

Linguistic, Oriental
and Ethiopian Studies
in Memory of Paolo Marrassini

Edited by
Alessandro Bausi, Alessandro Gori
and Gianfrancesco Lusini

Linguistic, Oriental and Ethiopian Studies in Memory of Paolo Marrassini

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Paolo Marrassini
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Tabula Gratulatoria

Maria Teresa Gagliano Ademollo
Florence, Italy

Alessio Agostini
Rome, Italy

Sergio Baldi
Naples, Italy

Giorgio Banti
Naples, Italy

Alessandro Bausi
Hamburg, Germany

Robert Beylot et Marie-Joseph
Pierre-Beylot
Argentan, France

Antonella Brita
Hamburg, Germany

Alberto Camplani
Rome, Italy

Franco Cardini
Florence, Italy

Elisabetta Carpitelli
Grenoble, France

Alessandro Catastini
Rome, Italy

Pietro Clemente
Florence, Italy

Riccardo Contini
Naples, Italy

Giovanni Dore
Venice, Italy

Gianfranco Fiaccadori
Milan, Italy

Massimiliano Franci
Florence, Italy

Getatchew Haile
Collegeville, MN, USA

Gidena Mesfin Kebede
Hamburg, Germany

Alessandro Gori
Copenhagen, Denmark

Felice Israel
Genua, Italy

Olga Kapeliuk
Jerusalem, Israel

Michael A. Knibb
London, United Kingdom

Gianfrancesco Lusini
Naples, Italy

Nicoletta Maraschio
Florence, Italy

Alessandro Mengozzi
Turin, Italy

Alberto Nocentini
Florence, Italy

Pierluigi Piovanelli
Ottawa, ON, Canada

Adriano Rossi
Naples, Italy

Vincenzo Saladino
Florence, Italy

Agostino Soldati
Padua, Italy

Tesfay Tewolde
Florence, Italy

Maria Vittoria Tonietti
Florence, Italy

Alessandro Triulzi
Naples, Italy

Siegbert Uhlig
Hamburg, Germany

Ida Zatelli
Florence, Italy

Editorial Note

We conceived the present volume in the course of 2012 as a *Festschrift* offered to Paolo Marrassini by colleagues, friends, and pupils. After the dedicatee passed away on 10 January 2013, trusting in the confidence of the numerous ones who had already accepted to contribute, we decided to keep on working on the volume in the only possible form of the *Gedenkschrift*.¹

A substantial number of authors from various academic environments and different countries accepted our proposal to contribute to the memorial volume: to all of them we are very grateful for their engagement, patience, and understanding. We are convinced that the variety of spectrum and approach of the contributions faithfully reflects the vastity of scholarly interests and human relationships cultivated and entertained by Paolo Marrassini.

We are particularly grateful to Riccardo Contini for having accepted to write his “Ricordo”. We are also very grateful to the family of Paolo Marrassini, namely Maria Antonia Gronchi, Elena and Alberto Marrassini, for having provided the picture printed on page ii.

1 We have shared the editorial tasks and the overall responsibility of the preparation of the volume. For technical and organizational reasons, the contributions by Alessio Agostini, Amsalu Tefera, Robert Beylot, Marco Bonechi, Antonella Brita, Maria Bulakh, Franco Cardini, Amalia Catagnoli, Alessandro Catastini, Riccardo Contini, Gianfranco Fiaccadori, Massimiliano Franci, Getatchew Haile, Felice Israel, Michael A. Knibb, Paolo La Spisa, Alberto Nocentini, Denis Nosnitsin & Maria Bulakh, Pierluigi Piovaneli, Gloria Rosati, Andrzej Zaborksi have been edited by Alessandro Bausi. The contributions by Lidia Bettini, Pietro Clemente, Giovanni Dore, Pelio Fronzaroli, Vincenzo Saladino, Marie-Claude Simone-Senelle and Tesfay Tewolde have been edited by Alessandro Gori. The contributions by Sergio Baldi, Franca Pecchioli, Maria Vittoria Tonietti and Alessandro Triulzi have been edited by Gianfrancesco Lusini.

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Hamburg, Copenhagen, Naples,
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The Editors

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3 TraCES: Advanced Grant no. 338756, hosted at the Asien-Afrika-Institut, Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian Studies of the University of Hamburg.

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RICCARDO CONTINI

Un ricordo

L'affettuosa insistenza dei curatori di questo volume, condiscipoli di poco più giovani – e di sede fiorentina anziché pisana – della scuola semitistica di Paolo Marrassini, ha voluto investire il più anziano di noi della responsabilità di aprire questa raccolta con un ricordo personale del nostro maestro. Non ho voluto sottrarmi a questo compito, benché sia ben consapevole del rischio di errori di prospettiva che mi deriva dall'aver negli ultimi trent'anni, per le ragioni che spiego nel seguito, potuto conversare con Marrassini solo di rado. In nessun modo, dunque, queste righe potranno sostituire, o anche soltanto utilmente integrare, il profilo complessivo della personalità e dell'opera del nostro maestro tempestivamente disegnato da Alessandro Bausi:¹ esse intendono soltanto rievocare l'impressione del primo incontro di uno studente ventenne col professor Marrassini e del rapporto di discepolato, divenuto per sua generosità presto anche di amicizia, sviluppato con lui nei 6 anni successivi, finché entrambi lasciammo Pisa per altre, tra loro diverse destinazioni. L'indulgenza dei lettori vorrà perdonare se questa interrogazione della memoria comporterà qualche eccesso autobiografico.

Benché pisana ne fosse l'occasione accademica immediata – rappresentata dalla mia intenzione di continuare gli studi di linguistica semitica comparata iniziati nell'autunno del 1975 sotto la guida di Pelio Fronzaroli – a Firenze e tra fiorentini si è inaugurata la nostra conoscenza, il professor Fronzaroli avendo avuto l'amabilità di presentarmi con qualche settimana di anticipo il suo primo, valentissimo allievo, che gli sarebbe succeduto nell'incarico pisano dal novembre del 1976. Si trattava per me anche di scegliere il tema di ri-

1 A. Bausi, "In memoriam Paolo Marrassini (1942-2013)", *Aethiopica* 16 (2013), pp. 200–212 (con esauriente bibliografia), qui riprodotto con aggiornamenti alle pp. xxvii–xxx.

cerca per il colloquio del terzo anno alla Scuola Normale, che avrebbe dovuto poi proseguire nella tesi di laurea. Accertate con poche ma precise domande le mie competenze e inclinazioni, Marrassini mi diede appuntamento per qualche giorno dopo, quando si presentò con una terna di argomenti di diversa declinazione metodologica, ma tutti estremamente attraenti, tra i quali scelsi la frase nominale nelle lingue siro-palestinesi, un tema che mi avrebbe accompagnato per diversi anni. Tutto questo accadeva senza che del mio nuovo mentore avessi sentito anche solo un'ora di lezione, pur avendo letto con ammirazione il suo libro sul lessico dell'edilizia militare nel semitico appunto siro-palestinese: ma avevo già sufficiente esperienza di insegnanti di alto livello frequentati nelle aule pisane per rendermi conto della sua qualità. Marrassini era un insegnante straordinario, che per di più aveva affinato il suo talento pedagogico alla severa palestra delle scuole serali di varie località della Toscana: nel ricordare le occasioni in cui aveva dispensato cultura umanistica ai lavoratori del Mugello, insisteva sulla necessità di fornire un'informazione non solo sufficiente, ma definitiva, a uditori che non avrebbero avuto né tempo né modo di approfondirla ("S'immagini spiegare il neoclassicismo a chi non sa cosa sia un classico!"). Come mi accorsi presto, aveva fatto tesoro di quell'esperienza: era chiarissimo nell'esposizione, venata di uno humour che poteva diventare sardonico nella conversazione privata ma mai *ex cathedra*, e completamente padrone della materia, che sapeva presentare nelle sue articolazioni problematiche su uno sfondo vastissimo di orizzonti culturali e di prospettive di metodo. Uomo di ampie e ben scelte letture e dei più vari interessi, era certamente tra i migliori prodotti della famosa Facoltà di Lettere dell'Università di Firenze che vantava negli anni '60 una schiera mai più rivista in Italia di maestri di livello europeo, che Marrassini avrebbe poi rievocato da par suo in occasione dell'ottantesimo anniversario della sua fondazione (2004). Sapeva suscitare negli allievi curiosità ed entusiasmo per i temi più diversi, dalle implicazioni antropologiche della lessicologia proto-semitica alle premesse ideologiche della comparazione tra le tradizioni bibliche e i miti mesopotamici o egiziani antichi (decenni prima della *Black Athena* di Martin Bernal), fino alle complessità dello scacchiere politico del Vicino Oriente tardoantico nei suoi riflessi per la storia dello Yemen e dell'Etiopia. Di molti di questi temi si parlava anche fuori dell'auletta dove dispensava i suoi corsi a un auditorio mai più folto di 4-5 allievi, quando mi capitava di accompagnarlo alla stazione a prendere il treno che l'avrebbe riportato a Firenze, dove io tornavo in famiglia solo un fine settimana ogni due, approfittando del sabato mattina per farmi guidare da lui tra le risorse semitistiche – allora, ancor più di oggi, imparagonabili alle pisane – della biblioteca dell'Istituto di Linguistica e Lingue Orientali a Piazza Brunelleschi, in gran parte organizzate da lui:

chi frequenta oggi quegli scaffali gremiti probabilmente ignora quanto essi riflettano l'intelligente cultura e la dedizione al compito del loro primo ordinatore.

Studio poliedrico e con forte propensione per la ricerca storica in tutte le sue articolazioni, Marrassini aveva particolare sensibilità e favore per tematiche di confine tra la storia culturale e la linguistica, quali l'antropo- e la toponomastica (ambito degli studi semitici di cui era espertissimo, anche se non ne ha scritto molto), la paleontologia linguistica (coltivata alla scuola di Giacomo Devoto e di Pelio Fronzaroli, ma senza negarsi alle geniali innovazioni di Émile Benveniste), e l'etnolinguistica, da poco introdotta in Italia (ricordo le occasioni in cui si discorreva – e lui aggiungeva suoi propri materiali alla già vasta esemplificazione – del benemerito manuale del suo amico Giorgio Raimondo Cardona, apparso l'anno stesso in cui ci conoscemmo). Molto più tiepido era invece il suo trasporto per la linguistica formale, per esempio per la sintassi generativa (ma molti anni dopo, nelle vesti del Preside di Lettere, avrebbe pronunciato la *laudatio* di Noam Chomsky, insignito di laurea *ad honorem* a Firenze), e in fondo anche per la tipologia linguistica, che per contro entusiasmava me, da poco iniziato all'opera di Humboldt, Sapir e Greenberg dal mio sapientissimo ed eclettico maestro alla Scuola Normale, l'altro fiorentino Giovanni Nencioni. Curiosamente, non ricordo di aver molto discusso con lui, nelle nostre conversazioni extra-curricolari, degli ambiti di ricerca in cui Marrassini ha prestato – tanto nell'applicazione *in re* quanto nell'approfondimento metodologico – un contributo innovativo e quasi da pioniere nell'ambito degli studi etiopici, e più in generale semitici: la critica testuale e la ricerca agiografica. E sì che nei tardi anni 1970, oltre a studi di minore ampiezza, veniva preparando la sua capitale edizione critica del *Gädlä Yoḥannäs Məśraqawi* (1981), vera pietra miliare di entrambe queste discipline. Forse, sapendomi figlio di un teorico dell'ecdotica, per di più assertore in ambito romanzo del metodo neolachmanniano che praticava lui stesso nell'edizione di testi agiografici e storiografici in gə'əz, presumeva – in verità erroneamente – che ne sapessi molto di più dei rudimenti che allora s'insegnavano a Pisa ai giovani classicisti, per cui riteneva superfluo erudirmene a sua volta. Fatto sta che è soprattutto di linguistica comparata, del corredo di lingue semitiche *extra moenia* (vale a dire: al di fuori dell'ebraico e dell'aramaico in cui mi venivo specializzando dopo la laurea) che mi esortava a procurarmi, e dell'importanza del controllo della bibliografia specialistica, traguardata nella sua successione storica, che m'istruiva nelle nostre passeggiate per Pisa o nel centro di Firenze. Della documentazione bibliografica Marrassini era un modello, quale non ho mai incontrato nel seguito, e stigmatizzava in colleghi anche eminenti – aveva grande capacità di ammirazione, ma altrettanta di disi-

stima verso chi si sottraeva allo standard che riteneva obbligatorio per uno studioso, – quel che un altro dei miei maestri, Gideon Goldenberg, avrebbe poi definito *the rupture of the bibliographical chain*, che il maestro fiorentino attribuiva a indolenza o all’omaggio acritico alla voga effimera di prospettive euristiche più recenti.

Da poco rientrato dai due anni trascorsi a Manchester a perfezionarsi in etiopistica con Stefan Strelcyn, fu estremamente incoraggiante verso le mie proprie esperienze internazionali, prima e dopo la laurea: più che il mio breve periodo californiano nello stesso anno accademico 1976-77 in cui cominciammo a frequentarci (e fu lui a spingermi a seguire a UCLA in particolare i corsi di Gideon Goldenberg, come Claudio Saporetti per quelli di Giorgio Buccellati, segnalandomi i suoi scritti che sapeva sarebbero stati per me più attraenti), a suscitare l’interesse partecipe di Marrassini fu l’anno accademico che passai a Parigi, attirato all’École Pratique des Hautes Études – IV^e Section dal suo, e presto anche mio, amico assiriologo Jean Bottéro. Tra le infinite scelte che Parigi offriva allora a un apprendista cultore di studi semitici, mi orientò soprattutto verso il gruppo degli antichi allievi di Marcel Cohen (come il suo maestro Strelcyn), una scuola cui l’avvicinava naturalmente una forte consentaneità politica non meno che l’altissima stima professionale: così continuai, nella frequentazione soprattutto di David Cohen e Maxime Rodinson, a coltivare ambiti d’interesse verso cui mi avevano avviato i corsi pisani di Marrassini, quali rispettivamente la parentela linguistica e il lessico comparato (camito-) semitici, e la combinazione di filologia g^oaz e storia dello Yemen tardoantico (in particolare la problematica interpretazione del complesso documentario multilingue della vicenda dei “martiri di Nagrān”, cui Marrassini aveva dedicato un corso entusiasmante, di impronta seminariale, arricchito dall’attiva partecipazione del bizantinista Gianfranco Fiaccadori, mio compagno di studi in Normale).

La frequentazione del mio maestro fiorentino rimase intensa anche dopo che, rientrato da Parigi, continuai a perfezionare la mia formazione in epigrafia semitica e filologia aramaica alla scuola di Giovanni Garbini, nel frattempo approdato alla Scuola Normale, della cui cattedra divenni poco dopo ricercatore. Tra i miei molti debiti verso la generosità di Paolo, di cui ogni suo allievo può allineare numerose prove, il massimo di cui serbo gratitudine riguarda la mia prima pubblicazione impegnativa: ricevuta l’offerta di dedicare a una monografia semitistica il primo supplemento del periodico pisano *Egitto e Vicino Oriente*, di cui mi aveva aperto le porte già nel 1979, Marrassini mi esortò – con energia insieme amica e irresistibile – ad approfittare io di quell’opportunità, rielaborando la mia tesi di laurea, compito che riuscii ad assolvere appena prima di partire per il servizio militare nella primavera del

1982. In quegli anni la nutrita serie di studi ed edizioni di testi gəʕəz che facevano corona alla precitata monografia del 1981, molto favorevolmente accolta dagli specialisti, avevano imposto il nome di Marrassini tra i maggiori etiopisti contemporanei, un rango che i decenni successivi non hanno fatto che confermare, senza tuttavia che venissero abbandonate la linguistica semitica comparata e le discipline trasversali, quali l'antropologia e la storia delle religioni, la quale anzi doveva aprire – mediata dalla collaborazione agli *Apocrifi dell'Antico Testamento* di Sacchi – un'ulteriore vena tematica alla versatile curiosità e all'eccezionale capacità di lavoro del nostro maestro, rappresentata dalla letteratura apocrifa e pseudepigrapha, naturalmente non soltanto in etiopico.

Nel 1983 le nostre sedi accademiche si separarono: Marrassini si trasferì a insegnare etiopico classico a Firenze, mentre io seguii Garbini a Roma, città di cui da sempre avvertivo il fascino. Da allora le nostre occasioni d'incontro si ridussero molto, particolarmente dopo che i miei genitori ebbero lasciato Firenze, così facendo mancare uno dei miei motivi principali di frequentazione della città natale. Chiamati nei decenni successivi a proseguire le nostre carriere in sedi diverse (o, se furono le stesse, questo accadde in periodi tra loro distanti), e soprattutto occupandoci di ambiti piuttosto differenti degli studi semitici, allentammo un po' il nostro rapporto.

Gli ultimi anni, tuttavia, mi hanno fortunatamente offerto qualche occasione di conversare di nuovo con Paolo Marrassini, soprattutto negli intervalli di congressi scientifici e in occasioni accademiche diverse. Nonostante l'accennata distanza relativa dei nostri settori di maggiore competenza, anche lo scambio delle rispettive pubblicazioni aveva ripreso una certa regolarità. Un'iniziativa editoriale di comune interesse ci aveva particolarmente riavvicinato: chiamato dall'editore Marco Scarpato a succedere al suo fondatore Paolo Sacchi al timone della collana "Testi del Vicino Oriente Antico" della Paideia Editrice di Brescia, avevo voluto rilanciare l'ancora inattiva sezione etiopistica invitando il mio antico maestro, che la dirigeva, a contribuirvi uno o più volumi a sua cura. Ostacolato dalla grave malattia che negli ultimi anni doveva rendergli particolarmente faticoso il lavoro scientifico, pur non avendo affatto appannato la sua lucidità né intaccato il suo entusiasmo e la progettazione di ricerche future, Paolo mi consegnò quasi *in limine vitae* il primo dei due libri progettati, la raccolta delle *Iscrizioni aksumite* tradotte, annotate e provviste di un'ampia introduzione storica. Si tratta di un contributo di importanza capitale tanto per gli studi etiopici quanto per la storia della tarda antichità, che al momento non trova riscontro in alcuna lingua: rivisto e finalizzato con affettuosa acribia da Alessandro Bausi, succeduto a Marrassini come responsabile della sezione, e arricchito di un capitolo archeologico a cura del

comune amico Rodolfo Fattovich, questo libro sta ora per vedere la luce. Con un saluto a questo autentico *Lebenswerk*, compendio dell'acume critico e della meticolosa documentazione profusi dal suo autore in quasi quarant'anni di attenzione alla storia più antica dell'Etiopia, si chiude il cerchio aperto da un suo memorabile corso all'università di Pisa nel 1978-79 (presto rifuso in una nutrita serie di articoli negli anni successivi), e con esso questa mia testimonianza.

GIANFRANCESCO LUSINI

Paolo Marrassini, maestro e innovatore

Ho conosciuto Paolo Marrassini nel 1981, nel momento cruciale del passaggio dal liceo all'università, quando – succede spesso – i giovani vanno in cerca di figure di riferimento, capaci di dare una forma più compiuta alle nozioni disordinatamente acquisite a scuola, ma anche di alimentare con linfa nuova la curiosità intellettuale degli allievi. In una tale disposizione d'animo l'incontro con Marrassini è stato per me il più fortunato degli eventi possibili. Quanti hanno avuto il privilegio di studiare con lui sanno quale alta considerazione egli avesse del mestiere di insegnante e delle responsabilità che esso comporta, e conseguentemente quanta energia e tempo egli riversasse nelle sue lezioni accademiche. In molti hanno beneficiato del suo vasto sapere, accumulato con passione e trasmesso con rara semplicità.

Fin dal primo anno, a lezione da Marrassini s'imparava a prendere le distanze dai testi, a guardarli con occhio critico, e per questo il vero punto di partenza dei suoi corsi era necessariamente la filologia, *the science of establishing primary sources*. La critica testuale, che per la prima volta è stata applicata alla letteratura etiopica in maniera coerente e sistematica proprio grazie a Marrassini, aveva per lui finalità immediate, in primo luogo l'esatta intelligenza del testo (che si trattasse di un apocrifo, di un racconto agiografico o di una cronaca reale) e la ricostruzione della sua storia tradizionale. Per questo egli considerava indispensabile comunicare l'idea che l'ecdotica è una scienza universale e che l'edizione di ogni testo letterario tramandato da una pluralità di manoscritti deve procedere rispettando le regole precise di un metodo consolidato e affinato da secoli di esercizio da parte dei filologi classici e romanzi. Affascinava anche noi giovani il fatto che Marrassini, il nostro maestro, fosse impegnato in uno sforzo di adeguamento e aggiornamento della disciplina e che non avesse timore di scontrarsi con i rappresentanti della vecchia etiopistica di derivazione coloniale, intrisa di parole d'ordine razziste e reazionarie, abbarbicata a metodi pre- e anti-scientifici di edizione dei testi

letterari. Tutti noi ricordiamo bene quanto l'aver difeso strenuamente la dignità del suo lavoro sia costato a Marrassini attacchi violenti – e a tratti feroci – in più occasioni, fino all'ultimo, fino ai giorni in cui, pur costretto ormai all'immobilità, continuava a tener fede all'impegno assunto come direttore della *Rassegna*.

Montato questo primo, solido gradino, Marrassini ci insegnava a dirigere lo sguardo più in alto, verso la finalità più autentica da lui assegnata al proprio lavoro di studioso, ovvero la comprensione della storia culturale etiopica, un obiettivo ancora più ambizioso – se possibile – della stessa ricostruzione di archetipi, stemmi e tradizioni. Anche in questo egli è stato un innovatore. Il ricorso ai testi in lingua gə'əz per la ricostruzione della catena dei fatti dell'Etiopia antica e medievale è una condizione necessaria, ma non sufficiente, per capire la storia culturale etiopica. A questa consapevolezza Marrassini era arrivato fin dal suo primo, fondamentale studio da etiopista, dedicato a un inedito testo agiografico. Completato l'esame filologico rivolto alla ricostruzione dell'archetipo e dei rapporti fra i manoscritti, egli si ripropose per primo di valutare quel testo «come documento “storico” esso stesso – s'intende della storia culturale, e non della semplice storia fattuale – e non come veicolo d'informazione per qualcos'altro» (P. Marrassini, *Gadla Yohannes Mesraqawi, Vita di Yohannes l'Orientale. Edizione critica con introduzione e traduzione annotata*, Firenze 1981, p. xxxiv). Al centro di questo secondo fronte della battaglia ingaggiata da Marrassini per il progresso della sua disciplina c'era, da un lato, la sensibilità per le nuove tendenze della storiografia d'Olttralpe, che imponeva all'attenzione dei conoscitori dell'Europa d'età medievale e moderna il superamento di ogni concezione puramente “evenemenziale” della storia, ma anche la piena consapevolezza che «un dato è tanto più realmente *storico* quanto più è fortemente o anche interamente e chiaramente *ideologico*», un «documento per la mentalità e la concezione del mondo di chi ha potuto scrivere, in quel tempo e in quel luogo, cose che a noi sembrano pura fantasia, ma che a lui sembravano pura storia» (P. Marrassini, “Un testo agiografico: la Cronaca reale”, in F. Pecchioli Daddi – M.C. Guidotti (a c. di), *Narrare gli eventi. Atti del convegno degli egittologi e degli orientalisti italiani in margine alla mostra “La battaglia di Qadesh”*, Roma 2005, pp. 225–232: p. 225).

Queste le poche parole, frutto dell'esperienza diretta, che premeva pronunciare nel momento in cui il volume in memoria del maestro è prossimo alla pubblicazione. Non c'è persona che abbia avuto rapporti di lavoro con Paolo Marrassini che non ne ricordi con ammirazione il rigore del filologo inserito in una visione straordinariamente ampia, sistematica e comparativa, dei fatti storici. Non è un caso se, per i suoi molti allievi oggi chiamati a vari ruoli

accademici e istituzionali in tre continenti, l'aver studiato con Marrassini è stato in molte occasioni un biglietto da visita che ha spianato strade e spalancato porte. Per essere stati condotti da lui lungo il "doppio binario" formativo della critica del testo e della storia della cultura, essi hanno potuto maturare una visione completa del loro oggetto di studio. Ora che dialogare con l'uomo non sarà mai più possibile, quanti hanno appreso da lui il mestiere di studioso possono capire bene, rileggendo i suoi scritti e mettendo ordine nelle proprie idee, il grande debito di riconoscenza che hanno contratto per sempre nei suoi confronti.

ALESSANDRO GORI

A few words for Paolo Marrassini*

Paolo Marrassini was a straightforward person in every respect and surely did not like rhetoric and pretentious speeches (actually, he hated them). His open character was among the main reasons why I started attending his classes: his frankness and unpretentiousness made him for me an irresistibly attractive professor who did not bury his humanity under the bulk of his knowledge, as it often happens with other representatives of the academia.

For sure, I do not want to irritate Paolo Marrassini on this occasion putting together a long and intricate series of well resounding words. I just would like to briefly give voice to a few memories and feelings which come to my mind while remembering him. I believe that this is the simplest and sincerest way to honour him as a pupil.

To me Paolo Marrassini was first and foremost a teacher. He took me by his hand when I was just a clumsy young man, furiously passionate with Oriental languages and cultures. He had the patience to guide me through the intricacies of the Semitic comparative linguistics and revealed me the richness of the Ethiopian languages, literatures and cultures which he deeply knew and sincerely respected. Thanks to his painstaking teaching, I became acquainted with the multifaceted manifestations of the Ethiopian civilization. He fostered my interest for the Islamic Ethiopian literature and manuscript tradition and encouraged me to do research in this field at a time (some 25 years ago) when it was almost completely neglected.¹

* A slightly modified version of this short text was read at the ceremony in memory of Paolo Marrassini held at Addis Ababa University on 22 April 2013.

1 It was in this way that I came to know another pivotal figure in my human and scholarly experience: the late Professor Hussein Ahmed, whom I also remember here in loving memory.

Paolo Marrassini always aimed at providing his students with a rigorous method of research based on the analysis of first-hand sources confidently approached thanks to a perfect command of the languages in which they were produced. The critical assessment of the data collected was then the second phase of a successful research. Marrassini was almost haunted by the urgent necessity to never stop questioning and scrutinizing all the different aspects of a problem, of a text, of a cultural or historical issue. He was pushed by an unquenched thirst of something more, a permanent desire to “unveil the hidden” which characterized him even beyond his scientific work. He abhorred sloppy generalizations and was always very cautious in drawing general conclusions from specific data. At the same time he kept teaching that a good researcher has to get perfectly acquainted with the general background of any issue he is dealing with, has to know in detail all the relevant bibliography and has to be aware of all the general implications his study has for the scholarly community. Erudition for Marrassini was never an infructuous retrieval of old and dusty articles but was a practical method to build up a sound basis for any advanced research work.

He strived with all his intellectual forces to transmit this rigorous intellectual attitude to me (as he did to all of his students) and to make me develop a critical spirit. If the mind could be formatted as a computer hard disk, I would say that my young mind was formatted by Paolo Marrassini.

Paolo Marrassini was always there for me: he never failed to give me his advice and his observations on my works, articles, research projects were always insightful. It was natural for him to keep following his pupils’ activities with his usual severe but supportive attitude. This is something which is not often found among academics: he really considered his students as a constituent part of his life and did not stop taking care of them even after they completed their institutional curriculum.

Beside the principles and practices of the job of a researcher, I think that there is something more (and perhaps more important) that Paolo Marrassini taught me. I learnt from him that behind (or better to say: inside) every line of a text, every apparently insignificant historical event and each tiny cultural item there is someone who is the ultimate, real object of study: the human being. Humanity is always at stake. If a scholar does not want to lose his conscience, he has to recognize that the fascinating and mysterious manifestations of the humankind appear in every research he does, no matter what the field of his activity is.

To know and respect all the human beings as they actually are, with their different languages and cultures: this is an all encompassing lesson which I hope I have properly learnt from Paolo Marrassini. Now that in my turn I

have become a teacher, I will do my best to pass this humanistic message over to the next generations. This is one of the best ways to keep alive the memory and legacy of Marrassini. For me personally it is also the reason why I can proudly and confidently say to everyone: “I am a pupil of Paolo Marrassini”.

ALESSANDRO BAUSI

In memoriam Paolo Marrassini (1942–2013)*

Prof. Paolo Marrassini passed away on 10 January 2013. He was almost 71 years old. In the last years of his life, he suffered from a progressive disease that hardly diminished his energy and undefatigable determination. He retired from active service at the university in 2009, but gave courses till 2011. He leaves his wife Maria Antonia, a daughter, and a son.

The son of Dante, a cartographer employed at the Istituto Geografico Militare, Florence, from whom he might have inherited a singular taste for meticulousness and details, his mother Clara Bosi was an appreciated primary school teacher. After attending the gymnasium and classical high school, Marrassini entered the University of Florence in 1961, first enrolling at the Faculty of Law, then moving to the Faculty of Arts in 1962, where he studied linguistics and Semitic philology. The most brilliant pupil of the eminent Semitist Pelio Fronzaroli (in turn a pupil of Giacomo Devoto for historical linguistics and Sabatino Moscati for Semitic studies, and the promoter himself of an excellent Italian school of Semitic Studies of its own, that through Moscati and Giorgio Levi della Vida went back, in the end, to Ignazio Guidi), Marrassini got his M.A. degree in 1967, with a thesis on the lexicon of military architecture in first millennium B.C. Semitic, that was later developed into his first monograph (1971).

After teaching in school some years, Marrassini was research assistant in Semitic Philology at the University of Florence in 1971–1982. After his initial and never forgotten interest in Assyriology (among his long-time acquaintances was Jean Bottéro), linguistic paleontology, and Near East archaeology (he also took part in the archaeological excavations conducted by the palethnologist Salvatore Maria Puglisi in Malatya, Turkey), Marrassini turned

* Obituary appeared in *Aethiopica* 16 (2013), pp. 200–203.

to Ethiopian Studies only in his full thirties, already as a mature scholar. He first attended the seminars at the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, held in 1974–1978 by Stefan Strelcyn under the auspices of Enrico Cerulli. The latter also supported his two-year stay in 1975–1976 in Manchester, where Strelcyn lectured at the time, as well as Marrassini's first impressive publication in Ethiopian Studies, i.e. the critical edition with introduction and annotated translation of the *Gädlä Yohannäs Mäsraqawi* (1981). In this work he introduced two profound innovations, i.e. the application of a modern philological method to Ethiopic text editions (“neo-lachmannian” approach, also noted by theoreticians of textual criticism, such as Gianfranco Contini), which Marrassini maintained and explicitly defended all through his career, and the appreciation of the hagiographical literature in its proper sense. Marrassini extended this latter approach to historical texts, at the example of the so-called “chronicle” of ‘Amdä Šəyon, and other case studies.

Appointed professor for Hebrew (1977–1978) and Semitic Philology (1978–1982) at the University of Pisa, Marrassini became Associate Professor in 1983 for Ethiopic language and literature at the University of Florence, also teaching Semitic Philology for one year (1983–1984). In 1990, under the auspices of Lanfranco Ricci, he became Full Professor for Ge‘ez language and literature at the Istituto Universitario Orientale of Naples succeeding Luigi Fusella. He remained at the Orientale in 1990–1993, chairing the academic programme for Oriental languages and civilizations (1991–1993), also teaching Coptic (1990–1991) and Semitic linguistics (1991–1993).

In 1994 Marrassini was called to the Chair of Ancient Ethiopic language and literature at the University of Florence. He still taught Geez language and literature at Naples in 1994–1995, where he also remained for the rest of his life an active member of the Ph.D. programme in African Studies, promoted and coordinated for many years by his colleague and dear friend Alessandro Triulzi. In Florence, Marrassini was President of the academic programme for Humanities (1996–1998), and eventually Dean of the Faculty of Arts for two terms (1998–2004). After Fronzaroli's becoming emeritus in 2003, he assumed the Chair of Semitic Philology, in which he remained until his retirement in 2009.

Marrassini did a lot to promote studies in Ethiopic philology in Ethiopia, where he taught one semester within the framework of Italian university cooperation in 1999. He considered this task one of the most urgent duties for a scholar in Ethiopian Studies, and was consequently among the initiators and tireless supporters of the graduate programmes in Philology at Addis Ababa University. He was Adjunct Professor at that University since the launch of the M.A. and Ph.D. programmes respectively in 2004 and 2007 and until after

his retirement, teaching several courses and tutoring dozens of students. In 2008 he was also Guest Professor for Ethiopian Studies at the University of Hamburg.

Marrassini was a member of several scientific associations. Their range testifies to the wide spectrum of his interests. They include the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (Rome), of which he was a member of the Scientific Council for several years, the Associazione Italiana per lo Studio del Giudaismo, the Association pour l'Étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne, the Associazione per lo Studio della Santità, dei Culti e dell'Agiografia, and the Società Italiana di Glottologia. He was also among the founders and director of the Center for Theoretical and Historical Linguistics: Italian, European and Oriental Languages, at the University of Florence.

Since 2003 Marrassini was the Italian representative in the International Organizing Committee of the International Conferences of Ethiopian Studies. Unfortunately he could not succeed, due to scarcity of funds and lacking institutional support, as well as to his incoercible uneasiness in accepting compromises and entering into negotiations, in organizing the planned 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, to be held in Italy; the conference instead took place in Trondheim, Norway, in 2007. Marrassini was also the editor-in-chief since 2010, succeeding Ricci, of the revived *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, of which he edited the issues new ser. 3 and 4 (the latter in print). He was also member of several editorial boards, including the journals *Africa* (Rome) and *Aethiopica* (1998–2000), as well as co-editor of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*.

Matched by few others of his generation, Marrassini had a scholarly career and achievements that fully ranged from ancient Semitic and Assyriology to Ethiopian Studies, from comparative and historical linguistics to philology as text criticism and hagiography, from manuscript cataloguing to religious studies, from Old and New Testament Apocrypha to the history of Oriental Studies. He substantially contributed to Semitic lexicography and linguistics, being able to approach subjects of general interest, with a special attention to South Semitic classification; to the critical edition of Ethiopic hagiographic and historical texts, where he definitely introduced new methods of editing and of looking at the sources; to the field of Apocrypha, in Ethiopic as well as in other languages; to manuscript studies, with his catalogues of Ethiopic manuscripts, among which that of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence; to several crucial questions in Christian Ethiopian history and culture, such as the so-called Syriac and Jewish influences, and others.

Initiated to Ethiopian Studies in the strict sense, in the end, by Strelcyn, *auspice* Cerulli, yet against an extremely solid background in Semitic Studies,

and Humanities in the wider sense – he always considered the intellectual legacy of several great linguists and philologists teaching at the University of Florence in the '60s and '70s, and the environment they created, that he commemorated in some of his last contributions, a fundamental component of his academic education – Marrassini was only in a very partial sense a representative of a national school of Ethiopian Studies, and rather the founder of an approach of its own.

Marrassini was a passionate, engaged, curious, and sensitive man, a meticulous scientific investigator with vast perspectives and a broad cultural horizon, an incomparable, devoted and generous teacher, and a profound methodological innovator in all the fields he dealt with. He was friend of such scholars as Jean Bottéro, Maxime Rodinson, David Cohen, Gherardo Gnoli, Franco Cardini, Tadesse Tamrat, and many others. Not a few of his pupils have undertaken an academic career, among them Riccardo Contini, Gianfranco Fiaccadori, Gianfrancesco Lusini, Pierluigi Piovaneli, Delio Vania Proverbio, Alessandro Gori, Alessio Agostini, and the author of this obituary.

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* Updated and slightly revised reprint of the bibliography compiled by Alessandro Bausi and appeared in *Aethiopica* 16 (2013), pp. 203–212, as an appendix to the obituary “In memoriam Paolo Marrassini (1942–2013)”, *ibid.*, pp. 200–203, here reprinted on pp. xxvii–xxx.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

DENIS NOSNITSIN – MARIA BULAKH

**A Fragment of an Ancient Four Gospels Book (Lk 6:35–7:7):
A Short Analysis***

The current publication continues a string of essays evaluating the material collected by the project Ethio-SPaRe in Ethiopia, in 2010–14. The presence of an interesting manuscript collection in the church of Dabra Māṣṣo Yoḥannəs (Gulo Makadā, East Təgray) has been reported, and a few of its books have been already analyzed.¹ Here below is a short study of one of the most remarkable pieces of the material originating from the site.² It is represented by a parchment leaf containing Lk 6:35–7:7 (most probably a remnant of a Four Gospels manuscript) which appears to be quite valuable on account of its ancient age, definitely prior to the mid-14th cent. The leaf has been included as flyleaf in one of the manuscripts of the collection to which the project signature MY-002 has been assigned. The manuscript was photographed in May 2010, briefly inspected in May 2011 and again in November 2012.³ Later it was described in the analytical database of the project.

* The research was conducted for the project “Ethio-SPaRe: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia, Salvation, Preservation, Research”, funded by the European Research Council within the EU 7th Framework Programme IDEAS; <http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/ethiostudies/ETHIOSPARE>. Maria Bulakh expresses her gratitude to the Russian Foundation for Humanities (RFH/РГНФ) for financial support (grant #12-04-00092a).

1 Nosnitsin 2011; 2012; 2013a: 24–30; 2013b. In addition, one can refer to one more source hinting to certain importance and historical fame of the site. In chapter viii of the Təgrəññā “History of Ethiopia”, the author Fəśśəḥa Giyorgis (d. 1931) speaks about Dabra Māṣṣo as one of the peculiarities of the region and describes clearly identifiable features of its landscape (s. Fesseḥa Giyorgis 1987).

2 First mentioned in Nosnitsin 2011: 26–27, fig. 10.

3 On that occasion, the condition of the manuscript was checked by specialists in book conservation and found satisfactory; after minor conservation measures, the manuscript was

I. Manuscript MY-002

Here is a cumulative description of MY-002, since this information may be also helpful for the evaluation of the ancient fragment in question.

Manuscript MY-002 is a codex measuring 30.0 (height) x 22.0 (width) x 10.0 (thickness), consisting of 150 folia (numbered 1–149 + 148a), gathered in 14 quires.

The codex is bound on two wooden boards; the sewing is executed on two pairs of sewing stations. Currently, there is no leather cover on the boards but their inner sides show some discoloration which may be suggestive of a former covering. The codex bears traces of crude interventions: each quire has been reinforced by a parchment guard which is attached to the leaves so tightly that the inner structure of quires cannot be established. The damaged sewing has been crudely repaired with recent threads⁴.

The text is laid out in two columns, each accommodating some 29 lines. The written area has the following dimensions: 22.0 cm (height) x 14 cm (width). The margins are: top 2.5 cm; bottom 5.0 cm; left 1.0 cm; right 4.5 cm; intercolumn 1.0 cm.

In some quires, and especially starting from fol. 130r, the scribe extended the written area; he was increasing the number of written lines to more than 35 (up to 39) and reducing the letter size, probably struggling to finish the work with the limited amount of parchment.

The pricking and ruling are well visible; the shape of prick holes is irregular (partly round holes, mostly slits). The upper written line is placed below the upper ruled line.

Rubrication seems to have been executed in the main hand only, according to three patterns: 1) up to ten lines in a homily incipit are rubricated (fols. 2ra, 7ra, 14ra, 92ra, 94va, 98ra, 100vb); 2) three lines in a homily incipit are rubricated, alternating with black lines; 3) three lines in both columns are rubricated on an incipit page (fols. 65va, 82r). The rubrication of the elements of punctuation signs (five dots in the nine dot asterisks) has been carried out only on a smaller number of the folia. The names of the feasts written in the top margin in the main hand are consistently rubricated. *Nomina sacra* and other names, *crux ansata* and *coronis* signs are not rubricated.

placed in an archival box and returned to the owning church. However, the difficult location of the site (on the isolated flat-top mountain) makes the item today hardly accessible.

4 The lower back board has an additional set of holes just above sewing station 1 and below sewing station 4, which might be original, but now are disused.

The codex MY-002 is a homiliary; it contains a collection of homilies which is similar to that of Ms. British Library, Orient. 770. However, the sequence of the texts is different, partly because the original order might be not exactly the same as in Orient. 770, and partly because the codex MY-002 was disturbed; some quires and leaves have been misplaced, some might be missing.⁵ The homiliary MY-002 contains 30 texts:

- 1) Fols. 2ra–7ra: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Nativity of Our Lord (cp. Orient. 774, no. 4)
- 2) Fols. 7ra–10va, fol. 13: Homily by Theophilus of Constantinople on St. Stephen the Protomartyr (Orient. 774, no. 5)
- 3) Fols. 10va–12v, 14ra–va: Homily [by John Chrysostom] on Passion of Our Lord (Orient. 774, no. 20)
- 4) Fols. 14va–15ra: Homily by Ephrem on fasting, repentance and prayer (Orient. 774, no. 11)
- 5) Fols. 15ra–22ra: Homily by anonymous author (“one of the holy fathers”) on the man who was born blind (Orient. 774, no. 12), incomplete
- 6) Fols. 22ra–25vb: Homily by Ephrem on Passion of Our Lord and on the thief on the right hand (Orient. 774, no. 17)
- 7) Fols. 25vb–32ra: Homily by Jacob of Serug on the angel and the thief (Orient. 774, no. 18)
- 8) Fols. 32ra–35rb: Homily by Ephrem on Palm Sunday (i) (Orient. 774, no. 13)
- 9) Fols. 35rb–39va: Homily by Ephrem on Palm Sunday (ii) (Orient. 774, no. 14)
- 10) Fols. 39va–43vb: Homily by John Chrysostom on Palm Sunday (Orient. 774, no. 15)
- 11) Fols. 44ra–51rb: Homily by Ephrem on Satan and death (Orient. 774, no. 16)
- 12) Fols. 51rb–64rb: Homily by ?Anəštāsyō[s] of Dabra Sinā on the burial of Our Lord (Orient. 774, no. 19), possibly incomplete

5 Wright 1877: 227–229, no. cccxl; three initial texts of Orient. 770 are missing in MY-002: no. 1, Homily by Jacob of Serug on the Annunciation; no. 2, Homily by Jacob of Serug on the Visit of Mary to Elizabeth; no. 3, Homily by Jacob on Serug on the Vision of Joseph.

- 13) Fols. 65va–69vb: Homily by the Orthodox on the holy spiritual Easter (Orient. 774, no. 27)
- 14) Fols. 69vb–73va: Homily by John Chrysostom on Easter Sunday (Orient. 774, no. 21)
- 15) Fols. 73va–81vb: Homily by John Theologus on Easter Sunday (cp. Orient. 774, no. 22)
- 16) Fols. 82ra–87ra: Homily by Jacob of Serug on the Apostle Thomas (Orient. 774, no. 23)
- 17) Fols. 87ra–89va: Homily by John Chrysostom on Lazarus (Orient. 774, no. 24)
- 18) Fols. 89va–91vb: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Samaritan woman (Orient. 774, no. 25)
- 19) Fol. 92ra–94va: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Baptism of Our Lord (i) (Orient. 774, no. 6)
- 20) Fols. 94va–98va: Homily by John Chrysostom on the wedding feast at Cana (Orient. 774, no. 8)
- 21) Fols. 98ra–100va: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Baptism of Our Lord (ii) (Orient. 774, no. 7)
- 22) Fols. 100va–111ra: Homily by John Chrysostom on the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Our Lord with ointment (Orient. 774, no. 9)
- 23) Fols. 111ra–117rb: Homily by Jacob of Serug on Simeon the priest who received Jesus in the temple (Orient. 774, no. 10)
- 24) Fols. 117rb–120vb: Homily by John Chrysostom on the pharisee and the publican (Orient. 774, no. 26)
- 25) Fols. 121ra–124ra: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Apostle Thomas (Orient. 774, no. 28)
- 26) Fols. 124ra–125vb; 127ra–130rb: Homily by John Chrysostom on the Ten Virgins (Orient. 774, no. 31)
- 27) Fols. 130rb–135vb: Homily by ?Anəštāsyos of Dabra Sinā on the Transfiguration (Orient. 771, no. 32)

28) Fols. 135vb–138ra: Homily by Jacob [of Serug] on the Annunciation to Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist (Orient. 774, no. 33)

29) Fols. 138ra–143rb: Homily [by John Chrysostom] on repentance (Orient. 774, no. 29)

30) Fols. 143rb–144vb, 126r–v, 145ra–vb: The Story of John of Rome who acquired the “Golden Gospel” (Orient. 774, no. 30).⁶

The manuscript accommodates also a few additional notes:

1) Fol. 2r, upper margin: Short ownership note in the hand of a 17th-cent. local ecclesiastic Zabana Krastos.⁷

2) Fol. 142: Prayer (?), poorly understandable, written in an old, very crude hand.

3) Fol. 147va-b: Hymn to St. Mary,⁸ written in a 16th or 17th-cent. hand.

4) Fol. 147(a)r: Note concerning the tributes for Dabra Māfšo Yoḥannəs, for the feast (*taskār*, sic) of St. John the Baptist, written in an old, very crude hand.

5) Fol. 147(a)v: Extensive donation note by the commissioner *ṣāqābe saṣāt* Tasabka Madḥən, written in the main hand. According to the note, he endowed the church with the book and holy utensils during the reign of King Dāwit II (r. 1379/80–1413 A.D.).⁹ Also palaeographic features of MY-002 point to the second half of the 14th or early 15th cent. as the production time of the manuscript.

6 As to the last text, cp. also EML no. 1844 from Ḥayk ʾEṣṭifānos, a 16th-cent. manuscript containing the collection *Gadla Samāṣtat*, this version including the Story about John of Rome “who acquired the Golden Gospel” (fols. 203v–205v), for the 17th of *Gənbət* (a translated hagiographical account about John Calybitis, cp. Orlandi 1991). The corresponding entry in the Ethiopic Synaxarion exists under 16th *Ḥamle* (= 23 July, s. Guidi 1909: 340–344). The Story about John in MY-002 presents an early attestation of the Ethiopic term for “Golden Gospel”, *wangel za-wark* (cp. A. Bausi, “Wängelä Wärq”, *EAE* 4 [2010], pp. 1130–1132).

7 Cp. Nosnitsin 2011: 27.

8 Cp. Chaïne 1913: 196, no. 92.

9 Since the cases of extensive old notes are rare, here it is transcribed in full: (fol. 148v) በአኩቲተ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ዘወሀብኩ ፡ ዛቲ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ አነ ፡ ዓቀቤ ፡ ሰዐት ፡ ተሰብከ ፡ መድኅን ፡ ለደብረ ፡ ማዕጸ ፡ ለዮሐንስ ፡ ዘወሃብኩ ፡ አፈወርቅ ፡ ወጳውስ ፡ መግደባንት ፡ ወወሰተይ ። ሶባ ፡ ተለቀሕኩ ፡ ግምዛው ፡ ለዮሐንስ ፡ ፉሎተ ፡ ብእሲትየ ፡ ዘፈደይኩ ፡ አነ ፡ ተሰብከ ፡ መድኅን ፡ ነሥየ ፡ እዘ ፡ ዐቃቤ ፡ ሰዓት ፡ ወሥደምሂ ፡ አቡው ፡ ሀሎ ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ወበዓልቴቲሂ ፡ አስምዑ ፡ ወንጉሥሂ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ወልደ ፡ ሴፋርዳድ ፡ ፡

II. Dabra Māṣṣo fragment (Lk 6:35–7:7)

The fragment of the ancient Four Gospels (foliated as fol. 1, in the following: Dabra Māṣṣo fragment; s. figs 1–2) was added into the first quire of MY-002 as a flyleaf, according to the common practice of the Ethiopian bookmakers. The project team found no other remains of the old Four Gospels or comparable manuscripts at the site. The local people did not have any further information about the provenance of the leaf. We can tentatively assume that the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment may represent the most ancient layer of the local manuscript collection.¹⁰

The original size of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment is difficult to estimate since the outer margin is crumbled, and the bottom margin has been cut. Now the leaf is approximately of the size of MY-002 regular text leaf, but originally it must have been bigger. Despite the loss, and also the fact that the ink has been abraded or flaked off at some places, and the parchment is in poor condition at the margins, the text of the fragment is still in good condition.

The text is laid out in two columns, each accommodating 25 written lines. In the current condition, the size of the written area is ca. 26.0 cm (height) x 18.5 cm (width). The sizes of the margins are: top 2.0 cm; bottom 1.5 cm; left 1.0 cm; right (?); intercolumn 2.0 cm. A regular written line accommodates 10–12 signs (each 6–8 mm high).

The pricking is not visible as the pricks were on the part of the leaf that has been lost. The recto side of the leaf is flesh, the verso is hair. The ruling

ወመኩንንሂ ፡ አርኒምስ ፡ መግእስል ፡ በሕርሂ ፡ ዘአማኑኤል ፡ ዘሂደ ፡ ወዘተአገለ ፡ ዘሆኒጠ ፡ ወዘ ፡ ተሠዩጣ ፡ ዘለቀሓ ፡ ወዘተለቀሓ ፡ ለህቲ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ ውጉዘ ፡ ይኩን ፡ እመሂ ፡ ቀሲስ ፡ ወእመሂ ፡ ሥዩም ፡ ወእመሂ ፡ ዘኮነ ፡ ከዊኖ ፡ በአፈ ፡ ዐሠርቲ ፡ ውጎምስቲ ፡ ነቢያት ፡ ወበአፈ ፡ ዓሠርቲ ፡ ወክልኤቲ ፡ ሐዋርያት ፡ ወበአፈ ፡ ሰብዓ ፡ ወክልኤቲ ፡ አርድኢት ፡ ወበአፈ ፡ ሠለስቲ ፡ ምእት ፡ ዓሠርቲ ፡ ወሰማንቲ ፡ ርቲዓነ ፡ ሃይማኖት ፡ በአፈ ፡ አብ ፡ ወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ወበአፋሁ ፡ ለእግዚእትነ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ውጉዘ ፡ ለይኩን ፡ ወለእመ ፡ ባዘሐከከ ፡ ውጉዘ ፡ ይኩን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ። Note such mistaken forms as እውስ for እውሎስ, ማዐጣንት for ማዕጠንት, ነሥዩ for ነሥእዩ, እዘ for እንዘ; *fālot* being possibly a plural form for *fālo* (Leslau 1987: 158b, “wallet, purse, basket”). The form *wasutāy* does not appear in any dictionary of Gəʿəz, but in the context it may refer to “chalice” (probably derived from the root *s-t-y* “to drink”, originally built with prefix *ma-* or *mə-*, cp. *maste* in Leslau 1987: 518).

10 The church of Dabra Māṣṣo Yoḥannəs possesses two more Four Gospels books: one (MY-008) written in the same hand as the Homiliary MY-002 (cp. Nosnitsin 2012; 2013a: 30), and another one (MY-006), a 19th-cent. (?) codex donated by the local lord *ras* Səbhāt ?Aragāwi (1844–1914).

was impressed on the recto (flesh) side. The upper written line is placed under the upper ruled line.

Black and red inks have been used for the text of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment.¹¹ The numbers referring to the columns of the Eusebian Canon tables (with one exception on fol. 1r), the Chi-Ro sign, the “title” and number (18) of the chapter in the upper margin (fol. 1v), have been rubricated (cp. fig. 3).

The Dabra Māṣṣo fragment is obviously older than the Homiliary MY-002. So far, no critical edition of the Gospel of Luke has been published. As one can see from the recent edition of the Gospel of John, no new ancient witnesses were incorporated into the group of the manuscripts used consequently for the editions of three Gospels books (Mark, Matthew, John).¹² The current issue is aimed at presenting one more previously unknown ancient Ethiopian Four Gospel manuscript, which, even though survived only in a fragment, can be later useful for various type of research, including text-critical study of the Gospel of Luke.¹³

Palaeographical features

Some palaeographical features reveal a considerable age of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment, which fall into the so-called period of the “monumental script” or “period I”,¹⁴ even though no more tangible dating can be proposed for the moment. As a general feature defining the appearance of the script, a number of letters (such as *ṣā*, *ṣi*, *ṣe*, *mā*, *mi*, *mə*, *wə*, *wo*, *śə*, *śā*, *tā*, *qā* etc.) are set up close to or at the ruled line (equivalent to the “base line”). Their vowel markers (directed downwards), are fairly short and in some cases are not well distinguishable (e.g., *tā*, *qā*); they tend to transgress the “base line”. Here are examples of some individual graphic shapes:


11 The black ink is of remarkably light brown tone, distinctively different from the black colour of the inks of the MY-002 main text. Also the red ink of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment is not the common vivid red, but shows a light brown tone.


12 Cp. Wechsler 2005: ix–xi.

13 Linguistic issues emerging from the text of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment are discussed in another essay of the current volume (M. Bulakh).


14 Uhlig 1988: 73–176; S. Uhlig – A. Bausi, “Palaeography”, *EAE* 4 (2010), pp. 101–104; cp. also graphic shapes from the early period in Davies 1987; Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88 (for the ancient homiliary Ms. EMMML no. 8509).


1) The 4th and 5th vowel order markers of *ʕ* are set up in the middle of the letter's body.¹⁵

ʕā: fol. 1ra l. 25 (fig. 4a): 


ʕe: fol. 1vb l. 13 (fig. 4b): 


2) The 2nd and the 3rd orders of *d* have typical ancient shapes: *du* is marked through an extension at the foot of the letter and additional stroke downwards; and *di* is made with one more additional horizontal stroke below.¹⁶


du: fol. 1vb l. 4 (fig. 4c): 

di: fol. 1va l. 12 (fig. 4d): 

3) The 4th order of *l*, *ʔ* and *k* is marked in the archaic way; the vowel marker is an additional linestroke at the letter's right leg.¹⁷

lā: fol. 1rb l. 21 (fig. 4e): 

ʔā: fol. 1rb l. 23 (fig. 4f): 


kā: fol. 1rb l. 20 (fig. 4g): 


15 Cp. Uhlig 1988: 98; similar but not the same shape for the 5th order in Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26.


16 Uhlig 1988: 98, widely attested in old manuscripts; cp. Davies 1987: 291, the shape seems to be somewhat different in Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26.

17 Sergew Hable-Selassie 1978–88: 26. Examples of the 4th order of *h* are missing in the Dabra Māʕšo fragment.


4) The 7th order of *s*, *b* and *k* is marked in the way which is somewhat difficult to discern, the vowel marker being a slightly bent extension of the sign's left leg.¹⁸

so: fol. 1va l. 24 (fig. 4h): 


bo: fol. 1rb l. 13, or vb l. 2 (fig. 4j): 

ko: fol. 1va l. 24 (fig. 4k): 


5) The 7th order of *h* is marked though a small stroke set at the left leg of the letter and directed downwards.¹⁹

ho: fol. 1vb l. 3, fig. 4l: 

6) The 4th order of *h* is marked by a small stroke similar to that of 5), at the stem of the letter.

hā: fol. 1va l. 7 (fig. 4m): 

7) The 6th order of *s* is clearly marked by a horizontal stroke (ending with a dot) directed to the left, set at the short vertical stroke.²⁰

sə: fol. 1ra l. 13 (fig. 4n): 


18 Cp. Sergew Hable-Selassie 1978–88: 26.

19 Cp. Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26.


20 Not explicitly defined in Uhlig 1988, but surely an old feature, cp. Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26, cp. Nosnitsin 2014 (in print).

8) The basic shape (1st order) of *m* is composed of two elongated loops of the same length, the right one set upon the left one (both downstrokes being nearly parallel).²¹

9) The 5th order marker of *m* has a peculiar shape; it is a semi-circle built up at the right loop of the letter, with no linking line.


me: fol. 1rb l. 21 (fig. 4o): 


This shape correlates with *mi*, for which the 3rd order marker is set up directly at the right “half” of the sign.²²

mi: fol. 1vb l. 8 (fig. 4p): 

10) The basic shape (1st order) of *s* is built in the way similar to *m* (s. above).²³

11) The distinction between the 2nd and 6th orders of *w* (which has an ellipsoid, strongly slanted shape) appears to be different in comparison to the later period; the marker of the 2nd order is set up in the middle of the letter’s body, and that of the 6th order is placed at its top.²⁴

wu: fol. 1ra l. 8 (fig. 4q): 

wə: fol. 1ra l. 4 (fig. 4r): 

21 No similar examples appear in Uhlig 1988 (yet it is mentioned for a later palaeographic period, *ibid.* 207); however, this is the form registered in Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26 and Davies 1987: 289.

22 Cp. a somewhat similar shape in Uhlig 1988: 150 for ?Abbā Garimā III (cp. also Davies 1987: 289), and Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26 (here the feature is less pronounced, and the sign has a very short linking stroke).

23 Similar to the shapes in Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26 and Davies 1987: 289.

24 Cp. Uhlig 1988: 95, 97, occasionally appearing in various examples on pp. 118, 150; probably meant vice versa in the table, Sergew Hable-Selassie 1987–88: 26; cp. also Davies 1987: 291.

12) The punctuation signs are represented by colon and the sign composed of four dots with two dashes in between (with the paragraph sign in the left margin), with no rubricated elements.

The 7th order of *l* has the vowel marker (ring) set at a linking line. Only one numeral (“10” in the chapter number, upper margin) has “dashes”. As in the cases of some other ancient manuscripts, the script of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment shows no elegance and uniformity; the letters are not upright but slanted to the right, downward strokes are bent (esp. in such letters as *b*, *s*, *h*, *k*, *z*). Probably representing an idiosyncrasy of the scribe, some letters’ elements are extended to the left by short lines, which sometimes makes the identification of a sign order more difficult.²⁵

Transcription of the text

The Dabra Māṣṣo fragment shows, apart from ancient palaeographic shapes, also cases of what can be called “irregular” or “unconventional” vocalization.²⁶ The good condition of the fragment and the possibility to check up the reading of the text gives us a better chance to evaluate the features’ distribution and employment. Below, the text of the fragment has been reproduced in both Ethiopic script and transcription (preserving the fragment’s irregular spelling).²⁷ The footnotes contain the corresponding forms according to Classical Gəṣəz (CG):

Fol. Ira

Line 1	ለ ፡ ኄራን ፡ ወለዕለ ፡ እኩ- la ḥerān wa-laṣla ʔəkku
Line 2	[ያ]ን ፡ = ፡ ወኩኑ ፡ መሐራ- yān wa-kunu maḥarā
Line 3	[ያ]ን ፡ ከመ ፡ አቡካመ ፡

25 They look like “hairlines” which are otherwise attested, at least in the material collected by the project Ethio-SPaRe, only for much later hands.

26 A feature of ancient manuscripts which has been given insufficient attention in the recent years, cp. Nosnitsin 2014.

27 Reconstructed readings are placed in square brackets; the cases of uncertain reading are marked with the dot below the character.

Line 4	yān ²⁸ kama ḡabukəmu መሐሪ ፡ ውእቲ ፡ = ፡ ወ
Line 5	maḡari wəḡətu wa- [ኢ]ተኩንኑ ፡ ወኢተተ
Line 6	ḡitak ^w annənu ²⁹ wa-ḡitata ኳንኑ ፡ ወኢተግፍዑ ፡
Line 7	k ^w ennanu ³⁰ wa-ḡitagfəፍu ³¹ ወኢይገፍዑክሙ ፡ አ
Line 8	wa-ḡiyəgaffəፍukəmu ḡa ሐይዉ ፡ ወያሐይዉክ
Line 9	ḡayəwu wa-yāḡayyəwukə ሙ ፡ ሃቡ ፡ ወይሁቡክ
Line 10	mu hābu wa-yəhubukə ሙ ፡ መሰፈርተ ፡ ሠናየ ፡
Line 11	mu masafarta ³² śannāya ወምሉአ ፡ ወዝሐሐ ፡
Line 12	wa-məluḡa wa-zəḡuḡa ወንሐ[ኑ]ሐ ፡ ይሁቡክ
Line 13	wa-nəḡanuḡa ³³ yəhubukə ሙ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ሐፅንክሙ ፡
Line 14	mu wəsta ḡəፍnəkəmu ³⁴ ወበመሰፈርተ ፡ ሰፈር
Line 15	wa-ba-masafarta ³⁵ safār ክሙ ፡ ይሰፈሩ ፡ ለክሙ ።
Line 16	kəmu yəsaፍፍaru ³⁶ lakəmu ወመሰለ ፡ ሎሙ ፡ ወይ
Line 17	wa-masala lomū wayə ቤሎሙ ፡ ይክልኑ ፡ ዕ

28 CG *maḡārəyāna*.29 CG *wa-ḡitək^wannənu*.30 CG *wa-ḡitək^wennənu*.31 CG *wa-ḡitəፍፍəፍu*.32 CG *masfarta*.33 CG *wa-nəḡnuḡa*.34 CG *ḡəፍnəkəmu*.35 CG *masfarta*.36 CG *yəsaፍፍəru*.

Line 18	belomu yəkəlnu ናፅ ወ.ር ፡ ለዕወ.ር ፡ መሪሐ
	wur la-ፍፅwur mariḥa
Line 19	ቶ ፡ አከኑ ፡ ክልኢሆሙ
	to ³⁷ ḡakkanu ³⁸ kəlḡehomu
Line 20	ይወደቁ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ግብ ።
	yəwaddaku ³⁹ wəsta gəbb
Line 21	አልቦ ፡ ረድኦ ፡ ዘይኔይ
	ḡalbo radḡ za-yəḥeyyə
Line 22	ሰ ፡ እምሊቁ ፡ መጠ[ኑ ፡] ለ
	sa ⁴⁰ ḡəm-liḡu maṭānu la
Line 23	ኩሉ ፡ ይኩን ፡ ከመ ፡ ሊቁ ።
	k ^w əllu yəkun kama liḡu
Line 24	ምንተኑ ፡ ተኔጽር ፡ ሐሠ
	məntānu taneṣṣər ⁴¹ ḥasā
Line 25	ረ ፡ ዘውስተ ፡ ዓይን ፡ ቢጽ
	ra za-wəsta ፍāyn ⁴² biṣə

Fol. Irb

Line 1	ከ ፡ ወኢተራኢ ፡ ሰር[ዌ ፡]
	ka wa-ḡitareḡi ⁴³ sarwe
Line 2	ዘውስተ ፡ ዓይንከ ፡ ወእ[ፎ]
	za-wəsta ፍāynəka wa-ḡəfo
Line 3	ተክል ፡ ብሂሎተ ፡ ለቢ[ጽ]
	takəl ⁴⁴ bəhilota la-biṣə
Line 4	ከ ፡ ተግገሰ ፡ እኑየ ፡ [አው]
	ka taፍāggasa ⁴⁵ ḡəḥuya ḡaw

37 CG *mariḥoto*.38 CG *ḡakkonu*.39 CG *yəwad(d)əku*.40 CG *za-yəḥeyyəs*.41 CG *təneṣṣər*.42 CG *ፍāyna*.43 CG *ḡitareḡi*.44 CG *təkəl*.45 CG *taፍāggas*.

Line 5	ዕእ ፡ ሐሠረ ፡ እም[ዓይን] śəʔ ḥasara ʔəm-ḥāynə
Line 6	ከ ፡ ወኢተሬኢ ፡ ሰርዌ[፡] ka wa-ʔitareʔi ⁴⁶ sarwe
Line 7	ዘውሱተ ፡ ዓይንከ [፡ = ፡] za-wəsta ḥāynəka
Line 8	መድልው ፡ አውዕእ ፡ [ቅ] madləw ʔawśəʔ kə
Line 9	ድም ፡ ሰርዌ ፡ እምዓ[ይ] dəm sarwe ʔəmḥāy
Line 10	ንከ ፡ ወእምዝ ፡ ተኔጽር nəka wa-ʔəmzə taneşşər ⁴⁷
Line 11	ታውዕእ ፡ ሐሠረ ፡ እም tāwśəʔ ḥasara ʔəm-
Line 12	ዓይነ ፡ ቢጽከ ፡ [= ፡] ḥāyna bişəka
Line 13	እልቦ ፡ ዕፅ[፡] ሠናይ ፡ [ዘ] ʔəlbo ⁴⁸ ḥəs šannāy za-
Line 14	ይፈሪ ፡ እኩይ ፡ ወእል[ቦ] yəfarri ʔəkkuy ⁴⁹ wa-ʔəlbo ⁵⁰
Line 15	ዕፅ ፡ እኩይ ፡ ዘይፈ[ሪ] ḥəs ʔəkkuy za-yəfarri
Line 16	ሠናይ ፡ ከሉ ፡ ዕፅ ፡ እም šannāy ⁵¹ kʷəllu ḥəs ʔəm
Line 17	ፍሬሁ ፡ ይተዓወቀ [፡ = ፡] fərehu yətaḥāwwak ⁵²
Line 18	ወኢይእርሩ ፡ በለሰ ፡ [እ] wa-ʔiyəʔarrəru balasa ʔə
Line 19	ምአሥዋክ ፡ ወኢ[ይቀ] m-ʔaśwāk wa-ʔiyəka

46 CG ʔitareʔi.

47 CG taneşşər.

48 CG ʔalbo.

49 CG ʔəkkuya.

50 CG wa-ʔalbo.

51 CG šannāya.

52 CG yətaḥāwwak.

Line 20	ሥሙ ፡ አሰካለ ፡ [እምኦ] śśəmu ʔasakāla ⁵³ ʔəm-ʔa
Line 21	ሜከላ ፡ = ፡ ጌር ፡ [ጠእሲ] mekalā ʔer bəʔəsi
Line 22	እምሠናይ ፡ መ[ዝገበ] ʔəm-śannāy mazgaba
Line 23	ልቡ ፡ ያወፅኦ ፡ ለ[ሠና] ləbbu yāwaśśəʔā la-śannā
Line 24	ይተ ፡ ወእኩይሰ ፡ ጠእ[ሲ] yta ⁵⁴ wa-ʔəkkuy-əssa bəʔəsi
Line 25	እምእኩይ ፡ መዝ[ገበ] ʔəm-ʔəkkuy mazgaba

Fol. Iva

Line 1:	[ል]ቡ ፡ ያወፅኦ ፡ ለእኩተ ፡ ləbbu yāwaśśəʔā ⁵⁵ la-ʔəkkita ⁵⁶
Line 2:	[እ]ሰመ ፡ ዘአተረፈ ፡ ልብ ʔəsama ⁵⁷ za-ʔatarafa ⁵⁸ ləbb
Line 3:	[ይ]ነብብ ፡ አፍ ፡ = ፡ ለምንተ yənabbəb ʔaf la-mənta ⁵⁹
Line 4:	ተብሉኒ ፡ እግዚኦ ፡ እግ tabəluni ⁶⁰ ʔəgziʔa ⁶¹ ʔəg
Line 5:	[ዚ]ኦ ፡ ወኢተገብሩ ፡ ziʔa wa-ʔitagabbəru ⁶³
Line 6:	ዘእቤለክሙ ፡ ።

53 CG ʔaskāla.

54 CG śannāyt.

55 CG yāwaśśəʔā.

56 CG la-ʔəkkit.

57 CG ʔəma.

58 CG za-ʔatarafa.

59 CG la-mənt.

60 CG təbəluni.

61 CG ʔəgziʔo.

62 CG ʔəgziʔo.

63 CG wa-ʔitagabbəru.

	za-ʔəbelakkəmu
Line 7:	ኩሉ ፡ ዘይመጽእ ፡ ኃቤየ ፡ k ^w əllu za-yəmassəʔ hābeya
Line 8:	ወይሰምዓኒ ፡ ቃልየ ፡ አር wa-yəsamməʕānni kāləya ʔar
Line 9:	[ኢ]የከሙ ፡ ዘይመሰል ፡ ʔiyakkəmu za-yəmassal ⁶⁴
Line 10:	ይመሰል ፡ ብእሲ ፡ ዘሐነጸ ፡ yəmassal ⁶⁵ bəʔəsi za-ḥanaša
Line 11:	ቦቶ ፡ ወከረየ ፡ ወአዕመ bato ⁶⁶ wa-karaya wa-ʔaʕma
Line 12:	ቀ ፡ ወሰረረ ፡ መሰረተ ፡ ዲቤ ka wa-sarara masarata dibe
Line 13:	ኩኩሐ ፡ ወብዙኅ ፡ አፍ k ^w ak ^w əḥa ⁶⁷ wa-bəzuh ʔaf
Line 14:	[ለ]ግ ፡ መጽአ ፡ ገፍዕዎ ፡ ለ lag ⁶⁸ maʕʔa gaʕəwwo la-
Line 15:	[ው]እቲ ፡ ቤተ ፡ ወሰእንዎ ፡ wəʔətu beta ⁶⁹ wa-saʔənəwwo ⁷⁰
Line 16:	[አን]ቀልቀሎቶ ፡ እሰመ ፡ ʔankalkəloto ⁷¹ ʔəsmā
Line 17:	[ዲቤ] ፡ ኩኩሐ ፡ ተሰረረ ፡ ፡ dibe k ^w ak ^w əḥa ⁷² tasarara
Line 18:	[ወዘሰ] ፡ ኢይሰምዓኒ ፡ ቃ wa-za-ssa ʔiyəsamməʕānni kā
Line 19:	ልየ ፡ ወኢይገብሮ ፡ ይመ ləya wa-ʔiyəgabbəro yəma
Line 20:	[ሰ]ል ፡ ብእሲ ፡ ዘሐነ[ጸ] ፡ ቤ

64 CG *za-yəmassəl*.65 CG *yəmassəl*.66 CG *beto*.67 CG *k^wak^wəḥ*.68 CG *ʔaflāg*.69 CG *bet*.70 CG *wa-səʔənəwwo*.71 CG *ʔankalkəloto*.72 CG *k^wak^wəḥ*.

Line 21:	ssa ⁷³ bəʔəsi za-ḥanaša be ቶ ፡ መለዕልተ ፡ ምድር ፡ to malaʕəlta mədr
Line 22:	[ዘ]እንበለ ፡ መሰረተ ፡ ወ za-ʔənbala masarata ⁷⁴ wa-
Line 23:	[ገ]ፍዕዎ ፡ ወሒዝ ፡ ወወ gafʕəwwo wahiz wa-wa
Line 24:	[ድ]ቀ ፡ ሰቤሃ ፡ ወኮነ ፡ ድቀ dka sobehā wa-kona dəka
Line 25:	[ቱ] ፡ ዓቢያ ፡ = ፡ tu ʕābiya

Fol. 1vb

Line in the margin	፲፰ ፡ በእንተ ፡ መሰፍን ፡ = ፡ 18 ba-ʔənta masafən ⁷⁵
Line 1	ወፈጸሞ ፡ ነጊሮቶሙ [፡] wa-faṣimo nagirotomu
Line 2	ቃሎ ፡ ለሕዝብ ፡ ቦአ ፡ ቀ kālo la-ḥəzb boʔa ka
Line 3	ፍረናሐም ፡ ወሃሎ ፡ አ fəranāḥom ⁷⁶ wa-hāllō ʔa
Line 4	ሐዱ ፡ መሰፍን ፡ ወገ ḥadu masafən ⁷⁷ wa-ga
Line 5	ብሩ ፡ ይደዊ ፡ ወአልጸ bru yədawwi wa-ʔalša
Line 6	ቀ ፡ ይሙታ ፡ ወክቡር ka yəmutā ⁷⁸ wa-kəbur
Line 7	ውእቱ ፡ በኃቤሁ ፡ ወ wəʔətu ba-ḥābehu wa-
Line 8	ሰሚዖ ፡ በእንተ ፡ ኢያ

73 CG *yəmassəl*.74 CG *masarat*.75 CG *masfən*.76 CG *ḳəfəranāḥom*.77 CG *masfən*.78 CG *yəmut*.

Line 9	samiŋo ba-ʔənta ʔiya ሱ-ሰ : ለአስ : ኃቤሁ : ረ sus laʔaka hābehu ra
Line 10	በኖተ : አይሁድ : ወአሰ bbanāta ʔayhud wa-ʔasa
Line 11	ተብቀሶዎ : ከመ : tabkʷəŋəwwo ⁷⁹ kama
Line 12	[.] : ይምጸእ : ወያሐ ... yəmsəʔ ⁸⁰ wa-yāḥa
Line 13	ዩ : ሎቲ : ቀላዲሁ : [= :] yu ⁸¹ lottu kʷəlŋehu
Line 14	ወመጽእ : ኃቤ : ኢዩ wa-maʃʔa hābe ʔiya
Line 15	ሱ-ሰ : ወአሰተብቀሶ sus wa-ʔasatabkʷəŋə
Line 16	ዎ : ወይቤልዎ : ፍጡ wwo ⁸² wa-yəbeləwwo fətu
Line 17	ነ : ረድ : እስመ : ይደል na rad ʔəsmā yədallə
Line 18	ዎ : ዘገበርከ : ሎቲ : እ wo za-gabarka lottu ʔə
Line 19	ስመ : ያፈቀር : ሐዝ[ባነ] sma yāfakkar ⁸³ ḥəzbāna ⁸⁴
Line 20	ወምኩራባኒ : ውእ[ቲ :] wa-məkʷərāba-ni wəʔətu
Line 21	ሐነጸ : ሰነ : = : ወሐረ : [ኢ.] ḥanaša lana wa-ḥarā ⁸⁵ ʔi
Line 22	የሱሰ: መሰሌሆሙ : ወ yasus masalehomu ⁸⁶ wa-

79 CG *wa-astabkʷəŋəwwo*.80 CG *yəmsəʔ*.81 CG *wa-yāḥyu*.82 CG *yāfak(k)ər*.83 CG *wa-astabkʷəŋəwwo*.84 CG *ḥəzbāna*.85 CG *ḥora*.86 CG *məsalehomu*.

Line 23	አልጺቆ ፡ ኃቤ ፡ ቤቱ ፡ ለ ʔalsiḳo hābe betu la
Line 24	እከ ፡ አዕርኩቲሁ ፡ ው ʔaka ʔaʕræktiḥu wə
Line 25	እቲ ፡ መሰፍን ፡ ኃቤሁ ʔətu masafən ⁸⁷ hābehu

Orthography: use of the 1st order

The most remarkable of the orthographic peculiarities appearing in the fragment is the extensive use of the 1st order instead of the 6th order.

1) The 1st order of *t* seems to have been extensively employed instead of the 6th order (altogether 17 occasions):

- Fol. 1ra l. 5: *ʔitak^wannənu* (cp. CG *ʔi-tək^wannənu*),
 - Fol. 1ra l. 5–6: *wa-ʔitatak^wennanu* (cp. CG *wa-ʔi-tək^wennanu*),
 - Fol. 1ra l. 6: *wa-ʔitagfəʕu* (cp. CG *wa-ʔitəgfəʕu*),
 - Fol. 1ra l. 24: *taneşşər* (cp. CG *təneşşər*),
 - Fol. 1rb l. 1: *wa-ʔitareʔi* (cp. CG *wa-ʔitəreʔi*),
 - Fol. 1rb l. 3: *takəl* (cp. CG *təkəl*),
 - Fol. 1rb l. 6: *wa-ʔitareʔi* (cp. CG *wa-ʔitəreʔi*),
 - Fol. 1rb l. 10: *taneşşər* (cp. CG *təneşşər*),
 - Fol. 1rb l. 17: *yətaʕāwwakə* (cp. CG *yətʕawwakə*),
 - Fol. 1rb ll. 23–24: *la-šannāyta* (cp. CG *la-šannāyt*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 1: *la-ʔəkkita* (cp. CG *la-ʔəkkit*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 2: *za-ʔatarafə* (cp. CG *za-ʔatrafa*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 3: *la-mənta* (cp. CG *la-mənt*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 4: *tabəluni* (cp. CG *təbəluni*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 5: *wa-ʔitagabbəru* (cp. CG *wa-ʔitəgabbəru*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 15: *wəʔətu beta* (cp. CG *wəʔətu bet*),
 - Fol. 1va l. 22: *za-ʔənbala masarata* (cp. CG *za-ʔənbala masarat*).
- No clear case of the 6th order of *t* has been attested in the fragment.

87 CG *masfən*.

2) The 1st order of *k* appears to have been used instead of the 6th order in four cases:

Fol. 1rb l. 17: *yataḡāwwaka* (cp. CG *yatḡawwak*) (uncertain),

Fol. 1vb l. 3: *kaḡarnaḡom* (cp. CG *kaḡarnaḡom*),

Fol. 1va l. 16: *ḡankalkaloto* (cp. CG *ḡankalkəloto*),

Fol. 1vb l. 19: *yāḡakḡar* (cp. CG *yāḡakḡar*),

There is, furthermore, one case which cannot be clarified due to the loss of the text, *kə/ka* in fol. 1rb ll. 8–9 (*kədam*).

There are no clear cases of *k* with a distinct marker of the 6th order.

3) The 1st order of *s* is used instead of the 6th order in 15 cases:

Fol. 1ra l. 10: *masafarta* (cp. CG *masfarta*),

Fol. 1ra l. 14: *wa-ba-masafarta* (cp. CG *wa-ba-masfarta*),

Fol. 1rb l. 4: *taḡāggasa* (CG *taḡāggas*),

Fol. 1ra ll. 21–22: *za-yəḡeyyasa* (cp. CG *za-yəḡeyyas*),

Fol. 1rb l. 20: *ḡasakāla* (cp. CG *ḡaskāla*),

Fol. 1va l. 9: *za-yəmassal* (cp. CG *za-yəmassəl*),

Fol. 1va l. 10: *yəmassal* (cp. CG *yəmassəl*),

Fol. 1va l. 15: *wa-saḡanəwwa* (cp. CG *wa-səḡanəwwa*),

Fol. 1va ll. 19–20: *yəmassal* (cp. CG *yəmassəl*),

Fol. 1vb line in the margin: *masafən* (cp. CG *masfən*),

Fol. 1vb l. 4: *masafən* (cp. CG *masfən*),

Fol. 1vb ll. 10–11: *wa-ḡasatabk^wəḡəwwa* (cp. CG *wa-ḡastabk^wəḡəwwa*),

Fol. 1vb ll. 15–16: *wa-ḡasatabk^wəḡəwwa* (cp. CG *wa-ḡastabk^wəḡəwwa*),

Fol. 1vb l. 22: *masalehomu* (cp. CG *məslehomu*),

Fol. 1vb l. 25: *masafən* (cp. CG *masfən*).

The reading *ḡasama*, fol. 1va l. 2, is too uncertain; the upper part of the letter is hardly visible due to the poor condition of the parchment.

The use of a distinct shape of the 6th order for *s* is well-attested⁸⁸.

4) The 1st order of *ḡ* is employed instead of the 6th order in seven cases:

Fol. 1ra ll. 7–8: *ḡaḡayəwu* (cp. CG *ḡaḡyəwu*),

Fol. 1ra l. 12: *wa-nəḡanuḡa* (cp. CG *wa-nəḡnuḡa*),

Fol. 1ra l. 13: *ḡaḡnəkəmu* (cp. CG *ḡəḡnəkəmu*),

88 In the following lexemes which are consistently written with the 6th order: *wasta* (fols. 1ra l. 13, ra l. 20, ra l. 25, rb l. 2, rb l. 7), *ḡasma* (fols. 1va l. 16, 1vb l. 17, ll. 18–19), *ḡiyasus* (fol. 1vb ll. 8–9, ll. 14–15, ll. 21–22).

Fol. 1va l. 13: *dibe k^wak^wəḥa* (cp. CG *diba k^wak^wəḥ*),

Fol. 1va l. 17: *dibe k^wak^waḥa* (cp. CG *diba k^wak^wəḥ*),

Fol. 1vb ll. 12–13: *wa-yāḥayu* (cp. CG *wa-yāḥyu*),

Fol. 1vb l. 19: *ḥazbana* (cp. CG *ḥəzbana*).

There is only one, yet very clear example with a distinctly marked *ḥa* (fol. 1vb l. 2: *la-ḥəzb*).

5) The 1st order of *d* is employed once instead of the 6th order:

Fol. 1ra l. 20: *yəwaddaku* (cp. CG *yəwaddəku*).

The use of a distinct shape of the 6th order is well-attested⁸⁹.

6) The 1st order of *m* is used instead of the 6th order in one (uncertain) case:

Fol. 1vb l. 22: *masalehomu* (cp. CG *məslehomu*).

The use of a distinct shape of the 6th order is well-attested⁹⁰.

7) The 1st order of *k^w* is used instead of the 6th order once:

Fol. 1va l. 17: *k^wak^waḥa* (cp. CG *k^wak^wəḥ*);

Cp. the spelling *k^wak^wəḥa* in fol. 1va l. 13, just a few lines before.

8) The 1st order of *b* is used instead of the 5th order in one case:

Fol. 1va l. 11: *bato* (cp. CG *betō*).

9) The 1st order of *l* appears instead of the 4th order in two cases:

Fol. 1va ll. 13–14: *ʔaflag* (cp. CG *ʔaflāg*) (uncertain),

Fol. 1ra, l. 1: *laʕla* (cf. CG *lāʕla*) (cf. below on the possible explanation in terms of the orthography of “guttural rules”).

89 Cp. seven clear cases of the 6th order of *d*: in fols. 1ra l. 21 (*radʔ*), rb l. 8 (*madləw*), rb ll. 8–9 (*kədəm*), va l. 21 (*mədr*), va ll. 24–25 (*dəkatu*), vb l. 10 (*ʔayhud*), vb l. 17 (*rad*).

90 Cp. 20 clear cases of 6th order of *m*: in fols. 1ra l. 11 (*məluʔ*), ra l. 22 (*ʔəm-liku*), ra l. 24 (*məntanu*), rb l. 5 (*ʔəm*), rb ll. 8–9 (*kədəm*), rb ll. 9–10 (*ʔəm-ʕāynəka*), rb l. 10 (*ʔəmza*), rb ll. 11–12 (*ʔəm-ʕāyna*), rb ll. 16–17 (*ʔəm-fərehu*), rb ll. 18–19 (*ʔəm-ʔaśwāk*), rb ll. 20–21 (*ʔəm-ʔamekalā*), rb l. 22 (*ʔəm-ʕannāy*), rb l. 25 (*ʔəm-ʔəkkuy*), va l. 3 (*la-mənta*), va l. 8 (*wa-yəšamməʕānni*), va l. 18 (*ʔiyəšamməʕānni*), va l. 21 (*mədr*), vb ll. 2–3 (*kaʕərnāḥom*), vb l. 12 (*yəməʕaʔ*), vb l. 20 (*wa-mək^wərābani*).

10) The 1st order of *s* is used instead of the 4th order twice:

Fol. 1va l. 12: *sarara* (cp. CG *sārara*, *śārara*),
 Fol. 1va l. 17: *tasarara* (cp. CG *taśārara*, *tasārara*).
 No examples of the 4th order of *s* occur in the fragment.

11) The 1st order of *ḥ* is used instead of the 7th order in two cases:

Fol. 1ra ll. 18–19: *mariḥato* (cp. CG *mariḥoto*),
 Fol. 1vb l. 21: *ḥara* (cp. CG *ḥora*) (uncertain).
 One clear example of 7th order of *ḥ* has been attested (fol. 1vb l. 3, *kaḥḥarnaḥom*).

12) The 1st order of *k* is used instead of the 7th order in one (not quite certain) case:

Fol. 1ra l. 19: *ḥakkanu* (cp. CG *ḥakkonu*).
 The 7th order of *k* has been attested once (fol. 1va l. 24, *kona*).

13) The 1st order of *ʔ* is used instead of the 7th order twice:

Fol. 1va l. 4 and l.5: *ʔagziʔa* (cp. CG *ʔagziʔo*).
 No clear examples of the 7th order of *ʔ* have been attested in the fragment.

14) The 1st order of *ṣ* is used instead of the 4th order once:

Fol. 1vb, l. 12: *yəmṣaʔ* (cf. CG *yəmṣāʔ*) (cf. below on a possible explanation in terms of the orthography of “guttural rules”).
 No clear examples of the 4th order of *ṣ* have been attested in the fragment.

Orthography: other irregularities in the vocalization

15) The 6th order of *ʔ* is used instead of the 1st order twice:

Fol. 1rb l. 13, fol. 1rb l. 14: *ʔalbo* (cp. CG *ʔalbo*; cp. also the standard form *ʔalbo*, fol. 1ra l. 21).

16) The 4th order of *t* is used instead of the 1st order once:

Fol. 1va l. 7: *yəmutā* (cp. CG *yəmut*).

17) The 4th order of *r* is used instead of the 6th once:

Fol. 1ra ll. 2–3: *maḥarāyān* (cp. CG *maḥārāyān*).

18) The employment of the 6th order instead of the expected 1st order in three following cases can be explained as a deviation in the domain of syntax, that is, employment of nominative in a context where the accusative is required (cf. below):

Fol. 1ra ll. 2–3: *maḥarāyān* instead of *maḥārāyāna*,

Fol. 1rb l. 14: *ʔəkkuy* instead of *ʔəkkuya*,

Fol. 1rb l. 16: *śannāy* instead of *śannāya*.

19) The 6th order of *n* is used instead of the 1st order once:

Fol. 1ra l. 25: *ʕāyn* (*biṣəka*) (cp. CG *ʕayna biṣəka*; note the correct spelling *ʕāyna biṣəka* in fol. 1rb l. 12).

This may also be a deviation from the standard syntax (as the cases in the previous section), but no other deviations in the synthetic possessive construction are found in the fragment.

Orthography: application of guttural rules

1) As is well known, the 1st and the 4th orders of the “guttural grapheme” (*ʔ*, *ʕ*, *h*, *ħ*, *ḥ*) are not distinguished in the traditional pronunciation (due to the guttural rule [Hä] > [Ha], Rule No. 5 in Gragg 1997: 180–182). As Diem (1988: 252–254) has convincingly shown, using the evidence from the epigraphic corpus, the phonological rule was operative as early as the 6th cent. A.D. This date by several centuries precedes the creation of any (or almost any, if the controversy concerning the three Abbā Garimā Gospel manuscripts is taken into account) known manuscript. Therefore, it is not surprising that this rule is reflected in the orthography of the Dabra Māʕšo fragment. For each “guttural grapheme”, only one order is retained (either the 1st or the 4th) and consistently employed both for the historical *Ha* and *Hā* (with one exception only). This orthography is different from that of CG, where the historical *Ha* and *Hā* are usually distinct (cf. Correll 1984: 60, Diem 1988: 241, Gragg 1997: 180–182, Tropper 2002: 37).

In the Dabra Māʕšo fragment, *ʕā*, *hā* and *ḥā* are used both for the 1st or 4th order of *ʕ*, *h* and *ḥ* resp. (as in fol. 1ra, l. 9: *hābu* instead of *habu*, fol. 1ra, l. 25: *ʕāyn* instead of *ʕayn*, fol. 1va, l. 7: *ḥābeya* instead of *ḥabeya*, etc.).

The grapheme *h* is consistently employed in the 1st order throughout the fragment both for *ha* and *hā* of CG (as in fol. 1ra, ll. 2–3: *maḥarāyān* instead of *maḥārəyān*).

The same is valid for *ʔ*, with the only exception: in fol. 1rb, l. 23 it is spelled in the 4th order, as in CG: *yāwaššəʔā*. In this case, the historically long *ā* is the exponent of the 3 sg. f. object suffix. This special grammatical load probably accounts for the spelling with the 4th order. Yet, the same form is written with the 1st order in fol. 1va, l. 1: *yāwaššəʔa*.

2) The Dabra Māṣṣo fragment contains two forms where the 4th order is expected according to CG orthography (due to the rule *aHC > āHC*, rule No. 4 in Gragg 1997: 180–182) but, nevertheless, the 1st order is employed:

Fol. 1ra, l. 1: *laʔla* (cf. CG *lāʔla*),

fol. 1vb, l. 12: *yəmṣaʔ* (cf. CG *yəmṣāʔ*).

Yet, it remains uncertain whether we deal with morphologically-based spelling or with simple lack of vowel marker. The latter option appears more attractive. Both *l* and *ṣ* belong to the graphemes for which the 4th and 7th orders are distinguished, in the ancient manuscripts, through the typical way of extension of the grapheme's "legs" (cp. above). The phenomenon of insufficient distinction between the 1st, 4th and 7th orders of such graphemes is well-known in a few ancient Ethiopian manuscripts (cf. Zuurmond 1989: 303) and is also present in the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment (cf. examples 9–13 above).

In any case, there is no doubt that the phonological rule No. 4 was in work at the time of the creation of the manuscript. This rule is linked to the aforementioned phonological rule No. 5. In fact, both can be expressed as a single phonological rule: the middle vowel [ā] is lowered to [a] in a syllable containing a guttural (cp. Diem 1988: 240–241). Since the phonological rule No. 5 is reflected in the orthography of the manuscript, one cannot but conclude that the rule No. 4 was also operative.

3) The fragment contains two examples of the application of the rule *aHi/u/e/o/ə > əHi/u/e/o/ə*, rule No. 2 in Gragg 1997: 180–182: fol. 1rv, l. 3: *bəhiloto*, cp. CG *bəhiloto* < **bahiloto*; fol. 1va ll. 8–9: *ʔarəʔiyakkəmu*, cp. CG *ʔarəʔayakkəmu* < **ʔaraʔayakkəmu*). Yet, in one case the spelling is morphologically-based: fol. 1ra, l. 23: *waḥiz* (cp. CG *wəḥiz*).

4) There is only one context in the fragment where the rule *əHa/ā > aHa/ā* (rule No. 1 in Gragg 1997: 180–182) is expected to be in work. Yet, it is not reflected in the orthography of the fragment: fol. 1rb, l. 18 *waʔiyəʔarrəru* (cp. CG *wa-ʔiyaʔarrəru*). Some old manuscripts show the

same morphologically-based spelling, noted already by Dillmann (1907: 85–86);⁹¹ cf. a discussion in Bausi 2005: 159, with fn. 30.

Finally, the spelling *malaʕalta* (cp. CG *malʕalta*) in fol. 1va, l. 21 should be mentioned as a possible result of the influence of the guttural ʕ. In this lexeme, the vowel before the guttural is secondary: the pattern is *maC1C2əC3(t)*, cf. Tropper 2002: 63–64. It is legitimate to treat it as an epenthesis before a guttural (admittedly, such an epenthesis is only rarely observed in Gəʕəz).

Notably, the same spelling is attested in some other old manuscripts and in the epigraphic corpus of Gəʕəz:

RIÉ 189:31: *malaʕalta* (this is the only occurrence of the vocalized form in EG),

Mt 5:14; 27:37: *malaʕalta* (mss. 3, 4, 37, cf. Zuurmond 2001: 439; mss. 1, 2 (?), cf. Zuurmond 2001: 460; cf. also Zuurmond 2001: 426).

Morphology

The prepositions *diba* and *haba* appear in the fragment with the final *-e* (fol. 1va ll. 12, 17: *dibe*, fol. 1vb, ll. 15, 24: *hābe*). Sporadic preservation of final *-e* in some prepositions is a well-known feature of ancient manuscripts as well as of Epigraphic Gəʕəz (cf. Bausi 2005: 156, with fn. 21; 2011: 25, fn. 20).

Syntax

The text contains three examples of nominative employed instead of the expected accusative:

fol. 1ra, ll. 3–4: *wa-kunu maḥarāyān*,

fol. 1rb ll. 13–14: *za-yəfarri ʔəkkuy*,

fol. 1rb, l. 15–16: *za-yəfarri śannāy*,

fol. 1va l. 10, 20: *yəmassal bəʔəsi*.

This phenomenon is not unknown in the manuscript tradition (cf. Zuurmond 2001: 27, with n. 110) and is rather to be considered as text variance than as a peculiarity of earlier syntax.

91 Cf., e.g., Mt 6:25: *təʕaššəb* (cp. CG *taʕaššəb*), ms. 2, cp. Zuurmond 2001: 440; Mt 6:25: *yəʕāššəb* (cp. CG *yəʕaššəb*), mss. 1, 4, *yəʕaššəb*, ms. 2, cp. *ibid.* 440.

Conclusion

The text of the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment is characterized by a number of peculiarities, most of which belong to the domain of orthography. 64 deviations from the CG orthography have been counted in 324 words employed in the fragment (in 60 words [ca. 18,5%]). The most remarkable feature of the text is the extensive use of the 1st order which is employed contrary to the demands of the standard CG grammar. The frequency of this phenomenon varies with different graphemes: from *t*, never appearing in the 6th order, to *d* and *m*, for each the 1st order being only once attested in place of the 6th order. It should be stressed that it is difficult to be absolutely sure about the exact scale of the phenomenon. The relevant 6th (or 7th) order examples are missing or attested in a small number only; due to this reason there is some uncertainty about the 6th order of *k*, which might be graphically just very similar to the 1st order, the 7th order of *ʔ*, the 4th order of *s*, or even the 6th order of *t* for which no clear examples are attested in the fragment. However, in view of some secure cases, we assume that we deal with the graphic shapes of the 1st order unless no additional vowel marker could be clearly identified. At the moment one can assume that at least two reasons might be behind the vocalization irregularities described above:

1) Lack of (sufficient) graphic distinction between the 1st and the 6th orders of certain graphemes. This possibly concerns *k* and *t*,⁹² for which no 6th order is attested.

2) Intentional (?) employment of the 1st order instead of any other order.⁹³ In the Dabra Māṣṣo fragment this involves: a) use of the 1st order instead of the 6th order for *s* and *h*, *d*, *k*^w, possibly *m*; b) use of the 1st order instead of the 4th order for *s*, and (possibly) *l* and *ʔ*; c) use of the 1st order instead of the 7th order for *h*, *ʔ* and *k*;⁹⁴ d) use of the 1st order instead of the 5th order for *b*.

92 This phenomenon is well known in some early manuscripts. Zuurmond notes the absence of distinction between 1st and 6th orders of some graphemes in such manuscripts as Abbā Garimā II and III, cf. Zuurmond 1989: 303. Some further examples can be gleaned from the Text-critical appendix in Zuurmond 1989: 308–334.

93 Or (intentional) “non-employment” of other orders but the 1st one. The feature reminds of one of the meanings of the word *gəʕəz*, referring to the (ancient?) way of writing or reading (?) which employs only the 1st order (Tasammā Habta Mikāʔel 1951 A.M.: 1221b).

94 Frequent lack of distinction between the 1st, 4th and 6th orders of the graphemes collected under b) and c) is known from other old manuscripts (cf. Zuurmond 1989: 303). In the manuscripts referred to by Zuurmond, this lack of distinction is possibly explained in terms

It remains unclear whether the graphemes belonging to category 1 did not distinguish between the 1st and the 6th order, or whether vocal markers for the 6th order did exist in the manuscript but do not occur in the fragment.

As for the cases assigned to category 2, they can be treated as examples of the so-called “partial vocalization”. This is a phenomenon well-known from the epigraphic corpus, where certain inscriptions are characterized by absence of the markers of orders (that is, indiscriminate employment of the 1st order) in some signs which appear side by side with the correctly vocalized graphemes.⁹⁵

Sporadic use of the 1st order instead of any other has already been observed in a few old biblical manuscripts.⁹⁶ Thus it is not the phenomenon itself, but rather its comparatively high frequency – standing in the obvious relation to the age of the manuscript in question – which can be regarded as a specific feature of the Dabra Māššo fragment.

of visual similarities between the three orders. On the contrary, in the Dabra Māššo fragment, the 4th and 7th order of such letters can be clearly marked, even though the shape of the markers is archaic. If these markers are used, the distinction between the three orders is quite conspicuous.

95 This “partial vocalization” is a conspicuous feature of the following Gəšəz inscriptions: RIÉ 193 I, II, 222, 228, 229, 230, 231, 234, 250 (but cp. Ricci 2003: 69–71), 254, 255, 256, 257, 267, 378.

96 Thus, a cursory inspection of Zuurmond 2001 has yielded the following unambiguous cases of similar “lack of vocalization” from various manuscripts: Mt 26:22: *ṭakka* (cp. CG *ṭakka*) (ms. 2 in Zuurmond’s notation, cf. Zuurmond 2001: 458); Mt 25:35: *rəḥəbaku* (cp. CG *rəḥəbku*) (ms. 3, cf. *ibid.* 457); Mt 16:23: *ṣəkaftəya* (cp. CG *ṣəkaftəya*) (ms. 4, cf. *ibid.* 449); Mt 24:29: *kawākəbtəni* (cp. CG *kawākəbtəni*) (ms. 32, cf. *ibid.* 456); Mt 24:39: *mašʔatu* (cp. CG *mašʔatu*) (ms. 2, cf. *ibid.* 456); Mt 23:4: *ʔašfara* (cp. CG *ʔašfara*) (ms. 31, cf. *ibid.* 454); Mt 22:10: *fənaw* (cp. CG *fənaw*) (mss. 4, 12, cf. *ibid.* 454); Mt 27:31: *ʔəm-dəbehu* (cp. CG *ʔəm-dibehu*) (ms. 2, cf. *ibid.* 460). Obviously, in some cases it is hard to prove if we deal with a deliberate omission of an order marker or with a scribal error. The examples in the manuscripts quoted by Zuurmond appear to be less numerous than those in the Dabra Māššo fragment; from the editions, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the feature’s application and intensity.

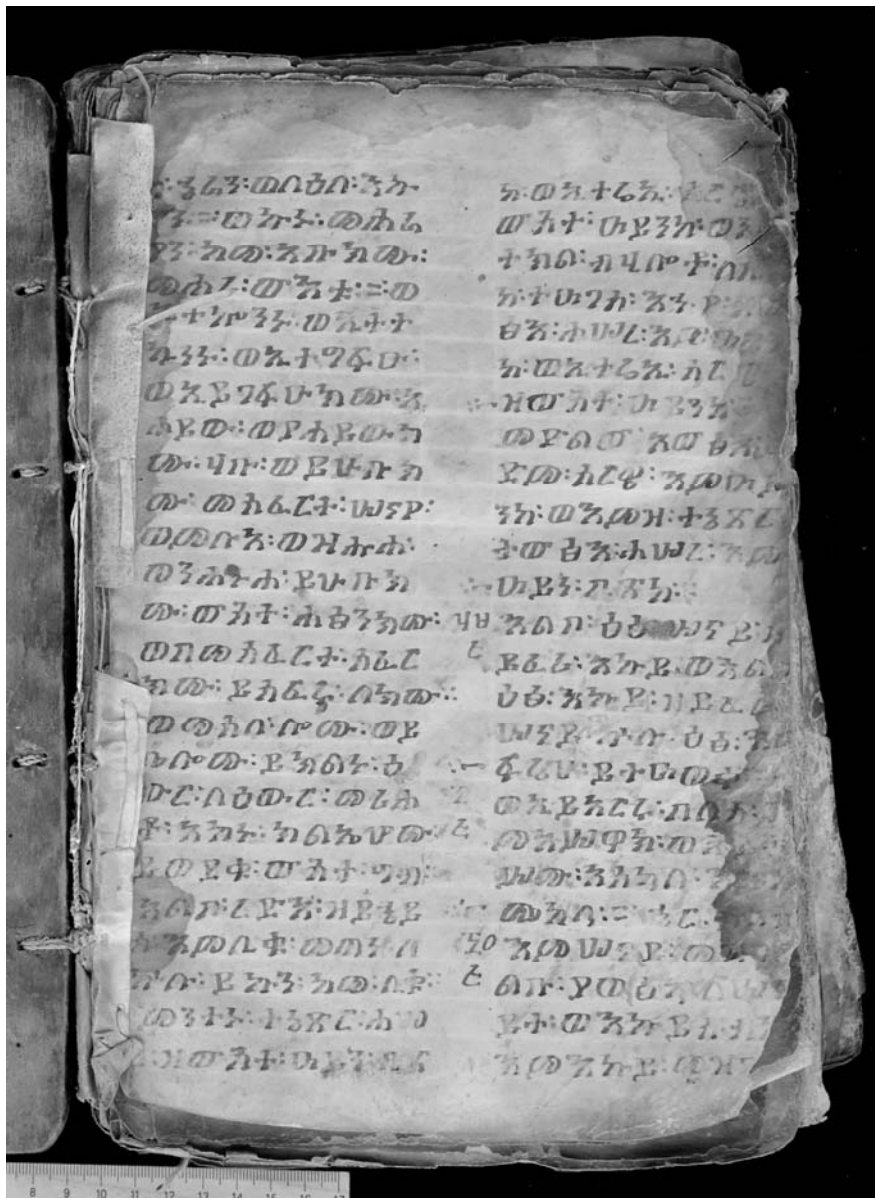


Fig 1. – MY-002, fol. 1r.

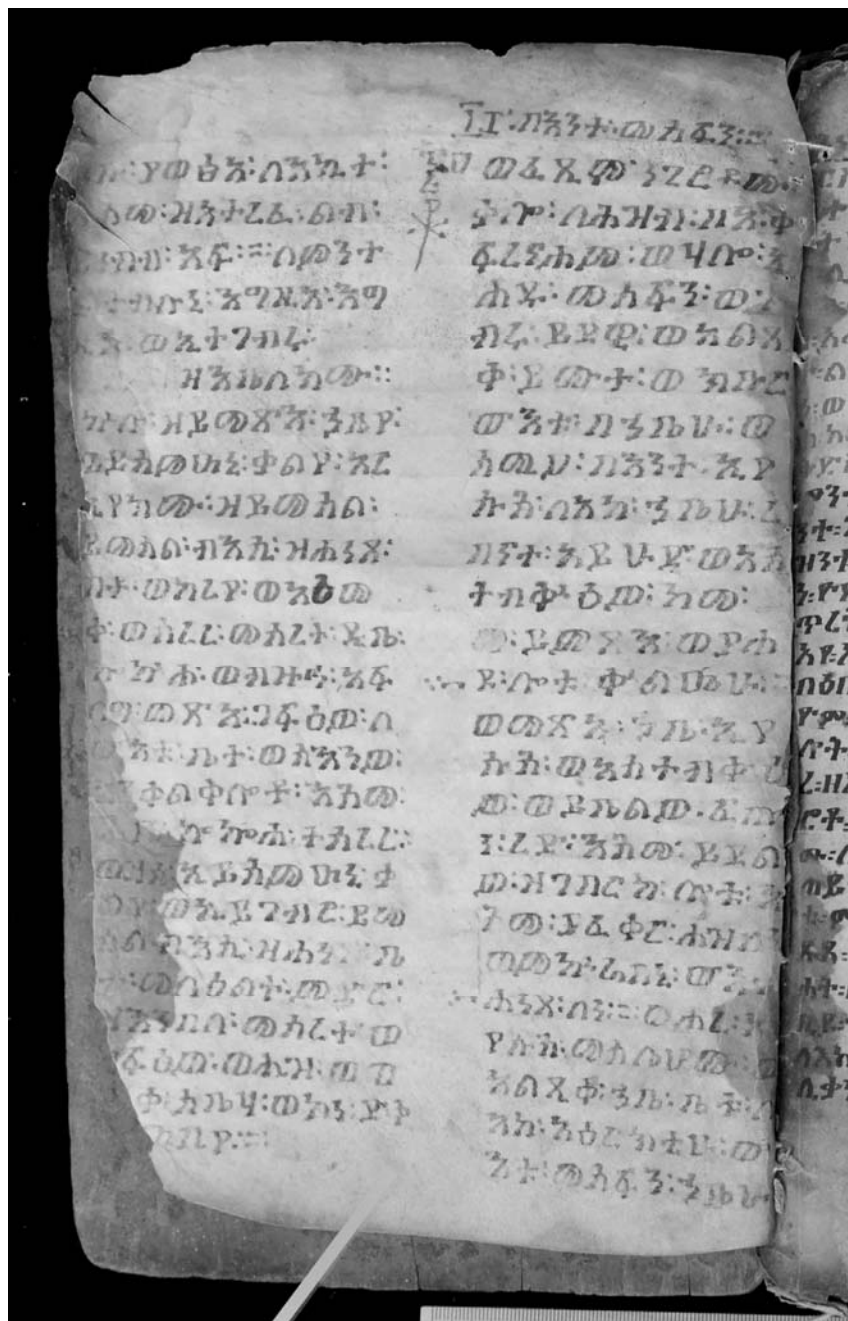


Fig. 2. – MY-002, fol. 1v.

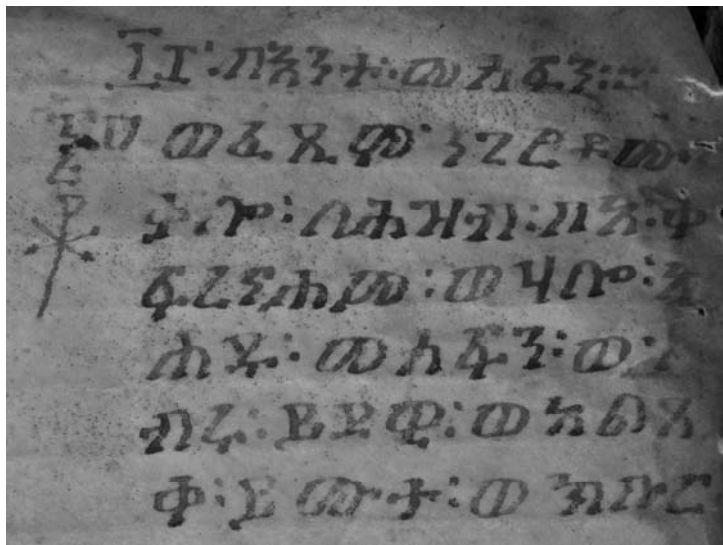


Fig. 3. – Fol. 1vb, ll. 1–6 (Lk 7: 1–2), “title” 18,
Chi-Ro sign and Canon table number.

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Denis Nosnitsin
Hamburg Universität
nosnitsin@yahoo.com

Maria Bulakh
Russian State University for the Humanities
mbulakh@mail.ru