INSIDE THE TRADING ZONE
Setting up the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

An actor-centered view

Structure of the talk:

• Intellectual framing: C²DH as “trading zone” for “thinkering” with digital tools & infrastructures
• Strategic framing: mission & ambition of C²DH as Interdisciplinary Centre at Luxembourg University
• Pragmatic framing: challenges & opportunities of setting up a new research centre
Inside the Trading Zone of C^2DH

*Intellectual framing*

- Different “waves“ of digital humanities:
  - 1st wave: computational humanities wave (driven by small community of programming scholars, mainly computational linguists)
  - 2nd wave: big expectations wave (revolutionary rhetoric of game-changing nature of digitization; large scale digitization; building of tools / datasets)
  - 3rd wave: critical / reflexive wave (acknowledging both the possibilities and limitations or biases)

Creation and strategic positioning of C^2DH is embedded in 3rd wave of digital humanities
Challenge: To face the growing gap between the fast development of new techniques and tools for doing digital humanities and the rather slow appropriation and critical reflection of such tools and techniques by the academic community.

The “update” of classical hermeneutics (Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer, Ricoeur, Habermas) to the digital age requires a thorough investigation on the technical, infrastructural, and digital environment in which we produce historical evidence, develop historical arguments, and construct historical narratives.
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

"classical" hermeneutics:

- concentrated on the philosophical or sociological conditions of possibility to produce evidence-based arguments ("truth", "objectivity") in order to "understand", not to "explain" (Wilhelm Dilthey)
- Philosophical hermeneutics as pragmatic theory of knowledge (Gadamer: Truth & Method): what can we know, under what circumstances and with what validity?
- Central lessons:
  - Absolute historicity of all knowledge (impossibility of absolute truth)
  - Contextual dimension of knowledge production & appropriation
  - Interest driven nature of cognition & insight
  - Understanding as dynamic process (Serres: randonneur)
  - Tension between "strangeness" and "familiarity": the in-betweenness is the true space of hermeneutics
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- digital hermeneutics:
  - Tension between “understanding” and “explaining” in Dilthey’s conception of hermeneutics resurges in the age of bid data
  - Methodological tensions:
    - Tension between ”quantitative” and “qualitative” research
    - Tension between “distant” and “close” reading
  - Epistemological challenges:
    - Tension between “statistical evidence” and “historical relevance”
    - Tension between “exemplary” versus “representative” research designs
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- To deal with those tensions, we need:
  - new heuristics of “in-betweenness”
  - true interdisciplinary skills
  - multimodal literacy

- New conception of academic training / curricula
- Generational challenge: train the trainers!
Digital hermeneutics as heuristic of “in-betweenness”:

„Trying to locate a hermeneutics at the boundary between mechanism and theory (...) Algorithmic criticism proposes that we channel the heightened objectivity made possible by the machine into the cultivation of those heightened subjectivities necessary for critical work“.

Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- Need for multimodal literacy & hybrid practitioners

“We need database literacies, algorithmic literacies, computational literacies, interface literacies. We need new hybrid practitioners: artist-theorists, programming humanists, activist-scholars; theoretical archivists, critical race coders. We need new forms of graduate and undergraduate education that hone both critical and digital literacies. We have to shake ourselves out of our small, field-based boxes so that we might take seriously the possibility that our own knowledge practices are normalized, modular, and black boxed in much the same way as the code we study in our work.”

Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- Multimodal literacy:
  - Searching: algorithmic criticism
  - Documenting: data criticism
  - Analysis: tool criticism
  - Presentation: interface criticism
  - Narration: simulation criticism
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

Digital History Practices

1. Algorithm Criticism
2. Data Management Curation
3. Analysis
4. Visualisation Presentation Publication

Digital Hermeneutics (Theory)
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- Reflexive wave:
  - In using software, apps, databases, digital meta-sources, the digital humanities scholar (the experimenter) actively co-constructs his “epistemic object” (Hans-Jörg Rheinberger)

- Kranzberg law: “Technology is neither good, nor bad, nor neutral”.
  - Ergo: we need to reflect on the “non-neutrality” of the technologies / infrastructures involved in our research
  - Ergo: we need to open up the “black boxes” we are using in doing our research!
Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

**Intellectual framing**

- Open up the black boxes = battle call of Science, Technology & Society Studies (STS)

- “The infrastructures of the digital humanities are, like all the best infrastructures, simultaneously omnipresent and invisible. The digital humanities depend on and operate through a vast, interlocked network of objects, capital, people, and ideologies: ASCII code; fiber-optic cables; tenure lines; server farms; research centers and literature labs; wage laborers and graduate students who scan, attach metadata, and program search functions”.

Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

- How to “grasp” the epistemological impact of hidden / black-boxed digital research tools and infrastructures?

By putting our hands and heads on!

„Grasping or comprehending reality becomes a double act that also involves gripping on it: 'comprehending‘ reality in linguistic – theoretical terms, and 'grasping‘ it through efficiency; the intellectual and the technical form“.

Inside the Trading Zone of C²DH

Intellectual framing

Thinkering

- bringing „thinking“ and „tinkering“ together! (Erkki Huhtamo)
- aim: to turn the „explorative mode“ of distant reading into an „experimental mode“ of knowledge generation
- playful mode of cognition: “heuristic groping” (Olaf Breibach et al.)
- The experimental / playful mode of knowledge production produces what Dilthey had called “Bildung” – it combines problem-based theoretical thinking with personnel experience

Inside the Trading Zone of $C^2$DH

Intellectual framing

Thinkering

“Thinkering” – composed of the verbs “tinkering” and “thinking” – describes the action of playful experimentation with technological and digital tools for the interpretation and presentation of history. Finding new historical insights and innovative forms of narrative are at the center of the $C^2$DH’s activities.
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

**Strategic framing**

**The C²DH**

- 3rd Interdisciplinary Centre of the University officially opened on 22\textsuperscript{nd} of May 2017.
- Governmental initiative (including the heritage of former public research centres).
- Focus on high quality research analysis and public dissemination in the field of contemporary history.
- Promoting an interdisciplinary approach with a particular focus on new digital method and tools for historical research and teaching.
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: structure
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: structure

Public History and Outreach

Contemporary History of Luxembourg

Digital History and Hermeneutics

Contemporary European History
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: structure

Public History and Outreach

Contemporary History of Luxembourg

Contemporary European History

Digital History and Hermeneutics

Digital Research Infrastructure
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: structure

- FLSHASE
- DH LAB
- GIS LAB
- Media LAB
- Library
- LCSB / SnT

Public History and Outreach

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Public History and Outreach

Contemporary History of Luxembourg

Digital History and Hermeneutics

Digital Research Infrastructure

- Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media
- ZZF Potsdam
- Sussex Humanities Lab
- HumLab Umeå
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: structure

- FLSHASE
- DH LAB
- GIS LAB
- Media LAB
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- FSTC / Data
- DH LAB
- GIS LAB
- Media LAB Science

- Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media
- ZZF Potsdam
- Sussex Humanities Lab
- HumLab Umeå
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing

UL President

Scientific Committee

C²DH Directorate

Advisory Board

Administration and Support

Contemporary History of Luxembourg

Contemporary European History

Digital History and Historiography

Public History and Outreach

Digital Research Infrastructure

Project Management Secretariat

Plus "UL partners":
- HR
- Finance
- Legal Affairs
- Research Support

Head
Project Manager

Secretaries

Fin. Controller

Communication

Research Documentation

Teaching

Plus involvement in outreach activities

Head (Prof)

Senior Researcher

Research Scientists / Associates

Post-Docs

PhD Students

Student Assistant

CMS Management

Webserver

Development of apps / software

Support of DH Lab

Plus "UL partners":
- Media
- Production
- ICT

Head

Technical Support

IT Developer

Programmer

Web Designer

Student Assistant

Research Documentation

Teaching

Organization of exhibitions / educational material

Communication / editing of website

Head (Prof)

Senior Researcher

Research Scientists / Associates

Post-Docs

PhD Students

Student Assistant

Externally funded researchers (PhDs, Post-Docs)
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition

- National Platform
- International Hub
- UL Mediator

Luxembourgish and European Contemporary History
Digital History and Hermeneutics
Multimodal Literacy
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition

Casino Luxembourg
Forum d'art contemporain
41, rue Notre-Dame, L-2240 Luxembourg
11.02.2017
10h00 - 11h30

Animation / Moderation: Pia Oppel, Radio 100

Table ronde avec / Discussion forum mit
Andreas Fickers (Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History, C²DH), José Kirps (Archives Nationales), Jean-Marie Ottelé (industrie.lu), Joëlle Wiese (Université du Luxembourg)

@C²DH_LU  #ForumZLu    #Archives for the future

C²DH
Archivieren für ein digitaler Zeitalter
Erfassung und Auseinandersetzung mit neuen Herausforderungen und Möglichkeiten
Archives for the digital age
Challenges and opportunities

Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Rés. Eg5-499

CONFERÊNCE
SHAPING THE EUROPE OF THE FUTURE
Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Vendredi 10 octobre 2017, de 10h00 à 12h00
Auditorium, Musée du Luxembourg, Place de la Fontaine, Luxembourg

CONFÉRENCE D'OUVERTURE
Jean-Claude WUNDER, président de la Commission européenne

SUIVI DU DEBAT : Les étudiants et les aînés avec les générations intermédiaires

Arsenal: Clément, membre de l'École de musique, et Christine, membre du C²DH

Aуль式的: Chris Tervet, professeur de musique, et Christine, membre du C²DH

Claudia Tervet, professeur de musique

Tom Müller, nouvelle direction de la Banque centrale luxembourgeoise, ancien directeur de la Banque centrale allemande

Prof. St. Ludwig, président de l'Université de Luxembourg

MÉDIATION
Prof. St. Wullenweber, directeur des études, Université de Luxembourg
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition
... Digital bricolage: how to deal with 4 million tweets when you are not a data scientist.
Pedroto Clariz, C²DH Senior Research Scientist
When? Wednesday 21 February 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... German Nuclear Restraint in the Cold War and Today.
Benedikt Schönböhm, C²DH Visiting Researcher
When? Wednesday 21 March 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... Russische Emigration in Luxembourg im 20. Jahrhundert.
Inna Glinschow, C²DH Visiting Researcher
When? Wednesday 18 April 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... Industriekultur im Bild. Visuelle Vermittlungsstrategien gesellschaftlichen Wandels in Luxemburg (ca. 1890-1940).
Ira Plane, C²DH PhD Student
When? Wednesday 16 May 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... #Memorecord: A memory Harvest! Learnings on crowdsourcing Digital Public History.
Anto Lucchesi, C²DH PhD Student
When? Wednesday 27 June 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

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... Mettre l’histoire de l’Europe en musée ? Expériences tirées de la Maison de l’histoire européenne.
Élémire Dechamps, Archives historiques du Parlement européen
When? Wednesday 28 February 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... Réagir à l’archive. Sortir et la radio.
Grégory Carmanis et Jeremy Hammers, Université de Liège
When? Wednesday 28 March 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... The Historical Art of Projection. Digital and Experimental Approaches to the Archaeology of the Screen.
Karim Bienek und Ludwig Virgil Bienek, University of Trier
When? Wednesday 23 May 2018 | 14:00-15:00 + 15:30-17:00
Where? C²DH-Lab, 1st floor, MSH, Campus Belval

... Hands-on Historical Investigations.
Koelien Hoing, Stanford University
When? Wednesday 4 July 2018 | 14:00-15:00
Where? C²DH Open Space, 4th floor, MSH, Campus Belval

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The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)
Strategic framing: mission & ambition
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition

The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH) is a four-year interdisciplinary research and training programme funded by the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) and hosted by the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH) of the University of Luxembourg. In this experimental space, different communities of practice and epistemic cultures - including historians, philosophers, computer scientists, geographers and information and data scientists as well as experts in human computer interaction - negotiate new forms of knowledge production in the field of digital history and humanities.

The DTU is built on the concept of "digital hermeneutics" as defined as the critical and self-referential use of digital tools and technologies for the development of new research questions, the testing of analytical assumptions and the production of sophisticated scientific interpretations. Based on a series of fundamental questions, the DTU offers a training environment for 13 PhD students.

Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>CFP: Decoding Europe: Technological Past in the Digital Age</td>
<td>20 September 2018</td>
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The 9th Tensions of Europe conference

Decoding Europe: Technological Past in the Digital Age

The Tensions of Europe conference is organised biennially by an interdisciplinary community of scholars who study the shaping of Europe through the lens of technology and material culture. The 9th edition of the conference will be organised by the C²DH around the theme 'Decoding Europe: Technological Past in the Digital Age.'

Witten by: Valeria Schaffer
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition

**IMPRESSO:**  
Media Monitoring of the Past / Mining 200 years of historical newspapers mit EPFL / Universität Zürich (1.55 Mio EUR)

**EUPoPCult:**  
Populärkultur transnational in den langen 1960er Jahren  
DFG/FNR Forschergruppe (Universität des Saarlandes / C²DH; 2 Mio EUR)

**DoctEU:**  
Collège doctoral trinational: “Histoire internationale interdisciplinaire: perspectives franco-allemandes et européennes sur le 20e siècle“  
Paris IV-Sorbonne / Universität des Saarlandes / C²DH: 4 year funding of French/German University
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition

Ranke.2 is a teaching platform on how to critically assess digital historical sources.
The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)

Strategic framing: mission & ambition
**The Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH)**

*Strategic framing: mission & ambition*

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**Skills Trainings**

**UL Mediator**

**Introduction to Programming (Python)**
December 8, 2017
By Tim van der Heijden

Dr. Folgert Karsdorp (Meertens Institute, Amsterdam) This workshop provides an introduction to computational text analysis with Python for scholars in the Humanities. Computational text analysis has gained popularity across different fields in the humanities, with successful applications such as computational authorship attribution, personality detection, linguistic profiling, and topic modeling. The goal of the workshop is … Continued

**GIS-Analysis, Mapping & Cartography**
May 14, 2018
By Tim van der Heijden

Dr. Catherine Jones, Kerry Schiel and Karel Sikk (University of Luxembourg) Today historians, geographers and social scientists and like have at their fingertips a myriad of digital resources (digital borne or digitised). They may be formal or informal datasets open for public use or held behind closed doors but common to all is the implicit … Continued

**Data Visualisation**
February 9, 2018
By Tim van der Heijden

Dr. Marten Dunin (University of Luxembourg), Dr. Robin De Croon and Francisco Gutiérrez Hernández (KU Leuven) This skills training provides an introduction to data visualisation as an important skill in digital humanities and historical research, analysis and presentation. The first training day focuses specifically on network visualisation and the use of Palladio as a DH … Continued

**Tool Criticism**
March 15, 2018
By Tim van der Heijden

Dr. Vincent Koenig and Dr. Carine Lallemand (University of Luxembourg) The ever-growing trend for digital tools is confronting PhD candidates with new challenges when it comes to designing or evaluating technologies and underlying services. The "tool criticism" training offers a critical and reflexive approach to digital tools, the interaction with those tools and to … Continued

**Database Structures**
November 17, 2017
By Tim van der Heijden

Prof. Dr. Martin Theobald (University of Luxembourg), Dr. Robert C. Kahler (KU Leuven) What are (big) data? What are databases? What are database structures? What can we do with them? This skills training provides an introduction to different database systems and applications, and how to work with them in historical research. The training day offers … Continued

**Text Mining**
July 18, 2017
By Tim van der Heijden

Prof. Dr. Christoph Schommer, Prof. Dr. Peter Gilles, Dr. Christoph Purschke (University of Luxembourg) Modern computer machines and algorithmic intelligence have made it possible that large amounts of texts can be collected, retrieved, and analyzed from heterogeneous text sources. This offers a high potential and many challenges, in particular for the application fields like History. … Continued
Favourable ecosystem for $C^2$DH in Luxembourg

- Window of opportunity: new Government 2014 (creation of IHTP in coalition agreement)
- 2019: new ministry of digitalization: promote “Digital Letzebuerg” strategy
- Creation of $C^2$DH as third Interdisciplinary Centre of University: contemporary and digital history as one of 8 research priorities of UL in P4 (2018-2021)
- National Funding Agency for Research: will include DH in new funding priorities (2020-2030)
- “Business model”: private/public or public/public research projects: combining fundamental research in contemporary & digital history with new public history outputs
Challenges & Opportunities

Pragmatic framing

Still some challenges...

- How to turn “theory” into practice? Creating C²DH as experimental space for interdisciplinary collaboration (“trading zone”) has been realized physically/institutionally, but how to promote / realize “interactional expertise” in practice?
- P. Gallison / H. Collins: different types of trading zones, depending on different forms collaboration and communities of practice / epistemic traditions
- At C²DH: main challenge, to facilitate / institutionalize collaboration between humanities scholars and computer or data scientists
  - How to develop a “common ground” / “inter-language”? Skills trainings / co-design of research projects
  - Fickers / Van der Heijden, “Into the trading zone” / Digital Humanities Quarterly 2020
Still some challenges...

- Developing multi-modal literacy in an interdisciplinary setting comes with a prize: it asks for a serious engagement in communication (inter-language), skills (trainings), and curiosity (leaving the comfort zone).
- Trading zones have to cope with “centrifugal forces” (example of DTU): interdisciplinarity not only a challenge for students, but for supervisors!
- The public history element of many research projects at C²DH ask for a professional project management and “double engagement” of the involved researchers (need for concise time management and recognition/reward system)
Challenges & Opportunities

Pragmatic framing

Memorecord is a simple hashtag

Join the harvest! Use #memorecord on your Facebook and Instagram posts.
Challenges & Opportunities

Pragmatic framing

Still some challenges...

- How to create transparency / traceability in digital history research?
  - Need for an integrative Virtual Research Environment, enabling the “tracking” of all moments of digital data retrieval, cleaning, analysis, enrichment and recontextualization

- How to produce multi-modal narratives in digital history?
  - Need for new publication platforms that allow for a multi-layered presentation and reading of digital history research
C²DH Story
2016-2018
Past 3 years

2016
- 26 Feb: CVCE Law (CVCE abrogation adopted by the deputies)
- 1st Jul: CVCE integration (Former CVCE employees join the Uni)
- 1st Sep: C²DH Director appointed by the BoG
- 1st Oct: Creation of the C²DH (Creation of the C²DH approved by the BoG)

2017
- 6 Jul: 1st Scientific Committee C²DH official launch event
- 22 May: 1st Advisory Board (Connect the C²DH with the society & politics)
- 10 Apr: 1st Forum Z (out of 9 so far)
- 11 Feb: C²DH Missions

2018
- 29 Jan: History of justice in Lux
- 15 Feb: 1st New Full Professor (Recruitment of Prof. Dr. Valérie Schäfer Contemporary European History)
- 18 Apr: 1st Virtual Exhibition «Eishe Weltkrie - Remembering the Great War in Luxembourg » launched by 1st Ministry
- 19 Apr: Ranke.2 Launch Event
- 16 Oct: 1 FNR PEARL Proposal
- 25 Oct: 1 FNR ATTRACT Proposal

2019
- 15 Nov: 1 FNR CORE Proposals
  Success rate = 33% (2/6)
- 175 Jahre PTT in Luxemburg
  Signature of an agreement with the CEO of Post Group Luxembourg

Additional events:
- 1 FNR PEARL Proposal
  Digital History Advanced Research Projects Accelerator (DHARPA)
- 6 FNR CORE Proposals
  Public History as new citizen science of the past (PHACS)
C²DH Story
2019-2021
Next 3 years

2019
14 Jan 1st Visiting Fellowship
364x363
In the context of the new C²DH Fellowship Program
1st Feb
1st Visiting Fellowship
364x363
International Conference
“9th Tensions of Europe Conference”
18 Apr
First transnational Forum Z
3 series with De Gruyter
27 Jun
1st C²DH Evaluation report
After 30 months of operation
1st Aug
ERC Grant : Start
5 new positions
1st Oct
FNR Pearl : Start
12 new positions
10-12 Oct
International Conference
Digital Hermeneutic conference in Washington co-organised by C²DH
2020
1st Jan
FNR ATTRACT : Start
5 new positions
Nov
C²DH in 5th P4 : analysis
Future contribution of the C²DH in the next P4
Mar
FNR ATTRACT : Start
5 new positions
Apr
28 Feb
DTU-DHH : 1st PhDs
7 PhD Students will finish their PhD in February 2021
May
2nd C²DH Evaluation report
At the end of the first mandate of the Director

2021
Nov
European Time Machine: FET flagship
UE project with 180 partners: 1 Billion EUR
Oct
C²DH in 5th P4 : approval
Contribution of the C²DH to the next P4 to be approved
Sep
1st eBook on Luxembourgish History
In primary/secondary school
Aug
1st eBook on Luxembourgish History
In primary/secondary school
Mar
Luxembourg during WWII
Launch of a new virtual exhibition