

International Workshop

“In the Name of the Rose: Searching for Unknown, Lost, and Forgotten Ancient Texts / Nel nome della rosa: alla ricerca di testi antichi sconosciuti, perduti e dimenticati”

Istituto Svizzero, Roma, 30.09.2021-01.10.2021

Abstracts (in alphabetical order of the names of the speakers)

Brillante, Sergio (Università degli Studi della Repubblica di San Marino, Scuola Superiore di Studi Storici)

Umanesimo contemporaneo. Ricerca e scoperta di nuovi testi greci fra XX e XXI secolo

La storia della riscoperta dei testi antichi è comunemente legata soprattutto al periodo dell’Umanesimo e del Rinascimento, quando eruditi del calibro di Poggio Bracciolini attraversavano l’Europa proprio a questo scopo riportandone continuamente immensi tesori. Nonostante tale attività abbia in seguito subito una riduzione, non si può dire che essa si sia mai davvero interrotta. Anche prescindendo dai nuovi ritrovamenti epigrafici e papirologici, il rinvenimento di testi greci precedentemente sconosciuti a partire da testimoni manoscritti non si è fermato né nel Settecento (Villoison) né nell’Ottocento (Emmanuel Miller, Angelo Mai). Il presente contributo intende soffermarsi sulle scoperte di questo tipo compiute nel XX e XXI secolo, a partire da vari casi di studio. Diverse, infatti, sono state le modalità seguite dalla ricerca contemporanea in tale campo. L’uso di nuove tecnologie ha permesso il rinvenimento di nuovi testi di Archimede; la presa in considerazione di biblioteche minori ha condotto al rinvenimento del nuovo Galeno in un monastero di Salonicco; l’esame più approfondito di codici già noti ha infine consentito di recuperare un consistente corpus di omelie di Origene all’interno della Bayerische Staatsbibliothek di Monaco. L’esame tipologico di questi nuovi rinvenimenti permetterà di indicare anche alcune linee per il futuro sviluppo di questa affascinante branca della ricerca filologica.

Burri, Renate (Universität Bern, Center for Global Studies)

In the Name of the Rose: Searching for Unknown, Lost, and Forgotten Greek Manuscripts and Texts

This paper presents first results of a search operation for unknown, lost, and forgotten Greek manuscripts and texts in the holdings of the largest repository of Greek and Byzantine manuscripts worldwide, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. This search, conducted within the frame of a short-term project supported by the programme Spark of the Swiss National Science Foundation, focused on manuscripts which have not been described in printed catalogues so far and for the better part still are barely known and/or studied. My examination concentrated on a series of manuscripts of the *Vaticani graeci* collection which contain predominantly theological texts and have been identified as particularly promising objects of investigation. The quantity and relevance of the output of this research project was not predictable. The best-case scenario, i.e. the discovery of an unknown or the rediscovery of an allegedly lost text or manuscript, did not happen yet. Still, the harvest was far more bountiful than expected as many small but exciting findings demonstrate. They range from a *metaphrasis* of poems by Gregory of Nazianzus over a medical treatise on a skin disease to a short text on why Sunday is called Sunday, to name but a few examples which will be discussed in this presentation.

Cantore, Raffaella (Università degli Studi di Ferrara, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici) / **Telesca, Chiara** (Universität Innsbruck, Institut für Sprachen und Literaturen, Abteilung Gräzistik und Latinistik)

Testi sconosciuti nel codice Laurenziano Pluteo 58.24

Il manoscritto Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 58.24 è un codice miscelaneo scritto da più mani, almeno in parte databili tra l'XI e il XII secolo, e contenente per la prima parte un corpus *rhetoricum in excerpta* (foll. 7–70) e per la seconda una raccolta di testi retorici, opere filosofiche e collezioni teologiche (foll. 71–128). Per alcuni di questi testi, il codice Laurenziano rappresenta l'unico testimone ma esso inoltre riporta diffusamente accanto a testi ben noti materiali disparati probabilmente attinti alle carte di uno o più dotti impegnati in un'opera assai varia di lettura e annotazione. Malgrado l'importanza di tale manoscritto esso tuttavia resta ancora poco studiato sia dal punto paleografico che dal punto di vista storico-filologico. Il presente intervento si propone pertanto di colmare questa lacuna degli studi e di offrire nuove prospettive di ricerca. Esso si articolerà in una prima parte incentrata sull'analisi paleografica complessiva del manoscritto, la quale mira a fare chiarezza rispetto alla varietà delle interpretazioni riguardo l'identificazione delle mani, ed una seconda che, attraverso l'esempio concreto di alcuni testi grammaticali presenti nel manoscritto, proponga ipotesi riguardo la natura del progetto sottostante al manoscritto e l'ambiente in cui esso può essere stato prodotto.

Fleischer, Kilian (Universität Würzburg, Institut für Klassische Philologie)

Out of the Ashes – The Herculean Task of Rereading and Unrolling the Herculaneum Papyri with New Techniques

In 79 AD mount Vesuvius erupted and buried nearby Herculaneum under a massive layer of volcanic material. In an unlikely set of circumstances more than one thousand papyrus scrolls were carbonized and escaped destruction. They represent the only library preserved from antiquity. Within the last decades new imaging techniques (Multispectral and Hyperspectral Images) have enabled papyrologists to read in already unrolled papyri text invisible to the naked eye. In addition, new editorial and philological methods have been applied and led to substantially improved text editions going along with new “hard facts”. The so-called *Index Academicorum* (Philodemus' *History of the Academy* – PHerc. 1691/1021) is an extraordinary papyrus, insofar as it preserves Philodemus' working manuscript and has text on both sides (opisthograph). The new imaging techniques and editorial methods have turned out to be particularly fruitful for this papyrus. Some results shall be presented in this paper. What is even more intriguing than the rereading of already unrolled papyri: hundreds (!) of Herculanean scrolls not unrolled yet could be opened by means of a technique called “virtual unrolling” in the near future. The expected amount and quality of text revealed by this method would have a kind of revolutionary impact on classics in general.

Förstel, Christian (Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Greek Palimpsests in the Bibliothèque nationale de France: Past, Present and Future of an Old Collection

More than one hundred years after the publication of a series of articles by Alfred Jacob (1847–1915) on the Greek palimpsests of the Bibliothèque nationale, this paper intends to provide a new panorama of these documents and of the studies which have been carried out on them since the end of the 17th century. Special attention will be given to discoveries made in the last decades, a period of increased interest in palimpsest studies as exemplified not only by the largely publicised research conducted on the Archimedes Palimpsest, but also by more traditional projects completed in Europe (e.g. Rinascimento Virtuale) and specially in Italy (Grottaferrata). Finally, the paper will address the future prospects which could improve our knowledge of the texts hidden under upper layers of text in the Paris manuscripts.

Hodel, Tobias (Universität Bern, Walter Benjamin Kolleg, Digital Humanities) / **Marthot-Santaniello, Isabelle** (Universität Basel, Departement für Altertumswissenschaften)

Papyri, Handwritten Text Recognition, and Text Processing. Approaches to a Digital Palaeography

Recognition of handwritten material and early prints is currently being immensely improved. Thanks to artificial intelligence, OCR (optical character recognition) and HTR (handwritten text recognition) lead to good results when trained on enough comparable material. Still, papyrus creates immense challenges when being processed automatically. From the identification of lines on the – often fragmentary – material to the recognition of characters, papyri require many pre- and post-processing steps to get in-depth analysis. The talk presents ongoing cooperation between the Digital Humanities at the University of Bern and Describes project from the University of Basel. On the one hand, we will report on the state of the art in the field regarding HTR and proposed workflows. On the other hand, we provide an insight into the remaining challenges of using machine learning approaches to decipher papyri. Furthermore, we propose a digitally enhanced approach that uses machine learning to understand writing styles, as seen by the machine. We try to develop an improved form of palaeography that sets humans in dialog with recognition algorithms

Janz, Timothy (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana)

Findings in the Vatican Library

Working through a group of well-known but as yet uncatalogued Greek manuscripts, such as the *Vaticani graeci* 1288–1421, yields some interesting discoveries, including inedita – often of hagiographical, grammatical or scholiastic nature, usually of relatively recent date – and these are always worth studying carefully so that they can be identified and published, if possible, as I shall illustrate with a few examples. However, this work also makes apparent the nature of the great bulk of the work which still remains to be done on these manuscripts: it consists not only of editing new texts but also, indeed primarily, of collating manuscripts of works which are already well known. The extent of what remains to be done, even for the most famous and widely admired classical authors, is not often realized: in most cases, the collations which have been accomplished to date really only scratch the surface of the materials which are available, in the Vatican Library and in other great collections of manuscripts. It remains to be seen whether, and in what ways, digitization and other recent technological advances will allow us to finish the work which was begun by our predecessors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Rossetto, Giulia (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Mittelalterforschung, Abteilung Byzanzforschung)

The Sinai Palimpsests Project: Searching for Unseen Texts in a Large Collection

The Sinai Palimpsests Project of EMEL was the first project ever to investigate a large number of palimpsests from the same collection: the library of the Monastery of Saint Catherine. During the five years of the project (2011–2016), 74 out of the over 170 palimpsests of the Monastery were imaged and studied by a large team of technicians and scholars resulting in new insights on the history of the book, of the writing styles and textual transmission, just to mention some.

In this paper I will show how the Sinai Palimpsests Project developed the process of ‘searching’ for unseen texts in a large collection: I will describe workflow and methods of the Sinai Palimpsests Project, from the onsite codicological analysis and the multispectral imaging of the manuscripts, to the work of the participating scholars with the processed folios.

Afterward I will showcase a selected sample of discoveries of classical and non-classical texts from the Sinai Greek palimpsests. Among them: the earliest liturgical book from the Salento, an old inventory of books, an unknown herbal and an otherwise lost text in hexameters dealing with the childhood of Dionysus—chance findings that enrich our knowledge of the ancient Greek and Byzantine world.

Schmidt, Thomas / Hirschi, Solmeng-Jonas (Université de Fribourg, Département de Philologie Classique)

Greetings from Egypt: Unpublished Papyri from the Bible+Orient Museum at Fribourg University

The Bible+Orient Museum at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) holds a small collection of over 500 unpublished papyri acquired through two private donations. After several years of costly and painstaking restoration by a professional conservator, the collection has only recently started to unravel its secrets. Whereas the exact provenance of the papyri cannot yet be ascertained (apart from an obvious location in Egypt), the majority date from the Roman period, with some items of the Ptolemaic era. As in most collections around the world, the bulk consists of documentary papyri, along with a few literary and semi-literary pieces, mostly written in Greek (as is to be expected), but also in Coptic and in Demotic. After a short video about the restoration work carried out on the papyri, the aim of our paper is to give an overview of our catalogue (in progress) before presenting some highlights from our collection, including private letters, school documents, a mention of Cleopatra, as well as the oldest surviving fragment of a 4th century BC Greek orator.