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@ Augustinianum 2011
Arguably the most important scholarly achievement of Tito Orlandi is the Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari project. Started early in his career at the Papyrological Institute of the Catholic University Sacro Cuore in Milan, the CMCL is destined to become known world-wide once our esteemed mentor and colleague will transfer it to the Università "La Sapienza" in Rome. The main purpose of this project is the reconstruction of the Sahidic codices that once belonged to the White Monastery, situated in Upper Egypt, near present-day Sohag. During the past four decades, Professor Orlandi has classified and studied the White Monastery parchment codices, whose poor remnants are scattered today all over the world. This enterprise has brought him in the select company of such coptologists as Oscar von Lemm, Walter Ewing Crum, Louis-Théophile Lefort, Gérard Garitte, Arnold van Lantschoot, Paul Devos, Enzo Lucchesi and Stephen Emmel.

In this situation, we have considered that it would be fitting to honour him in this Festschrift with a contribution related to the library of the White Monastery. We here publish two leaves of a parchment codex that once belonged to this Coptic convent, containing a hitherto unknown dialogue between Jesus and his disciples. The first leaf is now owned by the Norwegian collector Martin Schøyen and holds the number 1991 in the Schøyen manuscript catalogue. The second leaf exists in the Bibliothèque

1 T. Orlandi, Un progetto milanese concernente le manoscritti copti del Monastero Bianco, in Le Muséon 85 (1972), 403–413.
3 This leaf was seen by the late Hans-Martin Schenke, who made a translation of the text as an Anhang to the translation of the Unbekanntes Berliner Evangelium (also known as the Gospel of the Saviour) which he prepared for a new edition of Hennecke-Schneemelcher’s New Testament Apocrypha (which has not yet appeared). We are thankful to Uwe-Karsten Plisch for having made available to us Schenke’s unpublished translation and brief introduction to the text, both of which have been helpful, even if we are unable to share Schenke’s sentiment about the
Nationale as BN Copte 131\textsuperscript{7}, fol. 29\textsuperscript{1}. The connection between the two folios was made in October 2008 by Alin Suciu, who realised that they are consecutive leaves from the same codex giving a continuous text. On the second leaf the page numbers 13–14 have been preserved; the first leaf, whose upper part has been lost, must therefore be pages 11–12 of the codex. No further folios of this codex have been preserved, as far as we know.

The text is arranged on two columns and is written in a very neat and elegant hand. Whereas the bimodular script\textsuperscript{5} and the peculiar super-lineation system\textsuperscript{6} bring the fragments close to the Fayumic manuscripts copied in the ‘Touton scriptorium’, they exhibit fewer of the decorative mannerisms characteristic of the Toutonian scribes. Noteworthy in this Schøyen text that, «es scheint derselbe Geist zu wehen, der das UBE so faszinierend macht».


\textsuperscript{5} We employ the term “bimodular” as defined by G. Cavallo, Grammata Alexandrina, in Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik 24 (1975), 23–54: a type of script based on the alternation of large and narrow letters. This script was previously known as “Alexandrian script” or “Coptic uncial,” cf. also J. Irigoin, L’onciale grecque de type copte, in Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft 8 (1959), 29–51.


regard is the absence of the budded \textit{diplē}, which constitutes a distinctive mark of the codices from Touton\(^8\).

Although no further fragments are presently known to have survived from the codex to which the Schøyen and Paris leaves once belonged, several now dismembered White Monastery codices may be identified as being the work of the same copyist. The fact that two of those codices still bear the dates of their completion, offers excellent evidence for determining the date of the present fragments. Since the criteria that are used in order to establish the age of the White Monastery manuscripts are usually rather vague, the possibility of dating a fragmentary and undated manuscript through the intermediary of other codices copied by the same scribe is certainly fortunate.

One codex which appears to be in the same scribe’s hand is today housed in the British Library under the call number BL. Or. 1320, and contains the \textit{Canons of the Apostles}, followed by the \textit{Canons of the Church}\(^9\). The two colophons which occur on foll. 40\(^r\) and 51\(^r\) are both of much interest because the first offers the name of the scribe, Zacharias, and the second gives the year in which he completed the transcription, i.e. the Era of the Martyrs 722, which corresponds to 1005–1006 in our calendar\(^10\).

The hand of Zacharias is also recognizable on a parchment folio preserved in the \textit{Papyrussammlung} of the National Library in Vienna as K 9436\(^11\). Tito Orlandi and Enzo Lucchesi have shown\(^12\) that this and six other


consecutive leaves which are in the John Rylands Library in Manchester[^13], are all that has survived from a slender codex containing the Sahidic version of the so-called *Historia Gesii et Isidori* (BHO 485–486; Clavis Coptica 0202), the story of the two brothers who discovered near Emesa the relics of John the Baptist[^14]. A subscriptio placed under the last line on the recto of Vienna K 9436, which is paged 31 and was the last but one page of the codex, mentions that the manuscript has been written in the year 723 Era of the Martyrs, i.e. 1006–1007 A.D[^15].

On the basis of these two codices, copied at a short distance in time one after another, we can conclude that, being the work of the same scribe, the manuscript to which belonged the Schøyen and Paris fragments should be ascribed to the same period[^16].


[^14]: The text was edited on the basis of three fragmentary codices known at that time by G. Steindorff, *Gesios und Isidoro: Drei sahidische Fragmente über die ‘Auffindung der Gebeine Johannes des Täufers’*, in *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 21 (1883), 137-158. To the manuscripts used by Steindorff, J. Leipoldt, *Koptische Urkunden I* [Ägyptische Urkunden aus den königlichen Museen zu Berlin], Berlin 1904, 184–185 (=no. 188) added a fragment in Berlin (P. Berol. 8776), which belongs to a fourth codex of the *Historia Gesii et Isidori*. To the same codex from which comes the Berlin fragment, we can now add a previously unidentified one, namely IFAO no. 163. The piece is acephalous in all the four known codices, but Crum, *Rylands*, 50 and, not without some hesitation, Lucchesi, *Un feuillet*, 17, attributed it either to Ps.-Alexander of Alexandria or to Ps.-Athanasius; for the attribution to Ps.-Athanasius, cf. also E. Lucchesi, *Trois éloges coptes de Jean-Baptiste attribués à Athanase, Théophile et Cyrille d’Alexandrie*, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 53 (1999), 323-324, at 324. However, Father Ugo Zanetti has shown that the story is equally attested in Arabic, being ascribed to a certain Christodulus, bishop of Tiphre in Lower Egypt, see U. Zanetti, *Gésius et Isidore (BHO 485-486) dans une homélie arabe*, in *Analecta Bollandiana* 106 (1988), 318; idem, *L’homélie arabe sur Gésius et Isidore (cf. BHO 485)*, in *Analecta Bollandiana* 109 (1991), 5-71, 362.


[^16]: It is perhaps useful to mention here the rest of the identified fragments transcribed by this copyist: Vatican Borgia 109, 149 (*Theodori Anatolii Miracula*); Vatican Borgia 109, 156 (*Historia de Septem Dormientibus*); the fragments quoted *infra*, note 23 (Ps.-Severian of Gabala, *In apostolos*); Leiden Rijksmuseum no. 95 (=Insin-
Though the text contained on these four pages has the form of a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples — or possibly a single, unnamed disciple — it corresponds to no presently known “apocryphal” text. The catalogue of the Schøyen manuscript collection assigns it to the so-called Gospel of Bartholomew, even if Bartholomew’s name does not appear on the two extant leaves, nor does the text itself bear much resemblance to the existing apocrypha associated with that disciple — either the Questions of Bartholomew (BHG 228; CANT 63) or the Coptic Book of the Resurrection (CANT 80; Clavis Coptica 0027)\(^{17}\). On the other hand, similar revelation dialogues between Christ and one or more disciples can be found in certain Coptic homilies attributed pseudonymously to Euodius of Rome\(^{18}\), Cyril of Jerusalem\(^{19}\), John Chrysostom\(^{20}\) and to other Fathers of the


\(^{18}\) According to Eusebius (Hist. eccl. III, 22), Euodius was the first successor of Peter to the bishopric of Antioch. For the Copts he belonged to the restricted group of Jesus’ disciples, and this privilege transformed him into an eye-witness of the apostolic times and the keeper of certain words and deeds of the Saviour and of his disciples, unrecorded otherwise, but filled with the expression of Coptic piety. Only Coptic literature transformed Euodius into an author, ascribing to him two or three homilies; see esp. T. Orlandi, in The Coptic Encyclopedia vol. 4, ed. A. S. Aitay, New York 1991, 1078–1079, s.v. Evodius of Rome. A Coptic homily (CANT 81; Clavis Coptica 0149), presumably by Ps.-Euodius, was considered for a long time to be an apocryphal gospel, but this hypothesis has now been dismissed; see E. Lucchesi, Un evangile apocryphe imaginaire, in Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica 28 (1997), 167–178, and the literature quoted therein.

\(^{19}\) Concerning the Coptic homilies with apocryphal insertions attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, see in general T. Orlandi, Cirillo di Gerusalemme nella letteratura copta,
Egyptian Church. However, the identity of the present text remains a small mystery.

The dialogue takes place after the crucifixion (see especially 13:38–39). The victorious Christ encourages his disciples to believe that they, too, will be able to conquer. Two themes in particular are highlighted: first, that the incarnated and suffering Christ was fully human as well as divine; and secondly, that the disciples are able to share in him and his power because he is their “head,” “root,” “leaven,” etc., and because they are the recipients of his grace. Some inventive developments of the metaphors describing the relationship between Jesus and his disciples are notable, in particular the Pauline metaphor of the head and the limbs, which inspires the author to display a certain amount of scientific medical knowledge. The style in general is reminiscent of the Farewell Discourses of the Fourth Gospel. Remarkably, the preserved text consists only of lines spoken in the first person and contains no narrative components. We are not told who the speakers are. Jesus, who is not named, speaks about himself consistently as “I,” and addresses his interlocutors as “you” (plural). They on their part refer to themselves as “we.”

On one occasion, however, Jesus seems to use the second person singular: “You have seen...” (ⲁⲕⲛⲁⲩ) (14:51). This suggests that Christ may here be addressing one disciple in particular. Due to the fragmentary state of the text at this point, however, no inferences can be safely made in this regard. It cannot be totally excluded that Jesus is all along conversing with a single disciple, who is speaking on behalf of the disciples as a collective, and is being addressed as their representative.

Another possibility, however, is that the dialogue was actually framed by a sermon and that the homilist himself intervened at this point, enhancing the vivacity of his discourse by involving the listener directly. This was a common stylistic device in Christian homiletics influenced by the Second

in *Vetera Christianorum* 9 (1972), 93–100, at 96–100. Two sermons on the Passion (*De Vita et Passione Christi* [CPG 3604; Clavis Coptica 0113]; *De Passione I* [CPG 3598; Clavis Coptica 0114]) are among the most interesting pieces in this regard, both unpublished but attested in several codices, including some from the White Monastery. More than once, parts of these fragmentary manuscripts have been published individually as apocryphal writings, their real identity being revealed only later; cf. in this sense e.g. E. Lucchesi, *Identification de P. Vindob. K 2644*, in *Orientalia* 76 (2007), 174–175; idem, *D’une vie de Marie à une homélie sur la Passion*, in *Analecta Bollandiana* 114 (1996), 269–272.

Several Coptic homilies by Ps.-Chrysostom recount “apocryphal” episodes and revelation dialogues between Jesus and his apostles: *On the Four Bodiless Beasts* (CPG 5150.9; Clavis Coptica 0177), *On John the Baptist* (CPG 5150.3; Clavis Coptica 0170) and *On the Resurrection* (CPG 5150.11; Clavis Coptica 0167).
Sophistic, and numerous examples from the Coptic sermons may be quoted. Even though normally the preacher would appeal to his audience after a peroration using the expression αὐτέριδε, he could also use the second person singular. For example, in the Homily on the Thief and the Cross (CPG 2622; Clavis Coptica 0395) by Ps.-Theophilus of Alexandria, the author concludes his argument concerning the goodness of God with the words "you have seen (ἀκανθήσετε) now the great compassion of the Father and of his Son towards us..." Likewise, in the Pseudo-Chrysostomic Encomium on the Four Bodiless Beasts, the preacher comments on the meaning of a certain scriptural passage by saying, "you have seen (ἀκανθήσετε) that at the end of the quote..." and, after reporting a discourse made by Jesus to his disciples, the Encomium on the Twelve Apostles (CPG 4281; Clavis Coptica 0331), attributed to Severian of Gabala, remarks: "You have seen (ἀκανθήσετε) a teacher who knows how to teach his students..." 

21 John Chrysostom, who made use of the Second Sophistic’s rhetoric, also employed the verb ἐδείσας in this way; see e.g. the numerous occurrences from Homilia 4 ad illuminandos (CPG 4468), 8,1: ἐδείσας ἑγνωσόμενη; 10,1: ἐδείσας αὐτὸν καθόπερ λέοντα μεμηχάνα; 10,9: ἐδείσας, ἀγαπητέ, ὅτι ἡ μεταμολόσχος. Cf. Th. E. Ameringer, The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Panegyrical Sermons of St. John Chrysostom, Washington 1921. Tito Orlandi was the first who pointed out that the Second Sophistic’s figures of speech occur often in the Coptic homilies, see T. Orlandi, Omelie copte [Corona Patrum], Turin 1981, 24.

22 Quotation taken from the unpublished MS Pierpont Morgan M 595, fol. 144r. This work is preserved in four manuscripts, two of which come from the White Monastery. The only edition, made after a papyrus codex in the Egyptian Museum in Turin, was made by F. Rossi, Trascrizione di un codice Copto del Museo Egizio di Torino, in Memorie della Reale Accademia delle Scienze di Torino 2nd ser., 35 (1883), 64–83 (Coptic text), 84–90 (Italian translation); reprinted in idem, I papiri copti del Museo Egizio di Torino, vol. 1, Turin 1887. A single folio from one of the White Monastery codices, Vienna K 4856, has been published by H. Förster, Kestês und Dêmas, die beiden Schächer am Kreuz – aus einer koptischen Paraphrase der Acta Pilati, in Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum 11 (2008), 405–420, but without the proper identification.


As for the date of this gospel-like text, the echoes it contains of fifth century Christological debates should warn against regarding it as an early document. It is nevertheless interesting to observe that the gospel genre and the revelation dialogue could still be used freely at a relatively late period, whether the purpose of the text was to make specific Christological dogmatic points by putting them into the mouth of Christ himself, or simply general edification. Given the incomplete state of the manuscript, however, definite conclusions regarding the literary genre of the document would be rash. Though the two extant leaves may give us the impression that we are reading a hitherto unknown “gospel,” the hypothesis that the exchange between Jesus and his disciples may have been constructed as part of a sermon or a martyrdom is not to be excluded, since it was not uncommon in the Coptic literature to introduce revelation-discourses into a homiletic framework. Father Paulino Bellet affirmed once in this regard that

La homilía copta tiene, en general, un carácter compósito; junto al desarrollo del tema que es motivo de la exposición parenética, incluye otras varias narraciones sin conexión con la material de la homilía, y ama la inclusión de tradiciones inspiradas en los apócrifos, cuando no en antiguas leyendas populares … la homilética copta acostumbra tratar su texto con máximas libertad y añadir narraciones de fantasía del gusto de los oyentes25.

The scholar that we celebrate in this volume characterized in similar terms the apocryphal writings transmitted by the late Coptic manuscripts, drawing attention at the same time to the problem of their fragmentary character, which can be often misleading:

In realtà parlare di questi testi copti come di apocrifi è il frutto di un equivoco, generato in parte dal particolare stato frammentario in cui sono pervenuti i manoscritti copti, ed in parte dal disconoscimento dell’opera della scuola letteraria copta del VII e VIII secolo26.

(2008), 217-266. A White Monastery codex containing the Encomium on the Twelve Apostles was copied by Zacharias himself; the remnants of the codex in question are: Vatican Borgia 109, 124; Paris BN Copte 161, fol. 35 and Cairo Coptic Museum, sine numero.


In conclusion, we can only express our hope that, by publishing these two leaves of an unknown “gospel-like” text, it may become easier for scholars in the future to identify further fragments of the codex which may have been preserved, or to recognise another version of the same work, so that we may understand better what kind of text we are reading, and what its proper context may be.
this. We are human. If you were human like us, we would have said that just as he overcame his trials, we, too, might overcome. You, being divine, are indeed stronger than everything and at all times. We, however, are humans possessing a weak body. How can we have confidence in this? Did he perhaps say: "You are slow of heart until [
by means of unveiled [divinity],
or a word, because you are ignorant.
Even though the flesh in which I suffered,
was wholly united with divinity into a rational and intelligent soul, and though I conquered by means of divinity, I was human.
Why do you doubt, you un[}
... [it].

For I took a shape in order that you might draw close to me. I received a spirit in accordance with a dispensation (οἰκονομιά), and I have it also that I may send it upon you. I am your whole lump of dough. I will leaven your whole lump. Take...
I am the root, you are the branches. For the water that the root sucks up, the branches share (as well).

I am the head, you are the body. The nourishment that goes into the mouth spreads by way of the head throughout all the members. And the strength that is in the sinews, which begin from.
the membrane of the cover which is in the brain, penetrates along with them all the members. And [the power] of voluntary movement [ . . . . . ] after it has [ . . . . . ] the cover (?) [bכ . . . ] [ . . ] [ . . . . . ] [ . . . . . ] [ . . . . . ] as far as the [ . . ] [ . . ] power (ἐνέργεια) [ . . . . . ] mind (?) and [τάξις] ἱππος [my] grace will be shed, and [νεοκόρισ ἐβολ] it will be shed ἐδωτῆ ὑπ ἦ [Have you] not [πετεύσατ] heard [ἐκ ἡς ἡμ ὑ] [that the] apostles [ . . . . . . . . . ] [ . . . . . . ] that in [π . . . . . . . . . ] [the . . . . . . ] [ . . . . . . . . ]
Indeed I know before I assumed flesh that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. And I know before I suffered that suffering is hard. Nevertheless I let myself be crucified, so that by means of [ . . . . . . ] and [   ] And [ . . . . ] if I see you having suffered, I shall remember the things I had to endure myself. I shall [ . . . . ] a [ . . . in] front of [ . . . . ] [ ] my [grace . . . . ] [   ] [   ] [   ]
fire it is difficult to seize it. What, then, can come from the tree that is dry when the fire blazes high in it with ease? And if I have suffered in the flesh even though I am a god free of passion, being above all these, because they are humans only, even though my grace is with them. And if I laboured in [the] head in [ . . . . . ]
(ii) these, because they are children of humans only,

even though they are zealous for the

children of God.

[But] through my grace I have thought of [them], and I have . . .

[ . . . . . .]

[ . . . . . .]

[ . . . . . .]

help according to [ . . . .

Because of that you also have tribulation in the

world, but take courage,

for I have overcome the world.

You (sg.) have seen . . .

[ . . . . . .]

[ . . . . . .]
For the expression cf. Ps 4:3 ἐως πότε βαρσάρδῳ (Ἀρτάδης βαρσάρδῳ Budge, Psalm 4:2). ὁμεῖο may be completed as ὁμεῖο, or with a feminine noun.

The expression γεμίῃ δέος is frequent in fourth century writers (Athanasius, Didymus, Chrysostom, etc.) and later: the Son did not reveal his “unveiled divinity,” but appeared in the world as a human being.

Whereas the proposition that the flesh of the Logos was united with a rational and intelligent soul is orthodox and Chalcedonian, the formulation “united with divinity into ...” is unusual and perhaps betrays a Monophysite position.


This and the following sentences are written in a Johannine “I am”-style, though the metaphors are chiefly inspired by Paul. For these lines, cf. 1 Cor 5:6, Gal 5:9.

A variation on John 15:5 ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀμπελοῦς, ἡμῖν τὰ κλῆματα (cf. also Apoc 22:16).

The image of Christ as the ‘head’ is elaborated in a medical direction: the head provides the body with nourishment and is the source of the sinews giving the body strength and the power to move. This is based on contemporary medical theories. For a study that provides information on the relevant theories, and also attempts to apply them to the interpretation of the Pauline idea itself, see Clinton E. Arnold, Jesus Christ: ‘Head’ of the Church (Colossians and Ephesians), in Jesus of Nazareth Lord and Christ, ed. Joel B. Green and M. Turner, Grand Rapids 1994, 346–366.

The theory that the sinews, or nerves (νεῦρα), have their starting point in the meninx is particularly associated with Galen; see e.g. De Plac. Hipp. Plat. VII, 3.4–5, 35–36.

Cf. Ps.-Galen, Def. Med. XIX, 366–367 Kühn: νεῦρα τὰ ἀπὸ ἐγκεφαλίου καὶ μυγνήγων ἐκπερικότα, κοινά, ἐξίτερα καὶ ἕτον θερμότερα φλεβῶν καὶ ἀρτηρίων αἴσθηται τὰ τῆς προαρτικῆς κινήσεως εκτελούμενα («the nerves, having been brought forth from the brain and the meninges together, and being drier and less hot than the veins and more sensitive than the arteries, accomplish voluntary movement»). The theory goes back at least to Herophilus in the third century B.C. as quoted e.g. by Rufus of Ephesus, De corp. hum. aph. 150: τὰ δὲ ὀπὸ τοῦ ἐγκεφαλίου βιοστήματα, νεῦρα αἰσθητικά, καὶ προαρτικά, διὰ ὧν αἴσθησις καὶ προαρτικῆ κίνησις καὶ πάσα σώματος πράξεις συνελέβη («and the offshoots from the brain are the
sensory and voluntary motor nerves, through which sensation and voluntary motion and all action of the body are accomplished»; Heinrich von Staden, *Herophilus: The Art of Medicine in Early Alexandria*, Cambridge 1989, 225, and *passim*).

22–24 The reconstruction is uncertain. If the form is the negative perfect I, the djinkim above the n is erroneous.

30–33 Mark 14:38; Matt 26:41. Note that this text is also quoted in the Strasbourg Coptic Gospel Fragment and in the homily by Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, *De Passione 1* (M 595, fol. 10r).

44–50 John 16:33. This text as well is quoted in the Strasbourg Coptic Gospel Fragment.

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