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# Articles and notes

## Vat. copt. 57:

### A Codicological, Literary, and Paratextual Analysis\*

*Paola Buzi, Francesco Berno, Agostino Soldati, and  
Francesco Valerio, 'Sapienza' Università di Roma*

MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Vat. copt. 57, a collection of homilies attributed to John Chrysostom in Bohairic Coptic, poses a number of challenges to scholars. Questions such as, Can we identify the texts, and what is their relationship to their Greek models? Can we know who the copyist(s) was or were? are approached by a team of scholars in a collaborative study.

The Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana preserves several modern volumes (shelf marks Vat. copt. 57 to Vat. copt. 69), which contain Bohairic parchment leaves from the Monastery of St Macarius (Dayr al-Anbā Maqār) in the Wādī al-Naṭrūn (Skētis, or Wādī Hubayb). Among them, MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. copt. 57 = CLM 72 (= CMCL: MACA.AC)<sup>1</sup> represents a special case, not only because it is the only one that contains a selection of works by the same author (John Chrysostom), but also, and primarily, because all its leaves belong to the same original codex, or better codicological unit. The volume is therefore a modern re-binding of an ancient codex that has lost only a few leaves compared to its original structure.

This article describes the codicological and palaeographical features of Vat. copt. 57, analyses its content, and, lastly, its paratextual elements.

\* This study was carried out within the framework of the ERC Advanced Grant (2015) 'PATHs – Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context. Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage', directed by Paola Buzi and hosted by Sapienza University of Rome (grant no. 687567). A more detailed and elaborate study of Vat. copt. 57 is in preparation for the series 'Studi e Testi'.

1 Standard description: Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 368–384. For a general overview on the manuscript and an updated bibliography, see Voicu 2012. For a detailed table of its contents, see Table 1 below. A complete digitized copy is available at: <[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.copt.57](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.copt.57)>.

### *1. Codicological and palaeographical description (by Francesco Valerio)*

MS Vat. copt. 57<sup>2</sup> is a parchment codex containing the Bohairic version of 38 homilies attributed to John Chrysostom. It formed part of the library of the Monastery of St Macarius (Dayr al-Anbā Maqār), in the Wādī an-Nāṭrūn, whence it was acquired by Giuseppe Simonio Assemani (1687–1768) during his mission in the Near East (1715–1717), undertaken on behalf of Pope Clement XI Albani.

Together with Vat. copt. 57, Assemani acquired other Bohairic parchment manuscripts from St Macarius: Vat. copt. 1 = CLM 70 = MACA.AA (Copto-Arabic Pentateuch: the Bohairic text is attributed to the ninth–tenth century, while the Arabic version is a later addition, attributed to the thirteenth–fourteenth century),<sup>3</sup> Vat. copt. 5 = CLM 71 = MACA.AB (Psalter, attributed to the thirteenth century), Vat. copt. 35 = CLM 164 = CMCL MACA.EG (Antiphonary, dated by the colophon to the year 1218 CE), and Vat. copt. 58–69 (composite miscellanies of homiletical and hagiographical content, attributed to the ninth–tenth century, except for the four codicological units forming Vat. copt. 60, which are datable to the twelfth–thirteenth century).<sup>4</sup>

As it seems, Assemani brought one more Bohairic parchment manuscript back from St Macarius, containing a catena on the Gospels (dated by the colophon to the year 888/889 CE), but for some reason he left it in the Monastery of the Syrians (Dayr al-Suryān). More than a century later (1838), it was acquired by Robert Curzon, 14<sup>th</sup> Baron Zouche of Haryngworth (1810–1873), so that it became universally known as the ‘Curzon Catena’. In 1917, Curzon’s library was bequeathed by his daughter to the British Museum in London (now British Library), where the manuscript was given the call number Or. 8812.<sup>5</sup> We shall return to it later.

In its present state, Vat. copt. 57 contains 280 leaves (260 × 370 mm), forming 36 quires. All quires were originally regular quaternions composed according to Gregory’s rule, with flesh side first. Today, three quires are in-

2 Thanks to the kind permission of Paolo Vian, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, for the purpose of writing this article, I have been able to make a fresh inspection of the manuscript. For the other St Macarius manuscripts in the Vatican Library, I rely for the moment on the digitized copies available at <<https://digi.vatlib.it/>>. For the Curzon Catena, I used a digitized copy of a black and white microfilm, kindly put at the disposal of the PATHs team by Frank Feder and Alin Suciuc, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Digitale Gesamtedition und Übersetzung des koptisch-sahidischen Alten Testaments.

3 On this manuscript, see Boud’hors 2012.

4 See Proverbio 2012, 14. For a description of all these manuscripts, see Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 1–6, 12–14, 135–142, and 385–523.

5 Standard description: Layton 1987, 389–394 (no. 249).

complete. In quire XXII (= ff. 169–174), the central bifolium is lost (two leaves are missing between what is now ff. 171=172). In quire XXIII (= ff. 175–180), the third bifolium is lost (thus one leaf is missing between ff. 176 and 177, and one between ff. 178 and 179). In quire XXXVI (= ff. 277–280), the third and the central bifolium are lost (that is four leaves are missing between ff. 278=279; see fig. 1).

Looking at the texts, we see that the two missing leaves in quire XXII were the final leaves of Homily 21, the two missing leaves in quire XXIII were the last and the last but four leaf of Homily 22, the four missing leaves in quire XXXVI contained the end of Homily 37 and the beginning of Homily 38 (but see paragraph 2.1 below). Moreover, the final part of Homily 38 is also missing, since the text ends abruptly in what is now the last leaf of the manuscript (f. 280v).<sup>6</sup>

To sum up, it is certain that eight leaves are now missing from the core of the manuscript, and we can assume that it is not complete at the end. At least a singleton or a bifolium was necessary to complete the text of Homily 38. Besides, it is not known whether Homily 38 was in fact the last text in the collection: others could have followed, so that we cannot say how many, if any, quires are now missing.<sup>7</sup>

The 36 extant quires are regularly signed, from  $\alpha$  to  $\lambda\varsigma$ , on first and last page, in the top inner margin.<sup>8</sup> Each signature is decorated above and below

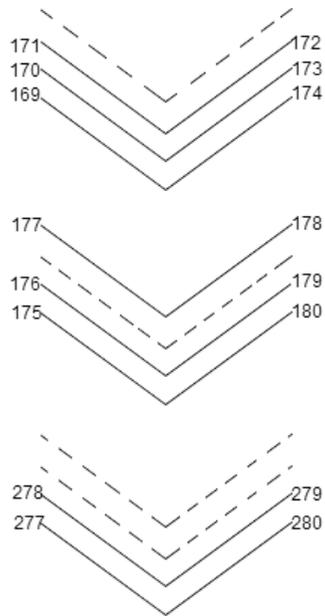


Fig. 1. Vat. copt. 57, quires XXII, XXIII, and XXXVI.

6 In fact, what remains of Homily 38 are only two leaves (ff. 279–280), or rather ‘half-leaves’, since their outer halves (and the upper margin of f. 280) are not preserved (and have been restored with modern parchment).

7 For the sake of completeness, one may observe that so rich a collection could be expected to be introduced by a title-index, listing the contents in their order of appearance (cf. e.g. the list of  $\mu\kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omicron\nu$  prefixed to each Gospel in the above-mentioned Curzon Catena: London, British Library, Or. 8812). If it were so, the manuscript may have suffered a loss not only at the end, but also at the beginning, where a bifolium or a binion (of course without a quire signature: see below in the text) would have contained such introductory matter.

8 Only on f. 280v (last page of quire XXXVI) the signature is not preserved, due to material reasons (see n. 6 above).

with a horizontal rule and a wavy line, and is accompanied by a cross and some invocations in Greek and Coptic, inscribed in the central upper margin of the same initial and final pages of each quire:  $\text{i}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}} \text{p}\bar{\text{x}}\bar{\text{c}} * \text{nik}\bar{\alpha}$  ('Jesus Christ is victorious'),  $\text{i}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}} \text{p}\bar{\text{x}}\bar{\text{c}} * \text{logoc p}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{c}}$  ('Jesus Christ the Word of the Father'),  $\text{i}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}} \text{p}\bar{\text{x}}\bar{\text{c}} * \bar{\gamma}\bar{\text{c}} \bar{\text{e}}\bar{\gamma}$  ('Jesus Christ the Son of God'),  $\text{logoc} * \text{to}\bar{\gamma} \text{p}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{c}}$  ('The Word of the Father'),  $\text{i}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}} * \text{p}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{m}}\bar{\text{b}}$  ('Jesus Christ the Life'),  $\bar{\gamma}\bar{\text{c}} \text{logoc} * \text{to}\bar{\gamma} \bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{y}}$  ('The Son Word of the God'),  $\text{i}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}} \text{p}\bar{\text{x}}\bar{\text{c}} * \text{o} \bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{c}} \text{h}\bar{\text{m}}\bar{\text{w}}(\text{n})$  ('Jesus Christ our God'),  $\bar{\gamma}\bar{\text{c}} \text{xp}\bar{\text{i}}\text{cto}\bar{\gamma}$  [*sic*] \*  $\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{y}}$  ('Christ the Son of God'),  $\text{z}\bar{\text{i}}\bar{\text{l}}\bar{\text{om}}$  [*sic*] \*  $\text{z}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{h}}\bar{\text{c}}$  ('The Tree of Life').<sup>9</sup>

Pagination is present in the top outer margin, on the first page of each quire (i.e. odd numbers from  $\alpha$  to  $\phi\zeta\alpha$  every 16:  $\alpha$ ,  $\iota\zeta$ ,  $\lambda\gamma$ ,  $\mu\theta$  and so on), and on all the verso pages (i.e. even numbers from  $\nu$  to  $\phi\omicron\Delta$ ), but there are many errors and inconsistencies.<sup>10</sup> The eight leaves now lost were comprised in the pagination, since the corresponding page numbers are now missing.<sup>11</sup> Like the quire signatures, each page number is decorated above and below with a horizontal rule and a wavy line.

Both the invocations (on the first and last page of a quire) and the pagination (only on the first page of the quire and on the verso pages) seem to be customary features of St Macarius parchment manuscripts, since they occur in nearly all the manuscripts acquired there by Assemani and now in the Vatican Library, as well as in the Curzon Catena.<sup>12</sup>

An ink foliation, from 1 to 280 (therefore *not* counting the eight missing leaves), is added in the top outer margin by an eighteenth-century hand.

9 The crosses are often decorated: see ff. 8v–9r, 16v–17r, 24v, 32v–33r, 48v–49r, 56v–57r, 64v–65r, 72v–73r, 96v–97r, 104v–105r, 112v–113r, 144v, 153r, 160v–161r, 168v–169r, 174v–175r, 180v–181r, 189r, 196v–197r, 204v–205r, 212v–213r, 220v–221v, 228v–229r, 244v, 260v–261r, 269r, 277r.

10 Four verso pages bear no page number, that is f. 14v (expected number  $\kappa\eta$ ), f. 60v ( $\rho\kappa$ ), f. 81v ( $\rho\zeta\theta$ ), f. 153v ( $\tau\varsigma$ ). Twelve pages bear a wrong number: f. 17r ( $\mu\theta$  instead of  $\lambda\gamma$ ;  $\mu\theta$  is in fact the number of the first page of the next quire!), f. 102v ( $\sigma\beta$  instead of  $\sigma\Delta$ ), f. 103v ( $\sigma\Delta$  instead of  $\sigma\varsigma$ ), ff. 175v–180v ( $\sigma\eta\Delta$ ,  $\sigma\eta\varsigma$ ,  $\sigma\zeta$ ,  $\sigma\zeta\beta$ ,  $\sigma\zeta\varsigma$ ,  $\sigma\zeta\eta$  instead of  $\tau\eta\Delta$ ,  $\tau\eta\varsigma$ ,  $\tau\zeta$ ,  $\tau\zeta\beta$ ,  $\tau\zeta\varsigma$ ,  $\tau\zeta\eta$ , respectively), f. 226v ( $\sigma\zeta$  instead of  $\gamma\zeta$ ), f. 260v ( $\phi\kappa\gamma$  instead of  $\phi\kappa\eta$ ), f. 264v ( $\phi\lambda\eta$  instead of  $\phi\lambda\varsigma$ ).

11 The missing page numbers are:  $\tau\eta\Delta$  and  $\tau\eta\varsigma$  (the two lost leaves of quire XXII),  $\sigma\eta\eta$  and  $\sigma\zeta\Delta$  (the two lost leaves of quire XXIII, certainly written, like the other page numbers of that quire, with the wrong c- instead of  $\tau$ -: see n. 10),  $\phi\zeta\varsigma$ ,  $\phi\zeta\eta$ ,  $\phi\omicron$ ,  $\phi\omicron\beta$  (the four lost leaves in quire XXXVI). In quire XXXVI, the number of the last page is also missing ( $\phi\omicron\varsigma$  on f. 280v), since the upper margin of the leaf is not preserved (see n. 6 and n. 8).

12 About this system of pagination, already Boud'hors 2012, 66, noted that it 'semble être l'habitude des manuscrits de parchemin du monastère de Saint-Macaire, et peut-être de Basse-Égypte en général'.

Sometimes the folio numbers have been trimmed, or have become faded, and have been repeated by a hand of the nineteenth or early twentieth century.<sup>13</sup>

The parchment is of poor quality, as it happens in the majority of Coptic manuscripts:<sup>14</sup> flesh and hair sides are highly different in colour and grain, and almost all leaves have irregular margins, holes, or eyes (now restored with modern parchment).<sup>15</sup>

The text is written in a single column, aligned left (written area: 170 × 300 mm). Each page has 36 to 38 lines, each line has 20 to 28 characters.<sup>16</sup> Paragraphs are marked with an enlarged initial in *ekthesis*. Punctuation is provided by a single or double raised dash, followed by a space.

Each homily is preceded by a title (see paragraph 4 below), written in a bimodular script inspired by the Greek Alexandrian majuscule.<sup>17</sup> The same writing is used for the page numbers, the quire signatures and the invocations, as well as for two prayers (in the standard pattern  $\text{CMOY EPOT XW NHH EBOL' ANOK } \text{Ⲫⲁ} \text{ } \text{ⲡⲒCBOWYI}$ , 'Bless me, forgive me; I am the disciple') added in ff. 200v and 211r, at the end of Homilies 26 and 27.<sup>18</sup>

The textual and numerical elements (texts, titles, invocations, prayers, quire signatures, and page numbers) are all written with the same brown ink, but there are some instances of use of red ink.<sup>19</sup>

The copyist left a blank space around each title, which in the majority of cases has been suitably occupied by a decorative frame, filled with interlaces of various patterns and colours. The frame at the beginning of Homily 1 (f. 1r) is of course the richest and most complex, as it not only surrounds the title, but also covers the outer and the lower margin of the page. Moreover, Homily 1 begins with a decorated initial (a large  $\text{ⲛ}$  with the vertical strokes filled with an interlace, and a knot in the middle of the oblique), and red ink is used for the first four lines of the text as well as for the first and third line of the title. Another 'enriched' frame, which covers the outer margin too, appears in f.

13 Usually in pencil, but in ink in ff. 134 and 142, and in pencil rewritten with ink in ff. 90, 92–104, 106–107, 117. In ff. 258 and 261 the nineteenth–twentieth-century hand has rewritten in pencil the eighteenth-century folio number.

14 See Buzi 2011, 14–15.

15 In f. 182v there are even remains of animal hair. In ff. 25, 67, 83, and 250 sewing repairs are visible.

16 Exceeding letters of the last line of the page are written below the end of the line in ff. 140r, 141r, 176r, 186r, and 271r.

17 It may be worth recalling that the bimodular Alexandrian majuscule is a very common type of *Auszeichnungsmajuskel* in Greek minuscule manuscripts.

18 See paragraph 3 on the supralinear corrections to the text written in this script.

19 Namely the page numbers in ff. 97v and 177v, and the complete set of page number, invocations and quire signature in ff. 1r, 81r, 88v–89r, 96v–97r, 104v–105r. On f. 1r see also below in the text.

179r, at the beginning of Homily 23: its scope is obviously to mark a major division in the codex, since Homily 23 opens the series of homilies devoted to the Pauline Epistles. The other frames usually surround the titles on three sides only (that is they are shaped like a square bracket, [ or ]), with a few exceptions, for which there seems to be no specific reason.<sup>20</sup> In addition to Homily 1, there are eleven instances of a decorated initial marking the beginning of a homily. Rather than being properly ‘decorated’, they are enlarged initials rewritten with coloured ink.<sup>21</sup>

The writing of the text is a calligraphic and yet fluid majuscule, whose general features are the square module of the letters (unimodularity), a sharp contrast of thick (verticals and descenders from left to right) and thin strokes (horizontal, ascenders and descenders from right to left), the presence of serifs. Such a script is clearly inspired by the Greek Biblical majuscule<sup>22</sup> and occurs not only in Vat. copt. 57, but appears to be the typical writing of the parchment manuscripts of St Macarius, so that it has been christened by cop-tologists ‘Nitriot majuscule’ (or ‘Nitriot uncial’).<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to observe that two of the aforementioned general features of the Nitriot majuscule (the sharp contrast of thick and thin strokes and the presence of serifs) are distinctive not of the ‘canonical’ form of the Greek Biblical majuscule (third to fourth century) but of the late examples of this script (the period of the so called ‘decadence’, from the fifth century on).<sup>24</sup>

Now, let us describe in detail the hand of Vat. copt. 57.

- 20 The title of Homily 11 (f. 74r) has no frame, but is followed by a band of dots and dashes and is accompanied by an elegant branch-shaped coronis, which covers part of the outer margin of the page. The titles of Homilies 17 (f. 136v), 25 (f. 188v), and 36 (f. 267r) have no frame at all. The title of Homily 18 (f. 141r) has a rectangular frame. The bracket-shaped frames surrounding the titles of Homilies 19 (f. 153v) and 31 (f. 230v) are depicted only in black ink, without insertion of colour. The title of Homily 37 (f. 272v) is framed by a simple rectangle, not filled with interlace.
- 21 See ff. 6v (Hom. 2), 14v (Hom. 3), 51v (Hom. 8), f. 59r (Hom. 9), 66v (Hom. 10), 90r (Hom. 12), 179r (Hom. 23), 196v (Hom. 26), 201r (Hom. 27), 218r (Hom. 29), 225r (Hom. 30).
- 22 Or ‘Biblical uncial’, as English-speaking scholars prefer to label it (see e.g. Wilson 1971).
- 23 See Boud’hors 1997, 120; Ead. 2012, 65.
- 24 On the Greek Biblical majuscule, see the pivotal study of Cavallo 1967, with updates and complements in Orsini 2005. Orsini also devoted a special study to the Coptic Biblical majuscule (Orsini 2008), but it is confined to Old Testament manuscripts in Sahidic dialect. As for the contrast of thick and thin strokes, I use here the term ‘sharp’ to indicate that the strokes could be *either* thick *or* thin, as it is the case in the late Greek Biblical majuscule (see Cavallo 1967, 76) and in the Coptic Nitriot majuscule, while there are also medium strokes in the canonical Greek Biblical majuscule (see Cavallo 1967, 4).

- α: occurs both in the canonical<sup>25</sup> form (i.e. with left and central stroke forming an acute angle) and in the looped form (i.e. with the two aforementioned strokes forming a loop), which is typical of the late Biblical majuscule.
- β: the upper loop is very small and pointed (it has in fact a triangular shape); the lower one is rounded in the outer part and straight at the base.
- γ: with a squared serif at the end of the horizontal.
- Δ: sometimes with a serif at the left end of the base.
- ε, ϑ, ο, ϙ: because of the shading, the four round letters appear to be vertically split (typical feature of the late Greek Biblical majuscule); the horizontal of ε ends with a squared serif.
- ζ: the oblique is thick and the horizontals thin (typical feature of the late Greek Biblical majuscule); the upper horizontal is very short, the lower one is prolonged below the line and ends with a serif.
- η: with tall horizontal.
- κ: split (typical feature of the late Greek Biblical majuscule), with the upper oblique very short.
- λ: sometimes with a squared serif at the base of the left oblique.
- μ: the two obliques form a single curved stroke, thin and above the line, or sometimes descending below it. This shape seems to be a compromise between the canonical four-stroke μ and the three-stroke μ of the Alexandrian majuscule.<sup>26</sup>
- ν: with thin oblique and thick verticals (typical feature of the late Greek Biblical majuscule). At the end of line, it is sometimes replaced by a supralinear stroke.
- ξ: the upper horizontal stroke is small and attached to the serpentine, which is prolonged below the line and ends with a squared serif.
- π: the horizontal does not project over the verticals (that is remarkably a feature of the canonical Biblical majuscule: in the late Greek examples the horizontal is prolonged and ends with two serifs). However, it should be observed that, when π is followed by ε, ο or ϙ, the horizontal is sometimes prolonged to the right and touches the upper part of the next letter.
- ρ, ϙ: the vertical descends below the line, and is sometimes hooked at the base.
- τ, †: with hooked serif at both ends of the horizontal; in † the vertical too is sometimes hooked at the base.

25 The term 'canonical' refers of course to the canon of the *Greek* Biblical majuscule.

26 It is interesting to compare the shape of μ in the Sahidic manuscripts analyzed by Orsini: in four strokes, both the obliques being thin (see Orsini 2008, 136, 142–143, 147). On the Greek side, in the canonical shape both the obliques are medium, while in the late Biblical majuscule the left oblique is thick and the right one is thin. So, the preference for a thin central part of the letter (be it in two or in a single stroke) can be considered a distinctive feature of the Coptic Biblical majuscule.

γ: the sole letter that is completely not consistent with the canon of the Biblical majuscule, as its shape is rather inspired by the corresponding letter of the Alexandrian majuscule. The vertical stroke ends above the line and has a triangular shape, while both the obliques are rounded and end with a hooked or squared serif.

ϕ: the loop is enlarged and elliptic, but often not symmetric (the right half is narrower and more pointed); the vertical is sometimes hooked at the base.

x: the descender from left to right is thick, straight and without serifs; the ascender is thin, wavy, starts sometimes below the line and ends with a squared or hooked serif.

ω: the left loop is rounded, the right one squared.

ϣ, ϣ̄: the prolonged tail ends with a squared serif and is usually above the line.

ϥ: the central part is parallel to the line, and therefore thin.

χ: the descender from left to right is thick, usually with no serif; the ascender is thin and ends with a squared or hooked serif; the base is prolonged over the obliques and sometimes has a round serif on its left end.

σ: has a round shape and the final stroke, being parallel to the line, is thin and ends with a squared or hooked serif (it looks like a minuscule Greek *sigma*: σ).

The characters described above are of course not exclusive to Vat. copt. 57, but for the most part they are common to all the manuscripts written in Nitriot majuscule. We can therefore consider this script as a canon, derived, as we have seen, from the Greek Biblical majuscule of the late type, with sporadic elements either of the canonical Biblical majuscule (π), or of alien origin (μ, γ, from the Alexandrian majuscule).<sup>27</sup>

Yet a canon in itself is quite an abstract entity, an ideal, formed by a group of hands showing a good deal of common features, but also several distinctive elements, which concern both the *impression d'ensemble* and the shape of single letters, or even of single parts of a letter. Every hand is the result of a complex balance of many factors, which make the identification of the same hand in more than one manuscript a particularly difficult, even tricky task, since even with all the visible similarities, there will always be at least one difference which will question the identification.

As far as Vat. copt. 57 is concerned, the general impression, as we have already noted, is of a carefully executed but at the same time fluid hand. In detail, we may consider the following letters distinctive: α (pointed), ζ, ξ, π (with ligature), ϕ, χ, ω, ϣ, ϥ, ϣ̄, χ̄.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, we must take into account

27 Of alien origin are also the seven additional characters of the Coptic alphabet, which are adapted to the 'rules' of the canon (but see n. 28).

28 Letters showing the highest degree of variation from hand to hand are, quite foreseeably, the additional characters of the Coptic alphabet, since there was no model for them to follow.

that the codex is equipped with a colophon (f. 184r: see paragraph 3) stating the name of the copyist: ‘*papa* Theodoros the reader’ (παπα θεοδωρος παρεωω), who accomplished his task for ‘*papa* Biktor of the church of the great *abba* Macarius’.<sup>29</sup>

As a first step of our comparative inquiry, we may consider the St Macarius manuscripts in the Vatican Library, which are *not* equipped with colophon. As far as I have seen, none appears to have been written by the same hand as Vat. copt. 57. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot judged the hand of Vat. copt. 58<sup>1</sup> = CLM 73 = CMCL MACA.AD (*In XLIX martyres Scetenses* = CC 0986) ‘affinis’ to that of Vat. copt. 57 and of British Library, Or. 8812,<sup>30</sup> but the comparison is untenable, since there are substantial differences in the shape of letters. Besides, in Vat. copt. 58<sup>1</sup> the vertical stroke of ρ, φ, ψ, ς, † is *consistently* pointed or hooked at the base, while that happens only sporadically in Vat. copt. 57 and in British Library, Or. 8812.

As a second step, we may scrutinize the St Macarius manuscripts equipped with a colophon, looking for references to a scribe named Theodoros. There are three such instances:

- (1) Vat. copt. 63<sup>4</sup> = CLM 122 = CMCL MACA.CI (a Chrysostomic homily on 2Cor. 5, 17 = CC 0482), f. 105v: copied by ‘the son Theodoros of Siout’ (θεωδωρος [sic] εἰς πριμνicioyτ);<sup>31</sup>
- (2) Vat. copt. 66<sup>2-3</sup> = CLM 133 = CMCL MACA.CU (*Vita Sinuthii* = CC 0481 and *Passio Isaac Tiphrensis* = CC 0280), f. 95r: copied in the year 924/925 CE by ‘Theodoros, the spiritual son of father Abraam son of Koltha’ (θεοδωρος πατρις ἡπῖνῖατικον ἡπαιωτ ἀβρααμ ντε κολθα);<sup>32</sup>
- (3) Brit. Lib., Or. 8812 = CLM 1468 (the Curzon Catena: see above), f. 116v: copied in the year 888/889 CE by ‘Theodoros of Abū Šīr (θεοδ( ) ποyσιρ), unworthy monk of the holy Laura of the great *abba* Macarius’.<sup>33</sup>

The hands of Theodoros 1 and 2 show substantial differences both between each other and from the hands of Theodoros 3 and of Theodoros ‘the reader’ (i.e. the scribe of Vat. copt. 57). The writing of Theodoros 1 is less regular and

29 On the titles of *papa* and *abba*, see Derda and Wipszycka 1994.

30 Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 386.

31 Ed. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 454.

32 Ed. *ibid.* 477–478. On palaeographical grounds, the two scholars assign to the same scribe also Vat. copt. 61<sup>3</sup> = CLM 98 = CMCL MACA.BG (Peter of Alexandria, *De divitiis* = CC 0311), 63<sup>2</sup> = CLM 120 = CMCL MACA.CG (*Passio Theodori Anatolii* = CC 0437), 66<sup>1</sup> = CLM 132 = CMCL MACA.CT (*Passio Ignatii Antiocheni* = CC 0512), 66<sup>10</sup> = CLM 139 = CMCL MACA.DD (*Passio Anub* = CC 0257): see Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 421, 452, 475, 487.

33 See Layton 1987, 391–392 and paragraph 3, n. 70.

accurate and adds more prominent serifs to the letters.<sup>34</sup> The writing of Theodoros 2 is rigid and compressed and does not even use the Alexandrian majuscule as *Auszeichnungsschrift*, but the same Nitriot majuscule as the text.<sup>35</sup>

There remains Theodoros 3, the scribe of the Curzon Catena: his hand (at least judging from the black and white images currently at my disposal, see n. 1) appears to be more ‘solemn’, but, if one compares it letter by letter with the hand of Vat. copt. 57, one has to admit a surprising amount of similarities, or rather a complete identity in shape.<sup>36</sup>

However, notwithstanding the similarity in the writing of the text, the two manuscripts show some differences in other respects, which cannot be totally dismissed. First of all in the ornamentation, since the decorated initials and the quire ornaments of the Catena are much more elaborate than those in Vat. copt. 57.<sup>37</sup> Secondly, the very colophons are written in different scripts: where the usual sloping majuscule is employed in Vat. copt. 57,<sup>38</sup> the Catena has the more formal Alexandrian majuscule. Finally, the same Alexandrian majuscule as *Auszeichnungsmajuskel* of the Catena is slightly different from that of Vat. copt. 57, as it has more pronounced serifs.

In this regard, I am inclined to think that the discrepancies are merely a consequence of the different content of the two manuscripts: a catena has many more internal partitions than a collection of homilies, and was perhaps considered a more ‘venerable’ book. In my opinion, the presence of a richer decoration and a more elegant *Auszeichnungsmajuskel* in the Curzon Catena could be accounted for by practical and ideological reasons, and should not serve as a counter-argument against the patent similarity of the main hands of the two manuscripts.

Therefore, I would maintain with some confidence that Vat. copt. 57 and British Library, Or. 8812 were written by the same scribe. I believe it is rea-

34 In detail, we may observe at least α, β, τ, γ, φ, χ, ω, ζ, ξ, σ, which are different from the corresponding letters of the hand of Vat. copt. 57.

35 As distinctive letters, compare μ, ρ, q, ζ, β, α.

36 The only relevant differences I have noticed are: (1) the loop of φ, which in the Catena occurs only rarely in the ‘asymmetric’ shape; (2) the left loop of ω, which in the Catena is usually more squared than in Vat. copt. 57. Note however that in the Catena the quite unusual ligature of τ with ε/o/p (and even with α) occurs, too.

37 On the contrary, the interlaces of the frames (see Brit. Lib., Or. 8812, ff. 2r, 121r) are very similar, if not identical, to those of Vat. copt. 57, but such ornamental motifs are in fact common to all the St Macarius manuscripts.

38 Or ‘onciale penchée’, on which see Boud’hors 1997.

sonable to identify him with the Theodoros (of Abū Šīr viz. the reader) who signed both colophons.<sup>39</sup>

As a matter of fact, an alternative view can be held, namely to assign to the same copyist only the transcription *of the text* of the two manuscripts, assuming that other scribes worked separately on each of them to add titles and ornamentation.<sup>40</sup> This scenario is not improbable, but Ockham's razor could perhaps tip the balance in favour of the 'simpler' hypothesis outlined above.

Be it as it may, if at least the identification of the main hands is accepted, the date of the colophon of Brit. Lib., Or. 8812 entitles us to assign (in broader terms) the transcription of Vat. copt. 57 to the second half of the ninth century.

As a conclusion, just a hint at a more general question concerning both Greek and Coptic palaeography. In his recent study of the Coptic Biblical majuscule, Pasquale Orsini observes that 'i manoscritti copti potrebbero fornire elementi utili per la definizione delle caratteristiche grafiche regionali della maiuscola biblica greco-egizia'.<sup>41</sup> In this connection, he mentions Guglielmo Cavallo's old hypothesis to locate the production of half a dozen Greek manuscripts in late Biblical majuscule showing similar palaeographical characteristics in the monasteries of the Wādī an-Nāṭrūn (they were all dated by Cavallo himself to the fifth or sixth century). Among them there are Washington, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, 06.275 (Pauline Epistles, 016 Aland, LDAB 3044, also known as 'Freer IV') and the three palimpsests Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Par. gr. 9 (lower script: New Testament, 04 Aland, LDAB 2930, also known as 'Ephraem rescriptus'), London, British Library, Add. 17210 (lower script: Homer's *Iliad*, LDAB 2231, also

39 To be honest, the comparison between the hands of these two manuscripts was already proposed by Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 384, but they simply observed that 'prae scripturae indole, coetaneus videtur [i.e. Vat. copt. 57] codici Brit. Mus., Or. 8812', without even noticing the name shared by the scribes.

40 In this case, since the colophon of the Catena is written in the same script as the titles, we must assume that Theodoros of Abū Šīr (not the same person as Theodoros the reader) was not the scribe, but simply the rubricator/decorator of Brit. Lib., Or. 8812 alone. As for Vat. copt. 57, Agostino Soldati (see paragraph 3) has convincingly argued a connection between the colophon and a set of supralinear corrections added to the text of the manuscript up to f. 184r. So, we have two possibilities: (1) the text of Vat. copt. 57 and Brit. Lib., Or. 8812 was written by the same (anonymous) scribe, and then Theodoros the reader inserted the titles in Vat. copt. 57, corrected and decorated it, adding eventually the colophon, while Theodoros of Abū Šīr added titles, decorations, and a colophon in Brit. Lib., Or. 8812; (2) Theodoros the reader wrote the text of both Vat. copt. 57 and Brit. Lib., Or. 8812, but added titles, decorations, corrections and colophon only in the first manuscript, while the second was equipped with titles, decorations, and a colophon by his namesake of Abū Šīr.

41 Orsini 2008, 145.

known as ‘Cureton Homer’) and 17211 (lower script: Gospel of Luke, 027 Aland, LDAB 2892, also known as ‘Codex Nitriensis’).<sup>42</sup> This hypothesis was subsequently questioned by Edoardo Crisci, who proposed to locate all the manuscripts assigned by Cavallo to the Wādī an-Nāṣrūn in a ‘Mesopotamian context’, *except* the Freer IV and the Ephraem rescriptus, which Crisci judged not consistent with the other members of the group palaeographically.<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, comparing the hands of the Freer IV and the Ephraem rescriptus with the Coptic manuscripts in Nitriot majuscule, we see striking similarities in the shape of nearly all the letters. Even the letter  $\pi$  in the two Greek manuscripts appears in the same ‘canonical’ shape (i.e. with the horizontal not projecting over the verticals) we have already noticed in the Nitriot majuscule. That seems to be a very good reason for definitely acknowledging a Nitrian provenance for the Freer IV and the Ephraem rescriptus. If it is so, the ‘regional variant’ of the late Biblical majuscule they represent should be considered the very model for the formation of the canon of the Coptic Nitriot majuscule.

## 2. *The literary content* (by Francesco Berno)

As is well known, Vat. copt. 57 preserves solely and exclusively John Chrysostom’s homilies, both authentic and spurious (whether erroneously attributed to the Archbishop of Constantinople or possibly derived from a Greek anti-graph currently unavailable to us).<sup>44</sup>

42 See Cavallo 1967, 87–93 (with facsimiles at tavv. 79, 81–83) and Orsini 2008, 147. For the Freer manuscript, see <[http://archive.asia.si.edu/collections/edan/object.php?q=fsg\\_F1906.275](http://archive.asia.si.edu/collections/edan/object.php?q=fsg_F1906.275)>; for the digitized copies of the Paris palimpsest see <<http://archivesetmanuscripts.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc24008t>>; of the London ones see <[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_17210](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_17210)> and <[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_17211](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_17211)>. One of the reasons for this attribution was that the London palimpsests (reused together in the ninth century for the transcription of the Syriac text of the treatise against John Grammaticus by Severus of Antioch) were acquired in the mid–nineteenth century precisely in the Wādī an-Nāṣrūn, in the Monastery of the Syrians (but see the following note).

43 See Crisci 1996, 152. The palimpsest London, British Library, Add. 17210+17211 was indeed discovered in the Monastery of the Syrians, but it was not produced there. The upper Syriac text is accompanied by a colophon (Add. 17211, f. 53r) stating that ‘it was written by one Simeon, recluse of the convent of Mār Simeon of Kartamīn, for Daniel, periodeutes of the district of Amid’ (see Wright 1871, 548–550, no. 687). Wright agrees with Cureton’s hypothesis that the manuscript was brought to Dāyṛ al-Suryān by its abbot Moses of Nisibis, who is in fact known to have conveyed to that monastery, in CE 932, 250 manuscripts collected during a visit to Baghdad and its neighbourhood.

44 On the *status quaestionis* regarding Chrysostom’s homilies in Coptic, see Voicu 2011, 575–610. Cf. also Orlandi 1973, 330, and 2000, 497–573.

Actually, Chrysostom's homilies customarily show a bipartite structure: the first part offers an interpretation of the biblical passage, forming the core of Chrysostom's teaching; the second part (*ethikon*) contains the moral/paraenetic exhortation, which the audience is invited to infer from the first part. Already in the Greek tradition, these ethical closes had often no specific relationship with the exegetical pericope.<sup>45</sup> Being generally free from learned concerns, they are obviously the most suitable to address a Coptic monastic audience and its liturgical needs. And indeed, the Bohairic<sup>46</sup> collection in Vat. copt. 57—which generally safeguards the relative place of each homily, by declaring its corresponding order in the Greek series upon which it relies—seems to avoid carefully the exegetical sections of the original texts, translating only the exhortative second part of its model. Besides, as we shall see more in detail, the correspondence between Coptic and Greek *ethika* is anything but exact, the latter failing at overlapping with the former in most cases. Significant mismatches occur, in particular, in sections<sup>47</sup> 5, 8, 9, 10, 16, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 36.

Several pieces of evidence help us see an order behind the apparently chaotic arrangement of the codex. The most important are the numerous scribal notes that seem to hint at a coherent internal structure, presumptive-

45 Further details on this quite peculiar structure of Chrysostom's homiletic Greek texts are available in Barkhuizen 1995, 43 ('[t]he general structure or composition of the exegetical homilies of Chrysostom reveals a clearly defined twopart division – an exegetical first part, followed by an ethical or moral second part'). See also Moulard 1941, 62.

46 For the hypothesis that Vat. copt. 57 was a translation from a Sahidic model, see Voicu 2012, 152. It has to be remarked that, with the eventual exception of ff. 31r–34v (see n. 57 below) and of ff. 74r–89v, no Sahidic translation of Chrysostom's homilies is consistent with the Bohairic versions preserved in the Vat. copt. 57. Thus, one could suppose that this codex was intentionally designed to fill a void in the Coptic reception of Chrysostom's work, in the context, however, of an immediate and practical capability of the manuscript. Nevertheless, the analysis carried out by Kim 2018, 92–96, raises the possibility of a Sahidic antigraph behind the extant version of the homily *De remissione peccatorum* (CC 0598). Further research should examine the practicability of extending his remarks to the other textual units of the codex. New light on a possible role played by one or more Sahidic antigraph(s) can be shed by the titles (see paragraph 4).

47 Throughout this essay, I avoid the use of the symbol § (which, as a mere instance, precedes the Chrysostomic homilies in Voicu 2011) in order to underline the pronounced independence and self-sufficiency assigned to each textual section by the final redactor of the manuscript (see also paragraph 4 for the role played by the titles).

ly consistent with a Paschal cycle.<sup>48</sup> It is worth observing at this point that there is a quite clear division into two parts: the first half of Vat. copt. 57 is made up of homilies on canonical Gospels (in the order Lk/Mt/Jn), while the second one consists of homilies on Paul's Letters (in the following, far more puzzling, order: 2Thes/1Thes/2Thes/1Cor/Tm/Tit/Col), demonstrating, *inter alia*, its dependence on the New Testament model.<sup>49</sup> Among the above mentioned notes, four *marginalia*—on ff. 136v (†ΜΑΡΓΓ† ΝΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΝ Ἦ ΝΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΣΑ ΝΟΥΕΡΗΟΥ),<sup>50</sup> 141r (ΦΑΙ ΠΕΙ ΠΙΜΑΡΒ ΜΕΝΕΝΣΑ ΠΡΟΥΓΤ ΞΕΝ ΠΕΦΕΞΟΥ ΝΩΩ),<sup>51</sup> 153v (ΦΑΙ ΠΕΙ ΠΙΜΑΡΓ ΜΕΝΕΝΣΑ ΠΙΒ ΝΡΟΥΓΤ),<sup>52</sup> and 256v (ΠΙΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΨΑΕ ΟΝ. ΕΥΧΩ ΜΜΩΟΥ ΞΕΝ †ΜΑΡΓΔ ΝΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΝΤΕ ΕΠΗΠ)<sup>53</sup>—show that our codex was actually used as a (Holy Week?) lectionary, or, at least, was perceived as such, although it is impossible to determine whether this usage was original or not.<sup>54</sup> The paraenetic attitude that presided over the selection of our homilies speaks in favour of the former option (*sed contra*, it could be noted that the wide-spread character of the Coptic management of Greek homiletic *corpora*, whose main concern was to enucleate solely the moral subject of its model, threatens to make this argument more questionable, and the case of Vat. copt. 57 far less specific).

Finally, as far as I can see—and also in view of the uncertainties about this manifold issue in the Greek tradition itself,<sup>55</sup>—it is not possible to identify an even vague conformity between the selection of the homilies collected in Vat. copt. 57 and their provenance from Chrysostom's Antiochene or Constantinopolitan period.

48 According to Voicu 2011, 599–600, 'la grande raccolta del Vat. copt. 57 [è] strutturata secondo un ciclo pasquale bizantino di cui non esistono attestazioni prima dell'età giustiniana'. On Coptic Holy Week Lectionaries, see at least Burmester 1932, Zanetti 1983, Sauget 1987, Zanetti 1995, and Suciú 2014, esp. 677–679.

49 This structural arrangement seems to be quite characteristic of Chrysostom's homilies. See Voicu 1977.

50 'The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Pentecost, three homilies in sequence (?)'.

51 'This [homily] is the 2<sup>nd</sup> after the 1<sup>st</sup>, in his day of reading'.

52 'This [homily] is the 3<sup>rd</sup> after the 1<sup>st</sup>'.

53 'The last Sunday, furthermore. To be read the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epēp'.

54 According to Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 375 ('[t]itolo homiliae praemittitur rubrica, ut videtur, saec. XIII'), these insertions date back to the thirteenth century, which is at least three centuries after the production of the codex. Another cluster of problems arises from the insertion on f. 66v, which appears to be much more generic, for which I refer to paragraph 3 below.

55 For example, the degree of internal consistency, from a geographical point of view, of the Greek series, which could be made up of non-consecutive homilies. On this vexed matter, I refer to Mayer 2005.

A synoptic and comprehensive overview of the content of Vat. copt. 57, with the indication of the new Coptic *clavis* entries attributed to each homily by the CMCL at the request of the PATHs project, as well as of some open questions, is provided in Table 1.

### 2.1. Outstanding issues: the cases of Coptic Homilies 5, 31, and 38.

In the following, I would like to highlight three issues that deserve more specific research to be definitively clarified.

The first issue concerns Coptic Homily 5, devoted to Mt 26:17 (Vat. copt. 57, ff. 31r–34v).<sup>56</sup> This is a doubly composite text: the first section was taken from the last part of the exegetical passage and the first part of the moral passage of Greek Homily 82 (*PG* 58, 742, 6–58, 743, 9),<sup>57</sup> and the second section, from the last lines of the *ethikon* of Greek Homily 81 (*PG* 58, 736, 19–58, 738, 27). While it is not possible to go in more depth here into the reasons (if any) that led to such a peculiar textual unification, it has to be noted that there is a thematic continuity between these two passages, namely the reflection on free will and free choice. It cannot be excluded that the second text aimed at rectifying the excessive anthropological pessimism of the first—where free will is said to be inadequate and insufficient to save humankind—by stating that a proper exercise of the human will is able to escape future punishments.<sup>58</sup>

The second, even more complex, issue regards Coptic Homily 31, the first of the three *excerpta* dedicated to 1Cor (Vat. copt. 57, ff. 230v–236r). The text at the beginning, ff. 230v ll. 5–11, is taken from *PG* 61, 11, 31–34 (the *argumentum*). The Homily opens with the quotation from 1Cor 3:1 and the related Chrysostom's commentary, which I read as follows:

ΑΝΟΚ ΖΩ ΗΠΙΩΧΕΜΧΟΜ ΝΣΑΧΙ ΝΕΜΩ|ΤΕΝ ΗΦΡΗ| ΝΖΑΝΠΙΝ(ΕΥΗ)ΑΤΙΚΩΣ: ΕΦΟΥ|ΩΝΖ  
 ΗΜΟΣ ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕΕΒΟΛ ΉΝΕΝ Η|ΓΕΘΩ| ΗΜΕΤΑΤΧΟΝΤ ΕΟΥΑΡΟΡΙΑ Ν|ΓΑ| ΑΛΛΑ  
 ΧΕΚΑΤΑ|ΑΘΕΝΙΑ ΝΤΕΝΗ ΕΤΕΜΜΑΥ· ΕΤΕΠΙΧΙΝΩΧΕΜΧΟΜ ΠΕ ΕΩΤΕΜ

56 Cf. Lucchesi 2010, 19–37.

57 Independent evidences reveal that Greek Homily 82, in its Coptic translation(s), has been the subject of substantial reworking and redrafting processes. See the Sahidic excerpt from CPG 4335, consistent with *PG* 49, 370, 3 and ff., which seems to preserve a divergent redaction of our homily. See Lucchesi 2010, 32–33. On the possible relation with PN 131.1.37, cf. Voicu 2011, 584 and Porcher 1933, 240. For the reconstruction of MONB.CP (= CLM 323), see Orlandi 2008, 17–18.

58 *In obliquo*, I would note the significant use of the polished Stoic image (see, Anthistenes, *Ulixes* 14, Ariston [*apud* Stobaeus, *Eclogues* II, 31, 95, and, under the name of Ἀριστόνυμος, in *Florilegium* III, 1, 97] and, lastly, Seneca, *Ad Lucilium* 30, 3) relating to the skillful ‘sailor/pilot’, who is able to navigate his own ship both in stormy and calm seas, like the virtuous soul, which can control its own body under any circumstances. Obviously, this image is rooted in the Homeric ‘πολύτροπος’.

CC	Section No. Vat. Copt. 57	No. Greek series	Content	CPG/PG	Notes
0596	1 (ff. 1r–6r)		Lk 12:16	4969/deest	The Coptic dictate seems to adhere to the Greek text in Vat. gr. 569, ff. 336r–339v. For the possible attribution to a Cappadocian author, see Voicu 2000.
0941	2 (ff. 6v–14r)	21	Mt 6:24	4424/57.293–300	
0597	3 (ff. 14v–22v)	22	Mt 6:28	4424/57.299–308	The title describes the following text as an excerpt from the original <i>ethikon</i> . Nevertheless, the Coptic translation covers the Greek homily in its entirety.
0598	4 (ff. 23r–30v)		De remissione peccatorum (Mt 18:18)	4629/60.759–764	The title describes the following text as an excerpt from the original <i>ethikon</i> . Nevertheless, the Coptic translation covers the Greek homily in its entirety. See Kim 2018.
0945	5 (ff. 31r–34v)	82/81	Mt 26:17	4424/58.742–843;736–738	See paragraph 2.1.
0599	6 (ff. 35r–45r)	2	Mt 1:1	4424/57.023–032	
0942	7 (ff. 45v–51r)	50	Mt 14:23	4424/58.507–510	The title states that the following homily stems from Greek Homily 49, instead of 50.
0943	8 (ff. 51v–58v)	52	Mt 15:21	4424/58.522–574	
0944	9 (ff. 59r–66r)	58	Mt 17:21	4424/58.569–574	
0600	10 (ff. 66v–74r)		De salute animae	4031/4622. Cf. 60.735–738	The dictate of this homily is traced back to Ephrem, <i>Oratio in uianam uitam, et de parententia</i> , by Assemani 1746, 308–314.
0081	11 (ff. 74r–89v)		Quod deus non est auctor malorum	2853/31.332–353	This is an authentic homily of Basil of Caesarea. The correct attribution was known also in Coptic environments, as stated by the Sahidic CLM 414 (MONB GS; see Devos and Lucchesi 1981). However, the first ten lines of the Coptic text cannot be found in Basil.
0601	12 (ff. 90r–97v)		In parabola de ficu	4588/59.585–590	For the possible attribution to a Cappadocian author, see Voicu 2002, 333–346. Cf. also Proverbio 1985.
0602	13 (ff. 98r–111v)		In diem Natalem	4334/49.351–362	
0603	14 (ff. 112r–122r)		In Theophania	4522/7900(4)/(50.805–808)	To be attributed to Leontius of Constantimople. The provided PG reference is to the <i>In S. Theophania, seu baptismum Christi</i> , a composite pseudo-Cyrosotomian homily made up of the second part of Leontius' <i>In Theophania</i> and other original sections. See Datema 1981.
0604	15 (ff. 122v–131v)	30	Gen 1:11	4409/53.273–282	
0605	16 (ff. 132v–136v)		Ps 48:6	4413/55.226–229	The correspondence with PG is partial.

Table 1. A Synoptic Overview of Vat. Copt. 57 (by Francesco Berno).

CC	Section No. Vat. Copt. 57	No. Greek series	Content	CPG/PG	Notes
0606	17 (ff. 136v-140v)		De Samaritana (In 4:5)	5003/deest	The Coptic dictate seems to partially adhere to the Greek text in MS Oxford, Bodl. baroc. 212, f. 292 and Mosw., 271, f. 335. See 'notes' to Coptic Homily 12.
0607	18 (ff. 141r-153v)		De Samaritana (In 4:5)	4581/59,535-542	
0608	19 (ff. 153r-158v)		De Samaritana	4653/61,743-746	According to Voicu 2011, 593, it is likely that this homily results from a lost Greek model, since Vat. copt. 57 allegedly consists exclusively of Coptic translations of known Greek texts.
0609	20 (ff. 158r-166r)	22	In 2:4	4425/59,133-138	
0610	21 (ff. 166v-171v)		In Annunciationem	4677/62,763-766	
0611	22 (ff. 172r-178v)		Cum Saturninus et Aurelianus	4393/52,413-420	
0612	23 (ff. 179r-184r)	4	2Thes 2,6	4435/62,489-492	
*0997	24 (ff. 184v-188v)	5	2Thes 3,3	4435/62,497-500	
*0998	25 (ff. 188v-196v)	11	1Thes 5:19	4434/62,464-468	
*0999	26 (ff. 196v-200v)	4	1Thes 3,5	4434/62,420-422	
*1000	27 (ff. 201r-211r)	8	1Thes 4:14	4434/62,439-446	
*1001	28 (ff. 211v-217v)	1	2Thes 1	4435/62,467-472	
*1002	29 (ff. 218r-225r)	2	2Thes 1:1	4435/62,475-480	
*1003	30 (ff. 225r-230r)	3	2Thes 1:9	4435/62,482-486	
0613	31 (ff. 230v-236r)	<i>argumentum</i> /12	1Cor 1:1	4428/61,1,31-34; 13-14; 20-22	See paragraph 2.1.
*1004	32 (ff. 236r-347r)	9	1Cor 3:12	4428/61,075-082	
*1005	33 (ff. 247r-256v)	18	1Cor 6:15	4428/61,146-152	
0614	34 (ff. 256v-262r)	15	Tim 5:11	4436/62,583-586	The title states that the following homily stems from Greek Homily 12, instead of 15.
0615	35 (ff. 262r-267r)	1	Tit 1	4438/62,667-670	
*1006	36 (ff. 267r-272v)	3	Tit 1:12	4438/62,679-682	
0616	37 (ff. 272v-278v)	9	Col 3	4433/62,359-364	
0617	38 (ff. 279r-280v)	deest	fragmentum	deest/deest	The title is lost, but there is no reason to doubt that this unidentified homily was also attributed to Crystostom. See paragraph 2.1.

\* The CC marked with \* have been attributed by CMCL at the request of PATHs, on the occasion of our analysis of this manuscript.

‘As for me, I could not speak to you in the lively way of the spirituals. This is (not) due to that irresoluteness which occurs to it in front of an *aporia*, but is due to the weakness of those who had the opportunity to listen’.

Οὐκ ἠδυνήθην ὑμῖν λαλῆσαι ὡς πνευματικοῖς. Δηλονότι οὐ παρὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀπορίαν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνων ἀσθένειαν τὸ μὴ πολλὰ ἀκοῦσαι γέγονε.

Subsequently, from f. 230v l. 12 to f. 233 l. 8, the text adheres to *PG* 61, 13, 30–61, 14, 3, that is to a short exegetical section extracted from the final part of Greek Homily 1. From f. 233 l. 9 to the end (f. 236r), the text complies (partially) with the *ethikon* of Greek Homily 2 (*PG* 61, 20, 40–61, 22, 46). In this case, a content-oriented analysis does not seem to help, since no satisfactory explanation arises from a joined reading of these two excerpts. Indeed, Coptic Homily 31 begins—after the aforementioned passage from the *argumentum*—by quoting from Eph 2:8,<sup>59</sup> and, from then on, follows the Greek dictate, which (not without a certain degree of inconsistency) turns to stress the importance of unity and harmony within the Christian Church. Here, the Coptic homily stops following Greek Homily 1 and overlaps with Homily 2, where we find that the scope of moral compass is alien to the notion of ‘nature’, i.e. no one is virtuous or wicked *κατὰ φύσιν*.

As for the fragmentarily preserved Coptic Homily 38 (ff. 279r–280v), we know<sup>60</sup> that this textual section begins somewhere in the four leaves missing between ff. 278v and 279r. They are said to have accommodated the end of Homily 37 and the beginning of Homily 38. Thus, the first line of f. 279r (ογορ ερενη ετεοι ἰηκαρ ἰρητ ρερετ[ερ]) is attributed to Homily 38.

Yet, the last words before the supposed gap, at the bottom of f. 278v, are ἐπιδη πικεμωγχε ρωφ ρατωβρ | ἰπαρητ ἄγρωτεμ εροφ πεχαρ |

59 Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ Ἐφεσίοις γράφων ἔλεγε: Χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως, καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν. Οὐδὲ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ὀλόκληρος: οὐ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ἐπιστεῦσατε προλαβόντες, ἀλλὰ κληθέντες ὑπηκούσατε. Σὺν πάνσι τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Οὐ τοῦ δεῖνος καὶ τοῦ δεῖνος, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου. Ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἡμῶν. Translation: εθεβφαι οη ερεβφαι ἰηρημεφεσοτ | ερεω μμοσ ρεβνογχομοτ γαρ | ατετενηροεμ εβολ ριτενογναρτ | ογορ φαι νε ογ εβολ ἰηωτεν αν πε | ογαε πετενηαρτ τηρη ἰολοκληρον | πιταιο φαφ(νογ)τ πε:ογ γαρ ἰωωτεν | αν πε: εταρετενηαρτ ἰωωρηι αλλα | εταγελερεῖθηνογ ἄρετενωτεν | νεμογον νιβεν εττωβρ ἰφραν | ἰπενσ(οι)σ ιη(σογ)σ πχ(ριστο)σ πεχαρ φαφ αν | νεμφαι: αλλα ἰφραν ἰπενσ(οι)σ ιη(σογ)σ | πχ(ριστο)σ βενμαι νιβεν πεχαρ ἰωωτεν | νεμῆταν (‘Hence, writing to the Ephesians, he said: *by grace have you been saved through faith, and this not for yourselves, not even the faith is yours altogether [the glory of God]; for you were not first with your belief, but obeyed a call, with all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not for this or that man, but in the name of the Lord*’).

60 Already from Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 328; see also paragraph 1 and n. 11 above.

Ⲭⲉⲉⲑⲃⲉⲟⲩ ⲕⲱⲱ ⲉⲡⲱⲱⲓ ⲟⲩⲃⲛⲓ'. Joining the two passages—allegedly interrupted by an eight-page lacuna—we read:

ⲉⲡⲓⲗⲏ ⲡⲓⲕⲉⲙⲱⲩⲥⲏⲥ ⲉⲱⲱⲥ ⲁⲩⲧⲱⲃⲉⲗ | ⲙⲡⲓⲁⲓⲣⲏⲧⲓ ⲁⲩⲥⲱⲧⲉⲙ ⲉⲣⲟⲩⲥ ⲡⲉⲬⲁⲩⲓ | Ⲭⲉⲉⲑⲃⲉⲟⲩ ⲕⲱⲱ  
ⲉⲡⲱⲱⲓ ⲟⲩⲃⲛⲓ || ⲟⲩⲟⲩⲥ ⲉⲣⲉⲛⲏ ⲉⲧⲉⲟⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲕⲁⲉⲗ ⲛⲉⲩⲏⲧ ⲥⲟⲉⲣⲧ[ⲉⲣ].<sup>61</sup>

which, apparently at least, is a quite consistent<sup>62</sup> translation of *PG* 62, 364, 14–17, that is of the obvious continuation of Coptic Homily 37 (Greek Homily 9) on Col 3:

Ἐπεὶ καὶ Μωϋσῆς οὕτως ἤρχετο, καὶ ἠκούσθη· φησὶ γάρ· Τί βοᾷς πρὸς με; Καίτοι γε οὐδὲν εἶπεν ἀλλ' ἐβόα κατὰ διάνοιαν μετὰ καρδίας συντετριμμένης·

We can try to explain this unexpectedly perceived textual continuity only tentatively. The first option to be taken into consideration is the mere chance. Yet, it seems extremely unlikely that, after a textual gap, the codex would accidentally start again with a pericope that can be easily related to the end of the previous incomplete section, and then the dictate would continue (without a new title, or any other paratextual marks) with an unidentified work that shows no affinity to Greek Homily 9 on Col 3. Under these circumstances, another supposition cannot be completely ruled out, namely that, in providing a new binding to the manuscript after the Vatican acquisition of the parchment codex from the library of St Macarius (or maybe sooner), the learned restorer who was (re?)-binding Vat. copt. 57 could fall victim of a *saut du même au même*. In the eventual presence of scattered leaves, it is not totally implausible that he completed the Coptic translation of ‘Τί βοᾷς πρὸς με’ with an expression that could echo ‘μετὰ καρδίας συντετριμμένης’. Yet, the evidence that ff. 278 and 279 form a bifolium speaks conclusively against this possibility. If there had been an actual textual continuity, it would be thus far more likely that the mistake had been made before the insertion of the ancient pagination. Further research is required to analyse the unidentified textual section in its entirety. Given all the above, at present this could be only mentioned as a phenomenon of ‘textual pareidolia’.

It is worth mentioning that, when we look at the Coptic reception of Chrysostom’s works, homilies that combine passages from different works are not isolated cases. As part of an ongoing broader analysis of the structure and content of MONB.CR (= CLM 325),<sup>63</sup> I focused my attention on the composition of the long Sahidic homily preserved *in extenso* in IB.11.85–99 (pλ–

61 ‘For Moses also in this way prayed, and was heard, for He said, ‘Why do you cry unto Me?’; albeit he said nothing, but cried in thought with a contrite heart’.

62 However, I must point out that the second Coptic sentence has a plural subject, which is not possible to find in its alleged Greek model.

63 Analysis that led, *inter alia*, to the identification of the precise width of the fragments (*PG* 49, 244, 66–49, 245, 27; 49, 250, 54–49, 251, 11) preserving the 1<sup>st</sup> Greek homily *De diabolo tentatore* (CPG 4332), respectively in IB.11.81–82 ([ⲛⲉ]–

ⲡⲛⲏ). Actually, the text appears to be the *cento* of three consecutive Chrysostomic homilies on the Gospel (CPG 4425; nos. 45, 46, 47),<sup>64</sup> the initial title clearly hinting at the composite nature of the text.<sup>65</sup> In particular, I would like to emphasize the marked liberty of redrafting, emending, cutting, and recomposing the original Greek model(s) that the final redactor of these homilies proves to have reached.<sup>66</sup> *In obliquo*, it remains to be said that any research on the Coptic notion of ‘literary work’ must seriously consider such a freedom as one of the most problematic issues (and, at the same time, as one of the most characterizing features) of Coptic literature.

Coptic Homilies 5, 31, and 38 are just three eye-catching instances. As shown in Table 1, numerous minor outstanding questions regarding peculiar textual arrangements generously dot the Vat. copt. 57, and make it an extremely significant (and quite unexplored) subject of research.

### 3. *The colophon, the marginalia, and some corrections* (by Agostino Soldati)

Eventually, all that there is left to do is to rake through the paratexts and some extra-scribal features scattered across the manuscript. ‘Perhaps the colophon was placed there, because, for some reason, most of f. 184r had been left blank’.<sup>67</sup> Such is the explanation Sever Voicu provided to the unconventional position of the scribal subscription informing us about the scribe, the donor, as

ⲡⲛⲏ) and WK.09827 (ⲡⲁ–ⲡⲃ). IB.11.82v, col. 2, as well as IB.11.083, show peculiar variations on the Greek dictate, which deserve specific attention.

64 The first section goes from the beginning of the homily to 90v, col. 2, l. 3, and adheres to *PG* 59, 255, 48–59, 258, 10 (with a gap, in the Greek text, of five lines before 59, 256, 31); the second is from 90v, col. 2, lin. 4 to 95r, col. 2, l. 4, and adheres to *PG* 59, 260, 53–59, 262, 54 (with a gap between 59, 262, 8 and 59, 262, 14); the third runs from 95r, col. 2., l. 5 to the end of the text, and adheres to *PG* 59, 268, 18 – 59, 270, 14. Further detail on the relationship between the Greek model and its Sahidic translation shall be provided by forthcoming contributions.

65 See Buzi 2009, 248, and Zoëga 1810, 607–608 (Num. CCLII). The ‘ϣⲟⲙⲟⲓⲱϥ’ which opens the *inscriptio* is due to the continuity of the homily with the immediately preceding text (ⲡⲕⲞ–ⲡⲕⲗ), which preserves a slightly redrafted version of the last lines (*PG* 59, 172, 10–20) of Chrysostom’s 29<sup>th</sup> homily on John.

66 This shows that the notion itself of *pseudoepigrapha* (as well as the related categories of *genuina*, *dubia*, and *spuria*) can be highly misleading, even more in a Coptic environment. As for Chrysostom’s Coptic reception, Voicu 2008, 61, effectively remarks that ‘le opzioni di autenticità applicabili a Cristostomo si sono moltiplicate e diversificate’. See also Mayer 2017, 979–981.

67 Voicu 2012, 152. The text is edited, with Latin translation, in Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 384.

well as the monastic *milieu* where manuscript Vat. Copt. 57 was copied.<sup>68</sup> The text, written in the customary sloping uncial, bears no date and reads:

ϸΥΝ Θ(ΕΩ) ΛϸΩΩΠΙ ΝΧΕΡΑΙ ϸΕΝΕΡΦΜΕΓΙ ΝΤΕΡΑΙΔΑΓΘΟΝ ΝΧΩΜ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤΕΝΠΤΗΜΑΤ  
 ΝΦΤ | ΝΕΜΠΙΡΩΟΥΩ ΝΤΕΝΙΔΑΟϸ ΝΠΙϸΤΟϸ · ΠΑΠΑ | ΒΙΚΤΩΡ ΝΤΕΤΧΚΗΝΗ ΝΤΕΠΙΝΙΩΤ  
 ΑΒΒΑ |<sup>5</sup> ΜΑΚΑΡΙ ΔΡΙΠΕΦΜΕΓΙ ΕΦΟΝϸ ΝΤΕΠΟϸ ΕΡΠΙΝΑΙ ΝΕΜΑϸ | ΝΕΜΝΕΦΩΗΡΙ ΝΠΙ(ΕΥΗΜΑΤ)  
 ΙΚ(Οϸ) (ΟΥΟΖ) ΔϸΦΑΝϸΙΝΙ ΕΒΟΛ | ΞΕΝΠΑΙΒΙΟϸ ΝΤΕΠΟϸ ΤΗΤΟΝ ΝΤΕΦΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ | ΝΨΥΧΗ  
 ΝΕΜΝΗΘΟΥΑΒ ΝΤΑϸ. | (ΟΥΟΖ) ΔΡΙΦΜΕΓΙ ΝΠΑΠΑ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟϸ ΠΙΡΕΦΩΩ |<sup>10</sup> ΤΕΠΟϸ ΕΡΠΙΝΑΙ  
 ΝΕΜΤΕϸΨΥΧΗ·ΧΕΝΘΟϸ | ΑΤϸΙΦΡΩΟΥΩ (sic)<sup>69</sup> ΝΝΙΓΡΑΦΗ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ ΛϸϸΗΤΟΥϸ | ΕΡΕΠΟϸ ΠΗϸ  
 ΠΧϸ ϸΗΤΠΕΦΡΑΝ ΞΕΝΠΧΩΜ | ΝΝΕΤΟΝϸ ΔΗΝΗ (ΟΥΟΖ) ΔΗΝΗ (ΟΥΟΖ) ΔΗΝΗ †

‘With God. This occasion of remembrance of this good (ἀγαθός) book occurred with the assent of God as well as the taking care of the faithful (πιστός) laymen (λαός), papa Biktōr of the tent (σκηνή) of the great Abba Makari, remember him who is alive, might the Lord have mercy of him with his spiritual (πνευματικός) sons and when he would pass away from this life, might he give rest to his blessed (μακαρία) soul (ψυχή) with his saints and remember of papa Theodōros<sup>70</sup> the reader, might the Lord have mercy of his soul (ψυχή), because he took care of the holy writings (γραφή), he copied them, might the Lord Jesus the Christ write his name in the book of those who are alive, amen and amen and amen’.

- 68 However, f. 184r is not the only page to have been filled only partially. Blanks were also left at the bottom of ff. 6r, 14r, 30v, 34v, 51, 58v, 66, 89v, 97v, 111v, 131v.
- 69 About the quite awkward dissimilatory change ϸϸ > τϸ, apparently affecting also the (sometimes homophonic?) cluster γϸ, see the instances gathered by van Lantschoot 1929, II 62, 9 ad XCII, 25–26. Rather than to a hardly explainable phonetic phenomenon, one could refer the writing to an abnormal analogous influence of the frequent abstract μΗΤϸΑΙΡΟΟΥΩ.
- 70 The scribal subscription of the Curzon Catena, London, British Library, Or. 8812, f. 116v (see paragraph 1 above), written in an accurate Alexandrian majuscule, exhibits a phrasing quite inconsistent with that employed by papa Theodōros the reader: ††ϸο ιϸ †ΜΕΤΑΝΙΑ ΔΡΙΠΑΜΕΓΙ ΝΑΓΑΠΗ ΖΟΠΟϸ | ΝΤΕΡΑΠΟϸ ΠΗϸ ΠΧϸ ΝΑΙ ΝΗ ΝΕΜΩΤΕΝ ΔΝΟΚ ΞΑΠ|ΓΑΛΕΠΩΡΟϸ ΕΤΑϸϸΪΑΙ ΘΕΟΔ.( ) ΠΟΥϸΙΡΙ ΠΑΤΤΙΩΔΑ Ν|ΜΟΝΑΧΟ(ϸ) ΝΤΕΤΛΑΓΡΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ ΝΤΕΠΙΝΙΩΤ ΑΒΒΑ ΜΑΚ`Δ`Ρ(ΙΟϸ) |<sup>5</sup> [[ΝΤΕϸ]] ΤΕΦΝΑΖΜΕ`Τ` ΕΒΟΛ ΞΑΠΩΠΙ ΝΤΕΝΙΚΟΛΑϸΙϸ ΔΗΝΗ | (ΟΥΟΖ) ΔΗΝΗ ΕΣΕΩΩΠΙ ΕΣΕΩΩΠΙ ΧΡΟΝΟ(Υ) ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΟ(Υ) Μ(Α)ΡΤ(Υ)ΡΩΝ) Χϸ. ‘I beseech, lo, I feel contrition (μετάνοια), keep my remembrance, so that (ὅπως) might my Lord Jesus the Christ have mercy of me and of you. I am the distressed (ταλαίπωρος) one who copied, Theod( ) (from) Pousiri, the unworthy monk (μοναχός) of the holy monastery (λαύρα) of the great abba Makari(os), might he preserve me from the shame of the chastisements (κόλασις). Amen and amen, (so) be it, (so) be it. In the year of the Holy Martyrs 605’. The text was edited by de Lagarde 1886, who surprisingly read τεφναζμεκ, pointing out in apparatus that ‘κ vocis τεφναζμεκ non certus lego: possit n esse. versui imposita pr m haec littera’. On closer inspection, the interlinear addition is the quite usual oblique τ. At the beginning of the line there are obvious relics of the classical Bohairic subjunctive ΝΤΕϸ-, then rectified by the younger *nitrisc* Form devoid of ṅ-.

As far as the extra-scribal annotations offered by the manuscript are concerned, the most obtrusive feature is the Arabic writing traced beside each title in the external margin of the page.<sup>71</sup> In the majority of the occurrences it appears as *سحته*, sometimes vocalized with a *fathah* on the first syllable (ff. 35r, 66v, 196v: *سحته*), in further instances, perhaps erroneously, as *سحبه* (f. 31r) or even *سحبه* (f. 166v).<sup>72</sup> Four times (ff. 45v, 51v, 66v, 122v) such Arabic word cohabits with an annotation in slender Greek minuscule *σχετφ* traced in the external upper corner of the page.<sup>73</sup> Only once (f. 22v) an apparently analogous *σχετ* occupies the same place in a page which does not host a title. In such case it is perhaps to be referred to the one bedizening the facing page (f. 23r). Thrice (ff. 51v, 66v, 74r) *سحته* is combined with a Coptic indication *σοκς*, occurring in its second instance within the *marginale* *ωϥ η̅φαι | εν̅ρεϥιμωοϥτ | σοκς*, underneath whom there is a compendious *ϥ̅ϥ* (perhaps *ϥωϥτ*, ‘stop’?). This advice to read ‘for the dead persons’ the Chrysostomic homily *ε̅βε̅ η̅ η̅ ε̅τε̅ρε̅θ̅ου̅ χ̅η̅ β̅ε̅ν̅να̅πα̅ι̅ε̅ων̅ η̅ε̅φ̅λη̅ου̅* is due to a starkly naïve Coptic hand, which seems nevertheless having employed the very same ink of the decisively more confident ubiquitous Arabic word. Conversely, the aforesaid Greek notes are traced with a brighter ink, nearly selfsame with the one of the pagination as well as of the *marginalia* *σορι* ‘correct’ (f. 23v), *ναμε* ‘truly’ (f. 220v) and *c( )* ‘ante interrogationes’ (ff. 101v, 102r, 110r) or *χ( )* (14v).

Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot explained *dubitatim* *سحته* as a rendering in Arabic letters of *с̅η̅η̅τ̅ϥ*, ‘write it’, and *σοκς* as a hint ‘quod vocis tonum forsan respicit’, embracing Crum’s cautious suggestion that such Bohairic marginal rubric would mean ‘continue, start (here)’, as opposed to *χακ/χακ ε̅βολ*, ‘cease, pause (here)’, or rather a clue pertaining to the mode of recital.<sup>74</sup> Firstly, the matching of *سحته* to *с̅η̅η̅τ̅ϥ*, and hence to *σχετφ*, its ‘dialect G’ writing, seems to be quite awkward. The Coptic personal suffix (-ϥ) in the alleged rendering through Arabic script would have been expressed by *ح* rather than *ه*. Since it seems very unlikely that the two scholars could see in the form a hybridization, in which the Arabic personal suffix *ه*- was added to the Coptic

71 See the detailed survey offered by Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 383–384.

72 Delio Vania Proverbio kindly informed me *per litteras* that he would read ‘talvolta *مخنة (مخنة) ingresso, introito*’.

73 What Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot interpreted as an *η* is indeed the upright *ε* characteristic of the medieval Egyptian Greek minuscule in ligature with *τ*. The dialect G writing *σχετφ* clearly reflects the Bohairic *с̅η̅η̅τ̅ϥ* yet untouched by itacistic pronounce, see Kasser 1975, 417, cp. Fayyūmic *с̅ε̅τ̅ϥ*.

74 Crum 1939, 362. The note *χακ* doubtfully discerned by Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot in ff. 35r and 110v seem rather the even murky *κηκ* and *χωι* (f. 35r) and the onomastic (?) *χαελς* (f. 110v).

сЭНТϣ,<sup>75</sup> I suggest that the meaning of سحتته should be searched for in the Arabic linguistic domain. If the last letter is indeed the *hā'* of the masculine pronominal suffix and not the *tā' marbūṭah* of a debatable substantival *addendum lexicis*, it appears licit to discern in the word a form of the verb سحت (*saḥata*) endowed with a pronominal suffix (*saḥatahu*). I wonder if in such context the root, usually meaning *perdere, eradicare*, could not be tentatively interpreted as *id excerpisit*.<sup>76</sup> The same sense, perhaps, could not be excluded for сѠк, notoriously translating ἀποσπᾶν, ἐκλέγειν, ἐκθερίζειν,<sup>77</sup> so that one might even be induced to deem سحتته and сѠк equivalent, both albeit well distinguished from сѠετϣ/сЭНТϣ. Actually, on a closer inspection, the latter indication, rather than a form of сЭИαι could be interpreted as belonging to сХαι (сХИТϣ), by means of which usually ἀποτριᾶν, but once also ἔλκειν<sup>78</sup> are rendered. Thus, it could not be excluded that, in such instances, also сѠετϣ might correspond to сѠк and to the puzzling سحتته. In light of the abovementioned conjectural interpretation, were the titles perceived as summaries of the corresponding textual sections? *Doctiores videant*.

Beside these somehow baffling *marginalia*, the manuscript bears several amendments ascribable to readers, whose mention, understandably, is missing in the lavish Vatican Library catalogue. Whilst some are undoubtedly due to simple readers (a), a certain amount seems to be by the very hand which inserted in *Auszeichnungsmajuskel* the titles (b):

- f. 1r, l. 7 in πκεπαρ (σκεπάρνη?) the letters κε are retraced with thick traits of black ink and the syllable oc is overwritten (i.e. σκε(ῦ)ος)<sup>79</sup> (a);
- f. 1r, l. 19 βεν`του`προερεσιс (b);
- f.9v, l. 36 βχετιαν`τι`θεσιс (b);
- f. 10r, l. 36 ep βχρια `αν` βουτροφιη (a?);
- f. 11r, l. 33 μετα`τ`κατ (b);
- f. 11v, l. 35 τ`τνογ (a);
- f. 12r, l. 8 βτω`ογ`[ογ (a), after the trimming of the leaf;

- 75 A change ϣ > ε, about which cp. Kahle 1954, 139, § 122A, seems decisively unlikely in this dialectal and chronological context.
- 76 See Lane 1863, 1314b–c. Among the instances there quoted سحت اللحم عن اللحم, he peeled off the fat from the flesh, and سحت شيئا, he peeled, or peeled off a thing by little and little, seem particularly telling.
- 77 Crum 1939, 325b, s.v. сѠк.
- 78 Crum 1939, 328b, s.v. сХαι: in the Boh. Version of Iob 39, 10 сХαι pro сѠк of the Šá. Cp. also the plausibly already ancient etymological confusion between сЭИαι and сѠк in a word as сαεο/сαεω, not ‘great scribe’ (\*сαε-ο) as supposed by von Lemm and Crum, but lit. ‘gatherer of face’ (\*сак-εο), as well as, perhaps, the graphically evocative сХαρ, lit. ‘gathering of money’ (\*ск-εαρ), about which see Černý 1976, 149.
- 79 For the writing кεοс see Förster 2002, 735-737, s.h.v.

- f. 12r, l. 24 ογ`ν` πε (b);
- f. 12v, l. 14 ἡταχολε`τ`, seems to be due to the copyist himself;
- f. 14r, l. 8 ἡτενιοηριο`ν` [η (a), after the trimming of the leaf;
- f. 15r, l. 13 ηη`ε`τεεεεε (b);
- f. 16r, l. 18 ἡ`εγ`τε|λνς (b?);
- f. 16r, l. 33 ετσαχ`ι` [ι (a);
- f. 16r, l. 35 εφερπκωουων`ε` [ε (a);
- f. 18v, l. 36 ουχιν[[ς]]σοκ, (a) the improper gemination is expuncted through an †  
overline;
- f. 19r, l. 36–37 ετερα[[π]]`ρ`ετιη (a) through an † overline, wrongly;
- f. 20v, l. 30 πεχακ `χε`φτωβε (a), through an † overline;
- f. 21r, l. 1 φη `ε`τεντεπεφιωτ, (a) through an † overline;
- f. 21r, l. 34 [[αφ]]`αιφν`σαρογι (a), wrongly;
- f. 23r, l. 16 πογαριμος with unclear sign over the γ (a?);
- f. 25r, l. 29 ηηςηα`γ`ε (a), very cursively;
- f. 26r, l. 23 ἡφ`ρ`ητι (a);
- f. 28v, l. 13 οη added at the end of the line (a);
- f. 31r, l. 5 ηενογρω`γ`τq (b?);
- f. 33v, l. 34 ηηηι`η`ωη (b?);
- f. 43r, l. 34 ηεηπαιαεε`α`ηα (b);
- f. 47r, l. 6 ηπαφ†αο (a);
- f. 47v, l. 28 σεταηνο`γ`τ (b);
- f. 51v, l. 19 ηαφ (a) over a washed out word; in the left margin the variant ηωου by  
another puny hand;
- f. 51v, l. 20 the same hand (a) wrote εφχηκ over the washed out word itself;
- f. 52r, l. 30 ρωηη `αν`πεηταηε (b);
- f. 81v, l. 14 α`ρ`τιον (b);
- f. 120v, l. 22–24, the beginnings are restored: η|εωφ etc. ηεφ†ου|οι ετρη etc.  
ηχηεηστ|χιον etc. (a);
- f. 123v, l. 11 ηα`λη`ογνος (b?);
- f. 126v, l. 8 ερ[[φ]]φανταζην (a?);
- f. 134v, l. 1 η†`γγ`φος (b), the very same writing of the pagination;
- f. 134v, l. 27 ηπετεφμε`τ`ραηαο (b);
- f. 148, l. 25 ε|τες`ωε η`ουωωτ (b?);
- f. 150v, l. 7 εταγορ`π`q (a);
- f. 151r, l. 10 αηο[[η]]κ (a?);
- f. 151v, l. 36 ηπεσφου† (a), ηου† overline;
- f. 152v, l. 3 ετ[[ε]]ο`γ`ουωωτ (a);
- f. 153v, l. 10 (after the title) ετα[[τ]]φουωη (a);
- f. 154r, l. 33 ηου[[ε]]ηηηη (b?);
- f. 166r, l. 4 ετεφηρηητq `αν` ηχηεηι (b);
- f. 168v, l. 30 εφ`χ`ω (b);
- f. 171v, l. 9 ηπε`ρ`ωε (a);
- f. 192r, l. 15 εηεηηη[[τ]]ε`χο`sic pro εκο (b);
- f. 200r, l. 30 ημετρεφχε`η`εηου (a);



ΟΥΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΑΦΤΑΟΥΟΥ ΝΧΕ ΠΕΝΙΩΤ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ Μ[ΠΠΝΑ]ΤΟΦΟΡΟΣ ΑΒΒΑ ΒΕΝΙΑΜΙΝ  
 ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΤΕ ΡΑΚΟΤ ΕΘΒΕ ΠΙΖΟΝ ΕΤΑΦΩΠΠ ΉΕΝ ΤΚΑΝΑ ΝΤΕ ΓΑΛΙΛΕΑ ΉΕΝ  
 ΟΥΖΙΡΗΝΗ ΝΤΕ ΦΤ ΑΜΗΝ

‘A sermon which our holy father pneumatophoros Apa Benjamin, Archbishop of Rakote (Alexandria), delivered on the wedding that took place in Cana in Galilea. In God’s peace. Amen’.<sup>83</sup>

It is interesting to stress that titles which refer to works of (or attributed to) John Chrysostom do not make exception in this respect.

On the other hand, Vat. copt. 57 itself includes a certain number of titles (seven out of the 37 preserved *inscriptions*) that respect the just described structural arrangement and literary tradition:<sup>84</sup>

ΟΥΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΜΑΚΑΡΙΟ(Σ) ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΧΡΙΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΙΣΚΟΠΟ(Σ) ΝΤΕ  
 ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ ΕΘΒΕ ΜΗ ΕΤΕ ΖΗΝΟΥ ΧΗ ΉΕΝ ΝΑΠΑΙΕΩΝ ΝΕΦΛΗΟΥ ΝΕΜ ΕΘΒΕ  
 ΤΗΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ ΝΕΜ ΟΥΚΑΤΑΝΙΖΙΣ

‘A sermon of the blessed John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on those whose heart is posed on this useless time, and on repentance and compunction’.<sup>85</sup>

ΟΥΟΜΗΛΙΑ ΕΑΦΤΑΟΥΟΥ ΝΧΕ ΠΑΓΙΟ(Σ) ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΧΡΙΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ ΕΘΒΕ ΠΧΙΝΗΙΣΙ ΜΠΕΝΟΣ  
 ΠΧΣ ΠΧΣ ΉΕΝ ΟΥΖΗΡΗΝΗ ΝΤΕ ΦΤ ΑΜΗΝ

‘A homily which saint John Chrysostom delivered on the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. In God’s peace. Amen’.<sup>86</sup>

ΟΥΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΑΦΤΑΟΥΟΥ ΝΧΕ ΠΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΧΡΙΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ ΟΥΟΖ ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΙΣΚΟΠΟ(Σ)  
 ΝΤΕ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙ(Σ) ΕΑΦΤΑΟΥΟΥ ΕΠΩΔΙ ΝΤΑΕΠΦΑΝΙΑ

‘A sermon which saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, delivered on the feast of Epiphany’.<sup>87</sup>

83 Benjamin of Alexandria, *De nuptiis apud Canam. In Iohannem 2.1–11* (CC 0085), Vat. copt. 67<sup>1</sup>, f. 9r = CLM 142 = MACA.DG. De Vis 1922, 1929, I, 56; Müller 1968, 52; Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 490–491.

84 We provide here but three examples. The other titles of this kind are to be found in: John Chrysostom, *In Gen.* 11,1 (CC 0604, CPG 4409), Vat. copt. 57, f. 122v (Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 373); John Chrysostom, *De Annuntiatione* (CC 0610, CPG 4677), Vat. copt. 57, f. 166v (Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 376); John Chrysostom, *De remissione peccatorum* (CC 0598, CPG 4429), Vat. copt. 57, f. 23r (Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 373); John Chrysostom, *Cum Saturninus et Aurelianus* (CC 0611, CPG 4393), Vat. copt. 57, f. 172r (Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 376). The title attributed to the 38<sup>th</sup> textual section of the codex is lost.

85 John Chrysostom, *De salute animae* (CC 0600, CPG 4031, 4622), Vat. copt. 57, f. 66v. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 371.

86 John Chrysostom, *De nativitate* (CC 0602, CPG 4334), Vat. copt. 57, f. 98r. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 372.

87 John Chrysostom, *De baptismo (b)* (CC 0603, CPG 4522, 7900(4)), Vat. copt. 57, f. 112r. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 373.

Most of the titles of Vat. copt. 57, however, have a completely different structure and phraseology, revealing—in my opinion—a firsthand operation aimed at collecting selected Chrysostomic texts from a different source compared to the one used for the above mentioned cases.

In this respect, it is meaningful that already the first title of the codex seems to stress the personal initiative of the ‘author’ who created it—and very likely was responsible for the creation also of the other titles of this kind—considering what he is copying as a part of a whole:

ΕΒΟΛ ΉΕΝ ΠΙΛΟΓΟΣ ΑΤΑΓΤΑΟΓΟΨ ΝΧΕ ΠΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΣΜΟΣ ΕΘΕ ΦΗ  
 ΕΤΉΝΟΥΤ ΉΕΝ ΠΙΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΚΑΤΑ ΛΟΥΚΑΝ ΧΕ ΨΝΑΦΟΡΦΕΡ ΉΝΑΑΠΘΗΚΗ  
 ‘From the sermon which saint John Chrysostom delivered on what is written in the  
 Gospel according to Luke: ‘I will tear down my barns’’.<sup>88</sup>

The same pattern—with an ΕΒΟΛ ΉΕΝ ‘from (the sermon, the homily, etc.)’, eventually accompanied by a ΝΘΟΨ ΟΝ, ‘likewise’—characterizes most of the following titles. A variant, that does not mention the ‘literary genre’, is represented by titles such as the following:

ΟΜΟΙΩΣ ΟΝ ΠΑΙΣΑΪ ΝΟΥΨΤ ΠΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΧΡΙΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ ΟΥΟΨ ΠΑΡΧΗΝΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ  
 ΝΤΕ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛ(ΙΣ) ΕΒΟΛ ΉΕΝ ΨΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΉΠΡΟΣΕΕΣΣΑΛΛΟΝΙΚΕΙΣ · ΉΘΙΚΟΝ  
 ‘Likewise, again the doctor saint John Chrysostom and Archbishop of Constantino-  
 ple from the letter to the Thessalonians. Ethical (works)’.<sup>89</sup>

Such a state of affairs suggests that the literary selection transmitted by Vat. copt. 57 is the result of copying from at least two antigraphs: the first is probably a Sahidic model, while the second—from which the copyist very likely obtains the texts that he could not find in the Sahidic tradition, or at least in the Sahidic model to his disposal—is a Greek one. This would explain the terminology which alludes to the act of ‘selecting’ or ‘extracting’.<sup>90</sup>

Considering the relatively late date of Vat. Copt. 57, it seems probable that the selection did not take place on the occasion of the manufacture of the codex. The manuscript rather represents the transcription of an older Bohairic codex, which, in turn, very likely, was the result of a targeted selection of texts, obtained also by means of a direct copy from Greek. This direct derivation from the Greek tradition would not be surprising at all, since it is clearly documented also in the case of the Bohairic biblical translations from the

88 John Chrysostom, *In Lucam 12,18* (CC 0596; CPG 4969), Vat. copt. 57, f. 1r. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 368.

89 John Chrysostom, *2Thes 1,9* (CC ... CPG 4435), Vat. copt. 57, f. 225r. Hebbelynck and van Lantschoot 1937, 380.

90 This terminology is used also in the numerous annotations of the codex. See paragraph 3.

same Monastery of St Macarius.<sup>91</sup> Several elements suggest that the milieu of the Wādī al-Naṭrūn was much more bound to, and in way dependent on, the Greek literary and manuscript tradition than the Monastery of Shenoute, for instance.

It remains to be explained why the author of the titles sometimes presents the textual sections introduced by the *inscriptions* as *excerpta*, even when they translate the entire homily they claim, as it happens in the case of the *In Mt 6,28* (CC 0597, CPG 4424) and of *De remissione peccatorum, In Mt 18,18* (CC 0598, CPG 4429).

From the literary point of view, it is meaningful that the selected Chrysostomic homilies of Vat. copt. 57 do not follow the expected (i.e. Greek) order. Moreover, the numbers attributed to the Coptic homilies do not always correspond to those of the extant Greek tradition,<sup>92</sup> which is a clear demonstration that the Bohairic Coptic translation is based on an unknown textual tradition.

Another peculiarity is represented by the label *ethikon*,<sup>93</sup> systematically used by the author of the titles. It does not appear in the Greek titles and does not seem to correspond to a real comprehension of the articulation of the original Chrysostomic homilies. This fact, however, does not affect the importance of the cultural operation that is behind the text transmitted by this codex.

In brief, everything suggests that Vat. copt. 57 is a local product, due to the cultural initiative of the monastic community of the Wādī al-Naṭrūn, an initiative that is partially independent from the Sahidic tradition and very likely was aimed to fill the absence of a systematic and/or satisfactory *corpus* of Chrysostomic works to be used for the liturgical purposes of Monastery of St Macarius.

Many aspects, however, remain unsolved for the moment. Assuming that the textual arrangement of Vat. copt. 57 depends in great part directly on the Greek tradition—without the medium of the Sahidic one—what were the *itineraria* that brought the Greek *antigraphon*, which differs from the Greek

91 Buzi 2017, 5-22.

92 See Table 1.

93 E.g.  $\eta\theta\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$   $\omicron\upsilon\tau$   $\pi\alpha\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$   $\iota\omega\alpha\lambda\eta\eta\eta\varsigma$   $\pi\alpha\chi\iota\sigma\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$   $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$   $\beta\epsilon\eta$   $\pi\iota\mu\alpha\delta\eta\mu\bar{\theta}$   $\eta\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$   $\eta\tau\alpha\upsilon$   $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\phi\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta$   $\mu\pi\pi\epsilon\upsilon\gamma\alpha\gamma\epsilon\lambda\iota\omicron\eta$   $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$   $\mu\alpha\tau\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$   $\eta\epsilon\mu$   $\epsilon\theta\epsilon$   $\epsilon\theta$   $\epsilon\tau\epsilon$   $\pi\iota\sigma\eta\omicron\upsilon$   $\psi\alpha\tau$   $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$   $\beta\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$   $\epsilon\tau\epsilon$   $\uparrow$   $\epsilon\mu\omicron\pi\pi\omicron\upsilon\gamma\alpha$   $\tau\epsilon$   $\eta\theta\iota\kappa\omicron(\eta)$  ('Again saint John Chrysostom from his sermon forty-nine, having interpreted the Gospel according to Matthew and on she from whom the blood flowed, that is the hemorrhaging woman. Ethical (works)'), *De Haemorrhoidissa. Hom. 50* (CC 0942; CPG 4424));  $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$   $\beta\epsilon\eta$   $\eta\eta\eta\theta\iota\kappa\omicron\eta$   $\eta\tau\epsilon$   $\pi\iota\mu\alpha\delta\eta\mu\bar{\theta}$   $\eta\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$   $\dots$  ('From the ethical sermon twenty-two...'), *Mt 6, 28* (CC 0597, CPG 4424); etc.

version that has survived and is widely known, to the Wādī al-Naṭrūn? Was it a local ‘product’ itself or rather had it been purchased for this purpose? How conscious was the scribe of Vat. Copt. 57—who, at that time, must have been mainly arabophone, and who shows no familiarity with Sahidic Coptic, so that it is very likely that he limited himself only to the task of copying (and annotating) the text—of the complex formation of this multiple-text manuscript that represents what has been defined as ‘corpus organizer’?<sup>94</sup> And, last but not least, when did the selection and combination of Chrysostomic texts transmitted by Vat. Copt. 57, with their related titles, take place?

These unanswered questions patently point to the fact that our knowledge of the transmission of culture in the Wādī al-Naṭrūn still has many grey areas.

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- CLM = Coptic Literary Manuscript (see <<http://paths.uniroma1.it/>>).
- CMCL = Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari (see <<http://www.cmcl.it/>>).
- CPG = M. Geerard *et al.*, eds, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, I–V, Corpus Christianorum. Claves (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974–2003).
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94 On the concept of ‘corpus organizer’ see Bausi 2010.

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# Early Genizah Fragments of Sa'adyah Gaon's Arabic Translation of the Pentateuch in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg\*

*Tamar Zewi, University of Haifa*

The following is an outline of my findings while working on the identification and classification of early Genizah fragments of Sa'adyah Gaon's Judaeo-Arabic translation of the Pentateuch in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg and after recently conducting a research visit there.

Sa'adyah ben Yosef Gaon (Ar. Sa'īd b. Yūsuf al-Fayyūmi; b. 882, d. 942) was the first major rabbinic figure to write in Arabic. During his tenure as the gaon of Sura (928–942), he produced a major corpus of texts in Judaeo-Arabic, including the famous translation (*tafsīr*) of the Hebrew Pentateuch.

The earliest and most important manuscript containing Sa'adyah's translation of the Pentateuch is kept in the Russian National Library. This is MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. II C 1, copied by Samuel ben Jacob in c.1009–1010 CE in Fustāṭ, which contains almost all the Pentateuch (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> It is intended to be the main version used in a new critical edition of this translation.<sup>2</sup> While Blau discussed in detail the characteristics of Sa'adyah's translation in this manuscript,<sup>3</sup> my research of Genizah fragments in the Russian National

\* This work is part of a larger research project of mine on early Genizah fragments of Sa'adyah Gaon's translation of the Pentateuch supported by the Israel Science Foundation (grant no. 150/15). I would like to thank Dr Amir Ashur, for his great assistance in the project, Mr Boris Zaykovsky, curator of the Oriental collections in the Manuscript Department at the National Library of Russia in St Petersburg, my husband Gill Zewi, who worked with me at the National Library of Russia during our research visit there, and Dr Barak Avirbach, who provided some of the transcriptions to Genizah fragments in this collection. The project in general and some of its results are discussed in Ashur and Zewi forthcoming. An earlier version of this paper was published online as a posting to the *Biblia Arabica* blog, <<https://biblia-arabica.com/category/blog/>>.

1 This paper manuscript has many small lacunas and half of the book of Leviticus is missing from it. Samuel ben Jacob is also known as the copyist of the Leningrad Codex (MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. I B 19a, parchment, 1008–1009), the oldest complete manuscript of the (Masoretic text of the) Hebrew Bible, which serves as the basic version of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) and other important critical editions of the Hebrew Bible. On other codices written by Samuel ben Jacob see also Beit-Arié et al. 1997, 118–119.

2 Schlossberg 2011.

3 Blau 1998, 2001.



Fig. 1. MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. II C I, 1r: the two-volume Pentateuch, Hebrew text followed by Sa'adyah Gaon's Arabic translation, written by the scribe Samuel ben Jacob, reproduction courtesy of the Oriental collections of the National Library of Russia.

Library in St Petersburg focused on identifying and examining other early Genizah fragments of Sa'adyah's translation of the Pentateuch in this collection.

So far I have identified about one hundred such fragments, many containing only a few folios, made of parchment or paper. Most of these are very fragmentary and their state of preservation is extremely poor. Many are partly torn and none provide details concerning the copyist or the date when they were copied. Some of these fragments were previously identified as holding Sa'adyah's translation, but the exact type of Arabic translation of many others was not specified: these required further examination and classification. Low-resolution black and white images of most of the fragments in the Russian National Library can be observed on the Internet site of the National Library of Israel. Some of them are also displayed in the Friedberg Genizah Project <<https://fjms.genizah.org/>>.

The fragments of Sa'adyah's translation of the Pentateuch in Hebrew characters kept in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg are no different from other fragments of this translation kept in other Genizah collections

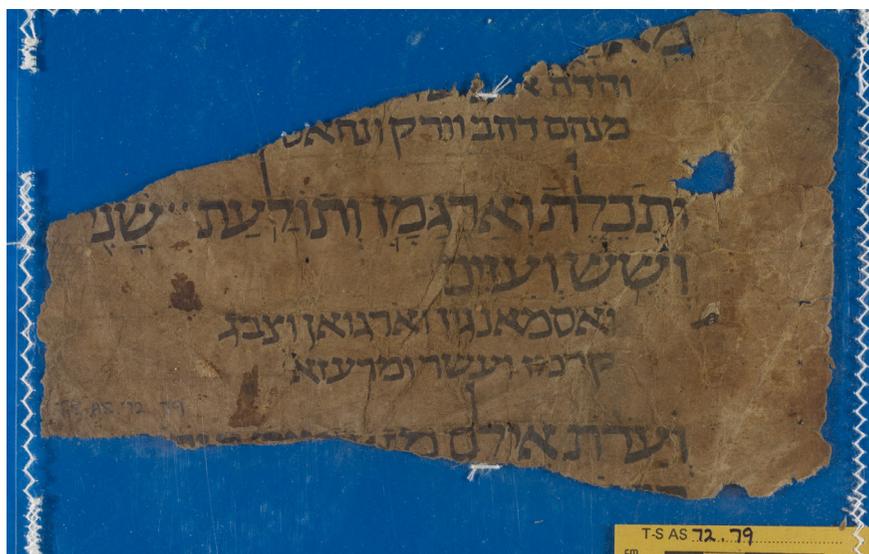


Fig. 2. MS Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, T-S AS 72.79, recto: Hebrew text of Exodus 25:3–5 or 35:5–7 with Sa'adyah Gaon's Arabic translation, written by the scribe Samuel ben Jacob.

worldwide. The largest is the collection in the Cambridge University Library.<sup>4</sup> They include fragmentary remnants of manuscripts in which Sa'adyah's translation follows Hebrew incipits or full Hebrew verses, and occasionally triglots displaying the Hebrew verse, its Aramaic translation (Onkelos), and Sa'adyah's translation (fig. 2). Passages of Sa'adyah's translation are also found embedded in his exegesis, but these are fewer. Some of the fragments are written in square oriental script, others in semi-cursive script. The fragments are made of parchment or paper. Common words and proper nouns may be shortened, numbers are frequently conveyed in Hebrew characters and the transcription conventions to Hebrew characters mostly include diacritic points for *צ* (ض) and *ט* (ظ), occasionally also *ג* mostly representing *ج* and rarely *غ*. The versions of Sa'adyah's translation attested in these fragments are generally close to that of MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. II C 1, but also reveal minor differences.

One small fragment, MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. II A 640, containing two leaves made of parchment, discloses remnants of several Hebrew verses (Deuteronomy 4.31–35, 46–49, 5.1) accompanied by Masoretic vocalization, cantillations, and one Masoretic note; Sa'adyah's translation follows (fig. 3).

4 E.g. Polliack 1998 on Arabic Bible translations in the Cambridge Genizah collection; Ashur and Zewi forthcoming on Sa'adyah's Bible translation in the *JTS* Genizah collection.

Fig. 3. MS St Petersburg RNL Yevr. II A 640, 6r: Hebrew text of Deuteronomy 5.1, followed by Sa'adyah Gaon's Arabic translation, written by the scribe Samuel ben Jacob, reproduction courtesy of the Oriental collections of the National Library of Russia.



This fragment, according to the shape of its characters, most probably belonged to a manuscript, unknown so far, copied by Samuel ben Jacob in the first quarter of the eleventh century.<sup>5</sup>

Worth mentioning is also one short fragment made of parchment in the form of a rotulus,<sup>6</sup> which does not contain any part of Sa'adyah's translation of the Pentateuch but rather of Daniel. This is Yevr. III B 642, which holds Dan. 6.15–29, 7.1–8. This fragment is similar to fifteen other rotuli that Amir Ashur and I identified in other Genizah collections and prepared for publication.<sup>7</sup>

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5 This fragment is described in detail in Zewi forthcoming. I thank Amir Ashur for confirming to me the identity of the copyist of this fragment.

6 On rotuli in the Cairo Genizah see Olszowy-Schlanger 2016.

7 Zewi and Ashur forthcoming. We have also identified the copyist of these fragments.

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# Research projects

## **Alchemy in the Making: From Ancient Babylonia via Graeco-Roman Egypt into the Byzantine, Syriac and Arabic Traditions (1500 BCE–1000 AD)**

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‘Alchemy in the Making: From Ancient Babylonia via Graeco-Roman Egypt into the Byzantine, Syriac and Arabic Traditions (1500 BCE–1000 AD)’ (*AlchemEast*) is a new research initiative funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Consolidator Grant 2017–2022, Grant Agreement 724914, PI Matteo Martelli) and based at the University of Bologna. The project casts its look to the East and back in time—on the two and a half millennia that precede the conventional Mediaeval origins of alchemy—in order to tell the unknown story of alchemy and its practice. To investigate this millennium-old tradition, *AlchemEast* explores Babylonian proto-alchemy, the origins of this discipline in Graeco-Roman Egypt, its dissemination in Byzantium, and the different forms of the Syriac and Arabic reception—with a focus on primary sources and their manuscript tradition.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1. AlchemEast project logo

With the combination of innovative textual investigation and experimental replications, *AlchemEast* wishes to change the pejorative paradigm and the negative stereotypes connected to alchemy as a pseudo-science. *AlchemEast* adopts new models for textual criticism in order to capture the fluidity of the transmission of the main sources, as to provide reliable editions that can in-

<sup>1</sup> For a complete presentation and regular updates, visit the project homepage at <https://alchemeast.eu/>.



Fig. 1. Experiment with orpiment and natron oil, Baltimore 2018, photo: Lucia Raggetti.

form the activity of replication in the laboratory. In exchange, the replications help philology to understand the chemical reality behind the texts.

*AlchemEast* also explores the intersections between alchemy and other related sciences that study nature from another perspective (medicine, philosophy, astrology).

At the moment, the *AlchemEast* team—that will acquire two more Doctoral Students and one researcher for the Babylonian materials in 2019—counts eight members and two associated Doctoral Students. They are:

— Luca Battistini (Associated Doctoral Student). Luca works on the relationship between astrological determinism and free will in the late antique astrological tradition, investigating the presence and the role of astrological elements in other related natural sciences (alchemy, medicine, magic).

— Miriam Blanco (Postdoc). Miriam's current project in *AlchemEast* focuses on the two (al)chemical papyri usually referred to as the Leiden and Stockholm papyri (third-fourth century CE) and their relation with the Hellenistic technical literature. She is also investigating their connection with the so-called Theban library and its intellectual environment.

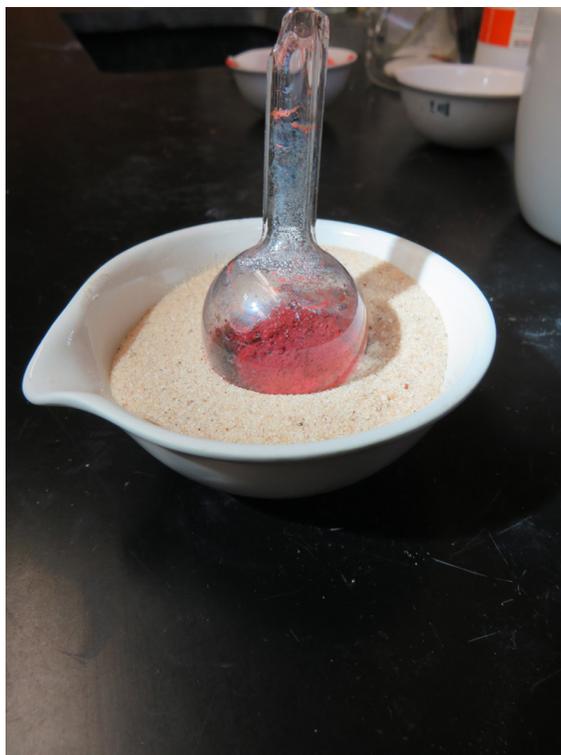


Fig. 2. Extracting mercury from natron and cinnabar, Baltimore 2018, photo: Lucia Raggetti.

— Bojidar Dimitrov (Postdoc) is currently working on a critical edition, translation and commentary of Ġābir ibn Ḥayyān’s ‘Rectifications to Plato’ (*Kitāb muṣaḥḥaḥāt Aflāṭūn*).

— Lucia Maini (Chemist) and Massimo Gandolfi (Lab technician). Their research in *AlchemEast* deals with historically informed replications of ancient alchemical recipes. So far, they have been working on the ancient chemistry of mercury and related minerals, especially cinnabar.

— Matteo Martelli (Principal Investigator). In this phase of the project, his research focuses on the alchemical work of Zosimus of Panopolis and its reception in the Syriac tradition (critical edition of the Syriac books ascribed to Zosimus).

— Daniele Morrone (Doctoral Student) is building a database of medically and alchemically themed metaphors and analogies in Middle Platonic texts, with a focus on their argumentative contexts. The aim of his research is to give insight into the historical interrelations between medical and alchemical science and all the other philosophical and scientific ideas that animated Middle Platonic thought and writing practice.

— Giorgia Pausillo (Doctoral Student) is preparing a new comprehensive and updated catalogue of the Greek alchemical manuscripts in Italy, with a particular attention to the codicological and paleographical aspects. Part of the research focuses on the manuscripts produced in the Paleologan Age, investigating the historical and cultural context that favoured the circulation of the alchemical texts.

— Lucia Raggetti (Researcher) is working on those Arabic texts connected with the reception of the Greek tradition—both translations and original compositions—with a focus on the mechanisms of transmission and the construction of authorship. She is preparing the critical edition of Ps. Aristotle's *Book of Stones*, of Ps. Democritus' *On the Four Elements*, and the *Treatise of the Crown* by Mary the alchemist.

— Robert Sieben-Tait (Associate Doctoral Student, co-direction Paris IV – University of Bologna) is working on a critical edition, translation and study of the *Mufarriḥ an-nafs* ('The Soul-Cheerer')—a thirteenth-century medical text that is attributed to the Damascene physician Badr ad-Dīn al-Muẓaffar ibn Qāḍī Ba'albakk and represents an attempt to compile a comprehensive guide for physicians to the treatment of the soul in the context of the medieval hospital.

# **Coding and Encoding: Towards a New Approach to the Study of Syriac and Arabic Translations of Greek Scientific and Philosophical Texts\***

*Rüdiger Arnzen, Ruhr University Bochum,  
Yury Arzhanov, Nicolás Bamballi, Slavomír Čéplö, and  
Grigory Kessel, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna*

This essay presents the ERC project ‘Transmission of Classical Scientific and Philosophical Literature from Greek into Syriac and Arabic’ (HUNAYNNET) based at the Institute for Medieval Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The main research question leading the project addresses the contribution of the Syriac tradition in the transfer of Greek scientific literature to the Arabic-speaking world. To fulfill this goal the project is going to provide digital editions of the Syriac and Arabic versions and tools for linguistic corpus-based analysis. The digital Greek–Syriac–Arabic corpus will offer a novel approach for research into the translation techniques and in the history of the transmission of classical Greek literature in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

## ***Introduction***

Between the sixth and the tenth centuries CE, a vast body of medical, mathematical, philosophical and other scientific and technical texts were translated from the Greek into Syriac and Arabic. Apart from the social, cultural and historical aspects of the translation activity (sometimes called ‘translation movements’) as such, these translations contain valuable information for a number of linguistic and philological issues, to mention but a few:

- the development of the vocabulary, syntax and scientific terminology of Classical Syriac and Classical and Middle Arabic;
- the history and development of the translation movements from Greek into Syriac and Arabic;
- the diachronic semantic shifts from Classical to Middle and Byzantine Greek as evidenced by Syriac and Arabic interpretations of the Greek works;
- the critical establishment of the Greek texts, which are often preserved in manuscripts that are much younger than their Syriac and Arabic translations.

Whereas it is well known that mediaeval Europe received ancient Greek science and philosophy through Latin translations—many of which were pre-

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pared on the basis of the Arabic and Hebrew versions of these works—, it is less well known that the Arabic translations from the Greek produced between the eighth to the tenth centuries were sometimes directly based on a Syriac intermediary or depended indirectly on available Syriac translation.

The impact of the Syriac tradition upon the Arabic translations has been acknowledged but not thoroughly explored. Compared with the extant body of Graeco-Arabic translation literature, the available Graeco-Syriac translations constitute just a small fraction. Nevertheless, it is our firm conviction that the very availability of at least that relatively small group of texts urgently requires comparative examination. A sound study of those translations can inform us about the contribution of the Syriac tradition not only on the relevant Arabic translations but also on other Graeco-Arabic texts for which a Syriac version is wanting.

The present project aims to contribute to the study of that transmission process and, more importantly, to trace the role of the Syriac tradition through the creation of a digital trilingual (Greek, Syriac, Arabic) text corpus. Named after Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq (c.808–877), arguably the most prominent figure in the history of scientific translations from Greek into Syriac and Arabic, the digital corpus HUNAYNNET is going to serve as an open-access platform for research in the transmission of Greek scientific and philosophical literature into Syriac and Arabic. It is the first attempt to present together the Syriac and Arabic translations along with the preserved Greek originals. The digital corpus is intended not only for specialists working on Greek, Syriac, and Arabic texts, but also for a broad spectrum of scholars and students interested in the history of culture, philosophy and translation studies, more generally.

### ***1. Textual Basis of the Greek-Syriac-Arabic Corpus HUNAYNNET***

The core group of the texts consists of those scientific and philosophical works that are available in all three languages, Greek, Syriac, and Arabic. We include straightforward translations (preserved in both complete form and in fragments) but exclude quotations embedded in other works. One of the things that makes the study fascinating is that for some texts there is more than one translation in a given target language. Table 1 below presents the principal sources of the corpus.

### ***2. HUNAYNNET corpus: Introduction***

Corpus linguistics in general and parallel corpora in particular are an invaluable aid for studying the translation process that may cover such aspects as translation techniques and style. The use of corpora in recent decades revolutionized the study of languages. Being first developed for modern languages the corpus-based approach has only recently been applied also to ancient languages and the major discoveries are yet to be made.

Table 1. Texts included in the Greek-Syriac-Arabic corpus HUNAYNNET.

<b>Author, title</b>	<b>Translations</b>
Porphyry, <i>Isagoge</i>	Syriac (two versions) Arabic
Aristotle, <i>Categoriae</i>	Syriac (three versions) Arabic
Aristotle, <i>De interpretatione</i>	Syriac (two versions) Arabic (two versions)
Aristotle, <i>Analytica priora</i>	Syriac (two versions) Arabic
Pseudo-Aristotle, <i>De mundo</i>	Syriac Arabic (three versions)
Galen, <i>Ars medica</i> (fragment)	Syriac Arabic
Galen, <i>De alimentorum facultatibus</i> (fragment)	Syriac Arabic
Galen, <i>De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus vi-viii</i>	Syriac Arabic (two versions)
Hippocrates, <i>Aphorismi</i>	Syriac Arabic
Hippocrates, <i>Prognosticon</i>	Syriac Arabic
Ptolemy, <i>Tetrabiblos</i>	Syriac Arabic

Even though we are fully aware of the advantages offered by corpus linguistics for a study of monolingual and multilingual corpora, our approach to the corpus needs to take into consideration the specific character of the material we deal with. Namely, the corpus is made of the ancient Greek texts that belong to classical antiquity. Each of them had its own transmission history and got to be translated into Syriac and Arabic. It is an axiom of classical philology that there is no ancient text that reaches us in its authentic and original form. For this very reason, philologists painstakingly labour to provide a reliable text paying minute attention to any detail. The optimal presentation of the philological work remains an edition.

To put it somewhat differently, the texts can be presented digitally either in the form of a digital edition or as a linguistic (parallel) corpus, whereas the former is ‘text-driven’ the latter is ‘data-driven’. Both solutions have their own pros and cons, and offer different functionality and usage scenarios.

To have the best of both worlds, we decided to provide two platforms for data visualization in order to satisfy the requirements of both groups of poten-

tial users as best as possible. At the same time, however, both solutions are to be integrated as closely and as seamlessly as possible by taking advantage of all capabilities of the selected technical implementation. The two solutions are referred to as the *reading interface* and *parallel corpus* and in what follows, we offer a brief description of both.

### 3 Reading interface

#### 3.1 General remarks

The primary purpose of the reading interface is to provide the user with a way to simply read the texts, whether in parallel or separately, in a way that is most suitable for digital consumption, while also preserving all the relevant scholarly information and providing access to tools, which aid them in their research.

#### 3.2 Implementation

The reading interface is implemented as a minimalist cross-operative system and cross-browser static website with minimal AJAX elements, all built on open standards (XHTML, CSS/Flexbox and JQuery). This ensures maximum usability in the present, as well as the project's longevity: the entire reading interface can be downloaded and copied anywhere or even run offline as opposed to a solution with a database backend. The combination of Flexbox and JQuery, while providing the necessary functionality, is much more resilient to the ever-present problem of inter-version obsolescence than, say, Angular which serves as the framework for the excellent and powerful EVT platform, an open-source tool designed for publishing digital editions using TEI XML.<sup>1</sup>

In terms of process, the texts edited and aligned in *Classical Text Editor* (CTE, created by Stefan Hagel from the Austrian Academy of Sciences, see below) are exported to TEI XML using the functionality built into CTE. The TEI XML files are then minimally post-processed (largely to ensure compliance with the TEI standard) and, using XSLT transformation, converted to HTML. The HTML files are then read into the reading interface using AJAX and arranged visually using CSS.

In the final version, the reading interface will include (1) permanent links with Uniform Resource Names (URN), (2) downloadable TEI compliant XML files with CSS stylesheets, (3) downloadable embeddable HTML files and viewable HTML files, (4) downloadable PDF files, and (5) basic text search.

1 Edition Visualization Technology, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://evt.labcd.unipi.it/>>.

It should be noted that the text search implemented in the reading interface will truly be only rudimentary; the bulk of the search capabilities will be outsourced to the parallel corpus.

### 3.3 *Enrichment of data*

The reading interface will provide two major forms of enrichment, which aim to aid the user in reading and studying the texts:

#### a. Sentence synchronization.

This is added to the texts using the respective functionality in CTE (see below, section 5.a) and implemented in the interface as (1) sequential number (per chapter or per text, selectable by user), and (2) as a hover-initiated highlight of the synchronized sentence and its equivalents in all displayed texts.

#### b. Lexical and morphological information.

This functionality is implemented in a manner similar to that used in *The-saurus Linguae Graecae*:<sup>2</sup> each word in each version is responsive, and upon calling, a selection of sources with lexical and morphological information is displayed where the user can select which of the sources they wish to access. This information is retrieved by API from existing publicly available online lexicons—provisionally Perseus for Greek, ElixirFM<sup>3</sup> for Arabic, and Syriac Electronic Data Research Archive dictionary (SE-DRA)<sup>4</sup> for Syriac—as well as from the *Glossarium Graeco-Arabicum*.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to linking to lexical and morphological information, functionality will also be provided to search for the selected word in the parallel corpus and continue the analytical work there. This is the first major step towards integrating the two platforms, namely the reading interface and the parallel corpus.

## 4 *Parallel corpus*

### 4.1 *General remarks*

The purpose of the parallel corpus is to provide an interface to conduct standard corpus research involving, for example, collocation extraction, lexicographic analysis, n-gram analysis and parallel lexical analysis.

### 4.2 *Implementation*

The texts are imported into an open-source corpus management system, for the moment the *NoSketch Engine* (updated in the future with a customized

2 *TLG*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>>.

3 *ElixirFM*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://quest.ms.mff.cuni.cz/cgi-bin/elixir/index.fcgi>>.

4 *SEDRA*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<https://sedra.bethmardutho.org/>>.

5 *GlossGA*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://telota.bbaw.de/glossga/>>.

KonText interface)<sup>6</sup> as parallel corpus; this is made possible by the sentence synchronization encoded in the files. Both these tools use the identical vertical text format as input in encoding the corpus and the vertical text is also provided as a downloadable resource.

### 4.3 Enrichment of data

The texts will be enriched with the standard set of linguistic annotation, i.e. (1) tokenization; (2) lemmatization; (3) part-of-speech tagging; (4) morphological analysis.

In the cases of Greek and Arabic, a number of tools exist to provide a reasonably accurate annotation for all of the above. These are, for example, for Greek, Morpheus<sup>7</sup> and the Classical Language Toolkit<sup>8</sup> and, for Arabic, the Stanford CoreNLP,<sup>9</sup> the aforementioned ElixirFM and Farasa.<sup>10</sup> With Syriac, however, what was said above in reference to lexical resources is doubly true of natural language processing tools, despite some recent progress.<sup>11</sup> One of the ancillary goals of the project is to use the project data and the experience of the project members to expand the existing range of computational tools for the processing of Syriac. Most annotation shall be carried out in CTE with additional post-processing directly in XML (see below).

Finally, a functionality will be provided to link the results of the search in the parallel corpus back to the reading interface using the identification of aligned synchronization units, so that a result of the query can be immediately consulted in the reading interface.

## 5 Making of the corpus

The primary goal of the project is to create an aligned multilingual corpus. The process entails (a) preparation of digital editions and (b) parallel alignment.

Both tasks are accomplished using the CTE software, which has been widely used for the preparation of critical editions in the field of classical philology and beyond and as such it provides a number of facilities required

6 *Czech National Corpus*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <[https://kontext.korpus.cz/first\\_form](https://kontext.korpus.cz/first_form)>.

7 *Perseus Digital Library*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?lang=greek>>.

8 *Classical Language Toolkit*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<https://github.com/cltk/>>, <DOI:10.5281/zenodo.593336>.

9 *The Stanford Natural Language Processing Group*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<https://nlp.stanford.edu/projects/arabic.shtml>>.

10 *Farasa*, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<http://qatsdemo.cloudapp.net/farasa/>>.

11 E.g. Kindt et al. 2018 and the *LinkSyr* (Linking Syriac Data) project, retrieved on 3 August 2018: <<https://github.com/ETCBC/linksyrr>>.

for critical text editing (e.g. unlimited number of critical apparatus, automatic insertion of line and chapter numbers, marginal references, freely definable sigla, etc.). Additionally, it also offers two crucial advantages for the purposes of our project: first, it enables the export of the text, the apparatus, any other notes and structural division markers into TEI XML, an open standard for the representation of texts in digital form.<sup>12</sup> Secondly and crucially, CTE allows easy and accurate handling of languages with RTL direction such as Syriac and Arabic, something that is generally not achievable by means of standard XML editors. All these and additional features (such as the export of a print-ready critical edition in PDF) make CTE the perfect tool for the kind of work entailed in the HUNAYNNET project.

In detail, the two aforementioned steps are carried out as follows:

a. Preparation of digital editions.

We have adopted the following general policy for the retrieval of the texts: to use available editions or manuscripts if the text is not edited. In the simplest scenario, we use an available edition and collate it against the manuscript(s). If there is more than one edition and none of those is superior, we use both editions which are collated against the manuscript(s) and against each other. In both cases, the errors are corrected and the editorial interventions are documented by means of an apparatus. For the unedited texts, we prepare minor editions based on a selected group of witnesses. Hence, we are going to offer improved editions for already edited texts and the very first editions for those that have never been edited.<sup>13</sup> To achieve the uniformity of the text corpus and thereby to guarantee better search results, all the texts are being normalized following established editorial guidelines (abbreviations resolved, homographs disambiguated; shaddas, hamzas and other orthographic features of Arabic supplied; all *seyame* in Syriac included, etc.). All the texts are provided with structural information referencing to the standard editions of the Greek texts (e.g. page, column, and line of Bekker's edition for the *Corpus Aristotelicum*), editions of the translations and manuscript witnesses.

b. Parallel alignment.

This is achieved by annotating the text with boundaries of minimally extensive syntactic and semantic units, roughly equivalent to simple or compound sentences, henceforth referred to as 'synchronization (or sync) units'. The

12 TEI P5: Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange, retrieved on 9 August 2018: <<http://www.tei-c.org/release/doc/tei-p5-doc/en/html/>>.

13 We would like to thank here the project 'The Syriac Galen Palimpsest: Galen's On Simple Drugs and the Recovery of Lost Texts through Sophisticated Imaging Techniques' (University of Manchester) that has kindly provided us with a transcription of the Syriac version of Galen's *De simplicium medicamentorum facultatibus*.



three languages have different structures and the translations do not always follow a *verbum e verbo* approach. In order to make the comparison more convenient, we present the texts aligned at the level of (sub- or coordinate) clauses or sentences.

In practical terms, this is done by introducing a so-called sync (or synchronization) mark, a special symbol in CTE, at the beginning of each of these minimal syntactic and semantic units. In the XML export, this symbol is converted into the TEI element <anchor> with a sync attribute;<sup>14</sup> this then allows to match the sync units as necessary.

In this context, the Greek text serves as the immutable fundament and so the division of sync units—defined broadly in semantic and syntactic terms—follows that of the Greek text and its semantic division. The automated processing necessary for the creation of parallel linguistic corpora (i.e. tokenization, lemmatization, and sentence alignment, see below) requires that the number of synchronization units (a term preferred to ‘sentence’ and thus used henceforth in the context of parallel alignment) be the same in all texts. Consequently, in cases where the translation lacks a passage, an empty synchronization unit is added to the translation; in cases where the translation adds a passage, the aforementioned principle of immutability of the Greek original requires that the added text be joined with the preceding synchronization unit, resulting in a translation that may be much longer than the original.

Fig. 1 illustrates a typical example of encoded Greek, Syriac and Arabic texts and the critical apparatus for two versions. In the main text, the sentence synchronization marks are highlighted in pink, chapter identifiers (Bekker numbers in the Greek, folio and line numbers of the manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ar. 2346 in the Arabic, and page and line numbers of King’s edition of the Anonymous Syriac version) are in yellow, and Bekker numbers (every fifth line) in the Arabic and Syriac are in turquoise.

And finally, in addition to aligning the Greek original and the Arabic and Syriac translations, the project also envisages the addition of an English translation to those texts that have been translated into English and for which an out-of-copyright English translation exists. This would allow for the project output to be used as a tool for the study of the languages and the texts involved and thus expand its usability beyond scholarly study to classroom and self-study use.

### References

Kindt, B., J.-Cl. Haelewyck, A. Schmidt, and N. Atas 2018. ‘La concordance bilingue grecque-syriaque des Discours de Grégoire de Nazianze’, *BABELAO*, 7 (2018), 51–80.

14 <<http://www.tei-c.org/release/doc/tei-p5-doc/en/html/SA.html#SASY>>.



## **Valuable Manuscripts and Old Printed Books Preserved at the Bulgarian National Museum of History in Sofia\***

*Nina Voutova, National History Museum, Sofia*

The National History Museum of Bulgaria, located in Sofia, is a relatively young cultural institution established in 1973. One of the main tasks of the museum is to search and collect artefacts related to the history of the Bulgarians and the territories they inhabited. Enhanced collection activities over the past 45 years have yielded fruitful results, and today more than 600,000 tangible cultural assets are in store at the museum.

The museum's collection of manuscripts and old printed books goes back to the creation of the museum. Over the years, it has grown thanks to redeeming manuscripts and printed publications as well as to donations. The collection, though small, contains remarkable monuments of medieval handwritten heritage and of printed literature. For this reason a project for the preparation of a Catalogue of manuscripts, old prints, rare and valuable publications stored at the National Museum of History was called into life. Over a period of several years, a team of scholars joined the efforts. As a result, two volumes were published, in 2013, and in 2017, containing for the very first time detailed descriptions of manuscripts and printed publications in line with national and international bibliographic standards. All paratext records, presenting important historical sources (and sometimes the only source of information about historical events) have been identified and published.<sup>1</sup>

\* This article is my presentation of the work on the two-volume *Опис на ръкописите, старопечатните, редките и ценните издания в Националния Исторически Музей* ('Catalogue of the manuscripts, old printed books, rare and valuable editions at the National Museum of History'), I: *Славянски ръкописи, кирилски печатни книги и периодични издания* ('Slavic manuscripts, Cyrillic printed books and periodicals'), ed. N. Voutova and V. Velinova, II: *Чуждоезични ръкописи, документи, старопечатни книги, редки и ценни издания* ('Foreign manuscripts, documents, old printed books, rare and valuable editions'), ed. N. Voutova (Sofia: Unicart, 2013 and 2017). The contributors included Alessandro Bausi, Kiril Pavlikianov, Nadya Danova, Vassja Velinova, Emmanuel Moutafov, Nina Voutova, Svetlana Ivanova, Anka Stoilova, Lora Nenkovska, Zorka Ivanova.

1 I would like to thank on this occasion all colleagues from Bulgaria and overseas who took part in coordination meetings and authored catalogue descriptions. I am absolutely positive that the invited scientists are among the best, internationally recognized academic authorities who committed themselves to the research and spent their time not only to work directly with specific groups of books, but also to solve all sorts of issues that occurred during the preparation of the volume.



Fig. 1. MS Sofia, NMH Inv. No 14070 (NMH Slav. 1), parchment, 140 × 90 mm, second half of the thirteenth century, f. 1v.

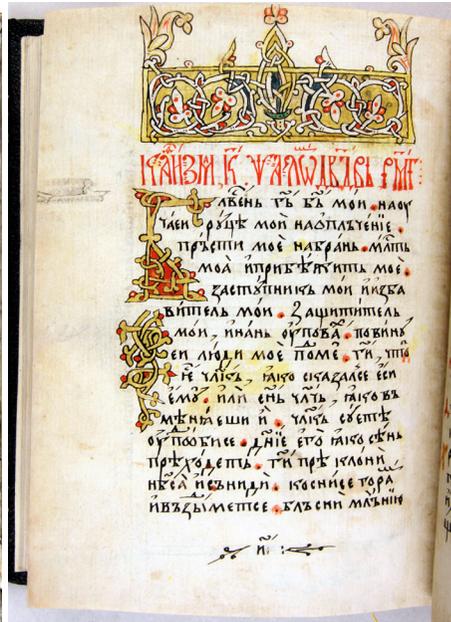


Fig. 2. MS Sofia, NMH Inv. No 4605 (NMH Slav. 2), parchment, 195 × 140 mm, 1660s, f. 111v.

The first part of the project was finalized with the volume which appeared in the end of 2013 and included descriptions of Slavonic manuscripts and Cyrillic publications from the museum's collection. The descriptions in the catalogue are arranged following the traditional classification scheme for scientific inventories: biblical books (Old and New Testament), liturgical (service/prayer) books, mixed content collections, manuscripts of secular content.

The Slavonic manuscripts in the collection cover a relatively broad chronological time range from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century and include codices and fragments, written on parchment and paper of wide geographic distribution on the territories, limited by the borders of Bulgarian lands. Most manuscripts date to the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries and reflect the literary tastes and preferences of readers and users during the Bulgarian Revival. Though small, numbering a total of 45 complete codices and fragments, the collection of Slavonic manuscripts contributes significantly to our knowledge of the late Bulgarian manuscript book, as well as the literary activity of prominent Bulgarian revivalists: St Paisius of Hilendar (or Paisiy Hilendarski), St Sophronius of Vratsa (or Sofroniy Vrachanski), Milko Kotlenski, Todor Pirdopski, Theodosius Rilski, and others.

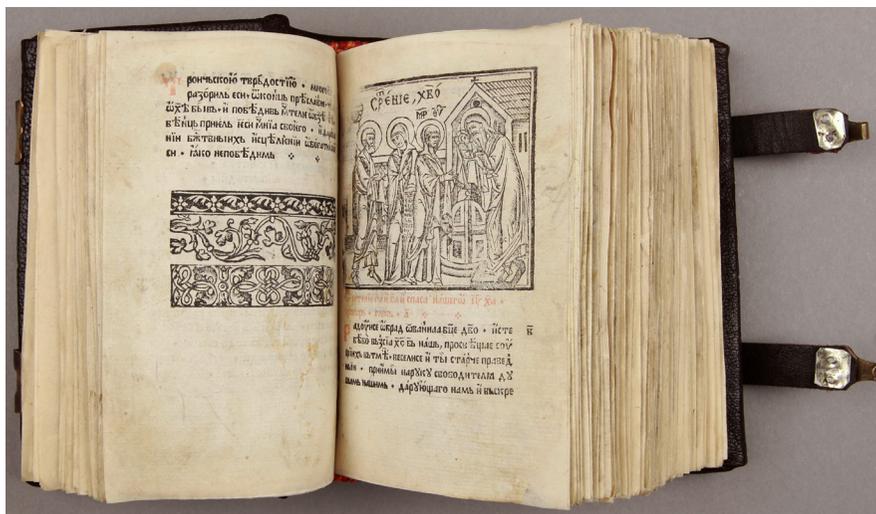


Fig. 3. Часословец ('Book of Hours), Jacov Kraikov printing house, 1566.

The older manuscripts include the so-called 'Boyana Psalter' from the second half of the thirteenth century, a parchment codex named after the remarkable medieval church of Sts Nikola and Pantaleimon in the Boyana residential district of Sofia, where it was found (see fig. 1), and the Menaia and the Triodic panegyric from the mid-fourteenth century, one of the most rare examples of ancient collections of such content. Another remarkable object, also from the point of view of art history, is the exquisitely decorated Psalter dated to the 1660s (see fig. 2).

In 2016, in the framework of a project of the University Library of the St Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, all Slavonic manuscripts from the collection were fully digitalized and are used in a special mode in the Zograph electronic library at the Sofia University (see <<https://zograf.lib.slav.uni-sofia.bg>>).

As for the collection of Cyrillic prints, it counts 349 literary titles in 365 volumes. Of particular importance are the Venetian editions of Bozhidar Vukovic Psalter (1520) and the Festal Menology (1538), as well as the 1566 edition of the Horologion of Jacov Krajkov (fig. 3). The museum also holds two copies of the first printed book in the New Bulgarian language: 'Kiriakodromion' of the prominent Bulgarian Revival Bishop Saint Sophronius of Vratsa (or Sofroniy Vrachanski), published in Rimnik, Romania, in 1806.

The second part of the project was finalized in 2017 with the publication of the second volume of the Catalogue. It contained identifications and descriptions of foreign language manuscripts, printed publications and doc-



Fig. 4. MS Sofia, NMH Inv. No 16507 (NMH Ethiop. 1), readings from the Bible and prayers in Ethiopic, parchment, 222 × 155/160 mm, fourteenth/fifteenth century, ff. 2v–3r.

uments, and rare and valuable editions. It also included a Supplement to the first volume, with descriptions of Slavonic manuscripts brought to the museum since the publication of the first volume, and also of Cyrillic old books and of rare prints of the Cyrillic alphabet. The descriptions were organized by the language of the written tradition and included a section on Ethiopic (with one manuscript); Greek manuscripts (four) and printed books; Arabic manuscripts (six) and printed books; and Turkish manuscripts (one manuscript) and printed books (including a book in Turkish printed with Greek letters). The oriental section is followed by printed works in Latin, Italian, French, Romanian (with two subchapters, for books using Latin script and for those using Cyrillic alphabet), German, English, Czech, Slovenian, and Hungarian. The appendix includes descriptions of four manuscripts in Slavonic and three in Bulgarian, of Paulician dialect with Latin. On the whole, there are descriptions of 19 manuscripts, 32 documents (in Ottoman Turkish), and 156 printed books.

Due to the variety of materials, its scientific presentation required the commitment of experts in different languages, as well as competencies in the areas of handwritten and printed cultural heritage. Among others, Alessandro Bausi described the only Ethiopic manuscript in the collection, a fragment of 13 parchment folios, containing readings from the Bible and prayers and dating to the fourteenth or fifteenth century (fig. 4). Kiril Pavlikianov pro-



Fig. 5. MS Sofia, NMH Inv. No 29202 (NMH Gr 2), Chronicle of John Skylitzes, parchment, 275/280 × 195/200 mm, twelfth century, ff. 134v–135r.

vided a detailed description of an exceptional handwritten monument, the twelfth-century manuscript with the Chronicle of John Skylitzes (fig. 5). The historical work from the second half of the eleventh century includes important data of Bulgarian history. Ani Stoilova described another impressive artefact in the collection, the richly decorated Arabic manuscript containing the famous *Dalā'il al-Ḥayrāt* by Muḥammad al-Ġazūlī.

The two volumes are completed by a variety of indices (an alphabetical index, a subject index, a chronological index, etc.). They are richly illustrated and provide an album of watermarks of all paper manuscripts.



# Conference reports

## **Cult of Saints in Late Antique Texts: 2018 Conferences**

**Narrating Power and Authority in Late Antique and Medieval Hagiographies from East to West, Rome, 15–17 February 2018**

**International Medieval Congress, Leeds, 2–5 July 2018**

**The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity, Warsaw, 27–28 September 2018**

**Understanding Hagiography and its Textual Tradition: the Late Antique and the Early Medieval Period, Lisbon, 24–26 October 2018**

**Novel Saints. Novel, Hagiography and Romance from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, Ghent, 22–24 November 2018**

Several encounters in 2018 dealt with hagiographical research, while the veneration of saints in Late Antiquity in the Mediterranean area received a major share of attention. Below is but a very short summary on just five such events, without any claim of completeness.

The *International Medieval Congress* in Leeds traditionally hosts several panels dedicated to the cult of saints. This year's congress had 'Memory' as its special thematic strand, which attracted a number of panels and presentations revolving around the veneration of saints. The state of the art in hagiographical research was discussed in the papers presented within the panel '25 Years of Hagiographical Research: Past Achievements and Future Perspectives' (three sessions on 3 July 2018). The panel 'Remembering the Saints' (four sessions on 4 July 2018, organized by scholars members of the 'Cult of Saints' ERC project based at Oxford, see also below) included the sessions 'The Formation and Revision of Memory', 'Forgotten and Ephemeral Saints', 'Creating and Adapting Memory in the Late Antique Mediterranean', and 'Creating and Adapting Memory in Early Medieval England and Wales', the former three almost entirely relevant in the COMSt context. The papers dealing with the Byzantine tradition included Anne P. Alwis, 'Adapting Memory in Byzantine Hagiography', Robert Wiśniewski, 'Holy Time in a Holy Place: Annual Miracles at the Feasts of Saints in Late Antiquity', Aude Busine, 'How to Tell the Story of Obscure Martyrs?: Euppsychius, Mamas, and Gordius at Caesarea in Cappadocia', Christian Sagner, 'Syrian and Byzantine Saints in a 12<sup>th</sup>-Century Syriac Manuscript', Efthymios Rizos, 'The Transformations of the Legend of Athenogenes of Pedachthoe', and Stavroula Constantinou, 'Remembering St Febronia: The Textual Cult of a Nun Martyr'.

(Note: the IMC 2018 hosted a vast array of other panels of varying length relevant for the COMSt network which are not subject of this summary. Just to give some examples, these included, among others, ‘Constructing and Reconstructing the Past’ (2 July 2018, with two papers on Islamic Arabic literature), ‘Between Memory and Imagination, I: Medieval Religious Encounters from the Silk Road to the Indian Ocean, II: Jewish Engagements from Ethiopia to the Persianate World’ (2 July 2018, with papers in Ethiopian, Jewish, Arabic, and Syriac studies), ‘Mythical Figures, Legendary Characters, and Great Men in the So-Called Occult Sciences in Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin Medieval Texts’ (3 July 2018), ‘Visual Memory in the Late Antique and Byzantine World’ (3 July 2018), ‘CEU 25, II: Jewish Studies; III: Byzantine Studies—Reactivations of Knowledge’ (3 July 2018), ‘Adaptation of Byzantine Hymnography in the Medieval World: East and West’ (4 July 2018), ‘Moving Byzantium, II: The Movement of Manuscripts’ (4 July 2018), ‘Remembering the Other in Islamic History’ (4 July 2018), ‘Communicating Medieval Heritage’ (5 July 2018, with a paper on Jewish manuscript heritage), ‘Medieval Provençal and Sephardi Texts between Secular Culture and Religion’ (5 July 2018), see the congress website <<https://www.imc.leeds.ac.uk/imcarchive/2018/>> for more information).

The international conference *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity* took place in Warsaw on 27 and 28 September 2018. It was the final event organized by the ERC project ‘Cult of Saints’, based at the University of Oxford (<<http://cultofsaints.history.ox.ac.uk/>>). The project investigates the origins and development of the cult of Christian saints in Late Antiquity. It maps the cult of saints as a system of beliefs and practices in its earliest and most fluid form, from its origins until around 700 CE (by which date most cult practices were firmly established): the evolution from honouring the memory of martyrs, to their veneration as intercessors and miracle-workers; the different ways that saints were honoured and their help solicited; the devotion for relics, sacred sites and images; the miracles expected from the saints. The conference papers covered material aspects of the cult and objects of veneration (e.g. relics, icons), the historical aspects of the development of cults of saints and martyrs, but also naturally considered texts and manuscripts connected with the saints (mainly, their hagiographies) in a variety of languages. Among others, Nikoloz Aleksidze spoke of the ‘Georgian sources for the study of the cult of saints in the Holy Land’, Eftymios Rizos of the ‘Relationship between hagiography and institutions of Cult: remarks on the legends of Athenogenes of Pedachthoe and Julian of Cilicia’, and Anna Salsano of ‘The Archangels Michael and Raphael in Coptic Acta Martyrum’. For the full programme, see <<http://cslaconference.ihuw.pl/programme/>>.

From 24 to 26 October 2018, an international conference on *Understanding Hagiography and its Textual Tradition* was convened by Paulo Farmhouse Alberto (University of Lisbon), Paolo Chiesa (Università degli studi di Milano), and Monique Goulet (CNRS/Paris-1, Panthéon-Sorbonne) at the University of Lisbon. The focus was on the remarkable process of transmission and rewriting that hagiographical texts underwent between the sixth and the eleventh century. While most papers dealt with general theoretical questions and occidental hagiographic traditions (Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, English, etc.), several papers fell specifically into the COMSt language scope. The fates of Byzantine Greek hagiographies in the Middle Ages were illustrated by Tina Chronopoulos in her talk on ‘The early Greek lives of St Katherine of Alexandria’ and by Anna Lampadaridi in her paper on ‘Lire saint Jérôme en grec: l’exemple de la Vie d’Hilarion (BHG 752)’. Two presentations addressed the fates of hagiographical texts in mediaeval Georgia: Eka Chikvaidze spoke of ‘St Barbara’s Martyrdom: the Georgian versions’ and Nikoloz Aleksidze discussed ‘The ‘discovery’ of old hagiographies and their new political lives in medieval Georgia’. Elizabeth Buchanan spoke of ‘Monastic use of early Coptic saints’ miracles as a prod to donate and a warning against theft’. Finally, Slavonic tradition was in the centre of the presentation by Marina Zgrablić on ‘Istrian hagiographical tradition in the context of political and ecclesiastical change in the Early Middle Ages’. The conference programme is available at <<http://uhttlisbon2018.letras.ulisboa.pt/>>.

Another ERC project, ‘Novel Saints. Studies in Ancient Fiction and Hagiography’, based at the University of Ghent (<<https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/>>), convened two relevant conferences in 2018. The project team studies the early Latin and Greek novel in antiquity and its reception in later periods, with a focus on late antique and early medieval hagiographical narrative traditions. The conference *Narrating Power and Authority in Late Antique and Medieval Hagiographies from East to West* was organized by Ghazzal Dabiri in Rome (Academia Belgica) from 15 to 17 February 2018. It featured an array of papers dealing with Byzantine Greek hagiographic tradition (Roald Dijkstra, ‘Laughing till Death: The Power of Laughter in Poetic Martyrdom Accounts’; Maria Conterno, ‘Whose Dream Comes True? Negotiation of Primacy in the Legend of Theodosius and Theophilus’; Fabrizio Petorella, ‘Power and Prophecy in Late Antique Hagiography: The Life of Saint Daniel the Stylite’; Petros Tsagkaropoulos, ‘Between Emperor and Caliph: Literary Arbitrariness in the Representation of Power Relations in the Life of St John of Damascus’; Stavroula Constantinou, ‘The Hagiographer’s Power and Authority in Byzantine Greek Miracle Collections’; Yulia Mantova, ‘A State Official as a Hagiographer: Exploring the Case of the *Life of*

*St. Theoktista of Lesbos* (BHG 1723)'; Nike Koutrakou, 'The Supernatural and the Limits of Power: Imperial Middlemen between Saints and Emperors in Byzantine Hagiography'; Maïeul Rouquette, 'Two Churches, Two saints, One Island: The Narrative Construction of the Conflict between Tamasus and Salamis (Cyprus) through Heracleides and Barnabas'. Yet, a vast range of other related traditions was also covered, including Armenian (Zara Pogossian, 'True Cross Relics in Armenia: Between 'Popular Tales' and Princely Patronage), Georgian (Damien Labadie, 'The Caliph, the Jew and the Bishop: Power and Religious Controversy in the Georgian Life of John of Edessa'; Nikoloz Aleksidze, 'Relics as Treasure and Kings as Their Discoverers: Legitimizing Royal Rule in Late Antique Caucasia'), Coptic (Anna Rogozhina, 'O You Evil, Blood-Shedding Lion, You Dragon That Dwells in the Abyss: Representations of Roman Imperial Authorities in Coptic Hagiography'), Arabic (Paul Losensky, 'Marvels of Authority: *Karāmāt* and Crises of Power in *Ṣafwat al-ṣafā'*); Aaron W. Hughes, 'Establishing Prophetic Authority in Early Islam: Ibn Ishāq's *Sirat Rasul Allah*'; Manpreet Kaur, 'Learning to be Sufi, Writing to Make History: Malfūzāt in the Chishti Context'), Persian (Islamic, Christian, Zoroastrian: Dominic Parviz Brookshaw, 'Symbiotic Sainthood: The Intertwining of Regal and Spiritual Power in 14<sup>th</sup>-century Fars'; Mohsen Ghasemi, 'Rūmī and Political Authorities: The Politics of Rūmī's Poetry'; Annunziata di Rienzo, 'A Noble Christian Killer: Portraits of Apostate Executioners in the Persian Martyr Acts'; Maryam Musharraf, 'The Paradox of Junayd of Baghdad: Sobriety in a Drunken Cosmos'; Carlo Cereti, 'Zoroaster's Life According to the Seventh Book of the Denkard and the Zaratushtname'; Ghazzal Dabiri, 'Who's the Moral Authority Around Here? Zoroastrians in Medieval Sufi Hagiographies'), Ottoman Turkish (Eliza Tasbihi, 'Revisiting the Significance of Rūmī's Shrine: Redefining the Concept of Sacred Space in Mevlānā Mausoleum'; Sibel Kocaer, 'Encounters of a Muslim Saint with Christian Monks and Rulers: The Adventures of Sarı Saltık in Ottoman Times'), Ethiopic (Olivia Adankpo-Labadie, 'The Saint, the Bad, and the Ugly: Constructing Figures of Power and Authority through Hagiographical Narrative and Socio-political Dissent in 14<sup>th</sup> c. Ethiopia'), Slavonic (Enrique S. Marinas, 'Sins of Youth of Saint Rulers in the Byzantine and Russian Hagiographical Literatures'), and Syriac (Maria E. Doerfler, 'Solomon in Edessa: The Saint and the Law in the Syriac *Life of Rabbula*'). The conference programme is available at <[https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Narrating-Power-and-Authority\\_Prelim-Program-1.pdf](https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Narrating-Power-and-Authority_Prelim-Program-1.pdf)>.

Finally, held within the framework of the same ERC project, the conference *Novel Saints. Novel, Hagiography and Romance from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century* took place in Ghent from 22 to 24 November 2018. It was organized

by Koen De Temmerman and Flavia Ruani. Once again, Byzantine studies were the highest profiled. Edmund Cueva spoke on ‘Symeon Metaphrastes, Life, Conduct, and Passion of the Holy Martyr of Christ Saint Eugenia and Her Parent, 50)’. Charis Messis’ talk was entitled ‘When Holiness Becomes Literature: the Lives of Women in Byzantium from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century’. R. Gillian Glass spoke of the ‘Novel Martyrdom: The Passion of Theagenes and Charikleia?’. Fotis Vasileiou presented on ‘From Leucippe to St. Thomas. Literary Motifs, Narrative Techniques, and Female Virtue in Late Antiquity’. An extra panel was dedicated to the Alexander Romance, featuring papers by S. Peter Cowe, ‘From Roman Alexandria to Ilkhanid Iran: The Orientalizing and Christianizing of the Armenian Alexander Romance’, Fedor Veselov, ‘Origins of the ‘Encircled Nations’ Episode Illustrations in Illuminated Manuscripts of the Alexander Romance’, and Alex MacFarlane, ‘The Monks and the Monarch: Christian Stories about the Edges of the World in Armenian’. Armenian tradition was also in the focus of the talk by Chahan Vidal-Gorène and Agnès Ouzounian on ‘L’Histoire de Zosime, une hagiographie? Nouvelles perspectives à l’aune de la tradition arménienne’. Novel-like features of Ethiopic hagiographies were discussed by Olivia Adankpo-Labadie in her paper ‘Le gadl, un roman éthiopien? Quelques réflexions sur l’écriture romanesque dans la littérature hagiographique éthiopienne médiévale’. Syriac studies were addressed by Alexey Muraviev in his paper on ‘Narrative Structures in the Syriac Julian Romance and their Literary Antecedents’ and by Flavia Ruani, who spoke of ‘Thecla Beyond Thecla. Secondary Characters in Syriac Hagiography’. Judaeo-Christian relationships as reflected in Late Antique literature were approached in the papers by Amber May Bremner ‘The Relationship between the Jewish novel *The Testament of Job* and the 5<sup>th</sup>-century *Life of Simeon Stylites* by Antonius: an Example of the Literary Role of Hagiography’ and Benjamin De Vos ‘The Homilistic Disputes Between Clement and Appion – a Clash Between Judeo-Christianity and Paganism for the ‘True’ *Paideia*’. Several contributions dealt with the apocryphal texts, including María Paz López Martínez, ‘The Papyri of *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres* in the Context of the Greek Lost Novels’ and Jan Bremmer, ‘The Earlier Apocryphal Acts and the Novel, with Special Attention to the Acts of Paul and Thecla, Both in Greek and Latin’. For the full programme, visit <<https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Novel-Saints-Conference-Definitive-Program.pdf>>.

It remains to be hoped that at least a part of the papers presented at the conferences described shall be soon published and become accessible to interested scholars.

*Red.*

## **Documents and Manuscripts in the Arab-Islamic World: The VII International Society for Arabic Papyrology Conference**

**Berlin, 20–23 March 2018**

Last years have seen a significant development in Arabic papyrology. New editions appear; documents are increasingly used in literary and historical research; and the cooperation with neighbouring disciplines including Demotic, Greek, and Coptic papyrology, as well as with Genizah Studies has steadily improved.

From 20 to 23 March 2018, the Seventh International Society for Arabic Papyrology Conference (ISAP VII) was convened by Lajos Berkes (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Beatrice Gruendler, Konrad Hirschler (both Freie Universität Berlin), Andreas Kaplony (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München/ISAP), Verena Lepper (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Michael Marx (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences), Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis, and Tonio Sebastian Richter (both Freie Universität Berlin). The venues included Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, but also Bodemuseum, Berlin Papyrus Collection, and the Manuscript Collection of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, for hands-on workshops on Arabic documents.

The keynote lecture by Fred Donner (University of Chicago) focused on ‘The Earliest Extant Arabic Letter? Several Puzzles in Search of a Solution’. The panels grouped papers on Omayyad Imperial Documents (two sessions), Literary Documents, Economic Documents, on Scribal Culture, and on Science Manuscripts.

Several papers dealing with the Omayyad Imperial Documents focused on the linguistic problems illustrated by the papyrus evidence. Thus, Tomasz Barański (University of Warsaw) spoke of ‘The Arabization of Lower-Rank Officials in Early Islamic Egypt: A Reconsideration of Two Bilingual Tax Receipts from the Heracleopolites/Ihnās’ and Lajos Berkes (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) of ‘Greek as an Administrative Language in the 8th-century Caliphate’. Multilingualism was also the topic of the paper by Said Reza Huseini (Leiden University) ‘Thinking in Arabic, Writing in Sogdian: Diplomatic Relations Between the Arabs and the Local Rulers in Transoxiana in the Early Eighth Century’. Particular terms and expressions were studied by Esther Garel (IFAO Cairo), ‘People of Edfu: Some Considerations on Onomastics and Prosopography in the Papyri from the Early Arab Period’, and Petra Sijpesteijn (Leiden University), ‘“After God, I turn to you.” Religious Expressions in Arabic Papyrus Letters’. Others aimed at historical interpretation of the data, such as Jelle Bruening (Leiden University), who talked of

‘Organizing the War Fleet in Early-Islamic Egypt’, or Nils Purwins (Freie Universität Berlin), whose paper was entitled ‘The Noble Ones of Ērānšahr: About wuzurgān, āzādāz, dahīgān, šahrīgān’. Coptic documents were in the focus of the paper by Vincent Walter (Leipzig University), ‘For you know about my life and the prison I am in’: The Late Coptic Paitos Dossier’.

Economic Documents session hosted papers by Cecilia Palombo (Princeton University) on ‘Power, Exaction, and Paternalism in the Enforcement of Taxation: The Egyptian Monastic Context, 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries’, by Janneke de Jong (Leiden University) on ‘Who Did What in Eighth-Century Aphrodito? Some Observations on Tax Documents and Prosopography’, by Saied el-Maghawry Mohamed (Sadat City University) on ‘Wheat Through Arabic Papyri in the World Wide Collections: Rare Unpublished Texts’, by Matt Malczycki (Auburn University) on ‘Livestock Sales and Social History’, by Mohamed N. Abdelrahman Gad (King Faisal University) on ‘An Unpublished Arabic Document from Mamluk Jerusalem: Ḥaram Šarīf no. 646’, and by Rocio Daga Portillo (LMU Munich) on ‘Writing in Arabic after the Christian Conquest: Toledo Documents Comparing Islamic and Christian Arabic Documents’.

The panel on Literary Documents hosted papers by Mathieu Tillier (Université Paris IV-Sorbonne) and Naïm Vanthieghem (CNRS Paris) on ‘A Quranic Manuscript on Papyrus From the End of the 7<sup>th</sup> and the Beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century in the Hamburg Staatsbibliothek’, by Ursula Bsees (University of Vienna/University of Cambridge) on ‘Some from the Zabur, Some from the Prophet: Religious Advice Collected as Seen in P.Vind.inv. A.P. 1854a+b’, by Hazem Hussein Abbas Ali (Beni-Suef University) on ‘Reconstructing Dhūr-Rumma’s Poem Through an Unpublished Document from the P.Cair.Arab. Collection’, by Edmund Hayes (Leiden University) on ‘The Epistolary Imam: Comparing the Correspondence of the Shii Imam with Documentary Letters’, by Samer Ben Brahim, Mahmoud Kozae, and Rima Redwan (Freie Universität Berlin) on ‘Digital Approaches to a Mutable Textual Tradition: *Kalīla wa-Dimna* in Manuscripts from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries’. The final paper in the panel, by Yousry Elseadawy (Freie Universität Berlin), on ‘Scribes and Manuscripts: The Scribes of Arabic Manuscripts: A Historical and Codicological Approach’, anticipated the topics of the Scribal Culture session convened on the following day.

Other papers grouped in the Scribal Culture panel included the talk by Abdullah al-Hatlani (Leiden University) on ‘What’s in a Name? Names, Kunyas, and Nisbas in Islamic-Era Inscriptions from Arabia’, Eline Scheerlinck (Leiden University), ‘We will not require anything of you, except for... Permits, Protection and Problem Solving in Early Islamic Egypt’, Eugenio Ga-

rosi (LMU Munich/University of Basel), ‘An Early Islamic Validity Cause: P.Ness. 56 Revisited’, Maher A. Eissa (Fayoum University), ‘More Late Coptic Texts from the National Archive of Egypt’, Daisy Livingston (SOAS London), ‘Late-Mamlūk Archival Practices on Ice: The View from Sultan al-Ghawrī’s Waqf Archive’, Tarek M. Muhammad and Noha A. Salem (Ain Shams University, Cairo), ‘*Tārīkh Mulūk al-Qusṭanīniyya* (The History of the Kings of Constantinople): An Attempt to Know its Author and Sources’.

Science was the content of the documents discussed by Gideon Bohak (Tel Aviv University), ‘Arabic Manuals of Twitch Divination from the Cairo Genizah and from Qusayr’ and Johannes Thomann (University of Zurich), ‘Scientific Texts-Books and their Application in Practice: Interdependencies of Literary and Documentary Evidence of Scientific Activities’.

A number of projects, individual and group, were presented during a poster session entitled ‘Hands-On Discussion of Documents, Archives and Collections’. It included poster presentations by Ahmed Nabil Maghraby (Sadat City University) ‘Fragment of a Lost Hadith Collection of al-Mu’tamar ibn Sulaymān al-Taymī Preserved on Paper’, Alon Dar (Leiden University), ‘Power or Persuasion: Qurra b. Sharīk’s Letters’, Ahmed Kamal Mamdouh (Cairo University), ‘Two Unpublished Personal Letters from al-Ashmūnain’, Tamer Mokhtar Mohamed (Helwan University), ‘Four Arabic Inscriptions on Wooden Panels’, and Lahcen Daaïf (Université Lumière Lyon 2), ‘The Archive of a Christian Wealthy Family from Ṭuṭūn’. In this context, the current work on the Arabic Papyrology Database was presented by the group of scholars including Andreas Kaplony, Daniel Potthast, Johannes Thomann, Sebastian Metz, Angélique Kleiner, Rocio Daga Portillo, Leonora Sonego, and Michail Hradek (LMU Munich).

The conference programme is available at <[http://www.naher-osten.lmu.de/isap\\_vii](http://www.naher-osten.lmu.de/isap_vii)>.

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## **Armenia & Byzantium Without Borders: Mobility, Interactions, Responses**

**Vienna, 20–22 April 2018**

The international conference in form of a workshop ‘Armenia & Byzantium Without Borders’ took place in Vienna on 20 to 22 April 2018. The event was organized by Emilio Bonfiglio (Universität Wien) and Claudia Rapp (Universität Wien and Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) within the framework of the Wittgenstein Prize Project ‘Moving Byzantium: Mobility, Microstructure and Personal Agency’—a five-year project begun in 2016 at

the University of Vienna under the leadership of Claudia Rapp, award recipient for the year 2015—which generously funded the conference.

The seminal idea of the conference was sown at a workshop organized by AnnaLinden Weller at the University of Uppsala in March 2017, where a small group of young Armenologists was gathered to present and discuss their work in progress informally and over the common theme of ‘Narrative Exchanges between Byzantium and Armenia’. The goal of ‘Armenia & Byzantium Without Borders’ was to continue this scholarly conversation, but also to broaden the scope of the workshop and further develop its concept.

The main objectives of the organizers were two: first, to provide a scholarly platform where specialists of Armenian and Byzantine Studies could meet, exchange, and discuss their research in a spirit of multidisciplinary and comparative approaches to the connections between Armenians and Byzantium in the long Middle Ages; second, to gather scholars at different stages of their academic career and provide a forum where advanced PhD students and early career scholars working in the field of Late Antique, Armenian, Byzantine, and Middle Eastern Studies could present their work-in-progress in front of senior specialists of the same disciplines who acted as moderators and respondents.

The venues of the conference included the Universität Wien, where the keynote lecture, papers, and responses were delivered, but also the Monastery of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Vienna, where a visit to its library and manuscript collection took place on Friday 20, and the Schallaburg Castle, where on Sunday 22 guided tours of the exhibition ‘Byzanz & der Westen. 1000 vergessene Jahre’ were organized for all conference participants and other guests.

After the welcome and introductory words by Emilio Bonfiglio and Claudia Rapp, Werner Seibt (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) introduced the keynote speaker of the conference, Bernard Coulie (Université catholique de Louvain). Coulie’s lecture focussed on ‘Armenian Translations from Greek Texts or the Inscription of the Armenian Particularism in the Byzantine Commonwealth’ and was addressed to a large audience of scholars, members of the Armenian clergy such as Father Paulus Kodjanian (Abbot of the Mekhitarist Congregation) and representatives of the Republic of Armenia in Austria such as Arman Kirakossian (Armenian Ambassador to Austria).

The speakers, moderators, and respondents were selected to cover the broadest possible variety of disciplines, as well as to showcase trends in scholarship which are currently being examined around the world. The 24 participants came to Vienna from as far as Los Angeles in the US and Tsukuba in Japan, and included Austria, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, and the

United Kingdom. The subjects dealt with ranged from manuscript studies and codicology to history of art, from liturgical studies to linguistics, and were based on both literary and material sources. There was one theme, however, on which all speakers were asked to focus: the social and cultural mobility of the persons, objects, and ideas that circulated between Armenia and Byzantium throughout the Middle Ages—the topic of ‘mobility’ being in fact one of the three core aspects of the Project ‘Moving Byzantium’.

The papers were delivered in four sessions. Father Vahan (Sarkis Hovagimian, Mekhitarist Congregation) chaired the first session, which dealt with ‘Manuscripts & Colophons’. The two speakers were Emmanuel van Elverdinghe (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich), who spoke on ‘*The hand that wrote...: The Journey of a Colophon Formula from Greek to Armenian*’, and David Zakarian (University of Oxford), who presented a paper on ‘King Vasil’s Holy Sign of War’. The respondent to this session was Johannes Preiser-Kapeller (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften).

The second session, ‘Art History’, was chaired by Basema Hamarneh (Universität Wien) and included a paper by Ayşe Ercan (Columbia University, New York City) on ‘A Prelude to the Future: St George of Mangana and its Architectural Legacy’, which benefited from the response of Lioba Theis (Universität Wien).

Session three focussed on ‘Religious Encounters & Conflicts’. It was chaired by Claudia Rapp, while Armenuhi Drost-Abgarjan (Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg) acted as respondent. The three speakers were Kosuke Nakada (University of St Andrews), who spoke on ‘The Power of Relics: A Case Study on the Religious Contacts between Byzantium and Armenian in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century’, Jesse Siragan Arlen (UCLA, Los Angeles) on ‘Gregory of Narek, Symeon the New Theologian, and the Inward Turn in Ascetic Experience’, and Karen Hamada (University of Tsukuba), on ‘Old Issues in the New regime: Revival of the Religious Controversies between Byzantines and Armenians after the Fall of the Bagratid Kingdom’.

The fourth and last session dealt with ‘Scientific, Liturgical, and Personal Mobility’. Chaired by Ekaterini Mitsiou (Universität Wien) and with Theo Maarten van Lint (University of Oxford) as respondent, it saw the papers of Heinrich Evanzin (University of Salzburg) on ‘The Enigma of the *Macedonian-Herb* – *maładanos/Maıntanós*’, Mark Roosien (University of Notre Dame) on ‘Feasting the Lord’s Transfiguration in Armenia, Syriac, and Byzantine Traditions: the Travels of a Liturgical Feast from the Holy land’, and Sundar Henny (Bern Universität) on ‘Armenian, Greek, and Latin Pilgrims at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (1400-1600)’.

A selection of the papers presented by the speakers, including the opening lecture of the keynote speaker and fresh contributions by some of the

respondents and moderators, is currently being prepared for publication in a peer-reviewed volume entitled *Armenia & Byzantium Without Borders*. This book will appear in the recently established series *Moving Byzantium*, published by Vienna University Press through Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht (Göttingen).

The ‘Armenia & Byzantium Without Borders’ conference as established in Vienna will continue in partnership with the University of Oxford in alternate years, under the joint organization of Theo Maarten van Lint and David Zakarian from Oxford, and Emilio Bonfiglio and Claudia Rapp from Vienna. The next conference will take place in Oxford on 22–23 March 2019.

The conference programme is available at <[https://rapp.univie.ac.at/file-admin/user\\_upload/p\\_rapp/Events\\_2018/Armenia\\_\\_\\_Byzantium\\_Program.pdf](https://rapp.univie.ac.at/file-admin/user_upload/p_rapp/Events_2018/Armenia___Byzantium_Program.pdf)>.

*Emilio Bonfiglio*  
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## Visualizing Sufism

**Bonn, 14 May 2018**

From the Late Medieval Period onward many Sufi treatises began to display an increasing amount of visual elements, mainly in the form of diagrams, which can either have an auxiliary function, i.e. to help explain the contents of specific written passages, or be themselves at the very core of the text.

A workshop was convened at Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn on 14 May 2018 by Giovanni Maria Martini in order to understand the significance and diffusion of such visual devices in Sufi literature—involving both traditional ‘manuscriptological’ disciplines such as codicology, history of the book, and philology on the one hand, and intellectual history and the history of ideas on the other hand.

The workshop aimed at investigating to which extent the diffusion of visual elements was one of the chief novelties and specific features of Sufi literature to develop in the Late Medieval and Early Modern period. Papers dealt with Arab, Persian, and Turkish Sufi authors, covering a time spanning from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century.

The workshop was opened by the papers by Noah Gardiner (University of South Carolina) on ‘Diagrams as Keys to the Kingdom in Aḥmad al-Būnī’s (d. 622/1225) *Laṭā’if al-ishārāt fi al-ḥurūf al-’ulwiyāt*’ and Elizabeth Alexandrin (University of Manitoba) on ‘Secret Alphabets and Sealed Texts in Three Unedited Works of Sa’d al-Dīn Ḥamūyeh (d. 649/1252)’.

Two talks examined symbols used in his treatise by Ibn al-‘Arabī: Sophie Tyler (EPHE) on ‘Visualizing the Order of the Universe: the Cosmolog-

ical Diagrams in Chapter 371 of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s (d. 638/1240) *Meccan Openings*’ and Ali Karjoo-Ravary (University of Pennsylvania) on ‘Illustrating the Forms: Ibn al-‘Arabī’s (d. 638/1240) Images in *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*’.

Orkhan Mir-Kasimov (The Institute of Ismaili Studies) spoke of the ‘Use of Digrams in the Ḥurūfi and Nuḡṭavi Manuscripts, and Possible Links between the Ḥurūfi ‘Verbal’ and the Bektashi Visual Iconographies’. Eliza Tasbihi (McGill University) focused on the ‘Esoteric Deliberations on Visionary Unveiling: Mystical Knowledge from Ḥaydar Āmulī’s (d. after 787/1385) *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*’.

Giovanni Maria Martini (University of Bonn) presented on ‘Shīrīn Maghribī’s (d. 810/1407) Visual Sufism: Diagrams, Intellectual Networks and the Transmission of the Spiritual Knowledge in 14<sup>th</sup>-Century Tabriz and Beyond’. Eryn Kropf (University of Michigan) talked on ‘Sensible Metaphors’: Pictograms in the Transmission of ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha’rānī’s (d. 973/1565) *al-Mīzān al-kubrā*’. Side Emre (Texas A&M University) presented a ‘Comparative Study in 16<sup>th</sup>-Century Sufi Images and Diagrams: Bāyezīd Ḥalīfe’s (d. after 921/1516) Sīrri-i-canān and Muḥyīyi Gülşenī’s (d. c. 1014/1606) *Devā’iru’l-ma’arīf*’.

The discussion addressed a number of questions concerning the emergence, use, and evolution of diagrams in Sufi literature.

A collective volume is expected as an outcome of the workshop.

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## **Manuscript Cataloguing in a Comparative Perspective: State of the Art, Common Challenges, Future Directions**

**Hamburg, 7–10 May 2018**

In the recent years, several paradigmatic changes in manuscript studies have strongly influenced the cataloguing method. First and foremost, it is the onset and expansion of electronic cataloguing, which brings its advantages but also its constraints. Second, there is the increasing attention to the material aspects of the manuscript. And finally, connected to that, the new understanding of the historical complexity of the structure of the manuscript, its multi-layered nature, that has far too often been neglected in catalogues.

From 7 to 10 May 2018, a conference took place at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at Universität Hamburg, to address the old and new trends and challenges in scientific manuscript description. The organizers—Patrick Andrist (Munich), Alessandro Bausi (Hamburg), Michael Friedrich (Hamburg), and Marilena Maniaci (Cassino)—wanted on the one hand to compare the approaches and strategies currently applied to manuscript cat-

aloguing in various traditions and on the other to try and discuss the best practice that might be adopted across the many cultures.

After a conceptual introduction by Patrick Andrist and Marilena Maniaci, the first session united three papers offering a historical overview of cataloguing practices in Hebrew (Javier del Barco), Ethiopic (Alessandro Bausi and Denis Nosnitsin), and Arabic (Tilman Seidensticker, with some glimpses also into the other traditions covered by the *Katalogisierung der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* project). In all these cases the shift of attention to the physical aspects of the book has been made evident, whether in print or in online catalogues.

The challenges of proper accounting for the physical aspects of the manuscript book were in the focus of the following two sessions, with the first centring on the codex and the second on non-codex manuscripts. Patrick Andrist and Marilena Maniaci spoke of the wide range of physical features that should deserve the cataloguers' attention and the possibilities of their codification. Timothy Stinson and Yasmin Faghihi addressed the ways the physical (and other) features have been and can be encoded in electronic catalogues. In particular, Faghihi illustrated the TEI XML guidelines for the codicological description. A series of case studies in cataloguing completed the sessions, with the one on Coptic Sahidic biblical manuscripts (Ulrich Schmid), and on Hebrew Torah scrolls (Élodie Attia-Kay) falling into the COMSt scope. In his insightful presentation, Christoph Flüeler illustrated the challenges of (electronically) describing physical features of manuscript fragments faced within the framework of the *Fragmentarium* project.

A session was also dedicated to the particular aspects of describing the contents of manuscripts, including main or added texts (e.g. in the talks by Christian Brockmann, with examples from the Greek tradition, or by Ronny Vollandt, describing the composition of biblical manuscripts in Arabic) or paratextual information (e.g. Steve Delamarter, with examples from Ethiopic psalter manuscripts, and Julia Craig Mc-Feely, talking of music notation).

The final two sessions primarily dealt with the challenges of electronic cataloguing. In the session *New and Open Issues*, the ways thinking digitally may modify our approach to manuscript description were highlighted by Marina Bernasconi on the example of the experience made by the *e-codices* project. Matthieu Cassin proposed a universal and unequivocal way of referring to manuscripts: an ISMI, International Standard Manuscript Identifier, could resolve the situation when the same manuscript is known under various shelfmarks and catalogue numbers. Columba Stewart illustrated the choices made in describing and visualizing manuscripts in the new *vHMML* reading room. Among the software solutions offered in the *Missing Tools* session, there was

the VisColl (<<https://github.com/leoba/VisColl>>), designed for building models of the physical collation of manuscripts, and then visualizing them in various ways (the project is led by Dot Porter at the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies and was presented at the workshop by Alberto Campagnolo). Saskia Dirkse and Pietro Liuzzo both addressed the issue of digitally representing the complex syntax of manuscripts. Dirkse introduced the work on the tool StruViMan (Structural Visualization of Manuscripts, <<https://www.struviman.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/>>), and Liuzzo showed how TEI schema and RDF ontologies (<<https://github.com/BetaMasaheft/SyntaxeDuCodex>>) can be used to encode and visualize the various ‘layers’ in a manuscript as described in the *Syntaxe du Codex* by P. Andrist, P. Canart, and M. Maniaci (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

The discussions after each session as well as the final discussion showed that while full standardization can probably never be achieved, more exchange and discussion of the best practice can eventually lead to more shared approaches in manuscript cataloguing in the future. A publication of conference papers is planned.

For the general description and a full programme visit <[https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register\\_cataloguing2018.html](https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register_cataloguing2018.html)>.

*Eugenia Sokolinski*  
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## **80 years since Nordenfalk:**

### **The Canon Tables in a comparative perspective**

**Hamburg, 16–18 May 2018**

The cross-referencing system of ten tables devised by Eusebius of Caesarea to emphasize the harmony of the Four Gospels was one of the most widely copied works during late antiquity and the middle ages. The Canon Tables, often prefaced by an explanatory epistle by Eusebius to Carpianus, circulated in manuscripts of the Four Gospels throughout the broader Mediterranean world and have been transmitted in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Gəʿəz, and other languages. Since it features a unique combination of texts, numbers, and images, the Eusebian apparatus has attracted the interest of scholars working on the text of the Gospels, on exegesis, and on art history. Although this evidence requires a multidisciplinary approach, the lack of team-based approaches, combined with the vastness and complexity of the material, has meant that most research on the Eusebian apparatus has generally focused on a single tradition or on one of the strands of evidence. It is no wonder, then, that the organization of a conference to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication

of Carl Nordenfalk's pioneering *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*—a pioneering study that does attempt to make sense of the evidence as a whole—was met with enthusiasm by all of the participants.

The conference was organized by Bruno Reudenbach, Alessandro Bausi, and Hanna Wimmer, and it took place at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), in Hamburg. The conference started on the afternoon of May 16. After the welcoming remarks by the organizers, the conference opened with a paper by Martin Wallraff (Munich), who presented his ongoing work towards a critical edition of the Greek Canon Tables and highlighted some of the methodological challenges that such an enterprise presents. This engaging talk was followed by Jeremiah Coogan (Notre Dame), who presented evidence to demonstrate that the text of the Eusebian apparatus was not just subject to 'transmission' and 'corruption,' but also to 'correction'. Coogan argued that latter process can introduce new insights into the historical interpretations of the Eusebian apparatus.

The morning session on the following day was kicked off by a paper by Judith McKenzie read by Foteini Spingou (Oxford). The presentation focused on the dating and significance of the two early Ethiopic Abba Garima Gospels and on their relation to other traditions. The paper took into consideration the decorative features of the Eusebian apparatus in these two manuscripts to draw conclusions about the development of manuscript illumination in the Aksumite Empire. Next was Jaś Elsner (Oxford), who raised questions about the early dating of the illuminations in the two earliest Abba Garima Gospels and offered considerations about the Evangelist portraits found in one of the manuscripts. This was followed by a paper by Jacopo Gnisci (Hamburg) focusing on the evolution of the iconography of the Tempietto in Ethiopic Gospels from Late Antiquity to the late fourteenth century. The morning session ended with a paper by Varduhi Kyureghyan (Frankfurt am Main) who focused on the Armenian commentaries in the Canon Tables which, in her view, became a conspicuous stimulus in the development of exegetical literature.

The first presentation in the afternoon was given by Matthew R. Crawford (Melbourne), who argued that the Eusebian apparatus should be viewed as an opening rather than a closure of the reader's engagement with the text of the Four Gospels. Crawford argued that the Canon Tables opened the text of the Gospels to new modes of analysis by focusing on the Codex Fuldensis, which features the Eusebian numbers to allow readers to engage in a source-critical analysis of Tatian's Diatessaron.

Next came an erudite presentation by Elisabeth Mullins (Dublin). The first part of the talk focused on the addition of a range of prefaces, Canon Tables, and Eusebian sections to the Book of Mulling, originally devoid of pa-

ratextual matter, approximately a century after its estimated production. The second part of her lecture examined the reception of the Eusebian Apparatus through the lens of a series of Hiberno-Latin commentary texts and, in particular, on the commentary on Luke in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek lat. 997. The session ended with a talk by Beatrice Kitzinger (Princeton), who looked at the decorations of the Jumièges Gospels and their relation to the rest of the book's text and illumination program, as well as its history.

On Friday 18, Linley Anne Herbert (Baltimore) delivered an engaging presentation on the Sainte-Croix Gospels of Poitiers and on its complex program of visual and textual dualities. In particular, by looking at the prefatory texts and miniature, she argued that the two sets of Canon Tables present in the manuscript were carefully planned and intentionally included together. Stefan Trinks's (Berlin) paper entitled *Multi-FACeTted Canon Tables* highlighted the presence of human faces in the architecture of some Carolingian Gospel books and offered some remarks as to the possible literary sources of this motif. The session ended with a paper by Susanne Wittekind (Cologne), entitled 'Transfer of Semantics – Canon Tables as a Visual Model'.

The talks were followed by lively discussions which continued during the breaks. Most of the participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to exchange views offered by the conference and their hope that it would be the first of a long series. Those who were unable to attend will be interested that proceedings of the conference will be published in a volume edited by its organizers.

The full programme is available at <<https://arthist.net/archive/18043>>.

*Jacopo Gnisci*  
*Universität Hamburg*

## **Natural Sciences and Technology in Manuscript Analysis**

**Hamburg, 13–14 June 2018**

The third international conference on Natural Sciences and Technology in Manuscript Analysis organized by and held at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) in Hamburg continued the tradition of bringing together scholars and scientists for discussing various aspects of a multi-faceted interdisciplinary approach adopted in the advanced research of manuscripts. This time the pre-conference workshop 'OpenX for Interdisciplinary Computational Manuscript Research', held on June 12 and 13, hosted the fast-growing field of computational techniques in the image and text analysis whereas material analysis and recovery of the lost writing constituted the three sessions of the one-and-a-half-day conference.

The first session, on 13 June, chaired by Oliver Hahn was dedicated to material analysis of manuscripts. In her key-note lecture 'Radiocarbon and Dating of a Manuscript: Material, Archaeological Context and Date Relation', Elisabetta Boaretto, the director of the archaeological Kimmel Centre in the Weizmann Institute in Israel, described in detail sampling, cleaning of the samples, measurements, data processing and the pitfalls associated with every step in the process of radiocarbon dating of writing surfaces. In addition, she shared with the audience her considerations on the latest developments in the time axis calibration. Two other papers of this session elucidated the contribution of the ink analysis for the manuscript studies conducted jointly by philologists, codicologists and scientists (Tea Ghigo; Zina Cohen). The session ended with a round table discussion dedicated to various strategies to facilitate interdisciplinary research, moderated by Oliver Hahn and Ira Rabin. The great success of the manuSciences '15 and '17, the German-French summer school for exhaustive manuscript studies held in September 2015 in Chiemsee, Germany and September 2017 in Fréjus, France, respectively stressed the role of the summer schools for dissemination of the new technologies. The next summer school in this series is planned for March 2019.

The second session, chaired by Daniel Stoekl in the morning of 14 June, focused on techniques for recovery of lost or damaged writing. The key-note lecture 'Hyperspectral Imaging of Historical Artifacts: A Novel Imaging Approach for the Study of Materials and Methods' delivered by David Messinger from the Rochester Institute of Technology, USA, focused on the differences between Hyperspectral and Multispectral imaging and the respective data processing. The remaining presentations of the session included optimization of the imaging protocols (Damianos Kasotakis), imaging systems (Roger L. Easton, Jr.), data processing (Keith T. Knox; Leif Glaser) and a detailed report of the service project Z1, i.e. spectral imaging at the CSMC.

The third and last session, chaired by Ira Rabin in the afternoon of 14 June, included a key-note lecture 'Material-Technical Details on Papyrus as Writing Support' delivered by Myriam Krutzsch from the Egyptian Museum and Papyrus collection in Berlin, who presented the protocol for the characterization of papyrus. This protocol, already containing an exhaustive details of papyrus physical properties, was broadened in the last years to include its chemical composition obtained through instrumental analysis. The rest of the session was divided between the report of the service project Z2 aimed at material analysis at the CSMC (Olivier Bonnerot), X-ray tomography for reading unopened bamboo scroll (Daniel Stromer), and case studies (Élodie Attia; Samanehalsadat Ehteram).

For the full programme of the conference, visit <[https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/natural\\_sciences\\_2018.html](https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/natural_sciences_2018.html)>.

*Ira Rabin*

*BAM Berlin and Universität Hamburg*

## **Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria: Towards a history of the Qubbat al-khazna depository in Damascus**

**Berlin, 28–29 June 2018**

On 28 and 29 June 2018, a two-day conference on Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria was convened jointly by Arianna D’Ottone Rambach (Sapienza Università di Roma), Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin), and Ronny Vollandt (LMU München). Funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, it was hosted by the Freie Universität Berlin and the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

The Qubbat al-khazna of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus was ‘academically discovered’ as early as in 1900. Similarly to the famous Cairo Gheniza, it is a rich depository for worn-out books and disused documents, yet far less known or studied. It preserves great numbers of parchment and paper documents. The majority are in Arabic and pertain to the Islamic sphere (Qur’ān, theological works, legal documents, etc.), yet there are also writings of Jews, Samaritans, and Christians, not only in Arabic but also in Syriac, Christian-Palestinian Aramaic, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Greek, Latin, and even Old French. Scholars from across the world came together in order to evaluate this multilingual heritage and launch the Qubba studies similar to the established Genizah studies.

The morning sessions on both days were dedicated to the Qubba’s history and its academic discovery. On the first day, Said Aljoumani (Scholars at Risk/Freie Universität Berlin) on ‘The pre-Ottoman history of the Qubbat al-Khazna’ (delivered in Arabic) and by Boris Liebrecht (Freie Universität Berlin/The Graduate Center, City University of New York) on ‘Fire, Consuls, Scholars: Conflicting Views on the Discovery of the Qubbat al-Khazna Documents’ both focused on the Qubba before its ‘academic discovery’ in 1900. On the second day, Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) focused on the discovery itself in their talk ‘Bruno Violet and the exploration of the Qubbat al-khazna around 1900’. Studies by Hermann von Soden, a scholar of the history of Christian Bible who used Damascus materials, were in the focus of the talk by Christoph Marksches (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) ‘Her-

mann von Soden: Some remarks on a Berlin Professor undeservedly fallen into oblivion’.

The second panel of the first day was entitled ‘Looking beyond the Qubba and Syria’ and compared the Qubba with other famous manuscript repositories in the East, namely St Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai. The papers presented included Miriam Lindgren-Hjälms (Stockholm School of Theology, Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy), ‘What has Damascus to do with Sinai? Paleographical similarities in Christian-Arabic texts preserved in the Qubba and in Saint Catherine’s Monastery’ and Ronny Vollandt’s ‘The Qubbat al-Khazna and the Cairo Genizah: a typological comparison’.

The evening session of the first day was dedicated to ‘Studying Scripts’. Ahmad al-Jallad (Universiteit Leiden) spoke of ‘An embryonic Graeco-Arabic script? The transcription system of the Psalm Fragment in light of Greek transcriptions of Arabic from the early Islamic and pre-Islamic periods’ and illustrated that the writing system of this longest example of early Arabic transcribed in Greek letters must have been designed without the influence of Arabic orthography. Francesco D’Aiuto and Donatella Bucca (Tor Vergata Università di Roma) focused on ‘The Greek hymnographic fragments of Damascus: scripts and texts’.

The traditions covered included Arabic, Jewish, Syriac, Latin, and Old French, and were presented in three panels entitled ‘Mapping corpora’. The ‘Mapping corpora’ panel in the afternoon of the first day focused on Jewish and Syriac heritage as discovered in the Qubba. In his paper on ‘The Jewish texts from the Damascus Genizah’, Gideon Bohak (Tel-Aviv University) focused on three manuscripts, a magical booklet, a marriage document, and a roll with the ‘Sayings of the Fathers’, illustrating the variety of the types of Jewish texts preserved. Grigory Kessel (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) offered ‘A survey of the fragments from Syriac manuscripts found in Qubbat al-Khazna’, trying to offer identification, grouping, and dating of the many fragments. In the morning of the second day, Coptic, Latin and Old French fragments were discussed. Alin Suciu (Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen) spoke of ‘The Coptic fragments from the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus’, Serena Ammirati (University of RomaTre) spoke of ‘Again on the Latin Fragments of Damascus: A further analysis of the oldest items’, and Laura Minervini (Università di Napoli Federico II) with Gabriele Giannini (Université de Montréal) of ‘The Old French texts of Damascus Qubbat al-Khazna’. In the afternoon of the second day, the Arabic manuscripts were in the centre of attention. Eyad al-Ṭabbā‘ (University of Damascus) presented his work towards ‘A preliminary catalogue of the Koran manuscripts in the Umayyad Mosque’. Konrad Hirschler presented his research on the ‘Binding

fragments from the Qubbat al-Khazna in Syrian manuscripts'. Finally, Arianna D'Ottone Rambach introduced the early woodcut prints discovered at the Qubba in her paper 'Unpublished exemplars of block-printed Arabic amulets from the Qubbat al-Khazna'.

The programme and abstracts are available at <<https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/forschung/Konferenzen-und-Workshops/Qubbat-al-Khazna/>>.

*Red.*

### **Beyond the *Physiologus* Animal Stories and Representations in Oriental Manuscripts Hamburg, 28–29 June 2018**

On 28 and 29 June 2018 the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC, at Hamburg University) hosted the conference 'Beyond the *Physiologus* – Animal Stories and Representations in Oriental Manuscripts', organized with the support of the COMSt network and Fritz Thyssen foundation. The workshop, intended to promote the discussion of themes, new findings and ongoing researches about zoography in Oriental manuscript traditions, was not the first initiative of its kind to be organized in the past years. It constituted, in fact, the ideal continuation of the conference 'The *Physiologus* between East and West. Transmission and dissemination of an early Christian text on nature', held in Paris from 15 to 17 June 2017. Aim of the CSMC conference was to expand the area of investigation from the *Physiologus* (the well-known early Christian collection of natural descriptions and their moralizing teaching) to a broader context, and to explore parallel material containing animal-related stories in the main Oriental literary traditions.

During the seven sessions of the conference no major cultural area was left untouched. In his paper 'Mischwesen im *Physiologus*: Das Echidna-Kapitel', Horst Schneider (Universität München) drew attention to the imprecise rendering of the word 'echidna' in modern editions. The echidna, habitually translated as 'viper' on the basis of the biblical passage Mt 3.7 which opens the *Physiologus* chapter, is in fact clearly described as a monstrous hybrid between a man and a crocodile. Caroline Macé (then at the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, presently at the University of Lausanne) expressed 'Methodological considerations and new hypotheses about the recensions of the Greek *Physiologus* and their indirect tradition', with respect to the intricate tradition of the chapter on the aspidochelone, i.e. the widespread legend of the island-whale which dives into the depths and drowns the sailors who anchored on it. Within the Hebrew literary context, Malachi Beit-Arié (Hebrew Univer-

sity Jerusalem) presented a paper entitled ‘The Hebrew *Perek Shira* and the *Physiologus*’, in which he traced parallels between the Jewish compilation of hymns on the creation and the *Physiologus*. Animals in the Arabic tradition were the subject of two presentations. A role for a still unpublished text, the *Nu ‘ūt al-ḥayawān*, in the shaping of the Arabic animal-related literature was studied by Remke Kruk (Leiden University), who spoke of ‘The mysterious *Nu ‘ūt al-ḥayawān* and Arabic zoography’. The presentation by Lucia Raggetti (then Freie Universität Berlin, now Bologna University), ‘Goodfeathers: The amazing pigeons in the Arabic animal lore’, contemplated the rich and even extravagant features and properties of pigeons as transmitted in the Arabo-Islamic tradition, and particularly by al-Ġāhīz. Two papers covered the Ethiopic tradition. In his ‘Exegesis and Lexicography in the Ethiopian Tradition: The Impact of the *Physiologus*’, Massimo Villa (then at Universität Hamburg, now University of Naples ‘L’Orientale’) offered a survey on the influence of the *Physiologus* in later commentaries and vocabularies in Ethiopic and Amharic, especially in the treatment of rare or uniquely-attested zoonyms. The pictorial representations of imaginary animals in the Ethiopian art were the subject of Ewa Balicka-Witakowska’s (Uppsala University) paper, entitled ‘Imagery of fantastic or hybrid animals in Ethiopian painting’. The Syriac also benefited from two distinct presentations. Sami Aydin (Uppsala University) illustrated his research on ‘Traces of the *Physiologus* in the Syriac hexaemeral tradition and other commentaries’. Adrian Pirtea (Freie Universität Berlin) spoke about ‘Some distinctive features of the Leiden Syriac *Physiologus* and a newly identified manuscript witness’, which would strongly support an Origenist background to the Syriac version. Further traditions in other languages were explored by several presenters. The fascinating theme of the cosmic bird was in the focus of attention of Ana Stoykova’s (Bulgarian Academy Sofia) paper, entitled ‘From Mesopotamia to late medieval Bulgaria: Transformations of the giant cosmic bird myth’. Emanuela Timotin (Rumanian Academy of Sciences, Bucarest) spoke of ‘The *Physiologus* in the Romanian manuscript tradition’. Ani Shahnazaryan (Matenadaran) developed the theme of ‘The *Physiologus* influence on medieval Armenian fables’. Georgian parallels to the *Physiologus* were traced by Jost Gippert (Universität Frankfurt), ‘The Georgian *Physiologus* in context’. Finally, the paper by Isabel Grimm-Stadelmann (Universität München), ‘Graeco-Egyptian texts of ritual power and their tradition’, dealt with the reception of some motifs inherited from Graeco-Egyptian papyri and survived in the late antique and Byzantine traditions.

Finally, an editorial meeting, led by Caroline Macé and attended by some of the presenters, was organized with the scope of discussing a variety of issues concerning the forthcoming edited volume, *The Physiologus: multi-*

*lingual history of an early Christian text. The oldest Greek recension and its translations.* The workshop programme is available at <[https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register\\_physiologus2018.html](https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register_physiologus2018.html)>.

*Massimo Villa*  
*University of Naples 'L'Orientale'*

## **Traces on Ink. Experiences of Philology and Replication** **Bologna, 12 July 2018**

The workshop ‘Traces of Ink’, which took place in Bologna on 12 July 2018, was the second of two joint workshops on the history of alchemy convened within the framework of the ERC Project *AlchemEast: Alchemy in the Making*.

Many ancient and premodern cultures, with the due differences, shared the reflection upon writing supports, the production of written artefacts with all the tools and substances involved in the action of leaving a clear impression of the written signs. A double path of traces can be followed in order to reconstruct the different writing practices and cultures: on the one side, the material objects connected to the act of writing, and the technical literature dealing with the art of writing on the other. The material and the textual aspects, however, do not exist in isolation; there rather are large areas of overlap, so that the different disciplines engaged in their study (codicology, palaeography, chemistry, archaeology, philology) can achieve better results in cooperation. This spirit has animated the programme of the workshop: its three sessions were chronologically arranged (Ancient Near East, Greek Late Antiquity and Arabo-Islamic Middle Ages) and, each of them saw two scholarly approaches together, one more focussed on the philological aspects, the other on the material and technical ones.

The first session (Ancient Near East), with Maddalena Rumor as discussant, included a joint presentation given by Michele Cammarosano and Katja Weirauch, who shared the results of their joint research on the use of wax tablets as writing support in the Mesopotamian and Hittite cultures.

With Lawrence Principe as discussant, the second session (Greek Late Antiquity) was opened by Miriam Blanco, who discussed the composition and use of red inks in the Greek magical papyri. Ira Rabin presented an overview of the technical analysis personally carried out on written artefacts from Antiquity well into the Middle Ages.

The third and last session (Arabo-Islamic Middle Ages), with Bink Hal-lum in the role of discussant, started with Sara Fani sketching the literary dimension of the Arabic treatises on ink making, and was concluded by Claudia

Colini, who presented some experimental replications of Arabic recipes for black ink.

The programme is available at <[https://alchemeast.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018\\_07\\_12\\_TracesOfInk.pdf](https://alchemeast.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018_07_12_TracesOfInk.pdf)>. The proceedings of the workshop, enriched by some additional related papers, will be published in the Nuncius Series, Studies and Sources in the Material and Visual History of Science (Brill).

*Lucia Raggetti*  
*University of Bologna*

### **Gotha Manuscript Workshop: Alchemy in the Islamicate World** **Gotha, 28–29 September 2018**

On 28 and 29 September 2018, the workshop ‘Alchemy in the Islamicate World’ was organized jointly by Regula Forster (University of Zurich/Freie Universität Berlin) and Gotha Research Library, within the framework of the project *Between Religion and Alchemy: The scholar Ibn Arfa‘ Ra’s (d. 593/1197) as a model for an integrative Arabic literary and cultural history* (University of Zurich).

Students of the history of sciences in the Islamic period need to review many unedited texts. This is especially true in the case of alchemy. 220 years after the modern beginning of research on alchemy in the Islamic period with De Sacy and his treatise published in 1799, many alchemical writings have still not been considered by research. The large numbers of Syriac, Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian alchemical manuscripts that have been written and copied between the seventh and the twentieth century are strong proof that alchemy was a well-known and significant part of knowledge in the pre-modern Islamicate world.

Fortunately, in recent years scholarship on the alchemical heritage of the Islamic period has increased significantly: now, scholars in Europe, the Middle East and North America are working on different aspects of the alchemical tradition. They try new approaches by using philological and literary-oriented, socio-historical approaches as well as the approach of the history of science. The material and codicological turn have led to a new interest in the manuscript evidence. Yet, while the interest in European alchemy has been steady over the years, the workshop ‘Alchemy in the Islamicate World’ was the first conference focused exclusively on this subject.

During the workshop, fifteen scholars discussed their research topics for two days and had the chance to consult Gotha’s Arabic alchemical manu-

scripts—a collection that deserves far more consideration, especially by researchers in the field of occult sciences in the Islamicate traditions.

The workshop opened with a short description of the history of the oriental collection in the Gotha library. Regula Forster explained that even though most Gotha manuscripts in the field of alchemy are relatively young (seventeenth-eighteenth century, some even from to the nineteenth century), they preserve rare texts and textual versions. In the first session, three scholars dealt with the Gotha collection. In the first lecture, Regula Forster introduced Ibn Arfa' Ra's and his biography and then discussed his works, especially the *Šudūr al-Dahab* ('The Splinters of Gold'), a collection of alchemical poems. She explained the stemmatological classification of more than 80 copies of the *Šudūr* with charts prepared by Svetlana Dolgusheva (Zurich). Forster also showed that without the Gotha manuscripts, the tradition of the alchemical *muwaššah* poem of Ibn Arfa' Ra's would be significantly reduced (by 40%). Richard Tod (Birmingham) presented the variety of commentaries on Ibn Arfa' Ra's's collection of alchemical poems with a stress on Gotha's copies. He explained several metaphors in *Šudūr al-Dahab* (such as the Dragon of resurrection) that were also used in western alchemy, asking whether the work might have had some influence in the West, even though it seems that *Šudūr* was never translated into western languages. The next speaker, Bink Hallum (London), started his discussion with Greek and Latin manuscripts of Zosimos of Panopolis' works (fl. c.300) and then shifted to the *Risāla fī Bayān Tafriq al-Adyān*, a text attributed to Zosimos in the Islamic period, e.g. in the *Aqālīm al-sab'a*, of which Gotha holds a splendid illustrated copy. He then compared Gotha's manuscript of the *Risāla al-Bayān* to a copy in the Topkapı Archeology museum, showing that the Gotha version is significant and probably cannot be considered to be a simple epitome. Focusing on alchemy and religious pluralism, Hallum explained why in this text the reader encounters a Hebrew Zosimos while in a ninth-century treatise on secret alphabets, he was called the third knowledge; furthermore, Brahmans and Jews discussing alchemy in Jerusalem fitted neatly with the picture of a poly-religious science.

The early period of Arabic alchemy was described by Marion Dapsens (Louvain-la-Neuve) and Thijs Delva (Leuven) in the second session. Dapsens discussed the alchemical works attributed to the Umayyad Prince Ḥālid b. Yazīd. She showed that the titles of these texts are varying since different titles in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist* by Ibn Nadīm and in Ibn Ḥalikān's *Wafayāt al-A'yān* can be found. She explained in detail which works by or attributed to Ḥālid are extant in manuscript form, evading however the most important question, which remained unanswered: Was the historical Ḥālid an alchemist? Delva presented new materials on the historicity of the figure of Ḡābir b. Ḥayyān

al-Ṭūsī. He stressed the relationship between Ḡābir's writings and the milieu of the extreme Shia (*ḡulāt*). In his opinion, this approach can offer a new perspective on the date of writing the *Corpus Ḡābirianum* as a collection. Taking into account the new research on Maslama al-Qurṭubī, author of *Picatrix*, he suggested to date the Ḡābirian corpus before 328/940.

The third session included four lectures on 'Decknamen, Terminology, and Codes'. Matteo Martelli (Bologna) discussed two Syriac lexicons on alchemy. He showed that alchemical words traveled between Byzantine and Islamic countries. Therefore, encyclopedias and symbols should be considered an important genre of text beyond cultural boundaries. In addition he investigated the sources of these lexicons too. He also explained how Greek works were received in Syriac, and stressed that Syriac alchemy largely is not earlier, but simultaneous with the Arabic. Godefroid de Callatay and Sébastien Moureau (both Louvain-la-Neuve) demonstrated the innovative character of Maslama al-Qurṭubī by examining his concept of 'code name' (code, *ramz*, pl. *rumūz*): they tried to show that Maslama developed his own, original approach by using allonyms as a form of disclosure of knowledge. Lutfallah Gari (Yanbu) clearly showed that we need to review many unpublished texts to decipher alchemical texts in the Arabic tradition as well as to understand Arabic alchemical terminology. In his lecture, he discussed some of these texts like as *al-Ḥudūd* and *al-Sirr al-Sār wa Sirr al-Asrār* by Ḡābir, the *Epistle of Buṭrus of Akhmīm to his son*, *al-Mudkhal al-ta'īmī* and *al-Asrār and Sirr al-Asrār* by Rāzī, *Maḡāṭīh al-'ulūm* by Ḥwārizmī, and Tuḡrā'ī's works such as *Maḡāṭīh al-rahma*. In his opinion, the *Epistle of Buṭrus of Akhmīm* (Panopolis) is a good example in this regard because the text offers an interesting combination of Late Antique, Christian, and Arabic elements. Salam Rassi (Oxford) introduced 'Abdīshō' bar Brīḥā (d. 718/1318), an East Syrian bishop of Singār (fl. thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), who allegedly translated a Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise from Syriac into Arabic. Rassi covered interesting points, for example the Iranian tradition of translating alchemical texts in the Sassanid period when Yazdin (a Christian minister of the Sassanid emperor) translated an alchemical work attributed to Aristotle for an Iranian king. Furthermore, he discussed the three principles of alchemy (soul, body, and spirit) and the tradition of manuscripts moving to Benghal and India.

The fourth session discussed alchemy as a practical art and science. Gabriele Ferrario (Baltimore) described Jewish tradition of alchemy in medieval Cairo. He showed that in the Cairo Genizah, we find 110 alchemical fragments and documents in Judeo-Arabic letters (about 300 pages). Now this collection is mostly available in the Cambridge University Library. During the lecture Ferrario reviewed some of them and presented new evidence of

theory and practice in these fragments. He emphasized that the Genizah documents are not only engaged with practical aspects—instead it seems like Jewish authors had access to the *Corpus Ġābirianum*. Christopher Braun (Zurich), starting from the *Kitāb Sidrat al-Muntahā* MS Gotha orient A 1162, discussed aspects of the recipe in Arabic alchemy. He compared alchemical recipes with those from magical treasure hunt books and used Gotha's collection to show how much genre expectations can be regarded as central. Malihe Karbassian (Bonn) focused on *Kitāb al-Aṣnām al-sab'a*, an astrological-alchemical work attributed to Apollonius of Tyana. She discussed the different names of this text and its content and also focused on the influence of this work on four fields in Persianate world: alchemical heritage in the Islamic period, Ismā'īlī cosmology, the allegorical and mystical literature, and occult sciences. Her contribution had two interesting points: (1) her discussion about differences between original and epitome versions of *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*, and (2) the Persian translations of the text dating to a time between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the last lecture of this session, Lahouari Ghazzali (Yanbu) discussed his method and approach to establish a critical edition of the *Šudūr al-Dahab* as a classical text of Arabic alchemy (his edition just having been published in Beirut). He stressed that the editor of a poem must not only take different copies into consideration, but also pay attention to literary features. He explained that specialized alchemical knowledge and access to manuscripts is not enough for a critical edition and that the editor also needs a solid knowledge of metric and rhetoric. To illustrate his approach, Ghazzali compared the Leipzig, Madrid, and Tehran manuscripts; he also showed their differences in interesting charts.

The fifth session addressed alchemy as literature and visual art. Vicky Ziegler (Bonn) focused on the Andalusian alchemist Maslama ibn al-Qāsim al-Qurṭubī and his 'Garden of the Divine, Noble and Secret Art' and 'Boasting of Stones'. She tried to show, especially with reference to two texts from Gotha, how the dialogue genre used in her set of texts shaped the content of the texts, making these texts seem much more accessible and comprehensible than many other alchemical works. Finally, Juliane Müller (Zurich) focused on the alchemical symbols in the manuscripts of the 'Mirror of Wonders' (*Mir'āt al-aḡā'ib*) by an otherwise unknown author, Ibn al-Muḥṭār (fl. between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries). In this treatise, the narrator dreams of himself being in a desert and discovering the 'Mirror of Wonders' in a hidden room of a monastery. Müller compared its symbols in some less known manuscripts of the text from Hamburg, Oxford, Cairo, Hyderabad, Karachi, London, and Riyadh. Her interpretation of the symbols in these manuscripts showed how a textual complex can be traced through different works. She found nine sym-

bols for the different stages of the alchemical work. She also discussed the influence of Ḥālid ibn Yazīd and Ibn Umayl on this text. Finally, she showed how the design of the symbolism in *Kitāb al-Aqālīm al-sab‘a* by al-Sīmāwī is partly different from the original ‘Mirror of Wonders’.

The workshop showed that we have serious gaps in research on the alchemical heritage in the Islamic period: many manuscripts are not available, a comparative research on the alchemical terminology is necessary, and the discussion on alchemy as a practical art and alchemical knowledge in its social contexts needs to be furthered. It offered the opportunity to discuss key questions, not only between the specialists of alchemical heritage in the Islamic period, but also with representatives of the study of European alchemy. In particular, the publication of bilingual text editions in the *Sources of Alchemy and Chemistry* series (edited by Jennifer M. Rampling and Lawrence M. Principe) was encouraged.

An earlier version of this report has been published as ‘Tagungsbericht: Gotha Manuscript Workshop: Alchemy in the Islamicate World, 28.09.2018 – 29.09.2018 Gotha’, in *H-Soz-Kult*, 24.11.2018, <[www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7962](http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7962)>.

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## **Twentieth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies Regional and Global Ethiopia – Interconnections and Identities Mekelle, 1–5 October 2018**

### **(1) Past, Present and Future of Editing Ethiopian Texts**

From 1 to 5 October 2018 Mekelle University hosted the twentieth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (ICES20), bearing the title ‘Regional and Global Ethiopia – Interconnections and Identities’. The Conference was organized by the ICES20 Organizing Committee with kind support by the International Organizing Committee, the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Frobenius Institute, Goethe Institute, French Centre of Ethiopian Studies, German Embassy, French Embassy, and other stakeholders. The host, Mekelle University, is an important academic institution in Ethiopia, which was ranked second among forty universities in Ethiopia in the academic year of 2017/2018. The announced programme of ICES20 contained over 700 papers grouped in 83 panels. Despite some unavoidable changes, the conference represented the range and variety of research topics related to Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Horn of Africa, among which manuscript studies and philology were well represented. The relevant sessions included, among others, the panel ‘Past, Present

and Future of Editing Ethiopian Texts' organized by Alessandro Bausi (Universität Hamburg), on 3 October 2018, which is in the focus of this report.

Ten papers were presented during this panel. After a short introduction, Alessandro Bausi presented on 'Editing Ethiopian Texts: the Case of the More Ancient Layer', in which he posed the question of a required re-examination of methods and assumptions in the light of the evidence of more ancient text witnesses. His paper was followed by the presentation by Maija Priess (Universität Hamburg) on 'Criteria for a Critical Edition of Ethiopic Amos'. This presentation considers the study of toponomastics of Ethiopic Amos with the aim to select the most relevant manuscripts for text reconstruction out of thirty seven manuscripts which were selected by the team of the project 'Textual History of the Old Testament'. Next presentation, by Nafisa Valieva (Universität Hamburg) was dedicated to the editing of the *Gadla Lālibalā* (Life of Lālibalā), a hagiographic composition which is considered to be the main source of the legendary life and deeds of the medieval Ethiopian king.

The second session of the panel was opened by the presentation by Mer-sha Alehegne (Addis Ababa University), 'Towards a Comprehensive Study of the Indigenous Text-Critical Methods of Ethiopia: a Focus on Recently Printed Gə'əz New Testament'. He presented two introductory texts to the recently published New Testament, which deliver information regarding indigenous methods and attitudes of text editing. The next presentation, by Stefan Weninger (Philipps-University of Marburg), was dedicated to the relevance of new editions of Gə'əz texts for facilitating future studies in grammar and lexicography. Antonella Brita (Universität Hamburg) subsequently proposed a methodological reflection on the edition of texts transmitted as part of large hagiographic collections in multiple-text manuscripts. The main focus was the edition of the texts of the *Gadla samā 'tāt* (Lives of martyrs).

The next session was opened by the presentation by Daria Elagina (Universität Hamburg) on her work towards the new edition of the Chronicle of John of Nikiu. The following presentation by Solomon Gebreyes Beyene (Universität Hamburg) was dedicated to the preparation of a critical edition of a royal court available in a manuscript containing the Homily of St Michael, originating from the monastery of Tārā Gadām. This document provides information on the hierarchical structure of titles and ranks of various office holders. In the next presentation, Jonas Karlsson (University of Hamburg) discussed the problems of producing a scholarly edition of the *Dəgg"ā*, the main antiphonary of the Ethiopic Orthodox Church. Finally, the paper by Getatchew Haile (Saint John's University) dedicated to the history of the monastery Dimā Giyorgis in Goḡḡām was read in absentia by Michael Gervens (University of Toronto).

The panel programme can be accessed at <<https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/en/ethiostudies/about/conferences/ices2018-panels/ices2018-texts>>.

Other text- and manuscript-oriented panels during the conference included, among others, ‘The Medieval Ethiopian Dynamics (12<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries): State, People, Space and Knowledge in Movement’ (with, among others, another paper dealing with King Lālibalā and his hagiography, presented by Marie-Laure Derat and Claire Bosc-Tiessé), ‘Ethiopia and the Ancient World: Reception and Transformation of Geographical Knowledge’ (with several papers on Ethiopian Greek heritage, including another paper by Alessandro Bausi, with Gianfranco Agosti, on late antique Greek Egyptian epic poetry, and on Greek ‘scientific’ literature translated into Ethiopic, by Klaus Geus and Carsten Hoffmann and Zeus Wellnhofer), ‘Gə‘əz Literature’ (with ten papers on various issues connected with works of Christian Ethiopian literature, original and translated, from the biblical Enoch, by Haileyesus Abebachew, to the national epic *Kəbra nagast*, by Michael Kleiner, from magic texts, by Gidena Mesfin, to the homilies, by Rafał Zarzeczny and Amsalu Tefera, to the Synaxarion, by Dorothea Reule, among others, as well as an overview of manuscripts recently acquired by the Bavarian State Library, by Veronika Six), ‘Ethiopian Christianity: Global Interconnections and Local Identities—From Late Antiquity to Early Modern Times’ (with a paper on the letter of Severos of Antioch in Ethiopic by Philip Forness), and ‘Philological Studies on Modern Ethiopian Texts’ (which included among others two papers, by Nuraddin Aman and by Muna Abubeker, on Islamic Ethiopian manuscripts in ‘*aḡāmī*’ script). The panel ‘Ethiopian Christian Art: Defining Styles, Defying Definitions’ featured two papers on manuscript illumination, by Meseret Oldjira and by Jacopo Gnisci, and a paper on the Ethiopian binding decoration, by Sean Winslow. A report on the panel on ‘Automatic Text Processing and Digital Humanities for Ethiopian Language and Culture’ is published separately.

The book of abstracts of ICES20 is accessible at <[http://www.ices20-mu.org/BookOfAbstract\\_contents.pdf](http://www.ices20-mu.org/BookOfAbstract_contents.pdf)>. For the full programme of the conference, visit <<http://www.ices20-mu.org/program.php>>. Selected papers are expected to be published in the proceedings of the conference.

*Daria Elagina*  
*Universität Hamburg*

## **(2) Automatic Text Processing and Digital Humanities for Ethiopian Language and Culture**

On 4 October 2018 a one-day panel on ‘Automatic Text Processing and Digital Humanities for Ethiopian languages and Culture’ was organized as part of the ICES20 held at Mekelle University. A first international event dedicated to the new digital method and its application to all Ethiopian languages (includ-

ing but not limited to Gə‘əz) and cultural heritage (including manuscripts), it was convened jointly by Cristina Vertan (Universität Hamburg) and Solomon Teferra Abate and Martha Yifiru Tachbelie (Addis Ababa University).

The papers were organized into two sessions, with the morning one dedicated to Digital Humanities and the afternoon one to Corpus and Computational Linguistics.

The first session (Digital Humanities) was opened by a talk of Daniel Yacob (Gə‘əz Frontier Foundation) who addressed the challenges and envisaged solutions for defining a common layout template for all Ethiopian languages using the Gə‘əz script. A proposal for joining forces in bringing the field of Ethiopian Languages and Culture into the digital era was formulated by Isabelle A. Zaugg (Columbia University). Anaïs Wion (CNRS, Paris) presented the work performed within the Ethiopian Manuscript Archives project, especially with regard to the TEI encoding of the digitized manuscripts. Pietro Liuzo (Universität Hamburg) gave an overview on the architecture and functionality of the *Beta maṣāḥəft* online portal (<<http://betamasafeft.eu/>>) gathering a large amount of metadata related to predominantly Christian manuscripts from Ethiopia and Eritrea. In a second talk, he introduced a new online application <<http://betamasafeft.eu/Dillmann/>>, which for the first time offers access and search functionality to a dictionary of Gə‘əz, based on an electronic version of Dillmann’s *Lexicon linguae Aethiopicae* (produced within the framework of the ERC project TraCES) and connected to a digital corpus of texts. Together with Solomon Gebreyes Beyene (Universität Hamburg), he then illustrated the opportunities offered by TEI-XML mark-up of texts on the example of place names annotated in an Ethiopic chronicle (and supplied with metadata on the *Beta maṣāḥəft* platform).

The last talk of the morning session and the first talk of the afternoon session were both located rather at the border between Digital Humanities and Computational Linguistics. In the morning, Cristina Vertan demonstrated the functionality of the GeTa tool (also developed for the TraCES project), an annotation software tailored for addressing the needs of detailed morphological analysis of texts in the Gə‘əz language. The afternoon session opened with another talk by Daniel Yacob, in which he illustrated how difficult work on historical languages can be, starting with the encoding and representations of characters not present in any scheme, such as the chant notation used in Ethiopic hymnaries.

The following contributions focused on current developments across all major modern Ethiopian languages. A selection of existing Ethiopian web corpora (Amharic, Tigrinya, Somali, and Oromo) was described in the presentation of Derib Ado (Addis Ababa University) and his colleagues from

Addis Ababa University, Jigjiga University, and the University of Oslo. Yaroslav Gutgarts (International Committee of the Red Cross, Ethiopia) spoke on standardization of written Tigrinya. A framework for linguistic annotation of the Somali language corpus (<<http://www.somalicorpus.com/>>) was described by Jama Musse Jama (Redsea Cultural Foundation, Hargeisa).

The panel provided a first overview of the state of the art in digital methods addressing Ethiopian cultural and linguistic space. Whilst corpus and computational linguistics seem to have become integral part of research programmes in Ethiopia, digital humanities (including digital preservation of the cultural heritage) are still limited to single projects in Europe and USA. Held in Ethiopia and attended by the audience from all over the country, the workshop was able to bring in discussion trends, challenges, and opportunities of this new interdisciplinary field.

A volume collecting among others revised versions of the workshop papers shall be published as a monographic *Supplement* to the journal *Aethiopica*. For the full programme and conference abstracts, visit <<https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/en/ethiostudies/about/conferences/ices2018-panels/ices2018-dh/>>.

*Cristina Vertan*  
*Universität Hamburg*



# Reviews

Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić, *L'Écriture et la sainteté dans la Serbie médiévale: étude d'hagiographie*, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études, sciences religieuses, 179 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017). ISBN 978-2-503-56978-9. 305 pp.

The Serbian hagiographical tradition is unusual in its very intimate connexion with the Nemanjić dynasty that ruled Serbia from the late twelfth to late fourteenth centuries and, to a lesser extent, with their successors who maintained the waning Serbian power under the Ottoman advance of the next hundred years. Royal saints are of course to be found all across Christendom from Ireland to Armenia, and although the notion of a *beata stirps* was associated with the ruling houses of various European nations, not least in Serbia's immediate neighbours, nowhere were the idea of sainthood and the idea of the reigning house so closely intertwined as in Serbia. The dynasty was the repository of sanctity, beginning with its founder, Stefan Nemanja (canonised under his monastic name of Symeon) and his son Sava, first Archbishop of Serbia and co-founder, with his father, of the Serbian monastery of Hilandar on Mount Athos. The heavenly patronage of these two important historical figures, and that of an ever-increasing number of their descendants, infused the self-perception of the dynasty and the nation, as did their continuing presence in the Serbian lands through their relics and through the religious houses that they had founded. In this respect Serbia and its hagiographical tradition do indeed, as Professor Marjanović-Dušanić says, represent *un cas unique*.

It is this tradition of dynastic hagiography that is the subject of this book. The non-dynastic saints of Serbia are of course mentioned, but very much in the context of the relationship of their cults to that of the royal saints, on which attention is very firmly focused. The texts are approached from the point of view of literary studies: there is nothing here for the manuscript specialist, nor for the textual critic, though the historian will be interested not only in the biographies of rulers as sources *per se*, but also in the process of the creation of a 'historical memory', in which the lives of the saints, their foundations and the associated places of pilgrimage played an important part. The political, religious and cultural élites of mediaeval Serbia (though these are hardly to be distinguished) actively promoted this, and were the motive force behind the writing of the hagiographic texts: 'Il s'agit de faire entrer la Serbie dans le concert des nations chrétiennes d'Orient en créant des saints sur le modèle de l'hagiographie protobyzantine'.

Professor Marjanović-Dušanić traces this process with great assiduity through the texts, not neglecting possible interactions with oral traditions nor the influences of neighbouring countries, principally Hungary and Byzantium, through cultural contacts (in the latter case particularly mediated through Athos) and dynastic alliances. She displays an extensive and profound knowledge of contemporary scholarship in Byzantine studies and the study of sainthood in mediaeval Europe, and this is ever-present in her exposition of material, occasionally to the extent that the actual details of the lives seem to be in danger of drowning in a sea of erudition. Bulgarian and Russian scholarship, by contrast, are hardly mentioned, and there is similarly scanty reference to the mediaeval literature of those countries.

The book is organised in four parts. The first two deal respectively with the political context of Serbian hagiography and with the cult and conception of sanctity. The first of these deals with the recurring motifs of the outward behaviour of the saint and with his position in society—the taking of the monastic habit, the people’s lament at his death, etc.—and with the models of sanctity, derived in the first instance from the Byzantine tradition, to which these correspond. The second, which is the most substantial part of the book, takes these ideas and shows how they were applied in the *Vitae*, and in particular how they developed over time. This does not only apply to the image and activity of the holy ruler, which (despite certain persistent *topoi*) were significantly different at different stages of history. It is obvious that the prince-martyr Lazar Hrebeljanović in the dying days of Serbian statehood presents a different image from that of the prince-founder Stefan Nemanja at its beginning. What is more interesting is the continuity of the image of the holy ruler over all this period. Professor Marjanović-Dušanić demonstrates its evolution in the lives of successive saints, relating them as much to the period in which they were written and the requirements of the ruler of the day as to the personality of their subjects.

A similar thread runs through the next section, on miracles and re-writing. These two apparently disparate themes are united by the fact that as a saint’s activity is continued in his posthumous miracles, and his image thereby ‘brought up to date’ by his continuing interaction with succeeding generations, so successive lives of the saint present him in the light in which later periods regarded dynastic sanctity. For this reason the motives that prompted the writing of hagiography, or causing it to be written, receive particular attention in this section.

The fourth section begins with an abrupt shift of focus from hagiographic to apocalyptic writings (both peregrinations through the afterlife and eschatology), tenuously connected to the main theme by a sixteenth-century

report of a book of prophecies attributed to St Sava. However, with the approach of the end of the Serbian state, eschatological expectations increased, and the death of a ruler such as Stefan Lazarević was seen as one of the disasters belonging to the last days. In this way the apocalyptic element enters the princely vita, and these later compositions incorporate a lamentation for the death of the saint which reflects the desolation of the country as it gradually succumbed to the forces of the enemy.

The book as a whole is undoubtedly a serious and substantial contribution to scholarship, but one does wonder somewhat about its intended readership. Set as it is firmly within the context of contemporary Western mediaeval and Byzantine studies, it appears to be aimed at an audience who are not and cannot be familiar with the texts with which it deals (since they are available only in Slavonic); the brief summaries of some of the lives in the appendix are hardly adequate to address this problem.

Slavists and Eastern European mediaevalists (outside Serbia) will however be perplexed at the neglect of their own tradition. The author is of course not to blame for the distance between regional academic establishments, and though the book does not really bridge the gap, if it takes a step towards mutual awareness, that in itself is a valuable service.

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Muriel Debié, *L'écriture de l'histoire en syriaque. Transmission interculturelle et constructions identitaires entre hellénisme et islam. Avec des répertoires des textes historiographiques en annexe*, Late Antique History and Religion, 12 (Leuven, Paris, and Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2015). ISBN 978-90-429-3237-1. xxxiv + 724 pp.

Couvrant les récits et les sources historiques écrites en langue syriaque du VI<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, le livre de Muriel Debié a d'abord ce grand mérite de constituer ce manuel qui manquait encore pour présenter l'historiographie syriaque (« ce livre est sans doute d'abord une sorte de manuel destiné à donner les clés pour une utilisation facilitée des sources historiques syriaques », p. xv). Mais surtout, au fil de douze chapitres substantiels, le livre nous conduit au cœur des questions qui permettent de mettre en valeur la spécificité de cette historiographie. S'intéressant aux œuvres, aux différentes formes de l'écriture des chroniques et des histoires ecclésiastiques, à leurs auteurs, M. Debié n'omet pas non plus d'aborder les raisons d'être de ces écrits, leurs sources et modèles, les systèmes chronologiques adoptés, les lieux et les formes de production, ainsi que la transmission et la réception. Elle prend en compte non seulement les écrivains les plus connus, mais aussi des auteurs et des œuvres jusqu'ici très peu étudiés. À la fin du livre, après plus de 500 pages de texte, elle offre un répertoire unique à ce jour d'environ 160 pages, présentant les textes historiques syriaques traduits du grec, les œuvres des historiens respectivement syro-occidentaux et syro-orientaux, ainsi que celles des auteurs syriaques qui ont écrit en arabe (X<sup>e</sup> siècle). Ce volume de plus de 700 pages au total constitue une somme aussi instructive qu'agréable et stimulante à lire.

Dans l'introduction, l'auteure explique avec pertinence les raisons du peu d'intérêt du monde académique pour l'historiographie syriaque et orientale en général. Cela est dû tout d'abord à la persistance, dans l'histoire de la recherche, d'une approche encline à privilégier l'historiographie classique gréco-latine (p. xiv). La redécouverte et la valorisation de l'historiographie tardo-antique et médiévale ont une histoire plus récente ; l'introduction même du concept d'« Antiquité tardive », au lieu du concept péjoratif de « Bas-Empire », vu comme une époque de déclin, a contribué à ce changement d'attitude (M. Debié rappelle, à ce sujet, l'importance des études pionnières d'Henri-Irénée Marrou et de Peter Brown, p. xix). Parmi les sources tardo-antiques, les œuvres écrites en grec et en latin, langues des Empires, se sont taillé la part du lion dans les études savantes. Les œuvres issues d'autres communautés du Proche-Orient ancien (Syrie-Mésopotamie, Arménie, Géorgie, etc.) ont été lues le plus souvent pour les informations événementielles qu'elles apportent

et qui comblent, parfois, des lacunes dans l'historiographie gréco-latine.<sup>1</sup> Cet aspect est certes fondamental et doit être souligné, mais il ne constitue pas le seul motif d'intérêt pour cette production. Ainsi, l'un des mérites du présent ouvrage réside dans le déplacement du regard du centre vers la périphérie. Ce changement de perspective permet de comprendre la manière dont les Syriques ont pensé leur place dans l'histoire, tout en mettant en évidence les rapports qu'ils ont entretenus, au fil des siècles, avec le pouvoir et les modèles culturels et religieux dominants. Plus en général, il montre, au travers de l'historiographie syriaque, la richesse des relations interculturelles, notamment à l'époque où, pour le « centre » (Empire byzantin), on a parlé de « siècles obscurs », bien qu'on sache aujourd'hui que ces siècles ont été moins « obscurs » qu'on a pu le croire dans le passé.<sup>2</sup> L'étude des littératures, notamment historiographiques, des communautés du Proche-Orient tardo-antique et de leurs contacts réciproques montre la porosité des frontières culturelles, ainsi que la richesse de la circulation des textes et des idées. Cette transmission a parfois pris la forme de traductions : c'est l'aspect le plus connu et, surtout dans le cas des traductions du grec, le plus étudié, souvent dans la seule perspective de retrouver le texte original sous-jacent, autrement dit avec une perspective « ancillaire ». L'historiographie est un terrain parfait pour montrer que les contacts se sont faits aussi par assimilation, réappropriation et adaptation au nouveau contexte de réception.

À l'époque de rédaction des premières œuvres présentées dans ce volume, au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la Syrie constituait une province de l'Empire romain d'Orient, dont la langue dominante était le grec. Le syriaque, forme particulière d'araméen, était la langue de culture principale de la Syrie et de la Mésopotamie depuis le II<sup>e</sup> siècle ap. J.-C. Comme le rappelle l'auteure, c'est au moment où « les chrétientés araméophones commencèrent à se constituer leurs identités religieuses séparées » (p. xx) que l'écriture de l'histoire débuta en syriaque. Dans un contexte culturel souvent bilingue (voir par exemple le milieu hellénisé du monastère de Qennešre, connu pour les traductions et les

- 1 Dans le cas de l'Arménie, on rappellera l'intérêt accordé à l'œuvre du pseudo-Sébeos, auteur anonyme contemporain de l'avancée arabe, pour la reconstruction de l'histoire du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle : voir R. W. Thomson (translation) and J. Howard-Johnston (Historical Commentary, assistance by T. Greenwood), *The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos*, I–II (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).
- 2 Des projets récents visent à parvenir à une nouvelle vision de Byzance dans une perspective globale, et à une réévaluation d'une société et d'une culture traditionnellement considérées comme figées, en explorant les questions de mobilité, microstructure, contacts interculturels. On rappellera le projet Wittgenstein *Moving Byzantium* dirigé par la professeure Claudia Rapp à l'Université de Vienne (<<https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/byzantine-research/byzantium-and-beyond/mobility-and-intercultural-contacts/moving-byzantium>>).

commentaires de la philosophie aristotélicienne ; p. 196–200), le choix même du syriaque au lieu du grec pourtant pratiqué, fut étroitement lié au processus de construction identitaire promu par le travail des historiens. C'est le cas, pour ne citer que cet exemple, de Jean, métropolite d'Éphèse depuis 558, qui écrivit en syriaque son Histoire de l'Église miaphysite naissante, alors qu'il exerçait en grec son activité ecclésiastique et pastorale (p. 440–441). Un des points importants de l'ouvrage de M. Debié est de montrer les liens étroits entre l'écriture historiographique et l'exigence, de la part des différentes communautés qui l'ont produite, de revendiquer une identité et de définir leur appartenance religieuse. Comme on le sait, au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, le contexte théologique constituait déjà une arène complexe, non dépourvue de lourdes implications du point de vue de la politique ecclésiastique. L'histoire religieuse orientale, y compris l'histoire syriaque, a été constellée de schismes provoqués par les délibérations prises aux conciles œcuméniques des V<sup>e</sup>–VI<sup>e</sup> siècles (Concile d'Éphèse, en 431 ; de Chalcédoine, en 451 ; de Constantinople, en 553) et par l'endurcissement de la politique byzantine à l'égard des positions « dissidentes ». Ce besoin de se positionner d'un point de vue religieux ne fit que s'accroître dans le contexte complexe des contacts et des controverses avec l'islam.

On peut ici ouvrir une comparaison. Alors que l'historiographie en langue syriaque apparaît seulement quelques siècles après le début de la littérature rédigée dans cette langue (II<sup>e</sup>–III<sup>e</sup> siècle), en Arménie, en revanche, la littérature écrite directement en arménien est, dès son commencement (V<sup>e</sup> siècle), en grande partie composée de textes d'histoire. La pensée historiographique arménienne ancienne s'est attachée à retracer les étapes fondamentales de l'histoire nationale, en insistant notamment sur les moments et les personnages qui ont fait de l'Arménie un pays chrétien. La reconstruction des grandes étapes du passé devait, entre autres enjeux, contribuer à poser sur de nouvelles bases l'identité ethnique des Arméniens, et à construire l'image d'un nouveau peuple élu, jouissant de la grâce divine et participant au plan providentiel du Seigneur au même titre que le peuple juif.<sup>3</sup> De plus, l'écriture de l'histoire a été considérée par les anciens écrivains arméniens non seulement comme un moyen pour dresser le mémorial de l'histoire de l'Arménie, mais aussi comme un instrument pour perpétuer l'Alliance entre Dieu et son peuple.<sup>4</sup> Or, il en va autrement dans le cas de l'historiographie syriaque, dont les auteurs furent

3 J.-P. Mahé, 'De Moïse à Mahomet: réflexions sur l'historiographie arménienne', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, 23 (1992), 121–153.

4 V. Calzolari, 'La citation du Ps 78 [77], 5-8 dans l'épilogue de l'*Histoire de l'Arménie* d'Agathange', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, 29 (2003–2004), 9–27; Ead., 'Écriture et mémoire religieuse dans l'Arménie ancienne (V<sup>e</sup> s. ap. J.-C.)', dans D. Barbu, P. Borgeaud, M. Lozat, N. Meylan et A.-C. Rendu Loisel, éd., *Le savoir*

soucieux de restituer l'histoire des communautés de langue araméenne qui, avec l'adoption du christianisme, adoptèrent le syriaque comme langue de culture, « sans que cela correspondît à l'existence d'une quelconque "nation" voire d'une ethnie au sens strict et en l'absence d'adéquation entre identité des groupes et pouvoir politique » (p. xvi). L'auteur montre qu'« il n'existe pas d'histoire nationale ni d'histoire "officielle" en l'absence d'un État » (*ibid.*). Cet aspect constitue une des spécificités du domaine syriaque. On remarquera, toujours d'une façon comparative et pour mieux mettre en évidence cette spécificité, que l'historiographie arménienne commença à l'époque où le royaume arménien prit fin et lorsque les Arméniens se trouvèrent exposés aux visées assimilatrices exercées par l'Empire sassanide dominateur, à la moitié du V<sup>e</sup> siècle. C'est dans ce contexte que les historiographes écrivirent l'histoire des Arméniens pivotant autour de l'idée maîtresse d'une correspondance entre identité ethnique et religieuse.

En plus des liens entre théologie et identité qui caractérisent le monde syriaque, un autre aspect majeur est mis en valeur par le présent ouvrage. M. Debié montre à quel point le choix d'un « genre » d'écriture plutôt qu'un autre est étroitement lié à une certaine compréhension du monde et à une certaine vision de l'histoire syriaque. Il est aussi lié aux différentes lectures de l'histoire par les différentes communautés et à la diversification des modèles suivis dans les deux formes – orientale et occidentale – de la langue syriaque ; comme on le sait, il s'agit de deux formes d'expression qui correspondent à des Églises indépendantes (p. xxix). Les historiens syro-occidentaux se sont appuyés sur l'autorité et le modèle de la Bible et ont retracé les étapes de l'histoire en commençant par la Création ; ils ont également interprété l'avènement des empires, et notamment l'arrivée de l'Empire arabe, au travers des prophéties de Daniel 7 sur l'apparition des quatre bêtes (une conception commune aussi au pseudo-Sébeos mentionné plus haut). Les syro-orientaux ont adopté plutôt la forme des Histoires ecclésiastiques (sur le modèle d'Eusèbe de Césarée et de ses continuateurs), construites autour de personnages centraux, notamment des moines et des clercs (l'examen de ces deux formes d'écriture et de leurs modèles se trouve aux chapitres 2 et 8). M. Debié rappelle qu'à la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, les Histoires ecclésiastiques cessèrent d'être écrites, en grec comme en syriaque, pour laisser la place aux chroniques qui se prêtaient mieux à intégrer les événements civils à l'histoire religieuse (p. 54). Elle s'interroge alors sur les raisons de la persistance de ce genre dans l'historiographie syro-orientale miaphysite, en observant que le modèle eusébien, centré sur le thème de l'affirmation de l'Église naissante contre les persécutions des

*des religions. Fragments d'historiographie religieuse*, Testimonia (Gollion: Infolio, 2014), 375–394.

empereurs païens, fut repris et adapté pour écrire l'histoire de l'Église miaphysite et de ses conflits avec le pouvoir impérial chalcédonien, considéré comme hérétique et persécuteur (p. 59–63). Après avoir présenté les deux genres, l'auteure en montre aussi, exemples à l'appui, la porosité. Elle attire également l'attention sur une autre caractéristique de l'écriture de l'histoire en syriaque, faite souvent de remaniements, abrégés, réécritures, citations, compilations. La pratique du « patchwork » est à l'origine d'une écriture par « strates » et « par extraits », qui rend parfois difficile la distinction entre texte et document, et qui invite à problématiser la notion même de « texte » et d'« auteur ». M. Debié pose judicieusement la question de la dimension littéraire des textes historiques (« Ce n'est pas seulement pour la recherche des sources et pour le matériel qu'ils contiennent que les textes historiques sont ici abordés mais pour ce qu'ils sont en eux-mêmes, comme littérature », p. xiv). En miroir du travail de M. Debié, on peut rappeler les recherches actuelles qui s'interrogent sur la complexité du concept de fiction narrative et des notions connexes, telles qu'elles se manifestent par exemple dans la narration hagiographique de l'Antiquité tardive. Une telle enquête porte à un questionnement sur les frontières poreuses entre texte historiographique et texte hagiographique (notamment les Vies, les Actes de martyrs, etc.) dans l'Antiquité tardive.<sup>5</sup> Le questionnement est ici tributaire, entre autres, des théoriciens de la philosophie de l'histoire comme Hayden White, qui a souligné que l'écriture historiographique, en tant que récit narratif n'est pas disjointe d'un processus de « fictionalization ».<sup>6</sup> Cette dimension n'est pas absente dans le livre de M. Debié : « L'étude de ces pratiques [d'écriture] doit conduire à garder à l'esprit que les 'histoires' sont des compositions littéraires où les concepts de fiction et d'histoire entrent parfois en friction, en raison d'une part du type de sources employées, que nous qualifierons de non-historiques, mais que les anciens acceptaient au nom de l'autorité dont elles bénéficiaient, et en raison d'autre part du travail de composition et de rédaction dont les histoires ecclésiastiques et les chroniques font l'objet, même les plus annalistiques d'entre elles. La notion de 'vérité' en histoire n'y est pas la nôtre » (p. 477–478). La question du

5 Voir par exemple le projet *Novel Saints. Studies in Ancient Fiction and Hagiography* dirigé par le professeur Koen De Temmerman à l'Université de Gand (<<https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be>>).

6 Cf. H. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1973); Id., *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978); Id., *The Content and the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987). Voir K. De Temmerman, 'Ancient Biography and Formalities of Fiction', dans K. De Temmerman et K. Dempoen, éd., *Writing Biography in Greece and Rome. Narrative Technique and Fictionalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 3–25.

rapport entre l'historiographie et l'hagiographie, considérée comme un genre connexe, ainsi que de la « friction » entre les deux genres est prise en considération (p. 404–418). Intéressantes, à cet égard, sont les remarques sur le vocabulaire syriaque, où le même mot *taš 'itā* « histoire », ou *šarbā* « récit », peut désigner aussi bien un texte historique qu'un texte hagiographique (p. 404).

L'approche décloisonnée du volume se manifeste à plusieurs niveaux et tient la promesse de présenter le monde syriaque, et tout particulièrement l'historiographie syriaque, « non comme un isolat mais dans le cadre plus large des historiographies dans d'autres langues et domaines culturels et dans celui des disciplines connexes » (p. 477). Les titres des douze chapitres qui forment ce livre reflètent bien la richesse des aspects traités. Ainsi, le premier chapitre (« Identité des auteurs et des textes », p. 1–35) affronte les questions liées à l'identification de nombreux auteurs et de nombreuses œuvres – en d'autres termes à la constitution du corpus –, tout en présentant quelques étapes de l'histoire de la recherche philologique. Le deuxième chapitre est consacré aux « Genres historiques » (p. 36–84) et porte une attention particulière aux chroniques et aux Histoires ecclésiastiques inspirées du modèle d'Eusèbe de Césarée, tout en avertissant le lecteur sur la porosité des genres tardo-antiques. Le même aspect est également affronté dans le troisième chapitre, qui prend en considération « Le contexte matériel des histoires » (p. 85–128). Il ne s'agit pas uniquement de montrer l'aspect matériel, mais aussi les circonstances de production et de transmission des manuscrits. L'auteure prend également en compte les inscriptions, y compris la stèle de Xi'an, en Chine, érigée en 781 par les chrétiens chinois (sur la base d'un édit impérial de 638, rédigé par l'empereur Taizong) pour commémorer l'arrivée de la « religion de la lumière ». Rédigée en chinois, cette stèle est glosée en syriaque et mentionne de nombreux membres connus du clergé de l'Église de l'Est (ou Église de Perse), en nous rappelant un épisode des contacts entre le christianisme syro-oriental et la Chine, vu à travers le prisme chinois (p. 123–127). Le quatrième chapitre (p. 129–155) s'intéresse aux « Acteurs de l'écriture de l'histoire » (p. 129–155), non seulement les auteurs connus et dont on peut restituer la formation (ex. Jean d'Éphèse, Théophile d'Édesse, Michel le Syrien), mais aussi les auteurs anonymes, clercs de l'Église ou moines. L'importance, entre autres, des monastères est soulignée dans le cinquième chapitre, portant sur « Les lieux d'écriture de l'histoire » (p. 156–204), où sont présentés les conditions et les lieux d'écritures et d'archivage des grandes métropoles, telles qu'Édesse, Amid, Mélitène, Nisibe, sans oublier les écoles. Le sixième chapitre (« La mesure du temps », p. 205–229) entre dans l'analyse des anciens systèmes de computation en usage en Syrie, en évoquant, entre autres, leur dépendance ou

écart par rapport aux calendriers grecs, ainsi que les enjeux d'unité religieuse impliqués par la fixation des calendriers, notamment à propos de la datation de Pâque. La mesure du temps ne correspond pas au « Temps des historiens » dont il est question dans le septième chapitre (p. 230–287), qui traite des différentes façons de comprendre la chaîne des événements de l'histoire et de leurs acteurs, notamment en l'inscrivant dans le temps biblique. Les huitième et le neuvième chapitres portent respectivement sur « Les sources historiographiques grecques » (p. 288–340) et sur « Les sources narratives [par exemples les textes apocryphes et hagiographiques, histoires et légendes] et documentaires [par exemple les documents d'archives, y compris les archives familiales] » (p. 341–376). Ce chapitre est complémentaire du chapitre suivant, le dixième, qui porte sur « Les transmissions interculturelles » (p. 377–402). Il renvoie au mouvement constant de réception, assimilation, écriture et réécriture originales qui a caractérisé le monde syriaque ; mais il renvoie aussi à ce que la Syrie a transmis au monde arabe. L'étude des sources syriaques, par ailleurs, permet de retrouver les traces d'une historiographie musulmane ancienne, perdue dans la langue originale. Le onzième chapitre porte sur « Historiographie et genres connexes » (p. 403–439), tels qu'astronomie, astrologie, apocalyptique, poésie, etc. Le douzième conclut le parcours en affrontant la question de l'« Écriture identitaire de l'histoire » (p. 440–476). Tout au long du volume, la question du rapport entre écriture de l'histoire et construction des identités et des mémoires du passé est présente (entre autres dans le sillon des travaux de Maurice Halbwachs et Jan Assmann)<sup>7</sup>. Une conclusion, brève mais dense, résume utilement l'ensemble des aspects traités (p. 477–482).

Le volume se termine par des annexes importantes qui ont une valeur documentaire, en offrant des informations essentielles pour toute recherche future. On signalera tout d'abord une liste récapitulative des auteurs et des œuvres (syriaques et arabes) du VI<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, classés à la fois par ordre chronologique et par confession (chalcédoniens, miaphysites, syro-orientaux) (p. 489–492). Aux p. 513–647, on trouve quatre répertoires respectivement des textes syriaques traduits du grec (p. 505–511), des textes syro-occidentaux (p. 515–595), des textes syro-orientaux (p. 599–628) et des textes syro-arabes (p. 631–647). C'est un ensemble de quatre-vingt-trois entrées, comprenant, le cas échéant, le titre de l'œuvre (en syriaque et en traduction) ; une notice sur l'auteur et le contenu ; la date de rédaction ; une description de la forme d'écriture du texte ; les sources ; les manuscrits ; la bibliographie. Dans certains cas, la notice offre des informations sur la transmission d'un texte

7 M. Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1925); Id., *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1950); J. Assmann, *La mémoire culturelle: écriture, souvenir et imaginaire politique dans les civilisations antiques*, traduit de l'allemand par D. Meur (Paris: Aubier, 2010).

syriaque dans d'autres langues (c'est le cas de la traduction arménienne de la Chronique de Michel le Syrien, dont on connaît l'importance pour le rétablissement du texte syriaque). La bibliographie est déployée sur cinquante pages et est classée en rubriques différentes : sources arabes, arméniennes, éthiopiennes, grecques, latines, syriaques (p. 651–656) ; catalogues des manuscrits (p. 657–659) ; bibliographie générale (p. 660–700). On apprécie la présence de cartes avec l'indication des lieux de production historiographique en syriaque respectivement aux VI<sup>e</sup>–IX<sup>e</sup> et aux X<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles (p. 485–486) et de quelques illustrations (huit illustrations, en couleur aux p. 88–89, 92–93, et en noir et blanc aux p. 96, 125 et 433–434). À la fin du livre se trouvent des index détaillés : *Index des manuscrits* (p. 701–703) et *Index général* (p. 705–724).

Voilà assurément un *opus magnum*, qui s'adresse non seulement aux spécialistes d'études syriaques, mais aussi à toute personne qui s'intéresse à l'histoire du Proche-Orient et à ses rapport avec l'Occident dans l'Antiquité tardive et au Moyen Âge. Nous possédons désormais une œuvre de référence incontournable dans le domaine.

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