

THE WORD OF PAINT: TERMINOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MEDIEVAL COLOUR TERMS

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Medieval colour terms have long confounded modern researchers, mostly in their earliest appearance. A colour term could have different meanings (or even several meanings at the same time) or it could be used to identify different substances. The linguistic hypothesis that persons can only perceive what they have words to describe can be a valid model of interpretation but a historic approach seems necessary. The intention of the paper is to track the meaning of early medieval colour terms in art technological treatises and in documentary sources (paying special attention to ones from the Iberian Peninsula), in order to understand their specific significance and to associate them with a particular substance.