

Editorial

Starting from 2016, the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies* network has become affiliated to the Hamburg University Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC). Established on the premises of the Sonderforschungsbereich 950: Manuscript Cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe, the CSMC has grown to one of the most active institutions for manuscript studies in Europe and world-wide and the *COMSt* network has now a safer basis, for some years to come at least.

The present issue merges articles accepted for the first and the second 2016 instalments of the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin*. Some of the papers in this issue were originally presented at the international conference *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: Looking Back, Looking Ahead* (Hamburg, 26 September 2016, co-sponsored by the CSMC; see the report in this issue). The issue is, however, far from being a *Proceedings* volume: it contains materials that were not presented during the conference, and some of the conference papers shall be published in the subsequent *Bulletin* issues.

The conference was a yet another witness to the value of the *COMSt* network as an exchange platform for scholars conducting research in manuscript studies. And it is exactly this scope, of constant exchange, that is the strength of the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin*, one of the few recognized periodicals in the field that publishes, with very short waiting lists, not only research articles *strictu sensu*, but also summaries of planned or ongoing projects, dissertation abstracts, reports and reviews, and opens floor for discussion on questions that have yet to be answered.

It is with great satisfaction that we can also note the international recognition of the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin*. In 2016, the *Bulletin* was accepted in the academic journals database of the European Research Council, and the publications can therefore be considered for ERC academic reporting. As an Open Access periodical, the *Bulletin* is particularly well seen by the European Union and national foundations, since providing Open Access has now become an often indispensable requirement for research results obtained with public funding. We also hope that in 2017 the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin* shall enter the list of the scientific journals recognized by the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research Systems, as it has previously happened for the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter*.

We look forward to receiving your articles, project descriptions, conference reports, and book reviews for the forthcoming *Bulletin* issues.