

Hiob Ludolf Zentrum
für Äthiopistik



Ethiopian scribes and re-creation of ancient documents: Ṭanṭawədəm's land charter revisited

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1 March 2023

From Aksum to Lalibäla: The myth of the dark age of Eritrean and Ethiopian history (7th-13th cent.). A multidisciplinary approach

The Charter of Ṭanṭawədəm

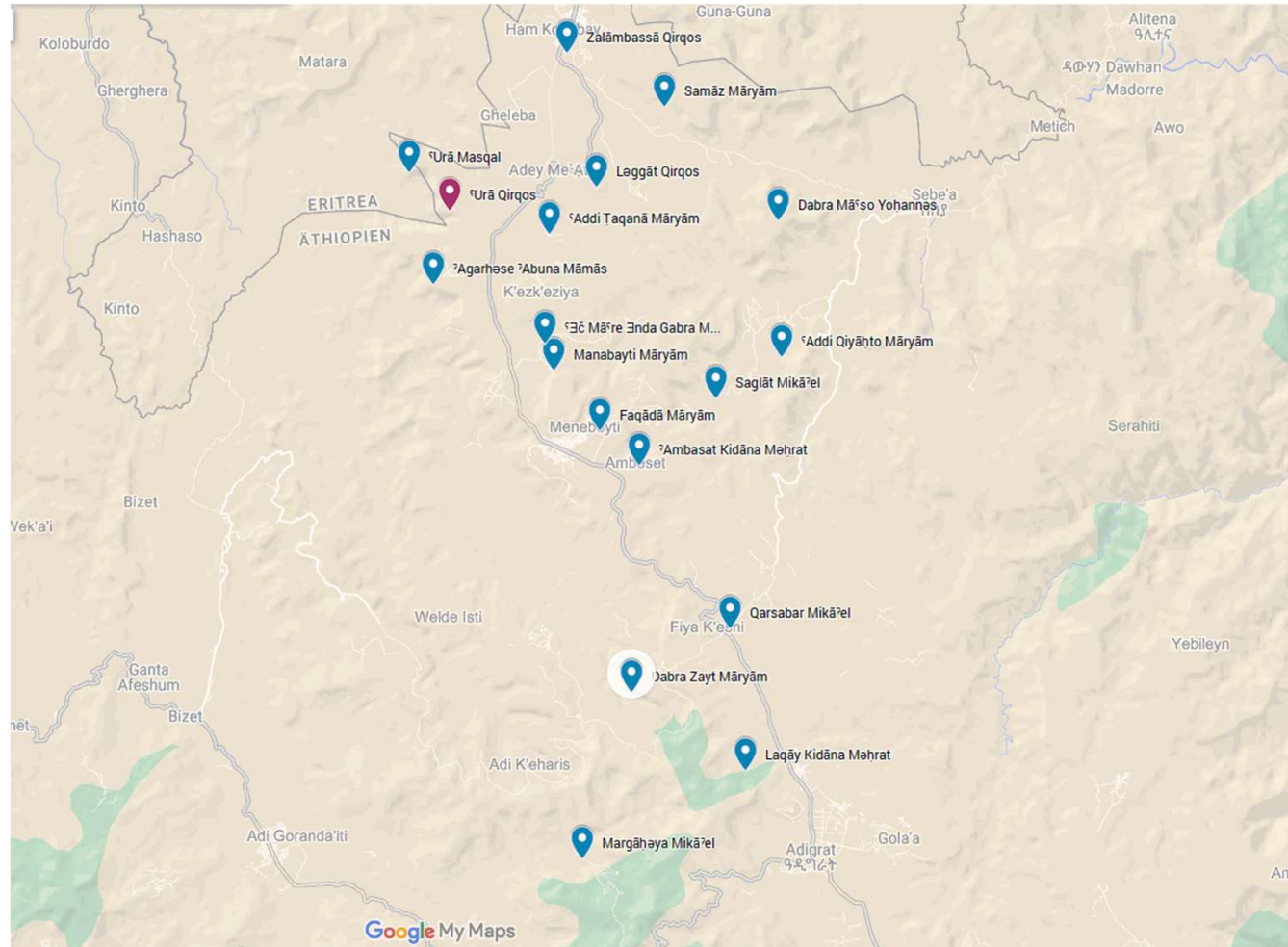
MS ^ᶜUrā Qirqos, UM-035/C₃-IV-83, 120 x 95 x 10 mm, 11 folia in 2 quires



Research questions:

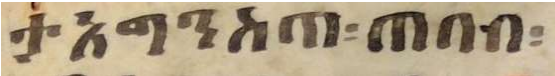
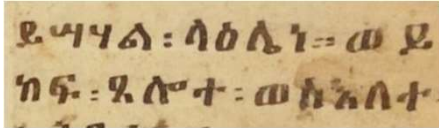
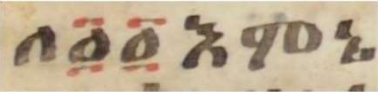
- 1) Who was the scribe of “The Charter” in MS UM-035?
- 2) What was the affiliation of the scribe?
- 3) When was the scribe active?
- 4) When exactly was MS UM-035 produced?

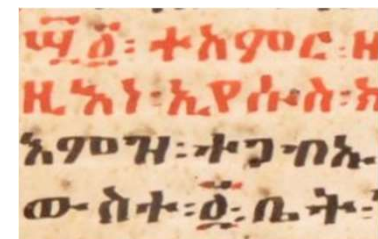
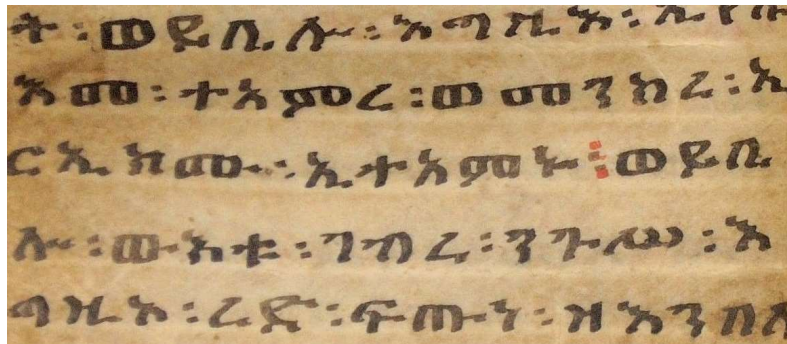
The material of the study



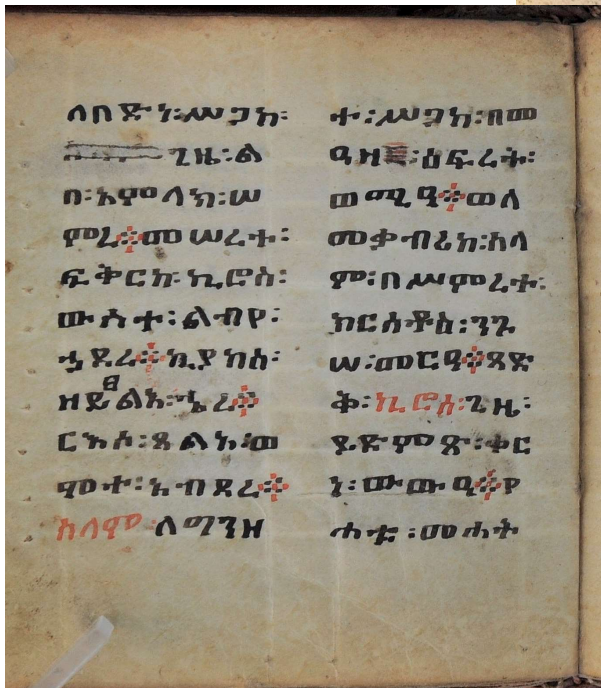
18
ecclesiastic
libraries;
223
manuscripts
taken into
account;
ca. 30
manuscripts
closely
studied.

The local 18th-century “broad style” of Gulo Maḳadā

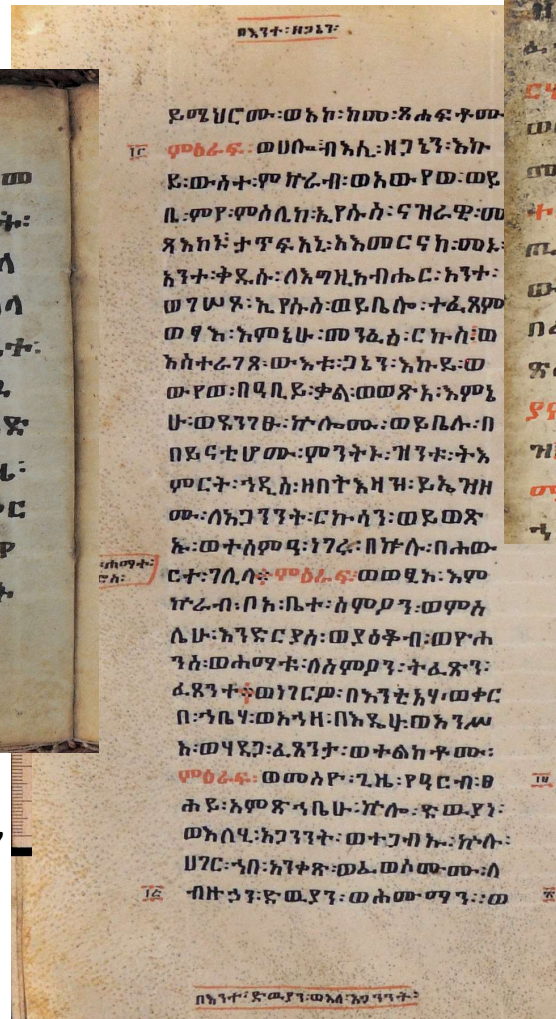
- vertical or slightly slanted downstrokes
- horizontal tops
- well spaced script
- mostly rounded shapes
- broad shapes of ω , h , σ , ω , t ; σ and ω “squeezed”
- some vowel markers exaggerated
- m has a flat top 
- λ has the right leg leant upon the left leg 
- the numeral $\bar{\delta}$ is closed the other way around 



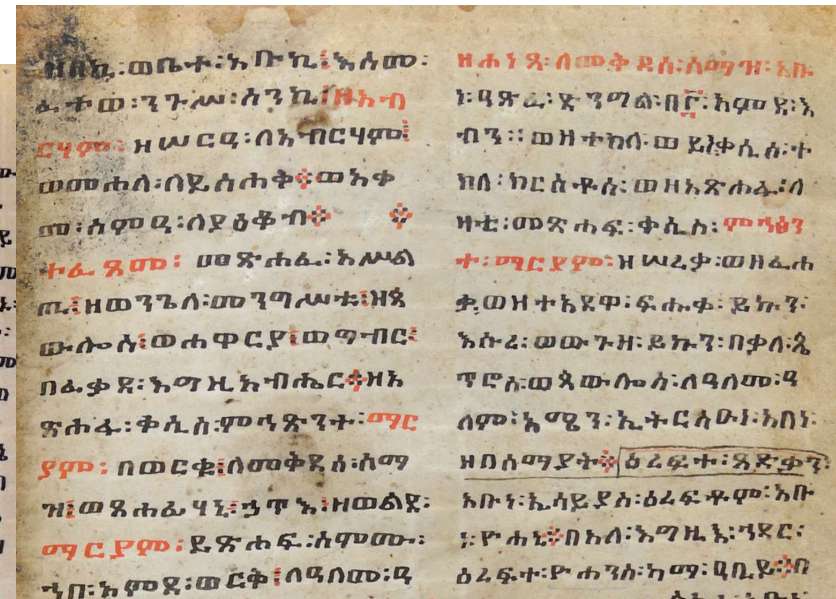
Scribe Zawalda Māryām 1 (around 1716-45): at least 12 witnesses



MS Laqāy Kidāna Məḥrat,
 MKL-016, Vita of Kiros
 and other texts,
 fols. 97v

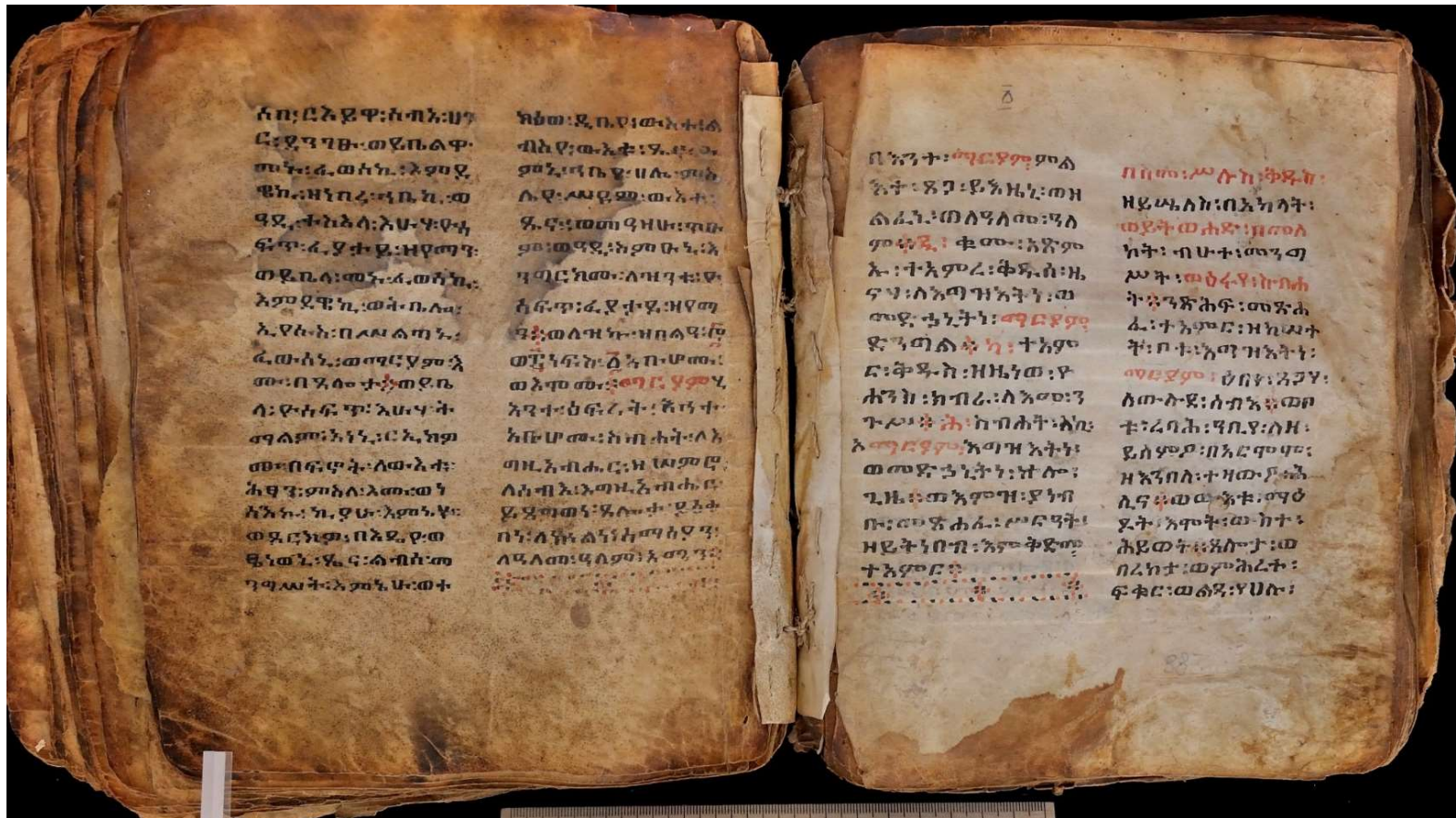


MS Samāz Māryām,
 SMM-003, Lectionary, fol. 72 r



MS Mədra Ruba Śəllāse,
 MR-022, Four Gospels, fol. 36va

MS 'Urā Qirqos UM-042: varieties of the local "broad style"?

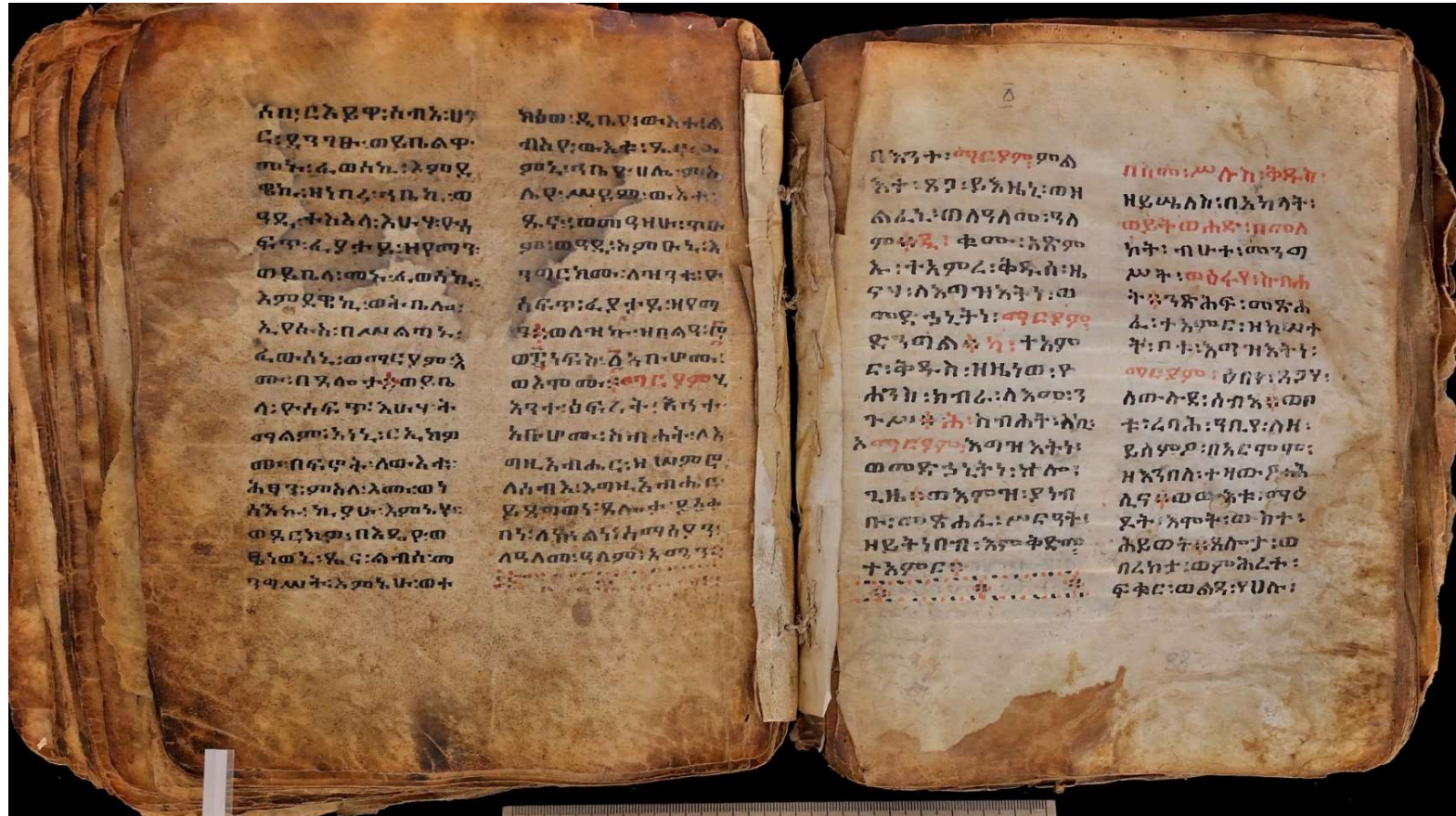


Fols. 37v-37r, hands of Məḥḍənta Māryām vs Zawalda Māryām 2 (unit I), second half of the 18th century (?)

MS UM-035, The Charter of Tanṭawədäm

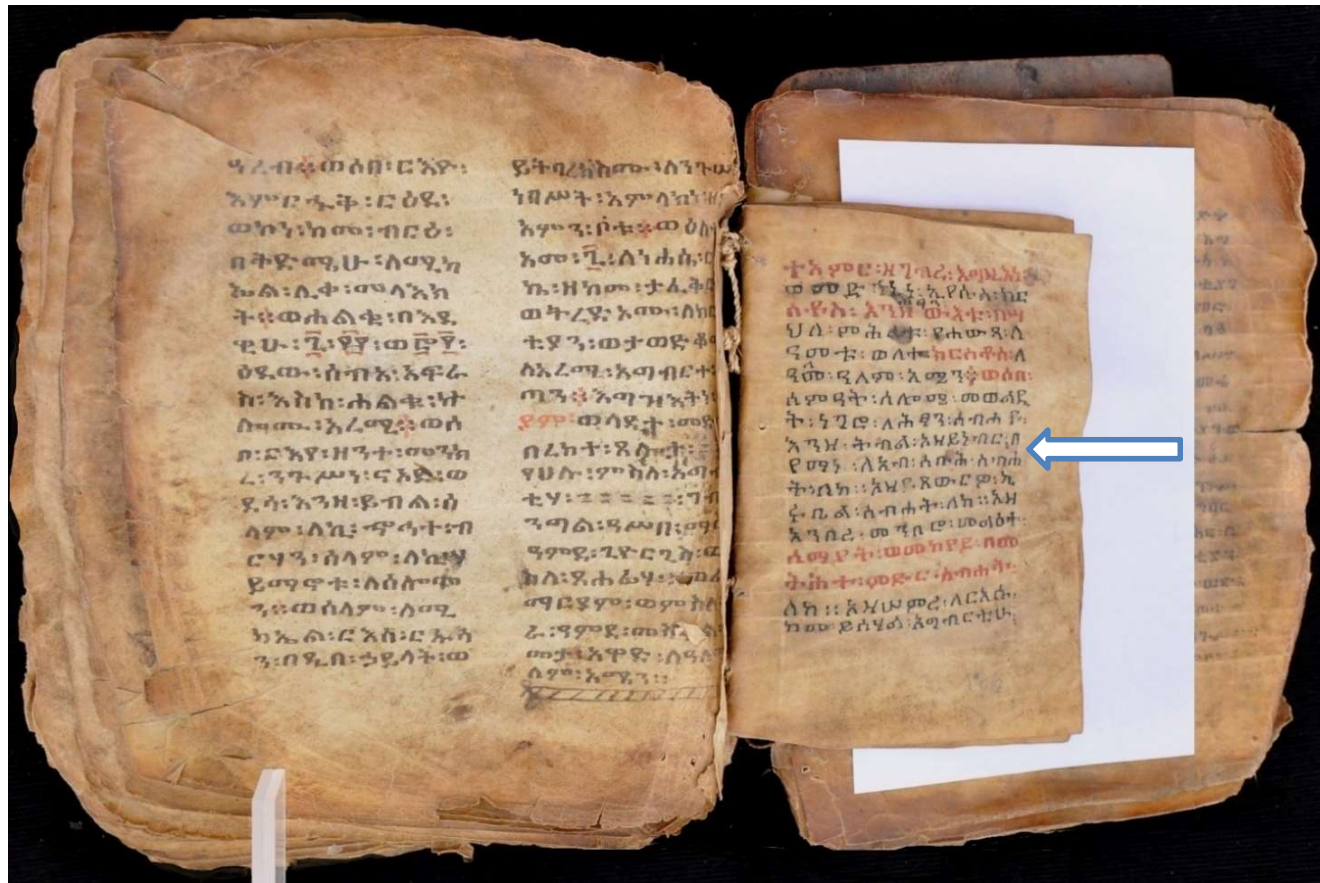


MS 'Urā Qirqos UM-042, unit I



Fols. 37v-37r, hands of Məḥḍənta Māryām vs Zawalda Māryām 2 (unit I), second half of the 18th century (?)

MS 'Urā Qirqos UM-042, unit II: a clue to the identity of the scribe of the Charter



Fols. 125v-
126r,
end of unit I,
beginning of
unit 2.

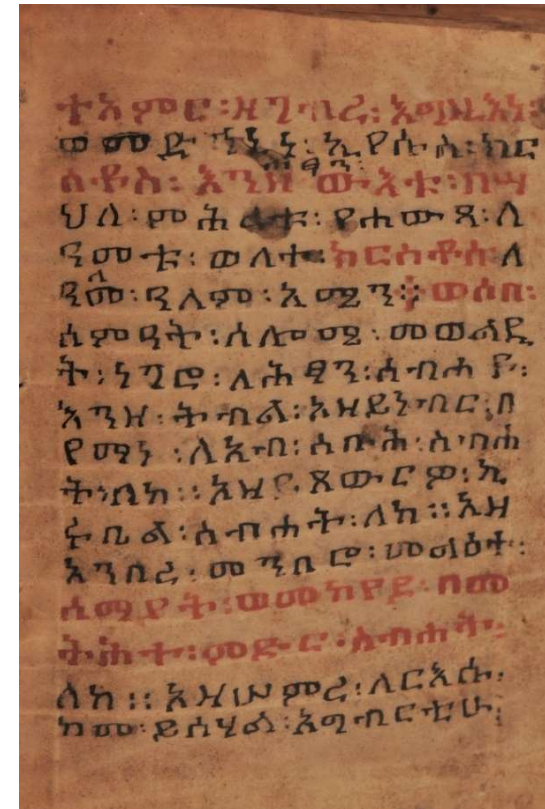
Hands of
Zawalda
Māryām 2
(left),

and Walda
Tənśā'e,
(right).

MS 'Urā Qirqos UM-042 (unit II): a clue to the identity of the scribe of the Charter

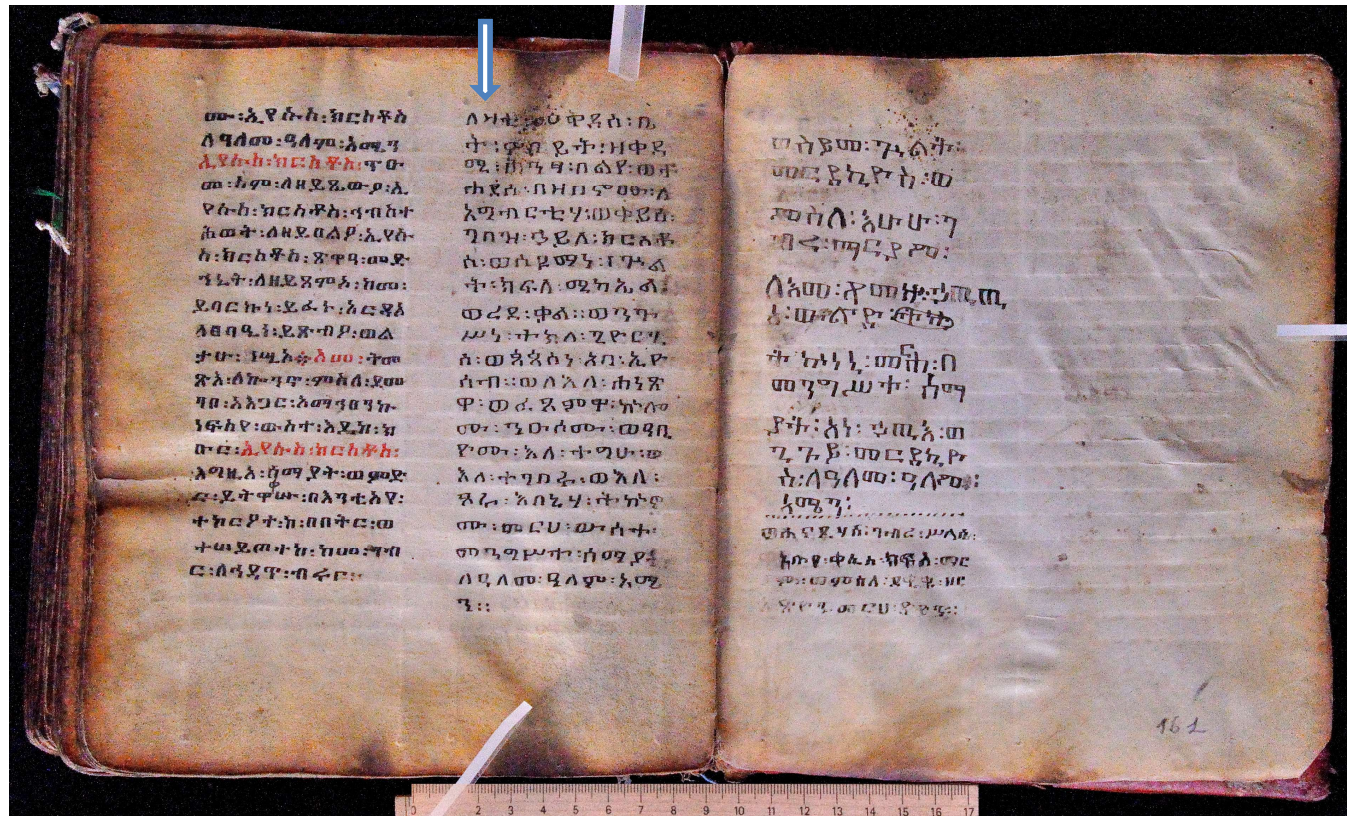


MS UM-035, fols. 1v-2r



MS UM-042, fol. 126r (unit II)

MS Manabayti Māryām, MSM-001, Miracles of Jesus, 18th century



Fols. 160v-161r, explicit, additional notes

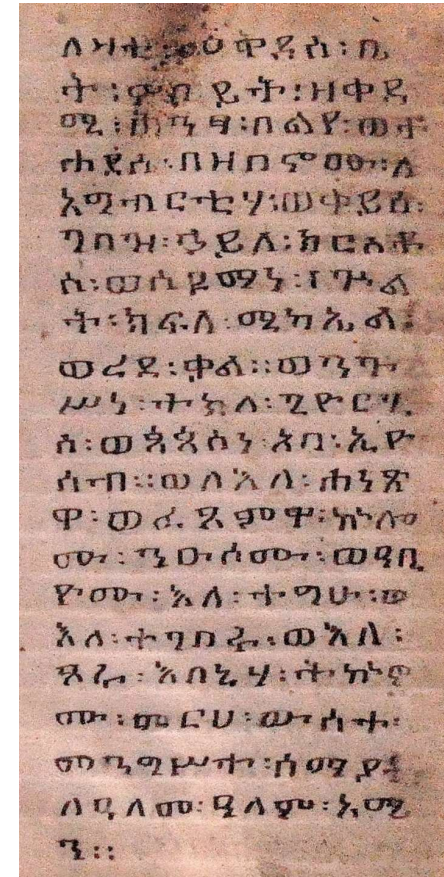
The writer of the Charter: Walda Tənśā'e of Manabayti Māryām?



MS UM-035, fol. 1r



MS UM-042, fol. 126r
(unit II)



MS Manabayti Māryām, MSM-001,
 Miracles of Jesus, fol. 106v, a
 note referring to 1779-1800

Walda Tənsāʿe: a summary

- Wrote “The Charter of ȚanȚawədəm”, UM-35
- Active in the second half of the 18th/early 19th century
- (at least 1779-1800)
- Senior local ecclesiastic or church scholar, “half-professional” scribe
- Affiliated to the church of Manabayti Dabra Şəyon Māryām
- Associated with the senior priest Kəfla Māryām of ʿUrā Qirqos
- “The Charter of ȚanȚawədəm” in UM-35 written at ʿUrā Qirqos or Manabayti Māryām



Many thanks!

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