Breaking Boundaries: Global Perspectives, Digital Humanities
inflected pedagogy and the teaching of Italian History and Literature

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Matteo Ricci's tombstone
A clever traveler may take one look at a foreign wheel, import the invention back home, and change his local culture fundamentally and forever.

Theoretical and methodological Framework

**The Mobility Turn**

New mobility paradigm (Sheller and Urry)
attention to movement, including migration, diasporas and transnational citizenship on both physical and metaphorical level.

**The Global Turn**

Global History (Conrad, Gruzinski, Subrahmanyan, De Vries, etc.)
concerned with the processes of contact, sustained interactions, exchange, and the impacts of such processes in economic, epidemiological, demographic and cultural dimensions.

**The Digital Turn**

Digital Humanities
Computational Network Analysis, text analysis, digital mapping, etc.
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The Digital Turn
New Mobility Paradigm

Movement of people and information

Places and infrastructures

Borders and “gates”

“symmetrical knowledge” to challenge “notions of wholeness, teleological development, evolutionary progress, and ethnic authenticity”, and the illusion of fixity, stability, coherence, wholeness and autonomy of culture (Greenblatt 1-7).
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Course Overview

Global Early modern Italy: Exchanges and Transitions from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment

- Focus: how Italy exchanged goods, people, ideologies, and culture with the wider world, and how indigenous societies in Africa, the Middle East, the Americas, Asia and Southeast Asia influenced Italy and Europe.

- Themes: Renaissance(s); the Reformation(s); State-building, the Scientific Revolution; Globalization and European expansion; Impact of Slavery; traveler and traveling, Catholic overseas missions; the Enlightenment, etc.

- Course level: upper-division course in Italian; R&C course; L&S breadth course
Course goals

1) Identify major events in early modern European history (the Renaissance(s), the Reformation(s), the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, etc.) and reposition them in Global History. Identify evidence to show why what used to be seen as European movements were not entirely home-grown movements.

2) Confidently cite and analyze primary source documents from early modern Italy and beyond: describe the works examined, their historical context and the importance of these works in relation to the themes, principle figures and events.

3) Develop intellectual and critical skills to identify and analyze patterns and phenomena of cultural mobility - movements and interactions across linguistic, literary, ethnic, national and cultural boundaries.

4) Capable of applying basic Digital Humanities methods, such as network analysis, digital mapping to conduct literary/history/cultural analysis and present research findings.
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Digital Humanities
Computational Network Analysis, text analysis, digital mapping, etc.
Sample final project

In this project you will deep dive into network visualization and analyses to investigate an aspect of the globalizing/globalized world. Conceive visually the connections between the Italian peninsula and the globe, discussing at least two communities on political, historical, economic, social, cultural, and intellectual issues. You can choose to work on materials of any time period.
Your objectives are as following:

- **Select a target data set**. Establish criteria to determine which data (including but not limited to textual, visual, aural materials) will be included, and what information will not be included, related to the scope chosen by the team;

- **Develop a series of research questions** to ask of the data based on network models;

- **Devise a strategy** for addressing those questions

- **Develop a network** based on your strategy in order to analyze the relational features of the selected subject;

- Prepare appropriate citations for each data point;

- Present the information in a clear and compelling manner for the general public.
Understanding networks

- A “network” is a collection of points linked together by lines.
- The points are referred to as **nodes** that could represent almost all sorts of objects and people in interest and their attributes (such as weight, color, origin, gender, class, profession, etc.),
- the lines are referred to as **edges**, which show how the nodes are connected with one another.
- A network contains a set of objects (nodes) and “a mapping or description of relations” between them.
An "Eurasian Republic of Letters"

Figure 1: Jesuit communicatio n networks across Eurasia
Figure 2. Matteo Ricci’s network
Figure 3.

Jesuits as nodes of convergence, information broker and disseminator
Hubs and contact zones that enables the circulation of people, objects and ideas across Eurasia, based upon Jesuit information networks across Eurasia.

Figure 4. “Crossroads of knowledge”
The Grand Tour: background

British travellers as “Self”: Grand Tour as a crucial educational experience and accreditation for British architects, influencing their careers back in Britain.

Italy as a European “Other” and “South”: The function of Italy, subject to foreign domination, is to serve the rest of Europe as a museum or series of tourist sites.

-Could network-driven approach, including both macro and local views, offer insights to the complexities in positioning Italian culture in relation to the rest of Europe in the context of the Grand Tour?

-What hints can network analysis offer to help us tell a better story about the Grand Tour?
## The Dataset

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person ID Link</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amateur</th>
<th>Employments and Appointments</th>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Educational Institutions</th>
<th>Societies and Academies by Type</th>
<th>Societies and Academies by Name</th>
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<td>Independent Wealth, Commissioned Work</td>
<td>Other Universities and Colleges</td>
<td>Leiden University</td>
<td>British Learned Societies</td>
<td>Society of Antiquaries</td>
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<td>Knight</td>
<td>Oxbridge and Inns of Court</td>
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<td>Christ Church Oxford</td>
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<td>British Learned Societies</td>
<td>Society of Virtuosi, Royal Society</td>
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## Travels

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<th>PersonName</th>
<th>Tour</th>
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<th>Place ID</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Beyond the Italian Peninsula</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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</table>

## Places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place ID Link</th>
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<th>Coordinates</th>
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<th>States</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Abruzzi</td>
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<td>Kingdom of Naples</td>
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<td>Papal States</td>
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<td>Ancona</td>
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<td>Papal States</td>
<td>Papal States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5. The most visited places

Rome (116), Florence (51), Venice (46), Naples (42)

- Node color is **group**
- Node size of architects is **trip count**
- Node size of places is **number of visits**
- Edge weight is **trip count to that place**
Figure 6. Less visited places
Less than 25 visits

- Green nodes are **architects**
- Node color of places are **states**
- Node size of places is **number of visits**
- Edge weight is **trip count to that place**
Analysis

- The Grand Tour was an urban and urbane experience: the main focus was urban centers like cities and towns rather than countryside.

- Republican Florence and early Christian Rome began to assume a much more prominent place in travellers’ imaginations.

Figure 7. Chart: the most visited places
There are 75 places that were only visited by one traveler, most of which were in the Kingdom of Naples.

Abruuzzi  
Arco Felice  
Arezzo  
Ariano  
Arienzo  
Asola  
Avellino  
Avezzano  
Bari  
Barletta  
Bassano  
Bergamo  
Bisceglie  
Bracciano  
Brindisi  
Calabria  
Capistrello  
Castelfranco  
Castelluccio  
Celano  
Cerignola  
Como  
Constantinople  
Cori  
Cortona  
Cuma  
Eboli  
Egypt  
Faenza  
Foligno  
Fondi  
Forli  
Gaeta  
Gensano  
Giovinazzo  
Isola di Sora  
Lake Bolsena  
Lake Garda  
Lecce  
Lerici  
Loreto  
Lucca  
Molfetta  
Monopoli  
Mont Cenis  
Monte Cassino  
Monza  
Nocera  
Olevano  
Otranto  
Palestrina  
Pavia  
Pistoia  
Polignano a Mare  
Polla  
Pontecorvo  
Pontine Marshes  
Porti  
Reggio (Emilia)  
Rhodes  
Rivoli  
Solfatara  
Sora  
Spalato  
Spoleto  
Subiaco  
Tagliacozzo  
Tarquinia  
Terracina  
Trani  
Trasacco  
Treviso  
Trieste  
Vermei  
Viterbo
In these two examples of trips, most of the places were visited by only one traveler. They start from a major hub like Naples or Rome and then go from small town to small town. Most travelers did not go on extended travels like this.
A clever traveler may take one look at a foreign wheel, import the invention back home, and change his local culture fundamentally and forever. (Stephen Jay Gould 1996: 220-21)
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“The globalization of the sixteenth century affected Europe, Africa, Asia and the New World, as interactions of unprecedented intensity began to take place between them. A web was being spun around the planet, [...] indifferent to political and cultural frontiers. The protagonists in this globalization included the African, Asian and Amerindian populations, who all played a part, willy-nilly.” [...] It is equally illusory to see it as a gigantic tree sprouted from a seed sown by Iberian hands in the sixteenth century”. (Gruzinski 2014: 2-3)
Potential Benefits of DH inflected pedagogy: Creating a lab-based learning environment

01
- A new way of knowledge production

02
- Beyond reading: a read-research-interpret-design-analyze-present process

03
- Increasing engagement and collaboration

04
- Broader audience
Thanks
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