The Inedita Homily In transfigurationem Domini (BHГ° 1980a): A compilation using Proclus of Constantinople

In his inventory of the manuscript tradition of the homilies on the Transfiguration, Maurice Sachot stated that folios 46r–55r of the codex Parisinus graecus 1611 contain the homily In transfigurationem Domini (BHГ° 1980a). He also stated that this text is unedited and that it is most probably a recension of the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980) attributed to Proclus of Constantinople. To date, however, this homily has remained unpublished and unstudied. After a brief presentation of the codex Parisimus graecus 1611, this article brings to light a surprise that emerges from examining folios 46r–55r of the Parisian manuscript.

Contribution: The article proves that the homily In transfigurationem Domini (BHГ° 1980a) is not a recension of the homily on the Transfiguration (CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980), but a compilation for which the beginning of the homily on the Transfiguration attributed to Proclus of Constantinople was used.

Keywords: In transfigurationem Domini; Proclus of Constantinople; CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980; BHГ° 1980a; the Transfiguration.

Introduction

At the end of the 19th century, in his brief description of manuscript 1611 in the Greek collection of the Paris Library, Henri Omont drew attention to the fact that folios 46r–55r contain the homily on the Transfiguration by Patriarch Proclus of Constantinople (‘Procli, CP. Patriarchae, homilia in Transfigurationem’), but without giving any information on the incipit or desinit (Omont 1888:106). In 1968, François Halkin also gave a brief description of the manuscript Parisinus gr. 1611, noting next to folios 46r–55r ‘transfiguratio, oratio Procli BHГ° 1980a’ (Halkin 1968:226). Although he stated that folios 46r–55r contain the homily on the Transfiguration attributed to Proclus of Constantinople, already inventoried in the Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca (BHГ) with the inventory number 1980, Halkin proposed another inventory number, namely 1980a. In the augmented version of the BHГ published in 1969, namely Auctarium Bibliothecae Hagiographicae Graecae (BHГ), Halkin reproduced the incipit and desinit of the homily ( Dxευς, φθεια, και τρόμον... συνένα ὁ τοίος διανοητὸς ὁμόθανος) and drew attention to the fact that this manuscript was omitted by the Jesuit François-Joseph Leroy (1967:100–105) in his inventory of the manuscript tradition of the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980) (ed. Halkin 1969:324). The editors of the third volume of the Clavus Patrum Graecorum (CPГ) placed the number BHГ° 1980a alongside the number BHГ 1980 for the homily on the Transfiguration listed among the works of Proclus of Constantinople (CPГ 5807) (Geerard 1979:136; Geerard & Noret 2003:136). They equate the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980) with the homily on the Transfiguration transmitted by the Paris manuscript. In Nouvum Auctarium Bibliothecae Hagiographicae Graecae (BHГ°), published in 1984, Halkin did not provide any further information about this text, merely reproducing what he had supplied in the earlier editions (ed. Halkin 1984:378). Three years later, in his inventory of the manuscript tradition of the homilies on the Transfiguration, Sachot stated that the homily BHГ° 1980a is an unedited text belonging to Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople, and that it is most probably a recension of BHГ 1980 (‘Il doit s’agir très vraisemblablement d’une recension de BHГ 1980’) (Sachot 1987:110). In 1993, Costas N. Constantinides and Robert Browning, although providing a detailed description of the Parisian codex in their work on dated Greek manuscripts from Cyprus, tell us only that folios 46r–55r contain the homily on the Transfiguration of ‘Proklos, patriarch of Constantinople’, and reproduce the incipit of the text (1993:328).

1. A digital copy of the manuscript is available online at Grec 1611 (Gallica (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b107234374/f57.item)).
2. As of 07 September 2021, the PInakes database, managed by the Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes (IRHT), lists the manuscript Parisinus gr. 1611 among the direct manuscript witnesses of the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPГ 5807; BHГ 1980). PInakes ([In:pruxx], – Notice: Proclus Constantinopolitanus, Hom B: In transfigurationem Domini (https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/6924/).
As far as the present author has been able to ascertain, this is all that is publicly known to date about the text preserved in folios 46r–55r of the manuscript Parisinus gr. 1611. In what follows, I intend to provide a brief introduction to the codex Parisinus gr. 1611, to place the codex among the great collections of manuscripts according to the typology adopted by Albert Ehrhard and generally preserved in hagiographic and liturgical studies and to shed some light on the uncertainty that persists to this day about the contents of folios 46r–55r, which are suspected of either preserving the entire homily *In transfigurationem Domini* (CPG 5807; BHG 1980) or a recension of it.

**The codex Parisinus gr. 1611: Its provenance**

A comprehensive description of the codex Parisinus gr. 1611 did not appear until 1993. Prior to this, the codex had been very briefly described in works on large manuscript collections. For example, Henri Omont, who provided the first information on the origin and content of this codex in his description of the Greek manuscript collection held in the French national library, lists the works preserved in the manuscript and tells us that the manuscript was copied in 1553 by a priest named Demetrius, who is mentioned on a paper, containing 445 folios, and that in the manuscript collection of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, it was inventoried under number 4719 (Omont 1888:106). Further details were to appear in 1950, in an article by Jean Darrouzès on Cypriot manuscripts in the French national library. Jean Darrouzès writes:

> At the same time, it should be observed that in folio 438 the same Demetrius gave the date of his ordination in 1550 and the date of his brother’s death in 1557. It is not the same hand that wrote the colophon. Demetrius could be none other than a companion or the one who commissioned the manuscript. The volume became the property of John Logaras, according to folio Ar, and later became the property of the monastery of Arakos [in Cyprus], according to folio Av (Darrouzès 1950:191) (Author’s own translation).

Costas N. Constantinides and Robert Browning were to describe the contents of the manuscript in detail, providing the *incipit* of each individual text and the number in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (Constantinides & Browning 1993:327–329). Also, by carefully reading the colophon in red at folio 437v, they were able to clarify the question of the manuscript’s origin. According to this colophon, ‘the precise date of the completion of the volume is Wednesday, 07 June 1553’ and the priest Demetrios Demetrakes is not the scribe of the volume, but the sponsor of the manuscript (Constantinides & Browning 1993:329). Apart from folios 31v–33v, because of an anonymous hand, the volume has been copied by ‘ἀρχηγὸν τὸν Πέτρον Βλαστέστη’ (Constantinides 2000:272; Constantinides & Browning 1993:329). Constantinides and Browning (1993:331) also supply details of the manuscript illuminations, binding, quire composition and later notes.

**The codex Parisinus gr. 1611: Its place in the great manuscript collections**

Concerning the place of this codex among the great manuscript collections, we find information on this in the fourth volume of Ehrhard’s work on the Tradition of the hagiographic and homiletic literature of the Greek Church (Ehrhard 1952). This codex is listed by Ehrhard in the category of ‘mixed collections’ (*die gemischten Sammlungen*) (1952:792–874) of the large group of ‘post-metaphrastic collections’ (*die nachmetaphrastischen Sammlungen*) (1952:789–894). The ‘post-metaphrastic collections’, together with the ‘pre-metaphrastic collections’ (*die vormetaphrastischen Sammlungen*), are the two parts of what Ehrhard called ‘non-menological collections’ (*die nichtmenologischen Sammlungen*), which he defines as those hagiographic or homiletic manuscripts whose texts are not ordered according to the criteria of the calendar of saints or the movable church year, but follow each other randomly in an eclectic mix (1952:725–727). Ehrhard rejects the hypothesis that these collections are based on a different calendar of saints. He bases his rejection of the hypothesis on the fact that such mixed collections are found in all the larger manuscript collections next to the other collections, which are all arranged according to the single Byzantine calendar and the same single church year. Ehrhard is keen to point out, however, that one thing can be deduced from this lack of liturgical order, namely that these texts were not usually intended for the official Liturgy. Rather, they were intended for private reading, for which the exact order and sequence of feasts and Sundays of the Church year was unnecessary. Their design for private use can be further deduced from the fact that most of them are in small format, unlike large liturgical collections, which have a large format. Thus, Ehrhard suggests, it was very easy to place them on a private bookshelf. Furthermore, texts maintained in private collections had the advantage of evading the process of living evolution to which the officially read texts were subjected (Ehrhard 1952:725–727). Ehrhard’s hypothesis that such collections were intended for private use seems to explain why only a single manuscript witness is known for the homily *In transfigurationem Domini* (BHG 1980a).

It is surprising, however, that Ehrhard does not mention folios 46r–55r in his description of the codex. He is very attentive to hagiographic texts, distinguishing between pre-metaphrastic and metaphrastic ones. He also comments on the Constantinopolitan origin of the nine homilies provided as readings for Sundays 10–12, 14 and 15, in which the Gospel of Luke is read, and for the Sundays 2–5, in which they are read from the Gospel of Matthew, but says nothing here about folios 46r–55r (Ehrhard 1952:865–867).

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3. Erroneous information, as we will see below.

4. Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), former minister to King Louis XIV (1643–1715) during the years 1661–1683. With regard to the question of when the codex came into Colbert’s possession, Donald Jackson has provided some information. According to him, the manuscript arrived from Cyprus in Paris on 23 November 1677 (Jackson 2010:53). Jackson relies on the arrival lists of Colbert’s manuscripts, published by Omont in the second volume of his Missions (1902:975–977). It passed to the Royal Library in 1732 and thus later became part of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

5. From these mixed collections, the dates of the feasts are usually missing and are replaced by order numbers. Also missing are the headings for each day and the order numbers (Ehrhard 1952:726).
A first close look at the folios 46r–55v of the codex Parisinus gr. 1611

An examination of folios 46r–55v brings to light an unexpected surprise. As the text preserved by these folios is unedited, I will provide here the first transcription of folios 46r–48v. In order not to clutter up the footnotes, I will not provide the incipit, nor will I provide here the first transcription of folios 47r. The first part of the homily on the Transfiguration in the codex Parisinus gr. 1611 brings to light an unexpected surprise. As the text preserved by these folios is unedited, I will provide here the first transcription of folios 46r–48v. In order not to clutter up the footnotes, I will not provide the incipit, nor will I provide here the first transcription of folios 47r. The first part of the homily on the Transfiguration under the name of Saint Proclus, Archbishop of Constantinople (Τοῦ ἐν ἱερός πατρὸς ἤμων Πρόκλου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, λόγος εἰς τὴν μεταμόρφωσιν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) has been published in volume 5 (1862:65:74B1–758B). In addition to some grammatical differences, there are a few omissions, invariances and word substitutions in the Paris manuscript text. For example, the Paris manuscript omits ἀφθόνως μεριζόμενον (’it generously shares’) (Daley 2013:89) from the first sentence of the homily (see Table 2). On folio 47r (lines 3–4), we read ἐρυθρὰ τὰ συστήματα instead of τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης τὰ συστήματα (Migne 1862:65:74C3.4). 

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The similarity with the homily CPG 5807, however, stops abruptly at the end of folio 48r, when the text from Mk 9:1 is quoted. What follows is a passage that bears a very close resemblance to the section on the Transfiguration in Catena in Marcum, edited by Cramer,16 and to the first part of the Synaxarion of Constantinople (or Synaxarion of the Great Church) and the Byzantine Synaxarion on the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on 6 August. Before appearing in Catena in Marcum and as a notice for the Synaxarion of Constantinople, the beginning of the second element of our composite text is first and above all borrowed from the beginning of Chrysostom’s homily 56 in Matthaeum (ed. Migne 1862:58:549.10–21), which is devoted to the exegesis of the episode of the Transfiguration. Sachot recalls in his article of 1983 that the Chrysostomic commentary on the Gospel of Matthew was a source of the section II of the exegetical chain on Mark (Sachot 1983:124; see also Geerard 1980:236). In the following, I will present this similarity by placing in a table the text transmitted by the Parisian manuscript, the beginning of Chrysostom’s homily 56 in Matthaeum, the beginning of the exegesis to the episode of the Transfiguration in Catena in Marcum, and also the beginning part of the Synaxarion to the Transfiguration (see Table 4).

### Concluding remarks

As discussed, the homily In transfigurationem Domini (BHG 1980a) is not a recension of the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPG 5807; BHG 1980), nor is it another homily on the Transfiguration by Archbishop Proclus of Constantinople. Rather, it is a compilation in the composition of which the author decided to use the beginning of the homily CPG 5807 (ed. Migne 1862:65:764B1–765B8). If he were still alive, Michel Aubineau would probably have once again exclaimed ‘un inédit fantôme disparaît’, as he did when he dashed the Bollandist Halkin’s hopes for the existence of an unknown homily attributed to Proclus in the manuscript Metochii Sancti Sepulchri (today Atheniensis) 163, sac. XVI (Aubineau 1983:424). So we are not wrong to say that folios 46r–48r are the first indirect manuscript witness to the homily In transfigurationem Domini (CPG 5807; BHG 1980), and that the manuscript Parisinus gr. 1611 should be added to the list of indirect witnesses, alongside the manuscripts Vaticanus gr. 604 and Romanus Angelicus gr. 125 (T.1.7) (see Gárbacea 2021a, 2021b). Note that unlike the first two indirect witnesses, which transmit passages from the homily CPG 5807 under the name of John Chrysostom, the third indirect witness transmits the fragment under the name of Proclus.

Finally, it is legitimate to wonder who compiled this homily for the composition of which the homily CPG 5807 and Catena in Marcum were used. What is certain is that to date no other manuscript witness is known. This does not exclude the possibility that the author of this homily was a disciple of Proclus and that he used the manuscript CPG 5807 and Catena in Marcum to compose his work. However, the manuscript’s author cannot be known.

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16For his edition, Cramer used an 11th century codex, Parisinus gr. 178, and two 11th century manuscripts, Parisinos Cod. 23 and Parisinos Cod. 35. According to the Pinales database, there are currently no less than 30 known manuscript records for Catena in Marcum. Pinales ([Pinales – Notice: Catenas, in Marcum (http://pinales.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/8183/), last accessed on 06 October 2021. On the origins of the Catena in Marcum, see Lamb (2012:27–73).

17The copy used by Peter Blabester seems to belong to the same family of manuscripts as cod. Laurentians Plutus gr. 6.18, saec. 10, available online at Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana - Scuola Digitale [blonline.it], last accessed on 16.10.2021. Compare, for example, ff. 48v–49r of Parisinus gr. 1611 with f. 113v of the Florence codex. It can be seen that the differences are very small.

18μαθήν cod.

19διὰ τούτων cod.

20γείωται cod.

21Συνακονίσατον cod.

22συναλλαγέως cod.
possibility that the copyist Peter Blabestes compiled this text. Although he wants to humble himself by claiming in the colophon at the end of the manuscript (f. 437v) that he does not know the divine teachings, and he puts the completion of the writing of the manuscript down to divine help (καὶ χαρὰς συγχώρησεν διὰ τῶν Κύριον, ὅτι ἡμᾶς ύπάρχων τῶν εἰρήνων γραμματίων), nevertheless his self-proclaimed status as a ‘reader’ (ἀναγνώστης) tells us that he was very familiar with the patristic writings. Such a hypothesis waits, of course, to be proved.

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Author’s contributions

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

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