

The Digital Humanities Luxembourg Symposium (DHLU)

Caption: On 20 and 21 March 2012, the CVCE and the University of Luxembourg held a symposium entitled 'Digital Humanities Luxembourg' (DHLU 2012) as part of their joint research programme 'Digital Humanities Luxembourg: the future of research in humanities and social sciences'.

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On 20 and 21 March 2012, the CVCE and the University of Luxembourg held a symposium entitled 'Digital Humanities Luxembourg' (**DHLU 2012**) as part of their joint research programme 'Digital Humanities Luxembourg: the future of research in humanities and social sciences'.

Digital humanities is a discipline that lies at the frontier of information technology and human, social, political and economic science. It is a recent field that aims to use digital technologies for research and teaching purposes. This conference, organised by the CVCE's Digital Humanities Lab and the University of Luxembourg's research unit Identités-Politiques-Sociétés-Espaces (IPSE), was an opportunity to consider the legitimacy of websites as sources for historians, the future development of digital archives, and research, writing and dissemination in the field of human sciences.

The first session, devoted to digital archives published on the Web, began with the presentation of several Web platforms offering documentary and scientific resources for researchers, teachers, students and the general public. These included *@Ampère*, the CNRS site that presents the history of electricity; *Les Manuscrits de Stendhal*, a joint project carried out by the City of Grenoble, Stendhal University-Grenoble 3 and the MSH-Alpes; and the *Catalogus Professorum Lipsiensis*, which presents information on the entire teaching body of the University of Leipzig in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The growing use of the Web and digital databases in research and teaching raises the question of the reliability of sources and their use for educational purposes. The second panel, moderated by Sean Takats from the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University, therefore focused on the challenges and opportunities presented by Web archives.

After considering the definition of the concept of 'Web history', discussions moved on to analysing the use of websites as sources and tools for history research. What is the definition of a digital scientific publication? What metadata is needed to identify documents? What issues and challenges are involved in the question of interoperability? How can we apply a critical method? How can we ensure the sustainability of digital content? As Jonathan Peter, a young researcher at the University of Kassel, sums up: 'For me, it is important to consider new media as an opportunity. The Internet can be seen as a showcase that can both host and piece together historical memory.' A question which cropped up several times was the integration of social networks in teaching and research methods.

The conference also addressed the notion of 'public history'. This concept, which emerged in North America, covers all history-related practices and activities outside the university sphere. For example, the European project ETNOFOLK aims to preserve, promote and enhance popular heritage in Central Europe through the site www.etnofolk.eu.

DHLU 2012, organised by the CVCE and the University of Luxembourg, was an opportunity for fruitful and constructive discussions with a view to future projects between the two institutions.

The abstracts of the contributions and further information on the event can be found at www.digitalhumanities.lu and <https://twitter.com/#!/dhluxembourg>.