

DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES OF THE SOUTH

Conclusions of the Conference on Social Sciences and Digital Humanities:
Knowledge, Societies, Policies

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The Power of Names

Names matter. Names confer color and character. It is not simply a translation to move from *Digital Humanities* to *Humanidades Digitales* in Spanish because in this inversion from DH to HD there is a conceptual, cultural, and social migration towards other practices of knowledge production. The question we raise is: what can we do to make this translation/cultural emigration more localized, rather than centralized?

Other names have already passed by the wayside, such as "Humanities Computing", which was the most common term in the United Kingdom until the beginning of the 21st century¹ for the use of computational methods linked to the practices and methods appropriate to each discipline. This was evident in terms such as "Linguistics Computer Science", "Computer Science applied to History", "Computer Science applied to Social Sciences", etc., used in the 1960s and 1970s. Also, the term "Informatica Umanistica" used in Italy, in a pioneering phase that coincided with that of

* Text reviewed by Desmond Schmidt.

¹ Used by McCARTY, Willard (2003). "Humanities Computing." *Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Science*, New York: Marcel Dekker (20 Feb 2010). Susan Hockey (2004), in her "The History of Humanities Computing" (in SCHREIBMAN, Susan, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth (Eds.), *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Oxford: Blackwell 2004 [\[http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/view?docId=blackwell/9781405103213/9781405103213.xml&chunk.id=ss1-2-1\]](http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/view?docId=blackwell/9781405103213/9781405103213.xml&chunk.id=ss1-2-1)) uses the term "Digital Humanities" only once.

"Humanities Computing", lost the battle with the disciplinary field of Computing. And so, to reclaim control of the field a term was coined that seemed to distance itself from that conflict: "Umanistica digitale", in imitation of the English term "Digital Humanities".

However, in 2004, in the introduction by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens and John Unsworth to the *Companion to Digital Humanities*², the term "Digital Humanities" appeared thirteen times, probably the highest frequency in any text published up to that date. The name was changed, a field was established, the discourse was determined to co-exist along with the contemporary order of science. Today, if we use a search engine, we will discover 109,000 results for "Humanities Computing" and 1,960,000 for "Digital Humanities"³.

Along these lines, the creation in turn of the Office of Digital Humanities in around 2008 as a section of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in the United States⁴ marked a turning point in the adoption of a systematic policy of financing projects in this area, which continues to impact other public funding systems such as those provided by the European Union. This funding has contributed to the emergence of research centers, projects and educational programs, which have incrementally institutionalized a set of practices designated as "Digital Humanities" and which, from the US, Canada, UK and more recently Germany, have brought a genuine geopolitical conformity to the new field⁵.

Since then, a centripetal movement has been developing that tends on the one hand to bring together institutions and resources into the hegemonic nucleus of the strong "Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations" (ADHO) in 2004⁶, CLARIN-ERIC in 2012⁷,

² SCHREIBMAN, Susan, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth (2004). "The Digital Humanities and Humanities Computing: An Introduction," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. eds, Oxford: Blackwell.

³ MCCARTY, Willard (2013). "The Future of Digital Humanities is a Matter of Words," in John Hartley, Jean Burgess, Axel Bruns. eds, *A Companion to New Media Dynamics*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 33-52.

O'DONNELL, Daniel Paul, Katherine L. Walter, Alex Gil, and Neil Fraistat (2016). "Only Connect: The Globalization of the Digital Humanities," in Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds, *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 493-510.

⁴ The *Digital Humanities Initiative* (2006-2008) became the *Office of Digital Humanities* in 2008: <http://www.neh.gov/divisions/odh> (accessed 1 Jun. 2016).

⁵ PAIXÃO DE SOUSA, Maria Clara (2015). "As Humanidades Digitais Globais?", *Coimbra*, 12 Aug. 2012, <https://humanidadesdigitais.org/hd2015/anotacoes/> (accessed 1 Jun. 2016). PEREIRA, Paulo Silva (2015). "Academia, Geopolítica das Humanidades Digitais e Pensamento Crítico." *MATLIT: Revista do Programa de Doutorado em Materialidades da Literatura* [Online], 3.1 (2015): 111-140. Web. 1 Jun. 2016. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/2182-8830_3-1_7

⁶ <http://adho.org/about>

DARIAH-ERIC in 2014⁸, and on the other hand, a centrifugal movement of national initiatives that struggles to be integrated into the center as a form of legitimization: Digital Humanities Network of Mexico (Red-HD) in 2011⁹, Humanidades Digitales Hispánicas in 2012¹⁰, Association of Digital Humanities (AHDig) in Brazil in 2013¹¹, *Humanistica* in France in 2014¹². Evidently, the geopolitical concentration of DH requires that its technological, economic and political infrastructure acts, generalizes and imposes its legitimizing model on the network. Behind the data lies an infrastructure, and whoever manages it has essential control¹³.

In the meantime, something has been brewing since the emergence of personal computers and Web 2.0. Now we are all digital: from the time we get up and use the mobile or the computer as the first day-to-day gesture. Just as no one distinguishes between digital astronomy and plain astronomy, it will be difficult to separate the so-called “Digital Humanities” and the Humanities disciplines simply because we all use libraries, editions, databases, and we are all teachers on line. In a certain sense the humanities can only be digital, given the pressure of the accelerated digitization of culture, which makes the expression of DH effectively redundant.

But in the studies of Humanities there are territories and traditions, very local fields of investigation, schools and their models. We are diverse and fragmented, and as such, there are differences that provoke encounters and frictions. As well as heuristics there is also hermeneutics.

Thus we could distinguish two meanings:

A strong definition (*Hard DH*) that is supported by the major international organizations (ADHO, EADH, CLARIN, DARIAH) of Anglophone countries and/or of Northern Europe, who contribute their servers, tools, resources, data, researchers and (their) technicians, and desperately seek users and more data (ours) to create added value (for them) through a (digital) work that is ours. Even at the risk of reducing the

⁷ <https://www.clarin.eu/content/clarin-in-a-nutshell>

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/index_en.cfm?pg=eric6#dariah

⁹ <http://www.humanidadesdigitales.net/>

¹⁰ <http://www.humanidadesdigitales.org/inicio.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.humanisti.ca/presentation/>

¹² <http://www.humanisti.ca/presentation/>

¹³ SANZ, Amelia (2013). “Digital Humanities or Hypercolonial Studies?” in *RICT, Responsible Innovation, Ethical Issues*, <http://www.responsible-innovation.org.uk/?s=Sanz>

argument to a simplistic and problematic dichotomy of theirs/ours, what is certain is that the current scenario and practices allow these comparisons. In order to be part of this Big Tent of the *Hard DH* requires strong, substantial and in-kind contributions (expertise, content hosting, tools and software, events, training facilities, educational resources, cooperation, etc.) and the use of many of the mainstream buzzwords (*digital library, VRE, TEI, interoperability, reusability, open source, Github, etc.*), which are all in English.

A soft definition (*Soft DH*) would correspond to users of the hardware of public institutions (or privately if they can afford it) or the software of local institutes or multinationals or any piece of code available for creating their own application,¹⁴ or from their own experience reflecting on cyberculture, cybertexts, cybermania, in search of a concrete answer to a precise problem. They are users who desperately seek to be at the center with their servers, their tools and their resources.

Fashions can be frightening because they are an immense business: the label “Digital Humanities” serves both to unite and dissolve specialties and specificities that have nothing to do with one another (history-geography-archeology-art or communication-literature-linguistics), or to legitimize studies considered by the authorities to be useless, or simply to create a disciplinary field where it is possible (and urgent) to set up institutes, laboratories, or training programs that put their names on the map of *Hard DH*: they want to be visible. The newcomers can also be frightening not as potential users, but because they are usurping a field that suddenly belongs to everyone. Perhaps that is why some of the pioneers of the “Digital Humanities” prefer to return to the term “Computing for the Humanities”¹⁵, because they want to retain their distinctiveness.

The Power of Things

What something is, or where it is done matters. It is in fact surprising that work originally focused on individual disciplines (Computational Linguistics, Computation for the History of Art, etc.) is nowadays regarded as interdisciplinary. The various DHs would be a set of computational techniques and their technologies¹⁶ that claim to

¹⁴ As NUPILL (<http://nupill.ufsc.br/>) at Santa Catarina University in Brazil or ILSA (<http://ilsa.fdi.ucm.es/ilsa/ilsa.php>) at Complutense University (Madrid, Spain).

¹⁵ Humanities computing/digital Humanities (http://www.cmcl.it/humanities_computing/) in 2015.

¹⁶ “La technique est le genre désignant l’ensemble des objets et de procédés utilisés, sans égard à leur mode de justification. La technologie est l’espèce du genre technique qui inclut tous les objets et procédés utiles basés sur les connaissances scientifiques” RAYNAUD, Dominique (2016). *Qu’est-ce que la technologie?* Paris, Ed. Matériologiques, p. 24.

offer methodological models to different disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences for the storage, modeling and (re)presentation of their knowledge through digital means¹⁷.

Now, if, as Kuhn and Habermas say, all sciences¹⁸ that claim to know the world are mortal because, although they are cumulative, they are falsifiable, it is also possible to point out that the technologies that seek to modify the world are only corroborative and tend to obsolescence¹⁹. There is no single scientific paradigm let alone methodology that is general and generalizable. As a result, scientific and in particular hermeneutic models may be present in our human and social sciences.

Needless to say, the imprint of computer science has been enormously to the detriment of hermeneutic traditions in the Humanities. It also true that hardware and proprietary software, have become something of a black box whose complexity can only be understood and managed by the “happy few” (we refer to Google's algorithms, Apple's technology), with a gradual improvement in ease of use. This creates an illusion of transparency that makes us forget the cultural character of the artifact, because software culturally re-encodes our practices, that is, it adjusts them to its own logic²⁰. Before the data, there exists a story and whoever develops it is key. Moreover, the data tells its own story, from the moment they are selected and modeled according to a certain criteria: they are *capta*²¹.

Technology is neither neutral, nor transparent, nor is it unique or necessary: it has colors and we can choose them not only to produce more cheaply but also to provoke social welfare. We could talk about the colors of computer technologies in the 1950s and 1970s when they were being shaped²², or in the 1990s with the global movements

¹⁷ Willard McCarty and Harold Short present “Humanities Computing” as “a large “methodological commons” of computational techniques shared among the disciplines of the humanities and closely related social sciences” MCCARTY, Willard (2003). “Humanities Computing.” *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, New York: Marcel Dekker.

¹⁸ KUHN, Thomas (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, and HABERMAS, Jürgen (1968). *Technik und Wissenschaft als “ideologie”*, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp.

¹⁹ BUNGE, Mario (1983). *Epistémologie*, Masloine, and AGASSI, Joseph (1985). *Technology. Philosophical and Social Aspects*, Dordrecht/Boston, D. Reidel.

²⁰ MANOVICH, Lev (2013), *Software Takes Command*, New York, Bloomsbury Academic.

²¹ This term was proposed by DRUCKER, Johanna (2011). “Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display” in *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 5.1.

²² ARPANET in 1968, and officially in 1972; WWW *Debates in Digital Humanities 2016* (<http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/29>). See MACPHERSON, Tara (2012): “Why are the Digital Humanities so White?” in Matthew K. Gold, *Debates in Digital Humanities 2016* (<http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/29>).

of capital and information. But we are interested in more recent dates, when the digital medium has become a social space (let us say since 2004, as a key symbolic date connected with the birth of Facebook, Google Earth, Google Books).

If we have all noticed a change in culture as a practice (not just as a text or as a discourse), if our intellectual and scientific activity is necessarily digital (and nothing without it), then our Humanities – which are necessarily digital – pose epistemological challenges (in the way subjects know objects), cultural (as a practice) and social (by the inequalities) that concern the “public thing”.

The algorithm modifies and determines the representation of knowledge at all levels. “Datification” has effects on knowledge and, as a result, has social and political consequences. That is why we say that the algorithm is political – and today we talk about “allogracy”²³. We have to point out and analyze the stories that are generating data, as well as the stories that are elaborated from the same data. Nothing is further from the end of the theory that the flood of data promised²⁴.

Because we overlook the fundamental epistemological questions that were already outlined by the “Informatica Umanistica” in Italy by Tito Orlandi²⁵ and also by Willard McCarty²⁶, which seem to have been interrupted by the exponential growth of the digitization bubble, precisely when the process of recording memories (we refer to the digitization of the analog, and to the digital traces of everything) is slipping out of democratic control. The use of software to model data, the application of humanistic perspectives to digital artifacts, the development of a critical language for the study of the instrumental fetishization of technology that dominates social discourses about the digital – all this must be part of the agenda of any “digital humanities”²⁷. It cannot be that the digital object makes us forget the thing itself.

²³ DANAHER John, “Rule by Algorithm? Big Data and the Threat of Allogracy”, IEET (07-01-2014), <http://ieet.org/index.php/IEET/more/danaher20140107>. See also INTONTI, Andrea (2015) “Algocrazia: il potere politico degli algoritmi” in *Il dettaglio* (17-10-2015) <https://aintont.wordpress.com/2015/10/17/algocrazia-potere-politico-algoritmo/>.

²⁴ ANDERSON, Chris (2008). “The End of Theory: The Data Deluge Makes the Scientific Method Obsolete” in *Wired*, June <https://www.wired.com/2008/06/pb-theory/>.

²⁵ See *PUBBLICAZIONI di Tito ORLANDI relative all'Informatica umanistica* (<http://www.cmcl.it/~orlandi/pubinf.html>).

²⁶ MCCARTY, Willard (2005). *Humanities Computing*, London, Palgrave-MacMillan.

²⁷ FIORMONTE, Domenico (2012). “Towards a Cultural Critique of the Digital Humanities”, in THALLER, Manfred (Ed.) Special Issue “Controversies around the Digital Humanities”, *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* No. 141, Vol. 37.3, pp. 59-76.

We need a critical citizenship, a critical pedagogy, a critical awareness of digital culture, because it is insidious and controls us very quickly like a second skin. It is transparent, like a relentless movement of millions of people towards other forms of representation, and this is necessarily changing the epistemology of the digital.

That is, the (Digital) Humanities are political. And given that they are, what politics do we want to propose for the (Digital) Humanities? What can be our strategies? For what and for whom? And above all: Dependent on whom?

The Power of Practice

There may be different practices, depending on different traditions and different names. There is room enough for technical diversity: adaptive responses to the cultural diversity of paradigms and technical practices, because technological solutions can be adapted to research questions, to their limits in scope and time.

It seems that “cognitive capitalism”²⁸ links in a continuum the hardware industries (Apple or IBM?), software producers, developers of digital objects, and users, because they are semantic: they make sense, create social value and are political, even if it seems that those in the North invent and those in the South consume.

It appears that we attach more importance to source than to market, but we forget that without this there is no product and that the largest institutes struggle to get users and thus justify their investment²⁹. It is clear that when the tools and servers are free, the products are the users. The issue, then, lies not in the producers who control, but in the democratic quality of the users.

But users are not simple appendages of the machine and alien to it in a production chain. By using these semantic tools to produce cultural content, they become not only consumers, but also products and producers, and so have been called “prosumers”, that is, all collective, cognitive, cultural workers: creators of discourses and practices that are cultural, diverse, antagonistic and (why not?) also critical³⁰.

²⁸ COLLETIS, Gabriel (2014). “Le capitalisme cognitif à l’ère du numérique”, *Mondes sociaux*, 25-02-2014, <http://sms.hypotheses.org/1902>; *Le capitalisme cognitif*, *Multitudes* n° 32, éd. Amsterdam, printemps 2008.

²⁹ *Text-Grid* (<https://textgrid.de/>) in the frame of DARIAH-EU. Or even *Europeana* (<http://www.europeana.eu/>).

³⁰ FUCHS, Christian (2015). *Culture and Economy in the age of social media*, New York and London, Routledge.

In fact, we cannot reproach Juan Maria Arzak who uses German kitchens, Italian casseroles and Japanese knives, along with his genuinely Basque know-how, for his creations; we cannot even reproach him for working for the happy few who can afford his art. We cannot, because Arzak has shared this art through his books, interviews and web pages; we have appropriated him, and he has thus produced a change in cultural and social practices.

Computers are not pure utensils, extensions of our hands and fingers, such as a fork and its spoon, a whisk and its bowl, although, in fact, these also impel us to act in a certain way, cause transformations in the context and have an inscribed knowledge. Computers in addition have interfaces: we interact with them and they produce knowledge that we recognize as such. We can manage that technology, convert it into technique, model and manipulate it to produce the desired operation. Moreover, we must act as if it were a fork particularly designed for a delicacy that is only ours: this library or that repertoire, for those students or those citizens. In the field of humanities that are now digital, this task of polishing the instrument, of modifying and adapting it, is the task of the artisan or artist who is the researcher in his studio, surrounded by other artists, researchers and technologists. So that every movement of the polishing fingers is not banal, it has a meaning: it is directed towards. They are not neutral and should not be transparent: they provoke reflection, reaction, and new movement.

Nevertheless, only the idea that circulates evokes social change, not because it originates from somewhere, but because it is distributed. If we want to launch into the world of MOOCS, we will have to reckon with *COURSERA*, *EDX*, *FUTURE LEARN*, *UDACITY*, *CANVAS* and only *MiriadaX* outside the Anglophone sphere. In research social networks, we have *Researchgate*, *Academia.Edu* or *AlphaGalileo*³¹, but also the *Information and Scientific News Service (SINC)* in Spain³². If we try to measure the impact of a scientific publication, along with *Web of Science* and *Scopus*³³ we have, in collaboration with the latter, *ScimagoLab*³⁴ and *Dialnet*, where the scientific contents of Social Sciences and Humanities create “impact” to be added to those databases that have been created. And let us not forget, Thomson and Reuters and the powerful publisher Elsevier, who follow the “established” criteria for traditional academic

³¹ *AlphaGalileo Foundation* (<http://www.alphagalileo.org>).

³² *SINC* (<http://www.agenciasinc.es>).

³³ *Scopus* (<https://www.scopus.com/>).

³⁴ *ScimagoLab* (<http://www.scimago.com/>). See the presentation in *Formación Universitaria*, Vol. 5 Nº5-2012, p. 1 (http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0718-50062012000500001)

products (those of their company, those of their journals)³⁵. Together with the *Journal Scholar Metrics*³⁶ that only includes nine journals in History, we have the *Scientific Resources* of FECYT³⁷, although they are no longer updated. Also, apart from the *Sherpa Romeo* (Rights Metadata for Open Archiving) portal for journals, in Spain there is *Dulcinea*³⁸. If we want to publish our academic positions and fellow researchers, we can use blogs from *BLOGGER* or *Wordpress*, or the platform in Spanish: *Blogia*³⁹. In countries like India, notwithstanding the digital divide (which is quickly being bridged by the rapid growth of smartphones), the digital databases and archives for scholarly publications are primarily managed by governmental entities, such as INFLIBNET and *Shodhganga*, who put theses and dissertations in the reach of all⁴⁰.

But, paradoxically, when a researcher puts into circulation a digital artifact (a posting in a blog or mailing list, updates to a database or experiences with students, interactive graphics, videos, scientific conversations in social networks, codes and processes shared in repositories, etc.), academic institutions penalize it. In fact the academic process is being radically transformed, by becoming more open from the gestation of the idea to its final results, which is starting to erode the artificial distinction between process and product⁴¹. Interdisciplinarity is also penalized when an article does not fit in a discipline⁴², or when it has multiple or diffuse authorship in open collaborative projects. Or even when tasks are not considered directly related to research (such as

³⁵ See FIORMONTE, Domenico, Ernesto Priego (2016). "Knowledge Monopolies and Global Academic Publishing", *The Winner* 3:e147220.00404 (<https://thewinner.com/papers/4965-knowledge-monopolies-and-global-academic-publishing>). A presentation of "Web of Knowledge y Journal Citation Reports" in Universidad Carlos III (http://portal.uc3m.es/portal/page/portal/biblioteca/campanas_promocionales/Web_of_Knowledge).

³⁶ <http://www.journal-scholar-metrics.infoec3.es>

³⁷ <https://www.recursoscientificos.fecyt.es>. See also http://www.cepc.gob.es/centro-de-recursos/biblioteca/otros-recursosselectr%C3%B3nicos/indices_de_impacto_de_las_revistas_espanolas

³⁸ *SHERPA-ROMEO* (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/index.php>). *Dulcinea*, *Derechos de explotación y permisos para el auto-archivo de revistas científicas españolas* (<http://www.accesoabierto.net/dulcinea>)

³⁹ *BLOGGER*: <https://www.blogger.com/>; *WORDPRESS.COM* <https://es.wordpress.com/>; *BLOGIA* <https://www.blogia.com/>

⁴⁰ See Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre <http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/> and particularly <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

⁴¹ See PRIEM, J. (2013). « Scholarship: Beyond the paper » *Nature*, 495, 437–440 (28 March 2013).

⁴² See RODRÍGUEZ ORTEGA, Nuria (2016). "Las Humanidades Digitales: un marco de reflexión crítica sobre la cultural [#CSHDSUR]" in *ReArte.Dix* (10-3-2016) (<http://historiadelartemalaga.uma.es/dixit/las-humanidades-digitales-un-marco-de-reflexion-critica-sobre-la-cultura-ii-cshdsur>)

the transfer of knowledge to the private sector, public engagement or teaching), as if they were parameters that can and should not be measured⁴³.

Of course, quality assessment agencies and many research project evaluation teams lack specialists to evaluate contributions when academics from such heterogeneous backgrounds participate. There is even a lack of instruments to evaluate projects that do not seek the generation of a prearranged final and set product, but what are recognized as works in progress and open to change⁴⁴. Hence, alternative metrics have to emerge, attentive to the full history of the impact⁴⁵, and, with them, new indicators based on Web 2.0, for the analysis of academic activity, such as *Altmetrics.com*

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It is not necessary to be a technology guru⁴⁶ to realize the high cost of digital illiteracy in our time, and the need to achieve a technological familiarity to be digital students, digital teachers, digital researchers, who will be able to use virtual libraries, collaborative methodologies, data analysis, and visualization tools in their daily tasks: what we call “soft skills” in the digital field. The problem is that university curricula are very slow to adjust to technical changes that are social. Given the volatility of digital culture, it is difficult to know how to prepare graduates to enter the digital market.

It is as if the companies and their markets were developing broadband and big data, while the competences of the “prosumers” lay with dialup or without any kind of telegraphy. Of course, the acquisition of digital skills and abilities requires time, and the dedication of trained professionals, that is, they are non-profit activities that are left for public institutions. Surprisingly, this is the role left to the public themselves (with some exceptions for educational companies that sell high-priced diplomas for practical skills).

⁴³ ROMERO FRÍAS, E. (2014). “Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades Digitales: una visión introductoria”. In Romero Frías, E. y Sánchez González, M. (editores) (2014). *Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades Digitales. Técnicas, herramientas y experiencias de e-Research e investigación en colaboración*. CAC, Cuadernos Artesanos de Comunicación, 61, pp. 19-50.

⁴⁴ See NOWVSKIE, Bethany (2012). *Cats and ships* (2-11-2012) <http://nowvskie.org/2012/cats-and-ships/> and PRESNER, Todd (2012). “How to evaluate Digital Humanities” in *Journal of Digital Humanities*, 1,4, 2012 (<http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-4/how-to-evaluate-digital-scholarship-by-todd-presner/>): Fundamentals for Initial Review, Crediting, Intellectual Rigor, Crossing Research, Teaching, and Service, Peer Review, Impact, Approximating Equivalencies, Development Cycles, Sustainability, and Ethics, Experimentation and Risk-Taking.

⁴⁵ TORRES-SALINAS, D.; Cabezas-Clavijo, A. & Jiménez-Contreras, E. (2013). “Altmetrics: nuevos indicadores para la comunicación científica en la Web 2.0” in *Comunicar*, 41, v. XXI, pp. 53-60.

⁴⁶ Such as Mark Zuckerberg: “In fifteen years we will be teaching programming, just as reading and writing, and wondering why we didn’t do it sooner”, in *Computer Science Education Week*, http://csedweek.org/files/Zuckerberg_poster.pdf;

There are many digital tools available to us which do not require any particular technical skills or advanced know-how for us to take to the class-room⁴⁷: there is *soft-tech* or *soft-software* (free, open, with simple functionalities, friendly) that we can appropriate not only to acquire basic skills, but also to build our own digital heritage, our own digital work, our own e-books.

Towards a Digital Humanities and Social Sciences in the South

Faced with digital hypercolonialism, those affected can decolonize the power of scientific knowledge⁴⁸. This is the current need, so that other voices and practices can participate in the constant modeling of the digital landscape that does not have to continue being insular, monolingual and homogenous, but can be subject to different influences.

First, **suitable digital models** for the analysis of cultural and artistic artifacts from the Humanities and Social Sciences, and from other epistemologies⁴⁹, will lead to new research and teaching practices. This implies:

(a) the development of digital methods for analyzing digital and non-digital practices and materialities in accordance with the specific modes of research in the human and social sciences;

(b) the study of current social, cultural and artistic practices that depend on digital materiality and which convert digital culture into an object of study;

(c) encouraging the expressive use of digital environments for creative literary and artistic production in all its forms;

(d) the development of critical theories of the digital knowledge society that develops the individual conscience in its historical and political aspects;

⁴⁷ *Google apps for Education* (<https://www.google.com/intl/es-419/edu/products/productivity-tools>) proposes more than 30 tools for educational purposes. See also *Pedagogical Toolkit*: <http://pedagogy-toolkit.org/resources/>

⁴⁸ ADRIANSEN, Hanne Kirstine (2016). « Global academic collaboration: a new form of colonisation? », in *The Conversation* (8 July 2016) <https://theconversation.com/global-academic-collaboration-a-new-form-of-colonisation-61382>. See also MIGNOLO, Walter (2012). *Local histories / coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, and SANTOS, B. Sousa (2010). *Descolonizar el saber, reinventar el poder*, Montevideo: Extensión, Universidad de la República-Ediciones Trilce.

⁴⁹ SMITH, Linda Tuhiwai (2012). *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous People*, Zed Books, London.

(e) the elaboration of particular histories of the adoption of computer methods in local disciplinary contexts, with the goal of enriching the legitimizing narrative that dominates production in English. In a multipolar world, these histories can be proposed as variant possibilities, rather than as threatening alternatives.

Second, the **critical appropriation** of codes, applications, resources and standards by users, which, based on the rejection of closed-source codes or applications in English, will attract local initiatives and break the mere digital reproduction of Social and cultural hierarchies, not forgetting (and in parallel to) reflection on the exploitation by the high-tech industries of the resources of the South, as in the mining of Coltan in the Congo, which is needed to produce the batteries in our mobiles, tablets, etc., as if our digital life begins with the material death of many⁵⁰ ...

It requires:

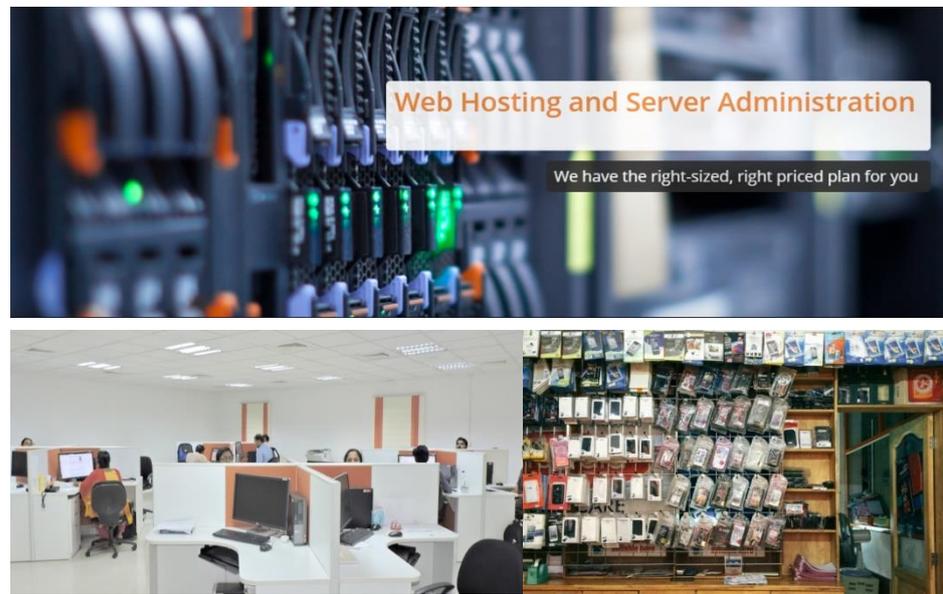
- The financing of small projects with digital methodologies, technologies and techniques at the national and local level.
- The creation of digital libraries and repositories that value local knowledge.
- The creation of digitization centers to support these initiatives.
- Digital literacy in various levels of the curriculum.

Third, a **pluralistic legitimization**, also arising from local disciplinary contexts, without the model of recognition being a simple translation of the traditional model into the digital domain. The fact is that the adoption of digital models is introducing valuable new products to the scientific community, which are not recognized by local communities. It will also have to be possible to evaluate the margins and the freedom of innovation in the peripheries, both within and without the digital community. And for this, it will first be necessary that in any of the associations, institutions or

⁵⁰ For example in India, where the slogan says that if you cannot overcome or work around the code (of Apple or Microsoft), then abandon it, as can be seen in the rejection of Facebook's Free Basics (after a strong public opposition to the commercial agenda behind the purportedly "free" move). While WhatsApp and Facebook remain the favorites in allowing the use of the major vernacular languages, Instagram and Twitter are limited to the English educated because they do not operate in local languages. If Google integrates them and they win greater acceptance, it is also certain that the learning of English has eroded established hierarchies and complicated caste equations in India, while the massive penetration of mobile phones has ensured that digital media act as a double edged weapon, which on the one hand promotes a social revolution, and on the other remains a disputed terrain of meeting, which also reinforces hegemonies. Not for nothing do 86% of Humanity have access to a mobile phone. See also <https://youtu.be/9vchBG2zX9I> and <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/business/batteries/congo-cobalt-mining-for-lithium-ion-battery/>

communities that deal with Digital Humanities that each and every one of its members have their own voice and vote.

Perhaps it is also time to assess all these mechanisms of social transformation, and to connect with those of the South.



Imag. 1: Digital plurality in Kerala (India): Brahmanet, Digital Center in the University, Molomart shop⁵¹

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⁵¹ <http://www.brahmanet.com/content/contact>,
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