The Medieval Electronic Scholarly Alliance: a federated platform for discovery and research

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1. Medievalists’ use of digital resources
Interest by medievalists in digital methods over time

• Programs from International Congress on Medieval Studies (Kalamazoo, MI)
• 857 individual events (papers, sessions, workshops, poster sessions) from 1971-2012
• Growth in number of digital papers, sessions, workshops over the years (broadly defined)
• Inconsistent growth:
  – % of sessions with digital components
  – Ratio of individual digital components to number of sessions containing digital components
Trends over time
Trends over time

- 1970s – wide variance from year-to-year
  - Strong start: 4.3% (3 sessions) in 1971
  - 0 papers in 1975
Trends over time
Trends over time

• 1980s – Fewer sessions in total, fewer components per session
  – Around 2% each year
  – Ratio above 0.5 each year (four years 0.667, one year 0.8)
Trends over time
Trends over time

• 1990s: Number of digital sessions grows along with the conference
  – Between 1-2% every year except 1998, 3.76%
  – Ratio below 0.5 all years but 1992 and 1997
Trends over time
Trends over time

• 2000s: Number of digital sessions grows faster than the conference
  – Percentage closer to 3.5-4% every year
  – Ratio above 0.5 all years but 2002
Spread for 2002-2012

• Percentage of sessions with digital components
  – 1.28% (2003) to 4.39% (2009)
  – 2012: 4.36%

• Ratio of individual digital components to number of sessions containing digital components
  – 0.449 (2011) – 22 sessions, 49 components
  – 0.758 (2012) – 25 sessions, 33 components
Medieval projects in arts-humanities.net

• 130 projects with keyword “medieval” (July 6, 2012 and July 4, 2013)

• Content Type
  – Text: 84
  – Dataset / structured data: 75
  – Still image/graphics: 55
  – Spatial: 11
  – 3-D objects: 6
  – Sound: 5 (music and recordings of readings)
Disciplines

- History: 73
- Archaeology: 26
- Modern languages: 22
- English literature and language: 20
- Architecture: history theory & practice: 20
- Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies: 14
- Linguistics: 13
- Librarianship, Information & Museum Studies: 12
- Classics & ancient history: 9
- Law: 9
- Visual arts: 5
- Music: 4
- Community arts: 4
- Design: 3
- Philosophy: 2
- Drama & theater studies: 1

http://www.castlesandmanorhouses.com/catharcstales/120710_puivert.htm
http://www.cincinnatiearlymusic.com/medieval_lute.html
http://home.earthlink.net/~curtis_c_bouterse/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/bladrpp2.jpg
Medievalists’ Use of Digital Resources

- Surveys of medievalists, 2002 and 2011
  - 2002: 92 selected faculty (US), 46.7% return rate
  - 2011: Closed and open
    - 100 selected faculty (US), 27% return rate
    - Released online, distributed via listservs, 176 responses
- Comparing 2002 and combined 2011 findings
<http://www.scholarlyediting.org/2013/essays/essay.porter.html>
1. Medievalists’ use of digital resources

• Medieval studies: broad field consisting of many disciplines
• Relatively consistent, although slow, growth of interest in the digital represented in conference papers
• Rapid growth in reported use of specific types of electronic resources (e.g. journals, facsimiles)
Medieval Electronic Scholarly Alliance (MESA)

http://www.mesa-medieval.org/
MESA Steering Committee

- Dot Porter, co-chair (Philadelphia, PA, USA)
- Timothy Stinson, co-chair (Raleigh, NC, USA)
- James Cummings (Oxford, UK)
- Christoph Flüeler (Fribourg, Switzerland)
- Will Noel (Philadelphia, PA, USA)
- Dan O’Donnell (Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada)
- Lynn Ransom (Philadelphia, PA, USA)
- Peter Robinson (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada)
- Torsten Schaßan (Wolfenbüttel, Germany)
- Stephen Shepherd (Los Angeles, CA, USA)
Focus on two needs of the community

• Provide aggregated searching of digital objects and projects in the field of medieval studies

• Provide or facilitate peer review of those projects when needed
Collex

About

Collex is a set of tools designed to aid students and scholars working in networked archives and federated repositories of humanities materials: a sophisticated COLLECTIONS and EXHIBITS mechanism for the semantic web.

Collex allows users to collect, annotate, and tag online objects and to repurpose them in illustrated, interlinked essays or EXHIBITS. It functions within any modern web browser without recourse to plugins or downloads and is fully networked as a server-side application. By saving information about user activity (the construction of annotated collections and exhibits) as “remixable” metadata, the Collex system writes current practice into the scholarly record and permits knowledge discovery based not only on the

Archives

- July 2012
- July 2013
- December 2009
- August 2009
- April 2009
- December 2008
- September 2008
- July 2008
- March 2008
- January 2008
- August 2007
- May 2007
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dc:hasPart rdf:resource="http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/ManuscriptDescriptions/W658/n224.206396"

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dc:hasPart rdf:resource="http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/ManuscriptDescriptions/W658/n224.206406"/>
Island of Ikaria in the eastern Aegean Sea west of Samos, W 658, fol. 83b

CodeX

Manuscript

The Walters Art Museum

1685

Nonfiction

18thConnect

wa ters

http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/W658/data/W.658/thumb/W658_000175_thumb.jpg

http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/ManuscriptDescriptions/W658.xml

Illustration

This map shows the island of Ikaria (Akhikrea) in the eastern Aegean Sea west of Samos (α'ξεα'ξη'.Αμ'.

http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/W658/data/W.658/sap/W658_000175_sap.jpg

http://thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/ManuscriptDescriptions/W658.xml
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  <collex:freeculture>false</collex:freeculture>
  <collex:genre>Nonfiction</collex:genre>
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<collex:archive>courtauld</collex:archive>
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<collex:text>
Wing: left Standing Virgin and Child (Vierge glorieuse); two standing angels holding candelsticks; angel crowning the Virgin; Christ touching with his right hand the Virgin's chin. Wing: right Crucifixion with the Virgin and Christ on the cross. Traces of gilding (haloes) and polychromy (cross; arch above the Virgin).
</collex:text>
<collex:link rdf:resource="http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/829475d2_c7ce9937.html"/>
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