Luciano Bossina

How Many Books Does It Take to Make an Emperor's Library? Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and a Chapter of History of the Manuscript Book

Abstract: In tenth-century Byzantium, the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus commissioned a series of works that aimed to collect and select the knowledge accumulated over the centuries. In the *Excerpta Constantiniana* this enormous material was distributed in 53 treatises, divided into specific book units and meticulously numbered. A survey of other textual traditions – Epictetus's *Handbook*, Evagrius's *De oratione*, Nilus's *Correspondence* – shows that the choice of this number is not accidental. Based on an arithmetic symbolism, the number 53 represents the aspiration to complete knowledge (earthly and divine). The emperor therefore wanted his ideal library to denote, even in the material structure, the possession of universal knowledge.

1 Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus's *Excerpta* and their programmatic purpose

In his famous book *Le premier humanisme byzantin*, Paul Lemerle describes the most remarkable features of the 'encyclopaedism of the tenth century', which reached the peak of its development under Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.[1] At its height, the 'Macedonian Renaissance' (a definition originally found in art history) infused Byzantine culture with new splendour following the crisis of iconoclasm. Yet, over the past decades, categories such as 'encyclopaedism' and 'Renaissance' have often been challenged, and a new appraisal of the cultural underpinnings of the iconoclasm – more nuanced and less negative at one and the same time – has been conceived.

It is not simply a matter of minor terminological issues, rather they determine the overall interpretation of a period and characterize the nature of works that had

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[1] Lemerle 1971; English translation: Lemerle 1986, especially Chapter 10, 'The Encyclopedism of the Tenth Century', 309–346.

a considerable impact. The definition of 'Byzantine encyclopaedism' had already been proposed decades earlier,[2] but Lemerle's authority and the adoption of this expression in leading art history and Byzantine literature textbooks ultimately endorsed its systematic spread. In recent times, however, several studies have highlighted the limits of such a definition and the risk of running into anachronism which it brings. Scholars have closely contemplated the independent historical and literary value of the Byzantine συλλογαί, insisting on the different nature of works which must not be analysed from the same perspective. As Paolo Odorico has pointed out,[3] Lemerle somehow creates a 'catalogue' of 'encyclopaedic works', including the great undertakings tied to the name of Constantine (*Vita Basilii, De administrando imperio, De thematibus, De cerimoniis*).[4] He also lists Symeon Metaphrastes' *Lives*, the *Basilica*, and the *Geoponica*, works likely to be respectively regarded as religious, legal, and agricultural encyclopaedias. Furthermore, even the *Souda* lexicon and the collections of epigrams of the *Greek Anthology* were to be interpreted in the wake of this new 'encyclopaedic spirit'.

The consistency of this categorization system and above all its alleged encyclopaedic nature were nevertheless called into question. Odorico stressed the fact that the classification of these works should mirror their different purposes and the different operational criteria behind them. He repeatedly points out that so-called 'compilation' literature, which deconstructs and reconstructs sources in the form of a new whole, obeys a particular inner logic and implies a very specific objective.[5] Hence, its interest lies not so much in the sources used but rather in the structure and function of the work. The debate was destined to continue since each of these works had to be studied in greater detail,[6] without giving up

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2 Already present in Büttner-Wobst's seminal 1906 article, it was a question of *historische Encyklopädie*.

3 Following the 1990 study, other studies by Odorico followed up on this reflection: see, at the very least, Odorico 2011, and, more recently, Odorico 2017.

4 *Vita Basilii*, edition: Ševčenko 2011; *De administrando imperio* (which according to Lemerle 1986, 320 was 'a sort of encyclopaedia of Byzantium's foreign policy'), edition: Moravcsik 2008, comments: Jenkins 2012; *De thematibus* (description of the provinces of the empire), edition: Pertusi 1952; *De cerimoniis* (compilation of the ceremonial protocols of the imperial court), edition: Reiske 1829–1830, Vogt 1967.

5 Odorico 2017, 25–26.

6 For a discussion on Byzantine encyclopaedism, with specific focus on the most important works from the ninth to fourteenth centuries, see the studies gathered by Van Deun and Macé 2011 (in particular Schreiner 2011; Magdalino 2011; and Odorico 2011, which address the theoretical aspects of the different viewpoints). The conference on Paul Lemerle 'forty years later' (Paris, 23–26 October 2013) was also a productive occasion to return to these questions. The conference proceedings were published by Flusin and Cheynet 2017: see in particular Magdalino 2017; Odorico 2017; Markopoulos 2017; Ceulemans and Van Deun 2017.

on comparing them to the encyclopaedic undertakings of other periods,[7] both ancient and modern, while avoiding anachronistic parallels.

In the context of this vast Byzantine literary production, the most important work is actually to be found in the enormous collection and compilation known under the name of *Excerpta Constantiniana*, which may now be analysed in the light of a remarkable and thoroughly documented study by András Németh.[8] Németh opportunely insisted on the idea that this way of selecting and restructuring sources in view of the primary goal of creating a new whole is a 'Byzantine appropriation' of the past.[9] Furthermore, he has had the merit of emphasizing the importance of the physical setting of the *Excerpta*.

In this respect, the fundamental programmatic text is the prologue preceding each book. There is no need, here, to analyse in depth such a highly elaborate text.[10] It will be sufficient, instead, to concentrate on the main passages, which explain the historical premises and goals behind this enormous collection:[11] (a) 'the number of events has become countless and the writings have become more complex'; (b) 'the fabric of the history has been infinitely magnified to the point of becoming unmanageable'; (c) truly 'useful books' are a rarity and the writings inspire 'fear and dread'.

To resolve such a situation, Emperor Constantine is thought to have come up with the following solutions: (a) 'to collect by means of diligent research all manner books from all over the known world'; and (b) 'to divide and distribute their great quantity and extent [...] into small sections' in order to make this 'fertile material' [...] 'available unstintingly to common use'. From the operational point of view, to achieve this, it was therefore necessary (c) to establish a well-defined number of subjects, which he called the 'principal topics' [κεφαλαιώδεις ὑποθέσεις], and (d) to dedicate a section to each theme.

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7 Comparing different periods always has its risks, but it is an essential condition for anybody who wishes to understand long-term historical phenomena. Extremely useful studies on encyclopaedism in Antiquity and the Middle Ages were published in *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale* 9, 1966 (cf. in particular Lemerle 1966). More recently, studies on encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance were collected by König and Woolf 2013.

8 Németh 2018. See also Németh 2013 (with rich bibliography).

9 Németh 2018, 15: 'Appropriation is an improved form of anthologization'.

10 Németh 2018, 54–87. In this book, the author offers a new edition of the prologue (Németh 2018, 267–268).

11 The prologue of the *Excerpta de legationibus* is cited according to Németh 2018 (edition: 267–268; translation: 61–62).

Each section opens with the same prologue, containing its specific title and the place that it occupies within the entire series, according to the fixed scheme below:

ὧν κεφαλαιωδῶν ὑποθέσεων ἡ προκειμένη αὕτη καὶ ἐπιγραφομένη [XYZ] [00] τυγχάνει οὖσα	Of these principal topics, the present, entitled [XYZ], is number [00]

As is already known, only a small portion of this enormous collection has survived: the section *De legationibus* and the section *De virtutibus et vitiis* (the first in its entirety, and only half of the second), and fragments of other two, *De insidiis* and *De sententiis*.[12] Because we have the prologue of the two sections, we also know the place that they occupied: *De legationibus* was number 27 and *De virtutibus et vitiis* was number 50.

The concepts on which this enormous undertaking was based were 'wholeness', 'division', and 'order'. The emperor's political and cultural goal was to distribute [καταμερίσαι] and organize [ἀπαρίθμησις] specific knowledge [ὑποθέσεις διάφοροι], to know 'all the great achievements of history' [ἅπασα ἱστορικὴ μεγαλουργία].

All other considerations aside, the interest of this passage in the overall assessment of the work is that it presents the work itself as an *entire library*, as a library in the form of a book, with a well-determined scope and a specific order. In this respect, one can speak of a 'miniaturized library',[13] meaning that this immense work aspired to bring together and condense, within a single space, the most valuable content of all previous books, and thereby, as explicitly stated in the prologue, to hold all of the great lessons that history could teach the emperor in order to build and preserve a universal empire.

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12 Editions: *De legationibus*: De Boor 1903; *De virtutibus et vitiis*: Büttner-Wobst and Roos 1906–1910; *De insidiis*: De Boor 1906; *De sententiis*: Boissevain 1906.

13 I use this expression in a slightly different sense than that meant by Odorico 2017, 27. He speaks of 'bibliothèques miniaturisées' to define 'des anthologies byzantines' that bring together 'des textes entiers, ordonnés selon une logique propre à chaque auteur, en vue de leur utilisation'. These libraries are supposedly 'constituées par l'intégralité de la source, et non par son extrapolation', and are motivated by the desire to gather 'tout ce qu'on voulait conserver d'un genre littéraire précis'. These distinctions are certainly useful to avoid grouping together works of a different nature in the same category, as Odorico remarks by criticizing the excessively imprudent use of the category of encyclopaedism. However, I would like here to emphasize another aspect of the issue, namely the construction of a work that aspires to contain everything concerning a subject, gathering portions of other works, without distinguishing whether the source is incorporated in its whole or in a summarized form. In this sense, Constantine's *Excerpta* is a book composed of other books, a 'miniaturized library'.

Within the context of the present volume, reflecting on libraries during the manuscript age, the goal of this paper is not to study the history of a Byzantine library from a codicological or archaeological perspective, but to shed light on this ambitious cultural project from the point of view of book history and the physical organization of the work. Nonetheless, this will require a long journey through documents that, though appearing superficially unrelated, may help to reconstruct a chapter of the history of the manuscript book in the Christian tradition.[14]

2 Epictetus's *Handbook* and the Christian paraphrases

In the spring of 1479, Angelo Poliziano concluded the last product of his *suave otium*: a translation of Epictetus's *Enchiridion* or *Handbook*. In his epistle dedicated to Lorenzo the Magnificent, the author explained the specific virtues of the work:

> An admirable aspect across the work is its internal order: even though the text is divided into multiple chapters, every line, so to say, converges towards a single centre [...] Moreover, the style – as required by the situation – is concise, clear, and devoid of ornament, just like the precepts that the Pythagoreans call *diathekai*.[15]

With these words, Poliziano is simply repeating the observations of the Neoplatonist Simplicius (sixth century), one of the *Enchiridion*'s most famous commentators in antiquity, who in his *Preface on the Handbook* says more or less the same:

> The speeches are pithy and gnomic, in the form the Pythagoreans called 'precepts'. But practically all of them have a certain orderly relationship to one another and a logical sequence, as we shall see as we proceed. And, although the chapters were written sepa-

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14 My interpretation here goes back to my PhD thesis: Bossina 2004, vol. 2, 331–369. The relationship between Constantine's *Excerpta* and the prologue of Evagrius Ponticus's *De oratione* was later independently argued by András Németh (see Németh 2013, 245–247; and Németh 2018, 71–77). I am therefore particularly pleased that my hypothesis has been confirmed by someone with a greater knowledge of Constantine. Here, I am reusing the entire demonstration, because it is based on a larger corpus of documents, as it had already been established in my 2004 study.
15 Maltese 1990, 60: *Omnia vero ordinem inter se mirum habent omnibusque veluti lineis, quamvis in plura id opus capita sit distinctum, ad excitandum rationalem animum quasi ad ipsum centrum contendunt* [...] *Stylus autem, qualem res postularet, concisus est, dilucidus quique omnem respuat ornatum, Pythagoreorumque praeceptis, quas illi diathecas vocant, quam simillimus.*

rately, they all aim at one art – the art which rectifies human life. The speeches are also all directed towards one goal – rousing the rational soul to the maintenance of its proper value.[16]

On this point, the ancient commentator and the modern translator agreed: the *Handbook* was divided into chapters [κεφάλαια / capita], but this did not affect the overall unity of the project. However, Epictetus's *Handbook*[17] – as Pierre Hadot also notes in his translation – was 'incredibly successful' over the centuries[18] and became one of the most stable sources for anyone wishing to find direction in his life through ancient philosophy. Yet, in view of a general analysis of this work, it might be necessary to ask a question that sounds rather odd, at first: How many chapters are there? How many 'lines converg[ing] towards a single centre'?

In the printed tradition, several divisions are witnessed.[19] In Gregor Haloander's edition (1529),[20] the text is divided into 62 chapters; Hieronymus Wolf (1560)[21] increased them to 79, and then, again, with John Upton (1741)[22] they decreased to 52.

The structure that became canonical was established by one of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century greatest scholars, Johann Schweighäuser, who in his 1799 edition determined the number of chapters as 53.[23] After fully examining the manuscript tradition of the *Handbook*, the utmost authority on the text

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16 Simpl., In Ench., Prooem. 62–70, ed. Hadot 2001, 3–4: Κομματικοὶ δέ εἰσιν οἱ λόγοι καὶ γνωμολογικοί, κατὰ τὸ τῶν ὑποθηκῶν καλουμένων παρὰ τοῖς Πυθαγορείοις εἶδος, πλὴν καὶ τάξις τίς ἐστι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐν πᾶσι σχεδὸν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀκολουθία, ὡς προϊόντες εἰσόμεθα. Κἂν τὰ κεφάλαια δὲ διωρισμένα γέγραπται, εἰς μίαν πάντα τείνει τέχνην, τὴν διορθωτικὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ζωῆς· καὶ πάντες οἱ λόγοι πρὸς ἕνα τείνουσι σκοπόν, τὸ τὴν λογικὴν ψυχὴν διεγεῖραι πρός τε τὴν φυλακὴν τοῦ οἰκείου ἀξιώματος. For an overview of the work and the author, see the introductory study by Hadot 2001, VII–CLII. English translation: Brittain and Brennan 2002, 38.
17 The text of the *Handbook* is here given according to the critical edition by Boter 1999.
18 Hadot 2000, 7: 'il serait lu en Chine au XVIe siècle et, dix-huit siècles après sa rédaction, il figurerait dans les programmes scolaires'. Regarding Epictetus's fortune, see the rich collection of data by Boter 2011, 2–10.
19 For a complete list of editions up until 1952, see Oldfather 1927 and Oldfather 1952. The data mentioned here are from Boter 1999, 146–147.
20 *Epicteti Enchiridion cum interpretatione latina Angeli Politiani*, ed. Haloandri, Norimbergae: Petreium, 1529 (Oldfather 1952, no. 249).
21 *Epicteti Enchiridion, h.e. Pugio, sive ars humanae vitae correctrix* [...] Hieronymo Wolfio interprete una cum annotationibus eiusdem [...], Basileae: Oporinus, 1560 (Oldfather 1952, no. 35).
22 *Epicteti quae supersunt Dissertationes ab Arriano Collectae Nec non Enchiridion et Fragmenta Graece et Latine* [...] recensuit, notis & indice illustravit Joan. Uptonus, Londini: Woodward, 1741 (Oldfather 1952, no. 30).
23 *Epicteteae philosophiae monumenta* I–III, ad Codicum Manuscriptorum fidem recensuit, Latina Versione, adnotationibus, Indicibus illustravit Johannes Schweighaeuser, Lipsiae: In Libraria Weidmannia, 1799 (Oldfather 1952, no. 26).

and its most recent editor, Gerard Boter in turn reconfirmed the division into 53 chapters, with a noteworthy remark: 'It is a lucky coincidence that the tradition is more or less in accordance with the chapter division that has been current in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries'.[24] At the same time, it should be recalled that the manuscript tradition of the *Handbook* is quite broad but also quite recent, and none of the 59 manuscripts dates back to before the fourteenth century. In the words of its last editor, this tradition is 'more or less in accordance' with the division into 53 chapters.

In spite of this, much older evidence is preserved that contradicts this structure. The *Handbook* experienced enormous success during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, in both pagan and Christian circles, and was the subject of noteworthy commentaries and rewritings. With regard to the pagans, the superb commentary by Simplicius has already been mentioned, but there are also three strange Christian paraphrases worth citing: (a) the *Paraphrase of St. Nilus*; (b) the *Paraphrasis Christiana*; and (c) the *Paraphrase of Vaticanus. gr. 2231*.[25]

These works clearly demonstrate the enormous capacity of Christianity to appropriate masterpieces of pagan philosophy. Precisely because the chapters of the *Handbook* were short and sententious – as Simplicius acknowledges –, it was very easy to export and adapt them to Christian thinking.[26] Moreover, the *Handbook* almost exclusively contains ethical teachings, all the while marginalizing the physical and ontological aspects of Stoic thought.

The Christian Paraphrases rewrite the *Handbook* with small adjustments that transform the original version into a veritable Christian text (and specifically a monastic one). While Epictetus speaks of 'gods' in the plural (*Handbook* 31: Τῆς περὶ τοὺς *θεοὺς* εὐσεβείας ἴσθι ὅτι etc.), Christians obviously write 'God' in the singular (*Paraphr. of St. Nilus* 38: Τῆς περὶ *θεὸν* εὐσεβείας ἴσθι ὅτι etc.). While Epictetus mentions Socrates, Christians replace him with Jesus or the apostles. The adjustment is often delightful:

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24 Boter 1999, 147, who then declares: 'Therefore, I have maintained Schweighäuser's chapter numbers'.

25 Following the studies of Wotke 1892; Piscopo 1969–1970; Piscopo 1972; Spanneut 1972; Piscopo 1978; De Nicola 1998; a critical edition of the Christian Paraphrases was published by Boter 1999. The Paraphrasis Christiana was in turn the subject of an exegetical commentary preserved in a rich manuscript tradition now available in the edition by Spanneut 2007.

26 The Christian appropriation of Epictetus is also the result of undeniable similarities in thought already recognized by Byzantine readers (for example, by Arethas of Caesarea, ninth–tenth century) and then later largely analysed by modern criticism, at least starting with Zahn 1895.

Epict. *Hand.* 46	Christ. *Paraph.* 60
Μηδαμοῦ σεαυτὸν εἴπῃς *φιλόσοφον*, μηδὲ λάλει τὸ πολὺ ἐν ἰδιώταις περὶ τῶν *θεωρημάτων*, ἀλλὰ ποίει τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν θεωρημάτων. οἷον ἐν *συμποσίῳ* μὴ λέγε πῶς δεῖ ἐσθίειν, ἀλλ' ἔσθιε ὡς δεῖ.	Μηδαμοῦ σεαυτὸν *ἡσυχαστὴν* εἴπῃς, μηδὲ λάλει ἐν ἰδιώταις περὶ τῶν *δογμάτων*. ἐν *ἑστιάσει* μὴ λέγε πῶς δεῖ ἐσθίειν, ἀλλ' ἔσθιε ὡς δεῖ.
Never call yourself a *philosopher* nor speak excessively, in the presence of ordinary people, of *theorical principles*, but practice that which is prescribed by these principles: in the same way, *during a meal* [*symposion*], do not hold conversations on the way that you must eat, but eat how you must.	Never call yourself a *hesychast* (monk) nor speak, in the presence of ordinary people, of *dogmas*, in the same way, *at the table*, do not hold conversations on the way that you must eat, but eat how you must.

So 'philosopher' becomes 'monk', 'theoretical principles' become 'dogmas', even the 'symposium', which is a word with an ideological connotation, is replaced with a general reference to the 'table'. Various problems raised by these *Paraphrases* would deserve to be carefully studied, but one specific issue remains here as to how many chapters the text of the *Handbook* was supposed to contain, at the moment that it was reworked? If one looks at the four works together, namely Simplicius's *Commentary* and the three Christian *Paraphrases*, none of them is found to divide the text into 53 chapters. All of them, instead, split it into approximately 71/73 chapters.

This difference is achieved by means of progressive unification. For example, Chapter 1 of the *Handbook*, as one reads it today, covers numerous chapters of the *Paraphrases* (six chapters in Simplicius, five in the *Paraphrase of St. Nilus*). Chapter 33 even covers a dozen chapters. As a result, the last chapter of the *Handbook*, Chapter 53, corresponds to Chapter 71 in Simplicius, Chapter 72 in the *Paraphrase of St. Nilus* (which then adds an independent chapter, 73), Chapter 71 in the *Paraphrasis Christiana*, and Chapter 73 in the *Paraphrase of Vaticanus gr. 2231*.

A specific study, which cannot be carried out here, should examine the structure of the *Handbook* in detail throughout the entire manuscript tradition, providing a systematic comparison with parallel texts. In any case, doubt remains concerning the original division of the *Handbook* into 53 chapters.

I am inclined to think that Epictetus's manuscripts, because of their recent origin, convey a subsequent, artificial arrangement (not surprisingly often regarded as inadequate and incoherent by modern scholars).[27] Other textual traditions, which we will

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27 See, for example, the exact evaluation of Maltese 1990, XXXI: 'Benché in più punti inadegua-

now discuss, may perhaps illuminate the reasons why this more recent chapter division was introduced.

3 Nilus of Ancyra's *Treatise in fifty-three chapters*

The first *Paraphrase* is attributed to a certain Nilus, and due to the typical tendency to group works together under the same author, this *Paraphrase* is also included within the proteiform *corpus* of Nilus of Ancyra.[28]

Among the works of this monk, who lived between the fourth and fifth centuries, there is an immense *Correspondence*, one of the largest collections from Late Antiquity, consisting of more than one thousand letters.[29] Nonetheless, it is wise to question the authenticity of these letters, as they pose numerous historical and editorial problems, and in several cases, they are nothing but excerpts from other authors' work.[30] The issue, though hard to solve, must be discussed in the light of a further aspect worth mentioning.

Many manuscripts transmit, under the name of Nilus, a text known as *Treatise in Fifty-Three Chapters*. This *Treatise* is as yet unpublished on its own,[31] because its chapters are nothing else than extracts from Nilus's *Correspondence*.[32] It is therefore quite clear that this work is a later redactional product, assembled from the juxtaposition of numerous letters (and this explains why it has remained marginal so far). However, its specific interest here lies in the text distribution over exactly 53 chapters. Furthermore, the history of the text shows a striking phenomenon: in the oldest manuscript, which dates back to the tenth century (Città del Vaticano, BAV, *Vat. gr.* 1524), the work is presented not as a *Treatise in Fifty-Three Chapters* but simply as a selection of letters [Ἐκ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νείλου], and the numbering in the margins of that manuscript indicates that the total number was not equal to 53. That means that subsequently, the manuscripts gradually started to split the text to achieve this number. Let us look closely at two examples:

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ta, si è mantenuta la tradizionale articolazione in capitoli e paragrafi'.

28 For an overview of the works and the historical figure of St. Nilus, see Heussi 1917; Stählin 1924; Bardenhewer 1924, 161–178; Disdier 1931; Quasten 1963, 496-504; Guérard 1982; and the introduction to Guérard 1994. For an orientation on the pseudepigraphs of this corpus: Bossina 2011.

29 *Patrologia Graeca* 79, 81–581. See Gribomont 1969; Fatouros 2003.

30 Cameron 1976; Bossina 2013; Bossina 2017; Bossina 2019.

31 Although it was known to Nilus's seventeenth-century editor: see J. M. Suares, *Dissertatio de operibus sancti Nili quae e graeco latina fecit et primus edidit*, in *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 79, cols 1354–1356.

32 Heussi 2017, 44–45; Gribomont 1969, 248–251.

Nilus of Ancyra *ep.* III 283 (= 242 Poussines)	53 *cap.*
Ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς τοῦτο ἐπιστάμενοι, ἀντιστρατευσώμεθα τῷ ἡμετέρῳ ἐχθρῷ, καὶ ὅταν σταθῶμεν εἰς προσευχὴν ἢ καὶ γόνατα κλίνωμεν, μηδένα λογισμὸν εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ἡμῶν εἰσελθεῖν συγχωρήσωμεν, μὴ λευκὸν μὴ μέλανα, μὴ δεξιὸν μὴ ἀριστερόν, μὴ γραφικὸν μὴ ἄγραφον, πλὴν τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν ἱκεσίας καὶ ἐνατενίσεως καὶ τῆς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐγγινομένης τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ ἐλλάμψεως καὶ ἡλιοβολίας. Ῥίψαντες τοίνυν πᾶσαν ἀφορμὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ὀκνηρίαν, ἀκηδίαν καὶ εὐλογοφανίαν, τῷ μεγάλῳ ἔργῳ τῆς προσευχῆς νηφόντως καὶ θερμῶς σχολάσωμεν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ ῥίζα ἀθανασίας.	26: Ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς τοῦτο ἐπιστάμενοι, ἀντιστρατευσώμεθα τῷ ἡμετέρῳ ἐχθρῷ, καὶ ὅταν σταθῶμεν εἰς προσευχὴν ἢ καὶ γόνατα κλίνωμεν, μηδένα λογισμὸν εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ἡμῶν εἰσελθεῖν συγχωρήσωμεν, μὴ λευκὸν μὴ μέλανα, μὴ δεξιὸν μὴ ἀριστερόν, μὴ γραφικὸν μὴ ἄγραφον, πλὴν τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν ἱκεσίας καὶ ἐνατενίσεως καὶ τῆς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐγγινομένης τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ ἐλλάμψεως καὶ ἡλιοβολίας. 27: Ῥίψαντες πᾶσαν ἀφορμὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ὀκνηρίαν, ἀκηδίαν καὶ εὐλογοφανίαν, τῷ μεγάλῳ ἔργῳ τῆς προσευχῆς νηφόντως καὶ θερμῶς σχολάσωμεν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ ῥίζα ἀθανασίας.

The original letter 242 was divided into two different chapters (26 and 27). The editorial intervention may be further detected through a revealing piece of evidence, that is the deletion of the word τοίνυν. Indeed, the person who split up the text into two sections erased the term which provided a logical link in the discourse. As a result, two texts were created from a single homogeneous text.

Another example may be drawn from Chapters 37 and 38. Nilus's original letter 192 is no other than the exact reproduction of a passage from Gregory of Nyssa's *On Virginity*.[33] It was later divided into two different chapters:

Greg. Nyss. *de virg.* 22, 2	Nilus of Ancyra *ep.* III 268 (= 192 Poussines)	53 *cap.*
μήτε διὰ τῆς ἀμέτρου κακοπαθείας νοσώδη καὶ λελυμένην καὶ ἄτονον πρὸς τὴν ἀναγκαίαν ὑπηρεσίαν κατασκευάσῃ. οὗτος ὁ τελεώτατος τῆς ἐγκρατείας σκοπός, οὐχὶ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος βλέπειν κακοπάθειαν, καὶ κατάλυσιν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ψυχικῶν διακινημάτων εὐκολίαν.	μήτε διὰ τῆς ἀμέτρου κακοπαθείας νοσώδη καὶ λελυμένην καὶ ἄτονον πρὸς τὴν ἀναγκαίαν ὑπηρεσίαν κατασκευάσῃ. οὗτος ὁ τελειότατος τῆς ἐγκρατείας σκοπός, οὐ τὸ βλέπειν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος κακοπάθειαν καὶ κατάλυσιν καὶ παντελῆ ἀχρείωσιν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ψυχικῶν κινημάτων εὐκολίαν.	37: μήτε διὰ τῆς ἀμέτρου κακοπαθείας νοσώδη καὶ λελυμένην καὶ ἄτονον πρὸς τὴν ἀναγκαίαν ὑπηρεσίαν κατασκευάσας. 38: Οὗτος ὁ τελειότατος τῆς ἐγκρατείας σκοπός, οὐ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος βλέπειν κακοπάθειαν καὶ κατάλυσιν καὶ παντελῆ ἀχρείωσιν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ψυχικῶν κινημάτων εὐκολίαν.

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[33] Edition and translation: Aubineau 1966.

Changes in the text are self-evident: a page by Gregory of Nyssa results into a letter by Nilus, and a letter by Nilus into two chapters of the *Treatise*. Apparently, the text was progressively divided in order to obtain a specific number of chapters.

This phenomenon becomes even clearer when looking at the modifications of the title. In the oldest manuscript, as said before, the work is presented as a selection of letters taken from Nilus's *Correspondence* (Ἐκ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν). Later on, the text is presented as a *Letter with 53 Chapters* and eventually as *Exhortations to Monks in 53 Chapters*:[34]

Vat. gr. 1524 (10th–11th c.)	*Marc. gr.* 131 (11th c.)	*Laur. Plut.* IX. 18 (12th c.)
Ἐκ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νείλου	τοῦ ἁγίου Νείλου ἐπιστολὴ ἔχουσα κεφάλαια νγ΄	τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Νείλου] πρὸς μονάζοντα παραινέσεις κεφαλαίοις τρισὶ καὶ πεντήκοντα

The editorial history of this *Treatise* therefore reveals two coinciding phenomena: (a) the deletion of the epistolary and plural nature of the original text; (b) the artificial attainment of the number 53.

Such a process is almost analogous to that of Epictetus's *Handbook*. Is this merely a 'lucky coincidence'?

4 Evagrius Ponticus's *De oratione* and the symbolic value of the distribution of a work

A work that gained enormous success in the Byzantine tradition ('more than 120 manuscripts from the ninth to the nineteenth century')[35] might help to clarify things: Evagrius Ponticus's *De oratione*. It should be noticed that in its Greek manuscript tradition this text was transmitted under Nilus' name, since Evagrius was

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34 To understand this progressive transformation of the literary genre, it should be noticed that the text in the form of a treatise was then adapted into the form of a homily and translated into Georgian by the famous translator Euthymius the Athonite: Tarchišvili 1955, 144 (no. 14), Gribomont 1969, 250.

35 Géhin 2017, 73 (index of Greek manuscripts 407–421): the text was also passed down in the Syriac (two different versions), Armenian, Arabic (three different versions), Georgian (two different versions) Ethiopian, and Slavic traditions. A complete and up-to-date overview is offered by the excellent edition of Géhin 2017, who also promised 'une étude détaillée [...] qui rassemblera tous les matériaux relatifs au traité, en grec et dans les versions orientales et slaves' (73).

included in the condemnations of the Council of Constantinople in 553, and his oeuvre was consequently doomed to *damnatio memoriae*. The attribution to Nilus thus saved it from destruction. On the other hand, *De oratione* was also translated into Arabic and Syriac, traditions which did not recognize the ecclesiastical condemnation, thus preserving its true authorship in Oriental languages.[36]

In the prologue, the author proposes a highly complex numerological interpretation[37] to explain why he organised his work into a specific number of chapters. As a friend asked him to write a treatise on prayer, Evagrius decided to divide it into 153 chapters, which directly references the *Gospel of Saint John* (John 21: 1–14). Following Jesus's death, the apostles go fishing, without catching anything. Then, a man appears before the boat, and the apostles recognize that he is Christ resurrected. Meanwhile, Peter throws his net once again and fishes 153 fishes. Based on the evangelical story, Evagrius developed a highly elaborate numerological interpretation:[38]

Ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ ἀρνηθείην, ὡς ὅλην τὴν νύκτα κοπιάσας πεπίακα οὐδέν· πλὴν ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ τῷ σῷ λόγῳ χαλάσας τὰ δίκτυα, ἤγρευσα ἰχθύων πλῆθος, οὐκ οἶμαι μὲν μεγάλων, ἑκατὸν δὲ ὅμως καὶ πεντηκοντατριῶν καὶ τούτους ἐξαπέστειλα ἐν τῇ σπυρίδι τῆς ἀγάπης, διὰ τῶν ἰσαρίθμων κεφαλαίων, τὴν πρόσταξιν πεπληρωκώς. [...]

As for myself, I would not deny that having toiled all night I have caught nothing. Yet at your word I have let down the nets and caught a great quantity of fish; they are not big, I think, but there are still one hundred and fifty-three. I have sent these to you in a basket of love arranged in an equal number of chapters in fulfilment of your order. [...]

ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεὶ *πάντα δισσά, ἓν κατ᾽ ἔναντι τοῦ ἑνὸς* κατὰ τὸν σοφὸν Ἰησοῦν, δέχου πρὸς τῷ γράμματι καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα. Σύνες ὡς πάντως τοῦ γράμματος νοῦς προηγεῖται· οὐκ ὄντος γὰρ τούτου, οὐδὲ γράμμα ἔσται. Οὐκοῦν καὶ προσευχῆς διττὸς ὁ τρόπος, ὁ μέν τις πρακτικός, ὁ δὲ θεωρητικός· οὕτως καὶ ἀριθμοῦ, τὸ μὲν πρόχειρός ἐστι ποσότης, τὸ δὲ σημαινόμενον ποιότης.

But since *all things come in pairs, one opposite the other* [Sir. 42:24], according to the wise Jesus, accept them according to the letter and according to the spirit; understand, that intelligence is prior to any writing, for if this were not so there would be no written work. The way of prayer, therefore, is also twofold: it involves the practical on the one hand and the contemplative on the other. Similarly, in the case of number, the immediate sense indicates quantity, but the meaning can refer to quality.

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36 A decisive role in re-attributing this work to Evagrius was played by the studies of Hausherr 1934, 1939, 1960. Regarding Evagrius's ecclesiastical condemnation and the censorship of his works, the reader is referred to Guillaumont 1962, 166–168.

37 The text is so complex that certain copyists passed on the work without the prologue or copied it with numerous mistakes. Even from a stemmatic point of view, the prologue constitutes an exception in the tradition of *De oratione*: Géhin 2017, 156–163.

38 Text by Géhin 2017, 210–214; translation by Sinkewicz 2003, 191–192.

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Εἰς ἑκατοστὸν πεντηκοστὸν τρίτον τὸν περὶ προσευχῆς λόγον διειληφότες, εὐαγγελικὸν ὀψώνιόν σοι πεπόμφαμεν, ἵνα εὕρης συμβολικοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τερπνότητα καὶ σχῆμα τρίγωνον καὶ ἑξάγωνον, ὁμοῦ μὲν εὐσεβῆ γνῶσιν τριάδος, ὁμοῦ δὲ καὶ τῆσδε τῆς διακοσμήσεως τὴν περιγραφὴν ὑπεμφαῖνον.	Having divided this treatise on prayer into one hundred and fifty-three chapters, we have sent you an evangelical feast (cf. John 21:12–13), that you might discover the delightfulness of the symbolic number as well as the figure of the triangle and the hexagon: the former indicating the pious knowledge of the Trinity and the latter the description of the ordering of the present world.
Ἀλλ' ὁ ἑκατοστὸς ἀριθμὸς καθ' ἑαυτὸν τετράγωνός ἐστιν· ὁ δὲ πεντηκοντὸς τρίτος, τρίγωνος καὶ σφαιρικός· ὁ γὰρ εἰκοστὸς ὄγδοος μὲν τρίγωνος, σφαιρικὸς δὲ ὁ εἰκοστὸς πέμπτος· πεντάκις γὰρ πέντε, εἰκοσιπέντε.	The number 100 in itself is a square, while the number 53 is triangular and spherical, for 28 is triangular and 25 is spherical, for $5 \times 5 = 25$.
Οὐκοῦν ἔχεις τὸ τετράγωνον σχῆμα, οὐ μόνον διὰ τῆς τετρακτύος τῶν ἀρετῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦδε τοῦ αἰῶνος τὴν ἔνσοφον γνῶσιν τῷ εἰκοστῷ πέμπτῳ ἀριθμῷ ἐοικυῖαν, διὰ τὸ σφαιρικὸν τῶν χρόνων. Ἑβδομὰς γὰρ ἐπὶ ἑβδομάδα καὶ μὴν ἐπὶ μῆνα δινεῖται καὶ ἐξ ἐνιαυτοῦ εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν ὁ χρόνος κυλινδεῖται καὶ καιρὸς ἐπὶ καιρόν, ὡς ἐπὶ κινήσεως ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης, ἔαρος καὶ θέρους καὶ τῶν ἑξῆς ὁρῶμεν.	You then have a square figure not only for the fourfold of the virtues but also for a wise knowledge of the present age, represented by the number 25 on account of the cyclical nature of time periods; for week moves on to week and month to month, and time rolls round from year to year; and season follows season, as we see in the movement of the sun and moon, of spring and summer, and so on.
Τὸ δὲ τρίγωνον σημαίνοι ἄν σοι τὴν τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος γνῶσιν	The triangle might indicate to you the knowledge of the Holy Trinity.

Apart from some discrepancies, Evagrius's entire numerological interpretation[39] resorts to Nicomachus of Gerasa's *Introduction to Arithmetic* (first-second century)[40] and establishes the very structure of *De oratione*. The passage above is therefore based on the following principles: (a) first of all, the number expresses the quantity [ποσότης], but its true meaning relies on the quality [ποιότης]; (b) for this reason, the organization of a work is not only an external and material

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39 Regarding this interpretation, see Muyldermans 1952, 41–46, Zigmund-Cerbu 1961, Sinkewicz 2003, 274–275, Géhin 2017, 375–381.

40 For the text by Nichomacus: Bertier 1978. Evagrius differs from Nichomacus in the concept of 'theoretical' number: for more details, see Géhin 2017, 378.

matter but also a structural one in the deepest sense of the term, as it conforms to a 'symbolic number' [ἀριθμὸς συμβολικός]; (c) the number 53 is symbolic because it is the sum of 25 and 28, in other words, a spherical number and a triangular number; (d) the spherical number is the product of a number multiplied by itself (5×5 = 25) and represents the 'wise knowledge of the present age'; (e) the triangular number is 'one equal to the sum of all preceding successive numbers starting with 1'[41] (28 = 1+2+3+4+5+6+7), as in the following diagram:

| 1 | 1+2=**3** | 1+2+3=**6** | 1+2+3+4=**10** |
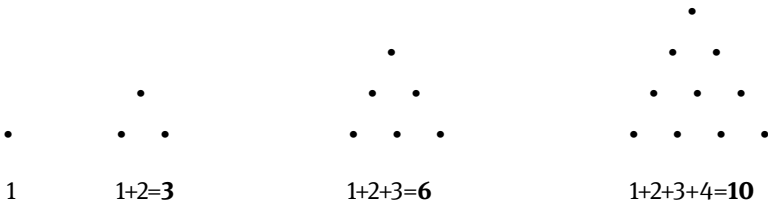
In Evagrius' interpretation, the triangular number represents the 'knowledge of the Holy Trinity'.

It must be concluded that the sum of a triangular number and a spherical number represents the sum of 'the knowledge of the Holy Trinity' and 'the knowledge of the present age': 28+25 = 53. In other words, this number thus guarantees knowledge of the heavens and the earth.

It seems rather inconceivable that behind these cases there be simply a lucky coincidence. On the contrary, between these three works – Epictetus's *Handbook*, the *Treatise in 53 Chapters*, and *De Oratione* (all of which, whether correctly or incorrectly, were passed down under the name of the same author, Nilus) – a certain continuity should be assumed. The Christianization of Epictetus's *Handbook* not only involved, now and then, adjustments of the text, according to the above-mentioned methods, but it also concerned the internal division into chapters. The architecture of the text was adapted to a symbolic number, following the same phenomenon that took place in the tradition of the *Treatise in 53 Chapters*, and on which the allegorical interpretation of *De Oratione* depended.

All of these works are presented to the reader in a structure that itself clearly claims to be exhaustive. Thus, the physical organization of the text, namely its subdivision based on a symbolic number, itself conveys the meaning of the text.

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41 Sinkewicz 2003, 274.

5 Constantine's 53 volumes

Now that this long trip has come to an end, we can get back to Constantine and read the prologue to his work from a new perspective. What may be specifically inferred is that the division into 53 sections ('the material was distributed into principal topics, fifty-three in number'), as forcefully emphasized in the prologue opening each of the sections, is neither a product of chance nor is it meaningless, but rather it acquires a specific programmatic value. Here is the text of the prologue:[42]

Ὅσοι τῶν πάλαι ποτὲ βασιλέων τε καὶ ἰδιωτῶν μὴ τὸν νοῦν παρεσύρησαν ἡδοναῖς, ἢ κατεμαλακίσθησαν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς εὐγενὲς ἀκηλίδωτον ἀρετῇ συνετήρησαν, οὗτοι δὴ οὗτοι καὶ πόνοις ἐνεκαρτέρησαν καὶ λόγοις ἐνησχολήθησαν, καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλο τι τῶν ὅσοι λογικώτερον ἐπεβίωσαν παιδείας ἐρασταὶ γεγονότες σπουδαιότερόν τινα συνεγράψαντο, τοῦτο μὲν τῆς σφῶν αὐτῶν πολυμαθίας δεῖγμα ἐναργὲς τοῖς μετέπειτα καταλιπεῖν ἱμειρόμενοι, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ εὔκλειαν ἀείμνηστον ἐκ τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων καρπώσασθαι μνώμενοι.

All those, both among the emperors of old and the persons of no public station, who did not allow their mind to be turned aside or weakened by pleasure, but who by dint of virtue preserved unblemished the noble quality of their soul, propelled themselves into action or gave themselves over to literary activities. Of these, the ones who undertook literary pursuits as a consequence of having been passionate about acquiring knowledge have – each in his own manner – written something remarkable. <This was> both so as to leave to posterity some brilliant proof of their vast learning, and at the same time with the intention of reaping the fruit of an imperishable fame among those who would read their work.

ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐκ τῆς τῶν τοσούτων ἐτῶν περιδρομῆς ἄπλετόν τι χρῆμα καὶ πραγμάτων ἐγίγνετο καὶ λόγων ἐπλέκετο, ἐπ' ἄπειρόν τε καὶ ἀμήχανον ἡ τῆς ἱστορίας ηὐρύνετο συμπλοκή, ἔδει δ' ἐπιρρεπέστερον πρὸς τὰ χείρω τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων προαίρεσιν μετατίθεσθαι χρόνοις ὕστερον καὶ ὀλιγώρως ἔχειν πρὸς τὰ καλὰ καὶ ῥαθυμότερον διακεῖσθαι πρὸς τὴν τῶν φθασάντων γενέσθαι κατάληψιν, κατόπιν γινομένης τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐπιτεύξεως, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν ἀδηλίᾳ συσκιάζεσθαι τὴν τῆς ἱστορίας ἐφεύρεσιν, πῇ μὲν σπάνει βίβλων ἐπωφελῶν, πῇ δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἐκτάδην πολυλογίαν δειμαινόντων καὶ κατορρωδούντων,

With the passage of so many years, however, the number of events has become uncountable and the writings have become more complex, the fabric of the history has been infinitely magnified to the point of becoming unmanageable. Thus people's inclinations and their choices have with time inclined ever more towards the worse, and they have become indifferent to the good and careless of understanding the events of the past. As a consequence of the truth being less accessible, the investigation of history is rendered obscure, both by lack of the useful books and because of people fearing and dreading their extreme complexity.

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42 Németh 2018 (edition: 267–268; translation: 61–62).

ὁ τῆς πορφύρας ἀπόγονος Κωνσταντῖνος, ὁ ὀρθοδοξότατος καὶ χριστιανικώτατος τῶν πώποτε βεβασιλευκότων, ὀξυωπέστερον πρὸς τὴν τῶν καλῶν κατανόησιν διακείμενος καὶ δραστήριον ἐσχηκὼς νοῦν ἔκρινε βέλτιστον εἶναι καὶ κοινωφελὲς τῷ τε βίῳ ὀνησιφόρον, πρότερον μὲν ζητητικῇ διεγέρσει βίβλους ἄλλοθεν ἄλλας ἐξ ἀπάσης ἑκασταχοῦ οἰκουμένης συλλέξασθαι παντοδαπῆς καὶ πολυειδοῦς ἐπιστήμης ἐγκύμονας, ἔπειτα τὸ τῆς πλατυεπείας μέγεθος καὶ ἀκοὰς ἀποκναῖον ἄλλως τε καὶ ὀχληρὸν καὶ φορτικὸν φαινόμενον τοῖς πολλοῖς δεῖν ᾠήθη καταμερίσαι τοῦτο εἰς λεπτομέρειαν ἀνεπιφθόνως τε προθεῖναι πᾶσι κοινῇ τὴν ἐκ τούτων ἀναφυομένην ὠφέλειαν, ὡς ἐκ μὲν τῆς ἐκλογῆς προσεκτικωτέρως καὶ ἐνδελεχέστερον κατεντυγχάνειν τοὺς τροφίμους τῶν λόγων καὶ μονιμώτερον ἐντυποῦσθαι τούτοις τὴν τῶν λόγων εὐφράδειαν, μεγαλοφυῶς τε καὶ εὐεπηβόλως πρὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις καταμερίσαι εἰς ὑποθέσεις διαφόρους, τρεῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς πεντήκοντα τὸν ἀριθμὸν οὔσας, ἐν αἷς καὶ ὑφ' αἷς ἅπασα ἱστορικὴ μεγαλουργία συγκλείεται.

So it is that Constantine, born in the purple, that most orthodox and most Christian of emperors up to the present time, fitted to the task by extremely keen discernment regarding what is good and possessing an enterprising intellect, judged that the best thing, the most conducive to the common good and useful for governing conduct is – in the first place – to collect by means of diligent research all manner books from all over the known world, books teeming with every kind and variety of knowledge. Next, he thought it necessary to divide and distribute their great quantity and extent, which weigh heavily on the understanding and seem too many to be irksome and burdensome, into small sections. Hence, the profit of this fertile material could <he thought> be made available unstintingly to common use, so that, by the virtue of the selection, they might find more carefully and persistently the nourishment of texts, while the beauty of the texts could be more permanently impressed upon them. In addition, <his intention was> to distribute [the material] in an ingenious and careful manner into principal topics, fifty-three in number, in and through which all the great achievements of history might be grouped together.

κοὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν τῶν ἐγκειμένων, ὃ διαφεύξεται τὴν τοιαύτην τῶν ὑποθέσεων ἀπαρίθμησιν, οὐδὲν τὸ παράπαν ἀφαιρουμένης τῆς τοῦ λόγου ἀκολουθίας τῇ διαιρέσει τῶν ἐννοιῶν, ἀλλὰ σύσσωμον σῳζούσης καὶ ἑκάστῃ ὑποθέσει προσαρμοζομένης τῆς τηλικαύτης οὐ συνόψεως, ἀληθέστερον δ' εἰπεῖν οἰκειώσεως.

Nothing contained in the texts will escape this distribution into topics; <since> by the division of the content this procedure omits nothing of the continuous narration, but rather preserves it in a corpus and establishes the correspondence with each topic, it is not a summary but, to speak more properly, an appropriation.

ὧν κεφαλαιωδῶν ὑποθέσεων ἡ προκειμένη αὕτη καὶ ἐπιγραφομένη περὶ πρέσβεων Ῥωμαίων πρὸς ἐθνικοὺς τυγχάνει οὖσα ἑβδόμη ἐπὶ τοῖς εἴκοσι.

Of these principal topics, the present text, bearing the heading *On Embassies of Romans to Foreigners* occurs as [number] twenty-seven.

It is well known that the Christian religion (but not only the Christian religion) developed many forms of numerology over the centuries. In ancient Christianity, the Alexandrine exegetical tradition was particularly keen on this type of allegorical interpretation and played a crucial role in spreading it. In the case presented here, there is more to be glimpsed, though, because it cannot be simply included among the numerous symbolic interpretations that necessarily characterized biblical exegesis (with the number three symbolizing the Trinity, the number seven as the image of the week of creation, the number forty as a reference to the Flood or Christ's temptation in the desert, etc.). Here, the most interesting aspect is the direct relationship between the symbolism of the number and the organization of a work (in books or chapters). Such symbolism becomes a phenomenon that influences book history, and text editors, in turn, cannot help but take it into consideration.

Based on a tradition that had already known previous illustrious figures, Constantine wanted to organize a collection that allowed him to be familiar with and manage universal history in the form of a 'book-library', a collection professing its aims through its material structure.

On the other hand, the prologue to *De cerimoniis* explains that it is the order itself, the τάξις, that portrays the imperial power as magnificent in the eyes of subjects and foreigners.[43] This is why Constantine delved into all past and present documentation so as to organize the material in a way that made them easy to understand: 'conducted with rhythm and order, the imperial power could thus reproduce the harmony and the movement given to the universe by the Creator'.[44]

Therefore, the world was truly in the hands of the Emperor who, in his library, contemplated the earthly and divine order of universal knowledge.

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43 See Németh 2018, 139–141.

44 Const. Porphyr. *De cer.* I, praef.: ὑφ᾽ ὧν τοῦ βασιλείου κράτους ῥυθμῷ καὶ τάξει φερομένου, εἰκονίζοι μὲν τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὴν περὶ τόδε τὸ πᾶν ἁρμονίαν καὶ κίνησιν.

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