

Use and Reuse of Paper in the Pre-Industrial World

Call for Proposals

After the material turn in the Arts & Humanities, the use and reuse of objects has gained more scholarly attention. In book history, the production and reuse of material has long been researched, but traditionally the focus was on the production of paper and the reuse of parchment, particularly on watermarks and on fragments used in bindings or as scraped-off and newly-written-on palimpsests. In recent years the research has shifted to include the wider afterlife of parchment manuscripts, including societal and historical contexts. We would like to expand these new approaches to handmade paper, including paper manuscripts, in the pre-industrial world.

We would like to strengthen the change of focus to later stages in the life cycle of paper and to non-text-bearing paper objects by hosting a colloquium. We thus invite you to investigate various approaches towards the use and reuse of pre-industrial paper. Possible research questions include, but are not limited to:

- To what uses was paper put, apart from books and manuscripts? What historical sources and artefacts bear witness to such uses?
- Did paper replace other materials or did it create new needs?
- How did the use and reuse of paper spread through our world? How widespread was the use of paper in society? Are there differences of use and reuse with regard to geographical or social aspects?
- When did the reuse of paper start, when did it stop and were there specific events that led to the reuse of paper?
- Does the reuse of handmade paper give us general clues about the age, or 'life expectancy' of paper? For how long was paper in circulation?
- What manuscripts and books were prone to be recycled and to contain recycled materials?
- To what new uses was recycled paper put, apart from manuscripts and books?

Topics are not limited to book history, codicology or fragmentology, and suggestions from other disciplines are particularly welcome. We especially encourage scholars, librarians, archivists, conservators and other interested parties from outside Europe to send us an abstract and to attend our colloquium.

The colloquium will convene at the **University College Cork, Ireland, on 27-28 August 2024** and will be free of charge, however, attendants and speakers are responsible for their own travel and accommodation. We envisage the publication of conference proceedings and will inform the speakers about details. The colloquium is jointly organised by the University College Cork, Ireland, and the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies in Reykjavík, Iceland.

Please send your abstract of 200-300 words until 31 March 2024 to silvia@hi.is.

Please feel free to circulate this call for proposals!