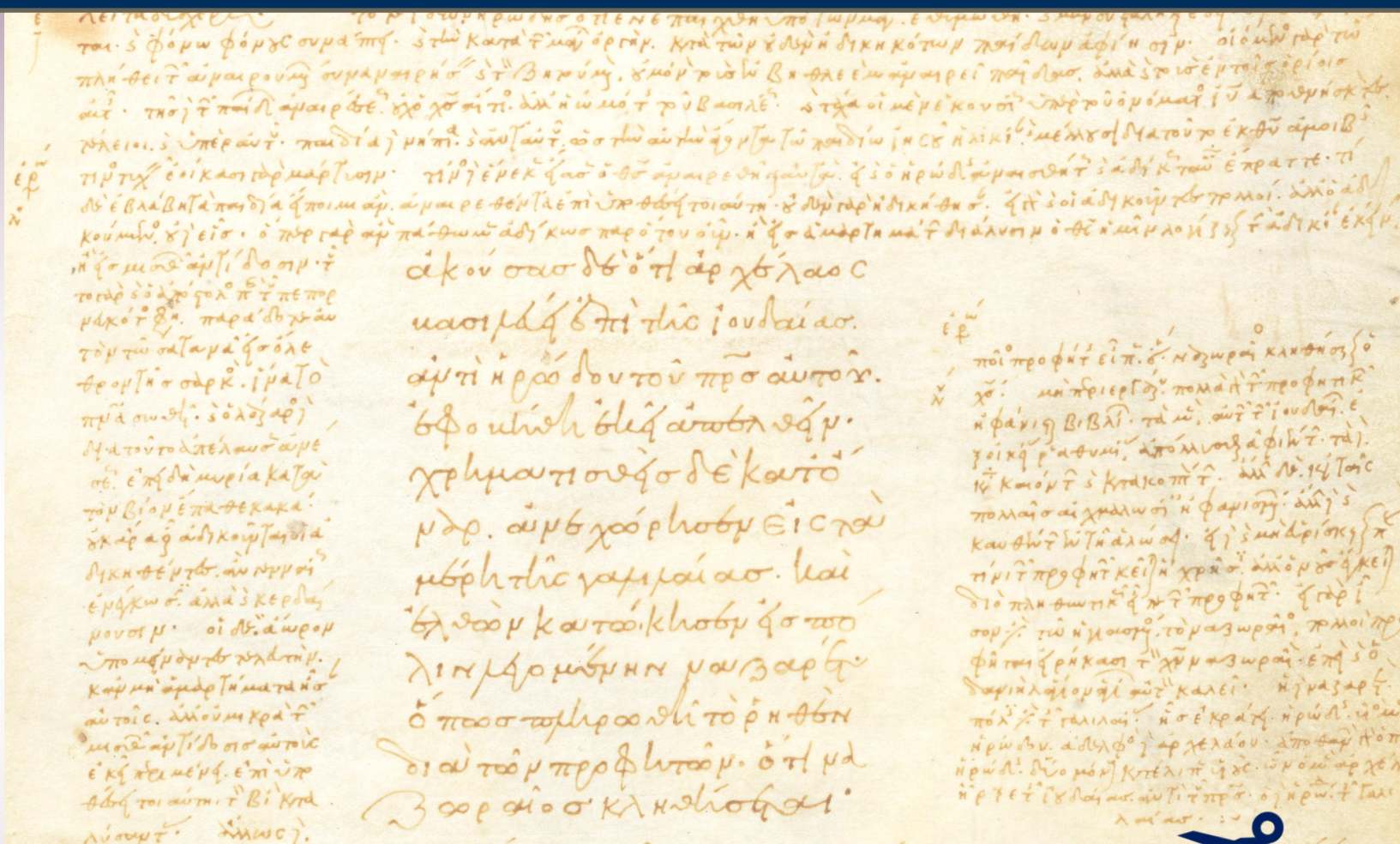# CALL FOR PAPERS

International Conference of the Research Training Group 2792

"Autonomy of Heteronomous Texts in Antiquity and the Middle Ages"

(RE)CREATE. TOWARDS A THEORY OF HETERONOMOUS TEXTS

5–7 September 2024

Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena

recreate-texts@uni-jena.de

https://www.heteronome-texte.de

Fig. detail from Cod. Bodmer 25 f. 4r.
https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/de/fmb/cb

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Autonomie heteronomer
Texte in Antike und Mittelalter
DFG-Graduiertenkolleg 2792

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(Re)Create. Towards a Theory of Heteronomous Texts

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The creation of texts can take various forms. One seemingly obvious method is to copy an already existing text. The material evidence of this practice in Antiquity and the Middle Ages constitutes the foundation of our knowledge of ancient textual cultures. A partial copy can also be the basis for further work on the material: shortening or adding, expanding, rearranging, or re-collecting are only a few possible ways of dealing with pre-texts. Some texts enclose their pre-texts, as we can see for instance in medieval commentary literature. Some texts quote their pre-texts, some allude to them thematically. Some texts are devoted entirely to their pre-texts, others use them only incidentally and as part of a broader scheme. With such different methods of production also comes a variety of genres in which we can find evidence of them: commentaries, compendia, collections, translations, and encyclopaedias as well as re-narrations of historical and literary material are all examples of texts that rely on predecessors although they differ in many other ways.

We can identify the connecting phenomenon of these texts: they all acknowledge the norm set by another entity. We call this phenomenon heteronomy.

Heteronomous texts form the core of the research training group "Autonomy of Heteronomous Texts in Antiquity and the Middle Ages". In case studies we investigate texts and traditions from the fields of Byzantine Studies, Greek and Roman History and Philology, Medieval German Studies, Philosophy, Syriac Studies, and Theology. A key aspect of our work is analysing the dependence between a text and its (purported) counterpart, namely the autonomy of creation. In particular, the creative relationship between adhering to a normative text and detaching oneself from it interests us. New and stand-alone works can be the product of conscious dependency.

While 'literary autonomy' has given rise to different theoretical approaches and case studies, 'heteronomy' has not yet been integrated into a fully formed theory. With our conference we aim to further this line of questioning: Which elements of a text are heteronomous and in what way? With which methods can we analyse these textual strategies? To what extent does this help us to understand the relationship between a text and its historical context? Are producers of heteronomous texts driven by a certain set of motivations?

We are open to papers that critically engage with our concept of heteronomy in relation to other theories. For example, various theories of intertextuality are concerned with the particular connection between texts (Fowler 1997; May 2012). In medieval studies, the term *wiedererzählen* has been coined to describe different forms of remodelling a text (Worstbrock 1999). Allusion and citation have a rich history in philology and theology (Krause 2022), and *aemulatio* and *imitatio* refer to a distinctive aesthetic value of engaging with pre-texts (May 2012). Concerning the working methods, theories have been developed for excerpting, collecting or rearranging textual material (Dusil et al. 2017; Piccione 2003). Last but not least the term 'autonomy' itself has been applied but also contested in its use to describe works of literature (Porter 2012). How can we define 'autonomy' and 'heteronomy' to use them with benefit for our disciplines? Which other theories and concepts are related to the study of heteronomy? How can we distinguish or integrate the research of heteronomy into these established

fields? As many others, heteronomous texts oftentimes cross genre boundaries as defined by research communities. How can the notion of heteronomous texts further our understanding of genre studies?

The outlined questions about motivations and strategies will be the thread of the conference. Whether proposals take a more theoretical or close-reading approach to this question, they should keep the highly specialised and interdisciplinary audience in mind.

We invite contributions from (but not limited to) the following fields: Theology and Biblical Studies, Latin and Middle Latin Studies, Greek and Byzantine Studies, Syriac Studies, Ancient and Medieval History and Philosophy, German Medieval Studies, and Roman Law. Preference will be given to proposals that focus on our areas of expertise: Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Both terms are understood in their broadest sense.

Each paper should last 20 minutes and will be followed by 20 minutes of discussion. We are looking forward to receiving proposals from scholars at all career stages, and we aim for parity in gender. The conference's language will be English. Speakers will be reimbursed for hotel and travel costs. Please send your abstracts (max. 300 words) to: recreate-texts@uni-jena.de. The deadline for submissions is 22 March 2024.

Please do not hesitate to contact us (Nicolas Campagnoli under the aforementioned email) with any questions you might have.

Selected Bibliography

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