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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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International  
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Niedersächsische Akademie  
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## **AbdElrahem AbdElwahab Ali, Wafaa**

### **Missing Passages from the Martyrdom of Saint Paul: A Critical Edition of Unpublished Sahidic Apocryphal Fragments from the Borgian Collection (Borg.copt.109)**

This study examines a unique ninth-century Sahidic Coptic manuscript preserved in the Vatican Library (Borg.copt.109.cass.XXVI.fasc.130), which represents a rare and missing link in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, specifically the Martyrdom of Saint Paul. The research is based on two methodological pillars. The first is meticulous philological analysis, resulting in the first comprehensive critical edition of the text. This includes deciphering the handwritten script, restoring lacunae, and providing a detailed, annotated translation accessible to non-specialists in Coptic. The second is comparative analysis, examining the relationship between the apocryphal narrative and canonical biblical texts, tracing how Coptic authors “recycled” and “rephrased” material, and highlighting their literary skill in creating intertextuality to confer legitimacy and credibility on the reconstructed narrative. Close textual study reveals notable divergences from the biblical account, reflecting creative freedom, possible influence from oral tradition, or echoes of lost Gnostic or popular traditions. Evidence also indicates that the manuscript served as a liturgical text for public ecclesiastical use, not merely for private reading. Overall, the critical edition illuminates the complex dynamics between written Scripture and popular oral traditions, showing how canonical and oral elements combined to produce a distinctive religious literature that shaped Coptic identity and maintained Christian communal cohesion during the linguistic transition.

## **Achi, Andrea**

### **Layers of Devotion: The Red Monastery's Nave Paintings and Networks of Visual Exchange in Medieval Northeast Africa**

In 2018, a significant series of wall paintings in the nave of the Red Monastery (*Dayr al-Aḥmar*) was stabilized and restored, revealing depictions of soldier saints, decorative crosses, and a procession of standing holy men. These layered paintings demonstrate the evolving stylistic developments in Coptic Art over successive centuries. This paper situates the Red Monastery's nave paintings within the broader framework of medieval Egyptian visual culture, drawing particular attention to parallels with monastic book illuminations produced in centers such as the Fayyum Oasis. Additionally, it places these works in dialogue with contemporaneous medieval Ethiopian wall paintings, emphasizing both shared iconographic traditions and local adaptations. By examining these interrelated artistic practices, the paper advances a more integrated understanding of Christian visual culture in northeast Africa during the medieval period, highlighting the importance of regional and transregional connections.

## Adamski, Clémence

### Faucille, serpe ou serpette : une étude de cas lexicographique

Les textes coptes de la pratique regorgent de vocables qui appartiennent au lexique agricole et dont la définition est inconnue ou incertaine, ce qui entrave la bonne compréhension des documents. Dans le cadre de ma thèse, intitulée « L'agriculture dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive. Une entreprise lexicographique de la vie matérielle et socio-économique du 4<sup>e</sup> au 9<sup>e</sup> siècle è. c. à travers les textes documentaires coptes » et réalisée à l'Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), je proposerai une étude de cas centrée sur quelques mots coptes à rattacher au champ sémantique de la faucille, de la serpe ou de la serpette. Après une courte introduction sur le travail mené pendant le doctorat, sur ses enjeux et son intégration dans le projet de base de données de lexicographie papyrologique de la vie matérielle « Ergaleion », je présenterai, à travers l'étude d'un des outils emblématiques de l'agriculture, la faucille, la méthodologie que je suis pour tenter de combler au mieux les lacunes lexicographiques du vocabulaire agricole en copte.

## Addessi, Marta

### A Codicological Stratigraphy: Strata, Units, and the Manuscript Tradition of the Coptic *recueils factices* of the Assemani Collection at the Vatican Library

The Vatican Apostolic Library preserves an important collection of Coptic manuscripts, among which particularly interesting are the 16 Bohairic Coptic codices that Giuseppe Simone Assemani acquired at the Monastery of St Macarius in the Wadi al-Natrun during his journey to the East in 1715–1717, undertaken on behalf of Pope Clement XI. From a codicological perspective, particularly interesting are the codices currently known as *Vaticani coptici* 57-69. These are miscellaneous collections of manuscripts transmitting hagiographic and homiletic texts that once belonged to various Bohairic codices dated to the 9<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Therefore, they represent *recueils factices*, composed of a more or less coherent assemblage of different codicological units produced in different times. When was this assemblage carried out? In response to what needs? What was the original arrangement of the quires (and of the texts) in the initial codices? These important questions, strictly connected to the history of the Coptic manuscript tradition in one of the most important monastic and cultural centers of Early Mediaeval Egypt, will be addressed during the presentation. Ultimately, the aim of this paper is to present a systematic analysis of the quire structure, pagination, liturgical notes, any scribal notes and illuminations of the Assemani *recueils factices* in order to help reconstructing the original form and scope of these manuscripts.

## Agaiby, Lisa

### The Sayings of St Antony the Great in the Copto-Arabic *Bustān al-Ruhbān*

The collection of sayings attributed to St Antony the Great in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* constitute a foundational source for the study of early Christian monasticism and Antony's enduring legacy. While these sayings circulated widely across multiple linguistic

and textual traditions, the Copto-Arabic tradition preserves a distinct body of additional sayings attributed to Antony that are absent from other known collections. These sayings were gradually incorporated into the Arabic *Bustān al-Ruhbān* between the sixteenth and early twentieth centuries. Drawing on manuscript evidence from the Red Sea monasteries, this paper investigates the origins, transmission, and development of these otherwise unattested sayings. In doing so, it sheds light on the reception history of Antony and demonstrates how later monastic communities continued to expand and reinterpret his ascetic authority within monastic tradition.

## **Albarrán Martínez, María-Jesús & Díaz de Miranda Macías, María Dolores**

### **The Coptic Codex P.PalauRib. Inv. 181–183: A Case Study in Late Antique Book Production**

The Palau-Ribes Collection includes among its holdings the codex P.PalauRib. Inv. 181–183. This codex, dated to the fifth century, is known for preserving in full the Sahidic Coptic Gospels of Luke, John, and Mark, as well as its original binding. The principal scholarly study was carried out by J. Quecke (1972, 1977, 1984), who edited the Gospel texts and included a codicological analysis. More recently, E. Dal Sasso (2024) has contributed new data on its binding within broader analyses of Coptic bookbindings.

At present, new perspectives and material-study technologies have prompted a more in-depth re-examination of the codex. Through the analysis of all aspects of its production – namely the manufacture and preparation of the quires, writing techniques, and binding methods – this study aims to contextualize the codex within the book production of Late Antique Egypt.

## **Alorshaleme, Fr Youstos**

### **The Conflict over Deir al-Sultan (1906–1910)**

This research examines the historical and legal struggle over Deir al-Sultan in Jerusalem between the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches, highlighting the political and diplomatic interventions that shaped the conflict.

Key Pillars of the Conflict:

- **Diplomacy and International Pressure:** The Ethiopians leveraged support from major powers such as Russia, and Italy to pressure the Sublime Porte. This resulted in "Imperial Decrees" (Firman) in January 1906 granting them a second key to the monastery or opening a door on the eastern side, despite warnings from the Mutasarrif of Jerusalem regarding the violation of the Status Quo.
- **Ecclesiastical Positions:** There was a clear discrepancy between the Egyptian Bishop in Jerusalem, who recognized the gravity of the situation on the ground, and the Patriarchate in Egypt, whose responses were characterized by a lack of awareness of the developments in Istanbul. The Bishop proposed compromise solutions, such as lease contracts or granting a plot of land to end chronic disputes, but these were sometimes met with rejection or neglect.

- **Legal and Historical Arguments:** The Copts relied on official documents, such as Sharia rulings and Firmans, to prove their ownership and management of the monastery, asserting that the Ethiopian presence was based on "hospitality". Conversely, the Ethiopians sought to validate their claims through testimonies from other denomination heads and attempts to seize keys, such as the (Angel's Gate), in coordination with the Greek Patriarch.

Outcomes:

This phase concluded with the Administrative Council of the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem (1907–1909 AD) affirming Coptic rights, considering Ethiopian claims a violation of the "Status Quo". Nevertheless, the eastern door was opened by force, and the Copts subsequently undertook the renovation of the monks' cells in 1910 to reassert their right of disposal and ownership.

## **Anba Martyros**

### **Contributions of the Abbots of the al-Surian Monastery in Wadi al-Natrun Egypt in the first half of Twentieth Century**

I will study the monasteries in the first half of the twentieth century and the nomination of the Abbots of the Monasteries as Bishops (4 in Wadi al-Natrun), I will go in detail about the monks of dayr al-Surian. The blind cantor abuna Yusif who left his fingerprint, the Ethiopian monk, I will conclude with the biography of Bp Theophilus and his achievements while the other bishops failed in their duties." Shedding light on the attempts of the heads of monasteries to protect the endowments of the monasteries, and studying the nature of monastic life during that period.

## **Anba Suriel**

### **Journey into the Patriarchal Archives: Habib Girgis Visions for Church Reform**

The life and work of Saint Archdeacon Habib Girgis Manqariyūs (1876-1951) have only recently been studied in an academic setting, and various books, journal and newspaper articles have been written about him, particularly in Arabic. On 20 June 2013, the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church canonized Archdeacon Habib Girgis as a saint of the Church. That has resulted in a new heightened interest within the Coptic community, and among scholars of the modern Coptic period and of educational reform in the Middle East, to learn more about Girgis' life and work, his educational philosophy, his vision for reform, and the legacy he left for the Church. Further research is required to study Girgis's contributions to the field of Coptic education across the six decades spanning the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. With the assistance of several individuals, I cataloged the bulk of the material that I have discovered which is relevant to my research. This has been a laborious task, and the resulting preliminary catalog constituted Appendix I of my doctoral research. This archival material has proven invaluable. In this paper I wish to highlight some main features of Habib Girgis's struggles and achievements in the field of religious and theological education discovered in the Patriarchal Archives.

## **Anba Thomas**

### **Anafora: Mission, Vision, and Initiatives**

Anafora is a community for cultural, scientific, and religious services and training courses. It is a spiritual and ecological retreat center in the Egyptian desert, dedicated to the holistic uplifting of every person. Rooted in values of respect, acceptance, and responsibility, Anafora offers a transformative environment where personal experience becomes the bridge between information and deep, lasting knowledge.

Central to Anafora's mission are two pioneering programs for women: the Aksia Program, which empowers women through education, skill-building, and personal development, and the Sotiria Program, designed to prepare women for leadership roles within their communities and beyond. These initiatives foster confidence, resilience, and vision, enabling women to become agents of change in both spiritual and societal contexts.

In this paper, I will explain the religious, spiritual, social, and economic perspectives that are foundational to the programs aimed at uplifting women, especially those from under-developed areas in Egypt.

## **Aravecchia, Nicola & Alfarano, Stefania**

### **Living among the Dead: Burials and Sacred Space at Amheida (Dakhla Oasis)**

This paper examines early Christian burial customs through a case study of a fourth-century church recently excavated at Amheida (ancient Trimithis) in Egypt's Dakhla Oasis. Excavations revealed a well-documented assemblage of burials both within the church and in subterranean crypts beneath the sanctuary, among the oldest known funerary crypts in Christian Egypt. By analyzing spatial organization, funerary architecture, and associated material culture, this presentation situates the Amheida burials within broader patterns of early Christian mortuary practice in Egypt and the Mediterranean. The presence of interments (including a significant number of women and children) in the church as well as in the crypts, located below the sanctuary, suggests complex considerations in burial placement. When viewed alongside evidence from other broadly contemporary contexts, the Amheida material suggests general correspondences as well as context-specific developments, without implying a single, uniform trajectory for emerging Christian funerary traditions. The findings from Amheida contribute to ongoing scholarly debates concerning the development of Christian sacred space and the integration of burial practices within church architecture during Late Antiquity. The paper also adds to our understanding of how mortuary customs embodied spiritual and social frameworks of an early Christian community at the southern fringe of the Roman empire.

## **Askeland, Christian**

### **Greek Loanwords in the Coptic New Testament**

This paper will address two global features in the Sahidic and Bohairic New Testament translations. First, the study will attempt to summarize those loanwords which function in a Christian, theological sense. Second, loanword usage will be considered as a tool in

determining which sections of the Sahidic and Bohairic New Testaments may have derived from the same translation event.

## **Atanassova, Dilia**

### **The Codex Structure as a Key to a Better Understanding of the Transmission of Coptic Manuscripts: The Pentateuch Codex sa 2044 from the 7th Century**

This paper will focus on parchment codex sa 2044, dating from the 7th century. Consisting of 42–44 lines in two columns, this large codex includes remnants from Exodus and leaves from Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

Through an analysis of its structure, I will demonstrate that the original manuscript undoubtedly contained all five books of the Pentateuch, although no remains of Genesis survive today. Unlike other known examples of codices containing either Genesis and Exodus or Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, this appears to be a unique example of a large Sahidic Coptic codex containing the entire Pentateuch.

## **Atanassova, Dilia**

### **The Sabbato-Kyriakai Lectionaries in the Sahidic tradition**

In this paper, I will present the four Sabbato-Kyriakai lectionaries sa 291L, sa 293L, sa 294L, and sa 322L (according to the LCBM system). The first two parchment lectionaries, sa 291L and sa 293L, contain pericopes for the Synaxis. A comparison with the typika of the White Monastery in Upper Egypt reveals interesting variations in the sequence of the liturgical feasts, as well as in the content of the pericopes between the two lectionaries. The third parchment lectionary, sa 322L, consists of a single leaf and also contains readings for the Synaxis. Of particular interest is the fourth paper lectionary, sa 294L, as it is intended for the morning and evening services and differs from the three mentioned above.

## **Atta, Mina Lotfy Fahem**

### **Ornamentation in Coptic Art: Symbolism and Spiritual Expression**

This paper examines the role of ornamentation in Coptic art as a fundamental element that transcends mere decoration to convey profound spiritual and theological meanings. While Coptic art is often characterized by its simplicity and stylization, its decorative motifs reveal a rich symbolic language deeply rooted in the religious life of the Coptic community. The study adopts an analytical approach, focusing on selected examples of vegetal, geometric, and symbolic ornamentation found in various artistic media, including church architecture, textiles, icons, and woodwork. Through this analysis, the paper explores how these motifs function not only as aesthetic elements but also as visual expressions of faith, continuity, and identity.

Furthermore, the research highlights the ways in which Coptic ornamentation reflects a synthesis of local Egyptian traditions and early Christian symbolism, forming a distinctive artistic identity. By examining the recurring patterns and their meanings, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the theological and cultural dimensions embedded in Coptic artistic production.

This paper ultimately argues that ornamentation in Coptic art serves as a vital medium for communicating religious beliefs and preserving cultural heritage, offering valuable insights into the spiritual worldview of the Coptic Church.

## Auber de Lapierre, Julien

### Coptic Medamud (ⲙⲉⲃⲁⲙⲟⲩⲧ): Christian archaeological material to be re-evaluated

The archaeological missions carried out at Medamud by the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology (IFAO) between 1925 and 1940, under the leadership of Fernand Bisson de La Roque (1925–1932) then Clément Robichon (1933–1940), have made it somewhat difficult to understand the post-Pharaonic occupation of the site. During these excavations, a large number of architectural elements, ceramics, figurines and other everyday objects from the Byzantine period were unearthed. Despite the lack of interest in these remains, most of these artefacts were catalogued by the excavators and were generally transferred to the Cairo Museum or shared between the *Service des antiquités* and the Louvre Museum. However, some of these Byzantine pieces, mainly architectural blocks, have remained at the Medamud site since their discovery in the 1920s and 1930s. As part of a reorganisation of the archaeological stores at Medamud and prior to the resumption of excavations in the Byzantine sector, work was undertaken to identify, classify and document this previously unseen material.

## Ava Mina, Ermia & Boutros, Naglaa Hamdi

### Les lois du divorce chez les Coptes à l'époque médiévale à travers leurs écrits canoniques (X<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)

La question du divorce au sein de l'Église copte orthodoxe constitue, encore aujourd'hui, un sujet de vive controverse au sein de la communauté, et les dispositions législatives qui s'y rapportent continuent de susciter de profonds débats. Dès le X<sup>e</sup> siècle apparaissent les premiers traités rédigés par des auteurs coptes en langue arabe ; ce passage du copte à l'arabe, à cette période charnière de leur histoire, ne représente pas seulement une transition linguistique, mais aussi une transformation culturelle et sociale. En effet, les écrits de Sāwīrus ibn al-Muqaffa' – premier théologien copte à composer des œuvres en arabe – renferment les premières références en langue arabe à des normes régissant le divorce au sein de cette communauté, normes qui seront par la suite formalisées et intégrées aux *Nomocanons* coptes. Ces mentions initiales évoluent ainsi progressivement pour donner lieu à des « statuts juridiques » pleinement élaborés, structurés au sein de l'Église copte, dont l'objectif est de réguler les relations interpersonnelles et de préciser les fondements et les motifs du divorce, les distinguant clairement des cadres juridiques islamiques.

## Ayad, Michael

### The missionary work of the Coptic Orthodox Church. In the continent of Africa, both in ancient and modern times

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” (Matthew 28:19-20). This Great Commission concludes the Gospel of Matthew and remains the mandate for the Coptic Orthodox Church today. Africa, often called the “Dark Continent,” is home to the descendants of Ham and Canaan, sons of Noah. Despite its abundant human and metallic resources, many African nations struggle with poverty. Since its founding by St. Mark the Apostle, the Coptic Church has pursued missionary work across the continent. A pivotal moment came in the 4th century AD when Saint Athanasius the Apostolic journeyed to Ethiopia, establishing the Ethiopian Church. In modern times, the Coptic Church continues to penetrate Africa by planting churches and monasteries, offering education and healthcare, training indigenous clergy, and distributing Christian literature. Countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe now host thriving Coptic communities. Through these activities, the Church spreads the light of the Gospel to those who have not yet known Jesus, fulfilling Christ’s promise: “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Its mission embodies love, service, and divine illumination.

## Aziz, Fr Arseny

### Tracing Cyril’s journey into The Confession of the Copts

This paper examines a selection of citations attributed to Cyril of Alexandria in the Copto-Arabic florilegium I’tirāf al-Ābā’ (*The Confession of the Fathers*), completed no later than 1078 CE during the patriarchate of Christodoulos of Alexandria. As the most frequently cited Church father in Coptic miaphysite florilegia, Cyril’s excerpts are essential to the text’s articulation and defense of the so-called one-nature Christology. The study focuses on a selection of passages attributed to Cyril preserved in the *Confession* and traces their patterns of citation and adaptation across intermediary sources from the fifth to eleventh centuries. Analysis draws on early post-Chalcedonian defenses, synodical letters of Alexandrian and Antiochian patriarchs, and related medieval Coptic compilations. Findings attempt to shed light on compilation techniques and interconnections among these florilegia. By charting the textual journey of selected Cyrillian works through Egypt’s Arabization, the paper reveals mechanisms of patristic preservation, selective quotation, and doctrinal continuity, affirming Cyril’s central authority in miaphysite orthodoxy.

## Badamo, Heather

### Medieval Art and the Work of Incense in the Coptic Church

In recent years, art historians have sought to recover traces of experience from medieval art and architecture by examining objects and monuments through their activation and sensory effects. Despite the widespread adoption of this approach, the medieval Coptic sensorium has received scant attention. Drawing on artworks, liturgical handbooks, and hymns, this study illuminates the role of incense in shaping the ritual experience of Coptic churches. Though

few medieval censers survive, depictions of them appear in thirteenth-century wall paintings at the Monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi al-Natrun, the Monastery of St. Anthony at the Red Sea, and the Monastery of Abu Fana in Hur. These paintings contribute to a rich corpus of olfactory imagery that employs censers and incense to articulate the nature of the human-divine encounter. They further reveal the work of incense in manifesting divine presence, sanctifying the faithful, and marking liturgical contexts. As I argue, Coptic representations of censers imbued incense with ritual meaning, making aroma essential to demarcating the liturgical spaces, objects, and acts of the liturgy. A focus on censers, then, connects the Copts to an expansive Christian olfactory imagination that regarded the sense of smell as a means of knowing the divine.

## **Bahey El-Din, Doaa**

### **Soteriology in Flux Nicaean and Egyptian Funerary Art**

This paper will discuss the recent discovery of exceptionally well-preserved 3rd-century wall paintings in the Hisardere Necropolis of ancient Nicaea (İznik, Turkey) provides a critical nexus for understanding the religious and social transitions of Late Antiquity. This research presents a comparative analysis between the Nicaean findings and contemporary funerary art in Roman Egypt, focusing specifically on the Bagawat Necropolis in the Kharga Oasis and the Kom El Shoqafa catacombs in Alexandria.

The centerpiece of the Nicaean discovery is a "Good Shepherd" fresco depicting a youthful, clean-shaven Christ in Roman attire – a motif that highlights a period of religious fluidity prior to the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. In Egypt, the Bagawat Necropolis (one of the world's oldest Christian cemeteries used from the 3rd century) displays a parallel development of early Christian imagery; Chapel 23 at Bagawat contains its own depiction of the Good Shepherd carrying a lamb amidst his flock, reflecting a shared trans-regional symbolic language.

Both regions exhibit a sophisticated synthesis of pagan social codes and emerging Christian soteriology. While the Nicaean hypogeum features portraits of high-status aristocratic couples and "eternal banquet" symposium scenes, Egyptian sites like Kom El Shoqafa demonstrate a unique "hybrid" style where Roman military features and classical hairstyles are merged with Pharaonic mummification reliefs. Technically, the vibrant figural frescoes of Nicaea contrast with the specific Coptic stylistic traits of Egypt, which often prioritized religious truth and frontal composition over classical realism. By mapping these shared iconographic and architectural traits across two distinct provinces, this study underscores the fluidity and interconnectivity of the visual culture of early believers during the Roman imperial period.

## **Balastre, Marien**

### **A Dionysian Apophaticism in Coptic Liturgies?**

We propose to study the apophatic vocabulary in Coptic liturgies, considering a form of at least indirect influence from the corpus of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, whose first commentator was Severus of Antioch, a pillar of the Coptic Miaphysite theology. Beyond the Chalcedonian debates, Dionysian spirituality is thought to have inspired the speculations of Eastern Miaphysite peoples, particularly Copts, in their understanding of divine

transcendence and liturgical mysteries. We will study in detail how the Coptic language specifically expresses this apophaticism in some specific examples, noting its abundance in the Coptic liturgy compared to Byzantine Greek liturgies. Our corpus includes the Sahidic liturgy of the Great White Monastery, as well as the Bohairic liturgies in use to this day.

## Baligh, Randa

### Traditional Coptic Food

Food is an integral part of the culture of nations and groups. The Copts are the inhabitants of Egypt, as the word is derived from the old name of Memphis that became the name of Egypt, *Hwt-k3-PtH* that the Greeks pronounced as “*Aigypotos*” (*Kuptaion* in Coptic, *Qibt/Qift* in Arabic) from which the foreign name of Egypt in most European languages is derived. The present-day Egyptians do not refer to their country as such but as *Masr/Misr*, probably from the ancient name of Egypt “*Medjer*”. In contemporary day Egypt the word Copt refers rather to the Christian Orthodox Egyptians. There are over 200 days of fasting per year in the Coptic Orthodox Church, and there are special recipes and dishes for most fasts as well as feasts. Some of the fasts such as the 55 day fast before Eastern Easter (Lent) are vegan. As the Copts are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians as they always say with pride, many of their traditional dishes come from ancient Egypt. In the course of the paper we shall examine some of the most traditional Egyptian dishes and food components that have continued to the present day. The linguistic origin of the words used for dishes will be addressed in addition to the occasions or context in which they were prepared and consumed. The Coptic Church has played a major role in preserving the true Egyptian identity. It preserved the language, the ancient calendar, the traditional feasts of the Egyptians that are linked with several feasts of the Coptic Church, in addition to a number of other traditions that constitute the Egyptian identity. The research paper will concentrate on the traditional dishes and food components and show that many of them have ancient roots. Some of the traditional Egyptian dishes include:

*Bitaw/bittaw* and *eish shamshi/shamsi*, بتاو وعيش شمشي/شمسي

*Kaak*, كعك

*Bisara*, بصارة

*Taameyya/falafel*, طعمية/فلافل

*Shalawlaw*, شَلُولُو

*Bamya weika*, بامية ويكا

*Kolkass bi khodra*, قلفاس بخضرة

*Tirmis*, ترمس

*Basal*, بصل

*Kishk*, كشك

*Moloooha*, ملوحة

The paper will present a number of the most beloved dishes, many of which are cooked by the Egyptians in a very traditional way, address the etymology of the words, discuss the ingredients, the techniques of preparing, and any historical or religious significance that may be attached to them in both ancient and contemporary Egypt.

## Baligh, Randa

### Oil and its uses mainly in religious rituals in ancient Egypt and the Coptic Church

The article intends to trace the use of oil in religious rituals in Egypt. Olive oil appears to be one of the earliest imports in ancient Egypt. An alabaster tablet from the tomb of Ankh-haf in Giza has a list of the Seven Sacred Oils used in funerary ceremonies written in black ink, with depressions for the seven oils on the tablet. They include the festival perfume, Hekenu oil, Syrian balsam, Nechenem salve, anointing oil, best cedar oil from Lebanon, and best Libyan oil. The seven oils are often referred to merely as *mrHt*. Spell 72 of the Pyramid Texts tries to ensure a supply of Sacred Oil for king Wanis or Unas of the Fifth Dynasty.

Oil also plays a major role in Coptic religious rituals since the Coptic Church was influenced by the rituals used in ancient Egyptian temples. We also hear of miracles in Coptic churches associated with oil oozing out of certain icons, murals or altars. In the Coptic Church, the Myron Oil is one of the Seven Secrets of the Church. The consecration of the chrism remains exclusive to the Patriarch of the Coptic Church. It is also used in several of the other secrets such as the secrets of baptism and marriage. Coptic churches and icons also have to be consecrated with the holy oil. It is so sacred that only a member of the clergy may handle it once it has been prepared (usually during Lent and terminating after Easter). The oil of the sick is prepared with special prayers. In older churches three oils were kept in a special box, usually for the chrism, the oil of the sick and the catechumens. The importance of oil in the rituals may be traced to older times as the research paper will show.

## Basta, Mena

### Prompting the πνεῦμα: The "Uncanny Valley" of AI in Coptic Culture and Religion

Generative AI has crashed into the Coptic consciousness without an invitation, creating a digital "Wild West" where efficiency often outpaces discernment. This paper explores the rapid, unmoderated infiltration of AI tools among the younger Coptic demographic, specifically in the realms of visual culture and religious education. We are witnessing the rise of a "synthetic tradition": AI-generated saints that mimic the Neo-Coptic style yet lack pneumatic depth, and Sunday School curricula generated by Large Language Models that risk producing a "hallucinated orthodoxy." Focusing on the diaspora's youth, this study examines how the "cool factor" and accessibility of these tools are subtly rewriting the rules of engagement with heritage. When a chatbot catechizes the next generation and algorithms paint our icons, where does the living Tradition end and the simulation begin? This presentation will analyze these "weird" new intersections, arguing that while AI offers unprecedented utility, it demands a rigorous new framework of "digital asceticism" to prevent the flattening of Coptic identity into mere aesthetic and data.

## Bayoumi, Rudeina & Monir, Nesreen

### A Legal Document and Scribal Exercises: Two Late Coptic Texts

This paper publishes and analyses two distinct late Coptic texts written on the recto and verso of a single manuscript from the Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Columbia University (Col. 593). Although they share the same material support, the texts differ markedly in genre and function, offering a rare juxtaposition of legal and pedagogical material.

The recto contains a substantial legal document addressing the intention to amend a previous agreement. The text engages with objections and disputes among the involved parties and concludes with the signatures of multiple witnesses. This document provides important insights into late Coptic legal culture, particularly regarding disputes, negotiation processes, and formal amendment procedures. The verso features a series of Coptic scribal exercises, most notably the practice of epistolary opening formulae in both Coptic and Arabic. These exercises shed light on scribal training and bilingual education in the late Coptic period, illustrating how students were instructed to navigate multiple linguistic registers. Together, the two texts contribute to our understanding of legal practice, education, and bilingualism in late Coptic society.

## Behlmer, Heike

### Paul de Lagarde and Carl Abel: Egyptology and Coptic Studies in Göttingen after Heinrich Brugsch

The paper will discuss the entanglement of persons, institutions and the evolution of scholarly knowledge in late 19th century Egyptology and Coptic Studies, using Göttingen University as a case study, on the basis of previously unpublished correspondence in the university library.

## Bélanger Sarrazin, Roxanne

### Strategies of Materialisation in the Ritual Prescriptions of Coptic ‘Magical Liturgies’

The term ‘magical liturgies’ refers to a group of incantations mainly directed at healing, protection, and exorcism that stand at the border of the traditional scholarly categories. These texts, and the manuscripts preserving them, feature traditional ‘magical’ elements – such as *voces magicae* and *charakteres* – while often referring to themselves as ‘prayers’ and following the structure of liturgical prayers, including core elements such as the Pre-Sanctus and Sanctus (Isaiah 6:3) and the Institution Narrative (Eucharist). Several ‘magical liturgies’ are attested in Coptic, in manuscripts dating from the 5th to 11th centuries: for example, the *Baktiotha Prayer* (Berlin P. 5527; BL.Or. 5987; *P.Macq.* I 1), the *Prayer of Mary at Bartos* (BL.Or 6796.1–3; P.Iand. inv. 9 A–B; Coptic Museum 4958; P.Heid.inv.Kopt. 685; Collège de France 2) and *Praise of the Archangel Michael* (P.Heid.inv.Kopt. 686; Collège de France 2). Notwithstanding the importance of the *texts*, which through descriptions of celestial hierarchies and topographies and references to biblical and apocryphal events contribute to the construction of the mythical and cultural worlds into which the prayers are rooted, the

efficacy of these incantations depends largely on their ritual materialisation. In some cases, the prayer texts themselves describe strategies of materialisation: drawing on the performativity of institutional liturgy, they include invocations to celestial beings, modelled after liturgical epiclesis, to come down upon cups of water and oil and infused them with their power, so that they might be given to the recipients to drink or wash themselves. These strategies (and others) are likewise attested in the ritual prescriptions that accompany the incantations in several manuscripts. These include, for example, 1) the preparation of an *assemblage*, with several ingredients to be gathered in a pot and offerings to be burnt, which create a specific atmosphere anchoring the practitioners and recipients in the ritual settings; 2) the recitation of the prayers over cups of water, oil, or other liquids, used for drinking, anointing, or washing; 3) the writing of the prayers on various material supports, meant to be bound to individuals or buried in specific locations (doorways, crossings). In some manuscripts, the incantations are also accompanied by drawings of the characters to which they are attributed (e.g., Mary, Michael) or the celestial beings invoked, which were also to be copied down and worn on one's body – thus drawing on the agency of those characters/beings through miniaturisation.

Focussing on these prescriptions, this paper will explore the strategies of materialisation of the Coptic 'magical liturgies'. It will discuss the materials used, the ritual actions through which they were transformed into the 'magical' substances and objects that carried agency – bearing and holding the powers of the prayers – and the specific actions through which these substances and objects directed their (and the prayer's) agency to affect the social worlds of the practitioners and recipients by appealing to their spatial, aural, and bodily senses.

## Bergamo, Max

### Heraclitus at Nag Hammadi

The presence, in the Coptic Gnostic texts of the so-called Nag Hammadi library, of themes and influences of contemporary Greek philosophical currents, such as Middle Platonism, is well known and has been subjected to considerable, and still ongoing, scholarly attention. Way less studied and thus still underexamined is the presence, in the same textual corpus, of traces of earlier phases of Greek philosophy, such as early Greek or Presocratic thought. I believe that these traces can effectively be tracked down in several treatises and that an analysis of their extent and import can shed significant light on the historical and philosophical outlook of the works at issue. In my paper, I shall provide such an analysis by focusing on the figure and the thought of Heraclitus. I shall point to a series of passages in the Nag Hammadi writings that bear traces, to my mind, of a Heraclitean presence. I shall, then, compare these references and reminiscences with parallel efforts in the work of authors belonging to the Platonic tradition. This will provide an assessment of the different ways in which the pithy sayings of Heraclitus were approached and will enable us to inquire about the peculiar features of both interpretations.

## **Bernardo, Angela**

### **De-essentializing a Community: Identities, Needs, and Relations of Modern Migrant Copts across Egypt, Europe, and the United States**

In recent years, modern Copts have received growing scholarly attention, due both to increasing migration and to the establishment of communities outside Egypt, as well as to the activities of their leaders, which have resulted in greater public visibility. Although they are often framed as part of a unified global Coptic community, and despite shared similarities supposed to be unchanging, local Coptic communities display specific characteristics shaped by internal dynamics and external conditions. This paper analyses the identities, needs, and relations of Coptic migrant communities in different countries to assess to what extent the concept of “community,” theorized through institutional discourses and narratives by the Coptic Church, is internalized, negotiated, or challenged by individual and contextual self-perceptions and representations. The analysis is based on selected comparative examples and cross-contextual observations from extensive fieldwork conducted between 2017 and 2025 in Egypt, Italy, Germany, and the United States. By doing so, this paper sets out to develop a de-essentializing analysis of the concept of religious “community” – and, consequently, of the category of “religion” – while further offering insights for critical self-reflection on the nature and contents of Coptic Studies, on their prospective trajectories, and on their relationship with the field of Religious Studies.

## **Beshay, Michael**

### **Greasing the Wheels of Ritual: The Dynamics of Oil Across Greco-Egyptian and Coptic “Magic”**

Greek and Coptic “magical” texts from Egypt record the use of numerous substances for harnessing the powers of cosmic, spiritual, and saintly beings. Of these substances, oil (of various kinds) is particularly valued for such purposes. In the Greco-Egyptian “magical” papyri of Roman Egypt, oil is used most frequently to ignite the fires of lamps, usually in divinatory rites (less frequently, oil is used as an emulsifier). Quite distinctly, oil is used in Coptic “magical” texts primarily as a mean to channel apotropaic powers that have touched, consecrated, and imbued it, often using verbal formulas similar to the epicleses of baptismal and eucharistic liturgies; lamps, by contrast, are seldom used. Indeed, oil in and of itself is considerably more effective in Coptic “magic.” This differential in the uses and potency of oil mirrors, and likely corresponds to, a broader transformation in religion and ritual, where the logic of lamp divination (and other epiphanic practices) is absorbed and reinterpreted by Christians, especially in relation to the theme of “baptism by fire” widely attested in the eastern Mediterranean. This baptismal theme and its cultural undercurrents have roots in allegorical and poetic receptions of the Biblical god’s consumption or purification of sacrifices by fire. Yet, it also suggests developing conceptions long associated with the abilities of oil to facilitate contact with divine and celestial fire, especially under the influence of stoicism and theurgy, and perhaps mediated by changes in the economic landscape of Roman Egypt. This paper will examine these evolving concepts and conditions surrounding oil in the interstices of Greco-Egyptian and Coptic “magic.” Despite the apparent rupture in uses, the mere presence of oil represents continuity between the earlier divinatory practices and later

Coptic tradition, by supplying the underlying associations and limitations from which the liturgical and “magical” practices were conceived.

## Bianchi, Costanza

### The *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum* (cc0019): Coptic Transmission of the Normative Section Concerning Clergy, Monks and Laypeople

The *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum* (cc0019) is a composite work originally written in Greek, transmitting both a doctrinal exposition (*ekthesis*) and a set of normative prescriptions attributed to different authoritative figures and ultimately connected with the Council of Nicaea. Alongside the *Didascalia*, another work is known in Greek – the *Syntagma Doctrinae* – which transmits, with some differences, only the normative section, omitting the *ekthesis*. This paper focuses on the Coptic transmission of the normative section of the *Didascalia*, as preserved in two principal manuscript witnesses: the reconstructed codex CLM 359, originating from the White Monastery and dated to 1002/1003, and the earlier codex CLM 47, probably produced at the Monastery of John the Baptist at This between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and today preserved at the Museo Egizio in Turin. In addition to these two witnesses, a further Coptic fragment of the *Didascalia* contributes to the reconstruction of the text and its transmission history.

In both codices CLM 359 and CLM 47, the *Didascalia* is transmitted alongside other Nicene texts, forming a coherent textual unit concerned with Christian doctrine and ecclesiastical order. By examining the Coptic translation and the textual sequence of the normative material, this paper investigates how the *Didascalia* was transmitted and reshaped in the Egyptian context. Particular attention is devoted to showing how the normative section of the Coptic version relates both to the Greek *Didascalia* and to the *Syntagma Doctrinae*, as well as to a comparative analysis of the two principal Coptic witnesses in order to identify textual differences and patterns of transmission. Ultimately, this contribution aims to shed light on the reception and function of the *Didascalia Patrum Nicaenorum* in the normative panorama of Christian Egypt.

## Bland, Weston

### “Let us Forget that we had a Patriarch Named Yusab”: Reconstructing Authority in the Aftermath of a Scandal

This paper explores how Coptic leadership navigated the unprecedented challenge to communal authority following the 1954 abduction of Pope Yusab II. While the spectacle of the kidnapping has received significant attention, I argue that the efforts of communal institutions such as the Holy Synod and the Communal Council to secure their own authority following the kidnapping are more instructive in understanding the nature of Coptic authority in the 1950s. I place the efforts of these institutions at the intersection of the populist mood that gripped the Coptic community following Egypt’s 1952 military coup and the unique challenges that Yusab’s kidnapping posed for tradition as a mechanism of communal authority.

I focus on two episodes that facilitated the divestment of Yusab’s authority: the 1955 maneuvers of the Holy Synod, the Communal Council, and the Egyptian state to divest Yusab

of authority and the 1956 Communal Council elections that served as an informal referendum on Yusab's return to the papacy. Relying on institutional minutes, Church correspondence, and Coptic periodicals, I argue that these institutions' decision-making was informed by a desire to create a mechanism for officially sanctioned exceptions to tradition in order to accommodate popular calls for purging in the community. The 1955 maneuvers and the 1956 elections served as means of securing both state sanction and popular consent for developing a precedent for navigating the unprecedented.

## **Bogdady, Sally**

### **Mapping the Egyptian Late Antique Burials**

This paper examines the diversity of Christian burial practices in Egypt during Late Antiquity, focusing on Qarara and Akhmim, and explores the role of geography in shaping regional funerary traditions. Egypt's varied landscape fostered distinct burial customs that persisted into the Coptic period and were deeply embedded in local cultural contexts.

Drawing on archaeological excavation reports and published evidence from Christian cemeteries, the study demonstrates that funerary practices in Late Antique Egypt were far from uniform. Instead, they reflect a dynamic interplay between regional traditions and emerging Christian beliefs. The adoption of Christianity did not eliminate earlier funerary customs; rather, practices rooted in Pharaonic, Greek, and Roman traditions continued to inform Christian burial rites, often reinterpreted within a theological framework that understood death as a transition to eternal life.

By tracing these continuities and transformations, the paper offers new insights into how identity, belief, and environment intersected in the material culture of death in Late Antique Egypt.

## **Bogdady, Sally (POSTER)**

### **Coptic collection in Egyptian Museum**

The Egyptian Museum in Cairo has long served as a center for displaying Coptic antiquities alongside Ancient Egyptian and Graeco-Roman artifacts. Since its establishment, four halls within the museum were dedicated to the exhibition of Coptic material.

Coptic antiquities have consistently been a focal point of interest within the broader scope of Egyptian heritage. The Boulaq Museum, founded in 1863 as Egypt's earliest museum, featured a dedicated Coptic Gallery. Later, the Giza Museum, established in 1891, appointed an Inspector of Coptic Antiquities. Much of this collection was transferred from the Egyptian Museum to the Coptic Museum during the 1930s, though numerous objects remained in the Egyptian Museum. Over time, the collection continues to grow as the Egyptian Museum still receives Coptic artifacts within repatriated and confiscated items.

Comprehending museum collections is central to the history of archaeology. This study explores the Coptic collection of the Egyptian Museum, comprising objects collected, excavated, or acquired individually, to provide a broader understanding of the assemblage once preserved there. It highlights material from diverse excavations alongside independently received artifacts and examines the museum's artifact numbering system, offering insight into the institutional history and development of the Coptic collection.

## **Boktor, Bishoy Demian Helmy**

### **The Holy Family's Journey to Egypt in Light of a New Group of Coptic Manuscripts and Homilies in the Monasteries of Wadi El-Natrun: An Archaeological and Artistic Study**

The tradition of the Holy Family's journey to Egypt occupies an important place in Coptic religious memory and Egyptian Christian heritage. While the narrative of the journey has been widely circulated in liturgical texts and popular devotion, several manuscript sources preserved in the monasteries of Wadi El-Natrun remain insufficiently studied from a historical and codicological perspective.

This paper examines a selected group of previously understudied Coptic manuscripts and homiletic texts (mimre) preserved in the monasteries of Wadi El-Natrun that refer to the Holy Family's journey. The study seeks to address the following research question: how do these manuscript sources contribute to our understanding of the development of the tradition of the Holy Family's journey in Coptic literature and religious memory?

Methodologically, the paper adopts an archaeological and textual approach combining manuscript analysis, paleographical examination of Coptic scripts, and comparison with known literary and historical sources related to the Holy Family tradition. Particular attention is given to the codicological features of the manuscripts, the structure and themes of the homilies, and their relationship to established pilgrimage traditions and geographical references associated with the journey.

By analyzing these materials, the study aims to clarify the historical and devotional context in which these texts were produced and transmitted. It also seeks to highlight the role of monastic manuscript culture in preserving and shaping the narrative of the Holy Family's journey within the broader framework of Coptic religious heritage.

## **Bolman, Elizabeth**

### **Shenoute's Pharaonic Church Exterior and Intervisuality**

Visual culture and texts appeal to different senses. Art and architecture affect our eyes and indeed our entire bodies directly. Writing in the early fifth century, the Christian abbot Shenoute of Atripe (d. 465 C.E.) observed: "What the eye sees, it appropriates," (Pseudo-Shenoute XL, 7; Kuhn 1960, 1:55, 59; Frank 2000a, 131; For attribution to Shenoute see Kosack 2013, 8–12) attributing a kind of greedy and indiscriminate character to the sense. His vast books of monastic rules, read out loud to his community four times a year, include numerous prohibitions relating to sight, another index of its potency. Sight and memory mesh together. When we see an image over and over, whether a type of monumental structure or an imprint on a small coin, we collect a database of visual information. We learn to recognize an object as part of a larger group. In this talk, I present a potential rationale for the distinctively pharaonic design of Shenoute's massive church, through the lens of intervisuality, namely narratives told through visual quotations and juxtapositions, and consider how it can be deployed intentionally to shape human experiences and invest a site with meaning.

## Borowski, Tomasz

### Public baths in a pilgrimage town – the case of Philoxenite ('Marea')

The double baths of Philoxenite were one of the most imposing late Antique secular public structures in Egypt. Built in the 6<sup>th</sup> C. Ad., they were larger than the baths of Abu Mena (1200 m<sup>2</sup> vs 1000 m<sup>2</sup>) and formed an important stage on the pilgrimage route to this sanctuary. The central part of the bath compound raised over 4.5 m. over the harbour, thus dominating the townscape and forming a visual counterpoint to the great basilica on the other side of the city.

Archaeological and space syntax analysis of the layout of Philoxenite shows that the town was designed in a way that directed pedestrian traffic towards its main baths, not the main church. The great basilica was spatially secluded from daily affairs of locals and visitors alike, thus being rarely visited by passers-by. The baths were more central and offered attractive venue for commerce and purchasing of religious souvenirs such as ampulae of St Menas. Both spatial location and lavish decoration of over 115 tonnes of marble, indicate that the baths of Philoxenite served as crossroads of both symbolic and social boundaries, were poor and rich alike experienced a distinct setting in which religious and secular spheres overlapped.

## Bosson, Nathalie

### Coptic “phrasal verbs” and discontinuous verb constructions in Bohairic (B4/B5): Toward a corpus-based account of complex verb construction

This study is in line with recent research on constituent order and field-based structuring of the verbal clause in Bohairic Coptic, focusing on complex verbal constructions known as “phrasal verbs” (lexical verb + adverbial/prepositional particle: ⲃⲟⲕ ⲉⲣⲏⲓ/ⲉⲣⲏⲓ, ⲁⲃⲟⲕ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ, etc.). It draws on the descriptive approach of *Functional Discourse Grammar* (FDG) developed by Ewa D. Zakrzewska, enriched with a diachronic dimension (B4→B5) and marginal dialectal perspective (L4).

Based on the Paleo-Bohairic corpus (B4) – the main analytical core – and Classical Bohairic (B5), complemented by specific observations from 4th century Manichaean texts in L4, the study proposes a working definition of these “particles verbs” and discontinuous verbal constructions. Their behavior will be analyzed within the field architecture (secondary, middle, final fields) as described for Bohairic by Zakrzewska, considering: (i) the linearization of verbal segments/particle vs discontinuous TAM elements, (ii) aspectual-modal correlations, and (iii) indicators of grammaticalization toward integrated periphrastic constructions, in connection with Bohairic semantic alignment and centripetality. L4 is by no means a central focus but serves only as a point of synchronic contrast (4th century). The primary focus on the B4 corpus associated with B5 provides a comprehensive textual base for statistical analysis across two genres (biblical/linguistic contact vs Manichaean/prose/poetry), while B4/L4 (contemporary) validate synchronic comparisons. These data empirically test the theory of fields in FDG: does the mobility of the “particle” mark internal boundaries (secondary, middle)? The study thus refines the typology of complex Coptic verbs through the prism of Greek/Coptic linguistic contact.

La communication s'inscrit dans le cadre des recherches récentes sur l'ordre des constituants et la structuration en champs de la proposition verbale en copte bohairique, en se focalisant sur les constructions verbales complexes qualifiées de "phrasal verbs" (verbe lexical + particule adverbiale/prépositionnelle : ⲃⲟⲕ ⲉⲣⲏⲓ/ⲉⲃⲣⲏⲓ, ⲁⲃⲟⲕ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ, etc.). Elle s'inspire de l'approche descriptive de la *Functional Discourse Grammar* (FDG) proposée Ewa D. Zakrzewska, enrichie d'une dimension diachronique ( $B4 \rightarrow B5$ ) et dialectale marginale ( $L4$ ). À partir du corpus paléo-bohairique ( $B4$ ) – noyau analytique principal – et du bohairique classique ( $B5$ ), complété par des observations ponctuelles sur les textes manichéens en  $L4$  (4<sup>e</sup> s.), l'étude propose une définition opératoire de ces verbes "à particule" et des constructions verbales discontinues. Leur comportement sera examiné dans l'architecture des champs (secondary, middle, final field) telle qu'elle a été décrite pour le bohairique par Ewa D. Zakrzewska : (i) linéarisation des segments verbaux/particule vs TAM discontinus, (ii) corrélations aspectuo-modales, (iii) indices de grammaticalisation vers des périphrases intégrées, en lien avec l'alignement sémantique et la centripétalité bohairique.  $L4$  ne constitue en rien un axe central, mais sert exclusivement de point de contraste synchronique (4<sup>e</sup> s.). Le recours prioritaire au corpus  $B4$  associé à  $B5$  offre une masse textuelle exhaustive pour l'analyse statistique (genres biblique/contact linguistique vs manichéen/prose/poésie), tandis que  $B4/L4$  (contemporains) valident les comparaisons synchroniques. Ces données testent empiriquement la théorie des *fields* en FDG : la mobilité de la "particule" marque-t-elle les frontières internes (secondary/middle) ? L'étude précise ainsi la typologie des verbes complexes coptes, au prisme du contact linguistique grec/copte.

## **Bottros, Marina & Matta, Youhanna**

### **The Anonymous Transvestite Woman in Besarion 4: New Insights in the Literary Motif of Transvestite Women in Late Antique Christian Hagiography - Abstract**

The literary motif of transvestites in hagiography is one of interest since early Christian times, through late antiquity and till at least the middle ages, but goes back even into antiquity. It caught the attention of many scholars in the last decades, who studied the topic from a wide spectrum of perspectives.

In the frame of a study of the dossier of abba Besarion of Sketis in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, one of the first generation of the desert fathers, for my master's thesis, a silent anonymous disguised woman in the desert drew my attention. She appears in a paragraph of a story in the sayings of the desert fathers, the *Apophthegmata Patrum*. Abba Besarion and abba Dulas were on their way to abba John of Lycopolis, when they encountered her, and thought she was a "brother", until they found her dead in her cell on their way back and knew they were sent to bury her. This short story is part of the longer short story in Besarion 4 which describes the journey to John of Lycopolis and their visit to him in the alphabetical collection. But it appears again as a separate story in the systematic collection, which shows its importance for the monastic milieus, where these collections were composed, copied, read and circulated generations after generations.

In this paper we claim that this story of this anonymous disguised woman is one of the "archtypes" of this literary motif of transvestite women in the Christian hagiography.

## **Bottros, Marina**

### **The Image of the Copts in Muslim Historiography from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Century**

This paper investigates the representation of the Copts in Muslim historiographical writings from the seventh century to the late medieval period. Through an analysis of selected historical, geographical, and administrative sources, the study examines how Muslim historians portrayed the Coptic community and defined its position within Egyptian society. The research adopts a critical analytical methodology that situates these texts within their broader political, social, and intellectual contexts. It seeks to assess the extent to which such representations were shaped by contemporary power structures, religious discourse, and administrative concerns. Particular emphasis is placed on recurrent themes, including the relationship between the Copts and ruling authorities, their involvement in state administration and taxation, and depictions of the Coptic Church and its institutions. By comparing accounts from different periods and authors, the paper demonstrates that Muslim historiography presents a varied and evolving image of the Copts rather than a single, consistent narrative. These portrayals reflect changing historical circumstances and offer valuable insights into the dynamics of Muslim–Coptic relations in medieval Egypt.

## **Boud'hors, Anne**

### **Seymour de Ricci et l'enrichissement des fonds coptes en France au 20<sup>e</sup> siècle**

Au début du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, Seymour de Ricci, érudit français d'origine britannique, fit plusieurs missions en Égypte et y acheta, pour le compte de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, un grand nombre de fragments grecs et coptes. Ceux-ci se trouvent actuellement répartis entre l'Académie, la Bibliothèque nationale de France et l'Institut de papyrologie de la Sorbonne, et l'activité de S. de Ricci peut être étudiée grâce à des archives conservées dans ces trois lieux, ainsi qu'au Collège de France. J'ai repris en 2024, sur les fragments acquis par S. de Ricci, des recherches commencées dans les années 1980 à la BnF. Je voudrais présenter un état actualisé du parcours des fragments coptes (circonstances d'achat, lieu de conservation, état de publication), et faciliter ainsi l'accès à ce matériel, en partie inédit, composé de textes certes disparates, mais qui complètent souvent des dossiers existants (littéraires ou documentaires) ou permettent d'en ouvrir de nouveaux.

### **Seymour de Ricci and the enrichment of Coptic collections in France in the 20th century**

At the beginning of the 20th century, Seymour de Ricci, a French scholar of British origin, undertook several missions to Egypt, where he purchased a large number of Greek and Coptic fragments on behalf of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. These are currently divided between the Académie, the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Institut de papyrologie de la Sorbonne. Besides, S. de Ricci's activities can be studied thanks to archives preserved in these three institutions, as well as at the Collège de France. In 2024, I resumed research on the fragments acquired by S. de Ricci, which I had begun in the 1980s at the BnF. I would like to present an updated overview of the history of the Coptic fragments

(circumstances of purchase, place of conservation, publication status), thereby facilitating access to this material, some of which is unpublished. Although the texts are disparate, they often complement existing ‘dossiers’ (literary or documentary) or open up new avenues of research.

## **Boutros, Helana Marie**

### **Canadian Coptic Women’s Pursuit of Spiritual Health and Their Encounters with The Cultures of Mental Health and Biomedicine in The West: Preliminary Conversations**

This work ethnographically thinks with Canadian Coptic Women as they pursue spiritual health and how their experiences frame and shape their encounters with the cultures of mental health and biomedicine in the West. Growing spiritual health scholarship since the 1980s has expounded an understanding of spiritual health beyond a subfield of mental health and as a separate dimension of health. Research consistently shows that spirituality in all its forms is a key dimension of health. To this end, this study of Canadian Coptic women in the Greater Toronto Area will illuminate the pursuit of spiritual health in the context of a mental health landscape that’s becoming more and more shaped by biomedical ideas. Positioned at the unique nexus of the anthropologies of health and illness, the senses, and Orthodox Christianity, this research examines spiritual health, by retaining a close focus on Coptic women’s lifeworlds and Coptic Orthodox Christianity’s theopolitical contexts. Here, the three engaged anthropologies are dialogued with from the *inside out* rather than the *outside in*. This research treats spiritual health as a configuration of health deserving of critical analysis, and aims to highlight the ambivalent subjectivities that are created “from below” where Coptic women pursue spiritual health, including their negotiations of their spiritual health experiences, the role of the sensorium in their pursuit, and the ways in which spiritual health knowledge is transmitted across generations.

## **Boutros, Helana Marie & Bland, Weston & van Doorn-Harder, Nelly**

### **Book Panel on “Martyrs and Migrants Coptic Christians and the Persecution Politics of US Empire” by Candace Lukasik**

In recent years, Western politicians, think tanks, and NGOs have re-channeled their efforts into “saving” Middle Eastern Christians, as violence against minoritized communities continues to rise in the wake of the American invasion and occupation of Iraq, the Arab Spring, the war in Syria, the emergence of ISIS/Daesh, and ongoing conflicts over territorial sovereignty and self-determination throughout the region. To the extent that Middle Eastern Christians have registered in Western political imaginaries at all, they are either invoked to justify military intervention, or as an exemption to anti-Muslim immigration policies, because of their putative kinship as Christians with the West. Moreover, in the Middle East, Christians have also been instrumentalized by authoritarian rulers and the state in the service of national unity politics. All the while, local inter-communal tensions and incidents of violence are either utilized or eschewed by those in power, further marginalizing such communities from political action and collective flourishing. In this context, permanent migration to

Western countries and the rapid growth of diasporic communities have become an integral feature of transnational Middle Eastern Christian social, political, and religious life. Diaspora expansion has had devastating impacts on Muslim-Christian relations in the Middle East, as their instrumentalization grows by right-wing, conservative actors abroad. Yet, these minority migrant communities also face forms of racialization, exclusion, and securitization in the West that either glorifies their ancient and martyrical sacrifice or effaces the vitality of their distinctive forms of life. This complex paradox lies at the center of *Martyrs and Migrants: Coptic Christians and the Persecution Politics of US Empire* (NYU Press, 2025) by Candace Lukasik. This roundtable gathers together interdisciplinary scholars of Coptic Christianity, Egypt, migration, and diaspora to think through the political, social, and theological dynamics and stakes of Martyrs and Migrants, bringing to the foreground how Coptic Christian communities exemplify the transnational workings of empire through migration and exclusionary regimes of recognition.

## Brakke, David

### Decent, Ascent, and Salvation in the Coptic *Apocryphon of James*

“No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man,” the Jesus of the Gospel of John proclaimed (3:13). At this crucifixion Jesus ascends to where he was before (6:62; 16:28). This paper studies how the Coptic *Apocryphon of James* from Nag Hammadi Codex I takes the Johannine pattern of descent and ascent as the means by which the Saviour brings salvation to his disciples, who likewise must descend and ascend. The Saviour characterizes his descent as suffering and defilement, but as necessary for the teaching of others, before he ascends back to the Father. His disciples have descended to this world as well for a prior existence and will follow Jesus by ascending to the Father. When Peter and James attempt to ascend, however, the other disciples interrupt them, and they must remain to educate their colleagues. Descent represents the condescension of the teacher, who enables his students to ascend, perhaps even before him. Salvation in the *Apocryphon* requires effort to understand teachings and the willingness to teach others.

## Breen, Marit

### Empowered by Divine Worth: A case study exploring the role of faith in the lives of young Coptic women in Egypt today

This presentation is part of a qualitative empirical PhD project focusing on the case of a one-week empowerment training programme for young Coptic women within the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt, where trauma healing is a core component. Situated within the research field of gender and religion, the study is driven by a commitment to taking seriously religious women's experiences and seeking to understand these within the parameters of their own contexts. In this presentation I focus particularly on how a self-understanding of being a Coptic Orthodox Christian and a young woman is shaped within an understanding of belonging to the Coptic Orthodox community where the divine and a heavenly afterlife is central.

By sharing empirical material from my research and experiences shared by the young women who participate in the empowerment programme, my presentation underscores the

potential of diaconal practices to integrate trauma healing and spiritual formation in fostering empowerment. Furthermore, it highlights how young Coptic women, with their experiences and perspectives, are central actors within narratives about who the Copts are, providing important insights about what it means to belong to the Coptic community in Egypt today.

## Buckner, Candace

### On the Efficacy of Invocations and Dirt: Remnants of Healing Magic in Parturient Care in the *Coptic Life of Aaron*

The sixth-century *Coptic Life of Aaron* preserves the tale of a child birth gone awry (*Life of Aaron* 105–108).<sup>1</sup> According to the account, a woman from Philae lingers on the verge of death when her son becomes stuck inside her and dies (*Life of Aaron* 105).<sup>2</sup> After crying out to the “God of holy Abba Aaron,” the woman successfully delivers her lifeless son and thus survives (*Life of Aaron* 105).<sup>3</sup> However, the story does not end here: her parents and husband travel to Aaron hoping he will intervene and vivify the child. Not only do they entreat Aaron, but “[t]he father of the little boy [also] t[akes] some dirt [ογκογι κκαε] from near the door of his dwelling and tie[s] it up into his cloak” before the return home (*Coptic Life of Aaron* 108).<sup>4</sup> The text is silent on the husband’s reasoning; and yet, we learn how important this act is later – when the parents and husband return home, the boy remains unmoving; the husband, then, takes the secreted dirt and sprinkles it upon the boy. Immediately, the child “...moves his body and opens his eyes” (*Coptic Life of Aaron* 108).<sup>5</sup> In this paper, I will focus on these two aspects of healing, namely the parturient’s invocation of Abba Aaron’s God and the use of dirt in the stillborn’s vivification. By examining these elements, I argue that this episode of the *Life of Aaron* demonstrates how Christians readily drew upon a long established tradition of efficacious healing. After all, long before the Christianization of Egypt, women and their loved ones sought obstetric care through the use of female figurines, invocations, amulets, and other healing apparati.<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, I contend that the anxiety around pregnancy and parturition permitted the continued incorporation of non-Christian healing traditions and the *Life of Aaron* gives voice to the continued importance of what we might understand as “magical” approaches to healing during obstetric crises.

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<sup>1</sup> Dijkstra and Jacques van der Vliet, *The Coptic Life of Aaron*, 126–129.

<sup>2</sup> Dijkstra and Jacques van der Vliet, *The Coptic Life of Aaron*, 127.

<sup>3</sup> Dijkstra and Jacques van der Vliet, *The Coptic Life of Aaron*, 127.

<sup>4</sup> Dijkstra and Jacques van der Vliet, *The Coptic Life of Aaron*, 129.

<sup>5</sup> Dijkstra and Jacques van der Vliet, *The Coptic Life of Aaron*, 129.

<sup>6</sup> For fertility, see catalog AR50/3490. See Woolley, C. L. 1907. Coptic Bone Figures in *Society of Biblical Archaeology Proceedings*, Vol XXIX. 218-220 plus 3 plates; Also, for fertility, from possibly al-Bagawat, Ain et-Turba, Temple of Hibis, Kharga Oasis, used in niches of Christian homes as a part of domestic shrines. For amulets, see Heta Björklund, “Metamorphosis, Mixanthropy, and the Child-Killing Demon in the Hellenistic and Byzantine Periods,” *Acta Classica* 60(2017): 22–49.

## **Bull, Christian**

### **The Coptic Translation of the *Vita* of Epiphanius of Salamis**

The Coptic translation of the *Vita* of Epiphanius of Salamis, bishop of Cyprus (CLM 60; CMCL GIOV.AP), has received remarkably little scholarly attention and is absent from several recent surveys of Coptic hagiographical and *vita* literature. Although Francesco Rossi published the text in 1893, his edition is incomplete and, in several respects, unsatisfactory. Alexandros Tsakos and I are therefore preparing a new critical edition based on a fresh examination of the manuscript.

The Coptic *Vita*, preserved in a fragmentary codex in the Museo Egizio in Turin, contains substantial lacunae in the first half of the work, while the latter half is transmitted in comparatively better condition. Establishing the correct sequence and placement of the fragmentary leaves requires close comparison with the little-studied Greek original, whose textual history remains insufficiently explored.

This paper presents the current state of our work on the manuscript, including issues of codicology, textual reconstruction, and its relationship to the Greek Vorlage. It further considers the broader significance of the Coptic *Vita* within the development of Coptic hagiographical literature and its potential to shed new light on the transmission of the Epiphanius tradition in Egypt.

## **Burdajewicz, Julia**

### **The Wall Decoration of the ‘Lower Basilica’ at Philoxenite (‘Marea’). Preliminary Considerations of the Decorative Program**

Built toward the end of the 5th century, the Lower Basilica undoubtedly served for several decades as the principal church of Philoxenite (‘Marea’). Its status is reflected, among other factors, in the exceptional quantity and quality of its painted and stucco wall decoration, unparalleled by other excavated complexes in the city, including ecclesiastical ones. However, preserved as tens of thousands of detached plaster fragments, this material required a laborious process of reassembling before it could be studied. The resulting picture points to a decorative programme devoid of figural imagery, based instead on painted imitations of multicoloured stone revetments, with painted capitals bearing crosses as the sole explicitly Christian motif. The absence of satisfactory parallels among similarly dated wall paintings in Egypt raises questions concerning the origins of this aesthetic. Factors such as the identity of the presumed patron, the influence of Alexandria’s artistic legacy, the possible execution by an Alexandrian workshop, and the function of the Lower Basilica as an urban church will be considered.

## **Burdajewicz, Julia (POSTER)**

### **A Haloed Figure from Bath T2 at Philoxenite (‘Marea’)**

Excavations in the caldarium of Bath T2 (mid-6th c.) yielded numerous wall-painting fragments consisting of up to seventeen layers of painted plaster and whitewash. The repeated redecorations of the caldarium walls were undoubtedly necessitated by

unfavorable conditions that caused rapid deterioration of the decoration. One of the plaster layers preserves traces of a haloed head, accompanied by an incomplete inscription reading *Theodor[-]*; the same name reappears on the final (latest) plaster layer. If interpreted as depicting a saint, this painting would constitute a unique piece of material evidence for the presence of figural religious imagery in bath complexes. Although the recovered fragment of the *titulus*, together with the account of a miracle performed by an image of St Theodore depicted in a bathhouse (*Vat. Copt. 66*), may appear to offer a ready identification of the figure, its representation does not conform to the contemporaneous iconography of St Theodore. While research is ongoing, it is already clear that this image must have held particular significance in the context of the bath, given that it was applied despite adverse conditions and in a prominent position opposite the entrance to the caldarium.

## Burns, Dylan

### Neo-Nicene Theology at Nag Hammadi: The Platonizing Sethian Texts

Recent research has highlighted the usefulness of reading the Nag Hammadi corpus in light of its manuscript (material) contexts and with reference to reader response theory, establishing a basis for reading these Coptic texts not as artifacts of ‘Gnostic heresy,’ but of Egyptian Christianity. The facts that the Nag Hammadi manuscripts contain a wealth of theological literature, much of it informed by Neoplatonism, and that they were likely produced and buried in the late fourth or early fifth centuries CE, invite a reading of the texts from the standpoint of Egyptian theology in this period, when the Arian Controversy and related questions remained contentious issues. While there has been some scholarship exploring the Gospel of Truth (NHC I,3; XII,1) and Gospel of Philip (NHC II,3) in light of Nicene and post-Nicene thought, the Platonizing Sethian texts have yet to be fully investigated from this angle. This is a surprise, given that Zostrianos (NHC VIII,1) has already been demonstrated to share a source of some kind with a leading Neo-Nicene theologian, Marius Victorinus. The present study will offer a reading of Zostrianos and its ‘sister’ treatises – Allogenes (NHC XI,3), the Three Steles of Seth (NHC VII,1) and Marsanes (NHC X,1) – from the standpoint of Neo-Nicene thought, and investigate the theological and philosophical appeal of these works for Coptic readers of the later fourth century.

## Calament, Florence (POSTER)

### A Work in Progress in the Louvre Museum

As you may be aware, the permanent exhibition rooms of the Department of Byzantine and Eastern Christian Arts will open soon, in 2028. This will be an opportunity to once again showcase our Coptic collections, the most significant outside Egypt after the Coptic Museum in Cairo. However, a significant transformation in presentation will occur within this new framework, with a paradigm shift. Apart from the focus on the remains of the monastery of Baouît, and in a new design, they will be compared with productions from other parts of the Byzantine Empire and other civilizations.

## Chaillot, Christine

### What is the situation about the discrimination and persecution experienced by the Christian Copts in Egypt in 2025 ?

In 2011, I wrote a book about the discrimination and persecution experienced by the Christian Copts in Egypt from the 1970s until the early 2010s. What is the situation like today, in 2025?

## Cook, Samuel

### Formulaic language in Coptic and Greek educational material

Educational texts and school exercises from Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt are replete with formulaic language (FL), encompassing a broad range of material from alphabets and syllabaries to grammatical paradigms, technical vocabulary and phraseology, and even the repetition of psalms, biblical passages, and other literary excerpts. However, the use of FL in education is not unique to antiquity: in the last forty years, studies from the fields of cognitive linguistics and pedagogy have discussed the use of FL in modern pedagogical practices, particularly in the context of second language acquisition. This includes how FL is acquired and processed, how a speaker's primary language (L1) affects the interpretation of FL in their target language (L2), and the extent to which FL reflects L2 proficiency.

Drawing on preliminary investigations as part of the ERC-funded project *EduGRE: Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt – An Intercultural Approach* (University of Exeter), the present paper explores the role of FL in Egyptian education and educational texts. Focusing on Coptic and Greek material, it will draw on recent studies on the use of FL in second language acquisition to discuss how formulaicity may have played a role in bilingual education in Egypt. It will also explore the question of what constitutes “formulaicity” in the context of Egyptian school texts.

## Crislip, Andrew

### Emotion in the Coptic Apocryphal Imagination

In this paper I address emotion in late antique Coptic apocrypha now sometimes included in the category of apostolic memoirs, biblical and extrabiblical narratives composed and transmitted within the homiletic context of Egyptian monasteries. In these apocryphal narratives, emotion features prominently as narrative, theological, and ritual element, as the texts model appropriate and inappropriate emotions and feelings through the biblical exemplars of Jesus Christ, the apostles and disciples, and the opponents of Christians, human and diabolical. Building on previous work on the passions in Coptic apocrypha (e.g., the *Book of Bartholomew*, the *Homily on the Life of Jesus and his Love for the Apostles*, and the *Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*), this paper will address the centrality of emotions in the Coptic apocryphal imagination and the creative refashioning of theologically troublesome episodes from the biblical story world to model a collective emotionality in a monastic context. Such Coptic apostolic memoirs offer valuable comparisons to emotional discourses in other

apocrypha translated and transmitted in fourth- and fifth-century Egypt, and give valuable evidence for the contours of monasteries as emotional communities in late antiquity.

## **Dal Sasso, Eliana**

### **Reading Bindings: Materiality and Scribal Practice in Coptic Manuscripts**

This paper presents selected results from my doctoral research at the University of Hamburg on Coptic bookbinding techniques, treating bindings as material evidence of scribal practices and manuscript production. Rather than viewing bindings solely as protective structures, the study demonstrates how their material and technical features provide insight into the contexts in which books were produced, used, and circulated.

The analysis is based on the direct examination of Coptic bindings in European collections, complemented by the study of digitised manuscripts and photographic documentation for material that was inaccessible for autopsy, and by critical engagement with existing scholarship. The resulting data have been integrated into the existing open-access database *PAThs*, thereby enhancing its coverage of Coptic bindings. The findings reveal clear correlations between binding techniques and manuscript function: quickly executed bindings, often limited to the stitching of leaves, are typically associated with manuscripts containing school exercises, magical and oracular rites, and devotional prayers, whereas more refined bindings characterise literary manuscripts.

Finally, the paper identifies localised binding practices, including a distinctive feature linking bindings to the Monastery of Mercurius at Edfu, and a cluster of bindings from manuscripts of the Monastery of the Archangel Michael at Phantou, whose specific decorative patterns suggest production in Touton. These material patterns contribute to the reconstruction of scribal environments and provide criteria for attributing detached bindings to particular centres of production.

## **Davis, Stephen**

### **At the Treshold: Arabic *Dipinti* as Markers of Presence in the Medieval Red Monastery Church**

The Coptic inscriptions on the walls of the White and Red Monastery churches have been the subject of scholarly attention now for over a century. In the early 1900s, Vladimir de Bock, W. E. Crum, Gustave Lefebvre, and Henri Leclercq documented surviving examples in the sanctuary of the church at the White Monastery. A century later, Paul Dilley documented the Coptic painted inscriptions (*dipinti*) in the sanctuary of the Red Monastery church as part of the ARCE-sponsored conservation project led by Elizabeth Bolman, and later by Nicholas Warner. In recent seasons, my archaeological work at the White Monastery has given me the opportunity to revisit the inscriptional record there and to expand the documentation of this corpus to include Coptic wall writings in the church's south hall. Aside from the epigraphic attention given to the Coptic inscriptions in these two monastic churches, however, very little attention has been given to Arabic wall writings in either setting. In this paper, I will begin to redress this oversight by focusing on the Arabic inscriptions preserved in the enclosed sanctuary space of the Red Monastery Church as a living record of visitation practices since the medieval period. I am interested in both the content and the placement of these writings:

not only what they tell us about the visitors themselves and their pious purposes, but also how such inscriptional acts served to mark thresholds and points of access to sacred space.

## Dekker, Renate

### News on Martin Krause's Dissertation on Bishop Abraham of Hermonthis

In 1956, Martin Krause (d. 2024) finished his dissertation *Apa Abraham von Hermonthis. Ein oberägyptischer Bischof um 600*, which includes a study on the bishop's person and activity as a bishop and abbot (vol. 1) and the edition of 114 Coptic texts relating to him (vol. 2). Krause was revising this dissertation and the second one – on Coptic deeds from the Monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit (1957) – for publication and intended to increase the number of edited texts, but political, practical and academic factors complicated this process. To honour Krause and to make his research better accessible, I am preparing the publication of a revised version of his dissertation on Bishop Abraham, a monk-bishop who also featured prominently in my dissertation. This version will include a new preface, introduction and first chapter as well as a list of the 200 texts that Krause wished to include, which I found in his Nachlaß at the Institut für Ägyptologie und Koptologie in Münster in August 2025.

## Delassus, Marie

### Étuis à calames et encriers en Égypte byzantine : révision d'un corpus d'instruments d'écriture

Parmi les accessoires relatifs au domaine de l'écrit se démarque un ensemble d'étuis de cuir abritant à la fois des styles et des calames. Simples fourreaux dotés de compartiments ou gaines trapézoïdales au décor élaboré, ces enveloppes intègrent parfois des parties en bois peint et plus fréquemment des éléments métalliques. Ceux-ci correspondent à des encriers, une typologie de récipients méconnue, qui sera étudiée au travers d'exemplaires mis au jour en Égypte et dans le reste du bassin méditerranéen. Un examen matériel sera l'occasion de nous interroger sur les techniques de fabrication ainsi que sur les modalités d'utilisation de ces objets. La question de leur circulation sera aussi évoquée. La relecture des contextes de découvertes permettra d'initier une réflexion sur les propriétaires de tels équipements, révélateurs d'un certain statut social.

### Pen cases and Inkwells in Byzantine Egypt: A Revised Corpus of Writing Implements

Among the accessories related to writing, a set of leather cases containing both *styli* and reed pens stands out. These simple sheaths with compartments or trapezoidal sleeves with elaborate decoration, these cases sometimes incorporate painted wooden parts and, more frequently, metal elements. These correspond to inkwells, a little-known type of container that will be studied through examples unearthed in Egypt and the rest of the Mediterranean basin. A material examination will provide an opportunity to examine the manufacturing techniques and methods of use of these objects. The question of their circulation will also be discussed. A re-examination of the contexts in which they were discovered will enable us to reflect on the owners of such equipment, which is indicative of an obvious social status.

## **Del Francia, Loretta**

### **Textiles from the tomb of Theodosia (Antinoe)**

In the winter 1936-1937 during an excavation campaign conducted under the direction of Evaristo Breccia, the tomb of a young woman named Theodosia was discovered beneath a kom in the Northern necropolis. The textiles found there were published in 1945 by Sergio Donadoni, who marked those found inside the tomb with an asterisk. The difference in the themes and styles of the decorations of these textiles have until now been considered inexplicable.

This investigation focuses on the analysis of the transformations in the representations of the figures, especially of the putti, as well as on the early appearance in some examples of miniaturization of human and animal figures. The contextual presence of different styles could be probably due to the relatively long use of the tomb. But other explanations can be proposed.

## **Delhez, Julien**

### **Greek-Coptic Bilinguals of the New Testament: A New Synthesis**

This paper aims to summarize current knowledge on Greek-Coptic New Testament bilinguals, both as artifacts and as textual witnesses. In this regard, it will update Kurt Treu's valuable but already old synthesis "Griechisch-Koptische Bilinguen des Neuen Testaments" (published in 1965). The paper will devote special attention to the first findings of the Leuven-based BICROSS project, which is dedicated to the study of New Testament bilinguals in general.

## **Deptuła, Agata**

### **Manuscript Culture in Medieval Nubia: Reading Liturgy through Fragments**

The liturgical traditions of medieval Nubia are preserved only in fragments. The surviving material consists mainly of isolated folios or small groups of leaves, with no complete liturgical books, allowing only a partial insight into liturgical practice.

This paper focuses on Greek liturgical books from medieval Nubia, primarily hymn collections, euchologia, and lectionary material, and considers them within the broader context of Eastern Christian manuscript culture, with particular attention to Egypt. Although the surviving Greek material is highly fragmentary, it allows for concrete observations concerning the types of books in use, the selection of liturgical texts, and their modes of transmission. The distribution of texts, their liturgical range, and their material features point to the existence of locally active centres engaged in book production, rather than the simple circulation of standardized imports from Egypt or elsewhere.

Particular attention will be given to the material from Qasr Ibrim, which preserves the largest assemblage of Greek liturgical fragments from Nubia, considered alongside evidence from other Nubian sites, including inscriptions transmitting excerpts from liturgical books, especially those from Baganarti and Dongola.

## **Derda, Tomasz**

### **Philoxenite – a pilgrimage city on the road to the sanctuary of St Menas**

For a long time, the ruins on the southern shore of Lake Mareotis were identified with ancient Marea, the principal city in this part of the Mediterranean prior to the foundation of Alexandria. However, after more than twenty years of excavation, it can now be stated that no remains predating the late fifth century AD have been found. It was at that time that a new city was established, laid out according to a carefully conceived urban plan that adhered to the finest traditions of Antiquity.

The city owed its name to Flavius Philoxenus, a prominent figure in Byzantine politics under Anastasius and Justin, who financed its foundation. The primary purpose of this undertaking was to provide a comfortable resting place for pilgrims travelling to the sanctuary of St Menas. Travellers could pause here, lodging in quarters specifically adapted to their needs. Many remained for longer periods, taking advantage of the recreational opportunities offered by the bath complexes – two large installations are known, both capable of accommodating several hundred visitors at once.

The spiritual needs of the pilgrims were met through participation in the liturgy celebrated in the monumental church, the Great Basilica. A limestone wall, two kilometers in length, was constructed along the shoreline, straightening it slightly; this wall imposed order on the space and gave the settlement a regular form. Its straight, bright – almost white – lines were clearly visible from any ship crossing the lake toward one of the Philoxenite piers. Completing this striking vista was the imposing silhouette of the Great Basilica, which must have made a powerful impression on every visitor.

## **Díaz Hernández, Roberto Antonio**

### **Exploring the Egyptian Language and Its Hieroglyphic Writing System in the Age of Artificial Intelligence**

The world is undergoing a digital revolution that is transforming the way Egyptian is studied – dictionaries and grammar books are increasingly replaced by lexical databases, large language models and treebanks. In this context, this paper deals with the work currently being carried out on the development of the Universal Dependencies treebank for pre-Coptic Egyptian, the EPC treebank (formerly the EUJA treebank). This is a natural language processing tool that allows the identification of any hieroglyphic spelling or grammatical construction within the previously annotated texts. It is like a digital grammar of pre-Coptic Egyptian, containing thousands of examples that could never fit in a conventional grammar book. The paper will also show the use of the EPC and its position with respect to the Sahidic and Bohairic treebanks in order to compare syntactic constructions between pre-Coptic and Coptic Egyptian, and it will outline future work on its development.

## Dijkstra, Jitse & Gerhardt, Marius

### Philae – Berlin – Moscow: A Sixth-Century Building Inscription from Philae Rediscovered

In his authoritative edition of the Greek inscriptions from Philae, Étienne Bernand remarks on the whereabouts of *I.Philae* II 216, one of a group of building inscriptions from the quay wall of Philae mentioning Bishop Theodore (dated 577 CE), that he inquired with the museums in Berlin, but that the stone (inv. 2136) could not be found, nor that there was a photo of the item. In fact, he was told that the stone was ‘wahrscheinlich im Kriege vernichtet’. His edition is therefore based on the facsimile of Lepsius, who took the stone back with him from his Egypt trip to Berlin in the 19th century.

In this presentation we will report on the exciting rediscovery of the stone just recently in Berlin. We will first discuss the interesting history of the artefact, whose travels reached as far as Moscow (and back to Berlin again), and why it would have been thought to be lost in the war and vanished from view. We will then provide a new edition of the text, which can be improved based on autopsy of the object and the photos now available, thus giving this important inscription the proper attention it deserves.

## Dilley, Paul (POSTER)

### AI-Assisted Editing of Coptic Manuscripts

This poster presents work in progress on Artificial Intelligence-based tools to assist in the editing of the Medinet Madi Library of Manichaean codices, supported by a 2026-2028 grant from Schmidt Science’s Humanities and AI Virtual Institute, “AI Models with Reinforcement Learning to Edit Texts in Damaged Manuscripts.” It will provide an overview of the primary target corpus, namely multispectral images of the Coptic Manichaean manuscripts in Berlin, Dublin, and Warsaw, taken by the mobile lab of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at the University of Hamburg; the project’s proposal of fragmentary Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) to output probable completions of letter fragments; and the connected LLMs for restoration of lacunae. The poster will include initial results and planned work, as well as a list of sources used for training the models.

## Dosoo, Korshi

### The Coptic Magical Papyri Project: Retrospective and Prospects

The first phase of the Coptic Magical Papyri project ran from 2018-2023 at the Julius Maximilian University Würzburg, culminating in the publication of the first volume of the *Papyri Copticae Magicae*. The second phase, the *Corpus of Coptic Magical Formularies* project (2024-2027) is currently underway, with the goals of producing a second volume of the *Papyri Copticae Magicae*, digitising a large proportion of the Coptic magical corpus through the *Kyprianos* database and the *Coptic Scriptorium*, and producing focused studies on questions of language and ritual structure. This presentation will review some of the key findings of the first phase, and the decisions made in producing the first volume of the *Papyri Copticae Magicae*, before providing an overview of the projected contents of the second and

subsequent volumes, and discuss some of the more significant preliminary discoveries made in the course of their preparation.

## **Drbal, Vlastimil**

### **Pagane mythologische Themen auf koptischen Textilien. Überlegungen zum Wesen der koptischen Kunst**

Bekannterweise beinhaltet die koptische Kunst nicht nur christliche Themen (was jedoch von der Forschung jahrzehntelang behauptet wurde), sondern auch Themen aus der griechischen und vereinzelt auch aus der altägyptischen Mythologie. Der Vortragende bietet eine neue Sicht allgemeinerer Art an, die auf Basis seiner Nachforschungen zu den einzelnen mythologischen Themen (nicht nur) auf koptischen Textilien entstanden ist (und ein Teil seiner Habilitation an der Universität Brunn/Brno ist). Die einzelnen Thesen sollen einen kleinen Beitrag zum Wesen der koptischen Kunst darstellen, deren Betrachtungsweise einem ständigen Wandel unterliegt; sie werden hoffentlich die Zuhörer zu einer regen Diskussion ermutigen.

## **Dzierzbicka, Dorota**

### **Marks of Trade, Seals of Identity: Economy and Socio-Cultural Change in Stamped Amphora Sealings from the Monastery of Naqlun in the Fayum Oasis**

Stamped jar sealings offer valuable insights into the distribution and consumption of amphora-borne goods – especially wine – as well as the broader economic networks in which they circulated. This paper examines 130 stamped sealings from the 6th–11th century CE, excavated by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, at the monastery of Naqlun in Egypt's Fayum Oasis. Thanks to their contextual association with amphorae and a rich body of over 1,000 papyri discovered on-site, the sealings enhance our understanding of the monastery's role in the regional economy. At the same time, the assemblage reflects broader socio-cultural changes that followed the Arab conquest of 641 CE. Sealings from the 6th–8th centuries are inscribed in Greek and Coptic, while those from the 9th–11th centuries are largely anepigraphic and bear figural motifs. These differences reveal shifts in language, iconography, and sigillographic conventions, reflecting changing aesthetic preferences and expressions of identity under Islamic rule. As conveyors of both information and symbolic meaning, the sealings shed light on the cultural interactions between Christian and Islamic spheres in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt.

## **Ebrahim, Ahmed**

### **Coptic Terms Denoting Rent and Wages in Coptic Documents during the Seventh and Eighth Centuries AD**

This research aims to study and analyze Coptic terms denoting rent and wages in Coptic documents during the seventh and eighth centuries AD, a critical period witnessing economic and cultural transformations in Egypt, where a thematic classification methodology was employed to organize fourteen primary terms and their derivatives that reflect the richness

and diversity of the Coptic economic system, and these terms were classified into six semantic axes: rental contracts and legal agreements, rent and material compensation, contracting parties, rental and leasing processes, expenses and costs, and terms of general significance, while the analysis revealed precise functional specialization of terms where Greek-origin terms were used in formal and legal contexts and Egyptian-origin terms dominated local transactions and daily business, and the results demonstrated the continuity of ancient Egyptian heritage in the Coptic language alongside Greek influence reflecting cultural integration in Coptic society, and the research revealed the Coptic language's capacity for precise and specialized expression in economic transactions confirming its vitality and richness as an administrative and commercial language during this important historical period.

## **Egger, Matthias**

### **Illuminating the Coptic Gospels in Lower Egypt from the Ayyubid Period (1171-1250) to the Early Nineteenth Century: Long-Term Visual Identity in a Multifaceted Production**

Western scholarship often perceives Coptic manuscripts' decoration as limited, heterogeneous in form, and confined to the medieval period. This paper challenges this by arguing for a developed visual unity and relative continuity in Coptic Gospel illumination in Lower Egypt over time, from the Ayyubid period (1171–1250), when several documented witnesses allow the establishment of a reasoned corpus extending to the early 19th century, when the first printing presses transformed this tradition. It questions the applicability of formal and chronological divisions to this heritage, which defies categorizations. Coptic illumination is generally analyzed through external frameworks – almost exclusively in medieval studies for codices up to the 14th–15th centuries: “Byzantine” miniatures, “Islamic” ornamentation, or marginal decorations as secondary borrowings. These classifications, however, reflect historiographical biases rather than the evidence itself. They obscure a discrete yet long-term self-referential production, where post-15th-century colophons often cite earlier codices as models.

This stylistic diversity may be indicative of a reappropriation rather than a borrowing; combined with this trajectory of illuminated manuscripts over time, this actually reveals a profound consistency in the multifaceted nature of this tradition.

Focusing on about ten manuscripts from the doctoral corpus – held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the British Library, and Coptic collections in Cairo – this study demonstrates how to approach Coptic illumination as a unified whole. By reassessing Western and Egyptian historiography and proposing interdisciplinary methodologies from Byzantine, Islamic, and Coptic studies, this research aims to redefine Coptic illumination and reposition it within broader art historical narratives.

## **Ekladyous, John**

### **Analysis of Recurring Melodical Patterns of Common Coptic Hymns**

**Team: John Ekladyos, Maged Samuel & Michael Henein**

**Background:** Repeated melodies commonly exist in ecclesiastical music, irrespective of geographical location, including the Coptic church. The latter has not been studied in detail, probably because of the well-known oral tradition-based practices.

**Objective:** The aim of this study was to identify the Coptic hymns which include the sixth station in the **Alli AlKorban** hymn and to explore potential links between the presence of that melody, the lyrics of the hymns and their place in the liturgical services according to the Coptic rite.

**Methods:** We searched for the hymns' recordings at the High Institute of Coptic Studies, Egypt, and all other available sources, obtained from different cantors over the last 80 years, most of them preserved by the Late Ragheb Moftah. The hymns included liturgical praises, liturgies and other events, particularly the Holy Week.

**Results:** The sixth station of the **Alli AlKorban** was identified in 11 hymns, one in the pre-vespers praises, 6 in the mid-night praises, 2 in the Gregorian Liturgy and the remaining 2 in the psalms of the Holy week. This melody was not related to language, since the 12 hymns were Hebrew, Coptic and Greek, nor to a specific vowel. However, 11 of the 12 identified hymns were related to the concept of the 'sacrifice' whether of Lord Jesus or the sacrifice of praise.

**Conclusion:** This study shows that the six station of the Alli AlKorban hymn exists in 12 of the commonly practiced hymns in the Coptic church. Their presence highlights a common theme 'sacrifice', a finding that should help the chanters to focus mentally on a valuable spiritual concept.

## El-Gendi, Sherin Sadek

### La Scène de la Déisis en Égypte et à l'Étranger: Étude Comparative

Le problème dont je m'occupe dans cette étude est, certainement, le plus intéressant de tous pour les coptes. L'art copte qui s'est, évidemment, développé dès la fin du 4<sup>e</sup> siècle ap.J.-C., comporte plusieurs thèmes décoratifs qui varient d'après les différentes époques historiques, nationalités et cultures des artistes qui les ont exécutés. La décoration copte se compose des figures humaines et animalières, des ornements floraux et géométriques, des symboles chrétiens, des éléments architecturaux, des inscriptions grecques, coptes, syriaques et arabes, des scènes bibliques, sociales et nilotiques variées.

La Déisis est une des scènes intéressantes mais elle n'est pas fréquente dans l'architecture et l'art coptes malgré l'importance de son sujet c'est pourquoi nous l'étudierons afin d'analyser ses différents détails qui apparaissent dans quelques monastères et églises coptes en Égypte. Il importe, également, de dégager la conception religieuse et la raison de l'exécution de cette scène avec ces trois protagonistes. Il sera fort intéressant d'établir une comparaison entre les arts copte, byzantin et d'autres arts étrangers pour souligner les emprunts réciproques de ce sujet de l'intercession qui décore quelques peintures murales, icônes et mosaïques.

## Elhage-Mensching, Lina

### Unveiling the Source of the Second Arabic Homily in the Sahidic-Arabic Holy Week Lectionary sa 16L (14<sup>th</sup> c.)

The Holy Week lectionary preserved in the BAV in Rome under the designation Borgia Copto 109, cass. 23, fasc. 99 (cf., among others, Georg Zoëga 1810, 189-192) is a bilingual Sahidic-Arabic paper codex most probably dating from the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. AD. In addition to the Arabic titles and texts of the liturgical readings from the Scriptures, which are parallel versions (but not necessarily direct translations) of the Coptic text, it also comprises four homilies only in Arabic, which have never been investigated in detail. In this talk, I will focus on one of the homilies, which appears on ff. 175v-176r at the end of the ninth Hour of the Day on Holy Friday. The Homily itself is introduced as ‘An exhortation said by the father *Anba* John Chrysostom with respect to our Lord Jesus Christ surrendering His soul on the wood of the Cross at the ninth hour’ and was first classified by Agostino Ciasca (Ciasca/Balestri 1885-1904, vol. I, XXVII) as St John Chrysostom’s *De Passione Domini* and mentioned by Oswald Burmester (1943, 483) as “Exhortation de S.J. Chrysostome en arabe”. However, in the course of my work on the edition of the four homilies and my research on possible sources of these texts, the homily at issue showed no clear relation with any homily by St John Chrysostom. Instead, as I will show in detail during the talk, almost literal versions of the homily appear in Ms. Theology 25 preserved in the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate (COP) in Cairo as well as in Ms. Vat. ar. 102 preserved in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV). Both manuscripts contain the *Kitāb al-dur al-tamīn* (‘The book of the precious pearl’) attributed to Severus ibn al-Muqaffa’ (10<sup>th</sup> c.). While Ms. Theology 25 is dated to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the fact that Ms. Vat. ar. 102 is dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century strongly suggests that the *Kitāb al-dur al-tamīn* is the source of the homily at issue. This hypothesis will be validated during the talk by means of a thorough comparison with more witnesses of the *Kitāb al-dur al-tamīn*.

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## Ellwardt, Andreas

### Kopto-arabische Umwege, oder: Wie aus 127 saidischen Kanones sieben bohairische Bücher werden

Die von Lagarde in seinen *Aegyptiaca* bekannt gemachten saidischen *Canones ecclesiastici* und *Canones Apostolorum* wurden im Mittelalter ins Arabische übersetzt und liegen heute in der Edition Périer/ Périer, *Les 127 canons des apôtres*, vor. Arabisch überliefert sind sie unter anderem in der umfangreichen Makarios-Sammlung. In dieser findet sich ebenfalls eine nur arabisch erhaltene Achtbuchsammlung, die dem syrischen pseudoklementinischen Oktateuch ähnlich, aber von diesem unabhängig ist. Henry Tattam ediert 1848 nur den bohairischen Text der koptisch-arabischen Handschrift Berlin or. quart. 519 von 1804. Diese Handschrift gewinnt besondere Bedeutung, da sie einige verlorene saidische Folien in der Edition der berühmten *Traditio Apostolica* ersetzen muß. Erst ein Blick in die gesamte arabische Überlieferung erlaubt, die überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhänge zwischen dem saidischen, dem bohairischen, sowie der drei arabischen Übersetzungen zu erfassen. Dies soll anhand einiger synoptisch vorgestellter Beispiele aufgezeigt werden.

## El-Suriany, Fr Bigoul

### Anonymous BELLA and PAPNOUTE ?

Certain text of the 7th century, about an unnamed saintly father apa PAPNOUTE (who was a priest and archimandrite in some hermitage in middle Egypt) was found through an Arabic manuscript from the 18th century in the collection of Deir al- Surian in Wadi el- Natrun {lower Egypt}.

This comes in a narrative spiritual meeting between someone called Bella? (Abbot) and his disciples. Studying of such text will help uncover and elaborate the monastic concepts, milieu, social routines and rules in the Coptic hermitage in the seventh century.

In this paper, we will go through analytic study of two sources of this text, one from Deir al-Surian and the other from Deir saint Antony the Great in the Red Sea. Also, we will focus on the life of apa PAPNOUTE the priest as model of the archimandrite in his time. Finally, we will come with some notes for further study.

## Engsheden, Ake

### The shifting use of the definite article with names of regions and cities

The paper provides an overview of the use of the definite article with place names. Although it is likely that Koine Greek provided the model for the use of the definite article with names of regions (e.g. *t-galilaia*) and cities, it is noteworthy that the definite article is more often used in the Coptic versions than in Greek (seen e.g. by comparing the versions of the Acts of the Apostles) although to a varying extent according to the dialect. Bohairic seems to use the article less frequently, Sahidic more often, Mesokemic the most. It can be observed that the definite article allows to make a distinction in Sahidic between Babylon/Babylonia in Mesopotamia and its Egyptian near-homonym at Old Cairo. In principle, only the former appears with the article (but there are a few exceptions, mostly late). The distribution of the

definite article with various types of place names reminds of what has been suggested to be an “areal feature of European languages”. Thus, the study rejoins recent research carried out on onymic grammar, in Romance in particular.

#### **Literature:**

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Shisha-Halevy, A. 1989. *The proper name. Structural prolegomena to its syntax*, Vienna.

### **Falduto, Elisabetta**

#### **Hidden Writings: Cryptography and Scribal Culture in the Colophons of the Coptic Manuscripts from al-Ḥamūlī**

This paper proposes a new interpretative approach to two brief cryptographic texts preserved in the colophons of Coptic manuscripts originating from the monastic library of al-Ḥamūlī. These encrypted notes are generally constructed through monoalphabetic substitution ciphers, and their interpretation has traditionally relied almost exclusively on decryption schemes based on the principle of reciprocal letter substitution.

Reassessing earlier decipherments, the present study adopts a methodological framework that combines cryptographic analysis with linguistic observation and the study of scribal practices. Particular attention is paid to the variability of substitution systems, the selective rather than normative use of reciprocal correspondences, and the integration of numerical signs as part of a strategy aimed at increasing textual opacity. Rather than approaching the cipher as an abstract and autonomous system, the analysis situates it within the concrete habits and choices of individual scribes, including orthographic preferences attested elsewhere in the same colophons.

This contextualized perspective allows for a reconsideration of the function of cryptography within Coptic manuscript culture, highlighting its role not only as a means of concealment but also as an expression of scribal agency, technical knowledge, and self-representation.

### **Falkenberg, René**

#### **Thomas on Thomas: The Gospel According to the Book in Codex II**

The seven texts of Nag Hammadi Codex II include two ascribed to the same disciple, the *Gospel of Thomas* as the second text and the *Book of Thomas* as the last. The latter is set apart from the general codex layout as its inscribed text is far more condensed and even unusually prolonged onto the end flyleaf glued to the cover. Apparently, the codex scribe felt the need to squeeze in exactly this text as the last. But why? All Codex II texts function as a kind of commentary on the first chapters of Genesis, except for the *Book of Thomas*, but this

squeezed-in-text may instead function as a kind of commentary on the second codex text, the *Gospel of Thomas*.

## **Farag, Mervat**

### **Depiction of the Virgin Mary in Manuscripts during the Ottoman Era**

This research deals with the depiction of the Virgin Mary in manuscripts during the Ottoman era through the manuscript 'Mayamar Collection of the Virgin Mary,' which is preserved in Abu Qurqas, Minya. Its transcription dates back to 3 Amshir, year 1451 Coptic.

The manuscript contains 14 'Mayamar' (hymns/discourses) and several depictions of the Virgin Mary. The research focuses on analyzing the images and highlighting the symbolic connotations associated with each pose, the execution style, colors, faces, clothing, and decorative backgrounds.

It also explores the continuation of Byzantine influences in the depiction of the Virgin, alongside the emergence of Coptic features influenced by the prevailing environment in Egypt during Ottoman rule.

## **Fawzy, Rowida**

### **P. Alex. Inv. 751: A Legal Deed from Christian Nubia**

In 1900, J. Krall published an article on six Coptic legal documents from the Museum of Alexandria, which he designated as Documents A–F. While Document F received a full transcription, Document A – remarkable for opening with an “Official Nubian Protocol” dating to the reign of the Nubian king Chael (late 8th century CE) – was only briefly described and never fully edited. Since Krall’s study, this historically significant text has remained unpublished.

This paper presents the first complete scholarly edition of this document, preserved in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (P. Alex. Inv. 751). The text is a legal deed recording the sale of property in South Mōhōndi (Nubia). A codicological analysis of the double-sided parchment shows that it originally formed part of a larger legal cartulary, allowing the document to be structurally and materially connected with related Nubian legal texts now dispersed across collections in London and Vienna.

By reintroducing a legal document absent from scholarly discourse for more than a century, this study sheds new light on property transactions, administrative practice, and legal culture in medieval Christian Nubia, contributing to a deeper understanding of the legal, economic, and socio-political structures of the Nubian Christian kingdoms.

## **Fluck, Cäcilia (POSTER)**

### **The Coptic collection in the Bode Museum (Museum of Byzantine Art) Berlin**

With nearly 3,500 objects, the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin holds the largest collection of Late Antique and Early Christian artefacts from Egypt outside the country. Its origins date back to Wilhelm Bode, founder of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum (today Bode Museum), which opened in 1904 on Berlin’s Museum Island. Bode commissioned the art historian Josef Strzygowski to acquire objects for the newly established department of Early

Christian and Byzantine art. During a study trip to Egypt in the winter of 1900/01, Strzygowski purchased a large number of works on the local art market, thereby laying the foundation for the museum's Late Antique Egyptian collection.

In the first three decades after the museum's opening, this branch of the collection developed into one of international importance through targeted acquisitions, donations, and transfers from the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin. Although it suffered considerable losses during and immediately after the Second World War, it remains one of the most significant collections of Late Antique Egyptian artefacts outside Egypt.

The poster presents a selection of key objects, including the portrait of Bishop Abraham of Hermonthis, a relief depicting Apa Shenoute, abbot of the so-called White Monastery federation at Sohag, sculptures from the Apa Apollo monastery at Bawit, and an outstanding group of textiles.

## Frankfurter, David

### “Scraps that Sing”: Vocality as a Component of the Object-Agency of Coptic Formularies with Horus/Isis *historiolae*

Many inscribed protective media in late antique Egypt seem to operate by projecting a potent voice towards a vulnerable person or against potential threats. One thinks not only of papyrus amulets (e.g., Suppl. Mag. 96; Coll. Moen 107) but especially of the limestone chip that the monk Frange was asked to inscribe to protect a farmer's animals 90. Frange 190): it would not simply operate in silent presence but as a vehicle of Frange's own authoritative voice.

How far can we take this model of the “speaking inscription,” where the material presence of the inscribed thing is extended through the inscription's capacity to speak? The cases I will address consist of late antique and Byzantine magical formularies that record *historiolae* of the ancient gods Horus and Isis. The potency of these *historiolae* is borne by the spoken words of the divine characters in the narrative. In addition, these particular VI-X CE multiforms of the ancient Horus/Isis *historiolae* reflect an oral performative tradition as context for their communication (although scribes clearly edited the texts to reflect Christian authority). The material multiforms of the *historiolae*, the codex and loose-leaf formularies, therefore mediate between the oral performative setting and the text – the scribal creation. But, I argue, those texts themselves acquire material agency: as things that are chanted aloud and as things that therefore convey voices: the voices of Horus and Isis, as well as their stories. In this experiment in the implications of object agency I aim to draw out the distinctive attributes of certain Coptic ritual formularies within a predominantly oral culture.

#### Bibliography:

Frankfurter, “Charismatic Textuality” (2019)  
Stern, *Writing on the Wall*

## Gay, Apolline

### The pieces of a Biblical puzzle: writing a new story of the “*Reinhardtstoff*”

In 1901, in *Orient oder Rom*, Josef Strzygowski devoted a short chapter to a particular work of art from Christian Egypt, the so-called “*Reinhardtstoff*”, from the name of its former collector.<sup>7</sup> As described by Strzygowski, the “*Reinhardtstoff*” is a great linen textile dating from the 4th-6th century, adorned with biblical scenes and divided into several fragments. Today, some of the pieces mentioned by the author are well known, and preserved in collections of prestigious museums, especially in London<sup>8</sup> and Leipzig,<sup>9</sup> while others have disappeared but are documented by archival images.<sup>10</sup> However, since Strzygowski’s publication, these fragments have never been studied together, as a whole and complete archaeological object.

Faced with this paradox, the aim of this paper is to challenge the existence of this “*Reinhardtstoff*” from a perspective of collection history: do these fragments really belong to the same original textile? Is it possible to reconstruct the initial aspect of the object(s)? To address these questions, I will use stylistic and material criteria, in order to distinguish the important variations and similarities between fragments. Furthermore, this study will provide a better understanding of the construction of ambitious biblical iconographic programmes, focusing on the links between images rather than on isolated episodes. Through this case study, I will demonstrate how the history of collections can be used as a scientific tool to enrich our knowledge of Byzantine Egypt art history, particularly with regard to textiles.

## Gertzen, Thomas & Schmidt, Heike

### „Aus dem Deutschen Gelehrtenleben“ – Disciplinary Disputes and Philological Paradigms in German Orientalist Studies

P. de Lagarde, nowadays primarily remembered as a pioneer of modern anti-Semitism (Sieg) and völkisch ideology, considered Coptic to be a “*lingua pulcherrima et sapientissima*” and began to edit New Testament Coptic texts immediately after his doctorate, to further pursue a project of his Doktorvater Moritz Gotthilf Schwartze. His youthful enthusiasm met with scorn by another young Orientalist scholar at Goettingen, Egyptologist Heinrich Brugsch, who tore this work apart in a review. Lagarde never gave up on Coptic Studies, although he sold the remainders of his earlier attempts as wastepaper; years after the events, he published a 40-page refutation of Brugsch’s criticism and tried to prevent a reappointment on the chair for Egyptology in Goettingen.

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<sup>7</sup> STRZYGOWSKI, Josef, *Orient oder Rom, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantiken und Frühchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig, 1901, pp. 104-108.

<sup>8</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum.

<sup>9</sup> GRASSI Museum für Angewandte Kunst.

<sup>10</sup> WULFF, Oskar et VOLBACH, Wolfgang Fritz, *Spätantike und koptische Stoffe aus ägyptischen Grabfunden: in den Staatlichen Museen, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, Ägyptisches Museum, Schliemann-Sammlung*, Berlin, 1926, pl. 118.

Leaving the personal conflict aside (only a limited number of letters, exchanged between him and Brugsch has been preserved among Lagarde's papers bequeathed to the Goettingen Academy), this clash of personalities highlights the change in Orientalist Wissenskultur (knowledge culture), as pointed out by H. Behlmer and described by S. Mangold as a process of professionalisation and philologisation, which this presentation is going to exemplify.

## **Ghali, Christine**

### **The disgrace of Judas: A Comparative Anthropological Reading of Coptic and Ethiopian Holy Week Traditions**

This paper offers an anthropological reading of the "Disgrace of Judas" as it appears in both Coptic and Ethiopian liturgical traditions, focusing on its ritual performance, historical formation, and popular reception. It seeks to examine the Coptic ritual procession connected with Judas, which is traditionally performed on Maundy Thursday after the reading of the Praxis. By tracing its historical background, the study also considers the local practices and communal responses that came to surround this procession.

The paper then turns to the Ethiopian Church, where a comparable ritual procession condemning Judas's betrayal takes place on Good Friday rather than on Maundy Thursday. Here, the focus is on the possible origins of this procession, the extent to which it developed popular or communal expressions, and the ways in which it functions symbolically and performatively within the wider framework of Holy Week.

Adopting a comparative anthropological approach, the study reflects on the notion of the liturgical procession itself, the similarities and differences between the two traditions, and the reasons behind the divergence in their liturgical timing. It argues that, despite differences in form and chronology, these processions express shared concerns about moral teaching, collective memory, and the lived experience of betrayal within communal religious life.

## **Ghica, Victor & Müller, Matthias**

### **Documentary and literary texts from the monastery of Dayr Mustafa Kashif, Kharga Oasis**

Dayr Muṣṭafā Kāṣif, perched on the south-west cliff of Ġabal al-Ṭayr overlooking the Darb al-Arbaʿīn and the monastic landscape of northern Kharga, is a multi-storey Late Antique complex whose most distinctive feature is an upper-storey church – an exceptional survival in Egyptian Christian archaeology. Recent excavations by the joint Norwegian–Egyptian mission have confirmed the monastic character of the main building and, on the basis of stratigraphy, ceramics, and Bayesian modelling of radiocarbon evidence, place the earliest monastic occupation within c. 360–381/382, before a major fire event affected parts of the complex.

This paper presents and contextualises the written material recovered in the excavated sectors (2021–2025), foregrounding what becomes possible when documentary and literary texts are read against secure archaeological provenience. The documentary dossier – currently including ceramic ostraca and wooden tablets (mostly acacia bark), written either in Coptic or in Greek – already constitutes the nucleus of a local monastic "archive". One key Coptic letter (oDMK 7) shows the *kephalaiōtēs* Phoibamōn instructing Apa

Kyriakos (very likely the monastery's superior) ahead of a meeting, urging him to "organise the taxes" with Apa Sinouthios and a layman Phaustine, and explicitly coordinating movements "north" and "south" in relation to arriving soldiers – an unusually vivid snapshot of monastic fiscal obligations and uneasy entanglement with mobile officials and military personnel in the Great Oasis. Alongside such correspondence, Greek fiscal notes include orders of payment addressed to clerics – for example, a deacon (Atripis) paying two *choes* of oil to Father Mousaios, and an order for wine addressed to a priest [Sa]rapis – anchoring monastic subsistence and redistribution in the same document habits known from Dūš and 'Ayn al-Wāqifa.

The literary corpus, likewise contexted, now includes: a parchment fragment in Lycopolitan Coptic preserving Galatians 1:8–2:2; a papyrus fragment from codex cartonnage with Acts 3:1–2; and a newly excavated parchment combining Titus 3:12–14 with Philemon 1:1–2. In addition, codex-related artefacts – leather cover fragments (including pieces implying a c. 16 cm-wide codex and a format compared to Nag Hammadi bindings) and a rare painted leather fragment depicting a reclining haloed figure – provide an exceptional, materially grounded glimpse into fourth-century book culture in the oases and its disruption in the fire sequence. A central contribution of the paper is to expand this dossier beyond the excavated fragments by reassessing dispersed manuscripts in museum collections. We argue that Sahidic parchment leaves in the Metropolitan Museum (catalogued generically as "Kharga Oasis, Bagawat") and related fragments split between New York (MMA) and Washington (CUA/ICOR) very likely originate from Dayr Muṣṭafā Kāšif: together they represent two biblical codices containing 2 Corinthians (6:9–7:5; 11:16–30), Hebrews (5:9–6:9 and parts of ch. 10), and Jeremiah (Jer 22; 23:19–29; 25:14–36:5). The argument combines excavation history, codicological comparanda with on-site finds, and heat deformation consistent with high-temperature exposure – plausibly linking these leaves to the same fire horizon documented archaeologically.

By integrating excavated texts, sealing evidence suggestive of official correspondence, and re-provenanced codex leaves, the paper reassesses literacy regimes, administrative connectivity, and scriptural circulation at Dayr Muṣṭafā Kāšif, and situates the Western Desert more centrally in debates on fourth-century Egyptian monasticism.

## Girling, Robert

### The Veil Between Worlds: Music in Coptic Gnostic and Manichaean Literature

Coptic musicology has largely focused on the musical heritage of the Coptic Church. Unlike Coptology more broadly, it has yet to consider the cultural implications of the re-dissemination of Coptic-language Gnostic and Manichaean literature over the course of the last century. This paper identifies passages with overtly musical terms from the 'Gnostic collections' of the Askew, Bruce, and Nag Hammadi Codices, as well as the Manichaean 'Homilies', Psalms, Epistles, and *Kephalaia*.

Collation of these passages reveals music as an important and multiform aspect of the writers' spiritual and cosmological philosophies. Some of these texts frame the cosmos in musical terms, while others consider 'hymning inwardly' or 'silently' as crucial components of achieving communion with the divine. The findings can be compared with references to music in orthodox Coptic literature to better understand their significance in context. The paper argues that music offers a new lens through which to interpret aspects of philosophy

and culture in Gnostic and Manichaean studies. Beyond these disciplines, the religious plurality evidenced in the Coptic literature has significant implications for early Coptic music, evidencing not just a single thread of Coptic heritage but a varied tapestry of musical culture and thought.

## **Golian, Estera**

### **Beyond Destruction. Hagiographic Narratives, Archaeological Evidence, and the Reinterpretation of Temple Conversion in Late Antique Egypt**

Hagiographic accounts of early Christian holy men dismantling temples, smashing cult images, and driving out demons have powerfully shaped how scholars imagine the beginnings of religious transformation in late antique Egypt. Since the early twenty-first century, however, scholars have approached these texts with increasing critical caution, seeking interpretive frameworks that move beyond narratives of violence and rupture. The present paper shifts the focus to the archaeological record and argues for a systematic reinterpretation of excavation reports and their underlying assumptions.

Drawing on a georeferenced database of approximately 260 Egyptian temple sites, the paper first assesses where meaningful archaeological investigation remains feasible: where does useful stratigraphic evidence exist, and where are we dealing with absence of data rather than absence of activity?

Further, selected temple sanctuaries are examined according to their modalities of conversion, identifying the distinct forms transformation adopts and the material indicators by which they are archaeologically recognisable. The paper investigates whether a given set of indicators corresponds to actual violent acts within a religious-ideological framework, while simultaneously examining the direction of the evidence in cases where such an interpretation is not supported.

## **Griffitts, Troy**

### **AI integration with collaborative digital tools for critical editions**

The workflow for editing the Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament consists of 11 discrete stages – from cataloguing, to imaging, indexing, transcribing, collating, regularizing, to reconstructing the textual history. This session explores our adventures integrating AI with 6 stages of this workflow as a proof of concept to answer the question: can AI be a legitimate assistant at every stage in a way which actually improves our editing experience and without eroding the accountability that makes an edition authoritative? We'll give a realtime demonstration of our live integration points into the Virtual Manuscript Room Collaborative Research Environment and discuss our lessons learned along the way.

## **Habib, John**

### **Seeing, Hearing, and Kissing: Modes of Interaction with Gospel Books in Medieval Egypt**

In medieval Egypt, Christians were identified as “People of the Book” in reference to their use of scripture. For Copts in medieval Cairo, the Book containing the Coptic Gospels was the central object around which they rallied to reaffirm their identity in the face of mounting external pressures. This paper showcases how the medieval Coptic ritual of kissing the Gospel Book consolidated the community while reaffirming its social stratigraphy. The medieval Cairene liturgical manuals indicate that the patriarch kissed the Book first, followed by the clergy, the men, and the women. Thus, everyone venerated the Book together and declared their shared submission to its contents. However, not all acts of kissing were equal: the clergy kissed the written words in the open Book, and the laity kissed the closed cover of the Book through a veil. This act of materializing social hierarchies would then be employed to reassert the primacy of the Coptic language over Arabic. In the sixteenth century, touching the Coptic Gospel Book would be limited to men, while women would only access the book of the Arabic translation. Therefore, this ritual was a complex expression of the Coptic identity with its uniting and differentiating components.

## **Habibi, Afnen**

### **“Wine from the Cell to...”: A Papyrus of Monastic Exchange**

P.UB.Trier.S. 118. 5 is a Coptic papyrus belonging to the papyrological collection of the University of Trier. The text is complete, written in light brown ink, and contains nine lines between recto and verso. It consists of a letter sent apparently by Phoibammon to other monks and including Apa Ioannes and Severus. The content refers to a shipment of three Lakootes of wine and the receipt of two others. At the end of the letter, instructions are given to ensure that the cellar door is properly sealed, as it had been left open, and the text concludes with a conventional religious formula. The mention of “the north” suggests that the order comes from middle or southern Egypt. Although no specific date is provided, paleographic features allow it to be dated to between the 7th and 8th centuries. Several papyrological correspondences identify wine as a commercialized and industrialized product exchanged between monasteries. Such evidence contributes to the study of economic activities within monastic communities and of exchanges between several establishments, while also highlighting wine as an essential product in both trade and religious contexts.

## **Harel, Haleli (POSTER)**

### **Ⲫⲟⲩⲧⲉⲙ: A Conversational Bohairic Coptic Digital Lexicon**

The nature of the spoken counterpart to the written evidence of Egyptian-Coptic remains largely unresolved. Over the last eight years, the Polis Institute in Jerusalem has offered experimental classes in spoken Bohairic Coptic using a full immersion method. This developing pedagogical approach is documented in the book series ⲧⲃⲁⲕⲓ (Tibaki), published by the Polis Institute Press. Building on Coptic texts, as well as 'Neobohairic' vocabulary and

neologisms constructed for this program, we are compiling an interactive digital lexicon for spoken Bohairic, entitled ⲥⲟⲧⲉⲙ (Sotem).

This poster accompanies the launch of this new resource, providing guidelines for using and contributing to this communal, collaborative tool. The tool is linked to lexicographical resources, such as the Coptic Dictionary Online (CDO), the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (TLA), and initiatives such as remnqymi.com, among others, and relevant research is cited per lexical item. ⲥⲟⲧⲉⲙ invites the members of Coptic communities, scholars, and interested individuals worldwide to discuss lexical choices and neologisms. Together, we aim to curate and expand the documentation of Coptic lexicography through visualizations, recordings, and live discussions. The resource is published in an open format, allowing data reuse and contributing to the development of teaching resources for Coptic.

## Henein, Michael

### Insight into the Music structure of the St Basil Liturgy

**Background:** The History of Coptic Liturgical music remains unknown. While the lyrics of the three prayed liturgies, St Basil, St Gregory and St Cyril, are attributed to their respective saints, the origins of the musical settings of these liturgies remain unclear.

**Objective:** This study aims to analyse the musical structure of the Liturgy of St Basil as it is currently practiced in the Coptic Orthodox Church, with the objective of identifying specific patterns that may shed light on its musical nature, style, and characteristics.

**Methods:** The St Kyrel Coptic Choir recorded the complete Liturgy of St Basil during a dedicated session in Paris in 2018, with occasional assistance from a musical instrument (lute) to maintain optimal tonality. The performance was based entirely on recordings produced by the Higher Institute of Coptic Studies in 1970. The recordings were subsequently transcribed using conventional Western musical notation, in conjunction with the Arabic notation system, to accurately represent microtonal intervals.

**Results:** Notational analysis confirmed that the Liturgy of St Basil, according to the Coptic tradition, can be divided into seven distinct sections, each characterised by a unique melodic identity, suggesting a deliberate and coherent musical design. These findings have implications for hymnology education and the academic study of Coptology.

## Herz, Bishoy Boules Thabt

### The cultural and educational role of the Copts in Egypt and the extent of their influence on other civilizations (from the emergence of Christianity until the tenth century AD)

Throughout history, Copts have contributed to building a diverse and prosperous Egyptian society, characterized by its intellectual and cultural richness. Churches, monasteries, and Christian schools spread remarkably throughout Egypt. In this context, the Copts left an indelible mark on Egyptian history by establishing a comprehensive educational and cultural system through which they successfully preserved their distinct identity despite the formidable challenges they faced.

The Copts embodied a widespread Christian entity, their ancient civilization extending along the banks of the Nile and deep into Nubia. This allowed them to engage in rich interaction

with diverse cultures, through the educational and cultural wealth of the Alexandrian school, the numerous translations undertaken by the Copts of Greek and Syriac sciences and arts, and their educational legacy of Coptic monasticism and literature. This legacy contributed significantly to the transmission of this heritage to various civilizations.

This cultural and educational role of the Copts in Egypt embodies the journey of Coptic civilization, which was and still is an integral part of the history of modern Egypt, and reflects the mutual interaction between the Copts and other societies throughout the ages.

## **Herz, Bishoy Boules Thabt**

### **The Art of Depicting Angels on Coptic Icons in Egypt During the Eighth and Nineteenth Centuries AD.**

Despite the ethereal and immaterial nature of angels, which renders them inherently imperceptible to the senses, the prevailing belief suggests their potential for visual manifestation to those blessed with divine grace and spiritual insight. This conception imbues angels with a symbolic, physical form in sacred icons, depicting them as youths of heavenly beauty, reflecting their purity and spiritual majesty. Beyond this iconic image, this concept extends to the four incorporeal beings and the twenty-four priests mentioned in the Book of Revelation, who are considered to belong to this angelic category, thus broadening the circle of spiritual beings capable of manifesting themselves through divine power. Within this framework, this research paper presents an overview of the depiction of angelic ranks in Coptic icons.

## **Hevesi, Krisztina**

### **What Does Invisibility Tell Us? The Case of Applied Magical Manuscripts with Faded Ink**

Most papyrological collections possess a certain number of Coptic magical manuscripts that, despite the general popularity of magical texts, have always been neglected and intentionally avoided by researchers due to their state of preservation, especially their damaged and faded texts. Consequently, the type of manuscripts with scarcely visible texts, additionally, often written with tiny letters, remained unpublished, as if they did not carry any useful information.

Through some hitherto unpublished examples, my paper focuses on this group of manuscripts that can be classified as a specific type of applied texts. Even though these sources are difficult, sometimes almost impossible to read, they can greatly contribute to our knowledge of Coptic magic and their importance should not be underestimated. Throughout the analysis with a handheld Dino-Lite microscope, not only did it come out that most of these manuscripts were written with plant or, more rarely, iron-gall ink on parchment or paper, but their reading became possible with UV light and consistencies could be outlined. Although it is often taken as granted that most magical texts were supposed to be read and copied after their preparation, some characteristics strongly go against this idea and point to the direction of ritual use beyond mere recitation and production. Based on the observations, it can be hypothesized that the material features (including both the ink and the writing

support) and the choice of layout were primarily in connection with the magical practice and application of these texts.

## **Hevesi, Krisztina & Vítková, Zuzana**

### **A Curse to Cause Hatred: A Fragmentary Coptic Magical Formulary reconstructed from fragments preserved in two European collections (P.Prag.Wess.Copt. IV,7 and P.Strasb. inv. K. 576, 578, 580 and 689)**

The papyrus collections of the *Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences* in Prague and the *Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire* in Strasbourg (BNUS) contain fragments of a magical manuscript, part of which we have managed to reconstruct and would like to present here.

The content of the reconstructed manuscript is a magical formulary. We can judge from the frequent repetition of the word “hatred”, or “to be hated”, and from the beings invoked (Krônôs, Devil) that the text consists of one or more curses that were intended to bring universal hate upon a person whose name has to be written instead of the generic name formula when the spell is copied and personalized. The invocation of the Devil is not a very common feature in Coptic magic, in this paper we will therefore try to examine the place of the manuscript in the context of Coptic aggressive magic. At the same time, we will also present some questions that arise when examining such magical manuscripts (e.g., the question of provenance and dating; when and for what purpose was the manuscript torn apart).

## **Hobel, Tina**

### **Aspects of Spatial Organization of the Monastic Cemetery at Deir el-Bakhît**

The monastery of Paulos (Deir el-Bakhît) on Dra' Abu el-Naga is the largest monastic complex in Western Thebes, Upper Egypt. It was inhabited by a coenobitic community from the late 6th to the early 10th century AD and was part of a local network of monasteries of varying sizes and characteristics. The monastery had its own cemetery, located on a hilltop to the east. The graves are marked by above-ground mudbrick structures and arranged in long rows. A stratigraphic analysis of the agglutinative construction method enables the tracing of the structural development of the cemetery over several centuries. The discussion will address indications of a spatial hierarchy that can be deduced from the positioning and shape of graves. Comparative evidence from neighboring monasteries in the Theban hills is used to contextualize the architectural concepts observed at Deir el-Bakhît.

## **Hodak, Suzana**

### **Intra muros et post templa. Ongoing Excavations at the West Wing of the Monastic Complex at Athribis**

Recent discoveries made at the western side of the Ptolemaic temple complex dedicated to the lion-headed goddess Repit at Athribis shed new light also on the female monastery of Shenoute's monastic federation located “in the village”. This paper will present a preliminary

report of the work carried out by the DFG funded excavation project led by Christian Leitz at the University of Tübingen and discuss its new findings at the West wing of the famous female monastery.

## Hradilová, Denisa

### Coptic textiles as export articles, educational tools, and museum artefacts

Coptic textiles were common articles of export from Egypt to Central Europe during the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. They were usually donated or bought for many museums at international exhibitions and public events, but in some cases, the journey has been much longer. This paper examines the convolutes of Late Antique Egyptian textiles from Coptic burial sites, which are currently housed in museums in the Czech Republic and were previously sent from central institutions in Vienna to textile schools in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (Rýmařov, Krnov, Liberec, Brno) as educational tools. Their purpose was to show students the art of textile production. After World War I and World War II, and the closure of these schools, these fabrics were donated to the nearest museum institutions (Museum Bruntál, Krnov Town Museum, North Bohemian Museum in Liberec, Moravian Gallery in Brno). In some cases, these schools were connected with large textile companies as Karnola in Krnov, which ceremoniously donated Egyptian textiles to the Krnov Town Museum as very valuable historical and artistic relics in 1961. The provenance of these textiles can be traced through documents in state archives and articles in museums and local journals.

## Huang, He

### Modeling Semantic Continuity and Change from Egyptian to Coptic through Embedding Alignment in Language Models

This study develops a shared Transformer-based language model encompassing Demotic, Hieroglyphic, Sahidic, and Bohairic, utilizing datasets from the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (TLA) and *Coptic SCRIPTORIUM* as primary corpora. Although various language models for earlier Egyptians and Coptic separately have been well trained before, joint training across the Egyptian language family remains rare due to surface divergence, such as missing vowels in earlier Egyptian and script changes among them. With proper normalization, this study projects these heterogeneous, stage-specific embeddings from different language stages into a unified semantic space.

The aim is to propose an alignment framework for these different yet closely related languages. While static dictionaries provide established cognate correspondences, they often fail to capture nuanced semantic shifts over three millennia. Conversely, our model captures dynamic, context-dependent semantics, enabling the quantification of diachronic semantic drift through the measurement of embedding distances. Furthermore, it helps identify latent semantic links beyond cognate mapping. This research thus provides a data-driven methodology for digital lexicography, offering tools for historical linguistics and the computational study of the evolution of both Egyptian and Coptic.

## Hyde, Leila

### **Coptic Susanna: The Book and its Text**

The book of Susanna is one of several apocryphal additions in the Greek Septuagint, which made its way into the Coptic Bible. This paper will analyze said text through its six extant manuscripts, addressing questions of Susanna's independence as a book and its role in religious and daily life. In addition to these broader reflections, this paper will highlight some of the most challenging readings found while assembling the critical apparatus of Sahidic Susanna, and explore what these differences can tell us about the Coptic translation.

## Hypszar, Joanna

### **Producing Books at Touton: Identifying Prototypes, Tracing Hands, and Mapping Networks in the Fayyum (9th-10th c. CE)**

This paper presents results from a material-philological study of the so-called “Touton style” Coptic codices produced in the Fayyum during the ninth–tenth centuries CE. The paper explains how manuscripts with Touton provenience can be identified either through explicit colophon testimony or by visual criteria (e.g. paragraph marks, superlineation, ekthesis initials, pagination and quire frames), and it discusses problems of attribution arising from variation in illumination patterns, pagination, and superlinear practice. Using a limited but well-defined palaeographical corpus, the study demonstrates how identifying individual hands can extend attributions and reveal collaborative copying practices. Further, prosopographical data from the colophons contextualize scribes, donors, and circulation networks. Finally, I provide counts and genre-based summaries of Touton manuscripts and fragments and assess how content type (biblical, liturgical, homiletic) correlates with layout and ornamentation. The corpus includes 179 manuscripts with identified contents and 210 unidentified pages or fragments that may belong to Touton manuscripts. The evidence suggests recipients beyond the White Monastery and Phantou, and points to an organized local book-production network. I argue that this study offers robust baseline data for late Coptic scribal culture and provides methodological tools and a searchable corpus for future research.

## Ibrahim, Nesma

### **Graffiti as Lived Theology Coptic Voices from Al-Bagawat Cemetery, Egypt**

Coptic graffiti constitute an often-overlooked category of textual evidence that offers direct insight into the lived religious experience of non-elite communities. This paper examines a selected group of Coptic graffiti from the cemetery of al-Bagawat in Kharga Oasis, focusing on their theological content and linguistic formulation. Unlike formal liturgical, homiletic, or documentary texts, these short inscription-frequently consisting of prayers, invocations, and expressions of hope-reflect a form of theology articulated outside institutional frameworks. Through a close analysis of formulaic expressions, biblical allusions, and linguistic variation, the paper argues that these graffiti represent a form of 'lived theology', in which doctrinal concepts such as salvation, resurrection, divine protection, and intercession are reworked in

concise, personalized forms. Particular attention is paid to the flexibility of standard prayer formulas and the interaction between orality and writing in shaping these texts.

By situating the graffiti within their spatial and funerary context, the study highlights the role of writing on walls as an embodied religious practice connected to memory, presence, and hope in the afterlife. The paper ultimately demonstrates that the graffiti of al-Bagawat are not merely marginal or informal texts, but meaningful theological statements that expand our understanding of Coptic religious expression beyond official literary traditions.

## **Incordino, Ilaria**

### **Preliminary analysis of new data from the Monastery of Manqabad, Asuyt (Field Season 2025/2026)**

**Team: Incordino, Ilaria & Marchionibus, Maria Rosaria & Salsano, Anna**

During the last season of work at the Monastery of Manqabad (Asyut), directed since 2024 by Maria Rosaria Marchionibus, the team carried on a survey in new areas of the site, in order to understand whether the place could be a pilgrimage center. In particular, the survey of a large raised platform, located just south to the apse of the main church of the site, has revealed a complex system of underground channels, for both loading and unloading of water. In addition, it was examined an underground room in the central sector of the site. The space was originally domed and its analysis has revealed several elements which may be related to some cultic purpose. Moreover, the documentation of previous findings in the warehouses of Shutb and El-Ashmunein proved useful in understanding the function of the monastery and the devotional tradition associated with the site, an important monastery of the Middle Egypt region.

## **Innemée, Karel**

### **Deir al-Surian, the architecture of the 7<sup>th</sup> century building**

The Church of the Holy Virgin in Deir al-Surian has been subject to investigations concerning the mural paintings and inscriptions (graffiti, dipinti, epigraphy, and other texts) in the past decennia. Apart from that the removal of 18<sup>th</sup> century plaster has also resulted in a large quantity of information concerning the original architecture of the building. Examples are the discovery of marble columns inside masonry piers, walled-up windows and a wooden framework construction. The paper gives an impression of how the original structure at the time of its construction must have looked.

## **Jiménez Torres, Leia**

### **Learning in Two Languages: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Greek and Coptic School Texts from Late Antiquity**

The publication of Monika Hasitzka's *Neue Texte und Dokumentation zum Koptisch Unterricht (P.Rain.UnterrichtKopt)* in 1990 brought Coptic school texts into the papyrological spotlight for the first time. It appeared as the Coptic counterpart to its Greek twin, *P.Rain.Unterricht*, and, despite the clear similarities between the school texts included in both editions and the

chronological overlap of a substantial portion of them, Greek and Coptic school texts have tended to be studied separately, with the Greek documentation attracting significantly more attention.

By studying Greek and Coptic texts together as part of the same educational landscape, one of the main questions that arises is, precisely, the rationale behind the choice of language. The aim of this paper is to address this question: by analysing a corpus of approximately 300 school texts in Greek and Coptic dating from the 4th to the 8th centuries, I will attempt to determine whether the papyrological evidence supports a distinction between a “Greek education” and a “Coptic education,” as well as to elucidate the sociolinguistic dynamics that motivated the use of one language over the other.

**John, Kathrin**

### **The Funk Framework – Concordances, creation pipeline, process files, and their future**

As Uwe-Karsten Plisch once wrote, “it becomes particularly clear that the published work of Wolf-Peter Funk represents only the visible tip of an iceberg. Numerous concordances, for example, to the so-called “small” dialects, only appeared as private prints or were generously shared as floppy disks - always for the benefit and advancement of Coptology.” The paper wants to shed light on what’s under the tip of the iceberg by giving an overview of the Funk framework, that is, an insight into inventory, structure, as well as the concordance process and pipeline of the version of Funk’s running instance and corpus that he provided for further use to the DDGLC project in 2014. Besides looking into its digital past, the presentation also aims to outline a possible digital future for the majority of the formats and versions of the framework, allowing multiple mappings between more than two million entries (morphemes) organized into 12 lemma lists, 21 full text archives, and 10 concordance folders, both to preserve the original information structure of the framework throughout all pipeline steps but also to allow a flexible future.

**Karawani, Hadil & Reintges, Chris**

### **“Ambiguous in meaning and translation”? – An alternative analysis of *eršan* protasis clauses**

**§1** Layton (2000:411 §497) claims that “bare *eršan* [protasis clauses] (not preceded by conjunction)” “are ambiguous in meaning and translation”. The leading idea (like much of the tradition) is that this special type of conditional “does not distinguish factual presupposition (*since* [cause]) from general stipulation (*if, whenever*). Unless preceded by a subordinate conjunction, it does not differentiate between temporal and causal meaning ‘*when, since, or if* she chooses or will choose, *whenever* or *if ever* she chooses or chose’ (idem 272 §346). **§2** This brief exposition introduces a useful distinction between presuppositional and stipulative readings but what is crucially missing from the description is a reference to the fact that the hypothetical ‘IF p, q’ and the temporal ‘WHEN p, q’ interpretation of *eršan* protasis clauses do not stand on equal footing in terms of the speaker’s epistemic certainty. In fact, and at first blush surprisingly so, temporal *eršan* protases presume the speaker’s epistemic commitment to the veracity and actualisability of the apodosis event once the protasis event

has occurred. In this sense, temporal conditionals embody the epistemically stronger stance.

**§3** We will make the strong assumption that the hypothetical construct does not so much represent the core meaning of periphrastic conditionals but rather arises as a default option when the relevant clues for speaker-oriented certitude are lacking. As such, hypotheticals are readily available and may surface even in those contexts where a temporal interpretation is intended. This introduces some noise into the interpretative judgement, which must carefully be controlled for by the translator of Coptic texts.

**§4** In our novel analysis, the system of conditional interpretation is fully transparent and leaves no room for inherent semantic ambiguity – contrary to the received wisdom in Coptic scholarship.

## Kattrup, Junia

### Accentuation of Greek loanwords in CLM 23

The manuscript CLM 23 is one of only two Coptic manuscripts which contains accentuations of the Greek loanwords, the other is CLM 844. Both manuscripts are Theban codices, and both are dated to the sixth to seventh century on paleographic grounds. While the accentuations in both manuscripts have been mentioned by W.E. Crum in his edition of CLM 23 in 1915 and by A. Boud'hors in a codicological study of CLM 23 in 2018. However, the phenomenon has not yet been studied in detail. This paper will focus CLM 23 and provide an overview of the use of accents in Greek loanwords. From this the paper will discuss the internal logic of the scribe's practice and the possible motivations for including the accents of the Greek loanwords. The paper will then compare the accentuation practice(s) to the ones found in CLM 844, as well as contemporary Theban Greek papyri. The paper will thus contribute to a broader understanding of the integration, use and pronunciation of Greek loanwords in Coptic and provide a broader understanding of the scribal *milieu* of western Thebes.

## Kelmelyte, Grazina

### Divine Feasting, Bridal Union, and Exclusion in Valentinian Traditions and Origen's Song of Songs

This paper explores the imagery of divine feasting, wedding banquets, food, and wine in Valentinian and related Nag Hammadi texts, especially *Authentikos Logos* and *Exegesis on the Soul*, with comparative reference to Origen's *Commentary and Homilies on the Song of Songs*. In Valentinian and para-Valentinian literature, banquet and bridal imagery function as soteriological events: participation in divine food and wine signifies awakening, restoration of identity, and reintegration into fullness, while exclusion from the feast operates as immediate judgment, revealing ontological unreadiness or ignorance.

The paper argues that these texts employ feast imagery to articulate a mythic and ritual logic of salvation, in which nourishment, intoxication, and bridal union mark decisive transitions rather than gradual formation. Origen's interpretation of the *Song of Songs* is comparable because it engages the same symbolic repertoire – wine house, nourishment, erotic union, and exclusion – yet systematically reworks it. By reading Origen alongside Valentinian traditions, this paper tries to clarify how banquet imagery became a site for negotiating authority, judgment, and access to divine knowledge in second- and third-century

Christianity, and how Valentinian models of revelatory completion might have prompted alternative, pedagogical reconfigurations within emerging ecclesial theology.

## **Kischko, Daniel**

### **Written, Done an' Dusted. Some Opening Remarks on a Scribe from Kellis**

The text corpus of Kellis represents one of the earliest assemblages of Greek and Coptic texts from the 4th century CE. While the Greek documents inform us about the official connections of the local population of the Dakhleh Oasis with the Roman administration, the Coptic letters offer us a glimpse into the private entanglements of these very same people. People who write complaints of assault to the governor or sell a foal in Greek send their condolences and greetings (a lot of greetings) in Coptic.

In a mostly illiterate community, the post of a scribe as well as writing (and reading) capability in general is of utmost importance not only for the Roman rule of and in Egypt but for every lasting communication. These scribes can be identified clearly in the Greek texts from Kellis and, as the same people or names are attested in the Coptic texts, it might be possible to identify these scribes and other local public servants of the imperial administration in Egypt in their private sphere as well.

As part of my ongoing PHD-project on „Late Imperial Roman Administration and Entanglement in the Egyptian Dakhleh Oasis“ I try to shed a light on some local public servants like the presumed scribe Aurelios Pebos, son of Tithoes, by means of the Greek administrative documents and, even more so, the Coptic private letters.

## **Kohlbacher, Michael**

### **More than a literary fiction: the monastery of Romanos**

In some coptic hagiographic texts appears the (famous) monastery of Romanos. In the homily on the archangel Gabriel of Archelaos a pilgrim found a book of apostolic origin in the library there. In the life of Archelites the relics of this otherwise unknown saint could be venerated there. The young man Cyriacus from Corinth became monk in this monastery. These - and possibly other mentions - are memories of a prominent monastic community in south-western Palestine.

Romanos of Tekoa was a leading figure of the monastic opposition against the council in Chalcedon, which lead to a temporary deposition (451-453) of the archbishop of Jerusalem, Juvenalius. The rebels had to go into exile or to flee. Later on Romanos founded a new monastery near Eleutheropolis, which was a kind of alternative center of pilgrimage and an important station in the anti-Chalcedonian network. Some abbots as his successors are known by name and corresponded with Timothy Aelourus and Severus of Antioch (ca. 460-520 CE).

## Kotsifou, Chrysi

### The Absence of Scriptoria in Coptic Egypt. Modes of Reproduction and Dissemination of Knowledge from the Fourth to the Tenth Centuries CE

In Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, most Christian and classical book production took place in monastic settings. The Middle Ages have been preferred so far as the high point of such monastic production, while huge scriptoria employing numerous copyists are the most thought of places for these monks to work in. What is challenging is that this idea of a specific room in a monastery where manuscripts were copied in great quantities has also been the impression of many scholars regarding the space in which Christian manuscripts were produced by monks in Coptic Egypt. This presentation will demonstrate, though, that dispersed, small-scale book manufacture remained customary in Egypt, as in rest of the Christian East, until the advent of printing. It will further analyze the non-existence of scriptoria in Egyptian monasteries by bringing together hagiographical, documentary, archaeological and codicological evidence. This presentation will propose that instead of ‘scriptoria’, we are to think in terms of monastic networks of scribes where a single scribe by himself or herself oversaw one aspect of book production (copying, illumination, binding, or preservation) and he would then transfer the unfinished manuscript to the next scribe for a different stage of the assembly.

## Kramer, Ruth & Reintges, Chris

### The morphosyntax of regular and irregular plurals in Coptic

§1 Coptic has a binary gender (masculine vs. feminine) and number (singular vs. plural) system. Nominal (as well as verbal) morphology is of the root-and-pattern type, meaning that the traditional noun can be decomposed lexically into (i) a consonantal root, (ii) a vowel melody and (iii) a prosodic template. Nominal categoryhood is always morphologically marked by the vocalism and the template.

The consonantal root, which does not surface phonologically, lacks such a specific categorial feature.

§2 The language has a convergent-to-plural (meta)syncretism, whereby the masculine/feminine gender contrast in the singular is neutralized in the plural (Kramer 2009). Every singular noun has a formally identical plural noun, which we interpret as a null plural suffix -Ø. Some nouns also have an irregular suffix, as seen in the paradigm of the weak-final noun **ʃɛːre** ‘boy’ in Table 1. Each member of a paradigm cell is presented in the definite article form, since gender and number features are marked on agreement targets (determiners, demonstratives, pronouns).

Table 1. The inflectional paradigm of the weak final noun **ʃɛːre** ~ **ʃɛʔere** (< √ʃRY)

| masc.sg form    |           | fem.sg form      |            | gender-neutral plurals     |             |                                  |                |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
|                 |           |                  |            | <u>Regular null plural</u> |             | <u>Irregular suffixal plural</u> |                |
| <b>pə=ʃɛːre</b> | ‘the boy’ | <b>tə=ʃɛʔere</b> | ‘the girl’ | <b>nə=ʃɛːre-Ø</b>          | ‘the boys’  | <b>nə=ʃr-ɛʊ</b>                  | ‘the children’ |
|                 |           |                  |            | <b>nə=ʃɛʔere-Ø</b>         | ‘the girls’ |                                  |                |

§3 The regular plural forms **nə=ʃɛːre** and **nə=ʃɛʔere** show that the morphologically encoded gender contrast is retained in the regular plural. This follows from the null form of the plural

suffix that does not affect the morphology of the gender-inflected noun. Since null pluralization is available for all nouns the root morpheme does not play any role in the pluralization process. Irregular plurals like as **nə=ʃr-εʊ** differ from regular ones in two respects. First, the irregular plural suffix (-εʊ in the case at hand) is in complementary distribution with overt gender morphology. Second, the form of the plural suffix is contingent on the root (or on the root class).

**§4** There are three types of evidence for the root-sensitive allomorphy of suffixal plurals. First, nouns with the same vocalism and prosodic template may have distinct plural allomorphs (**ərrɔ:** ~ **ərr-ou** ‘king/s’ vs. **əmro:** ~ **əmr-ɔ:we** ‘harbor/s’), differing mainly in regard to the consonantal root ( $\sqrt{\text{RR}}$  vs.  $\sqrt{\text{MR}}$ ). Second, many nouns have multiple irregular plurals (**təβnɛ:** [ $\sqrt{\text{TBN}}$ ] ~ **təβn-ɔ:we** vs. **təβn-ε:we** ‘beast/s’) with no appreciable meaning difference. Third, even homophonous roots can take distinct irregular plurals ( $\sqrt{\text{HB}}$  – **hɔβ** ~ **həβ-ui** ‘snake/s’ vs. **hoβ** ~ **həβ-ε:we** ‘thing/s’), for the simple reason that they are still two separate roots.

**§5** We present a syntactic analysis of the contrast between regular and irregular nominal plurals, in which the null plural and the irregular plural suffixes are located in different positions in the syntactic structure of nominal phrases.

## Krastel, Lena Sophie

### The Day of Remembrance. Coptic Funerary Stelae from the Aswan Region

Many Coptic funerary stelae are known to originate from the Aswan region. While some funerary stelae were discovered during excavations and can therefore be reliably attributed to particular sites, others entered the antiquities trade largely or completely unrecorded and can only be traced back to the Aswan region by their material and formulary.

This contribution focuses on the formulary of the Aswan stelae and discusses how certain formulaic elements make it possible to attribute stelae of unknown origin not only to a region but possibly also to a specific site.

## Krawiec, Becky

### Fringes, Tassles, Rags, Belts, and Cloaks: An exploration of clothing language in Shenoute's *Canon 8*

Clothing and illness are two dominant themes in the texts that comprise Shenoute's eight canon. The publication of a diplomatic edition and translation of these texts makes possible an exploration of how Shenoute uses clothing language to teach his audience about proper monasticism. The first three letters use, to a greater and lesser extent, clothing as the basis for Shenoute's argument, ranging from references to Shenoute's own clothing, biblical descriptions and instructions about clothing, the production of clothing in the monastery, clothing as indicative of monastic membership, and metaphors based on clothing. Although we do not always know the distinctions Shenoute is making amongst clothing items and their decoration, it is clear that Shenoute expects his monks to understand how and what clothing teaches. This expectation creates the monastic literacy of the White Monastery, an intersection of texts, reading practices, and social memory. I will show how this literacy is

corporeal, focusing on bodies – Shenoute’s and the monks’ – in correct and incorrect clothing. This literacy in turn determines monastic membership and identity in the White Monastery.

## Krueger, Frederic

### Parthenope Lives! What Remains of the Ancient Novel in Coptic Literature?

As remarked by Tito Orlandi in 2020, studies of Coptic literature have been almost universally interested in the language, theology, and historical-cultural context of individual works while largely ignoring “the literary aspect of the texts, most of which were in fact written to teach, but also to entertain”. This paper presents some prolegomena to what is designed to be a three year project that will approach Coptic literature of the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries from the perspective of literary studies and narratology, and to consider the ways and the degree to which Coptic prose fiction can be compared to, and is in fact a descendant of, ancient Greek and Jewish prose writing, including but not limited to those Greek and Jewish works that have often been considered “ancient novels”. The goal is to bring the study of Coptic prose into dialogue with the interdisciplinary research on prose fiction and “the ancient novel” in particular that is happening in the fields of Classics, Biblical and Demotic studies, and also late antique hagiography.

## Krueger, Frederic

### Importing Emendations to Coptic Letters into Papyri.info

When all the major corpora of Coptic – mainly Theban – letters were entered into the DDGLC Database of Greek Loanwords in Coptic (the basis of *Dioskoros: Greek Loanwords in Coptic Online*) between 2012 and 2025, countless corrections were made to the text of the editions that were used. In order to make these improvements accessible to the papyrological community at large, they are now being systematically integrated into *papyri.info*. This presentation gives an overview of the basic workflow and provides some examples of different kinds of emendations that affect the text in various ways and to varying degrees.

## Laver, Thomas

### Using Coptic Letters to Do Economic History in the Late Antique World

This paper will set out the value of Coptic letters when approached from an economic historical perspective, laying out where letters in general – and Coptic letters specifically – can be most useful to the social and economic historians of the Late Antique and Early Islamic worlds. The limitations of these documents will be highlighted, as well as the possible mitigations that can be put in place by either referring to the corpus of earlier Greek letters, or Coptic non-epistolary documents. The paper will conclude by presenting a few of the early insights from engaging in such an economic-historical study of Coptic letters, and will highlight particular topics which seem most fruitful for future research in this area.

## Lee, Gunhyuk

### Motive Clauses Referring to the Soul in Coptic Donation Documents

As Greek gradually gave way to Coptic as the primary written language of Late Antique Egypt, traditional donation formulas such as ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς (“for the repose of my soul”) and ἰάσεώς μου ψυχῆς χάριν (“for the healing of my soul”) were reformulated in Coptic. A particularly prominent expression is οὐχαι ἡτε πενήτη (‘‘the salvation of our soul’’), which appears frequently in the *P.KRU* corpus and related Coptic testamentary documents.

Through a comparative analysis of approximately ten Coptic documentary sources (including *P.KRU* 65, 106, 110; *CPR* IV 177) alongside hagiographical material, most notably the *Life of Pachomius*, this paper examines theological motive clauses referring to the salvation or healing of the soul. The appearance of closely related expressions in hagiographical narratives such as the *Life of Pachomius* demonstrates a significant continuity between documentary papyri and Coptic hagiographical literature, revealing shared theological language and conceptual frameworks across genres.

By tracing the recurrence of these expressions in both documentary and literary contexts, the study offers a theological and literary analysis of processes of formula formation in Late Antique Egypt. It argues that such motive clauses functioned as codified mechanisms of spiritual transaction, institutionalizing the exchange between material wealth and salvation. As part of an ongoing doctoral dissertation, this paper demonstrates how Coptic legal documents operated as theological instruments of redemption and invites scholarly discussion on this comparative framework.

## Leon Angelo, Camille

### Monastic Materialities: ‘‘Magical’’ Formularies and the Making of Monastic Community at the Temple of Seti at Abydos

On the walls of the Temple of Seti at Abydos, members of a late antique women’s community painted Coptic formularies commonly found in spells and on amulets; these formularies were believed to be efficacious in providing protection against various malevolent forces. In this paper, I consider these spells in terms of the larger spatialized assemblages in which they were located, examining how their presence operated in tandem with the embodied performances that took place within the temple’s interior. I argue that the formularies embedded within these assemblages materialized forces of divine guarding, capable of protecting monastic women against threats within their communities. I further contend that these forces effectively transformed monastic spaces of sociability into spaces of surveillance. For example, I show how the placement of Jesus’ reply to Abgar, painted on the interior wall of a room, rather than at its threshold, suggests that the enemies the *dipinto* sought to guard against were not intruders arriving from outside the community, but threats arising within – including temptations posed by other monks living in the temple. These ‘‘magic’’ technologies, I maintain, prompted the temple’s female residents to reflect on their location in relation to those around them, and to recognize the constraints and complications that such physical and emotional proximity presented. In sum, this project elucidates the material agencies of these magical materials in constructing and constricting forms of monastic community.

## Leon Angelo, Camille

### The Women`s Monastery at Atripe: Archaeological Recording of the Monastic Church

In late antiquity, three monastic communities comprised the White Monastery Federation: two men`s monasteries (the White and Red Monasteries) and one women`s community at Atripe (modern Sheikh Ḥamad). While the churches at the White and Red Monasteries remain functional today, the church at Atripe is now heavily ruined, located amidst the remains of a Ptolemaic temple dedicated to the goddess Repit. Despite the importance of the Atripe church for the study of ritual practice and Egyptian women`s monasticism, the structure had eluded careful study until the Yale Monastic Archaeology Project undertook detailed archaeological recording of the structure in 2019 and 2023. In this paper, I discuss the findings of this work. In particular, I focus on the church`s plan, features, and the architectural interplay between the church and the Ptolemaic temple. Of significant interest are possibilities for reconstructing the layout of the now collapsed sanctuary, and the identification of the area to the west of the church as a narthex and the tank complex on the north side of the nave as a baptistery. Finally, I detail our findings regarding the structure`s later reuse. This research helps to complete the picture of church architecture at the White Monastery Federation, which has previously been dominated by discussions of the churches at the White and Red Monasteries.

## Lincke, Eliese-Sophia & Vanderheyden, Lorelei & Cowey, James

### Digitizing and Editing Documentary Texts for papyri.info: an AI-Assisted Workflow

This tutorial is intended for anyone interested in learning how to digitize Coptic documentary texts using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and preparing them for integration into the papyri.info database. Participants will be guided hands-on through the full workflow: OCR of Coptic documentary texts with *eScriptorium*, processing of raw output using the open-source *prepyri* script, final mark-up in the *Papyrological Editor*, and the voting process that precedes publication. Participants who consent to release their texts will see them published on papyri.info, making them accessible to the scholarly community.

**Participants should bring their own laptops with internet access. Those wishing to take part in the editing stages after OCR will need a papyri.info login, which can easily be created using a Google account.**

## Lincke, Eliese-Sophia & Werning, Daniel & Walter, Vincent & Missael, Peter

### Preparing Wolf-Peter Funk`s Dataset for Integration into the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae

The dataset collected and prepared by Wolf-Peter Funk (1943–2021) over several decades likely represents the most extensive resource for the study of Coptic dialectology,

morphology, and related areas of linguistic research. Still unpublished, it comprises dialect-specific lemma lists as well as lemmatized and part-of-speech tagged full texts drawn from a wide range of Coptic manuscripts. In their current working form – commonly referred to as the “Funk data” – these materials provide the basis for integrating the Coptic stage of the Egyptian language into the largest and richly annotated corpus of Egyptian texts, the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (TLA).

This paper reports on work in progress focused on the technical and conceptual preparation of these data for the TLA. Based on a dataset converted from the original files and provided in tabular form by Katrin John (FU Berlin; see her own contribution at this congress), our work involves data preparation and restructuring, including the alignment of the dialectal lemma lists with external identifier systems, most notably the *Comprehensive Coptic Lexicon* (version 1.2; Burns, Feder, John & Kupreyev 2020). In addition, remaining issues in the Unicode conversion of the full texts were resolved, and texts and manuscripts were identified and enriched with missing metadata, especially *Paths* identifiers and edition references. The paper outlines the current state of this process and the steps still required prior to publication of the data via the TLA web application.

## Lincke, Eliese-Sophia

### Advances in Handwritten Text Recognition for Coptic Book Hands: Scripts, Materials, and Models

*Optical Character Recognition* (OCR) for printed Coptic texts can by now be considered a largely solved problem (Lincke 2021; Lincke, Bulert & Büchler 2019; Miyagawa, Bulert & Büchler 2017; Miyagawa, Bulert, Büchler & Behlmer 2019). By contrast, *Handwritten Text Recognition* (HTR) for Coptic manuscripts remains a desideratum, as a considerable number of manuscripts and fragments thereof remain unpublished, lack modern editions, or are not yet identified with regard to their textual content. The wider availability of digital transcriptions would therefore greatly facilitate accessibility, support manuscript identification, and enable more systematic cataloguing and further research.

Following the presentation of a first Coptic HTR model in 2025, this paper introduces a new generation of models with broader material and palaeographical coverage. In addition to parchment codices, the training data now include papyrus manuscripts. Furthermore, the models have been extended to cover unimodular uncial script, whereas earlier training data were restricted to bimodular script.

The paper outlines the adapted HTR workflow implemented in *eScriptorium* using *Kraken*, from layout annotation to model training and evaluation. The training data are drawn from expert transcriptions provided by the Göttingen Academy project *Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament*. Accuracy results are discussed with respect to writing material, page layout and script type. The paper concludes by outlining the implications for large-scale transcription, manuscript identification, and future work in Coptic studies and papyrology.

## **Louis, Catherine**

### **Catalogue des fragments coptes conservés au Musée du Louvre**

Le Musée du Louvre conserve un ensemble d'environ 250 fragments de manuscrits coptes, sur papyrus, parchemin et papier, constituant un fonds d'une richesse exceptionnelle tant par sa diversité matérielle que par son intérêt historique et textuel. La plus grande partie de ces fragments provient du monastère Blanc, l'un des centres majeurs de la production manuscrite copte, ce qui confère à cet ensemble une importance particulière pour l'étude de la culture monastique, de la transmission des textes et de l'histoire du livre en Égypte chrétienne.

Si certains de ces fragments ont déjà fait l'objet d'études ponctuelles et sont désormais bien intégrés à la bibliographie, une part significative du corpus demeure encore peu connue. L'élaboration d'un catalogue exhaustif vise ainsi à offrir, pour la première fois, une vision d'ensemble cohérente de ce fonds, en rendant accessibles des pièces jusqu'ici dispersées, mal identifiées ou insuffisamment décrites. Ce travail de catalogage ne se limite pas à une simple opération d'inventaire : il repose sur une analyse codicologique, paléographique et, lorsque cela est possible, textuelle, permettant de mieux situer chaque fragment dans son contexte de production et d'usage.

La communication se propose, dans un premier temps, de présenter l'état d'avancement du catalogue, actuellement dans sa phase finale de rédaction, en mettant en lumière les choix méthodologiques adoptés, les difficultés rencontrées et les apports scientifiques déjà perceptibles. Dans un second temps, elle ouvrira une réflexion plus large sur la place et l'intérêt des catalogues de manuscrits dans la recherche actuelle. À l'heure où les outils numériques se développent rapidement et où les catalogues en ligne tendent à se multiplier, la question du format – papier, comme celui envisagé ici, ou numérique – mérite d'être interrogée, non dans une logique d'opposition, mais de complémentarité. Il s'agira ainsi de montrer en quoi un catalogue raisonné, conçu selon des standards scientifiques rigoureux, demeure un instrument fondamental pour la valorisation des collections, la structuration des données et le renouvellement des études sur les manuscrits coptes.

## **Mahler, Robert & Czaja, Barbara & Zych, Iwona**

### **The late cemetery at Naqlun in Fayum: Spatial organization and identity of the deceased**

The Naqlun monastery, now known as Deir el-Malak Gabriel, was established at the end of the 5th or at the beginning of the 6th century CE. The first buildings on the upper terrace formed the core of this semi-anachoretic community, with hermitages scattered around in the adjoining Gebel Naqlun. According to 9th century sources, the monastery housed 120 monks and 200 lay people in the 7th century. In 1986, the monastery had just two monks living there, and now there are more than seventy.

The so-called Cemetery A began to take shape around the church on the upper terrace (building A) following the fire that consumed the central complex in the 10th/11th century CE. The cemetery is dated tentatively to the 11th–13th or possibly even the 14th centuries, with further solid evidence being obtained.

In the present paper we combine biological characteristics, dress, personal adornments, burial type and its location to approximate identities and life course biographies of the people buried in the cemetery. In addition, we use this data to determine the spatial organization and cultural role of the cemetery. As we are unable to provide a simple explanation of the features observed, we discuss a few plausible scenarios and pose new questions. This research was funded in part by the National Science Centre, Poland 2022/47/D/HS3/02162.

## **Maleux, Maxime**

### **Between Coptic and Arabic: translation technique and cross-linguistic interaction in Egyptian bilingual manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark**

Among the massive production of New Testament manuscripts in the original Greek and its numerous translations, there is a small yet intriguing corpus of bilingual manuscripts. These manuscripts can contain the original Greek text – combined with Coptic, Arabic, Armenian among others – but there are numerous manuscripts combining two versions. Examples of this category are Syriac-Arabic, Coptic-Arabic, and Syriac-Sogdian bilingual manuscripts. As artefacts, these sources evoke the multilingual reality of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages and the contact of different cultures, languages, and religions. As texts, they are privileged and promising witnesses to cross-linguistic influence from one version on the other. However, tracking down these contaminations is riddled with pitfalls, as these versions were typically no literal translations of one another. In this talk, I will focus on the Coptic-Arabic material, a rich tradition that has yielded recently more material than previously thought (e.g., Gregory 1902 and Metzger 1984). Concretely, I will discuss the differences in translation technique between the Coptic and Arabic versions of several bilingual manuscripts in the first verses of Mark 1, as well as the possibility of cross-linguistic contamination.

## **Malevez, Marc**

### **The Fear and Love of God, Angels, and Men in the Mission of Paphnutius / Life of Onuphrius**

In this lecture, I will review references to fear and contrition among the various ascetics encountered in the text in its different Coptic and Ethiopian versions, as well as in three Arabic texts. Contrition is one of the positive elements of monastic armor that comes into play in the Evagrius phase of practice. It follows the fear of God. But these monks also fear angels and even the appearance of other monks whom they do not immediately identify as such. Fear and contrition lead to the love of God once perfection – albeit temporary on the Earth – has been attained. But not all references to “loving God” are related to this process: for example, the monks of Scete are referred to as “loving God” without any apparent connection to the fear of God and contrition.

## **Maślak, Szymon**

### **Rubbish dumps in the monastery landscape: a case study from Naqlun**

H.E. Winlock's excavations at the monastery of Epiphanius in Thebes provided the first comprehensive extra-textual evidence of the daily life of Egyptian hermits/monks in late antiquity. Not only did he meticulously document all artefacts, but he also published a plan of the complex showing the relationship between the inhabited area and the rubbish dumps outside its boundaries. Since then, few excavations carried out in hermitages and monasteries have focused to such an extent on the rubbish discarded by their inhabitants. Naqlun, located directly southeast of the Fayyum oasis, is unique in this respect. The extensive rubbish dump at the southern end of the main monastic complex, which accumulated here from the late 5<sup>th</sup>/early 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, revealed a wealth of objects that can tell us a lot about the living conditions of the people inhabiting the monastery. In order to expand our knowledge of the waste disposal practices of the Naqlun monastic community, a limited number of test pits were opened around two preserved churches in Naqlun in autumn of 2024. They indicate the existence of a rubbish dump from a similar period, at least north of the northern church. Future research at this site aims to find other rubbish dumps around the main monastery complex and answer the question of to what extent this rubbish can testify to the economic conditions of the Naqlun community and, more generally, to the economy of the region in which it operated.

## **Mason, Charlie (POSTER)**

### **Keep Your Vow of Quiet. Investigating the Monastic Soundscape in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt**

Turning to the right upon entering Chapelle 28 at the Monastery of Apa Apollo (Bawit), a monastic viewer would have encountered three painted counterparts upon the wall, each of whom gaze outwards towards the room's inhabitants whilst calling for silence, holding their right-hand index finger to their mouth. In this instance, the decorative scheme becomes an active tool of instruction, communicating – albeit silently – the desired acoustic environment. Approaching 'sound' as an artefact of study, this poster considers methodological approaches to the monastic soundscape in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt. Alongside iconographic and textual references to sound (as seen above), this research will utilise digital modelling to assess the acoustic parameters of monastic buildings. When read together, the data allows us to ask after ways in which the individuals may have perceived and modified the monastic dwelling to amplify devotional practice and reinforce the idealised monastic soundscape. Presenting a work-in-progress from the author's doctoral thesis, this poster hopes to open discussion around monastic soundscapes, and ask: what can we learn by listening to the architecture of monastic space? And what might the act of listening tell us about access, status, and privacy within monastic communities?

## Meccariello, Chiara (POSTER)

### Educational Texts in Multilingual Egypt: Introducing the EduGRE Project

**Team: Chiara Meccariello (Principal Investigator), Sam Cook, Leia Jiménez Torres, Giulia Tonon (Postdoctoral Research Associates)**

In this poster we introduce EduGRE, an ERC-funded project based at the University of Exeter, UK (*Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt: An Intercultural Approach*, Consolidator Grant no. 101171610). Running from October 2025 to September 2030, the project aims to shed new light on educational practices in Graeco-Roman and early Byzantine Egypt through a holistic approach that takes into account evidence in different languages (Demotic, Greek, Latin, Coptic) and explores intercultural dialogue as well as local and chronological variation in learning practices.

The poster briefly outlines the project's research questions, methodology and work packages, and it then showcases some of our preliminary results, with particular focus on Coptic materials in the context of late antique and early Byzantine education. As a case study, we present our work on P. Rain. Unterricht Kopt. 269 I (TM 61310), which contains Greek maxims with Coptic translation.

This case study exemplifies our broader investigation of literary and religious texts used in educational contexts, particularly of how texts were adapted and (re)organised, textually and paratextually, in bilingual, bi-cultural and bi-religious educational assemblages. We analyse the selected artefact as part of a longer tradition of wisdom, both Egyptian and Greek, exploring how the selection and curation of gnomic material in this artefact relate not only to the Christian religious landscape, but also to the specific Egyptian setting.

## Meurice, Cédric

### Paul Durand entre deux chrétientés : de l'Égypte à la Nubie

L'historien de l'art et dessinateur Paul Durand (1806-1882) n'est pas seulement connu pour avoir été l'un des fondateurs des études coptes en Égypte. Des archives inédites montrent qu'il a aussi découvert plusieurs sites et églises de Nubie dont la très riche Abd el-Gadir. Au milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, il est l'un des premiers européens à nous laisser un témoignage étoffé sur les fragiles peintures chrétiennes de la région. Éclairé et guidé par les vestiges chrétiens d'Égypte, Paul Durand ouvrent la voie à l'étude de nouvelles formes iconographiques et artistiques et invente une nouvelle discipline.

### Paul Durand between two Christianities: from Egypt to Nubia

The art historian and draftsman Paul Durand (1806-1882) is not only known for being one of the founders of Coptic studies in Egypt. Unpublished archives show that he also discovered several sites and churches in Nubia, including the exceptionally rich Abd el-Gadir. In the mid-19th century, he was one of the first Europeans to leave us a comprehensive account of the fragile Christian paintings of the region. Enlightened and guided by the Christian remains of Egypt, Paul Durand paved the way for the study of new iconographic and artistic forms and invented a new discipline.

## **Mihálykó, Ágnes**

### **The Intercessions of the Anaphora of St Mark**

In 1964 Hieronymus Engberding analysed the intercessions of the anaphora of St Mark in a lengthy article published in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*. His conclusions were concise: he identified the earliest accessible form of these intercessions in P.Strasb. inv. Gr. 254 (Str), which he claimed was enlarged from the preanaphoral intercessions as well as from external sources, including the anaphora of St James. In the past sixty years, our source basis for the anaphora of St Mark has been expanded considerably and the new sources, while confirming the essence of Engberding's conclusion about enlargement, also allow us to nuance it. In this paper I will examine the relationship between the preanaphoral and anaphoral intercessions in the MARKan tradition and propose a new model, which acknowledges the textual fluidity of the anaphora of St Mark in the late antique and early medieval period.

## **Mikhael, Gerges Ebrahim Ioseph**

### **The Virgin Mary in Coptic Tradition: A Philological and Comparative Study of the Unpublished Manuscript Morgan M.634 and an Arabic Witness from Abnub**

This study presents a comparative philological investigation of the Sahidic Coptic fragments in Manuscript Morgan M.634 (Hamuli Collection, 9th/10th century CE), which constitutes a previously unpublished text. The research focuses on the narrative of the Virgin Mary's early life, from her miraculous birth to her entry into the Temple. The methodology employs a cross-linguistic approach, comparing these Coptic fragments with a previously unstudied Christian Arabic manuscript from the Monastery of St. Mina (Al-Mu'allaq) in Abnub, Egypt. Despite the fragmentary nature of the Coptic text, this research successfully utilizes the Arabic version as an interpretative witness to reconstruct the original Sahidic narrative. The comparison reveals significant textual variations between the Egyptian tradition and the Greek Protevangelium of James, indicating a robust, independent Egyptian tradition shaped by local liturgical and theological contexts. The study concludes that the transition from Coptic to Arabic was a literary and theological adaptation that preserved the Sahidic hagiographical legacy. This research is part of the author's doctoral dissertation on the textual transmission of Marian traditions.

## **Mikhail, Fr Arsenius**

### **Echoes of Antioch: Coptic-Syriac Relations in Thirteenth-Century Bohairic Euchologia**

The ancient Coptic monastery of St. Macarius (Abū Maqār) is one of the oldest monastic communities in the western desert of Egypt. Between the 7th and ca. 14th century, the Monastery of St. Macarius was highly influential in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Coptic Church and its papacy. Today, it is home to 31 Bohairic Euchologia from the 18th and 19th centuries. A few older witnesses are also preserved in European collections. This paper provides an overview of the known Macarian Euchologia and their pertinent liturgical and codicological features with broader reflections on the Bohairic Euchologion tradition.

## Milizia, Paolo

### The working method of Copto-Arabic grammarians and the vitality of Coptic in the 13th century

A scrutiny of Copto-Arabic grammars (i.e., the 13th- and 14th-century grammars of Coptic written in Arabic) shows that the authors of these treatises encountered significant difficulties in understanding several morphosyntactic constructions of Coptic. Particularly revealing are circumstantial structures that were not identified as such, as well as the erroneous interpretation by a grammarian (Ibn Kātib Qayṣar) of an instance of the “first present” as an exclamative construction (cf. Milizia 2025). Moreover, as will be shown in this talk, the Coptic general present (i.e., the “aorist”) was misinterpreted even by as-Samannūdī as a kind of causal structure.

An in-depth analysis of these treatises shows that such errors are consistently due to the application of a working method that consisted in attempting to fill gaps in the knowledge of Coptic morphosyntax by comparing the Coptic text of the Scriptures with already available Arabic translations. As will be clear from the relevant examples, this method is prone to generating erroneous inferences. It will be argued that the very fact that these grammarians were compelled to resort to such a bookish method constitutes substantial evidence for assessing the vitality of Coptic as a spoken language in the thirteenth century.

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## Milizia, Paolo

### On the vowel counter-shift in Fayyumic and Mesokemic

A distinction is generally assumed between a pair of Coptic dialects – Bohairic and Sahidic – affected by a vowel shift changing tonic *a* into *o* and tonic *e* into *a*, and the other dialects, not affected by that shift. Peust (2020) has convincingly shown that a different interpretation of the data is preferable: the dialects geographically located between Bohairic and Sahidic – i.e. Fayyumic and Mesokemic – did participate in the vowel shift and reverted to a condition similar (but not identical) to the starting point by virtue of a subsequent counter-shift. The aim of this paper is to better define the terms of such a counter-shift and to highlight the role played in it by the  $\epsilon > \text{h}$  ([ $\epsilon$ ] > [ $\text{e}$ ]) sound change.

A Fayyumic/Mesokemic development  $\epsilon > \text{h}$  ([ $\epsilon$ ] > [ $\text{e}$ ]) is attested by correspondences like F(ayyumic)  $\text{mnno}\gamma$ , L(ycopolitan)  $\text{m}\epsilon\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$ . According to the traditional view, the change  $\epsilon > \text{h}$  only occurred before  $\text{ʔ}$  not originating from  $\text{ʕ}$  and word-finally, but it can be assumed that it was a broader phenomenon, also yielding the vowel of F  $\text{tn}\text{b}\epsilon\text{t}$  (interpretable as an epenthesis parallel to that of Bohairic  $\text{t}\epsilon\text{b}\text{t}$ ). As will be shown, the  $\epsilon > \text{h}$  development can be seen as the triggering change of the counter-shift, and can be related to a more general tendency of the Fayyumic-Mesokemic area towards the loss of the “quantitative” (according to the traditional interpretation of Coptic vowel phonemes) oppositions  $/\epsilon/ : / \text{h}/$  and  $/o/ : / \omega/$ .

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## Miroshnikov, Ivan

### Greek-Fayyumic Diglots: Manuscripts, Language, Textual Value

In this paper, I will offer an overview of Greek-Fayyumic diglot manuscripts, building upon and expanding the findings of Kurt Treu. I will reflect on the different formats attested within this corpus, the linguistic features of the Fayyumic, and the text-critical value of each individual witness. Special attention will be given to palimpsest fragments (fa 6 and fa 22 according to the SMR citation method) and their codicological reconstruction.

## Missael, Peter

### Dialectal variation in Coptic constituent order: The case of the standard negator

ⲁⲛ

Coptic word order has been examined to some extent by various scholars, primarily in Sahidic (cf. Steindorff 1951: 195–198; Till 1955: §§378–383; Reintges 2004: Ch. 10). However, the standard negator ⲁⲛ has received comparatively little attention. Existing descriptions are often vague or insufficient, perhaps because its position is perceived as relatively free (Till 1955: §403), “following the negated term” (Layton 2000: 108), or “follows the predicate more or less immediately” (Layton 2000: 244). Reintges (2004: 346–



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## Miyagawa, So

### History of Coptic Studies in Japan: From the First Grammar Published in 1942 to Manuscript and Textile Collections

This paper explores the largely unexamined history of Coptic Studies in Japan, tracing its development from the early 20th century to the present day. The presentation focuses on three main areas.

First, I discuss the pioneering work of Seitaro Okajima, who published the first Coptic grammar in Japan in 1942. This grammar, now digitally accessible through the National Diet Library, represents a remarkable early effort to introduce Coptic language studies to Japanese academia during a period of limited international scholarly exchange. Second, I examine Takao Yamagata's 1983 fieldwork in Wadi Natrun, highlighting the contributions of Japanese scholars to Coptic archaeological and monastic studies.

Third, I present the history and significance of Coptic manuscript and textile collections held in Japanese institutions, including the Coptic papyrus donated by Sir Flinders Petrie at the Kyoto University Museum and numerous Coptic textile collections preserved throughout Japan.

By documenting these previously overlooked contributions, this paper aims to situate Japanese Coptic Studies within the broader international disciplinary history and to illuminate the unique circumstances and motivations that led Japanese scholars to engage with Coptic language, literature, and material culture.

## Miyagawa, So

### Using LLMs for the Analysis of Coptic Texts

This hands-on tutorial introduces participants to computational methods for detecting biblical quotations and allusions in Coptic texts using text-reuse detection tools. Working with the Coptic SCRIPTORIUM corpus as a case study, the session will guide attendees through each stage of the workflow: preparing and standardizing texts, applying TRACER and Passim for automated text reuse detection, and visualizing the results. In addition, participants will explore new AI-driven approaches to text reuse with Thoth AI (<https://somiagawa.com/thoth>). No prior technical expertise is required; step-by-step guidance will be provided.

**Participants should bring a laptop with internet access.**

## Miyagawa, So

### Assistance of Analysis, Translation, and Composition in Coptic Language through Artificial Intelligence: THOTH AI 2.0 and Coptic Composer AI

**Team: in collaboration with Mario Bishara**

This paper introduces THOTH AI 2.0, a major evolution in AI-assisted Coptology that integrates the new generative module, Coptic Composer AI. While the standard version retains the Sonnet architecture, THOTH AI 2.0 utilizes Claude 4.5 Opus as its base Large Language Model. Enhanced by Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) using the Comprehensive Coptic Lexicon ver. 1.2 (Burns et al. 2020) and several datasets that the project processed, the system delivers unprecedented analytical accuracy, achieving State-of-the-Art (SOTA) scores in metrics such as BLEU, METEOR, and ROUGE for Coptic-English bilateral machine translation.

Crucially, Coptic Composer AI shifts the platform from passive analysis to active creation. It functions as an interactive assistant: suggesting contextually fitting words, flagging errors, and offering corrected text via a click-to-select interface, while supporting Greco-Bohairic and Old Bohairic pronunciation. We demonstrate this workflow through the work of Mario Bishara, who used the AI to generate base translations of Grimm's Fairy Tales, subsequently modifying them for philological perfection. By lowering linguistic barriers for such creative applications – spanning emails, SNS, and art – THOTH AI 2.0 acts as a catalyst for the ongoing Coptic language revitalization movement that transforms Coptic into a vibrant medium.

#### Reference

D. Burns, F. Feder, K. John, M. Kupreyev, et al. 2020-07-24. Comprehensive Coptic Lexicon: Including Loanwords from Ancient Greek, Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, <http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/refubium-27566>

## Miyokawa, Hiroko

### The City of Alexandria in Modern Coptic Historiography

In antiquity, the city of Alexandria was one of the centers of the Christian world; consequently, the Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church still bears the title of Pope of Alexandria to this day. However, in accounts by Coptic Orthodox historians from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, Alexandria is depicted simply as the setting for St Mark's evangelisation rather than as the stage for the Coptic Church's glorious past. Instead, Alexandria was imagined as a city where Greco-Roman culture flourished and as a cosmopolitan city reflecting the circumstances of the time. It was rarely depicted as a 'Coptic/Egyptian city' during that period.

However, alongside Egypt's decolonisation process in the mid-twentieth century, a new historical perception emerged. Founded in Alexandria in 1945, the St Menas Association promoted the idea of the city as both Coptic and Egyptian through its publications. This presentation therefore examines how representations of Alexandria changed by comparing the works of late nineteenth-century historians, such as Ya'qūb Nakhla's *Tārīkh al-Umma al-Qibṭiyya* and Mikhā'il Shārūbīm's *al-Kāfī fī Tārīkh Miṣr al-Qadīm wa al-Ḥadīth*,

with historical narratives in the publications of the St Menas Association. It also discusses the implications of this shift in Coptic historical narrative.

## **Moawad, Samuel**

### **Unbekannte Enkomien auf Schenute von Atripe in einer neu entdeckten arabischen Handschrift**

Im Zuge der systematischen Suche nach bislang unerschlossenen Quellen zu Schenute von Atripe wurde eine umfangreiche arabische Handschrift identifiziert, die mehrere Vitae beziehungsweise Enkomien auf Schenute überliefert und höchstwahrscheinlich aus koptischen Vorlagen übertragen wurde. Die Handschrift befindet sich in der Bibliothek des koptisch-orthodoxen Patriarchats in Ägypten und gehört zu einer jüngst akquirierten Sammlung, weshalb sie bislang in keinem publizierten Katalog verzeichnet ist. Dieser Textzeuge bietet bisher unbekanntes Material und eröffnet neuartige Perspektiven auf die Rezeptionsgeschichte Schenutes sowie auf die Tradierung seiner Vita innerhalb der kopto-arabischen Literatur. Zugleich verspricht er, das Verständnis der Überlieferungs- und Redaktionsgeschichte der „Vita Sinuthii“ substantiell zu vertiefen.

## **Moharb, Enas Atef (POSTER)**

### **Collection of Coptic Tombstones from Abou El Goud Magazine in Luxor**

This unique opportunity aligns perfectly with my academic pursuits. This poster presents a first edition of a collection of Coptic tombstones currently housed in the Abou El-Goud magazine in Luxor. The influence of ancient Egyptian funeral customs on the Copts is evident in the tombstones, where details about the deceased are portrayed through inscriptions or symbolic signs..., and essential information such as the individual's name and often the date of their passing is consistently present. The inscriptions on these tombstones are written in the Egyptian languages of Greek or Coptic, sometimes in both. This poster aims to provide an accessible exhibition-style catalog of this significant yet unpublished corpus. Notably, these funerary stelae were not uncovered through archaeological excavations but were previously in the possession of dealers before the implementation of the Antiquities Protection Law of 1983. Originally owned by Mahmoud Mansour and Albert Tawdros, these stelae were acquired by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization as a gift from the heirs, highlighting their cultural and historical significance.

## **Morozov, Alexey**

### **Rewriting the Rules: The Coptic Transmission of the Pseudo-Clementine Octateuch from Late Antiquity to the Modern Era**

This paper examines the Coptic transmission of the *Pseudo-Clementine Octateuch*, focusing on the Sahidic version and its later adaptation into Bohairic. It first outlines aspects of the redactional history of the Sahidic text and highlights its linguistic and terminological features, considered within the framework of the Coptic reception of canon-law material of Greek origin. The study then turns to the Bohairic translation produced in the modern period on

the basis of the Sahidic version, emphasizing processes of linguistic reworking and the structural tensions they entail. Through an analysis of manuscript evidence and translation practices, the paper sheds light on the dynamics of transmission and transformation of the Pseudo-Clementine text within the Coptic tradition.

## **Mossakowska-Gaubert, Maria**

### **The daily bread of Egyptian nuns and monks**

My paper will focus on the production and consumption of bread within monastic communities in Egypt between the 4th and 8th centuries. Although this topic has been studied from various perspectives, including organisational and economic aspects, my presentation will highlight the differences in the various categories of bread and their respective production methods. To this end, I will examine written sources such as normative, literary, and documentary texts, as well as archaeological sources including artefacts and structures associated with bread production.

## **Mousa, Nevein Girgis**

### **The Bathing Prayer: A Historical, Liturgical, and Manuscript Study**

This paper examines the Bathing Prayer, also known in the Coptic tradition as the Prayer of the Hammim or the Prayer of the Basin, as one of the liturgical practices preceding infant baptism in the Coptic Orthodox Church. This rite holds a distinct place within the Church's liturgical tradition and functions as an early introduction of the child into ecclesial life, preparing for participation in the sacrament of baptism.

The study adopts a historical–liturgical approach, analysing a group of liturgical manuscripts that preserve the text of the Bathing Prayer, with particular attention to the earliest extant manuscript and its comparison with the text currently in use in the Coptic rite. Through this manuscript-based analysis, the paper traces the development of the prayer and its liturgical structure.

In addition, the paper offers a comparative study between the Coptic Bathing Prayer and the Byzantine rite known as the Prayer of Naming, highlighting similarities and differences in both liturgical form and theological meaning. The study argues that the Bathing Prayer should not be understood merely as a pastoral or social practice, but as an early theological proclamation of God's salvific plan for humanity and the world within the sacramental journey of the Church.

## **Müller, Matthias**

### **On Clitic Ordering**

Within grammatical descriptions of any given language, particles are often underrepresented and their description is often just a mere list of them; or in the words of Sir Alan Gardiner "Those relatively unimportant words (like *mk*, *js̄t*, *grt*, *js*) of which the characteristic is that they usually stand either at or very near the beginning of the sentence" (*Egyptian Grammar*, Oxford 1957, §226). The present paper will examine the so-called Wackernagel (or second position) clitics and describe a particular feature of them: their order of appearance in the

clause. The particles chosen will be  $\mu\epsilon\eta$  = *men*,  $\gamma\alpha\rho$  = *gar*,  $\Delta\epsilon$  = *de*,  $\rho\omega$  = *rô*,  $\omicron\gamma\eta$  = *un*,  $\Delta\eta$  = *an*,  $\eta\theta\omicron\gamma$  = *nt<sup>h</sup>of*,  $\gamma\omega\gamma$  = *hôf*,  $\chi\epsilon$  = *ce*,  $\omicron\eta$  = *on*,  $\pi\epsilon$  = *pe*, as well as the indirect object. The study's empirical base will Mediaeval Bohairic (B5), and its results will be contrasted with the only available study on them for Coptic, *Shisha-Halevy's Coptic Grammatical Categories*, published 40 years ago.

## Müller, Matthias

### Coptic Material from Elephantine

The present paper will present the results of the work on the Coptic material found during the German-Swiss excavations in and around the Khnum Temple on Elephantine Island at Aswân. Due to the structures excavated, mainly small house with workshops, most of the texts are documentary in nature and except for a small fraction majorly written on ostraca. In addition, a few copies of literary texts will be introduced as well. As the archaeological contexts allow to assign dates to the different convolutes, most of them can be dated between AD 560 and AD 950. An exceptional feature of the material is the predominance of Coptic, which outranks Greek almost by a ratio of 4:1. Besides the administrative side of the corpus, a focus will be set at indications for Christian institutions attested in the texts.

## Nabatame, Kokoa

### A Study on Differential Object Marking (DOM) in the Gospel of Judas: A Sahidic Coptic Dialectal Analysis

This study investigates the morphosyntactic patterns of Differential Object Marking (DOM) in the Gospel of Judas, a 3rd-4th century Sahidic Coptic text from the Codex Tchacos. DOM is a cross-linguistic phenomenon where only certain objects receive explicit case marking, typically determined by animacy, definiteness, and topicality hierarchies. While DOM has been extensively studied in various languages, research on Coptic dialects remains limited. Building upon Engsheden's previous work on Sahidic (2008) and Lycopolitan (2018) dialects, this research analyzes 300 verb-object constructions extracted from the Gospel of Judas. The analysis focuses on three key dimensions: verbal morphology (absolute, construct, and pronominal states), object characteristics (animacy and definiteness), and verb semantics classified into three affectedness levels (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW) following Tsunoda (1985)'s verb hierarchy.

The findings reveal that n-marking appears predominantly with high-affectedness verbs (64%), consistent with Engsheden's predictions. However, the verb *eire* ("make/do") exhibits exceptional behavior with unmarked constructions despite high affectedness, suggesting "semantically enabled optionality." The *mmo*= marking shows strongest correlation with low-affectedness cognitive verbs (70%), while unmarked constructions display relatively balanced distribution across semantic categories.

This research contributes to understanding early Sahidic dialectal variation and demonstrates that verb semantics, particularly affectedness hierarchy, plays a crucial role in Coptic DOM distribution. The study also highlights the significance of the Gospel of Judas as invaluable linguistic evidence for pre-standardized Sahidic Coptic with dialectal mixing characteristics.

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## Naether, Franziska

### Early Egyptological Dictionaries as Linked Open Data: The Project Ancient Egyptian Dictionaries in a Network 2.0

**Team: Marc Brose, Peter Dils, Thomas Eckart, Felix Helfer, Uwe Kretschmer, Franziska Naether, Daniel Werning**

Even before Erman and Grapow's "Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache" (published 1926–1961), which remains a standard work to this day, a number of dictionaries, word lists, and glossaries were produced, the information in which continues to inform research in Egyptian and Coptic lexicography. However, they fell into obscurity due to the resounding success of the dictionary and are largely ignored in research. The lecture provides an overview of these pioneering works – including major publications by Champollion, Birch, and Brugsch – and highlights why their content remains relevant. This is followed by a review of the subproject "Altägyptische Wörterbücher im Verbund" (AWV 1.0), which was carried out from 2013 to 2015 at Leipzig University as part of the ESF collaborative project "Wissensrohstoff Text". In this process, 12 early lexical sources from the period 1822–1895 were entered into a database, linked to the standard word list of the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (TLA) 1.0, and provided with extensive annotations. Despite its scholarly potential, the project is currently only accessible to a limited extent. Therefore, the new project "Langzeitverfügbarkeit und Integration der Altägyptischen Wörterbücher im Verbund (AWV 2.0)" aims to carry out a comprehensive modernization. Funded by the DFG as part of the Text+ consortium of the National Research Data Infrastructure, the project has been carried out since January 2026

at the Saxon Academy of Sciences and Humanities in cooperation with the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy. The goals include the conversion of ancient Egyptian lemmata to Unicode (transcription and hieroglyphs), linking to the new TLA 2.0 release and the Egyptian lemma list in Wikidata, as well as processing the data into standard formats. At the conference, initial results and a live demo of the Text+ infrastructure will be presented, which is intended to ensure the long-term availability to ensure the preservation of these historical encyclopaedias.

## Nakshara, Ahmed

### Beyond *P.Apoll. II*: Unedited Coptic Fragments from Papas' Archive

Under the auspices of the IFAO, Henri Henne began excavations at Tell Edfu in 1921. His most significant find in the next year was the so-called "Jar of the Papyrus." This assemblage of Greek and Coptic documents suffered a difficult history: a potential looting immediately after its discovery and further mechanical damage occurred during transit to Cairo. While Roger Rémondon (1953) initially identified the archive as belonging to Papas, the pagarch of Edfu, and dated it at the beginning of the 8th century, subsequent research by Jean Gasco and Klaas Worp (1982) crucially redated the archive to the 660s–670s AD. This period is vital for understanding the consolidation of the Umayyad administration in Egypt. Despite the historical importance of the archive, the Coptic component has remained largely under-studied. The ongoing IFAO project, "Edfu in the 7th Century," is currently addressing this through the forthcoming volume *P.Apoll. II*. However, *P.Apoll. II* will include only approximately 45 reconstructed Coptic documents out of an estimated 120–150 fragments held in the IFAO collection.

This paper focuses on the approximately 100 remaining fragments that fall outside the scope of the forthcoming volume. Through a systematic analysis of fragments such as P.IFAO Edfou Jarre 65c, 112, 113, and 114, this study identifies key epistolary formulas, prosopographical data, and administrative keywords. By presenting editions of the most significant pieces, this paper aims to complete the administrative puzzle of 7th-century Edfu.

## Narouz, Mariam

### Expressions of Humility in the Literary texts of Theodosius I of Alexandria in the Sixth century

My study focuses on the literary methods in which the Coptic author expressed the important spiritual *virtue of humility*, especially in the Coptic literary texts of patriarch *Theodosius I of Alexandria* (sixth century).

For the Coptic People, the Bishop or the Patriarch is considered as a chosen one and called by God to the great priestly service, and his sermon which is addressed to them in the different religious occasions about a biblical topic, or about the Holy virgin Mary or one of the Archangels, or a Biography of a martyr or a saint, etc., is considered as a map which Christian people can follow in their spiritual life. So, I will concentrate on the manifold literary methods that Patriarch *Theodosius the 1<sup>st</sup>* used in his works to express his humility and self-denial in several methods, and how did his works affect the other authors.

**\*I will propose** an overview of the works of *Theodosius I of Alexandria* in Coptic texts.

***\*Then I will enter further*** the homilies of *Theodosius I of Alexandria* on the Archangel Michael and John the Baptist which survive in Bohairic and Sahidic, because the study of the text in both dialects is giving a more profound and accurate meanings and results.

## Ochała, Grzegorz

### Wall inscriptions from the Monastery of the Syrians: progress report on the publication of the corpus

**Team: Ochała, Grzegorz & Jutkiewicz, Piotr & van Rompay, Luk**

Since the mid-1990s, a Dutch–Polish expedition to the Church of the Virgin Mary in the Monastery of the Syrians has been uncovering and conserving its treasures. Along with exquisite wall paintings, the layers of plaster hidden under modern grey coating have preserved a host of wall inscriptions in different languages (Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Latin), which give us unprecedented insight into the history of the monastery and its spiritual culture. However, apart from isolated examples edited or discussed in different venues, this corpus has so far not been presented in a comprehensive manner to a wider public. The present paper, therefore, aims at offering an overview of the corpus, both quantitative and qualitative, and discuss the most important methodological issues, but also shed light on its importance for understanding the multicultural milieu of the monastery.

## Parkhouse, Sarah (POSTER)

### Coptic in Manchester Project

The poster will display an overview of the project ‘Coptic in Manchester: Connecting Manuscripts and Communities’ which runs from 2026–2028. This collaborative project on Coptic manuscripts in the John Rylands Research Institute and Library aims to bridge the existing divide between traditional academic research on these artefacts and the local Coptic community in Manchester and beyond. The project’s objectives are threefold:

(1) To collaborate with the local Coptic Orthodox community to identify key manuscripts in the Rylands that can illuminate the formative period of Coptic history, followed by detailed analysis of the selected manuscripts; (2) To investigate the history of the Coptic archive at the Rylands, situating it within the broader narrative of colonial-era collecting practices and their contemporary legacies; (3) To raise awareness and access to the Coptic collection in Manchester, through collection encounters, a public conference, and a co-created digital exhibition and edited volume featuring critical editions, translations, articles, and reflections. As the project begins in February, as well as an overview of the project, the poster will also present the outcomes of the first set of activities.

## Paul, Arsany

### Center and Periphery: Eucharistic Frequency and Regional Divergence in Medieval Egypt

By the thirteenth century, most northern Egyptian churches celebrated the Eucharist on practically all days of the year, yet this expansion remained strikingly uneven. Southern communities retained weekend-centered rhythms much longer, while Western Desert monasteries followed an intermediate pattern. This paper argues that these differences were not stages in a single process of liturgical development. In the urban north, the decline of routine reserved communion made full weekday liturgies more necessary, while political pressure and patriarchal oversight gave more frequent celebrations greater communal importance. Monasteries and southern communities did not experience the same combination of conditions. Center and periphery therefore emerge not simply as geographical locations, but as relationships shaped by liturgical practice, ecclesiastical authority, and forms of communal life.

## Pawlikowska-Gwiazda, Aleksandra

### Living in the Tomb: Social and Economic Activity of Monks from the Tomb-Hermitage MMA 1152 & 1151 in Western Thebes

**Authors: Aleksandra Pawlikowska-Gwiazda (National Museum in Warsaw), Tomasz Górecki†**

The Sheikh Abd el-Gurna MMA 1152 & 1151 Hermitage Project was initiated in 2003 by Tomasz Górecki on behalf of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw. What initially appeared to be a modest monastic dwelling was later revealed to be a significant monastic settlement, well embedded within the wider monastic landscape and social networks of Late Antique Western Thebes.

Since 2003, excavations have yielded a remarkable assemblage of material culture, including exceptionally well-preserved manuscripts: two papyrus codices containing the *Canons of Pseudo-Basil* and the *Encomium of St Pisenthios*, as well as parchment leaves placed between two wooden covers, preserving excerpts from the *Book of Isaiah* and part of the *Martyrium Petri*. Equally important is the extensive pottery assemblage, studied in detail by Tomasz Górecki, which proved crucial not only for establishing the chronology and occupational phases of the hermitage, but also for reconstructing aspects of the monks' daily life, economic practices, and patterns of consumption.

This paper presents the final results of more than a decade of research at the site, incorporating previously unpublished material from earlier fieldwork as well as additions from the two concluding seasons of 2024 and 2025, conducted to complete the work of the former project director. The contribution also serves as a prelude to an upcoming monograph synthesising the archaeological and textual evidence from the hermitage.

**\* Tomasz Górecki (1951-2017)** was the founder and long-standing director of the Sheikh Abd el-Gurna MMA 1152 & 1151 Hermitage Project until his sudden death in 2017. Although

he was unable to prepare this paper, the research presented here is fundamentally based on his work, and the author does not claim sole credit for its results.

## **Pawlikowska-Gwiazda, Aleksandra**

### **Oops... I Sealed It Again: Mud Stoppers from monastic contexts in Western Thebes**

This paper reassesses mud stoppers as a significant yet neglected source for reconstructing practices of storage, control, and administration in Late Antique Western Thebes, a region marked by the widespread development of monastic communities between the sixth and eighth–ninth centuries. The analysis is based primarily on an unpublished corpus of mud stoppers from the Monastery of Phoibammon and the hermitage established in tombs MMA 1152 and 1151 on the Sheikh Abd el-Gurna plateau in Western Thebes, documented through the author’s own fieldwork.

In contrast to amphora dipinti or *tituli picti*, seal impressions on Late Antique mud stoppers rarely conveyed detailed logistical information such as dates, capacities, or ownership. Instead, they favoured symbols, invocations, and sacred signs. The sealing of wine amphorae may therefore have fulfilled not only practical functions related to storage and control, but also symbolic and apotropaic roles, reflecting the liturgical significance of wine and bread within monastic contexts and the need to safeguard these goods during storage and transport.

## **Petersen, Silke**

### **Metamorphoses of Eve in the Nag Hammadi Texts**

According to Church Fathers (such as Tertullian, Ambrose or Augustine) and later New Testament passages (cf. 1 Tim 2:12–15), Eve is to blame for the evil that has come into the world. There are numerous studies on the reception history of the figure of Eve (see, in the German-speaking context, especially the publications by Helen Schüngel-Straumann); however, the Coptic texts preserved in the Nag Hammadi library are rarely taken into account. My presentation will therefore focus on several passages from these writings, including the Gospel of Philip, the Hypostasis of the Archons, and the originally untitled text “On the Origin of the World” (NHC II,3; II,4; II,5). In the latter two writings, which are usually attributed to Sethianism, the figure of Eve undergoes interesting metamorphoses, in which she splits apart and transforms partly into a tree – the latter a motif that also appears in Ovid, specifically in the story of Apollo and Daphne in the first book of “Metamorphoses”, and will be given special attention in my presentation.

## **Pinchard, Laurent**

### **The Double Transmission of the Parable of the Two Sons (Matt. 21:28–32) in Coptic Manuscripts**

This paper investigates the Coptic manuscript evidence for the Parable of the Two Sons in Matthew 21:28–32, a passage known in the Greek tradition to exist in three distinct textual

forms – A, B, and C – depending on which son performs the will of the father. According to the critical apparatus of the *Novum Testamentum Graece* (NA<sup>28</sup>), the Sahidic witnesses reflect a mixed tradition, combining elements of form A (sa 2, sa 9, sa 128, sa 143, sa 101, sa 130) and form B (sa 104, sa 113, sa 118, sa 120, sa 133, sa 150), with several manuscripts too fragmentary to allow for precise classification (sa 166, sa 192, sa 118E). Conversely, all Bohairic witnesses consistently attest to form B alone. Form C appears only in a small group of Greek manuscripts, notably in the Codex Bezae (D 05).

The paper advances a new reconstruction of the textual transmission history of these three forms, proposing that the seemingly ‘nonsensical’ Greek form C represents an early archetype from which forms A and B subsequently diverged. The Coptic evidence, and particularly the Sahidic tradition, is shown to preserve traces of to this early textual bifurcation, probably dating to the second or third century C, whereas the Bohairic reflects the later, more standardized Alexandrian recension.

## Pinchbeck, Clara

### The Textile is the Message: Weaving Identity in the Late Antique Egyptian Burial of the “Embroideress Euphemia”

This paper examines the sixth-century CE Antinoupolis burial of the so-called “Embroideress Euphemia,” a naturally mummified woman excavated by the French archaeologist Albert Gayet in 1899–1900, now housed in the Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. Buried in multiple tunics of linen and wool, adorned with tapestry weave and resist-dyed ornamentation, Euphemia, named by Gayet, was accompanied by spinning and weaving tools. Building on scientific analyses conducted in 2010, which largely confirmed the authenticity of the burial assemblage, this study explores how Euphemia’s garments and grave goods constructed her identity in death. By contextualizing her burial within Roman textual traditions that associated textile production with feminine virtue, and by comparing Euphemia with Roman-Egyptian textile imagery, such as depictions of the Virgin Mary spinning, this paper links Euphemia’s burial to broader cultural narratives of gender, labor, and piety. Viewing Euphemia’s burial through a “textile aesthetic” lens, one that considers clothing an aesthetic system intentionally situated on the body, the paper argues that her ornately patterned clothing exemplified a shift in Late Antique visual culture and signaled both personal identity and social continuity beyond death. Euphemia’s dress ultimately reflects how textile practices shaped memory, status, and community in Late Antique Egypt.

## Piowarczyk, Przemysław

### Controlling Access to Churches in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt: Technical and Social Means

This paper examines how access to church space in late antique and medieval Egypt was controlled and managed. While scholarship has long recognized the primary distinction between the exterior and interior of the church, less attention has been paid to the practical means by which access was regulated within these zones. Two interconnected problems are addressed. First, the physical closure of church spaces – whether doors or screens were kept open or closed when services were not in progress, and how sanctuary areas were

sequestered – remains debated because the evidence is fragmentary and often contradictory. Second, the social management of access – who had authority to admit, exclude, or remove persons (clergy such as deacons and subdeacons, lay attendants, or assertive crowds) and how enforcement worked in practice – is poorly documented. This paper assembles and analyzes sources from canonical collections, miracle narratives, and homiletic literature from Egypt to trace norms, prescriptions, and incidents that illuminate both the material and social mechanisms of control. The study argues that control of access combined institutional rules with episodic social enforcement, producing a layered regime of sacral boundaries whose implementation varied by place and circumstance.

## Plisch, Uwe-Karsten

### Die Arbeit an der kritischen Edition des sahidischen Pentateuch. Beobachtungen und Einsichten

Die kritische Edition des Pentateuch im Rahmen des Göttinger Akademievorhabens *Digital Critical Edition of the Coptic (Sahidic) Old Testament* (<https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com>) schreitet voran. Im Zuge der Transkription aller verfügbaren Textzeugen, ihrer Neusortierung und bei der Erarbeitung der kritischen Edition begegnen immer wieder interessante Phänomene textkritischer, lexikalischer und grammatisch-syntaktischer Art. Die Arbeit am Text gewährt überdies immer wieder interessante Einblicke in die antike koptische Übersetzungspraxis. Eine Auswahl solcher, aus verschiedenen Gründen besonders aufschlussreicher, Phänomene bietet dieser Beitrag. Der Schwerpunkt wird dabei auf der koptischen Genesis liegen.

### Working on the critical edition of the Sahidic Pentateuch. Observations and insights

The critical edition of the Pentateuch as part of the Göttingen Academy project *Digital Critical Edition of the Coptic (Sahidic) Old Testament* (<https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com>) is progressing. In the course of transcribing all available textual witnesses, reordering them and preparing the critical edition, interesting phenomena of a textual-critical, lexical and grammatical-syntactical nature repeatedly come to light. Moreover, work on the text repeatedly provides interesting insights into ancient Coptic translation practice. This article offers a selection of such phenomena, which are particularly revealing for various reasons. The focus will be on the Coptic Genesis.

## Preininger, Markéta

### Materialities of Social Relations in Coptic Magic

We live in a world of social relationships and material things. In our daily lives, material objects create, reinforce, and express bonds among individuals and groups – a letter sent, a ring given, a coin borrowed – express the rich lived reality of embodied communication. Practitioners of rituals, as we know them from Coptic amulets and magical formularies, elevated *things* from their mundane status, recontextualized them and combined them with other objects to imbue them with agency oriented towards their new purpose, for instance, to heal or curse someone. Nevertheless, the objects did not have such agency naturally, but

they gained it through what the ritualists *did* with them. However, as research on Coptic magic is often oriented towards what rituals did for an individual, indeed mirroring their original purpose, we can easily overlook the agency ritual objects carried in transforming social relations. An example of such a *thing* capable of changing relations is menstrual blood. According to P.Baden V 123 (an eighth-century formulary), menstrual blood was used as ink for drawing an image of the powers Bakhoukh, Bikmn, and of the victim on special vellum, upon which a spell was recited and which was consequently burnt and buried. This *assemblage* (I am aware of the imprecise use of the term here) had the agency to destroy a relationship between two individuals. Why menstrual blood? How did the imbued object emerge, and when did it fade? Did it fully emerge with the recitation of the spell or with the burning? What were the boundaries between the things used to complete this ritual? What were the boundaries between the processes to create these objects with agency? Intuitively, we feel the role of menstrual blood was key in this process, but only when connected to other things and processes, almost dissolving into the final object carrying agency. The proposed paper will explore such objects with agency that change relations, how they created new bonds, destroyed the old ones, which objects were particularly desirable for this purpose, and how they were elevated from their mundane status.

## Pyke, Gillian

### An Engineering Challenge: Conservation and Archaeology at the White Monastery Church

On 6 January 2022 a portion of the north wall of the White Monastery Church collapsed, just a few weeks before an engineering intervention to secure and stabilise it was due to begin. The wall had been unsupported in the nave since the loss of its roof (probably) in the medieval period but was somewhat buttressed by houses between at least the late nineteenth century and the mid 1980s. Its deformation, first documented in early twentieth-century photographs, comprises a significant inward bowing of the upper part. Deformation analysis from recent 3D terrestrial laser scans tracked the wall's movement between 2015 and 2019 and aided the planning of engineering work using an anchoring system already successfully deployed in historic buildings in Egypt. Although still in its early stages, the anchoring will allow the safe rebuilding of the lost portion of the wall and secure it for future generations. Archaeological monitoring of the conservation has revealed insights into the everyday life of the recent householders, bringing this little-known period of the church's history into the spotlight.

## Ragheb, Mickel Helmy & Awed, Nabil

### The “Lost” Alphabetical *Antiphon* of the *Hamuli Antiphonarium* (MLM M575. fol.58<sup>v</sup>)

In the Arabic edition of the *Hamuli Antiphonarium*, the first author of this paper identified a group of hymns which called *Antiphona* arranged according to an alphabetical system, preserved in this codex under the heading: Ⲭⲧⲃⲉ ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲁⲥⲓⲥ ⲙⲡⲉⲛⲥⲱⲣ̅ ⲙⲛ̅ ⲡⲉⲩⲥⲣⲱⲥ “For the Resurrection of our Savior and His Cross.” But The earlier German edition prepared by Maria Cramer and Martin Krause entirely overlooked this textual phenomenon, despite the fact that

this occasion represents the only instance in the codex in which such a form of arrangement occurs.

This group of *Antiphona* displays a number of shared characteristics: they are uneven in length and lack semantic continuity, yet together they form a sequence ordered according to the Greek alphabet from  $\alpha$  to  $\omega$ , extending from nos. 324 to 346 (fols.57<sup>r</sup>, l.26 – 60<sup>v</sup>, l.16). It must be noted – with regret – that the scribe of the *Hamuli Antiphonarium* omitted one unit from this series, namely the *Antiphonon* beginning with the letter lambda  $\lambda$ . Although the foliation remains intact, this unit is absent from the present early codex.

The discovery of an Arabic translation of this group of *Antiphona*, preserved under the titles *Ṭurūḥāt* of the Third, Sixth, and Ninth Hours of Holy Saturday in a collection of manuscripts originating from the Nile Delta – currently preserved in the Church of St George in al-Maḥalla al-Kubrā (Lower Egypt) and in the Church of Kafr al-Ṣaʿīd at Minyā al-Qamḥ (al-Zaqāzīq) – and dating from between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries CE, has nevertheless made it possible to remedy this lacuna. Although the text is predominantly Arabic, the unit missing from the *Hamuli Antiphonarium* is still preserved in Bohairic in some of these manuscripts, a fact that is of considerable importance for the reconstruction and completion of this significant codex.

## Ramadan, Atef

### The efforts of the Byzantine Emperors to restore unity between the chalcedonian churches and the non-chalcedonian churches and the position of Alexandria church from 451 AD to the end of the seventh century

This study examines the "Reconciliation Policy" pursued by Byzantine Emperors to bridge the theological and political rift following the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD). The research spans nearly three centuries of intense ecclesiastical struggle, focusing on the dialectical relationship between Imperial authority and the unique identity of the See of St. Mark in Alexandria.

The research begins by analyzing the "Explosive Decision" at the Second Council of Ephesus (449 AD) – the deposition of Flavian of Constantinople – and the subsequent atmosphere of terror and "groaning" that permeated the council. This pivotal event served as a catalyst for Emperor Marcian's subsequent "Four Imperial Edicts," which marked the beginning of Caesaropapism as a tool for enforcing religious dogma. The study then traces the evolution of these unity efforts, from Zeno's "Henotikon" and Justinian's legislative attempts to the "Monothelite" controversy under Emperor Heraclius in the 7th century.

The study concludes that while the Byzantine Emperors sought unity primarily for geopolitical stability against external threats (Persian and later Arab conquests), their reliance on "Imperial Edicts" and legal coercion failed to win the hearts of the Alexandrian people. This persistent resistance fostered a permanent schism, which ultimately reshaped the geopolitical landscape of the Near East by the end of the 7th century.

## Ramzy, Sherif & Tony, Essam

### Obscure Vocabulary and Hidden Realities: A Study in *Siyar al-Bīʿa al-Muqaddasa* (History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria)

This paper examines instances of obscure, misunderstood, or ambiguous vocabulary in *Siyar al-Bīʿa al-Muqaddasa* (“Biographies of the Holy Church”), famously known today by its more recent title *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*. These obscurities refer to individuals, groups, place names, and geographical regions, while others affect the meaning of the embedded editorial notices describing the history of the composition of the text and its development across the centuries.

In the centuries that followed the appearance of the Arabic archetype of *Siyar al-Bīʿa*, compiled and edited by the Alexandrian deacon Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij (ca. 1020–1100), the sense of these terms faded from common understanding. Subsequent copyists, no longer recognizing their significance, transmitted them with errors that further obscured their meaning. Modern printed editions frequently reproduced these corrupt readings without resolution, resulting in gaps in interpretation and internal inconsistencies. The present study seeks to clarify examples of these obscurities by identifying and interpreting problematic terms through a systematic comparison of manuscript witnesses and published editions. It draws primarily on the 2023 critical edition prepared by Sherif Ramzy, which relies on the earliest extant manuscripts to present a carefully researched eclectic text.<sup>11</sup>

## Reaves, Pamela

### The Anticlimactic Death of James in the *First Apocalypse of James* (NHC V,3; CT 2)

This short paper focuses on the final scene of James’s arrest and death in the *First Apocalypse of James*, present in two Coptic manuscripts: Nag Hammadi Codex V (NHC V) and Codex Tchacos (CT). It begins with close analysis of the parallel manuscript passages, including attention to variants, before shifting to a focus on the better-preserved narrative of CT, which notes the stoning of James. This fuller account has generally affirmed for many scholars the dominant view that *1 Apoc. Jas.* affirms martyrdom and indeed prepares Christians for this fate. Challenging this perspective, this paper shows how the scene of James’s death is rather anticlimactic and stands apart from typical martyr narratives that linger on the bodily experience of a persecuted death and highlight the element of testimony. It argues that *1 Apoc. Jas.* offers a corrective to existing traditions of James’s martyrdom, thus participating in varied early Christian discourse regarding the significance of a suffering death. The paper also considers how this treatment of James’s demise (i) serves as part of *1 Apoc. Jas.*’s literary framework, which highlights James’s anticipated suffering and related anxiety, and (ii) aligns with its interest to situate persecution and testimony beyond the earthly realm.

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<sup>11</sup> Sherif Ramzy, *Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī: Siyar al-Bīʿa al-Muqaddasa* (Cairo: Logos Publishing and Media Services Foundation, 2023).

## Rebenich, Stefan

### Contested Fragments: Coptic Papyri, Scholarly Integrity, and Academic Politics in Imperial Germany

This paper examines the so-called Schmidt–Spiegelberg controversy surrounding the publication of a Coptic gospel fragment at the turn of the twentieth century. What began as a scholarly dispute over the edition and interpretation of newly discovered papyri rapidly escalated into a wide-ranging conflict involving accusations of plagiarism, questions of scholarly integrity, and competing institutional interests. The analysis reconstructs the dynamics of the feud and situates it within the academic culture of Wilhelmine Germany. The episode thus serves as a case study in the entanglement of scholarship, personal networks, and science politics in the humanities around 1900.

## Reintges, Chris

### The relative clause-like structure of temporal anterior (WHEN/AFTER) and conditional (protasis) clauses in Coptic Egyptian

Many languages opt for a neat structural distinction between relative clauses which modify a noun phrase and can be defining and non-defining and adverbial subordinate clauses which modify the main clause they are attached to. Language with a relative clause/adverbial clause split typically rely on semantically specific temporal, conditional and causal conjunctions to express relative tense (simultaneity, anteriority, posteriority), hypothetical-assertoric and inferential relations.

Coptic belongs to a group of languages where the categorial boundaries between relativization and adverbial subordinations are more fluid. Adverb clauses in a biclausal [antecedent clause [apodosis clause]] structure draw on a relative clause structure that share many structural properties in common with headless relative clauses with a nominal relative head. The descriptive task at hand is complexified by the considerable degree of relative complementizer allomorphy within and across dialects. The presentation will focus on temporal anterior and conditional protasis, which have been argued in the literature to have an underlying relative clause structure crosslinguistically (Declerck 1997; Bhatt and Pacheva 2006).

Starting with temporal anterior adverb clauses in Sahidic Coptic, I propose a decompositional analysis of the Temporalis marker *əntere* into the past tense relativizer *ənt* and the tenseless verbalizer *ere*, which are stacked on each other (Reintges 2012, 2013). I will furthermore show that the verbalizer *ere* does not have a subordinating function (this is taken care of by the relativizer *ənt*) but rather acts as a temporal shifter: it shifts the inherent past tense reference of *ənt* to past anteriority.

- (1) Sahidic temporal anterior clause formed with stacked *ənt* and *ere*  
*ʔaww:* [*ənt* *ere* =f *so:təm* *e=naï* *ənkʔi* *ʔe:sus*]  
 and REL REL =CL3M.SG listen.ABS to=DEM.PRON.3PL FOC Jesus  
*ʔa* =f *so:ʔe*  
 PERF =CL3M.SG laugh.ABS  
 ‘When Jesus had heard these (words), he laughed.’ (Gospel of Judas 36:22–23, ed.

Kasser/Wurst)

The conditional paradigm is a non-uniform paradigm whose members are formally contrasted by different morpheme orders. The relativizer/converbalizer *e=* ~ *ere*, which is placed in clause-initial position performs the subordinating function. The preverbal auxiliary *ʃan* cannot further be decomposed morphologically and semantically. This argues for its categorization as the inflectional base of the paradigm which contributes conditional meaning to the adverbial clause (contra Polotsky 1960:394 §4 Obs. 1 who proposes to disregard “the morpheme *ʃan* in setting up the Tripartite Pattern”).

- (2) Basic morpheme order [*e=* + SUBJ] + *ʃan* + infinitive] with unstressed 2nd person plural pronoun /*=tetən/*
- |     |                |       |          |     |                            |        |
|-----|----------------|-------|----------|-----|----------------------------|--------|
| [ e | =tetən         | =ʃan  | =ʔof     | de  | ən=ne=k <sup>h</sup> artəs |        |
| REL | =CL.2PL        | =COND | read.ABS | PCL | PREP=DEF.PL=text           |        |
| [RC | et – she:      | tʃin  | ʃo:rəp   |     |                            | (...)] |
|     | REL write.STAT | since | early    |     |                            |        |
- ‘When you (plural) read the texts, which were written earlier (...)’ (Shenoute III 126:15, ed. Leipoldt)

The preverbal position of the conjugation base *ʃan* in example (2) provides grounds for identifying the linearization pattern [*e=* + SUBJ] + *ʃan* + infinitive] as the basic morpheme order of conditional periphrasis. The linearization pattern [*ere* + *ʃan* + SUBJ] + infinitive] in example can be identified as the non-basic morpheme order, which is derived by conditional inversion. Here the conditional auxiliary *ʃan* is removed from the preverbal base position and relocated to the presubject position in the left-periphery of the clause.

- (3) Non-basic morpheme order [*ere* + *ʃan* + SUBJ] + infinitive] with NP subject
- |      |      |                  |     |                    |        |
|------|------|------------------|-----|--------------------|--------|
| [ er | =ʃan | u=sən            | de  | ʃəʔəkʰe=f          | (...)] |
| REL  | COND | INDEF.SG=brother | PCL | hurt.CNST=CL.3M.SG |        |
- “If a brother hurts himself (...)” (Precepts of Pachomius nr. 105, 32:3, ed. Lefort)

Akin to conditional inversion in English, conditional conversion in Coptic displays the same swap of position between the subject and auxiliary verb. But unlike as in the case of conditional inversion in English, the syntactic process lacks the special pragmatic effects (Iatridou and Embick 1994; Biezma 2011). We have in front of us a hitherto unnoticed case of context-sensitive word (free morpheme) order variation, which is purely morphological.

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## **Richter, Tonio Sebastian**

### **A Dictionary and Database of Greek Loanwords in Coptic**

In the fifteen years from 2010 until 2025, a team of coptologists and a DH/IT expert directed by the presenter has been working in the project *DDGLC* on a lexicographical database and a dictionary of Greek Loanwords in Coptic texts of all dialects and genres throughout the millennium from the earliest Coptic manuscripts up to 14<sup>th</sup> century works of Coptic L2-poetry. As of fall 2025, the database contained ca. 300.000 loanword tokens attesting to ca. 5.000 Greek word types and ca. 7.000 Coptic lemma types. The lexicographical procedure included the lemmatization (Greek source lemmata and Coptic loanword lemmata), the annotation with metadata, grammatical and semantic analyses, and the systematic documentation of spelling variants. The proposed presentation aims at introducing this upcoming lexicographical source and its potential for areas such as Coptic philology, Coptic linguistics, Greek lexicography, and Greek phonology, and at providing information on the recent state of the publication of the two output formats of the project, the printed "Dictionary of Greek Loanwods in Coptic" and the online user interface "Dioskoros".

## **Richter, Tonio Sebastian**

### **Discarded words. The rejection of Greek-origin words in the history of Coptic lexicography**

The Greek-Egyptian language contact, traceable all along in Coptic texts with their altogether more than 5.000 Greek loanword types of almost all parts of speech and from a wide range of semantic areas, is the broadest attested case of intense lexical borrowing in antiquity. While the medieval Coptic-Arabic glossaries composed by Coptic scholars in Mamluk Egypt (13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> c.) still presented the Greek loaned vocabulary as an integral part of the lexical repertoire of the Coptic written language, this integrity was dismissed in the early modern European work on Coptic lexicography. Non-Greek constituents of the Coptic lexicon were now filtered out, so that Coptic dictionaries from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on recorded exclusively words of presumed Egyptian origin. The gravity of this decision becomes apparent if we consider that the vocabulary discarded along this etymological criterion accounts for more than 50% of the total of lexical types used in Coptic texts. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the completion of the Coptic lexicon through compilation and description of its winnowed Greek-origin

components became a cardinal desideratum of Egyptian lexicography and was no less than five times unsuccessfully attempted. The announced paper will outline the history of Coptic lexicography and focus on epistemological premises and consequences of the disintegration of the Coptic lexicon along a merely etymological rational.

## Rizk, Mariam Khalaf Adeeb

### Digitally Mediating Living Coptic Heritage: An Integrated AR Approach to Architectural and Ritual Landscapes at Al-Muharraq Monastery

This research examines Al-Muharraq Monastery as a living heritage site where ancient and modern architecture intertwine with centuries-old ritual practices. The study explores the role of Augmented Reality (AR) in enriching the visitor experience through three objectives: first, utilizing manuscript texts to digitally reconstruct architectural elements and interpret symbols; second, providing interactive media explaining the ritual and social dimensions of the monastery's celebrations; and third, establishing a human-centered framework linking the monastery's history and architecture via "digital storytelling." The methodology employs a descriptive-analytical approach supported by field studies (interviews and surveys) to measure visitor acceptance of technology within the sacred precinct. The paper concludes that integrating emerging technologies effectively safeguards Coptic identity and supports tourism sustainability, turning AR into a vital tool that bridges the archaeological past with the modern architectural and ritual present.

## Rofail, Fr Angelos El-Naqady

### Coptic Ministers in Egypt in the 19th and 20th Centuries and Their Role in the Modern Renaissance of Egypt: A Scientific Study in Light of Official Documents

This study examines the contributions of Coptic ministers in Egypt during the 19th and 20th centuries, based on official documents, personal memoirs, and specialized historical studies, highlighting their role in the modern development of the state.<sup>1</sup> The study highlights several exemplary cases, such as:

**Salib Sami Pasha:** The first Coptic to hold the Ministry of War and Navy in modern Egypt, he faced significant diplomatic challenges, such as rejecting requests for Italian planes to pass through Egyptian airspace on their way to Eritrea, in defense of national sovereignty, as documented in his memoirs.<sup>2</sup>

**Wasif Boutros Ghali Pasha:** He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Speaker of the Parliament, affirming national unity after the assassination of his father, describing the incident as "an individual political act, not sectarian."<sup>3</sup>

**Administrative and Developmental Efforts:** Coptic ministers contributed to the development of modern state administration by participating in the Cabinet, legislative and economic committees, and engaging in wide-ranging reforms.<sup>4</sup>

**Engineers Alphonse Gries and Ibrahim Shoukry:** They contributed to the development of Egyptian agriculture by improving seeds, mechanizing farming, developing the cotton and sugarcane industries, and reclaiming lands.<sup>5</sup>

These cases demonstrate the ability of Coptic ministers to integrate national loyalty with religious identity, contributing to institutional, social, and economic reforms, despite political and sectarian challenges faced by the Coptic national elite.<sup>6</sup>

The study also emphasizes the importance of documenting this rare historical period to highlight the prominent role of the Coptic elite in building the modern state.<sup>7</sup>

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## Rösch, Florian

### The Gnomai of the Council of Nicaea: New Discoveries, New Perspectives

The so-called *Gnomai* of the Council of Nicaea (*Clavis coptica* 0021) constitute a text unique of its kind within Coptic literature. Cast in the form of *sententiae*, they provide Egyptian lay Christians of the fourth century with moral standards by which they were expected to shape their everyday lives. The text, preserved in a total of three codices, survives – according to the current state of research – largely in the Turin Codex GIOV.AJ, with additional fragmentary witnesses in MONB.EF and MONB.FT from the White Monastery.

The *Gnomai* have already been the subject of several scholarly treatments, most recently in 2015 by Alistair C. Stewart. Owing to the partially fragmentary nature of the extant witnesses, previous research on the *Gnomai* has faced the challenge of reconstructing their precise extent and textual history.

This paper aims to offer a detailed examination of the *Gnomai*. It will provide insights into the text's contextual placement, its dating and localization, as well as its literary genre. Particular emphasis will be placed on newly identified papyrus and parchment finds, which make it possible to place the reconstruction of the text on a secure footing for the first time and to demonstrate that the *Gnomai* are in fact extant today in a complete form.

## Rosenau, Malte

### The Textual Value of Citations and Lectionaries in the Sahidic Minor Prophets

The fragmentary transmission of the Sahidic Old Testament in textual manuscripts lends greater weight to the evidence of lectionaries and quotations from Coptic literature for editorial work than would be usual – or even desirable – in other transmission contexts. Using the example of the Sahidic text of the Minor Prophets, this paper aims to demonstrate what can and cannot be expected from these witnesses from a text-critical perspective. Owing to the fortunate circumstance that the Achmimic version of the Minor Prophets, a descendant of the Sahidic translation, is preserved almost in its entirety in a single manuscript, we possess a touchstone for assessing these problematic textual witnesses.

## Rosland, Kristine Toft

### The polymorphic Christ in the *Apocryphon of John*

When the Savior appears to John in the frame narrative of the *Apocryphon of John*, all the preserved manuscripts indicate that he does so in three forms. There are, however, several problems in the passage. It is badly preserved. It is completely lost from NHC IV, and only a small fragment remains of it NHC III. That means that we only have one witness to the short and one witness to the long recension, and even these are quite fragmented. While it is clear that Christ has three shapes in NHC II, there is a lacuna hiding what the first one is. The second 'νοσ' and third 'ῥαλ' are visible. BG lists two forms, 'αλογ' and 'ῥῆλο.' Scholars working with *Ap. John* face two questions – is there a third form in BG, and if the first and second form is 'youth' and the second is 'old man' why does NHC II have 'slave' as the third form? Through insights from New Philology and fan fiction theory, I will discuss previously suggested restorations and emendations to this passage and offer new suggestions.

## Rouxpetel, Camille & Youssef, Youhanna

### Copts and Jerusalem: new sources, new questions

This paper examines the relationship between the Copts and Jerusalem during the Mamluk period, a topic that has received limited scholarly attention. Christian communities under Mamluk rule have generally been overlooked, and *The History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* offers little information on the subject. The available patriarchal biographies are notably terse, often limited to a few lines noting a prelate's consecration, death, and burial place. Despite the valuable analytical framework offered by the concept of the "Islamicate world," most scholars focusing on the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods have tended to treat indigenous Christian communities as peripheral, primarily studying them within the context of their status as *dhimmī* minorities under Islamic rule.

In the first half of the thirteenth century, the Coptic and Syriac patriarchs became embroiled in a diplomatic conflict concerning the election of the metropolitan of the Ethiopian Church. Newly identified Islamic legal documents preserved in the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem shed light on the relationship between the Coptic and Ethiopian communities in Jerusalem at the transition from the Ayyubid to the Mamluk period. When considered alongside several unpublished manuscripts from the Church of the Virgin Mary's collection in Hārat Zuwayla, which focus on the ordination of the Coptic metropolitan of Jerusalem, as well as a doxology for the "Bishop" of Jerusalem, these sources significantly enhance our understanding of the interactions among the Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syriac communities in Jerusalem between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.

## Saed, Cherubim

### **Bridging an ancient faith and modern mission. Bishop Samuel as a catalyst for renewal in the Coptic Orthodox Church**

How does a centuries-old faith remain alive in a rapidly changing world? This study explores this profound question through the life and work of the late Bishop Samuel, Bishop of Ecumenical and Social Services for the Coptic Orthodox Church. More than just a church leader, Bishop Samuel was a shepherd who worked to bridge the ancient truths of his faith with the urgent needs of the modern human experience.

He believed that a renewed church could not be found by looking backward, but by courageously living out its timeless calling in new and compassionate ways.

Through his example, we see that true transformation doesn't mean abandoning tradition; it means letting that tradition come alive through service, dialogue, and a profound love for humanity.

Bishop Samuel's legacy offers a powerful blueprint for how a church can honor its past while dynamically serving the present.

## Salib, Fr Boules Gamil Banoub

### **Summary of the manuscripts**

Summary of the manuscripts (archaeological & hand written) written in the two languages Coptic & Arabic, between the centuries 17 & 18, those who are present in the virgin St. Mary church Sheblanga – Egypt.

### **Short brief about the church**

- ❖ Mentioned in the "Tawfik plans" for Aly Basha Moubarak 1899
- ❖ The church was following the Jerusalem throne in the era of the Bishop Timothy (Bishop of Jerusalem) in 1896 (from the Monastery of Saint Anthony) then now follows the Diocese of Qalyubia and Giza in the era of Bishop Metaoes

### **The church manuscripts (50 manuscripts)**

The church of Sheblanga owes a group of manuscripts that are hand written & are classified as follows:

- 1) Liturgical Service Books (Katamarsat) that used to help in the different prayers in the

different annual occasions.

2) Explanation books & books of praise and glorification & books stories of the ancient holy fathers (holy sermons).

3) Sermons, sayings, quotes and interpretations of the introductions of the four Bibles.

4) Hand written letter sent from Bishop of Jerusalem throne to church of Sheblanga to alert on pastoral matters.

## **Samuel, Emad Adel Abraham**

### **The history of monasticism and Christianity in the city of Esna in Luxor through recent discoveries at the Temple of Khnum in Luxor**

Esna is a city with a rich cultural and economic history before the advent of Christianity in Egypt. Due to its agricultural and commercial activities, it was more populated than Luxor. For this reason, many Christian and monastic communities emerged there from the 4th century AD, such as the Monastery of Anba Mattaous El-Fakhoury in Asfun, Esna, the Monastery of the Martyrs, west of Esna, in the Esna quarries, Monasticism in Wadi Al-Dababiya Nature Reserve in Esna, the Church of Mother Dolagi, the Shrine of the Three Peasant Martyrs, and finally the Basilica churches discovered in the courtyard of the Temple of Khnum, which indicate the strong spread of Christianity and monasticism in Esna since the 4th century AD. They provide us with a lot of historical information about the spread of Christianity and monastic communities in Esna and most of the commercial activities carried out by the monks in the monasteries of Esna. Esna remained the seat of the bishop until the 20th century AD, and both Luxor and Aswan were affiliated with it. This is evidence of the spread of Christianity among its population more than the cities surrounding Esna, and it also indicates the geographical and economic importance of Esna.

## **Sandmeier, Katharina**

### **τῆς χειρὸς vs. τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ – On the trail of Greek source text(s) of the Coptic New Testament**

The project “Novum Testamentum Graecum – Editio Critica Maior” launched at the Institute for New Testament Textual Research in Münster, Germany in 2007 has undertaken the task “to research the textual history of the New Testament and to reconstruct its Greek initial text on the basis of the entire manuscript tradition, the early translations and patristic citations” ([http://egora.uni-muenster.de/intf/index\\_en.shtml](http://egora.uni-muenster.de/intf/index_en.shtml)), preparing a new edition of the entire Greek New Testament. The volumes of the Catholic Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of Mark were published in Münster in 2013 (2nd, revised edition), 2017 and 2021 respectively. The Gospel of Matthew is close to publication (summer 2026).

Besides Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic and Gothic, the Coptic tradition is one of the early versions that are systematically included in the apparatus. This presentation will give an introduction to the rules and guidelines that are followed in the ECM when assigning the Coptic tradition to the various variants of the apparatus, filtering out the most likely Greek source texts. In the second part of the paper, an example from the Gospel of John will be presented to show how translators differently understood corresponding passages in a Greek-Coptic bilingual manuscript.

## Sandmeier, Katharina

### Towards a Critical Edition of the Fayyumic Gospel of Matthew

**Team: in collaboration with Ivan Miroshnikov**

The Gospel of Matthew is attested in more than 150 Sahidic manuscripts. In contrast, only 23 manuscripts (or fragments thereof) of its Fayyumic tradition are known, attesting 257 verses, or 23.9 %, of the Gospel. Of these 23 witnesses most have been published (some only in parts), though in multiple cases the editions are outdated. 10 are entirely untouched. This presentation will introduce the current state of research on the Fayyumic Gospel and present the findings (codicology-wise as well as text-wise) that have come up during the work towards a critical edition of the Fayyumic tradition of the Gospel.

## Sanzo, Joseph

### The Bible as Magical Tradition: Critical Reflections on the “Biblical” Texts on Amulets from Late Antique Egypt

My paper will critically examine the intersection of what we might regard as biblical texts, ancient magic, and our analytical taxonomies. I will especially attend to the so-called “Christian amulets” from late antique Egypt. I will argue that many of the artifacts that we might be tempted to understand as citing or referencing the Bible – or the liturgy, for that matter – in fact reflect the assimilation of the biblical/liturgical traditions into apotropaic and curative contexts: what we might call a “magical tradition” proper. In other words, we are witnessing the engagement with a “tradition” based on prior perceived successes (and not exclusively or even at all based on its original narrative context or on its liturgical performance). As part of this analysis, I will reflect on the notion of precedent or paradigm in magical *historiolae*, placing the magical evidence into dialogue with selected monastic sources (e.g., the *Coptic Life of Aaron*).

## Satzinger, Helmut

### The Twin Vowels of Sahidic (etc.)

“In the Sahidic dialect, we encounter Coptic ⲁⲁ, ⲉⲉ, ⲏⲏ, ⲟⲟ, and ⲡⲡ ... I argue that they express long vowels.” (Peust *phonology* 206). Until then, the leading opinion was that this spelling expressed a vowel, followed by a glottal stop. This is an assumption that met with some difficulties. Now this new interpretation has been forwarded: the doubling of vowel signs, for expressing a duration of the vowel articulation. But it is hardly with any precedent in antiquity (i.e. before German, Finnish, Estonian, etc.), in particular in any variety of the Greek script, nor in any script that is derived from the Greek.<sup>12</sup> If we stick to the traditional opinion, that the pairs of vowel signs (including ouou) express the articulation of the vowel combined

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<sup>12</sup> An exception is Oscan, in the 4th to 2nd centuries; though the doubling was not employed systematically. Rome made use of it.

with some kind of glottal stop. This complex sound could be compared with the diphthongs au, aei, etc.: a velarised vowel, a palatalised vowel, and eventually a glottalised vowel.

## Sawy, Mona

### A Philological Approach to View: Syntax in Coptic Medical Prescriptions

The examination of a specific category of Coptic scientific texts (medical, magico-medical, and chemical) from early 4th century to early 11th century CE, will be the main focus of this study, specifically word order as it relates to syntax. Using a philological framework, we can better understand these "utilitarian" (practical) texts and how their grammatical structure was influenced by their utilitarian nature; this includes the application of practical function in text composition.

Given the typical syntactic structure of the Coptic "Recipe," which consists of a Rubric (Indication), Ingredients (Materia Medica), Instruction (Preparation/Application), and Prognosis, this study will demonstrate how the grammatical and semantic characteristics of various sentence elements contribute to establishing the correct word order in Sahidic Coptic. The analysis is centered on the "Instruction" of the "Recipe" and will explore how the structure of the instruction (ordering of imperative verbs, direct objects, and adverbial adjuncts of action) differs between ingredients that are classified as either "heavy" or "light." By using examples of when and how a medical practitioner used medical science and the use of magical ritual to effect a cure, the paper will identify and describe how the grammatical structure of Coptic medical prescriptions provides information about the processes involved in the composition of the medical text.

## Scarlassara, Michele

### "Spells for a Good Singing Voice": Magic, Liturgy, Divination, and Monastic Traditions in Late Antique Egypt

This paper explores a cluster of late antique Coptic magical papyri – BL MS Or. 6794, P. Berlin 8318, and PCM 1 17 – commonly referred to in scholarship as "spells for a good singing voice." Based on detailed analysis of the discursive practices, gestures, and material media employed in their ritual procedures, I argue that these texts point to a monastic scribal milieu of origin. References to visionary-apocalyptic motifs, as well as to preparatory acts designed to facilitate communion with divine intermediaries, support this claim. The ritual mechanics of these spells hinge on the invocation of celestial beings upon a chalice infused with a concoction of potent substances (e.g., water, oil, honey). This ritual dynamic bears striking affinities to the Eucharistic *epiclesis*, the central prayer of the Christian liturgy, while also drawing upon ritual strategies operative in the Graeco-Egyptian "rituals of apparition." The latter involves summoning supernatural intermediaries to assist practitioners in obtaining certain benefits, either through human intermediaries or material media such as lamps, bowls, or similar vessel. On these grounds, the paper argues that the "spells for a good singing voice" reflect the ritual creativity of monastic ritual experts that adroitly navigated the intersections of magic and liturgy, adapting elements of the Eucharistic *epiclesis* to pre-existing ritual frameworks concerned with divine manifestation. By situating these spells within the

broader cultural landscape of Egyptian monasticism, the paper ultimately aims to contribute to broader discussions on the complex interplay between liturgy and magic in Late Antiquity.

## Scharfenberger, Philipp

### The “chapel” J11.3 on the Gebel Asyut al-gharbi

Approximately 1 km southwest of Asyut rises the desert mountain Gebel Asyut al-gharbi, which has been used by humans since at least the fourth millennium BCE. During Late Antiquity, Christians settled there, reused pharaonic rock-cut tombs, and established monasteries, some of which remained in use until the fifteenth century. Today, only ruins of these Christian structures survive.

One such structure is J11.3, a rock-cut tomb reused by Christians and identified as a “chapel” by Clédat in 1908. It preserves remains of what was once a richly painted decorative program consisting of images and inscriptions, described and edited – at varying levels of detail – by Clédat and Lefebvre in the early twentieth century. These editions received little scholarly attention in the subsequent century, and J11.3 became buried by sand. Only through the work of the *Asyut Project* were the remains of J11.3 re-exposed during the campaigns of 2004, 2016, and 2017.

In recent years, the structure has been subject to renewed archaeological documentation. This paper presents the results of this reassessment, provides an overview of the decorative program of J11.3, including its inscriptions, and discusses the dating and function of the structure.

## Schenke, Gesa

### Fourth Century Businesswomen of the Dakhleh Oasis

Women like Maria, Parthene and Sophia known through 4<sup>th</sup> century Greek and Coptic papyrus documents and wooden tablets, excavated in building 3 in the village of Kellis, were active Roman citizens of the Dakhleh Oasis. They acted as money lenders, managers of property, textile production, trade and the transport of goods, occasionally organized the acquisition of medicine and writing material, and could be called to supply a public witness account to crimes committed in the area. This paper will present a study of the abundant documentary evidence from Kellis regarding female leadership roles in Egyptian communities during the Late Roman Empire.

## Schlehofer, Jenny

### Late Antique re-use of Roman-era tomb house GB 87 in Tuna el-Gebel – Burials above burials

The Petosiris Necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel was founded in the Ptolemaic period. Starting with exclusive temple tombs, the necropolis spread over a large area during the Roman period with a city-like complex. The necropolis was abandoned at the end of the 3rd century CE. However, this necropolis was re-used in Late Antiquity with three different modes of utilisation: 1) a massive looting of limestone blocks of tomb buildings, 2) a profane re-use of tomb houses as storage rooms and 3) a subsequent re-use of tomb buildings again for burials.

In 2023, we excavated tomb building 87, which was built in Roman times. Inside this tomb building we found a total of 92 mummies, some of them were laid down on the floors, but most of them were laid down underneath the floors side by side, but also stacked on top of each other.

Some of the deceased were provided with grave goods – also some coins –, and a few were wrapped in painted shrouds. These coins confirm that the burials took place in Late Antiquity and are therefore the first Late Antique burials that could be identified in the necropolis of Petosiris.

## **Schrauder, Julienne**

### **Eine Gruppe koptischer Papierhandschriften in der Heidelberger Papyrussammlung – ein Zwischenfazit**

In der Papyrussammlung Heidelberg befindet sich eine Gruppe von mehreren späten Handschriften aus Hadernpapier, deren primärer Inhalt Gesangstext sind. Die Entstehung der Manuskripte lässt sich grob in die Osmanische Zeit Ägyptens (europäisch: Neuzeit) verorten, ihre genaue Herkunft innerhalb Ägyptens ist unbekannt. Im Rahmen eines in der Endphase befindlichen Promotionsprojektes werden sie derzeit sowohl ediert als auch auf spezifische Fragestellungen wie Textvarianz und Gestaltungselemente untersucht. Im Rahmen des Vortrags sollen die bisherigen Ergebnisse vorgestellt werden.

## **Schrauder, Julienne**

### **Numerian: On the role of a Roman Emperor in the Coptic synaxarium**

Despite his short and seemingly rather unremarkable reign of only a few months, the Third century Roman Emperor Numerian can be found in various instances throughout the Coptic synaxarium as a focal point of a whole cluster of martyrs, whilst not being one himself. His role is also noticeably different from other Christian traditions where he tends to be shown as a persecutor and/or firmly non-Christian. This paper aims to show both the ‘historical’ Numerian and to compare the (later) Christian traditions including him. A special focus is the question of how and why the Coptic tradition adopted him in the distinct way it did.

## **Schroeder, Caroline & Zeldes, Amir**

### ***Coptic Scriptorium: Searching Digital Texts and Using Tools***

In this tutorial we will present the Coptic Scriptorium project’s tools for working with linguistically analyzed Sahidic and Bohairic Coptic data. We will go over reading and searching in corpora online, including works such as saints’ lives, sermons, letters and martyrologies, which are also linked to the Coptic Dictionary Online. As part of the tutorial, we will learn how to use ANNIS Query Language (AQL) to formulate and link to complex queries on word forms as they are spelled in manuscripts, normalized forms, dictionary forms, as well as part of speech, syntactic function and entity type information for finding linguistic patterns. Time permitting, we will also give a high-level introduction to the available automatic linguistic analysis tools, which participants can use via a Web interface in order to automatically segment and analyze their own Coptic data.

**Please bring a laptop with internet access.**

## **Schroeder, Caroline & Wagner, Nicholas & Zeldes, Amir**

### **A Comparative Overuse-Underuse Analysis of Sahidic and Bohairic Coptic Morphosyntax**

Recent advances in the detailed description of Bohairic Coptic (Müller 2021) have substantially improved our understanding of qualitative aspects of Bohairic grammar. However, current approaches to dialectology (Funk 1988) going back to the Labovian sociolinguistic dialectology (Labov 1972, Wieling et al. 2011) highlight quantitative differences, which coalesce around a small core of grammaticalized qualitative differences. In other words, the majority of constructions in one dialect are also possible in another, but with differing probabilities, usage and characteristic environments.

In this paper we target the less well understood quantitative differences between Sahidic and Bohairic (following descriptive traditions from Layton 2011, Müller 2021), focusing on comparative underuse and overuse of morphosyntactic categories. In order to compare dialects based on such categories, we require data annotated with the same set of labels for parts of speech and grammatical functions, for which we leverage the newly released syntactically analyzed Bohairic Universal Dependencies treebank (Zeldes et al. 2025) and the earlier Sahidic treebank (Zeldes & Abrams 2018). Our results show a range of differences, including a higher likelihood for repetition and dislocation of syntactic arguments in Bohairic (e.g. more postponed subjects with  $\text{nx}\epsilon$  versus  $\text{n}\sigma\text{1}$ ), preference for indirect object possessives in Sahidic and more.

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## Schwarzer, Julia

### The Road (not) taken – Julian, “Infidel” Rule, and Coptic Identity Formation

The reign of the pagan emperor Julian (r. 361–363) shook up a Roman Empire governed by supporters of the Christian faith ever since Constantine’s final victory over his rivals. During his short reign, Julian tried to reestablish pagan cults, while also suppressing Christian intellectual life and launching a war against the Persian empire. The acts, writings, and personality of the emperor provoked strong reactions by his contemporaries and continue to inspire a myriad of scholarly publications.

In recent years, scholarship has begun addressing not only contemporaneous Christian reactions but also increasingly focused on later Christian memories of Julian. Yet despite many helpful publications, his treatment beyond the Greek and Latin traditions is still surprisingly under-researched.

Departing from the Coptic Church History (CCH), this contribution gives a first survey of the reception of Julian in Coptic sources. It argues that Julian increasingly became a negative foil which helped early Coptic communities negotiate contemporary experiences of “infidel” rule – be it by Chalcedonian emperors or Muslim governors. Studying the Coptic reception of Julian provides precious insights into identity formation processes of Coptic communities. It also critically enhances our understanding of Coptic literature in its own right.

## Secco, Vittorio

### Editing the So-Called *Epistula Apostolorum*: Methodology and Ecdotic Praxis

This contribution presents the methodological framework and ecdotic practice adopted for a new critical edition of the so-called *Epistula Apostolorum*, an early Christian apocryphal writing preserved in a complex and fragmentary multilingual tradition. Although it was originally composed in Greek, probably in the second half of the second century, the work survives in a Latin palimpsest fragment (late fifth century), an Achmimic Coptic witness (late fourth century), and a later but extensive Gəʿəz transmission (fourteenth–twentieth centuries), each reflecting different stages of reception and translation from a lost Greek *Vorlage*. Rather than privileging a single linguistic witness, the underlying premise of the edition proceeds from a comparative and stratified approach, treating each version as a historically meaningful instantiation of the text. Particular attention is devoted to the reconstruction of lacunae in the Coptic witness and to the evaluation of translation techniques, with constant reference to the Ethiopic tradition. By reflecting on concrete editorial decisions, this study aims to illustrate both the challenges and the heuristic potential of editing a work that stands at the crossroads of apocryphal literature, early Christian exegesis, and the history of biblical reception across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

## Sedra, Fr Polos Ramzi

### Iconography of the Burning Bush in the Codex Vaticanus Copticus 1 Manuscript (66r and 97r): A Study in Visual Symbolism and its Connection to the Theology of the Incarnation

The Codex Vaticanus Copticus 1 (Vat. Copt.1) serves as a critical bridge between textual scripture and liturgical theology, where the scribe utilizes elements such as the "burning bush", and the "removed sandals" of Moses to articulate a sophisticated Theology of Presence. This research investigates the iconography of the Coptic manuscript Vat. Copt.1 (9th century), focusing specifically on its only two extant miniatures:

- 1) the Virgin Mary and Child (Theotokos) on folio 66r.
- 2) Moses and the Burning Bush on folio 97r.

The presence of only these two icons reflects an intense theological focus by the scribe on the doctrine of the Incarnation, to the exclusion of other biblical narratives. By employing a comparative iconographic analysis, this study explores how these visual representations function as a "visual exegesis" of the Book of Exodus. The study provides a translation of the Coptic text found on the reverse side of the image on folio 66r, the text is not translated into a modern language. The paper argues that the placement of these images within the Pentateuch is not merely decorative but deeply rooted in Coptic Typology. The Burning Bush, as witnessed by Moses, is analyzed as the primary prefiguration of the Incarnation symbolizing the Virgin Mary, who contained the fire of Divinity without being consumed. Furthermore, the study examines the transition from the "shadow" of the Old Testament (the Bush) to the "reality" of the New Testament (the Theotokos), as depicted through the stylistic and symbolic language of medieval Coptic art.

## Seifeldeen, Marwa

### Translation and Social Context: A Sociolinguistic Reading of the Chapter on Marriage in the Arabic *al-Majmūʿ al-Ṣafawī* and the Geʿez *Fəṭḥa Nagašt* (Law of the Kings)

This paper explores how the chapter on marriage from the Arabic *al-Majmūʿ al-Ṣafawī* was translated into Geʿez in the *Fəṭḥa Nagašt* (Law of the Kings), using a sociolinguistic perspective. Rather than treating translation as a simple transfer of words, the study considers it a living process in which legal and social meanings are reshaped according to the cultural, religious, and institutional context of the target community.

Drawing on historical sociolinguistics and functional approaches to translation, the paper examines how key legal norms-such as the marriage contract, guardianship, dowry, and divorce-are reorganised and expressed in the Geʿez text. Selected passages from both works are analysed comparatively, considering structure, lexical meaning, and pragmatic use. The findings highlight notable shifts in wording and emphasis, reflecting different understandings of marriage in the Arabic-Christian and Ethiopian Christian contexts. The study shows that legal translation is never neutral: it is a social practice that actively reshapes

institutions like marriage, influencing how they are understood and enacted in the receiving society.

## Serrati, Francesco

### From Greek Theory to Coptic Practice: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Fumigation and Fomentation Recipes of *C.Pharm.Copt.*

The recent publication of Anne Grons' *Medizinische Rezepttexte in Koptischer Sprache* (*C.Pharm.Copt.*, DeGruyter 2025) provides a vital foundation for systematically evaluating Coptic pharmacology. This communication investigates two specific modes of administration within this newly edited *corpus*: fumigation and fomentation. Attested since the Pharaonic period, these external treatments offer unique insights into the intersection of therapeutic efficacy and material realities of Late Antique Egypt.

The analysis focuses on the transmission of knowledge from Classical Greek medicine into the Coptic milieu, specifically examining patterns of continuity and discontinuity. By scrutinizing the lexical and technical descriptions of these procedures, this study explores how Coptic terminology correlates with Greek vocabulary, while highlighting divergences in ingredient selection. This communication argues that the recipes in *C.Pharm.Copt.* reveal a dynamic process of selection and adaptation: rather than serving as mere copies of Hippocratic or Galenic prototypes, these texts demonstrate how Coptic practitioners curated Classical medical knowledge to suit the specific environmental and social context of Christian Egypt.

## Shehata, Kerollos Lamey

### Ecclesiology as Lived Reality in the Coptic Orthodox Church: Historical Foundations and Ethnographic Expressions

This paper explores ecclesiology in the Coptic Orthodox Church as a lived and embodied reality, examined through an integrated historical and ethnographic framework. While Coptic ecclesiology has traditionally been studied through doctrinal texts, patristic theology, and canonical sources, this study argues that such approaches remain incomplete without attention to how ecclesial theology is experienced and practiced within contemporary Coptic communities.

The research traces central ecclesiological themes – such as the nature of the Church, episcopal authority, sacramental life, and communal worship – from their patristic and canonical foundations to their concrete expression in parish life. Drawing on ethnographic observations of liturgical participation, parish organization, and communal religious practices, the paper highlights the dynamic interaction between theological tradition and lived faith.

By situating ecclesiology within everyday religious experience, the study demonstrates how the Coptic Church maintains theological continuity while responding to changing social and cultural contexts. The paper contends that ethnography does not dilute doctrinal theology but rather deepens its interpretation by revealing how ecclesial identity is formed, transmitted, and sustained in practice.

This interdisciplinary approach contributes to contemporary scholarship in Coptic studies and Eastern Christian theology, offering a model for integrating historical theology with ethnographic methodology in the study of ecclesiology.

## Shenouda, Fr John

### The Fleeing Patriarch: Pope Matthew the Great and the Poor

This dissertation offers a critical, comprehensive study of Pope Matthew the First (1336–1408). Within the religious and political milieu of Mamluk Egypt, this research examines how his ascetic formation and practised humility shaped Coptic leadership and identity. The thesis is built on the argument that Matthew’s humility, self-denial, voluntary poverty, and repeated flights from honour to avoid vainglory constituted his sanctity and generated spiritual authority. Consequently, he maintained Coptic communal resilience under Mamluk rule.

Methodologically, the thesis integrates historical and literary analysis of Coptic and Ethiopic hagiographies, liturgical texts, and previously untranslated Arabic materials. Chapter 1 considers the authorship, dating, and rhetorical strategies of Matthew’s life to show how narratives can construct sanctity and authority. Chapter 2 reconstructs how he came to live an ascetic life with attention given to the Abū Fānā and its Pachomian legacies. Chapter 3 analyses humility in practice as an instrument of authority in becoming holy. Chapter 4 situates Matthew within networks of sanctity (notably Abba Rueiss, Abba Markos al-Anṭūnī, and Fr Ibrahim al-Fānī). Chapter 5 analyses Matthew’s spiritual authority and power within conditions of persecution. Chapter 6 discusses his burial at Khandaq and posthumous veneration as the liturgical afterlife of authority.

The study reframes Matthew as both “the Great” and “the Poor”, showing how collaborative holiness and ascetic discipline redefined patriarchal leadership and continue to inform Coptic ecclesial memory and practice.

## Siuda, Tamara

### Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia (CCE) 2012–2026: from eight volumes to an expanding digital database

**Team: Gawdat Gabra, Tammi J. Schneider, Hany N. Takla, Karen J. Torjesen, Saad Michael Saad, Tamara L. Siuda, and Mena J. Basta**

The Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia (CCE), hosted by Claremont Graduate University (CGU) since 2012, is one of Coptic Studies’ most significant digital infrastructures. As a database including 2,145 entries combining the entire eight-volume *The Coptic Encyclopedia* (1991) and a growing body of born-digital entries, it enables research, supports pedagogy, and provides a platform for future contributions.

This paper offers multidimensional assessment of CCE’s success, via its scholarly value, expanding reach, and evolving role in the digital humanities. With about 1.4 million views during 2012–2025, key statistics illuminate usage patterns and their chronological and topical distribution. These indicators reveal how academic engagement and public interest in Coptic Studies is expanding. Usage often spikes with global events, archaeological

discoveries, manuscript auctions, or academic cycles, and offers a unique lens on how interest in Coptic Studies resonates internationally.

The CCE database is also being modernized. Hyperlinking cross-references within entries – a current project focus due to digitized versions of the 1991 entries lacking it – integrates topics and facilitates navigation between complex historical, linguistic, and archaeological material.

Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia is an engine of scholarly advancement: a treasure for humanity whose open-access model democratizes knowledge and confirms CCE's role as a resource for Coptic studies.

## Siuda, Tamara

### St. Salib (Pistavros) and St. Sidhom Bishay: Coptic Martyrs in Sacred and Secular History

Coptic martyrology serves as the sacred history of the Coptic Church, and sometimes, it also illuminates secular Coptic history. This paper examines the collected martyrologies of St. Salib or Pistavros (d. 29 November, 1512/3 Khoiak) and St. Sidhom Bishay (d. 25 March, 1844/17 Baramhat). Despite three centuries between the martyrs' deaths, which roughly bookend Ottoman rule in Egypt, there are significant similarities in their martyrdom narratives. Both were Copts engaging with the Ottoman government. Both were condemned for alleged blasphemy, publicly paraded before their executions, and subsequently subjected to death by burning.

Beyond these narrative elements, the martyrdoms of Salib and Sidhom Bishay offer important details about Coptic life in Ottoman Egypt, and the precarious relationships between dhimmis and their Ottoman-dominated state. The two martyrdoms demonstrate the difficulty of maintaining Coptic identity, faith, and culture in a state where this is not only difficult but potentially illegal. Further, they illustrate the complexity of Coptic martyrological narratives during times in Egypt's history where it was no longer safe to discuss government as the oppressor in ways the earliest Coptic martyrologies had been free to explore.

## Skarżyńska, Magdalena

### Under the Wings of the Archangel: Conservation of the Wall Paintings at Naqlun (Fayum Oasis, Egypt)

**Presented *in absentia* by D. Dzierzbicka**

The Church of the Archangel Gabriel at Naqlun preserves the only known in situ ensemble of Coptic wall paintings in the Fayum Oasis. The paintings are attributed to the 8th and 11th centuries and represent a rare group of medieval a secco mural decorations preserved within a living monastic complex.

The paper presents the conservation project *Under the Wings of an Archangel*, carried out by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, within the scope of a grant by the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE). The project focuses on the conservation–restoration of the most endangered parts of the painted decoration, particularly the extensive compositions in the narthex, combined with preventive

conservation of selected areas in the naos and sanctuary carried out in a functioning monastic church.

A central assumption of the project is that conservation decisions are based on detailed examination of the preserved material. The programme is built around graphic documentation, condition mapping, and identification of deterioration processes. Treatments are then selected individually for each zone and include controlled surface cleaning, consolidation of weakened paint layers, under-plaster injections to restore adhesion between original plaster and masonry, filling of voids, and stabilisation of fragile plaster edges.

## Speransky, Nina

### Modal auxiliaries in Sahidic

Coptic modality is relatively well described inasmuch as it is encoded in the verbal conjugation system by means of dedicated TAM markers. On the other hand, modal verbs and auxiliaries are still treated in grammars as lexical units. The present work provides a structural description of two Sahidic modal auxiliaries, *čpi* ‘must’ and *(e)š* ‘can’. Comparing *čpi* with other necessity-coding elements, I show that it serves to express ontological necessity, while deontic necessity is expressed via the TAM system (jussive, optative, imperative) or the impersonal verboid *šše*, and epistemic necessity has no formalized expression.

I further examine three Coptic constructions expressing the modal meaning ‘can, be able to’: *(e)š*, *ešcmcom*, and *ouncom mmo=*. I show that the latter construction is used in contexts where the eventive conjugation is unavailable, namely, for present-tense generic or actual predication, and thus complements the distribution of the two verbs. *Eš* and *ešcmcom* pattern as auxiliary verbs in the eventive conjugation. Semantically, *ešcmcom* is closer to expressing physical ability (participant-internal modality, in terms of [van der Auwera & Plungian 1998]), whereas negated forms of the simple *eš* typically convey ontological or deontic impossibility.

I also propose a redefinition of the syntactic positioning of *(e)š*, which, according to Layton (2011), varies depending on whether the subject is personal or non-personal. I argue that the auxiliary is more adequately described as a clitic: with personal pronoun subjects it immediately precedes the infinitive, whereas with nominal subjects (nouns, demonstratives, or indefinite pronouns) it can either precede the infinitive or adjoin the conjugation base or the (focal) converter, e.g.:

ⲛⲛⲉⲗⲁⲁⲓ ⲛⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲱⲫⲑⲟⲛⲉⲓ ⲉⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲛⲟⲩⲥⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ (Leipoldt 1913, 121:19)

ⲛⲛⲉⲗⲁⲁⲓ ⲛⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲱⲫⲑⲟⲛⲉⲓ ⲉⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲛⲟⲩⲥⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ (Leipoldt 1913, 60:13)

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## Suciu, Alin

### Where Was the Scriptorium? Rethinking Book Production at the Monastery of Shenoute in Light of Colophons and Comparative Evidence

Thus far, the archaeological evidence from the Monastery of Shenoute has failed to identify a scriptorium. However, despite the lack of material remains, this monastic settlement probably possessed an area dedicated to book production. For example, colophons from the monastery refer to a "House of the Scribes" and to individuals responsible for overseeing it, indicating an organized scribal milieu. Rather than being confined to a single, specially built room, book production was likely integrated into a monastic system of "houses," each functioning as both a residence for monks and a workshop. Comparative evidence from other Egyptian monasteries supports this interpretation. The "House of the Scribes" should therefore be understood not as a scriptorium in the later Latin medieval sense, but as a flexible and integrated space for copying, storing, and possibly binding manuscripts.

## Szymanska, Agnieszka

### Envisioning a Righteous Lineage: Monastic Genealogies and Apocalyptic Visions in Cell 42 at the Monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit, Egypt

The south wall of Cell 42 at the Monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit, Egypt, featured painted representations of Adam, Abel, and Enoch. This biblical lineage evokes Abraham's apocalyptic visions, which the patriarch witnessed during his tour of paradise, according to a story preserved in the *Testament of Abraham*. In this narrative, Adam sits enthroned outside the gates of heaven, Abel judges the souls, and Enoch writes down their sins and good deeds. In the painting from Cell 42, Enoch holds a pen and the Book of Life, emphasizing his identity as the scribe of righteousness.

The theme of righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) looms large in the *Testament of Abraham* and remains a vital concern in monastic sources as well. For example, Shenoute draws a link between righteousness and lineage: "The offspring of our fathers are those of us who will ever effect righteousness." The biblical genealogy of Cell 42 is part of a broader pattern of ascetic identity formation, where monastics claim descent from the Hebrew prophets and other exemplars. Tracing a righteous lineage is a central concern in monastic paintings and texts, as demonstrated by Elizabeth S. Bolman, Thelma K. Thomas, and Caroline T. Schroeder. Cell 42, however, blends ascetic genealogies and apocalyptic visions, transforming the monastic oratory into a hall of judgment.

## **Tatz, Sabrina**

### **Monastic burials in Context**

Late antique and early Islamic burial practices have rarely been examined in terms of social differentiation. This paper explores the development of monastic burial practices, with a focus on the necropolis of the Paulos monastery in Western Thebes, Upper Egypt. The spatial and material patterns of burials suggest internal social hierarchies within the monastic community. By situating these findings within broader Egyptian mortuary traditions, this paper not only re-evaluates assumptions about monastic burials but also raises questions about the interplay of social identity, ritual practice, and community organization in late antique and early Islamic contexts.

## **Tawadrous, Elkomos Athanasious**

### **The ancient baptismal fonts on the Coptic Orthodox Church from the fourth century to the eighth century**

With the issuance of the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, during the reign of Emperor Constantine, Christianity was officially recognized, so Christians were permitted to freely worship. The number of people who believed in Christianity increased, which led to constructing churches, and establishing a dedicated space, called chamber, for baptismal rites and rituals. Baptism holds a significant and important place in the Christian faith owing to its necessity for salvation, and also being the gateway to the Holy Sacraments. The baptism chamber contained a baptismal font in which the convert to Christianity is baptized.

In this research paper, we will discuss the ancient baptismal fonts of the Coptic Orthodox baptism in Egypt from the 4th to the 8th centuries.

The baptismal font is considered the most important and oldest water basin in the church, and it is also an important architectural element in it.

## **Ten Kate, Albert**

### **Gleanings from Early Manuscripts of the Coptic Versions of the Gospel of John**

The older Coptic manuscripts of the Gospel contain many differences between them. Very many are slight at first sight, but they reveal a different interpretation. So, there are the conjunctions: they are modified, inserted or omitted... Also, the naming of God as "Father" underwent variations. Most striking however are the longer insertions or omissions. All these differences will be compared with the Greek and the other Old Versions of this Gospel. Its results give a clear picture of the development of the Coptic textual transmission of the Gospel: from relatively free (Bohairic Papyrus Bodmer) to closer to the Greek (Old-Sahidic and Fayumic).

## Therrien, Philippe

### Philological Challenges of a New Edition and French Translation of the Long Recension of the *Secret Book of John* (NH II, 1; IV, 1)

This contribution stems from my current research project, which aims to produce a new edition and French translation of the long version of the *Secret Book of John* (NH II,1; IV,1), accompanied by an introduction and commentary. One of my goals is to identify and explain the text's specificities, in relation to the short version and other gnostic treatises. To achieve this, this work must be grounded in a new diplomatic edition of the *Secret Book of John* from Codex II, taking into account previous editions (Krause and Labib 1962; Giversen 1963; Wisse and Waldstein 1995) as well as recent progress in the field of Coptic and Gnostic studies. Since the first pages of the Codex II are badly damaged, the first issue is determining how the other witnesses (Codices III, IV, and BG) should be used to reconstruct lost passages. In order to preserve the specificity of the Codex II version, it is essential to avoid importing foreign meanings. Then, with the help of a comparison between all the witnesses, it becomes possible to bring to light the coherence and goals of the Codex II version.

## Timbie, Janet

### The Bohairic Version of the Letters between Peter Mongus and Acacius: Style and Purpose

The letters exchanged by Peter Mongus, patriarch of Alexandria, and Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, are preserved in Bohairic in Vatican Copt. 62: eight letters from Peter and six from Acacius. They received little attention after their publication by Amélineau (1888), in which he criticized the earlier work of Revillout (1887). Amélineau thought the letters were fake; Revillout thought they were authentic. With the publication of *Grammatik des Bohairischen* by Matthias Müller (2021), which includes a selection of letters in the readings section, and his 2012 conference paper, the letters may draw more attention. Details of the Bohairic text suggest that it is translated from Greek, with some degree of intermediary influence from Sahidic (as Müller noted). By focusing on the content and style of these letters, especially in contrast with the clearly authentic letters of Peter to Fravitta of Constantinople, they stand out as an example of late antique propaganda, meant to support Peter in his conflict with Egyptian "separatists." The edited version of the *henotikon* in Peter's letter six will be compared to the version preserved in Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History*, focusing on the Bohairic translation of several key theological terms.

## Toda, Satoshi

### Reexamining the Pachomian dossier for the last time

Although during these decades Coptic studies have made significant progresses in many directions, a history of Coptic literature still remains to be written. This fact is linked with the problem of determining, especially in early stages of the Coptic literary history, which works are translations from another language (notably Greek), and which ones can be said to have been written originally in Coptic. In this context is notorious the controversy surrounding the

so-called Pachomian dossier, which lasts more than a century and yet is a matter of dispute. To put it differently, although we are certain that Pachomius used the Coptic language only, the opinion is still divided between those who think that the Life of Pachomius was originally written in Greek and those who favor the Coptic original of the Life. The author of this paper has repeatedly tackled with this problem, e.g. in an international Coptic congress held in Claremont in 2016, but so far been unsuccessful in showing a clear-cut solution. However, convinced that this problem is a key issue in not only the Coptic literary history but also Coptic studies at large, he wishes to try once again to deal with the problem, including a detailed examination of L.-Th. Lefort's position, one of the major figure who was passionately in favor of the Coptic original of the Pachomian dossier.

## **Toft, Lasse Lovlund**

### **The Apparitions of the Archangel Michael and the Substitution of the Feast of his Investiture**

Besides the Trinity, the Archangel Michael is together with the Virgin Mary the most omnipresent and important object of veneration in the cult of saints of the Coptic Church and its cultural and ecclesial orbits. As with Christ and the Virgin, Michael has a day in each month (the 12th) dedicated to his memorial and veneration. While the earliest layers of Coptic literature dedicated to Michael attest only to 12 Hathor and 12 Paone as great feasts of the archangel, a calendrical-liturgical system of feasts developed throughout the Medieval period. Analysing Coptic apocryphal literature and understudied Arabic and Ethiopic sources, the paper will show how different aetiological traditions emerged as explanations for the specific occasions of celebration for each feast day. Of special focus are the Biblical appearances of Michael in response to theological controversies over the feast of his Investiture on 12 Hathor.

## **Torallas Tovar, Sofía**

### **A Coptic version of the Acts of Ephesus at Montserrat**

The Roca-Puig papyrus collection of the Abbey of Montserrat preserves ca 20 pages from a 6th-7th cent papyrus codex which contains a Coptic version of the Acts of Ephesus (431), including part of the epistolary exchange between Cyril and Nestorios. In this paper, I will present a first approach to the codex and its contents, provenance, and plans for publication.

## **Tutty, Paula**

### **Surveying the Coptic Landscape – Colonial Discourse and the Development of 'Coptic Studies'**

Recent historical events – the Black Lives Matter movement, the Covid-19 epidemic, and the Jesus' Wife episode amongst them – have had a sizeable impact, causing us, as scholars to pause and examine what we do, how we work and many of the procedures and behaviours that we may have taken for granted. Written as a response, this paper seeks to examine how the field of 'Coptic Studies' evolved as a discipline, with an intellectual inheritance that has

its roots in the Victorian era, with all its social and cultural preoccupations. Examining the activities, interests and attitudes of early scholars and archaeologists forces us to ask questions regarding the differing values that were placed on people, places and material artefacts and the cultural movements that lay behind these assumptions. It also introduces issues that relate to discourse and power – who controlled the discourse and how did discourse evolve and change in relation to Coptic Studies as power relationships waxed and waned? My aim here therefore is not only to examine the legacy of the past but also to raise questions regarding our past and present discourse and the challenges that confront us in the coming decades.

## Vanderheyden, Lorelei

### RSVP, a New Project on Coptic Epistolography across the papyrological millenium

RSVP (*Reconstructing Scribal Vernacular Practices. Coptic Correspondence and Vernacular Scribal Practices in Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt*) is a newly funded ERC project. It will investigate Coptic letter writing in Egypt between the 4th and 11th centuries CE through a corpus of approximately 5000 letters. Focusing on everyday correspondence by (mostly) non-elite writers (including women and villagers) the project offers a “view from below” on written interaction before, during and after the transition from Byzantine to Islamic rule. This paper will introduce the project methods, aims and challenges. RSVP treats Coptic letters as primary evidence for literacy, social cohesion, and cultural identity. Methodologically, the project will combine paleography and sociolinguistics with Digital Humanities approaches. Its concrete outputs will include the systematic encoding of Coptic letters in the Papyrological Navigator (*papyri.info*), the development of the *Coptic Letters Research Environment (CLRE)*, thanks to digital tools for OCR and text-image alignment (using eScriptorium), as well as maps of epistolary exchanges. These resources will enable the reconstruction of fragmented correspondence and epistolary networks, demonstrating how Coptic functioned as a vernacular alongside Greek and Arabic to sustain social bonds across a millennium of political and cultural change.

## Van der Vliet, Jacques

### Prefield in Sahidic Coptic

The present paper takes as its point of departure the model of centripetal ordering of clause constituents as proposed by Functional (Discourse) Grammar (see, for instance, Hengeveld & Keizer 2025). Its basic assumption is that constituents are disposed hierarchically around a central verbal predicate. Around the central predicate, a layered structure of pre- and post-clausal / -sentential elements is build up. Within this general ordering model, the Prefield, made up of clause-initial (pre-clausal and pre-sentential) constituents, is of particular significance as it marks the link (or lack thereof) with the preceding text and at the same time determines the topicality of new or old information for the following clause or paragraph (scope). For Coptic, this Prefield is traditionally (if at all) described in less felicitous terms, such as “frontal extraposition”.

Whereas this analytical concept has been applied successfully in the case of Coptic narrative texts, which relate a string of events (see in particular Zakrzewska 2004, for Bohairic), it has hardly been applied to argumentative and persuasive texts. The present paper will focus on “complex beginnings” in precisely such a text, the Sahidic Gospel of John, a classical Sahidic text, largely taken up by speeches and discussions in addition to narrative. The purpose of the discussion will be primarily descriptive. What types of constituents make up the Prefield in the Sahidic Gospel of John and what are the syntactic and pragmatic rules that govern their ordering? In order to enhance the descriptive relevance, a new witness will be used, the so-called Naqlun John (Hagen & Van der Vliet, *fc.*).

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## Wahba, Kirlos

### Ecumenism at the Grassroots Level: Youth Initiatives within the Contemporary Coptic Context

In recent decades, ecumenism has increasingly expanded beyond official theological dialogues and institutional agreements toward initiatives emerging at the grassroots level. Within the contemporary Coptic context in Egypt, youth-led initiatives have assumed a particularly important role in fostering ecumenical awareness and practical cooperation among different Christian traditions.

This paper explores forms of grassroots ecumenism as practiced by Coptic youth, focusing on informal networks, joint activities, and local initiatives that promote encounter, dialogue, and shared Christian witness. Rather than engaging primarily in doctrinal negotiations, these initiatives emphasize lived experience, common prayer, social service, and interpersonal relationships. The study situates such practices within the broader framework of modern ecumenical thought, engaging with contemporary approaches to lived and grassroots ecumenism that emphasize ecclesial life “from below” and the role of youth as active agents in shaping ecumenical practice.

Methodologically, the paper adopts a qualitative and descriptive approach, drawing on selected case studies, observations of youth activities, and analysis of publicly available materials related to ecumenical engagement in Egypt. Particular attention is given to structural and practical challenges facing these initiatives, including generational gaps within

church leadership, limited institutional support, irregular funding, and the absence of stable organizational frameworks.

At the same time, the paper highlights possible responses to these challenges, such as decentralizing ecumenical activities, integrating youth initiatives within local parish life, and fostering sustained cooperation through regular encounters rather than isolated events. By emphasizing both limitations and possibilities, the study argues that grassroots ecumenism represents a vital and often underexplored dimension of contemporary Coptic engagement with the ecumenical movement. It suggests that youth initiatives may contribute not only to improved inter-church relations but also to shaping a new generation's understanding of unity, diversity, and shared responsibility within the Christian community.

## Walter, Vincent

### The Martyrdom of Apa Prau: A new hagiographical text from the cycle around Julius of Aqfahs

In the early 20th century, Georg Steindorff acquired an assemblage of Coptic literary fragments for Leipzig University Library that appears to have come from a single source in the Fayyum. Besides papyrus fragments in the Fayyumic and Sahidic dialects, a notable number of Sahidic parchment fragments, belonging to at least 16 leaves of a single 10th-century codex, can be found within the assemblage. This codex contained the story of the martyrdom of an otherwise unknown saint, named Apa Prau, which is part of the hagiographical cycle around Julius of Aqfahs, the biographer of the saints. The paper will present this fairly unknown and still unpublished text with a special focus on its intertextual relationships with other martyrdoms from the Julius cycle, identifying episodic and structural parallels between these texts as well as episodes that are unique to the *Martyrdom of Apa Prau*.

## Wegner, Joanna

### Strengths and Vulnerabilities of the Clerical Position in Late Antique Egypt

In the thoroughly Christianised society of Egypt in the fourth–eighth century, clergy could be expected to have played a pivotal role in their communities. Such a view is strengthened by the literary narratives which focus predominantly on charismatic and powerful occupants of the episcopal sees. Papyrological documentation allows us to add nuance to our appraisal of the position of the Egyptian bishops, which has long been the subject of extensive studies. The present paper will focus on the lower rungs of the ecclesiastical hierarchy active in the Egyptian hinterland and the shaping of their social status as recorded in documentary papyri. Through the documents, we may recognise a variety of factors that influenced the position of clergy in their communities. While ecclesiastical affiliation came with its own package of sociocultural capital and institutional support, other components such as personal wealth, family status, occupation, and the related private networks, could significantly impact the way in which clergy operated in various contexts of social life. This impact could enhance clerical authority and social performance; on the other hand, the many socio-economic entanglements of the clerics, as well as local acts of resistance against the institutional power of the Church, could render the position of clergy both precarious and negotiable. Through

an analysis of Greek and Coptic documentary papyri, the paper will offer a reappraisal of the complex social and institutional reality of clerical status in rural communities of late antique Egypt.

## Wilson, Penelope

### Late Antique Northern Egypt: towns, connections and consumption practices

This paper will provide a short report on the analysis of sites surveyed in Northern Egypt in Kafr el Sheikh regions, that were active during the 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century CE according to the material culture found there – principally pottery and glass. Using the pottery this analysis will discuss the imported finewares and amphora in order to understand the processes and mechanisms for the way in which the pottery reached the different towns. The forms of the towns from detailed photographic and satellite imagery, magnetic mapping and recording of archaeological features will be compared to address the function of the towns. In addition, the consumption practices of the towns will also be assessed in order to understand the role of the towns in the active urban networks of northern Egypt and their relationship(s) with the western Delta, North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.

## Zakhary, Benjamin

### Pauline '*Pistis Christou*' in Coptic Sources

The *pistis Christou* in the Pauline letters have sparked a scholarly discussion in the past few decades. Some have translated it as “faith in Christ,” applying the objective genitive where Christ is the object of faith. Others have translated it as the “faithfulness of Christ,” employing a subjective genitive, where Christ is the subject who acts according to his own faithfulness. A third group, not aligning with either side of the genitive dilemma, have suggested other translation and understanding options such as “Christ Faith” or “Christic Faith.” Scholars have suggested to explore ancient translations for clues regarding the phrase’s reception; however, prior scholarship has been very sparse regarding the translation and interpretation of the *pistis Christou* within Coptic sources. Some have hastily remarked that the Coptic translation is inconclusive when it comes to the phrase of interest. This paper challenges that position, extracting clear conclusions by positioning the Coptic translation in the proper patristic and liturgical context, looking at both the Sahidic and Bohairic traditions. In using the Pauline *pistis Christou*, Coptic sources suggest a true possessive genitive where faith is defined as the domain that belongs to Christ (God), in which the faithful reside and participate.

## Zakrzewska, Ewa

### Constituent ordering in the verbal clause in Bohairic Coptic

This presentation forms the introduction to the proposed panel “Constituent ordering in Coptic”. At the same time, it offers a novel description of constituent ordering in Bohairic, inspired by Functional Grammar / Functional Discourse Grammar (see, for instance, Hengeveld & Keizer 2025).

The starting point of this contribution is the observation that Coptic is characterized by so-called semantic alignment, which implies that the form and position of the constituents are for the most part determined by their semantic roles. The individual constituents are grouped in fields which are organized in a centripetal fashion, that is directed towards the center, the verbal predicate:

Pre-sentential and/or pre-clausal fields > [PRED] < secondary field < middle field (<Predicate-related domain < Circumstances domain) < final field < post-clausal field  
The constituents which occur in a particular field are semantically related and/or syntactically adjacent. Moreover, the boundaries between the fields can be marked by diverse enclitics, for instance *de*, *an* or *pe*.

Next to the semantic functions of the constituents, their syntactic complexity, so-called ‘weight’, plays an important role, whereby ‘light’ constituents generally precede ‘heavy’ ones. ‘Heaviness’ can be an incidental property of the given construction or can be conventionalized in constructions of certain types, for example subordinate clauses. Finally, the pragmatic functions topic and/or focus operate at the edges of the centripetal structure, namely in the pre-sentential/pre-clausal and final fields.

These diverse motivations, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic, interact with one another and their interaction determines the actual form of the clause.

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## Zellmann-Rohrer, Michael

### Magic on the backs of things

Coptic amulets on papyrus and parchment, the text-bearing finished products of magical ritual, are sometimes also palimpsests or opisthographs to non-magical manuscript objects. The choice by the writers of these amulets to re-use rather than start fresh remains to be theorized systematically. A common assumption is that economic motivation or practical considerations of availability were central. A materialist counterpoint is facilitated by thing theory and object-oriented ontology. Internal evidence for deliberate selection of pre-used materials does exist, contrasting with other specifications that, e.g., “a clean sheet” of substrate should be used, and this consciousness corresponds to a distinction in genre: texts concerned with healing and protection are more likely to be inscribed on re-used materials than curses. In keeping with the theme of this session, and a broader materialist turn in the study of the history of religion, I will focus rather on further senses in which the composite of original texts, still legible on various levels, and added magical ones, constitute assemblages with an agency of their own. In other words, these doubly finished products can be added to the program of “tak[ing] the medium of amulets more seriously” advocated for Coptology.<sup>13</sup> I select two facets of this agency as test cases. First, I consider how the persistence of original writing may guide the magical writing and visually insist on itself,

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<sup>13</sup> David Frankfurter, “Magic and the Forces of Materiality,” *Guide to The Study of Ancient Magic* (Leiden, 2019), 659-677, at 663.

alongside or through the amuletic letters, to offer alternative textual authority, such as that of the Christian scripture of palimpsest codex leaves, and social context of “lineage.”<sup>14</sup> The magical additions, in turn, may have invited re-interpretation of existing marks, as in the case of documentary ‘stamped’ protocols. The latter might, as both object of reading and subject of authentication,<sup>15</sup> inspire the participants in ritual to re-analyze them as magical *charakteres*.

## Zych, Iwona & Godlewski, Włodzimierz

### The lost casket from the Naqlun monastery in Fayum – tools of the trade of an itinerant medieval physician

The contents of a casket found in the ruins of the central monastery building (D) at Naqlun reveals a great deal about the owner’s profession and interests. The box was found lying upside down in the rubble of the abandoned building. The plant and mineral remains, along with a set of Arab codices, notes and letters, suggest that the owner could have been an itinerant medieval physician or rather quack, perhaps even dabbling in the occult, but most likely a practitioner well versed in apotropaic practices designed to alleviate the pain and suffering of the common folk. The box was damaged during its life use and was repaired: the front is from a Sicilian casket, and the sides and back are an example of Fatimid woodwork. These repairs show the sentimental value of the box to the owner as well as his possibly dwindling resources. The paper will explore the presumed profession of the casket’s owner and the turbulent times during which he practiced his trade. The date of 1253, the last year of Ayyubid rule in Egypt, in one of the letters found inside the casket provides a timeframe for when the box was in use and after which it found its way to Naqlun.

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<sup>14</sup> This approach is suggested in general by Frankfurter, art. cit., 673–675, applying Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford, 1998). The scriptural palimpsests are a counterpoint to the cases of deliberate desacralization by tearing up codices discussed by AnneMarie Luijendijk, “Sacred Scriptures as Trash: Biblical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 64 (2010), 217–254.

<sup>15</sup> The object-subject dialectic of things is developed by Bill Brown, “Thing Theory,” *Critical Inquiry* 28 (2001), 1–22.

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