

Reading Eustathios of Thessalonike

Trends in Classics – Supplementary Volumes

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Reading Eustathios of Thessalonike



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and Vassilis Sarris

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Silvia Ronchey

Eustathios at Prodomos Petra? Some Remarks on the Manuscript Tradition of the *Exegesis in Canonem Iambicum Pentecostalem*

During my research into the history of the manuscript tradition of the *Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*¹, two features emerged with a high degree of likelihood: the relationship of the work with the monastery of Prodomos Petra at Constantinople; and the relationship of Eustathios himself with that same monastery during his tenure as professor in the Polis – the latter hypothesis had already been advanced by Ernst Gamillscheg². The connection of the *Exegesis* with Prodomos Petra is witnessed by the history of the manuscript tradition³, which was most likely limited to a single Constantinopolitan διδασκαλεῖον, where it served the benefit of the élite and of the learned *entourage*, thus being preserved until a later period, as is revealed by the two main manuscripts that transmit the text of the work⁴: Vat. Gr. 1409⁵ and Alex. Bibl. Patr. 62⁶.

Both were produced within a scholarly circle in Constantinople at the end of the 13th century⁷, in the years immediately following the coronation of Andronikos II Palaiologos, at the time when, with the end of the Latin occupation, the *revival* of Prodomos Petra began, and activity in its *scriptorium* started up again at full speed⁸. The fact that they were used for research and élite instruction is shown by the almost constant flow of corrections and *additamenta* of *aliae manus* datable between the 14th and 16th centuries⁹. Both manuscripts remained in Constantinople until after the Ottoman conquest, in a sort of reservoir

1 Ronchey 2014.

2 Gamillscheg 1979, 107–111.

3 Ronchey 2014, esp. 209*–218*; 220*–229*; 233*; 240*–241*.

4 An autoptic description of both manuscripts in Ronchey 2014, 189*–195* and 201*–207*; cf. also the *stemma codicum*, *ibid.* 289*, and below, Figure 1.

5 An updated bibliography in Ronchey 2014, 200*.

6 An updated bibliography *ibid.*, 209*.

7 *Ibid.*, 196*–197*; Pignani 1978a, 211.

8 Ronchey 2014, 225*–226*; on the *revival* of Prodomos Petra and of its *scriptorium* under Andronikos II Palaiologos see esp. De Gregorio 2001, 139–149, esp. 141 n. 80; Bianconi 2008, 534–535; cf. also Cataldi Palau 2008a, 203.

9 Ronchey 2014, 192*–194*; 204*–206*; see below, figures 2 and 3.

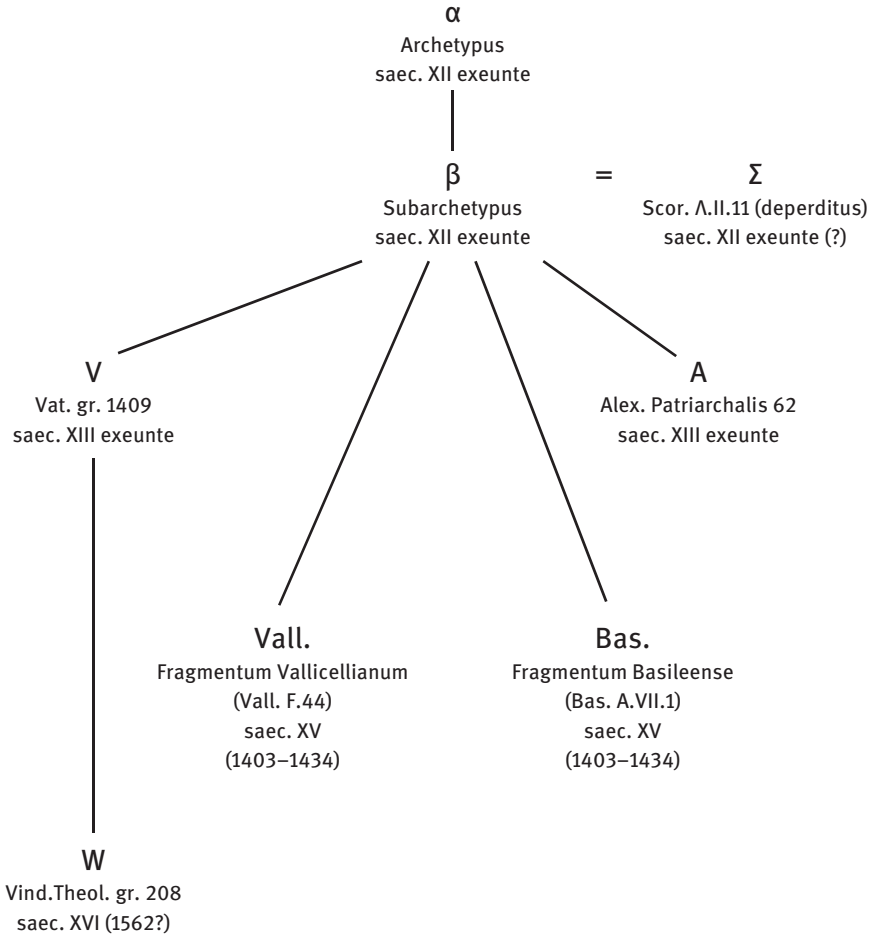


Fig. 1: *Stemma codicum*

of book learning still available to scholars within the patriarchal quarter: it was on this heritage that the circle of the Malaxoi brothers drew for their activity of study, transcription and commercialisation of manuscripts, that continued until at least the 1560s¹⁰. At least a residual part of the library of Prodromos Petra, adjacent to the outer enclosure of the Pammakaristos (where at the time the Patri-

¹⁰ Ronchey 2014, 242*–248*, with nn. 273–307; on the Malaxoi brothers and their circle see esp. De Gregorio 1995, 100 and 122; Id. 1996, 190–192; 231–235; Id. 2000, 327, n. 1; Schreiner 2001, 207; on the relation between the Malaxoi and Busbecq see von Martels 1989, 406–423; De Gregorio 1991, 10–11; Hunger – Kresten – Hannick 1984, pp. 22–23 and 159–161.

archal See was located), must have flowed into this last Constantinopolitan reservoir¹¹.

In fact, another witness of the *Exegesis*, Vindobonensis Theol. gr. 208, *descriptus* of the Vatican, copied for Ghislain Auger de Busbecq by a scribe of the Malaxoi circle¹², dates from the 1560s¹³. The Vienna manuscript, perhaps along with its antigraphon, left the Polis in 1562, with the shipment of Busbecq's books bound for Venice¹⁴. A short while later, the Alex. Bibl. Patr. 62 left Constantinople: its handwritten dedication to the Patriarch (and booklover) Cyril Loukaris shows that it was taken to Alexandria at the beginning of the 17th century¹⁵.

Various chronological clues would suggest dating the archetype α , possibly in Eustathios' hand, to the 1190s¹⁶. There is, therefore, only one century between Eustathios' exemplar and the two oldest witnesses, but a very eventful one: with the Fourth Crusade and the Latin domination of Constantinople between 1204 and 1261, the monasteries that made up the "branches" – according to Robert Browning's expression – of the network of the so-called Patriarchal School, stopped their teaching activities and hid their book collections. Byzantine cultural activities moved to the Empire of Nicaea, and underwent significant transformations.

The Latins occupied the Prodromos Petra Monastery. The late onset and general scarcity of the manuscript tradition of Eustathios' commentary, which – as its content and intended audience suggest – was originally aimed for advanced teaching at the so-called Patriarchal School of Constantinople at the end of the 12th century (a teaching that the sudden catastrophe of 1204 brought to a halt, or at least was deeply changed in its nature and structure), can be ascribed to these circumstances, and to the general eclipse, if not decline, of Constantinople's scholastic institutions at the time¹⁷.

A first positive clue that the Constantinopolitan *διδασκαλεῖον* within which the manuscript tradition of the *Exegesis* was confined, might have been that of

11 Ronchey 2014, 242*–248* and 250*–252*, with sources and bibliographical references in the footnotes; on the location of Prodromos Petra cf. also Barsanti 2001, 225; Ead. 2013, 487–490; Mondrain 2000, 227–240; Ead. 2010.

12 Hunger-Lackner-Hannick 1992, 31–33; Bick 1920, n° 121. A specimen of the handwriting of this otherwise unknown scribe George below, see Figure 4.

13 An autoptic description of the Vienna manuscript, with an updated bibliography, in Ronchey 2014, 239*–242*.

14 *Ibid.*, 250*–252*, with bibliographical references in the footnotes.

15 *Ibid.*, 207*–209*, with footnotes.

16 *Ibid.*, 262*–263*; 284*–287*.

17 *Ibid.*, 268*.

Prodromos Petra is supplied by the fragmentary tradition of the text. In fact, two 15th century manuscripts, both from Prodromos Petra, preserve some fragments of the work on their flyleaves¹⁸. These are the Vallicellianus F 44¹⁹ and the Basileensis A.VII.1²⁰ (see Figures 5 and 6).

The first is a palimpsest parchment manuscript written by George Baiophoros, active at Prodromos Petra until the mid-1430s: the *scriptio superior* of this manuscript, containing the Περὶ σχεδῶν by Manuel Moschopoulos, is certainly identifiable with Baiophoros' handwriting²¹; the manuscript then passed from Constantinople to Florence, perhaps through Janos Laskaris²². The fragment of Eustathios' commentary that can be still read on the back of the palimpsest's front flyleaf belongs to the same hand. The fragments preserved in the Basileensis are also written in Baiophoros' hand, and they are to be found on the palimpsest's front fly-leaf, a parchment sheet which Baiophoros placed before the bombycine bulk of the manuscript when he restored it (through a characteristic pink binding) and sold it to John Stojkovich²³. The bulk of the 12th-century manuscript was also produced in the Prodromos Petra *scriptorium*. Its scribe belonged to the Choniates family, as we may infer from the metrical *subscriptio*²⁴. Ernst Gamillscheg has suggested that this was Michael Choniates, Eustathios' pupil, and that the same Choniates brought to Prodromos Petra the lost manuscript containing the *Exegesis*, on which Baiophoros would draw two and a half centuries later²⁵.

However, while this identification is belied both by the handwriting and by Michael Choniates' biography²⁶, Gamillscheg's insight that a manuscript containing Eustathios' commentary must have been available at Prodromos Petra since the end of the 12th century, and that Baiophoros took the fragments of the flyleaves of the Vallicellianus and the Basileensis manuscripts from this exemplar, is supported by further evidence.

Textual criticism (see Fig. 1) has definitively revealed a sub-archetype β between archetype α and the main manuscripts – the Vatican and the Alexandrine:

18 *Ibid.*, 212*–214*; 228*–229*; 232*; Gamillscheg 1979, 111.

19 Ronchey 2014, 231*–239*.

20 *Ibid.*, 209*–231*.

21 Gamillscheg 1977, 216 and 220; *Id.* 1979, 104 and esp. 111; *Id.* 1981, 285 and 287; Ronchey 2014, 231*–233*, with more references.

22 Ronchey 2014, 238*, esp. nn. 257–258.

23 *Ibid.*, 229*–230; Gamillscheg 1979, 111; *Id.* 1981, 283; Cataldi Palau 2008c, 226–227; *Ead.* 2008d, 235–280.

24 F. 155v, see Ronchey 2014, 219*–220, n. 177.

25 Gamillscheg 1979, 107–111.

26 Ronchey 2014, 220* n. 179, with references.

the textual interrelations between the two manuscripts indicate not α but a copy of α as the antigraphon they were both copied from, at the end of the 13th century. Exemplar β was most likely written before the Latin occupation of Constantinople in 1204, when no one could foresee such a rash decline in the kind of Constantinopolitan instruction for which Eustathios' commentary had been conceived.²⁷

The existence of exemplar β , posited by textual criticism, confirms the hypothesis, independently put forth by Gamillscheg, that a manuscript of the *Exegesis* was available at Prodromos Petra from the end of the 12th century, that is, when the bulk of the Basileensis manuscript came to be copied by a scribe named Choniates. It seems reasonable to ask ourselves right away if this exemplar β might not be part of what Peter Wirth has called *mittelalterliche authorisierte Eustathiosedition*, intended by Eustathios himself in old age, and physically compiled by his disciples shortly before (and/or shortly after) his death²⁸.

The dating and content of β seem to coincide with those of another known, but now lost, manuscript of Eustathios' commentary: the *deperditus* Scorialensis A.II.11, a manuscript belonging to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza: we know that it was kept, from 1576 on, in the library of the Escorial, and that it went lost in the fire of 1671²⁹. From the descriptions compiled by Nicolaus Turrianus (see Fig. 7) and others between the 16th and 17th centuries³⁰, we know that it contained a collection of Eustathios' late works – in addition to the *Exegesis*, thirteen works not otherwise attested and, therefore, definitively lost –, and that it was an ancient in-folio on parchment of excellent quality (*bonissimus*). I will not provide here further data on this fascinating ghost. I will only add that its *pinax*, transcribed by Turrianus, shows the correct double title of Eustathios' commentary, and that a comparison of the titles of the Vatican and the Alexandrine manuscripts confirms the thesis that we are dealing precisely with the antigraphon used by the scribes of the two main manuscripts, and then later by Baiophoros³¹ (see Fig. 1).

If this is true, the *deperditus* Scorialensis, which I call Σ in the *stemma codicum*, is the same as β and the exemplar Σ/β was at Prodromos Petra from the end of the 12th century until at least the mid-15th century – in reality, probably up until

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 221* n. 182; 226* n. 200; 279*–280*.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 228*–229*; Wirth 1972.

²⁹ Ronchey 2014, 267*–269*. See also Cesaretti, this volume.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 253*–265*, with bibliography.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 265*–269*.

the first decades of the 16th century, when it was acquired by Mendoza, possibly for the Council of Trent³².

As we all know, the most famous institution of the Prodomos Petra monastery (see Fig. 8) after its re-foundation in the 11th century was, along with its *scriptorium*, the μουσεῖον, later known (though not in the 12th century) as the καθολικὸν μουσεῖον³³.

The first known official mention of the καθολικὸν μουσεῖον of Prodomos Petra still remains that of Francesco Filelfo³⁴. Of the approximately ten διδασκαλεῖα that most likely existed in Constantinople during the Middle Byzantine Age, some are called μουσεῖα in the sources, though perhaps the term has just a rhetorical and not an institutional function³⁵: for instance, the μουσεῖον of Alexios Moseles (10th c.), the μουσεῖον τῆς νομοθετικῆς (11th c.), the μουσεῖα νόμων καὶ ἀρχεῖα Θέμιδος (12th c.)³⁶. Apart from the mention of the μουσεῖον τῆς νομοθετικῆς in Michael Attaleiates³⁷, the usage of μουσεῖον as a synonym of διδασκαλεῖον is surely attested in Byzantine literature only since the 13th century, in the *Lexicon* of the Pseudo-Zonaras: Μουσεῖον· σχολεῖον³⁸. It subsequently occurs in Ephraem's verse chronicle: καὶ γραμματικῶν ἀπέταξεν αὐτὸν πάλιν / μουσεῖον εἰς παιδευσιν ὀρφανῶν νέων οὐκ εὐπόρων³⁹, and in Nikephoros Gregoras: ἐς τὸ τῆς ἀσφαλείας μουσεῖον ἐπαιδαγωγῆσε... εἰς τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας μουσεῖον παιδαγωγούμενον⁴⁰. In the 15th century, the term becomes current, in reference to Prodomos Petra's καθολικὸν μουσεῖον, but also, for example, to the μουσεῖον τῶν Στουδιτῶν⁴¹; Michael Apostolis uses it in his letters in a technical sense⁴². We have a further example of its usage in relation to university in a passage by Frankiskos Skouphos, the Cretan scholar active in Venice in the 17th century, who employed it about the University of Padua: ἐσπούδασε ... εἰς τὸ περίφημον μουσεῖον τοῦ Παταβίου⁴³.

32 *Ibid.*, 269*–272*; on the Council and the manuscripts of Turrianus and Darmarios, see also 199* with nn. 65–67.

33 Ronchey 2014, 222*–223*, with bibliography.

34 Gamillscheg 1977, 225–226; Fuchs 1926, 71–72.

35 Browning 1962, 171–178; Ronchey 2014, 224* n. 195.

36 Fuchs 1926, 21; 25; 27.

37 Mich. Attal. *Hist.*, p. 21.27 Bekker.

38 Ps.-Zon. *Lex.*, 1372.3 Tittmann.

39 Ephr. *Aen. Hist. Chron. V.* 3653, p. 135 Lampridis.

40 Nic. Greg. *Hist.*, I, p. 448.18 Schopen; III, p. 402.13; see also I, p. 476.11.

41 Fuchs 1926, 74.

42 Legrand 1885, 233–259, esp. *Ep.* 28.13.

43 *Ep.* 57.12; see Manoussacas 1998, 191–347; on Skouphos, see Sandys 1908, 354.

As Eustathios makes clear from the first lines of the proem, he was asked to compose the *Exegesis* by an anonymous ἀδελφός, a “confrere” and colleague, most likely younger than him⁴⁴, who needed it for advanced rhetorical and ecclesiastical instruction – the education reserved for the future members of the upper ranks of the Constantinopolitan clergy, and partly based on the exegesis of liturgical canons, in particular the canons belonging to the *corpus* of Cosmas and John. This exegesis was a well-established practice in the 12th century in the “branches”⁴⁵ of the network of more or less institutionalized διδασκαλεῖα, or scholarly circles, known as the Patriarchal School of Constantinople⁴⁶.

Now, the best description of the characteristics of this instruction is provided, if only indirectly, precisely by Eustathios himself in his *Exegesis*. In his commentary on the heirmos of the first ode, where Moses, shrouded in darkness, receives the tablets of the law, Eustathios plays on the name Μωσῆς and the word μουσεῖον, describing, in commenting on the use of the verb ἐρρητόρευσεν applied to Moses by the author of the canon, the particular relationship between Θεός and ἄνθρωπος, established in the Biblical episode, as *a relation of rhetorical instruction*: [...] ὅσα καὶ περὶ μουσεῖον θεῖον αὐτὸ ἢ διδασκαλεῖον, Θεός μὲν ἐλάλει ἐξάρχων καὶ ἔγραφε, Μωσῆς δὲ τὰ ἐκεῖθεν μεταλαμβάνων ἐρρητόρευσεν⁴⁷.

The pun, in which Eustathios overtly uses the word μουσεῖον as a synonym of διδασκαλεῖον, provides, on the one hand, one of the first known occurrences of the term μουσεῖον in the Byzantine language as the specific designation of a university teaching centre; on the other hand, it allows him to illustrate metaphorically the teaching method of that διδασκαλεῖον or those διδασκαλεῖα in Constantinople in which advanced lessons were taught, intended for the future members of the high clergy, but attended also by a learned public often linked to the court – the same lessons that Eustathios himself had given, though in the area of ancient Greek classics, before being elected archbishop of Thessaloniki.

The teacher ἐλάλει ἐξάρχων καὶ ἔγραφε: and, in effect, Eustathios based his teaching on a written text. The pupil ἐρρητόρευσε τὰ ἐκεῖθεν μεταλαμβάνων: and this was to be the task of the pupils, who did not “repeat” but rather “elaborated the material rhetorically”, in view of the ecclesiastical oratory expected of them, or perhaps in the more technical sense of *rhetoireia*.

⁴⁴ Eust. *Exeg. Prooem.* 1; see also 58; Cesaretti 2014, 120*–122*; Ronchey 2014, 223*.

⁴⁵ Browning 1962, 171.

⁴⁶ Cesaretti 2014, 8*; 10*; Ronchey 2014, 196* nn. 53–55; 223*–224*, with bibliography. On the *Patriarchatsschule* (Fuchs 1926), see Magdalino 1993, 325–331, with references; Schreiner 2009, 137–138.

⁴⁷ Eust. *Exeg.* 3.13–15; Ronchey 2014, 224*.

In *Exeg.* 3.13–15, Eustathios’ reference to the *μουσεῖον* and to the particular type of instruction carried out there, on top of providing us with an early occurrence of this term in the technical sense of *διδασκαλεῖον*, makes us consider how lessons were taught in 12th-century Constantinople in the advanced ecclesiastical institutions that were connected to the so-called Patriarchal School, or, at least, how Eustathios taught his lessons, here equating himself ironically with God⁴⁸.

We may and probably should read here an allusion to the teaching context the *Exegesis* was aimed at: Eustathios’ words seem to suggest that what was taught within a *διδασκαλεῖον/μουσεῖον* was that same technical-rhetorical wisdom, based on the act of commenting on the canons of Cosmas and John, for which the anonymous *ἀδελφός* had commissioned him the *Exegesis*⁴⁹.

We find a symmetrical identification of Eustathios with Moses on Mount Sinai in the funeral monody dedicated to him by Michael Choniates. It is difficult to imagine that this should be a coincidence, and we wonder if we should not read in the monody an allusion to the image introduced by Eustathios, and perhaps already earlier used by him, with just as much irony, as a *topos* during his oral lessons⁵⁰.

It would be prudent to observe that neither Eustathios’ presence at the monastery nor any teaching by him or by any of his disciples is documented at Prodromos Petra in the course of the 12th century⁵¹. However, a less than superficial knowledge of the milieu of this monastery on the part of Eustathios is apparent in a famous passage of the *De emendanda vita monachica*. Here Eustathios lampoons the speedy procurement on the part of the monastery of luxury foodstuffs and, in particular, of “black and red” caviar for the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos⁵². This is the absolutely first mention of Prodromos Petra found in literary sources⁵³. Certainly, we are well advised to note that the information in itself, though well suitable to attest to Eustathios’ or his circle’s first-hand familiarity with Prodromos Petra, exudes obvious sarcasm on the lavish way of life at the monastery⁵⁴. However, knowing Eustathios and his irony, this does not necessarily mean he entertained a bad memory of Prodromos Petra. On the contrary, it

48 *Ibid.*, 224*–225*.

49 *Ibid.* 225* n. 198.

50 Ronchey 2014, 225* n. 196: see Mich. Chon. *Mon. Eust. Thess.* 283–306 Lampros (= PG 140.337–362); on the monody, see Cesaretti 2014, 15* n. 64.

51 Ronchey 2014, 221*–222* with n. 187; Cesaretti 2014, 10*; 18*; 23*–25*.

52 Eust. *Vit. Monach.* 66.78–80 Metzler; Janin 1969², 422; Gamillscheg 1979, 111; Id. 1981, 291.

53 Cataldi Palau 2008a, 197–198; Ead. 2008b, 210.

54 Ronchey 2014, 222* n. 186.

could indicate his affection even for a kind of monastic life that surely had to be “emended”, but definitely not forgotten.

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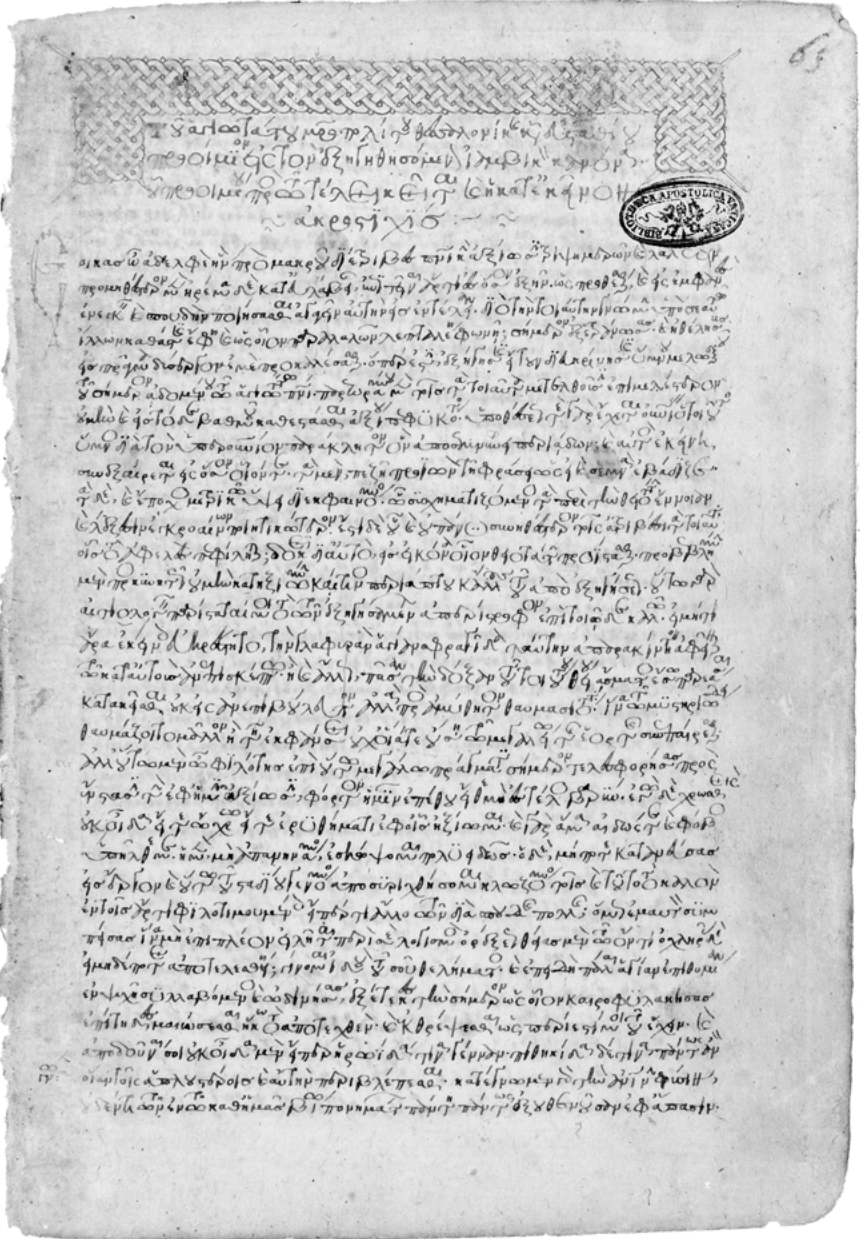


Fig. 2: Vaticanus graecus 1409, f. 65r. Copyright of the Vatican Library.

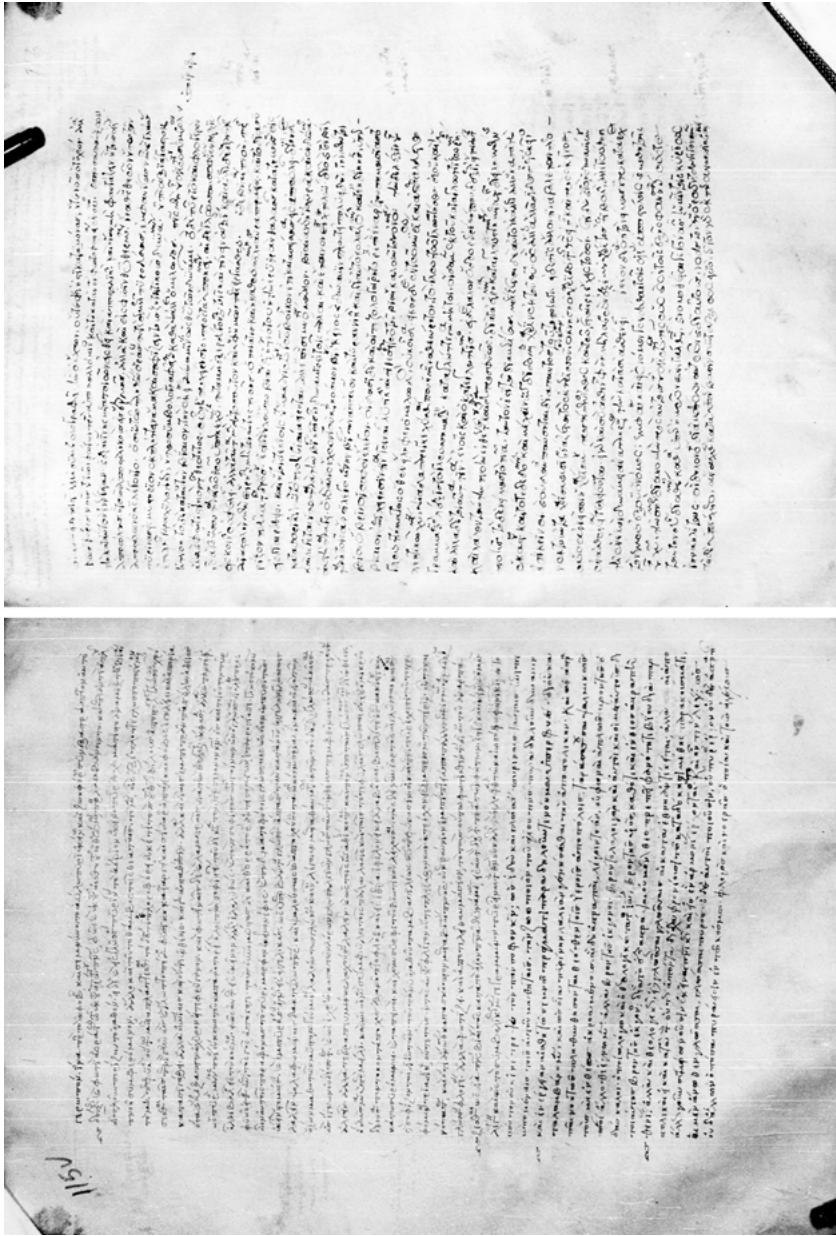


Fig. 3: Alexandrinus Patriarchalis 62 (107), ff. 115v–116r. Copyright of the Μορφωτικόν Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης, Ιστορικό και Παλαιογραφικό Αρχείο, Athens.

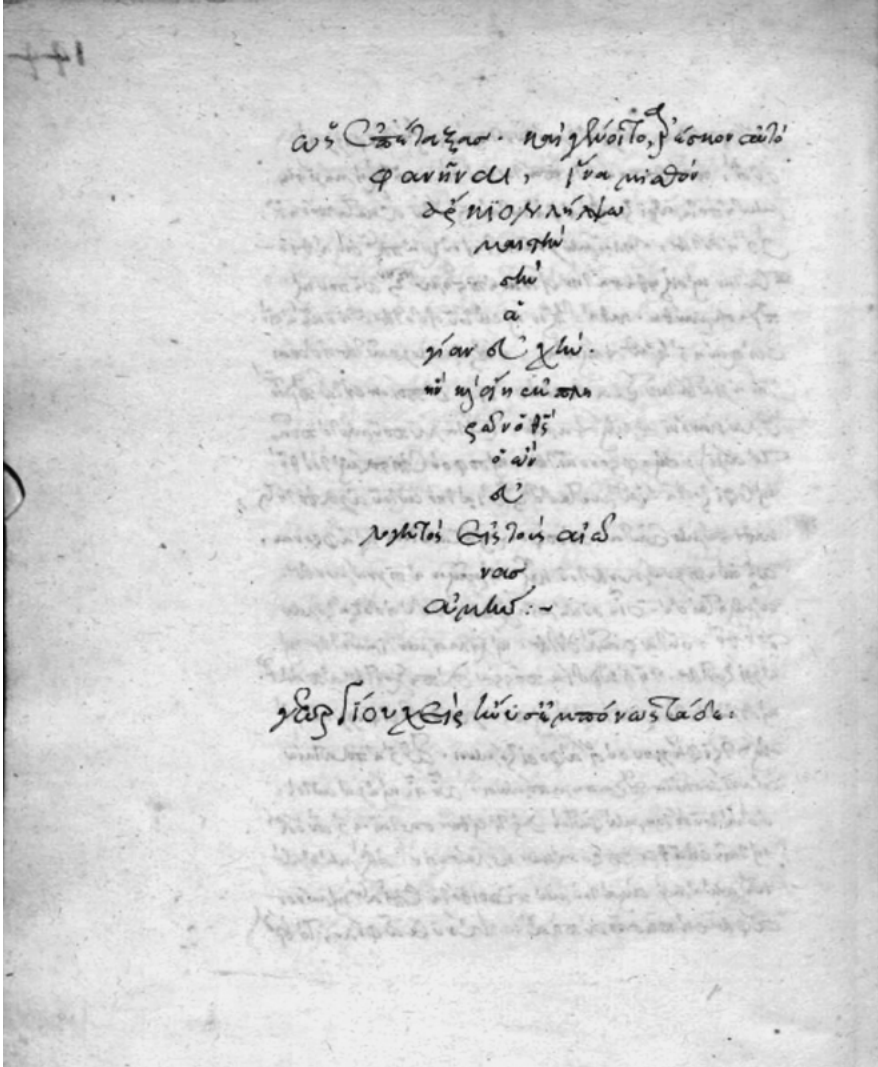


Fig. 4: Vindobonensis Theologicus graecus 208 Nessel (298 Lambeck), f. 144v. Copyright of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien.



Fig. 5: Vallicellianus F 44 (graecus 94), binding, front cover. Copyright of the Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Rome.



Fig. 6: Basileensis A.VII.1, f. 1r. Copyright of the Universitätsbibliothek, Basel.

ἔπιπλοῦ ἔπει μεσση γαλι κτ' αὐτοῦ περ
 ξωας. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ.
Προσίμων εἰς τὸν ἔθρονον βασιλικὸν κανόνα
 ἐπὶ τῆ ἑορτῆ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, οὐ προσιμίου
 πρὸς τὸ τέλος. κείτα ἐὶ κατ' ἐκείνον ἀκροστιχίς.
 γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ.
Αρχὴ τῆς εἰρημνίας καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ἔπει μὲν
 ἴσως ἂν ἐπὶ τῆς ἁγίας μουσικῆς τῆς ἐν
 χοροποιῶ, μεμελισμένου δ' πρὸς ἡμῶς τῆς ὑπο
 τεταγμένου, οἷς δηλαδ' ἐκκλησιῶν ἐπὶ τῷ
 ἔθρῳ (μεμνησθέντα προσημαίει. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ.)
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς
Τὸ κατ' ὁμοίαν ἐὶ ὁμοίαν ὁμοίαν ἐὶ ὁμοίαν
 ἐὶ ὁμοίαν. f. P. 6. v. 1. K. 13.
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς
Παρεμβολῆς ὡς μεμνησθέντα προσημαίει ἐπὶ τῷ
 ἔθρῳ. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ.
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς
Υπομεμνησθέντα ὡς μεμνησθέντα προσημαίει ἐπὶ τῷ
 ἔθρῳ. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ. 1. K. 9. 12.
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ. 1. K. 9. 12.
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς ὡς μεμνησθέντα προσημαίει ἐπὶ τῷ
 ἔθρῳ. γ. Α. η. Ζ. γ. 1. K. 9. 12.
Εὐσταθίου βῦ παρεμβολῆς
Διαστάσι. α. γ. κ. σ. ν. Δ. 16.
 : : : : :

Προσίμιον εἰς
 τὸν ἐξηγησάμενον [sic]
 ἱαμβικὸν κανόνα
 τὸν ἐπὶ τῆ ἑορτῆ τοῦ
 ἁγιοτάτου πνεύματος,
 οὐ προσιμίου
 πρὸς τῷ τέλει κείτα
 καὶ ἡ κατ' ἐκείνον
 ἀκροστιχίς ||
 Αρχὴ τῆς τοῦ
 εἰρημνίου κανόνος
 ἐξηγήσεως,
 ἤχου μὲν ὄντος δ^{ον},
 τοῦ κατὰ τοὺς ᾠδικούς
 μουσικωτάτου,
 καὶ χοροποιῶ,
 μεμελισμένου δὲ
 πρὸς εἰρμούς
 τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους,
 οἷς δηλαδὴ καὶ
 ἀκολουθῶς καὶ τὰ
 ὑφ' ἐκάστῳ συνείροντα
 [sic] τροπάρια ¶

Fig. 7: pinax of the *deperditus* Scorialensis A.II.11 (Σ/β), transcribed by N. Turrianus.



Fig. 8: Istanbul, the ruins of what remains of the so-called *Boğdan Sarayı*, enclosed in a tire shop at Draman Caddesi 32.

