

Further Leaves from a White Monastery Codex Containing Texts Attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria

(TAB. XXII-XXVII)

Alin SUCIU

In a recent issue of the journal *Orientalia*, Enzo Lucchesi commented upon a Sahidic parchment leaf kept in Strasbourg University Library¹. The folio bears the inventory number "Copte 248" and it was formerly identified by Françoise Morard as part of the Coptic homily *De homicidis, In Michaellem*, attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria (CPG 2191; *clavis coptica* 0048)². This sermon is readily available in the Italian translation made by Tito Orlandi after one of the Hamuli manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (M 602, ff. 98^v-110^v)³. Besides, we have knowledge of several fragments that have survived from a White Monastery manuscript (codex MONB.FQ)⁴, to which the Strasbourg folio identified by Morard also belonged.

The "dioratic" gift of Pachomius is a theme which occurs already in his Greek *Vita Prima* and was developed later in Coptic literature⁵. As the homily ascribed to Athanasius makes use of this motif and recounts, among other things, the way in which Pachomius tracked down a murderous monk through his visionary abilities, Louis Théophile Lefort included the episode in question in his edition of the Coptic *vitae* of the founder of coenobitism⁶. It was precisely in this context that

¹ E. Lucchesi, "Identification de Strasbourg Copte 248", *Or* 78 (2009) 92-95.

² F. Morard, "Les recueils coptes d'Actes apocryphes des apôtres. Un exemple: le codex R", *Augustinianum* 23 (1983) 73-82. The leaf was edited and translated by Y. N. Youssef, "The Archangel Michael and the Patriarchs in Exile in the Coptic Tradition", in N. Bosson - A. Boud'hors (ed.), *Actes du Huitième congrès international d'études coptes, Paris, 28 Juin - 3 Juillet 2004* (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 163; Leuven 2007) 645-656, at 648-650.

³ T. Orlandi, *Omèlie copte* (Corona Patrum 7; Torino 1981) 59-70. The codex in question belonged to the Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayyum. Description in L. Depuydt, *Catalogue of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library* vol. 1 (Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts 4, Oriental Series 1; Leuven 1993) 224-230 (= no. 116).

⁴ For the White Monastery codices, I employ the sigla system of the *Corpus dei manoscritti copti letterari* project (= CMCL, director: Tito Orlandi). According to CMCL's classification, each White Monastery codex is designated by two letters of the Latin alphabet, which are preceded by MONB (= "Monastero Bianco").

⁵ The "dioratikon charisma" was one of the charges against Pachomius at the Council of Latopolis (Esneh). Cf. Greek *Vita Prima* 112 (Greek text in F. Halkin, *Sancti Pachomii Vitae Graecae* [Subsidia hagiographica 19; Brussels 1932] 72-73); for the parallel in the Arabic *Life*, see E. Amélineau, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne au IV^e siècle. Histoire de Saint Pakhôme et de ses communautés* (Annales du Musée Guimet 17; Paris 1889) 591-595.

⁶ Edited in L. Th. Lefort, *S. Pachomii vitae Sahidice scriptae* 2 vols. (CSCO 99-100, *Scriptores coptici* 9-10; Paris 1933) 1: 347-350 (= no. 19; S¹⁶); French translation in *idem, Les*

Lefort tried, for the first time, a tentative inventory of the White Monastery codex which contained the sermon *De homicidis*⁷. The *dossier* was further enriched by Françoise Morard with two still unpublished leaves, Strasbourg Copte 248 and Paris BnF Copte 161⁶, f. 38. Finally, in his recent article, Lucchesi included in the same codex one more fragment, held in the Coptic Museum in Cairo (inv. no. 9286). This fragment was edited a long time ago without a proper identification by Henri Munier⁸.

I should like to remark in this brief note that at least three supplementary folios from the same manuscript are recoverable. Two of them are currently held in the National Library in Paris, while a third one is in the British Library in London. Given that the last fragment contains the *explicit* of *De homicidis* as well as the title of the following work, it is of central importance for the codicological reconstruction.

The two newly identified Parisian fragments of the codex MONB.FQ are BnF Copte 131⁶, f. 28 and BnF Copte 131⁷, f. 32. The page numbers 7-8 and 9-10 are still visible on the parchment, showing that the fragments which are bound today in separate volumes were originally consecutive leaves. Although both of them were tentatively attributed by Ariel Shisha-Halevy to the Coptic author Shenoute of Atripe⁹, they parallel in fact ff. 101^r, line 8-102^v, line 6 in Pierpont Morgan M 602, the other copy of ps.-Athanasius' sermon *De homicidis*¹⁰. Compared to the text of the Morgan codex, the White Monastery manuscript offers a shorter and slightly different recension, but over all there is no doubt that they represent two witnesses of the same text.

Until now, the last fragment of MONB.FQ was considered to be a leaf in the National Library in Paris identified by Morard (i.e. BnF Copte 161⁶, f. 38). The original pagination of this fragment is lost, but Enzo Lucchesi rightly pointed out that, if we compare the text to the version preserved in the Pierpont Morgan M 602, we must place it towards the end of Ps.-Athanasius' sermon, as pages [41]-[42] of the codex¹¹. Now, I should like to remark that BnF Copte 161⁶, f. 38

vies coptes de S. Pachôme et de ses premiers successeurs (Bibliothèque du Muséon 16; Louvain 1943) 382-385.

⁷ Lefort identified the remnants of three leaves, of which two are damaged but are recoverable from separate pieces: Paris BnF 129², ff. 72 + 70, Paris BnF 129², f. 71 + 133², f. 57, and Naples I.B. 09, f. 25. All the Parisian fragments except BnF 133², f. 57 were already published by E. Amélineau, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne aux IV^e et V^e siècles* vol. 2 (MMAF 4/2; Paris 1895) 609-611. For the Naples fragment see G. Zoega, *Catalogus codicum Coptiorum manu scriptorum qui in Museo Borgiano Velitris adservantur* (Rome 1810) 553 (= no. 229) and now P. Buzi, *Catalogo dei manoscritti copti borgiani conservati presso la Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele III" di Napoli* (Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche. Memorie, ser. 9, vol. 25/1; Rome 2009) 218.

⁸ H. Munier, *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Nos 9201-9304: Manuscrits coptes* (Cairo 1916) 150-152.

⁹ A. Shisha-Halevy, *Coptic Grammatical Categories: Structural Studies in the Syntax of Shenoutean Sahidic* (Analecta Orientalia 53; Rome 1986) 219; S. Emmel is more cautious and counts them among the Shenoutean uncertain fragments, see his *Shenoute's Literary Corpus* vol. 2 (CSCO 600, Subsidia 112; Louvain 2004) 904-905.

¹⁰ H. Hyvernat, *Bybliothecae Pierpont Morgan codices coptici photographice expressi* vol. 25 (Rome 1922) plates 201-204. Italian translation of the corresponding Sahidic text in Orlandi, *Omèlie copte*, 60-62

¹¹ Lucchesi, *Or* 78, 95.

was actually followed, at a distance of only one folio, by a previously unnoticed fragment in the British Library. This is BL Or. 6807, f. 6 and, although the parchment is a bit damaged, the pagination 4[5]-[4]6 still can be recovered on it¹².

The new London folio is of special interest because it carries some important codicological details. Thus, the recto contains the concluding lines of the pseudo-Athanasian homily *De homicidis* and a subscription of the copyist, who signed himself as “Aurelius Flavius Philotheus”¹³. The verso of the fragment contains the title of the following work, which reads: ΟΥΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΝΤΕΑΠΑ ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΣ ΠΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΡΑΚΟΤΕ ΕΑΧΤΝΝΟΟΥΣ ΨΑΑΠΑ ΖΩΡΣΙΗΣΙΟΣ [Μ]ΝΑΠΑ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ ΝΤΕΡΕΨΩΤΜ ΧΕ Α[Α]ΠΑ ΠΑΖΩΜΟ ΠΙΩΤ [Ν]ΤΕΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ ΜΤΟΝ ΜΜΟϢ ΖΝΟΥΕΙΡΗΝΗ ΝΤΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΖΑΜΗΝ (“A letter of Apa Athanasius the archbishop of Alexandria, which he sent to Apa Horsiesius and Apa Theodorus when he heard that Apa Pachomius, the father of the *Koinonia*, had died. In the peace of God, Amen”). It has not been established yet whether this letter, which claims to belong to Athanasius, is genuine or not¹⁴.

Be that as it may, it becomes apparent that *De homicidis* was followed in codex MONB.FQ by the epistle of (pseudo-)Athanasius to Horsiesius and Theodorus concerning the death of Pachomius (CPG 2190; *clavis coptica* 0453).

It is interesting to note that, although Lefort was aware of the London fragment and published the surviving portion of Athanasius' letter immediately before the fragments of *De homicidis*, he recorded it as belonging to a separate codex and even dated the handwriting one century earlier¹⁵. This shows once more how relative is the attempt to date the Coptic manuscripts on purely formal grounds.

Adding the three fragments identified here, we may now attempt the codicological reconstruction of the manuscript:

Ps.-Athanasius of Alexandria, *De homicidis*, In Michaellem (CPG 2191; *clavis coptica* 0048)

3 leaves missing

pages 7-8 = Paris 131⁶, f. 28

pages 9-10 = Paris 131⁷, f. 32

1 leaf missing

pages 13-14 = Paris 129¹², ff. 72 + 70

pages 15-16 = Paris 129¹², f. 71 + 133², f. 57

5 leaves missing

¹² B. Layton, *Catalogue of Coptic Literary Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired Since the Year 1906* (London 1987) 179-180 (= no. 153).

¹³ A. van Lantschoot, *Recueil des colophons des manuscrits chrétiens d'Égypte*, vol. 1: *Les colophons coptes des manuscrits sahidiques* (Bibliothèque du Muséon 1; Louvain 1929) no. LXc.

¹⁴ Cf. Lefort, *Les vies coptes*, p. lxxxiv. A letter from Athanasius to Horsiesius concerning the death of Theodorus appears in Pachomius' *Vita Prima* 150 (Greek text in Halkin, *Sancti Pachomii* 95-96), but also in Sahidic and Bohairic; for the Sahidic text, see Lefort, *S. Pachomii vitae Sahidice scriptae*, 1: 301-303; for Bohairic, idem, *S. Pachomii vita Bohairice scripta* (CSCO 89, *Scriptores coptici* 7; Louvain 1953) 214-215. Translation of both Coptic versions in idem, *Les vies coptes* 233-234 (French translation from Bohairic), 347-348 (French translation from Sahidic).

¹⁵ Edited by Lefort, *S. Pachomii vitae Sahidice scriptae*, 1, 346 (= no. 18; S¹⁸); translated in idem, *Les vies coptes* 380. In *S. Pachomii vitae Sahidice scriptae*, 1, p. x, Lefort described the fragments as coming from separate manuscripts, S¹⁸ and S¹⁶, and dated the first of them in the 10th century and the second in the 11th, without realizing that he ascribed the same hand to different centuries.

pages 27-28 = Naples I.B. 09, f. 25
3 leaves missing
pages 35-36 = Cairo 9286
1 leaf missing
pages 39-40 = Strasbourg 248
pages [41]-[42] = Paris 161^o, f. 38
1 leaf missing
page 4[5] = London BL Or. 6807, f. 6^r

Athanasius of Alexandria, *Letter to Horsiesius and Theodorus* (CPG 2190; *clavis coptica* 0453)

page [4]6 = London BL Or. 6807, f. 6^v
leaves missing

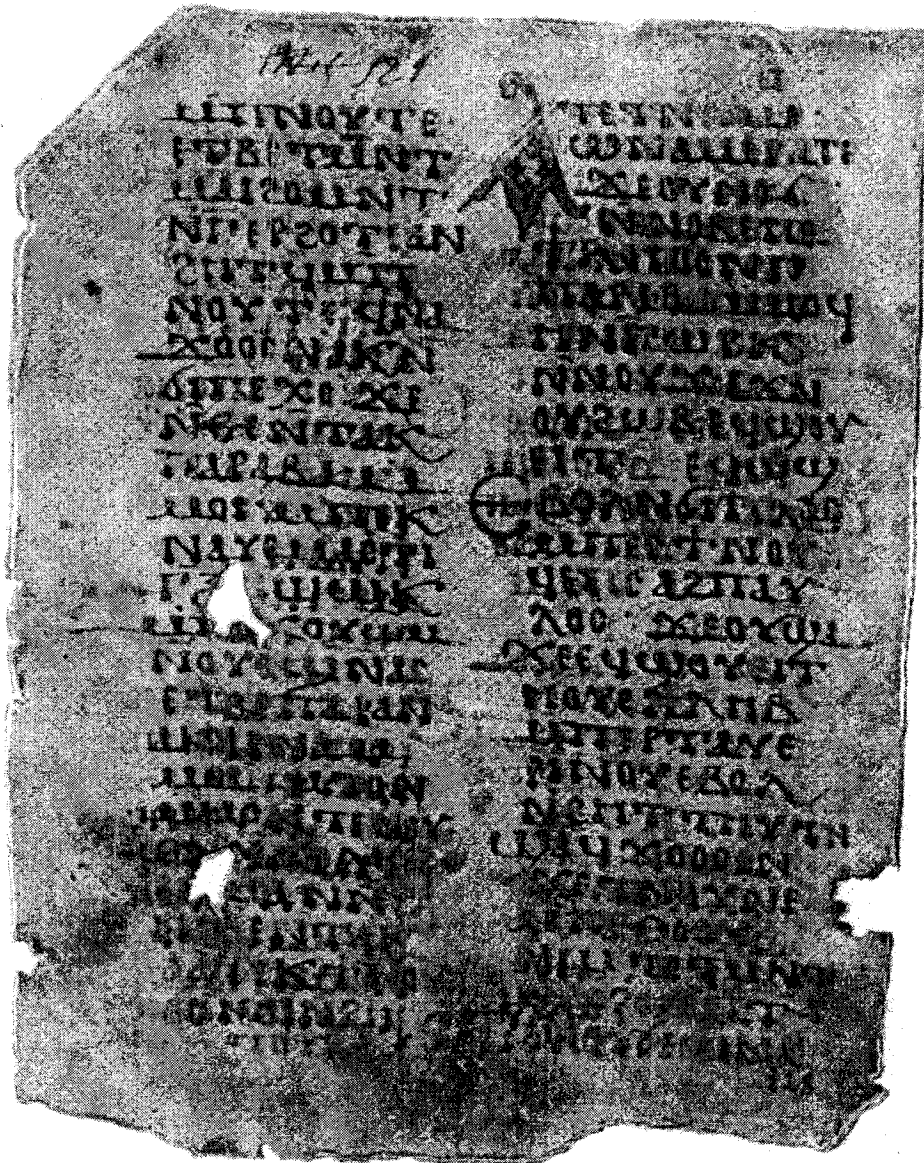
As a final remark, it should be stated that the internal coherence of the codex is established not only by the putative Athanasian authorship of the two works, but also by their common reference to Pachomius.

Faculty of Theology
Aleksanterinkatu 7
P.O. Box 33
SF-00014 University of Helsinki
Finland
e-mail: alin.suciu.1@ulaval.ca

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A. Suci, Further Leaves from a White Monastery Codex

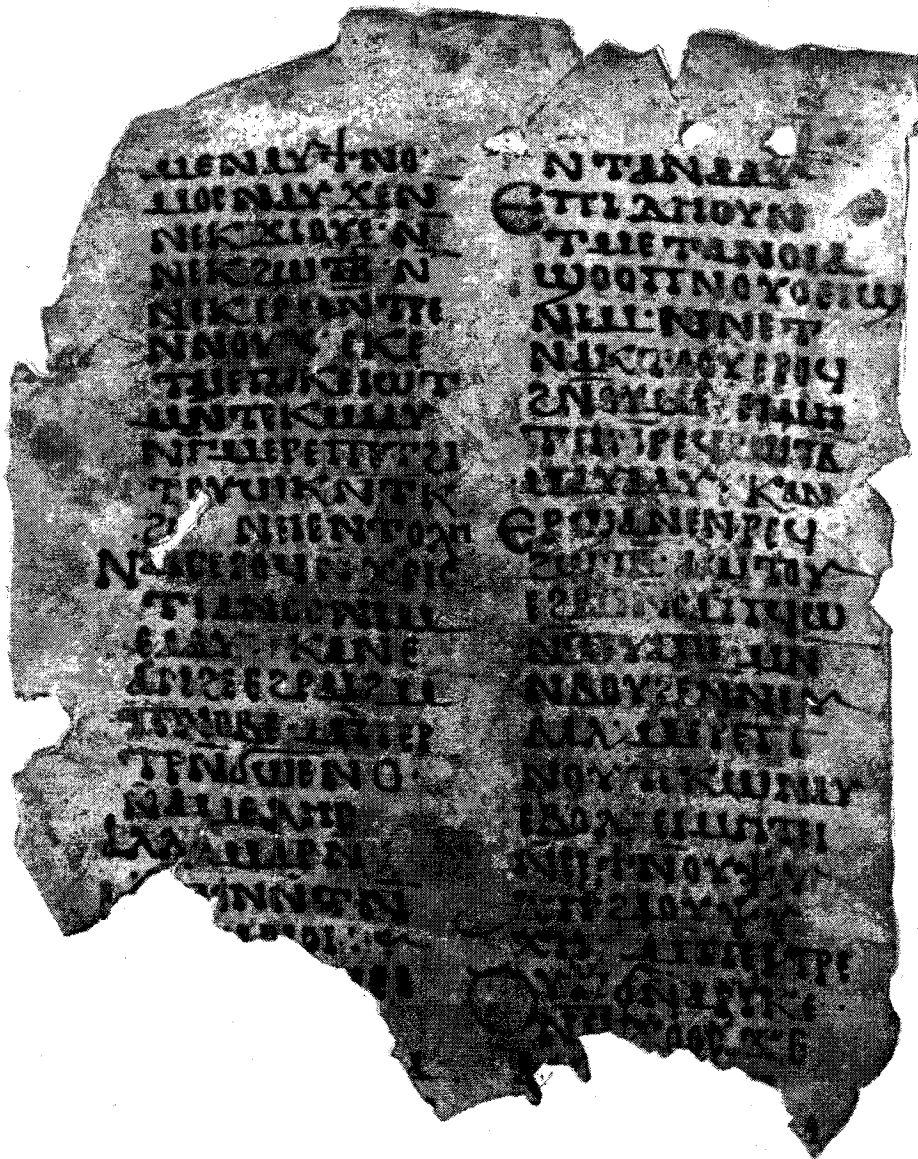
TAB. XXII



Paris, BnF Copte 131^o, f. 28.

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NON 219 JUC D122-

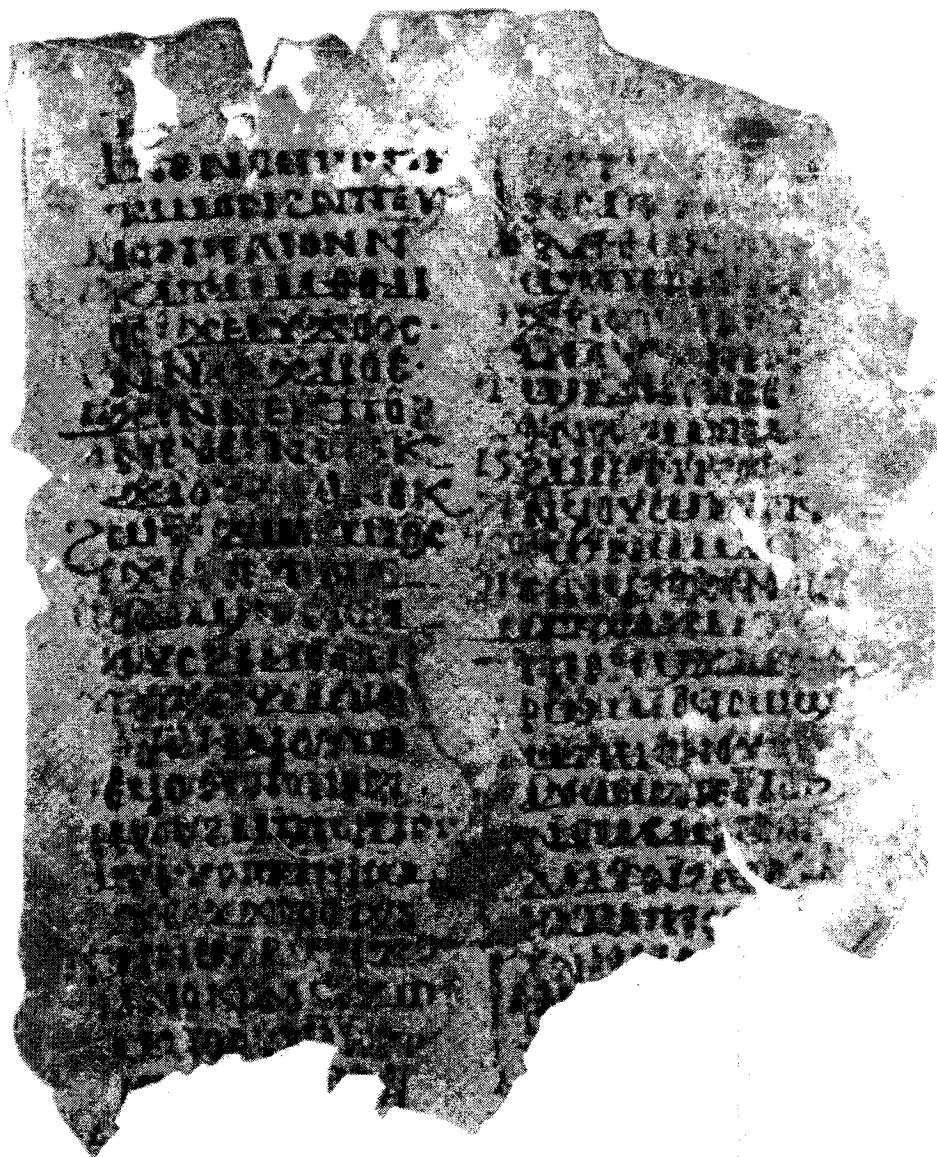


Paris, BnF Copte 1317, f. 32.



TAB. XXV

A. Suci, Further Leaves from a White Monastery Codex



Paris, BnF Copte 131^r, f. 32.

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<p> ΠΕΤΙΛΛΑΥ ΛΕΙΒΟΛΝΑΗΤΕ ΔΥΠΕΡΩΑΝΤΡΩ ΜΕΡΟΧΑΥΗ ΝΝΟΒΕ ΝΥ ΜΕΤΛΝΟΤ ΝΟΥΤΑΚΩ ΕΥΡΩΑ ΕΥ ΟΥΝΤΑΚΟΤΥ ΝΚΕΟΤΕΤΙ ΝΟΒΕ : ~ ΕΝΟΤΟΩΝΑ ΜΕΤΕΝΩΗ ΡΕΝΤΚΑΘΩ ΚΗΕΚΚΑΝΟ ΝΤΕΤΝΟΥΤΕ ΚΩΝΑΝΕΒΩ ΝΕΝΝΟΒΕ ΜΠΟΥΝΑΝΗ ΜΕΤΕΤΕΣΑ ΝΟΒΕ ΖΙ </p>	<p> ΓΕΛΟΕΤΕΡΩ ΝΑΥΛΙΤΟΥ ΖΙΤΝΤΕΧΑΡΙ ΜΝΤΛΝΤ ΟΜΑΡΩΜΕ ΠΕΝΧΑΕΙΟΙΤΗ ΧΟ ΠΑΙΒΟΛ ΖΥΤΟΟΥΕΡΕΟΥ ΝΑΥΤΡΕΤΕΙΝΑ ΜΝΤΕΥΕΙΩΤ ΝΑΓΑΘΟΟ ΜΝ ΠΕΤΝΑΕΤΟΥΛΛ ΝΡΕΥΤΑΝΣΟ ΔΥΩΝΣΟΛΟΥ ΟΙΟΒ ΤΕΝΟΥ ΔΥΩΝΟΥΒΕΙ ΝΗΕ ΟΥΝΑΙΟΝ ΤΤΡΟΥΝΝΑΙΩΝ ΑΛΛΕΙΝ : ~ ΔΥΡΙΑΙΟ ΦΛΑΒΙΟ ΦΙΛΟ ΠΑΙΟ ΤΟΥΛΑΚΟΤ ΜΑΡΚΟΣ ΜΑΚΟ ΕΥ ΜΕΘΑΙ ΥΠΕΡΕΛΟΥ </p>
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London, BL Or. 6807, f. 6.



TAB. XXVII

A. Suci, Further Leaves from a White Monastery Codex



London, BL Or. 6807, f. 6.