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COMPARATIVE ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

Steering Committee for the Humanities (SCH)

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter No. 8

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Editorial: Looking back at the past five years

The Conference held in Hamburg on the 18th and 19th March 2014 (Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: Results and Outlook) marked a crucial phase in the COMSt Research Networking Programme and also indicated the approaching of its end. At the centre of the conference was the tentative evaluation of the accomplishments of the project by external reviewers from other (non-oriental) fields: an unusual procedure for such a programme, of which we can be particularly proud, because it clearly shows the honesty and openness that has always distinguished the COMSt programme and community. Guest reviewers commented on the preliminary draft of the forthcoming manual Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction. The COMSt community is very grateful to them for the respect and commitment with which they approached this task and considers that, all in all, positive remarks and appreciation exceeded criticism. I would like to use this occasion to thank the following reviewers once more for their competence and frankness (in alphabetical order): Peter Gumbert, Marco Palma, Kristine Rose, Francesco Stella, and Manfred Thaller. Many thanks are also due to Agostino Paravicini Bagliani for his introductory keynote talk.

The conference feedback was an important input towards the completion of the manual, intended for the moment for an online and print-on-demand publication. The group of scholars, researchers and experts, who have enthusiastically accepted the challenge to contribute one or more pieces to this handbook—being convinced of the importance of presenting in a compact form not only the state of the art, but a coordinated reflection on a wide range of selected themes on comparative manuscript studies—are the real protagonists of this enterprise. Working together for the five years allotted to the programme, sometimes in unpredictable, academic

and non-academic, constellations, they have carried out their task at the best of the possibilities. It goes without saying that without the patient and competent direction and coordination provided by team- and co-team-leaders, who took the major responsibility of the work, the strenuous dedication by the central coordinator in Hamburg, the work of the Editorial Board and the Steering Committee, all these efforts would not have reached the goal. For all this, all those who have contributed to this enterprise deserve the most heart-felt thanks.

The handbook is the result of a true cooperation, exchange of ideas, and intense discussion of diverse approaches by several hundreds of scholars from “central” as well as “marginal” fields related to manuscripts research. Final revision is being carried out at the time of publication of this Newsletter, and the editors are hoping to see the handbook in print before the next Newsletter issue appears in January 2015.

Two of the articles in the present issue are closely connected to the handbook production. One is a by-product of the handbook preparation, a piece among the many materials that have been produced by the members of the COMSt community during the past years but for various reasons could not be included in the handbook (Antonia Giannouli); the other is inspired by reading from the handbook draft (Peter Gumbert). We hope that the handbook shall bring about more constructive feedback, and more first-hand research, once it is published.

Last but not least, we would like to dedicate this issue of our Newsletter to Dickran Kouymjian, the Nestor of the COMSt community, and one of the most active contributors to the workshops and the handbook, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday on June 6, 2014.

Alessandro Bausi
Hamburg, July 2014

Projects in manuscript studies

In this issue:

Books tell their story: cataloguing secondary notes in Islamic manuscripts in Gotha

The Byzantine translation of the Qur'ān from the eighth/ninth century CE and its role in the polemic of Nicetas of Byzantium

Books tell their story: cataloguing secondary notes in Islamic manuscripts in Gotha

Within the framework of the research group WRoTe: "Wissensrohstoff Text" funded by the European Social Fund for Germany (<http://www.esf.de/>) at Leipzig University (<http://wirote.informatik.uni-leipzig.de/wrote/index.php>) a new project has been called to life which aims to broaden our knowledge about the book culture of the Middle East. Manuscript books from many parts of that region can be eloquent witnesses to their history and the people using them. Some are littered with notes documenting their purchase, public and private reading, inheritance, endowment, lending or pawning, to name but the most common among them.

The data contained in these notes (names of persons and places, dates or prices) offers plentiful research opportunities for social and cultural history. Who read what, where, at what age, or how much did readers pay for their books? Between high-end bibliophilia and the readings of only superficially educated people, a multifaceted portrait of the reading audience unmatched by other sources emerges.

While the value of these notes has been highlighted repeatedly, systematic studies were impeded by a scarcity of available resources since manuscript

catalogues as well as text editions usually give only very limited information on the paratextual material contained in a book or disregard it entirely.

Collecting these notes in a systematic fashion is, therefore, an essential tool for any serious study of book culture. This project will collect and present the notes of some 3,000 manuscripts preserved at Forschungsbibliothek Burg Friedenstein in Gotha, written mostly in Arabic and partly in Turkish or Persian. In their vast majority these books were acquired by Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) in the first decade of the nineteenth century during his stay in Aleppo and Cairo, comparatively few were bought in Constantinople, Damascus, and Jerusalem.

The project builds upon an existing database structure successfully implemented for two previous cataloguing projects: the first documenting the secondary entries of the Refaiya family-library, originally from Damascus and now preserved in Leipzig University Library (<http://www.refaiya.uni-leipzig.de/content/main/search-secentry.xml>), the second those found in the Oriental manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek Berlin (<http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/content/main/search-secentry.xml>). All the notes are given in full text and enriched

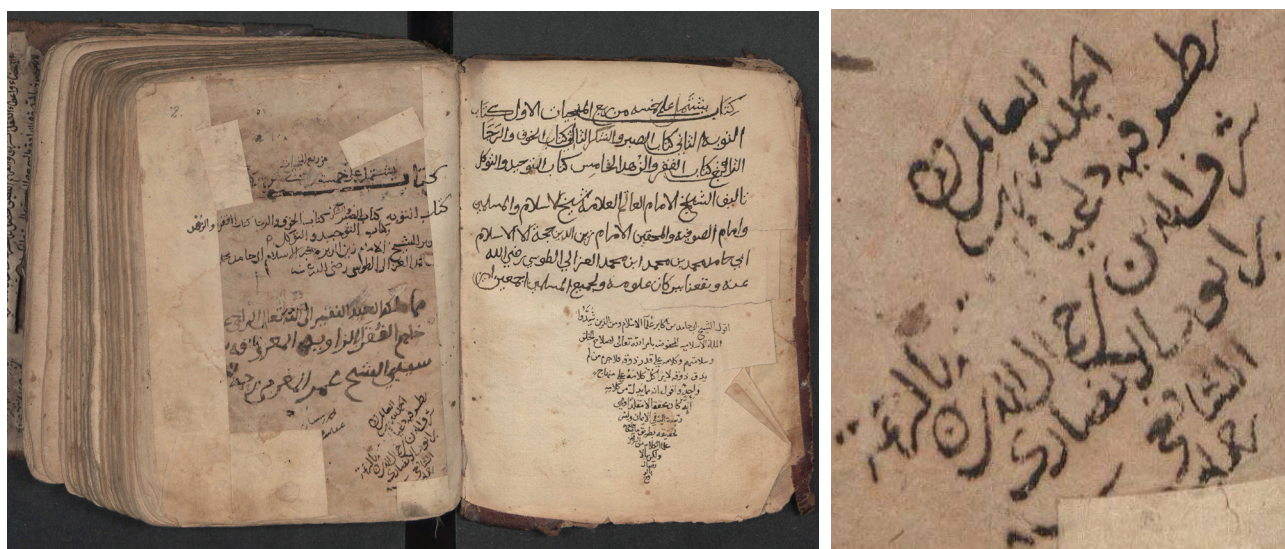


Fig. 1 a and b. Manuscript Leipzig Vollers 116, f. 2r: Title page of the manuscript with secondary notes. Ownership statement by the historian Ibn Ayyub.

Start Forschung Team Dokumentation Kontakt Links

Vollers 0116 / 2r / 2

Beschreibung eines Sekundäreintrages

Signatur: Vollers 0116 / 2r / 2

Link zur Handschrift: RefaiyaBook_islamhs_00000021

Link zur Abbildung: Vollers 0116 / 2r

Art des Eintrags: Lesereintrag

Personendaten:

Name: Šaraf ad-Dīn [Mūsā] b. Ġamāl ad-Dīn [Yūsuf] Ibn Aiyūb al-Anṣārī aš-Šāfiʿī

Todesdatum: nach 1000/1592

Eigenschaft: Leser

Anmerkungen: Besitzer von Berlin Ms. or. oct. 1455.
Leser von Leipzig Vollers 116, 593 (datiert 988); Berlin We II 298 (981), 326.
Kopist von Damaskus Maktabat al-Asad 15370 (datiert 978); vgl. Martel-Thoumian: Catalogue, S. 76.
Gazzī: Kawākib III, S. 194, Nr. 1539. Güneş (Hg.): Das Kitāb ar-raud al-āṭir, S. 2-6. Berger: Gesellschaft und Individuum, S. 26-29.

Text original:

الحمد لله رب العالمين
نظر فيه داعيا [لما لكه] بالربعة
شرف الدين بن جمال الدين
بن ايوب الانصاري
الشافعي سنة
رحمه [.....]

Sprache: Arabisch

Skript: Arabisch

English عربي

Handschriften

Sekundäreinträge

Suchmasken

Gesamtindex SE

Filter

Einbände

Historische Dokumente

Hilfe zur Suche

Nutzerkennung: keine

MyIHS 2.8

based on MyCoRe 2014.02

Die Ausstellung zur Refaiya-Bibliothek
19. April - 25. August 2013

19. April - 25. August 2013

Refaiya 1815

Leipziger Bibliothek

von Darmstadt

1815

Fig. 2. Description of the ownership statement as it appears in the Leipzig Refaiya database, the model for the envisaged database of manuscript notes in Gotha.

with metadata so that all the persons, places and institutions are identified wherever possible. The findings are cross-referenced with additional material collected personally in Beirut, Halle, and Tübingen, or online via digitization projects (mostly Dublin, Harvard, Michigan, Paris), and additional data occasionally found in manuscript catalogues or text editions.

The aim of the project is to contribute a great number of new entries to the growing dataset of the two previous projects in Leipzig and Berlin while also continuing the development of the existing database structure. The latter will ensure more user-friendliness and enhanced search options. At the core of this development lies the creation of an independent database of persons. Any information permanently connected with a person and not liable to change in different entries (name, dates, manuscripts possessed or read etc., sources and literature) will be stored centrally and the personal dataset linked to all the relevant manuscript entries. Since up until now this information had to be entered repetitively for every single note, every new bit

of information found inevitably triggered a manual change in all the entries mentioning the person in question, a time-consuming procedure with the potential for confusion and mistakes. Henceforth personal data can be amended or corrected centrally which will allow a better handling of the database while the separate personal files will also enhance its usefulness as a unique prosopographical tool.

This third application of the database will give researchers free access to more than 2,200 additional secondary entries documenting the individual history and use of a large number of manuscripts from the Middle East from the tenth to the nineteenth century as well as making it possible to reconstruct libraries long lost and scattered around the world. This application will be a basis for further investigations into the history of books and book culture of the Middle East.

Web: <http://wrote.informatik.uni-leipzig.de/wrote/index.php/ara/>

Contact: Verena Klemm, Supervisor (vklemm@rz.uni-leipzig.de); Boris Liebrecht, Researcher (liebrecht@rz.uni-leipzig.de).

The Byzantine translation of the Qur'ān from the eighth/ninth century CE and its role in the polemic of Nicetas of Byzantium

The research project on a witness to one of the earliest translations of the Qur'ān, preserved in the Vat. gr. 681, is directed by Manolis Ulbricht within the framework of the Collaborative Research Centre 980 "Episteme in Motion. Transfer of Knowledge from the Ancient World to the Early Modern Period" at the Free University Berlin.

Byzantium was especially challenged by the rise of Islam in the seventh century CE. The Byzantine empire was not only externally threatened in its sovereignty by the Arab forces, it also strove to prove the superiority of their own Christian faith against Islam. As part of the reaction to the Muslim victories, we find a proliferation of apologetic and polemical writings against Islam written by Eastern Christian authors since the eighth century. While names such as John of Damascus (ca. 650–750), Theodor Abū Qurrah (ca. 740–820) and Theophanes the Confessor (ca. 760–818) are well known, a profound analysis of the work of Nicetas of Byzantium (ninth century) is still a desideratum.

Nicetas wrote two letters to a Muslim emir as well as his opus magnum, the "Refutation of the Qur'ān", Ἀνατροπή τοῦ Κορανίου (see, e.g., Niketas von Byzanz, *Schriften zum Islam*, I., ed., tr. by Karl Förstel, Würzburg: Echter Verlag – Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 2000 [Corpus Islamo-Christianum, Series Graeca, 5]). The *Anatropē* dates back to the 860s CE and contains in its polemical main part a large number of verses quoted from a Greek translation of the Qur'ān. This Greek translation, now lost, had been made by an anonymous author in the ninth or possibly even the eighth century CE, that is very soon after the genesis of the Qur'ān as a written text. The *Anatropē* is thus one of the most important sources on Byzantine views on Islam, extensively quoted in later works until the eleventh century CE. It is preserved in a single manuscript, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 681.

The research project aims to present a synoptic Greek-Arabic edition of the Qur'ān fragments preserved in the *Anatropē*. These fragments are classified into four categories: literal quotation, free quotation, paraphrase, and allusion. A Greek-Arabic glossary will list all lexemes and their Greek translations while a concordance will put them into their context. This provides us with the possibility to double check this Byzantine translation against other Arabic-Greek translations leading to the overall question: Did this translation of the Qur'ān form part of a larger translation movement from Arabic

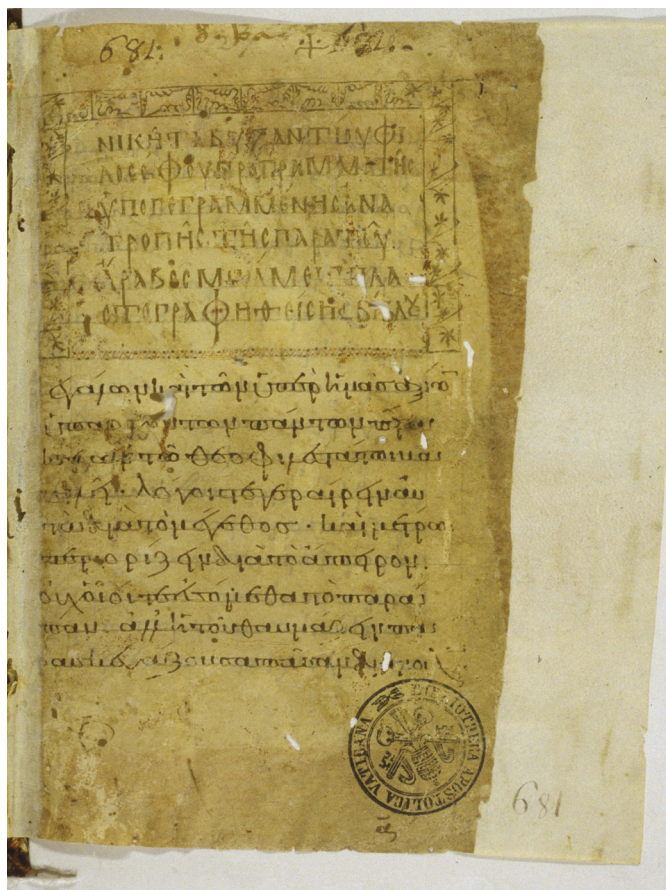


Fig. 1. Vat. gr. 681, f. 1r.

into Greek? Furthermore, a commentary will analyse the Qur'ān fragments under philological, theological and historical-cultural perspectives and, finally, explore the use of the Qur'ān fragments by Nicetas in his *Anatropē*.

In general, the Greek translation is very accurate but, nevertheless, it displays subtle textual differences with the *textus receptus* of the Arabic Qur'ān. On closer examination, we find a number of modifications of the Qur'ānic text that are of great theological relevance so one can speak about a Christian hermeneutization of the Qur'ān.

For example, verses referring to Jesus Christ display the same feature: In different Suras, his name is connected to the term *kalimah* ('word') in his undetermined form. The Greek translation, by contrast, determines this expression by adding the definite article (ὁ λόγος), calling him e.g. ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ('the Word of God'), while the Arabic text gives 'a Word of God'. This radically changes the sense of the Qur'ānic text because it thereby situates the Christian teachings about Jesus Christ as 'the Word of God' and thus as the 'Only Begotten Son of God', which is strictly refused by Islam and in the Qur'ān itself (for more details see M. Ulbricht, *الترجمة الأولى للقرآن الكريم من القرن ٨ / ٩ م في سجل نيكيتاس البيزنطي* (القرن ٩ م) مع الإسلام باسم تفنيد القرآن *Chronos – Revue d'histoire de l'Université de Balamand/ Lebanon* 25, 2012, 33–58).

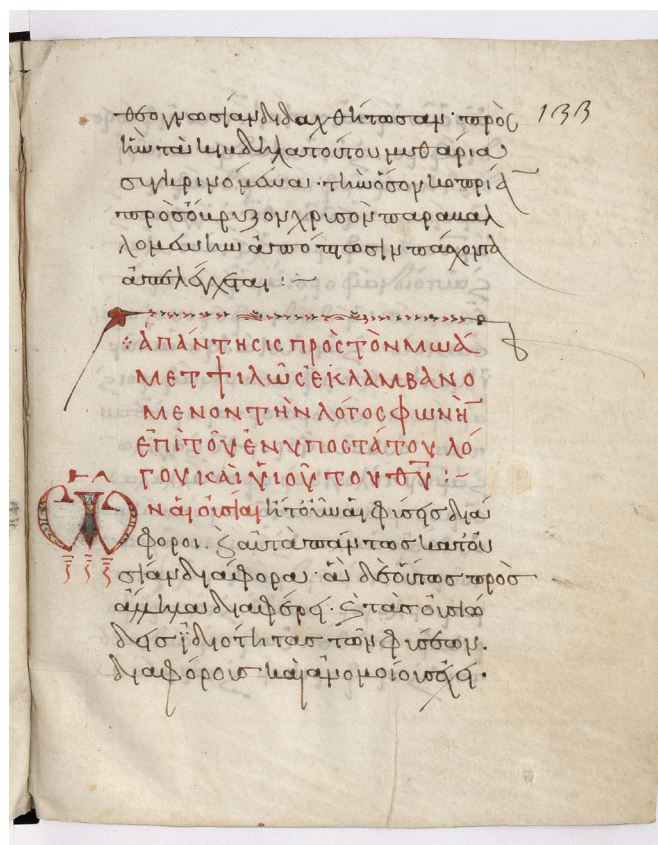


Fig. 2. Vat. gr. 681, f. 133r.

In addition to these theological aspects, the project also contains a philological dimension since the translation is given in the Greek of the Byzantine era (vs. the Classical Greek used by Nicetas). That makes the manuscript one of the rare testimonies of written Byzantine colloquial language while, at the same time, certain terms specific for the Byzantine liturgy are used in the translation. Another question is the understanding of the Qur'ān itself: By analysing the translation into Greek, we could get an idea of the comprehension of the Qur'ānic text in early times, and furthermore, of the literature the translator had at his disposal for understanding and translating the Qur'ān. This would help to give us a better understanding of the historical development of exegetical literature on the Qur'ān.

This projects aims to analyse the polemical oeuvre of Nicetas of Byzantium (ninth century CE) in an interdisciplinary way, by placing philological work with Christian and Muslim theological texts in a heresiological context and taking into consideration palaeographical and codicological aspects.

Contact: Manolis Ulbricht, manolis.ulbricht@fu-berlin.de.

Conference reports

In this issue:

COMSt conference:

18-19 March 2014, Hamburg, *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: Results and Outlook*

Conferences and workshops in manuscript studies:

19-20 December 2013, London, *Approaches to the Editing of Texts with a Multilingual Tradition (ATTEMPT)*

2-4 April 2014, Copenhagen, *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 15*

22-24 April 2014, Doha, *The Illumined Word*

COMSt conference

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: Results and Outlook

On 18 and 19 March 2014, the Research Networking Programme Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies held its final meeting in Hamburg, Asia-Africa Institute. The international conference, attended by sixty-six participants from sixteen countries, drew the results of the five-year programme.

In his opening talk, Alessandro Bausi (Hamburg) highlighted the central concepts of the COMSt network, underlining how the comparative perspective served as an inspiration and impetus for many COMSt-involved disciplines.

The mode of operation of the network and its progress were discussed in detail by the network coordinator, Evgenia Sokolinskaia (Hamburg), and the Team Leaders (and forthcoming COMSt Handbook chapter editors) Marilena Maniaci (Cassino), on codicology, Paola Buzi (Rome), on cataloguing, Caroline Macé (Leuven), supported by Lara Sels (Leuven), on philology, Jost Gippert (Frankfurt), supported by C. Macé and Ira Rabin (Berlin), on digital and scientific methods in manuscript research, Stéphane Ipert (Arles) and Laura Parodi (Genoa, in absentia), on conservation and preservation.

An important aspect of the conference was the openness of the network to external evaluation. Thus, Handbook chapter drafts had been circulated among independent referees of high international reputation who deal with traditions outside COMSt (mainly Latin / West European).

The keynote speaker, Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Lausanne–Florence), granted the COMSt members and guests a glimpse into the COST Action Medioevo Europeo (<http://www.medioevoeuropeo.org/>) he has been chairing. An experience comparable to that of COMSt but centred on medieval European culture(s), it has offered an additional insight in the networking possibilities in manuscript studies.

The project *TRAME: Manuscript texts and traditions of the European Middle Ages* ([http://www.fefonlus.it/index.php?option=com_k2 & view=item & id=230:trame & Itemid=188 & lang=en](http://www.fefonlus.it/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=230:trame&Itemid=188&lang=en)) has had among its aim an interoperability between the numerous databases and online services managing information on Latin manuscripts from around Europe.

A comparative and critical perspective on codicology was offered by Peter Gumbert (Leiden); his paper features in the present Newsletter (pp. 21–27). The progress in cataloguing was evaluated by Marco Palma (Cassino), an authority in Latin palaeography and author of catalogues of Latin manuscripts. Francesco Stella (Siena) provided a thorough page by page analysis of the draft of the chapter on critical and scholarly text editions. The work of the team Digital approaches to manuscript studies was reviewed by Manfred Thaller (Cologne), who also suggested that the COMSt should develop to a full-blown research infrastructure as it has been a perfect example of the potential of the collaborative research, and this potential should be explored for other major initiatives. Finally, the chapter on conservation and preservation was reviewed by Kristin Rose (Cambridge) who lauded the COMSt initiative for providing a floor of scientific exchange between conservators, codicologists and philologists.

The conference also offered space to short presentations of ongoing projects in manuscript studies, such as Chiara Barbatì (Vienna) on the Christian Sogdian book culture, Zisis Melissakis (Athens) on the new online interactive catalogue of the Greek manuscripts of the monastery of St. John on Patmos, Bernard Outtier (Paris) on the Georgian fly-leaves in Armenian manuscripts and Samuel Rubenson (Lund) on the Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia project.

The conference concluded with a round table dedicated to the future possibilities in Oriental manuscript studies, with the participation of all invited speakers and team leaders as well as Michael Frie-

drich (Hamburg), Christian Brockmann (Hamburg), Arianna Ciula (London).

The conference confirmed the impression of the entire COMSt experience that it is most important that the network continues to live and bring fruit.

For more information visit <http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/COMST/finalconf.html>.

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Conferences and workshops in manuscript studies

ATTEMPT – Approaches to the Editing of Texts with a Multilingual Tradition

The focus of the ATTEMPT workshop (King's College, London, 18–20 December 2013) – organized within the framework of the ERC-funded research project DEBIDEM at King's College, London, and co-funded by the Greek Studies Department at KULeuven (org. Ilse De Vos, Olga Grichenko and Lara Sels) – was on interdisciplinary approaches to the ecodotics of ancient and medieval texts with a multilingual tradition.

The actual workshop (December 19.–20.) was preceded by an informal ATTEMPT-DH meeting on Wednesday, December 18., which was convened to discuss computerized approaches with participants involved in projects with a strong digital component: Charlotte Roueché and Anna Jordanous (both King's College, London) of the *Sharing Ancient Wisdoms* project (SAWS) [<http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk>], Samuel Rubenson and his team (Lund University) of the *Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia* project [<http://mopai.lu.se>] and David J. Birnbaum (University of Pittsburgh) of the *Bdinski Sbornik* digital edition project [<http://bdinski.obdurodon.org>].

The main goal of ATTEMPT was to bring together scholars from different fields working on different linguistic traditions (esp. Greek, Latin, Slavonic, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, among others) to explore and discuss the pit-falls, the challenges and the perspectives of editing ancient and mediaeval texts with parallel traditions in multiple languages. Various speakers presented the particulars of individual textual traditions as thought-provoking examples for theoretical reflection (e.g. on the nature and variety of textual dependencies, the dynamics of textual variation, the relation between physical text objects and the abstract text, etc.) and fruitful debate on the more practical side of text editing (viz. issues of terminology, methodology, representation etc.).

After a brief opening address by DEBIDEM project director Yannis Papadogiannakis (King's College

London) and the organisers' introductory words, the workshop took off for a dense programme of fourteen papers presented by eighteen speakers in six separate sessions, loosely organised around various edition projects and methodological questions.

The first morning session focused on the textual tradition of the *Quaestiones ad Antiochum ducem*, a collection of 137 questions and answers on the position of Christianity with regard to Hellenism and Judaism, erroneously attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria. The opening lecture by organisers Ilse De Vos (King's College London) and Olga Grichenko (Oxford University) dealt with the tradition of the Slavonic translations, while the ensuing paper by Barbara Roggema (King's College, London) explored the Islamic context of the Arabic translations of the Ps. Athanasian *erotapokriseis*.

The second session dealt with the methodological challenges posed by flat textual traditions on the one hand and complex text clusters on the other. William Veder (University of Chicago) presented examples from the Slavonic field (e.g. from the tradition of the *Scala paradisi*) to exemplify the way in which flat traditions – viz. multiple texts copied from a single exemplar – are particularly resistant to a traditional stemmatic approach. Zara Pogossian (John Cabot University) went into the tradition of an anonymous Armenian apocalyptic text, *Agat'angel On the End of the World*, which belongs to a broader cluster of texts; her presentation centred on the issue of the transmission of smaller narrative units within different texts.

The first afternoon session was entirely devoted to the tradition of the *Apophthegmata patrum* and the *Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia* project (Lund University). Project director Samuel Rubenson and Johan Åhlfeldt presented both the project and the digital tool developed in that context for the analysis of the complex and multilingual textual transmission of the *Sayings of the Fathers*. Britt Dahlman commented upon the Greek collections of the *Sayings* as they are found in the *Codex Scorialensis* R.II.1 and related manuscripts, after which Jason Zaborowski (Bradley University / Lund University) went into the Arabic recensions of the *Apophthegmata*.

The fourth session, which concluded the first day of the workshop, featured three papers dealing with the edition of the fifteenth-century Slavonic *Vidin Miscellany* (*Bdinski Sbornik*) and its fourteenth-century hagiographical collection. Two presentations focused on the textual tradition of one of the *Miscellany's* entries, viz. the *Life of Abraham of Qidun and his niece Mary*: Laurent Capron (CNRS, Paris)

presented an introduction to the Syriac, Greek, Latin and Aramaic parallel traditions of the *Vita*, while Dieter Stern (Ghent University) focused on the relation between the Greek and the Slavonic *Life*. More general was the presentation by Lara Sels (KULeuven) and David J. Birnbaum (University of Pittsburgh), who discussed their attempt to reconcile a diplomatic edition of the *Vidin Miscellany* with critical editions of its individual entries, also addressing the more technical problems of normalisation and automated collation.

The *Dioptra*, a popular theological-philosophical compendium written by Philippos Monotropos (eleventh century), was at the heart of the fifth session, on Friday, with as speakers the editors of both the Greek and the Slavonic *Dioptra*: Eirini Afentoulidou (Vienna University) provided an instructive introduction to both the Greek text and her recent edition, while Jürgen Fuchsbaauer (Vienna University) addressed the challenges posed by the over-abundant Slavonic tradition of the *Dioptra*.

The closing session of ATTEMPT highlighted ongoing Bulgarian projects, which deal with Slavonic translations of parabiblical and homiletic texts. Anisava Miltenova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) discussed the electronic edition of Slavonic parabiblical texts (e.g. apocrypha and *erotapokriseis*) by means of the *Versioning Machine*, a digital framework and an interface for displaying multiple versions of text encoded according to the *Text Encoding Initiative* (TEI) guidelines. In the ensuing presentation, the *Versiones Slavicae* database [<http://versiones-slavicae.com>], which provides basic information about mediaeval Slavonic translations of (predominantly homiletic) texts, was showcased by Aneta Dimitrova (Sofia University) and Yavor Miltenov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), who addressed the asymmetry in the Greek and Slavonic traditions of the Chrysostomian homilies to exemplify the challenges involved in the making of such a database.

In a concluding address, Charlotte Roueché stressed the importance of interdisciplinary efforts in an open, collaborative – and increasingly digital – scholarly environment, to meet the future challenges in dealing with complex multilingual textual traditions. The organisers' concluding remarks were followed by a lively plenary discussion, which marked the end of a thought-provoking workshop.

The proceedings of the ATTEMPT meeting will be published shortly in the series *Orientalia Lovanien-sia Analecta* (Peeters, Leuven).

Lara Sels
KULeuven

The Illumined Word

From 22 to 24 April 2014, the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) in Doha, Qatar, hosted the conference entitled *The Illumined Word. Historic Qur'āns: Codicology and Conservation*. International scholars and conservators presented studies on historic Qur'āns, besides, three workshops in conservation laboratory were offered to participants including speakers, students, museum staff, and those interested in Islamic manuscript studies.

The first part of the lectures explored the Art of Qur'ān from Spain to Southeast Asia. The keynote lecture by Nabil Safwat gave insights on the lineage of copyists and calligraphers in Ottoman Turkey. Marcus Fraser presented his recent research based on the mediaeval changes in the layouts and decorative schemes of the early Qur'ānic parchment folia, particularly the last developments attested by the Blue Qur'ān folium of Doha. He explained that some minor changes could be associated with refurbishments over time, but others are more radical and indicate more thorough programmes of modification. Mounia Chekhab-Abudaya illustrated the features typical of medieval Maghrebi Qur'āns on the example of the seventeenth-century Moroccan Ms.11 from the MIA collection. Zachary Wright talked about the aesthetics of West African Qur'āns with their unique sense of colour and form and focused on the four distinct types of Arabic calligraphy found in diverse places of the region. The variety of hands seen in West Africa, continuing till the present day, illustrates the cultural diversity of the Muslim world as well as attests to older Islamic traditions still flourishing on the supposed periphery of Islam. Mahmoud Zaki offered a journey through the art of Qur'ān during the Mamluk Period with special focus on paper, inks, scripts, decorations, and binding. Nourane Ben Azzouna presented the Qur'āns in Ilkhanid Iraq and Iran, the period of the canonization of calligraphy in Arabic script around Yāqūtāl-Musta'şimī. She also debated the continuity or discontinuity of Qur'ān production under the first non-Muslim Ilkhans and its evolution after the conversion of the Ilkhans to Islam at the end of the thirteenth century. Annabel Gallop explored the art of Qur'ān in Southeast Asia, often referred to as "the Malay World". She identified the main regional styles and artistic features, notably in Aceh in the island of Sumatra, in the states of Terengganu, Kelantan and Patani, in various centres in Java and in areas associated with diaspora communities from south Sulawesi. Nur Sobers-Khan presented the history of Qur'ān production in the Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth until the nineteenth century, focusing

on codicological, ornamental and palaeographical developments. She also gave an interesting insight on the Qur'ānic production of Shumen in Bulgaria. Nuria Martínez de Castilla Muñoz talked about the specific features of the production of the Qur'ān in al-Andalus since the twelfth century until the beginning of the seventeenth century and analysed some codicological aspects in the Hispano-Maghrebi milieu and the decoration used in these copies.

The second part was dedicated to the conservation and the technology of these manuscripts. Wael Mohamed Elsaid presented an overview of the conservation procedures at the Biblioteca Alexandrina, Egypt, from the physical analysis of the manuscripts to the decision making process. Paul Hepworth outlined the various steps and the materials used in the making of Qur'āns, from the manufacture of the media and the supports to the conception of the quires. Karin Scheper explained the subsequent steps involved in the book binding process, from the sewing of the text block, to the board attachments and the covering.

The workshops focused on the study of outstanding copies of Qur'āns in MIA collection as well as on conservation perspectives.

A group visit was also organized to the Sheikh Faisal Museum where Hajer Drihmi gave a presentation of the Qur'ān collection.

Conference abstracts can be downloaded from <http://www.mia.org.qa/docs/bios-en.pdf>.

Amelie Couvrat Desvergnès
Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar

Care & Conservation of Manuscripts 15

The 15th international seminar on the care and conservation of manuscripts took place at the University of Copenhagen from the 2nd to the 4th of April 2014. The seminars, which have been organised by the University of Copenhagen's Arnamagnæan Institute in collaboration with the Danish Royal Library

since 1994, are interdisciplinary, and seek to bring together conservators, librarians, archivists, scholars, curators and others who work with manuscripts and early printed books in any capacity.

This year there were 150 participants from 29 different countries. 27 papers were offered on a variety of subjects, ranging from general questions relating to the care and conservation of manuscripts, such as Margit Smith on whether white gloves should be required when handling manuscripts (definitely not!) and Christoph Flüeler and Andrea Giovannini on how restoration and digitisation can, and should, support and enhance each other, to specific treatments given to individual manuscripts, such as Nicholas Pickwoad on the mounting and framing of the Lanhydrock Pedigree, a parchment document measuring 227 × 123 cm. There were also several project presentations, such as Lynn Ransom's progress report on the New Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts.

Topics of specific relevance for participants in the COMSt project included Weronika Liszewska and Jacek Tomaszewski on the analysis and conservation of Ethiopian parchment manuscripts in the University Library in Warsaw and Georgios Budalis on the structure, appearance and use of early codices around the Mediterranean Basin.

Abstracts of all presentations are still available on the seminar website: <http://nfi.ku.dk/cc/>.

The proceedings from the 14th international seminar were published in conjunction with this year's seminar and are available from Museum Tusulanum Press in Denmark (<http://www.mtp.hum.ku.dk/details.asp?eln=203599>), or, internationally, from the University of Chicago Press (<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/C/bo19126331.html>).

The next seminar will be held in two years' time, in April 2016.

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Miscellanea

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The Coptic Version of the Acta Phileae¹

In 2010 two distinct but almost identical papers by Gesa Schenke² contributed to extend the evidence for the already very substantial dossier of the hagiography and martyrdom of the Egyptian bishop Phileas of Thmuis (d. 305 CE), with the discovery, identification and publication of a previously unknown Coptic version of the *Acta Phileae* (Co) from *P. Köln* 492 = Inv. 20838e. The text is written on two parchments leaves, ff. 1^v and 2^r (hair side), originally belonging to one anopistograph bifolium, from a small-size codex, as appears from the extant leaves measuring respectively mm 54x75 f. 1 and 57x74 f. 2 (see fig. 1). The fragment belongs to an apparently unaccomplished codex (unwritten after f. 2^v), that is dated on palaeographical ground to the sixth century.

Notwithstanding its brevity, the fragment is extremely important because it contains: (1) the *incipit* of the text, lost in the Greek witness of the *Acta*; (2) the mention of the commemoration date of the martyrdom of the saint on 4 February – a date so far attested only by the Ethiopic version (*Et*), that also shares the indication of the “twenty first year of Dio-

cletian”, and by the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, yet not available in other sources: neither in the two Greek papyrus witnesses to the hagiography of Phileas, namely *P. Chester Beatty* XV (*Be*, *Acta Phileae graece*) and *P. Bodmer* XX (*Bo*, *Apologia Phileae*), nor in the Latin version (*La*, *Acta Phileae latine*).³

Let us now take a look at the edition of the Coptic text, corresponding to *La* 1,1-9 and *Et* 1-4 (cf. Schenke 2010a: 614; Ead. 2010b: 211; see Table 1). I think that in a crucial passage edition and translation must be revised, both in the light of the other textual witnesses to the passage and in consideration of serious palaeographical reasons. Neither of the two textual witnesses of the *Acta Phileae* that preserve the *incipit* of the text, namely the Latin (*La*) and the Ethiopic (*Et*) versions, has at the very beginning of the dialogue between Phileas and Culcianus the cue “Sacrifice!”, as it is in the Coptic text edited by Schenke: ⲁⲓⲣⲓⲑⲩⲛⲓⲁ. Besides, the emendation causes several problems in the interpretation of the passage, since it does not correspond at all with the Latin (and Ethiopic) versions.⁴

Moreover, instead of “Sacrifice!” of the Coptic, the Ethiopic has *baḥaba kʷellu*,⁵ that can be literally translated “in the presence of all”. Considering the palaeography of the Coptic manuscript, where in the first column, l. 10 a *delta* ⲁ is much more

1 I am very grateful for their remarks to Paola Buzi and Alberto Camplani, with whom I have discussed some points of this short note. The note summarizes a part of my paper “Dalla documentazione papiracea (*P. Bodmer* XX e *P. Chester Beatty* XV) alle raccolte agiografiche: la lunga storia degli *Acta Phileae* in versione etiopica”, delivered at the conference “I Papiri Bodmer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco e copto nell’Egitto tardoantico”, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Religioni – Dipartimento di Scienze dell’Antichità, Odeion – Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Sapienza Università di Roma, 3 February 2014. The paper shall be published in *Adamantius* 20, 2014, in a monographic section dedicated to the conference.

2 Schenke 2010a; 2010b.

3 For an overview of the hagiographic dossier on Phileas, extensive bibliography and previous editions, see Pietersma 1984 (*Be*, *Bo*, *La*); Kortekaas 1987 (*Be*, *Bo*, *La*); Baumeister 1999; 2002: 122–123; Bausi 2002 (*Et*).

4 Schenke 2010a: 613–615; 2010b: 211–213. Schenke knows of the existence of the Latin and Ethiopic version, but she consulted only the Latin for emending the Coptic.

5 Reading that is not supported by the Latin version (*La* 1,3), that has *praeses*, referred to the prefect Culcianus, cf. Kortekaas 1987: 280.

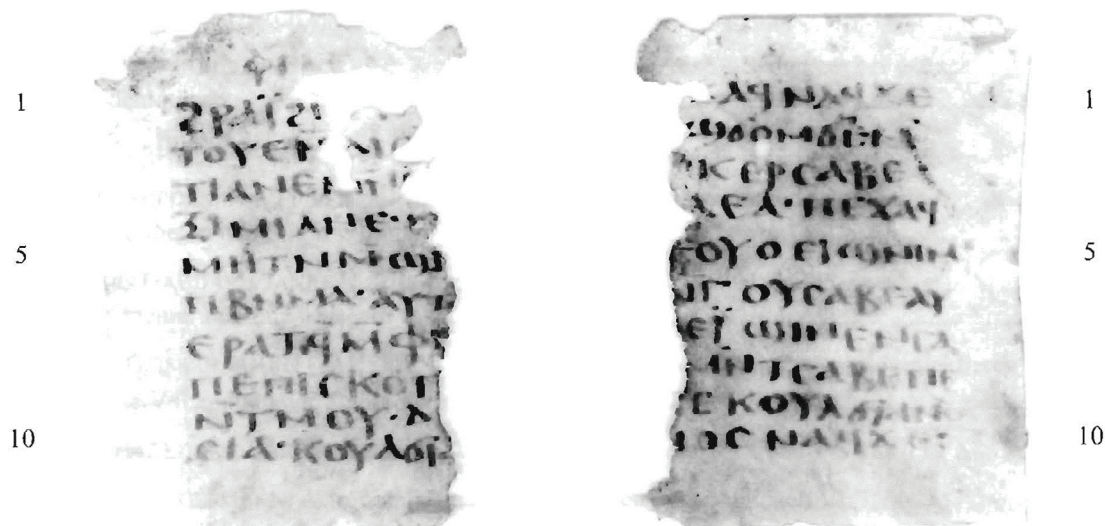


Fig. 1. P. Köln 492. From Schenke 2010a: pl. III; cf. Ead. 2010b: pl. XXIX.

1	φιλεα		
	ⲉⲣⲁⲓ ⲛⲓ ⲧⲙⲓⲛⲟⲩ		
	ⲧⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲁⲓⲟⲩⲕⲗⲏ		
4	ⲧⲓⲁⲛⲉ ⲙⲓⲁ	4	
	ⲛⲓⲙⲓⲁⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲟⲩ		
	ⲙⲏⲧ ⲛⲙⲟⲩⲓⲣ ⲉⲭⲙ		
	ⲡⲉⲛⲙⲁ ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲛⲟ		
8	ⲉⲣⲁⲧⲁ ⲙⲙⲓⲁⲛⲉ	8	
	ⲡⲉⲛⲓⲕⲟⲡⲟⲩⲟⲩ		
	ⲛⲧⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲓⲣⲓ ⲉⲩ		
	ⲕⲓⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲕⲟⲩⲁⲓⲁⲛⲟⲩ		

(¹ ⲁⲓⲙⲟⲩⲕⲓⲁ coniecit Bausi)

Table 1. Edition of the Coptic text.

La 1, 1-9 (ed. Kortekaas)
Passio Beati Fileae episcopi de civitate Thimui
1. Inposito Filea super ambonem Culcianus praeses dixit illi: «Potes iam sobrius effici?». Fileas respondit:
«Sobrius sum et sobrie degeo».
Culcianus dixit: «Sacrifica diis». Fileas respondit:
«Non sacrifico».
Culcianus dixit:

Et 1-4 (ed. Bausi)
1 ስምዕን ሰብሐዎ፡ ፊልጶስ፡ ኢጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘክመ፡ ተክለለ፡ በእንተ፡ እግዚእነ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ አሜ፡ ዕሥራ፡ ወአሐዱ፡ ዓም፡ በዐሥራ፡ ለወርጎ፡ ሚኪር፡
2 አቅረብዎ፡ ቅድመ፡ ምክርናን፡ ለፊልጶስ፡ ኢጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘብሐረ፡ ትሙድስ፡ ወበጎበ፡ ክሩሉ፡ ይቤሎ፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ይትከህለኩ፡ ከዊነ፡ ኒር፡ ወዓምዎ፡
3 ወአውሥአ፡ ወይቤሎ፡ ዓመውኩሂ፡ ወእዓሙሂ፡ ወዘበእንተ፡ ኒሩት፡ እትሐተት፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ይቤ፡ ሥዕ፡ ወአውሥአ፡ ወይቤሎ፡ ኢይሥውዕ፡
4 ቅዱሳን፡ ይቤሎ፡

Table 2. Parallel Latin and Ethiopic texts.

likely to be attested than an *alfa* α, the reading of the Ethiopic rather suggests on ll. 10-11 an emendation to: ⲁⲓⲙⲟⲩⲕⲓⲁ,⁶ Greek δημόσιον, that is “publicly, in a public trial”, that perfectly matches the Ethiopic “in the presence of all” and is a widely attested expression in Coptic *Passiones*.

⁶ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑ is actually very much used in Coptic texts both translated from Greek and in original ones. Extensive and appropriate evidence for this will be provided in the forthcoming publication announced in footnote 1, where also other aspects pertaining more to the properly hagiographic features implied by this passage will be discussed.

The Coptic text consequently matches closely the Ethiopic text – that probably goes back directly to a Greek *Vorlage* and is therefore decisive for a correct understanding of the Coptic, probably also based upon a Greek *Vorlage* – and should be translated as suggested in Table 3.

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Co (transl. Schenke)	Co (transl. Bausi)	Et (transl. Bausi)
Phileas: Im 21. (Regierungsjahr) Diokletians und Maximians, am 10. [Tag] des (Monats) Mecheir,	Phileas: in the 21 st (year of reign) of Diocletian and Maximian, on the 10 th [day] of (the month of) Mecheir,	1 Martyrdom of the blessed Phileas: how he was crowned with martyrdom for the sake of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year twenty one, the tenth day of the month of Mēkēr.
stellte man Phileas, den Bischof (ἐπίσκοπος) von Thmuis, [auf] das Bema (βῆμα) (mit dem Aufruf): „Opfere (θυσία)!“ Culcianus sprach zu ihm: „Kannst Du vernünftig sein?“	they placed Phileas, the bishop (ἐπίσκοπος) of Thmuis, [on] the dock (βῆμα); (and) publicly: Culcianus said to him: “Can you be sensible?”.	2 They introduced Phileas, bishop of the town of Thmuis, in front of the dock, and in the presence of all Culcianus said to him: “Can you behave properly and contain yourself?”.
Phileas sprach: „Jederzeit bin ich vernünftig und kümmere mich um die Vernunft.“ Culcianus sprach zu ihm: ...:	Phileas said: “I am always sensible and I take care of sensibleness”. Culcianus said to him: ...:	3 He answered and said: “I have always contained myself, and I (still) contain myself, and because of my righteous behaviour I am examined”. Culcianus said: “Sacrifice!”. He answered and said: “I do not sacrifice”.

Table 3. Parallel translation of the Coptic and Ethiopic versions.

ologische Abhandlungen, 60), 33-41; repr. in T. Baumeister, *Martyrium, Hagiographie und Heiligenverehrung im christlichen Altertum*, Rom–Freiburg–Wien: Herder, 2009 (Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte, 61. Supplementband), 107–112.

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Of Books & Men: Past cultural practices and methods of Islamic manuscripts preservation in Iran and India. Part 2: Pest control and Indo-Islamic manuscripts

In India, a tropical country, those interested in books, whether owners, bookkeepers or private collectors, have long shared concerns for pest infestation. From ancient times, several indigenous methods borrowed from the Ayurvedic and then later the Unani¹ medicines have been used for manuscript preservation. Dozens of ancestral recipes using herbals and natural insect repellents are still used and are considered to be less harmful to human health than industrial chemicals. Common factors of decay, namely light, dust, heat and humidity, have also been acknowledged since early times, and some basic principles were implemented in order to protect the Jain-Buddhist manuscripts made of palm leaves as well as Indo-Islamic paper manuscripts. This essay documents and comments upon some of the traditional methods against pest seen in the Indo-Islamic manuscripts mostly produced in the north of India.²

In some libraries it is usual to see books wrapped in red or yellow cloth and placed in cedar³ wood boxes.⁴ Cedar oil is believed to contain insecticidal and antifungal properties, and the boxes made from cedar act as an efficient barrier against insects, dust, light and climate fluctuations. This practice is inherited from palm leaves manuscript traditions where manuscripts are wrapped in red or yellow coloured cloth before being piled on library shelving. It is believed that red repels insects, and yellow possesses some germicidal power.

The yellow colour is usually achieved by dyeing the cloth with curcumin, i.e. turmeric (*Curcuma longa*). It has been extracted from the turmeric plant, by boiling it in water, since the nineteenth century.⁵ It is widely used in religious and wedding ceremonies being associated with prosperity and fertility. The medicinal qualities of turmeric have been scientifically proven—it is an effective analgesic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-tumour, anti-allergic, anti-oxidant, antiseptic, and antispasmodic

agent. Both religious and medical significance may explain the traditional use of turmeric as insect repellent.

As to the significance of the colour red, it is less obvious. Since ancient times, the red colour has been linked to the god Shiva and the goddess Parvati. Many red dyes are used in the Indian textile manufacture. These dyes are organic, extracted from plants such as safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius* L.) or species of the *Rubiaceae*⁶ family—dyer's madder (*Rubia tinctorum*), Indian madder *mujet* (*Rubia cordifolia* L.), chay root (*Oldenlandia umbellata* L.), and Indian mulberry (*Morinda citrifolia* L.) are commonly used across India—or from animals such as the lac insect (*Kerria lacca*). While all of these dyes possess curative powers in the Ayurvedic and Unani medicines (for instance the lac insect is said to heal wounds), they are not specifically reported to have any insecticidal compounds.

The red mineral paint is either made from cinnabar or mercuric sulphide known as *hingloo* in Sanskrit or from red lead called *sindhoor*. The latter is a sacred dye used, for instance, by married women to colour the parting of the hairs or to mark their forehead with the *tika*.⁷ In this case, red is used for prophylactic purpose. Artists and textile manufacturers were well aware of the toxicity of these pigments. It is possible that they concluded that, if red colours were harmful to humans, they must also be harmful to insects and animals. Today, the fabric used to bind or wrap books is industry mass production using synthetic dyes, it is therefore less probable that it contains any insect repellent ingredients. Red cloth is therefore used for the symbolic significance or out of habit than for its proven insecticidal qualities.

Historical Indian bindings of Qur'āns, *Shahnameh* or others luxury manuscripts are often covered with red Morocco goat skin leather. The red tone, a light brownish red, is characteristic of the Indo-Islamic bindings commissioned by high nobility. Various materials are used to dye the leather red, including sappanwood (*Caesalpinia sappan* L. *Leguminosae*), pomegranate rind, and *Carthamus* plants. It is not clear whether the red of the leather was also intended as a repellent; it is most probable that the red was chosen for its association with power and wealth.

Some others recipes such as exposing books to

1 The Unani medicine, tracing its origins from Greek medicine, arrived in India around the twelfth century with the Muslim invasion and flourished at the Mughal courts. It was practiced among the Indo-Islamic community. It borrowed many Ayurvedic principles.

2 This paper leaves out the discussion of dyed paper which is for the moment outside the scope of research.

3 The main chemical components of the wood of *Cedrus deodara* are a-cedrene, b-cedrene, thujopsene, other sesquiterpenes, cedrol and widdrol.

4 For example, in the National Museum of New Delhi.

5 For more details about the dye composition and dyeing methods see Cardon 2007, 320.

6 The *Rubiaceae* plants are rich in red anthraquinone dyes. See Cardon 2007, 107.

7 For more details about the red symbolism see Chowdry 2008.



Fig. 1. A *neem* leaf in ms. MIAQ 640, *Shahnameh*, Iran, 1570.



Fig. 2. Ms. MIAQ 640, *Shahnameh*, Iran, 1570, with *neem* leaves within the text block.

the kitchen stove fumes or opening books during sunset and sunrise seem to be more empiric. Indeed, it is good sense to regularly open and consult books by day light as the insects do not like to be disturbed and prefer dark and quiet environment. As to the fume, smoke particles are believed to be insect repellent as many local species of wood contain some insecticidal oils; besides, the carbon particles from the combustion are irritant and may also be repulsive.

The use of spices and herbs is also widespread. Small pouches filled with grasses, seeds, leaves or roots which have been recognized since ancient times for their germicidal and insect repellent properties are placed on library shelves next to the manuscripts. The choice of plants used for that purpose depends on the geographical area, among

others, lemon-grass, ginger, black cumin seeds, black pepper, sandal wood, clove, *aswagandha* (*Withania somnifera*), sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*), ajwain (*Trachyspermum ammi*), henna (*Lawsonia inermis*), custard-apple seeds (*Annona squamosa*), camphor (*Cinnamomum camphora*), mint leaves, turmeric, karanja seeds (*Pongamia glaba*), *nirgundi* (five-leave-chaste tree or *Vitex negundo*), tobacco leaves, and *neem* leaves (*Azadirachta indica*). The materials are renewed regularly as their effect fades with time.

Products of *neem* tree (*Azadirachta indica*, from the mahogany family *Meliaceae* and are one of two species in the genus *Azadirachta*) have been used in India for over two millennia for medicinal, cosmetic and domestic use. The tree grows in tropical and semi tropical regions and is native to India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. *Neem* is a major component in Ayurvedic medicine. Its functions range from antifungal to antidiabetic, from antibacterial and antiviral to contraceptive and sedative. Every part of the *neem* tree is exploited, the wood, the leaves, the gum, the blossoms, and the seeds from which the oil is extracted. The latter contains the azadirachtin from the limonoid class, a powerful growth regulator that stops the metamorphosis of larvae and blocks the digestive system. The *neem* wood is used to build shelving and protect books from pest. *Neem* leaves are widely used on the Indian sub-continent and are easily identifiable: they are small and elongated, with a pointed extremity and finely serrated edges (fig. 1). An example for the use of *neem* for manuscript protection is ms. Doha (Qatar), Museum of Islamic Art (MIAQ), no. 640, containing a copy of the *Shahnameh* by Firdawsi, in which *neem* leaves were placed into the text block (fig. 2). This manuscript was produced in Khorassan in 1570 for an Uzbek ruler, as the seal impression on the opening fly leaf bears the name of Shah Beg ibn Mirza beg Ataliq. At some stage, the manuscript was brought to India and was rebound with an Indian-style binding. *Neem* leaves were added on that occasion to protect the folios from pest infestation. Indeed, no characteristic mechanical damages such as holes and channels can be seen.

Another traditional method of book preservation is inserting the peacock feather between the pages. In general in Asia, peacock feathers are considered auspicious and protective, and they can be frequently found in Indian manuscripts.⁸ For instance, in an Ottoman miniature Qur'ān in the library of the

8 Many volumes contain peacock feathers in the National Museum's collection, in New Delhi, India.

Museum of Islamic Art at Doha, several feathers were placed in the text block as an insect repellent (fig. 3). If the properties of *neem* oil have been scientifically demonstrated, the research conducted in the 1990s did not identify any immediately insecticidal compound in peacock feathers.⁹ The feathers were shown to contain copper, arsenic and sulphur, as well as a red pigment of the porphyrin group¹⁰ that is believed to have antifungal and antibacterial properties. Peacock feathers were also used in traditional medicine: they were burnt to ward off disease and to cure snakebites. In any case, as mentioned above, any red colour is ascribed preservative and powerful qualities, and it is most probable that it was for their bright colours that the peacock feathers were used to repel the pest, as well as for their eye-shaped patterns: they recall the “evil eye” and thus have an apotropaic talismanic function. In North India, the evil eye is called *Buri Nazar* and amulets or charms, often eye-shaped or with eye motifs, are worn to ward off bad luck. Further to the symbolic meaning of the peacock we can recall the fact that in the nineteenth century the bird represented the supreme power of the Rajas. One can also have in mind the Peacock Throne of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the early seventeenth century.

Also found inserted in manuscripts in India are moulted snake skins; so far, no research has been conducted on this specific material. In all probability, such use comes from popular or religious beliefs and has no scientific foundation. In the food chain, snakes eat insects and peacocks eat snakes, feathers and moults are deemed by association of ideas to have a repellent effect against insects. This theory may find confirmation in Indian art. In Hinduism, particularly in South India, the peacock is the mount of Murugan Karthikeya, the deity of war. In a painting by Raja Ravi Varma (fig. 4), the peacock named Vahana dominates the cobra. On another painting dated to the eighteenth century and originating from Ahmadabad in Deccan, the goddess Asavari Ragini is depicted as a tribal woman wearing a peacock-feather skirt and feeding flowers to a snake (fig. 5). The reptile appears obedient to the woman, unless it is simply under the control of the protective power of the skirt. Hinduism and Islam being closely intertwined in India, it is quite natural to find some elements borrowed from



Fig. 3. Ottoman miniature Qur'ān containing peacock feathers, Library of Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar.

Hindu traditions in Indo-Islamic contexts.

Not only as parts of the history of the manuscripts, the materials and practices described above must be rigorously preserved since they provide evidence of human historical concerns for book preservation. Consequently, it is crucial that conservators, curators, scholars and archivists make sure that those fragile items are kept in place while the manuscripts are transported, displayed or sent on loan. It is also essential that the materials remain on the original location within the books, and they must be documented properly in the course of conservation surveys.

Further research is still needed in order to identify chemical compounds responsible for pest control. Cultural practices and beliefs could also be the topic of an in-depth ethnological study. It would be easy to ascribe everything to the Ayurvedic tradition but it is worth to further explore at least some of these methods as possibly a sustainable alternative to the chemicals used today in tropical institutions. Some scientific analyses are currently under progress and recent results have been quite promising.¹¹ Still, even if proven effective, these methods do not replace proper scientifically grounded preventive conservation procedures such as those implemented in modern museums and libraries, including regular cleaning and inspection, the use of pest traps, proper housing and monitoring of stable environmental conditions.

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¹¹ See Kharbade 2008, Kharbade et al. 2008.

⁹ See Kharbade–Agrawal 1992.

¹⁰ The colouring of bird feathers comes from the melanins, the carotenoids and the porphyrines. These latter can produce a variety of colours, from pink to red to brown to green; they fluoresce bright red under UV light. Porphyrin is also the dye of heme, the pigment of red blood cells.



Fig. 4. Sri Shanmukha Subramania Swami, by Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906). The god Shri Murugan Karthikeya is riding his mount, the peacock Vahana, who is trampling a cobra.

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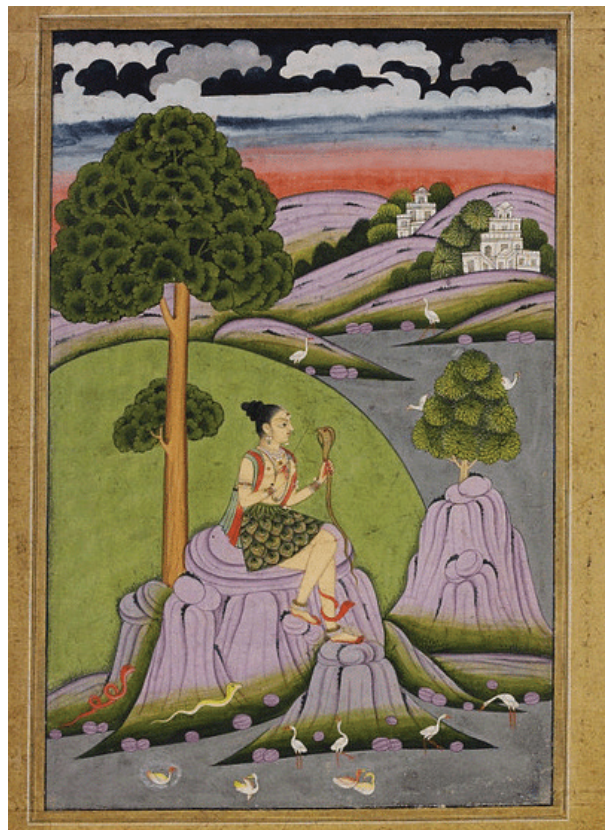


Fig. 5. Asavari Ragini, Hyderabad, Deccan, eighteenth century.

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Byzantine punctuation and orthography. Between normalisation and respect of the manuscripts. Introductory remarks¹

The tendencies of Byzantine authors and scribes with regard to punctuation, orthography or accentuation, based on such trustworthy witnesses as an autograph, a copy corrected or dictated by the author himself, have been the subject of individual analyses or integrated into editions. Yet, modern editors still waver between their *normalization* and their *adoption*. On the one hand, this diversity in editorial principles points to the need for a systematic study of authorial and scribal habits and their evolution throughout the Byzantine period. On the other, an ever more urgent issue is how the results of such a study would affect textual criticism and editing techniques. The observations outlined below apply to literary texts, written in prose and in learned language. It is necessary to establish this from the outset, because the issues discussed here have been treated differently in editions of vernacular literature. Moreover, they have often been regarded as of secondary importance because of the various problems involved in their transmission.²

1. Byzantine punctuation

Greek literature had, since antiquity, been intended for reading aloud. The systems of punctuation and accentuation facilitate the legibility and comprehension of the written text as well as the practice of oral presentation.³ The application of these systems was broadly established during the transliteration process in the transition from Greek majuscule (and *scriptio continua*) to minuscule (and separated script); a process estimated to have started as early as the ninth century.

The tendencies of Byzantine authors and scribes with regard to punctuation have been the subject of individual studies or introductory chapters in mod-

ern editions.⁴ However, a systematic and methodical recording of its development, in order to create a comprehensive overview based on the manuscript evidence, is still a *desideratum*.

To understand the Byzantines' punctuation system, researchers can base themselves on the theoretical remarks of the grammarians on the one hand, and the evidence of the manuscripts on the other.

Grammarians on punctuation

Among the most important witnesses to punctuation theory is Dionysios Thrax from Alexandria (ca. 170 BCE–ca. 90 BCE), author of the *Art of Grammar*.⁵ Dionysios records the use of three punctuation marks (upper, middle and low dot), which indicate breathing spaces of varying duration, but only two of them (the upper and low dot) are connected to the (in) completeness of a thought.

The grammarian Nicanor (early second century CE) nicknamed στιγματίας, the 'punctuator', made a considerable contribution to punctuation theory. He differentiated between eight punctuation marks in Homeric poetry.⁶

Apart from scholia on punctuation theories,⁷ no Byzantine treatise on the subject has come down to us; a lacuna all the more deplorable in the Byzantine minuscule, in which punctuation gradually came to be employed more consistently.

Evidence in the manuscripts

Byzantine authors were aware of the importance of punctuation for manipulating meaning.⁸ Yet, sparing use of punctuation is demonstrated in manuscripts dating before the consolidation of the minuscule

1 This contribution is based on the paper "The use of punctuation system in Byzantine manuscripts and questions of its rendering in modern editions" presented at the COMSt Workshop on *Textual Criticism and Oriental Manuscripts*, organised by Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven, Belgium, 25–26 October 2010. It was submitted for the COMSt Handbook in July 2012; only parts of it have found their way into the Handbook.

2 On punctuation, orthography, accentuation see Eideneier 2002 and 2005. On various problems in the transmission of vernacular literature, see, e.g., Eideneier 1987; Agapetos 2006, 94–102. On the editors' decisions, see Kaklamanes 2001, 172, n. 152. On the rendering of the transmitted punctuation in the edition see Eideneier 1989, 193f.

3 On reading aloud in antiquity, see Dionysios Thrax, *Ars Grammatica* 1.1.6, *Περὶ ἀναγνώσεως* (ed. Uhlig 1883); see also Theodosios Grammatikos (ed. Goettling) 1822. Reading silently or in a low voice was an occasional rather than a common practice: Cavallo 2001, 854.

4 A survey of ancient punctuation theory has been provided by Gaffuri 1994, 95–109. For further individual contributions on this subject, see *ibidem*, 99, n. 66; Maltese 1993, 81. See also introductions in editions, such as in CFHB, CCSG etc.

5 Dionysios Thrax, *Ars Grammatica* 1.1.7–8 (ed. Uhlig 1883): *Περὶ στιγματῆς. Στιγμαί εἰσι τρεῖς: τελεία, μέση, ὑποστιγμή. καὶ ἡ μὲν τελεία στιγμή ἐστὶ διανοίας ἀπρητισμένης σημεῖον, μέση δὲ σημεῖον πνεύματος ἔνεκεν παραλαμβανόμενον, ὑποστιγμή δὲ διανοίας μηδέπω ἀπρητισμένης ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐνδεούσης σημεῖον. Τίνι διαφέρει στιγμή ὑποστιγμῆς; Χρόνῳ· ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῇ στιγμῇ πολὺ τὸ διάστημα, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑποστιγμῇ παντελῶς ὀλίγον.* See also Dionysios ed. Swiggers–Wouters 1998, xxx–xxxii; Gastgeber 2011; Panteghini 2011.

6 Nicanor (ed. Friedlaender) 1857; see also *Scholia* in Dionysii Thracis *Artem Grammaticam (scholia Marciana)* 24.15–18, ed. Hilgard 1901: *κατὰ δὲ τίνα μεταγενέστερον τεχνικόν, φημί δὲ τὸν <Νικάνορα>, ὁκτὼ εἰσι στιγμαί, ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα τέως μάθωμεν· τελεία, ὑποτελεία, πρώτη ἄνω, δευτέρα ἄνω, τρίτη ἄνω, ὑποστιγμή ἐνυπόκριτος, ὑποστιγμή ἀνυπόκριτος, ὑποδιαστολή.*

7 Cf. Mazzucchi 1997.

8 Giannouli 2011a, 18–19.

script in the ninth century.⁹ The situation changed gradually from the end of the ninth century onward. Studies on the punctuation practice which was in use from the ninth to the twelfth century have shown that, in principle, the scribes followed the theoretical guidelines of the grammarians.¹⁰ An examination of autographs yields the most reliable insight into this matter.¹¹

Transmitted punctuation and the modern reader

It has been pointed out that transmitted punctuation is important in avoiding misinterpretations. Moreover, it marks the *cola* and facilitates reading aloud and the correct reception of the prose rhythm of a Byzantine text. In the light of these observations the question arises as to how to render punctuation marks in a modern edition, in order to bring the modern reader closer to the function they possessed in the Byzantine text.

It has been suggested that editors should change their approach to dealing with Byzantine punctuation. They should respect the transmitted punctuation in autographs or the most reliable text witnesses and try to understand it.¹² Thus, especially in the case of post ninth-century Byzantine authors, the transmitted punctuation should be taken into account by modern editors. The editor should examine the pauses made by the Byzantine author and understand his punctuation system. Even if there are many text-witnesses, it is possible (using the techniques of textual criticism) to define the pauses which the author wanted for his text. Variations, especially with regard to the strong pauses, are less than some editors would think. Finally, these observations should be presented in the introduction, regardless of whether the editor decides to retain these pauses in the edited text or not.

Editorial recommendations

While Louis Havet and Jean Irigoin recommended sparing use of punctuation, which was to be harmonized with French syntax, Armand Delatte and Al-

bert Severyns (as earlier Joseph Bidez and Anders Bjørn Drachmann) acknowledged that transmitted punctuation shows how ancient editors understood the text and can alert modern editors to changes in the text.¹³ Interestingly, Louis Havet raised the issue to be examined, i.e. whether prose rhythm of Byzantine texts is related to the transmitted punctuation, a phenomenon already observed in Latin works.¹⁴

2. Byzantine orthography

Over the last three decades, the tendencies of Byzantine authors and scribes in relation to orthography (including accentuation, enclitics, etc.) have increasingly attracted the attention of philologists. Though these tendencies may have been attested in autographs and reliable text witnesses, in editorial practice they have unjustly been treated as errors, since they deviated from the rules of classical grammar. Studying the orthographical details of the main text witnesses can reveal the preferences and choices made by the author being edited. Moreover, it reveals the educational level of a particular scribe and may help to identify his manuscripts. Modern studies point out that an editor should handle these tendencies with care, and not amend the text to comply with the classical rules which were, consciously or unconsciously, rejected by the Byzantines themselves (and certainly not exclude such tendencies from the *apparatus criticus*).¹⁵

Editorial recommendations

Apart from the separation of words, Louis Havet considered *variationes orthographicae* unworthy of mention in the *apparatus criticus*, unless they were significant for the prosody.¹⁶ The same sentiments *grosso modo* are repeated by Jean Irigoin, who suggested that all variants of morphological or semantic value were worth mentioning. He additionally included orthographical variations in proper names. Where variants appear in a group of manuscripts, he suggested that editors treat them either in the introduction or in their description of the manuscripts concerned.¹⁷ He further recommended that editors take into consideration the date and habits of the author being edited, and the manuscript tradition,

9 On the use of punctuation marks in the period between 835 and the mid-tenth century, see Gaffuri 1994, 109, n. 66.

10 Gaffuri 1994, 109f. and 114–115. On the implementation of Nicanor's punctuation system in the tenth century, see Basil the Younger ed. Schmidt 2001, xxi–xxiv.

11 Liverani 2001; see also *ibidem*, 188, n. 3. On editions, in which the punctuation of the autographs has been given due consideration see also Nicephorus Blemmydes (ed. Munitiz) 1984; Pletho (ed. Maltese) 1988; Angelou 1991. See also Noret 2011; Dendrinos 2011; Reinsch 2011.

12 On the arbitrary rendering of the transmitted punctuation even in those editions which rely on a single manuscript, see also Rafti 1988, 296; Mazzucchi 1997, 139f. See also Perria 1991; Maltese 1993; Gaffuri 1994; Noret 1995, 78; Reinsch 2008, 260; Noret 2011; Reinsch 2011; Gastgeber 2011; Panteghini 2011; Tocci 2011a, 2011b. See also Hörandner 2013 on prose-rhythm.

13 Havet 1925, §20 (p. 4); Irigoin 1972, 12. Delatte–Severyns 1938, 30. Cf. also West 1973, 69; Reinsch 2012; Bydén 2012.

14 Havet 1925, §§23–24 (p. 4); see Hörandner 2013.

15 Noret–Vocht 1985; Maltese 1995/96; Featherstone 2004, 243 and 245; Noret 2011; Reinsch 2011; Schiffer 2011; Tocci 2011a; Dendrinos 2011; Giannouli 2011b.

16 Havet 1925, §§52–54 (pp. 8–9).

17 Irigoin 1972, 25. Variants such as iotacisms, the doubling or simplifying of consonants, *iota subscriptum* or *adscriptum*, or errors in breathings, etc. should not be mentioned in the *apparatus criticus*.

before they choose between two variants; but the decision between systematic uniformity and flexibility is entirely left to the editor¹⁸.

On the other hand, Armand Delatte and Albert Severyns (as earlier Joseph Bidez and Anders Bjørn Drachmann) have recommended more attention be paid to orthographical variants, but that they should be discussed only in the introduction and not mentioned in the *apparatus criticus*.¹⁹ Objections to their exclusion from the *apparatus criticus* were made by Ulrich Knoche.²⁰

In modern editions, the orthographic tendencies attested in the main manuscripts are increasingly discussed by the editors and retained in the edited text.²¹

3. Byzantine accentuation

The tendencies of Byzantine authors and scribes with regard to accentuation (as well as enclisis, etc.) have also been the subject of individual analyses or integrated into editions.²²

Editorial recommendations

Louis Havet recommends that accentual variants should not be registered in the *apparatus criticus*.²³ Jean Irigoin too recommends adjusting the accents (in the case of enclitics) to current usage.²⁴ Modern editors are increasingly paying attention to these accentuation habits and retaining them in the text.²⁵

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18 Irigoin 1972, 13. He refers to variants such as ξύν or σύν, γίγνομαι or γίνομαι, etc. or the use of the ephelcystic v.

19 Delatte–Severyns 1938, §19 (p. 23) and §26 (p. 30).

20 Knoche 1940, 526, n. 1, points out that orthographica may be important for textual history and affiliation.

21 See e.g. editions in *Corpus Christianorum, Series graeca* and *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.

22 Noret 2014; Noret 2008; Oikonomakos 2005; Liverani 1999; Noret 1998; Noret 1995; Noret 1989; Noret 1987; Mazzucchi 1979; Reil 1910; Randolph 1910.

23 Havet 1925, §53 (pp. 8–9).

24 Irigoin 1972, 14: “L’accentuation des enclitiques sera conforme à l’usage actuel, qui n’est pas toujours celui des éditions du XIX^e siècle”.

25 See e.g. editions in *Corpus Christianorum, Series graeca* and *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.

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Our common codicology (and some notes on the West)¹

Codicology, like other disciplines, is a two-way process: out of the observation of single objects it builds a treasure-store of knowledge about the whole class of objects; and this knowledge is then applied in order to understand single objects. This last, the contribution to the comprehension of the individual codex, is probably the most important role of codicology.

One of the most salient characteristics of the manuscript, as against printed books, is that it is more subject to many sorts of changes. One volume may contain sections that were produced independently, perhaps at a distance of centuries and a thousand miles, perhaps by the same person within one week, but still distinct, in the sense that they did circulate, or might have circulated, separately. Besides, there are so many other things that may happen to manuscripts, and that often give them a surprisingly complex history.

The other side of codicology, concerned with how books were made, has in its turn two faces: one concerns the books of the own culture, the other looks outward towards other cultures, related ones or even distant ones. Regional codicologies are needed for the understanding of the culture's own books; but it is comparative codicology that does not only help us to understand the books of our neighbours, but also to understand our own books better—because we see what is the same elsewhere, but also because we see what is different; we learn that things we thought self-evident were not so, we learn to ask questions that we never asked before, and we begin to understand the larger history of our book forms.

For the moment, we still have a long way to go towards a true comparative codicology that would include the Western and the Oriental traditions.

It is quite difficult to acquire a good codicological knowledge. It cannot be done from handbooks; one simply must see a great number of actual manuscripts. And since most workers in this field did not start as codicologists, but studied the content of the manuscripts (whether their texts or their illustrations) and from that were lured into looking at the manuscripts themselves, they naturally concentrated on the manuscripts most connected with their prime area of interest, and certainly on manuscripts they could read. And so, most information that a comparative codicologist can gather about manuscripts outside his personal field will be second-hand.

Last but not least, the Oriental regional codicologies, the indispensable basis for the outward look, are for the moment quite uneven in their state of the art.

In the following, I would like to illustrate the challenges of both sides of the discipline, drawing examples from Western codicology.

A phenomenon I would like to use to illustrate the issue of the complexity of the changes that a manuscript may be subject to is the 'raccord imparfait' (using the terminology of Paul Canart), which I translate here as the 'imperfect junction'.²

Early in the fifteenth century Sozomenos, a humanist in Pistoia, wrote for his own use a manuscript of Cicero's *De oratore*.³ A few years later an old manuscript turned up, which contained a more complete text of the same work. At the relevant places of his manuscript Sozomenos cut out some leaves and replaced them with more leaves, containing the new, longer text. Early in the ninth century in the monastery of Corbie a manuscript of Servius' commentary on Vergil was written. Somewhat later a number of quires were lost from this book, and around 860 new quires were produced to fill the gaps.⁴ It is easy enough to start copying the new text at the beginning of the first line of the new leaf or quire; but it is difficult to end, with the last word of the replacement text, at the end of the last line, so as to make the junction between the new and the old perfect. The scribe might have to leave a piece of a page blank, or, on the contrary, have to add an extra leaf; he might extend his script in an attempt to fill the gap, or, on the contrary, compress it in order to squeeze the remaining text into the space left. These features are normal at the natural ends of texts; but if they occur in the middle of a text (sometimes even of a word), they are a sure sign that the scribe could write no further because the continuation of the text already existed, in other words: that the section that ends with an imperfect junction is younger than the following section. This also holds in another particular situation: what might be called 'parallel copying' by a number of scribes working at the same time on the same model, which for that purpose has been divided into a number of parts (generally quires). Each scribe receives for instance two quires of the original and two blank quires, and each begins at the beginning of the blanks; but only few scribes manage to end precisely at the end; so

¹ An earlier version of this paper was read at the Closing Conference of the Research Networking Programme *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies* in Hamburg on 18 March 2014.

² Canart 1998, 50, see also his note 2007.

³ This manuscript is Leiden, UL, BPL 127B.

⁴ This is Leiden, UL, BPL 52; facsimile edition: Lieftinck 1960.

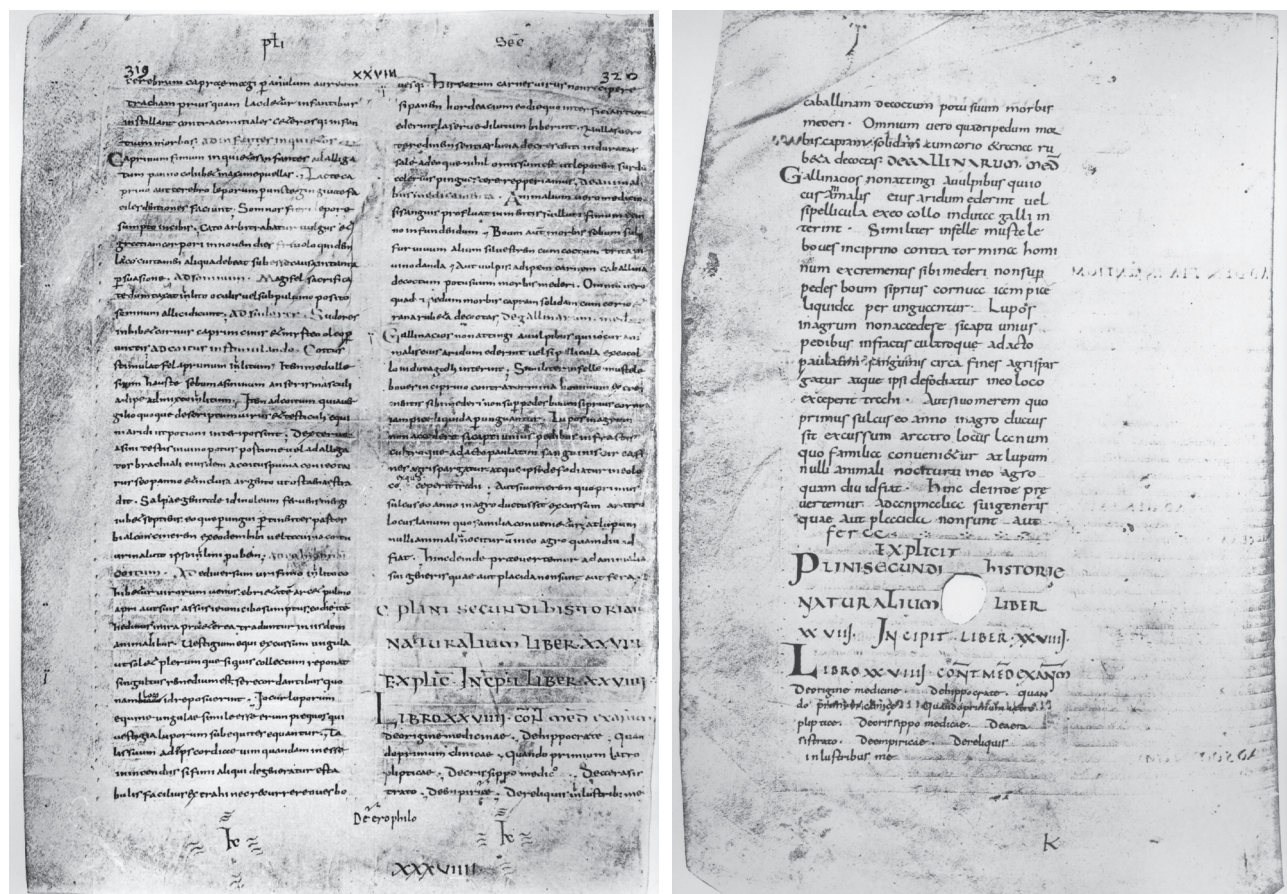


Fig 1. Leiden, UL, Voss. lat. fol. 61, f.80v, end of quire K; Leiden, UL, Lips. 7, f. 291v, end of corresponding quire, showing imperfect junction.

imperfect junctions appear frequently, although the work can certainly be considered as one single job. This was a common practice in Carolingian times, but it occurs later as well.⁵ There is a magnificent example of parallel copying in Leiden, a pair of ninth-century Pliny manuscripts, where model and copy can be laid side by side, so that it is easy to understand the imperfect junctions and to see that they are perfect proof that one is copied from the other. Chatelain published two excellent plates, one from each, precisely to make this point (fig. 1).⁶

Chatelain, in the 1890s, knew the date of the two manuscripts and understood their relationship. But the editor of the then standard edition of Pliny, dating from several decades earlier, gave to the original the date of the eleventh century, to the copy that of the tenth, thus blocking himself from understanding their relationship. And later editors blindly follow these dates, as do for instance most of the editors of the numerous volumes of the 'Budé' edition,⁷ even until a few years ago (although one of

them, troubled by their obvious textual relationship, decided that they must both be from the eleventh century, and one puts the model in the thirteenth.) What Chatelain says, what Bischoff, Reynolds and other palaeographers and codicologists have been saying for over a hundred years: the philologists do not listen to it—they do not even hear it. And I dare not be sure that similar situations cannot occur in other domains than that of Latin philology ...

Imperfect junctions and parallel copying are normal phenomena in the West. They are not unknown in Greek manuscripts. It may well be that they are rare in other codex cultures, but it is more probable that this phenomenon has not yet received due attention.

As to the challenges of a comparative approach and the dangers of second-hand knowledge, I wish to tell briefly the story of Western folding; it is a cautionary tale.

In 1940 Charles Samaran⁸ published the first example of a 'manuscript imposed in the typographical manner' (fig. 2), that is with four pages on each side of a sheet, arranged so that after appropriate folding the pages would appear in the correct reading order. Such a sheet consists of two bifolia which are still unseparated; its logical name is quadrifo-

⁵ This working method is sometimes confused with the famous *pecia* technique (a way of producing a fairly great number of copies of university textbooks in a fairly short time), but although both work from a model which exists in separate parts, they are otherwise quite different.

⁶ Chatelain 1884–1900, pl. 141–142. The manuscripts are Leiden, UL Voss. lat. fol. 61 (model) and Lips. 7 (copy).

⁷ *Pline l'Ancien, Histoire naturelle*, ed. in the Collection des Universités de France, begun by A. Ernout in 1950 and still not complete.

⁸ Samaran 1940=1978. Actually he had already made the manuscript known in a lecture of 1928.

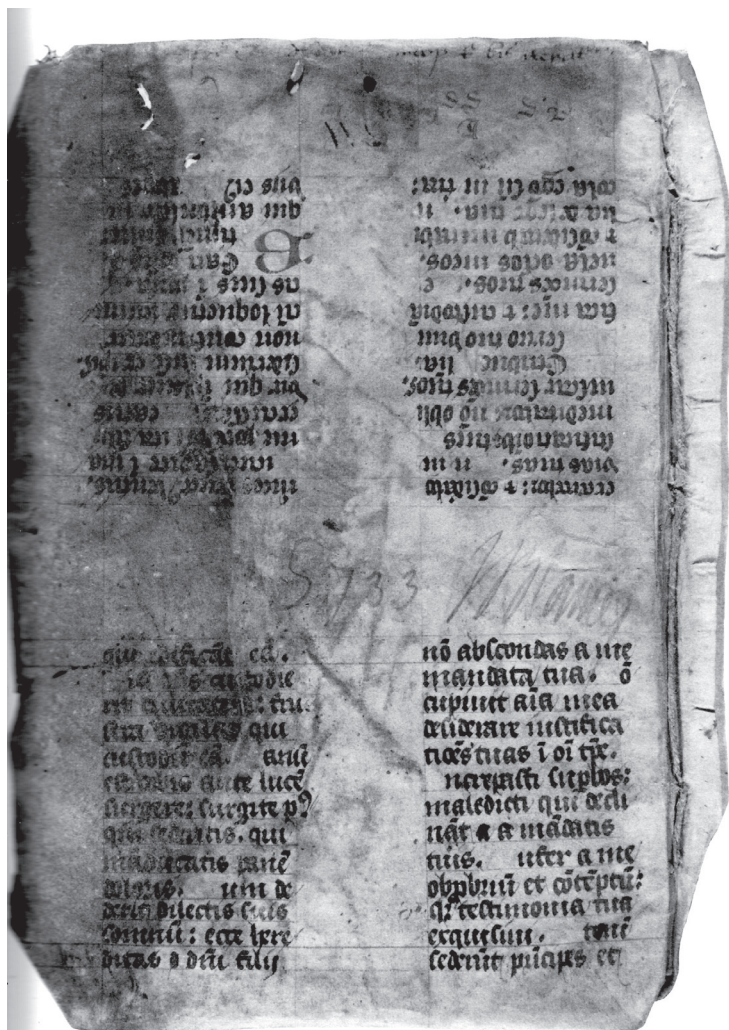


Fig. 2. An imposed quadrifolium, from Smith 1995, 149.

lium. One must suppose that such quadrifolia were written, folded, gathered into quires and bound while still uncut; opening the top folds would be left to the binder or the reader. And indeed there are manuscripts where the blank parts of quires, with nothing to read in them, are still unopened; there is even one where a pair of leaves in the text section is still partly unopened. There was much speculation about the how and why of such a technique; eventually it turned out to be a fairly frequent way of making books in the fifteenth, and even the fourteenth, century. In 1972 Léon Gilissen⁹ (who did preservation work in Brussels) published another observation: in the first place, that it could quite often be proved that two bifolia, or even four bifolia, had been part of the same skin (fig. 3), and in the second place that such bifolia were found in the places in a quire where they would have been if the skin had simply been folded two or three times. From this he concluded that those quires had indeed been so folded. And he found actual evidence that such folding had really occurred.¹⁰

⁹ Gilissen 1972, 1977.

¹⁰ Note, however, that in those cases (already in the eleventh century) the quadrifolia were not written on while still unbound;

This was a brilliant discovery, and it made a great impression, not only in the West but also in the East. For Jean Irigoien,¹¹ the use of parchment skins, which are big, 'requires a repeated folding which automatically implies both that the leaves are perfectly right-angled and that the hair- and flesh-sides of the parchment alternate'. François Déroche¹² explains 'how the scribes of the Medieval West worked: they generally folded a skin once, twice, three or four times' (and goes on to point out that Islamic scribes did not follow this method). In the draft of the Codicology chapter in the forthcoming *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction* I was asked to review, the authors of the Ethiopian chapter write that 'the skin is squared off according to the size of the intended book (...) without any folding'. The authors of the Armenian, the Hebrew, the Syrian chapters all take Western folding as the norm, and point out that in their cases this norm is not followed. Most probably in all the non-Western cultures the normal procedure was to cut out of a skin as many bifolia of the desired size as the skin would yield (depending on its size and quality).

What the 'Eastern' authors did not realize—because Gilissen had not pointed it out—was that that was also the normal procedure in the West, at least in the early period! There is, as far as I know, no evidence before the eleventh century that anyone did anything with undivided quadrifolia, either flat or folded. It may be that before that time someone already had the idea that, if you want four equal pieces out of one skin, folding was an easy way of finding the lines along which to cut; but even if he had folded the skin, he would then simply have four bifolia, which he could handle any way he liked. Recently I was given an article by Jiří Vnouček¹³ (who does preservation work in Copenhagen) about a late eighth century manuscript (probably from Regensburg); he found another way than Gilissen's of reordering the bifolia into their original skins; and although one quire did indeed consist of the four quarters of one skin, all in the position they ought to have according to Gilissen, the quarters of another skin ended up in three different quires, and some even in a 'wrong' orientation. (Incidentally, he also found a skin that

they were folded, stitched ('tacketed') into a quire, and then opened by the scribe as he progressed in his work.

¹¹ Irigoien 1998, 1.

¹² Déroche 1995, 29.

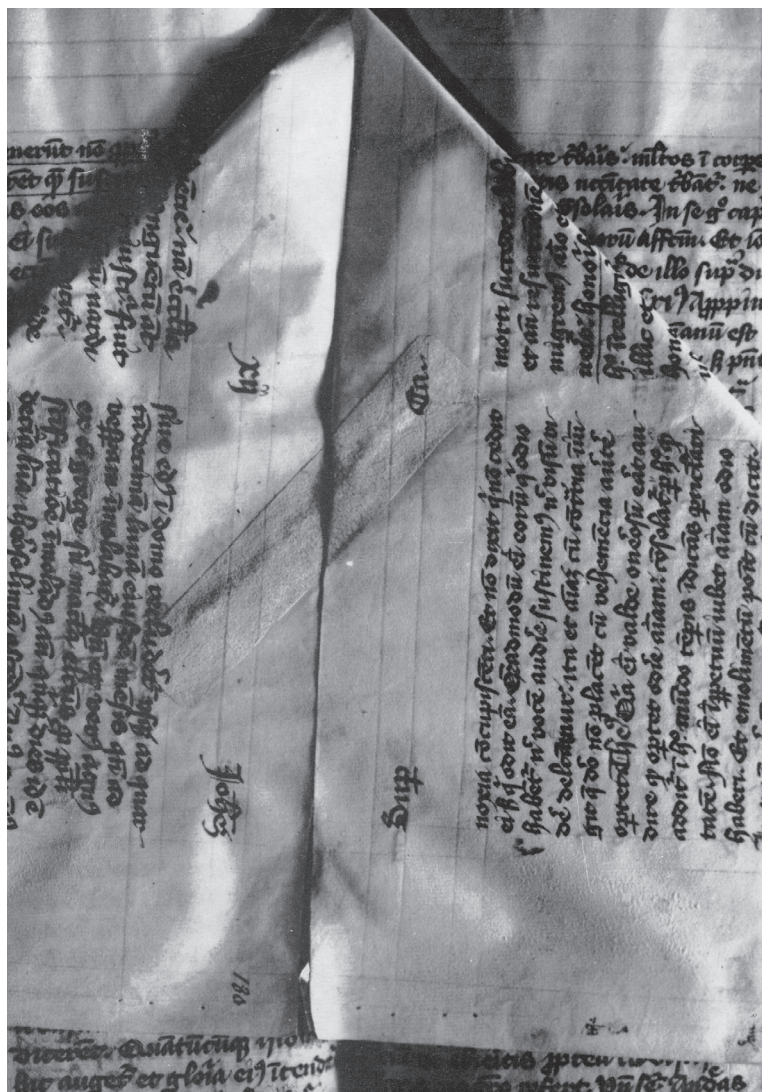
¹³ Vnouček 2012.

had yielded only three bifolia—a phenomenon that has been discovered in Greek manuscripts and now goes by the name of ‘in sexto’. And such a division into three cannot be done by folding; and so the divisions into four for this manuscript probably were not done by folding either.) So one does not need to distinguish the eastern practice from the Western norm, but rather explain the Western invention of folding as a departure from the common norm. (This makes the—probably rather rare and late—cases where folding ‘infiltrated’ into eastern codex cultures only the more interesting.) Let me add, finally, that it is true that folding produces quires that follow the Rule of Gregory, and if a quire does not follow it, it cannot have been produced by folding; but the converse is not true: if a quire does follow the rule that does not mean that it must have been produced by folding.

As I wrote above, there was hardly, or at least not easily, any way for the oriental codicologists to know this fact. There is no handbook, not even Agati,¹⁴ that gives a reliable survey of these matters; and the relevant articles are not all easy to find even for Western specialists.

The COMSt handbook does its best at bringing the data together. Still, even if the paragraphs are organized in a uniform way, a direct comparison is not always possible, as the paragraphs are naturally uneven in the depth of factual knowledge that they are able to present.

Another problem that must be faced when attempting a comparative approach is the terminological confusion, such as often happens with the regrettable muddle of ‘roll’, ‘scroll’, ‘rotulus’, ‘volumen’. The COMSt handbook succeeds in clearly explaining the terms when they appear, it does not, however, attempt a standardization. This brings us to the fundamental importance of terminology. As Daniele Bianconi writes in his introduction to the Palaeography section, ‘it is necessary to find an appropriate, scientific and—last but not least—shared terminology’. Exact terms (that have been given a definition) are needed, in the first place to help us to observe what we see, because most people most of the time ‘see’ only what they know and for which they have a word—it is a rare gift to see what one did not know (Gilissen had it). And in the second place we need



PL. 1. — Bruxelles, B. R., 486-7, fol. 180-181. (Voir p. 3-33 et surtout p. 8).

Fig. 3. Proof that two bifolia were once part of one skin, from Gilissen 1972, pl. 1.

the terms to communicate what we have observed to others. And this terminology should be universal—otherwise what someone in culture A observes and formulates with perfect clarity in his terms may be misunderstood by a reader in culture B, where the same terms are used differently. And after all that is our goal: that A and B understand each other, and that their labours produce the common knowledge of our common codicology.

It will certainly be a while before we achieve this goal fully. But the COMSt handbook shows that we have all become conscious of the importance of the codicological way of looking at books—not perhaps a first-order importance, if seen in the grand scale of world problems, but still a matter deserving serious attention—and that we are all moving, at different speeds, in the same direction. Thirty years ago a project like this would have been impossible; if in thirty years' time it will be repeated, it will be much better. And what I hope is that at that time Latin codicology will be one of the participants: not merely the implicit but tacit background and model,

¹⁴ Agati 2009.

but explicitly one of the branches of our common codicology.

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Tracing the sources. A rare case of explicit scholarly practice in an Arabic manuscript tradition

If one thinks about mediaeval collections of recipes and properties—medical and non-medical—in Arabic, it is likely that the image of a chaotic and hopelessly entangled mass comes to mind. This impression is also due to the fact that this kind of material has been scarcely studied so far. Thus, with certain levity, the slightly detrimental label ‘folk-science’ has often been attached to these texts. However, a deeper inquiry into some of the manuscript traditions associated with this genre raises a number of substantial counterarguments to this misperception.¹

To begin with, the authors of these compendia (ninth–twelfth century CE) were often outstanding intellectual personalities, highly educated scholars who in some cases served as the personal physician of a sovereign.² Then their assimilation into a more popular context happened during the transmission of the texts, which met with great success among a much broader readership for at least two reasons: they offered useful manuals for those who did not have access to professional (and very expensive) medical care, and they could also be read as collections of wondrous and amusing information.

The materials were organized in compendia with a well-defined structure. These compendia were formal structures, in which otherwise detached materials could be coherently arranged. Not all the formal solutions attested in the manuscript traditions are equally fortuitous. Nevertheless, the variety of different structures point to a constant evolution of the genre, deeply affected by the tastes and the needs of the readership. For instance, marginal notes were used as landmarks, offering the possibility to approach the text from different structural perspectives: if a text is organized on the basis of the characterizing ingredient, the glosses may

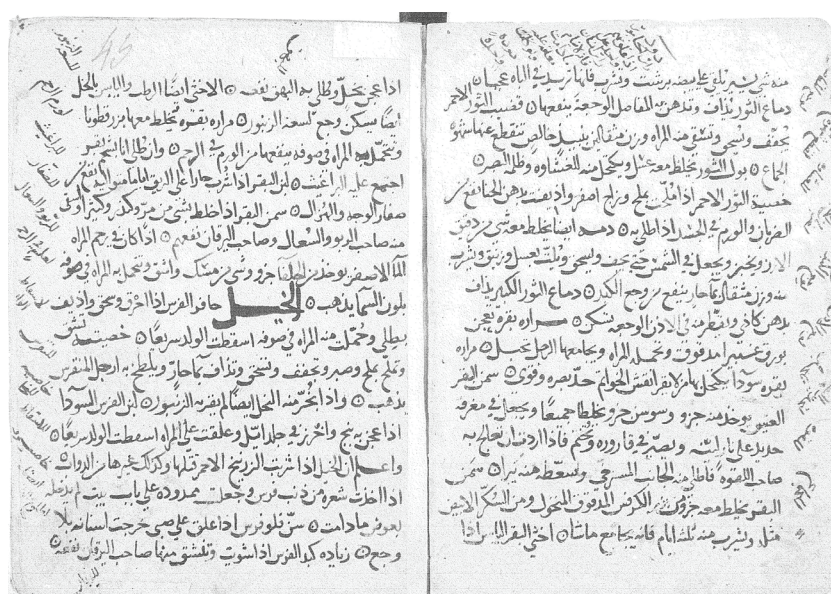


Fig. 1. Indexical marginal glosses—circular disposition. 'Isā ibn 'Alī, *Kitāb Manāfi* al-Hayawān, Gotha 67/2, ff. 44v–45r.

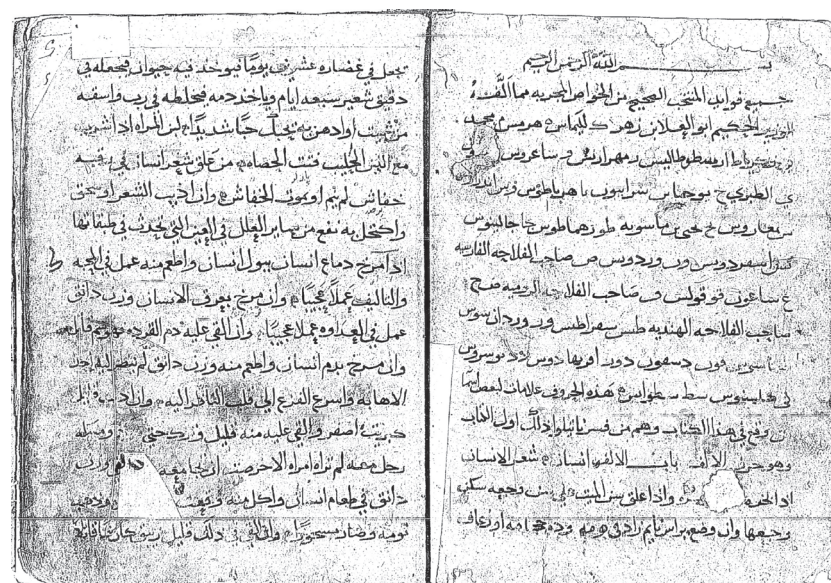


Fig. 2. Abbreviations. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-Hawāṣṣ al-Muḡarraba*, Paris Ar. 2954, ff. 4v–5r

refer to the goal of the recipe. In this way, a reader could avoid leafing through the whole text in order to find the solution to a specific problem (fig. 1).

Almost all the authors in the introductions to those works claimed to rely on prestigious ancient sources. Usually this claim is not followed by any explicit reference in the text itself. However, it hints at the use of written sources and at processes of selection carried out by the author. This does not exclude later addition of analogous materials from a different origin. The inclusion of new materials was favoured by a textual structure that was amenable to the fluid transmission and reorganization of discrete subsections.

1 I wish to thank my colleague and friend J.C. Johnson for the advices, the inspiring discussions, and the English proofreading.

2 For instance, 'Isā ibn 'Alī (ninth century), al-Rāzī (d. 930), Ibn al-Ḡazzār (d. 980), Ibn Buḥtīšū (d. 1058).



Fig. 3. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ al-kabīr*, Hamburg Or. 100, ff. 72v-73r



Fig. 4. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Ġam' al-fawā'id al-muntaḥaba min al-ḥawāṣṣ al-muḡarraba*, Saray Ahmet III 7294, ff. 1v-2r

cial uses selected from the tried out properties) by Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr (d. 1131)⁵ offers an almost unique occasion to overcome this stalemate, thanks to the explicit scholarly apparatus offered to the readers at the beginning of the text. The collection of properties attributed mainly to animal—but also vegetal and mineral—ingredients, *Materia Medica* arranged in alphabetical order is preceded by a list of sources, abbreviated by the name of the author, and represented by a distinct siglum. These abbreviations were used to mark the attribution of a particular text within the running text of the compendium.

Franz Rosenthal in *The Technique and Approach of Islamic Scholarship* wrote about the abbreviations used for indicating the sources in scientific texts, suggesting that this method of attribution originated in ancient times, independently from the systems of abbreviations used

in the *Aḥādīṭ* (traditions related to the Prophet). As an example, he mentioned the abbreviations in the astrological work of al-Damaḡānī, a contemporary of Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, as they are witnessed by the ms. Princeton 970.⁶ Although the fact that the two

ṣaḥīḥ (Leiden Or. 713), *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ al-muḡarraba* (Cambridge Or. 1418). Wien 1460 and Berlin 6166 give the title in a direct speech of the author included in the introduction. This work has been often confused, due to the misleading similarity of the titles, with the *Kitāb al-muḡarrabāt* (Book of medical experiences) which actually contains the records of particular medical cases. See Álvarez-Millán 1994 and Álvarez-Millán 2010.

5 Andalusian physician, member of an illustrious family of scientists, known in the Latin West as Aboali and Abuleizor. He practiced medicine in the courts of Sevilla and Córdoba, and it is possible that he was also appointed vizier by the Almoravids. See El² III, 1001–1003 (s.v. Ibn Zuhr) and Arvide Cambra 1987–88, 298.

6 "However, in the period and in the surroundings, in which Muslim scholarship came into being, the use of abbreviations was generally practiced. It would, therefore, hardly be correct to credit Muslim theology with being the exclusive source of

After these remarks about the authorship's status and the formal components of this textual genre, I would like to argue for a different status for these texts and to suggest labelling them as texts concerned with the 'Science of Properties'.³

The weakest aspect of this science is the accuracy of quotations. The reference to sources is normally seen as a rhetorical device to increase the general prestige of the work. The manuscript tradition of the *Ġam' al-fawā'id al-muntaḥaba min al-ḥawāṣṣ al-muḡarraba*⁴ (Collection of the benefi-

3 This was the name given by Paul Kraus to that section of the *Corpus Gabirianum* dealing with the properties of natural objects (minerals, plants, and animals), see Kraus 1942, 61–70. Later also Manfred Ullmann has recognized the status of "Wissenschaft von den Sympathiewirkungen" in relation to al-Rāzī's work. See Ullmann 1972, 383.

4 The work was transmitted with a number of different titles attested in the manuscript tradition: *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ al-kabīr* (Hamburg Or. 100), *Ġam' al-fawā'id al-ṣaḥīḥ min al-ḥawāṣṣ al-muḡarraba* (Paris 2954), *Kitāb fawā'id al-muntaḥaba al-*

authors lived in the same century might be a pure coincidence, this concurrence does let us hypothesize that the twelfth century was a crucial moment for the development of these systems of reference. Although it must be still demonstrated whether or not these types of abbreviations for the sources were a feature of this period, the existence of this apparatus makes clear that certain ancient authors were still clearly recognizable by scholars of the twelfth century. I cannot say whether this scholarly practice was constantly and continuously carried out from Antiquity to the mediaeval times. Perhaps, the explicit

statement of the sources was made at a moment in which the transparency of otherwise implicit attributions was disappearing in the Arabo-Islamic milieu. Thus far, I have collected eight manuscript witnesses of this text;⁷ six of them have the list of abbreviations. I will return to the two manuscripts without an explicit apparatus in a moment. This list of abbreviations did not pass completely unnoticed under the eyes of modern scholars,⁸ but up to now, no one has tried to collect all the manuscript witnesses in order to reconstruct the history of the text and of the practice.

The list consists of some thirty names, followed by a siglum of one or two letters. Only the Leiden manuscript adopted a slightly different strategy. In

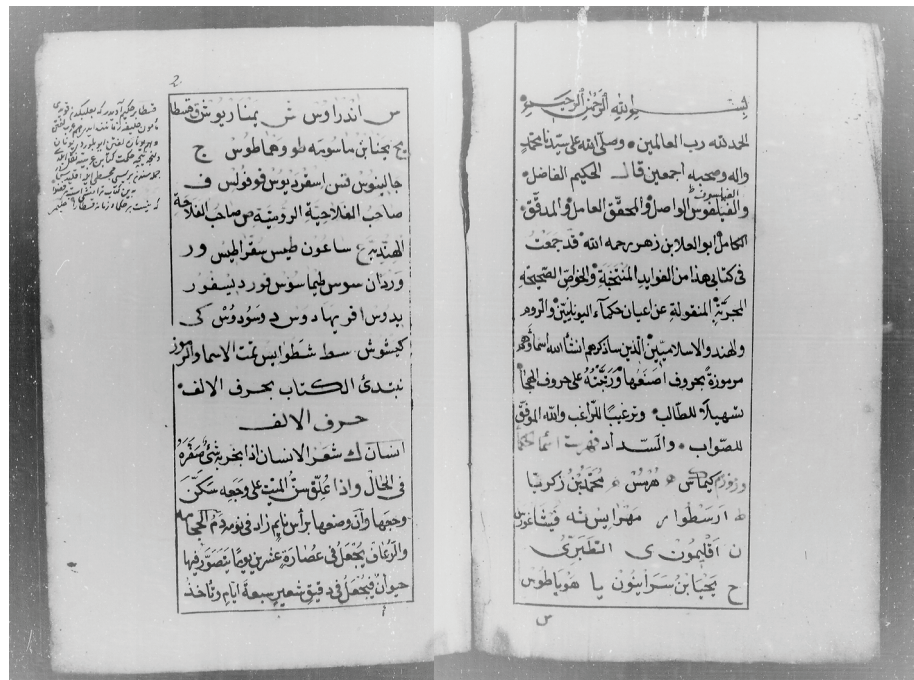


Fig. 5. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-fawā'id al-muntaḥaba wa-l-ḥawāṣṣ al-ṣaḥiḥa al-muḡarraba*, Wien 1460, ff. 1v-2r

order to avoid any possible confusion generated by the fluctuation of dots, the sigla are here written *in extenso*, with the name of the letter (or letters) written in full. Herewith the transcription of the abbreviations given in Saray Ahmet III 7294, ff. 1v–2r.

K Kīmās; **H** Hermes; **M** Muḥammad b. Zakariya (al-Rāzī); **Ṭ** Aristūṭālīs; **R** Mahrārīs; **W** Sāḡurūs; **N** Ilīmūn; **Y** al-Ṭabarī; **Ḥ** Yūḥannā b. Serābīūn; **[Y]ā** Harīātūs; **Ws** Andrārus; **S** Maḡārīūs; **Yḥ** Yūḥannā b. Māsawayh; **Ṭū** Rahmātūs; **Ġā** Ġālīnūs; **Ys** Isqarandūs; **Wr** Wardīūs; **Ş** Şāḥib al-Filāḥa al-Fārisiyya; **ˆ** Sā'ūn; **Fū** Fūlūs; **F** Şāḥib al-Filāḥa al-Rūmīyya; **Ṭīs** Suqrātīs; **Wr** Wardān; **Sūs**; **Ṭīmāsūs**; **Qūr** Dīsqūridīs; **ᵀ** Ifranmādūs; **D** Dīūsūrūs; **Kī** Kīsūs; **Şṭ** Saṭwā[y]ṣ

Some of the names are easily recognizable, especially the physicians (al-Rāzī, Yūḥannā b. Serābīūn, Yūḥannā b. Māsawayh, al-Ṭabarī, Galen), together with other Greek authorities (Polemon, Pythagoras, (Ps.) Socrates, Dioscorides). The quotations from Aristotle mainly come from the pseudo-epigraphic *Kitāb ṭabā'ī al-ḥayawān* (Book of the natures of animals) and the *Kitāb al-aḡḡār* (Book of Stones).⁹ Two different authors of books on agriculture (*ṣāḥib al-filāḥa*) are mentioned, a Byzantine and a Persian one,¹⁰ while four other witnesses (Hamburg, Paris, Leiden, and Wien) also add an Indian authority on agriculture. In the course of the transmission, more

Arabic abbreviations. [...] Astrological manuscripts, which use abbreviations for the indication of the names of the quoted authorities, appear to continue an ancient practice, rather than borrow from Muslim theological literature. In the astrological anthology which he composed in the year 1113/14, ad-Dāmaḡānī started out with a list of the following abbreviations, which he used throughout his work: *h*, for Hermes, *Wālīs* (Valens) remains unabbreviated, *ṭ*, for Dorotheus, *ṭm*, for Ptolemy; *nh* (?), for Zādānfarruḥ al-Andarzgār; *sb*, for Abū Faḍl (!) b. al-Ḥaṣīb; *št* (*sic*, *leg. ḥt*), for Ḥasan b. Sahl b. Nawbaḥt; *knd*, for al-Kindī; *śā*, for Māšāllāḥ; *sh*, for Sahl b. Bīšr; *m*, for Abū Ma'šār; *kū*, for Kūšyār b. Labbān; *jz*, for Aḥmad (Muḥammad b.) 'Abd al-Jalīl as-Sijazī; and *j*, (*majhūl*) for anonymous quotations", Rosenthal 1947, 36–37.

7 Hamburg Or. 100 (H), Paris Ar. 2954 (P), Saray Ahmet III 7294 (I), Leiden Or. 713 (L), Wien 1460 (W), Berlin 6166 (B), Bodleian M.Marsh 520 (O), Cambridge Or. 1418 (C).

8 In the catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in the National Library of Wien, Flügel transcribed the list included in the Wien copy, see Flügel 1865–67, II 528. Ullmann 1972, 28–29 summarizes the list of abbreviations. Fabian Käs, for his edition and study of Ibn al-Ğazzār's *Risāla fī al-ḥawāṣṣ*, refers the copy kept in Teheran (Maḡlis 1538), see Käs 2012, 7.

9 See Ruska 1912 as well as Aya Sofya 3610 and Sehīd Ali Pasha 1840.

10 One of the many aspects that requires further study is the Byzantine and Persian authors of agriculture and whether these names refer to two different compositions, or to the two different translations—respectively, from Greek and Pahlawi—of the *Eklogai* of Cassianus Bassus (sixth–seventh century). See Ullmann 1972, 434–435.

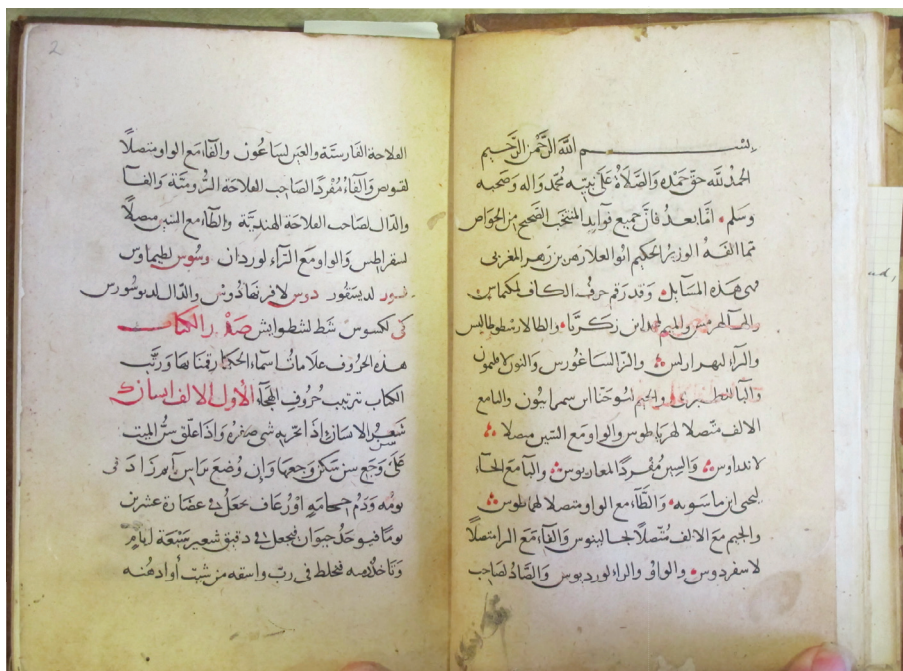


Fig. 6. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ al-muḡarraba*, Leiden Or. 713, ff. 1v-2r



Fig. 7. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ*, Berlin 6166 (Pm II 14), ff. 2v-3r

However, unlike Ullmann,¹³ I would tend to exclude the hypothesis that fake names were added just to stretch out the list. They are more likely to be understood as corruptions of actual names.

A first gross collation shows that the lists in Hamburg Or. 100, Paris Ar. 2954, Saray Ahmet III 7294, and Leiden Or. 713 are closely related, whereas Wien 1460 presents the authors' names in a different order. Finally, the copyist of the Berlin manuscript did not understand the logic behind the list of abbreviations and incorrectly associated names with sigla. Whether the manuscript he copied from had the correct readings or not does not matter much. In fact, if he had understood the logic of the abbreviation system, he could have easily amended the mistake.

As we have anticipated, two manuscript witnesses — namely Cambridge Or. 1418 and Bodleian M.Marsh. 520 — entirely lack the tables of sigla that we find in the other manuscripts. However, the former gives the full name of the authority for every recipe, so we can still say that it belongs to the explicit method of quoting sources; the latter includes only the recipes, without any

indication about their provenance¹⁴ (fig. 8).

Considering all these different aspects, the manuscript tradition of Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr opens a new perspective for the study of compendia and the transmission of knowledge from ancient to Medieval sources. In those cases where the original sources are still available, one can check the degree of reliability with which the sources are quoted and the selection carried out by the author — and by later copyists — among the materials at his disposal. In

authorities were added, and their names are fully given in the text. For instance, in Saray Ahmet III 7294 one can read recipes and properties attributed to Iskandar (Alexander the Great)¹¹, to the Metropolitan bishop Iskandar, and to the *ṣāhib kīmiyā al-ṭa'am* (the author of the 'alchemy of food')¹².

A number of the authors have still to be identified.

11 A parallel to the engraved talismans attributed to Alexander to chase off flies (f. 35r), against the bladder complaint and colics (f. 50r) can be found in the *Dahira Iskandariyya* (The Alexander's treasure), as transmitted in manuscript Berlin 4193 (= Wetzstein II 1209). This indicates that a coherent and recognizable kind of knowledge was circulating under the pseudo-authorship of Alexander the Great.

12 A recipe for ice making and one for a long-lasting love based on seven chick peas were transmitted under this name.

13 See Ullmann 1972, 28.

14 The lack of a complete *recensio* has been quite an obstacle to the full understanding of this text. For instance, by working only on M-Marsh. 520, Arvide Cambra (1987–1988) was unable to recognize the presence of the abbreviations list.

the opposite case, however, one can also try to reconstruct a tradition which is now lost. Moreover, with particular regard to pseudo-authorships, one can even define the kind of information that was transmitted under a certain name, giving a coherent description of the formal arrangements, based on authorship, which were involved in the transmission. Even more promising is the possibility of using explicit attributions in a text like that of Ibn Zuhr to identify the material structure of compendia in which the quotations from ancient sources remain implicit.

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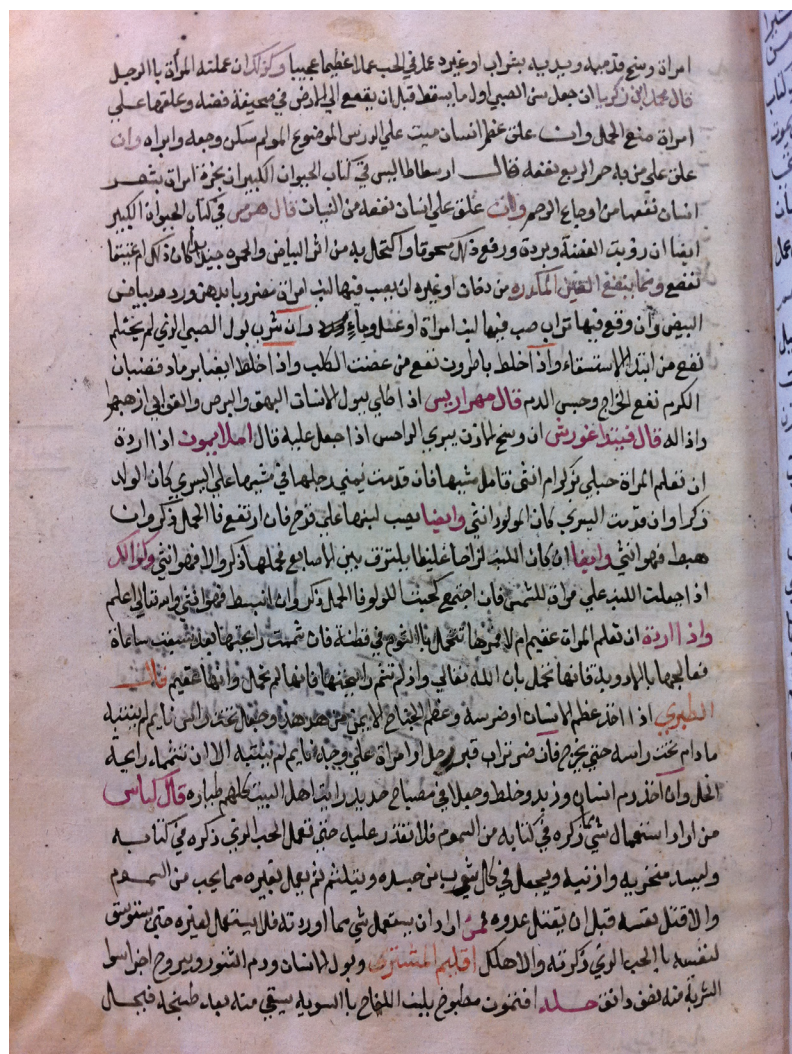


Fig. 8. Abū 'Alā ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-Hawāṣṣ*, Cambridge Or. 1418, f. 2r

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Modern palimpsests. The case of the counterfeit Kufic fragments

On March 29, 2012, I received a message from a Mr. Faisal Reza, whom I did not know, with the subject line 'enquiry on kufic manuscripts'. Mr. Reza wrote to me:

'Dear Prof Witkam,
I am Faisal and an amateur antique collector based in Norway. I have your contact details from <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/> when I was trying search on information regarding kufic script.
I am about to purchase antique kufic manuscripts in ebay.com from a seller based in US, as in the following links, http://www.ebay.com/itm/Old-Koranic-Kufic-Manuscript-Leaf-vellum-/380423425770?pt=Antiquarian_Collectible&hash=item589300ceea and http://www.ebay.com/itm/A-leaf-of-an-early-Koran-on-vellum-Kufic-Script-/160769679812?pt=Antiquarian_Collectible&hash=item256e9ea1c4
I really appreciate if you can help me to quickly assess this type of manuscript offered by this seller and I would like to know in which period these manuscripts were likely produced.
Many thanks for your attention.
Best regards
Faisal Reza'

Ever since 2007, when I started my website on Islamic manuscripts, I have been receiving both serious and less serious messages concerning Islamic manuscripts, both from scholars of standing and ordinary truth-seekers. I answer all incoming messages to the best of my knowledge. So the next day I wrote to Mr. Reza that maybe he should first acquire some basic knowledge about the things he collects, and that I personally would never even consider to purchase any of the two leaves offered for sale. Later I gave Mr. Reza a suggestion for further reading, and that was the correspondence between Mr. Reza and myself at the time. I now know that he eventually refrained from purchasing the Kufic fragments, but for aesthetical reasons only.¹ In the meantime he had acquired a beautiful fragment, for the image of which he referred me to a gallery of his collection on the internet. That the eBay pieces of 2012 were modern counterfeits had not played a role in his decision, and he may not even have been aware of it.

My Islamic manuscripts site has the purpose to increase knowledge, not monetary value. I do not use my expertise to give investment advices, and therefore I usually remain at a distance. I could have closed the matter at that, but my curiosity made me once more click on the first link Mr. Reza had sent me. The eBay article description read:

'Old Arabic Manuscript Koran Leaf in Kufic Script on Vellum. A very nice old vellum leaf of a manuscript Koran. Size: 19 × 24.5 cm. It is written in Kufic script, one of the earliest scripts in Arabic, 10 lines to a page. The leaf begins in the middle of Verse 96, Chapter 2 and ends at the middle of Verse 102 of the same chapter. The text is without dots as is the case in almost all early Korans. The red dots, here, represent the diacritical marks, such as vowels, hamzas, etc. Minor smudges, otherwise in excellent condition. A truly handsome piece. (See Martin Lings, the Quranic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination.) [Code:KJo02]'

Bidding was possible till April 2, 2012, and the starting bid was US\$ 425. Of course, the vendor, a certain Mr. M. Balwan,² had added an image of the fragment (fig. 1). Looking at it I was puzzled for a short moment, as the image did not fit into any of my experiences with Kufic fragments of the Qur'ān. Within seconds it occurred to me that these pieces were falsifications, clumsy ones even, but I felt I would need more articulate proof of that, rather than to jump to conclusions on the basis of a single hunch or a first impression. eBay's customer guarantees only go as far that the description of the object sold must exactly fit the object itself. In the description above no date or age are mentioned and for the rest the description is plain and factual. The only misleading element is the word 'Kufic', but that term has now, in modern scholarship, been abandoned, so its use is free. That the fragment in question is a 'truly handsome piece' is a matter of taste, and in matters of taste, there can be no disputes. The reference to Martin Ling's work is suggestive and misleading.

I also wished to know more about my correspondent, and that was not difficult. A short search online makes clear that Mr. Reza is an Indonesian national, who works for Statoil ASA, an international energy company present in more than thirty countries around the world.³ In his first message to me he already had intimated that he lived in Norway and that he was a collector. He has several interesting albums on the internet in which he shows images of objects in his collections.⁴ To judge from

¹ From November 2013 onward I have had several more exchanges with Mr. Reza while preparing the present article.

² He is still active with Kufic fragments. He has been an eBay member since 1998, as his profile (<http://www.ebay.com/usr/mbalwan>) mentions, with a customer satisfaction rate of 99%. He seems to be established in Belmont, Massachusetts, USA. Apart from Kufic fragments he sells also genuine items (http://www.ebay.com/sch/mbalwan/m.html?_nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_from= [accessed on June 14, 2014]). I have not been in contact with him.

³ <http://www.statoil.com/en/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed on June 1, 2014).

⁴ One of these albums is available at <https://plus.google.com/116299092146146571973/photos> (last visited on June

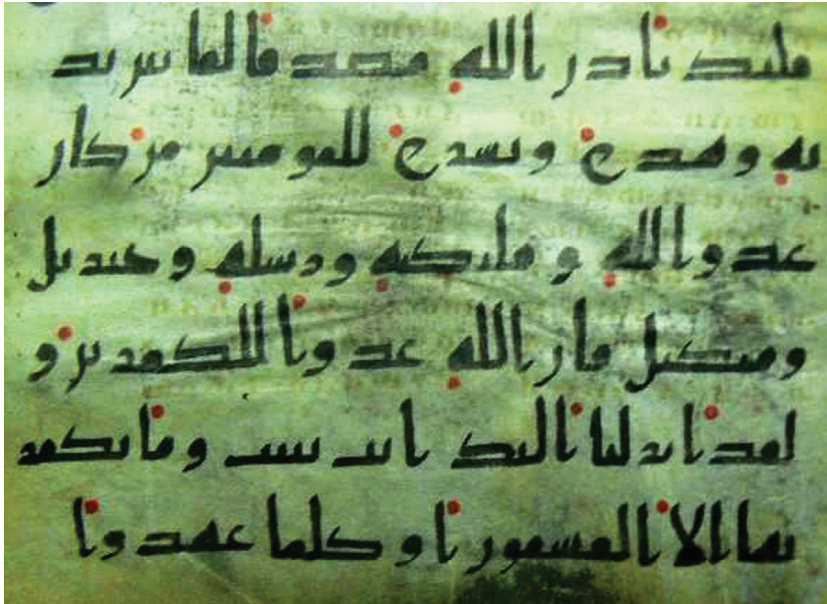


Fig. 1. Detail of one of the 'Kufi' fragments offered for sale on eBay in spring 2012. The Ethiopic *textus inferior* is clearly visible between the lines. Photo M. Balwan, eBay, image code \$(KGrHqVHJCcE63YFlwPy-BO2944bpRw~~60_3).

For the amateur palaeographer, this is what one is supposed to read on the fragment (Qur'ān 2:97-100):

| قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا | يَهْدِي وَيُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
 | مَنْ كَانَ | عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ | وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
 | عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ | لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا
 | الْفَاسِقُونَ أَوْ كَلِمَاتٍ عَهْدًا |

one of these albums, it becomes clear that Mr. Reza has both a broad interest and an eclectic taste. It also shows that he is sufficiently affluent to acquire collectibles from dealers and from the larger auction houses in Europe and North America. That he shares images of these on the internet is an example that should be followed more often.

The fragments that were offered for sale on eBay in April 2012 are not anymore on display and must have been sold, or withdrawn. That was bound to happen, so at the time I had taken the precaution to download and save these, and a few more, from Mr. Balwan's site. They are not of a high resolution, but it was sufficient to enable me to solve the problem of the curious Kufic, since underneath the Kufic text of one of the fragments, an image of which I had seen in 2012, another script was vaguely visible: Ethiopian script (fig. 1).

A counterfeiter of Kufic fragments has two main problems: finding authentic looking writing material and writing Kufic script in a credible way. Ethiopian manuscripts, which till recently were written, usually on parchment, often have a double *feuille de garde*, a separate bifolium on either end of the quires. It is not a flyleaf in the sense that it must connect the text block to the boards, as that is done differently in Ethiopian manuscripts. Usually these bifolia are blank. Sometimes they contain notes that are not necessarily relevant or connected to the text in the volume. Such bifolia are the ideal material from which Kufi fragments, as the ones that were offered for sale in 2012, could be made. Removing such

bifolia from an Ethiopian manuscript is not easily discovered and their absence does not make the Ethiopian text incomplete. I searched a bit more in Mr. Balwan's site, and there I also found an Ethiopian manuscript on parchment of exactly twice the size as the Kufic fragments that he offered for sale. It could have been the source of the parchment supply for the fragments.

Ethiopian manuscripts on parchment of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are abundantly available. The parchment on which they are written often gives them a quasi-antique patina. It is the obvious material to write Kufic script on. With any sort of C-14 test they would immediately be found out, but with the reasonable price asked by Mr. Balwan it is unlikely that a prospective buyer would go to that length of verification. That the *textus inferior* is younger than the *textus superior* is only a minor detail which will not disturb the pious collector.

This simple discovery of the way in which these eBay Kufic fragments had been produced at first made me reluctant in further contacting Mr. Reza. At the time I did not know a thing about this correspondent and it was possible that he himself was the counterfeiter and that he was now testing his products against my expertise. The internet is a strange place, and one needs only to be mildly paranoid to entertain such thoughts. If only the counterfeiter had been more thorough in brushing the text off the parchment, finding out how he had operated would not have been so easy.

As of June 13, 2014, there were three Kufic fragments for sale in Mr. Balwan's eBay shop. One is evidently by the same maker as the fragment of 2012 (fig. 2). It was sold while I was writing these lines.⁵

1, 2014). The forty-four images show a great variety of objects, including Islamic manuscripts, western collectibles, Islamic inscriptions, some more bric-a-brac, and a few Orientalist paintings. The provenance is usually indicated. Mr. Reza has also included several interesting photographs apparently made by himself in different parts of the world.

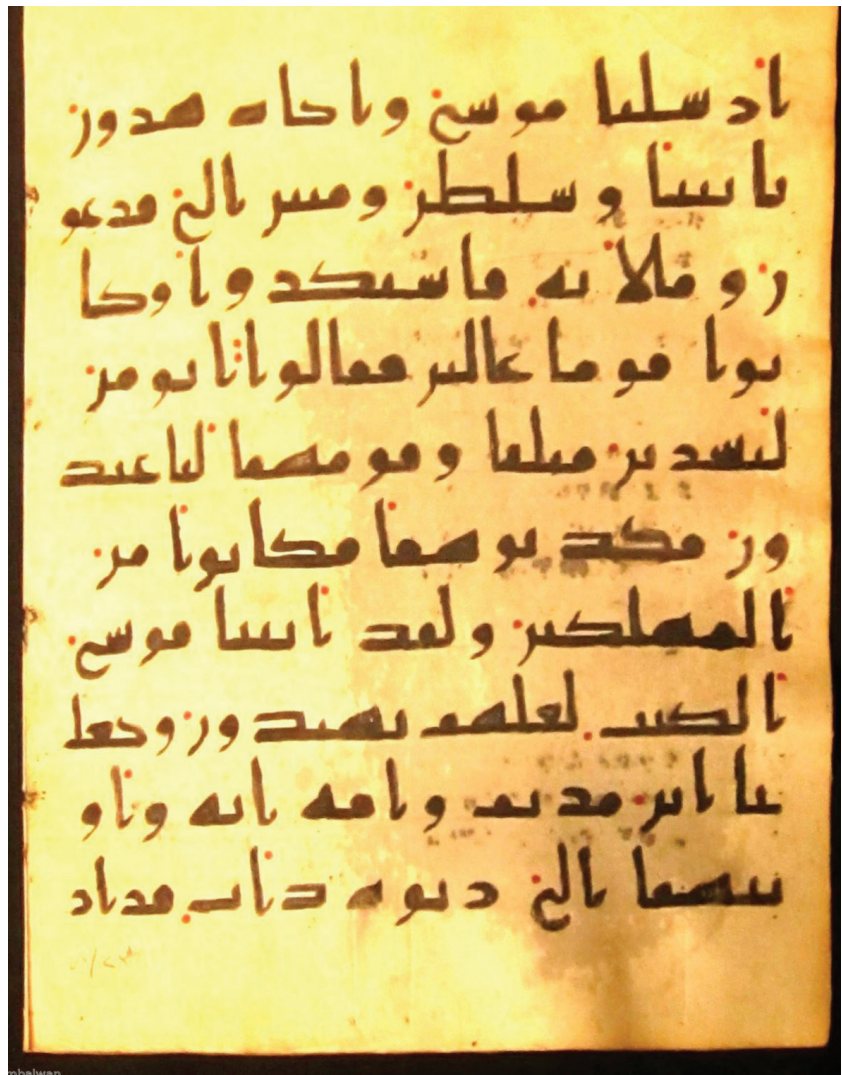
5 http://www.ebay.com/itm/Old-Koranic-Kufic-Manuscript-Leaf-on-vellum-/380912199770?pt=Antiquarian_Collectible&hash=item58b022e85a (accessed on June 14, 2014).

Fig. 2. The 'Kufi' fragment that was for sale from Mr. M. Balwan on eBay till June 13, 2014, then sold for US\$ 700. It is in the same hand as the fragment shown in fig. 1. Here as well the Ethiopian *textus inferior* is clearly visible. Photo M. Balwan, image code: \$(KGrHqV,!!EFJGIJ4TbvBSS3b8hRqQ~~60_57

The text (Qur'ān 23:45-50) reads:

ارسلنا موسى واخاه هرون | بايتنا وسلطن ومبين الى فرعو
 | نوا قوما عالين فقالوا انؤمن |
 لبشرين مثلنا وقومهما لنا عبد | ون فكنبوهما فكانوا من |
 المهلكين ولقد اتينا موسى | الكتب لعلهم يهتدون وجعلنا |
 بن مريم وامه ايه واو | بينهما الى ربوه ذات قرار |

At least one variant reading (line 2: *wa-mubīn*) as compared to the vulgate text was included.



The other two are shown in less clear photographs, but they are apparently produced in a somewhat more credible way with more sophisticated results. There is no shimmering through of other script anymore. One of these new fragments shows traces of a blind ruling for a text in columns, but they do not seem to be palimpsests. The script of the Balwan fragments presently for sale remains lousily uncon-

vincing. They are written by one or more craftsmen, who probably are all still alive and kicking. If so, they better take some vocational training in Kufic writing, if they wish to continue living by the pen.

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