



## “Manuscripts in Motion” - 15-17 November 2012

### Abstracts

**Orna Almogi, CSMC:**

**“Manuscripts and Xylographs in Motion Across the Tibetan Plateau and Beyond”**

Many, if not the great majority, of the manuscripts and xylographs produced within the Tibetan cultural sphere have been destined from the very moment of their production to be shelved in temples, monasteries or chambers. And indeed it is often the case that they remain in their original place of storage for centuries, sometimes perhaps without even being unfolded and read even once. However, manuscripts and xylographs travel within areas of the Tibetan cultural sphere more than it seems in a first glance and what one would perhaps imagine. One of the main reasons for transferring Tibetan books—be they manuscripts or xylographs—from one place to another is no doubt the production of new editions. At times books are moved from one place to another for performative purposes, at other times in order to bring them into a safe place where their existence and dissemination could be secured. In my talk I shall concentrate on the motives and circumstances of transferring Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs and highlight them with some examples as documented in historical traditional sources.

**Alberto Camplani, La Sapienza, Università di Roma/Alin Suciu, Québec, Université Laval:**

**“Coptic Manuscripts in Pieces: Jesus' Wife Gospel, and more”**

On September 18, 2012, during the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies (organized in Rome by three members of the teaching staff of Sapienza University of Rome and Istitutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Paola Buzi, Alberto Camplani, and Tito Orlandi), Professor Karen King delivered a paper concerning a papyrus fragment featuring a portion from a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples. The fragment contains the words: “Jesus said to them: ‘My wife...’ (Coptic: *ta-hime*), which probably refer to Mary Magdalene. Some days before the Congress, Karen King presented her discovery to the media, and, soon after, the draft of her article appeared on the website of the Divinity School of Harvard University. In this article the author addressed some of the fundamental issues posed by the papyrus fragment.

A lively debate took place both during the congress and for some weeks after its conclusion concerning the authenticity of the fragment (is it a forgery or an authentic ancient fragment of text?) as well as its significance (if authentic, how have we to interpret Jesus' words?). The two speakers, Alberto Camplani and Alin Suciu, have participated in this debate from different points of view. Here our intention is to give the listeners an idea of the complexity of the issues involved in this debate and an evaluation of the arguments that have been proposed, to add some new perspectives for what concerns the language, the codicology and the historico-religious significance of the fragment, and to contextualize it within the broader scope of the study of Coptic literary fragments. The latter part of our speech will include a brief description of the modern methods used by the Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari (CMCL) project, which is currently developed in Rome and Hamburg.

**Giuseppe De Gregorio, Università di Salerno:**

**“From Constantinople to Salonica and back, with final destination Rome: a multiple-text-codex “in motion” of Maximos Planudes (Vaticanus Urbinas graecus 125)”**

The history of a remarkable Greek multiple-text-manuscript (Vat. Urb. gr. 125, particularly classical rhetoric and poetry) is presented as case study. The manuscript was produced in the intellectual climate of Maximos Planudes in Constantinople around 1290 and brought to Salonica at the beginning of the 14th century, a city that played an important role in the culture of the Byzantine Empire. More than a century later, the Codex Urbinas fell into the hands of two important Constantinopolitans arguing over Church Union, namely Ioannes Eugenikos militating against Church Union and Isidoros advocating Church Union (later Metropolitan of Kiev and papal legate in Russia). Finally, the journey ended in Italy where, in the second half of the 15th century, the Codex passed into the ownership of Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, before it was brought to Rome together with the remainder of the Biblioteca Urbinate under Pope Alexander VII in the middle of the 17th century.

**Martin Delhey, CSMC:**

**“Manuscripts on Mountain Paths”**

This talk forms part of an on-going research project on a collection of Sanskrit manuscripts which probably originated in the Indian Buddhist monastery of Vikramaśīla. This famous centre of Buddhist learning perished about 1200 CE. The manuscripts under consideration, however, have survived to the present day because they were brought to Nepal and Tibet, before they fell victim to wilful destruction or the unfavourable climate of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The talk will deal with the question what their paratextual, paleographical and codicological features can possibly tell us on their steep uphill journey into, and through, the Himalaya. Since research on this 'after-life' of the monastic collection is still in its early stages, the present talk will consist of preliminary considerations and first findings rather than definitive results.

**Max Fölster, CSMC:**

**“Chinese collectors’ book stamps as a way to trace a manuscript’s ‘life’”**

The use of seals (*yinzhang* 印章) has a long history in China and spread to other East Asian countries (Korea, Japan etc.). Besides the use of imperial and official seals, they were also applied by artists to sign their works and collectors to mark their collectibles. In this last respect they are somewhat comparable to *ex-libris* in the European tradition. But in China new owners would add their seal imprint besides those of previous owners, thus seals of famous collectors or connoisseurs would become an integral part of a work of art. In art history this is well-known and often considered phenomena, which may also be applied to the study of manuscripts. By identifying collectors seals on manuscripts one can trace the 'life' of a particular manuscript as well as reconstruct what manuscripts were in possession of a certain collector.

In a first part the presentation will give an introduction to the general characteristics of Chinese book collectors' seals (*cangshuyin* 藏書印) and in a second part it will be demonstrated what can be learned about one particular manuscript's life by identifying the seals on it, taking the case of a late imperial manuscript.

**Jost Gippert, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main:  
“Wandering Georgian Manuscripts”**

The paper deals with the phenomenon of “wandering” Georgian manuscripts under two aspects: a) the exchange of manuscripts and manuscript-based knowledge in the Middle Ages when the usage of Old Georgian extended over several parts of Eastern Europe and the Near East, and b) the transfer of Old Georgian manuscripts from their original storage places to libraries in the West, with its implications for text transmission and philological studies.

**Vito Lorusso, CSMC:**

**“Manuscripts in motion: the case of ancient Greek philosophical and medical works”**

This paper looks at the circulation of ancient Greek philosophical and medical works in the ancient world. On the basis of some data from literary sources as well as the extant evidence I intend to answer the following questions: was it common practice among the scholars in antiquity to allow the circulation of one’s own works? Secondly, were there any ‘internal manuscripts’, not destined to a wide public but only to the restricted community of disciples? And how were those manuscripts arranged with reference to the scribal technique? Furthermore, did the circulation of previous manuscripts influence anyway the ultimate version of written texts?

**Eva Maschke, CSMC:**

**“Binding fragments in motion: The afterlife of manuscripts”**

Not only do living manuscripts travel - also destroyed manuscripts can make wide journeys in their afterlife as binding fragments or palimpsests. For instance, one of the fragmentary music manuscripts that belongs to the 13th-century repertoire associated with Notre-Dame of Paris made its way to New York and is now found as a flyleaf in an incunable in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University (US-NYcub N-66).

This paper will discuss selected fragmentary sources that transmit the Notre-Dame repertoire and will try to reconstruct their lines of travelling. In some cases, the parent volume allows for hypotheses on the provenance of the music manuscript – or at least on the place where it found its end or changed its function. During the 15th century, the Dominicans seem to have intensively recycled old material from their own libraries. Thus, it is likely that many fragments found in Dominican book bindings also began their lives in a specific Dominican library or travelling with Dominican monks from one monastery to the other. Other fragments found in Cistercian book bindings point to manuscripts travelling along the lines of filiation of the Cistercian order. In the very least, the fragments give us valuable clues about processes of manuscript destruction and manuscript recycling. The example of the Columbia fragment will show how the journey of a manuscript continued under new conditions; other examples will illustrate further strategies of reusing parchment.

**Boryana Pouvkova, CSMC:**

**“A Journey by Sea and Land. The Greek Manuscript Metochion Panagiu Tafu 462”**

The Greek manuscript Metochion Panagiu Tafu 462 written between 1574 and 1577 in Constantinople contains besides two chronicles, the zoological text *Synathroisis* by Damaskenos Studites. The copyist Manuel Malaxos failed to complete his intention and illustrate the animals of the *Synathroisis* which is the reason for the numerous lacunas in the manuscript. Later readers and owners of the book used the opportunity the free spaces offered and put down their own entries. Reading these entries one can reconstruct the long journey of the manuscript by sea and land and learn about the adventures of its owners witnessing a storm or the aftermath of an earthquake.

**Tilman Seidensticker, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena / CSMC:**

**“How Arabic manuscripts moved to German libraries”**

The paper is based on the inventories of Arabic (and, in general, Islamic) manuscripts in the three public German libraries owning the largest collections of Oriental manuscripts, namely Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Muenchen and Forschungsbibliothek Gotha. In each case, the history of acquisitions shows some peculiarities, but a comparison seems to be promising. Are there common characteristic traits in the role of war ("Tuerkenbeute"), of scholars and of travellers and diplomats? And what about the impact of geography and the specific interests of the public in these residential cities in Prussia, Bavaria and Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg?

**Eva Wilden EFEO / CSMC:**

**“On the Threshold between Legend and History: the Afterlife of a Mackenzie Manuscript”**

The 19th century saw the first attempts of writing Indian Historiography in Western languages, such as Wilson's "Historical Sketch of the Kingdom of Pandya" from 1836. For South India one of the major sources for such an undertaking were manuscripts from the extensive collections of Colin Mackenzie, the core stock of today's Government Oriental Manuscript Library. These manuscripts testify to the progressive amalgamation of indigenous traditional and Western modes of presentation and narration. The proposed lecture will deal with one instance of that type, namely the story of TiruvaLluvar, author of the text that is to this day regarded as the crown jewel of Tamil literary production, the TirukkuRaL, and how he vanquished the members of the older literary establishment called "the academy" (Cankam). In this case sources allow us to reconstitute the progression from a medieval puranic legend to an established fact of Tamil literary history.

