Controversy 3:

“What is the scope of the Digital Humanities? What is the relationship between individual disciplines served by them?”
The dawn of DH...
DH is us

or

on the unbearable impact of a shared methodology

Jan Christoph Meister
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Another “two cultures”? - The case of archeology and philology

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The social and philosophical implications of Information Technologies in archaeology. The nature, development, impact and implications of information technologies in relation to the archaeological discipline and their effects on our understanding of the past. The relationships between archaeology, archaeological theory, and the technological representations of archaeological knowledge – how that knowledge is created, manipulated, modelled, and understood, and how that has changed with the introduction of new information technologies.

The theory and practice of the application of GIS to archaeological intra-site and landscape studies.

Computer-based cemetery studies and burial analysis.
Two disciplinary fields – one DH-agenda:

The social and philosophical implications of Information Technologies in literary studies. The nature, development, impact and implications of information technologies in relation to the philological disciplines and their effects on our understanding of literature and its functions. The relationships between literary studies, literary theory, and the technological representations of philological knowledge – how that knowledge is created, manipulated, modelled, and understood, and how that has changed with the introduction of new information technologies.
What exactly does it mean for something to be „digital“?
Digitale vs. analogue conceptualization

The digital view → the phenomenon is composed of discrete states

The analogue view → the phenomenon is a meaningful whole
Thesis 1:

The scope of the Digital Humanities is universal – but its practice should not be.

→ DH needs to invest more energy into philosophical and methodological self-reflection and critique to engage in a constructive dialogue with “the Humanities”
Thesis 2:

Digital Humanities confronts the traditional disciplines with the ‘unbearable lightness’ of a shared methodology
Constituent dimensions of “discipline”

- a defined (but not necessarily exclusive) object domain
- a defined research orientation and methodological framework
- a developed terminology and taxonomy
- a unique set of practices, routines, methods and theories
- institutional manifestation in terms of entities (e.g., university departments), structures (e.g., degree courses, career paths) and facilities (e.g., libraries, museums, object repositories)
- an organized discursive community (e.g., academic organizations) and a communicative infrastructure (e.g., journals)

.... and more!
Thesis 2:

Digital Humanities confronts the traditional disciplines with the ‘unbearable lightness’ of a shared methodology

→ DH offers the chance of communication through the use of a new conceptual lingua franca: digital conceptualisation

→ DH cuts across & affects all dimensions defining the traditional disciplines: it negates disciplinary identity
One could distinguish two classes of men: those who are capable of metaphors, and those who are capable of formulae. Those who are capable of both are too few; they do not form a class.

(Heinrich von Kleist)