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CENTRE FOR THE  
STUDY OF  
MANUSCRIPT  
CULTURES

UHH - Sonderforschungsbereich 950  
Warburgstraße 26, D-20354 Hamburg

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) cordially invites  
you to a workshop on

## Shaping Communities: Manuscripts Affecting Social Relations

Hamburg, 13 July 2018

Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures Warburgstraße 26, Pavillon  
20354 Hamburg

10.15 am Introduction by Anna Boroffka and Michael Kohs

### Section I: Legal and Administrative Aspects

10.30 am **Sina Sauer, Hamburg**

The Agency of Paper Actors: Claiming Compensation in German Post-war Administration in the context of Nazi Seizure Policy 1948–1949

**Shutao Wang, Hamburg**

The Manichaean Illuminations and Paintings: The Visual Agency for Shaping the Manichaean Community of Gaochang (Late 8th – Early 11th Century)

12.00 am coffee break

### Section II: Social and Economic Aspects

12.30 pm **Berenice Möller, Hamburg**

Manuscripts for Noble Brides. A Case Study from Early Modern Japan

**Zhenzhen Lu, Hamburg**

For Readers and Reciters: Manuscripts of Entertainment Literature for Sale in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Beijing

14.15 pm **Jan van der Putten, Hamburg**

Customised Manuscripts Shaping a Community of Readers?  
Overbeck's Collection of Rental Manuscripts from Palembang  
(Indonesia)

15.00 pm Closing remarks/final discussion

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Warburgstraße 26 · D - 20354 Hamburg · <http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/>

## Abstracts

### **The Agency of Paper Actors: Claiming Compensation in German Post-war Administration in the context of Nazi Seizure Policy 1948–1949**

Sina Sauer, CSMC

After World War II in Europe had ended on May 8th 1945, former persecutees and their heirs immediately claimed legal compensation for the experienced injustice and crimes by the Nazis. One of the major issues was the mass spoliation of Jewish property, which had been given the semblance of legality. In order to ensure this administrative procedure of pseudo-legal formalization, the Nazis had transferred confiscation measures into bureaucratic forms like legal regulations, orders and letters. The lecture surveys the constitutive role of material evidence of Nazi administration in those reparation and restitution practices, which were established by the Federal Republic of Germany after 1945. It explores the functions of bureaucratic documents concerning the opening up of compensation proceedings. Hence it follows the question, in what way documents circulated between involved authorities and hereby shaped an administrative community depending on written artefacts. A case example of a compensation claim in the period of 1948–1949 will reconstruct the agency of these paper actors in German post-war bureaucratic practices.

### **The Manichaean Illuminations and Paintings: The Visual Agency for Shaping the Manichaean Community of Gaochang (Late 8th – Early 11th Century)**

Shutao Wang, CSMC

The Persian prophet Mani of the 3rd century CE propagated his teachings simultaneously in textual and pictorial forms. Accordingly, Manichaeism had fostered a richly religious culture of books and pictures. As visual agency, the Manichaean illuminations and paintings were generally used by eastern Manichaeans in sermons, rituals, and venerations, which led to constructing the Manichaean identity and shaping the Manichaean community. Although it seems that a devotional context of use was primary to Manichaean pictures, the Manichaean pictorial survivals and the writings about Manichaean art, demonstrate an obvious preference towards the instructional use. The Gaochang Uyghur Manichaean era of royal sponsorship was an important transitional phase in the history of Manichaean art, with significant innovations of modification and adaption based on inheritance, since mid-9th century. In this presentation, I will give an analysis on the various functions of the Manichaean illuminations and paintings, as visual agency in the process of shaping the Manichaean community at Gaochang.

## Manuscripts for Noble Brides: A Case Study from Early Modern Japan

Berenice Möller, CSMC

Gift giving is an integral part in shaping any community. In 17th century Japan, gift giving to, from and within the shogunal government shifted from the medieval practice of gifting to please or congratulate each other to a regulated and ritualized exchange of gifts. This is in accord with Mauss' concept of gifts as reciprocal, and one could say for the 17th century shogunal context, that gifts create even coercion. Thus, for Mauss gifts are "adhesives that form communities."

A wedding is an obvious occasion for gifts. In the shogunal realm, the romantic union of two individuals could be described as the least important aspect of weddings, where political motives were the main reason for the event. Wedding gifts could take many forms, and could as well be manuscripts. However, so-called trousseau books seem to have been presented to the female spouse only. The three manuscripts Sagamigawa, Sayohime and Yokubue from the collection of Otto Voretzsch in Frankfurt (Museum für Angewandte Kunst) illustrate what such manuscript gifts can express about their givers and receivers. While it is uncertain whether they were actually used as trousseau books, the sheer economic value and the implicit added value, especially becoming manifest in the manuscript's contents, leave only little doubt that they were gifts on the occasion of the wedding of a high-ranking lady.

When they were first gifted, these manuscripts attested to the social standing of the giver, representing his place in society. However, looking at them today, it is easier to see the presentee's social affiliation rather than the giver, because colophons or visual as well as contextual hints to the givers are missing. Materially the three manuscripts indicate the bride's high birth. The content may reflect social responsibilities to her husband, her parents and the family she married into or out of. In this talk I want to explore what 17th century trousseau books can tell us about the communities that produced and received them. I will focus on two aspects of the three Frankfurt manuscripts: their clearly commercial (mass) production, and their more personal details.

**For Readers and Reciters:  
Manuscripts of Entertainment Literature for Sale in 19th Century Beijing**

Zhenzhen Lu, CSMC

The 19th century was a golden age of entertainment in urban north China, as evidenced by the profusion of regional musical and theatrical forms. Nourished by the entertainment culture, in the capital city of Beijing a number of shops thrived on the production of handwritten copies of dramas, stories and songs, sold through catalogs displayed at temple fairs. In this talk I take a close look at several such catalogs from the shop Baiben Zhang, the most prominent of these shops. From stamps on the covers to the titles and prices listed in the catalogs, I attempt a preliminary look at their targeted urban communities, as well as the range of musical and literary tastes given shape in these manuscript products.

**Customised Manuscripts Shaping a Community of Readers? Overbeck's  
Collection of Rental Manuscripts from Palembang (Indonesia)**

Jan van der Putten, CSMC

This paper explores the possibility of tracing material agency in a small collection of manuscripts bought by the German scholar Hans Overbeck from the owner of a lending library collection in Palembang in the first decade of the 20th century. The seven Malay manuscripts examined here predominantly contain popular stories that relate to the Mahabharata-based repertoire of a Javanese performance tradition. Several of the manuscripts are nicely bound in leather bindings and have comparable illuminated opening pages, giving the impression of customised manuscripts constituting a handsome collection of a commercial lending library. Notes on some of the flyleaves indicate different owners and suggest that the collection was assembled from locally acquired manuscripts. The bindings also contain lists with notes by borrowers that indicate a very local distribution of the reading public. The inclusion of the pages containing these lists is rather puzzling and may have been included to strengthen the binding as endpapers. The materiality of the manuscripts with their quite luxurious binding and containing interconnected illumination patterns imply that the manuscripts were customised to serve as recognisable items of a certain collection which could be borrowed at 10 cents a night. Arguably, this would then invest agency in the manuscripts by indicating to the borrowers of a certain series manuscripts that might be borrowed.