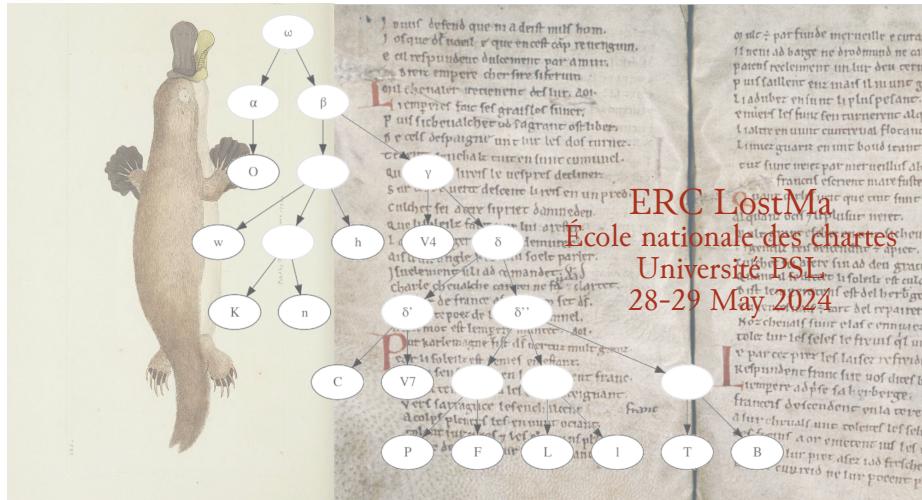# The Lost Manuscripts of Medieval Europe:
Modelling the Transmission of Texts
Inaugural Event

English (French below): The project LᴏsᴛMᴀ seeks to understand the evolution of human cultures through the transmission of written artefacts. It explores the extent to which this transmission, including preservation or loss, is influenced by factors beyond chance. By examining manuscript transmission trees (*stemmata codicum*), LᴏsᴛMᴀ investigates why these trees exhibit unique shapes, similar to the evolution of living organisms or language variants, that account for processes of innovation/mutation, fixation or extinction. The project primarily focuses on medieval chivalric literature in Europe.

On the occasion of the start of this project, an interdisciplinary workshop will convene experts in philology, computational human sciences, biology, linguistics, and mathematics. The workshop will explore current achievements and future directions in data collection and analysis of medieval traditions, as well as in modelling cultural transmission.

French : *Le projet LᴏsᴛMᴀ vise à comprendre comment les cultures humaines se constituent et évoluent à travers la transmission des artefacts écrits. Il cherche à établir dans quelle mesure cette transmission, incluant la préservation ou la perte, est influencée par des facteurs autres que le hasard. En examinant les arbres de transmission des manuscrits (phylogénies des manuscrits, généralement appelés stemmata codicum), LᴏsᴛMᴀ explore pourquoi ces arbres présentent des formes uniques, similaires à l'évolution des organismes vivants ou des variantes linguistiques, et rendant compte de processus d'innovation/mutation, fixation et extinction. Le projet se concentre principalement sur la littérature chevaleresque médiévale en Europe.*

À l'occasion du lancement de ce projet, un atelier interdisciplinaire réunira des experts en philologie, sciences humaines computationnelles, biologie, linguistique et mathématiques. L'atelier explorera les réalisations actuelles et les orientations futures en matière de collecte et d'analyse des données sur les traditions médiévales, ainsi que la modélisation de la transmission culturelle.

Tuesday 28 May

Location: École nationale des chartes, 65 rue de Richelieu, 75002, Paris

Lunch buffet (13h-13h50)   *Ground floor*

Welcomes (13h50)   : Christophe Gauthier, director of the Centre Jean-Mabillon, and Jean-Baptiste Camps, principal investigator of LostMa.

Afternoon workshop: Datafying Medieval Chivalric Literature (14h-17h30)

Session 1: The Datasets and Tools of ERC LostMa and friends   (Chair: Lucence Ing, ENC-PSL)

14h The OpenStemmata Initiative (Gustavo Fernandez Riva, Univ. Heidelberg; Jean-Baptiste Camps, ENC-PSL)

14h30 The Corpus of Medieval Epics and Romances and its deep-learning based workflow (Thibault Clérice, INRIA; Ariane Pinche, CNRS; JB Camps)

15h Building an open database of works, traditions and manuscripts for Medieval Romances (Kelly Christensen, ENC-PSL; JB Camps)

Coffee break (15h30-16h)

Session 2: Building Databases of European Medieval Epics and Romances   (Chair: Frédéric Duval, ENC-PSL)

16h Modelling the popularity of medieval literature: the case of the chivalric narrative (Mike Kestemont, Univ. Antwerp)

16h30 Chivalric Literature in Comparison: Challenges in Compiling a Corpus (Elisabeth de Bruijn, Univ. Antwerp)

17h The lost and not so lost romances of medieval Iceland (Katarzyna Anna Kapitan, Univ. Oxford)

Short break (17h30-17h45)

Session 3: Describing Romance Manuscripts   (Chair: Matthias Gille Levenson, ENC-PSL)

17h45 Old-French verse romances and their manuscripts: what we know and what we want to know (Pierandrea Martina, IRHT-CNRS)

18h15 Codicological contextualisation of Romance manuscripts: available tools and dream tools (Maria Careri, Univ. Chieti)

Evening Event

21h Diner for workshop participants

Wednesday 29 May

Morning Workshop: Modelling the Transmission of Texts and Culture

Session 4: Overview of some Existing Models (**Chair:** Florian Cafiero, ENC-PSL)

10h Birth-and-death processes from Weitzmann to LostMa (Julien Randon-Furling, ENS-Saclay; JB Camps, ENC-PSL)

10h30 Stemma's next top model - graph theory, DAGs, trees, forests and beyond? (Armin Hoenen)

11h Loss-rate of manuscripts and shape of stemmata. Is there a correlation? (Paolo Trovato, Univ. Ferrara)

Coffee/brunch break (11h30-12h)

Session 5: Perspectives (**Chair:** Julien Randon-Furling, ENS-Saclay)

12h Generative inference in cultural evolution (Anne Kandler, Max Planck Inst.-EVA)

12h30 Simulations can be used to study explicit mechanisms of cultural change: Example with approximate Bayesian computation and language transmission mechanisms (Valentin Thouzeau, PSL)

13h State-of-the-art of macro-evolutionary models (Jérémy Andréoletti, ENS-PSL)

Lunch buffet (13h30-14h30)