

The Cluster of Excellence  
**Understanding Written Artefacts**  
cordially invites you to the workshop

**Removed and Rewritten:  
Palimpsests and Related Phenomena  
from a Cross-Cultural Perspective II**

Monday, 10 July 2023, 9:30 am – 6:00 pm CEST  
Tuesday, 11 July 2023, 9:30 am – 5:45 pm CEST

Warburgstraße 26, 20354 Hamburg

Organised by Jost Gippert, José Maksimczuk,  
Hasmik Sargsyan und Athanasios Kerefidis

Registration:

<https://www.csmc.uni-hamburg.de/en/register-workshop41>

The phenomenon known as palimpsesting is one of the most radical ways in which a manuscript can be transformed. It not only implies the erasure of a part or all of a manuscript's contents but may even result in its complete disintegration. Instead of ceasing to exist, however, the dismembered parts often find their way into other manuscripts, hence establishing a mostly hidden and fortuitous connection between two or even more written artefacts.

In recent years, the development of new technologies has provided more and more reliable methods to study palimpsested manuscripts, with a view to rendering accessible the otherwise invisible scriptio inferior. At the same time, refinements in the concept of manuscripts as evolving entities (Andrist/Canart/Maniaci 2013 and Friedrich/Schwarke 2016) provide further analytical tools for a better understanding and conceptualization of palimpsests as complex written artefacts (re)created in the course of a special production process. With the present workshop – a continuation and expansion of a first workshop on palimpsests organized by the Cluster in October 2021 – we aim to bring together experts from different fields and disciplines and encourage discussion on the essentials of palimpsests from a cross-cultural perspective. During the workshop we will discuss the following issues (among others):

- the definition of 'palimpsest' in European and non-European manuscript cultures;
- the creation of palimpsests from a technical perspective, including the actors involved in their production, division of labour, etc.;
- contexts in which palimpsests were created, and the underlying motives of 'palimpsest culture', including aspects of cross-linguistic and cross-modal settings
- new methods for identifying palimpsests and deciphering their scriptio inferior;
- editorial approaches to the content of the scriptio inferior in palimpsests;
- approaches to the cataloguing of palimpsests.

## Programme

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### Monday, 10 July, 9:30 am – 6:00 pm

#### Session 1

Chair: Jost Gippert (Hamburg)

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|---------------|--|
| 9:30 – 9:45   | Welcome  |
| 9:45 – 10:30  | Chiara Rosso (Rome) and Michela Perino (Rome)<br><i>On the trail of Priscian's Ars grammatica: imaging analysis and palaeographic investigation of eighth- and ninth-century palimpsests</i> |
| 10:00 – 10:50 | Break  |

#### Session 2

Chair: Dieter Harlfinger (Berlin)

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|---------------|--|
| 10:50 – 11:20 | Zisis Melissakis (Athens)<br><i>Palimpsest manuscripts in the National Library of Greece (with a special mention of EBE 192)</i>               |
| 11:20 – 11:50 | Stefan Alexandru (Düsseldorf)<br><i>Some reflections on selected leaves of the palimpsest manuscript Athous Konstamonitou 99 (535 Lampros)</i> |
| 11:50 – 12:15 | Coffee Break   |

#### Session 3

Chair: Christian Brockmann (Hamburg)

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|--------------|--|
| 12:15 – 1:15 | Victor Gysembergh (Paris) and Emanuel Zingg (Zurich)<br><i>Unpublished Greek and Latin texts from North Italian and Egyptian palimpsests</i> |
| 1:15 – 2:30  | Lunch Break  |

#### Session 4

Chair: Konrad Hirschler (Hamburg)

- 2:30 – 3:00 Asma Hilali (Lille)  
*Palimpsests and palimpsesting in Arabic manuscripts: The Sanaa palimpsest as example*
- 3:00 – 3:30 Alba Fedeli (Hamburg)  
*Again and again: palimpsesting process and learning to write the Qur'an*
- 3:30 – 3:45 Coffee Break

#### Session 5

Chair: Alessandro Bausi (Hamburg)

- 3:45 – 4:15 Dmitry Bondarev (Hamburg), Darya Ogorodnikova (Hamburg), and Khaoula Trad (Hamburg)  
*Where to look for palimpsests in Islamic manuscript culture of West Africa?*
- 4:15 – 4:45 Ted Erho (Munich)  
*Ethiopic palimpsests*
- 4:45 – 5:00 Coffee Break

#### Session 6

Chair: Sebastian Bosch (Hamburg)

- 5:00 – 5:30 Ivan Shevchuck (Hamburg) and Kyle-Ann Huskin (Hamburg)  
*Tba*
- 5:30 – 6:00 Michael Phelps (California)  
*Palimpsests damaged by chemical reagents: new challenges for text recovery with MSI*
- 7:00 Conference Dinner

## Tuesday, 11 July, 9:30 am – 5:45 pm

### Session 1

Chair: Caroline Macé (Hamburg)

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|---------------|---|
| 9:30 – 10:00  | Erich Renhart (Graz)<br><i>The Armenian palimpsest of Graz University Library and its exciting biblical text variants</i> |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Hasmik Sargsyan (Hamburg)<br><i>Linguistic divergence in Armenian Bible and lectionary palimpsests</i>                    |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Emilio Bonfiglio (Hamburg)<br><i>Uncovering lost Armenian texts: the scriptio inferior of MS Schøyen 575</i>              |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee Break  |

### Session 2

Chair: Jost Gippert (Hamburg)

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|---------------|--|
| 11:30 – 12:00 | Mariam Kamarauli (Hamburg)<br><i>Palimpsested hagiography: a comparative analysis of the martyrdom of St. Febronia on the example of a Georgian palimpsest</i> |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | Bernard Outtier (Paris)<br><i>A palimpsest Georgian folio in an Athonian Greek manuscript</i>  |
| 12:30 – 12:45 | Heinz Miklas (Vienna)<br><i>A Survey of the palimpsests among Glagolitic manuscripts of Sinai</i>  |
| 12:45 – 2:00  | Lunch Break  |

### Session 3

Chair: José Maksimczuk (Hamburg)

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|-------------|---|
| 2:00 – 2:30 | Eka Kvirkvelia (Hamburg)<br><i>New witnesses of the Jerusalem-rite lectionary: Georgian Palimpsests Ivir. georg. 47 and Ivir. georg. 59</i> |
| 2:30 – 3:00 | Jost Gippert (Hamburg)<br><i>Palimpsests from the Caucasus and the DeLiCaTe project</i>   |

3:00 – 3:30 Dali Chitunashvili (Tbilisi)  
*Georgian Palimpsests: Paleography, Codicology, Dating Problems*

3:30 – 4:00 Coffee Break

#### Session 4

Chair: Aaron Butts (Hamburg)

4:00 – 4:30 Christa Müller-Kessler (Jena)  
*News on hidden treasure texts of Late Antiquity in Christian Palestinian  
Aramaic among the Taylor-Schechter Collection*

4:30 – 5:00 Grigory Kessel (Vienna)  
*Some observations on the reuse of Syriac manuscripts*

5:00 – 5:30 Hussein Adnan Mohammed (Hamburg)  
*Visualising palimpsests with computer vision approaches*

5:30 – 5:45 Farewells

## Abstracts and Contributors

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### **Stefan Alexandru (Düsseldorf)**

*Some reflections on selected leaves of the palimpsest manuscript Athous Konstamonitou 99 (535 Lampros)*

Monday, 10 July, 11:20 am – 11:50 am

The lower layer of script penned in codex Athous Konstamonitou 99 (535 Lampros) allegedly contains Latin lives of Saints and martyrdom narratives.

It will be shown that in this manuscript one finds *inter alia* Latin antiphons praising the Lord's Baptism (to be sung with Psalms of Matins), which are present in St. Gregory the Great's *Liber responsalis* and which disappeared from the Roman Breviary during the Tridentine reform.

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### **Dmitry Bondarev (Hamburg), Darya Ogorodnikova (Hamburg), Khaoula Trad (Hamburg)**

*Where to look for palimpsests in Islamic manuscript culture of West Africa?*

Monday, 10 July, 3:45 pm – 4:15 pm

Palimpsests in a canonical sense are almost non-existent in West African Islamic manuscripts. The few exceptions we are aware of are all on paper, and it is not clear whether the undertext was intentionally erased or simply faded away providing a chance opportunity to write a new text over it. At the same time, reusable wooden writing boards have always been part of primary Islamic education. Given the prominence of the wooden writing support as “study palimpsests” and extremely rare cases of erased writing on paper, we will question the extent to which paper palimpsests can be considered part of scribal practices in West Africa.

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### **Emilio Bonfiglio (Hamburg)**

*Uncovering lost Armenian texts: the scriptio inferior of MS Schøyen 575*

Tuesday, 11 July, 10:30 am – 11:00 am

In the course of the Middle Ages Georgians and Armenians developed two remarkable and, to a certain extent, parallel manuscript cultures. Starting from the fifth century, thousands of Georgian and Armenian manuscripts were produced, acquired, exchanged, and transmitted both in the respective autochthonous homelands of their users and makers, i.e. south Caucasia, as well as ‘abroad’, i.e. in the various cultural, religious, and economic colonies in which sizeable groups

of Georgians and Armenians lived and flourished, sometimes next to each other, often in constant interaction.

While several aspects of Georgian and Armenian manuscript culture have long been well-researched, less attention has been paid to the earliest, formative stages of manuscript production. Building upon the ongoing Hamburg-based DeLiCaTe ERC project (PI: Jost Gippert), this paper stems from fresh research dedicated to one side of this comparative approach, namely the earliest palimpsested manuscripts in Armenian language, which date from the beginning of the Armenian manuscript culture up to the turn of the first millennium.

After a short introduction on the scholarly background of this research, this paper will focus on a specific case study: the Armenian translation of John Chrysostom's *Commentary on the Psalms*, which is now extant in four *membra disjecta*, that is four separate manuscripts preserved in Milan, Leiden, Oslo, and Mount Sinai. In addition to providing an overall history of these four manuscripts, this paper offers the first preliminary results of a codicological and palaeographical study of these specimens, with a look at some peculiar features that appear also in contemporary Georgian palimpsested manuscripts.

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### Dali Chitunashvili (Tbilisi)

*Georgian Palimpsests: Paleography, Codicology, Dating Problems*

Tuesday, 11 July, 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

The study of Georgian palimpsests has a history of almost a century. Nonetheless, the project conducted between 2015–2017 with the aim of creating a catalogue of Georgian palimpsests safeguarded at the National Centre of Manuscripts, presented several problems arising in the study of paleography, codicology, and textology of the Georgian palimpsests as well as of the Georgian manuscripts in general.

1. **Paleography.** There are few scientific works on the origin and development of Georgian paleography, and until now there is no systematic study of the development of Georgian script, which would become the basis for dating the manuscript. The main watershed in the case of paleography remains the closed loops of *asomtavruli* graphemes. Manuscripts in which the graphemes  $\text{ⴌ}, \text{ⴍ}, \text{ⴎ}, \text{ⴏ}, \text{ⴐ}$  ( $\text{ⴑ}, \text{ⴒ}, \text{ⴓ}, \text{ⴔ}, \text{ⴖ}$ ;  $b, \check{s}, \check{z}, q', c'$ ) have closed loops date back to the 5th–7th centuries, but is the existence of closed loops enough to date the manuscript to such an early period? How should the manuscripts be dated even within these three centuries?

In addition, there is an entirely different graphic revealed in palimpsests. How should we date palimpsests in which all the above graphemes have closed loops, although the codicology of the manuscript does not allow us to date them to an early period?



Small-format manuscripts made with tiny letters: Non-palimpsest manuscripts with this type of script are not found, therefore, without the identification and complete reading of the text, paleography will not be useful as a tool for their dating. It should also be taken into account that in this type of palimpsests, it is conditional to talk about the closeness or openness of graphemes, due to the crossing of horizontal lines and the use of a thin pen for writing.

The *nuskhuri* script is also unique in palimpsests, which, unlike traditional *nuskhuri* manuscripts copied by calligraphers, is not devoid of individuality. Traditionally, *nuskhuri* is considered dominant since the 11th century, although its usage in fresco inscriptions dates back to the 8th century. Palimpsests show the most peculiar *nuskhuri* graphic, which has no analogs in ordinary manuscripts. There are elongated graphemes, which tend towards the *mkhedruli* script, and a tiny *nuskhuri*, which is almost impossible to read in palimpsests without special photography. What should be considered the starting point for dating these types of manuscripts?

**2. Linguistic data.** The most solid basis for dating the manuscripts to the early period is the confirmation of *khanmeti-haemeti* forms. *Khanmeti* is unconditionally considered to be from the 5th–6th centuries, and *haemeti* is considered to belong to the 7th–8th centuries. However, recently revealed *khanmeti-haemeti* palimpsests once again raised the issue: is this feature of Georgian a question of chronology or geography?

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### **Ted Erho (Munich)**

#### *Ethiopic palimpsests*

Monday, 10 July, 4:15 pm – 4:45 pm

Palimpsesting has been rarely utilised within the indigenous Ethiopian manuscript tradition. This presentation will first survey the approximately fifteen known palimpsests involving Ethiopic writing as either an over or undertext, manuscripts often solely consultable via bitonal microfilm copies. The second part of the presentation will focus on Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Pretermann II Nachtrag 24, the only Ethiopic-Ethiopic palimpsest yet subject to complete multi-spectral imaging, and one whose undertexts surprisingly derive from at least ten different prior codices.

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### **Alba Fedeli (Hamburg)**

#### *Again and again: palimpsesting process and learning to write the Qur'an*

Thursday, 11 May, 4:45 pm – 5:15 pm

Palimpsesting process is associated to the re-writing activity (*scriptio superior*) over an earlier/removed text (*scriptio inferior*) although the very essence in palimpsesting is the reallocation of

written materials for a new project (Cavallo 2001). If the definition of a palimpsested artefact is dependent on its being executed as a new project on a previously used material, some cases of intertwined *scriptio inferior* and *superior* do not fall under the category of palimpsest. An example of a Qur'anic manuscript that is not the result of a palimpsesting process despite its strata of Qur'anic text is the fragment A.Perg.2. Listed by Grohmann (1958) among the examples of Qur'anic manuscripts from the 7th century, the object are the remains of a bifolium described in the catalogue of Qur'anic fragments from the Papyrussammlung of the Austrian National Library as a very unusual palimpsest (Löbenstein 1980) but its nature as a palimpsest is a controversial issue (Fedeli 2005). The re-writing occupies the chronological layers of the manuscript (*scriptio inferior* and *superior* of the top half of the page) but also the physical spaces of the page (top and bottom parts of the *scriptio superior*). What makes A.Perg.2 a deeply puzzling case is the re-writing of the same portion of Qur'anic text across the page's layers and spaces: Q.28:75-80 is written three times.

A recent re-imaging of the fragment with a post-processing of the multispectral images (Phelps, Easton, Knox and Kasotakis 2020) allowed a re-reading of the manuscript and suggests that the re-writing of the Qur'anic text – in two different script styles – is likely the expression of a learning context. The three texts (repetition of the same portion of text) are three spaces of the same project happening around the page in a single session rather than chronological layers. The script styles, the possible teaching context and the peculiar dynamics of the page making/re-writing suggest that this fragment is a very interesting 'common Qur'an' produced for learning how to write it.

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### Jost Gippert (Hamburg)

*Palimpsests from the Caucasus and the DeLiCaTe project*

Tuesday, 11 July, 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

As a result of their Christianisation in the 4th century of our era, three peoples of the Southern Caucasus developed their own literacy based on individual scripts: Armenians, Georgians, and the so-called Caucasian Albanians. From the subsequent four "early" centuries, remnants of their writing activities have mostly been preserved in the form of palimpsests; this is especially true of Caucasian Albanian, which was given up as a written language in the course of the Arab conquest of the region. The ERC project "The Development of Literacy in the Caucasian Territories" (DeLiCaTe), running at the University of Hamburg from 2022–27, aims at unveiling the treasures that are concealed in the palimpsests of Caucasian origin, with a view to their textual contents, their linguistic and paleographic features, and their impact for the history of the region. The present paper illustrates the methods that are applied, the results that can be achieved and the problems that are encountered on the basis of a few examples.

**Victor Gysembergh (Paris) and Emanuel Zingg (Zurich)**

*Unpublished Greek and Latin texts from North Italian and Egyptian palimpsests*

Monday, 10 July, 12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

Our presentation will deal with four palimpsest manuscripts that have yielded recent textual discoveries: Codex Climaci rescriptus, from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai; Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare XL (38); Milan, Ambrosianus L 99 Sup.; and Paris, BNF, Supplément grec 921. We will describe these manuscripts and present the new contents recovered thanks to multi-spectral imaging: fragments from Hipparchus' Star Catalogue, from an anonymous Latin introduction to Plato's works, and from Ptolemy's treatise *On the Meteoroscope*, as well as the earliest extant copy of Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus*. We will reflect upon the new finds' significance for the history of each of these texts, and discuss prospects for future research.

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**Asma Hilali (Lille)**

*Palimpsests and palimpsesting in Arabic manuscripts: The Sanaa palimpsest as example*

Monday, 10 July, 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

The paper reconstructs the history of the techniques of palimpsesting in the ancient Islamic world. The first part of the contribution is dedicated to describing the perception Islamic medieval scholars have of the techniques of erasing, washing and rubbing and the way they evaluate each action within the scholarly activity. The second part is dedicated to the emblematic example of the Sanaa palimpsest, one of the most ancient Arabic fragments dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The last part of the paper provides a critical overview of the western approaches to the material and the text of the Sanaa palimpsest since the 1970s.

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**Mariam Kamarauli (Hamburg)**

*Palimpsested hagiography: a comparative analysis of the martyrdom of St. Febronia on the example of a Georgian palimpsest*

Tuesday, 11 July, 11:30 am – 12:00 pm

This presentation examines the hagiography of St. Febronia, who was a nun and was persecuted for not renouncing her belief and refusing to marry Lysimachos, the nephew of Emperor Diocletian. The story of her suffering has been recorded in Georgian in several manuscripts, three of which are presented and analyzed here: Sin.georg. 6. (*nuskhuri* script, dated to 10th c. CE), A-95 (*nuskhuri* script, dated to 10th c. CE) and Sin.georg. NF 84/NF 90 (double palimpsested, upper layer *nuskhuri* script, lower layer *asomtavruli* script, dated to 9th–10th cc. CE).

The analysis will mainly focus on differences, such as different choices of words, additions or omissions of passages of text, linguistic peculiarities and word order within and beyond phrases, etc. The goal of this presentation is to give an overview and a first attempt to systematically categorize differences and peculiarities found in the comparative analysis of these texts.

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### **Grigory Kessel (Vienna)**

*Some observations on the reuse of Syriac manuscripts*

Tuesday, 11 July, 4:30 pm – 5:00 pm

In my presentation, I will survey various possibilities for the reuse of Syriac parchment codices. Specifically, I am going to consider two aspects of the complex relationship between a codex and *codex rescriptus*: the quantity of folios that were taken over and the eventual modification made to the folio's format. An attempt will be made to distinguish between regular (or at least more widespread) patterns of reuse and irregular (or less frequent) ones.

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### **Eka Kvirkvelia (Hamburg)**

*New witnesses of the Jerusalem-rite lectionary: Georgian Palimpsests Ivir. georg. 47 and Ivir. georg. 59*

Tuesday, 11 July, 2:00 pm – 2:30 pm

The aim of the current study is to analyse the lower layer of two Georgian palimpsests: Ivir. georg. 59 and Ivir. georg. 47. The named MSS contain the text of the Jerusalem-type Lectionary. Research on them has been conducted within the framework of the project “The Development of Literacy in the Caucasian Territories (DeLiCaTe)”, which is led by Jost Gippert and hosted at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), University of Hamburg. Studying the lower layer of this manuscript I was able to obtain multispectral images taken by Jost Gippert in the Monastery of Iviron with a MuSIS camera.

The palimpsests Ivir. georg. 59 and Ivir. georg. 47 are essential sources for reconstructing the composition of the Jerusalem-rite lectionary. Beyond this, the preserved texts of lections provide us with new witnesses for further textological research.

### **Zisis Melissakis (Athens)**

*Palimpsest manuscripts in the National Library of Greece (with a special mention of EBE 192)*

Monday, 10 July, 10:50 am – 11:20 am

In the main manuscript collection of the National Library of Greece (Athens) there are 25 partial or complete palimpsests, with folios from older, mainly Greek, but also non-Greek, manuscripts. We had studied this material thoroughly, in the framework of the project "Rinascimento virtuale. Digitale Palimpsestforschung", and for some of them more specific studies have been carried out, but a detailed catalogue is still pending. The first part of this paper presents a summary of all these palimpsests with separate additions of newer research findings. The second part is devoted to the most important palimpsest in the collection, EBE 192, whose oldest layer of writing comes from two manuscripts with philosophical, educational, and legal content.

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### **Heinz Miklas (Vienna)**

*A Survey of the palimpsests among Glagolitic manuscripts of Sinai*

Tuesday, 11 July, 12:30 pm – 12:45 pm

Mainly due to the lack of raw material in the desert, palimpsests are a typical trait of manuscripts written in the Sinai. This applies in particular to the Glagolitic Old Slavonic codices and fragments in St. Catherine's monastery, the majority of which was discovered in the great find of 1975. Not all of them have been closely examined yet, so the exact amount of Sinaitic Glagolitic manuscripts with undertexts remains open. Even so, together with a few dislocated Glagolitic specimens from Sinai kept today in St. Petersburg and the Vatican, their number should be none less than eight, including a multiple palimpsest in the so-called Medical Leaves. Their demarcation and closer assessment suffer from the fact that usually the underlayers are so heavily washed out or erased that it is extremely difficult to discover more than such indications as multiple rulings, remnants of letters, and the like. So, we must content ourselves with figuring out the number of layers, the scripts and languages of the underlayers. We will discuss these traces in the context of a short, overall presentation.

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### **Hussein Adnan Mohammed (Hamburg)**

*Visualising palimpsests with computer vision approaches*

Tuesday, 11 July, 5:00 pm – 5:30 pm

This talk will present a work-in-progress project on visualizing palimpsests using computer vision and image processing methods. Palimpsests are manuscripts that have been overwritten or

erased, leaving traces of previous writing beneath the surface. To enhance the legibility of these complex documents, advanced image processing techniques are being tested to analyse and process the pixel values of both overwriting and underwriting.

State-of-the-art image segmentation methods can help with locating the handwriting regions and analysing the layouts of digitized manuscripts. Additionally, pattern detection approaches are being tested to detect text-lines in the underwriting and associate them with the corresponding transcriptions. The project also aims to refine text-line detections using image registration techniques, which utilize the provided transcriptions and font information.

The goal of this project is to provide a better understanding of palimpsests and facilitate their study by scholars and researchers in various fields. By utilizing computer vision and image processing techniques, we hope to shed new light on these ancient manuscripts and unlock valuable insights into the past.

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### **Christa Müller-Kessler (Jena)**

*News on hidden treasure texts of Late Antiquity in Christian Palestinian Aramaic among the Taylor-Schechter Collection*

Tuesday, 11 July, 4:00 pm – 4:30 pm

The Taylor-Schechter Collection has been known to be stored since the end of the nineteenth century at the Cambridge University Library. Among the first texts to be published were the palimpsests with Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Syriac as a lower script by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson in 1900 and 1902. It goes without saying that being palimpsests made them difficult to decipher and read. Thus a number of them were either declared as illegible or only scraps of letters and words could be made out. For the edition by Moshe Goshen-Gottstein with the assistance of Hanan Shirun (1973) and the later ones by myself and Michael Sokoloff (1997–1998), quite a few more of the lower texts of the early material in Christian Palestinian Aramaic could be attributed by me to their appropriate contents. Still there remained the most faded ones without identification. The plan to provide an up-to-date catalogue of the complete palimpsest material with the Christian Palestinian Aramaic text witnesses from the Cairo Geniza gave a new impetus to go over these unassigned texts again. It so happens that the last five to six unsolved text fragments could be identified in the spring of 2023. They will be presented with their diverse contents.

### **Bernard Outtier (Paris)**

*A palimpsest Georgian folio in an Athonian Greek manuscript*

Tuesday, 11 July, 12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

The Greek manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coislin 285 comes from Mount Athos. There had been folios lost and in 1475, the monk Nikephoros in the monastery of Kostamoní supplied one by adding the present folio no. 9, which was then rewritten in Greek on a Georgian layer.

We have identified the text as coming from the *Menaion* of September. We shall also try to identify the manuscript from which it had been taken and trace the textual affiliation.

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### **Michela Perino (Rome) and Chiara Rosso (Rome)**

*On the trail of Priscian's *Ars grammatica*: imaging analysis and palaeographic investigation of eighth- and ninth-century palimpsests*

Monday, 10 July, 9:45 am – 10:30 am

The ERC research project PAGES (Priscian's *Ars Grammatica* in European Scriptoria; <https://web.uniroma1.it/pages/home>) aims to produce a new critical edition of Priscian's *Ars grammatica*, considered as the last and greatest Latin grammar handbook of Antiquity. Among its tasks, PAGES involves the interdisciplinary study of four partially palimpsest codices, with remnants of the *Ars* dating from the late 8th/early 9th to the 10th century and later scraped off. The aim of such study is both to digitally restore the *scriptio inferior* with imaging technologies and to investigate the revealed handwritings from a palaeographic perspective.

The paper focuses on two palimpsests currently under investigation: the oldest one, Montpellier, Bibliothèque Universitaire, Section de Médecine, H 141 (primary script 8th/9th century); and manuscript Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 872 (primary script second half of the 9th century).

The first part of the paper points to the imaging analyses (e.g., multispectral imaging) which have been performed on the palimpsest *folia* in order to recover their *scriptio inferior*. Different image post-processing techniques are also discussed.

The second part deals with both the codicological reconstruction of the primary manuscripts and their palaeographic analysis. Thanks to the imaging techniques, which have successfully revealed new traces of handwriting, letter forms can now be more easily observed. We will therefore proceed to a new attempt at dating and localizing these erased witnesses of the *Ars Prisciani*.



The results of such analysis contribute to the knowledge of the manuscript tradition of Priscian's work. Also, they represent a good example of the value of interdisciplinary approaches in the field of manuscript studies.

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### **Michael Phelps (California)**

*Palimpsests damaged by chemical reagents: new challenges for text recovery with MSI*

Monday, 10 July, 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Palimpsests painted with chemical reagents in successful, though destructive attempts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to read their undertexts often frustrate the multispectral imaging (MSI) methods commonly used today for undertext recovery. A new research project now being organized will study palimpsests damaged by reagents to determine optimal methods of imaging and image processing to recover their undertexts.

In the twenty years following the Archimedes Palimpsest project, a consensus has coalesced around how to use MSI to recover the palimpsest undertexts. Imaging hardware and image-processing methods emphasize spectral fluorescence, where meaningful data for undertext recovery is often found. However, in 2022 the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library visited the Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona to apply MSI to Ms. XL (38), a palimpsest heavily painted with chemical reagents. We halted the imaging session midway realizing that if we collected data by customary methods, the project would fail. Our imaging methods did not fit the palimpsest. While Verona Ms. XL (38) is a severe example of a palimpsest damaged by reagents, less severe examples share similar challenges. Based on this experience EMEL and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) are organizing a project with the Fondazione Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, the Lazarus Project, and other partners to apply a variety of imaging and measurement technologies to palimpsests painted with chemical reagents. The project seeks to identify where in the spectrum meaningful information for undertext recovery for such palimpsests is located and to recommend imaging and image-processing methods that target this information.

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### **Erich Renhart (Graz)**

*The Armenian palimpsest of Graz University Library and its exciting biblical text variants*

Tuesday, 11 July, 9:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Being of Sinaitic provenance the 9th century codex Graz 2058/2 has been described as a manuscript containing most interesting oracles along with the text of the Gospel of St John. After the codicological reconstruction of the palimpsested book in its entirety and the discussion of the



oracle sayings, it is time to promote reading the biblical text. The present contribution summarises the efforts and offers preliminary results of peculiar text variants. Their wording and their pericopation (cutting the text into short sections) make evident that our text is an ancient version which is worth studying. Thus, the weight of the effaced text within the Armenian tradition will be estimated for a first time. This opens the window for a further initial comparison, i.e. with the Greek and Syriac versions.

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**Hasmik Sargsyan (Hamburg)**

*Linguistic divergence in Armenian Bible and lectionary palimpsests*

Tuesday, 11 July, 10:00 am – 10:30 am

The subject of this paper are variant readings in Old Armenian Bible and lectionary fragments preserved as lower layers of palimpsested manuscripts. This research is carried out in the framework of the project DeLiCaTe (*The Development of Literacy in the Caucasian Territories*) at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, University of Hamburg, with Jost Gippert as its PI (see Gippert 2022, 2023).

The oldest dated manuscripts of Armenian go back to the 9th century. Palimpsested fragments are of special importance in the study of the earliest stages of the Armenian language since they can usually be dated to an older period than the oldest known dated manuscripts preserving the same texts. The task of a linguist is to systematize variant readings in Armenian manuscripts of the 5th–11th cc. that could be of importance for linguistic research and in assessing the “linguistic” variation in Armenian manuscripts; cooperation between textual critics and linguists is crucial (cf. Weitenberg 2014: 223; Stone 1993: 20–21). This is one of the goals of the project DeLiCaTe. In the present paper, I will present preliminary results of the research on “linguistic” variants in several Bible and lectionary fragments.