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# **Taking Advantage of the Digital Humanities in Law and Political Science**

**Workshop - Bordeaux, France - June 22, 2022  
Pôle Juridique et Judiciaire (Room 1J & RG)**

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## I. LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Law and political science have undergone progressive changes with the emergence of the IT, marking the entry into the age of the information society (Scott and Marshall, 2015).

In the legal field, the computer revolution has been considered as a danger as well as an opportunity for both practitioners and researchers, particularly in the context of the legaltech movement, whose long-term consequences imply a profound transformation of the legal profession (Susskind, 1998).

Similarly, political science is now increasingly familiar with the possibilities - and limitations - of the computational text-as-data approach (Grimmer and Stewart, 2017).

These developments are often subsumed under what is referred to as artificial intelligence. Another current, also booming and strongly coupled to that of artificial intelligence from which it derives, has however become autonomous and increasingly important: the digital humanities, which can be defined as the application of digital technology to the humanities, understood as social sciences: "digital humanities refer to the meeting of computer sciences and technologies with humanities and social sciences" (Vinck, 2016).

This field is extremely promising for research, as it allows one to analyze, in a short period of time and with limited means, considerable masses of data in order to draw representations capable of generating, confirming or invalidating scientific hypotheses, while bringing an additional objectivity resulting from the essentially quantitative dimension of its approach.

The field of digital humanities may, however, seem rather unfamiliar to researchers, precisely because of its novelty: it is a relatively recent field of study which raises new practices and questions in each of the disciplines in which it is applied (Gefen, Saint-Raymond and Venturini, 2020).

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of digital humanities, it seemed essential to conceive this workshop as a place for dialogue between researchers from various disciplines. The aim of this workshop is to allow researchers in law and political science, but also, more broadly, from all areas of social sciences and humanities, to discover or deepen methodological and theoretical questions, but also the practical dimension of digital humanities.

## II. DIGITAL HUMANITIES BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

In order to address those two inseparable dimensions of the researcher's activity, it seemed essential to distinguish two parts in this workshop.

**Part 1.** The first one will aim at establishing the **theoretical and conceptual framework** of digital humanities. How to define them? What are their fields of application, as well as their limits from an epistemological point of view?

**Part 2.** The second axis will deliberately focus on the **practice of natural language processing (NLP)** and data mining of textual corpora, as well as the representation of these data (notably in the context of network analysis and bibliometrics).

Researchers who already used such tools will present, during short presentations followed by discussions, examples of concrete applications around the triptych of tools (programming languages such as R and Python, and software libraries such as spaCy or NLTK, alongside software dedicated to digital humanities), methods and results.

Speakers as well as attendees will thus benefit from a circulation of knowledge and expertise related to what is at the heart of their practice: the analysis of textual corpora, regardless of the discipline.

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