Research Networking Programme in Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies – Team 2 Report

Textual Criticism and Oriental Manuscripts **Workshop, Leuven, 25-26 October 2010**

1. Summary

The COMSt Team 2 workshop *Textual Criticism and Oriental Manuscripts* was held at the "Faculty Club" in Leuven, Belgium, on 25 and 26 October, 2010. The workshop convenors were Caroline Macé, professor of Greek at the KU Leuven, member of COMSt teams 2 and 3, and of the COMSt Steering Committee, and Johannes den Heijer, professor of Arabic language and litterature at the Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, and team leader of COMSt team 2. The scientific programme was established in close co-operation between both convenors, whereas the logistics and budget management were taken care of by Caroline Macé.

The workshop was sponsored mainly by the European Science Foundation, with significant additional funding from the KULeuven through Caroline Macé's research project CREA/10/004, embedded within LECTIO, the Leuven Centre for the Study of Texts and Ideas in Antiquity, Middle Ages, and Renaissance, whose chair, Gerd Van Riel, addressed a word of welcome in the opening session.

The workshop was attended by 50 registered participants (see the list on-line). It should be noted with special satisfaction that there was a large proportion of junior scholars: Ph.D. candidates and young post-doctoral researchers, many of whom actively contributed to the proceedings.

The workshop was organized according to a format of seven sessions that dealt with distinct albeit closely interrelated thematic issues. Presentations were given without interruptions and were followed, in each case, by discussions on the entire session. Ample time for exchange was reserved by adding two one-hour slots for general discussion. This format clearly worked, in so far as specific issues, trends, desiderata and remaining problems were not only identified during the discussions at the end of each session, but could be further highlighted, reviewed and reconsidered at the intermediate stage (end of the first day) and in the final general discussion. A special session was scheduled for brief presentations of current research projects by junior scholars, which also generated much feedback from other participants.

The main practical purpose of the workshop being the collective preparation, by COMSt team 2, of the "Philology" chapter for the COMSt handbook, the convenors expected some difficulties in making progress for team 2 within the setting of a workshop with such an overwhelming majority of non-team members. Due to the remarkably professional and constructive attitude of all participants, however, the high number of participants turned out to be a tremendous asset, since the team members received extremely useful feedback from a variety of backgrounds, which can and will be of immediate value for the expected product. After a promising start at the first cross-team meeting (Hamburg, 2009), team 2 has been able to keep the momentum and to further inventorize, process, develop and refine a plethora of ideas, data and points of view. Thus, the impact of this workshop on further developments, within COMSt and externally, is certain to be considerable.

2. Description of the Scientific Content

In line with the general objectives of COMSt as an ESF RNP, the workshop concept aimed at the following goals:

1. to establish and consolidate immediate personal contacts, and hence to provide first hand access to information and insights between international scholars working on texts in various language traditions, with different disciplinary backgrounds, and with an aim of allowing these scholars to benefit from such contacts in their respective research projects;
2. to bridge the gap between the Orientalist philological tradition, which is still lagging behind in many ways, and scholarship in Classical, Romance and Germanic philology, mostly to the benefit of the former, by inviting and consulting colleagues working in the latter fields of research;
3. to generate and elaborate materials for the "Philology" chapter of the COMSt handbook, as well as for other, online, COMSt-related publication activities.

In order to achieve maximum thematic and interdisciplinary coherence, the convenors and the presenters defined the themes for the respective sessions, but also the titles for most of the individual presentations, in non-language specific terms. This presentation format did not force presenters to systematically embark upon a comparative approach at the present stage, but rather, to discuss case studies based on their own specific research, typically based on a specific text or text corpus in a specific language, in order to allow for a comparitive exercise to be carried out collectively in the discussions and conclusions. By adhering, in an admirably disciplined fashion, to the suggested workshop format, the participants were indeed able to collectively identify common denominators, while simultaneously pointing out specific characteristics of individual language traditions or specific types of texts requiring specific approaches.

In the following account, then, the major trends and themes of the successive sessions will be explained and commented upon.

Session 1 - *Critical Editions: General Principles and Methodological Considerations* (chair: Caroline Macé, Leuven, member of teams 2 and 3 and of COMSt Steering Committee).

In general, this session was intended to deal with issues that *precede* the process of establishing the text, but it also addressed strategic choices in presenting it in a critical edition.

Alessandro MENGOZZI (Torino, member of team 2), "Philological Traditions: Different Approaches to Editorial Methods" made a comparison between (European) Medieval and Oriental studies, with a case study on ecdotic methods in the *Corpus Scriptorum Christanorum Orientalium - Series Syriaca*. He notably discussed the 'basic ms.' method, now generally abandoned for texts of the type in question but which was imposed for several decades on editors who contributed to this prestigious and influential series, not only for Syriac but also for other languages.

Philipp ROELLI (Zürich, external invited expert), "To What Extent can the Lachmannian Method be Formalized?", dealt mostly with stemmatology and the degree to which stemmas can be generated automatically. His examples were mainly from Greek and Latin texts.

Session 2 - *History of Manuscripts and Textual Criticism* (chair: Alessandro Bausi, Hamburg, member of team 3, chair of COMSt Steering Committee).

This session, as well as session 3, was expected to survey research on various aspects of text transmission, such as datation, the 'fluid' tradition, multiple recensions, and requiring specific methodologies.

Marie CRONIER (Paris, member of team 2), "Text History as a Tool for Philology" applied "new philology" by showing, from her practice with Greek manuscripts, how codicology is unseparable from research on the history of a text as such, in that data on book production can elucidate matters of text transmission.

Zuzana GAZAKOVA (Bratislava, member of team 2), "Fluid Traditions in Popular Literature", called for a more philological approach to the Arabic *sira* (popular epic) genre, which is often studied by anthropologists and literary historians after their low-cost printed versions, which utterly obscure their linguistic features and the earmarks of their transmission as texts that fluctuate between orality and writing.

Wido VAN PEURSEN (Leiden, member of team 2), "Dealing with Sacred Texts and their Linguistic Features" problematized the very concept of "sacred text" and suggested to refine the criteria for attributing a certain degree of authority to a given text prior to deciding how to deal with them from an editorial perspective. His observations were mainly based on the work of the Peshitta Institute, as well as on Hebrew and Syriac Biblical research in general.

Ugo ZANETTI (Chèvetogne, member of team 1), "Cataloguing and Editing Liturgical Manuscripts" issued a pervasive *caveat*, concerning Greek, Coptic and Arabic lectionaries but clearly applicable to other domains, against critically editing texts without being truly and intimately immersed in the subject matter, if need be – as is the case with the present category of texts that despite their age are still being used today –, by engaging in participatory observation.

Session 3 - *Specificities of Textual Transmission and Editorial Responses* (chair: Antonia Giannouli, Nicosia, member of team 2).

As a logical continuation of session 2, this session further highlighted particular texts pertaining to specific settings, with a focus on matters of both interpretation and presentation.

Hugo LUNDHAUG (Oslo, member of team 2), "Dating and Interpreting Texts from a Bilingual Setting" drew attention to the prevailing tendency to consider Coptic texts to be translations from Greek originals, which is usually stated without much in the way of argument. He suggests to establish a set of criteria in order to deal more stringently with this question and its possible implications.

Joshua A. SABIH (Copenhagen, member of team 2), unfortunately had to cancel his participation.

He was replaced by Michael MARX (Potsdam, holding a travel grant from the ESF), who presented the project "Corpus Coranicum", which aims at providing a databank with images of the oldest manuscripts of the Quran, as well as a database with "variae lectiones", taking also into account the oral tradition which is very important for the text of the Quran.

Sébastien MOUREAU (Nancy, member of team 2), "Editing a Translation of a Lost Treatise" dealt with the methodological pitfalls of editing a text that only survives in translation, *i.e.*, the risk of correcting translation mistakes by failing to effectively distinguish those from scribal errors. His case study was on a treatise on alchemy, wrongly attributed to Ibn Sina (Avicenna) but certainly written in Arabic, which is only extant in a Latin version today.

Willy CLARYSSE (Leuven, member of team 1), "Editing Documentary Papyri" proved to be a welcome extension of the workshop focus, in that it reminded us of the basic fact that documentary texts require a downright diplomatic approach; Clarysse also confirmed that papyrologist have actually shown their ability, for many decades now, to observe a uniform method of editing and presenting their material.

Session 4 - *Lay-out and Presentation* (chair: Alessandro Mengozzi, Torino, member of team 2)

When it comes to matters of formal presentation, the uniformity just mentioned seems remote, or even beyond reach, in the case of the "literary" (as opposed to documentary) texts that textual criticism most often deals with. The general feeling is that different types of texts require different approaches to the question as to whether, or to what extent, an editor should observe

formal features of the text as found in the manuscripts, or, on the contrary, apply alien, mostly modern, criteria of spelling and punctuation.

Paolo LA SPISA (Louvain-la-Neuve, member of team 2), "Orthography: Linguistic Particularities vs. Normalization" pointed out that Arabic studies remain largely unaware of the recognition that substandard or "vulgar" language features are to be taken into account within ecdotic methods, as has been known, *e.g.*, in Romance studies for an exceedingly long time now. Only very recently Middle Arabic studies have started to gain serious attention, and unmotivated normalisation to Modern Standard Arabic spelling conventions is still practiced on a large scale.

Antonia GIANNOULI (Nicosia, member of team 2), "Punctuation and other Aspects of the Original's Form" showed the complexity of dealing with such formal aspects in the case of Byzantine manuscripts, where modern Greek signs have to be introduced for the sake of intelligibility, but in such a way as to respect the use of corresponding original signs as much as is reasonibly possible.

Session 5: Round table - Presentation of research projects by junior scholars

Eight PhD students had the opportunity of presenting very briefly their doctoral research (5 minutes) and they received feedback from the audience: Shari BOODTS (Leuven - edition of St. Augustine's sermons), Eric CULLHED (Uppsala - study of the mss of Eusthatius of Thessalonica's Commentary on the *Odyssey*), Berend Jan DIKKEN (Leiden - edition of an Arabic translation of the Pentateuch), Elise FRANSSEN (Liège - studying and editing a specific group of mss of the *1001 Nights*), Aurélie GRIBOMONT (Leuven - edition of Byzantine magical treatises), Hadiya GURTMANN and Tolou KHADEMALSHARIEH (Potsdam - the Corpus Coranicum project), Perrine PILETTE (Louvain-la-Neuve - edition of the Lives of the Patriarchs of Alexandria).

Session 6 - *From Traditional to Electronic Editions I: Tools* (chair: Jost Gippert, Frankfurt, leader of team 3)

This session was intended as a survey of new tools that can be used for electronic editions. Observations and reflections on methodological principles were combined with practical considerations.

Tara ANDREWS (Leuven, member of team 3), "Digital Tools for Scholarly Editions", the possibilities and limits of digital tools that can or cannot yet be used for textual criticism. Her remarks are based mainly on her own research on Armenian manuscripts. Running us, step by step, through the whole familiar process of traditional preparation of text editions, she assessed a whole range of new, in some cases still experimental, tools for philological work, from scanning, via automatic collation (Juxta, only partly useful; CollateX, still in development), to data analysis (the Leuven stemmatic analysis project, which should yield its results in about two years).

Joris VAN ZUNDERT (The Hague, invited external expert), "The Interedition Project" is a COST Action (IS0704: An Interoperable Supranational Infrastructure for Digital Editions) (see http://www.interedition.eu/), which aims at developing "a shared technical infrastructure for the preparation, editing, publishing, analysis and visualization of literary material. This Action aims to form an international Management Committee of researchers that have a thorough experience in electronic editing and digital text analysis for scholarly purposes in a national context". As such, a representative of this Action was especially welcome in a meeting like this one.

The session was completed with two short presentations on specific tools and methods: Ilse DE VOS (Leuven, young post-doctoral student), explained the functionalities of her own adapted software for the automatic identification of Greek quotations, and Sébastien MOUREAU

(Nancy, member of team 2), shared his experiences with Classical Text Editor, for editing Arabic and Latin texts. Although this software is quite well-known among specialists, the issued raised were considered important enough for inviting the creator of CTE to the next workshop of team 3 (as suggested by the session's chair, Jost Gippert).

Session 7 - *From Traditional to Electronic Editions II: Project presentations* (chair: Witold Witakowski, Uppsala, leader of team 4).

Two specific projects were presented by way of case studies. In accordance with the workshop concept, these project presentations were also closely related to the themes of the other sessions, and particularly sessions 1, 2 and 3.

Denis SEARBY (Stockholm, member of team 2), "Digital Solutions for the Fluid Textual Tradition of Greek Gnomologia" underscored the understanding, which has gained much popularity since the introduction of "new philology" some twenty years ago, that certain texts or groups of texts are in fact "growing texts", characterized by a fluid tradition, and that the main purpose of studying such texts can now be "to showcase revision", thanks to the availabilty of digital means. The case study concerned Greek Gnomologia (arrangemed anecdotes belonging to wisdom literature), some of which are also extant in Arabic translation.

Aafke VAN OPPENRAAY (The Hague, invited external expert), "Editing an Arabic-Latin Text: Present-Day Practice and Wishes for the Future", was the last formal presentation of the workshop. Looking back at several decades of experience with critical editions of Aristotelian zoology in its Latin version (Michael Scot) based on an Arabic translation from the Greek, van Oppenraay was remarkably convincing in voicing the philologist's wishes for the future, such as high quality pictures accompanying the edtions, efficient ways of integrating URL links, new way of presenting variants and text layers, and notes to texts as well as external contributiions.

3. Assessment of the results and impact on the future direction of the field

Reiterating the goals mentioned above (at the beginning of section 2), we can state with great satisfaction that the workshop has met its purpose in a number of ways.

Immediate personal contacts were consolidated as far as the core members of team 2 and several members (including two team leaders) of other teams are concerned. The cross-team and therefore interdisciplinary approach that COMSt stands for was very much prominent, much to the benefit of all team members, who can make use of fresh insights for their own research activities.

Perhaps even more stimulating was the establishment of new contacts between external experts and particularly with and between young scholars (see below). The high turnout necessarily means that, for the philological field covered by team 2, more than 50 scholars are now somehow in touch with the COMSt approach and have been enabled to look beyond the boundaries of their own language-defined research. The potential impact on the research of all these people, and indirectly, on others (students, colleagues) is evident.

Very much in the same way as is done by all other COMSt teams, the workshop has helped team 2 to achieve remarkable progress in the process of catching up with the methodologically and technologically more advanced fields of philological research outside Oriental studies. Whereas it is by no means an exaggeration to state that many Orientalists have so far only been dreaming about such things as electronic editions, the COMSt platform has given us a completely new kind of exposure to research that is actually being carried out. And even irrespective of new

available tools and methods, the general lack of awareness, among Orientalists, of methodological achievements elsewhere, has been addressed to a considerable degree.

Notwithstanding the remarkable achievements made by a small number of Orientalists – some of whom are, fortunately, actively involved in the COMSt project! –, we cannot escape the reality that, for such language traditions as Arabic, Syriac, Armenian and Ethiopic, numerous texts are available in totally or mostly uncritical editions and have never been the subject of serious research on their composition or manuscript tradition. The bridge to be gapped is enormous, but, provided the COMSt teams keep joining forces in developing and refining an effective communication strategy, the progress made in just one year's time will be unquestionably useful in raising the methodological level of Oriental philology.

As for the immediate output of the COMSt project, the workshop has certainly allowed us to achieve remarkable progress in generating, reviewing and elaborating materials for the "Philology" chapter of the COMSt handbook and for other, online publications. Various presentations were prepared for the workshop in such a way that they only need minor editorial adaptation to be included in the handbook. Other contributions are still at a more embryonic stage from a redactional point of view but remarkably mature in conceptual and methodological terms. And even those papers that displayed a relative early stage of inquiry, the directions to follow in the near future proved to be clear, and were further clarified during the discussions.

After the workshop, a number of team members gathered in a meeting with an aim of starting the process of redefining and adapting the chapter outline that had circulated before. Whereas all team members will remain involved in the editing process, a more limited editorial board was formed, for the time being consisting of V. Calzolari-Bouvier, M. Cronier, J. den Heijer, Z. Gazakova, A. Giannouli, C. Macé, M. Marx, A. Mengozzi and D. Searby. As chair of the SC, A. Bausi will continue to be consulted on a regular basis. To what extent H. Lundhaug and P. La Spisa will be in a position to contribute with more than their own specific input (based on their workshop presentations) will depend on their immediate career perspectives.

In the presentations and discussions, a substantial amount of issues were raised that will be further developed in the "Philology" chapter. According to this target-oriented approach, the identification of these issues can be seen as preliminary results. For the sake of brevity, only a few examples can be mentioned in this report, but numerous remarks and observations were recorded and may be used in the chapter.

With regard to the methodology of textual criticism in the sense of preparing critical editions, a certain variety of practices has been reviewed, with a sufficient amount of coherence to allow for an analytical overview in the chapter as well as for certain recommendations. We must hasten to point out, however, that team 2 does not consider it feasable or useful to prescribe or even to recommend one single method. Methods now generally discarded (but not for documentary texts, for instance!) such as the "basic manuscript" approach, will still be dealt with in a section on the history of the discipline (which will obviously contain some references to non-Oriental philology but will stop short of attempting at a general history of textual research).

For the section on textual history and transmission, a good number of valuable observations have resulted from the workshop. One such observation is that studies on source criticism, internal transmission, identification of multiple recensions and their – sometimes problematic – distinction from separate texts in the case of fluid traditions, as well as secondary traditions and parallel texts, can and must be carried out as necessary steps towards a critical edition, but also deserve a status of their own, independently of such editions. This also applies, it was felt, with regard to studies about the relation between written and oral traditions, or about bilingual or multilingual traditions, which may be captured in combined editions, but which can or should

sometimes be studied from a different angle, with an aim of elucidating matters of datation, substrate, *Vorlage* etc. The highly useful connection that was made, in accordance with the principles of "new philology", between codicology and textual history, certainly added a dimension to the chapter that may have been understated earlier. At the same time, it prompts further fine-tuning of the distinction between what may be called "book history" and "text history".

For a section on specific categories of text requiring specific approaches, the workshop has opened our eyes to the problem of "sacredness", or rather, (a specific type of) authority in a general religious setting, or, more pointedly, in a specifically liturgical one, where texts continue to perform particular functions until the present day, in living traditions. The workshop contributions on various Biblical text traditions generated insights that will be further explored, including for Quran studies. At the other end of the conceptual scale, the presentation on documentary texts, pertaining to material matters and daily life in the past, and requiring a diplomatic method, has compelled us to look from a different angle at our methodologies. This will certainly be expressed in the chapter. Further research may deal with the question as to whether all documentary text are always always unique objects, or whether their stereotyped and formulaic character might display features comparable to those of "literary" texts that come in multiple versions or witnesses. In order to slightly elaborate on this problem in the chapter, it may be considered useful to pay some additional attention to epigraphy as well.

Coming to matters of form and presentation, the workshop has given the impression that the issue of sociolinguistic register as expressed in texts, and the question as how to deal with this in edtions, is particularly alive among the Arabists of the team, but this does not necessarily mean that the relevant section of the section should remain limited to one language. The team members specializing in other languages will explore the possibilties of adding material from a comparative perspective. For the use of punctuation, the experience with Byzantine texts may give us a useful framework.

Furthermore, besides the obvious merit of having obtained first-hand knowledge of new tools and methods, as well as of their limitations, for electronic text research, the workshop has yielded highly valuable insights into the function of such research in the future. Most significant is the view that the relation between printed critical editions and electronic editions is not to be seen as one between an "old" or even "traditional" one that precedes a "new" way of working in a linear development, but rather, as one of coexistence and that one can work towards a "dynamic coupling of book and computer screen" (D. Searby). Both formats can have their respective functions. This issue, admittedly, is intrinsically valid for any given language tradition, but awareness of it may have been lacking among Orientalists, so that the discussions on it in the workshop have considerably enriched the debate that necessarily precedes the redaction of the relevant part of the "philology" chapter.

Last but not least, the involvement of a good number of young scholars can be seen as a solid investment in the future and hence as a guarantee for a significant impact on the future of Oriental philology. It was agreed, at the end of the workshop, that these junior colleagues, and more of them in the future, should remain within the orbit of the COMSt project, that they will be given the opportunity to contribute to the handbook chapter with results of their own research, and that they will also be consulted for defining further desiderata, and for drawing the agenda for further project interventions.

With the combined forces of beginning as well as of experienced scholars, of specialists in various language traditions and categories of texts, and with the involvement of the disciplines represented by the other COMSt teams, the team 2 workshop has certainly been a giant step

towards liberating philology, and Oriental philology in particular, of its totally undeserved but alarmingly persistant image – all too often with grave consequences in research policy – of a dusty, old-fashioned discipline. By juxtaposing, as we were able to do in the workshop, well-tested formats and new experiments, by actively involving a new generation of scholars, and by systematically aiming at the concrete result of the "philology" chapter of the COMSt handbook, team 2 is now well prepared for the next step towards transforming Oriental philology into a state-of-the-art, 21st century field of research.

4. Final Programme

Monday, 25 October

09:00   A Word of Welcome by Gerd Van Riel (K.U.Leuven), chair of LECTIO, Leuven Centre for the Study of Texts and Ideas in Antiquity, Middle Ages, and Renaissance"

09:10   Practical Information and Introduction by Caroline Macé & Johannes den Heijer

09:30   Session 1: Critical editions : general principles and methodological considerations
          chair: Caroline Macé
1. Alessandro Mengozzi (Torino), Philological traditions - different approaches to editorial methods
2. Ph. Roelli (Zürich), To what extent can the Lachmannian method be formalized?

10:30   Coffee break

11:00   Session 2: History of Manuscripts and Textual Criticism
          chair: Alessandro Bausi (Hamburg)
1. Marie Cronier (Paris), Text History as a tool for philology
2. Zuzana Gazakova (Bratislava), Fluid traditions in popular literature
3. Wido van Peursen (Leiden), Dealing with sacred texts and their linguistic features
4. Ugo Zanetti (Chèvetogne), Cataloguing and editing liturgical manuscripts

13:00   Lunch

14:00   Session 3: Specificities of textual transmission and editorial responses
          chair: Antonia Giannouli (Nicosia)
1. Hugo Lundhaug (Oslo), Dating and interpreting texts from a bilingual setting
2. Michael Marx (Potsdam), Which type of textual variations can be observed in the earliest manuscripts of the Qur'an?

3. Sébastien Moureau (Nancy), Editing a translation of a lost treatise
4. Willy Clarysse (Leuven), Editing documentary papyri

16:00   Coffee break

16:30   Session 4: Lay out and presentation
            chair: Alessandro Mengozzi (Torino)

1. Paolo La Spisa (Louvain-la-Neuve), Orthographe, particularités linguistiques et normalisation dans les éditions critiques
2. Antonia Giannouli (Nicosia), Punctuation and other aspects of the original's form

17:30   Session 5: Round table - Presentation of research projects by junior scholars
        chairs: Johannes den Heijer & Caroline Macé

18:30 General discussion - chair: Johannes den Heijer

19:30   Dinner

Tuesday, 26 October

09:00   Session 6: From traditional to electronic editions, I: Tools
        chair: Jost Gippert (Frankfurt)
1. Tara Andrews (Leuven), Digital Tools for Scholarly Editions
2. Joris van Zundert (The Hague), The Interedition Project
3. Various participants: Short additional presentations on specific tools and methods: Ilse De Vos, Sébastien Moureau…

10:30   Coffee break

11:00   Session 7: From traditional to electronic editions, II: Project presentations
        chair: Witold Witakowski (Uppsala)
1. Denis Searby (Stockholm), Digital solutions for the fluid textual tradition of Greek *gnomologia*
2. Aafke van Oppenraay (The Hague), Editing an Arabic-Latin text, present-day practice and wishes for the future

12:00   General conclusions - chair: Johannes den Heijer

13:00   Lunch

Closing of the workshop

14:30-16:30 Work session for Team 2 members