

etymologiae.ms: a database of the early medieval manuscripts of the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville

Hello, everyone! My name is Evina Steinová, and I am a postdoctoral researcher at the Huygens Institute in Amsterdam. I am talking to you here because I am currently building an online manuscript database I want to tell you about. **(slide)** Once finished, this database will contain detailed information about roughly 450 pre-1000 manuscripts transmitting the most important medieval Latin encyclopaedia, the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville.

(slide) The idea of building a manuscript database stemmed from the desire to transcend the limits of paper catalogues and handlists. In fact, its basis is a printed handlist from the 1940s that illustrates the problems inherent to paper publications. Eighty years since its publication, Gustav Eduard Anspach's handlist suffers from typical ailments. Given what we know about the early medieval manuscripts of the *Etymologiae*, it is significantly incomplete, contains many errors, duplications, outdated information, misses certain types of information, which were not considered important in the first half of the 20th century, and it does not capture the current state of manuscripts, such as in cases when codices moved or perished in the Second World War. A manuscript database can be curated after its initial release. It can therefore not only be a one-time replacement of Anspach's original handlist but maintained for at least a certain period and therefore enriched and refined. **(slide)** I should add that the database is not intended as a substitute for a printed publication, but rather as one of several outputs of my project. I also intend to prepare a printable digital publication that will be downloadable from the database website. Moreover, users will be able to export the data underlying the database and reuse it for their own research. This is true both for the complete dataset and its subsets as filtered through the database interface.

(slide) Let me now tell you a little bit more about the database itself and introduce some of its functionalities. The querying of the database is made possible by nineteen faceted filters that you see in this screenshot. **(slide)** Users of *etymologiae.ms* will be able to select a subset from the 447 manuscript records in the database by filtering them based on their properties **(slide)** such as the date of origin, presence of annotations, **(slide)** their physical dimensions, or as in this example, **(slide)** presence of certain sections of the text. The filters can be combined to achieve more refined results. **(slide)** The users will then be able to download the result of such a query as a .csv file. They will also be able to click at any of the items **(slide)** to access the full description of any of the 447 manuscripts and download it as a .pdf.

(slide) Another handy feature of the database is going to be colourful labels attached to the individual database items in the search result view. **(slide)** The upper label allows users to see whether a particular manuscript contains the complete text of Isidore's encyclopaedia ('canonical *Etymologiae*'), one of the influential early medieval spin-offs ('non-canonical *Etymologiae*'), or excerpts from this work ('excerpts'). The lower label specifies the current physical state of the item, including whether it is a fragment, addition in the margin or a blank, a part of a multi-volume copy of the work, or whether it was destroyed.

So, when can you expect to see this database in action and use it yourself? **(slide)** At this moment, it is in the last stages of its development. I hope that a beta version is going to be released to a restricted group of users by the end of this year. Once the first round of testing is completed, I plan to invite the academic community at large to use the database and provide additional feedback about it. I intend to release the final version of the database, accompanied by a print-friendly digital publication by the summer of 2021.

(slide) Thank you for listening to my lightning talk, and I hope at least some of you will make use of *etymologiae.ms* in the future!