



# D I G I T H U M

The Humanities in the Digital Age

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## Editorial

### Digithum 17 - The First Issue of a New Era

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The journal *Digithum* publishes its 17<sup>th</sup> issue, which reflects the latest developments in terms of the new editorial line. As we already explained in our last issue, we have decided to turn this journal into a purely academic journal with a strong international focus and a dedication to a specific, albeit wide, thematic range. Founded 15 years ago and having come a long way in this time, we aim to turn *Digithum* into an academic journal of reference on a national and international level. Some of you might argue that *Digithum* already used to be an academic journal and obviously there is some truth in this. In fact, the path to the decision of turning *Digithum* into a scientific journal, in a dialogue with an international, specialised community has been unfolding slowly but surely over the years.

In relation with these editorial decisions, there is a very special piece of news that we wish to share with you, a piece of news that reflects and synthesises perfectly, this past process of maturation and the new aspirations for this journal: *Digithum* has been accepted in the Scopus data base! The acknowledgement of the work done in the past years provides fantastic motivation in keeping true, while endeavouring for continuous improvement.

This new phase of the journal brings along important changes. On the one hand, the periodicity of the journal has changed. Instead of publishing an issue every year, *Digithum* will from now on be published twice a year: in July (starting now, July 2015) and in January. This will allow for shorter waiting times between sending an article and publishing it, as well as for increased internal deliberation among authors publishing in the journal thereby better relating articles, revisions and materials we publish with one another. In this sense, we hope and expect that *Digithum* will be filled with further vitality and active debate, along with productive and critical interaction between authors, in an environment that was hardly possible with an annual publication schedule.

Another novelty will be that articles will be published in the language of arrival: If you send an article in English, it will be published in English (with a summary translated into Catalan and Spanish); if you send an article in Catalan, it will be published in Catalan; if you send an article in Spanish, it will be published in Spanish – with the respectively translated summaries. However, in keeping with our mission to create lively academic debates, we will engage in the translation of selected key articles and texts of a high academic value, in order to foster more lively debate between authors and texts. We thereby wish to avoid linguistic barriers becoming the horizons of constraint of our project.

As already mentioned, we wish to also give our journal a renewed and greater focus by concentrating on a very specific dimension of research. This will allow us to diminish possible dispersion and allow us to create an authentic debate between texts and authors. Our new focus will become possible by publishing works that look at and analyse the world via what we could call “relationalism” or relational perspective. Over the last years, the importance of such a relational perspective has grown constantly, not only but especially in the field of social sciences and humanities. A manifesto for a relational perspective came from Mustafà Emirbayer in an article of the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1997, which achieved considerable audience and impact. However, the origins of a relational perspective can be traced back to the philosophy, aesthetics and sociology of Georg Simmel (1858-1918).

*Digithum* proposes to work with relationalism as a new editorial line that projects our journal on an international level and that will live from strong academic debates and contributions. This means that contributions from sociological/social theory, historical sociology, sociology of culture and sociology of emotions, cultural theory, film theory, media studies, arts, and humanities are as



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welcome, as all kinds of works from other disciplines as long as they touch on the topic of relationalism. It should be evident that on the basis of relationalism as a transversal category, interdisciplinary debate and exchange will become possible. In fact, one of the central elements in the redefinition of our journal is the emphasis on an interdisciplinary dimension that will be well reflected in this, our first issue. In order to facilitate a better understanding of what we mean by this, we will explain in little more depth the changes in the editorial line.

The central axis of our new publication is the already-mentioned relational perspective in understanding the web of relations between culture-individual-society. Different issues will present the various ways in which we can analyse, understand and explain the individual and collective forms of creating and feeling part of society and its cultural processes from a relational perspective, focussing on the relational bonds which we weave between one another and which establish us within our society, as members in a specific place.

The name of our journal makes reference to the distance that is between us and ourselves, between our subjective experience and our cultural heritage which in an unfinished process of inter-relationality constitutes our culture. Simmel defined culture as the continuous coming and going between objective culture and subjective culture; a process that is necessarily always mediated.

People have the capacity to create objects bestowed with a meaning that survives longer than they themselves, which then shapes the lives of others who have in many cases never had direct contact with those who materialised what they wished to pass on. In fact, our lives are always built on this anonymous heritage that we meet as soon as we enter this world. We are heirs in this sense, weave our social relations and identities on

the shoulders of other persons and generations, transforming into giants on so many people's shoulders. We live our lives by building on millions of objects, social forms, traditions, languages, past presences, entities and institutions which might have disappeared, and we embody this legacy in the form, from the place, and according to the conditions from which we can live and create our lives.

*Digithum* wants to deal with and analyse these relational bonds, the objectified fingerprints (digitum) and their productive force, their consequences and forms of expression, all at a time of profound transformation in objective culture and ways of relating with others, with and via culture. New media, communication via computers, mobile phones, Internet... all of these digital devices and spaces have changed the way we go through our daily lives, connect with others, receive and pass on our legacy. The fingerprint (digitum) has become itself digital. New forms and possibilities in preserving and transmitting culture correspond with new ways of creating subjectivities, memories and oblivion, some of them searched for and desired, others not sought after nor desired, as a result of former actions and decisions.

Their analysis will be the task that we want to devote *Digithum* to. A new era has begun and we are looking forward to our and your future achievements.

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