Digital Ottoman Platform II

June 20-24, 2016
Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton, NJ
Workshop Conveners

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NIR SHAFIR
University of California, Los Angeles

Workshop Organizer

MARÍA MERCEDES TUYA
Institute for Advanced Study
General Remarks on the Workshop

At present, the DOP is loosely organized into three working groups:

**GAZ** is focusing on producing a proof-of-concept for creating an Ottoman gazetteer, working on technical aspects, content, and the possible mechanisms for populating data.

**WEB** is concerned with the (eventual) public face of the DOP, including principles and design of a web interface as well as the content on the site. Most immediately this is the gazetteer.

**ORG** deals with nuts and bolts of maintaining momentum, designing a five-year plan, exploring funding needs and sources, and addressing issues of sustainability, scaling up and opening out.
PROGRAM

Monday, June 20

WHAT WE’VE DONE, WHAT WE’RE DOING, WHERE WE’RE GOING

 moderator: Sabine Schmidtke
 location: White-Levy Room (everyone, all day)

9:00—10:15  Welcome
Robbert Dijkgraaf, Director, Institute for Advanced Study (IAS)
Sabine Schmidtke, Professor of Islamic Intellectual History, School of Historical Studies, IAS
Capsule report on DOP 1: Amy Singer
Individual projects review: Chris Gratien

10:15—10:30  Break

10:30—11:00  Report on the state of the gazetteer: Mark Połczyński, Michał Połczyński, Nir Shafir

11:00—11:45  Lex Berman: Multiple Languages, Scripts and Orthographies in Historical Gazeteers

11:45—12:30  Will Hanley: A schema for the Ottoman historical gazetteer

12:30—14:00  Lunch @Dining Hall (first floor)

14:00—15:00  Kelly O’Neill: If It Isn’t Somewhere, It Doesn’t Exist — the Challenge of Building a Historical GIS for the Russian Empire

15:00—16:00  Jeremy Guillette: Technical Tricks for Gathering & Reconciling Data

16:00—16:30  Break
16:30—17:30 Reinventing the Wheel? a general discussion of existing gazetteers (led by Nir Shafir)

Tuesday, June 21

PLACE, SPACE, VISUALIZATION, AND PUTTING IT TOGETHER

moderator: Michał Połczyński
location: White-Levy Room (everyone, all day)

9:00—10:00 Nicolas Michel: Historical Geography of Ottoman Egypt
10:00—11:00 Emily Neumeier: Visualizing an Agro-economic Regime in Ottoman Greece & Albania with GIS
11:00—11:30 Break
11:30—12:30 Hakan Karateke: Database for Ottoman Inscriptions: Exploring Digital Possibilities
12:30—14:00 Lunch @Dining Hall
14:00—16:00 Breakout
16:00—16:30 Break
16:30—17:30 Erdem Kabadayi: Mapping Late Ottoman Population Data in Istanbul and for the Empire

Wednesday, June 22

GAZETTEER MADNESS

moderator: Chris Gratien
location: Morning and late afternoon = everyone @White-Levy
9:00—10:00 **Tom Elliot:** The Pleiades Project
10:00—11:00 **Antonis Hadjikyriacou:** Spatial history projects in Crete, Cyprus and beyond
11:00—11:30 Break
11:30—12:30 **Boğac Ergene:** Economic and “Large-N” Analysis of Islamic Legal Practice in the Ottoman Empire: A View of the Craft’s Kitchen
12:30—14:00 Lunch @Dining Hall
14:00—16:00 Breakouts
16:00—16:30 Break @White-Levy

**Thursday, June 23**

**NUTS and BOLTS**

moderator: **Nina Ergin**
location: Morning 9—11:00, 16:00—17:30 = everyone @White-Levy

9:00—10:00 **Serkan Şavk:** Istanbul’s Early Modern Urban Topography and Mapping its Narratives
10:00—11:00 **Sarah Ketchley:** The Emma B. Andrews Diary Project – Recreating a Nile Journey in the Digital Age
11:00—11:30 Break
11:30—12:30 Breakouts
12:30—14:00 Lunch @Dining Hall
14:00—16:00 Breakouts
16:00—16:30 Break @White-Levy
ABSTRACTS

Lex Berman, Harvard University

"Multiple Languages, Scripts and Orthographies in Historical Gazetteers"

As people move across the landscape, and political-administrative geographies expand and collapse, the naming of places involves layers of new languages and their written forms. Here we will consider how a data model was developed to capture place names in Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan, and Russian, and how changes in the orthographies of written forms were dealt with.

Will Hanley, Florida State University

"A Schema for the Ottoman Historical Gazetteer"

One of the basic building blocks for a digital gazetteer of the Ottoman empire is a schema. At the most basic level, a schema is a shared vocabulary. This vocabulary makes explicit the categorical and descriptive language(s) that users should employ so that their work is mutually comprehensible, and it is absolutely necessary to any linked data undertaking. At the most advanced level, a schema can become a full ontology that will use rules to reason with data (rules such as: every sancak has a capital city; every vilayet has a vali; etc.). This presentation will show my endeavor to develop something rather more humble: a more-or-less complete, correct, multilingual list of the major divisions of Ottoman administrative geography (provinces, sub-provinces, districts, and capitals), to be posted at ottgaz.org. I will talk about the models I've imitated and the structures I have in mind, and invite corrections, revisions, and improvements. By the time we
meet, I will have a linked open data set of 6400 Ottoman administrative units posted at ottgaz.org. The core data is here (https://github.com/whanley/Ottoman-Gazetteer/blob/master/data/Osmanli-yer-adalari.tsv). I think that it would be productive for me and for the project to spend a bit of time discussing the content and form of this part of the project at some point.

KELLY A. O’NEILL, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

“IF IT ISN’T SOMEWHERE, IT DOESN’T EXIST: THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING A HISTORICAL GIS FOR THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE”

Historical space can be elusive. In Tsarist Russia, as in many other empires, the bureaucracy generated enormous quantities of geospatial information; in fact, whole archives are organized according to the logic of administrative geography. Yet very little work has been done to express and analyze the spatial content of the historical record. The Imperiia Project is an attempt to do just that. It is a historical GIS of the Russian Empire, one that focuses on cultural and economic infrastructure. After a brief introduction to the project I will highlight some of the headache-inducing issues that make imperial space difficult to map. Unstable toponyms, shifting boundaries, and inconsistencies in the scale of archival and published sources are among the many motivations we have encountered for creating a robust scholarly historical gazetteer of the tsar’s lands.

JEREMY GUILLETTE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

PROCESSING PLACE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RUSSIAN GAZETTER CONSTRUCTION

The Toponimika project, run by Fung Library and the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, is a project exploring best practices for extracting information from historical texts and presenting that information in a useful way. The broad goal is to turn
historical documents into modern data sources, using a variety of methods for data extraction and reconciliation. The first text taken on by the project, a dictionary of fairs and trading in Russia, provided an opportunity to extract and use the information in the text, and to reconcile that information with modern geographic data sources. This talk will discuss the methods employed by the project to extract this data and to reconcile it with modern geographic information (in this case, the Geonames database). The discussion will attempt to connect lessons learned in this context to issues in other geographic and linguistic contexts, to inform a more general discussion of historical data extraction.

**Nicolas Michel, Institut français d’archéologie orientale (IFAO), Cairo**

**Historical Geography of Ottoman Egypt**

Historians dealing with Ottoman Egypt have at their disposal two major tools for historical geography: Muhammad Ramzi's *al-Qâmûs al-jughrâfî li-l-bilâd al-misriyya*, 1994 (a comprehensive dictionary of past and present villages), and the sets of historical maps drawn by Heinz Halm and the *Tübingen Atlas des Vorderen Orients (TAVO)*, which rely mainly on Ayyubid and Mamluk, not Ottoman, surveys, i.e. lists of villages. We propose here to add to these tools by exploiting 16th- to 18th-century sources on village and city toponyms, as well as on irrigation works. The Ottoman data will be compared to and correlated with 19th- and 20th-century maps. The goal is to produce a comprehensive visual documentation of long-term developments in the distribution and patterns of settlement and of environmental changes, and to fill in the "Ottoman gap" in our understanding of the last seven or eight centuries of Egyptian historical geography.
This paper serves as an introduction to an ongoing project that employs geospatial systems to map the extensive agricultural holdings [çiftlik] of Tepedelenli Ali Pasha (d. 1822). This notorious historical figure, who served as the Ottoman governor over a large swath of territory comprising what is today northern Greece and southern Albania, was also by many accounts the greatest landowner in the region. I demonstrate how this kind of mapping project, which utilizes abundant yet previously unmapped archival evidence, offers Ottoman studies new and unexpected opportunities for the analysis of landscape. Re-constructing Ali Pasha’s agro-economic regime in its topographic dimensions not only allows for a detailed depiction of how Ottoman provinces were organized spatially, but also captures how local people experienced and understood the region in which they lived. I will also explain some of the major issues I have confronted when producing this gazetteer, most notably the changing of place names over time. I quickly discovered that translating information found in Ottoman documents to Google Earth is easier said than done, and I have been forced to develop some unconventional solutions to circumvent problems that emerged, conducting a kind of "internet anthropology" by using sources ranging from the Blogger sites of Greek villages to the "check-in" function on Facebook. I will present the preliminary results of this digital visualization project by mapping the çiftlik of Ali Pasha and his sons in the Ottoman sub-provinces of Yanya and Delvine, with a total of over 300 individual farming villages identified and represented. The data set that forms the basis for this project primarily comes from a series
of land registers today located in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul, and these findings are compared and evaluated with additional Greek archival documents.

HAKAN KARATEKE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DATABASE FOR OTTOMAN INSCRIPTIONS: EXPLORING DIGITAL POSSIBILITIES

This talk will report on a digital project entitled Database for Ottoman Inscriptions (DOI), http://www.ottomaninscriptions.com; this is an online corpus compiling the inscriptions created during Ottoman times, regardless of the language in which they were written. The project is creating a searchable database that will include high resolution pictures, GPS information, a transliteration of the inscriptions, further data and a bibliography specific to each one. The DOI was conceptualized and has been administered since 2009 by Hatice Aynur (Şehir University-Istanbul); Kayoko Ha-yashi (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) and myself.

While comparable projects for Greek, Latin, or Arabic inscriptions were initiated as early as the nineteenth century and have since expanded their databases, Ottoman inscriptions, despite their abundance and value as historical records, have been underutilized in historical studies. To be sure, a good number of individual studies examine the inscriptions of a given building, a locality, or a period, but a corpus of all the Ottoman inscriptions has not been attempted. As one of the editors of this project, I believe that the delay in creating such a corpus, integrated into one large data-base, will be offset and the corpus enriched by the technological advantages and innovations that can now be exploited in its creation.
Thus, I propose to explain the scope and technicalities of this project in detail, present behind-the-scenes methods and processes, discuss the difficulties encountered so far, and explore new ideas for moving forward.

**M. EREDEM KABADAYI, KOÇ UNIVERSITY**

**MAPPING LATE OTTOMAN POPULATION DATA IN ISTANBUL AND FOR THE EMPIRE**

As a part of a research project “Recovering Armenians in the late Ottoman Istanbul and Making Ottoman-Era Population Data Available for All,” funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, we are creating a demographic dataset of a part of the 1907 Ottoman population census (covering the Apostolic Armenians of Istanbul) by digitizing census material written in Armenian. The census information provides street names and houses for all of the households it registered. We are mapping the *mappable* census data onto geo-rectified insurance maps of Istanbul from the early twentieth century. For a different project we would like to create Ottoman population density GIS maps based on the smallest unit of administration (kaza) for the entire empire for the 1840s and the 1880s. I will present preliminary results coming out of these two ongoing projects.

**TOM ELLIOT, INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD (NYU)**

**THE PLEIADES GAZETTEER OF ANCIENT PLACES**

Since 2008, the Pleiades gazetteer has been hosted and operated by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University in collaboration with the Ancient World Mapping Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Pleiades publishes authoritative information about ancient places and spaces,
providing unique services for finding, displaying, and reusing that information under open license. It publishes not just for individual human users, but also for search engines and for the widening array of computational research and visualization tools that support humanities teaching and research. It embraces the new paradigm of citizen humanities, encouraging contributions from any knowledgeable person and doing so in a context of pervasive peer review. This talk will include a concise overview and introduction to Pleiades, its mission, and capabilities. I will emphasize major developments in its history, as well as current work-in-progress and planned improvements under the aegis of a current, 3-year grant from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities.

**Antonis Hadjikyriacou, Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas**

**Spatial History Projects in Crete, Cyprus and Beyond**

This paper discusses the progress of the project "Mapping Economic Space in the Ottoman World", first presented at last year’s workshop by Elias Kolovos. The overall aim is to develop methodologies for using GIS applications to process data on economic production derived from Ottoman fiscal surveys (*tahrir defterleri*). The presentation first focuses on the digitization of the Cyprus detailed survey (*mufassal defteri*), compiled in 1572, immediately after the island's conquest. More specifically, the presentation addresses the visualization and cartographic representation of economic data, correlating it with present-day geophysical conditions. It will also discuss the problems and limitations of this and similar exercises.

The presentation then turns to its attention to three new projects that are developing from the original one:
Mapping spaces of power: the realms and relationships of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa (in collaboration with Ali Yaycioğlu of Stanford University). This project is based on Tepedelenli Ali Pasha's Greek archive of correspondence with individuals and groups across the areas under his control. This source is complemented by a source more familiar to Ottoman historians, i.e. imperial documents or diplomatic records. The objective is to construct a spatial representation of the networks of power and forms of relations established by Ali Pasha in order to understand better the micro-workings of the areas under his influence.

An Historical Gazetteer of Cyprus (in collaboration with King's College, London). Building upon an existing KCL project on Byzantine churches in Cyprus, the gazetteer project aims to gather all historical toponyms in every language since ancient times in a GIS tool.

The Cyprus Digital Index (also with KCL). This project aspires to be a digital reference guide that reveals connections among people, places, and time – with emphasis on the latter. Using OCR tools to index key out-of-copyright texts related to Cypriot Studies, the guide will enable three-dimensional searches to uncover such links. The project will gradually expand to include other key collections and individual works with a simple reference to the source (rather than full-text access).

Boğaç Ergene, University of Vermont

Economic and “Large-N” Analysis of Islamic Legal Practice in the Ottoman Empire: A View of the Craft’s Kitchen

In this presentation, I will reflect on the promises and challenges associated with developing economic and quantitative
approaches in the study of the Ottoman court records. In particular, I will discuss my efforts to convert large numbers of legal documents from the court’s archive into a dataset, including the methodological tensions that an economist colleague and I (a historian) experienced in our collaborative efforts to develop an interdisciplinary framework for exploring Ottoman legal practice. I will further share some of our findings, discussing our reflections on the ways in which our computational efforts have yielded systematic and statistically-reliable information that adds insights about how various groups of court-clients, including women, lower classes, and religious minorities, used the legal system and developed legal strategies to use against other groups in the court’s arena. My presentation will juxtapose our results to those of earlier researchers, whose conclusions are largely based on impressionistic and anecdotal information.

Serkan Şavk, Izmir University of Economics

Istanbul’s Early Modern Urban Topography and Mapping its Narratives

Early modern Istanbul is marked with two transformative processes: The power struggle between different political factions and the integration of daily life practices into urban space. The changing topography of Istanbul shaped by these transformative processes is depicted in a dense corpus of textual and visual resources such as first person narratives, urban histories, chronicles, miniatures, engravings and panoramas. Even though produced in different forms and genres by creators with different political and cultural identities, the common feature of these resources is narrating the urban space through a blend of imagination and experience.

Until today, resources on the urban topography of Istanbul
have been studied in specific genres or forms. However, a comprehensive understanding of the urban topography requires the study of these diverse resources in an interrelated way. The intertextual character of digital media is suited to study and highlight such an interrelation.

In the Mapping the Early Modern Istanbul (MEMI) project that I am conducting at Princeton University’s Department of History as a visiting fellow, I consider every narrative as a text regardless of its form and genre. From this perspective I aim to handle the mass of resources by mapping them over an interactive and open access database. The resources will be mapped through three main layers:

- Narratives regarding a particular region, place or construction of the topography: All sorts of visual and textual sources will be mapped over this layer in the form of excerpts and/or image captions accompanied by source credits and metadata.
- The route of a particular narrative throughout the urban space: Regions, constructions and places visited through a single narrative and the narrational route connecting them.
- The route of a particular artist/writer throughout the urban space: Regions, constructions and places an artist/writer visits in different narratives.

My claim is that a mapping of visual and textual resources through these layers will enable me to answer the following questions: To what degree did artist/writers benefit from their own experiences or other resources for constructing their narratives? To what degree were their narratives imaginary? Is it possible to identify common themes, arguments and patterns among different resources? If so, is it possible to track the ways these themes, arguments and patterns
evolve and become pervasive?

My presentation focuses on four major questions, which also reflect the fundamental technical, theoretical and structural challenges of my project.

1. How should textual and pictorial resources be handled as components of the same network in a mapping project?

2. Even though most mapping projects end up with a single-layer visualization of the subject matter, is it possible to develop a multi-layered map of interrelated networks? How can different mapping and network analysis tools be employed to this aim?

3. In such a project how can the “to-be-digitized” (by this particular project) and the “already-digitized” (by other museums, archives or projects) resources be mapped together? How is it possible to make the metadata, size and formats of different projects compatible?

4. How is it possible to overcome sustainability and reliability issues that will arise due to the usage of resources from other portals and/or projects?

**Sarah Ketchley, University of Washington**

**The Emma B. Andrews Diary Project: Recreating A Nile Journey in the Digital Age**

Mrs. Emma B. Andrews travelled along the Nile with her companion, Theodore Davis, between 1889 and 1913. Ohio-born Andrews was the youngest daughter of one of the wealthiest families in the state. Her life is fascinating to modern sensibilities, straddling the early years of the state’s foundation, the upheavals of the American Civil War, the decadence of Newport’s Gilded Age and
beyond. Davis was a lawyer to the notorious 'Robber Barons' of New York and made his fortune in somewhat dubious circumstances before retiring to his mansion in Newport to travel and build a remarkable collection of art and antiquities. He began his annual trips along the Nile in 1889 with Mrs. Andrews, and they continued for more than two decades. Mrs Andrews was referred to euphemistically as Davis's 'cousin' or 'relative', but in all likelihood Emma was Theodore's mistress. The couple traveled first as tourists, before Davis was granted the coveted concession to excavate in the Valley of the Kings in 1902. Working with renowned Egyptologists such as Howard Carter, Percy Newberry, Harry Burton and Edward Ayrton, Davis discovered over 20 important tombs and burial deposits in and around the royal cemetery at Thebes. Mrs. Andrews was present at all of these excavations, yet her diaries remain unpublished. They have proven to be a rich source of information about ‘Golden Age’ Egyptology, archaeology, travel and society.

This presentation will cover the process of designing and implementing a digital project to introduce this important work to a broader audience, including our experiences transcribing and encoding the diaries in XML/TEI, developing an XSLT script to mine the content for biographical data, and geoparsing for location data to create layered Neatline maps. Our website has been developed using the Omeka content management system, and I’ll consider the pros and cons of this platform, the challenges of creating consistent and relevant metadata and of working with undergraduate and graduate student interns.
DIGITAL OTTOMAN PLATFORM II

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