

Joint CSMC & SAW Workshop

**“What Can the History of Science Contribute to Manuscript Studies
or
What Can Manuscript Studies Contribute to the History of Science?”**

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Abstract

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Confessions of an historian of science at work with manuscripts

There are some simple answers to the general question raised in this workshop: historians of science are acquainted with the intellectual habits of the scientific milieus in which many manuscripts were produced; they may also have some technical skills which allow them to date and locate particular texts or documents. However I will not try to exhibit “answers” that historians of science may have to questions raised by the specialists of manuscripts but rather concentrate on the issues and questions which we may share. I will expose some of the way in which, in my practice as an historian of mathematical sciences in the late medieval Europe, I worked with manuscripts. In addition, I will present how my practices are linked to those of my colleagues and predecessors. I will conclude by pointing to two aspects which could be fruitful for both fields.