

# Translating the Past, (Re-)shaping History ? :

Translation Issues in Late Antique and Medieval Christian  
Historiographical Sources in the Middle East



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INSTITUT ORIENTALISTE DE LOUVAIN

May 30, 2015  
10AM-5PM  
ISAW Lecture Hall

Institute for the Study of the Ancient World  
New York University

Late antique and Medieval Christian historiographical corpuses often result from multi-step composition and transmission processes, accumulating successive layers of historical knowledge. Given the cultural diversity of the Middle East, those derive, in many cases, from older sources composed in a different linguistic (and sometimes religious) environment. In this perspective, this workshop intends to address the issue of the impact of the translation processes on the actual historical content of such corpuses, occurring whether in their composition or in their later transmission. Accordingly, the question of the edition of such multilingual textual traditions will also be addressed. Texts in the following languages will be taken into consideration: Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, Greek and Syriac.

Organized by Dr. Perrine Pilette (ISAW)  
in collaboration with the Centre d'études orientales - Institut orientaliste de Louvain (CIOL) of the Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium)

Cover photo:  
St Mercurius killing the emperors Julian and Decius.  
Painting by Ibrāhīm al-Nāsikh, 1777.  
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- 10:00am - Roger Bagnall (Leon Levy Director, ISAW), Perrine Pilette (ISAW)  
Welcome & Introduction
- 10:10am - Muriel Debié (EPHE/CNRS, Paris)  
*Lost in Translation: The Reconstruction of the Distant Past in Christian Syriac Historiography*
- 10:50am - Coffee Break
- 11:20am - Johannes den Heijer (UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve)  
*The International Copto-Arabic Historiography Project (ICAFP): How to Deal with the History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria as a Translated, Multi-layered, Fluid, and Open Text Tradition in Arabic*
- 12:00pm - Manhal Makhoul (UCL / FNRS, Louvain-la-Neuve)  
*The Independent Recension of the History of Patriarchs of Alexandria. Adaptation and Reception in the Syriac Milieu*
- 12:40pm - Lunch Break
- 1:40pm - Scott F. Johnson (Georgetown / Dumbarton Oaks)  
*Ecclesiastical History (in absentia): Eusebian Trajectories across Greek and Syriac Chronicles*
- 2:20pm - Andrea Schmidt (UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve)  
*The Syriac World History of Michael the Syrian in its Armenian Adaptation (13th c.): A Case Study of Acculturation and Transformation of Shared Christian History in the Near East*
- 3:00pm - Tea and Coffee Break
- 3:30pm - Robert Hoyland (ISAW)  
*Greek to Arabic Translations from the Early Islamic Period*
- 4:10pm - Ilse De Vos (King's College, London)  
*Crossing Cultural Borders: The Multilingual Tradition of the Quaestiones ad Antiochum Ducem*