



Unconference Critique Digitale Report- Oct. 21-22, 2021

From papyri to photographs. Doing research with images.

Panel B4- Zurich

22.10.2021, 10h00 - 11h30

Panel suggested by: Elias Kreyenbühl

Reporter: Delphine Kessler

Discussion leader and core topic presentation:

This panel was led by Elias Kreyenbühl, who works at the Zentralbibliothek Zürich (ZB) and has personal experience with the International Image Interoperability Framework, short IIIF. His goal was to show how IIIF can facilitate working with images, but he was also interested to find out how others work with images in research. A short survey showed that the twelve participants in the panel use images in various formats (JPG, TIFF, PNG, IIIF, PDF) and interact with them through comparing few or many images, looking at details (zooming), manipulating images in Photoshop, run computational analyses or add images to a text to open the meaning.

Kreyenbühl presented multiple online tools of IIIF and pointed out how it is easy to use and how it allows images to be addressed directly. Some features of IIIF he mentioned are the following: Discovery, Collection, Comparing, Save your collection, Share & publish, Reference and Re-use.

Isa Marthot-Santaniello, who herself uses and advertises IIIF, shortly presented her project in which she uses IIIF for analyzing ancient handwritings. For example, she assigns detailed metadata to images, even to different areas of one and the same image. According to her, there are many useful tools of IIIF to locate, analyze and compare ancient handwritings. Marthot-Santaniello sees IIIF as the future and argues that there should be as many collections available on IIIF as possible.

Main arguments in the discussion:

The challenges addressed by the participants were that even though IIIF is user friendly, there are many steps needed to create one's own catalog on IIIF. Moreover, there is a steep learning curve regarding the tools of IIIF. Many things are very easy but at some point, there is additional programming knowledge needed. To help, tutorials were suggested as well as an easy tool to start with.

The participants saw big potential for technology like IIIF, for example in scientific online publications, where an image's metadata could enrich the image itself. There would be new publication formats needed to include such metadata and a methodology would have to be developed on how to annotate images.

Overall, the participants were very much intrigued by IIIF and saw how it might be transformative for how we do research. They agreed that using IIIF opens up the possibility of moving away from the single-researcher towards working in more collaborative ways, where researchers share their data so



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that others can use it too. The overall opinion was that IIF is a very useful tool which shows much potential and should be promoted further.

References:

Online tools of IIF: <https://storiiies.cogapp.com/>, <https://exhibit.so/>, <https://projectmirador.org/>

Youtube Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxDekeBVQtVJeRqoTgsif7fJki2X96O-1>

Example of easy to use tool of IIF: <https://hierax.ch/>