

# **2012 Multi-lingualism & Multi-culturalism Annual Report**

## **ADHO Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (SC MLMC)**

Report on activities and matters arising  
June 2011 - June 2012  
Elisabeth Burr

### **1. Composition of the Standing Committee**

At the meeting of the ADHO Steering Committee on June 19, 2011 in Stanford it was decided that the Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (SC MLMC) would be composed as follows:

- Elisabeth Burr (chair 2011-2014)
- Espen Ore (ALLC representative) - (2011-2014)
- Natasha Smith (ACH representative) - (2010-2013)
- Michael Eberle Sinatra - (SDH-SEMI representative) - (2011-2014)
- Jan Christoph Meister, ex-officio member, internationalization editor of DHQ

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford the following people were co-opted for one year:

- Jan Rybicki (re-co-option)
- Deborah Anderson (new co-option)

The feeling of the committee was that co-options should be used to bring more languages, cultures and country perspectives to the committee. The committee agreed that for the time being the Mexican members of the community should be approached. The chair was charged to make contact with the two representatives from Mexico, Isabel Galina and Ernesto Priani. After having taken this action the chair proposed to co-opt Ernesto Priani. He was co-opted the 17th of August 2011.

Although the committee agreed that the growing interest in working with the committee needs to be taken into account, there was a feeling, that co-option was not the best way to do this, that for work efficiency reasons the committee itself should not become too large and that other ways of including interested people should be sought.

As with effect from 1 January 2012 centerNet had become a fully fledged constituent of ADHO, the chair invited – albeit only in June 2012 – the chairs of centerNet, Katherine Walter and Neil Freistat, to nominate a representative of centerNet to ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-

Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism. The chairs unanimously nominated:

- Mitsu Inaba of Reitsumeikan University, who will represent centerNet from 2012 to 2015.

Mitsu Inaba was invited to register herself with Agora, the virtual environment the committee uses for its work.

Paul Arthur, the president of aaDH, proactively passed on the names of aaDH's representatives to the president of ADHO, Ray Siemens:

- Nick Thieberger, University of Melbourne, will represent aaDH from 2012 to 2015.

Nick Thieberger was invited to register himself with Agora, the virtual environment the committee uses for its work.

## **2.Preparation of DH 2012 in Hamburg**

### **2.1 MLMC session block**

#### **2.1.1 Committee Meeting in Stanford**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford the chair reported on

- the proposal put to the ADHO steering board, the Conference Committee (John Unsworth), ALLC (Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen, ACH (Julia Flanders), SEDIH-SEMI (Dan O'Donnell) and the 2012 Programme Committee chair (Paul Spence) to have a SCM session block at the next conference,
- the strong support expressed at the meeting for multi-lingual and multi-cultural matters in general and the proposal of SC MLMC that at the Hamburg conference multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism should play a more prominent role, in particular;
- the very strong support and interest in multi-lingual and multi-cultural matters expressed by SDH-SEMI and by the journals *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* and *Digital Humanities Quarterly*;
- ACH's strong concern about policy discussions but strong interest in a research agenda;
- the suggestion to have special issues of *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* and of *LLC* on multi-lingualism & multi-culturalism;
- that the chair was charged to follow up the question of special sessions with CentreNet and SDH-SEMI, and the question of a special issue of *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* with Michael.

During the discussion which followed the report the following decisions were taken:

1. EB will contact Paul Spence (both language in the call and proposing our own panel) in the following tenor:
  - strong support from associations
  - compatible with conference theme
  - give examples (like endangered languages)

- we will help to find reviewers
- 1. possibilities:
  - propose a normal panel session
  - poster proposal (Exploit?)
- 1. reporting of Exploit will be included
- 2. we will embed Exploit in conference website

The final discussion and decision was postponed to after the conference. It was established that AGORA should be used for this.

### **2.1.2 Actions taken (August 2011)**

After the chair, at the beginning of August, had informed the PC 2012 that there will be a proposal from the SC MLMC, the chair started the discussion in AGORA on the MLMC proposal to be included in the CFP 2012. The results of the very lively and intensive discussion were mailed to the PC on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August:

Dear Paul, dear All,

I am happy that I can present you now with the results of the very lively and intensive discussion we had in the ADHO Standing Committee on Multilingualism & Multiculturalism (MLMC) on the proposal we had promised to contribute to the CFP.

The committee would like to ask you first of all to delete "endangered languages" from the following paragraph of the CFP:

"computer-based research and computer applications in literary, linguistic, cultural and historical studies, including electronic literature, public humanities, and interdisciplinary aspects of modern scholarship. Some examples might be text analysis, corpora, corpus linguistics, language processing, language learning, and endangered languages;"

The committee would like to ask you further more to insert the following paragraph into the CFP:

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"ADHO's Standing Committee on Multilingualism & Multiculturalism (MLMC) particularly invites proposals on the potential and impact of digital methods and models in fostering multilingualism and multiculturalism, and on the challenges and potential presented to DH in terms of linguistic and cultural diversity. Proposals regarding endangered, lesser-known or minority languages and cultures are especially welcome, as are case studies demonstrating the successful integration of multilingualism and multiculturalism with digital methods. Selected papers may be eligible for inclusion in future ADHO publications devoted to the topic of multilingualism and multiculturalism."

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Once the CFP is closed the committee would welcome very much to be informed about the types and numbers of proposals concerning multilingualism and multiculturalism received. It would also be prepared to review these proposals and discuss with the Programme Committee the best

way of integrating the multilingualism and multiculturalism perspective into the final programme.

Best, Elisabeth

As a reminder: the paragraph was, in fact, inserted in the call which was published at the beginning of September:

In the spirit of the conference theme, and in consultation with the ADHO Standing Committee on Multilingualism & Multiculturalism (MLMC), we particularly invite proposals on the potential and impact of digital methods and models in fostering multilingualism and multiculturalism, and on the challenges and potential presented to DH in terms of linguistic and cultural diversity. Proposals regarding endangered, lesser-known or minority languages and cultures are especially welcome, as are case studies demonstrating the successful integration of multilingualism and multiculturalism with digital methods. Selected papers may be eligible for inclusion in future ADHO publications devoted to the topic of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

For what concerns the hope expressed in the last paragraph of the above letter to the PC, i.e. that the SC MLMC would be informed about the outcome of the call and might be more directly involved in the reviewing process and the setup of the programme, this hope did not materialise. When in April 2012 one of the members of the SC MLMC asked for information on the number of "multicultural/multilingual" submissions, whether there was an increase in the number of such submissions and whether the input of MLMC might have had any effect in the number of papers, we could only be given a table which showed the submissions for DH 2012 and thus could not be used for further analysis. For various reasons the question was not further pursued. The Committee feels, however, strongly about being put into a position which allows for the analysis of the results of the call and of the reviewing process with respect to multi-lingual and multi-cultural matters.

## **2.2 Translation of the Call (August – October 2011)**

### **2.2.1 Committee Meeting in Stanford**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford the chair reported not only on the positive development with respect to new voluntary translators having joined the group but also on the difficulties which had arisen because the PC 2011 had made considerable changes to the call. During the discussion about how to prevent such difficulties and delays and how to make things easier for the voluntary translators, the chair was charged to get in contact with the PC 2012 and the Conference Coordinating Committee and try to stabilize the basic components of the call.

### **2.2.2 Actions taken**

#### **2.2.2.1 Stabilisation of components of the call**

The 13th of August the chair sent a mail to the PC 2012 and to the chair of ADHO's Conference Coordinating Committee, John Unsworth, which contained the following proposal:

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In order to make the work of voluntary (!) translators easier I propose that the language of the following parts is rendered in such a way that it can remain **unchanged** in the future:

- Please note ...

- Presentations include ...

- everything from "The range of topics ..." down to "International Programme Committee" with the

exception of "Information about the conference venue"

Obviously years, hosts, dates, deadlines, members of PC will be changed every year.

The parts which **change** every year and will thus need translation / reworking of former translations will then be:

- General Information

- Information about the conference venue

If there is need to **add** new points they should be added as new paragraphs and not by changing the language of the stable parts.

**Deletion** of paragraphs is, obviously, less of a problem, but it should be made explicit to the Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism

Best, Elisabeth

The proposal Chris Meister made in AGORA to develop a sort of template for future use, consisting of "stable" paragraphs that are sacrosanct and those which might be changed, led to the drawing up of these stable parts (see separate document).

#### **2.2.2.2 Translation of the call**

The 13th of August committee members were asked to test the Microsoft Translator. No comments were received

Between the 25th and 29th of August Chris Meister and the chair discussed the possible number of translations and ways to put them up on the conference web-site.

The 09th of September the chair sent out a mail asking all former translators who were willing to contribute to the translation of the call 2012 to register with AGORA. As reactions to the first

call had been very poor, the 18th of September the call was sent out again. The 29th of September she welcomed the group of translators and explained them how to proceed. The 11th of October the chair sent a mail to the secretary of ADHO and asked her to send her call for more translators to the members of ADHO. The 12th of October she asked the members of the MLMC Committee to join into the endeavour.

In AGORA Google Translator Toolkit had been proposed as translation tool and the first steps were explained.

The 24th of October the last translation went up on the Conference Web-site. The team of translators had managed to translate the call into the following languages:

German

French

Italian

Spanish

Norwegian

Hungarian

[Japanese](#).

The translators were

Elisabeth Burr

Corinne Welger

Raffaele Viglianti / Matteo Romanello

Isabel Galina / Miriam Martínez Rodríguez

Espen Ore

Ágnes Abuczki

Tomoji Tabata / Kiyonori Nagasaki

The 7th of December the chair thanked the translators and announced to them the multi-lingual word clouds on the conference web-site which are generated by EXPLOIT from the 8 language versions of the call.

The 5th of January 2012 also the MLMC committee was informed about the outcome of the translation process and the multi-lingual word clouds.

## **2.3 Actions which could not be taken**

Various reasons, not least illnesses, unforeseen activities (see 2.4), meetings and workloads prevented the chair from taking action with respect to certain matters which had arisen during the committee meeting at Stanford.

### **2.3.1 Special journal issue on multi-lingualism & multi-culturalism**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford it was suggested to have special issues of *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* and of *LLC* on multi-lingualism & multi-culturalism. The chair was also charged especially to follow up the question of a special issue of *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* with Michael.

While the chair had managed to approach the editor of *LLC*, Edward Vanhoutte, at Stanford – he reacted favourably to the idea – the chair did not manage to follow up the question of a special issue of *Digital Studies / Le champ numérique* with Michael.

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford the following was proposed with respect to the preparation of a special journal issue on multi-lingualism & multi-culturalism:

- compile papers at Stanford for a special section
- study the programme of the Hamburg conference in advance and try to propose to authors to join a special edition

Although these matters were brought to the attention of the committee members, the chair did not find the time to follow this up. No action was thus taken.

### **2.3.2 Follow up Special session with CentreNet and SDH-SEMI**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford the chair was charged to follow up the question of special sessions with CentreNet and SDH-SEMI.

No action could be taken in this respect.

## **2.4 Student assistant bursaries (December 2011 – Mai 2012)**

The 5th of December Chris and Katrin, the local organisers of DH 2012 in Hamburg, approached me in my capacity as Chair of the ADHO Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism and Multi-Culturalism with a request to assist them in the selection and awarding of 12 Student Assistant Bursaries, granted by the VolkswagenFoundation, to international DH students. It was the intention of the local organisers to distribute these bursaries evenly among the following geographical regions

- 3 bursaries for students from Asia/Australasia

- 3 bursaries for students from Europe and Africa (excluding Germany)
- 3 bursaries for students from Latin and South America
- 3 bursaries for students from North America and the UK

After some reflection the chair came to the conclusion that it was her duty to lead the selection process. The process involved not only discussions about the call, the distribution of the call, discussions about the environment to be used for handling the applications and its setup, the establishment of selection criteria etc., but also leading a team of three regional reviewers, reading more than 50 applications, reviewing especially the applications from one of the four regions, taking a closer look at problematic cases and discussing and establishing the finalists. This very intensive and very complex process was concluded only at the end of May 2012.

### **3. Other matters arising / actions taken**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford also the following points were discussed and actions with respect to them were proposed.

#### **3.1 Protocol**

For what concerns the protocol of ADHO's SC on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism every member of the committee was supposed to collect points which need to be changed. The following points have come up:

- it needs to be made explicit who has a vote
- it needs to be made clear that every ADHO publication has the possibility / right to appoint an ex-officio member to the SC
- the acronym of the committee needs to be established for once and for all. At the moment there are 3 acronyms: MLMC, SCM, MMC

For what concerns the acronym of the committee, the discussion conducted with respect to it did not really come to a conclusion. As strong points can be made for MLMC or Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism, however, the chair proposed that the acronym should be MLMC. As no strong opposition against this acronym arose it is proposed to use MLMC systematically in the future.

For what concerns the question of the vote the changes should be done in accord with the protocol of the other SCs. For what concerns the ex-officio member only the right wording of the respective sentence needs to be established.

#### **3.2 Web-pages of the SC MLMC**

At the meeting of ADHO's Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (MLMC) on June 20, 2011 in Stanford also state of the committee's section of ADHO's homepage was discussed. The chair proposed that she would do the necessary work. No action on this could be taken yet because of various reasons.

At the moment of writing ADHO's homepage is being rebuilt in the latest version of Drupal. The



Drupal rebuilt should also provide translators with a better experience. The chair is in contact with Quinn who had approached her with respect to the requirements of the Multi-Lingualism and Multi-Culturalism committee. It was agreed that Quinn is first of all doing all the rebuilt before an account is set up for the chair. It was agreed as well that Quinn will walk through the process of setting up a new translation once herself, take notes, and write it all up as a set of instructions that the chair and / or others on the committee can use.

## 4. Other

The 26th of March the chair posted the following comment to <http://www.humanistica.eu/>, which says of itself “Humanistica is the future European association for Digital Humanities”:

L’iniziativa mi sembra molto interessante. Vorrei, però, accennare al fatto che il tema del multi-linguismo & multi-culturalismo è da molto tempo al ordine del giorno nell’ADHO che ha pure creato un comitato con questo nome che ho l’onore di presiedere: <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/administration/multi-lingual-cultural>. Il comitato ha anche pubblicato anni fa un “Position Paper” [http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~burr/ADHO/MLMC/ADHO\\_MLMC.htm](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~burr/ADHO/MLMC/ADHO_MLMC.htm). Per non inventare la ruota un’enesima volta, mi sembrerebbe utile che Umanistica prenda nota di tali iniziative.

Aparte questo vorrei informarmi come posso accettare l’invito espresso sul sito di associarmi.

The comment was posted in Italian because there are so many people in Italy who believe that neither ADHO nor ALLC is doing anything about multi-lingualism & multi-culturalism. The comment has been accepted by the moderators.