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Digby 23/ Timaeus Project
(GTX / HON)

The Digby 23/ Timaeus Project has grown out of the study of one specific medieval manuscript: Oxford Bodleian Digby 23. This important codex contains two of the most influential works read (and in the case of the second one, performed) during the twelfth century: Plato's *Timaeus*, in the Latin translation by Calcidius, and the anonymous Old French epic, the *Song of Roland*. We believe the assembly of the codex (dating most probably to the fourteenth century) is not fortuitous: it is the result of a close thematic link between these two twelfth-century copies it contains. Furthermore, the manuscript bears witness to the importance classical culture and the emergence of national identities played in shaping the work of Christian scholars of the High Middle Ages.

The most basic question twenty-first-century humanities computing specialists will face is: "so, we've digitized it... now what?" In recent decades, the digitization of medieval manuscripts, newspapers, charters, historic letters, etc., has made many rare materials available to humanities scholars. The value of those types of projects is not to be underestimated. Nonetheless, it is equally important that we learn to work with electronic materials in new ways, so that scholars are empowered to manipulate the data contained within the digitized images of texts: projects that accomplish that kind of goal will open the doors to innovative forms of research that would not be possible without the computer. The Digby 23/ Timaeus Project is envisioned as a fully searchable, multi-medial scholarly archive, including not only to an edition-like "expanded transcription" of the entire manuscript (linked to the corresponding images), but also a detailed diplomatic transcription, which takes into account all scribal variants and abbreviations (something that modern critical editions—even electronic—fail to do). It will also include a database for the study of the Latin glosses; a database for the study of the language, themes, and rhetoric / poetics of the *Timaeus* and the *Roland* (e.g., Biblical imagery in the *Roland*); a detailed critical apparatus; teaching tools; and a series of open-sourced computing programs, tools, and scripts that will be available for download by other scholars.

Once the analysis of Digby 23 is complete, we conceive of the project growing into a larger electronic library of key medieval manuscripts, constructed in conjunction with scholars across the U.S., the Baylor U. Libraries, the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Lyons, the Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris, and the Oxford and Lyons libraries. In sum, the larger Timaeus project (<http://timaeus.baylor.edu>) (so named because Plato exhorts us, in the *Timaeus*, to preserve our cultural heritage in writing) will allow scholars and students to study key medieval works not as they have been doctored by critical editions, but in their manuscript contexts. And, by placing these fully searchable electronic facsimiles side-by-side in an electronic database run out of Baylor university, scholars and students will also be able to consider the theological, literary, and philosophical connections between such works, just as medieval students might have done as they thumbed through the books lining the shelves of their libraries.