



## Aethiopica 15 (2012)

International Journal of Ethiopian and  
Eritrean Studies

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**Article**

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Aethiopica 15 (2012), 53–71

ISSN: 2194–4024

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Edited in the Asien-Afrika-Institut  
Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik  
der Universität Hamburg  
Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

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## A British Library Fragment from a Homily on the Lament of Mary and the So-Called Gospel of Gamaliel

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The fragmentary state in which most Coptic manuscripts have survived constitutes a major impediment in identifying them. This deplorable situation is especially true for the Sahidic fragments from the White Monastery, but unfortunately is not limited to them. The fragment I shall discuss here came from a Coptic monastery dedicated to Saint Mercurius, situated in Upper Egypt, near nowadays Edfu (Coptic ⲧⲃⲱ).

BL Or. 7027 is a Sahidic paper codex which was acquired by the British Museum in June 1909, together with other manuscripts from the antiquities dealer Maurice Nahman.<sup>1</sup> The manuscript was later transferred to the British Library, where it is kept today. This codex contains the *Life of Onnophrius*, by Paphnutius<sup>2</sup> and a *Homily on the Nativity* attributed to Demetrius of Antioch.<sup>3</sup> The colophon is dated Tobe 3, 721 Era of the Martyrs (= December 29, 1004) and informs us that the codex was copied in Esna by the scribe Victor for the Monastery of Saint Mercurius in Edfu.<sup>4</sup>

Two parchment fragments were used in order to strengthen the back part of the binding of the manuscript. During the conservation work, the fragments had been retrieved from the cover, inlaid in paper and bound together with the original codex as folios 74–75. While the first of the fragments has already been identified as belonging to the Sahidic version of the Epistle of James,<sup>5</sup> the identity of the second one has remained unknown until now.

The fragmentary text contains a discourse of the Virgin Mary, in which she blames Pilate (called “the Governor”) and the High Priest, because they

<sup>1</sup> Cf. LAYTON 1987: 192–193 (= no. 161).

<sup>2</sup> BUDGE 1914: 205–224 (Coptic text), 455–473 (English translation). The text edited by Budge was retranslated into English in VIVIAN 1993; cf. also CHAULEUR 1954: 3–15. The Ethiopic version of the Life of Onnophrius was published after the British Library manuscript Or. 763 in ESTEVES PEREIRA 1905. Other Ethiopic manuscripts are mentioned in MALEVEZ 2003: 226–227.

<sup>3</sup> BUDGE 1915: 74–119 (Coptic text), 652–698 (English translation); cf. also MODRAS 1994, who edited three different manuscripts of the text.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. by VAN LANTSCHOOT 1929: 211–213 (= no. 119).

<sup>5</sup> The fragment contains the text of James 2: 18–26; 3: 1–2, cf. LAYTON 1987: 56–57 (= no. 53); SCHMITZ 2003, no. 629; SCHÜSSLER 2009: 131 (= sa 661).

crucified Christ without a proper trial. Bentley Layton's catalogue of the Coptic manuscripts in the British Library calls the item an "Apocryphal fragment."<sup>6</sup> Actually, the text can be identified as part of a homily which is attributed in Arabic and Ethiopic to a certain Cyriacus, bishop of Behnesa (ancient Oxyrhynchus).<sup>7</sup> Although we know little about this author, the Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts transmitted eight homilies and an anaphora of Mary under his name.<sup>8</sup>

The homily to which the newly identified London fragment belongs is usually known as the Lament of Mary (CANT 74). This writing is fully preserved in Arabic and Ethiopic, and fragmentarily in Sahidic. The Arabic recension was published after two Garšūnī manuscripts by Alphonse Mingana in the second volume of his *Woodbrooke Studies*.<sup>9</sup> The Coptic text of BL Or. 7027, f. 75 corresponds precisely to pp. 192–193 of this edition. In 1959, Marcus-Antonius van den Oudenrijn published the Ethiopic version of the Lament of Mary.<sup>10</sup> It seems that the **ላከ ፡ ማርያም ፡** was translated from Arabic into Gəʿəz in the 14<sup>th</sup> century by Abba Sälama II.<sup>11</sup> The text is held in high-esteem by the Ethiopians, and is read as part of the so-called Acts of the Passion during the Holy Week.<sup>12</sup> Two Sahidic fragments in the National Library in Paris, namely BnF Copte 129<sup>17</sup>, ff. 37–38, were published almost simultaneously in 1904 by Pierre Lacau and Eugène Reville.<sup>13</sup> Their real identity was recognized only later by Mingana in the introduction to his edition of the Arabic text.<sup>14</sup>

The Lament of Mary is an apocryphal Passion narrative which has literary connections with other similar texts such as the Acts of Pilate, the Book of the Cock (**መጽሐፍ ፡ ዶርሆ ፡**), the Coptic Book of Bartholomew, the Martyrdom of Pilate, and some of the Sahidic homilies on the Passion attributed to Cyril of

<sup>6</sup> LAYTON 1987: 111–112 (= no. 100).

<sup>7</sup> On Cyriacus of Behnesa see COQUIN 1991: 669b–671a.

<sup>8</sup> On the list of works transmitted under Cyriacus' name, see COQUIN 1991: 670a–b; LANCHANTIN 2002: 145–146.

<sup>9</sup> MINGANA 1928: 163–240 (= reprint from the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 12 [1928]). Other Arabic manuscripts are mentioned in GRAF 1944: 248.

<sup>10</sup> VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959: 2–83 (Ethiopic text and German translation). The Coptic fragment in the British Library parallels pp. 26–27 in this edition. Other Ethiopic manuscripts of the Lament of Mary are mentioned in BAUSI 1989: 19. On the Ethiopic version, check also WENINGER 2007: 477a–b.

<sup>11</sup> VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959: xix–xx; cf. also VAN LANTSCHOOT 1960: 400.

<sup>12</sup> A version was printed in W.M.B. MÄSQÄL 1949–1950.

<sup>13</sup> LACAU 1904: 13–22; REVILLOUT 1904: 54–58.

<sup>14</sup> MINGANA 1928: 179–181; cf. also PIOVANELLI 2003: 435 n. 20.

Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup> The work narrates the events surrounding the Resurrection of Christ, interwoven with large fragments in which Virgin Mary is portrayed as stricken by grief, weeping over the death of her son.<sup>16</sup> She occupies a prominent place in the text, the Lament of the Virgin sharing with certain other Coptic writings the claim that the first witness of the resurrected Christ was not Mary Magdalene, but instead Mary the Mother.<sup>17</sup> The homily tends to absolve Pilate from the guilt of killing Jesus Christ, putting the whole responsibility on the Jews.<sup>18</sup> Convinced by the miracles that occurred during Crucifixion and Resurrection, Pilate confesses Jesus' divine nature and becomes his follower.

The Lament of Mary has affinities with the Martyrdom of Pilate (CANT 75), another work which survives in Arabic and Ethiopic under the name of Cyriacus of Behnesa.<sup>19</sup> The Martyrdom constitutes the continuation of the Lament of Mary, narrating the circumstances that ultimately lead to the death of Pilate and his family. Both stories were allegedly written by Gamaliel the Elder, and later retold by Cyriacus, who found them in books deposited in the library of Jerusalem.

Marcus-Antonius van den Oudenrijn was the one who decisively influenced the research on the two homilies of Cyriacus of Behnesa. According to the Dominican scholar, the main source of Cyriacus' homily on the lament of the Virgin was a lost Gospel of Gamaliel, written in Coptic around the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. In chapters I.1–V.1, Cyriacus melted the Gamaliel apocryphon within his homiletic discourse about the lamentations of the Virgin. On the other hand, chapters V.2–XI.50 represented simply a transcription of the Gospel of Gamaliel by Cyriacus of Behnesa.<sup>20</sup> This hypothesis was based on the fact that the narrator of the second part claims to be Rabbi Gamaliel himself.

<sup>15</sup> Notable in this regard are two homilies on the Passion by Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem: CPG 3598 = *clavis coptica* 0115 and CPG 3604 = *clavis coptica* 0113. The first of them is still unpublished, while the *editio princeps* of the latter has been prepared by Roelof van den Broek and will appear soon with Brill publishing house. See the preliminary report on this text in VAN DEN BROEK 1999: 101–108.

<sup>16</sup> The theme of the lament of Mary is common also among Greek authors, see STAROWIEYSKI 1994: 280–281.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g., BELLET 1954: 199–205; DEVOS 1978: 388; LUCCHESI 2007: 174–175. The episode of the encounter between Jesus and his mother near the empty tomb is analyzed in TEDROS ABRAHA – DANIEL ASSEFA 2010: 643–644.

<sup>18</sup> LUISIER 1996: 411–425; see also CERULLI 1975: 141–158; BEYLOT 1988: 181–195; COWLEY 1985: 20.

<sup>19</sup> Arabic version in GALTIER 1912; MINGANA 1928: 241–333; LANCHANTIN 2002: 166–199 (only translation into French); the Ethiopic version was published in VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959: 112–180; BEYLOT 1993. On the Ethiopic, cf. also BAUSI 1994: 26–27.

<sup>20</sup> VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959: xii–xxiv.

Van den Oudenrijn relied on the insights of other scholars before him. The first to postulate the existence of a Coptic Gospel of Gamaliel were Paulin Ladeuze and Anton Baumstark in two review articles which appeared simultaneously in 1906.<sup>21</sup> Analyzing the Sahidic fragments published by Pierre Lacau and Eugène Revillout, the latter under the fallacious title the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*,<sup>22</sup> Ladeuze and Baumstark thought they identified some of them as parts of a mysterious Gospel of Gamaliel. This title is not attested by the ancient sources, but the two scholars coined it, independently from each other, because in one of the fragments the narrator referred to himself as “I, Gamaliel”. As we shall see later in this study, the fragment in question is actually part of the Lament of Mary. None of them proposed a very early dating of the apocryphal gospel, since they remarked that the texts published by Revillout and Lacau drew heavily on the canonical gospels, especially on John. Nevertheless, van den Oudenrijn saw in the Lament of Mary a confirmation that a Gospel of Gamaliel once existed in Coptic, as Ladeuze and Baumstark believed.

Van den Oudenrijn’s theory soon attracted the attention of scholars and mass-media. In June 1956 the *Catholic Herald* published a brief note about the sensational discovery of the “Gamaliel fragments” on the first page.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, *Le Figaro littéraire* announced in April 1957 “un inédit sensationnel: le témoignage de Gamaliel, contemporaine du Christ”.<sup>24</sup> The latter publication contained the translation of the Gəʿəz version of the Lament of Mary into French. Other similar articles appeared during the year 1956 in the *Sunday Times* and *Die Furche*.<sup>25</sup>

At this point, someone might ask to which text belongs the London fragment presented here, to the homily on the lament of Mary or, rather, to the Gospel of Gamaliel? The answer to this question necessitates an evaluation of the Coptic fragments ascribed in the past to the Gamaliel text. As we shall try to point out, although the hypothesis concerning the existence of such a text was sometimes accepted without hesitation in scholarly literature,<sup>26</sup> the documentation speaks against it. Thus, a survey of the fragments

<sup>21</sup> LADEUZE 1906: 245–268 (reviews both LACAU and REVILLOUT cit. supra n. 13); BAUMSTARK 1906: 245–265 (review of REVILLOUT 1904).

<sup>22</sup> See n. 13 supra. Some of the fragments published by Revillout were edited without translation by LACAU 1904.

<sup>23</sup> “Witnesses of the Passion: The Gamaliel Fragments”, *Catholic Herald* June 8, 1956.

<sup>24</sup> “Ce qui arriva après la mort de Jésus,” *Le Figaro littéraire* April 13, 1957.

<sup>25</sup> These two references were signaled by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT 1966: 378–385 in his review of van den Oudenrijn’s book.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Schneemelcher and de Santos Otero’s remarks in SCHNEEMELCHER 1991: 559–560. The same positive attitude towards van den Oudenrijn’s theory can be found in different collections of apocryphal writings, see e.g., MORALDI 1971: 655–682; ERBETTA 1981: 344–366; ELLIOTT 2005: 159–160; HORN 2010: 602–604.

mentioned by Ladeuze and Baumstark as belonging to this apocryphal gospel indicates either that they must be identified with other texts, or that they do not concern Gamaliel.

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For his part, Ladeuze believed that the following fragments published by Revillout are traceable to “un nouvel apocryphe copte, celui de Gamaliel”:<sup>27</sup> nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 14, 15, 16. The first of these is the fragment Paris BnF 129<sup>18</sup>, f. 154, which mentions a visit made by Herod to the emperor Tiberius. However, this fragment had been correctly identified later by Karl Heinz Kuhn as part of a panegyric on John the Baptist attributed to Theodosius of Alexandria (CPG 7151; *clavis coptica* 0386).<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Revillout’s nos. 2 and 4 cannot belong to the Gospel of Gamaliel since they form two large portions from a homily on the apostles, presumably attributed to Evodius of Rome (CANT 81; *clavis coptica* 0150).<sup>29</sup> Far from being apocryphal, the text of no. 13 (= Paris 129<sup>18</sup>, f. 156) represents a Coptic translation of the Patristic homily *In sanctum apostolum Thomam* 10.33–11.38 (CPG 5832) by Proclus of Constantinople:<sup>30</sup> *incipit* ΜῆΝαμελος τηρου ετρεκετρωου (= πάντα μου τὰ μέλη προς ἔρευναν), *desinit* χωε επασωμα ενταχωπιρισε κατα παουωω χωε επασωμα νταχομου [...] (= ἄψαι τοῦ σώματός μου τοῦ παθόντος κατὰ γνώμη ἐμήν, ἄψαι τοῦ σώματός μου τοῦ νεκρωθέντος). As for no. 14 (= Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 20), this fragment comes from an unpublished homily on the Passion of Christ attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (CPG 3598; *clavis coptica* 0114), which is preserved in several Sahidic manuscripts. The fragment published by Revillout parallels the complete version of this sermon in the Pierpont Morgan codex M 595, f. 25r col. 1, line 32–25v col. 2, line 33:<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> LADEUZE 1906: 247.

<sup>28</sup> Published in REVILLOUT 1904: 131–132. See the doubts that this fragment would belong to an apocryphal gospel expressed already by DE VIS 1922: 6–11 (with a new edition of the fragment); identified in KUHN 1963: 60; cf. the other bibliographical details concerning this item in *Idem*, n. 29. Published in KUHN 1966, 1: 46–47 (Coptic text), 2: 39–40 (English translation). See also LUCCHESI 1997: 167 n. 1.

<sup>29</sup> REVILLOUT 1904: 132–149, 151–155. On the reconstruction of this text, see LUCCHESI 1997; for a recent translation, see MORARD 2005: 103–134. A new fragment of this writing was bought by the Turin based antiques dealers Bolaffi from Sotheby’s in July 2009; it was identified independently by Enzo LUCCHESI (2011: 383–384) and by myself in an article published on my blog ([www.alinsuciu.com](http://www.alinsuciu.com)) on April 19, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> REVILLOUT 1904: 168–169. Identified in LUCCHESI 1981: 51; for the Greek text of Proclus’ sermon, see LEROY 1967: 237–251. An Ethiopic fragment of this text was published in WEISCHER 1979: 118–120.

<sup>31</sup> Description of the manuscript in DEPUYDT 1993: 345–350 (= no. 170); HYVERNAT 1919: 15–16 (= no. 39).

Paris 129 <sup>17</sup> , f. 20	Pierpont Morgan M 595, f. 25
Recto: [νεξιόμε γαρ ἡ]πείκαζ ἡταγναγ επμογ ἡνεγψηρε· εγφανβωκ εβολ επ- ταφος ἡσεναγ επσωμα ἡνεταγριμε εροογ φαρεογσολσελ ἡνογπαρμηθια ψωπε ναγ <i>etc.</i>	Recto: νεξιόμε γαρ τηρογ ἡταγναγ επ- μογ ἡνεγψηρε· εγφανβωκ εβολ επταφος ἡσεναγ επσωμα ἡπετογριμε ερογ φαγζε εγσολσελ ἡ ἡτεογπαρμηθια ψωπε ναγ <i>etc.</i>
Verso: [...] κατὰ πωαζε ἡταιχοογ ηητῆ αμηιτῆ ετγαλιαλια τετῆναγ εροι· βεπη ἡμωτῆ γε ἡἡβωμ ἡμοι ετῆβωκ εβραι ετπε φαπαειωτ ειτῆαπαντα ερωτῆ νετῆαγπερισε ἡἡμαι ζιχῆπκαζ [...]	Verso: κατὰ θεε ἡταιχοος ηητῆ ταχη αμηιτῆ ετγαλιαλια τετῆναγ εροι βῆπμα ετῆμαγ· βεπη ἡμωτῆ ἡἡβωμ ετραβωκ ετπε φαπαειωτ ειτῆαπαντα ερωτῆ ἡψο- ρῆ· ἡτωτῆ νετῆαγῶπισε ἡἡμαι ζιχῆπκαζ

Other vestiges of the codex to which Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 20 originally belonged can be recovered in different collections of Coptic manuscripts. They include:

- pp. [1]–[2] Paris 131<sup>5</sup>, f. 125 – Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, *On the Passion* (= M 595, f. 1r col. 1, line 1–v col. 2, line 3)
- pp. [15]–[16] Paris 129<sup>13</sup>, f. 67 – Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, *On the Passion* (= M 595, ff. 7v col. 2, line 24–8v col. 2, line 15)
- pp. ?–? Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 20 – see supra
- pp. [55]–[56] London BL Or. 3581A, f. 146 – Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, *On the Passion* (= M 595, f. 27r col. 1, line 14–27v *ad finem*)
- pp. [57]–[58] Paris 131<sup>5</sup>, f. 109 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 79, 1–80, 4)<sup>32</sup>
- pp. 61–62 Paris 131<sup>7</sup>, f. 41 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 81, 14–82, 16)
- pp. 65–66 London BL Or. 3581A, f. 173 + Paris 131<sup>8</sup>, f. 111 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 83, 23–84, 21)
- pp. [81]–[82] Bolaffi frag. 5<sup>33</sup> – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 91, 28–92, 32)
- pp. [89]–[90] Paris 131<sup>6</sup>, f. 36 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 95, 36–97, 2)
- pp. 91–92 Michigan 158.36 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 97, 2–98, 8)
- pp. 103–104 Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 65 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 103, 11–104, 12)
- pp. [105]–[106] Paris 129<sup>18</sup>, f. 164 – Ps.-Evodius, *On the Passion* (= DEPUYDT 1993: 104, 12–105, 8)
- pp. ?–? Vienna K 9122 – unidentified sermon on the Passion
- pp. 129–130 Paris 131<sup>5</sup>, f. 51 – unidentified sermon on the Passion<sup>34</sup>
- pp. ?–? Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 42 – unidentified sermon on the Passion
- pp. ?–? London BL Or. 3581A, f. 174 – unidentified sermon on the Passion
- pp. ?–? Paris 131<sup>7</sup>, f. 22 – unidentified sermon on the Passion
- pp. ?–? Vienna K 9779 – unidentified sermon on the Passion

<sup>32</sup>The references to Ps.-Evodius sermon on the Passion are given according to the page and line number in DEPUYDT 1991: 79–106.

<sup>33</sup>This is one of the fragments sold by Sotheby's to Bolaffi in July 2009, cf. supra n. 29.

<sup>34</sup>Enzo Lucchesi has remarked in one of his articles that this fragment parallels another one in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York; see LUCCHESI 1998: 107 n. 1.



It becomes apparent that Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem sermon on the Passion was followed in this dismembered manuscript by two other texts on the same topic, one by Ps.-Evodius and another one which I have not yet been able to identify.

No. 15 consists of two parchment fragments paginated 53–54 and 59–60. They have already been mentioned above to demonstrate precise parallels of some portions from the Lament of Mary.<sup>35</sup> Under no. 16, Revillout edited six folios from the National Library in Paris (129<sup>17</sup>, ff. 21–25, 67), which concern the burial of the Virgin and her resurrection by Christ.<sup>36</sup> It has been recognized that the fragments considered belong to a homily on Mary attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the only remaining unidentified item in Ladeuze's list is Revillout no. 5 (= Paris 132<sup>1</sup>, f. 25, paginated 51–52). However, the text of this fragment discusses the betrayal of Judas and does not concern Gamaliel. For further attempts of identification, it is perhaps useful to remark that a leaf from the Austrian National Library in Vienna (i.e. K 9796, paginated 43–44) belonged to the same codex.<sup>38</sup>

According to Baumstark, the apocryphal Gospel of Gamaliel can be reconstructed from Revillout's fragments nos. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.<sup>39</sup> The German scholar added to the material edited by Revillout one supplementary fragment in the British Library, which was published by Forbes Robinson in 1896.<sup>40</sup> Above I have already discussed the identity of nos. 1, 2, 4, 13, 14, 15. Revillout no. 10 (= Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 52), should be identified as another leaf from the homily of Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem on the Passion. The parallel text can be found in the Pierpont Morgan manuscript M 595, ff. 13v col. 1, line 31–14v col. 1, line 3. Under no. 12 (= Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, ff. 51, 60) of his *Gospel of the Twelve*, Revillout has actually edited two fragments from the

<sup>35</sup> REVILLOUT 1904: 170–174. Fragment 1: parallel text in MINGANA 1928: 204–205; fragment 2: 207–208; VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959: 58–61, 67–69. The similarity between these two Coptic fragments and a fragmentary Ethiopic manuscript of the Lament of Mary was signaled in JAMES 1905: 578–580, but at that time James was not aware that the Ethiopic text is from Cyriacus' homily. The Ethiopic fragments were previously published by James in *Newbery House Magazine* 7, 1892, pp. 641–646 and studied a couple of years after in CLEMEN 1894: 757–768. They were identified only later in HAASE 1913: 20–22.

<sup>36</sup> REVILLOUT 1904: 174–183.

<sup>37</sup> On the reconstruction of the codex to which belonged the folios published by Revillout, i.e. MONB.DL, see LOUIS n.d.: 403–406 (= no. 90).

<sup>38</sup> In the same scribe's hand are also seven folios from the Vatican Library (Borgia 109, cassetta 29, fasc. 167). The pagination of the Vatican leaves is lost but in his catalogue Georg Zoega gives the following page numbers as certain: 15–18, 31–32, 35–40. The fragments were published in ZOEGER 1810: 283–287 (= no. 167) [repr. Hildesheim – New York: Georg Olms, 1973].

<sup>39</sup> BAUMSTARK 1906, review of REVILLOUT 1904.

<sup>40</sup> ROBINSON 1896: 164–167. Description in CRUM 1905: 133 (= no. 302).



so-called Book of Bartholomew (CANT 80; *clavis coptica* 0027).<sup>41</sup> The London fragment (= BL Or. 3581B, f. 19) edited by Forbes Robinson concerns the miracle at the wedding in Cana. The text is actually part of the “long version” of the sermon on the Virgin attributed to Evodius of Rome (CANT 133).<sup>42</sup> This fragment is codicologically related to five other leaves in the Clarendon Press, Oxford (= B3, ff. 5–8), which were also published by Robinson together with their parallel to the Bohairic version of Ps.-Evodius’ sermon on the Virgin.<sup>43</sup> Surprisingly, Robinson did not remark the paleographical similarity between the fragments he edited.<sup>44</sup> Again only one unidentified item remains, i.e. no. 11 (= Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 42), but this fragment concerns the trial of Jesus and Gamaliel and does not appear in the text. As I have showed above, the fragment comes from an unidentified sermon on the Passion and it belonged to the same manuscript as Revillout’s no. 14 (= Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 20). Paris 129<sup>17</sup>, f. 42 was followed in the codex by London BL Or. 3581A, f. 174, the two folios giving a continuous text.

Here is a synopsis of the fragments which Ladeuze and Baumstark thought to belong to the Gospel of Gamaliel and their true identity:

Ladeuze	Baumstark	Text
Revillout 1	Revillout 1	Ps.-Theodosius, <i>On John the Baptist</i>
Revillout 2	Revillout 2	Ps.-Evodius, <i>On the Apostles</i>
Revillout 4	Revillout 4	Ps.-Evodius, <i>On the Apostles</i>
Revillout 5		?
	Revillout 10	Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, <i>On the Passion</i>
	Revillout 11	?
	Revillout 12	<i>Book of Bartholomew</i>
Revillout 13	Revillout 13	Proclus, <i>On the Apostle Thomas</i>
Revillout 14	Revillout 14	Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, <i>On the Passion</i>
Revillout 15	Revillout 15	Cyriacus of Behnesa, <i>Lament of Mary</i>
Revillout 16		Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem, <i>Homily on the Virgin</i>
	Forbes Robinson, 164–167	Ps.-Evodius, <i>Sermon on the Virgin</i>

<sup>41</sup> As the Coptic Bartholomew apocryphon survived only in acephalous manuscripts, the title of the work remained mysterious for a long time. Only recently Enzo Lucchesi found one of the manuscripts’ title page. In this manuscript, the text is introduced as “a book (τόμος) of Bartholomew”, see LUCCHESI 2011: 389–395.

<sup>42</sup> The fragment corresponds, grosso modo, to the text published by SHOEMAKER 1999: 264. The differences between the texts can be explained by the fact that they belong to two different recensions of Ps.-Evodius sermon on the Virgin. On the different recensions of Evodius’ homily, see SHERIDAN 2004: 393–405.

<sup>43</sup> ROBINSON 1896: xxv (description), 70–87 (Coptic text and English translation).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. SUCIU 2011: 311–312 and n. 53.

The theory of Ladeuze and Baumstark concerning the Gospel of Gamaliel was soon appropriated by Felix Haase<sup>45</sup> and Montague Rhodes James,<sup>46</sup> but without any other important addition.

Van den Oudenrijn quoted Revillout's nos. 14 and 15 as being parallel to the Ethiopic text of the Lament of Mary. However, as I have noted above, no. 14 has a precise parallel in Pierpont Morgan codex M 595 and its correct identification should be with the homily of Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem on the Passion of Christ.

According to the Dutch scholar, the Coptic Gospel of Gamaliel was incorporated by Cyriacus in his Arabic homilies on the lament of the Virgin and the martyrdom of Pilate. Robert Beylot has already expressed his doubts that the two sermons should deserve the name "Gospel of Gamaliel", which was attributed to them by van den Oudenrijn.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, as we have seen, van den Oudenrijn's hypothesis that Cyriacus was "plagiarizing" the Coptic Gospel of Gamaliel is not supported by the sources which he thought he discovered in Revillout's publication. It is true, in the second part of the Lament of Mary, which is placed in the aftermath of the Crucifixion, Gamaliel speaks in the first person singular, and at the end of the text the homilist claims to be just a transcriber of a book written by Rabbi Gamaliel and deposited in the library of Jerusalem. However, this does not necessarily prove that Cyriacus used a Book of Gamaliel, in Coptic, or any other language.

Rather, this technique of gaining prestige and a venerable authority for someone's writing is well documented in Coptic literature. As Father Philippe Luisier has showed, the Lament of the Virgin can be included in a category of Coptic homilies which are allegedly first-hand testimonies of the apostolic times, being written by eye-witnesses.<sup>48</sup> Joost Hagen has called these texts "apostolic diaries",<sup>49</sup> a formula which is perhaps a bit too narrow given that some of them are put under the name of the disciples. Thus, in Coptic different writings have survived that were ascribed either to specific

<sup>45</sup> HAASE 1913: 11–22.

<sup>46</sup> JAMES, M. R. 1924: 152. James built upon Baumstark's list of fragments and included in the Gospel of Gamaliel Revillout's nos. 5, 10, 11, 15.

<sup>47</sup> BEYLOT 1993: 617: "Il a eu toutefois la main malheureuse en qualifiant ces textes d'Évangile de Gamaliel, à la suite de P. Ladeuze et A. Baumstark".

<sup>48</sup> LUISIER 1996: 412–413.

<sup>49</sup> HAGEN, J. 2004: 349–367; 2010: 339–371. See Tito Orlandi's insights on the theme of the books attributed to the disciples of Christ (ORLANDI 1983: 70–71). These writings (about two dozen) are preserved in Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic (the Arabic versions depend on Coptic originals, which are sometimes lost or not yet identified, while the Ethiopic versions come in their turn from Coptic via Arabic).

apostles and disciples like Peter,<sup>50</sup> Bartholomew,<sup>51</sup> James the brother of the Lord,<sup>52</sup> Stephen the Protomartyr,<sup>53</sup> Evodius,<sup>54</sup> or to the apostles as a group.<sup>55</sup> Usually, after completion, the book is deposited by the disciples in the library of Jerusalem. In some of these literary “forgeries”, the old writing is discovered by one of the Fathers of the Coptic Church, who copies it and includes his transcription in a homily.<sup>56</sup> The Lament of the Virgin falls into this category of texts, as a book allegedly written by Christ’s disciple, Gamaliel, and transcribed by Cyriacus of Behnesa.

I shall conclude that the newly identified fragment belongs to the homily on the lament of Mary and not to the apocryphal Gospel of Gamaliel. However, given that the Sahidic manuscripts of this text are fragmentary, it is impossible to argue decisively in the current state of documentation that

<sup>50</sup>Two books are ascribed to Peter: one that claims to be integrated in a sermon on the Virgin attributed to Theodosius of Alexandria (BHO 671; CPG 7153; CANT 135; *clavis coptica* 0385) preserved in Bohairic (ed. by CHAÎNE 1933–1934: 272–314) and another that is to be found in a homily on the Passion by Ps.-Cyril of Jerusalem (CPG 3604; *clavis coptica* 0113).

<sup>51</sup>The Coptic Book of Bartholomew (CANT 80) was edited several times; see BUDGE 1913: 1–48 (Coptic text) 179–215 (English translation); CHERIX – KAESTLI 1993; WESTERHOFF 1999. A good bibliographical survey of the research and editions can be found in GARDNER 2008:19–28.

<sup>52</sup>A Book of James is part of a sermon on John the Baptist attributed to John Chrysostom (*clavis coptica* 0170). See BUDGE 1913: 128–145 (Coptic text), 335–351 (English translation). Some Paris fragments of this sermon were published in WINSTEDT 1907: 240–248.

<sup>53</sup>The so-called Book of the Enthronement of the Archangel Gabriel (*clavis coptica* 0378) is ascribed to Stephen the Protomartyr, see MÜLLER 1962, 1: 61–82 (Coptic text), 2: 74–100 (German translation).

<sup>54</sup>There are several books attributed to Evodius, who traditionally was the disciple of Peter and his immediate successor as bishop of Antioch. It is interesting that the Coptic sources usually call him “Evodius, the archbishop of Rome,” perhaps because he is connected to Peter. For the writings attributed to Evodius, see ORLANDI 1991: 1078b–1079b. These are: On the Passion (*clavis coptica* 0149), On the apostles (CANT 81; *clavis coptica* 0149; cf. LUCCHESI 1997) and On the Virgin (BHO 666–667; CANT 133–134; *clavis coptica* 0151).

<sup>55</sup>E.g., the History of Joseph the Carpenter (BHO 532–533; CANT 60; *clavis coptica* 0037); the Stauros-text of the Kasr-el Wizz codex (HUBAI 2009).

<sup>56</sup>See, e.g., Ps.-Chrysostom, On the Four Bodiless Beasts (CPG 5150.9; *clavis coptica* 0177; DEPUYDT 1991, 1: 27–46 [Coptic text], 2: 27–47 [English translation]); Ps.-Chrysostom, On John the Baptist (cf. supra n. 41); Ps.-Timothy of Alexandria, On the Enthronement of Abbaton (CPG 2530; *clavis coptica* 0405; BUDGE 1914: 225–249 [Coptic text], 474–496 [English translation]); Ps.-Theodosius of Alexandria, On the Virgin (cf. supra n. 39); Ps.-Basil of Caesarea, In dedicationem Ecclesiae Mariae Verginis (CPG 2970; *clavis coptica* 0073; CHAÎNE 1922–1923: 149–159, 271–302).

the Lament of Mary circulated under the name of Cyriacus of Behnesa in Coptic, as it did in Arabic and Ethiopic. This author has not left any trace in Coptic literature that would allow us to place him chronologically.<sup>57</sup> It has already been suggested that the mysterious figure of Cyriacus of Behnesa is hiding in fact behind Judas Cyriacus, the legendary bishop of Jerusalem who was martyred under Julian the Apostate.<sup>58</sup>

Be that as it may, if a Gospel of Gamaliel did ever exist, it has not yet been attested, at least in Coptic. What we have in this language are fragments from the Lament of Mary, which in Ethiopic and Arabic survived under the name of Cyriacus, bishop of Behnesa. This is documented by the two folios edited by Revillout (= no. 15), as well as by the new fragment in the British Library, that is, Or. 7027, f. 75.

\*

The parchment fragment of the Lament of Mary edited here is 19 cm in length and 17 cm in width, being written on a single column in the bimodular script. The writing is still legible, although the reading on the verso, which is the flesh side of the skin, is sometimes difficult. The folio preserves the page numbers 29–30 in the upper outer corners as it was originally bound. In the upper right corner of the verso there are still visible traces of what must have been the decoration of the second quire's signature. This means that page 30 used to be the last of the second quire, a detail suggesting that the first leaf of the codex contained perhaps a drawing, since the scribe left it without pagination.

Logically, the date supplied in the colophon indicates that the fragment must have been copied before 1004 A.D. We do not know, however, after how much time the parchment codex, to which it originally belonged, was considered rubbish and was used by the scribe Victor in order to strengthen the binding of his newly copied codex. The paleographical evidence, as relative as it is, suggests that the fragment is not much older, perhaps datable to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. However, as the Coptic paleography is still rather rudimentary, this is hardly anything more than a guess. Although the original source of the fragment is unknown, its resemblance to other codices copied in Esna might indicate that it comes from the same *scriptorium*.

A partial transcription of the fragment was published by Budge, while Bentley Layton translated some sentences into English.<sup>59</sup> The present edi-

<sup>57</sup> Cf. the sources and hypotheses mentioned in HAMMERSCHMIDT 1966: 379–380, review of VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1959; COQUIN 1991: 669b–670a; LANCHANTIN 2002: 138–140.

<sup>58</sup> LUISIER 1996: 411–412.

<sup>59</sup> BUDGE 1915: 111.

tion is the first complete one, based on my own collation of the manuscript in the British Library in August 2010.

It is equally interesting to notice that the collection of the University Library in Strasbourg keeps, under the call number “Copte 530”, a Sahidic parchment fragment with a series of lamentations of Mary which resemble a section in Mingana 1928: 196 (= van den Oudenrijn 1959: 37). However, as the Sahidic text does not precisely follow neither the Arabic, nor the Ethiopic, I chose not to edit it here, although the Strasbourg fragment may possibly belong to a slightly different recension of the Lament of Mary.

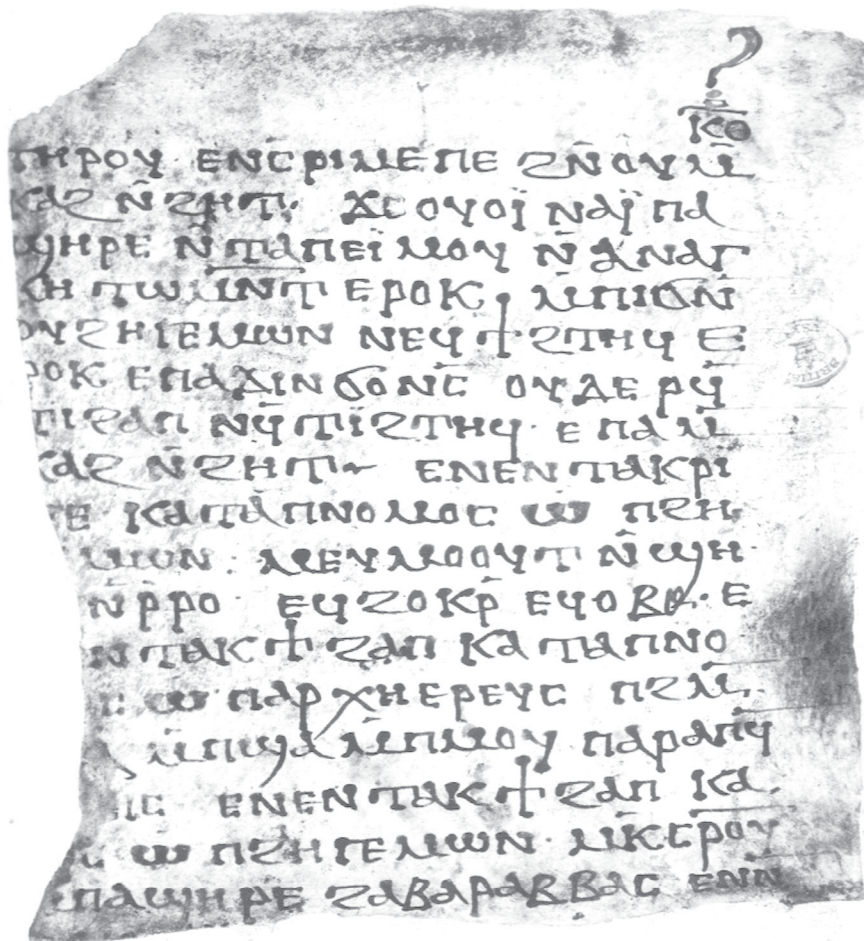


Fig. 1: Coptic manuscript BL Or. 7027, f. 75r: Lament of the Virgin



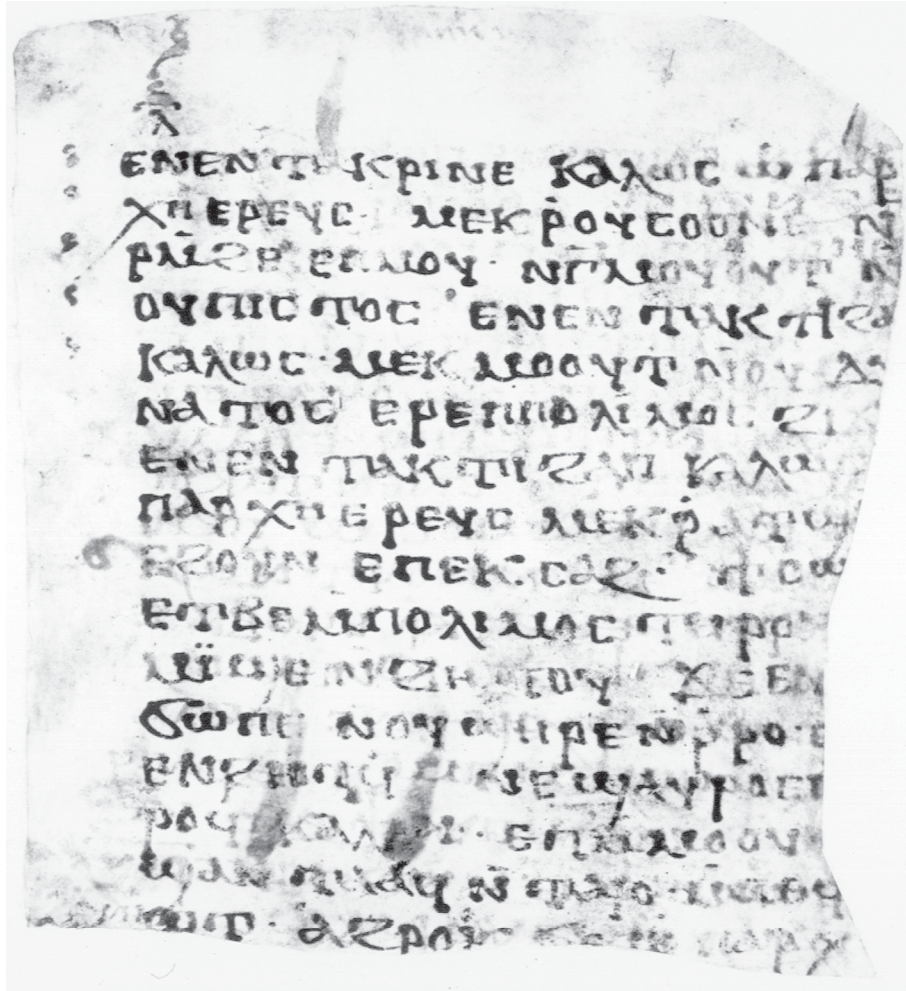


Fig. 2: Coptic manuscript BL Or. 7027, f. 75v: Lament of the Virgin

MS BL Or. 7027, f. 75 (= Layton no. 100)

Recto (Hair side):

κ̄θ̄

ΤΗΡΟΥ· ΕΝ̄CΡΙΜΕ ΠΕ Ζ̄ΝΟῩΜ̄  
 ΚΑΖ Ν̄ΖΗΤ· ΧΕ ΟΥΟῙ ΝΑΪ ΠΑ  
 ΩΗΡΕ Ν̄ΤΑΠΕΪΜΟῩ Ν̄ΑΝΑΓ  
 ΚΗ ΤΩΜ̄Ν̄Τ̄ ΕΡΟΚ Μ̄ΠΙ6Ν̄  
 5 ΟΥΖΗΓΕΜΩΝ ΝΕϣ†ΖΤΗϣ Ε  
 ΡΟΚ ΕΠΑΧΙΝ6ΟΝC̄ ΟΥΔΕ <ΟΥ>Ρ̄ϣ̄  
 †ΖΑΠ Ν̄ϣ̄Τ̄ῙΖΤΗϣ· ΕΠΑΜ̄  
 ΚΑΖ Ν̄ΖΗΤ ΕΝΕΝΤΑ<Κ>ΚΡ̄Ι  
 ΝΕ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΝΟΜΟΣ Ω̄ ΠΖΗ  
 10 [Γ]ΕΜΩΝ· ΜΕΥΜΟΟΥΤ ΝΩΗ  
 [ΡΕ] Ν̄ΡΡΟ· ΕϣΖΟΚ̄Ρ̄ ΕϣΟΒΕ Ε  
 [ΝΕ]ΝΤΑΚ†ΖΑΠ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΝΟ  
 [Μ]ΟC̄ Ω̄ ΠΑΡΧΗΕΡΕΥC̄ ΠΖΜ̄  
 [ΖΑ]Λ̄ Μ̄ΠΩΑ Μ̄ΠΜΟῩ ΠΑΡΑΠ̄ϣ̄  
 15 [ΧΟ]ΕΙC̄· ΕΝΕΝΤΑΚ†ΖΑΠ ΚΑ  
 [Λ]ΩC̄ Ω̄ ΠΖΗΓΕΜΩΝ· Μ̄ΚC̄Ρ̄Ο̄Ῡ  
 Μ̄ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΖΑΒΑΡΑΒΒΑC̄ ΕΝ̄Ν̄  
 [ ]

5–6 ΕΡΟΚ] *lege* ΕΡΟϣ

Verso (Flesh side):

λ̄

ΕΝΕΝΤΑ<Κ>ΚΡΙΝΕ ΚΑΛΩC̄ Ω̄ ΠΑΡ  
 ΧΗΕΡΕΥC̄· ΜΕΚ̄Ρ̄ΟΥC̄ΟΟΝΕ Ν̄  
 ΡΜ̄ΖΕ ΕΠΜΟῩ· Ν̄Γ̄ΜΟΥΟΥΤ Ν̄  
 ΟΥΠΙCΤΟC̄ ΕΝΕΝΤΑΚΤΙΖΑ[Π]  
 5 ΚΑΛΩC̄· ΜΕΚΜΟΟΥΤ Ν̄ΟΥΔΥ  
 ΝΑΤΟC̄ ΕΡΕΠΠΟΛΙΜΟC̄ ΖΙΧ[ΩΚ]  
 ΕΝΕΝΤΑΚΤΙΖΑΠ ΚΑΛΩC̄ [Ω̄]  
 ΠΑΡΧΗΕΡΕΥC̄ ΜΕΚ̄Ρ̄ΑΤΩ[ΙΠΕ]  
 ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΠΕΚCΑΖ· †C̄Ω[Τ̄Μ̄]  
 10 ΕΤΒΕ Μ̄ΠΟΛΙΜΟC̄ ΤΗΡΟΥ [ΕΥ]  
 ΜΙΩΕ Ν̄ΖΗΤΟΥ ΧΕ ΕΝ[ΕΥ]  
 ΩΠΕ Ν̄ΟΥΩΗΡΕ Ν̄Ρ̄ΡΟ· Ε[ϣ]  
 ΕΝΖΗΤ̄ϣ̄ ΝΕΩΑΥΡΟΕΙ[C̄ Ε]  
 ΡΟϣ ΚΑΛΟϢ· ΕΤ̄Μ̄ΜΟΟΥ[Τ̄ϣ̄]  
 15 ΩΔΑΝΤΑΔϣ Ν̄ΤΑΙΟ Μ̄ΠΕϣ[ΕΙ]  
 ΩΤ· ΑΖΡΟΚ ϣ̄ϣ̄ Ω̄ ΠΑΡΧ[Η]  
 [ΕΡΕΥC̄ ]  
 [ ]

15 *lege* ΩΑΥ-



**Translation:**

(p. 29) [...] all. She was crying with grief: “Woe to me, my son, that this violent (ἀνάγκη) death has befallen on you. I have not found a governor (ἡγεμών) to pay heed to my injustice, nor (οὐδέ) a judge to pay heed to my grief. Had you judged (κρίνειν) according to (κατά) the law (νόμος), O governor (ἡγεμών), they would not have killed a kingly son while hungry (and) thirsty. Had you judged according to (κατά) the law (νόμος), O high-priest (ἀρχιερεὺς), the slave would have deserved death instead (παρὰ) of his Lord. Had you judged well (καλῶς), O governor (ἡγεμών), you would not have crucified (σταυροῦν) my son instead of Barabbas. Had [...] (p. 30) Had you judged (κρίνειν) well (καλῶς), O high-priest (ἀρχιερεὺς), you would not have released a thief from death to kill a faithful one (πιστός). Had you judged well (καλῶς), you would not have killed a strong one (δυνατός) while the war (πόλεμος) is upon [you]. Had you judged well (καλῶς), [O] high-priest (ἀρχιερεὺς), you would not have been [shame]less towards your Teacher. I hear about all wars (πόλεμος) [that are] fought that if a king’s son who is in (the war) is seized, he is well (καλῶς) guarded so as not to be killed until he is made gift to his father. Then why, O high-[priest] (ἀρχιερεὺς) [...]”

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Summary

The article introduces British Library Or. 7027, f. 75, a previously unidentified fragment from the Sahidic version of a homily on the Lament of Mary, which is attributed in Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts to the mysterious figure of Cyriacus, bishop of Behnesa. As parts of this text had been ascribed by some scholars to the so-called Coptic Gospel of Gamaliel, our paper reevaluates the *dossier*, pointing out that this apocryphon is just an imaginary text, which never existed in Coptic.