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1200 Years of Materialities and Editions of a Forbidden Text

Before starting my investigation on the materialities of a forbidden text, I would like to introduce briefly its nature and then to analyse both sources and features of one of the most famous forbidden texts.

A 'forbidden' text, in this case forbidden by the Fathers of the Church, is a text whose reading appeared to be extremely dangerous for the salvation of the soul, and whose contents disagree with the dogma.[1] The contrary of a forbidden text is the canonical text, which is still read during the liturgy (i. e. it agrees with the dogma) and whose author was eyewitness of Jesus, i. e. either one of the same Apostles or one of their direct followers.[2]

Since the 2nd century, the Church has evidenced a clear line of demarcation between what was allowed by the dogma, and what was felt as fallacious. For that reason, the Fathers of the Church developed and updated constantly several catalogues of the forbidden texts.[3] The best known of those catalogues is the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, authorised for the first time in 1558 by Pope Paul IV, and abolished in 1966 by Pope Paul VI.[4]

However, Christians drew several lines of demarcation between accepted 'good texts' (the so-called canonical) and forbitten 'bad texts' (the so-called *apocrypha*) during the first times of the current era. An investigation of the influence of those lines of demarcation on the transmission of one of those 'bad texts' is the aim of the present study, which will analyse both its materialities and its textual history. The object of

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1 Cavallo 2002, 200–201; Metzger 1988, 201–207; Wikenhauser/Schmid 1981, 69–72.

2 Metzger 1988, 199–201. 251–254.

3 Metzger 1988, 210.

4 http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19660
614_de–indicis–libr–prohib_it.html (last accessed: 05.12.2016).

the present study is the *Shepherd* of Hermas from Rome, a masterpiece of the early Christian literature.

Hermas lived in Italy during the first half of the 2nd century; even though he did not communicate his place of birth, scholars agree that he was born in Rome.[5] The only significant exceptions are E. Peterson and G. M. Hahneman, who suggested Palestine as Hermas' place of birth,[6] and the *Liber Pontificalis* as well as the *Muratorian Fragment*, which both identified him as *frater* of Pope Pius I (140–155), born in Aquileia (in northern Italy) according to the *Liber*.[7] Moreover, the *Muratorian Fragment* indicated a composition of the *Shepherd* in the first half of the 2nd century AD:[8]

> *Pastorem vero, nuperrime temporibus nostris, in urbe Roma Hermas conscripsit sedente cathedra urbis Romae ecclesiae Pio episcopo fratre eius.*

> But Hermas wrote The Shepherd most recently in our time, in the city of Rome, while bishop Pius, his brother, was occupying the chair of the church of the city of Rome.
> (*Canon Muratori*, 44)

The *Shepherd* is a visionary and apocalyptical text written in Greek; it delves with chastity, repentance and *timor domini* before world's end.[9] Even though those themes are not abnormal or unusual, the same *Muratorian Fragment* as better explained below forbade the reading of the *Shepherd* already since the end of the 2nd century.
Before investigating the materialities of the *Shepherd* of Hermas, I will introduce briefly its content(s) and the history of its bans.

Two different originally autonomous works constitute the *Shepherd*, and each of them has its own theological and literary peculiarities and contains a dialogue between Hermas and a divine messenger: a Lady (female personification of the Church) in the first work, and the Angel of Repentance *in habitu pastoris* in the second work. Thanks to the apparitions of those celestial characters, the two works might be named with the following headlines: *Revelation of the Church* and *Revelation of the Shepherd*.[10] The *Revelation of the Church* is divided into four *Visions*. Besides introducing briefly Hermas and his sins (1st *Vision*), the *Visions* deal with the themes of confession and forgiveness (2nd *Vision*), with an allegory of the Church as a white tower under

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5 Prinzivalli/Simonetti 2015, 181. C. Osiek found additional proofs of Hermas' Italian origin in *Mand.* X,1,5, *Sim.* V,2 and *Sim.* IX,26,4 where, while introducing the parables of elm and wine, Hermas describes a typical viticulture of central Italy. Osiek 1999, 18.

6 Hahneman 1992, 37–72; Peterson 1959, 275–282.

7 *Liber Pontificalis* ed. L. Duchesne, Paris 1886, 58.

8 Scholars agree with the chronology suggested by the *Muratorian Fragment*; see for more bibliographical information: Tornau/Cecconi 2014, 1; Schneider 1999, 36–38; Osiek 1999, 20–23; Leutzsch 1998, 132–137; Brox 1991, 15–22.

9 Cecconi 2016b, 146–147.

10 Brox 1991, 26–28. For a comprehensive analysis of the female allegories of cities and buildings in the biblical and in the apocryphal literatures see: Zimmermann 2001.

construction made by different stones (3rd *Vision*), and with a forthcoming tribulation (4th *Vision*). The *Revelation of the Shepherd* starts with a short preface (5th *Vision*), which introduces the new divine character: the Angel of Repentance dressed like a shepherd. The Angel explains Hermas some commandments. He must believe in the unique God (1st *Commandment*), and be honest and modest and avoid rumours (2nd *Commandment*); he must not lie (3rd *Commandment*) and not commit fornication and adultery (4th *Commandment*). Hermas must also avoid anger and sadness (5th and 6th *Commandments*), have fear of God (7th *Commandment*), recognizes the differences between vices and virtues (8th *Commandment*). Finally, he must avoid hypocrisy and have faith in God (9th *Commandment*), feel bad only because of his sins (10th *Commandment*), avoid the false prophet (11th *Commandment*) and reject all lustful desires and temptations (12th *Commandment*). The Angel shows and explains Hermas several allegories: the well-known theme of the 'Two Cities' (1st *Parable*), the parable of the elm and the wine (2nd *Parable*); the metaphor of the trees in winter and in summer (3rd and 4th *Parables*); the parable of the good servant and the vineyard (5th *Parable*). The Angel explains also his mission (6th *Parable*) and the reason of Hermas' sufferings (7th *Parable*), and reveals the parable of the willow and its branches (8th *Parable*). Finally, the Angel develops the previous allegory of the white tower and its stones (9th *Parable*) and announces further revelations (10th *Parable*).

Even though written in two different phases of Hermas' life, both *Revelations* share the same allegory of the Church as a white tower (3rd *Vision* and 9th *Parable*), and have both similarities and differences. For instance, in the *Revelation of the Church* Hermas is in a field when he sees the tower build on the water by six Angels and seven Virgins; the divine Lady-Church explains the vision. On the other hand, in the *Revelation of the Shepherd* Hermas is on the top of a mountain when he sees the tower built by six angels and twelve virgins.[11] The contents, the stylistic differences and, as revealed below, the same textual transmission confirm the existence of those two autonomous *Revelations* at the origin of the present *Shepherd*. Today scholars agree that a unique author wrote the *Shepherd* in two different times of his life between 138 and 144.[12] Later, either the same Hermas or unknown members of the Christian community of Rome joined both *Revelations* together and created thus the present *Shepherd*.[13]

The *Shepherd* has had soon a broad reception and was therefore the object of several hard critics. Indeed already at the end of the 2nd century, the aforementioned *Muratorian Fragment* suggested a private reading of the *Shepherd* discouraging its reading during the liturgy:

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11 For a more detailed description of both *Revelations*' features see: Cecconi 2016b.

12 Prinzivalli/Simonetti 2015, 181; Osiek 1999, 10; Brox, 1991, 28–32.

13 For a comprehensive and broader analysis of the history of Hermas' authorship see: Prinzivalli/ Simonetti 2015, 183–186; Osiek 1999, 10; Carlini 1992, 27; Brox 1991, 26–28.

(45) Et ideo legi eum quidem oportet, se publicare vero in ecclesia populo, (46) neque inter Prophetas, completum numero, (47) neque inter apostolos, in finem temporum potest.

And therefore it ought indeed to be read; but it cannot be read publicly to the people in church either among the Prophets, whose number is complete, or among the Apostles, for it is after their time.

The reason of that critic was Hermas' theory of a second repentance *una tantum* after the baptism in order to grant the sinners a second chance of salvation.[14] After the *Muratorian Fragment*, Fathers of the Church and theologians criticized the *Shepherd* or had a positive opinion about it.

Tab. 1: Criticism on the *Shepherd*.

Source	Positive	Negative
Muratorian Fragment		X
Irenaeus	X	
Tertullian		X
Origen	X	
Clemens of Alexandria	X	
Athanasius		X
Eusebius	X	X
Rufinus	X	
Jerome	neutral	
Decretum Gelasii Papae		X

Tertullian criticized Hermas as *apocryphus Pastor moechorum* (*De Pudicitia* XX,2). On the contrary, Irenaeus and Clemens of Alexandria considered the *Shepherd* a text "inspired" by the Lord (*Adv. Haer*. IV,20,2; *Stromata* I,29,181).[15] Origen suggested that Hermas was the homonymous character greeted by Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans*, and thus judged the *Shepherd* a *scriptura* (*In ep. ad Rom*. X,31).[16]

On the contrary, Athanasius' *De Decretis Nicaenae Synodi* excluded the *Shepherd* from the canonical texts (*Decr. Nic. Syn.* 18). Eusebius wrote that the *Shepherd* had to be included both among the texts read everywhere, and among the texts whose reading was forbidden (*Hist. Eccl*. III,3 and III,25). Saint Jerome confirmed that while the Greeks still read Hermas, the Latins ignored him (*De vir. ill*. III,10). On the contrary

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14 Metzger 1988, 194–198.
15 For a comprehensive analysis of Hermas' theological value according to Irenaeus and Clemens, see: Batovici 2015; Batovici 2011.
16 Concerning some bibliographical historical information about the connection between Hermas and Paul, see: Prinzivalli/Simonetti 2015, 181–183; Baucham 1974, 28; Zahn 1868, 42.

Rufin had a positive opinion about the *Shepherd* (*Commentarius in Symbolum Apostolorum*). Finally the *Decretum Gelasii Papae de recipiendis et non recipiendis libris* (382) collocated the *Shepherd* among the apocrypha and banished it from the Church.

However, this ban did not avoid that at the beginnings of the 5th century a second Latin translation of the *Shepherd* (beyond the oldest one of the end of the 2nd century) was composed.[17]

If I take into account only the Greek sources of the *Shepherd*, their number exceeds thirty.

The textual transmission of the 'Greek' *Shepherd* is extremely rich until the 7th century, then reveals a huge lacuna until the 13th century and ends in the 14th century. According to the recent but not updated analysis of D. Batovici,

> Hermas is preserved on a similar scale only to the best represented biblical texts: compared with the numbers offered by the latest published standard edition of the Greek *New Testament*, N. Gonis' count of 23 Greek continuous papyri for Hermas is topped only by John (30) and Matthew (24), followed at some distance by Acts (15), and Romans (11) and Luke (10). The rest of the NT books are represented by one digit numbers, and no less than seventeen of them are listed with fewer than 5 papyri. Hermas is therefore considerably better attested in the Greek papyri than most Christian texts, scriptural and non-scriptural.[18]

The sources of the *Shepherd* are amazing not only because of their quantity but also because of their heterogeneity; indeed they belong to different media-forms and to different ideas and typology of editions.

An in-depth investigation of their writings and of their material supports reveals the presence of luxurious editions, of editions for internal uses of a local religious community, of private editions, of editions of the whole *Shepherd* and of 'minor editions' with only one of the two *Revelations*. According to those criteria, those editions could be listed and organized in the following schemas. Later I will discuss only the most significant sources, which I evidence with *.

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17 Concerning the newest critical editions of both Latin translations *Vulgata* and *Palatina*, see: Tornau/Cecconi 2014, 10–12; Vezzoni 1994, 35–42.

18 Batovici 2016, 20–36. Concerning the given data on Hermas, see: Gonis 2005, 1–17, which was updated by Coat/Yuen–Collingridge 2010, 196.

Tab. 2: Editions of the *Shepherd*. Legend: PH = the whole *Shepherd*; RC = *Revelation of the Church*; RS = *Revelation of the Shepherd*; [V] = Fragments of the *Visions*; [C] = Fragments of the *Commandments*; [P] = Fragments of the *Parables*.[19]

Mark	Century	Material	Format	Content	Reader/Aim/Edition
P. Mich. 130*	End 2nd	Re-used Papyrus	Scroll	[C]	Private edition, copy either of only the *Commandments* or of selected sentences
P. Oxy. 3528*	2nd/3rd	Papyrus	Codex	RS; today [P]	Good edition, the writing reminds chancery's writings
P. Oxy. 4706	2nd/3rd	Papyrus	Scroll	PH; today [V] and [C]	Good edition, the writing reminds chancery's writings
P. Iand. 4	2nd/3rd	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RS; today [C]	Luxurious edition
P. Oxy. 3527*	3rd	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RS; today [P]	Luxurious edition
P. Oxy. 4707	3rd	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RS; today [P]	Good edition
P. Oxy. 1828*	3rd	Parchment	Codex	Maybe PH; today [P]	Luxurious edition
P. Berolinensis 5513	3rd	Papyrus	Scroll	Maybe RS; today [P]	Middle-quality edition
P. Mich. 129*	3rd	Papyrus	Codex	RS; today [P]	Luxurious edition
P. Oxy. 4705*	3rd	Re-used Papyrus	Scroll	PH	Private edition (?)
P. Oxy. 5	3rd/4th	Papyrus	Codex	[C]	Quotation
P. Oxy. 404	3rd/4th	Papyrus	Codex	[P]	Unclear
P. Mich. 6427	4th	Papyrus	Scroll	[C]	Quotation in a luxurious edition
P. Oxy. 1783	4th	Parchment	Codex	PH or RS; today [C]	Luxurious edition
*Codex Sinaiticus**	4th	Parchment	Codex	PH	Luxurious edition

19 Where possible I have indicated the original content of the source (e. g. complete or partial edition). Where not, I have indicated its actual content (e. g. fragments of one or more sections).

Tab. 2: continued.

Mark	Century	Material	Format	Content	Reader/Aim/Edition
P. Oxy. 3526 + 1172*	4th	Papyrus	Codex	PH; today [C] and [P]	Low-quality edition
P. Oxy. 1599	4th	Papyrus	Codex	PH, today [P]	Low-quality edition
P. Berolinensis 13272	4th	Parchment	Codex	PH; today [P]	Luxurious edition
P. Bodmer 38*	4th/5th	Papyrus	Codex	RC	Good edition for private uses
P. Hamb. 24	4th/5th	Parchment	Codex	PH; today [P]	Luxurious edition
P. Prag. 1 + *Weill* I 96*	4th/5th	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RS; today [C] und [P]	Edition for private uses
P. Berolinensis 5104	5th	Papyrus	Codex	PH; today [C]	Edition for private uses
P. Harr. 128	5th	Papyrus	Codex	Maybe PH	Good edition
P. Berolinensis 6789	6th	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RS; today [P]	Poor edition
P. Amh. 190*	6th	Papyrus	Codex	PH	Luxurious edition
P. Berolinensis 21259	6th	Papyrus	Codex	PH or RC	Good edition
P. Dèr-Balyzeh	6th/7th	Papyrus	Codex	[C]	Quotation in a liturgical text
Florilegium Patristicum	13th	Parchment	Codex	[P]	Luxurious collection of selected quotations
Codex Athous Grigoriou 96*	14th	Papier	Codex	PH	Edition for private uses

For the purposes of the current investigations of the different 'materialities' of the *Shepherd* an organisation of the mentioned data according to the following criteria is required: 1. Material (Tab. 3), 2. Editorial format/aim (Tab. 4), 3. Content (Tab. 5).

Tab. 3: Used Materials. *Annotation*: The majority of the textual sources, especially of those that used parchment, dates between the 3rd and the 5th century. However papyrus remains the preferred material.

Century	Papyrus	Re-used papyrus	Parchment	Paper	Total
2nd		1			1
2nd/3rd	3				3
3rd	4	1	1		6
3rd/4th	2				2
4th	3		3		6
4th/5th	2		1		3
5th	2				2
6th	3				3
6th/7th	1				1
13th			1		1
14th				1	1
Total	**20**	**2**	**6**	**1**	**29**

Tab. 4: Editorial formats and aims. *Annotation*: Since the 4th century the codex form prevailed regardless of the used material. As already evidenced by J. van Haelst in 1976, between the 1st and the beginning of the 4th century only quite 24 % (23,96 % more precisely) of the Christian books (i. e. the *Bible* and other Christian texts) was written on a scroll.[20] In this case, it is interesting to observe both that the number of luxurious copies of the *Shepherd* equals the one of the others together, and, moreover, that several high-quality manuscripts date back between the 3rd and the 5th centuries.

Century	Scroll	Codex	Luxurious	Other
2nd	1			1
2nd/3rd	1	2	1	2
3rd	2	4	3	3
3rd/4th		2		2
4th	1	5	4	2
4th/5th		3	1	2

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20 Van Haelst 1976, 235–239.

Tab. 4: continued.

Century	Scroll	Codex	Luxurious	Other
5th		2		2
6th		3	1	2
6th/7th		1	1	
13th		1	1	
14th		1		1
Total	**5**	**24**	**12**	**17**

Tab. 5: Content.

Century	PH	RC	RS	PH/RC	PH/RS	Quotations/Excerpta
2nd						1
2nd/3rd	1		1		1	
3rd	2		2		2	
3rd/4th					1	1
4th	4				1	1
4th /5th	1	1			1	
5th	2					
6th	1			1	1	
6th/7th						1
13th						1
14th	1					
Total	**12**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**7**	**5**

Only if I consider the dubious editions (PH/RC and PH/RS) as partial editions, the number of the complete editions lays under the 50 % of the still extant sources. On the contrary, if I consider only the extant data, i. e. only the sure PH RC and RS, it is possible to assume that the majority of the complete editions of the *Shepherd* was produced in the 4th century. The data reveal that the partial editions of the *Shepherd* were made between the 3rd and the 4th centuries, but their autonomous life until the end of Christianity in Egypt should not be excluded. Some of the aforementioned sources (the ones marked with ⋆) enable a comprehensive perspective on the various materialities of the *Shepherd*.

Papyrus Michigan 130: Fragment of a scroll, whose scribe wrote the text of Hermas at the end of the 2nd century on the back of a document.[21] Today only a short section of *Mand*. II,6–III,1 survives.[22] Both cursive writing and re-use of a scroll suggest a private copy of the *Shepherd* (either of selected *excerpta*, or of the whole *Mandata*) maybe for the catechesis.[23]

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3528: Fragment of a leaf from a papyrus codex written between the 2nd and the 3rd century. It contains *Sim*. IX,20,3–4 and IX,22,1.[24] The presence of the number of the pages proved that it could have contained either only the *Similitudines*, or also the *Mandata* and the 5th *Visio*.[25]

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 4706: Formed by 27 small fragments from a scroll containing the whole *Shepherd*; it was written between the 2nd and the 3rd century.[26] Today only some fragments from *Vis*. III–IV and *Mand*. II–X survive.

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3527: Three fragments of a papyrus codex written at the beginning of the 3rd century.[27] A small textual section (*Sim*. VIII,4,1–5,2) survives, but the numeration of the pages suggests that this codex began at *Mand*. IV,1. Maybe it had lost some leaves before its pages were numerated.

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1828: Fragment of a leaf of a parchment codex written in the 3rd century. It contains *Sim*. VI,5,3 on the *recto* and *Sim*. VI,5,5 on the *verso*.[28]

Papyrus Michigan 129: This papyrus codex dates to 250 CE and contains a text-portion from *Sim*. II,8 to *Sim*. IX,5,1.[29] As suggested by its editor, it probably contained the whole *Revelation of the Shepherd*.[30] It confirms, together with the below-mentioned Papyrus Bodmer 38, the autonomous diffusion of the two sections of the *Shepherd*, at least in Egypt.[31]

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[21] Bonner 1927, 107.

[22] Bonner 1934, 129–136.

[23] The *Muratiorian Fragment* recommended a private reading of the *Shepherd*. Bonner 1934, 131.

[24] Roberts 1983, 21.

[25] Aland/Rosenbaum 1995, 307–308.

[26] Gonis 2005, 3–12.

[27] Roberts 1983, 17–20.

[28] Mercati 1925, 336; Grenfell/Hunt 1922, 230.

[29] Van Haelst 1976, 237.

[30] Bonner 1934, 8–11.

[31] Bonner 1934, 15.

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 4705: Fragment of a scroll written during the 2nd century, on whose recto, during the 3rd century, was written the *Shepherd*. It contains *Vis*. I,1,8–9.[32]

Codex Sinaiticus: The *Codex Sinaiticus* is a biblical manuscript written during the 4th century and contains the whole *Bible*, the *Letter of Barnabas* and the *Shepherd* of Hermas (today up to *Mand*. IV,3,6; *Sim*. VI,5,5–VIII,2,5; *Sim*. IX,14,4–18,5). It suffered the loss of several leaves, especially of the *Old Testament*.[33] In 1859 C. Tischendorf found this codex in the Library of Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai.[34] In 1975 the monks found twenty new leaves,[35] two of which contained some paragraphs of the *Similitudines* of Hermas and were published with the whole codex in 2009 and specifically studied in 2010.[36] Three scribes, whose work was emendated by several correctors, wrote this codex.[37] A very unprofessional scribe wrote the text of the *Shepherd*; the other scribes and, laterm several correctors (who date between the 5th and the 7th centuries) emendated it.[38] The correctors of Hermas are the so-called S¹ ("a correction made in the production process, as part of the revision of the text after it had been copied, or a correction by the scribe in the copying process. These cannot always be distinguished"), S^d ("a hand who rewrote faded portions of text, occasionally providing corrections"), and S^{ca} ("corrector who revised the manuscript rather extensively between the fifth and seventh centuries").[39] The *Codex Sinaiticus* has played a significant role in the textual transmission of the *Shepherd*, because it is the point of contact of different textual lines; indeed the need to have a very luxurious book—as the *Sinaiticus* is—created the preconditions for a review of the extant textual versions of Hermas. The *Codex Sinaiticus* was an attempt to fix the still fluid Hermas' transmission, and to establish an "official version" in the authoritative corpus of the *Bible*, but it produced "a hybrid text", which reveals its "weakness" and its "imprecisions" if compared with other sources, like the *P. Bodm*. 38 and the *Codex Athous Grigoriou* 96, which have had different autonomous transmissions.[40]

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32 Gonis 2005, 1–2.

33 For more data, see: Cecconi 2018, 278–279; Cecconi 2010, 112–113.

34 www.codexsinaiticus.org (last accessed: 01.11.2015); Aland/Aland 1987, 120; Tischendorf 1862, 5*.

35 Carlini/Bandini 2011, 91–92.

36 Respectively: www.codexsinaiticus.org (last accessed: 01.11.2015); Cecconi 2010, 118–132. The *Codex Sinaiticus* has had an interesting and vivacious history, which is not, unfortunately, the aim of the present study. For some more information concerning the dispute between C. Tischendorf and C. Simonides on the *Codex Sinaiticus*, see: Elliott 1982.

37 For more information, see Jongkind 2007, 131–245 and, for a general history of the *Codex Sinaiticus* Skeat 1999; Milne/Skeat 1938.

38 Milne/Skeat 1938, 54–55.

39 Batovici 2014, 447–462; http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/project/transcription_detailed.aspx (last accessed: 20.10.2016).

40 Cecconi 2018, 294.

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 3526 + Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1172: Several fragments of two different leaves of a papyrus codex written in the 4th century; *P. Oxy*. 3526 contains *Mand*. V,2,3–VI,1,2;[41] *P. Oxy*. 1172 contains *Sim*. II,4–10.[42] The scribe worked very sloppily and wrote παραβολὴ δʹ near the text of *Sim*. II,4–10; and counted the 3rd *Similitudo* as 4th.[43] The same error recurs in *P. Hamb*. 24, in the Ge'ez translation, and in the Sahidic one.[44]

Papyrus Bodmer 38: The Papyrus Bodmer 38 is the first half of a papyrus codex, the so-called *Codex Visionum*. It contained originally the whole *Revelation of the Church* (today only *Vis*. I,1,1–*Vis*. III,13,4 due to a loss of leaves),[45] and several Christian poems unknown so far: the so-called *Visio Dorothei* (*P. Bodm*. 29) and the so-called *Poems* (*P. Bodm*. 30–37): *Adresse à Abraham*, *Adresse aux Justes*, *Eloge du Seigneur Jesus*, *Paroles de Caïn*, *Le Seigneur à ceux qui souffrent*, *Paroles d'Abel*, *Poèmes au titre mutilé*, *Hymne(s)*.[46] Two different scribes wrote the text of Hermas between the 4th and the 5th century: A from *Vis*. I,1 to *Vis*. III,1,1 and B from *Vis*. III,1,2 to the extant *Vis*. III,23,4.[47]

Papyrus Pragensis 1 + Papyrus Weill I 96: Several small fragments of a papyrus codex written between the 4th and the 5th century.[48] They contain *Mand*. VIII,9–12, *Sim*. V,7,3–4 and *Sim*. VI,1,1–5. In 2016 D. Batovici has published the *P. Weill* I 96, which "belongs to the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris, but is hosted at the *Institut de papyrologie de la Sorbonne*",[49] and has done a new edition of the fragments previously studied by A. Carlini.

Papyrus Amherst 190: Seven fragments of a papyrus codex of the 6th century, which contain *Vis*. I,2,2–3,1, *Vis*. III,12,2–13,4, *Mand*. XII,1,1–3, *Sim*. IX,2,1–5, IX,12,2–5, IX,17,1–4 and IX,30,1–4.[50] Given the use of an extremely elegant uncial, it is possible to assert, that this codex was a very luxurious edition of the whole *Shepherd*.[51]

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41 Roberts 1983, 14–17.

42 Grenfell/Hunt 1912, 11–16; Van Haelst 1976, 237.

43 Aland/Rosenbaum 1995, 267–271.

44 Henne 1990, 250.

45 Carlini 1991, 12.

46 Respectively: Hurst/Reverdin/Rudhardt 1984; Hurst/Rudhardt 1999. For a recent bibliography, see: Miguelez–Cavero 2013, 91–97.

47 See the appendix of G. Cavallo in Carlini 1991, 123–124; for a recent bibliography see: Orsini 2005, 61–63. For recent analysis of *P. Bodmer* 38 and its new reconstructions see: Cecconi 2016a; Verheyden 2015.

48 Carlini 1988, 17–25.

49 Batovici 2016, 20–36.

50 Grenfell/Hunt 1901, 195–200.

51 Aland/Rosenbaum 1995, 234; Cavallo 1967, 113–117.

Codex Athous Grigoriou 96: In the middle of the 19th century, M. Minoides found this paper manuscript of the 14th century in the Library of S. Gregor's Monastery on Mount Athos.[52] Even at that time, only 10 leaves of the original manuscript survived, which contained the whole *Shepherd* and other today unknown texts.[53] The few readable words of the damaged *explicit* just before the beginning of the *Shepherd* refer to an anonymous collection of *Letters*.[54] According to the monks, Minoides stole the last leaf, and this is the reason why the text of the *Shepherd* ends suddenly at *Sim.* IX,30,3.[55] In 1855 C. Simonides saw the remaining nine leaves and stole three of them, which he sold to the University of Leipzig (where they were lost during the Second World War); he copied and emendated the other six leaves and forged the lost tenth one through a retroversion of the Latin text.[56] In 1880, S. P. Lambros went to Mount Athos, where he analysed the six remaining leaves and solved the problems of Simonides' fraud.[57] Finally in 1899 K. Lake went to the monastery and made a photographic reproduction of the six leaves here preserved.[58]

Scholars have variously dated this codex because of the complexity and of the extreme difficulty of its writing:

– O. De Gebhardt and A. Harnack published their edition of the *Shepherd* in 1877, and dated the *Codex Athous* between the 14th and 15th century.[59]
– Both S. Lambros, in his catalogue of the manuscripts of Mount Athos in 1895, and F. X. Funk, in his edition of the *Shepherd* of 1901, dated the codex to the 14th century.[60]
– K. Lake in his edition of the *Shepherd* of 1917 dated the codex to the 15th century,[61] and M. Whittaker and M. Leutzsch followed his suggestion in their editions of 1956 and 1998.[62]
– D. Harlfinger and B. Mondrain revealed the identity of the scribe of this codex: the Papas Malachias of the monastery of Chora in Constantinople, alias the so-called *Anonymus Aristotelicus*, one of the most famous scribes of Aristotelian manuscripts, and dated the codex to the 14th century.[63]

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52 Lake 1907, 3.
53 Abbott 1889, 65; Lambros 1888, 5.
54 Lake 1907, Pl.1.
55 Lake 1907, 3.
56 Abbott 1889, 65; Hollenberg 1856, 3–9.
57 Lambros 1888, 10–23.
58 See Lake 1907.
59 Gebhardt/Harnack 1877, vii.
60 Funk 1901, cxlvi; Lambros 1895, 56.
61 Lake 1917, 4.
62 Whittaker 1956, x; Leutzsch 1998, 120.
63 Mondrain 2004, 288–295; Mondrain 2000, 23; Harlfinger 1996, 49.

– B. D. Ehrman and M. Simonetti dated the *Codex Athous* respectively to the 15th and to the 16th century, but they did not quote the previous discoveries of D. Harlfinger and B. Mondrain.[64]

As written above, D. Harlfinger in 1996 was able to identify the scribe of the *Codex Athous Grigoriou* 96, because he found the same writing in several manuscripts of the 14th century like the codex Par. gr. 2511 e. g. at f. 362r (*Deuteronomy*, Porphyry's *Isagoge* and Aristotle's *Categories*), which was written by the so-called *Anonymus Aristotelicus*.[65] Later, in 2004, B. Mondrain found *Anonymus*' hand in the ff. 207–222 of the *Codex Laurentianus* 74,10 (Alexander's of Tralles *Therapeutica*) and in a scholium in f. 31r of the codex *Vat. gr.* 198 (astronomical notes, *Prolegomena to Ptolemaeus' Syntaxis*), and identified him as the παπάς Malachias, because she found his signature in both manuscripts.[66] Mondrain shed then new light on the production of Malachias, who wrote about other fourteen manuscripts,[67] which reveal that his activity concerned not only texts of Aristotle and other scientific or theological works, but also texts of contemporary authors like the Patriarch Philotheus Kokkinos and the Emperor John VI Cantacuzene.[68] B. Mondrain has suggested that Malachias-*Anonymus Aristotelicus* and the deacon Malachias in the monastery of Chora (*Prosopographisches Lexicon der Palaiologenzeit* PLP 16473) were the same person.[69] Indeed, Chora exerted a huge cultural function during the 14th century. For instance here lived between the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th the erudite Maximus Planudes (1255–1305/1330),[70] who knew the *Shepherd* and paraphrased it in his

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64 Respectively: Ehrman 2003, 170; Prinzivalli/Simonetti 2015, 216.

65 Harlfinger 1996, 49.

66 Mondrain 2004, 281–292.

67 The manuscripts are: *Bononiensis Bibl. Univ.* 2212 (John VI Cantacuzene's *Historiae*); *Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri* 150 (Aristotle's *Organon*); *Marcianus gr.* 582 (Philotheus Kokkinos); *Monacensis gr.* 508 (τόμος of 1351, and works of Matthias Blastarès); *Mosquensis Mus. Hist. gr.* 431 (Philotheus Kokkinos); *Mutinensis gr.* 56 (Nicomachus of Gerasa and Euclid); *Parisinus Coisl.* 144 (John VI Cantacuzene's *Historiae*); *Parisinus Coisl.* 161 (Aristotle's *Ethics*, *Politics*, *Oeconomica*, *Metaphysics*); *Parisinus Coisl.* 166 (Aristotle's *Physics*); *Parisinus gr.* 912 (Simeon Metaphrastes, St. Basil and Johannes Chrysostomus); *Parisinus gr.* 1921 (Aristotle, works on natural history); *Parisinus gr.* 2342 (various works of mathematic and astronomy); *Petropolitanus gr.* 244 (Philotheus Kokkinos). Malachias wrote also some *marginalia* in the codices: *Leidensis Voss. Q. 3* (Aristotle's *De Caelo*, *De generatione et corruptione*, *Meteorologica*); *Parisinus Coisl.* 327 (Aristotle's *Organon*) and *Parisinus gr.* 1876 (commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*). See: Mondrain 2004, 278–291; Mondrain 2000, 29.

68 For more information see: Bianconi 2005a, 403; Bianconi 2005b, 108; Mondrain 2000, 23; Canart 1998, 59–60.

69 Mondrain 2004, 289.

70 Scholars disagree about the dates of Planudes' diplomatic mission to Venice and of his death. E. Fryde dates Planudes' death to 1305 and his mission to Venice to 1297; on the contrary, N. Wilson dates them respectively to 1330 and 1327. See: Fryde 2000, 227; Wilson 1994, 351. About Planudes' letter to

Συναγωγή.[71] It is therefore not improbable that the library of Chora contained one (or more?) copy of the *Shepherd*, which Planudes read and later Malachias copied.

Despite bans and hard critiques, the *Shepherd* was not only broadly read and transmitted in Greek, but also variously translated in many other languages of ancient and late-antique world. Indeed, there are also seven translations into five different languages: two into Latin (the so-called *Vulgata* and *Palatina*, composed respectively at end of the 2nd century and during the 5th century); one into Ge'ez (composed between the 4th and the 5th century); two into Coptic (one into Sahidic, 4th century, and one into Achmimic, between the 3rd and the 4th centuries); one into Georgian through an Arab translation, and one into Middle-Persian. Those translations have had a significant role for a broader transmission of the text in and outside the Roman Empire.[72] Their description, even though brief, is therefore necessary for their better contextualisation:

The Latin *Vulgata* translation was written at the end of the 2nd century as proven by a quotation of *Sim*. IX,31,5–6 in the pseudo-Cyprianic *De aleatoribus*. Its importance not only for the comprehension of the Greek *Shepherd*, but also for the history of the Latin Christianity is indubitable. In 1994 E. Dekkers listed about 28 sources from the 9th to the 16th century, which contain partially or completely the text of the *Vulgata*.[73]

Thanks to a quotation of *Sim*. IX,15 in the *Vita Sanctae Genovefae* (ca. 520 AD), scholars have dated the translation *Palatina* to the 5th century. Ms. A. Vezzoni, *Palatina*'s most recent editor, suggested Gaul as its place of composition.[74] Other quotations of the *Palatina* (*Mandatum* 4th) are in the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis* (8th century) and in the *Collectio Canonum Fiscannensis* (between 9th and 10th centuries).[75] The *Palatina* has today a very poor textual transmission; it is present only in a fragment of an 8th-century-manuscript, and two complete 15th-century-manuscripts.[76]

The Ge'ez translation grounds its ideal roots in the journey of Frumentius to Ethiopia in the 330s, and in his consecration as bishop of this region because of his role in the conversion to Christianity of the Aksumite Kingdom of Ezana. Such events created "a more pressing need for the Scriptures and related writings in the native vernacular", and "set the stage for the translation of [...] the *Shepherd* of Hermas into Ge'ez

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Theodoros Muzalon, which begs him for financial support in order to restore Chora's Library (*Epistula* n. 67), see: Perez–Martin 1997, 74–75.

71 Ferroni 2003, notes 1–7; Fryde 2000, 249.

72 The Latin translations are fundamental sources to study the evolutions of Latin as Christian Language and the linguistic background(s) of Christians in Rome. See Hilhorst 1976.

73 Among those sources the most useful for the reconstruction of the Latin text are about 14 (all the manuscript before 1200 supported by a selection of significant manuscripts between 1200 and 1513). See: Tornau/Cecconi 2014, 12–13; Cecconi 2012, 35–40; Dekkers 1994, 15–19.

74 Vezzoni 1994, 35–42; Dekkers 1994, 25.

75 Tornau/Cecconi 2014, 8–9; Vezzoni 1994, 40; Carlini 1985, 311–312.

76 Vezzoni 1994, 41; Mazzini 1980, 181–182.

from Egyptian Greek manuscripts".[77] In 1847 A. D'Abbadie found the first witness of the Ethiopian *Shepherd* in the monastery of Gunda Gunde in a 1538-paper-manuscript. The commissioned transcription of that manuscript is now known as codex *Par. Abb.* 174, and it is the only extant trace of the original manuscript (today lost). In 1860 A. D'Abbadie published the critical edition of the Ge'ez text together with a Latin translation made by himself.[78] In 1962, A. van Lantschoot, *scriptor* of the Vatican Library, discovered a second witness of the Ethiopian *Shepherd*, the codex *Parmensis* 3842,[79] which comes from Gunda Gunde too, but whose text differs from *Par. Abb.* 174 and seems less emendated and corrupted.[80] In 2012 T. Erho announced the existence of third witness of the Ethiopian *Shepherd* of Hermas, which comes from the monastery of Tana Quirqos, and is readable in a microfilm at the National Library and Archives Agency of Ethiopia in Addis Abeba.[81] This new manuscript evidences that the differences between the two previous sources are mere textual variants generated at Gunda Gunde, and they do not suggest any double textual transmission.[82] In 2015 T. Erho has announced the presence of two leaves from a fourth manuscript of the Ethiopian *Shepherd*, dated to the 17th century; those leaves are now preserved in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg.[83] T. Erho has studied the textual diffusion of the *Shepherd* in Ethiopia, and has demonstrated that, despite its broad diffusion, "the *Shepherd* of Hermas did not possess a status analogous to that of the biblical or canonical books from the late-fourteenth century onwards. It is, however, impossible to say whether the situation differed in the earlier Zāgwē or Aksumite kingdoms. Given that its popularity equalled or exceeded many of the canonical texts in Egypt at the time of its translation into Ge'ez, it is tempting to think that, at least for a brief period in the first millennium, the *Shepherd* of Hermas may have been viewed as an inspired text of the first rank in Ethiopia, but no evidence exists to support or contradict such a statement."[84]

The Sahidic translation was written in the 4th century. It is given by two fragmentary manuscripts: the parchment codex *Par. cop.* 130 (6th/7th century) and a fragment preserved in the University Library of Leuven (sign. n. 26, 5th century).[85] The Sahidic

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77 T. Erho has contextualized the previous thesis of M. Bandini and P. Lusini, who suggested that the Ethiopian translation was made between the forth and the seventh centuries. See: Erho 2015, 97–98 (p. 98 for the quotations); Bandini/Lusini 1997, 630.

78 D'Abbadie 1860.

79 Van Lantschoot 1962, 95. A photographic copy of this manuscript is in the Vatican Library (*Cod. Vat. ms. fot.* 133) and was better studied by O. Ranieri in 1993; see Ranieri 1993.

80 Bandini/Lusini 1997, 631–632.

81 Erho 2015, 102; Erho 2012, 365–366.

82 Erho 2012, 367.

83 Erho 2015, 105.

84 See for the results of this analysis Erho 2015, 100–101 and 107–118 (for the quotation see p. 118); for some information about a new edition of the Ge'ez translation see Villa 2015.

85 Lefort 1952, v–viii. For more information, see: Lucchesi 1989, 393–396; Lucchesi 1981, 395–408.

translation has never contained the *Visiones* (no fragments of the Coptic *Visiones* of Hermas have appeared so far).[86]

The Achmimic translation was written between the 3rd and the 4th century. It is today present in eight leaves of a papyrus codex of the 4th century.[87] It is a translation of the Sahidic text instead of a translation of the Greek one.[88]

Textual source of the Georgian translation is the manuscript H-622 of the Institute of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, a parchment codex written between the 9th and the 10th century.[89] The Georgian text contains only the 5th *Visio* and the *Mandata*, and assigns them to a certain Ephraim. The Georgian translator used a lost Arabian version of the *Shepherd*.[90]

The Middle Persian Manichean Fragment M 97 is not yet dated. It contains several quotations from the 9th *Similitudo*.[91]

Any further analysis of the media-forms of those translations is extremely difficult, but the data quoted above reveal interesting information about the 'forms of the text' in other languages:

– Both Latin translations translated the whole *Shepherd*.
– Both Coptic translations and the Georgian one translated only the *Revelation of the Shepherd*.
– The Middle-Persian translation is more a mere paraphrase than a translation *strictu sensu*.

Coming to the end of the present investigation, I would like to mention three 'visual' materialities of the *Shepherd* of Hermas, which confirm and prove its fame and its cultural impact on early Christian life:

– The gravestone of the bishop Abercius of Hierapolis dates back to the 2nd century and contains a description of the Church of Rome represented as a divine women, with significant closeness with the divine Lady of Hermas' *Revelation of the Church*.[92]
– The fresco of the Catacomb of St. Gennaro at Capodimonte dates back to the 3rd century and reveals some women with luxurious garments who are building a white tower, as described by Hermas.[93]

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86 Henne 1990, 242; Lefort 1952, viii–ix.
87 Lefort 1952, iii.
88 Lefort 1952, iv.
89 Outtier 1990, 211.
90 Outtier 1990, 212–215.
91 Müller 1905 for the first edition. For the bibliography Leutzsch 1998, 121 and 362.
92 Violante 1987, 355–356.
93 Lusini 2001, 97; Carlini 1991, 35–36.

–   The female statue of Saint Hippolytus of Rome of 2nd century in the Vatican Library represented originally a Lady on a throne, who has to be identified with the Lady of the *Shepherd* of Hermas.[94]

They testify that the leitmotif of the female figure of the Church played a fundamental role in figurative arts during the Late-antiquity.[95]

At the end of this contribution, I would like to draw some brief conclusions. Because of its broad and variegated transmission, especially until the 6th century, the *Shepherd* of Hermas represents a special case not only in comparison with the other contemporary apocrypha but also with the biblical texts. Indeed none of those works has such a rich and variegated ancient textual transmission.[96] Moreover the textual sources of the *Shepherd* of Hermas reveal not only a rich ensemble of book-formats in Late-Antiquity, but also the different and multiple aims and uses of those book-formats.

Even though criticized, forbidden, banned, the *Shepherd* had a rich textual transmission and was written in luxurious editions especially in the 3rd and the 4th centuries, when it was hardly and strongly criticized. Such rich transmission was possible especially because the *Shepherd* was used for the moral education, but that reason is not enough to explain why the *Shepherd* influenced also the arts (e. g. the aforementioned fresco). Hermas' fame and his presence in the figurative arts have indeed several reasons, one of which is connected with his theology: Hermas did not condemn the men, but taught them a merciful way to be saved. For that reason, both reading and transmission of the *Shepherd* could not be stopped, because its teachings spread out themselves through the Christian communities thanks to their "inner force" and their merciful vision of the relationships between the Lord and His creatures.[97]

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94 Castelli 2010, 37–41; Castelli 2008, 315–320.
95 For a comprehensive analysis of female allegories in biblical literature see: Zimmermann 2001.
96 Batovici 2016, 22–34.
97 Cecconi 2016b, 162–163; Brox 1991, 395.

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