

***Patristic Sermons in the Middle Ages* (PASSIM, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)
Towards a Virtual Research Environment for the Study of Patristic Homiliaries**

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This paper will present the ERC-project *Patristic Sermons in the Middle Ages* (PASSIM), specifically its digital component and its potential to develop into a VRE. The main goal of PASSIM is to study the impact of patristic sermons on medieval culture through an analysis of the customizations and manipulations of late-antique homilies and homiletic compilations in medieval manuscripts. This goal is supported by a database which integrates detailed metadata on these manuscripts (composition, age, origin) and their content (author attributions, *incipit*, *explicit*, textual variations, liturgical function). The database is linked to a web application which allows for sophisticated queries (e.g.: which manuscripts transmit a certain sermon; which manuscripts share clusters of homilies, both predefined – like specific Augustinian collections or Paul the Deacon’s Homiliary – and created by the user), in order to reconstruct the textual and cultural networks these manuscripts witness. Since there are thousands of (unstudied) manuscripts containing patristic sermon collections, each with its own unique features, such a network approach to homiletic transmission is possible only with digital support.

Our work on the PASSIM application also includes exploring its collaborative potential. We seek to improve the platform in such a way that it can become a VRE useful to all researchers in the field of manuscript studies. At the scientific level, this task will be pursued by offering template collections, and by giving users the opportunity to propose additions and corrections, and to share searches and results. At the technical level, we envisage the PASSIM application as an interoperable environment, linked with existing virtual manuscript libraries, and as a collection of building blocks at the disposal of other scholars wishing to set up a similar database. Finally, we expect that the participation in the workshop will greatly inspire us, allowing for the exchange of best practices to carry out and opportunities to join forces in view of them.

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