A Concise Guide to AGAPE

In devising a tool for both bibliographical and reception studies, constant efforts were made to address the widest possible audience, including scholars, students and amateurs who do not necessarily have expertise in patristics, early modern history or book history. With this possibly utopian goal in mind, we sought to present information as clearly as possible. AGAPE website is intended to be both self-explicative and inclusive. Nonetheless, it is worth detailing its most innovative aspects. These largely serve two purposes: harmonising the different conventions used to described incunables and sixteenth century books as well as ancient and modern works; and matching the current understanding of Greek patristics with the intriguingly erratic knowledge the early modern publishers and scholars had of this literature.

General criteria

BE spelling is always preferred. Places are given in the English form (if it exists), while dates follow the BE convention (e.g., 7 Nov. 2022). Names are given in the Latin form for personalities who flourished up until the eight century AC and thus still lived in Late Antiquity and the patristic era as they are commonly intended. Afterwards, the appropriate vernacular form is used as much as possible according to the person's nationality. This includes printers and publishers, while those humanists who exclusively employed a Latin/Greek pen name are mentioned as such for the sake of clarity (e.g., Erasmus, Melanchthon, Oecolampadius). To avoid misunderstandings, all names are linked to the *Virtual International Authority File* (VIAF), which supplies, for each individual, the lifespan and the various forms of the name in the main languages. The VIAF link appears in the Search Page once a name is selected by users.

For Greek and Latin patristic works, we consistently adopted the standard Latin titles provided in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (CPG) and *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* (CPL), or, in the absence of an entry in these two reference books, the titles provided in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (BHG), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* (BHL), and *Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi* (CPPM).

In transcribing portions of texts printed in a variety of language, we departed from the original spelling only to help non-specialist readership. 'J' and 'v' were turned into 'i' and 'u' when acting as vowels, while '&' was rendered as 'et'. Only names of persons and places were consistently capitalised. All abbreviations were silently expanded, with square brackets marking the most unusual cases.

Collation formulas are usually not given. Unless specified otherwise, those for editions with no signature are the ones provided by the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (GW) and easily retrievable through the *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue* (ISTC).

The limit of the patristic corpus

Just like any other canonical lists, whether the classics or the Biblical books, the patristic corpus changes according to time, place and confession, with multiple valid meanings put forward simultaneously. As common ground, we adopted the inclusive catalogue provided by Maurice Geerard and Jacques Noret in CPG. Virtually embracing all ancient authors who wrote in Greek about Christianity up until the seventh century and thus including 'heretical' and anonymous writers, this catalogue seems perfectly in line with the recent reframing of patristics into the wider field of early Christian studies. The only work that was not taken into consideration is Justinian's *Corpus iuris civilis* (CPG-6893), as its inclusion would have quickly turned AGAPE into a legal database. For similar reasons of feasibility, it proved impossible at the present state of research to look into Bibles and Books of Hours, which often contained two extremely popular short texts, such as the Eusebian canons (CPG-3465) and the spurious Athanasian creed (CPL-167 and CPG-2295).

Both works are recorded in AGAPE, but only when they appear in miscellaneous, collected and self-standing editions.

AGAPE entry

Each entry is divided into four areas: edition, contents, bibliography and notes. Each has specific subfields which are briefly described below.

EDITION

Short title: author's name, work's standard title. If more than one work, the list follows the order in the edition.

Shorter title: used only for collected works or miscellanies conventionally known under a collective title (e.g., *Vitae patrum*).

Title-page: fully transcribed, if present, yet without marking different sizes, fonts and paragraphs.

Imprint: place in the English forms (if they exists)**,** printers'/publishers' name in the appropriate vernacular form depending on their nationality, date in the English form.

Country: names in the English form.

Place: names in the English form (if it exists).

Language: presently acknowledged idioms, with no further distinction for regional variations.

Physical description: format; number of leaves or pages depending on the enumerative system used in the edition.

CONTENTS

Text, including all works contained in the edition, is divided from paratext, comprising all elements which situate the edition in its historical, scholarly and entrepreneurial context. We focused exclusively on the paratext within the book itself – the peritext, in Gerard Genette's stricter definition. The categories devised to mark the paratext are the following: title-page; dedication; address to readers; preface; liminary verses; table of contents; testimonia; biographical note; blurb; illustration(s); summary; printed notabilia; scholia; commentary; index; errata; editorial note; and, finally, 'other', which accommodate all the unusual forms of paratext. Colophons, printer's devices, privileges, and registers were not taken into account unless they add information on the book beyond the editorial data and inner structure, since both these aspects are usually reworked in a standard bibliographical record.

The subfields of a work are the following:

Author: the notion of authorship was modulated to register misattributions and intentional misuses in the edition. The author is always the one presently recognised as such (and not the one stated in the edition). The addition of [pseudo] means that authorship is regarded as spurious or doubtful, as argued, for patristic literature, on CPG/CPL/BHG/BHL/CPPM. The addition of [mistaken for] elucidates the frequent misunderstandings which took place in the early modern times with regard to classical and patristic literature. The addition of [under the pseudonym of] help to include the cases in which an ancient authority, including a Greek Father, was intentionally used as a pen name by an early modern writer.

Standard Title: the title commonly used to identify the work, corresponding to that provided in CPG/CPL/BHG/BHL/CPPM in case of a patristic text

Part of the Work: used to signal the partial inclusion of a work in the edition, with Latin abbreviation for books, chapters, letters, homilies, sermons, verses (lib., cap., ep., hom, serm., vers.).

Title in the Text: transcription of the title which appears in the edition, most usually at the incipit of the work.
Editor and **Translator** are attributed through internal or external evidence mentioned in the entry**.** Similarly to authorship, nuances were introduced to record early modern misattributions, while a question mark was added in doubtful cases and the option 'unknown' was included in the many cases in which responsibility cannot be assigned.

The subfields of the various kind of paratext are the following:
Content: further description of the paratext and occasional transcription of portion of it, subject to the relevance for Greek patristics or the history of the edition
Author of Paratext: see above the notes regarding **Editor** and **Translator**

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Agape no. and **Permalink** offer two stable references for citing the entry.
References: it can include: list of standard references for patristic works (CPG/CPL/BHG/BHL/CPPM) – General catalogues: for incunables, Text-INC and ISTC only, through which other specific catalogues can be reached; for sixteenth-century imprints, USTC and the relevant national database, if any (e.g., VD16 for editions printed in German-speaking areas) – Other references: articles or books which are crucial to identify authors, editors and translators.

NOTES
Inspected copies: place in the English form, original library's name, shelfmark. If the copy was inspected through a digitization, a permalink (or a less stable URL, if necessary) is provided. Unless specified otherwise, copies are complete in all part of the printed text. If a copy is incomplete, we usually specify which leaves/pages are missing and will replace this copy with a complete one at the earliest convenience.
Accuracy: four degrees were introduced in order to stimulate a conscious use of data: 'drafted' means that no copy was inspected and information was drawn from printed/online catalogues; 'minimum' that contents were described by inspecting a copy but some information need further investigation; 'medium' that contents were described by inspecting a copy and no pending questions remain to be answered or that contents were described by inspecting two copies but some doubts are yet to be solved; 'maximum' that contents were described by inspecting at least two copies (book in hand or through complete digitisations) and all information were revised.
Last revision: date and time of the most recent update

Analytics
Information regarding authors, printer, year and place of publication are reworked as freely downloadable graphs to enable quantitative analysis. On the About page, analytics are presented for all the editions described in AGAPE, while the same graphs can be called up from the list of results of any search and further refined through filters. For each field, two graphs are offered, first by the number of editions and secondly by the volume of paper sheets which were employed in the printshop. The second, unusual criterion helps to avoid the mistake of equating an edition of eight leaves with that of an eight-volume opera omnia and provide a rough idea of the unit cost for publishing an author, an edition or a text. The estimated number of printed sheets is calculated by recording in AGAPE back-end the length of each text. A small degree of approximation is inevitable.

IT details
The technology of the AGAPE web application is based on:

SERVER-SIDE:
● MySQL database
● web space on a Linux server
● Apache web server
● PHP7 programming language

CLIENT-SIDE:
● CSS3
● Bootstrap 3 framework
● JavaScript library jQuery
● JavaScript library jQuery UI
● JavaScript library Highcharts
● JavaScript library Leaflet
● JavaScript library Wysihtml5

The AGAPE web application is divided into a back-end with restricted access, for data entry and editing, and a front-end for free consultation. Both modules are developed within the Zend Framework, a PHP framework based on the Model-View-Controller (MVC) pattern. The database is populated partly by acquisition from spreadsheets (via CSV) with the use of ad hoc procedures, and partly by the back-end module, which also allows the fine-tuning of the data. The front-end layout is realised according to the norms of responsive web design (RWD), in order to obtain the best representation of the data and the smoothest navigation in the most commonly used displays, from smartphones to large desktop screens. The resolution breakpoint corresponding to the collapse of the menu is set at 768 pixels. jQuery UI is used in the back-end for manual sorting functions via drag and drop. Wysihtml5 is also used in the back-end as a wysiwyg editor for fields requiring formats. In fact, the need is limited to italic and rarely to bold: Wysihtml5 allows extremely light use, without toolbars, with a choice of formats from the keyboard (Ctrl/⌘ + I and Ctrl/⌘ + B). Highcharts and Leaflet are used in the front-end for statistical diagrams and geographical maps respectively.

The front-end allows the following exports:
● summary results of searches, in CSV and JSON formats;
● complete charts of editions, one or more: the more 'technical' CSV and JSON formats are supplemented by PDF, ideal for printing, and RTF, directly editable;
● each individual chart, in the formats provided by Highcharts (PNG, JPEG, PDF, SVG, CSV, XLS)