ISSN 2410-0951

COMSt
Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies

Bulletin

Volume 3 • Number 2 • Autumn 2017

Edited by
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Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin is the biannual on-line and print-on-demand journal of the European research network Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. Born in 2009 as a European Science Foundation Research Networking Programme, the network has been affiliated to the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/) since 2016.

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Publication date February 2018

ISSN 2410-0951

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Articles and notes

Some Observations on the Coptic Reception of the Shepherd

Dan Batovici, KU Leuven

Summary

The *Shepherd of Hermas*, an early Christian apocalyptic book written in Greek in Rome of the second century, has been translated in both Akhmimic and Sahidic Coptic. This contribution revisits the surviving manuscripts of the *Shepherd* and discusses two issues concerning its Coptic reception which seemed settled: the dating of the earliest manuscript and the question of a split transmission of its text, with the first four Visions separated from the rest of the book.

The *Shepherd of Hermas* is one of the best represented early Christian writings among the Greek papyri: with 23 surviving Greek continuous-text papyri,[1] it is comparable in this respect only with the Gospels of Matthew and John, with 24 and 30 extant papyri respectively, in a context in which seventeen other New Testament books each occur in less than five papyri. It also appears copied at the end of the so-called Codex Sinaticus, together with the *Epistle of Barnabas*, after the books of the Old and New Testament. The *Shepherd* was translated into Latin (two different translations, one from the second or third century), Coptic, Ethiopic, Middle Persian, and Georgian. However, while the Greek, the oldest Latin, and the Ethiopic strands of reception have benefited from recent thorough scholarly treatments,[2] the Coptic is somewhat lagging behind. A fresh assessment of this strand of reception would be timely and important in order to get a comprehensive view on the reception of the *Shepherd* in late antique Egypt. To that end, this contribution discusses two elements potentially relevant for a possible reception history of the *Shepherd of Hermas* in Coptic: the dating of the earliest manuscript and the question of a split

1 Count in Gonis 2005, 1. For the list see Batovici 2016a, 394–395. Apart from these there are also P. Oxy 1.5 (LDAB 2607) and P. Mich. inv. 6427 (LDAB 5694), and—rarely mentioned in this respect—the Deir-Balaʾizah Papyrus which contain quotations from the Shepherd embedded in other texts. For a comparison with other early Christian papyri see Choat and Yuen-Collingridge 2010, 196–197.

2 E.g. Tornau and Cecconi 2014; Erho 2015 and various other publications of this author; and the yet unpublished PhD thesis presented in Villa 2015. There are a number of recent publications on the various aspects of the Greek reception of the *Shepherd* as well, e.g. Batovici 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b.

transmission of its text (the first four Visions on the one hand, and the rest of the book on the other).

A first observation would be that, compared to Greek or Latin, a peculiarity of the Coptic reception of the *Shepherd* is that virtually all the evidence we have is the few surviving manuscripts, as the Coptic text of the *Shepherd* is only known from three highly fragmentary manuscripts.[3] One of them—the Akhmimic papyrus—is currently hosted in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve; a parchment manuscript was also hosted in Leuven but was lost to the fire that burned the university library down on 17 May 1940. The third, dismembered, consists of fragments held in Paris (most of them) and Cairo. We will start therefore by offering an updated list of the manuscripts, which is necessary given that several fragments are now in different institutions than they were at the time of the latest publication, and will discuss a number of elements of scribal behaviour, potentially relevant for a historical enquiry focused on manuscripts taken as reception artefacts. The paper will conclude with some considerations on the possibility that the Akhmimic papyrus leaves were at some point part of a pandect similar to Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus (i.e. containing OT and NT books, followed by Apostolic Fathers).

1. The Witnesses

a. The Akhmimic Codex and its Date | LDAB 107965

Inventory: Archives Louvain-La-Neuve, Fond Lefort 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
KU Leuven, University Library Lefort 3 a, b, c (ff. 4, 6, 7)
Contents: *Mandate* 4.3.5–5.1.4 & *Similitude* 9.1.4–9.12.5

First published by L.-Th. Lefort in 1952, it preserves text from the fourth and fifth *Mandates* and of the ninth *Similitude*.[4] There are eight fragmentary leaves, which Lefort estimates to have originally measured 12–13 × 27 cm,[5] with a column of text of 8.5–10 × 21 cm, bearing 'très probablement 34 lignes', with 20 to 22 letters per line,[6] though some variation in the number of lines per page should most likely be allowed. There is no surviving page or leaf numbering, though margins have survived, top and bottom margins measuring 2.5–3 cm, left and right of about 2 cm. Given that the fibre succession is ↓ → for the first six leaves and → ↓ for the last two, Lefort proposes this

3 A fourth manuscript, consisting of two papyrus fragments, has recently emerged from the Oxyrhynchus papyri finds—66 6B.29–E(1–2)a—and is being currently edited by Geoffrey Smith.

4 Lefort 1952, ii-iv. At i, n. 3, Lefort notes that 'ce lot nous fut offert par M. Jean Doresse qui l'avait acquis au Caire chez l'antiquaire Albert Eïd'.

5 This would place the codex in 'Group 8', as categorised in Turner 1977, 20.

6 Lefort 1952, ii.

to have been a single gathering codex—of course, assuming it was a regular one in this respect. Since the eight leaves are now split between Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, the following table presents them by content and current inventory number for future reference:

Folio	Content	Inventory
1	Mand. 4.3.5—5.1.4	Fond Lefort 1, Archives Louvain-la-Neuve
2	Sim. 9.1.4—9.2.2	Fond Lefort 2, Archives Louvain-la-Neuve
3	Sim. 9.2.3—9.3.3	Fond Lefort 3, Archives Louvain-la-Neuve
4	Sim. 9.3.3—9.4.6	University Library Lefort 3 a, Leuven
5	Sim. 9.4.6—9.5.5	Fond Lefort 4, Archives Louvain-la-Neuve
6	Sim. 9.6.6—9.7.6	University Library Lefort 3 b, Leuven
7	Sim. 9.9.4—9.10.6	University Library Lefort 3 c, Leuven
8	Sim. 9.11.8—9.12.5	Fond Lefort 5, Archives Louvain-la-Neuve

We now turn to the question of dating. Lefort dates the writing to the fourth century, yet the only reason put forward in his edition of the manuscript in support of the proposed date is the elongated shape of the column, resembling that of a column in a papyrus roll, which Lefort interprets as a reflexion of the transition from roll format to codex format.[7] In a previous publication, containing an edition of the Akhmimic fragments of the Gospel of Luke, which came to Lefort along with the fragments of the *Shepherd* and further Akhmimic fragments of Genesis, and which he deems to have been written by the same hand, the date offered is fourth/fifth century, with no further argument.[8] It is only in the subsequent edition of the Genesis fragments, published in 1953, that the dating is related explicitly to the script—in addition to the format: 'L'écriture, en belle onciale dite biblique, nous reporte, du reste, à cette période, puisqu'elle ne paraît pas devoir être fixée à un^{e} date pos^{t}érieure au IV^{e} siècle'.[9]

The dating of Coptic manuscripts being notoriously problematic,[10] it is worth reconsidering the degree of certainty of this dating. The script is indeed a biblical majuscule:[11] most letters tend to be geometrical, with alternating thick and thin strokes, the vertical ones being the thickest and the horizontal

7 Lefort 1952, ii.

8 Lefort 1949, 200.

9 Lefort 1953, 3. Norsa 1939, 22–23, adding that 'quels que soient les préjudgés des papyrologues, on ne peut nier que grec et copte sortaient du calame des mêmes scribes, et partant que les deux paléographies sont communes à cette époque', at 3, n. 5.

10 Layton 1985.

11 Orsini 2008.

the thinnest, whereas the oblique ones can move from thicker to thinner. ⲁ is written in three strokes, ⲕ in three (and the two oblique ones can be detached from the vertical one), ⲙ in four. ⲫ and ⲯ break the bilinearism at the top and at the bottom, ⲣ, ⲩ and ϥ only at the bottom (though the latter tends to be shorter than the former two), whereas ⲟ can vary occasionally in size, and its smaller version can be written above the baseline. The thinner strokes of ⲧ, ⲉ, ⲕ, ⲥ, ϫ, ⲭ have small thicker ornamental endings, whereas the oblique stroke of ⲛ can be slightly curved.

Pasquale Orsini, who made an attempt to pin down more precisely a timeline for the development of the Coptic biblical majuscule, places such features in a second phase of the script, set at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth,[12] which opens the possibility that the dating of the codex should include at least the first part of the latter century. Other complementary factors also suggest that a more cautious and inclusive dating is preferable. While the use of Akhmimic might be in favour of the earlier dating, it is still compatible with a dating in the fifth century, when the dialect was still used.[13] Furthermore, whereas most of the codices in Turner's 'group 8' are dated to the fourth century, there are also two that allow a dating in the fifth century as well.[14] In any event, these considerations are not meant to produce a new dating for the Akhmimic papyrus codex of the *Shepherd of Hermas*—only to serve as a reminder that the traditional dating should not be taken as a well-established fact, but one which will have to be re-evaluated with each future advancement of the discipline of Coptic palaeography.

With regard to scribal behaviour, a number of elements can be highlighted here. The *Shepherd* leaves of the codex contain one subtitle, on f. 1v, that of the Fifth Mandate, ⲧⲙ]ⲁϩϯ ⲛ̄ⲉⲛⲧⲟⲗ̣[ⲏ, placed alone in the fourth line, probably aligned to its centre. On the previous line there is the ending of the Fourth Mandate, and its last word is followed by a high dot (and an oblique ascending line, similar to •/, but is not clear whether the dash is in the same ink) and blank space until the end of line. Several other high dots separate sentences, with no extra space before or after, e.g. in *l.* 8 and 23 of f.1v; *l.* 3 of f. 2v; *l.* 27 and 29 of f. 3v; *l.* 6 of f. 4r; *l.* 3 of f. 4v; last line of f. 5v; *l.* 2 of f. 6v; the seventh line from bottom on f. 7v. Sentences can also be separated by a character-size blank space, as in the fourth line of f. 2r; *l.* 25 of f. 4v; *l.* 11 of f. 5v; *l.* 3 of f. 6r. Most of these appear in Lefort's edition as high dots.

Finally, the left margin of the text is kept carefully, each line's first letter being aligned to its left, not to its vertical stroke. Yet there seems to be no spe-

12 Orsini 2008, 131–132.
13 Nagel 1991, 19.
14 Turner 1977, 20.

cial effort to keep the right margin as neat as the left, as there are occasionally up to three character blank spaces at the end of line, separating words in the same sentence. On *l*. 8 of f. 2v, however, a blank space of about six characters in size seems to signal the end of a sentence, with the following sentence starting at the beginning of the next line. However, occasionally letters are written considerably smaller than usual above the baseline at the end of line, seemingly in order to finish a word on the same line, as the letter sequence ⲃⲟⲩⲟ in *l*. 29 of f. 6v, and ⲱⲕ in the fourth line counted from last of f. 7r.

b. The White Monastery Codex MONB.AM | LDAB 108123

Inventory:	Paris, BnF	130^{2} f. 114, 127; 130^{5} f. 120, 129–130; 131^{5} f. 69; 131^{7} f. 61; 132^{1} ff. 33–34, 45; 132^{3} f. 256; 133^{1} ff. 5a, 7–7d
	Paris, Louvre	9997
	Cairo, IFAO	number unknown
Contents:	*Mandate* 8.7–8.12; 12.3.4–12.4.5 & *Similitude* 9.2.3–9.6.1	

These are fragments of 14 leaves that belonged once to the same parchment codex, measuring 14 × 19 cm, listed as MONB.AM in *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari*. Similar to many other manuscripts originating from the White Monastery, the codex is dismembered now and its parts are hosted in three different institutions. The updated version of Lefort's synopsis of the fragments below[15] presents them according to the sections of the *Shepherd* that they preserve, grouped together when they belong to the same leaf, and noting the Coptic pagination where available.

Content	Numbering	Fragment
Mand. 8.7–8.12	ⲗ̅ⲋ̅ – [ⲗ̅ⲍ̅]	BnF Copte 130^{2}, f. 114.[16]
Mand. 12.3.4–4.5	ⲛ̅ⲋ̅ – ⲛ̅ⲍ̅	BnF Copte 130^{5} f. 129,[17] Cairo IFAO (no number).
Sim. 2.3–2.7	ⲝ̅ⲋ̅ – ⲝ̅ⲍ̅	BnF Copte 131^{5} f. 69.
Sim. 2.7–3.3	ⲝ̅ⲏ̅ – ⲝ̅ⲑ̅	BnF Copte 130^{5} f. 120.[18]
Sim. 4.8–5.2.2	ⲟ̅ⲃ̅ – [ⲟ̅ⲅ̅]	Louvre 9997.[19]
Sim. 5.3.7–5.4.1	[ⲟ̅ⲏ̅ – ⲟ̅ⲑ̅]	BnF Copte 131^{7} f. 61.
Sim. 6.1.4–6.1.6	[ⲡ̅ⲋ̅ – ⲡ̅ⲍ̅]	BnF Copte 133^{1} f. 7a.
Sim. 6.2.1–6.2.7	ⲡ̅ⲏ̅ – ⲡ̅ⲑ̅	BnF Copte 132^{1} f. 33.[20]

15 Lefort 1952, v–vi.

16 First edited in Lucchesi 1981, 400–404. For the rest of the fragments, the most recent editions are Lefort 1938 and Lefort 1952, 19–31. Earlier editions will be mentioned in footnotes.

17 First edited in Leipoldt 1903, then in Delaporte 1906b; see also Delaporte 1906a.

18 First edited in Leipoldt 1903, then in Delaporte 1905.

19 First edited in Delaporte 1905.

20 First edited in Delaporte 1906b.

Sim. 8.10.3–8.11.5	ⲣⲓⲑ – ⲣⲕ	BnF Copte 132^1 f. 34.[21]
Sim. 9.2.7–9.4.2	[ⲣⲕⲉ – ⲣⲕⲋ]	BnF Copte 130^2 f. 127.[22]
Sim. 9.4.3–9.4.6	[ⲣ]ⲕⲍ – [ⲣⲕⲏ]	BnF Copte 133^1 f. 7.
Sim. 9.5.1–9.6.1	[ⲣⲕⲑ – ⲣⲗ]	BnF Copte 133^1 f. 7d,[23] BnF Copte 132^1 f. 45, BnF Copte 130^5 f. 130.[24]
Sim. 9.11.7–9.12.5	[ⲣⲙⲅ – ⲣⲙⲇ]	BnF Copte 132^3 f. 256, BnF Copte 133^1 ff. 5a, 7c.
Sim. 9.13.5–9.13.7	[ⲣⲙⲍ – ⲣⲙⲏ]	BnF Copte 133^1 f. 7b.

The question of dating seems somewhat similar. Neither Leipoldt nor Delaporte seem to make an attempt to date the fragments they published. Lefort, for his part, dates it to the sixth/seventh century,[25] and Lucchesi seems to concur.[26] The entry in the *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* similarly dates MONB.AM to the sixth/seventh century. It is nonetheless worth noting that the way in which Lefort dates the manuscript is to offer as comparandum Bodleian Library MS Clarendon Press 57 (LDAB 108141), which is also a manuscript he edited and consequently dated,[27] a fact which points to a certain circularity involved in the dating process. The matter is complicated, as mentioned, with the difficulties of dating Coptic manuscripts before the ninth century, when dated colophons appear.[28] Together with the Akhmimic codex presented above, this serves as a reminder that we do not have a clear, secure dating for such manuscripts.

With regard to scribal behaviour, in MONB.AM there are five extant subtitles—one on each side of BnF Copte 130^5 f. 120, one on each side of Louvre 9997, and one on the hair side of BnF Copte 132^1 f. 34. The first column of the hair side of Louvre 9997 has the subtitle of the sixth *Similitude* (ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲟⲗⲏ: ⲋ) alone in the column, the lines above and below filled with a row of horizontal strokes separated by *diplae*. The same goes for the title of the next *Similitude* (ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲟⲗⲏ: ⲍ) on second column of the flesh side of Louvre 9997. The first letter of the *Similitudes* (following each title) is enlarged and protrudes into the margin in *ekthesis*, and in the second case, where the margin has survived,

21 First edited in Delaporte 1906b.

22 First edited in Leipoldt 1909–1910. In the case of this fragment, the editio princeps is still relevant because Leipoldt offers a text which is free of the omission that crept into Lefort's edition; on this, see Batovici 2017.

23 First edited in Leipoldt 1903, then in Delaporte 1906b.

24 First edited in Leipoldt 1903.

25 Lefort 1938, v.

26 Lucchesi 1981, 401.

27 Lefort 1965.

28 Van Lantschoot 1929.

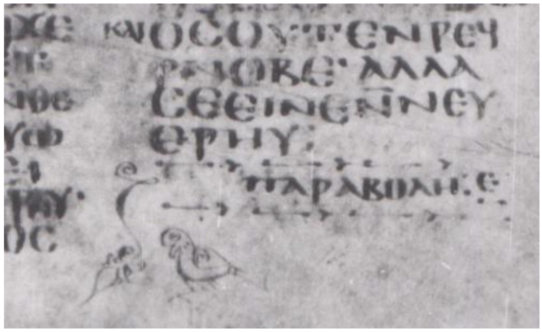

Fig. 1. The title of the Fifth Similitude in MS Paris, BnF Copte 130[5], f. 120v.

it also features a curved ornament with a leaf-like figure on top.

The two subtitles on BnF Copte 130[5] f. 120 (see fig. 1) occur on the last line of the second column (ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲟⲗⲏ: ⲇ and ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲃⲟⲗⲏ: ⲉ). They are similarly adorned with rows of horizontal strokes and *diplae* above and below, and also have ornamental shapes, and this time a bird drawing each, around their left margins. The title on the hair side of BnF Copte 132[1] f. 34 is that of the ninth *Similitude*, of which only the word ⲁⲣⲭⲏ survives (alone in the line, with blank space to its left and right), as the leaf breaks immediately under it. However, it has a row of curved lines and *diplae* above. And if in the other four cases the space after the last words of the previous section is left blank, in the case of this subtitle the rest of the line is filled with *diplae*.

When ⲇ and ϫ are at the beginning of a line, their horizontal stroke projects into the left margin for at least the width of a letter and ends in a small hook, for example on BnF Copte 130[2] f. 127r or 130[5] f. 120v. The horizontal stroke of ⲧ and ϯ at the beginning of the line also starts in the margin (as the left alignment of the column is to the vertical strokes of the letters, not to their left extremities as was the case in the Akhmimic codex), but less striking when compared to that of ⲇ and ϫ.

Finally, a very interesting scribal feature in this manuscript is the behaviour at the end of line. It is quite frequent that the last characters are comparatively smaller than they normally are in the line and compressed. ⲁ and ⲙ in final position are normally cursive, whereas they are angular elsewhere in the line. Ⲉ and ⲟ can be either of the regular height but compressed horizontally, or round but smaller and higher than the baseline (as can be ⲱ and ⲓ). In this position, ⲧ, ⲩ and ϥ are normally written not only smaller but also higher than the baseline, with the horizontal (respectively left) stroke starting above the previous letter, not after it, resulting in a compressed aspect. When the penultimate letter is ⲩ or ⲧ, the following letter (be it ⲛ, ϥ or ⲁ) can be not only compressed but written under the right stroke of ⲩ or the vertical one of ⲧ, and close to the vertical stroke.

Such compression at the end of line can involve up to three or four letters. For instance, on the verso of Louvre 9997, at the end on the twelfth line of the first column, the sequence ⲧⲉⲩ is written in such a manner that ⲩ follows ⲧ immediately and ⲉ is placed under the horizontal stroke of ⲧ and the left stroke of ⲩ, all three letters being smaller than usual. In BnF Copte 132[1] f. 34r (see fig. 2), at the end of lines 1, 4 and 5 of the first column the sequences ⲛⲉϩ, ϣⲉⲡ and ⲛⲟⲩ are written with the consonants next to one another (ⲛϩ, ϣⲡ, ⲛⲩ), while the vowels (ⲉ, ⲉ, ⲟ) are written smaller above the consonants. Similar phenomena have been documented in other majuscule manuscripts. For instance, in the so-called Codex Sinaiticus, the fourth-century Greek biblical pandect, the scribe customarily named D does this 'with an attempt to justify the text-column'.[29] However, in the case of MONB.AM it is fairly clear that this practice does not produce a justified right margin to match the quite neat left margin of the block of text. Nor does it seem an effort to finish a word on the same line, since words are split. It is perhaps an effort to not split syllables or compounds over two lines.

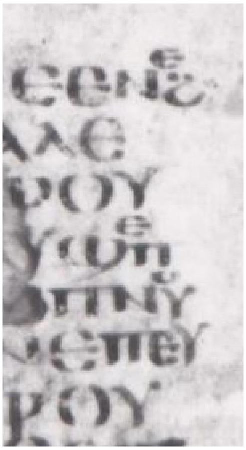

Fig. 2. End of line behaviour in MS Paris, BnF Copte 132[1], f. 34r.

c. *The Lost Codex | LDAB 107957*

Inventory: (formerly) KU Leuven, University Library no. 7
[*Les manuscrits coptes de l'Université de Louvain,* no. 26]
Contents: *Similitude* 8.5.6—8.6.4

In the editio princeps of this codex published in 1939, Lefort mentions that he bought a bifolium of white parchment during a 'récent voyage en Égypte' from a dealer in Cairo.[30] Unfortunately, one year later the manuscript was lost to the fire which burned down the University Library in Leuven. So far as I could verify, no image of it has survived, which could have been employed for an reevaluation of the dating, or for scribal behaviour. Lefort dates it to the fifth-sixth century in the first publication, and to the fifth in the second.[31] The description offered in Lefort's successive editions makes the lost codex

29 Head 2015, 128.

30 Lefort 1939, 223.

31 Lefort 1939, 223: 'L'écriture, d'un type oncial régulier V[e]–VI[e] siècle, est fort semblable à celui du Josué grec de la collection Freer', whereas later this is narrowed down, in Lefort 1952, viii: 'L'écriture, en onciales régulières et nerveuses, est vraisemblablement du V[e] siècle'. The comparandum mentioned in the editio prin-

interesting nonetheless from from the point of view of its historical reception. It measured 12 × 9 cm (‘c’est-à-dire plus large que haut’[32]), and only one folio had text on it in one column which measured 98 × 75, the other being left blank. On the flesh side the written folio also had a ‘quire’ signature, ⲓ̅ⲁ̅, and pagination on both sides, ⲣ̅ⲝ̅ⲃ̅ respectively ⲣ̅ⲝ̅ⲅ̅. This would have been therefore the first folio of the 11th gathering, whose first two pages were numbered 162 and 163. As the text on page 162 started in the middle of a sentence, it seems to have been intended as a continuous text of a multi-quire codex. However, the text stops mid-sentence on page 163 mid-line 18, more specifically mid word—ⲧϫⲟ[ⲟⲗⲉⲥ—according to Lefort’s reconstruction. As page 162 had 24 lines, page 163 is one third empty. No further text is written on the other two pages of the bifolium, which presumably would have been the last of the gathering, had the scribe continued his work.

Lefort notes that this might be due to the fact that the scribe ‘n’avait qu’un modèle mutilé, ou bien qu’il a cessé son travail pour un motif que nous ne pouvons deviner’, and is certainly right to recommend caution against ‘de vaines conjectures sur la teneur du Pasteur qu’ill [the manuscript] représente’.[33] The fact that the scribe stops mid-word, however, rather speaks against a mutilated exemplar: if that was the case, the scribe could have stopped before the mutilated word, or supplemented the missing letters in order to complete the sense unit, assuming that he was able to understand what he was copying (and we have seen earlier that a scribe can divide words by syllables at the end of line, hence able to discern ‘sense units’ to a certain degree). Lefort is of course right that if this is an interruption of the work of the scribe, i.e. for a reason which is external to the scribal activity, we cannot guess that reason. However, if we attempt to think of this in connection with the work of the scribe, hence as involving a decision that has to do with the process of the production process of the codex, then other scenarios are possible. For instance, in the case of the so-called Codex Sinaiticus it was possible to document the use of ‘cancel leaves’ which replace initial leaves in a codex for either textual reasons (e.g. a larger haplography) or simply for recalculating and redistributing the available space.[34] All in all, as far as the reception of the *Shepherd* in Coptic is concerned, the lost Louvain no. 26 is a codex written in biblical majuscule (if the parallel with LDAB 3288 holds) during the fifth or the sixth century, with at least 163 pages and 11 gatherings, which included the *Shepherd,* or parts of it, either on its own, or with other texts. Unfortunately, it does

ceps is LDAB 3288, currently where dated to the second half of the fifth century by P. Orsini, in *P. Antinoupolis I*, at 118.

32 Lefort 1952, viii.

33 Lefort 1952, ix.

34 Jongkind 2007, 44–46.

not overlap with the text of MONB.AM in order to verify whether Louvain no. 26 represents a separate Coptic translation.

2. A Truncated Coptic Transmission?

Lefort finishes his presentation of the Sahidic fragments of MONB.AM by concluding that the initial codex started 'probablement' with the Fifth *Vision*, serving as an introduction to the rest of the book.[35] Some hesitation notwithstanding, he also holds this to be true of the Akhmimic codex.[36] His overall assessment seems to be accepted by Carlini and others,[37] and with some caution by Giet,[38] but if ascertained, this would be indeed a remarkable feature in reception history.

The background for this proposal is the long-standing assumption in the scholarship on the *Shepherd of Hermas* that the book might have circulated in early Christian Egypt split in two books, the first four *Visions* on the one hand, and the *Mandates* and *Similitudes*, with the fifth *Vision* as an introduction, on the other. This suggestion was first made by C. Bonner in 1925 in relation to his reconstruction of P.Mich. 2.2.129 (LDAB 1097), which contains a large part of the Greek text of *Hermas*,[39] and has proved remarkably successful in subsequent scholarship.[40]

However, it can be argued that despite the virtually general acceptance, Bonner's proposal does not withstand close scrutiny, as it rests on two levels of conjecture, both questionable.[41] Put briefly, since the first surviving page would have been numbered 51 (calculated from the numbering present on other pages) Bonner proposed that page 1 would have had either the end of Mand. 4.1 on it or the beginning of Mand. 4.2. Postulating then that this could not have been the beginning of the codex, he further conjectures (this time

35 Lefort 1952, viii: 'On peut donc conclure que ce codex sahidique [the Paris-Cairo codex] présentait le Pasteur comme suit: 1º probablement la V[e] *Vision* servant d'introduction […]'.

36 Lefort 1952, iii and especially vii: 'Les données paléographiques [of MONB.AM] font ainsi apparaître un type de Pasteur sans les *Visions* (sauf peut-être la courte 5[e]) tel qu'apparaît le Pasteur du papyrus Michigan *et celui du codex akhmîmique ci-desous*', emphasis added.

37 Carlini 1983; Hellholm 2010, 218; Tornau and Cecconi 2014, 7.

38 Giet 1963, 75, quoted by Lucchesi 1989, 396, n. 3, who in turn thinks that 'si existence indépendente il y a eu, elle est plus ancidentelle que primitive'. See also Leutzsch 1998, 130.

39 Bonner 1934. Before that, Bonner had published a description and important variant readings in Bonner 1925.

40 See for example Joly 2011, 15; Snyder 1968, 4; Carlini 1987, 32–34; Ayán Calvo 1995, 23-24; Osiek 1999, 3. And, discussed here, Lefort 1952, iii and especially vii.

41 For a recent full discussion see Batovici 2016a.

with no ground whatsoever in the manuscript) that initially the manuscript would have had 16 more leaves, and that they would have started with the fifth *Vision*. This would be an exceptionally exact estimation, given that this *Vision* covers about one page of the Loeb Classical Library volume, which would have to be no less than 66 manuscript pages away from the first surviving page of P.Mich. 2.2.129.[42] For these reasons, Bonner's ingenious reconstruction remains a speculation; the proposed identification of the starting point of the original manuscript is far more exact than what the evidence allows for; and therefore P.Mich. 2.2.129 does not constitute positive evidence for either the separate circulation in Egypt of the first four *Visions*, or of the rest of the book starting with the fifth *Vision*.[43]

It can be shown that Lefort's argument displays similar shortcomings. In the case of the Akhmimic codex, which he seems to take as a single gathering, regular codex as far as the fibre succession is concerned—i.e. ↓ → until the middle, then → ↓ until the end—Lefort notes that 'Le milieu de la farde tombait … à la fin du ch. VII ou au début du ch. VIII de la IX^e *Similitude*. Or, selon C. Bonner, à cette endroit du texte on se trouve assez exactement au milieu d'un Pasteur ne comprenant pas les *Visions*, sauf la V^e, qui servait d'introduction.'[44] However, both assumptions are questionable. On the one hand, there are papyrus codices that do not keep to ↓ → | → ↓ fibre succession pattern, especially those with more than one quire (a possibility which cannot be ruled out) but not only.[45] On the other hand, the point of reference for Bonner's own estimation is based on a printed edition—'the *editio minor* of Gebhard, Harnack, and Zahn, which is closely printed and has no footnotes to disturb the equality of the pages'[46]—and does not take into consideration any sort of variation, even though the manuscript indeed varies in terms of both the number of lines per page and of letters per line. This rigidity in estimation is then echoed in the far too exact identification of the fifth *Vision* as the beginning of the text, which covers as said little more than one page

42 Bonner 1925, 118, and Bonner 1934, 13–14, discussed in Batovici 2016a, 385–388. A somewhat similar proposal was put forth in the case of P.Bodmer 38, which contains the first three visions and breaking off at Vis. 3.13.4 [21]: A. Carlini suggested that it probably ended with the fourth *Vision* (for which a bifolium in the middle would have been necessary in his view), but does not exclude the possibility that more bifolia could have been there originally; Carlini 1991, 12, discussed in detail in Batovici 2016a, 388–390.

43 Batovici 2016a, 390.

44 Lefort 1952, iii.

45 Turner 1977, 65–67, shows that there are exceptions to this rule even among single-gathering codices.

46 Bonner 1925, 118.

of a Loeb Classical Library edition, whereas the whole text of the *Shepherd* covers nearly 150 pages. The section which follows it on the next page—the first *Mandate*—would have been an equally possible candidate.[47] In any event, considering also the fact that, as already noted by Lefort, the absence of numbering on the surviving folia leaves us with no positive evidence for confirming the truncated hypothesis for the Akhmimic papyrus codex, any such proposal seems improbable.[48]

In the case of the fragmentary Paris/Cairo Sahidic codex, the existing numbering may well suggest that the initial page '1' might not have had the first *Vision* on it. However, whether it started with the fifth *Vision* or something else remains unclear. Other reconstructions are certainly possible, and have been formulated.[49] Finally, the third published Coptic *Hermas* manuscript, the Leuven bifolium which was lost in fire, apparently had a quire signature (11) and pagination (162, 163), which, according to Lefort's estimation, would have allowed for the whole of the *Shepherd*, including the *Visions*, though this, too, would be a speculation.

On scrutiny, the Coptic reception of the *Shepherd* does not offer any positive evidence of the separate circulation of the first four *Visions*, or of the rest of the book. This does not mean the book was only transmitted as a whole, but the clear-cut identification of the split right before the fifth *Vision* finds no support in the extant manuscripts in Coptic, just as it does not in Greek. It is remarkable how this long-standing proposal went unquestioned, with ramifications in the Latin, Coptic, and Greek scholarship on the *Shepherd*, but it is nonetheless a case of a conjecture taken as an assured reconstruction in subsequent scholarship.

3. In lieu of Conclusion: The Akhmimic Codex as a Biblical Pandect

In closing, I would briefly touch upon the question of the initial state of the Akhmimic codex of the *Shepherd*. Lefort reported in the early 1950s that he had received a box of papyrus scraps. His success in piecing together the eight leaves of the *Shepherd*, at a time when no other Coptic text of this book existed, is a remarkable achievement in itself. Moreover, from that lot of scraps he also reconstructed leaves of Exodus and the Gospel of Luke in the same

47 Batovici 2016a, 386.

48 Lefort 1952, iii too notes 'nous prive d'un élément de nature à confirmer ou à infirmer cette conclusion'.

49 See for instance the suggestion in Lucchesi 1989, 395, based on the similarity of hand, scribal habits, and format, that this codex might have been the second volume of a double-codex, where the first volume would have contained the *Revelation* (Zoega no. 89) and the *Visions* of the *Shepherd* and the second—the Paris/Cairo Codex—the *Mandates* and the *Similitudes*.

dialect, having the same format, and being written by the same hand. The question therefore rises whether the Exodus, Luke, and *Hermas* leaves belonged to the same initial codex, paralleling perhaps in this regard the Codex Sinaiticus, a multiple text manuscript where the Epistle of Barnabas and the *Shepherd* are written with or after the Old and the New Testament, or Codex Alexandrinus, where 1 and 2 Clement follow the Old and the New Testament. There are not many, especially early, Coptic manuscripts where biblical and non-biblical books appear together. An isolated example would be the Crosby-Schøyen MS 193, a one-quire codex which groups Jonah, 2 Maccabees, 1 Peter, and Melito of Sardis' *Peri Pascha*,[50] and the addition to the Leuven/Louvain Akhmimic leaves to this exception might be interesting.

In short, when using current codicological terminology, it is quite possible that the Exodus, Luke and *Hermas* leaves in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve were the result of the same production process, in which case they would form one production unit,[51] irrespective of whether it was one initial codex, or two, or indeed three. They certainly reached Lefort as the same circulation unit, dismembered and broken to pieces as it was, and remained so until the split of the Leuven university in the 1970s, when five *Hermas* leaves went to Louvain-la-Neuve, where the French part of the old university reformed. In any event, since they seem connected at both ends (at the production time by the same hand and same dimensions, and in post-discovery times by the bunch received by Lefort), they may well have been a circulation unit all along, in which case the question of whether they formed one codex or more is perhaps irrelevant. To conclude, if in the case of the two Greek codices, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus, the inclusion of the Apostolic Fathers led to a debate as to whether these manuscripts reflect canonical status for the Epistle of Barnabas, the *Shepherd*, and 1 and 2 Clement,[52] in a Coptic context the inclusion of the *Shepherd* with books from the Old and New Testament may seem less problematic if one regards it as reflecting a view akin to Athanasius of Alexandria's *Festal letter* 39, where the list of canonical books (κανονιζόμενα) is followed by a secondary category of books, appointed by the fathers to be read (ἀναγινώσκεσθαι) for instruction, which include the *Shepherd* and the *Didache*.[53]

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50 Buzi 2016, 95. The article offers an overview of multiple text Coptic codices.
51 For the terminology see Andrist, Canart and Maniaci 2013, 59–61.
52 For a survey see Batovici 2016b, 583–584.
53 Greek text in Joannou 1963, 71–76.

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Projects in manuscript studies

MBH – Manuscripta Bibliae Hebraicae. Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in Western Europe in the 12th and 13th Centuries: A Material, Cultural and Social Approach

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The last decades have witnessed two main developments affecting the study of Hebrew Bible manuscripts. Firstly, the widespread availability of digitised Hebrew manuscripts on the internet: for example, the collections of the Vatican Library, the Oxford Digital Library at the University of Oxford, the British Library, the Cambridge University Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France are easily accessible online. Secondly, various databases have been created, which are dedicated to medieval Hebrew manuscripts in general, not specifically to biblical items. This development started in the mid-1960s with *SfarData*; in the past decade, the *Friedberg Genizah Project* and *Books within Books* databases, amongst others, have been launched. These advancements have made it possible and desirable to reassess the systematic study of the medieval Hebrew Bible manuscripts that are widely available on the web, from an equally renewed collaborative and transversal perspective.

The great biblical scholar and Masorete Gérard E. Weil commenced working on a systematic study of Hebrew Bible manuscripts, preparing in the early 1970s a *Catalogue général de la Bible hébraïque et du Targum, dans les collections publiques et privées*.[1] Unfortunately, his untimely death in 1986 prevented its continuation. A critical re-evaluation remains crucial nonetheless, both for the insight it affords into the more general phenomena connected to the production of the Hebrew book, and to improve our discernment regarding the types of Bible produced during the Middle Ages and the variety of biblical texts used in the medieval Jewish world. A general, more quantitative insight could facilitate in-depth research into specific qualitative aspects and thus determine medieval socio-cultural standards, cultural transfers and socio-cultural practices concerning the transmission of the Biblical text.

A starting point for such vast investigation is the project *Manuscripta Bibliae Hebraicae. Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in Western Europe in the 12th and 13th Centuries*: *A Material, Cultural and Social Approach* (MBH)

1 Attia forthcoming.

directed by Élodie Attia at Aix-Marseille University CNRS (CPAF TDMAM UMR 7297). The aim of this four-year project, financed by the French Organization for Scientific Research (Agence nationale de la recherche, ANR), is to provide a systematic survey of medieval Hebrew Bible manuscripts and introduce a preliminary typology of Hebrew Bibles produced before 1300 CE in Ashkenaz (England, Northern France, Germany, and Northern Italy under German authority). In order to facilitate the development of this preliminary typology, an analytical descriptive database with a multi-criteria search engine is being currently developed. Initially, the database will be limited to a corpus of circa 115 Ashkenazic manuscripts, either dated or mostly undated, which include biblical text (complete or partial). Later on, the database will enable the processing of a larger number of sources, whether late-medieval texts or manuscripts from geocultural areas other than the Ashkenazic region, in order to further the comparative approach needed for an exhaustive look at the 'Bible' phenomenon. Finally, it should be stressed that a keen interest in 'late' Bibles can be reported for Latin Studies[2] but also Hebrew Studies, as is testified by the growing number of projects explicitly reflecting on this subject, among them, the SFB 933 Subproject B4 (Heidelberg), aiming at providing an on-line edition of MS Vatican, BAV, Vat. Ebr. 14;[3] the LEGARAD project on late Sephardic Bibles initiated by Javier del Barco (Madrid); the ERC ParaTextBib project on paratexts in Greek Bibles (Munich); the Biblia Arabica project headed by Ronny Vollandt (Munich); and the Textual History of the Bible editorial project concerning the Bible in all languages supervised by Armin Lange (Vienna).

Therefore, the MBH project is not only intended to create a directory of manuscripts as already is the case for Latin (R. Gryson) and Greek (A. Rahlfs) biblical texts, though it could contribute to it. The MBH project and its connected database aspire to facilitate cross-questioning by means of codicological and palaeographical criteria (measurements and size, writing support and material features, layout and mise en texte, decoration, structure of the books, estimated date and provenance), scribal practices and textual traditions (feature of the consonantal or Masoretic text, forms of accents, order of books and of the contents, reader annotations, cultural transfers from non-Jewish culture to Jewish book and vice versa), and the possible uses and functions of biblical manuscripts. Obviously, the project aims to take into account different kinds of sources: from dated codices (less than 40 items are described in SfarData from a codicological point of view) to a majority of non-dated codices and li-

2 See Boynton and Rilley 2011; Light and Polegh 2013; Ruzzier and Hermand 2015, Togni 2016.

3 On the basis of Attia 2015.

Fig. 1. MBH homepage, <http://mbhproject.org>, detail (accessed 20 March 2018).

turgical scrolls, whether the sources are complete, incomplete or fragmentary, which is a methodological novum.

In order to achieve its aims, the MBH project gathers corpus-based research data either 1) based on the analysis of specific library collections that are both easily accessible in situ and online (for instance in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Parma, the Vatican City, and Paris), or 2) connected to specific noteworthy elements that could be the subject of a separate study (such as Hebrew manuscripts of remarkable formats: either the very small 'Paris Bible' or the very large 'Giant Bible'). Like similar current projects conducted on manuscripts, for instance *E-Ktobe* on Syriac items, the MBH database intends to mention how its information has been collected (derived from printed catalogues or other sources), whether the information has been checked against the original or digitised images and, finally, whether it comes from codicological and palaeographical research carried out especially for the MBH project in the holding library (a budget is available for library visits). This transparency will allow other researchers to distinguish the least studied sources, the ones that are less easily accessible or the ones that require more analysis. Interoperability is a priority and establishing closer ties with a portal such as *Biblissima* should greatly facilitate this work.

Furthermore, in order to facilitate the dissemination of its research, the MBH project will develop a specially dedicated web portal and accommodate a certain number of data research tools useful for the investigation of the Bibles' materiality and history. There are plans for the development of a plug-in extension, called Graphoskop, adapted to Hebrew script (in collaboration with Maria Gurrado, IRHT Paris). A relevant bibliography and links to existing digital library collections will be included (in collaboration with Viktor Golinets, HFJS Heidelberg), but also other data or techniques that could enable future inter- or transdisciplinary investigation.

In addition, the EAJS Lab international workshop 'Research Approaches in Hebrew Bible Manuscripts', held in June 2016 in Aix-en-Provence and organised by Élodie Attia, Antony Perrot, and Samuel Blapp, stressed the benefits of cross-fertilising research approaches used to analyse sources from antiquity and those common in research carried out on medieval texts, even though these are separate fields of study. An interdisciplinary seminar in collaboration with Patrick Andrist (ERC ParaText Bib, Munich) and Marilena Maniaci (Università degli studi di Cassino e del Lazio meridionale) is planned for November 2018 at the Paul Albert Février Center TDMAM (UMR 7297) in Aix-en-Provence. A collaboration with Javier del Barco (CSIC Madrid) and his project LEGARAD is also scheduled for 2018 during his stay at the Institute for Advanced Studies (IMéRA Aix-Marseille). Last but not least, the library of the Paul Albert Février Center TDMAM (UMR 7297) has been honoured by the donation of a new documentary collection unique in Europe: the private work library of Gérard E. Weil. This donation considerably enriches the Aix-Marseille University's holdings and the ANR MBH project has plans for a major symposium dedicated to this collection and the specialist's outstanding work on Hebrew biblical manuscripts.

For more information about the project visit the CNRS academic blog at <http://mbh.hypotheses.org>, and <http://mbhproject.org>.

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PAVONe: Platform of the Arabic Versions of the New Testament

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On 18 May 2017, the Digital Humanities Center at the University of Balamand launched *PAVONe*, the Platform of the Arabic Versions of the New Testament.[1] *PAVONe* is a database dedicated to the Arabic manuscripts of the Gospels copied between the ninth and nineteenth centuries. The project aims to contribute to the scholarly quest for the early translations of the Gospels into Arabic and to highlight their richness and diversity and their relations with the communities that have produced and used them. To reach these goals, the centre has engaged, since 2012, in developing a digital corpus, which accommodates a huge number of digitized and transcribed Arabic manuscripts containing the four Gospels and the lectionaries.[2] The corpus includes the verses of the Gospels transmitted to us in the manuscript tradition (continuous text, lectionaries, etc.) and as citations in other writings (writings of Church Fathers, liturgical texts, Arabic and Islamic literature, etc.). The corpus also includes all the allusions to Gospels in different types of writings (Arabic poetry, apologetic literature, etc.). Practically, *PAVONe* provides scholars and researchers with a toolset to find, read, compare and analyse the transcriptions of the Arabic Gospels.[3]

Corpus of Arabic translations of the Gospels

Historically, many attempts have been made to study the text of the Arabic Gospels. Early attempts included critical editions of the Gospels in the nineteenth century and continued to involve the work of Orientalists in identifying the various textual families of the Arabic translations. Lately, the study of the text of the Arabic Gospels is considering the work of scholars interested in the Arabic Christian heritage. Although these efforts have not yet covered every aspect of this issue, they have succeeded in drawing attention to the richness of this tradition and to its potential contribution to Biblical studies and researches related to Church history, linguistics, Muslim-Christian relations, and other topics. Undoubtedly, the value of the Arabic translations of the Gos-

1 The small *e* in *PAVONe* is the initial of 'electronic' and reflects the digital aspect of the database. The *PAVONe* database is freely accessible at <http://pavone.uob-dh.org/>.

2 A lectionary is a book containing Scripture readings called pericopes or lessons that are appointed to be read in Church services according to the cycles of the liturgical year. More details about the Greek lectionaries are available in Jordan 2010.

3 For a presentation of the project in Arabic, see Dannaoui 2017a.

pels exceeds the value of what we already know about this huge corpus. Its importance is reflected in the following properties:

1 Volume of conserved textual heritage: The manuscripts of the Gospels are among the most translated and copied works in the Arabic Christian heritage. For example, all churches and monasteries in the East have lectionaries, which exist in numerous copies as a result of their usage on daily basis. This wide dissemination of lectionaries reflects a massive volume of conserved textual heritage. Unfortunately, the catalogues of oriental manuscripts do not give the real number of Gospels manuscripts, mainly because they do not include the manuscripts used in parishes. Also, the catalogues do not always include precise and detailed information about the identity of the text. This is due to the lack of tools and resources needed by scholars and librarians in the task of describing the content of Gospels manuscripts.

2 Wide variety of formats: The Arabic text of the Gospels exists in different formats. One format is the continuous text, which includes the complete verses of the four Gospels following the canonical sequence (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Another format is represented by the lectionaries, which include selected lessons from the Gospels read on a specific date or liturgical service, or ecclesiastical event. In addition, we have extensive Gospels citations in other writings. For example, the text of the Gospels can be found in the writings of Church Fathers, liturgical texts, Arabic and Islamic literature, Arabic poetry, etc.

3 Broad span of time covered: The oldest dated Arabic copy from the New Testament is MS Sinai, St Catherine, Arabic 151, produced in Damascus in 867 CE. The manuscript contains the Arabic translation from the Syriac of the Acts of the Apostles, Paul's epistles, and the Catholic epistles. The oldest dated witness of the Gospels in Arabic is MS Sinai, St Catherine, Arabic 72, a lectionary based on the calendar of Jerusalem church dating to 897 CE. Conversely, there is a general agreement that MS Vatican, BAV, arabo 13 includes the oldest Gospel text dating to the ninth century.[4] The manuscripts testify to the existence of diverse translations between the ninth century and the prevalence of printed editions in the East. The relation between those translations and various printings remains subject to research.[5] A recent study[6] has showed that there are commonalities between the 1865 Vandyke's edition and that of Debbas 1703.

4 Yet the manuscript contains no clear indicator of the transcription date or translation. See Monferrer-Sala 2015 for a study of the Syriac *Vorlage* of this manuscript.

5 A detailed *status quaestionis* of the early printing projects of the Gospels in the East is dealt with in Dannaoui 2017b, Walbiner 2012, and Kilpatrick 2012.

6 Hanna 2016.

4 Vast geographic scope: The Gospels were translated into Arabic, particularly from Greek and Syriac, in known centres (St. Catherine monastery in Egypt, Saint Saba monastery in Palestine, monasteries around Antioch, Damascus, Baghdad, etc.). The translated copies subsequently spread out and began to be deliberated in the Christian milieu elsewhere. Each translation reflects the characteristics of its community in regard to its language, culture, and the attitude towards other religions.

5 Wide variety of *Vorlagen*: The Gospel was written in Greek. The oldest translation is the Syriac *Peshitta*, which dates to the second century. Starting from the second century, the Bible was gradually translated into Coptic. In the last quarter of the fourth century, Jerome translated the Four Gospels into Latin, creating the widely diffused version that was later identified as *Vulgata*. The manuscripts testify that the Arabic translations of the Gospels did not depend only on the Greek, but relied on all the above-mentioned languages.

6 Theological richness and diversity: All Arabic speaking (fully or partially) churches translated the Gospels into Arabic for particular and various uses. Theological approaches and ways of expressing the faith held by each church are reflected in these translations. Accordingly, we believe that the Arabic translations of the Gospels form a treasure in Arabic Christian theology that researchers have not yet fully discovered. Nestorians, Chalcedonians, and non-Chalcedonians intersect in these translations in terms of how they expressed their faith.

Objectives and methodology

Despite the importance of the Arabic corpus of the Gospels, Father Sydney Griffith states in 2013 that: 'the study of the bible in Arabic is still in its infancy stage'.[7] His statement summarizes the current state of research in a field that is still under-developed and under-explored despite the few valuable studies that have been done so far,[8] all made on the basis of only few texts selected from a large number of manuscripts. Our project intends to continue these efforts by extending the study to include a larger number of texts and manuscripts and by using new automated methods.[9] In order to continue previous efforts, PAVONe adopted the following approaches:

1 Working on the whole text and not only on samples: Previous studies relied on short samples from the texts to generate conclusions and release provisions that were sometime closer to generalization, knowing that one manuscript sometimes represents more than one tradition or type. In order

7 Griffith 2013, 1.

8 Many attempts have been made to classify the textual traditions of the Arabic Gospels, including Guidi 1888, Samir 1994, Valentin 2003, Kashouh 2012.

9 The digital aspect of the project was described in Dannaoui 2013.

to close this gap, we decided to create a corpus, which aims at collecting all the copies which we have identified in national and international libraries and collections.

2 Including the lectionary in the study: Lectionaries were generally excluded from previous studies and projects despite their importance and available number that exceeds the other formats, mainly the continuous or canonical text.[10] Therefore, it is impossible to draw conclusions from the study of the Four Gospel manuscripts and generalize them on the whole history of the text without taking into account the richness, sometimes the uniqueness, of the lectionaries. To solve this problem, we gave special importance to the lectionary in this project. A section was dedicated to present the structure of this book type and to transcribe the pericopes from various lectionary manuscripts.[11]

3 Covering the period from which no manuscripts were obtained: Previous studies omitted the period from which no written texts were obtained, particularly the period before Islam until mid-eighth century. Consequently, the absence of manuscript copies was assumed to correspond to the absence of translations of the Gospels.[12] *PAVONe* has worked on collecting, identifying and transcribing all the Gospel verses cited in Christian and Muslim writings from the above-mentioned period, to fill this gap.

4 Developing a methodology: In order to study the relations between various versions of the translated texts of the Gospels, previous studies typically used one technique, known as verbal agreement. According to this technique, the translations of the same verse coming from different manuscripts are collated and compared in order to identify the differences and similarities between texts. The main disadvantage of the application of this technique is its incapability of handling the syntax of the translations. It is obvious that the syntax represents a crucial element in identifying the *Vorlage* of translated texts. *PAVONe* adopted the approach and tools of computational linguistics, which enable the researcher to analyse the annotated text through its metadata. Transcribed texts are subject to a morphosyntactic annotation. Lexical, grammatical and inflectional properties (tense, grammatical mood, grammatical voice, aspect, person, number, gender and case) are associated with the annotated text. These linguistic properties allow the system to perform complex searches based on abstract representations of a specific word, sentence, paragraph, syntax and occurence.[13]

10 Dannaoui 2012.
11 Dannoui 2015.
12 For a discussion of this issue see Griffith 2013, ch. III.
13 Dannaoui 2013, 68–71.

Fig. 1. Manuscripts section: Map view.

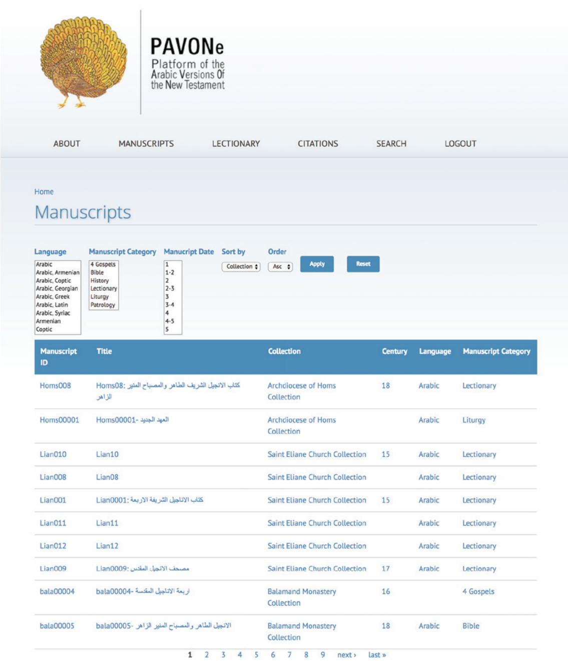


Fig. 2. Manuscripts section: filtering.

Fig. 3. Lectionaries.

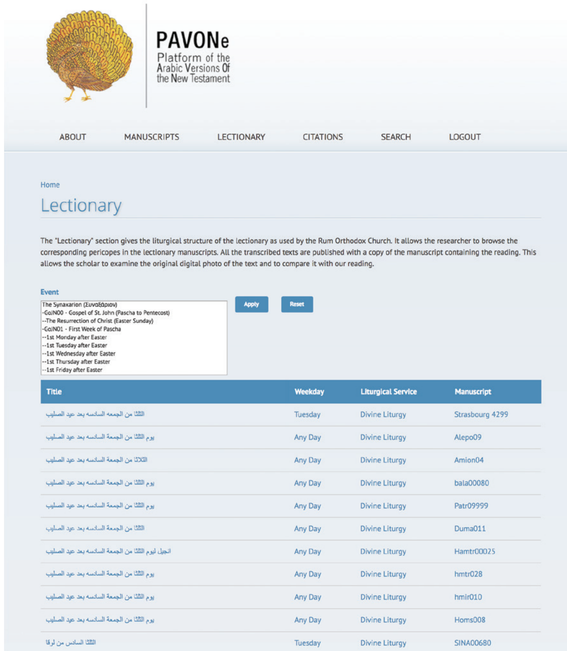
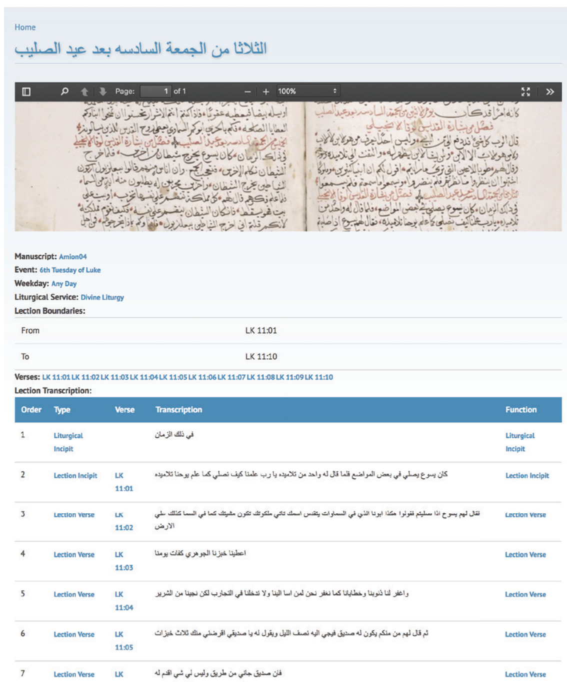


Fig. 4. Transcription vs image.



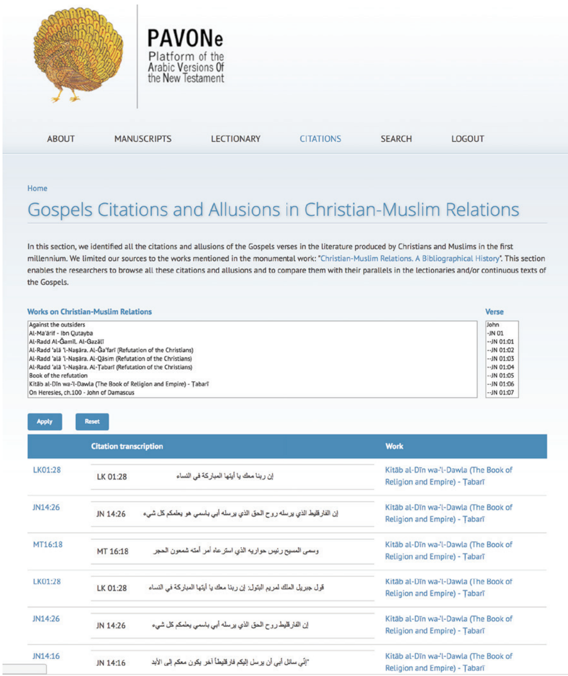


Fig. 5. Citations and allusions.

***PAVONe* database features**

The database contains the following sections/services:

About: The section includes a presentation of the project and the methodology used.

Manuscripts: The section allows the user to browse the Gospels manuscripts transcribed in the database. Two browsing modes are offered: the first one allows the scholar to visualize the manuscripts in their geographical location using a geotagging feature (fig. 1); the second one allows the filtration of the manuscripts by a variety of parameters (date, language, etc., fig. 2). Both modes lead to the same resources and give the researcher the possibility of displaying some codicological and palaeographical properties of the manuscripts and their content as well.

Lectionary: It gives the liturgical structure of the lectionary as used by the Rum Orthodox Church and allows the researcher to browse the corresponding pericopes in the lectionary manuscripts (fig. 3). All the transcribed texts are published with a copy of the manuscript containing the reading. This allows the scholar to examine the original digital photo of the text and to compare it with our reading (fig. 4).

Citations: In this section, we identified all the citations and allusions of the Gospels verses in the literature produced by Christians and Muslims in the first millennium.[14] It enables the researchers to browse all these citations and allusions and to compare them with their parallels in the lectionaries and/or continuous texts of the Gospels. These allusions are witnesses of a certain version of the Gospels' translation and may contribute in identifying this tradition if they were formally presented and integrated in the corpus (fig. 5).

Search: This module allows the researcher to look for a specific verse in all the contents of the database regardless of the type of the source. The user can search, for example, for a verse in the 'Muslim-Christian citations' and lectionaries at the same time.

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Conference reports

The *Physiologus* between East and West. Transmission and dissemination of an early Christian text on nature

Paris, 15–17 June 2017

The *Physiologus* is an early Christian (second or third century?) collection of moralizing stories about animals, plants and stones. Written originally in Greek, it was translated into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian, Arabic and Slavonic in the Middle Ages, not forgetting the translations from Latin into Western vernacular languages and their influence on the rich tradition of bestiaries. The conference 'The *Physiologus* between East and West. Transmission and dissemination of an early Christian text on nature', organized in Paris (Maison de la Recherche) from 15 to 17 June 2017 by Anna Dorofeeva, Stavros Lazaris, Caroline Macé and Arnaud Zucker, aimed at shedding some light on the early history of the text, to which ancient translations are of crucial importance.

After an introductory paper by Horst Schneider ('Der *Physiologus*: Grundlagen und Perspektiven'), the first session was devoted to the Greek tradition of the *Physiologus*: Arnaud Zucker explained the relationships between its three recensions, Adele Di Lorenzo spoke about the intriguing history of the editio princeps (by Ponce de Leon in 1587) and its manuscripts, and Alain Touwaide followed the fortune of the *Physiologus* in the tradition of the 'iatrosophia'. In the second session, illustrated Latin and Greek copies of the *Physiologus* were presented by Massimo Bernabò (who discussed the Greek 'Smyrna Physiologus', burnt during the sack of Smyrna in 1922, whose date is still highly debated), Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx (who spoke about the Bruxellensis 10066-77, a tenth-century Latin manuscript) and Stavros Lazaris (who considered an illustrated fragment of a Greek manuscript discovered in Saint-Catherine monastery on Mount Sinai).

The other sessions of the conference concentrated on various translations of the Greek *Physiologus*. Gohar Muradyan and Aram Topchyan presented the Armenian translation, made as early as the fifth century. Jost Gippert demonstrated that the Georgian translation, preserved in a tenth-century manuscript (the famous 'Šatberdi codex') was based upon the Armenian text, for which the Georgian constitutes a most precious witness. Alin Suciu showed that the *Physiologus* left some traces in Coptic, and that there are some connections between the Latin translation and one Coptic fragment. Massimo Villa presented his discoveries of previously unknown Ethiopic manuscripts containing the *Physiologus*, and demonstrated the existence of several recensions of the Ethiopic translation, that need to be taken into account in the new critical edition he is preparing. Sami Aydin showed the weaknesses of the extant editions of the Syriac *Physiologus*, and highlighted the necessity of a new critical edition. Sibylle Wentker, who edited the Arabic *Physiologus* in 2002, offered some insights into interesting aspects of the translation. Anissava Miltenova and Ana Stoykova presented the manuscript tradition of the south Slavonic translation of the *Physiologus*, based on the second Greek recension. Anna Dorofeeva and Emmanuelle Kuhry offered complementary analyses, codicological and philological, of the early Latin tradition. In the last paper of the conference, Caroline Macé showed how much can be gained in the research about the history of the Greek text, by looking at the ancient translations. A round-table led by Valentine A. Pakis closed the meeting.

The complete programme and summaries are available at <https://colloquephysiologus2017.wordpress.com/>. The results of the conference will be published in the form of a book, edited by Jost Gippert and Caroline Macé, entitled *The Physiologus*: *multilingual history of an early Christian text*. Another conference, focusing on traditions parallel to the *Physiologus* in oriental manuscripts, will be held in the Hamburg Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures on 28 and 29 June 2018.

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Hagiographico-homiletic Collections in Greek and Oriental Manuscripts: Histories of Books and Text Transmission in a Comparative Perspective

Hamburg, 23 June 2017

On 23 June 2017, Jost Gippert and Caroline Macé organized a workshop dedicated to Hagiographico-homiletic Collections in Greek and Oriental Manuscripts at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at Hamburg University.

The vast majority of manuscripts in the Christian world, both west and east, consists of Bibles and liturgical books, florilegia, and hagiographic-patristic collections (homiliaries). The same kind of manuscripts exists in different linguistic traditions; sometimes containing the same texts that were translated and circulated. Even within one language, those manuscripts were rarely taken in consideration for themselves; editors of a specific text will generally use them, but extracting the text to be edited from its context. The gigantic work Albert Ehrhard did on Greek manuscripts of what he calls the 'hagiographic-homiletic' tradition (*Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche*, published between 1937 and 1952), trying to classify those manuscripts according to their contents, is unparalleled in other languages. Although probably necessary for the purpose of an edition, the de-contextualisation of texts from the gatherings in which they were transmitted obscures to some extent our understanding of their transmission history, for which a more global approach, combining stemmatological analysis and palaeographical-codicological studies, is necessary. The problem is made even more acute in the case of texts translated and transmitted throughout the ancient Christian world: were the collections translated as such or were translated texts rearranged in other collections? Whereas it would probably not make sense to edit each collection for itself, it is important to study them, across the languages, as textual witnesses and as material objects. Yet the task is daunting, requires a comparative approach and a clear methodology, which has not yet been developed. Ehrhard's work, however admirable, is only a first step, but his efforts were unfortunately never continued (except for an index compiled by Lidia Perria).

The focus of this workshop was therefore in a comparative perspective, on the origin and development of 'hagiographico-homiletic collections', with a special attention to methodological issues and instrumenta studiorum (electronic or not). Some of the questions that were raised were: Is it possible to identify common clusters of homilies in the different traditions under consideration? If yes, what does it tell us about the history of those collections? Which texts / authors are preserved only through those collections (and in which languages)? Can we compare the history of transmission of homilies preserved both in those collections and in 'authorial' collections? What can we learn about the circulation of early Christian homiletics, based on the examination of hagiographico-homiletic collections? How could we go beyond the state of the art which is constituted by Ehrhard's monumental work?

The first panel focused on the Greek tradition. Sever Voicu spoke on 'The Earliest Greek Homiliaries' and Matthieu Cassin presented in particular on 'Gregory of Nyssa's hagiographic homilies: authorial tradition and hagiographico-homiletic collections, a comparison'.

The following sessions discussed the shapes taken by the patristic and homiletic texts in various traditions: Coptic (Alin Suciu, 'Greek Patristics in

Coptic: Early Translations and Later Systematisations within Homiliaries'), Ethiopic (Antonella Brita and Alessandro Bausi, 'A few remarks on the hagiographico-homiletic collections in Ethiopic manuscripts'), Arabic (Michael Muthreich, 'Dionysius Areopagita in the Arabic and Ethiopic Homiletic Tradition'), Armenian (Bernard Outtier, 'The Armenian hagiographic-homiletic tradition'), Georgian (Jost Gippert, 'Codex Vindobonensis georg. 4: an untypical mravaltavi'), Slavic (Christian Hannick, 'Formation and transmission of hagiographic-homiletic collections in the medieval Slavic tradition'). A view on a particular corpus across the many oriental traditions was offered by André Binggeli ('The transmission of Cyril of Scythopolis' corpus in Greek and Oriental hagiographico-homiletic collections').

In addition, a few *instrumenta studiorum* were presented. Daniel Stoekl Ben Ezra (via Skype) showed the progress of the database *THALES*: *Thesaurus Antiquorum Lectionariorum Ecclesiae Synagogaeque*, which currently contains 34 lectionaries with at least one witness of most Jewish and Christian liturgical families (i.e. Roman, Gallican, Mozarabic, Bohairic, Jerusalem (Armenian), Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Yemenite, Saadia Gaon, Mishnah, etc.); 4015 liturgical events; and 13075 readings (visit < http://www.lectionary.eu/>). André Binggeli and Matthieu Cassin presented the project of digitalization of the hand-written card catalogues of the hagiographic manuscripts produced by the Bollandists: the project BHGms (<http://www.labex-resmed.fr/les-manuscrits-hagiographiques?lang=fr>) is processing 8750 cards. Sergey Kim illustrated his work towards a digital liturgical index of Ehrhard's *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche*. The recent project *Pseudo-Chrysostomica*: *An Online Database on the Texts Wrongly Attributed to John Chrysostom*, to be hosted on the platform Trismegistos, < http://www.trismegistos.org/>, was introduced by Sever Voicu.

The proceedings shall be published in a special issue of Manuscript Cultures journal of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures.

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Medical Traditions in and around Byzantium

Munich, 14–15 July 2017

This workshop on Medical traditions in and around Byzantium, convened by Albrecht Berger, Isabel Grimm-Stadelmann and Alain Touwaide, was jointly organized by the Departments of Byzantine studies and of the History of Medicine at the Ludwig-Maximilian-University in Munich, in collaboration with the Institute for the Preservation of Medical Traditions in Washington, DC.

The care for the health of populations in the Byzantine World has been little explored in scholarly research, however important a component of Byzantine life it might have been. Just as in other sectors, Byzantium did not only further develop the legacy of Antiquity and transmit it to the worlds with which it was in contact, but it also received the contributions of these worlds and assimilated them in an active way in constant evolution over time. The workshop thus examined the different medical traditions in and around Byzantium (Greek, Latin, Arabic, Hebrew, and Syriac) with the aim to lay down the basis for a renewed approach to medicine in the Eastern Mediterranean, multicultural, aggregative, and dynamic.

Isabel Grimm-Stadelmann spoke of 'Traces of Ancient Egyptian wisdom in Byzantine Medical Literature'. On the example of Alexander of Tralles' medical treatise she showed a connection between iatromagic and conventional therapeutic concepts, together with the presence of authentic Egyptian concepts of the body and Greek traditional therapies based on humoral pathology and diaetetics. In his paper '*Antidotarium magnum*, *Antidotarium Nicolai*, and the *Dynameron* of Nikolaos Myrepsos', Ilias Valiakos focused on three related recipe books (two in Latin and one in Greek) which had a deep influence on pharmaceutical theory and practice in the West and in the Eastern Mediterranean until the end of the eighteenth century.

Several papers dealt with the Arabic tradition. Koray Durak spoke of the 'Byzantine Exports of *Materia Medica* to the Islamic World': Arabic lists of *materia medica* from around the turn of the first millennium CE provide invaluable information about the Byzantine provenance of certain materia medica and their exportation to the Near Eastern markets. In his presentation 'Hunayn ibn Ishaq and his Greek manual. A Re-discovery', Nikolai Serikoff introduced a new source for medieval translations from Greek into Arabic, a definitive set of lexical lemmas as compiled by Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-Ibadi for his Greek manual, which apparently was a Greek *Konversationsgrammatik.* Alain Touwaide spoke of 'Arabic into Greek. Revisiting Symeon Seth'. He introduced some previously unknown witnesses of Symeon's *De alimentorum facultatibus*. Arabic but also Persian physicians and respective medical treatises were the subject of the paper by Mehrnaz Katouzian-Safadi, 'Reading Literature, Practicing Medicine. Râzi and his Arabic and Persian colleagues'.

Siam Bhayro and Stefanie Rudolf spoke of the 'Syriac Medical Handbooks and the Persistence of the Greco-Roman and Mesopotamian Sciences'. While modern scholarship has tended to emphasise the reception of the

Greco-Roman traditions, while relegating the Mesopotamian ones to mere superstition or the practices of the ignorant, the authors established how the Mesopotamian sciences, particularly astronomy, herbal medicine and divination, not only persisted beyond the cuneiform age, but were also integrated with the Greco-Roman sciences in the medieval Syriac compendia. In her paper 'Melancholy and its Treatment in Jewish Medical Sources', Helena Paavilainen showed how writings of Jewish physicians reflect the interplay of tradition and innovation, combining the classical Greek material with later developments and an enriched *materia medica*. Caroline Macé spoke of the 'Greek Christian Sources of Armenian Medical Thought', exploring how the translated patristic literature may have shaped the medical thought in Armenia. Ramaz Shengelia's work towards a comprehensive catalogue of the Georgian *materia medica* was highlighted in his paper 'Georgian Medical Manuscripts and Texts: History and Peculiarities'. Klaus-Dietrich Fischer, in his paper ''Beifang' im lateinischen Oribasius: Die Streuüberlieferung griechischer medizinischer Werke', examined several examples by Oribasius' *Euporista*, a Latin source listing drugs in the order of the Greek alphabet, proving the Galenian influence.

Iatrosophia, collections of medical recipes produced in the Greek World after the Fall of Byzantium, which were intended for practical usage, were discussed by Danilo Valentino ('Similar Medicine, Different Eras. *Iatrosophia* from Byzantium to Early-Modern Greece') and Patricia Clark ('The *iatrosofion*. Recent Connections with Ancient Greek and Byzantine Medicine'). Their use well into the nineteenth century hints at the persistence of Byzantine medicine until the modern Greek time.

(*Red.*)

XIV General Conference of the Association internationale des études arméniennes

Oxford, 10–12 August 2017

The 14th General Conference of the AIEA was organized in Pembroke college at the University of Oxford by Theo Maarten van Lint, from 10 to 12 August 2017. It featured four keynote lectures and 15 parallel sessions, with three or four papers each on topics as diverse as homiletics, architecture, history, translation studies, linguistics, modern literature, apocrypha, Biblical literature and commentaries, epics, liturgy, colophons, epigraphy, etc.

Manuscript sources were widely employed by papers dealing with Armenian history, such as the keynote talk by Tim Greenwood, 'Ancient and

Medieval Armenian historiography', Tara Andrews' paper 'Understanding the Armenian reactions to the Byzantine annexation of Ani', the presentation by Marco Bais 'The meaning of history writing for T'ovma Mecopec'i', the paper by Anahit Safaryan 'The last king and the fall of the kingdom of Kars according to the Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa', the talk by Azat Yeghi-azaryan 'Some Problems of the History of the Armenian Epic'.

Armenian literature (covering homiletics, hagiography, poetry among other genres) and philology were dealt with in such papers as Emilio Bonfiglio's 'Rhetoric and Realia in Early Armenian Homiletics', Andy Hilkens' 'The Armenian reception of the homilies of Jacob of Serugh', Caroline Macé's 'The Armenian Version of the *Letter on the Death of the Apostles* attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite (BHO 966)', Sara Scarpellini's 'La traduction arménienne des Actes de Pierre et Paul du Pseudo-Marcellus: nouvelles contributions philologico-linguistiques et historico-littéraires', Hubert Kaufhold's 'Die armenische Version des Syro-Römischen Rechtsbuchs', Valentina Calzolari's 'Le *Martyre de Barthélemy* inédit conservé dans le ms. 7853 du Matenadaran : un témoin isolé et unique de la tradition apocryphe sur Barthélemy', Piruza Hayrapetyan's 'The Emergence and Development of the Ganj Kanon Revisited: What Do We Learn from the Manuscripts', Gabriel Képéklian's 'Tradition indirecte de la version arménienne de l'*Adversus haereses* d'Irénée de Lyon: Etat de la question', Alex MacFarlane's 'M3668, M7709, M7726: Considering Cycles of Kafas about Alexander the Great in Armenian', Stephanie Pambakian's 'The *Cosmology* of Anania Širakac'i: Text, Sources, and Value', Theo Maarten van Lint's 'Emptying and Fulfilment in Prayer 39 and 40 of Grigor Narekac'i's *Book of Lamentation*'.

Biblical tradition was in the focus of the papers by Michael E. Stone, 'Biblical Text and Armenian Retelling', Albert ten Kate, 'The Armenian Psalter according to the Manuscript Barberinianus Orientalis 2', Robert W. Thomson, 'Vardan Arewelc'i's *Commentary on the Psalms*. Some Preliminary Remarks', Emmanuel Van Elverdinghe, 'Grigor Murłanec'i's Lost Gospel Book and its Tradition'.

A particular type of manuscript, the handmade map, was the focus of the paper by Ruben Atayan and Anna Atayan-German, 'Armenian Cartography: History and the Modern Period. The Catalogue of Armenian Handmade and Printed Maps'.

For the complete programme, visit < https://sites.uclouvain.be/aiea/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/AIEA-2017-Program.pdf>, the abstracts are available at <https://sites.uclouvain.be/aiea/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Abstracts-1.pdf>.

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Caught in Translation: Versions of Late-Antique Christian Literature

Leuven, 20–21 September 2017

The 'Caught in Translation: Versions of Late-Antique Christian Literature' panel, convened by Dan Batovici and Madalina Toca (KU Leuven), was part of the EASR Annual Conference hosted in Leuven between 18 and 21 September 2017. It was devoted to the transmission of translations from patristic works (broadly conceived) in Late Antiquity and beyond. For the texts which are translated, the versions are not only textual witnesses, but also important testimonies of independent strands of reception, cast in the cultural context of the new language. The panel grouped ten papers on several traditions of late antique texts, with the explicit aim to sample the range of problems and approaches involved in addressing the reception of Christian literature in a comparative manner across the various languages in which it was transmitted, which included Latin, Coptic, Old Nubian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic and Sogdian. The panel was divided into four consecutive sessions of two or three papers.

The first session consisted of two co-authored, hence longer, presentations. Caroline Macé and Michael Muthreich (Patristische Kommission, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen) opened the panel with a paper on 'The Latin and Oriental Translations of the 'Epistola de morte apostolorum' Attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite', in which they presented the intricate transmission of this text, preserved in Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian, Latin and Syriac, but not in Greek (in which it probably originated). They showed that depending on the tradition, this text was to be found in homiliaries, collections of Pauline letters, collections with saint lives, but also among various other, not easily labelled, collections. C. Macé and M. Muthreich attentively discussed the manuscript tradition for each and every language, the available critical editions and their limitations—for instance in the case of the Arabic tradition, the edition is based on a single manuscript, while for the Georgian version there is no edition available yet—and also the possible relationship between these languages based on the contents they carry and on translation peculiarities. The presenters pointed to the possibility of two Greek recensions, one quite early reflected in Syriac and Armenian, and another reflected in Latin and Georgian. Finally, and quite interestingly, they advanced the idea that this letter might actually predate the coming into being of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.

The second presentation, by Alexandros Tsakos (University of Bergen) and Vincent van Gerven Oei (University of Aberdeen), was devoted to 'Translating Greek to Old Nubian: Reading between the lines of Ps.-Chrysostom's *In venerabilem crucem sermo'*. After an introduction about the Christian Kingdoms of Nobadia, Makuria, and Alwa, and a brief overview of their literary outputs (graffiti, different types of manuscripts, etc.), the presenters focused on the manuscript production which was mainly representative of Lower Nubia. They emphasized the multilingual character of the Nubian society, with Old Nubian, Greek, and Coptic being largely used. Out of some 300 existing manuscripts, about two thirds are in Old Nubian and the remaining in Greek and Coptic. There are only four Patristic texts preserved in Old Nubian—*In quattuor animalia* attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, and *In quattuor animalia, In venerabilem crucem sermo,* and *In Raphaelem Archangelum* all attributed to John Chrysostom—complemented with five Chrysostomian fragments in Greek, and a few authors preserved in Coptic. Focusing on Pseudo-Chrysostom's *In venerabilem crucem sermo* (the longest known text in Old Nubian) the authors proposed, by delving into the linguistic peculiarities and translation techniques, that this sermon was not translated from Coptic, but actually from Greek.

Starting the second session, Andy Hilkens (Ghent University) presented a paper on 'The Armenian Reception of the Homilies of Jacob of Serugh'. Apart from an intermediate period, which also saw the translation of Syriac texts, there are two main periods of translations from Syriac into Armenian: the first one dates back to the fifth century, and the second one (the so-called Cilician period) spans from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. A. Hilkens pointed out that the translations of Jacob of Serugh's works, together with the large majority of translations into Armenian, should be linked to the second period. With regard to the Armenian reception of Jacob, Hilkens discussed the need to update the corpus in order to include works omitted so far, previously misattributed works, as well as Jacob's works which have not survived at all in Syriac. In the process, the presenter also showed how Ephrem's and Jacob's receptions are heavily intertwined in the manuscript tradition of Armenian translations from Syriac.

Emilio Bonfiglio's (University of Vienna) paper 'Presences and Absences in the *Corpus Chrysostomicum Armeniacum*: The Issue of Selection' dealt with the transmission and translations of Chrysostomian works, authentic, spurious, and dubious, into Armenian. Focusing on the question of selection, E. Bonfiglio addressed the issue of which Chrysostomian texts were translated into Armenian and which were not, the reasons behind these choices and the connexion this selection process might have had with possible gaps in the manuscript tradition, suggesting that it might have to do more with what works were available to translators, than with theologically motivated choices. The presenter formulated the desideratum of a comprehensive list and updated catalogue entries for the Armenian Chrysostomian corpus.

Dan Batovici (KU Leuven) offered a paper on ‘The Versions of *In epistolas canonicas brevis enarratio* Attributed to Didymus the Blind’, which has survived as a whole only in Latin. This was edited in 1914, based mainly on three manuscripts which contain the *Adumbrationes* of Clement of Alexandria as well, with only a few Greek fragments preserved in the Greek catena. These fragments have also been translated in the Armenian catena which according to their editor might preserve an independent recension of the initial Greek catena, of which the extant Greek catena is another recension. Batovici discussed the parallels—the Greek, and their Latin and Armenian receptions—in an attempt to assess the relevance of the versions for the Greek text.

The third session started with a paper by Madalina Toca (KU Leuven) on ‘The Latin Reception of Isidore of Pelusium’s Letters’. The paper offered first an overview of Isidore of Pelusium’s Greek, Syriac, Slavonic and Latin reception, and of the scholarship devoted so far to each of them. The focus was then placed on the peculiarities of the Latin reception which consists of 49 letters (out of the two thousand in Greek) found in two witnesses: Vaticanus lat. 1319 and Codex Casinensis 2. A discussion of the larger context for Isidore’s Latin reception in ancient testimonies was then followed by a description of the manuscripts. In this case, the process of selection might be grasped when considering the manuscripts’ general theme and the other texts they preserve.

The paper by Francesco Berno (Sapienza Università di Roma) dealt with ‘The Nag Hammadi Reception of the Book of the Watchers’. Comparing the Greek Enoch preserved in the Gizeh Codex with the Coptic texts of gnostic treatises (the Valentinian Exposition – NHC XI, 2, and the Hypostasis of the Archons – NHC II, 4), Berno proposed an investigation of how the translation process from Greek into Coptic drove the initial theological intention of the text towards new directions and new configurations of thought.

Lara Sels (KU Leuven) then discussed ‘The Slavonic Reception of the Cappadocian Fathers’ Hexaemeron Commentaries’, focusing on Basil of Caesarea’s *Homiliae in Hexaemeron* and Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*. She proposed a comparison between the ninth/tenth-century exegetical compilation called Šestodnev (*Hexaemeron*), where both texts were freely translated, and the fourteenth-century Slavonic collection (*Šestodnevnik*) in which the texts are translated so literally that it almost loses the meaning by staying so close to the Greek. She also discussed the manuscripts as reception artefacts, the function of *marginalia* and other paratextual elements, and pointed towards Slavonic oddities coming from this hyper-attention to translate every detail from the Greek.

The first paper of the last panel, delivered by Marion Pragt (KU Leuven), dealt with 'The Syriac Reception of Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*'. M. Pragt presented the interesting case of the translation of the *Homilies*, which are preceded by the Peshitta version of the Song of Songs and two additional letters. One of the letters is authored by the translator, who describes his task, and seems to be aware of various Septuagint translations as well as of other works of Gregory. The presenter compared the translation's features of a sixth-century Syriac witness of Gregory's *Homilies* (Vat. sir. 106) with the ninth-century *Collection of Simeon* (Vat. sir. 103), reminding of the various interpretations of Gregory's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*.

For the closing of the panel, Adrian Pirtea (Freie Universität Berlin) delivered a paper on 'Isaac of Niniveh's 'Gnostic Chapters' in the Sogdian Monastic Anthology E27'. After an overview of languages and manuscripts in which the works of Isaac have survived (and existing editions), he discussed the authorship of a Christian Sogdian fragment, which is part of a large monastic anthology (MS E27) comprising Sogdian translations from Greek and Syriac ascetic authors (Pseudo-Macarius, Evagrius, Abba Isaiah, Dādīšōʿ Qaṭrāyā, and others). Identifying Isaac as the author of a Sogdian fragment in E27, A. Pirtea underlines the significance of this new fragment, being the only work of Isaac translated into Sogdian, and thus a unique witness to the reception of Isaac's *Second Part,* and also an input for the textual history of Isaac's *Kephalaia.*

The 'Caught in Translation' panel grouped ten case studies on translation of patristic works in mainly oriental languages. This offered the opportunity for scholars working on different corpora to present and discuss a number of problems which proved to be shared by all, including the question of selection and of linguistic equivalences in the process of translation of this type of literature. The papers are being currently prepared for publication.

Madalina Toca
KU Leuven

The Coptic Book between the 6th and the 8th Century

Rome, 21–22 September 2017

The kick-off meeting of the ERC Advanced Grant 2015 'PAThs-Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature', the international conference 'The Coptic Book Between 6th and 8th Century: Codicological Features, Places of Production, Intellectual Trends', took place in Rome on 21 and 22 September 2017.

The panel of the first day, entitled Literary culture(s), and book production in Egypt between the 6th and the 8th century, was convened at the Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia — Sapienza Università di Roma. The host project (see project description in the COMSt Bulletin 3/1, 45–47) was prominently featured. The complex relational database behind it was introduced by Julian Bogdani in his talk ''PAThs': an advanced draft of the information system'. Maria Chiara Giorda, in her paper 'Encoding Coptic literature: new perspective of analysis and valorization of Coptic hagiographic and homiletic texts', illustrated (on the example of *Vita Pauli de Tamma*) how the project team were marking up a selected corpus of texts — that are consistent as for cultural and literary milieu, period and genre — in order to obtain useful information for the Atlas of Coptic Literature of the project and to put at disposal of other scholars annotated texts useful for further research.

Paola Buzi presented the first results of a survey of a unique manuscript collection in her paper 'The Coptic papyrus codices preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Turin: new strategies for the valorization and conservation of the library from This'. The latest known example of an Egyptian library entirely transmitted by papyrus codices, probably to be dated between the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth, the This manuscripts represent a crucial and transitional instance in the history of Coptic books, which saw on the one hand the creation of new codicological and palaeographical features and on the other the progressive emergence of multiple-text codices. Some yet unclassified fragments in the holdings of the Egyptian Museum may also belong to the library and shall be closely studied within the framework of the PAThs project.

In his paper 'Greek and Coptic Paideia in Late Antique Egypt: Comparing the Incomparable?', Gianfranco Agosti offered a fresh approach to the comparison of such apparently distant texts as Greek epic poems and Coptic hagiographies, dismissing the former high/low dichotomy often applied to Greek/Coptic literary tradition in Egypt of the fifth to seventh centuries.

An outlook on a somewhat later manuscript tradition was provided by Tito Orlandi in his presentation 'The monasteries of Shenoute and Macarius: a comparison between two different bibliological arrangements'. The codices, mostly from the ninth to eleventh century, seem similar in liturgical scope and choice of texts, yet differ in variety. This should point to the fact that the religious-cultural work of choice and transformation of the preexisting texts was in fact conducted in the Shenute monastery.

The second day, convened at the Academia Belgica, offered papers focusing on Coptic Books from the Theban region. Elisabeth R. O'Connell, in her paper 'Theban books in context', presented a general survey of literature from the Theban area. Over half of the published corpus of Coptic documentary texts (*c*.4300) can be attributed to the Theban region. By localizing papyri and ostraca documents within the Theban landscape, we are able to populate the monasteries, churches, saints' shrines and dwellings with named and titled individuals and to identify their networks. Codices and literary fragments excavated in the area have been the subject of editions focusing on their composition and stemma, rather than the communities who copied or read them or both. Yet, new palaeographic and codicological study, together with the study of fragments and bindings, is now revealing a distinctively Theban corpus and gradually bringing into focus the production and use of codices in the region.

Along these lines, Anne Boud'hors, in her talk on 'Revisiting P.Bodmer 58 in the light of book production and circulation in Thebes (7th cent.)', offered an analysis of all the aspects of the papyrus, correctly dated by W. Crum to the seventh century, including palaeography and codicology, content, and production milieu.

The archaeological setting of the Coptic manuscripts in the Theban region was illustrated on the example of the findings of the Polish Archaeological Mission in Šayḫ ʿAbd al-Gurnah in 2005 by Ewa Wipszycka and Tomasz Górecki in the presentation 'Scoperta di tre codici copti a Tebe Occidentale: il contesto archeologico'.

A close study of one of the codices revealed during that very expedition was offered by Renate Dekker, 'The manuscript containing the Sahidic Encomium on Bishop Pesynthius of Koptos: its conservation, significance and context'.

Another manuscript discovered by the mission and containing the Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea (now Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448) was studied from various viewpoints by several scholars. Thus, Ágnes Mihálykó spoke of 'The Canons of Basil in the context of the liturgy in Western Thebes'. Alberto Camplani and Federico Contardi, in the presentation 'The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea in the context of the canonical literature preserved in Coptic', focused on the text of the Canons, offering an overview of the previously known and edited versions in both Coptic and Arabic as well as a detailed analysis of the structure and the contents of Basil's Canons in comparison with those Coptic works in which norms for Christian secular conduct are joined with the regulations for clerical hierarchy and directions for liturgy. A codicological analysis of the manuscript, carried out within the framework of the PAThs project, was offered by Nathan Carlig in his paper 'Osservazioni codicologiche sul codice pseudo-Basiliano del MMA 1152 (Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448)'. Agostino Soldati focused on the colophon contained in the same manuscript in his talk 'One of the earliest extant Coptic colophons'. It offers a new valuable instance of a so far poorly attested type of scribal subscriptions, while enhancing our knowledge of the prosopography of Byzantine Thebes and allowing a quite likely dating thanks to the analysis of its palaeographical features.

Another finding of the Polish Archaeological Mission, two leaves from the parchment codex found in Šayẖ ʿAbd al-Gurnah, was studied by Przemysław Piwowarczyk who provided 'Some remarks on the codex decoration and the text of *Martyrium Petri* preserved in the manuscript from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna'. The leaves appear to contain the text of the *Martyrium Petri* in a version differing reasonably from the already published manuscripts; the opening section (roughly corresponding to the section four of the Greek text) was previously unknown in the Coptic translation.

A general discussion completed the conference.

The full programme and conference abstracts are available at <http://paths.uniroma1.it/international-conference-coptic-book>.

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Von der Historienbibel zur Weltchronik: Die byzantinisch-slavische Palaea / Paleja

Greifswald, 28–30 September 2017

Palaea / Paleja is a term referring to a genre of anthologies about Old Testament history. It includes the Byzantine *Palaea Historica* and the Old Church Slavonic *Tolkovaja Paleja* and their chronographic arrangements. The Paleja is a particular branch of biblical reception, closely linked to other genres, above all to Christian chronography. The *Palaea* literature paraphrases and embellishes the great narrative from the creation to the time of the kings. Among the many additions there are attacks against various Jewish and Christian apocrypha. While some of the apocrypha themselves have since been lost, the *Palaea* passages are their only reflections remaining. The conference 'Von der Historienbibel zur Weltchronik. Die byzantinisch-slavische *Palaea / Paleja*', convened by Christfried Böttrich at Alfried-Krupp-Wissenschaftskolleg from 28 to 30 September 2017, dealt with this great literary context and the manifold intertextual connections of *Paleja* literature.

In his opening talk Christfried Böttrich tried to answer the question, 'Wovon erzählen 'Historienbibeln'?' Whereas most papers focused on the Slavic *Paleya* (e.g. Alen Novalija, 'The Serbian Transmission of the *Tolko-*

vaya Paleya', Tetjana L. Vilkul, 'The Story of Varangians' Calling to Rus' (about the sources of the Short Chronographic *Paleya*)', Florentina Badalanova-Geller, 'Slavonic oral tradition and the *Paleya*', Tat'jana V. Anisimova, 'New information about the history of the apocryphal *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs* in Old Russian Chronographs', Evgenij G. Vodolazkin and Tat'jana R. Rudi, 'Working on the Short Chronographic *Paleya*', Julian Petkov, 'World History and Otherworldly Journeys: The Framing of Apocalyptic Narratives in the *Paleya* Literature', Ivan Christov, 'Logical IT Data Access in Terminological Studies on the *Short Chronographic Paleya*'), some contributions touched upon other topics, such as Byzantine chronicles (e.g. Paolo Odorico, 'The *Chronicle* by ps.-Eustathius of Antioch in the Codex Parisinus: an unknown chronicle or a collection of materials?', Dieter Fahl, 'Fragments of the *Chronicle* by ps.-Eustathius of Antioch in the Short Chronographic *Paleya*', Caroline Macé, 'The text of the *Physiologus* in ps.-Eustathius of Antioch's *Chronicle*'), Christian apocryphal literature in Greek and Armenian (e.g. Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev, 'Melchizedek traditions in the Armenian corpus of sermons attributed to Epiphanius of Salamis', Martin Meiser, 'Patristic Literature and Apocrypha or the *Biblia Scholastica* of Petrus Comestor', Sabine Fahl, 'The Ladder of Jacob in the three types of *Tolkovaya Paleya*'), Jewish studies (e.g. Aleksandr I. Griščenko, 'Hebrew influence on the *Palaea* Interpretata', William Adler, 'New Perspectives on the Textual Transmission of the *Palaea Historica*'), Biblical commentaries (e.g. Jan Dochhorn, 'The Fate of Parabiblical Literature in 2nd Century AD'), or the Septuagint (Martin Rösel, 'The Septuagint as a Document of Biblical Chronography').

The proceedings will be published in Greifswalder theologische Forschungen monographic series.

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44th Saint Louis Conference on Manuscript Studies

Saint Louis, 13–14 October 2017

The 44th annual conference of St Louis University was organized at the Vatican Film Library of Saint Louis University on 13 and 14 October 2017.

While the majority of papers dealt with occidental manuscripts, several presentations covered traditions within the COMSt scope.

The keynote talk by Marianna Shreve Simpson was dedicated to 'Persian Manuscripts and the Meaning of Masterpiece'. Illuminated Persian manuscripts were also dealt with by John Renard, who in his talk 'Rumi: A Life in Miniatures' focused on two manuscripts of an Ottoman Turkish version of Ǧalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's (Persian) hagiography and showed, through the comparison of images with a contemporary Baghdad manuscript of another Persian hagiography, that there must have been a specific canon the illustrators followed. Rochelle Kessler ('Iskandar's Ponderous Peregrinations: Textual and Iconographic Variations of the Alexander Romance in Pre- and Early Modern Persianate Literature') discussed the Persian fates of a text shared by many oriental traditions. She illustrated how the interpretations spread in the Middle East and South Asia (including the Shahnama epic and other poetic works) served the needs and interests of the cultures in which they were composed.

Arabic medical manuscript tradition as it was reflected in the Indian reception was the subject of the talk by Deborah Schlein, 'Reading Medicine in the Margins: Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī and his Descendants in Indian Yūnānī Medicine'.

A separate panel focused on 'Oriental Manuscripts Encountering European Traditions'. David Calabro spoke of the 'Manuscript Culture in the Medieval Egyptian Desert: Insights from Coptic-Arabic Bibles of the Anba Maqar Monastery'. He showed how the handwriting and design elements of two fourteenth-century Coptic-Arabic Gospel manuscripts from the Dayr Anbā Maqār Monastery in Egypt are similar to those of the *Kacmarcik Codex*, a fourteenth-century Greek-Arabic liturgical book now housed at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library. A close comparison suggests the presence of a cohesive scribal school in Wādī al-Naṭrūn that was nevertheless cosmopolitan in terms of linguistic knowledge and exposure to other Christian traditions. In her talk 'Reproducing the Resurrection: From European Prints to Armenian Manuscripts (& more)', Sylvie Merian tried to contemplate on the reasons, why the appearance of the actual images of Christ in the Armenian tradition of representing the Resurrection is a rather late development: well up to the seventeenth century, the Resurrection was illustrated indirectly.

Byzantine manuscript tradition was in the centre of the talk by Barbara Crostini, 'Is the *Joshua Roll* a Macedonian Facsimile?'. The manuscript, palaeographically datable to the tenth century, was once defined as a 'facsimile' of a late antique roll of the biblical book of Joshua, and therefore the decoration was seen in that context as an act of preservation of an earlier model. It is possible, however, to find contemporary echoes for the scene selection and to reconsider the place of the *Joshua Roll* in tenth-century Byzantine iconography, while setting it more broadly into the landscape of biblical narrative illustration.

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Manuscripts East and West – Towards Comparative and General Codicology.

A Conference in Honour of Malachi Beit-Arié

Hamburg, 17–19 October 2017

From 17 to 19 October 2017, the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at Universität Hamburg organized a conference in honour of the 80th birthday of Malachi Beit-Arié, one of the leading scholars in manuscript studies worldwide. The scholars and scientists working on diverse Asian, African, and European manuscript cultures contributed to a general methodological re-assessment of manuscript research and to new comparative perspectives on codicology and palaeography.

Quite naturally, a significant part of papers were dealing with the Hebrew manuscript tradition. The social contexts of manuscript production were studied by Sarit Shalev-Eyni (Christian urban settings of the city of Esslingen) and Judith Olszowy-Schlanger (medieval Muslim world, exemplified by the Cairo Genizah). The fates of the Firkovich collection of manuscripts were traced by Shimon Iakerson.

Several papers dealt with various aspects of Hebrew codicology The layout (in particular, the mise-en-ligne) was discussed by Nurit Pasternak. Hebrew manuscript fragments reused in the bindings of renaissance music manuscripts in the 'Sabbateni collection' were studied by Edna Engel, who, following some codicological and palaeographical hints, succeeded in dating them to the thirteenth century. Colette Sirat offered a comparative perspective on Hebrew vs Latin codicology. A new project in Hebrew manuscript studies, KTIV – The International Collection of Digitized Hebrew Manuscripts, was introduced by Oren Weinberg. Tamar Leiter spoke of the forthcoming integration of the SfarData database into KTIV.

Other COMSt-relevant traditions covered included Greek, Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopic. In addition, several papers dealt with occidental (Latin) and far oriental (Nepalese, Chinese) manuscript traditions.

Ancient Greek manuscripts (of Aristotle) were studied by Christian Brockmann. Greek (also Byzantine Greek) manuscripts were taken as the basis for a general study on the colophons offered by Marilena Maniaci and Pasquale Orsini.

Arabic manuscript tradition was discussed by François Déroche and Nuria Martínez de Castilla, who focused on Moroccan manuscript bindings. A particular Arabic-language tradition, Qurans from Indonesia, was analysed by Edwin Wieringa. African manuscripts in Arabic script and their layout were at the centre of the talk by Dmitri Bondarev.

The commonalities and variation in the quire production among the different Syriac-language communities through time were studied by Grigory Kessel. New findings in the field of Coptic manuscript studies, in particular within the framework of a recent PAThs project based in Rome, were highlighted by Paola Buzi. An overview of the state of the art in Ethiopian manuscript studies (including issues in codicology and philology) was presented by Alessandro Bausi.

Several papers dealt with what scientific research can contribute to manuscript studies. Henk De Groot discussed the questions that scientific parchment analysis may try to answer. Sarah Fiddyment presented the actual results of an ongoing parchment analysis project, that aspires, through protein analysis, to build up a picture of geographic distribution and craft production quality through time. The study revealed information not only about animal species and sex but also the history of the book object through microbial fingerprints. Ira Rabin showed convincingly how instrumental analysis of writing materials can facilitate codicological studies (in this case on the example of some Hebrew manuscripts). A successful attempt of a virtual reconstruction of palimpsested codices (on the example of some Caucasian manuscripts) was demonstrated by Jost Gippert.

Programme and selected abstracts are available at <https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register_beitarie2017.html>.

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The Zograf Library and Archives: Research Approaches to Digitizing, Cataloguing, and Editing the Sources

Sofia, 27–28 October 2017

The library of the Zograf Monastery on Mount Athos is among the richest monastic repositories in the Slavic area that have been continuously used for centuries—from the Middle Ages till present day. Since 2014, the project 'The Zograf Digital Archive' at the University of Sofia 'St. Kliment Ohridski' has had the ambition to examine the library and archive repository of the monastery in its entirety, combining the expertise of a number of scholars from different fields. Thus over 400 manuscripts have been digitized by the monastery and made available in the *Zograf electronic research library* located in Sofia University (<http://www.slav.uni-sofia.bg/zograflib/>).

The conference 'The Zograf Library and Archives', held at St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia from 27 to 28 October 2017, had as its initial aim to publicize the intermediate project results. Its broader aim was to bring together a wider range of scholars working on other materials from the Zograf collection and a number of experienced researchers in the fields of digitizing, cataloguing, and editing manuscripts and archival sources in hopes to foster a productive debate and exchange of varied academic experiences.

The inaugural address from the librarian of the Zograf Monastery, father Atanasii, was followed by twenty-one papers. In the first session, Marina Krutova introduced the audience to a number of unknown Zograf materials from the manuscripts' collection of the Russian State Library in Moscow; Ralph Cleminson talked about the *Sermons* of Dorotheus of Gaza surviving in medieval Slavonic manuscripts currently kept in the Zograf collection and in the Cromwell collection of the Bodleian Library; Petr Zhgun and Vera Podkovyrova focused on a number of manuscripts from the Zograf collection, authored and copied by students of Reverend Paisii Velichkovski; and Zhanna Levshina presented a newly built internet platform encompassing the whole corpus of manuscripts of non-jus one-jer (Serbian) orthography housed in the Manuscript Department of the Russian National Library in Saint Petersburg (<http://expositions.nlr.ru/ex_manus/Serbian_Manuscripts/>).

The collection of Byzantine and medieval Slavonic documents from Zograf, currently under preparation for publication in the *Archives de l'Athos* series, was presented by Gencho Banev, who pointed out that in terms of quantity, the Zograf Byzantine archive ranks fifth on Mount Athos. The Moldo-Wallachian documents written in Slavonic (49 originals and 17 copies) from the Zograf Monastery were introduced by Dimităr Peev. Petronel Zahariuc and George Lăzar fittingly traced the ties of the Moldavian elite with the Monastery of Zograf.

A small round table discussed the challenges faced by the researchers describing late Slavonic manuscripts from the Zograf Library. Andrey Bobev outlined the results of the research team working on a short catalogue of 118 previously uncatalogued manuscripts (nos. 287–405). Elisaveta Musakova discussed some fine examples of the otherwise humble decoration of these late Slavonic manuscripts. Georgi Parpulov argued rather convincingly that the now lost part of the Zograf royal bead-roll, whose single first page is preserved bound at the beginning of another manuscript in Zograf, is actually to be found in another manuscript.

A session was dedicated to the Zograf materials from the Ottoman period. Grigor Boykov and Damyan Borisov described this collection, which consists of more than 800 documents of various kinds from the mid-fifteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. Mariya Kiprovska reported of the team's work on the fifteenth-century Ottoman Sultanic decrees and judicial (*kadı*) court decisions (19 in total) and commented shortly on the adopted principles of their edition. Father Kozma (Popovski) and Grigor Boykov focused on the watermarks of some of the accurately dated Ottoman documents, which showed that they could not only serve as a dating tool for the hitherto undated manuscripts, but also represent a supplementary extension of the thus far known watermark catalogues. Finally, Gencho Banev elaborated on the rather large collection of *kondika*s in the Zograf archive and shared some of the pitfalls and limitations in the process of their cataloguing.

A special session was dedicated to late Slavonic musical manuscripts. Gotse Risteski shared his experience in cataloguing the Slavonic musical manuscripts housed in the Zograf Monastery; Svetlana Kujumdzhieva elucidated the relations between the Hilandar and Zograf brotherhoods in the production and use of musical manuscripts; and Vasja Velinova described the collection of late Slavonic musical manuscripts in Professor Ivan Dujchev Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies at St Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia.

The final round table centered on the theme of using digital resources for description and edition of medieval manuscripts and documents and early printed books. Elena Uzunova talked about the practices of manuscript cataloguing at Sts Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia through COBISS in the framework of shared model of Balkan public libraries. M.A. Johnson reviewed the advantages of digital colour images of manuscripts, but reiterated that microfilm is still the preservation standard, urging the creation of microfilm from the digital copies for deposit in a secure environment for long-term preservation and access. Andrej Boyadžiev and Grigor Boykov presented samples of the electronic models of the ongoing project at Sofia University aiming at creating an encompassing electronic description of both manuscripts and archival documents held in the Zograf Monastery. Stefan Peev reported on the work in progress on a new Old Cyrillic font, Suprasal Font, seen in the context of the need for development of digital historical typography.

The participants all agreed that the monastic library and archives that have survived till present and were used during the centuries as an inseparable unity should be studied with holistic approaches requiring information exchange amongst scholars examining different kinds of sources written in different languages and scripts during different historical periods.

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Reviews

Margret Jaschke, Robert Stähle, *Kostbare Einbandbeschläge an armenischen Handschriften* (Wiesband: Reichert Verlag, 2015). ISBN-13: 9783954900534, ISBN-10: 395490053X. 205 pp.

The publication presents the result of the study and restoration of 77 metal bindings on as many manuscripts held in the Matenadaran, the Institute for the preservation and study of the world's largest collection of handwritten Armenian books in Erevan, Armenia. Most are silver, sometimes just crosses or other decorative motifs attached to the original leather binding. I was fortunate to have been at the Matenadaran while the team— independent professional book and manuscript binders who came together from different parts of Germany —were still actively working and to have witnessed their skill and grace. They not only consolidated shaky bindings, but very often fashioned new clasps, decorative plaques, and other metal elements, some that had dropped off or were loose, using metals carefully chosen to match or to be in harmony with the surviving ornaments.

The result is quite remarkable and convincing as is immediately evident by turning the pages of this lavishly illustrated (nearly a thousand photographs) analysis of a variety of silver bindings. The covers are listed in categories by type; each arranged by the date of the original copying of the codex. Thus we are presented with one manuscript from the thirteenth century, seven of the fourteenth, five of the fifteenth, eight of the sixteenth, 46 the seventeenth and four from the early eighteenth century. The texts were written or copied between 1237 and 1724 in localities from Constantinople to Isfahan. That there are more from the seventeenth century than all other centuries combined reflects the reality of surviving Armenian manuscripts with or without metal bindings. Though it may seem strange that the peak of surviving manuscript production was in the second half of the seventeenth century, more than 250 years after the first Armenian book was printed, it was only in that century, more precisely in the 1660s, that the number of individual titles of printed books clearly surpassed those of handwritten copies. Nevertheless, the selection chosen seems for the most part to have bindings closely contemporary to the copying. The use of elaborate silver bindings reflects moments of prosperity: the time of the Armenian kings of Cilicia and the second half of the seventeenth century, when rich merchants were often the patrons.

Curiously, there is no attempt to date the bindings (which in some cases are probably rebindings) themselves. The oldest example with original silver-gilded plaques on the upper (Deisis) and lower (Four Evangelists) covers is a Gospel of 1249 (M7690) from Hromkla in Cilicia, bound in 1255, one of the masterpieces of Armenian silverwork commissioned by the Catholicos Constantine.

Within the categories of bindings usually based on the decorative aspects of the metalwork, from isolated metal crosses to fully gilded silver plaques on the upper and lower sides, the sequence is not chronological. Each of the 77 selections is given a double-page opening, with on the left views of the restored upper and lower covers, sometimes the decorative spine, preceded by the accession number in the Matenadaran collection, the manuscript type, virtually all Gospels except for three: a Bible, a New Testament, and a liturgical text. Then the date is given of the original copying, the place when known, the size, and the writing surface (paper or parchment). Usually the craftsman's name, if known, is provided and sometimes the artistic motif. On the facing right-hand page, there are five to ten additional photos of details of the pre-restoration binding with technical commentary by the authors, who, however, rarely discuss iconography or decorative motifs. They are experts in metalworking and concentrate on methods used for refurbishing the codices.

At the end of the book there are elaborately illustrated and discussed binding elements, such as various methods of keeping manuscripts closed: leather thongs, woven or chain metal fastening bands, hook and loop clasps, vertical rivets with appropriate pierced straps to firmly guard the book closed. At the end there is a well-illustrated glossary of some sixty binding features. Before the bibliography, a comprehensive list of all manuscripts used is arranged by the accession number in the collection. There are no general indexes.

Margret Jaschke and Robert Stähle are professional binders, with practical experience, even though both have been teachers of the art; Stähle is also a major university professor in book arts. The amount of practical knowledge they bring together on the execution of Armenian metal bindings, with all elements carefully defined and illustrated, often with a series of detailed photos of each fastener, clasp, or other form of protection, serves to make this minute inspection of precious bindings a virtual handbook. In this respect it will become an indispensable guide, a must-have for any manuscript scholar, repository, or fine book collector.

This virtuoso compilation does not, however, present the artistic aspect of these covers. Of course simply turning the pages of this lavishly illustrated, full-colour volume, offers even the uninitiated a remarkable repertory of Armenian metal art, whether in the repoussée work of many of the covers, the engraving on others, the clearly hand-fashioned crosses, the fine filigree designs, sometimes used on both covers and spine, often photographed when they were removed for restoration. One is confronted throughout with non-repetitive artistic details—from elaborate, often inscribed, frames around the central icon-like motif to inlays, sculpted relief, sometimes in very high relief.

The Gospel book serves as the most cherished text of the Christian religion and thus was the most elaborately decorated. Virtually all of the 5,000 or so surviving Armenian examples are illustrated. It is easy to understand why the Four Gospels were also physically the most beautiful manuscripts, not just because of their content, but also because they were, along with the Missal, the most used during the liturgy. They were displayed on the altar and held up to the faithful during and after service, and usually made available afterwards to be kissed. Precious metal bindings are rarely, if ever, found on other texts of the church such as Psalters, ritual books, missals, or hymnals.

Since the Gospels are devoted to the life of Christ from the Nativity to Crucifixion and Resurrection, the decoration reflects their usage. A Crucifixion on the upper cover is almost universal; the lower cover often depicts the Resurrection in some form, for example the empty Sepulchre, but also the Incarnation with Mother and Child, and a variety of other less frequent subjects. Many of the metal bindings illustrated in the volume contain a Crucifixion—usually represented by a braided cross on a stepped pedestal representing Calvary—on the front cover. This tradition is a continuation of one established much earlier in the first millennium on the usual leather bindings of codices. The Resurrection on the lower cover almost never has Christ visibly rising from the tomb, a late borrowing from Europe in the Armenian tradition. It was mostly the empty tomb, represented by a rectangle dominating the entire field, indicating the removed stone slab that closed the cave of Joseph of Arimathea. The authors have included a few of these leather bindings: e.g. MSS M187, p. 26; M1336, p. 30; M5194, p. 44, M6386, p. 68.[1] As with the majority of manuscripts with metal bindings, the original leather one was decorated before the addition of metal plaques.

The study contains a wealth of information on Armenian manuscript bindings, but it is mostly through visual inspection. The authors, as has been noted above, do not discuss decoration or the long history of Armenian leather

1 A discussion can be found in D. Kouymjian, 'Armenian Bookbinding from Manuscript to Printed Book (16th–19th cent.)', *Gazette du livre médiéval*, 49 (Autumn, 2006), 1–14; idem, 'The Decoration of Medieval Armenian Manuscript Bindings', in G. Lanoë, ed., *La reliure médiévale*: *pour une description normalisée. Actes du colloque international* (*Paris, 22–24 mai 2003*) *organisé par l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes* (*CNRS*) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 209–218.

covers. Their concern is with the hardware, so to speak, of the metal overbinding. Even though Armenian silver manuscript bindings have been discussed in miscellaneous articles or notices in the catalogues of major art exhibits that included Armenian manuscripts, there is nothing available with the wealth of visual and descriptive information as is supplied here by the coauthors. Their exacting analysis of the techniques employed will be the indispensable starting point and reference tool for future scholarship.

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Tara L. Andrews and Caroline Macé, eds, *Analysis of Ancient and Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*: *Digital Approaches*, Lectio Studies in the Transmission of Texts and Ideas, 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014). ISBN 978-2-503-55268-2. 346 pp.

Few collections of articles may achieve so many goals, even undeclared ones, as the one under review. Few such collections may aim at lasting in relevance as long as this one probably will. Few indeed offer to their reader a thought-out structure and cohesion of contents in respect of the individual contributions, whilst providing a true dialogue between the different parts of the book.

The challenge posed by the editors in the introductory pages is bravely faced in each contribution. The overall care in the contents and their organization, including the selection of graphics and images which truly support the arguments of the present publication provides for a pleasant and interesting reading that is highly informative, precise and clear. The overall quality of the final product is thus to be attributed to the careful and thoughtful work of the editors. The reader will find here not just a collection of articles originating in a workshop from which to draw out single parts of interest but a work well worth being read from the first to the last page as it provides a coherent and articulated view.

Young researchers are especially encouraged to pick this book from the shelves if they have not done so yet, and use it to form their ideas on the basis of several unbiased, well exposed, essential concepts, questions, methods, examples and also some suggestions of tools which might be used.

The volume's five main parts, excluding the editors' 'Introduction' (pp. 11–14) and the final contribution by Joris J. Van Zundert 'Truly Scholarly, Digital, and Innovative?' (pp. 335–346), group the contributions under the themes of 'Stemmatology', 'Statistics and Stylistics', 'Intertextuality', 'Script Analysis', and 'Codicology'.

The first group is indeed the more solidly formed of these, and contains the following contributions: Tuomas Heikkilä, 'The Possibilities and challenges of computer-assisted stemmatology: the example of Vita et miracula s. Symeonis Treverensis' (pp. 19–42), Philipp Roelli, 'Petrus Alfonsi, or On the mutual benefit of traditional and computerised stemmatology' (pp. 43–68), Jean-Baptiste Camps and Florian Cafiero, 'Genealogical variant locations and simplified stemma: a test case' (pp. 69–94), Alberto Cantera, 'The problems of the transmission of Avestan texts and the Tools for Avestan Text Criticism (TATEC)' (pp. 95–116). These five articles, in clear dialogue with one another, when read together give a very wide view of the section topic. It is a perfect starting point for any scholar in any phase of their career to approach this complex part of their work, regardless of the type and chronology of the text studied, and not only where the manuscript tradition is complex. Also Armin Hoenen contribution ‘Simulation of scribal letter substitution in the Avestan text tradition’ (pp. 119–139) could have been in this first section, and in its current position provides a perfect bridge to the following section.

The second section is probably the most complex to follow in the volume requiring several prerequisites to understand where the results achieved by the authors actually bring to some interesting observations, especially for the non-specialist. It includes, together with the abovementioned contribution by Hoenen, the articles by Karina Van Dalen-Oskam, ‘Authors, scribes, and scholars: Detecting scribal variation and editorial intervention via authorship attribution methods’ (pp. 141–158) and by Francesco Stella, ‘Generic constants and chronological variations in statistical linguistics on Latin epistolography’ (pp. 159–179).

The section called ‘Intertextuality’, although the title might be misleading, provides the reader with the description of four diverse and interesting research projects, all giving a different answer to different concerns related to the edition and meaningful correlation between text sources: Linda Spinazzè, ‘Intertextual research with digital variants in Musisque Deoque: a case study’ (pp. 183–202), Samuel Rubenson, ‘A Database of the Apophthegmata Patrum’ (pp. 203–212), Charlotte Tupman and Anna Jordanous, ‘Sharing Ancient Wisdoms across the Semantic Web using TEI and ontologies’ (pp. 213–228), Maxim Romanov, ‘Writing digital history: a database of biographical records from the pre-modern Muslim world’ (pp. 229–244). The latter two papers are especially relevant and interesting in this section.

The fourth section, ‘Script Analyis’, is made of two contributions, Ainoa Castro Correa, ‘Digital tools applied to the study of Visigothic script’ (pp. 247–272) and Eugenio R. Luján and Eduardo Orduña, ‘Implementing a database for the analysis of ancient inscriptions: the Hesperia electronic corpus of Palaeohispanic inscriptions’ (pp. 273–290).

The two contributions are well connected indeed with the study of the inks by Ira Rabin, ‘Ink identification to accompany digitisation of manuscript’ (pp. 293–307), opening the last section, ‘Codicology’. The final contribution, by Patrick Andrist, ‘Going online is not enough! Electronic descriptions of ancient manuscripts, and the needs of manuscript studies’ (pp. 309–334), stands out for those interested in the cataloguing and online presentation of data about manuscripts giving a learned and greatly valuable overview of a possible presentation model from the end user and software user perspective. This should be made a core reading for any institution and individual involved in the production of manuscript catalogues online.

The volume manages to keep the focus on the research questions but also avoid overly theoretical approaches. While it critically asks whether there is progress in these methodologies, it provides astonishing evidence of a positive answer.

The contributions follow a clear structure of exposition which comprises a brief introduction to the research topic, a description of the tools used and of the steps undertaken, to conclude with the results obtained and an open discussion thereof. This approach in general provides neat access to the topics and allows the reader to understand all the intellectual steps involved in the research process, including the stages assisted by the use of computational methods. Not only is the reader offered case studies, which are made accessible also to non-specialists of the specific field of research, but is also equipped with most of what it takes to be able to reproduce the presented studies, to find useful filters and to interpret the results in order to answer other research questions. Finally, the reader is provided with a solid theoretical basis and completeness of references to the date of publication, which can support further interests and reasoning on one's own work and research tasks.

Although already four years old this volume has all it takes to remain a relevant reading for all scholars in the study of ancient and medieval texts and manuscripts for at least another ten years if not longer. The reader formed in a 'traditional' (non-digital) methodology of work will immediately perceive that the methodologies presented are not so different from what one is accustomed to. They are rather a sign of the progress in the refinement of human thought of which we are now capable. Indeed, one could argue that publications like this one prove quite well that the current traditional methodology is the one using also computer-assisted analyses and that using only office tools to achieve research objectives is no longer sufficient, if not retrograde, obsolete and definitely not trustworthy.

What is clear from this book is that we can ask more accurate questions on the basis of better data, we can give more accurate answers with more precise methods, which means a lot more work to get perhaps to the same results we got in the last century without all this, yet it is very persuasive in demonstrating with facts that this is indeed a good way to proceed.

Following some of the contributions in the book does take a bit of Maths, unfortunately excised from Humanities curricula for a long time before Digital Humanities brought them finally back into the game, but the reader will see in that a further stimulus and find food for thoughts and curiosity. Full references are provided for all the tools used: some of the links have unfortunately expired in the meanwhile, but can be partially found in the Internet Archive.

To conclude this review which struggles not to be only of complete praise of the volume so well curated by Tara Andrews and Caroline Macé, let me add that this volume takes a mostly unbiased approach at presenting software and tools without arguing in favour of one or the other, and it instead focuses on the models, methodologies and questions in the realization and interpretation of the data, which is exactly what the researchers need and want to read and reflect upon.

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