

I.
THE HAGIOGRAPHICAL DOSSIER
OF EUPHROSYNE OF ALEXANDRIA

According to the late antique narratives, Euphrosyne was a wealthy young woman in fifth-century Alexandria who disguised herself as a man and lived in a monastery for the rest of her life¹. By this ruse, she escaped her father, who wanted her to marry and to take on the business and wealth of the family. Euphrosyne thus belongs to a well-known gallery of late antique women in the eastern Mediterranean who fought against their parents and marriage, refusing the social conventions of the time in order to choose freely a Christian life of full dedication to God in an ascetic environment².

Many of these heroines achieved immense popularity: Eugenia, Pelagia, Euphrasia, Thais, Marina, among many others. A number of them share with Euphrosyne the motif of the *monachoparthenos*, the female transvestite who enters a monastery or becomes a hermit in the desert: Pelagia (adopting the name of Pelagius), Marina (Marinus), Eugenia (Eugenius), Athanasia of Antioch (Athanasius), Theodora of Alexandria (Theodorus), Hilaria (Hilarion), Apollinaria (Dorotheus), and Anastasia the Patrician, among others³. Already

1. On Euphrosyne of Alexandria, see H. Grieser, *Euphrosyne*, in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3, Freiburg 1995, col. 993; J. Darrouzès, 2. *Euphrosyne*, in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, Paris 1963, vol. 15, p. 1417; F. W. Bautz, *Euphrosyne*, in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, 1, 1990, 1559; P. Bertocci, s.v. *Eufrosina*, in F. Caraffa and G. Morelli (eds.), *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, Roma 1964 (vol. 5), cols. 175.

2. An introduction to Euphrosyne and her significance in the history of late antique mentalities can be found in Joseph Reisdorfer, «C'est l'habit qui fait le moine». *Édition de la version valenciennoise de la «Vita Sanctae Euprosynae» (BHL 2722)*, «Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum», 15 (2011), pp. 227-48, at pp. 227-34. See also L. Lozzi Gallo, *S. Eufrosina: La Vita in inglese medio nella prospettiva della tradizione europea occidentale*, in A. Cipolla and M. Nicoli (eds.), *Testi agiografici e omiletici del medioevo germanico: Atti del XXXII Convegno dell'Associazione Italiana di Filologia Germanica* (Verona, 8-10 giugno 2005), Verona 2006 (Medioevi. Studi 7), pp. 255-86, at pp. 255-64.

3. E. Patlagean, *L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine et l'évolution de la sainteté féminine à Byzance*, «Studi Medievali», 3/17 (1976), pp. 597-623 (a list of transvestite female saints is provided on pp. 600-2). See also J. Anson, *The Female Transvestite in Early Monasticism: The Ori-*

Thecla, one of the earliest paradigms of female sanctity, used garments modelled on male clothes for a certain period of time⁴. A few assumed the identity of a eunuch, such as Euphrosyne, who called herself Smaragdus ('emerald', or any precious stone of a bright green colour)⁵. The stories are usually staged in the cities of Alexandria, Constantinople, and Antioch, and were probably composed in the sixth century in that area. All of them share a common feature: the refusal of social conventions and earthly riches, and the rejection of the role that was predetermined for, and imposed upon, them.

This group of hagiographical accounts and these sorts of themes achieved a large circulation in ascetic and monastic milieux in the eastern Mediterranean in the sixth and seventh centuries. They travelled in clusters, often together with other works of ascetic and edificatory literature, usually related to Egypt and the Middle East, such as the so-called *Vitae patrum*. Symptomatically, Euphrosyne's father is called Paphnutius, a typical name in this sort of story: this is the name of three distinct monks in Palladius' *Historia Lausiaca*;

gin and Development of a Motif, «Viator», 5 (1974), pp. 1-32 (pp. 15-6 on Euphrosyne); V. L. Bullough, *Transvestites in the Middle Ages*, «American Journal of Sociology», 79 (1974), pp. 1381-94, at pp. 1384-7; Id., *Cross Dressing and Gender Role Change in the Middle Ages*, in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, London 1996, pp. 223-42, at pp. 228-9; J. T. Schulenburg, *Forgetful of Their Sex: Female Sanctity and Society, ca. 500-1100*, Chicago 1998, pp. 155-66 (on tonsure and male clothing); M. Delcourt, *Female Saints in Masculine Clothing*, in *Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*, trans. J. Nicholson, London 1961, pp. 84-102, at p. 101; Id., *Le complexe de Diane dans l'hagiographie chrétienne*, «Revue de l'Histoire des Religions», 153 (1958), pp. 1-33 (on Euphrosyne, pp. 4-5); P. E. Szarmach, *St. Euphrosyne: Holy Transvestite*, in P. E. Szarmach (ed.), *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, Albany (NY) 1996, pp. 353-66; N. Delierneux, *Virilité physique et sainteté féminine dans l'hagiographie orientale du IV^e au VII^e siècle*, «Byzantion», 67 (1997), pp. 179-243; V. R. Hotchkiss, *Clothes Make the Man: Female Cross Dressing in Medieval Europe*, New York 1996, pp. 13-4; C. L. Lubinsky, *Removing Masculine Layers to Reveal a Holy Womanhood: the Female Transvestite Monks of Late Antique Eastern Christianity*, Turnhout 2013 (Studia Traditionis Theologiae, vol. 13), pp. 33 and 187-9; Lozzi Gallo, *S. Eufrosina* cit., pp. 260-4.

4. G. Dagron, *Vie et miracles de Sainte Thècle*, Brussels 1978 (Subsidia hagiographica 62), p. 37 (see *Vita*, 14, p. 224; 25, p. 268); K. Aspegren, *The Male Woman: A Feminine Ideal in the Early Church*, Stockholm 1990 (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis 4: Uppsala women's studies: A, 4), pp. 99-114. Some authors associate this sort of story with the encratism and the doctrines of Eustathius of Sebaste, condemned at the Council of Gangra (A.D. 345): D. G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy*, Oxford 2007, pp. 133-4; S. Elm, «*Virgins of God*»: *The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 1994, pp. 106-11; Aspegren, *The Male Woman* cit., pp. 116-8; Schulenburg, *Forgetful of Their Sex* cit., pp. 162-3; Anson, *The Female Transvestite* cit., pp. 10-1.

5. Patlagean, *L'histoire de la femme déguisée* cit., pp. 606-8; K. M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium*, Chicago 2003, pp. 13 and 120. An earlier study is B. de Gaiffier, *Palatins et eunuques dans quelques documents hagiographiques*, «Analecta Bollandiana», 75 (1957), pp. 17-46.

it is also the name of a monk in Rufinus' *Historia Monachorum*, among other examples.

The history of the transmission and circulation of the narrative of Euphrosyne's life and deeds, and of her father Paphnutius, is complex and fascinating. Very early, probably in the late sixth century, a Greek *Bios* was composed (BHG 625-625b). This anonymous account circulated widely. It was copied, modified, and adapted to different audiences, always anonymously. More than fifty medieval manuscripts survive, the earliest dating to the early tenth century. Eventually, Euphrosyne was introduced into the Byzantine liturgy. The Synaxarion Constantinopolitanum, which assembled materials of the ninth and tenth centuries, celebrated Euphrosyne on 25 September, and incorporated a short account of her life⁶. Likewise the so-called Typikon of the Great Church of Constantinople, composed in the late ninth century⁷, and the menology produced for Basil II (976-1025). Most of the extant copies of the *Bios* from the tenth to the twelfth century are in menologies, produced in the eastern Mediterranean and in Italo-Greek communities. Her feast day is always 25 September⁸.

The *Bios* was translated into other languages. In the eastern Mediterranean, we have versions in Syriac (BHO 288-9)⁹, Armenian (BHO 290-

6. H. Delahaye, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi, adiectis synaxariis selectis*, Brussels 1902 (*Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*), cols. 77-8.

7. J. Mateos, *Le typicon de la Grande Église*, Ms. Ste.-Croix 40, X^e siècle. *Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes*, t. I. *Le cycle des douze mois*, Rome 1962 (*Orientalia christiana analecta*, 165). Other than Jerusalem, Sainte Croix 40, copied around 950/959, we have one other early manuscript, Patmos 266, s. IX-X (the *Bios* is on fols. 110r-2r).

8. In the Middle Ages, other texts telling the story of Euphrosyne were composed. In the tenth century, Symeon Metaphrastes wrote a *Life of Euphrosyne* (BHG 626; PG 114, 305-22, from Paris, BnF, gr. 1526). See L. Franco, *Rewriting the Life of Euphrosyne* (BHG 625, BHG 626), in P. Farmhouse Alberto, P. Chiesa and M. Goullet, *Understanding Hagiography: Studies in the Textual Transmission of Early Medieval Saints' Lives*, Florence 2020 (*Quaderni di Hagio-graphica*, 17), pp. 113-126. In the thirteenth century, a *Life* in verse appears in a *synaxarium metricum* (BHG 626n).

9. The version BHO 289 (*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis*, ed. P. Peeters, Bruxelles 1954 (*Subsidia hagiographica*, 10)), is a translation *ad verbum* of the Greek *Bios*, copied by John the Stylite, of Beth-Mari-Ḳaddisha, in Qanūn, near Antioch, in 778. John copied an anthology of fifteen female saints' *Lives*. Some of them are common in this sort of context, such as Thecla, Eugenia, Pelagia, Marina, Euphemia, Theodosia, among others. John's copy is today in MS Sinai, St- Catherine Monastery, Syr. 30 (Kamil 74). It is a palimpsest, our anthology in the upper script (in the under script we have a copy of the Old Syriac Gospels). It is worth noting that we have a few Greek manuscripts from this monastery (see Chapter 2). The anthology is edited and translated by Anne Smith Lewis, in *Select Narratives of Holy Women from the Syro-Antiochene or Sinai Palimpsest as Written Above the Old Syriac Gospels by John the*

1)¹⁰, and Arabic¹¹. Some centuries later, we have translations in a variety of vernacular languages¹². But it was in the Latin-speaking world that this anonymous text achieved its greatest success¹³. As far as we can reconstruct from the available evidence, we have three different translations, each one deriving from a particular line of transmission of the Greek text.

Stylite, of Beth-Mari-Qanūn in A.D. 778, London 1900 (Studia Sinaitica, 9-10), vol. I. *Syriac Text*, pp. 61-80; vol. II. *Translation*, pp. 46-59 (the translation was reprinted in «Vox Benedictina. A Journal of Translations from Monastic Sources», 1/3 (1984), pp. 140-56). Version BHO 288 is published in P. Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, t. V, Paris 1895, pp. 386-405. Bedjan used Paris, BnF, Syriac 23, a. 1192, Antioch (Syria), fols. 213v-214v, collated with London, BL, add. 14649, fols. 19 fols., s. IX. For the manuscripts, see Jeanne-Nicole Mellon Saint-Laurent et al., "Euphrosyne (text)", in J.-N. Mellon Saint-Laurent and D. A. Michelson (eds.), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Syriaca Electronica*. The Syriac Reference Portal, 2015. Entry published 5 November 2015.

10. The editions are identified in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* (BHO). BHO 290 and 291 are different redactions of the same text. The latter is in Nerses Sarkissian (ed.), *Lives of the Holy Fathers and Their Politeia According to the Double Translation of the Ancestors*, Venice 1855, vol. 1, and is based on Jerusalem, Library of the Armenian Patriarchate, 228, which is a copy of Jerusalem, Library of the Armenian Patriarchate, 285, made in 1430 at the monastery of St. Anthony the Great in Kaffa, Crimea. In 1443, it was transferred to Jerusalem, where it was the model of Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, 228. In this manuscript, a colophon after the *Vita Onophri* (f. 299) states that in 1110 Gregory III revised an earlier translation of this *Vita* in Egypt. We do not know if the same applies to the *Vita Euphrosynae*. See A. Avagyan, *The Armenian Transmission of the «Apophthegmata Patrum»*, in S. Ashbrook Harvey, T. Arentzen, H. Rydell Johnsen, and A. Westergren (eds.), *Wisdom on the Move: Late Antique Traditions in Multicultural Conversation. Essays in Honor of Samuel Rubenson*, Leiden and Boston 2020 (Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*. Texts and Studies of Early Christian Life and Language 161), pp. 147-65, at pp. 159-61, with bibliography. On Jerusalem 228, see N. Bogharian (ed.), *Grand Catalogue of St. James Manuscripts*, Jerusalem 1966, vol. 1, p. 615; N. Stone, *The Kaffa Lives of the Desert Fathers: A Study in Armenian Manuscript Illumination*, Louvain 1997 (CSCO 566, Subs. 94), pp. 30-2; on Jerusalem 285, see N. Stone, *The Kaffa Manuscript of the Lives of the Desert Fathers* in T. Samuelian and M. Stone (eds.), *Medieval Armenian Culture*, Chico CA 1983 (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 6), pp. 329-342, repr. in N. Stone, *Studies in Armenian Art: Collected Papers*, Leiden and Boston 2019 (Armenian Texts and Studies 2), pp. 11-24; Stone, *The Kaffa Lives of the Desert Fathers* cit., pp. 27-45 (a description of the manuscript), pp. 165-9 (on Euphrosyne). I am most grateful to Mariapia Muccigrosso for her kind help on the Armenian redactions.

11. M. Kamil, *Sainte Euphrosyne, vierge d'Alexandrie*, in *Tome commémoratif du millénaire de la Bibliothèque Patriarcale d'Alexandrie*, Alexandria 1953 (Publications de l'Institut d'études orientales de la Bibliothèque patriarcale d'Alexandrie, 2), pp. 231-60. On the *dossier* of Euphrosyne in Arabic, see pp. 233-4.

12. Information and bibliography can be found in Joseph Reisdorfer's website *Vita Sancte Eufrosine* (see below p. 60).

13. A. Siegmund, *Die Überlieferung der griechischen christlichen Literatur in der lateinischen Kirche bis zum zwölften Jahrhundert*, Munich 1949 (Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Benediktiner-Akademie 5), p. 235.

One of them, classified 2722 in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*, which I designate «Translation A», Redaction 1, descends from an exemplar in a high stemmatic position. It may have been produced between the seventh and the mid-eighth century. The earliest extant copy, Montpellier H 55, was produced in Francia in the early ninth century, possibly for a high-ranking female audience in Troyes, and presents indications of being copied from an ancient Merovingian exemplar. Another redaction of the same translation is the *Vita Castissimae* (BHL 1640), which Baudouin de Gaiffier classified as a “doublet” of Euphrosyne¹⁴ – actually, Castissima, the Latin translation of the heroine’s name, is also the name of the protagonist in the manuscripts of BHL 2722. This redaction is found in a tenth-century collection of female saints’ *lives*, assembled in the south of Burgos, Kingdom of León.

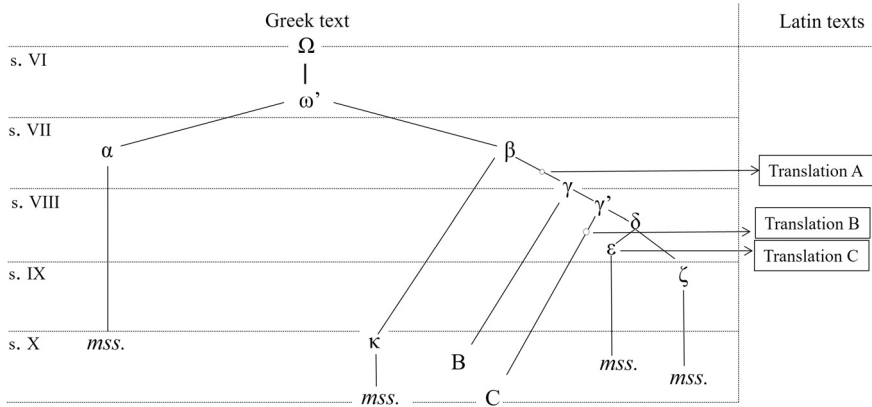
A second translation (BHL 2723-2723A, «Translation B») derives from a different line of transmission. This line of transmission was a reworked redaction offering substantial additions, represented, among the manuscripts used in the present edition, by the tenth-century Paris, BnF, grec 1538. This translation was by far the most widely read Latin version of the *Vita Euphrosynae* in the Middle Ages. Over one hundred copies produced up to the fifteenth century survive. The earliest copies were produced in the late eighth and early ninth century in Carolingian Francia (Würzburg, M.p.th.q. 26; Düsseldorf B. 3). Usually, this version circulated in ascetic and monastic contexts, often connected with a female audience.

A third translation (BHL 2725, «Translation C») descends from a line of the Greek transmission which I call ε. Unlike the two Latin translations, this one never achieved a wide circulation. It is found in a manuscript of Pacificus of Verona (Verona, Bibl. Cap. XCV [90]), inside a collection of female saints’ *lives*, and in a few later Italian manuscripts¹⁵.

14. B. de Gaiffier, *Les «doublets» en hagiographie latine*, «Analecta Bollandiana», 96 (1978), pp. 261-9, at p. 264.

15. In the Middle Ages, other texts on Euphrosyne were composed. In Montecassino, Biblioteca della Badia, 140, eleventh century, we have a different *Vita* (BHL 2724): inc. *Fuit vir quidam in Alexandria, Paphnutius nomine, dives valde et honorabilis*. This text is given in Appendix 1. In a manuscript of the third quarter of the thirteenth-century (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 377, fols. 109r-109v), we have a metrical *Life* (BHL 2725d). In fifteenth-century Novara, Biblioteca Capitolare, 27, fols. 29r-32r, we find a different text (BHL 2725e). A *Vita metrica* (BHL 2726f), possibly composed by Gehard of Grafschaft (†1172), is found in Darmstadt Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek 749, Part II (fols. 89-146), fols. 129r-36v, a manuscript written in the third quarter of the twelfth century in Grafschaft, St. Alexander abbey. See F. Dolbeau and J.-Y. Tilliette, *Vie métrique de sainte Pélagie attribuable à Gevehardus de Grafschaft*, in *Pélagie la Pénitente: métamorphoses d'une légende, Tome II. La survie dans les littératures européennes*, Paris 1984, pp. 129-44, at p. 129. Another *Vita metrica* survives in Wien, ÖNB 488, fols. 47r-49r (BHL 2726d), and was published by Franz Unterkircher in *Zwei Vers-Viten des 13 Jhs.* (Hl.

In sum, the main lines of transmission of the Greek text and Latin translations in the Middle Ages can roughly be represented as follows:



The meaning and details of this diagram will be discussed in the following chapters.

In general, the diffusion of the *Vita Euphrosynae* in the western regions of the Mediterranean prior to the twelfth century in its various redactions and translations was not especially connected to liturgical needs, in contrast to what we observe in the eastern Mediterranean. The Latin copies are usually not found in hagiographical collections *per circulum anni* – and whenever they are, they lack the feast day – but in anthologies of ascetic and edificatory literature, together with similar *Vitae*, such as those of Marina or Pelagia.

Nevertheless, Euphrosyne is recorded in the major Carolingian martyrologies, though she was not included in earlier martyrologies, such as the *Martyrology of Jerome* and that attributed to Bede. She appears for the first time in the so-called *Anonymous of Lyons*, composed in the first years of the ninth century¹⁶. Modelled on an exemplar of the so-called “second family” of the martyrology attributed to Bede, it presents a summary of the *Vita Euphrosynae* on 1 January¹⁷:

Ursula und Hl. Euphrosyne in der Wiener Handschrift cod. 488, «Analecta Bollandiana», 88 (1970), pp. 301-16 (at pp. 311-6). A Vita metrica (BHL 2726), inc. Euphrosyna, tuam fer opem mihi, expl. ciuis Alexandriae Paphnutius fuit urbis, is printed in AASS, Febr. t. II, p. 536, from a manuscript from Trier.

16. A synthesis of the origins and the date of composition, at some point before 806 or 807 at the latest, is offered in F. Peloux, *Lyon au temps d'Agobard, réceptacle hispanique et laboratoire hagiographique*, in M.-C. Isaïa, F. Bougard, and A. Charansonnet (eds.), *Lyon dans l'Europe carolingienne. Autour d'Agobard (816-2016)*, Turnhout 2019 (HAMA 36), pp. 75-92, at pp. 79-82.

17. Paris, BnF, lat. 3879, fols. 68r-96v, on fol. 68v. The text is in J. Dubois and G. Renaud, *Édition pratique des martyrologes de Bède, de l'Anonyme Lyonnais, et de Florus*, Paris 1976, pp.

Et apud Alexandriam, transitus sanctae Eufrosinae uirginis, quae orationibus patris sui Pafnutii de sterili matre progenita, in puellari aetate constituta, clam se tonderi fecit et monasticam uitam expetiuit, Smaragdi sibi nomen imponens. Deinde etiam recludi se fecit, atque in eadem reclusionem uiginti et octo annis in omni sanctitate perdurans, tacta aegrotationis incommodo et mortem sibi adesse cognoscens, manifestauit se patri. Cumque quieuisset, sepulta est a fratribus in ecclesia.

The martyrology attributed to Florus, the “first recension” of which is considered to have been compiled before 837, does not follow the *Anonymous of Lyons*, its main source, giving instead a very short entry: *apud Alexandriam sanctae Euphrosynae uirginis*¹⁸.

The martyrology of Ado, compiled between 853 and 860, perhaps around 855, offers the same entry as the *Anonymous of Lyons*, with a small addition: instead of *manifestauit se patri*, it has the more emotional *manifestauit se religioso et lacrimis multoties quaerenti patri*¹⁹. Wandalbert of Prüm, in his metrical martyrology composed between 830 and 850, likely in 848, only records the name of the saint: *Eufrosina simul nitet*²⁰. In contrast, Hrabanus Maurus’ martyrology, written between 843 and 854, ignores the saint entirely²¹. The martyrology of Usuard, finished shortly after 858 and before the acquaintance of Usuard with Eulogius of Córdoba’s death, in March 859, repeats Florus’ notice²².

Finally, the martyrology of Notker the Stammerer, composed between 890 and 912 at the abbey of St Gallen, reproduces Ado’s entry found in the MS St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek 454, and adds a concluding *cuius nomen et conuersatio sub interpretatione Castissimae apud Romanos celebris habetur*²³.

5-6. The edition exhibits some changes relative to the manuscript: *alexandriam*: *alexandrinam* cod.; *smaragdi*: *ismaragdi* cod.; *includi*: *inclusi* cod.; *cum*: *cumque* cod. The date 1 January is found in copies of the eleventh century. Interestingly, the *Martyrology of Jerome* offers a bishop of Nicomedia *Euphrosynus* on 1 January (AASS Nov. 2.1, p. 57; see Paris, BnF, lat. 10837, Part I (fols. 2-33), written in 703/710 at Echternach by Laurentius for Archbishop Willibrord, fol. 3r, and Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek, Weissenburg 81, copied in 772 at, or for, St Servatius of Maastricht, fol. 12r: *Nicomedia Eufrosini episcopi, Primiani (Priani in the Paris manuscript) et aliorum VIII*). Perhaps this may explain the day of Euphrosyne.

18. I quote from Paris, BnF, lat. 9085, s. X ex.-XI in., poss. Notre-Dame de Clermont-Ferrand, fol. 8r. The text is in Dubois and Renaud, *Édition pratique* cit., p. 165 (not a critical edition).

19. J. Dubois and G. Renaud, *Le martyrologe d’Adon. Ses deux familles, ses trois recensions. Texte et commentaire*, Paris 1984 (Sources d’Histoire Médiévale), p. 43.

20. Paris, BnF, lat. 2832, s. IX med., copied by Manno of Saint-Oyan in Lyons, fols. 72r-97r (on fol. 80v). edited by E. Dümmler, *Poetae latini Aevi Carolini*, Berlin 1884 (MGH), vol. 2, p. 578, v. 7. In Città del Vaticano, BAV, Reg. lat. 438, a. 855-864, Reichenau, made for Lothar I, it is on fol. 2v.

21. J. McCulloh, *Rabani Mauri Martyrologium*, Turnhout 1979 (CCCM 44), p. 5.

22. See Paris, BnF, lat. 13745, a. 858-865, Saint-Germain-des-Prés, fol. 6v. J. Dubois, *Le martyrologe d’Usuard. Texte et commentaire*, Brussels 1965 (Subsidia hagiographica, 40), p. 152.

23. St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 456, p. 3.

In spite of the martyrologies, a fact is that the *Vita Euphrosynae* rarely appeared as a liturgical piece in western medieval Christendom up to the twelfth century. Above all, the account of Euphrosyne's life remained a beautiful story for enlightenment and inspiration²⁴.

Over the course of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the *Vita Euphrosynae* was transmitted from generation to generation, providing one more example of female sanctity and a source of inspiration to a large audience. The text and its multiple textual versions always travelled anonymously, either in a liturgical context, as in the eastern Mediterranean, or within ascetic and hagiographical literature, as in the western Mediterranean. All these forms of the same text are conspicuous examples of a well-studied phenomenon: the fluidity and the plasticity of the hagiographical text, as shown by Monique Goulet in her remarkable study *Écriture and réécriture hagiographiques*²⁵. This phenomenon is even more fascinating when every version of the text, each one depending from another, is anonymous. In what follows, I shall inquire into the main lines of transmission of the Greek and Latin texts and their history and dissemination up to the late twelfth century. This will provide a picture of the main paths of the text and the transformations it underwent in the Middle Ages. In the Appendix, I give an example of a distinct *Vita Euphrosynae*, incorporated into an eleventh-century assemblage of ascetic literature, modelled on Translation B.

24. The *Vita Euphrosynae* may have inspired authors of other hagiographical accounts: see, especially, J. Van Pelt, *Disguised Identity and Recognition in the Life of Gregory of Agrigento* (BHG 707), «Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies», 60 (2020), pp. 272-89 (at pp. 284-8).

25. The bibliography is vast. Besides Goulet (*Écriture and réécriture hagiographiques. Essai sur les réécritures de Vies de saints dans l'Occident latin médiéval* (VIII^e-XII^e s.), Turnhout 2005), I shall only mention a few recent essays: R. Macchioro, *Identità di testo in agiografia: testi latini, testi greci, testi in movimento nello specchio di P.A.L.M.A.*, in F. Santi and A. Stramaglia (eds.), *Identità di testo. Frammenti, collezioni di testi, glosse e risacimenti*, Florence 2019, pp. 113-34; P. Chiesa, *Come trasformare la Vita. Riscritture dell'agiografia di Pelagia*, in Id., *Venticinque lezioni di filologia mediolatina*, Florence 2016 (Galluzzo Paperbacks 3), pp. 130-8; E. D'Angelo, *Riscrittura della riscrittura (la scuola napoletana del periodo ducale)*, in «Hagiographica», 10 (2003), pp. 139-60; M. Goulet, *Une typologie des réécritures peut-elle éclairer la nature du discours hagiographique?*, «Hagiographica», 10 (2003), pp. 109-22; G. Orlandi, *Pluralità di redazioni e testo critico*, in C. Leonardi (ed.), *La critica del testo mediolatino. Atti del Convegno (Firenze 6-8 dicembre 1990)*, Spoleto 1994 (Biblioteca di Medioevo Latino 5), pp. 79-115 (repr. in P. Chiesa, A. M. Fagnoni, R. E. Guglielmetti and G. P. Maggioni, *Scritti di Filologia mediolatina*, Florence 2008 (Millennio Medievale 77), pp. 27-61); M. Lapidge, *Editing Hagiography*, in Leonardi (ed.), *La critica del testo mediolatino* cit., pp. 239-58; finally, the contributions of Martin Heinzelmann, Christiane Veyrard-Cosme, Klaus Herbers, Monique Goulet, Joseph-Claude Poulin, Anne-Marie Helvétius, François Dolbeau and Patrick Henriot gathered in M. Goulet and M. Heinzelmann (eds.), *La réécriture hagiographique dans l'Occident médiéval. Transformations formelles et idéologiques*, Ostfildern 2003 (Beihefte der Francia, 58).