



Universität
Basel

Research Project

Dissertation Natale: La transformation des sciences historiques: la part du numérique

Project funded by own resources

Project title Dissertation Natale: La transformation des sciences historiques: la part du numérique

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Organisation / Research unit

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This article-based PhD critically addresses the ways in which digital information and communication technologies are being incorporated in the historical sciences, and suggests perspectives of an analytical framework on the ongoing transformations induced by digital technologies in the historical sciences.

In the last decade, Digital Humanities have emerged as one of the most innovative and dynamic field of research and scholarly practices in the Humanities. What used to be a sub-domain of the Humanities based on the computational analysis of text-based sources, has grown to a vast array of scholarly practices, encompassing a variety of digital-based research methods, the production of tools, and other forms of scholarly objects. All the while, Digital Humanities aim at engaging the general public as well as an epistemic reflexion about the role of digital media in knowledge production.

To this day, the historical sciences have not recognized the full potential of Digital Humanities for themselves. Reactions within the scientific community vary from expressed interest for experimenting with digital methods, to declared hostility for what some consider to be an academic trend of little intellectual interest. Nonetheless, there is a shared understanding that these tensions are a consequence of the fact that digital technologies question established practices such as research methods, scholarly communication, quality evaluation of results, science-society communication and transdisciplinary collaborations.

In order to move beyond infertile oppositions, research needs to focus on looking into the details of on-going transformations, identifying the various stakeholders inside and outside of the academy, and assessing where the disciplinary boundaries of historical sciences are moving towards. This is the general purpose of this doctoral project.

To achieve this within the scope of an article-based PhD, our research focuses on a number of empirical case studies where the integration of digital technology plays an important role. The case studies were chosen to cover the entire cycle of historical work, from information retrieval to the work on historical sources, including scholarly publication and outreach to the general public.

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