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SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Purpose of the visit

Attendance of the 10th International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, 17th–22nd September 2012, and presentation of a paper titled: “Coptic Divination Writings in Byzantine Egypt: The Case of Oneiromancy” (presented on 20th September).

Description of the work carried out during the visit

The work, which I successfully carried out during my visit, was twofold. On the one hand, I presented the preliminary results of my study of pDuke inv. 244, some leaves from a parchment codex containing a homily (of possibly Shenoutean authorship) concerning the nature of dreams, and the dangers of the (heretic) practice of their interpretation. On the other hand, I had the opportunity to receive feedback and discuss my research with leading experts in the field of Coptic philology, literature, and codicology, which proved highly beneficial to my scholarly investigations on pDuke inv. 244.

Description of the main results obtained

The main results of my visit are also twofold. First, I had the possibility to disseminate the preliminary results of my study of the text in question, presenting my ongoing work and announcing the upcoming publication of this previously unpublished text. Secondly, discussion subsequent to the presentation of my paper with other senior scholars, gathered in Rome for the congress, allowed me to improve my understanding of a few passages of pDuke inv. 244, as well as to collect more references to other texts and studies of which I was unaware. All this will enhance the quality of my study, and the value of my publications.

Future collaboration with host institution

Not applicable.

Projected publications / articles resulting or to result from the grant

The first publication I intend to prepare will be submitted soon for inclusion in the proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Coptic Studies. Given size

constraints, this will not include the complete publication of pDuke inv. 244, but will be close in nature to the paper I presented at the congress, i.e., it will include an introductory discussion of oneiromancy in Late Antique and Byzantine Egypt, as attested from Greek and Coptic sources in the new context of Christianity, which will then be followed by an overview of pDuke inv. 244, an assessment of its importance as a source about the concept of dreams and dream interpretation in Coptic monastic milieus, and excerpts from its text. The second publication that I intend to prepare will be the complete edition of pDuke inv. 244, with a detailed philological commentary, and plates prepared from the high resolution images of the parchment leaves which I have already procured. In both publications, the financial assistance of the ESF will be duly acknowledged.

Other comments

During my visit, I had the opportunity to appreciate the importance of academic networking. Particularly in the case of a project like mine, discussion with other academics on their ongoing, unpublished research can prove extremely beneficial. In my instance, I had the possibility to meet several Shenoutean scholars, currently occupied in the project of the publication of Shenoute's corpus. This is an area of interest to me, inasmuch as pDuke inv. 244 is a text unassigned to a specific author, but highly suspected to be a work by Shenoute.