

Call for Papers “Paper Stories: Paper and Book History in Post-Medieval Europe” 7-8 May 2020, Reykjavík

This international two-day-conference will focus on the various paths that paper took from production via the processes of being made into documents, manuscripts and books to their present repositories in library collections. We intend to bring together scholars, paper experts, conservators, book historians and others who work in watermark research, paper trade, history of collections and object biography. Thus, we aim to highlight material aspects of manuscripts and books, as well as object biography.

Post-medieval watermark research, watermark analysis in Scandinavia and studies in paper trade are gaining more and more scholarly attention, not least because it has a great impact on several scholarly disciplines, such as history, literary studies, art history and musicology.

We understand object biography as a perspective on both the material and the intellectual history of text bearers, i.e. manuscripts, books and documents. We focus on the processes of their production, reception and use, their physical appearance and aspects of wear, tear and repair. This includes the investigation of the origins of the raw materials, including paper production, as well as manufacture, use, ownership, exchange and preservation of the objects.

We hope that the analysis of paper production and trade, as well as history of collections and object biography presented at our conference will lead to new understandings of social, cultural and economic history in Europe.

Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- post-medieval watermarks
- European paper trade and trade networks
- paper trade as a part of social and economic history
- official and private paper buyers
- paper in book bindings and other non-textual uses of paper
- history of books and book collections
- object biography
- agents involved in acquisition and circulation of manuscripts and books
- the role of book antiquaries in library and collection history
- parameters and motivation behind building up a private or public library collection

Please send your abstract of 200-300 words by 30 August 2019 to silvia@hi.is.

Schedule and venue:

7-8 May 2020, National and University Library of Iceland, Reykjavík.

There will be no conference fee, however, we expect presenters and visitors to cover their own travel and accommodation expenses.

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