#### CONFERENCE

# THE MATERIALITY AND EFFICACY OF AKSARA. SITUATING BALINESE SCRIPTURAL PRACTICES

January 30 - February 1. 2014 Institut für Ethnologie, Universität Heidelberg

This conference aims to explore traditional uses of writing on the Indonesian island of Bali with a special emphasis on the power and efficacy attributed to Balinese script. Our approach will be at once interdisciplinary and comparative, bringing together regional-experts working both in Bali and other parts of South and Southeast Asia. Scholars have long recognized a certain gap between modern western practices of philological interpretation and those of the Javano-Balinese textual tradition. We wish to ask what, if any, impact recognition of this gap should have on our conception of the text

Of what relevance, for example, are the uses to which Balinese script has been put in the context of ceremonial rites? Does it matter that many of the manuscripts on which we work were, and often are, thought to be 'alive' by those who have produced and made use of them? What ideas of materiality, power and agency are at work in the production and preservation of palm-leaf manuscripts, inscribed amulets and other script-bearing ritual instruments? In asking these questions we are not simply interested in attending to material – such as palm leaves, copper plates and the like – as an inert substrate for the text and its script. Rather we aim to examine indigenous ideas of materiality with an eye to their implications for critical scholarship. It is in this latter connection that we are especially interested in comparison with uses of script and writing in India and Java, but also in mainland Southeast Asia.

#### **ORGANIZERS**

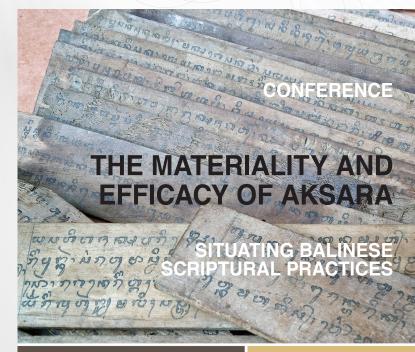
Sonderforschungsbereich 933 Materiale Textkulturen. Materialität und Präsenz des Geschriebenen in non-typographischen Gesellschaften

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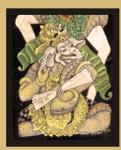






January 30 to February 1, 2014

University of Heidelberg



Sonderforschungsbereich 933 an der Universität Heidelberg, gefördert von der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft. Kooperationspartner: Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg





#### Materiale Textkulturen

Materialität und Präsenz des Geschriebenen in non-typographischen Gesellschaften

## **PROGRAM**

## Thursday, January 30

		Arrivals		
19 <sup>00</sup>		Dinner		
Friday, January 31				
900		Coffee		
<b>9</b> <sup>30</sup>	Annette Hornbacher	Opening address		
Session 1				
1000	Richard Fox Discussant: Daud Ali	The Meaning of Life, or How to Do Things with Letters		
	Margaret Wiener Discussant: Helen Creese	Lettered Actors: Animacy and Ontologies		
1230		Lunch		
	Session 2			
13 <sup>30</sup>	Helen Creese Discussant: Hedi Hinzler	Im-Materiality—Where Have All the Aksara Gone?		
	Tom Patton Discussant: Andrea Acri	From Palm-leaf Manuscripts to Popular Magazines: Burmese Buddhist Sacred Diagrams in the 21st Century		
16ºº		Coffee Break		
	Session 3			
16 <sup>30</sup>	Tom Hunter Discussant: Richard Fox	The Medium is the Message: Chirographic Figures from Aksara Cyutaka to Miyasa		
19 <sup>30</sup>		Dinner		

## Saturday, February 1

#### Session 1

930	Daud Ali Discussant: Tom Hunter, read by Richard Fox	Speech Acts and Magical Sounds: Power and the Technology of Writing in early Indonesia
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10 <sup>45</sup>		Coffee Break
	Session 2	
11 <sup>15</sup>	Hedi Hinzler	Visible and Invisible Script Used at
	Discussant: Anette Hornbacher	Consecrations of Buildings in Bali
1230		Lunch
	Session 3	
1330	Andrea Acri	Mātṛkānyāsa ('Imposition of the Syllabary') in the South Asian and Javano-Balinese traditions
	Discussant: Tom Patton	
	Annette Hornbacher	'Representation' or 'Presence'?
	7 11110110 11011101101101	Relations Between Text, Script and
	Discussant: Margaret Wiener	Power in Balinese Ritual
1600		Coffee Break
16 <sup>30</sup>	Chaired by Richard Fox	Closing Roundtable
		Dinner on own

All sessions will take place in the Besprechungszimmer of the Institut für Ethnologie (Albert-Ueberle-Straße 3-5, 69120 Heidelberg).

