

JOHN CHRYSOSTOMOS AND METHODIOS AT MONTSERRAT

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Six years ago we presented in Helsinki a new literary text on a parchment from Montserrat, P.Monts.Roca inv. no. 995¹. We were able to determine that the text on the parchment contained elements of the text of Johannes Chrysostomos' treatise *De Virginitate*, Chapter 73, lines 5–8 and 19–72. While the question of the precise nature and purpose of the text is still unsolved, this parchment from Montserrat is of particular interest and importance, because :

- a) in general, there are not many publications of papyri and parchments of Johannes Chrysostomos available to date (the *Leuven Database of Ancient Books* cites only a small number of texts as coming from Egypt)² ;
- b) among these few texts there is no publication of any fragment containing a part of *De Virginitate*.

Now, six years later, we are ready to present a surprising new discovery among the parchment fragments kept in the same abbey that are probably related to the one mentioned above ; we will focus in particular on inv. no. 722. There is a certain physical similarity in that we are dealing again with a fragment of parchment, possibly cut – like the earlier one – from the edges of the skin used for producing parchment for codices³. The text is written rather carelessly, in a quick cursive, by a not really well-trained hand datable to the fifth / sixth century⁴. Regarding the text itself, we find again a text that comes close to Chrysostomos, while it is not exactly a copy of the standard text, but a condensed version ; and again, we are dealing with the treatise *On Virginitate*, of which the previous fragment constituted the only papyrological evidence in 2004.

(I) P.Monts.Roca inv. no. 722 is a sheet of rather rough parchment made of two pieces joined by sewing with a piece of string. It features flesh and hair on both sides, since the two pieces were sewn together without making hair coincide with hair on the one side and vice versa.

¹ See Torallas Tovar / Worp (2007). Papyrological research at Montserrat is financed by project FFI2009–11288, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

² See LDAB 564 (P.Köln VII 297) ; LDAB 2566 (Van Haelst 632 ; Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum P. 6788a : Treu [1975]) ; LDAB 2567 (Van Haelst 635 ; *MPER* NS IV 54) ; LDAB 2568 (BKT IX 15) ; LDAB 10859 (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale IV. 459, *olim* Phillipps 22406 [fol. 3, 37, 38], Noret [1977]. See also, from the Sinai, LDAB 7327 (Monastery of St Catharina Sinaiticus MG 78 ; Nikolopoulos [1998] 153, no. 78 descr.) ; LDAB 7470 (Monastery of St Catharina, 491 ; Politis [1980]) ; LDAB 117923 (Monastery of St Catharina 492 + St Petersburg, Russian National Library Gr. 835 : Van Esbroeck [1978]). All of these Chrysostomos fragments, except for LDAB 564, belong to the category of Homiletic texts.

³ For the peculiar format of the piece (a vertical strip of parchment apparently not belonging to a codex, rather probably an individual note of theological content written on a discarded support), see the recently published vertical strips of parchment P.Oxy. LXXV 5023 (a mid / late sixth century *Chairetismos* to the Virgin) and 5024 (a sixth / seventh century *Prayer to the Lord through the intercession of Maria*). One may compare also a similar strip of papyrus, P.Monts.Roca inv. no. 65, on which see in latest instance Hagedorn / Torallas Tovar / Worp (2007) (St. Hippolytos' *De Benedictionibus Isaaci et Iacobi*). See also the parchment fragments published in P.Köln X 409 (a sixth century interpretation of the Trinity) and P.Köln VI 256 (a sixth century theological text). Especially the latter text features a remarkable paleographical similarity to the Montserrat parchments discussed in this paper.

⁴ Comparing Cavallo / Maehler (1987) pl. 19c (second half of V AD), we would date this hand to the late fifth (or perhaps to the early sixth ?) century AD.

Side 1

Hair

1 ὁ χρημάτων κατα-
φρονῶν κα[ὶ θ]ανάτου
καταφρον[ή]ει ῥα-
δίως καὶ συγγραφῶν
5 ἀκρίβειαν κ(αὶ) μείζον .[
τῆς ἀθυμίας ἐγείρει []
τὴν τυραννί[δα].
καὶ δὴ ἂν τὸν προ{.}-
φητὴν ἐμικήσαμεν
10 ἀπὸ τούτω[ν]
αὐτῷ πλέξω-
μεν τῶ[. . .]
τὰς ὑποθέξε[ι][c].
(stitches)

Joh. Chrysostomos, *De Virginitate* 81, 5

ὁ γὰρ χρημάτων καταφρονῶν
ὁδῶ προβαίνων καὶ θανάτου
καταφρονήσει ῥαδίως

Flesh

14 ἔξω

4 συγγραφῶν 5 ἀκρίβειαν : -κ- *ex corr.* or smudged? 9 ἐμικήσαμεν parchment 13 ὑπο-
parchment

He who despises material things, he shall also despise death easily (...) and the precision of (the) authors, and to awaken (?) the tyranny of despondency to a larger degree (?). And in fact we would have hated the prophet. On this basis, let us elaborate for him (...) the arguments. (...) To the outside.

9. The syllable -μι- of ἐμικήσαμεν was added secondarily between the lines on top of the syllable -κή-, perhaps by a second hand.

12–13. If we reconstruct a genitive plural correctly, the position of the article τὰς is not satisfactory. It should have been τὰς τῶ[ν . . .] ὑποθέξε[ε]ι[c].

Side 2

Hair

1 ἀλλὰ τίς ὁ σοφὸς <c> [τῶν]
πολλῶν λόγος []
ὁ πατριάρ (hole) χης φη[είν]
—
5 καὶ τί {τί} τοῦτο πρ[ὸς] τὴν
τοῦ σωτήρος {τῆς} αὐτοῦ
ἀνύψωσιν; ἴσως
ἂν εἴπω τις προα . .
εὐν δὲ πρὸς σοφῶν
10 μὲν οὖν (*vacat*)
(stitches)

(82, 1, 3)

Joh. Chrys. *De Virg.*

ἀλλὰ τίς ὁ σοφὸς τῶν
πολλῶν λόγος;
ὁ πατριάρχης φηεῖν

(73, 2)

καὶ τί τοῦτο πρὸς τὸν γάμον;

ἴσως

ἂν εἴποι τις

(73, 2–3)

καὶ σοφῶν

μὲν οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν

Flesh

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11 | ὁ δὲ παρὼν καιρὸς πρὸς τέλος ἐπίγεται καὶ ἐπὶ θύραι[c] τὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως | (73, 5–6) | ὁ δὲ παρὼν καιρὸς πρὸς τὸ τέλος ἐπείγεται καὶ ἐπὶ θύραιc τὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως |
| 15 | κηρύσσει(αι). οὐ γὰρ καὶ γὰρ δικαστηρίῳ παραστῆναι ^{ca} μέλλον- [τ]εξ καὶ πάντων (<i>vacat</i>) | (73, 41) | ἔστηκεν εἰ γὰρ οἱ μέλλοντες δικαστηρίῳ παραστήσεσθαι, etc. |
| m. 2 ? | αὐτοῦ λόγου θεοῦ βουλη- | | |
| 20 | μάτων[] . θων [.] . ἐν ἐκκλη- σίαιc Χρ(ιcτο)ῦ (<i>vacat</i>) υ | | |

1 ὁ parchment 5 τὴν : η *corr. ex -o-* 7 ἴως parchment 8 l. εἴποι 13 l. ἐπείγεται
15 κηρυσσει() : κ *ex corr. (-ec- ?)* 19 λόγου : λ- *ex o corr.*

5–10. We do not know why the author of our parchment made the jump backwards from *De Virg.* 82, 3 to 73, 2.

7. The noun ἀνύψωσις « exaltation » occurs among fourth century Christian authors apparently only in Greg. Nyss. *Contra Eunom.* 3, 3, 43, 1, Athan. *Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae* (PG 28, p. 377, 39) and in *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* vol. 1, 1, 7 pg. 126, 19 (Council of Ephesus, AD 431).

11–14. Compared with *De Virg.* 73, 5–6, only the article τό before τέλος is omitted.

19–21. The ink used by this second hand is different in color.

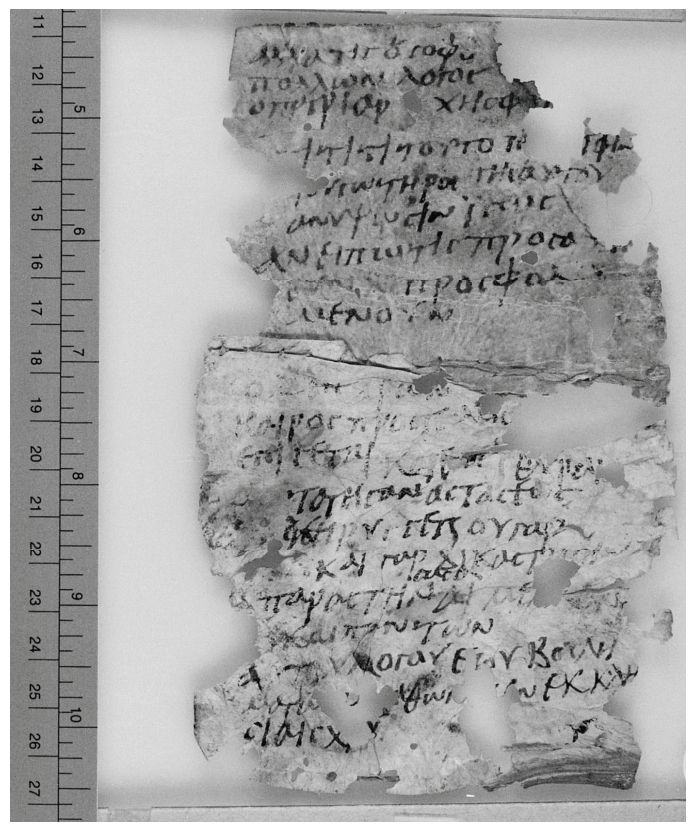
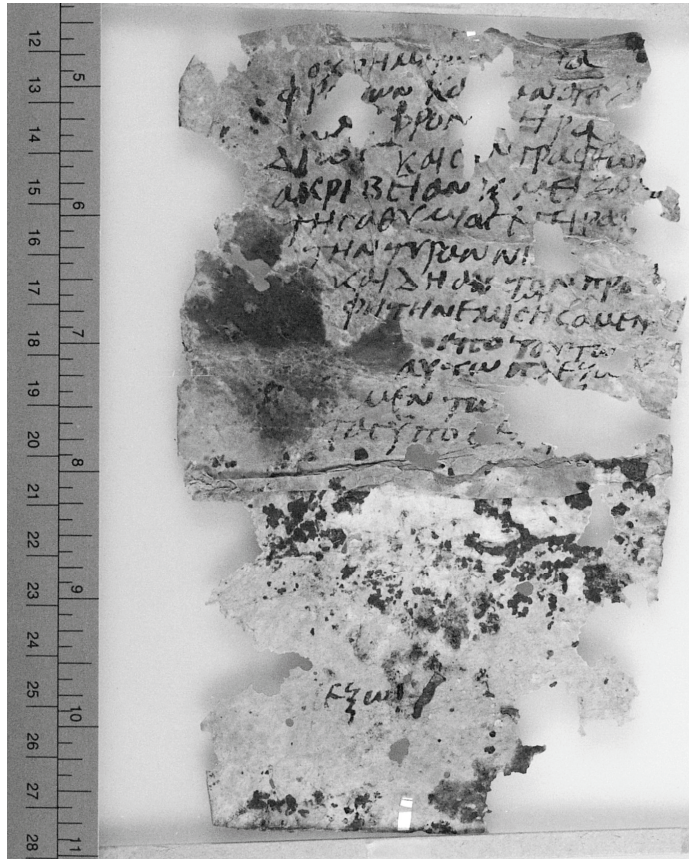
20. Alternately, read βούλημα τῶν, perhaps followed by ἁ[γ]αθῶν. We have speculated about reading αὐτοῦ λόγου θεοῦ βούλημα τῶν ἁ[γ]αθῶν [τ]ὸ ἐν ἐκκλη|σίαιc Χρ(ιcτο)ῦ, but we are very skeptical as regards the supposed *omikron* before ἐν, and we do not think that the resulting Greek text is coherent and produces good sense.

20–21. The word combination ἐκκλησία Χριστοῦ occurs before the sixth century only in Eus. *Comm. in Ps.* (PG 23, p. 813, 38), and in Procop. *Comm. in Is.* 1864, 31.

16. The edition of the text of chap. 73, 41–50 has :

- (41) ----- εἰ γὰρ οἱ μέλλοντες
(42) δικαστηρίῳ παραστήσεσθαι τῷ παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ λόγον ὑφέξειν
(43) τῶν πεπλημμελημένων, τῆς κυρίας γενομένης ἐγγύς, οὐ
(44) γυναικὸς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ κύριων καὶ ποτῶν καὶ πάσης ἑαυτοῦc
(45) ἀποστήσαντες φροντίδος τῆς ἀπολογίας γίνονται μόνης –
(46) πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡμᾶc τοῦc οὐκ ἐπιγείῳ τινὶ δικαστηρίῳ ἀλλ'
(47) οὐρανίῳ βήματι παραστήσεσθαι μέλλονταc καὶ ῥημάτων καὶ
(48) πραγμάτων καὶ ἐννοιῶν εὐθύναc ὑφέξειν, πάντων ἀφίεσθαι
(49) χρῆ καὶ χαρᾶc καὶ λύπης τῆc ἐπὶ τοῖc παροῦci πράγμαci καὶ
(50) τὴν φοβερὰν μόνον ἐκείνην ἡμέραν μεριμνᾶν.

Obviously, the scribe's eye swerved from line 42 to the same wording in lines 46–47 and then copied words from 47 (μέλλοντ-, καί) and 48 (πάντων).



(II) P.Monts.Roca inv. no. 731, 20,1 [H.] x 4,3 [W.] cm, is a narrow strip of parchment, featuring irregular damage on the right hand edge of the hair side and at the bottom of the strip, possibly an edge of a skin, which contains a text written in a quick cursive hand on both sides⁵. The text on the recto turned out to be that of a Christian author, this time the church father Methodios, now attested for the first time in Egypt. Methodios died in 311 during the persecutions, so his life may be attributed to the period ca AD 250–311. He wrote a treatise titled *Symposium sive Convivium decem virginum*, a eulogy on the advantages and blessings of voluntary virginity, which does in fact match with the topic of the previously discussed two fragments of Johannes Chrysostomos⁶. It is remarkable that this is now the earliest extant fragment of the works of Methodios, the Patmiacus graecus 202 (an eleventh century codex commonly cited as ms. P) being thus far the earliest known source for his text⁷. The verso apparently presents a hitherto unidentified Greek literary prose text. As far as we have been able to establish, there is no clear connection between the texts on each side.

Recto : Hair

| | | <i>Symposium</i> |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | εἴ τε οὖν γένεσις ἔστι, οὐκ ἐχρήν εἶναι νόμο[υς] | (8, 16, 72) ἦτοι οὖν γένεσις ἔστι καὶ οὐκ ἐχρήν εἶναι νόμους |
| 5 | ἰ[ε]ῆ ἀνάβασις[ε] τοῦ Νείλου ζωή ἐστι κ[αὶ] χαρὰ ἐστία[ις]. τὰ λοιπὰ | |
| 10 | ἐφεξῆς μνη- μονεύσαντες ὡς ἔτι ἔναυλ[ον] τὴν ἀκρόα[σιν] ἔχειν μοι δοκῶ,] | (3, 14, 35) καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐφεξῆς μνη- μονεύσαντες ὡς ἔτι ἔναυλον τὴν ἀκρόασιν ἔχειν μοι δοκῶ |
| 15 | πρὶν ἀπο- πτῆναι κ[αὶ] δι[α-] φυγεῖν εὐε- ξάλει[πτ]ο[ι γ]ὰρ νέων ἀκου[ς-] | πρὶν ἀπο- πτῆναι καὶ δια- φυγεῖν εὐε- ξάλειπτοι γὰρ νέων ἀκου[ς-] |
| 20 | μάτων [μνήμα[ι] γερόντων] εἰς μέγ[εθος καὶ] κάλ<λ>ος [ἀρε-] | μάτων μνήμαι γερόντων (3, 8, 60) εἰς μέγεθος καὶ κάλλος ἀρετῆς |
| 25 | τῆς, ὁ κα- τ' {ατ} ἀξίαν [τε καὶ] μέγεθος εἰπεῖν ἀδυ- νατῶ· ο· [| (3, 9, 18) κατ' ἀξίαν τε καὶ μέγεθος εἰπεῖν ἀδυ- νατῶ. |

⁵ Again we may compare this to Cavallo / Maehler (1987) pl. 19c (second half of V AD), we would date this hand to the late fifth (or perhaps to the early sixth ?) century AD.

⁶ This text was edited by Musurillo / Debidour (1963).

⁷ On the transmission of the text of Methodios, see Musurillo / Debidour (1963) 31–38. On the codex P, see 41. One may add that some of Methodios' extracts were preserved in the *Sacra Parallela*, and that our text may belong to a tradition of his works different from the one represented in the medieval manuscripts.

30 [ὄ]μωο δ[
(traces)

ὄ μωο δ' οὖν

Between 4 and 5 the parchment features a *paragraphos* 5 read εἰ, ἀνάβασις

Verso : Flesh

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ [π]ολλάκις ποι- [ητ]αὶ τυγχάνου- [σι] τῶν ποιη- | | μὰν ἰωθό[ω]τωο |
| | μάτων· οὐκ εἰσι δὲ δεσπότηαι. | 20 | [. . . νο]μίζον- τεο ἀνδρ[α]γ εἶναι τὴν ἀλό[γ-] |
| 5 | [τ]ὸ μὲν γὰρ [τ]ῆο τέχνηο [ἐρ]γάζοντ[α]ι, τὸ | | [ιτο]γ τόλμαν· [. . .]ερ οὐδεγ |
| 10 | [δ]ὲ τῆο δεο- ποτίαο ἄλλοιοο παραχωροῦο[ι]. πολλοὺο λαν- [θ]άνει τῶν νό- | 25 | [.]ρεο [. . . .]δορη το [. . φ]ρονίμη [οὐ δ]ίκαιοο ὑ- |
| 15 | [μ]ων ἡ ἰοχὺο προοείρωο [κα]τὰ τῶν ἐλευ- [θ]έρων τολ- | 30 | [τ]υπτηθῆ- [να]ι [. . .]δικην [. . . γ]ὰρ ὑβ[ρ] |
| | | 35 | [.]ου[.] |

10–11 δεσποτείαο 15 ἰοχυο parchment 19 εἰωθότωο (ἰωθο[ω]τωο parchment) 21 ἀνδρείααν
24 perhaps ουδαγ ? 25],ρεο : the last two letters may belong to ink coming through from the other
side 27 φ]ρονίμη parchment 28 ὑ- parchment 33 ὑβ[ρ]- parchment

Recto

1 εἶ τε. This is a iotacistic spelling or a variant of ἦτοι in the standard text. The resulting different syntax facilitates the omission (three words later in this phrase) of the standard text's καί. It remains unclear why the author of our parchment jumps from one oration (8) to another (3) and even within the same oration (3, 14 > 3, 8 > 3,9); why he omitted between lines 11–12 the words μιμητικώτατα διέλθωμεν; and why he wrote in line 12 ὡο rather than ὄν (this occurs also in the eleventh century ms. P, on which see Debidour / Musurillo [1963] 33). The single ὄ (25) may be taken as a relative pronoun that connects the preceding passage with the following. It is not clear either what is the cause of the apparently divergent text at the end of 29 (it adds the beginning of an unexpected word in o- right before ὄμωο); maybe only a dittography of ὄμωο?

5–8. Remarkably enough, the text ἰ [ε]ἠ ἀνάβαοει[ο] (l. ἀνάβαοις) | τοῦ Νείλου | ζοῆ ἔοτι κ[αὶ] | οαρά ἔοτία[ο] « The rise of the Nile is (= “means”) life and joy for the families », does not occur in Methodios. The combination of ζοῆ + [5 words later] οαρά is found in several other Christian authors, among whom Joh. Chrys. *In Epist. ad Philipp.* (PG 62, p. 295, 48) and *De Paenitentia* (PG 60, p. 703, 55).

Verso

Parts of the text on the verso suggest that here one is dealing with a product of « Gnostic » wisdom written by an ancient pedagogue. The opening lines may thus be compared with [Joh. Chrys.], *Ecl. i–xlvi ex diversis homiliis* (PG 63, p. 655, 36) : πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ πολλάκις ἀρρωτοῦσιν. Furthermore, a search in the TLG produced for 17–18, [κα]τὰ τῶν ἐλευ[θ]έρων, a precise parallel with Basil. Caes. *Epist.* 270, 1, 5, while for 20–23, νομίζοντες ἀνδρ[ι]α εἶναι τὴν ἀλό[γ]οι [ι]ετο]γ τόλμαν, one finds a matching text in Thuc. 3, 82, 4 : τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀλόγιος ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ἐνομίσθη. See also D.H. *De Thuc.* id. 17, 14; Plut., *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*, 56c ; Ael. Arist. *Ars Rhet.*, 1, 1, 3[1], 5 ; Hermog. *Περὶ ἰδεῶν λόγου* 1, 6, 172. Remarkably enough, for most parts of the verso there seems to be no parallel available in the texts stored to date in the TLG ; see the notes below.

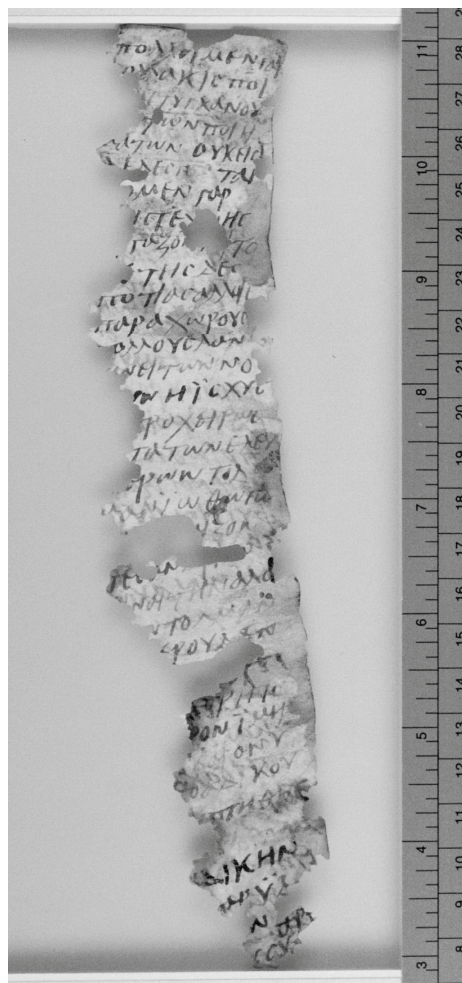
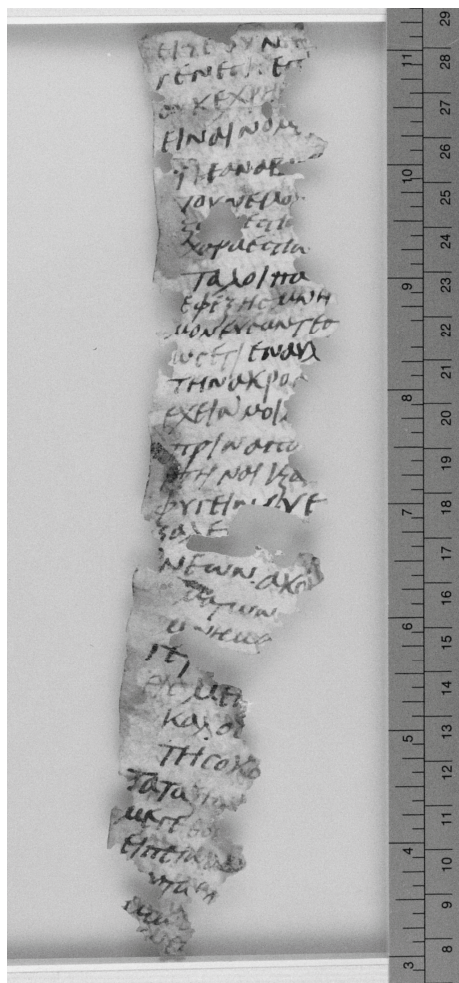
1–6. πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ πολλάκις ποιητὰι τυγχάνουσι τῶν ποιημάτων οὐκ εἰς δὲ δεσπότηται may be translated as « For many times many people happen to be the makers of poems [or, in general : creations / creatures ?], but they are not the masters / owners ». Apparently this phrase does not occur in texts already stored in the TLG. In itself, the *topos* of πολλοί + [after 4 intervening words] πολλάκις occurs frequently enough in Greek literature between the third and the sixth century AD (such a TLG search produces ca. 200 attestations, half of which in John Chrysostomos). In a couple of Christian authors (among whom, again, John Chrysostomos) one finds a combination of words in ποιητ-, ποιημ- and δεσποτ- occurring together relatively closely (within 1 line of each other), but in each case the context is far from identical. Likewise, the combination of ποιημ- and δεσποτ- is a phenomenon found only in Christian authors, but never in a context comparable to our text. For illustrating the « Gnostic color » of this text, we refer to the (only partial) parallel expression in Men. *Sent.* 628 : πολλοὶ μὲν εὐτυχοῦσιν, οὐ φρονοῦσιν δέ.

7–12 τὸ μὲν γὰρ τῆς τέχνης ἐργάζονται, τὸ δὲ τῆς δεσποτείας ἄλλοις παραχωροῦσι. This may be translated as : « For they work on (ἐργάζονται) the “technical” aspect (τὸ ... τῆς τέχνης) but they leave (παραχωροῦσι) the aspect of mastership / ownership (τὸ ... τῆς δεσποτείας) to others (ἄλλοις). » A TLG search for a combination of ἐργαζ- + παραχωρ- or τέχνη + δεσποτεία was unproductive.

13–23 πολλοὺς λανθάνει τῶν νόμων ἢ ἰσχυρὸς προχείρως κατὰ τῶν ἐλευθέρων τολμᾶν εἰωθότως [...] νομίζοντες ἀνδρείαν εἶναι τὴν ἀλόγιον τόλμαν. This may be interpreted as : « The force of the laws (ἢ ἰσχυρὸς τῶν νόμων) escapes (λανθάνει) many (πολλοὺς) <so as> to commit acts of cruelty (τολμᾶν) readily (προχείρως) against their wives (κατὰ τῶν ἐλευθέρων), feeling in their usual manner (εἰωθότως νομίζοντες) that irrational recklessness (τὴν ἀλόγιον τόλμαν) is tantamount to (εἶναι) manliness (ἀνδρείαν). » However, the interpretation given to λανθάνει + an abstract subject ἢ ἰσχυρὸς τῶν νόμων and connected with the infinitive τολμᾶν seems rather forced. For a similar « Gnostic » feeling, we refer to Men. *Sent.* 226 : εὐτολμος εἶναι κρίνε, τολμηρὸς δὲ μή. It is probably no coincidence that this section starts with πολλοὺς, after the preceding section on poems, poets, and owners of poems (1–12) started with πολλοί.

20. It is hard to propose a convincing solution for restoring the three letters lost in the lacuna.

27. It is again hard to propose a convincing solution for restoring the two letters lost in the preceding lacuna. Even so, one may wonder whether one should not capitalize Φρονίμη (not known to date as a woman's name). This notwithstanding, the passage could be translated as : « For a wise woman (φρονίμη) it is not right (οὐ δίκαιον) to be beaten (τυπηθῆναι) by an unjust person (ὑπὸ ἀδίκου). » But this raises the question whether a reversal in the elements « wise » (> « stupid ») and / or « unjust » (> « righteous ») would change the outcome ; in other words : is it acceptable for any woman to be beaten by any person ?



After presenting the two Chrysostomos fragments, inv. 995 and inv. 722, and the new discovery, inv. 731, offering a text by Methodios (writing also about Virginity), together with a passage that recalls Chrysostomos, we may sum up as follows. Our presentation of Christian parchments from Montserrat demonstrates :

- a) a remarkable increase in texts reflecting phrasings and thoughts stemming from John Chrysostomos ;
- b) the first attestation of the Christian author Methodios in Egypt on a parchment that is about five centuries older than the earliest medieval manuscript known to date.

In general, we wish to note that, as regards the study of early Christian texts, the collection at Montserrat has been remarkably prolific, because it has yielded not only a handful of new Chrysostomos (or at least « Chrysostomic ») texts and the new Methodios parchment, but, moreover, also a papyrus of Saint Hippolytos (see above, n. 3). Thus far, Chrysostomos was not frequently represented among Christian authors from Egypt, while both Methodios and Hippolytos were simply « unknown » in the list of such authors. We feel that their sudden appearance in this world, within the framework of the private papyrus collection of Ramon Roca Puig, can be explained more or less convincingly, but that this occasion is not the place and time to elaborate on this topic.

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