COMPARATIVE ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

Steering Committee for the Humanities (SCH)

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter No. 3

In this issue

Editorial

Thanks to the efforts of many COMSt members, our Newsletter has evolved into a full-fledged research bulletin, showing the dynamism of our COMSt RNP. This would not have been possible without the constant commitment of Evgenia Sokolinskaia, who is really the driving force behind the Newsletters, and whom we would like to warmly thank here. This achievement is also the result of a process of ripening of our RNP, as is clearly reflected in the mid-term report that was submitted to the ESF in December 2011. The whole is always greater than the sum of its parts, this is a well known scientific law, which is also verified in the case of COMSt. It can be said that new trends of research and new ideas have emerged, thanks to our workshops and meetings, and this is also palpable in several of the scholarly articles or reports published in the Newsletters. The Newsletter is also an important tool to keep the cohesion and cooperation of our COMSt community alive and to show it to the outside world. Let us do our best to continue this important work with the same quality and enthusiasm for the second half of the project tenure and even afterwards.

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Projects in manuscript studies

In this issue:

Digital Averroes Research Environment

Averroes was a medieval Muslim philosopher, who was born in Cordoba in 1126 and died in Marrakesh in 1198. Most of his many writings are extant in the original Arabic and in different versions of Hebrew and Latin translations that have been produced during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The Digital Averroes Research Environment (DARE) collects all accessible instances of manuscripts, incunabula, early prints and modern editions of Averroes's works and makes them available in digital form. The project website (http://dare.uni-koeln.de) is a growing repository, and already contains scans of fifty (so far only Latin) manuscripts, whose images can be viewed and compared synoptically. What is more, the user is able to switch back and forth through different languages, manuscripts and editions at will.

At the same time, DARE is a research platform offering further opportunities for support, networking and international cooperation. Scholars working on Averroes can present their research, discuss questions related to Averroes's thought and browse through the up-to-date bibliography of research literature. For every work and all the three languages, DARE provides a searchable Unicode full text. Users can comment on these full texts and suggest textual emendations. An editorial team will assess these comments and incorporate them into the data.

DARE encodes its texts, structures and miscellaneous data in XML, most of it in TEI P5. Metadata is also encoded in TEI, but as future plans incorporate the modelling of semantic interdependencies of texts and manuscripts, some RDF and OWL is also envisaged.

Harvesting of DARE data will be possible via an OAI-PMH interface, as well as via a sophisticated API for advanced interaction with the data. Visualisation and facettation of bibliographical entries is currently facilitated by way of the SIMILE toolkit, courtesy of the MIT. IBM Tivoli is used as the deep archival backend.

As all free and open source XML servers fall short on the requirements of DARE, namely scalability and depth-first searches, Xeletor as a lightweight XML server has been developed to suit this need.

Taken as a whole, the DARE project is designed to supply current and future projects of Averroes-related research with a reliable textual basis. The Averroian oeuvre will be made accessible to a broader professional audience engaging in such varied disciplines as philosophy, the study of Arabic language and literature, Islamic studies, Medieval Latin philology, Jewish studies, history and medical history.

Launched by the Thomas-Institute in February 2010, DARE will continue to evolve during the next years before reaching the complete documentation and digitisation of Averroes's works that is intended. DARE is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

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Forms and Functions of the Layout in Arabic Manuscripts

The Collaborative Research Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at Hamburg University includes nineteen sub-projects that deal with different types of manuscripts manufactured in various cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe. One of them is sub-project B 05, an external project of the Department of Languages and Cultures of the Orient of the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena. This project is about forms and functions of the layout in Arabic manuscripts of religious texts.

In spite of the significant number of preserved Arabic manuscripts, there has been little research on a larger corpus in general and on the layout of Arabic manuscripts in particular. Especially those which were used in everyday life, during teaching lessons, as memory aid for teachers as well as for the students or in prayer have often been disregarded, although these more or less plain manuscripts form the great majority of the surviving manuscripts.

The project will examine a larger corpus of daily or frequently used manuscripts that were produced over a period of more than a thousand years in the regions
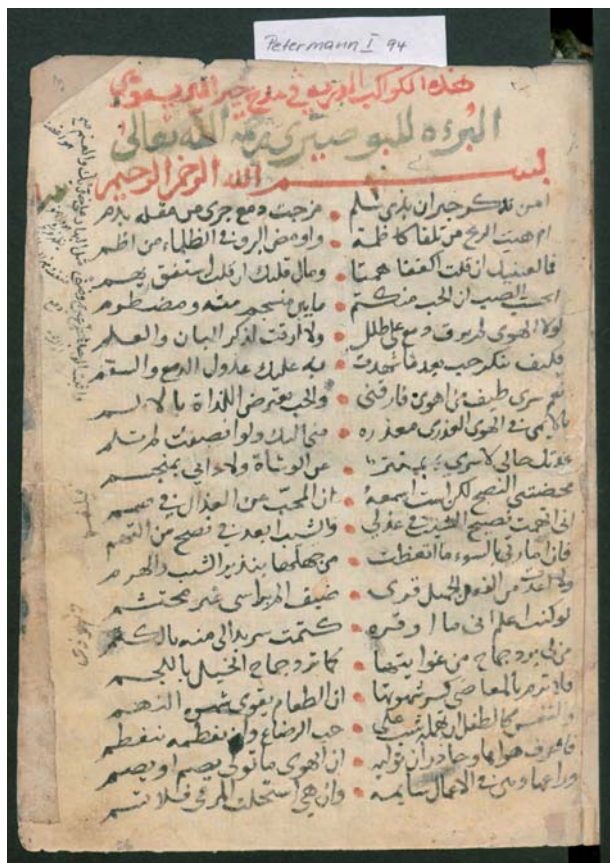
Qaṣīdat al-Burda, ms. Petermann I, 94, fol. 3r, Staats-bibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orient-abteilung

from Anatolia to Sub-Saharan Africa and from India to Morocco. The corpus includes poetry and prayer books as well as a *Ḥadīṯ* collection and copies of and commentaries on the Qur'ān. All these manuscripts are characterised by an enormous diversity of layout. The main emphasis will be put on the organisation of the page and the opening. The analysis of the single page includes the text itself, other graphical elements and empty space as well as their relationship to each other. Particular attention must be paid to elements of the layout which might be influenced by parameters such as the date of origin, the place of writing, the type of text, its topic or functional context. This includes the proportions of the page and the type area, framing, characteristics and the size of script, coloured ink, the number of lines and interline spacing, the composition of the lines, indentions and centering, chapter and section markings and their frequency. Further features may have been added by later users to facilitate the use, for example vocalisation and notes concerning the number of repetitions as well as other specifications and amendments. By studying those features systematically a conclusion can be drawn with respect to the question of how and for what reasons scribes or illuminators used these different layout elements. Since it is possible to facilitate the recitation and the reception by means of the layout, one of the basic questions will be, on the one hand, to what extent elements of the layout were used to organise the text and are therefore linked to the textual content. On the other hand, it will be of interest in what way the functional context – e.g., the mode of transmission or performative practices – has in turn an effect on the layout.

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Web: http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/Projekte.html (under B05)

New Contexts for Old Texts: Unorthodox Texts and Monastic Manuscript Culture in Fourth- and Fifth-Century Egypt (NEWCONT)

The European Research Council (ERC) recently awarded an ERC Starting Grant for the project *New Contexts for Old Texts: Unorthodox Texts and Monastic Manuscript Culture in Fourth- and Fifth-Century Egypt* (NEWCONT), for a duration of five years, starting January 2012.

Using recently accessible Coptic monastic texts, this project aims to shed new light on the production and use of some of the most enigmatic manuscripts discovered during the last century, namely the Nag Hammadi codices, together with the highly similar Berlin, Bruce, Askew, and Tchacos codices. This will be done by interpreting the contents of the codices as they are preserved in Coptic, primarily within the context of fourth- and fifth-century Egyptian monasticism and contemporary Coptic texts, while avoiding to impose the label "Gnosticism". This approach constitutes a decisive shift away from interpretations of the hypothetical Greek originals postulated for the early centuries AD across the Mediterranean, to a focus on the context of the production and use of the texts as they are found in actual manuscripts. The "new philology" perspective taken up by the project focuses on the users and producers of the extant manuscripts, and on textual variants and paratextual features as important clues. From this point of view, the project will also employ cognitive theories of literature and memory in order to illuminate early monastic attitudes towards books, canonicity, and doctrinal diversity in the context

Nag Hammadi codices, photo Claremont Colleges Digital Library

of monastic literary practices of writing, copying, translation, memorisation, and recitation, at the interface between orality and literacy. The project will thus combine new and traditional methodologies within a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework, thus bringing fresh theoretical and methodological approaches to bear on a traditionally conservative field of study, and has the potential to radically alter our picture of early Christian monasticism, manuscript culture, and the doctrinal diversity of early Christian Egypt and beyond.

The project will be based at the University of Oslo and will, in addition to the principal investigator, employ two postdoctoral researchers (for three and two years respectively) and a PhD student (for three years). The project will also organise workshops and conferences. The network and activities of the COMSt programme were an important inspiration in the conception and formulation of this research project.

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Individual research in manuscript studies

In this issue:

Syro-Melkite liturgical books and the lost stage in the formation of the *Oktoechos*

Within the framework of my doctoral thesis in Syriac studies (Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, 2007), I focused on the study of Syro-Melkite hymnody. The preliminary results of my research on Marian *theotokia* hymns are presented below.

One of the most curious and scarcely explored subjects in Syriac studies is Syro-Melkite literature, i.e. Syriac texts belonging to the Chalcedonian Christians. Hundreds of manuscripts around the world bear witness to this literary tradition. The majority of texts are translations from Greek, and are of liturgical or hagiographical character. The Syro-Melkite tradition is extremely valuable for researchers, raising a number of important issues. First, we still cannot answer the question what the first Melkite Syriac translations were (although we can suppose that they were Biblical texts) nor do we know when and where they were made. The translation technique equally remains understudied; it would be interesting to see in which respect it may be different from that employed by the West Syrians, and whether there exist varia-tions depending on the period, region or the school of translation within the Chalcedonian denomination.

It is also uncertain when the Estrangela script was modified receiving those peculiar elements, which converted it into the Melkite script. According to William H.P. Hatch, the Melkite hand developed from the 11th century onwards (s. Hatch, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts*, Boston 1946). However, it is now obvious that the handwriting of many Estrangela manuscripts, at least from the 8th century, has a number of features characteristic for the manuscript production of Melkites rather than the West Syrians or the East Syrians.

The study of Syro-Melkite translations will also be an important contribution to the history of Byzantine liturgy and of the evolution of the liturgical books. Since Syriac manuscripts have preserved the complete array of Byzantine liturgical books, they can in many cases testify to the archaic forms of the Church services or even to the particular pieces of hymnography, which were lost in the Greek tradition.

An example of such a valuable source is a unique collection of hymns to the Virgin Mary preserved in a parchment manuscript of the 9th century from the Russian National Library in St Petersburg. It contains 51 *theotokia* hymns translated from Greek, which follow the structure of the Byzantine *Oktoechos* (the book containing hymns divided in eight parts/modes according to the eight-week cycles within a liturgical year). Only 24 of these hymns have parallels in the existing

Greek tradition – either in the earliest manuscripts of *Oktoechos* (e.g., in *Paracletice sinaitica antiqua*, Sinait. gr. 1593; second part of the 8th century) or in modern printed versions. The rest of the *theotokia* have survived in Syriac only. Some of these texts also provide examples of use and revision of the Melkite translations in the West Syrian tradition. This is characteristic of the selected *tkšpt'* (supplications) which can be found in the manuscripts from the 11th century on and form a special part of the principal West Syrian hymnographic book entitled *beth gazo* (the treasury).

The collection of *theotokia* is even more valuable as it probably precedes the appearance of the whole book of *Oktoechos* in Syriac translation (the earliest Syriac manuscript of *Oktoechos*, BL Add. 17,133, is dated to the 11th century on palaeographic grounds, though the majority of manuscripts are from the 13th century). Thus, it represents an important phase in the formation of liturgical books which has no extant evidence in the original Greek tradition.

The majority of Syro-Melkite liturgical books (including the collection of *theotokia*) originate from or are kept in St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai. Many of these manuscripts were apparently used by the Syriac-speaking community in the liturgy. They may also hint to a special liturgical veneration of the Theotokos for which the texts preserved in the Saint Petersburg manuscript were intended.

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Double translations in the Greek Proverbs

My doctoral research (Durham University, Department of Theology and Religion) mainly focuses on the doublets which one reads in the Greek version of the Book of Proverbs. This translation is usually dated to the 2nd century BCE (cp. Dick 1990:21; Cook 1993a:398-399; d'Hamonville 2000:23-24; a different opinion was held only by Thackeray 1912:58-59 who based his assumption that the translation was not older than 100 BCE on a couple of orthographical particulars). Whereas no one has questioned its Jewish origin, scholars debate whether it is to be located in an Alexandrian or Palestinian milieu. The latter has been recently preferred by a number of researchers mainly because of some characteristics shared by both Ben Sira and the Greek version of Proverbs (cp. Gammie 1987:30; Dick 1990:21; Cook 1993b:32-36). There are also evident traces of a

mistrust of the foreign wisdom which might find better explanation as developing from Palestine rather than from Alexandria (Cook 1994). Nonetheless the traditional opinion has still been held in the last two decades by Ronald Giese (1992) and David-Marc d'Hamonville (2000:24-25). In his introduction, the French translator points out some geographical and climatic details which provide valuable hints (e.g., the disappearance of the bears from Prov. 17.12 and 28.15: there are no traces of this animal under the 30th parallel).

The phenomenon of the doublets has long been known. Paul de Lagarde (1863) was the first to try to explain it. Because of his persuasion that a *Revisor* had interpolated the Old Greek of Proverbs, he argued that, in case of doublets, the closest to the Masoretic text (MT) were to be rejected (Idem 1884:21). Somewhat later, Giacomo Mezzacasa (1913) suggested that the doublets were often stemming from Hexaplaric interpolations. Lastly, Charles T. Fritsch (1953) drew attention to 76 double translations, arguing that the doublet closer to the MT always stemmed from an insertion by the Hexaplaric recension. The paper enjoyed wide acceptance; it received significant attention in Sidney Jellicoe's famous introduction to the LXX (1968:138-139), and was reprinted in the well-known collection edited by Jellicoe in 1974. Fritsch's findings were among the few items in the history of the studies on the LXX of Proverbs that have remained unchallenged for decades. In 1990 Dick warned that ms. B "must be used with caution since it contains *many* Hexaplaric readings" (1990:20; my italics). Still in 2004, Fox, criticising Tauberschmidt's approach to the text, stated that "*many* stichoi in LXX Proverbs are Hexaplaric" (cp. also Fox 2005:96, 2000-2009; my italics). If in 1953, when Fritsch published his article, little was known about the pre-Hexaplaric recensions, it is astonishing that his conclusions may be repeated nowadays without a careful reexamination.

Therefore, I decided to study four of the five double translations (2.21; 3.15; 14.22; 15.6) of a whole distich, with the obeli, according to Fritsch, in the right position. In this way, I had a sufficient amount of translational material and a relatively solid text critical basis: that is, both an internal and an external control in evaluating Fritsch's thesis. Among the verses which present two additional lines, 3.15 is particularly interesting because it appears to witness a variant reading shown also by the *qere* / *ketiv* apparatus in the MT (‏מפנים‎ \ ‏מפנינים‎). Verses 14.22 (‏עכר‎ \ ‏עקר‎); 15.6 (‏יתעי‎ \ ‏ידעו‎) have

been given a careful study since they seem to present original double translations based on ancient Hebrew variant readings. On the other hand 2.21 presents a translation technique compatible with θ´, and one wonders whether this odd insertion really stems from the Hexaplaric apparatus, or the καίγε recension.

The four case studies were used in order to deduce which general patterns may occur when dealing with doublets in Proverbs. After establishing a text critical apparatus, a lexical analysis has compared every item with the MT, the patterns occurring in the other LXX books (with a particular attention to the Pentateuch for the influence it may have exerted on Proverbs), and, when appropriate, with the equivalences found in α´, σ´ and θ´. This allowed to evaluate Fritsch's proposal of a Hexaplaric origin for the doublets. The text critical apparatus received an ample discussion in order to ascertain the original text and to establish the Hexaplaric text of the passages.

The study produced a number of interesting conclusions. First of all, a simple, uniform solution cannot be given. One cannot assume from the presence of the obeli beside two lines of a doublet that the remaining two are lacking the asterisks, and depend on the Hexaplaric recension. Moreover, in three cases the study of the translation technique has shown clear consistencies with the original translator's approach. In these instances Fritsch's theory must be rejected.

Regarding the doublet in Prov. 14.22, d'Hamonville had suggested its dependence on the ambience which translated the Psalter. The lexical analysis has shown beyond any doubt that the alleged insertion is fully consistent with the translation technique of the original translator, but not with the technique of the translator of the Psalter.

Sometimes other small double translations are found: a word which can be vocalised in two different ways may be rendered twice in the same line (14.22 רע in the Sahidic addition, 15.6 חסן in the first line). In some instances, a root is interpreted according to its Aramaic meaning rather than in its Hebrew sense (this seams to be the case for רֵעַ in the Sahidic addition to 14.22, and for מלכים in 31.4; more cases in Mezzacasa 1913:47). All these features help to trace a portrait of the original translator. Scholars already agreed that he was a literate. However, the wide attention the translator gives to the polysemy of the Hebrew text adds an important element: he is not only a literate, but also a *philologist*. He is accustomed to the variant readings of the manu-

scripts, he is able to vocalise the text in different ways, to restructure the Hebrew sentences. Particularly, he is so much interested in the polysemy of the Hebrew original that he renders it *more than once*. This characteristic represents his peculiarity among the LXX translators. This philological interest for the biblical text, for its variant readings and its polysemy, suites at best a location in Alexandria, in a cultural circle which may have access to the Library and to the philologists who worked there.

As for the theology of the translator, he is certainly interested in ethics; its moralising has been stressed by several scholars. Even the stylistic tool of the antithesis is often used to enhance the moral meaning of the text in comparison with the Hebrew. Since in 3.15 a moralising antithesis is created, while in 14.22 and 15.6 the moralising antitheses are doubled, we may observe that the double translations also are involved in this moralising process.

The translator seems to cultivate some interest for the theology of the creation and of the σοφία. When dealing with Prov. 8.22-25, I noticed his repetition of the adverb πρό in order to emphasise the pre-existence of the σοφία *before* the created world, together with the peculiar use of the present γεννᾷ which seems to echo the philosophical speculations about the divine atemporality. One has to conclude, in addition, that the verb κτίζω does not bear the meaning 'to create' in this context. This fact might be an indication of an early dating for the translation.

To sum up, it seems that we are dealing here with an intellectual Jewish believer who is trying to explain his morality, and his belief in a Greek philosophical dress: a first Jewish theologian. D'Hamonville's (2000:135-138) identification of the translator of Proverbs with the Jewish philosopher Aristobulos, although not proved, receives further support.

A few text critical data were finally noted. The lack of the Göttingen major edition certainly affects our knowledge of the LXX Proverbs. The careful study of the double translations has offered a good number of variant readings, most of which are not recorded in the scientific apparatuses of BHK, BHS, BHQ. The Pre-Nicene translations, namely the *Vetus Afra* and the Coptic (especially the Sahidic), proved to preserve sometimes readings which are lost in the Greek tradition, as, e.g., in Prov. 14.22 (ἔλεον – ἀγαθοί] misericordes bonorum cogitatores sunt Lat94 Sa), and in the additional stich found in Prov. 8.31. These readings may

occasionally represent a different Hebrew *Vorlage*.

In verse 2.21 the omission of lines a-b in ms. B indicated the influence of the Hexaplaric recension even on our best manuscript for the book of Proverbs. The removal of the doublet under obeli may be at best explained if we admit that the scribe responsible for ms. B, when confronted with the striking similarity of the distichs, decided to set out the lines under obeli, because he considered them spurious.

An interesting phenomenon was found in 3.15 and 15.6 where we met a Hexaplaric variant to the text under obeli. In both instances Syh[txt] agrees with V, and Syh[mg] agrees with the common LXX. Clearly, these readings cannot stem from a recension toward the MT. I suggested that the variant reading in 15.6 shows a translation technique compatible with the original translator. The same phenomenon was noted for the Sahidic addition found in 14.22. The existence of these extra-lines led me to suggest that the authorial manuscript could have had marginal readings which occasionally were preferred by later scribes, and substituted with the readings found in the text. It is actually coherent with a translator who is able to collect Hebrew variant readings the option to offer alternative translations in the margin.

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Conference reports

In this issue:

COMSt workshops

The Making of the Oriental Book

The second workshop of the COMSt Codicology team, with 36 registered participants, was held at the Maison du Séminaire, Nice, France, on 14-15 October 2011. It was designed to explore "The making of the Oriental book" in various manuscript traditions. Both the chronological evolution and the diachronic variety of the documented practices were taken into consideration. The use of book materials was then compared to book typologies, contents and functions.

Among the topics covered were the making and the

structure of the quires (main typologies; chronological evolution and geographical diffusion); organising quires and bifolia (ordering, referencing, and "navigating" systems in Oriental manuscripts); the preparation of the page through pricking and ruling (functions, forms and positions of pricking; ruling techniques, methods, systems, and types). Scholars representing different Oriental traditions took turns in illustrating the state-of-the-art and the results of their innovative research on each of the topics.

M. Maniaci was in charge of the Greek tradition, Syriac was taken care of by F. Briquel-Chatonnet, P.-G. Borbone, and M. Farina, Coptic was analyzed by S. Emmel, D. Kouymjian spoke about the making of Armenian manuscripts, J. Gippert contributed on the Georgian manuscript tradition, the Arabic manuscripts were discussed by F. Déroche, the Ethiopic tradition was studied by E. Balicka-Witakowska and D. Nosnitsin, with a contribution from A. Bausi, an overview of the making of the Old Slavonic book was provided by S. Torres Prieto, Christian Palestinian tradition was introduced by A. Binggeli, Hebrew manuscripts were analyzed in great detail by M. Beit-Arié.

The presentations and the ensuing discussion confirmed the very unhomogenous state-of-the-art in different cultures. While in some cases extensive fundamental research has been conducted (Greek, Arabic, Hebrew), for most Oriental book cultures the codicological analysis as far as the making of the book has not yet advanced as far; the workshop gave the impetus to scholars in several fields to analyze the book making techniques for the first time.

A special attention was devoted to highlighting similarities and differences and to discussing their possible explanations. Among the important differences revealed there were, e.g., the degree of faithfulness to the so-called Gregory's rule; the distribution of the number of bifolios preferred (quaternions, quinions, etc.); the particular pagination modes or tendencies in the use of ruling instruments. The similarities and differences in bookmaking tradition can be sometimes explained by geographical proximity and cultural context (as is best revealed by the Hebrew manuscript tradition, following different models in the different regions, whether Byzantium, Germany/Europe or the Arabic Middle East); in other cases, alternative explanations might be necessary.

The relationship between the making of the book and the transmission of its contents was another impor-

tant point highlighted during the workshop.

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Specific Issues in Oriental Philology

On 8 and 9 December 2010, COMSt team 2: Philology, Critical Text Editing convened its second international workshop dedicated to Specific Issues in Oriental Philology. Over 50 scholars attended the workshop, hosted by the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens.

The presentations ranged from theoretical / methodological contributions meant to become chapters in the COMSt textbook (S. Moureau on the organisation of the critical apparatus; A. Giannouli on the *apparatus fontium et similium*) to historical overviews of existing editorial practices (S. Torres Prieto on Slavic, A. Bausi on Ethiopic).

The majority of talks focused on particularities and complexities of literary traditions that influence the work of an editor. The first session was devoted to editorial work dealing with translated texts. A case study was presented by L. Sels on how to use the original (in this case Greek: Gregory of Nyssa, *De Opificio hominis*) when establishing the text of the translation (Slavic). In most cases, the first translation would be closer to the source-language text, and then evolve according to the specificities of the target-language / culture, though at different stages of copying it may be again modified using the (Greek) original (possibly, and even probably, in a different state than the one used primarily for the translation). On the other hand, from a purely theoretical point of view, M. Cronier dwelled extensively on the conditions, advantages and limitations of using translations for establishing the original. A. Schmidt reflected on the explanations for the curious case when two distinct (Armenian) translations were produced, almost simultaneously and by the same team of translators, shortly after the composition of the original (Syriac) text (*History of Michael the Syrian*), both differing strongly from the original (mostly for ideological reasons), represented by a much later *codex unicus*. As became evident in the discussion, an explanation should still be found for the drastic change in text layout. In combination, the two versions can reveal the meaning of translation as a process of a text receiving a new national authenticity. J. den Heijer and P. Pilette illustrated their work towards an edition of the Arabic *History of the Pa-*

triarchs of Alexandria, partly translated from Greek via Coptic. Here, too, two distinct versions exist, however, produced at different points in time and comparable for an edition. During the second session, devoted to the so-called Fluid traditions, defined in detail by A. Bausi, case studies were provided for Ethiopic (A. Bausi: few if any really fluid traditions) and Coptic (H. Lundhaug: two types of texts, stable [Shenoute corpus] and fluid [Nag Hammadi]).

In continuation with the discussion begun in Leuven in 2010, a session dealt with religious/liturgical texts. A presentation of the project dedicated to the textual history of the Qur'ān (M. Marx) was followed by U. Zanetti revealing the challenges he faced when preparing an edition of the Copto-Arabic lectionary. A particular case study was dedicated to the difficulty in dealing with the edition of a text affected by physiological linguistic variation (Z. Gažáková; Arabic).

Contributions dealing with the use of digital aspects included I. De Vos who showed how simple tools (database) can be helpful in dealing with a large manuscript tradition (Greek: 137 *Questions and Answers* of Pseudo-Athanasius) and T. Andrews who relied extensively on computer assistance in producing a critical edition, from text recognition to collation to the establishment of the stemma codicum (Armenian: the *Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*).

The final presentation highlighted the difference between the traditional philological approach and the trend that has become known as the New (or Material) Philology (M. Driscoll).

For a detailed conference report, visit http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/COMST/meet2-2.html.

ES

Conference and workshops in manuscript studies

AELAC annual conference

The yearly meeting of the AELAC (Association pour l'études de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne) in 2011 took place on June 30 - July 2, 2011 in Dole. Next to the meetings of the regular collaborators to several editorial projects, presentations of on-going editorial undertakings and lectures on recent discoveries made this conference extremely interesting even for people who are no specialists of apocryphal literature. In many ways the work which has been done and which is being done in the AELAC is exemplary for COMSt. Many texts edited under the auspices of

the AELAC are transmitted in large and multilingual manuscripts traditions.

A few lectures were not focused on editorial projects, but were giving some larger view on the reception of apocryphal literature or on its background: Anne-Marie Polo de Beaulieu, *Usages et fonctions des apocryphes dans les recueils d'exempla et la prédication aux XIIIe-XIVe siècles*, and Witold Witakowski, *The "Vienna Protology" and recently discovered paintings in a church in northern Ethiopia* based on this Ethiopic apocryphal text.

Of course, reports on the advancement of editions are the core business of the AELAC meetings: Brent Landau spoke about the progress of the *Revelation of the Magi* CCSA Edition, Yves Tissot about the *Acts of Thomas*, Kristian Heal produced an update on the *Syriac History of Joseph*, Michael Muthreich commented on the Arabic and Ethiopic versions of the *Epistula de morte apostolorum Petri et Pauli* by Dionysius Areopagita, and Tony Burke reported on the progress in the producing a critical edition of the Syriac version of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*.

The presence of several scholars from Northern America was a sign of the vitality of the topic, even outside of Europe.

What was unusual this time was a special session where methodological questions about editing texts were addressed by specialists of apocryphal texts like Els Rose, *Editing the Virtutes apostolorum*, or Zbigniew Izyrodczyk, *Excer[-or-]cizing uncertainty: reflections on editing the Evangelium Nicodemi*, but also by people outside of the apocryphal literature community: Bart Janssens, *L'éditon critique aujourd'hui*, and Caroline Macé, *'Tous les cas sont spéciaux' mais y a-t-il des constantes dans les voies qui mènent à l'édition critique*?

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Digital Palaeography

On 20-22 July 2011, Malte Rehbein of the University of Würzburg hosted the ESF exploratory workshop on Digital Palaeography. Bringing together 24 researchers from 9 countries, its purpose was to explore the potential application to manuscript palaeography of the newer digital technologies, such as automated OCR, metrical analysis, quantitative methods, and forensic analysis and imaging techniques, and the likely implications of these scientific methodologies for the "traditional" art/science of palaeography.

The "traditional" perspective was provided by E. Overgaauw (Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin), who offered an overview of research in manuscript studies and the problems raised by "traditional" methods (e.g., how to accurately date and locate medieval manuscripts on the basis of script alone). He argued that, even where quantitative or numerical methodologies were applied, there would still be the requirement for manuscript expertise in order to interpret the data correctly.

A series of presentations on the new digital approaches to palaeography followed, touching on already existing digital resources: S. Brookes (King's College London; with reference to http://www.digipal.eu), W. Scase (Birmingham; http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/mancass/C11 and http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/mwm).

Scientific analysis was carried out by P. Errani (Cesena) who studied the development of methods to measure and compare the thickness of vellum in contemporary codices, to see whether recognisable techniques in the preparation of the writing-material might be found, as applied to the Malatestian Scriptorium. A similar study of the manuscripts in the Cairo Genizah – with a report on a successful case of identification – was presented by L. Wolf (Tel Aviv, s. http://www.genizah.org). T. Stinson (North Carolina) spoke on the DNA analysis of parchment.

The opportunities of computer-assisted visual analysis were illustrated by T. Schaßan (Wolfenbüttel) on the OCR, M. Exbrayat (Orléans) on the analysis of individual pen-strokes of scripts with a view to identifying identical hands in different manuscripts, M. Gau and R. Sablatnig (Vienna) on the automatic layout and character analysis (OCR) as applied to Old Church Slavonic manuscripts of Mount Sinai (s. also http://mns.udsu.ru/index_en.html).

The talk by S. Tarte (Oxford) was an elegant exposition, from the point of view of a papyrologist, of the philosophical and existential challenges faced by all who encounter the older written relics of the past.

Other contributions were made by N. Golob (Ljubljana) on digital techniques for analysing late medieval manuscript decoration, M. Smith (Paris), on script analysis, D. Stutzmann (Paris, IRHT), and H. Essler (Würzburg), and there was a valuable open workshop, utilising digital images of Oxford manuscripts, presided over by P. Stokes (King's College London).

For complete programme, paper abstracts and detailed conference reports (including full version of this report), visit http://www.zde.uni-wuerzburg.de/veranstaltungen/digital_palaeography/.

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West African Arabic Scripts: Towards a Taxonomy

On 27 October 2011, a workshop on the "West African Arabic Scripts: Towards a Taxonomy" was hosted by the University of Naples "L'Orientale". It was organised by Shamil Jeppie and Andrea Brigaglia from the University of Cape Town and Mauro Nobili from the University of Naples "L'Orientale".

In the course of the workshop, Sh. Jeppie offered a detailed report on the work of the Tombouctou Manuscripts Project (*http://www.tombouctoumanuscripts.com*). A. Brigaglia and M. Nobili presented an overview of the state-of-the-art on West African scripts. Their research has shown that neither Western nor local scholars have been paying sufficient attention to the study of West African scripts. All Arabic-based scripts employed in West African manuscripts are believed to belong to the Maghreb group (*Maġribī* scripts). European historians have grouped these scripts under the all-encompassing label of *Sūdānī* (i.e. belonging to the area of the *Bilād as-Sūdān*, roughly corresponding to the West African region, a term introduced in the late 19th century by Octave Houdas). However, the diversity of scripts is such that some scholars closely working with West African manuscripts find it necessary to establish their own terminology (e.g., Adrian H. Bivar). In more recent years, local scholars and calligraphers (Seyni Moumouni, Niamey, Niger; Maḥmūd Dadab, Timbuktu, Mali) have started using new locally accepted labels. Yet, these approaches do not entail accurate palaeographic descriptions; they often reflect cultural prejudices or local identities associated with scripts. A more accurate taxonomy would both help scholars to locating and date West African manuscripts and cast light on the fundamental problem of the origins and fates of the Islam in West Africa.

The organisers have agreed to convene a larger two-day conference on the palaeography of West African scripts at Cape Town in 2012 (possibly in June).

Andrea Brigaglia, University of Cape Town
Shamil Jeppie, University of Cape Town
Mauro Nobili, University of Hamburg

Miscellanea

In this issue:

Manuscript culture of West Africa. Part 2: A survey of the scholarly production dedicated to local manuscript collections

This publication is the second instalment of the article devoted to the West African manuscript heritage. The first part, published in the previous issue of the *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter* (2, July 2011, pp. 21-24), was focusing on the reasons for the lack of scholarly attention to this field of research. On the following pages, I review handlists, inventories and catalogues of West African manuscript collections that have been authored by both Western and African scholars since the colonial period.

Introductory notes

A review of the state-of-the-art (especially in such contexts where, as in West Africa, an important academic tradition of manuscript studies does not exist) is the starting point of every serious approach to the study of a manuscript heritage. Two essential research tools to explore West African manuscript and literary production have been developed: *West African Arabic Manuscript Database* (WAAMD) by Charles C. Stewart, and the *Arabic Literature of Africa* project (ALA) by John O. Hunwick.

The WAAMD was launched in the 1980s.[1] It is a multilingual (Arabic and English) database that includes a search engine. In its 3.0 version (*http://www.westafricanmanuscripts.org*), the database contains descriptions of more than 20,000 manuscripts included in eleven different collections. New manuscript descriptions are being added thanks to a collaboration with the London-based al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation. Due to the fact that the manuscripts are not described ex novo, but the entries are compiled using some of the available catalogues of the relevant collections, the degree of detail of the WAAMD entries depends on the information found in the original catalogue. As a result, there is a certain degree of heterogeneity, and of the thirty-one data fields, usually less than ten are fully filled out (cp. Fig. 1). As for the texts, often only the main thematic indications are reported (Sufism, Theology, Jurisprudence etc.).

Hunwick's ALA[2] was largely inspired by the work of the well-known Arabist Carl Brockelmann, the *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*.[3] The second and fourth volumes of the ALA are dedicated to West Africa and include detailed information regarding the writings of the authors form this region, as well as notes on works that are known only through quotations or fragments. To this end, the authors analysed all available sources, including indices, monographic studies and catalogues, including catalogues of collections that are available only *in situ* at the local libraries. The aim of this project is to produce a general outline of the literature from West Africa rather than a catalogue of catalogues. It is therefore understandable that the ALA provides no codicological details, saying nothing about the manuscripts' preservation conditions, page numbers, etc.

Starting with the manuscript collections mentioned in ALA and WAAMD, I provide a survey of published handlists, inventories and catalogues of these materials. The overview omits any reference to unpublished materials, such as accession lists or indices of manuscripts that are available *in situ*, as well as to collections that are not specifically devoted to West Africa and only include a few occasional manuscripts from the region.

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[1] For an analysis of the WAAMD, see Stewart 2008.

[2] Hunwick et al. 1995 and Hunwick et al. 2003. For a presentation of the project see Hunwick 2008.

[3] Brockelmann 1898-1902 and Brockelmann 1937-42.

Fig. 1. A database record from the *West African Arabic Manuscript Database*

Chronological overview: 1950s-1970s

The first pioneering works on West African collections date back to the early 20th century, when Louis Massignon presented an index of selected manuscripts from the inventory compiled by the French colonial administrator Henry Gaden of the *Šaykh* Sīdiyya Bābā (1862-1924) family library, one of the most important in Mauritania.[4] In the 1950s, Georges Vajda and H. F. C. (Abdullahi) Smith briefly described some manuscripts included in the two main West African collections kept in France, the *Bibliothèque 'Umarienne* (also called *Fonds Archinard*) at the Bibliothèque Nationale[5] and the *Fonds de Gironcourt* at the Institut de France.[6] The latter collection was re-analysed in the following decade by Hunwick and Hassan I. Gwarzo.[7]

In the late 1950s–early 1960s, the first analyses of manuscript collections housed in West African countries came to the light in the former British colonies. W. E. N. Kensdale published the handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts of the University Library of Ibadan.[8] Since then, the collection has expanded up to more than 600 items.[9] In the same Nigerian city, the Centre of Arabic Documentation of Ibadan started a project of collecting manuscripts in 1964. The policy of the project was to borrow manuscripts, copy them and return them to their owners, thus the collection exclusively contains microfilms. A list of its items regularly appeared on the centre's *Research Bulletin* until 1980–1982, describing 438 manuscripts,[10] but the number of manuscripts that Hunwick recorded at the end of the 1980s is 522.[11] Unfortunately, Hunwick also noted that the microfilms were

in a very bad condition.[12] On the same *Research Bulletin*, in 1966-67, Murray Last published a short list of the manuscripts included in the National Archives of Kaduna.[13] In Zaria, the Northern History Research Scheme of the Ahmadu Bello University established a manuscript collection whose belongings were listed and briefly described in successive reports of the project[14] and in a handlist prepared in 1979 but published in 1984.[15] However, the collection has expanded since then.[16] To complete the picture of the research initiatives dedicated to Nigerian collections in the 1960s, I would like to mention Aida S. Arif and Ahmed M. Abu Hakima's inventory of manuscripts kept in the Jos Museum and in the Lugard Hall Library, Kaduna.[17]

As for Ghana, Osman Eshaka Boyo, Thomas Hodgkin and Ivor Wilks published a list of the manuscripts preserved at the University of Ghana.[18] In 1965, mainly due to the effort of K. O. Odoom and J. J. Holden, short descriptions of selected items from the collection started appearing in a series of installments in the consecutive issues of the *Research Review* of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana.[19] Like the Centre of Arabic Documentation of Ibadan, the University of Ghana followed the policy of leaving the originals with the owners; the collection is composed of photocopies or photographs of actual manuscripts, counting about 500.

The first attempts to describe collections of manuscripts housed in what was formerly known as French West Africa go back to the mid-1960s. The

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[4]   Massignon 1909.

[5]   Vajda 1950; Smith 1959.

[6]   Smith 1958.

[7]   Hunwick – Gwarzo 1967.

[8]   Kensdale 1955-58.

[9]   Hunwick 1988:377-78.

[10]   *Arabic Manuscripts at the Center of Arabic Documentation, University of Ibadan (Nigeria). Accession list*; superseded by Hunwick – Muhammad 2001.

[11]   Hunwick 1988:378.

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[12]   Ibidem.

[13]   Last 1966 and Last 1967; superseded by Hunwick – Muhammad 1995–1997.

[14]   I have been unable to consult these reports and rely on Hunwick 1988:380 for this information.

[15]   Al-Bīlī 1984.

[16]   Hunwick 1988:380.

[17]   Arif – Abu Hakima 1965.

[18]   Boyo et al. 1962. Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to consult this publication.

[19]   *Arabic Manuscripts at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. Accession list*. The inventory has now been superseded by the online catalogue of West African collections at the Northwestern University (s. p. 14b below).

first to be described was a collection housed by the most important centre of research in the region, the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, formerly Institut Français d'Afrique Noire (IFAN). The *Catalogue des manuscrits de l'IFAN* (actually an inventory) was prepared by Thierno Diallo, Mame Bara M'Backé, Mirjana Trifkovic, and Boubacar Barry[20] and supplemented in the following decade by Ravane El-Hadji Mbaye and Babacar Mbaye.[21] More recently, Khadim Mbacké and Thierno Ka published a new inventory that included the manuscripts that had been acquired by the institute since 1975.[22] In the same years Mokhtar Ould Hamidoun and Adam Heymoski produced a provisional handlist of Mauritanian manuscripts including approximately 500 authors and more than 2,000 titles.[23]

The latter two contributions are the only ones that appeared in former French colonies until the 1980s, revealing an astonishing difference to what has happened in Ghana and Nigeria. The explanation of the obvious backwardness in the French West African manuscript studies is related, as convincingly suggested by Zakari D. Issifou, to the different policy of colonisation of France and Britain. The French policy of "assimilation" excluded any medium of acquisition and transmission of knowledge other than the French language, while the British indirect rule, that exploited the cooperation of native authorities, preserved and even stimulated traditional forms of learning and power.[24] Therefore, it comes as no surprise that at the end of British colonial rule and during the first years of independence, scholars such as the above mentioned Hunwick, Last, Smith or Wilks – who have been among the most prolific authors of West African historiography – were active in the Universities of Ghana and Nigeria.

Chronological overview: 1970s-2000s

While the 1970s did not offer any other contribution on West African collections, the 1980s were characterised by interesting pieces of research. In 1980, Elias N. Saad briefly presented some of the approximately 200 manuscripts of the Paden collection of

the Northwestern University,[25] while in 1984 the collection of Arabic manuscripts of the Institut de recherches en sciences humaines, Université Abdou Moumouni in Niamey, was introduced by Ahmed M. Kani.[26] In the following year, Nourredine Ghali, Mohammed Mahibou and Louis Brenner published the inventory of the West African manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France of Paris.[27] After the completion of this catalogue, the Bibliothèque Nationale acquired more manuscripts from West Africa, which Marie-Geneviève Guesdon analyzed in her short description of the new acquisitions in the early 2000s.[28]

The 1980s-early 1990s saw a surge of interest in the study of Mauritanian manuscripts. First, the German Ulrich Rebstock accomplished the amazing task of microfilming 2,239 manuscripts from Mauritanian libraries and completed in 1985 an inventory of these materials that was published in 1989.[29] From this fieldwork, the University of Tübingen developed the Oriental Manuscript Resource (OMAR), a database available at *http://omar.ub.uni-freiburg.de* which includes full reproductions of the manuscripts described. At the same time, Stewart published two inventories of Mauritanian collections. The first concerns the manuscripts of the Institut Mauritanien de Recherche Scientifique (IMRS),[30] a collection that was started in the middle of the preceding decade by the first director of the Institut, Abdellah Ould Babacar.[31] Stewart also produced the catalogue of library of *Šaykh* Sīdiyya Bābā, a library that had grown substantially in the twentieth century due to the activities of Sīdiyya's son Harūn (1919-1977).[32]

The mid-1990s were marked by the increasing public attention to manuscripts preserved in West Africa, probably due to the democratisation of Mali that "restored citizens their democratic rights, among which was the right to establish foundations, companies and private societies"[33] in order to promote families'

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20   Diallo et al. 1966.

21   Mbaye – Mbaye 1975.

22   Mbacké – Ka 1994.

23   Ould Hamidoun – Hymowski 1965-1966. I have not been able to find this work and I rely on the information included in Stewart et al. 1990:181.

24   Issifou 2002:34.

25   Saad 1980.

26   Kani 1984. Some historical information has been added by Fadel 1996. The publication has been superseded by Mouleye – Sayyid 2004.

27   Ghali et al. 1985.

28   Guesdon 2002.

29   Rebstock 1989.

30   Stewart et al. 1992.

31   Stewart 1991:180.

32   Stewart 1994. See also Stewart 1991.

33   Haidara 2008:268.

Fig. 2. A database record from the *Catalogue of the Herskovits Library Collection*

manuscript heritage. In this climate, the once fabled city of Timbuktu and its manuscript collections acquired a new appeal. The fascination with the city and its "hidden treasures" culminated in a series of BBC documentaries.[34] Subsequently, many private libraries opened in Mali as well as in other West African countries, such as Mauritania.

While a lot of contributions promoting these libraries have been published in recent years,[35] the main progress in the field of cataloguing and manuscript studies comes from the al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation that launched an important project of handlists and catalogues of West African collections that, until today, has covered many West African regions: Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. This project has so far analysed the collections of the National Archives of Kaduna,[36] the Institut des Hautes Etudes et de Recherches Islamiques – Ahmed Baba (IHERI-AB) (formerly Centre de Documentation et de Recherches Ahmed Baba – CEDRAB),[37] the towns of Šinqīṭ and Wadān in Mauritania,[38] the libraries of Šaykh S. M. Cisse *al-Ḥājj* Malick Sy and Ibrāhīm Niasse in Senegal,[39] the Mamma Haidara library of Timbuktu,[40] the University of Ibadan,[41] the manuscripts of the Mauritanian towns of Ni'mah and Wallatah,[42] the manuscripts of the Institut de Recherche en Science Humaines (IRSH) of Niamey[43] and the al-Zeiniyyah Library in Boujbeiha, Mali.[44] The al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation descriptions have rendered some of the inventories and handlists discussed on the preceding pages obsolete.[45]

Other relevant contributions of recent years include the online catalogue of the West African collections of manuscripts of the Herskovits Library of African Studies at the Northwestern University (*http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/arbmss/index.html*). Initiated in the early 1990s by John Hunwick, Hamid Bobboyi and Muhammad S. Umar, the catalogue follows the criteria of WAAMD. It includes the descriptions of manuscripts from West Africa forming the 'Umar Falke Collection, the John Paden Collection, the John Hunwick Collection, the University of Ghana Collection, and other documents from different sources. In 1993, the late Wilks donated to the Herskovits Library copies of manuscripts from the collection of the Centre of Arabic Documentation of Ibadan. The descriptions for this part were provided

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[34]   Krätli 2011:331.

[35]   See, for example, the presentations included in Gaudio 2002 and Jeppie – Diagne 2008.

[36]   S. n. 14 above.

[37]   Ould Ely et al. 1995-1998.

[38]   Ould M. Yahya & Rebstock 1997.

[39]   Kane 1997.

[40]   Haidara – Sayyid 2000–2003.

[41]   Hunwick – Muhammad 2001.

[42]   Ould M. Yahya et al. 2003.

[43]   Mouleye – Sayyid 2004.

[44]   Haidara – Sayyid 2006.

[45]   Cp. footnotes 10, 13, 26 above.

for the online catalogue by Muhammad S. Umar, Andrea Brigaglia, and Zachary Wright (cp. Fig. 2). More recently, Carmela Baffioni edited a scanty handlist of the Ahel Habott library of Chinguetti including more than 1,000 items.[46]

Finally, two other collections kept in France have been described. The first is the so-called *Petit fonds Archinard* (which should not be confused with the *Fonds Archinard* kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale, s. p. 12a above), housed by the Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie [formerly Musée de la France d'outre-mer].[47] A handlist of this collection of Arabic West African manuscripts was produced in 2000–2001 by Jillali El Adnani.[48] The second is the *Fonds de Gironcourt* of the Insitut de France (cf. p. 12a). As already announced in the previous issue of the *COMSt Newsletter*,[49] I am currently finalising the analytic catalogue of this collection.[50]

Final remarks

In spite of the seemingly high number of contributions under review, the West African manuscript heritage, a huge legacy of the Islamic civilisation that has flourished in the region for centuries, remains largely unexplored. All the initiatives described in this overview show, in Graziano Krätli's words, a substantial "imbalance between the 'intellectual' and 'physical' dimension" in the study of West African manuscripts.[51] A lot of work has been done in order to explore the Arabic literacy developed in the region, ranging from rough translation of texts to critical editions, to still the thirst of African scholars for new sources that can cast light on the history and culture of West Africa.[52] But none of these studies has addressed the material aspects of the manuscript. Among the few exceptions are the analyses of specific Qur'ān copies,[53] the general

presentation of the Timbuktu manuscript tradition by John Hunwick and Alida J. Boye (meant, however, for a non-specialist audience),[54] and the essays by Hamès and Seyni Moumouni.[55] Some contributions have been devoted to the study of the paper used in West African manuscripts,[56] and more recent publications address the problem of the Arabic scripts employed in West Africa.[57] Krätli's collection of essays *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade*[58] is the first attempt to study the West African manuscript as both a container of one or more texts and as a physical object that reflects the cultural context in which it was created, including the materials, the techniques, skills, circulation, collecting etc. No further research has been carried out in this field of inquiry, and a lot of issues relating to the peculiarities of West African manuscripts remain unexplored.

I would like to conclude by quoting once again Krätli's words: "any full understanding and appreciation of this unique cultural heritage, let alone any serious attempt at studying or preserving it, should roughly consider all the material, technological, economic, cultural and intellectual aspects of book production, circulation, consumption and preservation in the area".[59]

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[46] Baffioni 2006.

[47] Today at the Quai Brandy Museum.

[48] Adnani 2000–2001.

[49] Nobili 2011a.

[50] Nobili forthcoming b. For a preliminary presentation of the de Gironcourt collection s. Nobili 2008–2009.

[51] Krätli 2011:329.

[52] This scholarly production spans from the late 19th century (see, for example, Houdas 1898–1900) to the recent project Valorisation et Edition Critique des Manuscrits Arabes Sub-Sahariuenns (VECMAS) promoted by George Bohas (see *http://vecmas-tombouctou.ens-lyon.fr*).

[53] Abbott 1938; Brockett 1987; Stanley 1999; Hamès 2009; Brigaglia 2011; Bondarev forthcoming.

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[54] Hunwick – Boye 2008.

[55] Hamès 2002; Moumouni 2007a and 2007b.

[56] Bloom 2008; Waltz 1980–1982 and Waltz 2011.

[57] Bondarev forthcoming; Nobili forthcoming a; Nobili 2011b; Brigaglia 2011.

[58] Krätli – Lydon 2011.

[59] Krätli 2011:340.

319 (with thorough descriptions of manuscripts formerly listed): *RBCAD*, 8/1-2. 1972, pp. 35-51; indexes of the accessions until 1972: *RBCAD*, 9-10, 1973-1974, pp. 88-109; Mss CAD/375-401: *RBCAD*, 11/1-2, 1975-1976, pp. 49-62; Mss CAD/402-422: *RBCAD*, 12/1-2, 1977-1979, pp. 64-71; Mss CAD/423-438: *RBCAD*, 13/1-2, 1980-1982, pp. 64-73; Mss CAD/439-448: *RBCAD*, 14-17, 1983–1989, pp. 107-112.

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ʿĪsà the Prophet: some Turkish anecdotes not found in the Arabic tradition. Part 2.1. Talking objects and animals. Part 2.2. Miscellanous topics

The text below is the second instalment of a series devoted to the various "Märchen-Typen" in the Turkic ʿĪsà corpus. While in the first part, which appeared in the previous issue of the COMSt Newsletter, I dealt in detail with the *Long-living Worshipper* story (s. also Appendix below for some additional observations on this topic), the second is devoted to a series of stories featuring talking objects and animals, namely the *Talking Frog* and the *Talking Mountain*. It also includes two additional short miraculous narratives. Being a work in progress, the study largely limits to presenting the texts and commenting on them, leaving the final analysis for a later stage in research. For a general introduction on the popular motifs in the Turkic ʿĪsà tradition, as well as for an explanation of the transliteration convention used in this article, s. *COMSt Newsletter* 2, July 2011, p. 25.

The Talking Frog: from the *Cāmiʿü-ʾl-ḥikāyāt* by Muḫliṣ.

This parable of the Talking Frog narrates of a frog and a swallow, serving God by delivering its daily food to an animal living at the bottom of the sea. The frog is compared to the earthly kings who feed their dependants on behalf of God. The present tale finds a striking parallel in an anecdote embedded in *al-Durra al-muḍīʾa fī l-dawla al-ẓāhiriyya*[1] (a study of Damascus during a part of the reign of Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq) by Muḥammad ibn Ṣaṣrā.[2] In ibn Ṣaṣrā's account Sulaymān takes ʿĪsà's place, and an ant[3] that of the swallow. Obviously, the pending question is not whether ibn Ṣaṣrā or Muḫliṣ,[4] who were contemporaries (14th/15th century), would have been the direct prototype of each other, but from which common source both texts stem.

Manuscripts collated: London, British Library, Or. 14,920; Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, Tokat Zile İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi, 469.
Manuscripts checked: Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 8261, f. 194r ll. 1-17; Anklara, Milli Kütüphane, A 8402, fols. 78r l. 4 – 79r l. 2; Amasya Beyazıt İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 837, fol. 9r-v; Nevşehir-Ürgüp, Tahsin Ağa İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi, 423, fols. 9v l. 1 – 10r l. 10.

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[1] I am indebted to Evgenia Sokolinskaia for this clue.
[2] Cf. Brinner 1963, vol. 1, 290; vol. 2, *221 and foll. On beast fables embedded in the narrative of Islamic historians, cf. at least Brockelmann 1926 and Irwin 1992:49.
[3] The ant is typically connected with Sulaymān, cp. Qurʾān XXVII, 18; see Boeschoten 1995:323-325 (text); Brinner 2002:495 and foll.
[4] Cf. *COMSt Newsletter*, 2, July 2011, p. 27 n. 17.

BritLib, Or. 14,920, fol. 15r-v, l. 2 (= Tokat Zile 469, fol. 24v, l. 3; Beyazıt 837, fol. 9r l. 2).

ḥikāyet bir gūn ʿĪsà peyġamber ʿ⟨aleyhi-ʾl-selā⟩m |₃ bir deŋiz kenārındɒ ṭururdī gȫrdī-kim bir qūrbāġɒ |₄ ṭurur bir q⟨ı⟩rlanqıç geldī âġzındɒ bir yeşil yapraq getūrdī |₅ ʾōl qūrbaġɒnuŋ âġzınɒ vȇrdī dāḫī gitdī ⟨ʾōl qūrbāġā ʾōl yaprāġī âldī deŋiz ʾīçinɒ ṭaldī⟩ bir zemāndan |₆ ṣoŋrɒ yinɒ çıqdī ⟨ʾĪsà⟩ ʾōl qūrbaġayɒ ṣȫrdī-kim «iy qūrbaġɒ |₇ ʾōl yeşil yaprāġī neyledūŋ?» didī qūrbaġɒ ɒydūr |₈ deŋiz dibindɒ bir büyūk ṭāş vār-dur ʾōl ṭāşuŋ |₉ İçindɒ ḥaq taʿālà bir cānavercik ḫalq ɒylemiş#dūr ʾōl cā|₍₁₀₎nverūŋ her gūn bir yeşil yaprāq ʾōyunī vār-dur ʾōl |₁₁ melek her gūn bir yeşil yaprāq getūrür ben ʾōl yaprāġī |₁₂ ʾōl deŋiz dibindɒ ṭāş İçindɒ-kī cānaverɒ ʾūlaşdū|₍₁₃₎rūrīn zīrā ḥaq taʿālà ʾōl melek ʾīlɒ benī ʾōl cānaverūŋ rızqın || (15v) ₁ ʾūlaşdırmaq ʾīçūn ḥiẕmet-kār qōmışdūr didī ʾĪsà |₂ peyġamber ʿ⟨aleyhi-ʾl-selā⟩m ɒydūr ʾōl cānaverɒ ʾōl yaprāġī İletdükün zemāndɒ |₃ ne#dir {ʾōl cānaver} didī ʾōl qūrbaġɒ [[ɒydür]] qaçan#kim ʾōl yaprāġī |₄ âldūġī zemāndɒ dır-kim

سُبحانَ مَنْ تراني ويَعرِفُني [ويعلم] |ₐ مكاني ويَرزُقُني ولا يَنسَاني

dīr didī imdī ʾī qarındāş |₆ qarɒ deŋiz dibindɒ qarɒ ṭāş İçindɒ bir cānaverūŋ rızqın |₇ vȇren pādişāh hergiz qūllarīnuŋ rızqın kesmez […]

4 qırlanqıç| qarlanqıc Mss – yeşil| yāşıl **Zile 469** and *passim*. 5 qūrbaġɒnuŋ| qūrbāġɒ **Zile 469** – ⟨[…]⟩| **Or. 14,920** >. 6 ⟨ʾĪsà⟩| **Or. 14,920** > – iy qūrbaġɒ| **Zile 469** >. 9 cānvercik| cānever **Zile 46**9 and *passim*. 13| zīrā **Zile 469** >. (15v) 1| qōmışdūr **Zile 469** > – 2| peyġamber ʿm **Zile 469** > – ʾōl yaprāġī İletdükün zemāndɒ| yaprāġī âldūġī vaqtīn **Zile 469**. 3-4 ʾōl yaprāġī âldūġī zemāndɒ-dır-kim| yaprāġī âlūr dīr-kim **Zile 469**. 5 didī| **Zile 469** >. 8-9 imdī hīç qayırmɒ kim rızqūŋ saŋɒ ʾūlaşmaqlıġɒ senden ɒrtūq ʾīvār ʾȫylɒ bilmek gerek| sen hīç qayırmɒ rızqūŋ senden ɒrtūq ʾqāyırır didī **Zile 469**.

Tale: One day Prophet ʿĪsà [PBUH] made a rest stop on a sea shore and saw a frog. A swallow came, bringing a green leaf in his beak and put it in the mouth of the frog; the frog took the leaf and plunged it into the sea; then he went away and after a while he appeared again. ʿĪsà asked the frog: "O frog, what (are) You do(ing with) this green leaf?". The frog answered: "In the deep bottom of the sea there is a big stone: God Almighty created a small animal inside this stone; this animal enjoys the daily appearance of a green leaf; each day that angel brings a green leaf; I deliver (it) to the animal (living) in the stone (lying) on the bottom of the sea: so that God Almighty, by means of this angel, engages me as a servant in order to deliver the (everyday) sustenance of the animal". Prophet ʿĪsà [PBUH] asked: "During the time in which You are accomplishing the transportation of the leaf, what does the animal do?". The frog answered: "When the animal takes the leaf, (it) says: 'Praise (God), He who sees me, knows me and my place, helps me and does not forget me [Ar.]'". Therefore, brother, (consider that) the king who gives sustenance to an animal (living) in a black stone in the bottom of the black sea will never cut off feeding his servants.

The Talking Mountain: from the *Maqālāt* by Ḥācı Bektāş Velî († ca. 1271).

The parable of the Talking Mountain narrates about a mountain that fears the eternal fire. The mountain asks Prophet ʿĪsà for his intercession on its behalf, and is offered consolation.

Of this tale we may detect at least two Turkish versions: the first one is included in the verse transposition of Ḥācı Bektāş Velî's *Maqālāt*, rendered into Turkish (from Arabic) by Ḥaṭiboğlu (14th-15th century)

in his *Baḥrü'l-Ḥaqayıq*; the second is embedded in the prose version of the same text by a certain Saʿīd (cp. Yılmaz et al. 2007:47). Below, I offer the edition and translation of the *meśnevi* by Ḥaṭiboğlu.

Manuscript checked: Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 1311, written in 973 of the Hijra (1565 a.D.), pp. 27-30 (= ed. Türk 2009:77-79 [14A-15A]).

Photographic reproduction in: Ertalyan 1960; Develi 2006:217-219. On Ḥaṭiboğlu: Erkan 1997. Edition of the *Baḥrü'l-Ḥaqayıq*: Türk 2009.

On the "Speaking mountain" motif: Thompson 1956, vol. 3, p. 205, § F755.1. On the "Weeping rocks" motif: Thompson 1956, vol. 3, p. 214, § F801.

Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 1311, p. 27 l. 7 – p. 28 l. 13 (couplets 1-13 of p. 29 [15A] are here omitted).

P. 27, ḥikāyet-i-ʿĪsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām

｜7 ḥikāyet ėyler ʾōl ʿĪsà ibn-i-meryem	seḥer çūn gül yüzinǝ düşdī şebnem
｜8 kiʰ bir gūn ṣaḥrādɒ bir ṣūyɒ ėrdüm	teferrüc qıldum içdüm ânı gördüm
｜9 laṭīf-ü-ḥūb ṣūretdǝ ʿilācī	ve-līkin lezz̤etinde qātı âcī
｜10 yücā gördüm qātı ben ʾō ṭāġī	duʿā qıldüm şeşildī dīlī bāġī
｜11 çūʰ ʾōl ṭāġ söyleyüb qıldı ḫiṭābī	didüm bū söz yüzindǝ sil niqābī
｜12 kiʰ bū ṣū niçūn âcī ʾōldī ʾī yār	ḥaber vėrdī bū rāzdan ʾōl ḥaberdār
｜13 didī ʾōl ṭāġ baŋa kīm yā rūḥ-u-ʾllāh	baŋa bir nesnǝ vāqıʿ ʾōldī nāgāh

P. 28

｜1 zemānī māż̤īdǝ kīm geçdi devrān	kelīm-ü-ʾllāh ȧdī mūsà ibn-i-ʿimrān
｜2 geçer-dī bir yigit bi-ʾl-qaṣd ticārǝ	قودوها الناس والحجارة5 ʾōqūdī
｜3 ḥaber vėr dīdüm ȧŋā ʾī dilārām	yigit lil-kāfirindǝ qıldī ârām
｜4 didüm-kiʰ yā yigit sen bū âyātı	nǝ yėrden naql ʾėdersin beyyinātī
｜5 didī tevrīt içinden naql ėdȧrǝm	dāḫī vār mı sözüŋ ėyit gidȧrǝm
｜6 dīdüm ben tevrīt kim naqlı#dur bū	didī ʾōl dört kitābuŋ naqlı#dur būʾ
｜7 zebūr-ı tevrit-i fürkān-ı incīl	būlāruŋ içrǝ yazlū-dür bū teʾvīl
｜8 dīdī vū-geçdī gitdi ʾōl dil-ėfrūz	-ḫirāşideⁿ qılub gȫŋlümī düpdüz
｜9 pes ʾōl vaqtdan berü kim aġlaram ben	bū ṣū gȫzüm yāşī-dur çaġlaram ben
｜10 şükür kim ʾūş ėrürdi benī ȧllāh	kiʰ yüzüŋ gördüm ʾūşdǝ ʾī rūḥ-u-ʾllāh
｜11 duʿā qıl#kim duʿāŋ gey müstecāb#dur	duʿālardɒ senüŋ yavlaq ʾīcāb#dur
｜12 çeleb ʾōddan benī âzād qılsūn	ṭamūlar heybetinden yād qılsūn
｜13 hemān kim bū sözī işitdī ʾĪsā	qabūl ʾėt ʾī ḫuẕā dır her ne#yısā

P. 27: Story of ʿĪsà Peace Be Upon Him

7	ʿĪsà son of Meryem tells a story:	Early in the morning, when the dew has fallen down upon the rose
8	One day, in the desert I reached a pool.	I rejoiced, I drank and I realised that (water was)
9	A medicine of agreeable and pleasing aspect	but harshly bitter in taste.
10	I lifted my eyes: "I am the mountain,	I prayed and the fraenulum of my tongue was untied".
11	When that mountain spoke and delivered such a speech,	I said, "Remove the veil from this discourse:
12	Why has this water become (so) bitter, o friend?"	He informed [me], regarding this mystery, [he] the knowing,
13	This mountain said to me, "O Spirit of God,	Suddenly something happened to me.

P. 28

1	In past times when came to pass the age	(of) *Kelimullah* Moses, son of Imran
2	a young man passed by aiming at commerce [and]	recited 'his fuel are men and stones' [Ar., Qurʾān II, 24].
3	'Tell (me),' I said to him, 'O beloved	young man, (who) took rest in (the midst) of Infidels',
4	I said: 'O young man, this verse	from where do you transmit (it), so clear.
5	He said: 'From within the *Tevrît* [Torah] I transmit (it)'.	'What else is (there)? Say thy word' I insisted
6	Quoth I: 'the *Tevrît* is the transmission of which (text)?'	He answered: 'It is the transmission of the Four Books:
7	'Psalms, Pentateuch, Qurʾān, Gospels.	In those (books) this interpretation is written.'
8	He said, and went away, that burning tongue	lacerating and crushing my heart.
9	Ever since I have wept.	This water gushing (from me) are my tears.
10	Thanks (be to) God that enabled me to reach enlightenment,	since now I have seen your face, O Spirit of God.
11	Pray! Since your praying is very well received,	your prayers have a strong response potential.
12	Let God liberate me from fire!	He would keep remembrance of hellish dread!".
13	When ʿĪsà heard thes(e) word(s)	(he said), "Accept (it), o God! Pick (it) up, whatever will be!".

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5 For metrical reasons (viz. in order to avoid hypermeter), *wa-qūduha* was shortened into *qūduha*.

The narrative content of the tale borrowed from the *Maqālāt* differs substantially from the only apparently analogous "talking rock tale", reported in the *Cevāhir-i cemʿiyyɜ* by Demûrcî Zâde Ḥalîl b. İbrâhîm. The latter turns out to be a variant of the cognate story told by al-Samarqandī in his تنبيه الغافلين:[6]

Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 5135, fols. 29v ll. 2-14 (= Borg. turc. 5, fols. 82r l. 20 – 82v l. 3).

A 5135, ff. 29v l. 2: ḥikāyet ʾōlunūr |₃ ʿĪsà peyġamber ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām bir gūn gīderdī bir derɜdɜ bir ʾaẓīm qayɒ |₄ {qayɒ} gōrdī-kim zārlıq ėydūr aġlar iŋler ėyitdī yā ilahī bū qayɒ |₅ nɜ sebebden ʾiŋler âvāz geldi#kim yā ʿĪsà qayādan ṣōrġıl-kim |₆ cevāb vėrɜ ėyitdīgī yā ʿĪsà ʾōl#vaqıtdan berū-kī ḥaq taʿālà |₇ qūrʾāndɒ cehennemüŋ ṭūtarūġī âdam ʾōġlanlarī#dur ve-qayālar-dur |₈ didī qōrqāram-kī ʾōl ṭūtaraq ʾōlā qayālardan ʾōlām ɒnūŋ |₉ ʾiçūn bū vech#le ėgilirem yā ʿĪsà didī ʿĪsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām âġladī |₁₀ ėyitdī ilahī qayɒ-kī ʾōdɒ gīrmesī iḥtimāl ʾūzerīnɜ zīrā ėkśer |₁₁ ehl-i-tefsīr kibrīt qayālarī#dur didīler ɒmmā âdam ʾōġlanlarī |₁₂ ʾāşīlerī girɜcekī maʿlūm#dur didīler ḥāl bū-dur-kī ɒnlar {nw} nesnɜ-ьı |₁₃ fikr ʾēdūb âh ʾēdūb ġuşşɒlanmazlar zīrā günāh ʾēdɜ ʾēdɜ gōŋüllerī |₁₄ qayā gibī ʾōlmışdur nitekī qayādan daḥī ziyādɜ qatī ʾōlmışdur […]

> **2/3** ḥikāyet ʾōlunūr ʿĪsà peyġamber| ḥikāyet ḥażret-i ʿĪsà. **3** gīderdī| gīderken – bir ʾaẓīm qayɒ| bir qayɒ. **4** kim zārlıq ėydūr aġlar iŋler ėyitdī| ve-iŋledī ėyitdī – yā ilahī| ilahī ve-mevlāy ve-seyyidī. **5** âvāz geldi#kim| hātifden nidā geldi-kī. **5/6** ṣōrġıl kim cevāb vėrɜ ėyitdīgī| suɜāl ėylɜ ḥażret-i ʿĪsà suɜāl ʾēdīcek cevābındɒ. **7** qūrʾāndɒ| kitābındɒ – ṭūtarūġī| ṭūtarāġī – ʾōġlanlarī#dur| ʾōġullarī. **8/9** didī qōrqarām-kī ʾōl ṭūtaraq ʾōlā qayālardan ʾōlām ɒnūŋ ʾiçūn bū vech#le ėgilirem yā ʿĪsà didī| dīdī. **9/10** ʿĪsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām âġladī ėyitdī| ḥażret-i ʿĪsà âġladī. **10/14** ilahī qayɒ-kī → nitekī qayādan daḥī ziyādɜ qatī ʾōlmışdur| ʾōl qayɒ-kī ʾōdɒ gīrmek iḥtimālī ʾūzerɜ-dūr ɒşīlerüŋ ḥōd girmelerī müteʿayyin būnī fikr ʾēdūb nīçūn ġuşşɒlanmazlar zīrā günāhī ʾēdɜ ʾēdɜ qalblarī qayɒlar gibī belki daḥī pek ʾōlmışdur […]

One narrates that: one day Prophet ʿĪsà [PBUH] was wandering (when) in a valley he saw a rock which was whining lamentally and said: "My God, for which reason is that rock moaning?". A mysterious voice shouted: "O ʿĪsà, just ask the rock!". When ʿĪsà had put forth his question, the answer (was): "O ʿĪsà (I have been moaning) since that time in which, according to God Almighty's Book, men and rocks became tinder for Gehenna. I'm afraid that (as long as) that tinder (will) exist and (as long as) I (will) be a rock, because of it I (will have to) submit myself to this condition, O ʿĪsà". ʿĪsà wept and said: "My God, concerning the rock coming into (eternal) fire this is possible, since the majority of the interpreters say that [the hell] is made of sulphur rock; concerning, however, the human sinners, it is sure that they go (into eternal fire); the fact is that, whatever they (might) have in mind (or) (might) sigh for, (sinners) are not troubled (by the perspective

of eternal fire): in fact, their hearts, being continuously sinful, become as rock and even harder than rock […].

The motif of talking inanimate objects can be classified together with the well-known theme of the **Talking Ruins**. The "Talking Ruins" are a widespread topic in the Muslim "Gospel" as well as in Mohammedan *Ḥadīt*.[7] The following Turkish tale appears to be thematically akin to Khalidi 2001:59 and foll., no. 14; and Khalidi 2001:190, no. 250 = Chialà 2009:117, no. 319. I will give here only the *incipit*, taken from Ms Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 5135,[8] fols. 5r l. 6-5v [Ms Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana,[9] & 72 sup., fols. 13r l. 5 – 13v l. 4, gives a slightly different text].

Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 5135, fols. 5r ll. 6-14.

|₆ ḥikāyet ʿĪsà peyġamber ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām ėydür benī İsrāьīl |₇ {ėydür benī ɪsrāьīl} şehirlerinden bir şehrɜ girdüm gōrdüm ‡ʾōl |₈ şehrüŋ ėvlerī ve-çārdaqlarī ve-ṣōqāqlarī ṭopd̩olū |₉ qı⟨z⟩ ve-âdam sōkūkī ʾōlmış çürīmiş‡[10] ʿĪsà çaġırdī ėyitdī |₁₀ ėy çürīmiş sōkükler ėy fānī ʾōlmış bedenler baŋā ḥaber vėrüŋ |₁₁ kim sīzɜ bū ḥāl=ından ʾōldī †bir âvāz geldi-kim bū çürīmiş |₁₂ bedenlerden daḥī bū sōküklerden-kim† [11] yā ʿĪsà biz cümlɜmüz şāġ vel|₁₃-selāmet gēcɜ yatduq ṣabāḥ biz bizī hāviyɜ ṭāmūsındɒ bōlduq didiler […]

> & 72 sup. fol. 13r ll 5-12: |₅ ʾōn āltıncī ḥikāyet ʾōlundī#kī ʿĪsà peyġamber ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m seyāḥatdɒ gezerken bir şehr gōrdī benī ɪsrāīl |₆ şehirlerinden şehrüŋ ʾiçinɜ girdī hīç bir âdām gōrmedī ėvlerindɜ |₇ ve-ṣōqaqlarındɒ ve-dükkānlarındɒ cümlɜsī çevirmiş sōkükler ve-fānī ʾōlmış tenler |₈ yeter gōrdī ʿĪsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m nedā qıldī çāġırdī ėyitdī yā sōkükler ḥālūŋuzdan |₉ baŋā ḥaber vėrüŋ n#ōlduŋuz bīlɜ ḥāl ʾōldüŋuz didī ʾōl sōküklerden ɒllāhu taʿā(là) |₁₀ ėmriylɜ bir âvāz geldī ėyitdīler yā rūḥu-ʾllāh qaçān gēcɜ gündüz ʾōlsɒ şāġ |₁₁ ve-selamet ʾōlūrduq ɒllāhu taʿā(là) bizɜ hīç bir sāʿat ėlem ve-zaḥmet vermedī |₁₂ yaʿnī hīç ḥastɒlıq vermezdī […]

[…] Tale: Prophet ʿĪsà [PBUH] said: "I entered a city of Jews and I saw ‡ that its houses, pavilions and streets were jam full of withered putrefied shreds of human corpses". ‡ İsa shouted and said: "O putrid shreds, o perishable bodies, give me information about what happened to You!". † A cry emerged from those rotten bodies and shreds (of putrid flesh): † "O ʿĪsà, all of us slept safely (to)night, (but in the) morning we were (already) in the (bottomless) pit of Hell […]".

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[6] Hayek 1959:196 and foll.; Khalidi 2001:135, no. 150 ("a curious story of unknown origin"); Chialà 2009:55, 256 and foll., no. 161.

[7] Cf. Khalidi 2001:60.

[8] Cf. supra: Demûrcî Zâde Ḥalîl b. İbrâhîm, *Cevāhir-i cemʿiyyɜ.*

[9] Hammer no. 179: the first section, fols. 1v-39v, is dated 3 cemāẕiyü-ʾl-ėvvel 1003 (= January 14, 1595).

[10] The sentence between obeli features a quite odd syntax. I propose the following rearrangement: ‡⟨kim⟩ ʾōl şehrüŋ ėvlerī ve-çārdaqlarī ve-ṣōqaqlarī çürīmiş qız ve-âdam sōküklerī ṭoptolū⟨sī⟩ ʾōlmış‡.

[11] Here again a syntactic displacement took place: †bū çürīmiş bedenlerden daḥī bū sōküklerden bir âvāz geldi-kim†.

Part. 2.2: Miscellaneous topics

A kind of Turkish *Dormitio Mariae*

This text is taken from the *Risāle-i-ṭarīqu-ʾl-edeb* (Kitâb-ı teʾdib "*Liber eruditionis*") by ʿAlī İbn-i Ḥüseyin el-Amāsī [ʿAlāüddīn ʿAlī b. Ḥüseyin el-Amāsī] (†1470). According to Ms. Barb. or. 65, fol. 120r l. 10, "This work was composed in the (Year) 857ᵗʰ of the Hijra, Year of the Conquest of Constantinople [= 1453 a.D.]".[12] According to Ms. Vatican Library, Barb. or. 32 (*olim* vi.61), fol. 67r, l. 10, "[…] this book was composed and written on the 29ᵗʰ Muharrem of the Year 954 of the Hijra [= March 21, Monday, 1547], after the evening". Finally, Ms. Barb. or. 65 (*olim* vii.9), fols. 92v-120r: fol. 120r says: "[…] the book was ended on the 5ᵗʰ Zilhicce of the Year 975 [= June 1, Tuesday, 1568]".[13] The latter manuscript gives a slightly different text.

Barb. or. 32, fol. 16v ll. 1-9.

ḥikāyet ʿīsà peyġāmberüŋ meger-kim ȧnāsī ḥastɒ yidi̇ |₂ şū diledi̇ ʿīsà bardaġī âldī şū getürmegeʾ gitdi̇ ʾōl gelincə |₃ ȧnāsī teslīmə ʾōlūb cān ḥaqqɒ ı̇ṣmarladī ʿīsà şūyı getürdi |₄ ȧnāsīnī ʾūyūmış ṣanūb bardaġuŋ dibin eli̇ âyāsınuŋ içinə |₅ qōdī daḫi̇ ȧnāsınuŋ âyāġī qatınɒ dūtdī ṭūrdī tā ṣubuḥ ʾōlıncɒ |₆ namāz vaktı ʾōldī meryem ḫātūn ʾūyanmadī ʿīsà peyġāmber ṭūrdī |₇ ânāsınuŋ bāşī qātınɒ geldī gördi-kim cān ḥaqqɒ vāṣıl ʾōlmış |₈ diledi-ki̇m bardaġī eḷinden yėrə qōyɒ bardaġuŋ dibi̇ ṣovuqdan |₉ ʿīsānuŋ mübārek âyāsınɒ yāpışmışdī […]

> Barb. or. 65, fol. 102r ll. 6-11, incipit: Bābu ʿīsà peyġamberüŋ |₇ meger ȧnāsī ḥastɒ idi̇ şū diledi̇ vardī ʿīsà peyġamber çeşmeden |₈ şū getürdī ʾō gelincə teslim ʾōldī ʿīsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām ʾūyur ṣandī |₉ maṣrabɒ-ı̇ eṿ#icində dūtdī tā ṣabāḥa#degin ṣabāḥ görse#ki̇ teslīm |₁₀ ʾōlmiş diledi̇ maṣrabɒ-ı̇ yėre qōyɒ ṣovuq gün#idī eḷinde maṣrapɒ ṭōŋmış |₁₁ eḷinüŋ derisini̇ bilə ṣōydī […]

Tale: When Prophet ʿİsà's mother was sick, she asked for (some water). ʿİsà took a cup and went, to bring (some) water (to his mother). When he returned, his mother, having deceased, had entrusted (her) soul to God. ʿİsà brought (some) water and (then), supposing his mother (had fallen) asleep, put the cup bottom in the palm of his mother's hand; (then) took his mother's foot aside and waited. In the meanwhile, as dawn had approached, it became prayer time, but *hatun* Meryem had not woken up. Prophet ʿİsà stood up and came towards his mother's head (and) saw that (her) soul had reached God. (But) she (had) wished that, when (he had taken the cup) from her hand to put it down (on the ground), the cup bottom would stick to the sacred palm of ʿİsà because of the cold […]

As a first remark, one can suggest that the motif of the cup of water may be a result of coalescing "*Maryam* mother of Jesus" and "*Maryam* sister of Aaron" – a merger already recorded in Qurʾān XIX, 28.[14]

The Man in the Pit: from the *Kelile ve-Dimne*

The Tale of the Man pursued by a wild beast who escaped by throwing himself into a pit – here put into the mouth of Jesus – comes from the History of Barzoyeh (برزويه, Berzeveyh), the Indian physician,[15] which is part of the *Book of Kalilah and Dimnah*.[16]

The relationship intercurring between the following excerpt – taken from the *Cāmiʿü-ʾl-ḥikāyāt* by Muḫliṣ b. Hâfız el-Kâdî – and the multifarious translations of the *Kalilah and Dimnah* into Turkic languages (Osmanlı and Chagatay) will be investigated in a future study.[17] On this occasion, it is worth noting that already in 1892 Theodor Nöldeke signalled a further erratic occurrence of the "Man in the pit" Apologue in Turkish tradition – embedded in the *Gencǐnə-i ḥikmet* by Żiyâ ed-dîn Seyyid Yaḥyâ, written in 1628-29.[18]

Amasya, Beyazıt İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 837, fols. 35v l. 1 – 36r l. 4: fol. 35v ll. 1–11.

|₁ […] ḥikāyet ʿīsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m bū dünyāyī bir ṣaḥrɒdɒ bir quyūnɒ |₂ teşbīh ʾēdüb der-ki̇ ʾōl ṣaḥrānuŋ yūzində bir âdem ʾōġlanī gezerken bir yabānī nāqɒ ẓuhūr |₃ ʾēdüb ʾōl âdamuŋ ʾüzerǐnə ḥamlə ʾēder ʾōl âdam dāḫi̇ gō̌rdi#ki̇ ʾōl ṣaḥrɒdɒ bir ḥıfẓ |₄ qābil nesnə yōq ȧncaq ṣaḥrānuŋ ʾōrtāsınɒ bir quyū vār hemān dem kendũyi̇ ʾōl nāqɒnuŋ |₅ heybetinden ʾōl quyūnuŋ içinə âtdī bir ân-ı zemān ʿaqıl perǐşān ʾōlūb baʿdə |₆ ʿaqlī bāşınɒ geldī gō̌rdi#kim kendũyi̇ ʾōl quyūnuŋ ȯrtā yerində bir encǐr ȧġācī bitmiş ânuŋ |₇ ʾüzerində kendũ

The Man in the Pit, relief from the *Barlaam and Josaphat* cycle in the lunettes of the *Portale della Vita*, the Baptistery of Parma, 13th century.

kendǖyĭ būldī yūqārūyɒ naẓar ėyledĭ gȫrdĭ#kim ʾōl nāqɒ aġızın |₈ âcmış quyūnuŋ ʾĭcinə naẓar ʾēder ve-dāḫĭ dönǖb quyūnuŋ dĭbinə naẓar ėyledĭ gȫrdĭ#kim |₉ bir ėcde⟨r⟩hā aġızın âcmış ʾōl âdamɒ naẓar ʾēder būndan ṣoŋrɒ baṣduġĭ aġācuŋ |₁₀ kȫkinə naẓar ėyledĭ ʾĭkĭ fārə ṭūrmayūb ʾōl aġācuŋ kȫkinĭ aḳil ʾēdüb helāk ʾēdērler |₁₁ ʾōl fārənūŋ birisĭ qārɒ ve-birisĭ beyāz-ʾĭdĭ […]

Tale: ʾĪsà [PBUH] compares the world to a pit in a desert and says: "While a man wandering around in the desert, a wild she-camel[19] appeared and attacked him. The man saw nothing suitable to protect (him) in that desert, save a pit in the middle of the desert, and immediately, for fear of the she-camel, threw himself into the pit. At first, he remained bewildered, but then his senses returned to him and he saw that a fig tree had sprouted just in the middle of the pit. He himself was at the top of (the fig tree): he looked upwards and saw the she-camel which was looking into the pit, opening its mouth. Then, turning around, he looked into the lowest part of the pit and saw a dragon which was staring at him, opening its mouth. Then he looked at the root of the tree that

he was standing on, and there were two mice eating at the root of the tree and destroying it. One of the mice was black and the other was white […]".

Appendix: Further observations and bibliographical complements

The Long-living Worshipper Tale

Recension B (*recensio brevissima*)[20]

Additional manuscripts: Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 8261, f. 199r ll. 11-16; Nevşehir-Ürgüp, Tahsin Ağa İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi, 423, fols. 20r l. 9 – 20v l. 9.

The text occurring in ms. Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 8106, pp. 198 l. 9 – 201 l. 5, is to be regarded as a further recension of the *Long-living Worshipper* Tale (Recension C). Consider the following excerpt (p. 200, ll. 5-9):

(bir)|₅ maġārɒ vār ʾĭdĭ yā ʿĪsà bū maġārɒyɒ buyūruŋ baʾż-ı |₆ ʿacāɞib müşāhedə ʾēdəsiz dĭdükdə ḥażret-i ʿĪsà girǖb |₇ mermerden bir taḥti ʾǖzərində bir meyyit ve-bāşĭ ʾūcındɒ bir |₈ mermerdə yāzılmış#kĭ ben filān pādişāh#em bĭŋ yīl ȫmūr |₉ sū̃rdüm […]

[…] There was a cave: "Come into this cave, O ʾĪsà, You will perceive wonders!" quoth (the old man). ʾĪsà went (and saw) a marble throne upon which was (sitting) a dead man, on whose head-top (was) a marble inscription: "I am the king so and so. I lived one thousand years […]".

Surveying the entire tradition of the *Long-living Worshipper* tale, one may observe that, while the narrative architecture remains the same throughout all recensions, each text reveals many differences in detail. A rich repertory of variations on the theme of burials of mythical Kings – some of which show striking parallels with our text – is explored in Piemontese 2005, which provides an unabridged translation of the chapter relating to ancient sepulchres from the ʿ*Ajāyeb al-maxlūkāt* by Ṭūsī Hamadānī (ca. 1160).

A quite different text, though appearing to be thematically akin to the *Long-living Worshipper* tale, is reported by Hayek 1959:197 (here taken from the محاسن المجالس by Ibn al-ʿArīf) – which in turn is close

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[19] Voicu 2002:341 casts vivid light on a possible interpretation of the variant "(she-)camel".

[20] Cf. *COMSt Newsletter,* 2, July 2011, p. 28b.

to Khalidi 2001 p. 183 no. 238 = Chialà 2009:112 no. 305 (Turkish translation: Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 5135, fols. 183v l. 4 – 184r l. 6).

A fitting interpretation of the (average) temporal span of six hundred years is explicitly suggested in the prologue of an oral folk-tale recorded in 1981 near Sarıkaya, in the Yozgat Province of Central Anatolia – now retrievable in the Uysal-Walker Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative, located in the Southwest Collection and Special Collections Library at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas [http://aton.ttu.edu/: Story 926 (1981 Tape 8)]:[21]

Six hundred years before the time of the Prophet Mohammed, a snake spoke to Prophet Jesus. The snake said: 'There are places called Mecca and Medina and I want to know where those places are. Can you tell me about these places?' Prophet Jesus asked the snake, 'What would you do with such information?' The snake answered: 'I have heard of a person named Mohammed. I shall go there and look for Mohammed'. 'But there will be 600 years between you now and Prophet Mohammed when he comes' said Prophet Jesus […]

Further recensions of the Pardoner Tale[22]

Ms. Amasya, Beyazıt İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 837, fols. 34v l. 6 – 35v l. 1, gives a rather neutral text, in which, for exemple, the character of the "tricky Jewish acolyte" fades into a generic "Man" (= Recension C).

Ms. Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, B 479, fols. 23r l. 9 – 23v l. 15 (dated in the year 963 of the Hijra), which is pretended to hold a copy of the *Terceme-i cevāmiʿü-ʾl-ḥikāyā* by Celāl-Zāde Sāliḥ Çelebî (cf. Recension B), in fact shows a very different text (= Recension D).[23]
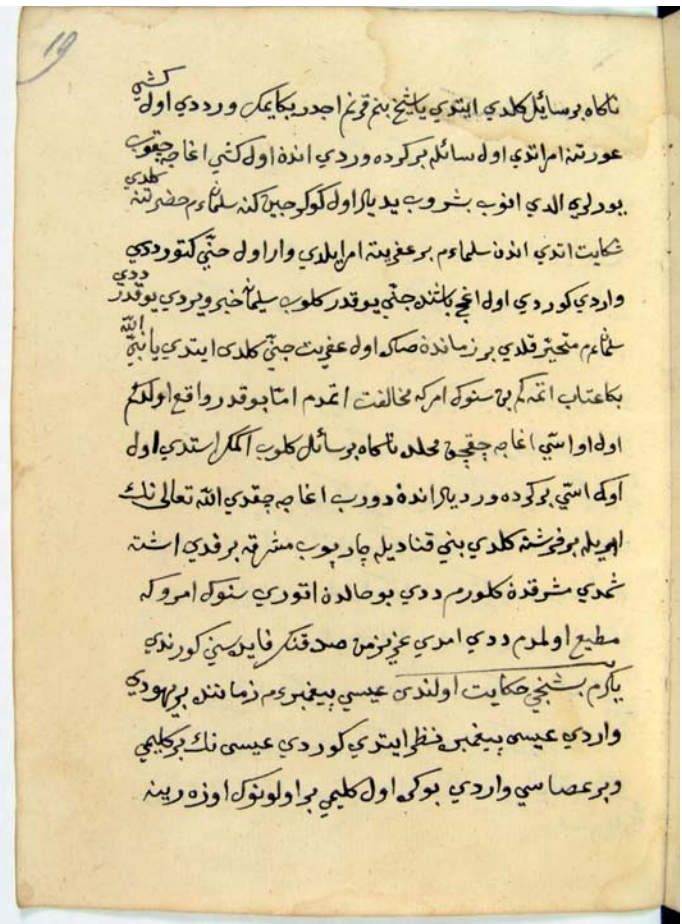
Ms. Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, & 72 sup., fols. 19r l. 13 – 21v l. 15, gives an expanded recension of the "Pardoner Tale" in which the very beginning of the novel, viz. the episode of the disappearing bread(s), is preceded by a prologue focusing on a magic rug used by ʿİsà to raise corpses from the dead (= Recension E).

Recensions D and E, though in different ways, depict ʿİsà as a thaumaturge*.*

Ms. Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, & 72 sup., fol. 19r

Here is a synopsis of incipits:

Recension A

Ms. or. 3393, fol. 223r l. 9.

ḥikāyet ʿİsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām bir gün bir cehūd#ilə yōldāş |₁₀ ʾōldī bir yerə vārdīlar ʿİsà ʿaleyhi-ʾl-selām ʾūc ėtmek aldī ʾōl |₁₁ cühūdɒ getür diyü vērdī yōldɒ yėyāvüz dīdī […]

Tale: One day ʿİsà [PBUH] arrived in a (certain) place with a Jewish companion. ʿİsà [PBUH] took three breads and gave (them) to the Jew while saying: "Carry (them)!". Along the way he said: "Let's eat (them)!" […]

Recension B

Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 1520 [= A 8044].

ḥikāyet |₁₈ ʾōlunūr-kiʰ ʿİsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m seferdə bir yahūd#ilə yōldāş ʾōlmışlardī âzıqların bir ârāyɒ qatdīlar ʾīkī |₁₉ girdə ʾİsànuŋ vār ʾīdī ʾūc girdə yahūdīnüŋ vār ʾīdī yahūdī gōŋülinden |₂ ėydür benim girdem |₂₀ bir ârtūq#dur ânī başqɒ yėyäm dīdī ʾōġrın girdənüŋ {brt-syn} ⟨birīsin⟩ yėdī bir zemān gidūb |₂₁ ṭaʿām vaqtī ʾōlūb âzıġī ʾōrtāyɒ getürdiler ʾİsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m ėydür girdenüŋ birīsī qanī dīdī |₂₂ yahūdī ėydür ėvveldə būdur dīdī […]

It came to pass that İsa [PBUH] was journeying in the company of a Jew. They put (their) provisions together: two flat breads that belonged to ʿİsà and three flat breads that belonged to the Jew. The Jew said in his heart: "(This) flat bread of mine is superfluous: I will eat it on my own". Secretly he ate

[21] S. http://aton.ttu.edu/narratives/wmVol_30-926_The_Snake_and_Prophet_Mohammed.pdf.

[22] Cf. *COMSt Newsletter*, 2, July 2011, p. 30b.

[23] At such an early stage of the research, we may disregard to establish to which of the (at least) three Turkish translations the aforementioned text belongs: Römer 1981:89 and foll.; Anetshofer 2005:34, no. 55.

one of them. When, a little while later, it was time for lunch, they brought forth (their) provisions. ʿĪsà [PBUH] said: "Where is one of your flat breads?" The Jew answered: "Even before (breads) were so (few)" […]

Recension C

Amasya, Beyazıt İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 837, fols. 34v ll. 6ff.

ḥikāyet ḥażret-i ʿĪsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m bir gūn bir âdam#lɒ yōl yōldāşī yolɒ gitdǐler |₇ bir yerǝ vārub ʿĪsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m būŋɒ ėtdǐ vār bir yerden ṭaʿām âl getūr qārınmız âcıqdī didǐ |₈ bū kimsǝ vārub ʾūč dānǝ kirdǝ bolūb getūrdī meger ʿĪsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m namāzɒ dūrmış hemān kirdenüŋ |₉ birisinǐ ʾōl ȧrādɒ yedǐ […]

Here, only the indicative incipit is provided; the subsequent text is the same as in the recensions above.

Recension D

Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, B 479, fols. 23r l. 9 – 23v l. 6.

fol. 23r |₉ […] ḥikāyet ʿĪsà peyġāmberüŋ muʿcizǝlerinden |₁₀ birǐdǝ bū-dur-kiʰ bir yōldɒ gǐderdī bir cühūd ȧŋā yōldāş ʾōldī nagāh ʿĪsà peyġāmberüŋ |₁₁ gōzǐ bir kōtrüm kǐmseyǝ ṭōqandī cühūd bū kōtrüm şāġ ʾōlmaq ʾīčün bir duʿā ėtseŋ |₁₂ tūlǝ dǐdī duʿā ǝyledī kōtrüm şāġaldī […] → fol. 23v |₆ […] ṭaʿāmī yedǐler zehirlenmiş ʾǐdī bū ʾǐkisǐ#dǝ defʿǐ ʾōldǐler ȧltūn kerbūc niyǝ ʾōl |₇ yōl ʾūstindǝ qaldī […]

Tale: Among the miracles of ʿĪsà is the (following) one: ʿĪsà was travelling, and a Jew was his companion. Suddenly the eye of ʿĪsà perceived a paralysed man. "If You pray for healing this paralytic he will recover his health [dūle⟨n⟩ǝ]" quoth the Jew. ʿĪsà prayed and the paralytic became healthy […] […] They ate the food and were poisoned (by it): so the two (men) died, and for what reason the golden brick remained on the road?

Recension E: the magic rug

Milano, & 72 sup., fols. 19r l. 13 – 19v l 7.

ʿĪsà peyġamber ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m zemānindǝ bir yahūdī |₁₄ vārdī ʿĪsà peyġamberǝ naẓar ʾėtdī gōrdī ʿĪsànuŋ bir kilǐmī |₁₅ ve-bir ʿaşāsī vārdī bū kerǝ ʾōl kilǐmī bir ʾōlūnüŋ ʾūzǝrǐnǝ |(19v)₁ qōr ʾōl ʿaşa#ɓilǝ vurur dɒ ǝydür ʾōl ȧllāhnıŋ ʾiẓniylǝ diril derdǐ ʾōl ʾōlǚ |₂ dirilūrdī çün yahūd bunǐ gōrdi#kim ʾōlǚ dirildī yahudī ǝyitdī ʿĪsànuŋ |₃ nesǐ vārsɒ bū kilim#lǝ ʿaşādɒ-dur didǐ kilim#lǝ ʿaşāyī ben ūġūrlayayın didǐ |₄ qandɒ ʾōlǚ vārsɒ der-qāl=am didǐ ȧndan vārdī ʿĪsàɒ ǝyitdī yā nebiyy-allāh |₅ ben senüŋ#lǝ gecǝ gūndüz bilǝ ʾōlayın benǐ ṣoḥbetüŋden maḥrūm ėtmǝ didǐ oġlūm qızım |₆ ve-hǐč taʿalluqātum yoqdur didǐ ȧndan ʿĪsà ʿ(aleyhi-ʾl-selā)m ǝyitdī suǧal vech#(i)lǝ benümlǝ bilǝ |₇ ʾōlɒsīn kim ȧṣlā yalān sǐlmeyǝsǐn didǐ daḥǐ yalān yerǝ ând ʾǐčmeyǝsǐn didǐ |₈ […]

In the time of ʿĪsà [PBUH] there was a Jew. (That Jew) looked

at ʿĪsà and noticed that he owned a rug and a rod. At that moment (ʿĪsà) put the rug over a dead man, hit him with the rod and said "Come to life, with the permission of Allah!". The dead man returned to life. When the Jew saw that the dead man had been revived, he said: "Whatever could be (i.e. the magic power) of ʿĪsà, it (must) be in the rod and in the rug. Let me steal (both) rod and rug (and) everywhere a dead man is I will be there". (The Jew) approached (ʿĪsà) and said to him: "O Prophet of Allah, let me stay with You night and day! Do not deprive me of your company! I have no son(s) nor daughter(s) nor familiar relationship (with anyone)". Quoth ʿĪsà [PBUH]: "Since You made such a request (lit. because of [your] request), stay with me! Do not lie and do not break (our) oath!" […]

Motifs embedded in the Pardoner Tale

After having eaten its roasted flesh, Jesus gathered a roe's bones together, and breathed into them with his breath; and the roe came to life: Thompson 1956, vol. 2, 408, § E32; Neugaard 1993:22, § E32: Resuscitation of eaten animals. In this context, we cannot avoid to mention the apocryphal "Book of the Cock",[24] in which a roasted chicken was restored to life by the intervention of Jesus.

Motif of the speaking skull

Thompson 1956, vol. 2, 426, § E261.1.2: Speaking skull tells about previous life, reveals future events, etc.; Neugaard 1993:23: E261.1.2.1.

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[24] Cf. inter alia Piovanelli 2005; Nagy 2007.

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Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

Identification and classification of historical writing inks in spectroscopy: a methodological overview[1]

The identification of the type of ink should be among the primary goals of manuscript description. Several techniques of instrumental analysis are available, and new tools have been appearing on the market, the main development having been to more portability and user friendliness. In this article, we would like to give an overview of several existing methods and of their respective advantages and the results that can be obtained with their help.

We believe that recent technological developments in the field of non-destructive analysis of ancient and medieval documents, combined with the increasing interdisciplinary collaborations, may lead to the incorporation of results achieved by means of scientific material analysis into the standard codicological description.

We hope to show that the recent developments in spectroscopy have made it possible to obtain information on inks used in manuscripts by means of non-destructive analysis, even in an absence of fully-equipped laboratory and with comparatively little technical preparation. The new simple, mobile method for a typological identification of various writing materials that cannot be differentiated purely by visual appearance can be routinely integrated into any manuscript research initiative, in particular that connected with the digitisation of manuscripts.

Soot, plant-material, and iron gall inks form different typological classes of historical black writing materials. The first one is a fine dispersion of carbon pigments in a water-soluble binding agent, the second one is a tannin solution, while the third one presents a boundary case of the first two: a water-soluble preliminary stage (belonging to the second group), followed by the insoluble black material that develops through oxidation when the writing is exposed to air (belonging to the first group). The "colour" of the inks (black, grey or brown) is not a criterion for distinction, because the appearance at the moment of inspection results from the combination of at least three factors: production recipe, corrosion and aging.

Vibrational spectroscopy[2] seems to be the most straightforward way to identify and distinguish between different types of inks. It has proved powerful in the studies of pigments where tabulated data allow for quick and unequivocal identification. Despite the positive analysis development in the case of pigments, reliable experimental methods for identifying the black inks of the Middle Ages have only started to emerge during the last decade. They are not yet fully established and validated as can be gathered from the reports on the most elaborate system of analysis applied in individual cases to characterise prominent manuscripts.[3] Easy and mobile applications designed for use on site by non-specialists are not yet available. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that the ongoing analysis of historical ink samples by means of conventional techniques will ultimately lead to improvements in the mobile equipment and the establishment of a database of different inks. Currently we use IR (infrared) and Raman bench equipment and we are constrained to study only those fragments that can be analysed in the laboratory.

The situation is completely different with respect to XRF (X-ray fluorescence) analysis[4]. In addition to a variety of transportable instruments, a wealth of knowledge and experience has been accumulated in the characterisation of historical inks. Specifically, development and use of the fingerprint model based on the qualitative and quantitative detection of inorganic components of the iron gall inks allows their reliable classification.[5]

In the framework of the collaboration during the COMSt research networking programme we analyzed the inks from a Coptic parchment document that was purchased in Cairo in the mid-1970s (a copyist's writing exercise, probably dating very ap-

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[2]   Infrared (IR) and Raman spectroscopy allow identification of the molecules and their structure by supplying specific information on vibrations of atoms in molecules. In the first technique, a molecule absorbs a portion of the irradiated infrared light, hence its name. In the second, called so after the Indian physicist Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, monochromatic light in the ultraviolet, visible and near infrared ranges is used. Since the mechanisms of the interaction with light differ in both cases, the techniques complement each other.

[3]   Aceto et al. 2008.

[4]   X-ray fluorescence spectrometry relies on the study of the patterns of the emission of X-rays from the chemical elements present in a material irradiated with high-energy X-rays.

[5]   Malzer et al. 2004.

Fig. 1. Top left and top right: colour photographs of the recto and verso sides of the Coptic document studied in this work that we designated DP_F and DP_H, respectively; second and third rows, left and right: distribution of the elements sulfur and chlorine, iron and copper, respectively, from the scan conducted on the side DP_F with Tornado M4 (Bruker); bottom: calculated distribution of the element copper on the back side (DP_H).

proximately from around 1000 CE) (upper row of Fig. 1) by various techniques. Each inscription was studied by means of μ-infrared, μ-Raman and μ-XRF spectroscopy.[6] We found out that the two sides of the document are inscribed with iron gall inks that differ in their metal salt composition. The possible implications could be that the two sides of the docu-

ment were inscribed by two different persons, or by the same person at different times, even though this cannot be demonstrated by the analysis, and an additional codicological and palaeographical expertise would be needed.

Well-preserved ink can be unequivocally classified by both infrared and Raman spectroscopy using bench equipment. Unfortunately, it is not yet properly known to what degree ink degradation affects the

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[6] In physical and mathematical measurements, the prefix "μ-" (micro-) represents 10^{-6}.
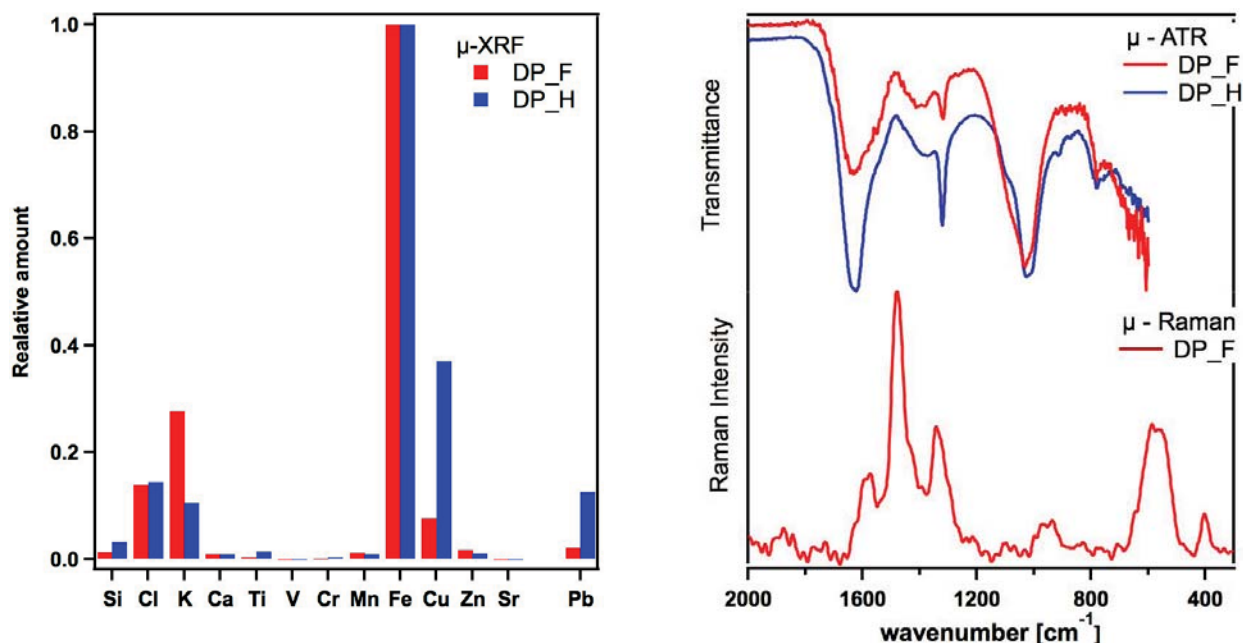
Fig. 2. Left: calculated amount (relative to iron) in the ink of the recto and verso (DP_F and DP_H) sides, respectively. For quantification, we used the data from the line scans conducted with µ-XRF spectrometer ARTAX (Bruker). Right: µ-ATR (top) and µ-Raman (bottom) spectra collected from the inscriptions. We used Bruker Equinox 55/IR-Scope II with ATR 20x objective and confocal Raman microscope (WITec) at 785 nm excitation line and 100x objective.

spectra. Thus, the individual characteristics recorded with the help of IR and Raman spectral analysis do not necessarily reflect the ink's original state. Nevertheless, the spectra should be included into a catalogue or inks database to produce a snapshot or a passport picture. In contrast, quantitative spatially resolved X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (µ-XRF) delivers a fingerprint of the elemental composition generally unaffected by ageing.

The element distribution plots presented in the second, third and fourth rows of Fig.1 result from a mapping with a µ-XRF instrument that allows obtaining detailed spatially resolved elemental distributions from large areas. An important indication of iron gall inks is immediately revealed by the distribution of sulphur linked to the inscription: it shows the presence of sulphates, precursor component of the ink. In contrast, the plot for the distribution of chlorine shows a negative picture of the inscription demonstrating that the amount of chlorine in the parchment is much higher than in the inks. The elements iron and copper, the main metal components of the inks under investigation, are localised in the inscription areas whereby the strong inhomogeneity of the intensities is caused by physical loss of the inks. Since parchment is partially transparent to X-rays emitted by iron and copper atoms, information from both sides is obtained simultaneously. Iron is the

main metal component for the inks in the inscriptions both on the recto and on the verso. Copper, on the other hand is more abundant on the verso. Using the relative difference between the two inks, it is even possible to suppress one of the inscriptions. This feature could be very helpful when studying palimpsests or highly degraded texts.

Spectra in Fig. 2 comprise the information we obtained using further non-destructive methods: µ-ATR (top right), µ-Raman (bottom right) and quantitative µ-XRF (left) spectroscopy. The measurements were carried out on recto and verso. µ-XRF line scans were performed in the areas with no inscription superposition; µ-Raman and µ-ATR[7] data were collected from the letters with well-preserved ink.

Though the same elements were observed in the XRF spectra of both inks, their relative amounts differ. The quantification of the spectra (Fig 2, left) delivers two distinctly different iron/copper and iron/zinc ratios, reflecting differences in the original vitriol used for the ink manufacture. The vibrational spectra show the presence of tannin and iron-tannin complexes, unequivocally confirming the identification of iron-gall inks by XRF. Infrared spectra (Fig. 2, top right) differ only in the relative intensities of the absorption bands in the region of 1400 cm⁻¹,

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[7] Attenuated total reflectance is a data collection method used in IR spectroscopy.
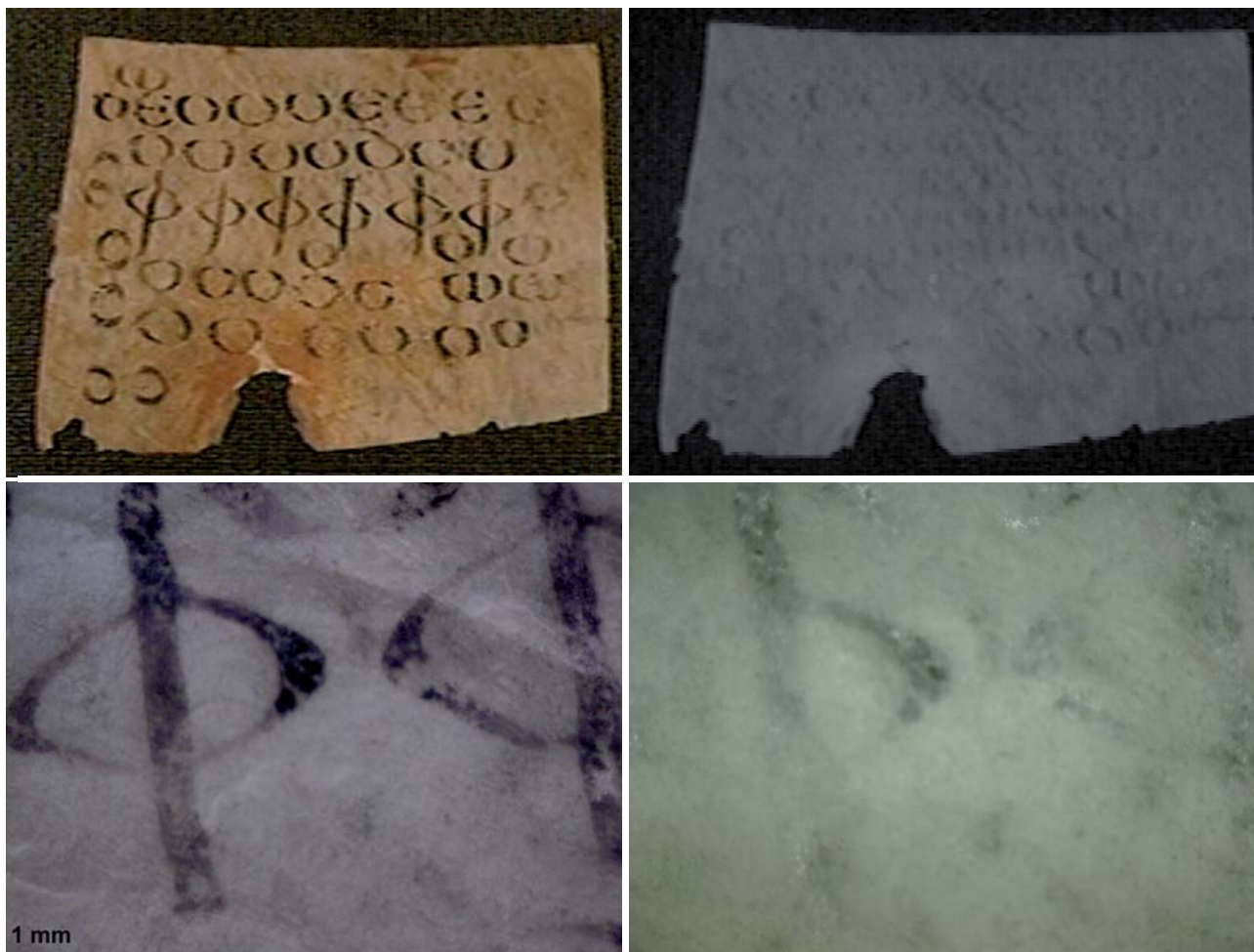
Fig. 3. Upper row: images taken with a multispectral imager in the visible region (400 – 750 nm) and near infrared region (950-1100 nm) respectively; lower row: images made with the USB microscope Dinolite in the visible region and near infrared (920-940 nm), respectively.

indicating inks of the same recipe but most probably from different batches. Unfortunately, good Raman spectra could only be obtained on one side. All the vibrational spectra are similar to the laboratory inks that contain no acid and differ from those made with wine or vinegar. The absence of acid in the original ink solution is probably responsible for the weak adhesion, leading to the loss of pigment clearly reflected by the elemental distribution of iron in the third row of Fig. 1.

Obtaining such a full characterisation is a laborious task that cannot be yet easily accomplished on site. However, using relatively simple methods one can determine the type of ink.

IR photography is traditionally used to study soot-based pigments and, thus, allows one-shot identification of carbon inks. Similarly, multi spectral imaging for visualising of palimpsests allows a rough differentiation between soot-based and tannin-based inks since only the latter become transparent in the infrared region of the spectrum. An easy way to add

such functionality to the normal digitisation is to use a handheld USB microscope equipped with UV and NIR light sources. In Fig. 3 we compare the images of the same Coptic document recorded with a multispectral imager in visible and near infrared spectral regions with those taken with a USB microscope. In both cases, the change of the intensity indicates that inks do not contain soot. For further classification, one could use another handheld device, an XRF-tracer equipped with a collimator that reduces the beam to the size of the ink spot. X-ray fluorescence analysis allows to rapidly determine whether iron and the vitriol components usually accompanying it in the iron gall inks are present in the manuscript.

Table 1 summarises relevant information on three different XRF spectrometers used in this work and compares Fe/Cu ratios obtained with them. For the quantitative μ-analysis two line-scans were conducted with ARTAX (transportable Bruker μ-XRF spectrometer) in the areas where inks did not coincide. The scans were quantified using a fingerprint model

Table 1. Information summary.

Instrument	TORNADO M4	ARTAX	TRACER SD-III
	Transportable (130 kg)	Transportable (~70 kg)	Portable (2.5 kg + tripod)
Measurement	1 x,y scan of 7.9 x 4.54 cm (Fig. 1)	2 line scans a 1.5 mm (Fig. 2)	3 single spots a 1 mm (not shown)
Beam size	25 µm	70 µm	1 mm
Acquisition time for the data shown here	5.4 hours	20 min.	6 min.
Output	Composition and spatial elemental distribution throughout the area measured	Average quantitative composition based on line scans	Qualitative composition
	Distribution of inks on both sides of the parchment	Inks fingerprint	Inks recognition and classification
	Degradation pattern		
Fe/Cu (F)	5	12.5	4
Fe/Cu (H)	2.5	2.7	2.5

that takes the parchment matrix into account. Thus, the results present the true ratio of iron to copper and can be used as inks characteristic in a database. The non-corrected data extracted from both the document mapping performed with Tornado M4 (tabletop Bruker 2D µ-XRF spectrometer) and the single spot measurements performed with Tracer SD-III (portable Bruker XRF analyser) correspond to the measured X-ray intensities. They also show that the inscriptions on the two sides of the document were made with different iron gall inks.

In conclusion, we see that any of the measurements conducted in this work was sufficient to identify the ink type. The combination of Vis/NIR-imaging with XRF spectrometry provides a simple tool for a routine inspection.

The result gained from such a routine identification should be included in the documentation or object description, because it is an important component of the item's materiality. Quantification of the µ-XRF spectra, on the other hand, will allow building an ink database necessary both for studies in history of writing materials and for manuscript studies. Fast µ-XRF scanning is a new powerful tool, capable of adding another dimension to the conventional multispectral and less common hyperspectral imaging. And, last but not least, we are positive that Raman and IR equipment suitable for the work on-site will be soon available.

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The production of Arabic multi-block Bibles: A case study of a Coptic-Muslim workshop in early Ottoman Cairo

Famously – and contrary to the usual habit of biblical manuscripts in Arabic – the sixteenth-century manuscript Paris, BNF Arabe 1 embraces an almost complete set of Old Testament books. It only dispenses with the book of Ruth, as a minor defect. Having served as the base text for the Arabic portions of the Paris Polyglot (1629-1645) and reprinted in the London Polyglot (1652-57), its contents gained certain prominence in the history of Arabic versions of the Bible. The codex arrived to France in the collection of François Savary de Brèves, who had served as ambassador of France to the Sublime Porte during the years 1591–1604 and was considered an outstanding Arabic and Turkish scholar of his time.

We are well informed about the later history of the codex and the role it played in the making of the Polyglots.[1] Yet, what do we know about the making of manuscript BNF Arabe 1, the context and place of its production? That the codex contains an almost complete set of Old Testament books, as mentioned above, is as a matter of fact not only the reason for its fame, but also an aspect that has to deserve a closer study. Although the scribal practice to join related books in one volume – e.g., the Pentateuch, the Historical books, the Prophets, or the Wisdom books – was not uncommon, codices encompassing a full Old Testament in Arabic are extremely rare.[2] Manuscripts exhibiting the complete sequence of biblical books occurred after the introduction of printing and only under the influence thereof.

A reconstruction of the *mise-en-livre* of the biblical books in manuscript BNF Arabe 1, which I attempt to present in this contribution, is not only of relevance to abstract codicology, but will permit us to understand the complex relationship between the codex's content and its production. In uncovering the interrelationship of codicological and textual layers, important evidence in regard to the working techniques of scribes may be gathered. As we will see, when observed meticulously, the leaves of manuscript BNF Arabe 1 will disclose the story of a highly professional, interfaith team of scribes, who specialised in the production of biblical deluxe codices for notable commissioners.

The general state of conservation of BNF Arabe 1 is very good. Just on ground of its extraordinary dimensions, the codex may be called massive. There are multiple colophons ranging from Ramaḍān 992 to Muḥarram 993 AH, which correspond to the period between September 1584 and January 1585 CE. The manuscript, written on Occidental watermarked paper, encompasses 458 folios, of the *in-folio* format (34.5 x 23.5 cm), assembled in 46 quires. Most quires are composed of five bifolia, with reduced or expanded gatherings attested at the end of codicological blocks (see below). The quires are kept in order by Arabic signatures. There are indications that the quires were acquired already ruled, with the ruling executed on the whole quire. Each page consistently exhibits twenty-nine lines of writing. The codex was rebound and trimmed, probably when it arrived at the Bibliothèque du Roi (later Bibliothèque Nationale). Its edges are gilded.

Since the volume joins translations from a variety of provenances, scholars have long known it to be a "miscellany". It contains various and very diverse Arabic versions, based on Hebrew, Syriac, and Greek *Vorlagen*, of which each section has a long and separate textual history. Needless to say that underlying rationale in their gathering was assembling one complete Old Testament. Technically speaking, thus, the codex is a *recueil organisé*.[3] In contrast, the homogeneity of the manuscript as object was never questioned. According to de Slane's and Troupeau's catalogues, the entire codex was executed by the Muslim scribe ʿAbd Rabbih b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Šaʿarānī.[4]

Nevertheless, just a brief sifting through its folios suggests that the codex is far from being entirely homogeneous. Several hands were involved in its production, merely one of them being that of the aforementioned Muslim scribe. Regardless of scribes' best efforts to

1   For a detailed account, cf. Vollandt in press.

2   The only other specimens known to me are manuscripts St. Petersburg, Russian National Library D 226 and Vatican, Ar. 468, which are quite prominently dealt with in secondary literature; cf. the summary in Vollandt 2011:219-223. I exclude here manuscript copies of biblical printings, as for example of the Biblia Sacra Arabica (1671–73), which are attested in Paris, BNF Arabe 2, London, BL Or. 8745, London, India Office Islamic 1280, Birmingham, Mingana Syr. 484 (in *Karšūnī*), Vatican, Borg. Ar. 48, 150, 154 and 239, Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 419, Sharfeh, Ar. 1/4-8, Coptic Patriarchate, Biblica 29, 31, 41 and 48, Coptic Patriarchate, Theol. 10. A manuscript copy of the London Polyglot can be found in Prague, Jewish Museum ms. 356. Two identical copies of the detached Arabic Pentateuch, in which the text was supplemented with an interlinear translation into Malaysian, are preserved as mss. Munich, Staatsbibliothek Ar. 233 and Cambridge University Library, Or. 193. The manuscripts were produced by the same scribe, are identical in the page layout and bear the same date (1680).

3   Muzerelle 2002-03:431.10, who offers "deliberate assemblage" as an English equivalent of the term.

4   de Slane 1972, vol. 1, 1; Troupeau 1972, vol. 1, 11f.

Ms. BNF Arabe 1, Egypt, 1584-85, fol. 232v, the beginning of the Book of Psalms, photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France

avoid individual manifestations for the sake of a stereotyped appearance, personal idiosyncrasies – concerning para-scriptural and palaeographic features, but also formulae and dating systems – are observed. Four scribes can be distinguished: scribe A, B, C, and D. Unfortunately only two of the scribes reveal their names to posterity. In a colophon to the Minor Prophets on fol. 387r and as already mentioned in the catalogues of de Slane and Troupeau, scribe C states that ʿAbd Rabbih b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Šaʿarānī al-Anṣārī wrote this section. His name indicates undoubtedly that he was Muslim.[5] This is also corroborated by the formulae he is using. For example, years are given in Arabic numerals according to the Hijra era and months are indicated by their Islamic names, as a rule accompanied by the fixed honorific epithets.[6] Textual units usually open with

the *basmala* (fols 53v, 68v, 86v) and may close with a praise of God, e.g. using the Qurʾānic appellation *rabb al-ʿālamīn* 'Lord of all the worlds' (369v, 374v). Since these features are consistently shared by scribe B, we may assume that, albeit remaining anonymous, he was Muslim as well. Scribe D discloses his identity on fol. 404r. His name is Faḍlallāh b. Tādrus b. Yūsuf b. Faḍlallāh b. Naṣrallāh, the priest. Following many expressions of humbleness, he names Qaṣr al-Šamʿ, i.e. the Coptic quarter of Old Cairo, as place of his ministry.[7] Faḍlallāh, in contrast to the two Muslim scribes, uses distinctively Monophysite formulae, such as *bism al-ab wa-l-ibn wa-rūḥ al-quds* 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (fols 196v, 222r) or *bism allāh al-wāḥid bi-l-ḏāt al-muṯallaṯ bi-l-aqānīm wa-l-ṣifāt* 'in the name of God, one in his essence, triune in personae and attributes' (fol. 210v). The Coptic scribe discloses an important detail concerning his working conditions: on fol. 404r, following the book of Proverbs, he reveals that *kāna nasḫ ḏālika bi-l-qāhira al-maḥrūsa bi-ḫaṭṭ qanṭarat al-mūskī sakan al-ḥaqīr* 'the place of copying was Cairo, the well-guarded, at Ḫaṭṭ Qanṭarat al-Mūskī, the residence of this humble [scribe]'. His portion of the Old Testament was thus handed out to him and copied at his domicile at Ḫaṭṭ Qanṭarat al-Mūskī, which lay to the east of Cairo's great channel and connected Bāb al-Zuwayla with al-Mūskī Bridge.[8] As for scribe A, due to the small scope of portions he copied, as well as in the absence of pertinent features that could assist an identification of his background, details will remain unknown. The Coptic-Muslim collaboration in producing BNF Arabe 1, as one should point out, constitutes a rare example of inter-faith scribal workshops.

The scribes left several colophons. The first, written by ʿAbd Rabbih b. Muḥammad (scribe C), comes after the Epistle of Jeremiah (fol. 321r) and dates 17th Ramaḍān 992 AH (21 Sept 1584 CE). It is followed by a series of additional colophons, of which the last one, after Malachi (fol. 387v), gives the date of 1st Ḏū al-Ḥiǧǧa of the same year (3 Dec 1584 CE). Thus, his portion embraced the Major and Minor Prophets. The second Muslim scribe (scribe B) copied the historical books, namely Joshua to II Samuel, between 30th Ḏū al-Ḥiǧǧa 992 (fol. 96v, 2 Jan 1585) and 18th al-Muḥarram 993

5   As an amusing anecdote, Eichhorn 1803:299 and Ryssel 1885:105, by reading *al-naṣrānī* for *al-Anṣārī*, turn ʿAbd Rabbih b. Muḥammad into a Christian.
6   On these epithets, see Littmann 1918:228-236 and Horovitz 1923:281.

7   The manuscript reads Qaṣr al-Ǧamʿ, which is a common variant for Qaṣr al-Šamʿ. For details, see Butler 1884:155-249 and Evetts 1895:21a, 44a, 60b, and 112b.
8   Cf. *ḫaṭṭ qanṭarat al-mūskī* in al-Maqrīzī's *ḫiṭaṭ*, ed. Muhammad Zaynuhum 1998, vol. 1, p. 474 and vol. 2, pp. 24, 44, 81, and 245. A more contemporary description of the area is found in Warner 2006, vol. 3, p. 234.

Table 1.

(fol. 135v, 19 Jan 1585). As one can clearly see, the two sets of books not only belong to separate portions of the Bible but also differ in the time of their production: scribe B copied the historical books at the beginning of 1585 CE, when the Prophets had already been accomplished by ʿAbd Rabbih b. Muḥammad. The picture that emerges is that the whole Old Testament was allocated to individual scribes, in almost *pecia*-like manner in separate blocks, which were then copied in different places. Only at the last stage of production, before binding, the blocks were collated, corrected, and decorated at a workshop, to be finally assembled to a full set. This also means that the model from which they copied either had existed in parts, namely in fact separate manuscripts, or had been divided into segments. The observed working mode suggests that BNF Arabe 1 is the product of a professional workshop, which manufactured books on a large commercial scale.

In order to understand precisely how the scribes worked and which models they used, we must now take also the content into consideration. BNF Arabe 1 contains the books of the Coptic canon, dispensing only with Ruth. The biblical books are framed by an anonymous introduction and an Arabic version of the originally Hebrew *Sefer Yosippon*, known as the *Kitāb aḫbār al-ʿibrāniyyin* 'The book of historical reports on the Hebrews'. The composition of the codex and the allocation of quires to the four scribes are presented in a schematic way in Table 1.

As can be seen, the many blank leaves – which frequently coincide with the end of quires and textual units, or change of hands – indicate sharp caesuras in general composition of the codex and divide the entire volume into separate units of production. One can distinguish four almost independent blocks.[9] The first covers the anonymous in-

[9]   The phenomenon of multi-block manuscripts has been examined by Gumbert 2004a, 2004b, and Maniaci 2004. For Arabic manuscripts, comparable studies remain a desideratum.

fols	Content	fols (bifolia)	Quire	scribe
1v-3r	Introduction	A-9 (5)	1	A
3v-24r	Gen	10-19 (5)	2	A
24v-41v	Ex	20-29 (5)	3	A
		30-41 (6)	4	B
42r	*blank*	42-51 (5)	5	-
42v-53r	Lev			C
53v-68r	Num	52-61 (5)	6	C
		62-71 (5)	7	C
68r-83v	Deut	72-81 (5)	8	C
84r-86r	*blank*	82-85 (2)	9	-
86v-96v	Josh	86-95 (5)	10	B
97r-107r	Judg	96-105 (5)	11	B
107v-168r	I Sam– II Sam and I - II King	106-115 (5)	12	B
	(I Sam:107v-122v,	116-125 (5)	13	B
	II Sam: 123r-135v,	126-135 (5)	14	B
	I King: 136r-142v,	136-145 (5)	15	B
	II King: 142v-168v)	146-155 (5)	16	B
		156-165 (5)	17	B
168v-195v	I-II Chr	166-175 (5)	18	B
	(I Chr: 168v-181r,	176-185 (5)	19	B
	II Chr 181v-195v)	186-195 (5)	20	B
196r	*blank*	196-205 (5)	21	-
196v-205v	Ezra			D
205v-209v	Neh	206-225 (10)	22	D
210r	*blank*			-
210v-213v	Tob			D
214r-218v	Jud			D
219r-221v	Est			D
222v-230r	Job	226-236 (5)	23	D
230v-232r	*blank*			-
232v-267r	Psalms	236-245 (5)	24	C
		246-255 (5)	25	C
		256-265 (5)	26	C
		266-275 (5)	27	C
267v	*blank*			-
268r-292r	Isa	276-285 (5)	28	C
		286-295 (5)	29	C
292v-315v	Jer	296-305 (5)	30	C
		306-315 (5)	31	C
315v-317r	Baruch	316-325 (5)	32	C
318r-320r	Lam			
320r-321r	Epistle of Jer			
321v-345v	Ez	326-334 (5)	33	C
		335-344 (5)	34	C
		345-354 (5)	35	C
346r	*blank*			
346v-347v	Introduction to Dan	355-364 (5)	36	C
348v- 359v	Dan			
360r	*blank*			
360v-387v	Minor Prophets	365-374 (5)	37	C
	(Hosea: 360v-364v, Amos:	375-384 (5)	38	C
	363v- 367r, Mic: 367v-369v,	385-390 (3)	39	C
	Joel: 370v-372r, Ob: 372v-373r,			
	Jon: 373v-374r, Nah: 375v-376r,			
	Hab: 376v-377v, Zeph: 378v-			
	379r, Hag 380v-381r, Zech:			
	381r-386r, Mal: 386v-388r)			
388r-390v	*blank*			-
391r-396v	Wis	391-400 (5)	40	D
397r-406r	Prov	401-410 (5)	41	D
406v-409r	Eccles			
410r-411r	Cant	411-420 (5)	42	D
411v-424r	Sir	421-428 (4)	43	D
424v-429r	*blank*	429-438 (5)	44	D
429v-439r	II Macc			
439r-458r	*Sefer Yosippon*	439-448 (5)	45	D
		449-458 (5)	46	D

troduction and the Pentateuch (fols 1r-86r). A caesura, marked by blank folios, change of quire and hand, and the smaller number of bifolia in the last quire, clearly indicates its boundaries. As three scribes were involved, this first codicological block can be described as allogenetic.[10] The second covers the historical books (fols 86v-195v). Unlike the first, it is homogenetic and was copied entirely by scribe B. A change of hand and quire marks the caesura to the next block. The fourth block, thus, ranges from the book of Ezra (fol. 196r) to the end of the Prophets (fol. 390v). It falls into three subsections: Ezra to Job (fols 196r- 232r), Psalms (fols 232v-267v), and the Prophets (fols 268r-390v). These are only indicated by blank folios, yet the change of hands and quires does not coincide with their boundaries. The whole block is allogenetic, written by scribes C and D, and closes with blank folios, a change of hand and quires. In addition, the last quire has a smaller number of folios. The last block comprises the Wisdom Books, Maccabees and *Sefer Yosiṗṗon*. A number of blank folios (fols 424v-429r) divide it into two sub-sections. Since copied exclusively by Faḍlallāh b. Tādrus, it is homogenetic. Having now identified the codicological building blocks of BNF Arabe 1, a striking relation to its content catches the eye. In their boundaries, the blocks closely correspond to groups of books that were translated from the same *Vorlage*: Hebrew (block I), Syriac (blocks II and III.a-b), and Greek (blocks III.c and IV.a). Merely block VI.b mixes Greek and Hebrew *Vorlagen*.

The first block contains Saadiah Gaon's (882-942) originally Judaeo-Arabic Pentateuch translation.[11] It is preceded by an anonymous preface (fols 1v–3r). The *Tafsīr*, as this text is known, was adopted by Syriac-Orthodox and Coptic communities and disseminated widely among them. The historical books of block II were all translated from Syriac.[12] Although the colophon after Joshua informs the reader that the book 'was translated from Hebrew', *al-manqūl min al-ʿibrānī*

ilā al-ʿarabī, this has not to be understood literally. It is common to find *ʿibrānī* as a designation of Syriac in the Middle Ages.[13] Apart from the book of Judges, none of the books has hitherto received any scholarly attention.[14] Similarly, block III.a (Ezra to Job) and III.b (Psalms) contain translations from Syriac.[15] The colophon after Job (fol. 230r) furnishes a direct mention of the *Vorlage*. It reads *qad ḏakara ṣāḥib al-nusḥa allaḏī (!) nuqila minha hāḏihi al-nusḥa innahu fussira min al-suryānī ilā al-ʿarabī* 'the owner of the exemplar, from which this copy has been transcribed from, mentioned that it had been translated from Syriac into Arabic'. Block III.c, in contrast, exhibits al-ʿAlam al-Iskandarī's translation of the Major and Minor Prophets from the Septuagint.[16] His *nisba* indicates that he accomplished this task in Alexandria, probably around 900. Further corroboration of his whereabouts may be found in the fact that his translation demonstrates close affinities with the Alexandrian text type of the Septuagint.[17] Al-ʿAlam al-Iskandarī states that he translated *min nusḥa ʿatīqa raqq bi-qalam al-lītun al-rūmī* 'from an ancient parchment codex written in Greek uncials (λιτόν)'. Faḍlallāh b. Tādrus informs the reader that the manuscript he copied from is found in the *armarium* (Arab. *ḫizānat al-kutub*) of the convent of our Holy Lady, the Virgin, in Ḥārat al-Zuwayla, his place of ministry. This exemplar, as he continues, was achieved by the scribe Ǧirǧis b. Abū al-Mufaḍḍal b. Amīn al-Mulk in 1072 AM (1356 CE). The Wisdom books of block IV.a are represented in anonymous versions from Greek.[18] In block IV.b, II Maccabees is translated from Greek and *Sefer Yosiṗṗon* goes back

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[10] I follow the terminology suggested by Gumbert 2004a.

[11] The Pentateuch has several lacunae, e.g. Gen 45:17-46:6, Ex 8:17-9:7. There was certain confusion as to the author of the Pentateuch. On a fly-leaf in ms. Paris, BNF Arabe 1, dated 1735, Joseph Ascari states that *Saʿīd ibn Yūsuf al-Fayyūmī al-rabbān* 'Saadiah b. Joseph, the Rabbanite' (fol. 1v) had to be understood as *Saidus Phaioumensis monachus Cophtus* 'Said, a Coptic monk from the Fayyūm-area'. Schnurrer, however, edited the entire preface of the manuscript (1790) and demonstrated that there was no foundation for that. Saʿīd, as duly pointed out by him, is simply the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew name Saadiah.

[12] The reader is referred to GCAL I, pp. 109-111 and Roediger 1829.

[13] Examples of this usage in Ibn Hišām, al-Buḫārī, and *Kitāb al-aġānī* were discussed by Griffith 1992:145. Compare in addition, al-Maqdisī's statement that "the Jews call Paradise *kanʿādan* [Gan Eden] in ʿibriyya and that is *baradīsā* in ʿibraniyya", cf. ed. and tr. Huart 1889, vol. 1, 186-187. It is clear that here ʿibriyya refers to Hebrew and ʿibraniyya, in contrast, to Syriac. The usage is paralleled in the *incipits* or *excipits* of translations from the Syriac. For example, in ms. Cairo, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate Bibl. 44, Jos and Judg are stated to be translated from *al-ʿibraniyya*, likewise in ms. Cairo, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate Bibl. 57 after Jos and ms.Vatican, Ar. 449 after Ruth.

[14] See Knutsson 1974.

[15] Compare GCAL I, 111-127 for block III.a and Döderlein 1778/1779:151-179/57-96 for block III.b.

[16] GCAL I, 130-131; Vaccari 1921:401-423.

[17] The text-critical value of al-ʿAlam's translation for the study of the Alexandrian text type has been pointed out frequently, cf. Gesenius 1820-1821, vol. 1, pp. 98-106 for Isaiah; Cornill 1886: 49-56, for Ezekiel; Wald 1784:204-210, Gehman 1926:219-221 and Löfgren 1936:31-34, for Daniel; Reynolds 1943:273-275 for Zechariah; Ryssel 1885:102-138, for Micha; Reinke 1867:65-70, for Nahum and Reinke 1868:34-37 for Haggai.

[18] See GCAL I, 127-128.

to a Hebrew *Vorlage* that, via Judaeo-Arabic translations, was adopted by the Copts. [19]

The blocks that stood out in the codicological analysis above are thus also closely reflected in the content. Each block contains a set of biblical books of a different provenance. The blocks remain independent within their boundaries and to a certain degree interchangeable. Physically, the blocks may be split, which would result in detached, nevertheless still intact, codices that contain smaller groups of translations. They are based on individual models, which, at least for block III.c, were identified. Copies of these various, distinct models constituted the building blocks, out of which the workshop compiled each of its codices in accordance with the request of commissioners or the demand of the market. The inclusion of a block was thus a matter of deliberate planning. This working technique confirms that the scribes – in producing BNF Arabe 1 – had at their disposal a set of exemplars containing a group of books (Pentateuch, historical books, Prophets, books of Wisdom, etcetera), in contrast to a *full* Old Testament that equally could have served as *Vorlage*.

Appearing clearly now, the chronological stages of production were as follows. In accordance to the initial decision as to which groups of books to include, the models for each block were selected. The models usually contain a homogeneous group of books, translated from the same *Vorlage*, and probably existed in separate codices. At least for the Prophets we are informed that the model was found in the *armarium* of the Marian convent in Ḥārat al-Zuwayla. In this way, the codex in the making was divided into its distinct building blocks. Having established the separate building blocks, the scribes calculated the required folios for each block and formed the quires out of pre-ruled paper. The models were then copied, independently, according to individual blocks, by different scribes. Miscalculation resulted in blank folios, which together with change of hands and quires enable us today to identify these individual blocks. Only at the last stage of production, the building blocks were assembled to one complete volume. Further finishing included the collation and correction of the copied text.[20] Similarly, the rubricated chapter headings and decorations were added at this last stage. Finally the codex was bound.

The full extent of the workshop's production becomes apparent in a number of related biblical manuscripts. Manuscripts Varican, Ar. 445, Cairo, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate Bibl. 32, 79 and 80, London, BL Or. 1326, and Paris, BNF Arabe 25 are strikingly similar to BNF Arabe 1 in terms of codicology and were crafted between 1583 and 1587 by the same workshop. A comprehensive study of this remarkable group of manuscripts, on which I hope to embark in the near future, will add important details to the working habits of involved scribes and the history of Arabic multi-block Bibles.

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[19] On the Arabic versions of *Sefer Yosippon*, see Sela 2009. She suggested that the Copto-Arabic versions preceded the Judaeo-Arabic ones. This, however, is highly debatable as pointed out by Dönitz 2008, Chapter 3. Dönitz is certain that Judaeo-Arabic copies were transcribed and disseminated among Coptic communities. The transmission history deserves further study. Ms. Paris, BNF Arabe 287 (13th cent) is the earliest dated manuscript. In addition, ms. London, BritLib Or. 1326 mentions as its *Vorlage* a manuscript dated 954 AM (= 1238 CE). It is thus during the 13th century that the originally Judaeo-Arabic versions were adapted by the Copts on a large scale.

[20] The codex contains many collation notes, cf. fols 25v, 55v, 56r, 62r, 66r, 66v, 70r, 73v, 78v, 89r, 125v, 128v, 154v, 176r, 183v, 202r, 208r, 210r, 224r, 228v, 250r, 255r, 310r, 413v, 432v, and 440v.

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