

The Cluster of Excellence  
**Understanding Written Artefacts**  
at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)  
cordially invites you to the event

## **Evolution of Amate Technology in the Context of Manuscript Production**

Wednesday, 3 June 2026, 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm CEST

Warburgstraße 26, 20146 Hamburg

Recognised primarily as the writing substrate used in Mesoamerican codices, amate and its production are often perceived as equivalent to historical paper and papermaking traditions in Europe and Asia. However, a closer examination of the amate manufacturing process reveals a distinct local technology, which may have evolved through contact with European papermaking following colonization.

This presentation reports on a fieldwork expedition to the Puebla region of Mexico conducted in October 2025 as part of the UWA project 'Measurements of Paper Components'. The talk will present the current state of knowledge on amate technology, the outcomes of discussions with Mexican experts studying the material, findings from research conducted within the Otomi papermaking community, and the first results of analyses of collected amate samples carried out at the DESY synchrotron facility. It aims to identify key gaps in current knowledge and to formulate new questions regarding the history of amate production and its use in manuscripts.

The presentation will be followed by the donation of an Otomi manuscript acquired during field interviews with don Alfonso Margarito Garcia Tellez, a prominent shaman renowned for crafting amate cutout books that recount the rituals and customs of the Otomi people.

## Programme

---

- 4:00 – 4:15 Welcome words by Konrad Hirschler (University of Hamburg)  
Introduction by Agnieszka Helman-Ważny (University of Hamburg)
- 4:15 – 5:00 Małgorzata Grzelec (University of Hamburg), Laura Gallardo Dominguez  
(Hamburg University of Technology), and Iván Pérez Téllez (Independent  
Researcher)  
*Evolution of Amate Technology in the Context of Manuscript Production*
- 5:00 – 5:15 Discussion
- 5:15 – 5:45 Manuscript donation  
Information on digitisation  
Showcasing of collected reference materials
- 6:00 – 7:00 Reception