

Reconstructing the Steps of the Italian Shoah

October 31, 2017

The FBK Digital Humanities Unit has created an interactive tool that describes in detail the movements of Italian deportees during the Holocaust. The system can be downloaded for free

An application that allows users to explore the moves of the Italian victims of the **Shoah**. It has been developed by the researchers of the **Digital Humanities** Unit at FBK, modifying a [database](#) recently created by the Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center (CDEC) in Milan, in collaboration with regesta.exe. The work is described in an article being published in the proceedings of the [conference](#) “Holocaust Documentation and the Digital Humanities” by **EHRI** (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure), which took place in Venice in June.

LOD Navigator – that is the name of the system created by the researchers – aims to enhance the data contained in the CDEC archive (in turn based on the information contained in the book “**The Memory Book: Jews deported from Italy (1943-1945)**” by Liliana Picciotto Fargion), focusing on an extremely important aspect in the context of the studies on the Shoah, that of the **moves**: deportations, transfers and dispersions represent in fact a central element in the genocidal policy of Nazism.

The system, which was presented to the public at the **Researchers’ Night** event on September 29 and can be downloaded for free [online](#), reconstructs these moves from a general point of view, with detailed mapping of the paths followed by the group of people involved, but also allows for “zooming in” on much more detailed information: thanks to an agile and intuitive interface, it is easy to see, for example where and when certain people were arrested or deported to a particular concentration camp, or killed in a massacre, and even to re-establish in detail **individual paths** (an aspect that may be especially of interest to the victims’ family members).

(The video, recorded during the 2017 Researchers’ Night, features Rachele Sprugnoli with the Digital Humanities Unit)

To obtain the final product, the first step was to extract the data contained in the database, which was then enriched with missing information (e.g. Country of origin and employment) and made homogeneous, until the finalization of the real application.

An in-depth study then focused on the deportation paths of **Trentino citizens** that were rebuilt using a more specific database at the [History Laboratory of Rovereto](#). **Daniel Messina**, a student at Pergine's "Marie Curie" High School, contributed to this part of the research, within his "Combining School with Work" (High School Student Training Program, editor's note) project.

"This work offers a new study tool in the history of the Shoah, useful to historians, teachers, and victims' families," says **Rachele Sprugnoli**, one of the authors of the study. "It also allows to draw attention on the large number of Italian victims of the Shoah: very often, since the concentration camps were physically far from Italy, we tend to consider the Holocaust as something far from us, but it is good to keep in mind that our Country has been a land of persecution and arrests. "

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