

## Writing and Reading Greek on the Pages of Arabic Translations of Byzantine Christian Classics

Alexandre M. Roberts\*

This chapter examines Greek annotations appearing in Arabic manuscripts containing translations of Christian texts from Greek into Arabic produced by the eleventh-century Byzantine Christian deacon and theologian ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī. In particular, it focuses on glosses of Arabic transliterations or translations of Arabic words; lemmas and other aids to the reader; and scribes’ and readers’ notes and subscriptions.

Keywords: *marginalia, translation, bilingualism, patristics, Greek words in Arabic script, the Greek Orthodox Church*

Greek and Arabic have a long history in the Middle East.<sup>1</sup> Greek became established as a literary and administrative language in the wake of Alexander the Great’s conquests. Almost a thousand years later, after centuries of Roman rule, Arabs conquered the region in the seventh century. Still, Greek persisted. According to the standard narrative, Arabic replaced Greek as the administrative language ca. 700 CE, but there is evidence that this was a longer process not yet complete by the end of the eighth century.<sup>2</sup> Recent work by Maria Mavroudi and others has made clear that long after Arabic had replaced Greek as the primary administrative language, and even after Christian texts appeared and multiplied in Arabic, Greek continued to be learned and actively cultivated by Christian intellectuals in the Middle East, particularly in Syria-Palestine and Egypt.<sup>3</sup>

Among these Christian intellectuals, it seems that Greek-Arabic bilingualism was not uncommon. Arabic eventually did become the language of administration and, in colloquial form, of everyday communication. But Greek retained its prestige as a language of Christian (and pre-Christian) literature, especially among Chalcedonian Christians in communion with the Byzantine Church, but also other Christians such as Coptic-Miaphysites. Other languages, especially Coptic and Syriac (dialects of Egyptian and Aramaic respectively), coexisted with

---

\* Department of Classics, University of Southern California, 3560 Watt Way, PED 130, Los Angeles CA 90089-0652, [robe941@usc.edu](mailto:robe941@usc.edu). I would like to thank the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and Father Justin of Sinai for providing photographs of manuscripts in their care.

<sup>1</sup> I owe my awareness of, interest in, and framework for thinking about simultaneous use of Greek and Arabic to Maria Mavroudi. In addition to her forthcoming book on the subject, see Mavroudi, *Greek Language*; and Mavroudi, *Arabic Words*.

<sup>2</sup> Mavroudi, *Greek Language*, 301-302, 307.

<sup>3</sup> Mavroudi, *Greek Language*, esp. 315-318.

Arabic and Greek as well.<sup>4</sup>

These overlapping spheres of prestige and scholarly practice meant that many scholars used both Greek and Arabic, often in the very same contexts. This occurred not only in the process of translating and re-translating Greek texts into Arabic but also as scribes and readers of Arabic texts engaged with and annotated these texts.

The present chapter briefly considers scribes and readers who created and experienced Greek annotations on Arabic texts of the Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition. The examples are drawn from paratexts of Greek-Arabic translations by the eleventh-century Byzantine Chalcedonian Christian deacon and theologian ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī (fl. ca. 1051), who was active during the period when his city, Antioch-on-the-Orontes, was under Byzantine rule (969-1084).<sup>5</sup> Greek annotations in manuscripts of Ibn al-Faḍl’s Arabic translations of Byzantine Christian classics—from John Chrysostom to Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus—attest to longstanding use of and interest in Greek among their readers. I will focus on several types of annotations: (1) Greek words or phrases glossing Arabic transliterations or translations of Greek words in the main text; (2) Greek annotations that serve as an apparatus for readers to help navigate a book, such as lemmas; and (3) scribes’ and readers’ notes and subscriptions (signatures), executed in Greek or both Arabic and Greek, in Arabic manuscripts.

## 1 Greek Glosses

Let us begin with Greek glosses. Such glosses appear in two thirteenth-century Arabic manuscripts now at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, containing John Chrysostom’s *Homilies on Hebrews* (CPG 4440, in 34 homilies) translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Faḍl: Paris, BnF, ar. 95 (1217-1218 CE)<sup>6</sup> and Paris, BnF, ar. 96 (before 1229 CE).<sup>7</sup> Annotations (including foliation using Coptic numerals) place Paris, BnF, ar. 95 in a Coptic-Miaphysite milieu in Egypt<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Mavroudi, *Greek Language*, esp. 302-305.

<sup>5</sup> See Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*; Noble and Treiger, *Christian Arabic Theology*, esp. 377-378; Treiger, ‘Abdallāh.

<sup>6</sup> Troupeau, *Cat. mss. arabes chrétiens*, vol. 1, 74. The copyist’s colophon reads (f. 300r): “Copying of the commentary on the Epistle of the Hebrews was completed in Kīhāk [December–January] of the year nine hundred and fifty-[vacuit] of Diocletian, killer of the martyrs, equivalent to the year 6726 in the dating of the years of the world.” كمل نقل تفسير رسالة العبرانيين في شهر كيهك سنة (بياض) خمسين وتسعمائة لدقليطيانوس قاتل الشهداء، الموافقة لسنة ستة الفو (كذا) وسبع العالم. The two dates given disagree considerably. The empty space before the Anno Martyrum date suggests less confidence in that date (which yields ca. 1234 CE), so it is likely that the Anno Mundi date (December 1217-January 1218 CE) is correct.

<sup>7</sup> Troupeau, *Cat. mss. arabes chrétiens*, vol. 1, 74-75. The date of copying is not given, but after the colophon is a reader’s note “Sophronios, Melkite bishop of the Ṣa’id [Upper Egypt],” dated Anno Mundi 6737 and 626 from the Hijra (1228-1229 CE). *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>8</sup> Coptic numerals are used throughout; several Coptic words in Coptic script occur; the colophon uses the Coptic

and Paris, BnF, ar. 96 in a Byzantine-Chalcedonian ('Melkite') setting, mostly in Syria but possibly in Egypt early on.<sup>9</sup>

Two passages in the Arabic translation of Chrysostom's homilies appear with Greek glosses in both manuscripts (fig. 1). The first passage is in Chrysostom's second homily, on Paul's description of Christ as "the radiance of [God's] glory and the imprint (*charaktēr*) of his subsistence (*hypostasis*), sustaining all things with the word (*rhēma*) of his power, when through himself he had expiated our sins . . ." (Hebrews 1:3).<sup>10</sup> Part of Chrysostom's argument in the homily is that this Pauline passage demonstrates that Christ is not inferior to God the Father, neither his creature nor an accident of him (in the Aristotelian sense). This argument focuses on the phrase "imprint of his subsistence" (χαράκτηρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ) and hinges on the terms 'imprint' (χαράκτηρ), 'form' (μορφή), and 'image' (εἰκών).<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Faḍl wrote a note on this passage in his Arabic translation, explaining the significance of these terms and his choice to translate χαράκτηρ and μορφή as "substantial image" (*ṣūra jawharīya*), but εἰκών merely as "image" (*ṣūra*).<sup>12</sup>

---

month and calendar; Sim'ān of the monastery of Saint Anthony also uses the Coptic calendar to date his mark (f. 300<sup>v</sup>) to Anno Martyrum 1005 (1289 CE). For other readers' marks, see Troupeau, *Cat. mss. arabes chrétiens*, vol. 1, 74.

<sup>9</sup> An early reader was Sophronios, Melkite bishop of Upper Egypt (see note 7). But then the priest Afrām ibn Yūḥannā al-Biṣṭāmī's marks (ff. 2<sup>r</sup>, 216<sup>r</sup>, 216<sup>v</sup>) include one in Syriac, suggesting a location in Syria-Mesopotamia. Marks by a priest Yūḥannā ibn Faraj Allāh of Latakia (f. 216<sup>v</sup>; 16th century) and Yūḥannā ibn Jirjis al-Ba'labakkī (f. 217<sup>r</sup>) place it in Greater Syria. Troupeau says that the Arabic script is Syrian. This suggests the possibility that the manuscript was produced in Syria, then brought to Egypt by Sophronios (perhaps a Syrian appointed to the Egyptian see); alternatively, Sophronios may never have brought it to Egypt.

<sup>10</sup> Trans. Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 172, based on the New Revised Standard Version (an English translation of the Bible) and Frederic Gardiner's translation of Chrysostom, in Gardiner, *Homilies*, 370.

<sup>11</sup> John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Hebrews*, 2.2, PG 63, col. 22.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this passage and Ibn al-Faḍl's translation and commentary, see Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 172-179.

السما وعلى الارض ونقول قول اخر وهو ان الانسان ما وصف بأنه صورة  
 الله الجوهرية بل صورته فقط: <sup>χαρακτήρ</sup> حاشية اي انه ما قيل فيه انه خركتيو  
 ولا مر في اللذان يدلان على الجوهر وعلى السببه الجوهرية وكما ان  
 مر في العبد اي صورته الجوهرية لان ذلك على شي اخر الاعلى انسان  
 لا خلاف في انسانيته: هكذا ومر في الله لا يدل على شي من الاشياء  
 الاعلى الله تعالى: <sup>μορφή</sup> <sup>χαρακτήρ</sup> حاشية قال عبد الله بن الفضل الخاط  
 المسكين المفسر هذه الرسالة الالهية ان في اللغة اليونانية اسماء  
 تدل على الصورة الجوهرية الذاتية مفردة. من ذلك <sup>μορφή</sup> <sup>χαρακτήρ</sup> خركتيو ومر في  
 والخركتيو هو الذي استعمله الرسول يدل على الصورة التي ليست الاسم  
 هو الذي استعمل ما هيئة الانسان في هذه الفصل من الرسالة. واسمي كذا  
 من ذلك اي قون وهذا قيل انه صورة الله: فاما اللغة العونية فقد

3  
 28  
 الله عز وجل ضابط كل ما في السماء وعلى الارض. ونقول قولاً اخر  
 وهو ان الانسان ما وصف بأنه صورة الله الجوهرية بل صورته  
 فقط اي انه ما قيل عنه انه خركتيو. ولا مر في اللذان يدلان  
 على الجوهر وعلى السببه الجوهرية. وكما ان مر في العبد اي صورته  
 الجوهرية لان ذلك على شي اخر الاعلى الانسان لا خلاف في انسانيته.  
 هكذا ومر في الله لان ذلك على شي من الاشياء الاعلى الله تعالى.  
 قال عبد الله بن الفضل مفسر هذه الرسالة الالهية  
 ان في اللغة اليونانية اسماء تدل على الصور الجوهرية  
 الذاتية مفردة من ذلك خركتيو ومر في. وخركتيو هي

Fig. 1 Top: Syrian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 96), f. 14<sup>v</sup>. Bottom: Egyptian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 95), f. 28<sup>r</sup>.

In both manuscripts, this passage has Greek glosses (in Greek script) labelling the Arabic transliterations *kharaktīr* and *murfī*, which appear both in Ibn al-Faḍl's translation of Chrysostom (when Chrysostom refers to them specifically as words) and in Ibn al-Faḍl's comment about

these words, as *χαρακτήρ* and *μορφή*, respectively. In the Syrian Melkite manuscript (Paris, BnF, ar. 96), these glosses appear each time the transliteration appears, while in the Egyptian Coptic manuscript (Paris, BnF, ar. 95), they appear only the first time. In the Syrian manuscript, they appear in a neat middle Byzantine minuscule book-hand, complete with accents; in the Egyptian manuscript, they are written using Coptic letter-forms, without accents. In both, the Greek is spelled correctly and appears above or beside the ruled Arabic text.

These Greek glosses indicate that Arabic-speaking scholars continued to take an interest in the Greek philological point to which Ibn al-Faḍl had drawn attention. These scholars also had sufficient knowledge of Greek to recognize the transliterated words, and both could write in another script (Coptic and Greek, respectively). The person who wrote the Greek words in the Syrian manuscript could have been a professional Greek scribe, to judge from the regularity and ease with which those Greek words were written. In both cases, then, we are to imagine scholars comfortably reading biblical exegesis in Arabic but effortlessly switching to think about the original Greek from which it was translated when the argument depends on it.

Another note on Greek words likewise prompted Greek glosses in both manuscripts near the end of the book, in homily 32 (fig. 2). Chrysostom, exhorting human beings to be merciful to each other, quotes scripture: “Listen to the prophet when he says, ‘I am like a fruitful olive tree (ἐλαία) in the house of God’ [Psalm 52:8, LXX 51:10].”<sup>13</sup> An anonymous Arabic note on “olive tree” (possibly written by Ibn al-Faḍl) interrupts the text to explain the play on words: “The word ‘olive tree’ (*zaytūna*) in Greek is like the word ‘mercy’ because the word ‘mercy’ (*rahma*) is *ilā’ūn* (ἔλεον from ἔλεος), and ‘olive tree’ is *ilā’a* (ἐλαία).”<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Hebrews*, 32.3, PG 63, col. 224.

<sup>14</sup> Paris, BnF, ar. 96, f. 204<sup>v</sup>; Paris, BnF, ar. 95, f. 285<sup>v</sup>: اسم الزيتون في اللغة اليونانية كاسم الرحمة، لأن اسم الرحمة الاون، والزيتونة: ἔλεον. I have voweled the transliterated words so as to make clear their phonetic equivalence to the Greek; these vowels are not marked in the manuscript.

كَثِيرًا وَاسْمَعُ مَا يَقُولُ النَّبِيُّ لِيُصَحِّحَ لَكَ الدَّلِيلَ زَعَمَ أَنَا كَالزَّيْتُونَةِ  
 الْمَثْمُورَةِ فِي بَيْتِ اللَّهِ فَسَبَّيْنَا إِنْ نَكُونُ كَالزَّيْتُونَةِ هـ  
 حاشية  
 اسْمُ الزَّيْتُونَةِ فِي اللُّغَةِ الْيُونَانِيَّةِ كَاسْمِ الرَّجْمَةِ لِأَنَّ اسْمَ  
 الرَّجْمَةِ الْأَوَّلَ ٤٦٥٠٤ وَالزَّيْتُونَةَ الْأَوَّلَةَ ٤٦٥٠٤  
 مُثْقَلِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ الْجِهَاتِ بِالْوَصَايَا لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ تَجْزِي إِنْ نَكُونُ كَالزَّيْتُونَةِ  
 بَلْ مِثْلَهَا إِذَا كَانَتْ مُثْمَرَةً لِأَنَّ الرَّاحِمِينَ هُمُ الَّذِينَ يُعْطُونَ قَلِيلًا

فِي بَيْتِ اللَّهِ فَسَبَّيْنَا إِنْ نَكُونُ كَالزَّيْتُونَةِ حَاشِيَةٌ اسْمُ الزَّيْتُونَةِ فِي  
 ٤٦٥٠٧  
 اللُّغَةِ الْيُونَانِيَّةِ كَاسْمِ الرَّجْمَةِ لِأَنَّ اسْمَ الرَّجْمَةِ الْأَوَّلَ وَالزَّيْتُونَةَ الْأَوَّلَةَ  
 مُثْقَلِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ الْجِهَاتِ بِالْوَصَايَا لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ تَجْزِي إِنْ نَكُونُ كَالزَّيْتُونَةِ  
 بَلْ مِثْلَهَا إِذَا كَانَتْ مُثْمَرَةً لِأَنَّ الرَّاحِمِينَ هُمُ الَّذِينَ يُعْطُونَ قَلِيلًا  
 قَلِيلًا فِي كُلِّ أَيَّامِ السَّنَةِ لِأَنَّ الْمُنْحُونَ فِي كُلِّ سَبْعِ أَيَّامٍ عَلَى سَبِيلِ

Fig. 2 Top: Syrian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 96), f. 204<sup>v</sup>. Bottom: Egyptian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 95), f. 285<sup>v</sup>.

The Egyptian manuscript has one very simple Greek gloss above *ilā'ūn*: ἔλου, or perhaps (reading the final letter as a majuscule *nu* missing a stroke) ἔλον. This and the earlier glosses *μορφή* and *χαρακτήρ* (in fig. 1, bottom) seem to have been written in different hands.<sup>15</sup>

The Syrian manuscript, by contrast, includes two Greek glosses: the accusative form ἔλεον for *ilā'ūn* and ἐλαΐα (read ἐλαΐα) for *ilā'a*. These Greek glosses appear *in-line with the Arabic*, as if their inclusion was planned or even executed by the scribe. They are written by a self-assured hand in a Byzantine minuscule in the same ink and using what looks like the same pen as the rest of the text; it seems likely that the scribe of the main text or a close collaborator was responsible for writing them. This conjecture is strengthened by a difference between the

<sup>15</sup> Paris, BnF, ar. 95, f. 285<sup>v</sup>.

first and second words: ἔλεον, which comes first, is written in a space which is not quite large enough for it, so that its final *nu* must be fitted atop the *nūn* that it follows, while ἐλαῖα, which comes second, is written in letters as bold as the main Arabic text, with enough room as not to overlap with the word that preceded it. It seems that the scribe picked up his pen and started the word ἔλεον without moving far enough to the left, so that when he came to the next Greek word, this time he moved over enough to leave room for the Greek word to be boldly written. If by contrast we suppose that the main scribe left gaps that were later filled in by a Greek scribe, it is unclear why the latter would have had to start ἔλεον so far to the right of the next Arabic word, since the red dots were presumably added later.

The Syrian manuscript's inline Greek glosses may well reflect the Arabic note as it was originally written (whether by Ibn al-Faḍl or someone else), especially since this manuscript is genealogically close to Ibn al-Faḍl's autograph, to judge from its reference to Ibn al-Faḍl at one point with an expression of authorial humility ("the wretched sinner") conventionally used when referring to oneself, not others.<sup>16</sup>

In this example, the Arabic translation of a Byzantine classic, Chrysostom's exegetical homilies on Paul's letter to the Hebrews, pointedly calls attention to the original Greek in a critical note on the translation. Later scribes and readers engaged with this reference to the Greek. In the Syrian manuscript especially, the evidence suggests a sophisticated and knowledgeable engagement with the Greek, which was included not as a marginal scholarly apparatus but as part of the text itself. Arabic readers were expected to appreciate these Greek words as part of their reading experience.

Many other examples of such brief Greek glosses may be adduced. In Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 350, a ca.-13th-century manuscript containing various texts, including Ibn al-Faḍl's translation (from the Greek translation) of Isaac the Syrian's *Ascetic Discourses*<sup>17</sup> and John of Thessaloniki's *Encomium to Saint Demetrios*,<sup>18</sup> there are several, all suggesting a reader's attempt to identify difficult words with the Greek words from which they might have derived.

---

<sup>16</sup> This occurs in the ascription of the note on χαρακτήρ, μορφή, and εἰκόν, just discussed. Paris, BnF, ar. 96, f. 14<sup>v</sup>: "Marginal note: 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl the wretched sinner, interpreter (*mufassir*, i.e., translator) of this divine letter said . . ." حاشية قال عبد الله ابن الفضل الخاطي المسكين المفسر لهذه الرسالة الإلهية . . ." Paris, BnF, ar. 95 omits this expression of humility. See further Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 176 n. 89.

<sup>17</sup> CPG 7868; Isaac of Nineveh, *Ascetic Discourses*, ed. Pirard; Sinai ar. 350, ff. 2<sup>v</sup>-222<sup>r</sup>. Ibn al-Faḍl translated 35 of the 82 homilies; see Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 65-67.

<sup>18</sup> CPG 7925 = BHG 547h; Sinai ar. 350, ff. 237<sup>v</sup>-270<sup>v</sup>. It was only recently that Alexander Treiger discovered that this manuscript and Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352 (discussed below) contain this text; previously it was not even known that Ibn al-Faḍl had translated it. See Treiger, *Christian Graeco-Arabica*, 208 and n. 86; Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 72-82.

Something similar occurs in Vatican, BAV, Borg. ar. 153, a 14th-century copy of an anonymous Arabic translation of Basil of Caesarea's *Homilies on the Hexaemeron*, which Ibn al-Faḍl used to produce his own revised translation.<sup>19</sup> In homily 7, Basil marvels at various sea creatures, including the pearl-producing oyster and the pinna (*Pinna nobilis*, a mollusk) with its “golden wool” (used to produce sea silk).<sup>20</sup> The Arabic translation transliterates the word pinna as *binnā* (بنا), which has been glossed in the manuscript, in majuscule letters, as ΠΙΝΝΑ,<sup>21</sup> thus retrieving the Greek word behind the Arabic transliteration. On the next folio, there is a similar example, except that the main Arabic text does not have a transliteration but rather a difficult word (fig. 3): “the stinger of the fish that is called the wild-dove (*yamāma*) of the sea.”<sup>22</sup> (Diacritics missing from the first letter of *yamāma* indicate that the scribe may have been unsure about this word.) In the margin, *yamāma* has been glossed by the Greek word τρυγών (which means ‘stingray’ here but can also mean ‘turtle-dove’) in both Arabic transliteration, *ṭrighūn*, and mostly-minuscule Greek letters (whose shape may reflect Coptic influence), τρυγὸν(v). The annotator presumably found this word in Basil’s original, changing it from Basil’s genitive (τρυγόνος) to the nominative form.<sup>23</sup>

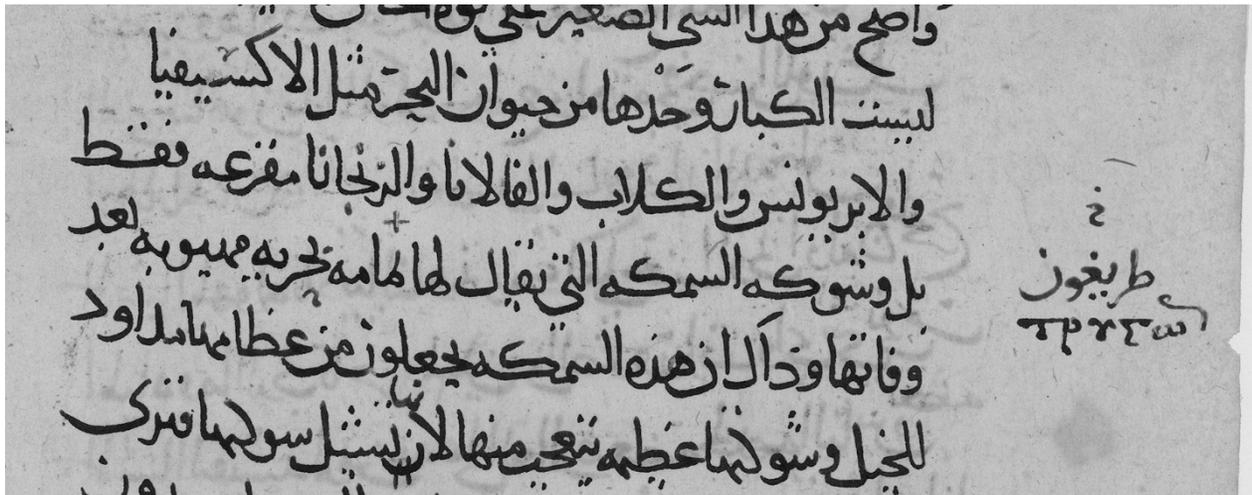


Fig. 3 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. ar. 153, f. 83<sup>v</sup>: stingrays and doves.

<sup>19</sup> See Roberts, Re-Translation.

<sup>20</sup> Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 7.6, ed. Amand de Mendieta and Rudberg, 123, lines 9-10. Cf. Aristotle, *Historia animalium*, 5.15, 547b15, who speaks of the pinna’s ‘byssus’ (cited by Amand de Mendieta and Rudberg, 123, apparatus); *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “byssus,” no. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Vatican, BAV, Borg. ar. 153, f. 82<sup>v</sup>. I refer to the folio numbers stamped in blue at the bottom of recto pages.

<sup>22</sup> Vatican, BAV, Borg. ar. 153, f. 83<sup>v</sup>: السمكة التي يقال لها يمامة بحرية. The usual word for a dove is *ḥamāma*.

<sup>23</sup> Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 7.6, ed. Amand de Mendieta and Rudberg, 124, l. 9; Vatican, BAV, Borg. ar. 153, f. 83<sup>v</sup>. According to the 10th-century lexicographer al-Jawharī (see *EP*, s.v. “al-Djawharī,” vol. 2, 495-497) *apud* Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* s.v. *yamm*, p. 4966, col. 3: “*yamām* are wild doves” (*al-yamāmu l-ḥamāmu l-waḥshī*). (Ibn Manẓūr also reviews a number of other possible definitions, all related to “dove,” *ḥamāma*.)

Arabic readers' impulse to think about the Greek original of zoological terms in Basil's *Hexaemeron* is not only attested in these medieval manuscripts but also deep into the modern period. Take for example two manuscripts of Ibn al-Faḍl's re-translation of the *Hexaemeron*: Joun (Lebanon), Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, MS 114 (1623 CE); and Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, ar. 142 (18th century).<sup>24</sup> In homily 9, Basil lists the four stomachs of ruminants: "[first] stomachs (στόμαχοι), omasa (ἔχῖνοι), reticula (κεκρύφαλοι), and abomasa (ἔνυστρα)."<sup>25</sup> Ibn al-Faḍl's translation renders the first with the ordinary Arabic word for stomach (*al-mi'da*). But he transliterates the three other terms; these receive interlinear glosses in both manuscripts: *al-ishīnī*, glossed ἔχῖνοι (Joun) and ἔχῖνοι (Damascus); *al-kākrīfānī*, glossed καϊκρίφανοι (Joun) and καικρήφ<α>νοι (Damascus); and the phrase "and the abomasum," *wa-l-inīstrā*, glossed κ(αἰ) ἔνυστρα (Joun) and κ(αἰ) ενυστρα (Damascus).<sup>26</sup>

These glosses are written in practiced Greek hands in both manuscripts. They do not appear to have been made with recourse to the original Greek, especially in light of καϊκρίφανοι, which is best explained as a form derived from the Arabic transliteration *kākrīfānī*, rather than the original Greek κεκρύφαλοι: not only are the first two vowels written using phonetic equivalents (equivalent to both the original Greek and the Arabic), but the Arabic's *n* is retained where the original Greek has *λ*. At the same time, the act of early-modern glossing whose traces these manuscript pages preserve must have had at its background considerable familiarity with Greek: the *κε* sound (which is how Arabic *kā-* is also pronounced) has been reflexively rendered as the conjunction καί, complete with the accent in the Joun manuscript, perhaps by attraction to the same Arabic conjunction (*wa-*) that precedes the word. The last item on the list is also prefaced by the same conjunction in a standard abbreviated form (κ).

Elsewhere we find somewhat longer Greek annotations that provide the Greek original of

---

<sup>24</sup> See Roberts, *Re-Translation*, esp. 211-219. To judge from the manuscripts' annotations, we can be confident that they have been in the Near East since being copied. The Damascus manuscript bears an ex libris (on the cover page) for the library of "Abd al-Masīḥ of Antioch." On the following folio, the title page, there is a stamp of the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (resident in Damascus). The Joun manuscript at Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ has two colophons, one short (p. 233), one long (p. 477), in the hand of the main scribe, who remains anonymous but names the manuscript's commissioner, "the sheikh and deacon Ni'matallāh, son of the late priest Naṣrallāh, known as Ibn Khalaf, the Damascene" (p. 477). The date of completion was Monday, 21 April, Anno Mundi 7131 (1623 CE), corresponding to the year [10]32 of the Hijra (1622-1623 CE). On the manuscript's title page, there is a note by Euthymios, bishop of Tyre (Ṣūr) and Sidon (Ṣaydā), saying that he has donated the book to "the Monastery of Christ the Savior" (Dayr al-Masīḥ . . . al-Mukhalliṣ) in July 1723 CE. The manuscript is still there.

<sup>25</sup> Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 9.5, ed. Amand de Mendieta and Rudberg, 155, line 8. For glosses on all three of these terms in Greek manuscripts, see the apparatus, which also cites Aristotle's helpful discussion in *Historia animalium*, 2.17, 507a36-b11.

<sup>26</sup> Joun, Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, MS 114, p. 222, lines 17-19; Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, ar. 142, part 1, p. 149, lines 8-9. See also Roberts, *Re-Translation*, 218, where this same passage and its glosses are adduced to help discern the textual relationship between manuscripts of this translation.

whole phrases and passages of the Arabic text. Such annotations appear, for example, in Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 66 (1266 CE), containing the Psalter in Arabic (ff. 1<sup>r</sup>-259<sup>v</sup> including Psalm 151, which, as the scribe notes, is not found in all copies of the Psalter, and a colophon) and Ibn al-Faḍl’s translation of the *Loci communes* under the title *Book of the Garden* (ff. 260<sup>r</sup>-375<sup>v</sup>).<sup>27</sup> (Saints’ lives, which seem to have been bound with the previous two texts at a later date, follow, ff. 376<sup>r</sup>-397<sup>v</sup>).

The Greek marginal annotations appear in the first section of the manuscript, the Psalter; they provide the opening line, in Greek, of each Psalm, all in the same well-practiced Greek hand. The Greek text is not a reader’s guess as to the original but reflects the Septuagint text that a Greek-speaker would have memorized or found in a Greek Psalter. The Psalms are numbered by the same hand using Greek numerals. So for example the Arabic text for Psalm 7 (*al-mazmūr al-sābi*) begins, “My lord and my God” (*rabbī wa-ilāhī*); in the margin is the Greek numeral ζ (7) and the words κ(ύρι)ε ὁ θε(ός)ς μου—the opening of the Psalm in Greek. There are indications that these lemmas may have been written from memory; Psalm 18 (η’, *al-mazmūr al-thāmin ‘ashar*), beginning, “The heavens spread word of . . .” (*al-samawāt tanuthth*),<sup>28</sup> has in the margin: “ὅτι [sic] οὐ(ρα)νοὶ διηγούντε”—“the heavens recount”—which is a misspelled phonetic equivalent of the Septuagint text. Likewise, Psalm 28, beginning, “Come close to the Lord” (*qarribū li-l-rabb*), has in the margin: “ἐνέγκατε το κ(υρι)ο” (f. 44<sup>r</sup>) for the Septuagint’s “ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ”—again a phonetic equivalent. These errors are unlikely to have been produced by copying, at least not from a text that lacked these errors, since the lemmatist was clearly fully proficient in the Greek script.

These Greek annotations may have been added by someone whose native language was Greek, or who in any case knew the Psalms in Greek. This would have allowed for easier reference, whether for the liturgy or for study: one could search for the Psalm number and then easily check that the opening line (in Greek) was the correct one before beginning to read the Arabic.

## 2 Apparatus for the Reader

<sup>27</sup> Atiya, *al-Fahāris al-tahlīliyya*, 129–32; ps.-Maximos the Confessor, *Loci communes*, ed. Ihm. On Ibn al-Faḍl’s annotated translation, including this manuscript, see Treiger, ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, 100-103; Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 62-64, 132-136, 152-163. The Psalter is missing at least one page: Psalm 7 begins at the bottom of f. 6<sup>v</sup>, but then the top of f. 7<sup>r</sup> begins in the middle of Psalm 8:5 (. . . *anta taftaqid-hu* corresponds to ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν). Although Ibn al-Faḍl did produce an Arabic version of the Psalter, the version in this manuscript is different from his translation. For Ibn al-Faḍl’s version, see Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 36-37. For a study of different Arabic versions, see the forthcoming article on this subject by Miriam Lindgren Hjälms.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘arab*, s.v. *n-th-th*, p. 4339, col. 1: “*al-naththu: nashru l-ḥadūth.*”

The Greek numerals used to number the Psalms exemplify another type of Greek found in Arabic manuscripts: apparatus for the reader, for example numerals and lemmas to help the reader use the book.

In the Syrian manuscript of Ibn al-Faḍl’s Arabic translation of Chrysostom’s *Homilies on Hebrews* already discussed (Paris, BnF, ar. 96, before 1229 CE), homilies are numbered throughout in the margin using Greek numerals. For example, on f. 160<sup>v</sup>, homily 26 is labeled κς in the margin. Sometimes the word ὁμιλία appears too, as on f. 200<sup>r</sup>, where homily 32 is labeled “ὁμιλ(ία) λβ.” This same manuscript also has a marginal note indicating that a passage is to be read on the sixth Saturday of Lent, “Ca στ’ νηστ(είας)” (f. 201<sup>r</sup>). These annotations are not systematic but do suggest that a user of this Arabic book who was most comfortable working in Greek marked certain homilies that he or she read or consulted, in such a way that they would be easier to find again—by marking them in Greek. The note about Lent suggests that ease of consultation might have been desired for use in the liturgy.

Similar numbering appears in Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352, a 13th-century manuscript containing various texts, including Ibn al-Faḍl’s Arabic translations of Isaac the Syrian’s *Ascetic Discourses*, John of Damascus’s brief *Statement on Correct Thought*,<sup>29</sup> and John of Thessaloniki’s *Encomium to Saint Demetrios*. The folios have been numbered in a premodern hand not in Greek but in Arabic *abjad* notation: f. 1<sup>r</sup> is labelled “16” (بو), f. 2<sup>r</sup> “17” (بز), and so on, up to f. 190<sup>r</sup>: “206” (رو). (Some folios, presumably at least 15 of them, have been lost from the beginning of the manuscript, perhaps two quires, quaternia, with an unnumbered title page followed by 15 numbered folios.) Nevertheless, the manuscript also bears Greek markings (fig. 4). In the first text, by Isaac the Syrian,<sup>30</sup> marginal Greek section numbers (perhaps executed by the main scribe) often appear, e.g., ς besides *al-bāb al-sādis*, “section 6” (f. 23<sup>v</sup>); and η beside “section 8” (f. 31<sup>v</sup>). Much further along in the manuscript, in the Arabic translation of the popular *Ladder of Paradise* by John of the Ladder (d. ca. 650),<sup>31</sup> similar marginal Greek numerals appear, each next to a homily.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> CPG 8046, a.k.a. *Libellus de recta sententia*. See Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 53-54.

<sup>30</sup> The manuscript as it now survives begins in the midst of §2.

<sup>31</sup> CPG 7852; see ODB, s.v. “John Klimax,” 1060-1061. John’s *Ladder* begins at f. 197<sup>v</sup>, whose heading identifies the author and says that the text has 30 homilies (*maymars*): هذا امبتدا (كذا) قول أنبا يُنه (كذا) اقليمس الراهب الكبير والقديس الحكيم: رئيس طور سينا الموضع المقدس، أقوال شتى ثلثين ميمر على الجهاد في الرهبانية لمنفعة الأنفس وأيضاً العقول. The beginning of the Arabic text corresponds to PG 88, col. 632.

<sup>32</sup> For example, ff. 244<sup>r</sup>, 245<sup>r</sup>, 246<sup>v</sup>, 247<sup>r</sup>. Some homilies later in the manuscript are numbered using Coptic numerals, e.g., on ff. 277<sup>r</sup>, 279<sup>r</sup>, 285<sup>r</sup>.

موضعه فهو نحو **حمر** • درجة ثامنه للذي عليها موضوع اليل عدوان الغضب  
فاما الذي هو من طبيعته لعله ليس هو عليه • بل الذي هو من العرق  
والنخب فقد غلب من كل بدل للمانيه •  
**الميم التاسع على الحق**  
اما الاعمال الصلاه • فهي تشبه سلم يعقوب • درجة واحده تصعد الي واحد •  
الذي يهوا العمل حتي تبلغه السما • فاما الشرور الخبيثه فهي تشبه السلسله

لان يدان نكثوفيه القول • درجة تاسعه والدي يلعبها واصاب  
حينئذ يطلب من الله الحبل من الاوج •  
**الميم العاشر على الوقيعه والدينونه**  
ليس اظن انه تحفا على كل من يعقل • انه من البغض والحقد تولد الوقيعه •  
وكل ذلك يلحق الولد بالديه • الوقيعه هي ولد البغض • وهي مرض لطيف

بتمر المناقض والعيوب ولكن انا اقول • ان ابصوت بعينك فلا تدن احد  
لانه مرار كثيره تغشد عينك • طلوع عاشور الذي غلب فهو عمال الخبث  
**الميم الحادي عشر من اجل الصمت وكثره الكلام**  
قد سبقنا واخبرنا كثر في القول الذي مضى من اجل الدينونه • بانها عطب عظيم لهوا

عسره هو جدا ان تجبس اللسان الما من غير سد • واعسرفه  
ان يضبط اللسان من غير امساك •  
الاحط عسره الذي غلب فقد قطع عنه حشا شر كثيره •  
**ميم ثا عشر على الكذب**

Fig. 4 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352, numbered homilies (*maymars*) from ff. 244<sup>r</sup>, 245<sup>r</sup>, 246<sup>v</sup>, 247<sup>r</sup>

After homily 30, the subsequent verso page (f. 322<sup>v</sup>) was filled with a table of the 30 homilies (fig. 5). Homilies are arranged in order from bottom to top. The right-hand column spells out the number in Arabic; the left-hand column has the corresponding Greek numeral. In the central column is the subject, in Arabic. (Immediately after the table, the manuscript continues with “homily 31,” i.e., John of the Ladder, *To the Shepherd*).<sup>33</sup>

٢٠	الذبح الذي كتبه كرسيا	عشرين
κϞ	عدم الاوح	تاسع وعشرون
κϡ	الملاكه الصلاه الراه	باثني عشر
κϢ	الهدايا السماويه بلاه	سابع وعشرون
κϣ	الانصاف المنفي	سادس وعشرون
κϤ	الانصاف القديس	خمس وعشرون
κϥ	تعليم المسيح الانبساطه بلاشر	اربع وعشرون
κϦ	استعمال الفن الشيطاني	بالعشرين
κϧ	الفوارش كتبه العظمه	بالعشرين
κϨ	النجاه من الجلب	احد عشر
κ	السهر المنفي	عشر
ιϠ	القواه التي تميز مع الجراعه	باثني عشر
ιϡ	استعمال عدم قلبه الحس	ثامن عشر
ιϢ	الجره الى السما بقله الاقتنا	سادس عشر
ιϣ	قلب حب الفضه	سلكم عشره
ιϤ	طريق العفه الذي لا يتغير	خمس عشره
ιϥ	الصيام التبعي	اربع عشره
ιϦ	السفام من الضح	بالعشره
ιϧ	السفام من جفه الكدر	باثني عشره
ιϨ	شؤون الشقيين الزنده وتخطف النفس	طاس عشره
ι	قله الربوبه	عاشر
Ϡ	قله الختمه	باسعه
ϡ	قله الغصه	ثمانه
Ϣ	المعوم بكل يوم بالد	سابعه
ϣ	الدوم التي تكون من زكوا المود	سادس
Ϥ	التقرب الى الله بالتوبه	طاسه
ϥ	الطاعه التي للموسى	اربعه
Ϧ	الجرى التي في العود	بالسه
ϧ	الانصاع بلاوح	ثانيه
Ϩ	الدرجه الاولى العوام من العالم	اوله

Fig. 5 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352, f. 322<sup>v</sup>: table of *maymars*

Throughout the manuscript, especially in this first portion, a different Greek guide to the reader occurs as well, marking the “beginning,” ἀρχ(ή), and “end,” τ(έ)λ(ος), of certain passages,

<sup>33</sup> CPG 7853. The beginning of “homily 31” on f. 323<sup>r</sup> corresponds to PG 88, col. 1165A. *To the Shepherd* typically follows the *Ladder* in Greek manuscripts.

in a competent Byzantine minuscule.<sup>34</sup> These passages were probably selected to be read aloud, perhaps in a liturgical context. The manuscript also has a number of Greek glosses of the type already examined above, including what may be a Greek vernacular form: της φρονήσης, for τῆς φρονήσεως, “of practical wisdom.”<sup>35</sup>

At the top the last page of the original manuscript (f. 333<sup>v</sup>), which ends with John of the Ladder’s *To the Shepherd*, the Greek annotator has written a note that is neither a gloss nor an apparatus to help the reader, but a Greek scriptural quotation that the Arabic text called to mind: “κ(ύρι)ε τὰ χεῖλη μου” (read χεῖλη), the beginning of Psalm 51(LXX 50):15, which continues “. . . ἀνοίξεις, καὶ τὸ στόμα μου ἀναγγελεῖ τὴν αἴνεσίν σου”—“Lord, you will open my lips, and my mouth will proclaim your praise.” The prompt for this line from this frequently recited psalm was probably the Arabic text on this page, which recalls that Moses claimed to have a “hoarse voice and a heavy tongue” (*abahh wa-thaqīl al-lisān*, lines 5-6 = ἰσχνόφωνον . . . καὶ βραδύγλωσσον).<sup>36</sup> It seems we are to imagine someone who had memorized at least this well-known psalm in Greek reading this Arabic manuscript.

Such practices persisted into the early modern period. Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 270, dated 1625 CE, contains Basil’s *Hexaemeron* in the anonymous Arabic translation, followed by Gregory of Nyssa’s *On Making Man*, various other texts by Basil, and, at the very end, a homily by John Chrysostom (454<sup>r</sup>-468<sup>v</sup>).<sup>37</sup> Scattered throughout the *Hexaemeron* are various simple Greek glosses of the sort already discussed, offering the original Greek of words transliterated in the Arabic text.<sup>38</sup>

The manuscript also has marginal lemmas for the reader. After the hexaemeral texts come an “abridged portion of the ascetic works” (*juz` mukhtaṣar min nuskīyāt*) of Basil (f. 248<sup>r</sup>). In the margin is written: “ὕποτύποσις [*sic*] ἀσκήσεως,” a title attached to *Prologue 6* (CPG 2884) in

<sup>34</sup> The first example is ff. 3<sup>v</sup> (*archē*)-4<sup>r</sup> (*telos*). They continue: 4<sup>r-v</sup>, 5<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup>, 9<sup>r-v</sup>, 11<sup>r-v</sup>. They pause for a while, then continue, only *archē* apparently with no matching *telos*: 24<sup>v</sup>, 33<sup>v</sup>, 36<sup>r</sup>, 37<sup>v</sup>, etc. In later portions of the manuscript these annotations occur much less frequently but still occasionally, e.g., 254<sup>v</sup> (*archē*).

<sup>35</sup> f. 16<sup>r</sup>, a gloss on *al-dhar* (capacity, strength) in the phrase *yanbū` al-dhar*, “spring [i.e., source] of strength.” Other Greek glosses appear on ff. 30<sup>r</sup> and 211<sup>r</sup> (λαυρέντιος, glossing لفوننتيوس; read لفوننتيوس).

<sup>36</sup> PG 88, col. 1205D; cf. Exodus 4:10. For the daily liturgical use of Ps. 51(50), see Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects*, 19 and n. 60.

<sup>37</sup> Atiya, *al-Fahāris al-tahlīliyya*, 501-503. For the anonymous translation of Basil’s *Hexaemeron*, see Roberts, *Re-Translation*, 203-204.

<sup>38</sup> See ff. 46<sup>v</sup>, 56<sup>r</sup>, 57<sup>r</sup>, 58<sup>v</sup>-59<sup>v</sup>, 71<sup>r</sup>, 75<sup>v</sup>. On f. 133<sup>r</sup>, words for two of the ruminant stomachs are glossed: ἐχίνοι on *al-ishīnī* and κεκρίφαλοι on *al-kikirīfālī*. These glosses are phonetically identical to the correct Greek words; notably, the lambda in κεκρίφαλοι is retained (clearly because the Arabic has the correct *lām*, not *nūn*), in contrast to the manuscripts of *Ibn al-Faḍl*’s translation of Basil’s *Hexaemeron* discussed above (Joun, Dayr al-Mukhallīs, MS 114; and Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, ar. 142).

Greek manuscripts of Basil's *Asceticon magnum* (CPG 2875).<sup>39</sup> And indeed, the beginning of the Arabic text corresponds to the beginning of *Prologue 6*.<sup>40</sup> Such marginal lemmas occur throughout the text, offering Greek headings corresponding to sections of the Arabic; these headings are the original Greek titles, allowing us to identify the Arabic text as sections from Basil's *Constitutiones asceticae* (CPG 2895). Thus beside the Arabic heading “*Min ajli annahu lā yanbaghī li-l-rāhib an yashtahī an yašīra kāhinan wa-lā ra’īsan ‘alā aḥadan [sic]*” is the Greek equivalent Ὅτι κλήρου ἢ προστασίας ἀδελφῶν οὐδαμῶς ἐφίεσθαι, which is most of the title of *Constitutiones asceticae*, chapter 9 (the rest is: . . . προσήκει τὸν ἀσκητήν).<sup>41</sup> Another heading announces the beginning of Basil's *Qawānīn li-jamī’i l-nussāk*, “Rules for all ascetics”; what follows is in fact the *prooimion* of the *Constitutiones asceticae*, as the early modern reader has indicated by copying the Greek incipit corresponding to *lammā khtartu laka . . . falsafata l-masīh*, “when I chose for you the philosophy of Christ”: τὴν κατὰ χ(ριστὸν) φιλοσοφίαν ἐπανελόμενος. Marginal lemmas continue in this text as well. They also continue in the next text, labeled Basil's *Ru’ūs waḍa’ ahā li-ajli l-nussāk fī l-majma’*, “Chapters which he laid down for ascetics in the assembly,” whose opening line the early modern reader has annotated in Greek with the corresponding opening line of the *Sermo asceticus* (CPG 2883, a.k.a. *Prologue 5*), which, like *Prologue 6*, also appears in Greek manuscripts of *Asceticon magnum*: ὁ ἀσκητικὸς βίος ἔνα (*sic*) σκοπὸν ἔχει, τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς σωτηρίαν (f. 323<sup>r</sup>). The frequent lemmas continue until the end of these selections from Basil's ascetic writings, announced by the Arabic scribe at f. 397<sup>r</sup>.<sup>42</sup>

These lemmas were clearly copied from the Greek text. They indicate that an Arabic reader (well practiced in writing in the Greek script) wished to sort out which of Basil's writings had been collected here and so compared the Arabic to a copy of the Greek.

### 3 Notes by Scribes and Readers

The manuscript we have just been considering, Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 270, brings us to the final type of Greek annotation this chapter considers: notes and subscriptions by readers

<sup>39</sup> For example, in Paris, BnF, gr. 964 (11th century), f. 16<sup>v</sup>: Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὑποτύπωσις ἀσκήσεως· πρόλογος. See also PG 31, col. 881, note 70; Gribomont, *Histoire*, 7-8.

<sup>40</sup> Τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ προστάσσοντος: ربنا يسوع المسيح أمر قائلاً.

<sup>41</sup> f. 252<sup>v</sup>. PG 31, col. 1317. Further examples include Greek lemmas on f. 253<sup>r</sup> = Basil, *Constitutiones asceticae*, ch. 18, heading, PG 31, col. 1381B (with a scribal error: περὶ for πρὸς); f. 255<sup>v</sup> = ch. 19; f. 256<sup>r</sup> = ch. 20; f. 258<sup>r</sup> = ch. 21; etc. Further such lemmas appear on ff. 261<sup>r</sup>, 264<sup>v</sup>-265<sup>r</sup>, 266<sup>r</sup>, 271<sup>r-v</sup>, 273<sup>r</sup>, 274<sup>r</sup>, 275<sup>r</sup>-278<sup>r</sup>, 280<sup>r-v</sup>, 282<sup>r</sup>, 283<sup>v</sup>, and so on.

<sup>42</sup> There is also a Greek lemma beside Basil's *Qawl nuskī ‘an al-zuhd fī l-‘ālam wa-fī l-kamāl* (424<sup>r</sup>); the lemma corresponds to the incipit of CPG 2889.

and scribes. The manuscript is graced by an ample colophon (fig. 6; f. 469<sup>r</sup>), in a slightly different hand, which says that copying of the book was completed on 10 March, Anno Mundi 7133 (1625 CE), at the monastery of Mount Sinai, in the time of the abbot and bishop Ioasaph (Yuwāṣaf), by the scribe Sīmāōn (سيماون)—an Arabic transliteration of the Greek name Συμεών, rather than the Arabic form Sim‘ān—who was a deacon from Ḥoms (Emesa). The choice of a Greek form in Arabic transliteration for Symeon’s name suggests that this Arabic writer of the colophon, as he wrote (good) Arabic, was thinking of the name in Greek.

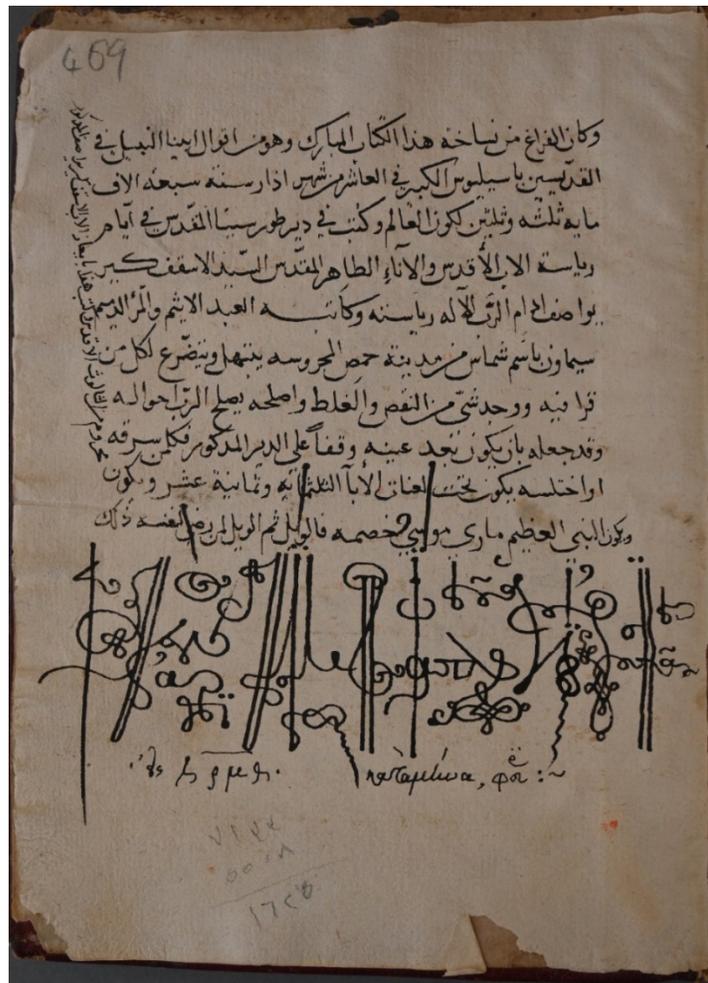


Fig. 6 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 270, f. 469<sup>r</sup>: colophon and subscription of Ioasaph, Archbishop of Sinai

Below the colophon appears an ornate subscription: + ὁ εὐσεβέστατος (?) ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἰωάσαφ τοῦ ἁγίου ὄρους Σινᾶ, “the most pious (?) archbishop Ioasaph of the holy Mount Sinai,” followed by a date: εἰς ζρμηθ, κατὰ μήνα φευρ(σουάριον), that is, February (spelled phonetically), Anno Mundi 7149 (1641 CE)—almost 16 years later than the colophon. The person in question is

Ioasaph of Rhodes, Archbishop and Hegoumenos of Sinai (r. 1617-1661).<sup>43</sup> Together, the colophon and subscription offer us a glimpse of the sort of bilingual reader who might have read this Arabic book with persistent reference to the Greek textual tradition upon which it is based.

Greek subscriptions can be found in another Arabic manuscript, Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35 (1227 CE), which contains Ibn al-Faḍl's translation of John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis* (CPG 4409), homilies 31-67 (of 67).<sup>44</sup> (An Arabic version of a homily by Gregory of Nazianzos was appended at the end.) According to the colophon after Chrysostom's homilies, this copy was completed "at the monastery of Saint Mark at the outskirts of Alexandria," on 5 January, in the 15th indiction, Anno Mundi 6735 (1227 CE).<sup>45</sup> As Koikylides points out, this Arabic manuscript has notes in Greek in a hand contemporaneous with the Arabic on a number of folios, "interpreting or correcting the Arabic text."<sup>46</sup> To judge from the photographs, the manuscript's history is complex. Several scribes are responsible for the main text, and pages worth of lacunas seem to have been filled in.<sup>47</sup> For the present purposes, we can pass over these complexities.

Three notes in the manuscript allow us to identify its owner as Patriarch Joachim of Antioch, former bishop of Beirut, and one of its readers as his student Moses the hieromonk.<sup>48</sup> First, when he was still metropolitan bishop of Beirut, Joachim read the book, wrote an Arabic note under the colophon, and subscribed it in Greek (fig. 7; f. 440<sup>r</sup>).

---

<sup>43</sup> Marinescu, *Hierarchs' Catalogue*, 285.

<sup>44</sup> Koikylides, *Katálogoç*, 38-48. I am grateful to Maria Mavroudi for introducing me to this manuscript and its multilingual annotations, generously sharing with me her notes on the manuscript, and giving me access to a reproduction of the manuscript in her possession (before a digitized microfilm of the manuscript was made available by the US Library of Congress online at <https://www.loc.gov/item/00271070901-jo/>).

<sup>45</sup> f. 440<sup>r</sup>; transcribed and translated into Greek by Koikylides, *Katálogoç*, 39-40.

<sup>46</sup> Koikylides, *Katálogoç*, 39, citing ff. 266, 268, 271, 278, 286, 295, 341, 377, 441, 442, 447, 450.

<sup>47</sup> For example, at the bottom of f. 110<sup>v</sup>, the scribe who copied the foregoing replacement for pages that had presumably been damaged wrote that the text had been collated (with the new exemplar? or the damaged original?) and was found to be correct (*qūbila wa-ṣaḥḥa bi-'awni llāh*).

<sup>48</sup> All described by Koikylides, *Katálogoç*, 39, who also mentions the Arabic reader's mark of the monk Yuḥannā ibn Sarkī (f. 110<sup>v</sup>), who consulted it in Anno Mundi 7072 (1563-1564 CE); and a note (f. 131<sup>v</sup>) relating that the bishop of Mar Saba (*uṣquf al-sīq*) had died on Friday 24 November 7072 (1563 CE; it originally read "7073" but then the same hand struck out *thalātha* and replaced it with *ithnayn*). On the same page is a note in Syriac; there is another Syriac note on f. 440<sup>v</sup>.



The identification of the two Joachims is especially clear from a comparison of the Greek and Arabic handwriting used in the two notes. Furthermore, the Arabic notes use similar formulas (“the blessed book,” *al-kitāb al-mubārak*; Joachim is “the lowly among high priests,” *al-ḥaḡīr fī ru’asā’ al-kahana*).<sup>50</sup> Joachim must have consulted and signed the book as metropolitan of Beirut and then later, when he had become patriarch of Antioch, decided to donate the book to Mar Saba. On that occasion he signed the end of a re-written portion, suggesting that he may have commissioned the replacement pages. Nasrallah identifies this Patriarch Joachim with Joachim ibn Jum‘a, patriarch of Antioch from 1543 until his death in 1576.<sup>51</sup> Nasrallah also refers to a manuscript in his own private collection (fig. 9) that was copied by Patriarch Joachim on 2 December, Anno Mundi 7075 (1566 CE), or possibly 7065 (1556 CE).<sup>52</sup> The date in that manuscript, as in the Jerusalem manuscript (see fig. 8), is given in Coptic numerals. These interrelated examples show that Joachim was at ease reading and writing Arabic but signed his name in elaborate Greek script—even in an Arabic book.

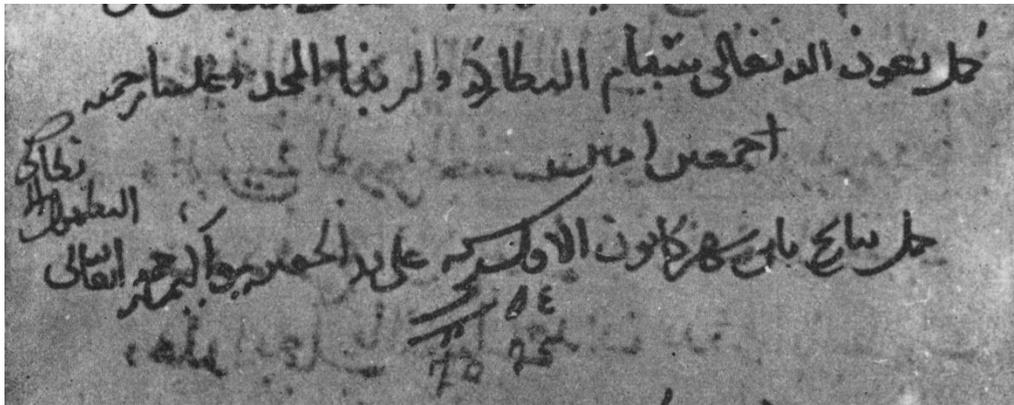


Fig. 9 Manuscript formerly in private collection of Joseph Nasrallah: colophon by Patriarch Joachim ibn Jum‘a. Reproduced from Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, after 32

Nor was this learned prelate the only person to write Greek in the manuscript. Sometime after Joachim had become patriarch of Antioch, his student Moses wrote a note in fluent Arabic saying that he, Moses (Mūsā), student (*tilmīdh*) of Patriarch Joachim, had consulted the book (fig. 10; f. 117<sup>v</sup>). Moses’s note bears a date in Coptic numerals (not mentioned by Koikylides) which I tentatively read as Anno Mundi 7075 (1566-1567 CE). Beside his Arabic note, in a clear but hardly effortless Greek hand is the (misspelled) inscription “Moses the hieromonk” (μοησης

<sup>50</sup> Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, 32 took it for granted that the two notes were by the same Joachim.

<sup>51</sup> Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, 30-35, 66-68, 73.

<sup>52</sup> See note 49. The colophon of that manuscript is reproduced by Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, after 32. Nasrallah reads the Coptic numerals as 7075 but gives the Common-Era equivalent as 1567.

ηερουμουνάχου). Clearly Moses was much more comfortable in Arabic than Greek, and yet it seemed important to him to sign his name in Greek too.

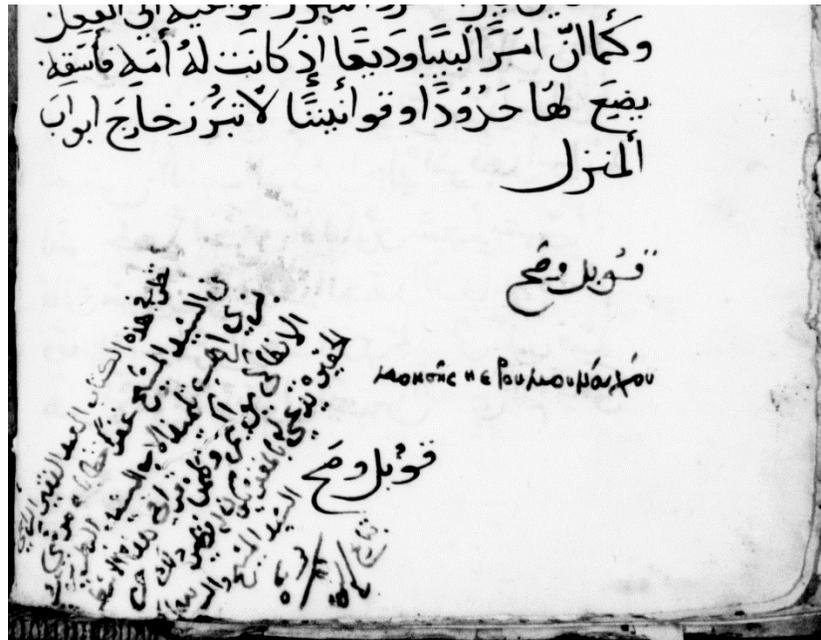


Fig. 10 Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35, f. 117<sup>v</sup>: reader’s note of Moses, student of Patriarch Joachim

A thirteenth-century manuscript mostly containing works by John of Damascus (including his *Statement on Correct Thought*, translated by Ibn al-Faḍl),<sup>53</sup> also contains a patriarchal subscription. This manuscript, Vatican, BAV, ar. 79, is dated by its colophon (f. 318<sup>r</sup>) to the last ten days of March, Anno Mundi 6731 (1223 CE), or the last ten days of Ṣafar AH 620 (20 Ṣafar 620 = 25 March 1223 CE). There follow several owners’ marks in Arabic, including that of a Michael, Patriarch of Antioch (fig. 11; f. 318<sup>v</sup>). Presumably written in his own hand, it concludes with a date: “And this was written in July of the year . . .” (. . . *wa-kutiba bi-tārīkh shahr tammūz sanat . . .*). A date in Coptic numerals follows: ζλζ, or Anno Mundi 7037 (July 1528 CE). Beside the date is a subscription, in Greek script: Μιχαὴλ πατριάρχης, “Michael, Patriarch.” This must be Michael ibn al-Māwardī (d. 1543), patriarch of Antioch from 1523-1524 to 1541.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See note 29.

<sup>54</sup> See Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, 23-27.

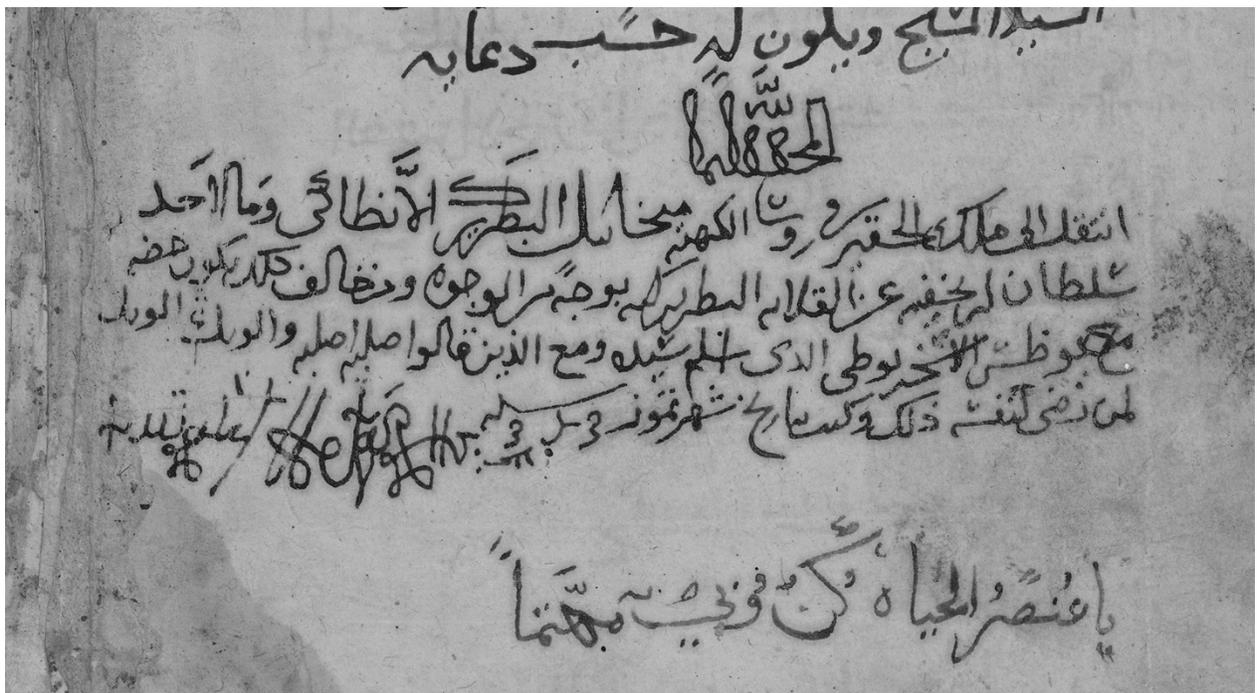


Fig. 11 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ar. 79, f. 318<sup>v</sup>: owner's mark and subscription of Michael, Patriarch of Antioch

I have mentioned in passing the use of Coptic numerals in these manuscripts. This practice attests to how standard Arabized Coptic numerals had become among Arabic-speakers.<sup>55</sup> These particular Arabic-speakers, who wrote Greek in their manuscripts, were also, if only at a distance, preserving a vestige of yet another script, using Coptic numerals, even though Arabic *abjad* numerals and Greek numerals were standard systems still in use.

Following the *Statement on Correct Thought* comes an even briefer creed composed by the translator Ibn al-Faḍl (ff. 325<sup>v</sup>-326<sup>r</sup>).<sup>56</sup> This appears to have been the last text in the original manuscript (although in its present binding more text follows).

The clearest sign that the manuscript once ended here is also evidence that Arabic scribes sought to draw on Byzantine scribal tropes: a scribe's note, in Greek, expressing relief at the end of the book (fig. 12; f. 327<sup>v</sup>). The note, in an uneven script, reads:

+ ὡσπερ ξένοι χέρωντες οἰδ' οἶν π(ατ)ρίδα καὶ  
οἱ ἐν θαλλάττεβωντες ευρ( ) λυμενα οὐτως καὶ  
οἱ γράφωντες οἰδ' οἶν βοιβλοίου τέλλως

Below it, a hand even less used to writing Greek has copied out the text:

<sup>55</sup> On the Arabic influence on Coptic numerals in Arabic manuscripts, see Frantsouzoff, *Les chiffres coptes*.

<sup>56</sup> For a transcription and translation of this creed, see Roberts, *Reason and Revelation*, 54-56.

+ οσ περ ξενι χερων τες οιδιν  
π(ατ)ριδα και οι ενθαλα τεβοντες ευρ  
λυμεν ουτως κε οιγρα φον τεσοιδοιν  
βιβλοι ου τε λλος

Or, in standard Greek orthography:

ὥσπερ ξένοι χαίροντες ἰδεῖν πατρίδα  
καὶ οἱ ἐνθαλαττεύοντες εὐρεῖν λιμένα,  
οὕτως καὶ οἱ γράφοντες ἰδεῖν βιβλίου τέλος.

Like strangers rejoicing to see their country,  
and men at sea (rejoicing) to find a harbor,  
so too scribes (rejoice) to see the book's end.

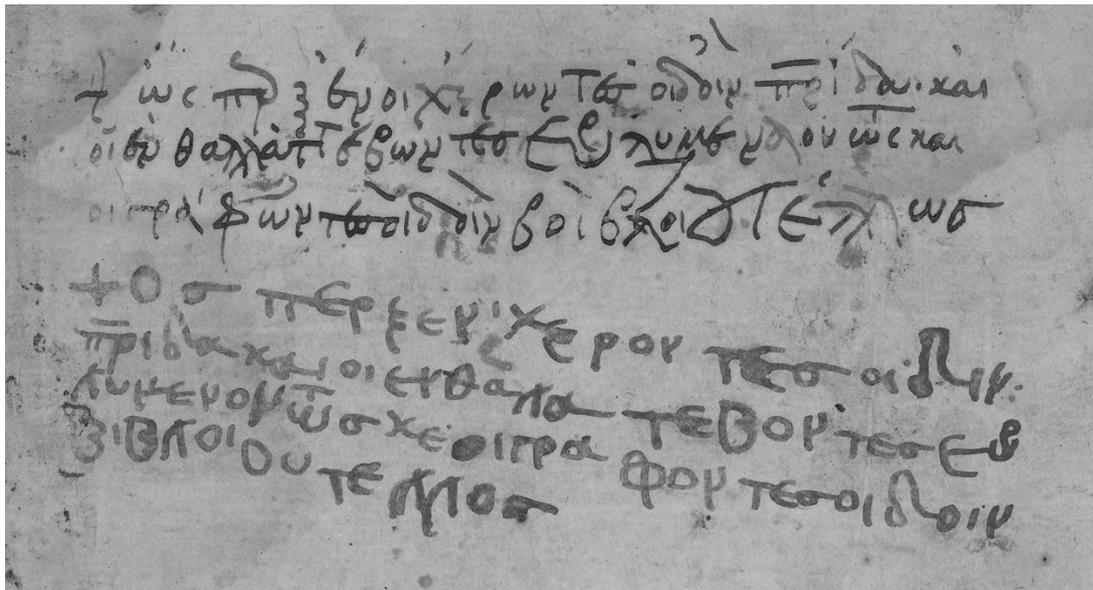


Fig. 12 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ar. 79, f. 327<sup>v</sup>: harbors and scribes

This is a typical scribal note in middle and late Byzantine manuscripts.<sup>57</sup> The first hand—perhaps belonging to the scribe who copied the Arabic text—does not write like a professional Greek scribe but does write as if not entirely unused to the Greek script. If one ignores the spelling and focuses on the sound of the text, it is perfectly good Greek. The spelling is, however, quite distant from standard Greek orthography. It is as if the person who composed this note

<sup>57</sup> Treu, *Der Schreiber am Ziel*. It is most similar to the “three-line” version, variants of which appear in many Byzantine manuscripts (*ibid.*, 476-480): ὥσπερ ξένοι χαίρουσιν ἰδεῖν πατρίδα / καὶ οἱ θαλαττεύοντες ἰδεῖν [or: εὐρεῖν] λιμένα, / οὕτως καὶ οἱ γράφοντες [many add: ἰδεῖν] βιβλίου τέλος. See also Brock, *Scribe Reaches Harbour*, 195-202.

knew the Greek alphabet and was writing out this standard Greek note from memory, or perhaps dictation. The second hand is very halting and has trouble forming some of the letters, such as lambda. Curiously, this note follows some of the spellings in the first note but changes others to a letter of equivalent phonetic value (e.g., καὶ becomes κε, τέλλως becomes τελλος), as if someone were helping the person copy the note by reading it aloud.

In earlier examples, we saw Greek being used by scholars who knew it well. Patriarch Joachim's student Moses and the two copyists of an old Byzantine trope about scribes and harbors were different: they did not know Greek well, but they *aspired* to know it. These were people who were not at ease in Greek but wished to cultivate the Greek tradition. To do so they exerted a conscious effort to write in Greek.

## **Conclusion**

Scholars in the Middle East over the past millennium chose to use Arabic, Greek, and other languages in various contexts for a variety of reasons. The examples discussed in this chapter suggest that not infrequently they chose to use both Arabic and Greek at the same time. When they did so, they were not always acting as mediators or “cultural brokers” between one clearly defined culture and another, between ‘Greek culture’ and ‘Arabic culture.’ Indeed, most of the time, such scholars operated within a single cultural tradition, in which the Hellenic and early Christian legacy was valued, studied, adapted, re-interpreted, and taught, by native speakers of Greek and of Arabic alike.

Use of Greek in Arabic contexts could aid the study and interpretation of texts originally written in Greek, especially passages on technical topics like mollusks and ruminant stomachs. For Greek-speakers in a primarily Arabic environment, Greek annotations could also facilitate navigation within a large book with many sections, whether for study or liturgical use. Conversely, a Greek apparatus might help one compare the Arabic with a Greek original. Finally, Greek carried a certain prestige. It was the language in which patriarchs signed their names: a patriarch's first-person voice might be expressed, with appropriate humility, in elegant and finely-written Arabic, but the art of the official subscription was cultivated in Greek. Even those with little or no knowledge of Greek, in a world where day-to-day communication could be carried on seamlessly without it, were determined not to forget it.

## List of manuscripts

Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, ar. 142  
Joun (Lebanon), Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ (Ordre Basilien Salvatorien), MS 114  
Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35  
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 95  
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 96  
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 964  
Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 66  
Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 270  
Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 350  
Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352  
Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ar. 79  
Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. ar. 153

## References

Atiya, Aziz S., *al-Fahāris al-tahlīliyya li-makhtūṭāt Ṭūr Sīnā al-‘arabiyya* = *Catalogue raisonné of the Mount Sinai Arabic manuscripts*, transl. from English by Juzif Nasim Youssef (Alexandria, 1970).

Basil of Caesarea, *Hexaemeron*, ed. Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta and Stig Y. Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaemeron* (Berlin, 1997).

BHG: François Halkin (ed.), *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, 3 vols., 3rd ed., *Subsidia Hagiographica* 8a (Brussels, 1957).

Brock, Sebastian P., The Scribe Reaches Harbour, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 21 (1995) 195-202.

CPG: *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 7 vols. (Turnhout, 1974-2018).

EI<sup>2</sup>: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1960-2008).

Frantsouzoff, Serge, Les chiffres coptes dans les manuscrits arabes, chrétiens et musulmans, *Parole de l’Orient* 39 (2014) 259-273.

Gardiner, Frederic (transl.), The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Epistle to the Hebrews, in: NPNF 14 (1890) 647-974.

Gribomont, Jean, *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de S. Basile*, Bibliothèque du Muséon 32 (Louvain, 1953).

Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, ed. ‘Abdallāh ‘Alī al-Kabīr, Muḥammad Aḥmad Ḥasb Allāh, and

- Hāshim Muḥammad al-Shādhilī (Cairo, [1981]).
- Isaac of Nineveh, *Ascetic Discourses*, ed. Marcel Pirard, *Ἀββᾶ Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ Σύρου. Λόγοι ἀσκητικοί. Κριτική ἔκδοσις* (Mount Athos, 2012).
- Koikylides, Kleopas M., *Κατάλογος ἀραβικῶν χειρογράφων τῆς Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης* (Jerusalem, 1901).
- Krueger, Derek, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia, 2014).
- Marinescu, Adrian, The Hierarchs' Catalogue of Monastery St. Catherine in Mount Sinai, *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* 4 (2001) 267-289.
- Mavroudi, Maria, Arabic Words in Greek Letters: The Violet Fragment and More, in: Jérôme Lentin and Jacques Grand'Henry (eds.), *Moyen Arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire: Actes du premier colloque international (Louvain-la-Neuve, 10-14 mai 2004)* (Louvain, 2008) 321-354.
- Mavroudi, Maria, Greek Language and Education under Early Islam, in: Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi, Robert G. Hoyland and Adam Silverstein (eds.), *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone* (Leiden, 2014) 295-342.
- ps.-Maximos the Confessor, *Loci communes*, ed. Sibylle Ihm, *Erste kritische Edition einer Redaktion des sacro-profanen Florilegiums Loci communes* (Stuttgart, 2001).
- Nasrallah, Joseph, *Notes et documents pour servir à l'histoire du patriarcat melchite d'Antioche* (Jerusalem, 1965).
- Noble, Samuel and Alexander Treiger, Christian Arabic Theology in Byzantine Antioch: 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī and His Discourse on the Holy Trinity, *Le Muséon* 124 (2011) 371-417.
- NPNF: Philip Schaff (ed.), *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 14 vols. (New York, 1886-1890).
- ODB: Kazhdan, Alexander, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Ševčenko (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford, 2005).
- PG: *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Series Graeca, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1857-1866).
- Roberts, Alexandre M., *Reason and Revelation in Byzantine Antioch: The Christian Translation Program of Abdallah ibn al-Fadl* (Oakland, 2020).
- Roberts, Alexandre M., A Re-Translation of Basil's Hexaemeral Homilies by 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl of Antioch, in: Barbara Roggema and Alexander Treiger (eds.), *Patristic Literature in*

*Arabic Translation*, Arabic Christianity 2 (Leiden/Boston, 2020) 198-240. Accessible online: [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004415041\\_009](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004415041_009)

Treiger, Alexander, ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī, in: David Thomas and Alex Mallett (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 3 (Leiden, 2011) 89-113.

Treiger, Alexander, Christian Graeco-Arabica: Prolegomena to a History of the Arabic Translations of the Greek Church Fathers, *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015) 188-227.

Treu, Kurt, Der Schreiber am Ziel, in: Kurt Treu (ed.), *Studia codicologica*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 124 (Berlin, 1977) 473-492.

Troupeau, Gérard, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes*, part 1: *Manuscrits chrétiens*, 2 vols (Paris, 1972-1974).

### List of figures

Fig. 1 Top: Syrian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 96), f. 14v. Bottom: Egyptian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 95), f. 28r. Reproduced with permission of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig. 2 Top: Syrian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 96), f. 204v. Bottom: Egyptian manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ar. 95), f. 285v. Reproduced with permission of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig. 3 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. ar. 153, f. 83v: stingrays and doves. Reproduced by permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, with all rights reserved.

Fig. 4 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352, numbered homilies (*maymars*) from ff. 244r, 245r, 246v, 247r.

Fig. 5 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 352, f. 322v: table of *maymars*.

Fig. 6 Sinai, Monastery of St. Catherine, ar. 270, f. 469r: colophon and subscription of Ioasaph, Archbishop of Sinai.

Fig. 7 Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35, f. 440r: reader's mark by Joachim, metropolitan bishop of Beirut, under colophon. Reproduced from the digitized microfilm in the public domain available from the Library of Congress Collection of Manuscripts in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Fig. 8 Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35, f. 110v: Patriarch Joachim of Antioch donates the manuscript to Mar Saba, subscribing his note in Greek. Reproduced from the digitized microfilm in the public domain available from the Library of

Congress Collection of Manuscripts in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Fig. 9 Manuscript formerly in private collection of Joseph Nasrallah: colophon by Patriarch Joachim ibn Jum'a. Reproduced from Nasrallah, *Notes et documents*, after p. 32; originally published in *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 7.1 (1957), after p. 40. Reproduced with the kind permission of *Proche-Orient Chrétien* at the Université Saint-Joseph, Beirut, Lebanon.

Fig. 10 Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Holy Sepulcher, ar. 35, f. 117v: reader's note of Moses, student of Patriarch Joachim. Reproduced from the digitized microfilm in the public domain available from the Library of Congress Collection of Manuscripts in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Fig. 11 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ar. 79, f. 318v: owner's mark and subscription of Michael, Patriarch of Antioch. Reproduced by permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, with all rights reserved.

Fig. 12 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ar. 79, f. 327v: harbors and scribes. Reproduced by permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, with all rights reserved