Al-Iwan ILiADS 2021

Project Description

- al-Iwan is a Levant architectural space created for visitors to find shelter and exchange conversations.
- Our project finds inspiration in this concept in creating an online space to invite researchers, students, and users in the community to explore and tinker with cultural items collected from our institutional and local archives
- Users can mashup and create their own narratives around these object that may counter Western Orientalist accounts
- Educators, researchers, and members in our community at large can also contribute to growing the collections and collaborate with people from the Global North

Week Goals

- Identify an appropriate infrastructure
- Create an online platform that allows collaborations with publicly funded platforms
- Learn about flattest possible technology stacks and static websites
- Get training on annotation tools and minimal computing
- Learn how to be able to facilitate the development, digitization and integration of relevant materials and items
- Explore possible next steps for funding

Team Members

Adopt a unique text color for taking/adding notes in other sections of the document.



- Elie Kahale
- Vera al Ashkar
- Donna Rajeh
- Nabila Shehabeddine
- Samar Mikati
- Till Grallert
- Pierre France
- Najla Jarkas

Monday 7/26

Outline

- Questions or other follow-up from previous sessions
- Discussion of project goals and aims
 - Individual brainstorming + reflection
 - Collaborative discussion
- Discussion of infrastructure
 - Institutional
 - Resources
 - Constraints
 - Individual
 - Resources
 - Constraints
 - Next steps regarding infrastructure
- Existing technologies, frameworks, and projects
 - Individual brainstorming + reflection
 - o Collaborative discussion

Link to conversation recording

Discussion of Project Goals and Aims

- Let's spend 15 minutes reflecting, brainstorming, and taking notes individually about the project's goals and aims. A few specific prompts are provided below:
 - What do you see as your contribution to the project? What parts of this project are most appealing or exciting to you? You could think in terms of your own scholarly work or possible teaching implementations (or other types of collaborations/projects).
 - Imagine the project exists and you are 3-5 years in the future. How are you
 thinking about what your day-to-day or week-to-week involvement in the project?
 You could think in terms of discrete tasks or collaborations.

 What would success in this project look like? There are a number of ways to think about or define success: research output, number or types of users, etc. What is the current state of your thinking about what success looks like for this project?

Space for individual notes:

Elie Kahale

Creating a project that meets the needs of our DH community and is supported by the community. Currently, there are a lot of DH works that are taking place by different researchers and scholars with difficulty sharing and preserving their work. There should be a way to allow this community to express and publish their work for others to see, learn from and build on top of it. Qualified work and adopting standards should hence be easily preserved.

I hope in a few years, we have a platform that is adopted by several scholars around the world but mainly locally and from the region. Hopefully we are able to sustain this work and we would be looking for ways to provide more resources and tools to our scholars. The measurement of success is first by the **number** of scholars, the **variety** of tools, topics/methodologies adopted and finally by the **quality** of work preserved and published (**increased citations**).

Vera al Ashkar

- 1. Start by benchmarking Al-iwan platform, collect info about other similar platforms that might be useful for us (for example pages with highest traffic, tools, tech, web server, keywords, meta-title, and meta-description)
- 2. Plan and implement overall marketing strategy.
- Plan our growth hacking strategies that will help us acquire more users in the future, and improve our traffic and appearance on google (SEO keyword for example).
- 4. We can later use our data to generate insights to improve our dashboard and user experience, and to create some useful visuals.

Donna Rajeh

- Collecting material about our topics (need to narrow down the scope)
- Putting a plan on how we need to reach out and promote our project
- Discussing the feasible tools to be used for annotation/mapping/ any visualization we would like to include

- At a later stage, we can work on instructional material for students to guide them through the process
- Choosing the right platform to implement the project based on our resources and budget

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- Nabila Shehabeddine
- Create Zotero libraries for collected materials.
- Develop guides for users as needed
- Should have a section on copyright / Creative Commons
- Citation and attribution/ Possibility of auto-citation??
- o Provide correct metadata about each object, text, etc.
- Help in finding hard to find resources needed for the project
- Commitment to the project
- Continuity and Sustainability of the project
- o Reach out to larger communities in lebanon and in the region ... with time
- Possibility of generating statistical reports for assessments

Samar Mikati

- -Identifying special collections from AUb Archives to include in the project
- Contacting scholars and people with related collections to contribute to the project
- Involving AUB community in this project either professors or students

In five years

- The project should be up and running with contributions from researchers intreated in the topic and not restricted to AUB
- My role will be to maintain adding more resources and marketing this new platform to researchers

Success will be measured by

 Number of users accessing the platform and contributing to it either by adding new resources or by reflecting on existing material or by citing the resources available on the platform

Till Grallert

- Sorry: I am easily getting carried away typing out such thoughts as bullet points
- Annotation is at the core of academic engagement with any material and yet in the digital realm it is so poorly implemented. The initial hypertext idea is so inspiring yet there are so many walled gardens that add layers of exclusion. I would love to contribute to improving this state of affairs with open, sustainable, interoperable infrastructure. Infrastructure that is open to all languages and scripts and not necessarily/conceptually linked to the Anglophone hegemony. The most exciting part is adding domain knowledge (academic or otherwise) to the plethora of material out there. Contribute our own material through open and hackable platforms without need to pay lots of money and without any restriction on our use of this data (as opposed to creating shareholders' value for the platform).
- The most exciting bit would probably be the actual implementation of annotation/ hypertext as Linked Open Data in a user-friendly form and integrated into basic web workflows independent of platforms, OSs etc.
- I can contribute domain knowledge and a good overview of open, sustainable approaches to the digital. I also see myself coding bits and pieces.

Goals:

- test and establish workflows, best practices for annotating any type of digital content along a concrete project.
 - I want to be able to contribute my domain knowledge to often purely catalogued digital collections
 - I want to draw connections
- Write them up as proper workflows and publish them through established platforms
- an Arabic branch of the programming historian (I know it sounds wild)
- Add local and Arabic narratives to the dominant discourse about the region, particularly within academia

Success:

 getting sustainable annotation workflows to actually work and for audiences that do not have institutional resources at their command. To See whatever we are dreaming up is used by a community of people beyond those currently involved.

- My future engagement:

- I don't think the project (in its current form with a clear topical focus) will actually run for five+ years.
- We will use and reuse components and workflows but I don't necessarily see myself interacting with a specific platform on a weekly basis.
- I will come back for teaching, concrete needs etc.
- annotation workflows are so basic that I foresee myself reusing them for anything I do. From research to teaching.

Pierre France

- In the field of music, figures, charts, dataviz, interactive projects are usually confined to Spotify-like ppt presentations and annual reports, or NGO projects like https://www.syriamusicmap.org/en/home that are nice but limited as to their scientific ambitions > one thing that this project could tackle, because on the contrary musicology in/on the region hasn't done any digital turn. The question is also political: global actors from the music industry are reshaping the experience of music in the region, and can't be the only actors using digital and data, that they conceal most of the time.
- Many small scale projects, personal archives, have been developed but in a very basic way > giving tools to improve them, positioning ourselves as a toolkit for knowledgeable collectors?
- I would like very much to start coding with this project and delve into dataviz in arabic, but I am afraid I have no idea of what my input could be in 3 years.

Najla Jarkas

- Digital Humanities is an exciting field that could be integrated in different ways and in different courses. Showing faculty some of the experiments my students and I worked on and the type of digital objects and tools we used will inspire them to integrate methods and tools into their own courses. I see myself contributing to the pedagogical aspect of the project, by adding some of the tutorials, lesson plans, assignments and digital projects that students have completed. I also find it exciting to be able to contribute to the development of the Orientalist corpus and add ways faculty and students can conduct textual, network and spatial analyses of different texts that may not have been well known to readers before.
- I am committed to working on the project for a long period of time, and see myself collaborating with a number of colleagues at different institutions in the region and beyond on more digital methods and tools.
- Success in this project can take the form of introducing the project at a number of DH conferences, writing papers on some of the outcomes, contributing to tutorials in collaboration with colleagues in fields other than literature and with people in the community at large to show them how to make use of the resources and add to the work.

Project Goals and Aims: Initial Observations + Next Steps

 Curation- bringing together and facilitating access to existing archival collections; not just a project highlighting digitized collections- building on and connecting existing work (in way that facilitate new forms of access)

- Sustainability, or scalability- capacity to incorporate existing and new collections, provide forms of access that facilitate variety of digital humanities methods or uses
- Annotation- particular types of interactivity and user engagement (with a focus on educational teaching/research contexts); language of remixing comes to mind (narrative, context, creativity)
- Community and education- active and ongoing use of resources and platform; development of instructional resources; highlighting or showcasing scholarly (and student) work created with and through the platform

Questions:

- Resources
- Timeframe

Discussion of Infrastructure

- Let's take 10 minutes to curate notes, questions, or concerns related to the following topics. Resources and constraints could refer to a wide variety of things: technologies, personnel, financial resources, etc.
 - Socio-technical/ infrastructure
 - Constraints
 - Support for capturing non-Latin/ non-English content on the OS level
 - Institutional
 - Resources
 - Constraints
 - Individual
 - Resources
 - Constraints
- Space for individual notes:
 - Elie Kahale

Socio-tehnical/Infrastructure:

Several challenges exist but this is what makes the project worth it.

Institutional:

Based on previous experience and current situation we have/will have at the beginning limited support from the institution in terms of funding, human resources (time,...), technical resources,.....

However there is also an opportunity to move this project to the top (priority) by providing funding and/or creating momentum by reaching out to the community that is in need for such work

Individual:

We have very talented resources in the community, AUB, the library that will do wonders if well supported to achieve this project.

Of course training and other logistics will be needed.

Vera al Ashkar

- Institutional
 - Finding the right platform that might be easily used by everyone
 - Having the ability to add tools or plugins that will help us collect data and use it later, and organize our archived data to avoid data redundancy
- Individual
 - Some very useful tools might not be free, so we might have limited access
 - Internet and electricity cut
- Donna Rajeh
- Institutional
- Finding an open source platform that could accommodate the project needs/ platform funding
- Training on the new platform
- Funding for new updates/ training
 - Individual
 - Internet access
 - Electricity cuts
 - Technical know-how of the tools/new platform to be used
 - Nabila Shehabeddine
 - Resources
 - Open access resources/
 - Constraint:
 - multi-language (arabic , english ...)

- Technical skills
- Continuous funding
- Regular update of tools
- Copyright of materials useful to the project

Samar Mikati

- Socio-technical/ infrastructure
 - Constraints
 - Staff working with this project might need training for using the new platform
 - Technical support might not be available due to economic crises
 - Delay of work might be encountered due to the health and economic crises that the country is passing
 - INternet access might be an issue in coming months
 - Some material might not be suitable for publishing online
 - Support for capturing non-Latin/ non-English content on the OS level

Institutional

- Resources
 - Some resources might not be yet digitized or might be still copyrighted
- Constraints
 - Financial and human resources are limited and will be in many years to come
- Individual
 - Resources
 - Backlog of work might hinder required commitment and productivity

Till Grallert

- Constraints:
 - Unicode wars: we are still bound to the metaphor of typesetting. We cannot capture the ambiguity of Arabic script in digital form.
 - Language barrier: interfaces and all the coding are commonly perceived of in English and follow metaphors from the Global North
 - Limited access to funding
 - Including limited access to paywalled content of digitised cultural heritage from the Global South for those in the Global South, outside wealth institutions in the Global North

- Collection and curation biases of existing collections translate into digital collections
- Internet connections, electricity
- Individual constraints
 - I am contingent faculty and currently an independent scholar with two small kids and limited access to childcare (due to pandemic)
 - There is a substantial number of projects that I will have to prioritise over al-Iwan

- Resources:

- As contingent faculty I bring only individual resources to the table
- Extensive domain knowledge of the late Ottomam Eastern Mediterranean, urban history, history of social unrest, periodical studies, digital humanities
- Well connected in digital humanities circles and especially those with a focus on the MENA region, decolonial digital humanities etc.
- Knowledge of / experiences with infrastructures, workflows, standards, communities of practice
- Digital editing, TEI in Arabic contexts, metadata generation from digital editions
- XML etc., extensive knowledge of R, a bit of Python
- Pierre France

Najla Jarkas

Institutional Resources:

- Rich collections of orientalist materials in the archives
- Diaries and undigitized materials in the archives that would be so exciting to share with the world
- Digital experts working at AUB library that can contribute to the project development

Constraints:

- People have heavy workloads and have to answer to their bosses
- Team members have different work schedules and working patterns [for example, I work during weekends and holidays]
- Financial constraints at AUB, so we will need external funding

Individual:

Resources:

- My knowledge and interest in DH methods and tools
- Large corpus of Orientalist fan fiction available for free on Gutenberg
- My network of DH experts and students

Constraints:

 I will be travelling next year and may not be able to be in Lebanon to have face-to-face meetings and connect with the group

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Infrastructure: Initial Observations + Next Steps

- Connectivity- access and use; ability to withstand limited or intermittent internet
- Digital colonialism- English-language default for platforms/frameworks/etc
- Cost-
 - Outright cost (domains, server space, etc)
 - Overhead cost (time buyouts, dedicated work time, etc)
 - Learning new technologies
- Things we can be excited about!
 - o Rich wealth of cultural resources/materials
 - Wide range of skills team members possess
 - Some level of institutional commitment/support from AUB

Discussion of existing technologies, frameworks, and projects

- Let's spend 15 minutes reflecting, brainstorming, and taking notes individually about existing technologies, frameworks, or projects that might inform, shape, or relate to this project. Feel free to approach this prompt expansively.
- Space for individual notes:

Elie Kahale

I am not aware about the existence of similar projects. I might have examples about different initiatives or aspects implemented in other projects. Najla has created an extensive list....

I think the tricky part is to find a platform that is based on minimal computing yet it allows the flexibility, scalability, interoperability,... multilingual, ...needed.

One example I think was shared by Brooks is;

https://minicomp.github.io/wax/ (I think it is a good idea to preserve the work and use minimal computing, but not sure how much it responds to the community needs in terms of ease of use and user friendliness.)

We need to create our own simple robust framework from current existing platforms and technologies that are mainly open source and freely available.

Vera al Ashkar

Existing technologies:

- Some limited analysis tools such as google chrome extensions(Traffic analysis, SEO Checking...)
- Python libraries that we might use to classify our collected data so we can target the right personas with the right marketing info
- Social media management tools (free but limited)
- Mailchimp Email campaign tool for automated marketing, it helps in designing email campaigns and analysing email open clicks and visibility.
- Microsoft Power BI data visualization tool (Free to use, as long as we don't need to publish the created dashboard)

Donna Rajeh

Finding it hard to give input here, it's one of my individual constraints

- Nabila Shehabeddine
- Not familiar with technology.
- Simple and strong enough platform will do the job
- Some tools were shared during the 2nd presentation e.g Trellor??
- https://libquides.d.umn.edu/c.php?q=301110&p=2007378
- Dr. Jarkas shared with us some interesting projects
- Samar Mikati
- Not familiar with technology.
- Till Grallert

Pierre France

Najla Jarkas

I haven't yet found a DH Project that will do all of the things that we plan to achieve in this project, although there are some samples of DH projects that have some interesting features that could benefit ours:

<u>Letters of 1916</u> is a participatory project that showcases mapping, network analysis and statistical analysis of its collection of letters. It also allows croud-sourcing. We could make use of the way they collect more resources and promote the project in the community.

There are other projects that have a blogging feature, which could also be part of what we want to achieve: **Mapping Dubliners Project**

Adding brief descriptions of what students discovered in their assignments would be a very interesting feature and will allow students to take ownership of their work in class and beyond.

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913 has an interesting research and study guide that i find useful

I also find <u>Six degrees of Francis Bacon</u> very interesting, in that users can add information that is relevant to the project after logging in or signing up <u>Coptic Scriptorium</u>

Existing Technologies, Frameworks, Projects: Initial Observations + Next Steps

Projects to explore further:

- Six Degrees of Francis Bacon
- o <u>Letters 1916-1923</u>
- o Riiks Studio
- Mapping Dubliners
- Old Bailey
- o Early African American Film
- Virtual Angkor
- o First Days Project
- o https://www.syriamusicmap.org/en/home
- https://gatartalkingarchives.org/

- https://alwathaeq.com/
- How to integrate material from grey resources? Submit them to archive.org / perma.cc and continue from the resulting stable representations?
- https://opengulf.github.io/

Next steps + action items for Tuesday 7/27:

Inventory of existing archival collections/resources

- Børre Ludvigsen Digital Archive:
 - The Al Mashrig the Levant Lebanon and the Middle East -
- The Student Union Gazette
- Postcards Collection
- Travel Books
- Yearbooks

Nabila

- https://aub.edu.lb.libguides.com/DigitalCollections/AUBLibraries
- <u>Lebanese American University : Library Digital Collection</u>
- Heinz Gaube Lebanese Architecture Photographs Collection
- Orientalist Photography
- Arab Image Foundation
- Orientalism in Nineteenth-Century Art
- La Méditerranée orientale <u>Supprimer le critère -La Méditerranée orientale</u>
- Kahlil Gibran digital archive
- Ameen Fares Rihani (1876-1940) Collection
- An Exhibition of Early Arab American Culture more at https://lebanesestudies.ncsu.edu/Archive.php
- Mapping Women Writers in the Mahjar
- American University in Cairo: Rare Books and Special Collections Digital Library
- TIMEA Travelers in the Middle East Archive
- Photorientalist.org
- Helpful blogs/ blog news
 - http://aucmedhd.blogspot.com/
 - https://digitalorientalist.com/
 - https://www.mayfairgallery.com/blog/orientalist-paintings-19th-cent-urv-fantasies-east/

Samar

A selection of Archives and Special Collections from AUB Archives on Orientalism

ARCHIVAL MATERIAL (we will choose samples of these)

Daniel bliss Collection

Correspondence D.B. with David Stuart Dodge Correspondence D.B. with his family, YMCA, and various coordinates

- Bayard Dodge: Personal Letters early 20th C
- Edward Nickoley Diary on famine during WWI in Beyrouth, Syria
- Letters by SPC (AUB) alumni experience during WWI (not digitized)
- Oral History Interview (selections of these personalities experiences during WWI this way we can compare the experiences of the locals with those of the missionaries)
- Shahin Al-Salibi, AUB alumnus, eye surgeon fought in the Ottoman Army during World War I, November 1968; AUB035A [60min.]
- Suleiman Al-Salibi, Lebanese physician who served in the Egyptian army father of AUB Emeritus Professor Kamal Salibi, October 1968; AUB033A/B [1h. 26min.]; AUB034A/B [1h. 9min.] -
- Anbara Salam Al Khalidi, a prominent women activist committed to education and women's rights, March 13, 1970; AUB072 [1h)
- Raymond Eddé, Lebanese legislator and minister, February 25, 1970; AUB055A [55min.]; AUB085A/B [2h. 3min.]; AUB086A/B [2h. 1min.]; AUB087A/B [1h. 40min.]; AUB105A/B [1h. 40min.] Saeb Salam; Prime Minister and member of the Lebanese Parliament during the 20th Century AUB056A/B [61min.]; AUB082A/B [2h. 4min.]; AUB083A/B [2h. 3min.]; AUB084A [34min.]; AUB106A/B [1h. 51min.]
- Scans from a news papers on famine in the Syria
 - الحرب العظمى: مجموعة تاريخية مصورة تبحث في التاريخ.
- Al-Ḥarib al-'uzmá: majmū'ah tārīkhīyah muşawwarah tabḥathu fī al-tārīkh
- Howard Bliss:

Soup Kitchen report during WWI

Correspondence between Howard Bliss and Ahmad Djemal Pasha and H. B. with the American Consulate in Constantinople

• Missionaries (not digitized)

Correspondence: Eli Smith, Porter, Wilson Brief Chronicle of the Syrian Missionaries

- Henrietta Buttler smith (not digitized)
 - Incoming Letters to Smith who was a resident in Syria 1883-1891
- American Press (not digitized): Selected items

PHOTOS

- The Blatchford Collection of Photographs:
 - Ph:1/405
- <u>Indigènes moulant du blé à Jérusalem</u> [Two women, one boy, a pivotal grinding stone, wheat and scale with weights]
 Jerusalem/People
 - Ph:1/753

- Des femmes arabes portant de l'eau du Nil [Women filling earthen jars with water from Nile]
 - Ph:1/164
- [On mount: Arab women] [Four Bedouins]
 [Syria?/People]
 - Ph:1/733
- <u>Chanteuse Arabe avec la Tarabucca</u> [Arab woman singer with tarabucca, veiled face and ornaments
 - Ph:1/735s
- [On mount: <u>Woman and child</u>] [veiled woman with cylinder between eyes: in studio]
 - Ph:1/744s
- [Man and woman eating bread and tu'miah (beans), water carrier emptying water in large jar arabesques on wall.
 - Ph:1/731s
- [On mount: <u>Egypt [Two seated] Abyssinian women</u>] [Elaborate ornaments on clothes, legs and feet]
- Dr. Franklin Moore Photo Collection
 - Mary Bliss Dale? with faculty? and baby crib. Worker plowing ground. 75
 - o Ras Beirut: cactus lane. 1898. 01
 - Eye clinic. Patients brought sometimes food (zawwadeh) in baskets as fees. November 1897. 62
 - o Dr. George E. Post operating, 61
 - o Abdel Aziz and Bliss streets, Corner of. Hospital wall on right. 07
- Cornelius Van Dyck Photo Collection
- Isa Iskandar Ma'luf Postcards Collection:
- The Holy Land: Jerusalem by Raphael Tuck & Sons, England [1903]
 - o Jounie
 - Jounieh : Gare de Sarba by E. Cailteux Lille, France [1923]
 - o Menageres Arabes-Liban by Jean Tourosian
 - o Haifa (Palestine): Couvent du Mt. Carmel by R. Zedda, Napoli
 - Jerusalem : Garden of Gethsemane by Weltpost-Verein, Germany

Travel Books

- A handbook for travelers in Syria and Palestine part In by John Murray, 1868
- A handbook for travelers in Syria and Palestine Part II. by John Murray
- Palestine and Syria: handbook for travellers, 1894
- Palestine and Syria: handbook for travelers, 1898
- Palestine and Syria with routes through Mesopotamia and Babylion and the Island of Cyprus, 1912
- Le Tourisme en Syrie et au Liban, 1920
 - دليل الشوير ونواحيها: جمال، جلال، مناخ، جذل، طمأنينة، أنس، إرتياح، 1923

Manuscripts by Orientalists

- Cornelius Van Dyck (8 items only one digitized)
 - في اللوغارذمات والانساب / MS 512.7:V24fA:c.1
 - كتاب في علم الجبر <u>MS 512:V24kA:c.1</u>
- George Edward Post (digitized)
 - قاموس النبات و الحيوان MS:581.03:P85qA

Books

- Impressions of Syria, Lebanon, Alaouite State, and Djebel Druze. <u>CA 915.69:C777i</u>
 [1932]
- Relation d'un sejour de plusieurs années a Beyrout et dans le Liban. CA 915.692:G991r:v.1-2:c.1 1847
- 1950-1949 بيروت ولبنان منذ قرن ونصف قرن <u>CA 915.692:G991rA:v.1</u> (ACO)
- Beyrout et le Liban 1850 CA 915.692:G991ra
- Syria and Lebanon: holidays off the beaten track. 1936. CA 915.69:S995sE
- Oriental encounters: Palestine & Syria, 1894-1896. CA 915.69:P590:c.1
- Pictorial journey through the Holy Land, 1863. CA 915.69:P61p
- Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte pendant les années 1783, 84 et 85. 1787. CA 915.69:V928v:v.1:c.1
- Old and new places in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon 1946, CA 915.69:M350:c.1
- Fifty-three years in Syria CA 922.573:J581f:v.1-v 2
- That they may have life CA:AUB 378.5692:P417t:1941
- Les orientalistes au Liban 1989 CA:F 760.09:O6920
- Description de l'Egypte <u>CA 916.2:M22dF:c.1</u>

 - Corpus of Orientalist texts (linked to entries on Najla's Drive)
 - Explore additional existing digital humanities projects
 - Digital history projects

I love the Tutorials posted by Katie and the Experimental Results created by the course instructor, Sarah Pucell, in this course site/project. Very inspiring and similar to what I had in mind but I would add resources and datasets for the tutorials and experiments in our project repository/collections

- Reviews in Digital Humanities journal/project directory
- Minimal Computing working group
- Things we do tomorrow:
 - Technical conversation about metadata, languages, platforms, etc (Till, Elie, Pierre, Najla)
- Reverse engineer existing digital humanities projects- thinking about back-end architecture, platforms, etc.

Activities that are till-essential first

Tuesday 7/27

Outline

- Questions or other follow-up from previous sessions
- Exploring and documenting existing archival projects
- Technical conversation about metadata, languages, platforms, etc
- Reverse engineering existing digital humanities projects
- Use cases (user stories) and desired functionality
- Wednesday 7/28 schedule and next steps

Exploring and documenting existing archival projects

Many thanks to those who have contributed toward a list of existing archival collections and projects: link to this list (page 14) in this Google Doc

I've created a draft Google Form for collecting information about these collections and projects:

- Link to Google Form for existing archival projects
- Link to access Google Form results
- Link to edit or modify Google Form

A few questions about how we proceed:

- What parts of the form need to be modified, or what other questions need to be on the form?
- Do we want to spend time completing this form for the list of archival collections and projects now, or is that something folks want to do on your own time?
- Are folks comfortable completing this form for collections or projects they added to the list, or do we need a different approach?

Other notes on this process/workflow:

- How much information is needed about the collection at this point in the process (date, creator, etc)?
- What is the goal of this information, i.e. what do we need this information to accomplish?

Next steps:

- Other modifications to the Google form
 - For example, "If unsure, contact...."
 - Unknown/unsure option

- Contact person for questions about form
- Conversation about narrowing scope/focus for what collections to enter data for
- Point people for working with entered data or data entry workflows
- We can show an example of where to get the required information for the form entries

Use cases (user stories) and desired functionality

Let's spend 15 minutes writing out use cases or user stories for this project.

Possible user communities:

- Archivists
- Librarians
- Instructors
- Students
- Researchers
- Who else?

A use case or a user story is a brief narrative that describes how a user (or type of user) interacts with, navigates, and uses a project or resource. Some questions that might get us started:

- How does this user find or become aware of this resource?
- What is the context or situation in which this user interacts with this resource?
- How will this user interact with or use this resource? What kinds of tasks or actions will they be doing?

Space for notes:

Till

Teaching a course on Orientalism, I want students to find visual material online with no limit as to the platforms they are utilising. As soon as they find material, lets say digital facsimiles of postcards, we will need to establish some metadata for the original material artefact, be able to link to that specific digitised instance of the artefact, and comment on /remix this digitised artefact in a course specific context. Some students will focus on the captions and analyse a) the terminology used to describe the depicted scene, b) the accuracy of the caption (does the caption really relate to the image?). Others will look at the pictorial material and try to classify the displayed / depicted locations and objects probably even with machine vision. The aim is to get a sense of how a) the original physical artefact functioned in its specific cultural context and b) how the digitally remediated artefact carries on/ challenges these "original" functions.

- Challenges:
 - There is a physical artefact with multiple copies.
 - There are multiple digitised copies of this artefact all with differing associated metadata.
 - We might need to consider captions and images as two independent bodies of sources which have been freely remixed by the creators of the original material artefact (i.e. the postcards).

- We will need to be able to identify/disambiguate named entities. In the case of locations, we might want to put them (and the postcards relating to them) on a map.

- Role of al-Iwan

- Capture the metadata, including the URIs linking to items and captions
 - Submit this metadata to an open platform that allows for transparent re-use and provides stable identifiers
- Place to hold the students observations on these items
- Make it easy to link between various digital artefacts and digitisation of the same artefact.
- Provide a way to ingest this material into methods for distant reading
 - In the case of grey material, I could imagine submitting URLs to the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine etc. and building upon their APIs
 - Provide an annotation layer that allows to "easily" link entities to Wikidata, VIAF etc.
 - Submit textual material to annotation (machine-learning based entity recognition)

Najla'

Users can become aware of this site through research guides

Digital Humanities/Literature/History faculty can use this site to teach students DH methods such as textual analysis, mapping of literary texts, and network analysis, etc and tools, using the Orientalist texts in the corpora collected for such lessons/tutorials. Maps created from the texts could be compared to maps in the collections. Attitudes to the Orient can be analysed through DH tools such as Antconc and Voyant that could go against what is known in the field of Orientalism.

Students' projects and experiments could be posted on the site as resources for other students and teachers.

Digitized Cultural items could be used by faculty in their classroom to give students a sense of how it felt like living, traveling, and working in the region at particular moments of history that could be contrasted with Western notions of the Levant.

Blogs and reflections by people in the community could also be of interest to researchers.

Elie

Faculty/Students (part of an academic activity) or any scholar (doing a research) can use the platform to upload their digital work. The platform will allow them to have a unique workspace to do some DH activity and to follow a certain workflow, guideline or procedure to upload/share their digital work that should be related to orientalism. Their work should be made available for others to check and cite.

For example, students are asked by their professor to choose images about orientalism and comment on these photos. Students should be introduced to the framework/platform to accomplish their assignment. Qualified work should remain on the system to be cited by other scholars and build on top of it.

As a digital archivist, the digital objects created and referenced should be archived and preserved.

Archivist/librarian can work with students to help them identify item about orientalism form the web.

Nabila

Librarian/ students: Librarian can direct students working on the topic to this platform Librarian/ faculty /students: information session where the librarian will introduce students to this platform. Highlights the best way to reuse content in their assignment to create new content, how to add what they created in the platform, how to give attribution and cite.

Librarian: Added this platform to a research guide created by the librarian to make it more visible to other users.

Samar

Researchers / Faculty and Students can use Iwan in their research on Orientalism which should primarily be based on the existing AUB collection in addition to other collections from other local institutions like OIB. These researchers should be able to reflect on the material as well as add more collections if possible. This editing and ability to change should be controlled by the team as to control the quality of the material included by other members.

Donna

Technical conversation about metadata, languages, platforms, etc

From Monday:

- Curation- bringing together and facilitating access to existing archival collections; not just
 a project highlighting digitized collections- building on and connecting existing work (in
 way that facilitate new forms of access)
- Sustainability, or scalability- capacity to incorporate existing and new collections, provide forms of access that facilitate variety of digital humanities methods or uses
- Annotation- particular types of interactivity and user engagement (with a focus on educational teaching/research contexts); language of remixing comes to mind (narrative, context, creativity)
- Community and education- active and ongoing use of resources and platform; development of instructional resources; highlighting or showcasing scholarly (and student) work created with and through the platform

Desired functionality:

- Browsing or searching to find items and materials across these collections
 - Is item-level metadata enough?
 - Item-level metadata and keywords
 - Are images or representations of objects also needed?
 - Yes, representations of object would make searching easier
 - What kinds of faceting/filtering functionality is needed in the search interface?
 - Key word search, classification, categories (object type), date, geography, author, DH technology,
 - O Do users need to be able to build or curate collections or sets of items?
 - Yes, users can build their own corpora of texts, collection of images, etc
 - How to provide information needed for proper citation/attribution?
 - A note at the bottom showing how to cite items/results can be added
- Interacting with materials to use in or for digital projects
 - Are users adding to or enriching item information via the platform?
 - How are they doing that, how does that connect back to institutional metadata?
 - Are users downloading the item or material to use in another platform or tool?
 - Users download items, follow tutorials, add the items to open source tools (Voyant, Palladio, Antconc, and post their results with critical analysis.
 - O How are users interacting with the items via the online platform/interface?
 - Annotation, curation, etc.
 - Users can add their narratives around cultural items already posted on the platforms and contribute their own items (photos, maps, postcards, etc)
- Sharing and accessing educational resources
 - What types of curriculum objects or instructional materials would these encompass (text files, video content, etc)?
 - Corpora of Orientalist texts, datasets with structured data on authors' geolocations of places they traveled to, geolocations of places in their texts, word frequencies (themes in their texts for example) results of topic modeling and word trends, example: <u>Mapping the Lakes</u>
 - To what degree do these materials focus on how to use particular technologies versus ways of interacting with collections?

- Ways on how to use DH methods and technologies could be accompanied by previous results as pedagogical examples for school teachers/college faculty/users.
- Users' narratives around cultural items are also important for community engagement and crowdsourcing.
- Webinars on how to integrate some of the items or project experiments in syllabi would be helpful for faculty.
- What would it look like for users to submit their own educational resources?
 - Faculty could link their tutorials/syllabi/lesson plans and students' projects. These could be linked to research and study guides
 - New findings, newly created datasets could be submitted by users following our guidelines
 - Example: http://mappingdubliners.org/contribute-to-the-blog/
 - Example: The Old Bailey
- Highlighting community work and contributions
 - What types of work or projects would this include (video projects, timelines, interactive maps, writing, image galleries, etc)?
 - Example of a project that features mapping projects: <u>Mapping Dubliners</u>
 - What types of projects would you want users to be able to produce or create using the platform?
 - Digital timelines, Storymaps, network visualizations, interactive maps (Neatline)
 - Users can download some of the items in the collections, create their projects on their WordPress or Google Sites, Twitter, add their own items, and link them to our platform. (Instructions on how to do this would be provided by us)
 - Feedback/reviews could be offered to them to improve or develop their work
 - Every month or semester, selections of new projects and contributions could be highlighted.
 - Is the goal hosting this work on the platform, or just highlighting work that might be hosted elsewhere?

Further conversation on minimal computing:

- How much of a concern is minimizing technical needs in terms of hosting the project?
 What are some of the priorities (or concerns) around hosting the project?
 - Priorities/Concerns:
 - Cost
 - Maintenance
 - Stability

- Solutions:
 - https://reclaimhosting.com/
 - https://reclaim.cloud/

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- How much of a concern is minimizing required technologies for accessing or interacting with the project? What are some of the priorities (or concerns) around users accessing the project?
 - o Priorities/Concerns:
 - Internet connectivity
 - Technology devices

- Solutions:

What are some of the questions/concerns about developing resources or other materials using Google Drive products?

Placeholder for notes

Based on what we're seeing in the information about existing collections or projects, what work would be involved in combining or bringing together these materials?

- What kind of item-level metadata is needed? What is available (and how, or in what format?
- What possibilities exist for bringing item-level metadata into a shared environment (for exploration, search, etc)
- Are there stable links or connections to individual resources?

Next Steps for Wednesday 7/28

Further conversation about Google Form data entry workflow for existing archival collections/projects

Wednesday 7/28

Outline

- Questions or other follow-up from previous sessions
- Reflecting on questions from yesterday
- Project sustainability workshop

- Wireframing
- Thursday 7/29 schedule and next steps
- Metadata and data modeling workshop

Notes from Yesterday's Questions

- Possibly having browsing/searching at the collection (or sub-collection) level, rather than item level
- Narrowing the scope of the archive or collections to aggregate
- Questions about the degree of interactivity/annotation that is built into the platform (versus collections being used in other tools/platforms)
 - o Focus on sustainability and robust metadata
 - Where the added or supplemental metadata "lives"- does it go back into the main browsing/searching interface or is it a supplemental timeline/map/etc.
 - Some level of infrastructure for collaborative annotation (Hypothesis group, crowdsourced map, etc)
 - Link to Hypothesis group (thank you, Till!)
- Making methodologies and workflows legible for students (and other instructors)
 - o Documentation, also educational materials
 - Sustainability (permalinks, resilient datasets, etc) that would allow digital project work to feed back into discovery interface
 - Workflows for Archive.org (or Zenodo), etc

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- What does it look like for users to be able to contribute or submit additional items/materials to the "collection"
 - Sustainability or preservation of singular items or materials that exist on the web or in personal collections
 - Who reviews submissions or oversees this workflow
 - What it looks like to ingest or integrate these submissions into the central "discovery" interface/core repository- complementary but distinct workflow(s)
 - Upload image to <u>archive.org</u>, add metadata, connect to central repository
 - Zenodo
 - Archive.org API documentation
- Links to digital humanities tools, accompanied by documentation/tutorials/examples of how to work with these collections via these tools
 - Examples of crowdsourced pedagogy resources:
 - Digital Library Federation #DLFteach Toolkit
 - Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities
 - A non-pedagogy resource hosted on Humanities Commons: <u>Alt-Ac</u>
 Support Network
- Publicity or promotion component- highlighting datasets, projects, assignments, etc.
 - Preservation or sustainability of projects submitted or highlighted in the site

Sustainability Workshop Follow-Up, Conversations, and Next Steps

- Link to Google Drive folder with resources
- Notes:
 - Thinking about access points in more concrete ways
 - Thinking about different components of the project having different levels of needed ongoing support
 - Useful ways to think about the project for future funding application materials

Wireframing

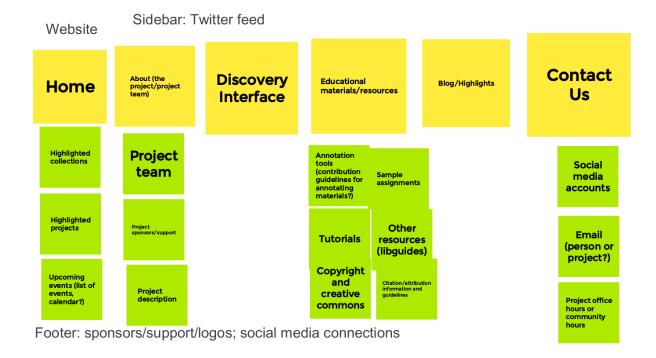
Data model for discovery interface

- Jamboard link
- Question about mapping data from archival finding aids to data model
- Other data components that would be part of model but not public user interface (permalinks, object identifiers, etc)
- Spreadsheet template with controlled vocabulary/defined options as a starting point
- Thinking about the final format for the discovery interface data (JSON, XML, etc)
- Platform- static sites (HTML, Jekyll, JavaScript) versus CMS (Omeka)

Data Model		Controlled vocab (LOD) for periods?	Languages, types of scripts, etc.			Gazetters (LOD)? Nested administrative units by period might be too much to ask/ dream		Accessibility (state of access, versus state of digitization-are those combined or separated?)
Collection name or title	Author or creator	Date (do calendars matter?)	Language	Host institution or original location	Material type (image, audio, etc)	Geography (creation or content)	Resource type (digital reproduction/remediation)	Key words (is this tagging or searching across all fields?)
Comes from finding aid	Comes from finding aid	Come from finding aid; dealing with catalogi ng errors/inconsis tencies	Some langauge information would come from finding aid; would also need to be able to modify this field	aid or digital interfac e	Different ways to define material type-thinking about different user grou and how they will search/	Dealing wi changing geopolitica landscape terms of geographic units and borders; P§uestion about creating collection	object I s that in have been	Separate keywords (or tags/ notes) field, versus full- text search across all data fields

Website components:

- Contribution guidelines- are these on the public website, or posted elsewhere; how is this information communicated (and to whom)
- Platform- static site (HTML, Jekyll, etc) versus CMS (WordPress)



Next Steps for Thursday 7/29

- Starting to work on documentation/technical workflows
- Continue thinking about data model and website architecture
- Continue thinking about platforms- static sites versus CMS (WordPress, Omeka)
 - Some examples to consider:
 - <u>Colored Conventions Project</u> (combination of <u>WordPress</u> and <u>Omeka</u>)
 - Looks like there are some Omeka plugins built for annotation- I am not familiar with these, but might be worth thinking about the value/utility of these plugins to facilitate interactivity/annotation
 - o IIIF Toolkit (Omeka Classic)
 - Annotate Module (Omeka S, uses W3C Web Annotation Ontology)
 - <u>Wax (minimal computing, static sites platform for digital collections)</u>
 - Demo site built using Wax
- Thinking more about contribution guidelines- are these on the public website, or posted elsewhere; how is this information communicated (and to whom)
- Back to the regular team time Thursday (12-3pm CST)
 - I'm working on coordinating a conversation with a couple of other project teams that are working with non-English and multilingual metadata- stay tuned!

Modeling and Metadata Workshop

Placeholder for notes

Thursday 7/29

Outline:

- Follow-up from NEH grants presentation
- Continue thinking about data model and website architecture
- Continue thinking about platforms- static sites versus CMS (WordPress, Omeka)
- Community conversation about working with non-English or multilingual metadata
 - o Zoom link
- Starting to work on documentation/technical workflows
- Thinking more about contribution guidelines- are these on the public website, or posted elsewhere; how is this information communicated (and to whom)

NEH Presentation Follow up

https://www.neh.gov/divisions/odh/resources-for-applicants-to-the-NEH-office-of-digital-humanities

Global Outlook::Digital Humanities group

• globaloutlookdh-l@uleth.ca

Questions to consider:

- What grant funding would be needed for or to do
- Possibilities for collaboration across consortial partners
- Timeline for preparation (and funding)
- What grant program would be a good fit
- Timeline for developing discrete list of goals/needs to talk with program officer

Data Model and Website Architecture

Placeholder for notes

Platforms: Static Site Versus CMS

- Till favoring static sites or static formats that get converted into HTML
 - Being able to submit content in plain-text forms
 - Who would be doing these submissions or commits
 - Minimizing space requirements, also traffic requirements
 - Static sites preferable for sustainability
 - Doesn't have to look like 1990s web content!
 - <u>GitHub actions</u>- running pre-defined scripts on the data, docker workspace (for free from GitHub?)
 - Reclaim Hosting / Reclaim Cloud as another option for docker access

- Elie- possibly need for two different types of platforms
 - One that facilitates discovery interface (static sites, metadata based)
 - A different platform or resource type for project website (blog posts, student work, etc)

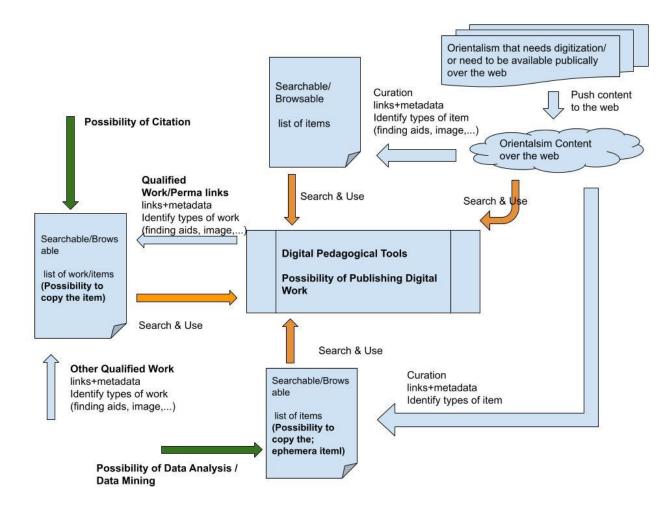
Metadata Community Conversation

- Zoom link
- MSU team- dealing with Russian language and multilingual metadata
- AUB team- calendar, language variance; encoding challenges
- Question: Calendars that are not Gregorian, how to standardize or how to deal with variety?
 - Sidestepping the calendar issue by focusing on user community being predominantly English-speaking
 - Methods for dealing with script variance and language contextual usage
 - Where Unicode might be headed, or what options/workflows might be able to help address unicode gaps
- Question: Dealing with different Unicode tables for characters/glyphs, not normalized on the OS level?
- Question: How to represent multilingual metadata? Multiple languages, translation, etc? Think about this in relation to audience/user communities?
 - Also platform/interface language?
 - What does this mean for standardizing metadata for user submissions?
 - Script differentiation in terms of R-L, L-R reading
 - Interoperability and what that means back-end technical workflows versus front-end presentation
 - What needs translation and what must be interoperable (and by or for whom)
- Value of bibliographic resources for highlighting cultural material/cultural heritage that exists in personal collections
 - Making bibliographies part of the project for materials/collections that might not (ever) be ingested into central project repository data model
 - Bibliographic work as a form of crowdsourcing
- Mirror site targeted for potential donors/diaspora communities/cultural institutions
 - Crowdsourcing for the mirror site rather than the central project repository (different purpose/audience)
 - Intercultural and intergenerational dimensions of crowdsourcing cultural heritage
 - Which connects back to metadata, description, representation, presentation
 - Digitized representations of material artifacts

Documentation and Technical Workflows

Placeholder for notes

A thought; draft architecture/workflow



Notes:

- Lower one/lower items do connect
 - Where annotation, curation, and submission fit in
- Different classes of object
 - Digital object
 - Metadata (helps with discovery, links to and describes item/object)
 - Annotation (attached to item, also attached to metadata to be part of discovery)
- Ways of connecting annotation and metadata to minimize duplication
 - But also what this means for discovery/searching/browsing
 - Provider versus user perspective
- Being able to compartmentalize and isolate aspects of the projects and workflow
 - Ease of use for different user communities- barriers to entry or workflows
 - What it means to be able to ingest content/material/submissions into a central space or workflow

- How to incorporate or ingest student work/classroom work into the central project space
 - Metadata template

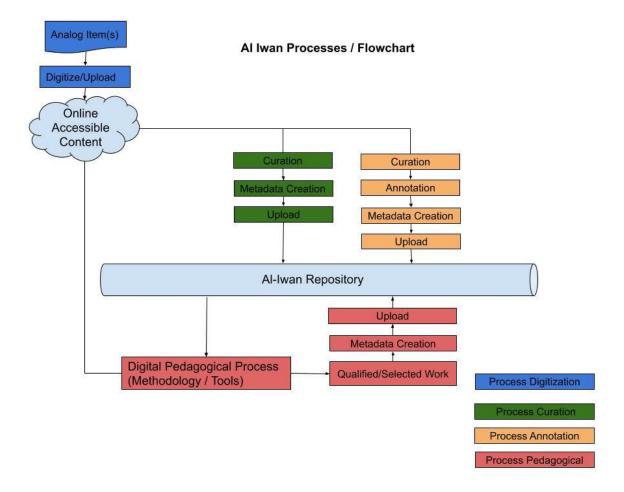
Next steps:

- Curation and data model
- Elie- data model/technical workflows, gathering information to build and populate data model
 - Metadata structure
 - Filling out excel sheet- using existing templates
 - Digital collections workflow
 - Starting with Dublin Core fields (and building out from there)
- Happening in parallel- figuring out platform where data model will "go" or next step for discovery interface
- Thinking more concretely about annotation possibilities and workflows
- Till- annotation components
 - Funny thing is: I have no idea :-)
 - How to embed/point to <u>hypothes.is</u> for annotating websites
 - Submit material for semantic annotation with <u>recogito</u>
- Najla- playground/pedagogical space
 - Expanding out website architecture
 - Starting to build project website (for educational resources, events, etc)
 - Developing educational resources (identifying existing content)
 - Katie's tutorials are all fair game
 - Programming Historian
 - DLFTeach Toolkit
 - Library Carpentry
- Where to host all of this- server space?
 - Reclaim hosting
 - US-based: is this an issue?
 - <u>Hypotheses.org</u> for blogging (Wordpress):
 - Free: hosted by European research institutions
 - increasing visibility of the content through the platform
 - Maintenance of the infrastructure taken care of.
 - GitHub's gh-pages: simple and free-to-use hosting solution for static content
 - Built-in <u>Jekyll</u> support
 - Static content can be generated upon changes to the data in repositories through Github Actions
 - No guarantee on long-term availability
 - Limited size of free repositories not suited to host visual/ audio content
 - o The Internet Archive
 - Can act as a digital archive for user-digitised content
 - Supports IIIF ("experimental" but reliable)
 - Public repositories for long-term preservation of data sets
 - Zenodo
 - EU-funded at CERN

- Provides DOIs
- Can hook into GitHub
- Project plan, timeline, etc.- updating existing language
- Developing budget (1, 3, 5 year intervals)
 - Hosting
 - o Digitization
 - Course release(s)
 - Events
 - Labor
 - Technical consultation/training (who in the team needs what)
 - IIIF
 - IIIIF training resources
 - IIIF workshop materials from Jeffrey C. Witt
 - IIIF workshop materials developed by Jason Ronallo
 - Annotation
 - AudiAnnotate project (IIIF and audio annotation)
 - IIIF annotation that integrates with Wax (or Jekyll sites)
 - Minimal computing
 - Jekvll theme for IIIF-C sites
 - <u>Wax</u> (minimal computing, static sites platform for digital collections)
 - o Demo site built using Wax
 - Ed (Jekyll theme for minimal computing textual edited content)
 - <u>CollectionBuilder platform</u> for static-site generation using digital collections (options for GitHub Pages, Stand Alone, and CONTENTdm with options for other systems/APIS; based at University of Idaho)
 - Olivia Wikle, Evan Williamson, and Devin Becker, "What is <u>Static Web and What's it Doing in the Digital Humanities</u> <u>Classroom?</u>" dh + lib (2020)
 - Git/GitHub
 - Software Carpentry tutorial
 - <u>Library Carpentry tutorial</u>

Contribution Guidelines

Al Iwan General Processes Diagram



Next Steps for Friday 7/30

- Team time: 11am-1pm CST
 - Updated project description and goals language
 - Start to work on project timeline/budget

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- Final session: 1-2pm CST
 - o Zoom link
 - Link to slide deck
 - Prompt: In 3 minutes, address any of the following questions:
 - What did you accomplish this week?
 - What did you learn?

- What are your next steps?
- Feel free to add visuals or links!

Friday 7/30

• What did you accomplish this week?

- Ø Finally as a team we were able to meet for a full week and discuss our Idea/Project from different perspectives
- ØClarified our project Scope
- ØChunked our project into smaller pieces and processes
- ØCreated our Initial Data Model
- Ø Created our Initial Website Components
- ØCreated our Initial list of relevant digital archives and digital projects

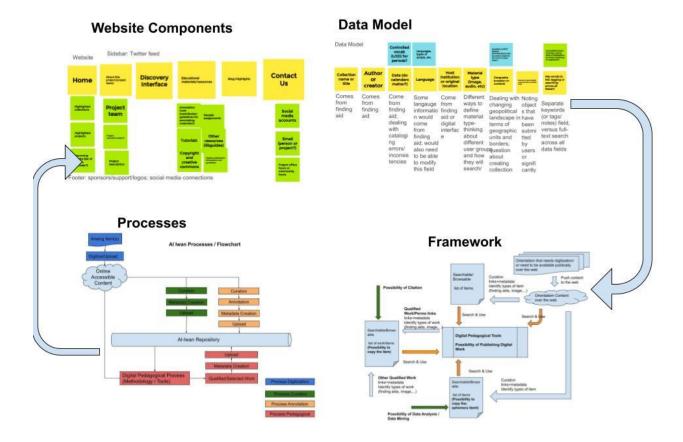
• What did you learn?

- Ø Explored a variety of possible approaches to implement our project
- Ø Discussed a variety of possible platforms to host our project

Ø Examined: interesting tools/methodologies that we can use/build in our Digital Project; PM, sustainability, ethics, digital tools, google tools and much more.

• What are your next steps?

- Ø Project Charter
- Ø Identify our Training needsØ
- ØContact DH experts in certain fields of interest: Alex Gil, Jack Reed (IIIF)
- ØStart the inception phase by creating different proof of concept that fulfill the different needs of the project;
 - o Data Curation
 - Annotation
 - o Pedagogical tools
 - Citation tools
 - Static Vs Dynamic Online Presence
 - Minimal computing
 - Sustainability
- Ø Identify clearly our needs, constraints and risks -> Apply for funding depending on our needs
- ØRevisit the project schedule and Milestones



PLACEHOLDER FOR NEW CONTENT

When is our next meeting? Indicate availability: Najla will be travelling in August and early September

Elie will be contacting each small group around mid September to schedule meetings and discuss tasks

We need to schedule a meeting before end of August to fill out the AMICAL form for further support and indicate our budgetary needs

Najla and Elie work on the request

• Experts to contact:

Create a network of DH experts and faculty that could contribute or make use of the project GlobaloutlookDH: Quinn Dombrowski

https://dlcl.stanford.edu/people/guinn-dombrowski

Marii Nyrop https://library.nyu.edu/people/marii-nyrop/

Till can offer a short intro to GitHub

• Discuss budget: