Epistolary Culture and the Formation of the Syriac Orthodox Church: The Letters of Philoxenus of Mabbug (d. 523)

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline.be

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Project abstract:

The fifth and sixth centuries were a decisive period for the emergence of the Syriac Orthodox Church, a community rooted in the Middle East which now forms an integral part of European society. The Christological controversies sparked by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 led to divisions between churches that persist to the present. Late antique letters offer rich details about interactions between leaders of the anti-Chalcedonian, miaphysite movement which over the course of the sixth century became the Syriac Orthodox Church. The twenty-seven letters of Philoxenus of Mabbug (d. 523), a bishop and major actor in the miaphysite movement, form the earliest corpus of ten or more letters in Syriac but have never been the subject of a dedicated study. This project uses Philoxenus's letters as a focal point to understand the miaphysite movement from the perspective of its epistolary culture. Alongside a comprehensive dissertation on Philoxenus's letters and the emerging Syriac Orthodox Church, the project will publish a suite of digital fascicles that lay a foundation for further studies on Syriac letters and are linked with digital humanities projects in other fields extending the potential impact of the research. The project will thus lead to a breakthrough in the understanding of the history and literature of a religious community whose voice has been marginalized in western accounts of the history of Christianity but whose heritage and future are tied to that of Europe.

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1. Research Data Summary

List and describe all datasets or research materials that you plan to generate/collect or reuse during your research project. For each dataset or data type (observational, experimental etc.), provide a short name & description (sufficient for yourself to know what data it is about), indicate whether the data are newly generated/collected or reused, digital or physical, also indicate the type of the data (the kind of content), its technical format (file extension), and an estimate of the upper limit of the volume of the data.

				Only for digital data	Only for digital data	Only for digital data	Only for physical data
Dataset Name	Description	New or reused	Digital or Physical	Digital Data Type	Digital Data format	Digital data volume (MB/GB/TB)	Physical volume
		Please choose from the following options: • Generate new data • Reuse existing data	*Please choose from the following options:* • Digital • Physical	*Please choose from the following options:* • Observational • Experimental • Compiled/aggregated data • Simulation data • Software • Other • NA	*Please choose from the following options:* • .por, .xml, .tab, .cvs,.pdf, .txt, .rtf, .dwg, .gml, … • NA	*Please choose from the following options:* • <100MB • <1GB • <100GB • <1TB • <5TB • <10TB • <50TB • >50TB • NA	
1. Ph.D. Dissertation	Prose text authored by doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.txt	<100 MB	
2. Journal Articles	Prose text authored by PI and doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.pdf	<100 MB	
3. Popularizing Summaries of Research	Prose text authored by PI and doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.html	<100 MB	
4. Spreadsheet with Formal Features of Syriac Letters	Tabulated data generated by PI and doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.xsl	<100 MB	
5. Index of biblical citations in Syriac letters in Biblindex	Tabulated data generated by PI and doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.xsl	<100 MB	
6. Four fascicles in Syriaca.org	Tabulated data generated by PI and doctoral student	Generate new data	Digital	Compiled/aggregate data	.xml	<100 MB	

If you reuse existing data, please specify the source, preferably by using a persistent identifier (e.g. DOI, Handle, URL etc.) per dataset or data type:

n/a

Are there any ethical issues concerning the creation and/or use of the data (e.g. experiments on humans or animals, dual use)? Describe these

issues in the comment section. Please refer to specific datasets or data types when appropriate.

- No

Will you process personal data? If so, briefly describe the kind of personal data you will use in the comment section. Please refer to specific datasets or data types when appropriate.

- No

Does your work have potential for commercial valorization (e.g. tech transfer, for example spin-offs, commercial exploitation, …)? If so, please comment per dataset or data type where appropriate.

- No

Do existing 3rd party agreements restrict exploitation or dissemination of the data you (re)use (e.g. Material/Data transfer agreements/ research collaboration agreements)? If so, please explain in the comment section to what data they relate and what restrictions are in place.

- No

Are there any other legal issues, such as intellectual property rights and ownership, to be managed related to the data you (re)use? If so, please explain in the comment section to what data they relate and which restrictions will be asserted.

- No

2. Documentation and Metadata

Clearly describe what approach will be followed to capture the accompanying information necessary to keep data understandable and usable, for yourself and others, now and in the future (e.g., in terms of documentation levels and types required, procedures used, Electronic Lab Notebooks, README.txt files, Codebook.tsv etc. where this information is recorded).

For datasets 1-3, proper citations using the standards of KU Leuven will be given as is required of academic prose. This will make clear where the particular data is coming from. Critical editions and, as relevant, manuscripts will be referenced for each primary source under consideration. Secondary sources will be referenced whenever we draw on them. The procedure taken to interpreting the texts will be clearly outlined in the prose text.
For datasets 4-6, the corpus of letters will be clearly defined to show which texts were taken into consideration. More details relevant to each dataset will be provided: e.g., which types of biblical references were included and which were excluded. With our collaboration with Syriaca.org, we will mint new URIs and use existing ones for people, places, and works in order to make the data reusable in future projects and easily identifiable.

Will a metadata standard be used to make it easier to find and reuse the data? If so, please specify (where appropriate per dataset or data type) which metadata standard will be used. If not, please specify (where appropriate per dataset or data type) which metadata will be created to make the data easier to find and reuse.

- Yes

For datasets 1-3, the authors will clearly be noted and the works uploaded into the institutional repository of KU Leuven. ORCiDs will be provided for all relevant authors to make the attribution clear. Keywords will be provided according to the scheme of the publishers will link the works to related literature.

For datasets 4-6, the metadata will be provided according to the scheme of our digital humanities partners. For dataset 4, which will only be published on Zenodo, best practices will be developed for letter corpora, following the guidelines of correspSearch - https://correspsearch.net/en/home.html.

3. Data storage & back-up during the research project

Where will the data be stored?

The data will be stored on the hard drives of the PI and the doctoral student at an initial phase. This will also include cloud storage as provided by KU Leuven. After publication, the data will be available in the relevant repositories of the publishers. Datasets 4-6 will also be published on Zenodo.

How will the data be backed up?

The data will be backed up for the duration of the project and then permanently in KU Leuven repositories after publication. Datasets 4-6 will also be backed up on Zenodo.

Is there currently sufficient storage & backup capacity during the project? If yes, specify concisely.
If no or insufficient storage or backup capacities are available, then explain how this will be taken care of.

- Yes

Yes, the PI already has the relevant laptop for storage and the doctoral student's laptop will be purchased when the candidate has been identified. The cloud storage is already available to the PI.

How will you ensure that the data are securely stored and not accessed or modified by unauthorized persons?

The procedures of KU Leuven for securing data have been followed here which consists of a two-step authorization process in order to access the data.

What are the expected costs for data storage and backup during the research project? How will these costs be covered?

The costs merely include the purchase of the laptop for the doctoral student. These have already been figured into the budget.

4. Data preservation after the end of the research project

Which data will be retained for at least five years (or longer, in agreement with other retention policies that are applicable) after the end of the project? In case some data cannot be preserved, clearly state the reasons for this (e.g. legal or contractual restrictions, storage/budget issues, institutional policies...).

Yes.

Where will these data be archived (stored and curated for the long-term)?

(1) Data consisting of narrative prose will be published in Open Access as possible. During the research phase, the data will be stored on the personal device and external hard drive of the doctoral candidate and supervisor.
(2) The encoded text will be stored on the websites of the digital humanities partners (Biblindex, Syriaca.org) but also converted into an accessible format (CSV) and deposited in the open science repository Zenodo (https://zenodo.org/).

What are the expected costs for data preservation during the expected retention period? How will these costs be covered?

There are no expected costs.

5. Data sharing and reuse

Will the data (or part of the data) be made available for reuse after/during the project? In the comment section please explain per dataset or data type which data will be made available.

- Yes, in an Open Access repository

Datasets 1-3: The prose texts will be made available in the institutional repository to be released as open access as soon as possible.
Datasets 4-6: These datasets will be uploaded to open access repositories during the course of the project, in each case according to the relevant publisher, and made immediately available.

If access is restricted, please specify who will be able to access the data and under what conditions.

n/a

Are there any factors that restrict or prevent the sharing of (some of) the data (e.g. as defined in an agreement with a 3rd party, legal restrictions)? Please explain in the comment section per dataset or data type where appropriate.

- No

Where will the data be made available? If already known, please provide a repository per dataset or data type.

Datasets 1-3: These will be made available with through KU Leuven's repository (LIRIAS) as well as the relevant publisher's databases.
Datasets 4-6: These will be made available through the relevant publishers (Biblindex, Syriaca.org) and Zenodo.

When will the data be made available?

The data will be made available upon the publication of research results.

Which data usage licenses are you going to provide? If none, please explain why.

We will use CC-BY 4.0 license as relevant for each data set.

Do you intend to add a PID/DOI/accession number to your dataset(s)? If already available, you have the option to provide it in the comment section.

- Yes

We do not yet have the DOIs.

What are the expected costs for data sharing? How will these costs be covered?

There are no expected costs for data sharing.

6. Responsibilities

Who will manage data documentation and metadata during the research project?

The PI and the doctoral student will be jointly responsible during the project.

Who will manage data storage and backup during the research project?

The PI and the doctoral student will be jointly responsible during the project.

Who will manage data preservation and sharing?

The PI and the doctoral student will be jointly responsible.

Who will update and implement this DMP?

The PI will update and implement this DMP.