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Digital Scholarship Conversations

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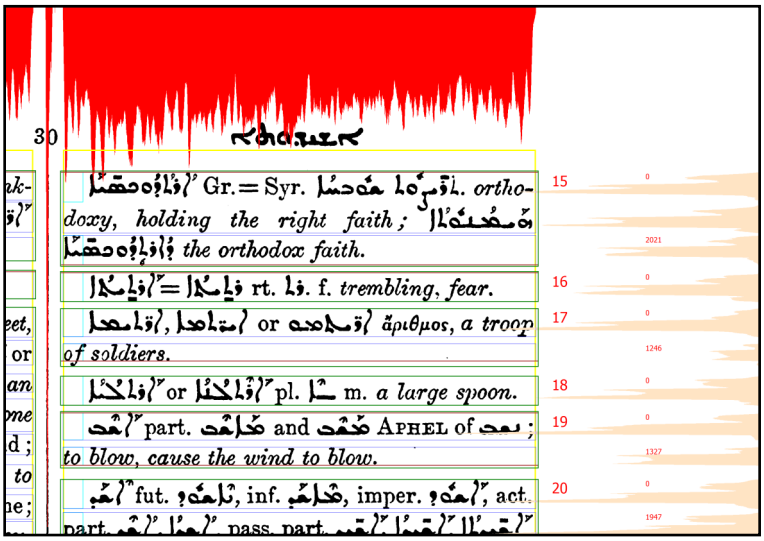
George A. Kiraz

Beth Mardutho: The Syriac Institute and IAS

"Computing Lexica & Dictionaries"

March 7, 2018, 12:30 pm*

Dilworth Room (1st floor Simons Hall), IAS



Lexica and Dictionaries are essentials tools for the philologist but getting hold of all of them in a particular field of study can be daunting, especially when rare references are hard to find. This talk will describe how a team of scholars collected over the years lexicographical resources for the Syriac language in one digital portal called SEDRA and made it accessible across various platforms. The talk will also demonstrate how this portal was linked to independent linguistic resources of other languages such as Greek (Perseus), Arabic (Mawrid), and Persian (DDSA). The talk will also introduce in an accessible manner some of the essential technologies of the Digital Humanities such as text encoding & electronic editions, linked data, regular expressions & APIs. Attendees are not expected to know any of the languages mentioned above.

George A. Kiraz is a Member of the Institute for Advanced Study (2017–2018). He has been involved in Computing and the Humanities (aka the Digital Humanities) since the mid-1980s and played a role in the advancement of Syriac studies with respect to computing. Some of his DH initiatives include encoding Syriac music (1984), introducing fonts for Near Eastern languages including Aramaic, Ugaritic cuneiform and Egyptian hieroglyphic (1986–1990), producing textual tools for text alignment (1988) and concordances (1993), launching one of the earliest peer-reviewed open-access electronic Journals (*Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies*) and its discussion group *hugoye-list* (1998), advocating for the inclusion of Syriac in Unicode (1998), creating a consortium of academic libraries to digitize Syriac books (1999 –2005), digitizing the Patriarchal Archive of Mardin of ca 10,000 documents (2005–2010) and recently building a portal and mobile apps for Syriac sacred-music (2018).

*You may bring your own lunch or purchase lunch at the Institute's Dining Hall from 12:00 noon. Please RSVP by email to mtuya@ias.edu.