Editorial

By Monica Berti and Franziska Naether

Since the formation as academic disciplines around 200 years ago, Egyptology and Papyrology collected the vast materials from Egyptian excavations in large Zettelkästen, scholarly archives, and databases. No wonder egyptologists and papyrologists with their multitude of backgrounds in Classics, Ancient History, Archaeology etc. are on the spearhead of Digital Humanities.

In the last years, both subjects saw many projects cataloguing the sources such as papyri and their texts or visualizing architectural structures by the means of digital tools and applications. Development is driving fast, not only by groundbreaking research and infrastructure projects of scholars but also by the consumer industry launching new devices especially in the field of 3D and augmented/virtual reality. We as editors are sure 2016 will see many new developments. Therefore, it was our mission with this conference to bring together emerging young scholars and students, the Nachwuchswissenschaftler of our fields, together with more experienced researchers representing the top-notch digital projects. The vision of our conference and workshop was to cross the boundaries of Egyptology and Papyrology as disciplines which are both often acting separately because of the languages that are studied: While Egyptologists usually care for the Egyptian languages in Old, Middle and Late Egyptian written in Hieroglyphs and Hieratic plus the sub-fields of Ptolemaic, Demotic and Coptic studies, Papyrologists focus mainly on sources in Greek and Latin. But especially in Ptolemaic, Roman and Late Antique Egypt the openness for several languages is more important to fully understand the cultural heritage from the Nile. Therefore, we are very happy that both Egyptologists and Papyrologists followed our Call for Papers and invitations to present their current work and discuss it at "DHEgypt15" in Leipzig in November 2016. The scholars worked well together and identified common problems and strategies on how to move on in the field of digital humanities. And, moreover, the sites where the multilingual texts and multicultural artifacts are found often come from the same contexts.

Our aim was not simply to provide a forum for scholarly exchange and presentation of new projects, but to arrange it in a structured manner with four research areas which also form the four chapters of this dossier publication in lieu of "proceedings". We wanted to go a step further: to connect people, share sources, research questions and technical issues, discuss solution strategies and how to proceed as digital scholars to move on for the benefit of our field. Nowadays, project members often say that "we don't want to reinvent the wheel", but it is also difficult to keep track of all the developments in the scholarly environment and nobody could attend all the conferences in disciplines such as Egyptology and Papyrology that are international since their beginning. Many of you were not only interested in contents, but also in infrastructures and methodologies. A growing demand was voiced in the

communication of the finding to the public but also on how to train students and integrate digital techniques into academic curricula and syllabi.

Humanities, mostly "Kleine Fächer" (small institutes covering vast time spans and regions) with few faculty members, are constantly threatened by budget cuts and institute's closures. Careers in the field are rare, employment is characterized by a large number of short-term contracts and a high level of insecurity for the employees, should they finally be in the lucky position to secure for themselves a tenured job. To an increasing rate, the command of mark up languages or the ability to create a 3D model of a trench from an excavation is becoming important and might make the difference in an application process.

To a certain degree, we have already fulfilled our goal of connecting people and encouraging collaboration because by the time we are writing this editorial, some of you are already working together and tackling the issues such as shaping Unicode characters for non-alphabetic scripts like Hieroglyphic, Hieratic and Demotic, designing tools for their input and recognizing cursive palaeographies. We were also successful in encouraging further meetings. The two workshops and the final discussion were very fruitful in that matter, and we wish to thank all participants and the chairs for their great interest and contributions in the topics under discussion. Everybody who was not able to join us in Leipzig, and judging from the feedback we know there are many of you, is able to follow the discussion in the protocols. Two of you, Athena von der Pere and Rita Lucarelli, kindly accepted to additional papers.

This proceedings dossier contains the abstracts of the speaker presentations at the conference and the workshops. Given the great interest in the event showed by participants and by those who were unable to attend it, we opted for this open access publication in order to put at everyone's disposal what was presented and discussed in Leipzig. Since it would not make sense to publish a printed book with articles about projects in status nascendi, especially not in a field such as the Digital Humanities, participants were asked to hand in their presentations with updated notes and further explanation in their unique layouts. We are grateful for the smooth process in cooperation with the repository QUCOSA and Henriette Rösch and her staff at the Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig.

Our special thanks go to Gregory R. Crane, who supported our conference since the beginning, discussed the outline with us and provided the inspiring keynote speech. This venue would have been less multifaceted and sustainable without him and his vision of the "Big Humanities" which we actually are. Valuable input came also from Thomas Koentges, Uta Kremer, and Simona Stoyanova. The venue was made possible through generous funds from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the man and especially womanpower from the two executing institutes (Lehrstuhl für Digital Humanities at the Institut für Informatik and Ägyptologisches Institut / Ägyptisches Museum -Georg Steindorff-). We could not have done this without the help of Sophia

Baron, Sylvia Frömmert, Sabine Kubisch and Annette Kunze as well as the many student volunteers. We are also very grateful to Kerstin Seidel and Dietrich Raue from the Egyptian Museum for enabling us an unforgettable reception on the first night after the inspiring evening lecture by Felix Schäfer. The biggest share, undoubtedly, was done by Julia Jushaninowa who not only pulled the strings while Monica Berti was on business trips and Franziska Naether at ISAW in New York but also co-presented two papers. Her blog article reviewing the event is the final contribution to this publication.

Digital Humanities is not just creating an elegant website or a cool 3D model – it is much more: it is new methodologies shared by researchers from different field. Ancient texts, artifacts and sites can be presented in multimedia narrations and embedded in broader contexts of cultural heritage. This opens up to communicate to the public our findings in deciphering papyri (or identifying ghost words) and linking stratigraphies within cultural heritage. In times of increased looting and antiquities trade, it is important to attribute value to a nation's treasures, not only in Egypt, and we strongly believe that education and citizen science are the keys to reach that goal.

But now: Enjoy the reading and browsing through the papers!

The editors

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