

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)  
announces an Informal Talk

by

**Dr. Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello & Dr. Vlad Atanasiu**  
**University of Basel**

## **D-scribes: A New Project on Digital Palaeography of Greek and Coptic Papyri**

In September 2018, a four-years project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation has started in Basel: "Reuniting fragments, identifying scribes and characterizing scripts: the Digital palaeography of Greek and Coptic papyri (d-scribes)". Greek and Coptic papyri preserved in the sands of Egypt are one of our main sources for Classical and early Christian literature. They are also crucial for the field of Ancient History of the Eastern Mediterranean world, as the texts found written in them span from the Hellenistic period to the Middle Ages. The papyri are often incomplete, however, broken accidentally during the course of time or, in more recent periods, intentionally cut to be sold in pieces in the antiquities market. The present research project aims to lay the foundation for an online interface through which papyrologists would be able to look for similar – or identical – handwritings to a given papyrus and typical samples of writings for a given period. To reach this ambitious goal, this project will first focus on three distinct and complementary case studies: the 1,500 papyri which contain Homer's Iliad, written in Ancient Greek; the richest archive of the Byzantine period (700 papyri) which is called the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito written in Greek and Coptic (from the 6th c. A.D.); and the archive of Papas, written in Greek and Coptic, whose hundreds of papyri were found broken in a jar and thus represent a real jigsaw puzzle for papyrologists. During our talk, we intend to present the dataset, research questions and first achievements of d-scribes but also two initiatives aiming to gather scholars interested in the topic of handwriting analysis and classification, whatever the language, writing material or period: d-scribes mailing-list and the new Group of Research on Digital Palaeography (GoRDiPal).

**Thursday, 23 May 2019 at 2 pm**  
**Room 2002, CSMC**