

MINUTES OF THE ON LINE CONFERENCE, 6 October 2015,
by Tito Orlandi

I myself introduced the session, briefly reminding that the idea of constituting a sort of association dedicated to the propagation of the theoretical principles of Humanities Computing, and to the critical evaluation of the humanities computing research projects, was conceived in a conversation between Buzzetti and Lauer, and then developed with Mordenti and myself. I was entrusted to prepare a preliminary draft of the Statutes of an Academy, which was sent on January 11th, 2015 to all the colleagues who, in our perception, were interested and capable to participate in such an enterprise.

I called the attention of the colleagues to the main points (not negotiable) of the proposed statutes: the acceptance of the Turing Machine as the basic theoretical constituent of the computers; and the distinction between Humanities Computing (methodological procedures) and Digital Humanities (technical applications). Beside that, the participants in the enterprise (or Members of the Academy) should be ready to work for the Academy, producing a number of reports every year.

In the first exchange of opinions, all agreed on the general acceptance of the proposed statutes, but: Zeldes invited to keep as broad as possible the range of activities taken into consideration; Ross suggested some way to monitor the action of the members; Cazalé suggested some criteria for the theoretical basis; Ballo announced his (and Parodi's) intention to review initiatives concerning the influence of humanistic/philosophical conceptions upon computer realizations; Monella proposed a more precise definition of humanities; Tammaro stressed the importance of information science.

In the second part of the session the individual paragraphs of the proposed statutes were examined:

- the name was approved;
- the "Presentation" was approved with the following change: ...digitizing cultural artifacts... (instead of: documents);
- the "Purpose" was approved with the following change: ...in digital form... (instead of: in the form of data-base).
- The section "Localization and Infrastructures" will be filled in after negotiations with the Accademia dei Lincei.

- The section on “Activity” was approved with the following changes: ...a minimum of two reviews each year... (instead of: a minimum ... bibliography); and suppress: [and ... [to be discussed]].

Also were approved: the institution of a web site of the Academy, under the care of myself; and the institution of a mailing-list, under the care of Francesca Tomasi. It was agreed that the procedure for the acceptance of the reviews provided by the Members would follow my suggestions:

“The contributions of the Members are passed around to the other Members. If within one month there is no preclusive objection (I distinguish between preclusive and constructive objections), they are eventually revised by the author and put on line. If there are preclusive objection, the matter is discussed and resolved in a general meeting. The constructive objections are only submitted to the author.”

A certificate of membership will be sent to all Members, when the Academy becomes operative (suggestion of S. Ross, approved). So far, there is no governing board. It is agreed that I shall function as a clearing house, until the opportunity for such an office will be felt.

STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY of HUMANITIES COMPUTING AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Presentation: This Academy is a free association of scholars cultivating humanities computing [= HC] (not necessarily and not exclusively digital humanities [= DH]), and sharing some precise opinions on its definition and theoretical foundations, i.e.:

* HC is the way of carrying on research in humanities by means of digitized data submitted to automatic (algorithmic) procedures.

* Humanities is historical research in cultural achievements.

* The correct procedure for digitizing cultural artifacts consists in formal analysis and identification in continuous data of discrete entities to be represented by means of binary digits.

* Automata is any realization of a machine according to Alan Turing (Turing Machine).

* Scientific activity in HC is dependent also on the methods of the individual humanistic disciplines and their relative competence.

Purpose: Discuss the principles of HC and DH.

Function as an observatory of research and enterprises in the field of HC and DH; namely:

Maintain a list (in digital form) of the institutions, enterprises, congresses, projects, and University courses pertaining to research in HC and, where appropriate, in DH. The list will contain a critical description (which server, which software for analysis and dissemination, which digitization criteria, which operating environment, stability), and assessment of the listed entities, according to the principles stated above.

Maintain a bibliography (in the form of data-base), with critical assessment, of HC monographs and articles, in print or in digital form.

Localization and infrastructures. *** Centro Linceo The Academy will organize a web site for publication of the contributions of the members.

Activity: Members will meet regularly, eventually using internet facilities, and in specially organized seminars, in order to discuss problems relating to the theoretical foundations of HC and DH.

Each member will contribute with a minimum of two critical reviews (cf. above) each year.

The Academy will arrange for patronage and collaboration with institutions like Allea and Union Académique Internationale.

The Academy will eventually request support from funding agencies.

The activities mentioned above will be disseminated by means of a web site and a mailing list.

Recruitment: In first instance the Academy is formed of those of the persons listed hereinafter [those who will accept the nomination] (members founders):

Edoardo Ballo, Aurelien Berra, Dino Buzzetti, Claude Cazalé, Alessandro Cristofori, Domenico Fiormonte, Gerhard Lauer, Paolo Mastandrea, Paolo Monella, Raul Mordenti, Paola Moscati, Tito Orlandi Massimo Parodi, Lorenzo Perilli, Geoffrey Rockwell, Gino Roncaglia, Seamus Ross, Francesco Stella, Annamaria Tammaro, Manfred Thaller, Francesca Tomasi, Amir Zeldes.

New members may be accepted by the majority of the existing members.

The members founders may not be dismissed, except in case of resignation or failing to contribute the minimum of items (cf. above).

The members not founders may be dismissed for resignation, or through a poll of the majority of the existing members for failing to contribute the minimum of items, or for incompatible opinions on theoretical foundations (cf. above).

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