

1. Contributi

1.1 Sezioni monografiche

1.1.1 The Coptic Book: Codicological Features, Places of Production, Intellectual Trends

Introduction

by
Paola Buzi

The theme section of this issue of *Adamantius* collects the proceedings of the international conference *The Coptic book between the 6th and the 8th centuries: codicological features, places of production, intellectual trends* (Rome, “Sapienza” Università di Roma – Academia Belgica, 21-22 September 2017)¹, organized within the scientific activities of the ERC project “PATHs - Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context: Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage”, plus two more contributions – respectively dedicated to the Coptic version of the letter of Athanasius to the monk Dracontius, transmitted by a horizontal roll, and to the Coptic tradition of John Chrysostom’s homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews – that, although exceeding the chronological limits dealt with the conference, are extremely relevant for the reconstruction of the development of the Christian Egyptian book and literary tradition.

It is important to stress that the term ‘book’ is meant here both as a material object – with its specific codicological and palaeographic features –² and as a carrier of texts and intellectual products. Moreover, it must be clear that the adjective “Coptic” is used in this context to refer to the entire Late Antique Christian Egyptian book production, therefore written also in Greek, and not only to books that transmit texts in the Coptic language.

The choice of dedicating a conference – the first of the “PATHs” project – to the book production between the 6th and the 8th centuries was not fortuitous: despite the important recent progresses made in the understanding of this period of the history of the Coptic book³ – and of the book in general, since Egypt can be considered a real laboratory of the physical features of codices, in terms of formats, quire systems, bookbindings, combination and arrangement of texts –, much remains to be clarified and explored, such as the nature of

¹ ERC Advanced Grant (2015) project n° 687567, hosted by “Sapienza” Università di Roma (paths.uniroma1.it; <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu>). See P. BUZI, *Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature: Literary Texts in Their Geographical Context; Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage (PATHs)*, *Early Christianity* 8 (2017), 507-516; P. BUZI – J. BOGDANI – N. CARLIG – M. GIORDA – A. SOLDATI, “*Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths*”: A New International project on Coptic Literature, *Rivista del Museo Egizio* 1 (2017) [<https://rivista.museoegizio.it/>]; P. BUZI – F. BERNO – J. BOGDANI, *The ‘PATHs’ Project: an Effort to Represent the Physical Dimension of Coptic Literary Production (Third–Eleventh centuries)*, *Comparative Oriental Manuscripts Studies Bulletin* 4.1 (???) 39-58.

² More and more specialists of manuscripts and early printed books, of various cultural areas and disciplines, are now studying the textual/cultural aspects of books in strict relation with their physical features, internal and external. See for instance B.J. FLEMING, *The Materiality of South Asian Manuscripts from the University of Pennsylvania MS Coll. 390 and the Rāmamālā Library in Bangladesh*, *Manuscript Studies* 1.1 (Spring 2017) 3-26, and B. WAGNER, M. REED (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects. Proceeding of the Conference Organized by the IFLA Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Munich, 19-21 August 2009*, Berlin-Munich 2010.

³ For the case of Thebes see A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics. Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bentley Layton*, ed. D. BRAKKE - S.J. DAVIS - S. EMMEL, Leuven - Paris, Bristol (CT) 2017, 175-212; EAD., *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VII^e-VIII^e siècles)*, in *“Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que village...” Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romain et byzantine*, ed. A. DELATTRE, P. HEILPORN, Brussels 2008, 149-161; EAD., *Copyist and Scribe: Two Professions for a Single Man? Palaeographical and Linguistic Observations on Some Practices of the Theban Region According to Coptic Texts from the Seventh and Eighth Centuries*, in *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*, ed. J. CROMWELL - E. GROSSMAN, Oxford 2017, 274-295.

libraries and their criteria of selection, the tastes and the interests that were behind their formation, but also the evolution in the making of the codex and the professional competences involved⁴. The scant information concerning all these aspects that are provided by well-known 9th-11th-century libraries in fact is even poorer for previous periods.

A better knowledge of this phase of the Coptic book production will contribute to the definitive abandonment of the misleading praxis for using the most famous mediaeval libraries – White Monastery, Monastery of the Archangel Michael (Hamūli), Monastery of Macarius (Scetis) – as a model and a meter on which to measure the entire history of Coptic manuscript tradition.

Moreover, also thanks to recent discoveries due to active archaeological excavations, it appears clearer and clearer that it is possible to talk about a “regionality of the book production”, being the area of Thebes one of the most generous in providing new finds consisting of books, in all possible forms and writing supports, that shed light on the cultural trainings and literary tastes of the inhabitants of urban settlements (such as Jeme) and of a constellation of different forms of ‘monasteries’ (from essential and remote hermitages to well-organized *topoi*).

Whenever possible, therefore, it becomes essential to take into consideration the place(s) where a text was copied and a book was manufactured and stored and has circulated. In this way, cultural orientations and literary tastes in specific areas of Egypt will be singled out, while changes in the manufacture of codices will emerge, in a manuscript tradition that offers the oldest witnesses for the use of codex.

The theme section is articulated in three parts. The first – *Literary culture(s), and book production in Egypt between the 4th and the 10th centuries* – that aims at analyzing different libraries and regional milieus of Late Antique and early Mediaeval Egypt, is opened by an article of Gianfranco Agosti, which deals with the common ground of Greek and Coptic *paideia*, comparing the Late Antique Greek learned poetry with the contemporary Coptic hagiographic production. Then Sofía Torallas Tovar discusses one of the most important bibliographical discoveries of the last years, a papyrus roll containing Athanasius of Alexandria’s *Letter to Dracontius* in Coptic version, that much adds to our knowledge of the cultural activities of early Egyptian Church institutions. The section continues with a contribution of Paola Buzi dedicated to the ancient library of the cathedral of This, consisting of a number of Coptic codices dating to the end of the 7th century or the beginning of the 8th, preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Turin, and now the object of a complete re-examination within the activities of the “PATHs” project, with particular attention to ancient restorations and re-writings and the codicological features. The criteria of selection and arrangement of the works of two important Christian libraries of early mediaeval Egypt, that of the Monastery of Apa Shenoute and that of the Monastery of Macarius, which represent different manners of preservation of the Coptic literary tradition, are the object of Tito Orlandi’s contribution. Lastly, the section offers an accurate *status quaestionis* of the reception of John Chrysostom’s homilies dedicated to the Epistle to the Hebrews (Francesco Berio).

The second section – *Coptic Books from the Theban region* – takes its inspiration from the discovery of the three Theban Coptic books of the so-called pit MMA 1152 by Tomasz Górecki and his team⁵, whose provenance is archaeologically well documented, a fact of great importance for a project like “PATHs”, that aims at analysing the Coptic book in strict relation to the geo-archaeological context. The section, however, is opened by a more general and at the same time very accurate overview of the literary manuscripts, in Greek and Coptic, found in Thebes, with a particular attention to their archaeological contexts (Elisabeth R. O’Connell). This is followed by a contribution on one of the most interesting multiple-text manuscripts of the Theban area, *P. Bodmer 58*, as far as the content and the physical aspects are concerned (Anne Boud’hors).

⁴ In this respect, the contribution of A. MARAVELA, *Monastic book production in Christian Egypt*, in *Spätantike Bibliotheken. Leben und Lesen in den frühen Klöstern Ägyptens*, ed. H. FROSCHAUER, C.E. RÖMER, Wien 2008, 25-38 is very useful.

⁵ T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152). Preliminary Report, 2005*, *Polish Archaeological Mission 22* (2017) 263-274; ID., *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, in A. MAJEWSKA, *Seventy Years of Polish Archaeology in Egypt. Catalogue of the Exhibition. Egyptian Museum in Cairo, 21 October - 21 November 2007*, Warsaw 2017, 176-181; ID., ‘It might come in useful’: *Scavenging among the Monks from the Hermitage in MMA 1152*, *Étude et Travaux 27* (2014) 129-150.

Most of the contributions of this section are, therefore dedicated, to the archaeological context of discovery (this is the case of the article written by Tomasz Górecki† and Ewa Wipszycka), to the texts that are transmitted by the codices (Renate Dekker, Alberto Camplani with the collaboration of Federico Contardi, Przemysław Piwowarczyk), to their codicological features (Nathan Carlig), to the liturgical aspects of the historical contexts (Agnes Mihálykó), and to scribal subscriptions (Agostino Soldati).

Lastly, the third sections contain an article by Julian Bogdani that aims at showing how digital humanities, with their broad and diversified tools and methodologies, can contribute to a better knowledge of Late Antiquity, notably of Christian Egyptian manuscript and literary production in its geographical context.

A few days before the conference, we received the sad news of the passing of Mons. Paul Canart, an inspirer and guide for several of the authors of this theme section. He had been invited to take part in the conference as discussant and therefore I find it appropriate and dutiful to celebrate his memory with a brief *ricordo* of his human and scientific qualities by Marilena Maniaci. It is our way to thank him for his extraordinary teachings in the fields of codicology and palaeography.

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«PATHs - Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: an Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature.

Literary Texts in their Geographical Context.

Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage»

Ricordo di Paul Canart (25 ottobre 1927 – 14 settembre 2017)

di

Marilena Maniaci

Nato a Cuesmes, in Belgio, il 25 ottobre 1927, Paul Canart era stato ordinato sacerdote a 24 anni, nel 1951; dopo aver lavorato come insegnante di greco a Bruxelles era stato invitato nel 1957 dal cardinale bibliotecario Giovanni Mercati a redigere il catalogo dei manoscritti greci della Biblioteca Vaticana. Amava raccontare che quell'incarico temporaneo – presto trasformatosi in definitivo – era stata la sua fortuna, consentendogli di trascorrere quasi 50 anni di servizio presso la 'biblioteca dei Papi', dapprima come *scriptor* e quindi come direttore della sala manoscritti e come vice-prefetto; anche se Canart ha 'vissuto' di fatto in biblioteca per quasi sessant'anni, ben oltre la pensione e fino a poche settimane dalla sua scomparsa.

Ricordare, a grandi linee, l'attività scientifica di Paul Canart significa ripercorrere la biografia intellettuale di un studioso assai prolifico, ma anche le grandi linee di sviluppo della paleografia e della codicologia greca fra la seconda metà del Ventesimo e l'inizio del Ventunesimo secolo¹. Con alcune parziali eccezioni (le grafie dei papiri o quelle documentarie), Canart è infatti intervenuto – sempre in maniera autorevole e non di rado conclusiva – su molte fra le questioni centrali per la storia della scrittura e del libro bizantino: l'individuazione di stili e tendenze grafiche riconducibili a specifiche aree periferiche orientali o occidentali; le implicazioni teoriche e metodologiche dell'analisi della scrittura greca, mediante la ricostruzione e la descrizione dei suoi elementi costitutivi; la ricostruzione della fisionomia, dell'attività e della relazioni tra copisti Quattro- e Cinquecenteschi, attraverso la caratterizzazione sincronica e diacronica dei tratti tipici delle loro mani (secondo un metodo che ha fatto scuola); il censimento puntuale di elementi, motivi e stili della decorazione; l'analisi specifica di materiali e modalità di manifattura del libro greco (dalla carta, agli inchiostri, ai criteri per riconoscerne e documentare la complessità strutturale dei codici, alle strategie impiegate per trascriverli, alle tecniche di legatura... ma l'elenco è lungo dall'essere completo); infine, la valenza culturale complessiva dei fatti grafico-librari, indagata – attraverso sintesi di ampio respiro – nella sua dimensione generale (manifattura e trascrizione, circolazione, conservazione di libri nel Millennio bizantino), locale (produzione e ricezione del libro nell'Italia meridionale calabro-sicula e pugliese, esaminata nei suoi aspetti qualitativi e quantitativi, in relazione alle diverse fasi storiche) o tipologica (struttura e presentazione del libro dei Vangeli nelle sue varie declinazioni).

Riassumere e commentare la ricchezza dei risultati della ricerca paleografico-codicologica di Paul Canart è un compito che va ovviamente ben al di là di questo breve ricordo. Sarà sufficiente menzionare alcuni aspetti salienti e originali della sua fisionomia di studioso, tutti, in ultima analisi, connessi e riconducibili ai due compiti fondamentali che Paul Canart ha svolto per oltre sessant'anni: l'attività di catalogatore di manoscritti («j'ai été d'abord et je reste avant tout un catalogueur de manuscrits grecs», come amava ripetere) e quella di docente presso la Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia (nonché, in veste di conferenziere, in numerose sedi italiane e straniere), ma anche di vigile e generoso maestro di allievi accompagnati nel loro percorso di crescita e non di rado trasformati nel tempo in collaboratori ed amici.

Il primo dato significativo della biografia scientifica di Canart è rappresentato dalla mole dei manoscritti greci visti personalmente (e minuziosamente schedati) nel corso della sua lunga carriera di studioso. Oltre a molti di quelli espressamente citati nei suoi lavori, Canart ha esaminato una o (spesso) più volte – per sua stessa ammissione – tutti i codici greci della Biblioteca Vaticana e della Bibliothèque nationale di Parigi – un totale di quasi 10.000 volumi, stando alle stime del repertorio di Richard-Olivier), usufruendo di condizioni di lavoro eccezionali ed oggi certamente irripetibili; senza contare i molti altri visti e analizzati nelle principali biblioteche europee ed extraeuropee.

A un'esperienza così vasta ha fatto sempre da sostegno – e da riscontro – una disciplina ferrea e una straordinaria capacità di lavoro, ben nota a chi ha potuto constatarne quotidianamente per anni la presenza immancabile, e instancabile, dapprima alla sua postazione di scriptor e poi di viceprefetto, all'ingresso

¹ Una bibliografia aggiornata al 2008 è contenuta nella raccolta di saggi PAUL CANART, *Études de paléographie et de codicologie*. Reproduites avec la collaboration de MARIA LUISA AGATI et MARCO D'AGOSTINO, I-II (Studi e Testi, 450-451), Città del Vaticano, 2008, I, IX-XVIII; elenchi aggiornati compariranno sicuramente in due miscelanee in sua memoria, in corso di allestimento. Dai due volumi sono tratte anche le citazioni riportate in questo ricordo, di cui non si è ritenuto necessario riportare la fonte.

della sala manoscritti della Biblioteca Vaticana e quindi, ben oltre la pensione, alla scrivania ricolma di libri ed appunti sul retro della sala periodici, e ancora, successivamente, in sala di lettura e nella sua abitazione privata, letteralmente traboccante di libri e di appunti.

Il risultato è una produzione scientifica contraddistinta da una eccezionale ampiezza e versatilità di interessi, animata da una curiosità intellettuale vivissima e libera da preconcetti, che ha consentito a Paul Canart di spaziare fra epoche, temi, metodi e tipologie di lavoro: dall'osservazione e caratterizzazione puntuale, finanche puntigliosa, dell'itinerario grafico e biografico di un copista o dell'evoluzione di una scrittura allo studio della struttura e delle dinamiche di trasformazione dei segni, alla descrizione meticolosa delle particolarità della carta orientale, della composizione degli inchiostri o dei dettagli tecnici della legatura, alla raccolta di facsimili o sussidi bibliografici, all'ampio affresco sulla cultura libraria di una regione o di tutto l'Impero nelle diverse epoche della sua storia; dal catalogo 'tradizionale' (anzi, tradizionalissimo, come richiesto dal rigore analitico delle *Leges* vaticane, pur se personalmente reinterpretate) alla ricerca 'sperimentale' condotta in équipe, talora anche in collaborazione con studiosi di formazione diversa e senza disdegnare il ricorso a strumenti e metodi propri di altre discipline (statistica, chimica, fisica nucleare).

La formazione di catalogatore, «moins lié à une grille d'interrogation et d'interprétation préconçue, condamné à donner son attention à l'accessoire, voire au négligeable, comme au principal», ha consentito a Paul Canart di sviluppare un approccio personale allo studio del libro manoscritto inteso in senso globale, come indagine a tutto campo sulla civiltà dello scritto che comprende e associa paleografia, codicologia, bibliografia, storia della letteratura, filologia e storia della tradizione, storia dei fondi e archivistica dei manoscritti, storia della circolazione e della ricezione di libri e testi: tutte discipline reciprocamente intese e impiegate come 'serve-padrone', in una costante dialettica tra analisi tecnica e sintesi storico-culturale che conferisce alla produzione scientifica di Canart, pur nella poliedricità delle sue espressioni, quella «convergenza di risultati e unità di intenti e di metodo» da lui stesso giustamente rivendicata.

Il metodo coerentemente applicato da Canart può essere caratterizzato come 'scientifico', nell'accezione propria delle scienze cosiddette 'esatte' o 'dure' o 'scienze della natura'. I suoi lavori sono solidamente fondati su fatti «empiricamente osservati e misurati», con un'attitudine naturale all'ispezione, alla raccolta e alla classificazione delle informazioni (è egli stesso, del resto, a dichiarare una predilezione per gli «esercizi di asceti paleografica» e – aggiungerei – codicologica); attitudine testimoniata dalla mole di dati appuntati nella sua caratteristica e riconoscibilissima grafia, minuta e perfettamente allineata su miriadi di schedine e fogli di carta solitamente riciclati. Le ricerche di Canart sono per lo più fondate sulla costituzione di dossier tendenzialmente esaustivi, spesso riassunti in liste e prospetti pubblicati in appendice ai suoi stessi lavori (minuziosi censimenti di peculiarità grafiche e perigrafiche di singoli scribi, stili o tendenze scrittorie, documentate rilevando in percentuale l'uso delle diverse soluzioni; elenchi di codici provvisti di caratteri grafici e codicologici peculiari; liste di filigrane; tabelle che sintetizzano la diffusione di libri di diversa tipologia e contenuto all'interno di una società; risultati 'grezzi' dell'analisi strumentale della carta, estesa alle più minute particolarità, comprese quelle inspiegabili o apparentemente – ma forse solo provvisoriamente – prive di significato). Alla pubblicazione dei dati su cui è fondata la ricerca si accompagna di norma l'enunciazione schematica dei presupposti metodologici e del percorso dal quale scaturiscono i risultati: percorso a sua volta definito ed esplicitato nelle singole tappe, in omaggio al precetto cartesiano di «suddividere la difficoltà fino al punto in cui è possibile risolverla». E se la soluzione stenta comunque ad emergere, o si presenta con contorni incerti, «de la certitude au *non liquet* la gamme des conclusions est étendue»: la provvisorietà dei risultati è dunque sempre apertamente dichiarata, insieme alla ripresa di questioni lasciate aperte o alla rettifica di errori o deduzioni frettolose. Fra i pregi dell'opera di Canart c'è anche la franchezza con la quale dà conto dello stato ancora fluido, frammentario e problematico di molte questioni relative ad aspetti importanti della storia della scrittura e del libro greco. Ma, soprattutto, la *forma mentis* 'scientifica' di Paul Canart si esprime nella preferenza accordata a conteggi e misure, come strumenti non esclusivi né dogmaticamente sopravvalutati, ma adoperati sin dall'applicazione più antica alla grafia di Manuele Provataris, e via via a molte altre mani di copisti noti ed anonimi, o a stili locali come l'asso di picche, o ad intere tradizioni grafiche dalle manifestazioni variegiate, come quella cipriota: sempre con piena consapevolezza delle regole da osservare e dei rischi da evitare. Per Canart fare ricerca significa anche – ma non solo – contare e misurare, come dimostra, con esemplare coerenza, in tutto l'arco della sua carriera di studioso: che si tratti di descrivere tipologie e formati della carta quantificando le distanze fra gli elementi della trama (vergelle e filoni), ma anche la struttura e la qualità esecutiva di una scrittura personale o professionale, misurandone – fra l'altro – lo spessore dei tratti,

l'inclinazione e i rapporti fra aste ascendenti e discendenti e fra altezza e larghezza dei nuclei. L'approccio proposto muove dalla convinzione che «*toute écriture est un ensemble organisé, structuré*», di cui indagare, enucleare e rendere comunicabili le leggi (anche se la sola 'scienza' è insufficiente all'*expertise*, che comporta – secondo Canart – una componente imponderabile di 'arte', intesa come possesso di doti naturali – l'occhio paleografico' – e paziente allenamento allo stile). Canart è, con André Bataille e Jean Irigoien, uno dei pochi paleografi greci ad aver posto in termini di 'struttura ed evoluzione' – ovvero di relazioni (descrivibili e quantificabili) fra morfologia e tratteggio di forme e legature – le questioni dell'evoluzione complessiva della minuscola greca e della sua caratterizzazione 'oggettiva', temi fra i più 'sensibili' della ricerca paleografica, sui quali ha pesato a lungo – e continua oggi, sia pur con qualche apertura, a pesare – un ostinato pregiudizio. Non a caso, anche il metodo di descrizione delle scritture applicato da Canart non ha mancato di suscitare perplessità e scetticismi, fino al punto da essere indirettamente tacciato di «vacuo, inutile e noioso virtuosismo», anche in ragione di certe sue più spinte manifestazioni 'classificatorie', come il lavoro sulle minuscole dei secoli XI e XII, scritto a due mani con la compianta Lidia Perria. Rimane il fatto che la paleografia greca (ma non solo) è ancora oggi lontana dall'aver costituito un «*tableau complet, cohérent et raisonné du système de l'alphabet minuscule grecque médiévale et de sono évolution*».

Si è accennato in precedenza, fra le componenti essenziali della fisionomia scientifica di Paul Canart, al suo impegno pluriennale come titolare di corsi presso la Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia. Dai suoi scritti la preoccupazione didattica emerge sempre con chiara evidenza, attraverso la linearità dello stile, estraneo alle seduzioni della retorica accademica e sostenuto da un eccezionale spirito di sintesi, e le lezioni di metodo spesso anteposte alla presentazione dei risultati o inserite nel corpo dell'esposizione, sempre proposte con autorevole pacatezza. La lettura della sua opera non fa del resto che confermare quanto affermato da molti di quelli che lo hanno avuto come maestro o anche soltanto come interlocutore acuto e disponibile o come generoso dispensatore di informazioni, pareri, o personali, preziose raccolte di materiali. O ancora da quanti, come me, hanno avuto il privilegio e il piacere di averlo come attivo compagno di redazione della *Gazette du livre médiéval* o come componente, insieme a Patrick Andrist, di una vivace ed affiatata équipe di ricerca. Riflesso della sua intelligenza vivace ed aperta, la produzione scientifica di Paul Canart è densa di acquisizioni entrate a far parte della storia della paleografia e della codicologia greca, ma anche ricca di spunti da approfondire, ricerche parziali da riprendere e completare, intuizioni da verificare, preannunci di temi attualmente al centro del dibattito scientifico: per non citarne che alcuni, oltre ai già citati interrogativi sul metodo dell'analisi paleografica, le anticipazioni sulla crisi della catalografia classica (già nel 1980, scrive Canart, «*on peut se demander si le catalogue de type classique a encore un avenir*»); la problematica dei manoscritti complessi e delle strategie per analizzarne e descriverne la confezione (già chiaramente prospettate nello studio condotto con Giancarlo Prato sulle raccolte organizzate da Giovanni Cortasmeno, e ribadite in lavori successivi (come ad esempio quelli dedicati ai Vat. gr. 207 e 469) o, più recentemente, nella monografia intitolata alla *Syntaxe du codex*.

Fin qui il profilo sintetico dello studioso: ma Paul Canart era per molti, e per chi scrive, anche un modello di ricchezza interiore, intensità di affetti, generosità. Profondamente schivo e discreto, estraneo ad ogni forma di ambizione e di narcisismo, a chi aveva il privilegio di frequentarlo svelava il suo carattere arguto e ironico, amante della musica, della letteratura e della buona tavola. Era legatissimo alla sua numerosa famiglia di origine (amava raccontare di fratelli, sorelle, nipoti e pronipoti), ma anche agli amici di antica e nuova data e ai loro familiari adulti e bambini (i miei figli, fra gli altri, lo chiamavano zio).

Paul Canart lascia, come studioso e come uomo, un grande vuoto: è di conforto sapere che ha avuto un'esistenza lunga e dedita fino alla fine alle sue passioni, ed è scomparso circondato dagli affetti più cari e accompagnato dalla stima e dal rimpianto di quanti hanno avuto la fortuna di conoscerlo e frequentarlo, oltre che dell'intera comunità scientifica.

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Greek and Coptic *Paideia* in Late Antique Egypt: Comparing the Incomparable?

by
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At the outset, I would like to offer a few explanatory words to justify the presence of my paper in the framework of this conference. Although I have been working for many years on late antique Egypt, I am far from being a specialist of Coptic literature and manuscripts. My research focused on the Greek side of the Egyptian society, dealing mainly with what Byzantinists use to call *highbrow literature*, especially poems on classical and Christian subjects composed in Alexandria and in the Thebaid. However, it is exactly as a student of Greek poetry that I have been feeling more and more unsatisfied with the traditional way of approaching the texts, based almost exclusively on the Greek tradition. It is not my intention, of course, to undermine the importance of this tradition for poets who considered themselves as the 'heirs' of Homer, after all – and this is true also for the Christian poets of the Bodmer *codex visionum*, or a poetaster like Dioscorus of Aphrodito¹. I would rather suggest that besides classical Greek tradition we should take into account the relations of the Egyptian poets with their own society, seeking to balance the one-sided critical approach as far as possible. This means, of course, that classical scholars should look at the other side of the Nile, at Coptic culture, much more than they did in the past. For Coptologists this statement might seem to be a truism – and probably is. To the contrary, I am afraid that it is not completely true for classical scholars. Hence, the subtitle of this paper, *comparing the incomparable?*, which is an expression taken from Marcel Detienne's well-known book on Greece and China². In what follows I would like to suggest not only that Greek poetry and Coptic texts are comparable, but also that the comparison can shed new light on their interpretation. Recent scholarship abandoned the old vision of a contraposition between a Coptic 'national' literature and the Greek literature of the élites, in favour of models based on coexistence and on multilingualism³. The disjunction between language and ethnicity is another recurring issue in recent studies. The creation of Coptic literature⁴ was primarily a cultural choice: Coptic works were composed by people who received an education based on the same traditional *paideia* of their Greek counterpart⁵. Papyrological and archeological findings have dramatically shown the multiculturalism of late Egyptian society. «The learned character and rhetorical brilliance of [Shenoute's] writings suggest that he received the education in grammar and rhetoric that any young man from a prominent family of Panopolis would have enjoyed», as Brakke and Crislip remark in their recent selection of Shenoute's writings⁶. To put it succinctly, the old interpretive model of 'the high vs the low', too often declined as 'Greek vs Coptic', still popular among classicists, should be definitely abandoned. Panopolis is a special case from this point of view, for obvious reasons. It was the hometown of many poets

¹ On the Bodmer poems see the theme section: *I Papiri Bodmer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco, copto e latino nell'Egitto tardoantico*, ed. G. AGOSTI, P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, *Adamantius* 21 (2015) 1-172; G. AGOSTI, *(Re)constructing a Christian Community through its Poetry*, in *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence. The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, ed. J. VERHEYDEN, T. NICKLAS, E. HERNITSCHECK (WUNT 388), Tübingen 2017, 233-250, where I reappraise the question of the "community" that produced these poems. On Dioscorus, see J.-L. FOURNET, *Hellénisme dans l'Égypte du VIe siècle. La bibliothèque et l'œuvre de Dioscore d'Aphrodité*, Le Caire 1999 and the chapters in *Les Archives de Dioscore d'Aphrodité cent ans après leur découverte. Histoire et culture dans l'Égypte byzantine (Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 8-10 déc. 2005)*, ed. J.-L. FOURNET, C. MAGDELAINÉ, Paris 2008.

² M. DETIENNE, *Comparer l'incomparable*, Paris 2009² (2000).

³ This is valid also for legal documents: see J.-L. FOURNET, *Sur les premiers documents juridiques coptes*, in *Études Coptes XI. Treizième journée d'études*, ed. A. BOUD'HORS, C. LOUIS, Paris 2010, 125-137: 135.

⁴ Mainly in Sahidic in the first period: and Sahidic is considered by many scholars as a dialect of the upper class, used later by church leaders to unify Egyptian christianity.

⁵ See the insightful discussion by A. CAMPLANI, *Il copto e la Chiesa copta. La lenta e inconclusa affermazione della lingua copta nello spazio pubblico della tarda antichità*, in *L'Africa, l'Oriente mediterraneo e l'Europa. Tradizioni e culture a confronto*, ed. P. NICELLI (Accademia Ambrosiana, Classe di studi africani), Roma 2015, 129-153.

⁶ *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great. Community, Theology and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt*, transl. D. BRAKKE, A. CRISLIP, Cambridge 2015, 3.

from the third to the fifth century CE, above all of Nonnus, the most important late Greek poet, author of both a mythological poem, the endless *Dionysiaca* (more than 21,000 hexameters), and a Christian one, the *Paraphrase of St John's Gospel* (about 3700 verses) in the first half of the 5th century (roughly, 430-450 CE)⁷. Nearby Panopolis, Shenoute (ca. 350-465) and his disciples accompanied their activity of struggling against religious opponents (in the largest sense of the word: either pagans, Jews, or 'non orthodox' and lukewarm Christians) with a hectic literary production in Sahidic, sermons, letters, and (from the 5th c.) hagiographies⁸. It is an impressive amount of works, part of which still lies unpublished. It would be difficult (if not impossible) to imagine that Greek intellectuals in Panopolis were unaware of the monastic movement and its activity: as a Christian born in Panopolis Nonnus probably had the opportunity since his childhood to enter in contact with people speaking Egyptian and with exponents of the growing monastic movements⁹. Although he received a traditional Greek education based on classical *paideia*, he did not live in an ivory tower. We cannot know whether and to what extent Nonnus knew Sahidic, nor if he had direct contact with the White Monastery, of course. Moreover, since no systematic exploration of Coptic literature has been done by any Nonnian scholar, it is impossible at present to speak of sources and intertextual links. Notwithstanding these objective difficulties, I think that we should not overlook the possible influence Coptic literature might have had on the poet, with regard to shared images, common ideas and cultural attitudes. 'Influence' is here to be taken in the broadest sense of the word, especially when we consider homiletic and liturgical texts, easily subject to oral diffusion and transmission also beyond the original occasion of their performance. In short, relations between Coptic literature and the Nonnian poems are to be studied in terms not of direct derivation, but rather of a common 'cultural imagination'¹⁰.

I begin with a couple of very simple instances of similarity in expressions and content, to be taken as a necessarily provisional remark, since no systematic research exists so far. My first example come from *Par.* 15.27-28 (~ John 15.7 ἐὰν μείνητε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη):

εἰ δ' ἐν ἐμοὶ μίμνητε, καὶ ἡμετέρας ῥόδος αὐδῆς
ὑμέας ἀρδεύων ὑποκάριδος ἔμπεδος εἶη

If you abide in me and if my flowing words can irrigate you and take root within your hearts¹¹

The amplification of John 15.7, with the imagery of the flow of Jesus' voice irrigating the disciples, shows a remarkable similarity with the rewriting of the same verse in a Coptic fragmentary text containing a dialogue between Jesus and the Disciples, the 'Apocryphal Gospel' from MS Schøyen 1991 and BN Copt.

⁷ On Greek poetry in late antique Egypt see G. AGOSTI, *Greek Poetry in Late Antique Alexandria: Between Culture and Religion*, in *The Alexandrian Tradition. Interactions Between Science, Religion and Literature*, ed. L.A. GUICHARD, J.A. GARCÍA ALONSO, M.P. DE HOZ, Bern 2014, 287-311; A. CAMERON, *Wandering Poets: A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt*, *Historia* 14 (1965) 470-509 (reprinted, with corrections and additions, in Id., *Wandering Poets and Other Essays on Late Greek Literature and Philosophy*, Oxford 2015, 1-35). An updated bibliography on Nonnus is provided in the Oxford Bibliography online (<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195389661/obo-9780195389661-0332.xml>).

⁸ On Coptic hagiography see now A. PAPAConstantinou, *Hagiography in Coptic*, in *The Ashgate research companion to Byzantine hagiography: periods and places*, ed. S. EFTHYMIADIS, Farnham 2011, 323-343.

⁹ In the effective words by Peter van Minnen: «Now picture this: Nonnus [...] is himself a schoolboy in Panopolis, and Shenoute is speaking at a Christian feast. All schoolboys want to see the old man. What happens? Shenoute addresses the crowd in - what? Sahidic Coptic? Achmimic Coptic? Achmimic is not hard to perform if you work off a Sahidic text. Shenoute addressed the crowd definitely not in Greek. Did Nonnus and the other schoolboys get it? Presumably» (P. Van Minnen, *Nonnus' Panopolis*, in *The Brill's Companion to Nonnus*, ed. D. ACCORINTI, Leiden-Boston 2016, 54-74: 67).

¹⁰ Cf. D. BRAKKE, *From Temple to Cell, from Gods to Demons: Pagan Temples in the Monastic Topography of Fourth Century Egypt*, in *From Temple to Church. Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. HAHN, S. EMMEL, U. GOTTER, Leiden-Boston 2008, 90-112, 93. A first attempt can be found in G. AGOSTI, *La letteratura agiografica e le Dionisiache di Nonno: note di lettura*, in *Le voyage des légendes. Hommages à Pierre Chuvin*, ed. D. LAURITZEN, M. TARDIEU, Paris 2013, 83-93.

¹¹ Text according to A. SCHEINDLER, *Nonni Panopolitani Paraphrasis S. Evangelii Joannei*, Leipzig 1873; translation by M.A. PROST, *Nonnos of Panopolis: The Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, Ventura 2003.

131, f. 29, (this text should probably be dated to the 5th century)¹²: “I am the root, you are the branches. For the water that the root sucks up, the branches shares”. The image of the flowing voice is as old as Greek literature, and Nonnus is very fond of this kind of images (although ῥόος αὐδῆς ... ἀρδεύων is an *unicum*)¹³. Nonetheless, the employment in the *Paraphrase* and in the Coptic text of the same image of Jesus irrigating his followers like water remains striking. Both the authors probably drew it from a shared stock. Needless to remind, to properly use stock phraseology and imagery was essential part of school education in late antiquity.

My next example comes from a Coptic homily on Lazarus attributed to Athanasius and transmitted in a single manuscript of the 9th century. The text is probably to be dated to the 5/6th century¹⁴.

Follow me, Thomas, and I will show you the model of my Resurrection, which I shall perform for every creature (SHERIDAN, *From the Nile to the Rhone and Beyond*, cit., 209)

The eyes, which had closed so as never to open, opened again filled with light and saw everyone.
The head, which had been bound with a napkin, loosed itself and became strong again and bowed to Christ.
The ears, which had been closed by the stroke of death, opened again and heard Christ calling in the tomb in His divine voice.

His nose, which had been a stranger to the breath of life, functioned again and smelt the sweet odour of Christ.
The tongue, which had ceased speaking any more, moved again, stretched, and praised God.

The lips, which had closed so as not to speak again, opened again and spoke with the Son of God.
The mind, which had dissolved so as not to speak or to think or to be able to see a man to know him or to be able to perceive anything, became strong again and knew the one who had created it.

All the members, which had decayed and dissolved in the earth, became alive again and ministered to the body.

The feet, which had been bound so as never to walk, were loosed again and stretched and ministered patiently to Christ Jesus, the Son of God (SHERIDAN, *From the Nile to the Rhone and Beyond*, cit., 212).

The author had a good command of rhetorical structures, as Mark Sheridan pointed out. The homily is a sort of exegetical commentary on John 11: the anaphora on the resurrection insists on the gradual resurrection of single parts of Lazarus' body and shows some similarities with the Nonnian treatment of the same episode (*Par.* 11.157-173)¹⁵.

εἶπε καὶ ἐσπαράγησε διαπρυσίη τινὶ φωνῇ·
ἔξιθι, Λάζαρε, δεῦρο. λιποφθόγγιο δὲ νεκροῦ
ἄπνοον ἐψύχωσε δέμας νεκουσσοῦς ἤχῳ·
ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, καὶ ἔτρεχε νεκρὸς ὀδίτης
στείχων αὐτοκέλευθος ὀμοπλέκτῳ χθόνα ταρσῶ·
ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, καὶ ἐν φθιμένοισιν ἀκούσας
ἔξ' Ἄϊδος νόστησε φυγὰς νέκυς ὄψιμον ἄλλην
ἀθρήσας μετὰ τέρμα βίου παλινάγρετον ἀρχὴν
θαμβαλέην. Αἰδῆς δὲ μάτην παρὰ γείτοιν Λήθη
πανδαμάτωρ ἀδάμαστον ἐδίετο νεκρὸν ἀλήτην·
καὶ ποδὸς ὀρθωθέντος ἀκαμπέα γούνατα σύρων,
τυφλὴν ἰθυκέλευθον ἔχων ἀντώπιον ὀρμὴν
αὐδήεις νέκυς ἔσκε καὶ ἐκ ποδὸς ἄχρι καρῆνου
σφιγγόμενον πλεκτῆσιν ὄλον δέμας εἶχε κερεῖαις
θερμὸν ἔχων ἰδρώτα καλυπτομένοιο προσώπου·
καὶ λινῶ πεπύκαστο καλύμματι κυκλάδα κόρησιν,
σουδάριον τόπερ εἶπε Σύρων στόμα.

¹² A. SUCIU, E. THOMASSEN, *An Unknown 'Apocryphal Gospel' from the White Monastery*, in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends. Studies in Honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI, Roma 2011, 477-499.

¹³ Cp. B. SAVELLI, *Nonno di Panopoli. Parafrasi del Vangelo di Giovanni. Canto XV. Introduzione, edizione critica e commento*, Diss. Univ. di Firenze 1999, 126-128 who quotes only Neoplatonic parallels for ἀρδεύων.

¹⁴ [Athanasius] *De Lazaro e mortuis reuocato* (CPG 2185; *Clavis coptica* 0049); new partial edition and translation in M. SHERIDAN, *From the Nile to the Rhone and Beyond. Studies in Early Monastic Literature and Scriptural Interpretation*, Roma 2012, 204-212.

¹⁵ Text and translation by K. SPANOUDAKIS, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis of the Gospel of John XI*, Oxford 2014.

He spoke and roared out in a penetrating voice: ‘Emerge, Lazarus, come hither.’ And the dead-arousing resonance animated the lifeless body of the voiceless dead man.

He summoned a lifeless man and he came running, a dead man walking, making his own way on the ground with feet bound together. He summoned a lifeless man and from amongst the dead he heard and returned from Hades, a runaway corpse, observing after the end of life in late order another recovered astounding beginning. In vain did Hades the all-tamer seek by neighbouring Lethe the untamed corpse unleashed. And set upright on his feet, dragging his unbending joints and maintaining a blind straight-pathed forward rush, he was a speaking corpse; and from head to foot he had his whole body tightly bound with coils of swathing-bands while a hot sweat appeared on his covered face. His round head was enwrapped by a linen veil which speakers of Syriac call *sudarium*.

The resurrection of the dead Lazarus in the Coptic homily is described according to the typical scholastic technique of body ekphrasis, exactly as it is in Nonnus. This technique of description was a well established feature of the homilies on Lazarus: Konstantinos Spanoudakis was able to gather extensive evidence from Greek and Syriac texts in his excellent edition of Nonnus’ *Paraphrase* 11¹⁶. Nonetheless, it is worth to point out some details of the homily attributed to Athanasius: a) the single parts of the body that gradually come again to life; b) the insistence on the breath; c) the detail of the nostrils, which irresistibly reminds another description of resurrection in the *Dionysiaca* (25.530, a passage that has a lot in common with *Par.* 11, and glances at the *Genesis* 2.7 creation of man)¹⁷; d) the explicitly declared typological interpretation of Lazarus’ resurrection, which Nonnus develops in detailed way both in book 11 and in book 20 of his Christian poem¹⁸. Briefly, aside from the question of (possible) direct or indirect relations between this text and Nonnus, the comparison reminds us that we cannot underestimate the importance of Coptic tradition to better understand the complex exegetical efforts done by Nonnus in the *Paraphrase*.

The common ‘cultural imagination’ becomes evident, in my submission, in descriptions of violence in which Nonnus is clearly influenced by the tensions of contemporary society. Let me briefly discuss an example I find particularly intriguing. It is the vexed passage of the *Dionysiaca*, concerning the king Blemys (*Dion.* 17.385–397).

Καὶ Βλέμυς οὐλοκάρηνος, Ἐρυθραίων πρόμος Ἴνδῶν,
 ἰκεσίης κούφιζεν ἀναίμονα θαλλὸν ἐλαίης,
 Ἴνδοφόνῳ γόνυ δοῦλον ὑποκλίνων Διονύσῳ.
 Καὶ θεός, ἀθρήσας κυρτούμενον ἀνέρα γαίῃ,
 χειρὶ λαβῶν ὠρθωσε, πολυγλώσσῳ δ’ ἅμα λαῶ
 κυανέων πόμπευεν Ἐρυθραίων ἐκὰς Ἴνδῶν,
 κοιρανίην στυγέοντα καὶ ἦθεα Δηριαδῆος,
 Ἀρραβίης ἐπὶ πέζαν, ὅπη παρὰ γείτονι πόντῳ
 ὄλβιον οὐδας ἔναιε καὶ οὐνομα δῶκε πολίταις
 καὶ Βλέμυς ὠκὺς ἴκανεν ἐς ἑπταπόρου στόμα Νείλου,
 ἐσσόμενος σκηπτοῦχος ὁμόχροος Αἰθιοπῶν
 καὶ μιν ἀειθερέος Μερῶης ὑπεδέξατο πυθμῆν,
 ὀπιγόνους Βλεμύεσσι προώνυμον ἡγεμονῆα.

Now woollyhead Blemys, chief of the Erythraian Indians, bent a slavish knee before Dionysos Indianslayer, holding the suppliant’s unbloodied olivebranch. And the god when he saw the man bowed upon the earth, took his hand and lifted him up, and sent him far away with his polyglot people, apart from the swarthy Erythraian Indians, now hating the lordship and the manners of Deriades, away to the Arabian land, where beside the sea he dwelt on a rich soil and gave his name to his people. Blemys quickly passed to the mouth of seven-stream Nile, to be the sceptred king of the Ethiopians, men of colour like his. The ground of Meroë welcomed him, where it is always harvest, a chieftain who handed down his name to the Blemyses of later generations¹⁹.

¹⁶ SPANOUDAKIS, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis*, cit. 18-23 and *passim* in the commentary.

¹⁷ Cp. K. SPANOUDAKIS, *The Shield of Salvation: Dionysus’ Shield in Nonnus’ Dionysiaca* 25.380-572, in *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context. Poetry and Cultural Milieu in Late Antiquity*, ed. K. SPANOUDAKIS, Berlin-Boston 2014, 333-371: 356.

¹⁸ See SPANOUDAKIS, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis*, cit., 92-96.

¹⁹ Text by B. GERLAUD, *Nonnos de Panopolis. Les Dionysiaques. Chants XIV-XVII*, Paris 1994; transl. by ROUSE in *Nonnus of Panopolis, Dionysiaca*, with an *English Translation* by W.H.D. ROUSE, *Mythological Introduction and Notes* by H.J. ROSE and *Notes on Text Criticism* (1984) by L. ROGER LIND, 3 vols. Cambridge 1984 (1940).

The poet characterizes the people of Blemmyes in surprisingly positive terms²⁰, emphasizing their prompt 'conversion' to the Dionysiac cause, and he carefully distinguishes them from Indians²¹. These lines, which reflect a real - albeit imprecise - knowledge of these people living between the Red Sea and the Nile Valley²², have been traditionally solicited in order to find evidence for the chronology of the *Dionysiaca*. The Blemmyes are ubiquitous in Greek and Latin literary and documentary sources from Late Antiquity because of their continuous threat to Egypt's southern borders²³, even though recent reassessments have questioned the image of a 'continuous war' between the Blemmyes and the Roman empire. Moreover, peace treaties with the Blemmyes were probably rather occasional and agreed upon when necessary or possible.²⁴ As a consequence, it is vain to look for a *terminus post quem* for the aforementioned Nonnian lines on the basis of a precise treaty, such as, for example, the one between general Maximinus and the Blemmyes in 452-453 (= *FHN* III, no. 381), as suggested by Dostálová-Jeništová²⁵. If it is likely that Nonnus somehow reflects the historical situation of Blemmyes, it is much more difficult to extract *precise* historical informations from his lines. In other terms, it would be rather simplistic to take Nonnus as a historical source.

It seems to me that king Blemys' submission reflects a hope rather than a historical fact. In the perfect world of Dionysus, the warlike and dreadful Blemmyes do not behave like the irreducible Indians and promptly recognize the light of justice and peace. Let me compare these Nonnian lines with a passage from the *Life of Shenute* traditionally attributed to Besa (fl. 465 - after 474)²⁶.

Then my father, Apa Shenute, wanted to hasten to them on account of the captives whom they had taken. And when he crossed the river to go east after them, those whom he first approached raised their spears, intending to kill him. At once their hands became stiff and dried out like (pieces of) wood; they stood (there, hands) outstretched, and were unable to bend them toward them and were crying out in great distress. Likewise again, the same thing happened to the rest of the tribe(smen) until he arrived at the place of their king. When that man understood that the power which was with him was invincible, he rose up (and) prostrated himself (and) adored him, saying, 'I beseech you, heal the hands of my men.' And when he made the sign of the cross over them, their hands were healed at once²⁷.

The powerful archimandrite does not hesitate to face a group of aggressive Blemmyes, whom he miraculously defeats receiving obedience from their king.

²⁰ It is noteworthy that the name of the eponym chief, Βλέμυς, considered either an invention by Nonnus or derived from Dionysius, is attested in an Egyptian graffito (A. SOLDATI, s.v. Blemmyes, in *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, vol. 5, Wiesbaden 2014, 275-278: 276).

²¹ Despite the common identification of Indians and Ethiopians on which see now P. SCHNEIDER, *L'Éthiopie et l'Inde. Intérférences et confusions aux extrémités du monde antique (VIIIe siècle avant J.-C.-VIe siècle de notre ère)*, Rome 2004.

²² See D. GIGLI PICCARDI, *Nonno e l'Egitto*, *Prometheus* 24 (1998) 61-82, 161-181: 174-178 and EAD., *Nonno di Panopoli. Le Dionisiache. Canti I-XII*, Milano 2003, 39-40. On the economic relations between Blemmyes and Eastern desert see also J.H.F. DIJKSTRA, 'I, Silko, Came to Talmis and Taphis': *Interactions between the Peoples beyond the Egyptian Frontier and Rome in Late Antiquity*, in *Inside and Out. Interactions between Rome and the Peoples on the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, ed. J.H.F. DIJKSTRA, G. FISHER, Leuven/Paris-Walpole, Ma 2014, 299-330: 313-314. - To understand what an 'imprecise knowledge' means see, for example, *Expositio totius mundi* 35.6-7 Rougé (*Alexandria*) *supra caput enim habens Thebaidis Indorum genus*.

²³ For example, a papyrus codex, dated around 400, preserved the fragments of an epic poem on a successful Roman campaign against the Blemmyes, and it has been tentatively attributed by Enrico LIVREA to the diplomat and historian Olympiodorus of Thebes. See L. MIGUÉLEZ CAVERO, *Poems in Context: Greek Poetry in the Egyptian Thebaid 200-600 AD*, Berlin 2008, 59-61, with bibliography.

²⁴ See SOLDATI, *Blemmyes*, cit., and J.H.F. DIJKSTRA, *Blemmyes, Noubades and the Eastern Desert in Late Antiquity: Reassessing the Written Sources*, in *The History of the People of the Eastern Desert*, ed. H. BARNARD, K. DUISTERMAAT, Los Angeles 2012, 239-247, and 'I, Silko, Came to Talmis and Taphis', cit.

²⁵ See F. VIAN, *Les Dionysiaches. Chants I-II*, Paris 1976, XVII, and D. GIGLI PICCARDI, *Nonno di Panopoli. Le Dionisiache. Canti I-XII*, Milano 2003, 39, both with further bibliography.

²⁶ Cp. N. LUBOMIERSKI, *Die Vita Sinuthii. Form- und Überlieferungsgeschichte der hagiographischen Texte über Schemute den Archimandriten* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 45), Tübingen 2007.

²⁷ Trans. by R.H. PIERCE in T. EIDE, T. HÄG, R. HOLTON PIERCE, L. TÖRÖK, *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of The Middle Nile Region between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD. Vol. III From the First to the Sixth Century AD*, Bergen 1998, III, n° 301.

Both the hagiographer and Nonnus could hardly be taken at face value, of course: they do not recount a historical event (although we know how successful Shenoute was in sheltering refugees from Blemmyes and Nubians attacks²⁸), but a representation shaped by the same rhetorical narrative about the Blemmyes and their relation to Egyptian society. Very conveniently, Giusto Traina adopted the category of ‘wishful thinking’ for Besa’s passage²⁹. It is debatable, of course, whether Nonnus was aware—directly or indirectly—of stories similar to that narrated by Besa (although it seems to me likely). But this is not the point. In a poem dealing with ‘Indians’ in the broadest (and late antique) sense of the term, Nonnus could not avoid alluding to Blemmyes, who represented after all a much more real presence and threat than other ‘Indians’ for his Egyptian audience. Significantly enough, he adopted a reassuring triumphalistic narrative³⁰, which we can presume encountered the favour of his audience. In light of that, I suggest that we should reverse critical attitudes towards this passage. It is *not* surprising that Nonnus describes Blemmyes in a positive way. He makes them behave exactly as an Egyptian (especially from the $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$) wanted to. His pacific and devout Blemmyes belong rather to the realm of imaginary world³¹. Many documents show that the real situation was quite different, as for example the well-known petition of Appion, to be dated to 425-450 (P. Leiden Gr. Z = SB 20.14606 = TM 23768)³².

It remains unexplored how far the acquaintance with the rhetoric of triumphalism and die-hard opposition typical of Coptic literature influenced Nonnus’ narrative discourse. My impression is that a detailed comparison of Shenoute’s and Nonnus’ rhetorical and stylistic features might be helpful to contextualize certain features of Nonnian poetry (for example, Shenoute’s fondness for catalogues, pathetic speeches and ethopoeae etc.)³³.

I give here just one example, in line with the methodological approach I illustrated above. In the *Dionysiaca* a recurrent feature all over the poem is the speech by an opponent of Dionysus (battle exhortations to troops³⁴, speeches addressed to Dionysus himself), who claims that Dionysus is a sorcerer, a man pretending to be a god³⁵. For example, Pentheus in his boasting speeches utters that «Dionysus is not a God» ($\omicron\upsilon\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota\ \beta\omicron\rho\tau\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\alpha\ \nu\acute{o}\theta\omicron\nu\ \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\nu$, cp. 45.80, 46.18). All this is part of the rhetoric of abuse, which Nonnus employs with great ability as the manifestly weak counterargument of the encomium. As Laura Miguélez Caveró remarked, «in the eyes of the reader, characters accusing Dionysus of not being a god have no credibility, as his conception and birth have been recounted in the first books of the poem»³⁶. $\nu\acute{o}\theta\omicron\varsigma$ (literally «bastard») belongs to the anti-Christian polemical language³⁷. But if we look at the world around the poet, it is difficult to resist the temptation to recall one of the most well-known moments of the struggle of Shenoute against paganism in Panopolis, namely the Gesios *affaire* concerning the defeat

²⁸ A.G. LOPEZ, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty Rural Patrolage, Religious Conflict, and Monasticism in Late Antique Egypt*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2103, 57-63; BRAKKE – CRISLIP, *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great*, cit., 11.

²⁹ G. TRAINA, *428 dopo Cristo. Storia di un anno*, Roma-Bari 2007, 162.

³⁰ A typical feature of Christian writing, effectively defined by Averil CAMERON as «stories people want» (Av. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire The Development of Christian Discourse*, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1991).

³¹ Cp. the mention of Blemmyes as representatives of the ‘dreadful barbarians’ in Dioscorus’ poems: see FOURNET, *Hellénisme*, cit., 511.

³² P. Leiden Gr. Z = SB 20.14606 = TM 23768, ll. 5-11. Edition by D. FEISSEL, K.A. WORB, *La requête d’Appion, évêque de Syène, à Théodose II: P. Leid. Z révisé*, Oudheidkundige Mededelingen 68, 97-111 = D. FEISSEL, *Documents, droit, diplomatique de l’Empire romain tardif*, Paris 2010, 339-361. For the sixth century see J.-L. FOURNET, *Coptos gréco-romaine à travers ses noms*, Topoi Suppl. 2, 2002, 47-60: 58-59.

³³ Cp. A. SHISHA HALEVY, *Rethorical Narratives: Tableaux and Scenarios. Work-Notes on Narrative Poetics in Shenoutean Sahidic Coptic*, in *Narratives of Egypt and Ancient Near East: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, ed. F. HAGEN et al., Louvain 2011, 451-498; SHERIDAN, *From the Nile to the Rhone and Beyond*, cit., 199-223.

³⁴ For an excellent treatment of them see now B. VERHELST, *Direct Speech in Nonnus’ Dionysiaca. Narrative and rhetorical functions of the characters’ “varied” and “many-faceted” words*, Leiden-Boston 2016, 88-132.

³⁵ A brilliant analysis is offered by L. MIGUÉLEZ CAVERO, *Invective at the Service of Encomium in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus of Panopolis*, *Mnemosyne* 63 (2010) 23-42: 31-34.

³⁶ MIGUÉLEZ CAVERO, *Invective at the Service of Encomium*, cit., 32.

³⁷ E.g., Celsus, or the emperor Julian in fr. 64 of his *Against Galileans*. See R.L. WILCKEN, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, New Haven-London 1984, 105-112, and 178-179 quoting Cyril’s reply «we have not made a man into God [$\tau\epsilon\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\eta\iota\kappa\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\nu$] as you think» (*In Iul.* 6, PG 76.809c = 6.27.16-17 W. KINZIG – T. BRÜGGEMANN).

and humiliation of a rich pagan landowner, never named in the extant works by Shenoute (he is just called «impious, faithless, or godless-man, fool, wretch, child of pestilence, sinner» or just «that man»)³⁸ he is called Gesios in the Bohairic *Life of Shenoute* (and probably to be identified with Flavius Aelius Gessius, *praeses Thebaidos* in 376-378; less sure that he was the same Gessius blamed by the epigrammatist Palladas, *AP* 7.681-688³⁹). The *dossier* is rich and complex, also because of the unsatisfactory editorial state of Shenoute's works⁴⁰. According to Emmel's recent reconstruction⁴¹ at a certain time and for unknown reasons, Gesios also had attempted to convince Shenoute that he had given up his pagan beliefs. Shenoute was not easily persuaded: he preferred to make a raid on Gesios' house, where he discovered a household 'shrine' full of idols that he later removed. After the raid, Gesios claimed that his house was free of demonic idols, inviting Shenoute to verify again. The second visit did not unearth idols, but this did not prevent Shenoute from composing a violent sermon *Not because a Fox Barks*, castigating Gesios and paganism, and eventually he raided his house again.

Now, Shenoute depicts Gesios as a fiery opponent of Christianity, who used to publicly deny Jesus' divinity. For example, in a sermon against rich people⁴² Shenoute tells how he caught Gesios attempting to reconsecrate the temple of Atripe (*Sermon* A26, ed. BEHLMER, cit., 91-93).

I caught him in the temple of Atripe when he was worshipping Satan and pouring libations to him. He scattered roses and peach-twigs and bunches of vine leaves and other aromatic herbs. We had burned down that place of idols with everything that was inside it. I say these things openly, and I ask that if anyone among you is familiar with him, you would tell him that I constantly utter curses against him and angry words filled with the rage of our God Jesus. When that impure man heard about Jesus, when I was advising him to believe in Christ, he spat. He said, blaspheming, that the miracles that Jesus the Lord of All performed were also performed by Apollonius of Tyana and Plato⁴³.

More than once Shenoute remembers that Gesios repeatedly blasphemed against Jesus by stating «Jesus was not divine», «not only in private but also in the agora and on the streets»⁴⁴. The date of the confrontation with Gesios is unknown: some scholars place it around the 430s (Van der Vliet), others around 400 (Thissen, Emmel). In any case, around 440 Shenoute mentioned the death of Gesios in the sermon *God is Blessed*. Therefore, it is a reasonable assumption that Nonnus was aware of this story concerning one of his fellow citizens. Furthermore, recent research on Shenoute has convincingly shown that we cannot read what the abbot tells about Gesios at face value: this latter was probably a 'cryptopagan', imbued in Hellenic *paideia* (as anyone belonging to the élite), and even his statement might have been echoing some adoptionist or subordinationist Christological formula rather than claiming a fiery paganism⁴⁵. It is also

³⁸ See EMMEL, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples in Egypt*, cit., 99.

³⁹ See EMMEL, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples in Egypt*, cit., 103. The correct writing of the name should be Gesius, if he was connected with the family of the iatrosophist Gesius of Petra (cp. J. GASCOU, *Sophrone de Jérusalem, Miracles des saints Cyr et Jean. BHG I*, Paris 2006, 101, n. 579).

⁴⁰ See now S. EMMEL, *Shenoute the Archimandrite: The Extraordinary Scope (and Difficulties) of His Writings*, *JCS* 10 (2018), 9-36.

⁴¹ EMMEL, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples in Egypt*, cit., 107.

⁴² A26, in H. BEHLMER – A. ALCOCK, *A Piece of Shenoutiana from the Department of Egyptian Antiquities (EA 71005)* (British Museum Occasional Paper 119), London 1996, 91-93. Abbreviations of Shenoute's works according to S. EMMEL, *Shenoute Literary Corpus* (CSCO, 599-600, Subsidia, 111-112), Louvain 2004.

⁴³ Transl. LÓPEZ, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, cit., 106; see also BRAKKE – CRISLIP, *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great*, cit., 239.

⁴⁴ A26, ed. by BEHLMER, cit., 91-93; D4.1, *The Lord thundered*, in ShA1, p. 379; LB 88; *Let our eyes*, in MS WW 34; D5.5, *God says through those who are his*, in MS GF 261-262. I extract this list from EMMEL, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples in Egypt*, cit., 99. See now BRAKKE – CRISLIP, *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great*, cit., 20-23 and 193-199.

⁴⁵ This is the reading by EMMEL, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples*, cit., against the traditional picture accepted by other scholars. See also BRAKKE – CRISLIP, *Selected Discourses of Shenoute the Great*, cit., 197: «Shenoute's attribution to Gesios of the idea that Jesus was a divine man similar to Plato and Apollonius of Tyana suggests how people like Gesios may have seen devotion to Jesus as not entirely incompatible with traditional religion and philosophy».

possible that behind the conflict political and economic reasons were concealed⁴⁶. Thus, the portrait of Gesios and his impious utterances are to be read against the rhetoric of Christian narrative and as a part of Shenoute's «strategy in local politics and in his writings, rather than part of any independent reality», as Roger Bagnall puts it⁴⁷.

Shenoute gives a picture of Gesios as a champion of paganism using the same rhetorical paraphernalia and the language of abuse and mockery that we find reversed in Nonnus' depictions of Dionysus by his rivals, especially Deriades and Pentheus⁴⁸. Once again, I am not suggesting a direct derivation, i.e. that Nonnus derived the vocabulary of abuse from Shenoute's characterization of a die-hard pagan. Like for the passage on Blemys, I rather think that both Nonnus and Shenoute *shared the same rhetorical discourse*. In his invectives Nonnus combined classical rhetoric and literary models with the attitude of Christian polemic he and his audience were familiar with. In an article of several years ago, devoted to the transformation of iambic idea in Late Antiquity and its fortune in Christian literature⁴⁹, I interpreted Nonnian abuses and invectives within a wider cultural context, but relying only on Greek and Latin documentation. It is evident, however, that in Coptic literature, especially in Shenoute's works, we find the other side of the same coin a side Nonnus was probably very familiar with, as it was natural for somebody who received his education in Panopolis.

Just a few words on recurrent imagery in Nonnus' poems. Anyone who is familiar with his poetry would not be struck by this way of rendering a passage like John 14.28, εἰ ἡγαπᾶτέ με ἐχάρητε ἅν, ὅτι πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, in *Paraphrase* 14.111–114:⁵⁰

εἰ δέ μοι ἀκλινέας φιλίου ἐκεράσατε θεσμούς,
καὶ κεν ἀγαλλομένοιο ποδὸς σκιρτήσατε ταρσῶ
ξυνὸν χάριμα φέροντες, ὅτι χθονὸς οὐδας ἔασας
ἴξομαι ὀψικέλευθος ἐμῶ πέμψαντι τοκῆι

If you were joined to me by binding laws of love,
Then you would celebrate with bounding leaps of joy,
And share in the delight when I depart this earth
At last returning to my Father, who sent me.

with the disciple's joy expressed through vivid dancing imagery. There is no need to recall how frequent dance and related imagery are in Nonnus (and in his followers)⁵¹. They are less frequent in the Christian poem, for obvious reasons, but not absent. In *Par.* 14 Jesus points out that if the disciples should love Jesus in the proper way knowing that He is coming back to the Father they would express their joy «with bounding leaps» (σκιρτήσατε) and they would share their delight (ξυνὸν χάριμα φέροντες). The adjective ξυνὸς has been explained as referring to doctrinal meaning (the joy shared by all people living in Christ), but it literally means that the disciples dance all together. It is not an invention by Nonnus. This reminds us of the image of Christ dancing with the disciples known from the gnostic section of the *Acts of John* (2nd century), where the apostles dance in a circle around Christ⁵². It is quite possible that Nonnus had some

⁴⁶ LÓPEZ, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, cit., 102-126.

⁴⁷ R. BAGNALL, *Models and Evidence*, in *From Temple to Church. Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity*, ed. J. HAHN, S. EMMEL, U. GOTTER, Leiden/Boston 2008, 23-41: 28.

⁴⁸ And used against them by Dionysus in his counterattacks, of course.

⁴⁹ G. AGOSTI, *Late Antique Iambics and Iambiké Idea*, in *Iambic Ideas*, ed. A. ALONI, A. CAVARZERE, A. BARCHIESI, Lanham, MD, 2001, 219-255.

⁵⁰ Text according to SCHEINDLER, *Nonni Panopolitani Paraphrasis*, cit.; transl. by PROST, *Nonnos of Panopolis*, cit.

⁵¹ See now C. CADAU, *Studies in Colluthus' Abduction of Helen*, Leiden-Boston 2015, 205-221; K. SCHLAPBACH, *The Anatomy of Dance Discourse. Literary and Philosophical Approaches to Dance in the later Graeco-Roman World*, Oxford 2017, 215-222.

⁵² *Acts of John* 94-96 E. JUNOD – J.-D. KAESTLI πρὶν δὲ συλληφθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνόμων καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνόμου ὄφρα νομοθετουμένων Ἰουδαίων συναγαγὼν πάντας ἡμᾶς ἔφη· “Πρὶν με ἐκεῖνοι παραδοθῆναι ὑμνήσωμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ οὕτως ἐξέλθωμεν ἐπὶ τὸ προκειμένον”. Κελεύσας οὖν ἡμῖν ὡσπερ γῦρον ποιῆσαι, ἀποκρατούντων τὰς ἀλλήλων χεῖρας, ἐν μέσῳ δὲ αὐτὸς γενόμενος, ἔλεγεν· “Τὸ ἀμὴν ἐπακούετε μοι.” Ἦρξατο οὖν ὕμνον ὑμνεῖν καὶ λέγειν· “Δόξα σοι πάτερ. Καὶ ἡμεῖς κυκλεύοντες ἐπηκούομεν αὐτῶ τὸ ἀμὴν” («Before He was arrested by the lawless Jews, whose lawgiver is the lawless serpent, he assembled us all and said, “Before I am delivered to them, let us sing a hymn to the Father, and so

knowledge of this text, as the story of the dead Bacchant and the anonymous Indian in *Dion.* 34 shows⁵³. Its presence, under the form of rewriting, is attested among 4th c. Manichean communities in the Dakhleh Oasis and in the Fayyoun⁵⁴. In any case, it is not the only text describing Apostles forming a circle and dancing around Jesus. The scanty remains of the Coptic *Gospel of the Saviour* (known from a Berlin manuscript published in 1999 and from some fragments in Strasbourg published in 2003) show a very similar scene, clearly inspired by the *Acts of John*⁵⁵. And in 2009 (2006) Peter Hubai edited a 9th century small-format codex from the Qasr el-Wizza monastery (Nubia), with a couple of Coptic apocrypha: the *Wort des Erlöser*, a discourse of the Saviour about the Cross and a hymn, titled *Die Tanze des Erlöser*, *The Dance of the Saviour*. Both the texts should be dated most likely from the end of the 4th century and are probably local, Egyptian products. The latter represents Jesus dancing and singing a hymn on the Mount of Olives and clearly depends on the *Acts of John*⁵⁶. As P. Piovanelli remarked, the responsorial scene in the *Gospel of the Saviour* and the hymn in the *Dance of the Saviour* offer a «sanitized and recycled» version of the gnostic passage of the *Acts of John*, in order «to produce new apocryphal stories for ‘orthodox’ faithful in late antique and early medieval Egypt» where «the Valentinian theologumenon of the ‘members of the Saviour’ has been reinterpreted and applied, in a restricted way, to Jesus’ closest disciples»⁵⁷. After some preliminary remarks in the *ed. pr.* by Hubai⁵⁸, in an article of 2013 P. Dilley studied the *Dance of the Saviour* against the tradition of the Christian appropriation of language and symbolism related to Dionysus (and to David), focusing especially on the liturgical function of dance in Late Antiquity. Indeed, despite the condemnation of dance as pagan or heretic practice in Patristic sources, it is possible to gather evidence about the role of dance in liturgical occasions and public ceremonies in Late Antiquity. For example, dancing was part of the common way of expressing joy during the feasts of the martyrs, as we know from criticisms by Church Fathers like Gregory of Nazianzus or Augustine⁵⁹. In Egypt dance played a role in the liturgical practice of the Melitians, but was probably more widespread⁶⁰ and it continued to exist as part of the liturgy of Ethiopian christianity⁶¹.

Furthermore, Dilley is right in considering the *Dances* within the wider context of the adaptation of Dionysiac imagery by Christians, especially in Egypt. He also quotes Nonnus as a witness to the popularity of this imagery⁶². However, he just points out the use of *χορός* for the disciples in *Par.* 17.89 (where the expression means simply ‘group’), failing to notice the aforementioned passage from Book 14, which

go to meet what lies before (us)”. So he told us to form a circle, holding one another’s hands, and himself stood in the middle and said, “Answer Amen to me”. So he began to sing a hymn and to say “Glory be to thee, Father.” And we circled round him and answered him, “Amen” » [transl. R.MCL. WILSON, in *New Testament Apocrypha*, Revised Edition of the Collection initiated by E. HENNECKE, edited by W. SCHNEEMELCHER, English translation edited by R. MCL. Wilson, Volume Two: *Writings Relating to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, Louisville [KY] 1992).

⁵³ On the possible influence of *Act. Jo.* 63-86 on it see D. ACCORINTI, *Nonnos und der Mythos: Heidnische Antike aus christlicher Perspektive*, in *Antike Mythologie in christlichen Kontexten der Spätantike*, ed. H. LEPPIN, Berlin-Boston 2015, 43-69: 56-57 with further bibliography.

⁵⁴ See P. PIOVANELLI, *Thursday Night Fever: Dancing and Singing with Jesus in the Gospel of the Savior and The Dance of the Savior around the Cross*, *Early Christianity* 3 (2012) 229-248: 246-247 with further bibliography.

⁵⁵ See PIOVANELLI, *Thursday Night Fever*, cit., 232 providing all the relevant bibliographical references.

⁵⁶ See *Gospel of the Saviour* ll. 72-132(TM 129696).

⁵⁷ PIOVANELLI, *Thursday Night Fever*, cit., 246. See also E. YINGLING, *Singing with the Savior: Reconstructing the Ritual Ring-Dance in the Gospel of the Savior*, *Apocrypha* 24 (2013) 255-279, on the doctrinal meaning of the dance.

⁵⁸ See P. HUBAI, *Koptische Apokryphen aus Nubien. Der Kasr el-Wizza Kodex* (trans. A. Balog), Berlin 2009, 113-116 on the dance.

⁵⁹ See M. KAHLOS, *Comissiones et ebrietates – Church leaders against banqueting at martyria and at tombs*, in *Ad itum liberum. Essays in honour of Anne Helntula*, ed. O. MERISALO, R. VAINIO, Jyväskylä 2007, 13-23.

⁶⁰ See now D. FRANKFURTER, *Christianizing Egypt. Syncretism and Local Worlds in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 2017, 122-126.

⁶¹ The Egyptian origin was already supposed by U. MONNERET DE VILLARD, *Di una possibile origine delle danze liturgiche nella chiesa abissina*, *Oriente Moderno* 22 (1942) 389-391 (I owe the reference to Alessandro Bausi). See different entries in the *Encyclopedia Aethiopica* (s.vv. Aqwaqam, Dances, liturgical) and A. BAUSI, *Foreword*, in *The Songs of Africa. The Ethiopian Canticles*, ed. T.C. ODEN, C. NICCUM, New Haven 2017, XI-XV.

⁶² P. DILLEY, *Christus Saltans as Dionysus and David: the Dance of the Savior in its Late-Antique Cultural Context*, *Apocrypha* 24 (2013) 237-253: 242-243.

is much more significant. But I think he was successful in establishing the connection and especially in demonstrating that *The Dance of the Saviour* represents a wider issue of Late Antique Church. In Dilley's words, the message of the *Dance* «spoke to widely practiced forms of piety in the Christian Roman empire, including both local festivals and imperial rituals»⁶³.

Therefore, the *Dance* is an important witness of the diffusion of dance imagery in Late Antique Egypt. Together with the other texts mentioned above, it reminds us that dance played a role in Christian doctrine and was not limited to public spectacles or to official occasions (as the adventus ceremonies, for example). This is not irrelevant for Nonnus too, I think. Even if he did not know this text (although we cannot exclude it), he was probably aware of this tradition. As a first consequence, we should consider his fondness for dance imagery and vocabulary also from a Christian point of view, not only in the light of the popularity of pantomime and the traditional Dionysiac character of dance (often represented also in Coptic textiles). And we should also take into account his audience's response to that. Secondly, the role played by dance in liturgy should compel us to further explore the influence of liturgical language in the *Paraphrase*⁶⁴.

Just a few words to conclude. What we have briefly seen about Nonnus is valid, I think, for all Egyptian Greek writers of late antiquity. A critical approach based only on the Greek cultural tradition is not sufficient to understand the works of writers deeply embedded in their own multicultural and multilingual society⁶⁵. From this point of view, I would like to suggest that a thorough exploration of Coptic literature would be very helpful. Needless to say this implies a radical change of critical attitude. As literary scholars, we use to think of Greek poets' cultural world in terms of Greek (and possibly Latin) tradition and of written sources. Furthermore, we should also take into account the oral diffusion of stories, ideas, and images. If we want to read Nonnus' poems against their own society, we could not leave out a significant part of this society and its everyday life, i.e. that of monks and abbots who delivered their speeches and sermons both in Greek and Sahidic dialect, and of people listening to them and talking about them and their edifying stories. One of the reasons why Nonnus is so attractive to our sensitivity is exactly his ability to collapse cultural boundaries: not only those between Hellenism and Christianity, but also I would add those between literary tradition and living contemporary society. In this respect, his poetry is a primary source to better understand the cultural melting pot of late antique Egypt. As I mentioned above, recent research has dramatically shown how much Shenoute's works are indebted to Hellenic tradition and that a neat division between a national (and popular) Coptic literature and traditional upper class Greek *paideia* is misleading. For the study of Greek literature in late antique Egypt these are exciting news.

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Abstract. Within the framework of a broader research project on Greek and Coptic culture in Late Antique Egypt (5th-7th century), this paper deals with the relations between Greek highbrow literary production (especially poetry) and Coptic literature, considered as two sides of the same coin. Indeed, rather than asking 'trans-cultural' questions – as the essay by M. Detienne alluded in the title does, I propose to adopt an 'intra-cultural' approach, in order to shed an unusual light on the multicultural society of Late Antique Egypt. The comparison of apparently distant texts, like epic poems in Greek and hagiographies in Coptic, can be helpful, in my submission, to better understand the attitude to classical *paideia* in Late Antique society, and to dismiss the old interpretive model of 'the high vs the low', too often declined as 'Greek vs Coptic'.

Keywords. Nonnus of Panopolis. Shenoute of Atripe. Greek culture. Rhetoric. Coptic culture.

⁶³ DILLEY, *Christus Saltans as Dionysus and David*, cit., 251.

⁶⁴ Cp. F. DOROSZEWSKI, *Judaic Orgies and Christ's Bacchic Deeds: Dionysiac Terminology in Nonnus' Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel*, in *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context*, cit., 287-301.

⁶⁵ For Nonnus I fully developed this point in G. AGOSTI, *Nonnus and Contemporary Society*, in *The Brill's Companion to Nonnus*, cit., 644-668.

**Athanasius' Letter to Dracontius:
A Fourth-Century Coptic Translation in a Papyrus Roll (P.Monts.Roca inv. 14)^{*}**
by
Sofia Torallas Tovar

O. INTRODUCTION

P.Monts.Roca inv. 14 (LDAB 749338)¹ is a magnificent papyrus roll, kept today at the Abbey of Montserrat, Barcelona. Its extent and state of preservation make it one of the highlights in the Roca-Puig collection², and its textual contents – a translation of a large part of Athanasius' *Letter to Dracontius* (CPG 1132) into Sahidic Coptic – is also of considerable interest³. The papyrus roll constitutes what is most likely the earliest known fragment of the works of Athanasius, a very early translation into Coptic of his works. It is also a historical artifact, which attests to (among other things) readership, translation practices, and methods of communication between the patriarchate of Alexandria and the communities.

Athanasius addressed the epistle to Dracontius, a Nitrian monk who had been recently nominated bishop of Hermoupolis Parva⁴, and who had apparently fled, refusing to be appointed and separated from the ascetic life, or perhaps in fear of being expelled from office and exiled⁵. The present letter, written to urge Dracontius not to refuse the nomination to the episcopate, was written before Easter (§10), when persecution was expected (§3), and after the mission of Serapion, Ammonius and others to meet emperor Constantius, in 353 CE (mentioned in §7) (Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* IV 9). The letter was sent together with Athanasius' Festal Letter 26, for the Easter of 354⁶, where there is evidence already of clear anxiety about the events to come.

The Montserrat roll contains the earliest known evidence for this epistle, dated six centuries before the earliest surviving codex. Moreover, the Coptic version was previously unknown, and also offers us insight

^{*} I would like to thank the Benedictine community at the Abbey of Montserrat, especially Father Pius Tragan, for their generosity and for allowing me to study this magnificent roll. Since I discovered it, many scholars and friends have helped me in multiple discussions. I want to thank especially Margaret Mitchell (Chicago) and Anne Boud'hors (Paris), Annick Martin (Rennes) and Alberto Camplani (Roma), for their feedback, generosity and support from the beginning of this research project. Also thanks are due to colleagues who have taken the time to help me with different aspects of this project, like Jean Luc Fournet, David Brakke, Alberto Nodar, Wolf-Peter Funk, Paola Buzi, Annette Von Stockhausen, Marco Stroppa, Brent Nongbri, Malcolm Choat, David Nirenberg, and Jaś Elsner. I also thank Lucas Binion for his assistance in polishing the English language.

¹ The LDAB number was kindly provided by Willy Clarysse (Leuven), whom I also thank for his immediate response and assistance. While I was writing the present article, my colleague Brent Nongbri identified a couple of small fragments from the Montserrat roll in the Bodmer library. Tito Orlandi has provided the CMCL number for the Coptic translation of the *Letter to Dracontius*: cc0996. In the PATHs project the unique identifier of the ms. is 1161.

² On the origin and acquisition of the Roca-Puig collection see S. TORALLAS TOVAR – K.A. WÖRZ, *To the Origins of Greek Stenography. P.Monts.Roca I*, Barcelona 2006, 15-16; J. GIL – S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *Hadrianus. P.Monts.Roca III*, Barcelona 2010, 15-16; M.T. ORTEGA MONASTERIO, *El Instituto Papiroológico Roca-Puig y el CSIC: ¿Proyecto o realidad?*, in *Palabras bien dichas. Estudios filológicos dedicados al P. Pius-Ramon Tragan*, Montserrat 2011, 57-76.

³ On the origin and acquisition of the Roca-Puig collection see TORALLAS TOVAR – WÖRZ, *To the Origins of Greek Stenography*, cit., 15-16; GIL – TORALLAS TOVAR, *Hadrianus*, cit., 15-16; ORTEGA MONASTERIO, *El Instituto Papiroológico Roca-Puig*, cit., 57-76.

⁴ On the procedure of episcopal appointment, see A. MARTIN, *Athanasie d'Alexandrie et l'église d'Égypte au IV^e siècle*, Rome 1996, 128; on the case of Dracontius, see esp. 466-468. For Dracontius' resistance, see D. BRAKKE, *Athanasius and Asceticism*, Baltimore 1995, 80-141, esp. 103, 108-109.

⁵ This indeed happened soon after this letter was sent, in 356-7. His place of exile was the desert near 'Clysmā,' i.e. the gulf of Suez (Athanasius, *Hist. Ar.* 75, cf. Hieron. *Vit. Hilar.* 30).

⁶ A. MARTIN, *Athanasie d'Alexandrie*, cit., 467. For the text of the letter, see L.-TH. LEFORT, *Lettres festales et pastorales en copte* (CSCO 150, C 19), Louvain 1955, 44-45; A. CAMPLANI, *Atanasio di Alessandria: Lettere Festali. Anonimo: Indice delle Lettere Festali* (LCPM 34), Milano 2003, 456-460.

into the early Greek text, as well as material evidence for the earliest circulation of the Athanasian corpus. In this paper I will briefly refer to some of the main questions that this roll has opened since its identification. I leave deeper discussions in all the issues introduced here for a longer monograph, which will include the full edition and commentary of the text⁷. For the time being, I present here a description of the piece and acquisition information, together with a discussion on its possible origin and a description of the main textual features.

1. DESCRIPTION

The Montserrat papyrus roll is kept in a single frame in the papyrus collection at the Abbey of Montserrat, Barcelona. It measures 92 cm wide. The actual preserved height varies from column to column, but averages 12 cm. It features five columns of text on the recto and one on the verso. The top and bottom margins are lost. The reconstructed height would be ca 30 cm, a typical size for papyrus sheets⁸. Only the right hand margin is preserved, and is ca. 4.5 cm wide. The whole roll is composed of five glued pieces, with the *kolleseis* visible at the beginning of the lines of each column, 20 cm from each other, except col. 2, which features a *kollesis* at 15.5 cm from the following one. The column width is variable, being for columns 2-4 of 17 cm, while 5 is much narrower, at 14 cm. wide, perhaps due to bad calculation of the space left until the end of the roll (col. 1 is partly lost, and the remaining part is 8 cm. wide), and for 6, on the verso, 12 cm. The space between columns is 4 cm between 1-2, 3.5 cm between 2-3, 3 cm. between 3-4 and 2.5 cm. between 4-5. The recto is written along the papyrus fibers, and col. 6 on the verso is written on the back of col. 3, in the same direction, across the papyrus fibers. The width of the columns is remarkably large in comparison to other late Roman rolls. This is, however, not uncommon if compared to Festal letters and other such documents, which tend to have much wider columns⁹.

The text of the Montserrat roll presents an irregularly performed pointed majuscule, slightly tilted to the right. There are some elements of cursive, like the ligatures of epsilon iota and alpha iota and double lambda. Not being a pure pointed majuscule, it mixes elements from other styles, as is common in this period. Medium thickness strokes without decoration (except some hooks on the finals of kappa and chi, eventually beta and hypsilon) present contrast between narrower and wider letters, being ε and c laterally compressed. The omicron is round, small and raised from the baseline; the beta has triangular bellies, while its first stroke in the shape of an 'L' has a loop in the left lower corner; the mu is performed in three strokes; the alpha has a rounded belly.

The supralinear stroke appears regularly on μ and η, sometimes on ρ (curved), on the η often is shorter and curved, or even also in the shape of a grave accent; there are longer and undulated strokes on combinations of letters, like ημτ; dihaeresis appears on the iota. The apostrophe, appearing in two different shapes (hooked and as a grave accent) is used to mark the end of words ending in consonant: πμϵρτ', ρεζμωτ', μμ', μνκ', πνωβ', εβολ', ντωκ'. There is punctuation in the form of a high dot. There are neither marginal signs nor abbreviations.

As I will explain below, the roll could have belonged to one of the hoards that were sold in the 50s of the twentieth century. Expecting to find some parallels in the Bodmer library, I started my search there¹⁰. After comparing the hand of our roll to the Bodmer/Chester Beatty materials, I found a very close parallel in Bodmer XXI (Bodmer XXI + Chester Beatty 1389), a papyrus codex containing the Coptic translation

⁷ In Mohr Siebeck: *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum*.

⁸ Based on the calculation of the Greek text, the Vorlage of the lost Coptic translation. For the average sizes of papyrus sheets and the anatomy of the scroll, see W. JOHNSON, *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus*, Toronto 2004, 88-92.

⁹ See below and a forthcoming study on the Greek Festal letters preserved on papyrus, by M. STROPPIA, *Lettere festali su papiro*, to appear soon, and M. KONSTANTINOUDOU, *Festal Letters: Fragments of a Genre*, in *Proceedings of the XXVIII international congress of Papyrology*, A. NODAR - S. TORALLAS, Barcelona 2019, 144-152.

¹⁰ On the hands of Bodmer and Nag Hammadi, see P. ORSINI, *I papiri Bodmer: scritture e libri*, Adamantius 21 (2015) 60-78. P. ORSINI, *Le scritture dei codici di Nag Hammadi. Il punto di vista paleografico*, in *Oltre la scrittura. Variazioni sul tema per Guglielmo Cavallo*, a cura di D. BIANCONI e L. DEL CORSO (Dossiers byzantins 8), Paris 2008, 95-121.

of Joshua and Tobit, dated between the fourth and fifth century¹¹. Kasser, in his edition¹², attributes it to a professional scribe and dates it to the fourth century. He describes it as “assez irrégulière” but with “une certaine fermeté”. Orsini has described the hand of the Bodmer manuscript as “maiuscola ogivale diritta e inclinata”, and in his study of the Bodmer codices¹³, dated it to the fifth century. It is virtually the only example of this style in the Bodmer and the Nag Hammadi codices¹⁴. Other parallels, but in Greek, are Cavallo-Maehler 12a to 12c, examples of “upright pointed majuscule”, especially 12a, P.Oxy XI 1352¹⁵. One more parallel, different in some traits, would be PGM V, P.Lond. 46, a Theban codex also dated to the fourth century¹⁶.

The paleography of our roll places it at least in the same graphic environment as the codices from the southern area in the fourth century, with the closest example found in Bodmer XXI. It is impossible to tell whether or not the Montserrat roll was found together with the Bodmer library hoard, but it is at least a possibility that can be supported by the material evidence. The Coptic component of the Bodmer Library was studied by Boud’hors¹⁷. In general, the characteristics of our roll fit nicely in the group of Coptic books belonging to this library. Regarding the language, it is written in Sahidic with some “graphic archaisms” and dialectal traits (see below)¹⁸, but these traits are also shared with the Nag Hammadi codices. Regarding the contents, the Coptic Bodmer library is composed of Biblical and non-Biblical texts (*Acta Pauli*, the *Apocalypse of Eliah*, and Melito’s *Peri Pascha*)¹⁹. When looking for a match to our roll, perhaps the closest from the generic point of view is that of the nine rolls added to the list of books from the Bodmer library whose attribution is very doubtful²⁰. These have been described as “archival copies of official letters” written by Pachomian abbots. I will refer to these later.

2. ORIGIN OF THE ROLL

2.1. Acquisition

The origin of this roll, a point at which I have already hinted, is not completely clear. There is no indication in the roll of scribe or possessor. However, two documents from Roca-Puig’s personal papers may contribute to clarifying this matter, or at least give a clue to where and how the roll was purchased. Both documents are handwritten by Father Sylvestre Chauleur, who was Director of the *Institut Copte* in Cairo at that time. Both documents were written in the summer of 1955, when, apparently, Father Chauleur visited the city of Barcelona and delivered the papyri personally to Ramon Roca-Puig. The roll acquired by Roca-Puig in 1955 was later bequeathed to the Abbey of Montserrat together with his whole papyrus collection upon his death in 2001. It is interesting to note that the roll was still rolled up when it arrived into the hands of Roca-Puig, who was probably responsible for opening it up and framing it between glass, as it is still stored today. For the sake of convenience, I give here the text of Chauleur’s letter²¹:

¹¹ See comparison in plate 3.

¹² R. KASSER, *Papyrus Bodmer XXI. Josué en sahidique*, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, Cologny-Genève 1963, 12-13.

¹³ P. ORSINI, *I papiri Bodmer*, cit., 77. See also P. ORSINI, *La maiuscola ogivale inclinata. Contributo preliminare*, *Scripta. An International Journal of Codicology and Palaeography* 9 (2016) 89-116.

¹⁴ I also find correspondence with some of the Nag Hammadi hands, especially NHC III, VII (second half of the fourth cent.) and XI, with a few differences. The closest one, however, is one of the hands of NHC I (fourth cent.). The Montserrat hand is narrower than NHC VII and XI (these are square), and as stated above a bit tilted to the right. The diacritics are similar to those in the NH codices: straight and rounded supralinear stroke, hooked apostrophe, dihaeresis on the iota.

¹⁵ On the evolution of the hand see E. CRISCI, *La maiuscola ogivale diritta. Origini, tipologie, dislocazioni*, *Scrittura e Civiltà* 9 (1985) 103-145, esp. 112-114.

¹⁶ Cf. E.G. TURNER, *Greek manuscripts of the ancient world*, London 1974, *GMAW* 70 (P.Herm Rees 5) 325 CE.

¹⁷ A. BOUD’HORS *Quelques réflexions sur la cohérence de la composante copte des P.Bodmer*, *Adamantius* 21 (2015) 79-85.

¹⁸ A. BOUD’HORS, *Quelques réflexions*, cit., 79.

¹⁹ A. BOUD’HORS, *Quelques réflexions*, cit., 80-82.

²⁰ J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie d’une bibliothèque de l’Antiquité tardive: l’inventaire, le faciès et la provenance de la ‘Bibliothèque Bodmer’*, *Adamantius* 21 (2015) 8-24, esp. 12.

²¹ These two documents attesting the purchase were published entirely in J. GIL - S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *Hadrianus*,

À bord du bateau le 8 août 55
Mon cher Abbé,

Je dois débarquer à Dunkerque et me rendre de suite à Barcelone ou je compte me trouver le 26 août pour vous parler de ces fameux manuscrits. Je dis fameux parce que je le crois sincèrement. Les pages des psaumes grecs étant vendus, je n'ai pas voulu vous dire: il n'y a rien à faire. Et je me suis mis en chasse avec le Dr Aziz. J'ai trouvé 2 manuscrits magnifiques.

Le 1er: un Codex complet et signé du IIIe environ avec 3 dessins. Deux dessins représentant la croix égyptienne, ce qui signifie la période de transition – IIIe siècle environ et une page avec un dessin bien fait, représentant une femme ou un homme, je ne me souviens plus, tenant une tête, en bas un dragon. A la fin du codex une liste de plusieurs feuillets de noms. Ce codex en papyrus, grec archaïque est contenu dans une couverture (comme celle d'un livre) en peau et 4 morceaux de cuir très petits. À l'intérieur de la peau pour renforcer la couverture se trouve un autre manuscrit qu'il faudra étudier (plus ancien, important). Il provient (ce manuscrit) / du couvent de St Pacôme et lui est certainement contemporain. Vous savez que ce qui était rédigé dans le couvent de St Pacôme était rédigé en grec et non en copte. Le grec étant alors la langue des intellectuels. Serait-il un manuscrit fait par Théodore le disciple de Pacôme? En tout cas je le crois très important.

Le 2e: est un biblos très important également. Il y a 4 colonnes de textes les uns à côté des autres. Je n'ai pas voulu le dérouler (serait-ce un synoptique?) (c'est un rouleau celui-ci) de peur de le briser. Le Dr Aziz a dit qu'il est très très intéressant [Ces manuscrits ont été achetés pour vous après votre requête].

Passons maintenant au coté pratique.

Après réception de votre lettre, devant partir le lendemain, j'ai pu après de grandes difficultés me faire avancer l'argent. Il n'était pas encore arrivé. Aussi la personne que vous connaissez a conservé les 2 manuscrits que j'ai emballés, enfermés dans une boîte en fer, enveloppés de papier etc à votre nom. Dès réception de l'argent, il remettra comme vous l'avez demandé le paquet au P. Remiro, afin de le remettre à la personne qui doit vous le faire parvenir. J'attends donc confirmation – et c'est pour cela que je viens à Barcelone – de la réception de l'argent pour vous dire: voilà votre paquet-

À bientôt, donc, cher Abbé et croyez moi bien à vous in Xos (Christos) P. Sylvester Chaleur

Less than twenty days later Father Roca Puig paid 132.000 pesetas (800Euro) = 1200 LE for both pieces. The first manuscript, the *codex miscellaneus*²² is a fourth-century papyrus single quire codex, which contained texts in both Latin and Greek. This codex, it has been argued, belonged to the Dishna papers or the Bodmer library, connected to a Pachomian library²³.

2.2. Origin

Although it is largely impossible to trace back pieces bought in the 20th century antiquities market, we may at least follow the few clues we have to the possible origins, in the Thebaid, of the roll of Montserrat. On the basis of the acquisition information, one might be tempted to assume that the Athanasius roll came from the same hoard as the *codex miscellaneus*. However, contradicting this assumption is the fact that the letter only mentions the provenance of the codex and does not explicitly connect the two pieces. Taking the aforementioned paleographical arguments into consideration, we may try to find points in common between the Athanasian roll and the 'library' to which the codex allegedly belonged.

24-31, with images in pl. IX-X.

²² S. TORALLAS TOVAR – K.A. WORB, *To the Origins*, cit., 11-24; J. GIL – S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *Hadrianus*, cit., 17-31; G. NOCCHI MACEDO, *Bilinguisme, digraphisme, multiculturalisme: une étude du Codex Miscellaneus de Montserrat*, in *Bilinguisme et digraphisme dans le monde gréco-romain: l'apport des papyrus latins*, ed. M.-H. MARGANNE – B. ROCHETTE (Papyrologica Leodiensia 2), Liège 2013, 139-167; G. NOCCHI MACEDO, *L'Alceste de Barcelone (P. Monts. Roca inv. 158-161)* (Papyrologica Leodiensia 3), Liège 2014, 26-48.

²³ The *codex miscellaneus* was claimed to belong to the library by James M. ROBINSON already in his article *The Pachomian Monastic Library at the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Bodmer*, *Manuscripts of the Middle East 5* (1990-1991) 26-40, esp. 34. See also W. BRASHEAR – W.-P. FUNK – J. M. ROBINSON – R. SMITH, *The Chester Beatty Codex AC. 1390: Mathematical School Exercises in Greek and John 10: 7-13: 38 in Subachmimic*, Louvain-Paris 1990, 3-32. Lowe had observed the paleographical resemblance between the Montserrat codex and Chester Beatty AC1499: see E. A. LOWE, *Codices Latini Antiquiores. A Palaeographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts Prior to the Ninth Century*. Part 12: Supplement, Oxford 1971, no. 1782. Other formal similarities include page set up and codex typography. A. CAMPLANI, *Per un profilo storico-religioso degli ambienti di produzione e fruizione dei Papyri Bodmer: contaminazione dei linguaggi e dialettica delle idee nel contesto del dibattito su dualismo e origenismo*, *Adamantius 21* (2015) 124-125, also observed the coherence in the Christian contents of the *codex miscellaneus* and some of the Bodmer books.

Much has been written about the Bodmer library or the so-called Dishna papers²⁴, and I do not intend to reopen the question here. The reconstruction of this 'library' is mostly the work of James M. Robinson, who lists almost 60 items that according to him belonged to this same library. This is what Fournet calls the 'maximalist inventory'²⁵. In assembling this list, Robinson did not take into account some important pieces of information such as that provided by R. Kasser: the list of papyri which «ne font pas partie de la grande trouvaille»²⁶. Robinson's tendency to overlook acquisition information and base his hypothesis on unreliable informants is one of the critical points of contention within his reconstruction. In my view there is reason to be cautious about drawing conclusions about the Montserrat roll based on an unreliable piece of information in Chauleur's letter²⁷.

The attribution of this specific roll to the Bodmer library, together with the text it contains, based on paleographical, dialectal, orthographical, bibliological arguments, or even its acquisition, as we have seen so far, might open new questions about the nature of the library itself²⁸. I am aware that the speculations derived from this would lead again to circular arguments, both about the purpose of the roll and about the position a text like the *Letter to Dracontius* might have had within the readership or reading culture of a Christian community or congregation, be it an educational center or a monastic community.

2.3. Pbow or Panopolis

As shown above, there are some material aspects that can help us reconstruct and understand the Bodmer library, and thus find a connection between our roll and other pieces in the reconstructed library. A different question is that of its origin²⁹. Was this the library of the Pachomian monastery of Pbow, as Robinson claims, or did these books belong to a center of high education, perhaps in Panopolis?³⁰

The fact that Chauleur's letter to Roca-Puig mentions the Pachomian monasteries could be used to reinforce the thesis presented by Robinson³¹, but we have to consider the possibility that the introduction of this idea was just a marketing strategy deployed back in the 50s, so I will not force a conclusion on this matter³². There is also the issue about the geographical proximity of the supposed origin of the Bodmer

²⁴ I prefer the name Bodmer Library, because it does not imply a geographical denomination as Dishna. The most recent approach is the monographic section of Adamantius 21 (2015). While this paper was in final production, Brent NONGBRI, *God's Library. The archeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*, New Haven, 2018, appeared, with an extensive study on the acquisition of this hoard(s) and material features of these books.

²⁵ J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 8.

²⁶ R. KASSER, *Introduction*, in *Bibliotheca Bodmeriana. La collection des Papyrus Bodmer. Manuscrits de textes grecs classiques, grecs et coptes bibliques et de littérature chrétienne, du 2e au 9e siècle* (édité par la Fondation Martin Bodmer par les soins de M. Bircher), München 2000, XXIV, n. 5.

²⁷ R. KASSER, *Status quaestionis 1988 sulla presunta origine dei cosiddetti Papiri Bodmer*, *Aeg.* 68 (1988) 191-194, collects two contradictory testimonies: the antique dealer who negotiated its sale to M. Bodmer said on his deathbed that they came from Ed-Debba, 5 km. from Nag Hammadi; M. Bodmer's secretary, on the contrary, claimed that they came from Mina or Minia, in the outskirts of Assiut and that the provenance cited by the antique dealer applied only to P.Bodm. 17, from a different lot. Too much speculation, indeed.

²⁸ A full revision of the proposals for the nature of the Bodmer library is given by J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 15-17.

²⁹ On the proposals, J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 17-19.

³⁰ Contra ROBINSON, see A. BLANCHARD, *Sur le milieu d'origine du papyrus Bodmer de Ménandre*, *CEG* 66 (1991) 211-220; R. CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, Princeton-Oxford 2001, 200, and fn. 74, both say that this hoard must have belonged to a Christian school of advanced learning. See also J.-L. FOURNET, *Une éthopée de Caïn dans le codex des Visions de la Fondation Bodmer*, *ZPE* 92 (1992) 253-266. R. KASSER, *Status quaestionis 1988*, cit., 191-194. R. KASSER, *Lazare conté en un Lyco-diospolitain d'aspect fort étrange (Jean 10,7-13,38)*, in *Christianisme d'Égypte* (Cahiers de la bibliothèque copte 9), Louvain 1995, 21-47, esp. 28, n. 37. But see recently: A. PIETERSMA – S. TURNER COMSTOCK, *Two More Pages of Crosby-Schøyen Codex MS 193: A Pachomian Lectionary?*, *BASP* 48 (2011) 27-46.

³¹ J.M. ROBINSON, *The Story of the Bodmer Library. From the First Monastery's Library in Upper Egypt to Geneva and Dublin*, Cambridge 2013. R. KASSER, *Introduction* (n. 24), XXI-XXXVII.

³² In spite of the connection of some texts with Pachomian content, the association of the Bodmer Library with the Pachomian communities is at least an open question, if not, as many think, very dubious. J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 12, 16-17. A. CAMPLANI, *Per un profilo*, cit., 127.

library and the Nag Hammadi find, which has been an argument, together with codicological and paleographical criteria, for connecting both libraries and proposing a Pachomian origin to both of them³³. All arguments are based on hypotheses and analogies that cannot be proven in a definite way.

As I will suggest later, there are dialectal traits that connect our roll to Achmim. This is again a piece of circumstantial evidence, since both books and scribes have mobility, and different dialects are found in the Bodmer library³⁴. At the risk of falling into the same kind of hypothesis as those criticized above, I will discuss the possibility of the roll belonging to or stemming from a library in Panopolis or the Panopolitan area. In fact, it is not news that the Bodmer library has also been linked to Panopolis. Turner³⁵ already advanced the possibility of Panopolitan origin. Some of the Bodmer rolls were copied on Panopolitan administrative documents³⁶. Gilliam suggests a Panopolitan origin, but in his opinion the use of Latin in some of the pieces of the library contradicts the possibility of the library having belonged to a monastery³⁷. Fournet and Gasco propose new evidence to link the Bodmer library to Dendera, in the Panopolitan nome but very close to Dishna, based on the evidence provided by documents (and the onomastics in these documents) found in the bindings of some of the codices. This evidence also explains the use of Panopolitan administrative documents mentioned above³⁸.

If we want to insist on a Panopolitan origin for our roll, it might well belong to another Achmimic library now being studied by Nathan Carlig. Discovered by G. Maspero at the end of the nineteenth century in Achmim, it is a lot now kept mostly in the Bibliothèque nationale de France³⁹. They are parts of a few codices and a roll in Achmimic and Sahidic Coptic, which contain biblical and apocryphal texts, and can be dated to the fourth-fifth century⁴⁰. Other pieces in Berlin and Vienna could be part of the same lot⁴¹. G. Steindorff

³³ Also led mainly by J.M. ROBINSON, *The Nag Hammadi Story*, Vol. 2: *The Publication* (NHMS 86), Leiden-Boston 2014, 1118-1135. Recently reopened by H. LUNDHAUG – L. JENOTT, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (STAC 97), Tübingen 2015. For a debate on this see E. WIPSYCKA – P. PIWOWARCZYK, *A Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices?*, *Adamantius* 23 (2017) 432-458.

³⁴ A. BOUD'HORS, *Quelques réflexions*, cit., 79-80; J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 17.

³⁵ E.G. TURNER, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction*, Princeton 1968, 51-53.

³⁶ The rolls of the *Iliad* in P.Bodm. 1 (third - fourth cent.) are copied on the verso of a Panopolitan land register (dated to 208/9). See Karolien GEENS, *Panopolis, a Nome Capital in Egypt in the Roman and Byzantine Period (ca. AD 200-600)*, Leuven 2014, 80; L. MIGUÉLEZ CAVERO, *Poems in Context. Greek Poetry in the Egyptian Thebaid 200-600 AD*, Berlin 2008, 221-222. See the codicological argument advanced by J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 14.

³⁷ J. F. GILLIAM, *Some Roman Elements in Roman Egypt*, *Illinois Classical Studies* 3 (1978) 115-131, esp. 128-131: while both Menander and Homer are not out of place in a monastery, Latin is however unexpected. Cf. H.G. EVELYN WHITE, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition. The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes, Part II*, New York 1926, 320-321, for inscriptions on walls of cells with lines of the *Iliad* and Menander's *sententiae*. See also A. STRAMAGLIA, *Fra 'consumo' e 'impegno': usi didattici della narrativa nel mondo antico*, in *La letteratura di consumo nel mondo greco-latino*, a cura di O. PECERE – A. STRAMAGLIA, Cassino 1996, 97-166, esp. 131-135. Other hypotheses propose a Christian secondary school rather than monastic library (see footnote 28). For Latin in Egypt, although no discussion on Latin in a monastery, see J.N. ADAMS, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*, Cambridge, 2004, 527-641, esp. on Latin in the army, 599-623.

³⁸ J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 18.

³⁹ C. LOUIS, *La cachette du monastère Blanc ou l'affaire des papyrus d'Achmim*, in *Pages chrétiennes d'Égypte. Les manuscrits des Coptes*, ed. A. BOUD'HORS, Paris 2004, 20-21.

⁴⁰ U. BOURIANT, *Les papyrus d'Achmim*, in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique française au Caire*, 1, 2 (1885) 243-304; P. LACAU, *Textes coptes en dialectes achmimique et sahidique*, *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 8 (1911) 43-109; U. WILCKEN, *Die Achmim-Papyri in der Bibliothek Nationale zu Paris*, *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (1887) 807-820; U. WILCKEN, *XI. P. Bouriant*, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 8 (1927) 302-308; P. COLLART, *Les papyrus Bouriant*, Paris 1926, 3 and 41a,b; P. COLLART, *Les papyrus grecs d'Achmim à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris*, *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 31 (1931) 33-111.

⁴¹ *Die Apokalypse des Elias. Eine unbekannte Apokalypse und Bruchstücke der Sophonias-Apokalypse. Koptische Texte, Übersetzung, Glossar*, ed. G. STEINDORFF, Leipzig 1899. *Der erste Clemensbrief in altkoptischer Übersetzung*, ed. C. SCHMIDT, Leipzig 1908. See A. BOUD'HORS, *10. Livre des Petits Prophètes en copte (achmimique)*, in *Pages chrétiennes*, cit., 38.

claimed it was the first library of the White Monastery, but without any convincing argument. This hypothesis was adopted by other scholars⁴², but was also rejected later as unlikely for various reasons⁴³.

Since all evidence for a safe identification both of the geographical spot and the nature of the 'library' is circumstantial, we will never really know to which hoard the roll of Montserrat belonged. I prefer to remain skeptical. First, the acquisition information is not clear about the link of the roll to the *codex miscellaneus*, which has been connected to the Bodmer library. Another link between the roll and this library is based on paleographical criteria, which can also be explained by proximity or mobility of scribes. The contents of the books have also been used for the reconstruction of libraries and readerships. More than one hoard, however can have been in circulation and up for sale in those years⁴⁴, and at the same time, the fact that books with different content and different date belonged to the same library in Antiquity has to be considered a possibility as well.

Two of the libraries from the Thebaid, Nag Hammadi and the Theban Magical library, tend to be considered separately in isolation, because of the contents of the books in each of them: gnostic Christianity and Magic. On the other hand, nothing speaks against the possibility of mixed book collections, especially if monastic libraries were fed with books contributed by visitors and neophytes. Multiple efforts have been made to use both the material features and the contents of the books presumably belonging to the Bodmer library in order to establish links between them and the type of library that could have owned them. I think that material features, like codicological format, paleography (even contents), can help reconstruct scriptoria or scribal environments as places where books emanate, while libraries are recipients of books from all possible origins, and the interests of readers or just random book collection are very difficult to reconstruct based on acquisition information fifteen centuries later.

4. WHY A ROLL?

Kahle in 1954 said that papyrus or parchment rolls are an extremely rare format in Coptic literature⁴⁵. Years later, in 2015, Buzi and Emmel⁴⁶ with more evidence in hand would still say that they are 'oddities'. The Montserrat roll can be added to the short list of examples of these oddities. We need to understand the use of the roll in official communication in Christian circles at this date, in order to attempt an approach toward the readership of the Montserrat Athanasius.

The format of the Montserrat piece is that of a horizontal roll, on papyrus, written from left to right in columns. This format is found in Festal letters, a genre that has recently received more attention, not only regarding its texts and contents, but also its formal and material aspects⁴⁷. Festal letters were circulars sent by the bishop of Alexandria to Christian communities, both churches and monasteries in Egypt, with the main purpose of announcing the date of Easter. Part of the content, however, was homiletical, and was thus read aloud in the congregations. Although Athanasius' *Letter to Dracontius* is not a Festal letter, it was most probably sent together with the Festal letter of 354 (as mentioned above)⁴⁸. The use of a format

⁴² T. ORLANDI, *The Library of the Monastery of Saint Shenute at Atripe*, in *Perspectives on Panopolis. An Egyptian Town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest. Acts from an International Symposium Held in Leiden on 16, 17 and 18 December 1998*, ed. A. EGBERTS, B.P. MUHS, J. VAN DER VLIET, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 211-231, esp. 221-222.

⁴³ ORLANDI, *The Library*, cit., 223. A. MARTIN - O. PRIMAVERESI, *L'Empédocle de Strasbourg (P.Strasb. gr. inv. 1665-1666). Introduction, édition et commentaire*, Berlin-New York 1999, 43-50 and K. GEENS, *Panopolis*, cit., 77-84.

⁴⁴ As J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 12, also claims.

⁴⁵ P. KAHLE, *Bala'izah: Coptic texts from Deir el-Bala'izah in upper Egypt*, Oxford 1954, 275.

⁴⁶ P. BUZI - S. EMMEL, *Coptic Codicology*, in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*. COMSt, Hamburg 2015, 137-153, esp. 140.

⁴⁷ On Festal letters on papyrus, see A. CAMPLANI - A. MARTIN, *Lettres festales et listes épiscopales dans l'église d'Alexandrie et d'Égypte*, JJP 30 (2000) 7-20; A. CAMPLANI, *Introduzione*, in *Atanasio di Alessandria*, cit., 25-34. G. BASTIANINI - G. CAVALLIO, *Un nuovo frammento di lettera festale (PSI inv. 3779)*, in *I Papiri letterari cristiani. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi in memoria di Mario Naldini*, a cura di G. BASTIANINI - A. CASANOVA (Studi e Testi di Papirologia, N.S. 13), Firenze 2011, 31-45. M. STROPPA, *Lettre festali su papiro* (forthcoming); M. KONSTANTINIDOU, *Festal Letters: Fragments of a Genre*, cit.

⁴⁸ The reason for this is difficult to assess. It makes sense that the circulation of Festal letters was taken as an opportunity to circulate other materials.

similar to that of Festal letters may suggest that this text was also meant to be read publicly⁴⁹, featuring a catechetical purpose, on a topic of current urgency, such as the ascetic life *vis à vis* the episcopal life. This theme was live in the mid fourth century because several monastic leaders had refused to be appointed bishops and this brought problems for the ecclesiastical administration of the Patriarch of Alexandria⁵⁰. Festal letters issued in Alexandria in Greek had a standardized format and handwriting. They were written on papyrus rolls, along the papyrus fibers, using considerably wide columns. The handwriting is formal, exclusively with examples of Alexandrian uncial, such as PSI XVI 1576⁵¹. This formalized style of the letters is imitated with variable dexterity by the local scriptoria that produced the translations into Coptic according to their needs. For that reason, the formality of ÖNB K 10157⁵², for example, is compromised. This translation of Cyril's Festal Letter of 401 into Achmimic Coptic is written on a roll *transversa charta* in a very sloppy hand⁵³. This confirms that the translations were not produced in Alexandria, but *in situ* according to the needs of each diocese, and using materials at hand. The roll of Montserrat was also produced locally, but imitating the formality of the documents emanating from the Patriarchate.

Apart from the Festal letters, other kinds of letters were written on rolls. As I mentioned above, a distinctive part of the Bodmer library consists of archival copies of official letters of abbots from the Pachomian monastic order written in Coptic. These are kept today in collections connected to the acquisition of the Bodmer library: Cologne, Chester Beatty, and Bodmer. Robinson's arguments for the assignation of these documents to the Bodmer library are precisely based on this acquisition, under the assumption that the material sold in those years in the antiquities market all came from the same find. Moreover, he then claims that these documents confirm the Pachomian origin of the Bodmer library⁵⁴, something that is clearly a circular argument. The fact that these letters are much later (fourth to seventh centuries) than the date of most of the codices of the library is also counter-evidence to this reconstruction⁵⁵. Since there are not many other examples of rolls in Coptic, regardless of the provenance of the Montserrat roll and the Pachomiana, it is undoubtedly illuminating to compare them.

Two of the Pachomian letters are made of papyrus and written horizontally in wide columns, like the Montserrat roll. The other ones are parchment (probably leftovers from the edges of the skins) and written in *rotulus* format, i.e. in vertical roll format. The two papyrus letters⁵⁶ are bibliologically very similar to our roll. Although not written in the same style, one of them, CBL ac.1495, presents similarities in scribal conventions, such as the use of certain diacritics⁵⁷. The other one, CBL ac.1494, is certainly different. The list is as follows⁵⁸:

⁴⁹ This would imply that the format used for festal letters, emanating from the offices and scriptoria of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, was imitated by the Upper Egyptian scribes who wrote the Montserrat and other papyrus rolls (see below). On this see A. CAMPLANI - S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *The Material Support of Festal Letters: uses of the roll in Late Antique Egypt* (forthcoming).

⁵⁰ See D. BRAKKE, *Athanasius*, cit., 103, 108-109.

⁵¹ G. BASTIANINI - G. CAVALLO, *Un nuovo frammento*, cit., 31-45. The sloping pointed majuscule of P.Oxy. LXXVI 5074 (P. ORSINI, *La maiuscola ogivale*, cit., 101) although a formal hand as well, indicates that this is a later copy of the letter or part of it, not an 'official copy'. See in this M. STROPPA, *L'uso di rotoli per testi cristiani di carattere letterario*, APF 59 (2013) 351, n. 11.

⁵² A. CAMPLANI, *La prima lettera festale di Cirillo di Alessandria e la testimonianza di P. Vindob. K 10157*, Aug. 39 (1999) 129-138; A. CAMPLANI - A. MARTIN, *Lettres festales*, cit., 7-20.

⁵³ Other peculiar examples, though not on rolls, are P.Mon.Epiph. 53, 55, and 77: ostraca with titles or dates, extracted from the Festal letters.

⁵⁴ J.M. ROBINSON, *The Story of the Bodmer*, cit. 133-134.

⁵⁵ R. KASSER, *Bodmer papyri*, in *The Coptic encyclopedia* 8 A48b-A53b, already doubts that the Pachomian rolls are part of the Bodmer papyri, as does J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 12, and B. Nongbri, *God's Library*, cit., 191.

⁵⁶ Both by Horsiesis. Described by Tito ORLANDI, *Due rotoli copti papiracei da Dublino (Lettere di Horsiesi)*, in *Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Congress of Papyrology, New York 24-31. July 1980*. ed. R.S. BAGNALL, G.M. BROWNE, A.E. HANSON, L. KOENEN, Chico CA 1981, 499-508.

⁵⁷ See above, in the paleographical description.

⁵⁸ The "Pachomiana", as in J.-L. FOURNET, *Anatomie*, cit., 23-24. I excluded number 2 in that list, because it is a codex: P.Chester Beatty Ac. 2556: Pachomius, *Letters*, 9a, 9b, 10, 11b (Coptic) (sixth cent.) (TM 108078). Papyrus codex (4 folios). I would date number 6 (CBL ac 1495) earlier than the seventh century.

1. P.Bodm. XXXIX: Pachomius, Letter 11b (Coptic). Unpublished. Parchment roll.
2. P.Chester Beatty Ms. W. 145 = P.Köln IV 174: Pachomius, Letters, 1-3, 7, 10, 11a (Greek) (fourth cent.) (TM 62348). Parchment roll.
3. P.Chester Beatty Ac. 1486: Theodore, Letter 2 (Coptic) (sixth cent.) (TM 108130). Parchment roll.
4. Private German collection. Theodore, Letter 2 (Coptic) (fifth cent.) (TM 107787). Parchment roll.
5. P.Chester Beatty Ac. 1494: Horsiesis, Letter 3 (Coptic) (seventh cent.) (TM 108131). Papyrus roll, horizontal.
6. P.Chester Beatty Ac. 1495: Horsiesis, Letter 4 (Coptic) (seventh cent.) (TM 108132). Papyrus roll, horizontal.
7. P.Köln Ägypt. I 8 = P. Köln Kopt. 2: Pachomius, Letter 8 (Coptic) (fifth sixth cent.) (TM 107777). Parchment roll.
8. P.Köln Ägypt. I 9 = P. Köln Kopt. 1: Pachomius, Letters 10-11a (Coptic) (fifth sixth cent.) (TM 101251). Parchment roll.

Although Christian books in the first centuries of Christianity were far more likely to be codices than rolls⁵⁹, the residual use of the latter acquired a special place in Late Antiquity, indeed less prominent than that of the distribution of literary texts, but clearly with a specific purpose representing a cultural practice. While the rolls for Classical texts were meant for performative oral reading⁶⁰, once they were replaced by the codex in the transition that took place over the first four centuries of our era, their cultural status necessarily had to change. The book-format has important implications as to the purpose of the copy.

The papyrus horizontal roll can be explained within the sociology of oral performance connected to the communication of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Its purpose was not purely archival, as it was also meant to be read in public, for the edification of a Christian community⁶¹ (in the case of the Pachomiana and the Montserrat roll, judging by the contents, a monastic community).

The two formats –horizontal roll and vertical *rotulus*- might have represented different purposes or might have different prestige. We probably do not have enough evidence from this early period to establish a difference⁶². In fact, the *rotuli* belonging to the Pachomiana mentioned above are not very helpful in this respect. While they present some formality in their handwriting, they are written on what seem to be remains or clippings from the edges of parchment skins, which were often found used for private documents⁶³. Only one of them⁶⁴ is a series of parchment sheets sewn together to form a ca 90 cm long *rotulus* with a somewhat formal presentation. For this reason it is difficult to tell if these vertical rolls in parchment had some liturgical purpose, as did the much later examples from Byzantine times⁶⁵. The fact that they use marginal materials as a medium might support Choat's⁶⁶ claim that they represent a stage in the collection of the letters, previous to the one represented by letters already collected and copied in codices.

⁵⁹ For recent and full debates about this, see L. HURTADO, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts Manuscripts and Christian Origins*, Gran Rapids 2006; R.S. BAGNALL, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, Princeton 2009.

⁶⁰ W.A. JOHNSON, *Toward a Sociology of Reading in Classical Antiquity*, *AJPh* 121.4 (2000) 593-627.

⁶¹ Cf. *First Greek Life of Pachomius*, 99: «This text we have just written, we have not written for the sake of writing but as a memorial, as is the case with the letters that holy bishops and fathers have written for edification, ...» (translation A. VEILLEUX, *Pachomian Koinonia*, Kamalazoo (MI) 1980, vol. I, 366).

⁶² L. SANTIFALLER, *Über späte Papyrusrollen und frühe Pergamentrollen*, in *Speculum Historiale. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung*, ed. C. BAUER, L. BOEHM, M. MÜLLER, Freiburg-München, 1965, 117-133, is the first attempt at listing the evidence in Greek and Latin.

⁶³ See for example, P. Köln inv. 10213.

⁶⁴ No. 2: Chester Beatty W 145, containing the Greek text of a Pachomian letter. Cf. H. QUECKE, *Die Briefe Pachoms. Griechischer Text der Handschrift W. 145 der Chester Beatty Library eingeleitet und herausgegeben* (Textus patristici et liturgici quos edidit Institutum Liturgicum Ratisbonense 11), Regensburg 1975.

⁶⁵ For liturgical scrolls, see V. MARINOS, *Liturgical Scrolls*, in *A Companion to Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts*, ed. V. TSAMAKDA, Leiden 2017, 310-318. There are fragments of some, Sinai, Monastery of St Catharina Sinaiticus MG 87, P. ORSINI, *Manoscritti in maiuscola biblica*, Cassino 2005, 139, says it was produced in Constantinople. See L.W. DALY, *Rotuli: Liturgy Rolls and Formal Documents*, *GRBS* 14.3 (1973) 333-338. See also C. GRASSIEN, *Un nouveau rotulus liturgicus: le P. Vindob. G 26064 + 26091 + 35761*, in *Proceedings of the 24th International Congress of Papyrology*, Helsinki, 1-7 August, 2004, ed. J. FRÖSÉN, T. PUROLA, E. SALMENKIVI (Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 122:1), Helsinki 2007, 395-406.

⁶⁶ M. CHOAT, *Monastic Letter Collections in Late Antique Egypt: Structure, Purpose, and Transmission*, in *Cultures in Contact: Transfer of Knowledge in the Mediterranean Context. Selected Papers*, ed. J.P. MONFERRER-SALA, S. TORALLAS TOVAR, Córdoba-Beirut 2013, 73-90.

5. CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GREEK TEXT

The Greek text of Athanasius' *Letter of to Dracontius* has been recently edited in the volumes of *Athanasius Werke*⁶⁷. The literary corpus of Athanasius has reached us in four different traditions and families of manuscripts (*a, b, x, y*), of which only 'a' and 'b' transmit the text of our letter, in eight different manuscripts. The b-tradition, represented by manuscripts DWNV(Z) seems to be the Vorlage for the Coptic text presented in the Montserrat roll. Opitz characterized this tradition as 'antiochenisches Korpus'⁶⁸. It is found in the citations made by Theodoret in *Historia ecclesiastica*⁶⁹, and is also the basis for the Latin and the Syriac translations of Athanasius' works⁷⁰. From the manuscripts in the tradition, which attest the text of the *Letter to Dracontius*, the closest to the Coptic text is W (=Athos Vatopedi Ms. gr. 7), an eleventh century parchment codex, which is one of the earliest manuscripts for Athanasius⁷¹.

To demonstrate the alignment of the Montserrat text with tradition 'b', I provide below two examples, presenting the Greek text, with the variant in W, and the Coptic translation⁷².

Greek text with variants (W)

9.2 ὡςπερ καὶ ἐπισκόπους πατέρας τέκνων καὶ μοναχοῦς ἐξ ὀλοκλήρου γένους τυγχάνοντας.

W ἐξ ὀλοκλήρου ἀγνοῦς τυγχάνοντας.

9.2 καὶ πάλιν εἶδομεν κληρικούς πινῶντας, μοναχοῦς δὲ νηστεύοντας.

W καὶ πάλιν εἶδομεν κληρικούς πίνοντας

Coptic text (with translation)

col. 5.14-16 ⲛⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲓⲥⲕⲟⲓⲣⲟⲥ ⲁⲓⲱⲟⲡⲉ | ⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧⲓⲧⲓ ⲛⲁⲓⲛⲣⲉ ⲁⲓⲱ ⲛⲓⲛⲟⲛⲁⲕⲟⲥ ⲁⲓⲱⲟⲡⲉ ⲉϥⲧⲃⲃⲛⲓϥ | ⲟⲩⲁⲃⲟⲗ·
(«just as the bishops who have become fathers of children and the monks who are purified to the extreme»).

col. 5 16-17 ⲁⲓⲱ ⲟⲩ ⲁⲓⲛⲟ ⲁⲓⲛⲟ ⲉⲕⲕⲓⲣⲓⲕⲟⲥ ⲉϥⲥⲱⲛⲓ ⲛⲟⲛⲁⲕⲟⲥ ⲁⲓⲱ ⲉϥⲓⲛⲓⲥⲧⲉϥⲉ·
(«and again we have seen clerics who drink and monks who fast»).

The Coptic text presents also peculiar differences when compared to the Greek text. There are a few omissions and additions of words or expressions. I will present below the two most relevant examples:

1) In the final paragraph of the letter, Athanasius mentions his envoys to Dracontius. The Greek text has Hierax the presbyter, known in other Athanasian writings⁷³, and Maximus the reader, who is otherwise unknown. Where the Greek versions present «Hierax the presbyter and Maximus the reader», the Coptic translation has «Hierax and the other Hierax, the presbyters»:

10.5 τούτου δὲ χάριν προετρεψάμην ἐλθεῖν τοὺς ἀγαπητοὺς ἡμῶν Ἰέρακα τὸν πρεσβύτερον καὶ Μάξιμον τὸν ἀναγνώστην,

col. 6, 7-8 ἱεραξ ⲁⲓⲱ | ⲛⲓⲕⲉⲓⲣⲁⲗⲥ ⲛⲉⲓⲣⲉⲥⲃⲩⲧⲉⲣⲟⲥ

2) Most interestingly, there is a whole extra paragraph following a lacuna in the third column of the roll. The text should follow the end of paragraph 5 of the Greek text, since, at the end of column 3, the Coptic text catches up with the Greek text for paragraph 6.1. The new Coptic text is reproduced below as an advance view of the full version to come in the published critical edition:

1 []..ⲙⲉⲉϥ.[
[.] ⲉⲣⲉⲛⲓⲟⲓⲥⲉ[.]ⲛⲓⲧⲣⲧⲓⲕⲥ ⲛⲓⲧ[

⁶⁷ *Athanasius Werke*, ed. H.-G. OPITZ, and later H.-C. BRENNECKE - U. HEIL - A. VON STOCKHAUSEN, Berlin 1934-2012. For a study of the textual tradition of Athanasius, see H.-G. OPITZ, *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung der Schriften des Athanasius* (AKG 23), Berlin-Leipzig 1935, and the introduction to *Athanasius Werke. Zweiter Band. Die "Apologien"*, 8. *Lieferung*, ed. H.C. BRENNECKE - U. HEIL - A. VON STOCKHAUSEN, Berlin-New York 2006, XIII-CXXVIII.

⁶⁸ H.-G. OPITZ, *Untersuchungen*, cit., 190-203.

⁶⁹ See *Athanasius Werke*, II.8, ed. H.-C. BRENNECKE - A. VON STOCKHAUSEN, cit., LXXXII.

⁷⁰ On this see *Athanasius Werke*, II.8, ed. H.-C. BRENNECKE - A. VON STOCKHAUSEN, cit., LXIX-LXXV. Unfortunately, we do not have a translation of this letter into either of these languages, so we cannot confirm that the other translations would have followed this Greek text for precisely this letter, but it is the most likely hypothesis.

⁷¹ See *Athanasius Werke*, II.8, ed. H.-C. BRENNECKE - A. VON STOCKHAUSEN, cit., LV. I am extremely grateful to Annette von Stockhausen for sending me the scans of the microfilm which have allowed me to confirm the text.

⁷² I leave for the final edition a complete list of variants, which sum up to ca 15.

⁷³ *H. Ar.* 72, 4; *Fug.* 7,4, *Ep. Adolph.* 8.

tory and opening formulaic elements (if such elements ever existed) trimmed off in their transmission⁷⁶. The fact that the formula is preserved and distinctively highlighted by using a different handwriting, more cursive and slightly larger, might be proof that this letter is not archival but still preserves its epistolary characteristics. This ties up with the interpretation of the use of the papyrus roll as book format in Late Antiquity as described above. It is difficult to tell whether the scribe in the farewell formula is the same as the one that wrote the rest of the text. If it is a different one, a further question is whether this is a later addition, and represents a later life of the text.

6. THE TRANSLATION

Alberto Camplani has recently outlined⁷⁷ some of the main questions regarding translation in the Early Coptic world, such as the social context and selection of texts connected to the needs, liturgies, and linguistic development of the emerging Coptic Christian communities. The specific “type” of translation represented by the Montserrat roll belongs within a wider translation movement, which generated, as its most prominent product, standardized versions of biblical and patristic texts. This cultural mechanism has to be understood in a linguistic background, in which language choice is also a cultural choice⁷⁸, as Greek and Coptic were used side by side in a constantly shifting linguistic milieu in Egypt in which different motivations prompted changes in the balance between these languages in the period of transition in which the Montserrat translation was produced.

A passage in one of the Lives of Pachomius (Bo §189) illustrates the precise circumstances of translation and readership related to the Montserrat roll. Pachomius' successor Theodorus is explaining Athanasius' letter of 367 CE to the monks. He then orders the monks to translate it: «once they had translated it into the Egyptian language, he deposited it in the monastery, in order that it would become their rule»⁷⁹.

As for the Coptic translations of Athanasius, his works were translated into Latin and Syriac, as mentioned above, but also into Coptic. We have a complete translation of the Life of Anthony⁸⁰, different manuscripts for collections of his Festal Letters⁸¹, and other works of contested attribution⁸².

As we have argued on historical grounds, the text was probably translated in the Thebaid, and not sent in translation from Alexandria. This is confirmed by the fact that the Coptic text of this translation is standard fourth-century Sahidic, with some dialectal deviations typical of the south. Either the scribe was copying a Sahidic translation and inadvertently let some dialectal traits slip in, or he translated himself imperfectly. While I intend to prepare a full analysis for the future publication of this roll, I will describe some of these traits, in order to give an idea of the variants⁸³. One finds ⲙⲛⲟ for ⲙⲛⲁϥ, the adverb ‘there’, like in ⲛⲉⲧⲙⲛⲟ (col. 3, 12), but also ⲛⲉⲧⲙⲛⲁϥ (col. 5, 8), as well as ⲛⲟ for the verb ⲛⲁϥ, ‘to see’, in ⲁⲛⲛⲟ (col. 5, lines 12 and 16). This would be frequent only in dialect A (although it may occasionally occur in the Manichaean corpus I4 and in documentary southern Sahidic). The variants ⲩⲁⲣⲡⲓ for ⲩⲟⲣⲡⲓ (col. 3, 18), ⲛⲁⲃⲉ for ⲛⲟⲃⲉ (col. 5, 4) and ⲙⲉϥ for ⲙⲉϥⲉ (col. 4, 4) are also to be noted, as well as the preposition ⲁ for ⲉ (col. 5, 12).

⁷⁶ M. CHOAT, *Early Coptic Epistolography*, cit., 173, n. 115.

⁷⁷ A. CAMPLANI, *Il copto e la chiesa copta. La lenta e inconclusa affermazione della lingua copta nello spazio pubblico della tarda antichità*, *Atti del I Dies Academicus*, Milano 2015, 129-153. A. CAMPLANI, *Sulla multifunzionalità del tradurre in copto: note sparse su frammenti copti tardoantichi, Cicerone e moderne ipotesi di ricerca*, in *Egitto crocevia di traduzioni*, ed. F. CREVATIN, Trieste 2018, 101-144.

⁷⁸ J.-L. FOURNET, *The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* ed. R.S. BAGNALL, Oxford 2009, 418-451; S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *Identidad lingüística e Identidad Religiosa en el Egipto Greco-romano*, Barcelona, 2005; S. TORALLAS TOVAR, *Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. PAPACONSTANTINOU, Aldershot 2010, 17-43.

⁷⁹ S. Pachomii *vita bohairice scripta*, ed. L.Th. LEFORT, (CSCO 89, C 7), Louvain 19532, 175-178, in particular 178.

⁸⁰ S. Antonii *Vitae. Versio sahidica*, ed. G. GARITTE (CSCO 117, C 13), Paris-Louvain 1949.

⁸¹ *Lettres festales et pastorales en copte*, ed. L.-Th. LEFORT, cit.

⁸² Like the *Canons*, W. RIEDEL - W.E. CRUM, *The Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria. The Arabic and Coptic Versions Edited and Translated with Introductions, Notes and Appendices*, London-Oxford 1904. For a complete list, see CMCL, cc 0089.

⁸³ I owe much of this to the invaluable help of W.-P. Funk.

Lexical variants with southern flavor are: ρ-μαιζε (col. 5, 12) 'to be astonished' for ρ-απιηρε, which in fact is translating the Greek σημεία ποιοῦντας (9, 2), perhaps 'to work miracles'; or ρητε for ρε, 'manner', in ἄπιρητε (col. 3, 5). The use of ειρε in the adoption of loan words in ατοῦρπροκοπται (col. 4, 18) is also to be noted.

The two most striking deviations are the use of the negative causative imperative ἄνιτῶω|πε (col. 3, 9-10) for the regular ἄπῖτρε-, which appears in the same col. 3, 13-14 ἄπῖτρεϥϥμβογλεγε and 17 ἄπῖτρεϥϥτηη. In col. 6, 8, ἴνα χαγαπροτρεπε ἴμοκ translates the Greek ἵνα καὶ ... σε προτρέψωνται. One would expect χε(κααα) εγα-. The tense used here is the absolute future or third future with the coalescing χε in front of it (χαγα-), as normal in dialect A. The redundant use of ἴνα is not surprising. It is even spelled without the hori, which is rare but not impossible (cf. P.Kell.Copt. 50.39).

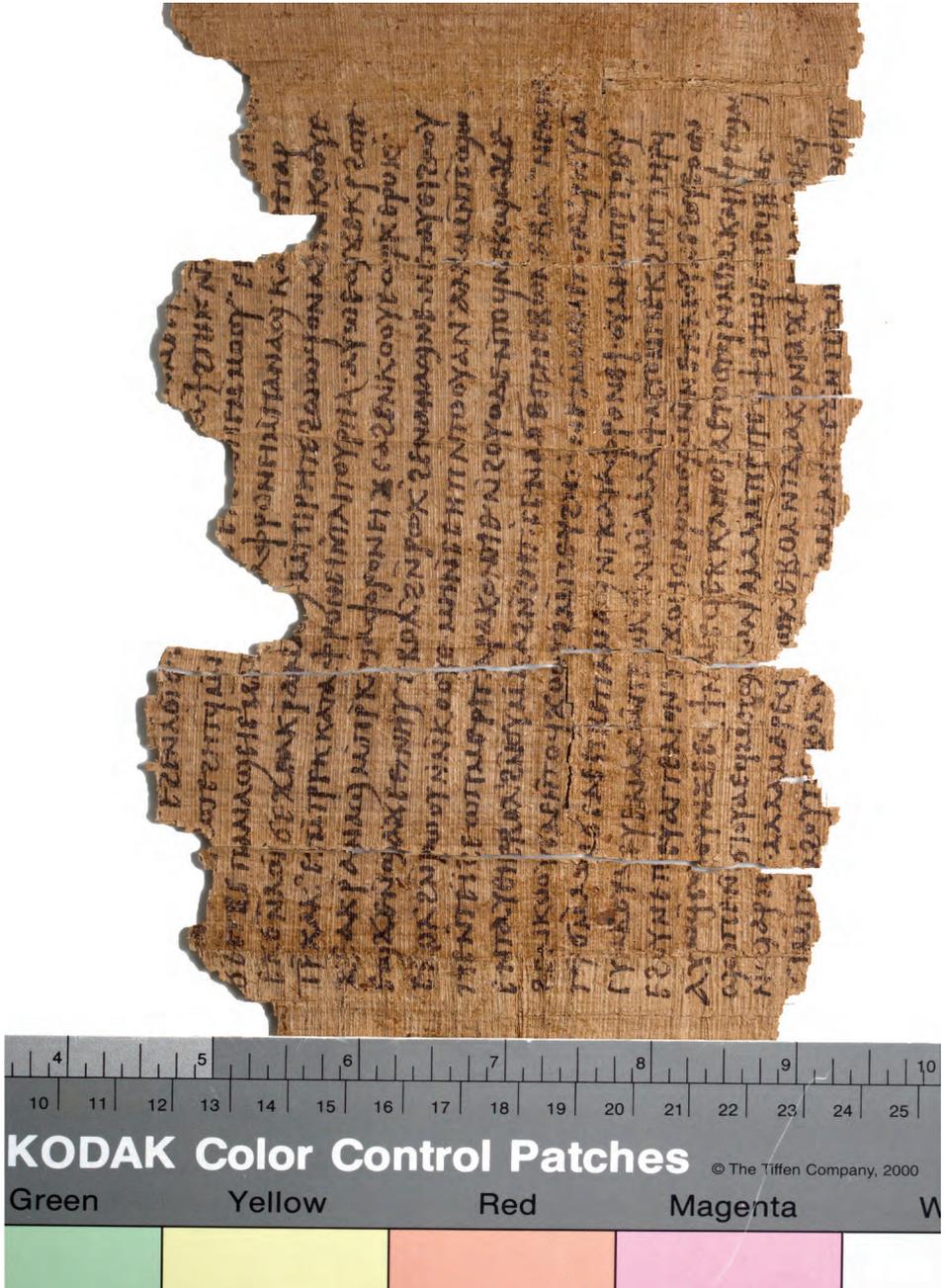
7. EPILOGUE

The Montserrat roll is not only the vehicle for a text not heretofore known in its Coptic translation, but also a historical artifact. It was copied at a date very close to the date the *Letter to Dracontius* was produced by Athanasius and perhaps also sent to the dioceses. Many questions are immediately opened about the circumstances of translation, copying and circulation of this roll. I have attempted to present some of these in this paper with the hope of developing them and others in a larger future publication which will include a full edition of this invaluable new Coptic text.

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Abstract. P.Monts.Roca inv. 14 (LDAB 749338) is a papyrus scroll containing the Coptic translation of Athanasius' *Letter to Dracontius* (CPG 1132, CC 0932). The philological significance of this version is here discussed with some examples of variants (including a new paragraph of the text, probably omitted in the whole Greek tradition because of haplography in the archetype). This roll opens also many questions about issues such as communication of the patriarchate of Alexandria in the fourth century with the rest of Christian Egypt, the use of this particular format of manuscript, the translation of official documents.

Keywords. Coptic manuscripts. Coptic Rolls. Athanasius of Alexandria, *Letter to Dracontius*. Coptic translations.

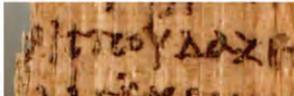
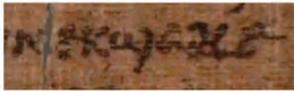


P.Monts.Roca inv. no. 14, Col. 3

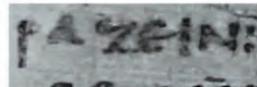


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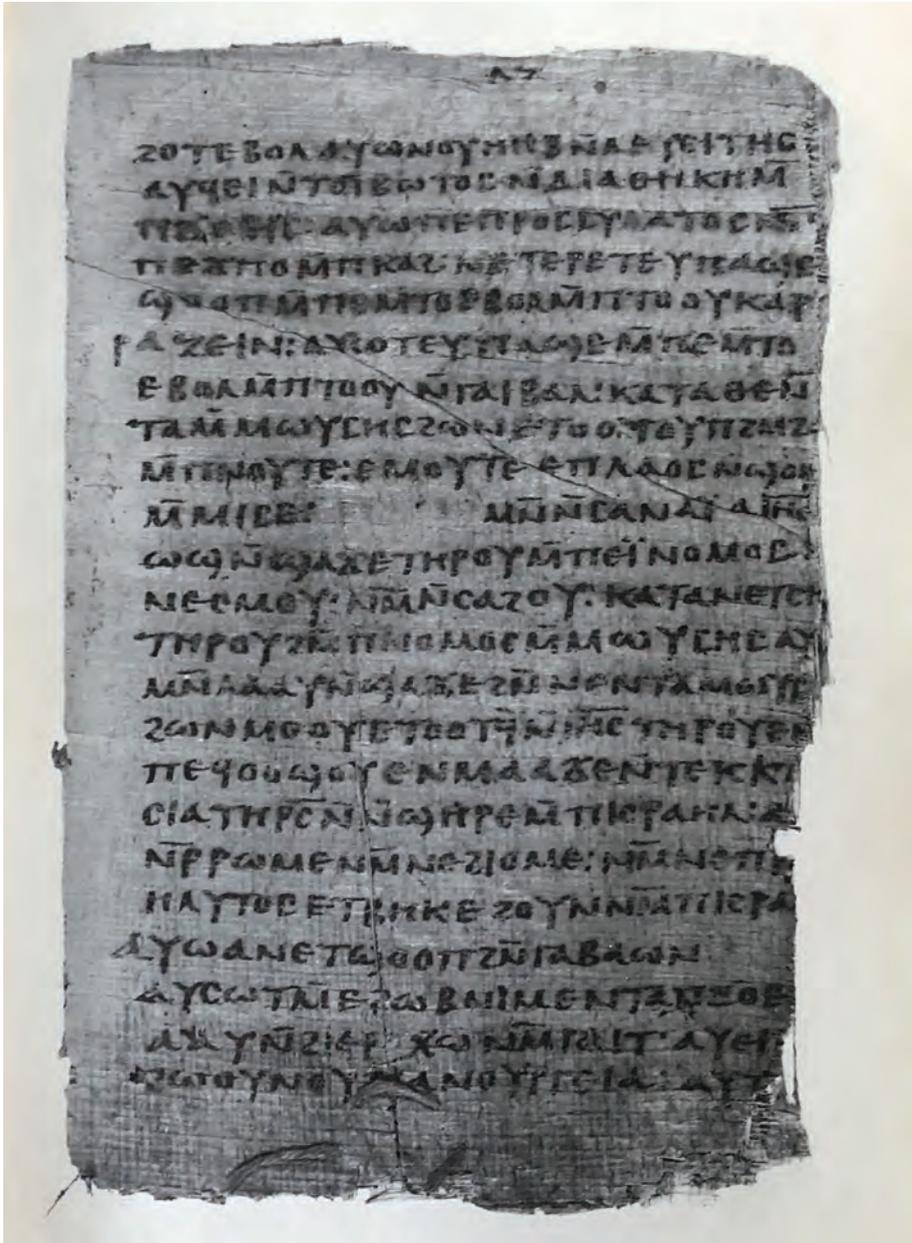
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P.Bodmer XXI



Comparison between P.Monts.Roca (color) and P.Bodmer XXI (black and white)



P.Bodmer XXI

**The Coptic Papyrus Codices Preserved in the *Museo Egizio*, Turin:
New Historical Acquisitions, Analysis of Codicological Features, and Strategies
for a Better Understanding and Valorization of the Library from Thi(ni)**

by
Paola Buzi

This article aims at describing the new data, which have been recently acquired concerning the arrival of the Coptic papyrus codices preserved in the *Museo Egizio*, Turin, and at the same time at illustrating the first results of an accurate autoptic codicological analysis conducted within the other scientific activities and goals of the 'PATHs' project¹.

The Turin Coptic codices represent a rare example of a well-preserved late antique institutional library that reflects the literary tastes and dogmatic orientations before what can be defined as the ninth-century Coptic book revolution², which significantly changed bookmaking in Christian Egypt³.

The progressive shift from papyrus to parchment as a writing support was a technical innovation that directly affected the number of works transmitted by a single manuscript and sometimes even its contents. In this respect, the Turin Coptic codices – probably datable between the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth – are the latest known example of an Egyptian library entirely transmitted by papyrus codices, and offers a rare occasion to study the criteria by which several literary works were assembled in one codex and, at the same time, to analyse the technical features of the late Coptic papyrus book.

AMEDEO PEYRON AND HIS WORK ON THE COPTIC CODICES OF TURIN

As is well known, the Coptic literary manuscripts of Turin – consisting of a number of quasi-complete codices⁴, plus some fragments still awaiting an accurate codicological reconstruction – were purchased in Egypt by Bernardino Drovetti⁵.

In 1824, Charles Felix, the duke of Savoy, Piedmont, and Aosta and the king of Sardinia, entrusted the philologist Amedeo Peyron (Turin, 1785-1870)⁶ with the task of arranging the famous Egyptian collection of Bernardino Drovetti. Such acquisition would have rounded out the collection established about fifty years earlier by Charles Emmanuel III for the *Museo della Regia Università*. That earlier purchase constituted the first nucleus of the future *Museo Egizio*.

After having been stored at least since 1820 in two warehouses in Livorno, where it was visited by several scholars and potential buyers, the Drovetti collection was finally escorted, in 1824, to Turin with all due

¹ This research has been funded by the European Research Council, Horizon 2020 Programme, with an ERC Advanced Grant 2015 destined to support the project "Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context: Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage", project no. 687567 [<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/>]. I am very grateful also to Christian Greco, Director of the *Museo Egizio*, and to Susanne Töpfer, who is responsible for the papyri preserved in the museum, for making this research possible, thanks to a formal cooperation with the author of this pages within the scientific activities of the 'PATHs' project. On the project, see P. BUZI – F. BERNO – J. BOGDANI, *The 'PATHs' Project: an Effort to Represent the Physical Dimension of Coptic Literary Production (Third–Eleventh centuries)*, COMSt Bulletin 4.1 (2018) 39-58.

² P. BUZI, *The ninth-century Coptic book revolution and the emergence of Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, in *The Emergence of Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, eds. A. BAUSI, M. FRIEDRICH, M. MANIACI (Studies in Manuscript Cultures, 17), Berlin - Boston 2019, forthcoming.

³ P. BUZI, *Amedeo Peyron and the Coptic codices from This*, EDAL 5 (2015-2016) 57-67.

⁴ Normally described as seventeen codices, the Turin Coptic manuscripts are in reality at least twenty, although some of them appear in a very fragmentary status.

⁵ G. BOTTI, *La collezione Drovetti e i papiri del R. Museo Egizio in Torino*, Rendiconti Accademia dei Lincei xxx (1922) 128-315.

⁶ S. BASSI, *La vita e gli studi di Amedeo Peyron (1785-1870)*, Torino 1961; G.F. GIANOTTI, *Peyron, Amedeo Angelo Maria* in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 82 (2015), electronic version: [[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/amedeo-angelo-maria-peyron_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/amedeo-angelo-maria-peyron_(Dizionario-Biografico))] (last accessed: December 2017).

fanfare by the numismatist and conservator Giulio Cordero, the count of San Quintino (Mondovì 1778 – Turin 1857)⁷.

As one of the officially designated members responsible for the arranging of the collection, Amedeo Peyron at first concentrated his attention on thirteen Hellenistic papyri, which he published in the «Memorie della Reale Accademia delle Scienze di Torino»⁸. In the meantime, however, he had started to collaborate with Jean-François Champollion on the study of some hieroglyphic papyri, contributing in that way to the birth of Egyptology discipline in Turin⁹.

Compared to his studies devoted to philology and Greek papyrology, however, the crucial importance for the development of Coptic Studies of his research on the Coptic papyrus codices preserved in the *Museo Egizio* has passed virtually unnoticed.

Amedeo Peyron, after a first disappointment¹⁰, due to the physical conditions of the codices, gave a classification and a first codicological description of seven of them – still valid –¹¹ as he himself explains in the preface of his *Lexicon linguae copticae*¹².

Although it was Francesco Rossi who published almost the whole of the Turin Coptic codices¹³, we have now enough information to deduce that it was Amedeo Peyron who originally intended to do so. It was probably for this reason that he transferred some leaves of the Coptic papyrus codices to his residence¹⁴. Francesco Rossi informs us about the patience with which Peyron worked on the manuscripts and provides us with useful information concerning their conservation:

Con diligenza e pazienza maggiori d'ogni lode, [Peyron] condusse a termine in breve tempo il difficile compito. Fatti incollare su leggiera e trasparente carta quei fragilissimi fogli, con quella profonda conoscenza, che aveva di queste due lingue [egiziano e copto], li classificò tutti con sapiente ordine, secondo il loro contenuto, e dei papiri greci, che erano in piccolo numero, fece una quanto mai fedele ed esatta trascrizione, che venne poscia pubblicata con traduzione latina e dotti commenti nei volumi di questa Accademia. I papiri copti, che erano molto più numerosi, furono da lui divisi per materia in sette codici, di cui diede una descrizione sommaria, ma esatta, nella prefazione del suo impareggiabile *Lexicon* copto, ove egli li cita con tutte le altre fonti, a cui attinse per la compilazione di questo suo ammirabile lavoro¹⁵.

⁷ CORDERO DEI CONTI DI S. QUINTINO, *Notizie intorno alla collezione di antichità egiziane del cav. Drovetti*, *Giornale Arcadico* 19 (1823) 3-31.

⁸ A. PEYRON, *Papyri graeci Regii taurinensis Musei Aegyptii I, Taurini 1826*; ID., *Papyri graeci Regii Taurinensis Musei Aegyptii II, Taurini 1827*.

⁹ As regards the two scholars' collaboration and the invitation made by J.-F. Champollion to A. Peyron to share with other colleagues the results of their common research, see A. PEYRON, *Lexicon linguae copticae, Taurini 1835*, VIII.

¹⁰ A. PEYRON, *Saggio di studi sopra papiri, codici cofti, ed uno stele trilingue del Regio Museo Egiziano*, Torino 1824, 11.

¹¹ T. ORLANDI, *Les papyrus coptes du Musée Egyptien de Turin*, *Le Muséon* 87 (1974) 139-151.

¹² A. PEYRON, *Lexicon*, cit. xxv-xxvi.

¹³ F. ROSSI, *I papiri copti del Museo Egizio di Torino*, 2 voll., 10 fascicoli, Torino 1887-1892; ID., *Un nuovo codice copto del Museo Egizio di Torino*, *Atti Accademia dei Lincei* v (1893) 3-136. Before Rossi, Paul de Lagarde and Eugène Revillout had already published some works of the Turin collection: E. REVILLOUT, *Le Concile de Nicée, d'après les textes coptes*, *Journal Asiatique* VII (1873) 210-288; ID., *La vie du bienheureux Aphou, évêque de Pemdje (Oxyrinque)*, *Revue Égyptologique* 3 (1885) 27-33; ID., *Le martyre de St. Ignace*, *Revue Égyptologique* 3 (1885) 34-37; see also E. REVILLOUT, *Rapport sur une mission en Italie*, *Archives des Missions scientifiques et littéraires* 3/4 (1877) 444-494. On Francesco Rossi's work see R. ATKINSON, *On Professor Rossi's Publication of South-Coptic Texts*, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* III (1893-1896) 24-99.

¹⁴ Tito Orlandi, informed by Andreas Wittenburg (Munich), reveals us this habit, which is now confirmed by Peyron's papers preserved in the National Library of Turin.

¹⁵ «With a diligence and patience above and beyond the call of duty, he [i.e. Peyron] quickly carried out the difficult task. After having glued those extremely fragile sheets to light and transparent paper, he used his profound knowledge of these two languages [i.e. *Egyptian and Coptic*] to classify all them in an intelligent manner according to their contents, and he made an extremely faithful and precise transcription of the few Greek papyri that there were, publishing them with a Latin translation and erudite notes in the volumes of this Academy [i.e. *Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*]. The Coptic papyri, which were much more numerous, were subdivided into seven codices according to subject, and he gave a brief but correct description of them in the preface to his incomparable *Coptic Lexicon*, where he cites them together with all of the other sources that he drew upon in compiling this admirable work». F. ROSSI, *Trascrizione di alcuni testi copti tratti dai papiri del Museo Egizio di Torino*, *Memorie Accademia delle Scienze di Torino* II.36 (1884) 3-4.

We learn, therefore, that Amedeo Peyron made use of the texts transmitted by the codices of Turin to extract *lemmata* to be used for the realization of his *Lexicon*, which was a work that was mainly conceived to contribute to the study of the Egyptian language¹⁶. In this respect, it should be stressed that Amedeo Peyron was one of the pioneers to arrange the *lemmata* of a Coptic dictionary according to the roots, a not following the simple alphabetic order.

In brief, the composition of the *Lexicon linguae copticae*¹⁷ and of the *Grammatica linguae copticae*¹⁸, that are widely recognized as milestones in the history of Coptic studies¹⁹, strongly depend on the classification and cataloguing of the Coptic manuscripts of Turin²⁰.

In the *Note e giudizi delle proprie opere dell'Ab. Amedeo Peyron*, the Turin scholar himself explains his work, revealing at the same time his pride at the results achieved and hardly hiding his severe reserves towards the work of Henry Tattam, who had just published another lexicon of Coptic language:

Impiegai dieci anni in questo lavoro ingrattissimo. Ben io sapeva, che il Silvestre Sacy in una sua *Memoria* letta all'Istituto di Francia aveva riprovato il consiglio di seguitare l'ordine analitico delle radici nella formazione di un lessico Copto, tuttavia io seguitai quest'ordine nel mio *Lexicon*. Il Sacy fu talmente leale, che nel rendere conto del mio Lessico nel *Journal des Savants, mars 1836*, pag. 147, lodò il mio metodo. Contemporaneamente al mio comparve in Oxford, 1835, il *Lexicon Aegyptiaco-Latinum* di Enrico Tattam; egli stesso in Parigi me ne fece cortese dono, ed io, lui presente, notai nelle sole prime pagine errori non lievi. Il suo Lessico morì appena nato, il mio fu accettato e seguito da tutti. Il Tattam era un pensionato dell'Università di Oxford, che viveva beatamente facendo lavorare la sua figlia più che ventenne; questa in Parigi copiava i manoscritti Copti, e somministrava il materiale a suo padre, che anche ad ora tarda si godeva le oziose piume. La figlia meritava rispetto per la sua scienza Copta²¹.

This brief summary has just the aim to illustrate what there is behind the well-known work of Francesco Rossi, whose edition of most of the Turin texts – with all its limits – is still extremely useful.

There is no need, on the other hand, to explain here the pivotal importance of the work of Tito Orlandi on the Turin codices, in terms of both classification and edition. His two articles, published in 1974 and in 2013 respectively²², not only represent the best comprehensive study and *status quaestionis* of this set of manuscripts, but are the basis of any further study and edition.

Concerning this last aspect, it is useful to report that there are several scholars who at the moment are working at the edition or re-edition of the texts transmitted by the Turin codices. Among the others, Jean-Daniel Dubois is preparing a new edition of the *Acta Pilati* (Codex II), Christian Bull and Alexandros

¹⁶ S. DONADONI, *Il copto del Peyron*, in *Giornata di studio in onore di Amedeo Peyron* (Torino, 4 ottobre 1996), a cura di S. CURTO, Firenze 1998, 27-32.

¹⁷ A. PEYRON, *Lexicon*, cit.

¹⁸ A. PEYRON, *Grammatica linguae copticae*, Taurini 1841.

¹⁹ Both works were based on the teaching received from Tommaso Valperga di Caluso (Turin, 1737-1815) – who, under the pseudonym of Didymus Taurinensis, had published a pioneering work entitled *Litteraturae copticae rudimentum*. T. VALPERGA DI CALUSO, *Litteraturae copticae rudimentum*, Taurini 1783.

²⁰ For a description of the Egyptian collection of Turin in the period of the arrival of the Coptic codices see G. CORDERO DI SAN QUINTINO, *Notizie intorno alla collezione di antichità egiziane del cav. Drovetti*, *Giornale Arcadico* XIX (1823), 3-31; G. BOTTI, *La collezione Drovetti e i papiri del R. Museo Egizio in Torino*, *Rendiconti Accademia dei Lincei* xxx (1921) 128-149; R.T. RIDLEY, *Drovetti Bernardino*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 41 (1992) 712-716; S. CURTO, *Carlo Vidua e il Museo Egizio di Torino*, *Studi Piemontesi* 16 (1987) 437-444.

²¹ «I spent ten years in this ungrateful task. I was well aware that, in a *Memoire* which he read at the French Institute, Silvestre Sacy had criticized the plan of following the analytical order of the roots in forming a Coptic lexicon. However, I followed this order in my *Lexicon*. Sacy was so honest that he praised my method when reviewing my *Lexicon* in the *Journal des Savants, mars 1836*, page 147. At the same time as mine, there appeared at Oxford in 1835 the *Lexicon Aegyptiaco-Latinum* of Henry Tattam. In Paris he kindly made a gift of it to me, and, in his presence, I observed that in just the first pages there were errors of no small importance. His *Lexicon* died newborn, whereas mine was accepted and used by everyone. Tattam was a retired professor of Oxford University who led a happy life by giving work to his daughter in her early twenties. She copied the Coptic manuscripts in Paris, and furnished the material to her father who loved to work even late into the night. Tattam's daughter deserved respect for her knowledge of Coptic». A. PEYRON, *Note e giudizi delle proprie opere*, contained in B. PEYRON, *Per le nozze di Teresa Peyron – Melchior Pulciano*, Torino 1879, 15.

²² T. ORLANDI, *Les papyrus coptes du Musée Egyptien*, cit.; T. ORLANDI, *The Turin Coptic papyri*, Aug. 53 (2013) 501-530.

Tzakos are working at the *Vita Epiphani* (Codex XV), Tito Orlandi himself is studying, with Awad Wadi, the *In Athanasium* attributed to Cyril of Alexandria (Codex XIV), and, lastly, Alberto Camplani and Federico Contardi are using the Turin version of the *Canones Basilii* (Codex XIII) for the edition of the same work transmitted by a codex found in Thebes²³.

Although the object of several specific studies – mainly philological, however –, the Coptic papyrus codices of Turin have still much to say and the following pages try to illustrate the research activities which have been planned within the 'PATHS' project, in agreement with the director of the Museo Egizio, Christian Greco, and in collaboration with Tito Orlandi, in order to valorize them and to make them better known.

ON THE PROVENANCE OF THE COPTIC PAPYRUS CODICES OF TURIN

If the exact provenance of the Turin codices, as well as the origin of the copious unidentified literary fragments of the Turin collection of Coptic literary manuscripts, does not seem to be not explicitly mentioned in any modern document or report, a provenance from Thi (or Thin, or Thinis), the modern Ġirgā²⁴, is highly sustainable, and in fact has been already compellingly proposed by Tito Orlandi and by others.

A book-list pertaining to one codex – that for the remaining part has disappeared – mentions the property of the cathedral of Thi(ni)s, which fact makes it quite reasonable to deduce that the entire group of codices had its origins in that ecclesiastical and cultural institution. The book-list in question is transmitted by Ms. Provv. 6266²⁵ and contains a scribal subscription informing us about the owner institution, the «catholic church» of Thi(ni)s (ἸΤΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΗ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΝΤΙΝ) and the identity of the copyist, the «humblest reader» (ΠΕΛΛΗΧΙΣΤΟΣ ΝΑΝΑΓΗΩΣΤΗΣ) Geōrgios. A numbered list of the contents of the lost book follows (ΝΑΪ ΝΕΤΣΗΖ ΕΠΕΙΧΩΜΕ)²⁶.

No less important is Ms. Provv. 8548²⁷, a single leaf that carries only the scribal subscription – a prayer on behalf of the donor of the manuscript –, which very likely concluded a codex. Another possibility, according to Tito Orlandi's opinion²⁸, is that this last fragment represented a model to be used to write colophons. In any case, in such text an anonymous woman is said to have donated a book to the monastery of St. John the Baptist in Thi(ni)s (ΕΠΤΟΠΟΣ Ἰ[π]Ι[ρ]ΑΓΙΟΣ ΑΓΑ [Ι]Ω[ρ]ΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΑΠΤΙΣΤΗΣ ἸΤΙΝ). Eugène Revillout, the first scholar to deal with the document, informs us that Ms. Provv. 8548 was originally found with the leaves (*en tête de la masse*) of Codex III, while van Lantschoot's reading of the slightly damaged toponym following the mention of the *topos* quoted in Ms. Provv. 8548 confirms a provenance of the Turin codices from Thi(ni)s²⁹.

It is possible that the «catholic church» mentioned in the first colophon was part of the monastery (?) of St. John the Baptist cited by the second document, as Ewa Wipszycka suggested³⁰.

²³ A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea. A New Coptic Codex*, in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th-19th, 2008*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 247, a cura di P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI, Louvain 2016, 970-992; A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution of the Coptic codices preserving the Canons of Saint Basil, with Edition of the Ordination Rite for the Bishop (Canon 46)*, in *Philologie, Herméneutique et Histoire des Textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever Voicu*, éd. di F.P. BARONE, C. MACÉ, P.A. UBIERNA, Turnhout 2017, 139-159.

²⁴ About this place see TRMM, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit*, I-VI, Wiesbaden 2007, VI, 2682-2685.

²⁵ A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil des colophons*, Louvain 1929, I.1, 180-181, n° CV.

²⁶ P. BUZI – J. BOGDANI – N. CARLIG – M.C. GIORDA – A. SOLDATI, 'Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths': A New International Project on Coptic Literature, *Rivista del Museo Egizio* 1 (2018) [https://rivista.museoegizio.it/article_category/volume-1-2017/]

²⁷ E. REVILLOUT, *Le Concile de Nicée d'après les textes coptes*, VII.1 (1873) 218-219; A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil des colophons*, cit., 181-182, n° CVI.

²⁸ Expressed orally, on the occasion of the conference "The Coptic book between the 6th and the 8th century", Rome, 21-22 September 2017.

²⁹ See Orlandi, *Les papyrus coptes*, p. 116, as well as Orlandi, *The Turin Coptic Papyri*, 525.

³⁰ I am grateful to Ewa Wipszycka for confirming this hypothesis, again on the occasion of the conference "The Coptic book between the 6th and the 8th century" (21 September 2017). On the "catholic church" in Coptic sources see E.

The edition and English translation of these two scribal subscriptions is part of the work carried out by Agostino Soldati for the 'PATHs' project. A complete census and edition – both traditional and electronic, the latter destined to be hosted by the 'PATHs' database – of all the colophons preserved in the Coptic manuscripts between the 3rd and the 11th centuries is one of the aims of the project³¹.

OTHER LEAVES BELONGING TO THE THI(NI)S LIBRARY: EXPLORATION OF THE 'HIDDEN TREASURES' OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF TURIN AND OF THE STOREROOMS OF THE MUSEO EGIZIO

We now know, thanks to the exploration of the "Fondo Peyron" of the National Library of Turin (BNT), that not only took Amedeo Peyron some leaves of the codices from Thi(ni)s to his residence, in order to study them, but also that he owned an indeterminable number of fragments – literary and documentary – which he had received directly from Drovetti. Unfortunately, it is not possible to ascertain more precisely when this donation took place, because most of the papers and notes of Peyron's dossier have no date. Among the materials of the "Fondo Peyron" of the National Library of Turin, for instance, there is a folder classified as «Gnosticismo», where we read:

Un consimile papiro, donatomi dal cav. Drovetti, contiene pure una preghiera indiritta al Padre onnipotente, alla mente nascosta del Padre ...³²

It was Peyron himself who donated his papers and some manuscripts to the National Library of Turin, but unfortunately in the night between 25 and 26 January 1904 a fire destroyed part of the section of the library where Greek and Oriental manuscripts were preserved. The remaining part of Amedeo Peyron's archive, together with the library and the documents of other members of the family, originally preserved in a private property in Cavour, near Turin, was sold to the Italian State in 1969.

The "Fondo Peyron" documents the activities of the Peyron family in the period between Bernardino Drovetti (1780-1865) and Peyron's homonymous grandnephew (1904-1937) and is articulated in several sections, each of them pertaining to a member of the family. A complete inventory of it was completed only in 1993³³, a fact that explains why it still largely remains to be explored by specialists.

The part of the archive dedicated to Amedeo is subdivided into several thematic sections³⁴. In that section denominated "Egittologia e coptologia", the following documents are to be found:

- Papiri documentari e iscrizioni greco-egizie³⁵
- Papiri demotici³⁶
- Scrittura ieratica e geroglifica³⁷
- Copto³⁸

WIPSYZKA, *Katholikai et les autres épithètes qualifiant le nom ἐκκλησία. Contribution à l'ordre hiérarchique des église dans l'Égypte byzantine*, JJP 24 (1994) 203-224 and M.C. GIORDA, *Monachesimo e istituzioni scolastiche in Egitto. Alcuni casi di interazione e di integrazione*, Bologna 2010, 37.

³¹ In a second phase, meaningful textual elements – such as names and professions of copyists, names of commissioners and patrons, places, architectural typologies, ethnic groups, etc. – will be extrapolated from the electronic edition of colophons, my means of tags, in order to provide valuable information to sketch a geography of the book production. The same method, for the same purposes, will be applied also to the electronic edition of titles.

³² «A similar papyrus that was donated to me by cav. Drovetti contains a prayer addressed to the Almighty Father, to the hidden mind of the Father...». BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», Mss. 196, not-numbered leaf, *sine data*.

³³ A complete inventory of the "Fondo Peyron" (299 pages) is preserved in the National Library of Turin, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Books (BNT, Cons. Mss. 8 Gallo 2).

³⁴ The section of the "Fondo" pertaining to Amedeo includes 16 manuscripts of different origin, which give a clear idea of his multiform interests: 7 manuscripts in Hebraic language, some of which are liturgical; a manuscript of the 18th century preserving a Syriac grammar in Latin translation, originally belonging to Tommaso Valperga di Caluso; an Arabic manuscript of liturgical contents; a Copto-Arabic manuscript; 2 Greek manuscripts of the 14th century belonging to Amedeo Peyron; 2 Latin manuscripts; a 15th century-manuscript containing the *Life of Niccolò Acciaiuoli* by Matteo Palmieri; a 17th century English manuscript with biblical meditations.

³⁵ BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», Mss. 129-134, 160. This section also includes transcriptions and notes used for the realization of *Papyri Graeci Regii Taurinensis Musei Aegyptii*.

³⁶ BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», Mss. 129-134, 160.

³⁷ BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», Mss. 129-134, 160.

³⁸ Among the other documents and papers, this section includes: a draft and an incomplete version of the *Lexicon lin-*

From these papers, we learn, for instance, that Amedeo Peyron was well acquainted with the collection of Henry Salt, which he had visited in Livorno in 1826 thanks to the intercession of Jean François Champollion³⁹. The archive also includes transcriptions of articles and works by Jean-François Champollion, Thomas Young⁴⁰, Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838)⁴¹, and others⁴², all of them testifying to the solid network of scholarly relationships maintained by the Turin scholar with several international colleagues, mainly Egyptologists.

The most important 'discovery' in the "Fondo Peyron", however – due to the work of Paolo De Silvestri⁴³ –, is that of two leaves (BNT, Peyron, Ms. 157)⁴⁴ belonging to one of the papyrus codices from Thi(ni)s⁴⁵, which transmit a passage of the *Vita Athanasii*, edited by Francesco Rossi and later Tito Orlandi⁴⁶, both of whom did not know of the existence of these fragments when they published the text.

The two leaves (see the Appendix to this article), which correspond to pages 35-38 of Codex IX and measure 313 x 222 mm 307 x 226 mm max. respectively, are to be added to two other unpublished leaves from the same codex, identified with the label "Dono Peyron - 1983" and preserved under glass in the *papiroteca* of the *Museo Egizio*, but in a different dresser from that where the Thi(ni)s codices are stored. Although the page numbers are not very readable, it is reasonable to infer that they correspond to pages 25-28 of Codex IX and again they were not known to Rossi or Orlandi.

Moreover, in the cupboards of the Museo Egizio several other little Coptic fragments, in part certainly from the same Thi(ni)s codices, are preserved. Some of them had already been seen and analyzed in the 1970s by Tito Orlandi, while some others, preserved in cardboard folders, still have to be completely explored, because nobody was aware of their existence until some months ago.

Unfortunately, both Bernardino Drovetti and Amedeo Peyron are very laconic concerning the exact circumstances of the acquisition of all these manuscripts, an aspect that the 'PATHs' project is trying to clarify⁴⁷. What is sure, however, is that the Coptic papyri seem to be mentioned for the first time in an unpublished letter that Carlo Vidua – who convinced Drovetti to sell his Egyptian collection gathered in Upper Egypt to the Savoy family – sent to the count Prospero Balbo⁴⁸. This report mentions about 3,000 items, including

guae Copticae with several notes destined to the writing of *Grammatica linguae Copticae*; a printed copy of the *Lexicon* with personal notes; the transcription of some texts of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, copied on the occasion of a trip to Paris in 1836; notes to the Catalogue of the Borgian Coptic manuscripts written by Georg Zoëga; notes on manuscripts received as a gift by Bernardino Drovetti; fragments of papyrus and paper Coptic manuscripts; a magical text (Peyron, Mss. 158-159) and a not identified fragment.

³⁹ Peyron was morally committed with Champollion not to publish or circulate the papyri that he could study only thanks to his intercession.

⁴⁰ BNT, *Fondo Peyron*, «Amedeo», Mss. 227, 13.

⁴¹ BNT, *Fondo Peyron*, «Amedeo», Mss. 226, 104.

⁴² Jean Antoine Letronne (1787-1848), BNT, *Fondo Peyron*, «Amedeo», Mss. 226, 67. and Philipp Karl Buttmann (1764-1829), BNT, *Fondo Peyron*, «Amedeo», Mss. 135, 1-3.

⁴³ In 2009 Paolo De Silvestri had carried out, under my supervision, a research on the "Fondo Peyron" in the National Library of Turin. His premature deceases, at the age of 43 (2012), has unfortunately prevented him from collecting the fruits of his efforts.

⁴⁴ The leaves are numbered with a modern label from 36 to 38; one of them is not numbered. In the folder preserving the leaves there is also a drawing declared as a reproduction of p. 37, which however is a graphic reproduction of p. 35.

⁴⁵ Museo Egizio 63.000, Codex IX = Codex CML (= Coptic Literary Manuscript) ID 54, according to the classification of the 'PATHs' project = Codex GIOV.AJ, according to the classification of the Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari (CMCL) [<http://www.cmcl.it/>] (last accessed: November 2017). It corresponds to number 7119, according to A. FABRETTI – F. ROSSI – R.V. LANZONE, *Catalogo generale dei musei di antichità e degli oggetti d'arte raccolti nelle gallerie e biblioteche del Regno edito per cura del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Serie Prima - Piemonte*, II, Roma 1888, 310.

⁴⁶ F. ROSSI, *I Papiri copti del Museo Egizio*, cit., 3-136; T. ORLANDI, *Testi copti. 1. Encomio di Atanasio, 2. Vita di Atanasio*, Milano-Varese 1968; ID., *Les papyrus coptes du Musée Égyptien*, cit., 115-127. The *Vita Athanasii* (6th century) is transmitted also by codex MONB.GY (= CLM 418) and by few other fragments: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Copt. C31; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Copt. E28, f. 2 and Wien, Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, K 2941A-I.

⁴⁷ Maria Chiara Giorda, in particular, has explored – and is still exploring – the archives and documents of the *Museo Egizio* itself and of the *Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, discovering new elements related to the way the codices reached Turin.

⁴⁸ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, PVC, II, *Lettera a Prospero Balbo*, Torino 29 Ottobre 1822. R. COALOA, *Carlo Vidua romantico atipico*, Casale Monferrato 2003, 130-131. On Vidua see S. CURTO, *Carlo Vidua e il Museo Egizio di Torino*,

the papyrus Coptic manuscripts.

It remains to be clarified, on the other hand, the provenance of the parchment Coptic book (Ms. Provv. 7117)⁴⁹ which was published by Paul de Lagarde in 1883⁵⁰ and was already mentioned in the anonymous “Catalogue de la collection d’antiquités de mons. le chev. Drovetti” (1822)⁵¹. Was it purchased with the papyrus codices? Was it originally part of the same library of the papyrus codices? Answering to these questions would contribute to delineating more precisely the nature and the entity of the Thi(ni)s library. Moreover, seven papyrus codices are listed in the just mentioned anonymous catalogue⁵² and these are very likely the same manuscripts which are described by Peyron in his *Lexicon*, but why the other codices are not mentioned? Were they acquired slightly later? It is clear that much remains to be clarified.

THE CODICOLOGICAL FEATURES OF SOME CODICES

Already before the official starting of the ‘PATHs’ project, a formal agreement between the direction of the *Museo Egizio* on the one side and the author of these pages on the other for the realization of an analytical catalogue of the Coptic codices from Thi(ni)s had been established. The new energies and competences acquired thanks to ‘PATHs’ permit to plan an even more detailed study of the Turin manuscripts, not only of the literary aspects of their texts, but also of their material features.

It is superfluous to stress the enormous importance of the possibility to analyze a consistent group of manuscripts characterized by the same writing support – unless it will be found out that the parchment codex published by de Lagarde was also part of the same library – and by a common provenance – whose geographical identification is almost sure, as we have seen –, and by a certain number of scribes, whose hands are very marked and defined, manuscripts that have reasonably been manufactured in the same atelier or at least in workshops located not too far from one another.

In brief, the study of this library will contribute to the advancement of what we know about the papyrus Coptic book that is still lacking a systematic and diachronic study.

Two missions for autoptic analysis of the codicological features of Codices I-X have been carried out in April and October 2017 respectively⁵³, and thanks to them it was possible to elaborate a detailed codicological description of this first group of codices. It turned out that they are less regular than they appear at a first look, also in terms of composition of quires. Moreover, very often the fibres of the codices show manufacturing defects or negligences.

Studi Piemontesi 16 (1987) 437-444.

⁴⁹ The codex is bound in a modern (beginning of the 19th century?) leather bookbinding that collects in reality three different codicological units: 1) CC 0762, *Syrach*, 0,30-33, 1,1.3-51,30; CC 0761, *Liber Sapientiae* 1,1-19,22 (= sa 98); 2) CC 0761, *Ps.* 101,4-29 (= sa 99); 3) CC 0762, *Syrach* 0,1-22.24-25; 1,1-2 (= sa 100). K. SCHÜSSLER, *Biblia Coptica. Die koptischen Bibeltexte, Band I. Das sahidische Alte und Neue Testament. Lieferung 4: sa 93-120*, Wiesbaden 2000, 21-24. It is interesting to observe that de Lagarde had seen the codex when it had already been bound in the modern volume. Remaining of the original bookbinding of the first codicological unit and of its wooden plates are preserved with the call numbers Provv. 7117/1 and 7117/2.

⁵⁰ P.A. DE LAGARDE, *Aegyptiaca*, Gottingae 1883, nos 3-4.

⁵¹ This catalogue is contained in *Documenti inediti per servire alla storia dei Musei d'Italia* v. III, Firenze-Roma 1880. The parchment codex is marked by no. 145.

⁵² These are marked by nos. 125-131.

⁵³ Such autoptic analysis was conducted at first by Agostino Soldati, Maria Chiara Giorda and the author of these pages in April 2017 and then by Nathan Carlig and again the author of this article from 23 to 26 October 2017. Both visits were prepared and followed by an accurate study of the photographs, kindly provided by the *Museo Egizio*. After the conclusion of this article, two more missions have been carried out by Nathan Carlig (22-26 October 2018 and 22-24 January 2019), who is charged with the codicological chapter of the future catalogue dedicated to this ancient library.

In Codex I⁵⁴ the fibres are heavily damaged, above all the horizontal ones (Fig. 1). Moreover, the codex makes use of a mixed system of page ordering that combines pagination and foliation.



Fig. 1 - Turin, Museo Egizio, Codex I, f. 13r.

⁵⁴ CLM 45; GIOV.AA, according to the CMCL classification.

Codex III⁵⁵ shows that the making of the codex is not always accurate and that the rolls from which the *bifolii* have been obtained are sometimes re-used. For the making of f. 25, which corresponds to pages 75-76 (οε/ος), for instance, a protocol has been re-used (Fig. 2). This causes an unaesthetic mixed direction of the fibres on the same page. The presence of a protocol, however, is extremely interesting, because it testifies to the fact that the Thi(ni)s codices cannot be dated before the second half of the 7th century.



Fig. 2 - Turin, Museo Egizio, Codex III, f. 25v

⁵⁵ CLM 47; GIOV.AC according to the CMCL classification.



Fig. 3 - Turin, Museo Egizio, Codex II, f. 17v

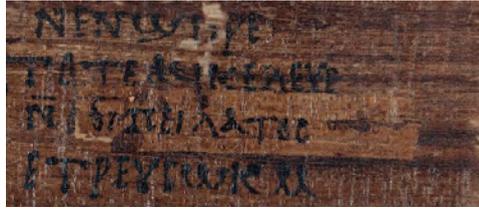


Fig. 4 - Turin, Museo Egizio, Codex II, f. 18r

In Codex V⁵⁶ the fibres are often irregular and corrugated. This is the case, for instance, of f. 5 (Jerome the Presbyter, *Vita Hilarionis*). Codex II⁵⁷ shows several restorations or, better, integrations of the fibres, obtained by means of little strips of papyrus, and re-writings of small sections of the text⁵⁸ (Figg. 3-4). In Codex VI⁵⁹ the fragment preserved under glass 6 was repaired with a strip whose fibres are oriented differently from those of the page (Fig. 5).⁶⁰ Moreover, *kollēseis* are very frequent and very visible (13 *kollēseis* are visible in Codex I, while 10 in Codex IV), that is another sign of the fact that the choice of the material used for these codices was not always of the best quality. These very preliminary observations of the physical features of the Turin codices will be corroborated by the next missions destined to codicological study⁶¹. Moreover, in 2018 the first mission destined to archaeometric analyses of the inks will be conducted in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (Hamburg University) and the Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung (BAM, Berlin)⁶².

The library of Thi(ni)s represents a crucial and transitional moment 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 definitive affirmation of multiple-text codices.

The layout of the codices is normally in two columns – with five exceptions – the writing is in evolution, and the titles always stand before the works they refer to. *Subscriptions* (or final titles) occasionally survive, but no longer represent the main titles. As for the contents, there is a meaningful presence of Greek patristic works translated into Coptic in the fifth century (the so-called “classical translations”, according to Tito Orlandi’s classification), some apocrypha (such as the *Acta Pilati*), old-style works that reflect the theological controversies of the end of the 4th century (for instance, the *Vita Aphou*, transmitted exclusively by a Turin codex), some original works of the 6th century (such as Damian of Alexandria, *De Nativitate*), a few pseudoepigraphal works and a selection of normative works, such as the *Gnomai Concilii Nicaeni*, and last but not least the *De iudicio* of Shenoute, which represents, so far, the most ancient manuscript

⁵⁶ CLM 49; GIOV.AE according to the CMCL classification.

⁵⁷ CLM 46; GIOV.AB according to the CMCL classification.

⁵⁸ For instance on f. 15v.

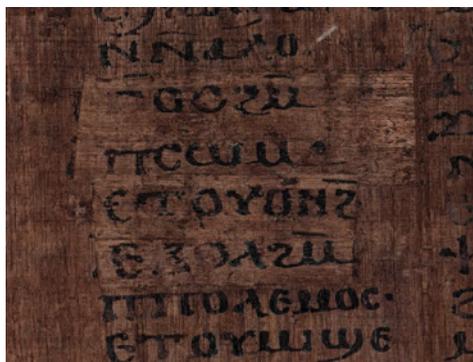
⁵⁹ CLM 50; GIOV.AF according to the CMCL classification.

⁶⁰ According to Alin Suciu the integrations could have been caused by the necessity of correcting the text (personal communication, 17.09.2018), although no similar cases are known.

⁶¹ In parallel with the cataloguing of the Coptic papyrus codices, Agostino Soldati has been charged with the edition of unpublished Greek and Coptic documentary fragments – mainly private letters of monastic context and administrative documents, apparently from the Memphite nome –, studying which he found out that W.E. Crum knew very well these texts and made use of them for some of the entries of his dictionary.

⁶² Tea Ghigo, a PhD student supervised in cotutelle by Oliver Hahn and Ira Rabin for Hamburg University and myself for Sapienza University of Rome, is charged with the above mentioned archaeometric analyses. On 6 October 2017 preliminary measurements of a selection of fragments have been conducted, in my presence, by Ira Rabin and Myriam Krutzsch, who made use of a Dino-Lite digital microscope. In May 2018 Tea Ghigo has integrated first results with other measurements, by means of XRF and Raman techniques. For the first results of these two sessions of analyses see T. GHIGO ET AL., *An Attempt at a Systematic Study of Inks from Coptic Manuscripts*, *Manuscript Cultures* 11 (2018) 157-164.

transmitting a work of Shenoute⁶³. It is useless to stress how important is the presence of this work in the Thi(ni)s codices for the reconstruction of the dissemination of the works of the archimandrite of Atripe. For all these reasons it is essential to go deeper in the codicological, palaeographical and philological analysis of Turin codices, in order to better define the history and the context in which they were produced, used, stored and circulated.



Turin, Museo Egizio, Fig. 5 - Codex VI, glass 67 r

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Literary Texts in their Geographical Context.

Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage»

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Abstract. This article aims at describing the first results of accurate autoptic codicological analyses conducted on the papyrus codices preserved in the *Museo Egizio*, Turin, within the other scientific activities and goals of the 'PATHs' project (Rome). The Turin codices represent a rare example of a well-preserved late antique institutional library that reflects the literary tastes and dogmatic orientations before what can be defined as the ninth-century Coptic book revolution, which significantly changed bookmaking in Christian Egypt. The definitive shift from papyrus to parchment as a writing support was a technical innovation that directly affected the number of works transmitted by a single manuscript and sometimes even its contents. In this respect, the Turin codices – probably datable between the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth – are the latest known example of an Egyptian library entirely transmitted by papyrus codices, and offers a rare occasion to study the criteria by which several literary works were assembled in one codex. Moreover, the edition of two unpublished leaves of Codex IX, preserved in the National Library of Turin, is provided.

Keywords. Coptic literature, Coptic libraries, papyrus codices, codicology, This/Thinis.

⁶³ A. BOUD'HORS, *Réflexions sur l'existence d'une littérature pseudo-chénoutienne en copte*, in *Philologie, herméneutique, et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident*, cit., 121-138.

APPENDIX: EDITION OF THE LEAVES BELONGING TO CODEx IX PRESERVED IN THE BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE DI TORINO (BNT, FONDO PEYRON, «AMEDEO», MS. 157)⁶⁴

[p. λϵ]

ταψχη παραυε εχνητηνε	... my soul will rejoice for the peace
νητεκκλησια εμπατηβωκ	of the Church before I go
ωαπνουτε [να]ι δε ντε	to God. When Pappoute and Hamate
ρουχοου και νει παπνουτε	told me these things,
μη ραματε · αιμοουε εν	5 I walked relying
τηκ ηρητ εχνη νωαχε η	on the words
πρωμε σναγ αντωνιος	of these two men, Antony
μη παρωμο εροου εγνος	and Pachomius the Great, more than on
νηστρατευμα ηματοι εφ	a big army
οχηρ ησωι · αιμοουε	10 following me. I walked
δε ωαντηπωρ επτοου η	until I reached the mount
προση διαπαντα ενετ	of Nitria. I met the
ογααβ ηπ[να] ετημαγ ετε	saint (men) of that place
[.....π]επερσβυτερος	who..... the presbyter
μη απα παμβω · μη αρσηνιος	15 and apa Pambo and Arsenios
μη παχων · μη θαναηλ ηι	and Pachon and Thanael the
ρωμε ετογααβ · αυω ητι	saint men and then
ρε ακαταντα ερακοτε ·	we reached Rakote.
μηησα ρενκογι δε ηροου	After a few days
αιβωκ ερατη ηπρω · η	20 I went to the emperor.
ταιβωκ σε ηαω ηρε ητησο	I went there I do not
οχη αν εβολ δε τηροτε ε	know how, since I am scared
χοοσ ετβε πεσεεπε ηα	to say it because of the remains of
πιστος και ετω(τ)ρωρ ρη	the unbelievers, who are disturbed in
πεγνους εγκομηι ρη	25 their minds showing off in
οχηπιστις εωροχητ ·	a vacuous faith.
[η]τερημοοσ δε εχνητεμ	After I sat on the
[ρω] ηθαλασσα ανοκ μη	seashore, I and
[πρ]εφροτε ρητη ηπνουτε	the God-fearing
[ηπρ]εσβυτερος επεφραν	presbyter, whose name

12 The Coptic toponyms associated with Nitria are the following the: πτωου ηπροση, πτωου ηπροση, ηπρωουχ. S. TIMM, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit. Eine Sammlung christlicher Stätten in Ägypten in arabischer Zeit, unter Ausschluss von Alexandria, Kairo, des Apa-Mena-Klosters (Dēr Abū Mīna), der Skētis (Wādī n-Naṣrūn) und der Sinai-Region*, I-VI, Wiesbaden 1984-1992, III, 978-985, s.v. Gabal Barnūg; Pleiades GeoID 727177.
17-18 lege ητηρε.

⁶⁴ See figg. 6-9. I am grateful to Anne Boud'hors and Alberto Camplani for their help in reading some problematic passages. For the edition of the other leaves, see T. ORLANDI, *Testi Copti. 1. Encomio di Atanasio, 2. Vita di Atanasio*, Milano 1968.

p. 15

<p> πε εσιδαωρος · πεχαϊ ναϥ δε ερεπαρητ μοκῆ ετβε ἡεπισκοπος · δε οϥ αρ[α] πενταϥωπε ἡ μοο[ϥ] η οϥ πε νταπῆρο 5 ααϥ ναϥ · πεσῆρ ἱαρ ἡθα λασσα οὔηϥ · εἶναϥωρ γαρ εροοϥ ἡαϥ ἡροοϥ · τῶμ δε ἡτασϥωπε ἡἡο[η] ἡἡναϥ ετἡμαϥ νογεβολ ἡμον α[η] 10 τε · ἀνοκ ἱαρ ἀἡῖογελαχι ετος ἡρε[ϥερ]νοβε · ἀλλα τεϥπἡρ[ε ἡτασϥωπε] [ῖη]ἡεϥλη τε ἡἡκακαριος ἀντωνιος ἡἡ παρῶμο ἡῖηῖαλ ἡπεχῶ · τεϥπἡ 15 ρε ετἡμαϥ οὔοῖβ επαρη λιας ἡἡ ελισταιος ἡἡναϥ ἡἡταϥχιορ ἡἡπορδανης νετἡμαϥ ἡεν εϥχε η 20 ταϥπωρῶ ἡἡμοοϥ εὔμοοϥε [ῖ]ἡεϥερ[ητε] ἀνον σε ἡἡῖηρε ἡτε[κκλη] 25 σια ἡἡπενμοοϥε εἡ[τηρϥ] ἀλλα ετι εἶαϥχε ἡἡ [ιςιδω] ρος ετβε πτωϥ ἡἡ[νοϥτε] αὔνοσ ἡῖροτε ρε εχἡ[πα] ῖἡηβ · ἀνοκ σε ἀπχ[οεις] †ῶμ ναἰ ετρα[ναϥ ε] </p>	<p> is Isidoros, I told him: «My heart was pained for those bishops. What happened to 5 them? Or what the emperor did to them? The distance over the sea is long. In how many days I will be able to reach them? The strength which occurred to us 10 in that moment did not come from us. I am indeed the last of the sinners but the miracle [occurred through] the prayers of the blessed 15 Antony and Pachomius the Great the slaves of Christ. That miracle overcame that of Elias and Eliseos when they passed the Jordan. 20 They, when they divided the water, were walking [.....] We, on the other hand, sons of [Church] did not walk at all». </p> <p> 25 But I was still talking with Isidoros And a great fear fell on my sleep. As for me, the [Lord] gave me the power to see </p>
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10 ετἡμαϥ is written between the ninth and the tenth line.

p. λζ

ΝΕΖΗΟΤ ΕΤΪΕΙΡΕ Η̅ΝΗΟΟΥ Η̅Ν
 Η̅ΑΪ ΕΤΒΕ ΤΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑ Η̅ΤΕΪ
 ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΔΙΨΩΠΕ
 ΕΙΡΗΣ ΨΑΝΪΝΑΥ ΕΤΕΪ ΘΕΩΡΙΑ
 Η̅ΪΝΑΨΩΡΞ ΔΝ ΕΠΕΣΕΟΥ
 ΔΦΑΖΕΡΑΤΕΪ ΖΙΔΩΪ Η̅ΣΙ ΟΥΝΟΣ Η̅
 ΡΩΜΕ Η̅ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΕΝΕΣΩΦ Ε
 Η̅ΑΤΕ ΕΡΕΠΕΦΖΟ ΜΕΖ Η̅ΧΑΡΙΣ ·
 ΕΡΕΟΥΣΤΟΛΗ Η̅ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΘΟΟΛΕ
 ΕΠΕΦΗΑΚΞ ΕΡΕΟΥΚΛΟΗ ΖΙ
 ΧΗ̅ΤΕΦΑΠΕ ΕΦΟ Η̅ΟΥΘΕΙΝ
 ΕΡΕΨΟΗΤΕ ΝΣΦΡΑΓΙΣ ΟΥΤ
 ΕΡΟΥ · ΕΡΕΟΥΣΕΡΩΒ Η̅ΟΥΘ
 ΕΙΝ ΖΗ̅ΤΕΦΟΙΧ Η̅ΟΥΝΑΗ · ΕΡΕ
 ΟΥ... ΠΡΙΣ ΕΣΟ Η̅ΠΟΙΚΙΛΤΗΣ
 ΟΥΤ ΕΧΗ̅ΤΕΦΜΕΣΘΗΤ · ΕΡΕ
 ΟΥΖΒΣΩ Η̅ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΖΙΔΩΦ
 Η̅ΠΑΧΑΗ Η̅ΠΕΧΙΩΗ ΕΝΕΣΩΦ
 Η̅ΣΑΣΑ Η̅ΗΗ · ΔΝΟΚ ΔΕ ΔΙΨΤΟΡ
 ΤΡ̅ ΕΠΔΗ Η̅ΠΙΣΟΥΩΗΪ · ΝΕ
 Η̅Η̅ΤΗΞ ΓΑΡ Η̅ΜΟΥ ΖΩΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
 ΟΥΤΕ ΟΗ Η̅Η̅ΡΩΜΕ Η̅ΣΑΡΞ ΝΑΨ
 ΦΟΡΕΪ Η̅ΠΙΣΕΟΥ Η̅ΤΕΪΘΤ
 Η̅ΤΕΡΕΦΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΪ Η̅ΤΕΪΞΕ ΔΦ
 ΤΒΣΠΑΣΠΡ ΖΗ̅ ΠΣΕΡΩΒ ΕΤ
 ΖΗ̅ ΤΕΦΟΙΧ · ΔΝΟΚ ΔΕ ΔΙΦΙ Η̅
 ΠΑΞΟ ΕΖΡΑΪ ΔΙΨΩΨΤ ΔΙΝΑΥ Ε
 ΡΟΥ ΔΙΪΞΟΤΕ Η̅ΤΟΥ ΔΕ ΠΕ
 ΧΑΦ Η̅ΑΪ ΧΕ Η̅ΠΙΣΟΥΩΗΤ
 ΧΕ ΔΗ̅ Η̅ΗΗ · ΠΕΧΔΑΪ ΝΑΦ ΧΕ Η̅ΟΗ

the graces that he grants to me
 for the good disposition of his
 holy Church. I became
 attentive since I received this vision.
 5 I will not reach her glory.
 A great bright man watched over me
 and he was beautiful
 and his face was full of grace
 and a stole of light was
 10 on his neck, a crown of light
 on his head
 with three seals located
 on it, a stick of light
 in his right hand
 15 a multicolour
 on his chest
 He wore a dress of light
 of the colour of the snow, beautiful
 in all aspects. But I was upset
 20 because I did not recognize him
 since he did not have feathers like angels
 and no man of flesh and bones
 Is able to wear such a great glory.
 When he saw me,
 25 he incited me with the stick
 (he held) in his hand. I raised my face,
 I looked and saw him and
 I was frightened. As for him,
 he told me: «You do not know who I am?»
 30 But I replied to him: «no».

15 ποικιλτης: to be maintained as such or to be corrected in ποικιλη?



Fig. 6 - BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», ms. 157 n. 35



Fig. 7 - BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», ms. 157 n. 36



Fig. 8 - BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», ms. 157 n. 37



Fig. 9 - BNT, Fondo Peyron, «Amedeo», ms. 157 n. 38

The Monasteries of Shenoute and Macarius: A Comparison Between Two Libraries

by
Tito Orlandi

The comparison of the libraries of the two monasteries of Shenoute of Atripe and of St. Macarius, which is the aim of this paper, is guided by a series of convictions, which must be declared in advance.

1. It is unrealistic to think that the formidable work of selecting the Greek patristic, hagiographical, historical and canonical texts to be translated into Coptic, and then of actually translating them¹, was carried out at random, or simply when and where the necessity was felt to translate this or that text. I would maintain rather that it was the result of the activity of an organized working unit, which has so far escaped the attention of the scholars. This applies also to the later work of composing Coptic texts under the name of fictitious ancient authors, when the Islamic authorities prohibited new religious texts².

2. The role of the libraries in the creation and development of the Coptic culture is obvious but it is very difficult for us to establish how it actually materialized. Moreover, when we speak of libraries in the Coptic Egypt, we refer to places, buildings, and organizing structures very different from those known in the Greco-Roman world, from the most famous in Alexandria to the many known in imperial Rome and in the Roman provinces. Perhaps the closest example in the classical environment might be the small room in the Villa dei Papiri of Herculaneum. In fact, the lack of evidence would suggest leaving this subject out; on the other hand the manuscripts, fragments of manuscripts, and the relative texts cannot be understood without at least imagining where they were kept and for what reason.

We would now like to compare the constitution, development, and cultural character of the two libraries, in order to assess their relative role in the development of the Coptic culture. However, in doing so, a preliminary question lies at the base of every analysis of the kind we are attempting to perform, although it is also liable to remain without a persuasive answer: how many (monastic or not) churches in Egypt could compete, in number of books possessed, with those of Shenoute and Macarius, or, from a different point of view, were equipped with texts for the entire liturgical year?

The possible candidates, for which there are significant documents to use, are the following:

1. The Patriarchal library in Alexandria is the first to spring to mind for obvious reasons but it is a very special case because we may confidently assume that it existed in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages³, as it certainly exists today and after some centuries. However, there is insufficient information on it for the period which concerns us here, and I am unable to comment on it. Furthermore, with the division of Egypt as a consequence of the council of Chalcedon (451), after Timothy II (460), we should speak of two libraries because, starting from an unknown moment (I incline towards the 7th century), there were two Patriarchal libraries in Alexandria, one for the Melkites – from which comes e.g. the famous Codex Alexandrinus⁴ – and one for the Orthodox. This does not simplify the matter but nor does it concern our investigation. There is of course the possibility that, in Alexandria, and so around the Patriarchal library, the translation of ecclesiastical texts from Greek into Coptic was initiated, and mostly carried on. I am skeptical about this hypothesis because, until the 6th century, the Patriarchate had no interest in promot-

¹ A list of the Coptic works is available in the CMCL database: [http://www.cmcl.it/~cmcl/chiam_clavis.html].

² Cf. T. ORLANDI, *Hagiography, Coptic; Literature, Coptic; Cycles*, in *Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. ATIYA, I-VIII, New York 1991, IV, 1191-1197; V, 1450-1460; III, 666-668; A. BOUD'HORS, *The Coptic Tradition*, in S.F. JOHNSON (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2012, 224-246; A. SUCIU, *The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*, Tübingen 2017, 70-108.

³ Assuming that the library and the archives were kept together, one may consult, A. CAMPLANI, *Setting a Bishopric / Arranging an Archive: Traces of Archival Activity in the Bishopric of Alexandria and Antioch*, in *Manuscripts and Archives. Comparative Views on Record-keeping*, ed. A. BAUSI, CH. BROCKMANN, M. FRIEDRICH, S. KIENITZ, Berlin 2018, 231-272.

⁴ [<http://www.helsinki.fi/hum/kla/papupetra/santeri/library.html>]. Cyril Lucar (1572-1638), later Patriarch of Alexandria and Constantinople, brought the manuscript with him from Egypt to Constantinople in 1621, and gave it as a gift to Charles I of England (1600-1649) in 1627.

ing the Coptic culture and, in the following period, the anti-Chalcedonian Church was hampered in its operations, especially in Alexandria.

2. Also out of our scope must remain the Dishna or Bodmer library⁵ because the otherwise very important ca. 50 codices from the 4th century in Greek, Coptic and Latin, even if in fact they belonged to one library, would be too early to be of help for our investigation.

3. A group of codices which in theory might have been part of a library should be left aside for a number of reasons. They are five parchment codices found together ca. 1924 in the monastery of apa Jeremias of Saqqara. Three are now preserved in the Chester Beatty Library, and two in the Michigan Library. They were written in ca. 600 CE at apa Jeremias, as a colophon of one of them and some coins found with the manuscripts of the kingdom of Justinian and Justin, indicate⁶. However, the codices were very small (cm 10x8 to 15x13), were almost never used when concealed, and were all of biblical content; so, as Thompson maintained, they were produced for personal use rather than for a liturgical monastic library.

4. Another group of 15 codices⁷ in Achmimic language (one in Sahidic, two in Sahidic and Greek) must be mentioned but its character is too uncertain for our analysis. Some scholars maintain that it represents part of the original library of the monastery of Atri (5th-6th centuries) but this seems very doubtful. They contain biblical, apocryphal, and patristic texts.

As for the collections of books, which can be taken into consideration for our purpose, three are particularly representative and each of them suggests a different situation of its own:

5. The papyrus codices now in Turin, probably from the 8th-9th centuries, all damaged but most of them reasonably complete⁸, may have constituted, perhaps with others now lost, the library of a monastic church - that of St. John at Tin/Thinis. They are ca. 18 in number, all in Coptic, and contain patristic, hagiographic, and canonical texts but no Biblical or strictly liturgical ones.

6. The ca. 23 parchment codices from the 10th-11th centuries recovered mainly by de Rustafjaell near Edfu⁹ may have constituted the library of the monastic church of St. Mercurius near tBo/Edfu, which would be the most similar one to those of Shenoute and Macarius. However, it belongs to a kind of Copto-Nubian, not to the Copto-Egyptian environment, and its liturgical characters are only partially comparable with the Egyptian monasteries.

7. The ca. 55 parchment codices from the 9th-10th centuries, found in the ruins of the monastery of St. Michael at Hamuli¹⁰ belong, in my opinion, to a repository from the *scriptorium* or whatever it may have been (we note that scribal instruments were also found in the same place) of Touton (Tebtunis), and just a handful of the codices seems to have been in use in the local Church.

Other libraries have left fragmentary remains:

⁵ Cf. the recent general assessment in the theme section of Adamantius 21 (2015), *I Papiri Bodmer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco, copto e latino nell'Egitto tardoantico*, 8-172.

⁶ H. THOMPSON, *The Coptic Version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles in the Sahidic Dialect*, Cambridge 1932, I-XX.

⁷ Cf. the list/table published in T. ORLANDI, *The Library of Shenoute of Atri*, in *Perspectives on Panopolis: An Egyptian town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest. Acts from an International Symposium Held in Leiden on 16, 17 and 18 December 1998*, ed. A. EGBERTS, B.P. MUHS, J. VAN DER VLIET, Leiden 2002, 222; cf. also A. BOUD'HORS, *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)*, in «*Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...*», ed. A. DELATTRE, P. HEILPORN, Bruxelles 2008, 149-162.

⁸ T. ORLANDI *The Turin Coptic papyri*, Aug. 53 (2013) 501-530.

⁹ List and observations in B. LAYTON, *Catalogue of Coptic Literary Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired Since the Year 1906*, London 1987, xvi-xxx – also of those outside the British Library.

¹⁰ S. EMMEL, *The Library of the Monastery of the Archangel Michael at Phantou (al-Hamouli)*, in *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis. Essays from the 2004 International Symposium of the Saint Mark Foundation and the Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society in Honor of Martin Krause*, ed. G. GABRA, Cairo - New York 2005, 63-70; L. DEPUYDT, *Catalogue of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, Leuven 1993; H. HYVERNAT, *The J. P. Morgan Collection of Coptic Manuscripts*, JBL 31 (1912) 54-57; ID., *A Checklist of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, New York 1919.

8. The papyrus collection called Harris (formerly Des Rivières, and also Kennard) now in the British Library in London Or. 7561¹¹, consists of very poor fragments from probably 22 codices of ca. 8th century of uncertain provenance. The texts are Biblical, patristic and hagiographical but none strictly liturgical.

9. The papyrus collection, former property of Lord Amherst, now in the Morgan Library of New York¹², consists of fragments from ca. 30 codices of the 7th-8th centuries which possibly come from a Pachomian monastery in the district of Hou/Diospolis parva. Here too there are biblical, patristic and hagiographical texts and perhaps only one strictly liturgical fragment (n. 2, Lectionary).

10. The fragments found in the excavations of the ruins of the monastery of apa Thomas, at Wadi Sarga, now in the British Library in London Or. 9035¹³, are the relics of ca. 14 codices from the 6th-7th centuries: 9 contained biblical texts, 2 contained liturgical (or similar) texts, one Melito, *In Pascha*, perhaps also liturgical¹⁴.

11. The excavations carried out in a monastery at Bala'izah, 12 miles South of Siout/Lykopolis, produced a large number of literary fragments and documents in Greek and Coptic Sahidic and even Bohairic¹⁵. The literary fragments come from ca. 60 codices dating from the 4th to the 8th cent., containing Biblical, patristic and liturgical texts. However, the number of codices does not appear to have any significance as regards the importance of the monastery and, consequently, of the library. They simply happened to be there at the moment of its destruction or desertion.

One should also mention the catalogues found without the corresponding books but attesting to the existence of original libraries. The most important is an *ostrakon* listing the books of the library of one monastery "of apa Elias of the Petra" with detailed titles and information on the codices¹⁶.

The codices are lost but we know that the library contained at least eighty of them – biblical, liturgical, patristic, historical, canonical – when the *ostrakon* was written (ca. 8th cent.), an important number though not comparable with the libraries of Shenoute or Macarius. There is more however: we note that the list mentions works by Shenoute and we are convinced that such works could not circulate outside the Shenoutean communities. We know also that the monastic community in residence in the Karnak temple was Shenoutean¹⁷ and we are inclined to assume that the list came from that community.

Other inventories of churches have been published which mention books - an inventory of the 7th-8th centuries from an unknown church. Unfortunately, it is incomplete and about two thirds of the text has been lost. On the other hand, it carefully mentions the content of the books which it includes, together with the other objects, contrary to the inventories that are listed later. We find a total of 45 biblical, hagiographic and patristic books, whose language (Greek or Coptic) is not detailed. The complete document may therefore have mentioned ca. 135 books, certainly a significant number, but it is difficult to draw a conclusion because we do not know anything about the church in question¹⁸.

Another inventory of a church near Kos/Apollonopolis of around the 5th-6th century¹⁹ lists 24 books of unknown texts, while an inventory of a church of St. Theodore, presumably in the *nomos* of Hermopolis/

¹¹ A list is contained in LAYTON, *Catalogue*, cit., xxxiii-xliv.

¹² W.E. CRUM, *Theological Texts from Coptic Papyri*, Oxford 1913; HYVERNAT, *Checklist*, cit.

¹³ W.E. CRUM, H.I. BELL, R.C. THOMPSON, *Wadi Sarga. Coptic and Greek Texts*, Copenhagen 1922; LAYTON, *Catalogue*, cit., li-lij; E.R. O'CONNELL, R. Campbell Thompson's 1913/14 excavation of Wadi Sarga and other sites, *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 21 (2014) 121-192, esp. 136.

¹⁴ E. LUCCHESI, *Deux nouveaux temoins coptes du « Peri Pascha » de Meliton de Sardes*, AB 102 (1984) 383-393.

¹⁵ P.E. KAHLE, *Bala'izah. Coptic Texts from Deir el-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt*, London 1954, 3, 8-9. No discussion about a possible library.

¹⁶ R.-G. COQUIN, *Le catalogue de la bibliothèque du couvent de Saint Elie du Rocher (ostrakon IFAO 13315)*, BIFAO 74-5 (1974-5) 207-239; BOUD'HORS, *Copie et circulation*, cit.

¹⁷ R.-G. COQUIN, *La christianisation des temples de Karnak*, BIFAO 72 (1972) 169-178.

¹⁸ P. VAN MINNEN, *The Inventory of an Egyptian Church on a Greek Papyrus*, in *Actes du IVe Congrès Copte, Louvain-la-Neuve, 5-10 septembre 1988*, ed. M. RASSART-DEBERGH, J. RIES, I-II, Louvain-la-Neuve 1992, I, 228-229; F.A.J. HOOGENDIJK, P. VAN MINNEN, *Papyri, Ostraca, Parchments and Waxed Tablets in the Leiden Papyrological Institute* (P.L. Bat XXV), Leiden 1991, no. 13.

¹⁹ B.P. GRENFELL - A.S. HUNT, *New Classical Fragments*, Oxford 1897, n. 111 p. 160. The locality is called Ibion.

Shmun, from the 8th century²⁰, lists 31 books, also of unknown texts. It may be noted that the number of books of these inventories agrees with that of libraries 8-11, the most relevant for our inquiry, listed above. It is evident that every church of a certain importance, monastic or not, had a number of codices with texts to be read in the *synaxeis* but, as it seems, never more than two or three dozens. It is reasonable to assume that the only churches or monasteries which had collected an extensive library for ecclesiastical studies or for the liturgy for each of the celebrations throughout the year were those of the monasteries of Shenoute and Macarius. We do not find any possible hint of libraries comparable to them. We note that many *ostraca* of patristic and liturgical content have been found. They may have served, in the “normal” ecclesiastical communities, as a substitute for the codices, which were very expensive.

Coming now to the genuine comparison between the two libraries, we briefly remind that the contributions directly concerning the general description and problems of the book collections of Shenoute and Macarius are for the first library T. Orlandi, *The Library of the Monastery of Saint Shenoute at Atripe*²¹, which also summarizes the previous studies²², while for the second library the old but unsurpassed work of Evelyn-White²³.

The huge number of observations in the catalogue of van Lantschoot²⁴ make it difficult to arrive at any general conclusions on the library but our effort here may be considered an initial contribution in that direction. The catalogues of other collections which preserve fragments from the monastery of Macarius²⁵ do not unfortunately serve any useful purpose here.

We begin with some general remarks:

1. What we know of the quantity and quality of the books which were kept in the two libraries is derived only from the ones, and from the fragments available to us, which restrict the chronology to after the 9th century. The manuscripts from the libraries of Shenoute and Macarius do not date to before that period but a study of them and a comparison of their characteristics help us to clarify the librarian culture also of earlier centuries. The scholars have tried to go back to the 4th century, interpreting some testimonies (cf. above, n. 4), but the evidence is too uncertain for us to use in our analysis.

2. The unusual convergence of features and significant differences, or even the number of unexpected differences within some common features in the manuscripts found in the two libraries, has produced an equally unusual consequence; namely, that the scholars interested in the books from each of the two libraries have tended to neglect the other one. I speak here of their character and their history as institutions, not of the texts that they have contributed to keep alive and transmit.

3. The conventional wisdom about the substance of the two libraries should be at least partially changed. Contrary to what is generally assumed, it is not true that library of Shenoute gave mainly fragments, while that of Macarius mainly complete codices. It would be more accurate to say that, from Macarius, mainly entire works were recovered but from discarded codices.

In fact for the library of Shenoute the situation is easily appreciated as unsatisfactory because it is well known that the fragments are scattered throughout the world. The reconstruction of partial codices and

²⁰ W.E. CRUM, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the Collection of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester 1909, n. 238.

²¹ ORLANDI, *The Library of the Monastery of Saint Shenoute*, cit., 211-232.

²² The more recent bibliography, although useful, does not add perspectives to our aim: Chr. KOTSIFOU, *Books and Book Production in the Monastic Communities of Byzantine Egypt*, in Ph. ROUSSEAU, *The early Christian centuries*, London 2006, 48-68; S.J. DAVIS et al., *Left Behind. A Recent Discovery of Manuscript Fragments in the White Monastery Church*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 16 (2014) 69-87.

²³ H.G. EVELYN-WHITE, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n Natrun. I. New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarius*, New York 1926.

²⁴ A. HEBBELYNCK – A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Codices coptici Vaticani Barberiniani Borgiani Rossiani, I. Codices Vaticani*, Roma 1937; cf. also A. MAI, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio*, V, Roma 1825-38, 114-170; E.M. QUATRÈMÈRE, *Recherches critiques et historiques sur la langue et la littérature de l'Égypte*, Paris 1808, 118-133; A. HEBBELYNCK, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits coptes de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, Roma 1924, 35-82.

²⁵ W.E. CRUM, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the Collection of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester 1909; J. LEIPOLDT, *Verzeichnis der Koptischen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek zu Leipzig*, in C. VOLLERS, *Katalog der Handschriften der Univ. Bibl. zu Leipzig*, I-II, Leipzig 1906, 383-427.

documents is far from complete but, such as it is, it is at least reasonably clear. For the library of Macarius, the situation is thought to be satisfactory (many *entire* codices accompanied by well-known fragments) but it is in fact much more complicated than the situation which is generally assumed with regard to the library of Shenoute.

4. I understand that the preliminary results of the study that I am going to give in this paper are open to debate. Indeed, it is for this very reason that I offer them to colleagues to debate, scrutinize and correct. I would like to point out that I have excluded: the bilingual Copto-Arabic (including grammatical) codices, and those containing biblical and (strictly) liturgical texts, because they present quite different problems. On the other hand, the canonical, synodical, and historical collections might have been included but they are almost entirely absent in the library of Macarius.

5. For obvious although not entirely justifiable reasons, modern scholars have adopted different approaches in publishing the texts. In the texts from the library of Macarius, the description of the manuscripts is virtually non-existent²⁶; in those from the library of Shenoute, the attention to the codicological details is even exaggerated. It is interesting also to note difference in attention given by the historians to the Borgia collection in comparison with the "Assemani", in the Vatican library.

Both libraries were dispersed in a number of Western libraries starting from the same period (early-late 18th century) and initially even by the same people (the Assemani family)²⁷.

Both libraries, when dispersed, gave parts of codices written in the 9th century and, to a greater degree, the 10th cent. and later. They were the result of a revolution in the script style and in the organization of the texts which took place in ca. 8th century. It is possible that the *scriptorium* of Touton/Tebtunis has much to do with that revolution and its impact on both libraries. On the other hand, Shenoute adopted the bimodular script - two columns of text, and one kind of page numeration of one type (which we might describe as the usual one) while the library of Macarius adopted the unimodular script - one column of text, and a different form of (page)/folio numeration. The numeration of quires is made in the same style. We are looking here at the historical and cultural inferences which can be drawn from the formal differences. As regards the content of the codices, both libraries have given us the same kind of texts: leaving aside the Bible and "formal" liturgy, they had homilies, martyrdoms, and lives of Saints²⁸. However, the library of Shenoute also preserved histories, canons (cf. below), and of course Shenoute's own works, while the library of Macarius had some translations from "more international" Patristic texts²⁹. This may have been due to its relations with the orthodox Coptic Patriarchate, which in turn was not completely distinct from the Melchites (Chalcedonian) in terms of cultural and linguistic attitudes. In both cases, the codices were gathered in the two libraries, mainly in order to be used for liturgical purposes i.e. to be read in the appropriate *synaxeis*.

From what we have said so far, this is what we can reconstruct of the library of Shenoute (the chronological statements are only provided as an indication):

5th-6th century

The main purpose of the Shenoute library was certainly to preserve the works of Shenoute himself, for which it jealously guarded the exclusivity, according to their organization in three *corpora*, *Canones*, *Logoi*, *Epistolai*³⁰, following the instructions, or at any rate the intentions, of the prophet. A second purpose was to assemble a corpus of Coptic patristic texts, earlier in parallel with the ones in Greek, and then in their substitution. The translation of Greek patristic texts was possibly initiated by Shenoute himself. It

²⁶ I. BALESTRI - H. HYVERNAT, *Acta Martyrum* (CSCO 43), Paris 1907, 86; E.C. AMÉLINEAU, *Les actes des martyrs de l'Église copte*, Paris 1890; H. DE VIS, *Homélies coptes de la Vaticane*, I-II, København 1922, 1929. G. LAFONTAINE, *La version copte bohairique du discours « Sur l'amour des pauvres » de Grégoire de Nazianze*, Le Muséon 93 (1980) 199-236 has a good description, but only of the relevant part of one codex.

²⁷ Cf. ORLANDI, *The Library of the Monastery of Saint Shenute*, cit., and EVELYN-WHITE, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n Natrun*, cit. xxxvii-xlii.

²⁸ I prefer to avoid the term "apocryphal"; cf. SUCIU, *The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*, cit., 74-75.

²⁹ Especially the famous codex of John Chrysostom, Vat. copt. 57, which is a real codex.

³⁰ S. EMMEL, *Shenoute's Literary Corpus*, I-II (CSCO Subsidia 111-112), Lovanii 2004.

is my conviction that the monastery of Atripe was the centre of the work of translation from Greek into Coptic. This is based on the development of the Coptic culture when compared with the documents available. The same situation is valid for the:

7th century

Production (after Islamic religious control was established) of pseudepigraphic literature and of homiletic and hagiographic cycles³¹.

This is very uncertain but, in my opinion, only Shenoute could have had the necessary cultural strength, i.e. cultivated monks mastering the Coptic style, possession of the relevant books in Greek and Coptic and relative independence from Islamic authorities, that made it possible to carry on such an endeavour.

8th century

Selection and adaptation of the existing texts in view of their liturgical use, probably with the expectation of some future difficulty in keeping a very large body of any kind of ecclesiastical-works. The homilies in particular were re-written or heavily edited according to specific targets. Long titles were added³², stating the author who seemed most appropriate for the text in question, giving some hints to the content (to facilitate the use), and the date on which to read it. The fact that such titles inform us of the literary (patristic) competence of the scholars of this age has been sadly neglected. Collections of miracles were reshaped in the form of homilies. Narrations about individuals from the time of Jesus (the so-called apocrypha) were also shaped in the form of homilies and were often said to have been found in a supposed Apostolic library in Jerusalem.

9th-12th centuries

Establishment of an (almost) new kind of script, the bimodular, and standardization of a canonical structure for the liturgical codices – which will be used also for the few historical, canonical and ascetical works or collections, which were preserved in the library until a later period. Production or commission of such codices.

In spite of the efforts of Evelyn-White³³ the situation with regard to the library of Macarius before the 9th century is very uncertain. It is possible that the library of the Alexandrian patriarchate was transferred to Sketis when (or if) the residence was moved there; but I would suggest that it was composed mostly of codices in Greek, and in any case it is not possible to speak of a real communal library before the 9th century. It appears that the decision to found one was the consequence of a similar type of revolution to the one that we have described for the library of Shenoute in the 8th century. In the case of the library of Shenoute, it brought about a radical change in script, layout, and titles, while in the case of the library of Macarius it was more of a beginning. The fundamental *criterium* was that of constituting a series of texts for the liturgy of the whole year.

This may be inferred from the extant codices, always bearing in mind that, in their present condition, they represent the reorganization of those of the first generation. We understand in any case that the choice of script and layout, what may be called the purely external features, was taken as a diversification from those of Shen. However, the use of long titles, and to a certain extent the choice of the texts, was undertaken in agreement with Shen., I think, because the revolution was first accepted there.

The Bohairic language was partly influenced by geography, but it may also have been preferred to mark a diversification; some other special characteristics of the library of Macarius are mentioned below.

The development of the library of Macarius, which seems much simpler than that of the library of Shenoute, may therefore be reconstructed as follows:

³¹ Cf. above, note 1.

³² P. BUZI, *Titoli e autori nella tradizione copta. Studio storico e tipologico*, Pisa 2005.

³³ EVELYN-WHITE, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n Natrun*, cit., xxi-xxiv.

9th-11th centuries

Production (commission) and collection of codices for liturgical use in Coptic, inspired by what was going on in the library of Shenoute, but accommodating the liturgical organization of the monastery of Macarius.

12th-14th centuries

Deconstructing the codices, separating individual texts to be collected and bound according to new liturgical criteria. The rearranged codices are those brought to Rome by Assemani (cf. above).

16th-17th centuries

It is possible that the reorganization of the codices was continued in this period, perhaps due to their decay. The European scholars interested in Coptic codices began to visit St. Macarius, and it seems that the monks liked to show what remained of them. A new library was formed with only codices in Arabic now in real use.

18th-19th centuries

Treatment in Rome and possibly in Paris, when they were transferred in 1805 and then brought back. New covers were provided and in certain cases some folios were replaced.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It was observed above that the Coptic texts translated from Greek (for the original texts the situation is more complicated) were not produced at random but appear to be the result of a voluntary and conscious choice and then of a process of revision and collection, according to different historical and ecclesiastical situations in the development of the Coptic Church and culture. We assume that, behind the production, lay an organizational system of the type that, judging from what we already know, could only have existed in the monastery of Atripe.

It is reasonable to assume that the cultural activity of the monastery of Atripe was approved from the beginning by the Alexandrian anti-Chalcedonian Patriarchate – and we note that no Chalcedonian text is found in Coptic – but its production was not adopted, or rather imitated, in the region where Bohairic was spoken and written, in particular at the monastery of St. Macarius, before late in the 8th century. At this time, it was decided that the monastery of St. Macarius should become a sort of mirror site of Atripe. However, only certain texts were selected which were translated from Sahidic into Bohairic because they were used in the liturgy of St. Macarius, as well as of the other communities in Lower Egypt, and a different kind of script, layout, and numeration system was developed. The liturgical aspect in particular seems to have been more exclusively considered in St. Macarius than in Atripe. In St. Macarius the choice and collection of the texts was dictated more formally by their liturgical use. An extreme product of this formalization was the Synaxarium, directly written in Arabic.

The differences that we note between the St. Macarius and Atripe codices may indicate some characteristics of the two environments. We note the rich elaboration of titles' decoration, which was also initiated in the *scriptoria* that provided the codices of the library of Shenoute. In the library of Macarius it becomes more standardized and also more elegant, hinting at a conscious reception of a practice which in the library of Shenoute had developed in a sort of natural way. The page number is written in the codices of Shenoute on every page (recto and verso of the folios), while in Macarius it is only written on the verso of the folios (except for the beginning of the quires), possibly influenced by the Arabic way of leafing through books. The beginning of paragraphs is highlighted in both environments with a capital in the margin but, while in the library of Macarius it is always the first letter of the paragraph, i.e. the paragraph always begins *a capo*, in the library of Shenoute the beginning of the paragraph continues on the same line as the preceding one and the first letter of the new line is capitalized. This also indicates a more developed taste for elegance and consistency in the library of Macarius.

In conclusion, we see the monastery of Atripe as the lively environment in which Coptic literature was produced and revised, while the monastery of St. Macarius accepted and continued its achievements, with some changes and presumed improvements. All this may help to improve the value and significance of the texts preserved in the codices of the two libraries.

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Abstract. The aim of this contribution is to compare the constitution, development, and cultural character of two libraries, that of the Monastery of Shenoute and that of the Monastery of Saint Macarius, in order to assess their relative role in the development of the Coptic culture. Codicological, literary and historical considerations are at the basis of the proposed observations that hopefully will stimulate a discussion among scholars.

Keywords. Libraries in antiquity. Monastic libraries. Monastic Culture. Coptic codices.

**The Coptic Reception of the *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews* by John Chrysostom (CPG 4440),
with Some Notes on the Composition of MONB.CR (= CLM 325):
A Survey and New Textual Identifications¹**

by

Francesco Berno

O. INTRODUCTION

As it has been observed¹, the Coptic fortune of Chrysostom's *Homilies on Hebrews* can hardly be overrated. The exceptional dissemination this paper is going to observe is reasonably due to several factors – including their use in liturgical (and, more extensively, monastic) activities, as well as their distinctly moral-oriented nature, not to mention their heresiological potential² – the analysis of which goes way beyond the much more limited scope of the present contribution. Indeed, the first and main goal of this paper is to supplement and further integrate the identifications provided mainly by Sever Voicu³ and by Alin Suciuc of the textual units actually translated into Coptic⁴, as well as to stress in the clearest possible terms that the Chrysostomic Coptic tradition differs essentially from its Greek counterpart, due to the extraordinary degree of interpolatory activity shown by the former.

A second section will focus on the manuscripts by which the homilies are preserved, with special reference to MONB.CR (= CLM 325⁵), whose peculiar structure will be briefly sketched.

A third and conclusive paragraph will offer some remarks and an overview of the redrafting processes underlying the Coptic reception of the entire Chrysostomic and ps.-Chrysostomic⁶ corpus, revealing a pro-

¹ This paper was conceived in the framework of the ERC Advanced Grant (2015) project n° 687567 “PATHs. Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context: Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage” (P.I.: Paola Buzi), hosted by Sapienza Università di Roma (Rome, Italy).

² Cf. A. SUCIUC, *The Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews by John Chrysostom: A Complement to the Coptic Version* (<https://alinsuciuc.com/2011/07/12/the-homilies-on-the-epistle-to-the-hebrews-by-john-chrysostom-a-complement-to-the-coptic-version/>; last accessed on 30 January 2019).

³ *Inter alia*, I am thinking here of the problematic relationship between Christianity and Judaism as addressed by the letter, and of the debate concerning the legitimacy of those Jewish-Christians who still maintained regular and substantial contacts with the Synagogue. It would be significant to analyse in depth the development of such fundamental issues over the period of the Coptic reception of this anonymous epistle.

⁴ S. VOICU, *Per una lista delle opere trasmesse in copto sotto il nome di Giovanni Crisostomo*, in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends in Late Antiquity. Studies in honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, Roma 2011, 575-610; 589-590.

⁵ An identification of the Parisian leaves, with the indication of their overall content (the homiletic series on *Hebrews*, indeed), but without the attribution of the Coptic texts to a single Greek homily, was offered in E. LUCCHESI, *Répertoire des manuscrits coptes (sahidique), publiés de la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris*, Geneva 1981 and, partially, in É. PORCHER, *Analyse des manuscrits coptes 131¹⁻⁸ de la Bibliothèque nationale, avec indication des textes bibliques*, RdE 1 (1933) 105-160; 231-278; 2 (1934) 65-123. It is worth noticing that we have no evidence of a Bohairic transmission of this homiletic series.

⁶ A Coptic Literary Manuscript (CLM) entry is a univocal numerical identifier attributed by PATHs project to all complete, reconstructed, and fragmentary preserved Coptic manuscripts. See the *PATHs Mission Statement* (<http://paths.uniroma1.it/>) and the introduction to the section “manuscripts” in *PATHs' Atlas* (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts>).

⁷ However, this classification is not unambiguous, even more in an extremely “fluid” literary tradition, such as Coptic, and for an author whose literary afterlife and fortune are debated and controversial, such as Chrysostom. Such a questionable partition will be used here in the interests of brevity. On this matter, see W. MAYER, *A Life of Their Own. Preaching, Radicalisation, and the Early ps.-Chrysostomica in Greek and Latin*, in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu*, ed. F.P. BARONE, C. MACÉ, P. UBIERNA, Turnhout 2017, 977-1004, and S. VOICU, “*Furono chiamati giovanitti...*”. *Un'ipotesi sulla nascita del corpus pseudocrisostomico*, in *Philomathestatos. Studies in Greek and Byzantine Texts Presented to Jacques Noret for His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. B. JANSSENS, B. ROOSEN, P. VAN DEUN, Leuven 2004, 701-711.

per *ars combinatoria* involved in the selection, arrangement, textual re-elaboration, and collection of this homiletic *corpus*.

Nevertheless, I must point out that several important questions are going to remain unanswered. In particular, the following list of extant translations is intended to be updated on an ongoing basis by future identifications and textual acquisitions, as well as by developments in our understanding of Coptic literary activity. The provisional nature of this contribution is revealed also by the absence of an inquiry devoted to the redactional history and the textual variations of the Greek text itself. Indeed, for the sake of convenience, the Greek originals taken into consideration are from Jacques Paul Migne's *PG* 63, 9-236, which, in turn, reproduces the edition by Bernard de Montfaucon⁷. Furthermore, it cannot be ruled out that what will be here indicated as a relevant textual variant should be intended as a translation of an as yet unknown Greek reading.

Since the fragments potentially preserving Chrysostomic works and not yet identified are numerous, it is important to stress that only the secure identifications are presented below, leaving aside the leaves too badly damaged or too fragmentarily preserved⁸.

Moreover, any and every entry discloses characteristic (unique, indeed) emending and rewriting phenomena, to such an extent that the correspondence between Greek and Coptic texts is frequently hard to trace. The most considerable and significant deviations will be reported and cursorily analysed.

1. CHRYSOSTOM'S HOMILIES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS EXTANT IN COPTIC⁹

– *hom. 4*: Manchester, *P.Ryl.Copt.* 25, f. 4 (MONB.CP; *PG* 63, 41.20 – 63, 41.46). The initial title introduces the following text as «the 6th sermon (πνευματικὸν λόγος) [...] that the blessed John [...] preached, commenting upon the Epistle to the Hebrews»¹⁰.

– *hom. 5*: Manchester, *P.Ryl.Copt.* 25, f. 4 (MONB.CP; *PG* 63, 50.40 – 63, 51.3). The text of the 5th homily is consecutive to the text of the 4th, the unmarked transition being in Manchester, *P.Ryl.Copt.* 25, f. 4r, lin. 21; Manchester, *P.Ryl.Copt.* 25, f. 1 (MONB.CP; *PG* 63, 51.33 – 63, 54.9)¹¹.

– *hom. 7*: Cairo, *IFAO Copte* f. 171 (MONB.CP; *PG* 63, 64.3 – 63, 66.7); possibly Wien, *K 09170* (MONB.CP)¹².

⁷ B. DE MONTFAUCON, *Sancti patris nostri Ioannis Chrysostomi opera omnia qua extant...*, vol. 12, Parisiis 1728.

⁸ As a mere instance, this is the case of Cairo, *IFAO Copte* 226r-v (MONB.OT), whose edition is offered by C. LOUIS, *Catalogue raisonné des manuscrits littéraires coptes conservés à l'IFAO du Caire. Contribution à la reconstruction de la Bibliothèque du monastère Blanc* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses, Paris 2005), 439-441 (= no. 99). This fragment preserves a work which is classified by the CMCL with an independent *clavis* entry (*De vita caelesti*; CC 0478).

⁹ For each homily the complete shelfmark of the manuscript(s) by which it is preserved is indicated – when two or more shelfmarks are connected by '+', they preserve consecutive pages – as well as the reference, given in brackets, to the Greek text actually translated, as it was printed in the *PG*, and the indication of the codicological unit they once belonged. Due to the above-mentioned radical difference between Greek and Coptic tradition, the correspondence between the Coptic text and his supposed Greek model should not be perceived as an evidence to assume the transmission in Coptic of the entire original homily.

¹⁰ W.E. CRUM, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the Collection of the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, Manchester-London 1909, no. 62, already highlighted the quotation, on the first lines of the leaf, from Heb 2, 14. The only Chrysostom homily on Hebrews quoting this passage is the 5th, «with the text of which – Crum added, perhaps too quickly – the Coptic passage does not correspond». However, mismatches between what is declared by the *inscriptio* and the position of the homily in the relative Greek series are not isolated cases, especially in Chrysostomic collections. This happens twice, for instance, in the Bohairic MACA.AC (= CLM 72). Thus, it is not unlikely that antigraphs revealing arrangements of Chrysostom's homilies different than the ones we currently know have circulated in Coptic environments (both Sahidic and Bohairic).

¹¹ C.M. SCHNEIDER, *The Text of a Monastic Discourse, On Love and Self-Control. Its Story from the Fourth Century to the Twenty-First*, Collegeville 2017, 118, footnote 228, rightly notes that Greek and Coptic texts correspond closely on the recto, namely between *PG* 63, 51.33 and 63, 52.42, while, on the verso, «the Coptic and Greek are still discussing the same theme but not in the same way. The words match only occasionally, but with increasing frequency as both texts draw to their close». Nevertheless, it seems to me that the Coptic text parallels in a consistent way the argumentative structure, as well as the literary construction (see, for instance, the quotation from Eph 6, 12), of the Greek one at least until *PG* 63, 54, 9. I was not able to identify, instead, the last lines of Manchester, *P.Ryl.Copt.* 25, f. 1v, which appear to me as an original conclusive digression.

¹² Although C.M. SCHNEIDER, *The Text of a Monastic Discourse*, cit., 118, footnote 227, tentatively states that such

- *hom.* 12: Paris, *BnF Copte* 131³, f. 27 (CLM 5201; *PG* 63, 100.44 – 63 102.9).
- *hom.* 15: Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 147 (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 136.38 – 63, 63, 136.56); Paris, *BnF Copte* 131⁵, f. 087 *scriptio superior* (MONB.OT; *PG* 63, 136.59 – 63, 137.18). It is relevant to note that the 15th homily is (partially) preserved by two ancient codicological units. See also the case of the 17th sermon.
- *hom.* 16: Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, ff. 79-84 (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 126.1 – 63, 128.27). The text of the 16th homily ends at Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, f. 84r, col. b, lin. 22 (ΝΗΤΟΥΩΩ ΔΗ ΕΣΟΤΤΙΣ ΝΑΝ). In Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, f. 080r, col. a, lin. 14, about twenty lines of the Greek text (*PG* 63, 126.15-36) are strongly summarized.
- *hom.* 17: Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, f. 84 (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 131.42 – 63, 132.3). The text of the 17th homily begins in Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, f. 84r, col. b, lin. 23 (ΧΕΚΑΣ ΖΗΟΥΣΥΝΗΔΥΣΙΣ ΝΚΑΘΑΡΟΝ); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, ff. 100-106¹³ (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 132.8 – 63, 135.5); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 16, ff. 20-23 *scriptio superior* (MONB.OT; *PG* 63, 132.57 – 63, 133.36). In Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana Or.* 192, f. 84v, the portion of text parallel to *PG* 63, 131.42-54 exhibits a significant revision, departing from a literal translation of its source.
- *hom.* 24: Wien, *K 09817-09822* (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 169.45 – 63, 172.20; section 63, 170.46 – 63, 171.3 is omitted). The text of the 24th homily ends at Wien, *K 09822r*, col. b, lin. 22 (ΖΑΠΣ ΓΑΡ ΕΡΟΝ ΠΕ ΕΤΡΕΥΔΟΚΙΜΑΖΕ ΜΠΟΥΑ ΠΟΥΑ ΜΗΟΝ ΖΗΝΑΙ¹⁴). In Wien, *K 09817r*, the following initial title (unfortunately severely damaged) is preserved: ΟΥΛΟΓΟ[Σ ΝΤΕ] ΠΕΧΡΗΣ[ΟΣΤΟ]ΜΟΣ ΕΤΟ[ΥΑΔΒ] ΑΥΩ ΠΕΝ[ΕΙ]ΩΤ Δ[ΠΑ ΙΩΡΑ]ΝΗΣ [ΠΑΡΧΗΕ]ΠΙΚ[ΟΠΟΣ ΝΚΩΣ]ΤΑΝΤΗΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ ΕΑΓΤΑΥΟΦ ΧΕ ΩΩΕ ΕΡΟΝ [...]ΠΩ ΓΑΡ ΚΑΝ[...] ΝΩΔΑΡΡΕΝΝΑΕΙΝ [...] ΣΥΝΧΩΡΗΣΙΣ ΝΤΕΠΝΟΥΓΤΕ ΤΗΝΤΗΖΗΓ ΝΛΑΔΥ ΔΗ ΑΥΩ ΟΝ ΧΕ ΝΩΩΕ ΔΗ ΕΚΑΝΗΤΩΒΗΡ ΝΑΝ ΜΗ ΝΡΩΜΕ ΕΘΟΟΥ· ΑΛΛΑ ΕΤ Ρ[...]ΝΠΩΤ ΕΒΟΛ [Μ]ΜΟΥΓ· ΧΕΚΑΣ Ε[...]ΩΒΗΣΟΜ Ε[...] ΝΑΝ ΠΟΥΟΕΩ ΝΗ ΝΘΟΤΕ ΜΠΟΥΓΤΕ ΡΡΑΙ ΝΖΗΤΗ ΖΗΟΥΕΙΡΗΗ ΝΤΕΠΝΟΥΓΤΕ ΖΑΜΗΝ. I will discuss the relevance of this heading later. In Wien, *K 09821r*, col. b, the Greek text underwent an extensive redrafting activity¹⁵.
- *hom.* 25: Wien, *K 09822* + London, *BL Or.* 03581A, f. 18 (MONB.CR; *PG* 63, 172.25 – 63, 175.1). The text of the 25th homily begins at Wien, *K 09822r*, col. b, lin. 23, with a textual section marked as a scripturistic quotation (ΚΑΤΑ ΘΕ ΕΓΧΗΖ ΧΕ ΖΗΟΥΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΔΒΡΑΖΑΜ ΑΓΤΑΛΕ ΙΣΑΑΚ ΕΡΡΑΙ ΕΥΠΕΙΡΑΖΕ ΜΗΟΙ¹⁶) and with a speculation on Abraham's faith and temptation (Inc.: ΕΩΧΕ ΔΠΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ ΘΕ ΜΗΤΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΕΒΑΒΡΑΖΑΜ ΝΣΩΤΤΙ). Although this passage has no known formally literal counterpart from the extant Greek tradition, it seems to me that it was supposed to act as a connecting element with the previous textual unit and as a summary introduction to the model, by recapitulating its main theme. Furthermore, in London, *BL Or.* 03581A, f. 18v, col. b, lin. 5-10, one finds the quotation from 1Cor 6, 7 (διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθε; διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀποστερεῖσθε; // ΕΤΒΕ ΟΥ ΡΩ ΣΕΝΑΧΙΤΗΓΤΗ ΔΗ ΗΣΟΝΣ ΕΤΒΕ ΟΥ ΡΩ ΣΕΝΑΒΕΣΤΗΓΤΗ ΔΗ), which cannot be traced back in the Greek model¹⁷.

a damaged fragment «seems to begin with a correspondence to *PG* 63:63, around line 18», and, consequently, that it is supposed to immediately precede the IFAO sheet, I have some reservations about such identification. The connection with the theme of the 7th homily is undeniable, but the extant text attests an extensively revised version. To give just one example, and waiting for more specific inquiries, the quote from Mt 16, 27, in the present form (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεσθαι ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ, καὶ τότε ἀποδώσει ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὴν πράξιν αὐτοῦ, rewritten as follows: ΦΗΗΖ ΚΑΡ ΝΣΙ ΠΩΜΡΕ ΜΡΩΜΕ ΕΦΖΗΟΟΣ ΕΞΕΜΠΕΘΡΟΝΟΣ [ΜΠΕΦΕ]ΟΟΥ ΑΥΩ ΚΗΑΤ ΜΠΟΥΑ ΠΟΥΑ ΚΑΤΑ ΝΕΦΒΗΓΕ) does not appear at all in the Greek text.

¹³ A partial (*I.B.* 11, ff. 101r-105v) edition of these leaves was published in A.A. GIORGI, *Fragmentum Evangelii S. Iohannis Graeco-Copto-Thebaicum Saeculi IV...*, Romae 1789, 425-440.

¹⁴ «It is necessary for us to be examined one by one on this point».

¹⁵ In particular, see the repetition of Lk 13, 25. Moreover, it has to be noted that, in Wien, *K 09819r*, col. b, lin. 9, the Coptic text (ΠΧΟΕΙΣ ΜΗ ΡΡΑΙ ΔΗ ΖΗΠΕΚΡΑΝ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΕΥΕ ΑΥΩ ΔΗΝΕΧΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΟΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΑΥΩ ΔΗ ΡΡΑΖ ΝΣΟΗ) adheres to the extended version of the quotation from Mt 7, 22 (Κύριε κύριε, οὐ τῷ σῷ ὀνόματι ἐπροφητεύσαμεν, καὶ τῷ σῷ ὀνόματι δαμόνια ἐξεβάλομεν, καὶ τῷ σῷ ὀνόματι δυνάμεις πολλὰς ἐποιήσαμεν;). Instead, it seems that Chrysostom had followed a short version here (Κύριε, οὐ τῷ σῷ ὀνόματι προεφητεύσαμεν, καὶ τῷ σῷ ὀνόματι δυνάμεις πολλὰς ἐποιήσαμεν;).

¹⁶ «As it is written, by faith Abraham raised Isaac up being tempted».

¹⁷ However, it is interesting to note that this quote, in the present form, is almost an *hapax* in Chrysostom's production, recurring only in the 16th homily *On Matthew* (*PG* 57, 248.30), at the beginning of the 16th homily *On John* (*PG* 59, 101.50), and in the 23rd homily *On 2Corinthians*. Nevertheless, the framework within which the quote is inserted

- *hom.* 26: Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 148 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 182.46 – 63, 183.57).
- *hom.* 29: Leiden, *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* 104 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 206.37 – 63, 206.52). The first twelve lines of Leiden, *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* 104r, col. a, until the quotation from Mt 11, 8, do not parallel the Greek text, although they seem to share the same lexical references¹⁸.
- *hom.* 30: Wien, K 09828 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 212.36 – 63, 212.53).
- *hom.* 31: Wien, K 09829 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 216.2 – 63, 216.16); Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², ff. 159-160 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 216.38 – 63, 217.7).
- *hom.* 32: London, *BL. Or.*03581A, f. 19 + Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 149 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 222.3 – 63, 222.42); Wien, K 09828 + Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 150 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 224.15 – 63 224.51). In London, *BL. Or.*03581A, f. 19r we read the following *inscriptio*, attesting a different writing-style (but reasonably by the same hand as the one to which the main text is ascribable): ρΟΜΙΩΙΣ ΚΕΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΤΕΠΣΟΦΟΣ ΝΑΝΕ ΖΗΝΝΑΠΟΥΓΤΕ ΑΠΑ ΙΩΡΑΝΗΝΣ ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΠΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΚΩΣΤΑΝΨΗΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ· ΕΑΦΤΑΥΟΦ ΧΕ ΝΩΥΕ ΔΗ ΕΤΡΕΝΤΑΧΡΟΝ ΕΧΗΝΝΑΠΕΙΒΙΟΣ ΧΕ ΕΝΣΕΝΑΜΟΥ(Ν) ΕΒΟΛ ΔΗ· ΑΥΩ ΧΕ ΤΕΘΛΙΨΙΣ ΕΡΝΟΒΡΕ ΝΑΝ ΕΖΟΥΗ ΕΠΕΝΤΟΝ ΑΥΩ ΟΝ ΧΕ ΤΗΡΧΡΙΑ ΠΟΥΝΟΒ ΝΣΠΟΥΔΗ ΕΡΟ(Ν) ΨΑΝΤΗΝΕΨΜΗΘΟΝ ΕΜΑΤΕ ΝΤΕΧΑΡΙΣ· ΝΤΑΝΧΙΤΣ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤΗΠΠΟΥΓΤΕ· ΑΥΩ ΧΕ ΟΥΝΟΒ ΝΡΗΥ ΠΕ ΠΩΨ ΝΝΕΓΡΑΦΗ ΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ· ΖΗΟΥΕΙΡΗΝΗ ΝΤΕΠΠΟΥΓΤΕ ΖΑΝΗΗ¹⁹. I shall return to this issue later.
- *hom.* 33: Berlin, *Ms. Or.* 1606, f.6 + Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², ff. 151-156 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 229.23 – 63, 232.13). The text of the 33rd homily ends in Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 156r, col. b, lin. 8 (ΑΥΩ ΝΤΕΙΡΕ ΤΗΝΝΑΜΑΤΕ ΝΤΠΕ ΜΗ ΝΑΓΑΘΟΝ ΕΤΗΡΗΤΣ). In Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 152r, we find an interesting textual addition²⁰.
- *hom.* 34: Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², ff. 156-158 (MONB.CR; PG 63, 235.1 – 63, 236.22). The text of the 34th homily begins at Paris, *BnF Copte* 131², f. 156r, col. b, lin. 17 (ΠΚΩ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΝΕΝΝΟΒΕ ΠΕ ΜΗ ΠΟΥΟΠ ΕΤΨΟΟΠ ΝΑΝ). Nevertheless, the text is not consecutive to the end of the previous homily (see *hom.* 33), since a brief interlude is inserted between the two works, which, obviously, does not parallel the Greek text: ΝΩΔΑΝΦΕΙ ΓΑΡ ΖΗΟΥΓΨΙΕΜΟΤ ΖΑΠΡΟΔΡΕΧ ΝΤΗΨΤΖΗΚΕ· ΤΨΗΝΑΨΚ ΨΑΡΟΝ ΠΕ ΝΤΕΧΑΡΙΣ ΝΠΕΠΨΑ ΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ²¹.

does not parallel any Greek text. In a different form, the passage appears also in the 25th homily *On Hebrews* (PG 63, 175.17), and it is likely that the text we currently read is an original elaboration on this occurrence.

¹⁸ By way of example, one can compare the Greek and Coptic sentences immediately preceding the quotation from Mt 11, 8: οὐχὶ ἐν κολάσει εἰσὶ; Τὰ δὲ νῦν, εἰπέ μοι, οὐ τοιαῦτα // ΑΥΩ ΨΕΨΟΟΠ ΝΠΟΟΥ ΖΗΤΚΟΛΑΨΙΣ ΜΗ ΝΡΕΝΤΕΙΜΙΝΕ ΔΗ ΝΕΝΕΤΨΟΟΠ ΤΕΝΟΥ. Finally, it has to be noted that the Coptic homily does not include the Greek reference in PG 63, 206.35-36 to the «kings of the Gentiles» (πάντες δὲ οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν, Βαβυλωνίων, Αἰγυπτίων, οὐχὶ κακῶς τὴν ζωὴν κατέστρεψαν; cf. Lk 22, 25).

¹⁹ «Likewise, another sermon by him who is really wise in the things of God, Apa John, archbishop of Constantinople, which he pronounced (on the fact) that it is not necessary that we rely upon the things of this life, because they won't remain and because the affliction is profitable for us in the rest, and again (on the fact) that we need a great concern so that we could obtain the Grace which was given to us by God, and (on the fact) that reading the Holy Scripture is a great profit. In God's peace. Amen».

²⁰ The Greek text runs as follow: Ὅτε εὐεργετήθη και ἀπηλλάγη τῶν κακῶν ὁ Ἐζεκιῆς, ἐπήρθη εἰς ὕψος ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ· ὅτε ἠρώσθη, τότε ἐταπεινώθη, τότε ἐγγὺς ἐγένετο τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ὅτε, φησὶν, ἀπέκτεινεν αὐτοὺς, τότε ἐξεζήτουν αὐτὸν, και ἐπέστρεφον και ὠρθίζον πρὸς τὸν Θεόν· και πάλιν· Ὅτε ἐπαχύνθη και ἐλιπάνθη, ἀπελάκτισεν ὁ ἡγαπημένος. Πινώσκειται γὰρ Κύριος κρῖματα ποιῶν. The Coptic redactor (or, far more likely, already his antigraph) must have found the reference to Ezekiel misleading, since it seems to suggest that the second quotation was also from the same prophet. Consequently, he replaced 'φησὶν' with the more exegetical 'κατὰ πρ(ε)σβ(ε)τα {πεντα}δαγεια. χροοφ χε' («according to what David has said»).

²¹ «If we tolerate, through the acceptance of (the) Grace, the distress of the misery, we attract to ourselves the Grace of the Holy Spirit».

2. THE MANUSCRIPTS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MONB.CR

As we have cursorily seen, at least²² three Sahidic codicological units²³, which once belonged to the library of the White Monastery, preserve sections of Chrysostom's *Homilies on Hebrews*, that is, MONB.CP (= CLM 323)²⁴, MONB.CR (= CLM 325), and MONB.OT (= CLM 581). For present purposes, the parchment codex MONB.CR²⁵ takes on particular importance, since, unlike the two other codices, it consists exclusively of *excerpta* from Chrysostom's works. For obvious reasons, it is not possible to provide here an even partial edition of this codex. Nevertheless, I would like to offer a few improvements to the reconstruction of his structure and literary content.

The above-mentioned²⁶ long initial titles²⁷ are a good place to start this analysis. Indeed, instead of introducing a single homily – as is the case, for instance, of another important Chrysostomic collection, namely the Bohairic MACA.AC (= CLM 72)²⁸ –, they are placed at the beginning of larger textual units, which, in turn, are compilations of several excerpts by Chrysostom's homilies, woven together and slightly revised by an editor. In fact, after informing about the author (ἸΩΡΔΑΝΗΝΗΣ ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΠΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΚΩΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ) and the “literary genre”²⁹ ([κε]λογοσ), these extended *inscriptions*, respectively at λ and cz, mark the main themes of each collected homily with the customary expression “ἀγὼ οὖν καὶ” («and again about/that»),

²² Paris, *BnF Copte* 1313, f. 27 seems to have belonged to a fourth White Monastery codex. According to A. SUCIU, *The Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews by John Chrysostom: A Complement to the Coptic Version*, cit., «[t]he paleographical comparison with other manuscripts from the White Monastery has revealed that the fragment was copied by the same scribe to which we owe the *Apophthegmata Patrum* codex (MONB.EG). [...] However, despite the fact that both of them were obviously copied by the same scribe, I have doubts that the Chrysostom bit should be attributed to the *Apophthegmata* codex». Provisionally, CLM entry no. 5201 has been attributed to this parchment folio.

²³ See T. ORLANDI, *Terminology for the Identification of Coptic Literary Documents*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013) 87-94; 91: «[t]he codicological units correspond to what in the more fortunate traditions are simply and rightly called “the codices”. In the Coptic environment I propose to use a different terminology, because in most cases we are confronted with sparse groups of sheets, which through the research of the scholars are presented as having been part of an original codicological unit, with all the uncertainties which accompany such operation».

²⁴ A survey on the content of this palimpsest – which includes, *inter alia*, homilies by Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, Severus of Antioch, and Severian of Gabala – is available in C.M. SCHNEIDER, *The Text of a Monastic Discourse*, cit. 113-120. See also T. ORLANDI, *Coptic Texts Related to the Virgin Mary. An Overview*, Roma 2008, 17.

²⁵ A codicological reconstruction of this dismembered manuscript presumably produced between the 10th and the 12th century was offered by P. BUZI, *Catalogo dei manoscritti copti borgiani conservati presso la Biblioteca Nazionale “Vittorio Emanuele III” di Napoli con un profilo scientifico di Stefano Borgia e Georg Zoega e una breve storia della formazione della collezione Borgiana*, Roma 2009, 247-248. See also P. BUZI, *Coptic Manuscripts 7. The Manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Homiletic and Liturgical Manuscripts from the White Monastery. With two documents from Thebes and two Old Nubian Manuscripts*, Wiesbaden 2014, 146-148, and A. SUCIU, *The Borgian Coptic Manuscripts in Naples: Supplementary Identifications and Notes to a Recently Published Catalogue*, *OrChrP* 77 (2011) 299-235.

²⁶ For the full texts, see under the entries of hom. 24 and 32.

²⁷ On the variety and heterogeneity shown by the use, position, structure, and role of Coptic titles, see P. BUZI, *Miscellanea e florilegi. Osservazioni preliminari per uno studio dei codici copti pluritestuali: il caso delle raccolte di excerpta*, in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends in Late Antiquity. Studies in honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, Roma 2011, 177-203; EAD., *Titoli e autori nella tradizione copta. Studio storico e tipologico*, Pisa-Roma 2005; EAD., *Titles in the Coptic Manuscript Tradition: Complex Structure Title and Extended Complex Structure Titles*, in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium*, ed. M. IMMERZEEL e J. VAN DER VLIET, Leuven-Paris-Dudley, MA 2004, 309-316.

²⁸ All thirty-eight homilies of this codex from the Monastery of St. Macarius have their own title, which gives clear indication of their relative position in the corresponding Greek series. For an analysis of this manuscript, see P. BUZI – F. BERNO – A. SOLDATI – F. VALERIO, *Vat. copt. 57. A Codicological, Literary and Paratextual Analysis*, *COMSt Bulletin* 4.2 (2018), 162-193. See also S. VOICU, *Vaticano Copto 57, in Coptic treasures from the Vatican Library: a selection of Coptic, Copto-Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts: papers collected on the occasion of the tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies (Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012)*, ed. P. BUZI, D.V. PROVERBIO, Roma 2012, 151-162.

²⁹ However, particular care should be taken in considering this questionable piece of information. As remarked by T. ORLANDI, *Terminology for the Identification of Coptic Literary Documents*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013) 87-94; 92, «a kind of homogeneization [of the literary genres] has been introduced before the X century, and it is not advisable to reproduce the terminology found in the title of late manuscripts».

indicating a clear perception of the Coptic text's composite nature³⁰. A third, entirely comparable *inscriptio*, in Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, f. 85v [ρλ] must be added to these two headings. Here we read: ρΟΗΟΙΩΣ ΚΕΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΤΕΠΕΧΗΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ ΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΑΠΑ ΙΩΡΑΝΗΝΗΣ ΠΑΡΧΗΠΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΚΩΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ· ΕΑΦΤΑΥΟΥ ΕΤΒΕ ΤΕΚΡΙΣΙΣ ΕΤΝΑΩΩΠΕ· ΧΕ ΝΩΑΝΚΑ ΠΕΣΡΠΜΕΕΥΕ ΖΗΠΠΕΖΗΤ· ΜΕΡΕΛΑΔΥ ΜΠΑΘΟΣ ΘΗΣΟΜ ΕΡΟΝ· ΑΥΩ ΧΕ ΖΕΝΡΒΗΥΕ ΕΥΜΕΖ ΝΝΕΡΩΛΖΡ ΝΕ ΝΗΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΝΤΕΚΚΛΥΣΙΑ· ΑΥΩ ΕΤΒΕ ΠΝΑ ΕΡΟΥΝ ΝΖΗΚΕ ΖΗΟΥΕΡΗΝΗ ΝΤΕΠ[ΝΟΥΤΕ]³¹.

For present purposes, this *inscriptio* is of the utmost interest in at least two respects. First, we can read (and evaluate) the entire following textual unit, which is preserved *in extenso*. Second, the text that the title introduced is the result of a complex editing activity of three Chrysostom's homilies on the Gospel of John (CPG 4425).

It seems worth reconstructing the structure of this 'Coptic homily' – such is, indeed, the most appropriate definition of this “new” textual unit –, in order to retrace the boundaries and the methods of the interpolatory process.

As just stated, the work as we read it in Coptic consists of selected sections from three authentic Greek homilies by John Chrysostom, namely the 45th, 46th, and 47th of the series dedicated to the Fourth Gospel. In Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, f. 86r ([ρλα]), the text begins by adhering to PG 59, 255.48. Thus, this first section runs until f. 90v, col. b, lin. 3 (ρμ), and parallels the Greek text between PG 59, 255.48 and PG 59, 258.10³². Here begins³³ the second part, which covers PG 59, 260.53 – 59, 262.47³⁴, ending at f. 94v, col. b, lin. 22 (ρμη). After a short transitional passage³⁵, which reworks and summarizes PG 59, 262.47–54, at f. 95r, col. b, lin. 7 ([ρμω]) the last and longer excerpt begins³⁶, translating between PG 59, 268.18 and PG 59, 270.14, and completing the homily in f. 99v (ρμη)³⁷.

Fortunately, in Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, f. 85, we can read the closing lines of the work immediately preceding this long textual unit. I was able to identify them as the Sahidic translation of PG 59, 170.10–20, that is, of the final section of the 29th homily on the Gospel of John by Chrysostom.

This clearly shows that an entire section of MONB.CR was dedicated to this Greek series. Moreover, such a “thematic” division presided over the arrangement of the whole codex. Indeed, along with this large section reserved for the homilies *On John*, and the other, even more substantial part consisting of the sermons *On Hebrews*, a third series found a place in our manuscript, namely the homilies *De diabolo tentatore* (CPG 4332). Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, ff. 81–82 preserve a consistent translation of PG 49, 244. 60 – 49, 247.27³⁸ (1st homily *De diab.*), and, after a twenty-folio lacuna, in Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B.* 11, f. 83³⁹ and Wien, K 09826, we read PG 49, 250.54 – 49, 251.11.

Consequently, it seems appropriate to conclude that MONB.CR originally preserved a complete transla-

³⁰ See P. BUZI, *From Single-Text to Multiple-Text Manuscripts: Transmission Changes in the Coptic Literary Tradition. Some Case-Studies from the White Monastery Library*, in *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, ed. M. FRIEDRICH – C. SCHWARKE, Berlin 2016, 93–109; 99–100.

³¹ «Likewise, another sermon by the saint Chrysostom Apa John, archbishop of Constantinople, which he pronounced about the judgement that will happen, (on the fact) that, if we keep its memory in our hearts, no passion has power over us, and (on the fact) that works full of fears are the mysteries of the Church, and about the mercy towards the poor. In God's peace».

³² Although the conformity between Greek and Coptic is almost exact, the following issues must be reported: in f. 86v, col. a, lin. 15 (Inc. ΑΥΩ ΜΑΡΕΝΤΑΟΥΟΥ) begins a relatively long section which redrafts and modifies the Greek text, mainly by overexposing the moral concerns of its model; in f. 88r, col. b, lin. 14 (PG 59, 256.31) about five lines of the Greek text are missing.

³³ Inc. ΖΗΠΑΙ ΓΑΡ ΕΡΕΠΕΧΡ ΣΩΚ ΜΜΟΝ.

³⁴ The section between PG 59, 262.8 and 59, 262.14 has been omitted by the Sahidic witness.

³⁵ Inc. ΜΑΡΕΝΗΕΥΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕ.

³⁶ Inc. ΠΜΟΥΤΕ ΓΑΡ ΜΕΦΑΝΑΓΓΑΖΕ ΜΜΟΝ.

³⁷ Here again, the Coptic translation is relatively faithful to the Greek text.

³⁸ F. 82v, col. b presents a less accurate translation, since some linguistic labels and thematic features of the model are re-used in new narrative motifs. For instance, the mention of the [ε]ΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΙΕΡΗΝΙΑΣ, as well as the discussion on ΝΠΟΒΕ ΜΠΔΑΟΣ, cannot be found in the original dictate, which, nevertheless, is shaped by a succession of speeches by prophets and Hebrew kings.

³⁹ The text in f. 83 bears clear signs of reworking. The quotations from Ps 84, 3 and 31, 1–2 are missing from the model.

tion of, at least, the 1st homily *De diabolo tentatore*, while the presence of the other two sermons of the series in missing leaves between πβ and πϑ cannot be excluded.

Finally, an updated codicological and content-oriented synoptic reconstruction of MONB.CR can be tentatively outlined as follows:

Wien, *K 09817-09824* (α - ις; 24th and 25th hom. on Hebrews); London, *BL. Or.03581A*, ff. 18-19 (ιζ - ιη; 25th hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, f. 148 ([λζ] - λη; 26th hom. on Hebrews); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, ff. 81-82 ([ηε] - ηη; 1st hom. De diab.); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, f. 83 ([οθ] - π; 1st hom. De diab.); Wien, *K 09826* (πα - πβ; 1st hom. De diab.); Berlin, *Ms. Or. 1641*, f. 1 ([ρθ] - ρι)⁴⁰; Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, f. 84 (ρκγ - ρκΔ; on John⁴¹); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, ff. 85-99 (ρκθ - ρηη; 29th, 45th, 46th, and 47th hom. on John); Venice, *Biblioteca Nazionale 192*, ff. 79-84 ([ρζα] - ρζβ; 16th and 17th hom. on Hebrews); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, ff. 100-106 (ροε - ρπε; 17th hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, f. 147 (ρφα - ρφβ; 15th hom. on Hebrews); London, *BL. Or.03581A*, f. 006B (cz - ch; 32nd hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, f. 149 ([cθ] - ci; 32nd hom. on Hebrews); Wien, *K 09827* ([cθ] - ck; 32nd hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, f. 150 ([cka] - ckv; 32nd hom. on Hebrews); Berlin, *Ms. Or. 1606*, f. 6 (ckr - ckΔ; 33rd hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, ff. 151-158 ([ckε] - ch; 33rd and 34th hom. on Hebrews); Leiden, *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden 104* ([cna] - cnv; 29th hom. on Hebrews); Wien, *K 09828* ([coe] - cos; 30th hom. on Hebrews); Wien, *K 09829* ([cna] - cnp; 31st hom. on Hebrews); Paris, *BnF Copte 131²*, ff. 159-160 ([cpe] - cpi; 31st hom. on Hebrews); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, f. 107 (τγ - τΔ; 49th hom. on John⁴²); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, f. 108 ([τνα] - τnv⁴³); Naples, *Biblioteca Nazionale I.B. 11*, f. 109 (τζε - τζς).

As for this last folio, the case is particularly complex. The extant text begins with a quotation from Gal 4, 4-5 (ὁτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυνακός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν // ντερειπχωκ δε μπεροειω ει αππογτε τηνοογ ηπερωηρε εαρωαπε εβολ ρηνογρημε αρωαπε ραππομος χε εφεωωπ ηνετρα ππομος). The text goes on to specify how Christ's nativity happened, namely εβολ ρηγεθεοαοκος ετογααβ μαρια («from the saint Mary, mother of God»). This is enough to state that we are dealing with a late pseudo-Chrysostomic composition, and that the theology it expresses is more at home in the Egyptian post-Ephesian debate on the nature of Jesus than in 4th century Anatolia. Obviously, the passage deserves more detailed and specific examinations. However, here I would like to limit myself to reminding that several works by heterodox authors (or by authors formally condemned by the Great Church) can be discovered under the name of the bishop of Constantinople. It can be assumed – and, as far as I can see, MONB.CR is further evidence of this – that *corpora* of such texts circulated also in Coptic environments⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ I was not able to identify the content of this isolated leaf. Particularly, the relationship between the quotation from Mt 25, 41 (Πορεύεσθε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, οἱ καταραμένοι, εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον, τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ // σαρετηγτη εβολ ημοι νερτρογορτ ετσατε ηρωαηεζ ταϊ ηταγσβτωτς ηηλιαβολος ηη ηεφαγγελος) and the framework within which it is inserted in the Coptic text does not find comparison in any Chrysostomic work.

⁴¹ The last lines of this leaf seem to echo PG 59, 97 and ff., but the correspondence is far from being exact.

⁴² PG 59, 273.3 – 59, 274.8. F. 107v, col. b, presents a strongly revisited text.

⁴³ These last extant leaves are fraught with several outstanding issues. As for f. 108, the eulogy of Paul (ρικων ητε τμε; τελειον ητε τηπιστ εσχηκ εβολ; ηος ηκγρζ ητεισοτ ητε τηητεγσεβης [«image of the truth»; «perfection of the complete faith»; «great herald of this sort of godliness»]) cannot be found in the present form in Chrysostom, even though, obviously, it fits well with Chrysostom's great appreciation of the Apostle. On this matter, see M. MITCHELL, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation*, Tübingen 2000.

⁴⁴ On this fascinating phenomenon, see S. VOICU, *L'immagine di Crisostomo negli spuri*, in *Chrysostomusbilder in 1600 Jahren*, ed. M. WALLRAFF e R. BRÄDLE, Berlin-New York 2008, 61-96 («refugium peccatorum», 66) and ID., *Nestorio e la Oratio de epiphania (CPG 4882) attribuita a Giovanni Crisostomo*, Aug. 43 (2003) 495-499. E. CATTANEO, *Trois homélies pseudo-chrysostomiennes sur la pâque comme œuvre d'Apollinaire de Laodicée. Attribution et étude théologique*, Paris 1981. Due to its thematic proximity with this fragment on the Nativity, the pseudo-Chrysostomic homily *In hypapante* (CPG 4756) is of particular relevance. Cf. E. BICKERSTEDT, *Edition with a Translation of a Hypapante Homily Ascribed to John Chrysostom*, OrChrP 32 (1966) 53-77. Comparable revisions of John's "Mariology" are attested by other Chrysostomic collections, also in Greek: see S. VOICU, *Il florilegio crisostomico del Vat. Gr. 790*, in *Studia codicologica*

3. SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Coptic reception of Chrysostom's literary *corpus* exhibits peculiar and recurring features⁴⁵. As I have stressed elsewhere⁴⁶, the final redactor's extensive freedom to cut, redraft, and recompose the Greek models is among the most pronounced traits shown by the Sahidic translations of Greek homiletic series. It remains to be highlighted that the arrangement of MONB.CR keeps the memory of the relative position occupied by each homily in the corresponding Greek series, since the Coptic textual units largely preserve several ordered sequences of their model: the homilies on *Hebrews* nos. 24, 25, and 26 are tied together in this order, as well as homilies nos. 32, 33, and 34, and, then, sermons nos. 29, 30, and 31. This structure is due to a careful selection of Greek passages which seems to aim at enucleating the ethical and paraenetic core of Chrysostom's works and at prioritising the Greek *ethika*, that is, the exhortative sections which customary close Chrysostom's compositions⁴⁷.

Actually, the Sahidic renderings of Greek depart from literal translation especially when the expression draws close to the exegetical sections of the original texts. The erudite concerns stemming from these learned speculations had to be perceived by the Coptic redactor as oblivious to the interest of the Coptic readers. He felt free therefore to ignore (or at least to considerably downsize) them, in order to create an original literary production, which was able to effectively meet new expectations and needs, evoking an image of Chrysostom as teacher of monastic virtues and wisdom. This appears to have been the rationale underlying the creation of Coptic collections of redrafted Greek *ethika*, and, more broadly, presiding over the Coptic reception of the Greek homiletic tradition⁴⁸.

Finally, it has to be noted that MONB.CR lacks all indication to the reader, and this makes it unlikely that the manuscript could be intended as an homiliary for liturgical services, that is as a lectionary⁴⁹. Instead, it appears to have been conceived as a handbook of uplifting readings, taken from one of the most influential, revered and popular Early Church Fathers⁵⁰.

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Abstract. The present article aims at providing a fresh review of the Coptic reception of the *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews* by John Chrysostom. Along with an exhaustive analysis of the scholarly contribution on such a relevant

(TU 124), Berlin 1977, 493-502 (with reference to the text no. 13, Voicu notes that «l'interpretazione, non identificata, sembra creata apposta per soppiantare quella del Crisostomo [PG 57, 464-466], nota per il suo tono poco elogiativo nei confronti di Maria»; 496).

⁴⁵ For a detailed *status quaestionis*, see T. ORLANDI, *Gregorio di Nissa nelle letteratura copta*, VetChr 18 (1981) 333-339.

⁴⁶ F. BERNO – P. BUZI – A. SOLDATI – F. VALERIO, *Vat. copt. 57*, cit., especially 179-180.

⁴⁷ On this quite peculiar, bipartite structure of Chrysostom's homiletic Greek texts, see J.H. BARKHUIZEN, *John Chrysostom, Homily 50 on Matthew 14:23–36* (PG 58, 503–510). *A Perspective on His Homiletic Art*, Acta Classica 38 (1995) 43–65, and A. MOULARD, *Saint Jean Chrysostome. Sa vie, son œuvre*, Paris 1941.

⁴⁸ For a more detailed discussion, see F. BERNO, *The Literary Content. An Introduction*, in *Detecting Early Mediaeval Coptic Literature in Dayr al-Anbā Maqār, between Textual Conservation and Literary Rearrangement: The Case of Vat. copt. 57*, ed. by P. BUZI, Città del Vaticano 2019, forthcoming.

⁴⁹ Cf., at least, O.H.E. BURMESTER, *The Homilies or Exhortation of the Holy Week Lectionary*, Muséon 43 (1932) 20-70, and, more recently, U. ZANETTI, *Homélie copto-arabes pour la Semaine Sainte*, Aug. 23 (1983) 517-523.

⁵⁰ For an overview on the Coptic fortune of Chrysostom, suffice it to refer to S. VOICU, *John Chrysostom in the Oriental Languages*, Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter 5 (2013), 41-46. About eighty extant works are ascribed in Coptic to Chrysostom, including more than forty authentic compositions by John, about thirty-five *pseudoepigrapha* transmitted under his name and a more limited *corpus* of literary works attributed in Coptic to other authors, while in Greek to Chrysostom, or, conversely, ascribed in Coptic to John, while in Greek to other authors. A constantly updated *regesto* in PATHS' database: paths.authors.53, <http://paths.uniroma1.it/atas/authors/53>. See also P. BUZI – J. BOGDANI – F. BERNO, *The 'PATHS' Project: An Effort to Represent the Physical Dimension of Coptic Literary Production (Third-Eleventh centuries)*, COMSt Bulletin 4.1 (2018) 39-58, especially 50-56.

topic, new textual identifications are offered, with the correlative goal to give an updated codicological and content-oriented synoptic reconstruction of MONB.CR, the main Coptic testimony of Chrysostom's homilies *On Hebrews*. This significant manuscript is analysed in comparison with other Coptic witnesses entirely or almost entirely consisting of Chrysostom's works. Finally, some textual and historical remarks on the Coptic rewritings of Greek homilies and homiletic corpora supplement the contribution, in order to retrace the methods and the boundaries of these interpolatory processes.

Keywords. John Chrysostom. Homilies on Hebrews. Coptic translations. Coptic reception. Rewriting. Homiletic corpora.

Theban Books in Context

by

Elisabeth R. O'Connell

In 1849, the traveller and antiquities dealer Baron Robert Curzon, the fourteenth Baron Zouche of Haryngworth (1810-1873) published an account of his 1838 visit to Western Thebes where he lived for a time at Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah (Figs 1-2)¹. His account is lively and dramatic in accordance with the travel writing of the day, and vividly evokes the Theban West Bank in the 1830s when it was busy with travellers, nascent Egyptologists and antiquities hunters². The great pharaonic temples and tombs were the primary focus of their efforts; in contrast, the physical remains of the region's later, less impressive, Late Antique levels of occupation were largely stripped away with little or no documentation. Today, the landscape of Late Antique region can be somewhat reconstructed using early travellers' accounts, such as Curzon's, and other early records; archaeological objects, including ancient texts mostly written on papyri and ostraca, now in international museums and libraries; and, from the early twentieth century, the documentation and publication of Late Antique archaeological sites³. These sources reveal that the temple of Ramesses III at Madinat Habū was transformed into a town called Memnoneia in Greek and Ĝēme in Coptic, which flourished c. AD 600-800, and contemporary monasteries, churches, saints' shrines and monastic dwellings were installed in and around the ancient Egyptian monuments on the desert escarpment called the Mountain of Memnoneia in Greek sources and the Mountain of Ĝēme in Coptic⁴.

Like other travellers' accounts, Curzon's gives his impression of the Christian landscape of Western Thebes before it was largely removed and destroyed, providing important evidence for features no longer visible, such as the wall-paintings of the Great Church of Ĝēme located within the courtyard of the temple of Ramesses III at Madinat Habū.

The inner court of the Temple of Medinet Habou has also been converted into a Christian church; and the worthy Copts have daubed over the beautifully executed pictures of Rameses II [sic] with a coat of plaster, upon which they have painted the grim figures of St. George, and various old frightful saints and hermits, whose uncouth forms would almost give one the idea of their having served for a system of idolatry much less refined than the worship of the ancient gods of the heathen, whose places they have usurped in these gigantic temples⁵.

While he denigrates the physical remains of Late Antiquity in favour of those of ancient Egypt, Curzon, like many of his fellow European travellers, valued and actively collected Christian manuscripts⁶. His

¹ This contribution is dedicated to the memory of T.E. Górecki (1951-2017). Like so many others, I benefited from his kindness and hospitality, on site and at the Polish mission's house at Deir el-Bahri (fittingly, H.E. Winlock's former Metropolitan Museum of Art expedition house). I am grateful to A. Boud'hors, P. Buzi, K. Doosoo and the anonymous peer-reviewers for their comments and suggestions, and especially the representatives of Theban excavations who supplied unpublished information given in section II. I thank S. Boange for assistance compiling and formatting bibliography. All errors are my responsibility alone. Place names are spelled according to the conventions preferred by the PATHs Project and outlined in J. BOGDANI – P. ROSATI, *PATHs Atlas*, <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu> (last accessed 18 March 2019). I thank the team for revising place names systematically herein. All editions are cited according to J. OATES et al., *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets*, <http://papyri.info/docs/checklist>. Coptic shelfmarks are provided in text for convenience to users of this issue.

² These categories overlap. For an overview up to 1881 with bibliography, see, *inter alia*, J. THOMPSON, *Wonderful things: A history of Egyptology*, Cairo 2015. For biographical information on collectors and dealers, see *Who was who in Egyptology*, ed. M.L. BIERBRIER, 4th rev. ed., London 2012; F. HAGEN – K.S.B. RYHOLT, *The antiquities trade in Egypt 1880-1930: The H.O. Lange papers*, Copenhagen 2016.

³ For surveys of the excavation of and scholarship on the archaeology of Late Antique Western Thebes, see T.G. WILFONG, *Western Thebes in the seventh and eighth centuries: A bibliographic survey of Jēme and its surroundings*, BASP 26 (1989) 89-145; E.R. O'CONNELL, *Excavating Late Antique Western Thebes: A history*, in *Christianity and monasticism in Upper Egypt II: Nag Hammadi-Esna*, ed. G. GABRA – H.N. TAKLA, Cairo 2010, 253-270.

⁴ E.R. O'CONNELL, *Transforming monumental landscapes in Late Antique Egypt*, J ECS 15 (2007) 239-274.

⁵ R. CURZON, *Visits to monasteries in the Levant*, London 1849, 122-123.

⁶ Compare his descriptions the Wādī an-Naṭrūn and the 'Monastery of the Pulley', R. CURZON, *Visits to Monasteries*

account thus stands at the intersection of ancient history, modern history, collections' history, and a tale well-told. Curzon's chapter begins,

On a rocky hill, perforated on all sides by the violated sepulchres of the ancient Egyptians, in the great Necropolis of Thebes, not far from the ruins of the palace and temple of Medinet Habou, stand the crumbling walls of an old Coptic monastery, which I was told had been inhabited, almost within the memory of man, by a small community of Christian monks. I was living at this period in a tomb, which was excavated in the side of the precipice, above Sheik Abd el Goui-noo. It had been rendered habitable by some slight alterations, and a little garden was made on the terrace in front of it, whence the view was very remarkable. The whole of the vast ruins of Thebes stretched out below it ... This habitation was known by the name of 'Mr. Hay's tomb'⁷.

The dwelling here described was built in and around the tomb now known as Theban Tomb 83 (TT 83) by the famous Egyptologist John Gardner Wilkinson, and later occupied by his collaborator Robert Hay and his Greek wife, Kalitza, whom he had purchased at a Cairo slave market⁸.

... One of the numerous admirers of Mr. Hay ... was a Coptic carpenter,⁹ ... [who] was the guardian of the volumes belonging to his fallen church. After some persuasion he agreed [to show me], but he said I must go to the place where they were concealed at night ... we had only just light enough to see our way across the plain of Thebes, or rather among the low hills and narrow valleys above the plain, which are so entirely honey-combed with ancient tombs and mummy pits Skulls and bones were strewn on our path; and often at the mouths of tombs the night wind would raise up fragments of the bandages which the sacrilegious hand of the Frankish spoilers of the dead had torn from the bodies of the Egyptian mummies...

... Away we went stumbling over ruins, and escaping narrowly the fate of those who descend into the tomb before their time. ... After a fatiguing walk, we descended suddenly into a place something like a gravel pit, one side of which was closed by the perpendicular face of a low cliff, in which a doorway half filled up with rubbish betokened the existence of an ancient tomb ...

The walls and columns, or rather square piers which supported the roof, retained the brilliant white which is so much to be admired in the tombs of the kings and other stately sepulchres. On the walls were various hieroglyphics, and on the square piers tall figures of the gods of the infernal regions—Kneph, Khonso, and Osiris—were portrayed in brilliant colours, with their immense caps or crowns, and the heads of the jackal and other beasts.¹⁰ At the further end of this chamber was a stone altar, standing upon one or two steps, in an apsis or semicircular recess. As this is not usual in Egyptian tombs, I have since thought that this had probably been altered by the Copts in early times...

The Coptic manuscripts, of which I was in search, were lying upon the steps of the altar, except one, larger than the rest, which was placed upon the altar itself. They were about eight or nine in number, all brown and musty looking books, written on cotton paper, or *charta bombycina*, a material in use in very early times.

They proved to be all church books, liturgies for different seasons, or homilies; and not historical, nor of any particular interest, either from their age or subject. There now remained only the great book upon the altar, a ponderous quarto, bound either in brown leather or wooden boards; ... but ... we heard the noise The carpenter and I looked at each other: he turned pale—perhaps I did too...

... it was a fearful howling, like the roar of a hundred wild beasts. The carpenter looked aghast: the tall and grisly figures of the Egyptian gods seemed to stare at us from the walls. ... to our unutterable horror, it began again, and waxed louder and louder, as if legions of infernal spirits were let loose upon us. We could stand this no longer: the carpenter and I jumped up from the ground ...

... We all set off as hard as we could run, our feelings of alarm being increased to desperation when we

in the Levant, cit., 75-104, 105-116. In general, see A. HAMILTON, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822: The European discovery of the Egyptian Church*, Oxford-New York 2006.

⁷ R. CURZON, *Visits to monasteries in the Levant*, cit., 117-118.

⁸ J. THOMPSON, *Tomb-dwelling in 19th century Thebes: Sir Gardner Wilkinson's house at Sheikh Abd el Qurna*, KMT 7.2 (1996) 53-59; J. THOMPSON, *Wonderful things: A history of Egyptology*, cit., 155-161, 185-189.

⁹ For the Coptic community on the West Bank in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see K.VAN DER SPEK, *The modern neighbors of Tutankhamun: History, life, and work in the villages of the Theban West Bank*, Cairo-New York 2011.

¹⁰ Curzon's account may of course conflate places in the service of his story, but it is worth remarking that the 'square piers' bearing images of ancient Egyptian deities bring to mind especially the royal tombs of the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens.

perceived that something was chasing us in the darkness, while the roar seemed to increase every moment. Breathless and bewildered, the carpenter and I bolted out of this infernal palace into the open air ...

... The evil one came forth in bodily shape, and stood revealed to our eyes distinctly in the pale light of the moon...¹¹.

With high drama and more than a little camp, Curzon reveals that the 'evil one' was in fact a donkey. The later 'church books' described by Curzon were not of interest to him, nor are they particular interest in the present volume on sixth-eighth century Coptic books. Written on paper, they are medieval, copied after 987, our earliest dated Coptic paper codex (P.Lond.Copt. II 120 = BL Or. 7021)¹². Curzon does not say he took any of the books he described in this episode. But he did acquire at least one paper Bohairic Coptic and Arabic codex, a *Psalmodia*, in Thebes in 1838, now in the British Library (P.Lond.Copt. II 236 = BL Or. 8805)¹³. I start with this tale to give some of the atmosphere and pathos of the place that, in our scientific study, we naturally dismiss. It is after all an ancient Egyptian necropolis.

This contribution surveys the Greek and Coptic literature from or said to be from the 'Theban region,' with the aim of understanding the levels of certainty of their attribution, and what the resulting corpus of books may reveal about the people who used them in Late Antiquity (AD 200-800)¹⁴. In order to situate book production (copying) and consumption (reading) within wider patterns in the region, I have included Greek and Coptic literary and some 'semi-literary' texts dating not only from Late Antiquity, but from the Roman to early medieval periods¹⁵. First I will examine the provenance of books that formed early collections now in international institutions (I). Second, I will survey both published and unpublished examples from excavated contexts (II). Third, I discuss possible correlations between the contents of 'libraries' and the places to which they were donated or housed (III). I conclude with observations on the contribution of Theban manuscripts to the study of book culture (IV).

First some definitions are in order. With 'books,' I am concerned with literary texts in book roll and codex form¹⁶. The division between literary and documentary texts is not always straightforward, with extracts of literary texts found in documents. Distinguishing between literary and 'semi-literary' texts such as school exercises and 'magical' texts is likewise problematic, especially when only a fragment survives. Here, I largely exclude texts that are not direct attestations of ancient works. These works are mainly from the 'Classical' and 'Christian' traditions, terms I use for convenience, acknowledging that these two categories are not mutually exclusive¹⁷. That stated, I explore one category of 'semi-literary' texts, i.e., 'magical' handbooks and formularies, because they usefully span the period between the third and eighth centuries, and, if correctly dated, demonstrate the transitions from roll to codex form and from Greek to Coptic language. Finally, books attributed to Western Thebes rarely survive complete, but more often are only fragments of rolls or codex leaves. Most of the objects described below are therefore only small parts representing manuscripts once complete (thus in the case of codices, 'codicological units')¹⁸.

By 'provenance' in the following, I am mainly concerned with findspot. Books are of course portable,

¹¹ R. CURZON, *Visits to monasteries in the Levant*, cit., 118-126.

¹² G. PÄRPULOV, *Bibles of the Christian East*, in *The new Cambridge history of the Bible 2*, ed. R. MARSDEN – E.A. MATTER, Cambridge 2012, 314-315. For the twelfth/thirteenth-century church at Dayr aš-Šahīd Tādrus al-Muḥārib, see P. GROSSMANN, *Mittelalterliche Langhauskuppelkirchen und verwandte Typen in Oberägypten: Eine Studie zum mittelalterlichen Kirchenbau in Ägypten*, Glückstadt 1982, 203-205.

¹³ On a paper codex *Psalmodia* (Theotokias) in The British Library is written 'from Thebes, at Memnonium, 1838', with hymns in Coptic and some in Arabic (P.Lond.Copt. II 236= BL Or. 8805).

¹⁴ The content is largely based on Chapter 8 of E.R. O'CONNELL, *Tombs for the living: Monastic reuse of monumental funerary architecture in Late Antique Egypt*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Berkeley 2007.

¹⁵ I use 'semi-literary' advisedly and for convenience to cover glossaries, school texts and other extracts used for various reasons, medical and magical texts, acknowledging that indeed literary and documentary texts form a continuum and are not necessarily fixed categories.

¹⁶ See the introduction to this section by Paola Buzi.

¹⁷ See G. Agosti's contribution in this section.

¹⁸ Following T. ORLANDI, *A terminology for the identification of Coptic literary documents*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013) 87-94.

each with its own life history, moving from place of production, potential multiple places of use and final deposition¹⁹. Western Thebes is here defined broadly as the West Bank opposite what is today Luxor, and is identified by the Ministry of Antiquities and Egyptological literature, as covering the distance between Dayr aš-Šalwiṭ to the southwest and aṭ-Ṭārif to the northeast²⁰. Manuscripts purchased on the east or west banks of Luxor are often presumed to be from the region, but since Luxor was a hub for travellers and antiquities dealers, they may have been brought from further afield for sale in Luxor. The ‘Theban neighborhood’ can extend from Isnā to Dandarah and even Hu²¹. These issues will be addressed in the following, but suffice to say here that levels of certainty range from 1) manuscripts said to be from the region, purchased there or both 2) manuscripts said to be from the region, supported by palaeographical parallels or other internal criteria²² and 3) excavated manuscripts.

This contribution aims to capture the maximum number of items attributed to the region. It does not aim to re-date or attribute or reattribute manuscripts to their findspots. This will be the work of PAThs and other scholars. I hope that this contribution will provide one point of departure.

I. ACQUISITIONS 1769-1914

The era of manuscript hunting that resulted in most European and North American library collections largely took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries²³. Active Christian churches such as those in the Monastery of Macarius in the Wādī al-Natrūn and the Monastery of St Catherine in Sinai were targeted by manuscript hunters, as demonstrated by Curzon’s strategy at Thebes. Ruined monasteries such as those at Ḥaḡar Idfū (III below) and Ḥāmūli also provided rich, mainly medieval corpora. The circumstances of the discoveries of earlier manuscripts such as the so-called Naḡ’ Ḥammādī, Bodmer and This corpora are difficult to reconstruct and have been the subject of extensive scholarly investigation²⁴. Most of these ‘bibliological units’ comprise 20-40 items dating to a relatively limited time-span, whereas Western Thebes is remarkable for the number and variety of both codicological and bibliological units associated with it.

In the following, the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB) provides a ready-made dataset with which to explore the limits of the corpus that can be attributed to ‘Thebes’²⁵. It has many advantages²⁶,

¹⁹ Recording the life history of codicological units will be an important outcome of the PAThs project. For example, a manuscript found in the Wādī al-Natrūn, but thought to have originated at the Monastery of Apa Thomas at Wādī Sarḡah (*P.Sarga*, p. 8), the more famous White Monastery manuscripts acquired by Curzon at the Monastery of the Syrians in Wādī al-Natrūn (*P.Lond.Copt.* II xviii and 2, 81, 85, 89, 174, 175), and codices copied in Nubia and the Oxyrhynchite that were probably part of the Idfū corpus (*P.Lond.Copt.* II, xxvii, see now also, J. VAN DER VLIET, *Nubian voices from Edfu: Egyptian scribes and Nubian patrons in southern Egypt*, in *Nubian voices II: New texts and studies on Christian Nubian culture*, ed. A. ŁAJTAR – G. OCHAŁA – J. VAN DER VLIET (JJP. Supplement 27), Warsaw 2015, 263-277.

²⁰ B. PORTER and R.L.B. MOSS, *Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs and paintings* I-II, 2nd rev. ed., Oxford 1989-1994.

²¹ So defined in H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes I* (Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition 3), New York 1926, 104.

²² Largely following Crum in various publications, especially in H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 196-208; and A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, in *From gnostics to monastics: Studies in Coptic and early Christianity*, ed. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL, Leuven 2017, 175-212; A. BOUD’HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, in *New perspectives on religion, education and culture at Christian Western Thebes (VI-VIII)*, ed. A. MARAVELA – A. MIHÁLYKÓ TOHTNE (American Studies in Papyrology), Ann Arbor, MI, forthcoming.

²³ E.R. O’CONNELL, *The discovery of Christian Egypt: From manuscript hunters toward an archaeology of Late Antiquity*, in *Coptic civilization: Two thousand years of Christianity in Egypt*, ed. G. GABRA, Cairo 2014, 143-156.

²⁴ See T. Orlandi’s contribution in this section. For Naḡ’ Ḥammādī, see J.M. ROBINSON, *The Nag Hammadi story* (NHMS 86), Leiden 2014; for Bodmer see J.M. ROBINSON, *The story of the Bodmer Papyri: From the first monastery’s library in Upper Egypt to Geneva and Dublin*, Cambridge 2011; *I Papiri Bodmer: Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco, copto e latino nell’Egitto tardoantico*, ed. G. AGOSTI, P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, Adamantius 21 (2015), 6-172; for This, see P. Buzi’s contribution in this section.

²⁵ W. CLARYSSE, et al. (eds), *Leuven database of ancient books*, 1998-present, <http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab>, all searches collated 8 Jan. 2018.

²⁶ See e.g., R.S. BAGNALL, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, Princeton 2009, 72.

but is an imperfect tool especially when it comes to issues of findspot and provenance; each search return must be interrogated on a case-by-case basis. Nevertheless, LDAB gives an upper limit for the number of published codices attributed to the region (see Appendix). In order to understand how literary codices fit with wider patterns of books attributed to the region, we can look at the distribution of all literary and semi-literary texts in different forms (here, roll and codex) and on different writing supports (here papyrus, parchment and wood), and further refine our results by language (here Greek and Coptic)²⁷. Thus, a search for provenance: 'Thebes'; book form: 'codex,' returns 80 books; a search for 'Christian' added to this search returns 67 (Table 1).

	Thebes	Thebes, papyrus	Thebes, papyrus roll	Thebes, codex	Thebes, papyrus codex	Thebes, parchment codex	Thebes, wood codex
All	592	117	16	80	70	7	3
Greek	199	37	12	23	19	2	2
Coptic	366	75	3	65	58	5	2
Christian	399	72	2	67	60	5	2

Table 1. Leuven Database of Ancient Books results from Thebes based on combinations of search terms.

1. Roman-period Greek book rolls

Among the 12 fragments of Greek papyrus rolls said to have been found in Thebes, up to four contain direct attestations of ancient authors. Fragments of a c. 50-150 book roll containing parts of *Iliad* 6 are now split between London, Paris and Milan, with the Milan fragments said to have been acquired at Qurnah in 1829 (P.Lond.Lit. 13 = BL Pap. 127 c)²⁸. A second-century roll containing parts of *Iliad* 18 is now in London and Paris (P.Lond.Lit. 24 = BL Pap. 127 a). The London fragments were purchased from J.G. Hilton Price 13 October 1888 and are said to have been discovered in the Valley of Kings. A second-century fragment of Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, purchased on the Theban West Bank, is now in Berlin (BKT IX 37)²⁹. A c. AD 75-125 papyrus containing the works of Hyperides is now split between London, Cambridge and Paris (P.Lond.Lit. 132 descr. = Cambridge, St John's College Aa 5.1 Ardenianus + London, BL Pap. 108 + London, BL Pap. 115 + Paris, Louvre 1169). The British Library fragment purchased in 1846 by the British merchant and commissariat official based in Alexandria, A.C. Harris (1790-1869), was said to have been recovered from a Theban tomb³⁰. The attribution of each of the four depends on the reported purchase place or findspot. Contrary to expectation, the specificity of the findspot can in fact be misleading, with sources such as Harris being notoriously unreliable³¹.

Despite the small sample and unconfirmed provenance, we may nevertheless speculate who may have owned literary papyrus rolls in Roman antiquity in anticipation of a discussion of who may have copied and read books in Western Thebes in Late Antiquity (below). Active sites in the Roman period comprised tourist, settlement, funerary and (other) sacred sites (Fig. 1)³².

²⁷ Nine entries contain both Greek and Coptic.

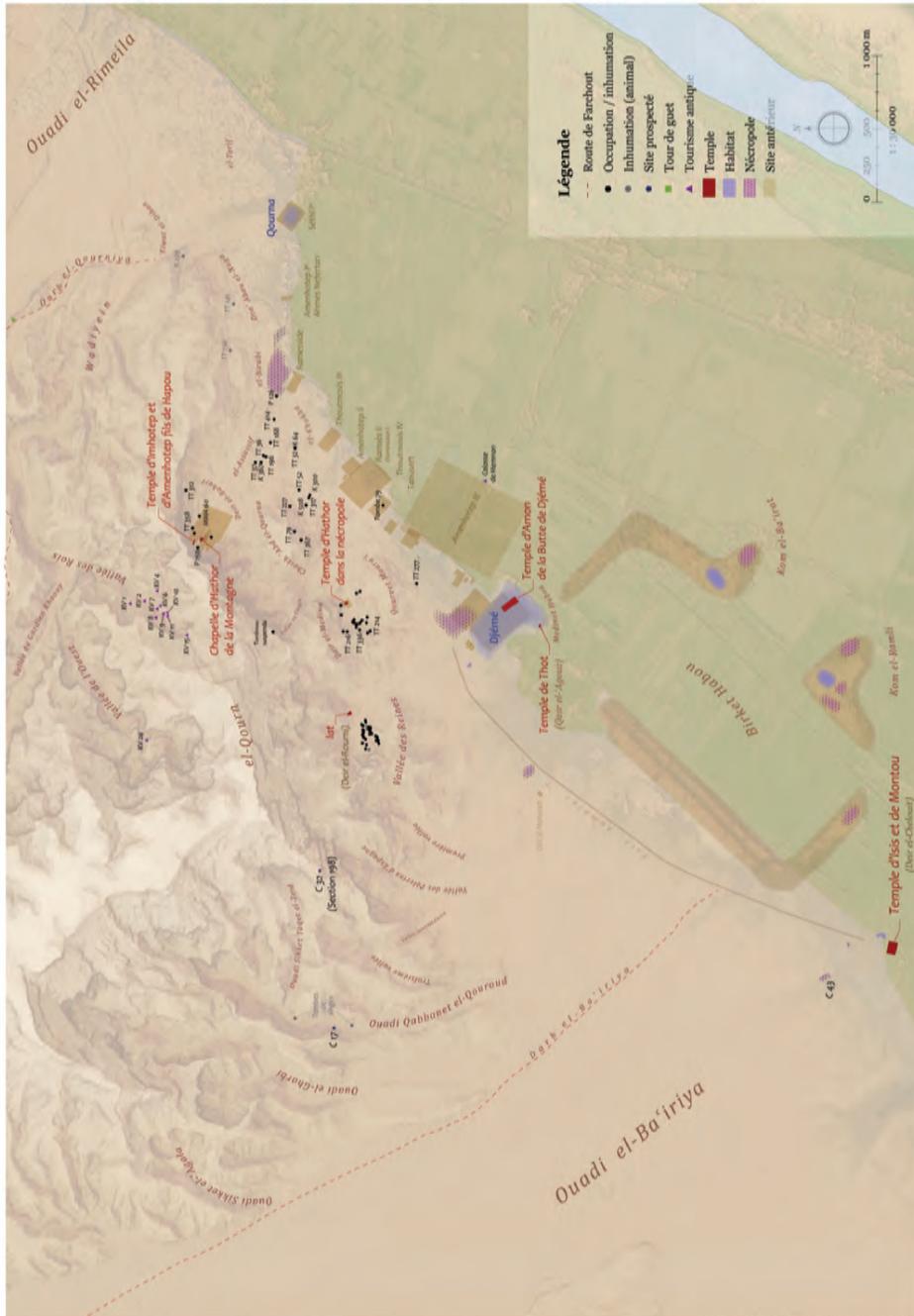
²⁸ C. GALLAZZI, *I falsi rotoli dell'Acerbi*, P. Paris 3 ter e P.Lond.Lit. 13, ZPE 112 (1996) 185.

²⁹ For all SMB manuscripts, see *Die Papyrussammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Berliner Papyrusdatenbank*, <http://berlpap.smb.museum/sammlung/>.

³⁰ A.C. HARRIS, *The Secretary read an account by Mr Harris of Alexandria*, Proceedings of the Royal Society of Literature 1.18 (13 January) 262. Harris died in Alexandria and his papers and notebooks are deposited in the Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria. In 1846, Harris also purchased the largest corpus of Coptic manuscripts said to come from Thebes (below).

³¹ B. NONGBRI, *The crocodile pit of Maabdeh, Florence Nightingale, and the British Museum's acquisition of the Harris Homer*, BASP 54 (2017) 107-117; C. GALLAZZI, *I falsi rotoli dell'Acerbi*, cit. 185.

³² A.-B. PIMPAUD – G. LECUYOT, *Cartes pour l'étude de la rive gauche de Thèbes aux époques romaines et byzantines*, Memnonia 24 (2013) 147-154, pl. 31; E.R. O'CONNELL, *Tombs for the living*, cit., ch. 4 253-281; N. HOLMES – E.R. O'CONNELL, *A parcel of Late Roman bronze coins from Thebes*, Numismatic Chronicle 126 (2008) 21-26. The 'dayr' in



Carte de la rive gauche du Nil à Thèbes à l'époque romaine.
 © A.-B. Pimpaud, G. Lecuyot, « Cartes pour l'étude de la rive gauche de Thèbes aux époques romaines et byzantines, *Memoria XXIV*, 2013, pl. XXXI.

Fig. 1. Map of Western Thebes in the Roman period (Courtesy of G. Lecuyot).

the modern place names indicates modern recognition that these sites were reused by Christians.

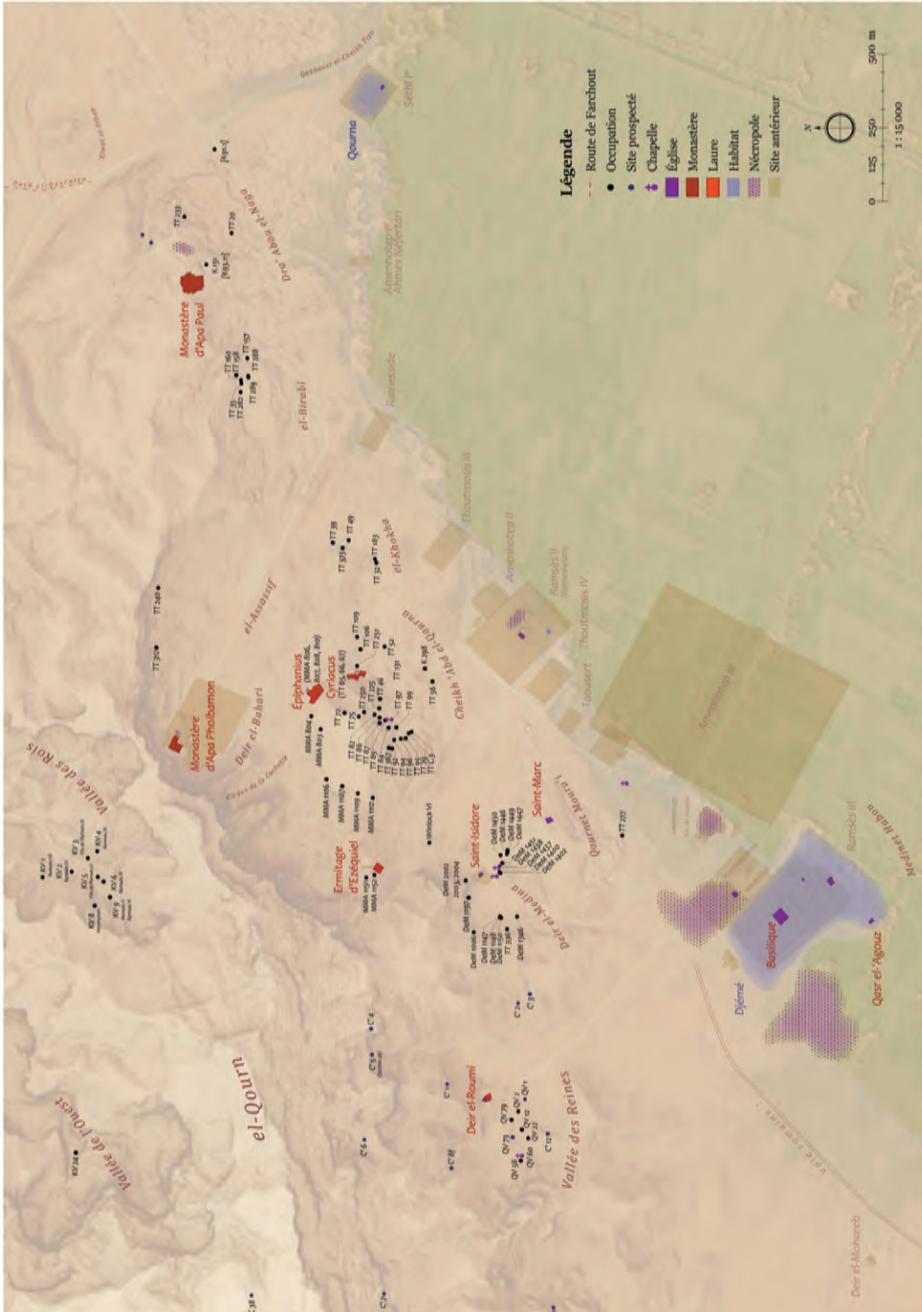


Fig. 2. Map of Western Thebes in the Byzantine period (Courtesy of G. Lecuyot).

Carte de la rive gauche du Nil à Thèbes à l'époque byzantine.
 © A-B. Pimpaud, G. Lecuyot, « Cartes pour l'étude de la rive gauche de Thèbes aux époques romaines et byzantines, *Memnoia* XXIV, 2013, pl. XXXII.

The must-see status of tourist destinations like the so-called colossi of Memnon and tombs of the Valley of the Kings is evidenced by thousands of visitors' inscriptions (I.Memnon, I.Syring.), as well as historians' accounts (Strabo XVII 1,46, Pausanias I 42,3, and Ammianus Marcellinus VI 43, XVI 15). Along the cultivation, towns were installed in the temples of Ramesses III at Madīnat Habū and Seti I at Qurnah. Temples were built or refurbished or cult continued at 1) the temple of Isis and Montu at Dayr aš-Šalwīt, 2) the temple of Amon in the town at Madīnat Habū, 3) the temple of Thoth at Qasr al-'Aġūz to the west, 4) Dayr al-Rūmī at the mouth of the Valley of the Queens, 5) a chapel of Isis installed at the back of the Ptolemaic-period temple of Hathor at Dayr al-Madīnah, and 6) activity at Dayr al-Baḥarī associated with the cult of Imhotep and Amenhotep, son of Hapi³³. Roman-period graves were found in abundance just beyond the region's settlements, for example, at Madīnat Habū as well as al-Birabi, that is, near the town in the temple of Seti I at Qurnah. Burials were also plentiful in already existing rock-cut tombs throughout the necropolis, especially in the Valley of the Queens, Dayr al-Madīnah, Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah and al-Ḥūḥah. Around AD 300, the legionary fort across the river was built in and around the temple of Amon at Luxor. Routes departing from Western Thebes across the Qīnā Bend and to al-Ḥarīḡah Oasis and destinations beyond were punctuated by watch towers and shelters covered in graffiti. Thus in the Roman period, the Theban landscape was inhabited by priests, townspeople, tourists and the dead, any of the elite among whom could have owned and read Greek book rolls. Some are more likely suspects than others.

2. Roll to codex: 'Magical' texts

With some types of texts, we can make an educated guess as to who used them. Among the so-called semi-literary manuscripts, 'magical' texts are fairly well-studied³⁴, with J. Dieleman persuasively arguing that those known today as the Theban Magical Library should belong to a bilingual, priestly milieu of second- to fourth-century Thebes³⁵. This corpus forms one of the few bodies of evidence representing the region after the first-second century AD, and before the late sixth to eighth centuries³⁶. It also functions as a bridge between language usage—that is demotic, Greek and toward Coptic—and also book technologies, from book roll to codex. R.S. Bagnall has recently argued that, if correctly dated, this distinctively non-Christian corpus neatly shows the transition from book rolls at end of the third century to codices at the beginning of the fourth century, demonstrating that a shift to the use of codices had less to do with 'Christianization' and more to do with 'Romanisation'³⁷. The inclusion and exclusion of manuscripts in the corpus has long been contentious³⁸. On the basis of



Fig. 3. False Colour image of Hay 'magical' text on leather, BM EA 10122, said to be from Thebes (Photo: L.-A. Skinner, Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

³³ D. KLOTZ, *Caesar in the city of Amun: Egyptian temple construction and theology in Roman Thebes* (Monographies Reine Élisabeth 15), Turnhout 2012.

³⁴ The definition and use of the term 'magic' are controversial among modern scholars, but the term is retained here for convenience. For a reasoned definition of 'magic' specifically with respect to archaeological objects, see A. WILBURN, *Materia magica: The archaeology of magic in Roman Egypt, Cyprus, and Spain* (New Texts from Ancient Cultures), Ann Arbor, MI, 2012, 13-20.

³⁵ J. DIELEMAN, *Priests, tongues and rites: The London-Leiden magical manuscripts and translation in Egyptian ritual (100-300 CE)* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 153), Leiden 2005.

³⁶ E.R. O'CONNELL, *Tombs for the living*, cit., Ch. 7.

³⁷ R.S. BAGNALL, *Early Christian books in Egypt*, Princeton, NJ, 2009, 83-90.

³⁸ W.M. BRASHEAR, *The Greek magical papyri: An introduction and survey; annotated bibliography (1928-1994)*, in

collection history and content, K. Dosoo has recently argued that only 10 of the 19 manuscripts, some combination of which is usually attributed to the Theban Magical Library, should be included in the corpus³⁹. Dosoo's group of 10 were distributed as part of three sales and a gift beginning in 1828 by the famous dealer Jean Anastasi, a Greek merchant, who served as Swedish-Norwegian Consul-General in Egypt (1828-1857). Thus the corpus should have come from a single find discovered in or before 1828.

In the sixth to eighth centuries, magical practice continued to be part of literate culture, with the contents of Coptic handbooks and spells in many ways reproducing the mechanics of practices found in the earlier, third and fourth century Theban Magical Library. The texts employ Christian historiolae, images and nomina sacra, but who exactly may have used them is difficult to specify. Two groups are said to be from Thebes, and a third was excavated there⁴⁰.

The first set of Coptic texts comprises seven papyrus rolls and sheets are dated about the seventh century. Found in the late nineteenth century and acquired by The British Museum (BM) in 1907, they are now British Library (BL Or.6794, 6795, 6796 [2], [3], [1], 6797 [4])⁴¹. Discovered together, they are written in the same hand, which W.E. Crum describes as a 'Theban' type, comparing it to texts edited in P.Pisentius⁴². Remarkably three of the four spells name the author or client as Severus, son of Joanna. Among them are a prayer made by Mary and a prayer to cast out an unclean spirit, depicting the crucifixion; a spell for success in fishing on analogy with successful figures from the Bible, depicting a man with a fishing rod and a fish (labelled with the nomen sacrum for Jesus Christ); and a spell for a good singing-voice on analogy with angel Davithe/King David, who is depicted with his instrument.

Also discovered together and probably copied by a single individual, a corpus of texts on sheets of leather belonging to Robert Hay (1799-1863) were presumed to have been found at Thebes (BM EA 10391, 10376, 10414, 10122, 10434a and b)⁴³. The British Museum acquired them in 1868 after Hay's death in 1863. This is the same Robert Hay who lived in a modified tomb, TT 83, at Šayh 'Abd al-Qurnah, where Robert Curzon stayed in 1838. Now dated to about the eighth or ninth century, the leather has darkened so that only infrared photography has made it possible to see the text and drawings⁴⁴. The magical/medical handbook gives spells to be recited, each followed by a list of ingredients, so that it is often called the 'Hay cookbook' by modern scholars (Fig. 3 [BM EA 10391])⁴⁵. Other sheets contain text and magical

ANRW II.18.5, Berlin 1995, 3380-3684.

³⁹ K. Dosoo has argued that they were all part of a single find due to 1) their stated provenance in each of the sale catalogues as 'Thebes', Anastasi's care to record the provenance of papyri in general, 2) internal links across the sales, such as two instances of the same hand, and 3) that formularies and alchemical are rare enough that their sale together texts together makes it likely they are from the same discovery. K. DOSOO, *A history of the Theban Magical Library*, BASP 53 (2016) 251-274.

⁴⁰ I exclude here individual spells, concentrating on handbooks and formularies.

⁴¹ Ed. and trans., A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 3 vols, Brussels 1930-1931, E-J, 1: 29-49; 2: 57-62, 89-101, 104-109, 135-143; trans. R. SMITH in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic: Coptic texts of ritual power*, New York 1994, nos 129, 130, 131 recto (279-85) and M. MEYER in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian Magic*, cit., nos 131 verso, 132 (285-92).

⁴² W.E. CRUM in A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: xi

⁴³ London, British Museum EA 10391; ed. and trans A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: 55-62, 2: 40-53; trans. D. FRANKFURTER and M. MEYER in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic*, cit., no. 127 (263-269); and EA 10376, 10414, 10122 and 10434 (ed. and trans. W.E. CRUM, *Magical texts in Coptic I and II*, JEA 20 [1934] 51-53; 195-200; trans. D. FRANKFURTER and M. MEYER in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic*, cit., nos 78, 79, 80, 81 [164-174]). For attribution, 'the presumption is that they were procured at Thebes, but as to this there is no certain evidence to be had' (W.E. CRUM, in A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: xii). For the suggestion of their attribution to Dayr al-Bahīt, see T. BECKH, *Monks, magicians, archaeologists: New results on Coptic settlement development in Dra' Abu el-Naga north, western Thebes*, in *Coptic society, literature and religion from Late Antiquity to modern times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012, and plenary reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th-19th, 2008*, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI (OLoA 247), Leuven 2016, 739-748.

⁴⁴ The manuscripts are the subject of the British Museum Research Project, 'The "Hay cookbook" of Coptic spells and associated ritual handbooks on leather', The British Museum, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_project/all_current_projects/the_hay_cookbook.aspx.

⁴⁵ On its character, see D. FRANKFURTER in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic*, cit., 259-262; A. WILBURN,

characters (EA10434a) and texts containing a variety of requests employing *historiola* (EA 10122, 10376, 10414, 10434b). For example, one erotic spell to bring a woman 'diabolical longing' for a man employs the example of Mary coming to Joseph (line 9), invoking the power not to delay until the author satisfies his desire with her (line 11); it is to be said over wine intended for the victim to drink (EA 10376).

These two corpora are said to be Theban. The third is a Coptic handbook written vertically on a papyrus roll discovered by Howard Carter in 1913/1914 (P.Cair. inv. 45060)⁴⁶. As he reported 12 years after the find, he found it in an amphora 'discovered buried in the floor of a monk's dwelling—a Rock Cave...'⁴⁷. The 'Rock Cave' has been identified with Winlock site XXVII⁴⁸, which is the subject of renewed investigation by the German mission to Dayr al-Bahit, now tentatively identified as the location of the Monastery of Apa Paul known from documentary texts⁴⁹. A typical Byzantine Greek protocol dates the papyrus to the end of the sixth- or first half of the seventh century⁵⁰. It was turned up-side-down to write invocations and prescriptions for 16 spells to heal, protect and curse. Yet, even with the findspot known, the text's circumstances of production, use and deposition are unknown. It may have belonged to a monastic milieu, as Carter suggested, but it may also have belonged to an earlier or parallel phase of use. Thus, even when we can be assured of the findspot, the text's users remain obscure.

A more recent discovery should be noted in the context of Coptic semi-literary texts. A German mission led by J. Assmann, L. Bell and H.-W. Fischer-Elfert, undertaking renewed work at TT 157, located to the west of Dayr al-Bahit at Drā' Abū an-Naḡā South, found a papyrus sheet bearing medical recipes in Coptic. On the basis of palaeography, T.S. Richter has persuasively argued a fourth-fifth century date (P. TT157-470)⁵¹. As such it would be our earliest excavated Coptic text from the region and the earliest with a known findspot⁵². Even with its findspot known, its life history is not clear. Originally belonging to the New Kingdom official Nebwenenef, the tomb was later reused by Ptolemaic-period funerary priests called choachytes, as known from their documentary papyrus dossier (P.Chaoc.Survey). In Late Antiquity, the tomb was reconfigured and reused by Christians for habitation, much of the archaeological evidence for which was removed by Egyptologists in the mid-twentieth century (Bell 1968, 1969, 1973).

In summary, (semi-literary) ritual handbooks from Thebes span the Roman to Late Antique periods, usefully demonstrating the shift from roll to codex within the Theban Magical Library corpus specifically, and, more generally, from Greek to Coptic, and non-Christian to Christian. Containing Old Coptic, the Theban Magical Library is our earliest evidence of the script in the region and a medical recipe may be our earliest Coptic text from the region (P.TT157-470). While the Theban Magical Library was almost certainly compiled and copied by bilingual priests and widely presumed to come from a Theban tomb, their findspot is unknown and, unless a fragment of one turns up through future excavation, unknowable. But

Materia magica, cit., 33.

⁴⁶ P.Cair. inv. 45060. H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 21, 207; A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: 50-54; trans. M. MEYER in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic*, cit., no. 128 (270-273).

⁴⁷ Carter's account is given in a letter dated 10 February 1926, reproduced in A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: 50 and pls 3 and 4. For Carter's work in the ravine 1913/1914, see H. CARTER, *Report on the tomb of Zeser-ka-Ra Amenhetep I, discovered by the Earl of Carnarvon in 1914*, JEA 3 (1916) 147-154.

⁴⁸ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 21.

⁴⁹ For the identification of the ancient toponym Monastery of Paul with the archaeological remains of Dayr al-Bahit, see BECKH in T. BECKH – I. EICHNER – S. HODAK, *Briefe aus der koptischen Vergangenheit: Zur Identifikation der Klosteranlage Deir el-Bachit in Theben-West*, Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Kairo 67 (2011) 17. For the identification of the place in which the papyrus was buried, see T. BECKH, *Monks, magicians, archaeologists*, cit., and BECKH in D.A. POLZ et al., *Topographical archaeology in Dra' Abu el-Naga: Three thousand years of cultural history*, in Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Kairo 68 (2012) 115-134.

⁵⁰ Cf. P.Cair.Masp. II 67151 and 67186, which date to the end of the sixth or the first half of the seventh centuries. See W.E. CRUM, in A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: xi and H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 21 and 207, note 5; J. DIETHART – D. FEISSEL – J. GASCOU, *Les protokolla des papyrus byzantins du Ve au VIIe siècle*, Tyche 9 (1994) 31 note 90.

⁵¹ T.S. RICHTER, *Neue koptische medizinische Rezepte*, ZÄS 141 (2014) 154-194.

⁵² The earliest attestation of Old Coptic in the region belongs to the Theban Magical Library. The earliest datable Coptic text is AD 601 (T.G. WILFONG, *Women of Jeme: Lives in a Coptic town in Late Antique Egypt*, Ann Arbor, MI, 2002, 1).

even when we do have the findspot of later, Coptic magical texts, we cannot be assured of who used them. The Theban Magical Library and Coptic texts described above are coeval with codices containing Greek literature from the Classical tradition (I.3 below), and Greek and Coptic literature from the Christian tradition (I.4). Coptic codices containing texts described and published by modern scholars as magical, such as the Bruce codex and Anastasi 9, will be discussed below.

3. Greek codices

Among the 12 Greek codices from or said to be from Thebes, two are fragments of parchment codex leaves containing Classical texts⁵³. The so-called Codex Thebanus deperditus, dating to sixth or seventh century and comprised of six folios of a parchment palimpsest codex, was acquired by U. Wilcken in 1898. Lost in a ship fire in Hamburg, it contained Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* and, usually attributed to the same author, *Chione*⁵⁴. The second parchment codex is represented by a bifolium containing Menander's *Aspis* and *Misoumenos*, dating to the fifth century and thought to have been written in Panopolis or Hermopolis (PSI II 126+P. Schubart 22 fr. 2)⁵⁵. Now in Florence and Berlin, the Florence fragment was said to have been purchased in Luxor in 1912. While it was likely that the object was brought to Luxor for sale, it cannot be excluded that it travelled in antiquity.

Among the remaining 10 items responding to a search for 'Greek-papyrus-codex', two are written in both Greek and Coptic and will thus be discussed in section I.4, below⁵⁶. Five others are associated with the *topos* of Epiphanius at ʕayḥ ʕAbd al-Qurnah will be discussed in section II.1, below. The remaining three fragmentary Greek papyrus codices contain content in the Classical tradition and are said to have been purchased at Luxor. A papyrus codex leaf containing Menander's *Georgus*, said to be fourth century and now in Florence, was said to have been purchased in Luxor by E. Pistelli in 1910 (PSI I 100). Fragments of another papyrus codex leaf bearing Soranus' *Gynaecia*, also said to date to the fourth century, were purchased by E. Pistelli in Luxor in 1912 (PSI II 117). The fragments of a third papyrus codex containing the *Blemmyomachia*, usually attributed to Olympiodoros of Thebes, are now in Berlin, Cairo and Geneva. The Berlin fragments were acquired about 1881, but the Cairo fragments of the same text were recorded as part of the Society for Coptic Archaeology's 1947-1948 fieldwork season at the so-called 'petit' Monastery of Phoebammon located to the south of the Theban promontory. Their discovery has suggested to scholars that the text was read by the monks living there⁵⁷. In fact, these fragments do not have a findspot recorded⁵⁸. It is possible that the book belonged to the Christian community, but a direct relationship cannot be assumed without knowing the findspot and further information about deposition, if it was indeed excavated by the team at all. There are other, contemporary installations on ascents to desert roads crossing the Qinä Bend. It is possible that it was found nearby or even in an earlier phase of occupation at the same site.

Most of the Greek codex fragments containing Classical and Christian literature, like the book rolls, were acquired through the antiquities market; their dates require scrutiny and attribution to the region must remain uncertain purely on the basis of collection history. But as we have witnessed in three cases al-

⁵³ An LDAB search for 'Thebes- Greek-codex' returns 23 items, including two sets of wooden tablets and two parts of parchment manuscripts. Five of the 23 belong to the Theban Magical Library discussed above, six are school texts (including the wooden tablets), medical recipes or other 'semi-literary' texts, which I will not deal with here.

⁵⁴ U. WILCKEN, *Eine neue Romanhandschrift*, APF 1 (1901) 227-272; A. HENRICH, *Missing pages: Papyrology, genre and the Greek novel*, in *Culture in pieces: Essays on ancient texts in honour of Peter Parsons*, ed. D. OBBINK, R. RUTHERFORD, Oxford 2011, 302-322, at 310.

⁵⁵ For all PSI manuscripts, see PSI – *Papiri della Società Italiana*, PSI-Online, in <http://www.psi-online.it/search>.

⁵⁶ P.Anastasi 9 and Florence, Museo Egizio 7134, M. NALDINI, *Documenti dell'antichità cristiana: Esposti nella Biblioteca medica laurenziana, Firenze, 6-30 giugno 1964*, Florence 1964, no. 13; A. PELLEGRINI, *Piccoli testi copto-sahidici del Museo archeologico di Firenze*, *Sphinx* 10 (1906) 141-159, no. 19 (153-154).

⁵⁷ L. STERN, *Fragmente eines griechisch-ägyptischen Epos*, ZÄS 19 (1881) 70-75; C. BACHATLY et al., *Le monastère de Phoebammon dans la Thébaïde*, 3 vols (Publications de la Société d'Archéologie Copte), Cairo 1961-1981, 1: 27, pls CVI-CVII; L.S.B. MACCOULL, *Papyrus fragments from the Monastery of Phoebammon*, in *Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Congress of Papyrology, New York, 24-31 July*, ed. R.S. BAGNALL et al. (American Studies in Papyrology 23), Chico, CA, 1981, 491-498; M. STEINRÜCK, *Neues zur Blemmyomachie*, ZPE126 (1999) 99-114.

⁵⁸ L.S.B. MACCOULL, *Papyrus fragments from the Monastery of Phoebammon*, cit., 491.

ready (P.Cair. inv. 45060, P.TT157-470, P.Gen. IV 158), even the life-use of manuscripts with a provenance based on excavation is not assured.

4. Coptic codices

Among the 65 LDAB entries for Coptic codices from Thebes, the earliest are those belonging to the fourth century Theban Magical Library, one item of which contains Old Coptic (PGM IV). Otherwise, the earliest (and one of the most famous) Coptic codices said to be at Thebes, is the Bruce codex acquired during J. Bruce's travel in Egypt in 1769. The 31 folios contain what have been described as magical and gnostic contents, the so-called *Books of Jeu*, a post-resurrection discourse on the organisation of the heavens, and *Untitled text*. Said by its editors to date to the fourth century, but probably to be assigned to the fifth, it is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford⁵⁹. A description of the findspot which has been transmitted through editions is first found in the 1842 sale catalogue of Bruce manuscripts, where it was said to have been found in the ruins near Madīnat Habū, that is, from the Late Antique town of Memnoneia/Ĝēme.

Coptic Manuscript. On papyrus. When Mr. Bruce was at Medīnat taboū or Thebes, in Upper Egypt, he purchased a Coptic manuscript which had been found in the ruins near that place, in the former residence of some Egyptian monks ...⁶⁰.

This is the earliest mention of Madīnat Habū in the documentation associated with the book, and an examination of archival materials by E. Crégheur, has not revealed any mention of so specific a location before this date. Crégheur has determined the codex was purchased 7-17 January 1769, and said to have been excavated from ruins in Bruce's presence, but where is unknown⁶¹.

Apart from this very early acquisition, the great bulk of Coptic manuscripts today attributed a Theban provenance arrived at the British Museum (BM) in the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s, and are now in the British Library (BL)⁶². They were acquired mainly by men actively working in the pharaonic Theban Necropolis or employing agents there, some of whom we have already met. The owner of the Theban Magical Library, G. Anastasi also traded in Coptic manuscripts, one of which is said to have been found in Thebes in 1829, but had been sent already to Livorno in 1826 (P.Anastasi 9)⁶³. Now in Leiden, it survived in its leather binding. Dating to c. sixth century, it contains 16 folios with an exorcism of Gregory Nazianzus; an anonymous text; two letters from Jesus to Abgar; the prayer of Judas Cyriacus; a list of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus and 40 Martyrs of Sebaste; and incipits of the four gospels and Psalm 90⁶⁴. Like the Bruce codex, it exhibits extra-biblical content, some of which has been included in modern publications on Coptic

⁵⁹ C. BAYNES, *A Coptic gnostic treatise contained in the Codex Brucianus (Bruce MS.96.Bod.Lib. Oxford); a translation from the Coptic*, Cambridge 1933 (repr. 2013); C. SCHMIDT – V. MACDERMOT, *Books of Jeu and the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex* (Nag Hammadi Studies 13), Leiden 1978; W. KOSACK, *Die titellose gnostische Schrift 'Traktat vom Urvater Sêtheus' aus dem Codex Brucianus*, Copac, in *Collectanea Coptica*, Basel 2015, 5-106.

⁶⁰ G. ROBBINS, *A catalogue of a valuable collection of Oriental literature collected by James Bruce of Kinnaird*, London 1842, 35.

⁶¹ E. CRÉGHEUR, *Pour une nouvelle histoire de la découverte et de l'état primitif du codex Bruce (1769-1774)*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 16 (2014), 47-68.

⁶² The BL papyrus register book has no details about provenance for anything acquired before 1840 (i.e., Pap shelfmarks before Papyrus 53), and I thus rely on the published catalogues.

⁶³ Leiden, National Museum of Antiquities, P.Anastasi 9; W. PLEYTE – P.A.A. BOESER, *Manuscripts coptes du Musée d'antiquités des Pays-Bas à Leide*, Leiden 1897, 441-479; H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 207; ed. and trans. A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 2: 72-79, 81-85, 161-175, 220-221, 3: 210; trans. R. SMITH in M. MEYER – R. SMITH, *Ancient Christian magic*, cit., no. 134 [314-322]. For Theban hand, see W.E. CRUM, in A. KROPP, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, cit., 1: xi where it is compared to W.E. CRUM, *Theological texts from Coptic papyri*, Oxford 1913, no. 9 [36-53]; see also, BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2. A Christian hymn in the same collection is suspected to be Theban in the catalogue is Leiden, National Museum of Antiquities, P.Anastasi 11+8b; W. PLEYTE – P.A.A. BOESER, *Manuscripts coptes*, 480-481. I thank K. Dosoo for steering me to further information on the acquisition of P.Anastasi 9, see *inter alia*, R. B. HALBERTSMA, *Le solitaire des ruines: De archeologische reizen van Jean Emile Humbert (1771-1839) in dienst van het Koninkrijk der Nederlande* (Collections of the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden 9), Leiden 1995, 92, 105.

⁶⁴ For a summary of the contents, see J.E. SANZO *Scriptural incipits on amulets from late antique Egypt: Text, typology, and theory* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 84), Tübingen 2014, no 5 [82-83], no. 29, [109].



Fig. 4. A work concerning Shenoute with reused papyrus in binding visible, BM EA 71005/1v, from the Theban region (Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

'magic'. Two other c. late sixth-seventh century Coptic manuscripts acquired from Anastasi are now in the BL. One constituted by eight surviving folios contains a homily on charity (P.Lond.Copt. I 279 = BL Pap. 48, frames 18-25) and another, 17 folios of the *Book of Job* (P.Lond.Copt. I 939 = BL Pap. 48 frames 1-17)⁶⁵. Anastasi's homily of charity (P.Lond.Copt. I 279) is copied in the same hand as another manuscript now in the BM (BM EA 71005; Fig. 4). The seven leaves of a papyrus codex containing a work about Shenoute was once in the collection of the antiquarian and astronomer J. Lee (1783-1866)⁶⁶. The codex leaves were

⁶⁵ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 197-198 and note 1; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.3; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁶⁶ H. BEHLMER – A. ALCOCK, *A piece of Shenoutiana from the Department of Egyptian Antiquities (EA 71005)* (British Museum Occasional Paper 119), London 1996; identifying the content as the beginning of a work of Shenoute, 'You Know, O Brethren', S. EMMEL, *Shenoute's literary corpus* (CSCO 599-600), Louvain 2004, 1:381, 2:683, 2:996; A.

acquired prior to 1837, when H. Tattam provided Lee with a transcription, translation and identification. In 1935 the leaves were donated to the BM (P.Lond.Copt. II, p. xlix-li), but they were only registered in what is now the Dept of Ancient Egypt and Sudan in 1988. In A. Alcock and H. Behlmer's 1996 edition, they identified the hand as the same as P.Lond.Copt. I 279, and also compared it to another manuscript now in the Harris corpus (below P.Lond.Copt. I 134 = BL Or. 3579B (58)).

J.G. Wilkinson, whom we have already encountered as the builder of the home in TT 83 on Ṣayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah where Curzon stayed, is responsible for five Coptic codices in BL today. In Crum's estimation, 'it may be assumed that those presented by Sir G. Wilkinson came from Thebes' (P.Lond.Copt. I, xii)⁶⁷. They contain four folios of the *Gospel of John* (P.Lond.Copt. I 115 = BL Pap. 13); a letter of John Chrysostom (P.Lond.Copt. I 981 = BL Pap. 14 foll. A, B, G); a homily of the marriage of Joseph (P.Lond.Copt. I 271 = BL Pap. 16, foll. 1-5 + BL Or. 1013 C); and two other homilies (P.Lond.Copt. I 274; 275 = BL Pap. 14 frame D; frames C, E, F).

J. Sams (1784-1860) travelled through Egypt 1832-1833 and sold a large collection of over 2000 objects to the BM in 1834. Among the 21 papyri offered for sale at this time were 'two books' singled out by Sams as exceptional⁶⁸. Consisting of 80 and 24 'pages', respectively, it is possible that they correspond to manuscripts now in the BL, but, since other Coptic manuscripts later passed through his hands, it is not guaranteed. The four fragmentary Coptic manuscripts acquired from Sams include 46 folios of the *Martyrdom of Chamoul* and the *Martyrdom of Justus*, among other narratives (P.Lond.Copt. I 325+338 = BL Pap. 5); four folios of Psalms (P.Lond.Copt. I 950 = BL Pap. 36, foll. 20, 25-27); three fragments of monastic rules (P.Lond.Copt. I 170 = BL Pap. 10)⁶⁹; three fragments of *Questions and answers* (Cyril) (P.Lond.Copt. I 179 = BL Pap. VI, foll. 2, 3, 8), which parallel the contents of P.Bodmer 58 (below)⁷⁰.

H. Salt was British Consul General in Egypt, arriving in 1816. Having formed and sold two collections, one to the BM in 1819-1821, and another formed 1819-1824 to the King of France, most of his third collection formed in 1824-27, was purchased by the BM and stated to be 'from Thebes'. Among the objects was a Coptic manuscript comprised of 23 folios of the *Canons* of Ps-Athanasius now in the BL (P.Lond.Copt. I 167 = BL Pap. 36)⁷¹.

A.C. Harris purchased the largest single corpus of Coptic books from the region in 1846. W.E. Crum judged their Theban provenance to be 'practically certain'⁷². The Harris fragments originally constituted

BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.3, fig. 3; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2; and identifying the work as part of a dossier on the life of Shenoute, A. BOUD'HORS, *Réflexions sur l'existence d'une littérature pseudo-chénoutienne en copte*, in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu* (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 73), Turnout 2017, 130-131.

⁶⁷ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁶⁸ 'And what is very remarkable, & of great interest, as well as nearly unique, there are in the collection "two books" wholly on papyrus, in the ancient Coptic tongue. One of these extraordinary volumes, contains about eighty pages; the other about twenty-four. The size is about 10 inches high, by six inches & half broad. Of these remarkable books on papyrus, the proprietor knows of no other whatever in any of the celebrated European collections. Ancient mss on papyrus are very scarce and interesting—but these books may truly be said to be of extreme rarity & of the highest interest' (Sams sale catalogue [manuscript], Archive, Dept of Ancient Egypt and Sudan, The British Museum, AES Ar. 257, pp. 46-47).

⁶⁹ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷⁰ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 204-205; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷¹ W. RIEDEL – W.E. CRUM, *Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria the Arabic and Coptic versions*, London 1904, 82-83; H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 202; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷² H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 196; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., section 1; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

22 codices dated by Crum to the seventh-century. H. Kennard (1833-1911) had most of the fragments by 1891 and presented them to the BM in 1910 (P.Lond.Copt. II xxxiii-xxxv). A Mr. Leatham had fragments of another Harris codex, which was later sold by his wife to the BM (P.Lond.Copt. II 93 = BL Or. 7561 (74)-(76)(122)). Others from the same corpus reached the Munich collection before 1906 (Munich Cod. Copt. 2 Quart.) and, as B. Layton reported in his catalogue, were long missing in 1974. The group contains a range of contents, books from the Bible, works by Shenoute, and (distinctively anti-Chalcedonian) saints' lives, martyrdoms and homilies⁷³.

Most of these early purchases took place in the 1820s-1840s. After large-scale excavation began in the 1880s, more codex fragments reached the antiquities market. Notable among these later purchases are 19 folios and several fragments of a codex containing the *Acts of Peter and Paul* brought from Egypt in 1891, transcribed by O. von Lemm, and now in Moscow (P.Moscow.Copt.Lit. 2)⁷⁴. A fifth or sixth century fragment of a Greek and Coptic manuscript, purchased at Luxor before 1906 and now in Florence, contains gospel texts in Greek (Jn 12.12-15) and Coptic (Lk 7.50 and 7.22-26)⁷⁵.

Other manuscripts purchased in Luxor are unlikely to have been copied in the Theban region based on their palaeography. One fragment of a codex containing a narrative with a dialogue between Christ and the Apostle John was purchased in Luxor (P.Lond.Copt. I 997 = BL Or. 4919 (6)) and given to the BM before 1905 by F.A. G. Grenfell (1841-1925), Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army and an excavator, notably in the Aswān region⁷⁶. A c. 700-900 papyrus fragment containing Mt was purchased by Jouguet at Luxor in 1920 (P.Sorbonne inv. 2554). Aside from their place of purchase neither has much of a claim to be Theban⁷⁷.

In addition to the Harris papyri, Crum suspected a second large group of codices, which he published in 1913, to be 'probably of Theban origin'⁷⁸. Dating to the seventh-century, this group contains twenty-nine different texts, including books from the Bible, martyrdoms and sermons, e.g., by Gregory of Nazianzus and the Archbishop of Alexandria Damian (d. c. 607). In the winter of 1905-1906, Lord Amherst purchased the fragmentary codices from a dealer, and he sold them to J.P. Morgan just as Crum published them in 1913 (P.Morgan.Lib., lxxiii). In his 1913 publication, Crum reported that a Luxor dealer had told A.H. Sayce that the papyri had been brought from Hu, located to the north, at the other end of the Qinā Bend⁷⁹. Crum himself was ambivalent about defining 'Thebes,' identifying commonalities amongst texts found between Hu and Isnā, rather than by a more narrow ancient administrative boundary, or an Egyptological definition⁸⁰.

Before turning to excavated material, a few points about our early acquisitions can be made. Most of the books surveyed above are in UK collections. The use of LDAB should have smoothed my bias as a native

⁷³ Edited and treated separately, F.W. WEIDMANN, *Polycarp & John: The Harris fragments and their challenge to the literary traditions*, Notre Dame, IN, 1999.

⁷⁴ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 205 noting additional fragments in Munich; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.4. A second manuscript in Moscow is said to have been purchased at Dayr al-Madinah (P.Moscow.Copt. Lit. 15). For both, BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷⁵ Florence, Museo Egizio 7134, M. NALDINI, *Documenti dell'antichità cristiana*, cit. (n.58) no.13 ; A. PELLEGRINI, *Piccoli testi copto-sahidici*, cit. (n.58) no. 19; A. BOUD'HORS, *Toujours honneur au grec? À propos d'un papyrus gréco-copte de la région thébaine*, in *The multilingual experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abassids*, ed. A. PAPACONSTANTINOU, Farnham 2010, 182-183; A. BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷⁶ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2.

⁷⁷ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.2; I thank A. Boud'hors for her evaluation of these two codices, pers. comm. 31 Aug. 2017 and 15 Jan. 2018.

⁷⁸ W.E. CRUM, *Theological texts from Coptic papyri*, Oxford, 1913; H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 196-97; P.Morgan.Lib., lxxiii.

⁷⁹ «The papyri recently acquired by Mr. Pierpont Morgan from Lady Amherst have perhaps equal claims to be here considered, for they too are probably of Theban origin; but reason of space and the fact that they have been fully published already may excuse they being left out of account». H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 196-197.

⁸⁰ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 104.

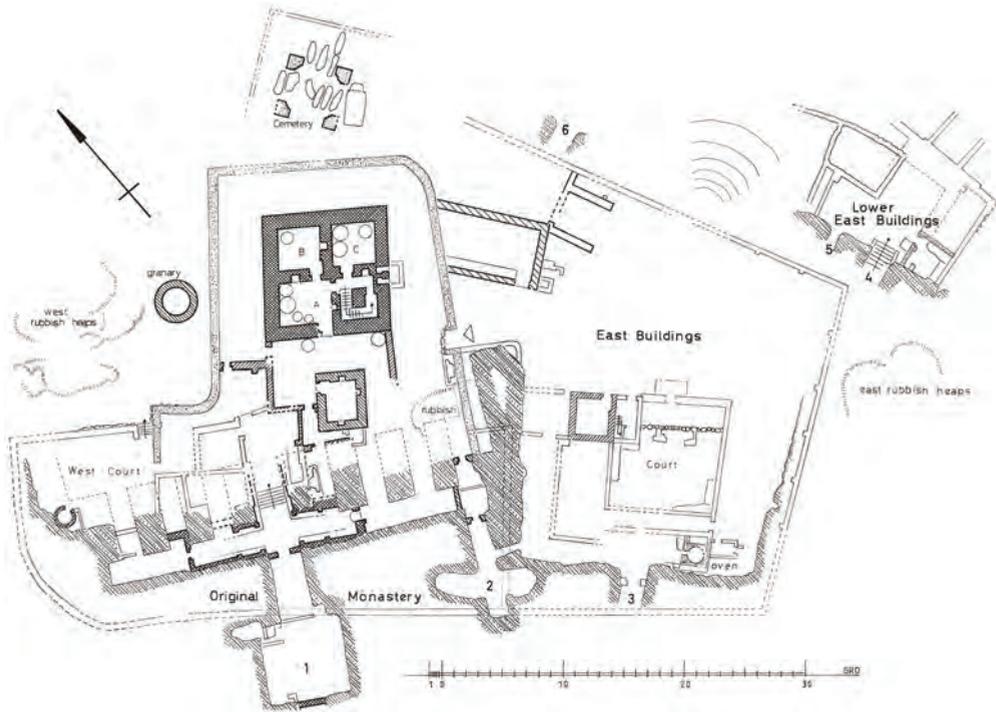


Fig. 5. The *topos* of Epiphanius, 'Original monastery', Šayh 'Abd al-Qurnah (Plan: P. Grossmann, after Winlock and Crum 1926, pl. III).

English speaker working in London. Instead, it is perhaps due to Crum's own personal efforts that provenance or his learned opinion is given at all, and we might wonder what has yet to be identified in French, German, Italian, Austrian or other collections. On-line collection catalogues such as those representing PSI and SMB papyri are steadily making such collections more accessible. The reported provenances given herein, however, all require further scrutiny and archival research in tandem with the palaeographical and codicological research undertaken by A. Boud'hors.

II. ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND EXCAVATED BOOKS (1912-PRESENT)

With the advent of archaeology as a discipline at the end of the nineteenth century, we enter a new age of reporting and documentation in Western Thebes⁸¹. In two seasons undertaken in 1912 and 1914, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) excavated the so-called Monastery of Epiphanius. The two resulting volumes contain a model report and site-synthesis (vol. 1) and editions of Greek and Coptic texts (vol. 2). Archaeologist and MMA curator H.E. Winlock published an in-depth archaeological report of a monastic settlement on Šayh 'Abd al-Qurnah. His collaborator W.E. Crum provided a survey of the textual material, demonstrating an unequalled mastery over Coptic literary, semi-literary and documentary texts from the region. The volumes have been the key to all subsequent research on the region. Crum's survey of the literature he attributed to the region is the basis for most of the foregoing. Surveys of archaeological work

⁸¹ For the topography of the Theban Necropolis and numbering systems of monuments, see B. PORTER – R.L.B. MOSS, *Topographical*, cit. and F. KAMPB, *Die Thebanische Nekropole: Zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der XVIII. bis zur XX. Dynastie* (Theben 13), Mainz am Rhein 1996. For overviews of each of the following sites, see S. TIMM, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit: Eine Sammlung christlicher Stätten in Ägypten in arabischer Zeit, unter Ausschluss von Alexandria, Kairo, des Apa-Mena-Klosters* (Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients; Reihe B. Geisteswissenschaften 41. vol 1-6), Wiesbaden 1984-1992.

undertaken since are plentiful⁸², and Pimpaud and Lecuyot's up-to-date map reproduced supra immediately conveys the density of settlement in Late Antiquity (Fig. 2)⁸³.

1. *Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah*

Located in and around several Middle Kingdom tombs on *Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah*, the *topos* of Epiphanius was already a source for 'antiquities' in the first quarter of the nineteenth century (Fig. 5). Some 32 leaves of a Greek Psalter (P.Mon.Epiph. 578) were purchased by John Hogg in 1832⁸⁴. On this occasion, Hogg saw another codex, which Crum later argued to be the Phillipps codex he published in 1915. Now in the Bodmer collection, its 67 leaves contain *Questions and answers* (P.Bodmer 58)⁸⁵. Hogg reports that 'these papyri were both discovered among the rubbish of an ancient convent at Thebes, remarkable as still preserving some fragments of an inscription purporting to be a pastoral letter of Athanasius Patriarch of Alexandria ...', a location which can only be tomb 1 of the *topos* of Epiphanius as discussed by Crum (P.Mon.Epiph. 578).

Fragments of papyrus codices from the MMA excavations in 1912 and 1914 come predominately from a couple of locations within the *topos*⁸⁶. A rubbish hole in tomb 5 of the Lower East buildings was the find-spot for eight leaves bearing two Greek acrostic hymns and a Coptic liturgical text (P.Mon.Epiph. 592+49) and a Greek gospel table with Eusebius' letter to Carpianus (P.Mon.Epiph. 584). Nearby, in 'Cell A', which was possibly the dwelling of Epiphanius at the beginning of his career⁸⁷, was found a tiny fragment of a bilingual biblical manuscript containing Ps 41.1 and an unknown text of a type 'not uncommon upon parchment, are rare upon papyrus' (P.Mon.Epiph. 17). There are other fragments in book hands bearing literary texts, although it is unclear whether they are from codices, e.g., the beginning of 'a creed' (P.Mon. Epiph. 43), a fragment probably from a Psalter (P.Mon.Epiph. 21) and unidentified texts (P.Mon.Epiph. 82, naming Hilaria, and possibly 83, a narrative). From a bookbinding comes a parchment fragment bearing Gen 28.13 and 20 (P.Mon.Epiph. 2*).

To the south of the *topos* of Epiphanius on *Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qurnah*, is the *topos* of Cyriacus, a cluster of New Kingdom rock-cut tombs, also named for an individual appearing prominently in texts (-7-, -8-, TT 65, -24-, TT 66, TT 67). On the floor of an unfinished tomb above TT 65 and 66, the MMA team found fragments of two leaves of a Greek codex containing Mt 17-18, 25 and Jn 9-12 (P.Mon.Epiph. 583). More recently, the Hungarian mission (1995-2010), led by T. Bács, has discovered a fragment of a Coptic codex bearing parts of Jn 21 (P.Cyriacus 2). It was found in a secondary burial pit, C, in the transverse hall of TT 65⁸⁸. To the southwest is another cluster of rock-cut tombs reused in Late Antiquity (TT 84, 85, 87, 95, 96,

⁸² E.R. O'CONNELL, *Tombs for the living*, cit., 108-252; G. LECUYOT – C. THIRARD, *La montagne thébaine à l'époque copte à travers ses vestiges archéologiques*, in 'Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...': *Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romaine et byzantine. Actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles le 2 et 3 Décembre 2005*, ed. A. DELATRE – P. HEILPORN (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 34), Brussels 2008, 137-144; L. BAVAY, 'Dis au potier qu'il me fasse un kôtôn': *Archéologie et céramique de l'Antiquité tardive à nos jours dans la TT 29 à Cheikh Abd el-Gourna, Égypte*. Unpublished PhD, Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2008; E. WIPSYZKA, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe-VIIIe siècles)* (JJP. Supplement 4) Warsaw 2009, 91-99; T. BECKH, *Zeitzeugen aus Ton: Die Gebrauchskeramik der Klosteranlage Deir El-Bachit in Theben-West (Oberägypten)* (Sonderschriften des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Kairo 37) Berlin 2013, 5-9.

⁸³ Omitting only new finds in the South 'Aṣṣāṣif, A.-B. PIMPAUD – G. LECUYOT, *Cartes pour l'étude de la rive gauche de Thèbes aux époques romaines et byzantines*, Memnonia 24 (2013) 147-154.

⁸⁴ A. RAHLFS, *Der Text des Septuaginta-Psaltern* (Septuaginta-Studien 2) Göttingen 1907.

⁸⁵ W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex saec. VI. VII der Phillippsbibliothek in Cheltenham* (Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft in Strassburg, Schriften 18) Strassburg 2015; P.Mon.Epiph. 578, note 1; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., 3.5; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit., Table 2; Boud'hors, this section.

⁸⁶ Images of MMA excavated objects can be found at: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Collection, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/474953>.

⁸⁷ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 210-211, 218.

⁸⁸ A. HASZNOS, *Writings and readings of the monks at TT 65*, in *Coptic society, literature and religion from Late Antiquity to modern times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies*, cit., 770; T.A. BÁCS et al., *Hungarian excavations in the Theban necropolis: A celebration of 102 years of fieldwork in Egypt*, Budapest 2009, 148

97, 99, and C3).⁸⁹ A Swiss mission, led by A. Gnirs, has discovered papyrus fragments in TT 95 identified as codex fragments⁹⁰. On the terrace just below TT 95 is TT 29, where the Belgian mission led by R. Tefnin and, later, L. Bavay has excavated a tomb dwelling now known to have housed the monk Frange, who was involved in bookbinding, and his predecessors (O.Frangé). Unpublished literary texts from the site are relatively few and seem to be reused, probably for bookbinding⁹¹. Two small pieces of parchment bear New Testament texts, 1 Co and Mt (Inv. 29892 with 1 Co 15, 6-7; 18-19; Inv. 295159, with Mt 11, 11-12; 11, 15-16), and possibly one papyrus fragment with a Psalm on one side and an unidentified text on the other.

2. MMA 1151 and 1152

To the west of Šayḥ ‘Abd al-Qurnah proper, on a hillock overlooking South ‘Aṣṣāsif are MMA 1151 and 1152. Hewn in the Middle Kingdom, the tombs were adapted and reused for habitation with a mudbrick tower, kitchen and storage installations built into the courtyard of 1152⁹². In 2005 three largely complete manuscripts were discovered in the rubbish dump by the Polish mission led by T. Górecki. They contain seventh- or eighth-century copies of the *Canons* of Ps-Basil and *Encomium on Pisentius* and a possibly later century copy of Isaiah with the *Acts of Peter* on parchment reused to stiffen the cover (Coptic Ms 1-3)⁹³. The treatment of the manuscripts since their discovery highlights in particular issues of conservation, storage and access with such fragile finds⁹⁴.

3. Qurnat Mar‘ai

To the south of MMA 1151 and 1152, at the church of Mark at Qurnat Mar‘ai, installed in and around an earlier rock-cut tomb, a handful of papyri were discovered by a French mission led by S. Sauneron and G. Castel in the 1970s⁹⁵. Four published fragments of Coptic papyrus codex leaves contain Ps 10-11 (P.Marc. 420), and possible homiletic and hagiographical texts (P.Marc. 421-423).

4. South ‘Aṣṣāsif

At the base of the escarpment and surrounded by the church of Mark at Qurnat Mar‘ai and the church of Isidorus at Dayr al-Madīnah to the west, MMA 1151 and 1152 to the north and Šayḥ ‘Abd al-Qurnah to the east, is the South ‘Aṣṣāsif where recent work has been directed by E. Pischikova since 2006⁹⁶. Substantial Late Antique remains in and around TT 223 and TT 390 have revealed, among other finds, fragments of codices, including some bearing gospel text in Coptic⁹⁷. Evidence for book culture at the site is supple-

and 156 (no. 75).

⁸⁹ See M. UNDERWOOD, *Domestic occupation of Theban Tomb 95 in the first millennium AD*, *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 20 (2017) 225-240, with bibliography to present.

⁹⁰ ‘The small fragments are written in a variety of hands and include some codex fragments such as part of a decorative motif, a page number, parts of a protocol, and some well-formed book hand text from the top of two pages’. M. UNDERWOOD – H. BEHLMER, *Coptic documents from the tomb of Mery, Theban Tomb no. 95*, in *Coptic society, literature and religion from Late Antiquity to modern times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies.*, cit., 787. I thank the authors for sharing images and further information on the finds, pers. comm. Behlmer 17 May 2017 and Underwood 23 May 2017.

⁹¹ Soon to be published by A. Boud’hors and A. Delattre (A. Delattre pers. comm. 10 Aug. 2017). I thank both for sharing these observations, identifications of the material and unpublished images.

⁹² See the contribution by Wipszycka and Górecki in this section.

⁹³ For Ps-Basil’s *Canons*, see the contributions by Camplani and Contardi; Carlig; Mihálykó; on the *Encomium on Pisentius*, see Dekker’s contribution; for the *Acts of Peter*, see Piwowarczyk’s contribution in this volume.

⁹⁴ A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna manuscripts (hermitage in MMA 1152): Conservation report, 2010*, *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* (Research 2010) 22 (2013) 199-208.

⁹⁵ G. CASTEL, Qurnet Marai, in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. Atiya, New York 1992, 5: 2042-2043.

⁹⁶ E. PISCHIKOVA, *Tombs of the South Asasif necropolis: Thebes, Karakhamun (TT 223), and Karabasken (TT 391) in the Twenty-fifth Dynasty*, Cairo 2014; E. PISCHIKOVA, *Tombs of the South Asasif necropolis: New discoveries and research 2012-2014*, Cairo 2017.

⁹⁷ M. MÜLLER, *Coptic ostraca in the tombs of the South Asasif necropolis*, in *Tombs of the South Asasif Necropolis: New discoveries and research 2012-2014*, ed. E. PISCHIKOVA, Cairo 2017, 281-312; and, M. MÜLLER *Scribal-office or scriptorium? Texts and contexts from the South Asasif*, in *New perspectives on religion, education and culture at Christian Western Thebes (VI-VIII)*, ed. A. MARAVELA – A. MIHÁLYKÓ TOTHNE, forthcoming [Oslo]. I thank M. Müller for sharing these

mented by the remains of leather covers with papyrus cartonnage supports.

5. *Valley of the Queens*

In the French excavations led by Ch. Lebanc in the tombs of the Valley of the Queens, including the church at Dayr ar-Rūmī, limited papyri have been found. Some in an uncial hand were identified as liturgical, but are now lost⁹⁸. In the stairway and entrance of QV 60, Greek and Coptic papyri were dated by G. Wagner to the second half of the fifth-century through the beginning of the seventh-century, and a Coptic parchment fragment may have been sixth-century⁹⁹.

6. *Dayr al-Baḥārī*

To the northeast, is the Monastery of Phoibammon at Dayr al-Baḥārī, the Late Antique remains of which were published by W. Godlewski in a model synthesis¹⁰⁰. The Monastery of St Phoibammon and the Monastery of Apa Paul (below) are the only two sites explicitly named as monasteries in the documents. In 2008/2009 the Polish mission led by Z.E. Szafrński discovered several fragments of Coptic parchment and papyrus codex leaves in a Third Intermediate Period tomb (tomb X, S.7C/82) in the western part of the chapel of Hatshepsut, which, in Late Antiquity, was a richly decorated space, probably a church¹⁰¹. The fragments contain Jer 39.32 and 35 on parchment (inv. 822), and Lk 4.33-34 and 40-41, Mk 10.14 and 20-21, Jn 11.37-38 and 45-46, Jn 20.24-25 and 30-31 and unidentified fragments on papyrus (inv. 826).

7. *Drā' Abū an-Naḡā*

To the east, at Drā' Abū an-Naḡā, a German mission led by G. Burkard, D. Polz and I. Eichner has worked at Dayr al-Baḥīt. Standing on the desert plateau, the main monastery, now tentatively identified as the Monastery of Apa Paul, overlooks the temple of Seti I, a likely town in Late Antiquity. Several fragments of papyrus and parchment codices have been discovered, some in their book-bindings¹⁰². Numerous other fragments of leather book covers have been discovered on site, accounting for 66 catalogued items¹⁰³. On the escarpment below the main monastery, at Winlock units XXVI and XXVII, a mission led by T. Beckh has recorded further evidence of Late Antique settlement. In Winlock XXVII, where the 'Cairo cookbook' was found by Carter (see above), small fragments of papyrus and parchment so far include book hands that might prove to be fragments of codices¹⁰⁴.

On a terrace to the south and just below Winlock unit XXVI are tombs investigated by an Australian mission led by B. Ockinga, including tombs TT 233 and TT 149, which were reused in Late Antiquity¹⁰⁵. From TT 233 there are very few literary papyri and nothing indisputably from a codex, except perhaps

observations, identifications of the material and unpublished images (pers. comm. 12 May 2017).

⁹⁸ I am grateful to G. Lecuyot for sharing this information (pers. comm. 17 Aug. 2017).

⁹⁹ C. LEBLANC, *Les tombes No. 50 et No. 60 de la Vallée des Reines*, *Annales du Service des Antiquités* 69 (1983) 43; and G. LECUYOT, *The Valley of the Queens in the Coptic period*, in *Acts of the Fifth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Washington, 12-15 August 1992*, ed. D. JOHNSON, Rome 1993, 270. For a recent overview with earlier bibliography, see G. LECUYOT, *Deir el-Roumi: Le topos chrétien*, *Memnonia* 27 (2016) 91-99.

¹⁰⁰ W. GODLEWSKI, *Deir el-Bahari V: Le monastère de St Phoibammon*, Warsaw 1986.

¹⁰¹ A. BOUD'HORS – E. GAREL, *Que reste-t-il de la bibliothèque du monastère de Saint-Phoibammon à Deir el Bahari?*, in *Aegyptus et Nubia Christiana: The Włodzimierz Godlewski jubilee volume on the occasion of his 70th birthday*, ed. A. ŁATJAR – A. OBLUSKI – I. ZYCH, Warsaw 2016, 47-60.

¹⁰² I. EICHNER, *Bücher und Bucheinbände des Paulosklosters (Deir el-Bachit): In Theben-West / Oberägypten*, in *Byzantium as bridge between West and East: Proceedings of the international conference, Vienna, 3rd-5th May 2012*, ed. C. GASTGEBER – F. DAIM (Denkschriften/Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 476; Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 36), Vienna 2015, 241-250.

¹⁰³ From Dayr al-Baḥīt, A.J. VELDMEIJER, *Sandals, shoes and other leatherwork from the Coptic monastery Deir el-Bachit: Analysis and catalogue*, Leiden 2011, 29-38, 41-42 and nos 113-176; from K93.12, located on a terrace just below the main monastery, A.J. VELDMEIJER, *Sailors, musicians and monks: The leatherwork from Dra' Abu el Naga (Luxur, Egypt)*, Leiden 2017, 71, nos 62-64.

¹⁰⁴ I thank T. Beckh for sharing this information (pers. comm. 7 July 2017).

¹⁰⁵ I thank M. Choat (pers. comm. 21 May 2017), H. Behlmer (pers. comm. 17 May 2017) and M. Underwood (pers. comm. 23 May 2017) for sharing this information.

a fragment with the number 177 at the top, probably a page number¹⁰⁶. From the neighbouring TT 149, however, at least 18 fragments of Coptic codices are in similar looking hands (and possibly part of a single original codex), the largest of which contains Gen 2.19-20/3.2-5¹⁰⁷.

Taking into account recently excavated material, we can add at least c. 35 ‘Theban books’ to the maximum corpus of c. 70 acquired on the antiquities market. These excavated books are represented by both complete or near complete items (e.g., from MMA 1152) and tiny fragments. Papyri are more fragile than ostraca, requiring post-excavation conservation and mounting. In time, scholars may find joins with more complete, unprovenanced manuscripts in modern collections described above (I). When a specific findspot is recorded by excavators, papyri are usually from ancient rubbish heaps or are likely to derive from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century plunder. Nevertheless, in general, the attribution of a findspot suggests the identity of their users, that is, the milieu of monks and clerics named in documents from the same sites. In some cases, copyists are well-known through their archives and are identifiable by their hands (e.g., O.Marc and O.Frangé).

Such documents from the Western Thebes provide unparalleled evidence for the production and circulation of books¹⁰⁸. Correspondence and requests evidence the copying, binding, selling and borrowing of books and inventories list books. The most celebrated inventory names three sets of books, c. 33 belonging to ‘the *topos* of Elias of the Rock’, a location otherwise unattested in the region, c. 24 ‘given to Kalapesius the second time, in the first indiction’ and another c. 22 described as ‘those that came in to the holy *topos* in addition to the aforesaid’ (KSB I 12)¹⁰⁹. The books are listed by title, and the material is given as either ‘papyrus’ or ‘parchment’, with the former sometimes qualified as ‘new’ or ‘old’. The three sets might be interpreted as constituting three bibliographic units in the process of consolidation. The character of the titles is consistent with that of manuscripts from the region, with some titles overlapping, i.e., books of the Bible, lives, martyrdoms and homilies, some with an anti-Chalcedonian character. Thus in addition to the c. 100 books represented by acquired or excavated manuscripts or fragments thereof (I and II, above), an equal number of titles are known from documentary sources from the region, that is, up to c. 200 books known to have been read.

Finally, it is common sense that the sites in the landscape with the most conspicuous ‘Coptic’ remains would be the least interesting to Egyptologists and should have been left relatively intact. For this reason the church of Mark at Qurnat Mar’āi, MMA 1151 and 1152, and Dayr al-Bahīt were spared for archaeologists to record and document. So too the low-lying South ‘Aṣṣāṣif has been somewhat overlooked by earlier excavators. It is the Late Antique remains around ancient Egyptian temples and decorated tombs where official and unofficial excavators and early Egyptologists removed what even today can sometimes be dismissively termed ‘overburden’. Precisely the locations with little, if any, evidence for books, are those in and around the most prominent ancient Egyptian temples and tombs: the Monastery of Phoibammon at the temple of Hatshepsut at Dayr al-Bahārī; the Ramesseum; Dayr ar-Rūmī in the Valley of the Queens; and the church of Isidorus in the temple of Hathor at Dayr al-Madinah. Being alert to the potential for rediscovering relationships between texts and their findspots, however, may yield future rewards, as ‘museum archaeology’ has proven for reassociating documents with sites, e.g., at Dayr al-Madinah¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁶ Noting 97 fragments of papyrus from c. 64 objects, H. BEHLMER – M. UNDERWOOD, *Coptic textual finds from Macquarie University excavation in Dra Abu el-Naga (TT 233)*, in *Christianity and monasticism in Upper Egypt 2: Nag Hammadi-Esna*, ed. G. GABRA – H.N. TAKLA, Cairo-New York 2010, 7-19 at 14; noting literary texts in papyrus, M. CHOAT, *Posidonios and the monks of TT233 on Dra Abu el-Naga*, in *Coptic society, literature and religion from Late Antiquity to modern times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies*, cit., 750.

¹⁰⁷ M. Choat (pers. comm. 21 May 2017).

¹⁰⁸ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 196-197; A. BOUD’HORS, *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (7e-8e siècles)*, in *Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...: Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistique, romaine et byzantine, actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles le 2 et 3 Décembre 2005*, ed. A. DELATTRE, P. HEILPORN (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 34), Brussels 2008, 148-162; BOUD’HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit.

¹⁰⁹ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, cit., 197; R.-G. COQUIN, *Le catalogue de la bibliothèque du couvent de Saint Elie du rocher*, BIFAO 75 (1975) 207-239.

¹¹⁰ For A. Schiller’s transcriptions of Coptic ostraca from Baraize’s 1913/14 clearance of the temple of Hathor at Dayr

III. POSSIBLE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONTENT AND FINDSPOT?

Another way to consider matching manuscripts without provenance to sites within the landscape, albeit more speculative, is to look at the contents of 'libraries'. For example, it is no surprise that the works of Shenoute should survive precisely in his monastery near Sühāg. Other relationships prove more subtle.

1. *The Mountain of Idfū*

The corpus of medieval manuscripts today associated with the site of Ḥaḡar Idfū was sold in five lots on the antiquities market between 1907-1911 (P.Lond.Copt. II xxvi-xxvii). They were said to have been found in this ruined dayr 'on the fringe of the desert plateau' near Idfū¹¹¹, which accords with medieval remains surrounding an 1830 church at the base of the desert escarpment at Ḥaḡar Idfū. Above the dayr are ancient Egyptian rock-cut tombs. Just like at the Theban Necropolis, these too were inhabited by Christians in Late Antiquity, c. 600-800¹¹². Most of the up to 24 manuscripts in the corpus are written in Coptic, but one is in Greek (BL Add. 37534) and another is in Old Nubian (BL Or. 8505). Most of them are in the British Library today, another is in the Pierpont Morgan and half of one BL codex is in the Freer Gallery (P.Lond.Copt. II xxvii)¹¹³.

Unlike the great majority of our codices attributed to Thebes, many of our Idfū corpus items contain colophons. The colophons can give us the date, donor, copyist, recipient and other useful information¹¹⁴. The colophons of nine manuscripts state that they were written in Isnā or can be linked to copyists active there. Five colophons state the manuscripts were copied for a monastery and *topoi* in the 'Mountain of Idfū', which parallels nicely the toponym of the 'Mountain of Ĝēme' known from Theban texts. Others are associated with different places and, if they are indeed from the same find, may have been gathered together at a later time.

The colophons tell us something about the manuscripts, but so do the contents. The manuscripts contain texts on the saints to whom the monastery and *topoi* are dedicated. Two codices contain texts on St Mercurios. One was copied as a memorial for abbas known from elsewhere to belong to the Monastery of Mercurios and contains three texts: a *Martyrdom of St Mercurios*, *Miracles of St Mercurios and the emperor Julian*, and *Lessons of the Feast of St Mercurios* (P.Lond.Copt. II 130 = BL Or. 6801). The second contains a *Martyrdom and miracles of St Mercurios the General* and *Encomium on St Mercurios the General* by Acacius of Caesaria (P.Lond.Copt. II 131 = BL Or. 6802). Although the Monastery of Mercurios might be expected to be the most prominent institution in the area since it is named as a monastery (apparently containing a church with a saint's shrine), six codices contain works on the Archangel Michael who had a *topos* dedicated to him on the Mountain of Idfū: *On Michael the Archangel* by Theodosius of Alexandria and *Lessons for the Feast of St Michael* (P.Lond.Copt. II 119 with colophon = BL Or. 6781); *On Michael the Archangel*, by Theodosius of Alexandria (P.Lond.Copt. II 120 with frontispiece and colophon = BL Or. 7021); *On St Michael, the Archangel* (P.Lond.Copt. II 118 = BL Or. 7030); *Homily of the Devil and Archangel Michael* by Gregory of Nazianzus (P.Lond.Copt. II 151 = BL Or. 6782); *On St Michael the Archangel* by Timothy of Alexandria (P.Lond.Copt. II 163 = BL Or. 7029); *On Michael the Archangel* by Severus of Antioch (P.Lond.Copt. II 173 = BL Or. 7597). Finally *The Life of Aaron* and *Lessons for the feast of Aaron* are contained in a codex with a colophon specifically stating it was copied for the *topos* of Aaron (P.Lond. Copt. II 163 = BL Or. 7029).

al-Madinah, E.R. O'CONNELL, *Peopling the Late Antique Theban landscape: Further work in archives and collections*, presentation given at the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, 14-20 Sept. 2008.

¹¹¹ R. DE RUSTAFJAEEL, *The light of Egypt: From recently discovered predynastic and early Christian records*, London 1910, 3-9.

¹¹² *Inter alia*, E.R. O'CONNELL, *Sources for the study of late antique and early medieval Hagr Edfu*, in *Christianity and monasticism in Aswan and Nubia*, ed. G. GABRA – H.N. TAKLA, Cairo 2013, 237-248.

¹¹³ W.V. DAVIES – E.R. O'CONNELL, *The British Museum expedition to Elkab and Hagr Edfu, 2013*, *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 22 (2015) 1-34.

¹¹⁴ A.V. LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil des colophons des manuscrits chrétiens d'Égypte*, Louvain 1929; G. GABRA, *Zur Bedeutung des Gebietes von Hagr Edfu für die Koptologie und Nubiologie*, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, Kairo 41 (1985) 9-14.

If we apply the same logic to, for example, the Harris corpus of Coptic papyrus manuscripts, we can note that out of 22, two contain martyrdoms of St Phoibammon and two contain texts on Colluthos the Stylite. The latter is not known to have had a cult place in Western Thebes, but Phoibammon's occupied the most dramatic location of all, installed in and around the temple of Hatshepsut at Dayr al-Bahārī at the end of a long causeway leading from the cultivation. On analogy with the Monastery of Mercurios at Idfū, we might speculate that the Harris collection may be the 'library' of the Monastery of Phoibammon at Dayr al-Bahārī.¹¹⁵ As a conspicuous place described by early travellers as early as the 1700s¹¹⁶, it was an early target for acquisitions.

IV. THEBAN BOOKS IN CONTEXT

Our main collections of Coptic manuscripts are medieval and survive on parchment and paper, i.e., those associated with Idfū, the Monastery of Shenoute near Sūhāḡ, the Wādī al-Natrūn monasteries of Macarius and the Syrians, and the Monastery of St Michael near Ḥāmūli in the Fayyūm. Earlier manuscripts such as the Naḡ' Ḥammādī, Bodmer and This corpora survive on papyrus. The Theban region's varied corpora emerge to equal and surpass the famous libraries from each of these places. The early manuscripts of the Naḡ' Ḥammādī and Bodmer finds have garnered the most attention because some of the content was judged by Church Fathers to be unorthodox. The medieval manuscripts of Idfū, the Monastery of Shenoute, the Wādī al-Natrūn monasteries and Monastery of St Michael have been used to establish the text editions today representing Coptic literature. The Theban corpus stands at the intersection of these pursuits, contributing to both.

Late Antique Theban production and reading habits lie on a continuum with earlier, Roman-period Greek book rolls and later, medieval Coptic codices. I have sought to situate the Coptic books that are the subject of this thematic volume within a broader chronological and linguistic context. The transition from the use of book rolls to codices and from demotic and Greek to Coptic have been noted above. The region also represents a material turn from papyrus to parchment and, if we include the medieval manuscript acquired by Curzon, to paper (P.Lond.Copt. II 236 = BL Or. 8805). The majority of codices attributed to 'Thebes' in the LDAB are papyrus (70 max) with parchment accounting for a much smaller proportion (7 max). These figures are only slightly lower than the proportion calculated (c. 12 of 79) from the *topos* of Elias booklist (KSB I 12) or the impression given from more recent finds (5 of 35). More durable than papyrus codices, it is possible that parchment codices were transferred to other libraries after those on the Theban Mountain fell out of use¹¹⁷.

Concerning materials, the region presents other opportunities. With a few exceptions (e.g., P.Anastasi 9), the codicological units acquired through purchase (I) were separated from their bindings soon after they were discovered, either so that individual manuscripts could be divided for sale on the antiquities market or by for ease of study and storage when they reached collections. The discovery of the three manuscripts from MMA 1152 and large numbers of leather book covers at both South 'Aṣṣāsīf and Dayr al-Bahīt are of particular interest for the ancient production of books and modern codicological reconstruction. Further, recycled papyrus and parchment in the cartonnage used to stiffen leather covers and in book bindings have provided both witnesses to literary texts and documentary evidence for the circumstances of book production in other corpora (e.g., with the Naḡ' Ḥammādī and Idfū manuscripts). Such sources have the potential to be exploited in similar ways for Theban corpora¹¹⁸.

The occupants of the Late Antique Theban Mountain were part of a literate society, using books daily and

¹¹⁵ Indeed the same conclusion has now been suggested on the basis of the content of documentary texts reused in the book binding of a Harris manuscript (BL Or. 7561, no. 57, *O.Crum ST 59*), A. BOUD'HORS – E. GAREL, *Que reste-t-il de la bibliothèque du monastère de Saint-Phoibammon à Deir el Bahari?* cit.

¹¹⁶ R. POCOCCO, *A description of the East, and some other countries*, London 1743, 100.

¹¹⁷ For the relative abandonment of the region after c. 800, see T.G. WILFONG, *Women of Jeme*, cit., 151-158.

¹¹⁸ See now A. BOUD'HORS – E. GAREL, *Que reste-t-il de la bibliothèque du monastère de Saint-Phoibammon à Deir el Bahari?* cit. Boud'hors has also observed that the papyrus cartonnage of the Idfū book covers (BL Or. 7558) contain manuscripts of a Theban type and may have been reused in Isnā for manuscripts sent to Idfū, A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes thébains*, cit., Annexe.

actively engaged in their production.¹¹⁹ More so than the other areas represented by bibliological units, the rich history of archaeological enquiry at Western Thebes enables us to reconstruct the cultural context of copying and reading in a defined Late Antique landscape populated by named and titled individuals. Their books reflect the resurgent anti-Chalcedonian culture of the seventh and eighth centuries.¹²⁰ With its more accurate data and more subtle searching techniques, the PAThs project database promises to better enable us to refine the corpus of Coptic books attributable to Western Thebes, and thus to better understand the intellectual world of its inhabitants.

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Abstract. In Late Antiquity, the ancient Egyptian necropolis on the desert escarpment of Western Thebes was installed with monasteries, churches, saints' shrines and dwellings. Among archaeological objects uncovered there are codices and fragments thereof. More so than the rich documentary record (up to c. 4300 published Coptic texts), literary texts are disassociated from their archaeological context, housed in libraries and museums, and the subject of learned editions focusing on their origins, composition and stemma, rather than the communities who copied and/or read them. Knowledge of and research on the history of collections has identified books from or reported to be from Western Thebes and new palaeographic and codicological study is now revealing a distinctively Theban corpus. In parallel, the production and use of codices in the region is gradually coming into focus through the discovery of fragments of codex leaves and covers in controlled, documented and, most importantly, published, excavations. This contribution will cast a wide-net, surveying both Greek and Coptic literature and select 'semi-literature', here 'magical' handbooks or formularies, which are from or said to be from Thebes, with the aim of better understanding archaeological context of the finds, and what this may reveal about the people who used them. The contribution concludes with a discussion of possible correlations between the contents of 'libraries' and the places to which they were donated or housed.

Keywords. Late Antique Western Thebes. Gême. Collection history. Greek and Coptic manuscripts.

¹¹⁹ A. BOUD'HORS, *Copie et circulation*, cit., 148-162.

¹²⁰ P. BOOTH, *A circle of Egyptian bishops at the end of Roman rule (c.600): Texts and contexts*, *Le Muséon* 131 (2018) 21-72; P. BOOTH, *Towards the Coptic Church: The making of the Severan episcopate*, *Millennium* 14 (2018) 151-89; BOUD'HORS, *How do texts from Western Thebes contribute to the history of Coptic literature?*, cit.; E.R. O'CONNELL, *'They wandered in the deserts and mountains, and caves and holes in the ground': Non-Chalcedonian bishops 'in exile'*, *Studies in Late Antiquity* 3 (2019).

APPENDIX. MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE THEBAN REGION

List of the manuscripts from or said to be from the Theban region (see qualifications in-text). The following abbreviations are used: A=acquired, P=purchased, Ex=excavated; b=before, a=after, H=hieratic, Dem=demotic, Gr=Greek, OC=Old Coptic, C=Coptic, Ar=Arabic; pap=papyrus, par=parchment, l=leather; cod=codex; sh=sheet; all dates according to LDAB unless alternate rationale given in-text.

Manuscripts are here mentioned according to their editions or inventory numbers.

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
n/a	P.Lond.Copt. II 236	A 1838 Curzon	post-987	C/Ar	paper/cod	<i>Psalmodia</i>
I. Early acquisition						
Classical book-roll						
1483	P.Lond.Lit. 13	A 1829 Gurna	50-150?	Gr	pap/roll	Homer, <i>Iliad</i>
1625	P.Lond.Lit. 24	P 1888 Hilton Price	100-199	Gr	pap/roll	Homer, <i>Iliad</i>
54	BKT IX 37	P Theban West Bank	175-199	Gr	pap/roll	Aeschines, <i>Contra Timarchum</i>
2423	P.Lond.Lit. 132 des.	P 1846 Harri	75-125	Gr	pap/roll	Hyperides
Magical/Alchemical						
10636	PGM I	A b.1857 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/roll	Handbook
10637	PGM II(+VI)	A 1828 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/roll	Handbook
5564	PGM IV	A b.1857 Anastasi	300-400	Gr/OC	pap/cod	Handbook
5590	PGM V	A b.1839 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/cod	Handbook
5653	P.Holm+PGM Va	A b.1832 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/cod + sh	Alchemical handbook and spell
5669	PGM/PDM XII	A 1828 Anastasi	300-400	Dem/Gr	pap/roll	Handbook
5670	PGM XIII	A 1828 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/cod	Handbook

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
5298	PGM/PDM XIV	A 1828 Anastasi	200-300	Dem/Gr/ OC	pap/roll	Handbook
5437	PDM Supplement	A b.1857 Anastasi	200-300	H/D e m / OC	pap/roll	Handbook
2442	P. Leiden inv. I 397	A 1828 Anastasi	300-400	Gr	pap/cod	Dioscorides; Alchemical habook
100017	Kropp 1931, E	A b.1907	600-700	C	pap/roll	Spell
100018	Kropp 1931, F	A b.1907	600-700	C	pap/roll	Spell
100019	Kropp 1931, G&H	A b.1907	600-700	C	pap/sh	Spell
100020	Kropp 1931, J	A b.1907	600-700	C	pap/sh	Spell
99566	BM EA 10122	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/sh	Spell
99565	BM EA 10434a	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/sh	Spell
99565	BM EA 10434b	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/sh	Ring sign
99562	BM EA 10414	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/sh	Spell
99554	BM EA 10376	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/sh	Spell
100015	BM EA 10391	A b.1863 Hay	600-700	C	l/roll	Hay cookbook
Winlock XXVI						
100016	P.Cair. inv. 45060	Ex 1913/14 Carter	550-660	C	pap/roll	Cairo cookbook
TT 157						
TT157-470		Ex Assmann et al.	300-500	C	pap/sh	Medical recipe
Greek codices						
543	Thebanus deperditu	A 1898 Wilcken	500-699	Gr	par/cod	Chariton, <i>Chaereas and Callirhoe</i> , <i>Chione</i>
2715	PSI II 126+P.Schubart 22(2)	P 1912 Luxor	400-500	Gr	par/cod	Menander, <i>Aspis and Misoumenos</i>

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
2709	PSI I 100	P 1910 Pistelli	300-399	Gr	pap/cod	Menander, <i>Georgus</i>
3965	PSI III 117	P 1910 Pistelli	300-399	Gr	pap/cod	Soranus, <i>Gynaecia</i>
Monastery of Phoebammon						
5938	P.Gen. IV 158	P+Ex 1881 P 1881 Stern + Ex? 1947/8 Bachatly	350-450	Gr	pap/cod	<i>Blennyomachia</i>
Coptic codices						
107927/108136	Bruce Codex	A 1769 Bruce	420-450	C	pap/cod	<i>Books of Ieu and Untitled tractate</i>
100023	P.Anastasi 9	A 1829 Anastasi	500-599	C	pap/cod	Varia
108483	P.Anastasi 11+8 b	Anastasi	600-799	C	pap/cod	Hymn
107930	P.Lond.Copt. I 279	Anastasi	550-699	C	pap/cod	Homily on charity
108567	P.Lond.Copt. I 939	Anastasi	550-599	C	pap/cod	Job
108324	BM EA 71005	P b. 1835 Lee	550-700	C	pap/cod	About Shenoute
107946	P.Lond. Copt. I 115	A b.1856 Wilkin- son	350-450	C	pap/cod	Jn 20:2-29
108624	P.Lond. Copt. I 271	A b.1856 Wilkin- son	500-900	C	pap/cod	Homily on marriage of Joseph
108627	P.Lond. Copt. I 274	A b.1856 Wilkin- son	500-900	C	pap/cod	Homily on the Origin
108628	P.Lond. Copt. I 275	A b.1856 Wilkin- son	400-900	C	pap/cod	Homily
108653	P.Lond. Copt. I 981	A b.1856 Wilkin- son	400-900	C	pap/cod	John Chrysostom, <i>Ep.</i>
108635	P.Lond.Copt. I 325+338	P 1832-3? Sam	400-900	C	pap/cod	Martyrdoms of Chamoul (325) and of Justus (338)
108649	P.Lond.Copt. I 950	P 1832-3? Sam	400-900	C	pap/cod	Ps 148.4-13; 149.7; 151; colophon

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
108621	P.Lond.Copt. I 170	P 1832-3? Sam	400-900	C	pap/cod	Monastic rule
108622	P.Lond.Copt. I 179	P 1832-3? Sam	500-700	C	pap/cod	Cyrillus, <i>Eratapokrisei</i>
108620	P.Lond.Copt. I 167	A b.1828 Salt	400-900	C	pap/cod	Ps-Athanasius, <i>Canon</i>
108311	P.Lond.Copt. II 7	P 1846 Harris	500-800	C	pap/cod	Ex
108549	P.Lond.Copt. II 15	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Ps
107945	P.Lond.Copt. II 27	P 1846 Harris	550-650	C	pap/cod	Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn
108570	P.Lond.Copt. II 36	P 1846 Harris	350-450	C	pap/cod	Jn
107796	P.Lond.Copt. II 63	P 1846 Harris	500-800	C	pap/cod	Biblical lectionary
108731	P.Lond.Copt. II 93	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Shenoute
108747	P.Lond.Copt. II 103	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Ep.?
108748	P.Lond.Copt. II 109	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Homily?
108749	P.Lond.Copt. II 110	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Homily?
108751	P.Lond.Copt. II 124	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Pambo, <i>Life of Hilaria</i>
108753	P.Lond.Copt. II 134	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	<i>Martyrdom of Arsinuphiu</i>
108754	P.Lond.Copt. II 137	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Papohe, <i>Life of Phib</i>
108755	P.Lond.Copt. II 138	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	<i>Coluthus the Stylite, Martyrology of Phoibammon</i>
108058	P.Lond.Copt. II 165	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc. Acts of Martyrs: Polycarp, James the Sawn Asunder, On John the Baptist, Philotheus of Antioch, Life of SS Cosmas and Damien, + unidentified
108059	P.Lond.Copt. II 166	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Acts of Martyrs, unidentified except Shenufe and his brethren

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
108060	P.Lond.Copt. II 167	P 1846 Harris	650-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: Pisenithius' homily; John the priest, <i>Life of Pisenithius</i> ; <i>Coluthos the Stylite, Martyrology of St Phoebamon</i> ; homiletic fragment
108061	P.Lond.Copt. II 168	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: Homily; Homily; Ep.; John Chrysostom, Ep. of Basil of Caesarea; Unidentified frag
108062	P.Lond.Copt. II 169	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: Homily of God's Judgement; Julius of Aqfahs, <i>Martyrdom of Psate (Pishate)</i>
108057	P.Lond.Copt. II 170	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: Dioscorus of Alexandria, <i>Encomium on Macarius of Tkoo</i> ; Theopistus, <i>Life of Dioscorus</i> ; Unidentified fragment
108063	P.Lond.Copt. II 171	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: Mentions Methuselah; Apocryphal Acts of Paul?; Unidentified; Narrative concerning a holy man
108064	P.Lond.Copt. II 172	P 1846 Harris	600-800	C	pap/cod	Misc: mentions Egypt and Nicodemus; <i>Martyrdom of Peter and Paul</i> ; dialogue
2896	Naldini 1965, no.13	A b. 1906	400-599 500-699	or Gr/C	pap cod	Lk 7.50 and 7.22-26 Copt; Jn 12.12-15 Gr
108154	P.Moscow.Copt.Lit. 2	P b.1891	350-499	C	pap/cod	<i>Acts of Peter and Paul</i>
108661	P.Lond.Copt. I 997	P b.1905 Grenfell	400-800	C	pap/cod	Dialogue between Christ and the Apostle John
108506	P.Sorbonne inv. 2554	P 1920 Jouguet	700-899	C	pap/cod	fr Mt

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
II Excavated sites Sheikh abd el-Gurna						
3371	P.Mon.Epiph. 578	1832 Hogg purcha- sed		Gr	pap/cod	Ps 10.2-18.6 and 20.14-34.6
107785	P.Bodmer 58	a.1832 Phillipps?		Gr	pap/cod	Questions and answer
1062	P.Mon.Epiph. 584	Ex 1911-13		Gr	pap/cod	Eusebius, <i>Letter to Carpianus and Gospel Canon</i>
6416	P.Mon.Epiph. 592+49	Ex 1911-13		Gr/C	pap/cod	Two acrostic hymns, liturgical
108512	P.Mon.Epiph. 2*	Ex 1911-13		C	par/cod	Gen 28.13&20, frag from back of bookbinding
3375	P.Mon.Epiph. 17	Ex 1911-13		Gr/C	pap	Bilingual biblical mss, Ps. 41.1 and unknown
108528	P.Mon.Epiph. 21	Ex 1911-13		C	pap/codex	Presumably frag of a Psalter
112546	P.Mon.Epiph. 43	Ex 1911-13		C	pap/codex	Beginning of a creed
112422	P.Mon.Epiph. 82	Ex 1911-13		C	pap/cod	Name Hilarion
112573	P.Mon.Epiph. 83	Ex 1911-13		C	pap	From a narrative
TT65						
2979	P.Mon.Epiph. 583	Ex 1911-13		Gr	pap/codex	Mt 17-18, 25 and Jn 9-12;
641969	P.Cyriacus 2	Ex 2000s BÁC		C	pap/codex	Jn 21.18 and 21.21-22
TT 95						
		Ex Gnr		C		Small frags including a page number
TT 29						

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
	Inv. 29892	Ex 2000s Tefnin/Bavay		C	par/codex	1 Cor 15, 6-7; 18-19
	Inv. 295159	Ex 2000s Tefnin/Bavay		C	par/codex	Mt 11, 11-12; 11, 15-16
MMA 1152						
113913	Copt Ms 1	Ex 2005 Gorecki	650 - 750	C	pap/codex	<i>Canons of Ps-Basil</i>
113914	Copt Ms 2	Ex 2005 Gorecki	650 - 799	C	pap/codex	<i>Life of Pisenithius</i>
113915	Copt Ms 3	Ex 2005 Gorecki	700-1000	C	par/codex	Isaiah; Acts of Peter reused in cover
Qurnet Marai						
700765	P.Marc 420	Ex 1970-74 Sauneron/Castel		C	pap/cod	Ps 44.10-11
700766	P.Marc 421	Ex 1970-74 Sauneron/Castel		C	pap/cod	Homily?
700767	P.Marc 422	Ex 1970-74 Sauneron/Castel		C	pap/cod	Hagiography?
700768	P.Marc 423	Ex 1970-74 Sauneron/Castel		C	pap/cod	?
700769	P.Marc 424	Ex 1970-74 Sauneron/Castel		C	pap/cod	?
South Asasif						
		Ex 2006-pres, Pischikova		C		Papyrus and paper frags and book binding
Valley of the Queen						
		Ex 1980s Leblanc		Gr/C		Small frags of Greek and Coptic papyri in book hand
Deir el-Bahri						
	inv. 822	Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	400-499?	C	par/cod	Jer 39.32 and 35

LDAB/TM	Catalogue/edition	Acquisition info	Date circa	Language	Material/format	Content
inv. 826		Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	700-899	C	pap/cod	Mk 10.14 and 20-21
inv. 826		Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	700-899	C	pap/cod	Lk 4.33-34 and 40-41
inv. 826		Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	700-899	C	pap/cod	Jn 11.37-38 and 45-46
inv. 826		Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	700-899	C	pap/cod	Jn 20.24-25 and 30-31
inv. 826		Ex 2008/9 Szafranski	700-899	C	pap/cod	Unidentified frag
Dra abu el-Naga						
	P Bachtit 8, 26, 255, 357, 360, 362, 367, 423, 424, 425, 427, 566, 568, 603, 606	Ex 2000s Eichner et al.			pap	Documentary and literary papyri
	P Bachtit 367	Ex 2000s Eichner et al.		C	pap/cod	Leaf
	DB 820	Ex 2000s Eichner et al.		C	par/cod	
Winlock XXVII						
		Ex 2010s Beckh		C	par&pap/cod	possible frags of codex leave
TT 233						
		Ex Ockinga			pap	97 frags of papyri belonging to c. 64 object
TT 149						
		Ex Ockinga		C	pap/cod	18 frags, incl. Gen 2.19-20/3;2-5

Le P. Bodmer 58 comme témoin de la vie culturelle et religieuse dans la région thébaine au début du VII^e siècle

de
Anne Boud'hors

Le but de cette étude est de proposer une interprétation globale des circonstances de production d'un manuscrit, le P. Bodmer 58, dont le contenu est, pour certaines parties, très bien connu, tandis qu'il l'est peu pour d'autres, et dont les aspects matériels méritent d'être étudiés de plus près, au vu des progrès faits sur la connaissance des livres produits dans la région thébaine. Je présenterai donc successivement le contenu du manuscrit, son lieu de copie et son éventuel copiste, puis je m'attacherai à mettre en relief quelques aspects des textes qu'il contient, en m'appuyant sur de récents travaux dus à plusieurs spécialistes d'histoire de l'Église. J'espère ainsi montrer que tous les aspects de ce manuscrit concourent à en faire un témoin privilégié d'une page d'histoire de l'Église égyptienne.

I. FICHE D'IDENTITÉ ET CONTENU DU MANUSCRIT

Ayant appartenu à la collection Phillips, conservée à Cheltenham, le manuscrit fut publié dès 1915 par W.E. Crum¹. Il passa plus tard dans la collection Martin Bodmer à Genève, où il se trouve toujours, sous le numéro d'inventaire P. Bodmer 58.

Dans le *Corpus dei manoscritti copti letterari (CMCL)*, ce manuscrit porte le sigle « CMCL.AZ »².

Enfin, son numéro identifiant dans les bases de données interconnectées *Leuven Database of Ancient Books* et *Trismegistos*³ est 107785.

Il s'agit d'un codex de papyrus composite, qui contient les éléments suivants :

- Une partie principale, elle-même composée de plusieurs textes, probablement tous copiés par la même main [fig.1] (voir plus loin pour l'analyse paléographique) :

1. Dialogue entre deux diacres et Cyrille d'Alexandrie à propos de diverses questions ecclésiastiques et eschatologiques (CPG III 5277). Ce texte relève du genre des Ἐρωταποκρίσεις (questions-réponses)⁴.

2. Un ensemble constitué de : (2a) une lettre d'invitation de Théophile d'Alexandrie à l'archimandrite Horsière (CPG II 2608) ; (2b) le récit de la rencontre d'Horsière et Théophile à Alexandrie ; (2c) une lettre de Théophile aux moines de Pboou (CPG II 2609) ; (2d) les questions de Faustus et Timothée, diacres de l'Église d'Alexandrie, à Horsière, dans le bateau en route vers Alexandrie (Ἐρωταποκρίσεις ; CPG II 2371).

3. Un ensemble d'œuvres attribuées à un certain Agathonicus, évêque de Tarse, personnage fictif.

- Une série de quatre feuillets (l'un placé au début du codex, les trois autres à la fin, numérotés A-D par Crum dans sa publication), qui proviennent d'un autre manuscrit, dont la main est différente, bien que comparable, à celle de la partie principale (fig. 2). Le contenu est également très différent, peut-être « pseudo-chénoutien » comme j'ai essayé de le proposer récemment⁵. S'agit-il de véritables feuillets de garde, ce qui serait intéressant pour la fabrication du codex à l'époque, ou bien ces feuillets se sont-ils trouvés là par accident, ou par l'intervention du marchand qui les a vendus ? Cela reste difficile à dire.

¹ W. E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex saec. VI-VII der Philippsbibliothek in Cheltenham*, Strasbourg 1915. Il y est désigné comme « codex A ». Cette publication est citée dans W. E. CRUM, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford 1939, comme « Pcod ».

² Accessible à l'adresse <http://www.cmcl.it/>. Le codex AZ y est ainsi identifié: GB.61.B (005-136); GB.61.E (137-138); il faut lire GB (= Genève Bodmeriana).58.

³ <http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/>.

⁴ Le texte copte les appelle ζητήματα (ζητήματα), « questions ».

⁵ A. BOUD'HORS, *Réflexions sur l'existence d'une littérature pseudo-chénoutienne en copte*, dans *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges Sever Voicu*, éd. F. BARONE, C. MACÉ, P. UBIERNA (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 73), Turnhout 2017, 121-138.

- Deux feuillets avec une écriture très droite (fig. 3), situés à la fin du codex, après les trois mentionnés ci-dessus, et contenant des recettes de préparation du parchemin⁶. La même question se pose que précédemment : s'agit-il ou non de vrais feuillets de garde ?

II. PROVENANCE ET COPIE DU MANUSCRIT

Sans l'avoir jamais affirmé de manière définitive, Crum avait déjà rassemblé plusieurs indices concernant l'origine de ce manuscrit, basés à la fois sur ses conditions d'acquisition par Phillips et sur la comparaison avec d'autres manuscrits. Il considérait ainsi la région thébaine (actuelle Louqsor) comme son lieu de provenance probable⁷, tandis que H.G. Evelyn White avançait, quelques années plus tard, l'hypothèse qu'il pourrait s'agir du manuscrit de papyrus trouvé en même temps qu'un Psautier grec dans les ruines du monastère d'Épiphane à Thèbes, et acheté par Edward Hogg en 1832⁸. Plusieurs observations confortent cette hypothèse :

- L'écriture du manuscrit est caractéristique des scribes et copistes thébains connus par les papyrus et ostraca (voir plus loin la discussion ce point).
- Des parallèles aux textes des feuillets de garde du P. Bodmer 58 (A-D) se trouvent dans les « papyrus Harris », un lot de papyrus littéraires conservés à la British Library et provenant très vraisemblablement de Thèbes⁹, tandis qu'un parallèle au premier texte du codex est attesté par un fragment de codex de papyrus également thébain¹⁰.
- Un ostracon copte thébain conservé au musée Pouchkine de Moscou fait état de la circulation des œuvres d'Agathonicus de Tarse : ἀρι πῖνα τῆννοῦ πχῶμε καὶ νταπανεφ ετε ακαθονικος πε, « Aie la bonté de m'envoyer le livre, pour que je le copie, à savoir l'Agathonicus » (*P.Moscow.Copt.* 56.14-16).
- Des préoccupations communes aux textes du P. Bodmer 58 et aux documents juridiques de Thèbes sont observables dans plusieurs domaines (voir plus loin en IV).

Est-il possible d'aller plus loin et de tenter d'identifier le copiste ? En attendant qu'une analyse complète du manuscrit soit possible, grâce à un jeu de photos de bonne qualité et un examen autoptique¹¹, j'aimerais proposer quelques hypothèses.

L'écriture de la partie principale (fig.1), une majuscule plus ou moins penchée à droite, est très caractéristique, d'autant qu'elle est peu utilisée pour les manuscrits littéraires dans cette région¹². Crum la rappro-

⁶ Feuilletés publiés à part par W. E. CRUM, *A Coptic Recipe for the Preparation of Parchment*, Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology 27 (1905) 166-171. Unique en son genre dans la documentation copte, ce texte vient paradoxalement d'une région qui a livré un grand nombre de vestiges de livres de papyrus, mais très peu de parchemin. Il pourrait être mis en rapport avec les exemplaires de pierres ponce et polissoirs trouvés par l'archéologue T. Górecki dans l'ermitage thébain MMA 1152 (voir la présentation d'E. WIPSYZKA dans le présent volume).

⁷ W. E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., IX-X.

⁸ *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes. Part II. Coptic Ostraca and Papyri* by W. E. CRUM, *Greek Ostraca and Papyri* by H. G. EVELYN WHITE, New York 1926, n°578, 299 (et n. 1). Voir aussi A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, dans *From Gnostics to Monastics. Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bentley Layton*, éd. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL, Leuven 2017 (OLoA 263), 175-212, ici 190-191.

⁹ Ces fragments sont regroupés sous la cote BL Or. 7561 ; sur leur acquisition et leur provenance, voir B. LAYTON, *Catalogue of Coptic Literary Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired Since the Year 1906*, Londres 1987, XXXIII-XXLIV, et l'article d'E.R. O'CONNELL dans cette section. Détail des parallèles: f. C r°, 6sq.= BL Or. 7561, fragment 77 r°; f. D v° dernières lignes: cf. BL Or. 7561 78 r°(?) (pour les deux fragments de la British Library, voir B. LAYTON, *Catalogue*, n°168).

¹⁰ Pour ce parallèle, voir plus loin en III.

¹¹ Je dispose d'un jeu de photos noir et blanc de résolution moyenne, amicalement fourni par Tito Orlandi. En avril 2008, j'ai eu l'occasion de passer une journée à la fondation Bodmer pour examiner le manuscrit. À la suite de cette visite, j'ai acquis quelques clichés couleur. Tout cela reste insuffisant. Il y a cependant bon espoir de progresser, grâce à l'existence du projet « P.BodmerLab. », dont le but est de préparer un catalogue de tous les P.Bodmer, accessible en ligne et assorti d'images en haute résolution. Une réédition du P. Bodmer 58 est prévue dans le cadre de ce projet (communication personnelle de Daniel Sharp, par courriel du 21/08/2017).

¹² Le « standard thébain » tel que défini dans A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 8), 181-182, est plutôt une majuscule biblique bien droite. Une exception notable est le *P.Mon.Epiph.* 592, fascicule liturgique bilingue, dont le copiste

chait déjà de celle de certains documents de la région thébaine, et notamment de productions écrites (lettres, inscriptions) désormais attribuées à un certain Marc, prêtre du *topos* de Saint-Marc (voisin du monastère d'Épiphane), et copiste de grand talent dans les années 600-630¹³. À la réflexion, je ne crois pas que Marc soit le copiste du P. Bodmer 58, ou tout au moins faut-il envisager d'autres possibilités. Considérons quelques traits caractéristiques de cette écriture, notamment les signes diacritiques :

- Accentuation des mots grecs : très peu usitée dans les textes coptes, elle est ici fréquente, sans être systématique. Quelques exemples suffiront : ρομόνοια (ὀμόνοια) [p. 27 l. 12] ; ἀκίνητοι (ἀκίνητον) [p. 29 l. 18]¹⁴. Doit-on voir là la trace d'un modèle grec où les mots étaient accentués ? De fait un phénomène analogue s'observe dans d'autres textes du monastère d'Épiphane (*P.Mon.Epiph.* 578, 598 et 583), mais il s'agit de textes grecs, à usage liturgique.
- Présence de nombreux séparateurs (voir fig. 1) : virgule ; dicolon (:); point haut ; *vacat* ; *paragraphos* parfois simple, parfois prolongée par un trait descendant¹⁵.
- Changement de style ou de main ? À la page 135 du codex, c'est-à-dire vers la fin, l'écriture semble changer : le copiste est-il différent, ou est-ce juste un changement de style ou l'usage d'un nouveau calame ? Les pages 136-137 donnent l'impression d'un mélange des deux styles (voir fig. 3).

Ces caractéristiques invitent à considérer comme candidat plausible l'anachorète Moïse, qui habitait probablement la tombe thébaine 29, à quelques centaines de mètres du monastère d'Épiphane, au début du VII^e siècle¹⁶. Il est qualifié une fois de *sungrapheus*, une fois de *kalligraphheus*, ce qui pourrait signifier qu'il est à la fois scribe de documents et copiste de manuscrits¹⁷, et il est en relation avec le prêtre Marc, notamment pour des questions de copie de livres. Son écriture est très proche de celle du P. Bodmer 58, que ce soit dans l'allure générale ou dans le détail de certaines lettres (voir fig. 4). La similarité des signes diacritiques (virgule, dicolon) est frappante. Enfin la variation des styles s'observe particulièrement bien dans les ostraca de Moïse, comme dans ceux d'autres scribes : textes courts, écrits à différents moments d'une journée ou d'une carrière, ils peuvent aider à faire comprendre les variations d'écriture dans un manuscrit, en fonction de diverses circonstances, tels l'état du support, le contenu du texte, l'état physique et mental du copiste.

L'enquête n'est cependant pas close. D'autres candidats seraient à considérer, notamment parmi les scribes du monastère d'Épiphane, étant donné la probabilité que le codex en provienne : par exemple le scribe de *P.Mon.Epiph.* 597 (un Trisagion), ou le scribe de *P.Mon.Epiph.* 1, qui a copié le plus grand nombre d'ostraca provenant du site, ou encore l'un des scribes des lettres adressées à Épiphane, ont des écritures qui ne sont pas sans ressemblance avec celle du P. Bodmer 58.

III. LES TEXTES DU P. BODMER 58 : PORTÉE LINGUISTIQUE ET THÉOLOGIQUE

Afin de cerner le mieux possible la signification des différents groupes de textes, la cohérence interne du codex, la portée théologique et historique à la fois des textes et du codex, il est instructif d'analyser leur rôle dans une tradition textuelle plus large, quand elle existe.

Commençons par le troisième ensemble (corpus d'Agathonicus), dont la tradition textuelle a été magistralement étudiée par T. Orlandi¹⁸. Les textes de ce corpus sont attestés, en plus du P. Bodmer 58, par les

pourrait être le prêtre Marc (voir note suivante).

¹³ Voir W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., XI ; A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n.8), 191.

¹⁴ Une liste des mots grecs accentués se trouve dans l'index de W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 122.

¹⁵ Sur ce type de *paragraphos*, voir F. ALBRECHT – M. MATERA, *Testimonianze di παραγραφος 'à coda ondulata' in alcuni manoscritti greci e copti*, *Nέα Πώμη* 14 (2017) 5-35.

¹⁶ Voir A. BOUD'HORS et C. HEURTEL, *Les ostraca coptes de la TT29. Autour du moine Frangé*, Bruxelles 2010, 22-23.

¹⁷ Voir W.E. CRUM, *Inscriptions from Shenoute's Monastery*, *JThS* 5 (1904) 552-569, ici 563, n. 3.

¹⁸ T. ORLANDI, *Il dossier copto di Agatonico di Tarso. Studio letterario e storico*, in *Studies presented to Hans-Jakob Polotsky*, éd. D.W. YOUNG, Beacon Hill 1981, 269-299; T. ORLANDI, *Coptic texts relating to the Church canons. An Overview*. Rome 2016. Dans ma présentation du corpus, je suis entièrement tributaire de ces travaux, que je résume en espérant ne pas les simplifier à l'excès. Je m'appuie également sur l'article d'A. CAMPLANI, *Il dibattito sulla visione di Dio e sull' « uomo ad immagine » nel monachesimo egiziano : interpolazioni e riscritture nei testi copti attribuiti ad Agatonico di Tarso*, in *L'anti-Babele. Sulla mistica degli antichi e dei moderni*, a cura di I. ADINOLFI et al., Gênes 2017,

manuscrits suivants :

- Deux manuscrits de parchemin du monastère Blanc (xe-xie s.): MONB.EF, MONB.CV ;
- Un codex de papyrus : P. Carlsberg 30, en dialecte fayoumique (F5).

Orlandi distingue trois étapes dans la constitution et la transmission du corpus d'Agathonicus¹⁹:

- a. Des groupes de textes circulent (ceux du P. Bodmer 58 [CMCL.AZ] ou du corpus F5), mais sans le cadre pseudo-historique qui sera fabriqué ensuite.
- b. Un corpus se constitue, qui révèle une intention de canoniser la doctrine, sous l'autorité d'un soi-disant concile d'Ancyre pour garantir les théories attribuées à Agathonicus à propos de l'anthropomorphisme, de la résurrection des corps, de la providence. Cette étape est sans doute à situer avant le concile de Chalcedoine (451) et hors des cercles officiels de l'Église égyptienne.
- c. Ce corpus est reçu dans des milieux divers, notamment au monastère de Chénouté (monastère Blanc), après avoir subi les modifications nécessaires.

Toujours selon Orlandi, les textes mis sous le nom d'Agathonicus ont été rédigés en grec, dans un milieu monastique évagrien (en Basse-Égypte), où un premier corpus grec fut constitué, avec des titres de transition entre les œuvres. Ce corpus grec n'est pas conservé, mais assez proche sans doute de la plus ancienne collection copte, contenue dans CMCL.AZ/P. Bodmer 58²⁰. Le manuscrit MONB.EF représente quant à lui une version neutralisée, une tentative de domestiquer le langage pour l'adapter aux milieux pachômien ou, à plus forte raison, chénoutiens, plus sensibles aux expressions qui pourraient choquer leur anthropologie unitaire et leur spiritualité concrète²¹. Ce processus d'adaptation est probablement déjà en cours dans le P. Bodmer 58, comme le montre la présence, dans le même codex, de textes d'obédience plutôt pachômienne²², ainsi que des indices d'additions reflétant des positions anti-chalcedoniennes²³. Au-delà de la complexité des enjeux théologiques, retenons de l'analyse de cette tradition textuelle que les textes attribués à Agathonicus dans le P. Bodmer 58 témoignent d'un état, sinon primitif, du moins plus ancien que ceux attestés par des manuscrits produits dans d'autres milieux. Examinons maintenant ce qu'il est en est du premier texte du codex²⁴.

Du dialogue entre deux diacres et Cyrille d'Alexandrie, un seul parallèle était connu par Crum, consistant en trois fragments d'un codex de papyrus acquis, avec d'autres, en 1834, et provenant très probablement de la région thébaine (*P.Lond.Copt.* I 179)²⁵. La principale différence entre les deux témoins est que le papyrus de Londres ajoute $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ à chaque changement d'interlocuteur :

P.Bodmer 58	P.Lond.Copt. 179
$\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\omicron\varsigma$...	$\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ $\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\omicron\varsigma$ $\chi\epsilon$...
$\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\lambda\lambda\omicron\varsigma$...	$\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\lambda\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ $\chi\epsilon$...
etc.	

Cela ressemble à un travail de révision, le texte primitif (P. Bodmer 58) étant le plus proche du grec et ayant ensuite été rendu plus conforme à la syntaxe du copte.

Un travail du même genre est visible dans un autre parallèle, inédit, récemment identifié par Alin Suci. Il s'agit de fragments de papyrus conservés à la Cambridge University Library (ancienne collection Herbert

149-183, qui reprend et prolonge les études d'Orlandi.

¹⁹ Très clairement exposées dans A. CAMPLANI, *Il dibattito*, cit., 168-169.

²⁰ T. ORLANDI, *Coptic Texts*, cit., 59.

²¹ A. CAMPLANI, *Il dibattito*, cit., 175.

²² « L'accostamento in CMCL.AZ con opere in cui intervengono Orsiesi, Teofilo, Cirillo, e l'esito finale di un corpus nei codici del Monastero Bianco dimostrano che poteva ben accadere che testi evagriani fossero trasmessi in ambiente pacomiano, per finire in un ambiente shenutiano, dove venivano alterati e aggiornati nel linguaggio antropologico, eucologico e teologico » (A. CAMPLANI, *Il dibattito*, cit., 169).

²³ A. CAMPLANI, *Il dibattito*, cit., 172, 177.

²⁴ Il n'y a pas de parallèle connu pour le deuxième ensemble de textes, sauf erreur de ma part.

²⁵ W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., XV (« Codex D ») : « Kleine Bruchstücke eines Papyruscodex (Brit. Mus. Catal. 179). Die Mappe, die sie aufbewahrt, enthält auch Reste anderer Papyrusbücher, sämtlich gegen 1834 erworben ». Les parallèles se situent aux pages 36-37 du P. Bodmer 58 (W. E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., p. 11-12). Sur le caractère thébain de ces fragments, voir A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 8), 187, et E.R. O'CONNELL dans cette section.

Thompson), qui constituent les restes de trois feuillets²⁶. Comme dans le *PLond.Copt.* I 179, πεξε ... ξε est ajouté à chaque changement d'interlocuteur. Le texte contient aussi des variantes rédactionnelles et textuelles qui mériteraient d'être étudiées en détail.

Dans l'espoir que ces fragments seront prochainement publiés, je voudrais aussi signaler leur intérêt sur le plan codicologique. Leur écriture et leur mise en page, en effet, n'est pas sans rappeler ce que j'ai défini comme le « standard thébain » (voir n. 12), sans y correspondre tout à fait : l'écriture, une majuscule unimodulaire, semble un peu plus tardive, et les feuillets sont probablement un peu plus grands. Ces caractéristiques me rappellent celles de certains fragments de papyrus contenus dans les manuscrits provenant de la région d'Esna-Edfou et conservés à la British Library²⁷. Si cette impression se confirmait, nous pourrions avoir dans tous ces manuscrits un autre ensemble bibliographique du sud, partageant avec les manuscrits thébains des caractéristiques codicologiques et de contenu.

Quelques années après la publication de Crum, O. von Lemm identifia un autre parallèle. Son étude, restée inédite, fut publiée par P. Jernstedt²⁸ : il s'agit de la partie supérieure d'un feuillet de papyrus de l'Ermitage, publié une première fois par Touraiev, malheureusement sans photo. Jernstedt donne un facsimilé qui permet de se rendre compte que l'écriture est une majuscule alexandrine de type copte. Le texte est sur deux colonnes et la largeur du feuillet est de 25 cm. Il s'agit donc d'un codex d'assez grande taille, qui n'est probablement pas thébain, mais dont la provenance, comme la date, sont difficiles à déterminer.

Dans le même article, Jernstedt identifie un autre parallèle, publié sans identification par H. Munier²⁹. Il s'agit d'un feuillet de papier dont la provenance, d'après Jernstedt, n'est pas connue. Pourtant, Munier l'avait publié avec d'autres fragments sous le titre « Manuscrits coptes de Cheik Abadeh », c'est-à-dire d'Antinoé. Quoi qu'il en soit, si c'est du papier, il peut difficilement être antérieur au xe siècle. Le texte est écrit en majuscule penchée sur une seule colonne. Sa localisation actuelle inconnue³⁰.

Ces deux parallèles sont assez proches du début du texte et se recouvrent partiellement³¹. Ils attestent un état révisé du texte, comme on peut s'en rendre compte dans les deux exemples ci-dessous :

- Exemple 1. P. Bodmer 58 p. 10 [CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 3], citation de Mt 27,4 :

ΔΙΡ ΝΟΒΕ ΧΕ ΔΙΠΑΡΔΑΔΙΟΥ ΝΟΥΣΝΟΥ ΝΑΤΝΟΒΕ

Le texte traduit la leçon majoritaire en grec : Ἡμαρτον παραδούς αίμα ἀθῶν, tandis que le parallèle d'Antinoé a : ΔΙΡ ΝΟΒΕ ΔΙΤ ΝΟΥΣΝΟΥ ΝΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ, qui est conforme à la version copte sahidique³². Le copiste de ce manuscrit (ou son modèle) a manifestement actualisé le texte en rendant la citation conforme à la version copte standard.

- Exemple 2. P. Bodmer 58 p. 11-12 [CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 4] (en réponse à la question : « Pourquoi, parmi les Grecs et autres païens, beaucoup atteignent-ils un âge avancé ? ») :

†ΧΩ ΜΝΟΣ ΧΕ ΕΡΕΠΧΟΕΙΣ ΤΡΕΥΩΣΚ ΕΝ ΝΕΥΡΟΥ ΤΑΡΕΠΠΗΝΩΕ ΙΝΕΥΡΟΥ Ρ ΜΠΤΡΕ ΕΡΟΥ ΧΕ ΙΠΟΥΜΕΤΑΝΟΙ
 ἡπείνος ἥκρονος ἡτέριστ ἀγῶ οἷν χε ἐπεδῆ οὐππογῶστῆς πε πῶυτε ἐφσοῦν χε ἡσανεμετεχε ἀν
 ἐνεφερητ ἡδιδῶνιον ἀια τοῦτο γαρ ἐφκῶ μνοῦφ φαντοῦσει ἡνεπρος οὔγοσεια.

« Je dis que c'est le Seigneur qui les fait durer dans leurs jours, afin que la foule des jours témoigne contre eux qu'ils ne se sont pas repentis au long d'une grande période de cette sorte. (12) Et aussi que, comme Dieu est

²⁶ A. SUCIU, *Report on the new Thompson Sahidic fragments in the Cambridge University Library (March 30-31, 2015)*, non publié. Il s'agit des dossiers 5a.c et 5b. L'ensemble couvre les portions de texte qui se trouvent, dans le P. Bodmer 58, aux pages 20 et 21-22 d'une part (W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 6-7) et aux pages 28-32 d'autre part (W.E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 9-10). Je suis très reconnaissante à A. SUCIU de m'avoir montré des photos de ces fragments.

²⁷ Voir par exemple B. LAYTON, *Catalogue*, cit. n.9, n° 25 ; certains de ces fragments semblent perdus et ne sont plus accessibles que par les transcriptions effectuées précisément par H. Thompson : voir S. ULJAS, *Lost Coptic Texts from Herbert Thompson Papers I: The Acts of Stephen*, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 17 (2015) 165-213, part. 165-169.

²⁸ P. JERNSTEDT, *Zwei neue Bruchstücke der koptischen ΕΡΩΤΑΠΟΚΡΙΣΕΙΣ*, *Aegyptus* 10 (1929) 80-86.

²⁹ H. MUNIER, *Manuscrits coptes de Cheik Abadeh. Mélanges de littérature copte II*, *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 21 (1921) 77-88, ici 86-88.

³⁰ Il se peut qu'il soit conservé au musée Égyptien ou au musée Copte du Caire.

³¹ Ils ne sont cependant pas suffisamment longs pour attester un changement d'interlocuteur, ce qui empêche une comparaison du même type qu'entre les deux témoins thébains.

³² Edition G.W. HÖRNER, *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect*, vol. I, Oxford 1911.

prescient, Il sait qu'ils ne participeront pas à ses promesses d'éternité. C'est à cause de cela donc qu'Il les laisse se rassasier de ces choses éphémères ».

Le fragment de l'Ermitage fournit un parallèle partiel du même texte :

ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙ ΔΥΟ ΕΠΙΔΗ ΠΛΗΘΙΣ ΣΟΟΥΝ ΔΕ ΗΠΟΥΜΕΤΕΧΕ ΕΝΕΦΕΡΗΤ ΝΕΠΟΥΡΑΜΙΟΝ ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΙ ΚΚΩ ΗΜΟΟΥ [ΝΣΕΣΕΙ Ν] ΗΠΡΟΣ [ΟΥΘΟΥΕΙΩ]

« ...ils ne se sont pas] repentis. Et comme le Seigneur sait qu'ils n'ont pas participé à ses promesses célestes, à cause de cela Il les laisse se rassasier des choses éphémères ».

La comparaison des deux textes montre que le fragment de l'Ermitage semble avoir une leçon plus brève (omission de « au long d'une grande période de cette sorte », à moins que cette portion de phrase ait été placée avant). D'autre part, dans ce fragment, l'importation du grec ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ (διὰ τοῦτο) a été remplacée par la traduction copte ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΙ, correction qui se retrouve aussi dans les parallèles des textes d'Agathonicus. Enfin, l'omission de « Dieu est prescient (*prognôstês*) » et le remplacement de ΔΙΩΝΙΟΝ (« éternel ») par ΕΠΟΥΡΑΜΙΟΝ (« céleste ») pourraient avoir des motivations théologiques.

Ainsi, les parallèles du premier texte, aussi limitée que soit leur étendue, confirment dans une certaine mesure les conclusions d'Orlandi quant au caractère « primitif » des textes transmis par le P. Bodmer 58. Cela constitue en outre un argument en faveur de la cohérence linguistique et théologique de tout le codex.

IV. P. BODMER 58 ET L'HISTOIRE DE L'ÉGLISE D'ALEXANDRIE

Dans son récent ouvrage sur l'Église d'Alexandrie, E. Wipszycka s'appuie à plusieurs reprises sur les deux premiers ensembles textuels du codex, à ses yeux curieusement négligés³³. Je reprends ici quelques-uns des aspects qu'elle a évoqués, en soulignant leurs rapports avec les documents juridiques de la région thébaine.

À propos de l'implication de l'évêque dans les activités charitables, E. Wipszycka cite le passage du dialogue entre Cyrille d'Alexandrie et les deux diacres, où l'archevêque affirme que la vertu de charité est supérieure au don de prophétie chez un évêque³⁴, en commentant : « What is important is that the clergy (probably the Alexandrian clergy) saw charity as the bishop's principal task. Not everyone shared this view, no doubt. The average man would simply hope that a charismatic bishop would persuade God to grant a good harvest »³⁵. Une telle préoccupation trouve aussi des échos dans les textes du dossier de l'évêque Abraham d'Hermonthis, par exemple dans deux lettres où l'évêque souligne la nécessité de s'occuper des pauvres et menace d'excommunication ceux qui ne le font pas³⁶.

Dans un autre passage du dialogue, il est question des éventuelles contestations que des donations immobilières *post mortem* faites en faveur de l'Église peuvent déclencher dans la famille du défunt³⁷ :

« Anthimos : Quand un homme donne ses biens à l'évêque, (en disant) : "Donne-les en aumônes" ou "Dépose-les dans l'église", si ce sont des biens immeubles et que quelqu'un veuille les prendre ?

Cyrille : L'amour ne réclame pas ce qui est à lui³⁸.

Anthimos : Si c'est le cas, mon père, alors on peut prendre tous les biens de l'Église ».

E. Wipszycka relève, à propos de la réponse d'Anthimos : « Let us note this comment of one of the deacons that in the event of relinquishment of objection-provoking donations, the Church would lose all of its assets. This of course is an exaggeration, but the statement implies that quarrels over the validity of testamentary bequests were commonplace »³⁹.

On peut voir une illustration de ce genre de situation dans un document de la région thébaine, P. KRU 67, le testament du moine Paham. Paham, qui a été marié, a eu plusieurs enfants et s'est fait moine tardivement, règle sa succession entre ses différents héritiers. Aux lignes 97-128 du document se trouve le

³³ E. WIPSYZYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church. People and Institutions* (JJP. Supplements 25), Varsovie 2015.

³⁴ P. Bodmer 58, p. 28 (CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 9).

³⁵ E. WIPSYZYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 112 ; voir aussi 350 sqq.

³⁶ M. KRAUSE, *Apa Abraham von Hermonthis. Ein oberägyptischer Bischof um 600*, thèse de doctorat inédite, Leipzig 1956, II, 177-195, textes 44 (= O. Crum 71) et 45 (= P. Moscow Copt. 80).

³⁷ P. Bodmer 58, p. 29-30 (CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 9).

³⁸ Cf. 1Co 13,5.

³⁹ E. WIPSYZYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 351-352.

résumé des dispositions en faveur de Jacob, principal héritier, et l'exposé de toutes les formules habituelles de garantie et de malédiction pour les contrevenants. Les punitions sont l'excommunication (l. 114/115) et le paiement d'une amende au magistrat qui sera en fonction à ce moment-là, « selon ce que Dieu lui inspirera ». L'évêque en place ne pourra rien contre ce testament, ni aucun membre du clergé, ni aucun laïc, sous peine d'excommunication et de traduction devant le tribunal divin. Sans être exactement la même que celle exposée par le diacre Anthimos, la situation présente avec elle des analogies. On pourrait penser que, comme le testateur est un moine, les ecclésiastiques pouvaient théoriquement avoir la tentation de s'en mêler et de récupérer une partie des biens. En fait ce genre de clause retrouve aussi dans des testaments de séculiers, comme si elle faisait partie d'un formulaire usuel.

Le dialogue de Cyrille avec les diacres contient aussi l'un des seuls textes où il soit question du processus d'élection d'un évêque⁴⁰ :

« Stephanos : Comment choisissez-vous ceux que vous nommez évêques ?

Cyrille : Si d'un côté les citoyens ou la magistrature, de l'autre le petit peuple écrivent d'un commun accord en faveur de quelqu'un de leur district, nous nous hâtons d'accomplir leur vœu. S'ils s'en remettent à nous, nous cherchons un homme charitable dans cette ville pour lui confier le troupeau. Mais nous nous appliquons à ne pas leur donner un étranger ou un jeune homme. S'ils sont en difficulté, nous leur donnons quelqu'un de ceux qui sont à notre disposition, après les avoir exhortés à ne pas faire preuve d'orgueil. Enfin s'il arrive que la magistrature choisisse quelqu'un et le petit peuple quelqu'un d'autre, nous suivons les pauvres. Et puis aussi, nous les tirons au sort ».

Comme le note E. Wipszycka, « The patrologists have not been greatly interested by this text. No one has carried out a study of the theological thought that – even in a simplified form – is expressed in it. Even if Cyril was not himself involved in it, because of the content of the work we must consider it an expression of the opinion of the curia's clergy »⁴¹.

Pour finir, je citerai le commentaire que fait E. Wipszycka à l'épisode de la visite d'Horsiène à Théophile d'Alexandrie, un fait historique qui a dû avoir lieu entre 385 et 390 (texte 2b), où, au-delà de l'assaut d'éloges que les deux hommes déploient à l'égard l'un de l'autre, la soumission de l'archimandrite à l'autorité de l'archevêque est sensible⁴² : « The words which the author of the text, a Pachomian monk, put in the mouth of his protagonists correspond to the view about how one should greet a patriarch. It is pure rhetoric, but this rhetoric is of importance to us, as it carries meanings that belong to the sphere of dogmatic thought »⁴³.

CONCLUSION : L'UNITÉ DU CODEX ET SA RAISON D'ÊTRE

Au-delà de la disparité apparente entre les trois ensembles textuels⁴⁴, se dégage une certaine cohérence qui se manifeste sous plusieurs aspects. D'abord, sur un plan « linguistico-théologique », on a affaire à des textes qui résultent d'une traduction proche d'un modèle grec, et qui ont ensuite subi une actualisation destinée d'une part à les rendre plus « coptes », d'autre part à les adapter au vocabulaire en usage dans les milieux coptes post-chalcédoniens. Ensuite, le genre littéraire des questions-réponses (ἑρωταποκρίσεις) est présent dans les trois ensembles. Quant au milieu de production, s'il est nettement monastique pour les deuxième et troisième ensembles (et même pachômien pour le deuxième), le premier concerne davantage la personne de Cyrille d'Alexandrie, que l'écrit soit ou non authentique. Sur ce plan donc, la cohérence semble moins grande. Pourtant cette différence ne nuit pas à l'homogénéité, si on considère dans quelles circonstances et pour quel but des textes de cette sorte pouvaient être réunis.

De fait, la fondation de l'Église miaphysite locale voulue par Damien d'Alexandrie à la fin du vie siècle, avec pour centre le monastère d'Épiphane, d'après les récents travaux de J. van der Vliet, R. Dekker et E.

⁴⁰ P. Bodmer 58, p. 27-28 [CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 8-9].

⁴¹ E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 130. En Égypte, et seulement là, tout nouvel évêque devait être consacré par l'archevêque d'Alexandrie (voir E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., chapitre 5).

⁴² Voir P. Bodmer 58, 43-47 [CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex*, cit., 13-14].

⁴³ E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 274-275.

⁴⁴ Disparité relevée par E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 350.

Wipszycka⁴⁵, me semble être le cadre de production idéal pour ce manuscrit. Inversement, le P. Bodmer 58 peut avoir fait partie des livres fondateurs de la jeune Église, et ce à plusieurs titres. D'une part, il contient des prescriptions ecclésiastiques, qui ne sont pas sans ressemblance avec les *Canons* attribués à Athanase d'Alexandrie ou les *Canons* attribués à Basile de Césarée, dont les témoins les plus anciens sont eux aussi thébains⁴⁶. D'autre part il renferme des prescriptions dogmatiques, particulièrement présentes dans les textes du corpus d'Agathonicus, avec une coloration anti-chalcédonienne attendue à cette période. Enfin, l'importance du soutien monastique dans la mise en place de l'Église est bien sensible dans certains textes du codex, notamment le deuxième ensemble. On se souviendra que des évêques comme Abraham d'Hermonthis et Pesynthius de Coptos sont aussi supérieurs de monastères. Que le type de monachisme en vigueur dans la région thébaine ne soit pas de type pachômien ne me paraît pas être une objection. Pachôme continue à servir de figure idéale, en compagnie d'Antoine et Chénouté, comme le montrent par exemple certains titres de livres de l'inventaire de Saint-Élie du Rocher, ce qui n'empêche pas les textes d'Evagre le Pontique de circuler aussi⁴⁷.

Cette présentation est loin d'épuiser toutes les questions posées par le P. Bodmer 58, dont une réédition assortie d'un commentaire complet de tous ses aspects, serait très souhaitable.

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Abstract. The papyrus codex published by W.E. Crum, *Der Papyruscodex saec. VI-VII der Phillipsbibliothek von Cheltenham*, Strasbourg 1915, was then transferred to the collection of Martin Bodmer in Geneva, where its inventory number is P. Bodmer 58. On the basis of several indices, Crum already considered the Theban region (Western Thebes) as its probable place of origin. There is little doubt that this hypothesis is correct and that this manuscript can, from the codicological point of view, be considered one of the best representatives of the Theban codex around the 7th century. Moreover, this codex is a compendium of theological texts that deserves new consideration in the light of the recent progress towards a better knowledge of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the monastic communities of this region at this period. An analysis of some of its textual aspects leads to see this manuscript as a witness of the cultural and religious preoccupations of the local Church.

Keywords. Book production; Church; copyist; monasticism; textual transmission; Thebes.

⁴⁵ J. VAN DER VLIET, *Pesynthius of Coptos/Qift (ca. 569-632) and the Rise of the Egyptian Monophysite Church*, *Journal of the Canadian Society of Coptic Studies* 3-4 (2012) 27-42; R.E.L. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt. Bishops of the Theban Region at Work* (OLOA 264), Leuven 2018, 4-11 ; E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 141-142. Voir aussi désormais, parus après la rédaction de cet article, les deux articles de P. BOOTH : *Towards the Coptic Church: The Making of the Severan Episcopate*, *Millennium-Jahrbuch* 14 (2017) 151-190 ; *A Circle of Egyptian Bishops at the End of Roman Rule (c. 600): Texts and Contexts*, *Le Muséon* 131 (2018) 21-72.

⁴⁶ Voir A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 8), 187, et la contribution d'A. CAMPLANI et F. CONTARDI, ainsi que celle de N. CARLIG, dans cette section.

⁴⁷ R.-G. COQUIN, *Le catalogue de la bibliothèque du couvent de Saint Elie 'du Rocher' (ostracon IFAO 13315)*, *BIFAO* 75 (1975) 207-239 ; A. BOUD'HORS, *How Do Texts From Western Thebes Contribute to the History of Coptic Literature?*, in *New Perspectives on Religion, Education, and Culture in Christian Western Thebes (VI-VIII)*, éd. A. MARAVELA and Á.T. MIHÁLYKÓ, à paraître.

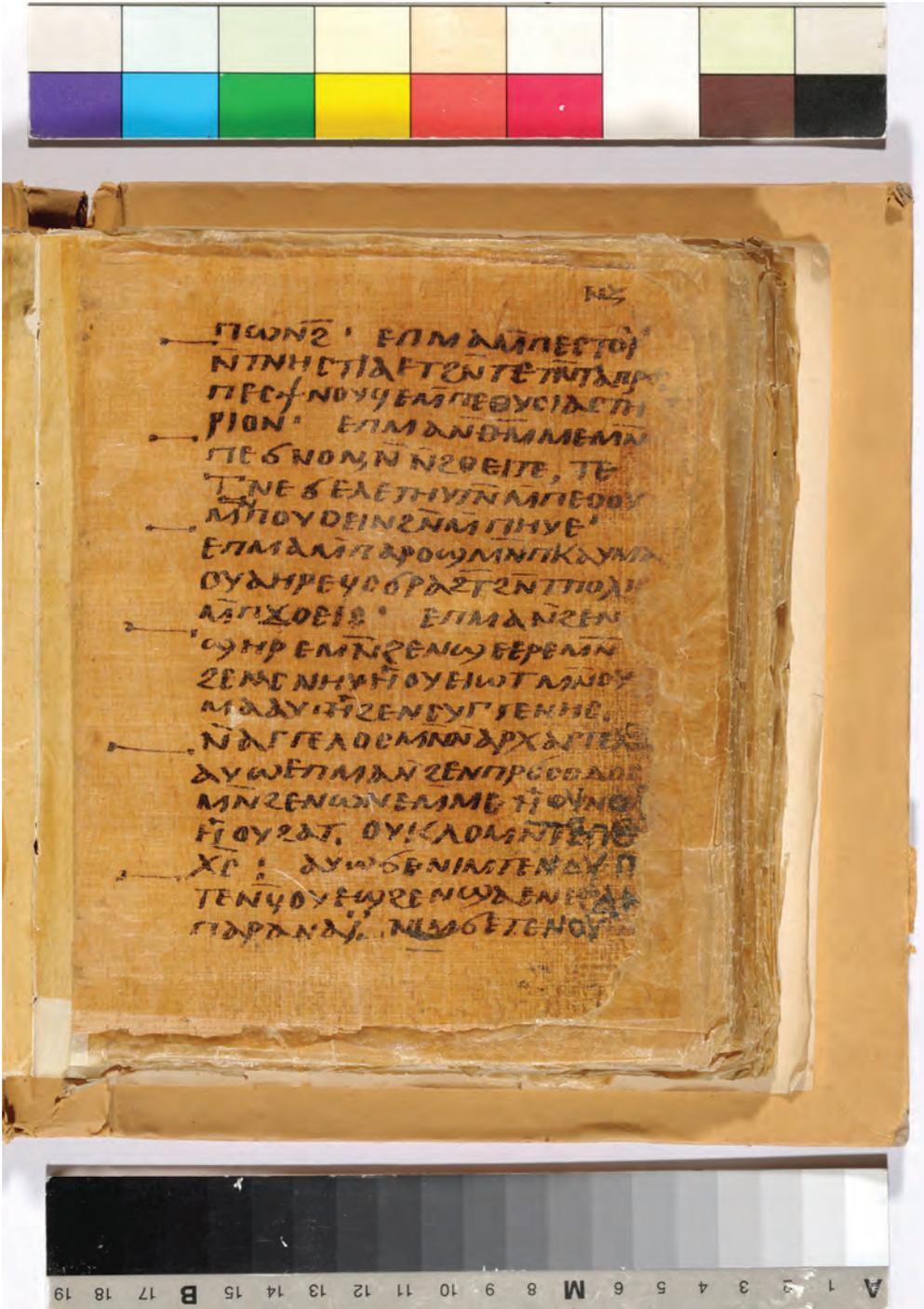


Fig. 1 : P. Bodmer 58, copiste principal. ©Fondation Martin Bodmer, Genève.

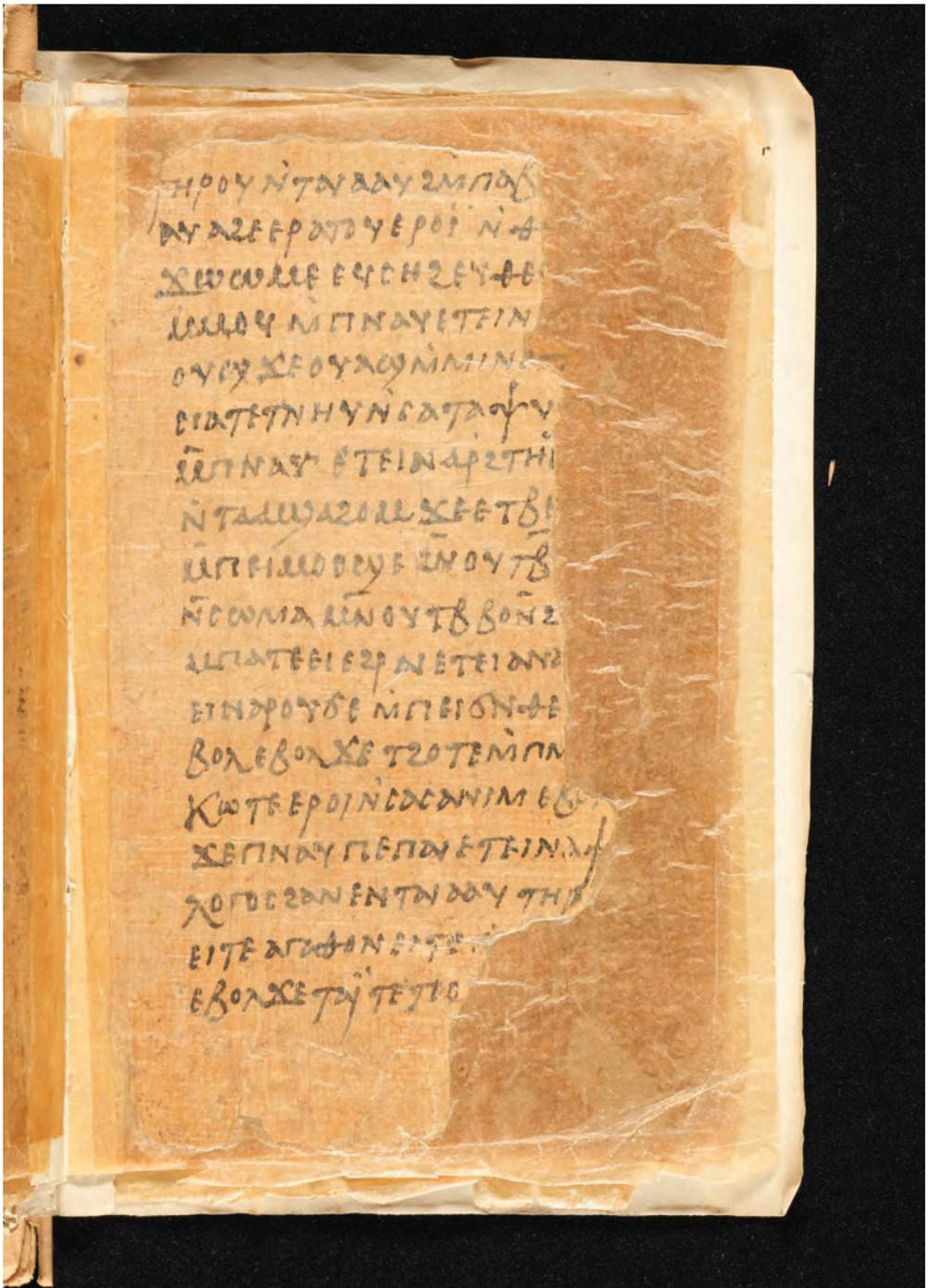


Fig. 2 : P.Bodmer 58, feuillet de garde « C » recto ©Fondation Martin Bodmer, Genève.



Fig. 3 : P. Bodmer 58. À gauche : recette de préparation du parchemin ; à droite : p. 137 du codex principal.
©Fondation Martin Bodmer, Genève.

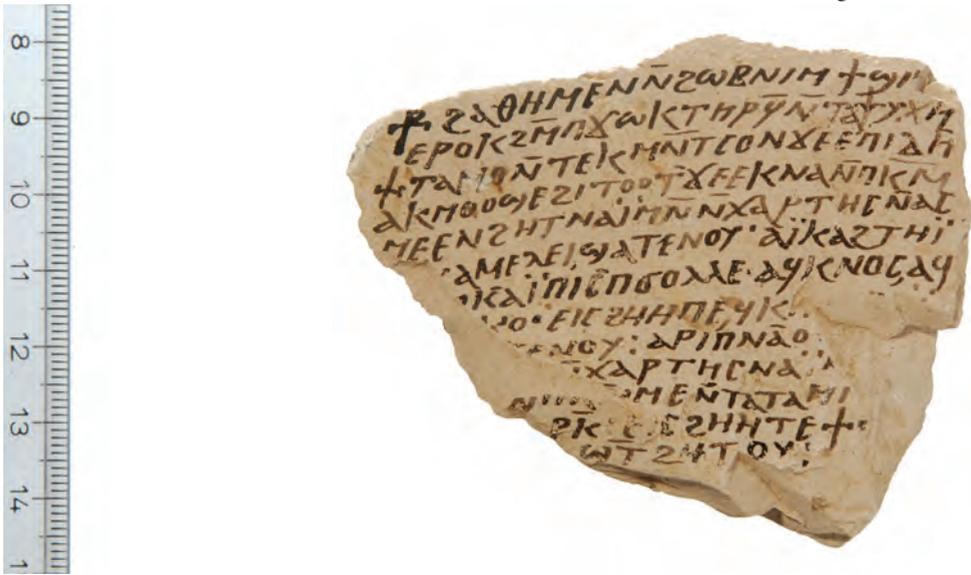


Fig. 4 : O.Frangé 753 recto. © Université Libre de Bruxelles.

Scoperta di tre codici in un eremo a Sheikh el-Gurna (TT 1151-1152): il contesto archeologico

di

Tomasz Górecki† e Ewa Wipszycka

Il luogo in cui sono stati scoperti tre codici copti è un eremo che Tomasz Górecki aveva scelto come sito da scavare dopo aver camminato a lungo avanti e indietro nel deserto tebano, tenendo in mano, come guida, il catalogo dei siti monastici redatto da Winlock all'inizio del XX secolo e pubblicato in *The Monastery of Epiphanius*¹. La scelta si è rivelata felice: l'eremo è interessantissimo sia come abitazione monastica di piccole dimensioni atta ad essere studiata nei minimi dettagli, sia per gli oggetti che vi sono stati scoperti. Gli scavi in questo sito sono cominciati nel 2004 e sono durati fino al 2014².

Anche i due monaci che a metà del V secolo decisero di procurarsi un'abitazione nel deserto tebano devono aver camminato parecchio per scegliere un luogo adatto tra le tombe disponibili nella grande necropoli di Tebe Occidentale, che serviva durante i secoli agli abitanti dei dintorni. Nel periodo romano e in quello tardo-antico, il numero di tombe aperte era considerevole.

I fondatori dell'eremo si installarono in un luogo appartato, un po' sotto la cima di una collina di un massiccio roccioso appartenente all'altopiano del Deserto libico, a 160 m sul livello del mare, a 70 metri sul livello della terra coltivata. Qui i due monaci presero possesso di due antiche tombe situate a una distanza di 40 m l'una dall'altra, fatte alla fine dell'XI o all'inizio della XII dinastia, dunque tra il 2000 e il 1900 a.C. Nel catalogo delle tombe tebane queste due tombe portano i numeri 1151 e 1152.

L'eremo dista dal monastero di Deir el-Medina 880 m, dal monastero di Phoibammon a Deir el-Bahari circa 1300 m, da Gurnet Murai 800 m. A Jeme, che era una località copta importante, situata a 800 m di distanza (oggi si chiama Medinet Habu), si arriva per una stradina abbastanza comoda.

Il fatto che l'eremo si trovava e si trova fuori della rete di comunicazione della valle, e dunque fuori dei percorsi degli abitanti del villaggio di Sheikh el-Gurna così come di quelli dei turisti moderni, ci dà la garanzia che ogni oggetto che gli scavi hanno messo in luce in questo sito era usato dai monaci.

Il sentiero che portava all'eremo (lo stesso che esiste ancora oggi e serve agli archeologi) partiva ai piedi della collina, là dove il pendio è dolce. A circa 20 metri sotto il cortile dell'eremo il sentiero si divideva in due: un tronco andava direttamente alla torre che sorgeva nel cortile, l'altro arrivava alla tomba 1151 e aveva una diramazione verso la tomba 1152. I monaci si diedero da fare per rendere più agevole la salita lungo il sentiero: vi fecero dei gradini e dei terrazzi, usando per questo scopo grosse lastre e blocchi di pietra. Il fondo del sentiero che andava alla tomba 1151 fu indurito con pezzi di mattoni e di anfore. Probabilmente era questo il sentiero per cui salivano gli asini e i cammelli che portavano grandi pesi.

Le due tombe scelte dai nostri monaci erano conformi al modello tipico del Medio Impero. Secondo questo modello, davanti all'entrata c'era un ampio cortile circondato da un muretto in mattoni o in pietra. Un lungo corridoio (ca. 19 m), scavato all'interno della collina, conduceva a una cella quadrata, che serviva al culto funebre. Il sarcofago veniva deposto in un profondo pozzo (nel nostro caso ca. 23 m), che, dopo la sepoltura, veniva riempito di pietre.

Avendo a loro disposizione due tombe, i monaci poterono distribuire tra l'una e l'altra varie funzioni. La tomba 1151 diventò un oratorio, ornato di pitture su una delle due pareti del corridoio e dotato di una panca per sedersi di fronte a questa parete. La tomba 1152 invece diventò il luogo in cui i due monaci dormivano, lavoravano, ricevevano gli ospiti.

La parte iniziale del corridoio del nr. 1152 serviva da spazio di ricevimento, come risulta dal pavimento formato da mattonelle disposte accuratamente a spinapesce, con evidente ricerca dell'effetto estetico. A sinistra per chi entrava, lungo la parete, si trovava una specie di alta panca costruita con pietre e mattonelle e ricoperta

¹ H.E. WINLOCK, W.E. CRUM, H.G. EVELYN-WHITE, *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, New York 1926, vol. I, 3-24.

² Rapporti preliminari e ricerche su singoli reperti sono stati pubblicati da T. GÓRECKI nei volumi 15-22 dei *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean. Reports*. Il rapporto finale è in corso di stampa. Della pubblicazione degli ostraka trovati nell'eremo si sta occupando A. BOUD'HORS; una parte è stata pubblicata da questa studiosa in *The Coptic Ostraca of the Theban Hermitage MMA 1152. Letters 1-66*, JJP 47 (2017) 45-100; i rimanenti ostraka saranno da lei pubblicati nei prossimi tre volumi della stessa rivista.

da uno strato di intonaco. Su uno dei due lati corti la panca aveva un rialzamento, una specie di cuscino in muratura. Conosciamo bene questo tipo di panche, che potevano servire sia per stare seduti, sia per dormire (su di esse si mettevano di solito delle stuoie). Le troviamo in quasi tutti i siti monastici egiziani.

Dietro la panca c'era un basso muretto, dotato di un'apertura attraverso la quale si poteva passare; dietro il muretto era collocata un'altra panca, un po' più piccola. Il pavimento di questa seconda parte del corridoio non era così curato ed elegante come quello della prima parte; qui i detriti dei tempi faraonici non furono interamente eliminati.

Sulle due pareti del corridoio, nella zona in cui si ricevano gli ospiti, Górecki ha scoperto resti sbiaditi di due immagini dipinte: l'una, secondo lui, sembra rappresentare Cristo con il capo avvolto da un nimbo associato a una croce; l'altra rappresenta un personaggio a cavallo, dunque un santo guerriero.

A 14 metri dall'entrata, lo spazio del corridoio fu tagliato mediante un muro che arrivava fino al soffitto. Tale muro, interrotto da una porta, teneva separata la sezione dell'eremo in cui si dormiva: esso proteggeva coloro che dormivano dal freddo delle notti. Serviva anche a impedire l'accesso agli animali selvatici, ai pipistrelli e agli insetti fastidiosi, in particolare ai calabroni. Resti di nidi di calabroni sono visibili in vari punti dell'eremo e portano tracce dell'azione del fuoco: evidentemente i monaci cercavano di eliminare questi insetti col fuoco. Nello spazio destinato al riposo notturno c'erano due posti per dormire (0,60 × 1,90 m per ciascuno), delimitati da bassi muretti, che proteggevano i dormienti dagli animali. Si dormiva su stuoie distese direttamente sulla roccia. Nella parete, al di sopra dei posti per dormire, si vedono delle nicchie: queste potevano servire per metterci delle lucerne o vari altri oggetti. Nella parete orientale, a 1,50 m di altezza dal pavimento, i monaci fecero scavare una grande nicchia, profonda 2 m: essa poteva essere utilizzata per dormire ben isolati dall'ambiente. Alcuni buchi nelle pareti testimoniano la presenza di cavicchi cui si appendevano vestiti o altri oggetti che non dovevano essere abbandonati per terra.

Il pavimento dello spazio per dormire fu coperto con uno strato di argilla: in certi punti, le buche furono riempite con pietre rotonde e frammenti di vasi.

L'attività diurna si svolgeva in un cortile notevolmente spazioso (30 x 10 m). Si lavorava soprattutto qui. Lungo la parete di roccia furono installati due telai, fissati in fosse che durante gli scavi erano visibili chiaramente. Installazioni analoghe si trovano in altri eremi tebani³.

Nel cortile i monaci costruirono alcuni piccoli capannoni, di cui non conosciamo la funzione. Inoltre, sull'orlo del cortile, fecero costruire una torre a due piani, alta 6 m (torri di questo genere sono un elemento normale degli eremi). Questa dev'essere stata un'operazione laboriosa e costosa. I mattoni usati per la costruzione – mattoni disseccati al sole – furono presi da qualche edificio faraonico; l'insieme del materiale usato pesava circa 15 tonnellate. Certamente fu necessario ricorrere ad artigiani specializzati nelle costruzioni.

Il locale a pianterreno della torre era accessibile attraverso una porta (caso raro: di solito infatti l'entrata delle torri di questo genere non era a pianterreno), aveva una volta a botte, in cui c'era un buco che serviva per passare al locale superiore. A questo si arrivava usando una scala portatile appoggiata a una parete del buco. Per la notte o per i periodi di assenza degli inquilini, la scala si poteva eliminare. I muri della torre, che avevano ca. 70–80 cm di spessore, isolavano bene l'interno, sicché qui la temperatura d'estate era più bassa che all'esterno di qualche grado – fatto importante per la conservazione del cibo. La torre poteva servire come luogo alternativo per dormire, eventualmente anche per lavorare. Certamente qui si immagazzinavano le merci.

Contrariamente a ciò che ragionevolmente si aspettava, Górecki non ha trovato una cucina. Per cuocere i cibi, gli abitanti di questo eremo accendevano il fuoco in una piccola cavità della roccia nel cortile e mettevano un vaso di terracotta o una padella di ferro sopra questa cavità. Non avevano un forno per cuocere il pane. Non si è trovata nemmeno una macina. Certo, si potrebbe immaginare che una macina ci fosse e che l'ultimo abitante l'abbia portata via, come una cosa preziosa; ma non ci sono tracce dell'esistenza di un forno. Questo è anormale. Probabilmente, per macinare il grano e fare il pane, i monaci del nostro eremo andavano in un eremo vicino, fornito di forno (forse nell'eremo di Epifanio, in cui è stato trovato un grande forno di tipo professionale⁴). Ricordiamoci che gli asceti egiziani non si sognavano nemmeno

³ Su questo tipo di installazioni per telai (che gli archeologi chiamano *loom-pits*) e sulla produzione tessile negli eremi, si veda E. WIPSYZKA, *Resources and Economic Activities of the Egyptian Monastic Communities*, JJP 41 (2011) 173-182.

⁴ *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes*, vol. I, 58-59.

di mangiare pane fresco: facevano come i contadini egiziani, cuocevano il pane solo poche volte all'anno⁵. I resti di materiali vari trovati nel cortile (pezzi di cuoio, prodotti semi-finiti per la fabbricazione di panieri, di ceste o di corde, e strumenti per la rilegatura di libri) testimoniano che i monaci producevano oggetti di fibra vegetale (sandali, copertine per libri, cinture?) e molto probabilmente rilegavano libri⁶. Non possiamo sapere se copiassero libri; sono stati trovati dei calami, ma questi potevano evidentemente servire per scrivere cose varie.

I rifiuti venivano buttati giù sul pendio della collina. Essi formarono un enorme immondezzaio, che arrivava in basso fin quasi alla fine del pendio (i rifiuti venivano infatti spinti verso il basso dai venti o trascinati dalle piogge, rare, ma a volte violente). In questo immondezzaio è stata trovata una grande quantità di materiali vari: resti di materie prime per la tessitura, tessuti, pezzi di cuoio, ceste, corde, moltissimi frammenti di ceramica, soprattutto del tipo LRA 7. Le anfore più antiche, in questa massa di materiali, sono dei prodotti tipici della metà del V secolo (imitazioni di ARSW, forme 62 e 82). Da ciò risulta che l'eremo esisteva verso la fine del V secolo. Il V-VI secolo è rappresentato da imitazioni di ARSW, forme 86, 91, 99, 105. Testi copti scritti su cocci e su piccole lastre di calcare ci assicurano che l'eremo funzionò fino almeno all'inizio dell'VIII secolo. Nulla testimonianza che dopo questo tempo l'eremo sia stato ancora abitato.

I codici sono stati trovati nella parte alta dell'immondezzaio, sul suo margine. Giacevano quasi direttamente sulla roccia, coperti da piccoli frammenti di roccia misti a cenere e sabbia e a detriti ceramici. La posizione che occupavano gli uni rispetto agli altri suggerisce che essi siano stati buttati sull'orlo del pendio e che poi di là siano scivolati per un tratto verso il basso. Certamente non furono messi là dove sono stati trovati da qualcuno che volesse nasconderli: infatti non giacevano sotto uno spesso strato di terra accumulato appositamente, né in un buco. La persona che lasciò i codici in questo luogo non era per niente interessata alla loro conservazione.

La datazione di questi codici è possibile soltanto su base paleografica. Sia Anne Boud'hors, che ha condotto ampie ricerche sui manoscritti tebanici, sia Renate Dekker e Alin Suciu ritengono concordemente che la scrittura di questi codici si debba collocare tra la fine del VII e l'inizio dell'VIII secolo (vedi l'articolo di P. Piwowarczyk in questa sezione).

L'archeologo, da parte sua, può dare un suggerimento per quanto riguarda la copertina usata per la rilegatura del codice contenente i *Canoni* dello pseudo-Basilio. I motivi decorativi in essa (si veda fig. 10) sono quasi identici a quelli dei piatti ceramici del tipo 'Late Roman' prodotti in Tunisia e in Egitto. Il rilegatore può essersi servito di un punzone di vasaio o di uno strumento analogo. La decorazione indica come data di produzione della rilegatura il VI secolo o l'inizio del VII. Poiché questo codice è posteriore a questa data, dobbiamo supporre che in origine questa rilegatura sia stata prodotta per un altro codice.

Purtroppo tutto quello che l'archeologo può dire dell'eremo non aiuta a capire in quali circostanze i codici siano stati abbandonati. Ma ciò dev'essere accaduto parecchio tempo dopo che era stato abbandonato l'eremo. La lontananza dell'eremo dai luoghi abitati ebbe come conseguenza che nessuno raccolse questi codici. Col passare del tempo essi furono coperti da sabbia e sassolini. Così, quando gli abitanti di Sheikh el-Gurna cominciarono a cercare oggetti antichi per venderli ai viaggiatori europei (cominciarono a farlo già nel XVIII secolo), i codici non furono notati e non caddero nelle loro mani.

L'eremo nel suo insieme si presenta come un'abitazione ben concepita e ben attrezzata, tale da rendere possibile ai due abitanti una vita relativamente comoda – se di comodità si può parlare nelle condizioni dell'ambiente desertico. Coloro che lo costruirono adattando due antiche tombe devono aver impiegato dei mezzi economici consistenti. Non c'è dubbio che i due monaci che lo abitavano lavorassero e vendessero i loro prodotti, ma – tenendo conto del fatto che tutto ciò che mangiavano e bevevano doveva essere comprato – non possiamo esser sicuri che fossero in grado di mantenersi con ciò che guadagnavano con il loro lavoro. Per mezzo delle fonti scritte possiamo capire che spesso l'esistenza dei monaci nel deserto era resa possibile dai beni che essi possedevano nel 'mondo'⁷.

⁵ Sulla produzione di pane per i monaci, vd. E. WIPSYCKA, *Resources and Economic Activities*, cit., 186-196.

⁶ Un'attività di questo genere si svolgeva anche in un'altra comunità monastica di Tebe Occidentale, detta Deir el-Bachit: vd. I. EICHNER, *Bücher und Bucheinbände des Paulosklosters (Deir el-Bachit) in Theben West/Oberägypten*, in *Byzantium as Bridge between West and East*, ed. CH. GASTGEBER, F. DAIM (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse. Denkschriften 476), Wien 2015, 241-250.

⁷ Questo risulta chiaramente dallo studio di vari aspetti della vita economica delle comunità monastiche: si veda E. WIPSYCKA, *Resources and Economic Activities*, cit., 159-263.

Tomasz Górecki (1951–2017), che ha scavato e studiato l'eremo di cui in queste pagine si tratta, è morto improvvisamente il 29 settembre 2017, pochi giorni dopo l'incontro a Roma in cui Ewa Wipszycka ha presentato questa comunicazione preparata insieme con lui. Egli lavorava nel Museo Nazionale di Varsavia. Partecipò a molti scavi effettuati dal Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology dell'Università di Varsavia in Egitto e in Nubia, inoltre a scavi nel monastero Deir Abu Fanah. Era soprattutto archeologo-ceramologo; praticava la ceramologia con grande intelligenza; fu uno di quelli che fecero di questa una disciplina pienamente storica. Negli anni 2003–2013 svolse autonomamente una lunga serie di scavi nell'eremo di Sheikh el-Gurna – scavi che diedero risultati inaspettatamente ricchi. La pubblicazione finale di questi è in corso di stampa.

Tomasz Górecki†

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology

Ewa Wipszycka

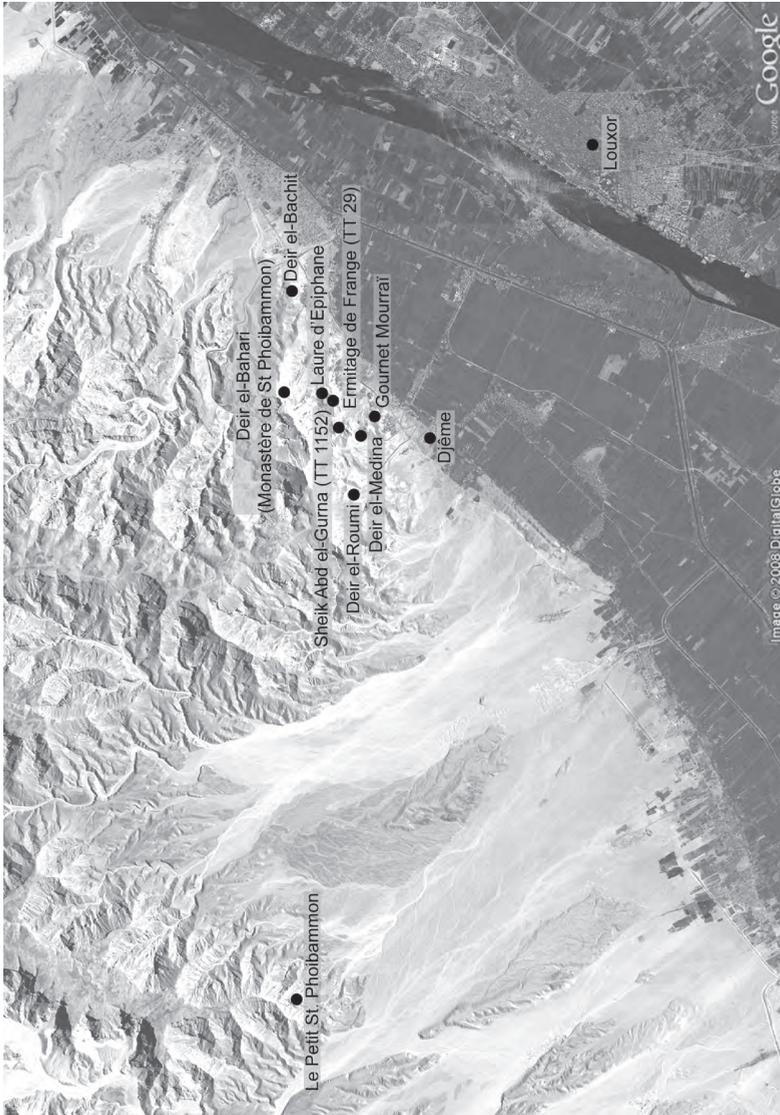
Uniwersytet Warszawski
(Warsaw University)
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Abstract. The three codices were discovered in a small hermitage (with two places for the inhabitants to sleep) located in the Theban necropolis which is called Western Thebes by the scholars. The hermitage occupied part of the rooms belonging to two Middle Kingdom tombs, which in the Theban tombs catalogue bear the numbers 1151 and 1152. The tomb 1152, together with a spacious courtyard in which a tower was built, served as a place for sleeping, meal preparation, and work; the tomb 1151 hosted an oratory. The hermitage yielded numerous finds: ceramic vessels, Coptic ostraca, metal containers, fragments of leather, raw material prepared for spinning and weaving, and baskets. These objects were discovered either in the hermitage's rooms or in the large rubbish dump located nearby. The ceramic finds indicate that the hermitage could be inhabited already from the end of the fifth century; the ostraca show that it was still in use in the beginning of the eighth century, but not later. The codices were buried by the edge of the rubbish dump, not far from the tower. Judging from their position in respect to each other, they were dumped on the ground surface, which is slightly inclined in this place, and no effort was made to hide them. At the time of their deposition the hermitage had already been abandoned.

Keywords. Thebes. Theban necropolis. Coptic codices. Monastic archaeology. Towers in the hermitages. Kitchens in the hermitages. Monks' jobs. Spaces for sleeping in hermitages.

DOCUMENTAZIONE FOTOGRAFICA

Le fotografie e i piani fanno parte della documentazione. Essi appartengono al *Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology* di Varsavia e vengono pubblicati con il permesso della sua Direzione.



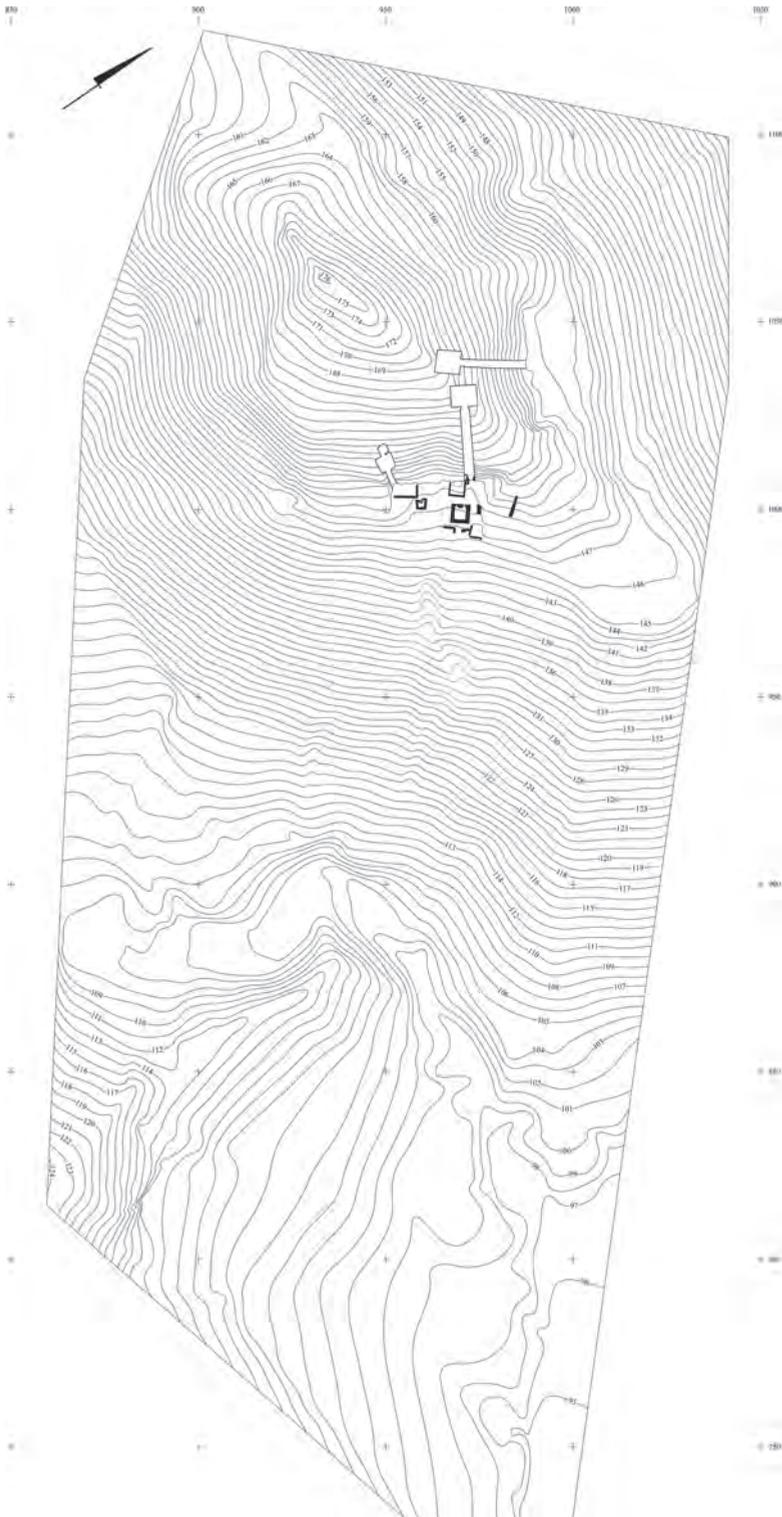
1. Carta dei siti monastici finora identificati nella necropoli tebana (carta eseguita sulla base di una foto di Google Maps). Si tenga presente che molte tombe della necropoli furono occupate da monaci, ma solo in alcune le tracce lasciate dai monaci sono sufficientemente visibili e consistenti per meritare l'attenzione dei ricercatori. Non è da escludere che in futuro si possano identificare altri eremi, come quello scoperto da T. Górecki.



2. Veduta dei dintorni dell'eremo, dal basso. Il luogo dell'eremo è indicato con un numero.



3 Sentieri che portano all'eremo.



4. Piano che mostra la posizione rispettiva delle tombe 1115 e 1152. Con trattini in grassetto sono indicati i resti di grossi muri.

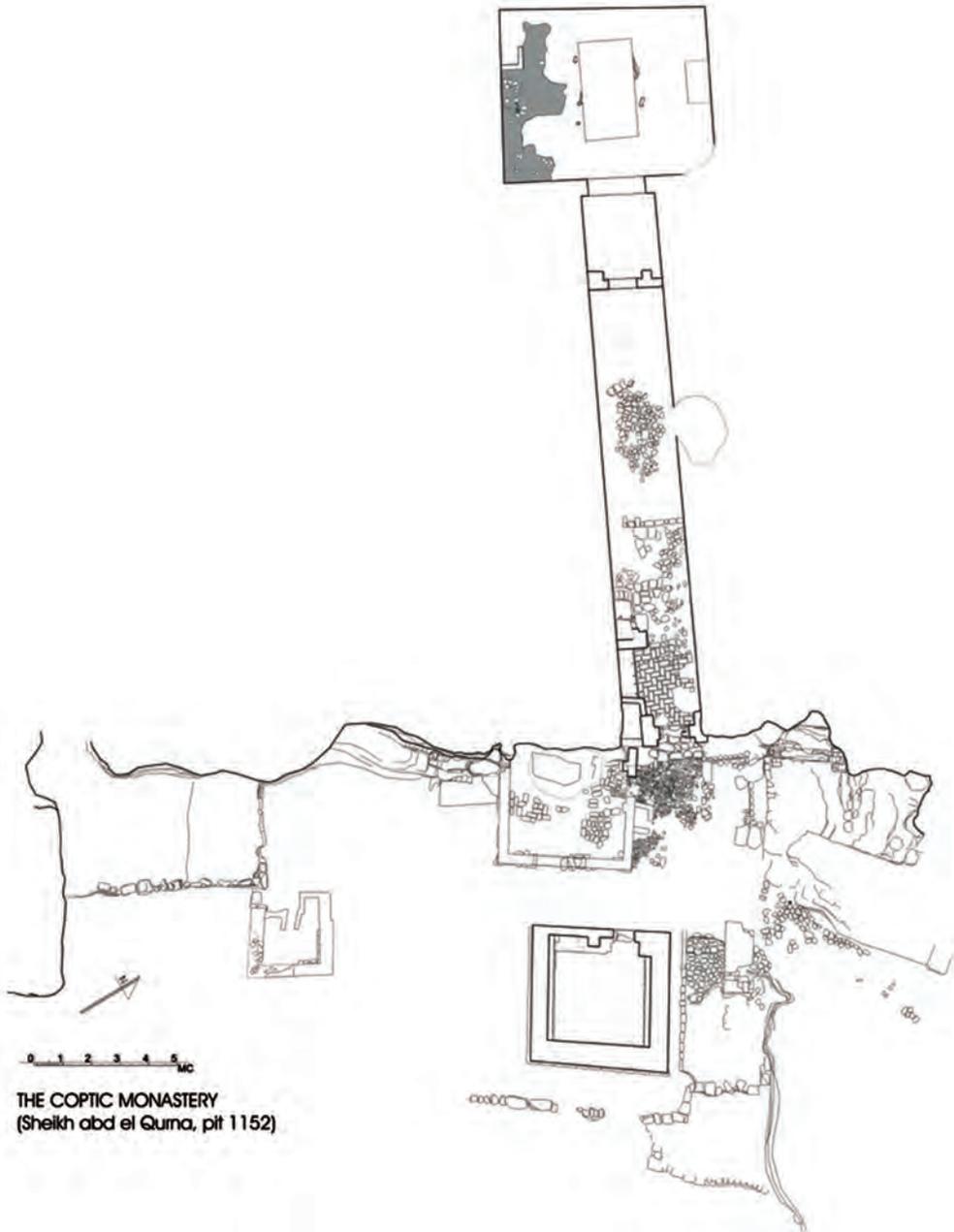
All'estremità sinistra (non compresa nella cartina) c'era un vano scavato nella roccia, che doveva servire da magazzino.



Croce composta con piastrelle di pietra sul pavimento della tomba 1151 presso l'entrata.



6. Veduta del cortile della tomba 1152. Si notino i resti di piccoli capannoni. Qua e là si vedono gruppi di resti di ceramica, raccolti per analisi ulteriori.



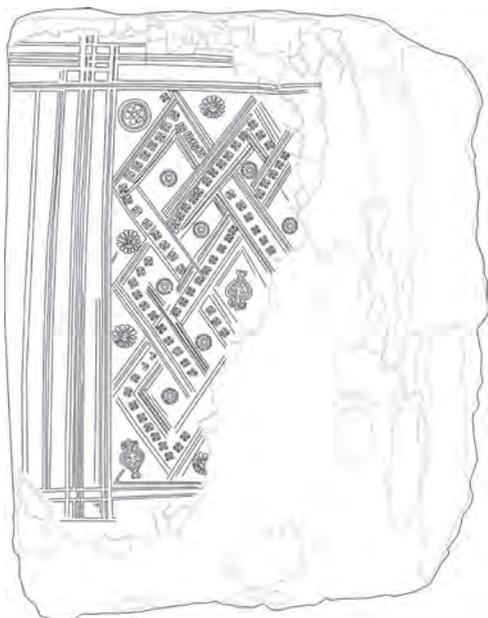
7. Piano della parte della tomba 1152 destinata ad abitazione.



8. Il luogo dove sono stati trovati i codici è indicato con un cerchietto.



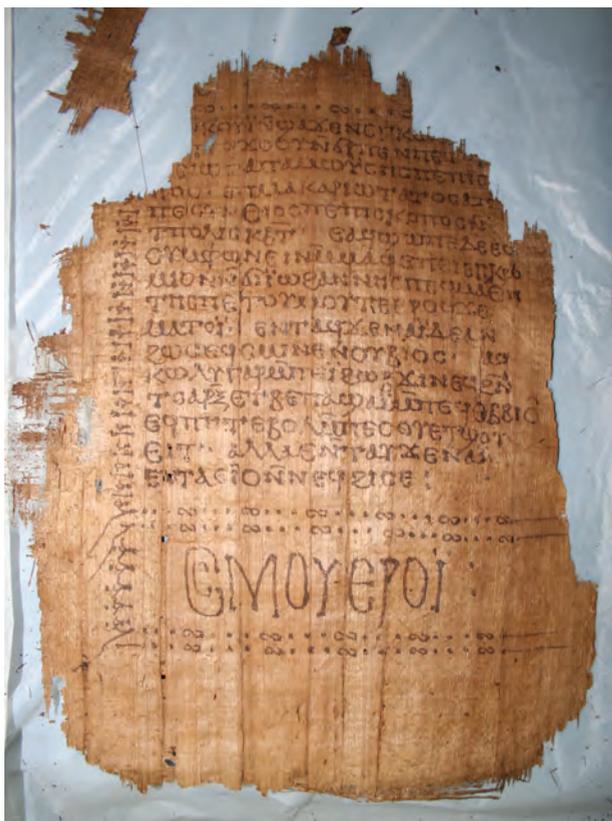
9. T. Górecki mentre fotografa i codici subito dopo la loro scoperta. Il più lontano rispetto alla macchina fotografica è il codice di pergamena contenente il libro di Isaia, in mezzo si vede il codice dell'Encomio di Pisenzio, il codice più vicino è quello contenente i Canoni dello Pseudo-Basilio.



10. Disegno che riproduce l'ornamento della rilegatura del codice dei Canoni dello Pseudo-Basilio.



11. La prima fase dell'apertura del codice dei Canoni dello Pseudo-Basilio. Per altre foto del codice, si veda il contributo di N. Carlig in questo stesso volume.



12. Pagina del codice dell'*Encomio* di Pisenzio.



13. Così si presentava il codice di pergamena: i fogli erano posti tra due tavolette di legno, che col tempo si sono leggermente deformate. I buchi nelle tavolette servivano per farvi passare degli spaghi allo scopo di legare l'insieme.



14. Una pagina del codice di Isaia.



15. Un documento incollato all'interno della rilegatura del codice di Isaia. Non siamo riusciti a leggerlo, ma il tipo di scrittura testimonia che esso è certamente posteriore all'inizio dell'VIII secolo.



16. Strumenti per il lavoro di rilegatura: due spatole di osso che potevano servire per appiattire i fogli e separare i fogli incollati – spatole simili a quelle usate ancora oggi per gli stessi scopi.



17. Un altro strumento da rilegatore: una conchiglia trovata in un vaso di rame, all'interno dell'eremo.

18. Questa foto scattata in un museo di Istanbul mostra degli strumenti che si usavano in Turchia nei secoli XVIII e XIX per levigare i codici.



19. Calami.



20. Restauro del codice dell'Encomion di Pisenzio

**The Early Sahidic Version of the Encomium on Bishop Pesynthios of Koptos
from Shaykh Abd al-Qurna: On the Progress of Its Edition**

by
Renate Dekker

One of the three manuscripts found in the hermitage at tomb MMA 1152 in Shaykh Abd al-Qurna contains an early Sahidic version of the *Encomium* of Bishop Pesynthios of Koptos (599-632)¹, the edition of which was entrusted to me². For a long time, only the first part of the papyrus book was available for study. Since the Polish conservator Anna Thommée sent images of the fragmentary second part, and since her team will soon start a new mission to complete the restoration and documentation of the manuscript, the edition can be resumed³.

This contribution evaluates the present state of research, focusing on four aspects. Firstly, it describes the conservation work done on the manuscripts and the difficulties faced by Thommée and her team during the process. Secondly, it discusses how the edition of the *Encomium* started in 2007 and how it will be continued. Thirdly, we can finally evaluate how much of the text is preserved in the papyrus book and to what extent it diverges from the other – Coptic and Arabic – versions of the *Encomium*. We conclude with some observations on the historical context of the hermitage, where the early Sahidic version was found, not far from where the bishop actually stayed in the 620s⁴.

1. CONSERVATION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

In February 2005, the Polish team headed by Tomasz Górecki unexpectedly discovered two papyrus books and a parchment codex in « a dump of ashes and rubbish from an oven or kitchen » on the rocky slope southeast of the tower in front of the entrance to MMA 1152⁵. They lay on top of a layer of ashes and were covered by about 30 cm of rock detritus⁶. The papyrus book containing the *Encomium* was found directly next to the book with the *Canons* attributed to Basil of Caesarea⁷ and under the parchment codex

¹ Former National Museum of Alexandria, Field inv. no. Coptic MS. 2; now Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13447 (confirmed by Nathan Carlig).

² R. DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthios of Coptos: The Recently Discovered Sahidic Version from Sheikh Abd al-Qurna*, in *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt*, vol. 2: *Naqada - Esna*, ed. G. GABRA, H.N. TAKLA, Cairo-New York 2010, 21-31; EADEM, *The Encomium on Bishop Pesynthios: An Evaluation of the Biographical Data in the Arabic Version*, in *Coptic Culture: Transmission and Interaction*, edited by M. AYAD, Cairo/New York 2016, 77-91. See also EADEM, *The Sahidic Encomium of Pesynthios, Bishop of Keft: Towards a New Understanding. Based on a Recently Discovered Manuscript*, MPhil-thesis, Leiden University 2008 (unpublished, but available at www.academia.edu).

³ I am much indebted to Tomasz Górecki (Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, Warsaw) for giving me a tour at the hermitage in February 2008, and for sending updates on the progress of the conservation work. Thanks are also expressed to Anna Thommée, conservator and director of the Atelier for the Conservation of Artifacts, Books and Archival Materials in Toruń (Poland), for sending conservation reports and photographs of the manuscript made in the period 2010-2015, and for reviewing this paper; and to Ewa Wipszycka (University of Warsaw) and Paola Buzi (Sapienza University, Rome) for arranging funding, in order that the restoration of the manuscript and consequently, the edition of the *Encomium* can be completed.

⁴ H.E. WINLOCK – W.E. CRUM, *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes I*, New York 1926, 133, 223-224; J. VAN DER VLIET, *Pisenthios de Coptos (569-632), moine, évêque et saint: autour d'une nouvelle édition de ses archives*, in *TOPOI. Supplément 3*, ed. M.-F. BOUSSAC, Lyon/Paris 2002, 63-64; R. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt: Bishops of the Theban Region at Work* (OLOA 264), Leuven 2018, 2, 95-96.

⁵ T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152): Preliminary Report, 2005*, Polish Archaeological Mission (=PAM) 17 (2007) 266 and fig. 3; cf. ID., *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, in *Seventy Years of Polish Archaeology in Egypt*. Exhibition catalogue, ed. E. LASKOWSKA-KUSZTAL, Warsaw 2007, 186 and the photograph on p. 190.

⁶ GÓRECKI in *Seventy Years*, cit., 180.

⁷ On this Coptic version of the *Canons* of Saint Basil, see A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea: A New Coptic Codex*, in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion, from Late Antiquity to Modern Times: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17-22, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the*

with fragments from the *Book of Isaiah* and the *Martyrdom of St Peter*⁸. It was almost complete, but in a poor condition, for the back cover was destroyed and the rest of the book was brittle, tightly compressed and distorted⁹, apparently on account of being exposed to the heat of smoldering ashes. Heat had also caused the edges of the parchment leaves to melt together¹⁰.

The Supreme Council of Antiquities and the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (University of Warsaw) arranged that the manuscripts were secured by Janina Wielowiejska and Izabela Mazur, book conservators from the National Library in Warsaw¹¹. The books were first brought to the storeroom of the SCA in Luxor, where excavated objects are stored, and transferred to the laboratory in the National Museum of Alexandria in March 2006¹². Already before their transfer, the PCMA and the Polish Ateliers for Conservation of Cultural Property (PPKZ S.A., Warsaw) launched the project « Polish Conservation Mission: Gurna Manuscripts (Hermitage in TT 1152) ». The conservation work was done by Daria Kordowska and Anna Thommée, conservators of the Atelier for Conservation of Artifacts, Books and Archival Materials in Toruń, a local branch of PPKZ S.A.¹³. Thommée headed the first two missions in 2006, and Kordowska the two following ones in 2007 and 2008. After Kordowska left the PPKZ S.A. in 2009, Thommée directed the conservation work in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2015. Until present, there have been eleven missions, and the last three of them took place in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, where the manuscripts were transferred to in October 2012¹⁴.

In the studio the leaves of the manuscripts were carefully cleaned and separated. The papyrus books were stored in specially made acid-free cardboard boxes with Japanese paper between the leaves and silica gel packets¹⁵. Unfortunately, the condition of the fragile books deteriorated on account of toxic fungi (from the *Aspergillus* family) and bacteria growing on them despite repeated disinfections, and the papyrus was falling apart and getting darker¹⁶. Apart from the fact that the climate in Alexandria was too humid for manuscripts, the air-conditioning in the museum storage room did not work properly from May until November 2010, despite the recommendations of the conservators¹⁷. Although international norms for preserving papyrus prescribe a temperature of 18-20°C and a humidity level of 50-55%, the temperature fluctuated between 15°C and 25°C and the humidity level between 40% and 80%, causing « the degradation and biodeterioration of the objects »¹⁸. In order to stop this process, the manuscripts were brought to the Coptic Museum in Cairo, where the air is drier. When the conservators assessed their condition in January 2013, they observed

Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15-19, 2008 (OLOA 247), ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI, Leuven 2016, vol. 2, 979-992; A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution of the Coptic Codices Preserving the Canons of Saint Basil, with Edition of the Ordination Rite for the Bishop (Canon 46)*, in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu*, ed. F.P. BARONE, C. MACÉ and P.A. UBIERNA, Turnhout 2017, 139-159; and the contribution by the same authors in this volume.

⁸ GÓRECKI in *Seventy Years*, cit., 180, 186-187. On the *Martyrium Petri*, see Przemysław Piwowarczyk's contribution in this section.

⁹ D. KORDOWSKA, *Conservation Work on Three Coptic Manuscripts from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, PAM 18 (2008) 314; A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts (Hermitage in MMA 1152): Conservation Report 2010*, PAM 22 (2013) 201.

¹⁰ KORDOWSKA, in PAM 18, cit., 312-313; THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit. 201, 204; cf. EADEM, *Preliminary Conservation of a Coptic Parchment Manuscript (9th–10th century): a Review of its Condition, and Nature of its Problems*, in *Parchment and Leather Heritage: Conservation – Restoration*, ed. E. JABŁOŃSKA, T. KOZIELEC, Toruń 2012, 199-208.

¹¹ KORDOWSKA, in PAM 18, cit., 311 n. 1; cf. GÓRECKI, PAM 17, cit., 263 n. 1.

¹² THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit., 199 (on the new laboratory). She mentioned the SCA store room during personal communication.

¹³ KORDOWSKA PAM 18, cit., 311 n. 2; <http://www.pcma.uw.edu.pl/en/pcma-newsletter/2006/late-roman-byzantine-and-medieval/sheikh-abd-el-gurna-papyrus-book-conservation-project-egypt/>.

¹⁴ I: 5 March-11 April 2006; II: 17 August-28 September 2006; III: 26 June-22 July 2007; IV: 12-28 October 2008; V: 4 January-24 February 2010; VI: 11-27 May 2010; VII: 12 December 2010-27 January 2011; VIII: May 2012; IX: 14-31 January 2013; X: 20 May-21 June 2013; XI: 15 November-30 December 2015, according to KORDOWSKA in PAM 18, cit., 311; THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit., 199 n. 1; THOMMÉE's unpublished conservation reports of January 2011 and January-June 2013; the dates of the photographs taken in 2015.

¹⁵ KORDOWSKA PAM 18, cit., 314-315; THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit., 201.

¹⁶ THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit., 201-203, 207-208 (with a microbiological report)

¹⁷ THOMMÉE, Conservation report of January 2011, 3.

¹⁸ THOMMÉE, PAM 22, cit., 207.

new microbiological changes: « while the growth was not intensive, it was observable with the naked eye »¹⁹. By day, the conditions in the Coptic Museum were optimal, but in the evening, when the museum staff left the building, the air-conditioning was switched off for security reasons. As a result, the temperature in the



Fig. 1. Front cover (photo: A. Thommée; adapted by R. Dekker)

¹⁹ THOMMÉE, Conservation report of January-June 2013, 2.

storage room rose to 26°C and the humidity level dropped to 50% during the mission in May-June 2013²⁰. The papyrus book containing the *Encomium* measured ca. 32.5 x 24 x 4 cm²¹. It used to have a leather cover, strengthened by boards made of reused papyrus (with remains of two texts, one in a literary hand and the other one in a more cursive script). The front cover, now broken into pieces, was decorated with a six petal rosette within a circular frame against a red background, with a string of red dots painted on the frame (Fig. 1). A red broad ribbon interlace ornament ending in loops above and below is visible below the rosette, and another, less intricate design was painted in red ink above and on both sides of the rosette. The book was closed with leather straps and a wooden peg with carved interlace decoration (Fig. 2)²². The codex consists of forty more or less complete folios (eighty pages) that belonged to five quires (A-E), eleven fragmentary folios (twenty-two pages), and the last part of the book, which was opened in 2015 and comprises fragments of at least five more folios²³. A paper reproduction of the codex on the basis of printed photographs, which takes into account the direction of the papyrus fibres, the contents of the *Encomium* and the original page numbers, indicates that the codex probably comprised eight quires (A-H) of ca. 120 pages in total.

After the mission of 2015, the project was suspended on account of lack of funding, but in November 2017, Ewa Wipszycka (University of Warsaw) informed me that she and Paola Buzi were arranging financial means, in order that the conservation work on the papyrus books could be completed²⁴. Later that month, Anna Thommée confirmed that a new mission will take place. Once the restoration and documentation of the manuscript has been completed, the edition of the *Encomium* can be finalized as well.

2. EDITION OF THE ENCOMIUM

Soon after the discovery of the manuscripts, Father Wincenty Myszor (Silesian University, Katowice) and Jacques van der Vliet (Leiden University) both identified the text in one of the papyrus books as the *Encomium* on Bishop Pesynthius on the basis of the title page²⁵. Myszor made a first edition of the title²⁶. Van der Vliet was contacted to confirm the identification, since he had previously announced his intention to re-edit the documents relating to Bishop Pesynthius in the Musée du Louvre (*P.Pisentius*)²⁷. In September 2007, the international project directed by Van der Vliet and Florence Calament of the Musée du Louvre officially started in the form of a seminar in Coptic papyrology in Leiden, in which I participated as a student²⁸. In the same month, I was entrusted with the edition of the *Encomium* under Van der Vliet's supervision and with the support of Wipszycka and Górecki-



Fig. 2. Wooden peg (photo: A. Thommée; adapted by R. Dekker)

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ GÓRECKI in PAM 17, cit., 271.

²² GÓRECKI, in PAM 17, cit., 271 and Fig. 6; THOMMÉE, in PAM 22, cit., 200.

²³ THOMMÉE, in PAM 22, cit., 200, where ten single folios are listed instead of eleven.

²⁴ Wipszycka made the announcement on the day of the author's PhD defense (Leiden, 7 November 2017).

²⁵ GÓRECKI, PAM 17, cit., 272 and n. 5.

²⁶ W. MYSZOR, *Encomium of St. Pisentius from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, PAM 17 (2007) 273-274.

²⁷ VAN DER VLIET, *Pisenthios de Coptos*, cit. n. 4, 61-72.

²⁸ On the progress made, see J. VAN DER VLIET, *Les archives de Pesynthius: nouvelles découvertes, nouvelles questions*, in *Études coptes XII: Quatorzième journée d'études (Rome, 11-13 juin 2009)*, ed. A. BOUD'HORS, C. LOUIS, Paris 2013, 263-270; R. DEKKER, *Reconstructing and Re-editing the Archive of Bishop Pesynthius of Koptos/Keft (7th century)*, in *Current Research in Egyptology 2010: Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Symposium*, ed. M. HORN, J. KRAMER, D. SOLIMAN, N. STARING, C. VAN DEN HOVEN, L. WEISS, Oxford 2011, 33-41; F. CALAMENT, *Le programme d'édition des archives de Pesynthios: focus sur les papyrus coptes du Musée du Louvre*, in *Actes du 26e Congrès international de papyrologie, Genève, 16-21 août 2010*, ed. P. SCHUBERT, Genève 2012, 107-118; cf. J. VAN DER VLIET, *Pesynthios of Coptos/Qift (ca. 568-632) and the Rise of the Egyptian Monophysite Church*, JCS 3-4 (2012) 27-42; IDEM, *Le prêtre Marc, Psan et Pesynthios: un réseau miaphysite autour du monastère d'Épiphane*, in *Études coptes XIII: Quinzième journée d'études (Louvain-la-Neuve, 12-14 mai 2011)*, ed. A. BOUD'HORS and C. LOUIS, Paris 2015, 127-136.

ki. Following the example of Gawdat Gabra, who first examined the Coptic and Arabic versions of Bishop Pesynthios' biography²⁹, the manuscript from Shaykh Abd al-Qurna is referred to by a *siglum*, « Q ».

The images of Q that became available for study in 2007 showed seventy pages of the first five quires of the manuscript³⁰, which revealed that the main text is close to the complete Sahidic version in the paper codex S (Esna-Edfu region, A.D. 1005)³¹. For palaeographical reasons, Q is dated to the late seventh century, but its discovery at the hermitage in MMA 1152 suggests that it was still used in the early eighth century, during the second phase of occupation of that hermitage (see the fourth section below)³².

Preliminary transcriptions and translations of the first part of Q and the complete text of S were used as sources in my MPhil thesis *The Sahidic Encomium of Pesunthios, Bishop of Keft* (2008), PhD dissertation *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt* (2017) and three articles published in 2010, 2011 and 2016³³. The bishop's name is variously spelled, partly on account of the preferences of editors of congress proceedings, but « Pesynthios » is the preferred form in the PhD dissertation: « Pesynth- » is based on the Sahidic form of the name, which is older than the Bohairic forms « Pisentius » and « Pisenthios », but the Latin « -ius » ending is consistent with the spelling of other names, such as Epiphanius, Athanasius, Claudius, etc.

In October 2016, Thommée sent a second CD with all the photographs made by her team, including images of the front cover and the second part of the book before and after the opening of the pages. In addition, it contained unpublished reports on the conservation work done in 2011 and 2013. The passages on the dark, incomplete folios and fragments were difficult to read, but most of them could be identified by means of a new transcription of S.

Since images of the remaining part of the manuscript are available now, and since the conservation team intends to make new photographs during the eleventh mission, the edition of the *Encomium* can be resumed and finalized. It should not only include Q and S, but also L, three incomplete papyrus folios in the British Library (Western Thebes, late seventh century), BN, four fragments of a parchment codex in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris (White Monastery, ninth/tenth century), and W, three folios from a parchment codex in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (provenance unknown, ninth century)³⁴. W includes two anecdotes that do not appear in Q and S, but are known from the extensive Arabic version A (nineteenth century copy of an unknown manuscript)³⁵, and – one of them – from the Bohairic version B (Wadi al-Natrun, A.D. 917/918)³⁶. In other words, Q and S represent a short Sahidic version, and W a long one, which is likely to have included more anecdotes known from B and/or A only, such as the bishop's conversation with a mummy.

²⁹ G. GABRA ABDEL SAYED, *Untersuchungen zu den Texten über Pesyntheus, Bischof von Koptos (569-632)*. PhD-dissertation, Bonn 1984.

³⁰ Pages 1-62 and 65-72.

³¹ BL, Or. 7026, fols. 20a-82b; ed. E.A.W. BUDGE, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*, London 1913, 75-127 (text), 258-321 (translation); cf. GABRA, *Untersuchungen*, cit., 6; B. LAYTON, *Catalogue of the Coptic Literary Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired since the Year 1906*, London 1987, no. 160 (2).

³² DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthios of Koptos*, cit., 23; cf. EADEM, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 98, 239-240.

³³ R. DEKKER, *Bishop Pesynthios of Koptos (Egypt): « He Did Not Pursue the Honour, but It Was the Honour That Pursued Him »*, in *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, edited by J. LEEMANS, P. VAN NUFFELEN, S.W.J. KEOUGH, C. NICOLAYE, Berlin 2011, 331-341. The other two are DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthios of Koptos*, cit. (n. 2), and *Encomium on Bishop Pesynthios*, cit. (n. 2).

³⁴ L = BL, Or. 7561 (61-62); unpublished, cf. LAYTON, *Catalogue*, cit., no. 167 (2); GABRA, *Untersuchungen*, cit., 7 (« S1 »); BN = BnF, copte 161 (6), fol. 41; unpublished, cf. A. SUCIU's blog post for April 24, 2013, at <https://alinsuciu.com/2013/04/24/photographs-of-white-monastery-fragments-on-gallica-website/> (accessed on May 18, 2019); DEKKER, *Biographical Data*, cit. (n. 2), 80, Fig. 6.1; W = ÖNB, K 9692, K 9551, K 9552; ed. W.C. TILL, *Koptische Pergamente theologischen Inhalts*, Vienna 1934, 31-36 (text), 37-43 (translation).

³⁵ A = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, arabe 4785; ed. DE L. O'LEARY, *The Arabic Life of S. Pisentius, According to the Text of the Two Manuscripts Paris Bib. Nat. Arabe 4785 and Arabe 4795* (PO 22.3), Paris 1930. W corresponds to A, fols. 161a-166a (no. 30: the priest who was punished for spitting in the sanctuary) and 180a-185b (nr. 26: the adulteress who claimed to be innocent).

³⁶ B = Rome, Vatican Library, copt. 66, ed. É. AMÉLINEAU, *Étude sur le christianisme en Égypte au septième siècle*, Paris 1887, 109-115 (the spitting priest).

The edition is planned as a supplement to *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, which requires the retyping of the Coptic transcriptions in the unicode font Antinoou. *S* will serve as the main text, since it is complete, but where necessary, the text will be supplemented by the – occasionally more elaborate – parallel text in *Q*. A comparison of *Q* with *L*, *BN*, *S*, *W*, *B* and *A* should reveal to what extent the *Encomium* was adapted to local needs, and what the distribution of the Coptic and Arabic manuscripts tells us about the development of Bishop Pesynthius' cult in Egypt in the course of time.

3. THE CONTENTS OF THE ENCOMIUM

The title of *Q* is similar to that of the Bohairic version *B*, which is likewise presented as an « *Encomium* » delivered by Bishop Moses of Koptos, after Pesynthius' disciple John agreed with him about the contents³⁷. The involvement of two « authors » suggests that Moses, being a bishop, was considered as the right person to write and deliver an *Encomium* and to thereby promote the cult of a saint, but relied on John, an important eye witness, for anecdotes³⁸.

Whereas the title of *Q* is close to the Bohairic version, the main text includes most of the anecdotes attested in the Sahidic version *S*, which was renamed a « *Life and Conduct* » and attributed to « the priest » John³⁹. The preserved anecdotes appear in the same order as in *S* (see Table 1)⁴⁰. Although the second part of the manuscript is fragmentary and dark, it is possible to recognize a passage on the bishop's last days and even a damaged colophon, including a short title, « The life of our holy father ... » (ll. 1-2), the date of Pesynthius' death (l. 5: « [thirteen] Epep ») and a request by the copyist (« Pray for [me, ...] ! »). The mention of « Apa Pesynthius, the bishop » is expected in ll. 2-3, but the traces are hardly legible.

The Sahidic version is a carefully composed text that alternates encomiastic sections addressing the deceased Pesynthius with narrative sections, in which statements about the bishop are illustrated by one or more anecdotes⁴¹. The author aimed to convince his audience, originally the citizens of Koptos⁴², that Pesynthius was truly a saint and a successful intercessor with God, by emphasizing his spiritual abilities (reading souls, telepathy, foreknowledge, knowledge of the divine, healing) and the efficacy of his prayers⁴³. *S* includes only nineteen out of the fifty-five narratives known from *A*, which is, by contrast, organized as a collection of narratives or « wonders ». Each of them is introduced by a separate header⁴⁴. Whereas *A* still contains part of the encomiastic sections, *B* only includes narratives, without commentaries and headers⁴⁵, and has a particular interest in anecdotes on Pesynthius' asceticism, some of which do not occur in *Q* and *S*⁴⁶.

Some parts of the *Encomium* are more extensive in *Q* than in *S*, such as a discussion of the importance of faith, citations from the bishop's pastoral epistles and a description of his radiant appearance⁴⁷. Remarkably, the anecdote that explains why Pesynthius reluctantly agreed to be ordained bishop, is complete in *S*, but imperfect in *Q*: the copyist skipped the section in which the clergymen of Koptos requested Apa

³⁷ AMÉLINEAU, *Étude*, cit., 73; cf. DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthius of Coptos*, cit. (n. 2), 24; EADEM, *Biographical Data*, cit., 80.

³⁸ Several *encomia* are attributed to Bishop Constantine of Asyut; cf. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 98; on the commemoration of saints by Pesynthius and Abraham of Hermonthis as a possible missionary act, see 186-187 (St Phoibammon), 252-253 (St Onnophrius, Patriarch Severus of Antioch, St Victor).

³⁹ *S*, fols. 20a-82b: ed. BUDGE, *Coptic Apocrypha*, 75-127 (text), 258-321 (translation). John, Pesynthius' disciple and an important eye witness, does not appear as a priest elsewhere in the *Encomium*.

⁴⁰ The original page numbers of *Q* are referred to, but since the original pagination of *S* is irregular (p. 45 is followed by 36!), we adopt the folio numbering introduced by Budge in his edition.

⁴¹ DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthios of Coptos*, cit., 25; EADEM, *The Sahidic Encomium of Pesunthios*, cit., 27.

⁴² EADEM, *Biographical Data*, cit., 78; EADEM, *The Sahidic Encomium of Pesunthios*, cit., 62.

⁴³ EADEM, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 245-247.

⁴⁴ Ed. O'LEARY, *S. Pisentius*, « wonders » nos 1, 4-8, 14-17, 20-25, 27, 31 and 53.

⁴⁵ *A*, fols 117a-b is loosely based on *Q*, pp. 45-47 = *S*, fol. 36b-37b; *A*, fols 139b-140b on *S*, fol. 49a-50b and 56b-57a; *A*, fols 155b on *S*, fol. 74a-b. The first two passages are omitted in *B*, ed. AMÉLINEAU, *Étude*, cit., 100, 144. The third eulogy and the preceding anecdote (on the jealous husband) are absent from *B* altogether.

⁴⁶ AMÉLINEAU, *Étude*, cit., 75-101 = *A*, « wonders » 9-13 (not in *Q* and *S*) and 5-8 (in *Q* and *S*).

⁴⁷ Passages in *Q*, pp. 31-33, 58-61 and 88, are absent in *S*, fols 32b, 43b and 56b.

Colluthus to ask Pesynthius what he meant by saying that he would « not to be disobedient to Him who sends me »⁴⁸. At least in this section, S provides a better reading than the early version Q.

4. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE HERMITAGE IN SHAYKH ABD AL-QURNA

The hermitage in MMA 1152 was inhabited in two phases: from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh centuries, and from the end of the seventh to the mid-eighth centuries, with an interval of a few dozen years⁴⁹. Other hermitages in Western Thebes display a similar pattern, including the *Topos* of Epiphanius (inhabited in the early seventh and early eighth centuries, with an interval of at least sixty years)⁵⁰, TT 65⁵¹, TT 29⁵² and perhaps the *Topos* of St Mark at Qurnet Murai⁵³.

In the 620s, the hermitage in MMA 1152 was inhabited by Ezekiel and Djor, who were in contact with the priest Victor, the abbot of the Monastery of St Phoibammon at Dayr al-Bahri, and the priest Mark of the *Topos* of St Mark at Qurnet Murai⁵⁴. Interestingly, in the same period, Bishop Pesynthius stayed at the *Topos* of Epiphanius at a few hundred meters distance, as the discovery of part of his episcopal documents at the *Topos* indicates⁵⁵.

According to all versions of the *Encomium*, Pesynthius and John left the diocese of Koptos and went to Western Thebes in the neighboring district of Hermonthis, in order to hide for the Persians, who were about to take the city of Koptos⁵⁶. Whereas the Arabic version states that the bishop remained concealed for ten years, that is, during the entire period of the Persian occupation (619-629)⁵⁷, and that only four people knew where he was hidden, the study of his episcopal documents reveals that he was far from isolated. In fact, he was also involved in matters outside of his diocese: he supervised clergymen from the diocese of Qus (until the ordination of Bishop Pisrael of Qus in ca. 620) and received multiple requests to contact civil officials in the district of Hermonthis⁵⁸. He was apparently believed to be a powerful « patron who intercedes on behalf of us before God and men », as a desperate widow from Jeme addressed him in a petition⁵⁹. Direct contact between Pesynthius and the hermits at MMA 1152 has not been demonstrated,

⁴⁸ S, fol. 40b-41a; cf. DEKKER, *Encomium on Pesynthios of Coptos*, cit., 23; EADEM, *He Did Not Pursue the Honour*, cit., 338 n. 42.

⁴⁹ T. GÓRZECKI, *The Hermitage in Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (West Thebes): Excavations, Studies and Conservation in 2009 and 2010/2011*, PAM 22 (2013) 188; cf. IDEM, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna: Hermitage in Tomb 1152 and Chapel in Tomb 1151*, PAM 19 (2010) 303. On the site, see E. WIPSZYCKA, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (ive-viii siècles)* (JJP Suppl. 11), Warsaw 2009, 190-196.

⁵⁰ DEKKER, *Relative Chronology*, cit., 765 and Fig. 1. On the *Topos* in general, see WIPSZYCKA, *Moines et communautés*, cit., 184-187.

⁵¹ A. HASZNOS, *Coptic Texts from the « Monastery of Cyriacus » (TT 65)*, vol. I, with an introduction by T.A. BÁCS, Budapest 2013, 22.

⁵² A. BOUD'HORS and C. HEURTEL, *Les ostraca coptes de la TT 29 autour du moine Frange*, Bruxelles 2010, vol. I, 9-10 and 22, where the editors distinguish Frange's dossier (first half of the eighth century) from that of his predecessors (beginning of the seventh century). Documentary material for the period in between appears to be absent.

⁵³ A. BOUD'HORS and C. HEURTEL, *Les ostraca et papyrus coptes du Topos de Saint-Marc à Thèbes*, Cairo 2015, vol. I, 9-15, where the editors distinguish dossiers for the priest Mark (early seventh century) and the priest Peter (early eighth century). Cf. WIPSZYCKA, *Moines et communautés*, 187-190.

⁵⁴ E. GAREL, *The Ostraca of Victor the Priest Found in the Hermitage TT 1152*, in *Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology, Warsaw, 29 July-3 August 2013* (JJP Suppl. 28), ed. T. DERDA, A. ŁAJTAR, J. URBANIK, Warsaw 2016, vol. 2, 1041-1054. On Mark, Victor, and Ezekiel and Djor, see also DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 111-117.

⁵⁵ At least *P.Mon.Epiph.* 117, 152-153, 254, 430, 494 and *O.Mon.Epiph.* 172, 425, 469; cf. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 206, 210.

⁵⁶ Q, pp. 68-69 = S, fol. 46a-b; B, ed. AMÉLINEAU, *Étude*, cit., 137-138; A, fol. 136b.

⁵⁷ The Coptic documents found at the *Topos* confirm that Pesynthius stayed there, but not necessarily for ten years, and since Western Thebes was relatively safe, there was no need to remain in hiding; cf. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, 95-96, in reaction to E. WIPSZYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions* (JJP Suppl. 25), Warsaw 2015, 41. Since the bishop did not reside in the city of Koptos on the east bank, but in a monastery on the west bank, I wonder whether he actually fled or had practical reasons for going to Western Thebes.

⁵⁸ A, fols 194b, 201a, but see DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 95-96, 143-144, 227-228, 230-231.

⁵⁹ *SB Kopt.* I 295, ll. 9-10.

but since their dwelling was close to the *Topos* of Epiphanius, the bishop must have known about them. One of the hermits living at the hermitage during the second phase of occupation was Joseph, who received several letters, including one from Frange (early eighth century). The latter addressed him reverently as a spiritual superior (« his beloved father ») and an ascetic authority (« the man who truly bears Christ »)⁶⁰. On the basis of a Coptic writing exercise signed by Simon and Joseph, Górecki suggested that Joseph was a teacher, who checked Simon's work⁶¹. In this period, at least one of the inhabitants was specialized in working leather and produced belts, sandals and perhaps leather covers for books⁶². Perhaps, the study of the documentary texts found at the site will reveal his identity⁶³.

The discovery of a late-seventh century copy of the *Encomium* at the hermitage in MMA 1152 indicates that the short Sahidic version was composed relatively soon after the bishop's death, that an early copy circulated in the very area where the bishop used to stay (outside of his diocese), and that his cult was already established by that time. In a Coptic circular letter from the time of Patriarch Benjamin I, which was probably written in the period 643/644-665, Pesynthius is called « thrice blessed », an expression indicating that he was still in the process of being officially recognized as a saint⁶⁴.

The colophon of Q does not record for which audience this copy of the *Encomium* was intended, but the one in the book containing the *Canons* attributed to Basilius of Caesarea, which was found next to Q, is helpful: Peter of Peperi donated this book to the Parochial Church (*ekklesia catholike*) of Jeme⁶⁵. On the basis of the palaeography, it is dated to the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century, in about the same period as Q⁶⁶. It is likely that the *Encomium* was donated to a church as well, either the Parochial Church of Jeme or a church in the Koptite district, since it was meant to be read out to the faithful on the bishop's feast day. At some point, the papyrus books were brought to the hermitage in MMA 1152 (together or separately), perhaps in order to be read, copied or repaired. Since one of the hermits was engaged in leather working, it is tempting to wonder whether he produced a new leather cover for one or both books. The interlace decoration on the front cover of Q and particularly the decorated title page of the *Martyrium of St Peter*⁶⁷ recall ostraca with drafts of such patterns, which were indeed executed on a wall in the corridor of MMA 1152⁶⁸.

It is unclear when and why the papyrus books and the parchment codex ended up on a rubbish dump. The tentative dating proposed for the parchment codex (ninth-tenth century)⁶⁹ suggests that the three

⁶⁰ Ostrakon K.O. 10, in I. ANTONIAK, *Preliminary Remarks on the Coptic Ostraca from Seasons 2003 and 2004*, PAM 16 (2004) 244-245 and Fig. 1. On the date for Frange, see BOUD'HORS and HEURTEL, *Frange*, cit., 10. For « Christ-bearer » as an expression for ascetic authority, see DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit., 47.

⁶¹ GÓRECKI, PAM 19, 301-302, Fig. 4.

⁶² GÓRECKI, PAM 19, 303; IDEM, PAM 22, 188; WIPSZYCKA, *Moines et communautés*, cit., 192.

⁶³ A. BOUD'HORS, *The Coptic Ostraca of the Theban Hermitage MMA 1152. 1. Letters (O. Gourna Górecki 12-68)*, JJP 47 (2017) 45-100. For a letter on papyrus, from a certain Moses to an unnamed recipient, see A. BOUD'HORS, *Réclamation pour le paiement de coupons de papyrus: le témoignage d'une lettre copte*, JJP 45 (2015) 9-24. Cf. T. GÓRECKI – A. ŁAJTAR, *An Ostrakon from the Christian Hermitage in MMA 1152*, JJP 42 (2012) 135-164.

⁶⁴ Pap. Berlin P. 11346: ed. A. CAMPLANI, *A Pastoral Epistle of the Seventh Century Concerning the Eucharist (Pap. Berlin P. 11346)*, in *Forschung in der Papyrussammlung: Eine Festgabe für das Neue Museum*, ed. V.M. LEPPER, Berlin 2012, 377-386; cf. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, 97.

⁶⁵ CAMPLANI – CONTARDI, *The Canons Attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 7), 983. On the Parochial Church, the main church of Jeme, see DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks*, cit. 74-75. It could have been the church in the second courtyard of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu.

⁶⁶ CAMPLANI – CONTARDI, *Remarks*, cit. (n. 7), 140, based on A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics: Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bently Layton* (OLOA 263), edited by D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL, Leuven 2017, 175-212.

⁶⁷ T. GÓRECKI – E. SZPAKOWSKA, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna: Archaeological activities in the Hermitage in Tomb 1152*, PAM 18 (2008) 306, Fig. 2.

⁶⁸ T. GÓRECKI, *Archaeological Research in the Hermitage in Tomb 1152 in Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (West Thebes)*, PAM 20 (2011) 232, Fig. 9 (two ostraca with elegant interlace patterns); cf. IDEM, *Limestone Flake with a Drawing of a Guilloche: A Contribution to the Designing of Theban Hermitage Wall Decoration*, *Études et Travaux* 22 (2008) 61-68, Figs 1-2 (fragments of mud plaster) and 3-6 (ostraca with crude exercises).

⁶⁹ GÓRECKI in *Seventy Years*, cit. n. 5, 180. Both Piwowarczyk (during the conference in Rome) and Thommée (personal communication) suggest that the parchment book is probably older and should rather be dated to the eighth-

manuscripts were left there after the hermitage was abandoned, not by the hermits but by passers-by, possibly tomb robbers⁷⁰.

CONCLUSION

The discovery of an early version of the *Encomium* on Bishop Pesynthius in Western Thebes is remarkable, since the bishop temporarily stayed in the area himself, and he was apparently commemorated there as a saint relatively soon after his death through this hagiographic text.

The Polish conservation team had a hard time when trying to restore and document the fragile papyrus book that contains this early version, since it was repeatedly overgrown with toxic fungi and bacteria, and finding funding was a problem, on account of which the work had to be suspended. Fortunately, there are two new positive developments to report. Firstly, photographs of the entire manuscript are now available for study, on the basis of which the provisional transcription and translation of the *Encomium* can be supplemented. Although the second part of the manuscript is fragmentary and dark, it is clear that most anecdotes known from the complete Sahidic version dated A.D. 1005 were also included in the early Sahidic version. Secondly, thanks to the mediation of Wipszycka and Buzi, Thommée's team is able to continue the restoration and documentation of the manuscript, which is likely to result in new, clear images of the manuscript. In other words, there is good hope that the conservation of the manuscript and the edition of the *Encomium* can be completed in the near future.

Further research on the ostraca and the leatherwork from the hermitage at MMA 1152 will hopefully shed light on the reason why the papyrus books containing the *Encomium* and the *Canons* attributed to St Basil were brought to Shaykh Abd al-Qurna. It is not unlikely that the hermit who worked leather also produced leather book covers, and that he or someone else who decorated two of the three manuscripts (and a wall in the hermitage) first practiced drawing interlace patterns on ostraca. Whatever the reason for keeping the books, they were never returned to the church(es) from which they came, but ended up on a dump heap.

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Abstract. This contribution discusses the present state of research on the early Sahidic version of the *Encomium* found at Shaykh Abd al-Qurna: the conservation work done on the manuscript, the edition of the text, its contents and the historical context of the hermitage, where it was found.

Keywords. Bishops. Western Thebes. Manuscript conservation. Hermitages. Codex. Papyrus. Hagiography.

ninth centuries.

⁷⁰ GÓRECKI in *Seventy Years*, cit. n. 5, 180.

Table 1: Contents of the short Sahidic version (adapted from Dekker 2008)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Description</i>	Q	[quire]	S
1.	Title	p. 1	[A]	fol. 20a
2.	Introduction	pp. 2-3	[A]	fols 20b-21a
3.1	Pesynthius disliked being praised: 1. recitation of the prophets is overheard	pp. 3-12	[A]	fols 21b-24b
3.2	God sent saints during illness: 2. Elijah the Tishbite's visit	pp. 12-34	[B-C]	fols 24b-32b
3.3	God listened to him since his youth: 3. the pillar of fire	pp. 34-36	[C]	fols 32b-33b
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**The Thrice-Blessed Pesynthios of Koptos and the Presanctified Holies:
Some Notes on a Coptic Pastoral Letter (P.Berol. 11346)¹**

by
Ágnes T. Mihálykó

In the volume *Forschung in der Papyrussammlung. Eine Festgabe für das Neue Museum* (ed. by Verena M. LEPPER, Berlin 2012, 377-386) Alberto Camplani published the papyrus P.Berol. 11346, a Coptic pastoral letter from the Thebaid, which addresses questions regarding the Eucharist. My article presents new readings of the letter and related remarks based on a high resolution image kindly provided by Alberto Camplani. I have checked the readings on autopsy on the occasion of a visit in September 2017. I will suggest new readings that relate to the interpretation of the hierarchy involved, as well as considerations concerning the interpretation of the procedures of introducing extra bread after the anaphora.

The letter starts, after the address (ll. 1-3), with an unclear reference to a certain bishop Petros and to «this holy encyclical epistle» (ll. 4-7). After a lacuna a question appears, the exact content of which is lost, but a list of authorities and two Biblical quotations (Phil. 2:12 and Hbr. 12:29) are cited in support including the *hegumen* Petros, the deceased bishop Pesynthios and the patriarch Benjamin (ll. x+1-x+13). As a second topic (πείκελογα ll. x+13-x+14) the letter addresses the question of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharistic bread and wine, in which the writer confirms his belief «without doubt» (ll. x+13-x+21). The third question (ll. x+21-x+29) concerns the introduction and consecration of bread after the anaphora. The letter ends with a refutation of the heresies and a confession (ll. x+29-x+34), which leads into a blessing of the community and a final doxology (ll. x+34-x+40).

My first observation is related to the list of authorities referred to by the writer (ll. x+2-x+7). The small fragments carrying the beginning of ll. x+2 and x+3 in the ed.pr. (ΟΥΜΕΝ and ΤΟΥ) were stuck in the wrong place by the conservator and have to be removed. Thus the larger piece below, which is disconnected from the big fragment to the right, can be moved one line up. The new disposition of the fragments is also supported by the presence of strong fibres on both the fragment to be moved up and the main fragment, which match in the new alignment. This would result in the following text for ll. x+3-x+8:

x+2 τ[. . .] [. . .] . πεῖτρ μῆ̅ πεινῆτ[] εφ[...]... [. . .] [...] . [ca. 10]
 ϕε ντ[Δ]πτρισμακαριος απα πῶσυνθιος πεπισκοπος ετοϋ[ΔΔΒ]
 † ετοτ[η]γῆτῆ̅ ἡτακολογῆα ἡτῶινσυναγε χιν ἡδωρη
x+5 κα[τα ϕε] ἡ̅τ[Δ]ππατριαρχης ετοϋαδβ απα βενιαμειν κελεγε
 [ἡ̅]μ[ος ρ]ῆ̅τοοτῆ̅ ἡ̅ππεινωτ ετοϋαδβ απα πετρος πῶσοφορος
 ἡ̅[επι]σ[χο]πος ρωμ̅ ρημογουμεν[ος· ε]ῖς εηητε ανοκ ρω̅ πειλαχ[ιστος]
 †βωλ̅ μμωτ[ἡ̅]

x+2] ουμενϕι ε̅ βτῆ̅ ε̅μντ ed.pr. x+3 . . .] του̅ πτρισμακαριος ed.pr.; πε<σ>γῆνος ed.pr., l. πεσγῆνος x+4 ἡ̅]ϕε ντ[ατε]
τῆ̅η̅τακολογῆα ed.pr. x+5 †ετοτ[τηγῆτ]ἡ̅[±2]ππατριαρχης ed.pr. x+6]κα[...]τοοτῆ̅ ed.pr.

east and west ... the way in which the thrice-blessed Apa Pesynthios, the holy bishop, gave you the correct order of celebration from the beginning, according to how the holy patriarch Benjamin commanded it through our father Apa Petros the God-bearing bishop and *hegumen*, behold, I too, the humblest explain (?) to you...

x+2: the ι of πεῖτρ is difficult as it seems to have a horizontal line above the letter. ι does not usually have such a line in this hand though there are some places where it does, compare the ι-s in αἰοις, l. x+27.

x+3: the spelling of the name of πεσγῆνος is confused; ϑ is written instead of c. However, ι does not seem to be missing as the ed.pr. supposed; its traces are visible on the left edge of the lacuna. Similarly, at the second instance of the name in l. x+9 the ι simply is lost in the lacuna, the correct reading being πεσγῆνο[ι]ος.

¹ This article has benefitted from the comments of Ramez Mikhail, Heinzgerd Brakmann, and the anonymous reviewer, to whom I express my gratitude. I also thank Alberto Camplani and Andrea Hasznos for a preliminary confirmation of my readings. I am furthermore grateful to Lloyd Abercrombie for correcting my English. My work received support from the Hungarian National Research, Development and Innovation Office within the research project PD 128355 and within the research project NN 124539.

x+4: The expected form would be ετο(ο)τ τ[η]γτη, but the second ο and τ cannot be read.

x+5: The restored ἡτ[α]ππατριαρχης is somewhat short for the space available in the lacuna, which would allow two letters, but considering that both τ and π are large letters, and only the beginning of the τ is visible on the remaining part of the papyrus, the proposed restoration is acceptable.

x+8: the verb βαλ usually governs ἰμο" να" 'explain something to someone'. †βαλ ἰμοϋ [ἡτῆ] is nonetheless not admissible, since the last letter before the lacuna cannot be an γ, it clearly belongs to a τ, which alone has serifs like this. Thus we have to assume a variation in the preposition, but the meaning is as expected.

The reconstruction of Petros' title as [επι]ς[οπο]ς ἀγω πρῆγοῦμεν[ος] helps us place the little fragments disconnected from ll. x+2-x+3. The οῦμεν in the first line can be part of Petros' title πρῆγοῦμενος and thus can be placed at the end of l. 6. My suggestion for ll. 5-7 is:

5 [ca. 5]ε[ι]ς[ε]ἰ ἡτῆ ἀγω εἰπληροφορει ἰμοϋ[τῆ...].. [ca. 5]
 [πῶ]οτιμῆτος ἀπα πῆτρος πεπισκοπος ἀγ[ω πρῆ]γοῦμενο[ca. ?]
 [ςα]ἰ ἰ τειεπ[ι]ς τολη ετογαδβ ἡεγκγκλιον ε[ca. 5]ρῶτ. [ca. 3]

5 σις . ἡτῆ, ἰμοϋ[ed.pr.

I, writing to you and convincing you... Απα Petros the bishop and *hegumen* honoured by God ... wrote this holy encyclical epistle...

With this reconstruction l. 6 is more or less filled, and it shows that the remaining parts of the lines are close to the left margin (a smooth fibre that was jumped over in πῆτρος in l. 6 aligns with similar fibre under πῆμῆτ in l. x+2). This in turn leaves space for only three or four letters before the diaeresis of the ι, which could be filled with [ςα]ἰ. If nothing else is lost, then the bishop Petros wrote the letter originally, which the writer forwards to the addressees. However, the bishop Petros is also referred to in l. x+7 as an authority forwarding the patriarch's command, thus he seems not to be the one writing «this holy encyclical epistle». Thus it is possible that the letters αἰ have to be inserted before ςαἰ either at the end of l. 6 or at the beginning of l. 7. In this case the lost text between ll. 5 and 6 might mean something like 'in agreement with' (e.g. κατα ποῦωϋ).

These readings have bearing on how we understand the hierarchy involved. The authoritative commandment comes to the writer from Benjamin through «our father» Petros, bishop and *hegumen* (ll. x+5-x+8). Petros, mentioned twice, is perhaps (as suggested by the phrase «our holy father») the bishop of this particular bishopric. The other alternative proposed by Camplani, that he may be the vicar of the patriarch, is thus somewhat less attractive. The writer seems to be below Petros, perhaps a monastic superior or, in case Petros is the vicar, the writer can be a bishop. He terms himself ελαχιςτος in l. x+7 (and probably also in l. 1, where the beginning of the line might be read as [ελα]χ[ι]ςτος η[ι]), which indicates only his clerical status.

Pesynthios (ll. x+3-x+4) is credited with giving the order of the *synaxis* to the addressees, therefore, he was probably also the bishop of this congregation. He is termed «thrice-blessed», which means he is already deceased and is cited as a source of authority due to his memory and holiness. The lack of this adjective for the patriarch Benjamin and the bishop Petros implies, in all likelihood, that they are still alive. This positions the letter between 626-665, the patriarchate of Benjamin, and excludes an identification of our Pesynthios with the Pesynthios of Hermonthis mentioned in the diptychs SB III 6087, since in the diptychs Pesynthios is mentioned as the living bishop beside Agathon as the living patriarch. Thus this latter Pesynthios survived Benjamin (who in the diptychs was moved down to the list of the dead patriarchs), while in our letter Pesynthios is dead and Benjamin is alive. In this way this Pesynthios can be identified with the holy bishop of Koptos, whom one can expect to be a venerable source of authority for defining the order of liturgy «from the beginning»². Accordingly, Petros (or, less probably, the writer of the letter) is the reigning bishop of Koptos.

² The Encomium of Pesynthios also praises him for «grabbing the rubber of the worship of God», see E.A. WALLIS BUDGE, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*, Oxford 1913, 90, cf. R. DEKKER, *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt: Bishops of the Theban Region at Work* (OLOA 264), Leiden 2018, 238.

name must have derived from the fact that the *Despotikon* bears a sealed pattern¹⁰. Thus the phrase ἵψῃ τέσφραγίς ἐρραῖ εἰς ἵπισσηριον ἡτέχαριςτῖα must mean «to bring up a piece of consecrated bread (the *Despotikon*) in the chalice of thanksgiving», which would indicate that the *Despotikon* is floating in the chalice, just as it should be according to the modern practice¹¹. If the noun τέσφραγίς indeed governs the clause παῖ εἶτοις εἰς πέσνοϋ, the change of the feminine into the masculine reference could be prompted by the natural gender of bread in Coptic. This interpretation might be supported by a further parallel, Chapter 4 of *The Guide for the Beginners and the Disciplining of the Laity* attributed to the patriarch Cyril III Ibn Laqlaq (1235-1243), which provides instructions for the consecration of extra wine after the consecration of a first chalice¹². Here the priest is instructed to distribute the communion, and if he needs extra wine, then to take the *Despotikon* (which, according to Chapter 3, was dropped into the first chalice at the point of the commixture before the communion, hence apparently it is taken from there), draw the cross on the surface of the new wine, and drop the *Despotikon* into the new chalice. This procedure is to be repeated for each new chalice¹³. Although not stated explicitly, the *Despotikon* used for additional consecration seems to be recovered from the chalice also in this case, which supports the suggestion that a similar procedure was recommended also in our letter.

The other option is that the expression ἵψῃ τέσφραγίς ἐρραῖ is the synonym of ἵψεσφραγίσε and signifies nothing more than the drawing of the cross above the chalice. In this case the point of reference of the clause παῖ εἶτοις εἰς πέσνοϋ remains unexpressed, and a dropped clause between it and the «chalice of the Eucharist», something along the lines «with a piece of the bread», has to be supposed. In this case the sequence could be understood in the following way: «draw the sign of cross in the chalice of thanksgiving <with a piece of bread> – this that is soaked in the Holy Blood of the Lord – sign the bread». It is not clear if in this case the piece of bread soaked in the Holy Blood relates to the signing of the chalice, the signing of the new bread, or both. The parallel of the modern rite would suggest signing the chalice with a piece of the bread, which as a consequence is soaked in the wine, and signing the rest of the bread with this. Thus the piece of bread would relate to both signings while syntactically belonging to the first signing. This option is perhaps more practical than the instruction to fish a piece of bread out of the wine. On the other hand it is less preferable grammatically, as it involves a missing clause, while the other one only a change of gender in the relative clause, and the parallel of the *Guide for the Beginners* also seems to support the first option.

Thus the manual acts of P.Berol. 11346 can probably be reconstructed in the following way: the priest takes a piece of already consecrated bread (the σφραγίς or *Despotikon*) out of the chalice and signs the new bread with it, reciting the formula τὰ προαγιασθέντα ἄγια τοῖς ἁγίοις. This formula, absent from both Canon 99 and Chapter 4 of the *Guide for the Beginners*, is of special interest. It stands in clear connection with the priest's call before communion in the Byzantine liturgy of the Presanctified, τὰ προηγιασμένα ἄγια τοῖς ἁγίοις¹⁴. The Presanctified Liturgy is celebrated in the Byzantine rite on Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent and combines vespers with communion, for which the bread is reserved from the Sunday Eucharist, but a new chalice is consecrated with a short prayer and the signing of the wine with the presanctified

(BURMESTER, *The Egyptian or Coptic Church*, cit., 75), the meaning 'lift' is preferable.

¹⁰ For this meaning of the word in the Byzantine rite, see J. GOAR, *Euchologium, id est, Rituale Graecorum*, Paris 1647, 117.

¹¹ Also Canon 99 knows about dropping pieces of bread, called σταυρός, in the chalice. At the end of the Canon (page 134 of the manuscript) in the context of instructions concerning the breaking of the bread, it is prescribed that crosses (σταυρός) should be put into the chalice in imitation of the Blood that came out of the Body. Since putting the 'crosses' into the chalice is understood as equal with reuniting the Body and the Blood of Christ, σταυρός has to refer to pieces of the consecrated bread, called σταυρός because of a cross-shaped pattern on them, just as the *Despotikon* has a cross-shaped pattern on it in the modern practice (BURMESTER, *The Egyptian or Coptic Church*, cit., 81).

¹² G. GRAF, *Liturgische Anweisungen des koptischen Patriarchen Kyrillos Ibn Laklak*, JLV 4 (1924) 119-143. I am grateful to Ramez Mikhail for bringing this text to my attention.

¹³ GRAF, *Liturgische Anweisungen*, cit., 123.

¹⁴ F.E. BRIGHTMAN, *Eastern Liturgies Being the Texts Original or Translated of the Principal Liturgies of the Church*, Piscataway, NJ, 1896 (repr. 2002), 351.

bread¹⁵. The Coptic Church in its present rite does not have a Presanctified Liturgy, but it used to practice it at least from the eighth century, as shown by sporadic attestations gathered by Ramez Mikhail¹⁶. However, already in the eleventh century it was prohibited¹⁷, and the only complete text of the service comes from an Arabic manuscript belonging to the Melkite Church from the thirteenth-century Sinai, which contains the Presanctified of Mark¹⁸. The ritual described in P.Berol. 11346 is only remotely related to the Presanctified Liturgy, in that it also involves consecration of new offerings with the help of already consecrated elements. Apparently, the presence of an already consecrated element and the consecration of new elements through it triggered the formula also in this situation.

The form of the acclamation is surprising in that it has the aorist participle προαγιασθέντα instead of the perfect participle προηγιασμένα, which is attested in the Byzantine rite. The perfect form was present also in the Egyptian tradition, in the title of a thanksgiving for communion prayer from the fourteenth-century liturgical codex Paris, BnF Gr. 325¹⁹, and in a prayer of consecration from tenth-century Nubia, which serves the consecration of wine through a προηγιασμένη μερίς of the bread²⁰. However, Heinzgerd Brakmann has called my attention to the presence of the aorist form of the verb in the service for the consecration of the Myron of the Coptic Church. In the manuscript transcribed by Burmester, Cairo, Coptic Museum, Ms Lit. 253 (from 1364) the celebrants' call τὰ προαγιασθέντα (*sic*) μύρον τοῦτο ἅγιο (*sic*) τοῖς ἁγίοις (BURMESTER, *The Egyptian or Coptic Church*, cit., 230 n. 4) is reported, while R. Tŭkhi's printed edition renders it as τὸ προαγιασθέντα (*sic*) μύρον τοῦτο: τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις²¹. The form is obviously flawed; the neuter of the μύρον would require τὸ προαγιασθέν instead. The plural neuter of the manuscript τὰ προαγιασθέντα might very well have been inspired by a similar exclamation related to the Eucharist, such as it can be found in P.Berol. 11346, which therefore was apparently not unique in Egypt in using the aorist form of προαγιαζεῖν in this context instead of the perfect form. Also in a Sinai diaconicon for the Presanctified Liturgy of St. James, Cod.Sinait. 1040 + Sinait. gr. NE X Σπ. 6 (14th c.), the deacon uses the aorist form in the intercessions: ὑπὲρ τῶν προτεθέντων καὶ προαγιασθέντων τιμῶν δώρων²²; the priest's text is not transmitted in this case.

The thorough evaluation of the importance of this letter for the history of the liturgy in Egypt still awaits scholars of comparative liturgy. Further attention should be given to the ways in which it both agrees with and diverges from the redaction of the Canons of Basil, which are preserved in a manuscript from the same area and period from which the letter comes. The concerns are apparently the same, while the solutions are somewhat different. The manual acts in the Canons involve the signing of the new bread with the old one, its soaking into the chalice, and a repeated signing, while the pastoral letter appears to prescribe signing the new bread with a piece of bread that has been floating in the chalice while reciting

¹⁵ On this rite and its oriental parallels see S. ALEXOPOULOS, *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite: A Comparative Analysis of its Origins, Evolution, and Structural Components*, Leuven 2009.

¹⁶ R. ΜΙΚΗΑΙΛ, *The Coptic Church and the Presanctified Liturgy: The Story of a Rejected Tradition*, *The Alexandria School Journal* 3 (2016) 2-30. In addition to the sources gathered by him, a Sahidic prayer from the seventh or eighth centuries deserves mention, which is preserved on P.Oslo inv. 1665 and edited in A. ΜΑΡΑΒΕΛΑ – Α.Τ. ΜΙΗΑΛΥΚΟ – G. WEHUS, *A Coptic Liturgical Prayer for the Consecration of the Chalice*, *APF* 63/1 (2017) 204-230. This prayer is structurally related to the prayer of the filling of the chalice, a Coptic service which Mikhail has shown to be «a repurposing of the old Alexandrian» Presanctified (ΜΙΚΗΑΙΛ, *The Coptic Church*, cit., 21). Thus the Oslo prayer may also belong to the Presanctified; alternative considerations include a similar rite of consecration of extra wine as mentioned in *Canon* 99 of the Canons of Basil (ΜΑΡΑΒΕΛΑ – ΜΙΗΑΛΥΚΟ – WEHUS, *A Coptic Liturgical Prayer*, cit., 229-230).

¹⁷ ΜΙΚΗΑΙΛ, *The Coptic Church*, cit., 29.

¹⁸ R. ΜΙΚΗΑΙΛ, *The Presanctified Liturgy of the Apostle Mark in Sinai Arabic 237: Text and Commentary*, *BBGG*, NS 3, 12 (2015) 163-214.

¹⁹ Ἄλλο παρ' Αἰγυπτίους ἀπὸ τῶν προηγιασμένων τοῦ ἀποστόλου Μάρκου μετὰ τὴν μετάληψιν τῶν ἁγίων μυστηρίων, E. RENAUDOT, *Liturgiarum Orientalium Collectio*, Paris 1716, 79. On this fourteenth-century codex see H. BRAKMAN, *Zur Stellung des Parisinus graecus 325 in der Geschichte der alexandrinisch-ägyptischen Liturgie*, *Studi sull'Oriente Cristiano* 3.1 (1999) 97-110, who demonstrated that the codex belonged to the Miaphysite church.

²⁰ On the prayer see H. BRAKMAN, *Defunctus adhuc loquitur. Gottesdienst und Gebetsliteratur der untergegangenen Kirche in Nubien*, *ALW* (2006) 320-323.

²¹ R. ΤŭKHĪ, ΠΑΧΩΜ ΕΦΕΡΑΠΑΝΤΟΚΤΙΝ ΕΧΕΝ ΝΙΕΥΧΗ ΕΘΟΥΔΑΒ (*Pontificale*) Vol. I. Roma 1761, 335.

²² BRIGHTMAN, *Eastern Liturgies*, cit., 499 ll.1-2, also 498 ll. 29-32.

a call that is missing from the Canons. The reasons for the difference may only be established when the textual history of the Canons of Basil and its different redactions become sufficiently clear. However, these two attestations of very similar instructions imply that the introduction of extra bread (and wine) after the anaphora was an issue that triggered the attention of the authorities of the Miaphysite church in the seventh century.

Finally, I would like to propose a few minor corrections. In l. x+14 I read ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲏⲁⲱⲟⲩⲉ instead of ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲏⲏⲁⲱⲟⲩⲉ. In l. x+20 the scribe abbreviated only the ⲛ of ⲡⲟⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟ(ⲛ), writing a small ⲓ between the ⲣ and the ⲟ. As for the last line (l. x+40), I suggest the reading ⲟϥ[ⲁⲁⲃ ⲧⲉ]ⲛ[ⲟ]ϥ ⲟⲛ ⲁϥⲱ ⲛⲟϥⲉ[ϣ ⲛ]ⲛ, with the caveat that I have not been able to recover a parallel to this form of the doxology with ⲟⲛ. There are faded traces of letters visible on the bottom margin of the letter, which are mirror prints of ll. x+38 and x+37, created when the letter was rolled up starting from the bottom. Similar mirror prints are visible on the back as well.

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Abstract. This article presents corrections to a seventh-century Coptic pastoral letter from the Thebaid, P.Berol. 11346, which concerns questions regarding the Eucharist. By repositioning a fragment, new readings can be proposed to the list of authorities in ll. 4-x+8, which reveal that the author of the letter attributed the establishment of «the correct order of celebration» of the Eucharist to Pesynthios, the renowned bishop of Koptos. The article provides moreover new readings and interpretation to ll. x+21-x+31, which discuss the consecration of additional bread after the anaphora, during communion. These lines show parallels with the newly discovered Sahidic version of the Canons of Basil and contain a call from the Presanctified Liturgy.

Keywords. Coptic liturgy. Eucharist. Presanctified Liturgy. Rite of communion. Pesynthios of Koptos.

**The Canons Attributed to Basil of Caesarea
in the Context of the Canonical Literature Preserved in Coptic**

by

Alberto Camplani – Federico Contardi*

1. A REPORT ON THE EDITION OF THE CANONS OF BASIL

Through two articles published respectively in 2016 and 2017¹ the authors of the present contribution informed the scientific community about the discovery of a new complete Coptic papyrus codex containing the *Canons* attributed to Basil of Caesarea (CPG 2973, *Clavis coptica* 0090², here abbreviated with ‘CanBas’), which can be dated to the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the eighth century³, as well as its textual significance in comparison with the other fragmentary codices preserving the work. The discovery was due to the Polish Archaeological Mission in Thebaid⁴. In the meantime, in the framework of the ERC ‘PATHs’, Nathan Carlig and Paola Buzi have improved our knowledge of this codex, by describing it in all the details and by studying it directly on the site of preservation (*Coptic Museum*, Cairo, inv. 13448 = C)⁵. The edition of the codex was trusted to Alberto Camplani, who in turn charged Federico Contardi with the task of transcribing both the new codex and the Turin fragments, in preparation for the edition of the Coptic text; other scholars are being involved in the project with the task of studying the Arabic version and writing sections of the literary, canonical, and liturgical commentary. After this discovery, the textual situation of the *Canons* can be described in the following way, with reference to the CMCL’s and PATHs’s siglas⁶:

- 1) a quotation of *Canon* 1 in a Coptic (Sahidic) liturgical manuscript of paper⁷;

* The first paragraph of this contribution has been written by Federico Contardi, who is responsible also for the Appendix containing some examples of comparison of the Coptic textual tradition; Alberto Camplani has written paragraph 2, devoted to the literary and ideological contextualization of the *Canons*. Both authors are grateful to the staff of the ERC Advanced Grant Project (2015) n. 687567 ‘PATHs - Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context: Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage’ (Principal Investigator Paola Buzi), hosted at Sapienza University of Rome, for giving so much attention and cultural space to the codex of the *Canons* of Basil not only during the conference but also in the daily research activity. In a sense, both the Theban codex and the Coptic text of the *Canons* have been ‘adopted’ by PATHs and its publication (some studies on the text and the edition) will take place in the framework of this project.

¹ A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea. A New Coptic Codex*, in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion, from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17-22, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15-19, 2008*, ed. by P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI, Leuven 2016, 979-992; A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution of the Coptic Codices preserving the Canons of Saint Basil, with Edition of the Ordination Rite of the Bishop (Canon 46)*, in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu*, éd. F.P. BARONE, C. MACÉ, P.A. UBIERNA (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 73), Turnhout 2017, 139-159.

² For *Clavis coptica* (CC) 0090 see <http://www.cmcl.it>.

³ A. BOUD’HORS, *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)*, in “*Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...*” *Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistiques, romaine et byzantine*. Actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles les 2 et 3 décembre 2005, ed. A. DELATTRE, P. HEILPORN, Bruxelles 2008, 149-161 ; EAD., *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics. Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bentley Layton*, ed. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL (OLoA 263), Leuven-Paris-Bristol (CT) 2017, 175-212.

⁴ See, among other contributions, T. GÓRZECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152). Preliminary Report, 2005*, *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 17 (2007) 263-274; of course, take into consideration also his contribution in collaboration E. Wispyzcka in this section.

⁵ As the reader may learn from N. Carlig’s contribution to this section.

⁶ www.paths-erc.eu.

⁷ Cairo, Coptic Museum, J 42572, see J. DRESHER, *A Coptic Lectionary Fragment*, *Annales du Service des Antiquités*

2) a number of fragments belonging to different Coptic codices, edited and inedited, among which are to be mentioned⁸:

- two leaves from a lost papyrus codex coming from Deir Bala'izah (n. 31), with the text of *Canon 36*⁹, preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Copt., b10 and d178a (Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 940);
- some Chester Beatty Library leaves (ms 819C, ff. 1-8) from a parchment codex (*Canons 48-96*) likely deriving from the White Monastery¹⁰ (here 'D'), to be attributed to the tenth / eleventh century (Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 1668);
- the Turin *Codex XIII*, which is constituted by a good number of fragmentary leaves from a papyrus codex; it has been called GIOV.AN in the *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari*¹¹ (here 'T'), Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 58 in the PAThs project, to be attributed to the eighth century; its fragments have been transcribed by F. Contardi, who has identified some new fragments. It is constituted by a good number of fragmentary leaves¹², to be attributed to the 8th century. This codex contained originally the whole of the text, which is disposed in two-columns on numbered pages. F. Rossi published some fragments for the first time without recognizing the identity of the text, which was later revealed by Crum¹³. The first partial reconstruction was carried on by Th. Lefort, whose notes remained unpublished. Obviously, the lack of a Coptic parallel allowed only a very partial reconstruction, which on the contrary is now possible¹⁴.
- The new manuscript, Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 713 according to the PAThs project: Egypt, Cairo, *Coptic Museum*, inv. 13448.

3) an Arabic version (**Ar**), preserved by a number of Arabic manuscripts, divided in 106 chapters – a form of the text known to Abū 'l-Barakāt ibn al-As'ad ibn Kabar – probably made on the basis of a Coptic *Vorlage*¹⁵: one of these manuscripts was translated in German by Riedel¹⁶ ('R'), but not edited¹⁷; a partial transcription of the Arabic version of two canons (97, 99) from one manuscript, namely «ex cod. Bibliothecae Maronitarum Alepi saec. XIV», originally copied in Keft, was published by Ignatius Efrem II Rahmani in 1920¹⁸;

d'Egypte 51 (1951) 247-256.

⁸ F. ROSSI, *I papiri copti del Museo Egizio di Torino*, Torino 1892, II, fasc. IV, 81-92. For the identification and a first proposal of arrangement of the fragments, see W.E. CRUM, *The Coptic Version of the 'Canons of S. Basil'*, Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology 26 (1904) 57-62, who was able to check also an Arabic manuscript containing the work (BL *add.* 7211).

⁹ P.E. KAHLE, *Bala'izah*, London 1954, vol. 1, 410-416.

¹⁰ T. ORLANDI, *Les manuscrits coptes de Dublin, du British Museum et de Vienne*, Le Muséon 89 (1976) 323-338: 324.

¹¹ T. ORLANDI, *Les papyrus coptes du Musée égyptien de Turin*, Le Muséon 87 (1974) 115-127 : 125; Id., *The Turin Coptic Papyri*, Aug. 53 (2013) 501-530, in particular 505 and 523; see also <http://www.cmcl.it>.

¹² T. ORLANDI, *Les papyrus coptes du Musée égyptien de Turin*, Le Muséon 87 (1974) 115-127: 125; Id., *The Turin Coptic Papyri*, Aug. 53 (2013) 501-530, in particular 505 and 523.

¹³ W.E. CRUM, *The Coptic Version of the "Canons of S. Basil"*, cit.

¹⁴ A. CAMPLANI – C. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit., 983-984.

¹⁵ G. GRAF, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*. I Band. *Die Übersetzungen*, Città del Vaticano 1944, 606.

¹⁶ Riedel's translation of the Arabic text was based on the 'Berliner Handschrift R' (Königliche Bibliothek zu Berlin Diez A. quart. 107): W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen des Patriarchats Alexandrien*, Leipzig 1900, 231-282.

¹⁷ We could consult only the ms. *Vaticano arabo* 149 ('V').

¹⁸ We thank Heinzgerd Brakmann for this very useful information, which is missing in our two previous publications: the text of *Canons 97 and 99* is edited in IGNAZIO EFREM II RAHMANI, *I fasti della Chiesa patriarcale antiochena. Conferenza d'inaugurazione tenuta in nome dell'Istituto Pontificio Orientale, colla pubblicazione in appendice di varii antichissimi documenti inediti*, Roma 1920, XIV-XVIII. The manuscript could be «Aleppo 196», pp. 332-397 quoted by GRAF, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, cit., 606.

This research should lead to an edition of the Coptic text with a translation in a modern language, accompanied by the edition of the Arabic version, and followed by a historical, canonical, and liturgical commentary¹⁹.

There are still some questions concerning the Coptic material which need further clarification. For example, it should be wondered whether the differences among C, T and D are to be explained with the textual diversification within the Coptic tradition or as the consequence of two distinct processes of translation from Greek to Coptic. The first hypothesis seems more likely, although the task of proving its plausibility is made difficult by the fact that the main part of the text is preserved by C, while T and D contribute only with minor fragments.

On the other side, the Arabic text, as it appears in V, in Rahmani's transcription of an Aleppo codex and in Riedel's German translation from R, is usually close to the Coptic one, but in some cases provides expressions, sentences, paragraphs that in Coptic, or at least in C, have disappeared. However, the most noteworthy difference concerns the structure of the text of Ar, which has been changed in comparison to the Coptic one: the units in which Ar is divided are shorter in comparison with those of the Coptic version, numbered from 1 to 106, as confirmed by Abū 'l-Barakāt ibn al-As'ad ibn Kabar²⁰, and provided with section-headings. Abū 'l-Barakāt too transcribes these section-headings in a very similar form. That means that Ar is the result of a literary reworking of the text, which loses its appearance of a sequence of long or less long literary units inserted in a fictional framework dominated by the figure of Basil of Caesarea, to acquire the typical form of a sequence of short canons. The differences between the Coptic and Ar affect also the occurrence and disposition of certain themes. At the end of the Coptic text, preserved only by C, we read some prescriptions about the first fruits and tithes followed by some lines about apocryphal books, and a very important final section about the writing of the text itself, where the writer, a fictional 'historiographer' Paulinus of the diocese of Caesarea (the same episcopal see of Basil), declares to have written the canons according to the words pronounced by his father²¹. On the contrary, in the Arabic version the last canon (n. 106), with which the text ends, is the one specifically devoted to the post-baptismal prayer: it corresponds to a section of the Coptic text which immediately precedes the prescriptions on first fruits and the section about the composition of the work, eliminated from the Arabic version. From Abū 'l-Barakāt ibn al-As'ad ibn Kabar we may infer that this abridged form was the one known at his time²². We have suggested that it is more likely that in the course of time the text of the *Canons* has been shortened and deprived of their fictional frame rather than the opposite. This is what happened, though with less radicality, to the *Canons* of Athanasius, which, in their passage into Arabic, underwent a process of segmentation (107 canons) which can be attributed to a historical figure, Michael bishop of Tinnis in the 11th century²³. To this same time could be dated both the reworking and the translation into Arabic of CanBas too.

¹⁹ This research will assume a collective dimension in the course of time: we thank in particular Perrine Pilette and Agnes T. Mihálykó for having discussed some issues of this project with Alberto Camplani.

²⁰ Cfr. chapter VII, ed. W. RIEDEL, *Der Katalog der christlichen Schriften in arabischer Sprache von Abū 'l-Barakāt*, Nachrichten der Kgl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-hist. Klasse 5 (1902) 635-706; see also W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen des Patriarchats Alexandrien*, cit., 35, and the edition by KH. SAMIR, *Abū al-Barakāt ibn al-As'ad ibn Kabar: Miṣbāḥ al-zulma fī iḏāḥ al-ḥidma*, Cairo 1971, 178-182.

²¹ See A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit., 979-992.

²² Cf. W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen des Patriarchats Alexandrien*, cit., 238: Abū 'l-Barakāt ibn Kabar declares that Basil's *Canons* are 106 and that the canon numbered 103 is the one dealing with baptism.

²³ *The Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria. The Arabic and Coptic Versions edited and translated with introductions, notes and appendices*, by W. RIEDEL – WE. CRUM, Oxford 1904, IX.

2. COMPARISON WITH OTHER CANONICAL LITERATURE IN COPTIC

The general content of CanBas can be compared with other canonical literature, for the study of which we have new tools at our disposal: namely Kaufhold's history of canon law in the eastern churches²⁴ and Orlandi's recent repertoire of manuscripts containing canonical works²⁵. The first is a synthesis, accompanied by a number of original insights, of the studies about the development of canonical literature in the East, its rich typology, the elaboration of new writings and collections, the competition among different normative traditions. The second is a study of the Coptic manuscripts containing at least one canonical work, which gives the possibility not only to have an idea of the canonical literature circulating in Coptic language, but also to understand the significance of the coexistence of single canonical works within sets of texts, preserved in their turn into manuscripts and libraries which can give the modern scholar further elements of analysis.

Our aim is to understand the culture and the reading experience not only of the authors who either wrote the works or translated them into Coptic, but also of the environments which received them and put them into circulation. To do this, we will take into consideration a reduced number of single writings which show similarities of content or structure with CanBas; but also collections of canonical works preserved in Coptic will be mentioned, because their cultural meaning transcends that of the individual units of which they are composed and may be usefully compared with CanBas. Why texts not completely Egyptian in their ecclesiastical outlook were not only composed in certain historical and geographical circumstances (non necessarily in Egypt), but also collected, translated and put into circulation in Coptic language? The initial general index²⁶ of CanBas as preserved in C makes reference to the main themes of the text, although not in the order in which they appear in the work:

«The Canons of Basil the Great, bishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia, (1) about the faith in the Holy Trinity; (2) about those (who live) in the marriage and the virgins; (3) about the widows and the ascetics; (4) about all the ecclesiastic orders, from the bishop to the doorkeeper; (5) about the hour in which it is proper to pray; (6) about the fasts and the first fruits and tithes; (7) about the way of baptizing and celebrating the (eucharistic) mystery; (8) about the sins and the times that is necessary to establish according to the kind of sin; (9) about the ornaments of male and female (believers), in order that we can find the way of going into the house of God».²⁷

Also the section-headings which mark the beginning of each literary unit of CanBas give us a good indication about how the compiler that the Coptic text is subdivided in a number of units of different length by a system of section-headings marking the beginning of each unit:

«First of all we believe (Credal formula)» (*Canon 1*)

«These are the commandments of the way of life and the way of death» (ⲡⲠⲛⲉ ⲙⲏⲧⲉⲗⲏⲛ ⲙⲓⲡⲓⲟⲩ: *Canon 2*)

«About those (who live) in the marriage» (*Canon 3*)

«About the times (ⲛⲉⲗⲣⲟⲛⲟⲥ) that is necessary to establish each one according to the kind of sin» (*Canon 20*)

«About magicians» (*Canon 22*)

«About the ornaments » (*Canon 26*)

«About the hour in which it is proper to pray» (*Canon 28*)

«About the fasts» (*Canon 29*)

²⁴ H. KAUFHOLD, *Sources of Canon Law in the Eastern Churches*, in *The History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500*, ed. W. HARTMANN, K. PENNINGTON (History of Medieval Canon Law), Washington D.C. 2012, 215-342: 275.

²⁵ T. ORLANDI, *Coptic Texts Relating to the Church Canons. An Overview*, Roma 2016. A good presentation is also R.-G. COQUIN, *Canons of Saint Basil*, in *Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. ATIYA, New York 1991, 459a-459b. Of great importance is of course W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, cit. Some interesting, although debatable, remarks on dating and provenance had been offered by J. WORDSWORTH, *The 106 Canons of Basil, an Egyptian Church Order, probably of the fifth century*, in Id., *The Ministry of Grace*, London 1903² (1901), 445-461.

²⁶ On the codicological position of this index, see N. Carlig's contribution in this section.

²⁷ A. CAMPLANI - F. CONTARDI, *Remarks of the Textual Contribution*, cit., 142-143.

«About the fact that is not seemly to go to the tombs called *martyria* to celebrate the liturgy (συναξιας) or praying» (Canon 31)

«About the male ascetics (ασκητης) and female ascetics (ασκητριας)» (Canon 32)

«About the fact that is not seemly to bring the bodies of the martyrs into the Catholic Church (εξοχη εκκαθολικη), but (this canon is) in order that *martyria* will be built for them» (Canon 33)

«About the fact that it is a great sin the incantation (μουγτε) or to go to an enchanter (ουρεφμογτε)» (Canon 34)

«About the widows and the virgins» (Canon 36)

«About the fact that it is a great sin to go to the theatres (νεωεατρον) and to the horse race (ιριππικος), or any other polluted place» (Canon 37)

«About the constitution of all the orders (ταγμα) of the Church» (Canon 38)

«About the dispositions (νεπιστημη) of the altar» (Canon 96)

«About the breaking (πρω) of the [eucharistic] mystery» (Canon 97)

«About the breaking (πρω) of the bread; about the institution (καταστασις) and about the order (τεπιστημη) of the way of celebrating the [eucharistic] mystery» (Canon 98)

«About the way (τυπος) of celebrating the baptism» (Canon 101)

«About the first fruits and tithes» (ετβε ηρεμητ μηναπαρ[χη] not preserved in Arabic).²⁸

In some occasions these units are defined by the compiler as '*kephalaion*', while the whole work is called '*logos*'²⁹: it is clear that he perceives his work on the one hand as a composite one (the norms, the rules, the decrees of the councils, the Biblical interpretations), on the other as a monothematic work with one great subject, the life of the believers within the Church³⁰.

What are the main concerns of the text? In synthesis we can state that the following are the main concerns of the compiler:

- the Trinitarian and Christological profession of faith.
- the traditional theme of the two ways, of good and evil, which is at the beginning of moral behaviour;
- marriage and its discipline, in relation to both lay believers and the clergy (presbyters and deacons);
- penitence;
- the life of lay believers and ascetics;
- the life of the clergy;
- the prayers for consecration;
- detailed indications concerning the liturgy (baptismal and eucharistic) and the tithes.

The correct belief is strictly tied to the correct moral behaviour of both lay believers and clerics; consecration, baptismal and eucharistic liturgy play an important role; ascetism, on the contrary, does not have a great space and monks are rarely mentioned.

What kind of work is it? Surely it can be classified as a 'church order', a category which has been recently

²⁸ See F. Contardi's edition in A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks of the Textual Contribution*, cit., 156-158.

²⁹ See canon 2 (end), p. κ (both terms); canon 27, p. λθ (τηναδαδε τενογ ετβε πκε σεεπε ηκεφαλαιον «now we will discuss the remaining kephalaia»); canon 28 p. μβ; canon 34 p. ηη; canon 100, p. ρς; final section, p. ρηζ.

³⁰ The order of the section-headings does not coincide with that of the general index. The significance of this issue has been discussed in one of our contributions, A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution*, cit., 145-147.

This formulation would not have been appreciated by the historical Basil of Caesarea, but finds some parallels in Didymus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 34, Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, 7. 8. 9. 67. 70. 71³⁷ and an extensive later literature. However, these parallels are not decisive in defining the dating and the provenance of CanBas or of the Creed.

The flesh and the humanity which the Logos has taken on it with the act of the incarnation do not result in an addition of a fourth element to the Trinity: in this discussion, a more Alexandrian flavour is perceptible³⁸.

Among other elements, the mention of two heretics is particularly noteworthy: Sabellius (3rd century) and Fotinus (4th century), both representatives of a Trinitarian position in contrast with later orthodoxy: Fotinus, though anti-Arian, was very soon considered heretical³⁹.

As we have seen, the creed is followed by a number of canons devoted to the moral life of lay believers and clerics. It is interesting that at the beginning of this section we find the theme of the two ways, of the highest importance and antiquity in canonical literature, since the time of *Didaché*: $\text{ναῖ νε νενητολη ἵτεριη ἡπωνῆ ἡἵτεριη ἡπμογ}$ ⁴⁰.

Liturgical rituals and moral exhortations (the *horologion*⁴¹, the toilette of men and women) are woven in the work until the end, reserved to the firstfruits and tithes and to the fictional frame of the work, both lacking in the Arabic version. The situation of these pages is not good, as physical lacunas have damaged the text. Despite this, a first look is possible thanks to the inspection of P. Buzi and the codicological analysis of N. Carlig⁴². Of course, the unit begins with an allusion to Numbers 18.8-10 and the OT legislation about tithes. Its development is longer than the one we find in *Didascalía Apostolorum* 18 and *Tradition apostolica* 32⁴³. The expression «We, on our part order ...» gives origin to a unit in which are listed those vegetables and fruits which can be classified as *aparchai* reserved to windows and orphans. A subsequent quotation of Isaiah 1.11-13 has the function of explaining to the reader the new Christian meaning of these kinds of offerings. At the end there is probably the passage to the theme of apocryphal books and the prohibition of reading them.

Now it is time to offer the announced comparison with a selection of canonical works and collections.

The Canons of Athanasius (CC 0089)⁴⁴. The *Canons*, known to Abū 'l-Barakāt ibn al-As'ad ibn Kabar, have some material in common with CanBas, as already recognized by W.E. Crum in his notes⁴⁵. A systematic comparison with the Coptic text of CanBas could be useful to enlarge the parallels between the two works.

³⁷ See M. SIMONETTI, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (SEAug 11), Roma 1975, 496, but chapter XV in its entirety should be consulted.

³⁸ C, p. Δ-Ζ.

³⁹ C, p. ε.

⁴⁰ «These are the commandments of the way of the life and of the way of the death»: C, p. η. On this theme and literary genre, see A.C. STEWART, *On the Two Ways: Life or Death, Light or Darkness*, Oxford 2006.

⁴¹ C, pp. η-ια: $\text{μαρῖφληη ἡπναγ ἡχῖφωμτε . χε πναγ | εἱἡμαγ ἡταγσρογ ἡπενσωτηρ . μαρῖφληη ἡπναγ ἡχῖσο χε πναγ εἱἡμαγ ἡταπκακ εωφπε . μαρῖφληη ἡπναγ ἡχῖῖῖτε χε πναγ εἱἡμαγ . ἡταπενωῖε εωφπε ναη ρῖῖῖῖῖῖ ἡπενσωτηρ$.

⁴² The pagination is lacking due to physical lacunas: however see in this section N. Carlig's contribution and the final table.

⁴³ See I. FASIORI, *La dime du début du deuxième siècle jusqu'à l'Edit de Milan* (313), Lateranum n.s. 49 (1983) 5-24; *Storia della decima dall'editto di Milano* (313) al secondo concilio di Maçon (585), VetChr 23 (1986) 39-61. For the *Traditio apostolica* see A. BAUSI, *La nuova versione etiopica della Traditio apostolica: edizione e traduzione preliminare, in Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production And Intellectual Trends. Studies in Honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, Roma 2011, 19-69.

⁴⁴ The *editio princeps* of both the Coptic and Arabic materials is in *The Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria*, ed. W. RIEDEL – W.E. CRUM, cit., to which is to be added H. MUNIER, *Mélanges de littérature copte I-III*, ASAE 19 (1919) 225-241: 238-241, with edition of CMCL.BG, attributable according to Orlandi to the 8th-9th century.

⁴⁵ See *ibid.* particularly the notes to the English translation of the Arabic text. The *Canons of Athanasius* have drawn the historians' attention: see among others, E. WIPSZYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 30-31.

Here I would like to highlight a parallel attitude in both texts towards the relationship between Church and society, since they insist on the fact that the Church should be on a par with the civil authorities. In the *Canons*, 10, Jesus's saying on Caesar (Matthew 22.15-22 and parallels) is applied to bishops, presbyters and deacons in a very peculiar form: as the Old Testament kings, chosen by God, took care that their kingdoms worked well, sometimes even resorting to the imposition of personal taxes («Render to Caesar»), so the same attention must be paid by presbyters and bishops to churches and to the celebration of the liturgy («Render to God»). As clerics must pay taxes to the State in order to preserve the society, so they must give themselves to the altar and the liturgy, in the name of the liturgical dress in which the image of God is imprinted (which is the image of the 'spiritual' side of the money)⁴⁶. In CanBas 86, edited in the *Appendix* by F. Contardi, the following impressive statement is to be found: «It is not right that the Church be slave in anything of this sort, but it is right that every one, a king or a prince or every man who is in high ranks, are all subject to the Church». To support the command not to receive a property burdened with taxes the example of Joseph in Gen 47:22-27 is quoted: a very original interpretation of the OT text, used to propose a distinction among the kinds of heritage to be accepted or refuted by the Church. However, an overall comparison shows that equally significant are the differences between the two work titled *Canons*:

- the *Canons of Athanasius* are written by a cleric and addressed to a public of clerics, so that very little attention is paid to the problems of lay believers;
- the monks' presence is more meaningful than in CanBas;
- while great attention is paid to the acts of cult, the altar, the life of the community, there is no quotation of prayers or rituals which are so important in CanBas;
- no credal formula is offered, and the ties between orthodoxy and moral behaviour are not stressed;
- no reference to the traditional norms is made: this could be interpreted as an indication of an ancient dating, as well as the plurality of references to the canonical literature in CanBas should be seen a sign of the latter's seriority.

If CanBas could be dated after the *Canons of Athanasius*, a further interesting issue would be that of their dependence on this work. In more general terms, it must be observed that the *Canons of Athanasius* are preserved in a codex of the 10th century (Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 293) in which there were also the *Canones apostolorum* (CC 0091).

Sententiae Concilii Nicaeni.⁴⁷ In the *Gnomai* the opening (1,1-1,7) is devoted to exalt God in his Trinitarian articulation, his goodness, his not being a creature, and the gift of *prohairesis* to men:

ΠΝΟΥΓΕ ΠΕΙΩΤ ΟΥΑΓΑΘΟΣ ΠΕ. ΠΧΣ ΠΧΘΕΙΣ ΠΕ ΛΥΩ ΠΝΟΥΓΕ. ΟΥΑΓΑΘΟΣ ΠΕΠΠΔ ΕΤΟΥΑΔΒ. ΠΝΟΥΓΕ ΜΝΤΪ ΖΟΥΕΓΤΕ. ΟΥΤΕ ΜΗ ΖΔΕ ΟΡΟΠ ΗΤΗΝΤΝΟΥΓΕ. ΗΤΟΥ ΓΑΡ ΠΕ ΤΑΡΧΗ ΛΥΩ ΠΧΩΚ ΗΠΤΗΡΪ. ΜΗΚΤΙΜΑ ΟΡΟΠ ΞΝ ΤΕΤΡΙΑΣ ΔΛΛΑ ΗΤΟΥ ΠΧΘΕΙΣ ΔΥΩΔΩΤ ΗΠΤΗΡΪ. ΜΗΝ ΠΕΤΟ ΗΧΘΕΙΣ ΕΔΔΥ ΖΗ ΝΕΦΕΒΗΥΕ ΤΗΡΟΥ. ΔΥΪ ΟΥΑΥΔΟΖΟΥΣΙΟΝ ΔΕ ΗΝΕΤΖΗ ΠΤΗΡΪ ΔΕΚΑΣ ΕΡΕ ΝΕΠΡΟΖΑΡΗΝΙΣ ΟΥΩΠΖ ΕΒΟΛ. Δ ΤΕΠΡΟΖΑΡΗΝΙΣ ΔΕ ΗΡΟΙΝΕ ΘΗΜΟΟΥ ΖΑΤΗ ΠΕΧΣ. ΛΥΩ ΔΧΔΑΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΑ ΗΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ. ΖΕΝΚΟΟΥ ΔΕ ΔΧΧΙΤΟΥ ΕΑΜΗΤΕ. ΗΠΕΠΝΟΥΓΕ ΟΥΤ ΛΑΔ ΕΦΡΟΟΥ.

God the Father is good. Christ is Lord and God, and the Holy Spirit is good. God has no beginning, nor there is any end to his divinity, for he is himself the beginning and the end of all that is. There is no creation in the trinity but the Lord himself created all things. There is no other Lord but he over all his works. He gave freewill to those who are in the world so that their inclination might be manifest. Inclination brings some to be seated by Christ, and exalts them over the angels. Others it leads to hell.

As the reader may easily understand, we have here a very short declaration of faith, Trinitarian in character, characterised by an anti-Arian tendency (God is not a creature, on the contrary creation depends

⁴⁶ *The Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria*, ed. W. RIEDEL – W.E. CRUM, cit., 23: «What sayest thou then, O priest, of the name that hath been given thee and the image of God wherewith thou art clothed in return for all these (things)? If the bishop serve not the altar as befits the reverence for its honour, but rather despiseth the presbyters and the presbyters despise the deacons and the deacons the people and everyone is neglectful in his duties, what wilt thou then say? Shall God keep silence for ever?».

⁴⁷ *The Gnomai of the Council of Nicaea (CC 0021): Critical Text with Translation, Introduction and Commentary*, ed. A.C. STEWART (Texts from Christian Late Antiquity 35.), Piscataway, NJ, 2015.

on him). God has given the *autexousion* to some of his creatures. Here the foundations are laid for the moral discourse which occupies the rest of the writing. It is interesting to quote the opinion of the last editor of the text:

This introduction is firmly anti-Arian (there is no κτίσμα in the Trinity, it is stated) and the divinity of the Son is clearly upheld. However, the status of the Spirit is less clear; there is no explicit statement of the Spirit's divinity as such, and no statement that the Spirit has any role in creation, but rather the Spirit gives growth to creatures⁴⁸.

These features could be interpreted as a sign of a 4th century dating. Of course, these moral indications are strictly connected to the church, which, as in CanBas, is the source for correction and pardon addressed to all: the laity and the clergy. As it is said in *Sententiae* 3,1: «The work of the church is simply prayer and intercession» (πρωτὸν ἡτεκκλήσια πρῶτῃ ἡμᾶτε ρισοῦς).

As in CanBas (and also in the *Canons of Hippolytus*⁴⁹), there are indications about dress and sexual ethics, which concern women and men, both secular and members of the clergy. What is lacking in the *Sententiae* – and here resides the great differences between the two works – is the presence of «any material regarding ordinations or the liturgy, in other words the very subjects which define the 'church order' element in the church order literature. It is the very diversity of the nature of the material found within the church orders which has led to the questioning of the legitimacy of the classification of church orders as a genre»⁵⁰.

A last element should be stressed, that is, the sets of texts in which the *Sententiae* are transmitted. It is material mainly connected with the Council of Nicaea or Athanasius. *Sententiae* are preserved in a codex of the 8th-9th century, containing the *Vita Athanasii*⁵¹, and two codices coming from the White Monastery, offering, among other things, a very rich synodical collection⁵². The environments that can be reconstructed through these manuscripts are monastic or ecclesiastic, interested to gather canonical legislation and history of the Church, so that to put canonical regulations in a historical perspective.

*Canons of Hippolytus*⁵³ (CanHipp). It is a series of thirty-eight canons transmitted only in Egypt, which can be considered a deep reworking of the *Apostolic Tradition*. The text is preserved only in Arabic, but certainly it is a translation of a Coptic text. Common elements with CanBas include:

- a profession of faith;
- a series of canons expounding the different orders, from the bishop down to the lay believers, exactly as in CanBas;
- a certain stress on the liturgical life: fasts, prayers (*horologion* as in CanBas and *Apostolic Tradition* 41), eucharist, catechesis.

Despite the fact of being preserved only in Arabic, a fact that inhibits a comparison with other collection of Coptic texts, it must be remarked that from the point of view of both structure and contents the two texts are very close. One of the reasons could be that both know the *Apostolic tradition*, which, however, is used with parsimony by the author of CanBas.

Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum (=Did. Patr. Nic.). A complex textual situation is the one revealed by a set of writings which has been titled *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum, Syntagma doctrinae* (CPG2264 and

⁴⁸ *The Gnomai*, ed. A.C. STEWART, cit., 7.

⁴⁹ See edition by R.-G. COQUIN in PO 31,2.

⁵⁰ *The Gnomai*, ed. A.C. STEWART, cit., 11.

⁵¹ GIOV.AJ, Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 54: it is the same library in which CanBas is preserved (GIOV.AN).

⁵² MONB.FT (Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 393), with synodical canons, and MONB.EF (Coptic Literary Manuscript ID 359), whose contents are extraordinary: CC 0955 *Symbolum Nicaenum A*, CC 0956 *Anathemata Nicaena*, CC 0957 *Nomina Patrum Nicaenorum*. CC 0019, Anonimo. Athanasius of Alexandria *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum-Syntagma doctrinae*. CC 0959 *Epistula Epiphani*, CC 0960 *Epistula Rufini*, CC 0961 *Narratio de 318 Patribus Nicaeae*, cc0021 *Sententiae Concilii Nicaeni*. CC 0556 *Canones Concilii Nicaeni*. followed by the synodical materials typical of the *Collectio antiochena* and the works attributed to Agathonicus of Tarsus.

⁵³ PO 31,2. See the long introduction and T. ORLANDI, *Coptic texts*, cit., 11.

2298; CC 0019; 0956)⁵⁴. They are preserved in a Turin manuscript, GIOV.AC⁵⁵, coming from a milieu in which the history of canonical literature was promoted: despite the occurrence of hagiographical and homiletic texts, a nucleus in the manuscript is constituted by materials connected with the Council of Nicaea, among which the *Didascalía Patrum Nicaenorum* finds its prominent place. MONB.EF, as we have seen, is a huge collection of synodical texts, including those of the Council of Nicaea.

It can be divided in three parts: 1. a declaration of faith (*ekthesis*) which contains the Nicene Creed along with anathematizations against Sabellians, Photinians (see CanBas), anthropomorphites, and Arians; 2. monastic precepts (the so-called *Didascalía* or *Syntagma Doctrinae*); 3. an appendix to the previous section, moral in character. Not all these sections are preserved by all the recensions and manuscripts, a textual situation which casts some doubts about the original form of the work.

Despite the complex textual situation, *Did. Patr. Nic.* is the Coptic text, or compilation of texts, which exhibits two fundamental features in common with CanBas:

- 1) a stress on the dogmatic faith, with reference to the Council of Nicaea, mention of heretics, and in particular of Sabellius and Fotinus, exactly as in CanBas;
- 2) a stress on moral behaviour not only of the monks (which are conspicuously present), but also of secular believers.

In the following table the reader will find a synthesis of our comparison:

CanBas	CanHipp	CanEccl	<i>Did. Patr. Nic.</i>	<i>Sententiae</i>
Profession of faith(1)	Profession of faith (1)		Profession of faith	Profession of faith
Two ways (2)		Two ways (1-15)		Free will
Marriage (3-19)			Marriage	Marriage
Penitence (20-27)				Repentance
Prayer (28)	Prayer (27) <i>Traditio apostolica</i> 41			
Precepts for the lay (behaviour and dress), widows, ascetics (29-37)	Widows (9)	Lay believers	Monks, women, clergy	Ascetics, Mary as an example. Dress
Precepts for the clergy, prayers for episcopal consecration (38-95)	Bishops and their consecration. Precepts for the clergy (2-8)	Bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers, widows (16-23)		
Rules on liturgy (96-106).	Baptism and rules about exclusion(10)	Oblation. Exclusion of female deacons (24-28)		
First fruits, tithes	First fruits (36)			

⁵⁴ On the complex textual situation, the recensions and the versions in different languages see M. KOHLBACHER, *Minor Texts for a History of Asceticism: Edition in Progress*, in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit. Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses*, Münster, 20.-26. Juli.1996 (Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 6,1-2), Wiesbaden1999, 2, 144-154; R. RIEDINGER – H. THURN, *Die Didascalía CCCXVIII Patrum Nicaenorum und das Syntagma ad Monachos im Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 (a. 1276)*, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 35 (1985) 75-92. See now the edition of a new Greek fragment by L.H. BLUMELL, *P.Mich. Inv. 4461KR: The Earliest Fragment Of The Didascalía CCCXVIII Patrum Nicaenorum*, *JThS* 68 (2017) 607-620.

⁵⁵ Coptic Literary manuscript ID 47.

The authorities of the compiler are quite evident, although rarely mentioned: *Didaché*; the *Canons of the Apostles* (different canonical writings with the term 'apostle' in the title could be alluded to); the *Canons of the Council of Nicaea*, which include certain customs which were not dealt with by the historical collection of 20 canons of 325, but attributed to the Council either to give them authority, or because of their occurrence in the synodical collections (for example the *Collectio antiochena*) where they were numbered consecutively starting with the 20 *Canons of Nicaea*; Basil of Caesarea, whose canonical letters are certainly known to the compiler, and Athanasius, who is quoted as a person in relationship with Basil, although a direct knowledge of his works is difficult to prove.

In our recent contributions, we have exposed the problems of dating the text. We have observed that the historical figures such as Basilius, Paulinus, Athanasius, are quoted in a fictional frame and the reference to the synods have no historical value. Unfortunately, the initial profession of faith does not give a sure *terminus post quem* different from the most obvious one, *i.e.* the end of the fourth century, or, better, the first half of the fifth century. There is no distinctive Christological terminology which could point to a theological trend, apart from some expressions close to Cyril's theological language – a language however which is typical of diverse religious trends active in Egypt or Eastern Mediterranean. Basil of Caesarea is presupposed with his letters and canons; the council of Nicaea is mentioned more than once, although, according to a phenomenon that is detectable also in Western canonical literature, the references are to decisions and rules which are not preserved in the official canons⁵⁶. From the above considerations it emerges that a 6th century date could be preferable, although an earlier date, in the middle of the 5th century, is not to be excluded.

It is difficult to take a position on the issue of the text's provenance. The *Canons* are not known outside Egypt in other canonical literatures of both the Christian East and Byzantium. However, on the other hand, the Egyptian origin of some of its elements has been questioned. In *Canon 46*, edited by F. Contardi, there is the particular mention of «the bishop of the *metropolis*» and/or the «great bishop», as well as the allusion to the custom of ordering the bishop by three bishops. The ordination by three bishops including a «metropolitan» is an argument against the Egyptian provenance of the text, because, according to a well-known Egyptian custom, it is the bishop of Alexandria who, assisted by several bishops, consecrates the candidates coming from the dioceses of Egypt and the Egyptian Church lacks the figure of the metropolitan bishop⁵⁷.

One could place the composition of the *Canons* in a Syrian context, from where it would have been taken by the Coptic Church and translated from Greek into Coptic during the Christological controversies. We have added a liturgical parallel to this phenomenon: the new anti-Chalcedonian Church which emerged during the fifth/sixth century was marked by a celebration of the Eucharist with the *Anaphora of St Basil*, an Antiochian type of *prex eucharistica* which took the place of the older *Anaphora of St Mark/St Cyril* – a Basilian connection between Syria and Egypt which could be on the background of the *Canons* too. But we can also reverse our argument: the traces of customs foreign to Egypt could be the result of the influence of Basilian and Syriac canonical literature on an Egyptian compiler whose aim was to collect canons coming from different Churches. This statement could be considered contradictory with the likely fact that the two papyrus codices preserving Basil's *Canons* were entirely occupied by this work alone: this fact should not allow too much speculation about the culture of the environments in which these two codices were read, in consideration of the lack of other works or sets of works which could give a hermeneutical key. However, we cannot avoid a comparison with other manuscripts of the same provenance in which works are put within more complex textual structures, particularly those preserved in the libraries of This and Atripe (White Monastery).

Parallels with the *Canons of Athanasius* are to be found in the *Canons of Athanasius, Sententiae*, in *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum*, the so-called *Hippolytus' Canons*. They demonstrate that the Coptic audience was interested in works in which the doctrinal element, not affected too much by a polemical terminolo-

⁵⁶ On the issue of the date in which the 'Fathers' entered the canonical collections of the Byzantine and Syriac Churches, see H. OHME, *Greek Canon Law to 691*, in *The History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500*, ed. W. HARTMANN, K. PENNINGTON, Washington D.C. 2012, 24-114, especially 84-114.

⁵⁷ E. WIPSYZKA, *The Alexandrian Church*, cit., 129-146.

gy, could be used as a premise for instruction about the moral behavior, where attention was paid not only to ascetical life (which in CanBas is alluded to with parsimony) but also to the life of secular believers, with a certain interest in liturgy. The aim was not to conform to different norms, not rarely contradictory, but to build a Coptic culture open to different trends of canonical traditions, which could be put in a historical perspective, according to which changes of canonical norms were not perceived as a threat to the unity and strength of the Church.

3. APPENDIX. COMPARISON AMONG THE COPTIC CODICES

The existence of many manuscripts gives the possibility to inquire into the possibilities of many Coptic traditions and their relationship with the Arabic translations (here **Ar**). We will try to show the complexity of the material on the light of the canons 73-75 and 86 (in C they occupy the pages ρβ-ρθ), which have been chosen because they are preserved in the largest number of witnesses.

Canons 73-75, very short, are preserved in all three Coptic witnesses (A, D, T) and in the Arabic translation too, with the exception of canon 73, which is lost in T. It is interesting to observe that the Arabic translation omits, at least in part of the tradition, the canon between the 73th and the 74th.

Canon 73. It is extremely short and it states the prohibition for a cleric to participate in a Jewish assembly. The text, preserved in **C**, **D**, and in **Ar**, is identical in all the sources:

Ἰηελααυ ἱκκληρικος εἰπτηρῆ βωκ εζογν εσεναγωγη Ἰιογδαῖ
 Ἰιογδαῖ : Ἰηιογδαῖ **D**

No cleric shall go at all to a Jewish assembly⁵⁸.

Canon 73bis. This Canon, omitted in **Ar**, deals with the prohibition for clerics of drinking wine.

C Ἰηελααυ ἱκκληρι(κ)ος εἰπτηρῆ † συμβολη εσε ηρῆ ·

T [] [κλ]ηρικ[ος] [†] [σ]υμβολη [η] [ε]ηεζ ·

D Ἰηελααυ · ἱκκληρῖκος † συμβολη εἰπτηρῆ

No clerics will absolutely give a banquet (contributions) for drinking wine.

The expression † συμβολη has the meaning of “to give contributions to the expenses of a festival” or “to give a banquet”⁵⁹. Only **C** offer the reading εσε ηρῆ “to drink wine” omitted in **T**, **D** and **Ar**.

Canon 74. This canon deals with the prohibition for an *anagnostes* to play the guitar. It is preserved in all the Coptic witnesses (**C**, **T**, **D**) and in Arabic (**Ar**).

ερωαν ογαναγνωστης · τσαβο εῤκιοαρωδος Ἰσε † σβω ηαϩ · ηῤτῆκοτῆ
 Ἰκεσοπ · αγω εζρομολογει ετῆρηζωβ εἰπτηρῆ · εγε† τεφεπιτιμα ηαϩ Ἰσααϩε Ἰζεβδονακ
 εωωπε ερωανσω Ἰηητῆ μαρογκαθαιροϩ Ἰμοϩ ρῆτεφταζεῖς

1 ἀναγνωστῆς : ἀγνωστῆς **C** | τσαβο : χιςαβο **D** | 1 εῤκιοαρωδος : εεῤκιοαρωδο[ς] **T** |

1-2 ηῤτῆκοτῆ Ἰκεσοπ · αγω : **T**, **D** om.

2 εζρομολογει ... εἰπτηρῆ + : ετῆρ πεί · ρωβ ηκεῖ·σοπ **D** | 2 εἰπτηρῆ : **T**, **D** om. | εγε†

τεφεπιτιμα : εγνα† επειῖτιμα **D**

3 εωωπε ... Ἰηητῆ : εωωπε δε · ερωανῶγεω ρζωβ ετρεφωῶ · Ἰηητῆ **D** | μαρογκαθαιροϩ

... ρῆτεφταζεῖς : εἰε εγναααῖτῆ εβολ · ητταζεῖς · ητεκκλησία **D** | ρῆτεφταζεῖς : ητταζεῖς

· ητεκκλησία **D**,]† [.....]τεκκλ]†

⁵⁸ **Ar**: «Kein Kleriker soll in eine Versammlung der Juden gehen. In eine Versammlung der Juden soll überhaupt kein Kleriker gehen» (RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, cit., 267).

⁵⁹ Cf. H.G. LIDDELL, R. SCOTT, H.S. JONES, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1968⁹, s.v.

If an *anagnostes* learns to play a guitar, and he is taught not to repeat it and professes not to do the thing absolutely⁶⁰, he will be given a punishment of seven weeks. If he continues with it, he should be stripped of his rank.⁶¹

D gives⁶²: «If he wishes to continue with it, he will be expelled from the rank of the Church». Moreover it could be possible that ΝΤΤΑΖΙC · ΝΤΕΚΚΛΗCΙΑ is a corruption of ΝΤΤΑΖΙC ΜΗΤΕΚΚΛΗCΙΑ «from the rank and from the Church». In that case D would be closer to Ar.

Canon 75. This canon deals with the matter of sexual intercourse with a woman. I give the text of the three mss. because of some differences

C ερωανορωμε < ογαω > εἰκοτῆ νῆουcριμε · ζωcτε εφτιῆματε ἡτεφειοῦνια · μαρῆρομολογει εζαρεε
ερωc ἡcαοη · αγω ηῆφῆπ ρηοτ ἡcαοη · ζωc εαφματε ἡογρηοτ ·

T [ερω]ανογ[ρω]με ογα[ω] εἰκοτῆ η[ν]ουcριμε [ζωc]τε ἡφτιῆματε ἡτεφειοῦνια · μαρεφρο[η]ολογει
ε[ρ]αρεε ερωc [αcαοη]

D ερωανορωμε · †πεφογοῖ · εροην εϋcριμε · ζωc δε · εἰκοτῆ νημαc · νεφτιῆματε ἡτεφειοῦνιᾶ ειε
ἡαρεῆρομολογει εζαρεε · ερωc ἡcαοη αγω μαρεφρεπ ρηοτ ζωc εαφμετεχε · εϋχαριc

Ar «Wenn jemand bei einem Weibe schlafen will und sie ihm seine Lust nicht gewährt, soll er sich verpflichten, sich später in acht zu nehmen, und danken, daß er große Gnade erfahren hat».

If a man sleep with a woman without obtaining his desire, he shall commit to guard himself from this afterwards, and he shall give thanks because he has obtained mercy.

It should be noted the dittography of ἡcαοη in C, which in general presents some mistakes.

Canon 86. This canon deals with the opportunity for the Church to accept a heritage. If it is subjected to a taxation, that is, to the political authority, the Church should avoid to accept it. All the Coptic versions (C, T, D)⁶³ call this tax *demosion*. The Arabic translation (Ar) uses the terms typical of the new fiscal system: the *ḥarāg* (land tax) and the *uṣr* (the tithe):

Ar: «Was ein Sterbender der Kirche gibt, soll zuerst dem Verwalter oder Bischof gegeben werden; es soll ihr aber nichts gegeben werden, worauf Grundsteuer ruht. Wenn jemand auf dem Totenbette seinen Besitz der Kirche zu geben wünscht, so soll der Verwalter oder Bischof oder Presbyter der Kirche ihn annehmen, wenn er in Gold oder Kleidern oder Erz oder Weizen besteht. Besitz er aber etwas, worauf Grundsteuer (*ḥarāg*) oder Zehnter (*uṣr*) ruht, so sollen sie es nicht nehmen: die Kirche darf Derartiges nicht besitzen, sondern jeder König, Fürst und Beamter muß der Kirche unterworfen sein. Denn ihr wißt meine Brüder, daß in der ersten Zeit Joseph vom Besitze der Priester keinen Zehnten erheben ließ, sondern ihr Land war zehnten-frei, und man unterhielt sie vom Hause des Königs. Und doch dienten diese Priester den Götzen und standen in den Tempeln. Die Kirche aber ist der Tempel des lebendigen Gottes; daher muß sie grundsteuerfrei sein. Der Priester des großen Königs soll den Zehnten vom Altare nehmen, aber nicht der Knecht anderer sein, denn der Herr verordnete für den, welcher das Evangelium predigt, daß er vom Evangelium den Zehnten erhalte. Der Kleriker soll überhaupt keine Frone leisten: es soll keinen Vorwand gegen sie geben. Der Kleriker soll keinem Menschen unterstehen, so wenig wie der Ökonom, damit er nicht schikaniert und in seiner Würde von einem, der unter ihm steht, erniedrigt werde» (W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, cit., 270).

The Coptic manuscripts offer interesting variants, namely those of D against C/T:

⁶⁰ «he is taught ... not to do the thing absolutely»: « he is taught not to do these things another time» D.

⁶¹ Ar: «Wenn ein Anagnost die Gitarre schlagen lernt, soll er gelehrt werden, es zu beichten (?). Kehrt er dann nicht wieder dazu zurück, so soll seine Strafe 7 Wochen betragen. Will er dabei bleiben, soll er abgesetzt und aus der Kirche ausgeschlossen werden» (W. RIEDEL, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, cit., 267).

⁶² T doesn't preserve enough text.

⁶³ In T is not preserved the part of the text which mentions the tax.

forced labour, nor a job will be cast on them. No cleric will do the administrator or the manager for anyone, in order that any pressure will not reach him and (his) reputation will not be despised by them who humiliate him.

All the Coptic versions and the Arabic translation offer a relatively coherent text. Comparing **C** and **D**, the two best preserved manuscripts, we observe some differences, which are not sufficient to recognize specific textual forms. In general, **D** and **T** show more accuracy in writing than **C**, which on the contrary shows orthographic mistakes: ⲛⲕⲗⲏⲣⲓⲟⲥ (canon 73b); ⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲏⲥ (canon 74); ⲉⲓⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲁⲥⲥⲉ (canon 85) or dittography (ⲛⲥⲁⲟⲛ, canon 75).

The differences in some case are to be interpreted either as a banalization of the tradition **C/T**, or as a reworking by the compiler of **D**; for the moment we are not able to exclude the hypothesis of a double translation.

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Abstract. The *Canons* attributed to Basil of Caesarea were known so far through a number of Arabic manuscripts, one of which was translated in German by Riedel, but not edited; a quotation of *Canon* 1 in a Coptic liturgical manuscript of paper (published by J. Dresher); a number of fragments belonging to different Coptic codices, edited and inedited, and in particular two leaves from a lost papyrus codex coming from Deir Bal'izah (n. 31), with the text of *Canon* 36 (published by P.E. Kahle); some Chester Beatty leaves (ms 819C, ff. 1-8) from a parchment codex (*Canons* 48-96) likely deriving from the White Monastery (inedited); the Turin *Codex* XIII, which is constituted by a good number of fragmentary leaves partially edited by F. Rossi. To these textual witnesses a new entire codex has been added, now preserved in Cairo, *Coptic Museum*. The aim of this contribution is to offer an updating about the edition of the *Canons* and to place them in the context of the Coptic literature, in particular the circulation of the canonical literature in this language and the intellectual milieu that promoted it.

Keywords. Basil of Caesarea, Canons. Canonical literature. Coptic canons. Coptic translation. Coptic manuscript.

**Codicological Remarks on the Pseudo-Basil Codex from Hermitage MMA 1152
(Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448)***

by
Nathan Carlig

In 2005, the Polish archaeological mission at Šayḥ ‘Abd al-Qurna (Western Thebes) directed by the late T. Górecki discovered three manuscripts in the hermitage MMA 1152¹. Two of them are papyrus codices, one containing 36 *Canons* attributed to Basil of Caesarea (CC² 0090) and the other bearing an *enkōmion* of Pistenthus, bishop of Coptos (CC 0238). The third manuscript consists of a bulk of parchment leaves containing the book of Isaiah (CC 0739) followed by two leaves with the *Acta Petri* (CC 0026)³. The three manuscripts were restored in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010⁴. At the beginning they were kept at the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*, and in 2013 they were moved to the Coptic Museum, Cairo, where they are still kept. The manuscript of the *Canons* has the inventory number 13448. While preparing the edition of the text, A. Camplani and F. Contardi published two preliminary articles, dealing mainly with philological matters⁵. As regards the codicological point of view, the codex has been taken into account by A. Boud’hors in both her surveys on Theban manuscripts. According to the French scholar, the manuscript could date back to the 7th or 8th century, thanks to the *terminus post quem* provided by the presence of the manuscript of the *Enkōmion* of Pistenthus in the same discovery place, and on the basis of palaeography⁶.

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¹ As regards the archaeological context, see T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152). Preliminary Report, 2005*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 17 (2007) 263-274 and the article by T. Górecki and E. Wipszycka published here.

² The abbreviation “CC” stands for *Clavis Coptica* (or *Clavis Patrum Copticorum*) developed by T. Orlandi within the framework of the *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* (CMCL), and freely available at http://www.cmcl.it/~cmcl/chiam_clavis.html.

³ Some preliminary reports have been published. See in particular T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152)*, cit. (n. 1), 263-274, where the discovery of the manuscripts is announced. A brief *status quaestionis* about the hermitage can be found in E. WIPSYZKA, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IV^e – VIII^e siècles)* (JJP. Suppl. 11), Warsaw 2009, 190-196. See also I. ANTONIAK, *Recent Discoveries in the Hermitage of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna: Coptic Codices and Ostraca*, in “*Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...*” *Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistiques, romaine et byzantine*. Actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles les 2 et 3 décembre 2005, éd. A. DELATTRE – P. HEILPORN (PapyBrux 34), Bruxelles 2008, 10-16.

⁴ As regards the restorations, see T. GÓRECKI – E. SZPAKOWSKA, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna. Archaeological Activities in the Hermitage in Tomb 1152*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 18 (2009) 305-310, D. KORDOWSKA, *Conservation Work on three Coptic Manuscripts from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 18 (2009) 311-315 and A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts (hermitage in MMA 1152)*. *Conservation Report, 2010*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 22 (2013) 199-208.

⁵ A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea. A new Coptic codex*, in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times*. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th-19th, 2008, ed. P. BUZI – A. CAMPLANI (OLOA 247), Leuven 2016, 979-992 and A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution of the Coptic Codices preserving the Canons of Saint Basil, with Edition of the Ordination Rite of the Bishop (Canon 46)*, in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident*. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu, éd. F.P. BARONE – C. MACÉ – P.A. UBIERNA (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 73), Turnhout 2017, 139-159.

⁶ A. BOUD’HORS, *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VII^e-VIII^e siècles)*, in “*Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...*” *Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistiques, romaine et byzantine*. Actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles les 2 et 3 décembre 2005, éd. A. DELATTRE – P. HEILPORN (PapyBrux 34), Bruxelles 2008, 149-161

However, the codicological elements mentioned in publications about the manuscript are not sufficient to provide a detailed codicological description. Within the framework of the ERC Project “PATHs”, which aims to provide a digital atlas of Coptic literature (now available on atlas.paths-erc.eu), a pattern of codicological description applied to Coptic manuscripts has been developed. It takes into account the text, but also material features, such as the writing support and form, layout characteristics, writing, binding, etc. In this article, I am going to apply this method to describe the manuscript. In the manuscripts database of the atlas of Coptic literature, the manuscript is recorded as Coptic Literary Manuscript (CLM) 713. A. Camplani kindly provided me with a complete set of pictures of the manuscript. An autoptical analysis of the manuscript in Cairo was conducted on June 24th-27th 2018 by Paola Buzi, whom I warmly thank for sharing with me the results of her analysis.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The codex is complete and inclusive of binding and decorated leather cover. It consists of 75 preserved leaves⁷, divided into ten quires⁸. All the leaves are written on both sides, with the exception of f. 1r at the beginning of the codex, and ff. 73v and 74 at the end, which are left blank. F. 75r bears a sort of colophon written by a different hand from those used to write the text⁹. The other side (f. 75v) is blank. The leaves measure 28-29 cm in height and 22 cm in width¹⁰. The written frame is 23 cm high and *ca* 14 cm wide¹¹. Each page contains one column of 21 to 24 lines, with the exception of f. 65r (p. ρλλ), which contains two columns. The text is aligned on left.

F. 1v (pl. 1) bears a general title (“Canons of the Great Basil, bishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia”), followed by an “index-title” of some of the *Canons* copied in the manuscript. Inside the codex, each canon is preceded by a brief title, i.e. a section heading¹². Five section headings are highlighted by leaf tabs placed on the external edge of ff. 15v, 27r, 38r, 56v, and 68r. The leaf tabs are black, maybe made from leather. I suppose that each page bearing a title was provided with a leaf tab. In fact, on these pages, a loss of papyrus or kind of a black stain is observed where the leaf tab would have been applied.

WRITING AND SIGNS

The text was written by one main hand, while two others wrote f. 65r (p. ρλλ), and ff. 68v and 69r (pp. ρλμ and ρλ[θ]) respectively. The three writings are little irregular majuscules with upright axis and no thick-and-thin style. However, they can be distinguished by some specific features.

The first hand has already been briefly described by A. Camplani and F. Contardi¹³, as well as A. Boud’hors¹⁴. It is generally unimodular¹⁵ but o and e are sometimes wide and sometimes narrow. c is wide. η shows a 3-strokes *ductus*. Bilinearity is broken by ρ, ϕ, κ, τ, φ, x, ρ, ψ, and ω. The *ductus* of some letters shows serifs

and A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics. Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bentley Layton*, ed. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL (OLOA 263), Leuven-Paris-Bristol (CT) 2017, 175-212.

⁷ In the first account about the discovery of the manuscripts, by T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152)*, cit. (n. 1), 266 counted about 70 leaves (see also A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. [n. 7], 194). In A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 5), 982, there are 74 leaves.

⁸ A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts*, cit. (n. 4), 200 counts 9 quires.

⁹ On the colophon, see the article of A. Soldati, published here.

¹⁰ The dimensions were measured by P. Buzi during her mission in the Coptic Museum in June 2018 and are slightly different than that published by T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152)*, cit. (n. 1), 266, followed by I. ANTONIAK, *Recent Discoveries*, cit. (n. 3), 147, A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 5), 982, and A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 6), 194.

¹¹ The dimensions were also measured by P. Buzi.

¹² As regards the section headings, see A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *Remarks on the Textual Contribution*, cit. (n. 5), 142-145. All the section headings are edited on pp. 156-158.

¹³ A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 5), 982.

¹⁴ A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 6), 194.

¹⁵ However, according to A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 6), 194 the writing is generally bimodular.

that can be classified as *boules* when they appear at the join of two lines (in the case of o for example), and as *empattements* when they appear at the end of a stroke in the case of Δ, γ, ζ, or Ϸ¹⁶.

The writing of the two columns of f. 65r (p. ϣλΔ; pl. 3) is more bimodular, since it shows more systematically narrow c and e. The serifs at the end of the letters are slight and the ink is darker than in the rest of the codex.

The third hand, which wrote ff. 68v and 69r (p. ϣΗ and p. ϣλ[Ϸ]; pl. 4 and 5), is more similar to the first hand, but the serifs are very slight, like the ones of the second hand. Two further features must be noted. First, some letters of the last line of both pages are extended and decorated in the lower margin, so as to break the bilinearity. On f. 68v, the hast of Ϸ forms a spiral under which we can distinguish some ink traces, probably the rest of some decorative pattern. On f. 69r, the hast of the two γ is prolonged and ends with a sort of stylized *corōnis*. Secondly, two signs are noted on these two pages, that are unique in the manuscript: in the left margin of f. 68v, a twisted rope, used as a logical sign for the text, and in the centre of the upper margin of f. 69r, a cross (+).

There are no lectional signs in the text, but some structural signs are used. A blank space (*spatium vacuum*) sometimes accompanied by a medium dot distinguishes the meaning units (sentences), while more important portions of texts are concluded with the *dicōlon* (·). Important passages or the beginning of a *Canon* section are highlighted by a zeta-shaped sign (Ζ) in the margin and, at f. 65r, by the twisted rope. We also note a phytomorphic ornamentation in the left/outer margin of f. 1v and stylized half-*corōnides* in the upper and lower margins. Superposed lines of *diplai* (>) and *diplai ōbelismenai* (>—) are used to highlight the *Canons* titles inside the codex.

PAGINATION AND QUIRE SIGNATURE

Pagination starts on f. 1v, where the title and the “index-title” are written, and ends on f. 73r, as the text ends. Page numbers are partially lost on ff. 13r, 14r, 15r, 16v, 32r, 40r, 62r, 64r, 66r, 69r, and 73r, and they are completely lost on ff. 1v, 2r, 16r, 68r, 70r, 71r, 71v, and 72r and v (pl. 6 and 7). When completely preserved, the pagination is regular, except in the consecutive pages 7r and 7v, where the pagination jumps from 12 (Ϸ) to 16 (ϣ)¹⁷, and in f. 55r, where the writer forgot the ι for the number 10 in 111 (p<ι>Δ). Page numbers are written in the top-outer corner of the page and are decorated with two horizontal strokes respectively written above and under the number and, not systematically, by little curved strokes on left and right (see by example pl. 2).

Quire numbers are written in the top-inner corner of the first and last pages of quire. If they were written, the numbering of the first (ff. 1r and 7v) and the last (ff. 72r and 75v) quire has been lost. The quire numbering of the first page of the second (β) and of the sixth (ς) quires, as well as of the quire numbering of the last page of the fifth quire (ε) have not been preserved. The preserved quire numbers bear the same ornamentation as the pagination (see by example pl. 2).

QUIRE LAYOUT

In their 2016 article, A. Camplani and F. Contardi say that the codex is made up exclusively of quaternions¹⁸. On the base of 1) the analysis of the pagination and of the quire numbering, 2) the presence of vertical or horizontal *kollēseis*, 3) the juxtaposition of the fibres of distinct leaves, as well as 4) the state of conservation, it is possible to reconstruct the layout of quires 2 to 9, while the first and the tenth quires are more problematic from this point of view.

The eight quires numbered from 2 (β) to 9 (θ) are quaternions showing the horizontal fibres (→) on the first page. The succession of fibre directions within the pages of quires 2 (β), 3 (γ) and 7 (ζ) tallies with

¹⁶ Many thanks to D. Bianconi who helped me to better describe the serifs.

¹⁷ This irregularity has already been noted by A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 5), 982.

¹⁸ A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea*, cit. (n. 5), 982.

the “like faces like” typology described by E.G. Turner¹⁹, that is to say that when the codex is open, the two facing pages shows the same fibre direction and in the centre of the quire, the fibres are horizontal, according to the following scheme:

→↓↓→|→↓↓→||→↓↓→|→↓↓→

The other five quires show some irregularities in comparison with this scheme. In quires 4 (Δ), 5 (ϵ), and 6 (ς), the central bifolium is reversed, so that the facing pages alternate the fibre direction before and after the centre of the quire and that the facing pages at the centre of the quire show the vertical fibres (↓), as in the following scheme:

→↓↓→|→↓↓→||→↓↓→|→↓↓→

In quires 8 (η) and 9 (θ), however, the second bifolium, corresponding to ff. 2 and 7, is reversed, breaking the “like faces like” typology on this only point. Consequently, there is a fibre alternation between ff. 1v and 2r and between ff. 7v and 8r, while the centre of the central bifolium shows the vertical fibres, as shown in the following scheme:

→↓↓→|→↓↓→||→↓↓→|→↓↓→

The first quire has seven leaves. Except for f. 1r, all the pages of the quire are written. Pagination is preserved from f. 2v (p. r). Thanks to the autoptical analysis conducted by P. Buzi, a continuity of fibre is observable between ff. 1 and 6, 2 and 5, and 3 and 4. Therefore, the two latter leaves correspond to the centre of the quire. A first solution to reconstruct the layout of the first quire is to consider that it was made up by a ternion (ff. 1-6) followed by a singleton (f. 7), as shown in the following scheme:

→↓↓→|↓→||→↓↓→ / ↓→

This quire layout seems to be attested in the Pisenthus codex (Cairo, Coptic Museum inv. 13447; CLM 714), found in the same place as the *Canons* codex, according to what is said by R. Dekker in her 2008 MPhil thesis: the first quire of the codex is made up of a ternion showing the horizontal (→) fibres on the first page followed by a seventh leaf as singleton placed ↓→²⁰.

The second solution, which is more likely, supposes the existence of a 76th leaf, left blank and placed before f. 1 (f. 0), which originally formed a bifolium with f. 7. The recto of f. 0 could have been pasted on the inner side of the front cover (as done with f. 75v on the back cover; see *infra*), while the verso was left blank, according to the following scheme:

[→↓]→↓↓→|↓→||→↓↓→|↓→
 f. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 (lost)

This quire reconstruction, which comprises two leaves at the beginning not used to write the text of the *Canons* (it begins on f. 2r), is attested in contemporary book productions, such as the Turin Coptic codices Museo Egizio, 63000 VIII (CLM 53), IX (CLM 54), XV (CLM 60) and XVI (CLM 61), dated to the second half of the 7th or the first half of the 8th cent. In fact, pagination, quire numbering, as well as fibre juxtaposition of the first preserved leaves lead to suppose that the codices began with two blank unpaginated leaves and that the text began on the recto of the third leaf (so on the two facing pages, the text begins on the right page). In the case of the *Canons* codex however, we see that the verso of the second leaf, f. 1v, is completely covered with the copy of the “index-title”, so that in the two facing pages, the left one presents the “index-title”, and the right one has the beginning of the *Canons*. Since f. 1v was originally numbered Δ, it surely indicates that the “index-title” was part of the original editorial project. One could

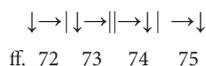
¹⁹ E.G. TURNER, *The Typology of the Early Codex*, Philadelphia 1977, 65-67.

²⁰ R. DEKKER, *The Sahidic Encomium of Pesunthios, Bishop of Keft. Towards a New Understanding, based on Recently Discovered Manuscript*, unpublished MPhil, Leiden University, 2008, 6 (freely available at <https://www.academia.edu/4767524/The_Sahidic_Encomium_of_Pesunthios_Bishop_of_Keft_unpublished_thesis_main_text_>>).

explain this peculiarity in the layout by considering that the writer, in assigning this peculiar position to the “index-title”, gave it a special status, a bit apart from the text of the *Canons* itself.

The last four leaves of the codex, ff. 72-75 are incomplete, particularly in the lower part. Ff. 72 (pl. 6 and 7) and 73↓ bear the end of the *Canon* “On the first fruits and tithes”, of which it is the first attestation ever. Ff. 73→, 74→ and 74↓ are blank. F. 75 bears the “colophon” on the perfibral face (→). The other side (↓) is left blank but we can see concretions that are perhaps a consequence of pasting this side of the leaf onto the back board of the cover²¹. Except from f. 73↓ which bears the first numeral of the pagination (p[.]), no pagination or quire number has been preserved on the written pages, while the blank pages should not have been numbered.

In order to reconstruct the quire layout, we can only rely on the state of conservation of the leaves, comparing it with ff. 69, 70, and 71 from the previous quire, whose position is surely known. These three leaves are incomplete in the bottom-inner corner, near the binding. The loss of papyrus grows while leafing through the codex. In quire 10, f. 73 has lost its entire lower part. In ff. 72 (pl. 6 and 7), 74 and 75, a loss of papyrus in one bottom corner is observed, shaped similarly to the lacuna in ff. 69 to 71. For these reasons, we can identify the order of succession of the faces of ff. 72, 74, and 75, so that the place of the lacuna fits with that of the previous leaves. Since this canon is not known elsewhere, and the lacunas due to loss of writing support or bad conservation of the ink prevent any reconstruction of a sentence running from one leaf to the following, as I was told by A. Camplani²², this reconstruction is possible too and can give precious indication on the reconstruction of the text. Finally, the autoptical analysis by P. Buzi shows fibre continuity between ff. 72→ and 75→ and between ff. 73→ and 74→. According to these observations, we can therefore conclude that quire 10 is a binion showing vertical fibres on the first page and alternating fibre direction, as can be seen in the following scheme:



MANUFACTURE OF THE ROLLS

The blank papyrus roll was used to make up the codex, by cutting the roll into large sheets, placing them one on the top of the other, then folding them to form bifolia²³. The study of the *kollēseis* on the leaves, their number, their direction (vertical or horizontal), the type of superposition (upward or downward), their frequency, the distance from one to another, allows the reconstruction of how the codex was made up, but also, when we have enough information, the shape of the original rolls, shedding light on its fabrication at a time when the book *par excellence* was the codex.

Regarding the *Canons* codex, the sometimes poor state of conservation of some leaves prevents the identification of all the *kollēseis* in the codex both on the photographs, and by autoptical analysis. The conclusions drawn here are therefore partial. Two vertical *kollēseis* are observed on ff. 4 and 6, while on the rest of the codex, all the observed *kollēseis* are horizontal. We can see that the horizontal *kollēseis* are very frequent: they occur almost on every leaf.

The vertical direction of the two first *kollēseis* indicates that the first quire was made up of a horizontal roll, with the side showing horizontal fibres facing downward, because the quire begins with the horizontal fibres (→)²⁴. Since the leaves of quires 2 (ϐ) to 9 (ϑ) show horizontal *kollēseis*, it indicates that the blank roll or the sheets cut from it were turned 90° before making the quires.

In conclusion, the analysis of the codex of Pseudo-Basil’s *Canons* found in Gurna on the base of photographs, and enriched by the autoptical analysis conducted by P. Buzi, as well as by the comparison with

²¹ A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts*, cit. (n. 5), 200. For A. BOUD’HORS, *À la recherche*, cit. (n. 6), 194, the “colophon” is written on the verso of the leaf.

²² Email of September 14th 2017.

²³ On the making up of a codex in the Coptic tradition, see P. BUZI – S. EMMEL, *Coptic Codicology*, in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction*, ed. A. BAUSI, Hamburg 2015, 141-147.

²⁴ See P. BUZI – S. EMMEL, *Coptic Codicology*, cit. (n. 23), 142.

other contemporary Coptic manuscripts, took into account the general aspect, the number of leaves, pagination and quire signature, the juxtaposition of fibres in order to reconstruct bifolia, writing, use of signs, elements of layout, like the number of columns per page, the presence of titles, leaf tabs, *kollēseis* and decoration. It leads to a more detailed codicological reconstruction. The codex of Pseudo-Basil's *Canons* was most probably originally composed of 76 leaves (of which 75 survive), organised in nine quaternions followed by one binion. The reordering of the leaves can contribute to a better edition of the text, especially with regards to the last canon *On first fruits and tithes*. The presence of a “index-title” written in a peculiar place of the codex, according to the contemporary scribal habits must be highlighted, as well as the three hands who wrote the codex, one of which changing deeply the page layout. Finally, the presence of the *kollēseis*, and their features, contributed to a better understanding of the making of a papyrus codex. Surely further investigations in Coptic manuscripts, by applying a detailed protocol of description such as the one developed in the ERC Project “PATHs”, will lead to interesting and innovative results and therefore contribute to a better understanding of Coptic book production.

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Abstract. The article provides the first complete codicological description of the codex containing the *Canons* attributed to Basil of Caesarea (Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448) discovered in 2005 in a hermitage in Western Thebes. The codicological method applied here has been developed within the framework of the ERC Advanced Grant Project “PATHs” at Sapienza University of Rome. After a general description, special attention is paid to the writing and the identification of the hands, use of signs, pagination, quire numbering, quire layout and the manufacture of the rolls used to make up the codex. In the appendix, a chart lists all the leaves with their main codicological features.

Keywords. Coptic book, Western Thebes, codex, papyrus, pagination, quire signature, *kollēsis*, layout, quire, roll.

APPENDIX

CHART SUMMARIZING THE CODICOLOGICAL FEATURES OF CODEX CAIRO, COPTIC MUSEUM, INV. 13448

Preliminary notes:

- a dotted line distinguishes the two sides of a leaf
- a simple line separates different leaves
- a bold type line distinguishes the quires
- a double line indicates the centre of a quire.

Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollësis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
0	r	→							Not preserved
0	v	↓							Not preserved
1	r	→				Blank			
1	v	↓	[Δ]			Index-title			
2	r	↓	[B]			Canons			
2	v	→	Γ			Canons			
3	r	↓	Δ			Canons			
3	v	→	ε			Canons			
4	r	→	ς		V	Canons			
4	v	↓	z			Canons			
5	r	→	η			Canons	X	[X]?	
5	v	↓	θ			Canons			
6	r	↓	ι		V	Canons			
6	v	→	ια			Canons			
7	r	↓	ιβ			Canons			
7	v	→	ις			Canons			
8	r	→	ιz	[B]		Canons			
8	v	↓	ιη			Canons			
9	r	↓	ιθ		H	Canons			
9	v	→	κ			Canons	X	[X]?	
10	r	→	κΔ		H?	Canons	X	[X]?	
10	v	↓	κΒ			Canons			
11	r	↓	κΓ		H	Canons			
11	v	→	κΔ			Canons			
12	r	→	κε			Canons			
12	v	↓	κς			Canons			

Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollësis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
13	r	↓	κ[z]			Canons			
13	v	→	κη			Canons			
14	r	→	κ[ο]		H	Canons			
14	v	↓	λ			Canons			
15	r	↓	λ[δ]		H	Canons			
15	v	→	λβ	β		Canons	X	X	
16	r	→	[λγ]	γ	H	Canons			
16	v	↓	[λ]Δ			Canons	X	[X]?	
17	r	↓	λε		H	Canons	X	[X]?	
17	v	→	λς			Canons			
18	r	→	λζ			Canons			
18	v	↓	λη			Canons			
19	r	↓	λε		H	Canons	X	[X]?	
19	v	→	η			Canons			
20	r	→	ηδ		H	Canons			
20	v	↓	ηβ			Canons	X	[X]?	
21	r	↓	ηγ		H	Canons			
21	v	→	ηΔ			Canons			
22	r	→	ηε		H	Canons			
22	v	↓	ης			Canons			
23	r	↓	ηζ		H	Canons			
23	v	→	ηη	γ		Canons	X	[X]?	
24	r	→	ηθ	Δ	H?	Canons			
24	v	↓	η			Canons			
25	r	↓	ηδ		H	Canons			
25	v	→	ηβ			Canons	X	[X]?	
26	r	→	ηγ		H	Canons			
26	v	↓	ηΔ			Canons			
27	r	→	ηε		H	Canons	X	X	
27	v	↓	ης			Canons			
28	r	↓	ηζ		H	Canons			
28	v	→	ηη			Canons			

Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollësis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
29	r	↓	νε			Canons			
29	v	→	ζ		H	Canons			
30	r	→	ζα			Canons			
30	v	↓	ζβ		H	Canons			
31	r	↓	ζγ			Canons			
31	v	→	ζΔ	Δ	H	Canons			
32	r	→	ζ[ε]	ε		Canons			
32	v	↓	ζς		H	Canons	X	[X]?	
33	r	↓	ζζ			Canons			
33	v	→	ζη		H	Canons			
34	r	→	ζε			Canons			
34	v	↓	ο		H	Canons			
35	r	→	οα			Canons			
35	v	↓	οβ		H	Canons			
36	r	↓	ογ			Canons			
36	v	→	οΔ		H	Canons			
37	r	↓	οε			Canons			
37	v	→	ος		H?	Canons			
38	r	→	οζ			Canons	X	X	
38	v	↓	οη		H	Canons			
39	r	↓	οθ			Canons			
39	v	→	π	[ε]	H	Canons			
40	r	→	π[Δ]	[ς]		Canons	X	[X]?	
40	v	↓	πβ		H	Canons			
41	r	↓	πγ			Canons			
41	v	→	πΔ		H	Canons			
42	r	→	πε			Canons			
42	v	↓	πς		H	Canons			
43	r	→	πζ			Canons			
43	v	↓	πη		H	Canons			
44	r	↓	πε			Canons			
44	v	→	Ϸ		H	Canons			

Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollësis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
45	r	↓	qα			Canons			
45	v	→	qβ		H?	Canons			
46	r	→	qγ			Canons			
46	v	↓	qΔ		H?	Canons			
47	r	↓	qε			Canons			
47	v	→	qς	ς	H?	Canons			
48	r	→	qζ	ζ		Canons			
48	v	↓	qη		H	Canons			
49	r	↓	qθ			Canons			
49	v	→	ρ		H?	Canons			
50	r	→	ρα			Canons			
50	v	↓	ρβ		H	Canons			
51	r	↓	ργ			Canons			
51	v	→	ρΔ		H	Canons			
52	r	→	ρε			Canons			
52	v	↓	ρς		H?	Canons			
53	r	↓	ρζ			Canons			
53	v	→	ρη		H	Canons			
54	r	→	ρθ			Canons			
54	v	↓	ρι		H?	Canons			
55	r	↓	ρ<ι>α			Canons			
55	v	→	ριβ	ζ	H?	Canons			
56	r	→	ριγ	η		Canons			
56	v	↓	ριΔ		H?	Canons	X	X	
57	r	→	ριε			Canons			
57	v	↓	ρις		H	Canons	X	[X]?	
58	r	↓	ριζ			Canons			
58	v	→	ριη		H	Canons			
59	r	→	ριθ			Canons			
59	v	↓	ρκ		H	Canons			
60	r	↓	ρκα			Canons			
60	v	→	ρκβ			Canons			

Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollēsis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
61	r	→	ρκΓ			Canons			
61	v	↓	ρκΔ			Canons			
62	r	↓	ρκ[ε]			Canons			
62	v	→	ρκς		H?	Canons	X	[X]?	
63	r	↓	ρκζ			Canons			
63	v	→	ρκη	η	H	Canons			
64	r	→	ρκ[θ]	θ		Canons			
64	v	↓	ρλ		H?	Canons			
65	r	→	ρλα			Canons			Second hand
65	v	↓	ρλβ		H?	Canons			2 cols. on the page
66	r	↓	ρλ[γ]			Canons			
66	v	→	ρλΔ		H	Canons			
67	r	→	ρλε			Canons			
67	v	↓	ρλς		H	Canons			
68	r	↓	[ρλζ]			Canons	X	X	
68	v	→	ρλη		H	Canons			Third hand
69	r	→	ρλ[θ]			Canons			Third hand
69	v	↓	ρμ			Canons			
70	r	↓	[ρμΔ]			Canons			
70	v	→	ρμβ		H?	Canons			
71	r	↓	[ρμγ]			Canons; Additional Canon <i>On first fruits and tithes</i>	X	[X]?	
71	v	→	[ρμΔ]	θ		Additional Canon <i>On first fruits and tithes</i>			
72	r	↓	[ρμε]			Additional Canon <i>On first fruits and tithes</i>			
72	v	→	[ρμς]			Additional Canon <i>On first fruits and tithes</i>			

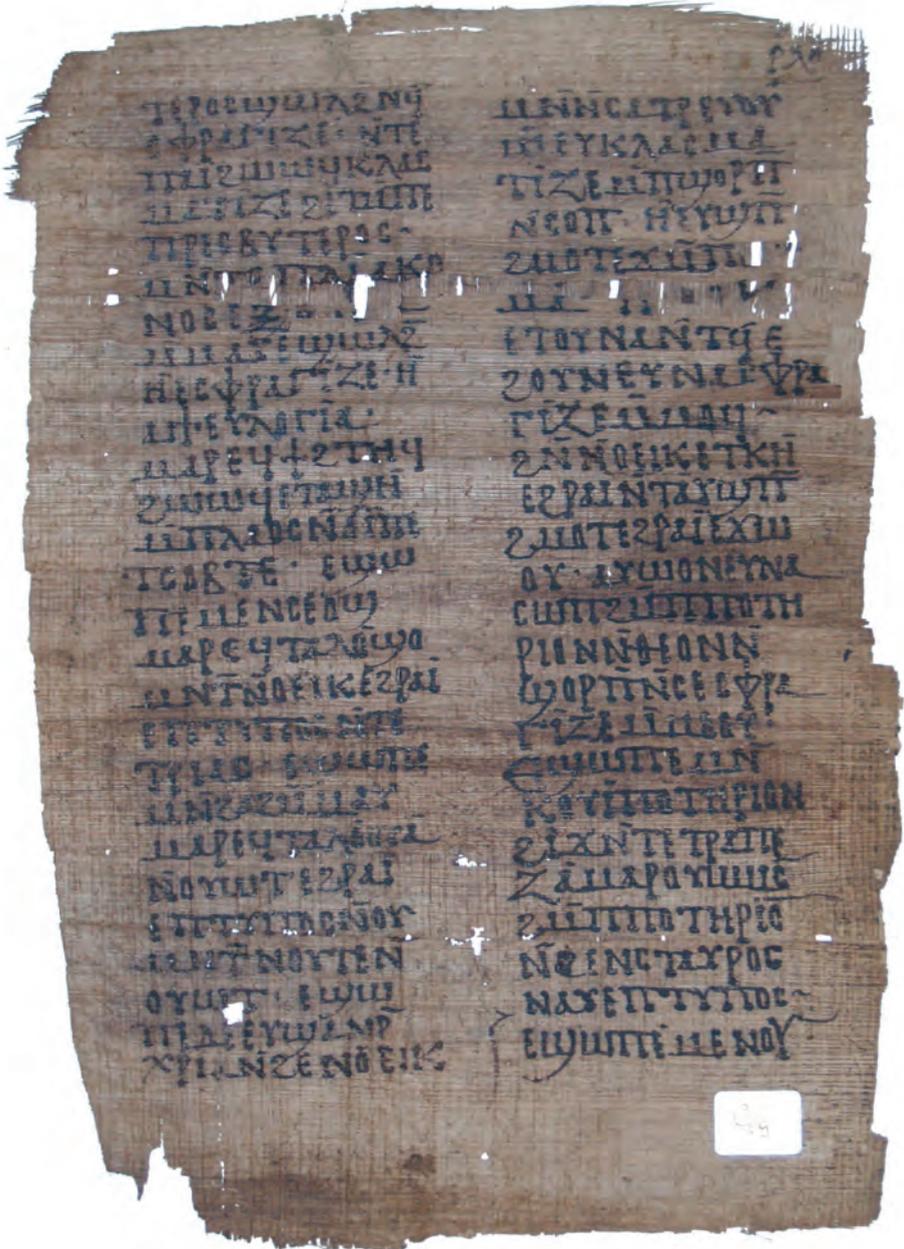
Leaf numb.	r/v	→/↓	Pagin.	Quire numb.	H/V kollēsis	Content	Section heading	Leaf tab	Other remark
73	r	↓	p[MZ]			Additional Canon <i>On first fruits and tithes</i>			
73	v	→				Blank			
74	r	→				Blank			
74	v	↓				Blank			
75	r	→				'Colophon'			Fourth hand
75	v	↓				Blank			



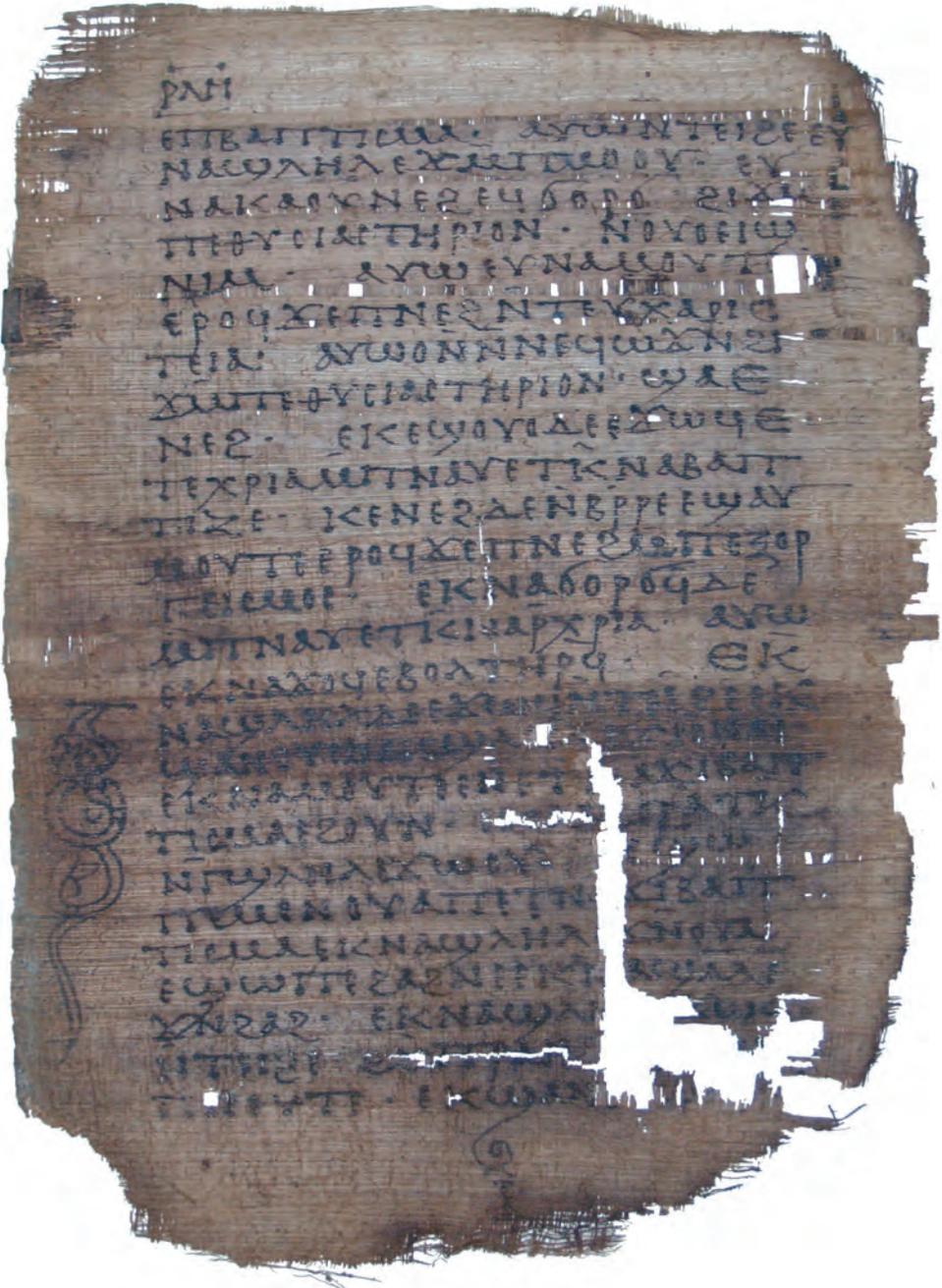
Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 1v (main title and "index"). © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology

Fragment of a Coptic manuscript on papyrus, showing several lines of text in Coptic script. The text is written in a dark ink on a light-colored, textured papyrus surface. The fragment is irregularly shaped with frayed edges. The text is arranged in approximately 15 lines, with some lines appearing to be part of a larger section or chapter, as indicated by the presence of a cross symbol (✠) in the middle. The script is a form of Coptic, likely from the 4th or 5th century AD, based on the reference to Adamantius in the caption. The text is difficult to read due to the fragmentary nature and the specific script used.

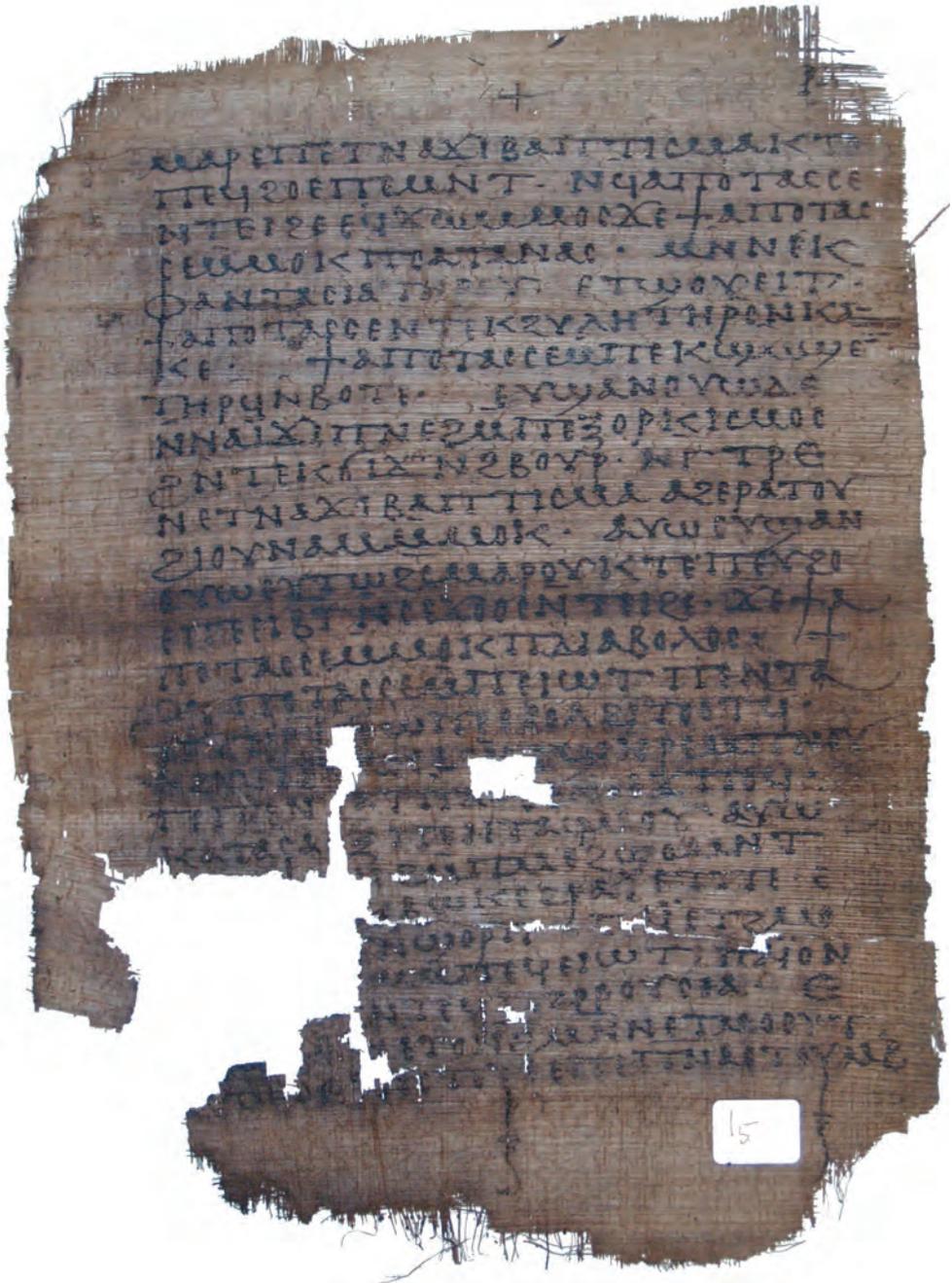
Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 15v. © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology



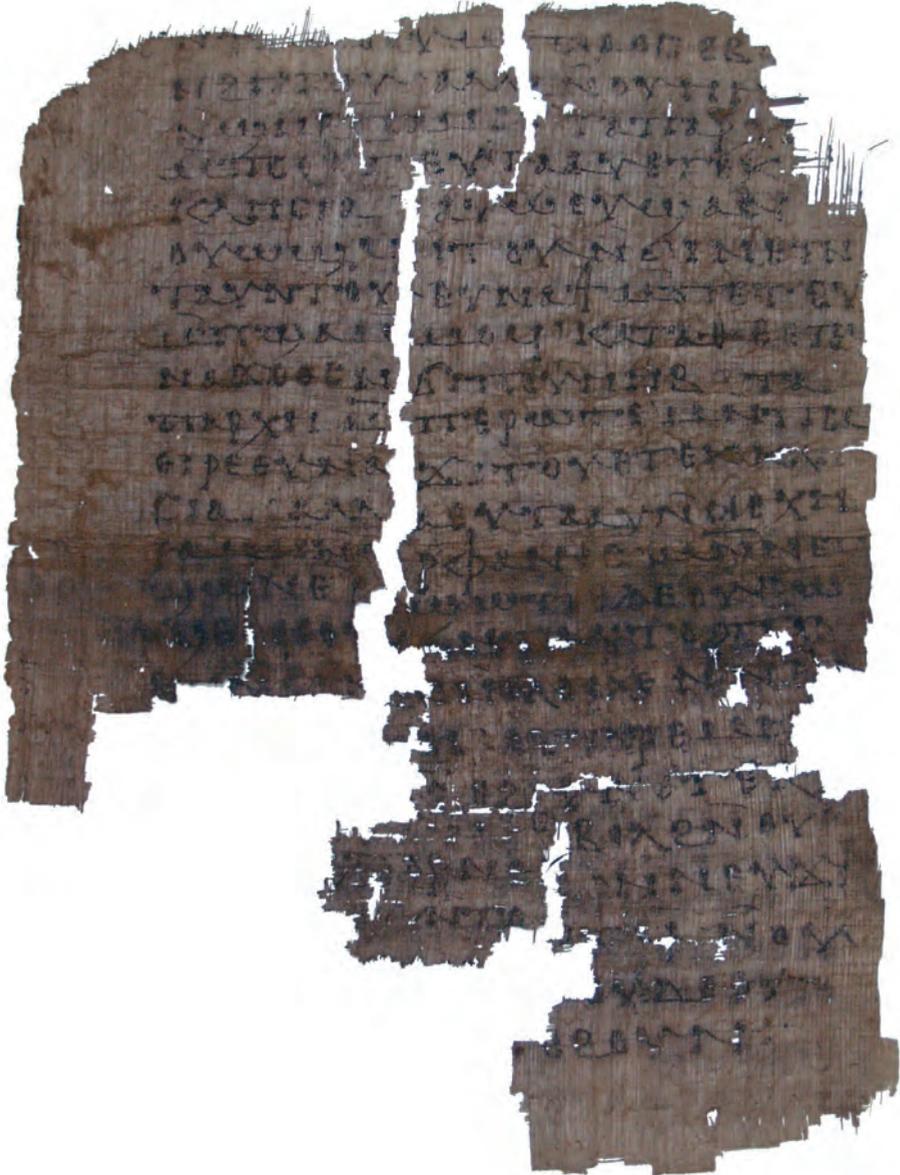
Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 65r (second hand). © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology



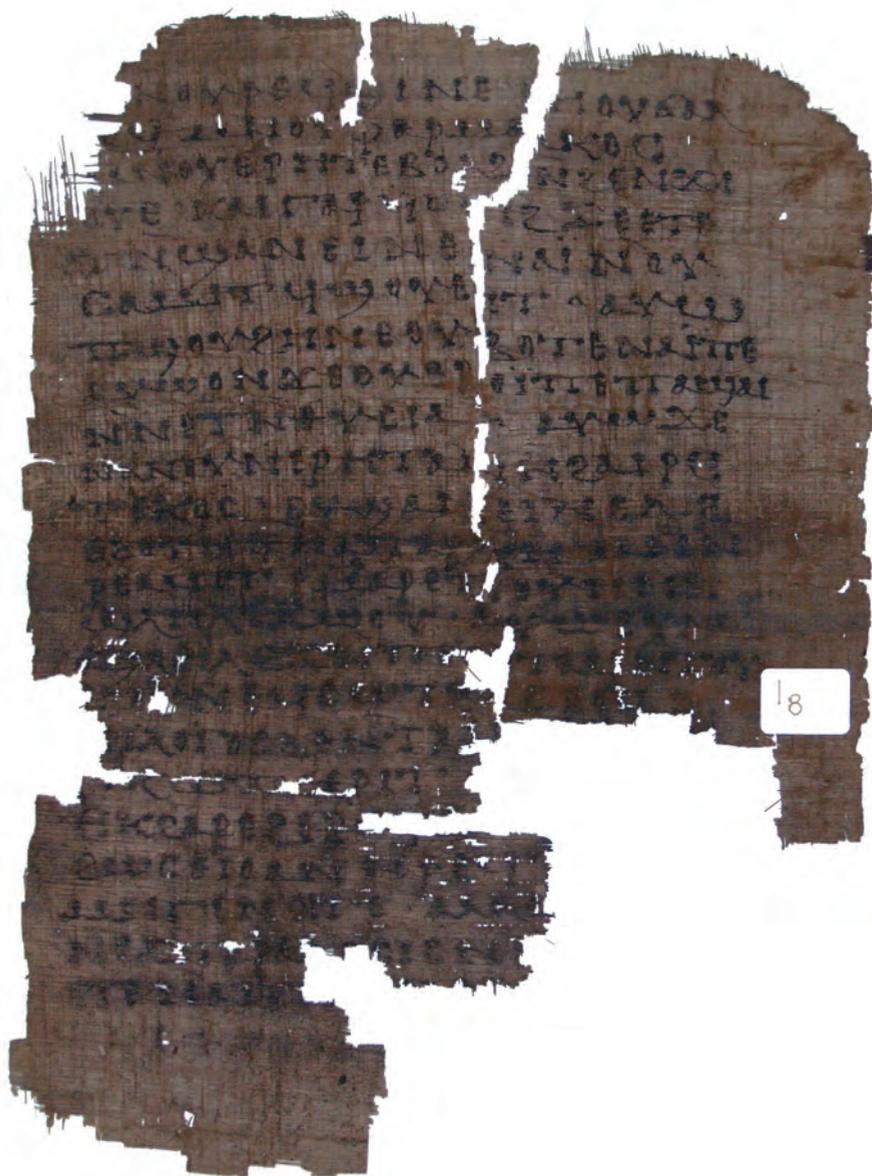
Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 68v (third hand). © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology



Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 69r (third hand). © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology



Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13448, f. 72r. © Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology



**Preliminary Remarks on the Recently Identified Leaves with *Martyrium Petri*
from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna***

by

Przemysław Piwowarczyk

STATE OF PRESERVATION

The parchment codex (Coptic Museum, Cairo, inv. N° 13446)¹ is one of the three codices excavated by the Polish Mission led by the late Tomasz Górecki in the TT 1152 at the hill of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna in 2005². There are extant 49 folios³, some preserved only as small scraps. Very recently Nathan Carlig has analysed carefully the codicological aspects of the manuscript and calculated the original number of folios as 52⁴. All the leaves were found put inside between two wooden planks covered with leather. The leather has already fallen apart into crumbles⁵; the planks are preserved, but in poor condition, distorted and rotten on the inner side. It has not yet been determined, whether all the folios originally belonged to the same codex. In the first reports, the content of the manuscript was identified as the book of Isaiah, an indeed, the 47 leaves contain the last 20 chapters of this prophet. Probably, we have to do with the separate volume with the third part of Isaiah (Isa 47-66) what seems to be a typical division in Coptic Isaiah codices⁶.

The manuscript of Isaiah was provisionally dated by Tito Orlandi to the 9th-10th century, then on the basis of contextual evidence by Tomasz Górecki to the 8th century⁷, and recently by Alin Suciú, to whom the text was entrusted for an edition, to late 7th – early 8th century⁸ what Anne Boud'hors also recognizes as a plausible date in the light of some Theban comparanda⁹.

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¹ In A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts (hermitage in MMA 1152), conservation report, 2010*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 22 (2013) 200, referred to as Inv. No. Coptic MS. 3; Trismegistos and LDAB ID: 111691; CLM and PAThs manuscript ID: 3469 (for Isaiah) and 6293 (for *Martyrium Petri*); in Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament Project the manuscript of Isaiah is identified with ID 622028 and labelled «sa 2028» (<http://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=622028> accessed 18.05.2019).

² T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Hermitage in Tomb 1152). Preliminary Report, 2005*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 17 (2007) 263–274, esp. 266–272. On the excavations see the paper of E. Wipszycka in the present volume.

³ D. KORDOWSKA, *Conservation Work on three Coptic Manuscripts from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean 18, Reports 2006 (2008) 313, gives the number of 52 «cards». A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts*, cit., 200, notes «50 parchments leaves». To obtain the number 50, the conservators probably included the scraps of papyrus glued to the inner side of the back plank into the total number of leaves. The scraps, however, do not belong to the codex.

⁴ N. CARLIG, *Dealing with the Stratigraphy of Coptic Codices: the Cases of MSS Pierpont Morgan Library M578 and Coptic Museum, inv. 13446*, Comparative Oriental Manuscripts Studies Bulletin 4.1 (2018) 69–78, esp. 74–76. The results of Carlig's investigation have been published in the Archaeological Atlas of the Coptic Literature <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/3469> and <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/6293>, accessed 25.02.2019. I thank N. Carlig for explanations of the details of his analysis.

⁵ The leather is mentioned only by D. KORDOWSKA, *Conservation Work*, cit., 312.

⁶ In a personal correspondence between A. Suciú and T. Górecki, 09.2017. The Isaiah text (Isa 47,1-66,24) is preserved in *P.Bodmer XXIII* (TM/LDAB ID: 108542; sa 48) and the title in a scribal note at the end refers to it expressly as «the third part of the prophet Isaiah» I thank A. Suciú for this reference. The scrap from the first preserved folio of Gurna Codex has a phrase from Isa 47:14. There is no comprehensive study on Isaiah in Coptic, but see a recent paper by T. БАК, *A Critical Edition and Philological Analysis of the First Chapter of Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 40) on the Basis of the Coptic Manuscript sa 52 (M 568) in Light of Other Coptic Manuscripts Written in the Sahidic Dialect and the Greek Text of the Septuagint*, Biblical Annals 9 (2019) 73–100.

⁷ T. GÓRECKI, *Studium funkcjonowania eremu w grobowcu 1152 w Gurna (Luksor) w świetle danych archeologicznych i tekstowych*, unpublished, 25. Orlandi's datation is mentioned without any further detail.

⁸ In personal correspondence between A. SUCIU and T. GÓRECKI, 09.2017.

⁹ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics. Studies in*

In the course of scrutiny, two last folios of the codex were recognized as containing other text, identified as a part of *Martyrium Petri*. This identification was at first proposed by Tomasz Górecki because of the proper names and was later fully confirmed by myself. These two leaves are in a deplorable condition, no single line remained complete. The first leaf of the *Martyrium* (f. 51) was severely fragmented and was put together from more than 50 scraps. The conservators filled the lost sections of the leaf with the Japanese tissue¹⁰. There are many lacunas, some letters faded, and part of the letters from f. 52r is misplaced to f. 51v (page numbers refer to the reconstruction by Carlig).

The manuscript of the *Martyrium* is not dated on paleographic grounds, but its local provenance is highly probable because of the sloping script characteristic of some Theban scribes¹¹. It could not be later than the half of the ninth century when the monastic communities of Western Thebes eventually declined, and concerning contextual information about an occupation of the hermitage¹², it might be dated to 7th-8th century. Of course, as all the three manuscripts from MMA 1152 were found covered with debris outside the proper hermitage, their deposition sometime after the abandonment of the monastery cannot be entirely excluded, but, as their textual and codicological features fit the local patterns, their origin outside the Theban region would be an unnecessary supposition.

Nathan Carlig established that the f. 51 belonged originally to the Isaiah codex as an elaborately decorated end leaf, sharing its size (14×11 cm), ruling and pricking patterns with the rest of the codex. Folio 52 is, however, recognisably smaller (14×9 cm) and does not show traces of ruling and pricking¹³. This last folio might be inserted sometime later when the user decided to copy a passage from *Martyrium Petri* on the last leaf of the Isaiah codex. It might never be integrated into the codex, and we cannot even exclude that there were more such loose leaves with the further part of the *Martyrium* that are nowadays lost. It is possible that such a loose sheet protected the last, richly decorated, folio of Isaiah against the wooden cover, but since there are scraps of reused papyrus glued at the inner side of the plank exactly in this purpose, such a protection was not a necessary solution.

ORGANISATION OF THE TEXT

On the first page under consideration (f. 51r), the text is divided into four sections in the fields determined by the bars of the ornamental cross, and the sequence of text blocks runs from left to right, and from up to bottom. The upper fields have six (left) and eight (right) lines, each of 8-9 letters. The only exception, with only four letters (ΥΡΩΗ), is the eighth line in the upper-right field. The word was probably initially omitted by the scribe and inserted only sometime later in the free space between the seventh line and the bar of the cross. The bottom-right field (the bottom-left field is only partially preserved) has eleven lines of seven to ten letters, sometimes written densely, sometimes with some free space left at the end of the line. I was unable to find another manuscript with such organisation of the text, and it seems that it is a result of an impromptu adaptation to constraints imposed by the decoration of the reused leaf. On folio 51v, the scribe did not overwrite the illumination.

Except for the first, three other pages are not separated into columns. The margins are kept regular. The exact number of lines per page cannot be determined with certainty because of their state of preservation. The number might vary between pages. At f. 51v there are 28 lines preserved, at f. 52r 30 lines, and 34 lines at f. 52v. No line is preserved complete, but in comparison with the manuscript Paris, Bibl.Nat., cop. 129/17, f. 71 (siglum C^{BN}), and especially the manuscript from Pushkin Museum in Moscow, Coptic MS GMII I.1.b.686 (siglum C^P), which contains very similar recension of the text, it may be counted that average line has about 38-41 letters, as examples below indicate:

Coptic and Early Christianity in Honor of Bentley Layton, ed. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL, Leuven 2017, 195. I thank A. Boud'hors for sharing with me the results of her yet unpublished research.

¹⁰ On the conservation process see D. KORDOWSKA, *Conservation Work*, cit. 312-314; A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts*, cit., 206-207.

¹¹ A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits*, cit., 195.

¹² T. GÓRECKI, *Studium funkcyjowania*, cit., 8. Górecki refers to pottery and ostraca.

¹³ N. CARLIG, *Dealing with the Stratigraphy of Coptic Codices*, cit., 74-75. Autoptic assessment and measurement has been performed by P. Buzi in 2018 (*ibid.*, 75 n. 23).

f. 52v, ll. 5-6, restored according to C^{BN}

5 [α]Ϟκακ εβολ χε ω πε[π]χινοσοῦς η̄τ[α]πετρος λαϞ ω αργιπ[ι]

6 πα

f. 52v, ll. 12-13, restored according to C^P

12 ετβε τη̄τῆ ἀριπνεεγε ἡ̄μμα[ε]ιν· ἡ̄[ῆ] νεϞπηρε εντα[ι]

13 τετῆνᾱγ̄

f. 52v, ll. 16-17, restored according to C^P

16 σωντ ε̄αργιπας εϞδακονει γαρ· [ἡ̄τενεργια ἡ̄περει]

17 [ω]τ

TEXTUAL FEATURES

The script is dense, horizontal, with cursive features, with 3-stroke η, tall ρ, γ, Ϟ, rather narrow ε and circular ο and c. Shapes of letters are simple, with no thick-and-thin style, without sherifs. Horizontal strokes in the case of τ, π and ε very often touch adjacent letters. Characteristic of the hand is the lowered τ with its upper stroke in the middle of the line. There is no fixed top or the bottom line. If there is enough space below, the lower parts of Ϟ and ε are elongated. Initials are not featured. There is also no marginal ornament and no traces of colour ink.

There are a few identified scribal errors that belong to two categories:

1. Unnecessary letters:

a. νεϞπρημοτ η̄τεγϞωη (f. 51r, col. B, ll. 6-8), «giving thanks by night». The word (ο)γϞωη seems to have duplicated ω. As already mentioned, this last word was initially omitted, and maybe it was later added in a hurry.



Figure 1. f. 52v, l. 6

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b. η λαϞ πε πεσοογ ηταϞα[α]Ϟ ηα[κ] (f. 52v, l. 6); «or who has done to you?». Here, we have a reduplication of α in λαϞ.



Figure 2. f. 52v, l. 14

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2. Incorrect letter

a. Ϟιπομνε οροϞ (f. 52v, l. 14); instead of Ϟιπομνε εροϞ «Wait for him». Omicron is clearly visible in the MS.



Figure 3. f. 51r, col. B, l. 6-8

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Except for insertion of the word (ο)γϞωη mentioned above, there are no traces of any proofreading of the text, no deletions by crossing or dotting, no letters given above the line, no clear evidence of changing the incorrect letters to the correct ones.

The marks of punctuation appear irregularly and do not fit the pattern of the Pushkin Museum MS or any other witness of the *Martyrium*. As the following remarks base on high-resolution photographs,

autoptic examination of the parchment may bring some further data. The upper point is visible 12 times in the preserved portion of the text (f. 52r, l. 5, f. 52v, ll. 9, 12, 13 (×2), 15 (×2), 16 (×2), 21, 25, 30). Since the letters are frequently preserved incomplete, especially on pages 51v and 52r, it is often difficult to ascertain a character of a particular trace of ink. Points usually mark a logical pause between clauses or logical clusters. In the f. 52r, l. 5, it seems, however, to divide syllables in the name ⲙⲓⲁⲣⲕⲉⲗⲗⲓⲟⲥ. The space after the first syllable suggests against interpreting the upper point as an elongated stem of the (now lost) letter in the line above. In the case of the first folio, it seems reasonable to refrain from taking numerous points and strikes as marks of punctuation, as they might be traces of the letters already lost or imprinted from the subsequent page.

Two-dot trema is used to sign a consonantal jota, as in ⲙⲙⲟⲓ. It remains uncertain if the raised point in f. 52r, l. 14 ⲙⲓⲣⲓⲙⲁ also represents a trema. In a few instances, there is a single dot over ypsilon, but no instance of a double dot of trema found in some other manuscripts occurs. Colon, diple, coronis, middle and bottom point do not appear in the preserved parts of MS. In one case, a short vertical upper stroke of unclear nature occurs just before the letter (f. 52v, l. 7). Twice, in f. 52r, ll. 14, 18, superlinear stroke indicates abbreviation of the word at the end of the line. Generally, the superlinear strokes are short, put exactly above the letter, in the case of nomina sacra the short stroke spans two letters and is placed in the middle between them. The superlineation system conforms to standard Sahidic orthography. Because all the corners of the pages perished, the presence of the page numbers cannot be determined.

There is only a limited number of nomina sacra in Gurna MS. The name of Christ appears twice abridged to ⲫⲚ (f. 52v, ll. 14, 34). Also the name Jesus occurs two times, in both cases in contraction. In the case of f. 52v, l. 11 stroke is noted only above c, and on f. 52r, l. 12 only very feeble trace of supralinear stroke is visible only above this letter. The noun 'Cross' is given as the staurogram with suspension ⲥⲓⲟⲩ and also in 'genitive' form ⲥⲓⲟⲩ. It does not, however, follow Greek, because the two occurrences of 'nominative' form correspond to genitive in the Greek text (f. 52v, l. 21 = Zwierlein, p. 412, l. 13; f. 52v, l. 26 = Zwierlein, p. 414, l. 2) and 'genitive' form renders Greek dative (f. 52v, l. 19 = Zwierlein, p. 412, l. 12; f. 52v, l. 20 = Zwierlein, p. 412, l. 13¹⁴). The form ⲥⲓⲟⲩ in the Gurna text regularly stands also for the verb 'to cross', and as such is also attested in C^{BN} and C^{P15}.

DECORATION

Leaf 51r is framed by a wide, unbroken band of the interlaced ornament, painted in red and green¹⁶. In the middle of the frame, the similarly interlaced cross divides the page into four fields. The crosses of interlaced ornament are very common in the Coptic manuscript as decoration of frontispieces (with the most striking examples of some Hamuli manuscripts)¹⁷ and endpieces¹⁸, none of them, however, is enclosed in a continuous frame around the leaf, as in the case of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna codex. This motif also appears as decoration of the church interiors¹⁹, but again I was unable to find an exact parallel. At the verso of this page, there is a pair of doves with some floral elements. The pair of doves is a widespread motif, both at the front pages in association with the cross, or separately as marginal decoration²⁰. The place at the page and the size of illumination exclude, however, its marginal character. Carol Downer links this motif to a

¹⁴ Zwierlein prefers ⲁⲩⲧⲟⲩ, but see ⲥⲓⲟⲩⲧⲟⲩ in MS referred to in an apparatus.

¹⁵ See A. ELANSKAYA, *Coptic Literary Texts*, cit., 43, col. B, l. 36 (the last line).

¹⁶ On this ornament M. CRAMER, *Koptische Buchmalerei. Illuminationen in Manuskripten des christlich-koptischen Ägypten vom 4. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Recklinghausen 1964, 20-28.

¹⁷ L. DEPUYDT, *Catalogue of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library* (Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts 5), Leuven 1993, plates 28-44; M. CRAMER, *Koptische Buchmalerei*, cit., 40-41.

¹⁸ See Codex Glazier (CLM 44) <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/44> accessed 25.02.2019. I thank N. CARLIG for this reference. Qasr el-Wizz codex contains crosses of interlaced ornament on both frontispiece and endpiece. Apocrypha in this codex reflect piety focused at the cross.

¹⁹ P.-H. LAFERRIÈRE, *Les croix murales du monastère rouge à Sohag*, BIFAO 93 (1993) 308 (cross No 8, fig. 12-13); L. DEL FRANCIA BAROCAS, *L'immagine della croce nell'Egitto cristiano*, RSO 85 (2012) 196-199.

²⁰ L. DEPUYDT, *Catalogue*, cit., plates 201, 318-321. Some general observations with only two examples in M. CRAMER, *Koptische Buchmalerei*, cit., 51-52; Cf. crosses 1-2, and 8 in Red Monastery, see P.-H. LAFERRIÈRE, *Les croix*, cit., 302-304, 308.

general and vague idea of «balance and symmetry»²¹. Maybe in the case of *Martyrium Petri*, the author of illumination had also no particular theological concept in his mind. Illumination might, however, evoke some more precise ideas present in the Coptic literature. The only Coptic text known to me in which cross and doves appear together is *Apocalypsis of Elijah*:

But when the Christ comes, he comes in a manner of a bevy (μεγαλ)²² of doves with his crown of doves encircling him, as he walks on the vaults of heaven, with the sign of the cross preceding him²³.

After this and other signs of the last days, *Apocalypsis of Elijah* describes a series of eschatological martyrdoms inflicted by Antichrist what David Frankfurter interprets as literary transposition of the historical persecutions of the third century²⁴. However, it would be too precarious to see typical decoration of the pages of interest as an indirect hint at martyrdom ideology of *Martyrium Petri*. Association of the cross motif with the praise for the cross, constituting part of the preserved text of *Martyrium*, seems more probable. In the Coptic literature, there is also a tradition interpreting dove and cross as the figures of prayer (in orant gesture). It is witnessed in so-called *Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt* by Paphnutius:

His face was very pallid and his whole body even more so on account of his ascetism. As it is written: «The wings of a pigeon pale like silver, and round about her neck green as gold» [Ps 68:13]. He speaks this way because when the old man raised up his hands, they were like the wings of a pigeon as described in the Scriptures²⁵.

And in another place:

Every person who lifts up his hands as a type of the cross of Christ defeats all his enemies, as did Moses who defeated Amalek by raising up his hands [Ex 17:12]²⁶.

The exact reason behind writing down the part of *Martyrium Petri* on exactly those leaves – if there is something more than mere coincidence or chance – remains (and probably will remain) obscure. There are, however, some features of the manuscript itself, that bring some light on it. Fine decoration does not fit the informal character of the script. The fact that the text begins in the middle of *Martyrium* suggests that the copied passages have been deliberately chosen. All that indicates that leaf 51 has been used (together with leaf 52) sometime after the text of Isaiah had been composed for noting down the spiritual excerpt made for personal prayer, perhaps focused on the cross²⁷. Possible relations between *Martyrium* and Isaiah in terms of their use for personal devotion remain unknown.

TEXT OF *MARTYRIUM PETRI*

As mentioned, the last two folios of the Gurna codex contain the Coptic version of *Martyrium Petri* (*Martyrdom of Peter*, Clavis Coptica 0568 *Passio Sancti Petri et Pauli*; CANT 190.IV; BHO 941-942). The text contains the sections 4-8 of the standard edition of the Greek original prepared by Constantin Ti-

²¹ D. DOWNER, *A Ban on Unicorns. Decorativ Motif and Illumination in M581*, in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium. Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies. Leiden, August 27 - September 2, 2000*, ed. E. IMMERZEEL, J. VAN DER VLIET, M. KERSTEN, C. VAN ZOEST (OLOA 133), vol. II, Leuven 2004, 1208.

²² Achmimic version has $\text{c}\alpha\text{m}\eta\text{r}$, both words render Greek $\nu\omicron\sigma\sigma\acute{\alpha}$, D. FRAKFURTER, *Elijah in Upper Egypt. The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity*, Minneapolis 1993, 313.

²³ P. Chester Beatty 2018, p. 12, ll. 11-16, *The Apocalypse of Elijah based on P. Chester Beatty 2018*, ed. A. PIETERSMA, S.T. COMSTOCK, H.W. ATTRIDGE (Texts and Translations 19. Pseudepigrapha Series 9), Ann Arbor 1981, 42 (text), 43 (English transl.). Cf. also synoptic translation of Sahidic and Achmimic versions in D. FRAKFURTER, *Elijah in Upper Egypt*, cit., 313, n. 52.

²⁴ D. FRAKFURTER, *Elijah in Upper Egypt*, cit., 141-145.

²⁵ Paphnutius, *Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt* 6, f. 3b, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*, ed. E.A.W. BUDGE, London 1915, 434-435 (text), Paphnutius, *Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt and the Life of On-nophrius*, transl. T. VIVIAN (Cistercian Studies Series 140), Kalamazoo 2000, 76 (English transl.).

²⁶ Paphnutius, *Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt* 20, f. 8b, ed. BUDGE, 440 (text), English transl. VIVIAN, 81.

²⁷ On the various aspects of communal and personal cult of the cross in the monastery of Saqqara, see P. VAN MOORSEL, *The Worship of the Holy Cross in Saqqara*, in *Theologia Crucis – Signum Crucis. Festschrift für Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag*, hrsg. C. Andresen, G. Klein, Tübingen 1979, 409-415.

schendorff and then amended by Richard Adalbert Lipsius in his *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*. Recently, the new edition of the Greek text by Otto Zwierlein appeared²⁸. The readable text in Gurna MS roughly corresponds to Lipsius edition from p.84, l. 11 (but probably the mutilated part contained already l. 9) to p. 92, l. 14, and Zwierlein edition from p. 404, l. 3 to p. 414, l. 9. There are six known witnesses of the Coptic (Sahidic) version of this text, four of which overlap partially with the manuscript from Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (sigla according to Zwierlein)²⁹.

- C¹ Vatican, *Cod. Borg.* cop. 109, XXVI, 128, MONB.GQ/1 (CLM ID: 412), 9th century, Monastery of Shenoute at Atripe; edited by I. Guidi, *Frammenti Copti. Nota II^a*, AAL.R 3.2 (1887), 23-32.
- C² Vatican, *Cod. Borg.* cop. 109, XXVI, 129, MONB.MQ/1, (CLM ID: 528), 9th century; Monastery of Shenoute at Atripe; edited by I. Guidi, *Frammenti Copti. Nota II^a*, AAL.R 3.2 (1887), 25-29, 31-34.
- C^P Moscow, Pushkin Museum³⁰, GMII I.1.b.686, later than 5th century?³¹, provenance unknown, bought in Luxor (CLM ID: 3505) edited by A.I. Elanskaya, *The Literary Coptic Manuscripts in the A.S. Pushkin State Fine Arts Museum in Moscow*, Leiden 1994, 41-59.
- C^{BN} Paris, Bibl.Nat., cop. 129/17, f. 71, MONB.BY/6, (CLM ID: 308), X-XI w., Monastery of Shenoute at Atripe; unedited³².

This paper does not aim to establish the critical edition of the Coptic *Martyrium*, so I give here only some very general observations. For our knowledge of the Coptic text of *Martyrium*, the most important point is that the text on the *recto* and also partially on the *verso* of f. 51 is not preserved in other MSS, so we gain the first attestation of this portion of *Martyrium* in Coptic. Two *codices Borgiani* (C¹ and C²) edited by Ignazio Guidi, both from the White Monastery, represent different but closely connected traditions³³. The unedited codex from the same monastery, now housed in the Bibliotheque National in Paris (cop. 129/17, f. 71), is even closer to our text than *Borgianus* 128. The recension of MS GMII, I.1.b.686 (siglum C^P), housed in the Pushkin National Museum in Moscow, edited at first by Oscar von Lemm³⁴ and then re-edited by Alla Elanskaya, represents similar branch of tradition. It was bought in Luxor, so perhaps it originated in the Theban area and if so, it stems from same scribal milieu as the Gurna Codex. Although very similar, both Mss. are far from being identical, and their relationship is not direct. There are hints at contamination with other line(s) of transmission, as Gurna MS has some unique readings and additions, as ⲁⲛⲁⲮ in f. 52v, l. 25, and although it generally agrees with C^{BN} and C^P (portion of the text preserved in these two witnesses does not overlap) against C¹, there are instances where it is closer to C¹, as in examples below:

²⁸ O. ZWIERLEIN, *Petrus in Rom. Die literarische Zeugnisse mit einer kritischen Edition der Martyrien des Petrus und Paulus auf neuer handschriftlicher Grundlage* (UALG 96), Berlin – New York 2010, 2. Auflage, 403-425. Edition begins with *Martyrium Petri* 4 (according to Lipsius' division of the text).

²⁹ P. CHERIX, *Manuscrits coptes et textes apocryphes. Liste de travail provisoire*, 15 <https://www.coptica.ch/Cherix-Apocryphes.pdf> accessed 15.02.2019.

³⁰ O. ZWIERLEIN, *Petrus im Rom*, cit., 340, incorrectly refers to this papyrus as hosted in St. Petersburg. I retain, however, the siglum, as it may refer to Pushkin (Museum).

³¹ The traditional datation to the 4th-5th century, given by A. ELANSKAYA, *Coptic Literary Texts*, cit., 42, has been put into question in the course of comparative analysis of the Theban Coptic manuscripts carried out by A. BOUD'HORS, *À la recherche des manuscrits.*, cit., esp. 190.

³² I thank Alin Suciú for providing me with a photocopy of this unpublished folio.

³³ On the relations between C¹, C², and C^P, see O. ZWIERLEIN, *Petrus in Rom*, cit., 340s.

³⁴ O. VON LEMM, *Koptische apokryphe Apostelacten II*, *BASP, Nouvelle Série* 3(35) (1894) 240-292.

Coptic Museum, Cairo, inv. n° 13446, f. 52r, l. 26: ⲭⲉ ⲉⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲡⲟϥⲱⲛ

C¹: ⲭⲉ ⲉⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲡⲟϥⲱⲛ

C^P: ⲭⲉ ⲉⲱⲭⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲟϥⲱⲛ

Coptic Museum, Cairo, inv. n° 13446, f. 52v, l. 23: ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲏⲃⲟⲙ ⲏⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲡⲓⲛⲟϥⲧⲉ

C¹: ⲉⲧⲉⲙⲏⲃⲟⲙ ⲏⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲡⲓⲛⲟϥⲧⲉ

C^P: [ⲉ]ⲧⲉⲙⲏⲃⲟⲙ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲥⲡⲟⲣⲭ ⲉ[ⲡ]ⲓⲛⲟϥⲧⲉ

The expected publication of the Gurna manuscript and a desirable critical edition of the Coptic *Martyrium Petri* would precisely specify the relations between all the manuscripts.

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Abstract. The last two folios of the parchment codex found in the hermitage located in TT 1152 in Western Thebes contain a part of the Coptic version of well known apocryphal work *Martyrium Petri* (*Martyrdom of Peter*). This new MS brings into light some new passages of the Coptic text and witnesses the complex history of the transmission of this work in Coptic. The first, richly decorated folio (f. 51r), seems to be a reused frontispiece of another codex, and the text itself appears to be a personal excerpt from a more extensive work, written down to serve in a personal prayer, perhaps focused on the cross.

Keywords. Western Thebes. Sheikh Abd el-Gurna. *Martyrium Petri*. Codex decoration. *Isaiah codex*.



Figure 4. f. 51r © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology



Figure 5. f. 51v © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology

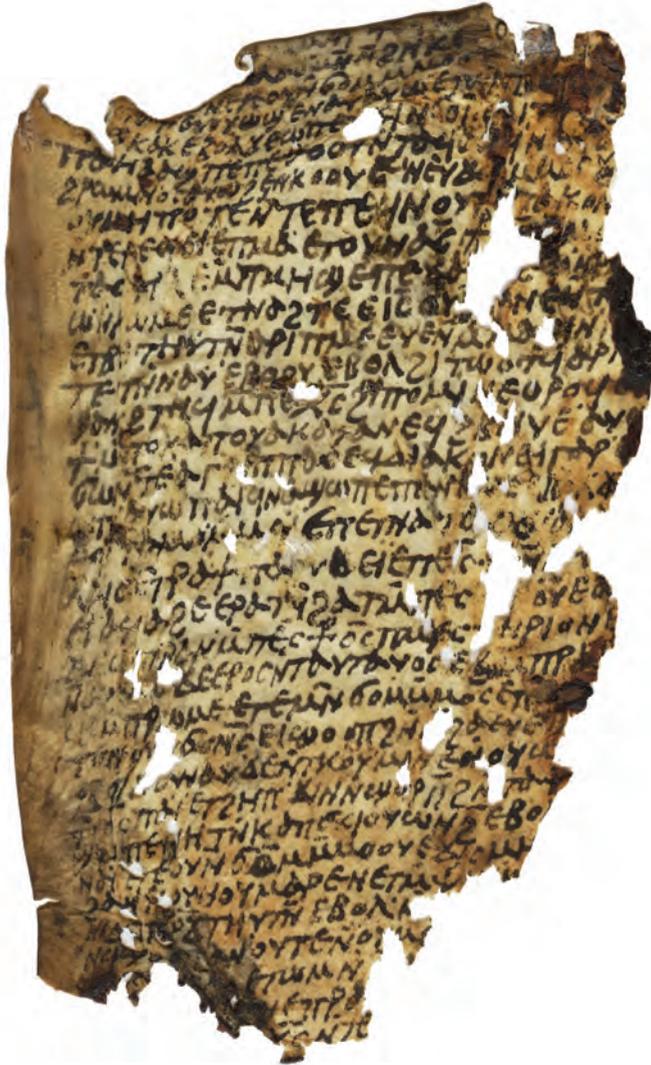


Figure 7. f. 52v © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology

One of the oldest extant Coptic ‘colophons’

by
Agostino Soldati

Ms. Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13488, bears at least two paratexts on the *recto* of its conclusive leaf (f. 75), the first of which (ll. 1-7) offers noteworthy information about the context where such codex, in a period conterminous to its realization, would have been circulating (Fig. 1). It consists of seven lines written in the upper portion of the leaf through a perspicuous documentary hand, whose letters appear tenuously sloping rightward and still exhibit wholly capital features, if one excepts the minuscule traits of the η. Its use of diacritical signs, as was customary around the beginning of the Islamic era, seems to be characterized by an apparently random versatility. The τρήματα occur both in their usual shape (l. 3-4: ραπογ|χαϊ) and stylized in a tiny cusp (l. 1: in the opening demonstrative παϊ), whereas the indicators of syllabic morpheme, when marked, appear chiefly as a grave accent, as well as a short horizontal *lineola* (e.g. l. 5: ρ̄πεϥη̄; l. 6: η̄οῡειρη̄η̄η̄). In a single case the sound is rendered through a mere dot (l. 3: η̄ζ̄η̄η̄ε̄).

As far as the text is concerned, the examination of some rather clear photographs of the leaf bounteously provided by the Polish colleagues allows a few meek improvements to its albeit commendable *editio princeps* which Alberto Camplani and Federico Contardi offered in their delectable foretaste of the sizable Theban manuscript². If the omitted transcription of the intensifying preposition ε- following ερογν and prefixed to τκα|θολικη εκκλησια is to be considered as a trivial misprint, the phrase χεκασε επχοεις | ιϥ̄ πε̄χ̄ ρ̄πεϥη̄η̄ (ll. 4-5) entails a somehow puzzling hindrance, due to the unexpected ‘Uyropolitan’ coloring χεκα(α)σε and, above all, to the dubious prefix ε- foregoing the nominal subject πχοεις. Such ε- in this position could only be interpreted as a circumstantial or ‘second tense’ converter, neither of them suiting the preceding final conjunction χεκασε. A closer inspection of the available pictures reveals both an ε- before τκα|θολικη and the husk of a ρ – the lower ending of the stem and traces of the loop – between the pretended χεκασε επχοεις. Thus, an expected ερογν ετκα|θολικη εκκλησια as well as a normative third future final construction χεκαε ερεπχοεις ρ̄πεϥη̄η̄η̄ introduced by the habitual Ṣa’īdic form χεκαε are to be definitely restored. The text of the first “colophon” preserved by f. 75 could consequently be transcribed as follows:

πᾱιπε π̄χ̄ω̄μη̄ η̄ταπετρο̄ς
η̄πεπερε̄ τᾱαϥ ερογν ετκα-
θολικη εκκλησια η̄ζ̄η̄η̄ε̄ ραπογ-
χᾱι η̄τεϥ̄γ̄χη̄ χεκαε ερεπχοεις
5 ιϥ̄ πε̄χ̄ ρ̄πεϥη̄η̄η̄ η̄η̄μαϥ ρ̄η̄προ̄οῡ
η̄πεϥε̄μη̄ω̄μη̄ η̄οῡειρη̄η̄η̄η̄ ρα-
μη̄η̄

2. ηπεπερι *ed. pr.*

ερογν τκαθολικη *ed. pr.*

4. χεκασε επχοεις *ed. pr.*

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¹ About these matters of Coptic orthography, see now A. BOUD’HORS, *L’apport des signes diacritiques à la codicologie copte*, in to be published in *Signes dans les textes. Continuités et ruptures des pratiques sribales en Égypte pharaonique, gréco-romaine et byzantine. Actes du colloque international de Liège (2-4 juin 2016)*, ed. N. CARLIG, G. LESCUYER, A. MOTTE, N. SOJIC (Papyrologica Leodiensia 9), Liège.

² A. CAMPLANI – F. CONTARDI, *The Canons attributed to Basil of Caesarea. A new Coptic codex*, in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times*. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th-19th, 2008, ed. P. BUZI, A. CAMPLANI, F. CONTARDI, Leuven-Paris-Bristol 2016, 797-992: 983. Further philological evaluation of the Theban witness in Eid., *Remarks on the Textual Contribution of the Coptic Codices preserving the Canons of Saint Basil, with Edition of the Ordination Rite of the Bishop* (Canon 46), in *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre Orient et Occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu*, ed. F.P. BARONE, C. MACÉ, P.A. UBIERNA (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 73), Turnhout 2017, 139-159.

«This is the book which Petros | of Pepere gave to the catholic church (καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία) of Ĝēme for the relea]se of his soul (ψυχὴ) in order that the Lord | Jesus the Christ might have mercy of him in the day | of his visitation in peace (εἰρήνη), a]men».

Beyond the aforementioned substantial amendments, the examination of the photographs could also raise doubts about the validity of reading ἡ-πε(-)περι for the proper name following the onomastic of the donor, πετρος. Such a plausible patronymic, expressed through a simple genitive instead of the expected *status constructus* π-ωνη-, seems rather to be πε(-)περε, if one considers the tendency of this hand to trace a sort of ε whose ring is reduced to a vertical stroke imperceptibly curved at the lower end, as it can be observed in the closely subsequent instance of ερογν. As far as this alleageable anthroponym is concerned, Πέπερι is attested in Egyptian context thanks to a Byzantine account of pounds (O.Eleph. DAIK 133, 1; 5th-6th cent. CE)³, and also by the likely relevant hypocoristic Πεπερούς/Ππερούς, which occurs in papyrus documents of the late Roman period (P.Athen. 54, 20 and, respectively, P.Oxf. 15, 4; 20; 22)⁴. Related instances are to be gleaned also from the Greek Orient epigraphy of the Roman period: the *alias* of a lost name ὁ κ(αἰ) Ππερᾶς preserved by a Bithynian inscription (TAM IV, 1 42, 14; Nicomedia)⁵, as well as the name Αὐρήλιος Ππερᾶς borne by both men (father and son) attested by a Pisidian one (TAM III, 1 658, 2; Nicomedia)⁶. Nor the name Ππερᾶς (its papyrological instances are: P.Laur. III 98r, 6; P.Tebt. II 424, 1, both 3rd cent. CE) is unknown to Latin documentation, being attested by an inscription from *Dacia Superior* (IDR III, 1 26, 4, 2nd-3rd cent. CE), where a certain *Piper(as)* is cited⁷. As regards the origin of the aforementioned onomastic evidence, it seems to point to a conjectural *Berufsnamen* *πεπερᾶς/ππερᾶς, *piperarius*, to which also some medieval and modern Greek family names (e.g. Ππέρας/Ππερᾶς, Πέπερας/Ππερᾶς etc.) could easily be referred⁸. Instead of the Indian loanword for the spice name, one could rather discern in πε(-)περε a Coptic outcome of the Greek πέπειρος, echoing e.g. the much older Ππερίας of a silver *lamella* from Macedonian Aigai (SEG XLVI 831, 1st half of the 5th cent. BC). Actually, it is doubtful whether a Coptic name as ππεριος occurring in a sherd recovered at Madīnat Hābū (O.Medinet Habu Copt. 25, 1)⁹ – namely within a cultural and chronological context decisively akin to the one in which the Theban codex of *Canones* was copied and was circulating – is to be referred to the name of the pepper or to the learned Greek adjective for “ripe”. Only an advantageous autoptic examination of the leaf will uphold the legitimacy of the aforesaid surmises or rather will disclose that the apparently overblown spacing between the second (ε) and the third (π) letter would not conceal a faint ρ. In that case the patronymic of the donor would have been a Coptic *Verschreibung* of the Greek Πορφόριος similar to the already known (πε)περπιρος¹⁰. As warned in advance by the segmentation employed, it behooves us to consider that the proper name could be preceded by the article πε-: ἡ-πε-περε would therefore be a new occurrence of the equally already attested περε/-ι. On the other hand, the aforesaid dearth of an unequivocal π-ωνη- introducing the name requires us to contemplate the possibility that the genitive ἡ-πε(-)περε could rather be the toponym of the hamlet whence the donor originated, as already sagily suggested by Anne Boud’hors¹¹. In such a case, being περε/-ι, to the best of my knowledge, an undetected

³ The first entry of the list, preserved by an ostrakon, sounds Πέπερι λί(τραί) [.

⁴ In the first document, the name (possibly a virile one, like the others there recorded) occurs in the variant Πε- as entry of a “κατάλογος χρηματικός” that Petropoulos vaguely ascribed to Roman period, in the latter, a “contract concerning an inheritance”, Ππερούς (gen. -οὔτος) is undoubtedly a *nomen muliebris*. In the instance of l. 20, we discern a correction *ex πεπερουτ[ος]*.

⁵]νος ὁ κ(αἰ) Ππερᾶς ὁ φιλότιμος.

⁶ A certain Aurelia Nikē, daughter of Agathopous, reserved a multiple grave (σωματοθήκη), to herself as well as τῷ προενημένῳ αὐτῆς | ἀνδρὶ Αὐρ(ηλίῳ) Ππερᾶ Δοιδου καὶ τῷ νιῷ αὐτῶν Αὐρ(ηλίῳ) Ππερᾶ δῖς.

⁷ The father of the dead child there commemorated is *Piper(as)* | *Timostrati disp(ensatoris)* | *vik(arius)*.

⁸ The word ππερᾶς is perhaps also attested by Egyptian Greek in the meaning of “pepper-pot”, cp. *LJS* p. 1406b, s.h.v.

⁹ Fragment of a short account, the first extant entry of which is ππεριος α.

¹⁰ See *NB Copt.*, 75b.

¹¹ A. BOUD’HORS, *Copie et circulation des livres dans la région thébaine (VIIe-VIIIe siècles)*, in “*Et maintenant ce ne sont plus que des villages...*” *Thèbes et sa région aux époques hellénistiques, romaine et byzantine. Actes du colloque tenu à Bruxelles les 2 et 3 décembre 2005*, ed. A. DELATTRE, P. HEILPORN (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 34), Bruxelles 2008, 149-161. EAD., *À la recherche des manuscrits coptes de la région thébaine*, in *From Gnostics to Monastics: Studies in Coptic and Early Christianity*, ed. D. BRAKKE, S.J. DAVIS, S. EMMEL (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta), Leuven 2017, 175-212: 193-194. See also P. BUZZI, *Titoli e colofoni: riflessioni sugli elementi paratestuali dei manoscritti copti saidici*, in *Colofoni*

place name, I wonder if it could be interpreted as the colloquial truncated form for the Greek appellation of a district, such as, for instance, Περὶ (Θήβας), or rather that of a small village which borrowed its name from a contiguous περί(χωμα) flowing through its countryside or from a περι(στερεών) towering over there. Thanks to the mention of the religious institution to which Petros of Peperere offered the manuscript, the text currently holds the earliest attestation of the catholic church (καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία) in Ġabal Šāmah¹². The cathedral was known thanks to nine later Coptic documents dated between the 8th and the 9th century. Some of them inform us about the identity and the rank of certain prelates acting there, as well as about plots of land owned by the καθολικὴ. An ostracon edited by Crum confirms that the catholic church of Ġēme was a separate ecclesiastical foundation from the other main church of the *kastron*, that of Saint Mary (ἁγία ἡμερη), the memory of which is preserved by an even more significant bulk of evidence¹³.

A very ancient instance is borne by the text also from the point of view of formulary: I am hinting at the verbiage ῥπεφνα νῆμαϥ ρῖπεροϥ ἡπεφσῆπῳῖνε, quite usual later, though with accessory *variatio*, in many more structured scribal subscriptions¹⁴.

After an approximately two lines wide blank space, a further line can be glimpsed. Albeit barely legible, it could be attributed to the same hand which traced the preceding text. Lastly, the endings of two lines written in a different, upright and thinner hand are extant in the lower part of the page:

ⲓ ϩⲁϥ εἰε ἡπεφκω λⲁⲁϥ
ⲓ εἰοϥ ϩεῖπαϥⲛⲏⲏε

If the first fragmentary line («... to him then he did not put anything ...») preserves an obscure sentence, on the other hand, a certain astonishment is raised, in the second line, by the *ethnicus* labelling another individual native of Ġēme, ϩεῖπαϥⲛⲏⲏε, where we notice the profligate juxtaposition of the *status constructus* ϩεῖ - showing a vocalization ε also attested in Šā'idic (beside the prevalent ϩε) - and the *Herkunftsbezeichnung*-prefix ϩε-. Moreover, the toponym occurs here in its well-known scribal variant with double η, contrary to what occurs in the preceding text¹⁶.

armeni a confronto. Le sottoscrizioni dei manoscritti in ambito armeno e nelle altre tradizioni scritte del mondo mediterraneo, Atti del colloquio internazionale, Bologna, 12-13 ottobre 2012, a cura di A. SIRINIAN, P. BUZI, G. SHURGAIA, Roma 2016, 203-215: 214.

¹² See S. ТИММ, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit. Eine Sammlung christlicher Stätten in Ägypten in arabischer Zeit, unter Ausschluss von Alexandria, Kairo, des Apa-Mena Klosters (Dēr Abū Mina), der Skētis (Wādi n-Naṭrūn) und der Sinai-Region*, III (G – L), Wiesbaden [1985], 1012-1035, s.v. *Gabal Šāma*: 1019-1020. About the designation καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία, see E. WYRSZCZKA, *Καθολικὴ et les autres épithètes qualifiant le nom ἐκκλησία. Contribution à l'étude de l'ordre hiérarchique des églises dans l'Égypte byzantine*, JJP 24 (1994) 191-212 = Ead., *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive* (SEAug 52), Roma 1996, 157-175, and FÖRSTER, *WB*, 362, s.v. καθολικὴ (ἐκκλησία, ἡ).

¹³ O.Crum 292 is a letter addressed by the monks of the church of Saint Mary to those of the catholic church (ll. 3-6: ἀνον ἡεσνηϥ ἡἁⲓⲓα ἡαρη εἰεϣⲁ ἡ|ἡεσνηϥ ἡἁⲓⲓα ἡκαθολικῆ); about the first religious institution, see ТИММ, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten*, III, cit. (n. 3), 1020-1021.

¹⁴ The biblical motif of the divine σῆπῳῖνε (see e.g. Ps. 26, 4: εἱραῖα ἐποῖνοϥ ἡπρῳεἰε σῆπῳῖνε ἡπεφλαοϥ), particularly in the *iunctura* ρῖπεροϥ ἡπεφῆπῳῖνε (1Pet. 2, 12), often echoes in colophons as euphemism for “death”: Ms. Cairo, IFAO, fr. 1v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil des colophons des manuscrits chrétiens d'Égypte*, I. *Les colophons coptes des manuscrits sahidiques* 1, Louvain 1929, 117 f., n° LXXI, 10-11 (sec. IX-X): ἡφροϥⲏⲁ ἡῖμαϥ ρῖπεροϥ | ἡπεφσῆπῳῖνε; ms. New York, Pierpont Morgan L., M 599, fol. 32r = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 14-16, n° VII 2, 5-6 (8.XII.901): ἀριοϥⲏα ἡεῖⲓⲏε ἡεβῖεⲏ πεϣⲁϥ | ἡασιπῳῖνε; ms. London, BL, Or. 7022, fol. 59v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 184-186, n° CVIII, 18 (7.IV.981): ἡῖροϥⲏα ἡῖμαϥ · ρῖπεροϥ ἡπασῆπῳῖνε; ms. London, BL Or. 7029, fol. 76v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 197-200, n° CXIII E, 21-22 (14.VII.992): ⲁ|πνοϥⲧ(ε) · σῆπῳῖνε · ρῖτῖⲏⲏⲉϩⲏⲧⲟⲗⲏⲧⲏⲥ ρεοϥⲏ | [; ms. Napoli, BN Copt. I B 4, n° 367, fol. 6v = VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 112-113, n° LXVIII, 26-28 (AD 1000 circa): ἡῖροϥⲏα ἡῖμα[ϥ] ἡπεροϥ ἡπεφ[σῆ]πῳῖνε; ms. Vienna, Papyrussammlung K 9436 = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 106-107, n° LXIII, 17-19 (1006-1007): ἡαεϩεϩⲏοϥ | ἡἡα ἡῖμαϥ · ἡπεροϥ ἡπεσῆπῳῖνε; Paris, BNF Copte 1317, fol. 35v + 1321, fol. 66 = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 127-131, n° LXXVII, 27-29 (6.VI.1091): ἡφ[ρ]οϥⲏα ἡἡμαϥ ἡπερ[σ]οϥ ἡπεσῆπῳῖνε; Londra, BL, Or. 3581B (69) = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 133-137, n° LXXX, 69-71 (18.IV.1112): εϣεῖⲓⲏⲉϩⲏοϥ ἡἡα ἡῖμαϥ ρῖπεροϥ | ἡπεφσῆπῳῖνε; ms. Paris, BNF Copte 1317, fol. 17 v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., 108-109, n° LXIV, 19-20 (11th cent.): ϩεϥⲏ[ⲁ] ἡἡμαϥ ἡπεροϥ | ἡπεφ[σῆ]πῳῖνε.

¹⁵ WESTENDORE, *KH*, 163 s., s.v. ϩεῖⲏε.

¹⁶ The attested variants of the toponym are collected in S. ТИММ, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten*, III, cit. (n. 3), 1013:

Since the aforesaid remains are so scant, it seems appropriate to expound some evaluation regarding uniquely the text drafted in the upper portion of the page. As we still lack an exhaustive terminological categorization by scholars focused on ancient *Buchwesen*, the denomination ‘colophon’ has been thus far attributed to paratexts of the widest possible variety. If one confines the attention to the field of Coptic studies, a meaningful example of the substantial vagueness of this word is offered by the illustrious *Recueil* of Arnold van Lantschoot, where plenty of paratexts of the very diverging content – conclusive titles, scribal subscriptions, owner’s notes, prayers, obituaries, even mere *lusus calami* – are gathered and masterfully edited. In view of the above, before defining it crudely as a colophon, it seems worthwhile to clarify which typology the text sewing up the Theban codex of the *Canones* does not correspond to. Firstly, it is not a scribal subscription, lacking any mention of the copyist or of the date when his work had been accomplished, and bearing neither any devotional note, nor, obviously, the *explicit* of the work preserved by the manuscript. Our text cannot even be described as a simple owner’s note, since a special stress is laid upon the donor through a turn of phrase which, starting from the subsequent century, was to become a canonical locution within the formulaic repertory of “colophons”¹⁷.

The comparison of the paratext borne by the manuscript recovered at Ṣayḥ ‘Abd al-Qurnah with the only analogous and about coeval evidence allows us to pinpoint the main features marking the *incunabulum* of Coptic “colophons”. Both touchstones are preserved by single leaves kept in the *papyrotheca* of the Museo Egizio of Turin among the Coptic treasures with which Bernardino Drovetti endowed the Piemontese institution in the early 1820’s. The one which is supposed to be the most ancient, is Inv.Prov. 6266, the likely conclusive page of a lost papyrus codex¹⁸. It consists in a terse owner’s note setting forth an ecclesiastical property (ll. 1-2: ⲛⲧⲕⲁⲑⲟⲗⲓⲕⲏ | ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲧⲓⲛ) followed by the mention of a reader (ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ) who was more probably the donor than the manufacturer of the book. Below the date in Greek, there is a thoroughgoing table of the contents the missing manuscript hosted (l. 21: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉⲧⲥⲏⲣⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲗⲁⲩⲟⲩⲙⲉ), apparently due to the same bookhand although it resorts to letters of diminished size.

† ⲡⲁⲓⲡⲉ ⲡⲬⲞⲩⲙⲉ ⲛⲧⲕⲁⲑⲟⲗⲓⲕⲏ
 ⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲧⲓⲛ ⲉⲛⲟⲩⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ
 ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲁⲙⲏⲏ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲓⲉⲟⲣ-
 ⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲗⲁⲕⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ
 5 ⲟⲩⲗⲏⲗ ⲉⲗⲟⲓ ⲛⲁⲓⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩ ⲉⲁⲙⲏⲏ ·
 ⲙⲏⲛⲟⲥ Ⲃⲑⲩⲣ ⲓⲑ ⲧⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ.

«This is the book of the catholic | church (καθολική ἐκκλησία) of Tin, in peace (εἰρήνη) | of the God, amen. I am George the least reader (ἀναγνώστης) | pray for me as an act of charity (ἀγάπη), amen | 19th (day) of month Athyr of third indiction».

A more long-winded “colophon” is offered by a dateless single leaf, Inv. Prov. 8548¹⁹. The hand could be easily described as a documentary one. Van Lantschoot, albeit *dubitanter*, assigned it to the 8th or 9th century, but nothing prevents us, in my opinion, from evaluating it as slightly older, that is approximately coeval with the bulk of the Thinite library. The subscription ratified the gift of the equally lost manuscript of unknown content to the monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Thinis (ll. 3-4: ⲉⲡⲓⲧⲟⲡⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ ⲁⲛⲁ | [ⲓ]ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲏⲛⲏⲥ ⲛⲁⲓⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲧⲓⲛ). As it often occurs in later “colophons”, Christian modesty and faith in divine omniscience (l. 2: ⲡⲬⲞⲩⲉⲓⲥ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲥⲟⲟⲩⲛ ⲛⲛⲉⲩⲃⲣⲁⲛ) implied the aposiopesis of the identity of the pious widow who presented the book and the relatives, on whose behalf she was entreating:

ⲡⲓⲁⲓⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲣⲏⲧ ⲛⲧⲁⲛⲓⲛ ⲛⲓⲥⲣⲓⲙⲉ ⲙⲓⲡⲉⲩ-
 ⲣⲓⲟⲩⲟ ⲡⲬⲞⲩⲉⲓⲥ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲥⲟⲟⲩⲛ ⲛⲛⲉⲩⲃⲣⲁⲛ
 ⲁⲥⲓⲧⲁⲁⲩ ⲉⲣⲟⲩⲛ ⲉⲡⲓⲧⲟⲡⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ ⲁⲛⲁ
 ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲛⲏⲛⲏⲥ ⲛⲁⲓⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲥⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲧⲓⲛ ⲉⲁⲡⲟⲩ-

ⲕⲉⲙⲉ, ⲕⲉⲙⲏ, ⲕⲏⲙⲉ, ⲕⲏⲙⲏⲉ, ⲧⲕⲉⲙⲉ, ⲧⲕⲏⲙⲏⲉ, Βοῦ. ⲉⲉⲛⲓ.

¹⁷ The customary phrasing consists of the name of the donor, ⲁⲓⲧⲁⲁⲩ ⲉⲣⲟⲩⲛ ⲉ-, or an equivalent relative form, followed by the mention of the donee religious institution, see the instances indexed in A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil, cit.*, 142b.

¹⁸ VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil, cit.* (n. 8), 180 f., n° CV.

¹⁹ VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil, cit.* (n. 8), 181 f., n° CVI.

- 5 ⲭⲁⲗⲓ ⲛ̅ⲧⲉⲛⲓ ⲛ̅ⲛⲓⲛⲉⲥⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ
 ⲛⲓⲗⲁⲓ ⲛⲛⲛⲉⲥⲟⲩⲛⲣⲉ ⲛⲛⲛⲉⲥⲣⲟⲩⲙⲉ
 ⲧⲓⲛⲣⲟϥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁⲛⲉϥⲣⲁⲛ ⲭⲉⲕⲁⲥ ⲉⲣⲉ-
 ⲡⲛⲟϥⲧⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛⲛⲣⲁⲗⲓⲟⲥ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲓⲱⲗⲁⲛ-
 ⲛⲓⲛⲥ ⲛⲁⲥⲙⲟϥ ⲉⲣⲟⲟϥ ⲛ̅ⲛⲛⲉⲕⲗⲏ-
 10 ⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲓⲥⲓ ⲛ̅ⲛⲓⲛⲉⲗⲓⲛⲓ ⲧⲏⲣⲓⲥ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ-
 ⲡⲉⲓⲥⲙⲟϥ ⲛ̅ⲁⲃⲣⲁⲗⲁⲛ ⲛ̅ⲛⲓⲥⲁⲁⲕ ⲛ̅ⲛ-
 ⲓⲁⲓⲕⲟⲩⲃ ⲗⲛⲟϥⲉⲣⲏⲛⲏ ⲗⲁⲙⲏⲛ.

«This is the vow of which a certain woman took | care – The Lord God knows their names – | she put it upon to the place (τόπος) of the Saint Apa | John the Baptist of Tin for the relea|se of her soul (ψυχή) with (that of) her blessed (μακάριος) | husband, with (that of) her sons, with (that of) her men, | all according to their names, in order that might | God with the Saint (ἅγιος) Apa Joh|n bless them with the cler|gy (κλήρος) all, with their house all according | to the blessing of Abraham, with Isaac, with | Jacob in peace (εἰρήνη), amen».

The paratext concluding the Theban codex of the pseudo-Basilian *Canons* and the couple preserved in the Turinese collection, not to mention their uneven extent as well as the diverse eulogies to which they have recourse, exhibit an undeniable resemblance. This is also likely due to their chronological congruity and to their provenance from neighboring contexts. Each one begins with the same demonstrative *tournaire* (ⲛⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉ, ⲡⲓⲗⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲣⲏⲧ) in order to highlight their unavoidable material connection with the book they sew up²⁰. Hints at the confection of the book or at the identity of the copyist are lacking anyhow. Irrespective of the presence or absence of a forthright mention of the benefactor, a stable and main feature of these texts is the enunciation of the ecclesiastical institute receiving the gift, even though they could not be demoted to trivial owner's notes. Despite the fact that it might seem untoward to develop a hypothesis with the comfort of such a scarce evidence, I am inclined to believe that these three documents could actually depict what Coptic 'colophons' were before the *scriptorium* of Toutōn dictated its broadly accepted and long-lasting stylistic precepts. They were, presumptively, nothing more than concise *Schenkungsurkunden*, necessarily bound, even on a physical level, to the object whose charitable gift they sanctioned.

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Abstract. The article offers a new edition with some amendments of the colophon preserved by the last leaf of ms. Cairo, Coptic Museum, inv. 13488. Together with two similar paratexts belonging to the Turinese library of Thi(ni)s, the colophon of the manuscript of Šayḥ ‘Abd al-Qurnah is one of the most ancient example of this documentary genre within the extant Coptic Schrifttum.

Keywords. Coptic Colophons. Coptic codices. Katholike ekklesia.

²⁰ Comparable openings with the “deictic” pronoun and the relative clause (ⲛⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉ ⲛ̅ⲧⲁ-) are to be found, for instance in Ms. Cairo, Ifao, fr. 1v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., LXXI, 1 (Aḥmīm?, 9th-10th cent.); Ms. Cairo, E. M. inv. 9270, fol. 2v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., LXXII, 1 (Aḥmīm?, 9th-10th cent.); Ms. Leiden, Rijksmuseum, Insigner n° 81, fol. 3r = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., LXXIII A, 1 (Aḥmīm, AD 1000 circa); Ms. London, BL Or. 6781, fol. 35v = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., LXXXIV A, 1 (? , AD 983 : ⲛⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲣⲏⲧ ⲁϥⲟ ⲡⲁⲟⲣⲏ | ⲉⲛⲁⲡⲉⲣⲁⲧⲟⲛ ⲛⲧⲁ-); Ms. Paris, BNF Copte 1321, fol. 70r = A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., LXXXV A, 1 (? , AD 985-986). The same verbiage occurs also in some final titles: e.g. A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Recueil*, cit., II A, 1 (ⲛⲁⲓⲧⲉ ⲡⲓⲟⲥ ⲕⲧⲗ.).

Linking Coptic Literary Manuscripts to the Archaeological Context by Means of Digital Humanities: The Case of 'PATHs' project

by

Julian Bogdani

1. INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this paper is the methodological background that has determined all the solutions embraced in this first year of the activities of the PATHs project, funded by the European Research Council and hosted at Sapienza University of Rome (Dept. of History, Anthropology, Religions, Arts and Performing Arts)¹. We believe that our *in fieri* experience could be fruitfully adopted by others in similar disciplines, and this is the main reason for the full presentation of our philosophy and methodology in this journal. Technical elements, such as a thorough database description, are omitted here, because this information is going to be published soon in detailed and complete form, following a more appropriate editorial plan². At present, some aspects of the project have already been discussed at international conferences and round tables focused on both archaeological and textual topics, some of them recently published³. This paper pays greater attention to the still-lacking description of the all-embracing framework of what has been accomplished so far.

The most peculiar trait of the PATHs project is its ambition to be a multi-disciplinary project. Application of information technology to humanities studies is by no means an innovative approach⁴, but the combination of literary, textual, religious and historical studies with archaeological research, using information technology as a common sharing and working platform, certainly is⁵. The historical background and scope of this common research is the Late Antique and Medieval Egypt. PATHs' main aim is, in fact, to sketch a diachronic geography of Coptic literary production by extensively combining philology, archaeology and digital humanities, in order to explore the process of production, copying, dissemination, usage, transmission and preservation of Coptic literary works in a close relationship with the tangible geographical contexts of provenance of both texts and related writing supports⁶.

The Egyptian landscape is far from being unknown: almost everybody is aware of the wealth of extraordinarily preserved archaeological and textual material its sands have offered up in the past and still continue to offer in the present⁷. Yet, the attention of scholars has been attracted in the past by the most

¹ ERC Advanced (2015) "PATHs – Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context. Production, Copying, Usage, Dissemination and Storage" directed by Paola Buzi and hosted by Sapienza University of Rome (project number 687567).

² The working draft of the technical documentation is maintained on PATHs' repository on Github and published at <https://docs.paths-erc.eu>. It contains at present the definition of the database schema and the detailed descriptive protocol for manuscripts and places (see below). This documentation is continuously and constantly being updated and enhanced as long as the project advances, also introducing new encoding schemes for textual and graphical documents.

³ P. BUZI – J. BOGDANI – N. CARLIG – M.C. GIORDA – A. SOLDATI, "Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths": A New International Project on Coptic Literature, *Rivista del Museo Egizio* 1 (2017), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29353/rime.2017.656>. J. BOGDANI, *The archaeological atlas of Coptic literature. A question of method*, *Vicino Oriente* 21 (2017) 59–69.

⁴ For a difficult history of humanities computing, cf. S. HOCKEY, *The History of Humanities Computing*, in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. S. SCHREIBMAN, R. SIEMENS, J. UNSWORTH, Oxford 2004, 3–19. It is worth noting that pioneering work in digital techniques applied to humanities and literature studies has been conducted by Italian scholar Roberto A. Busa and his *Index Thomisticus* (R.A. BUSA, *Index Thomisticus*, Stuttgart 1974).

⁵ For an updated and well documented state of art on the fruitful application of Information Technology on text-oriented studies, specifically epigraphy, cf. *Digital and Traditional Epigraphy in Context. Proceedings of the EAGLE 2016 International Conference*, ed. S. ORLANDI – F. MAMBRINI – P. LIUZZO (Collana Convegni 36), Roma 2017.

⁶ "PATHs project", <http://paths.uniroma1.it>, accessed 22/01/2018.

⁷ For an extraordinary and recent example of the discovery of three books written in Coptic during archaeological

monumental pharaonic periods and, secondly, by the well-documented Greek and Roman phases. Late Antiquity and the Mediaeval period, marked by the birth and growth of the Coptic language and Coptic literature, mostly of religious content⁸, were somehow underestimated during the golden age of the Egyptian explorations.

2. THE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Since PATHs is a multifaceted project, dealing with information from different sources, a rather complex structure had to be conceived for the information system. This structure is both able to facilitate the specific work of each specialist within his field and, at the same time, to permit a closer collaboration between different disciplines, defining a very detailed network of links and associations, capable of reestablishing the lost unity of the archaeological and literary data. The information that is currently collected, managed and elaborated has been categorized into seven domains, which can (and will soon) be increased in the future. These domains concern: manuscripts, collections, works, titles, colophons, authors and places, strictly connected through a rather complicated relation network. Right from the outset, the information system was designed with the prospect of first-hand use of the most important digital source of Coptic literary texts currently available, the *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* (CMCL) by Tito Orlandi⁹.

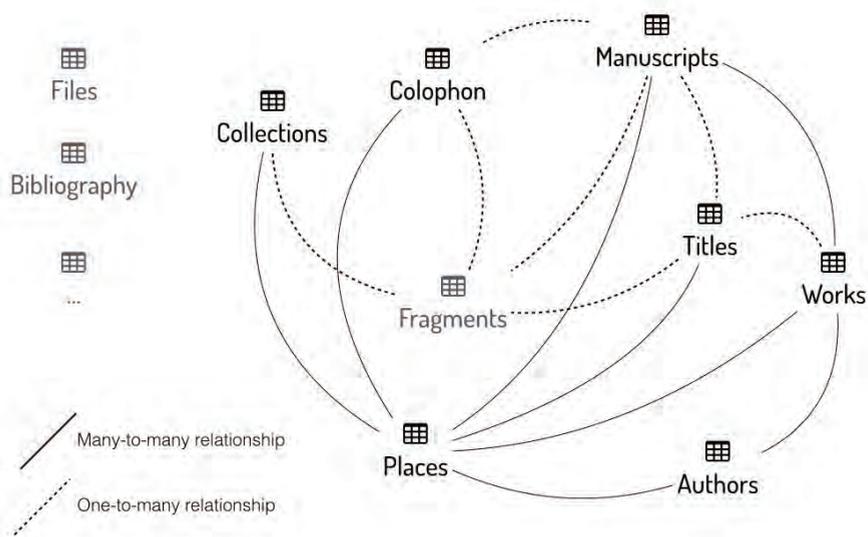


Fig. 1. Simplified diagram of PATHs' Information system

excavations, cf. T. GÓRECKI, *Sheikh Abd el-Gurna*, in *Seventy Years of Polish Archaeology in Egypt*, ed. A. MAJEWSKA, E. LASKOWSKA-KUSZTAŁ, Warsaw 2007, 183–190; A. THOMMÉE, *The Gurna Manuscripts (hermitage in MMA 1152), conservation report, 2010*, *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 22 (2012) 199–208 and the paper by Ewa Wipszycka in this section.

⁸ P. BUZI *et al.*, *Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths*, cit. par. 1.

⁹ Available at <http://www.cmcl.it/> [accessed 2018/01/27]. See also T. ORLANDI, *Modeling the Coptic Literature. The*

This database, partly available for free and partly through a subscription plan, is a stratified gold mine of digitized resources about Coptic literary tradition and manuscripts. It is also the *de facto* authority file for the classification of Coptic literary works, thanks to the use of a unique identifier called *Clavis Patrum Copticorum* or *Clavis Coptica* (CC)¹⁰.

2.1. Manuscripts

The *Manuscripts* domain is aimed at creating an ordered list of Coptic *codicological units* of literary contents and providing each element with a unique new identifier made up of the acronym CLM (Coptic Literary Manuscript) followed by a unique progressive number. A codicological unit «corresponds to what in the more lucky traditions are simply and rightly called “the codices”, i.e., the books in their original form»¹¹. As T. Orlandi has pointed out, the Coptic manuscript tradition has endured a long history of dismemberment and often what once used to be part of a single codex is now preserved in leaves and fragments scattered in several library and archive collections¹². *Manuscripts* therefore tries to recover all the information that can possibly be obtained from these *disiecta membra* of the original codex (or roll) they belonged to. Particular attention is paid to a very detailed and careful physical (i.e. codicological) description of the fragments, a very important step in the attempt to find similarities between different manuscript fragments and, finally, try to group them into clusters, referable to original codicological units. For each fragment considered, precise coordinates of where it is preserved (collection and shelf number) are provided, in order to easily locate and verify all the information provided. A huge amount of information has been inherited by the above mentioned CMCL database, in which about 710 codicological units had already been recorded, identified by a *siglum* made up of a prefix of four letters identifying the provenance of the manuscripts¹³ and a progressive suffix of two letters, forming a classification system based on the 24 letters of the alphabet¹⁴. For each codicological unit qualified relationships with the archaeological context (be it the production, storage or discovery context), when available and/or recoverable, are being registered. The detailed listing and the geographical representation of production, storage and discovery places of manuscript fragments containing literary texts is certainly an important focus of the project.

2.2. Collections

A new mapping of all library and archive collections where manuscripts and manuscript fragments are currently stored was a fundamental prerequisite for the work undertaken on codicological units. For this reason, a complete census of library collections was started and has almost been completed, containing not only European and American collections, but also Egyptian ones and, most importantly, provisional and more or less stable storehouses of various papyrological and archaeological missions active in the region, that have discovered literary texts written in Coptic. This step is of great importance not only

“*Corpus Dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari*,” in *I&E 2002: Proceedings of the XIV Table Ronde Informatique et Égyptologie*, Pisa 2003. For a complete list of T. Orlandi’s contributions on the topic of Digital Humanities, cf. T. ORLANDI, *Pubblicazioni di Tito Orlandi relative all’Informatica umanistica*, in <http://www.cmcl.it/~orlandi/pubinf.html>.

¹⁰ The *Clavis Coptica*, a «list of the authors and works of the Coptic literature with information on manuscripts, content, and critical problems» (T. ORLANDI, <http://www.cmcl.it/> [accessed 2018/01/27]) is a list of four-digit identification numbers, that can be quoted as ccNNNN, e.g.: cc0001. The list has been modeled on the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, by Maurice Geerard, cf. T. ORLANDI, *Coptic texts relating to the Virgin Mary. An Overview*, Roma 2008, 12.

¹¹ T. ORLANDI, *Coptic texts relating to the Virgin Mary*, cit., 8.

¹² This dismemberment is the main reason why the PAThs project inherited and adopted the methodological and terminological framework set up by Tito Orlandi, cf. T. ORLANDI, *Coptic texts relating to the Virgin Mary*, cit., 7–11.

¹³ DISH: ‘Dishna papers’, GIOV: Library of the church of This, now in the Museum of Turin, MACA: Library of the Monastery of St. Macarius, Sketis, MERC: Library of the Monastery of St. Mercurius at Tbo (Apollonopolis Magna, Edfu), MICH: Library of the Monastery of St. Michael at Sopheh (Fayum), MONB: Library of the Monastery of St. Shenute at Atripe, NHAM: Codices found at Nag Hammadi. Manuscripts with unknown provenance have been identified by prefix CMCL.

¹⁴ To each CMCL manuscript *siglum* corresponds thus a CML identifier, e.g.: codicological unit from so called White Monastery at Atripe MONB.BF = CLM292. The reference to the provenance library is not maintained anymore in the new identifier in order to keep the identification separated and independent from any (possibly varying) metadata.

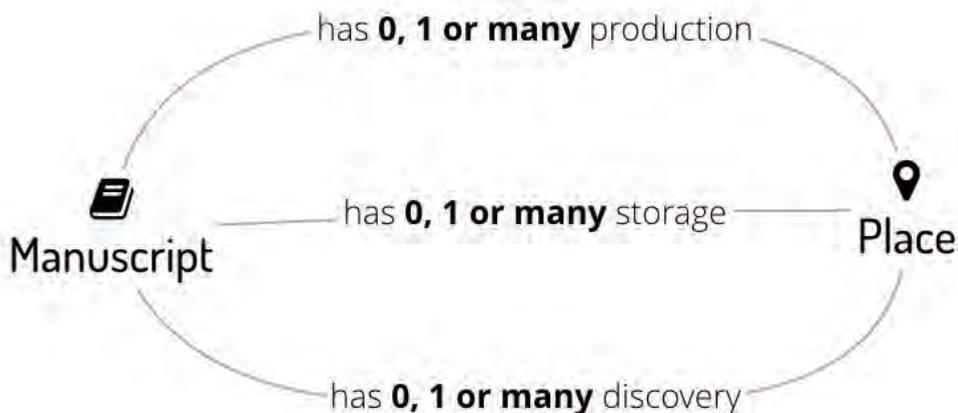


Fig. 2. A detailed description of the many-to-many qualified relationship between Manuscripts and Places

for the identification and location of the written fragments, but also for their further exploration and exploitation, e.g.: photographic documentation, archeological contextualization (e.g. through antiquarian documentation), sampling or laboratory analysis.

2.3. Works and Authors

The study of the literary works contained in manuscripts has, for many years, been one of the main aims of the CMCL database, and the creation of the *Clavis Coptica* (see above) is one of the most important results, but it is far from my competence to offer an adequate description of the main issues involving Coptic literary production. As far as the identification, description and serialization of Coptic translations of Greek works—or of works conceived originally in Coptic—is concerned, PATHs is currently relying mainly on the results of the CMCL. T. Orlandi's *Clavis Coptica* continues to be the only reliable system of unique identification of literary works and 'textual units'; it is continuously being updated, also due to the reprisal of the research by the PATHs team with the addition of new records or with a more detailed and congruent description of the works. Yet this authority list, widely adopted by international scholarship, is not planned to be replaced by a newly created identification system.

Much more articulated are the issues related to the authorship of these works. In Orlandi's CMCL, each work has been attributed, when possible, to an author, reported in Italian form, e.g. Giovanni di Shmun. In the PATHs database, the list has been translated in English and for each name the Coptic and Greek forms are provided. Furthermore, the one-to-many relationship between *Authors* and *Works* adopted by Tito Orlandi in his CMCL has been further developed, towards a more articulated many-to-many relationship: one author can be connected to more than one works and one work can, in turn, be connected to many authors. These links are being labeled to exhaustively qualify the connection type: a Work can therefore have a *stated* Author¹⁵ or a Work can have a well definite Author, labeled in this case as *creator*; in

¹⁵ Paratexts, typically titles, can sometimes claim a false authorship of the text they accompany; this is done, usually, to enhance the text's reputation and authority. This information, although fictitious, is stored in the database. It is the case, for instance, of cc0081 (*Quod Deus non est auctor malorum*) attributed by a title (paths.titles.103 / ccT0049-I) to John Chrysostom (paths.authors.53), but in fact created by Basil of Caesarea (paths.authors.26).

few exceptional cases the Coptic Work might be a free adaption (or translation) of other works of known authors; in these case the *author(s) of the master work* from which the current one was adapted are being recorded¹⁶. In the most fortunate cases, many of these relationships can be filed for a single Work, while in other cases we are forced to make do with uncertainty and lack of information.

Finally, each author is being linked to the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF)¹⁷ by means of unique stable identifiers, in order to comply with internationally shared library standards.

2.4. Titles and Colophons

Paratexts, such as *Titles and Colophons*¹⁸, are currently being catalogued as separate entities, distinguished from supports (i.e. manuscripts) where they have been written and from text they accompany. A unique identifier has been assigned to each paratext and they are linked both to the pertinent original manuscripts and to actual fragments where they are currently preserved. Titles are also connected to the works they accompany. All texts are being transcribed and translated in English and detailed information about layout, paleography, and some linguistic features is provided.

2.5. Places

Places is the domain responsible for the archaeological description of relevant sites and for the geographical representation of the whole dataset, therefore it is a fundamental part of the entire information system in the creation of the archaeological Atlas. Its core is a cataloguing and descriptive protocol of Egyptian archaeological sites, of different sizes and types, which had a documented activity in Late Antiquity and the Mediaeval period, in other words between the 3rd and 11th century CE. Once again, full advantage has been taken from previous or parallel projects, mainly Trismegistos Places¹⁹ and, most importantly, the Pleiades gazetteer²⁰, currently the most important international project focused on the geographical representation of ancient Mediterranean places. Besides, data from these open access databases must be reworked, further analyzed and studied to fit the needs of the PATHs project. For each site, three different geographical contextualizations are provided, one referred to current administrative geography, a second referred to ancient geography (province, *nomos*, and *meris* in the case of the Fayyum region) and a third referred to the religious administrative organization (references to episcopal sees, important monasteries, etc.). The main focus of the project is on the period between the 3rd and 11th century CE, but previous and sometimes successive phases can (and should) not be ignored. Coptic geography is the dynamic result of important changes that transformed, sometimes utterly and definitively, the previous landscape²¹. This is

¹⁶ It is the case of work cc0689 contained in codex VI of Nag Hammadi library (CLM 667; CMCL: NHAM.06). It is notoriously a «redactional (gnosticizing) transformation of» Plato, *Resp.* IX (T. ORLANDI, *Nag Hammadi Texts and the Coptic Literature*, in *Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi. Traditions et convergences*, ed. L. PAINCHAUD, P.-H. POIRER, Louvain-Paris 2007, 323-334). *The Republic* is assumed to be the master work from which cc0689 was created and Plato its author; the creator of the Coptic work cc0689 remains anonymous.

¹⁷ “The VIAF® (Virtual International Authority File) combines multiple name authority files into a single OCLC-hosted name authority service. The goal of the service is to lower the cost and increase the utility of library authority files by matching and linking widely-used authority files and making that information available on the Web.”, <http://viaf.org/> [accessed 2018-01-27].

¹⁸ P. BUZI, *Titoli e colofoni: riflessioni sugli elementi paratestuali dei manoscritti copti saidici*, in *Colofoni armeni a confronto: le sottoscrizioni nei manoscritti in ambito armeno e nelle altre tradizioni scritte del mondo mediterraneo: atti del colloquio internazionale*, Bologna, 12-13 ottobre 2012, ed. A. SRINIAN, P. BUZI, G. SHURGAIA, Roma 2016, 203–217.

¹⁹ Trismegistos Places is based on the foundations of the Fayum Project (Graeco-Roman Egypt) of the KU Leuven and the project Multilingualism and Multiculturalism in Graeco-Roman Egypt of Cologne University; these data were fully reworked before their current publication on the website, cf. H. VERRETH, *A survey of toponyms in Egypt in the Graeco-Roman period*. Trismegistos Online Publications, 2, Leuven, <http://www.trismegistos.org/geo/index.php> [accessed 2018-01-27].

²⁰ T. ELLIOTT – SEAN GILLIES, *Digital Geography and Classics*, Digital Humanities Quarterly 003 (1) 2009. For the reuse of this data in a Linked and Open Data (LOD) oriented project, cf. R. SIMON – L. ISAKSEN – E. BARKER – P. DE SOTO CAÑAMARES, *The Pleiades Gazetteer and the Pelagios Project*, in *Placing Names: Enriching and Integrating Gazetteers* edited by M. LEX BERMAN, R. MOSTERN, H. SOUTHALL, Bloomington 2016, 97–109.

²¹ For an incomplete and superficial but significant example, the case of Western Thebes can be considered

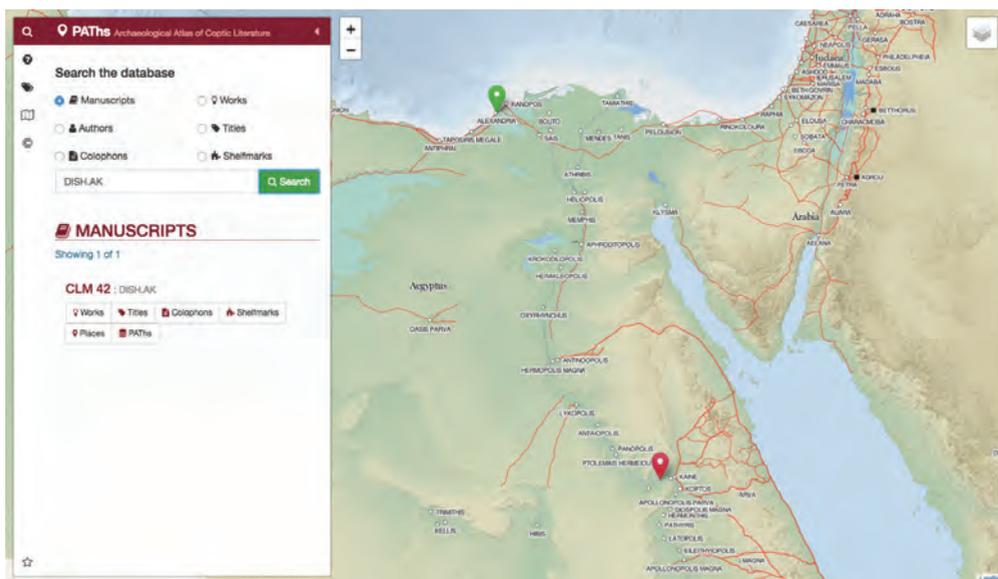


Fig. 3. Partial view of the descriptive protocol of *Places*: The site of Bakchias (paths.places.105), its different toponyms over time and links to external gazetteers (Trismagistos GeoID and Pleiades).

the main reason why a synthetic but complete description of each phase is also provided, with no claim to be complete, but with the hope of providing a meaningful background and a first bibliographic tool that can be used for further detailed studies.

At this initial stage of the project, the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*²², in the digital version elaborated at the Ancient World Mapping Center²³, and the previously mentioned *Pleiades* gazetteer²⁴ are the primary sources for geographic coordinates. These solid data providers offer a trusted base to build new research upon, yet further improvement is necessary, because of the different scale of interest

(E.R. O'CONNELL, *Excavating Christian Western Thebes: A History*, in *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt, Volume 2: Nag Hammadi—Esna*, edited by G. GABRA, H.N. TAKLA, Cairo 2010, 253–270 and the contribution by the same author to this volume): what used to be a vast necropolis in the Dynastic, Hellenistic and Roman period was transformed in this later period into a rather densely populated region, scattered with monasteries and cells of monks. This landscape cannot be comprehended and explained if the previous necropolis and sacred geography is excluded from the reference framework. The case of Western Thebes is of particular interest and this is the main reason it was chosen to be the first destination of PATHs *in loco* archaeological and topographical surveys (cf. *infra* note 25).

²² *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, ed. R.J.A. TALBERT – R.S. BAGNALL, Princeton (NJ) 2000.

²³ <http://awmc.unc.edu> [accessed 2018-01-27].

²⁴ <https://pleiades.stoa.org/> [accessed 2018-01-27].

of PATHs project. New places, not present in the above mentioned gazetteers are being mapped and a very detailed description is being provided for each place. Bibliography based information is currently being greatly extended with new data, collected during specifically programmed on-field campaigns²⁵.

The Places domain has, on one hand, a meaning *per se*, providing the basis for any archaeological consideration. On the other hand, it has a pivotal and strategic position in the entire information system, inasmuch as it represents the main hub where all other domains meet. Every manuscript can be related to one or more places, be it a production, storage or discovery place. Collections where these manuscripts are stored today are also referred to geographical places. The same is true for works: their attestation, diffusion and circulation can be traced and represented by referencing these to actual places.

2.6. The underlying GIS platform

The places domain is supported by a dedicated desktop GIS platform, responsible for the organization and storage of all geographical data. At present, the implementation of the GIS is still in the early stages, since the first year of activity was spent mainly on the analysis of manuscripts and fragments and their present location. The GIS is being built with a double function in mind: to provide a high precision repository for geographical (and georeferenceable) vector and raster data²⁶ and as a base for further analysis and study,



Fig. 4. Desktop GIS project showing the overlay of Places on current satellite imagery and on georeferenced historical cartography (A Map of Lower Egypt from Various Surveys communicated by Major Bryce and other Officers. Drawn by A. Arrowsmith 1807. London, Published A. Arrowsmith, No.10 Soho Square, 10th November, 1807, source David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/>).

²⁵ The first on-field campaign, aimed at a closer awareness of the topography and archaeology of the Theban area, was completed in January 2018. A very rich photographic documentation and an important update of our knowledge of the state of preservation of Coptic remains in this area are two important results. The identification of new certain and possible sites and the better contextualization and description of other poorly documented remains are a key aspect of the archaeological part of the project.

²⁶ Many high-quality base layers and vector data are provided free of charge on the Ancient World Mapping Center website (<http://awmc.unc.edu/wordpress/map-files/> [last visited 2018-01-21]). Simultaneously, many maps, sketches and site plans in publicly available bibliographic entries are being digitized, georeferenced, vectorized and uploaded

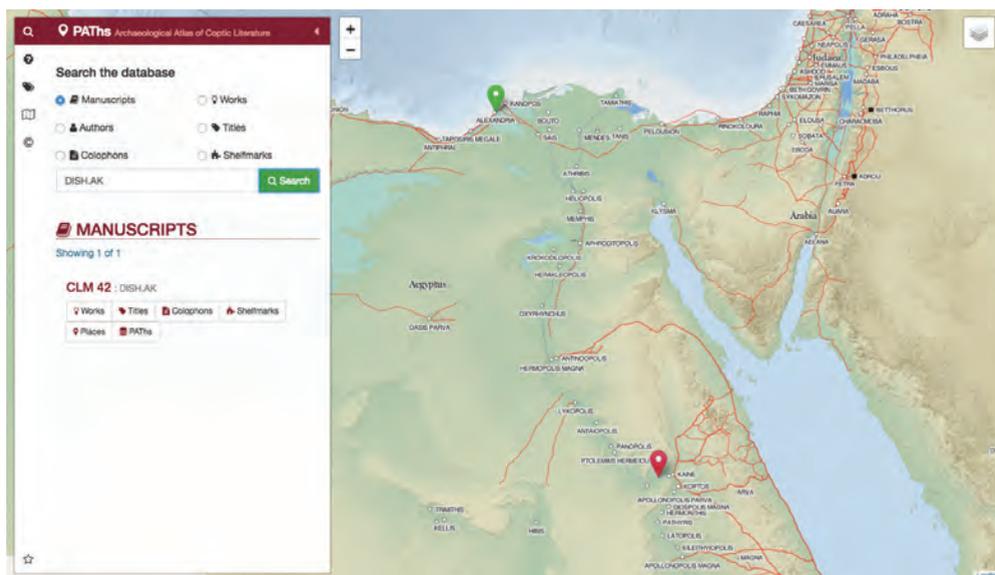


Fig. 5. Proof of concept on the online database: a simple search using CMCL's siglum for codicological units returns the correspondent CLM identifier. Both production (in green) and discovery (in red) are shown on the map. Basemap by Digital Atlas of the Roman Empire (DARE) project (<http://dare.ht.lu.se>)

in an attempt to better refine the positioning of uncertain or unlocalized places and to better contextualize the manuscripts and create a meaningful link between texts and archaeological contexts. The work is still just beginning, but the goal is to be able, in the final stages, to easily build dynamic maps capable of effectively displaying specific themes, like the creation centers of a given literary work, the most common circulation paths, etc. By accomplishing a very detailed description of manuscripts and places of storage and discovery, it will be possible through GIS analysis to intersect the data and possibly infer knowledge for manuscripts of unknown provenance.

Thematic layers created for internal use will be finally published on the Internet and made available to the broader scientific community using permissive licenses, in order to incentivize the reuse of the created data and possibly their further enhancement by a wider active public²⁷.

3. PHILOSOPHY AND KEY ASPECTS

The last considerations offer the opportunity to introduce a few methodological key aspects that arose as fundamental during the conception and first realization of the PATHs information system. These might appear very technical at first glance, and essentially they are technical, but their consideration and examination has deep implications on the daily activities of the various scholars and contributors of PATHs as well as in the final results of the project.

onto the main platform. These resources are now being used for the archaeological study; in the future, all copyright-free material will be re-published and made freely available on PATHs' website and in PATHs' public data repositories.

²⁷ Different IT tools are being created and made available by PATHs' team, both for internal and external use, along other textual resources and documentation. All this material is made available at PATHs' repository on GitHub (<https://github.com/paths-erc>) with permissive MIT (<https://opensource.org/licenses/MIT>) and Creative Commons (<https://creativecommons.org/>), in order to encourage use and contribution by other projects or individuals. Cf. also note 34 for a recent bibliographic assessment on the usage of open data in the archaeological domain.

3.1. Scalability

As stressed many times before so far, PATHs sits on the shoulders of other important projects for many reasons. An important dataset with fundamental information on manuscripts, fragments, literary classification, etc., has been imported from the CMCL database. Also, the core set of geographical data is being imported from and linked to Pleiades or the Ancient World Mapping Center. Yet, these data represent only a part of the Atlas' dataset and need to be further enriched and extended, with a detailed study to match the expectations of the project²⁸. For this reason, the information system should be able to contain and process the current data, and also be able to grow with them in the future. The expected growth is both horizontal, e.g. with the addition of new study domains²⁹, and vertical, i.e. the ideal expanding to infinity of the number of items in each domain, without losing performance or interrupting the search and visualization experience.

3.2. Interoperability

Since the outset, the PATHs project has found strong foundations in important open access databases and it is a moral obligation for us to share our results with the scientific community in a similar manner. Furthermore, providing one or many links for virtually every resource that PATHs deals with, to other identical or similar entries of external open data providers, can greatly help the better identification and definition of the study object, offering our database to a wider audience. A few simplified examples can further explain this point: pairing each PATHs' CLM identifier with identifiers of other databases that record (among other things) Coptic rolls and codices, such as Trismegistos texts or the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB), will surely help users of these well-known databases easily find corresponding records in the PATHs database and vice-versa. Outwards links have already been implemented and in the future, specific planned agreements will produce inward (towards PATHs) connections. Furthermore, since each database is aimed at different purposes and is therefore differently structured, end-users can easily put together different types of descriptive protocols and information using these easy to follow hard-links. Not to mention the opportunity of automated data migration from one platform to another, filling the gaps that each research project might have, without having to review previous work accomplished by peers³⁰.

The same can be true for less strictly matching spheres, such as the history of literature: providing each *Clavis Coptica* with the corresponding *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*³¹, without making a very strong assumption about the level of relevance, can greatly help scholars of religious studies of different cultural *milieus* put together rich folders of documentation. Links can be easily edited, added or removed if further detailed studies highlight slight inconsistencies due to obvious differences between different literary traditions. Finally, no better example can be proposed than the one related to the *Places* domain: each place—be it a region, a *nomós* or a very specific location—is provided with a Trismegistos GeoID or Pleiades place iden-

²⁸ Just to offer a rough example of the differences between PATHs' and other databases, of the 6.144 codicological units recorded at present (January 2018) in the PATHs' manuscripts database, only 541 are present in Trismegistos and the Leuven Data Base of Ancient Books (LDAB), initially used as sources of information. Again, the 2-3 sites documented by Pleiades in the Western Theban area correspond to dozens of archaeological sites in the PATHs' database. This difference is not due to the carelessness of other datasets, but to the different geographical scale of study and/or to a different chronological focus.

²⁹ Such as, for example, the chemical analysis of writing supports and inks, which was not envisaged since the beginning, but has been recently started. Also a deeper and analytical study of the book bindings of the Coptic manuscripts is being considered. Another domain that is going to be implemented in the near future is the one dedicated to *Persons related to manuscripts*, be them scribes or customers who financed the manuscript creation, etc; a georeferenced network of scribes is in fact one of the main PATHs expected outputs. The database will be adapted to accommodate the information that can possibly provide important clues to further cluster manuscript fragments of unknown provenance.

³⁰ The PATHs' database system is also provided with an RESTful Application Programming Interface (API) endpoint for fully automated access by third-party automated services. This is an essential step for the correct alignment of stable identifiers and the automated migration of metadata between different initiatives and projects.

³¹ CPG, but also links to the *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (CANT), *Clavis Apocryphorum Veteris Testamenti* (CAVT), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* (BHO), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (BHG), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* (BHL) and *Clavis Aethiopica* (CaE), when available, are being stored.

tification³². This is a very important point as far as a later publication in an interconnected framework, like the one provided by Pelagios for instance, or any other Linked and Open Data Platform is concerned³³.

3.3. Sustainability

Leading the legacy of the CMCL to a new stage of development by enriching its already precious dataset with new information about codicological description, archaeological context, geographical data and richer links to external identifiers is certainly an important aim of the PATHs project. The creation of a new information system entails, on the other hand, the responsibility for creating an IT platform which is sustainable in the medium to long-term future, both from the technological and economic point of view. This is the reason why only open sourced software and libraries are being used and all measures are being taken in order to make all database content freely available with open data licenses, in order to encourage dissemination and further (re)usage³⁴.

The information system that is being created should be easily maintained in the future, without fees and licensing issues by third-party software houses or service providers. While the World Wide Web is swiftly becoming overcrowded with high quality software-as-a-service platforms, capable of managing large amounts of linked data efficiently and effortlessly, it seemed reasonable not to link the destiny of the PATHs project to that of a third-party service provider, at the cost of possibly renouncing or postponing cutting-edge features.

3.4. Technical specifications

As a result of the above-mentioned methodological premises, some incomplete technical specifications can be listed. The core functionality of the Information system is provided by an SQL-based database, a platform-agnostic database engine based either on MySQL/MariaDB or SQLite software. BraDypUS, an open-source licensed RDBM system³⁵, has been chosen as the principal graphical user interface, for its long term usage in archaeological (and more broadly Cultural Heritage) related projects, scattered from the Mediterranean to Central Asia and its efficient employment³⁶. It is written in PHP and JavaScript, but the most important feature is that it does not impose a specific database schema but conforms to

³² The scale of the PATHs project is generally bigger than that of larger projects like Trismegistos or Pleiades, consequently more PATHs' places can be located in a certain area where one or few Pleiades/Trismagisios places are documented. This is the main reason for introducing an independent naming system, along with the fact that our specific period of interest requires a specific gazetteer.

³³ The "mantra" of the Pelagios project is *Connectivity through Common Reference* (R. SIMON *et al.*, *The Pleiades Gazetteer and the Pelagios Project*, cit.) and this connectivity is entrusted mainly to geographical places identified by stable URIs. Referring back to these URIs will permit the PATHs database to be linked, queried and referred from Pelagios or other similar linked data browser portals. See also R. SIMON – E. BARKER – L. ISAKSEN, *Exploring Pelagios: a visual browser for geo-tagged datasets*, in *International Workshop on Supporting Users' Exploration of Digital Libraries*, 23-27 September 2012, Paphos, Cyprus, Paphos 2012; R. SIMON – L. ISAKSEN – E. BARKER – P. DE SOTO CAÑAMARES, *Pelagios and the Emerging Graph of Ancient World Data*, in *ACM Web Science Conference, WebSci '14, Bloomington, IN, USA, June 23-26, 2014*, Bloomington (IN) 2014, 197-201.

³⁴ In the last years the community of archaeological scholarship is becoming increasingly aware of the urgency of opening the archaeological dataset to general use and reuse, cf. M. ARIZZA – V. BOI – A. CARVALE – A. PALOMBINI – A. PIERGROSSI, *I Dati Archeologici. Accessibilità, Proprietà, Disseminazione* (Roma, CNR, 23 Maggio 2017), Firenze 2018; M. PREVITALI – R. VALENTE, *Archaeological Documentation and Data Sharing: Digital Surveying and Open Data Approach Applied to Archaeological Fieldworks*, *Virtual Archaeology Review* 10 (20) (2019) 17–27.

³⁵ Available at <https://github.com/jbogdani/BraDypUS>.

³⁶ J. BOGDANI, *Un archivio digitale multidisciplinare per la gestione e la conservazione di un patrimonio culturale a rischio: il progetto Ghazni (Afghanistan)*, *Archeologia e Calcolatori*. Supplement (2016) 236–245; J. BOGDANI – E. VECCHIETTI, *Network solutions for the management and dissemination of the archaeological data*, in *Open source, free software e open format nei processi della ricerca archeologica. Atti del III workshop (Padova, 8-9 maggio 2008)*, ed. by L. BEZZI *et al.* 2012; I. BALDINI LIPPOLIS – J. BOGDANI – E. VECCHIETTI, *Il progetto JiC, archivi in rete: verso una forma aperta di conoscenza*, in *Oreficeria in Emilia Romagna. Archeologia e storia tra età romana e medioevo*, ed. by I. BALDINI LIPPOLIS, A. LINA MORELLI, Bologna 2010, 7–25; J. BOGDANI – E. VECCHIETTI, *Nuove soluzioni in rete per la gestione e la divulgazione del dato archeologico*, *Ocnus* 16 (2008) 59–68.

the user-defined data model. Ultimately, it can easily be replaced at any time with other graphical user interfaces (GUI), with no need to reshape the data model or the dataset. This means that, in any case, the PATHs data-structure, data encoding format and in general its information system is not bound to any software or platform and is easily transportable if necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

PATHs is a multidisciplinary and complex project that brings together different specialists and expertise in the effort of restoring, for the very first time, the reconstruction of the Late Antique and Mediaeval Egyptian landscape from a quite unusual point of view: Coptic literary production and dissemination in its actual geographical and archaeological context. Besides, technical or domain-specific issues, some more general methodological considerations resurface, the main one regarding the kind of landscape we are about to reconstruct. The landscape that can be built by archaeological means can be quite different from that imagined from the philological or literary point of view. A third possible reconstruction can also be introduced, the landscape as can be presumed from the contents of the literary production, quite fictional but, in some cases, much more representative of the antique point of view than any archaeological evidence. It is rather slippery ground but nevertheless very interesting and full of stimulating challenges³⁷. This is not the place to tackle the details of these issues, and we are not sure that the project itself will be able to offer a clear answer. Yet it is a challenge worth taking, because despite its possibility of success, it offers the certainty of a fruitful *path* of knowledge, based on the reciprocal enrichment of different points of view and educational and training backgrounds. The information system and the IT solutions adopted to build, publish and visualize such a complex network are not only an unaware technical tool but a solid backbone upon which knowledge is built, represented, shared, and finally communicated.

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Abstract. Philological and literary studies on Coptic language and literature have faced a growing interest in recent years. As well, a more careful and sensitive reconsideration of archives and newly collected archaeological data allow today a more detailed reconstruction of the Egyptian Late Antique and Medieval landscape. The ultimate goal of PATHs project is to build new bridges between these two disciplines by creating an online atlas able to represent Coptic literature in its archaeological context, testing methodological frameworks and building IT tools based on network technologies. We believe that information technology, widely used since long time by both disciplines, can provide a common ground for experimentation and fruitful collaboration: PATHs information system discussed in this paper has proven to be an important test bench for the development of new methodologies and the improvement of the studies.

Keywords. Coptic literature. Digital Humanities. Network technologies. Digital Archaeology. GIS.

³⁷ For a methodological approach of this problem, cf. D.L. BROOKS HEDSTROM, *Reconsidering the Emerging Monastic Desertscape*, in *Copts in Context. Negotiating Identity, Tradition, and Modernity*, ed. by V.N. DOORN-HARDER, Columbia (SC) 2017, 205–217. The “imagined” geography of the Coptic literature is not PATHs’ main objective, yet some efforts are being spend in this direction. Few texts are being semantically annotated using a simplified TEI based scheme, as described in details by the paper of M.C. Giorda in this volume. For some interesting methodological notes on putting together Corpus linguistics and GIS based analysis and data visualization (called *Visual GISing*) cf. I.N. GREGORY – A. HARDIE, *Visual GISing: bringing together corpus linguistics and Geographical Information Systems*, *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 26,3 (2011) 297–314. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/lc/fqr022>.