centre for material texts

annual report 2015-16

introduction

The Cambridge Centre for Material Texts was established by the English Faculty Board in July 2009 to push forward critical, theoretical, editorial and bibliographical work in a lively field of humanities research. Addressing a huge range of textual phenomena and traversing disciplinary boundaries that are rarely breached by day-to-day teaching and research, the Centre fosters the development of new perspectives, practices and technologies that will transform our understanding of the way that texts of many kinds have been embodied and circulated. This report summarizes the activities of the Centre in its seventh year.

2015-16 was marked by the arrival in the English Faculty building of two state-of-the-art cases for the display of books. These were originally acquired by the Centre as part of the AHRC-funded exhibition of books from the Grand Tour at Belton House in Lincolnshire, for which the PI was **Abigail Brundin**. They have now been put to work in a series of small but perfectly formed exhibitions, curated by academics and graduate students in a programme overseen by **Hester Lees-Jeffries**. The cases have given the Centre a substantial material presence and they will provide a showcase for a wide variety of projects in the English Faculty and beyond.

2015-16 was also a year of conferences. In November 2015, the Centre ran a one-day symposium on '**The Academic Book of the Future**', as part of the broader project on that theme based at University College, London. Members of the Centre were also involved in organising a three-day conference on '**Digital Editing Now**' (January 2016), which brought together a dazzling array of practitioners and theorists from Europe and the US for intensive debate on the current state of play in the field. Another CMT-related conference, '**Books in the Making**' (April 2016), brought key players in the publishing industry into dialogue with academics from literary and publishing studies, in order to expand our understanding of the institutional contexts of contemporary literary production. The CMT also sponsored two sessions at the Renaissance Society of America conference in Boston. The **Medieval Palaeography Workshop** entered its fifth year; and the **History of Material Texts Seminar** ran some wonderful seminars in some new venues. Sessions in the Milstein Seminar Room in the University Library allowed us to see some of the treasures of the UL's Islamic Manuscripts collection and to hear about the textual studies projects of this year's Medieval and Renaissance English MPhil students with many of the books in situ.

I   committee

The Centre is run by a Director (currently **Jason Scott-Warren**) and a Steering Committee. In 2015-16 the committee comprised: **Anne Alexander** (Digital Humanities Network), **Abigail Brundin** (MML), **Sarah Cain** (English), **Stefano Castelvecchi** (Music), **Orietta da Rold** (English), **Mina Gorji** (English), **Alison Knight** (CRASSH), **Hester Lees-Jeffries** (English), **Stella Panayotova** (Fitzwilliam Museum), **Paul Russell** (ASNC), **Anne Toner** (English), **Tessa Webber** (History), **Grant Young** (University Library) and **Andrew Zurcher** (English). At the end of the year Grant Young departed to a new post at UEA, and **Suzanne Paul** (University Library), **Nicolas Bell** (Trinity) and **Andrew Webber** (German) agreed to join the committee. The committee met twice, in January and June.

An Advisory Committee oversees the Centre's activities. Current members are: **Mary Beard** (Classics), **Simon Franklin** (Slavonic Studies), **Robert Gordon** (Italian), **David McKitterick** (History/Wren Library), **Rosamond McKitterick** (History), **John Rink** (Music), **Jim Secord** (History and Philosophy of Science), **Nicholas Thomas** (Anthropology), **John Thompson** (Sociology), **David Trotter** (English), **Mark Turin** (Anthropology), and **Alexandra Walsham** (History).

II   website

The website sets out the aims of the Centre, reports back on conferences and colloquia, advertises news and events, and publicizes the research interests and activities of its members.

In 2015-16, two new items were added to the 'Gallery' space on the website. The first, 'Collective Considerations Collating into Commonplaces', was a report by **Megan Beech** on the curation of the CMT's inaugural exhibition (see the full report below). The second, by **Anna Nickerson**, was entitled 'Writing by Sound: Pitman's Phonographic Shorthand', and coincided with her CMT exhibition of a number of Pitman's books.

The **blog** received 17 new contributions across the academic year. Subjects included varieties of non-reading; the 'Arc' classification in the Cambridge University Library; torn-up political campaign posters; digital photography in special collections; Don DeLillo's characters; the *chiocciolina* (@); Shakespeare and xenophobia; the demise of the *Independent* newspaper; the retention of vellum for English laws; the printed sea rutter; aniseed and sumac in Elizabethan binding waste; and a fly (or a midge) squashed in a book.

The main contributors to the blog this year were **Jason Scott-Warren** and **Amy Bowles.** Members of the Centre wishing to blog should contact Jason Scott-Warren (jes1003).

The CMT **Facebook page**, which provides broader publicity for the website, has now garnered 860 likes. The CMT's **Twitterfeed** has 342 followers and has issued 554 tweets. Twitter and Facebook feeds on the website continue to make these social media engagements more visible to members and visitors.

III   events and activities

<u>Seminars</u>

The Seminar in the History of Material Texts, convened by **Dunstan Roberts, Jason Scott-Warren** and **Andrew Zurcher**, held the following meetings:

15 October   **Discussion** of *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 45/3 (2015), 'The Renaissance Collage' (Milstein Seminar Room, CUL)

29 October   **Jennifer Richards (Newcastle University),** 'Listening readers and the visible voice' (Venue: S-R24, Faculty of English)

12 November **Catherine Ansorge (University Library),** 'Ink and gold; how the Islamic manuscripts came to Cambridge' (Milstein Seminar Room, CUL)

4 February   **Kate Kennedy (Oxford),** 'Appealing for Release: Ivor Gurney's 'mad' asylum letters' (Milstein Seminar Room, CUL)

18 February **Mina Gorji (Cambridge),** 'Lyric and Ephemera: Rossetti's Sing-Song' (S-R24, Faculty of English)

3 March   **James Mussell (Leeds),** 'Moving Things: Replication, Mediation, and Serialisation in Charles Dickens's *Mugby Junction*' **(S-R24, Faculty of English)**

28 April   **Med/Ren MPhil students presented their textual studies projects.** (Milstein Seminar Room, CUL)

12 May   **Ian Gadd (Bath Spa),** 'Errant commas, absent pages, and shifting typos: the strange bibliographical world of Jonathan Swift's English political works' (Keynes Room, CUL)

Cambridge Medieval Palaeography Workshop

Convenors: Teresa Webber, Orietta Da Rold, Suzanne Paul and David Ganz

The Cambridge Medieval Palaeography Workshop is a forum for informal discussion on medieval script and scribal practices, and on the presentation, circulation and reception of texts in their manuscript contexts. Each workshop focuses upon a particular issue, usually explored through one or more informal presentations and general discussion.

This year the workshop held three meetings in the Cambridge University Library:

Friday 6 May 2016.

'The Network of Cursive Handwriting: Late Medieval Italian Notaries, Merchants, Scribes and Scholars between Documents and Books'

Dr Irene Ceccherini discussed her research on Italian cursive scripts, from its first steps (quantitative analysis of notarial handwriting), via the study of the origin of the mercantesca (and its relationship with notarial handwriting), and then to the study of the transferral of cursive handwriting from documents to book (identification of notaries' and merchants' hands in books). With the help of some relevant examples, she discussed how to analyse cursive handwriting (structure and style, technique, formality), and how to study the specialisation of handwriting in different contexts (professional, social, from documents to books).

Friday 20 May 2016.
Dr Katya Chernakova: title tba
Dr Eyal Poleg: 'The Late Medieval Bible'

Dr Poleg discussed his work on late medieval Bibles, as they emerged from stationers' shops and nascent universities. They mark the height of medieval book-production and constitute a watershed in the history of the modern Bible. This session explored these highly uniform and extremely popular manuscripts as evidence of medieval reading cultures. It also asked how research shapes our understanding of medieval artefacts.

Friday 27 May 2016.
Professor David Ganz, 'When is a 'Script' not Several Scribes?'

Convenors: Teresa Webber, Orietta Da Rold, Suzanne Paul, Sean Curran and David Ganz. For further details, email Orietta Da Rold (od245@cam.ac.uk)

CMT GOES TO BOSTON

The CMT arranged two seminars at this year's Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting in Boston:

The Early Modern Material Text I: Reading, Collecting, Compiling
Thu, March 31, 8:30 to 10:00am, Park Plaza, Mezzanine, Georgian Room

Chair: **Anne E. B. Coldiron**, Florida State University

Jason Scott-Warren (Cambridge), 'Cut-and-Paste Bookmaking: The Private-Public Agency of Robert Nicolson'

Robert Nicolson of London and Surrey, a merchant and a member of the Muscovy Company, patron of the translator Josuah Sylvester and the cartographer John Norden, was a highly active reader whose reading shaded into the making of books. Whether he was 'finishing' printed books by adding handwritten marginalia, running heads and indexes, decorating them with pasted-in armorials, ornamenting them with manuscript poems in praise of their authors, or extending their projects by importing new materials into them, Nicolson's textual practices suggest the hidden investment of an early modern merchant in the literary culture of his time. How far was that investment meant to be kept hidden? My paper will investigate a life in the margins that confounds our ability to distinguish public from private, confirming and extending recent scholarship on the close relationship between cutting, pasting and creativity in early modern England.

Harriet Phillips (QMUL), 'The Ballad and the Source: Collecting Ephemera in the Seventeenth Century'

This paper considers a moment in the mid-seventeenth century as a key moment in the history of the broadside ballad, in its trajectory from the trashiest printed ephemera to an artefact of a distinctively 'popular' culture subject to learned scrutiny. By the 1630s John Selden had already begun to collect them; at the same time, his contemporary Thomas Browne can be seen obscuring the traces of their presence from his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Enquiries into Common and Vulgar Errors* (1646). This reticence is variously explicable: as an expression of the social distaste often directed towards printed ephemera, or more interestingly as a consequence of Browne's distinctively philological method. It also brings into a focus the changing nature of the broadside: from a 'disposable' paper with multiple uses, to a bounded textual object; from an unremarkable piece of the fabric of everyday life, to collectible; from mass print to folk culture.

Juliet Fleming (NYU), 'Gleaning'

Heidegger used the metaphor of gleaning to understand reading: 'Legō, legein, Latin legere, is the same word as our lesen [to collect]: gleaning, collecting wood, harvesting grapes, making a selection'. But Heidegger's formulation bleaches out the specificity of a practice with Biblical sanction that survived in European farmlands well into the twentieth century: 'And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of the field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor and to the stranger' (Leviticus 23:22). Everybody gathers but only the poor stoop to glean; it is the work not of the farmer, but of those who will not otherwise eat. This paper proposes that gleaning may allow us to think more practically and charitably about what it means to read.

The Early Modern Material Text II: Surface, Image, Point
Thu, March 31, 10:30am to 12:00pm, Park Plaza, Mezzanine, Georgian Room

Chair: **Jason Scott-Warren**, Cambridge

Lucy Razzall (QMUL), "Like to a title-leaf": Textual Surfaces in Early Modern England

The word 'surface' has its origins in early modern England, where it is often associated with cosmological or geographical descriptions of Creation. This paper is about creative surfaces and the early modern material text, and focuses on the title-page, one of the first surfaces that a reader of a printed text encounters. It is William Shakespeare to whom we can attribute the first use of a specific term for this part of a book – the 'title-leaf' – and this paper considers the material and poetic relationships between title-leaves and other surfaces concerned with visual or textual identification, including faces and street signs. It examines how real and imagined title-pages work as many different kinds of creative surface, often challenging the pervasive opposition between 'surface' and 'depth', and telling us about the possibilities as well as the limitations of the material form of the book.

Sarah Howe (Harvard, Radcliffe Institute), "Disjunctive" Prints: Reading Illustrated Books in Early Modern England

Scholars sometimes express puzzlement at what they perceive to be the lack of fit between many early modern book illustrations and the texts they putatively illuminate. In an important article of 1987, Ruth Luborsky reflected on the connections and disconnections between the two in Tudor secular books. This paper will revisit a category of illustration Luborsky dubbed 'disjunctive', whose prints seem unrelated to the accompanying text, or even contradict its details. By looking at examples from a variety of English illustrated works, I will consider how this apparent tension might help us conceptualise the problem of historical distance. In our efforts to recover early modern cultural practices of viewing, we need to develop habits of attention freed from modern assumptions about how images and texts relate to one another. My larger aim is to suggest how we might reconsider book illustration as an overlooked aspect of the history of reading.

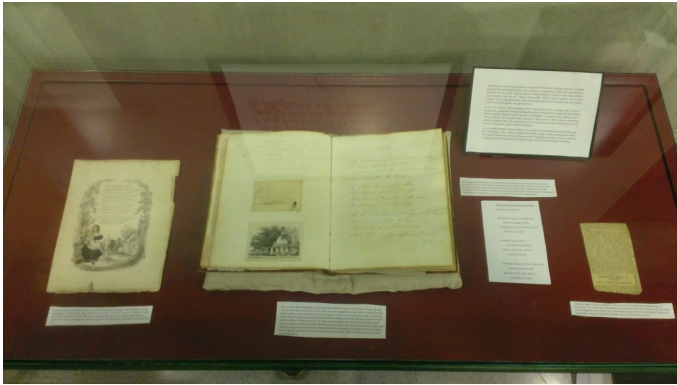**Andrew Zurcher (Cambridge),** 'Shakespeare's Paronomastic Pointing'

From Othello's "bloody period" to the comma that Hamlet will set between the amities of England and Denmark, Shakespeare frequently points his most dramatic moments with thoroughly pointed puns. As Carla Mazzio has recently demonstrated, the speech of Shakespeare's plays is littered with various forms of play on typographical features of the play texts, including references to letter-forms and to abbreviations. The general effect of this type of play is to press the page onto the stage; in this paper, I will work through some examples of Shakespeare's play with punctuation and notation, exploring the theatrical opportunities and difficulties presented by person-text hybrids in Troilus and Cressida, The Winter's Tale, and Cymbeline, King of Britain.

Selected CMT Exhibitions at the English Faculty, 9 West Rd

Inaugural Exhibition: Compilation, Composition, and Commonplace Books

An exhibition compiled and curated by MPhil students from Ruth Abbott's 'Writers' Notebooks: Literature, Scholarship, and the Organization of Knowledge, 1800-1900' course.

Commonplace books became popular during the seventeenth century, acting as repositories for aphoristic, literary and philosophical quotations, as well as more clerical forms of note-taking. By the nineteenth century, commonplacing came to be recognised as a valuable aid to literary composition, particularly among autodidact authors and poets like George Eliot and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Our exhibit focuses on the use of commonplace books by ordinary middle-class families in the nineteenth century, how they chronicled and contributed to an everyday engagement with literature, theology, poetry and domestic activity. From the Bible to Byron, musings on God to sketches of the family dogs, the commonplace book offered a powerful collective storehouse for the miscellanies and medleys of material that amassed at the center of communal family life in the nineteenth century. Through this exhibition we hope to celebrate this pursuit, and we encourage all exhibition-goers to contribute to our very own commonplace book.

Stories in the Making: American Fiction in Magazines Since 1960

Anxious musings about 'the fate of reading in the electronic age' are now commonplace, with most attention focused on perceived threats to the tangible pleasures of the book. Gutenberg elegies are, however, seldom sung for print magazines – perhaps because they were always intended to be ephemeral.

This miniature exhibition, associated with our up-coming symposium Books in the Making <http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/26185>, focuses on American fiction, and celebrates the mass-market and avant-garde magazines in which some of the best known twentieth-century writers first found a place to publish. Sometimes magazines published extracts from novels, but more often than not they relied on and promoted short stories – complete fictions that were said to appeal to modern readers because (as one late nineteenth-century editor put it) they could 'be taken down with a gulp.'

For more than half a century, American magazines – big and small – loved short fiction, which in all sorts of contexts (including Playboy!) provided a powerful enticement for readers and therefore for advertisers.

Today, however, things are different – advertisers and many readers have departed for TV and the internet – and even little magazines struggle to maintain a print presence. While, as Stephen King pointed out in 2007, the high-paying New Yorker remains the 'holy grail of the young fiction writer', much original short fiction today is published in web-based outlets. Nonetheless, new media often look back to earlier moments; this year the Evergreen Review, a once venerable print journal, will be relaunched online <http://www.evergreenreview.com/>.

CMT COLLOQUIUM
The Academic Book Of The Future: Evolution Or Revolution?

11 November 2015, 9.30-5
Darwin Room, Pitt Building, Trumpington St, Cambridge

Yesterday the CMT convened a one-day colloquium entitled 'The Academic Book of the Future: Evolution or Revolution?' This was part of Cambridge's contribution to a host of events being held across the UK in celebration of the first ever Academic Book Week, which is itself an offshoot of the AHRC-funded 'Academic Book of the Future' project. The aim of that project is both to raise awareness of academic publishing and to explore how it might change in response to new digital technologies and changing academic cultures. We were delighted to have Samantha Rayner, the PI on the project, to introduce the event.

The first session kicked off with a talk from **Rupert Gatti**, Fellow in Economics at Trinity and one of the founders of Open Book Publishers (www.openbookpublishers.com), explaining 'Why the Future is Open Access'. Gatti contrasted OA publishing with 'legacy' publishing and emphasized the different orders of magnitude of the audience for these models. Academic books published through the usual channels were, he contended, failing to reach 99% of their potential audience. They were also failing to take account of the possibilities opened up by digital media for embedding research materials and for turning the book an ongoing project rather than a finished article. The second speaker in this session, **Alison Wood**, a Mellon/Newton postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities in Cambridge, reflected on the relationship between academic publishing and the changing institutional structures of the university. She urged us to look for historical precedents to help us cope with current upheavals, and called in the historian Anthony Grafton to testify to the importance of intellectual communities and institutions to the seemingly solitary labour of the academic monograph. In Wood's analysis, we need to draw upon our knowledge of the changing shape of the university as a collective (far more postdocs, far more adjunct teachers, far more globalization) when thinking about how academic publishing might develop. We can expect scholarly books of the future to take some unusual forms in response to shifting material circumstances.


The day was punctuated by a series of 'views' from different Cambridge institutions. The first was offered by **David Robinson**, the Managing Director of Heffers, which has been selling books

in Cambridge since 1876. Robinson focused on the extraordinary difference between his earlier job, in a university campus bookshop, and his current role. In the former post, in the heyday of the course textbook, before the demise of the net book agreement and the rise of the internet, selling books had felt a little like 'playing shops'. Now that the textbook era is over, bookshops are less tightly bound into the warp and weft of universities, and academic books are becoming less and less visible on the shelves even of a bookshop like Heffers. Robinson pointed to the 'crossover' book, the academic book that achieves a large readership, as a crucial category in the current bookselling landscape. He cited Thomas Piketty's *Capital* as a recent example of the genre.

Our second panel was devoted to thinking about the 'Academic Book of the *Near-Future*', and our speakers offered a series of reflections on the current state of play. The first speaker, **Samantha Rayner** (Senior Lecturer in the Department of Information Studies at UCL and 'Academic Book of the Future' PI), described the progress of the project to date. The first phase had involved starting conversations with numerous stakeholders at every point in the production process, to understand the nature of the systems in which the academic book is enmeshed. Rayner called attention to the volatility of the situation in which the project is unfolding—every new development in government higher education policy forces a rethink of possible futures. She also stressed the need for early-career scholars to receive training in the variety of publishing avenues that are open to them. **Richard Fisher**, former Managing Director of Academic Publishing at CUP, took up the baton with a talk about the 'invisibles' of traditional academic publishing—all the work that goes into making the reputation of an academic publisher that never gets seen by authors and readers. Those invisibles had in the past created certain kinds of stability—'lines' that libraries would need to subscribe to, periodicals whose names would be a byword for quality, reliable metadata for hard-pressed cataloguers. And the nature of these existing arrangements is having a powerful effect on the ways in which digital technology is (or is not) being adopted by particular publishing sectors.

Evolution of the Book
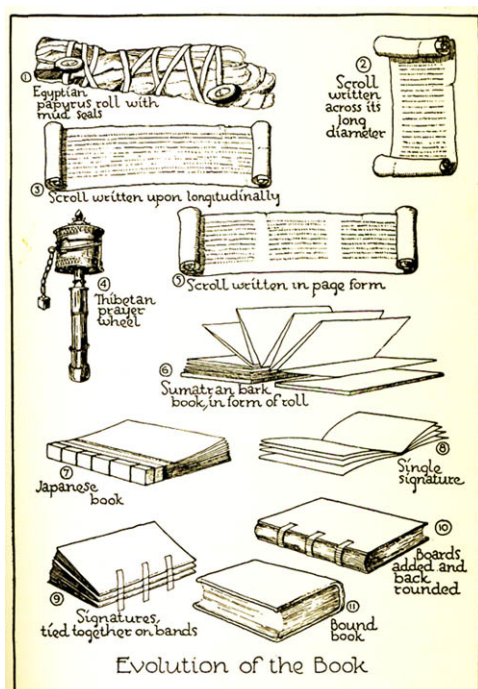
Peter Mandler, Professor of Modern Cultural History at Cambridge and President of the Royal Historical Society, began by singing the praises of the academic monograph; he saw considerable opportunities for evolutionary rather than revolutionary change in this format thanks to the move to digital. The threat to the monograph came, in his view, mostly from government-induced productivism. The scramble to publish for the REF as it is currently configured leads to a lower-quality product, and threatens to marginalize the book altogether. **Danny Kingsley**, Head of Scholarly Communication at Cambridge, discussed the failure of the academic community to embrace Open Access, and its unpreparedness for the imposition of OA by governments. She outlined Australian Open

Access models that had given academic work a far greater impact, putting an end to the world in which intellectual prestige stood in inverse proportion to numbers of readers.

In the questions following this panel, some anxieties were aired about the extent to which the digital transition might encourage academic publishers to further devolve labour and costs to their authors, and to weaken processes of peer review. How can we ensure that any innovations bring us the best of academic life, rather than taking us on a race to the bottom? There was also discussion about the difficulties of tailoring Open Access to humanities disciplines that relied on images, given the current costs of digital licences; it was suggested that the use of lower-density (72 dpi) images might offer a way round the problem, but there was some vociferous dissent from this view.

After lunch, the University Librarian **Anne Jarvis** offered us 'The View from the UL'. The remit of the UL, to safeguard the book's past for future generations and to make it available to researchers, remains unchanged. But a great deal is changing. Readers no longer perceive the boundaries between different kinds of content (books, articles, websites), and the library is less concerned with drawing in readers and more concerned with pushing out content. The curation and preservation of digital materials, including materials that fall under the rules for legal deposit, has created a set of new challenges. Meanwhile the UL has been increasingly concerned to work with academics in order to understand how they are using old and new technologies in their day-to-day lives, and to ensure that it provides a service tailored to real rather than imagined needs.

The third panel session of the day brought together four academics from different humanities disciplines to discuss the publishing landscape as they perceive it. **Abigail Brundin**, from the Department of Italian, insisted that the future is collaborative; collaboration offers an immediate way out of the often closed-off worlds of our specialisms, fosters interdisciplinary exchanges and allows access to serious funding opportunities. She took issue with any idea that the initiative in pioneering new forms of academic writing should come from early-career academics; it is those who are safely tenured who have a responsibility to blaze a trail. **Matthew Champion**, a Research Fellow in History, drew attention to the care that has traditionally gone into the production of academic books—care over the quality of the finished product and over its physical appearance, down to details such as the font it is printed in. He wondered whether the move to digital and to a higher speed of publication would entail a kind of flattening of perspectives and an increased sense of alienation on all sides. Should we care if many people our work? Champion thought not: what we want is not 50,000 careless clicks but the sustained attention of deeply-engaged readers. Our third speaker, **Liana Chua** reported on the situation in Anthropology, where conservative publishing imperatives are being challenged by digital communications. Anthropologists usually write about living subjects, and increasingly those subjects are able to answer back.

This means that the 'finished-product' model of the book is starting to die off, with more fluid forms taking its place. Such forms (including film-making) are also better-suited to capturing the experience of fieldwork, which the book does a great deal to efface. Finally **Orietta da Rold**, from the Faculty of English, questioned the dominance of the book in academia. Digital projects that she had been involved in had been obliged, absurdly, to dress themselves up as books, with introductions and prefaces and conclusions. And collections of articles that might better be published as individual interventions were obliged to repackage themselves as books. The oppressive desire for the 'big thing' obscures the important work that is being done in a plethora of forms.
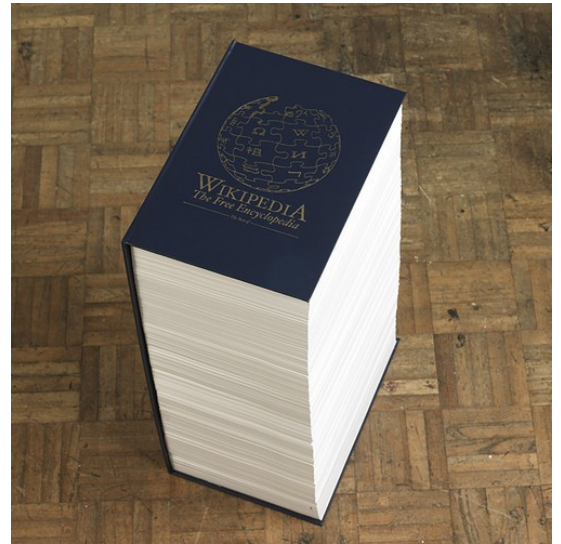
In discussion it was suggested that the book form was a valuable identifier, allowing unusual objects like CD-ROMs or databases to be recognized and catalogued and found (the book, in this view, provides the metadata or the paratextual information that gives an artefact a place in the world). There was perhaps a division between those who saw the book as giving ideas a compelling physical presence and those who were worried about the versions of authority at stake in the monograph. The monograph model perhaps discourages people from talking back; this will inevitably come under pressure in a more 'oral' digital economy.

Our final 'view' of the day was 'The View from Plurabelle Books', offered by **Michael Cahn** but read in his absence by **Gemma Savage**. Plurabelle is a second-hand academic bookseller based in Cambridge; it was founded in 1996. Cahn's talk focused on a different kind of 'future' of the academic book—the future in which the book ages and its owner dies. The books that may have marked out a mental universe need to be treated with appropriate respect and offered the chance of a new lease of life. Sometimes they carry with them a rich sense of their past histories.

A concluding discussion drew out several themes from the day:

(1) A particular concern had been where the impetus for change would and should come from—from individual academics, from funding bodies, or from government. The conservatism and two-sizes-fit-almost-all nature of the REF act as a brake on innovation and experiment, although the rising significance of 'impact' might allow these to re-enter by the back door. The fact that North America has remained impervious to many of the pressures that are affecting British academics was noted with interest.

(2) The pros and cons of peer review were a subject of discussion—was it the key to scholarly integrity or a highly unreliable form of gatekeeping that would naturally wither in an online environment?

(3) Questions of value were raised—what would determine academic value in an Open Access world? The day's discussions had veered between notions of value/prestige that were based on numbers of readers and those that were not. Where is the appropriate balance?

(4) A broad historical and technological question: are we entering a phase of perpetual change or do we expect that the digital domain will eventually slow down, developing protocols that seem as secure as those that we used to have for print? (And would that be a good or a bad thing?) Just as paper had to be engineered over centuries in order to become a reliable communications medium (or the basis for numerous media), so too the digital domain may take a long time to find any kind of settled form. It was also pointed out that the academic monograph as we know it today was a comparatively short-lived, post-World War II phenomenon.

(5) As befits a conference held under the aegis of the Centre for Material Texts, the physical form of the book was a matter of concern. Can lengthy digital books be made a pleasure to read? Can the book online ever substitute for the 'theatres of memory' that we have built in print? Is the very restrictiveness of print a source of strength?

(6) In the meantime, the one thing that all of the participants could agree on was that we will need to learn to live with (sometimes extreme) diversity.

With many thanks to our sponsors, Cambridge University Press, the Academic Book of the Future Project, and the Centre for Material Texts. The lead organizer of the day was **Jason Scott-Warren** (jes1003@cam.ac.uk); he was very grateful for the copious assistance of **Sam Rayner, Rebecca Lyons**, and **Richard Fisher**; for the help of the staff at the Pitt Building, where the colloquium took place; and for the contributions of all of our speakers.

DIGITAL EDITING NOW

7-9 January, 2016, CRASSH, University of Cambridge

What is a 'digital edition'? Investigation at the three-day conference 'Digital Editing Now' into the nature and purpose of the digital within the humanities frequently led participants to bright-eyed reflection on the nature of *print* editions – a refreshing and reassuring development that indicates not only the potential of the digital to illuminate historical texts, but also that there is ample room for the skills involved in traditional scholarly editing to enrich newly expanding digital environments.

The event brought together cohesively scholars working on a brilliant variety of corpora – Austen, Joyce, Woolf, Shakespeare, Beckett, Chopin, Schnitzler, Darwin, Newton, Goethe, along with case studies of material preserved in a less conventionally accessible manner, such as email archives, medical and legal records and manuscript collections, all with excitingly undetermined user bases. The balance between technical demonstration of individual project interfaces and discussion of wider implications meant that a broad range of fields benefited from a shared drive to avoid conventional distinctions and to find common tools with which to brook the transition to digital media.

The conference was structured around three keynote addresses and four panels: 'Material texts and digital forms', 'Editorial agents and agencies', 'Chronology and topography', and 'Digital edition and performance practices'. Kathryn Sutherland opened with personal testimony to the capacity of a digital edition to spotlight the editor in new ways, questioning his/her choices while furnishing through imitation an invitation into the 'strange and banal' environment – the archive, alone before the manuscript – in which those choices are made. Only while digitising Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts did Sutherland notice certain physical aspects of the manuscripts. The power of Jane Austen's handwriting to distract even experts from errors in transcription, on the other hand, caused her more exasperation, but it at least reflects the growing interest among non-specialists in the physical genesis of classical works, for which the lay readership has traditionally relied on... the editor.

Andrew Prescott moved from questioning the editor to questioning the very concept of an 'edition'. Is a digital environment an 'edition', or is this a metaphor, and what difference does it make? Data from Wikileaks cables, the email archives of the Bush presidency or the British Civil Service, and the computerised outputs (from files to Tweets) of authors are of too great a scale to be examined in anything resembling what we have called an 'edition'. The challenge is to distance ourselves sufficiently from the model of the book to *enrich* our study of the book by exploiting new forms of data analysis that born-digital material obliges us to devise. Far from rendering the role of scholars obsolete, this challenge ought to provoke a dynamic integration of the skill set of Special Collections librarians into that of traditional scholarly editors, and steer both toward better appreciation of technical expertise.

Elena Pierazzo queried the tendency to describe editing using 'moral' categories: to what extent is the editor's sense of 'responsibility' connected with the requirement of the publishing industry, rooted in its growth alongside that of Protestantism, to have One product to publish, or from the fear of not being worthy scholars?

Pierazzo embraced the concept of an edition as a 'working hypothesis' and reminded us that not even print achieved the preservation of everything. Instead we should look to the possibilities of the digital for showcasing variation as an integral part of literary genesis. Readers can be convinced to enjoy variation; it is for editors to take from the print experience more positive elements such as the medium's imposition of discipline, rather than preoccupation with false ideas of stability that will cause scholarship to stagnate.

Each of the keynote addresses was thus dominated by one of the three main themes that developed organically throughout: the potential of digital environments for exhibiting unremarked material properties of a work; the use of digital visualisations to extract new connexions from historical material; and redefinition of the 'edition' to embrace the *process* of writing, to which literary editors' continued resistance has distanced them from literary *critics* and now from the possibilities offered by digital media. One of these possibilities is, of course, increased access. Participants shared a fundamental belief in open access, but faith in its feasibility was more varied. It was also remarked that while digital 'editors' feel 'obliged' to provide a facility for users to make comments, they are less certain as to the sort of engagement they want and how to prompt it. In this, editors of literary material, used to working alone in the archive, have much to learn from arenas long since characterised by the unpredictability (good and bad) of collaborators; this was evident from dynamic demonstrations of the work of the Schnitzler Project and a stunning recital of Chopin by John Rink using a combined score that exemplified stability as only one, vital but not exclusive, aim of an edition.

Happily, the problem of engagement was consistently conceived as integral to the fierce and rewarding discussion of the nature of the edition – how should stages of a work be presented visually, encoded, described? What is to be edited? How much editorial apparatus ought to be provided and how conspicuously? One clear realisation was the need for scholars to acquaint themselves with coding languages; digital collation tools can only function effectively if the data that they process are manually coded by the specialist editor(s). Perhaps, in a period of increasing interest in print books *and* in literary genesis, freedom to exercise a combined print-digital application of expertise makes the scholarly editor's role – to facilitate a sense of proximity to, and understanding of, our fellow humans of ages past – no less vital, but less of an illusion. It is for us to decide whether greater clarity is a good thing.

The editor, then, is not dead, but the editor's function is changing. There is much to be done in response to the call to embrace variance in ways that the linear medium of the book cannot sustain; to dispense with the book model to create deceptively simple, targeted digital interfaces founded on specialist input; to ensure that the data produced by such creation can be reused without the need for translation. It was heartening to see that the conference showcased the responses of international postgraduates. These included a re-conceptualisation of editing guidelines as scholarship; use of digital formats to showcase the impact of correspondence on

social history, and external material used in composition, and to reconstitute material that has been misconceived owing to its physical form, such as cartularies and papyri; challenges to ensure the 'interoperability' of editions intended for print and digital media, and to preserve the mental effort in projects that aim to *circumvent* the editing process; avenues to facilitate scholarly annotation and engagement with local history and special collections.

Only one notable grievance (as opposed to challenge) emerged: the ambivalent relationship between scholars and groups that perform a role that might be conceived as a service. There was evident and sincere concern to recognise contributors felt to be under-appreciated: crowd-sourced volunteers who transcribe documents but are not invited to engage further; content owners or providers such as librarians and archivists who are occasionally treated as mere conduits; technical staff whose positions are not covered by institutions' academic investment; important members of the editorial team of digital projects, whose work does not easily correspond to current research formulae. On the whole, the conference benefited from marked sensitivity to the need to find a balance between making material accessible and rewarding the people who put years of labour and expertise into making this a reality.

On the other hand, in the quest for mutual frameworks and principles, closer engagement is evidently to be sought with research councils and publishers, who have traditionally funded circumscribed and authoritative projects. Research councils' responses to new editorial environments are subject to ongoing discussion, however fraught, but the situation of scholarship within a *commercial* (!) *industry* (!) seemed an unwelcome afterthought in a fruitful exchange. The conference seemed to tend towards (though did not settle on) a conception of the digital as a vehicle for editors to question and examine their own authority, but the adoption of such a trend presents real difficulties the people who ultimately endorse a work's presentation to the world. Hopefully, these difficulties will also be harnessed in order to nuance the discussion – from which, while it was acknowledged that individual printing house editors are more than obstacles to or vehicles for the dissemination of information, publishers as a group with a vital interest in the subject were, in fact, entirely absent.

On dispersal, participants praised the character of the conference, its balance between distinguished members of the field and early career scholars, the set of discourses it encouraged, the immense variety of watchwords proposed for determining what a 'digital edition' might be now, and the collaboration between disciplines. The strongest imperative felt was indeed the need for continued collaboration, more extensive and between more parties. It is important to share knowledge about how best to render distinct digital projects mutually comprehensive and sustainable outside the lives of their creators. Most academics lack the technical competence to make their editorial work evident in a digital environment; this deficiency necessitates greater effort to understand users' motives for engaging with projects, and greater recognition of the roles played by different types of specialists involved in any edition. It is clear that the rising need to respond to the immediacy of the digital medium provides a long overdue impetus to break down artificial boundaries within the British 'academy'.

report by **Olivia J.R. Thompson**   Balliol College | Bodleian Libraries, Oxford

Colour: The Art And Science Of Illuminated Manuscripts
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 30 July - 30 December 2016

www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/colour

The COLOUR exhibition and its catalogue mark the bicentenary of the Fitzwilliam's foundation by displaying 150 of the Museum's illuminated manuscripts. They showcase the collection – the largest and finest museum collection of illuminated manuscripts in existence. They also celebrate the advanced research supported and inspired by the collection.

Two cross-disciplinary projects form the research platform for the COLOUR exhibition and catalogue: *Cambridge Illuminations*, which is publishing the 4000 illuminated manuscripts and incunabula preserved at the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Cambridge Colleges; and MINIARE, which employs non-invasive analytical methods to identify materials and techniques in illuminated manuscripts, and integrates scholarship in the arts, humanities, physical sciences and digital technology (http://www.miniare.org/).

The COLOUR exhibition is highly acclaimed by academics, the public (over 30,000 visitors in the first month) and the press (5-star reviews). The catalogue is selling out and a reprint was ordered within the exhibition's first month (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/colour/catalogue).

There is a strong interest in the two digital, research and teaching resources launched with the exhibition: *ILLUMINATED: Manuscripts in the Making* (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/illuminated/) and *Under the Covers: The Conservation and Rebinding of Fitzwilliam MS 251* (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/utc)

The research and themes presented by the COLOUR exhibition will be explored in a broader, international context during the conference organised by the Fitzwilliam Museum in association with the Departments of Chemistry and History of Art, *Manuscripts in the Making: Art and Science*, 8-10 December 2016 (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/colour/conference).

IV   selected publications by members of the Centre, 2015-16

Ruth Abbott, 'Correcting the Page Order of Wordsworth's Dove Cottage Manuscript 13', in *Notes and Queries* (April 2016), 214-20

---   'George Eliot, Metre, and the Matter of Ideas: The Yale Poetry Notebook', in *ELH*, 82 (Winter 2015), 1179-1211

Amy Bowles, '"Dressing the Text": Ralph Crane's Scribal Publication of Drama', *Review of English Studies*, 68 (2016)

---   'Ralph Crane and the Authorship of *The Most Auntient Historie of God and Man*, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library MS PR2199.M67', *Studies in Philology*, 112 (2015)

Abigail Brundin, 'Vittoria Colonna in Manuscript', in Abigail Brundin, Tatiana Crivelli, and Maria Serena Sapegno, *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), ch. 2

Christopher Burlinson, 'John Stubbs's Left-Handed Letters', in James Daybell and Andrew Gordon, eds, *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 156-68

Melissa Calaresu, with Danielle van den Heuvel, 'Foodhawkers from Representation to Reality', introduction to Calaresu and Van den Heuvel, eds, *Foodhawkers* (Routledge, 2016).

Sarah Howe, *Loop of Jade* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2015)

Lauren Kassell, 'Paper Technologies, Digital Technologies: Working with Early Modern Medical Records', in Anne Whitehead et al., eds, *The Edinburgh Companion to the Critical Medical Humanities*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 120–135

John Kerrigan, *Shakespeare's Binding Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016)

Alison Knight, 'John Donne', in Timothy Beal, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and the Arts*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), I 267-71

---   'Sermons', in Timothy Beal, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and the Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), II 347-57

Sachiko Kusukawa, 'William Courten's List of 'Things Bought' from the Late Seventeenth Century', *Journal of the History of Collections* (2016)

Hester Lees-Jeffries, 'What's Hecuba to him? Absence, silence, and lament in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Troilus and Criseyde*', in Elisabeth Kempf et al., eds, *Performing the Politics of Passion: Troilus and Cressida and Troilus and Criseyde and the Literary Traditions of Love and History* (Manchester, 2016)

Raphael Lyne, *Memory and Intertextuality in Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016)

Scott Mandelbrote, 'The Old Testament and its ancient versions in manuscript and print in the West, from *c.* 1480 to *c.* 1780', in E. Cameron (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), III 82-109.

--- ed, with Joanna Weinberg, *Jewish Books and their Readers: Aspects of the Intellectual Life of Christians and Jews in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

--- 'When Manuscripts Meet: Editing the Bible in Greek during and after the Council of Trent', in A. Blair and A.-S. Goejing, eds, *For the Sake of Learning: Essays in Honor of Anthony Grafton* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 251-67.

Richard J. Oosterhoff, 'A Book, a Pen, and the *Sphere:* Reading Sacrobosco in the Renaissance', *History of Universities* 28 (2015)

Stella Panayotova, ed., *Colour: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London and Turnhout: Harvey Miller/Brepols, 2016)

Lucy Razzall, ''Non intus ut extra': The Emblematic Silenus in Early Modern Literature', *Emblematica: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Emblem Studies,* 22 (2016)

John Rink, 'Playing with the Chopin Sources', in *Chopin et son temps / Chopin and his Time*, ed. Vanja Hug and Thomas Steiner (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), 41-53

--- 'Making the Music Work: Towards a "Dynamic Edition" of Chopin', in *Genèses musicales*, ed. Nicolas Donin, Almuth Grésillon and Jean-Louis Lebrave (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2015), 255-65

Jason Scott-Warren, 'Status Anxiety: Arguing about Plays and Print in Early Modern London', in Tian Yuan Tan, et al, eds, *1616: Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu's China* (London: Bloomsbury Arden, 2015)

Michael J. Sullivan, 'Tennyson and *The Golden Treasury*', *Essays in Criticism*, 66 (2016)

Alexandra Walsham, 'Wholesome Milk and Strong Meat: Peter Canisius's Catechisms and the Conversion of Protestant Britain', *British Catholic History,* 32 (2015), 293-314.

Edward Wilson-Lee, *Shakespeare in Swahililand: Adventures with the Ever-Living Poet* (London: William Collins, 2016)

Andrew Zurcher, 'Allegory and Epistolarity: Cipher and Faction in Sidney and Shakespeare', in James Daybell and Andrew Gordon, eds, *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 110-28
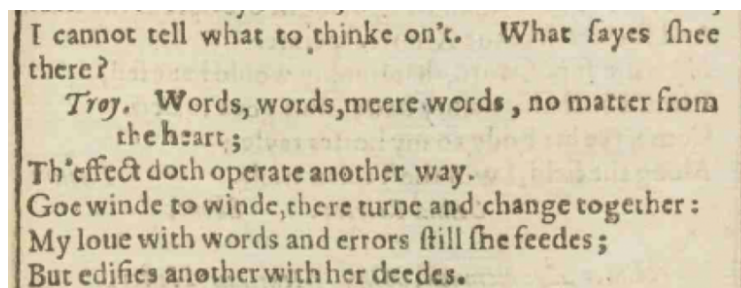
V the future

In 2016-17, we're planning to experiment with a new format for the HMT seminar, holding more workshops and bringing them back within the traditional 9-5 working day so as to enable more people to participate.

We're looking forward to a one-day symposium on 'Scribal Ingenuity in Early Modern Europe', at Trinity Hall and Magdalene, convened by **Alexander Marr** and **Sachiko Kusukawa,** and starring **Peter Stallybrass**, **Jonathan Gibson**, **Jan Loop**, **Angus Vine** and **Andrew Zurcher.**

The Fitzwilliam Museum, together with the Departments of Chemistry and History of Art, will be staging a major international conference entitled '**Colour:** The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts' (8-10 December 2016), to coincide with the current exhibition.

We're in the early stages of planning a conference on **John Taylor**, the Water Poet (probably for September 2017). And CMT exhibitions in celebration of **Jeremy Prynne** at 80 and on **Jane Austen** at 200 are also in prospect.

I cannot tell what to thinke on't. What fayes fhee there?

    Troy. Words, words, meere words , no matter from the heart;
Th'effect doth operate another way.
Goe winde to winde, there turne and change together :
My loue with words and errors ftill fhe feedes ;
But edifies another with her deedes.

;)

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