



## **POSTER: Exploring the origin and provenance of medieval manuscripts from the collection of Clairvaux abbey using a biocodicological approach**

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The aim of our research is to investigate ways in which to identify the origin of parchment manuscripts from their materiality. To do so, we have selected a series of manuscripts from the collection of Clairvaux Abbey in France. The library of Clairvaux Abbey, founded in 1115 by Saint Bernard, contains one of the largest collections of medieval bindings in Europe. It was formed from donations by the first monks and thereafter mostly from the production of the Abbey's own scriptorium. By the end of the 12th century, Clairvaux possessed about 350 volumes, of which more than 170 romanesque bindings survived. The manuscripts we selected are of known origin and provenance and precisely dated between 1250-1350 CE. Additionally, we have information about their use and storage conditions since their creation. For these reasons, Clairvaux constitutes an exceptional case study.

Our goal was to differentiate two groups of manuscripts, firstly one where the manuscripts share a place of origin but have been kept in different locations, and secondly a group of manuscripts of the same provenance but that were produced in different scriptoria. We have obtained almost 150 samples from parchment and leather and we are currently applying two different biocodicological methods, proteomics and genomics (DNA), to explore these two groups. The DNA analyses are targeted at clustering documents within the two datasets, via the composition of their microbiome. We hope that this will enable an understanding of what effect a manuscript's origin, provenance and storage condition has on these microbial communities and how these compare to other documents with similar life histories. We further hope that these patterns could then be used to understand documents with a less clear curatorial history.

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