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Alessandro Bausi, Paola Buzi, Marilena Maniaci,
Zisis Melissakis, Laura E. Parodi, Eugenia Sokolinski

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Articles and notes

A Misapplication of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* in the Manuscript Tradition of Narsai (d. c.500)*

Aaron Michael Butts, *The Catholic University of America*

In 1979, F. G. McLeod published an edition of five metrical homilies, or *mēm̄rē*, of the important East-Syriac theologian and poet Narsai (d. c.500). Though McLeod knew of seventeen manuscripts attesting these five homilies, his edition was based on only five. Of particular interest to the present article is that McLeod disregarded eleven manuscripts as ‘of no value in determining the critical text’, claiming that they descend from a single manuscript, MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (1705). This represents one of the more far-reaching applications of the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, or eliminating derivative manuscripts, in Syriac studies. In the present article, I introduce hitherto-unnoticed manuscript evidence to argue that most of these eleven manuscripts cannot derive exclusively from MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (1705) and that, therefore, they cannot be discarded via the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*.

Introduction

The axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, or eliminating derivative manuscripts, is a simple but powerful principle of textual criticism (i.e., Lachmann’s method).¹ In his *Textkritik*, P. Maas explains ‘Es wird nun einleuchten, daß ein Zeuge wertlos ist (d.h. als Zeuge wertlos), wenn er ausschließlich von einer erhaltenen ... Vorlage abhängt. Gelingt es hinsichtlich eines Zeugen dies nachzuweisen (vgl. § 8), so muss der Zeuge *ausgeschaltet* werden (*eliminatio codicum descriptorum*)’ (emphases in the original).² Consider, for instance,

* This publication was supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship for Assistant Professors at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. I am also grateful to Kristian Heal, George A. Kiraz, Alessandro Mengozzi, Janet Timbie, and Lucas Van Rompay for their help with this article.

1 For a readable general introduction to textual criticism, see Trovato 2014. For the broader historical background, see Timpanaro 1981; 2005.

2 Maas 1957, § 4. English translation: ‘It will now be obvious that a witness is worthless (worthless, that is, *qua* witness) if it depends exclusively on a surviving exemplar ... A witness thus shown to be worthless (cf. § 8) must be *eliminated* (*eliminatio codicum descriptorum*)’. (Maas 1958, 2). I have deleted ‘oder einer ohne seine Hilfe rekonstruierbaren (or an [exemplar] which can be reconstructed without its help)’ from the quotation: This additional possibility adds unnecessary complication even

the hypothetical stemma in Figure 1: According to the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, manuscript C is of no value in reconstructing the archetype ω , since C derives exclusively from the extant B, and thus all readings that C preserves of the archetype ω will also be found in B.

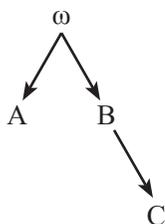


Figure 1. Hypothetical stemma

Scholars working within the framework of Lachmann's method have criticized the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* from various angles, including perhaps most persuasively that it is methodologically difficult to establish that one manuscript does in fact derive exclusively from another.³ Still, this does not invalidate the principle in theory even if it does render its application rare. In addition, scholars who reject Lachmann's method in favor of so-called new (or: material) philology often challenge, if not entirely reject, the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*.⁴ The criticism of these scholars centers on Maas's 'als Zeuge wertlos'—worthless as a witness to

if it is perhaps ultimately salvageable (see Reeve 1989, 5–6), and regardless it is not pertinent to the present article.

- 3 For this critique in particular, see Reeve 1989, who on the one hand questions whether it is possible to establish that one manuscript derives exclusively from another on textual grounds and on the other hand suggests that this is possible if one looks to the physical evidence of manuscripts themselves. For a broader discussion of the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* and especially Maas's formulation of it, see the now-classic article by Timpanaro (1985), who, *inter alia*, changes the axiom from *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* to *eliminatio codicum inutilium*: That is, the crucial point for Timpanaro is not that a particular manuscript is derived exclusively from another manuscript but that a particular manuscript does not contain useful information in addition to another manuscript.
- 4 Classic statements on new philology can be found in the 1990 special issue of *Speculum*, edited by S. G. Nichols et al., and in the essays in Busby 1993. Nichols (1997) later switched from the term 'new philology' to 'material philology'. For application to ancient Christian and Jewish contexts, see the thought-provoking collection of essays in Lied and Lundhaug 2017 and especially the editors' introduction 'Studying Snapshots: On Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology' (1–19).

reconstructing an archetype, perhaps yes, but that is hardly the only value of a manuscript according to practitioners of new philology: A manuscript that is worthless for reconstructing an archetype, for instance, might have great value in showing how a text is transmitted and received by later generations (i.e., Überlieferungsgeschichte, or Pasquali's 'storia della tradizione'), to name only one obvious aim of textual research outside of reconstructing an archetype.⁵ But, again, this criticism does not invalidate in theory the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* if one's aim is in fact to reconstruct an archetype as much as it challenges whether this is the best aim or at least whether it should be the only aim.⁶

Thus, despite various criticisms, the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* continues to be useful for reconstructing an archetype in line with traditional textual criticism. In general, however, Syriac scholars have rarely turned to *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that Syriac scholars have mostly been reluctant to adopt the textual critical method more broadly.⁷ Nevertheless, *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* has featured prominently in textual studies of the Syriac metrical homilies, or *mēm̄rē*, of the important East-Syriac theologian and poet Narsai (d. c.500).⁸ In the present article, I argue that previous Syriac scholars, particularly F. G. McLeod, have been too quick to claim that a number of (more recent) manu-

- 5 The classic example in the study of ancient Christianity of using textual criticism as a window into Überlieferungsgeschichte is undoubtedly Ehrman 1993. For a Syriac case, see Butts 2017.
- 6 This is not the place to attempt to reconcile traditional textual criticism (i.e., Lachmann's method) and new philology, but I will say that I do not think that this should be reduced to a simple binary, an either-or choice for the scholar. Rather, I see these as a set of complementary—even if at times, conflicting—tools in the textual scholar's toolbox: The tool that the scholar adopts will depend on the desired aim. To take the present case as an illustration, if a scholar is interested (only) in reconstructing an archetype, then *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* may prove useful. If a scholar is interested in Überlieferungsgeschichte, then *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* is not among the tools of choice, and in fact a manuscript derived exclusively from an extant manuscript may prove very useful to the enquiry.
- 7 There are a number of reasons for this, but one that cannot be ignored is the prestige that the series Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (CSCO) has held in the field. For almost fifty years (1948–1995), CSCO was directed by R. Draguet who required that editions in the series be diplomatic following their base manuscript closely, arguably even more closely than advocated by J. Bédier, the heroic critic of Lachmann's method. See Draguet 1977. For the broader context, see the insightful survey in Mengozzi 2015. My 'heroic critic' is a nod to Tarrant's immensely readable and insightful reexamination of methods and problems in Latin textual criticism (2016).
- 8 For an introduction to Narsai, with additional bibliography, see Butts forthcoming a.

scripts of Narsai derive exclusively from an earlier manuscript and so can be excluded from critical editions based (implicitly) on the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*.⁹

The Manuscript Tradition of Narsai: Status Quaestionis

Almost fifty years ago, W. F. Macomber published a foundational article on the manuscript tradition of the metrical homilies of Narsai that remains indispensable until today.¹⁰ In the course of this article, Macomber made a number of suggestions about the inter-relationship of various manuscripts. Of particular interest to me here are Macomber's remarks about a particular liturgical collection.¹¹ This liturgical collection recurs in at least the following ten manuscripts (in roughly chronological order):¹²

MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (1705)¹³

9 McLeod 1979.

10 Macomber 1973. The present author, together with Sebastian P. Brock and Kristian S. Heal, is currently compiling a *Clavis to the Metrical Homilies of Narsai* that deals, *inter alia*, with the manuscript tradition.

11 The term 'liturgical collection' is Macomber's. These manuscripts are probably not *sensu stricto* liturgical manuscripts that were used in church services. Rather, they are collections of homilies—homilies that do indeed seem to have been used in church services—organized according to the liturgical calendar.

12 For the contents of this liturgical collection, see below. In addition to the following, this liturgical collection is also attested in MS Strassburg, Strassburg University Library, 4139 (end of nineteenth century). This manuscript is, however, a modern copy of MS Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter: BAV), Borgia sir. 79 and so can be excluded based on the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. See already Macomber 1973, 290. In addition, I do not include here MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 588 (1918), which seems to be a deliberate attempt to collect homilies not published in Mingana 1905 from various sources, including the liturgical collection currently under investigation. See Macomber 1973, 291–292; McLeod 1979, 15 with fn. 55. Finally, I do not include the manuscript, which was copied in Telkepe in 1901, that was the basis for the facsimile edition entitled *Homilies of Mar Narsai* (= Shimun 1970). For this manuscript, see Mingana 2003, 45–46; Brock 2009, 34–39. This manuscript seems to be a deliberate attempt to collect (almost) all of the extant homilies attributed to Narsai, including the liturgical collection currently under investigation as the first part. This manuscript was unknown to Macomber and McLeod and so does not feature in the history of scholarship that is of concern in this article.

13 For this manuscript, see Scher 1907, 245; Macomber 1973, 283; McLeod 1979, 12; Mingana 2003, 40.

- MS St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Diettrich 6 (eighteenth–early nineteenth century)¹⁴
 MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A (1868)¹⁵
 MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160 (1879)¹⁶
 MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 174–176 (catalogue: Sachau 57; 1881)¹⁷
 MS Kirkuk, Chaldean Archdiocese, 49 (1881)¹⁸
 MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 79 (1883)¹⁹
 MS London, British Library (hereafter: BL), Oriental 9368 (1887)²⁰
 MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498 (1890)²¹
 MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69 (1896, 1898)²²

- 14 For this manuscript, see Diettrich 1909, 193–196; Pigulevskaya 1960, 103–106; Macomber 1973, 284; McLeod 1979, 15; Mingana 2003, 41. The dating of this manuscript is based solely on paleography: In her catalogue, Pigulevskaya dates the manuscript to the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but Macomber, who did not himself consult it, gives nineteenth century—perhaps confusing the date with that of MS St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Diettrich 5, which Pigulevskaya does date to the nineteenth century. Macomber’s error is repeated by others, e.g., McLeod and P. T. Mingana.
- 15 For this manuscript, see Scher 1909, 268; Macomber 1973, 284–285; McLeod 1979, 14; Mingana 2003, 41. Available at DigiVatLib, <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Borg.sir.83>.
- 16 For this manuscript, see Scher 1906, 491; Vosté 1928, 184; Vosté 1929a, 60; Macomber 1973, 285; McLeod 1979, 14; Mingana 2003, 41.
- 17 For this manuscript, see Sachau 1899, 190–197; Macomber 1973, 285; McLeod 1979, 14; Mingana 2003, 41. Available at the Digitalisierte Sammlungen of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN858165996>>, <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN85816759X>>, and <<https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN858167816>>.
- 18 For this manuscript, see Vosté 1939, 100; Macomber 1973, 285; McLeod 1979, 14; Mingana 2003, 42. Available at HMML Virtual Reading Room, <<https://w3id.org/vhml/readingRoom/view/132838>>.
- 19 For this manuscript, see Scher 1909, 268; Macomber 1973, 286; McLeod 1979, 14–15; Mingana 2003, 42. Available at DigiVatLib, <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Borg.sir.79>.
- 20 For this manuscript, see Macomber 1973, 286; McLeod 1979, 15; Mingana 2003, 42.
- 21 For this manuscript, see Vosté 1929, 40; van Lantschoot 1965, 29–32; Macomber 1973, 286; McLeod 1979, 15; Mingana 2003, 42. Available at DigiVatLib, <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.sir.498>.
- 22 For this manuscript, see Scher 1907, 244–245; Macomber 1973, 289; McLeod 1979, 15; Mingana 2003, 39; Frishman 1992, I, 8*. This manuscript consists of two parts: The first part was copied in 1896 at Alqosh, and it contains the liturgical collection that is of interest here. The second part was copied two years later, in 1898, also in Alqosh. It contains 14 homilies, all of which are found in MS London, BL, Oriental

Macomber does not systematically outline the relationship of these manuscripts, but he does on occasion state that either MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 or MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160 could be the ‘immediate source’ of such-and-such manuscript as well as that such-and-such manuscript ‘could be derived’ from MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72. Macomber himself did not, however, edit any texts by Narsai, and thus teasing out the implications of these relationships was left to one of his students, F. G. McLeod.

In 1979, six years after the publication of Macomber’s foundational article, McLeod published a critical edition of five homilies of Narsai.²³ He explains the manuscript basis for his edition as follows:

The present five homilies are found in seventeen of the twenty-six extant manuscripts. Of these, six stand out as being of primary importance, and five served as the basis for determining this critical edition. The other eleven, all late nineteenth-century copies, derive, with the exception of the second part of *Vatican Syriac 588*, from *Chaldean Patriarchate 72*.²⁴

After providing detailed descriptions of his six ‘primary manuscripts’, McLeod then turns to his ‘secondary manuscripts’, about which he states the following:

Eleven other manuscripts contain the present five homilies. They all, however, stem from the primary manuscripts described above.²⁵

McLeod is not specific about how he determined this derivational relationship beyond stating that his secondary manuscripts ‘agree with’ MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 and ‘contain the same unique variants ... and omit the same lines’.²⁶ McLeod then proceeds to state that the secondary manuscripts are ‘of no value in determining the critical text’.²⁷ Thus, McLeod employs the axiom of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, even if he does not explicitly name it such.

The result of McLeod’s application of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* is that out of the seventeen manuscripts attesting his homilies only six are employed for establishing the text. This is most-clearly illustrated by the stemma that he proposed (see Figure 2).²⁸

5463 (1893) and MS Tehran, Orthodox Chaldean Archbishopry, Neesan 1 (1896), as well as their presumable ultimate source, MS Urmia, Library of the Museum Association of Urmia College, 34 (1714).

23 McLeod 1979.

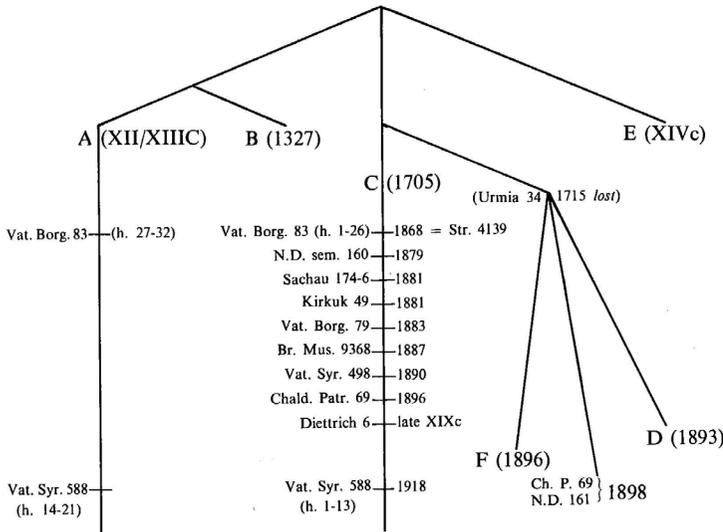
24 McLeod 1979, 10.

25 McLeod 1979, 13.

26 McLeod 1979, 14.

27 McLeod 1979, 14.

28 McLeod 1979, 18.



- A = Chald. Patr. 71 D = Br. Mus. 5463
- B = Diarb. 70 E = Diarb. 71
- C = Chald. Patr. 72 F = Neesan 1

Figure 2. Manuscript stemma from McLeod 1979, 18.

Six—and only six—manuscripts have been given sigla, and it is only these six manuscripts that McLeod employs for his edition. The center branch is of particular interest to me in this article: Here we see a single branch represented by MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (= McLeod’s C) and almost a dozen manuscripts, beginning with MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A and concluding with MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 588, excluded through *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. This application of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* is, I think, incorrect, as I will argue in the next section.

A Previously-Overlooked Variation: Soḡiṭā ‘On the Cherub and the Thief’

To understand the problem with Macomber’s application of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, it is necessary to have a sense of the texts that recur in this liturgical collection, which are as follows:²⁹

29 For each homily attributed to Narsai, the following information is given: the standard identification number of the *mēmṛā*, as established in Mingana 1905; a short title, which is generally based on Brock 2009, though there is an occasional departure; and publication details (when relevant). Note the following abbreviations: DT

- Mēm̄rā 1* ‘On Revelations to Patriarchs and Prophets (I)’³⁰
Mēm̄rā 2 ‘On Revelations to Patriarchs and Prophets (II)’³¹
Mēm̄rā 4 ‘On the Nativity’³²
Soḡiṭā ‘On Mary and Magi’³³
Mēm̄rā 5 ‘On Mary’³⁴
Soḡiṭā ‘On Angel and Mary’³⁵
Mēm̄rā 6 ‘On Epiphany’³⁶
Soḡiṭā ‘On Jesus and John the Baptist’³⁷
Mēm̄rā 7 ‘On John the Baptist’³⁸
Soḡiṭā ‘On John and the Crowd’³⁹
Mēm̄rā 8 ‘On Peter and Paul’⁴⁰
Mēm̄rā 9 ‘On the Four Evangelists’⁴¹
Mēm̄rā 10 ‘On Stephen’⁴²

= Dutch translation ET = English translation; FT = French translation; GT = German translation; LT = Latin translation; Syr. = Syriac.

- 30 Mingana 1905, I, 1–28 (no. 1) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 1–39 (Syr.).
 31 Cardahi 1875, 47–51 (excerpt of Syr.); Mingana 1905, I, 29–56 (no. 2) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 39–77 (Syr.).
 32 Shimun 1970, I, 77–98 (Syr.); McLeod 1979, 36–69 (no. 1) (Syr. with ET).
 33 Lamy 1882–1902, I, col. 129–144 (Syr. with LT); Feldmann 1896, 2–6 (Syr.), 6–11 (GT); Gwynn 1899, 287–289 (ET); Manna 1901, I, 216–222 (Syr.); Mingana 1905, II, 372–377 (Syr.); Beck 1959, 209–216 (Syr.), 195–200 (GT); Shimun 1970, I, 98–104 (Syr.); Brock 1982, no. 8 (Syr.); Beshara 1988, 85–88 (ET); Brock 1994, 125–132 (ET); Brock 2006, 139–147 (ET); Brock 2010, 139–145 (ET); Brock 2011, 49–68 (ET); Brock 2012, 167–176 (ET).
 34 Shimun 1970, I, 104–128 (Syr.).
 35 Lamy 1882–1902, II, col. 589–604 (Syr. with LT); Feldmann 1896, 6–11 (Syr.), 12–18 (GT); Manna 1901, I, 216–222 (Syr.); Mingana 1905, II, 367–372 (Syr.); Ricciotti 1925, 79–89 (IT); Shimun 1970, I, 128–134 (Syr.); Brock 1982, no. 6 (Syr.); Beshara 1988, 89–92 (ET); Brock 1994, 111–118 (ET); Brock 2006, 121–130 (ET); Brock 2010, 125–132 (ET); Brock 2011, 9–30 (ET); Brock 2012, 135–143 (ET).
 36 Shimun 1970, I, 134–157 (Syr.); McLeod 1979, 70–105 (no. 2) (Syr. with ET).
 37 Lamy 1882–1902, I, col. 113–128 (Syr. with LT); Feldmann 1896, 11–15 (Syr.), 18–24 (GT); Gwynn 1898, 284–286 (ET); Beck 1959, 217–224 (Syr.), 201–206 (GT); Shimun 1970, I, 157–163 (Syr.); Brock 1982, no. 9 (Syr.); Brock 1987, 21–27 (ET); Brock 2012, 176–184 (ET).
 38 Gismondi 1900, 103–110 (selection of Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 163–185 (Syr.).
 39 Feldmann 1896, 15–18 (Syr.), 24–30 (GT); Mingana 1905, II, 377–381 (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 185–191 (Syr.).
 40 Mingana 1905, I, 68–89 (no. 4) (Syr.); Krüger 1958, 271–291 (GT); Shimun 1970, I, 191–220 (Syr.).
 41 Shimun 1970, I, 220–241 (Syr.).
 42 Mingana 1905, I, 90–99 (no. 5) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 241–253 (Syr.).

- Mēmrā 11* ‘*On the Three Doctors*’⁴³
Soḡiṭā ‘*On Cyril and Nestorius*’⁴⁴
Mēmrā 20 ‘*On Lent I*’⁴⁵
Mēmrā 21 ‘*On the Temptation of Christ*’⁴⁶
Soḡiṭā ‘*On Cain and Abel*’⁴⁷
Mēmrā 28 ‘*On the Raising of Lazarus*’⁴⁸
Mēmrā 31 ‘*Against the Jews*’⁴⁹
Mēmrā 29 ‘*On Palm Sunday*’⁵⁰
Soḡiṭā ‘*On Pharisees and Christ*’⁵¹
Mēmrā 34 ‘*On Holy Week*’⁵²
Mēmrā 36 ‘*On the Passion*’⁵³
Mēmrā 37 ‘*On the Repentant Thief*’⁵⁴
Mēmrā 38 ‘*On Mysteries and Baptism*’⁵⁵
Mēmrā 40 ‘*On the Resurrection*’⁵⁶
Soḡiṭā ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’⁵⁷—more on this one below

- 43 Martin 1899 (Syr.); Martin 1900 (FT); Shimun 1970, I, 253–287 (Syr.). See also Haneberg 1849; Sfair 1917; Abramowski 1954–1955; McVey 1983; Kavvadas 2012; Perotti 2015.
- 44 Feldmann 1896, 19–23 (Syr.), 30–36 (GT); Martin 1899, 484–492 (Syr.); Martin 1900, 515–524 (FT); Shimun 1970, I, 287–292 (Syr.); Brock 2002a (includes ET); Brock 2004 (ET); Mengozzi forthcoming (IT).
- 45 Mingana 1905, I, 167–181 (no. 10) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 292–312 (Syr.).
- 46 Shimun 1970, I, 312–334 (Syr.).
- 47 Feldmann 1896, 23–27 (Syr.), 36–43 (GT); Mingana 1905, II, 386–391 (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 334–340 (Syr.); Brock 1982, no. 1 (Syr.); Brock 2000 (Syr. with ET); Brock 2012, 51–60 (ET); Mengozzi forthcoming (IT).
- 48 Shimun 1970, I, 341–363 (Syr.).
- 49 Mingana 1905, I, 299–312 (no. 18) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 363–382 (Syr.). See also Frishman 1987.
- 50 Shimun 1970, I, 382–393 (Syr.).
- 51 Feldmann 1896, 27–32 (Syr.), 43–49 (GT); Mingana 1905, II, 396–401 (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 393–399 (Syr.).
- 52 Mingana 1905, I, 313–327 (no. 19) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 399–419 (Syr.).
- 53 Shimun 1970, I, 419–438 (Syr.); McLeod 1979, 106–135 (no. 3) (Syr. with ET). See also Abramowski 2000.
- 54 Mingana 1905, I, 327–340 (no. 20) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 438–457 (Syr.).
- 55 Mingana 1905, I, 341–356 (no. 21) (Syr.); Connolly 1909, 46–61 (ET); Brouwers 1965, 177–207 (FT); Shimun 1970, I, 457–479 (Syr.). See also Ratcliff 1963; Childers forthcoming.
- 56 Shimun 1970, I, 479–495 (Syr.); McLeod 1979, 136–161 (no. 4) (Syr. with ET).
- 57 Sachau 1896, 196–208 (Syr. with GT); Qelayta 1926, 142–147 (Syr.); Graffin 1967 (FT); Brock 1982, no. 13 (Syr.); Brock 1987, 28–35 (ET); Pennacchietti 1993 (Syr. with IT); Glenthøj 1994 (ET); Brock 2002b (ET); Bakker 2005 (Syr. with DT). Note

*Mēmṛā 41 ‘On the Confessors’*⁵⁸

*Soḡiṭā ‘On the King and the Martyrs’*⁵⁹

*Mēmṛā 77 ‘On the Three Children’*⁶⁰

*Mēmṛā 45 ‘On the Ascension’*⁶¹

*Mēmṛā 46 ‘On Pentecost’*⁶²

*Mēmṛā 56 ‘On the Incarnation of Christ’*⁶³

David the Scholastic, *Mēmṛā of the Feast of the Discovery of the Cross*⁶⁴

In general, this liturgical collection is quite stable among the ten or so manuscripts that attest it, but there are variations, two of which Macomber already noted.⁶⁵

First, the order of the last two homilies varies among the manuscripts: MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72; MS London, BL, Oriental 9368; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498; and MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69 have the order as above, whereas MS St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Diettrich 6; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A; MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160; MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 174–176 (57); and MS Kirkuk, Chaldean Archdi-

that this *soḡiṭā* also has a robust tradition in Neo-Aramaic: See the previously-cited publications by Sachau and Pennacchiotti as well as Mengozzi and Ricossa 2013, 49–66, with a number of additional references.

58 Mingana 1905, II, 28–45 (no. 24) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 495–520 (Syr.).

59 Feldmann 1896, 32–35 (Syr.), 49–55 (GT); Manna 1901, I, 222–227 (Syr.); Mingana 1905, II, 401–406 (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 520–526 (Syr.).

60 Mingana 1905, II, 314–328 (no. 44) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 526–546 (Syr.). See also Kitchen 2017.

61 Shimun 1970, I, 546–563 (Syr.); McLeod 1979, 162–187 (no. 5) (Syr. with ET).

62 Manna 1901, I, 222–227 (Syr.); Mingana 1905, II, 72–84 (no. 27) (Syr.); Shimun 1970, I, 563–581 (Syr.).

63 Shimun 1970, I, 581–598 (Syr.).

64 For David the Scholastic, see Baumstark 1922, 197. The *mēmṛā* attributed to him, which remains unedited, is found in the following manuscripts (in roughly chronological order): Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (1705), ff. 493–505; St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Diettrich 6 (eighteenth–early nineteenth century), ff. 284b–292a; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A (1868), ff. 199b–204b; Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160 (1879), ff. 255a–261b; Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 174–176 (57; 1881), ff. 255b–262a; Kirkuk, Chaldean Archdiocese, 49 (1881), ff. 243b–249b; London, BL, Oriental 9368 (1887), ff. 250b–256b; Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498 (1890), ff. 265b–272b; London, BL, Oriental 5463 (1893), ff. 352b–356b; Tehran, Orthodox Chaldean Archbishopry, Neesan, 1 (1896), ff. 406–411; Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69 (1896, 1898), ff. 284b–291b; Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 588 (1918), ff. 56a–59b. See Macomber 1973, 306.

65 The manuscripts that attest this liturgical collection are those given above.

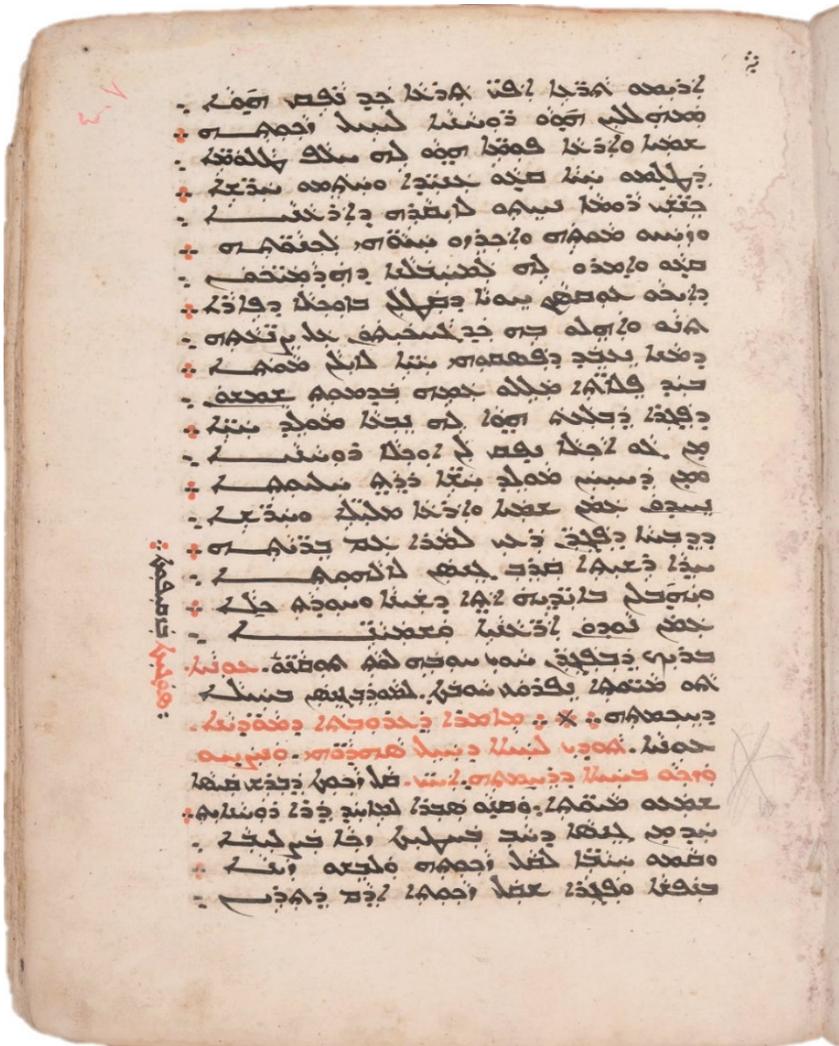


Figure 3. MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 (= HMML project no. CPB 00105), f. 205a. Photo courtesy of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John’s University, Minnesota, USA. Published with permission of the Chaldean Patriarchate of Babylon. All rights reserved.

from the Middle East, which also happen to be the earliest manuscripts, through the lens of the later European manuscripts. Though far from provable, this would help to explain how there are such inopportune mistakes in this particular article by Macomber.

To make this even more interesting, in the margin there is a note mentioning a *soḡitā*. It reads: ܣܘܓܝܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ‘*Soḡitā* (with *incipit* of) ‘at the crucifixion’” (f. 205a). The words ‘at the crucifixion’ are in fact the *incipit* for the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’, which is found here in some other manuscripts, but not all, that attest our liturgical collection—more on this shortly. Regarding this marginal note, it should be pointed out that some of the texts in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 are indicated in the margins but far from all. In addition, this is the only marginal note in this manuscript that provides the *incipit*. Given all this, it is difficult to know how exactly to understand this marginal note: Is it the work of the original scribe who has realized that he inadvertently omitted the *soḡitā*? Or, did the original scribe know that a *soḡitā* belonged here even if it was not present in his exemplar? Or, is this note the work of a later reader noting that a *soḡitā* usually occurs here in this liturgical collection? The answer to these questions will affect how one explains the absence of the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ between *Mēm̄rā* 40 ‘*On the Resurrection*’ and *Mēm̄rā* 41 ‘*On the Confessors*’ in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72—a topic that I address below.

If we turn to the other manuscripts that attest our liturgical collection, a few of them agree with MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 in not having the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ between *Mēm̄rā* 40 ‘*On the Resurrection*’ and *Mēm̄rā* 41 ‘*On the Confessors*’: MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 79; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498; MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69 (1896, 1898); as well as possibly MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160.⁷⁰ In contrast, other manuscripts attesting this liturgical collection do have the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ between *Mēm̄rā* 40 ‘*On the Resurrection*’ and *Mēm̄rā* 41 ‘*On the Confessors*’: MS St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Diettrich 6; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A; MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 174–176 (57); MS Kirkuk, Chaldean Archdiocese, 49; and MS London, BL, Oriental 9368.⁷¹

70 Unfortunately, MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160 is not, to my knowledge, currently accessible, and so I cannot determine this conclusively, but Macomber gives *Mēm̄rā* 40 ‘*On the Resurrection*’ as concluding on f. 211b and *Mēm̄rā* 41 ‘*On the Confessors*’ starting on the same folio, which would not seem to leave room for the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’.

71 I have not included MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498 in this list but in the previous because it does not have the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’. Interestingly, however, the following occurs in the main text: ܣܘܓܝܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ‘*Soḡitā*: At the crucifixion, a wonder (I) be(held) ...’. This is of course very similar to the marginal note found in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72:

There are at least two possible ways to explain the variation with regard to the presence or absence of the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ in these manuscripts, and neither, I argue, allows for McLeod’s application of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. The first is to assume that MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 reflects the archetype in not containing the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’. In such a case, this *soḡitā* would have been added to some manuscripts from an external source at some point in the transmission history.⁷² This would contradict the ‘ausschließlich (exclusively)’ in Maas’s definition of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* given above: ‘... wenn er *ausschließlich* von einer erhaltenen ... Vorlage abhängt (... if it depends *exclusively* on a surviving exemplar)’ (emphasis mine). To return to the hypothetical example above, slightly adapted here as Figure 4.

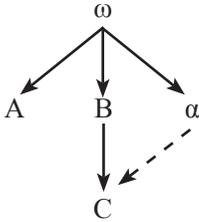


Figure 4. Hypothetical stemma

If C does not derive *exclusively* from B but also from a no-longer-extant manuscript (here labeled α), then C could—and almost certainly would—contain readings from the no-longer-extant α that are valuable for the reconstruction of the archetype ω but that are not found in B. In such a scenario, C cannot be disregarded via *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. The same logic applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the matter under consideration here: If the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ was not in the archetype, then it would have had to come from a different source, meaning that each manuscript attesting this text has been contaminated and so contains readings outside of MS Baghdad (*olim*

There is the word *soḡitā* followed by an *incipit* but the *incipit* here in MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498 includes two full words followed by the beginning of another with the abbreviation sign in contrast with the single word found in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72.

72 In this regard, it should be noted that the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ is a highly-popular text that was widely available to scribes from other sources, including liturgical manuscripts (see Brock 1984, 47). See also Murre-van den Berg (2015, 167) who describes this as ‘the most popular’ *soḡitā*.

Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72. These manuscripts, therefore, cannot be discarded via *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*.⁷³

The second option is to assume that the archetype had the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’, but that this text was lost in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72, or one of its predecessors, due to a scribal error. In this scenario, MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 obviously could not have served as the source for the later manuscripts that attest the *soḡitā*.⁷⁴ Thus, in this scenario, MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 would not be the mother of the later manuscripts that attest the *soḡitā* but rather an older sister—older but in this particular reading inferior, given the omission.⁷⁵

Choosing between these two options depends crucially on whether or not the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ was present in the archetype, and there is not conclusive evidence either way. Nevertheless, regardless of which option is favored, the variation in this group of manuscripts regarding the presence or absence of the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’—a variation that has not previously been noticed—is fatal to McLeod’s application of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. Most obviously, and definitively, MS St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Dietrich 6; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 83A; MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 174–176 (57); MS Kirkuk, Chaldean Archdiocese, 49; and MS London, BL, Oriental 9368 cannot derive exclusively from MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 since the former have the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ and the latter does not. Thus, these five manuscripts cannot be discarded via *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*.

From our liturgical collection, that leaves MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 79; MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498; MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69; and presumably MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160.⁷⁶ The last two Narsai homilies in MS Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Semences, 160 are reversed compared with MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72, and in addition this manuscript also has

73 In addition, I will point out that MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 would itself be contaminated in this scenario since the marginal note indicating the presence of the *Soḡitā* ‘*On the Cherub and the Thief*’ would have to be the work of a scribe—whether the original or a later one—who knew from *another* textual tradition that a *soḡitā* was ‘missing’ here.

74 Unless we resort to contamination, which however will still render *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* inoperative, as just discussed.

75 The inverse of Pasquali’s dictum *recentiores, non deteriores* (Pasquali 1952, 43–108).

76 See fn. 70 above.

Pseudo-Narsai's *Mēmṛē 'On Joseph'*. Pseudo-Narsai's *Mēmṛē 'On Joseph'* are also found in MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, sir. 498. Thus, again, neither of these manuscripts can derive exclusively from MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 in its entirety, and therefore they should likely not be discarded via *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. The best candidate to be eliminated is probably MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 69 (1896, 1898), since—at least according to Macomber—it copies the colophon of MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72 and so would seem to derive from it. Nevertheless, even here, the case is not airtight: Two years after the liturgical collection was copied in this manuscript, fourteen additional homilies were added from a different source, and so it is at least possible that the texts copied earlier could have been collated—and thereby contaminated—with the other source. In the end, then, it is only MS Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borgia sir. 79 that does not contain texts not found in MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate, 72.

Conclusion

It has been more than forty years since McLeod published his critical edition of five homilies by Narsai. Over this time, a number of developments have transpired in the field of textual criticism. None is perhaps more far-reaching than the rise of so-called new (or: material) philology, which, among other things, calls for the textual scholar to ask a broader range of questions that move beyond reconstructing the earliest recoverable archetype. In the case considered in this article, for instance, an approach inspired by new philology might have great interest in the ten or so manuscripts of Narsai, which contain the liturgical collection investigated here, that were copied in the late nineteenth century in Alqosh and its environs: These manuscripts, I am convinced, have much to tell us about the reception of Narsai, as well as of the wider East-Syriac literary tradition, in this place at this time.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, even

77 This is part of the broader story of the manuscript transmission of East-Syriac literature and what it has to tell us about this literary tradition itself. East-Syriac manuscripts from before 1000 are exceedingly rare (for the dated ones, see Brock 2007). There are slightly more though still a small number from 1000 up to, say, 1700. Then, starting in the eighteenth century, we see increased scribal activity at a few East-Syriac centers, including Alqosh, Telkepe, and Urmia, that continues into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To illustrate with Narsai: There are no known manuscripts from before 1000. There are then four prior to 1700: MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean Patriarchate 71 (1188-1288), but now lost; MS Diyarbakır 70 (1328); MS Diyarbakır 71 (fourteenth–sixteenth century); and MS Baghdad, Archbishopric of the Church of the East 45 (1647). In the eighteenth century, there are a couple of manuscripts, MS Baghdad (*olim* Mosul), Chaldean

if a scholar remains committed to reconstructing the earliest recoverable archetype of Narsai's homilies, which, I am convinced, also continues to be a worthwhile scholarly enterprise, these later nineteenth-century manuscripts must be mined for the potential data that they contain. As I have argued here, few, if any, of these manuscripts can be discarded via *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*. McLeod has, I fear, acted too hastily in his judgement that these manuscripts are 'of no value in determining the critical text', calling to mind a path all-too-well-trodden in the history of textual scholarship, about which Timpanaro wrote the following: 'Later—in the nineteenth century, as we shall see, and unfortunately even today—this procedure, which has received the technical name of *eliminatio codicum descriptorum* [elimination of derivative manuscripts], has often become a convenient expedient for saving the Classical philologist time and trouble: insufficient evidence, or even the simple observation that there is a mass of *recentiores* [more recent witnesses] alongside a manuscript of considerable antiquity, has too easily suggested that the more recent ones derived from the older one'.⁷⁸

Patriarchate, 72 (1705), which has been the main concern of this article, as well as MS Urmia, Library of the Museum Association of Urmia College, 34 (1715), which unfortunately seems to have been destroyed in the tragic events affecting Syriac Christians during World War I and its aftermath. The remaining manuscripts that attest Narsai, which number more than two dozen, all stem from the nineteenth century, with most coming from Alqosh. Though the details will undoubtedly vary, the same general trend seems to apply to most East-Syriac literature. Not enough attention has, I am convinced, been paid to this. Personally, I am intrigued by the role that the increased scribal activity starting in the late seventeenth century and continuing for a couple of hundred years had not only in transmitting and preserving the earlier East-Syriac literary tradition but also in shaping and—arguably—even in creating it. It is tempting to draw a connection to the flourishing of literature written in Neo-Aramaic around the same time in the same places (see, for instance, the texts in Mengozzi 2002; 2011, as well as the important study of Murre-van den Berg 1999). In fact, the increased scribal activity in Classical Syriac starting in the late seventeenth century is likely another precursor to the so-called 'Syrian Awakening' usually associated with the nineteenth century but with antecedents already a couple of centuries earlier (see Murre-van den Berg 1998 as well as, with more detail, Murre-van den Berg 2015). For the broader historical background, see also Wilmshurst 2000, as well as Becker 2015 on the nineteenth century.

⁷⁸ Timpanaro 2005, 47. Italian original: 'Più tardi—nell'Ottocento, come vedremo, e purtroppo ancora oggi—questa operazione, che ha assunto il nome tecnico di *eliminatio codicum descriptorum*, è divenuta spesso un comodo espediente per risparmiare tempo e fatica al filologo: indizi insufficienti, o addirittura la semplice constatazione di una massa di *recentiores* accanto a un codice di notevole antichità, hanno troppo facilmente persuaso a postulare la derivazione dei più recenti dal più antico'. (Timpanaro 2005, 5). Compare this with the following from Pasquali: 'E

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conviene rispondere che ogniqualevolta v’era da una parte un codice antico e dall’altra un certo numero di recenti dello stesso contenuto, quella generazione tendeva a derivare questi da quello, e non si peritava di abusare senza scrupolo dei mezzi tecnici di prova, o per parlar più chiaramente, si contentava di dimostrazioni prive di valore’ (Pasquali 1952, 26).

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Disambiguating the Concept of Formality in Palaeographic Descriptions: Stylistic Classification and the Ancient Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic Scripts*

Drew Longacre, University of Groningen

The concept of formality in palaeographic analysis is often ill-defined and understood in conflicting ways by the scholars who utilize it. In this article, I attempt to clarify the meaning and significance of formality by suggesting that it is best understood as a multifaceted concept dependent upon the interaction between morphology, execution, and function. From this perspective, formality is an overall impression of the level of handwriting based on the type of model script chosen to reproduce, the skill and care with which it was written, and the purpose(s) for which the embodying manuscript was created. Each aspect can be conceptualized and to some extent analyzed independently in concrete terms other than formality. The resulting, more explicitly-defined nature of formality proposed here then provides a better foundation for hypothesizing about the functions of manuscripts. I apply this schema to the Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic scripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls to show its potential for increased clarity and resolution in stylistic analysis.

1. Introduction

In the study of ancient scripts, palaeographers try not only to provide date estimates and scribal identifications for written exemplars, but also to classify their scripts according to stylistic criteria. While dating handwriting and identifying writers are both complex and difficult tasks, the stylistic classification of scripts presents even greater challenges.¹ The wide range of material that must be accounted for in such classification systems encompasses many diverse forms, interrelated variables, and degrees of execution that do not neatly fit into discrete categories. Furthermore, the choice and measurement of the criteria for classification are often highly subjective.² Nevertheless, the usage

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1 Cf. Stutzmann 2016, § 8.

2 Stutzmann 2016, § 1, ‘The clustering of scripts reflects the subjectivity of the interpreter, and his or her often unstable categories of interpretation; as a result, ... all

of different conventional types and levels of scripts for various purposes is a historical reality, and palaeographers must account for this variety.

One of the most common (and pragmatically helpful) criteria for classifying scripts stylistically is the concept of formality. Formality, however, is often ill-defined and under-theorized, leading to vastly different and conflicting usages of the idea in various palaeographic subdisciplines, schools, and even by individual scholars. By focusing on the example of the ancient Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic scripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, I will seek to disambiguate the concept of formality in handwriting and make suggestions for appropriation of the term across disciplinary boundaries.

2. Stylistic Classification of the Hellenistic- and Roman-Period Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic Scripts

In the study of the early ‘Jewish’ Hebrew/Aramaic scripts, the classification system of Frank Moore Cross has been most influential.³ Cross categorized these scripts into four main classes (‘styles’ or ‘series’) on a spectrum ranging from formal to cursive hands: formal, semiformal (three types, characterized as subtypes of the ‘formal’), semicursive, and cursive (see my visual interpretation of his system in Figure 1). While Cross’s model has been productively applied to the classification of most of the scripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there remain significant taxonomic ambiguities and shortcomings.⁴ In order to examine these, I will distinguish four general aspects of script classification

script categories [sic] remain subject to debate and discussion.’ And, ‘The very notion of style is difficult to assess in an objective manner’ (§ 16). ‘Moreover, the historical evolution of scripts is a continuum and has to be divided into discrete categories. How this is executed largely depends on the chosen criteria for analysis’ (§ 23).

- 3 See Cross 2003 (1961). For generally sympathetic appraisals and developments, see also Eshel 2014; Puech 2017; Yardeni 1997, 2000. Longacre and Tigchelaar 2017, are somewhat more critical of details of Cross’s schema, but still accept much of the general framework. Sirat 1986, 275, argues that Cross’s schema does not sufficiently account for synchronic diversity, ‘Une conception linéaire et unitaire de l’histoire tend aussi à ignorer la diversité des écritures qui existaient au même moment, dans un même lieu: cette diversité peut être due à l’origine différente des scripteurs ou encore à la tradition graphique différente qui leur avait été enseignée, ou bien encore à leur habileté ou à leur état d’esprit. Et pourtant, pour bâtir toute sa chronologie des manuscrits de la Mer Morte, F.M. Cross utilise, en tout et pour tout, dix-huit exemples. Il nous affirme que ces exemples sont ‘typiques’. Nous aurions aimé que cette affirmation soit prouvée et non pas prise comme point de départ de son étude’.
- 4 A comprehensive assessment of Cross’s model for script development with the help of digital palaeographic tools and new radiocarbon dates is part of the aforementioned ERC project.

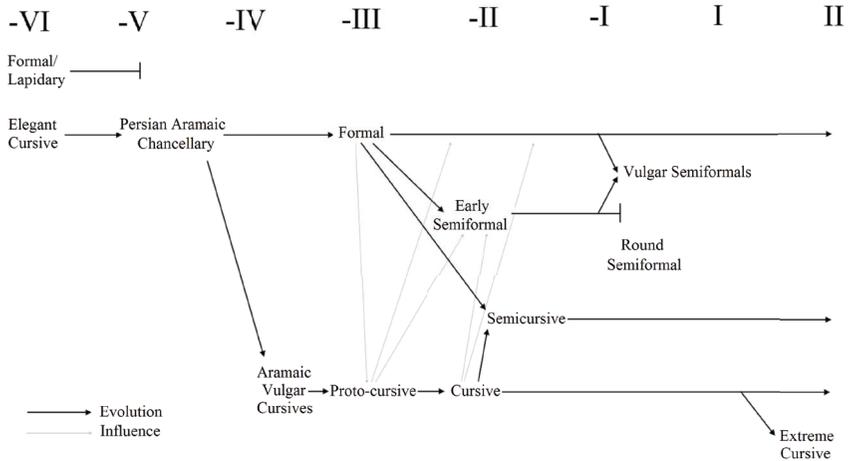


Figure 1. Stylistic development according to F. M. Cross

relevant for stylistic analysis of the Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic scripts: formality, morphology, execution, and function.

3. Formality

Fundamental to Cross' classification is the assumption of two basic types of writing—the 'formal' and the 'cursive'—which influence each other to create numerous intermediate types. A similar distinction is evident in many palaeographic subdisciplines. I will argue that classifying scripts on a spectrum of formality indeed has some heuristic value and pragmatic benefits, but the concept of formality is somewhat problematic as an analytical category.

First, the nature of 'formality' is highly ambiguous and multifaceted, which causes much confusion and debate. Unfortunately, Cross never clearly defined formality, and many palaeographers use it similarly without explication. With regard to handwriting, I note that formality can be (and has been) defined in relation either to: 1) morphology, 2) execution, 3) function, or 4) some combination of these three.⁵ Defined morphologically, formality may be a measure

- 5 Palaeographers have not typically been very explicit in their treatment of formality. For a helpful parallel discussion of the ambiguities of 'formality' in the analysis of spoken language, see the programmatic article by Irvine 1979. According to Irvine, in the classification of human speech, particular speech acts may be defined as more or less formal based on criteria relating to the linguistic codes themselves such as increased structuring (e.g. a high number of well-defined rules or a higher level of vocabulary) and/or consistency (i.e. rigorous adherence to the set rules). Formal speech may also be defined more functionally as whatever type of speech is considered appropriate for formal (rather than familiar) situations, regardless of

of the degree to which a conventional script type is artificially structured with clear distinctions between well-defined strokes and additional ornamentation.⁶ Defined in terms of execution, formality may refer to meticulous adherence to the ideal forms writers are attempting to reproduce, whatever those may be.⁷ Defined according to function, formal handwriting may mean the type(s) of handwriting typically used in more ‘formal’ situations, such as ‘literary’ or ‘book’ scripts for quality copies of esteemed literature.⁸

These factors of morphology, execution, and function to some degree overlap and are often directly related to each other, yet each plays an important role in script production. Thus, I propose that they may be considered together under the umbrella concept of ‘formality’, rather than equating formality with any one of these three component aspects. Morphology, execution, and function in isolation do not fully explain the formality of a script, but must be considered in combination. In other words, I suggest defining a ‘formal’ hand as one that is characterized by *meticulous adherence to highly structured ideal forms considered appropriate for an esteemed textual artefact*. Such

which particular codes are used. Some treat formality as a broad and inclusive term encompassing all of these factors, especially when they perceive the various factors to be directly related to one another. For more recent surveys of literature and investigations of the nature of formal speech, see Heylighen and Dewaele 1999; Pavlick and Tetreault 2016.

- 6 E.g. Orsini 2019, 32, 211, applies formality to well-defined script styles or canons, rather than varying levels of execution of these styles. Similarly, Cross 2003, frequently speaks of ‘formal’ and ‘semiformal’ scripts as if they are distinct styles (or in the case of semiformal, sub-styles of the formal) with their own coherent series and varying levels of execution.
- 7 E.g. Derolez 2003, 21–24, following Liefertinck 1954, explicitly defines formality as level of execution, classifying texts as Formata, Libraria, Currens, or intermediate categories. Similarly, Gumbert 1974, 205, uses formata ‘für Schriften, die mit besonderer Sorgfalt und Disziplin gestaltet sind.’ Cf. Johnston 1971, 71, ‘Formal penmanship in its general sense implies any careful writing with a pen.’
- 8 References to hands as ‘literary’, ‘chanc(ell)ery’, ‘lapidary’, ‘documentary’, ‘administrative’, ‘scholarly’, ‘personal’, ‘school’, and similar function-oriented terms are ubiquitous in the literature. The distinction between literary book scripts and documentary scripts in particular is fundamental in many fields (cf. § 6), and it is also regularly used of the Jewish scripts by Cross, Yardeni, et al. See, explicitly, Roberts 1956, xi, ‘It is easier to recognize than to define a literary hand, but we may describe it as the kind of hand which is normally employed for the writing of books [...] But vague as these terms are, function provides the best differentia of hands in the classical age.’ Johnson 2004, 102, explicitly defines his notion of formality in relation to the formality of the manuscripts, rather than the scripts in isolation: ‘We are concerned here not with the definition of scripts per se but with the type of book that the scribe thinks he is writing.’

a broad, general level of classification may indeed prove helpful for some purposes, though it alone is ill-suited to address the full complexity of the data. Thus, in this article I will utilize the general and multifaceted concept of formality as just defined, but I will also further differentiate between aspects of morphology, execution, and function in order to achieve greater resolution in the stylistic analysis.

A second problem with Cross's system of classification is the ambiguity of the opposite pole on the spectrum of formality, namely the 'cursive'. In palaeographic studies, cursive can refer alternatively to: 1) any type of handwriting written quickly with a flowing ductus or 2) an established graphic type of script with its own set of conventions and ideal forms.⁹ In the Herodian and post-Herodian periods (roughly 30 BCE–135 CE), a stylized Jewish Cursive¹⁰ script type is clearly to be distinguished from the calligraphic Square scripts, but the significance of 'cursive' in the earlier periods is contested. Cross supposed the existence of a distinct and coherent Cursive script type throughout the early history of the Jewish script, despite the lack of clear documentation for its early stages. He attempted to reconstruct this early Jewish Cursive script type based on distinct cursive letter forms appearing in pre-Jewish Aramaic documents, cursive letters in interlinear corrections in manuscripts in formal hands, cursive influences on somewhat formal hands, and especially the supposedly mixed Semicursive scripts.¹¹ Ada Yardeni, on the other hand, argued that the true Cursive was only stylized around the turn of the era, and that in earlier periods the distinct cursive letter forms were more a function of fast execution of a relatively undifferentiated early Jewish script than a clearly defined distinct style of writing.¹² In other words, for Cross, 'cursive' was a distinct style of writing throughout the history of the early Jewish script, whereas for Yardeni 'cursive' was just a quickly and fluently written version of the general Jewish script in the early periods.¹³ For Cross, the Semicursive was a mixture or hybrid of distinct Formal and Cursive script types, while

9 Cf. Derolez 2003, 123.

10 To avoid confusion, I will use capitalization to distinguish between the ideal graphic type (Cursive) and the level/speed of execution (cursive or current). The same is true for other potentially ambiguous labels.

11 Cross 1955, 153–154; 2003, 38.

12 Yardeni 1997, 172; 2000, [155–156]; 2014, 23.

13 Birnbaum understood the Herodian and post-Herodian Cursives to be a distinct hybrid of the Hebrew and Nabatean scripts, which he called the 'Negeb script'; Birnbaum 1956 and 1971, 195–202. Thus, Birnbaum 1971, 176, concluded that there was no truly stylized native Hebrew Cursive script until late in the first millennium CE, leading him to use the term 'cursive' only loosely for quickly-executed 'square' Hebrew hands in the period. Both Cross and Yardeni also recognized close similarities between the Jewish and Nabatean scripts and their parallel developments,

Yardeni considered the semicursives less thoroughly-differentiated precursors of the true Cursive style. For Cross, a hypothetical early Cursive script style consistently serves as the polar opposite of the early Formal, but Yardeni seems to suggest that the semicursives themselves are the extreme antithesis of the early formal hands. During this transitional period, the Jewish cursive scripts are clearly in the process of becoming a conventional graphic system distinct from their more ‘square’ counterparts, rather than being merely informal representations of the (Quasi-)Square script.¹⁴

Thus, it remains contested just what exactly is the definition of ‘cursive’ on the pole opposite of ‘formal’, which also problematizes intermediate gradations like semiformal and semicursive. When cursive is understood as a measure of execution rather than a distinct graphic type, the problem is compounded by the highly subjective nature of such evaluations.¹⁵ For instance, both Avigad and Birnbaum used the term ‘(semi)cursive’ to refer to scripts labelled by Cross as ‘(semi)formal’.¹⁶ Since Cross’s ‘cursive’ pole is further removed from the Formal than that supposed by other scholars for the early periods of the (proto-)Jewish script, Cross tends to rank hands relatively highly on his spectrum of formality. In essence, he classifies every hand more formal than the ‘semicursives’ on the ‘formal’ side of the spectrum—warranting at least a rating of semiformal—even when they are crude, careless, or unskilled.¹⁷ Cross, then, has no category for ordinary, everyday non-Cursive writing that is less than (semi)formal. Essentially, all non-Cursive hands are considered (semi)formal, such that the category becomes extremely broad and loses its discriminating power for differentiating varying qualities of hands.

but they saw the developing Cursive scripts as mainstream and native to the Jewish tradition, rather than a geographical aberration.

- 14 The same is also true of the increasing distinction between formal literary and cursive documentary hands in the contemporary Greek tradition; cf. Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 10–17.
- 15 Cf. Gumbert 1974, 205.
- 16 Avigad 1958; Birnbaum 1971, 176. Avigad’s usage of ‘angular cursive’ for Cross’s ‘Vulgar semiformal’ is paradoxical, but serves to illustrate the different definitions used by these scholars.
- 17 E.g. Cross 2003, 27, considers a crude abecedary from Qumran to be an example of the Formal. On my stricter definition, a ‘crude formal’ hand would be an oxymoron. Yardeni 1997, 192, also seems to operate either with a looser definition of formality and/or a stricter definition of calligraphy when she at one point speaks of a ‘non-calligraphic formal hand’ in some of the Bar Kokhba letters. Admittedly, the cutoff for the classification of ‘formal’ and ‘calligraphic’ scripts on the script continuum is arbitrary and impressionistic, but I suggest that the strict standards for formality applied here are helpful for distinguishing levels of writing.

Yet there is an even more fundamental problem with the formal-cursive opposition utilized by Cross. If Formal and Cursive are indeed discrete script types, one wonders whether it is even appropriate to measure them on the same spectrum of formality. If the Cursive is a distinct style with its own conventional forms (as it certainly is in the first and second centuries CE), how can it be compared with the more ‘formal’ (Quasi-)Square hands on the basis of adherence to ideal forms (i.e. execution), when the scribes were intentionally attempting to reproduce entirely different forms? When ‘formal’ and ‘cursive’ diverge to such an extent that they are no longer reproducing the same basic script, these two categories can in fact function quite independently of each other.¹⁸ In fact, it would not at all be oxymoronic to speak of a ‘formal cursive’ script from this perspective, if a cursive script (i.e. with flowing ductus) came to be more carefully written as a book script.¹⁹ This may seem counterintuitive at first, but it clearly shows that different script types should be evaluated on their own terms, with like compared to like. In other words, ‘formal’ and ‘cursive’ need not, in principle, function as polar opposites on a single-trajectory spectrum of formality. Any supposed spectrum of formality must rather be conceptualized as more fluid and complex, incorporating multiple distinct trajectories.

In light of these problems, I will refrain from classifying the Jewish hands according to a formal-cursive continuum. Instead, I prefer to classify their formality on a spectrum from formal to informal (the true opposite of formal), based graphically on the morphological complexity of their script types and the degree to which they accurately execute their respective ideal forms.²⁰ Thus, the formality of a Herodian Square hand should not primarily be measured relative to the Herodian Cursive, but according to the degree to which it reproduces the forms of its own script type and the degree of structuring utilized in those forms. This allows the explicit creation of a catego-

18 Cf. Casamassima 1999, 22, who stresses that Medieval Latin documentary cursive and book scripts should be treated largely independently, rather than as varying manifestations of a common script type.

19 Indeed, the formal Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic hands developed out of the earlier formal/official Aramaic cursive tradition; cf. Naveh 1970, 3–7. Compare also the use of the famous Rashi Hebrew cursive script and Byzantine Greek minuscules as formal book scripts. Derolez 2003, 5, 123–125, speaks of the repetitive alternation between cursivity and calligraphy in the creation of new script types as characteristic of the history of script, providing numerous examples from the Latin script tradition. See also Casamassima 1999.

20 For similar usage of ‘informal’ for irregular, non-Cursive hands, see Johnson 2004, 102; Sirat 2006, 314–315, 351–362; Turner 1987, 20–21. Functional dynamics must also be factored in (see § 6), but less directly than the evident graphic characteristics.

ry of non-Cursive ‘informal’ scripts, facilitating the distinguishing between relative qualities of hands within the same script type, which is essential for more nuanced appreciation of the registers of different levels of handwriting. The possible gradations of formality are practically infinite,²¹ and so it makes little sense to devise a highly precise classification system.²² But the broad category of informal writing that falls short of meticulous adherence to highly structured ideal forms may prove pragmatically helpful for analyzing the functions of different hands. An important consequence of this is that I apply a somewhat stricter standard for formal and semiformal scripts than Cross. It is also important to note that informal handwriting is a negative category, composed of hands which do not form a clearly defined ‘style’ proper in their own right, but rather a diverse and non-homogenous class of hands lacking the calligraphic features characteristic of formal and semiformal hands.²³

The informal hands should not necessarily be considered secondary simplifications or developments from formal or semiformal scripts.²⁴ Some may, indeed, be poorly executed attempts to produce calligraphic results. But, more often, informal handwriting reflects the most basic, common forms of handwriting learned in the early stages of primary education and subsequently developed and personalized by experienced fast writers.²⁵ It is actually the for-

- 21 According to Roberts 1956, xii, ‘though the gradations between the most elegant book hand and the most fluent cursive are almost infinite, at the extremes they are as different as chalk from cheese.’
- 22 If levels of formality are too finely distinguished, this would increase the subjectivity of the hierarchy, reduce the number of samples in each category (thereby making statistical data less useful), and result in categories that are considerably narrower than what can realistically be associated with distinct conventional functional registers. In other words, broad distinctions like formal, semiformal, and informal, are more likely to yield historically meaningful categories related to intended functions than overly precise constructs. For perspective, according to Diocletian’s price edict, there were three levels of professional handwriting for which one could charge a fee; cf. Turner 1987, 1.
- 23 Cf. Cross 2003, 32; Sirat 2006, 355, ‘The varieties of informal script are as numerous as the scribes who write it, for there is no body of rules to restrain individuality.’ Similarly, the informal Greek hands are too diverse to be described as a particular style; cf. Nongbri 2018, 61.
- 24 Contra Cross 1962, 217 and 2003, 32.
- 25 So also Carr 2005, 242; Wise 2015, 57–60, who argue similarly based on material evidence from contemporary Jewish writing samples. Contra Hezser 2001, 85–89, who supposes that all the preserved early Hebrew/Aramaic ‘exercises’ should be attributed to professional scribes. Even if the writing exercises were done by professionals, the evidence of informal writing in signatures and inscriptions is sufficient to demonstrate its ubiquity. For evidence of writing in later Jewish educational practices, see Olszowy-Schlanger 2003. A class of informal school hands for everyday

mal and semiformal scripts that artistically refine simple models of everyday practical handwriting, requiring both advanced calligraphic scribal training and carefully controlled execution. Informal hands in general lack the high degree of structuring and regularity evident in formal (usually professional) hands and are often characterized by inconsistency (e.g. the indiscriminate usage of non-final and final forms of letters and cursive letters alongside non-cursive forms).²⁶ Informal hands can reflect varying degrees of skill and control.²⁷ Unskilled hands tend to be slowly and irregularly written, and the handwriting is frequently larger than average.²⁸ Unskilled hands are generally limited to writing very short texts. Skilled writers can also write in informal scripts, either because of lack of calligraphic training or an intentional decision to write quickly and without artifice. These writers can exercise greater or lesser control on their handwriting, based on a variety of situational factors, such as the speed at which they intend to write and the relative need for the legibility of the resulting handwriting.²⁹ Informal writing always exists to some degree alongside more formal counterparts, but it is especially common

use also finds significant parallels in contemporary Greco-Roman educational practices, for which see Cribiore 1996, 114. Haines-Eitzen 2000, 63, following Cribiore, calls this school script ‘semicursive’, ‘multifunctional’, and ‘basic’. Harrauer 2010, 2, says that the book script was learned in primary education, but he says this in contrast to the documentary Cursive without making finer distinctions in quality.

26 Avigad 1958, 78; Birnbaum 1952, 45; Cross 1962, 217.

27 For an attempt to classify various informal hands based on skill level, see Wise 2015, 59–60. For a similar approach to ranking Greek school hands, see Cribiore 1996, 111–112.

28 Cf. Cribiore 1996, 102–106. Johnson 2004, 155–156, also notes a tendency for the most elegant Greek literary hands to be very large. Many of the Dead Sea Scrolls with large scripts are relatively informal, but there is also a reflex of the usage of large scripts for particularly beautiful (and late) manuscripts (e.g. 11Q5 and Mas1e).

29 For the concept of control in writing, see Sirat 2006, 429, ‘By *controlled* we mean careful writing in which writers pay attention to the outcome of their work: a formal message, a calligraphic page or, as in forged documents a copy of another person’s writing. By *personal* we mean the fluent, ordinary, automatic writing performed without undue attention to the morphological results. Controlled and personal writings are more clearly defined by comparison and contrast. We shift between the two modes almost instantaneously and unconsciously: control appears as soon as there is an internal restraint or an external constraint. An internal restraint may be our impression, when writing a letter, that it will be hard to read, leading us to switch to a mode in which there is greater control. An external constraint is seen when we are asked to write with the page laid horizontally or in a perfectly straight line. As a result, the hand ceases to work automatically and the eye becomes more active. The writing loses its personal character and tends to revert to the conventional forms learned in childhood.’ Though Sirat considers controlled and personal to be separate

in contexts with large numbers of non-professional writers and the proliferation of everyday writing.³⁰

While the differences between formal and informal hands are often immediately evident, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish relatively carefully written informal scripts from less carefully written formal scripts.³¹ To alleviate this ambiguity somewhat (but not completely), I will classify borderline cases as ‘semiformal’. This definition too, is stricter than the broad usage practiced by Cross, who included an exceptionally diverse assortment of less-than-strictly formal scripts in the category of ‘semiformal’.³²

4. Morphology

I have argued above for a broad and composite concept of formality that can be fruitfully broken down into several component parts: morphology, execution, and function. Morphology refers to the ideal graphic forms writers aim to reproduce and is itself multifaceted and multilayered.³³ Handwriting

modes of writing, she clarifies, ‘No writing is formed by totally automatic movements; nor is any writing totally controlled’ (2006, 432).

30 Cf. Naveh 1970, 4–7, for the presence of Aramaic ‘vulgar’ and ‘extreme’ cursives already in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Yardeni 2000, [154–155] attributes the increasing use of diverse types and levels of writing in the Herodian period to a proliferation of everyday writing. See, similarly, Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 16, for the contemporary increase in relatively informal handwriting in Greek hands of the first centuries BCE and CE.

31 In any case, carefully written informal scripts and inferior formal scripts are both substandard by calligraphic standards.

32 See also Tigchelaar 2018, 2. Practically, I propose to reclassify Cross’s diverse vulgar semiformals and some less elegant early semiformals as ‘informal’. This demotion is fitting, since the relatively poor quality and simplicity of these informal hands usually clearly distinguishes them graphically from more formal hands. This is recognized also by Cross, who labels them ‘crude’ and notes that they fluctuate ‘between formal and semicursive traditions’; Cross 1962, 217 and 2003, 32.

33 By ideal forms, I refer not only to the most basic letter structures of the writing system, but also to the particular style-specific and even personal forms that writers aim to reproduce. These ideals fit into a hierarchy of script relationships within a given writing system. Each writer’s personal ideal forms can be situated within wider style-specific conventional ideals and increasingly broad systems of writing. Cf. Sirat 2006, 310, ‘An individual’s writing system is nested in another system, which includes other persons writing at the same time in the same culture. Every personal system is a part of this writing style, which characterizes a period and cultural setting, and cannot be studied outside this larger system. This period-cultural system is in turn nested in another system, that of the particular species of writing; e.g. Cuneiform, Egyptian, or some alphabet. It is also part of a larger style that encompasses different writing systems, such as the Gothic style common to Latin and Hebrew.’

results from a complex nexus of cognitive and performative factors, among which are the choices of which forms (allographs) of each letter (grapheme) to write.³⁴ Herein lies the potential for style distinction, even within the oeuvre of an individual writer.

The study of morphology includes many essential aspects of the script, including, but not limited to: structure, ductus,³⁵ stroke quality, module, weight, ornamentation, inclination, and interrelationships between letters in context.³⁶ In the continuous development of handwriting, different combinations of these aspects occasionally become conventionalized as ideal graphic types used in certain times, places, communities, and circumstances. These conventions are constantly in flux, though diachronic changes are not the focus of this article, which explores rather synchronic stylistic distinctions. Scholars studying the Dead Sea Scrolls are confronted with a bewildering array of scripts that cannot be explained simply by the personal idiosyncrasies of individual writers reproducing a common script type. Rather, the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect conscious differentiation between a variety of conventional types. Such style distinctions frequently have an even greater effect on the appearance of scripts than chronological development.

Cross's focus on a linear scale of formality in his classification system is ill-suited to the delineation of these script types in the early Jewish script tradition, often mixing indiscriminately factors related to morphology and execution (for which see § 5 below). Without direct access to the minds of the scribes, the results of morphology and execution may not always be easily distinguishable, so Cross's decision to classify these primarily on a general scale of formality is to some extent understandable. But in doing so Cross wrongly gives the impression that levels of formality like 'the formal hand' are themselves the most basic morphological script types, when in fact the correlation between formality and script type is not one-to-one. One might argue, for instance, that some of the more elegant examples of Cross's 'Round Semiformal' could be classified as formal, in which case there could be multiple different styles of formal writing.³⁷ Cross himself distinguishes three

34 See, in principle, Teulings 1996. The higher-level cognitive modules related to graphemes and allographs are the most relevant for the questions of style addressed in this article. Writers must choose between different learned forms (allographs) of each letter (grapheme).

35 Used here in the standard Anglophone sense of the term, referring to the number, sequence, and direction of stroke formation.

36 Types of interrelationships include, for instance, the relative positions of letters in context ('kerning') and ligatures.

37 Cf. Yardeni 1997, 57; Tigchelaar 2018, 2–3. So also Turner 1987, 20–22, who identifies at least four distinct formal graphic styles of Greek handwriting, clearly

sub-types of semiformal scripts based on three different criteria: 1) cursive influences (Early Semiformal); 2) elegant curved strokes (Round Semiformal); and 3) crude execution (Vulgar Semiformal). The resulting categories are unequal, with some reflecting poor execution of relatively formal script types and others representing conscious, calligraphic alternatives to Cross's formal scripts. Consciously distinguishing in principle between morphology, execution, and formality permits the construction of a more coherent system of graphic types oriented more around apparent convention than physical implementation.

As noted above, in the Herodian and post-Herodian periods there is a clear distinction between highly stylized Square and Cursive scripts, which means that they each have their own coherent traditions and highly standardized conventions, including major structural differences for most letters of the alphabet. In the earlier periods, there is much less morphological difference between the most cursive documented samples and contemporary formal scripts. Within this broad scheme we can also distinguish several smaller, less clearly defined and differentiated graphic subtypes.

In order to classify these scripts, there are two complementary levels of analysis that may prove useful: 1) a grapheme-based approach relating to differences and developments in the writing of particular letters, and 2) a global, texture-based approach focusing on large-scale or repeated features that influence the general appearance or aspect of the script.³⁸ On the global level, Cross noted a general movement towards greater bilinearity³⁹ over time, such that later scripts tend towards more regular letter height and square module (i.e. the framing shape within which letters are formed).⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Cross emphasizes the grapheme-based approach, leading him to associate specific letter forms with particular graphic types and periods. Admittedly, the relative typology of early-to-late letter forms constructed by Cross and others

demonstrating the distinction between formality and style. In the Gothic script tradition, the round Southern Textualis similarly functions alongside the more angular Northern Textualis as a fully formal script; cf. Derolez 2003, 102–118.

38 Sirat 1981. Stokes 2011a, rightly emphasizes that both analysis of letter forms and general stylistic features should ideally be synthesized in stylistic classifications. This comprehensiveness has historically been very difficult to achieve, however, given the large number of variables and the messiness of the data.

39 By bilinearity (not used by Cross), I mean the tendency to write letters within a regular notional frame bounded by both top and bottom lines (headlines and baselines respectively), such that most letters have the same height, excluding long ascenders and descenders. See the similar usage amongst Greek palaeographers, e.g. Turner 1987, 3.

40 For parallel developments in the contemporary Greek tradition, see Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 15–17. For the continuing development of the formal Hebrew scripts in the second through fifth centuries CE, see Longacre 2018.

is a useful tool for palaeographic dating, even if the precision and accuracy with which this typology can be anchored to calendar dates remains debated.⁴¹ Nevertheless, I remain unconvinced that letter forms provide the best means for synchronic style classification among the non-Cursive scripts, since all these (Quasi-)Square scripts seem to develop structurally along similar diachronic trajectories.⁴² Most of the differences in letter-forms between the

41 E.g. Longacre 2018, 46–50; Longacre and Tigchelaar 2017; Sirat 1991, 418, ‘Nous savons que les rouleaux de Qumrân sont antérieurs à 68/70, ceux de Massada à 73, ceux de Murabba‘at à 135. Peut-on les dater avec plus de précision ? Une chronologie fondée sur l’évolution de la lettre hébraïque a été élaborée par F. M. Cross. Il semble difficile cependant d’accepter cette chronologie. En effet, nous ne connaissons pas la provenance de ces rouleaux et aucun d’eux n’est daté. De plus, elle est basée sur une conception linéaire de l’évolution des écritures qui ne nous semble pas correspondre aux réalités de l’histoire. Nous nous bornerons donc à parler de périodes sans tenter d’utiliser des datations plus précises.’

42 In agreement with Cross and Yardeni, systematic and significant differences at both the graphemic and global levels indicate that there are two main streams of early Jewish script development from the first century CE at the latest. I will call these (Quasi-)Square and Cursive. The Ornate and Simple Rectilinear and Curvilinear script types defined below are essentially morphologically different visual manifestations, graphic variants, or even levels of the same basic (Quasi-)Square script. The various (Quasi-)Square script types develop in parallel in structurally similar ways, differing mainly in terms of stroke quality, ornamentation, angularity, inclination, and regularity. For the application of the structure vs form distinction to Hebrew scripts, see Engel 1999. Engel considers decorative elements, shading, and the curving of lines to be ‘formative elements’ (p. 44). The use of ‘form’ in this sense would be confusing in relation to my definition of ‘formality’ given in § 3, so I will rather refer to these non-structural features individually as necessary.

The (Quasi-)Square script is frequently (if imprecisely) called ‘square’ without qualification. The earliest (proto-)Jewish scripts are indeed significantly more angular than pre-Hellenistic Aramaic scripts, which probably reflects the change in writing implement from a soft rush brush to a stiff reed pen; see Yardeni 1997, 158, 160. Nevertheless, the inconsistency of letter sizes and shapes in early scripts and the roundness of curvilinear scripts do not fit the general description of ‘square’ well. The formal scripts of the late first century BCE and onwards, however, show clear development towards rigid angularity and a truly square module, probably influenced by a similar trend in Greek scripts. The transitional nature of the period from the third century BCE to the second century CE makes it difficult to provide an accurate overall characterization. Avigad 1958, 58–59; Birnbaum 1971, 126–127, 130, label the formal hands from as early as the third century BCE ‘square’. Cross 2003, 3 n. 5, considers the label ‘square’ to be appropriate only for the formal scripts from the Herodian periods onwards. Sirat 2006, 321, agrees that the formal Herodian script of 11Q5 can be classified as square. Engel 2013, 485–487, labels the early Jewish scripts ‘proto-square’ until the tenth century CE, reserving the unqualified ‘square’ for fully-developed medieval hands.

(Quasi-)Square scripts are more likely attributable to personal idiosyncrasies, varying levels of execution, different stages or trajectories of typological development that do not reflect established stylistic conventions,⁴³ or the implementation of style decisions made at the global level. Perhaps it will in the future be possible to distinguish graphic (sub)types within the (Quasi-)Square scripts (at least in part) on the basis of grapheme-based structural patterns, but such an approach is yet to bear much fruit. Focused attention to the general aspects of the scripts, on the other hand, is more likely to yield fruitful synchronic distinctions between types of writing, and I will emphasize these global style features in this article.⁴⁴

Two global morphological features seem most prominently and reliably to differentiate discernable graphic script types in the early Jewish script tradition: curvature and ornamentation.⁴⁵ Both of these features occur on independent continua with infinite possible indiscrete gradations.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, they can easily be differentiated at their extremes, and I suggest that together they distinguish the most prominent non-Cursive early Jewish script types (see Table 1).⁴⁷

	Ornate	Simple
Rectilinear	Ornate Rectilinear	Simple Rectilinear
Curvilinear	Ornate Curvilinear	Simple Curvilinear Semicursive

Table 1. Early Jewish (Quasi-)Square script types

The curvature of the strokes can be measured on a scale from rectilinear to curvilinear. By *rectilinear* I refer to the short, rigidly straight strokes characteristic of the most formal (especially late) hands, which often meet at right angles, resulting in angular letter forms. These precise strokes are more

43 In this regard, however, I would note the general tendency for informal hands to utilize typologically more advanced letter forms than formal hands, which tend to delay the introduction of new letter forms until they are well-established.

44 Global features also feature prominently in the typical classifications of medieval Hebrew scripts; see Engel 2013.

45 There are also second-tier factors which are characteristic of certain types of script, but have less significant distinguishing/discriminating power with regard to synchronic style differences within our corpus: structure, ductus (in the Anglophone meaning of stroke number, sequence, and direction), weight, module, shading, inclination, and interrelationships between letters in context.

46 Furthermore, both of these phenomena can be objectively measured using existing computer vision techniques, which opens up many future possibilities for (semi) automated clustering of script types.

47 For a similar approach, see Gumbert 1976.

difficult to produce with a human hand, and thus rectilinear scripts tend to be relatively formal.⁴⁸ *Curvilinear* strokes, in contrast, are curved or wavy (tilde ~ or reverse tilde ~ horizontal and long ‘s’ ↓ downstrokes), yielding rounded letter forms.⁴⁹ Wavy, undulating strokes require more effort to produce than simple curved strokes, and thus tend towards relative formality. In contrast, long, sweeping strokes are easier to produce with the human hand, such that they tend to correlate with informality. At the extreme curvilinear end of the spectrum, distinct cursive letter forms sometimes appear, warranting separate classification (i.e. the Semicursive).⁵⁰

Ornamentation is the second major criterion by which the non-Cursive scripts can be productively classified. Ornamental additions can be measured on a scale of increasing frequency and complexity.⁵¹ At the lower end of the spectrum, the simplest hands feature no additional decorative strokes at the tops of letters beyond the inherited serifs integral to the basic structures of some letters. At the upper end of the spectrum, the post-Herodian formal scripts frequently feature a fully-developed system of similar orna-

- 48 On the relative difficulty of producing straight strokes, see Sirat 2006, 368, ‘A script composed of straight strokes requires strength, and thus contraction of the hand and arm muscles. The hand cannot rest on the table and tires quickly. Moreover the hand, poised *above* the row of letters, interferes with the writer’s view of what is being written... A script composed of curves allows the hand to rest *below* the row of letters; the writer’s hand and body are relaxed.’
- 49 On the occasional difficulty of distinguishing between rectilinear and curvilinear hands, see Tigchelaar 2018, 3, 7–8. Indeed, some poorly-executed rectilinear hands incorporate more frequent curved strokes, and curvilinear hands sometimes evidence relatively straight strokes, occasionally blurring the demarcation borders between these categories. Nevertheless, I suggest that in truly stylized formal scripts, the scribes consciously aimed to write either rectilinear or curvilinear strokes. These respective types of strokes will inevitably predominate, especially if the script is carefully executed. The ambiguity pertains primarily to the sub-standard semiformal, as well as the well-executed informal scripts.
- 50 From the perspective of curvature, the Cursive and Extreme Cursive scripts could also be classed as extreme curvilinear, but these scripts are even more clearly distinguishable by their conspicuous structural differences at the grapheme level.
- 51 It is a perennial problem whether to include ornamentation under the category of morphology or execution. E.g. Gumbert 1974, 220, suggests that ornamental additions may be determinative for the level of execution. Similarly, Turner 1987, 21, rejects Schubart’s *Zierstil* (‘decorated style’) on the basis of the wide distribution of serifs over time and multiple distinct types of script. In the case of the Hebrew scripts, the presence or absence of ornamentation so closely correlates with other stylistic features that I will provisionally treat it as essential to the definition of the script types. The relationship between ornamentation and script type remains an open question worthy of further research, however.

mental strokes at the tops of downstrokes on the letters שׁעטטנוגן, as well as hooks on לוי, decorated right arms on א (and frequently also flourishes on the left leg), and sometimes also decorative elements on other letters like ההמת. Many intermediate scripts have less fully-developed systems of additional ornamental strokes, and many curvilinear hands have bent back tops on some of these strokes. Within formal Jewish hands, these ornamentations develop diachronically from the early rudimentary hooks on the letters לוי to the full system of ornamentation described above, so there is a chronological aspect to these classifications.⁵² But many informal hands—both early and late—select a simpler script type from among recognized contemporary alternatives, either by virtue of training and competence or the intended function of the handwriting.

Based primarily on these two graphic criteria, I provisionally distinguish five main non-Cursive script subtypes. While not the only possible way of arranging the data, these categories have the advantage of being labelled based on characteristic graphic features that are objectively measurable and (to my mind) most-discriminating, rather than subjective impressions of formality.

The *Ornate Rectilinear* is a highly stylized script type characterized by rectilinear strokes, angular letter forms, and a high degree of decorative artifice and ornamentation. Ornate Rectilinear scripts are further characterized by a lack of ligatures and leftward leaning inclination. Some exemplars evidence conscious and elegant contrast between relatively thick horizontal strokes and thin vertical strokes, but this feature never becomes characteristic in the period of our corpus. The intrinsic complexity of this well-defined and highly structured style of writing usually entails a degree of formality (see Figure 2). The ornamentation characteristic of the Ornate Rectilinear seems to have been elaborated only from the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods onward.

The *Ornate Curvilinear* is a stylish script type characterized by curvilinear (frequently wavy) strokes, round letter forms, and some degree of decorative artifice and ornamentation. Like their Ornate Rectilinear counterparts, they lean leftward and lack ligatures. Because of the graded nature of curvature, the difference between carefully written Ornate Curvilinear scripts and hastily written Ornate Rectilinear scripts is sometimes minimal. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that some scribes intentionally aimed to reproduce curvilinear forms in contradistinction to the more rectilinear scripts. Like the Ornate Rectilinear, the Ornate Curvilinear script type often attains a degree of

52 Cf. Yardeni 2014, 27, 30–31, 39. Many of these ornamental additions are continued and even further elaborated in the later Hebrew script traditions. For the parallel elaboration of ornamentation in contemporary Greek handwriting from the first centuries BCE and CE, see Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 16.

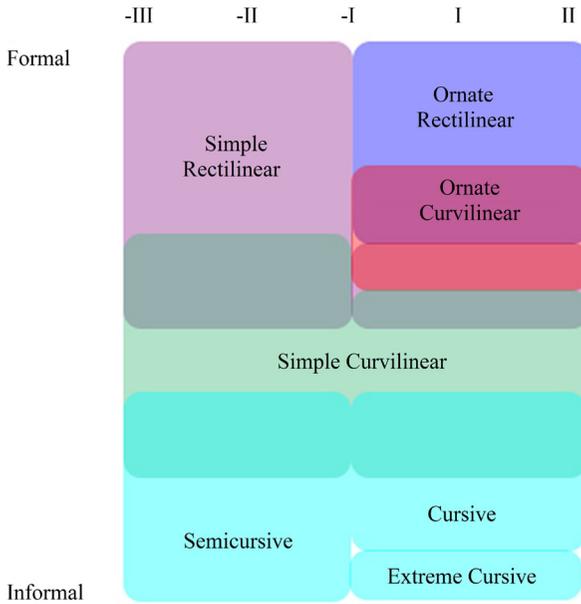


Figure 2. Formality distribution of script types over time

formality and seems to have originated with the elaboration of ornamentation in the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods.

The *Simple Rectilinear* is a less strictly defined cluster of scripts characterized by rectilinear strokes and angular letter forms, but a lack of decorative artifice and ornamentation. Like the Ornate Rectilinear, the Simple Rectilinear scripts lack ligatures, and more formal examples incline to the left. Formal Simple Rectilinear exemplars are usually datable earlier than the Ornate Rectilinear scripts which functionally replaced them, since ornamentation seems to have become more elaborate over time. On the other hand, informal Simple Rectilinear scripts are spread throughout the entire period, since the lack of ornamentation may have one of two causes: 1) the script is datable to an early stage prior to the elaboration of the ornamentation; and 2) writers may consciously have chosen to use a simple, unadorned script for informal writing, even once the Ornate Rectilinear was firmly established.

Several types of simple, undecorated curvilinear scripts can also be identified, distinguished both by the degree of curvature and the use of distinct cursive letter forms. The basic *Simple Curvilinear* is a loosely defined cluster of scripts generally characterized by curvilinear strokes, round letter forms, and lack of decorative artifice and ornamentation. Early left-leaning, stylish examples of this type with frequent wavy strokes are the precursors of

בלג נבט עזיחונכח על כן נעזתני נבא
 סנה זכרנכח ודארי כטן סתאוס
 פי כערתו ויאשאכח לביעורונכח תאכבו
 כנח אלו וזוננו ככסכס לזוכנו שאכח
 כענזי חנן לזכרונכח ואל תשלוט בו כול און
 כודע כעשאק אונת ויאשאכח כקוויזוכח
 כענכח חזיר כעברנכח ולכירע את חזירונכח
 בלג כנח ודארי ענז על כן לראי שאכח חזיר

Ornate Rectilinear (11Q5)

אף חזרני לטעם וביעורני סתאוס
 ענזנו ויאשאכח ו אף נשאעו עכאכח
 ענזנו כביעורונכח ויאשאכח ו
 אף ויאשאכח ינעל כעשאכח נישדו
 סתאוס ואלכירע ככענזני ויאשאכח
 ענזנו כודע כאכל ויאשאכח
 אף אפניד. חזרני חזיר כ
 ויאשאכח כטעם ויאשאכח

Ornate Curvilinear (4Q166)

כרוד אתה נוד ?
 כעכר עכרוד כ
 כאכר כיאכר
 ככקויניך ויאשאכח ויאכר
 כחוקיקתך אשאכח
 כקוויניך עכרוד ויאכר
 כרוד כרוד

Simple Rectilinear (4Q90)

כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד

Simple Curvilinear (4Q95)

כחוקיקתך ויאשאכח
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד
 כעכר עכרוד

Semicursive (4Q88)

Figure 3. Examples of non-Cursive script types

the later Ornate Curvilinear scripts and are clearly to be distinguished from contemporary Simple Rectilinear scripts. Informal examples span the entire period and usually have long, sweeping strokes, which are easier and quicker to produce than rectilinear or wavy strokes. Even in the later periods with elaborated ornate scripts, writers sometimes consciously preferred to write informal Simple Curvilinear scripts, either due to their level of skill or the purpose of their writing. In informal writing, there is often no clear distinction between Simple Curvilinear and Simple Rectilinear hands.

The *Semicursive* hands constitute a particular, minimally coherent sub-type of simple curvilinear script characterized by long, sweeping strokes, round letter forms, and the occasional usage of distinct cursive (especially simplified and looped) letter forms. These scripts tend to be upright and sometimes use ligatures. Some semicursive hands inconsistently have very broad horizontal strokes, creating a heavy appearance to the script, but this is not used to a regular and elegant effect. The Semicursive was an ideal script type for fast writing, and so it usually appears in very informal handwriting. With Yardeni, I consider the Semicursives to be the early precursors of the later developed *Cursive* and *Extreme Cursive* script types, which will not be discussed in detail in this article. These latter, highly efficient scripts are characterized by varying degrees of smooth, flowing ductus, the reduction of the number of basic strokes in many letters, simple round or even looped letter

forms, lack of ornamentation, frequent ligatures, and rightward-leaning inclination.

The script types identified in this section seem to represent the most prominent varieties of conventional models and are clearly differentiated at their extremes. Nevertheless, the complex interaction between morphology and execution creates a wide range of intermediate hands on the margins that remain difficult to classify, especially in less formal examples.⁵³

5. Execution

The second major factor influencing the overall formality of a hand is its execution. When a writer attempts to reproduce an ideal model script on a manuscript, numerous material, cognitive, environmental, and biomechanical factors affect its implementation.⁵⁴ Choice of writing implement and surface, for instance, can impact the writing process and the final appearance of the script. The writer's skill,⁵⁵ carefulness, hastiness, distraction, confusion, and fatigue also dramatically affect the results. The shape, size, and strength of the hand, as well as the writing posture further distinguish the handwriting of individual writers. Because of such factors, no two handwriting samples are ever completely identical, even by the same writer.⁵⁶ This is all the more true when comparing handwriting by multiple writers. Even writers attempting to follow the same sets of writing conventions (i.e. model script types) can differ considerably, depending both on personal idiosyncrasies and more general patterns of changes due to execution. Unlike conventional graphic types, execution cannot be transmitted serially, but rather varies from person to person and situation to situation.

53 On the fundamental difficulty of classifying intermediate hands, cf. Kestemont et al. 2017, S101–S104, S109.

54 See Teulings 1996.

55 Thus, Gumbert 1974, 215–216, 218–219, distinguishes between writers' intended levels of execution (*Niveau*) and their competence to achieve those aims based on personal skills (*Qualität*). For Gumbert, 'quality' refers not to the ability to write individual letter forms of a given style accurately, but the ability to maintain the elements of a chosen style consistently over long stretches of text without lapsing into other styles and influences. See, similarly, Derolez 2003, 25–26. The caution of Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 1–2, in reference to early Greek hands is also worth repeating, namely, 'within the same period and the same type of script there may be huge differences in quality, in the mastery of writing. One must not confuse these differences in quality with stages in the development of a script. In other words, unskilled, primitive-looking hands are not necessarily older than their more professional-looking counterparts.'

56 Sirat 2006, 21.

The ways execution can affect a script are too numerous to be comprehensively listed and accounted for, but some more general phenomena can be highlighted here as relevant to the early Jewish scripts. One prominent aspect of relatively unskilled or careless scripts is the general lack of regularity, whether in stroke quality, letter formation, column and line alignment, etc. Hasty writing tends towards simple, unadorned letter forms and highly curvilinear strokes, sometimes even introducing distinct cursive letter forms and/or ligatures. Among the early Jewish scripts, the more formal hands almost always incline to the left, but everyday informal writing is frequently upright. Furthermore, while formal writing aims to reduce the personality of the writer in favor of set conventions, informal writing allows for greater personal freedom and idiosyncrasy.

As is evident from the previous paragraph, the significant effects of execution on the production of handwriting overlap considerably with the texture-based features characteristic of graphic types. It is not always clear which aspects of the handwriting were intentionally planned by the writer and which were accidental consequences of the physical implementation. Thus, without access to the mind of the writer, execution cannot always be neatly disentangled from morphology when studying the final products of the handwriting process. In lieu of objective criteria for distinguishing the effects of graphic form and execution, the combined effects can be measured and plotted in terms of formality as defined above. But scholars may also hypothesize about the relative contributions of morphology and execution to the final results. Typically, I suggest that the variation caused by execution should be smaller than that caused by the selection of different ideal script types in order for the latter to be meaningful.⁵⁷

57 The relative priority of morphology and execution in hierarchies of script classification is an enduring problem for palaeographers. Derolez 2003, 20–24, following Lieftinck 1954 and Gumbert 1976, is able to maintain a consistent distinction between morphology and execution by defining graphic types primarily on the basis of a few distinct letter forms rather than textural features, but it is far from clear whether this pragmatic classification decision accurately accounts for the real impact of these factors. Derolez classifies Gothic Latin scripts first according to graphic types based on morphology (e.g. Northern Textualis, Southern Textualis, Cursiva, etc.) with each sample secondarily ranked according to a spectrum of formality of execution (Formata, Libraria, Currens, and intermediate categories). While some script types are limited in the range of their levels of execution, Textualis scripts can occur at every level from Formata to Currens (p. 101). According to Derolez (p. 22), this has the benefit of removing unhelpfully multiplied classifications based only on differing levels of execution. On the other hand, hands of vastly different execution may be grouped together, despite their very different general appearance. In fact, somewhat counterintuitively, a Formata hand of one type may look consid-

The impression of level of execution is somewhat subjective and difficult to measure, operating on a continuum that cannot be easily quantized into discrete classifications. As with formality, the various gradations in execution are multifaceted and practically infinite, but nevertheless distinguishable. In the analysis below I will classify levels of execution very roughly into three main categories (see Table 2): *Calligraphic* hands reflect high degrees of care, artifice, and conscious attention to the aesthetic appearance of the script beyond simple functional legibility.⁵⁸ *Common* hands are everyday practical forms of writing that lack either calligraphic care or evidence of extreme haste. *Current* hands reflect high velocities of writing and general disregard for clarity and

erably more like a Formata hand of another type than a Currens hand of its own morphological type; cf. Stutzmann 2016, §§ 16–18. By classifying graphic type and execution in this way, Derolez then to some extent undermines the significance of his own graphic types.

In contrast, Turner 1987, 20–22, classifies Greek scripts first as either Formal or Informal, with the Formal scripts subsequently grouped into numerous morphologically different graphic styles. This has the effect of excluding a priori poorly executed hands from stylistic classification among the Formal script types, necessarily creating more narrowly defined script types. From this perspective, it is the script types themselves which are Formal, and the execution creates only minimal variation within those Formal styles. The drawback of this approach is that, if a hand is poorly executed, it is no longer classed in the same categories as the well-executed Formal scripts, even if the writer was indeed attempting (albeit unsuccessfully) to produce one of those script styles.

I have tried to stake out a middle ground position that allows for a range of variation in execution within broadly defined script types, which is nevertheless limited to some extent by the intrinsic formality or informality of certain script types (see Table 2). As defined in § 3, formality reflects the broadest spectrum of handwriting in a single script tradition (cf. Stutzmann 2016, § 53), within which relatively formal or informal graphic types may be distinguished that allow for limited ranges of internal variation due to execution. In other words, in the hierarchy of classification, formality is the broadest criterion, morphology the intermediate, and execution accounts for the narrowest ranges of variation. Cf. Teulings 1996, 566, 568, who classifies execution as a lower-level phenomenon in the hierarchy of cognitive modules.

58 Yardeni 2014, 19, similarly distinguishes between calligraphic and cursive versions of a given script type. Turner 1987, 3, defines calligraphic hands as those characterized by ‘absolute regularity and formality by separately forming the constitutive movements of each letter in the same way that an engineering draughtsman might draw them.’ This type of structuring is referred to as a ‘set hand’ by Parkes 2008, 154. My own understanding matches well with Parkes 2008, 149, who defines calligraphy as ‘the exploitation of the potential of penmanship to produce conspicuous features of style in response to a prevailing attitude towards what constituted elegance in handwriting.’

legibility. As defined here, these categories are related to but different from levels of formality. Calligraphic hands tend to use highly structured script types, while current hands tend towards simpler, more cursive script types. Common hands are more diverse, applicable to a wide assortment of script types.

		Levels of Execution					
		Calligraphic		Common		Current	
Ancient Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic Script Types	(Quasi-)Square	Ornate Rectilinear	Formal	Semiformal	Semiformal	Informal	n/a
		Ornate Curvilinear	Formal	Semiformal	Semiformal	Informal	n/a
		Simple Rectilinear	Formal	Semiformal	Semiformal	Informal	n/a
		Simple Curvilinear	n/a	Semiformal	Semiformal	Informal	Informal
		Semicursive	n/a			Informal	Informal
	Cursive	Cursive	n/a			Informal	Informal
		Extreme Cursive	n/a			n/a	Informal

Table 2. Script types and levels of execution in relation to formality

6. Function

A third aspect important for the concept of formality is functional and situational. In the history of script development, different script types frequently came to be considered more appropriate for particular contexts. The concept of formality (especially as defined in § 3) entails high levels of skill and arduous work, and it is conducive to perceptions of beauty and, consequently, prestige.⁵⁹ Because of the precision and conventionality of formal hands, they are also characterized by clarity.⁶⁰ Clear hands are easily legible by readers other than

59 Gray 1986, 9, calls such formal writing ‘lettering’, a sub-division of writing defined ‘as writing in which the visual form, that is the letters and the way in which these are shaped and combined, has a formality and an importance over and above bare legibility. It can therefore be an art.’

60 For the combination of beauty and clarity, cf. Roberts 1956, xi, who notes that the characteristics of literary hands, ‘no one of which is by itself a sufficient criterion, are clarity, regularity, and impersonality. Written by Greeks, it will also often aim at beauty. Legibility and the separation of individual letters do not by themselves

the writers themselves and those intimately familiar with them, which makes them particularly useful for general circulation and public reading.⁶¹ Informal hands, by contrast, emphasize efficiency over beauty, mundane practicality over prestige.⁶² The reduction in clarity characteristic of informal hands often renders them difficult to read by others than the writers themselves and their intimate associates, which generally makes them suitable only for personal use or interaction with familiar readers or professional colleagues. Thus, by choice of writing style writers both reflect functional priorities and at the same time signal to potential readers appropriate usage contexts.

Typically, more formal scripts are utilized for copying esteemed texts and/or manuscripts, especially works of literature and sacred scriptures.⁶³ Current hands, on the other hand, are frequently used for more mundane texts like business documents where the emphasis was on efficiency. Most Greek palaeographers, for example, consider the primary distinction between contemporary Greek hands from around the second century BCE onward to be between ‘literary’ (or ‘book’) and ‘documentary’ hands.⁶⁴ The same is true of the Jewish Hebrew/Aramaic scripts in the first and second centuries CE (and possibly earlier), where formal ‘book hands’ predominate in the literary texts and Cursive hands predominate in the documentary texts.⁶⁵ This distribution of hands in both corpora is so marked, consistent, and easily explicable that the basic distinction between literary and documentary hands must be accepted, despite occasional acknowledged crossovers.

The broad distinction between literary and documentary registers does run into at least three complications, however. The first—and least serious—

define it adequately; a clumsy school hand (often mistakenly described by editors as ‘literary’ or ‘uncial’) is legible enough but lacks uniformity and style. Literary hands, it is true, will not normally employ ligature as it tends to loss of clarity.’ See also Derolez 2003, 6, 47.

61 In reference to human speech, Heylighen and Dewaele 1999, 3, highlight a key driving motivation behind formal speech to increase clarity through the use of explicit, context-independent language. They label this ‘deep formality’, defined as ‘attention to form for the sake of unequivocal understanding of the precise meaning of the expression’. They contrast this with ‘surface formality’, which they define as ‘attention to form for the sake of convention or form itself’.

62 Cf. Stokes 2011b, 28, ‘Informal features may not constitute a distinct script, but they still reflect something about the scribe’s attitude to his or her text.’

63 A famous illustration of this can be seen in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Flor. II 259, a letter where the main body is written in a current hand and a marginal Homeric reference is written in a more formal hand; cf. Mugridge 2010, 574.

64 Cavallo and Maehler 2008, 10; Mugridge 2010.

65 See especially Yardeni 2000, [155].

are exceptions, such as when literature is written in current hands and business documents are written in calligraphic hands. These exceptions are noteworthy only for the fact that they are so exceptional, and they can usually be explained by extenuating circumstances that conditioned the particular instances of writing.

The second complication is that the third to first centuries BCE are a period of transition in the early Jewish (and, for that matter, Greek) tradition where the distinction between literary and documentary scripts is in the process of crystallization. The details of this transition in the Jewish scripts are not at all clear (as noted above), since there is an almost complete lack of documentary texts from this period. In light of this, scholars cannot safely assume that the later distinction between literary and documentary hands applies with the same clarity to the earlier periods.

The third complication is that non-current handwriting exists in a wide variety of types and levels of execution, which cannot all be considered equally suitable for writing esteemed literature. Not every non-‘documentary’ hand is necessarily of ‘literary’ quality, and it would be a misnomer to label a crude, non-professional hand a ‘book’ hand. While the principal distinction between conventional literary and documentary scripts may be clear at the extremes, this schema does not easily account for the large variety of intermediate scripts that fit neither pattern.⁶⁶ These common, informal hands reflect the basic forms learned in primary education and used in everyday, mundane writing without calligraphic pretense (see § 3). The potential uses and functions of such hands in the Dead Sea Scrolls have received very little attention from scholars to date and would be a fruitful avenue for further investigation.

7. Conclusion

As defined above, formality is a multifaceted concept dependent upon the interaction between morphology, execution, and function. This definition will by no means remove the complexities, ambiguities, and subjectiveness of stylistic classification. But I hope that it challenges palaeographers to speak more clearly and explicitly about the meaning and significance of formality. As I have tried to show with reference to the Jewish scripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, such a systematic approach has the potential to increase the resolution

66 Similarly, Mugridge 2010, 575. Bataille 1954, 77–78, distinguishes four modes of Greek handwriting: 1) impersonal, neatly and clearly written to be read by anonymous readers; 2) deferential, neatly and clearly written to exhibit respect for social superiors; 3) familiar, somewhat negligently written for social equals or inferiors; and 4) private, carelessly written to be read only by the writer.

of stylistic classification and shine valuable light on the purposes and functions for which manuscripts were produced.

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ʿAbbā Salāmā and his Role of Commissioner of the *Gəbra Ḥəmāmāt*: an Additional Evidence from Two Witnesses from Təgrāy, Northern Ethiopia

Vitagrazia Pisani, Universität Hamburg

Among the Gəʿəz translations which, according to the Ethiopian Christian tradition, were produced and promoted by the fourteenth-century Metropolitan ʿAbbā Salāmā, there is also *the Gəbra Ḥəmāmāt*, the Gəʿəz version of the Coptic Lectionary for the Holy Week. This is suggested by the colophon, which concludes the readings for the Saturday of the Resurrection and which is found, in addition to three previously known manuscripts preserved in the British Library, in two witnesses from Təgrāy in northern Ethiopia, recorded by the project Ethio-SPaRe. The aim of the article is to present these two manuscripts and the colophon, in which ʿAbbā Salāmā is mentioned as the one who commissioned the Gəʿəz lectionary.

Introduction

ʿAbbā Salāmā, the Coptic monk who was Metropolitan of the Ethiopian Orthodox (*Tawāḥədo*) Church from 1348 to 1388, is credited with having personally translated or revised as well as promoted the translation of numerous texts of the Ethiopian Christian literature from Egyptian Arabic into Gəʿəz, earning him the epithet *Salāmā Matargʿəm*, ‘*Salāmā the Translator*’ (ሰላማ፡ ሙተ ርጉም፡).¹

We have very limited biographical information about him; equally scarce is evidence concerning his literary activity in Ethiopia. The epithet *Matargʿəm* is found in the Ethiopic Synaxarion, in the very short commemoration note dedicated to him, on 21 *Naḥase*.² In the list of Ethiopian metropolitans included, on f. 90r, in MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Éthiopien 160 (seventeenth century), ʿAbbā Salāmā is referred to as ‘Translator of the Sacred Scripture’;³ yet, according to Arnold van Lantschoot, the Metropolitan Salāmā did not carry out a real translation, but rather a revision of the already existing Gəʿəz Bible, on the basis of an Arabic version which was circulating in the Coptic Church in that period.⁴ In any case we have no further evidence

1 On ʿAbbā Salāmā, see Marrassini 2010; cf. also Lantschoot 1960, 397–401.

2 Cf. Guidi 1912, 359.

3 Cf. Zotenberg 1877, 263a. Here, about Salāmā, we read: ‘Abbā Salāmā, le traducteur de l’Écriture sainte, qui est enterré à Ḥaqâlet (ሐቃሌት)’.

4 Cf. Lantschoot 1960, in particular p. 399. About the mention of ʿAbbā Salāmā as ‘Translator of the Sacred Scripture’ in the list of metropolitans of MS Éthiop. 160, and about the hypothesis of the revision of the Gəʿəz Bible made by him, see also Conti Rossini 1895, 236–241, in particular p. 240.

on this presumable work of revision (whether he performed it alone, which books exactly he corrected, etc.). Somewhat more, though still limited, are the pieces of information concerning 'Abbā Salāmā's role as translator or promoter of translations of other Gə'əz texts, in particular, hagiographical and liturgical ones. This emerges, as Arnold van Lantschoot points out, from some colophons copied by the scribes at the end of certain texts,⁵ where the name of the Metropolitan appears as the one who translated or transcribed them.⁶

The list of works the Ethiopian Christian literature, which, according to the tradition, were translated or promoted by 'Abbā Salāmā, also includes the Gə'əz version of the Coptic Holy Week lectionary, the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* (ግብረ ሐሙስ),⁷ containing readings generally starting from the Palm Sunday's eve till the 12th hour of Easter Sunday.⁸ This attribution can be assumed from a mention of 'Abbā Salāmā as the commissioner of the lectionary in an 'embedded colophon', transmitted with some of the copies of the work.⁹ Three such witnesses are preserved in the British Library: MS London, British Library (BL), Oriental 597,¹⁰ of the fifteenth century, with the note on f. 259v; MS London, BL, Oriental 599,¹¹ of the eighteenth century (1721–1730), with the note on f. 153v; MS London, BL, Oriental 600,¹² of the end of the seventeenth century, with the note on f. 157v.¹³

5 For the list of these texts see Marrassini 2010, 488b–489a, and Lantschoot 1960, 399–401. For the hagiographical texts see in particular Bausi 2002, 8–12.

6 Cf. Lantschoot 1960, 399.

7 On the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt*, cf. Zanetti 2005. For a comparison between the Coptic and the Ethiopic lectionary, see Zanetti 1994, 765–783. On the liturgical moments, readings and 'meanings' of the Holy Week of the Ethiopian Church, see in particular Fritsch 2001, 211–247. Cf. also Habtemichael Kidane 1997, 93–134; Proverbio 1998, 99–108. A particularly detailed manuscript description was provided by Strelcyn for MS London, BL, Oriental 2083 (hereafter BL Or 2083; cf. Strelcyn 1978, 57–71, no. 40) and is therefore often used below as a point of reference.

8 Cf. Zanetti 2005, 725b.

9 As 'embedded colophon' I define here the colophon about the production of the text, copied together with the work, as opposed to the scribe's colophon produced to describe the creation of the specific copy. On the phenomenon of the colophons and *subscriptions* in Ethiopic manuscripts, see Bausi 2016; in particular, on 'embedded colophon', p. 242.

10 Cf. Wright 1877, 136–138, no. CCVII. Hereafter BL Or. 597.

11 Cf. *ibid.* 140, no. CCX. Hereafter BL Or. 599.

12 Cf. *ibid.* 138, no. CCVIII. Hereafter BL Or. 600.

13 In his list of Gə'əz texts ascribed to 'Abbā Salāmā, Lantschoot includes the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt*, indicating as source the note found in BL Or 597 (cf. Lantschoot 1960, 401, and 401 n. 34). Marrassini (2010, 489a) also mentions BL Or 597 but also adds MS London, BL, Oriental 601 (BL Or 601; cf. *ibid.*; on this manuscript cf. Wright 1877, 140, no. CCXI). Yet, the latter note is not the same 'embedded colophon'

The same colophon is contained in two manuscripts of the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* from Təgrāy, MSS Gol'a Dabra Bərḥān Yoḥannəs, Ethio-SpaRe BGY-004 and Gwāḥgot 'Iyasus, Ethio-SpaRe GBI-002, both photographed by the project Ethio-SpaRe¹⁴ and catalogued by myself within the framework of the project. The cataloguing of these exemplars of the Ethiopic lectionary¹⁵ gave me the opportunity to identify this colophon and the information which links this text to the Metropolitan 'Abbā Salāmā.

In this article, I introduce these two manuscripts of the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt*, provide the summary of their content as well as their physical and codicological description,¹⁶ and present this colophon, which can be considered an 'embedded colophon' of the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* and which constitutes an addi-

as the one in MSS BL Or 597, 599, or 600 (or in the two manuscripts discussed below). The particular 'embedded colophon', found in BL Or 601, f. 113r, belongs, in fact, not to the entire lectionary, but only to the text of the 'Homily of Cyriacus of Behnesa on the Assumption', known as the *Lāḥa Māryām* (Weninger 2007), translated from Arabic into Gə'əz by 'Abbā Salāmā (cf. *ibid.*, 477a and Marrassini 2010, 489a). The note is partially reported by Wright (1877, 140) as follows: 'ዘንተ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ዘተርጎሙ፡ ብፁዕ፡ ወርቱዕ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ኢቡነ፡ ኢባ፡ ሰላማ፡ ያጽሐፍ፡ ሰሞ፡ እግዚእ {sic} ብሐር፡ ውሰተ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ሕይወት etc.' (The same 'embedded colophon' also concludes the *Lāḥa Māryām* in MS London, BL, Oriental 604; cf. *ibid.*, 143–145, no. CCXVI, here p. 145). Already Guidi (1932, 30) included the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* among the works of the Ethiopian Christian literature translated by, or under, 'Abbā Salāmā.

- 14 The digitizing of these manuscripts was carried out by the team of the project Ethio-SPaRe: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia. Salvation, Preservation, Research (EU 7th Framework Programme, ERC Starting Grant 240720, PI Denis Nonsnitsin, 2009–2015, <<https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/en/ethiostudies/research/ethiospare/>>): MS BGY-004 during the third fieldwork mission, on 22 May 2011, MS GBI-002 during the second fieldwork mission, on 1 December 2010; on the Ethio-SPaRe missions, the churches and the relative collections, see Nonsnitsin 2013. All shelf marks, here and below, were assigned by the project and used in the project database.
- 15 The other manuscripts of the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* photographed and catalogued by the Ethio-SPaRe project are: MSS DMB-008, GKM-006, GMG-001, AKM-006, QS-010, DAY-001, GMS-001, BQM-005, WQ-001, QDQ-002, MY-003, SDGM-003, ATH-007, QQM-003, QSM-002, AQG-004, MM-002, all of them catalogued by Vitagrazia Pisani, and MSS SMM-001, MAC-002, DZ-010, DMA-014, KTM-005, NSM-002, QMB-001, AMQ-003, AP-009, MQM-010, MKL-001, FBM-002, all of them catalogued by Irene Roticiiani. Their descriptions are available at <<https://mycms-vs03.rz.uni-hamburg.de/domlib/>> and now at <<https://betamasasheft.eu>> (updated to TEI format, last accessed 29 November 2019).
- 16 The descriptions of MSS BGY-004 and GBI-002 which I provide in this article are updated versions of the ones made in the framework of Ethio-SPaRe project and available at <https://mycms-vs03.rz.uni-hamburg.de/domlib/receive/domlib_document_00002528> and <<https://mycms-vs03.rz.uni-hamburg.de/domlib/receive/>>

tional evidence on the role of 'Abbā Salāmā as commissioner of the Ethiopic lectionary.

1. Manuscripts Ethio-SPaRe BGY-004 and GBI-002

1.1. MS Ethio-SPaRe BGY-004



Fig. 1. MS Gol'ā Dabra Bərḥān Yoḥānnəs, BGY-004, late seventeenth/early eighteenth century: incipit page (f. 2r) (photo: Ethio-SPaRe).

MS BGY-004 (= Təgrāy Culture and Tourism Agency no. 1, 24–08–93¹⁷) is a witness of the *Gəbrā Həmāmāt* recorded by the Ethio-SPaRe project, which is preserved in the church of Gol'ā Yoḥānnəs Maṭməq¹⁸ (*waradā*-district Gāntā 'Afašum), in East Təgrāy (fig. 1). It contains the lectionary on ff. 2ra–208vc. On ff. 208vc (l. 19)–209ra, at the end of the entire work, a dating colophon

domlib_document_00001572>, respectively. The updated descriptions are now available at <<https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/ESbgy004>> and <<https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/ESgbi002>>, respectively.

- 17 The shelf mark of the Təgrāy Culture and Tourism Agency is written on f. 1r.
- 18 Also Gol'ā Dabra Bərḥān Yoḥānnəs and Dabra Bərḥān Qəddus Yoḥānnəs Gol'ā. About this church and its collection, see Nosnitsin 2013, 190–195. See also <<https://betamasaheft.eu/INS0161BGY>>).

states that the book was completed in the year A.M. 7191 during the time of King 'Iyāsu and when Metropolitan was 'Abuna Mārḳos:

ተፈጸመ፡ ዝነጉ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ግብረ፡ ሕግግጥ፡ በረድኤተ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ክቡር፡ ወእዚዝ፡ ለክርኤት፡ ይደሉ፡ ሰጊድ፡ በጳጳሳዊ፡ ጳ፡ ጳወጁ፡ ዓመት፡ እምፍጥረተ፡ ዓለም፡ በዘመነ፡ ሉቃስ፡ ወንጌላዊ፡ እንዘ፡ አበቅ፡ ፀሐይ፡ ጳወጁ፡ ወአበ ቅ፡ ወር(f. 209ra)፡ ኧ፡ ዓመተ፡ መንግሥተ፡ ለንጉሥ፡ ንጉሠ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ኢያሱ፡ ወጻጸሱ፡ አባ፡ ማርቆስ፡ ...

This book of the *Gəbra Həməmət* was completed, with the help of the Lord, glorious and mighty, (Whom) it is proper to venerate, for His memory, in the year 7191 from the Creation of the World, in the time of the Evangelist Luke, on the 28th epact of the sun ('*abaqtē dahay*) and on the 2nd epact of the moon ('*abaqtē warh*'), (in) the year of the reign of our King of Faith, 'Iyāsu, and our Metropolitan 'Abbā Mārḳos ...

Reading this note and assuming that King 'Iyāsu and Metropolitan Mārḳos mentioned are 'Iyāsu I (r. 1682–1706)¹⁹ and 'Abuna Mārḳos IV²⁰ (tenure 1693²¹–1716), we can deduce that the manuscript was written between 1693 and 1706, and, considering Chaîne's calculation,²² precisely in 1699.

Another note, on f. 208ra (l. 19)–vb (l. 10), concludes the readings for the Saturday of the Resurrection. This is the 'embedded colophon' mentioning 'Abbā Salāmā as the commissioner of the *Gəbra Həməmət*, which is in the focus of this article and is discussed in detail in § 2 below.

In the following, I provide the codicological description of the manuscript and a short summary of the content.

1.1.1. Physical and codicological description

Material: parchment. State: good. Restoration: modern. Codicological units: 1. Language: Gə'əz. Date: 1699. Outer dimensions (mm): 310 (width) × 335 (height) × 90 (thickness). Total folia: 209 (blank ff.: 1v, 103vc, 209rb–rc, 209v). Number of quires: 23 (A + 22). Quire structure²³: $\overset{A}{(I\text{-pos. } 1)^f.1} + \underset{1-8}{8.V^{ff. 2-81}} + \underset{9-10}{2.IV^{ff. 82-97}} + \underset{11}{III^{ff. 98-103}} + \underset{12-21}{10.V^{ff. 104-203}} + \underset{22}{III^{ff. 204-209}}$.

19 Cf. Bosc-Tiessé 2007.
20 Cf. Crummey 2007.
21 For this date cf. Bosc-Tiessé 2007, 250a.
22 Chaîne 1925, 168. It is to the same period, during the years of King 'Iyāsu I and the Metropolitan 'Abuna Mārḳos IV, that MS BL Or 600 was dated by Wright following the evidence in the dating colophon reported in the catalogue (cf. Wright 1877, 138). 'King 'Iyāsu' is also mentioned as the commissioner of MS BL Or 600 in the second part of the other colophon (starting on f. 157v; the first part mentioning 'Abbā Salāmā as the commissioner of the *Gəbra Həməmət*) and in supplication formulas throughout the text.
23 I use here the so-called 'improved German formula' (see COMSt 2015, 524; also Agati 2009, 167–168), with the additional indication of the number of the first folium.

Abbreviations: ስ: for ስቡሕ: ውሳኔ: ወልደ: ውሳኔ: ለዓለም: (text 1.8., f. 173va–vc); ኪ: for ኪራላፀሶን: (text 1.8., f. 177ra–rb).

Colophon: (1) f. 208ra (l. 19)–vb (l. 10): ‘embedded colophon’; (2) ff. 208v (l. 19)–209ra: dating colophon.

Scribal activities: textual additions, corrections and *marginalia*: (1) Several supplication formulas contain the name of Zawalda Māryām (e.g. ff. 160va, 160vc, 161rc, 162rc, 183rc), who is mentioned in the ‘embedded colophon’ as the commissioner of the manuscript. In the supplication formula on f. 160va, Zawalda Māryām is mentioned with ‘the children of this church’ (... ለደቀ: ዛቲ: ቤተ: ክርስቲያን: ምስሉ: ዘወልደ: ማርያም: ...). (2) Subscriptio at the end of the ‘Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham’ (in Text 1.8.), on f. 139rc–va, ascribing the translation to ‘Abbā Salāmā (see below p. 137 and nn. 32 and 33). (3) Lacuna on f. 113ra (end of the column). (4) Spaces left unfilled (for personal names?) on f. 3va and f. 3vc. (5) Erasures: ff. 35vb–vc, 39vc, 42rb, 160vb. (6) Cues for the rubricator (numerals and words) in the margins of some folia (e.g. ff. 3v, 4r, 64v). (7) Decorated quire marks (black and red ink) on the left upper margin of the first folium of some quires: for the quires 3, 4, 5, 6 the quire marks ፩, ፪, ፫, ፬, respectively; the quire marks ፩, ፪, ፫ are also used for quires 14, 15, 17, respectively. (8) Excerpts of hymns (for the Good Friday?) written (in red, sometimes framed by lines) in the upper margin of some folia (e.g. ff. 124v–125r, 136r–v).

Varia: (1) Shelf mark of the Təgrāy Culture and Tourism Agency (TCTA), on f. 1r: no. 1, 24–08–93. (2) Personal names are written over erasure in a secondary hand in the supplication formulas throughout the text: Tasfā Māryām (e.g. ff. 4vb, 7rb), Zamanfas Qəddus (e.g. ff. 7vb, 29vb), Walatta ‘Aqlesyā (f. 82vc), Walatta Həywat (e.g. ff. 84rc, 87rb). (3) Stamp of the Church (bottom margin of ff. 2r, 64r, 208v). (4) Recent notes are written in pen or pencil in the margins and within the text of some folia (e.g. ff. 95v, 96r, 97r, 100v). (5) A text (additional note?) has been washed out on f. 207va–vb. (6) Strip of textile inserted in f. 129 (upper edge), for navigating in the text.

Miniatures and decorations: not present.

1.1.2. Description of content

Ff. 2ra–208vc: *Gəbra Həmāmāt*:

1.1. (ff. 2ra–4rc) Introduction (በስመ: አብ: ወወልደ: ወመንገረሰ: ቅዱስ: ጀእምላክ:፳፬ ንቀድም: በረድኤተ: አግዚአብሔር: ወበሥምረቱ: ንጽሕፍ: ዘንተ: መጽሐፈ: ቅዱስ: ዘፀደለ: አንብቦቱ: እምኦሪት: ወእምነብት {sic} ፳፯...).

26 In the following, the Trinitarian Formula is abbreviated as ‘በስመ: ...’.

27 I give, after the ‘title’ for each text or section, the *incipit*. Concerning the punctuations *, #, †, they are reported as they are in the text; the punctuation made of a x-cross, with or without dashes, is represented and replaced with #.

1.2. (ff. 4rc–7ra) Eve of Palm Sunday:

– (ff. 4rc–7ra) for the evening (በሰሙ... በሰንበት፣ በዕለተ፣ ሆሣዕና፣ ሰርክ።...).

1.3. (ff. 7ra–15vc) Palm Sunday:

– (ff. 7ra–8va) for the morning (ወበዝዮ፣ ያንብብ፣ ምዕዳ፣ በሰንበተ፣ ሆሣዕና፣ ነግሠ።...);

– (ff. 8va–10vb) [for the procession] (ወይትጋብኡ፣ ካህናት፣ ውስተ፣ ቤተ፣ መቅደስ፣ ወይዑዳ፣ ታቦተ፣ ቪጊዜ፣ ምስለ፣ መጋትው፣ ወዕፀ፣ ዘይት፣ ወሆሣዕና።...);

– (ff. 10vb–12rb) before the Gospel (ወይብል፣ ቀሲስ፣ ዘንተ፣ ጸሎተ፣ ቅድመ፣ ወንጌል።...);

– (ff. 12rb–14va) for the Mass (ወለእመቦ፣ ዘይክል፣ ይቄድስ፣ ቅዳሴ፣ ጎርጎርዮስ፣ በዕለተ፣ ሆሣዕና።...);

– (f. 14va) for midnight (ጸሎት፣ ዘይትነብብ፣ በሰሙ፣ ሕማማት፣ ወይእቲ፣ ሰባሔ፣ ይብሉ፣ ሕዝብ፣ ጀወጀጊዜ፣ መንፈቀ፣ ሌሊት።...);

– (ff. 14va–15vc) for the 11th hour (ወይትጋብኡ፣ ሕዝብ፣ ኅብ፣ ቤተ፣ ክርስቲያን፣ በጀወጀ፣ ሰዓት፣ በዕለተ፣ ሆሣዕና።...).

1.4. (ff. 15vc–39ra) Monday:

– (ff. 15vc–19vb) for the night hours (በሰኑይ፣ በኢሐዳ፣ ሰዓተ፣ ሌሊት።...);

– (ff. 19vb–39ra) for the day hours (በሰኑይ፣ ጽባሕ።...), with: (ff. 24vb–25vb) ‘Homily by John Chrysostom (*Yohānnes ʿAfa Warq*) for Monday morning’ (በሰሙ... ድርሳን፣ ዘቅዳሱ፣ ወብፀ፣ ዮሐንስ፣ ኦሪ፣ ወርቅ፣ ዘይትነብብ፣ በዕለተ፣ ሰኑይ፣ ነግሠ።...);²⁸ (ff. 25vb–29vb) ‘Homily by John Chrysostom on the fig tree for Monday morning’ (በሰሙ ... ድርሳን፣ ዘቅዳሱ፣ ወብፀ፣ ዮ(f. 25vc)ሐንስ፣ ኦሪ፣ ወርቅ፣ በእንተ፣ ዕፀ፣ በለስ፣ ዘይትነብብ፣ በዕለተ፣ ሰኑይ፣ ነግሠ፣ ዘዕለተ፣ ሕማማት።...);²⁹ (ff. 35vb–37ra) ‘Anonymous Homily for the ninth hour of Monday morning’ (ድርሳን፣ በሰኑይ፣ ዕለት፣ በዘ፣ ሰዓት፣ ዘይትነብብ።...)³⁰.

1.5. (ff. 39rb–60rc) Tuesday:

– (ff. 39rb–42vb) for the night hours (በቀዳሚት፣ {sic} ሰዓተ፣ ሌሊት፣ ዘሰሉሥ።...);

– (ff. 42vb–60rc) for the day hours (በሠሉስ፣ ጽባሕ፣ ዘይትነብብ።...).

1.6. (ff. 60rc–77vb) Wednesday:

– (ff. 60rc–67vc) for the night hours (በቀዳሚት፣ ሰዓተ፣ ሌሊት፣ ዘረቡዕ።...);

– (ff. 67vc–77vb) for the day hours (በጽባሕ፣ ዕለተ፣ ረቡዕ።...).

1.7. (ff. 77vb–103vb) Thursday:

– (ff. 77vb–81vb) for the night hours (በጁ፣ ሰዓተ፣ ሌሊት፣ ዘሐሙስ።...);

– (ff. 81vb–103vb) for the day hours (በጁ፣ ሰዓት፣ በሐሙስ፣ ጽባሕ።...).

28 The same homily is also in e.g. MS BL Or 2083, f. 29va (cf. Strelcyn 1978, 59, no. 40).

29 On the oriental manuscript tradition of this homily (= CPG 4588) and on the analysis and critical edition of the Gəʿəz and Arabic versions, see Proverbio 1998. For a hypothesis on the *Vorlage* of the text, on its translation into Gəʿəz and incorporation into the *Gabra Ḥāmāmāt*, see *ibid.* 106–108. The same homily is also in e.g. MS BL Or 2083, f. 31rb (cf. Strelcyn 1978, 60, no. 40). On John Chrysostom, cf. Witakowski 2007a; on this homily, cf. in particular *ibid.* 294a.

30 For the same homily see also MS BL Or 2083, f. 42ra (cf. Strelcyn 1978, 60, no. 40).

1.8. (ff. 104ra–180rc) Friday:

– (ff. 104ra–117va) for the night hours (በጅሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡ ዘይትነብብ፡ በዕለተ፡ ዓርብ፡...), with: (ff. 109rb–112vc) ‘Homily by John [Chrysostom], Bishop of Constantinople on the Saying of Christ “If it be possible, let this cup from me”³¹ (ድርሳን፡ ዘቅዱስ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ ኤጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘቀሩሰጥንጥንዖ፡ ጥንዖ፡ {sic} ጳሊስ፡ በእንተ፡ ዘይቤ፡ እግዚእ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ለእመ፡ ዝንተ፡ ጽዋዕ፡ ወአይምሰሉ፡...);

– (ff. 117va–180rc) for the day hours (በጽባሕ፡ በእርብ፡...), with: (ff. 137vb–139va) ‘Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham’³² (በሰመ፡ ... ድርሳን፡ ዘደረሰ፡ አባ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ኢ. {sic} ጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘሀገረ፡ ሥሩግ፡ በእንተ፡ ኡብርሃም፡ እቡን፡ አርከ፡ እግዚእብሔር፡ ...);³³ (ff. 148va–160va) ‘Homily and Teaching of the Apostles regarding the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Our Lord’ (በሰመ፡ ... ድርሳን፡ ትምህርት፡ ዘእባዊን፡ ሐዋርያት፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ዘመሀሩን፡ መንፈሳዊያን፡ እሉ፡ እሙንቱ፡ እሉ፡ ገብሩ፡ ኃይለተ፡ ወተአምራተ፡ ወትምህርተ፡ ሕይወት፡ ወዝ፡ ነገር፡ በክመ፡ ገብሩ፡ አይሁድ፡ ላዕሊ፡ እግዚእን፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ዘጸረ፡ ሕግማተ፡ በዲብ፡ ዕዕ፡ መስቀል፡ ቅዱስ፡ በእንተእነ፡...);³⁴ (ff. 175vc–177rb) *Sə ‘latāt ba-samuna həməmāt* ‘Petitions in the Passion Week’ (ወይብል፡ ካህን፡ ዘንተ፡ ስእለታተ፡ በሰመን፡ ሕግማት፡...); (ff. 177rc–180ra) *Maḥāləya maḥāləy* ‘Song of Songs’ (መኃልዩ፡ መኃልይ፡...).

1.9. (ff. 180rc–208vc) Saturday:

– (ff. 180rc–197vc) for the night hours (በሰንበተ፡ አይሁድ፡ በዕለተ፡ ትንሣኤ፡ ዘይትነብብ፡...), with: (ff. 184ra–197rc) ‘Revelation of John’ (ዘዮሐንስ፡ ኤጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘቀሩሰጥንጥንዖ፡ ምጥሮጳሊስ፡ አመ፡ ሀለዎ፡ ያሰደድ፡ ራእዩ፡ ለዮሐንስ፡...);

31 On this homily (= CPG 4654), cf. Witakowski 2007a, 294b. See also Proverbio 1998, 71–72, 104, and 107, n. 6. The same homily is also in e.g. MS BL Or 2083, f. 129va (cf. Strelcyn 1978, 66, no. 40).

32 On Jacob of Serug, cf. Witakowski 2007b; on this specific homily, cf. in particular *ibid.* 263a, Marrassini 2010, 489a, Proverbio 1998, 104–105. The same homily is also in e.g. MS BL Or 2083, f. 154va (cf. Strelcyn 1978, 67, no. 40).

33 The homily ends (on ff. 139rc–va) with a *subscriptio* ascribing the commissioning of the translation from Arabic into Gə‘əz to ‘Abbā Salāmā and attributing the authorship of the work to the Bishop Athanasius (Bishop of Alexandria from 328 to 373; on him and the attribution of this and other works of the Ethiopic literature, cf. Witakowski 2003): ... (f. 139rc l. 18) ወይረሰ፡ እግዚእብሔር፡ ማኅደር፡ ለአቡን፡ አባ፡ ሰላሚ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ምስሌሆም፡ ደርጉ፡ አሜን፡ ለዝንተ፡ ድርሳን፡ ዘአጽሐፎ፡ አቡን፡ አባ፡ ሰላሚ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ርቱዓ፡ ሃይኖት፡ {sic} እመጽሐፈ፡ ዚአሁ፡ ለገዕዝ፡ ወይተሉ፡ ዝዮ፡ ተጽሕፎ፡ ዘይቤ፡ አባ፡ አትናስዮስ፡ ጳሎቱ፡ ተሀሉ፡ (f. 139va) ምስሌ፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን፡. The same *subscriptio* (with minor variants) concludes the same homily also in other manuscripts of the *Gəbra Həməmāt* from the Ethio-SPaRe collection, MSS GBI-002 (f. 99rc), GMS-001 (f. 127rb), AQG-004 (f. 104va), and ATH-007 (f. 93ra). In BGY-004, as in ATH-007, the word እምሀረቢ or ሀረቢ (‘[from] Arabic’) is omitted.

34 For the same text, see MSS London, BL, Oriental 752, f. 183v (cf. Wright 1877, 215, no. CCCXXI.IV) and Oriental 775, f. 160r (cf. *ibid.*, 229, no. CCCXLI.II).

– (ff. 197vc–207va) for the Eucharistic liturgy (በሰንበተ፡ አፀሁድ፡ በጊዜ፡ ቅዱሴ፡ ቊርባን፡...), with: (ff. 206rb–207va) *Təmhərta həbu* ‘at ‘Doctrine of Mysteries’³⁵ (በእንተ፡ ትምህርተ፡ ጎቡአት፡ ቅድመ፡ ዘትትነገር፡ እምጵርሰፎሬ፡ ለምእመናን፡...);

– (ff. 207vc–208vc) for the evening (በሰንበተ፡ ሰርክ፡ ትንሣኤ፡ ፆትጋብኤ፡ ከህናት፡ ወሕዝብ፡ ጎብ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ወፆትቀንዩ፡ ለበዓል፡...), with: (ff. 208vb–208vc) ‘Blessing of the sheep of the Lord’ (ፆብል፡ ካህን፡ ህዩንተ፡ ቡራኩ፡ በግዑ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡...).

1.10. (f. 208vc) [Sunday] (ህዩንተ፡ ዝውእቱ፡ ትብል፡ በበዓለል፡ ፋሲካ፡ እስኪ፡ በዓለ፡ ሃምሳ፡...).

1.2. MS Ethio-SPaRe GBI-002



Fig. 2. MS Gwähgot 'Iyasus, Ethio-SPaRe GBI-002, late seventeenth/mid-eighteenth century: incipit page (f. 3r) (photo: Ethio-SPaRe).

MS GBI-002 is another witness of the *Gəbra Həməmāt* (on ff. 3ra–138ra) recorded by the Ethio-SPaRe project, which contains the ‘embedded colophon’ mentioning *‘Abbā Salāmā* as the commissioner of the text, identical to the one in MS BGY-004. MS GBI-002 is preserved in the rock-hewn church

35 On this text, known also as the *Doctrina Arcanorum*, cf. Burteta 2010.

G^wahgot ʿIyasus³⁶ (*waradā*-district Gāntā ʿAfašum), in East Təgrāy (fig. 2). According to a scribal ownership note in the upper margin of the *incipit* page of the text (f. 3r), ‘ግብረ፡ ሕማማት፡ ዘቅዱስ፡ መድኃኔ፡ ዓለም፡’, ‘*Gəbra Həməmət* of Qəddus Madhāne ʿĀlam’, this manuscript belonged and was preserved in the church of Madhāne ʿĀlam, that is the known church of Maqdalā in Wallo.³⁷ The codex is not explicitly dated, it does not contain a colophon with the date of the completion of the copy or with any other information concerning its production. However, some paratextual elements, supported by a paleographical analysis, allow us to date the manuscript between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. In the second part of the ‘embedded colophon’, on f. 137va (ll. 1–2), we read, in fact, ‘ለዛቲ፡ ግብረ፡ ሕማማት፡ ዘአጽሐፋ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ኢየሱ፡ ለ{er.³⁸ } ተክለ፡ ሃይማኖት፡’, ‘The one who had this *Gəbra Həməmət* written (is) our king ʿIyāsu for {er. } Takla Hāymānot’. King ʿIyāsu is therefore mentioned as the commissioner of this specific manuscript (the first part of the name Takla Hāymānot has been erased, it is therefore not clear whether the name belongs to a church or to a person). King ʿIyāsu is also mentioned in numerous supplication formulas throughout the text. We cannot know whether King ʿIyāsu I (r. 1682–1706) or King ʿIyāsu II (r. 1730–1755)³⁹ is meant, and therefore can only accept the wider range between 1682 and 1755 as a production date.

In the following, I provide the codicological description of MS GBI-002, with a summary of its content.

1.2.1. Physical and codicological description

Material: parchment. State: good. Restoration: modern. Codicological units: 1. Language: Gəʿəz and Amharic. Date: 1682–1755 (?).

Outer dimensions (mm): 360 (width) × 400 (height) × 70 (thickness).

Total folia: 140 (blank ff.: 1r, 2v, 140v).

Number of quires: 19 (A + 17 + B). Quire structure: I^{ff. 1-2} + ₁V^{ff. 3-12} + ₂₋₁₆15. IV^{ff. 13-131} + ₁₇(IV-pos. 8)^{ff. 132-138} + _B(I-pos 1-pos 2)^{ff. 139-140}.

Binding: Two wooden boards covered with reddish-brown leather (with tooled ornament; the leather cover is partly missing). Two pairs of sewing stations.

36 Also Dabra Şəge ʿIyasus G^wahgot, G^wahgot Dabra Şəge ʿIyasus. About this church and its collection, see Nosnitsin 2013, 250–254. See also <<https://betamasaheft.eu/INS0117GBI>> (last accessed 29 November 2019).

37 On this church cf. Pankhurst 2007. Concerning some manuscripts digitized by the project Ethio-SPaRe in East Təgrāy, and originally preserved in the Maqdalā library, see Ancel and Nosnitsin 2014, 91–95.

38 Er. = *erasit*.

39 On King ʿIyāsu II, cf. Chernetsov and Nosnitsin 2007.

Columns: 3. Lines: 30. Text area (mm) (taken from f. 4r): 270 (width) × 270 (height). Margins (mm): top: 53; bottom: 73; left: 25; right: 45; intercolumns: 16–16.

Pricking and Ruling: visible; dry-point ruling. Ruling pattern: 1A-1A-1A1A-1A1A/0-0/0-0/C (Muzerelle system); the top written line is placed above the top horizontal ruled line (on f. 3r, below) and the bottom written line above the bottom ruled line (Pattern 1, according to Nosnitsin's classification).

Ink: black and red.

Palaeography: one hand (quite regular). Scribe: Ṣəge Dəngəl; his name is mentioned in the 'embedded colophon' on f. 137vb, on the bottom margin of f. 3r, and within the text divider on f. 82va. Script: late seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century. The letters are slightly right sloping and with rounded shapes. The letters *oo* and *uw*, especially in the first order, show the upper horizontal strokes slightly slanted to the left side; the letter *oo*, in the first and second orders, has the left loop slightly bigger than the right one and the right loop which does not rest on the ruled line. Some archaic features: the letter *ḫ* has the sixth-order marker set up on the vertical stroke at the top, oriented to the left (f. 68rb l. 5); the loop of the numeral *ḫ* is open, looking like a 'compressed' *ḫ*; the numeral *ḫ* has the bottom loop open; the numeral *ḫ* is triangular and upwards-oriented; coronis.

Punctuation: * used throughout the work. Symbol x-cross with dashes used several times, especially after work titles, sections headings or after the trinitarian formula (e.g. ff. 77ra, rb, rc, 80ra). *, repeated thrice, used at the end of sections and subsections. Chain of red and black dots used as text divider, sometimes combined with *, which is repeated three times, either before or within the chain. The symbol *z* used a few times (e.g. f. 109va). Coronis, with decorative little loops and dots below, used on f. 70r.

Rubrication: Holy names; the name of King 'Iyāsu, commissioner of the manuscript (throughout the work); the name of 'Abbā Salāmā, commissioner of the work, in the 'embedded colophon'; the name of 'Abbā Salāmā in the subscriptio to the 'Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham' (f. 99rc, in Text 1.8.); the name of the scribe Ṣəge Dəngəl (on f. 137vb, on the bottom margin on f. 3r, and within the text divider on f. 82va). A few lines (some alternating with black lines), on the *incipit* page of some texts (1.1., 1.5); headings and *incipits* of the texts, sections and subsections (sometimes alternating with black lines); some lines in the 'embedded colophon' (first two lines, after the concluding formula, and the first two lines of the second part). Titles of the Biblical books and other works; directives for the ministers (in text 1.7.); names of Hebrew letters (in text 1.8.); some words (e.g. *ḫ*: *oo+CT-ḫ*, *ḫ*: *ḫ*, *ḫ*: *ḫ*, *ḫ*: *ḫ* and its abbreviation *ḫ*); scribal notes in the margins; Ethiopic numerals and parts of the punctuation signs, of the text dividers and of quire marks.

Abbreviations: **ገ:** for **ገርዳላፀሰገ:** (text 1.7., ff. 72vc–73ra); **ፍ:** for **ፍፀፍገ:** (text 1.7., ff. 72vc–73ra).

Colophon: ff. 137rc (l. 1)–vb (l. 23): ‘embedded colophon’.

Scribal activities: textual additions, corrections and *marginalia*: (1) The name of *nəgus* 'Iyāsu is written in the supplication formulas throughout the manuscript. (2) Subscriptio at the end of the ‘Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham’ (in Text 1.8.), on f. 99rc, ascribing its translation to 'Abbā Salāmā (see below). (3) Lacunae (spaces left for rubrications?) on f. 62ra. (4) Compressed script over erasure (e.g. ff. 85rb, 112ra). (5) Corrections (?) marked by dots above and below the word(s) (e.g. ff. 10va, 10vc). (6) Interlinear corrections (e.g. f. 8vb). (7) Cues for the rubricator (numbers) are written in the margins of some folia (e.g. ff. 4r, 6r). (8) Quire marks are written (in black and red ink) in the upper margin of the first folium of quires 1–17. The quire marks **፱**, **፲** are decorated with dashes all around. The quire marks **፲፩**, **፲፪**, **፲፫**, **፲፬**, **፲፭** and **፲፮** are decorated with the word **መረሐኒ:**, written in red all around the number. The quire mark **፲፫** is decorated with the word **ተሣላኒ:**, written in red around it. (9) Marginal note mentioning the original provenance of the manuscript: ‘**ግብረ: ሐሞሞት: ዘቅዱስ: መድኃኔ: ዓለም:**’, ‘*Gəbra Həməmət* of Qəddus Madhāne ‘Ālam’. The sentence is written (in black and in a faded ink) in the upper margin of the *incipit* page of the text (f. 3r). (10) Marginal note with the supplication to God written (in red and with chains of red dots above and below) in the upper margin of ff. 3r, 12v, 15v, 28v, 30v, 42r, 45r, 57r, 82v, and within the text divider on f. 73ra: ‘**ኢየሱስ: ከርስቶስ: ወልደ: ኢግዚአብሔር: ሕያው: ተሣላኒ:**’, ‘Jesus Christ, the living son of the Lord, have mercy on us’. (11) Marginal note mentioning the scribe, Ṣəge Dəngəl: ‘**ዘጽኔ: ድግግል:**’, ‘Of Ṣəge Dəngəl’; it is written (in black, decorated by red dots above and below) in the bottom margin of the *incipit* page (f. 3r) and within the text divider on f. 82va. (12) Excerpts of hymns (for the Good Friday?) are written in red (decorated by dots and thin lines above and below) in the upper margins of some folia (e.g. ff. 88r, 103v, 110r).

Varia: (1) Pen trials on f. 140v. (2) An unclear note, in black ink and by a secondary hand, in the upper margin of f. 62r. (3) The title of the text, in Latin script as ‘*Gebre H{n.l.⁴⁰}mamāt*’, and the number 834 are written in pencil (or faded ink) in a secondary hand on f. 1r. (4) Strip of textile inserted in f. 28 (right edge), for navigating in the text.

Additions: (1) Ff. 1v–2r, 138rc, 138va (in the upper and bottom margins), 139vb–140r: Records concerning land transaction (?).⁴¹ (2) F. 138rb–rc: Excerpt from a liturgical text. (3) F. 138va–vc: Record concerning tributes or

40 *N.l.* = *non liquet*.

41 The notes are written by several hands in Amharic (partly in Gə‘əz). On f. 140r. the notes are almost completely erased.

land distribution (?). (4) F. 139ra–rb: Salām-hymns to Mary.⁴² (5) F. 139rc–va: Hymns to God.⁴³

Miniatures and decorations: not present.

1.2.2. Description of content

1. Ff. 3ra–138ra: *Gabra Hāmāmāt*:

1.1. (ff. 3ra–4vb) Introduction (በስመ... ንቀድሞ፡ ንጽሐፍ፡ ዘንተ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ዘይደሉ፡ አንብቦቱ፡ አምኦሪት፡ ወእምነሊያት፡...).

1.2. (ff. 4vb–6va) Palm Sunday eve:

– (ff. 4vb–6va) for the evening (በስመ... ዝንተ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ዘይትነብብ፡ በሰንበት፡ በዕለተ፡ ሆሳዕና፡ ሰርክ፡...).

1.3. (ff. 6va–12vb) Palm Sunday:

– (ff. 6va–7va) for the morning (ወበዝዮ፡ ያንብብ፡ ምዕዳነ፡ በሰንበተ፡ ሆሳዕና፡ ነግሀ፡...);

– (ff. 7va–9ra) [for the procession] (ወይትጋብኦ፡ ካህናት፡ ውስተ፡ ቤተ፡ (f. 7vb) መቅደስ፡ ወይቡዳ፡ ታቦተ፡ ሠለስተ፡ ጊዜ፡ ምስሊ፡ መኃትው፡ ወዕፀ፡ ዘይት፡ ወሆሳዕና፡...);

– (ff. 9ra–10rb) before the Gospel (ወይብል፡ ቀሲስ፡ ዘንተ፡ ጸሎተ፡ ቅድመ፡ ወንጌል፡...);

– (ff. 10rb–11vb) for the Mass (ወለእመቦ፡ ዘይክል፡ ይቀድስ፡ ቅዳሴ፡ ጎርጎርዮስ፡ በዕለተ፡ ። ሆሳዕና፡...);

– (f. 11vb–vc) for midnight (ጸሎት፡ ዘይትነብብ፡ በስመ... ሕማማት፡ ወይእተ፡ ሰባሐ፡ ይብሉ፡ ሕዝብ፡ ሺወጀጊዜ፡ በመንፈቅ፡ ሌሊት፡...);

– (ff. 11vc–12vb) for the 11th hour (ወይትጋብኦ፡ ሕዝብ፡ ጎብ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ በሺወጀሰዓት፡ በዕለተ፡ ሆሳዕና፡...).

1.4. (ff. 12vc–28rc) Monday:

– (ff. 12vc–15va) for the night hours (በሰነይ፡ በኣሐዳ፡ ሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡...);

– (ff. 15va–28rc) for the day hours (በሰነይ፡ ጽባሕ፡...), with: (ff. 18vb–19va)

‘Homily by John Chrysostom (*Yohānnas ʿAfa Warq*) for Monday morning’

(በስመ... ድርሳን፡ ዘቅዱስ፡ ውብፀዕ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ አፈ፡ ወርቅ፡ ዘይትነብብ፡ በዕለተ፡ ሰነይ፡ ነግሀ፡...); (ff.

19va–22ra) ‘Homily by John Chrysostom on the fig tree for Monday morning’

(በስመ... ድርሳን፡ ዘቅዱስ፡ ውብፀዕ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ አፈ፡ ወርቅ፡ በእንተ፡ ዕፀ፡ በለስ፡ ዘይት<ነ>ብብ፡

በሰነይ፡ ነግሀ፡ ዘዕለተ፡ ሕማማት፡...).

1.5. (ff. 28va–42rc) Tuesday:

– (ff. 28va–30vc) for the night hours (በቀዳሚት፡ ሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡ ዘሠሉስ፡...);

– (ff. 30vc–42rc) for the day hours (በሠሉስ፡ ጽባሕ፡ ዘይትነብብ፡...).

1.6. (ff. 42rc–54rc) Wednesday:

– (ff. 42rc–45ra) for the night hours (በቀዳሚት፡ ሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡ ዘረቡዕ፡...);

– (ff. 45ra–54rc) for the day hours (በረቡዕ፡ ጽባሕ፡...).

42 The words *salām* (and its abbreviation *salā*), the name of Mary, and the elements of punctuation signs are rubricated.

43 The words *ʿIyasus* and *səbhāt* (and its abbreviation *səb/səbhā*), some initial words, and elements of punctuation signs are rubricated.

1.7. (ff. 54rc–73ra) Thursday:

- (ff. 54rc–57ra) for the night hours (በጅሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡ ዘሐሙስ፡...);
- (ff. 57ra–73ra) for the day hours (በሐሙስ፡ ጽባሕ፡ በጅሰዓተ፡...).

1.8. (ff. 73ra–118^{a44}va) Friday:

- (ff. 73ra–82va) for the night hours (በጅሰዓተ፡ ሌሊት፡ ዘዐርብ፡...), with: (ff. 77rc–79vb) ‘Homily by John [Chrysostom], Bishop of Constantinople on the Saying of Christ “If it be possible, let this cup from me”’ (በሰሙ፡...ድርሳን፡ ዘዮሐንስ፡ ኤጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘቀናጥንጥያ፡ ጳሊስ፡ በእንተ፡ ዘይዩ፡ እግዚእን፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ለእሙ፡ ይትከሀል፡ ይገል (f. 77va)፡ፍ፡ እምኔየ፡ ዝንቱ፡ ጽዋዕ፡ ኢያምስሉ፡...);
- (ff. 82vb–118^ava) for the day hours (በዐርብ፡ ጽባሕ፡...), with: (ff. 95ra–99rc) ‘Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham’ (በሰሙ፡ ... ድርሳን፡ ዘደረሰ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ኦባ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ኤጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘስሩዓ፡ በእንተ፡ ኦብርሃም፡ ኦቡነ፡ ኦርክ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡...)⁴⁵; (ff. 117rc–118^arb) *Maḥālāya maḥālāy* ‘Song of Songs’ (መኃልየ፡ መኃልዩ፡...).

1.9. (ff. 118(a)va–137vb) Saturday:

- (ff. 118(a)va–130rc) for the night hours (በሰንበተ፡ ኣይሁድ፡ በዕለተ፡ ትንሣኤ፡ ዘይትነብብ፡...), with: (ff. 121ra–130ra) ‘Revelation of John’ (ዘዮሐንስ፡ ኤጲስ፡ ቆጶስ፡ ዘቀናጥንጥን፡ መዋርዕጳሊስ፡ ኣሙ፡ ሀለዎ፡ ይሰደድ፤ ራእዩ፡ ለዮሐንስ፡...);
- (ff. 130rc–137ra) for the Eucharistic liturgy (በሰንበተ፡ ኣይሁድ፡ በጊዜ፡ ቅዳሴ፡ ቊርባን፡...), with: (ff. 136ra–137ra) *Təmhəarta ḥəbu* ‘at ‘Doctrine of Mysteries’ (በእንተ፡ ትምህርት፡ ቅድመ፡ እምጳርስ፡ ዘትትነገር፡ ለምእመናን፡ ኅቡእት፡...);
- (f. 137ra–rc) for the evening (በሰንበተ፡ ሰርክ፡ ትንሣኤ፡ ይትጋብሎ፡ ክህናት፡ ወሕዝብ፡ ኅብ፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ወይትቀነዩ፡ ለበዕል፡...).

1.10.(ff. 137vb–138ra) [Sunday] (ሀዩንተ፡ ዘውእቱ፡ ትብል፡ እምበዓሉ፡ ፋሲካ፡ እስኪ፡ በዓሉ፡ ሃምሳ፡...), with: (ff. 137vb–138ra) ‘Blessing of the sheep of the Lord’ (ዩብል፡ ካህን፡ ሀዩንተ፡ ቡራኬ፡ በግዑ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡...).

2. The ‘embedded colophon’: ‘Abbā Salāmā as the commissioner of the *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt*

As already mentioned, the same note stating the name of ‘Abbā Salāmā as commissioner of the Gə‘əz lectionary for the Holy Week concludes the readings for the Saturday of the Resurrection in both MS BGY-004 (f. 208ra l. 19–vb l. 10, fig. 3) and MS GBI-002 (f. 137rc l. 1–vb l. 23, fig. 4). The long *subscriptio* can be divided into two parts, wherein the initial note with the

44 The foliation number for the folium between ff. 117 and 119 is missing: the picture of this folium has been numbered 118^a.

45 The homily ends (on f. 99rc l. 20) with a *subscriptio* ascribing the commissioning of the translation from Arabic into Gə‘əz to ‘Abbā Salāmā, and attributing the authorship of the work to Bishop Athanasius (same as in BGY-004 and other *Gəbra Ḥāmāmāt* MSS in the Ethio-SpaRe collection, see n. 33 above): ‘... ወይረሰ፡ ማኅደር፡ ለኦቡነ፡ ኦባ፡ ሰላማ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ምስሌሆሙ፡ ደርገተ፡ ኣሜን፡ * * * ለዘንቱ፡ ድርሳን፡ ዘአጽሐፎ፡ ኦቡነ፡ ኦባ፡ ሰላማ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ርቲዮ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ እምዐረቢ፡ መጻሕፈ፡ ዚእሁ፡ ለግዕዝ፤ ይተሉ፡ ዝዩ፡ ተጽሕፎ፡ ዘይዩ፡ ኦባ፡ ኣትናሰዮስ፡ * * * ፊ’.

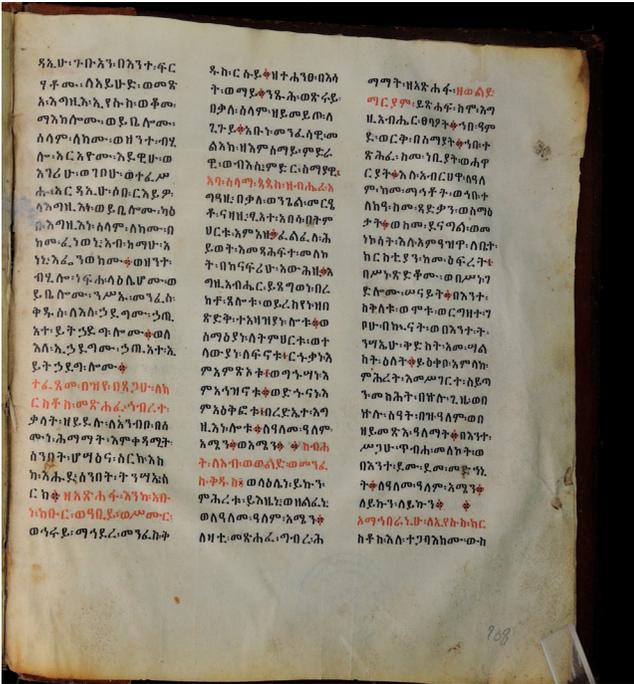


Fig. 3. MS BGY-004, f. 208r: the first part of the ‘embedded colophon’ (f. 208ra l. 19–rb l. 26), with the mention of ‘*Abbā* Salāmā, and the second part (f. 208rb l. 27–vb l. 10) with the mention of Zawalda Māryām (f. 208rc ll. 1–2), commissioner of the manuscript; photo Ethio-SPaRe.

mention of ‘*Abbā* Salāmā is followed by a second one with an invocation for the commissioner of the manuscript, the scribe and the readers, and where the name of the commissioner of the manuscript and, in the case of GBI-002, also the name of the scribe are revealed.

The same note is also found in three British Library manuscripts, MSS BL Or 597, 599 and 600.⁴⁶ Only for MS BL Or 597 is the first part almost entirely reproduced in Wright’s catalogue; the other descriptions are referenced to the former one: for MS BL Or 599, we read that the colophon on f. 153v ‘agrees in its first part with Orient. 597’⁴⁷ and for MS BL Or 600, that the colophon on f. 157v is, in the first part, ‘identical with Or. 597’.⁴⁸

46 See n. 13 above. In my work of comparison between MSS BGY-004 and GBI-002, I could not personally verify the manuscripts from the British Library. I rely therefore on the description provided by Wright (1877).

47 Wright 1877, 140.

48 *Ibid.* 138.

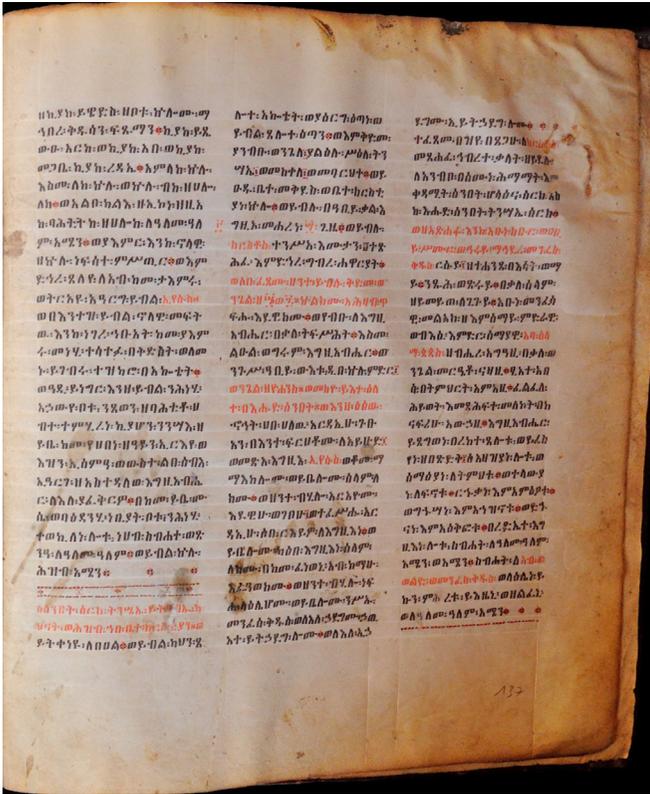


Fig. 4. MS GBI-002, f. 137r: first part of the ‘embedded colophon’ (f. 137rc l. 2-rc), with the mention of ‘Abbā Salāmā (f. 137rc ll. 13-14), photo Ethio-SPaRe.

In the following I provide the text of the first part of the ‘embedded colophon’, transcribed after MSS BGY-004 and GBI-002.⁴⁹

(A: f. 208ra l. 19; B: f. 137rc l. 1)ተፈጸመ፡ በዝዩ፡ በጸጋሁ፡ ለከርሰቶስ፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ኅብረተ፡ ቃላት፡
ዘይደሉ፡ ለእንብቦ፡ በሰሙን፡ ሕማማት፡ እምቀዳሚት፡ ሰንበት፡ ሆሳዕና፡ ሆሳዕና፡ B) ሰርከ፡ እሰከ፡ እሑድ፡
{እሑድ፡ B) ሰንበት፡ ትንሣሤ፡ ሰርከ፡⁵⁰ ዘእጽሐፋ፡ {ወዘእጽሐፋ፡ B) እንከ፡ አቡን፡ ከቡር፡ ወሳቢያ፡ {ወወሳቢያ፡

49 I transcribe the note after MS BGY-004 (=A), and I give the variants (including the punctuations) of GBI-002 (=B) in curly brackets. I do not attempt a philological reconstruction of the note. For the translation, however, I consider the variants from both manuscripts.

50 The initial lines of the colophon, ‘ተፈጸመ፡ በዝዩ፡ ... ሰርከ፡’, constitute actually a concluding formula, which is also found at the *explicit* of the text of the Saturday of the Resurrection in other manuscripts of the *Gəbra Həməmāt* recorded by Ethio-SPaRe: MSS SMM-001 (f. 214rc), DZ-010 (f. 176ra), DMA-014 (f. 159va), NSM-002 (f. 163rb), GMG-001 (f. 144ra), AKM-006 (f. 139vc), AMQ-003 (f. 207rb), MQM-

B} ወሥመር፤ {ሥመር: B} ወኅሩይ፣ ማኅደረ: መንፈስ: ቅ(A: f. 208rb)ዱስ: ርሱቆ፥{፤ B} ዘተሐንቦ: {ዘተሐንጽ: B} በእሳት: ወማቆ፥ ንጹሕ: ወጽሩቆ: {፥ B} በቃሉ: ሰለም: ዘፀመፀጦ: ለፒፕ፡ ለፒፕ፡ ለፒፕ፡ መንፈሳዊ: መልእክ: ዘእምሰማይ: ምድራዊ: ውበእሴ: ምድር: {እምድር: B} ሰማያዊ፤ {ሰማያዊ: B} አባ: ሰለማ: ጳጳስ: ዘብሐረ: አግዓዚ: በቃሉ: ወንጌል: መርዓቶ: ፍዛዚ: {፥ B} ዓላተ: አበሳ: በትምህርቱ: እምነዚ፥ ፈልፈል: ሕይወት: እመጻሕፍተ: መለኮት: በከፍፍሪሀ: አውሕዚ፥ {አውኃዚ፥ B} እግዚአብሔር: ፀጸግወነ: በረከተ: ጸሎቱ: [...] (A: f. 208rb l. 22; B: f. 137 l. 26)ሰብሐት: ለኦብ: ወወልድ: ወመንፈስ: ቅዱስ: {ቅዱስ: B} ወላዕሌነ: ይኩን: ምሕረቱ: ይአዜኒ: ወዘልፈኒ: ወለዓለሙ: ዓለም: አሜን፥ ፥{፥፥፥ B}

Here, with the grace of Christ, the book of the collection of the words, which it is proper to recite in the week of the Passion, from the first Saturday, the *Hosā ‘anā*⁵¹ vigil, till the vigil (of) Sunday (of) the Resurrection, is completed. The one who made it write, therefore, is the glorious, big, delightful, elect *‘Abuna*, established residence of the Holy Spirit, that was erected with fire and water, blameless and pure in the word of the peace, who converts the sinner, father of the spiritual angel who (is) from the Earthly Paradise and man from the celestial earth, *‘Abbā* Salāmā, Metropolitan of the region of *‘Ag ‘āzi*, with the word of the Gospel, who consoles his flock, who perfumes the rot of the sin with his teaching. Fountain of life pouring out from the Books of the divine rule with his lips. May the Lord give us the blessing of his prayer [...] Glory to the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. And may his mercy be now on us and also perpetuity. For ever and ever, Amen.

The second part of the note, written in BGY-004 on f. 208rb l. 27–vb l. 10, and in GBI-002 on f. 137va–vb l. 23,⁵² mentions the commissioner of the manuscript, respectively Zawalda Māryām in BGY-004 (f. 208rc ll. 1–2) and King *‘Iyāsu* in MS GBI-002 (f. 137va l. 2). Besides, at the very end of the note in MS GBI-002 (f. 137vb l. 10), the name of the scribe is given, ሿጭ ደንግል. In MS BGY-004 the name of the scribe is omitted. (In the aforementioned MS BL Or 597,⁵³ which also contains the ‘embedded colophon’, the name of the commissioner is *‘Abuna* Marḥa Krēstos, and the name of the scribe Gabra Krēstos).

(A: f. 208rb l. 27; B: f. 137va)ለዛቱ: መጽሐፈ: {om.⁵⁴ B} ግብረ: ሕ(A: f. 208rc)ማማት: ዘአጽሐፍ: ዘወልድ: ማርያም: {ንጉሥነ: ኢየሱ: ለ {er.⁵⁵ } ተክለ: ሃይማኖት: B} ፀጽሐፍ: ሰሞ: እግዚአብ

10 (f. 138rc), GMS-001 (f. 179ra), ATH-007 (f. 129rc), FBM-002 (f. 93va). In a few cases (e.g. in MS GMG-001), the formula is followed by an exhortation for the scribe, the commissioner, and the reader.

- 51 It is the Palm Sunday; cf. Fritsch 2001, 214.
- 52 In MS GBI-002, at the end of f. 137rc, a chain of red and black dots separates the second part of the colophon from the first.
- 53 See the note, with the first part mentioning *‘Abbā* Salāmā and the second part mentioning the commissioner and the scribe of the manuscript, in Wright 1877, 137.
- 54 *Om.* = *omittit*.
- 55 A word, first name, or title, of Takla Hāymānot has been erased. Such a Takla Hāymānot is also mentioned in the note of Or. 597, as we read in Wright 1877, 137: ‘ለዛቱ: [መጽሐፈ: interlined] {sic} ግብረ: ሕማማት: ዘአጽሐፍ: አቡነ: መርሐ: ክርስቶስ: ሠርዐ: አቡነ: ተክለ: ሃይማኖት...’.

ሐር፡ ፀባዖት፡ {ጸባዖት፡ B} ጎብ፡ ግምድ፡ ወርቅ፡ በሰማያት፡ [...] (A: f. 208va l. 20; B: f. 137vb l. 8)
ለጌሱት፡ ትንታኒከሙ፡ {፡ B} ወይናዝዜ፡ ትካዘከሙ፡ {፡ B} ለደጽንዕ፡ ድካሙከሙ፡ ምስሉ፡ ጸሐፊው፡ ኃዋኢ፡ {ጽፌ፡
ድንግል፡ add.⁵⁶ B} አኃው፡ {አኃው፡ B} ዚኢከሙ፡ {፡ B} [...] (A: f. 208vb l. 8; B: f. 137vb l. 22)
ለጌኩን፡ በእንተ፡ ሥጋው፡ ወደሙ፡ ለከርሱቶስ፡ ለጌኩን፡ ለጌኩን፡ {፡ ፡ B}

The one who had this manuscript written (is) Zawalda Māryām {‘our king ‘Iyāsu for {er: ██████████} Takla Hāymānot’ in B}. May the Lord (of) hosts write his name by the column of gold in the heavens. [...] May he (God) support your vacillation and console your sorrow. May it fortify your weakness, with its (of the manuscript) sinful scribe {‘Şəge Dəngəl’ add. in B}, your brother [...]. Let it be according to the body and the blood of Christ. Let it be. Let it be.

3. Some observations

The note mentioning the Metropolitan ‘Abbā Salāmā as the commissioner of the *Gəbra Həməmət* is transmitted in the three witnesses preserved in the British Library, MSS BL Or 597, 599, and 600, respectively of fifteenth, eighteenth and seventeenth century. To this list we can add two manuscripts recorded by the project Ethio-SPaRe, BGY-004, of the seventeenth century, and GBI-002, from the seventeenth or eighteenth century. It is interesting to note that one of these latter manuscripts, MS GBI-002, was originally kept in the famous church of Maqdalā in Wallo, where, as it is well known, the Ethiopian manuscripts preserved in the British Library come from.⁵⁷

I would consider the first part of the note, mentioning ‘Abbā Salāmā’s activity of commissioner of the *Gəbra Həməmət*, an ‘embedded colophon’,⁵⁸ or even an embedded ‘colophon of the work’, which was originally created with the intention to give information about the production of the text,⁵⁹ and which was then copied and incorporated, maybe deliberately or maybe almost unconsciously, by the scribes of our witnesses of the lectionary at the end of the readings for the Holy Saturday, becoming subsequently part of the textual transmission.

The second or additional section, with the invocation for the commissioner of the manuscript, the scribe and the readers, can be also considered an ‘embedded (or part of an embedded) colophon’, but here the information with the names of the commissioner and of the scribe of the specific exemplar was revised by each scribe during the copying process. Figuring out when the

56 *Add.* = *addit.*
57 According to the marginal note on f. 3r, see above. On the British Library and its Ethiopian manuscripts, cf. Pankhurst 2003.
58 See n. 9 above.
59 This has to be distinguished from the colophon of the specific copy, where we find information about the material production and/or about the copying of the specific manuscript. Cf. also Bausi 2016, 238 n. 19.

model of this note was created, and which the first codex to contain it was, is open to further investigation. It is also not clear whether the second part, whichever its model, was at some point added to the first part or whether the ‘embedded colophon’ contained both parts from the very beginning.

As for the role of ‘*Abbā* Salāmā, the Metropolitan is clearly referred to as the commissioner: we read, in fact, ‘ዘአጽሐፋ፣’, i.e. he is ‘the one who had it written’. However, this does not tell us whether ‘*Abbā* Salāmā should be considered as the commissioner of the entire translation of this liturgical text, or rather only of its transcription and/or of a manuscript copy (or copies), meaning that the lectionary had already been circulating in Gə‘əz at his time.

The activity of the Metropolitan as translator appears defined more clearly in other works. This is for instance the case of the ‘Homily by Jacob of Serug on Abraham’ (also present in both MSS BGY-004 and GBI-002),⁶⁰ where in the *subscriptio* concluding the text we find, ‘ለዝንቱ፣ ድርሳን፣ ዘአጽሐፎ፣ አቡነ፣ አባ፣ ሰላሚ፣ ጳጳስ፣ ርቱዓ፣ ሃይማኖት፣ እምዐረቢ፣ መጽሐፈ፣ ዚአሁ፣ ለግዕዝ፤ ...’⁶¹ ‘the one who had this homily written, from his Arabic (‘*arabi*) book into Gə‘əz, (is) the orthodox Metropolitan ‘*Abuna* ‘*Abbā* Salāmā’. Also the *subscriptio* concluding, in many witnesses (though not in MSS BGY-004 or GBI-002),⁶² the homily *Lāha Māryām*⁶³ mentions ‘*Abbā* Salāmā, but here his role of translator is made even more evident: ‘ዝንቱ፣ መጽሐፈ፣ ዙተርገጦም፣ [...]’ ‘the one who translated this book’.

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60 Text 1.8 in both MSS; see nn. 33, 45.

61 Taken from MS GBI-002, f. 99rc. Cp. n. 45.

62 For instance, see the following manuscripts (catalogued by Vitagrazia Pisani): GMG-001, with the Homily on ff. 145ra–155rc, and with *subscriptio* on f. 155rc; AKM-006, with the Homily on ff. 140ra–148va, and with *subscriptio* on f. 148va; DAY-001, with the Homily on ff. 222rb–248va, and with *subscriptio* on f. 248va; BQM-005, with the Homily on ff. 141vc–152vb, and *subscriptio* on f. 152vb; SDGM-003, with Homily on f. 130rc–139rc, and *subscriptio* on f. 139rc; ATH-007, with the Homily on ff. 130ra–139ra, and *subscriptio* on f. 139ra; QSM-002, with the Homily on ff. 171ra–181ra, and with *subscriptio* on f. 181ra.

63 Cf. n. 12.

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Conference reports

Preliminary Considerations on the *Corpus Coranicum Christianum* The Qur'an in Translation – A Survey of the State of the Art

Berlin, 5–7 December 2018

The *Corpus Coranicum* (CC) project requires little introduction to the readers of this journal. This long-term project hosted at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW), under the leadership of Angelika Neuwirth, is currently preparing an online critical edition of the Qur'an text and making it accessible as an open access database <<https://corpuscoranicum.de/>>. A new research initiative based on this Academy project is currently taking shape through the efforts of one of Angelika Neuwirth's former doctoral students, Manolis Ulbricht (Byzantine Studies) at Freie Universität Berlin. His PhD thesis *Coranus Graecus* (see *COMSt Newsletter*, 8 (July 2014), 5–6) includes a Greek-Arabic synoptical edition, a commentary, and a glossary of the early Greek translation of the Qur'an preserved in Nicetas of Byzantium's *Refutation of the Qur'an* (MS Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 681, c. 870 CE) (FU Berlin, 2015, soon to be published in the series *Studi e testi*). As such, Ulbricht's thesis forms the nucleus of this new branch of present interdisciplinary research initiative, the *Corpus Coranicum Christianum* (CCC).

The long-term goal of the future CCC research initiative is to study the translations of the Qur'an from its beginning in the seventh century CE up until the early modern period in the principal 'Christian' languages of the time: Greek, Syriac, and Latin. The aim of the initiative is to work through these translations comparatively, and to make these texts available online through a synoptic digital edition. Later on, the project might be expanded to include more languages and historical periods. Despite being generously supported by start-up funding from the Presidency of the Freie Universität Berlin, the CCC is only in its conceptual phase and not yet an official project. The aim of the workshop 'Preliminary Considerations on the *Corpus Coranicum Christianum*' in Berlin in December 2018 was therefore threefold: (i) to bring together scholars from various disciplines and countries working on Qur'anic translations; (ii) to explore avenues for further collaboration; and (iii) to establish a methodological framework for a future database and a comparative analysis of translation techniques.

As a primary result of the workshop, some individual projects within the overall framework of CCC are currently being prepared in anticipation of

strengthening the basis for a future application of a long-term project, which shall be methodologically based upon the CC project. This is why the keynote speech of the CCC workshop was delivered by Angelika Neuwirth. Her talk analyzed and interpreted the Qur'an's recourse to Psalms as a kind of 'Translation' in terms of 'Liturgical Patterns and Theological Messages'.

The scope of the sources included in this exploratory workshop was intentionally broad. It ranged from full translations or explicit quotations of the Qur'anic text to mere allusions of it. The workshop was divided into three sections according to the three languages of translation: Latin, Greek, and Syriac. In addition to these philological aspects, a fourth technical section was included that dealt with the digital humanities (DH) and explored possible methods of establishing and constructing a CCC-database.

As most source material is available in Latin, three panels were dedicated to the section *Corpus Coranicum Latinum* (CCL), which comprised the most prominent part of the program. In a first panel, which was devoted to the earliest sources (CCL I), the translations by Robert of Ketton and Mark of Toledo were assessed with regards to the issue of the readership (Nàdia Petrus Pons) and the presence of scientific vocabulary (Julian Yolles). In addition, the Qur'anic quotations included in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Latin translations of Arabic scientific treatises were examined (Charles Burnett). A second panel (CCL II) examined the sources through which Latin Christians read and accessed the Qur'an, with papers on the Latin glosses in Latin and Arabic Qur'ans (José Martínez Gázquez), Robert of Ketton's use of Ṭabarī's *tafsīr* (J. L. Alexis Rivera Luque), and the question of the character of Ramon Martí's Islamic sources (Görge K. Hasselhoff). The focus of the third panel (CCL III) was on early modern Qur'an translations, with papers on the sixteenth-century translation by Egidio da Viterbo (Katarzyna K. Starczewska), the seventeenth-century translation and commentary by the Jesuit Ignazio Lomellini (Paul Shore), and the recently discovered 1632 translation by Johann Zechendorff (Reinhold F. Gleib).

The single panel of Greek Qur'an translations (*Corpus Coranicum Byzantinum*, CCB) covered both the first appearances of the Qur'an in Byzantium, as well as in the late Byzantine period. The former period was addressed with papers on the linguistic character of the eighth/ninth-century Greek translation, especially its non-classical vocabulary (Erich Trapp), and the historical background of Muslim-Byzantine rivalry behind its emergence (Jakub Sypiański). The late period involved papers appraising the knowledge of the Qur'an and Islam by Gregory Palamas (Evangelos Katafyllis) and John VI Cantacuzene (Marco Fanelli).

Papers on the *Corpus Coranicum Syriacum* (CCS), the language least represented at this workshop, were presented on the Qur'anic quotations in

the Arabic disputation of Abū Qurra with the Caliph al-Ma'mūn compared to the Garshuni version of the *Legend of Sergius Bahīrā* (Yousef Kouriyhe), and on the double/triple occurrences of Qur'anic verses in Dionysius Bar Ṣalībī's *Disputation against the Arabs* (Alexander M. Schilling).

A special panel on the interdisciplinary nature of the overall project and its implications was entitled '*Corpus Coranicum Christianum – A Digitalized Trial Version*'. It consisted of papers on the Greek translation of the Qur'an preserved by Nicetas of Byzantium (Manolis Ulbricht), the Syriac excerpts from the Qur'an in Dionysius Bar Ṣalībī's *Disputation against the Arabs* (Bert Jacobs), and the Latin translation by the seventeenth-century Franciscan Germanus de Silesia (Ulisse Cecini). Prior to the workshop, these three scholars had agreed to provide micro-editions of selected common passages (Q 3:42-7; 90:1-4; 112), which were digitally processed in an online interactive edition by Joel Kalvesmaki (see <<http://textalign.net/quran/>>). The trial session continued with a presentation on the make-up and functions of this tool (Joel Kalvesmaki), and concluded with a brief comparison of the translation techniques applied to the selected materials.

Besides the work on the sources themselves, the workshop gave special attention to the use of the digital humanities in the study of Qur'anic translations. This included an introductory workshop on the goals and techniques of the digital humanities (Nadine Arndt, Oliver Pohl), as well as presentations on the Paleocoran project (<<https://paleocoran.eu/>>) (Oliver Pohl), Ediarum (<<http://www.bbaw.de/telota/software/ediarum/>>) (Nadine Arndt), and the valence of TEI for editing synoptic editions (Joel Kalvesmaki).

The CCC workshop was designed also as a networking platform, thus encouraging and facilitating synergies between the different research activities and fields in the broader scientific context. Events promoting these types of engagement included the presentation of the programmatic thoughts on a future 'Collegium Oriens Christianus' (COC) at FU Berlin (Shabo Talay) and the evening lecture on the interactive digital edition of the New Testament (<<http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/de/>>) (Holger Strutwolf). Finally, the ERC-funded project 'The European Qur'an. Islamic Scriptures in European Culture and Religion 1150-1850' (EuQu, ERC Synergy Grant, 2019–2025) on the cultural history of the Qur'an in Western Europe, which started shortly after the workshop, was presented by one of the four project leaders (Jan Loop).

The full workshop programme is available at <<https://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/we02/griechisch/byzantinistik/projekte/corpus-coranicum-christianum/workshop/index.html>>. The proceedings are being prepared for publication and will be published probably in Brill's series *Documenta Coranica* (eds A. Neuwirth, F. Déroche, Ch. Robin, and M. Marx) with the title *Documenta Coranica Christiana. Christian Translations*

of the *Qur'an*—*Preliminary Considerations of the State of the Art* (ed. Manolis Ulbricht).

The initiator of the research initiative *Corpus Coranicum Christianum*, Manolis Ulbricht, is currently on a two-year research leave with a scholarship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in order to dedicate himself to the research of Byzantine translations of the *Qur'an* in affiliation with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Manolis Ulbricht, Freie Universität Berlin
Bert Jacobs, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Versions of the Apostolic Past: Ancient Translations of the Apostolic Fathers (AnTrAF)

Leuven, 22–23 May 2019

The first AnTrAF conference, generously founded by the Fritz-Thyssen Stiftung, was organised by Dan Batovici (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies) and hosted at the Irish College (The Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe) on 22 and 23 May 2019. It was meant to facilitate a concerted reflection on the issues posed by, and to update various facets of, the *Ancient Translations of the Apostolic Fathers*. The starting point is the fact that the Apostolic Fathers corpus contains an interesting, if motley, sample of early Christian texts whose Greek was edited several times in the past couple of decades, with new critical editions and commentaries being now produced for each book separately within the on-going series *Oxford Apostolic Fathers*. The versions, even though very interesting and quite varied, receive far less attention. Despite a few exceptions, critical editions of the versions are either still lacking or outdated. The papers in this conference offered a series of updates on various aspects of the Apostolic Fathers transmission in Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Slavonic, Middle Persian, Ethiopic, and Arabic. Joseph Verheyden kindly accepted the invitation to serve as discussant to all offered papers.

The first two papers dealt with the transmission of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. Benjamin Gleede (Universität Zürich), offered ‘Preliminary Remarks to a Preliminary Critical Edition of the ‘Literary’ *Passio Polycarpi*’. The problem of the Latin transmission of the *Martyrdom* and its relationship to the other versions has not been tackled in scholarship since von Harnack’s time. Gleede showed that a new attempt of reconstructing the text is bound to remain preliminary in several respects, despite all the considerable advances in comparison to Zahn. Producing a stemma would require a comprehensive analysis of the textual relationship between the diverse *passionalia* as a

whole. The text itself remains uncertain in several places, as we do not have a consistently reliable witness for β , the better family. Furthermore, the archetype that can be reconstructed from the available witnesses has suffered some corruptions that cannot be corrected with the data we have.

Taras Khomych (Liverpool Hope University) presented on ‘Lost or Found in Translation? The Old Slavonic Version of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*’. Besides Latin, the *Martyrdom* was translated into different oriental languages, including Armenian, Syriac, Coptic, and Slavonic. The value of the eastern translations, commonly recognized as adaptations of Eusebius, is normally considered low. During the last decade, however, there has been a revival in this field of research, including attention paid to the Armenian and Slavonic versions. A critical edition of the latter is still lacking, and therefore it is not used in the apparatus of the Greek text. Khomych offered considerations on a future publication of the early Slavonic *Martyrdom*.

The Epistles of Clement were the subject of the following two talks. The paper by Donatella Tronca (Università di Bologna) included a reassessment of the ‘The *versio latina* of the First Letter of Clement to the Corinthians’. The Latin translation of 1 Clement is transmitted in a single codex dating back to the eleventh century. Aside from a description from the 1930s, there is no full-scale data sheet for this manuscript drafted in accordance with recent standards that highlights its codicological and palaeographical aspects. The paper revisited the codicological description and the current theories on the dating of the translation, calling the early dating into question. Tronca showed how the study of the manuscript transmission of the Latin translation of 1 Clement reveals more about the eleventh-century political and ecclesiastical interests that prompted the production of the codex than about the situation of the Christian community in Rome in the second century.

In his paper ‘1 and 2 Clement in University Library, Cambridge, Add. MSS 1700’, Dan Batovici discussed the main Syriac witness for 1 and 2 Clement, which is peculiar for two reasons: it is the only non-modern Syriac witness to these texts, and it is a New Testament liturgical manuscript. The memory of Clement is preserved in Syriac in various forms, but apparently not enough to have much of 1 Clement itself. The paper aimed to situate the Cambridge manuscript in the wider context of associating 1 and 2 Clement—and other Apostolic Fathers—with biblical books in multiple-text manuscripts. Batovici showed that the issue of association is complex—while in some manuscripts the epistles were copied with biblical text, they were copied with other texts as well—and that it was crucial for the survival of these texts.

Five of the papers on the second day of the conference focused on the transmission of texts associated with Ignatius of Antioch. Samuel Noble fo-

cused on ‘The Garshuni ‘Letter on Priests’ of Pseudo-Ignatius of Antioch’. While Ignatius of Antioch is a foundational figure in the imagination of the West Syriac churches (particularly the Syriac Orthodox Church whose patriarchs have all carried the name ‘Ignatius’ almost as a sort of title since the fourteenth century), there is relatively little independently transmitted pseudo-Ignatian material in either Syriac or Arabic. In Syriac, there is an anaphora attributed to him, usually under the name ‘Ignatius the Fiery’ (Nuronoyo), characteristic of the Syriac Orthodox Church’s relentless liturgical creativity, though it is also found in Maronite collections. Noble studied a Garšūnī *Exhortation to the Priests* that was first published with an English translation in 1927 by Alphonse Mingana in the first volume of his *Woodbrooke Studies* and seems to have scarcely been examined since. Counting the two manuscripts Mingana used, Noble was able to locate a total of seven manuscripts of the text, all in Garšūnī and dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, as well as an earlier Syriac witness in Cambridge.

Madalina Toca (KU Leuven) discussed a number of issues in view of ‘A New Critical Edition of the Syriac ‘Canonical Selection’ of Ignatius’ Letters’. Since Lightfoot’s contribution of 1889, several other Syriac witnesses have been identified in various catalogues and publications, and some of them have been found to contain the same text as Lightfoot’s S1 fragment. This selection has two distinctive features: 1) it comes with a set of paratextual elements that are kept in all cases, and 2) all witnesses that include this selection are Syriac canonical collections. Toca discussed the eight manuscripts, the relationship between the canonical collections containing the letters, and the textual relationships in the Ignatian material. She also discussed the peculiar shape of the Ignatian ‘canonical selection’ and aimed to identify its profile and probable purpose.

Massimo Villa (University of Naples ‘L’Orientale’) discussed ‘The Ethiopian Reception of Ignatius of Antioch’. Ignatius reached Ethiopia only in the form of quotations and via intermediate Copto-Arabic sources. Ignatian quotations were first introduced as excerpts of Severos of Ašmūnayn’s work, no later than the fourteenth century, and, more significantly, in the sixteenth century, on the occasion of the translation of the *I’tirāf al-’abā’*. The identity of the anonymous exegete who appended his own commentary to the two Ignatian quotations and was later mistaken as Ignatius himself remains unknown. Nonetheless, we know that somewhere in Egypt and no later than the eleventh century he reinterpreted the Ignatian motifs in a fierce anti-dyophysite Christology. The Ignatian allusions to the Lord’s human and physical experiences, including pain and death, were felt as an incontrovertible evidence of Jesus’s single nature, divine and human at the same time. Transmitted to Ethiopia several centuries later, this pseudo-Ignatius became an authoritative source

of the non-Chalcedonian teaching and gained a certain popularity in a variety of Ethiopian theological or catechetical treatises. His teaching also played a role in the acrimonious Ethiopian controversy on the Union and Unction of the Son of God, which in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries saw the mutual rivalry of the adherents of the *Karra*, the *Qəbat*, and the *Şägga* doctrines. In this respect, the Ethiopian tradition certainly represents an intriguing example of ‘Sub-Apostolic pseudo-epigraphy’ in one of its latest and most original outcomes.

Anahit Avagyan (Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts Matenadaran) spoke on ‘The Apostolic Fathers in Armenian’. Avagyan offered a survey of the Armenian translations of the Apostolic Fathers’ literary heritage and then focused on the *Martyrium Ignatii* with its embedded *Epistula ad Romanos*. The Armenian redaction used by Lightfoot, Zahn, Petermann was the one of Venice from 1814 (reedited by Petermann). The author showed that the Armenian transmission of the *Martyrium Ignatii* is not homogeneous and proposed as appropriate to term the Armenian version ‘homiletic redaction’, as is it preserved in the Homiliaries or Festive-Homiliaries (Ճառընտիր / Ճառընտիր-Տօնակաւն). The paper then offered an overview of all known witnesses and discussed in detail the two oldest of them.

The aim of the paper by J. Gregory Given (Harvard University), ‘The Coptic Reception of Ignatius of Antioch’, was to offer a survey of the available manuscript evidence for interpreting the reception of Ignatius of Antioch and his letters in Coptic literature, and to explore what the Coptic versions can contribute to our understanding of the textual history of Ignatian letter collections. Given showed how methodological approaches both to the letters of Ignatius of Antioch and to Coptic literature have shifted dramatically in recent decades, presenting an opportunity to reassess this long-neglected evidence afresh, and consider how it might be put to use today for the history of early Christianity, Late Antiquity, and Coptic Christianity.

Finally, two papers focused on the traditions of the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Paolo Cecconi (Chemnitz) offered a study into the ‘New Cues in Translation Technique in the Two Latin Versions of the *Shepherd*’. The *Shepherd of Hermas* is among the best cases to demonstrate that, for any analysis of ancient works, taking into account not only the original text but also its translations (if extant) will offer new and unexpected points of view on linguistical exchanges not only through the mediterranean world but also through the centuries. Thanks to its numerous and various translations, the *Shepherd* might be counted among the best cases of study for the analysis of the various techniques of reading, understanding and translating a Greek text in the ancient world. Thus, concerning the *Shepherd*, the importance of its translations, especially of the Latin ones, for its *constitutio textus* must not be underestimated; indeed,

in several cases they help scholars to reconstruct the text by completing some lacunae of the majority of the Greek sources. The paper analysed systematically the technique of translation of both Vulgata and Palatina developing the analysis according to their ‘editorial’ division into three sections (*Visiones*, *Mandata*, *Similitudines*), which is used by both translations and also by the Greek sources (e.g. the Codex Sinaiticus, the Papyrus Bodmer 38, and the Codex Athous Grigorious 96).

Adrian Pirtea (Freie Universität Berlin/Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) spoke on ‘Gathering Souls through Parables’: The *Shepherd of Hermas* Fragment from Turfan (M97) and its Manichaean Context’. The very existence of this fragment of the *Shepherd* in Chinese Turkestan (now in Berlin, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Turfan Collection, fr. M97) is showed as striking for at least two reasons: (1) it is a rare instance of a non-Christian (in this case Manichaean) reception of an Apostolic Father; and (2) the *Shepherd* was apparently never translated into Syriac. While the *Shepherd* was well known in Western Europe and in Egypt (at least until the seventh century), it had little to no impact on Christian literature in the Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia/Iran. Pirtea offered a brief overview of scholarship on the Manichaean *Shepherd* fragment and discussed some codicological and palaeographic features of the fragment M97, offering some remarks on its relationship with the Greek original and the early Latin and Coptic versions. He then highlighted the didactic and edifying aspects of the *Shepherd* as a collection of parables, suggesting that a proper appreciation of the role of the Manichaean *Shepherd* can only be obtained if studied against the background of other Manichaean parable collections.

The program is available at <<https://theo.kuleuven.be/en/general/calendar/versions-of-the-apostolic-past-ancient-translations-of-the-apostolic-fathers>>. The proceedings of the conference—including further invited contributions on Ignatius of Antioch in Slavonic and on the *Shepherd of Hermas* in Ethiopic—will be published as a 2021 thematic issue of *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* (ETL).

Dan Batovici, KU Leuven

The Material Gospel Conference

University of Notre Dame, 31 May 2019

What do Gospel books have in common with collections of medical recipes? What erasure and destruction tell us about early Christian identity? Can we tell biographies of books?

Early Christians materialized Gospel literature in diverse formats and technologies. As material objects, these instantiations of ‘the Gospel’ participated in ritual, political, economic, and readerly contexts. Gospel books were powerful. Augustine of Hippo complains that his audiences put Gospel books under their pillows to cure toothache. Amulets attest that even short excerpts enabled users to access the protective power of the material Gospel. The Gospel codex represented Christian identity, as Gospel books were processed in liturgy and imposed on the shoulders of ordinands. In times of persecution, Gospel books might even be subject to public execution in place of Christ himself. Yet Gospel books might also be erased or destroyed for apparently more mundane reasons, as various kinds of recycling attest. As an anthological object, the multiple-Gospel codex contributed to the development of a fourfold canonical Gospel. Early Christian readers developed novel strategies to facilitate knowledge, navigation, and use of Gospel literature. In each of these contexts, the materiality of Gospel literature plays a decisive role.

To address this theme, David Lincicum and Jeremiah Coogan organized a conference on *The Material Gospel* at Notre Dame on 31 May 2019. The conference was generously sponsored by the Medieval Institute, the Institute for the Study of the Liberal Arts, and the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame. The conference brought together scholars of Gospel literature and material culture to discuss Gospel as a material object in the early Christian centuries. The day conference involved six papers and extended discussion between speakers and audience.

Clare Rothschild (Lewis University) offered a paper on ‘Galen’s *De indolentia* and the Early Christian Codex.’ The codex, a book format with pages and covers, quickly became a marker of Christian practices—to such an extent that scholars have suggested that codex format became a sign of Christian identity, perhaps even chosen because of its visual distinctiveness. Rothschild intervenes in this conversation, emphasizing that the early Christian preference for codex format was not only about visual distinctiveness or the perceived value of the texts, but also about the utility of codex format. Comparison with the second-century physician Galen (129–c.216 CE) offers one window into second-century uses of the codex. Rothschild offers a close reading of a passage where Galen describes the loss of parchment codices with medical recipes and of scrolls with his own medical treatises. Similar genres appear in both formats. Galen describes the codices of recipes as having enormous intellectual and pecuniary value, but one of his own treatises, written on a scroll, was even more precious. But if codex format was neither a bibliographic marker of genre or an indication of value, then why might Galen have used codex format? Rothschild argues that the codex affords durability, accessibility, expandability, and portability. These practical possibilities make

it appropriate and convenient for Galen's collections of medical recipes. Similarly, codex format is practical for early Christian practices of study, liturgy, and travel in ways that exceed the possibilities of the bookroll. Conversations about the early Christian adoption of the codex for Gospels and other texts must, therefore, attend to the utility of the codex.

In a paper on 'Navigating the Gospel: Nonlinear Access and Practical Use,' Jeremiah Coogan (Notre Dame) expands the conversation about the materiality of early Christian Gospel reading beyond the issue of codex format. Coogan argues that technologies for finding, dividing, and referencing illuminate late ancient Gospel reading, revealing how readers used Gospel books as objects. Coogan compares the modes of access invited by Gospel books with other practical texts in classical and late antiquity. Gospel books share visual features and practical affordances of access with recipe collections (like Galen's or Scribonius Largus'), ritual ('magical') anthologies (like PGM IV), and agricultural handbooks (like that of Columella). Paratextual interventions facilitate and expect Gospel access in nonlinear ways—for liturgy, for divination, for moral instruction, for study. The late ancient Gospel book as an object functions more like a recipe book than a linear text (such as the *Iliad*). Here, as in Rothschild's paper, the focus is on the modes of use to which Gospel books as objects are suited. At the same time, the conversation must move beyond the codex as such, since Gospel books participate in material and paratextual conventions that facilitate access but that are not native to the codex. Coogan offers enlarged frames of comparison for the physicality and use of late ancient Gospel books.

Practices of reading and access are embedded in larger discourses. In his paper on 'The Gospel Read, Sliced, and Burned: The Material Gospel and the Construction of Christian Identity,' Chris Keith (St Mary's Twickenham) argues that the use of the Gospel as a material object becomes part of early Christian identity. Drawing on the work of anthropologist Jan Assman, Keith argues that the early Christian book functioned as a material locus of memory and tradition. Far from being secondary or peripheral, textual objects become part of the visualization of literary memory. Practices of Gospel reading shape Christian understandings of the Gospel book as object. Christians read Gospel books in ways that are similar to how Jewish communities read Scriptures; there is a conceptual replacement of Torah with 'Gospel' in (some) early Christian reading practices. Through public reading, the book becomes a cult object. As a result, early Christians think in decidedly literal (and yet metaphorical) terms about textual change. Early Christians imagined Marcion of Sinope's textual editing as gnawing, slicing, amputation. Textual change is construed as an assault upon physical objects themselves. Finally, the Chris-

tian book as object becomes a key issue in persecution under the Emperor Diocletian in the early fourth century. In seeking to destroy the Christian book, Rome attests its significance as material object. For Eusebius, to destroy either churches or material texts is an attack upon Christianity. The construction of Christian identity is about what one does with the material Gospel.

Practices of book destruction, however, are not always violent or polemical. In her paper ‘Erasing the Gospels: Insights from the Sinai Syriac Gospel Palimpsest,’ Angela Zautcke (Notre Dame) analyzes the palimpsesting (erasing and rewriting) of late ancient Gospel books. Focusing on Syriac manuscripts, especially those held at St Catherine’s Monastery (Sinai, Egypt) and the British Library (many also from Sinai). Zautcke focuses on the potential role of erasure as intentional destruction, and concludes that there is no evidence to suggest that obsolete textual traditions like the Old Syriac Gospels were more likely to be palimpsested than other kinds of texts. Rather, parchment Gospel books often circulated for some four centuries before being recycled for other texts. The preponderance of palimpsested texts in the extant monastery collections have various scriptural texts (not always Gospels) as the undertext, reflecting the predominance of these texts in the existing collections available for palimpsesting. Zautcke demonstrates the need for further study of palimpsesting in material and social histories of early Christian texts, but concludes that the destruction of Gospel books by erasure is part of the life-cycle of the Gospel as object. The medium often continues past the text itself.

Returning to the transition from roll to codex, Sofia Torallas Tovar (Chicago) discussed the opposite case in a paper on ‘Resisting the Codex: Christian Rolls in Late Antiquity.’ While modern scholarly imaginations associate early Christian book culture with the emergence of the codex, Torallas Tovar demonstrates that scrolls continue to function in a range of contexts. While the codex becomes standard for some kinds of Christian literature, the media ecology of Christian texts includes the continued use of scrolls—for episcopal letters, for texts like *Didache* and *Jubilees*, and for day-to-day letters and documents. Both the codex and the roll belong in a wider landscape of late ancient Christian material texts.

Finally, Matthew Larsen (Princeton) offered a paper on ‘Codex Bobiensis: A Real-and-Imagined Biography of One Gospel Manuscript.’ Applying a model of ‘real-and-imagined’ history from Heather Blair, Larsen narrated the biography of the Latin Gospel manuscript known as *Codex Bobiensis* (MS Turin, National University Library, G.VII.15), from its production in Roman North Africa to its current dismembered state in Turin. This manuscript offers an unusual—and often ignored—Gospel text and an even more unusual hybridized epitomized form, combining Mark and Matthew. It takes its common

name from Bobbio Abbey, where it was preserved in part because of a remembered association with the Irish missionary Columbanus (c.540–615 CE). The story of this object ends (for now) in Turin, where the manuscript exists as a collection of dismounted folios. Larsen's approach to the biography of the material Gospel offers new lenses with which to examine the continued and changing materiality of Gospel text.

The publication of collected papers from the conference is intended.

Jeremiah Coogan, University of Notre Dame

Exempla Trahunt.
Specimens of Alchemical and Scientific Manuscripts
(Arabic & Syriac)
Bologna, 8–9 July 2019

The study of oriental manuscripts has taken its first steps towards professionalization, without doubt a wise direction to follow. The past twenty-five years, at least, have seen the publication of important research and reference works, along with the institution of many dedicated courses and seminars introducing students to scholarly work on oriental manuscripts. The reference to 'manuscript specimens' in the workshop title hints at a homage to one of the first publications to pave the way to the professionalization of the study of Arabo-Islamic manuscripts. Its author, Jan Just Witkam, opened this workshop with a methodological introduction, addressing the importance of defining a set of basic tools for this scholarly field ('Searching for Anchors: Creating Basic Tools for the Study of Islamic Manuscripts'). The idea of 'specimens', proposed for this workshop, however, was much broader and more inclusive than its paleographic usage. This scholarly meeting gathered a number of typological case studies representative of various features attested in the Arabic and Syriac manuscript traditions dealing with alchemy and science, for instance, multilingual and allographic traditions, fragmentary and over-abundant ones, including prose or poetry texts with (or lacking) the addition of diagrams and illustrations. The typological value of these representative specimens turns them into valuable tools for research and didactic.

After the opening address, the first day of the workshop focused on Arabic alchemical manuscripts. Regula Forster presented the large manuscript tradition of Ibn Arfā' Rā's's *Šuḍūr al-ḡahab*, showing how to analyse, understand, and handle the tradition of a text that, arguably, met with great success, as evidenced by the impressive number of witnesses revealing considerable material and textual differences produced in the course of several centuries. Bink Hallum chose MS London, British Library, Oriental 13006 as an exam-

ple of a notebook that was produced and owned by an itinerant scholar, stressing the presence of texts in different languages and its idiosyncratic layout. The contribution of Gabriele Ferrario offered a typological overview of the alchemical fragments that emerged from the Genizah. This research compared the data derived from the quantitative aspects of the alchemical fragments in the Genizah collection with an analysis of the different kinds of original formats and textual genres (lists of ingredients, portions of larger texts, recipes, etc.). Marion Dapsens chose MS Rabat, Khizana al-Hasaniyya, 1024, an exemplary Mağribī manuscript that displays most of the features associated with alchemical writings (prose and poetry, symbols and diagrams and the occasional lack thereof).

The second day of the workshop was dedicated to Syriac scientific literature. Emilie Villey gave an overview of extant Syriac astronomical manuscripts. Though few in number, it is possible to establish relations between the existing witnesses and stress common features, such as the small format characterized by relatively ample margins meant for explanatory glosses to clarify the most difficult and obscure passages. In his discussion of Syriac medical manuscripts, Grigory Kessel showed different typologies (in particular, those including tables and diagrams), although there seemed to be no specific attempt to differentiate medical manuscripts from witnesses to other textual traditions. Jury Arzhanov dealt with the forms of transmission of gnomic sayings in Syriac manuscripts. Such sayings were the nascent steps in Syriac rhetorical education, strongly reminiscent of the ancient *paideia* and the Alexandrian curriculum. This emerges, in particular, from the combination of these gnomic sentences with other texts in multiple-text manuscripts. Salam Rassi presented the *Epistle of Alchemy* attributed to the Ps. Aristotle, a text with a double transmission, Christian and Islamic. One of the most striking features of this manuscript tradition is allography, since considerable parts of the text are written in Garshuni, which probably contributed to the fluid transmission of the text. There are plans to publish a selection of the papers presented at this occasion in a monographic issue of the *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts*.

The programme is available at <<https://alchemeast.eu/2019/06/25/exempla-trahunt-specimens-of-alchemical-and-scientific-manuscripts-arabicsyriac/>>.

Lucia Raggetti, University of Bologna

Reviews

Murād Tadgūt, *Fihris al-maḥṭūṭāt al-musawwara*, Al-ṭibb-Al-kitāb al-ṭālīṭ, III (Al-Qāhira: Ma‘had al-Maḥṭūṭāt al-‘Arabiyya, 1439/2017).

Microfilms recall an epoch of imaging that seems quite remote from the latest digital developments. But the collection gathered from all over the world by the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts remains an important resource for scholars. Indeed, this collection provides access to rare witnesses that simply would not be available otherwise.¹

This is the third catalogue dealing with the medical materials in the collection: the first was compiled by Ibrāhīm Šabbūh in 1959, the second ten years later.² The need for this new volume arises from the editorial and scholarly history of the Institute. The two previous catalogues were produced at an earlier stage of a large cataloguing project, in which the division of materials resulted organically from the workflow, rather than from a precise plan; the catalogue of 1959, for instance, is labelled as the second tome of the third part. It was deemed necessary to produce a new reference work condensed into a single volume so as to offer researchers a more effective tool. It is left to the reader to guess whether this new catalogue merges the contents of the previous two, perhaps adding the new acquisitions. This latest catalogue includes 300 titles, compared to the 271 recorded by Ibn Šabbūh in 1959. Without

- 1 The Institute of Arabic Manuscripts was founded in 1946 in Cairo (where it can be found today, after changing name and location a number of times), as part of an educational and cultural project of the Arab League. The website (in Arabic) offers a form to request reproductions on different supports (CD-Rom, microfilm, digital images), with different rates (in different currencies) intended for Arab and non-Arab students and researchers (see <<http://www.malecso.org/services/request-filming-manuscript>>, last accessed 17 October 2019).
- 2 A digital copy of the volume published in 1959 is available online (see <<http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/catalogues/Chabbouh-1959-Cat-Musawwarat-Arab-League-3-2.pdf>>, last accessed 17 October 2019). I could not find a copy of the second catalogue published in 1969. Information about the general editorial criteria and some peculiar features of the volumes are described in preface and introduction. For Ibrāhīm Šabbūh’s introduction to the first catalogue on medical manuscripts, see Ibn Šabbūh, *Fihris al-maḥṭūṭāt al-musawwara – Al-ġuz’ al-ṭālīṭ (al-‘ulūm) al-qism al-ṭānī (al-ṭibb)* (Al-Qāhira: Maṭba‘at al-sunnat al-muḥammadiyya, 1959), 3–4; for the preface by the current director of the Institute, Fayṣāl al-Hafyān, and the author’s introduction to this new catalogue published in 2017, see Murād Tadgūt, *Fihris al-maḥṭūṭāt al-musawwara. Al-ṭibb – Al-kitāb al-ṭālīṭ* (Al-Qāhira: Ma‘had al-Maḥṭūṭāt al-‘Arabiyya, 1439/2017), 7–10.

any further indicators, it is hard to closely compare the entire contents of the different catalogues. Apart from the possible increase in the size of the collection—which is not mentioned or otherwise indicated—it is curious that some titles listed in the catalogue of 1959 are not recorded in the new one. For instance, al-Rāzī's *Kitāb al-ḥawāṣṣ* was recorded in 1959 but did not find its way into the new catalogue.³

There is a great emphasis on numbers in this new catalogue (300 titles, 400 manuscripts copies, 75 reference works consulted) and on how these ciphers account for the great variety of medical disciplines that found their way into the collection (141 general works, 56 on pharmacy, 20 on diet, 18 on ophthalmology, 14 on internal diseases, 11 on wounds, six on poisons and plague and smaller numbers—between two and five—dealing with veins and bones, procreation and birth, medicine for children, the influence of climates and more). Compared to the 1959 catalogue, for which only six basic reference works were used (Ibn al-Nadīm's, *Al-Fihrist*, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a's *Uyūn al-anbā'*, Ḥāğğī Ḥalīfa's *Kaṣf al-zunūn*, Ismā'il Pāšā's *İdāh al-maknūn*, Brockelmann's GAL and al-Qiftī's *Aḥbār al-hukamā'*), the number of sources and studies consulted in the course of the new catalogue's preparation has increased tenfold, including many Arabic sources and studies that are virtually unknown and rarely read in other scholarly circles.⁴

Like its predecessors, this catalogue is arranged by title in alphabetical order. This arrangement is not unusual in Arabic works, given the composite nature of proper names and the inconveniences deriving from attempts to list them alphabetically. The structure of entries has largely remained the same (title, author, beginning and end of the text, synthetic description of codicological, paratextual and paleographical features, original library shelf mark and the number assigned to the microfilm in the Institute collection) and follows a methodology that was developed and standardized by the Institute for the description of its holdings. Perhaps unwisely, the entries are not progressively numbered as in the catalogue of 1959, but simply marked by a bold dot. Often, titles are attested to by more than one manuscript copy in the Institute's collection, and all of them are listed in a single catalogue entry, whereas other manuscript witnesses from different collections are mentioned in a footnote. The issue of fluidity in Arabic titles is detected and addressed by matching the titles actually attested in the manuscript tradition with those reported by primary sources, printed editions, repertories and studies.

3 See Šabbūh 1959, 79–80, no. 97.

4 These sources and the relevant secondary literature are listed, by title, alphabetically, in the last index attached to the catalogue. Bibliographical references are in a smaller font and contained within round brackets under the title and the name of the author.

The approach to contents is twofold: firstly, just after the title, which is in bold and which marks the beginning of a new entry, a short paragraph summarizes the contents of the text and its subject. Secondly, the entry includes a transcription of the relatively consistent parts of the incipit and the explicit of the text. This is indeed helpful in the work of recension of medical manuscript traditions. In some cases, rather than just the first and last lines, the catalogue records a partial list of paragraphs or section titles, which is a valuable commodity in an initial survey of contents.

The last part of each entry condenses information about material aspects as well as paratextual and paleographical features of the manuscript. This section informs us about the kind of script,⁵ the presence of rubrications, the copyist and the attestation of different hands, the presence of ownership, reading, collation and *waqf* certificates, watermarks and the presence of ruling. The identification of the copyist, an important element for the reconstruction of the history of Arabic medicine and, additionally, for the critical evaluation of technical manuscript traditions, receives special attention, including a dedicated index. Among the 80 copyists recorded in the catalogue, about one third is represented by scholars and physicians. This implies that a consistent number of professional copyists was specifically trained as physicians, thus having an expert understanding of the contents of the texts they were copying. This is one of the features that reminds us of the great importance of informative manuscript catalogues in writing the history of medicine as well as other disciplines.

The catalogue concludes with a number of black-and-white plates and some folia from those manuscripts considered to be the most remarkable pieces in the Institute's collection: the oldest ones, an illuminated Dioscorides, the two autographs in the collection, and a small number of luxury manuscripts. Apart from offering an insight into the Institute's outlook on its own collection, the choice of images offers an impression of the limitations imposed by working with microfilmed images that often are of poor quality.

The 19 different indexes are proudly presented as the scholarly signature of this catalogue and, in fact, they are meant to map a number of important aspects: authors; titles (divided by subject); dates;⁶ autographs; manuscript

- 5 The author adopts a threefold macro-classification of the script: 'I have divided the script of the manuscript copies into *nash* script [cursive script of the Mašriq], *fārisī* script [Persian script], and *mağribī* script [North-African and Andalusian script]; but the first one remains the most representative, since the majority of manuscript copies was produced in the East (*Mašriq*)'. Occasionally, his description includes remarks, for example, if a script appears particularly old or is difficult to read. See Tadžūt, *Fihris*, 9.
- 6 Whether from colophons, reading certificates or death of the author is specified between round brackets associated to each specific entry in this index.

copies containing notes by the hand of the author; copyists; luxury manuscript copies; patrons; an index for readers, donors, authors of eulogies and panegyrics and people who left their signatures; separate indexes for owners, places, titles of printed editions, the libraries that own the original reproduced in the microfilm, the authors of editions and translations, publishers; an index for titles of works that are frequently mentioned in the catalogue; and another for eminent personalities whose name is often quoted; an index of technical terms; and, finally, an index of sources and reference works (this last index also serves as a bibliography arranged by title). Minor redundancies and overlaps⁷ aside, this panoply has a major technical fault: in many instances, the page number given in the index is not matched in the catalogue. The empirical solution of leafing a few pages forwards or backwards—based on the assumption that there might have been a slight shift of page numbers in different stages of the proofs—is not always sufficient to overcome the hurdle. The only solution to this is to go back to the alphabetical order of titles, but not all indexes include the necessary information. Regrettably, this makes the use of the catalogue unnecessarily complicated and it could have been avoided simply by numbering the entries and using this as a system of reference for the indexes. Now that the prospective readers have been given some indications to adjust their search in the catalogue, they can look at it as a treasure chest of primary sources and secondary literature for the study of Arabic medicine.

Lucia Raggetti
University of Bologna

7 Some authors, for instance Aristotle and Galen, but also many others, appear both in the index of authors and in the one dedicated to eminent personalities.