

Into the medieval manuscript: what digital knowledge medium to « re-open » the book?

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Abstract

In Edinburgh last March, we gave a brief presentation on the intermedial object that the medieval codex can represent, using the example of manuscript 1800 from the Méjanes library in Aix-en-Provence, the primary support for a digital escape game available from autumn 2023.

We have carried out interdisciplinary work combining literature and chemistry on this 15th-century illuminated manuscript, and we wanted to popularize the results and approach through an immersive investigation. The construction of the game and its initial results lead us to ask the following questions:

- How can the development of a digital game serve scientific communication? What does the digital medium enable? What does it facilitate? How is it perceived and understood by different audiences?
- In the other way, how can scientific research evolve thanks to the design of such a game?

We'll try to show that the ludic digital medium is a tool as well as a digital fiction; that it is also a means of questioning, which stimulates and refines research. Finally, it leads us to consider the digital medium as a solution for understanding and representing medieval manuscripts in all their complexity. Indeed, the development of knowledge graphes, of virtual and augmented reality, driven by traditional visions of reading, codicological and chemical analysis, and photography, can enable us to understand and represent medieval manuscripts in all their complexity.

Indeed the development of virtual and augmented realities based on traditional views as lecture, chemical and codicologic analyze and photography can help us to understand this medieval object as a witness and support of knowledge.

Keywords

Medieval book, multidisciplinary research, digital knowledge medium

Bio

Elodie Burle-Errecade is a lecturer in medieval language and literature at the CIELAM laboratory at the University of Aix-Marseille (AMU, France). She is a member of the CUERMA team of medievalists. Specializing in medieval literature and its rewritings, she is both a medievalist (including poetry and Arthurian Middle Ages) and a modernist (especially the reinvention of medieval imaginary in various modern genres and contexts). She also works on the dissemination of scientific culture particularly on the medieval manuscript. After designing a digital escape game to understand this ancient book and its mysteries, and showing how it can be invested in a modern game field, she works with a multidisciplinary team on other digital media to make understand its conception and its place in a tradition and a library.

Valérie Gontero-Lauze is a lecturer in medieval language and literature at the CIELAM laboratory at the University of Aix-Marseille (AMU, France). She is a member of the CUERMA team of medievalists. Her areas of specialisation are medieval encyclopaedic literature (lapidaries, bestiaries, herbariums) and the history of medieval books. In 2015, she began works with Florence Boulc'h, MADIREL's chemist, on colours in a 15th-century manuscript - Petrarch's translation of *Remèdes de l'une et l'autre Fortune*. Other research projects are currently underway, with an expanded multidisciplinary team. Based on the results of this research, a digital Escape Game has been designed for 2023, a project led by Elodie Burle-Errecade. The team is currently working on the conceptualisation of other digital tools for entering the world of medieval books.

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Web site: affairepetrarque.com

YouTube: https://youtu.be/cStuC5_jGKI?si=GTu_XINFE_X3tDG4

YouTube: https://youtu.be/CMEe-N3G_OU?si=6jocNCzA9JDs-GHb