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**Editorial**

# From Newsletter to Journal

Dear Reader

When the first issue of the newsletter *manuscript cultures* was published back in 2008, none of the editors would have dared to imagine that only three years later the Hamburg research group ‘Manuscript Cultures of Asia and Africa’ (funded by the German Research Association, DFG) would grow into a research centre with twenty-two sub-projects in eighteen disciplines, including imaging, material analysis and computer science. These sub-projects, a post-graduate programme with 35 PhD students from all over the world and a library occupy all seven floors of a building close to the campus of the University of Hamburg.

Establishing the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) was also made possible by the generous support the DFG and the University of Hamburg provided for our ‘Sonderforschungsbereich 950: Manuskriptkulturen in Asien, Afrika und Europa’, which has attracted further manuscript projects such as ‘Safeguarding the Manuscripts from Timbuktu’ (funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the German Foreign Office) and ‘Going From Hand to Hand: Networks of Intellectual Exchange in the Tamil Learned Traditions’ (NETamil, funded by the European Research Council).

Since the scope of regions and research interests has grown considerably, it was decided to expand the newsletter into an academic journal, completing the circle of publications issued by the CSMC: its website, the monograph series entitled *Studies in Manuscript Cultures* (SMC) and the *Encyclopaedia of Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa* (EMCAA). Just like its predecessor, the journal *manuscript cultures* will be freely available, both as a download and – upon request – as a hard copy.

The editorial policy of *manuscript cultures* is the same as the one for SMC: it strives to enhance the emerging field of manuscript studies (also known as manuscriptology), including disciplines such as philology, palaeography, codicology, art history and material analysis, thus encouraging comparative study and contributing to a historical and systematic survey of manuscript cultures. The CSMC and its international network of scholars will serve as a pool of experts, inviting, recommending and reviewing articles concerned with this academic field.

It has taken some time to produce the first volume of this journal, but we expect it to appear much more frequently in the future. We look forward to receiving your contributions and suggestions.

*Michael Friedrich, Jörg B. Quenzer, and Irina Wandrey*