From DARIAH to CLARIAH in Flanders. Challenges and Opportunities for the Development of an Open Humanities Service Infrastructure

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This poster introduces CLARIAH-VL (2019-2021), a cross-university collaborative project to develop an interdisciplinary open humanities service infrastructure for Flanders. CLARIAH-VL is funded by the Flemish Research Foundation (FWO) under the International Research Infrastructures (IRI) programme. It is the direct successor of the DARIAH-VL VRE-SI (Virtual Research Environment Service Infrastructure; 2015-2018), and aims to strengthen and expand the sustainable portfolio of services developed in that project. Through CLARIAH-VL, the network of existing and emerging Digital Humanities Research Centres across Flemish universities in Antwerp (platform{DH}), Brussels (DIGI), Ghent (GhentCDH), and Leuven (DH Task Force) will work closely together with the Dutch Language Institute (INT) – the CLARIN-ERIC certified B-Centre for Flanders.

CLARIAH-VL focuses on five areas within the humanities: linguistics, literature, socio-economic history, media studies, and ancient history & archaeology. It will offer a unique combination of high-quality and user-friendly tools and resources that are seamlessly embedded into the everyday workflows of humanities researchers. Some of the tools CLARIAH-VL will offer include: i) a **IIIF-enabled Corpus Management Platform**, enabling researchers to build a research corpus from a variety digital resources and export the textual data for analysis with digital research tools, ii) a **participatory deep mapping platform** to facilitate crowdsourcing a rich array of geo-spatially annotated resources, iii) a **web-based platform for the publication of digital scholarly editions** and iv) a **Linked Open Data infrastructure** for analysing, sharing, connecting and enriching arts and humanities research data.

As implied in the project's name, CLARIAH-VL is committed to collaborate more closely with CLARIN-Flanders through the INT, and is inspired by the success of its Dutch sister consortium CLARIAH-NL – a leader in a recent trend towards closer collaborations and joint forces between DARIAH and CLARIN across Europe. At European level, DARIAH-EU and CLARIN-ERIC are already collaborating closely in a number of areas, including: European project funding, Shared Services (e.g., Digital Humanities Course Registry), European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), Training, Education and Events. There are already strong ties or joint consortia between DARIAH and CLARIN in several European countries, e.g., Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece and The Netherlands.

Collaboration between DARIAH and CLARIN has been a step-by-step process in Flanders. In 2017, following a number of meetings between DARIAH and CLARIN partner institutions, there was an unanimous agreement to join forces and develop a CLARIAH-VL proposal. This proposal was submitted in 2018, and accepted in early 2019. Despite good reviews, the funding agency decided to only grant

CLARIAH-VL two years funding in the first instance, and explicitly asked the consortium to focus on maintaining the existing (DARIAH-VL) infrastructure while working further on developing the collaboration with CLARIN, before submitting a new proposal in 2020. Convinced that DARIAH and CLARIN make excellent and complimentary partners, the consortium decided to keep its new name and to actively continue collaborating in the interim. At the DH Benelux conference in Liège this September, we would like to use the poster session to introduce the consortium, and highlight the opportunities and the challenges it has met along the way.