

Opening Remarks at the HSUHK Global Humanities Initiative “Game and Gaming Across Cultures” International Conference

25 June 2022

Director Wang Xuelei, Prof. Yan Conggen, Prof. PC Hsiung, Prof. Zhao Li, Mr. Derek Yue, distinguished guests and friends, good morning.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the “Game and Gaming Across Cultures” International Conference, co-hosted by Jinghengyi School of Education of Hangzhou Normal University and the CIPSH Chair Collaborative Office in Hangzhou Normal University. The conference is organized in collaboration with Tencent Social Research Center and Global Humanities Initiative (GHI) of The Hang Seng University of Hong (HSUHK). I am excited to meet all of you who are joining us from different time zones today.

The Global Humanities Initiative (GHI) of The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong has been a long-time partner of CIPSH (the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies). Our GHI was launched in 2017 as part of our commitment to establish a new liberal-arts-oriented university. The university is now offering more than 30 undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to more than 6,200 students. With GHI, our university has been actively promoting interdisciplinary research and studies relating to humanities.

The GHI also connects HSUHK to the world. We have collaborated with CIPSH under UNESCO and many international partners and scholars on innovative research projects, examining humanities issues from different and innovative perspectives. We do hope that our staff and students from different disciplines will gain access to new ideas and perspectives on global humanities issues.

The GHI and CIPSH have been studying “Play” and “Game” as a subject of humanities. International scholars have shared their analyses from historical, philosophical, phenomenological, educational, and cultural approaches in the previous colloquiums. Building on those events, we have been looking forward to this international conference

today. Cultural studies on game and gaming, whether traditional or virtual games, have been intriguing to many in the society – whether you are a game developer, an educator, a parent, a game player, or a policy maker. The impact from the development of game and gaming cultures will be a parameter that shapes life in the modern society. I am interested to learn more about the subject from the presentations and discussions among the distinguished scholars today.

Both traditional games and electronic games could bring the sentiments of joy and excitement, and most of the time also interactivity and educational values to the players. With technological advancement, games and gaming have evolved to be formed on virtual platforms. The popularity and emergence of online streaming services have fueled the growth of online multiplayer games. Electronic games have now leapt forward to a completely new universe in which their development and the phenomenon are worth every attention.

For example, competitive electronic multiplayer games involve skills, teaming, coordination, strategizing and also mental toughness, especially at tournaments which have been phenomenal for popular games. After many years of debate, competitive electronic games have been classified as a sport and eventually esports is included in 2022 Asian Games as a medal event.

How games and gaming in the new world will impact our future way of life? Imagine the immersive experience we acquire in virtual games and the way players from different locations could team up and communicate online to get their goals, there are so many phenomenological, cultural, and even economic aspects about games awaiting us to explore. Furthermore, many popular electronic games have developed into franchises, selling products like novels, television shows and merchandise. It is interesting to know that certain game companies will make slight changes in a game to make sure it will be properly received by different cultures.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank the co-hosts in Hangzhou. I also look forward to the announcement about the new dates for Hangzhou Asian Games. I guess many of our participants would be interested in the sports event as well as the newly included esports games.

I am very glad to have your participation today. Hope you will enjoy the conference and find it rewarding. Thank you.