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One of the more welcome trends in the study of medieval literature and language is the movement away from the anachronistic Platonizing national paradigms that long shaped the discipline. The development of languages, literatures and systems of writing was a messy process characterized by acculturation, adaptation and borrowing. This is particularly clear in the Mediterranean world, where various scriptural and vernacular linguistic traditions, and various writing systems were current often within the same societies. What is striking is not only the number of linguistic traditions that came into contact here, but their diversity – including Latin, Hellenic and Semitic alphabets, and a whole gamut of spoken and written languages ranging from Romance to Armenian, and including Berber and Slavic tongues, not to mention the emblematic scriptural languages: Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic, and languages from further afield, such as Persian or Ethiopic. Scholars now recognize the broad multilingualism that characterized not only the region but its inhabitants, who created hybrid alphabet systems and produced multilingual documents as a response to this environment. The study of such documents is not only a valuable end in itself, but provides a window into larger processes of cultural evolution that were so essential to the region.

This handsome and well-produced volume gathers papers delivered at “Manuscritos plurilingües y plurigráficos de Oriente y Occidente,” a conference held in 2012 at the CSIC in Madrid. The focus of the collection is on pre-Modern Italy, with an emphasis on Sicily – together these parts account for thirteen of the eighteen essays, including chapters surveying linguistic interactions in Latin, Arabic, Hebrew Greek and Maltese from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries. While most essays are essentially case-studies of specific documents and genres, each of the three sections in this part of the book features an opening chapter that serves as an introductory survey. Following this, three chapters discuss multilingualism and multilingual texts in the Iberian Peninsula, from the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries, including a chapter that surveys Jewish multilingual and multigraphic texts here. The book concludes with two further case studies from the Levant.

As is common with conference proceedings, the collection may lack a certain overall coherence, but this is off-set by the excellent quality and variety of the contributions. Whereas most readers will pick and choose the chapters relevant to their own fields, as a whole the collection serves as an excellent overview of the subject and those who work on other regions of the Mediterranean will undoubtedly find the perspectives outlined here useful and relevant. Considering the high quality of the book’s production and the generous allotment of color and

black-and-white plates, *Multilingual and Multigraphic Documents and Manuscripts of East and West*, is well-priced at \$120, and should certainly be on the shelf of any research library.

## Table of Contents

Frontmatter

Preface

Giuseppe Mandalà and Inmaculada Pérez Martín vii

### **Part I: Sicily and the Italian Peninsula Multilingual and Multigraphic Documents of Sicily**

Language and the Written Record: Loss, Survival and Revival in Early Norman Sicily

Alex Metcalfe 1

Multilingualism in the Documents of the Norman Rulers in Calabria and Sicily. Successful Acculturation or Cultural Coexistence?

Julia Becker 33

Legal Language and Practice in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Messina: The Evidence from Greek Private Documents

Cristina Rognoni 55

Translators of Arabic, Greek and Bilingual (Arabic-Greek or Greek-Arabic) Documents in Palermo Between the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century

Marcello Moscone 79

### **Multilingual and Multigraphic Manuscripts of Sicily**

Written culture(s) in Islamic Sicily (827–1091)

Giuseppe Mandalà 123

The Cambridge Chronicle: Some Linguistic Features

Cristina La Rosa 159

Multilingual Manuscripts in Norman Sicily

Paola Degni 179

Notes on the Illustrations of the Greek-Arabic Gospel Marc. gr. Z. 539 (303)

Francesco Lovino 207

The Maltese and Sicilian Component in the Arabic Glosses of the Italian Version of *Maqrē Dardeqē*

Dario Burgaretta 233

### **Multilingual and Multigraphic Documents and Manuscripts of the Italian Peninsula**

Greek-Latin Deeds in the Norman Calabria and the Question of the Reality of Multilingualism

Annick Peters-Custot 293

On Multigraphism in Mediaeval Apulia

Daniele Arnesano 315

Bilingual Manuscripts as a Sign of a Social and Cultural Decline: the Abbot Nicolas-Nectarius of Otranto and the Greek-speaking Community in Apulia During the First Half of the Thirteenth Century

Lars M. Hoffmann 343

Editing an Illuminated Arabic-Latin Masterwork of the Fifteenth Century. Manuscript Vat. Urb. lat. 1384 as a Philological Challenge

Benoît Grévin 359

### **Part II: Between West and East. Multilingual and Multigraphic Documents and Manuscripts of Iberia: Some Case Studies**

Textual and Pictorial Multilingualism in Alfonso the Learned's <i>Libro del saber de astrología</i> : Between Theoretical Necessity and Aesthetic Erudition	
Laura Fernández Fernández	385
Jewish Multilingual and Multigraphic Texts in Christian Spain	
Laura Minervini	407
Transmission, Translation, Legitimacy and Control: the Activities of a Multilingual Scribe in Morisco Granada	
Claire Gilbert	425
<b>A Glimpse of Eastern Traditions</b>	
A Summary in Michael the Syrian's 'Chronography' and its Companions in Greek, Syriac and Arabic, With an Incursion in Ethiopic	
Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala	463
A Seventeenth-Century Multi-Text Manuscript from Aleppo: Linguistic Remarks and Historical Context	
Paolo La Spisa	485
Abstracts	505
Index	515