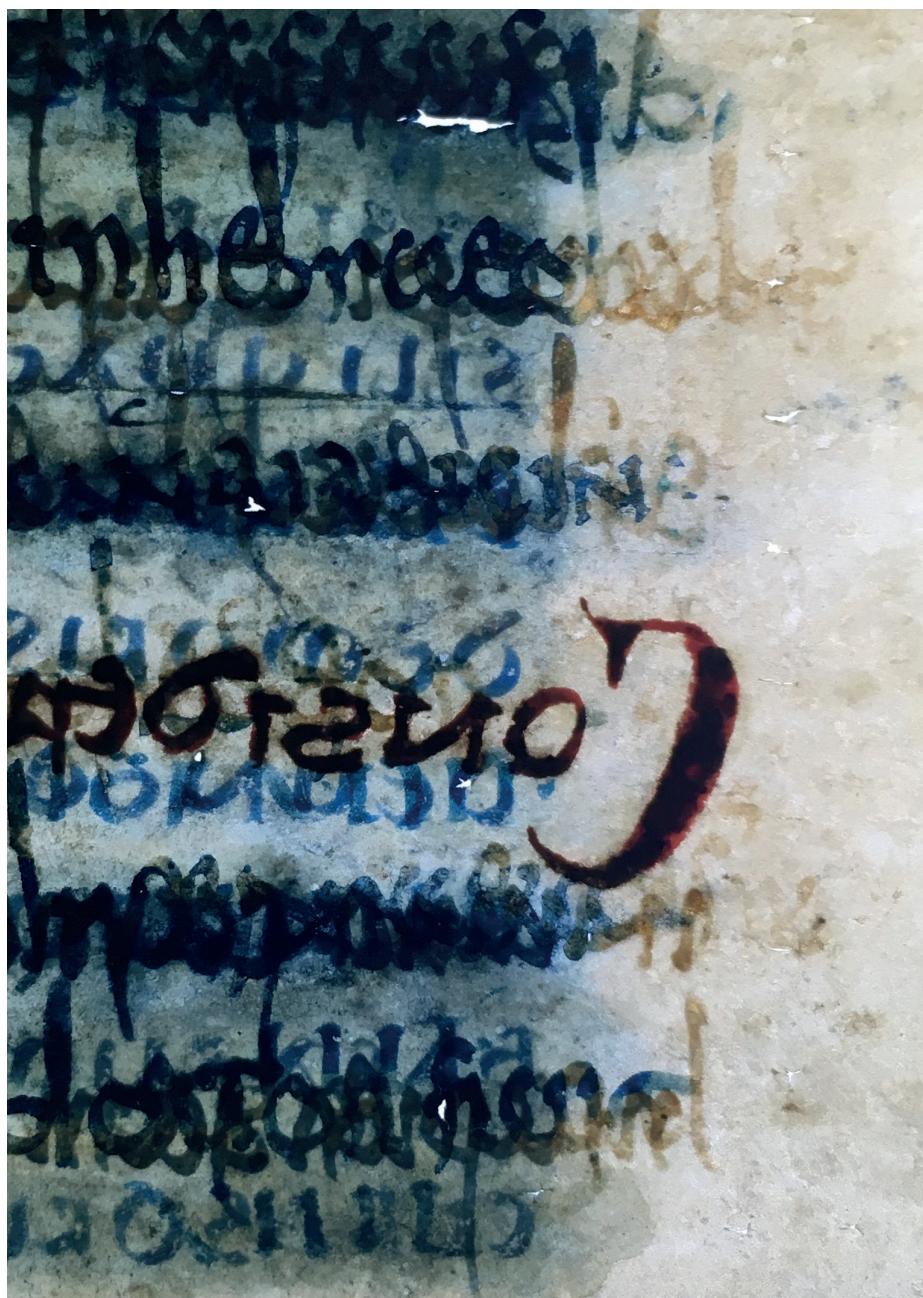


manuscript cultures

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Transmitted light image (detail) of Codex 3/1 (5th century Luxueil or 7th–8th century Italy), Benedictine Abbey St Paul in Lavant Valley, Austria. Hieronymus, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*; Plinius Secundus, *Historia naturalis*. Photography by Thomas Drechsler, Berlin.

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Editorial

Natural Sciences and Technology in Manuscript Analysis

The Centre for the Studies of Manuscript Cultures in Hamburg strives to enhance the field of manuscript studies by providing a forum for dialogue between the humanities and the natural sciences. This dialogue leads to well-defined new tasks for the natural and applied sciences and very often provides answers to questions that could not be solved by historical and philological methods alone.

In recent years, multi- and hyperspectral imaging to recover erased text in palimpsests has made considerable progress. Various institutions have acquired dozens of the imaging systems. However, image processing still requires serious development and the establishment of standard procedures. In addition to non-destructive material analysis of pigments and dyes, which has become standard in the studies of illuminated manuscripts, the interdisciplinary teams of the CSMC are currently working on establishing guidelines for studies of writing inks. Finally, digital image processing and analysis techniques are also gaining recognition in the fields of palaeography and codicology.

The second International Conference on Natural Sciences and Technology in Manuscript Analysis was held on the premises of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures in Hamburg from 29 February to 2 March 2016. Like the first conference, it brought together scientists and scholars engaged in this field of research and provided a forum for discussion and for presenting new methods and results.

This special issue of *manuscript cultures* once again contains a selection of extended papers presented at that conference in Hamburg 2016 and some additional contributions presenting unique case studies. The articles were solicited for original research work illuminating the role of the natural sciences and technology in manuscript analysis.

All in all, this special issue represents the state of the art, illustrating how different techniques and varying methodologies can be successfully applied to analytical investigations in the field of manuscript analysis. We hope that it will help to integrate the natural and applied sciences into the field of manuscript studies.

The research at the University of Hamburg for this volume was sponsored by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) at SFB 950 'Manuscript Cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe' and undertaken within the scope of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC). We would like to express our gratitude to all the authors for submitting persuasive, up-to-date papers, to all the anonymous reviewers for their valuable and constructive comments and finally to the editorial office for their own fruitful contribution to this issue.

*Christian Brockmann, Oliver Hahn, Volker Märgner,
Ira Rabin, and H. Siegfried Stiehl*

Studies in Manuscript Cultures (SMC)

Ed. by Michael Friedrich, Harunaga Isaacson, and Jörg B. Quenzer

Writing is one of the most important cultural techniques, and writing has been handwriting throughout the greater part of human history, in some places even until very recently. Manuscripts are usually studied primarily for their contents, that is, for the texts, images and notation they carry, but they are also unique artefacts, the study of which can reveal how they were produced and used. The social and cultural history of manuscripts allows for 'grounding' the history of human knowledge and knowledge practices in material evidence in ways largely unexplored by traditional scholarship.

With very few exceptions, the history of the handwritten book is usually taken to be the prehistory of the (printed

Western) book, thus not only denying manuscripts their distinct status as carrier medium, but also neglecting the rich heritage of Asian and African manuscript cultures from which, according to conservative estimates, more than ten million specimens survive until today.

The series *Studies in Manuscript Cultures (SMC)* is designed to publish monographs and collective volumes contributing to the emerging field of manuscript studies (or manuscriptology) including disciplines such as philology, palaeography, codicology, art history, and material analysis. SMC encourages comparative study and contributes to a historical and systematic survey of manuscript cultures.

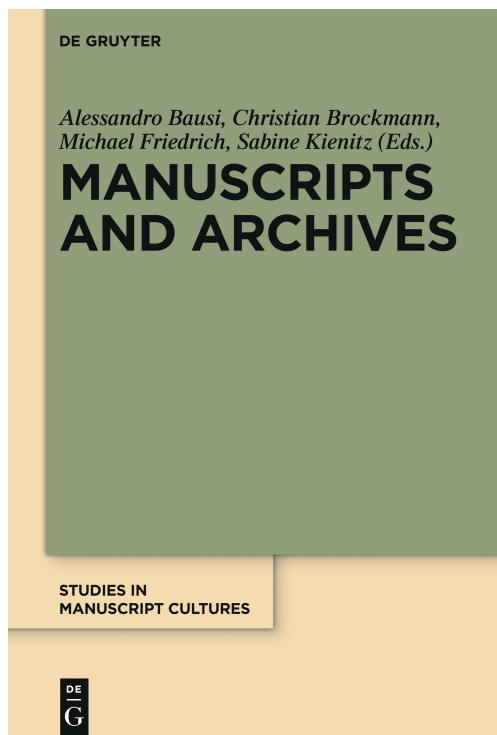
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Just published



11 - *Manuscripts and Archives: Comparative Views on Record-Keeping* edited by Alessandro Bausi, Christian Brockmann, Michael Friedrich, and Sabine Kienitz

Archives are considered to be collections of administrative, legal, commercial and other records or the actual place where they are located. They have become ubiquitous in the modern world, but emerged not much later than the invention of writing. Following Foucault, who first used the word archive in a metaphorical sense as 'the general system of the formation and transformation of statements' in his 'Archaeology of Knowledge' (1969), postmodern theorists have tried to exploit the potential of this concept and initiated the 'archival turn'. In recent years, however, archives have attracted the attention of anthropologists and historians of different denominations regarding them as historical objects and 'grounding' them again in real institutions. The papers in this volume explore the complex topic of the archive in a historical, systematic and comparative context and view it in the broader context of manuscript cultures by addressing questions like how, by whom and for which purpose were archival records produced, and if they differ from literary manuscripts regarding materials, formats, and producers (scribes).

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