

Aïoli, a Reality-Based Annotation Cloud Platform for the Collaborative Documentation of Cultural Heritage Artefacts

Adeline Manuel, Violette Abergel

▶ To cite this version:

Adeline Manuel, Violette Abergel. Aïoli, a Reality-Based Annotation Cloud Platform for the Collaborative Documentation of Cultural Heritage Artefacts. Un patrimoine pour l'avenir, une science pour le patrimoine, Mar 2022, Paris, France. hal-03819923

HAL Id: hal-03819923 https://hal.science/hal-03819923v1

Submitted on 26 Oct 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers. L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Aïoli, a Reality-Based 3D Annotation Cloud Platform for the

Collaborative Documentation of Cultural Heritage Artefacts

Adeline MANUEL¹, Violette ABERGEL²

¹Research Engineer, UMR CNRS/MC 3495 MAP, France

²Postdoctoral Researcher, UMR CNRS/MC 3495 MAP, France

Résumé

Malgré leurs différentes approches et leurs différents outils d'observation, de

description et d'analyse, les acteurs de la documentation du patrimoine culturel

partagent tous un même intérêt et une même préoccupation : l'objet patrimonial,

celui qui est matériel, qu'il soit un lieu, un bâtiment, une sculpture, un tableau, une

œuvre d'art ou un fragment archéologique. Ce dénominateur commun est le point

de départ pour le projet « Aïoli », une plateforme d'annotation 3D basée sur la

réalité, qui permet à une communauté multidisciplinaire de construire des

descriptions 3D enrichies sémantiquement d'objets patrimoniaux à partir de simples

images et d'annotations spatialisées couplées à d'autres ressources.

Mots-clés: annotation, documentation, collaboratif, patrimoine culturel

Keywords: annotation, documentation, collaborative, cultural heritage

Moving from a data-driven to a semantic-driven digital documentation approach is an essential challenge today, especially in cultural heritage, where knowledge is always the result of a combination of complementary skills and disciplinary profiles. However, when considering the current state of the art, reality-based 3D reconstruction and 3D information systems are generally considered distinct topics when they each prove to have potential in cultural heritage documentation.

From this context, a question emerges: how to merge geometry, visual appearance, and semantics within an integrated documentation approach? The only stable denominator remains the object itself, which must therefore be at the heart of the structuring, analysis and storage system.

This corresponds to three major gaps:

- The semantic gap underlines an essential need for innovative methods for assisting data processing, sorting and analysis toward effective knowledge-enhancement scenarios;
- The communication gap underlines the need for an effective solution for collecting, storing and sharing data and extracted information, while it is still difficult to bring together (physically or digitally) the multiple actors of this continuous documentation process;
- Lastly, the interoperability gap underlines an essential need for a flexible solution allowing to manage several acquisitions, levels of details, geometry segmentation, annotation layers and data properties according to very heterogeneous observation and analysis scenarios.

Aïoli: An Innovative Approach

That is why our approach puts the heritage object (the physical one) at the heart of the documentation process by considering reality-based 3D and semantic description in a strongly integrated way.

Our solution is to create an informative continuum at all phases of the documentation process, from the acquisition of images and spatial data to semantically enriched 3D representation based on three fundamental features (**Figure 1**):

- The first part is to create a bridge between the real object and its digital representation by introducing a solution for memorising spatialised annotations made by different actors by including photogrammetric 3D reconstruction and a bijective relation between 2D and 3D representations of the object.
- Once this is established, we built a multilayer description model to structure the analysis, the geometry and the correlation of the annotations made on different supports by all the users working on the same object through a flexible data model, allowing us to organise semantic information with a set of freely structured user descriptors and the automatic extraction of geo-visual descriptors.
- To ensure the accessibility to the application, even from *in situ* remote areas, our platform is built on a cloud computing service allowing the gathering, processing and sharing of 3D data.

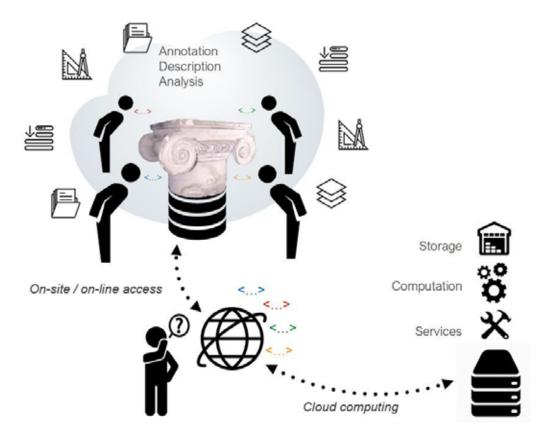


Figure 1. The framework introduced by the Aïoli platform

Aïoli introduces an original, informative linkage between the physical object space and its digital representation by integrating different features¹:

- An incremental image-based 3D spatialisation process to manage the geometric merging of several images coming from different actors at different temporal states;
- A 2D/3D annotation framework enabling users to draw, visualise and register relevant surface regions by handling simple 2D images spatially oriented around dynamic 3D representation;
- A multi-layered morphology-based data structuring model to accurately describe real objects in all their geometric complexity and according to multidisciplinary observations.

Users access Aïoli through a web interface where they have access to their personal spaces and where their projects as well as collaborators are listed. To create a project,

they load a dataset which is then sent to the server to be processed to reconstruct the 3D model of the object and to create the necessary indexing for propagation. Once the processing is complete, they have access to the project, where they can view both the images used and the generated 3D model. By selecting an image, users can then begin to annotate it by drawing a region. The propagation process starts in the background once the region is validated. Finally, users can describe the region by constructing their own description sheet and by defining fields of various types (free text, number, date, URL, list of values, controlled vocabularies, etc.). Controlled vocabularies are implemented in Aïoli through an already existing web-based multilingual thesaurus management tool dedicated to the management of vocabularies called OpenTheso, which offers interface elements to create, insert and manage lists of concepts. Users can consult and complete annotated projects by viewing the annotations on the images and a point cloud. Each project can be shared with one or more collaborators who can consult and but also annotate the project.

From a technical point of view, Aïoli relies on a thin client, which assures the cross-compatibility of services, on a web server that dispatches requests to the application server and finally, an application server relying on Docker technology which contains all the calculation processes (**Figure 2**).

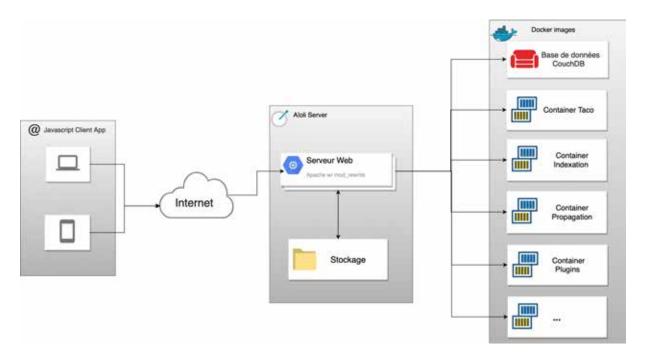


Figure 2. Aïoli's architecture

The development of Aïoli started in 2016 based on the results of Adeline Manuel's thesis². The platform has since received funding for its development from several national (DGA RAPID BIG 3D, ANR SUMUM) and international (H2020 SSHOC, ERC n_Dame Heritage) projects.

Beta Testing Campaign

From our first prototype of the application, we opened a beta testing campaign that gave us the chance to have real-world issues and users coming from many different usages. During this program, a wide range of heritage artefacts belonging to different scales (archaeological sites, buildings, archaeological artefacts, archaeological fragments and parietal art) have been used for experimenting with the implemented features (**Figure 3**).

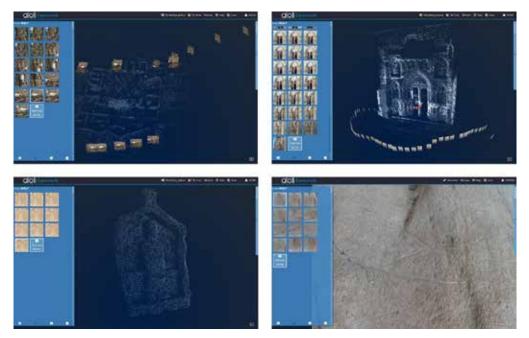


Figure 3. Screen captures of the case studies carried out within the beta testing program

One of the biggest projects was the reporting of the complete diagnosis of the outside of the cathedral of Notre Dame after the fire in Aïoli. As it is a huge object, the cathedral has been divided into different projects, and each part has been documented according to a report by experts. The inside of the cathedral is currently in processing.

The sharing and dissemination of an annotated project within a community is a crucial issue for the Aïoli project. Collaboration modalities already allow several actors to work on the same project through the management of rights on a project. Each project owner can define a set of collaborators who can integrate their own annotations on a project. However, opening up a project to a community means that it is not necessary to create an account on Aïoli for each person who simply wants to consult the results.

Spritz, a specific online viewer, is therefore being developed to allow the sharing and dissemination of Aïoli projects on a wider scale. This viewer aims to embed Aïoli scenes within a web page. This viewer allows anyone to only visualise and manipulate

the images, the point cloud and all annotations (2D and 3D regions and linked description).

Perspectives

We are today exploring several scenarios in order to start the diffusion of Aïoli within the cultural heritage community on a national and international scale. In parallel, we planned to develop new functionalities to offer users a large panel of possibilities in terms of multitemporal monitoring, interoperability and multidimensional correlation.

Some experiments that seem promising concerning multitemporal monitoring, which makes it possible to compare the evolution of the object over time, have been carried out³. This result could lead to a complete process of quantitative change monitoring on a multitemporal data set. Theoretically, all compatibles' images with the photogrammetry pipeline can be used in Aïoli and become annotations support. That is why we are now interested in the integration of images from different kinds of sensors like UV, IR, RTI, etc.

The last point is about the multidimensional correlation where the spatial overlapping of annotations would allow the generation of hundred relationships in a spontaneous way. The correlation of qualitative (user descriptors) and quantitative (computed geovisual descriptors) attributes belonging to overlapped annotations generates a rich environment for analysing the co-occurrence of factors.

Further information about the Aïoli project (including demonstration videos, case studies, and a beta testing program) is available on the platform website: www.aioli.cloud.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the beta testers who provided screen captures for this paper, as well as the cultural and scientific institutions related to their case studies in **Figure 2**: ICONEM, the French School at Athens and the Delos Archeological site, Greece; The municipality of Saint Emilion and the Saint Emillion's church; The Marseille History Museum, France; Anne-Laure Goron, CNP, DRAC Guyane and the Carapa site, Kourou, Guyane.

¹ MANUEL, Adeline, M'DARHRI, Anas Alaoui, ABERGEL, Violette, ROZAR, Fabien, DE LUCA Livio, 'A semi-automatic 2D/3D annotation framework for the geometric analysis of heritage artefacts', 3rd Digital Heritage International Congress Proceedings, San Francisco, CA, USA, Oct. 2018, pp. 498-505. DOI: 10.1109/DigitalHeritage.2018.8810114.

² MANUEL, Adeline, Annotation sémantique 2D/3D d'images spatialisées pour la documentation et l'analyse d'objets patrimoniaux. Génie des procédés, École nationale supérieure d'arts et métiers - ENSAM, 2016, Français. (NNT : 2016ENAM0009). (tel-01304776)

³ PETELER, Friederike, GATTET, Eloi, BROMBLET, Philippe, GUILLON, Odille, VALLET Jean-Marc, DE LUCA, Livio, 'Analysing the evolution of deterioration patterns: The first step of an image-based approach for comparing multitemporal data sets', 2015 *Digital Heritage*, 2015, pp. 113-116, DOI: 10.1109/DigitalHeritage.2015.7419465.