TESTI
Antichità, Medioevo e Umanesimo

Latin and Coptic

Languages, Literatures, Cultures in Contact

edited by
Maria Chiara Scappaticcio
and Alessia Pezzella

Federico II University Press

fedOA Press

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5

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I contributi originali pubblicati nei volumi di questa collana sono sottoposti a doppia lettura anonima di esperti (double blind peer review)

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Latin and Coptic : Languages, Literatures, Cultures in Contact / edited by Maria Chiara Scappaticcio and Alessia Pezzella. – Napoli : FedOAPress, 2022. – 228 p. ; 21 cm. – (Testi : Antichità, Medioevo e Umanesimo ; 5).

Accesso alla versione elettronica: http://www.fedoabooks.unina.it

ISBN: 978-88-6887-122-2
DOI: 10.6093/978-88-6887-122-2
ISSN: 2612-0518

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (Grant agreement no. 636983); ERC–PLATINUM project, University of Naples 'Federico II' – Principal Investigator: Maria Chiara Scappaticcio.

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Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II
Centro di Ateneo per le Biblioteche "Roberto Pettorino"
Piazza Bellini 59-60
80138 Napoli, Italy
http://www.fedoapress.unina.it/
Published in Italy
Prima edizione: marzo 2022
Gli E-Book di FedOAPress sono pubblicati con licenza
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Indice

M.C. Scappaticcio, *Preface* 7

T. Orlandi, *Reflections on the Use of Latin in Late Antique Egypt* 9

P. Buzi, ⲙⲛⲧϩⲣⲱⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ*: Reflections on the Forms of Use of the 'Language of the Romans' in Late Antique Egypt. Textual, Archaeological and Epigraphic Sources* 35

1. *The Passive Assimilation of Latin in Late Antique Coptophone Egypt* 41
2. *The Tenuous (But Not Useless) Archaeological Traces* 46
3. *Latin as a Language of Status and its Range of Use* 58

M.C. Scappaticcio, *Notes on the Circulation of Latin Language and Literature in Coptic Contexts* 75

1. *The* History of the Monks in Egypt, *with a Diversion on Palestine* 77
2. *The Trilingual Theon* 83
3. *Vestiges of an Educational Route: Readings and Tools for Learning Latin* 91
4. *Readers, Readings, Schools, Authors* 96

S. Torallas Tovar, *Latin in the Egyptian Monasteries: A Context for Linguistic Interference* 107

1. *Linguistic Landscape in the Egyptian Monasteries: Multilingual Spaces: Travellers and Pilgrims* 111
    - 1.1. *Distribution in Houses according to Language* 113
    - 1.2. *Language Learning and Exposure* 115
    - 1.3. *Use of Interpreters* 117
2. *Exchange of Loanwords* 119
    - 2.1. *Latin in Coptic* 120
    - 2.2. *Coptic in Latin* 125
3. *Conclusion* 134

A. Pezzella, *Remarks on the Scope and the Functions of the Code-switching in the Letters of Theon* 137

1. *The Dossier of Theon* 139
2. *Code-switching in the Letters of Theon* 142
    - 2.1. *Code-switching to Latin in the Coeval Greek Epistles from Oxyrhynchus: An Overview* 147
    - 2.2. *The Introductory Lines* 152
    - 2.3. *The Greeting Formula* 162
    - 2.4. *The Address* 167
3. *Conclusions* 169

M. Pedone, *Small Remarks on Latin-Greek-Egyptian Multilingualism in a Late Record of Court Proceedings from Aphrodito* 175

O. Salati, *Notes on the Formula* Sator Areto *in the Late Antique Egypt* 185

1. *Structure, Origin, and Significance of the Formula* 186
2. *The Formula in Coptic Egypt* 192
    - 2.1. *From* Sator Arepo *to* Sator Areto 192
    - 2.2. *Instances of the Formula Alone* 193
    - 2.3. *Instances with Prayers, Magic Texts, and Other Formulas* 195
3. *Conclusions* 197

Abbreviations 199
Bibliography 201
Index locorum 221
Manuscript Index 225

Notes on the Circulation of Latin Language and Literature in Coptic Contexts*

MARIA CHIARA SCAPPATICCIO
Università degli Studi di Napoli ‘Federico II’

While in a monastery in Bethlehem, John Cassian met Abba Panuph and this meeting was determinant for both his and his friend Germanus’ decision to leave for Egypt, which was the heart of the ascetic movement[1]. John Cassian stayed in Egypt for fifteen years. It was the end of the 4th century AD. There is an episode attributed by Cassian to his stay in a village of Lower Egypt called Diolcus, and this episode is narrated in the fifth book on avidity (*de spiritu gastrimargiae*) of Cassian’s *Institutes of the Coenobia* (*De institutis coenobiorum et de octo principalium vitiorum remediis*). The episode runs as follows: while Cassian was in Diolcus, a certain Simeon arrived from Italy and he was totally ignorant of the Greek language, which made him inappropriate for several tasks proper to monks living in that place; thus Simeon was given the role of scribe, and precisely that of scribe of Latin books, although very few people in that

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* The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (Grant agreement no. 636983); ERC-PLATINUM project, University of Naples ‘Federico II’, which I lead as Principal Investigator.

[1] Cassian. *inst.* 4, 21-32; *conl.* 17; on John Cassian – whose origins are debated between Scythia Minor and Gallia – see R.J. Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian. Aristocrats, Ascetism, and Reformation in Fifth-Century Gaul*, Oxford 2007 and R. Alciati, *Monaci d’Occidente. Secoli IV-IX*, Roma 2018, pp. 41-61, with bibliography.

Egyptian area would have read a book in Latin[2]. Both the lack of use for scribes who could write codices in Latin and the complete ignorance of this language by all the monks of Diolcus (according to Cassian) are contradicted by what we know of the circulation of Latin. Our evidence comes from the *History of the Monks in Egypt*, from the *Apophthegmata Patrum* and from other brief and indirect references. One finds such references in a literary production linked to Christian milieux, from Latin 'books' having circulated in monastic environments and, more in general, from late antique Egypt[3]. This is a thin and subtle cross section, and especially an untapped cross section[4].

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[2] Cassian. *inst.* 5, 39, 1-2: «*cum frater nobis optime carus nomine Symeon, penitus Graeci sermonis ignarus, e partibus Italiae commeasset, quidam seniorum, erga eum utpote peregrinum caritatis opus quodam redhibitionis colore cupiens exhibere, inquirit ab eo cur otiosus sederet in cella, per hoc coniciens eum tam otii pervagatione quam penuria necessariarum rerum diutius in ea durare non posse, certus neminem posse inpugnationes solitudinis tolerare nisi eum, qui propriis manibus victum sibimet fuerit parare contentus. Quo respondente nihil se nec nosse nec praevalere ex his quae illic exercebantur a fratribus operari praeter librariam manum, si tamen ullus in Aegypti regione Latinum codicem usui esset habiturus, tum ille tandem nanctus occasionem, qua posset desideratum pietatis opus velut debiti colore mercari, ex deo haec inventa est, inquit, occasio: nam olim quaerebam qui apostolum Latinum hac mihi manu perscriberet. Etenim habeo fratrem militiae laqueis obligatum et adprime Latinis instructum, cui de scripturis sanctis aliquid ad legendum aedificationis eius obtentu transmittere cupio*»; see also 5, 39, 3: «*universis in illa regione* (scil. *Aegypto*) *notitia linguae huius* (scil. *Symeonis*) *penitus ignaris*». Unlike Simeon, John Cassian himself had to be well integrated into the monastic community of Diolcus, which would imply that he was also linguistically integrated and will have known Greek, besides Latin. As for the *oppidum* of Diolcus, in Egypt, see P.M. Fraser, *The ΔΙΟΛΚΟΣ of Alexandria*, «The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology», 47 (1961), pp. 134-138.

[3] An overview on the impact of Christianisation on the multilingualism of Egypt is found in both the pioneering G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'Eglise ancienne*, Paris 1948, and especially in A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Église d'Egypte au IV^{e} siècle (328-373)*, Roma 1996, pp. 662-670. C. Rapp, *The Use of Latin in the Context of Multilingual Monastic Communities in the East*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*,

1. *The* History of the Monks in Egypt*, with a Diversion on Palestine*

The ‘travel journal’ of seven monks moving from Palestine to Egypt at the end of the 4th century AD, passing across the main monastic communities where they met important personalities, undoubtedly is the point of departure for a reflection on the circulation of Latin within the cultural environments where Coptic literature circulated[5]. The monks animating the itinerary of the *History of the Monks in Egypt* did not have to be familiar with the Egyptian language, which occasioned them to see, at the offer of Abba Apollonios, as guides some brothers who would have had a deep knowledge of Greek, of Latin and of the local language(s)[6].

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cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 93-107 is focused on Latin. In these aforementioned studies, the analysis is based upon indirect witnesses of the role of Latin, and a quick reference to some glossaries on papyrus can be found only *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[4] See A. Papaconstantinou, *Introduction*, in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, cur. Ead., Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2010, pp. 1-16, esp. 5: «its (*scil.* of the rise of Coptic) concomitance with a reinforced use of Latin has never been investigated, and this would no doubt hold interesting results».

[5] On the *History of the Monks in Egypt* see the introduction by E. Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe-VIIIe siècles)*, Warsaw 2009, pp. 12-15 and the more recent volume by A. Cain, *The Greek* Historia monachorum in Aegypto. *Monastic Hagiography in the Late Fourth Century*, Oxford 2016.

[6] *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 7, 62 (Festugière): «ὁ δὲ ἅγιος Ἀπολλῶ τρεῖς ἐπιλεξάμενος ἄνδρας ἱκανοὺς ἐν λόγῳ καὶ ἐν πολιτείᾳ καὶ ἐμπείρους ὄντας τῆς Ἑλλενικῆς διαλέκτου καὶ Ῥωμαϊκῆς καὶ Αἰγυπτιακῆς

In late antique Palestine, linguistic interaction was certainly alimented by (wealthy) pilgrims coming from the Latin-speaking West or by a few (and unavoidably wealthy) educated monks who used to learn Latin together with the local language and Greek[7]. The *Pilgrimage* (*Peregrinatio*) of the Gallic (or Hispanic) Etheria / Egeria is a precious witness describing a multilingual Jerusalem where Syr-

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καὶ συμπροπέμπων ἡμῖν αὐτοὺς ἐνετέλλετο μὴ πρότερον ἀφιέναι ἡμᾶς, πρὶν ἄν ἱκανῶς ἔχοιμεν τοὺς πατέρας ὅλους θεωρήσαντες πληροφορηθῆναι» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 7, 16, 3 (Schulz-Flügel): «*et cum paene omnes promptissime semetipsos obtulissent et progredi nobiscum vellent, ipse sanctus pater elegit ex omnibus tres, qui et Graecam linguam et Aegyptiam bene nossent, ut sicubi necessarium fuisset interpretarentur nobis, quique et in adlocutionibus suis aedificare nos possent*». On this passage see Cain, *The Greek* Historia cit., p. 34; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., where this phenomenon is interpreted in a social perspective, with Latin being like a ‘social status-marker’. The Latin version of the text clearly describes a situation of Greek-Coptic bilingualism, while the Greek one puts the knowledge of Greek on the same level as that of Latin and Coptic.

[7] The contribution by Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit. – where an exhaustive and updated bibliography can be found – is based on the interesting assumption that ecclesiastical councils, on one side, and pilgrims, on the other side, must be considered among the main engines of the circulation of Latin within the monastic communities. In fact, many pilgrims moved from the Western empire to the Holy Land and they often decided to spend several years of their lives there. Cases of local monks from the Judaic-Palestinian area who knew Latin are rare, as a certain *Gabrielios* known thanks to the *Vita Euthymii* of Cyril of Scythopolis (38). On this *Gabrielios* see *Égérie. Journal de voyage (Itinéraire) et lettre sur la B^se^ Égérie*, ed. P. Maraval, Paris 1982, p. 316; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 101. On the circulation and presence of Latin in Palestine, from the 1st century AD to Late Antiquity, see J. Geiger, *How Much Latin in Greek Palestine?*, in *Aspects of Latin. Papers from the Seventh International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics (Jerusalem, April 1993)*, cur. H. Rosén, Innsbruck 1996, pp. 39-57, where literary sources are explored together with direct evidence mainly of archaeological provenance.

iac, Greek and Latin coexisted, with many being the *Graecolatini*[8]. Jerome of Stridon benefitted from the support of the rich Roman Paula to spend thirty-four years of his life in the vicinity of Jerusalem, where he devoted himself to the crucial challenge of translating into Latin the Bible and also, among others, three fundamental texts of monastic rule, namely the precepts of Pachomius, Theodore and Horsiesius, all made available to Jerome via a Greek translation from the original[9]. The nuns of the nunnery founded by Paula in Bethlehem were multilingual, as was the Roman benefactress herself, and they certainly mastered Greek and Latin, together with Aramaic[10]. Between the end of the 4th and the beginnings of the 5th century AD, another wealthy Roman, Melania the Elder, made it possible for Rufinus of Aquileia to stay at the monastery of the

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[8] *Peregr. Aeth.* 47, 3-4: «*et quoniam in ea provincia pars populi et Grece et Siriste novit, pars etiam alia per se Grece, aliqua etiam pars tantum Siriste, itaque quoniam episcopus, licet Siriste noverit, tamen semper Greco loquitur et numquam Siriste: itaque ergo stat semper presbyter, qui, episcopo Greco dicente, Siriste interpretatur, ut omnes audiant, quae exponuntur. Lectiones etiam, quecumque in ecclesia leguntur, quia necesse est Grece legi, semper stat, qui Siriste interpretatur propter populum, ut semper discant. Sane quicumque hic Latini sunt, id est qui nec Siriste nec Grece noverunt, ne contristentur, et ipsis exponitur eis, quia sunt alii fratres et sorores Grecolatini, qui Latine exponunt eis*», on which see Maraval, *Égérie* cit., pp. 315-316; Papaconstantinou, *Introduction* cit., pp. 15-16; *Egeria. Itinerarium*, ed. G. Röwekamp, Freiburg im Breisgau 2017, p. 276; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., pp. 95-96.

[9] Jerome's *Rules of Pachomius* – collected in *Pachomiana Latina: règle et épîtres de saint Pachôme, épître de saint Théodore et Liber de saint Orsiesius, texte latin de saint Jérôme*, ed. A. Boon, Louvain 1932 – can thus be interpreted as a 'second degree' translation; that is, as a translation of a translation. Jerome's Latin version of the *Rules of Pachomius* is the only extant one, and this issue will be further discussed below. See Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 96.

[10] Hier. *epist.* 108, 29, on which see *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Before arriving in Palestine, Rufinus spent eight years in Egypt and he played a decisive role in transmitting the Eastern monastic rule to the Latin-speaking West[11]. A Latin translation of the *History of the Monks in Egypt* by Rufinus is known, and the name of Rufinus is also linked to what is known on monasticism in Egypt from Sozomen's *Church History* (in Greek), later translated by Cassiodorus in the *Tripertita*[12].

What is known of Egypt is party different from Palestine, and the circulation of Latin in its Christian milieux can be better understood within a more general reflection on the role this language had in Late Antiquity, in such a province where multilingualism meant multiculturalism[13]. There are evanescent traces of Latin-speaking 'islands' such as that of the Monastery of the Metanoia, near Alexandria, or that of the house directed by Theodore of Alexandria[14], and Latin native-speakers are rarely met among the characters using Latin in some tales of the *History of the Monks*. The case of Arsenios, if this Arsenios is the same «abba» from Rome one reads about in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* seems to be an isolated one[15]. In the *Apophthegmata* one reads that Arsenios was a grammarian at the court of Theodosius I and teacher of Arcadius and Honorius, who decided to leave the Constantinople court to become a hermit in Egypt. The Arsenios of the *Apophthegmata* certainly knew Latin – which might have been his native language – and Greek, but he did not even know the alphabet of the language spoken by an Egyptian farmer who tested him orally[16].

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[11] See *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

[12] The links between these three works are repeatedly emphasised in Cain, *The Greek* Historia cit., with bibliography. The discussion of the relationship between these works is all but closed, and the priority of Latin to Greek (shared by Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit.) or vice versa is a debated topic.

[13] On multilingualism in Egypt see J.-L. Fournet, *The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 418-451 (with bibliography), where on Latin in Christian environments one reads: «the data are scant and difficult to use. Despite everything, Latin remained marginal: Greek was the official language of the church, Coptic its natural language and that more customary in monastic milieus» (p. 429). A new assessment of the role Latin played in Egypt and in the Greek-speaking and multilingual Eastern empire will be possible only by moving to the new *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (*CLTP*), where a higher number of Latin texts on papyrus is collected than in the previous corpora. On Coptic literature in 3rd-4th century AD Egypt see P. Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad of Translations and Literary Interweavings (3rd-6th Centuries). A Reconsideration of Earlier Coptic Literature*, in *Egitto crocevia di traduzioni*, cur. F. Crevatin, Trieste, 2018 pp. 15-67, with exhaustive bibliographical references.

Unlike the monks surrounding Apollonius, the monks of the circle of Copres had to ignore Latin. While visiting the Egyptian hermit, one of the Palestinian brothers, who seemed to have dozed off while all the others were attentively listening to Copres, was blamed by an older monk. He later awoke (or «got up») and started inexplicably (*secretius*) talking in Latin (*Latino sermone*) to reveal to his travel companions what he saw in his vision of the book with golden letters Copres had in his hands[17]. Both the Greek and the Latin version of the *History of Monks* seem to attribute to Latin the same role as an 'elitist' language, useful for keeping some interlocutors off.

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[14] See below p. 96.

[15] *PG* LXV 71-440; see Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., pp. 102-103. Recent studies support the possibility that the *Apophthegmata* – a collection of sayings and episodes highlighting the religious wisdom peculiar to Christian environments in the desert of Egypt – were put together in 5th-century AD Palestine; see Z.B. Smith, *Philosopher-Monks, Episcopal Authority, and the Care of Self. The Apophthegmata Patrum in Fifth-century Palestine*, Turnhout 2017, with an abundant bibliography to understand the state-of-the-art.

[16] *PG* LXV 89: «‘Ἀββᾶ Ἀρσένιε, πῶς τοσαύτην παίδευσιν Ῥωμαϊκὴν καὶ Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπιστάμενος, τοῦτον τὸν ἀγροῖκον περὶ τῶν σῶν λογισμῶν ἐρωτᾷς;’ ‘Τὴν μὲν Ῥωμαϊκὴν καὶ Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπίσταμαι παίδευσιν· τὸν ἀλφάβητον τοῦ ἀγροίκου τούτου οὔπω μεμάθηκα’», on which see L.I. Larsen, *Early Monasticism and the Rhetorical Tradition. Sayings and Stories as School Texts*, in *Education and Religion in Late Antique Christianity. Reflections, Social Contexts and Genres*, cur. P. Gemeinhardt, L. Van Hoof, P. Van Nuffelen, London - New York 2016, pp. 13-33, esp. 13-16; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 103.

It was also narrated that the pioneer of cenobitic monasticism, Pachomius, was totally ignorant of both Greek – which actually seems impossible – and Latin. From birth, he only practised Egyptian. But there is an episode showing Pachomius as the most brilliant among the σχολαστικοί while speaking both Latin and Greek[18]. A Roman reached Pachomius to confess, but he did not accept making his confession via a translator. Thus, after having prayed for three hours, a brief letter on papyrus fell upon Pachomius from Heaven. Pachomius attentively read that letter, and he learnt all the languages. So, he approached the Roman and started talking to him, speaking Greek and Latin accurately[19]. The miraculous acquisition of all the languages by Pachomius sounds like an anecdote, but some details highlight aspects of the linguistic reality of that time. The Roman would have perfectly understood both Greek and Latin, and the question remains whether speaking other languages than the local Egyptian ones was a necessity within the Eastern monastic environment, if only to indulge the important flow of pilgrims.

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[17] *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 10, 25 (Festugière): «καὶ ὡς ἦν ἔτι ταῦτα διηγούμενος ἡμῖν Κόπρης ὁ πατήρ, ἀπονυστάξας εἷς ἐξ ἡμῶν ἀδελφὸς ἀπιστίᾳ περὶ τῶν λεγομένων φερόμενος ὁρᾷ βιβλίον θαυμαστὸν ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐπικείμενον χρυσοῖς γράμμασι γεγραμμένον καὶ ἐφεστῶτα ἄνδρα τινὰ πολιὸν μετὰ ἀπειλῆς αὐτῷ λέγοντα· 'Οὐκ ἀκούεις προσεχῶς τοῦ ἀναγνώσματος, ἀλλά νυστάζεις;' ὁ δὲ ταραχθεὶς εὐθὺς ἡμῖν ἀκροωμένοις αὐτοῦ τὸ ὁραθὲν Ῥωμαϊστὶ ἐξέφηνεν» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 9, 7, 2 (Schulz-Flügel): «*et cum haec nobis Copres senior enarraret, unus ex fratribus nostris quasi incredulitate eorum quae dicebantur, taediare coepit et prae taedio dormitare. Cumque somno fuisset oppressus, vidit per visum librum aureis litteris scriptum in manibus senis Copretis, ex quo narratio eius deduci videbatur, et adsistentem quendam clarissimi aspectus virum canitie venerandum cum comminatione magna sibi dicentem: cur non audis adtente quae recitantur, sed incredulus dormitas? At ille conturbatus evigilat et statim nobis secretius latino sermone quae viderat enarrabat*». Notice that the Latin *secretius* does not have an equivalent in the Greek version of the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*.

[18] *Paralipomena (seu Ascetica) de SS. Pachomio et Theodoro* 27 (154-155 Halkin; the *Paralipomena* are called *Vita Tertia* in this edition). On this episode see S. Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 17-43, esp. 37-38 and Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 105; in both these studies the passage is quoted according to *Le corpus athénien de Saint Pachôme, avec une traduction française*, ed. F. Halkin, Geneva 1982, p. 89, where the episode Περὶ τοῦ Ῥωμαιοῦ is given according to a different *recensio* transmitting it in a mutilated way.

2. *The Trilingual Theon*

If compared to the more common Greek-Coptic bilingualism[20], trilingualism among monks like a certain – and «holy» –

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[19] *Paralipomena (seu Ascetica) de SS. Pachomio et Theodoro* 27 (155, 12-16 Halkin): «ἐπὶ ὥρας τρεῖς προσευχομένου αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλὰ παρακαλοῦντος τὸν Θεὸν περὶ τούτου, ἄφνω ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατεπέμφθη ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τῇ δεξιᾷ ὡς ἐπιστόλιον χάρτινον γεγραμμένον καὶ ἀναγνοὺς αὐτὸ ἔμαθεν πασῶν τῶν γλωσσῶν τὰς λαλιάς ... καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ Ἑλληνιστὶ καὶ Ῥωμαϊστὶ ἀπταίστως, ὥστε τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἀκούσαντα λέγειν περὶ τοῦ μεγάλου ὅτι πάντας ὑπερβάλλει τοὺς σχολαστικοὺς εἰς τὴν διάλεκτον».

[20] An exhaustive analysis on Greek-Coptic bilingualism is found in S.J. Clackson, *Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 73-104 and in many contributions collected in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit. The theme of Greek-Coptic bilingualism is very fertile and it has been particularly explored in recent years, especially thanks to the acquisitions due to papyrology and to the discovery of several and famous Greek-Coptic archives, such as that linked to the name of Dioscorus of Aphrodito. On

Theon undoubtedly was both exceptional and necessary to assure that pilgrims from the Latin-speaking West (and Latin-speaking themselves) could also be instructed during their itineraries in the East.

There is an epistolary collection, though it is fragmentary, which bears the name of Theon. It comes from late antique Oxyrhynchus. It is possible that Theon, the sender of these three letters, was the famous ἅγιος / *sanctus* Theon of the *History of the Monks*. The famous Theon lived in the vicinity of Oxyrhynchus between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century AD; he lived like an anchorite in a small cell and remained silent for thirty years, only using tablets to answer the questions foreign people put to him. If the Theon who sent these letters is the famous Theon, he would have been familiar with Greek, with Latin, and with the Egyptian autochthonous language[21].

Theon's knowledge of Greek, Latin and Egyptian must have seemed something exceptional to the Palestinian monks, and would likely have been attributed to divine grace. In Rufinus' version of the *History* there is a different relationship among the three languages, with Latin coming up beside Egyptian and Greek and with trilingualism interpreted as a completely human competence[22].

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the reasons for translating into Coptic see A. Camplani, *Sulla multifunzionalità del tradurre in copto: note sparse su frammenti copti tardoantichi, Cicerone e moderne ipotesi di ricerca*, in Crevatin, *Egitto crocevia* cit., pp. 101-144, with rich bibliography.

[21] Theon is the subject of the entire sixth chapter of the *History of Monks*. As for the identification of Theon, the sender of the three aforementioned epistles, and the Theon of the *History of Monks*, see L.H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, Leiden 2012, pp. 216-217, with bibliographical references. On Theon's letters see the detailed contribution by Pezzella below.

[22] See *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 6, 3 (Festugière): «πεπαίδευτο δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ τριπλῇ τῶν διαλέξεων χάριτι ἔν τε Ἐλληνικοῖς καὶ Ῥωμαϊκοῖς καὶ

Two of the three of Theon’s letters are structured in such a way that the main text in Greek – thus, the main topic discussed in the letter, always supported by scriptural quotes – is put between opening and closing lines in Latin[23]. The opening lines consist of an apparently formulaic phrase which is like a maxim on the divine will which lies behind human mortality. The closing lines consist of final greetings (in one case) and of the address, which is also expressed in a very unusual (and otherwise unknown) manner[24].

Αἰγυπτιακοῖς ἀναγνώσμασιν, καθὼς καὶ παρὰ πολλῶν καὶ παρ᾽αὐτοῦ ἐκείνου ἐμάθομεν» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 6, 7 (Schulz-Flügel): «*erat autem supradictus vir eruditus non solum Aegyptiorum et Graecorum lingua, sed etiam Latinorum, ut et ab ipso et ab his, qui ei aderant, didicimus*». On these lines see also Cain, *The Greek* Historia cit., p. 12; and Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 103.

[23] The following three texts belong to Theon’s epistolary: *P.Köln* IV 200 (*C.Epist.Lat.* 244 *bis*; *ChLA* XLVII 1455; L.H. Blumell, T.A. Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus. Texts, Documents, and Sources*, Waco 2015, pp. 594-596 n. 158); *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 (*CPL* 270; *C.Epist.Lat.* 243; *ChLA* XLVII 1410; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 585-589 n. 156); *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 (*CPL* 271; *C.Epist.Lat.* 244; *ChLA* XLVII 1411; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 589-593 n. 157). Although initially dated between the 5th and the 6th century AD, the dating of the three letters has been more recently fixed to the end of 4th century AD for both palaeographic and strictly textual reasons, but also because of the possible identity of the Theon of these letters and the Theon of the *History of the Monks in Egypt*. See L.H. Blumell, *Reconsidering the Dates of Three Christian Letters: P. Oxy. XVIII 2193, 2194, P. Köln IV 200 and a Reference in the* Historia monachorum in Aegypto, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 54 (2008), pp. 219-223, and Id., *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 212-217, with an analysis of these letters. It is worth underlining that the ductus of the Greek script is very influenced by that of the Latin script, with some peculiar cases of character-switching; see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 586, with bibliography.

[24] *P.Köln* IV 200 l. 10: «*vale apud deum*»; v: «[*r*]*edde serbo dei te*[*mpore Apphuti*]»; *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 v: «*redde Pascenti serbo dei tempore*»; XVIII 2194 v: «*ser-*

Two letters are addressed to the same recipient called Pascentius. In one case the letter asks for justice in favour of one woman and her son who had been victims of an offensive act (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193); in another case the letter defends a veteran called Paul who had been damaged by a ship (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194). These kinds of request would imply that the otherwise unknown Pascentius would have had an administrative or legal authority. In both cases, Theon quotes scriptural passages in Greek – from the Book of Job (36:19a) and from the Ecclesiastes (12:2) – chosen according to the context, and in both cases in order to put some Biblical *exempla* under the eyes of his addressee Pascentius. A quotation from Genesis (48:16a) supports the request addressed to someone whose name is not extant in the third letter but who shows affection towards a certain Aphous, a man who was suffering some difficulties. This Aphous has been identified with one of the bishops of Oxyrhynchus[25].

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bo dei tempore Pascentio». A different interpretation is found in P.J. Sijpesteijn, *Apphus and Pascentius:* servo dei tempore, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 40.1 (1994), pp. 69-70; J. O'Callaghan, *Nota sobre* 'servus Dei' *en los papiros*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 106 (1995), pp. 201-202 and Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 214. The letter known from *P.Köln* IV 200 is lacking the initial section, which has fallen into the lacuna, and it cannot be stated with certainty whether the same opening lines of the two other letters could have been found here, with an admonition to Pascentius. This letter is addressed to a certain Aphous – a name of Egyptian origin, on which see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 411 – and it is characterised by an encouraging and affectionate tone. It has even been thought that Theon and Aphous would have been linked by a very strict relationship (*Ibid.*, p. 596). This Aphous cannot be identified with the otherwise unknown Aphous, son of Theon, known from another letter from a Christian milieu of Oxyrhynchus, dating after 16 February AD 295 (*P.Oxy.* I 143 v: *Ibid.*, pp. 408-411 n. 113), and from another Oxyrhynchus document dating to AD 322 (*P.Oxy.* LXI 4125 ll. 5, 14).

[25] See Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 217.

The opening is of a formulaic kind, and it is repeated in both a *minor* and in a *maior* version in two of the three letters[26]. The similarity between what Theon wrote and the answer the Alexandrian Apollonius gave to the governor Perennius (perhaps Tigidius Perennius, praetorian prefect in Rome between AD 180 and 185) – who had ordered his arrest and imposed a court summons – is both flooring and undeniable[27]. It especially offers clues to the quality of

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[26] *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 ll. 1-3: «*una mortis condidit* | *deus lues autem com* | *m*[*o*]*rtis fieri*». In the *editio princeps* the possibility was presented that these lines could contain a quote from the *proverbia Salomonis* (2:23-24: «*quoniam Deus creavit hominem inexterminabilem et ad imaginem similitudinis suae fecit illum: invidia autem diaboli mors introivit in illum*»); see *P.Oxy.* XVIII, p. 154. But it is evident that, although similar in content, Theon's letter does not bear a quotation from the Latin version of the sayings of Salomon (or at least the version known from the *Vetus*). For a different interpretation see L.H. Blumell, *A Potential Source for the Latin Preface in P.Oxy. XVIII 2194*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 183 (2012), pp. 72-74 and Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 587-588. Compare also the expanded version known from *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 ll. 1-5: «[- - -]̣ [- - - | - - -]*os et probatos et inperato-*|*-rum et Senatorum et maximo disserto et pauperos una mortis condidit deus lues autem com mortis fieri*», on which *Ibid.*, pp. 592-593. It has already been observed that the possible Latin opening lines of *P.Köln* IV 200 are not extant.

[27] The analogy with Apollonius' martyrology is observed for the first time in Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit. See *A.Apoll.* 25: «γινώσκειν δέ σε θέλω, Περέννιε, ὅτι καὶ ἐπί βασιλεῖς καὶ ἐπὶ συγκλητικοὺς καί ἐπί τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλὴν καὶ ἐπὶ πλουσίους καὶ πτωχοὺς καὶ ἐλευθέρους καὶ δούλους καὶ μεγάλους καὶ μικροὺς καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ ἰδιώτας ἕνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσεσθαι ἐπὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους». On the *Acta Apollonii* see *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, ed. H.A. Musurillo, Oxford 2000^2, pp. xxiii-xxv. On differences between the Greek martyrology and the narration of the martyrdom of the senator Apollonius in Rome in Euseb. *hist.* 5, 21, 1-5 see R.M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, Oxford 1980, pp. 119-121; T.D. Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*, Tübingen 2010, pp.

Theon's Latin and of his possible composition-strategy. The Latin of Theon is all but perfect, and it clearly emerges from the efforts made by editors to correct the text of his letters[28]. Apollonius' «ἕνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεὸς» «God determined one death only» becomes Theon's «*una mortis condidit deus*»: the arrangement of words is the same, and *una mortis* might be a clunky translation instead of *unam mortem*[29], while *condo* correctly translates ὁρίζω in its meaning of «to

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46-47. Most of Eusebius's narration is his own creation with the exception of the names of Apollonius himself and of the judge Perennius. Eusebius' narration is also useful for a dating of the *Acta* to the 2nd century AD (see C. Erbes, *Das Todesjahr des römischen Märtyrers Apollonius*, «Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche», 13 (1912), pp. 269-279), but it is worth underlining that Eusebius' narrations on martyrdoms are based on a previous collection of martyrologies (*hist.* 4, 15, 46, 48) and rich in material from Tertullian (Grant, *Eusebius* cit., pp. 120-121). Eusebius states that he wrote his narration of Apollonius' martyrdom with a report on ancient martyrdoms as a model (*hist.* 5, 21, 5). Such a report is unknown to us, and it might be either linked to the *Acta* of which only an Armenian *recensio* (usually likened to Eusebius' narration) and a Greek one are known, or to one of their sources. On the composition-technique of Eusebius and on his work see M. Verdoner, *Narrated Reality. The* Historia Ecclesiastica *of Eusebius of Caesarea*, Frankfurt am Main 2011 and S. Morlet, L. Perrone, *Histoire Ecclésiastique. Commentaire - Tome I*, Paris 2012, with an in-depth analysis of the textual tradition of all the extant versions, including the Latin one by Rufinus; see *Ibid.*, pp. 243-266.

[28] See Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 592-593, where the formula is translated as follows: «God ordained one death, in the moment of death they dissolve» (pp. 587; 591). Editorial corrections are usually mere conjectures and they never moved from the only kind of bilingual tools which might have supported Theon in his work, namely the bilingual Latin-Greek or Greek-Latin glossaries, be they lexicons, *idiomata* or *hermeneumata*.

[29] *Una* in place of *unam* can be explained either with the loss of *-m* (which is common in this age) or with the levelling of the Latin ending

determine»[30]. The second half of Theon's *sententia* is more imperfect having its illustrious model in mind. «*Lues autem com mortis fieri*» translates «καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσεσθαι» «and that a sentence will take place after death»: differently from καί, *autem* has an adversative meaning[31], while μετὰ θάνατον would have been translated with *com mortis* (with a vocalic alteration and an incorrect ending in place of *cum morte*); *fieri* and ἔσεσθαι mostly overlap[32]. The apparently inexplicable *lues* – which would translate the Greek δίκην – might have a more complex origin, and nothing prevents the hypothesis that Theon incorrectly copied a word from the glossary he might have used for his 'literary creation' and perhaps copied *lues* instead of a more plausible *poenam*[33].

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on the original Greek one. As for *mortis*, a genitive in place of the accusative, it can be explained as an error in the nominal declension or due to a misleading belief that it was an indeclinable noun.

[30] The Greek ὁρίζω is mainly translated as *constituo* (*CgL* II 113, 13; 460, 61), and *constituo* is found as a synonym of *condo* – see for instance the attestations in monolingual lexicons: *CgL* IV 40, 30; 321, 47; 435, 10; 496, 20-21.

[31] There are no occurrences of καί ~ *autem* in the *CgL*. One might suppose that the adversative nuance was due to Theon's willingness to…, or perhaps Theon already found it in his model, or perhaps Theon even wrongly copied *autem* instead of *aut* (see *CgL* II 27, 35) or instead of *et* from his reference glossary.

[32] *Fio* usually translates γίνομαι; see e.g., *CgL* II 263, 20; III 74, 17-18; 132, 27-29; 406, 30-32. There is a difference in terms of tense, as the Greek future corresponds here to the Latin present infinitive.

[33] As it stands, *lues* shall be the accusative plural subject of the infinitive. In Greek, *lues* is intended as φθορά (*CgL* II 150, 4; 471, 12) or λοιμός (II 150, 4; 362, 28). The idea of *luere* is often found together with a *poena* – see *CgL* V 114, 15 («*luentes poenas persolventes*»); II 469, 16 («*luet poenam* ὑφέξει δίκην»); IV 256, 13 («*luis persolvis poenas*»); 415, 23 (*luetis poenas persoluitis*») – and *poena* is identified with the δίκη (*CgL* II 152, 41; III 276, 49). Thus, one might hypothesise that the possible reference glossary Theon

If so, «*una mortis condidit deus lues autem com mortis fieri*» could be an imperfect adaptation by Theon moving from something which might have sounded like *unam mortem condidit deus poenam autem cum morte fieri* «God determined that there is one death and that the sentence will come together with the death itself» in a 'depurated Latin', which might have mirrored the answer given by the wise Apollonius to the governor Perennius. Apollonius was famous among observant people for his education and his philosophical erudition[34]. His maxims (*sententiae*) and even the *Acta* of his martyrdom might have circulated widely within a peculiar religious and cultural milieu. The words he pronounces might have had different origins which will remain obscure to us and of which Theon's formula might be a deformed result. Nonetheless, Theon sets his (or indirectly his) *sententia* and makes it an important structural element of his letters, which is even more significant because – especially if it came from the court summons involving the martyr Apollonius – it would sound as a warning to the addressee of his letters. Such an addressee had a decisive power in judging the cases Theon was defending. In sum, Pascentius would have been warned by Theon in the same way Apollonius would previously have warned Perennius. A warning in Latin can be explained by having the Roman Pascentius in mind[35], and this warning clearly has a symbolic value. Before writing the proper message in his own language, Theon addresses himself to the person who has charge of the judgment of a peculiar issue, and he does that using the language of law, on one side, and a sententious tone proper to an authoritative

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was using might have had the two forms as a couple, with the noun and the verb with the same root (*lues poenam* or *poenam lues*), and that, when translating, there was something like a 'short circuit' which might have led to the wrong choice of word.

[34] Euseb. *hist.* 5, 21, 2.

[35] On the Roman name *Pascentius* see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 588.

character, on the other side. An open question remains whether or not Pascentius understood Theon's Latin maxim. The only certainty is that the clunky and very humble Latin maxim of Theon is recognised as coming from an authority which made it become formulaic in correspondence of this character.

The Latin of Theon could have had as its point of departure the well-known tools proper to contexts where Latin was learnt as a foreign language. Theon's unhappy Latin seems to have had an original Greek phrase as a reference point, and such a work of translation might have been supported by a bilingual Latin-Greek glossary[36]. Theon will have known this kind of tool also for another reason. In fact, one finds in his letters a singular sign, made up of two oblique parallel strokes; this sign is found to separate Latin from Greek (and vice versa) in some bilingual glossaries such as the (Christian) one known from the so-called 'Dishna Papers'[37].

3. *Vestiges of an Educational Route: Readings and Tools for Learning Latin*

If the 'Dishna papers' and the Nag Hammadi codices were to be connected as disjointed sections belonging to the same monastic library, it would be worth further reflecting on the role Latin played within the multilingual context of the Pachomian order in the area of Pbow, Upper Egypt, and assuming that Latin had to circulate there at least for learning purposes[38]. The case of the miscellaneous codex at the Montserrat Abbey is famous[39]. Pagan and Christian themes

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[36] On these kinds of tools see *Artes grammaticae in frammenti: i testi grammaticali latini e bilingui greco-latini su papiro. Edizione commentata*, ed. M.C. Scappaticcio, Berlin 2015, pp. 39-49, with bibliography.

[37] On this peculiar sign see S. Ammirati, *Sul libro latino antico. Ricerche bibliografiche e paleografiche*, Pisa - Roma 2015, p. 59.

[38] Since a lot of the twelve papyrus codices mainly transmitting Christian texts in Coptic (but also in Sahidic and Subacmimic, dialectic variants of Coptic) was discovered in Jabal al-Tarif in 1945, the Nag Hammady Li-

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brary became the subject of several important works. See e.g., the state-of-the-art in *Nag Hammadi à 70 ans. Qu'avons nous appris? / Nag Hammadi at 70: What have we learned?* Colloque international, Quèbec, Université Laval, 29-31 mai 2015, cur. E. Crégheur, L. Painchaud, T. Rasimus, Leuven - Paris - Bristol 2019, with an exhaustive bibliography. See also the reference work of J.M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Story. Voll. I-II*, Leiden - Boston 2014. As for the so-called 'Dishna Papers' – both papyrus and parchment fragments split among several collections among which is the Bodmer one in Geneva –, which are supposed to come from Jabal Abu Mana, see Id., *The Story of the Bodmer Papyri. From the First Monastery's Library in Upper Egypt to Geneva and Dublin*, Cambridge 2013. Within the 'Dishna Papers' one finds texts in Greek, Latin, Coptic, Sahidic, Boharic, Proto-Madaic, Subacmimic and even a peculiar dialect called *P* (or 'Proto-Theban', in *P.Bodmer* VI). Jabal al-Tarif is very near to the monastery known as *Chenoboskion* and Jabal Abu Mana is near to Tabennesis, where Pachomius founded the first monastery. Both Jabal al-Tarif and Tabennesis are in the area of Pbow. There is a huge quantity of works on the possible contexts of production and circulation of these texts; see e.g., the whole n. 21 of the review «Adamantius» on *I Papiri Bormer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco, copto e latino nell'Egitto tardoantico*, collecting several contributions among which G. Agosti, *La poesia greca nella Biblioteca Bodmer: aspetti letterari e socioculturali*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 86-97; A. Camplani, *Per un profilo storico-religioso degli ambienti di produzione e fruizione dei Papiri Bodmer: contaminazione dei linguaggi e dialettica delle idee nel contesto del dibattito su dualismo e origenismo*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 98-135 and J.-L. Fournet, *Anatomie d'une bibliothèque de l'Antiquité tardive: l'inventaire, la faciès et la provenance de la 'Bibliothèque Bodmer'*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 8-40 deserve to be mentioned. On this topic see also B. Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*, New Haven 2018, pp. 157-215. The hypothesis of a common provenance and of a common ownership by a Pachomian library is strengthened in H. Lundhaug, *The Dishna Papers and the Nag Hammadi Codices: The Remains of a Single Monastic Library?*, in *The Nag Hammadi Codices and Late Antique Egypt*, cur. Id., Tübingen 2018, pp. 329-386, with an updated bibliography. See also Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., pp. 24-30.

[39] Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 798 + Montserrat, Abadia,

– both in the Greek and Latin language – are flanked and they are found together within the manuscript, where a huge portion of Cicero's *Catilinarians* is followed by a responsorial psalm, by a drawing of a mythological nature (perhaps Hercules against Ornis, or Perseus against the sea-monster), by prayers (in Greek), by the well-known hexametric poem on the myth of Alcestis, by a prose folktale on the emperor Hadrian, and finally by a list of words from a commentary to a stenographic manual (in Greek). It is a 'working copy', and the texts in Latin (with the only exception of the psalm) are all characterised by a plausible educational destination. In fact, Cicero is one of the four authors who made up the educational *quadriga* of the grammarian Arusianus Messius; the *Alcestis* is a mythological composition destined for performance and with the remarkable presence of Virgilian material[40]; and the *Hadrianus* is a peculiar biographic and fictional tale about the emperor made up of travels and maxims[41].

Roca 126-178 + Roca 292 + Roca 338 (P.Duke inv. 798 + P.Monts.Roca inv. 129-149: *CLA* XI 1650 + *Suppl.* 1782; LDAB 552; MP³ 2921.1 + 2916.41 + 2998.1 + 2752.1 + 2998.1). The dating to the 4th century AD is supported by Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 57-58, with bibliography.

[40] On the so-called *Alcestis Barcinonensis* see the following editions *Alcestis Barcinonensis. Text and Commentary*, ed. M. Marcovich, Leiden 1988 and Anonimo. *L'Alcesti di Barcellona. Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento*, ed. L. Nosarti, Bologna 1992; see also *L'Alceste de Barcelone (P.Monts.Roca inv. 158-161). Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un poème latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. G. Nocchi Macedo, Liège 2014, with bibliographical updates. In Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 58 footnote 10 the composition on Alcestis in the *Anthologia Latina* is drawn as a parallel for the poem known from the Montserrat codex.

[41] The *editio princeps* of the *Hadrianus* is recent; see Hadrianus. *P.Monts. Roca III*, edd. J. Gil, S. Torallas Tovar, Barcelona 2010. The text was edited again in recent times in G. Ammannati, *L'Hadrianus del P.Monts.Roca III*, «Materiali e Discussioni», 81 (2018), pp. 221-240 and *L'*Hadrianus *de Montserrat (P.Monts.Roca III, inv. 162 - 165). Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un récit latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. T. Berg, Liège 2018.

In addition, that which remains of Latin from another codex – like a 'twin codex' for the Monserrat one –, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499, can be reconnected to an educational destination. In this codex there is a Greek grammar, but also a Greek-Latin glossary made up of miscellaneous material from the Pauline epistles, from the *Vulgata* and from the *Vetus*, and the glossary is followed by a Latin alphabet[42]. Whether this singular glossary circulated in a context where Coptic was practised can be reconstructed by having the possible library to which it belonged in mind. Moreover, its having been destined for someone familiar with Greek and learning Latin can suggest that it was created for someone who already knew Greek – which was a necessary condition for those who entered the monasteries in Egypt.

Among the bilingual glossaries of Eastern circulation (and provenance), the only one which seems to have been created with a Coptophone readership in mind is the peculiar trilingual Latin-Greek-Coptic *colloquium*[43]. It has recently been supposed that the Latin of this glossary is like a relic of a more ancient and original Latin-Greek version of the *colloquium* – with Latin in Latin script and Greek in Greek script – and that it was later modified because of the necessity of creating a Greek-Coptic *colloquium* addressed to Coptic-speakers learning Greek. The presence of Latin there would have been no more than symbolic[44]. Moreover, Coptic there translates Greek more than Latin. This certainly is a possibility, but one might wonder why the Latin section was not excluded, which would have been more economical. Another possibility is to recognise in such a trilingual *colloquium* the best solution for an educational tool addressed to an, albeit circumscribed, public made up of trilingual people like the Theon known from the *History of the Monks*. (The only difference would be that this Theon had both a spoken and a written knowledge of Latin, while the reader of the trilingual *colloquium* would have learned only spoken Latin, like the trilingual monks surrounding Abba Apollonius and assuring him the service of translators. In fact, the *colloquium* has Latin and Greek in Greek script, and Coptic in Coptic script.)

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[42] Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499: *CLA Suppl.* 1683; LDAB 3030; MP^3 2161.1). On this codex see Wouters, *Chester Beatty Codex*. The glossary has been recently studied again by E. Dickey, *A Re-Examination of New Testament Papyrus P99 (Vetus Latina AN glo Paul)*, «New Testament Studies», 65 (2019), pp. 103-121, with new interpretations; Dickey will publish the new edition of this glossary for the *CLTP*.

[43] Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582 (P.Berol. inv. 10582: *CPL* 281; LDAB 6075; MP^3 3009). See Ead., *How Coptic Speakers Learned Latin? A Reconsideration of P.Berol. Inv. 10582*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 193 (2015), pp. 65-77, and *The Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana. Vol. II: Colloquium Harleianum, Colloquium Montepessulanum, Colloquium Celtis, and Fragments. Edited with Translations and Commentary*, ed. Ead., Cambridge 2015, pp. 270-279. This fragment has a very complex tradition: an original bilingual Latin-Greek *colloquium* seems to have been adapted to a renewed need with the later addition of a Coptic section and with the subsequent transliteration of Latin in Greek script.

If it was addressed to a readership who knew Coptic and needed to approach Latin and / or Greek, this trilingual *colloquium* could open a new window (1) on the forms in which Latin was taught (and learnt) in Egyptian milieux where Coptic literature circulated and (2) on the possible education of those autochthonous monks who knew Latin (about whom we know from literary sources). Another example is offered by Kellis, in Egypt's Eastern Desert, where Latin is known to have been practised in such a Manichaean environment and where a certain Macharius, in a letter where he also talked about his sons, stated that one of them, Pienes, could travel together with the «great Master» to learn Latin[45].

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[44] See Ead., *How Coptic Speakers* cit.

[45] *P.Kellis* V 20 ll. 24-26, on which see *P.Kellis* V, pp. 75-76; 170.

4. *Readers, Readings, Schools, Authors*

A tool like the aforementioned trilingual *colloquium* might have been also of help for Latin-speakers like the one for whom the translation into Latin of the Pachomian rule by Jerome was necessary.

The presence of Romans in the Egyptian monasteries is known from more than a Pachomian life where one reads how some of them were hosted in a house directed by Theodore of Alexandria. This house became the point of reference for all the foreign people arriving in Egypt and approaching the Pachomian order, since they were ignorant of the Egyptian language[46]. In contexts of this kind, similar to Theodore's house, one can imagine something like linguistic 'islands' where Latin was practised by Roman native-speakers and perhaps by those translators transmitting Pachomius' precepts to them. The various lives do not make it clear how strangers could understand local languages, and it is unclear whether these precepts were issued in Greek or in Latin.

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[46] See e.g., what arises from one of the lives in Coptic (known as *Bo*) according to the translation in *Les vies coptes de saint Pachôme et de ses premiers successeurs*, ed. L.-T. Lefort, Louvain 1943: «la renommée de notre père Pachôme et celle de sa charité arrivait chez chacun, si bien qu'on entendait son nom à l'étranger et chez les Romains, et qu'on venait se faire moine auprès de lui» (*Bo* 89; 151, 24-27 Lefort); «voici quelles furent, dans sa maison (*scil.* of Theodorus), les prémices de la fructificaton: [...] parmi les romains il y avait Firmus, Romulus et Domnius l'arménien» (*Bo* 91; 156, 8-11 Lefort). See also the life known as *G*^{1}: «καὶ οὕτως εὑρήσομεν ἦν Θεόδωρος, ὅτε ἐξηγεῖτο τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς Παχούμιος, διὰ τοὺς μὴ ἀκούοντας αἰγυπτιστί. Καὶ ἐποίησεν ιγ΄ἔτη οἰκιακός, πρὸ τοῦ τελευτῆσαι τὸν μακάριον Παχούμιον. Καὶ τῆς οἰκίας ἀπὸ μὲν Ἀλεξανδρέων πρωτοτόκοι καρποφορίαι οἵδε εἰσίν· Αὐσόνιος ὁ μέγας καὶ Αὐσόνιος, καὶ παιδίον Νεών ὀνόματι· καὶ Ῥωμαίων θεοφόροι· Φίρμιος καὶ Ῥώμυλλος καὶ Δομνῖνος Ἀρμένιος καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἅγιοι» (*G*^{1} 95; 64, 3-11 Halkin).

The origin of the translation into Latin of the Pachomian precepts by Jerome is linked to a context of this kind. Jerome lived for years in the Eastern empire, he spent many years of his life familiarising himself with Egyptian monasticism, and he played a decisive role in making the Pachomian rule arrive and circulate in the Western empire. A certain Sylvan received from Alexandria a copy of Pachomius' precepts and he asked Jerome to make a translation into Latin which would have been destined for the many monks of the Monastery of the Metanoia, in the Delta, given that these monks were Latin-speakers (*plurimi Latinorum*) and were ignorant of the Egyptian autochthonous language(s) and the Greek language[47]. Jerome's Latin translation of the Pachomian rule seems to have been done from a Greek version. Jerome is not explicit on this issue, but in the preface he states that his Latin version tends to reflect the rigour and the conciseness (*simplicitas*) of Coptic and is lacking rhetorical bombast[48].

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[47] Hier. *Pachom. reg. praef.* 1: «*aiebat enim* (scil. *Silvanus*) *quod in Thebaidis coenobiis, et in monasterio Metanoeae, quod de Canopo in paenitentiam felici nominis conversione mutatum est, habitarent plurimi latinorum qui ignorarent aegyptiacum graecumque sermonem, quo Pachomii et Theodori et Orsiesii praecepta conscripta sunt*», on which see A. De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité. Vol. 4.1 (Première partie: le monachisme latin)*, Paris 1997, pp. 296-297; Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés* cit., pp. 57-59; Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity* cit., p. 41. Nonetheless it does not seem to be plausible that they did not know the Egyptian language(s). Boon's edition of the *Pachomiana Latina* is the reference one. On the Pachomian works of Jerome see in general De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire* cit., pp. 295-405, with bibliography. On the Monastery of the Metanoia, in Kanopos near Alexandria, see P. Barisson, *Ricerche sui monasteri dell'Egitto bizantino ed arabo secondo i documenti dei papiri greci*, «Aegyptus», 18 (1938), pp. 29-148, with a reference to Jerome's aforementioned preface.

[48] Hier. *reg. Pachom. praef.* 9: «*aiunt autem Thebaei quod Pachomio Cornelioque et Syro, qui usque hodie ultra centum et decem annos vivere dicitur, angelus linguae mysticae scientiam dederit, ut scriberent sibi et loquerentur per alfabetum spi-*

A knowledge of the Coptic language, albeit embryonic and limited to technical terms, arises from a letter Jerome wrote once he came back to Rome after his Eastern 'parenthesis', namely the letter addressed to Eustochium. Eustochium was preparing to enter a monastic community of virgins. While writing to the daughter of her benefactress Paula, Jerome described to her the three *genera* of monks in Egypt, but, while for the cenobites he also gives the (local) name of *sauhes*, he only knows the original *remnuoth* for this *genus*, with *remnuoth* being a transliteration from the Coptic original[49].

There is something more. Jerome's fundamentalism is clear from some letters he wrote once back in Rome. This fundamentalism forced him to convert his Ciceronian nature (*Ciceronianus*) into a Christian one (*Christianus*)[50]. Nonetheless, his school in Bethlehem

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ritale, signis quibusdam et symbolis absconditos sensus involventes; quas nos epistulas ita ut apud Aegyptios Graecosque leguntur in nostram linguam vertimus: eadem ut repperimus elementa ponentes, et quod simplicitatem Aegyptii sermonis imitati sumus interpraetationis fides est, ne viros apostolicos et totos gratiae spiritalis sermo rhetoricus inmutaret», on which see De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire* cit., pp. 321-323.

[49] Hier. *epist.* 22, 34 (to Eustochium): «*tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum: coenobium quod illi sauhes gentili lingua vocant, nos 'in commune viventes' possumus appellare; anachoretae, qui soli habitant per deserta et ab eo quod procul ab hominibus recesserint nuncupantur; tertium genus est, quod dicunt remnuoth, deterrimum atque neglectum, et quod in nostra provincia aut solum aut primum est*», on which see Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity* cit., p. 38; Y.-M. Duval, P. Laurence, *Jérôme. La Lettre 22 à Eustochium:* de virginitate servanda, Bégrolles en Mauges 2011, p. 265.

[50] Hier. *epist.* 22, 29 (to Eustochium): «*'quae enim communicatio luci ad tenebras? qui consensus Christo et Belial?' quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? cum evangeliis Maro? cum apostolo Cicero? nonne scandalizatur frater, si te viderit in idolo recumbentem? et licet 'omnia munda mundis et nihil reiciendum sit, quod cum gratiarum actione percipitur', tamen simul bibere non debemus calicem Christi et calicem daemoniorum*». A negative example of morally corrupted women is put under the eyes of Eustochium. The narration of Jerome's conversion

was a fortunate centre stimulating the library circulation of pagan authors. Jerome asked the scribes of his circle to copy the dialogues of Cicero, and Virgil was one of the first readings he submitted to his disciples[51]. Virgilian codices are known from Christian milieux of late antique Palestine, such as the two *Aeneids* – one only in Latin

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follows. When he left Rome to go into Palestine, Jerome long regretted not having with him some volumes of his pagan library, such as those of Cicero and Plautus, but being accused of his Ciceronian nature in place of a Christian one (*Ciceronianus es, non Christianus*) made him leave pagan authors and only read Holy Scripture (*epist.* 22, 30). This episode is famous. See Duval, Laurence, *Jérôme. La Lettre 22*, pp. 244-251. See also Hier. *epist.* 21, 13 (to Damasus): «*alioquin quale erit, ut aestimemus apostolum eius qui vescebatur in idolio scientiam conprobasse, et eum dixisse perfectum quem sciret de idolothytis manducare? Absit, ut de ore Christiano sonet 'Iuppiter omnipotens' et 'mehercule' et 'mecastor', et cetera magis portenta quam numina. Ac nunc etiam sacerdotes Dei omissis evangeliis et prophetis videmus comoedias legere, amatoria bucolicorum versuum verba cantare, tenere Vergilium, et id quod in pueris necessitatis est crimen in se facere voluntatis*». These passages are important for showing how Christian and pagan authors could live together in both late antique West and East, which is an abundantly discussed topic.

[51] Rufin. *apol.* 2, 11: «*alioquin, si inficias eat, etiam testes quamplurimos fratrum habere possum, qui in meis cellulis manentes, in monte Oliveti, quamplurimos ei Ciceronis dialogos descripserunt, quorum ego et quaterniones, cum scriberent, frequenter in manibus tenui et relegi, et quod mercedes multo largiores, quam pro aliis scripturis solent, ab isto eis darentur agnovi. Mihi quoque ipsi aliquando, cum de Bethleem Ierosolymam venisset et codicem se cum detulisset, in quo erat unus dialogus Ciceronis et idem ipse Graecus Platonis, quod dederit ipsum codicem et aliquandiu fuerit apud me, nullo genere negare potest. Sed quid immoror tandiu in re quae luce est clarior? Cum ad haec omnia quae supra diximus, etiam illud addatur, ubi cesset omne commentum, quod in monasterio positus in Bethleem, ante non multum adhuc temporis partes grammaticas executus sit, et Maronem suum comicosque ac lyricos et historicos auctores traditis sibi ad discendum dei timorem puerulis exponebat, scilicet ut et praeceptor fieret auctorum gentilium, quos si legisset tantummodo, Christum se iuraverat negaturum*».

and one bilingual Latin-Greek – from the Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus in Nessana, and precisely from its *genizeh* where a small library for the monastic school of the Church stood[52].

Jerome issued his disciples, his *pueruli*, with rudiments of grammar, on one side, and (Latin) epics, theatre, poetry and historiography, on the other side. Whether Jerome's *pueruli* were Latin-speaking Romans or Greek-speaking Palestinians is unclear from Rufinus' description of Jerome's school in his *Apologia*. Moreover, if we know – as we do know – that Jerome asked his scribes to copy Cicero's dialogues, one can legitimately wonder what the aforementioned Cassian's Simeon used to copy. Egyptian scriptoria produced both pagan and Christian books, such as the parchment codex from Antinoopolis with a Latin-Greek version of an Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians (6, 5-6), of which only a fragment is extant[53].

What one knows of the Palestinian school of Jerome – with Cicero and Virgil being the classics at the origin of an educational process – reflects a common tendency of the first Christian period, when the classical *paideia* still played a decisive and influential role[54].

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[52] New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library, H. Dunscombe Colt Collection, pap. 1 (*P.Ness.* II 1: *CLA* XI 1652; *CPL* 8; LDAB 4166; MP^3 2939) and New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library, H. Dunscombe Colt Collection, pap. 2 (*P.Ness.* II 2: *CLA* XI 1653; *CPL* 16; LDAB 4164; MP^3 2945), on which see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 63-65, with bibliography.

[53] Cairo, Egyptian Museum, SR 3796 25/1/55/2 (21) (*PSI* XIII 1306: *CLA Suppl.* 1694; *CPL* 51; LDAB 3204), on which see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 78 and the new annotated edition by M. Fressura, *PSI XIII 1306: note codicologiche e paleografiche*, in *Spazio scritto e spazio non scritto nel libro papiraceo. Esperienze a confronto.* Atti della Seconda Tavola Rotonda del Centro di Studi Papirologici dell'Università del Salento (Lecce, 9 ottobre 2014), cur. N. Pellé, Lecce 2017, pp. 77-128. Papyri transmitting Christian literary texts are collected by J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens*, Paris 1976, pp. 363-373 nn. 1202-1226. Only circa ten of these are of archaeological provenance, and they (plus an unpublished one) will be newly edited by H.A.G. Houghton and C.M. Kreinecker in the *CLTP*. On late antique Latin books produced in the Eastern empire see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 45-73.

Direct traces from Coptic environments are rare, and they are often linked to the recycling of (parchment?). Fragments from manuscripts of Livy's *Ab urbe condita*[55] and Seneca's *Medea*[56] were respectively found in the bindings of two Coptic manuscripts, one from the Monastery of Deir el-Malak and one from the White Monastery of Sohag (in the Thebaid) or perhaps from that of St. Michel the Archangel in Hamouli (in the Fayyum). This does not necessarily mean that Livy's historiographical work or the Senecan tragedies stood among the readings of a Coptic environment, as it is impossible to know with certainty whether the portions of juridical literature, which recently emerged from the lower script of a Coptic manuscript from the Fayyum, – among which Ulpian's *On Edict*, Papinian's *Questions*, and Trebatius are found[57] – came from the manuals of law which had to enrich the shelves of monasteries whose monks shall have not ignored law[58]. One can only affirm that they entered within the pools of scribal material recycled to prepare Coptic books.

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[54] See Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., while on the role of *paideia* in the first monastic environments see Agosti, *La poesia greca* cit. See also the contributions collected in *Early Monasticism and Classical* Paideia – *Studia Patristica vol. LV: Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 2011*, cur. S. Robinson, Leuven - Paris - Walpole 2013, where specific attention is given to the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, and in Gemeinhardt, Van Hoof, Van Nuffelen, *Education and Religion* cit., in *Teachers in Late Antique Christianity*, cur. P. Gemeinhardt, O. Lorgeoux, M.L. Munkholt Christensen, Tübingen 2018, and in Lundhaug, *The Dishna Papers* cit. Important contributions are in *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity*, cur. L.I. Larsen, S. Rubenson, Cambridge 2018, on the monastic education and on the transformations of the classic *paideia*.

[55] Cairo, Coptic Museum, 15/86, also known as P.Naqlun inv. 15/86 (LDAB 2576; MP^3 2926.01). See the new and richly annotated edition in *Corpus dei papiri storici greci e latini. Parte B. Storici latini Vol. 1: Autori noti- Titus Livius*, ed. R. Funari, Pisa - Roma 2011, pp. 239-258 (3F). The importance of this fragment lies in transmitting a portion of Book 11, only known from the *Periochae*. A palaeographic analysis is found in Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 80-81. It is a parchment fragment for which a Western (African?) origin was supposed. See also Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés* cit., p. 72, where the possibility that Livy's work might have belonged to the library of Naqlun is introduced.

[56] Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan, University Library, P. 4969 fr. 36 (P.Mich. inv. 4969: LDAB 3907; MP^3 2933.010), on which see D. Markus, G.W. Schwendner, *Seneca's Medea in Egypt (663-704)*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 117 (1997), pp. 73-80 and the palaeographic analysis in Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 61. As for the provenance of this fragment, see M.C. Scappaticcio, *Un testimone, due recensioni e un 'singolare' Typhon. Appunti su un testimone senecano dall'Egitto tardoanti-*

The two miscellaneous codices – miscellaneous in terms of their languages, themes, and the cultures to which they give voice –, which can be reconnected to the 'Dishna papers' and perhaps belonged to the same Pachomian library, stand as the most evident witness of the presence of Latin in these kinds of environments. Cicero's *Catilinarians* are certainly among the speeches which met with a wider and undebatable scholastic success[59]. Moreover, bilingual glossaries – as the Christian one from the Chester Beatty codex – clearly exemplify the way in which non-native speakers approached

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co sui suoi lectores, sulle sue lectiones (P.Mich. inv. 4969 fr. 36 – Sen. Med. 663-704), «Rheinisches Museum», 164 (2021), pp. 124-144, with bibliography.

[57] This is a recent discovery; see S. Ammirati, *Frammenti inediti di giurisprudenza latina da un palinsesto copto. Per un'edizione delle* scripturae inferiores *del ms. London, British Library, Oriental 4717 (5)*, «Athenaeum», 105 (2017), pp. 736-741.

[58] On the knowledge of law and on the legal aspects of documents in Coptic see T.S. Richter in *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab conquest*, cur. J.G. Keenan, J.G. Manning, U. Yiftach-Firanko, Cambridge 2014, pp. 28-30; 134-144.

[59] See G. La Bua, *Cicero and Roman Education. The Reception of the Speeches and Ancient Scholarship*, Cambridge 2019, p. 73, with bibliography.

Latin and became accustomed to both a new language and its authors – mainly Cicero and Virgil – whose texts were modified in proper glossaries. As for the alphabet closing the Chester Beatty codex, it is worth remembering that the alphabet is the point of departure for a linguistic reflection moving towards the learning of a foreign language. Declining a word like *dominus* might be reconnected with a Christian environment, at least in the case of the partial declension of *dominus* one finds on a recycled papyrus roll with a few lines from the preface of Faustinus Luciferianus' treatise *On Trinity* (*De Trinitate*) and a Latin version of Psalm 52[60].

The *Alcestis* and the *Hadrianus* of the Montserrat codex, on the other hand, flex the Christian *paideia* to Christian needs. Alcestis, a mythical heroine, becomes the feminine model of resurrection[61]. The emperor Hadrian, characterised by the virtues of *clementia* and

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[60] Cairo, Egyptian Museum, PSI 1309 v (*PSI* XIII 1309 v), Cairo, Egyptian Museum, PSI 1309 r (*PSI* XIII 1309 r: *ChLA* XLII 1226; LDAB 6095; MP^3 3016); see its new annotated edition in Scappaticcio, *Artes grammaticae* cit., pp. 231-237. This fragment is especially important for our knowledge of the affirmation of the Luciferian heresy in late antique Oxyrhynchus (from where the fragment comes), which is also known from Faustinus Luciferianus' *Libellus precum* (92-101). See especially 93: «*certa pars est apud Oxyrynchum sanctae plebis, in cuius sacro numero plerique, quanto intentius ad res divinas studium curamve posuerunt, tanto sollicitius diligentiusque fidem catholicam inviolabiliter servare contendunt, ita ut se nullis haereticis nullisque praevaricatoribus per divina commisceant sacramenta. Ad hanc observantiam plerique eorum eruditi sunt exemplo et motu beatissimi Pauli, qui isdem fuit temporibus quibus et famosissimus ille Antonius, non minori vita neque studio neque divina gratia quam fuit sanctus Antonius. Novit hoc et ipsa civitas Oxyrynchus, quae hodieque sanctam Pauli memoriam devotissime celebrat*», on which see Faustin (et Marcellin), *Supplique aux empereurs (*Libellus precum et Lex Augusta*)*, ed. A. Canellis, Paris 2006, pp. 198-199 and E. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church. People and Institutions*, Warsaw 2015, pp. 137-138.

[61] R. Cavenaile, *Le latin dans les milieux chrétiens d'Egypte*, in *Miscel·lània Papirològica R. Roca-Puig*, cur. S. Janeras, Barcelona 1987, pp. 103-110, esp. 104.

liberalitas, is the protagonist of adventures and proper *itineraria* which put him on the same level as martyrs and the protagonists of the *Passiones*. There is also a dialogue between Hadrian and a certain Saturninus, and this dialogue is structured *per interrogationem et responsionem*, which is a scheme common in the late antique technical grammatical works, with disciples and grammarians questioning one another. But Hadrian's sententiousness also aligns his tale of the Montserrat codex with the *Altercatio Hadriani cum Epicteto* and the *Vita Secundi*[62], as well as with the gnomic anthology of the *Sexti sententiae*[63], whose only copy in Coptic belongs to the Nag Hammadi Library. The tale of Hadrian especially has a novel vein which seems to reflect literary tastes well known from the 'Dishna Papers', among which a late antique copy of the adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon of Achilles Tatius is found[64]. Another example is the *Historia Apollonii* in a palimpsest from the library of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, perhaps incorporated its *repositorium* of codices in various languages and of different centuries of which the only trace is left in lower scripts[65]. The relationship between Christian and pagan *paideia* in the first milieux of Coptic culture – as Coptic is not simply the language of Christianity, but especially the expression of a cultural identity[66] –, is even more complex from the perspective of Latin; nonetheless, it is osmotic and undeniable, and deserves further exploration.

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[62] Gil, Torallas Tovar, *Hadrianus* cit., pp. 95-99.

[63] See Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., pp. 31-33.

[64] Köln, Papyrussammlung, P. 901 + Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 772 (P.Colon. inv. 901 + P.Duke inv. 772: *olim* P.Rob. inv. 35: LDAB 8; MP^3 0002.1), dating to 3rd century AD.

[65] See C. Sirat, F. Déroche, U. Ehrlich, A. Yardeni, *Vingt manuscrits (hebreux, grec, latin-grec, grec-arabe, arabes) pour un seul palimpseste*, «Scripta», 1 (2008), pp. 145-156, and Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 71 on another palimpsest possibly coming from the Monastery on Mount Sinai, that is the bilingual *Aeneid* of Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, L 120 *sup.* ff. 113-120 (*CLA* III 306; *CPL* 7; LDAB 4156; MP^3 2943). The *Historia Apollonii* has been recently discovered within the 'Sinai Palimpsest Project', on which see M.P. Brown, *Were Early Medieval Picture Cycles recycled from Late Antiquity? New Evidence for a Lost Archetype of the Apollonius Pictus – An Illustrated Classic*, in *Illuminating the Middle Ages. Essays for John Lowden by*

His Students, Colleagues and Friends, cur. L. Cleaver, A. Bovey, L. Donkin, Leiden 2020, pp. 4-18. I thank Brown for allowing me to read her still unpublished paper and for informing me of this unedited discovery. On the Latin texts which emerged within the 'Sinai Palimpsest Project' see Ead., *The Bridge in the Desert: Towards Establishing an Historical Context for the Newly Discovered Latin Manuscripts of St. Catherine's Sinai*, in *Palaeography between East and West.* Proceedings of the Seminars of Arabic Palaeography held at Sapienza, University of Rome in 2013 and 2014, cur. A. D'Ottone Rambach, Pisa - Roma 2018, pp. 73-98.

[66] T. Orlandi, *Coptic Literature*, in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, cur. B.A. Pearson, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 51-81, esp. 69.