Science Meeting – Scientific Report

Proposal Title: **Medieval and Modern Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age**

Application Reference N°: 5577

1)   Summary (up to one page)

The Medieval and Modern Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age course ran for its fifth year on 28 April – 2 May 2014. For the first time this was offered also for Modern Manuscripts. This is an intensive course for PhD students on the analysis, description and editing of medieval and modern manuscripts in the digital age. It is offered by the School of Advanced Studies under the direction of the Institute of English Studies and King's College London, in collaboration with the Warburg Institute and the University of Cambridge, and this year has been funded jointly by the ITN Marie Curie DiXiT and NeDiMAH.

One hundred and fifty eight students from all over the world applied to attend the course, of which thirty one were selected; nine received generous grants for travel and accommodation from NeDiMAH, while 22 were funded by DiXiT. The students visited Corpus Christi, Cambridge University Library, and St John's College Libraries in Cambridge, and the Senate House and Lambeth Palace Libraries in London. During these visits they worked with a wide range of original manuscripts, including Darwin's autographs, eighth-century gospel books, some treasures of twelfth-century illumination, and medical and scientific manuscripts, among others. They also received 'hands-on' training, working on computers to develop and practice new skills in the editing, transcribing and cataloguing of the very manuscripts they had seen in the libraries earlier that week. The course was also complemented by additional lectures and discussion on palaeography, cataloguing, editing, bookbinding, provenancing, and issues of preservation and representation in a digital context. They were taught by twenty-two leading experts in the fields of Manuscript Studies and Digital Humanities who came not only from the IES, King's, the Warburg and Cambridge, but also included librarians, consultants and specialists from elsewhere such as Prof Dirk Van Hulle from the University of Antwerp, Prof Susan Schreibmann from the NUI Maynooth, Franz Fischer and Patrick Sahle from the University of Cologne, Alberto Campagnolo from the Vatican Library and Dr Tim Bolton from Sotheby's.

Feedback from both students and instructors was extremely positive, with the teaching, learning, networking opportunities, and overall experience all noted favourably. The Organising Committee consisted of Dr Elena Pierazzo (Principal Coordinator), Dr Peter Stokes, Prof. Charles Burnett, Dr Wim Van Mierlo and Dr Franz Fischer

2) Description of the scientific content of and discussions at the event (up to four pages)

The AIM of MMSDA is to offer in Cambridge and London a unique, annual, five-day, intensive training programme on the analysis, description and editing of medieval and modern manuscripts in the digital age, using original manuscript materials. In the past, for funding reasons it was open only all UK postgraduates (but prioritizing AHRC-funded doctoral students); thanks to COST funding it has been opened to EU students in 2012 and this year, thanks to the DiXiT ITN, to the whole world. Manuscripts constitute the primary source for most students of the literature, history and art of the Middle Ages, but few postgraduates receive a comprehensive introduction to manuscript studies or to the principles of editing and publishing medieval texts; and this is even more true for students of modern materials. An understanding of manuscript production, codicology, texts, script, decoration, bindings, provenance and transmission is crucial for the interpretation of individual texts and images contained in them. Skills in providing and using information in catalogue entries are often required in PhD theses and publications.

The OBJECTIVES include:
1. Training postgraduates working on the literature, history, or art in the comprehensive, interdisciplinary study of manuscripts.
2. Introducing these students to the principles of describing manuscripts and editing manuscript texts, using both print and electronic media, and to the available resources and terminology.
3. Taking advantage of the interrelation between traditional disciplines and computer-mediated techniques at a subject specific level.
4. Equipping students with the skills necessary to consult and analyse original manuscripts and to develop their own electronic and print resources based on the analysis of these manuscripts.
5. Exemplifying concepts and best practice in relevant resources and projects.
6. Encouraging and enabling students to develop their own digital projects around manuscripts.

The Training TARGETS are such that by the conclusion of the course, students will be expected to:
1. Be familiar with and able to use existing resources, particularly catalogues (print and digital), handbooks and facsimiles (print and digital).
2. Be familiar with the main stages in book-production and how they developed, particularly the preparation of parchment, paper, scripts, decoration, and binding.
3. Be able to describe the support, ruling, binding, script, decoration and provenance of a manuscript using established terminology.
4. Gain experience in working with original manuscripts in a variety of settings; be aware of procedures for accessing libraries and correct handling of original material.
5. Understand the principles and issues in cataloguing manuscripts (for both print and electronic formats)

6.   Be familiar with established methods and standards of cataloguing manuscripts (both nationally and internationally) and gain practical experience of cataloguing a manuscript.

7.   Understand the principles and issues in editing texts (for both print and electronic formats); be familiar with established methods and standards of editing these texts; gain practical experience of editing a text.

8.   Understand the principles of text encoding; be familiar with the main elements of the TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) modules relevant to manuscript description, transcription and editing; be able to apply this understanding and familiarity to practical problems.

9.   Drawing all these elements together, to build upon and apply these skills to their own doctoral projects using recognised conventions in detailed, accurate descriptions.

The training was offered for the first time in two strands; this was because previous years had highlighted the need of support for students that work with modern primary sources for which formal training is even more scarce and fragmentary than for medieval studies. In fact, while many universities offers courses in Palaeography and manuscript studies, to our knowledge not a single university offers similar courses for modern manuscripts. Again to our knowledge this is the only training course that is specifically offering classes in modern palaeography and codicology. The response of the participants on this particular part of the course has been very enthusiastic, since none of them have been ever been exposed to structured teaching around the issues of modern manuscripts studies. This has certainly offered us reasons for thinking to further development of this initiative and about the necessity of raising the academic profile of modern manuscript studies.

One half of the course involves classes in the mornings and then visits to libraries in Cambridge and London in the afternoons (see the schedule). Students have the opportunity to view original manuscripts and to gain practical experience in applying the morning's themes to concrete examples. In the second half we address the cataloguing and description of manuscripts in a digital format with particular emphasis on the standards developed by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). These sessions also combine theoretical principles and practical experience and include workshops with supervised work on computers. The course is completed by sessions on modelling and evaluating digital scholarly editions. The course is completed by evening lectures offered on more general topics such as planning digital projects (which was also offered to the public), conservation of manuscripts in the digital age, provenance and the private market.

The participants' feedback has been overwhelmingly favourable. In particular students have appreciated the unique mixture of theoretical and practical teaching, and of traditional and digital scholarship. MMSDA was offered as part of the training supported by the DiXiT ITN, so among the participants were 13 of the DiXiT fellows and 18 people coming from elsewhere. The distinction between the two groups was fairly visible at the beginning of the week, but then the participants blended seamlessly, favoured by the division in parallel sessions based on research interest (medieval and modern) and by the fact that there were also plenty of joint lectures and activities.

Students have also appreciated the wide variety of the lectures as well as the large number of instructors, each of them with their own expertise and unique style of teaching. While a rapid rotation of instructors may at times seem confusing, for doctoral students it seems an appropriate way of teaching, since they already have the maturity to appreciate different points of view. However, where the information to be delivered was totally new to the participants, i.e. the digital

component, the teaching has been delivered by only one instructor, who was able then to guide the class coherently throughout the various sessions.

3) **Assessment of the results and impact of the event on the future directions of the field (up to two pages)**

MMSDA first ran in 2009. Between 2009 – 2011 it was exclusively funded the AHRC; in 2012 it has been supported by the COST action "Medioeveo Europeo", a fact that allowed us to open participation beyond the UK. That particular instance of MMSDA saw 90 applicants apply for 20 positions. This result forced us to look into forms of funding that allowed us to open it up even further. The success of the initiative in the past as well as offering it worldwide and for modernists has contributed to a dramatic rise the number of applicants, to 158 for 30 positions.

The formula of the training scheme is well established, but it is also revisited and adjusted every year in order to take into account the feedback of previous participants and to accommodate the change of situation of some of the instructors. The latter has been limited, though, which is surprising if one considers the many career changes that inevitably happen in 6 years in such a large group. The fact that most of the original group of core instructors has maintained their commitment throughout the years further demonstrates the strong cohesion and motivation of the group and the success of the scheme.

The success of this year's edition is demonstrated by the feedback forms we have collected from the participants, but also from a few extensive blog posts that have been written by some of the participants. The first of these has been written by Francisco Javier Álvarez Carbajal who took the medieval strand (http://dixit.hypotheses.org/232#more-232). His focus is on the widespread provenance of the participants and on the blend of traditional and digital content. This particular participant is the only one who has taken the course twice, in 2012 and 2014, so he is in a particularly strong position to appreciate the particular approach we gave to the course this year. In his words: "Because of this, I could perceive some changes for the better with regard to my previous visit. The organizers have taken seriously the feedback supplied by the attendees and applied adjustments accordingly to improve the experience of the course. Although the original spirit of the course remains intact, I could feel how everything was just better organized overall. It has certainly grown, divided into two specialized strands, and now it's being backed up by something bigger, an ambitious international project with three years ahead, a dozen of academic institutions with their respective scholars involved, and a group of twelve PhD students eager to take the knowledge acquired during the course one step further".

Hana Videen also attended the Medieval strand. Her account (http://quadriviumproject.com/blog/1554/from-codex-to-coding-a-week-at-mmsda) is insightful and really highlights some of the motivations that moved us to conceive this scheme in the first place. She writes: "My experience with manuscripts prior to this course was fairly limited – I had personally handed a total of … *one* manuscript (MS. Bodley 340, in case anyone's wondering). How is this possible for someone in her third year of a Ph.D. in medieval English literature, you might ask?". This comment clearly demonstrates the lack of hands-on experience that characterises most institutional training on manuscripts, and which on the contrary represents one of the strengths of MMSDA. One of the comments to her post is also particularly telling regarding the impact of MMSDA on the participants: Tamsyn Rose Steel (from MMSDA 2009) said: "Hana, thanks for your blog on MMSDA. It brought back some extraordinary memories for me. I

took this course the first year that it ran and it was a marvellous experience. I'm now working in a hybrid post between a university department and the digital curation center of the library, and I think MMSDA was one of the major things that prepared me for this kind of role". As one can notice, the unusual and specific blend of content that MMSDA provides, offered at a crucial stage of a young scholar's career, can offer a unique opportunity to enhance one's career perspectives.

The last of the blog posts worth mentioning is written by Elli Beeker; she took the Modern strand (http://dixit.hypotheses.org/219) and gives a detailed choronological account of the highlight of the week.

MMSDA, with both modern and medieval strands, is planning to run again next year. DiXiT is considering offering more funding to run it, and it is now in the hands of the organisers to secure funding for the applicants to travel.

4) **Annexes 4a) and 4b): Programme of the meeting and full list of speakers and participants**

Annex 4a: Programme of the meeting

Mon. 28 April: Cambridge			
English Faculty, 9 West Rd Cambridge: Rooms GR04 and SR24	9:00–9:30	**Registration** (GR04)	
	9:30–10:00	**Introduction to the Course** (GR04)	P. Stokes, F. Fischer, A. Speer
	10:00–11:00	**Manuscript production** (GR04)	P. Stokes
	11:00–11:30	**Coffee Break**	
	11:30–12:15	**Codicology, Provenance, Bindings**	P. Stokes
	12:15–13:00	**Medieval script | Manuscript Culture** (modern)	P. Stokes | W. Van Mierlo
	13:00–14:00	**Lunch**	
Corpus Christi College Cambridge *or* Cambridge University Library	14:00–15:00	**Library-visit: CCCC** (medieval) **| CUL** (modern)	P. Stokes, C. Voth | A. Perkins, D. Van Hulle
	15:00–15:30	**Coffee Break**	
	15:30–17:00	**Library-visit** (continued)	*As above* | J. Wells & W. Van Mierlo

Tues. 29 April: Cambridge			
English Faculty, 9 West Rd: Rooms GR05 and SR24	9:30–10:00	**Medieval Script | Modern Palaeography**	P. Stokes | W. Van Mierlo
	10:00-11:00	**Principles of Cataloguing** (medieval) **| Manuscripts and Print** (modern)	H. Vorholt | E. Pierazzo
	11:00–11:30	**Coffee Break**	
	11:30–13:00	**Decoration** (medieval) **| Private Libraries** (modern)	H. Vorholt | D. Van Hulle
	13:00–14:00	**Lunch**	

Cambridge University Library *or* **St John's College Cambridge**	14:00–15:20	**Library-visits:** **SJC** (medieval) **| CUL** (modern)	P. Stokes, C. Voth | D. Van Hulle, W. Van Mierlo, S. Schreibman
	15:20–15:40	**Coffee Break**	
	15:40–17:00	**Library-visits** (continued)	*As above* | A. Pearn, D. Van Hulle, W. Van Mierlo, S. Schreibman
English Faculty, 9 West Rd Room GR06/7	17:30–18:30	**Evening Lecture: Simon Tanner** *on planning digital projects*	
	18:30–19:30	**Reception** sponsored by the Dept. of ASNC, Cambridge	

Weds. 30 April: London			
Warburg Institute Woburn Square	10:00–11:20	**Transcribing and Editing: Principles**	E. Pierazzo
	11:20–11:40	**Coffee Break**	
	11:40–13:00	**Transcribing and Editing: Practices** (parallel sessions)	C. Burnett | S. Schreibman
	13:00–14:00	**Lunch**	
Senate House Library *or* **Lambeth Palace Library**	Start 14:00 (SHL) *or* 14.30 (LP)	**Library-visits. LP** *or* **SHL Durning Lawrence Library** (medieval) **| SHL Seng T. Lee Centre** (modern)	M. Brown, J. Crick | W. Van Mierlo, G. Giglioni, A. Cole
	15:15–15:45	**Coffee Break**	
	15:45–16:30 (SHL) Finish 17:00	**Library-visits** (continued) **LP** (medieval, cont.) *or* **SHL Seng T. Lee Centre** (both strands)	M. Brown (LP); Alan Cole (SHL)
The Plough, Museum St	17:00 – *whenever*	*Informal drinks with* [EpiDoc workshop] *participants: The Plough, 27 Museum St, WC1A 1LH*	

Thurs. 1 May: London			
King's Building, Strand (KCL) Room K4.32	10:00–11:00	**Encoding texts: XML**	E. Pierazzo (with assistance from P. Stokes and F. Fischer)
	11:00–11:30	**Coffee Break**	
	11:30–12:30	**Encoding texts: TEI**	J. Cummings (with assistance from EP, PS and FF)
	12:30–13:30	**Lunch**	
King's Building, Strand (KCL) Room K4.32	13:30–14:30	**Digital Cataloguing I**	E. Pierazzo (with PS and FF)
	14:30–15:00	**Coffee Break**	
	15:00–17:00	**Digital Cataloguing II**	E. Pierazzo (with PS and FF)
IALS Lecture Theatre, 17 Russell Square	17:30–18:30	**Evening Lecture: Alberto Campagnolo** *on bindings*	
	18:30–19:30	**Reception** sponsored by the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Studies, University of London (**Rm L103**)	

Fri. 2 May: London			
King's Building, Strand (KCL) Room K4.32	10:00–11:00	**Digital Editing I**	E. Pierazzo (with PS and FF)
	11:00–11:30	**Coffee Break**	
	11:30–12:30	**Digital Editing II**	E. Pierazzo (with PS and FF)
	12:30–13:30	**Lunch**	
King's Building, Strand (KCL) Room K4.32	13:30–14:30	**Digital Modelling**	F. Fischer, P. Sahle,
	14:30–15:00	**Coffee Break**	
	15:00–17:00	**Evaluating Digital Editions**	F. Fischer, P. Sahle
Room 104, Senate House, Russell Square	17:30–18:30	**Evening Lecture: Tim Bolton** on provenance and book-collectors	

Annex 4b: Full list of speakers and participants

Instructors and Convenors

Name	City, Country	Type
Dr. Elena Pierazzo	**London, (UK)**	**Convenor**
Dr. Peter Anthony Stokes	**London, (UK)**	**Convenor**
Dr. Tomothy Bolton	**Stockholm, (SE)**	**Speaker**
Professor Michelle Brown	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Professor Charles Burnett	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Mr. Alberto Campagnolo	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Mr. Alan Cole	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Professor Julia Crick	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Franz Fischer	**Köln, (DE)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Guido Giglioni	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Vorholt Hannah	**York, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Alison Pearn	**Cambridge, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Adam Perkins	**Cambridge, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Elena Pierazzo	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Patrick Sahle	**Köln, (DE)**	**Speaker**
Professor Susan Schreibman	**Co. Kildare, (IE)**	**Speaker**
Professor Andreas Speer	**Köln, (DE)**	**Speaker**
Mrs. Simon Tanner	**London , (UK)**	**Speaker**
Professor Dirk Van Hulle	**Antwerpen, (BE)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Christine Voth	**Cambridge, (UK)**	**Speaker**
- John Wells	**Cambridge, (UK)**	**Speaker**
Dr. Van Mierlo Wim	**London, (UK)**	**Speaker**

Participants

Name	City, Country	Type

Ms. Anya Adair	New Haven, (US)	Participant
Mr. Francisco Javier Alvarez Carbajal	Oviedo, (ES)	Participant
Ms. Elli Bleeker	Antwerpen, (BE)	Participant
Mr. Ingo Börner	Vienna, (AT)	Participant
Mr. William Michael "Misha" Broughton	Köln, (DE)	Participant
Ms. Anna Cappellotto	Verona, (IT)	Participant
Mr. Federico Caria	Roma, (IT)	Participant
Mr. Łukasz Cybulski	Warsaw, (PL)	Participant
Ms. Heidi Dowding	Den Haag, (NL)	Participant
Mr. Seb Falk	Cambridge, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Sandra Freregger	Vienna, (AT)	Participant
Mr. Richard Hadden	Co. Kildare, (IE)	Participant
Mr. Arthur Henaff	Paris, (FR)	Participant
Miss Jessica Henderson	Oxford, (UK)	Participant
Mr. Aodhán Kelly	London, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Merisa Ariel Martinez	Boras, (SE)	Participant
Ms. Synnøve Marit Midtbø Myking	Bergen, (NO)	Participant
Ms. Frederike Neuber	Graz, (AT)	Participant
Mr. François Vincent Pageau	Edmonton, (CA)	Participant
Mr. Daniel Powell	London, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Anna Katarzyna Pytlowana	Carrigaline, (IE)	Participant
Ms. Maria Teresa Rachetta	Roma, (IT)	Participant
Ms. Sabine Ines Rauch	Dublin, (IE)	Participant
Mr. Stefano Rosignoli	London, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Teresa Soto González	Madrid, (ES)	Participant
Ms. Elena Spadini	Den Haag, (NL)	Participant
Ms. Véronique Thouroude	Oxford, (UK)	Participant
Mr. Tuomo Toljamo	London, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Magdalena Turska	Oxford, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Hana Videen	London, (UK)	Participant
Ms. Carmen Elena Vílchez Ruiz	Santiago de Compostela, (ES)	Participant