Biblioclasm, First Collective Volume, 2027

Deadline: Nov 15, 2026
www.pigouchet.com/biblioclasm-serie

Antoinette Lacroix

BIBLIOCLASM: Studies in the Destruction, Dispersal, Theft and Reconstruction of Books and Manuscripts.
First Collective Volume (2027).

Éditions Pigouchet (Paris) announces the launch of BIBLIOCLASM, a new international peer-reviewed scholarly series and research programme devoted to the destruction, theft, mutilation, dismantling, illicit circulation, recovery, and reconstruction of books and manuscripts.

Conceived as more than a conventional periodical, BIBLIOCLASM combines scholarly publication with an ongoing programme of research, discussion, and public dissemination. Alongside its peer-reviewed volumes, the project will promote seminars, workshops, lectures, round tables, and video contributions, creating an international and interdisciplinary forum for the study of biblioclasm and the material histories of books and manuscripts.

The first volume, scheduled for publication in the second half of 2027, will be a collective international volume bringing together original research selected through this Call for Contributions.

Fragments, detached leaves, and biblioclasm

One of the fundamental methodological principles of BIBLIOCLASM is the need to distinguish between a historical fragment and an intact or substantially intact leaf deliberately detached from a manuscript.

A fragment resulting from the historical transmission of a codex – through deterioration, reuse, binding practices, accidental loss, or other processes of material survival – is not equivalent to a leaf intentionally removed from a manuscript through theft, mutilation, or commercial dismemberment.

The circumstances in which an object became separated from its parent codex constitute an essential part of its history and provenance.

BIBLIOCLASM therefore encourages research that moves beyond the isolated description, attribution, or cataloguing of detached material to investigate, wherever the evidence permits, how, when, and under what circumstances separation occurred, and how such objects subsequently entered private or public collections, catalogues, auctions, libraries, museums, databases, or the international market.

The generic designation of deliberately detached leaves as “fragments”, without consideration of the circumstances of their separation, is incompatible with the methodological principles of the series.

Provenance is not ancillary information. The physical history of an object, the circumstances of its removal or dispersal, and the documentary history of its subsequent circulation constitute evidence that must be examined together with its textual, palaeographical, codicological, and artistic features.

Areas of research

Contributions may address, but are not limited to:
- manuscript and book theft from libraries, archives, museums, religious institutions, and private collections;
- deliberate mutilation and commercial dismemberment of manuscripts and rare books;
- historical and modern forms of biblioclasm;
- provenance research and reconstruction of ownership histories;
- manuscript leaves and book material circulating on the antiquarian and auction markets;
- identification of stolen, missing, or illicitly removed material;
- restitution, recovery, repatriation, and reintegration;
- historical fragments, detached leaves, and the terminology of manuscript dispersal;
- the history and ethics of collecting;
- professional responsibility and due diligence in the manuscript and rare-book market;
- scholarly responsibility in the description, attribution, cataloguing, and publication of detached material;
- libraries, museums, collections, and institutional responsibility;
- dealers, collectors, auction houses, catalogues, sales, and commercial networks;
- cultural-property law and the protection of manuscript and book heritage;
- archival investigations of historical thefts, mutilations, and dispersals;
- digital reconstruction of dismantled or dispersed codices;
- technologies and methodologies for identifying and reconnecting dispersed manuscript material;
- case studies concerning recovered, reconstructed, or still dispersed books and manuscripts.

Particular attention will be given to documented case studies based on previously unpublished or insufficiently studied archival, codicological, palaeographical, photographic, legal, bibliographical, or market evidence.

Scholarly independence

Because many of the subjects addressed by BIBLIOCLASM concern provenance, ownership histories, market transactions, institutional responsibility, and the circulation of cultural property, the series is founded on a principle of scholarly independence from the commercial manuscript and rare-book market.

BIBLIOCLASM does not accept scholarly contributions from authors who are professionally involved in the commercial trade of manuscripts, manuscript leaves, rare books, or related cultur-

al property.

This includes, but is not limited to, dealers, commercial intermediaries, auction-house specialists or consultants, and paid advisers involved in the acquisition, attribution, cataloguing, valuation, or sale of such material.

This policy does not exclude the scholarly study of the manuscript and rare-book market. On the contrary, BIBLIOCLASM welcomes rigorous historical and critical research into dealers, auction houses, collectors, catalogues, sales, and commercial networks, provided that such research is conducted from a position of scholarly independence and is supported by verifiable evidence.

Selection and peer review

The Call is open to established scholars, early-career researchers and independent researchers, as well as specialists working in related fields. Academic status and institutional affiliation are not selection criteria.

Proposals will undergo an initial assessment by the Scientific and Editorial Board and will be evaluated according to relevance, originality, methodological rigour, quality of documentary or material evidence, attention to provenance and material history, and their potential contribution to the relevant fields of research.

Authors must clearly distinguish between documented facts, scholarly interpretation, and hypothesis.

Acceptance of an abstract constitutes an invitation to submit the full article and does not guarantee publication.

Full articles will undergo independent external peer review. Final publication decisions rest with the Scientific and Editorial Board.

Research integrity and Artificial Intelligence

Contributions must constitute original scholarly work based on identifiable and verifiable sources.

BIBLIOCLASM considers authorship to entail personal intellectual responsibility for the research, evidence, analysis, argumentation, and conclusions presented.

AI-generated or substantially AI-composed scholarly content presented as the author's own intellectual work will not be accepted. Generative AI must not be used to fabricate or supply unverifiable quotations, archival evidence, bibliographical references, provenance information, historical data, transcriptions, descriptions of objects, or images presented as documentary evidence.

Limited use of digital or AI-assisted tools for language correction, translation assistance, bibliographical organisation, or technical processing does not preclude submission. Where such use has materially affected the preparation of the contribution, it must be transparently disclosed.

Authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, authenticity, and traceability of all information contained in their submissions.

Beyond the volume

Selected contributors may also be invited to participate in seminars, workshops, lectures, round tables, recorded discussions, or short video presentations connected with their research and with the broader BIBLIOCLASM programme.

Participation in these activities is not a condition for publication.

Submission guidelines

Contributions may be written in English, French, Italian, or Spanish.

Final articles should normally be between 5,000 and 10,000 words, including notes and bibliography.

Proposals should include:
- a 300–500-word abstract, presenting the research question, corpus or case study, methodology, principal sources, and expected contribution;
- five keywords;
- a short biographical note, including the author's principal research interests and institutional affiliation, where applicable;
- the proposed language of the article.

Calendar

Abstract submission deadline: 15 November 2026
Notification of selection: 15 January 2027
Full article deadline: 1 March 2027
Peer review: March–April 2027
Revisions and final acceptance: May–June 2027
Publication of the first collective volume: Second half of 2027

Proposals: contact@pigouchet.com
Further information: https://www.pigouchet.com/biblioclasm-series

Reference:
CFP: Biblioclasm, First Collective Volume, 2027. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 1, 2026 (accessed Nov 25, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/53533>.