An alleged homily on the paralytic by John Chrysostom in the codex Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112)

Through the efforts of the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (IRHT), a list of manuscripts is available that preserves homilies on the healing of the paralytic. Included in this list is the codex Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112), which, according to those who provided its second description, preserves in the last four folios ‘a homily on the paralytic by John Chrysostom’. After a brief presentation of what is known about this codex, this article offers a detailed examination of the codex’s last four folios, revealing that the description of them by Spyridon Lauriotis and Sophronios Eustratiadis is inaccurate.

Contribution: This article provides the first thorough examination of the last four folios of the codex Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112), demonstrating that they do not contain ‘a homily on the paralytic by John Chrysostom’ but rather several fragments of homilies on Thomas, Mid-Pentecost and the Ascension. Thus, the article contributes to the description of the codex and to the identification of a previously unknown manuscript witness to several homilies.

Keywords: Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112); the healing of the paralytic; John Chrysostom; Proclus of Constantinople; Leontius, presbyter of Constantinople; Pseudo-Chrysostom.

Introduction

While consulting the Pinakes database managed by the Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes (IRHT) in preparation for an edition of two unedited homilies on the paralytic (CPG 4978 and CPG 5055), the author of the present article noticed the presence of Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112) in the list of manuscripts preserving patristic homilies on the theme ‘Paralyticus’. In compiling this list, the members of the Pinakes management team relied on existing catalogues and inventories, some of which date from the late 19th or early 20th centuries, without being able to conduct a verification in each case. It is therefore necessary to re-examine the manuscripts listed in order to ascertain whether ‘Paralyticus’ refers to known texts or unknown texts, or whether there is any connection between the texts bearing this label.

The present article, then, checks the brief description given by the editors of the Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in the Library of the Laura on Mount Athos regarding the last four folios of the manuscript Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112) (Lauriotis & Eustratiadis 1925:12) and subjects folios to a thorough analysis in order to identify the text(s) they preserve.

Note: Special Collection: Orthodox Theology in Dialogue with other Theologies and with Society, sub-edited by Daniel Buda (Lucian Blaga University, Romania) and Jerry Pillay (University of Pretoria).

1. The author is preparing an edition of the two homilies with Guillaume Bady, to whom he is very grateful for all his support. For the homily In paralyticum (CPG 4978), only one manuscript witness is known, codex Parisinus graecus 1173A, saec. XII–XIII, ff. 209r–210r, housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (Geerard 1974:636). A copy of the manuscript is accessible online at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b107217811/f218.item.zoom, last accessed 04 April 2022. The homily In paralyticum (CPG 5055) is preserved in the Pinakes database, in seven codices (https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/8308/, last accessed 04 April 2022). In the alphabetical index of Chrysostom’s writings at the end of volume 64 of the Patrologiae Graecae, the homily CPG 5055 is entitled In Mexopentecosten (Migne 1862:64:1417–1418). In the first volume of the Codices Chrysostomici Graeci edited by Michel Aubineau, the homily has the title In paralyticum (Aubineau 1968:194–195). The editor of the second volume of the Clavis Patrum Graecorum has chosen the title In paralyticum for the homily inventoried under the reference number 5055 (Geerard 1974:647). The title In paralyticum does not seem to be supported by the manuscript evidence. For example, the codex Oxoniensis Bodl. Barocci 174, saec. X, ff. 41r–43r, preserves the text with the title: ‘Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν ἑορτὴν λόγος γ’; the codex Marcianus graecus II.46 (coll. 1014), saec. XIII, ff. 234v–236v: Τοῦ εν δύοις πατρίς ἡμῶν ἤματαν τὸν Χριστόσωμα, λόγος εἰς τὴν μεσοπεντέκοσταν; the codex Oxoniensis Bodl. Barocci 212, saec. XVI, ff. 290v–291v: Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν μεσοπεντέκοσταν.

The codex Athonensis, Lauras A 112 (Eustratiadis 112)

As far as it has been possible to ascertain, this codex was first described in the early 20th century by Caspar René Gregory (1909:1260). According to him, the codex dates from the 14th century. It measures 34.5 cm × 27 cm, is made of parchment and contains 300 folios. The codex is a gospel book, which at the beginning and at the end contains several folios of texts by Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom (‘corn und hinten Bil [Blätter] aus Greg Theol und Chrys’). Caspar R. Gregory, being interested only in the contents of the gospel book, says nothing about the number of these folios. The vague indication of the authors from whom the texts come is of no help when one considers the very extensive corpora preserved under these two patristic authors’ names.

In 1925, Spryridon Lauriotis and Sophronios Eustratiadis provided a second basic description of the codex (pp. 11–12). In their brief catalogue entry, they describe this codex as made of parchment, measuring 35 cm × 25 cm, and dating from the 10th century. The manuscript’s place of origin is unknown, and no hypothesis has been formulated with regard to its provenance. The codex is said to contain an Evangelion, with three and four folios added at the beginning and end, respectively. According to Lauriotis and Eustratiadis, the three folios added at the beginning contain two homilies of Gregory the Theologian, and the four folios added at the end preserve a homily on the paralytic by John Chrysostom (ἐν ὑπηρέτῃ τόπῳ προσέβαλεν περιέχουσι δύο λόγους Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου· ἐν τέλει 4 ἔτερα περιέχουσι λόγον τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου εἰς τοῦ παραλυτικόν; Lauriotis & Eustratiadis 1925:12).

The last four folios

It should be noted at the outset that due to the extensive ongoing renovations that have been taking place for several years in the main building of the library of the Great Lavra Monastery on Mount Athos, it was not possible to make an in situ examination of the codex. Thanks to the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessaloniki (Greece), however, the author of the present article was able to examine a microfilm reproduction of the manuscript’s last four folios. These folios are numbered 297–300. The text is written in two columns of 35 lines. Strikingly, all four folios share a peculiarity. The right-hand side of the folios has been mutilated, and in some places even the letters in the margin of the column have been mutilated. A strip has been subsequently glued to the verso so that the size of these last four folios in the codex is identical to that of the other folios. The four glued strips also come from a parchment manuscript, having been written on both sides. Although their size is small, it is still possible to read one or more words on a line and thereby attempt to identify the text they preserve. The hand that wrote the text on the pasted strips is the same hand that wrote the last four folios preserved in the codex, but this hand is not that of the copyist who transcribed the Evangelion.

For the sake of clarity, in what follows, the number of the folio, recto or verso, and the column (a or b) are all indicated. Also, text that is illegible in the microfilm has been placed between brackets.

The first lines of column a of folio 297r read as follows: <...>θορύσαν τοιχὰς τῆς χάρις τού Θεού ἐφέλθε καὶ προσήκετο ἐν τῇ συλλογῇ τῶν Δαυὶ ῥήματα λέγων: Μὴ συναπόλεσῃς μετὰ ἀσαρθῶν τὴν ψυχήν μου καὶ μετὰ ανθρώπων αἵματον τὴν ζωήν μου, ὅν ἐν χερείς αἱ ἀνομίαι· ἡ δεξιὰ αὐτῶν ἐπλήσθη δόρων. A search of the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG) database3 reveals that the above fragment is from the Homilia in medium Pentecostes (CPG 7888; BHG 1488e) by the enigmatic priest Leontius of Constantinople (Sachot 1977:244). Reading on, we discover that the two columns of folio 297r contain, with very slight differences, the last part of Leontius’ homily, namely, lines 471–504 of the critical edition published by Cornelis Datema and Pauline Allen (1987:313–337, here 335–337). Following the apparatus criticus provided by Datema and Allen, it can be seen that the fragment transmitted by the Lavra codex has variant readings in common with the large group of manuscripts which the editors refer to as o (Datema & Allen 1987:308–309). A connection can also be seen with the branch a distinguished by the editors within the o group of manuscripts, particularly with Vindobonensis theologicus gr. 5 (dated 948) (V4) and Parisinus gr. 771 (14th century) (Z). In terms of content, the fragment speaks of the murder of James, the imprisonment of the apostle Peter and Herod’s intention to kill Peter after the Passover, thereby providing an interpretation of Acts 12:1–4 (Allen & Datema 1991:122–135).

Examining the folios further, it becomes evident that the first lines of column a from folio 297v preserve the end of Leontius’ homily Homilia in medium Pentecostes, namely, lines 504–508 in the critical edition by Datema and Allen (1987:337). Column a of folio 297v continues with another homily, which is ascribed to John Chrysostom. The homily is entitled ὁ<ἀνάμαζον> ἀγριευσθένους Κωνσταντινουπόλεις τὸν Χρ<υσοστόμον> εἰς τὸν παραλυτικόν ἐλέξαθε τῇ Μοσαποταμώτῃ καὶ εἰς Μὴ κρίνετε κατ’ ὅψιν. The homily is none other than the Oratio in mesopotenteces (CPG 3236), included in Migne’s Patrologia Graeca among the works of Amphileichus of Iconium (ed. Migne 1862:39:119–130). The fact that it has been transmitted mainly as a sermon on Mid-Pentecost by John Chrysostom1 led Datema to place this sermon among the spuria of Amphileichus in his critical edition of that author’s works (Datema 1978:245–262). The letter of the


4. The letter V is the siglum used by the editors for Vindobonensis theologicus gr. 5. After indicating the name of each manuscript, the author notes the siglum assigned to it by the editors of the text in question.

5. In only one of 14 manuscripts collated by Datema is the sermon attributed to Amphileichus, and even there the attribution was deleted by a later hand. The manuscript in which the name Amphileichus is found is the codex Mosquensis graecus 217 (234). In this manuscript, the sermon’s initial words – present in all the other witnesses – are lacking (Kaiser 2016:123).

6. For a useful overview of the issues of authorship and the structure of the text, see Kaiser 2016. The sermon is not included in the new edition of the works of Amphileichus by Michel Bonnet and Sever J. Voicu (Bonnet & Voicu 2012).
homily does not seem to be attested by any of the manuscripts collated by Datema for his critical edition. Columns a and b of folio 297v preserve lines 5–29 of Datema’s edition (1978:251–252). One can, however, observe several variant readings in common with the αβ2 group of manuscripts, notably Atheniensis EBE 457 (16th century) (B). As for the content of the text, after the opening words, two sayings of Jesus from the gospel according to John (5:8 and 7:16) are very briefly quoted. Then, in an address to the listeners, the homilist indicates that the Lord spoke these words because of the healing of the paralytic (Jn 5:1–15), an account of which has just been read to the congregation, most likely at the celebration of the Eucharist. There follows an exxursus on the equality of the Father and the Son and an affirmation that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit teach the same doctrine.

The text that can be discerned on the recto of the strip glued to the edge of folio 297 is the beginning of a homily. Although some of the letters are not legible due to the mutilation of the strip, it is possible to discern the following title: Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίῳ τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου εἰς ἀνάληψιν τὴν ἀναστάσιν τοῦ Κυρίου...

Further on the it is apparent that their text shares variant readings with the manuscripts Parisinus gr. 582 (10th century) (A) and Atheniensis EBE 457 (B), the latter being very close to the former (Datema 1978:248).

We then come to folio 298. In the first lines of column a on folio 298r, one can read: καὶ κοινῇ τοῖς ἡμῖν δεόντως ἐργάσεται... Καὶ ἀκούσταις τὰ βραβεῖα, καὶ ἐπετειλάμβανα τὰς αἰνέσεις τῶν ἡμῶν Δεσμάτων καὶ τὴν παλαιάν ἐξαιρετικήν... Ψάλτα, καὶ οὗτοι... Διὸ συνήθηκεν... ὕπατες ἁγίας... Λατινός ἡ ἐκ... Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ... «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου»... πιστεύω... Καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἡμῶν λαβὼν, τὸν μέρος ἡ ἀπαρχα... ἐργαστῆται ἐργαστῆται... Καὶ τὴν ἐξ αὐτῶν τὰς αἰνέσεις καὶ τὰς αὐθαίρετας καὶ τὰς ἐκ τῆς ἔκδοσεως... καὶ εἰς τὸν θρόνον... καταλαβοῦν... Καὶ τὸν πατρικὸν θρόνον... τὸν θρόνον τοῦ διδάσκαλου... τὰς αἰνέσεις... Καὶ τὰ βραβεῖα... καὶ τὰ ἐπίσταλα... καὶ οὗτοι... διὸ συνήθηκεν... ὕπατες ἁγίας... Λατινός ἡ ἐκ... Τίς λάβων τῷ τῶν τῆς μέγεθος... καὶ ἐπετειλάμβανα τὰς αἰνέσεις τῶν ἡμῶν Δεσμάτων καὶ τὴν παλαιάν ἐξαιρετικήν...

On the verso, folio 298 also preserves a fragment of the homily In s. apostolam Thomam (CPG 5832), unanimously attributed by the manuscript tradition to John Chrysostom but restored by Leroy to Proclus of Constantinople (Leroy 1967:230). This text in the two columns of folio 298r comes from the homily In s. apostolam Thomam (CPG 5832), which is: 'my God and Lord', 'truly God and really man' (Barkhuizen 2004:32) and the beginning of a credo' (Barkhuizen 2004:32) and the beginning of a

TABLE 1: The text on the recto of the strip added to folio 297 and the introduction of the homily in Ascensionem sermo 2 (CPG 4532) critically edited by Rambault.

| Atheniensis, Laurae A 112 (Eustadiadis 112), recto of the strip glued to the folio 297 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Rambault (2014:305.1–13)         |                                  |

The text in the two columns of folio 298r comes from the homily In s. apostolam Thomam (CPG 5832), unanimously attributed by the manuscript tradition to John Chrysostom but restored by Leroy to Proclus of Constantinople (Leroy 1967:230). This text is paragraphs 11.40.4 to 13.47.4 of the homily (Leroy 1967:245–247). Following Leroy’s apparatus criticus, it is evident that the variant readings have the most in common with the following manuscripts: Hierosolymitanus S. Sabae 1 (10th century) (S), Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (10th century) (T), Oxoniensis Boll. Baroccius 241 (14th–15th centuries) (N), Vaticanus gr. 2079 (9th–10th centuries) (X). With regard to its context, the fragment contains the last words of Jesus’ invitation to Thomas to touch him and Thomas’ credo. Thomas confesses his faith in Jesus’ resurrection, in his victory, and he asserts that from now on he need not seek more. Thomas confesses that he now truly knows who Jesus is: ‘my God and Lord’, ‘truly God and really man’ (Barkhuizen 2001:189–190).

On the verso, folio 298 also preserves a fragment of the homily In s. apostolam Thomam in the two columns. This is paragraph 13.47.4–14.54.3 (Leroy 1967:247–249). One should note that the strip pasted on the verso of this folio covers in places the first letter or letters of the lines in column a. Again, one can find common readings with the codex Hierosolymitanus S. Sabae 1 (S), Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (T), and Vaticanus gr. 2079 (X). In its content, the fragment contains the ‘final part of Thomas’ credo’ (Barkhuizen 2004:32) and the beginning of a response by Jesus that blesses those who, without seeing or touching, believe in him. They are blessed because through faith they see the Unseen One.
On account of the excessive mutilation, it is scarcely possible to read a word or a few letters on each line on the recto of the strip added to folio 298. However, it was not impossible to identify the preserved text. It too is a passage from the homily In s. apostolam Thomam, exactly paragraphs 14.54.3 to 15.58.3 of Leroy’s edition (Leroy 1967:249–250). Following the variant readings given by Leroy in the apparatus criticus of his edition, it is again evident that the text transmitted by their codex shares many readings with three other 10th-century codices that transmit this homily: Hierosolymitanus S. Sabae 1 (S), Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (T), and Vaticanus gr. 2079 (X).

In terms of content, the fragment contains the final part of Jesus’ response to Thomas’ creed and an exhortation by the author that his listeners approach Christ with pure hearts. This exhortation is followed by a prayer to the Lord. On the verso, the strip attached to folio 298 preserves a fragment from the beginning of Leontius of Constantinople’s Homilia in medium Pentecosten (CPG 7888). These are lines 4–25 of the edition published by Datema and Allen (1987:313–314), in which Leontius provides ‘an exposition on the nature of the feast’ (Allen & Datema 1991:118).

The two columns of folio 299r preserve another fragment of the Homilia in medium Pentecosten (CPG 7888) by Leontius. These are lines 105–144 of the edition published by Datema and Allen (1987:318–320). In the case of this fragment too, one can observe, by following the apparatus criticus of the editors, the variant readings common to the group ω1 and in particular the branch α. The content of the fragment is ‘a lively altercation between the homilist and the Jews ... in the course of which reference is made to the cure of the man blind from birth’ (Allen & Datema 1991:118).

On the verso of folio 299r, the strip attached to folio 299 preserves a fragment of the Homilia in medium Pentecosten (CPG 7888) by Leontius. This passage also shares variant readings with the group ω1, and with the textus vulgatus of Migne’s edition, especially branch a. A variant in common with Parisinus gr. 771 (both omit δέσποτα from the sentence ἐκεῖ γὰρ Λάμπουσαν, δέσποτα τὴν λαμπάδα τῆς πίστεως, lines 145–146, ed. Datema & Allen) may lead to placing the text in a closer relationship to this manuscript. There is another omission in Parisinus gr. 771 (it omits τά from the sentence Ἐλισσαῖος δὲ τὰ ὅμοια αὐτῷ οὐ διεπράξατο), which is not found in the manuscript. In their content, the passages present ‘a vivacious debate between the Jews and the blind man’ (Allen & Datema 1991:118).

Although the text is very mutilated, one can still see the connection with the ω1 manuscript group and the textus vulgatus of Migne’s edition. In content, the fragment comes from the introductory part of the sermon, in which the author gives an exposition on the nature of the feast, which is the midpoint ‘of the resurrection of the Master and the coming of the Holy Spirit’ (Allen & Datema 1991:122). On the verso, the strip added to folio 299 also preserves a fragment of the Homilia in medium Pentecosten (CPG 7888), lines 85–105 of the edition published by Datema and Allen (1987:317–318). As in the case of the recto of the strip, the connection with the ω1 group and the textus vulgatus of Migne’s edition is visible, as shown for example in the omission of an entire sentence (line 100 of Datema & Allen’s edition). In terms of content, the fragment is the very beginning of the ‘altercation between the homilist and the Jews’, which started with the latter’s accusation that Jesus was possessed by a demon (Jn 7:20) (Allen & Datema 1991:118).

The last folio of the Lavra codex preserves on the recto, in both columns, another fragment of the homily In Ascensionem sermo 2 (CPG 4532), namely, lines 25–52 of Rambault’s recent edition (pp. 307–309). A close look at Rambault’s critical apparatus reveals that the manuscript has the most variant readings in common with the manuscripts Parisinus gr. 766 (P), Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (Y), Monacensis gr. 146 (M), Athenensis Pantokratoros 26 (K), Parisinus gr. 1175 (J), Marcianus gr. II.46 (G). But again, when a reading is attested by only one of these manuscripts, that reading is not found in the Lavra codex, which prevents us from establishing a closer relationship between it and the rest of the tradition. With regard to content, the fragment includes the homilist’s emphasis on the soteriological role of Christ’s Ascension, whereby people become co-heirs with the Son. It is affirmed that Christ is God and that his Incarnation is not incompatible with his presence in heaven.

The text continues in the two columns on the verso of folio 300, which contain lines 52–79 of Rambault’s recent edition (pp. 309–313). Following Rambault’s critical apparatus, it is again possible to see that the text in the Lavra codex has the most readings in common with the group of manuscripts formed by P, Y, M, K, J, G, especially Y and P. But when a particular reading is attested only by Y or P, that reading is not found in the Lavra codex. In terms of content, the fragment develops the idea that Christ assumed a human body out of his love for humankind in order to reconcile them to the Father and that the Holy Spirit was sent as a guarantee of reconciliation.

On the recto of the strip added to folio 300, a fragment of the Oratio in mesopentecosten (CPG 3236) can be identified, namely lines 43–59 (Datema 1978:253). As the text is very mutilated, it was only possible to observe, with regard to common variant readings with other manuscripts that transmit this homily, that there is a common reading with Vaticanus gr. 1587, (dated 1389) (R), Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (H), Parisinus gr. 582 (A) and Athenensis EBE...
Concluding remarks

The first observation to be made after examining the last four folios of the codex Athonensis, Laura A 112 is that the description given by Lauriotis and Eustratiadis is inaccurate. These folios do not preserve a homily on the healing of the paralytic by John Chrysostom, but they rather contain several fragments of homilies on Thomas, Mid-Pentecost and the Ascension. More precisely, the homilies in question are In s. apostolum Thomam (CPG 5832), Homilia in mediam Pentecosten (CPG 7888), Oratio in mesopentecosten (CPG 3236) and In Ascensionem sermo 2 (CPG 4532). Although preserved only in fragments in the last four folios of the Lavra codex, for two (In s. apostolum Thomam and Oratio in mesopentecosten) of the four homilies the title is preserved. Both are attributed to John Chrysostom. Modern scholars, however, no longer share the copyst’s belief in the Chrysostomic authorship of these two texts. The homily In s. apostolum Thomam was restored by Leroy to Proclus of Constantinople, and it is listed in the Clavis Patrum Graeco among the writings of Proclus of Constantinople, while the Oratio in mesopentecosten, according to Martin Kaiser’s thorough analysis of the text as it has come down to us, cannot be wholly by Amphiloctius of Iconium, although some parts may come from him (Kaiser 2016:137). If one wonders what led the codalisters to state that the folios preserve a homily on the healing of the paralytic by John Chrysostom, it is quite possibly due to the title of the homily beginning on f. 297v (In s. apostolum Thomam and Oratio in mesopentecosten), which is adopted by the editor of the critical edition.

To summarise, the last four folios of the Lavra codex contain the following:

• Folio 301v: Pseudo-Chrysostom, In s. apostolum Thomam (CPG 5832; BHG* 1839), Leroy (1967:249–250), lin. 14.54.3 usque ad 15.58.3.
• Folio 302v: Pseudo-Athanasius, In s. apostolum Thomam (CPG 5832; BHG* 1839), Leroy (1967:249–250), lin. 15.58.3 usque ad 16.58.3.

From the above, it is evident that the actual numbering of the folios is subsequent to the binding of the codex. We would be right to wonder what might be the reason for placing these folios at the end of the Evangelion in a chaotic order, one that in no way points to the intention of appending a text to the end of the gospel book. A reasonable hypothesis is that the four folios at the end of the codex, like the three folios at the beginning of the codex (numbered as folios 1–3), were used as a covering for the Evangelion. The first two folios show the same features as folios 297–300. As their original size was smaller than that of the Evangelion’s folios, a strip of the same manuscript was added to them so that their size was the same as that of the Evangelion’s folios. Folio 1r–v preserves a fragment of the
Finally, a few remarks are in order regarding the possible origin of the last folios of the Lavra codex. Throughout the examination of the folios, the author of this article has carefully followed the variant readings that the fragments share with other manuscripts preserving these homilies, in an attempt to identify a possible ancestor of the manuscript from which the folios originate. It can be seen that only one preserves all five homilies. This is Hierosolymitanus S. Sepulcri 6 (10th century).

Not all the homilies, however, share readings with this manuscript. In the case of homily CPG 7888, the text preserved in the Lavra codex seems to be far removed from that transmitted by the Jerusalem codex, and the same seems to be true of homily CPG 3236. Therefore, the last four folios of the codex Lauras A 112 cannot be a copy of the Jerusalem manuscript but rather are only related to it.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessaloniki (Greece), in particular Anna G. Lyssikatou, who provided him with a microfilmed reproduction of the first and last folios of the codex Athonensis, Lauras A 112.

Competing interests

The author declares that he has no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced him in writing this article.

Author’s contributions

R.G. is the sole author of this article.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

The project was financed by Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu and the Hasso Plattner Foundation research grants (ref. no. LBUS-IRG-2020-06).

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

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