

6 February 2018 - Guest Talk at HLCES

*The Social Lives of Ethiopian Psalters:*  
Assumptions, Goals, Methods, and Initial Findings

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Abstract: The Social Lives of Ethiopian Psalters is a project to identify and explore the dozens of social locations that constitute Ethiopian Christian book culture, and which have left evidence in the codices themselves, evidence of: craftwork (materials, assembly, repairs, etc.), basic and advanced scribal skills, artistry (both skilled and common), economics (value, ownership, transactions, and economics), readership, liturgical settings, public records, etc. In this presentation we will describe: 1) assumptions we bring to the project and which help us to formulate an approach to our work; 2) goals we hope to achieve in the course of the project; 3) methods we employ (typologies, data collection, data analysis, and data visualization); and 4) findings which have begun to emerge. In particular, we see great promise in tracing chronological developments in several of these categories. And most recently, we have added a geo-mapping dimension to the project that promises to provide glimpses of regional variation in book culture.