

Modernalia. A valuable source for the study of Early Modern History

C. Vega Gómez¹, F. Hidalgo Fernández², A. Romero González³

University of Castilla – La Mancha, University of Málaga, Seminar for the Social History of the
Population

ABSTRACT

Teaching through ITC has become one of the most necessary and essential resources for the development of basic skills in the classroom. The studies on the impact of these tools confirm that digital technology is an essential implement in the teaching–learning concept. In this context, Modernalia was born: a platform of didactic resources dedicated to the Early Modern Age. This website offers countless resources for the teaching of modern history at different educational levels with a rich nature of primary sources –texts, wills, or letters–, art and even videogames. In short, a variety of resources that advocate the learning of complex knowledge from simple cards to understand our past⁴.

Keywords: Modernalia, Early Modern History, Didactics Sources, ITC, LKT, Education, Digital Resources

1. INTRODUCTION. TEACHING AND HISTORICAL COMPETENCE IN DIGITAL SOCIETY: EARLY MODERN HISTORY & ITCs

We find ourselves in a new social, cultural, and educational context which prioritizes a historical innovative approach. Digital technologies have become an essential item, a cornerstone of necessary skills development within the XXI century society. To research, to teach and to make a historical dissemination at present have undergone a profound change generated by a huge digital effort that has facilitated us the implementation of tools and instruments to access the information, to be reworked and to be disseminated without limits. However, we should be aware that it requires a methodology, a classification, and a data breach due to the proliferation of inaccurate information. We need to emphasize it since it is a basic digital competence.

Research reports and studies on “the impact of technological revolution confirm the fact that, since digital technology has become an essential item in the social development and, the educational environment rapidly reflects the changes from technologies”¹. The concept of teaching-learning (T-L) concerning the teaching of history coincides also with “an increasing questioning about the social and political influence on the discipline, even among historians who are discussing about their own status of scientists.”².

Digital competence, that it is defined as the ability to apply technology in order to improve the abovementioned processes, requires an important training and a lifelong learning. Nowadays, the development of these competences is considered as an essential part of teachers and students’ skills. Assuming the structural and institutional need to support the education system, many tools and applications (ITCs) have been undertaken. In this connection, one of the main functionalities of ITCs is its didactic use to support teaching and learning³. But a lack of competition in many cases generates “a scenario to learn FROM ITCs and not to learn WITH ITCs”⁴, in order to innovate. The simple presence of

¹ Carlos.Vega@uclm.es

² frhifer@uma.es

³ alvaroromero Gonzalez@hotmail.com

⁴ The following paper has been done within the framework of the research *project Families, trajectories and social inequalities in Center-South Spain, 1700-1930* [Reference HAR2017-84226-C6-2-P]. It has been driven by Francisco García González y Jesús Manuel González Beltrán thanks to funding from the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness.

new technologies in the classroom or the field of scientific research does not guarantee anything. It is against this background that a valuable and an innovative tool, such as *Modernalia*, has become. The development of the information and communication society has generated changes over education. Internet, as a learning experience, tool and didactic resource is undeniable. This way, tools as *Modernalia* allows to access information which it has been previously filtered and classified by specialists, but What is *Modernalia*?

Modernalia is a project developed and driven by the Seminario de Historia Social de la Población (SEHISP) in the University of Castilla – La Mancha. It involves national professors and university researchers from Early Modern History, Didactics on Social Sciences, Geography, History and Art History professors from Secondary Education and other national education levels. The aim is to provide digital resources about Early Modern History to the education community and interested people in this historical age. The educational and research possibilities are numerous. Besides, it is a quality and methodological teaching improvement.



Figure 1. Modernalia Home

Early Modern History’s teaching-learning, as well all historical areas, “must be understood as an approach to an open and ever-changing knowledge”⁵. The new technology disruptive impact presents us a new digital context, with the consequent emergence of a wide range of possibilities, to interact and to collaborate in history teaching. The sources for the study of history are an essential pillar for a past reconstruction, they are “what every historian needs to base its research work”⁶. In this context, historian works and sources, as well as historical teaching and learning, have had to be restated. This has created many methodological discussions.

Early Modern History is not lacking in far interpretations from their own social reality⁷. Unifications, generalizations, images and stereotypes which compose the vision of the period, and it is has been perpetuated. As a result of Internet importance and proliferation in our current societies, future historians, students, and researchers should not obviate theses sources. Sources which often are perpetuating wrong speeches and images. Fundamental to world and today’s society understanding, there is an important gap between curricular proposals and researches in Early Modern History⁸. In that scenario is where ITCs and Learning and Knowledge Technologies (LKTs) will play an important key role in using Modernalia as tool for their development. An increasingly importance, LKTs is now making ground in education. ITCs have facilitated an overall approach to information, to manage it, to store it...etc. However, in order to make an effective development of these technologies, a solid documental based is required. A documental base made by experts. Teach to learn – learn to teach in this digital context must facilitate these processes with an up to date and interactive content. Modernalia proves an open and collaborative environment which could become a perfect setting to Early Modern History studies.

The use of ITCs, with proposals that have been promoted in later years by the Seminario de Historia Social de la Población and the University of Castilla – La Mancha such as workshops, scientific publications or congresses, have attempted to introduce the use of digital resources from a competence perspective. New methodological and strategy

proposals to facilitate historical thinking. As will be apparent on the pages which follow, Modernalia is a project that facilitates us to incorporate digital and didactic resources in classroom. This is the result of the materialization of a solid trajectory, and it has the support from important nationally and internationally respected researchers. A tool which has the capacity to become a reference within educational community in this digital context.

2. MODERNALIA: BACKGROUND AND CREATION OF A NEW DIDACTIC PROJECT

Modernalia. Resources for teaching Early Modern History is an open-access website launched in May 2021. As such, this is a recent project. Nevertheless, Modernalia has to be defined from a double perspective. On the one hand, another way to increase available digital resources. On the other hand, and it is that we will focus on this paper, as a result of many years of collaborative work from the Seminario de Historia Social de la Población and other research projects driven by Early Modern History Professor Francisco García González.

It is therefore a commitment which is reflected in published works at least for seven years. This has allowed the SEHISP to position itself as a reference point about Early Modern History Teaching by the incorporation of new components and the collaboration among institutions and research groups.

Albacete was the location chosen for the I National Congress. *Early Modern History and Secondary Teaching* in 2014. Since then, that activity has strengthened with two more Congresses in Murcia (2015) and Granada (2019). These last ones are published with a wide range of quality contributions. This indicates the concern to create synergies between historical research, notably by university researches, and secondary teaching. And besides, two published volumes in 2016 under the University of Murcia label with 40 contributions organize in two thematic lines: Proposals and innovative experiences⁹ and research experiences¹⁰. The volume published from III National Congress by the University of Castilla – La Mancha in 2020 with 71 papers, that it contains three thematic lines: contents, methods, and representations¹¹. They are a response to the foreseen objectives such as Early Modern History research dissemination; to establish cooperation; to set out and analyze ITCs experiences in classroom, among others. Beyond these three Congresses and new ones we will celebrate, it is important to note the different papers and workshops which deal with these issues. Representations, topics, or stereotypes¹² have monopolized many social aspects discussions about this period. In this way, professors as Gómez Carrasco and García González noted the need for considering about the relationship between didactic transmission and strict historical knowledge¹³.

As one of many instances that illustrate this situation can be also the *X International Symposium of Didactics on Social Sciences within the Iberoamerican Context*, in particular a session driven by professor Cózar Gutiérrez about “New themes and proposal from Social History in teacher training”. Similarly, there have been several recently discussions and contributions from SEHISP. We here highlight two of these activities, a History Workshop. Early modern History and the uses of ITCs, and History Workshop. History and the use of ITC in classroom, both with the collaboration of LabinTic in 2021. However, the first cornerstone for the platform was in 2019, when the workshop *Early Modern History, between dissemination and renewed teaching* took place.

In sum, this is a brief survey. This is all made possible by a wide range of works from every team researcher. So, teaching and didactic resources are one of the main lines followed by SEHISP and with the support of different groups, educative institutions and, of course, the Fundación Española de Historia Moderna with an institutional coverage.

In this context, we understand the birth of Modernalia as a young platform. The project can become a valuable and useful tool in order to transform learning-teaching process by offering different resources and quality knowledge. Modernalia team, after years of works is offering a website with 1.216 entries so far. However, as a recent project in an early stage of development, we are not capable to show results so far. But we hope it can be implemented as soon as possible in education environments in order to reveal its potential.

Those efforts would be to no avail, however, in the absence of all of these institutions that we must mention: Departamento de Historia y el Laboratorio de integración de la tecnología en las aulas (LabinTic) de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha; el Grupo DICO. Didáctica de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Murcia; el Departamento de Educación. Didáctica de las Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Almería; el Departamento de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de la Universidad de Cantabria, el Departamento de Historia Medieval, Historia Moderna y Ciencias y Técnicas Historiográficas de la Universidad de Alicante; Fundación Séneca, Fondos Feder; Sociedad Española de Estudios del Siglo XVIII; Asociación de Demografía Histórica; Asociación Española de Investigación en Historia de las

Mujeres; Red14. Red de investigación en enseñanza de las Ciencias Sociales; Hespérides. Asociación andaluza de profesores de Geografía e Historia; and la Asociación madrileña del profesorado de Historia y Geografía

3. MODERNALIA'S SOURCES AND CHALLENGUES: AN EARLY MODERN HISTORY SOURCES REPOSITORY

The digitalization of Humanities is a result of years of development. It started through the use of giant desktop computers and early Internet around the globe. It was accompanied by a new wide range of ways to store data or resources thanks to diskettes and compact discs. Cd format was one of the very first ways to access to a new digital era that it showed us the potential of Humanities. This could mean that we would need less efforts to gain knowledge. As a result, encyclopedias were pushed into the background in every home.

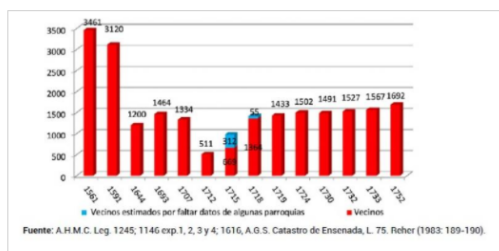
The ceaseless rate at which Internet created questionable tools on the web allowed to students to use them for their scholar works. By the early 2000s, professors warned about dark nature of a certain numbers of pages on the web. Knowledge without control. Indeed, a lot of works were made by using these websites because they believed that all the included information was correct, eve it was better than their manuals. Thus began the difficulty of finding quality knowledge on the Internet to do their history essays. Historical proposals did not attract students. They repeated a list of kings, political events, battles o monuments that they had to memorize, so Human Sciences were very unattractive.

Modernalia is established as a thematic space with two main functions: To contribute to improving teaching thanks to updated contents and to disseminate research results. The web is organized in different sections, and it is very easy-to-use. The users will find thematic levels ready to find any information. The nature of Modernalia` sources is diverse, what gives wealth and an interdisciplinary perspective to the platform. Every user will find, texts, documents, images, charts, statistics and multimedia resources (from videogames to links). Added to these more academic issues such as scientific and didactic publications. There are primary sources use daily by researchers such us wills, letters, examination letters, cards, records or memorials; Spanish, European or American Early Modern pieces of art; charts about demographic, economy or social issues. The multimedia sections provide attractive learning possibilities in classroom from videogames, Tv series or movies.

Primary sources are a very interesting approach for students. They can observe how history develops as a discipline. Its implementation will arouse interest, perhaps through the senses (specifically by touch). Testaments, inventories, or letters may be used from a cultural perspective. To analyze ancient calligraphies and maybe the challenge of deciphering them. The main interest point of Modernalia is its resources about Early Modern History. These are very diverse and interdisciplinary tools. The user will find a wide range of sheets which are divided in five main thematic areas. Homogeneous, concise, and clear, these characteristics are a common denominator in all resources. The resource displays on screen reflecting a title and a brief overview. The user will be able to discern unnecessary elements. On the contrary, if users are interested it will find a more detailed description. These resources are set out in clear and unequivocal terms. First of all, the selected resource shows the title, then it displays a very short overview (no more than a phrase). The description of them provides an extensive commentary about the image, chart, or text, it is depending on what kind of resource. It is followed by a timeline, the potential recipient, the source, and origin. One of the strengths of Modernalia is to propose the possibility of extending more detailed information through links in every sheet.

Lastly, tags are a key aspect for users in order to access the website. The possibilities for interaction which are offering them allow to set topics or didactic uses for classroom. Through this valuable tool, using general terms as «Thirty Years' War» or «War of Succession», professors will have a wide range of possibilities from resources which are containing these tags such as texts, maps, statistics, or images by a thematic corpus. From a scientific perspective it is intended to show how these contents are accessible to education community for its implementation in classroom. Furthermore, students improve their interactive capacity using the website. The uses of tags, similar to hagstags, allow professors and student connect themselves using the same terminology and they would create original content from allocated information on web.

Vecinos de Cuenca 1561–1752



Título: Vecinos de Cuenca 1561–1752

Resumen: La evolución de la población en la provincia de Cuenca desde 1561 hasta 1762

Descripción: La población de Cuenca en 1561 alcanzó los 17.000 habitantes frente a los cerca de 30.000 que tenía Toledo. Si para toda Castilla se estima un descenso poblacional del 36–42% de los vecinos pecheros comparando los datos de 1591 y 1712, en el caso de Cuenca la disminución es especialmente abultada hasta llegar a perder un 83.6% de su población. A finales del siglo XVII experimenta una pequeña recuperación demográfica, participando en el aumento generalizado de toda Castilla alcanzando los niveles de 1591, la cual se verá truncada por la guerra de Sucesión. En cuanto a la provincia, se calcula una disminución del 51%, al igual que en Valladolid o Extremadura. Estas reducciones se traducen a un descenso poblacional en la región, entre 1591–1646 de un 35%, mientras que en la propia ciudad de Cuenca alcanzó el 61.5% reduciéndose de los 3.120 a finales del siglo XVI a tan solo 1.200 en 1644. El descenso durante la primera mitad del Seiscientos se debía en gran parte a la desindustrialización por la disminución de la industria textil que conllevó aparejado un proceso de desurbanización a finales de la centuria. Encuadrada en el modelo de España interior, Cuenca participó de un resurgimiento demográfico durante el siglo XVII, al igual que Guadalajara, donde la población a lo largo del mismo creció de manera modesta con un incremento de bautismos del 17.7%, sin recobrar los máximos del siglo XVI hasta 1790.

Cronología: XVIII

Destinatarios: Secundaria Universidad

Formato: Gráfico de barras

Fuente: García Heras, Víctor Alberto, «Crisis poblacional: Escasez, conflicto y mortalidad. La Guerra de Sucesión en Cuenca», Revista de Demografía Histórica, vol. 38, nº1, 2020, pp. 7–35.

Idioma: Castellano

Fecha: 2020

Autor del registro: Álvaro Romero González

Identificador:

Derechos: ©Victor Alberto García Heras; ©Revista de Demografía Histórica

URL: <https://adeh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ADEH-2020-1-Victor-Alberto-Garcia-Heras.pdf>

Etiquetas

[1561](#) [Cuenca](#) [Demografía](#) [Guerra de Sucesión](#) [Madrid](#) [Población](#)

Figure 2. An example of a sheet

Modernalia faces several challenges to become a referent website in teaching. It proposes a larger number of resources which are created by Early Modern researchers. This means a platform with scientific contents and quality knowledge apart from other sites where editors are unknown. It will be a long and hard way, but on the two bases of clear objectives: to present the research results in addition to understand from a social perspective how Old Regime society have evolved. Accordingly, to show in classroom all this research work. The nature of resources conjures a clear focus to social history by persecuting a decentralization of political history in classroom and to present new ways of making history. Knowing Early Modern History is in relation to comprehend society and individuals, thereby getting to know our past. *Modernalia* offers a wide range of possibilities, sources which are way from political issues. This means that *Modernalia* understands History as a constant development than a series of events, because of the importance of families and individuals.

REFERENCES

- [1] Albert Tarragona, J. M., “La competencia digital es necesaria para la enseñanza de la historia”, en Monteagudo Fernández, J., Escribano Miralles, A., Gómez Carrasco, C. J. (eds.), Educación histórica y competencias transversales: narrativas, TIC y competencia lingüística, Ediciones de la Universidad de Murcia, Murcia, 215-226 (2018).
- [2] Cabrera Acosta, M. A., McMahon, M. (coord.), La situación de la historia: ensayos de historiografía, Universidad de La Laguna, (2002).
- [3] Marqués, P., “El impacto de las TIC en la educación: funciones y limitaciones”, TIC: cuadernos de desarrollo aplicados a las TIC, 2 (1), 2-15 (2013).
- [4] Miralles Martínez, P., Gómez Carrasco, C. J., Monteagudo Fernández, “Percepciones sobre el uso de recursos TIC y «Mass-Media» para la enseñanza de la historia. Un estudio comparativo en futuros docentes de España-Inglatera”, Educación XXI, 22(2), 187-211 (2019).
- [5] Cambil Hernández, M. E., Romero Sánchez, G., “La enseñanza aprendizaje de la historia en el nuevo contexto digital”, en Monteagudo Fernández, J., Escribano Miralles, A., Gómez Carrasco, C. J. (eds.), Educación histórica y competencias transversales: narrativas, TIC y competencia lingüística, Ediciones de la Universidad de Murcia, Murcia, 227-240 (2018).

- [6] Ojeda Pérez, R. M., “Enseñanza de la historia en la educación superior a través de las TIC, Revista de la Universidad de La Salle, (75), 105-127 (2018).
- [7] Gómez Carrasco, C. J., Miralles Martínez, P., Los espejos de Clío. Usos y abusos de la Historia en el ámbito escolar, Editorial Sílex, Madrid (2017).
- [8] García González, F., Gómez Carrasco, C. J., Cózar Gutiérrez, R., Martínez Gómez, P. (coords.), La Historia Moderna en la Enseñanza Secundaria. Contenidos, métodos y representaciones, Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla. – La Mancha (2021).
- [9] Gómez Carrasco, C. J., García González, F. y Miralles Martínez, P. (eds.), La Edad Moderna en Educación Secundaria. Propuestas y experiencias de innovación, Editum, Murcia (2016).
- [10] García González, F., Gómez Carrasco, C. J. y Rodríguez Pérez, R. A. (eds.), La Edad moderna en Educación Secundaria. Experiencias de Investigación, Editum, Murcia (2016).
- [11] García González, F., Gómez Carrasco, C. J., Cózar Gutiérrez, R. y Martínez Gómez, P. (coords.), La Historia Moderna en la Enseñanza Secundaria. Contenidos, métodos y representaciones, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Cuenca (2020).
- [12] An example: Vega Gómez, C., Maldonado Cid, D., “De la realidad al mito. Tópicos y estereotipos en el antiguo régimen: edad y construcción cultural a través de la historia social”, X Simposio internacional de didáctica de las ciencias sociales en el ámbito iberoamericano, Actas-Mayo (2021), (in press).
- [13] Gómez Carrasco, C. J. y García González, F., “La difícil transposición didáctica. Un estudio comparativo de la construcción de estereotipos sociales desde la historiografía al aula (España-Francia)”, OBETS. Revista de Ciencias Sociales, vol. 12, n.º 2, 337-367 (2017); Gómez Carrasco, C. J. y García González, F., “Representaciones sociales y la construcción de discursos estereotipados en la enseñanza de la Historia. Un análisis a partir del campesinado (ss. XVI-XVIII)”, Historia y comunicación social, 24, 1, 127-145 (2019).