

# TOWARDS A *DIGITAL PHILOLOGY*

## Creation, Spread and Apprehension of Knowledge through Digital Scholarly Platforms in Humanities (A Case Study of *OpenEdition*)

“What we are, as human beings as well as societies, is deeply shaped by modes of producing and diffusing knowledge. Understanding those modes, being able to analyze and identify issues, is not only a matter of technical or disciplinary skills: it is actually the key to get a grip on our world” (Vitali Rosati & Sinatra 2014, §1, *incipit*. [My translation])

Question: What are the uses developed on a scholarly platform in Humanities, and in what concrete way are they influencing the modes of scientific communication?

### I. A DIGITAL PHILOLOGY?

Written culture through the Digital: a new relationship between material support and textual content.

**Traditionally**, philology is the discipline that establishes and analyzes texts in order to interpret them in the light of their physical inscription.

#### Digital philology:

- Making traditional philology with digital tools (e.g. semantic enrichment of classical or medieval texts) (Crane, Bamman and Schreibman 2008);
- Considering philology suitable to digital texts – texts that are distinguished by the fact that their content can be separated from their material supports (Rastier 2001) but also by the fact that the support influences the writing act as well as the reading act (Bonaccorsi 2012).

#### “Philological imperative” (Doueihi 2011):

- Applying philological methods (such as checking sources) in a digital environment as a condition for what Doueihi called *digital humanism*;
- Contextualizing Digital in its historicity as a technical innovation having an influence on our culture. In other words, to consider the Digital in a critical way and to keep a reflexive outlook on our practices (Berra 2015).

### II. WHY *OPENEDITION* AS A CASE STUDY?

#### A full platform of scientific edition in open access:

- *Revue.org*: journals with scientific papers;
- *Hypotheses.org*: scientific blogging;
- *Calenda*: announcements; news of research in Humanities and Social Sciences;
- *OpenEditionBooks*: books provided in open access by editors.

#### Based on an active apprehension of the technical device by users:

- No interference on the intellectual content once a journal is agreed;
- Training sessions and coaching by an editorial team are provided;
- Flexibility of the support enables creative uses.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**Triviality:** “The transformative and creative feature of transmission and rewriting of cultural beings through several social spaces” (Jeanneret 2014: 15 [my translation]).

- No *digital revolution* but other means of transmission for culture and ideas that transform them and determine new ways for apprehension;
- Scientific texts are meant to be reused, commented, criticized, translated... Then, how can publishing scientific texts on a digital scholarly platform as *OpenEdition* contribute to that process?
- Approach by *triviality* takes into consideration:
  - the **technical framework** of a platform with e.g. the notion of *architext* and the works on the *editorial enunciation* (Souchier 1998; Jeanneret & Souchier 2005);
  - **discourse** as a fundamental component to understand how a socio-technical device can be apprehended (Jeanneret 2014);
  - the **social dimension of imaginaries** carried by texts that could influence uses of the platform (Davallon et al. 2003: §47 et sqq., Jeanneret 2000, 2014).

### IV. RESEARCH TRACKS

How does knowledge, as a cultural product subject to *triviality*, spread through the platform?

#### I. Articulation of temporal strata within the platform:

- How do archival materials deal with recent publications (e.g. possibilities of “redocumentarization” (Paveau 2013) by tags)?
- What means of *editorialization* (Vitali Rosati 2016) could be given when an old document is used again (e.g. in “epi-journals” that collect scientific papers in an archive like HAL)?

#### II. Genres used on the platform:

- Are they proper to the Web such as blog posts or are they still used in other media such as scientific articles, recensions, advertisements, etc. (Maingueneau 2013)?
- How could a genre be reused through the platform, e.g. a blog post on *Hypotheses* used to edit a recension or a scientific paper?

#### III. Communities acting on the platform:

- Who are the users of those platforms (researchers, groups, professionals, etc.)? How do they deal with their digital identities?
- How can they apprehend and diffuse knowledge by citing, reusing and discussing (Compagnon 1979, Genette 1982)? How are new ways emerging for research in Humanities, through collective negotiation, collective evaluation or interdisciplinarity?

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