



The Hamburg Manuscript Research Projects
announce a Workshop
on

The Second(ary) Life of Manuscripts

11-13 July, 2013

Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures
Warburgstraße 26
20354 Hamburg

Manuscripts might be used in a way which is far beyond the original scope of the commissioners and manuscript makers. The most common function of text- and/or image-carrier can be accompanied by other less obvious ones. With the passage of time and due to various social, cultural, and practical factors, initially parallel, subordinate and secondary functions might assume a prominent role, transcending and transforming the initial conception of the manuscript at the time it was first produced. Being a living object for the entire time it is used, the manuscript bears in itself written and non-written evidence of its earlier as well as afterlife or secondary life. A source of invaluable data in its own right, the latter evidence often turns out to be by far more important and revealing than the earlier layer according to the original programme.

Written additional notes or marginalia excluding paratexts such as commentaries, etc. (using a purely descriptive terminology) might cover a huge range of typologies. They might testify to interventions in the material structure of the manuscript (repairs, renovations, restorations, later addition of ornamental decorations) as well as consist of every kind of texts of a given manuscript culture. Yet specific typologies of texts might also come to be regularly, if not exclusively, hosted as guest-texts only. This might depend on various reasons: from the scarcity of scribal material, to the necessity of a contextual legitimation through an authoritative manuscript environment, to various other reasons. Actually a moment of its reception in the long run, this is but one of the various possible cases in which a manuscript comes to be re-used, thus subverting the hierarchies devised by the producers and commissioners, and expected by the primary consumers.

Three panels of the meeting will deal, respectively, with

- 1) surveying typology of the evidence as represented in different traditions, as well as the way of recording and studying it;
- 2) discussing physical features and peculiarities of the evidence (kind of secondary materials, material changes, additional visual elements, interventions into the binding structures);
- 3) tracing of the manuscripts' history and "second(ary) life" on examples of specific cases (esp. tracing of chains of private owners, transfer from one collection to another and wandering of the manuscripts, change of the status of the manuscript, reutilization of manuscripts, or their fragments).

The workshop will focus on methodological issues and sample cases, and will strive towards a broad, diachronic look at the phenomenon as represented in several manuscript cultures.

The publication of the workshop's proceedings is planned.

Ethio-SPARE

Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian Studies,
Asien-Afrika-Institut, Hamburg

COMSt

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Cultures,
ESF Research Networking Programme
(coordinated from Hamburg)

SFB 950

Manuscript cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe

CSMC

Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures
(host)

NGMCP

Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project,
Department for Indology and Tibetology,
Asien-Afrika-Institut, Hamburg

