

CDH2020

**BENEVOLENCE AND EXCELLENCE: DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND CHINESE
CULTURE**

20-21, Shanghai, China

President of ADHO Constituent Organizations Board
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1. SHORT INTRODUCTION

A very good morning to all of you. I have the great honour and joy to bring the greetings from the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations to you. As my Internet connection is shaky, you will watch the video I have recorded beforehand. Please go to ADHO's website if you want to know which associations make ADHO, as this part of my speech was, sadly, cut for time reasons. Have a very good conference!

2. RECORDED SPEECH

A very good morning to you all whether you are taking part in the conference in person or via computer screens. When I received the invitation to attend the opening ceremony of the 2020 Chinese Digital Humanities Conference from your colleague, Dr Jing Chen, on behalf of the executive committee of this conference, I was thrilled. I could, however, not accept the invitation to be your distinguished guest straight away. As President of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO) I obviously had to inform, first of all, those who I represent and ask them for their opinion. As the reaction was unanimously positive I have now the great pleasure and honour to welcome you to this conference, to bring to you the collegial greetings of the Alliance for Digital Humanities Organizations and to wish your conference with the wonderful theme "Benevolence and Excellence: Digital Humanities and Chinese Culture" a huge success.

Allow me to say a few words about the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations.

The first Digital Humanities Organisations, or better Organisations for Humanities Computing, as the field was called at the beginning, were founded, as far as we know, in the 1970ies. In fact, in 1973 the European Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing (ALLC) was founded at King's College London, and in 1978 followed the foundation of the Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH) in the United States of America. From 1988 onward, these two Associations celebrated joint conferences, which took place one year in Europe and the other year in the United States. In 2002, discussions started about an umbrella organization which would foster closer collaboration and exchange within the field of digital humanities more widely and which also other organisations might want to join.

These discussions led to the foundation of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, or ADHO as it is generally called, in 2005. The first ADHO Digital Humanities Conference

was celebrated in Paris in 2006. ADHO's aim is to promote and support digital research and teaching across all arts and humanities disciplines, and to foster excellence in research, publication, collaboration and training.

Over the years, more and more Digital Humanities Associations applied to become Constituent Organisations of ADHO. In 2007, the *Canadian Society for Digital Humanities / Société canadienne des humanités numériques* (CSDH / SCHN) joined ADHO, in 2012 *CenterNet* and the *Australasian Association for Digital Humanities* (aaDH) followed, in 2013 the *Japanese Association for Digital Humanities* (JADH) became a constituent organisation of ADHO, 2016 saw the arrival of *Humanistica. L'association francophone des humanités numériques / digitales*, and in 2019 ADHO welcomed the *Taiwanese Association for Digital Humanities* (TADH), la *Red de Humanidades Digitales* (RedHD) based in Mexico, and the *Digital Humanities Association of Southern Africa* (DHASA). As the legal entity for ADHO, The *Stichting ADHO Foundation*, was established in the Netherlands, ADHO needs to respect Dutch laws.

ADHO sponsors a whole range of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) which enable members of ADHO Constituent Organisations who have similar professional specialties and interests, to exchange ideas, keep themselves up to date on developments in their specific field, and develop related activities: these include

- Digital Literary Stylistics (SIG-DLS)
- Audiovisual Data in Digital Humanities (SIG AVinDH)
- Global Outlook::Digital Humanities (GO::DH)
- GeoHumanities SIG
- Libraries and Digital Humanities
- Linked Open Data (DH-LOD)

ADHO offers its own Constituent Organisations and SIGs a common infrastructure where web pages, mailing lists, and email addresses can be hosted, and where tools like Wordpress, Drupal and Mediawiki and others are made available for the community. This infrastructure is also used by affiliated bodies like the *Text Encoding Initiative* (TEI) and by some of the digital scholarly journals, which are published by ADHO Constituent Organisations and which ADHO sponsors: the open access peer-reviewed *Digital Humanities Quarterly* (DHQ),

Digital Studies / Le champ numérique, and *Humanités numériques*. The Journal of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations is the peer reviewed and Impact Factor holding *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* (DSH) published by Oxford University Press. Among the many countries from which proposals for publication were submitted during the last year, the People's Republic of China with 38 submissions actually holds the top place of the list.

Every year ADHO organises the Digital Humanities Conference. At first, this conference took place either in Europe or in the United States. When more Associations joined, ADHO's conference started to travel to other continents and countries. This year's conference was supposed to be in Ottawa Canada, but because of Covid-19 it had to be cancelled. This was a very sad and frustrating experience for us all. That we managed to have a virtual conference in the end was only possible because some of our colleagues were prepared to invest a lot of their time and energy in its realisation.

Obviously, this virtual conference could not do away with the loss we feel. It would have been so much better if we could have met in person as at least some of you can do at this conference. We were longing all through the year to meet our colleagues, exchange ideas with them, construct networks and collaborations and above all get to know each other better. We come after all from very different countries and continents, belong to diverse cultures, speak different languages, and have different views and perspectives on Digital Humanities. As ADHO's next Digital Humanities conference scheduled for 2021 in Japan had to be postponed for a year because of the pandemic we will now have to wait until 2022 before we can meet the global Digital Humanities community again in person. This also means that we have to wait much longer than planned, before we can welcome the Japanese language among the conference languages. Over the years and because of the hard work of the Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) ADHO experienced a process of growing awareness that English is not everything and that the diversity of our community cannot be bridged by having English only conferences. We had to acknowledge instead that the languages and cultures we call our own determine our doing and our concepts of Digital Humanities. Slowly but continuously languages which are spoken by the people or important communities of the country where our conferences took place were admitted as conference languages and ways were found to be inclusive when we present our papers. We were really looking forward to take up the challenges, which Japanese will certainly present for most of us.

ADHO is governed by two boards, a *Constituent Organizations Board*, composed of one representative from each of the Constituent Organizations (COs) and the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) coordinator. The role of this board is to establish vision, strategy, and policy for ADHO. The second board is the *Executive Board*, which enacts the decisions taken by the Constituent Organisations Board and administers the day-to-day running of the organisation. As president of the Board, which represents all the Digital Humanities organisations which together make ADHO, and also personally, I would have wished to be able to bring you ADHO's greetings in person and to get to know the Digital Humanities Community which gathers at this conference at least a little bit, but the pandemic makes this impossible. I hope very much that the present virtual encounter will not remain the only one and that sometime in the future I will meet members of this community and will be able to exchange ideas with them. I also hope that at some point in the future the Digital Humanities Community of the People's Republic of China will be part of the ADHO "family" and will, by contributing its own perspectives and cultures, help ADHO to become ever more embracing and sensitive to the diversity of the field and its scholarly community. May you have a great conference and enjoy very enriching scholarly debates and friendly human encounters.