

The plans for a network for Judaica Digital Humanities

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This proposal for a network for Judaica Digital Humanities seeks to create a synergy between three elements: massive digitised contents, DH methodologies and a community of scholars.

Humanities scholarship may be now substantially advanced due to: (1) The maturation of the technology of Linked Data making available digitised corpora to be aggregated, seamlessly accessed and serve users using: (2) Digital Humanities (**DH**) tools, methodologies and infrastructures that support basic scholarship tasks: Discovering, Annotating, Comparing, Referring, Sampling, Illustrating, and Representing.

Contents: Many ongoing initiatives are seeking to digitise corpora of documents and manuscripts that are relevant for Jewish Studies. Judaica Europeana has been working with libraries, archives and museums to provide integrated access to digital collections, which document the Jewish presence and heritage in Europe and uploaded about five million items to Europeana. Many other projects are engaged in similar endeavors. A small share is represented by: the Center of Jewish History and its affiliated institutions like YIVO, the Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University Museum, American Jewish History Society, American Sephardi Association; Yerusha; the NLI digitisation program; early Jewish Newspapers; Hebrew Paleography; Responsa; The Friedberg Genizah; University of Frankfurt Compact Memory; the EHRI infrastructure for Holocaust studies; Nouvelle Gallia Judaica; Germania Judaica; Digital Haskalah and many more.

Digital Humanities: Many resources support Digital Humanities including semantic Linked Data approaches. One project lists infrastructures and tools supporting (1) Space and time (2) Information Visualization (3) Linked Data and Ontological Methods (4) Building and Developing Collections of Digital Data for Research (5) Using Large-Scale Text Collections for Research (6) Scholarly Digital Editions. The Arts and Humanities Network list DH methods: Communication and Collaboration; Data analysis; Data capture; Data publishing and dissemination; Data structuring and enhancement; Practice-led research.

Community: Scholars concerned with Jewish Studies are active in hundreds of universities and research institutes and are members of associations that sometimes reach thousands of members. As an example, one them offers as its main taxonomy of Jewish Studies the following: (no. of sub-categories in parentheses): Bible and related literature(8); History of the Jewish People(13); Religion and religious movements(11); Jewish Thought and Philosophy(5); Rabbinic Literature(4); Literature (other than Biblical and Rabbinic)(8); Languages(10); Art, Architecture and Performing Arts(4); Contemporary Studies(13); Jewish Studies and Resources(8).

The proposed network should:

- (1) Establish a Virtual Research Environment (VRE), integrating documents and other research objects, tools/infrastructures and scholarly resources are available as a complete and coherent package serving a dynamic scholarly community.
- (2) Reach a critical mass of active scholars, young scholars and post-graduate students trained and able to advance their research interests while using the VRE.
- (3) Test the adequacy of existing digital humanities tools in their application in Jewish Studies and identify the research challenges that may demand further tools/infrastructures development.