The role of computers in the humanities has long been debated, but consider Roberto Busa SJ and his team's pioneering digital humanities project, the *Corpus Thomisticum: Index Thomisticus* which involved lemmatizing words using punch cards and creating concordances. This would have taken 50 scholars 40 years to complete without computers. Computers have been essential in various humanities disciplines, enabling tasks such as automatic information extraction from historical documents, literary analysis, author attribution, and pattern recognition.

E.A.Bowles predicts the knowledge of data processing becoming a part of the “*‘common baggage’ of research tools and techniques required of every student in the liberal arts.*” Bowles goes on to count the computer among those tools that has “*[freed] the humanist scholar from the time-consuming operations of the past.*” He promotes instead a collaboration of the machine and the mind.

Computers have not only survived in the humanities but have also expanded their boundaries, leading to the development of 'Humanities Computing' (HC) and its evolution into the broader field of 'Digital Humanities' (DH). Susan Hockey, in her 2004 article classified the development of HC into four periods:

* Beginnings: 1949 to early 1970s (the first centres, conferences, and journals)
* Consolidation: 1970s to mid-1980s (symposiums continued, organizations started coalescing, ACH created)
* New Developments: Mid-1980s to Early 1990s (period of personal computers and democratisation of innovation, *Humanist* started by Willard McCarty, TEI created)
* The Era of the Internet: Early 1990s to the Present (debates about use of electronic resources, creation of institutional digital libraries, multimedia information popularised)

Still, there remains the enormous task of *defining* humanities computing. John Unsworth finds three primary reasons to do the same: [from “What is Humanities Computing (and What is Not)?, 2002]

* to distinguish a tool from the various uses that can be made of it
* to distinguish between exemplars of that activity and charlatans
* to justify new and continuing investments of personal, professional, institutional, and cultural resources

Unsworth does provide a worthy definition too. He says:

*“Humanities computing is a practice of representation, a form of modeling…mimicry. It is also…a way of reasoning and a set of ontological commitments, and its representational practice is shaped by the need for efficient computation on the one hand, and for human communication on the other.”*

The transition occurred due to various reasons including ‘humanities computing’s “lack of engagement with the ‘digital’ as a study object” (Patrik Svensson), also due to either lack of interest or lack of resources, or sometimes even due to lack of consensus and collaboration.

Turning now to the ‘digitisation’ of humanities, one must afford a cursory glance to use of ‘data’ within the field. There is much definitional deviation about the use of ‘data’ within the humanistic purview. Shanmugapriya T offers a comprehensive definition for the term:

*“Data refers to a captured or observed or curated machine readable, writable, manipulatable, multipliable object/material which requires an action and critical analysis that contain the amalgamation of both digital technologies and humanities inquiries.”*

Johanna Drucker and Urzula Pawlicka, on the other hand, attempts to coin a new term altogether—‘capta’—to reflect the more inclusive approach of interdisciplinary studies. Text becomes data, so do digital archives and databases, and even digitised historical maps. But the term itself never really caught on.

Another matter of concern is the selection of data—which depends on its availability, accessibility, format, quality, and range. But more importantly, the selection of data, or really any work in DH is wholly dependent on collaboration and presently, with the persistence of ‘big-tent’ mentality, there is a large scale exclusion of voices and opinions. Patrik Svensson is in favour of, instead, a ‘trading zone’ where crucial actors will not be left out (like designers, and software engineers) as Melissa Torres suggest they currently do. Borgman, though, offers a more optimistic view:

In this line of conversation, as an Indian, one must also consider the need for localized DH frameworks, and in this vein, P.P.Sneha has made a important contribution—she has successfully identified few of the key challenges to this localising effort:

* Technological obsolescence and digital divide
* Linguistic diversity as a significant barrier
* Lack of consensus on defining DH in India

Others challenges also persist—lack of digital infrastructure, of experts, of other resources, etc.

However, the only way from here on out is up! DHARTI has connected Indian DH thinkers, and likewise has popularised DH thought and ideas among one and all. Already, there are major DH tools, and projects being developed across various centres dedicated to the field and enlightening young minds in dedicated university programs.