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October 19, 2024

Title: Classical Literature as a Bridge in the Digital Age

Abstract

The study of humanities is the study of the human condition – what it is to be human. The objects of our study in the digital humanities are the entirety of the human record and achievements. This, of course, is necessarily varied across culture, language, and location. The field that has become known as Digital Humanities does computational work in the humanities, inhabiting the space where humanities data meets digital methods. Here the computer is not used solely as a tool to aid the scholar but becomes part of the research process itself. The defining element of the digital humanities is that it is a field in which technology and humanistic study come together to mutually benefit from each other with research projects that are of intellectual interest to both parties and that result in new knowledge that would not otherwise be possible.

We live, work, and communicate with each other in an ever-shrinking globalized world. The boundaries of the many different aspects of our existence are becoming blurred; the borders between the private and public spheres of our lives overlap and become confused. Nevertheless, whether at work or at home, our collaborators are only a phone tap or keyboard click away regardless of their location and time zone. Despite these affordances of the Internet massively disrupting our perceptions of space and place, our multicultural and multilingual world still imposes barriers with a tendency to divide us up according to language and location (or more precisely by language and time-zone). We have the illusion of connectivity but often with the focus on the technology rather than the communication.

We need a common understanding of the ways in which we can promote the progress of our societies and education and communication are key to this

process. As educators we look ahead to the future and the achievements of our students but that always needs to be done with a firm and solid foundation of our past and an understanding of how we have come to be how we are.

The study of classical literature can act as a bridge to bring together different cultures and allow us to reach out beyond our own limited cultural spheres and learn about others. We need international partnerships and exchanges to facilitate trans-cultural discussions. Students needed to be guided to explore different languages and cultures, philosophies, and histories, and by doing so become more aware of their positionality within a global context as well as developing sensitivity about others and the differences. In this way mutual learning leads to a deeper understanding, not only about others but also about ourselves. Building bridges and reaching out beyond our own cultures through education, communication, and cooperation, to share knowledge and learning, to overcome cultural barriers and other obstacles, to achieve harmony between civilizations and greater prosperity for humanity.