

PAPYRUS NETWORKS

Montserrat and 20th cent.
collectors



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English version by Lucas W. Binion

PAPYRUS NETWORKS: 20TH CENT. EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES COLLECTING

Sofia Torallas Tovar

Since the 19th century, the antiques market has been the primary driving force behind the greatest dispersion of our written heritage. This dispersion could be attributed to ambition, greed, or perhaps simply to the carelessness of the antique merchants: an edition of the same book or document may be distributed as pieces in different collections.

With access to documentation on the acquisition of collections, the most modern technologies have contributed enormously to the reconstruction of this great puzzle, and codicologists have been able to virtually gather pieces that have been separated for years. Thanks to this virtual gathering process, it is possible to understand the network of collections and the interrelationships that these fragments can create.

The papyrus collection at Montserrat Abbey was acquired by Father Roca-Puig in the 1950s, at a time when other famous papyrus collections were created in Europe and North America. Over the last few years the detailed study of many of the pieces in our collection has led us to search in collections such as Cologne, Duke University, Chester Beatty in Dublin, Bodmer in Geneva, and of course, the nearest collection Palau Ribes del Arxiu of the Companyia de Jesús in Barcelona, created by J. O'Callaghan at the same time as that of Ramon Roca-Puig.

RAMON ROCA PUIG (1906-2001) AND THE ACQUISITION OF THE MONTSERRAT PAPYRI

Pius Ramon Tragan

Ramon Roca Puig was born in 1906 into a very Christian family from Algerri, a village in the Catalan region of La Noguera. As a fugitive in Italy during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), he remained in Bergamo and enrolled as a student at the Catholic University of Milan, where he completed his studies in papyrological science. In 1939 he finished his coursework in classical philology, with

a special focus on papyrology while under the direction of the great master Aristide Calderini. Later he continued studying textual criticism with Prof. Alberto Vaccari of the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome, and then continued to perfect his specialization at the Catholic University of Louvain, where he was able to benefit from the advice and friendship of professors Lucien Cerfaux and L.Th. Lafort.



He returned definitively to Barcelona in 1939 and continued his life as an intellectual cleric under the sign of teaching and research. With the firm intention of acquiring a collection of papyri and studying the texts firsthand, Dr. Roca created the «San Lucas Evangelista Foundation» in 1952 for the purpose of obtaining funds and promoting both the acquisition and study of ancient documents. It is not clear how he developed the idea for this project, though in any case, he dedicated all his own resources to

meet this goal, and also petitioned wealthy people in Barcelona to help him financially. A few of the most noteworthy names among them include Juan Cendrós, Joaquín Ribera and Joan Llonc.

In 1954 Dr. Roca embarked on the first of a series of trips to Egypt in order to acquire texts inscribed either on papyrus or on parchment from the Cairo antique dealers. His visits were repeated in 1955, 1957, 1959 and 1960. The collection of acquired texts eventually came to form a very valuable collection that he called *Papyri Barcinonenses*. In 1958 he obtained his doctorate from the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Salamanca, completing his degree with the study of fourteen texts –including both papyrus and parchments – from his own collection. He had already begun publishing two years before obtaining his degree, and these works were being recognized by international papyrologists. He was appointed professor of Greek at the Diocesan Conciliar Seminary and later, between 1960 and 1964, he became professor of Greek at the

University of Barcelona. During this tenure, he published a grammar and an anthology of Greek texts that turned out to be an extraordinary success.

Roca's travels in Egypt were not improvised. Spampinati, the Rector of St. Mark's Parish in Schoubra with whom he had developed a good friendship, was a crucial agent in the collection process. After Roca revealed his project of acquiring and studying the ancient texts from Egypt, this priest offered him hospitality within his parish and also put him in contact with the Italian Franciscans in Egypt, who had extensive knowledge regarding the state of the market for papyri and ancient objects in Cairo. Although most of Roca's collection was acquired in Egypt, we know that some of its pieces were acquired through antique dealers in Switzerland.

The formation of the Roca-Puig collection coincides with a period of intense activity in the Cairo antiquities market, although in many cases we are unaware of the circumstances by which the pieces were found and acquired. In any case, at the same time that Roca-Puig was forming his collection, other important collections were acquiring their collections through the same sources: Cologne, Duke University (Durham, North Carolina), Chester Beatty (Dublin), Bodmer (Geneva) and, of course, Palau-Ribes, in Barcelona.

Dr. Roca put all his efforts and possibilities into assembling an important collection that currently consists of some 1800 pieces. He made all of the purchases in person and within a span of just a few years gathered this important collection of extraordinary value, composed of Greek, Latin, Demotic, Coptic, and Arab texts that cover about twelve centuries of writing, ranging from the Homeric fragments of the third century B.C. all the way to some biblical parchments that date from the ninth and tenth centuries. For Dr. Roca, a man of science and faith, the dream of his life was realized: to approach and interact with the most ancient testimonies of classical and Christian tradition.

Correspondence and the exchange of research papers with other scholars demonstrate the consideration and respect that Dr. Roca Puig garnered, deservedly, in the world of papyrology. His initial purpose of orienting his life toward the study of unpublished texts had reached a maturity and fullness that, as we have seen, allowed him and the proliferation of his work to cross the borders of his own

country. Moreover, his capacity for and complete dedication to study did not diminish his aesthetic sensibility, nor did it impact his interest in getting to know the customs other countries and getting in contact with different people that he met during his travels.

Roca's non-academic writings, including descriptions of the places and monuments he had admired, are very illuminating. The notes and written notations he took, which eventually served as useful tools in a series of cultural conferences, illustrate the impressions of the archaeological testimonies of the Pharaohs' works near Cairo, Luxor, and Karnak, as well as observations made during similarly impactful visits to Sinai and Palestine. He also mentions the beautiful Egyptian landscape, crossed by the Nile and adorned with promontories, as well as the daunting severity of its vast sand deserts.

Above all, Egypt was, in Roca's eyes, the model country in terms of the preservation of texts for dedicated and respectful future study. At the same time, during his visits he enriched both his historic and his aesthetic sensibilities, prepared as he was thanks to prior knowledge of the writings and monuments of the classical world. The collection of photographs taken during his travels and kept in his archives is eloquent proof of his fascination and engagement with the region.

Over the years, the question of to whom he was to leave his collection dawned upon Roca. Given that in his homeland there was no official or academic entity that could take charge of the specific character of his legacy, he feared that his collection would be blocked or dispersed. After excluding various possibilities, he decided to bestow his papyrological collection upon the Abbey of Montserrat. The monks not only accepted his donation, but also offered him accommodation and made a commitment to care for him for the remainder of his life. Dr. Ramon Roca Puig lived and was cared for at the Abbey for four years, from 1997 until his death on June 29, 2001. He wanted to be buried in Arenys de Mar, where he had spent his childhood and youth.

Montserrat has assumed the duty of conserving, studying and disseminating the heritage received from Roca Puig. Under the scientific direction of Dr. Sofia Torallas Tovar, a group of specialists has been working for the last eighteen years to compile, research, and publish these papyri and parchments. The project will be carried out

as far as possible, and currently operates under the working title, *Papyri Montserratenses-Roca*.

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ROYAL AMNESTY DECREE 9 OCTOBER 186 BCE

Alba de Frutos García

José Domingo Rodríguez Martín



Fig. 1. P.Monts.Roca inv. 908 (left) and P.Palau.Rib. inv. 172 a (right)

These fragments, which come from mummy cartonnage, belong to the same roll of papyrus that contains a copy of the so-called “amnesty decree” proclaimed by Ptolemy V Epiphanes on October

9, 186 BCE, after the suppression of the Great Revolt in southern Egypt (206-186 BCE). During this period, this area became independent from the Ptolemaic monarchy after having established a theocratic monarchy with two successive Egyptian pharaohs. By adopting the measures appearing in the decree, Epiphanes tried to establish a certain social and economic stability during a period of serious political crisis. These measures included the absolution of fugitives and policemen from all crimes with the exception of murder and temple thief, as well as a general amnesty for crimes committed until September/October 186 BCE. Other measures included the remission of debts for royal farmers, as well as the prohibition for royal officials to put any accused for private causes without having been brought him before the judge.

The various fragments are now preserved in the Palau-Ribes, Roca-Puig, and Cologne collections. The Cologne fragments were acquired in 1957 by Harald Bocke on behalf of Joseph Kroll. Roca-Puig and O'Callaghan travelled to Egypt several times during the 1950s, although we do not know the exact date on which they acquired the rest of the fragments of the decree for their respective collections. We do have documentation explicitly confirming Roca-Puig's presence in Cairo in 1957, but it is impossible to say whether or not this is the year in which the fragments were purchased.

Although the relative position of most of the extant fragments in the original roll remains largely unknown to us, we can appreciate the fortuitous way in which the three fragments of the first column fit together perfectly: the fragment of Montserrat (P.Monts.Roca inv. 908) preserves the beginning of the letters of one of the fragments of Cologne (P.Kroll. col. I) which in turn completes another of the fragments of the Palau Ribes collection (P.PalauRib. inv. 172 a).



Fig. 2. Reconstruction of column one of the decree with P.Monts.Roca 908 (left), P.Kroll. col. I (center) and P.Palau.Rib. inv. 172 a (right). © S. Carro.

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THE TURA CODICES

María Jesús Albarrán Martínez

In 1941, in the small town of Tura, 10 kilometres south of Cairo, a group of Egyptian workers accidentally uncovered around 2,500



Fig. 3. P.Monts.Roca inv. 400

papyri deposited in one of the galleries of the old quarries (no. 35), mined since Pharaonic times. The gallery was unearthed and had been outfitted to serve as an ammunition store for the British troops present in Egypt during the Second World War, though it did not seem to have had any human occupation other than the brief military stint or the work related to the quarry exploitation.

All the papyri were in the same deposit and were regrouped in quires that belonged to at least 8 different codices, which indicates that they had originally been part of the same library. Their states of conservation are variable, and their greater deterioration does not correspond to effects related to the passage of time inside the gallery, since they had not been in contact with humidity or other corrosive agents, but instead to human contact most likely made prior to their deposit in the gallery. Many of the papyri had been deliberately folded, rolled or fragmented, indicating a priori that it was a clandestine deposit, perhaps with the intention of hiding or making the codices

and their texts disappear. We have no evidence pertaining to who hid and rendered them useless or of any reason for their behavior. It must have happened sometime after the seventh century, as it is the latest date for some of the codices. It can be conjectured, however, that this interest in hiding and rendering these books useless would have been related to the persecution or censorship of heretical doctrines, particularly Origenism. Since the texts of the codices, despite their diverse nature, are all clearly Christian, and in particular feature biblical commentaries attributed to Origen himself (2nd-3rd c.) and to Didymus the Blind (4th c.), defender of the doctrines of Origen, the desire to dispose of or disfigure them is logical.

The discovery gave rise to very different interests and generated great expectations from different populations over a long period of time. The workers, realizing the economic value of such a cache of papyri, appropriated it to sell it to merchants, who in turn would sell it to antique dealers and collectors. The Egyptian Antiquities Service, upon learning of the discovery, tried to stop the illegal sale and dispersion of the hoard; thus, with the support of King Faruq, the EAS was able to recover a significant amount of papyri, which were then deposited in the Museum of Cairo, where they were classified, restored, and studied. Though as Octave Guéraud, curator of the Cairo Museum and one of the most involved in the whole process, predicted, it was impossible to locate and acquire a collection of such magnitude, and it was also impossible to avoid the dispersion of many pieces which would end up scattered throughout several European and American collections after decades: Cologne, Milan, Geneva, London, Provo (Utah), and as we present here, in the Abbey of Montserrat.

The texts, on the other hand, made important contributions to the advancement of biblical studies and early Christianity, and researchers in these fields soon became interested in these codices. This was the case of Ramón Roca Puig. Our collector did not acquire them in Cairo, as had been the case with the rest of the collection, but through the Bianchi family, antique dealers of Lugano, in Switzerland, who presumably would have acquired them in Egypt shortly before.

Roca Puig acquired 75 folios from their repertoire in 1975 for the price of 135,000 Swiss francs.

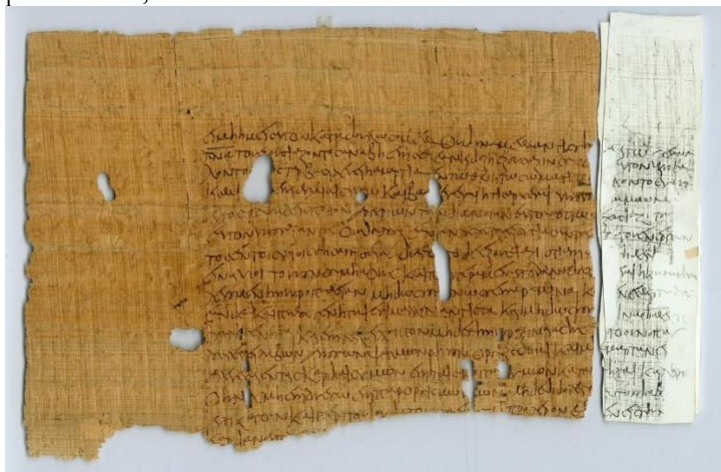


Fig. 4. P.Köln Theol. Inv. 51, p. 294 (Ecl. 10, 3c-10, 4b) © Kölner Papyrussammlung

Of the total of our collection, 50 folios, P.Monts.Roca inv. 400-450, contain commentaries to the book by Zechariah of Didymus the Blind (TM 59670 / LDAB 772). Other folios from the same codex can be found in the Museum of Cairo (w/o n) and the papyrological collection in Cologne: P.Köln Theol. Inv. 2 (acquired in the 1960s). The codex dates from the 6th century. The other 25 folios, P.Monts.Roca inv. 451-475, contain commentaries on Genesis by the same author, Didymus the Blind (TM 59673 / LDAB 775), and are in connection with folios from the Cairo Museum.

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THE MISCELLANEOUS CODEX

Sofia Torallas Tovar

One of the best-known pieces in the Roca-Puig collection is the so-called miscellaneous codex. It is a small papyrus codex, in square format, datable to the end of the fourth century. It is a codex composed not only of different works, but also in different languages - Greek and Latin - and bears witness to an interest in the Latin language in Upper Egypt and the use of classical texts, such as the Catilinaries of Cicero, in the education of young Thebans.

The first section of the codex contains fairly long passages from the Catilinary orations by Cicero. It is followed by the *Psalmus responsorius*, a liturgical Latin Christian text. Next, a mythological-themed drawing (see Fig. 5), unrelated to any of the surrounding texts, which depicts a man holding a head in his hand and stepping on a monstrous being. The fourth section of the codex is an anonymous poem in Latin hexameters: the text of the *Alcestitis*. It is followed by *Hadrianus*, a sort of Latin story or narration whose central character is the Emperor Hadrianus. The codex closes with a list of more than 2000 Greek words, which upon examination turned out to be some kind of index in alphabetical order of terms appearing in a shorthand manual (see Fig. 6).

The acquisition of the codex is exceptionally well documented, as we have preserved the letters of Father Silvestre Chauleur from Cairo in 1955, with a description of two pieces: this manuscript and a papyrus roll containing a Coptic translation of the epistle from Athanasius to Dracontius. In Chauleur's letter, the codex is described as coming from none other than the library of the monastery of St. Pachomius - monastic founder of the late third and early fourth centuries, who was the head of a monastic network with several monasteries in southern Egypt. What is interesting about this information is that it puts this codex in relation to a series of interesting contemporary codices, acquired at the same time as our collector, Roca-Puig, by Bodmer and Chester Beatty (see Fig. 7) in Cairo and in these same years.

The physical characteristics of these codices, both in their format and palaeography, confirm that they probably had a common origin, although the fact that they came from the library of a Pachomian monastery sounds more like a ruse to improve the price of papyrus and is an argument very difficult to prove.



Fig. 5. P.Monts.Roca inv. 154

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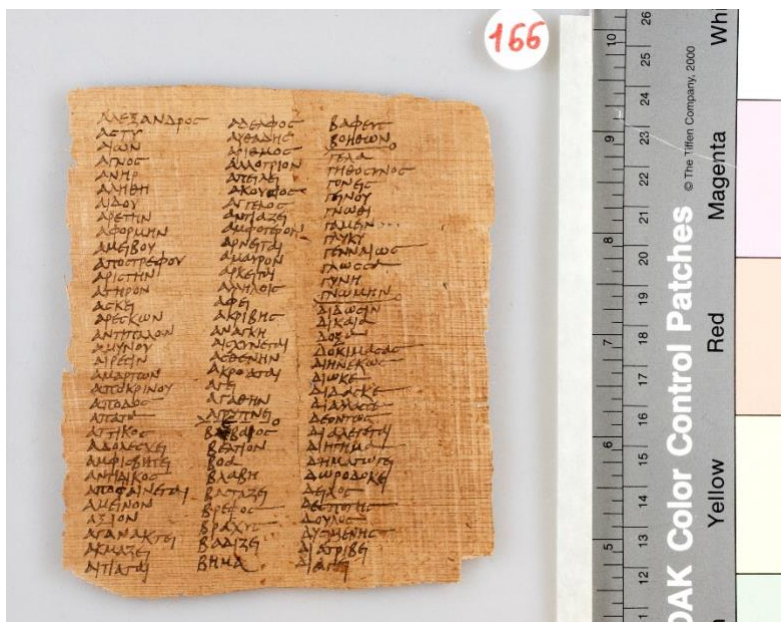


Fig. 6. P.Monts.Roca inv. 166

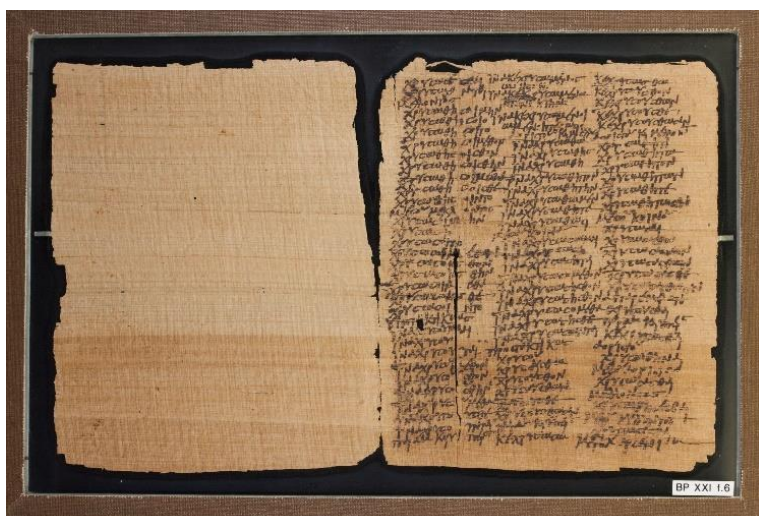


Fig. 7. BP XXI f. 6 (Chester Beatty).

A SAMUEL CODEX REUSED AS A MAGICAL FORMULARY

Raquel Martín Hernández

A codex containing a biblical text written in Sahidic Coptic was unbound in Antiquity and its leaves then subsequently reused in order to write a magical handbook. According to the study and interpretation of S. Torallas (2007), at least six folios from the Biblical manuscript were erased and sewn together to form a roll or rotulus onto which several magic recipes were written. The text is written on only one side of the roll, mainly on the flesh side, and in rotulus format, i.e., vertically. Later the roll was intentionally torn, resulting in its particular state of preservation.



Fig. 8. P.Monts.Roca inv. 643

In what remains of the fragments, it has been possible to identify the original text (lower scriptio) as belonging to book 2 of Samuel as it was translated into Sahidic Coptic. The later text (upper scriptio) preserves magical recipes, also written in Coptic, which have

not yet been edited. As is typical of these magical formularies, the texts are full of symbols of power, images of angels, and other divine entities, which make these fragments some of the most striking pieces in the collection.

Most of the known fragments of this palimpsest are preserved in the Roca-Puig collection, though the circumstances of his purchase could not be clarified. It is possible that they were bought by Ramón Roca Puig during one of his trips to Cairo between 1954 and 1960 (Tragán 2015).

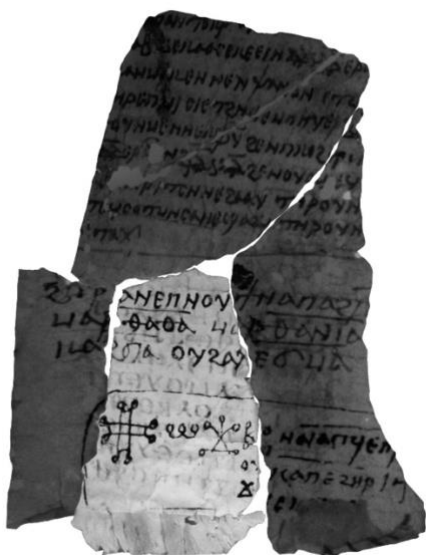


Fig. 9.P.Monts.Roca II 4 + McGill MS NO Coptic 2 © B.C. Jones

In addition to the fragments from Montserrat, two other fragments have been identified as belonging to the same scroll. The first of them is conserved in the Palau Ribes collection (inv. nr. 96). It has the remains of writing lines on both sides and preserves part of the stitching that joined some of the folios to the others. As with the fragments of Montserrat, we also do not know the particular circumstances of its acquisition. Other texts that form part of this exhibition show the same interconnections between the two

collections, which may provide interesting data to clarify, at least as much as possible, the circumstances of some of the purchases of lots of papyrus.

In 2013 Brice Jones published a piece from the University of Montreal's library collection that partially completed Montserrat's text. The fragment, McGill MS NO Coptic 2, originally belonged to Erik von Scherling, a trader of antique and rare books, who sold a large number of Greek and Coptic papyri and parchments to different collectors and institutions through a private catalogue called *Rotulus*. According to data provided by Jones (2013), von Scherling acquired this piece some twenty years before Roca-Puig. That is, if the date approximating the 1950s as the timeframe for the purchase of Roca Puig is correct. How it happened that some small fragments were sold *before* the sale of the bulk of the rest of the codex is a mystery.

We are not aware of the existence of other pieces, apart from those reviewed, that complete the palimpsest. Not all the manuscripts sold by von Scherling are published, nor do we know if other fragments of the same codex were bought by other merchants, and thus remain unpublished and hidden in the collections.

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PAPYRUS 967

M^a. Victoria Spottorno

The Abbey of Montserrat preserves two semifolios from the famous biblical codex P.967. This is the only codex that both comes before and makes alterations to the hexaplar recension, the philological work carried out by Origen in the first half of the third century that was performed in order to compare and mark the differences between the Hebrew text and the Greek versions of the Bible (Hexapla). He arranged the parallel texts in six columns, featuring from left to right: the Hebrew text, the transcription from Hebrew to the Greek alphabet, the version of Aquila, the version of Symmachus, the version of Septuagint, and the version of

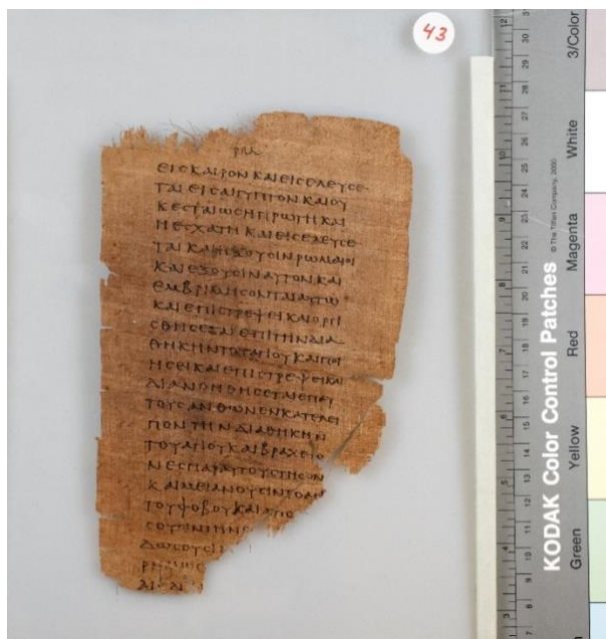


Fig. 10. P.Monts.Roca inv. 43

Theodotion. For those concerned with exegesis regarding the Book of Daniel, papyrus 967 is the primary and practically the only

testimony of the text of Septuagint, since the regular text of this book used mostly the version of Theodotion.

Papyrus 967 is a codex that originally contained the Greek texts of the Books of Ezekiel, Daniel, Bel and the serpent, Susanna, and the Book of Esther. From it a total 200



Fig. 11. P.Köln Theol 16.9

of the 236 pages of the codex are preserved, including their numbered pagination. The codex consisted of 59 papyrus sheets placed one on top of the other and folded in half, resulting in the formation of a single quire with 118 folios, i.e. 236 pages of text, in elongated format. The initial 18 pages were lost with the first 11 chapters of Ezekiel, and the final 18 with the rest of the book of Esther and, possibly, Ruth.

In addition to Montserrat, the fragments of the codex are scattered throughout different papyrological collections across Europe and America: 38 pages at Princeton (John H. Sheide Papyri collection), 20 in Madrid (Papyri Matritenses collection of the Fundación Pastor de Estudios Clásicos, now deposited in the National Library), 78 in Cologne (P.Köln collection), 4 fragments split between two (Princeton and Cologne), and 16 more fragments split between two more (Dublin, in Chester Beatty collection, and Cologne). The two semifolios of Montserrat (collection P.Monts.Roca) contain parts of chapters 7, 8 and 11 of Daniel, however the

corresponding parts that complete these pages are lost.

The origin of the codex, dated to approximately the 2nd or 3rd centuries CE, is unknown. The dispersion of its pages indicates that it has come to us via the hands of merchants. Specifically, the two fragments belonging to the Montserrat collection were acquired by R. Roca-Puig through merchants in Cairo. The 20 pages of the Fundación Pastor in Madrid reached Prof. Manuel Fernández Galiano

through the donation of Pénélope Photiadès, who had purchased them in Geneva, most likely sometime during the seventies. Around 1985, these folios were deposited in the National Library.

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P.MONTS. ROCA INV. 323 : A FRAGMENT OF A SAHIDIC CODEX OF THE APOCRYPHAL ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Alin Suciu

Three fragments from a Sahidic manuscript containing the Apocryphal Acts of the apostles, each of them kept in a different

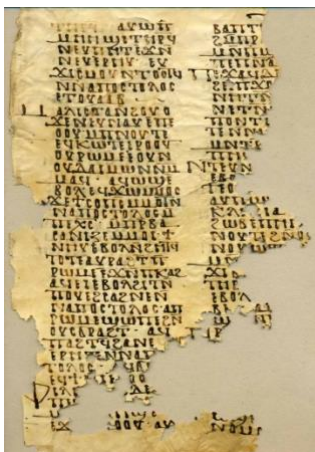


Fig. 12. Schøyen MS 2007. ©
Schøyen collection

location, turn out to belong to the same codex. Thus, paleographical inspection indicates that a parchment fragment in the possession of the Norwegian collector Martin Schøyen (MS 2007) and a second one in the collection of the Leiden University Library (Cod. Or. 14.331) were parts of the same manuscript. The two fragments contain portions from the Acts of Philip and the Acts of James respectively. Although they are kept in different locations, they were both at one point in the hands of Erik von Scherling, the renowned Dutch antiquities dealer. This is clear from the fact that the fragments were catalogued together in 1949 in *Rotulus*, a

magazine privately printed by von Scherling in order to advertise the manuscripts he had up for sale.

Laurence Witten, an American collector, at some point bought the two Coptic apocryphal fragments from von Scherling. In 1975, Witten sold one of them – that containing the Acts of James – to the library of the University of Leiden. After Witten's death in 1995, his family sold a part of his collection via Sam Fogg Rare Books. This is how the second fragment – which contains the Acts of Philip – came into the possession of Martin Schøyen.

Yet a third fragment of the same codex surfaced in the collection of the Montserrat Abbey, P.Monts. Roca inv. 323. From here, however, things become more obscure because it is not clear whether F. Roca-Puig purchased his fragment from von Scherling or, rather, that they both acquired their fragments from the same source, one still unidentified. A similar situation is observed in the case of a small palimpsest parchment fragment in the collection of McGill University in Montreal. This apparently insignificant fragment in terms of size and content (the superior script is from a magical text while the scriptio inferior gives the text of 2 Samuel in Sahidic) comes from a manuscript of which large portions are preserved in the Roca-Puig collection in Montserrat (see above).

As the library records state explicitly that the item was sold by Erik von Scherling to McGill University, this fragment is another piece of evidence revealing that the collections of von Scherling and Roca-Puig shared different fragments from the same manuscripts. It remains a desideratum for future research to identify the mysterious dealer from which both collectors acquired their fragments.

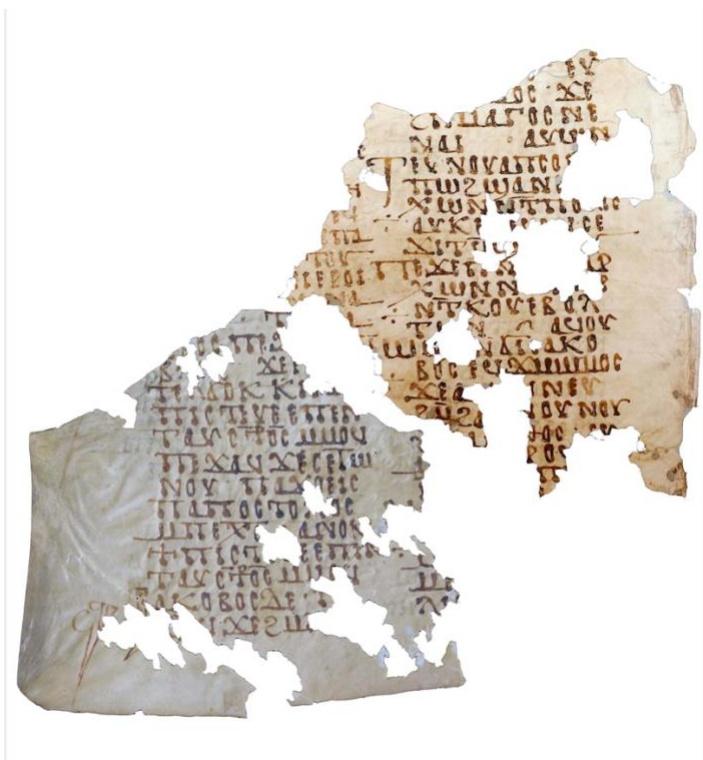


Fig. 13. Leiden Cod. Or. 14.331 + P. Monts.Roca inv. 323. © A. Suciu

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CHRISTIAN LITERATURE ON PARCHMENT STRIPES

Anastasia Maravela

The parchments P.Monts.Roca IV 55-57 and 59 (inv. nos. 995, 722, 731, and 796 respectively) have strikingly similar format (narrow rectangular strips), are written in very similar graphic style (sloping pointed majuscule with cursive elements, datable between the second half of the fifth century and the first half of the sixth century) and contain Christian literature.

The texts on three of these parchments, P.Monts.Roca IV 55-57, relate to two important works by early Church fathers, that championed the ideal of virginity, the *De Virginitate* by St. John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407) and the earlier treatise by Methodius of Olympus (ca. 260-311 AD) *Symposium sive Convivium Decem Virginum*. The Montserrat parchments are the sole surviving ancient witnesses of the two treatises on virginity which have a close genetic connection as Methodius' treatise is thought to have exerted a formative influence on John Chrysostom's thought on questions of virginity and (re)marriage.

Close study of the text and of the material supports has led the editors of these parchments (Sofia Torallas Tovar and Klaas A. Worp) to the conclusion that they neither come from codices nor should their texts be treated as genuine alternative textual witnesses. The texts seem to be rather free, and at places not strictly continuous, compositions which incorporate elements from John Chrysostom's or Macarius' texts and mould them into new textual units that give the impression of notes or excerpts that could have been intended for oral delivery.

Since works on virginity in general, and John Chrysostom's work on the topic in particular, were popular in monastic circles, one may consider the possibility that John Chrysostom's and Macarius' teachings are used in the frame of moral instruction by an Egyptian monastic catechist or a preacher who penned his notes on independent single sheets which were remainders from the preparation of parchment codices. Alternatively, one may view the contents of the strips as working notes or rough drafts towards a commentary or other exegetical work.

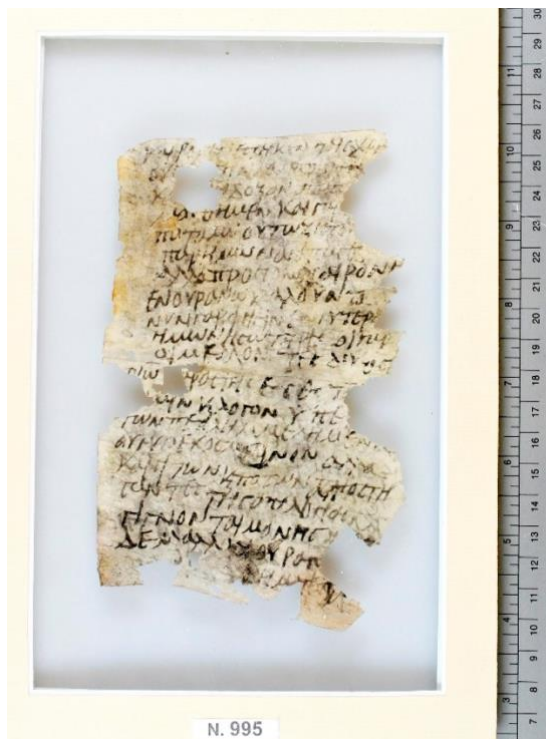


Fig. 14. P.Monts.Roca inv 995.

The gnomic-didactic character of the text on the flesh side of P.Monts. Roca 57 supports the hypothesis that these texts may have been produced in a monastic ambience for moral instruction and edification. The contents of P.Monts.Roca inv. 59, which contains a hitherto unidentifiable Christian text with distinct Biblical echoes would also be compatible with such a scenario, as would the contents of a contemporary papyrus strip, P.Monts. Roca IV 53-54 (inv. 65). This strip contains on the recto a collection of gnomic statements on the topic of wealth, derived from a fluid gnomological composition known as *Comparatio Menandri et Philistionis* and on the verso a free composition, part of which is based on the Biblical commentary *De Benedictionibus Isaaci et Iacobi*, ascribed to Hippolytus of Rome (ca. 170-235 CE).

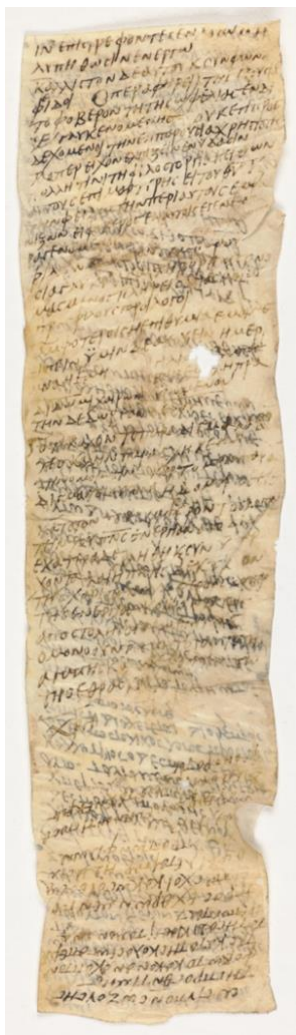


Fig. 15. P.Oslo inv. 1668

The Montserrat parchment (and papyrus) strips have counterparts in other papyrus collections: one of the more striking *comparanda* is P.Oslo inv. 1668. It is a thin, almost transparent, parchment strip with physical defects present prior to the writing. The hand shows striking similarity with the hand of P.Monts.Roca IV 57 (inv. 731). The surface is filled with a hitherto unidentifiable Christian text with the same basic features as the texts on the Montserrat parchments: it consists of an array of (sometimes incomplete) sentences and formulations on various topics: eucharist, conversion and ascent to God, conversion and baptism, and man as a creature in the image of God. On both sides when he is circa midway through the text the scribe turns the strip upside down and fills the sheet writing in the opposite direction. This procedure and the contents suggest that we may be dealing with notes to support oral delivery (a sermon, moral instruction) or towards a commentary or other exegetical work.

The Oslo parchment was purchased by the Norwegian historian of religion Hermann Ludin Jansen from Nahman junior in Cairo in January 1954. It is not known whether Roca-Puig purchased the Montserrat parchments

from the same antiquities dealer but it is noteworthy that the chronological frame for the purchases coincide as he acquired his collection in Egypt in the 1950s and allow us to assume that since the parchment strips were in the antiquities market at around the same time, they may derive from the same (monastic?) find.

Other parchment or papyrus strips deriving from different purchases or finds in Egypt (as e.g. P.Vindob. G 02322, Wessely 1882) 214-223; P.Oxy. LXXV 5023, as well as a dearth of strips with liturgical texts) show that this a favourite format for utility texts among Egyptian Christians in the fifth and sixth centuries.

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P.MONTS.ROCA INV. 65: CHRISTIAN FRAGMENTS

Sofia Torallas Tovar

Probably in connection with the stripes of parchment mentioned above, there is a group of Christian literary fragments on papyrus, in a format difficult to recognize. The Montserrat text (inv. 65) is indeed a stripe, but the fragments of the Palau Ribes, indisputably written by the same hand, seem to be part of a codex, or at least some kind of notebook in the shape of a codex. The six papyri in question are P.PalauRib.Lit. 3 (inv. 225r), 5 (inv. 225v), 13 (inv. 68, 207), 14 (inv. 31), 15 (inv. 4). We know that O'Callaghan created his collection virtually at the same time as Roca Puig, so it is not surprising that there are matching fragments as these. There are two more pieces in the Duke collection, P.Duke, inv. nos. 764 (TM



Fig. 16. P. Köln inv. 1170

62317; LDAB 3480) and 765 (TM 61615; LDAB 2764), both Bible commentaries, to be dated to the 5th cent., which also provide a remarkably close parallel for the handwriting found in the Montserrat papyrus. Another piece may be found in Cologne, P.Köln 1:11 (TM 64572; LDAB 5802), a small fragment containing a few lines, perhaps a biblical commentary, perhaps a homily.

All these collections acquired pieces that have been attributed to the reconstructed library of the monasteries of Pachomius. The Christian content of these fragments, both in parchment and in papyrus, suggest that these fragments may have belonged to the same collection or library, although it cannot be proven.

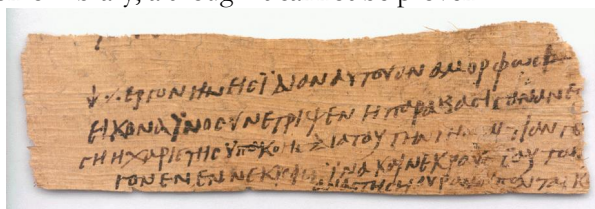


Fig. 17. P. Duke inv. 765

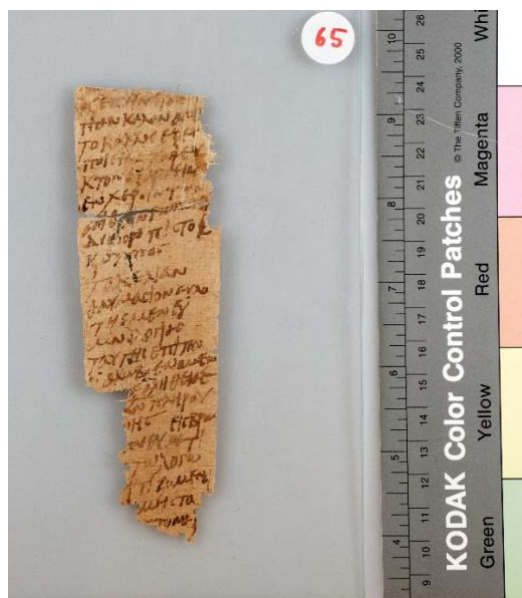


Fig. 18. P.Monts.Roca inv. 65 r.

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Fig. 19. P. PalauRib. inv. 225 r.

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