

Alexandre Tessier

Location: Mainly Oxford, and secondarily Lancaster Duration: Six weeks divided into two distinct phases. Phase 1 (three weeks): observation -Extensive study of a panel of recent works relating to geographic representation of various kinds of flows -Training in GIS - Detailed analysis of ORBIS, the program developed at Stanford University, devoted to travels in Greco-Roman Antiquity: this analysis will be especially concerned with global architecture, methodological choices, parameters, software applications and databases which lie behind the impressive interface that is available online. All my observations will be recorded and digested in a descriptive report, which will assess the main achievements and limits of the various methods in use to represent geographic flows. Phase 2 (three weeks): conjecture and proposals -Realization of a practical plan aiming at laying the necessary foundations to realize, in future, an interactive map reflecting international mail communications between 1500 and 1800 -Sketch of a critical bibliography of the main synthetic sources at a European scale -Experimental attempts: drawings of various maps describing postal relations between London and a selection of foreign destinations on the continent, at different dates All these elements will join the final report in the form of several subsections. The two phases will be conducted maintaining a constant dialogue with other historians, geographers and IT specialists. After the mission, the whole report -- observations and proposals -- will be reduced in the form of an article. Then it could be published in a specialized review, or also be presented during a conference or a workshop on historical methods.