



Aethiopia 19 (2016)

International Journal of Ethiopian and
Eritrean Studies

HUGO LUNDHAUG, University of Oslo

Review

PAOLA BUZI, *Coptic Manuscripts 7: The Manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Part 4: Homiletic and Liturgical Manuscripts from the White Monastery: With two documents from Thebes and two Old-Nubian manuscripts*

Aethiopia 19 (2016), 269–273

ISSN: 2194-4024

Edited in the Asien-Afrika-Institut
Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik
der Universität Hamburg
Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

by Alessandro Bausi

in cooperation with

Bairu Tafla, Ulrich Braukämper, Ludwig Gerhardt,
Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg and Siegbert Uhlig

Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA, like the preceding one, is partly monographic, with a section containing the proceedings of the Panel on Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research, from the '19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies', held in Warsaw, Poland, on 24–28 August 2015.

Starting from this issue, the annual bibliography on Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics held from its inception in 1998 for eighteen years by Rainer Voigt is handed over, on Voigt's own will, to a pool of younger scholars, with the substantial support of the AETHIOPICA editorial team. I would like on this occasion to express the deep gratitude of the editorial board of AETHIOPICA and of all scholars in Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics to Rainer Voigt for his fundamental and valuable contribution.

Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
ÄthFor Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
AethFor Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
AION *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
EAE S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
EI² *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I–XII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2005).
EMML Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
JES *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
JSS *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.
NEASt *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.
OrChr *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
PICES 9 A.A. GROMYKO, ed., 1988, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986*, I–VI (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988).
RSE *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli 1983ff.
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig–Wiesbaden–Stuttgart 1847ff.

Reviews

A non-specialist who has attempted to read and understand these inscriptions will at once realise what a precious resource Marrassini has provided. While translations of most of these inscriptions have appeared in various publications, here Marrassini gathers them together in a single place; and while some have sometimes been published as a collection, these collections are either now incomplete¹ or lacking in commentaries to elucidate the contents for non-experts.² Marrassini's book should now therefore be the starting point for all students of the epigraphic evidence, which is so crucial to our understanding of the world which produced them.

In short, this is a wonderful book which will delight specialists and non-specialists alike. It is essential reading.

Phil Booth, Trinity College, Oxford

PAOLA BUZI, *Coptic Manuscripts 7: The Manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Part 4: Homiletic and Liturgical Manuscripts from the White Monastery: With two documents from Thebes and two Old-Nubian manuscripts*, Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, 21, 7 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2014). 274 pp. Price: € 68.00. ISBN: 978-3-515-10711-2.

The publication of a new catalogue of Coptic manuscripts is always a reason for celebration, and this is no exception. In the volume under review, Paola Buzi has catalogued Coptic manuscripts belonging to the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, mostly deriving from the so-called White Monastery near modern-day Sohag,¹ but also including other manuscripts kept in the same collection, including two Sahidic documentary papyri from Thebes, fragments of two liturgical parchment manuscripts in Old Nubian, and some manuscripts with less certain provenance (see below). The White Monastery library, from which most of the fragments catalogued here derive, once contained by far the most extensive collection of Coptic manu-

¹ E.g. the translations in E. Littmann, ed., *Deutsche Aksum-Expedition, IV: Sabäische, Griechische und Altägyptische Inschriften* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1913).

² E.g. in S.C. Munro-Hay, *Aksum: An African Civilisation of Late Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 221–232.

¹ On the White Monastery and its library, see esp. T. Orlandi, 'The Library of the Monastery of Saint Shenute at Atripe', in A. Egberts, B.P. Muhs, and J. van der Vliet, eds, *Perspectives on Panopolis: An Egyptian Town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest: Acts from an International Symposium Held in Leiden on 16, 17 and 18 December 1998*, Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava, 31 (Leiden–Boston, MA: E.J. Brill, 2002), 211–231.

scripts known to have existed,² and the present catalogue contributes to the important work of virtually reconstructing its now widely dispersed remains.³

The catalogue proper, which constitutes the main part of the book, is prefaced by an extensive introduction which provides a general overview of the nature and acquisition of the Coptic manuscripts of this particular collection, as well as specific introductions to the White Monastery manuscripts, the documentary papyri from Western Thebes and the Old Nubian manuscripts, as well as a detailed exposition of the descriptive method used. After the catalogue itself, the book concludes with a number of useful indices and black and white plates.

Like Buzi's previous catalogue of Coptic manuscripts in the Borgia collection at the national library in Naples,⁴ the descriptive method and structure of the present catalogue is inspired by Bentley Layton's catalogue of Coptic manuscripts in the British Museum.⁵ Each catalogue entry includes a detailed physical description of the manuscript or fragment in question, as well as information on its contents, date, and related fragments located in other collections. Finally, each entry includes information on the manuscript or fragment's modern history and relevant bibliographical references. The information is well-structured and comprehensive,⁶ and the excellent indices make the catalogue a highly user-friendly and valuable research tool.

Among the information given in each entry is the date of the manuscript. However, as the dating of Coptic manuscripts can be very tricky in those cases where we do not have dated colophons, it would have been helpful if the catalogue had not only stated the dates, but also the grounds on which the

² See S. Emmel, 'Coptic Literature in the Byzantine and Early Islamic World', in R.S. Bagnall, ed., *Egypt in the Byzantine World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 83–102, esp. 89; Orlandi, 'The Library' (see fn. 1).

³ Here Buzi's catalogue crucially builds on the work of Tito Orlandi's *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* (CMCL) project (<http://www.cmcl.it/>), to which Buzi herself has been a contributor, as well as the important work of S. Emmel, *Shenoute's Literary Corpus*, I–II, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 599–600, Subsidia 111–112 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004).

⁴ P. Buzi, *Catalogo dei manoscritti copti borgiani conservati presso la Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele III" di Napoli: con un profilo scientifico di Stefano Borgia e Georg Zoega e una breve storia della formazione della collezione Borgiana*, *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei: Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche – Memorie, Serie IX*, 25/1 (Roma: Scienze e Lettere Editore Commerciale, 2009).

⁵ B. Layton, *Catalogue of Coptic Literary Manuscripts in the British Library Acquired Since the Year 1906* (London: British Library, 1987).

⁶ It was slightly surprising, however, to find under catalogue entry no. 14, which we are told consists of 'Thirty-three parchment little fragments' (p. 177), that only five of these thirty-three fragments have been given separate treatment (pp. 177–180).

various items have been dated. Concerning item 15 (p. 181), for instance, we are told that the manuscript derives from the fourth century, but we are left in the dark as to the method or criteria with which it has been dated. Moreover, it is somewhat confusing when it is stated in the preface that Ms. or. fol. 3065 and Ms. or. oct. 987 dates from 'the end of the 4th or beginning of the 5th century' (p. 67), while in their catalogue entries the dates are given as '4th century' (p. 181) and 'End of 4th century' (p. 214) respectively.

The small photographic reproductions at the back, similar to what one finds in Layton's catalogue of British Library manuscripts,⁷ give a very useful sampling of the palaeographical features of the manuscripts catalogued. These plates are of good quality and thus a highly welcome feature of the catalogue. It would still have been useful if, in addition, some pictures of complete leaves had been included, such as one finds, e.g., in the second volume of Leo Depuydt's catalogue of Coptic manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library.⁸ The photographs of complete fragments found on p. 271 and the photographs on pp. 272–273 of Ms. or. oct. 987 in both its original and modern bindings are highly commendable, but even more, and larger, images would still have been welcome.

While not a criticism of the catalogue as such, it should be noted that its subtitle, *Homiletic and Liturgical Manuscripts from the White Monastery*, is somewhat misleading, since many of the manuscripts catalogued here include are not usually classified as homiletic or liturgical, and are rather biblical, apocryphal, and hagiographical materials. Thus, one cannot help thinking that it was possible to find a more fitting subtitle for the catalogue.

On a more substantive note, the present reviewer must confess a certain skepticism regarding the assignment of a White Monastery provenance to the two Akhmimic papyrus codices catalogued as nos. 15 and 17 (Ms. or. fol. 3065⁹ and Ms. or. oct. 987 respectively) (pp. 66–68). While a White Monastery provenance is unproblematic with regard to the parchment fragments that constitute the majority of the materials catalogued here, the situation is different with the two much earlier papyrus codices. In the case of these manuscripts the case for a White Monastery provenance lacks substantive supporting evidence. Since no evidence is produced that would link these early manuscripts to the White Monastery in particular or any new information that would mitigate the skepticism expressed by Tito Orlandi in his important 2002 survey of the manuscripts deriving from the White

⁷ Layton 1987 (quoted in n. 7 above).

⁸ L. Depuydt, *Catalogue of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, I–II, *Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 4–5, Oriental Series, 1–2 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993).

⁹ On p. 67 incorrectly referred to as 'Ms. or. oct. 3065'.

Monastery,¹⁰ it is unfortunate that Buzi here only mentions the arguments that have been made in favour of a White Monastery provenance, and not the arguments against it. As Buzi notes, it was argued by scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that these manuscripts derive from the White Monastery (p. 67), and the main argument, beside the statement by the sellers, was that the Akhmimic dialect of the manuscripts pointed towards this particular region, and thus this particular monastery.¹¹ However, as Orlandi has pointed out, since all known White Monastery manuscripts are written in the Sahidic dialect, the Akhmimic dialect of the two manuscripts in question can hardly be used as evidence of a White Monastery provenance.¹² Moreover, although one cannot rule out the possibility that some of the early papyrus manuscripts now held in collections around the world may derive from the White Monastery, no clear-cut case can be made for any manuscript prior to the ninth century being traced back to this particular provenance. There is thus a gap of several centuries between the papyrus manuscripts catalogued as nos 15 and 17 and the securely provenanced parchment manuscripts, which is hard to explain.¹³ The only additional argument brought forward by Buzi is that the other Coptic manuscripts that are part of this Berlin collection derive from the White Monastery (p. 68). Thus, while it would be of great value if one could actually point with some degree of certainty to papyrus codices deriving from the early phases of the White Monastery, it would perhaps have been advisable for a catalogue such as this one to be rather more cautious in assigning provenance to such manuscripts as Ms. or. fol. 3065 and Ms. or. oct. 987.

Finally it is the reviewer's sad duty to point out the unfortunate fact that the catalogue suffers from a distinct lack of proofreading, resulting in relatively frequent and varied typographical mistakes that somewhat lowers its overall merit. While these mistakes are mostly inconsequential and do not in general detract from the usefulness of the catalogue,¹⁴ there are also a few cases where it may create some confusion. A couple of examples will suffice:

¹⁰ Orlandi, 'The Library', 220–224.

¹¹ See e.g. C. Schmidt, 'Die Urschrift der Pistis Sophia', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*, 24 (1925), 218–239, here 228, quoted on p. 68 of the catalogue under review.

¹² Orlandi, 'The Library', 223.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ E.g., such mistakes as the double listing of *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* in the abbreviations list on p. 14 (once in the correct and once in the wrong location); or the nonsensical reference 'Cf. the Preface' on p. 58, footnote 4, in the preface itself; oddities such as the reference to eighteenth-century scholar Rafael Tuki as a 'modern scholar' (p. 68); turns of phrase that may sound odd in English (e.g. 'The manuscript ... was payed

Reviews

(1) In catalogue entry no. 3, Ms. or. fol. 1350 (p. 95), a reader may be surprised to find that although the entry is designated as 'Evangelia', the contents are in fact *Vita Pachomii* and *Transitus Mariae*. Moreover, while it is stated in the main description of the entry that Ms. or. fol. 1350 is in fact three leaves from three different codices, footnote 1 refers to 'the problematic dating of the codex' in singular. There is, as it turns out, a natural explanation for all this. The statement on p. 95, 'Evangelia, 10th–11th centuries c.' and its footnote are in fact exactly the same as that found in catalogue entry no. 2 (Ms. or. fol. 1349, a fragment of the Gospel of Matthew) on p. 92, which thus seems to have been inadvertently copied over to p. 94 as well.

(2) On p. 108, in the description of catalogue entry no. 4, fol. 5, we find in the bibliographical entry a reference to 'Schmitz-Mink 1986–1991, I, 322, 328–29 (sa 121)'. For some reason this bibliographical entry also has a footnote stating 'For different opinions about the date see also Schmitz-Mink 1986–1989, I, 322'. In addition to being slightly puzzled by this superfluous footnote, the reader is thus also left wondering who else it is, apart from Schmitz-Mink, who discusses the date of this manuscript, as no other study is in fact mentioned.

While it is difficult to escape the conclusion that most such mistakes could easily have been weeded out with proper proofreading, these minor criticisms in no way diminish the fact that this is an important work which should be included in any self-respecting Coptological library.

Hugo Lundhaug, University of Oslo

DENIS NOSNITSIN, ed., *Veneration of Saints in Christian Ethiopia. Proceedings of the International Workshop Saints in Christian Ethiopia: Literary Sources and Veneration, Hamburg, April 28–29, 2012*, Supplement to AETHIOPICA: International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies, 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015). xxxix, 274 pp., 84 ills, 4 tables. Price: € 36.00. ISBN: 978-3-447-10399-2.

The study of Ethiopian saints has a long and venerable history. It began over a century ago with the publication and editing of the relatively small number of manuscripts available in European libraries. During the second half of the twentieth century, it expanded to include more texts and began to identify and microfilm the large number of manuscripts found in the country's numerous monasteries. In recent years, digitalization has further expanded the availability of texts.

450 Egyptian pound' (p. 183)); simple spelling mistakes (e.g. 'Douple' for 'Double', and 'shor' for 'short' (p. 182)); or even words inadvertently left in another language, such as 'und' for 'and' (p. 177).