Mind the Gap: Digital History in the 21st Century Between Global Access and (In)visible Limitations

Programme Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE	LOCATION
29 Aug 2026, 09:00 - 11:30	House 5 SR134
THEME	CONFERENCE
G - Future Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities in the Historical Sciences	International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

The introduction of digital methods has changed the foundations of historical research to an extent comparable to the introduction of compulsory education and the establishment of modern scientific research. The shift in the perception of knowledge has opened up new possibilities for global and non-Eurocentric historiography, albeit at a considerable cost: at the intersection of digital platforms, technology, and historiography a new methodological gap has emerged, intensified by recent concerns about “artificial intelligence”. The panel discussion brings together archivists, librarians, computer scientists and historians to explore the opportunities and challenges of bridging this gap. We ask what skills, knowledge and forms of co-operation are needed to cope with the increasing complexity of digital methods. The panel contributions will address the datafication and enrichment of source material and the use of historical data in machine learning models. How can we deal with the wide variety of data on a methodological and empirical level? What new research questions are opened up by digital methods? How can the advantages of analogue methods be combined with new approaches to renew and extend historical research?

Panelists will cover a wide range of historiographical traditions, sources and institutions: archives of international organizations, scientific collections and archives, and major libraries will provide the perspective of cultural heritage institutions, while historiographical contributions discuss approaches to large collections of newspapers and broadcasting archives and the question of new methods of capturing dynamic movements in the case of global shipping.

The aim is to discuss the historicity of the digital gap and to gain an understanding of the limits set by new methods, how these can gain visibility and be discussed in a scientifically sound way, by means of a broad tradition of historiographical methods, theories and topics.

Participants

Convenor

- Christiane Sibille (ETH-Library Zurich)

Panelists

- Christiane Sibille (ETH-Library Zurich)
- Madeleine Herren (University of Basel)
- Gentiana Rashiti (ETH-Library, Zurich)
- Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert (United Nations Library & Archives, Geneva)
- Raphaëlle Ruppen Coutaz (University of Lausanne)
- Martin Grandjean (University of Lausanne)
- Arthur Michelet (University of Lausanne)
- Michael Gasser (ETH Library, Zurich)

Papers

Collections as Data - Processing the past to share the future?

Christiane Sibille (ETH-Library Zurich), Michael Gasser (ETH Library, Zurich)

New Approaches to the Historicity of Global Shipping

Madeleine Herren-Oesch (University of Basel), Gentiana Rashiti (ETH-Library, Zurich)

LONTAD: Total Digital Access to the League of Nations Archives

Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert (United Nations Library & Archives, Geneva)

Impresso Project: Media Monitoring of the Past

Raphaëlle Ruppen Coutaz (University of Lausanne), Martin Grandjean (University of Lausanne), Arthur Michelet (University of Lausanne)

Source: https://cish2026.recentglobe.org/events/mind-the-gap-digital-history-in-the-21st-century-between-global-access-and-invisible-limitations/

Generated: 15/08/2026 17:03