

Comparative codicology, 9th–10th centuries AD London, 31 October 2014

A one-day workshop dedicated to *Comparative Codicology in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries AD* took place on 31 October 2014 at Brigham Young University, London Centre. It was convened by Sebastian Brock (University of Oxford, UK) and Myriam Wissa (University of London, UK), and organized by the latter with the support of James Faulconer, academic director of Brigham Young University, London.

As Myriam Wissa's research on craftsmen in Egypt and their commercial networks from Justinian to the Abbasids (sixth to tenth centuries) showed, these communities of artisans include, among other people, scribes and secretaries, and therefore involve their codicological works. Thence, the idea of a workshop on comparative codicology was borne, with the intention to survey various codicological traditions. While working on cataloguing the Syriac fragments at Saint Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai, Sebastian Brock was struck by the multiplicity of the languages of Sinai in the ninth and tenth centuries—the period covered by the workshop presentations. In addition to the potential interest for the multilingual Greek, Georgian, Syriac and Arabic manuscripts, which were used simultaneously in Sinai, new insights can be gained from the change of material from parchment to paper.

The day was organized into three sessions. The first session was dedicated to Hebrew, Syriac and Coptic manuscripts. It featured presentations by Maria Gorea (University of Paris VIII, France), *Du volumen au rotulus: pratiques sribales en Syrie-Palestine dans les communautés juives de la diaspora*, by Sebastian Brock, *Syriac codicology*, and by Myriam Wissa, *Inks and the written word in the ninth and tenth century Coptic and Coptic-Arabic manuscripts*.

The second session focused on Greek manuscripts. Federico Montinaro (University of Cologne, Germany) spoke on *Histories of Byzantium: the early manuscripts of Theophanes' Chronicle*, and Georgi Parpulov (University of Oxford, UK) on *Codicological peculiarities of ninth and tenth-century Greek manuscripts*.

The third session combined papers from Armenian, Georgian, and Arabic studies. Vrej Nersessian (British Library, London, UK) presented a talk on *The dating systems used by scribes in colophons of Armenian manuscripts*, Nino Sakvarelidze (Innsbruck, Austria) spoke of *Georgian manuscripts as witnesses to a 'mixed tradition'*, finally, Alasdair Watson (Bodleian Library, Oxford, UK) reported on *The 3rd-4th centuries of the Hijrah: scribal reforms, and the transition from parchment to paper*.

The workshop proved to be exceptional merging of diverse codicological approaches, the mingling of which opened out into a fascinating range of topics. The success of this workshop stemmed not only from its size and intimacy but also from the speakers and their creativity. The papers will be published.

Myriam Wissa, University of London

Bible as Notepad

Oslo, 10–12 December 2014

The *Bible as Notepad* conference, organized by Liv Ingeborg Lied and Matthew Monger, was held from 10 to 12 December 2014 in Oslo, hosted by MF – Norwegian School of Theology in cooperation with The University of Agder, The Norwegian Bible Society and the Fritt Ord Foundation. The goal of the conference was to gather an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars to study notes, comments, and scribbling in biblical and related manuscripts. The result was a stimulating discussion of annotations in different manuscript and language traditions, the various relationships between text in the column and notes in the margins, and the roles and functions of annotated manuscripts as cultural artifacts.

At the beginning of the conference, Liv Ingeborg Lied provided introductory reflections on the topic of *Bible as Notepad*, setting the tone by pointing to the methodological and theoretical importance of marginalia and annotations in the study of manuscripts. Another methodological contribution was provided by Hindy Najman (Yale), who drew lines between traditional philological methodologies and material philology in her paper ‘Philologie der Philosophie’: Revisiting the Limits and Possibilities of Philology’.

A considerable number of papers treated oriental traditions. Ethiopic manuscript tradition was discussed by Ted Erho (Munich) in his paper ‘A Classificatory Survey of Marginalia in Ethiopic Old Testament Manuscripts’, and by Loren Stuckenbruck (Munich), who led the group on a virtual journey to Ethiopia while discussing the liturgical use of Enoch in the Ethiopian tradition in his paper ‘Marginal Notes on the Liturgical use of Enoch in the Ethiopian Tradition’. The Medieval Hebrew tradition was represented by James R. Davila (St. Andrews), who offered a close reading of sections of the Hekhalot Rabbati in his paper ‘Notes in the text? The