

Final report on the COMSt Workshop “Orientan Textual Traditions and 21st-cent.

Philology: New Challenges”, Leuven, 5-7 September 2012

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Thanks to the COMSt travel grant I was able to attend the workshop in Leuven. Many presentations proved to be of special value for my own research. Moreover I was given the opportunity to give a short presentation on my PhD thesis. In the following short summaries of all the presentations are given. (To keep the report short I will use abbreviations, tr.=translation/s, ms./mss. =manuscript/s)

The workshop was opened on Wednesday by Prof. Alessandro Bausi who gave a short report on the midterm elaboration of the COMSt project and the forthcoming of the handbook. The handbook itself was discussed later during the editorial meeting.

Starting the first session Sever Voicu gave an overview presentation of “The diffusion of John Chrysostom in Oriental languages”. The works (over 1500) of Chrysostom have been translated into eight ancient languages whose characteristics Voicu presented, leaving aside Latin and Old-Slavonic. In Coptic we find tr. from Greek into Bohairic and Sahidic. Syriac and Armenian tr. partly transmit sources lost in Greek. First tr. into Georgian came from Armenian (late 5th cent.) later from Arabic. Tr. into Arabic came from Greek, Syriac and Coptic. Through the Arabic on the other hand texts were translated into Ethiopic (Ge’ez). Direct tr. from Greek into Ge’ez during the Aksumite era are pure hypothesis.

Valentina Calzolari presented (in French) on “The edition of Apocryphal Literature”, based on a short survey of Armenian Christian apocrypha. Apocrypha in general are coined by an emotional censorship in the selection. With apocrypha a continued regeneration is possible unlike canonic texts (texte normatif) which are considered as “untouchable” and are under constant control of the authorities. In a case study Calzolari presented an edition of the Mechitarist fathers – a synoptic presentation in two columns with two different recensions edited on the same page.

Emilio Bonfiglio talked on “The Armenian Versions of the Martyrium of Philip: Status Questionis and Editorial Issues”, a new critical edition prepared by him for CSCO. The Acts of the Apostle Philip were produced in Greek, possibly on Crete, containing Philips fight against Hierapolis’ heretics, the torture and death of him and his followers. Over 60 Greek witnesses are known. The text is known in three recensions, and is itself arranged in paragraphs. Tr. are known

in Armenian, Georgian, Church-Slavonic and Syriac. Bonfiglio plans to present all recensions in equal columns, correct mistakes of older, misleading editions. Possibly it will be a digital edition.

The second session opened with Caroline Macé's presentation on "Dealing with an overabundant textual tradition – stemmatology and beyond" on the basis of Gregory of Nazianzus, with its up to 700 mss. witnesses. The text which is very authentic, considered almost like a Bible, is written like some kind of literary fiction with Gregory as first person narrator/character. One previous edition, of the Mauriners 1778-1840, exists. Macé presented a philogenetic tree (based on three homilies) and speculated that the "original" was a complete collection done by Gregory himself. She tries to eliminate as many witnesses as possible, yet the tradition is so large that it will not be possible to "recreate" the original.

Gregory Kessel in his intense presentation covered a wide overview of "Syriac Monastic Antologies". Syriac shows an abundant number of anthologies (= complete/fragmentary collections of ascetic/mystical contents) divided into three branches (West-Syriac [Jacobite], East-Syria [Nestorian], Chalcedonian). The majority is of Greek origin (4-5th cent.), followed by Syriac (7-8th cent.) and Latin (from 15th cent.). Kessel presented some case studies and mentioned a project founded by him which aims to discover new texts; new witnesses of known texts; to provide material which helps trace the development of monastic intellectual cultures.

Alessandro Mengozzi presented the "History of transmission and publication of Syriac dialogue poems" pointing out past methodological choices in the edition of classical Syrian and modern Aramaic texts. Mengozzi presented the case of Sebastian Brock who published his works in over 20 different journals, periodicals, volumes, etc. to reach a wide and variegated readership. Mengozzi also illustrated the problem of dialogue poems: they are difficult to date; different versions of the same poem are known; contaminated with disputes of monks, and other material like OT or NT; due to the use in the Liturgy texts have been divided into two mss. for two people to read out.

The first day ended with six short presentations of ten minutes each by young scholars on their personal research. Gidena Mesfin and Sophia Dege (both Ethiopic topics), Maria Lacinakova and Alba Fedeli (both Arabic topics) presented their PhD theses. Lucia Raggetti (Arabic) gave an overview of three of her past and recent projects. Cornelius Berthold presented an overview of editing standards for Oriental (Arabic) languages.

Thursday was opened with the entertaining talk of Jan Just Witkam on "The philologists's stone. The continuing search of the stemma". He presented his own struggles and experiences with the philological methods of finding a stemma. Witkam pointed out that the methods of Maas (and

West) were focusing on Greek and Latin texts, yet for Oriental languages other rules apply. E.g., in Greek you never find an autograph yet in Arabic you can have even two, three or four autographs.

Lara Sels and David Birnbaum presented their joined project of “Editing Medieval Slavonic Translations of Byzantine Texts” on the case of the Vidin Miscellany (V.M.), a Slavonic collection of stories on holy or martyred women. It was discovered that the present V.M. is a 15th cent. copy of the lost original, individual parts of the texts were translated before the 14th cent. Corresponding Slavonic text shall be identified and collated. For the edition also the Greek reference text will be used. The digital edition wants to explore the possibilities of modern technique (such as different views – folio/only text/ magnifier glass and different fonts). Instead of using the old Unicode fonts a web font is delivered which applies when opening the page.

The round table discussion focused on different questions without always finding clear answers. In the following I will just give headwords of the discussion:

- Is it always possible or (at all) desirable to create a stemma codicum/history of tradition? Philogenetic tree or stemma, an unclear terminology. What is an open tradition – several archetypes?
- type of edition, critical or diplomatic again a problem of terminology. Always consider the addressed readership
- digital or not? Going digital will solve some problems but also create new ones. Especially the question of maintaining homepages (money, manpower, etc.).
- differences between editions of Oriental texts/mss. and other languages.

Stefan Hagel gave a presentation on his software Classical Text Editor. His presentation was less an introductory course but more a show of the possibilities CTE offers to those preparing an edition. His programme is especially a help for all those people who are unfamiliar with XML or TEI. Hagel had designed CTE in a way that such formats are already implemented in set up styles the user simply has to use, without the need of understanding the technical work.

The workshop ended with two sessions of the “Intereditions Schooling programme”. As the whole presentation spread over several hours I will just summarize those parts that will be useful for my own studies. I still have one manuscript that I need to include into the collatio, so far I chose only selected parts out of it. With “T-Pen” I hope to simplify this task, because it will speed up the process of transcribing the ms. Once I am done with this I will switch to “Juxta software”, upload my transcribed material and run a automatic collatio. As both tools were not designed for Oriental texts I have to see how well they apply for Ethiopic script. Hopefully, as I use Unicode characters, there will be no problem.