

## Foreword

The present volume resumes after ten years the publication of catalogues of Coptic manuscripts for the subseries XXI of the VOHD (*Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*)<sup>1</sup>. It contains the description of part of the manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, and in particular of the Sahidic manuscripts of homiletic and liturgical character from the famous White Monastery, of two documents from Thebes, and of two precious Old Nubian manuscripts<sup>2</sup>.

The catalogue is the result of the remarkable effort of Dr. Paola Buzi – at present Assistant Professor for Egyptology and Coptology at Sapienza University of Rome – who has accomplished her task from January 2010 to November 2011, partly as a half-time KOHD-employee in Hamburg, and partly on an external collaboration basis.

The result is all the more noteworthy since the manuscripts catalogued in this volume – a large part of which consists of leaves of dismembered codices – have necessarily required the adoption of the best-practice standard for this kind of documentation, as already applied in major catalogues of Coptic manuscripts, i.e. the description of each single codicological units (often corresponding to one single leaf), and, wherever possible, the virtual reconstruction of the original codices, in turn implying a time-wasting examination of Coptic manuscript collections from all over the world. Accordingly, particular care has been devoted to applying an extensive codicological description and to the possibly exhaustive listing of secondary literature, as required for a collection of historical importance as the one described in the volume.

- 1 The last catalogue published was that by Lothar Störk, *Koptische Handschriften, 4: Die Handschriften der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Teil 1: Liturgische Handschriften 1* (VOHD XXI, 4), Wiesbaden 2002.
- 2 Other Coptic manuscripts from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, are described in the forthcoming VOHD XXI, 5 (Teil 2) and VOHD XXI, 6 (Teil 3) volumes.

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The entertaining – as is necessarily required in present day research – of a fruitful scientific international network where several partners have featured – from Tito Orlandi (Rome - Hamburg)<sup>3</sup> to Enzo Lucchesi (Geneva), from Ugo Zanetti (Chevetogne) to Diliانا Atanassova (Salzburg), and others – is evidence itself of the respect the cataloguer has enjoyed while working, as well as of the intrinsic interest of this catalogue.

The scientific editing of the present VOHD-volume opens and at the same time concludes, for the moment at least, my participation in the KOHD-project (Katalogisierung der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland).

Hamburg, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Alessandro Bausi

3 Founder and director of the long-term running CMCL-project (Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari, to the implementation of the data bank of which Dr. Buzi has actively contributed for many years now), also based in Hamburg at the Hiob-Ludolf-Zentrum für Äthiopistik from 2011.