

ISSN 2410-0951

COMSt
Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies
COMSt
Bulletin

Volume 9 • 1–2 • 2023

Edited by
Alessandro Bausi, Paola Buzi, Javier Del Barco,
Emiliano Fiori, Marilena Maniaci,
Eugenia Sokolinski

COMSt

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

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin welcomes articles, project descriptions, conference reports, book reviews and notes on all topics connected with the written cultures of the Mediterranean Near and Middle East and related traditions or offering a comparative perspective. Contributions should be sent to Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies, Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies, Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg, Alsterterrasse 1, 20354 Hamburg, Germany; eugenia.sokolinski@uni-hamburg.de. For submission guidelines and former issues visit <https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/en/comst/publications/bulletin.html>.

Editorial Board

Alessandro Bausi, Hamburg, Germany
Paola Buzi, Rome, Italy
Javier Del Barco, Madrid, Spain
Emiliano Fiori, Venice, Italy
Marilena Maniaci, Cassino, Italy

Editorial Secretary

Eugenia Sokolinski, Hamburg, Germany

Advisory Board

Tara Andrews, Vienna, Austria	Matthew Driscoll, Copenhagen, Denmark
Patrick Andrist, Munich, Germany	Alessandro Gori, Copenhagen, Denmark
Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, Uppsala, Sweden	Dickran Kouymjian, Fresno, USA – Paris, France
Malachi Beit-Arié, Jerusalem, Israel (d. 2023)	Marco Palma, Cassino, Italy
Pier Giorgio Borbone, Pisa, Italy	Ira Rabin, Berlin – Hamburg, Germany
Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, Paris, France	Lara Sels, Leuven, Belgium
Valentina Calzolari, Genève, Switzerland	Gaga Shurgaia, Naples, Italy
Ralph Cleminson, Winchester, UK	Jan-Just Witkam, Leiden, The Netherlands

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) under Germany's Excellence Strategy, EXC 2176 'Understanding Written Artefacts: Material, Interaction and Transmission in Manuscript Cultures', project no. 390893796, at Universität Hamburg (2019–2025)

Copyright © COMSt (Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies) 2023

Publication date January 2024

This journal is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) www.creativecommons.org.



ISSN 2410-0951

Contents

Editorial. *In memoriam Malachi Beit-Arié (20 March 1937–17 October 2023)* 5

Articles and notes

*Recovering Some Lost Lines in the Mēmrē of Narsai (d. c.500),
with an Appendix on a Stemma of Manuscripts of Narsai*
(Aaron Michael Butts) 7

*Nineteenth-century Kashmiri Paper: Victor Jacquemont's Account of an
Unparalleled Craftsmanship* (Amélie Couvrat Desvergues) 25

The Colophon of the Chronicle of John of Nikiu and Ethiopic ḥassāb (Daria
Elagina) 59

*The Byzantine Reception and Transmission of William of Ockham's Summa
totius logicae* (José Maksimczuk) 67

Osservazioni filologiche su Galeno, De antidotis XIV 3,16–4,4 K.
(Simone Mucci) 89

*Representations of the History of Beta 'Ēsrā'el (Ethiopian Jews) in the
Royal Chronicle of King Šarḏa Dəngəl (r.1563–1597): Censorship, a
Philological and Historical Commentary* (Solomon Gebreyes Beyene) 95

The Collector's Heir: Käthe Rehfeld (Previously Grote, Née Hahn)
(Peter Tarras) 115

*Mind the Gap: On Columns and Other Patterns of Visual Organisation in
Manuscripts* (Hanna Wimmer) 129

Research projects

Editing Paratexts: Observations from the New Testament's Titles (Garrick V.
Allen, Kimberley A. Fowler, Kelsie G. Rodenbiker, Maxim Venetskov,
Martina Vercesi, and Lily Su) 187

Reviews

LARA SELS, JÜRGEN FUCHSBAUER, VITTORIO TOMELLERI, and ILSE DE VOS, eds,
*Editing Mediaeval Texts from a Different Angle: Slavonic and Multilingual
Traditions*, together with *Francis J. Thomson's Bibliography and Checklist
of Slavonic Translations, To Honour Francis J. Thomson on the Occasion of
His 80th Birthday*, together with *Proceedings of the ATTEMPT Workshop held
at King's College, London, 19–20 December 2013 and the ATTEST Work-
shop held at the University of Regensburg, 11–12 December 2015*, *Orientalia
Lovaniensia Analecta*, 276, Bibliothèque de Byzantion, 19 (Leuven–Paris–
Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2018) (Susana Torres Prieto) 205

STÉPHANE ANCEL, MAGDALENA KRZYŻANOWSKA and VINCENT LEMIRE, *The Monk on the Roof: The Story of an Ethiopian Manuscript Found in Jerusalem (1904)*. Translated from the French by KATE MATTHAMS SPENCER, Open Jerusalem, 4 (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2022) (Daria Elagina) 211

Conference reports

- Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 19*, University of Copenhagen, 19–21 April 2023 (Red.) 215
- Byzantium from a Global Perspective II: Byzantium and the Islamicate World*, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 28–30 June 2023 (Red.) 216
- Studying Written Artefacts: Challenges and Perspectives*, Universität Hamburg, 27–29 September 2023 (Red.) 218
- Archäologie der Handschrift – Erschließung, Präsentation und Forschung im digitalen Raum*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 9–11 Oktober 2023 (Red.) 225
- Priests and their Manuscripts in the Holy Land and Sinai*, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, 8–10 November 2023 (Red.) 227
- Perceptions of Writing in Papyri. Crossing Close and Distant Readings*, Basel University, 7–8 December 2023 (Red.) 228

Owners' and Maxim Venetskov (Glasgow), 'Sinaitic Readers of Gospel and Apostle Manuscripts: Between the Text and Multiple Paratexts'.

Among the presenters of the first part of the session 'Multilingual Levant', Nina Glibetić (University of Notre Dame) spoke on 'Glagolitic Sinai Manuscripts and their Scribes: Negotiating Ecclesial Identity in an International Monastic Community', Tinatin Chronz (Mainz) referred on 'John Zosime, the First Georgian Liturgiologist in the Holy Land and Sinai', and Denis Nosnitsin and Dorothea Reule (Hamburg) offered a presentation on 'Ethiopian Christian Manuscript-Making Abroad: The Ethiopic Collection of St. Catherine's Revisited'. The second part of the 'Multilingual Levant' session included presentations by Adrian Pirtea (Berlin) on 'Safeguarding the Patristic Heritage at the Dawn of the First Crusade: Sinai Arab. 481 and its Scribe, the Priest Butrus (Peter)' and Natalia Smelova (Manchester) on 'Jerusalem and Antioch on Sinai: A Study into the Syriac Liturgical Manuscripts Copied by Priests'.

The final session was dedicated to 'Priests and Book-Production'. Here, Samuel Bauer (Regensburg) talked on 'Early Printed Greek Euchologia on Mt. Sinai' and Georgios Boudalis (Thessaloniki) presented an overview of 'Manuscript Repair, Binding and Rebinding at Saint Catherine's Monastery during the 17th and 18th Centuries'.

For a full programme, visit <<https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/imafo/events/event-details/priests-and-their-manuscripts>>.

Red.

Perceptions of Writing in Papyri. Crossing Close and Distant Readings

Basel University, 7–8 December 2023 (online)

The online conference was convened on 7 and 8 December 2023 by Claire Clivaz (DH+, SIB, CH & RSCS, UCLouvain, BE) and Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello (Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Basel), and organized in the framework of the SNSF starting grant EGRAPSA (n° 211682), led by Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello. The conference's purpose was to analyse how digital culture has changed the perceptions of writing styles in papyri. Studies conducted by modern scholars have always been the main way of evaluating papyri, determining their dates and content.

Selected papers focused on the current ways scholars view the aesthetics of papyri in a world where close and distant readings are intersecting more every day. A large part of ancient scholarship successfully used the traditional close read, whereas today, a small group of newer scholars have integrated

computer analysis into their research. The following questions were addressed: To what extent is computer analysis of quantitative data bringing objectivity into the study of writing styles in papyri? What are the potential limits or biases of computer analysis? Does this confirm insights from the past, or to the contrary, does this change our evaluation of dates, content, and genre implications within papyri studies? These questions were reviewed considering the various fields currently working with papyri in different languages.

The conference was opened by Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello, who summarized the ‘State of the Art in Computational Paleography of Papyri: at Hand, Hopes and Wishes’ with a focus on recent works on Greek papyri especially identification of writers and evaluation of stylistic similarities. An opening lecture by Jean-Luc Fournet (Collège de France, Paris) followed, who contemplated on ‘Understanding a Text before Reading it? The Contribution of a Document’s form to its Interpretation’. He showed how the materiality of the papyrus as an object contributes to the understanding of the nature and purpose of the transmitted text, and offered possibilities to consider it in the computer analyses that are developing in the field of papyrology.

The first panel, ‘Distant View’, featured the talk by Dominique Stutzmann (IRHT, Paris and Humboldt-Universität, Berlin), who presented on ‘Closeness, Distance, and Identification of Writers in Latin Paleography’. Detailed taxonomies have been developed in Latin palaeography, which has been able to quickly benefit from the contributions of computer vision. The scholar showed how computer-supported analysis of such elements as spacing between the letters can reveal the ‘rhythm’ of handwriting and contribute to dating and localizing of entire manuscripts. In her paper on the ‘Hieratic Script in the Graeco-Roman Period: New Perspectives in the Wake of a Project Devoted to Funerary Texts’, Sandrine Vuilleumier (University of Basel) used the findings of the project ‘Beyond the Text. New Funerary Compositions from the Graeco-Roman Period: Textualities and Archaeology in Thebes’, supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). She illustrated the methodology developed within the project to analyse hieratic script in funerary manuscripts, highlighting the limitations and scientific advantages that can be derived from such an analysis.

Three papers were grouped in the panel ‘Christian Papyri’. Claire Clivaz inquired about the evolution of the scholarly perception of P⁴⁵ (Dublin, Chester Beatty, BP I) and in 0171 (PSI I 2 + PSI II 124) in her paper ‘Looking Digitally at two manuscripts: 0171 and P⁴⁵ in Scholarship’. She showed how the availability of digital images of these two manuscripts allowed the scholars to make assertions that would have been difficult to demonstrate before the digital era. Laurent Pinchard (Institut Catholique de Paris) addressed the issue of how ‘classical’ textual criticism can benefit from electronic resources especially

when addressing the question of ‘free’ transmission in early manuscripts in his paper ‘Testing the Boismard-Lamouille Theory on *Acts* 16.13–17.10 in P127: Heresy or Evidence?’. In her paper ‘What a Magical Tool! Studying Coptic Apocrypha and Magic in the Age of Databases’, Roxanne Bélanger Sarrazin (University of Oslo) discussed how two recently created databases (the *Apocrypha Database* and the *Kyprianos Database of Ancient Ritual Texts*) impacted her own research on the relationship between Coptic apocrypha and magic, in particular with regards to the analysis of content and paratextual features, as well as the evaluation of dates and provenance. A fourth paper on Christian Papyri by Garrick V. Allen (University of Glasgow), ‘The Aesthetics of Handwriting in Greek Papyri. Paleography and Understanding’ was scheduled but not presented orally (a written contribution to the proceedings is being considered).

The first panel of the second conference day was dedicated to ‘Digital Palaeography’. Mladen Popović (University of Groningen) spoke on ‘Assessing Writing Style and Quality by Combining Traditional Palaeography and AI: the Case of the Great Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls’. He explored how quantitative data from computer analysis can assist in palaeographic analysis when assessing writing style and quality, also with regard to basic questions such as: what is quality and how do we know? Pedro Garcia-Baro and Giuseppe de Gregorio (Universities of Zurich and Basel) illustrated the work done with their colleagues Olga Serbaeva and Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello based on the results of the recently ended SNSF project, ‘Reuniting Fragments, Identifying Scribes and Characterizing Scripts: the Digital Paleography of Greek and Coptic Papyri (D-scribes)’. In their paper ‘Biblical Majuscule: Computer Spotted Features and Palaeographer’s Perception’, they showed how the annotation of *c.*150 *Iliad* papyri (with the help of the platform called ‘READ: Research Environment for Ancient Documents’) opens new possibilities in the analysis of difficult cases, in particular on the specific question of the variability within one hand (intra-writer variation) and variation among different hands (inter-writer variation). They illustrated how computer-based methods can assist palaeographers handling and visualizing a massive quantity of data, but also extracting features that do not correspond to traditional palaeographical categories. Another project, aimed at developing a reliable digital tool that can automatically identify handwritings and accurately date chronologically uncertain documents on papyrus, headed by Giuseppina Azzarello at the University of Udine, was showcased by Nicola Reggiani (University of Udine) in his talk on ‘The Artificial Papyrologist at Work: Automatic Identification of Scribes and Dating of Handwritings in an Ongoing Project at the University of Udine—Theoretical Outlines and Case Studies’. He focused on the case studies of the Ptolemaic archives of Zenon and Menches.

The final conference panel was dedicated to ‘Natural Language Processing and Documentary Papyri’. In her paper ‘Writer’s Style in Greek Documentary Papyri: Issues of Orthography, Linguistic Style and Authorship’, Marja Vierros (University of Helsinki) showed how the analysis of linguistic information produced by ERC Starting Grant project ‘Digital Grammar of Greek Documentary Papyri’ can contribute to the identification of authors and writers, among the many other aspects. Victoria B. Fendel (University of Oxford), in her paper ‘When the Lines get Blurred: Support-verb Constructions in the Documentary Papyri’, showed that quantitative data (i) is only as good as the premises on which it has been collected and that not every data sample lends itself to quantitative analysis, (ii) has to be interpreted with care considering confounding variables, and (iii) demonstrates how support verb constructions in small and diverse corpora such as the documentary Greek papyri withstand computational models so far. Aneta Skalec (La Sapienza University, Rome) spoke on ‘*Misthosis* Monogram in the Late Antiquity Hermopolites Lease Contracts’. In focusing on the particular abbreviation common in a specific type of documentary papyri and its evolution, she showed how important the careful image analysis is. She also showed how studying the evolution of writing of only one word could be useful to narrow down the dating or indicate the place where the document was written. In his presentation ‘To <g> or not to <g>: Paratext, Materiality, and the Digital Corpus of Literary Papyri’, C. Michael Sampson (University of Manitoba) illustrated how the recently-created *Digital Corpus of Literary Papyri* provides a revealing lesson in both the imperfections of work-in-progress and the challenges of anticipating the needs of future users and research. Inconsistencies in (TEI XML) encoding and abuse of certain elements may have to be carefully fixed in order to make the corpus more useful in the future. Finally, Lea Packard-Grams (UC Berkeley) presented on ‘Digital Papyrology as a Method for Reassembling an Archive: A Case Study in Digitally Reuniting Papyri Near and Far’. Hauling from her experience in a project at the Center for Tebtunis Papyri, she showed how digital tools have proven to be invaluable to analyse a scribe’s distinctive handwriting and aesthetic features. Notably, digital methods aid in identification of fragments as belonging to the scribe’s documents based on paleography. These tools include infrared photography, digital manipulation of fragments, and analyses of databases.

The conference programme and the abstracts are available at <<https://d-scribes.philhist.unibas.ch/en/events-1/papyri-conference/>>, and videos will be available early 2024 on <<https://d-scribes.philhist.unibas.ch/en/>>. Papers of the conference are proposed to be submitted in the Open Access journal *Pylon: Editions and Studies of Ancient Texts*.

Red.