

DIGITAL HUMANITIES INTERNSHIP AT THE INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

Thanks to funding from the Roman Society I was able to undertake a three week placement at the Institute of Classical Studies in Digital Humanities. My interest in this field was sparked during my final year at University College London through further reading into the wide-scale digitalisation of manuscripts carried out at the British Library as well as the BBC's "Invisible Cities", which demonstrated how 3D scanners and virtual reality can be used for innovative Classics outreach and research. The ways with which Classicists can combine ancient and modern worlds by applying technology to their work encouraged me to research opportunities to learn more about Digital Classics and hence this placement has provided invaluable insight.

A particularly great aspect of this placement was the freedom and ownership that I was given over my project. Having grown up in this city and completed work experience at the Roman Baths, I have always been fascinated by the way in which so much of Aquae Sulis' ruins lie beneath listed Georgian buildings. So, I approached the Roman Society with a plan to create a digital map demonstrating this. My supervisors, Gabriel Bodard and Valeria Vitale, guided me through my concept and together we built a plan of action.

Firstly, they introduced me to Pleiades, a community-built online gazetteer of ancient places which allows users to share information about ancient places in digital form. Using archaeological journals and academic writing, I created ids for the locations of archaeological sites on OpenStreetMap and transferred these to Pleiades. Not only did this part of the project open my eyes to ongoing projects in the digital humanities community, it was interesting to see how issues with copyright can come into play when using drawings from archaeological journals to create new, digital maps. Working on Pleiades allowed me to expand my network but meeting others in the Digital Humanities community who were also a part of this project.

Alongside working on Pleiades, I created my own digital map. Given my lack of experience with coding, we decided to create a map using Google since it did not require my own coding and would still allow me to create an interactive, layered map which would effectively show the different layers of Bath's history. The insight I got into what I could have achieved with more coding experience has since spurred me on to learn more once the placement was over. Once I had created my map, I was able to link Pleiades locations, OpenStreetMap ids, and other useful information for users to see.

Something which I especially enjoyed was creating a 3D digital model of the ancient temple of Aquae Sulis using evidence from archaeological journals. For this, I learnt to use Sketchup, a 3D modelling software. I was able to attach this to my own map to help users better visualise how the ancient ruins once stood.

Finally, whilst at the Institute of Classical Studies I was also presented with the opportunity to attend weekly Digital Humanities seminars. These opened my eyes to other projects going on around the world. For example, I learnt about use of GIS in Eastern Europe to create a digital library of Ancient Greek inscriptions found there. In addition, it was fascinating to understand how we can use technology to easily locate place names, historical figures and other information in an ancient text. This data is then used to compare ancient and

modern maps to see with greater depth and ease how different writers have written about these locations. As with Pleiades this was an excellent opportunity to meet Digital Humanities academics from around the world and to learn more about what this exciting field has to offer to Classics.

I would like to thank Valeria and Gabriel for their advice, patience and encouragement throughout the placement. In addition, I would like to thank Fiona Haarer and the Roman Society for this opportunity to see how we can apply technology to Classics for better teaching, research and understanding of the Ancient World.

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