The Damascus Fragments

Towards a History of the Qubbat al-khazna Corpus of Manuscripts and Documents

Edited by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach
Konrad Hirschler
Ronny Vollandt



Orient-Institut Beirut

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Workmen in front of the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus, 1902 (reprint of 1898 photograph?). (İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, 90580/18, Yıldız Sarayı Fotoğraf Koleksiyonu (photographer unknown). © İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi.)

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Introduction

Ronny Vollandt (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) /
Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin) /
Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (Sapienza University of Rome)

The principal aim of this volume is as simple as it is ambitious: to take a first step in placing a large set of (often fragmentary) documents and manuscripts on the map of Middle Eastern history as a *corpus*. So far, these texts have played a very minor role in Middle Eastern history and if they have been noticed at all this was generally done within specific subfields such as biblical studies, Armenian studies, or Jewish studies, and there has hardly ever been a vision of these artefacts as one corpus with a shared history. Until the early twentieth century, this corpus was housed in a dome in the courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. This "Qubbat al-khazna" (the name is far from straightforward, as will be shown in this volume) and its contents became known to scholarship from the late nineteenth century, having been "discovered" at around the same time as its famous sibling, the Geniza of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo. Both the Qubba and the Geniza served as depositories of worn-out books and disused documents, although with over 200,000 items, the Qubba material is less extensive than the material from Cairo, currently counted at 350,000 items (though counting such "items" is never an exact science). Despite their similarities, there is one major difference that sets these two depositories apart, and this is also the main rationale for this volume: while the scholarly discovery of the Geniza has gradually generated a fully fledged field of research over the course of the last century, the Qubba has so far remained marginal in the field of Middle Eastern history. That such a massive set of manuscripts and documents has remained so marginal has a variety of causes that will be touched upon in the following pages, though it includes in particular the difficulty of accessing Qubba manuscripts and documents.

As the cumulative bibliography at the end of this volume shows, this is not in any way the first publication to deal with manuscripts and documents from the Qubba. There were publications from the German pioneers of the early twentieth century, especially Hermann von Soden and Bruno Violet; there has been a sustained interest among French colleagues from the 1960s onwards, especially from Dominique Sourdel, Janine Sourdel-Thomine, Jean-Michel Mouton, and François Déroche; and there have been other contributions from numerous individual scholars over the course of the twentieth century, such as Kurt Treu in Germany, P.A.H. de Boer in the Netherlands, and Levon Khachikyan and Artashes Matevosyan in Soviet Armenia, as well as Malak Hanānū in Syria itself. Yet, the provenance of the individual pieces has often remained secondary in these publications: the wider context of these manuscripts and documents as belonging to a distinct Qubba corpus

was rarely at the heart of scholarly interest. In consequence, the history of this building, the history of this corpus, and the history of those who deposited the manuscripts and documents in it has remained blurred at best. Thus, while many Qubba manuscripts and documents have been published over the last hundred years, they have entered their respective fields as rather decontextualised objects.

This state of affairs also goes back to another difference between the Qubba and the Geniza. While the Geniza mostly contained written artefacts emanating from and circulating within the Jewish community,[1] the Qubba not only stored artefacts produced within the Muslim community, but its corpus indicates that it was more than the storehouse of a single community – thus mirroring a "multilingual and multicultural society".[2] As we will discuss below, the particular nature of its discovery made Qubba fragments in scripts other than Arabic much more accessible over the

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1 The Geniza also preserved many texts of a Christian provenance as the lower layer of palimpsests; see Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, "Christian Palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah", *Revue de l'histoire des textes* 8 (1978), 109–132. For Greek fragments, see also F. Crawford Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings According to the Translation of Aquila*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1897; Charles Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah Palimpsests from the Taylor-Schechter Collection: Including a Fragment of the Twenty-Second Psalm According to Origen's Hexapla*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1900; and Natalie Tchernetska, "Greek-Oriental Palimpsests in Cambridge: Problems and Prospects", in: *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, Catherine Holmes and Judith Waring, eds., Leiden: Brill 2002, 243–256. For Christian Palestinian Aramaic fragments, see Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson, *Palestinian Syriac Texts: From Palimpsest Fragments in the Taylor-Schechter Collection*, London: C.J. Clay 1900; updated lists may be found in Christa Müller-Kessler, *Grammatik des Christlich-Palästinisch-Aramäischen*, Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik 6, Hildesheim: Olms 1991. Geniza fragments in Syriac were discussed by William F. Macomber, "An Interesting Fragment of an East Syrian Festal Hymnary of the 14th (?) Century", *Oriens Christianus* 57 (1973), 72–78; Sebastian P. Brock, "East Syrian Liturgical Fragments from the Cairo Genizah", *Oriens Christianus* 68 (1983), 58–79; Sebastian P. Brock, "Some Further East Syrian Liturgical Fragments from the Cairo Genizah", *Oriens Christianus* 74 (1990), 44–61; and Friedrich Niessen, "New Testament Translations from the Cairo Genizah", *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 6 (2009), 201–221. On a Latin–Hebrew palimpsest, see Ben Outhwaite, "St Augustine in the Genizah", Fragment of the Month (blog), May 2007, Cambridge University Library, https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fragment-month-11-5. Compare also Krisztina Szilágyi, "Christian Books in Jewish Libraries: Fragments of Christian Arabic Writings from the Cairo Genizah", *Ginzei Qedem* 2 (2006), 107*–162*; and Ronny Vollandt, "Biblical Translations into Christian Arabic Preserved in the Cairo Genizah Collections", Biblia Arabica (blog), n.d., https://biblia-arabica.com/biblical-translations-into-christian-arabic-preserved-in-the-cairo-genizah-collections/. As for Muslim fragments, see Geoffrey Khan, "The Arabic Fragments in the Cambridge Genizah Collections", *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 1 (1986), 54–60; Nadia Vidro and Almog Kasher, "How Medieval Jews Studied Classical Arabic Grammar: A Kūfan Primer from the Cairo Genizah", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 41 (2014), 173–244; and Marina Rustow, *The Lost Archive: Traces of a Caliphate in a Cairo Synagogue*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2020.

2 Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63–88.

twentieth century. This, in turn, meant that many texts of the Qubba corpus entered various disciplines in the twentieth century (such as Armenian studies, Jewish studies, Syriac studies, and biblical studies). Yet, in these disciplines the number of publications based on Qubba artefacts was never large enough to engender a sustained interest in them as belonging to a distinct historical corpus.

In response to this fragmentation of "Qubba studies" (a field that has not yet emerged), the editors of this volume organised a conference in Berlin in 2018. The aim of this conference was precisely to encourage conversations across disciplines in order to study the individual artefacts as part of a corpus that has its own history and its own identity, and the conference brought together two sets of scholars. First, there were colleagues from various fields who have studied manuscripts and documents from the Qubba. As a first step, it was decided to focus in particular on the non-Muslim manuscripts and documents from the Qubba corpus; this volume thus has a very distinct focus on artefacts in languages other than Arabic, but this obviously does not reflect the shape of the corpus itself, in which Arabic is by far the most important language. As the aim of this conference was to see the manuscripts and documents as part of a historical corpus, a second group of speakers was also invited, to speak about their research on the Qubba as a historical subject by itself, looking at questions such as the function of the Qubba, its history in the pre-Ottoman and Ottoman periods, and its scholarly "discovery" in the nineteenth century. The organisation of this volume, discussed in more detail below, reflects the aim of studying the manuscripts and documents from the Qubba as more than decontextualised fragments, rather moving towards a history of the Qubbat al-khazna corpus: while the first part discusses the history of the Qubbat al-khazna, the second part discusses subcorpora along linguistic lines (Syriac, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Old French, etc.).

Encouraging a cross-disciplinary conversation against the background of the history of the corpus has led to many fascinating results, as the following pages demonstrate. Here, we want to briefly highlight only one issue that the contributions to this volume bring out clearly, namely that the Qubba is only a single stage in the highly complex life cycles that many of these artefacts had undergone before they ended up in this depository. We are still far from understanding why people decided to deposit written artefacts in the Qubba and why it has such a rich multilingual and multiscriptural profile. Yet, numerous contributions suggest possibilities about the pre-Qubba stage(s) in the life cycle of individual subcorpora, such as that the Jewish manuscripts and documents might be remnants of a synagogue geniza (see the contribution by Gideon Bohak) or that the Syriac fragments come from two Damascene/Palestinian churches or monasteries, one East Syriac and one Melkite (Grigory Kessel). The remainder of this introduction will take up several key issues that cut across the individual contributions and that we hope will contribute to the next steps in ensuring that the Qubba finally gets the place in scholarship that it has long deserved.

A very short history of the Qubbat al-khazna

The contributions in this volume repeatedly touch upon how the Qubbat al-khazna was "academically" discovered. This short section will provide a very rough overview for reference while reading individual chapters.

The Qubba is an octagonal structure, on eight Roman columns, which is located in the courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. There, in a medium-sized chamber with a diameter of approximately six and a half metres, protected from harm by a heavily locked iron door, and only reachable with the help of a ladder, a pile of manuscripts and documents – as high as one man standing upright – had found its final rest.

The classical date for Qubba studies is the year 1898 when the scholar Hermann Freiherr von Soden and the German Emperor Wilhelm II visited Damascus and identified the Qubba and especially its non-Muslim manuscripts as a site of scholarly interest. As contributions to this volume show, there had already been a long-standing previous European interest in the Qubba and its holdings, but this interest was less visible and did not lead to a large-scale removal of fragments from the Qubba. In 1900 the Ottoman authorities gave permission for the German scholar Bruno Violet to work on the non-Muslim holdings of the Qubba *in situ*. He stayed in Damascus until the summer of 1901, after which German authorities started to petition the Ottoman authorities for a loan of the non-Muslim manuscripts. In 1902 over 1500 fragments were indeed sent to Berlin, where they remained until 1909 when Berlin finally handed them back to Istanbul. As the contributions to this volume show, these manuscripts were subsequently returned to Damascus where many (or all?) of them can still be found. The Muslim manuscripts, in contrast, were moved in 1917 from Damascus to Istanbul, where today they are held in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum. These latter manuscripts constitute by far the largest part of the Qubba material, numbering well above 200,000 items.

Access to the Qubba material has been very difficult over the last century, and this volume focuses on those manuscripts that have had the most visibility, the non-Muslim items. This visibility is the result of different sets of photographs that were taken of these items between 1901 and 1909. There are three main sets of photographs known: (1) the photographs of manuscript fragments taken in Damascus by Bruno Violet in 1901 (214 photographs); (2) those taken in Istanbul by Ali Sami Bey prior to the departure of the material to Berlin in 1902 (3116 photographs); and (3) those taken in Berlin in 1909 (147 photographs). Sets 1 and 3 are now available (on the websites of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities[3] and of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin[4]) and many of the contri-

[3] BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481; https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

[4] MSS simulata orientalia 5 (94 photographs) and MSS simulata orientalia 6 (53 photographs); https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/. Please note that some contributors to this

butions to this volume are based on photographs from these sets. In contrast, the whereabouts of set 2 have not so far been identified.

The narrative of the modern history of the discovery of the Qubba is heavily focused on European actors and this is how the story of the Qubba has often been largely framed. However, there is no doubt that this narrative has two main gaps that this volume sets out to address to some extent at least, but that will need to be elaborated much more clearly in future scholarship. Firstly, the "academic" discovery took place within and was part of the European colonial expansion in the Middle East. This connection between the "discovery" of the Qubba and the wider colonial ambitions of the German Reich in the region is a topic that has not yet been addressed, but to give but one example: the mindset of administrators in the Foreign Office in Berlin during the loan of the non-Muslim items (and especially attempts to reframe this loan as a gift) are a striking example of how the removal of cultural artefacts was seen as an almost natural entitlement. The second major gap in scholarship is linked to the fact that the Qubba was evidently not a building that awaited European discovery, but that was quite a conspicuous part of the topography of the Umayyad Mosque. This building and its contents were certainly not cut off from the surrounding society and the bookish worlds of Damascus, of Bilād al-Shām, and of the wider Middle East. We thus urgently need to capture the role that this building and its contents played for local societies, and much more importantly we need to write the agency of individuals and groups within Damascus and within the wider Middle East into the narratives of the Qubba and its "discovery".

Placing the Qubba in the wider Middle Eastern context
(Ronny Vollandt)

The term *qubbat al-khazna* (literally, "storage dome") started to prevail only in the nineteenth century, mostly among Western scholars, at the same time as postcards designated the building as a library. As its original designation *qubbat al-māl* (i.e. the "treasury dome") implies, the building was used primarily as a repository for the funds of the mosque, together with *waqf* documents and precious endowed books. The travelogues of Ibn al-Jubayr (540/1145–614/1217) and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (b. 703/1304, d. 770/1368–9 or 779/1377) attest to this usage, as does Ibn Kathīr in the seventh/fourteenth century.[5] Much of its content, described below, reflects this practice. We find *waqf*-related documents, contracts of land sale, and marriage contracts, as well as valuable Koran codices. It appears that the practice that underlies the storage of documents in the Qubba was at least to some extent an ar-

volume refer to the folio number within SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, while others use the photograph number.

5 See Said Aljoumani's and Boris Liebrenz's contributions to this volume.

chival one and attempted to preserve crucial written artefacts. Furthermore, it seems that the Qubba was not the only place used for this purpose. In the eighteenth century, Ibn Kinān reports on similar, but much smaller, compartments above the pillars of the mosque where *waqf* documents were stored.[6] Whether this decentralised archival practice, in the Qubba and elsewhere, allowed for later retrieval, for example when resorting to litigation with a *qāḍī*, cannot be said with any certainty at present.[7]

Possibly as a secondary function, documents which no longer had any legal agency and sacred books which were too frail to remain in circulation or which had fallen out of use were also stored in the Qubba. It is not difficult to imagine how this secondary function emerged from the primary function with the passing of time and thus, almost accidently, enabled the partial survival of the Qubba's contents. The "storing away" appears to have resulted from an esteem for, a special care for, or a fear of desecration of the written word. This practice was shared by Muslims, Jews, and Christians.[8] There is evidence from European scholars and travellers that the Qubba was used for this purpose in the nineteenth century.[9] Whether this was also one of its functions in earlier periods remains unclear, however the large number of fragments from the pre-Ottoman period would suggest this was the case. It seems that the disintegrated books disposed of in this manner did not remain sealed off within the Qubba, as we observe both inward and outward traffic. In particular, fragments found their way back to the market, either as lesser quality writing material or as book bindings.[10]

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6 The source is provided by Joseph Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices in Islamic and Jewish Traditions", *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 43 (1986), 42.

7 For a survey of archival practices in the Near East and the scholarly debates surrounding them, the reader is referred to Jürgen Paul, "Archival Practices in the Muslim World prior to 1500", in *Manuscripts and Archives: Comparative Views on Record-Keeping*, Sabine Kienitz, Michael Friedrich, Christian Brockmann, and Alessandro Bausi, eds., Berlin: De Gruyter 2018, 339–360; and Konrad Hirschler, "From Archive to Archival Practices: Rethinking the Preservation of Mamluk Administrative Documents", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 136 (2016), 1–28. See also Rustow, *Lost Archive*.

8 Compare Joseph Sadan, "Storage and Treatment of Used Sacred Books (Genizah) in the Muslim Tradition and Jewish Parallels" [in Hebrew], *Kiryat Sefer* 55 (1980), 398–410; Joseph Sadan, "Ritual Purity, Impurity and the Disposal of Books in Islam and Judaism" [in Hebrew], *Peʿamim* 70 (1997), 4–20; Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices"; and also Mark R. Cohen, "Geniza for Islamicists, Islamic Geniza, and the 'New Cairo Geniza'", *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 7 (2006), 129–145.

9 See the contribution by Boris Liebrenz in this volume.

10 See Konrad Hirschler's contribution in this volume. The practice of reusing folios as book bindings has been described by Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 51 n. 23; and Kurt Treu, *Majuskelbruchstücke der Septuaginta aus Damaskus*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1966, 215. The so-called Violet fragment is probably a particularly telling example of this practice; see Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment", in: Ahmad Al-Jallad,

What we encounter in the Qubba is thus a repository with a dual function of storing texts, first as an archive and living library for the retrieval in an orderly manner of documents and books and, secondary to this, as a place of continued preservation after the disposal of dead letters. This secondary practice solicited comparisons to the Cairo Geniza, in particular among scholars who worked on the non-Muslim texts. Not many years before Bruno Violet arrived in Damascus to examine the contents of the Qubba, the great treasures of the Ben Ezra Synagogue had been discovered and commodified by a variety of manuscript hunters, so he deemed it appropriate to use the term "geniza" for the Qubba in the Umayyad Mosque.[11] As is well known, Jewish religious law prescribes the specific removal of worn-out books and documents from circulation if they contain divine names, prior to their burial in a cemetery: in the words of Solomon Schechter, consigning dead-letter books to a geniza "means much the same thing as burial for men". The practice is described by the Hebrew root *g-n-z*, literally "to hide" or "to remove", and it was often extended to texts in Hebrew script in general. Some rabbinic injunctions also suggest the burning of these books to protect them from casual destruction and profanation.[12] Jewish geniza practices vary geographically,

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The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī, Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110. Cases of reuse have also been described for Muslim fragments; see François Déroche, "In the Beginning: Early Qurʾans from Damascus", in: *The Art of the Qurʾan: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 72 n. 37.

11 Bruno Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment aus Damaskus", *Orientalistische Literatur-Zeitung* 4, nos. 10–12 (1901), 384–403, 426–441, 475–488 (col. 384): "Damascener Moschee-Genisah". On the discovery of the Cairo Genizah, see Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, "A Genizah Secret: The Count d'Hulst and Letters Revealing the Race to Recover the Lost Leaves of the Original Ecclesiasticus", *Journal of the History of Collections* 21, no. 1 (2009), 125–142; Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, "The Cairo Genizah Unearthed: The Excavations Conducted by the Count d'Hulst on Behalf of the Bodleian Library and Their Significance for Genizah History", in: *"From a Sacred Source": Genizah Studies in Honour of Professor Stefan C. Reif*, Ben Outhwaite and Siam Bhayro, eds., Leiden: Brill 2010, 171–200; Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, "Deconstructing 'the Cairo Genizah': A Fresh Look at Genizah Manuscript Discoveries in Cairo before 1897", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 108, no. 4 (2018), 422–448; and Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, "'What Cannot Often be Obtainable': The Revd Greville John Chester and the Bodleian Genizah Collection", *Journal of the History of Collections* 31, no. 2 (2019), 271–289.

12 There is no comprehensive treatment on the pious practice of discarding written objects in rabbinic literature. However, the rabbinic texts describe a Jewish scribal culture that is distinct from that which we encounter in the fragments in the Cairo Geniza. Although it is clear that Late Antique rabbis did concerned themselves with the practice, the sources appear to primarily address two types of written texts – documents and Torah scrolls – as well as tefillin (the parchment inside phylacteries) and mezuzot (the parchment inside doorposts), which include biblical passages. This conforms closely to what we know about rabbinic scribality: rabbinic texts, with the exception of the above-mentioned categories, emerged orally. The earliest evidence of a written Talmud dates only to the ninth century, although the ideological prohibition against writing down the oral Torah had been broken as early as the Amoraic period (*c.*200–500 CE), as recent scholarship has demonstrated. It has been suggested that, even though parts of the rabbinic literature were committed to

as well in terms of how long the results of such practices have survived.[13] The Cairo Geniza stands out for a number of reasons. First, no other geniza has been found in the rest of the Islamicate world.[14] Although one may assume that other cities such as Baghdad, Qayrawān, or Toledo – all important centres of Jewish intellectual history in the Near East – probably witnessed similar practices, nothing has in fact survived outside the favoured conditions in Egypt. Second, the Cairo Geniza did not serve as an interim storage place before burial, but as some form of continued preservation. This not only sets the Cairo Geniza apart from later, mostly Western, practices of geniza, where books and Torah scrolls were eventually buried, but also moves it typologically much closer to the other repositories discussed in this section.

Islamic law, in contrast to Jewish law, stipulates a variety of practices for disposing of the Koran or texts that mention the divine names, Muhammad, or the names of angels.[15] Among these are burying, burning, washing (*ghasl*), or scraping out (*ḥakk*), but also storing away (*ḥubus*). As Sadan noted, the Qubba seems to correspond to the latter practice, as do other finds of Islamic manuscripts. The most important of these other finds may be a collection of early Koranic manuscripts, dating to as early as the first/seventh century, in the Ḥijāzī and Abbasid scripts, that was discovered in a storage space between the ceiling and the roof of the Great Mosque of Ṣanʿāʾ in 1972.[16] As a third example, Sadan mentions the

writing at an early date, texts were still transmitted orally in the geonic period (traditionally dated 589–1038 CE). The world of the Cairo Geniza reveals a scribal culture in which written texts had become the norm of transmission, corresponding to a greater book production and hence an increased need of disposal that is altogether different from the rabbinic period. Valuable sources, while not comprehensive, are Sadan, "Storage and Treatment"; Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices", and Sadan, "Ritual Purity".

13 Note that the use of the term *geniza* in research literature has become convoluted in recent years. In particular, a number of projects use it in referring to practices of reuse, such as for example the use of earlier manuscript fragments in binding; see Andreas Lehnardt, *"Genizat Germania": Hebrew and Aramaic Binding Fragments from Germany in Context*, Leiden: Brill 2010, or Mauro Perani, *La "Genizah italiana"*, Bologna: Il Mulino 1999.

14 The information on the context of the so-called Afghan Geniza is too scarce to allow any conclusion which would justify the use of the term in the sense it is understood here. On the Afghan Geniza, see Ofir Haim, "Documents from Afghanistan in the National Library of Israel" [in Hebrew], *Ginzei Qedem* 10 (2014), 9–28.

15 A treatise by Muḥammad Ibn Ḥamza al-Kūzal al-Ḥiṣārī on on this subject, dated 1109/1676, is discussed by Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices". For similar practices of respectful disposal, however, see Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 316/928), *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*, ed. Muhibb al-Din Waʾidh, Beirut: Dār al-bashār al-islāmiyya 2002, 665; al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941), *al-Kāfi*, ed. Ali Akbar al-Ghaffari, Tehran 1365 Sh./1986, 673–674; Abū ʿAbdāllāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273), *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-qurʾān*, ed. Abdallah al-Turki, Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-ʿarabī 2006, 48–89; and Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), *Kitāb ṣubḥ al-aʿshā*, Cairo: Dār al-kutub al-miṣriyya 1922, 459.

16 See Ursula Dreibholz, "Preserving a Treasure: The Sana'a Manuscripts", *Museum International* 51, no. 3 (1999), 21–25; and Ursula Dreibholz, "Treatment of Early Islamic Manuscript Fragments on Parchment", in: *The Conservation and Preservation of Islamic Manuscripts: Proceedings of the Third Conference of al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation*, Yusuf Ibish and George Atiyeh,

cache of manuscripts found in the *maqṣūra*, an enclosed storeroom near the mihrab, of the Great Mosque of Qayrawān.[17] During his visit to Qayrawān in 1896, the very year in which Solomon Schechter entered the storeroom of the Cairo Geniza for the first time, Muḥammad Bek Bayram described the *maqṣūra* as follows:

> A door is located in the storeroom (*maqṣūra*), from which one enters another storeroom that was used as a library for the books of the mosque. … In this second room, two cabinets are found, filled with bundles of paper which are tied up with cords and in hopeless disarray. They are covered in dust, sand, and cobwebs. This is what is left of the library of Qayrawān. … All these bundles contain parchment leaves from gazelle hide, written in a pleasant Kufi hand, gilded and embellished with the most marvellous colours and decorations.[18]

Muranyi showed on the basis of reader's and *waqf* notes how those books were read and used prior to the invasion by the Banū Hilāl in the fifth/eleventh century.[19] Although he disagrees with the idea that a geniza-like practice was involved here, it is evident that the bundles of leaves were only stored in the inner storeroom (*maqṣūra*) after the invasion, when the books were no longer consulted, and that the purpose of the two cabinets was to store in a secure place those books no longer in use.

Similar practices can also be observed among Christians. As a first example, one may adduce the Nessana papyri, found in the church of the Theotokos and that

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eds., London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation 1417/1996, 131–145. Dreibholz explicitly draws parallels to the finds in the Cairo Geniza. See also Hans-Caspar Graf von Bothmer, "Die Anfänge der Koranschreibung: Kodikologische und kunsthistorische Beobachtungen an den Koranfragmenten in Sanaa", *Magazin Forschung* (Universität des Saarlandes) 1 (1999), 40–46; Gerd-Rüdiger Puin, "Observations on Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in Ṣanʿā'", in *The Qur'ān as Text*, Stefan Wild, ed., Leiden: Brill 1996, 107–111; and P. Costa, "La Moschea Grande di Sanʿa'", *Annali Istituto orientale di Napoli* 34 (1974), 487–506 (esp. 505–506, and the photograph of the geniza-like deposit, plate 30). As Dreibholz confirmed to Ronny Vollandt in an email communication, there were five Hebrew fragments among the manuscripts found. They remain unidentified and their whereabouts are unknown today.

17 See Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices", 42; Miklos Muranyi, "Geniza or Ḥubus: Some Observations on the Library of the Great Mosque in Qayrawān (Tunisia)", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 42 (2015), 183–199; Georges Marçais and Louis Poinssot, *Objets kairouanais: IXe au XIIIe siècle*, Tunis: Tournier 1948, 1:11–12.

18 As quoted in Werner Schwartz, "Die Bibliothek der Großen Moschee von al-Qayrawān / Tunesien: Vorarbeiten zu ihrer Geschichte", part 1, Hausarbeit zur Prüfung für den höheren Bibliotheksdienst, Fachhochschule für Bibliotheks- und Dokumentationswesen, Cologne 1986, https://www.academia.edu/31701409/Die_Bibliothek_der_Gro%C3%9Fen_Moschee_von_al_Qayraw%C4%81n_Tunesien (accessed 28 December 2019), 44–45. This corpus once again also contained Hebrew texts: reused as a binding fragment for a Koran, the manumission of a slave girl in Hebrew survived; see Marçais and Poinssot, *Objets kairouanais*, 1:209, and Hmida Toukabri, "Un contrat de donation hébraïque dans une reliure du Corán", *al-Qanṭara: Revista de estudios árabes* 30 (2009), 257–269. We thank Wissem Gueddich, who is preparing a new edition of this document, for drawing our attention to it.

19 See Maranyi, "Geniza or Ḥubus".

of St Sergius. This corpus largely dates to the sixth and seventh centuries and contains both literary and non-literary texts in four languages (Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Arabic). The non-literary texts are mostly of an administrative, archival nature, whereas the literary texts reveal fragments of the *Aeneid* with a Greek glossary, of the Gospel of St John, and of the martyrdom of St George. They were found in two chambers, where they appear to have been stored after the town lost its administrative importance once the Abbasids took control. In some publications, these have also been called geniza-like repositories.[20]

Not infrequently the manuscript hunters of the nineteenth century describe hidden chambers to which monks had removed their oldest books after they had fallen out of use. In a famous episode at Dayr al-Suryānī in Egypt, Robert Curzon, Baron de la Zouche (1810–1873), described how he was led by the monks to a small vaulted closet, adjacent to the oil cellar, which "was filled to the depth of two feet or more with the loose leaves of the Syriac manuscripts, which now form the chief treasures of the British Museum".[21] Gaston Maspero (1846–1916) describes a similar room at the Monastery of Shenoute (the White Monastery).[22] Although one must take the context of their visits into consideration – Curzon and Maspero apologetically overemphasise the careless storage and bad state of the manuscripts – such a description may hint at the practice of the monks of removing "dead" books no longer fit for consultation to a secure place. In 1975, such a place at St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai yielded a discovery that became known as the New Finds.[23] The manuscripts found there were in different languages – Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic – and had not been moved to the new library built by Archbishop Nikephoros Marthales in 1734, but rather left in a room under the chapel of St George, apparently because they were too frail to use.[24]

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20 Casper J. Kraemer, ed., *Excavations at Nessana*, vol. 3, *Non-literary Papyri*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1950, 3–9. For the two chambers, see Dunscombe H. Colt, ed., *Excavations at Nessana*, vol. 1, London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem 1962, pl. 157 (room 3) and pls. 153 and 154 (room 8).

21 Robert Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*, London: John Murray 1849, 60.

22 Gaston Maspero, "Review of G. Steindorff, *Die Apokalypse des Elias*", *Journal des Savants* (1899), 31. Henry Hyvernat, "Pourquoi les anciennes collections de manuscrits coptes sont si pauvres", *Revue biblique*, n.s., 10 (1913), 424 uses the word *geniza* to describe this room. See also Tito Orlandi and Alin Suciu, "The End of the Library of the Monastery of Atripe", in: *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome*, Paola Buzi, Alberto Camplani, and Federico Contardi, eds., Leuven: Peeters 2016, 891–918.

23 Panayotis G. Nicolopoulos, ed., *Holy Monastery and Archdiocese of Sinai: The New Finds of Sinai*, Athens: Ministry of Culture, Mount Sinai Foundation 1999. This volume contains a detailed description of the discovery by Father Sophronios.

24 On the Greek fragment, see Nicolopoulos, *New Finds of Sinai*. On the Syriac fragments, see Sebastian P. Brock, *Catalogue of Syriac Fragments (New Finds) in the Library of the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai*, Athens: Mount Sinai Foundation 1995. On the Latin fragments, see Michelle P. Brown, "The Bridge in the Desert: Towards Establishing an Historical Context for the Newly Discovered Latin Manuscripts of St Catherine's Sinai", in: *Palaeogra-*

These examples show how the Qubbat al-khazna can be placed in a wider Middle Eastern context. It shares some of the particularities of its survival and composition with repositories from a Muslim provenance, but also with those from Jewish and Christian provenances. All are to various degrees, some more so and some less so, multilingual and multigraphic deposits like the Qubba, whose content blurs denominational boundaries.

The Qubbat al-khazna documents and manuscripts: Locations and accessibility
(Konrad Hirschler)

The documents and manuscripts from the Qubbat al-khazna are dispersed today over numerous museums and libraries. In this sense they have shared the fate of the material from the Cairo Geniza, as in both cases the artefacts were moved after their academic "discovery" in the nineteenth century to new locations. However, in the case of the Qubba this process has been far more centralised, as the Ottoman state administration took a major interest in the fate of the Damascus artefacts.[25] As a consequence, the Qubba documents and manuscripts can be grouped into three main clusters based on their location – those in Istanbul, those in Damascus, and those in various museums and libraries around the world – and each of these will be discussed here in turn. However, it is important to emphasise that the distribution of the overall Qubba corpus is much more complex than this, since the Qubba remained a living depository with inward and outward traffic throughout its existence. As mentioned above, in the pre-Ottoman period Damascene manuscript producers accessed the Qubba to source parchments for reuse in book production,[26] and there is also the possibility that Qubba material was relocated within Damascus during the late nineteenth century, as we have reports of transfers of material to the Public Library (*al-Maktaba al-ʿumūmiyya*) after it was founded in 1878.[27] Colleagues working on the Cairo Geniza are by now aware that their corpus

ply between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, pp. 73–98; and Georgi R. Parpulov, "The Greek and Latin Manuscripts of Mount Sinai and the Scholarly World", in *St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai: Its Manuscripts and their Conservation; Papers Given in Memory of Professor Ihor Ševčenko, 27 November 2010, Stelios Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, University of Oxford*, Cyril Mango, Marlia Mango, and Earleen Brunner, eds., Athens: Saint Catherine Foundation 2011, 35–42. On the Arabic fragments, see Yiannis Meimaris, *Katalogos tōn neōn aravikōn cheirographōn tēs Hieras Monēs Aikaterinēs tou Orous Sina*, Athens: Ethnikon hidryma ereunōn 1985.

25 See the contribution by Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler in this volume.

26 See the contribution by Konrad Hirschler in this volume.

27 Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Y.PRK.MF 4/35/1 (report by Ali Galib, 30 March 1900).

is much more complex than initially thought.[28] We can be sure that those of us working on the Damascus Qubba will go through the same process.

Because of the decisive role of the Ottoman state in the distribution of documents and manuscripts from the Qubba, by far the most important of the three major clusters of material is the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum (Türk ve İslâm Eserleri Müzesi) in Istanbul. Here the relevant collection is known by a term introduced in the late Ottoman period, Şam Evrakları (Damascus papers). This collection consists of the material brought to Istanbul in 1917[29] and contains 211,603 "items", according to a stocktake conducted in the 2010s.[30] However, this number is highly subjective as the collection consists of a range of materials from tiny scraps of paper or parchment up to manuscripts consisting of several quires. Thus the decision to count a specific piece as an "item" on its own is always highly subjective, and more detailed studies are needed to flesh out this number. In addition to the material classified as Şam Evrakları, there is also further material in the museum, especially in the form of scrolls, that goes back to the Qubba but that has separate call numbers. This includes for instance a large number of pilgrimage certificates,[31] but also other documentary material that has been published.[32]

Currently, the Şam Evrakları collection has 13,882 inventory numbers, and these go back to a handwritten inventory completed in 1955. This inventory started in an optimistic mood with one inventory number assigned to each piece, so that Şam Evrakları 8886, for example, refers to two folios of the *Kitāb Uṣūl al-qirāʾāt* by Khalaf b. ʿAmmār b. Saʿīd. However, the cataloguers in the museum soon realised that they would take a very long time to finish their task and opted to proceed in a faster way: they started to simply bundle together several hundred pieces and then assign a single inventory number to each bundle. These "bundle inventory numbers" start in the 12900s, and Şam Evrakları 13047, for instance, contains 421 codicological units (that is 421 physical pieces, several of which

28 Jefferson, "Deconstructing 'the Cairo Genizah'".

29 See Erbay and Hirschler in this volume.

30 Personal communication, staff of the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, September 2017.

31 Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, "Certificats de pèlerinage par procuration à l'époque mamlouke", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001), 212–233; Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Certificats de pèlerinage d'époque ayyoubide: Contribution à l'histoire de l'idéologie de l'Islam au temps des croisades*, Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades 19, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2006; Şule Aksoy and Rachel Milestein, "A Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates", in: *M. Ugur Derman Festschrift: Papers Presented in Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, İrvin Cemil Schick, ed., Istanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi 2000, 101–134; Solange Ory, "Un nouveau type de *muṣḥaf*: Inventaire des corans en rouleaux de provenance damascaine conservés à Istanbul", *Revue des études islamiques* 33 (1965), 87–149.

32 Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, "Biens fonciers constitués waqf en Syrie fatimide pour une famille de šarīfs damascains", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 15, no. 3 (1972), 269–296; Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, "Un acte de vente arabe portant sur la région d'Ahlat au VIIe/XIIIe siècle", *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6 (1968–1972), 51–57.

might belong to one single work). There were certainly reasons why some specific material was bundled together – for example, Şam Evrakları 13750 contains only paper fragments and no parchment fragments. However, I have not yet detected any other system, such as "thematic" bundles or "genre" bundles, and to understand the logic of the museum's archivists in the first half of the twentieth century would be a project on its own. The collection is not catalogued except for the handwritten inventory and a rudimentary database for internal use, but these are of little help (even if one can access them), since almost every single inventory number carries the simple description "Koran". Researchers thus have no way of knowing what material is under any given inventory number and simply have to randomly order bundles to view.

In practical terms, the absence of unique class marks for each item in the collection will create problems if and when the collection is systematically catalogued in the future. For instance, I have published a register from a fruit and vegetable market in Ayyubid Damascus with my colleague Said Aljoumani.[33] This document is part of a bundle with the inventory number Şam Evrakları 13327, but there are roughly 400 pieces in that bundle, and all carry exactly the same inventory number. In consequence, another piece from this bundle, a document attesting that the recipient had fallen into destitution, has been published with the same inventory number.[34] Two further documents from this bundle, in this case relating to marriage, have also been published, once again with the same inventory number.[35] It does not take too much imagination to predict that this situation will create numerous practical problems and confusion in future.

Access to the Şam Evrakları collection has been very difficult over the past 100 years and thus only a small number of the Qubba documents and manuscripts held in the museum are known. The only major exception to the collection's inaccessibility occurred in the 1960s when Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine worked on the material and took an unknown number of black and white photographs. They focused in particular on documentary material and have published numerous items, most recently in collaboration with their student Jean-Michel Mouton.[36] In addition, François Déroche, another of their students, has

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33 Said Aljoumani and Konrad Hirschler, "Trading Fruits and Legumes on a Medieval Damascene Market: The Documentary and Archival Life Cycle of an Account Book from the Qubbat al-Khazna (Şam Evrakları 13327)", in: *Festschrift in Honour of Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu for his 75th Birthday*, Hatice Aynur, Didar Bayır, Fatma Şen, and Tuncay Zorlu, eds., Istanbul 2020 (forthcoming).

34 Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, "À propos de la 'pauvreté' à Damas à l'époque ayyoubide: Deux documents inédits", *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 57, no. 1 (2011), 99–108.

35 Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation à Damas au Moyen Âge: Un corpus de 62 documents juridiques inédits entre 337/948 et 698/1299*, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2013.

36 The most important publications include Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Propriétés rurales et urbaines à Damas au Moyen Âge: Un corpus de 73*

worked on Koranic fragments in the Şam Evrakları collection[37] and Solange Ory has worked on scrolls.[38] Further, selected Şam Evrakları items are known from having been placed on display in the museum's exhibition rooms (see fig. 1) or having been lent to other museums for temporary exhibitions (such as the exhibition *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, held in Washington in 2016–2017). As far as we can judge on the basis of this sparse knowledge, the Şam Evrakları collection and the other Qubba items in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum are exclusively in Arabic script and the vast majority were produced in Muslim contexts. While the best-known subgroups of Qubba material in the museum are the documents and the Koranic fragments, it is clear that the collection holds a much wider array of artefacts, including in particular fragments of books on a range of topics including hadith and jurisprudence, as well as more "arcane" items such as amulets.[39]

In addition to the material in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, it is also very likely that some Qubba manuscripts deemed to be of particular value were transferred to the library of the Topkapı Museum after their arrival in Istanbul in 1917.[40] However, so far we do not have the slightest insight as to what manuscripts these might be, or how many of them were transferred. This, in turn, brings up a topic that is relevant for the field of Qubba studies as a whole: while scholarship has mainly focused on fragments, there are certainly also a considerable number of (near) complete manuscripts with a Qubba provenance; for example, we mentioned above the reports on the transfer of books from the Qubba to the Public Library in Damascus after its foundation in 1878. In addition, the exhibition in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum clearly also encompasses complete manuscripts (as seen in fig. 1). That we have evidence of the existence of larger codicological units in these collections opens up the possibility that they might be found in many more collections. This is especially true for the manuscript dealers who brought Qubba fragments to European collections, such as Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905), as they very likely also sold complete manuscripts. Unfortunately, the provenance of these manuscripts was lost before they entered European collections and it remains to be seen whether we will ever be able to identify complete codicological units of this type as forming part of the Qubba corpus.

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documents juridiques entre 310/922 et 669/1271, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2018; Mouton, Sourdel and Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation;* Sourdel and Sourdel-Thomine, *Certificats de pèlerinage*.

37 See for instance François Déroche, "Collections de manuscrits anciens du Coran à Istanbul: Rapport préliminaire", in: *Études médiévales et patrimoine turc*, Janine Sourdel-Thomine, ed., Cultures et civilisations médiévales 1, Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique 1983, 145–165.

38 Ory, "Un nouveau type de *muṣḥaf*".

39 See the contribution by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach in this volume.

40 François Déroche, "La 'Bibliothèque' de la mosquée des Omeyyades", in: *De Bagdad à Damas: Études en mémoire de Dominique Sourdel*, Jean-Michel Mouton and Clément Onimus, eds., Geneva: Droz 2018, 311–325.



Fig. 1: Qubba fragments, scrolls, and manuscripts on display in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum (Istanbul), June 2019. (© Ayşe Hümeyra Demirci.)

Moving on from material which found its way to Istanbul, the second cluster of Qubba items is in Damascus. Some of them are in the National Museum (*al-Maṭḥaf al-waṭanī*), although we do not have even a rough idea of how many there are (my guess is a four-digit number). If the Istanbul collection has been difficult to access and we know little about it, the Damascus collection is almost entirely unknown and unpublished. In the following I will present the few indications we have about Qubba items in the museum and possibly elsewhere in Damascus.

The main difference between the Qubba material in Istanbul and that in Damascus is that we find in Damascus not only Arabic documents and manuscripts produced in Muslim contexts but also those in other scripts and other languages produced in non-Muslim contexts. That Arabic Muslim items are still in Damascus shows that some of the fragments stayed in Damascus when the Ottoman state authorities transferred the vast majority to Istanbul in 1917, where most ended up – as we have seen – in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum. Until we have a better insight into the exact profile of the items in Damascus it is impossible to speculate about why they remained there. As for the non-Arabic items, the most striking feature for the purposes of this volume is that among them are some or all of the items that the Ottoman state lent to Berlin in 1902 and which returned to Istanbul in 1909.

The earliest trace of Arabic Muslim Qubba items having remained in Damascus is the first guide to the newly founded National Museum (known as *Dār al-āthār* at that point). In 1930, its curator Jaʿfar al-Ḥasanī published his *Dalīl mukhtaṣar* (Summary Guide), containing a broad overview of the collection.[41] In it, he organised the artefacts according to materiality and dedicated chapters to stone, metal, glass, wood, and so on. The seventh and final chapter was dedicated to those "various artefacts" that did not fit his main classification system, and here we find some Koranic fragments "in Kufic script", and fortunately al-Ḥasanī included summary information on the provenance of the artefacts he catalogued. Several of these Koranic fragments are listed as "found in the Umayyad Mosque" (*wujida fi al-jāmiʿ al-umawī*).[42] While the "Qubba" itself is not mentioned, the terminology "found" makes a provenance outside a formal library collection very likely. Regrettably, this is indeed a summary guide, and no further information is given on these fragments. However, some forty years later Youssef Eche, then director of the National Library in Damascus, mentions further items from the museum's "various artefacts" section that al-Ḥasanī had not included in his guide.[43] The details provided by Eche make a Qubba provenance for these items very likely as they carry endowment notes going back to the third/ninth century – a feature that we regularly find in the Qubba Koranic fragments held in Istanbul. Indeed, one of the most knowledgeable specialists of Syrian manuscript cultures in the first half of the twentieth century, Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, explicitly links these items to the Qubba.[44] At this stage, however, hardly any reproductions of the Koranic fragments held in the museum have been published.[45]

A further indicator of Koranic fragments with a Qubba provenance held in institutions in Damascus is the exhibition of the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy (*Matḥaf al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī*). Photographs taken in 2006 by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach show among the items on display a fragment with an endowment note by the Abbasid governor Amājūr (see fig. 2). Other folios of the Koran of Amājūr are held in Istanbul and Berlin (and elsewhere) and there is no doubt that this Koran

41 al-Amīr Jaʿfar al-Ḥasanī, *Dalīl mukhtaṣar: al-Ḥukūma al-sūriyya, Dār al-āthār bi-Dimashq*, Damascus: Mufid 1930.

42 For instance, items with the numbers ʿ/22, ʿ/24–ʿ/35 (al-Ḥasanī, *Dalīl*, 112).

43 Youssef Eche, *Les Bibliothèques arabes publiques et semipubliques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Égypte au Moyen Âge*, Damascus: Institut français de Damas 1967, 110 and 119: class marks ʿ/289, ʿ/291, ʿ/342, and ʿ/343.

44 Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, *Kitāb Khiṭaṭ al-shām*, Damascus: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Haditha 1928, 6:199–200.

45 The main exception is Arianna D'Ottone, "Frammenti coranici antichi nel Museo nazionale di Damasco", in: *Dirāsāt Aryūliyya: Studi in onore di Angelo Arioli*, Giuliano Lancioni and Olivier Durand, eds., Rome: La Sapienza Orientale 2007, 217–239, who lists, in addition to the class marks listed in al-Ḥasanī's guide, the class marks ʿ/344–ʿ/352 and ʿ/444. A further fragment is reproduced in Sophie Cluzan, ed., *Syrie: Mémoire et civilisation; Exposition réalisée par l'Institut du monde arabe*, Paris: Institut du monde arabe 1993, exhibit 297.



Fig. 2: Fragments of the Koran of Amājūr on display in the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy (Damascus), 2006. (© Arianna D'Ottone Rambach.)

had been in the Qubba before the nineteenth century.[46] As the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy was only founded in the 1970s, it sourced material from other institutions, and it is possible that this Amājūr fragment originally belonged to the collection of the National Museum.

While the *Summary Guide* only mentions material in Arabic script, the National Museum clearly also held artefacts in other scripts. In 1964 Malak Hanānū published fragments of an Arabic translation of the Torah in the journal of the Arab Academy in Damascus and reproduced an image of this fragment covering parts of Exodus.[47] These fragments were held in the museum's depository and Hanānū explicitly mentions that they had previously been in the Qubba. Arianna D'Ottone Rambach has highlighted the importance of these fragments and has established that they belong to the same codex as some of the Qubba fragments that had been lent to Berlin between 1902 and 1909.[48]

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46 François Déroche, "The Qurʾān of Amāğūr", *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990–1991), 59–66; François Déroche, "The Quranic Collections Acquired by Wetzstein", in: *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., Leiden: Brill 2019, 92–115. See also the contribution by Boris Liebrenz in this volume.

47 Malak Hanānū, "Min al-tawrah", *Majallat al-Majmaᶜ al-ᶜilmī al-ᶜarabī* 39 (1964), no. 2, 313–334; no. 3, 447–468; no. 4, 646–651. On this fragment, see the contribution by Ronny Vollandt in this volume.

48 Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 261–284.

There is a second trace of non-Muslim and non-Arabic-script items from the Qubba in the National Museum – research visits by non-Syrian scholars. First, we have the case of the Dutch biblical scholar P.A.H. de Boer who had access to Qubba fragments in the National Museum in 1967.[49] He only published a brief report on this visit and was rather vague on exactly what he had seen and photographed.[50] However, his private papers, held in the Peshitta Institute Archives in Amsterdam, provide more detail. In his travel log he writes:

> In the museum [the National Museum of Damascus] I got a first impression of the material from the Qubba that is preserved there …: a collection that has been lost for years; it includes Hebrew, Greek (NT), Georgian, Armenian, and Arabic. Twenty fragments with Syriac text could be photographed. The whole collection, stored in cardboard boxes in a strongbox in the museum's basement without numbering or description, deserves a comprehensive study. I had to restrict myself this time to the [Syriac] Peshitta texts.[51]

The microfilms preserved in Amsterdam show that De Boer not only photographed Syriac texts, but there is at least one Greek text as well.[52]

For the Qubba provenance of the items that De Boer saw we do not have to solely rely on his words in this matter. Rather, we have undisputable evidence if we compare the photographs that Bruno Violet took while he worked on the Qubba documents and manuscripts in Damascus in 1901 and the photographs that De Boer took in the National Museum. For instance, one of the Violet photographs shows a Syriac fragment with a text from 2 Kings 10:31–11:5.[53] We find exactly the same fragment (same text, same hand, same material damage) among the photographs De Boer took over sixty years later in the basement of the National Museum, and there are many more matches between these two photographic corpora.[54] That the National Museum pieces seen by De Boer had been

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49 For this visit and further evidence on Syriac material in the National Museum, see the contribution by Grigory Kessel in this volume.

50 P.A.H. de Boer, "Dispersed Leaves", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 13 (1968), 33–35. Some information on the fragments is found in P.A.H. de Boer, "Peshiṭta Institute Communications VII", *Vetus Testamentum* 18 (1968), 128–143.

51 "In het Museum kreeg ik een eerste indruk van het aldaar bewaarde materiaal uit de Kubbit … een verzameling, waarin ook Hebreeuws, Grieks (ook N.T.), Georgisch, Armeens, Arabisch aanwezig is, die jarenlang zoek is geweest. Een twintigtal fragmenten Syrische tekst konden worden gefotografeerd. De gehele verzameling, die in dozen in een brandkast in de kelder van het Museum wordt bewaard en geen nummering of beschrijving heeft, zou een uitvoerige bestudering verdienen. Ik heb mij ditmaal moeten beperken tot Peshiṭta teksten." P.A.H. de Boer, "Piet de Boer, Travel Log", Peshitta Institute Archives, Correspondence from staff members, Amsterdam, 1967. I thank Wido van Peursen and Geert Jan Veldman for sending me transcripts of the Dutch original.

52 Personal communication, Wido van Peursen, 18 April 2019.

53 Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/84 (left-hand side), available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/

54 Some of the De Boer photographs are available via the vHMML site of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/502943 (accessed 9 August

among the fragments lent to Berlin between 1902 and 1909 is also evident from paratextual evidence: on one of the folios we find the word "Qubbit" written in Latin characters and this most likely goes back to the sojourn of these fragments in Berlin. When De Boer saw these pieces, they must have been at least rudimentarily catalogued in the National Museum, as he cites them with class marks – for example, he refers to the fragment from 2 Kings as item "217/8, 221/2".[55] In the 1960s, the Byzantine art section of the museum dedicated a whole room to Syriac, Armenian, and Greek manuscripts,[56] and this fragment probably goes back to the rich material held in its deposit. As Grigory Kessel suggests in his contribution to this volume, Syriac manuscripts from the museum that have been exhibited around the world have a Qubba provenance.

The second case of a research visit by non-Syrian scholars concerns the Armenian fragments on which Levon Khachikyan and Artashes Matevosyan worked in the late 1960s.[57] They identified thirty-four fragments belonging to fourteen texts that in their opinion originated from the Qubbat al-khazna. The photographs they took in the museum indeed show that these fragments had been lent to Berlin between 1902 and 1909: the fragments carry exactly the same class mark system that we see on the photographs taken in Berlin in 1909, which had been written on the Qubba fragments by the Damascene commission in 1902.[58] In addition we see that at least three of the fragments that Khachikyan and Matevosyan photographed in the museum are also among the Violet photographs of 1901.[59]

The third and final case is Marika Tchatchibaya, who worked in the National Museum in 1974. She identified seven Georgian texts with eighteen pages that in her words "had been preserved in the library of the Great Mosque".[60] While these Georgian fragments might have a non-Qubba provenance, the Syriac and

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2019). At the time of writing, the individual photographs had not yet been assigned class marks; the fragment in question carries the filename ending with "2_07_04.jpg".

55 De Boer, "Peshiṭta Institute Communications VII", 130.

56 Mohammad A. al-Ush, *Catalogue du Musée national de Damas*, Damascus: Publications de la Direction générale des antiquités et des musées 1969, 148–149.

57 Levon Khachikyan and Matevosyan, Artashes, "The Armenian Fragments of the National Museum in Damascus" [in Armenian], *Haigazian Armenological Review* 3 (1972), 9–54 (translated and reproduced in this volume). We thank Alin Suciu for drawing our attention to this publication.

58 On these class marks, see the contribution by Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler in this volume.

59 Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/188 (left folio), available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/, is identical with Khachikyan and Matevosyan, "Armenian Fragments of the National Museum", fig. 17; BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/188 (right top, left folio) is identical with fig. 22; and 188 (right top, right folio) is identical with fig. 19.

60 Marika Tchatchibaya, "Fragments de manuscrits géorgiens du Musée de Damas", *Les Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes* 32 (1982), 59–82: "les manuscrits étaient conservés dans la bibliothèque de la célèbre Grande Mosquée".

Armenian "smoking guns" make it very likely that the Georgian fragments were also among those lent to Berlin between 1902 and 1909, and that they thus belong to the Qubba corpus.

Apart from the National Museum there are certainly also other Damascene collections and libraries that hold Qubba documents and manuscripts. Private collections are a prime candidate for this, and a rare catalogue of one such Damascene library gives an indication of potential Qubba manuscripts. In 1965, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid published a slim catalogue of the private library of Farrūj Salāṭiyān, with just over a hundred entries. Al-Munajjid described the very first entry as 200 Koranic Kufic parchments going back to the third/ninth century.[61] These parchments were sold to the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich in 1977[62] where they now carry the class mark Cod.arab. 2569. These fragments are strikingly similar to the Koranic fragments that we find in Istanbul.[63]

In contrast to the material in Istanbul and Damascus, the third and final cluster of Qubba documents and manuscripts is not located in one single geographical place. It is rather a residual category in which we can place individual pieces dispersed across museums and libraries around the world. We are far from having even a rough idea of what is out there, since Qubba items are hardly ever labelled as such in their modern-day collections. Rather, Qubba documents and manuscripts have often lost their provenance and only a few pieces have been securely identified so far. There is thus no possibility of making even an informed guess as to the number of items in this third cluster.

The unknown provenance of these items goes back to the fact that most of them were removed from the Qubba before the Ottoman state authorities started to take a dedicated interest in the Qubba as part of a "cultural heritage" that needed to be protected. In this "gold rush" period of manuscript hunters, European traders and scholars, such as Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, brought numerous fragments to European collections and libraries. However, in contrast to the Cairo Geniza that was almost completely moved to Europe and the USA, the losses of Qubba documents and manuscripts seem to be relatively small. As the Qubba was at the very heart of the most prestigious religious building in Damascus, and primarily contained Muslim items, Damascene society and Ottoman state authorities took a much keener interest in safeguarding this material. For instance, when Bruno Violet was working on the Qubba documents and manuscripts in Damascus in

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61 Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-ʿarabiyya fi maktabat Farrūj Salāṭiyān*, Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-jadid 1965.

62 Helga Rebhan, "Auktionszuschlag für Koranhandschriften", *Bibliotheksmagazin: Mitteilungen aus den Staatsbibliotheken in Berlin und München* 26 (2014), 69.

63 The fragments are described in Florian Sobieroj, *Arabische Handschriften*, part 12, *Arabische Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek zu München unter Einschluss einiger Türkischer und Persischer Handschriften*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner 2018. The fragments are available online at http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0009/bsb00095989/images/ (accessed 9 August 2019).

1900, the German scholar and then-librarian of the Khedival Library in Cairo, Bernhard Moritz, purloined folios of a Peshitta manuscript. The authorities of the Umayyad Mosque did not take this lightly when they became aware of it some months later and Violet's stay in Damascus was possibly shortened on account of Moritz's actions.[64]

The trajectories of the items in the third cluster are highly varied and each of them has a unique story. In consequence, I will limit myself to presenting four cases in order to illustrate the contours of this third cluster and the intricacies involved in establishing their provenance. The first case takes up the Syriac Peshitta manuscript taken from Damascus by Bernhard Moritz in 1900. When Violet challenged Moritz in Cairo about his theft and demanded the return of the manuscript, Moritz ripped it in two and kept one half for himself. Violet returned "his" half to the Qubba collection in Damascus, and indeed we find folios of it among the photographs taken in Berlin between 1902 and 1909[65] – these are the very fragments that P.A.H. de Boer photographed in Damascus in the National Museum in 1967. As for the second half of the manuscript, which Moritz had kept, several folios of it were sold in 1929 to the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago.[66] Here, they were inventoried without any provenance indicating the Qubba or Damascus. It was only De Boer who was able to match the National Museum and the Chicago fragments of this manuscript and who could thus restore the Qubba provenance to the Chicago items.[67]

Our second case concerns a fragment of the Greek translation of the sermons by Isaac the Syrian held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. The Paris fragment carries the class mark Suppl. Grec 693 and was again devoid of any information regarding provenance. It was Kurt Treu who established that folios of exactly the same codex are among the photographs that Violet took of Qubba documents and manuscripts when he was in Damascus.[68]

Our third example involves Muslim fragments and takes us once again to Berlin. This case is closely connected to the Prussian consul Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, one of the most active collectors and traders of manuscripts in nineteenth-century Damascus.[69] Wetzstein sold thousands of manuscripts to the

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64 Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20.

65 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 11.

66 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 17.

67 De Boer, "Peshiṭta Institute Communications VII".

68 Kurt Treu, "Remnants of a Majuscule Codex of Isaac Syrus from Damascus", in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. 16, no. 2, Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., Texte und Untersuchungen 129, Berlin: Akademie 1985, 114–120. The relevant photographs by Violet are Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/1–22, available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

69 On Wetzstein, see Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Leiden: Brill 2019.

Royal Library in Berlin (now the Staatsbibliothek), and these were inventoried under the class marks Wetzstein I and Wetzstein II. They are among the most important collections of Syrian manuscripts in the world. After Wetzstein's death, the library also received his estate including some further manuscripts, which were in turn inventoried under the generic class marks MS or. oct. and MS or. quart. Their provenance as coming from Wetzstein was not registered and their identity as one collection has only recently been re-established.[70] Among these items is class mark MS or. quart. 1208, a collection of forty-three folios, mostly Koranic parchments. One of these Koranic parchments carries the endowment note of the Abbasid governor Amājūr, and as we have seen above this Koran of Amājūr had previously been stored in the Qubba. It is thus highly likely that the other Koranic parchments in MS or. quart. 1208 also go back to the Qubba, and the same is true for further Koranic parchments that we find in the Wetzstein collection.[71]

The fourth and final case that we will consider of Qubba materials outside Istanbul and Damascus is another example of Koranic fragments, but this time not from the Koran of Amājūr. We have seen above that Youssef Eche saw in the National Museum Koranic fragments that Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī linked to the Qubba. The endowment notice is by a certain ʿAbd al-Munʿim and dated to the year 298/910–911.[72] François Déroche has shown that we find folios of the same codex in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin and the Topkapı in Istanbul.[73] Again, there was no information in the Chester Beatty Library that would link these folios with the Qubba or Damascus. It is only by drawing the lines between the various collections that house Qubba items in Damascus, Dublin, and Istanbul that we are able to re-establish the provenance of such dispersed folios.

In summary, the field of Qubba studies is blessed in that it has two very distinct regional clusters of Qubba documents and manuscripts, Istanbul and Damascus. Even if the issue of accessibility has been a major impediment for the development of the field, at least the historical provenance of this material is evident. The real problem for the field is the third cluster, in that it will take numerous in-depth studies to enlarge the known corpus. These studies have been and will be conducted in various disciplines as the third cluster reflects the whole linguistic and religious breadth of the Qubba.

This volume is a first step towards drawing the contours of what the field of Qubba studies might look like by bringing together scholars working in a wide

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70 Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, "Arabic Manuscripts and Books from the Bequest of Wetzstein", in: *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., Leiden: Brill 2019, 174–193.

71 On this issue, see also the article by Boris Liebrenz in this volume. Images of the materials can be accessed via https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

72 For a discussion of this fragment, see D'Ottone, "Frammenti coranici antichi", 219.

73 Déroche, "The Quranic Collections Acquired by Wetzstein", 98; Déroche, "La 'Bibliothèque' de la mosquée des Omeyyades", 318.

variety of fields. Yet it is evident that the emerging field of Qubba studies is extremely fast moving and that articles are often in need of revision shortly after they are written – as the editors have experienced in producing this volume. The most pressing tasks for developing this field include localising further fragments (especially those in the third cluster), facilitating research on the fragments in the first and second clusters in Istanbul and Damascus, identifying and describing the fragments (especially with regard to language, script, text, period, and regional provenance), and making them known to a larger academic audience. Such a task cannot continue to be done via print editions and publications such as this one. To develop the field, it will thus be necessary to create a shared online platform, as the editors of this volume plan to do, where researchers can get up-to-date access to these numerous bits and pieces that constitute a very unwieldy corpus.

Before and after the opening of the Qubba in 1900
(Arianna D'Ottone Rambach)

Early authors in both the East and the West – for example, al-Iṣṭakhrī (fourth/tenth century) and Richard Pococke (1704–1765) – refer to the small octagonal building in the courtyard of Great Mosque of Damascus which, long ago, housed the treasure of the mosque. At some point in its history – possibly since Ayyubid and Mamluk times – this structure became a dynamic deposit for manuscripts and manuscript fragments that were stored in, as well as taken from, there.[74] It seems possible to consider that the building had a first life as a repository of the treasure of the mosque – when it was called *bayt al-māl* – and a second life in which it was employed as a storeroom for manuscripts and manuscript fragments and designated the *qubbat al-khazna*.[75]

Although in some written documents this octagonal building was referred to as a sort of talisman, with its opening signifying good or bad luck for Damascus, prior to May or June of 1900 it had already been opened on various occasions at

74 See Konrad Hirschler's contribution in this volume.

75 I would suggest the use of these different terms to indicate the building and its function through the centuries. It seems also useful to recall the term *khazina* that appears in a letter written in Damascus by Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) to Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer (1801–1888) dated 10 March 1853, with a reference to four old Korans acquired by Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801–1876) in Damascus from the Qubbat al-khazna; see Boris Liebrenz's contribution in this volume. The case of the Koran of Amājūr, three folios of which I had the chance to document during a visit to the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy in Damascus – see D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi", and figure 2 – offers a good example of an early dispersion of folios from a single multivolume codex; these folios are nowadays in a number of museums and libraries, in the East and in the West. The presence in Damascus, both at the National Museum and at the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy, of manuscript materials coming from the Qubba offers clear evidence contradicting the statement that "nothing is left in Damascus, with the exception of a *waqfiyya* from a multi-volume set"; Déroche, "The Quranic Collections", 95.

the request of Westerners.[76] Nonetheless, late spring of the year 1900 marks a turning point in the history of the Qubbat al-khazna, with its official opening in the presence of Ottoman authorities and religious representatives on 16 June, and Bruno Violet represents a key figure in the study of its multilingual and multigraphic contents.[77]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were many Westerners in the Middle East – and specifically in Syria – in particular from Germany (fig. 3), England, and France.[78] One visitor to Damascus, in both 1900 and 1905 – that is, around the arrival of Bruno Violet at the end of May 1900 and after the shipment of the manuscript material found in the Qubba to Istanbul and from there to Berlin – was the English writer and traveller Gertrude Bell (1868–1926),[79] who left a number of diaries of her travels in the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey).[80]

On the day on which Bruno Violet arrived in Damascus, 30 May 1900, the city was "full of apricots, plums and mulberries", as Bell noted in her diary the day before.[81] The two of them met for breakfast the next day, 31 May 1900, together with Paul Apéry, Ernst Lütticke, and Hermann Burchardt.[82] Unfortunately, Bell

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76 See the contribution by Fabio Ioppolo in this volume.

77 I will limit myself here to mentioning the so-called Violet fragment; see Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment". For the role of Bruno Violet in the exploration of the Qubba, see the contribution by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann in this volume. For the discussion of two bilingual fragments in Arabic and Greek from the Qubba, see Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Sharing the Written Space: Contact and Interaction between Arabic and Other Cultures/Languages/Scripts as Attested by Palaeographical Evidence: Some Examples", in: *Navigating Language in the Early Islamic World*, Proceedings of the Symposium held at the Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Alison M. Vacca and Antoine Borrut, eds. (forthcoming).

78 Following Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, Western travellers explored the Middle East in the nineteenth century by who hiring local people in order to skip the difficulties of obtaining travel permits from the Ottoman authorities; see Cherie J. Lenzen, "The Desert and the Sown: An Introduction to the Archaeological and Historiographic Challenge", *Mediterranean Archaeology* 16 (2003), 6.

79 See William Woods Cotterman, *Improbable Women: Five Who Explored the Middle East*, Contemporary Issues in the Middle East, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press 2013, especially the discussion of Gertrude Bell on pp. 159–206; Elizabeth Monroe, "Gertrude Bell (1868–1926)", *Bulletin, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies* 7, no. 1 (1980), 3–23; David G. Hogarth, "Obituary: Gertrude Lowthia Bell", *Geographical Journal* 68, no. 4 (1926), 363–368; H.St.J.B. Philby, "Obituary Notice: Gertrude Bell", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1926), no. 4, 804–806.

80 The Gertrude Bell Archive contains photographs, diaries, letters, books, and *personalia* and was given by Gertrude's half-sister, Lady Richmond, to Newcastle University Library; see http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk.

81 Gertrude Bell's diary entry for Tuesday, 29 May 1900; see the Gertrude Bell Archive, http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/.

82 For the meeting between Violet and Bell on 31 May 1900, see Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann's contribution in this volume.

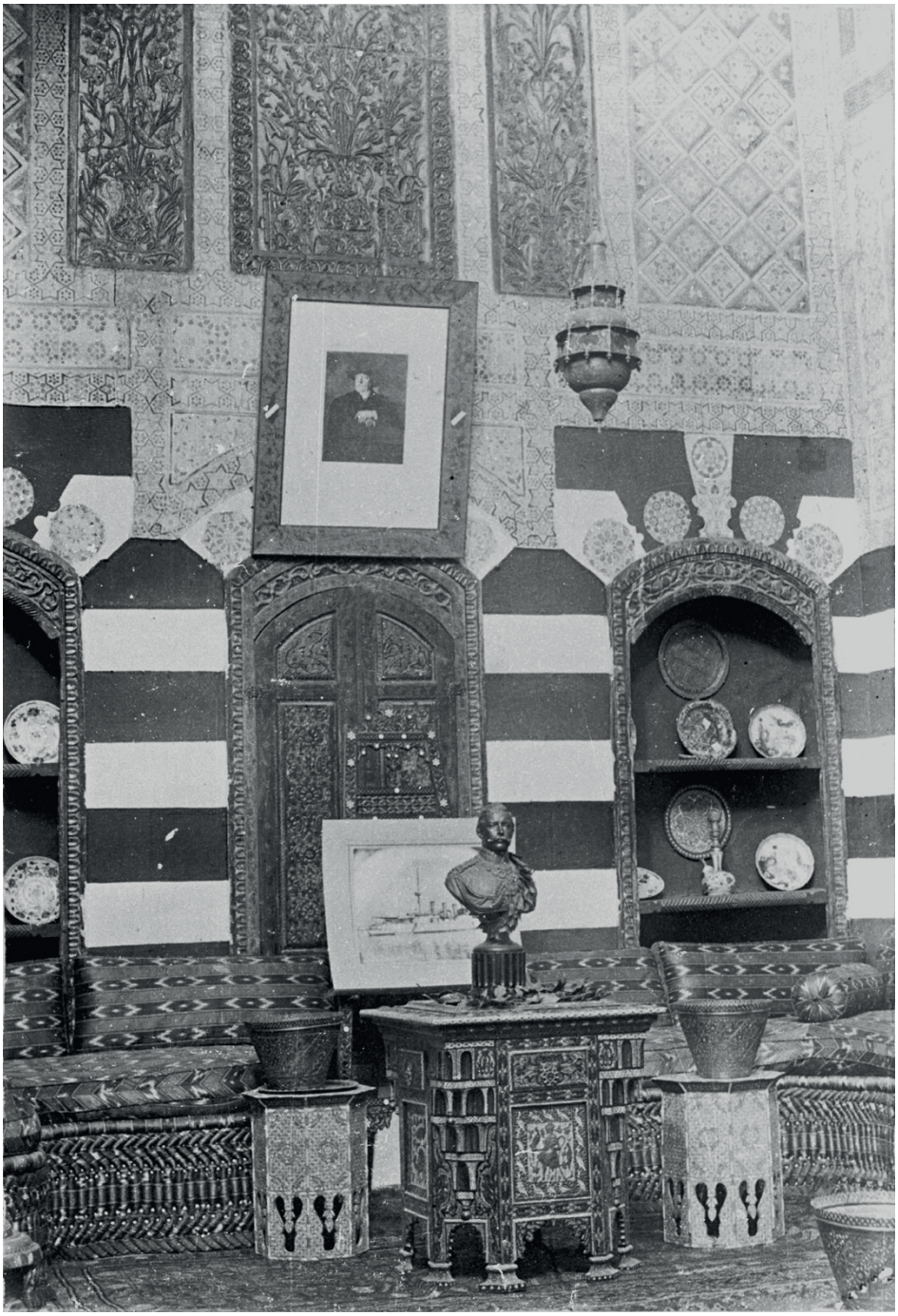


Fig. 3: The German Consulate, Damascus, May 1900. (Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University: Photograph A_330.)

left Damascus at the beginning of June for Beirut,[83] and her records do not give any hints about the phases of discovery of the Qubba material.

However, Bell came back to Damascus a few years later, in 1905, and her writings – books, private letters, and diaries – as well as her photographs provide some information about the circulation of the manuscript fragments taken from the Qubba and the fate of their photographs, and it seems worth recalling them here.

In her diary, on 28 February 1905, for example, Bell recorded that "the Vali gave me photographs of the MSS in the Kubbet el Khazne (which is now closed for ever)", and in a letter she wrote from Damascus to her stepmother, Dame Florence Bell, on 3 March 1905, Gertrude echoed this episode as follows: "When I left, the Vali presented me with photographs of the famous MSS in the mosque here, MSS which no one is allowed to see and I think I am about the only person who has the photographs except the Emperor of Germany!"[84]

The same episode is recalled in Bell's 1907 book entitled *The Desert and the Sown*, which collects the travel-notes of her 1905 trip to the Middle East.

> The Vāli was affability itself. He presented me with certain photographs of the priceless manuscripts of the Kubbet el Khazneh in the Great Mosque, now closed for ever to the public eye, and promised me the rest of the series. To that end a bowing personage took my English address and noted it carefully in a pocket book, and I need scarcely say that that was the last any one heard of the matter.[85]

It is so far known that there were three sets of photographs of Qubba material made in the early twentieth century: the photographs of manuscript fragments taken in Damascus by Violet in 1901 (set 1), those taken in Istanbul prior to the departure of some of the material to Berlin in 1902 (set 2), and those taken in Berlin in 1909 (set 3). Set 2, in turn, consists of two photographs of each fragment. Of these three sets of photographs, only those taken by Violet in 1901 and those taken in Berlin in 1909 are currently available, while the two series produced in Istanbul have not yet been found. Which photographs are those to which Bell refers? To the set of photographs made in Istanbul in 1902, which are seemingly lost, or to a further, fourth, set of photographs in addition to those already known? Considering the interest and efforts of the Ottomans in producing photographic copies of the Qubba materials in Istanbul, it seems not unlikely that some local member of the Ottoman administration in Damascus might also have had photo-

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83 Gertrude Bell's diary entry, Friday, 1 June 1900; Gertrude Bell Archive, http://gertrude-bell.ncl.ac.uk/.

84 The "Vali" or *wāli* to whom Bell refers is most likely Wali Nazim Pasha; see Radiciotti and D'Ottone, "I frammenti", p. 48.

85 Gertrude Bell, *The Desert and the Sown*, London: W. Heinemann 1907, p. 142. This small note would be sufficient to contradict the claim that "her descriptions offered no startling new conclusions or insights about the people or places visited"; Lisa Cooper, "Archaeology and Acrimony: Gertrude Bell, Ernst Herzfeld and the Study of Pre-Modern Mesopotamia", *Iraq* 75 (2013), 144.



Fig. 4: Damascus, March 1905; possibly Wali Nazim Pasha. (Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University: Photograph B_089.)

graphs made of the fragments.[86] Further research in Bell's archival materials might be fruitful in recovering these Damascus pictures.[87] Equally, though, one wonders whether the wali (see fig. 4) might perhaps have accorded the same generosity to

[86] I wish to thank Konrad Hirschler for an exchange of thoughts on this matter.
[87] Indeed, I have already planned a trip to Newcastle to search the Gertrude Bell Archive.

other foreigners, and if the current lack of the Ottoman series of photographs (set 2) may in fact be linked to their dispersion via the wali.[88]

In *The Desert and the Sown*, Bell also gives some hints about the presence, in private hands, of some parchment folios – likely some leaves of old Korans.

> There was another morning no less pleasant when I went with the faithful Selīm to pay my respects on a charming old man, the most famous scribe in all the city, Mustafa el Asbāʾi was his name. He lived in a house decorated with the exquisite taste of two hundred years ago inlaid with coloured marbles and overlaid with gesso duro worked in patterns like the frontispiece of an illuminated Persian manuscript and painted in soft rich colours in which gold and golden brown predominated. We were taken through the reception rooms into a little chamber on an upper floor where Mustafa was wont to sit and write those texts that are the pictures of the Muslim East. It was hung round with examples from celebrated hands ancient and modern, among which I recognized that of my friend Muhammad ʿAli, son of Beha Ullaḥ the Persian prophet, to my mind the most skilful penman of our day, though Oriental preference goes out to another Persian of the same religious sect, Mushḳin Kalam, and him also I count among my friends. We sat on cushions and drank coffee, turning over exquisite manuscripts of all dates and countries, some written on gold and some on silver, some on brocade and *some on supple parchment (several of these last being pages of Kufic texts abstracted from the Ḳubbet el Khazneh before it was closed)* [my emphasis][89]

The photograph of the Qubbat al-khazna in the Gertrude Bell Archive (see fig. 5) shows the open door of the building that, at that time (February 1905), seems to be empty, and a number of children playing in the courtyard of the mosque.[90] Considering that the final transfer to Istanbul of the manuscript material took place in 1917, one may wonder where the fragments were stored in Damascus prior to their departure for the Ottoman capital.

Overview of this volume
(Arianna D'Ottone Rambach)

This volume gathers together sixteen papers – in English, Arabic, and German – most of which were originally presented at the international workshop entitled "Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria: Towards a History of the Qubbat al-Khazna Depository in Damascus", which took place in Berlin on 28–29 June 2018 at the Freie Universität Berlin and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.[91]

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88 On the importance of recovering the photographs taken by the Ottoman administration, see the contribution of Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler in this volume.

89 Bell, *Desert*, p. 148.

90 It seems meaningful to compare the photograph on the cover of the present volume, the one in fig. 2 of Boris Liebrenz's contribution to this volume, and that in fig. 2 of Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann's contribution, in which the Qubba has a closed door, with the photograph taken by Bell in 1905, in which the door of the Qubba seems to be missing.

91 See the programme in fig. 6 below. Unfortunately, Eyyad al-Tabba (Damascus University) was not able to come to Berlin in 2018.



Fig. 5: Great Mosque, Damascus: The Qubbat al-khazna, February 1905. (Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University: Photograph B_075.)

In addition to the thirteen papers presented during the workshop, this volume also includes two further papers – one by Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler and one by Fabio Ioppolo – as well as a translated text. This latter is the article by

Levon Khachikyan and Artashes Matevosyan in which Armenian fragments from the Qubba are discussed: it was originally published in 1972 in Armenian and has had a very limited readership so far, therefore it seemed worth including an English version in the volume. The volume ends with a cumulative bibliography, compiled by Simone Petrillo, which, as well as containing the bibliographical references quoted by the various authors in the volume, includes a number of titles related to the study of the Qubbat al-khazna material that we considered useful to put together to offer the reader a wider picture of the manuscript materials already published and linked to the Qubba.

The volume is divided into two main sections based on the focus of the chapters: six deal with the history of the Qubba as a repository of manuscript fragments, and ten examine the multilingual material contained in it.

In the first section, examining the history of the Qubbat al-khazna, Boris Liebrenz begins by offering new insights on the opening of the Qubba in the mid-nineteenth century and the recent recovery of one folio of the Koran of Amājūr in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, which came from the estate of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein.[92] Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann relate, through precious unpublished documents – diaries, notebooks, and letters – the arrival of Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1900, and his painstaking work on the fragments. Fabio Ioppolo's contribution sheds light on the interest that Edward Thomas Roger (1831–1884), an English diplomat of the mid-nineteenth century, had in "Cufic books and manuscripts" from the Qubba, and on the journey of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (1841–1910), to Damascus in 1862. Christoph Markschies's contribution deals with the key figure in Berlin, the theologian Hermann Freiherr von Soden (1852–1914), who took the initiative to organise Bruno Violet's trip to Damascus, and investigates his biography, career, and scientific interests. The story of the Qubbat al-khazna through Arabic sources is the focus of Said Aljoumani's paper, with a particular focus on the different names that have been used to refer to the Qubba over the course of the centuries. Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler, in their turn, offer a counter-account of the 1900 "discovery" of the Qubba materials, until now considered almost invariably as a Western discovery, showing, through archival documents, how the Ottoman administration and the local authorities in Damascus were conscious of the significance of the manuscript fragments preserved in the Qubba. In particular, when it comes to the temporary loan of some of the fragments to Germany, it appears very clear that the Ottomans, both in Damascus and in Istanbul, made all the efforts needed in order to document the fragments through photographs and ensure that they would get them back.

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92 The recovery of this folio in Berlin comes after the publication, in 2019, of three folios from the same multivolume Koran, which researchers believe remained in Damascus, although their history is not documented until 2007. In 2007 I had the occasion to photograph them in the permanent exhibition of the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy in the Syrian capital; see D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi".

The second section of the volume consists of studies devoted to the manuscript material itself, and each contribution deals with a specific language or a specific type of manuscript evidence. Ronny Vollandt presents a codicological reconstruction, as well as a complete edition, comparing two fragments containing Arabic translations of the book of Exodus and the book of Psalms with other known biblical manuscripts in Arabic from the collection of St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai. Gideon Bohak offers a broad overview of the Jewish texts found in the Qubba, including both documentary and literary texts, and gives a thorough analysis of the origin and the significance of this evidence. Among the documents, datable to the twelfth century, there is a ketubah, in Aramaic, a deed of sale for a house, written "in the town of Damascus", and a legal deed. As for the literary texts, they are mostly fragments of biblical manuscripts – in some cases the Hebrew text is the *scriptio inferior* in palimpsests with Syriac as *scriptio superior*, but there is also a rotulus containing the Mishnah Avot and other fragments of various codices in Hebrew as well as in Judaeo-Arabic. The Christian Arabic texts in the Qubba are identified and examined by Miriam Hjälm, who performs a palaeographical analysis of the Christian Arabic script and attributes the fragments to ninth- or tenth-century Palestine. Grigory Kessel's contribution is devoted to the Syriac manuscript fragments that represent "one of the largest groups of non-Arabic fragments" found in the Qubba. Kessel gives a rich and detailed account of already published studies which are devoted to Syriac fragments, and offers an outline of the unpublished material, which consists mainly of biblical and liturgical texts but also includes theological, homiletic, and exegetical texts. The fragments examined by Kessel are, in some instances, palimpsests, with Syriac–Hebrew and Syriac–Syriac fragments, and even fragments with Syriac as a second layer between Greek (*scriptio inferior*) and Arabic (*scriptio superior*).

As for the Greek Byzantine evidence, a significant nucleus of fragments containing Christian hymns is presented by Francesco D'Aiuto and Donatella Bucca who offer an in-depth study of these texts and their scripts, highlighting the extremely high number of graphic phenomena that the Qubba material mirrors on the whole. Their contribution focuses, in particular, on the so-called mixed script and the study of hymnographic fragments, which leads, in some cases, to the identification of archaic liturgical commemoration that is not otherwise attested.

The manuscript evidence in the Latin alphabet has been reconsidered by Serena Ammirati, who offers, in her contribution, some thoughts on the presence of material of that type in the Qubba in order to contextualise them and place them in a wider Mediterranean context. Gabriele Giannini and Laura Minervini, in their paper, discuss the Old French textual evidence, which consists of an apologetic poem against Judaic criticism, an excerpt from the *Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne*, a bifolium carrying the extended version of the twelfth-century chanson de geste of *Fierabras*, and some scraps of the *Enfances Godefroi* in Gothic script datable to the first half of the thirteenth century. Moreover, Giannini and Minervini make some

Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria

Towards a history of the Qubbat al-khazna depository in Damascus

Berlin, 28 & 29 June 2018

Organised by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (Sapienza - Università di Roma), Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin), Ronny Vollandt (LMU München), Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften; Funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation

Thursday, 28 June

Venue: Freie Universität Berlin, Topoi House, Hittorfstraße 18, 14195 Berlin

9:30 Welcome by Klaus Mühlhahn, Vice President of Freie Universität Berlin

9:45 Introduction to Conference

10:00-11:30 *Session 1 The Qubba's history and its academic discovery I*

Chair: Sara Nur Yildiz (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

Said Aljoumani (Scholars at Risk/Freie Universität Berlin): *The pre-Ottoman history of the Qubbat al-Khazna*

Boris Liebrenz (Freie Universität Berlin/The Graduate Center, City University of New York): *Fire, Consuls, Scholars - Conflicting Views on the Discovery of the Qubbat al-Khazna Documents*

11:30-12:00 Coffee Break

12:00-1:30 *Session 2 Looking beyond the Qubba and Syria*

Chair: Stefan Weber (Museum für Islamische Kunst im Pergamonmuseum Berlin)

Miriam Lindgren-Hjälm (Stockholm School of Theology, Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy): *What has Damascus to do with Sinai? Paleographical similarities in Christian-Arabic texts preserved in the Qubba and in Saint Catherine's Monastery*

Ronny Vollandt (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München): *The Qubbat al-Khazna and the Cairo Genizah: a typological comparison*

Fig. 6a–c: The programme of the international workshop on "Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria", 28–29 June 2018.

1:30-2:30 Lunch

2:30-4:00 *Session 3 Mapping corpora: Judaism & Syriac*

Chair: Lukas Mühlethaler (Freie Universität Berlin, Jewish Studies)

Gideon Bohak (Tel-Aviv University): *The Jewish Texts from the Damascus Genizah*

Grigory Kessel (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften): *A survey of the fragments from Syriac manuscripts found in Qubbat al-Khazna*

4:00-4:30 Coffee Break

4:30-6:00 *Session 4 Studying scripts*

Chair: Verena Lepper (Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Berlin)

Ahmad al-Jallad (Universiteit Leiden): *An embryonic Graeco-Arabic script? The transcription system of the Psalm Fragment in light of Greek transcriptions of Arabic from the early Islamic and pre-Islamic periods*

Francesco D'Aiuto (Tor Vergata - Università di Roma)/Donatella Bucca (Tor Vergata - Università di Roma): *The Greek hymnographic fragments of Damascus: scripts and texts*

7:30 Conference Dinner

Fig. 6b

Friday, 29 June

Venue: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Unter den Linden 8, 10117 Berlin

9:00-10:30 *Session 5 The Qubba's history and its academic discovery II*

Chair: Christoph Rauch (Staatsbibliothek Berlin)

Cordula Bandt/Arnd Rattmann (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften): *Bruno Violet and the exploration of the Qubbat al-khazna around 1900*

Christoph Markschies (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften): *Hermann von Soden: Some remarks on a Berlin Professor undeservedly fallen into oblivion*

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-1:15 *Session 6 Mapping corpora: Coptic & Latin & Old French*

Alin Suciu (Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen): *The Coptic Fragments from the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus*

Serena Ammirati (University of RomaTre): *Again on the Latin Fragments of Damascus: A further Analysis of the oldest items*

Laura Minervini (Università di Napoli Federico II)/Gabriele Giannini (Université de Montréal): *The Old French Texts of Damascus Qubbat al-Khazna*

1:15-2:30 Lunch

2:30-4:45 *Session 7 Mapping corpora: Arabic*

Chair: Beatrice Gründler (Freie Universität Berlin, Arabic Studies)

Eyad al-Ṭabbāʿ (University of Damascus): *A preliminary catalogue of the Koran manuscripts in the Umayyad Mosque: Overview and Analysis*

Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin): *Binding fragments from the Qubbat al-Khazna in Syrian* manuscripts

Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (Sapienza - Università di Roma): *Unpublished Exemplars of Block-Printed Arabic Amulets from the Qubbat al-Khazna*

4:45-5:15 Coffee Break

5:15-6:00 Future Initiatives

3

Fig. 6c

hypotheses about the ways in which these fragments entered the Qubba and their original regions of provenance.

Khachikyan and Matevosyan discuss fragments that are held in the National Museum in Damascus and that had – as we know now – previously been in Berlin between 1902 and 1909. As their article adds a fascinating perspective to the question of the origin of material that entered the Qubba we decided to have it translated and included in this volume. Arianna D'Ottone Rambach focuses her contribution on a couple of unpublished block-printed amulets, likely dating back to the eighth/fourteenth century. She examines their contents – both textual and iconographic – and their meanings, stressing their significance for the history of the printing technique and for their contribution to this specific type of para-religious text. Last but not least, Konrad Hirschler opens up the perspective by considering the role of the Qubba fragments in the context of the wider manuscript culture and book production, proposing that the Qubbat al-khazna was, from Ayyubid times on, a source for manuscript producers and bookbinders. Hirschler puts the practice of reusing writing material in Damascus in context, employing a corpus of 4000 Arabic-Islamic manuscripts which are primarily, but not exclusively, from the al-Asad National Library in Damascus. From this vast corpus he has identified some 400 cases of fragments in different script and languages which have been reused, primarily for book bindings.

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The History of the Qubbat al-khazna

تاريخ قبة المال، أو قبة عائشة، أو القبة الغربية أو قبة الخزنة في الجامع الأموي بدمشق

د. سعيد ضامن الجوماني

The history of the *qubbat al-māl* or *qubbat ʿĀ'isha* or *al-qubba al-gharbiyya* or the *qubbat al-khazna* in the Umayyad Mosque

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This chapter discusses the history of the dome that is at the centre of this volume. It shows that the dome has carried multiple names that have changed over time and that it has fulfilled different functions in its history. It was built as the *qubbat al-māl*, the "dome of the funds", during the governorship of al-Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ (d. 172/788) in the Abbasid period, and during this period it served as a depository for the treasury. This financial function ceased in the early tenth/sixteenth century at the latest, and more probably at some point in the previous centuries, and the dome then started to function as a depository for worn-out books, especially Koran manuscripts. However, it was not only a depository, as we also have reports about moments when books were taken out. From the eighth/fourteenth century onwards we also see that the name of the dome changes from *qubbat al-māl* to *qubbat ʿĀ'isha*, linking the dome to this wife of the Prophet Muhammad. From the moment it was built this dome was also alternatively known as *al-qubba al-gharbiyya*, the "western dome". The term *qubbat al-khazna* or *qubbat al-khazīna*, in contrast, is not used at all until the modern period, and Arabic authors only start to widely adopt it in the course of the twentieth century.

يُعدُّ الجامعُ الأموي القلبَ النابضَ لمدينةِ دمشقَ، ومصدرَ فخرِ الدماشقة ومهوى أفئدتهم. بقي الجامع بهجة للناظرين ونزهة للمتفرجين إلى أن طالت ألسنة اللهب كثيراً من محاسنه في حريق سنة (٤٦١هـ/١٠٦٩م)[١]. ولم تزل الخطوب والنوائب تنزل بأركانه؛ إذ سلبَهُ زلزالُ سنة (٥٩٧هـ/١٢٠١م)[٢]،

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١ - ابن القلانسي: تاريخ أبي يُعلى حمزة ابن القلانسي: ٩٦، ابن شداد: الأعلاق الخطيرة، تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ٧٤.

٢ - أبو شامة: تراجم رجال القرنين السادس والسابع: ٢٠، الذهبي: تاريخ الإسلام: ج ٤٢: ٣٨.

كثيراً من جماله ورونقه فهدمَ قسماً من المنارة الشرقية وأسقط ست عشرة شرفة من شرفاته إضافة إلى تصدعات أصابت قبة النسر، وعاوده حريق آخر سنة (٧٤٠هـ/١٣٤٠م)[٣]. ثم حريق ثالث سنة (٧٥٣هـ/١٣٥٢م)، تلاه حريق سنة (٧٧٤هـ/١٣٧٢م)، أثّر تأثيراً بالغاً في بنيان الجامع حتى اضطرهم الأمر أن ينقلوا إليه بقايا أعمدة ومأذنة جامع خَرِبٍ كان في حارة الكشك[٤]. وفي أيام تيمورلنك (٨٠٣هـ/١٤٠١م)، أصابه حريق عظيم احترقت فيه المصاحف وكتب العلم[٥]، وما كادت أرجاؤه تستعيد أنفاسَها حتى دهمَهُ حريقٌ سادسٌ سنة (٨٨٤هـ/١٤٧٩م)، إلا أن الطامةَ الكبرى كانت سنة (١٣١٠هـ/١٨٩٣م) لما سرت النار في سقوفه فدَثرتْ آخر ما بقي من آثاره وأثاثه ورياشه، وحُرق فيه مصحفٌ كبير بالخط الكوفي القديم، كان الناس يظنون أنه المصحف العثماني[٦].

وهكذا نرى أن النيران المتعاقبة جرَّدت الجامع من محاسنه وزخارفه وأثاثه، ومن ضمنها جزء كبير من فرائد مخطوطاته، إلا أن هناك قسماً من مخطوطات الجامع كان محفوظاً في قبته الغربية؛ فصانتها هذه القبة

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٣ - صلاح الدين المنجد. حريق الجامع الأموي بدمشق سنة ٧٤٠ هـ. مجلة المجمع العلمي العربي دمشق. مج ٣١، ج١ (كانون الثاني ١٩٥٦م). ص ص ٣٥ – ٤٧.

٤ - حبيب الزيّات. حارات دمشق القديمة لشمس الدين بن طولون الدمشقي الصالحي (٨٨٠- ٩٥٣هـ/ ١٤٧٥ – ١٥٤٦م). مجلة المشرق، ع١ (يناير ١٩٣٧). ص ٣٤.

٥ - المجموعة الزملكانية في التاريخ نقلاً عن طاهر الجزائري: دفتر منوعات: مج (١١٤٧٧): الورقة [٢١/ ب]. أما حديثه عن احتراق مصحف عثمان الذي كان موضوعاً بمقصورة الجامع، فهذا كلام فيه نظر، ليس من حيث احتراق مصحف قديم كان بالمقصورة، بل من حيث نسبته إلى الخليفة عثمان بن عفان. فكما قال محمد كرد علي "كلما حُرِقَ مصحف قديم قال القوم إنّه مصحف عثمان". محمد كرد علي: خطط الشام: ج٦: ١٨٩.

٦ - محمد كرد علي: خطط الشام: ج٥: ٢٧٨ – ٢٧٩. جمال الدين القاسمي: تعطير المشام في محاسن الشام في حريق الجامع الأموي وبناؤه: ١٣. محمد عز الدين بن حسين عربي كاتبي: الروضة البهية: ٩١. وهذا يؤكد ما مرَّ بأنه كلما احترق مصحف قديم قالوا عنه: مصحف عثمان.

عن طمع الحرائق وجبروت الزلازل، وأدت الأمانة حتى سنة ١٩٠٠م، حيث خرج ما في جعبتها إلى برلين[٧]، والأستانة، ولاحقاً إلى المتحف الوطني بدمشق[٨].

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٧ - "وقد بلغنا أن الحضرة الشاهانية طلبت هذه الأوراق وفي نيتها - حفظها الله – أن تهديها إلى جلالة إمبراطور ألمانيا". لويس شيخو. عاديَّات كتابية. مجلة المشرق، السنة الخامسة، ع ١٤ (تموز ١٩٠٢). ص ٦٧١. وجاء عند محمد أبو الفرج العش " ولما أراد السلطان عبد الحميد الثاني أن يكرم الإمبراطور الألماني ولهلم الثاني سأله هذا أن يُهديه المخطوطات السريانية المودعة في **قبة الخزنة** من جامع بني أمية؛ فقدمها إليه دون أن يعلم قيمة هذه الهدية". محمد أبو الفرج العش. المتحف الوطني بدمشق نواة المديرية العامة للآثار والمتاحف، مجلة مجمع اللغة العربية بدمشق، مج ٤٤، ج ١-٢ (كانون الثاني ١٩٦٩). ص ص ٣٧٥ – ٣٧٦.

٨ - بُني المتحف الوطني بدمشق أيام الاحتلال الفرنسي سنة ١٩٢٠م، واتخذ من المدرسة العادلية مقراً له في بادئ الأمر، وكان يتبع إدارياً إلى المجمع العلمي العربي، وهناك إشارة مهمة عند محمد كرد علي تبين كيفية انتقال جزء من مخطوطات القبة إلى المتحف الوطني - دار الآثار قديماً - حيث قال " فأهدى السلطان [عبد الحميد الثاني] معظمها لعاهل ألمانيا، ووُزع قسمٌ على بعض رجال الأستانة ورجال دمشق، **واستُخلصت بعض** قطع منها حُفِظت الآن في دار الآثار في هذه المدينة واهمها تلك القطعة الكوفية المكتوبة على رق غزال من ربعة شريفة وقفها عبد المنعم بن أحمد سنة ٢٩٨ وعلى الوجه الثاني نقش مذهب باسم واقفها". محمد كرد علي: خطط الشام: ج٦: ٢٠٠. وكلمة استُخلصت: تشير إلى أن عملية تقصي جرت لمعرفة المستولين على المخطوطات، ومن ثم أُكرِهوا لرد ما أخذوه، وأن بعضاً آخر بقي عند المستولين عليها. فهناك عشرون سنة بين خروج المخطوطات من القبة وبين استعادة ما وُزع منها على رجال دمشق ووضعه في دار الآثار، فقد يكون أحدهم باعها، أو توفي وتصرف أبناؤه فيها. ولكن القطعة الكوفية الموقوفة من قِبل عبد المنعم بن أحمد محفوظة الآن في المتحف الوطني فقد جاء عند الامير جعفر الحسني أول محافظ لدار الآثار/ المتحف الوطني: "ع/٢٢ :رق غزال مذهب من ربعة قرآنية وقد كتب عليه بخط كوفي هذه العبارة، وقف هذه الأجزاء وهي ثلاثون جزءً[ا] في المسجد الجامع بدمشق عبد المنعم بن أحمد طلبًا لثواب الله وابتغاء مرضاته في ذي القعدة سنة ثمان وتسعين ومائتين ."جعفر الحسني .دليل مختصر .112 :وهذا أكد دليل على انتقال مخطوطات من قبة المال إلى المتحف الوطني .كما يقول عيسى إسكندر المعلوف عند وصفه مقتنيات المتحف: أنَّ فيه "كتابات كوفيَّة ونسخيَّة أقدمها سنة ٤٧٥هـ، وكتابات قديمة باللغات العربية والسريانية والقبطية والعبرانية على رقِ غزال **مما كان في قبة الجامع الأموي**، وأخذه الألمان منذ سنوات. فحفظ المتحف بعضه[ا] مما جمعه". عيسى إسكندر المعلوف. المتحف العربي في دمشق. مجلة الهلال، ع٣ (ديسمبر ١٩٢٢). ص ٢٤٥. وفي الحقيقة ليست لدي أية معلومة عن نقل أجزاء من مخطوطات قبة المال المودعة في المتحف الوطني إلى متحف الخط العربي المُنشأ سنة ١٩٧٥ في المدرسة الجقمقية.

ولكن هذه القبة الشامخة على ثمانية أعمدة في الجهة الغربية من صحن الجامع الأموي بدمشق، تطرح بوقفتها تلك على ذهن الناظر إليها عدة تساؤلات هي: من بناها؟ ومتى بُنيت؟ ولأي سببٍ بُنيت؟.

البحث في تاريخ الجامع الأموي والإجابة عن هذه التساؤلات :

تولى الفضل بن صالح بن علي بن عبد الله العباسي إمارة دمشق تسع سنين (من سنة ١٤٩هـ إلى سنة ١٥٨ هـ/ من سنة ٧٦٦م إلى سنة٧٧٥م) فقد ذكر أبو زرعة عند سؤاله محمد بن العلاء بن زهير، عن سنة وفاة أبي حفص عثمان بن أبي عاتكة، " قلت: متى مات؟ قال: مات وعلينا الفضل بن صالح، ولينا سنة تسع وأربعين ومائة، ولينا تسع سنين"[٩].

أي أنَّ ولاية الفضل بن صالح لمدينة دمشق كانت إبان خلافة أبي جعفر المنصور (ت ١٥٨هـ/٧٧٥م) وليس في خلافة ابنه المهدي (ت ١٦٩هـ/٧٨٥م) فالأخير ولاه على مصر[١٠].

وكان من إنجازات الأمير الفضل بن صالح (ت ١٧٢هـ/٧٨٨م) خلال إمارته على دمشق. أنه عمل أبواب الجامع الأموي، والقبة التي في الصحن وتُعرف بقبة المال[١١]. وبالتالي فإن بناء قبة المال في جامع بني أمية بدمشق كان في العصر العباسي، وفي عهد الخليفة أبي جعفر المنصور، وليس سنة (١٦٠هـ/٧٧٧م)

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٩ - أبو زرعة: تاريخ أبي زرعة: ج١: ٢٦٢، ابن عساكر: تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ج٤٨: ٣١٨. ورواية أبي زرعة (ت ٢٨١ هـ/٨٩٤م)، عن تولي الفضل إمرة دمشق سنة ١٤٩ هـ، والتي نقلها عنه ابن عساكر لاحقاً، هي أصدق من رواية الصفدي المتاخر (ت ٧٦٤ هـ/١٣٦٣م). حيث قال: " ولما مات [أي صالح بن علي بن عبد الله] ولَّى ابنه الفضل بن صالح على الشام، وقيل إنه مات سنة اثنتين وخمسن ومئة". أي أن ولاية الفضل بن صالح على الشام كانت سنة ١٥٢ هـ/٧٦٩م. الصفدي: تحفة ذوي الألباب: ج١: ١٩٦.

١٠ - ابن عساكر: تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ج٤٨: ٣١٨، الصفدي: تحفة ذوي الألباب: ج١: ٢٠١، الصفدي: أمراء دمشق في الإسلام: ٨٤، الصفدي: الوافي بالوفيات: ج ٢٤: ٣٧، الذهبي: تاريخ الإسلام: ج ١١: ٢٩٣- ٢٩٤، الذهبي: العبر في خبر من غبر: ج١: ٢٠٢، الذهبي: سير أعلام النبلاء: ج٩: ٢٢٢. ابن تغري بردي: النجوم الزاهرة: ج٢: ٧٨.

١١ - انظر المراجع في الحاشية السابقة. و سبط ابن الجوزي: مرآة الزمان: ج١٢: ٤٣٩، النعيمي: الدارس في تاريخ المدارس: ج٢: ٢٩٦، عبد القادر بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ٣٥٩.

في زمن الخليفة المهدي كما ذكر ابن كثير نقلاً عن الذهبي حيث قال: سمعت " شيخنا الذهبي يقول: إنها إنما بُنيت في حدود سنة ستين ومائة في أيام المهدي بن المنصور العباسي"[١٢]، وكما تبعه في ذلك بعض المؤرخين المُحدَثين[١٣].

وقد تفرَّدَ أبو البقاء البدري، المتأخر (ت ٨٩٣هـ/١٤٨٩م) فنسب بناء القبة إلى الوليد بن عبد الملك (ت ٩٦هـ/٧١٥م) فقال" كان في الركنين الشماليين صومعتان كالمقابلة فهدمهما الوليد، وجُعل من بعض آلتهما قبتان على أعمدة في صحن الجامع، وجُعل فيهما خلوتان من فوق الأعمدة وأودع بهما كتب أوقاف الجامع ومصاريفه، ويُقفل عليهما بالأقفال الحديد المانعة"[١٤].

ونقل هذه الرواية ابن كنان الصالحي (ت ١١٥٣هـ/١٧٤٠م) مع شيء من التصرف المُخل؛ فذكر " يُقال: في الركنين الشماليين صومعتان كالمقابلة، فيهما خلوتان من فوق الأعمدة. فيها[١٥] كتب الأوقاف، ويُقفل عليها[١٦] بالحديد"[١٧]. ووافقها ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي (ت ١١٣٨هـ/١٧٢٦م) حيث قال " أما القبة الغربية التي بصحن الجامع الأموي فإنها في غاية الحُسن، وقد بناها الوليد بن عبد الملك لحفظ كتب الأوقاف التي أوقفها على الجامع للاحتفاظ عليها"[١٨].

ومما يُضعف هذه الرواية أن أبا البقاء البدري جعل بناء القبتين في زمنٍ واحدٍ، ناهيك عن أنه جعل لهما الوظيفة ذاتها، وهي حفظ كتب وقف الجامع ومصاريفه. والظاهر أنه يقصد بالقبة الثانية القبة الشرقية؛

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١٢ - ابن كثير: البداية والنهاية: ج٩: ١٥٩.

١٣ - محمد كرد علي: خطط الشام: ج٥: ٢٧٦. حيث قال " القبة الغربية التي في صحنه ويسمسها الناس قبة عائشة، وغالب ظني أنها بنيت في سنة ستين ومائة في أيام المهدي". حبيب الزيات: خزائن الكتب في دمشق وضواحيها: ٣، في الحاشية. أما عي الطنطاوي فيجعلها سنة (١٧١ هـ). انظر علي الطنطاوي: الجامع الأموي: ٢٣.

١٤ - البدري: نزهة الأنام في محاسن الشام: ٤١ – ٤٢.

١٥ - هكذا في الأصل وربما يريد فيهما.

١٦ - هكذا في الأصل وربما يريد عليها.

١٧ - ابن كنان الصالحي: المواكب الإسلامية: ق١: ٤٠٤.

١٨ - ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي: حدائق الإنعام في فضائل الشام: ١٥٣.

لأن القبة التي في وسط الصحن، قبة مجوَّفة[١٩]، اتُخذت كمظلة لفوارة الماء تحتها فلا يمكن أن يُحفظ فيها شيء. وأما القبة الشرقية فقد بُنيت في حدود سنة (٤٠٠هـ/١٠٠٩م)[٢٠]، والذي يدعم قيامها في هذا التاريخ أن المقدسي البشاري المتوفى نحو (٣٨٠هـ/٩٩٠م) عندما وصف الجامع الأموي أتى على وصف القبة الغربية بالتفصيل، ولم يذكر القبة الشرقية؛ لأن الأخيرة لم تكن قائمة في أيامه[٢١]. وعلى العموم فأبو البقاء البدري مؤرخ متأخر. وأما ما يثير الريبة في كلام ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي، ويُشكك في أخباره أنه جعل القبة الشرقية هي قبة عائشة[٢٢].

الغاية من إنشاء القبة:

وفيما يخص الغاية التي أنشئت من أجلها هذه القبة. فيجيبنا ابن كثير بأنهم " جعلوها لحواصل الجامع، وكتب أوقافه"[٢٣]. ولكن يُستشف من كلام الرحالة والمؤرخين الذين كتبوا عن جامع دمشق، بأن هناك تغيرات طرأت على وظيفة هذه القبة، وكذلك على اسمها.

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١٩ - ابن جبير: رحلة ابن جبير: ٢٤٠. وهذه القبة بُنيت سنة (٣٩٦هـ). انظر ابن شداد: الأعلاق الخطيرة، تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ٧٥. عبد القادر بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ٣٦١، حسن عبد الوهاب. الجامع الأموي بدمشق. مجلة المجلة، ع ١٥ (١ مارس ١٩٥٨)، ص ٣٦. وهذا التاريخ أقرب إلى الحقيقة من التاريخ (٣٦٩هـ)، الذي قد يكون مُصحفاً عن الأول، وقد ذكره ابن عساكر: تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ج٢: ٢٦٤. لأن المقدسي البشاري (ت ٣٨٠هـ). لم يذكر هذه القبة عند وصفه للجامع.

٢٠ - ابن كثير: البداية والنهاية: ج٩: ١٥٩. وإن كان بعض المحدثين يجعل تاريخ بناء القبة الشرقية سنة (١٦٠هـ)، انظر عبد القادر بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ٣٦١، عفيف بهنسي: الجامع الأموي الكبير: ١٠٥، علي الطنطاوي: الجامع الأموي في دمشق: ٢٤. وحتى هذا التاريخ (١٦٠ هـ) يقع أيام المهدي العباسي، وليس أيام الوليد بن عبد الملك الأموي.

٢١ - المقدسي: أحسن التقاسيم: ١٥٧ – ١٥٨.

٢٢ - ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي: حدائق الأنعام في فضائل الشام: ١٥٤.

٢٣ - ابن كثير: البداية والنهاية: ج٩: ١٥٩. البدري: نزهة الأنام في محاسن الشام: ٤٢.

والبداية ستكون مع ما جاء عند الإصطخري (ت ٣٤٦هـ/ ٩٧٥م) ففي حديثه عن بيت مال المسجد الجامع في مدينة برذعة من مدن أذربيجان قال: " وبيت مالهم في مسجد الجامع على رسم الشام فإنَّ بيوت أموال الشام في مساجدها، وهو بيت مال مرصَّص السطح وعليه باب حديد وهو على تسعة أساطين"[٢٤]. أي أن نموذج قبة المال في المدن الشامية أصبح مثالاً يُحتذى في مدن أخرى من العالم الإسلامي.

ثم قال المقدسي البشاري: " وعلى الميمنة في الصحن بيت مال على ثمانية عُمد، مُرصّع بالفسافساء [كذا]"[٢٥]. أي حتى زمن المقدسي كانت القبة تقوم بدور بيت المال.

وفي وصف الرحالة ابن جبير للقبة ذكر أن " في الصحن ثلاث قباب، إحداها في الجانب الغربي منه وهي أكبرها، وهي قائمة على ثمانية أعمدة من الرخام مستطيلة كالبرج، مزخرفة بالفصوص والأصبغة الملونة، كأنها الروضة الحسناء، وعليها قبة رصاص كأنها التنور العظيم الاستدارة، **يُقال**: إنها **كانت مخزناً لمال الجامع**"[٢٦]. وهذا الوصف كان في شهر ربيع الأول سنة (٥٨٠هـ/١١٨٤م) أي بعد كلام المقدسي بمئتي سنة. ويُلاحظ أن القبة في عهد ابن جبير تخلت عن وظيفتها كبيت للمال، ولم ترجع إليها أبداً.

وما يؤيد هذا الاستنتاج، أن الرحالة ابن بطوطة الذي زار دمشق في رمضان سنة (٧٢٦هـ/ ١٣٢٦م) سجل مشاهداته فيها، ومن بينها ما كتبه عن جامعها وقبة ماله؛ فقال: " **يُقال** أنَّ مال الجامع **كان يُختزن بها**"[٢٧].

ومن المهم ذكر ما أورده ابن شداد (ت ٦٨٤هـ/١٢٨٥م) حول ما فعله الملك الظاهر بيبرس عندما دخل دمشق سنة (٦٦٩هـ/١٢٧١م) إذ نظر في أوقاف الجامع الأموي " وتطلَّبَ كتب وقفه – وكانت قد أهمل النظر فيها – وأجرى الوقوف على شرط واقفيها، وإنما كان المتولي للنظر فيها يفعل فيها بمقتضى

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٢٤ - هكذا في الأصل تسعة أساطين أي أعمدة. الإصطخري: مسالك الممالك: ١٨٤. وانظر آرياناانا دوتون في هذا المجلد. وهنا أتوجه بالشكر إلى الدكتورة آريانا دوتون التي أرشدتني إلى هذا النص.

٢٥ - المقدسي: أحسن التقاسيم: ١٥٧.

٢٦ - ابن جبير: رحلة ابن جبير: ٢٤٠.

٢٧ - ابن بطوطة: رحلة ابن بطوطة: ج١: ٥٣.

رأيه في منعه وإعطائه. **فُمِلَت إليه بعد ما شقَّ على الباحث عنها وجودها**، فوجدها قد تمزق القديم منها، وما كان مما وقفه الملك العادل نور الدين محمود ومن بعده من الملوك قد كادت كتبها أن تتلف. **فأمر بإحياء خطوطها وإثباتها عند سائر القضاة**، واجتهد فيها حسبما اقتضته آراؤه السعيدة وأفعاله الرشيدة"[٢٨]. ويُفهم من هذا النص أحد أمرين:

- إما أن كتب وقف الجامع الأموي لم تكن في قبة المال، بدليل المشقة في البحث عنها وتتبعها، وأن كتب الوقف المُعاد تجديدها أثبتت عند سائر القضاة، وحُفِظَت عندهم وليس في قبة المال.

- وإما أن قبة المال كانت ملأى بالوثائق والمخطوطات المتراكمة المختلطة؛ فتعذر العثور على كتب الوقف بسهولة، وأنّ المُجدد منها حُفظ عند القضاة.

وفي شوال سنة (٩١٢هـ/ ١٥٠٧م) أمرَ نائبُ دمشقَ الأمير سيباي الأشرفي (ت ٩٢٢هـ/١٥١٦م) بفتح القبة؛ ففُتحت وصعدَ إليها بنفسه يرافقه متولي النظر على الجامع؛ فلم يجد فيها سوى مصاحف عتيقة[٢٩]. وهذا الخبر يُوضح أن القبة في هذا الوقت كانت خالية من أية وظيفة إلا حفظ المصاحف القديمة، وأنها لم تفتح منذ زمنٍ طويل، وأن تاريخها كبيت للمال هو ما أغرى النائب بفتحها على أمل الوقوع على كنز من الذهب والدنانير[٣٠].

ولكن المؤرخ المعاصر ابن سبَاط (المتوفى بُعيد ٩٢٦هـ/ ١٥٢٠م) أضاف إلى الخبر السابق تفصيلاً مهماً فذكر أنه في شوال من هذه السنة - أي ٩١٢هـ - صعد صاحب دمشق سيباي الأشرفي إلى القبة الموجودة في صحن الجامع الأموي بدمشق، **واستخرج منها كتباً كثيرة**، وعظُمَ ذلك على أهالي دمشق وتطيروا منه[٣١]. وهذا يعني أن جزءاً كبيراً من مخطوطات القبة خرج منها في هذه السنة، ولكن المؤرخ ابن

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٢٨ - ابن شداد: الأعلاق الخطيرة، تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ٨٠ – ٨١. النعيمي: الدارس في تاريخ المدارس: ج٢: ٣١٥.

٢٩ - ابن طولون: مفاكهة الخلان: القسم الأول: ٢٥٢.

٣٠ - وظل هذا الظن حياً حتى مطلع القرن العشرين؛ فيقول علي الطنطاوي " وكنا نتحدث ونحن أطفال أن فيها كنزاً". انظر علي الطنطاوي. في صحن الجامع الأموي. مجلة الرسالة، ع ٨٩ (١٨ مارس ١٩٣٥). ص ٤١٧.

٣١ - ابن سباط: تاريخ ابن سباط: ج٢: ٩٣١ – ٩٣٢.

سباط يصمت عن تحديد وجهة هذه الكتب، وأغلب الظن أنها استقرت في مدرسته السيبائية التي بناها في دمشق ما بين (٩١٥ – ٩٢١هـ/١٥٠٩- ١٥١٥م)[٣٢] فحسب تعليل القلقشندي (ت ٨٢١هـ/١٤١٨م) لقلة عناية الملوك بخزائن الكتب، هو استعاضتهم عنها بخزائن كتب المدارس التي ابتنوها، أي لم تخلو مدرسة منشأة من خزانة كتبٍ[٣٣].

وفي رجب سنة (١٠٨١هـ/ ١٦٧٠م) زار إبراهيم بن عبد الرحمن الخياري الجامع الأموي، ووصف القبة الغربية بأنها " مرفوعة على عمدها في عليَّة لها باب مغلق لا يُدرى ما فيها، **ويزعم** بعض الناس ممن لقيناهم أن بها مكاتيب الأوقاف إما عموماً خشية الحريق، وإما ما يتعلق بالمسجد ووقفه خصوصاً، أو هو ما يتعلق بأموال اليتامى والأوصياء، أو أنها لتوضع أموال اليتامى لتحفظ هناك خشية الضياع، أو لغير ذلك مما الله أعلم به"[٣٤]. وكل هذه الفرضيات توحي بالغموض الذي لفَّ القبة جرَّاء عدم استخدامها وإغلاقها منذ زمنٍ طويلٍ.

تسميات القبة عبر القرون:

فيما يخص اسم القبة، يُلاحظ أن القرون الهجرية السبعة الأولى اعتمدت تسمية قبة المال مع استخدام مصطلح (القبة الغربية) للتميز بينها وبين القبة الشرقية في صحن الجامع التي تشابهها بأعمدتها الثمانية ولكنها أصغر منها وهي قبة زين العابدين[٣٥]. وعلى الرغم من انتهاء وظيفتها كبيت للمال منذ القرن السادس على أبعد تقدير. إلا أن تلك الوظيفة كانت ذات سطوة كبيرة على ذاكرة المجتمع.

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٣٢ - النعيمي: الدارس: ج١: ٤٠٧، ابن بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ١٧٥.

٣٣ - القلقشندي: صبح الأعشى: ج١: ٤٦٧.

٣٤ - الخياري: رحلة الخياري: ج١: ١٦٨.

٣٥ - ابن جبير: رحلة ابن جبير: ٢٤٠. ابن بطوطة: رحلة ابن بطوطة: ج١: ٥٣.

ومع القرن الثامن الهجري تطغى على القبة في كتب التراث تسمية **قبة عائشة** وإن لم تنعدم تسمية قبة المال. وترد عند الصفدي (ت٧٦٤هـ/١٣٦٣م) إشارة مهمة إلى هذا التحول فيصرّح " والقبة التي في الصحن وتُعرف بقبة المال، وهي الآن تُعرف بقبة عائشة"[٣٦].

ونجد عند ابن كثير (ت٧٧٤هـ/١٣٧٣م) ما نصه " وأما القبة الغربية العالية التي في صحن الجامع، التي يُقال لها قبة عائشة"[٣٧].

أما ابن بطوطة (ت٧٧٩هـ/١٣٧٧م) فذكر " وفي هذا الصحن ثلاث من القباب إحداها في غربيه وهي أكبرها تُسمى قبة عائشة أم المؤمنين"[٣٨].

وبالنسبة إلى أصل تسمية قبة عائشة. فقد ذكر ياقوت الحموي أن الدماشقة سرت بينهم قصة مفادها أن عائشة زوج النبي مدفونة في هذه القبة فنُسبت إليها، لكنه يُبين أن هذه القصة خاطئة لأن عائشة مدفونة في البقيع[٣٩]. ولكن ابن بطوطة يجتهد في تصحيح هذا الخبر فيذكر أن القبة سُميت بهذا الاسم لأن عائشة سَمَّعَت الحديثَ في الموضع الذي يلي القبة، حيث يلتقي الرواقان الغربي والجوفي[٤٠].

وحتى تصح هذه القصة فلا بدَّ أن تكون جرت قبل بناء القبة؛ فعائشة توفيت سنة (٥٨هـ/ ٦٧٨م) والقبة بُنيت (بين سنة ١٤٩هـ إلى سنة ١٥٨ هـ/ وسنة ٧٦٦م إلى سنة ٧٧٥م) كما مرَّ آنفاً.

وعلى جميع الأحوال فقصة تسميع عائشة للحديث في هذه البقعة الغربية من الجامع، قصةٌ مُختَلَقَة لا أساس لها من الصحة، أنتجها المخيال الشعبي الدمشقي، والدليل الأول: أن الجامع الأموي في هذه الفترة كان

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٣٦ - الصفدي: تحفة ذوي الألباب: ج١: ٢٠١.

٣٧ - ابن كثير: البداية والنهاية: ج٩: ١٥٩.

٣٨ - ابن بطوطة: رحلة ابن بطوطة: ج١: ٥٣.

٣٩ - ياقوت الحموي: معجم البلدان: ج٢: ٤٦٩. وانظر مادة بقيع في معجم البلدان: ج١: ٤٧٣ – ٤٧٤.

٤٠ - ابن بطوطة: رحلة ابن بطوطة: ج١: ٥٤.

في **الجهة الشرقية** من كنيسة يوحنا المعمدان[٤١]. حيث اتفقت المراجع على أن الوليد بن عبد الملك أراد توسيع الجامع وضم نصف الكنيسة الغربي سنة (٨٦، ٨٧هـ/٧٠٥، ٧٠٦م). فرفض النصارى هذا الأمر وعارضوه بشدة؛ فقال له أحد رجاله: يا أمير المؤمنين لمَّا دخل المسلمون دمشق، دخلها خالد بن الوليد بالسيف من الباب الشرقي. وعندما سمع أهل البلد بذلك فزعوا إلى أبي عبيدة بن الجرَّاح يطلبون منه الأمان فأمنَّهم، وفتحوا له باب الجابية[٤٢]. وأنا أقترح عليك أن نقوم بمسح المدينة إلى المكان الذي بلغته سيوف المسلمين فنأخذه لأنه لم يدخل بالصلح والأمان. وعندما قاموا بعملية المسح هذه وجدوا أن السيف بقي عمّالاً من الباب الشرقي إلى نحو باب الجابية – وهو الباب الغربي **للمدينة** - فدخلت الكنيسة كلها في الجامع[٤٣]. وجاء عند الحميري (ت٧٢٧هـ/١٣٢٧م) أن " الوليد هو الذي أخذ نصف الكنيسة الباقية منه في أيدي النصارى وأدخلها فيه [أي بالجامع] لأنه كان قسمين: قسماً للمسلمين وقسماً للنصارى، وهو الغربي"[٤٤].

كل ما سبق يثبت أن الجهة الغربية من كنيسة يوحنا كانت بيد النصارى حتى سنة توسيع الجامع. وهو ما يضحد الخطأ، أو سبق القلم، الذي جاء عند ابن كنان الصالحي. حيث قال: وبنى الوليد ابن عبد الملك بن مروان الجامع بعد أن حرَّرَ حدَّ خالد بن الوليد؛ فرأوا حدَّه خارجاً عن قنطرة **باب البريد** بالمساحة

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٤١ - عبد القادر بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ٣٥٨. وانظر ملكة أبيض. الدور التربوي للمسجد الجامع بدمشق من الفتح حتى عام (٨٦هـ/٧٠٥م). مجلة دراسات تاريخية، ع ٧ (ربيع الأول ١٤٠٢هـ/كانون الثاني ١٩٨٢م). ص ١٠١.

٤٢ - " باب الجابية: من أبواب دمشق الرومانية في **الطرف الغربي** للمدينة". قتيبة الشهابي: معجم دمشق التاريخي: ج١: ٢٠.

٤٣ - ابن عساكر: تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ج٢: ٢٥٥، سبط ابن الجوزي: مرآة الزمان: ج٩: ٤١١، ابن شداد: الأعلاق الخطيرة، تاريخ مدينة دمشق: ٥٤، ابن كثير: البداية والنهاية: ج٩: ١٤٥- ١٤٦، النعيمي: الدارس في تاريخ المدارس: ج٢: ٢٩٠، المنيني: الإعلام بفضائل الشام: ٦٨، عبد القادر بدران: منادمة الأطلال: ٣٥٩. ويقول المنيني: لما صارت الخلافة إلى الوليد بن عبد الملك، عزم على أخذ بقية الكنيسة التي أخذ المسلمون نصفها عنوة من النصارى، وصالحهم أبو عبيدة على انه يبقى النصف الثاني بيدهم. المنيني: الإعلام بفضائل الشام: ٧٦.

٤٤ - الحميري: الروض المعطار: ٢٣٨، ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي: حدائق الأنعام في فضائل الشام: ١٤٩. البصروي: تحفة الأنام: الورقة [٧/ ب]. ابن فضل الله العمري: مسالك الأبصار: ج٣: ٣٦٠.

بأربعة أذرع، وكانت **الحصة الشرقية منه بأيدي النصارى**[٤٥]. علماً أنه يُناقض نفسه بنفسه؛ فباب البريد هو الباب الغربي من أبواب **جامع** دمشق[٤٦].

أما الدليل الثاني: فإن شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية سُئل " هَلْ دَخَلَتْ عَائِشَةُ زَوْجُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إلَى دِمَشْقَ وَكَانَتْ تُحَدِّثُ النَّاسَ بِجَامِعِ دِمَشْقَ أَمْ لَا ؟ فَأَجَابَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، لَمْ يَدْخُلْ دِمَشْقَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؛ لَا عَائِشَةُ وَلَا غَيْرُهَا. وَاَللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ"[٤٧].

وللدمشقيين باعٌ في هذا المجال، فبعد أن ذهبت من دمشق أبهة المُلك، وعظمة السلطان ولم يبقَ لها شيء يُفضِّلها على غيرها من العواصم، ظهرت عبقرية الدمشقي ولباقته فاخترع لها دعاية دينية وأكسبها مظهراً

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٤٥ - ابن كنان الصالحي: المواكب الإسلامية: ق١: ٤٣٣. وقد نلتمس بعض العذر لابن كنان في مقالته هذه؛ لأن قدامى المؤرخين اختلفوا في كيفية فتح دمشق وأوردوا روايات متناقضة. فنقل القاسم بن سلَّام: " ودخلها خالد بن الوليد من **الباب الشرقي صلحاً**". انظر القاسم بن سلَّام: كتاب الأموال: ٢٨٤. أما البلاذري فجمع كل ما صادفه من روايات فذكر " لما رأى الأسقف أن أبا عبيدة قد قارب دخول المدينة، بَدَرَ إلى **خالدٍ فصالحه وفتح له البالب الشرقي**"، ثم ذكر " وفي رواية أبي مخنَف وغيره أن **خالداً دخل دمشق بقتال**، وأن أبا عبيدة دخلها بصلح"، ثم ذكر " روى قومٌ أن أبا عبيدة كان بالباب الشرقي وأن خالداً كان بباب الجابية وهذا غلط". انظر البلاذري: فتوح البلدان: ج١: ١٤٥ – ١٤٦. ولكن صلاح الدين المنجد محقق الكتاب أثبت نصاً جاء على هامش أحد النسخ، وفيه مناقشة منطقية مقنعة لهذه القضية، مبنية على الخبر التراثي، وعلى الأثر الباقي، وهو: " الصحيح الثابت بالأخبار والآثار أن خالداً رضي الله عنه دخلها من الباب الشرقي قسراً ودخلها أبو عبيده سلماً من باب الجابية. هذا من حيث صحة الأخبار، وأما من حيث دلالة الآثار فإن جامع دمشق لم يكن [بيد] المسلمين منه قبل عمارته إلا الجانب الشرقي بحكم السيف **ودليلنا أن المقصورة التي تنسب إلى الصحابة، والسبع القراءة به أيضاً**، ولم تزل الكنيسة من غربه إلى أن هدمها الوليد بن عبد الملك لما عزم على بنائه في خلافته.". انظر البلاذري: فتوح البلدان: ج١: ١٤٦. الحاشية. وهناك نظرية لبعض المستعربين تقول إن دمشق حوصرت مرتين الأولى في رجب سنة ١٤ هـ (٦٣٥م)، والثانية بعد معركة اليرموك، بين رجب سنة ١٥هـ ومحرم سنة ١٦هـ (٦٣٦- ٦٣٧م)، ونتيجة فتحها بعد الحصار الثاني تمت معاقبة النصارى وأخذ منهم النصف الشرقي من كنيسة يوحنا. انظر جورج مرعي حداد: فتح العرب للشام: ١٠٣.

٤٦ - قتيبة الشهابي: معجم دمشق التاريخي: ج١: ٢١.

٤٧ - ابن تيمية: مجموع الفتاوى: ج ٢٧: ٤٩.

مُقدساً؛ مما جعل الناس يحنون إليها ويقصدونها بالزيارة والسُكنى بها؛ فصارت رابع الأماكن المقدسة بعد مكة والمدينة المنورة وبيت المقدس[٤٨]. ومن الدعايات الدينية الترويجية قصة قبة عائشة.

واستمرت هذه التسمية حتى مطلع القرن العاشر الهجري؛ ففي قصة دخول النائب سيباي إلى القبة كانت عبارة ابن طولون كالآتي: " وفي يوم الأحد حادي عشريه أمر النائب بفتح **قبّة عائشة**، غربيّ صحن الجامع. ففتحت وصعد إليها بنفسه"[٤٩].

وفيما يتعلق بتسمية قبة الخزنة أو قبة الخزينة، فهذه التسمية لم ترد في كتب التراث، وإنما درجت على أقلام المؤرخين المُحدثين مثل عيسى اسكندر المعلوف[٥٠]، وكامل شحادة[٥١]، وعفيف البهنسي[٥٢]، وغيرهم. وأقدم نصٍ عثرت عليه يرد فيه مصطلح (قبة الخزينة) يعود لسنة ١٩٠٢م. فقد جاء في العدد (٤٦٧) من جريدة المعلومات ما نصه " ورد على دار السعادة بعض أوراق قديمة كانت محفوظة في الجامع الأموي في الشام، لها مساس بالتاريخ منها ... وهذه الصُحف محفوظة في **قبة الخزينة** من الجامع الأموي"[٥٣].

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٤٨ - انظر مقدمة محمد أحمد دهمان لكتاب. ابن طولون : القلائد الجوهرية: ٣٩ – ٤٠. ومقدمة يوسف بديوي لكتاب ابن عبد الرزاق الدمشقي: حدائق الأنعام في فضائل الشام: ٩. حيث أضاف، الخلاف السياسي بين الأمويين وشيعة علي، والعصبية الأموية التي حافظ عليها الدمشقيون، واختلاف القيسيين واليمنيين فكانت قيس تضع الأحاديث عن فضل الأماكن التي تنزل بها من دمشق.

٤٩ - ابن طولون: مفاكهة الخلان: ٢٥٢.

٥٠ - عيسى اسكندر المعلوف. خزائن الكتب العربية وعلم وصف مخطوطاتها. مجلة المجمع العلمي العربي، مج٣، ج ٥ (أيار ١٩٢٣). ص ١٤٣.

٥١ - كامل شحادة. الجامع الأعلى الكبير في حماة، مجلة الحوليات الأثرية العربية السورية، مج ٢٦، ج ١-٢ (١٩٧٦م). ص ١٩٧.

٥٢ - عفيف البهنسي: الجامع الأموي الكبير: ١٠٤.

٥٣ - نقلاً عن لويس شيخو. عاديّات كتابية. مجلة المشرق، السنة الخامسة، ع ١٤ (١٥ تموز ١٩٠٢). ص ٦٧١.

هل كان الفضل بن صالح مقلداً في بناء هذه القبة، أم كان مبتكراً؟

يضع كامل شحادة[٥٤] نظريتين لاستحداث بناء قبة الخزنة. فيقول: يكاد يكون هذا النوع من البناء نادراً إذا ما استثنينا مدناً ثلاثًا هي القدس وحماة ودمشق. ومن المحتمل أن يكون هذا النوع ناتجًا عن عادات محلية صرفة لا يوجد لها ما يماثلها، أو أنها إعادة إحياء لعادات قريبة الشبه تعود للعهد البيزنطي، وإن كانت اتخذت لغايات أخرى، كما نجده قائماً في الكنيسة الجنوبية من مدينة الرويحة الأثرية التابعة لمنطقة أريحا في محافظة إدلب السورية[٥٥].

في الواقع في هذا الطرح هناك أكثر من نقطة للنقاش:

- أنه حصر هذا النوع من البناء بثلاث مدن هي القدس، وحماة، ودمشق. علماً أن المقدسي يقول بصراحة عند إجماله شؤون إقليم بلاد الشام: " في كل قصبة [أي مدينة كبيرة] بيت مال بالجامع، معلَّق على أعمدة"[٥٦]. أيضاً هناك مدنٌ شرقية عرفت هذا النوع من القباب في مساجدها مثل مدينة بَرْذَعَة. فجاء عند الإصطخري ولاحقًا عند ياقوت الحموي" وبيت مالهم في المسجد الجامع على رسم بلاد الشام؛ فإن بيوت الأموال بالشام في مساجدها وهو **بيت مال** مرصص السطح وعليه باب حديد وهو على تسع أساطين [أي أعمدة]"[٥٧]. والغريب أن المؤلف انتبه لهذين النصين واستشهد بهما[٥٨].

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٥٤ - كامل شحادة: باحث أثري سوري، أول ناظر لمتحف حماة، ومؤسس متحف معرة النعمان، توفي سنة ١٩٩٩م.

٥٥ - كامل شحادة. الجامع الأعلى الكبير في حماة، مجلة الحوليات الأثرية العربية السورية، مج ٢٦، ج ١-٢ (١٩٧٦م). ص ١٩٧.

٥٦ - المقدسي: أحسن التقاسيم: ١٨٢.

٥٧ - ياقوت الحموي: معجم البلدان: مج١: ٣٨٠. وهنا نلاحظ أن ياقوت الحموي ينقل عن الإصطخري. انظر الإصطخري: مسالك الممالك: ١٨٤.

٥٨ - كامل شحادة. الجامع الأعلى الكبير في حماة، مجلة الحوليات الأثرية العربية السورية، مج ٢٦، ج ١-٢ (١٩٧٦م). ص ١٩٨.

- أن أصل بناء القبة إما مأخوذ عن إرث بيزنطي، أو أنه عادات محلية صرفة، وإن اختلفت الغاية من البناء.

ربما يكون العباسيون استفادوا من هذا النموذج المعماري الماثل أمامهم في كنائس بلاد الشام، ومن ثم سخَّروه في وظيفة أخرى. إنما تعود فكرة وضع مال المسلمين في المسجد، إلى أيام النبي محمد حيث روى " إبراهيم عن عبد العزيز عن صُهيب عن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه قال: أُتيَ النبي بمال من البحرين فقال: انثروه في المسجد، وكان أكثر مال أُتيَ به رسول الله؛ فخرج رسول الله إلى الصلاة ولم يلتفت إليه، فلما قضى الصلاة جاء فجلس إليه فما كان يرى أحداً إلا أعطاه"[٥٩].

كما أنَّ فكرة جعل بناء خاص لبيت المال في المسجد تعود إلى الخليفة الثاني عمر بن الخطاب سنة (١٧ هـ/٦٣٨م). فيروى أنّ سعداً بن أبي وقاص عندما اختط مدينة الكوفة جعل بناءً مستقلاً لبيت المال، إلا أن هذا البيت نُقب وسُرق المال منه[٦٠]؛ فأرسل إلى الخليفة عمر يخبره بالذي حصل؛ فأشار عليه الخليفة أن يجعل بيت المال في قبلة المسجد. " فإن للمسجد أهلاً بالنهار وبالليل؛ وفيهم حصنٌ لمالهم"[٦١]. أي أنّ الحضور الدائم للناس في المسجد سيمنع اللصوص من السرقة، ولكن ما لم يبح به النص، إن كان بناء بيت المال جاء على شكل قبة مرفوعة عن الأرض أم لا.

وعليه فإن وضع مال المسلمين في المسجد، ومن ثم تخصيص بناء خاص ضمنه لهذا الغرض هي فكرة إسلامية، استفادت من اكتظاظ المسجد بالناس ليلاً ونهاراً لقطع الطريق على اللصوص.

وإنَّ الشكل الهندسي للقبة المثمنة المرتفعة على ثمانية أعمدة ربما أُخذ من الكنائس المنتشرة في بلاد الشام مهد المسيحية، أما فكرة جعله بيتاً لمال المسلمين ضمن الجامع فهو تطوير إسلامي للنموذج الأول في مسجد الكوفة، وحلاً ذكياً ضد عمليات النَّقب.

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٥٩ - البخاري: صحيح البخاري: ١١٤.

٦٠ - النَّقْبُ: النَّقْبُ فِي أَيِّ شيءٍ كَانَ، نَقَبه يَنْقُبه نَقْباً. ابن منظور: لسان العرب: ٤٥١٣. أي حُفِرَ تحت جداره، أو ثُقِبَ جداره.

٦١ - الطبري: تاريخ الطبري: ج٤: ٤٦.

وقد يكون من المفيد في هذا المقام التعريج على قبة المال في الجامع الأعلى الكبير بحماة. فمن المعروف أن العرب المسلمين دخلوا حماة سنة (١٥هـ/٦٣٦م) بقيادة أبي عبيدة بن الجرَّاح، ومن أعمال هذا القائد أنه جعل الكنيسة العظمى جامعاً، " وهو جامع السوق الأعلى من حماة"[٦٢]. ولكن هذا الجامع جُدِّد في خلافة المهدي العباسي (١٥٨هـ - ١٦٩هـ/ ٧٧٥- ٧٨٥م). "وكان على لوحٍ مكتوب أنه جُدِّد من خراج حمص"[٦٣].

وقد تتبع كامل شحادة في تنقيباته الأثرية في الجامع الأعلى، لوح التجديد المكتوب زمن المهدي العباسي، لكنه لم يعثر له على أثر، فوضع تفسيرًا مفاده أنه من المحتمل جداً أن يكون التجديد وقع في سقف الحرم جراء عاملٍ طارئ، وأن هذا السقف كان يرتكز على صفين من الأعمدة والجدران. وقد استُخدِمَ نصف تلك الأعمدة بكاملها مع القواعد والتيجان وعوارضها من فوقها في بناء قبة الخزنة بباحة الجامع؛ مما يدعو لاعتبار قبة الخزنة هي الجزء الأقدم في التجديد[٦٤].

وهذا يقود إلى أن قبة المال في جامع بني أمية بدمشق هي أقدم بناءً، وأنها أضحت مثالاً يُحتذى، كما أن القبتين أنشئتا في العهد العباسي للغرض ذاته وهو حفظ مال الجامع[٦٥]، لكن الغريب أن الرحَّالة الذين وصفوا قبة المال في جامع دمشق لم يذكروا شيئاً عن قبة المال في الجامع الأعلى بحماة[٦٦]، رغم زيارتهم للجامع. وربما يعود ذلك إلى الفوارق الفنية والزخرفية التي حظيت بها القبة الأولى فلفتت الأنظار إليها، إضافة إلى أن المصادر التي رجعت إليها لم تذكر شيئاً عن وجود مخطوطات أو صكوك في قبة المال بالجامع الأعلى.

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٦٢ - أبو الفداء: المختصر في أخبا رالبشر: ج١: ١٦٠.

٦٣ - أبو الفداء: المختصر في أخبا رالبشر: ج١: ١٦٠. أحمد بن إبراهيم الصابوني: تاريخ حماة: ٥٢. محمد كرد علي: خطط الشام: ج٦: ٦١.

٦٤ - كامل شحادة. الجامع الأعلى الكبير في حماة، مجلة الحوليات الأثرية العربية السورية، مج ٢٦، ج ١-٢ (١٩٧٦م). ص ١٩٧. علي موسى، محمد حربا: محافظة حماة: ١١٤.

٦٥ - كامل شحادة. الجامع الأعلى الكبير في حماة، مجلة الحوليات الأثرية العربية السورية، مج ٢٦، ج ١-٢ (١٩٧٦م). ص ١٩٧.

٦٦ - ابن جبير: رحلة ابن جبير: ٢٣٠، ابن بطوطة: رحلة ابن بطوطة: ج١: ٣٨ – ٣٩، ياقوت الحموي: معجم البلدان: ج٢: ٣٠٠- ٣٠١.

كيف وصلت هذه المخطوطات والصكوك والعقود إلى قبة المال؟

يقول حبيب الزيات (عام ١٩٠٠م): " وأما كيفية مصير هذه المخطوطات إليها وعلى الخصوص هذه الرقوق والصحائف الأعجمية فلا يُعلم بالتحقيق ولا يخرج القول فيه عن الحدس والتخمين"[٦٧]. ومع ذلك أورد أنيس سلوم – عضو المجمع العلمي العربي بدمشق – في محاضرته التي ألقاها برحاب المجمع سنة ١٩٢٢م: أن ما كان "في كنيسة يوحنا المعمدان بدمشق من الكتب اليونانية والسريانية فإن المسلمين لم يمسوها عند فتحهم المدينة، ولما حوَّلَ **عبد الملك بن مروان** الكنيسة إلى جامع جعل هذه الكتب في **قبة مقام النبي يحيى** (يوحنا)؛ فبقيت محفوظة لم يُفقد منها شيء. إلى أن فتحها الألمان بإذن السلطان عبد الحميد وقيل إنهم نقلوا كثيراً من كتبها إلى برلين"[٦٨].

ولكن كلامه للأسف غير دقيق. فالذي حوَّلَ الكنيسة إلى جامع هو الوليد بن عبد الملك، وليس والده عبد الملك، والمخطوطات والصكوك والعقود كانت محفوظة في قبة المال في صحن الجامع، وليس في قبة مقام النبي يحيى داخل الجامع. وأمرٌ آخر أن تعويض المسيحيين عن النصف الغربي من كنيستهم لم يكن أمراً مفاجئاً أو بغتة، بل كانت هناك مفاوضات طويلة بينهم وبين الخليفة الوليد، أي كان لديهم الوقت كله ليأخذوا كتبهم ويحتفظوا بها في كنائسهم التي بقيت معهم. ناهيك عن أن قبة المال أُنشئت في العصر العباسي كما مرَّ آنفاً. وسيبقى هذا السؤال مطروحاً ولن تُغلق القبة مرة أخرى قبل الإجابة عنه.

وبعد هذه المسيرة من البحث يمكن تسجيل النتائج الآتية:

- أن قبة المال في الجامع الأموي بدمشق بُنيت إبان حكم الخليفة إبي جعفر المنصور (ت ١٥٨هـ/٧٧٥م). وليس سنة (١٦٠ هـ/٧٧٧م). في زمن ابنه الخليفة المهدي.
- أن وظيفتها كخزنة لمال الجامع انتهت في القرن السادس الهجري على أبعد تقدير.

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٦٧ - حبيب الزيات: خزائن الكتب في دمشق: ٣.

٦٨ - أنيس سلوم. الكتب والمطالعة: ٢٦٤.

- أن تسمياتها في كتب التراث هي قبة المال، وقبة عائشة، والقبة الغربية. أما قبة الخزنة أو قبة الخزينة فهما تسميتان مستحدثتان.

- أن نموذج بناء القبة المثمنة ربما كان مأخوذاً من تراث الكنائس البيزنطية المنتشرة في بلاد الشام، ولكن توظيفه كبيت مال للجامع؛ فهو تطوير إسلامي استفاد من اكتظاظ الجامع بالناس لتوفير الحراسة الدائمة من جهة، ومن ارتفاع القبة لتجنب عمليات النقب من جهة أخرى.

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Fire, consuls, and scholars: Conflicting views on the discovery of the Qubbat al-khazna documents

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There is a notion that the creation of the Qubbat al-khazna depository was the result of a devastating fire that ravaged the Umayyad Mosque in 1893. According to this narrative, whatever was salvaged from the fire was only temporarily deposited in the Qubba, which was still standing unharmed in the courtyard.[1] A slightly different version still gives credit to the fire, but associates it with the rescue effort that eventually brought the fragments to the Ottoman capital.[2] Although this theory, in its different incarnations, has been thoroughly disproved in such meticulous investigations as the works of Radiciotti and D'Ottone[3] and Bandt and Rattmann,[4] it is still sometimes maintained even in the most recent publications.

In this contribution, I am not concerned with proving once again that the Qubba was in fact the original storage place for what we know today as its contents. Nor will the focus be on how access was officially granted to the German researcher Bruno Violet in 1900 and the ensuing fate of the documents. Rather, I am going to explore the extent to which knowledge of the Qubba and what it held

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1 This foundational myth can be traced to the first, and eminently meritorious, researchers who had access to the Damascus papers after they were taken to Istanbul, Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel. In their first pertinent publication, they do not make a direct connection between the Damascus papers in Istanbul and the Qubba, and indeed they mention the Qubba only in relation to biblical fragments preserved in Damascus; see Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Nouveaux documents sur l'histoire religieuse et sociale de Damas au Moyen Âge", *Revue des études islamiques* 32, no. 1 (1964), 1–25, especially p. 2. However it soon became clear that the collection in Istanbul actually came from the Qubba, and their account evolved to mention the Qubba as a temporary storage place and the fire as the cause for the "discovery" of the papers. For the latest expression of this story, see Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Propriétés rurales et urbaines à Damas au Moyen Âge: Un corpus de 73 documents juridiques entre 310/922 et 669/1271*, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2018, 9–12.

2 E.g. François Déroche, "The Qurʾān of Amāǧūr", *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990–1991), 59; Frédéric Bauden, "Mamluk Era Documentary Studies: The State of the Art", *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9 (2005), 53. Déroche's views have greatly evolved and are now in line with the arguments presented here while his research is fundamental to the reconstruction of the Qubba's history; see his "La 'Bibliothèque' de la mosquée des Omeyyades", in: *De Bagdad à Damas: Études en mémoire de Dominique Sourdel*, Jean-Michel Mouton and Clément Onimus, eds., Geneva: Droz 2018, 311–325.

3 Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74.

4 Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20.

was available to those who went to Damascus before Hermann von Soden heard of the Qubba material and arranged for Bruno Violet to work there in 1900. Thus, I shall look for traces of knowledge about the Qubba's existence preserved, among other places, in the writings of several travellers, scholars, and consuls who reported on it long before the fire of 1893.

The aim of this paper is thus to present these witnesses and speculate to the extent possible on the level of knowledge of and access to the Qubba prior to its dissolution and transfer. I will look first at published reports, and here pride of place is given to a British consul who is said to have been the first visitor to set foot in the Qubba in the nineteenth century.

Edward Thomas Rogers served as vice-consul in Haifa, then as consul in Damascus, to which post he was promoted in 1861. In 1877 he published a study on the coins of the Tulunid dynasty,[5] but to my knowledge he did not write an account of his travels. I am not aware of any record of his entry into the Qubba written by Rogers himself, but the memory of the event – and, apparently, of the transgression – still remained vivid several decades later when the German visitor Hermann von Soden (1852–1914) and the Damascene historian Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt (1872–1954) independently reported both on him having entered the Qubba and on him having removed some items from it, which some considered theft.[6] Although it was reported long after it happened, the event itself would not have been completely out of the question when we look at what a British consul could do at the time. In the description of his sister, Mary Eliza Rogers, who joined her brother in 1855, Rogers appears as someone who could use the position as a literal door-opener: at one point, after discussing the fact that the gates of the bazaars in Damascus were closed at night, she writes:

> I have frequently ridden, at midnight, with my brother through the deserted bazaars. How well I remember the long arched and vaulted vistas, scantily illuminated by pendant oil lamps, the night-silence broken now and then by the angry barking of the bazaar-dogs, or by the kawasses, shouting to the wardens at every barrier, to "open the gate for the consul". This was always willingly done.[7]

According to al-Zayyāt, it was indeed in the night that Rogers allegedly gained access to the Qubba with some of his guests.

A little later, the German scholar Albert Socin published a reference to the Qubba in the volume on Syria and Palestine he wrote for the popular travel guide Baedeker: "the small building reportedly contains only old books and valuables

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5 E.T. Rogers, *The Coins of the Tuluni Dynasty*, London: Trübner 1877.

6 Hermann von Soden, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1247–1249; Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt, *Khazā'in al-kutub fī Dimashq wa-ḍawāḥihā*, Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif 1902, 3.

7 Mary Eliza Rogers, "Books and Book-Binding in Syria and Palestine", *The Art Journal*, n.s., 7 (1868), 115.

and is never (?) opened".[8] Socin had spent the year 1869 in Damascus, but where he got his information from is not clear. It is known, however, that he had many contacts among those locals who dealt with manuscripts, so we could perhaps identify this as a source for some insider knowledge.[9]

Just a little after Socin informed the German reading public about the Qubba, the general audience was treated to a splendid description of the region in English through Charles W. Wilson's *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*. This lavish publication was adorned with many illustrations by Harry Fenn, and one of them depicted the "Kubbet el Khazneh", which, according to the caption, "is said to contain ancient books and other relics which are held sacred" (see fig. 1);[10] but these were "inaccessible to strangers".[11]

Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt held that information on the Qubba's contents was a secret known only to a handful of elite insiders (*khāṣṣa*) – all the general public (*ʿāmma*) knew was that the Qubba held documents about the Umayyad Mosque's endowments and estates. However, al-Zayyāt agreed with Socin that the Qubba was never opened. After the intrusion by Rogers, the mufti of Damascus, Maḥmūd Ibn Ḥamza, was the only one that he knew of who had gained access prior to Violet. This access is not dated, but must have happened before Ibn Ḥamza died in 1305/1887, and therefore long before the fire of 1893.

Following this review of published accounts, I will now turn briefly to plans and postcards. Clearly, they do not contain much narrative, but in their concise way they provide striking insights into perceptions of places and their functions. Such is the case with a plan of the Umayyad Mosque drawn by the French architect Jules Bourgoin in 1874 or 1875, recently discussed by Déroche. It features, next to the Qubba, the caption "Bibliothèque", which is very likely not a reflection of Bourgoin's first-hand observation but the description which was provided to him.[12]

The Qubba was also a recurrent motif in early postcards. Such undated postcards feature captions such as "chambre des livres sacrés"[13] (see fig. 2) or "ancienne

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8 Albert Socin, *Palästina und Syrien: Handbuch für Reisende*, 2nd ed., Leipzig: Baedeker 1880, 384: "das kleine Gebäude soll nur alte Bücher und Kostbarkeiten enthalten und nie (?) geöffnet werden".

9 Albert Socin, "Die Dîwâne der Dicher Nâbiġa, ʿUrwa, Ḥâtim, ʿAlkama und Farazdak", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 31 (1877), 667–668.

10 Charles W. Wilson, ed., *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, New York: Appleton 1881, 1:388.

11 Wilson, ed., *Picturesque Palestine*, 1:387.

12 François Déroche, "The Quranic Collections Acquired by Wetzstein", in: *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., Leiden: Brill 2019, 97. The map is referenced there as École des beaux-arts, Musée, no. 8564.

13 Boris Liebrenz, *Die Rifāʿiya aus Damaskus: Eine Privatbibliothek im osmanischen Syrien und ihr kulturelles Umfeld*, Leiden: Brill 2016, 186.



Fig. 1: The Qubbat al-khazna as depicted in Wilson, ed., *Picturesque Palestine*. Artist Harry Fenn, engraver J. Johnstone. (From the New York Public Library, Digital Collections, UUID: fa9df3e0-c5f2-012f-77d4-58d385a7bc34.)

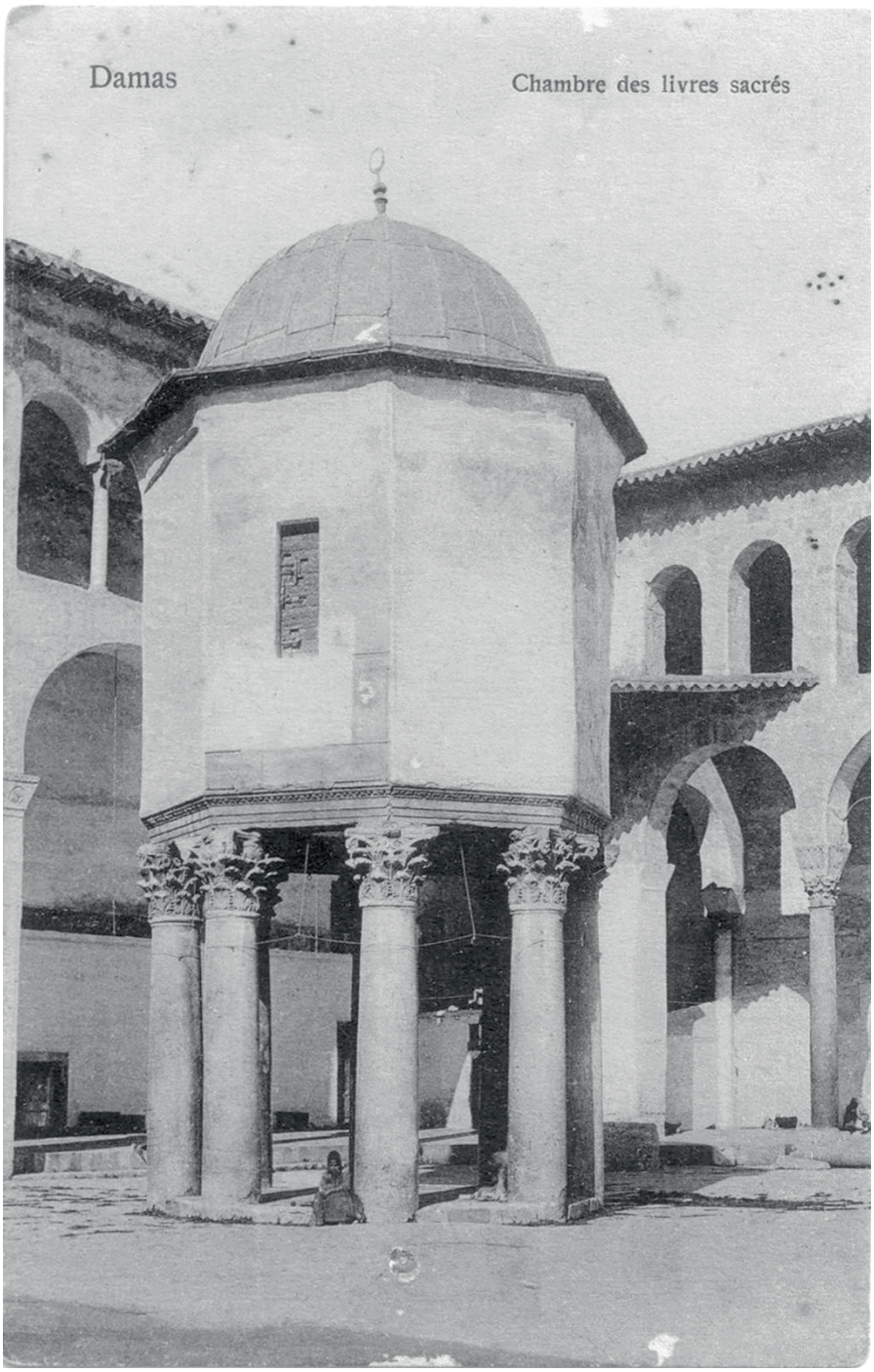


Fig. 2: Nineteenth-century French postcard identifying the Qubba as a "room for sacred books".

bibliothèque".[14] Of course, this does not tell us what the Qubba actually was. But we see that in the public perception, or at least in how that perception was translated to some European observers, it was a place for books. Even more, the first caption further narrows the contents of the Qubba to sacred books, probably a reflection of the fact that so many of the fragments were either of the Koran or of holy texts of other religions. This perception would have spread through the medium of the postcard and might well have influenced published accounts in the West, such as those of Wilson and Socin.

Finally, there are the books themselves, the manuscripts! These, as well as a great number of documents, accumulated in the Qubba over centuries and had started to attract scholarly attention by the end of the nineteenth century, particularly in the wake of the recent excitement over the Cairene Geniza. It was in those final years of the nineteenth century that, through the lobbying of Hermann von Soden and with the support of Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany, access to the Qubba was finally granted to Bruno Violet, who worked on the non-Islamic material in 1900 and 1901. The fragments then started to be moved out of Damascus, first through the loan of materials to Berlin and the subsequent loss of some of these, and finally with the transporting to Istanbul of what was long considered to be the complete contents of the Qubba.

Yet it has been known for quite some time now that not all of the Qubba's contents ended up in Istanbul.[15] Therefore, it would be worthwhile to learn more about the routes of those items which did not go there and which might have been, and in some cases certainly were, taken out of the Qubba prior to its official opening. For example, François Déroche identified a volume of Koran fragments in Paris (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Arabe 6140) as consisting at least partly of material from the Qubba.[16] It arrived in the Bibliothèque nationale as part of the collection of Charles Schefer (1820–1898), who resided in the Ottoman Empire between 1843 and 1857, and, more specifically, served in the Greater Syria area between 1843 and 1846. If it was at this point that he bought the fragments, this would be a strong indication that material from the Qubba appeared on the market at a very early date.

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14 François Déroche, "In the Beginning: Early Qurʾans from Damascus", in: *The Art of the Qurʾan: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 62.

15 Arianna D'Ottone, "Frammenti coranici antichi nel Museo nazionale di Damasco", in: *Dirāsāt Aryūliyya: Studi in onore di Angelo Arioli*, Giuliano Lancioni and Olivier Durand, eds., Rome: La Sapienza Orientale 2007, 219; Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatical dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 268–271.

16 Déroche, "The Quranic Collections", 96.

The Koran of Amājūr

Zooming in on this last point, the traces of book trajectories, I would like to focus here on one specific multivolume item, the Koran of Amājūr. The aim is to show how tracing the trajectory of the dispersed fragments of this particular manuscript can help shed more light on the Qubba. In particular, their individual provenances will provide clues as to who had access to it and when.

The Koran of Amājūr has arguably been the most famous of the Arabic manuscripts from the Qubba since François Déroche published his identification of it in 1990.[17] This is not only due to its artistic quality as an early monumental thirty-volume Koran with only three lines of text to the page – this had been known ever since Bernhard Moritz (1859–1939) published a specimen in the early twentieth century.[18] What Déroche's work added were several complete endowment (*waqf*) statements, which are the earliest of their kind and allow for a better contextualisation of the manuscript.

According to these *waqf* statements, the volumes were originally donated to Ṣūr (Tyre) in 262/876 by Amājūr, who is known to have been the Abbasid governor of Damascus at the time. We will accept here that, after the manuscript left Tyre (perhaps as a result of the Crusader takeover of the city), it was deposited in the Damascene Qubba. It is true that there are grounds to debate this, since a fragment of the manuscript reached the Khedival Library in Cairo.[19] However it is likely that this happened only after this institution was founded, in the late nineteenth century,[20] and thus the fragment could well have been taken directly from the Qubba itself. One suspects even more strongly that this is what occurred when one learns that the head of the Khedival Library, Bernhard Moritz, actually helped Violet with the Qubba material in Damascus for a while, concentrating on Koran fragments.[21] And indeed, Violet even accuses Moritz of the outright theft of a fragment of the Pentateuch![22]

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17 Déroche, "The Qurʾān of Amāǧūr"; the most recent and complete review and list of dispersed fragments (with the exception only of Wetzstein's fragment now in Berlin and discussed below) is found in D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi", 268–269.

18 Bernhard Moritz, "Arabien *d.* Arabische Schrift", *Enzyklopaedie des Islām*, vol. 1, *A–D*, M.Th. Houtsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basset, and R. Hartmann, eds., Leiden: Brill and Leipzig: Harrassowitz 1913, pl. IV.

19 Thomas Walker Arnold and Adolf Grohmann, *The Islamic Book: A Contribution to its Art and History from the VII–XVIII Century*, London: Pegasus Press 1929, 46–47, pl. 22b–c.

20 Sabine Mangold, "Die Khedivial-Bibliothek zu Kairo und ihre deutschen Bibliothekare (1871–1914)", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 157 (2007), 49–76.

21 Déroche, "The Quranic Collections", 97; Bandt and Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise", 10–11.

22 Bandt and Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise", 10–11. According to Violet, when Moritz was confronted in Cairo with this accusation, he did not deny it, but produced the stolen manuscript and ripped it in half to share it with Violet.



Fig. 3: A piece of the Amājūr Koran that has recently been identified in the estate of the Prussian consul Wetzstein. (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, MS or. quart. 1208, Fragment II.)

If we assume, then, that the Koran of Amājūr was indeed entirely deposited in the Qubba, understanding the provenance of those fragments of it that arrived in other destinations before the removal of the Qubba papers to Istanbul will allow us to map instances of access to the Qubba. Not surprisingly, by far the largest part of this Koran is found today in Istanbul with the Damascus papers. But a few items did not follow this path. Besides the piece in Cairo and a modern acquisition now in Saudi Arabia,[23] one more fragment has been known for some time, and it is found in Cambridge University Library. This piece, MS Add. 1116, was acquired from Edward Henry Palmer (1840–1882) in 1878.[24] But Palmer would have acquired this fragment, and probably others as well, during his stay in Damascus in 1869–1870, and therefore this would be a post-Rogers provenance; and since no document is known in which Palmer refers to the piece, we are not even sure that he was aware of its provenance from the Qubba.

However a recent find in the estate of the Prussian consul in Damascus between 1848 and 1862, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905), offers material for further reflections. This hitherto unrecorded piece of the Amājūr Koran (MS or.

23 Déroche, "The Quranic Collections", 100.

24 Catherine Ansorge, "Cambridge University Library Islamic Manuscript Collection: Origins and Content", *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 7 (2016), 135.

quart. 1208, Fragment II; see fig. 3) was discovered and identified by Christoph Rauch and François Déroche in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin in the course of an inventory of previously uncatalogued manuscripts and books.[25]

The facts above have demonstrated that there was access to the Qubba material apart from when Rogers entered the Qubba, and indeed that some of this access must have occurred prior to his entry. It appears that some Western visitors, like Charles Schefer and Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, benefited from this. But what was the nature of this access? When did it start? And what kind of awareness was there about the source of these manuscripts, the Qubba? Obviously, there are ways to come into possession of such manuscripts other than buying – or stealing – them directly from the Umayyad Mosque. For example, they could have been for sale on the book market or through antiquities dealers, with no reference to their provenance.

So, was Rogers the first of the Western visitors to Damascus to learn about the Qubba? Rogers knew his fellow consul Wetzstein and held him in very high esteem.[26] Their terms overlapped for more than a year, as Wetzstein left Damascus in 1862, the year after Rogers arrived. Therefore, depending on when Rogers entered the Qubba, Wetzstein's fragment could actually be a result of that entry and not constitute proof for a pre-Rogers opening of the Qubba. Thus, to conclude, I will turn to Wetzstein again and try to show that the Prussian consul did indeed know of the Qubba well before his British counterpart.

Wetzstein and the Qubba

In order to show that Wetzstein knew of the Qubba before Rogers, we must connect the presence of the Amājūr fragment in Wetzstein's estate to some hints he gave during his time in Damascus, which remain unpublished.

Those hints, included in two accounts, speak for a rather early – certainly pre-Rogers – opening of the Qubba in the 1850s, and for some knowledge of this among a small circle of interested Western residents in Damascus. The first account is taken from a letter that Wetzstein wrote on 10 March 1853 to his former teacher, Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer (1801–1888), a professor in Leipzig. In it, Wetzstein talks about a guest of his, Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801–1876), who was on a mission to collect written artefacts in the region:

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25 Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, "Arabic Manuscripts and Books from the Bequest of Wetzstein", in: *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., Leiden: Brill 2019, 186.

26 See Emily Beke, *Jacob's Flight or a Pilgrimage to Harran, and Thence in the Patriarch's Footsteps into the Promised Land*, London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green 1865, 78–79, where Rogers recommends Wetzstein as an authority about Damascus in December 1861.

> Petermann's acquisitions so far are rather negligible, with the exception of four splendid Kufic Korans (since they have been taken from a very old and holy خزينه, this information should not be publicised) and some antiquities.[27]

That Petermann's primary purchases should have been Korans is unexpected, since Koranic studies were not his main interest – he went on to study the Samaritans of Nablus, and his Arabic was rough, according to Wetzstein.[28]

Before we further analyse this passage, however, a look at Petermann's own travel account seems to suggest that he was aware of the Qubba but that he could not gain access to it. A passage in his account discussing the Umayyad Mosque, and the widely held belief that old Samaritan, Mandaean, and Christian texts could still be found there, reads:

> Samaritans, Mandeans (or Disciples of John), and Christians strive to claim it as their original possession, and all claim that their most ancient scriptures can still be found therein. Of the Christians, this is even acknowledged by the Muslim. And this belief, generally held in Damascus, was a main incentive for this travel. Dr Wetzstein was and remains friends with the most distinguished and influential Muhammedans of Damascus and expected to receive secure information from them about this issue, and also to receive any Christian manuscripts that might still be found there either to view them or for purchase. Sometime after our arrival he approached this topic with one of them who was a frequent guest of his. While he knew of this rumour, he also vowed that he had never seen any writings other than Arabic ones in the mosque, even though he had visited it since his earliest youth and was practically raised there. The whole mosque was known to him except for one room in the cupola which he had never before entered. But he was willing to look inside this room, too, and, were he to find any non-Arabic writings in it, to make them available for us to look at them. […] finally he appeared, yet reported that despite all his efforts was unable to find anything like what we wished for. He said that inside it were four massively large Korans, written for the first four caliphs, and also several boxes with Kufic fragments of various ages, yet certainly nothing that was not Arabic.[29]

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27 Letter from Wetzstein to Fleischer, Damascus, 10 March 1853, Det Kongelige Bibliotek MS Ny kgl. Sam. 2969-4°, Estate of Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, Copenhagen: "Die zeither. Erwerbungen Petermanns sind außer 4 kostbaren Kufischen Koranen (da die Bücher aus einer uralten heiligen خزينه sind, so eignet sich diese Notiz zu keiner öffentl. Mittheilung.) und einer kleinen Sammlung Antiken nicht sonderlich gewesen."

28 Letter from Wetzstein to Fleischer, 10 March 1853.

29 Julius Heinrich Petermann, *Reisen im Orient*, 2nd ed., Leipzig: Veit 1865, 1:99–100: "Samaritaner, Mandäer oder Johannisjünger und Christen wollen sich dieselbe als ihr ursprüngliches Eigenthum vindicieren, und sie Alle behaupten, dass ihre ältesten Religionsschriften darin noch zu finden seien. Von den Christen meinen es selbst die Muhammedaner; und dieser in Damascus allgemein verbreitete Glaube war eine Hauptveranlassung für mich zu dieser Reise. Dr. Wetzstein war und ist befreundet mit den angesehensten und einflussreichsten Muhammedanern von Damascus, und hoffte, von diesen sichere Kunde darüber zu erlangen, und, wenn nicht zum Kauf, doch zur Ansicht, christliche Handschriften, sofern sie sich da noch vorfinden sollten, zu bekommen. Einige Zeit nach unserer Ankunft brachte er das Gespräch mit einem derselben, der ihn öfter besuchte, auf diesen Gegenstand. Diesem war das Gerücht bekannt, aber er versicherte, dass er, ob er gleich seit seiner frühesten Jugend die Moschee besucht habe, und darin fast erzogen worden sei, doch nie andere als arabische

Again, there are some inconsistencies and ambiguities in this account. But, since we learn from Petermann himself that he did not see the Qubba, all of this is merely a second-hand report, translated by someone not quite familiar with spoken Arabic, and slight variations are to be expected. The reporter himself might not have understood what he saw and was probably not allowed or really willing to dig through heaps of manuscript fragments in order to uncover anything non-Arabic, and he therefore concluded that nothing un-Arabic was to be expected. Finally, Petermann himself might have concealed any possible purchases that he made from this source since, as Wetzstein put it, the nature of the provenance "should not be publicised". But what about the location of the manuscripts in "one room in the cupola"? This certainly sounds like a larger structure with many rooms, namely the main dome of the mosque. However if the interlocutor simply used the term *qubba* to mean the Qubbat al-khazna, it is likely that the German, not familiar with the structure, would have understood this as a reference to the large dome of the mosque.

Let us return now to what we learn from Wetzstein's letter. The four Kufic Koran fragments he mentioned have to be identified with MS Petermann I 36, 37, 38, and 325[30] in the Petermann collections now housed in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (see fig. 4). The state of their conservation and the fact that they are not mere fragments but full volumes with old and elaborate bindings presents at first a challenge to this assumption. Are they not, despite severe damage to large parts of them, too well preserved overall when compared to the more familiar rubble from this provenance? But other complete volumes with well-preserved pages and bindings such as those found on the Petermann Korans can also be found among the Qubba material that reached the Topkapı Palace from Damascus.[31] It remains to be seen whether we can reasonably connect these four volumes with other fragments from the Qubba, but what is striking in Wetzstein's short mention of the manuscripts is his use of the word خزينه (*khazīna*) instead of the common Arabic word for a book repository or library with which Wetzstein was certainly very fa-

Schriften dort gesehen habe. Die ganze Moschee, sagte er, sei ihm bekannt, bis auf ein Zimmer in der Kuppel, welches er noch nie betreten habe; aber er könne und wolle auch in diesem Gemach einmal nachsuchen, und, wenn er nichtarabische Schriften darin entdecken sollte, sie uns zur Ansicht mittheilen. […] endlich erschien er, berichtete uns aber, dass er trotz aller Nachforschungen nichts derartiges, wie wir wünschten darin gefunden habe. Er sagte, es liegen darin vier mächtig grosse kufische Qor'ane, geschrieben für die ersten vier Chalifen, und ausserdem einige Kisten mit kufischen Fragmenten aus verschiedener Zeit, aber durchaus nichts, was nicht arabisch sei." I had previously overlooked this reference and owe it to Konrad Hirschler and Said Aljoumani.

30 I would argue that the "2" in the shelf-mark of MS Petermann I 325 is a secondary insertion. If that is the case, then the sequence of MS Petermann I 35 through 38 shows the four volumes as a coherent group, consistent with what Wetzstein described. All four volumes are scanned and easily available online through http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de.

31 See objects 2, 3, and 5 in Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 144-149.



Fig. 4: A folio from one of the four Koran fragments in the Petermann collection that can be identified as very likely to be Qubba material. (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, MS Petermann I 36, fol. 1r.)

miliar, namely *khizāna*. This peculiarity could well be a reference to the Qubba. *Khazīna* is very occasionally used for a book depository instead of the ubiquitous *khizāna*, but only in Mamluk and early Ottoman manuscripts, and to my knowledge not at all in the nineteenth century (or the eighteenth for that matter).[32] In the context of the nineteenth century, this word designates instead a treasury or the state's coffers, like the Qubba. Wetzstein's description of the source as "holy" (*heiligen*), on the other hand, is not as strange as it may first seem: "sacré" is also the term used in connection with the Qubba on the French postcard mentioned earlier. It must be admitted, though, that all of this is a mere string of conjectures and, while likely, not yet conclusive.

Just a few years later, though, and the plot thickens yet again, because Wetzstein details his own Kufic fragments in an unpublished catalogue of his manuscripts, written in 1859: "Sheer happenstance enabled the collector [i.e. Wetzstein himself] to acquire a great many Kufic parchments, which, without anyone having had any prior knowledge of their existence, surfaced through a chance find from centuries of obscurity."[33]

For all its deplorable ambiguity, this notice is no small matter, as the combination of a cache of antique Koranic fragments and centuries of obscurity could hardly refer to anything other than the Qubba, and therefore clearly shows that Wetzstein not only purchased Qubba material, just like Schefer and Palmer, but that he *was* aware of its provenance! That does not mean, of course, that he actually gained access to the Qubba. As we have seen in Petermann's account, Wetzstein had a web of contacts and informants who would make any necessary enquiries for him. This means that, for all we know, the consul Rogers may well be the European visitor who first set foot into the dome.

The Koran of Amājūr, with its visible *waqf* statements, is only the most obvious object to demonstrate how nineteenth-century collection provenance can help contextualise the history of the Qubba's gradual discovery and opening. Other fragments in such collections could surely be matched to those in the Damascus papers in Istanbul or in Damascus itself to underline what I have tried to demonstrate here: that access to material from the Qubba and an awareness of its provenance, and in rare cases even access to the physical space of the Qubba, all preceded the work of Bruno Violet by many decades.

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32 The only instances I could find are two manuscripts now in Istanbul and one in Paris, and Wetzstein would not have been familiar with any of these: Süleymaniye MS Fazil Ahmed Pasha 105 (*kutiba li-ajl al-khazīna* in 687), MS Fazil Ahmed Pasha 1036 (*wa-dhālika mimmā ʿumila bi-rasm khazīna* in 1010), and Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Arabe 1639 (copied *bi-rasm khazīna* in 1018).

33 Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, "Catalog der arabischen Handschriftenbibliothek des Dr. J.G. Wetzstein" [1859], Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MS or. sim. 8947, 2: "[Es] begünstigte der Zufall den Sammler, daß er eine große Parthie kufischer Pergamente ankaufen konnte, die, ohne daß man vorher von ihrer Existenz etwas gewußt hatte, durch einen glücklichen Fund aus einer jahrhunderte langen Verborgenheit zu Tage gefördert worden sind."

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The sister, the king, and yet another consul: Additional evidence of early European interest in the Qubbat al-khazna

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Famous manuscript findings of the nineteenth century, such as the Codex Sinaiticus, or the discovery of a manuscript corpus in the Cairo Geniza, raised awareness of the intellectual and financial value of old manuscripts. Consequently scholars around the Western world went on journeys to the Near East, looking for the next prestigious discovery. Although the narrative of discovery has mostly focused on Hermann von Soden and his official discovery in the late nineteenth century of the Qubbat al-khazna, where an important corpus of manuscripts was brought to light, recent research has provided new sources that challenge this narrative, since the surfacing of manuscripts not related to von Soden's discovery but which have distinct Qubba-like features, such as the Koran of Amājūr, support the assumption that the "treasure dome" most likely had been opened on prior occasions.[1] What sparked my initial curiosity on this topic was an obscure mention of an "Englishman" in several reports by von Soden. In what follows, I will bring forth additional evidence on the consul Edward Thomas Rogers, complementing Boris Liebrenz's contribution to this volume. In particular, however, I will concentrate on his successor in the consulate, Richard Francis Burton.

In his 1901 article "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", von Soden mentions that when the official request to open the Qubba was made by the German Federal Foreign Office to the Ottoman authorities, an answer was provided weeks later:

> After some time a message came from Constantinople, noting that the Qubba had been opened in the forties, that an Englishman who happened to be present took possession of a Greek New Testament, and that the rest had been relocated to the library of the mosque. Therefore it would not be worthwhile to bother the sultan again about this matter.[2]

Von Soden mentions here an "Englishman", who happened to be in the mosque at a time when the Qubba was opened in the 1840s, and who took a Greek New

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1 On this, see the contributions by Boris Liebrenz and by Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler in this volume.

2 Hermann von Soden, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1247: "Nach einiger Zeit kam von Konstantinopel die Nachricht, daß die Kubbeh schon in den vierziger Jahren einmal geöffnet worden sei, daß damals ein zufällig anwesender Engländer ein griechisches Neues Testament an sich gebracht habe, das Uebrige seitdem in der Bibliothek der Moschee ausgestellt sei. Es lohne sich also wohl kaum, den Sultan aufs neue mit der Sache zu behelligen."

Testament. However in this period it would seem almost impossible that non-Muslim foreign manuscript collectors had the chance to remove something from the Qubba. Furthermore, it is attested that it was difficult even to enter the Umayyad Mosque.[3] The 1838 Druze revolt against the Ottoman authorities and the upheavals that accompanied the Tanẓīmāt reforms marked a period of political instability in the city. These conflicts led, on the one hand, to the Damascus affair of 1840, where Jews of the city were accused of murdering a Franciscan monk for ritual purposes, and on the other to Druze–Christian conflicts that later culminated in a civil war.[4]

Even though the 1840s seem not to offer any reliable accounts of access to the Qubba material by Europeans, von Soden's mention of the "Englishman" should not yet be rejected. Bandt and Rattmann have identified an earlier report from 1899 that was composed for the German Federal Foreign Office and in which von Soden mentions the mysterious Englishman for the first time:[5]

> On the occasion of a research trip to the Orient, which was dedicated to the New Testament, I learned the following: since I had been told that the sultan could command the opening of the Qubba, I saw myself referred to the imperial German embassy in Constantinople, which in the most cooperative way investigated and informed me that a few decades ago the Qubba had been opened, that manuscripts were found in it, and that these were accessible to the public in the library; one fragment of a text of the New Testament had been taken by an Englishman.[6]

As mentioned by Boris Liebrenz in his contribution to this volume, the Damascene historian Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt explicitly provides the name of Edward Thomas Rogers. He was a diplomat whose career in the Near East started in 1848, and he held different diplomatic positions in the Levant until he was appointed British

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3 For a description of the difficulty of entering the mosque as a non-Muslim during this period, see e.g. J.A. Lorent, *Wanderungen im Morgenlande während den Jahren 1842–1843*, Mannheim: Tobias Loeffler 1845, 207.

4 See Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 66–67. Regarding the background and development of the civil war, see L.T. Fawaz, An Occasion for War: Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860, Berkeley: University of California Press 1994.

5 This earlier report is mentioned in Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 4 n. 21, and is now found in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin with the shelf-mark BArch R901/37531, p. 86. See also Bandt and Rattmann's contribution to this volume.

6 Bundesarchiv, Berlin, BArch R901/37531, p. 86: "Gelegentlich einer Forschungsreise im Orient die den Handschriften des Neuen Testaments galt, erfuhr ich dies: da, wie mir gesagt wurde der Sultan die Öffnung der Kubbet befehlen könne sah ich mich an die kaiserliche deutsche Botschaft in Constantinopel gewiesen die von der letzten in entgegenkommendster Weise angestellten und mir zugestellte Ermittlung gingen dahin, daß vor einigen Jahrzehnten eine Öffnung der Kubbet stattgehabt, alte Handschriften in der derselbe vorgefunden, diese in der Bibliothek der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich gemacht worden – ein Bruchstück eines neutestamentlichen Textes ein Engländer an sich gebracht habe."

consul in Damascus in 1861.[7] Rogers was known for his interest in sculptures and, in particular, in ancient coins.[8] Upon his return from Cairo in 1875 to London, he donated a number of sculptures from Harran (south Syria) as well as other antiquities to the British Museum.[9] It is important to mention that he provides only sparse information about where and how he acquired these objects, leading to the assumption that he might have acquired material in an illegal way.[10]

In any case, a crucial part of Rogers's involvement with the Qubba is missing. None of the sources that we have about Rogers seem to suggest an interest in manuscripts. However new evidence comes from a record in the Minutes of the Trustees of the British Museum dated 13 December 1862, where we find a mention of a letter received from Rogers in Damascus, dated 6 November, discussing "antiquities at the Hauran and offering to negotiate for the purchase of an inscribed tablet found at Nablus and of certain Cufic books and manuscripts".[11] From these lines, it emerges that Rogers indeed intended to purchase manuscripts in Syria and that he was, above all, interested in Kufic manuscripts, which were available in the Qubba.[12] This raises the following question: Why would a numismatist like Rogers look for manuscripts? The answer to this question could perhaps be found within his family.

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7 On Rogers's official promotion, see J.F. Rivington and F.H. Rivington, *The Annual Register, or, A View of the History and Politics of the Year 1861*, vol. 103, London: Woodfall and Kinder 1862, 509.

8 One of his few published works is about numismatics; see E.T. Rogers, "Catalogue of the Collection of Mohammadan Coins", *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Numismatic Society*, 3rd ser., 3 (1883), 202–260.

9 See Rogers's biography: British Museum, "E T Rogers (Biographical Details)", n.d., https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioId=93017, accessed 14 November 2019; and also his obituary, William Muir, "Royal Asiatic Society: Proceedings of the Sixty-Second Anniversary Meeting of the Society, Held on the 18th of May, 1885", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 17, no. 3 (1885), xxvi–xxvii.

10 An example of an antiquity brought back by Rogers with no information about provenance is mentioned by John H. Taylor, "Aspects of the History of the Valley of the Kings in the Third Intermediate Period", in: *After Tutʿankhamūn: Research and Excavation in the Royal Necropolis at Thebes*, C.N. Reeves, ed., London: Kegan Paul 1992, 198: "The recycling of objects with royal associations may also have had other implications. Another is suggested by the consideration of wooden shabti figure of Ramesses II, now in the British Museum (EA 69672) (see pls. XX–XXI, XXIV). It was donated in 1883 by 'Rogers Bey' of Cairo (i.e. Edward Rogers formerly owner of the 'Rogers Tablet' from the DB 320 cache), but its provenance is unknown. It is interesting, firstly because shabtis of Ramesses II are rare in any case, but more so because it has undergone extensive alteration in antiquity."

11 This quotation from the Minutes was retrieved on 25 March 2019 in correspondence with Angela Grimshaw, archivist at the British Museum. Unfortunately, the original of Rogers's letter seems to be inaccessible.

12 As Liebrenz shows in his contribution to this volume, the Prussian consul in Damascus, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, and his guest Julius Heinrich Petermann reported on Kufic manuscripts in the Qubbat al-khazna in the 1850s.

Manuscript hunting: A family affair?

Edward Thomas Rogers's sister Mary Eliza Rogers (1828–1910; see fig. 1) started her trip to the Levant in 1855, where she joined her brother on his numerous tours. After her return to London in 1859 she started to compose her famous work *Domestic Life in Palestine*, published in 1860; in this work she depicts her extensive travel and encounters in the Near East.[13] To collect material for her research, she relied on her brother's help, as he had built up good relations with the locals.[14] It would seem that she showed more interest in manuscripts than her brother did. For example, in 1868, she published an article on "Books and Book-Binding in Syria and Palestine".[15] Liebrenz has also provided some evidence that she played an important role in providing access to the mosque and, possibly, also the Qubba.[16] Moreover, we have additional evidence that she was in the possession of manuscripts, even though not specifically from Damascus – in *Domestic Life in Palestine* she mentions manuscripts that she brought back to England:

> When he had carefully returned this precious roll to its place, he showed me several later copies of the Pentateuch – some in the Samaritan, others in the Arabic character; a printed collection of psalms or hymns; several commentaries from the Exodus to the time of Mohammed; and a very curious manuscript, called the Book of Joshua, which begins with the account of the journeyings of the company of spies who were sent into the promised land by Moses, and concludes with the fabulous stories of the life of Alexander. This seems to be rather a favourite book. It is written in Arabic, but the proper names and certain words are in the Samaritan characters. It is said to be of Syriac and not of Hebrew characters. I brought a copy of this remarkable work to England.[17]

These manuscripts are also mentioned in a letter sent by Mary Eliza Rogers, dated 23 August 1877 and today preserved in the British Museum.[18] She describes there how

> An old friend Mr Jacob esh-Shellaby arrived in London on Tuesday, and he will probably remain two or three weeks. He has brought with him a fine and perfect copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch written on parchment – and a very old one written on paper – also an Arabic version of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

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13 Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock 1865.

14 On Mary Eliza Rogers's stay in the Near East, see Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918; Sexuality, Religion and Work*, London: Macmillan 1992, 332; and also a letter from Rogers herself, published in W. Sparrow Simpson, "Proceedings of the Association", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 30 (1874), 191.

15 Mary Eliza Rogers, "Books and Book-Binding in Syria and Palestine", *The Art Journal*, n.s., 7 (1868), part 1, 41–43; part 2, 113–115.

16 See his contribution to this volume.

17 See Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 246; on p. 210 she also mentions: "It was rumored that the manuscript book which I carried contained talismanic directions for seeking treasures. It had a patent lock and key, and a book thus guarded had never before been seen there."

18 The letter is in the archive of the Egyptian Department at the British Museum, accession number 5717. I thank Ronny Vollandt for drawing my attention to this document.



Fig. 1: A photograph of Mary Eliza Rogers. (With the permission of the Yad Izhaq Ben-Zvi Photo Archive, Finn collection, Jerusalem)

The passage gives some indication of what we might interpret as the professional network who provided manuscripts for the Rogers family, in particular for Mary Eliza.

The king's photographer

The case of Edward Thomas Rogers remains, at the moment, inconclusive. However, an event that took place in Damascus in 1862 could give us new information. On his mother's advice, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (1841–1910), who later became King Edward VII of the United Kingdom, embarked on an extensive journey through the Near East, visiting Egypt, Jerusalem, Damascus, Beirut, and Constantinople. In late April 1862 he arrived in Damascus.[19]

Edward's travel journal describes a visit to the Umayyad Mosque, but unfortunately there is no mention of the Qubba, only a single sentence noting that "the Court outside the Mosque, & the Mosque itself are very striking".[20] Rather interesting is the fact that in this travel journal there is no mention of Edward Thomas Rogers, although he had already been promoted to consul the year before. In his account about his arrival in Damascus the prince does mention the consulate (illustrated in fig. 2), though without specifics:

> The town was full of people, & the troops lined some part of the way. We rode to the English Consulate with Mr Sandwith*, *the Acting Consul*, & [illegible word crossed through] O'Reilly Colonel O'Reilly (Hassan Bey) who is an Irishman in the Turkish service, & is a pleasant & conversible fellow.[21]

However it was Rogers who was at that time the acting consul. It is very puzzling, then, that Rogers is not mentioned at all, even though he had such an important position, and considering that the Prince of Wales was very accurate in mentioning names in his diary.

In any case, it would seem that Rogers had chosen the Great Mosque of Damascus as an important destination for the royal entourage, based on the photographic evidence. To document the different stages of the royal tour, the photographer Francis Bedford (1815–1894) had been recruited. As the son of the famous architect Francis Octavius Bedford (1784–1858), he had started his career as an architectural lithographer, and only in the early 1850s did his interest shift towards photography. After helping to found the Royal Photographic Society and being

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19 On Edward's biography, see Sidney Lee, *King Edward VII: A Biography*, London: Macmillan 1927.

20 The entry is 28 April 1862 (p. 59) in Edward's travel journal, now preserved in the Royal Collection Trust; see Edward VII, "The Prince of Wales's Travel Journal: 6 February – 14 June 1862", Royal Collection Trust, https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/cairo-to-constantinople/the-queens-gallery-buckingham-palace/the-prince-of-waless-journal-6-february-14-june-1862.

21 Edward VII, "Travel Journal", 58.



Fig. 2: Photograph of the British Consulate of Damascus, taken by Francis Bedford in 1862. ("The British Consulate, Damascus – Garden Court", 1 May 1862; Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 2700965.) © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

commissioned to photograph objects in the Royal Collection, he then accompanied the Prince of Wales on his journey, becoming the first photographer to document a royal tour.[22]

The collection of his photographs taken during the journey are today preserved in the Royal Collection Trust. Bedford took a total of ten pictures in Damascus, and four of these depict the Umayyad Mosque: one is a rather aerial view from one of the minarets; two give a wider view of the courtyard; and only a single photograph seems to focus on something specific, the Qubbat al-khazna (see fig. 3).[23]

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22 For biographical information, see the introduction and the first chapter in Stephanie Spencer, *Francis Bedford, Landscape Photography and Nineteenth-Century British Culture: The Artist as Entrepreneur*, Farnham: Ashgate 2011.

23 All the pictures are digitally accessible on the official Royal Collection Trust website at https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/cairo-to-constantinople-early-photographs-of-the-middle-east/the-queens-gallery-buckingham-palace/francis-bedford. They are also available in Sophie Gordon and Badr El Hage, *Cities, Citadels and Sights of the Near East: Francis Bedford's Nineteenth-Century Photographs of Egypt, the Levant and Constantinople*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press 2014.



Fig. 3: Photograph of the Qubbat al-khazna, taken by Francis Bedford in 1862. ("Fountain in the court of the Great Mosque", 29 April 1862; Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 2700961.) © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

The Royal Collection Trust describes the building in that photograph as a fountain – this is probably a later mistake, since Bedford never described it as such, and the actual fountain is in the middle of the courtyard and known as *qubbat al-nāfūra* (the dome of the fountain) or *qafs al-mā* (the water cage).[24] Not only is this the oldest photograph of the Qubba, with its date of 1862, but the fact that the picture was taken focusing mainly on the dome itself shows that there could have been knowledge about the particularity of this building.[25]

24 For the names of the fountain, see D.S. Margoliouth, *Cairo, Jerusalem & Damascus: Three Chief Cities of the Egyptian Sultans*, London: Chatto & Windus 1907, 247.

25 Déroche had suggested that the first graphical representation of the Qubbat al-khazna was in the plan of the Umayyad Mosque drawn by the French architect Jules Burgoin in 1874–1875, who referred to it as the "Bibliothèque"; see François Déroche, "In the Beginning: Early Qur'ans from Damascus", in: *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 61.

Rogers's successor: Richard Francis Burton

After Rogers was transferred to Cairo, Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821–1890) was appointed as the next British consul in Damascus. In his early life Burton had enlisted in the army of the East India Company, and during this time as a soldier he learned a number of Indian languages, as well as Persian and Arabic. Only after his military career did he become a renowned explorer, travelling throughout the world acquiring many other languages. In addition, Burton became known for having disguised himself as a Muslim in order to make the hajj and see Mecca, writing a full report of his pilgrimage.[26] He arrived in Damascus and took office in 1869, having already served as a consul in South America and travelled through Africa. As a result of a great number of incidents with locals, he was soon seen as not being suitable for such a sensitive position, and lost his position as consul in Damascus after only three years, in 1871.[27] Despite only being in Damascus a short time, and being uninterested in manuscripts – as demonstrated recently by Robert Irwin[28] – Burton should nevertheless be seen as an important figure in the context of the Qubbat al-khazna.

On the morning of 11 July 1870, Richard Burton saw "two sun-burnt Englishmen"[29] approaching his house. The two men turned out to be Edward Henry Palmer (1840–1882) and Charles F. Tyrwhitt Drake (1846–1874). The former was an orientalist and explorer with expertise in manuscripts and the Arabic language, while the latter was a naturalist.[30]

Palmer, who compiled catalogues of the Oriental manuscript collection of Trinity College Library in Cambridge, has recently drawn the attention of Qubba scholars, since some of the manuscripts he brought back from his journeys seem to have similarities to Qubba materials. According to Déroche, for example, the manuscript with the class mark MS Add. 1116 in the Cambridge University Library, which had previously been owned by Palmer and Drake, can be associated with the Koran of Amājūr.[31] Therefore if we assume that this manuscript was ac-

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26 Richard Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina*, Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz 1874.

27 There are numerous biographical works about Richard Burton. As a primary source, there is an extensive biography by his wife; see Isabel Burton, *The Life of Captain Sir Richard Burton*, London: Duckworth 1898.

28 Robert Irwin, "Arabist and Consul in Damascus", in: *Manuscripts, Politics and Oriental Studies: Life and Collections of Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905) in Context*, Boris Liebrenz and Christoph Rauch, eds., Islamic Manuscripts and Books 9, Leiden: Brill 2019, 420–431.

29 Thomas Wright, *The Life of Sir Richard Burton*, London: Everett & Co. 1906, 209.

30 For information about Palmer and Drake and their journey to Syria, see Richard Burton and Charles F. Tyrwhitt Drake, *Unexplored Syria: Visits to the Libanus, the Tulúl el Safá, the Anti-Libanus, the Northern Libanus, and the ʾAláh*, London: Tinsley Brothers 1872.

31 A codicological and palaeographical analysis of the Koran of Amājūr, identifying further fragments, has been carried out by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach; see Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un*

quired in Damascus, it must have happened during this specific visit, for two reasons: first, Cambridge University Library indicates that the manuscript was acquired in 1878 from both Palmer and Drake, but they only travelled together to Damascus once, in 1870; and second, after his return from this specific trip, Palmer was appointed Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University in 1871, and because of his wife's illness, he had no opportunity to travel to Damascus for a second time before she died in 1878. This confirms that, if the Koran of Amājūr is indeed from the Qubba, and was acquired in Damascus, Palmer had to have acquired it during the 1870 trip.[32]

Palmer and Drake were very well received by Burton, who was happy to have British people around him. The two scholars, for their part, were relieved to have found someone who, due to his position, was able to show them around and grant them access to difficult places. Burton's adventurous spirit, his diplomatic position, and his relations with the locals all facilitated the search for antiquities. The three of them immediately started a long journey through Syria and Palestine. But neither the accounts and writings of Burton nor those of Drake or Palmer offer any mention of the Qubba, let alone it being opened, even though there is reliable evidence that the manuscript that came into the possession of Palmer and Drake can be associated with the treasure dome.

Once again, to understand if these scholars knew about the Qubba, and therefore could have attempted to extract material from it – or indeed, were successful in doing so – we have to turn to a secondary source. The wife of the British consul, Isabel Burton, compiled various books which contain information about their stay in Damascus. In her *Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land* she describes the city, and gives some interesting details about the Umayyad Mosque:

> Let us now pass into the large paved court adjoining the Mosque. In the middle is a jet d'eau under a marble dome. At the end of the court is a short, squat dome, supported on columns, which they tell us has been shut up for three hundred years, and contains only shreds of manuscripts, common as well as rare. They prime me as usual with highly imaginative stories about the sacred and mysterious books here deposited by some great prophet. I ask them if it is not a pity to hide such a treasure, which would instruct and interest the world; they reply that it is so, but that it would be sinful to disturb what the men of Allah had commanded to be kept hid.[33]

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discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 268–275; and also Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "The Blue Koran: A Contribution to the Debate on its Possible Origin and Date", *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 8 (2017), 127–143.

32 For Palmer's journey's, see Wright, *Sir Richard Burton*, 208–222. On the acquisition of the Koran of Amājūr, see the information section of the Cambridge University Library web page at https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01116/1.

33 Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land: From my Private Journal*, London: Henry S. King & Co. 1875, 169–170.

Not only did Isabel Burton know about the Qubba, she also knew its purpose and its precious content. Interesting also is the fact that she points out that the Qubba has supposedly remained unopened for several centuries. If his wife knew about the Qubba, then it is highly likely that Richard Burton also knew of it, and it is therefore plausible that when Palmer was looking for manuscripts, Burton would have advised him to look for them in the Umayyad Mosque.

Of course, this raises another question: If Palmer and Drake knew about the Qubba and actually took something from it, how did they convince the locals to open it? There are two possible answers to this question. One answer is that Palmer did not try to open the dome at all, but simply took manuscripts from the mosque's library or manuscripts that were circulating from previous times that the Qubba had been opened; and this is plausible, since the letter from the Ottoman authorities that is mentioned in von Soden's article quoted at the beginning of this chapter pointed out that material had been transferred from the Qubba to the mosque's library. The alternative answer, on the other hand, would involve Burton. In the case of Hermann von Soden, the opening of the Qubba was brought about by a royal dignitary; and Wetzstein did not open it, but asked a local for a favour. For Palmer, the answer could lie in the fact that Burton was a hajji.[34] After he undertook the pilgrimage to Mecca, he enjoyed respect from the locals and especially from people associated with the mosque. Burton himself reports: "even the Muezyns (Prayer-Callers) of the great Amawi Mosque led by a Shaykh in brown cloak and black hood … the most fanatical, smiled at me as I looked down upon them".[35] His religious title combined with his diplomatic authority could have led to the Qubba being opened.

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34 On the fact that Richard Burton enjoyed respect even from religious people, see Mary S. Lovell, *A Rage to Live: A Biography of Richard and Isabel Burton*, New York: Norton 2000, 519.

35 Lovell, *Rage to Live*, 519 n. 28.

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Bruno Violet and the exploration of the Qubbat al-khazna around 1900

Cordula Bandt (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities) / Arnd Rattmann (Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung)

For more than a millennium the Qubbat al-khazna of the Great Mosque in Damascus was filled with manuscripts and fragments of various origins.[1] Yet, only in 1900–1901 did the first systematic scientific analysis of its contents take place. It was a young German scholar, Bruno Violet (see fig. 1), who was entrusted with this both delicate and demanding task. In the following, we summarise what is known about the circumstances of his journey to Damascus, his stay there, and his work on the site, and we give an overview of the outcomes of his venture.

Bruno Violet was born in 1871 to a Huguenot family. In 1889 he started his studies of theology at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin. His most important academic teacher was Adolf von Harnack, who had just entered the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences at that time. Violet's special interest lay in Oriental languages. Around 1892 he moved to Strasbourg, where in 1895 he finished his studies and earned his doctorate with a thesis on the Syriac tradition of *De martyribus Palaestinae* by Eusebius of Caesarea.[2]

Violet appears to have had a special gift for languages. He spoke several modern languages fluently and specialised in ancient Greek as well as Syriac and Hebrew. His knowledge was appreciated by Harnack, who sent him to various European libraries in order to collate or transcribe ancient manuscripts on his behalf. Violet's experience in this field would become decisive in the decision to send him to Damascus some years later.

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1 This chapter gives information additional to that which is found in our German overview, Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20. For an earlier account of the discovery, see Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubba^{t} al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74, especially pp. 46–50.

2 Violet won the prize of the theological faculty of Strasbourg University with his thesis. One year later an extended version was published: Bruno Violet, *Die Palästinischen Märtyrer des Eusebius von Cäsarea: Ihre ausführlichere Fassung und deren Verhältnis zur kürzeren*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 14, no. 4, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1896.



Fig. 1: Bruno Violet (1871–1945) at a young age. (Printed with the kind permission of Violet Brehmer, Berlin.)

The background of Violet's journey

A colleague of Harnack in Berlin, Hermann Freiherr von Soden (see the contribution by Christoph Markschies in the present volume), was at that time preparing a critical edition of the New Testament. He was constantly in search of old text witnesses of the New Testament in order to utilise them for his ambitious work.[3] In the hope of finding undiscovered manuscripts, he travelled to the Middle East in 1898, visiting Damascus on the way.[4] The Qubbat al-khazna in the courtyard of the Great Mosque (fig. 2) aroused his special interest, since he had learned from locals that manuscripts of great age would be located there. He also learned that the Qubba had been opened several decades earlier and that on that occasion a New Testament fragment had been taken away by an Englishman.[5]

Thrilled by this information, von Soden started all possible diplomatic efforts to achieve a reopening of the treasury and its scientific investigation. Prospects were good, because, after a devastating fire in 1893, the mosque was undergoing reconstruction, and this would include a restoration of the Qubba.

But von Soden's efforts had to overcome strong resistance from local officials, since in Damascus there was a strong belief that opening the treasury would bring harm to the city. However, in early May 1900, von Soden was officially informed that Sultan Abdul Hamid II had issued an irade to open the Qubbat al-khazna for scientific research, or at least to take an inventory. At this point there was no time to lose in finding someone to be present for the opening and to do the work on site. Fortunately, Harnack could recommend to von Soden the promising young scholar Bruno Violet, who was willing to set out for Damascus only a few days later.[6]

In his diary, Violet not only described his journey and his personal daily routine, but also the circumstances of finding some of the manuscripts, as well as meetings with the German archaeologists who conducted the excavations of the temple district in Baalbek from 1900 to 1905. Furthermore, he provided information that is valuable for scholars in a variety of disciplines. Later, after his return

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3 Von Soden published his four-volume edition of the New Testament over the years 1902–1913; see Hermann von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt, hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte*, Berlin: Glaue 1902–1913.

4 Immediately after his return he published a travelogue: Hermann von Soden, *Reisebriefe aus Palästina* [1898], 2nd ed., Berlin: Springer 1901.

5 For further details, see Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 4 n. 21. The earlier opening of the Qubba is discussed in the files of the German Foreign Office, housed at the Bundesarchiv, Berlin; see especially the file BArch R901/37531, p. 68. See also the contributions by Boris Liebrenz and Fabio Ioppolo in this volume.

6 Harnack later noted about Violet: "he was the only one who could have gone to Damascus"; see Adolf von Harnack, *Protokollbuch der Kirchenväter-Kommission der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 1897–1928*, ed. Christoph Markschies and Stefan Rebenich, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2000, 120.



Fig. 2: The Qubbat al-khazna, before 1876 (or 1868); photograph taken by Felix Bonfils. (Felix Bonfils No. 476; Creative Commons.)

to Germany, he published several essays on the events. Nevertheless, his diary is the source most intensively used for the following description of his time in Damascus.[7]

7 Violet's diary (Violet, "Tagebuch" in following notes) is in the possession of his granddaughter, Violet Brehmer, in Berlin. We warmly thank Mrs Brehmer for providing us with copies and further information. Violet's articles and essays on his journey to Damascus are: Bruno Violet, "Der Damaszener Fund", in: Friedrich Schulthess, *Christlich-Palästinische Fragmente aus*

Arrival in Damascus

After a ten-day journey by train and ship, Violet reached Damascus on 30 May 1900. On the next day, the German consul, Ernst Lütticke, introduced Violet to his family and to his business partner Bishara Asfar.[8] Both men were to become Violet's closest contacts in Damascus. Through them, he met several other foreigners that day in the garden known as Junaynat al-daftardāriyya:[9] the British adventuress Gertrude Bell, who happened to be staying in the same hotel as Violet, and Paul Apéry, an architect from France or Greece,[10] who was in charge of the reconstruction of the Great Mosque after the devastating fire of 1893. The German orientalist, Hermann Burchardt, was also present in Damascus, photographically documented the meeting (fig. 3), which Bell and Violet both report in their respective diaries.[11]

Immediately after the photographic session, Apéry guided the party through the Great Mosque, in order to exhibit the restoration work (see fig. 4). Bell commented on this tour in only a few words: "a pitiful sight".[12] The grounds of this building would later become Violet's daily place of work.

Before he could begin his work, Violet had to wait for some days for the official permission to open the Qubba to reach Damascus, and he used the time to improve his knowledge of Arabic and Syriac. One of his teachers was Ḥabib al-Zayyāt, a clerk of the Banque Ottomane and an enthusiast for ancient manuscripts. Al-Zayyāt was in contact with several private collectors of manuscripts in Damascus and intro-

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der Omajjaden-Moschee zu Damaskus, Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, NF 8, no. 3, Berlin: Weidmann 1905, 7–10; Bruno Violet, "Damaszener Erinnerungen", *Der Christliche Orient* (1922), 22–25; Bruno Violet, "Um die Jahrhundertwende in Damaskus", *Der Orient* 18, no. 5 (1936), 97–110, and vol. 18, no. 6 (1936), 128–137 (page numbers cited for this work relate to special offprint version published by Potsdam Missionshandlung und Verlag in 1936). See also Bruno Violet, "Das Hussein-Fest am 19. April 1901", *Der Christliche Orient* (1902), 9–12; and Bruno Violet, "Die Heimkehr der Mekkapilger in Damaskus", *Orient im Bild* (1929), 43f.

8 Ernst Lütticke was a merchant and the German consul in Damascus. Bishara Asfar represented him in consular matters, as becomes clear from the files of the Bundesarchiv, Berlin; see BArch R901/37532, p. 13. Violet himself described Asfar's family as "mit Lüttickes verwandte Kaufmannsfamilie" (merchant family related to the Lüttickes); see Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 4.

9 For the location of this garden, see Stefan Weber, "Zeugnisse kulturellen Wandels: Stadt, Architektur und Gesellschaft des osmanische Damascus im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts", dissertation, Berlin 2001 (679 Nr. 417, IV/7-2-1381).

10 Violet calls him "einen französich gebildeten Griechen" (a Greek educated in the French way); see Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 4.

11 See: Violet, "Tagebuch", 32f. For Gertrude Bell's diary entry for 31 May 1900, see the Gertrude Bell Archive at Newcastle University, http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk.

12 Gertrude Bell's diary entry from 31 May 1900.



Fig. 3: Morning coffee at Junaynat al-daftardāriyya, 31 May 1900. The following people have been identified: Ernst Lütticke (in the middle with the white hat), Paul Apéry sitting next to him, followed by Bruno Violet; and also Gertrude Bell (second from the left). (Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University, photo A 328.)

duced Violet to their libraries as well as to the great al-Ẓāhiriyya Library (fig. 5). He also took Violet to examine manuscripts outside the city.[13]

The opening of the Qubbat al-khazna

Two weeks after Violet's arrival in Damascus, the Qubba was officially opened with a ceremonial act, on 16 June 1900. First, the local Ottoman and religious representatives inspected the small room and examined its contents. Afterwards, Lütticke and Violet were allowed to see the interior. Their first impression was disillusioning, as Violet notes in his diary: "a horrible sight: the entire floor is covered with parchments and papers that are burned, torn, etc."[14] In a letter to Berlin, he describes the sight as a "man-sized mess" and mocks the denomination

13 See: Violet, "Tagebuch", 33–41.

14 Violet, "Tagebuch", 42: "ein graulicher Anblick: der ganze Boden bedeckt von verbrannten, zerrissenen etc. Pergamenten und Papieren".



Fig. 4: Reconstruction of the Great Mosque 1899. (Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung, Cologne.)



Fig. 5: Al-Ẓāhiriyya Library, 1899. (Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung, Cologne.)

of the Qubbat al-khazna as a "treasury" – he even goes so far as to call himself an "attaché of trash"[15] rather than of treasure.

Despite this rather disappointing first impression, the first day was quite successful for Violet's mission. Three particularly promising manuscripts were taken out the Qubba and submitted to the mosque commission for further investigation: two Greek bifolia, a Peshitta fragment from the book of Exodus, and a Latin manuscript with notes.[16] Latin manuscripts were rather exceptional, and so the latter might have been a musical manuscript which was later photographed by Violet and is available as photograph no. 158 in the Violet collection.[17]

A first sifting through the manuscripts and fragments

Unfortunately, the only opportunity Violet had to get an impression of the conditions in which the manuscripts had been stored within the building was on the day the Qubba was opened. For his later examination and analysis of the manuscripts, nearby rooms were made available to him, with members of the mosque's staff being ordered to bring the manuscripts out of the Qubba to him. As Violet complains, the material was stuffed "without special care" into sacks and poured onto the floor in front of him.[18] Together with assistants, Violet rather cursorily divided the manuscripts into Muslim and non-Muslim ones, because he was only permitted to work with non-Muslim documents. The ones that were classified as Muslim were immediately stuffed back into the sacks, which were then sewn up, and the manuscripts were returned to where they had been stored. According to Violet's estimate, only a half to one per cent of all the manuscripts were of non-Muslim origin.[19]

In the first months, Violet was allowed to work only a few hours per week, and only over two days. Additionally, he was observed suspiciously by overseers from the mosque. This limited schedule changed over the course of his work, and he was later allowed to work every day except Friday and was attended by only a single person with a friendlier attitude.

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15 In a letter to Harnack on 14 July 1900, p. 1, Violet complains that he "muß mich als kaiserlich-ottomanischer Müll-Attaché bewähren" (had to prove myself as an Imperial-Ottoman attaché of trash). All letters from Violet to Harnack quoted in the following are to be found in the archive of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, archive no. KVK 8/1.

16 Violet, "Tagebuch", 42.

17 Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/158. The Violet collection is available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

18 Violet, "Fund", 8.

19 In Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 5, he estimates the proportion of non-Muslim texts as one per cent, whereas in Violet, "Fund", 8, he estimates it as only half of one per cent.

Nonetheless, the overwhelming mass of manuscripts in itself put an enormous demand on Violet. According to his diary, a total of 150 sacks of manuscripts had been sorted by 25 November 1900 in the way described above.[20] We can assume that each sack contained about 1400 individual documents, as most of the Muslim documents are now housed in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul[21] and François Déroche estimates that there are 210,000 of them.[22] This number also conforms to Violet's estimate of the non-Muslim material making up between 0.5 and 1 per cent of the total, since, as reported in detail below, he identified about 1500 non-Muslim documents. Given that Violet and his assistants worked through all these documents during a period of little more than five months, this means they checked nearly 10,000 documents per week, or more than 1500 per day!

As a matter of course, Violet needed some time to acquaint himself with the peculiarities of the manuscripts. For example, when the work had already been going for ten weeks, Violet discovered for the first time, and mainly by chance, a palimpsest.[23] Having thus become aware of the existence of palimpsests in the collection, he then devoted more attention to the study of the parchments and found more palimpsests in a relatively short time.[24] In a letter to Harnack, Violet bemoans that he and his assistants might have unwittingly overlooked palimpsests before.[25] But by this stage they had already worked through forty-five sacks, and it was utterly impossible to look through them again, as they had been sewn up and returned to storage.

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20 Cf. Violet "Fund", 8. The last five sacks were inspected on 25 November 1900; see Violet, "Tagebuch", 78.

21 In fact there are some Islamic manuscript fragments, including three folios of the Koran of Amājūr, in Damascus at the Syrian National Museum and in the Museum of Arabic Calligraphy; see Paola Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaᵗ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74; Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society,* Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63–88; Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 268–281 and figs. 2–4. We warmly thank the editors of this volume for drawing our attention to this fact.

22 François Déroche, "The Qurʾān of Amāǧūr", *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990–1991), 59. For more accurate numbers, see the introduction to the present volume.

23 He reports his find in a letter to Theodor Nöldeke from 26 August 1900. (All letters from Violet to Nöldeke referred to here are found in the Nachlaß Nöldeke, University Library of Tübingen.) According to this letter, the very first palimpsest which Violet discovered was a Christian Palestinian Aramaic fragment with Arabic upper script from the Quran. As he identified the content of the lower script as 1 Cor. 9:24–10:15 and 1 Cor. 12, this was obviously the Schulthess Fragment XIV.

24 See Violet, "Tagebuch", 69.

25 Letter to Harnack, 15 October 1900, pp. 6f.

Unquestionably, the entire process by which the manuscripts were extracted from the Qubba was disadvantageous for a comprehensive analysis of the collection as a whole. The manuscripts were apparently arbitrarily gathered into the sacks, and there was no documentation of the local or chronological ordering of the manuscripts inside the Qubba, nor were the sacks labelled in any way. In his diary, Violet sometimes mentions unusually thick layers of dust between the manuscripts. These may have been the result of the Qubba being opened in former times, or possibly from longer periods without any deposition of manuscripts inside it. In any case, valuable information was lost forever.

During this entire period, Violet was in constant contact with Hermann von Soden. He reported to Berlin about interesting pieces he had found and about difficulties with which he struggled. When it turned out that Violet would need far more time for his work in Damascus than originally expected, and that this could not be financed, von Soden started diplomatic efforts to get the non-Muslim documents sent to Berlin. However, for a long time it was doubtful whether he would succeed in his efforts.

Further treatment and analysis of the non-Muslim finds

After the first rough screening and sorting, Violet took charge of the non-Muslim material. He thoroughly cleaned each fragment, and subsequently pressed and dried it.[26] He divided the fragments into groups, according to language and script. Overall, he classified the documents into nine groups – Greek, Syriac, Syro-Palestinian (Christian Palestinian Aramaic), Hebrew, Coptic, Armenian, Samaritan, Latin, and Old French – and the notebook in which he documented his finds was ordered in terms of these groups. This notebook is highly valuable in terms of the scientific achievement of Violet's journey, and indeed for some of the documented manuscripts it provides the only proof of their existence.[27]

Even though Violet's attention was strongly focused towards Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, he found only a few of these. As already mentioned, Violet kept von Soden informed about his progress, and he sent documentation and transcriptions of these manuscripts to Berlin. In his own notebook, he recorded all their codicological and palaeographic peculiarities; and he suggested that the oldest of these manuscripts dated to the fourth century.[28]

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26 See Violet, "Fund", 8.

27 Violet titled his notebook "Fragmenta Damascena (1900)", although it is often simply referred to as his "Notizbuch" (notebook). The original is in the possession of his granddaughter, Violet Brehmer, but she kindly permitted a copy to be made, and this is kept in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/CGS, Akz.-Nr. 484).

28 See Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 6.

The find that was most important from Violet's point of view was an Old Testament curiosity, which he referred to as the "zweisprachiges Psalmfragment" (bilingual fragment from Psalms): it is a Greek–Arabic manuscript of Psalms 77 to 78, but the Arabic is written in Greek letters (see fig. 6). Violet devoted a special analysis to this piece, which he published immediately after his return to Berlin.[29]

Violet also discovered patristic Greek majuscule manuscripts. The longest of these were a quire and some disjointed folios from a manuscript of Isaac Syrus, *Logoi*. This manuscript has a particularly interesting history, since, as Kurt Treu has demonstrated,[30] the larger, first part – 78 folios – of the very same manuscript is in the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France,[31] yet nothing is known about the provenance of the Paris manuscript, which was purchased in 1867 from an unknown private collector. Of course, Violet also found Greek minuscule manuscripts.

From his first discovery of fragments in Christian Palestinian Aramaic (CPA) onwards, Violet paid particular attention to these pieces, since he was well aware of their scientific value and their rarity.[32] Violet was fascinated by the fragments, even though they were very difficult for him to read. He carefully copied the contents of some of them into his notebook, apparently even going so far as to use the same colours as the scribes of these manuscripts (see fig. 7).

However, most of the CPA manuscripts were palimpsests with Arabic upper script. Violet was therefore worried that they might be claimed back and go into the sacks together with the Muslim texts, thus being lost to scholarship for an indeterminate period. In addition, the CPA lower script was, as Violet later put it, "ohne alle Hilfsmittel unmöglich zu entziffern" (impossible to decipher without any tools).[33] Eventually, Violet decided to smuggle these manuscripts out of the

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29 Bruno Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment aus Damaskus", *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung* 4, nos. 10–12 (1901), 384–403, 426–441, 475–488. His preliminary work on this document is preserved in his notebook, including all his research on the Greek–Arabic words. In Old Testament studies, the manuscript became known as the Violet codex or the Violet fragment; see Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Vetus testamentum graecum*, supp. 1, pt. 1, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, 62f. A recent study of this manuscript was done by Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment" in: Ahmad Al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzi,* Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110.

30 See Kurt Treu, "Remnants of a Majuscule Codex of Isaac Syrus from Damascus", in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. 16, no. 2, Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., Texte und Untersuchungen 129, Berlin: Akademie 1985, 114–120.

31 MS suppl. gr. 693.

32 Violet reported in detail on these texts in a letter to Nöldeke dated 26 August 1900, pp. 3f.; see also his letter to Harnack on 15 October 1900, pp. 6f.

33 This quote is from a short unpublished typescript by Bruno Violet, written in 1941 and entitled "Die verhängnisvolle Taura". The original is in the possession of Violet Brehmer, who kindly gave a copy to the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

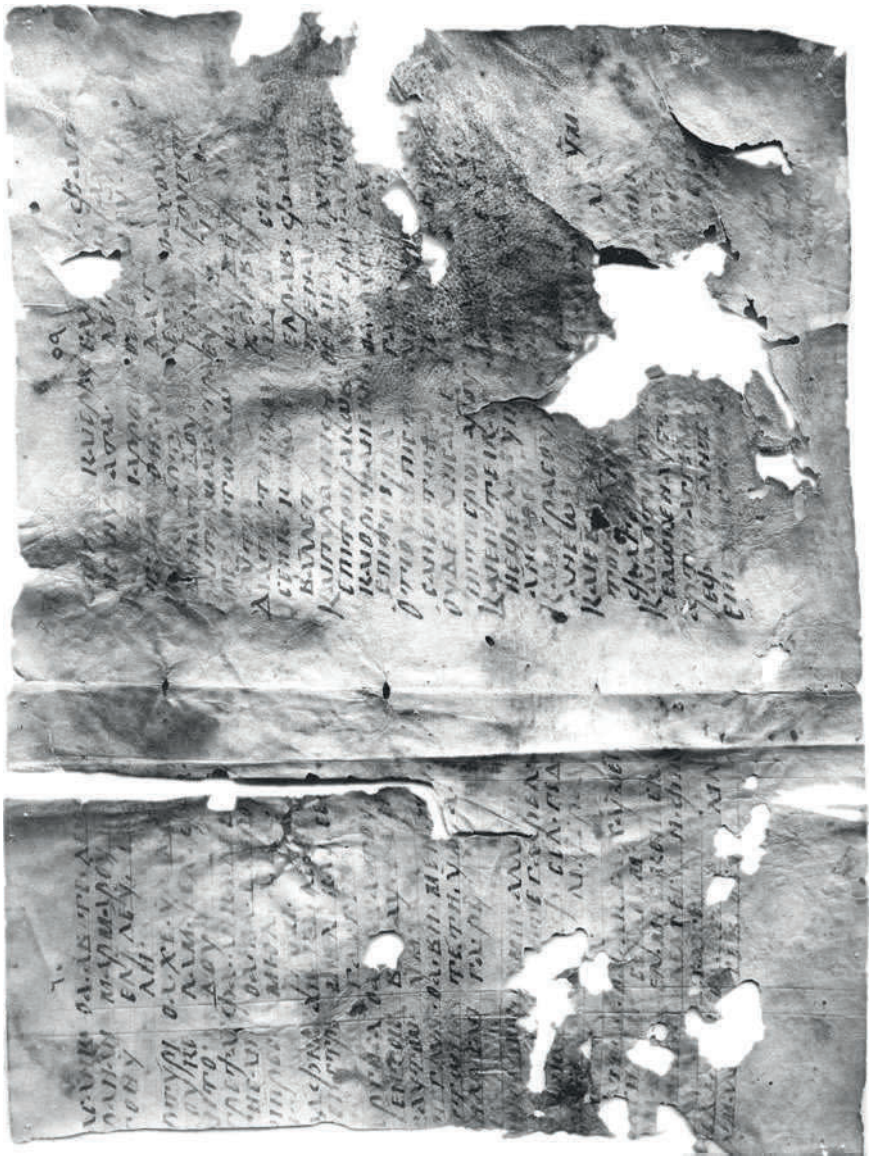


Fig. 6: The Violet fragment. (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 31r.)

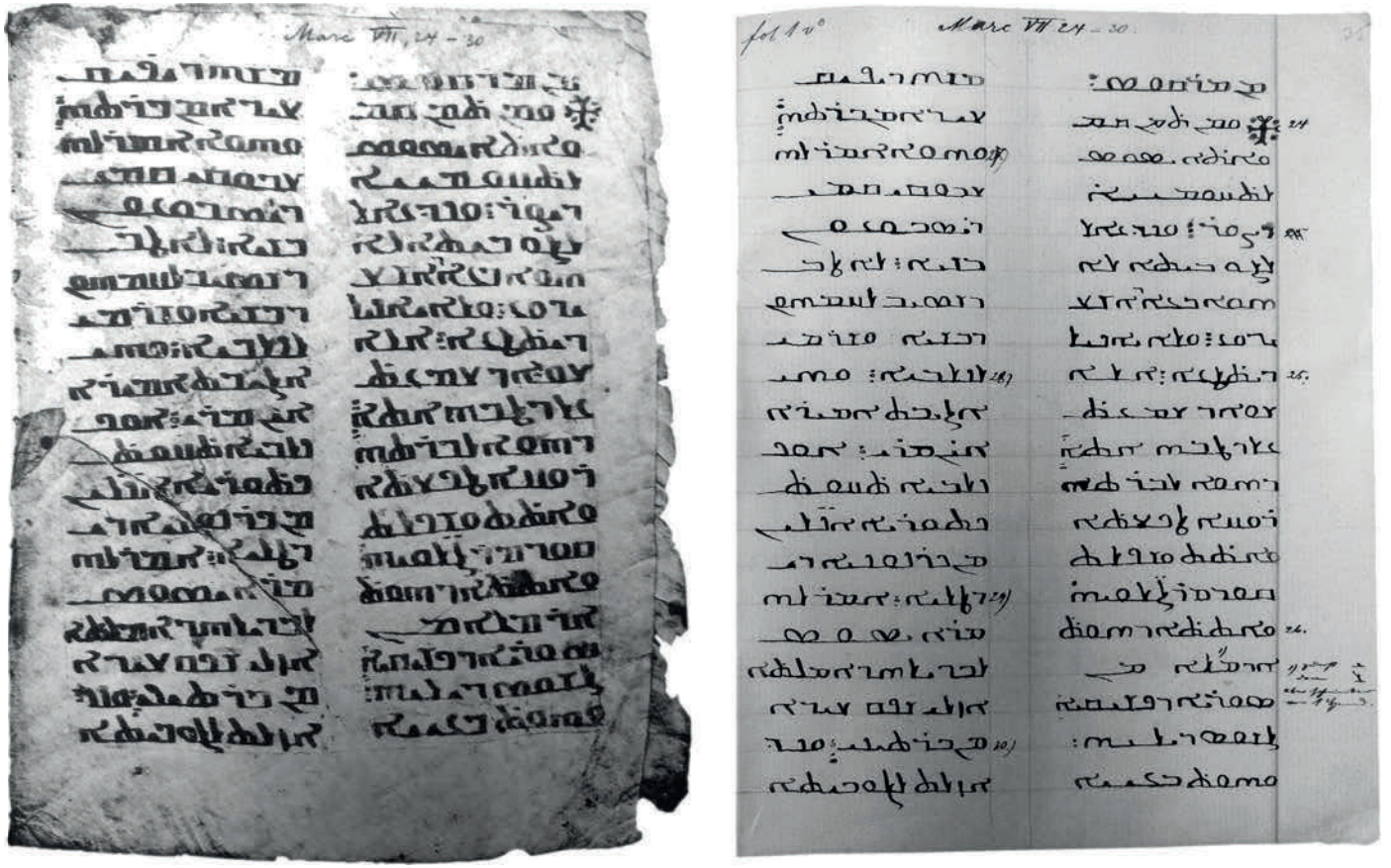


Fig. 7: Schulthess Fragment VII (Mc 7:24–30) and Violet's transcription of the piece in his notebook. (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities / Violet Brehmer.)

mosque and send them to a close friend in Berlin, Friedrich Schulthess, who published them in 1905.[34]

Even though Violet had done a great service to the scholarly community with this audacious act, he felt guilty about it. This caused him to undertake another odd action later: when the non-Muslim manuscripts were loaned to Germany, Violet seized the opportunity and smuggled the CPA fragments back into this collection, which he had so carefully assembled in Damascus. Some forty years later, Violet reflected on this event (and in that same reflection also blamed the German orientalist, Bernhard Moritz, for having stolen an essential manuscript when he visited Violet in Damascus to evaluate the Arabic manuscripts from the Qubba).[35] It seems that when he added the CPA fragments to the collection, Violet was convinced that all the non-Muslim manuscripts would stay in Berlin for the time being. In his later reflection, he ended with the ironical remark "that the Turkish authorities would have received more things back than they originally sent, a situation that is probably unparalleled".[36]

The largest of the Syriac manuscripts was a book fragment with forty-five folios and two additional fragments of the commentary on Ecclesiastes by Theodore of Mopsuestia, which was edited by Werner Strothmann in 1988.[37] Most other Syriac manuscripts came from the Peshitta. But as Emiliano Fiori discovered, as late as 2017, there is also a piece with medical prescriptions.[38]

Violet also discovered Hebrew, Aramaic, and Samaritan fragments in the collection, but these he documented less carefully, probably because he lacked time. One must not forget that his mission was determined by von Soden and that Violet himself, as a theologian, was mainly interested in biblical material. However, when the manuscripts came to Berlin, some of the Hebrew and Aramaic pieces

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34 Friedrich Schulthess, *Christlich-palästinische Fragmente aus der Omajjaden-Moschee zu Damaskus*, Berlin: Weidmann 1905.

35 Violet, "Taura"; see also Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 6.

36 Violet, "Taura": "sodaß die Türken mehr zurückerhalten haben müssen, als sie gesandt hatten, ein Fall, der wohl einzig dasteht". Of course, Violet's intention was certainly not to send the CPA texts back to Istanbul or Damascus; his aim was to keep the collection together. When the box with the non-Muslim fragments came to Berlin, the scholarly community believed that it was a gift, not a loan, as can be seen from the way that Hermann von Soden enthusiastically entitled his little article on the event: "a Christmas gift from the Sultan to German scholarship". See Hermann von Soden, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1247–1249.

37 Werner Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment des Ecclesiastes-Kommentars von Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1988.

38 Emiliano Fiori, "A Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment in Syriac: Evidence of Recipes and Prescriptions from the Qubbet el-Ḫazne of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus", *Aramaic Studies* 15 (2017), 200–229.

were photographed. Amongst them is a very interesting magical booklet, which was published by Gideon Bohak and Matthew Morgenstern in 2014.[39]

Only a few manuscripts in other languages were discovered, such as those in Latin and one in Old French which apparently stemmed from the Crusader period, a letter of protection from King Baldwin III of Jerusalem.[40] Some Coptic and Armenian fragments had also found their way into the Qubba. The Coptic fragments, at least those that were photographed, were analysed recently by Alin Suciu, and contain biblical and other religious texts, including a Bohairic version of the apocryphal *Acts of Matthew in the City of the Priests*.[41]

Of course, Violet found Christian Arabic manuscripts,[42] such as an Arabic psalter with Greek lines between the Arabic (fig. 8). The most recent Christian piece in the collection also belonged to this group, although it was not a manuscript, but a print: an Arabic New Testament, published in London in 1830.[43] This is interesting not because of its content, but merely due to its presence in the Qubba. The book was probably not deposited there immediately after its publication, but rather a few years, if not decades, later. This means that the Qubbat al-khazna was apparently used as a depository for worn-out sacred texts almost until it was opened in 1900 – at the very least until the end of the first half of the nineteenth century.

During the initial screening of all manuscripts from the Qubba, some Arabic folios attracted Violet's special attention. He called them "Quranic manuscripts from the first two centuries of the hijra with Umayyad script".[44] Although he had no authority to study Muslim texts, he separated these fragments out in the hope of later receiving permission to study them. After his work was interrupted by Ramadan, however, these folios were taken away, and he had no idea of their whereabouts.[45]

In his letters, Violet asked Theodor Nöldeke and Adolf von Harnack to support the dispatch of a commission of German Arabists to scientifically explore the Mus-

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39 Gideon Bohak and Matthew Morgenstern, "A Babylonian Jewish Aramaic Magical Booklet from the Damascus Genizah", *Ginzei Qedem* 10 (2014), 9*–44*. See also the contribution by Gideon Bohak in this volume.

40 On this document, see Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 827. Violet photographed this fragment, which is available as Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154 at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

41 See Alin Suciu, "A Bohairic Fragment of the Acts of Matthew in the City of the Priests and Other Coptic Fragments from the Genizah of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus", *Le Muséon* 131 (2018), 251–277.

42 For the edition of a bifolium containing the text of Exodus, see D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi", 284.

43 Violet, "Psalmfragment", 427.

44 Violet, "Fund", 8: "Koranmanuskripte aus den ersten zwei Jahrhunderten der Hedjra mit omajjadischer Schrift". Compare Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 8f.; Violet, "Psalmfragment", 385.

45 Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 9; Violet, "Fund", 8.

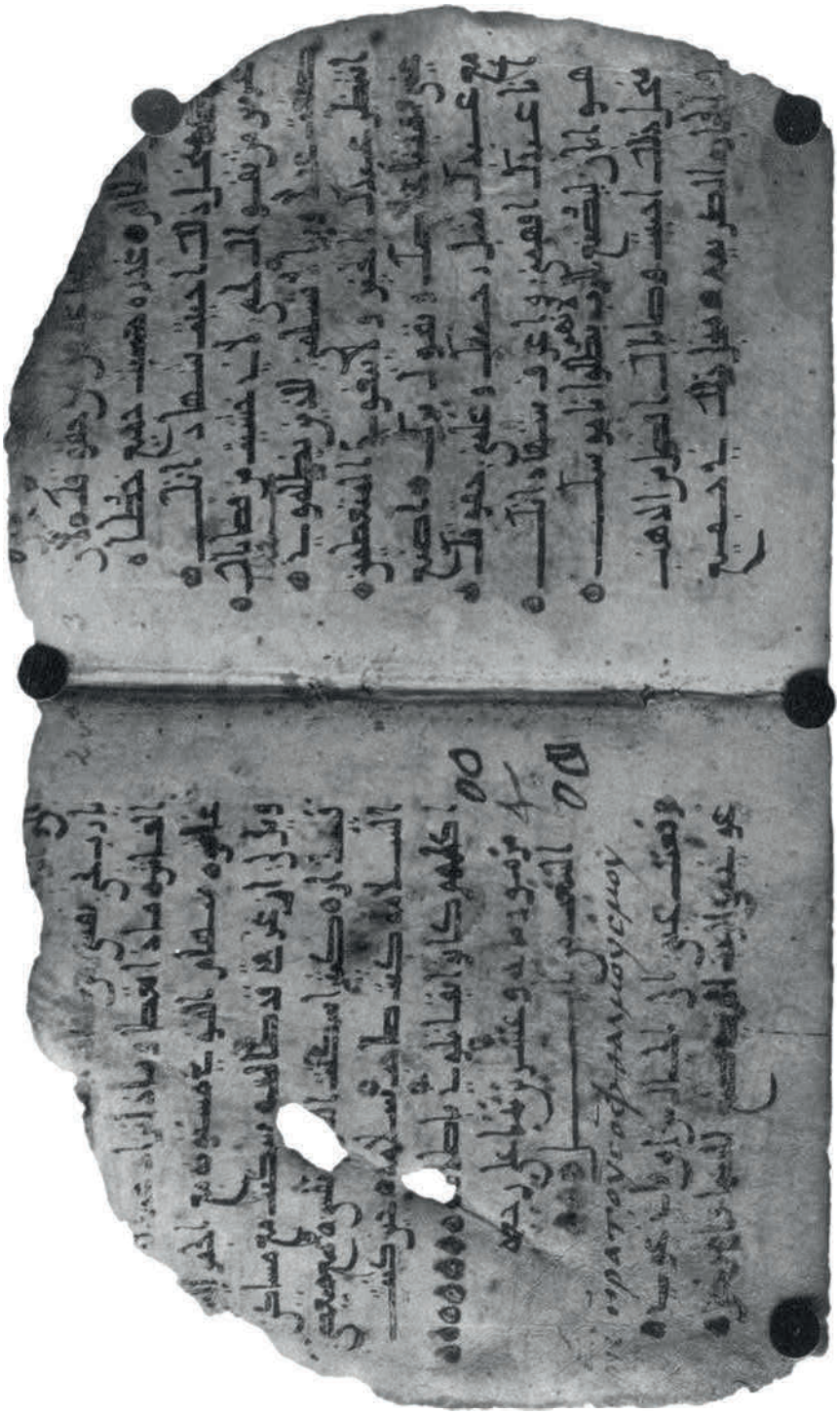


Fig. 8: Christian Arabic Psalter, photographed by B. Violet in Damascus in 1901. (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137.) © BBAW.

lim documents.[46] In order to assess the value of these manuscripts, Bernhard Moritz, then director of the Khedival Library, was sent from Cairo to Damascus. However, Moritz considered that the scientific relevance of the documents was too little to send a commission.[47]

The end of the work in Damascus

Violet stayed in Damascus for about a year, from June 1900 to June 1901, with a long break during Ramadan early in the spring of 1901, when he travelled to Egypt and Palestine. Since a section from his diary is lost,[48] what happened upon his return to Damascus cannot be reconstructed. But it becomes clear that his work became more and more difficult and that he was urged by the mosque commission to finish his work.[49]

Still, this situation had its upside. Violet finally received permission to take photographs of manuscripts, though he was granted only two weeks to complete this work. Unfortunately, precisely at this time the importing of photographic material into the Ottoman Empire was strictly limited. Violet therefore had to use space as efficiently as he could, combining as many fragments as possible into each photograph, sometimes up to five or even six. He was supported in this by the orientalist Hermann Burchardt, mentioned above. They used glass plates, which were then processed by the local photographer Suleiman Hakim.[50] All told, 214 photographs were taken, showing a total of 211 folia, bifolia, and fragments, most of them from both sides.

As the last act of his work in the mosque, Violet deposited the approximately 1500 folios in a prepared box, which was clearly different to the sacks of the Muslim manuscripts. This was in preparation for the fragments to be sent to Berlin, if

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46 Letter to Nöldeke dated 26 August 1900, pp. 2–6.

47 Letter to Harnack on 15 October 1900, pp. 5f. For the communication between Nöldeke and Moritz, see Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37531, p. 98. See also the contribution of Boris Liebrenz in the present volume.

48 The lost section contained the time between 21 March 1901 (when Violet was still in Nablus) and 18 April 1901 (by which time he had already returned to Damascus).

49 Political tensions may have been responsible for the changed situation. Between 22 May and 2 June 1901, the mosque officials informed Violet that he had only 10–15 days left to complete his work, and shortly after that Violet was informed by Paul Schröder, Consul General of the German Empire for Syria, "daß der Botschafter die Schenkung jetzt nicht erbitten könne" (that the ambassador could not ask for the donation at the moment) – see Violet, "Tagebuch", 115 (without date, between 22 May and 2 June 1901; probably Tuesday, 23 May) –which probably refers to the wish from the German side to get the non-Muslim fragments to Berlin as a donation. In his final report to the local governor, Nazim Pasha, on 22 June 1901, Violet openly complains about the mosque officials who had made his work increasingly difficult in the last few days (cf. Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37532, p. 26).

50 Violet, "Jahrhundertwende", 6.

von Soden were to succeed in having these non-Muslim documents loaned to Germany.[51]

On the last pages of his notebook, Violet assembled an inventory of the box. This inventory is very detailed for the Syriac and Greek majuscule manuscripts, where it gives accurate measurements and descriptions of the content. For documents in the other languages, Violet only counted the number of pieces: Greek minuscule (150 folios), Old French (one bifolium, two fragments), Coptic (nine parchment folios and nine paper folios), Samaritan (eight folios, two fragments), Hebrew (about 170 folios and fragments), Armenian and Georgian (together about 120 folios), and Latin (about 150 folios).[52] The CPA fragments were of course not included in this inventory because, as described above, they had already been smuggled out of the country.

According to the inventory, Violet had found a total of about 1500 folia, bifolia, and fragments. This round number corresponds approximately to the later official count, which specified the total as 1558 (see below).

On 16 June 1901, exactly one year after the Qubba had been ceremonially opened, Violet finished his work in the mosque, taking his last photographs.[53] He was still busy for a few more days, having the photographs processed and writing a final report to the local governor, Nazim Pasha, to which he attached fifty selected photographs.[54] In the end Violet bid farewell to the families of Ernst Lütticke and Bishara Asfar, as well as to his other acquaintances in the city, and left Damascus on 2 July. He travelled via Athens, where he stayed for some time, and reached Berlin on 1 August.

The further destiny of the Violet manuscripts and photographs

Von Soden's efforts to get Violet's finds to Berlin eventually succeeded. In December 1901, the sultan issued an irade that the non-Muslim manuscripts could be loaned to Germany.[55] Von Soden was more than delighted, and his enthusiasm is manifest in the short article he wrote, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft" (a Christmas present from the Sultan to German scholarship).

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51 Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37531, p. 99; See also: Violet, "Tagebuch", 79ff and the letter to Harnack, 15 October 1900, p. 13.

52 Violet, "Notizbuch", 148–150.

53 Violet, "Tagebuch", 118 (19 June 1901).

54 A copy of this report, which Violet sent to Nazim Pasha on 22 June 1901, can be found in the files of the Bundesarchiv, BArch R901/37532, pp. 25–28 (as an attachment to the letter from von Soden to Richthofen dated 23 September 1901, pp. 22–24). In it, Violet expressed three times his wish that the manuscripts could be brought to Germany, with the kind permission of the sultan. See also Violet, "Tagebuch", 118 (without date, between 19 and 27 June 1901), where Violet gives the number of photographs attached to the report as fifty.

55 On the negotiations, see Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37532, pp. 4–10, 22–24.

However, it still took a few months for the box to reach Berlin. First it went to Constantinople, where the manuscripts were precisely registered to ensure they would all be returned. This procedure took some months, as it turned out to be quite difficult to record the multilingual and only partly legible manuscripts in detail. Consequently, all leaves were first provided with inventory numbers, and thanks to this process, we know the exact number of non-Muslim documents found by Violet: according to the files, a total of 1558 "leaves" (i.e. folia, bifolia, and fragments) were recorded. The documents were then photographed so that they could be checked upon their return. Two series of these photographs were produced, both of which remained in Constantinople – one series was deposited in the Foreign Ministry, the other in the Topkapı Sarayı Library.

A loan period of one year was fixed, and in June 1902, a full year after Violet had left Damascus, the box finally arrived in Berlin.[56]

The manuscripts already had a political status by this point, and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted that they should be treated with the utmost care, as they were of special importance to the Ottoman authorities. Despite these warnings, von Soden and other scholars – including Bruno Violet – were convinced that once the pieces were in Berlin, they would never leave the city, but would become a permanent loan or maybe even a donation, as a memento of the German emperor's trip to the Orient in 1898.[57]

As things transpired, the loan period was extended every year for a further year.[58] For the first two years, the manuscripts were kept in the Royal Museum in Berlin, where they were restored. Later, they were transferred to the Royal Library in order to make them more accessible for research purposes. Remarkably, scholarly interest was rather limited, and by 1908 only a few pieces had been edited.

Then in December 1908, there was an urgent and unexpected demand to return the manuscripts to Constantinople. Adolf von Harnack, then director of the Royal Library, managed at least to negotiate a short delay of three months. Together with von Soden he selected a series of manuscripts to be photographed before they were returned. It is not clear why only some of the manuscripts were photographed, nor do we know the criteria which were used in assembling this series.

In April 1909, all the manuscripts were sent back to Constantinople, and the files of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, the successor of the Royal Library, holds a

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56 On the loan, see Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37531, especially p. 99.

57 See Bundesarchiv BArch R901/37531, p. 99. See also Violet, "Fund", 9: "Daß das Leihen nur eine den Verhältnissen des Moscheegutes angepaßte feine Form der Überlassung ist, hält jeder Kenner für selbstverständlich. Was sollen jene Handschriften in der Rumpelkammer der Damaszener Moschee?" (It is self-evident to everyone acquainted with the situation that a loan is only the appropriate form of donation for things coming out of the property of a mosque. What would be the use of these manuscripts in the junk room of the Damascene mosque?)

58 For the extension of 1904, see Bundesarchiv BArch R 901/37532, p. 107.

receipt for their complete return, issued in French by the Sublime Porte.[59] But this is the last that is heard of the Violet manuscripts themselves.

As the manuscripts are no longer available, at least for the present, the photographs of them are the only means by which they can be accessed. Thankfully, the two series in Germany are quite well preserved.

Of the 214 photographs taken by Violet in the mosque in Damascus, 210 are still extant. Violet gave them to "Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller", a project run by the Royal Prussian Academy; since 2011, this project has been operating under a new name, "Die alexandrinische und antiochenische Bibelexegese in der Spätantike", at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the successor to the earlier academy. As mentioned above, the photographs are currently accessible online, together with information on their contents and secondary literature.[60]

In addition to the Violet photographs of 1901, all 101 photographs which were taken in the Royal Library in 1909 are still extant in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. They are also accessible online.[61]

It would be a worthwhile task to find the photographs taken in Constantinople before the manuscripts were sent to Berlin; these might still be in the Topkapı Sarayı Library in Istanbul and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara. Additionally, of course, tracing the manuscripts themselves would be invaluable: they are most likely now somewhere in the collection of the National Museum of Damascus.[62]

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59 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Akte VII, 2, vol. 8, p. 191.

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61 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 5 and MSS simulata orientalia 6; see https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de.

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Hermann von Soden (1852–1914): Einige Bemerkungen über einen Berliner Professor und Pfarrer, der zu Unrecht vergessen wurde

Christoph Markschies (Die Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Zu dem Thema[1] vermag ich nur Marginalien beizutragen – bin ich doch im Unterschied zu Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die an der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie arbeiten oder gearbeitet haben (vor allem der Name von Kurt Treu [1928-1991] verdient genannt zu werden[2]), weder ein Experte für die Texte aus der Damaszener Qubbat al-khazna noch für die Geschichte dieser Manuskripte. Zu den Marginalien, die ich zu diesem Thema beitragen kann, gehören die folgenden Bemerkungen zu dem Berliner Theologen *Hermann Freiherr von Soden (1852-1914)*. Über von Soden im Zusammenhang mit den Texten aus der Damaszener Qubbat al-khazna zu sprechen, liegt nahe, weil er im Jahre 1900 gleichsam die Initialzündung für die deutsche Beschäftigung mit dem Damaszener Gebäude und seinen Texten gab und die Forschungsreise von Bruno Violet nach Damaskus letztlich auslöste. Auch das zeitweilige Entleihen von Fragmenten aus Damaskus nach Berlin während der Jahre 1902 bis 1909 wäre ohne seine Initiative nicht zustande gekommen und in seinem reichen Schrifttum finden sich allgemeinverständliche und fachwissenschaftliche Beiträge zum Gesamtfund wie zu einzelnen Texten in seinem Zusammenhang. Die immense Bedeutung, die Hermann von Soden für die Berliner Initiativen zur Erschließung der Damaszener Qubbat al-khazna hatte, ist durch Cordula Bandt und Arnd Rattmann in ihrem Aufsatz über die Damaskus-Reise von Bruno Violet aus dem Jahre 2011 bereits anhand der Quellen in Archiven nachgezeichnet worden[3]; hier soll dieses Engagement vor dem Hintergrund der Person Hermann von Sodens und ihrer wissenschaftlichen Arbeit be-

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1 Vortrag für die Tagung „Manuscript Cultures in Medieval Syria. Towards a history of the Qubbat al-khazna depository in Damascus" (Berlin, 28. und 29. Juni 2018), organisiert von Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (Sapienza – Università di Roma), Konrad Hirschler (Freie Universität Berlin), Ronny Vollandt (LMU München) und der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften; der Vortrag wurde am 29. Juni in englischer Sprache im historischen Akademiegebäude Unter den Linden gehalten. – Die Anmerkungen enthalten nur die notwendigsten Nachweise, sehr herzlich möchte ich mich bei der Familie, besonders bei Dr. Henning Freiherr von Soden in Düsseldorf, für viele Hinweise und Auskünfte bedanken.

2 Vgl. nur Kurt Treu, „Majuskelbruchstücke der Septuaginta aus Damaskus", *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. I. Historisch-philologische Klasse* (1966), 201-221 und weitere in Anm. 76 genannte Beiträge.

3 Cordula Bandt und Arndt Rattmann, „Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1-20 sowie Arianna D'Ottone, „Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in*

leuchtet werden. Dabei konnten erstmals auch familiäre Überlieferungen ausgewertet werden[4]. Eine umfassende Darstellung der äußerst vielfältigen Aktivitäten des Berliner Pfarrers und Professors in Kirche, Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft ist hier allerdings nicht intendiert. Sie bleibt ein Desiderat.

Hermann von Soden gehört zu einer seinerzeit relativ umfangreichen Gruppe hoch gebildeter evangelischer Pfarrer, die neben ihrem Gemeindepfarramt herausragende wissenschaftliche Leistungen auf philologisch-historischem Gebiet vollbrachten – bedingt durch die immer stärkere Spezialisierung und Professionalisierung sowohl von Pfarramt als auch von wissenschaftlicher Tätigkeit sind derartige Doppelexistenzen mindestens hierzulande inzwischen sehr selten geworden[5]. Das Leben Hermann von Sodens macht deutlich, dass schon zu seinen Lebzeiten ein quasi gleichberechtigtes intensives Engagement im Pfarramt wie in der Wissenschaft kaum mehr möglich war. Er gehört insofern zu den – chronologisch betrachtet – letzten prominenten Vertretern dieser spezifischen Doppelbegabung in Deutschland am Ende des neunzehnten und Beginn des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts. Man versteht seinen Lebensweg außerdem nur, wenn man sich klarmacht, welche familiären und religiösen Hintergründe ihn prägten: Hermann Freiherr von Soden stammte aus einem ebenso bekannten wie verzweigten, ursprünglich niedersächsischen Adelsgeschlecht. Angesichts der freiherrlichen Familientradition und der damaligen gesellschaftlichen Konventionen ist sein Berufsweg als evangelischer Pfarrer und Honorarprofessor einer theologischen Fakultät nicht gerade als typisch zu bezeichnen. Das galt aber in gewisser Weise schon für seine Eltern: Theodor August von Soden und seine Frau Clementine Camerer eröffneten nach Jahren in Cincinnati/Ohio in Esslingen am Neckar eine private Töchterschule mit Pensionat[6]; in dieser ehemaligen freien Reichsstadt am Neckar wuchs Hermann, am 16. August 1851 noch in Cincinnati geboren, mit fünf Geschwistern auf, darunter die spätere Schriftstellerin Eugenie von Soden (1858-1930), die sich in der

Byzantine Society, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, Hgg., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63-88.

4 Vgl. dazu auch: Sigrid Bernhardt, „Erinnerungen an Hans von Soden aus der Sicht der Familie oder Begegnungen im Rückblick", in: *Hans von Soden, Leben und Werk*, Jochen-Christoph Kaiser, Hg., Marburger Beiträge zur Kirchlichen Zeitgeschichte 3, Baden-Baden: Tectum-Verlag 2017, 115-150.

5 Wenn ich recht sehe, fehlen Studien zu den pfarramtlichen Tätigkeiten von zeitgenössischen Berliner Professoren wie Harnack und akademischen Tätigkeiten von Berliner Pfarrern praktisch vollständig. Klaus Fitschen, *Pastors Kinder. Wie Pfarrhäuser die Gesellschaft prägten,* Holzgerlingen: SCM Hänssler 2013, 80 spricht von „wissenschaftlichen … Nebeninteressen, die für den Pfarrberuf im 18. Jahrhundert charakteristisch gewesen waren", sich aber im Zuge der Professionalisierung des Pfarrerstandes bereits im folgenden Jahrhundert zunehmend verloren hätten.

6 *Zum Andenken an Clementine von Soden geb. Camerer, Gattin des Freiherrn Theodor von Soden: geboren zu Stuttgart den 27. März 1826; gestorben zu Cannstatt den 13. Jan. 1893; beerdigt zu Esslingen den 16. Jan. 1893*, Esslingen: Louis Bosheuyler, 1893.

kaiserzeitlichen Frauenbewegung engagierte.[7] Man darf wohl von einem schwäbischen, eher pietistischen Hintergrund sprechen, der das Elternhaus prägte; man hatte sich allerdings einer sozial engagierten und liberalen Frömmigkeit bereits geöffnet und war nicht im konservativen Spektrum des pietistischen Milieus verblieben. In einem Nachruf, der anlässlich seines Todes in der „Schwäbischen Kronik" veröffentlicht wurde, ist aus offensichtlich wohlinformierter Quelle schon dem Studenten Hermann von Soden „eine lebhafte, ideal veranlagte Frohnatur voller Energie" und „peinliche Sorgfalt", aber auch fröhlicher Humor attestiert[8].

Angesichts des Wohnortes seiner Eltern und des kirchlichen Engagements der Mutter war es nicht verwunderlich, dass von Soden Theologie studieren wollte und eine klassische Berufsbiographie als württembergischer Pfarrer anstrebte. Nach der Schulzeit am Seminar in Bad Urach, dem Dienst als freiwilliger Krankenpfleger im Kriegslazarett 1870/1871 und Reisen nach England sowie Frankreich nahm er das Studium der Theologie an der Tübinger Eberhard-Karls-Universität auf und trat in die (schlagende) Verbindung Normannia ein. Diese Verbindung wurde aufgrund ihrer Geschichte besonders von Theologen frequentiert, vor allem solchen, die wie von Soden Stipendiaten am Evangelischen Stift waren[9]. Seine nächsten Karriereschritte machen deutlich, dass er zu den Hoffnungen der Württembergischen Landeskirche zählte (und auch später noch für kirchliche Ämter seiner Heimat im Blick war); wenn nicht alles täuscht, prägten Residuen seiner pietistischen Frömmigkeit bei allen Veränderungen seinen weiteren Lebensweg: Sein rastloses Engagement und die vorbildliche Erfüllung der Pflichten in Kirche wie Wissenschaft darf man vielleicht auf diese Frömmigkeit und die Familientraditionen des adligen Standes zurückführen. Der erwähnte Nachruf der „Schwäbischen Kronik" bescheinigt ihm zudem, bei aller Begabung für das Pfarramt „etwas ‚Akademisches' an sich" gehabt zu haben, aber entgegen der zeittypischen Tendenzen wenig auf Standesunterschiede geachtet zu haben[10].

Bemerkenswerterweise verlief der Lebensweg von Herrmann Freiherr von Soden für einen württembergischen Theologen, der zuerst das Seminar und dann das Tübinger Stift besuchte, dann doch nicht so typisch, wie er in Urach und Tübingen begonnen hatte – allerdings war er in Amerika geboren worden und schon insofern kein klassischer Schwabe. Nach einer kurzen, für Stifts-Stipendiaten verbindlichen Zeit von fünf Jahren als Vikar und Hilfspfarrer im württembergischen Kirchen-

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7 Irene Ferchl, „Das reinste Glück fühl ich der Poesie entschweben. Sechs schreibende Frauen aus drei Jahrhunderten", in: *Literarische Spuren in Esslingen. „Das ist eine Stadt"*, Irene Ferchl, Ute Harbusch, und Thomas Scheuffelen, Hgg., Esslingen: Bechtle 2003, 123-135.

8 N.N., „Professor D. Hermann von Soden†", *Schwäbische Kronik, des Schwäbischen Merkurs zweite Abteilung* 2, Nr. 35 (Mittagsblatt), 23. Januar, 1914, 1.

9 Martin Biastoch, *Tübinger Studenten im Kaiserreich. Eine sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Contubernium – Tübinger Beiträge zur Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte 44, Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke 1996, 105-121 (Tübinger Evangelisches Stift) sowie 137-147 (Verbindungen).

10 N.N., „Professor D. Hermann von Soden†", 1.

dienst (1875-1880[11]) wechselte von Soden im Alter von neunundzwanzig Jahren auf seine erste Pfarrstelle ins lutherische Sachsen nach Striesen, einem Vorort von Dresden[12]. Sachsen war im Vergleich zum eher durch Landwirtschaft und Kleinunternehmertum geprägten Schwaben schon deutlich industrialisierter; die Gemeinde, an die von Soden wechselte, gehörte zu den aufblühenden Vororten (und ab 1892 Stadtteilen) der Haupt- und Residenzstadt des Königreiches Sachsen[13]. Die dortige evangelisch-lutherische Kirchengemeinde hatte gerade erst einen von dem seinerzeit prominenten Architekten Gotthilf Ludwig Möckel errichteten großen Kirchenneubau erhalten, für den eine Gruppe den Anstoß gegeben hatte, die sich auf böhmische Exilanten zurückführte. Die Zusammensetzung der Gemeinde war durchaus gemischt, was ihren sozialen Status betraf; das Gemeindeleben gestaltete sich mit diversen Gruppen und Kreisen äußerst rege. Wie es sich damals gehörte, heiratete von Soden erst, nachdem er seine erste selbständige Stelle angetreten hatte, und gründete gemeinsam mit seiner Frau Gabriele von Schaedtler, einer Offizierstochter,[14] eine Familie. Acht Kinder, zwei Söhne und sechs Töchter, kamen im Laufe der Jahre zur Welt. Gleichwohl fand Frau von Soden Zeit, sich wie ihre Schwiegermutter für Frauenfragen zu engagieren – beispielsweise war sie gebeten, 1896 in Stuttgart auf einer Tagung des Evangelisch-sozialen Kongresses über Frauenrechte zu sprechen, lehnte die Anfrage aber mit Rücksicht auf den Schwiegervater ab. Insofern positionierte sich das junge Paar noch einmal deutlicher im liberalen Spektrum des deutschen Protestantismus als die in einer einstigen freien Reichsstadt in Württemberg lebenden Eltern. Nach fünf Jahren in Striesen (1881-1886) wurde Hermann von Soden zwei Jahre Archidiakon in St. Jacobi in Chemnitz, der Hauptkirche des Hauptortes der Industrialisierung im Königreich Sachsen, und wechselte dann 1888 auf die erste (ehemals reformierte) Pastorenstelle an die Jerusalems-Kirche mitten im Berliner Zeitungsviertel. Möglicherweise verstärkte sich in Chemnitz eine ohnehin schon angelegte soziale Ader, die sich dann in Berlin weiter entfaltete, wie wir gleich sehen werden[15]. In der Familienüberlieferung galt schlicht die Größe der Pfarrwohnung als Grund für den Wechsel aus der streng lutherischen Landeskirche Sachsens in eine eher uniert geprägte Umgebung der Berliner Metropole[16]; die Ferien verbrachte man allerdings weiter in Sachsen (auf dem Rittergut Grün-

11 Ordination am 7.11.1875, 1875 Vikar in Wildbad, 1876 Stadtvikar in Kirchheim, 1879 Stadtvikar in Stuttgart.

12 Hartmut Mai, „Die wachsende Großstadt. Kirchenbau und kirchliche Arbeit nach 1870“, in: *Gottes Häuser. Dresdner Kirche im Wandel*, Dresdner Hefte 29, Nr. 106, Dresden: Dresdner Geschichtsverein 2011, 6-16.

13 Ingo Zimmermann, „100 Jahre Versöhnungskirche Dresden-Striesen“, in: *Gottes Häuser. Dresdner Kirche im Wandel*, Hans-Peter Lühr, Hg., Dresdner Hefte 29, Nr. 106, Dresden: Dresdner Geschichtsverein 2011, 70-78.

14 Georgine Lydia Gabriele von Schaedtler, geboren am 5.11.1852 in Kopenhagen, gestorben am 12.04.1925 im Stolpmünde, Hochzeit am 13.01.1881 in Röcknitz/Sachsen.

15 So jedenfalls N.N., „Professor D. Hermann von Soden†“, 1.

16 Hans von Soden, „Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben“, Marburg, 24. Mai 1942, S. 2. (Abschrift im Besitz der Familie.)

gräbchen im Landkreis Bautzen[17]). Für einen sächsischen lutherischen Pfarrer stellte der Wechsel an eine Gemeinde in der evangelischen Kirche der altpreußischen Union und dazu zunächst noch auf eine eigentlich *reformierte* Pfarrstelle durchaus keine Selbstverständlichkeit dar und dokumentiert die liberale Orientierung Hermann Freiherr von Sodens, in gewissem Sinne auch eine Abkehr von den schwäbischen Ursprüngen seiner Karriere als Pfarrer (allerdings vertrat die württembergische Kirche im Unterschied zur sächsischen seit jeher eher ein mildes Luthertum). Die zur Superintendentur Friedrichswerder gehörende Berliner Kirchengemeinde war schon länger liberal geprägt und nach der Union 1830 aus einer reformierten sowie lutherischen Teilgemeinde zusammengewachsen[18]. An der zeitweilig (bis 1830 und wieder nach 1934) mit ihr verbundenen, benachbarten Neuen Kirche auf dem Gendarmenmarkt wirkten ebenso bekannte wie umstrittene liberale Prediger: Samuel Marot (1770-1865), Wilhelm und Theodor Hoßbach (1784-1846 bzw. 1834–1894) sowie Emil Gustav Lisco (1819-1887) und Adolf Sybel (1800-1882)[19]. 1902 wechselte von Soden von der ersten (ehemals reformierten) auf die zweite (ehemals lutherische) Pfarrstelle der Berliner Jerusalems-Kirche, wieder ein etwas ungewöhnlicher Schritt, der sich vermutlich nur durch seine vielfältigen Belastungen als Forscher erklären lässt[20] – bereits im Jahre 1890 war von Soden zum Privatdozenten für Neues Testament an der Berliner Universität ernannt worden, 1893 zum außerordentlichen und 1913 zum ordentlichen Honorar-Professor. Neben neutestamentlichen Vorlesungen und Seminaren hielt er auch Veranstaltungen im homiletisch-

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17 Man hatte im dortigen, nach 1945 abgerissenen Schloss eine „ständige Sommerwohnung". Neben der Arbeit an Manuskripten fuhr Hermann von Soden aber auch (für einen Adligen durchaus ungewöhnlich) Fahrrad (Bernhardt, „Erinnerungen an Hans von Soden aus der Sicht der Familie", 121). Ein (anonymer) Konfirmand charakterisiert ihn in einem Nachruf („Ein Wort zum Gedächtnis von Hermann v. Soden", *Tägliche Rundschau Unterhaltungsbeilage* 217 (1914), 106).

18 Die Ergebnisse der Kirchenwahlen von 1874 in der Berliner Innenstadt dokumentiert: Walter Wendland, *Siebenhundert Jahre Kirchengeschichte Berlins*, Berlin: De Gruyter 1930, 340f. In den Jahren 1882 bis 1889 amtierte als Superintendent D. Ernst von Dryander (1843-1922), der später Generalsuperintendent sowie Oberhof- und Domprediger wurde: Alfred Werbeck†, *Die Superintendenturen in Berlin und die Berliner Ephoren von der Reformation bis heute*, Berlin: Buchdruckerei Union 1956, 23 sowie Bernd Andresen, *Ernst von Dryander: Eine biographische Studie*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 63, Berlin: De Gruyter 1995, 39-45.

19 Vgl. dazu: Paul Kirmß, Hg., *Die Geschichte der Neuen Kirche zu Berlin von 1708 bis 1908: Festschrift zum zweihundertjährigen Jubiläum der Neuen Kirche*, im Auftrag der Gemeinde-Körperschaften, Berlin: Winkelmann 1908 sowie Claudia Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch in die Moderne. Der deutsche Protestantenverein in der Zeit der Reichsgründung und des Kulturkampfes*, Religiöse Kulturen der Moderne 3, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus 1996.

20 Wenn ich recht sehe, sind die entsprechenden Aktenüberlieferungen der Gemeinde im Zweiten Weltkrieg stark dezimiert worden. Bei der Bezeichnung der Pfarrstellen als „erste" und „zweite" folge ich der Darstellung der Gemeinde in den Festschriften der Gemeinde (unten Anm. 23); in den Memoiren des Sohnes wird für 1902 der Wechsel von der zweiten auf die erste Pfarrstelle vermeldet (von Soden, „Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben", S. 2).

katechetischen Bereich der praktischen Theologie[21]. Eine Berufung auf den neutestamentlichen Lehrstuhl an der Universität Marburg lehnte er im Juli 1892 ab, weil er damals offenbar Pfarrer bleiben wollte[22].

Einen ersten Schwerpunkt im doppelten Berufsleben Hermann von Sodens bildete seine Arbeit im Rahmen der Jerusalems-Gemeinde[23]. Die Pfarrwohnung der Familie von Soden befand sich zusammen mit Gemeinderäumen in der Friedrichstraße 213, direkt an der heutigen Kreuzung Koch-/Rudi-Dutschke-Straße Ecke Friedrichstraße; das Haus ist (wie auch die traditionsreiche Jerusalems-Kirche) im Bombenhagel des Zweiten Weltkriegs zerstört und abgerissen worden. Ein englischer Nachruf auf von Soden hebt hervor, dass seine pastorale Arbeit sehr geschätzt worden sei, „especially in preparing for Confirmation the sons and daughters of the German aristocracy"[24]. Diese Bemerkung lässt nicht nur erkennen, dass die (offenbar recht große) Gottesdienstgemeinde wie in der Innenstadt üblich weniger nach dem Parochialprinzip durch die Einwohnerschaft gebildet wurde als vielmehr durch Menschen, die sich aufgrund ihrer theologischen Prägung der Gemeinde zugehörig fühlten. Vielmehr wird auch deutlich, dass Freiherr von Soden bei allen für seinen Stand untypischen Verhaltensweisen in der Berliner Gesellschaft offenbar immer noch als Adliger von Stand wahrgenommen wurde. Sein ebenfalls als Neutestamentler wirkender Sohn Hans von Soden (1881-1945) bezeugt die „an allen Sonntagen gut gefüllte, an Festtagen stets überfüllte Kirche meines Vaters einerseits und die Besuche von Trauernden und die damals fast täglichen Fahrten auf den

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21 In meinem Besitz befinden sich die handschriftlichen Ankündigungen für die Wintersemester 1891/1892 sowie 1899/1900. Freiherr von Soden kündigt an: „A) Privatissime 1. Erklärung des Römerbriefs, Montag, Dienstag, Mittwoch, Freitag 8-9 Uhr. … 2. Enzyklopädie der Theologie zur Einführung in das theol. Studium, Freitag 5-7 Uhr … 3. Wesen und Aufgaben der inneren Mission. Donnerstag und Sonnabend 8-9 Uhr. … b) Privatissime und unentgeltlich. 4. Homiletische Übungen. Donnerstag 9-10 Uhr." Acht Jahre später bietet er an: „1. Erklärung der synoptischen Evangelien. … . Montag, Dienstag, Donnerstag, Freitag 8-9 Uhr. privatissime (…) 2. Innere Mission … . Mittwoch 8-10 Uhr. privatissime (…) 3. Katechetische Übungen des praktisch-theolog. Seminars Mittwoch 11-1 Uhr privatissime et gratis". In beiden Wintersemestern stand von Soden täglich (!) von 10-11 Uhr zur Sprechstunde in seiner Wohnung in der Friedrichstraße 213 zur Verfügung; die Ankündigung von 1891 ist vom Dekan abgezeichnet: „vidi Kaftan".

22 Aus einem Brief von Julius Kaftan, einem Freund von Sodens, an seinen Bruder Theodor vom 26.12.1894 geht außerdem hervor, dass von Soden hoffte, Emil Schürers Nachfolger in Leipzig zu werden, und vorher schon Bonn und Marburg abgelehnt hatte: „Der Gute! Zweimal hat er abgelehnt, Bonn und Marburg, und jetzt, wo er es nun doch wünscht, ganz an die Universität überzugehen, hat das Ministerium mal wieder die Bangbüxerei gekriegt" (zitiert nach: Walter Göbell, Hg. u. komment., *Kirche, Recht und Theologie in vier Jahrzehnten. Der Briefwechsel der Brüder Theodor und Julius Kaftan*, 1. Tl., *1891-1910*, München: Chr. Kaiser 1967, 111).

23 Gemeindekirchenrat der Jerusalems- und Neuen Kirchengemeinde, Hg., *Chronik der Jerusalems- und Neuen Kirche zu Berlin*, Berlin: Bernhard Goebel, 1967 sowie Alfred Rößler, Hg., *Festschrift zur 500-Jahrfeier der Jerusalem-Kirche 18.10.1484 – 18.10.1984*, Hamburg: Bergedorfer Buchdruckerei 1984.

24 William Sanday, „Baron Hermann von Soden", *Journal of Theological Studies* 15 (1914), 306.

Friedhof“[25]. Der erwähnte Nachruf in der „Schwäbischen Kronik“ spricht von einem „glänzenden und feinsinnigen Kanzelredner“[26]. Im Sommer 1902 schrieb Hermann von Soden an seinen Vater in Esslingen: „Lieber Vater, ich stecke trotz der Ferien in Korrekturlesen und Manuscriptvollendung, dass ich, da ich dazwischen auch noch radeln, baden, Böcke schießen muss, Tag um Tag auf ein freies Stündchen hoffte Dir zu schreiben“[27]. Eine seiner sechs Töchter charakterisierte ihn (wie die oben erwähnte „Schwäbische Kronik“) mit dem inzwischen etwas weniger gebräuchlichen Ausdruck „Frohnatur“, also als einen gut gelaunten, engagierten Zeitgenossen. Aber gleichzeitig scheint von Soden in ständiger Hetze gelebt zu haben: „Hätte nur der Tag mehr Stunden, die Zeit fliegt wie ein Windhauch, wie ein Zeppelin über einen hin. Und immer hat man das Nachsehen und die Empfindung, nicht mitzukommen“[28]. Während der Dienstzeit des Pfarrers von Soden feierte die Jerusalems-Kirche (auf deren Grundstück heute u.a. das Verlagshaus Axel Springer steht) 1884 ihr vierhundertjähriges Jubiläum, wurde 1898 umgebaut und erhielt neue Fenster. Der Gemeindebezirk umfasste – grob gesagt – die südliche Friedrichstadt von der Französischen Straße ab bis zum Landwehrkanal, dem heutigen Mehringplatz und der heutigen Stresemann-Straße; zwischen den Wohnhäusern standen längst Konfektionsbetriebe[29], Zeitungsverlage, Druckereien, Büros und Geschäftshäuser. 1881 hatte Ullstein mit Herausgabe und Druck der „Berliner Zeitung“ in der Kochstraße begonnen; aber auch die Brüder Siemens fühlten sich der Gemeinde verbunden. Ihr Konzern war zwar 1847 in der Markgrafenstraße gegründet worden, aber hatte natürlich längst auf andere Standorte expandiert. Eher vornehme Häuser wechselten mit eher einfachen.

Hermann von Soden wirkte in der Gemeinde nicht nur als Pfarrer, er leitete die „Deutsche Zentrale für Jugendfürsorge“, den „Verein zum Schutz der Kinder vor Ausnutzung und Misshandlung“ (einen Vorläufer des heutigen Kinderschutzbundes[30]), der zwei Notunterkünfte für Kinder in Berlin betrieb, und gründete im

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25 von Soden, „Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben“, 8; vgl. auch Bernhardt, „Erinnerungen an Hans von Soden aus der Sicht der Familie“, 115-150.

26 N.N., „Professor D. Hermann von Soden†“, 1.

27 Brief Hermann an Theodor Freiherr von Soden, zitiert nach Bernhardt, „Erinnerungen an Hans von Soden aus der Sicht der Familie“, 121.

28 Brief Hermann an Theodor Freiherr von Soden, zitiert nach Bernhardt, „Erinnerungen an Hans von Soden aus der Sicht der Familie“, 124.

29 Soden äußerte sich zu einem großen Streik der Konfektionsarbeiter, der vom 11. bis 21. Februar 1896 in mehreren deutschen Städten und auch in Berlin stattfand: Hermann von Soden, „Zum Aufstande der Konfektionsarbeiter in Berlin“, *Die Christliche Welt* 10 (1896), 233-237 und dazu Ekkehard Henschke, „Sozialer Konflikt und staatliche Aktivität im wilhelminischen Deutschland. Der Streik der Konfektionsarbeiter im Jahre 1896“, *Internationale wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* 17 (1981), 154-168. – In einem Nachruf erwähnt der sozialdemokratische *Vorwärts* vom 18. Januar 1914 das Verständnis von Sodens mit der Charakterisierung „volle Sympathie“ (Ausriss aus dem Besitz der Familie).

30 Zentrale für private Fürsorge, Hg., *Die Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen von Groß-Berlin nebst einem Wegweiser für die praktische Ausübung der Armenpflege in Berlin. Ein Auskunfts- und Handbuch*, vierte neu bearb. u. vermehrte Aufl., Berlin: Springer 1910, 79 sowie 113. Vgl. auch Hermann von

Rahmen des „Vereins zur Verpflegung und Unterstützung armer Wöchnerinnen“ ein Haus für Wöchnerinnen[31]. Außerdem stand er der Stiftung „Heimstätte in Berlin“ vor, die in der Drontheimer Straße in Berlin-Wedding ein „Heim für erstmals gefallene Mädchen und ihre Kinder“ eröffnet hatte[32]. Weiter engagierte er sich im „Evangelisch-sozialen Kongress“ von dessen Gründung 1890 an und gehörte dem Aktionskomitee dieser einflussreichen Verbindung vor allem des liberalen Protestantismus lange Jahre an[33]. Anstelle des erkrankten Friedrich Naumann hielt von Soden auf der ersten Berliner Zusammenkunft des Evangelisch-sozialen Kongresses das Grundsatzreferat über „die Kirchengemeinde in ihrer sozialen Bedeutung“[34], „in dem er programmatisch den kulturprotestantischen Leitanspruch christlich-sozialkaritativer Handlungskompetenz formulierte“[35]. 1908 nahm er als Teil einer größeren Delegation deutscher Kirchenvertreter an einer Reise zur Pflege deutsch-britischer Beziehungen nach Großbritannien teil[36]. Anlässlich des fünften Internationalen Kongresses für freien Protestantismus in Berlin im Jahre 1910 trat von Soden öffentlich auf einem seinerzeit viel beachteten „Berliner Religionsgespräch“ mit großen Mengen an Zuhörenden dem schriftstellerisch tätigen Karlsruher außerordentlichen Professor der Philosophie Arthur Drews (1865-1935) und dessen Bestreitung der Historizität der Person Jesu in seinem Buch „Die Christusmythe“ von 1909 entgegen[37]. Anschließend verwickelte er sich in literarische Aus-

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Soden, Wodurch schützen wir das erwachende Geschlechtsleben unser Jugend vor Überreizung und ihren Folgen, Schriften der Deutschen Zentrale für Jugendfürsorge 1, Berlin: Mittler 1908.

31 Zentrale für private Fürsorge, *Die Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen von Groß-Berlin*, 178.

32 Zentrale für private Fürsorge, *Die Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen von Groß-Berlin*, 200.

33 Klaus-Erich Pollmann, „Evangelisch-sozialer Kongress“, in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 10, Berlin: De Gruyter 1982, 645-650.

34 Hermann von Soden, „Die Kirchengemeinde in ihrer sozialen Bedeutung“, in: *Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Ersten Evangelisch-Sozialen Kongresses, abgehalten zu Berlin v. 27. bis z. 29. Mai 1890 (nach den stenographischen Protokollen)*, Berlin: Wiegandt 1890, 15-35. – Vgl. auch: Johanna Jantsch, Hg. u. komment., *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Adolf von Harnack und Martin Rade. Theologie auf dem öffentlichen Markt*, Berlin: De Gruyter 1996, 33-45.

35 So Klaus-Gunther Wesseling, „Soden, Hermann Freiherr von“, in: *Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Bd. 10, Nordhausen: Traugott Bautz 1995, 722-727.

36 Martin Rade, „Deutsche Kirchenmänner in Großbritannien, 25. Mai bis 7. Juni“, *Die Christliche Welt* 22 (1908), 611-615, 630-633 und Wilhelm Bornemann, *Die Friedensfahrt deutscher Kirchenmänner nach England: Skizzen zum Andenken und Nachdenken*, Gießen: Töpelmann 1908 sowie die Berichte von Besuch und Gegenbesuch: *Der Friede und die Kirchen. Zur Erinnerung an den Besuch in England abgestattet von Vertretern der Deutschen Christlichen Kirchen vom 26. Mai bis 3. Juni 1908. Einschließlich des Besuches in Schottland, vom 3. bis 7. Juni 1908. Peace and the Churches*, London: Cassell 1908 und Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze, Hg., *Friendly Relations between Great Britain and Germany. Souvenir Volume of the Visit to Germany of Representatives of the British Christian Churches 1909*, Berlin: Hermann 1910.

37 Hermann von Soden, *Hat Jesus gelebt? Reden gehalten auf dem Berliner Religionsgespräch des Deutschen Monistenbundes am 31. Januar und 1. Februar 1910 im Zoologischen Garten über „Die Christusmythe“*, Vorträge nebst Diskussion: Berliner Religionsgespräch Bd. 1, Berlin: Verlag des Deutschen Monistenbundes 1910.

einandersetzungen mit einem der evangelischen Pfarrer, die Drews unterstützten[38]. Von Soden stand, wie sich u.a. in dieser Kontroverse zeigte, dem freien Protestantismus eher distanziert gegenüber und gründete die Vereinigung der „Freunde der (freien) Volkskirche" mit, die als Liste der sogenannten Mittelpartei für die Synodalwahlen kandidierte[39]. Es wundert nicht, dass Soden mit solchen Einstellungen wie Handlungen ein Teil des Netzwerkes um Adolf Harnack wurde, zusätzlich verband offenbar eine enge Freundschaft die Familien und ihre Kinder, wie die Tochter Harnacks in ihrer berühmten Biographie ausführt[40]. In einem Nachruf anlässlich des Todes 1914 werden Soden, der an der Fakultät wirkende Systematiker Julius Kaftan (1848-1926), der an der St. Marienkirche wirkende Hermann Scholz (1853-1929) und Harnack als „ein seltenes vierblättriges Kleeblatt" von Freunden und kirchenpolitischen Weggefährten bezeichnet[41]. Hermann von Soden und Adolf Harnack wechseln beide im Jahre 1888 nach Berlin; Harnack bekanntlich nach einer längeren Kontroverse um seine Berufung erst im Herbst des Jahres[42]. Von Soden erwartete von Harnacks Berufung nicht wenig – nämlich Segen, „der ihr unmittelbar entsprießen wird" für den „Kampf gegen den katholischen Wahnglauben" und „seine wilden Machttriebe", aber auch „gegen den öden Unglauben und seine unheimliche Gefolgschaft", wie er Harnack brieflich mitteilte[43]. Die Verbindung zwischen beiden Familien wurde dadurch noch gestärkt, dass der Sohn Hans von Soden Schüler Harnacks und dessen zeitweiliger Seminarsenior wurde. Gemeinsam kämpfte das besondere Kleeblatt Harnack, Kaftan, Scholz und von Soden für Interessen des liberalen Protestantismus, beispielsweise im Streit um eine neue Agende für die altpreußische Landeskirche[44], aber stets um Ausgleich

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38 Hermann von Soden, *Hat Jesus gelebt?*; dagegen: Friedrich Steudel, *Wir Gelehrte vom Fach. Eine Streitschrift gegen Prof. D. von Sodens „Hat Jesus gelebt"*, Frankfurt/Main: Neuer Frankfurter Verlag 1910. – Zur Kontroverse und den „Berliner Religionsgesprächen" vom 31.1. und 1.2.1910 vgl. mit weiteren Literaturhinweisen Irmgard Heidler, *Der Verleger Eugen Diederichs und seine Welt (1896-1930)*, Mainzer Studien zur Buchwissenschaft 8, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1998, 192f.

39 Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik. Zum Verhältnis von Liberalismus und Protestantismus im wilhelminischen Deutschland*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1994, 83-94.

40 Agnes von Zahn-Harnack, *Adolf von Harnack*, Berlin: Bott 1936, 178f. Soden griff auch auf Seiten von Harnack in den sogenannten Apostolikums-Streit ein: ders., *Die Bedeutung der Apostolikumsfrage für unsere Landeskirche. Vortrag von D. Hermann v. Soden*, Berlin-Schöneberg: Protestantischer Schriftenvertrieb 1912. – Rade rechnet ihn in einem Brief vom 1.9.1892 (zitiert nach Jantsch, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Adolf von Harnack und Martin Rade*, 236) an Harnack zum „intimen Kreise der nächsten Freunde der Chr[istlichen] W[elt]", wie übrigens auch den Fakultätskollegen, den Systematiker Julius Kaftan (1848-1926).

41 Redaktionsartikel „Zum Gedächtnis des Professors Freiherrn v. Soden", in: *Tägliche Rundschau,* 16. Januar, 1914. (Ausriss aus dem Besitz der Familie.)

42 Walter Wendland, „Die *Berufung* Adolf Harnacks nach Berlin im Jahre 1888", *Jahrbuch für Berlin-Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte* 29 (1934), 103-121.

43 von Zahn-Harnack, *Adolf von Harnack*, 178f.

44 Hermann von Soden, „Der Entwurf einer Agende für die Evangelische Landeskirche Preußens in seiner auf Grund der Beratungen der Provinzialsynoden umgearbeiteten endgiltigen Gestalt", *Die Christliche Welt* 8 (1894), 995-1005.

bemüht und ohne die sonst gerade in Berlin übliche Schärfe. Harnack und von Soden dürften sich auch in gewissen pietistischen Elementen ihrer Frömmigkeit nahegestanden haben, die beide trotz einer liberalen Grundhaltung prägten.

Hermann von Soden hat aber nicht nur praktisch als Pfarrer in der Gemeinde und in übergemeindlichen Zusammenhängen gearbeitet, sondern sein Wirken auch theoretisch reflektiert; er hat seinerzeit durchaus bedeutsame Beiträge zur Kirchentheorie vorgelegt und folgte dabei inhaltlich dem ihm aus Dresdner Tagen bekannten Pfarrer Emil Sulze (1832-1914) und seinem Programm[45]. Wie Sulze plädierte von Soden für eine Reform der parochialen Struktur in Großstadtgemeinden und die radikale Verkleinerung der Gemeinden: Auf einen Pfarrer sollten künftig nur noch 15 000 Gemeindeglieder je Seelsorgebezirk kommen; seine Tätigkeit solle von geistlichen Hilfskräften unterstützt werden. An die Stelle der riesengroßen großstädtischen Parochien sollten nicht nur kleinere Gemeinden, sondern eine aus Hauskreisen gebildete Struktur treten. Liberal war dieses Programm insofern, als hier eine reformatorische Ekklesiologie in der Tradition Luthers mit einer am Individuum orientierten praktischen Theologie im Sinne Schleiermachers kombiniert wurde[46]. Die Jerusalems- und Neue Kirche teilten sich (als Überrest ihrer engeren Gemeinschaft bis 1830) übrigens eine Frühpredigerstelle, die ab 1912 (und bis 1925) von dem später zu einiger Berühmtheit gekommenen Alttestamentler Otto Eißfeldt (1887-1973) besetzt wurde; die Gemeinde war also im Vergleich zu anderen Kirchengemeinden (auch angesichts der Tatsache, dass ihr Gemeindegebiet nur noch partiell als Wohnviertel und mehr als Büroquartier genutzt wurde) personell recht gut mit Geistlichen ausgestattet.

Am 15. Januar 1914 starb von Soden im Alter von zweiundsechzig Jahren an den Folgen eines schweren Verkehrsunfalls in der Wohnung seines Sohnes. Der überaus vielbeschäftigte Gelehrte und Pfarrer hatte, nachdem er in der Königin-Luise-Stiftung in Dahlem, einer traditionsreichen Bildungseinrichtung für Erzieherinnen[47], wie gewöhnlich Unterricht erteilt hatte, im Bahnhof Podbielskiallee in Berlin-Dahlem versucht, auf eine fahrende Untergrund-Bahn in Richtung Innenstadt aufzuspringen, und war dabei durch eine Kollision mit dem Tunnelmund schwer verletzt worden. „Es ist tragisch, aber bezeichnend, dass er dem Kampf um die Minute zum Opfer gefallen ist", formulierte ein Studienfreund in einem Nach-

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45 Wolfgang Lorenz, „Kirchenreform als Gemeindereform, dargestellt am Beispiel Emil Sulze", Diss. theol. (masch.), Berlin, Kirchliche Hochschule, 1981 sowie Klaus Raschzok, „Emil Sulze und der protestantische Kirchenbau", in: *Kirchliche Kunst in Sachsen. Festgabe für Hartmut Mai*, Jens Bulisch, Dirk Klingner, und Christian Mai, Hgg., Beucha: Sax-Verlag 2002, 197-221.

46 Hermann von Soden, *Und was thut die evangelische Kirche erwogen angesichts der Reichstagswahlen zumal in unseren Großstädten*, Berlin: Nauck 1890; vgl. auch ders., „Die soziale Wirksamkeit des im Amt stehenden Geistlichen, ihr Recht und ihre Grenze", in*: Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Siebenten Evangelisch-Sozialen Kongresses, abgehalten zu Stuttgart am 29. u. 29. Mai 1896. Nach den stenographischen Protokollen*, Berlin: Weigandt 1896, 15-39.

47 *Festschrift zum 175jährigen Bestehen der Königin-Luise-Stiftung 1811-1986,* Berlin: Königin-Luise-Stiftung 1986.

ruf. Der Schriftsteller Ludwig Fulda (1862-1935) war Augenzeuge der Bemühungen, den Schwerverletzten zu versorgen, und beschrieb plastisch den Abtransport; der zerschmetterte, blutende Kopf war mit seinem Hut und dem Gehpelz bedeckt worden[48]. Da der Verletzte ansprechbar war, wurde er in die nahegelegene Wohnung seines Sohnes Hans in die Steglitzer Schlossstraße 32 am Rathaus Steglitz gebracht und starb dort nach wenigen Stunden. Sein bis heute erhaltenes Grab liegt auf einem Kirchhof seiner Gemeinde in Berlin-Kreuzberg (genauer: dem Friedhof der Jerusalems- und Neuen Kirche II an der Baruther Straße) und trägt die schlichte Inschrift „Prediger an der Jerusalems-Kirche“[49]. Die Inschrift markiert damit, was Hermann von Soden in der Fülle seiner Aufgaben die Mitte war: der Gottesdienst und dabei die Predigt.

Er war aber eben nicht nur Pfarrer, sondern lehrte auch mit einigem Erfolg an der Universität und publizierte wissenschaftlich. In den Berliner Jahren gelang – vielleicht aufgrund der erwähnten, im Vergleich zu anderen Innenstadtgemeinden geringen Zahl von Gemeindegliedern im Zeitungsviertel – Hermann von Soden eine staunenswerte Produktion von neutestamentlichen Veröffentlichungen, hauptsächlich zu Fragen der Textkritik. Bereits 1888 wurde eine bei der Haager Gesellschaft eingereichte Arbeit über „Ἅγιος und seine Derivate (Motto: Joh 27,19)“ preisgekrönt[50]. Im Laufe seiner Doppelexistenz als Professor und Pfarrer schrieb von Soden mehrere Kommentare zu neutestamentlichen Schriften[51]. Aufsätze in Fachzeitschriften veröffentlichte er eher selten; immer noch diskutiert wird aber ein Beitrag zum Verhältnis des unter die sogenannten Apokryphen gerechneten Petrusevangeliums zu den kanonisch gewordenen Evangelien[52]. Dazu verfasste

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48 Ludwig Fulda, „Der Tod des Herrn v. Soden“, *Berliner Tagblatt,* Nr. 29, 17. Januar, 1914 (Ausriss aus dem Besitz der Familie). Fulda schließt an den Bericht Fragen zum Sicherheitsstandard der Berliner Untergrundbahn an und zur Häufigkeit, mit der auf der Linie Züge verkehren.

49 Die Ansprachen der Kollegen im Pfarramt und von Julius Kaftan als Vertreter der Fakultät im Rahmen von Trauerfeier wie Beerdigung wurden gedruckt und sind in der Berliner Staatsbibliothek verfügbar: *Am Sarge des Pfarrers D. theol. Freiherrn Hermann von Soden 1914*, Berlin: Grunert 1914 (Signatur: N.17/1191). – Das Grab liegt auf dem Friedhof in deutlicher Distanz zu den in einer Theologenecke begrabenen liberalen Pfarrern der Neuen Kirche auf dem Gendarmenmarkt, aber das mag auch daran gelegen haben, dass es dort keine freien Liegeplätze gab.

50 Hermann von Soden, *Ἅγιος und seine Derivate (Motto: Joh 27,19), Werken van het Haagsche Genootschap tot Verdediging van de Christelijke Godsdienst* 6, Reihe 3 (1888).

51 Hermann von Soden, *Der Brief des Apostels Paulus an die Philipper*, Freiburg im Breisgau: Mohr 1889 (2., durchges. Aufl., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1906); ders., *Die Briefe an die Kolosser, Epheser, Philemon. Die Pastoralbriefe*, Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament 3/1, Freiburg: Mohr 1890 (2. Aufl., Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck 1899); ders., *Hebräerbrief, Briefe des Petrus, Jacobus, Judas*, Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament 3/2, Freiburg: Mohr 1890 (2. Aufl., Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck 1899) sowie *Die Pastoralbriefe*, Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament 3, Freiburg: Mohr 1893.

52 Hermann von Soden, „Das Petrusevangelium und die canonischen Evangelien“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 3 (1893), 52-92. – Weitere Aufsätze in der Bibliographie bei Wesseling, „Soden, Hermann Freiherr von“, 726f.

Hermann von Soden eine ganze Reihe von kleineren Arbeiten zu Einzelfragen der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft, beispielsweise zur Verfasserschaft des ersten Petrusbriefes[53]. Weit verbreitet war ein dünnes, aber gehaltvolles Heft unter dem Titel „Urchristliche Literaturgeschichte", das auf Lehrerfortbildungskurse im Herbst 1904 zurückgeht.

Am bekanntesten wurde von Soden in der wissenschaftlichen Landschaft seiner Zeit aber durch ein Unternehmen mit gigantischen Zügen, das bestens in die nach industriellem Maßstab betriebene Großwissenschaft passte, wie sie der seit 1888 in Berlin wirkende Theologe Adolf von Harnack und zuvor schon Theodor Mommsen propagierten. Mit Hilfe von umfangreichen Geldmitteln[54] einer unverheirateten Mäzenin und einem auserlesenen Stab von zunächst zehn Hilfsarbeitern und weiteren elf Gehilfen sowie vielen zuarbeitenden Kollegen wollte von Soden die gesamte handschriftliche Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments kollationieren, die Textgeschichte der kanonischen Schriften samt ihrer parabiblischen Beigaben rekonstruieren und eine kritische Edition vorlegen[55]. Die Liste in der das Werk abschließenden kritischen Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments von 1913 nennt insgesamt fünfundvierzig Namen von Mitarbeitern aus sechzehn Jahren, darunter auch Hans Lietzmann und Bruno Violet. Seine Mäzenin Elise Koenigs (1848-1932) war die Schwester eines Kölner Bankiers und soll unter seinem Einfluss vom Judentum zum Christentum übergetreten sein.[56] Sie finanzierte neben dem großen Projekt von Sodens beispielsweise auch das Berliner Münzkabinett und andere staatliche Museen in Berlin. 1912 erhielt sie auf Vorschlag Harnacks (nach einem erfolglosen Versuch im Jahre zuvor) die Leibniz-Medaille der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften; später hat sie auch der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft (der heutigen Max-Planck-Gesellschaft) namhafte Mittel zukommen lassen.

Ab 1902 begannen nach sieben Jahren Vorarbeit vier Bände des Werkes unter dem Titel „Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt" zu erscheinen, der erste Band war „Fräulein Elise Koenigs" gewidmet[57].

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53 Nach 1. Petrus 5,12 sah von Soden in Titus Silvanus (= Silas), einem Mitarbeiter des Apostels Paulus, den Verfasser des Briefs. – Zu den sogenannten Gefangenschaftsbriefen vgl. auch Erich Haupt, „Ein Briefwechsel mit Herrn D. Freiherr von Soden", *Deutsch-Evangelische Blätter. Neue Folge 5*, Nr. 30 (1905), 563-569.

54 N.N., „Professor D. Hermann von Soden†", 1 nennt die Summe von 200 000 Mark.

55 Hermann von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt aufgrund der Textgeschichte*, 1. Tl., *Untersuchungen* 1. Abteilung *Die Textzeugen*, Berlin: Alexander Duncker 1902; 2. Abteilung *Die Textformen a. Die Evangelien*, Berlin: Arthur Glaue 1907; 3. Abteilung *Die Textformen b. der Apostolos mit Apokalypse*, Berlin: Arthur Glaue 1910; 2. Tl., *Text mit Apparat nebst Ergänzungen zu Teil 1*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1913. Vgl. auch ders., „Der Apokalypse Text in dem Kommentar-Codex Messina 99", *American Journal of Philology* 35 (1914), 179-191 (nach dem Tod durch seinen Sohn Hans von Soden zur Veröffentlichung eingereicht, wie im Korrekturzusatz p. 191 mitgeteilt wird).

56 Rykle Borger, „Wolfram von Soden (19.6.1908-6.10.1996)", *Archiv für Orientforschung* 44 (1998), 588.

57 Der erste Band der „Schriften des Neuen Testaments" ist nicht nur „Fräulein Elise Koenigs" gewidmet, sondern enthält ein mit „Verehrte Freundin!" überschriebenes Vorwort (S. V-VIII).

Trotz der immensen Arbeit wird das Werk bis auf den heutigen Tag eher unfreundlich besprochen[58], die Gründe dafür sind die sperrigen und unübersichtlich wirkenden Siglen für die neutestamentlichen Handschriften, die sich gegenüber dem alternativen zeitgenössischen Versuch von Caspar René Gregory haben nicht durchsetzen können[59], sowie der leider aufgrund der Vielzahl an Mitarbeitenden nicht fehlerfreie textkritische Apparat. Auch die stemmatischen Entscheidungen, die die Ausgabe tragen, sind nicht über jeden Zweifel erhaben. Es verdient mindestens einen knappen Hinweis, dass 1898 in der Bibelanstalt Stuttgart eine von dem schwäbischen Theologen Eberhard Nestle (1851-1913) besorgte Handausgabe des griechischen Neuen Testaments in erster Auflage erschienen war, die sich schnell als Referenztext durchsetzte und damit die Handausgabe der großen kritischen Edition Freiherr von Sodens verdrängte. Nestle hatte zur selben Zeit wie Soden in Tübingen studiert, blieb aber mit Beschäftigungen am Tübinger Stift und am Seminar in Maulbronn im Unterschied zu ihm im klassischen Rahmen einer Karriere an den Bildungseinrichtungen der württembergischen Landeskirche[60]. Soden wollte – ganz in der Tradition der klassischen deutschen altertumswissenschaftlichen Editionsphilologie seiner Zeit – mit seinem umfangreichen Werk nach textkritischen Bereinigungen einen Urtext rekonstruieren; Details müssen hier ausgeblendet werden. Wichtig bleibt sein Werk, weil es neben den biblischen Texten erstmals die vielen antiken christlichen Paratexte zum Neuen Testament, kleine Beigaben zu den Autoren, Kapitelüberschriften und vieles andere mehr[61], in den

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Dort findet sich ein Satz, der beschreibt, was der Autor wollte und seiner Mäzenin verdankte: „Aber Sie haben es mir gern gestattet, was mir unerlässlich schien: ganze Arbeit zu machen, soweit es in meinen Kräften lag und bei einer ersten Bewältigung des umfangreichen Materials billiger Weise zu fordern ist“ (S. V).

58 In der Reihe der kritischen Besprechungen fällt besonders ein Votum eines Mitarbeiters dieser Ausgabe auf: Hans Lietzmann, „H. von Sodens Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments. I. Die Perikope von der Ehebrecherin“, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 8 (1907), 110-124 = ders., *Kleine Schriften II: Studien zum Neuen Testament*, hg. v. Kurt Aland, Texte und Untersuchungen 68, Berlin: Akademie 1958, 220-234; ders., „Bemerkungen zu H. v. Sodens Antikritik“, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 8 (1907), 234-237 = ders., *Kleine Schriften II*, 235-238; ders., „H. von Sodens Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments. II. Die drei Rezensionen“, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 8 (1907), 323-331 = ders., *Kleine Schriften II*, 239-248.

59 Caspar René Gregory, *Die griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, Leipzig: Hinrichs 1908. Zur Kritik an von Soden aaO. 3-5. Aus der Zusammenstellung der Namen von Kollegen, die Gregory zu seinem System der Siglen befragt hat (aaO. 10-13), geht hervor, dass auch Harnack seinen Freund Gregory in der Sache stützte, nicht von Soden. Vgl. auch Ernst von Dobschütz, „Ein Schlüssel zu von Sodens Apparat“, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 25 (1926), 313-315.

60 Eberhard Bons, „Eberhard Nestle“, in: *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Bd. 6, Herzberg: Bautz 1993, 625-627.

61 Zur Definition des Begriffs „Paratexte“: Patrick Andrist und Martin Wallraff, „ParaTexBib: An ERC Project Dedicated to Paratexts in Greek Manuscripts of the Bible“, *COMSt Bulletin* 2 (2016), 64: „A short preliminary definition could be ‚all contents in biblical manuscripts,

Blick nimmt. Besonders ein Corpus parabiblischer Texte, der sogenannte *Apparatus* des Euthalius (eine spätantike Epitome der neutestamentlichen Schriften mit Einleitungen)[62], hat die Aufmerksamkeit von Sodens gefunden und ihn auch in eine größere wissenschaftliche Kontroverse über die Umstände der Entstehung dieser Texte, insbesondere die Biographie des angeblichen Autors Euthalius, verwickelt, die hier aber gleichfalls nicht nachgezeichnet werden kann[63].

Hermann Freiherr von Soden legte einen weiten Weg von einem klassischen württembergischen Theologiestudenten zu einem ebenso klassischen Vertreter deutscher liberaler Theologie in der milden und persönlich frommen Form, wie sie sein Freund Adolf von Harnack vertrat, zurück[64]. Sein Engagement für die Texte der Qubbat al-khazna, auf das wir jetzt zum Schluss kurz eingehen wollen, ist ein Teil der nach nahezu industriellen Maßstäben betriebenen Erschließung antiker christlicher Texte durch Adolf Harnack, seinen Berliner Protektor Theodor Mommsen und das Netzwerk, das sich um diese beiden Altertumswissenschaftler herum sammelte[65]. Es gehört aber auch in den größeren Zusammenhang von „Urkundenfunden zur Geschichte des christlichen Alterthums" im neunzehnten Jahrhundert, um den Titel eines kleinen Büchleins von Gotthard Victor Lechler zu zitieren[66]. Planmäßige Suche, aber auch wissenschaftliche Neugier auf neue Textfunde brachten so zentrale Werke wie die vollständigen pseudo-klementinischen Homilien, die Didache als erste christliche Kirchenordnung und die antihäretische Schrift des Hippolyt von Rom wieder ans Licht, dazu maßgebliche syrische Texte wie die entsprechende Rezension der Ignatianen, das „Buch der Gesetze der Länder" des Bardesanes, die Apologie eines „Pseudo-Melito" und vieles andere mehr. Mit den Damaszener Funden kam von Soden erstmals im Frühjahr 1898 auf einer Reise in den Nahen Osten in Berührung, die er im wissenschaftlichen Bericht über die

except the biblical text itself, are *a priori* paratexts'. Within the scope of the ParaTexBib project, this encompasses all the material accompanying the biblical texts in Byzantine Gospels".

62 Dazu jetzt: Vemund Blomkvist, *Euthalian Traditions. Text, Translation and Commentary*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 170, Berlin: De Gruyter 2012.

63 Nachgezeichnet bei Blomkvist, *Traditions*, 23-29. – Zur Sache vgl. u.a. F.C. Conybeare, „The Date of Euthalius", *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der älteren Kirche* 5 (1904), 39-52; Theodor Zahn, „Neues und Altes über den Isagogiker Euthalius", *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 15 (1904), 305-330, 375-390 sowie Joseph Armitage Robinson, "Recent Work on Euthalius", *Journal of Theological Studies* 6 (1905), 87-90.

64 Vgl. dazu beispielsweise: Ernst Krieck, *Die neueste Orthodoxie und das Christusproblem: Eine Rückantwort an Weinel, nebst einigen Bemerkungen zu Jülicher, Bornemann, Beth u. von Soden*, Jena: Diederichs 1910.

65 Christoph Markschies, „Adolf von Harnack. Vom Großbetrieb der Wissenschaft", in: *Die modernen Väter der Antike. Die Entwicklung der Altertumswissenschaften an Akademie und Universität im Berlin des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Annette M. Baertschi und Colin G. King, Hgg., Transformationen der Antike 3, Berlin: De Gruyter 2009, 529-552.

66 Gotthard Victor Lechler, *Urkundenfunde zur Geschichte des christlichen Altertums*, Leipzig: Alexander Edelmann 1886.

Funde vor der Preußischen Akademie fünf Jahre später als „Bibliotheksreise“ im Zusammenhang seiner Arbeiten an den neutestamentlichen Handschriften charakterisiert; in einem Reisebericht aus dem Jahr 1898 unter dem Titel „Reisebriefe aus Palästina“ bekommt man dagegen den Eindruck, dass auch durchaus andere, landeskundliche Interessen im Mittelpunkt seiner Interessen auf dieser Reise standen. Allerdings werden dort auch die Besuche in den bis heute einschlägigen Bibliotheken von Kairo, Jerusalem und Konstantinopel erwähnt.[67] Von Soden wurde durch den späteren Jenaer Pfarrer, Patristiker und Neutestamentler Paul Glaue (1872-1944) und den späteren Neutestamentler Rudolf Knopf (1874-1920) auf der Reise begleitet. Knapp ein halbes Jahr nach dieser Reise fuhr Kaiser Wilhelm II. ins Heilige Land (11. Oktober bis 26. November 1898) und besuchte zum Abschluss Ende November auch Damaskus[68]. Die Aktivitäten, die von Soden nach der Rückkehr des Kaisers über Bernhard von Bülow, den damaligen Staatssekretär im Auswärtigen Amt, entfaltete, sind bereits durch Cordula Bandt und Arnd Rattmann nacherzählt worden und brauchen hier nicht nochmals wiederholt zu werden. Wichtig ist lediglich der ergänzende Hinweis, dass von Bülow schon damals allerlei Anstalten unternahm, um Teil des Netzwerks um Harnack zu werden, und damit ein naheliegender Ansprechpartner für Soden war[69]. Der Erstkontakt in der Sache scheint im Frühjahr 1899 mündlich erfolgt zu sein. Ein dreiseitiges Memorandum vom 16. April 1899, das von Soden an von Bülow richtete, fasst den Gesprächsinhalt zusammen und nennt den entscheidenden Punkt: Er habe bei seiner Reise nach Damaskus erfahren, dass der Inhalt der Qubbat al-khazna nur auf Anordnung des Sultans europäischen Wissenschaftlern zugänglich gemacht werden könne. In seinem Memorandum äußert von Soden die Hoffnung, dass zumindest die christlichen Fragmente, „die für die Mohammedaner ja todter Besitz wären, seiner Majestät unserem Kaiser zur Erinnerung an seinen Besuch in Damaskus geschenkt würden“[70]. Wenn man sich klarmacht, welchen Eindruck die berühmte Damaskus-Rede des Kaisers wenige Monate zuvor gemacht hatte, in der Wilhelm erklärt hatte, der deutsche Kaiser „werde zu allen Zeiten der Freund aller Mohammedaner sein“, wird man durchaus von einem geschickten Schachzug von Sodens sprechen können, der aus einer in Deutschland durchaus umstrittenen Rede Kapital für seine wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten zu ziehen versuchte. Rund ein Jahr später lag die Erlaubnis des Sultans dann tatsächlich in der deutschen Botschaft in Konstantinopel vor. Über das Ministerium für geistliche und Unterrichtsangelegenheiten wurde von Soden entsprechend in Kenntnis gesetzt und schon am 20. Mai 1899 brach

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67 Hermann von Soden, *Reisebriefe aus Palästina*, 2. Aufl., Berlin: Springer 1901, 56-66; Maibritt Gustrau, *Orientalen oder Christen? Orientalisches Christentum in Reiseberichten*, Göttingen: V&R Unipress 2016, 318-322.

68 Zur Reise vgl. D'Ottone, „Manuscripts as Mirrors“, 68 mit Anm. 13.

69 Nottmeier, , *Adolf von Harnack und die deutsche Politik 1890-1930. Eine biographische Studie zum Verhältnis von Protestantismus, Wissenschaft und Politik*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2004, 289.

70 Memorandum Hermann von Soden an von Bülow vom 14. April 1899 (III 3415 4/2. 98), Bundesarchiv R901/37531, Blatt 86-87, hier 86[r].

Bruno Violet (1871-1945), Mitarbeiter der Berliner Kirchenväterkommission, in den Orient auf; die Reise wurde erneut von Elise Koenigs finanziert. Von seinen Arbeiten in Damaskus berichtete er von Soden, der seinerseits unter Datum vom 10. November 1899 versuchte, sich nochmals für eine Schenkung wenigstens der christlichen Stücke einzusetzen[71]. Spätestens im Frühsommer 1900 wird allerdings deutlich, dass der deutsche Botschafter in Konstantinopel sich nicht in der Lage sieht, die Schenkung zu erbitten, und man höchstens die zeitweilige Leihgabe einzelner Stücke nach Berlin erreichen kann – auch diese Zusammenhänge sind bekannt und müssen hier nicht noch eigens dargestellt werden[72]. Die im Bundesarchiv erhaltenen Unterlagen aus der Korrespondenz zwischen der Kaiserlichen Botschaft in Konstantinopel und dem Auswärtigen Amt zeigen, dass nach Einschätzung des deutschen Konsulats in Beirut beispielsweise bei den alteingesessenen Familien in Damaskus Widerstand dagegen geleistet wurde, dass die Stücke außer Landes gebracht werden sollten[73]. Entsprechende Hinweise wurden aber sowohl im Konsulat in Damaskus als auch in der deutschen Botschaft in Konstantinopel und eben auch in Berlin lange ignoriert. Hermann von Soden hat über seine Sicht auf diese Zusammenhänge sowohl in einem allgemeinverständlichen Artikel in der „Christlichen Welt" im Jahre 1901 als auch in einer von Harnack vorgelegten Akademieabhandlung von 1903 gehandelt[74]. Dabei macht vor allem der Artikel in der „Christlichen Welt", dem Zentralorgan der liberalen Theologie und des Netzwerks von Adolf Harnack[75], deutlich, wie sehr von Soden noch im Jahre 1901 auf den Fund von seinen Interessen als neutestamentlicher Textkritiker her zurückgriff und wie enttäuscht er gewesen sein muss, als Violet ihm nicht von wichtigen neuen Handschriften berichten konnte[76]. Für einen Freund Harnacks, der bekanntlich die

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71 Details und Nachweise bei Bandt und Rattmann, „Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets", 9.

72 Bandt und Rattmann, „Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets", 5-17.

73 Brief Paul Schroeder, Generalkonsul in Beirut, an den Botschafter Marschall von Bieberstein, 1. Februar 1901, Bundesarchiv R901/37532, Blatt 5.

74 Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 825–830. Die Sitzung fand am 30. Juni 1903 statt, den Text legte Harnack der Akademie zum Druck vor.

75 Hermann von Soden, „Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1247-1249.

76 In einem Brief über den Inhalt der Damaszener Funde vom 12. Februar 1903 an den Minister der geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten August von Trott zu Solz (dort unter der Nummer U I 25524 archiviert; hier zitiert nach einer Abschrift aus der Aktenüberlieferung des Auswärtigen Amtes in R901/37532, Blatt 71-73, Zitat 71[r]) erwähnt von Soden 15 verschiedene Majuskel- und Minuskelfragmente, die er in seinem Werke *Die Schriften des neuen Testaments* beschrieben und verwertet habe: ders., *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten Textgestalt dargestellt aufgrund der Textgeschichte*, Bd. 1, 74 (zehn Stücke mit zugehörigen Nummern); vgl. auch William H.P. Hatch, „An Uncial Fragment of the Gospels", *Harvard Theological Review* 23 (1930), 149-152 (= Gregory/Aland 0196) sowie Kurt Treu, „Ein neues neutestamentliches Unzialfragment aus Damaskus (= 0253)", *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 55 (1964), 274-277; ders., „Ein weiteres Unzialpalimpsest des

Berliner Kirchenväterausgabe verantwortete, war auch die Ausbeute an verschollenen antiken christlichen Schriften enttäuschend gering. Liest man diese beiden Texte für das breite Publikum und die akademischen Fachgenossen, die überraschend textlich identische Passagen enthalten, so wird deutlich, welche großen Hoffnungen man in Berlin auf den Fund setzte, wie groß aber entsprechend auch die Enttäuschung bei von Soden war:

> Mit welchen Erwartungen sahen wir dem Ergebnis entgegen! Eine uralte Handschrift des neuen Testaments, ein Rivale des Codex Vaticanus oder Sinaiticus, die schwer vermissten Denkwürdigkeiten Hegesipps, das Diatessaron Tatians, des Papias Erklärungen der Herrenworte schwebten uns vor. Es blieben Traumbilder! Was aus den zahlreichen Säcken, die im Orient die Regale unserer Archive vertreten, ans Tageslicht gezogen wurde, waren meist Moscheenakten und -rechnungen, Koranstücke, andere arabische und türkische Literatur, und dazwischen, sich fast verlierend, von Schmutz überzogen, der nur den ernstlichsten Brunnenkuren wich, von Mäusen und Würmern zernagt, von Feuer und Wasser halb zerstört, zerstreute Blätter, zuweilen Blätterlagen, auf denen andere als arabische oder türkische Schriftzüge, oft unter solchen verborgen, dem Forscherauge erkennbar wurden[77].

Hermann von Soden musste ehrlich eingestehen, dass für seine große kritische Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments in den Texten wenig zu holen war und die Bruchstücke, die er für den wertvollsten Teil des Fundes hielt, in den Bereich der christlich-palästinischen Überlieferung biblischer und nichtbiblischer Texte gehörten, die ihn selbst offenkundig nicht sonderlich interessierte. Trotzdem berichtete er im Mai und Juni 1913 sowohl im Konferenzzimmer des Kunstgewerbemuseums in der Prinz-Albrecht-Straße als auch im Akademiegebäude den Mitgliedern der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Preußischen Akademie[78].

Ungeachtet solcher Enttäuschungserfahrungen gilt: Hermann von Soden hat – daran kann überhaupt kein Zweifel sein – eine zentrale Bedeutung für die Erschließung der Textfunde aus der Damaszener Qubbat al-khazna und für die Tatsache, dass diese Texte der wissenschaftlichen Öffentlichkeit überhaupt erst bekannt wurden. Allerdings betrieb er die Erschließung der Stücke als Experte für die Textge-

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Galaterbriefs aus Damaskus", in: *Studia Evangelica* 5, F.L. Cross, Hg., Texte und Untersuchungen 103, Berlin: Akademie 1975, 114-120. Nach Angaben von Treu handelt es sich um die Stücke 062, 072, 0126, 0144-0147, 0154-0159, 0196, 0234 sowie 0253 der neutestamentlichen Handschriftenliste Gregory/Aland nach *Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, 2., neubearb. und erg. Aufl., in Verbindung mit Michael Welte, Beate Köster und Klaus Junack bearb. von Kurt Aland, Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung 1, Berlin: De Gruyter 1994.

77 Soden, „Bericht", 826.

78 Eine Einleitung zu einer Konferenz am 13. Mai 1913 für einen „engeren Kreis" in gedruckter Form (mit handschriftlich eingesetztem Namen und Soden als persönlichem Absender) ging offenbar an von Bülow; die Paraphen auf dem Blatt lassen nicht erkennen, ob er an dem Zusammentreffen teilgenommen hat: Bundesarchiv R901/37532, Blatt 76. Wie die erhaltenen Akten aus der Überlieferung des Auswärtigen Amtes zeigen, war natürlich auch Friedrich Althoff über alle Zusammenhänge orientiert, vgl. seine Weiterleitung des in Anm. 73 erwähnten Briefs über den Inhalt der Damaszener Funde vom 12. Februar 1903 an den Minister der geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten August von Trott zu Solz unter Datum vom 26. Februar 1903 in R901/37532, Blatt 70.

schichte des Neuen Testaments und formulierte seine Enttäuschung über den in dieser Hinsicht eher wenig ertragreichen Fund so deutlich, dass die Erschließung der Texte eher schleppend verlief. Da das Ansehen von Hermann Freiherr von Soden als Textkritiker – ich würde sagen: unverdienterweise – in der Disziplin eher gering ausgefallen ist und an ihn heute kaum noch erinnert wird, blieb auch seine Bedeutung für die Erschließung des Fundes lange im Dunklen. Dass die Funde dann in Berlin so schleppend erschlossen wurden, während ihres vergleichsweise langen Aufenthaltes so wenig umfassend dokumentiert wurden und noch heute allerlei Arbeit zu tun ist, liegt zunächst an dem damals verbreiteten Interesse an „großen Texten großer Autoren in griechischer Sprache" und einer vergleichsweise stark ausgeprägten Marginalisierung der Orientalia in der deutschen Patristik. Dann aber kam das Schicksal der Editionsunternehmen der Berliner Akademie in Kriegszeit, Inflation, Diktatur und Zweitem Weltkrieg dazu. Erst Kurt Treu nahm die Arbeiten in der Akademie an den Textfunden wieder auf, aber das ist eine andere Geschichte, die hier nicht mehr erzählt werden kann[79]. Wenn es dagegen in diesem Beitrag gelungen ist, eine beeindruckende Person mit einer ansatzweisen „Würdigung des bei allen Mängeln bewundernswerten Lebenswerkes" ein Stück weit der Vergessenheit[80] entrissen zu haben, würde mich das sehr freuen.

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79 Bandt und Rattmann, „Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets", 18-20.

80 Drei Darstellungen der Fakultätsgeschichte erwähnen von Soden entweder gar nicht oder unzureichend: Joachim Rohde, „Die Geschichte des Berliner Lehrstuhls für Neues Testament", in: *Zur Geschichte der Theologischen Fakultät Berlins*, Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Reihe 7, Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin 1985, 539-543 bzw. Gerhard Besier und Christof Gestrich, Hgg., *450 Jahre Evangelische Theologie in Berlin*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1989 sowie Notger Slenczka, „Die Theologische Fakultät 1880-1945", in: *Geschichte der Universität Unter den Linden 1810-2010, Praxis ihrer Disziplinen 5, Transformation der Wissensordnung*, Heinz-Elmar Tenorth, Hg., Berlin: Akademie 2010, 53-106. Slenczka verwechselt Vater und Sohn von Soden (S. 68) und führt das Münsteraner Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung auf „das wegweisende Projekt der Erstellung eines kritischen Textes des Neuen Testaments aus den Handschriften" durch Hermann Freiherr von Soden zurück (S. 74), obwohl dessen Gründer Kurt Aland wie auch dessen akademischer Lehrer Hans Lietzmann, ein ehemaliger Mitarbeiter von Sodens, sich mehrfach deutlich von diesem Projekt distanziert haben: Vgl. dazu die oben in Anm. 58 zitierten Aufsätze von Hans Lietzmann sowie Kurt und Barbara Aland, *Der Text des Neuen Testaments. Einführung in die wissenschaftlichen Ausgaben sowie in Theorie und Praxis der modernen Textkritik*, 2. Aufl., Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 2006, 37 und 50. – Das Zitat stammt aus einer Redaktionsnotiz, vermutlich von Erwin Preuschen, zu dem kritischen Aufsatz von Lietzmann, „H. von Sodens Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments. II. Die drei Rezensionen", 331 = 248.

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Writing Middle Eastern agency into the history of the Qubbat al-khazna: The late Ottoman state and manuscripts as historical artefacts

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The modern history of the Qubbat al-khazna in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has first and foremost been written as the history of a European "discovery".[1] Prussian and English consuls and German professors are always at the centre of these narratives and are often depicted as Indiana Jones–like heroes who unearth fragments slumbering untouched in the Orient. This narrative has written local actors out of the process that, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, gradually turned the Qubba into a "historical" monument, and its holdings into cultural artefacts. Most importantly, it assumes that there was no serious local or regional interest in the fragments housed in the Qubba or even an awareness of them among contemporaries in Damascus and Istanbul.

The heavy emphasis on European actors in writing the modern "discovery" of the Qubba is closely tied to the sources that have been used – diaries, the first scholarly articles, photographs, letters, German official documents, and so on. These sources are strongly imbued with the self-conceptions of the European officials and scholars who played a role in what was effectively a discovery only from the European perspective. For instance, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein (1815–1905), who was the Prussian consul in Damascus and a scholar, bought thousands of manuscripts in Damascus in the 1860s. In his handwritten sale catalogue of one group of these manuscripts he also obliquely referred to fragments from the Qubba. Here, he styled himself as the adventurous explorer of the untouched Orient when he writes that "they were unearthed by a lucky discovery from centuries of concealment".[2] Hermann von Soden (1852–1914) concluded his overview article of the fragments that had been sent to Berlin in 1902 in a similar vein. After mentioning the Crusades, he wrote: "Subsequently, this rich history is coffined;

1 We thank Ayşe Hümeyra Demirci (İstanbul Şehir University) for her support in writing this paper.

2 Johann Gottfried Wetzstein, "Catalog der arabischen Handschriftenbibliothek des Dr. J.G. Wetzstein" [1859], Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MS or. sim. 8947, p. 2: "durch einen glücklichen ~~Zufall~~ Fund aus einer jahrhundertelangen Verborgenheit zu Tage gefördert worden sind". This passage contains one of the few corrections in this catalogue: Wetzstein had originally written "coincidence" (*Zufall*), but then replaced it with the more exciting "discovery" (*Fund*).

the debris and dust of centuries cover them. Yet in the success I have reported we might see a humble emblem of how the academic efforts of the Occident reopen the grave and recover the present's past."[3] Elsewhere he describes the European researcher "who had cleaned his small darlings just as a mother washes her small ones in the evening", in contrast to "uncomprehending [Oriental] hands that had cast them into a corner as plunder where they had been forgotten for centuries; eaten away by moths and mould".[4]

Not only texts constructed this image of heroic and caring Western efforts to recover artefacts in the absence of local and regional actors, but photography did so as well.[5] The iconography of the Qubba in photographs of that period reflects the same attitude of the untouched Orient waiting for the European kiss of awakening. European photographers took all the photographs of the Qubba from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries known so far. The shared striking element in most of these photographs is the near-complete absence of any humans. The Qubba seems to be an abandoned Oriental monument standing in a complete social void. It appears as a dormant building with artefacts of the past that had seemingly no relevance for local society at all (see for instance the oldest photograph known so far, taken by Francis Bedford in 1862 and discussed in Fabio Ioppolo's contribution to this volume). However, if we consider the earliest known photograph preserved in an Ottoman context, a different iconography emerges (fig. 1).[6] Here, the photographer takes a very different approach: the Qubba seems almost marginal, while the people working on it take centre stage. This emphasis on the Qubba as a part of local society and its social embeddedness is the more remarkable as these persons are not prominent administrators, notables, or scholars, but "merely" workmen.

Obviously, the Qubba is not the only depository "found" in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century in the Middle East or other non-European regions that has been framed in such a Eurocentric narrative. One only has to turn to the Qubba's close relative, the Cairo Geniza, to find a strikingly similar situation. It is certainly not by chance that *the* iconic photograph of the Geniza collection became that of the Cambridge scholar Solomon Schechter sitting in Cambridge Uni-

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3 Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 830: "Dann wird die ganze reiche Geschichte eingesargt, der Schutt und Staub der Jahrhunderte begräbt sie. Aber in dem Erfolg, von dem ich berichten durfte, dürfen wir ein bescheidenes Sinnbild dafür erblicken, wie die wissenschaftliche Arbeit des Abendlandes das Grab wieder eröffnet und die Vergangenheit der Gegenwart zurückgewinnt."

4 Hermann von Soden, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1248–1249.

5 On this topic in general, see Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, eds., *Photography's Orientalisms: New Essays on Colonial Representation*, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute 2013.

6 We thank Ayşe Hümeyra Demirci (İstanbul Şehir University) for sharing this photograph with us.


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Fig. 1: Workmen in front of the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus, 1902 (reprint of 1898 photograph?). Unknown photographer. (İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, 90580/18, Yıldız Sarayı Fotoğraf Koleksiyonu. © İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi.)

versity Library and studying the fragments. Out of the numerous visual possibilities, the field has chosen that of the lone and absorbed scholar studying the material over 5000 kilometres from where it had been preserved. It is only fitting that this photograph adorned the title page of the 2011 book *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza*. This title wonderfully summarises the idea of fragments devoid of social context and cultural meaning for the host society ("trash", "lost world"), and the photograph of Solomon Schechter on the title page left little doubt that the agency of finding this world was exclusively situated in Europe.[7]

Against this background, the aim of this contribution is simple, namely to propose one way of writing non-European actors into the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century story of the Qubba. This is not done to suggest that these non-European actors were clearly separated from or even opposed to European actors. Quite to the contrary, our intention is rather to show that their stories are deeply interwoven with those of the English consuls, the Prussian consuls, the German

7 Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza*, New York: Schocken Books 2011.

scholars, and the German administrators. We need to reconstruct precisely these webs of entanglement to move away from the simplistic and reductive notions of "European" and "non-European" actors that we use here merely as heuristic devices to frame this paper. Manuscript dealers, scholars, notables, and officials in Damascus, as well as administrators, scholars, and politicians in Istanbul, all had their own agency and agendas in the events surrounding the Qubba's modern transformation into a historical building with cultural artefacts. They also all had different notions of what the Qubba meant and what was to be done with its contents. The interest in the Qubba material was not just a reaction to European actors playing a more prominent role; we propose that the non-European actors display a set of attitudes that indicate a notion of Ottoman cultural heritage preservation. This attitude was certainly not limited to the Qubba, but was part of a wider trend in the Ottoman period, as the example of the late Ottoman Museum of Islamic Endowments shows.[8] Our aim here is thus not to write a heroic account of local and regional actors, but to write them back into history to retrieve the webs of entanglement that a purely Eurocentric narrative obliterates.

As this is the first step in retrieving the agency of local and regional actors, this contribution will focus on one group, those positioned in the imperial central administration in Istanbul. That the central administration is at the centre of this paper is not because we believe that they played a dominant role in these events. Rather, this focus is simply the result of the source corpus on which we are working, administrative documents preserved in the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi or, to give its current designation, the Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi (henceforth "Ottoman Archive" or "BOA"). We will see in the following some glimpses of Ottoman officials in Damascus and of local Damascene actors. Yet the voices of the latter group are faint in this corpus and we mostly hear them filtered through the pens of the central administration. To recover their agency and their positionality with respect to the modern "discovery" of the Qubba will require a different source corpus, not yet identified and retrieved.

Pre-1900 developments in Damascus

The story of the Qubba's supposed discovery has centred on the "opening" of the Qubba in 1900 in the aftermath of the German emperor's visit to the Middle East in 1898. After diplomatic efforts, the German scholar Bruno Violet arrived in

8 Edhem Eldem, "The Genesis of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts", in: *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 119–139. This museum was also responsible for the renovation of the Umayyad Mosque after the 1893 fire (see for instance BOA Y.PRK.DH.7/35).

Damascus to examine the non-Muslim fragments.[9] As Boris Liebrenz and Fabio Ioppolo show in their contributions in this volume, there is in fact a much longer history of European engagement with the Qubba before this point. For the purpose of this paper, it is important to underline that we also see changed Ottoman attitudes towards written artefacts well before the arrival of Bruno Violet in Damascus. For instance, in 1878 the city's topography of libraries underwent a watershed with the foundation of a new Public Library (*al-maktaba al-ʿumūmiyya*) in which the books of all the "old" Damascene endowment libraries were henceforth to be housed. This drastic change in the history of the city's endowment libraries goes back to the arrival of Midhat Pasha (1822–1884) as the Ottoman governor of the Syrian province in 1878. Midhat Pasha was one of the central figures in the reform process that the Ottoman Empire had undergone in the previous decades. Not only had he held the grand vizierate in Istanbul, but he was a seasoned regional governor who had left a discernible footprint in Iraq and the Balkans. One of the focus areas of late Ottoman reform was in the field of education and culture, where we see the introduction of new institutions and new educational practices.[10]

After Midhat Pasha arrived in Damascus, he immediately formed a charitable committee (*jamʿiyya khayriyya*) of local notables that was to look after all things educational and cultural, including libraries. This committee worked at impressive speed and submitted a report on the city's libraries within a few months.[11] On the basis of this report, a decree was promptly issued that had three aims: to delegitimise the existing libraries as inefficient and sloppy; to dissolve these "old" libraries; and to move their books into the newly created "modern" Public Library.[12] The story of this dramatic shift in the book culture in Damascus (and elsewhere) was part of a much wider transformation where the past became musealised and what had simply been called "books" (*kutub*) increasingly became "manuscripts" (*makhṭūṭāt*). The story of this library and the role of other protagonists in the field of manuscripts and libraries in Damascus, especially that of Ṭāhir al-Jazāʾirī (1852–1920), remains to be written. In any case, the massive intervention of the Ottoman

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9 See the contribution by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann in this volume; and also Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaᵗ al-ḥazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74; Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20.

10 As an example, see the discussion of primary education in Benjamin Fortna, *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2011.

11 Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt, *Khazāʾin al-kutub fī Dimashq wa-ḍawāḥīhā*, Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif 1902, 5.

12 This decree is contained in the first catalogue of the new Public Library, *Sijill jalīl yataḍammanu taʿlīmāt al-maktaba al-ʿumūmiyya fī Dimashq maʿa asmāʾ al-kutub al-mawjūda bi-hā, al-Jamʿiyya al-khayriyya* [Sublime Register Containing the Decree on the Public Library in Damascus and the Titles of Its Books], Damascus 1881–1882, pp. 2–3 (Ottoman), pp. 3–4 (Arabic).

state into the cultural field was far from uncontroversial in Damascus. Physical force had to be used repeatedly to prise gates open and to move the holdings of the "old" libraries to the "modern" library.[13]

The relevant point here is the speed with which profoundly new notions of what to do with historical written artefacts were introduced. The first printed catalogue of the new library, the *Sublime Register Containing the Decree on the Public Library in Damascus and the Titles of Its Books*, was published swiftly in 1881–1882. Interestingly, scholarship has hardly used this catalogue to date and few copies of it are held in European libraries – the British Library found a copy of this catalogue in their "backlog" in 2017 more than a century after it was purchased.[14] The new Public Library went through several permutations over the course of the next 120 years and became known as the al-Ẓāhiriyya Library, and is today the most important collection of manuscripts in Syria. Despite this, the late Ottoman origins of what is today the al-Asad National Library are hardly acknowledged.[15]

After the Public Library had been founded, we see that the Ottoman central administration took a very close interest in the running of this new institution for what had become "manuscripts". A number of documents (they are not part of the Qubba corpus at the heart of this paper) show that Istanbul administrators saw it as the state's prerogative and duty to involve itself in the micromanagement of such a cultural institution. The foundation decree that was printed in the *Sublime Register* was carefully archived,[16] as were various documents on the day-to-day workings of the library. We thus find interventions regarding the appointment of the librarian and the doorkeeper,[17] instructions on keeping the catalogue,[18] confirmations of the authority of the Education Ministry's director in Syria over the library's staff,[19] and requests by the Education Ministry to be updated on the holdings of the library.[20] In short, cultural affairs, including historical written artefacts, clearly turned in the course of the late nineteenth century into one of the fields in which the Ottoman state saw itself as the legitimate custodian. The history of the Qubba in Damascus has thus to be seen in this wider context.

Coming to the Qubba and its pre-1900 history, the reuse corpus discussed elsewhere in this volume shows that the Qubba was not a closed-off building or an

13 One gets glimpses of this violent process in al-Zayyāt, *Khazā'in al-kutub*.
14 Dan A. Lowe (DLo), "A Rare Find in BL Arabic Backlog", Twitter, 9 March 2017, https://twitter.com/dan_a_lowe/status/839870420992081921.
15 Mājid al-Dhahabī, "al-Maktaba al-waṭaniyya min Dār al-kutub al-Ẓāhiriyya ilā Maktabat al-Asad", *ʿĀlam al-kitāb* 8, no. 2 (1986–1987), 244–249; Muḥammad Zuhayr al-Bābā, "al-Madrasa al-Ẓāhiriyya wa-maktabatuhā", *Majallat al-majmaʿ al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya bi-Dimashq* 71 (1995–1996), 181–195.
16 BOA Y.EE. 6/1 (10 July 1881).
17 BOA İ.DH. 879/70132 (19 March 1883).
18 BOA MF.MKT. 81/39 (9 June 1883).
19 BOA MF.MKT. 95/47 (21 October 1887).
20 BOA MF.MKT. 95/77 (11 November 1887).

isolated space that was of no relevance to Damascene society over the centuries.[21] Rather, the Qubba depository had been an essential part of the manuscript topography of Damascus at various points in its history. Violet himself underlined that the Qubba was not a sealed-off building, but a depository in active use:

> There were many Korans and other book fragments, including mosque accounts and similar materials from the most recent past; until the eighteenth century and perhaps even until the nineteenth century. There was also a fragment of an Arabic Bible, which – if I remember correctly – was printed in London in the 1830s.[22]

That the Qubba was a significant building well beyond the local context might also be deduced from a Koran box that was produced in Istanbul in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Federica Broilo has suggested that a Damascene craftsman made this box with reference to the Qubba – as much as the actual Qubba housed precious Korans, this box was also meant to house a copy of it.[23] It is an irony that both the Koran box and the Koranic fragments from the Qubba are today in the same museum in Istanbul.

More importantly, we see that local actors in Damascus also had access to the Qubba in the course of the nineteenth century to retrieve material. Some of these events are known, though little noted so far. For instance, the Damascene historian Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt reported that Maḥmūd Ḥamza Efendi (1821–1887), the high-ranking Damascene administrator and Hanafi mufti of Syria, had access to its holdings.[24] From other narrative sources it transpires that under the Ottoman governor Hüseyin Nazım Pasha (gov. 1897–1906), even Christian notables came to Damascus to inspect the Qubba material.[25] More importantly, documents from our corpus in the Ottoman Archive show that the Ottoman state, too, had taken an interest in the building well before 1900. For instance, the governor Şirvanizade Mehmed Rüşdü Pasha (1828–1874) became interested in the Qubba in the mid-1860s and had it opened.[26] There is also the possibility, though the wording is vague on this, that prior to 1900 manuscripts had been transferred from the Qubba to the new Public Library.[27]

It thus certainly did not take Europeans to "discover" the Qubba and its contents, and the appearance of European actors was merely a new element in a long

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21 See Konrad Hirschler's other contribution in this volume.

22 Bruno Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment aus Damaskus", *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung* 4, no. 11 (1901), 426–427.

23 Federica Broilo, "Ottoman Woodwork: Some Little-Known Quran Boxes from the Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi in Istanbul (16th–17th centuries)", in: *Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art: Proceedings*, Géza Dávid and Ibolya Gerelyes, eds., Budapest: Hungarian National Museum 2009, 135–143. We thank Arianna D'Ottone Rambach for this reference.

24 Al-Zayyāt, *Khazā'in al-kutub*, 3.

25 Filīb Dī Ṭarrāzī, *Khazā'in al-kutub al-ʿarabiyya fi al-khāfiqayn*, Beirut: Dār al-kutub 1947–1948, 1:132–133.

26 BOA Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1 (30 March 1900).

27 BOA Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1 (30 March 1900).

history of how individuals, and increasingly the Ottoman state, had interacted and were interacting with the contents of this building. The entanglements of these various actors are evident when we consider the non-public writing of a figure as crucial as Bruno Violet. He obviously needed local knowledge to navigate his way through the material on which he was working. In his unpublished diary he thus notes that he worked with a local bookbinder in the mosque.[28] He went together with Nazım Pasha to the Public Library to identify reused non-Muslim fragments.[29] Four weeks later we find him working with Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt in the same library on Syriac fragments[30] and in his dairy he calls him "my teacher"[31] The story of the Qubba is certainly much more complicated than Middle Easterners putting fragments into a building and forgetting about them and then Europeans retrieving them from debris and dust.

The corpus

This paper is centred on forty-two documents from the Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (see app. 1 for full list). The impetus to start working on this collection in the framework of the Qubba's history goes back to Edhem Eldem who generously provided us with the first documents from this corpus.[32] Subsequently, we conducted searches on key terms like "kubbetü'l-hazine", "Emeviye Camii", "kutub-i mesihiye", and "kutub-i islamiye" (with variations) in the archival summaries provided by the Ottoman Archive. In a second step, we specified the search by narrowing it to various archival collections and time periods on the basis of the first search results. We have not, however, conducted in-depth research systematically looking at further documents where the archival summary might not spell out the relevance of the document for the Qubba. There is thus little doubt that the corpus presented here is nothing but a start and merely scratches the surface of what is there.

Our forty-two documents are distributed over twenty-six class marks. While there are forty-two distinct documents, for one of the documents we not only have the fair copy but two drafts (nos. 4, 4a, and 4b in app. 1). The majority of the documents directly involve the Foreign Ministry or are triggered by initiatives of the Foreign Office following the German requests to be allowed access to the

28 Bruno Violet, "Tagebuch", archive of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, week of 17–20 December 1900. Our thanks go to Arnd Rattmann for providing the references to this diary.

29 Bruno Violet, "Tagebuch", week of 2 June 1900.

30 Bruno Violet, "Tagebuch", week of 30 June 1900.

31 Bruno Violet, "Tagebuch", week of 14 June 1900.

32 These documents are also cited in François Déroche, "La 'Bibliothèque' de la mosquée des Omeyyades", in: *De Bagdad à Damas: Études en mémoire de Dominique Sourdel,* Jean-Michel Mouton and Clément Onimus, eds., Geneva: Droz 2018, 311–325.

Qubba and subsequently to have the non-Muslim fragments lent to Berlin. The prominence of these events in our corpus corresponds to the fact that these documents are the most visible items relating to the Qubba in the Ottoman Archive. The profile of our corpus thus reproduces to some extent the current Eurocentric bias of our knowledge as it focuses on documents produced in the context of the German initiatives. In consequence, it is crucial to reiterate how preliminary our corpus is and that its current shape cannot be used to make any far-reaching conclusions.

Apart from the forty-two documents in appendix 1 we have also identified a further thirteen "ghost documents" that we have not (yet) found (see app. 2). These are documents which the extant documents show must have existed. For instance, we know that the German embassy approached the Ottoman government on a yearly basis to extend the loan period of the documents in Berlin. In our corpus this is evident for the year 1904, for which we have explicit documents (app. 1, documents nos. 28–30). For the year 1903 we do not have a document, but we have explicit references, so it has been included in the list of ghost documents (app. 2, ghost document no. 8). However, we do not have documents nor references for similar requests in the years 1905, 1906, 1907, or 1908 and they have thus no entry in the list of ghost documents.

The identified documents and ghost documents taken together bring the size of our corpus to well over fifty documents, clearly showing how intensively the Ottoman central administration dealt with the Qubba and its holdings. We will use this documentary corpus in the following to focus on two points: the loan of the non-Muslim fragments to Berlin in 1902 and the as yet unresolved question of when the Muslim fragments were transferred to Istanbul.

Lending the non-Muslim fragments to Berlin

On the basis of German state papers, Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann have superbly reconstructed the events surrounding the loan of the non-Muslim fragments found in the Qubba to Berlin.[33] The German side approached the Ottoman state in 1901, the fragments were sent in 1902 for a loan period of one year, the Ottoman state agreed to repeated German requests to extend the loan period, and in 1909 the fragments finally returned to Istanbul. In factual terms, the papers in the Ottoman Archive add some more detail to this story. For instance, we knew from the German documents that the German ambassador Adolf Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein wrote that the shipment in 1902 included 1558 pages and fragments.[34] The original Ottoman protocol of the handover to the German em-

[33] Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise".
[34] Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 12.

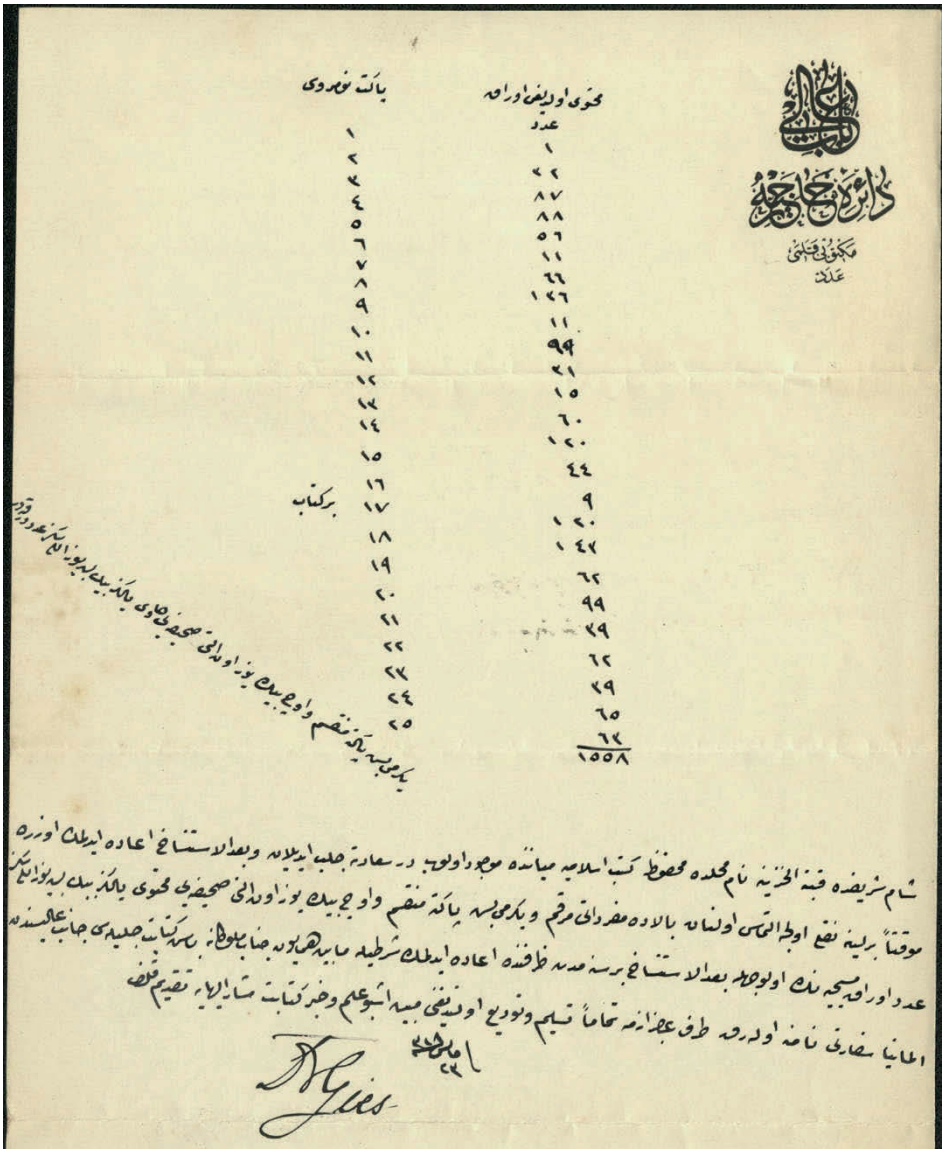


Fig. 2: Protocol of the handover of fragments to the German embassy in Istanbul, 1902. (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1. © Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi.)

bassy in Istanbul (fig. 2), signed by a "Dr Gies", adds a highly interesting logistical side: the material was divided into twenty-five packets and there is a very uneven number of fragments in each packet (see app. 3). One packet contained just a single fragment (packet 1) while others held up to 143 fragments (packet 18). We will see below that this organisation of the 1558 fragments was not an initiative of the central administration in Istanbul, but goes back to local actors in Damascus. In

addition, it seems that not only fragments were sent, but there was also at least one book in packet 17, as the protocol has a note "bir kitâb".[35]

As is well known, the Ottoman administration had photographs taken of the fragments before they handed them over to the German embassy in 1902, but researchers have not yet found these photographs. They would be highly important for Qubba studies, because not only do we not have access to the original fragments that were returned to Damascus in 1909, the Germans themselves only took 147 photographs of the fragments while they were in Berlin.[36] The Ottoman administration took the photographs to have a kind of "visual catalogue" so that they could ensure that the Germans would indeed return all of the fragments.[37] The discussion in the Ottoman documents shows that there had been an initial idea of a written register, but that this was abandoned on account of the difficulties posed by these multilingual and multiscriptual fragments.[38]

From the Ottoman documents we also learn that it was Ali Sami Bey (fig. 3; d. after 1928), chief photographer of the Ministry of the Navy and official photographer for Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who took the photographs for the Ottoman administration. Ali Sami Bey himself visited Damascus and the Umayyad Mosque as he accompanied Wilhelm II of Germany on his visit to the Levant in 1898. He had little sympathy for the Turkish nationalistic trend in the late Ottoman Empire and later actively fought against the newly founded Turkish Republic. In 1922 he became one of the "Hundred-and-fiftyers", that is, the 150 individuals declared *personae non gratae* in the Turkish Republic.[39] Ali Sami Bey died in exile in Thessaloniki, where he continued to work as photographer.[40]

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35 BOA Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1. This "book" might be the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia, of which we find fourty-seven folia in the photographs taken by Bruno Violet in 1901 in Damascus (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/87–133, available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/). The photographs of the same work taken in Berlin in 1909 show that it is an incomplete codex (see Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 5, available at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/); cf. Werner Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment des Ecclesiastes-Kommentars von Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1988 (we thank Ronny Vollandt for directing us to this work).

36 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 5 and MSS simulata orientalia 6; see https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de. In addition, of course, Bruno Violet had already taken 214 photographs while he was working on the fragments in Damascus; see "Damaszener Handschriften, aufgenommen von Bruno Violet" at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

37 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 12.

38 See, for instance, BOA BEO 1795/134611/2/1 and BOA Y.PRK.HR 32/7/1/1.

39 Engin Özendes, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda fotoğrafçılık (1839–1923)*, Istanbul: YEM Yayın 2013, 282–284. On late Ottoman photography, see also Bahattin Öztuncay, *The Photographers of Constantinople*, Istanbul: Aygaz 2003.

40 *Thessaloniki Photographers on Mount Athos: Ali Sami, the Ottoman Philhellene Photographer*, Thessaloniki: The Mount Athos Photographic Archive 1995.



Fig. 3: Ali Sami Bey, *c.*1902. (*Servet-i Fünun* 596 (1318/1902), p. 372.)

Taking these photographs was a massive and costly affair, as reflected in several documents concerned with this project. After the sultan had issued the decree to take the photographs,[41] the Foreign Ministry informed the Grand Vizier's Office of the cost: 46,760 kuruş.[42] This estimate amounted to three times the yearly salary of an average employee in the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul in that year.[43] The office was not impressed and replied that existing equipment should be used and that an amount of 1000 to 2000 kuruş would be sufficient.[44] When the Foreign Ministry insisted on the original amount,[45] the Grand Vizier's Office told them to just hand over the fragments to the German embassy without taking these photographs.[46] At that point the sultan intervened and unequivocally ordered the pho-

41 Ghost document no. 6 (see app. 2).
42 BOA BEO 1795/134611/3/1 and BOA BEO 1795/134611/2/1.
43 Based on salaries given in Merih Erol, *Greek Orthodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul: Nation and Community in the Era of Reform*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2015, 55.
44 BOA BEO 1795/134611/1/1.
45 BOA BEO 1800/134929/2/1.
46 BOA BEO 1800/134929/1/2.

tographs to be taken.[47] That the Foreign Minister Ahmet Tevfik Pasha (1845–1936) himself recommended Ali Sami Bey for promotion after the successful completion of this project shows the importance ascribed to it.[48]

The documents also provide more tantalising details, most importantly that Ali Sami Bey produced no fewer than 3116 photographs. This means that he took two photographs of each fragment. There are two possibilities to explain this number: either he photographed the recto and verso of each fragment (which would be excellent news if we were ever to find these photographs); or he took two photographs of the same side, thus producing two identical sets. The Ottoman documents do not provide detail on this question, but here the German documents come in. They speak of two series of photographs: one went into the Palace library and the other was given to the Foreign Ministry.[49] Regrettably for research purposes, then, Ali Sami Bey probably only photographed one side of each fragment, with the decision to do so probably bound to the photographs' function as visual catalogues – upon the return of the fragments from Berlin to Istanbul, the evidence of one side would be sufficient to check whether all pieces had been returned. Photographing only one side was also how Bruno Violet proceeded when he took his photographs in Damascus in 1901.

This photographic project must have resulted in massive albums, and indeed we learn in a memorandum from the Foreign Ministry to the Palace in the year 1902 that eight leather albums were made.[50] The wording implies that there were two sets and here we see confirmation that one of these sets, bound in eight albums, went into the Palace library. We never hear of this set again and we do not know what happened to these albums or where they went. The other set, however, reappears in the documents when the fragments were returned to Istanbul in 1909. This moment left a decent paper trail: first, we have the document confirming that the German embassy handed the fragments to the Foreign Ministry;[51] second, we have a document from the Grand Vizier's Office on the fragments being transferred to the Education Ministry;[52] and finally we have a set of documents from the Education Ministry. Strikingly, there is no mention of the photographs in the first or the second of these documents, even though they spell out in detail exactly what is being sent on. It is only in the Education Ministry's documents that the photographs reappear, as the ministry was tasked with ascertaining that all fragments had indeed been returned to Istanbul. However, the wording in the documents implies that the photographic set was not complete, as it talks about "seven catalogues, each containing ten photographs previously taken of [the frag-

47 BOA I.HUS. 94/88/1/1.
48 BOA Y.MTV. 231/176/1/1.
49 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 12.
50 BOA Y.PRK.HR 32/7/1/1.
51 BOA HR.ID 2033/109/1/1.
52 BOA BEO 3618/271288/1/1.

ments]".[53] It thus seems that the second set of photographs had by this time been broken up and that the Education Ministry in 1909 had only a small number of photographs to conduct a sample check. When searching for the photographs today, then, we can assume that one of the two sets had already been highly fragmented a few years after it had been taken; we can thus expect the photographs to be dispersed in numerous collections.

Apart from new factual information, the main value of reading the Ottoman documents is to understand how deeply concerned these Istanbul administrators were with the fate of the Qubba's contents. This shows the extent to which several key actors on the German side completely misunderstood the significance of what had already become historical artefacts in the eyes of the Ottoman state. Bruno Violet, for instance, declared in 1905: "It is self-evident to everyone acquainted with the situation that a loan is only the appropriate form of donation for things coming out of the property of a mosque. What would be the use of these manuscripts in the junk room of the Damascene mosque?"[54] Hermann von Soden had already declared before the arrival of the fragments that the loan was the "Sultan's Christmas present to German academia".[55] That these scholars believed that the loan was a de facto donation might have been encouraged by those cases where, in the words of J. Chamonard, the director of the National Museum of Damascus at the beginning of the French Mandate in Syria (1920–1945), "the sultan gave in to the request of a close sovereign and donated part [of a collection] to some European museum".[56] However, the Qubba was a very different case and the assumption that there was no local interest in the fragments only shows how little the German side was aware of the attitudes in both Istanbul and Damascus. Only the German consul in Beirut had warned that the old Damascene families would resist the idea of fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna being taken abroad.[57]

Every Ottoman document concerned with the handover of the fragments to Berlin invariably underlined that this was nothing but a temporary (*muvakkaten*) loan for the purpose of making reproductions (*istinsâh*). The idea of this loan being a refined form of donation was certainly not entertained in Istanbul nor, as we will see below, in Damascus. Indeed, when the German request for the loan reached

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53 BOA BEO 3618/271288/5/1 ("evvelce alınan on aded fotoğrâfîlerîni hâvî yedi aded katalog").

54 Cited in Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 13 and see the contribution by Bandt and Rattmann in this volume.

55 Von Soden, "Weihnachtsgeschenk".

56 Cited in Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 67.

57 Letter from Paul Schroeder, general consul in Beirut, to ambassador Marschall von Bieberstein, 1 February 1901, Bundesarchiv R901/37532, sheet 5 (cited in the contribution by Christoph Markschies in this volume).

the Ottoman administration in 1901, the first administrative step was to ask the Ministry of the Şeyhülislam for its legal opinion. In its memorandum to the Palace Secretariat, the ministry clearly preferred that the work would be undertaken *in situ* in Damascus and reluctantly agreed that only if this was not possible would it be appropriate to lend them to Berlin. Strikingly, the ministry declared these fragments to be state property (*devlet malı*), leaving little doubt as to their legal status.[58] In 1902, as Foreign Minister Ahmet Tevfik Pasha struggled with the Grand Vizier's Office over who was to cover the expenses for the photographs, he noted in correspondence that the fragments were "historical artefacts" (*âsâr-ı atîka*) that would sooner or later find their way into the Imperial Museum.[59]

In the years following the loan, the German embassy kept returning with requests for yet another extension until the Ottoman administration lost patience and in late 1908 asked for the fragments to be sent back.[60] This in turn led to a suggestion from Berlin that shows how little they understood Istanbul, namely to exchange the fragments for Wilhelm Ahlwardt's printed ten-volume catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in Berlin.[61] This offer was not exactly received with great enthusiasm in the Ottoman administration, and when the Education Ministry was asked for its opinion it flatly replied: "The Christian books are endowed books and according to the endower's conditions exchanging them or taking them out of the library is strictly forbidden." Suggesting an exchange of more than 1500 fragments for a printed catalogue went too far, and the Education Ministry stated in its reply that the fragments were to be returned immediately and to be brought back to "their designated place" (*mahal-i mahsûsu*).[62]

From the above discussions within the Ottoman elite it is evident that there was not necessarily a consensus on the fragments' legal status (whether an endowment of the mosque or state property). However, there was a clear consensus that "the academic efforts of the Occident" to "reopen the grave and recover the present's past" was not to mean that the Ottoman state would rescind its prerogative of deciding what was to happen to these historical artefacts. The dozens of administrators and officials involved in the discussions in Istanbul over the years clearly saw these fragments as historical artefacts that were to be preserved and that fell into the state's expanding definition of its role in the cultural field. The great interest that the German scholars and the German embassy took in these pieces certainly contributed to focusing the attention of Istanbul on the Qubba. Yet the interest in Istanbul had deeper roots than that. As early as 1900 Ali Galib, the director of the Record Office in the Education Ministry, submitted a report to the

58 BOA İ.MF. 7/55/1/1 (11 December 1901).
59 BOA BEO 1800/134929/2/1.
60 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 15.
61 Wilhelm Ahlwardt, *Verzeichniss der arabischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Berlin: Schade 1887–1899.
62 BOA BEO 3618/271288/2/1 (1 July 1909).

Palace Secretariat where he made the suggestion that the Qubba's "valuable artefacts [*âsâr-ı kıymetdâr*] … should be taken to the Imperial Museum [in Istanbul]. In this way the public can profit from them and the entire learned world will be infinitely grateful."[63] His suggestion of transferring the fragments was not taken up, but it is striking that he put scholarly access at the heart of his argument.

So far, we have seen the Qubba and the loan to Berlin from the perspective of Ottoman administrators, while a local Damascene role has not appeared at all. It is interesting to note that these administrators were quite happy to use the same rhetorical devices as their German counterparts when it came to the Qubba's position within Damascus. For instance, when Ali Galib suggested bringing the "valuable artefacts" to Istanbul in 1900, he fell back on the well-known topos of them being closed away and in a state of "eternal burial and imprisonment".[64] However, the central administration was well aware that local societies had to be brought on board in order for the state to effectively expand its role in the cultural field. As seen above, when the state-run Public Library was founded in Damascus in 1878 this was done under the patronage of a commission that included local notables. Even then, despite these efforts to integrate local actors, some custodians of endowed libraries put up fierce resistance – ultimately unsuccessful – to the state's decision to translocate their manuscripts into this Public Library.

Thus when Istanbul decided in 1901 to approve the German request to lend the non-Muslim fragments to Berlin, the local reaction in Damascus was certainly a matter of concern. As a consequence, just as in the case of the Public Library some twenty years earlier, a local commission was involved. In the case of the Qubba, this was the building commission of the Umayyad Mosque, and its report is preserved in the Ottoman Archive (fig. 4). The members of this commission represented an impressive cross-section of the Damascene elite. Among them was, for instance, Muḥammad Fawzī al-ʿAẓm (d. 1920), former employee of the Ministry of Imperial Endowments and scion of the grand Damascene al-ʿAẓm family. Members of other great Damascene families include Aḥmad al-Quwatlī, the elder brother of the first post-independence Syrian president Shukrī al-Quwatlī, and ʿAṭāʾ al-ʿAjlānī, member of the prominent *ashrāf* family whose members repeatedly represented Damascus in the Ottoman Assembly and Parliament.[65]

In this report the commission first set the record straight: what the Istanbul administrators invariably called "Christian books" (*kutub-ı mesîhiye*) were in fact a colourful bunch of fragments in "Syriac, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek" scripts. The members of the commission organised these fragments in twenty-five packets according to the script and language (*lisanlarına göre takım takım paketlere*); probably these are the same twenty-five packets that we saw above in the protocol of the

63 BOA Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1 (30 March 1900).
64 BOA Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1 (30 March 1900).
65 Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus 1860–1920*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983, 31–32.

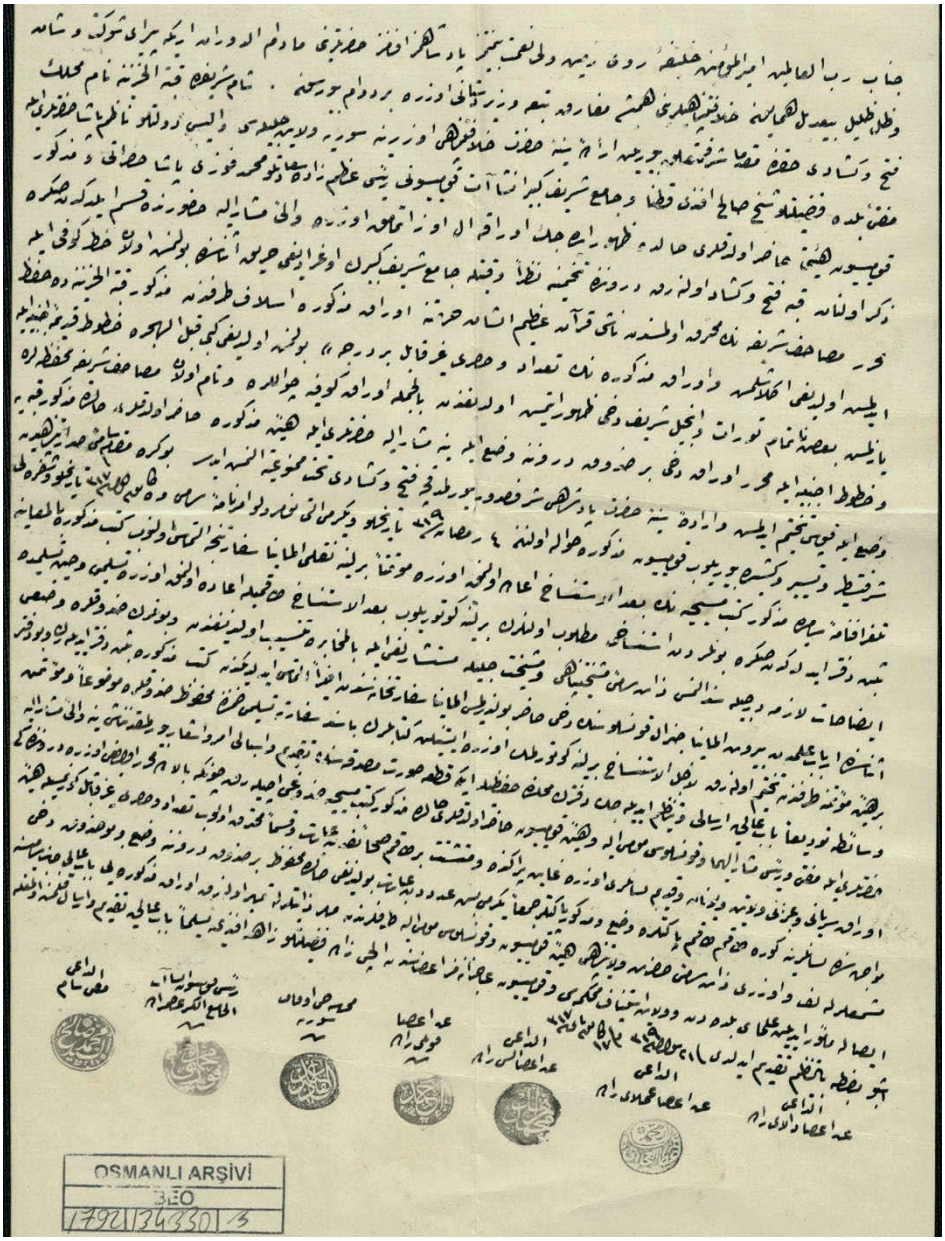


Fig. 4: Report of the Damascus commission on the non-Muslim fragments, 1902. (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, BEO 1792/134330/3/1. © Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi.)

handover in Istanbul some months later. Organising them by script and language probably also explains the very uneven numbers of fragments in the various packets. In the presence of the German consul from Beirut and the Ottoman governor

Nazım Pasha, the packets were then sealed and shipped off to Istanbul accompanied by one member of the commission, Muḥammad Zāhid Efendi.[66]

These twenty-five packets show the care that the Damascene members took when dealing with this material. This was clearly not some random old stuff for them, but highly valuable artefacts. They not only organised the fragments according to language and script, but they came up with a class mark system that we are able to deduce from the extant photographs. On the photographs taken in Berlin in 1909 we find Arabic numerals ("Arabic" in the sense of ١, ٢, ٣, and so on), but these numbers are not present on the photographs taken by Bruno Violet in 1901 in Damascus.[67] These Arabic numbers always consist of two numerals written one above the other and separated by a line. Gideon Bohak suggests in his contribution on the Jewish texts from the Qubba in this volume that the lower numeral represents a subcollection (where 7=Coptic, 8=Hebrew, 11=Syriac) and the upper numeral represents the running number within that subcollection – for example, 185/8 represents the 185th item within the Hebrew subcollection.[68] If we look at the Berlin photos, we find that the highest numeral for a subcollection is twenty-five[69] – exactly the number of the Damascene packets that were organised according to script and language. However, until we have access to more fragments the exact relationship between the class marks and the twenty-five packets cannot be securely reconstructed.[70]

Whatever the exact relationship is, the main point for our purposes is that the commission in Damascus thus most likely went through every single fragment, assigned it to one of the subcollections, assigned it a running number within that subcollection, wrote the resultant class mark on the fragment, and put that fragment into the corresponding packet. It is particularly noteworthy that a system with twenty-five class marks and packets is not the same classification that Bruno

66 BOA BEO 1792/134330/3/1. Istanbul acknowledges receipt of these fragments in a document to the Syrian governor, BOA BEO 1793/134446/1/1.

67 The protocol of the handover to the German embassy already describes the fragments as "numbered" (*murakkam*) (BOA Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1).

68 However, the evidence of further photographs complicates this matter. For instance, the photographs in the article by Khachikyan and Matevosyan in this volume all pertain to Armenian fragments. On these photographs we do indeed see the same Arabic numerals as on the Berlin photos. Yet, even though all fragments are Armenian, we find three different lower numerals: 7 (figs. 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 18, 20, 21, 22 and 23), 10 (figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14 and 17), and 11 (figs. 13 and 24).

69 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 15 and 16.

70 For instance, the protocol of the handover to the German embassy has 136 items for packet no. 8. Yet on the Berlin photos we find class marks in subcollection 8 as high as the 180s (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 23 and 24). One possible explanation is that the class marks were assigned according to pages, but the packets counted in folia. We find a statement at the bottom of the Istanbul list that makes this scenario likely: "The 3116 pages (*sahife*) are 1558 folia (*varak*) split into twenty-five packets" (BOA Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1).

Violet had used to organise the material when he was working in Damascus: he had grouped the fragments into nine groups when he undertook the first preparatory work for shipping them to Berlin.[71] The Damascus commission thus took its own approach when coming up with a system for classifying these fragments.

The solemn character of the commission's report, with six personal stamps, certainly shows the importance that its high-ranking members ascribed to this moment in the Qubba's history. They agreed to the fragments being sent off, but it goes without saying that they stressed in the report their expectation that the fragments would be returned after the "temporary" (*muvakkaten*) loan to Berlin.[72] The fragments did indeed return to Damascus after a trajectory of seven years taking them to Istanbul, to Berlin, and back to Istanbul.[73] That the central administration in Istanbul then returned them to Damascus, rather than keeping them in the museum in Istanbul, shows that the commission's cooperative attitude towards the request from the centre was not misplaced. The Damascene commission in 1902 was worried about Berlin, not Istanbul, and Istanbul clearly entertained no plans to implement Ali Galib's suggestion or Ahmet Tevfik Pasha's belief that the Qubba's contents should be taken from Damascus to Istanbul. The commission was correct not to worry about the documents ending up in Istanbul, as is evident from the above-cited document of the Education Ministry seven years later that unequivocally states that the fragments were to be returned to "their designated place" (*mahal-i mahsûsu*), that is, Damascus.[74]

Transferring the Muslim fragments to Istanbul

While the trajectory of the non-Muslim Qubba fragments is fully visible to us at least until 1909, the trajectory of the Muslim fragments has remained much more obscure. As described in the introduction to this volume, the vast majority of these fragments are today in Istanbul, in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum. However, scholarship has offered widely conflicting accounts of how and when the Muslim fragments made their way to Istanbul. The first tentative account of the holdings in Istanbul in 1965 suggested that the Muslim fragments "were transferred by the Ottoman authorities in 1893 after the fire in the main Damascene sanctuary".[75] This account has retained traction until today even though it is plainly wrong. To cite just one piece of evidence, the descriptions by Bruno Violet

71 See the contribution by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann in this volume.
72 BOA BEO 1792/134330/3/1.
73 See the introduction to this volume.
74 BOA BEO 3618/271288/2/1 (1 July 1909).
75 Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "À propos des documents de la Grande Mosquée de Damas conservés à Istanbul", *Revue des études islamiques* 33 (1965), 74. On this issue, see also Boris Liebrenz's contribution to this volume.

of the Qubba holdings when he was working in Damascus in 1900 and 1901 clearly shows that the Muslim fragments were still there.[76]

The Ottoman documents presented here finally provide us with a clear date for when this transfer actually took place and under what circumstances. As we have seen, the central administration in Istanbul generally assumed that the rightful place of the Qubba fragments was Damascus, but this attitude drastically changed during World War I. When the Allied and Hashemite troops advanced into Greater Syria in 1916, the Ottoman hold over the region became increasingly precarious. The fall of Jerusalem in 1917 brought home the message that Ottoman control was – at least temporarily – no longer to be taken for granted.

It is in this context that the Ministry of Imperial Endowments sent a telegram in early January 1917 to the governor of Syria. Apparently, some "rare artefacts" (*âsâr-ı nâdire*), referring to Qubba fragments, had already been sent from Syria to the Committee of the Museum of Islamic Endowments in Istanbul. The ministry had subsequently requested further fragments, but the committee decided that sorting the fragments *in situ* in Damascus would take too long. In early January, the ministry thus ordered the governor to send all the fragments to Istanbul.[77] Seven weeks later the ministry sent another telegram, seemingly in response to a telegram by the governor that we have not yet found (or that is lost). In this telegram, the ministry acknowledged that sending all the fragments in one go was logistically not feasible in the circumstances of war (somewhat euphemistically referred to as "current transport-related problems"). It thus instructed the governor to send them in several charges and informed him that the headquarters of the Fourth Army had been asked to provide the required support[78] – and indeed, we have the telegram in which the ministry ordered none other than Cemal Pasha (1872–1922), then the commander of the Fourth Army, to support the governor in this task.[79] At this point, as far as we have been able to determine, the paper trail in the Ottoman Archive stops. Yet reports by subsequent Damascene authors confirm that the Ottoman troops transported the fragments to Istanbul before they withdrew from the city.[80]

It is simply extraordinary that an army in dire straits and on the defence against a massive campaign was ordered to undertake quite a complex logistical project and found the capacities to do so. We do not know any details of the transport, but when Bruno Violet was working in Damascus in 1900–1901, he reported that the Qubba contained 150 sacks[81] and the Ottoman documents show that there

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76 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 7–8.
77 BOA DH.ŞFR. 72/3/1.
78 BOA DH.ŞFR. 73/73/1.
79 BOA DH.ŞFR. 73/70/1.
80 ʿAbd al-ʿAziz al-ʿAẓma, *Miʾāt al-Shām: Taʾrīkh Dimashq wa-ahlihā*, ed. N.F. Ṣafwa, London: Riyāḍ al-Rayyis li-l-kutub wa-al-nashr 1987, 49.
81 Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 8.

were also metal boxes.[82] For the central administration in Istanbul, however, it was clearly a high priority to avoid these "ancient and precious pieces" (*âsâr-ı kadîme ve nefîse*) falling into enemy hands. There was certainly no local commission set up at this point and this is not the place to make ethical judgements on this translocation of cultural artefacts in the midst of war. Clearly, though, this was not a random decision to grab sacks buried under debris and dust from a junk room. Rather, the decision to divert precious military resources to bring these fragments to Istanbul was the culmination of a long-standing and sustained interest by the Ottoman central administration in this material. The ministry underlined in its first telegrams that the governor had "to place all the boxes and sacks that are in the depot [*mahzen*] in the courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque in proper boxes without opening them" and that these boxes had to be sealed "with the official seal".[83] This was repeated in the second telegram, where the ministry specifically stated that the governor had to leave "the sacks in their original state".[84]

It is striking, and here we return to the start of this paper, how this transfer of the Qubba fragments was remembered in the correspondence between German scholars in the subsequent decades. The Koranic scholar Otto Pretzl (1893–1941), for instance, wrote in a letter to Bruno Violet in 1938 that the fragments "were removed during the war from the danger zone at the instigation of the Germans".[85] Once again, there is no mention of local actors (hidden by the passive construction) and European actors are seemingly represented as the only ones who really understood the value of this material.

Conclusion

The documents from the Ottoman Archive show that the history of the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus includes many more actors than we have assumed thus far. Most importantly, local and regional actors play decisive roles; their actions around the Qubba fragments and their attitudes towards this material are a crucial element that we cannot disregard. The Qubba was only one piece of a much wider expansion of the late Ottoman state in the cultural realm and of changing attitudes towards what became historical artefacts and manuscripts. Recalibrating our interest towards these actors and these processes will not only bring local and regional

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82 BOA DH.ŞFR. 72/3/1 (14 January 1917): "boxes" (*sandıklar*); BOA Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1 (30 March 1900): "metal boxes" (*temūr sandıklar*).

83 BOA DH.ŞFR. 72/3/1.

84 BOA DH.ŞFR. 73/73/1.

85 Letter from Pretzl to Violet, 21 April 1938 ("auf Veranlassung der Deutschen während des Krieges der Gefahrenzone entrückt worden"), archive of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Our thanks go to Arnd Rattmann for providing this reference. On the basis of the files in Berlin, Arnd Rattmann is working on a fascinating new episode in the story of the Qubba material, namely that in 1917 and 1918 the German and Ottoman authorities were negotiating a cataloguing project of the fragments in Istanbul.

agency into our focus, but is an indispensable element of trying to disentangle the complicated story of these fragments' trajectories and translocations over the course of the last 150 years. This contribution has begun this work on the basis of a corpus of documents from the Ottoman Archive, and as we have said, there is much more material to be identified in Istanbul to further our knowledge of the centre's actions and perspectives. However, the really exciting pieces in the Qubba jigsaw that are still missing are the actors in Damascus itself. Their actions and their attitudes are a *terra incognita* of Qubba studies and there is no doubt that research on this topic will decisively push the field ahead.

Appendix 1: Qubba-related documents in the Ottoman Archive (by date)

No.	*Sender and recipient*[86]	*Class mark*	*Date*[87]
1	Education Ministry, Director of the Record Office to Palace Secretariat	Y.PRK.MF. 4/35/1	30 Mar. 1900
2	Memorandum (*muhtıra*) from Ministry of Şeyhülislam (to Palace Secretariat)	İ.MF. 7/55/1	11 Dec. 1901
3	Foreign Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1768/132555/2	12 Dec. 1901
4	Grand Vizier's Office to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1762/132122/1	15 Dec. 1901
4a	Grand Vizier's Office to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1762/132122/2	15 Dec. 1901
4b	Grand Vizier's Office to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1762/132122/5	15 Dec. 1901
5	Grand Vizier's Office to Foreign Ministry	BEO 1762/132123/1	15 Dec. 1901
6	German embassy (to Foreign Ministry)	BEO 1768/132555/3	23 Dec. 1901
7	Grand Vizier's Office to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1768/132555/1	24 Dec. 1901
8	Syrian Governor's Office to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1762/132122/3	25 Dec. 1901
9	Protocol of Damascene Commission (to Grand Vizier's Office)	BEO 1792/134330/3	30 Jan. 1902
10	Syrian Governor's Office to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1792/134330/2	30 Jan. 1902
11	Grand Vizier's Office to Foreign Ministry	BEO 1792/134330/1	10 Feb. 1902
12	Grand Vizier's Office to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1793/134446/1	11 Feb. 1902

[86] Parentheses indicate that the recipient is not explicitly named in the document, but can be deduced from the document's content.

[87] In the case of drafts, the date of the fair copy is used; this is regularly indicated on the draft as well. The date of the first translation is used in the case of the German *notes verbales*.

No.	*Sender and recipient*	*Class mark*	*Date*
13	Ali Sami Bey to Foreign Ministry	BEO 1795/134611/3	17 Feb. 1902
14	Foreign Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1795/134611/2	17 Feb. 1902
15	Grand Vizier's Office to Foreign Ministry	BEO 1795/134611/1	19 Feb. 1902
16	Foreign Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1800/134929/2	24 Feb. 1902
17	Grand Vizier's Office to Foreign Ministry	BEO 1800/134929/1	27 Feb. 1902
18	Chief Secretary's Office, Yıldız Imperial Palace to Grand Vizier's Office	I.HUS. 94/88/1	2 Mar. 1902
19	Grand Vizier's Office to Finance Ministry	BEO 1802/135143/1	4 Mar. 1902
20	Foreign Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1822/136644/2	6 Apr. 1902
21	Grand Vizier's Office to Finance Ministry and Foreign Ministry	BEO 1822/136644/1	6 Apr. 1902
22	Foreign Ministry to Palace Secretariat	Y.PRK.HR. 32/7/1	14 May 1902
23	Foreign Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 1822/136644/3; BEO 1822/136644/4	29 May 1902
24	Record of delivery (*sened*) to German embassy by Foreign Ministry	Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1	5 June 1902
25	Foreign Ministry to Palace Secretariat	Y.MTV. 230/174/1	5 June 1902
26	Record of delivery (*sened*) to German embassy by Foreign Ministry	Y.MTV. 230/174/2/2	7 June 1902
27	Foreign Ministry to Palace Secretariat	Y.MTV. 231/176/1	19 June 1902
28	*Note verbale* of German embassy put in writing at Translation Office of Sublime Porte	HR.ID 2033/78/1	14 Apr. 1904
29	Translation Office of Sublime Porte to Palace Secretariat	Y.MTV. 260/99/2	31 May 1904
30	Foreign Ministry to Palace Secretariat	Y.MTV. 260/99/1	31 May 1904
31	*Note verbale* of German embassy put in writing at Translation Office of Sublime Porte	HR.ID 2033/106/1; HR.ID 2033/106/2	11 Mar. 1909
32	Grand Vizier's Office to Education Ministry	BEO 3538/265342/1	29 Apr. 1909
33	Grand Vizier's Office to Education Ministry	BEO 3586/268879/1; BEO 3586/268879/2	28 June 1909
34	Inspectorate of Libraries, Education Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 3618/271288/2	1 July 1909
35	Grand Vizier's Office to Foreign Ministry	BEO 3591/269278/1	5 July 1909
36	*Note verbale* of German embassy put in writing at Translation Office of Sublime Porte	HR.ID 2033/109/1	1 Aug. 1909
37	Grand Vizier's Office to Education Ministry	BEO 3618/271288/1	11 Aug. 1909

No.	*Sender and recipient*	*Class mark*	*Date*
38	Inspectorate of Libraries, Education Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 3618/271288/4; BEO 3618/271288/3	12 Aug. 1909
39	Inspectorate of Libraries, Education Ministry to Grand Vizier's Office	BEO 3618/271288/5	14 Aug. 1909
40	Ministry of Imperial Endowments to Syrian Governor's Office	DH.ŞFR. 72/3/1	14 Jan. 1917
41	Ministry of Imperial Endowments to Cemal Pasha	DH.ŞFR. 73/70/1	25 Feb. 1917
42	Ministry of Imperial Endowments to Syrian Governor's Office	DH.ŞFR. 73/73/1	25 Feb. 1917

Translations used in the appendices: Grand Vizier's Office: Sadaret; Palace Secretariat: Mabeyn-i Hümayun; Foreign Ministry: Daire-i Hariciye *or* Hariciye Nezareti; Education Ministry: Nezaret-i Maarif; Ministry of Imperial Endowments: Nezaret-i Evkaf-ı Hümayun; Inspectorate of Libraries, Education Ministry: Nezaret-i Maarif-i Umumiye Kütüphaneler Ser-Müfettişliği; Finance Ministry: Maliye Nezareti; Ministry of Şeyhülislam: Bab-ı Fetva Daire-i Meşihat; Translation Office of Sublime Porte: Bab-ı Ali Tercüme Odası; Chief Secretary Office, Yıldız Imperial Palace: Yıldız Saray-ı Hümayun'u Baş Kitabet Dairesi; Director of the Record Office: Evrak Müdürü; Syrian Governor's Office: Suriye Vilayeti; German embassy: Sefaret-i Devlet-i Almanya

Appendix 2: Qubba-related "ghost documents" (by date)

No.	*Description*	*Named in*	*Date*
1	Decree (irade) for opening of Qubba under Governor Nazım Pasha	BEO 1792/134330/3	before 1901
2	Decree (irade) ordering a legal opinion with respect to legality of loan of non-Muslim Qubba fragments	İ.MF. 7/55/1	before 11 Dec. 1901
3	Decree (irade) permitting the loan and ordering opening of Qubba	İ.MF. 7/55/1; BEO 1768/132555/2; BEO 1762/132122/1	before 11 Dec. 1901
4	Query (*tezkere*) by Sublime Porte to Foreign Ministry concerning handover of fragments to German embassy	BEO 1768/132555/2	11 Dec. 1901
5	Telegram by Sublime Porte to Syrian Governor's Office	BEO 1792/134330/3; BEO 1792/134330/2	1901

No.	*Description*	*Named in*	*Date*
6	Decree (irade) ordering photographing of fragments on suggestion of Foreign Ministry	BEO 1795/134611/2; Y.PRK.HR. 32/7/1	16 Feb. 1902?
7	Foreign Ministry to Yıldız Palace	Y.MTV. 260/99/1	31 May 1902
8	Documents to extend loan period of fragments in Berlin by another year	HR.ID 2033/78/1; Y.MTV. 260/99/2	summer 1903
9	Foreign Ministry to German embassy	HR.ID 2033/106/1	21 Nov. 1908
10	Foreign Ministry to Sublime Porte subsequent to *note verbale* by German embassy	BEO 3538/265342/1; BEO 3618/271288/2; BEO 3591/269278/1	before 8 Mar. 1909
11	Foreign Ministry to Sublime Porte urging reply to *note verbale* by German embassy	BEO 3586/268879/1	24 June 1909
12	*Note verbale* of Foreign Ministry to German embassy	HR.ID 2033/109/1	13 July 1909
13	Foreign Ministry to Sublime Porte conveying *note verbale* of German embassy of 21 July 1909	BEO 3618/271288/1; BEO 3618/271288/5	after 21 July 1909

Appendix 3: Shipment of the fragments loaned to Berlin in 1902 (BOA Y.MTV. 230/174/2/1)

	Packet number	*Number of fragments* (evrak) *contained in each packet*
	1	1
	2	32
	3	87
	4	88
	5	56
	6	11
	7	66
	8	136
	9	11
	10	99
	11	31
	12	15
	13	60
	14	120
	15	44
	16	9
one book	17	120
	18	143

Packet number	*Number of fragments* (evrak) *contained in each packet*
19	62
20	99
21	39
22	62
23	39
24	65
25	63
	1558

"The 3116 pages (*sahife*) are 1558 folia (*varak*) split into twenty-five packets."

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Corpora from the Qubbat al-khazna

The Qubba and the Arabic Bible

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The very first fragment from the Qubbat al-khazna that was presented to the scholarly public in Europe in 1901 as result of Bruno Violet's mission to Damascus was the so-called Violet fragment.[1] This fragment thus became known even before Hermann von Soden gave his account and surveyed the major discoveries at the Prussian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, in 1903.[2] It contains the Greek *Vorlage* and an Arabic translation of Psalm 77:20–31, 51–61 (MT 78). The Arabic column was written in Greek letters and it was precisely for its linguistic importance, resulting from this unusual practice, that it met with great interest.[3] Had the Arabic column been in Arabic script, the fragment would not have received comparable consideration.

Fragments of the Bible had been at the centre of von Soden's mission that led to the European discovery of the Qubba. He had been engaged in producing a new edition of the Greek New Testament in Berlin and, endowed by a patron with

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1 Bruno Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment aus Damaskus", *Orientalistische Literatur-Zeitung* 4, nos. 10–12 (1901), 384–403, 426–441, 475–488.

2 Cf. Hermann von Soden, "Ein Weihnachtsgeschenk des Sultans an die deutsche Wissenschaft", *Die Christliche Welt* 15 (1901), 1247–1249, which presented the cache of documents to a more general readership; and Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 825–830, which introduced it to the Prussian Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

3 See Maria Mavroudi, "Arabic Words in Greek Letters: The Violet Fragment and More", in: *Moyen arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire: Actes du premier colloque international (Louvain-la-Neuve, 10–14 mai 2004)*, Jérôme Lentin and Jacques Grand'Henry, eds., Leuven: Université catholique de Louvain, Institut orientaliste 2008, 321–354; Simon Hopkins, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic Based upon Papyri Datable to before 300 A.H./912 A.D.*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1984, 1–2; Joshua Blau, *A Handbook of Early Middle Arabic*, Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem 2002, 68; Joshua Blau, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic*, Leuven: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO 1967, 1:31 (this grammar generally excludes Bible translations); Rachid Haddad, "La phonétique de l'arabe chrétien vers 700", in: *La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam VIIe–VIIIe siècles: Actes du colloque international (Lyon, Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen; Paris, Institut du monde arabe, 11–15 septembre 1990)*, Pierre Canivet and Jean-Paul Rey-Coquais, eds., Damascus: Institut français de Damas 1992, 159–164; Michael C.A. Macdonald, *Literacy and Identity in Pre-Islamic Arabia*, London: Routledge 2009, 1:100–102, 3:50, 3:68 n 62; Michael C.A. Macdonald, "Old Arabic (Epigraphic)", in: *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, C.H.M. Versteegh, ed., Leiden: Brill 2008, 3:464–477; and F. Corriente, "The Psalter Fragment from the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus: A Birth Certificate of Nabaṭī Arabic", in: *Eastern Crossroads: Essays on Medieval Christian Legacy*, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 1, Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, ed., Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2007, 303–321. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī*, Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110.

the right means, set out to gather new sources for this enterprise in textual criticism.[4] The set of photographs of fragments taken by Violet in Damascus and the set that consisted of the prioritised list of fifty-four fragments prepared by von Soden in December 1908 before the return of the fragments to the Ottomans predominantly contained biblical fragments in various languages.[5] Although biblical fragments in Greek were at the centre of attention in the scholarship of the time, and would remain so for most of the twentieth century, other Bible translations were also studied. In 1905, for example, Friedrich Schulthess presented an edition and study of twenty-one fragments, containing parts of the Old and the New Testaments in Christian Palestinian Aramaic, the language used by the Melkite Christian community in Palestine from around the fifth to the thirteenth century.[6] Despite the linguistic importance of the Violet fragment, however, the collection of biblical fragments does not show a particular interest in the Arabic Bible. Fragments in Arabic seem to have been photographed only for accidental reasons, either because they are palimpsests and contain a Greek undertext, or because they are part of bilingual codices or contain Greek rubrics.

The purpose of this contribution is therefore to direct attention back to the fragments containing Arabic biblical translations. In a recent study I proposed two lines of investigation for the Violet fragment: first, the fragment's material aspects as part of a formerly complete codex; and second, the translation tradition it rep-

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4 Hermann von Soden, *Reisebriefe aus Palästina* [1898], 2nd ed., Berlin: Springer 1901; he describes his work on manuscripts at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem on pp. 56–59 and 66. On his project for a new edition of the Greek New Testament, see his work *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt, hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte*, Berlin: Glaue 1902–1913.

5 On both sets of photographs, see the introduction to this volume. The folder MSS simulata orientalia 6 at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin (viewable online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/) contains fragments from the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy (fols. 1–2) and Esther (fols. 3–4) in Greek, a bilingual Greek–Arabic fragment from the book of Psalms (fols. 1–3), fragments from the Old and New Testaments in Christian Palestinian Aramaic (fols. 5–12), an Arabic fragment from Psalms (fols. 15–16), fragments of the Gospels in Fayyumic (fol. 27), and fragments of the book of Job in Hebrew (fols. 33–42).

6 Andreas Masius (1514–1573), Giuseppe Simone Assemani (1687–1768), Joseph White (1745–1814), Jacob Georg Christian Adler (1756–1834), and others had preceded him in wresting this language from the oblivion of time. In 1893, George Henry Gwilliam published five palimpsests from the Cairo Geniza, which were in the Bodleian Library, today preserved as Bodleian MSS Syr. c. 15–18 (formerly Syr. c. 4); see G.H. Gwilliam, *The Palestinian Version of the Holy Scriptures: Five More Fragments Recently Acquired by the Bodleian Library*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1893. Only three years later, in 1896, Gwilliam – this time joined by Francis Crawford Burkitt and John Frederick Stenning – presented an edition of five additional fragments, two of them again from the Geniza collection in the Bodleian Library and three from St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, containing further hitherto unknown texts in Christian Palestinian Aramaic; see G.H. Gwilliam, F. Crawford Burkitt, and John F. Stenning, *Biblical and Patristic Relics of the Palestinian Syriac Literature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1896. Today they are kept as Bodleian MSS Syr. d. 32–33 (P).

resents, considered in the wider context of Arabic versions of biblical scriptures.[7] Here, two additional fragments in Arabic are presented, one containing parts of the book of Exodus and the other parts of the book of Psalms. In what follows, I furnish a codicological reconstruction, as well as a complete edition, comparing these versions with other known biblical manuscripts in Arabic from the collection of St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai.

Fragment of the Pentateuch: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 + 481/196

The fragment of the Arabic translation of the Pentateuch is found in the photographs BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 + 481/196 at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities; the latter photograph is presented in Figure 1.[8]

Content: Exodus 3:12–22; 4:1–31; 5:1–23; 6:1–30; 7:2–28; 8:1–15

The fragment consists of three bifolia, which form part of an intact quire. All three folios have been palimpsested. As identified by Treu, the undertext contains the Greek version of 1 Kings 18:26–33; 18:41–19:2; 20:11–14; 22:6–10.[9] The fragment is of parchment, and only the ruling for the undertext is visible on the photographs. It is mutilated, with holes, and damaged by water, and contains 15–17 lines per page. The photographs reflect only a part of the manuscript. In his notebook, Violet recounts that the present quire is one of three, with the two additional quires exhibiting the text of Exodus 8:19–14:7 and 32:5–38.[10] Violet did not photograph these quires, possible because they were not palimpsests and therefore did not include a Greek undertext, which was the main focus of his research.

Script: Abbasid book hand[11]

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7 See Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment", in: Ahmad Al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī*, Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110.

8 Images of fols. 1–3 can be seen in BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27. Additional photographs of fols. 2v, 3v, 4r, and 5r are preserved under the shelf-mark BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/196. These are available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

9 Kurt Treu, *Majuskelbruchstücke der Septuaginta aus Damaskus*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1966, 205–210. He dates the undertext to the fifth or sixth century, following the notes in Violet's notebook. On this notebook, see the contribution by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann in this volume.

10 See Treu, *Majuskelbruchstücke*, 206 n. 1.

11 Arianna D'Ottone Rambach studied the palaeography of this fragment; see "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi



Fig. 1: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/196, fols. 2v, 3v, 4r, and 5r, photographed by B. Violet in Damascus in 1901. © BBAW.

Date: eighth or early ninth century (based on the script)

In the following edition, the fragment has been compared to two Sinaitic manuscripts which contain complete translations of the Pentateuch: Sinai MSS Ar. 2 and Ar. 4. Those two translations are based on a Syriac *Vorlage* and have been assigned the sigla Arab^{Syr}1 and Arab^{Syr}2.[12]

sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 261–284. Also see Miriam L. Hjälm's contribution to the present volume.

12 I follow here the accepted system of classifying biblical versions in Arabic; see my *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch: A Comparative Study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Source*s, Leiden: Brill 2015, x; and also Miriam L. Hjälm, *Christian Arabic Versions of Daniel: A Comparative Study of Early MSS and Translation Techniques in MSS Sinai Ar. 1 and 2*, Leiden: Brill 2016, xiii.

The first text type, Arab^{Syr}1 is preserved in Sinai MS Ar. 2, as well as in another copy, Oxford, Bodleian MS Hunt. 186, and on fols. 2v–26r in St Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts MS D 226.[13] The Pentateuch citations in the writings of the Muslim scholars Ibn Qutayba (213/828–276/889) and al-Ṭabarī (224/839–310/923) usually agree with Sinai MS Ar. 2 and thus furnish important evidence allowing the dating of the translation to the second half of the ninth century. In particular, the former quotes the present translation tradition extensively in his works *Taʾwīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth* (Elucidation of Disputed Hadith), *Taʾwīl mushkil al-qurʾān* (Elucidation of Difficult Passages in the Koran), *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* (Choice Narratives), and *Kitāb al-maʿārif* (Book of Noteworthy Information).[14] The citations are used as proof-texts for debated passages in the Koran or in hadith, or to supplement reports on biblical figures transmitted in islamicised form, as for example by Wahb b. Munabbih. In like manner, al-Ṭabarī features quotations that are identical to the version exhibited in Sinai MS Ar. 2 in his most influential compositions: his commentary, known as *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl ay al-qurʾān* (Commentary on the Koran), and his universal history, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (The History of Prophets and Kings).[15]

Arab^{Syr}2 was a popular translation and is found in many manuscripts of diverse geographical provenance, including manuscripts from Egypt and Spain.[16] Arab^{Syr}2 came to be the preferred translation of the Peshitta Pentateuch, to the point that it completely supplanted Arab^{Syr}1.

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13 On these manuscripts, see my *Arabic Versions*, 142–152, and also Miriam Lindgren and Ronny Vollandt, "An Early Copy of the Pentateuch and the Book of Daniel in Arabic (MS Sinai – Arabic 2): Preliminary Observations on Codicology, Text Types, and Translation Technique", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 1 (2013), 43–68.

14 See Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 97–103. Though unidentified, these citations have been treated by Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, Leiden: Brill 1996, 112–117; Franz Altheim, "Die älteste arabische Genesis-Übersetzung", in: *Die Araber in der alten Welt*, vol. 1, Franz Altheim, Ruth Altheim-Stiehl, and Aristide Calderini, eds., Berlin: de Gruyter 1964, 332–343; Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 1, Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 1944, 49; I. Goldziher, "Ueber Bibelcitate in muhammedanischen Schriften", *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 13 (1893), 315–321; Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992, 121–122; Gérard Lecomte, "Les Citations de l'ancien et du nouveau testament dans l'œuvre d'Ibn Qutayba", *Arabica* 5 (1950), 34–46.

15 Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 103–105.

16 For a full list, see Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 245–252.

Sinai MS Ar. 2 (representing Arab^{Syr}1)[17]

Content: Genesis (2r–81r), Exodus (81v–141r), Leviticus (141v–178v), Numbers (179r–216v), Deuteronomy (216v–246v), Daniel (247r–266v)

266 folios (several subsequent folios are missing), corresponds to the present fragment on fols. 85r–92v. Brownish Oriental paper, evidently unruled, because the mise-en-page and number of lines vary; 27 × 16 cm; five bifolia/quire; ordered by ornamented *rūmī* numerals; Georgian letters in the Nushkuri script are used to number the opening and closing folios of each quire; 15–23 lines per page; the wooden binding, possibly later work, measures about 26.5 × 16 cm (smaller than the paper itself).

Script: transitional Abbasid book hand[18]

Date: 328/939–940

Sinai MS Ar. 4 (representing Arab^{Syr}2)[19]

Content: Genesis (1r–64v), Exodus (65r–125v), Leviticus (126v–170v), Numbers (171v–229v), Deuteronomy (230v–280v)

281 folios, corresponds to the present fragment on fols. 68r–74v. The first folios, containing Genesis 1:1–2:10, are missing. Oriental paper, 20 × 14 cm, five bifolia per quire. The quire order is indicated by signatures in the form of spelled-out numbers on the upper margin of each page. 16–19 lines per line, informal *naskh*, sporadically vocalised.

Date: 3 Rajab 353 AH (= 16 July 963 CE)

Scribe: Jibrīl Ibn Mūsā; another manuscript by his hand is Sinai MS Ar. 580[20]

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17 The manuscript is described in detail in Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 245–246. It is available online at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279385755-ms/?sp=1.

18 See the description in Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 143.

19 This manuscript is available online at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279385731-ms/?sp=1.

20 See Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson, *Forty-One Facsimiles of Dated Christian Arabic Manuscripts*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1907, 8–10.

Edition of the fragment[21]

For the sake of clarity verse numbers are indicated in the conventional manner. Diacritical pointing, as well as the use of hamza and vocalisation, which are marked in the manuscripts only sporadically, have also been added in accordance with standard Classical Arabic orthography. In the edition of the texts the following symbols are employed:

[...] An ellipsis within square brackets indicates sections where the text is missing owing to a lacuna or badly faded portions.

[إله] Text in square brackets represents a completion of the missing text on the basis of the compared manuscripts.

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, third fragment, left-hand side	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*Sinai MS Ar. 4*
[fol. 1v] (3:12) [...] أنا أكون	[fol. 85r] (3:12) فقال الله لموسى	[fol. 68r] (3:12) فقال له الله أنا
معك وهذه [... سأ]رسلك فإذا	أنا أكون معك وهذه آية أني سأرسلك	أكون معك وهذه الآية انّي أرستلك
أخرجت الشعب من مصر [...] قدام	فإذا أخرجتهم من أرض مصر يعملون	إنك إذ أخرجت الشعب من مصر
الله [...]	قدام الله على هذا الجبل	يعبدون الله في هذا الجبل
(13) قال موسى لله إن أنا أذهب إلى	(13) قال موسى لله إن أنا أتيت بني	(13) فقال موسى لله هانذا منطلق
بني إسرائيل فأقول لهم إني الله إله	إسرائيل فقلت لهم إن الله الرب إله	إلى بني إسرائيل فأقول لهم الربّ إلاه
آبائكم أرسلني إليكم إن قالوا لي ما اسمه	آبائكم أرسلني إليكم فيقولون لي ما اسمه	آبائكم أرسلني إليكم فيقولون لي ما اسمه
ايش أقول لهم؟	فماذا أقول لهم؟	ماذا أقول لهم؟
(14) فقال الله لموسى قل لهم اسمه	(14) فقال الله لموسى قل لهم أهيا	(14) فقال الربّ لموسى قل لهم
أهيا اشر اهيا [...] إسرائيل أهية	اشر اهي وقال له قل هكذا لبني	الازلي الذي لم يزل وقال هكذا قل
الذي أرسلني إليكم	إسرائيل أن أهية أرسلني إليكم	لبني إسرائيل الازلي أرسلني إليكم

21 The text has hitherto only been partially edited. Hanānū furnished, in an instalment of three parts, an edition of Exodus 4:26–6:16, corresponding to the inner bifolium (fols. 3 and 4) of the quire. See Malak Hanānū, "Min al-tawrah", *Majallat al-Majmaᶜ al-ᶜilmi al-ᶜarabi* 39 (1964), no. 2, 313–334; no. 3, 447–468; no. 4, 646–651. She compares the text of the fragment with the Pentateuch translation of Saadiah Gaon and apparently assumes a Hebrew *Vorlage*. D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti", reedited Exodus 4:26–31, 5:1–4, and 6:11–14, corresponding to fols. 3r and 4v.

(15) وقال الربّ أيضاً لموسى هكذا قل لبني إسرائيل الله ربكم إلاه آبائكم إله آبائكم [fol. 68v] إلاه إبرهيم وإلاه إسحق وإلاه يعقوب إرسلني إليكم هذا اسمي إلى الأبد وهذا ذكري إلى حقب الأحقاب

(15) وقال أيضاً لموسى هكذا قل لبني إسرائيل إن الله إله آبائكم اله إبراهيم إله إسحاق إله يعقوب أرسلني إليكم فهذا اسمي إلى الدهور وذِكْري إلى حقب الأحقاب

(15) وقال الله أيضاً لموسى إن الله إله آبا[ئكم إله] إبراهيم إله إسحاق إله يعقوب أرسلني هذا اسمي إلى الد[هور] وإلى حقب الأحقاب

(16) انطلق فاجمع أشياخ بني إسرائيل وقل لهم الربّ إلاه آبائكم اعتلن لي وإلاه إبرهيم وإسحق ويعقوب يقول لكم لقد ذكرتكم وذكرت ما صنع بكم بمصر

(16) انطلق واجمعهم وقل لهم إن الله إله إبراهيم واله إسحاق وإله يعقوب لتعلن عليَّ لأقول [fol. 85v] لكم قال الله إني قد ذكرتكم وما فُعل بكم في أرض مصر

(16) [...] لأقول لكم إن قال الله إنّي قد [...] وما فُعل بكم في [...]

(17) ورأيت إخراجكم من تبعد أهل مصر إلى ارض الكنعانيين والحثيانيين والأمرانيين والفزاريين والحاواين واليابسانين و إلى الأرض التي تغل السمن والعسل

(17) فقلت إني أريد أن أرفعكم من تعبد أهل مصر إلى أرض الكنعانيين والجاثانيين واليوناسايين والأمورايين والفرزايين والجاويين الأرض التي تفيض لبناً وعسلاً

(17) [...] تعبد أهل مصر إلى أرض لكنعا[نيين...] والأمورايين والفرزايين وال[...] تفيض لبن وعسل

(18) ويسمعون منك وتدخل أنت وأشياخ بني إسرائيل إلى ملك مصر وتقولون له

(18) وسيسمعون كلامك وتلج أنت وشيوخ بني إسرائيل على ملك مصر فتقولون له

(18) وسيسمعون [...]

Sinai MS Ar. 4

Sinai MS Ar. 2

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, first fragment, right-hand side

(3:18) إلاه العبرانيين ظهر علينا فتنطلق الان مسيرة ثلثة ايام في البرية وتذبح الذبائح لله ربنا

(3:18) إله العبرانيين استعلن علينا لنذهب مسيرة ثلاثة أيام في البرية فنذبح لله ربنا

[fol. 1v] (3:18) [...إ]له إسرائيل العبرانين أمرنا أن نذهب مسيرة [ثلا]ثة أيام في البرية فنذبح لله ربنا ذبيحة

(19) وأنا أعلم أن ملك مصر لا يدعكم تخرجون وليس هنا من يده المنيعة

(19) وأنا أعلم أنه لا يترككم ملك مصر تذهبون وليس ملك بيده العزيزة

(19) وقد علم أن ملك مصر لا يتركهم أن يذهبوا وليس بيده العزيزة

(20) فأمد يدي فأضرب المصريين بجميع العجائب التي احدثتها فيهم ومن بعد ذلك يرسلكم

(21) وأجعل للشعب في أعين المصريين رأفة ورحمة واذا انطلقتم فلا تنطلقوا عُطلا صفرا

(22) بل تستعير المرأة منكم من جاراتها وساكنة بيتها حُلى ذهب وفضة وكسوة وألبسوا بنيكم وبناتكم واحتربوا أهل مصر

(4:1) فأجاب موسى وقال [fol. 69r] إنهم لا يصدقونني ولا يقبلون قولي لانهم يقولون لم يتراءى لك الرب

(2) فقال له الرب ما هذا الذي في يدك؟ فقال هي عصا

(3) فقال ألقها في الأرض فألقاها على الأرض فصارت ثعبانا فهرب موسى منه

(4) فقال الربّ لموسى مد يدك فخذ بذنبها فمد يده فأمسكه فتحول في يده عصا

(5) لكي يصدقوا أن الله إله آبائهم قد تراءىلك إله إبرهيم وإله إسحق وإله يعقوب

(20) وأبسط يدي وأضرب كل أهل مصر بكل العجائب التي أصنع بهم ثم يرسلكم بعد ذلك

(21) وأحبب الشعب إلى أهل مصر فإذا ذهبتم فلا تخرجوا من عندهم خائبين

(22) ولتسل المرأة من جيرتها ومن ضيافها حلي فضة وذهب وثياب فألبسوا بنيكم وبناتكم واجردوا أهل مصر

(4:1) فأجاب موسى وقال إنهم لا يصدقوني ولا يسمعون دعائي وهم يقولون لِمَ [fol. 86r] يتتراءى[24] لك الرب

(2) فقال الله له ماذا في يدك؟ فقال هي عصاي

(3) قال له ألقها إلى الأرض فلما ألقاها فإذا هي حية، فأدبر هارباً منها

(4) فقال الله يا موسى ابسط يدك فخذ بذنبها فبسط يده واشتدّ بها وارتدّت عصا في يده

(5) لكي يؤمنوا أن الله ترايا لك إله آبائهم إله إبراهيم إله إسحاق إله يعقوب

(20) فأبسط يدي فأضرب أهل مصر بكل العاجيب العجائب التي أصنع بينهم تراءى[22] بعد ذلك

(21) و[أ]حبب الشعب إلى أهل مصر فإذا خرجتم فلا تخرجون خائبين

(22) وأن تسل المرة جيراتها وسكناها حُلي ذهب وفضة وثياب فألبِسوا بنيكم وبناتكم واجردوا أهل مصر

(4:1) فقال موسى إنهم لا يصدّقوني ويقولون لم يترايا لك الربّ

(2) فقال الله له ما ذا الذي في يدك؟ فقال عصاي

(3) فقال الله له ألقِها[23] على الأرض فلمّا ألقاها إذا بها حية فأدبر موسى هارب فأرض قدامها

(4) فقال الله لموسى ابسط يدك وخُذ بذنبها فبسط يده فأخذها واشتدّ بها فارتدّت عصا في يده

(5) كي يؤمنوا أنه قد ترايا لك الرب إله آبائهم [...]

22 MS: ترايا.
23 MS: ألقيها.
24 MS: يترايا.

(6) وقال الربّ لموسى اردد يدك في ردنك فادخل يده في ردنه ثم اخرجها فإذا هي بيضاء مثل الثلج
(7) فقال له الربّ اردد

Sinai MS Ar. 4

(4:7) يدك في حضنك فردها في حضنه ثم أخرجها من ردنه فإذا هي مثل جسده

(8) فإن هم لم يؤمنوا ولم يسمعوا بالآية الأولى فإنّهم سيؤمنون ويسمعون بالآية ا الأخرى

(9) فإن لم يؤمنوا بالايتين ولم يسمعوا قولك فخذ من ماء الأرض فأصبه على الارض والماء الذي تأخذ من النهر يصير دما في اليبس

(10) فقال موسى للربّ أطلب اليك يا رب لست رجلا ناطقا منذ أمس ومن أول أمس ولا من الوقت الذي كلمت عبدك فيه لأني أرت المنطق عسر اللسان

(11) فقال له الربّ من الذي خلق المنطق للناس ومن الذي خلق الأخرس والأصم والمبصر والمكفوف أليس أنا الربّ الذي خلقت ذلك

[fol. 69v] (12) والآن فانطلق وأنا أكون راقبا للسانك وألقنك ما تنطق به

(6) وقال الله أدخل يدك في جيبك فأدخل يده ثم أخرجها من جيبه فإذا هي بيضاء مثل الثلج
(7) قال الله اردد

Sinai MS Ar. 2

(4:7) يدك فردها ثم أخرجها فإذا هي مثل الأخرى

(8) وقال إن هم لم يؤمنوا ولم يسمعوا ما يقال في الآية الأولى فليصدقوا بالأخرى

(9) وإن لم يؤمنوا بهاتين الاثنين ولم يطيعوك فخذ ماءً من النهر فأهريق على اليابس فيصير دماً

(10) فقال موسى أنا أطلب منك يا رب أني لست رجل بيّن لا أمس ولا أول منه ولا قبل ذلك، ولا منذ كلمت عبدك من أجل أني رجل أرثغي اللسان [fol. 86v]

(11) فقال الله له من جعل للبشر أفواه ، ومن جعل الأصم والأخرس والبصير والأعمى ألست أنا الله

(12) اذهب الآن وأنا أكون معك

(6) قال أيضًا أدخل يدك في جيبك فأدخل يده فإذا هي بيضاء مثل الثلج
(7) ثم قال الله له ردّ

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, second fragment, left-hand side

[fol. 2r] (4:7) يدك [...] فردّها وأخرجها مثل جلده

(8) و[قال إن]لم يؤمنوا [...] أو لم يسمعوا ما يقال بالآية الأولى فليصدّقوا بالآية الأخرى

(9) وإن لم يؤمنوا بهاتين الآيتين ولم يطيعوك فخذ من النهر ماء فألقيها على اليبس فإنّ ذلك الماء يصير دم في اليبس

(10) فقال موسى إنّي أطلب منك يا رب. إنّي رجل أرث اللسان

(11) فقال الله له مَن خلق الفم للبشر ومَن جعل الأصمّ والأخرس والبصير والأعمى أليس أنا الله

(12) انطلق وأنا أكون معك وأعطيك ما تقول بقول

(13) فقال موسى اطلب إليك يا ربّ أرسل في هذه الرسالة غيري

(14) فاشتدّ غضب الله على موسى وقال هذا أخوك هرون اللاواي قد علمت أنه ناطق لسين وهو أيضاً سيلقاك فيراك ويشتد فرحه بك

(15) وأخبره بالأمر ولقنه كلامي وأنا أكون راقبا على فيك وفيه وأعلمكما ما تصنعان

(16)

Sinai MS Ar. 4

(4:16) وهو يكلم الشعب عنك فيكون لك مترجما وأنت تكون له إلاها ومدبرا

(17) وخذ في يدك هذه العصا لتعمل بها الآيات

(18) فرجع موسى منطلقا إلى يثرون ختنه وقال له إني راجع إلى إخوتي بمصر وناظر هل هم أحياء بعد فقال يثرون لموسى انطلق راشدا سالما

(19) وقال الرب لموسى في مدين انطلق راجعا إلى مصر لأن الرجال الذين كانوا يطلبون نفسك قد هلكوا جميعا

(20) فانطلق موسى بامرأته وابنيه وحملهم على حماره وانصرف راجعا إلى مصر وأخذ بيده عصا الرب

(13) [...]

(14) واشتدّ غضب الله على موسى وقال هارون أخاك النصف فأنا أعلم أنه بيّن وهو يتقدمك ويراك ويفرح بك في قلبه

(15) فتقول له يجعل كلامي في فمه وأنا أكون مع فمك ومع فمه وأعطيكما ما تفعلان

(16) وليكن

Sinai MS Ar. 2

(4:16) هو يتكلم مكانك مع الشعوب، ويكون الترجمان وتكون له الإله

(17) فخذ هذه العصا بيدك لتعمل بها الآيات

(18) فرجع موسى إلى يثرون ختنه وقال له ارجع إلى أخوتي بمصر فاعلم أخبارهم بعدي قال يثرون اذهب بسلام

(19) وقال الله لموسى بمدين: ارجع إلى مصر إنه قد مات كل القوم الذين كانوا يريدون نفسك

(20) فساق موسى امرأته وبنيه فحملهم على حمار إلى مصر وأخذ موسى عصا[fol. 87r] الله بيده

(13) فقال له موسى أطلب منك يا رب أرسل من أنت مرسل

(14) فاشتدّ غضب الربّ على موسى وقال له اللوي هارون أخاك النصف فإنّي أعلم أنّه بيّن [...]وسايت [...] قدّامك ويراك ويفرح وا[...]

(15) وأدخل كلامي في فوه وأنا أكون [...] وأعلّمكما ما تفعلان

(16) وليكن

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, second fragment, right-hand side

[fol. 2v] (4:16) [مكا]نك مع الشعب ويكون لك [الت]رجمان وأنت تكون له إله

(17) وخذه وهذه العصا بيدك لتعمل بها الآيات

(18) فرجع موسى إلى يثرون خَتَنِه فقال له إني راجع إلى إخوتي الذين بمصر فأنظر أحياءهم فقال يثرون لموسى اذهب بسلام

(19) وقال الله لموسى في مدين اذهب إلى مصر فقد مات الذي كان يطلب نفسك

(20) فأخذ موسى مرته وبنيه وحملهم على حمار وساق بهم راجع إلى مصر وأخذ موسى عصا الله بيده

(21) وقال الرب لموسى إذا رجعت منصرفا إلى مصر انظر إلى كل آية أجريتها على يدك فاصنعها أمام فرعون وأنا أقسي قلبه فلا يرسل الشعب	(21) وقال الله لموسى إذا أنت رجعت وذهبت إلى مصر فانظر العجائب التي صنعت بيدك فاصنعها قدام فرعون وأنا أقسي قلبه لئلا يرسل الشعب	(21) وقال الله لموسى إذا أنت رجعت ذاهب إلى مصر فانظر العجائب التي صنعت يدك اصنعها بين يدي فرعون وسأقسّي[25] قلبه فلا يرسل الشعب
(22) وقل لفرعون هكذا يقول الربّ ابني بكري إسرائيل [fol. 70r]	(22) وقل لفرعون هكذا يقول الله ابني بكري إسرائيل	(22) فقل لفرعون إنّ ربّنا يقول[26] ابني إسرائيل
(23) أرسل ليعبدني فإن أبيت أن ترسل ابني فإني اقتل ابنك بكرك	(23) قد قلت لك أن ترسل ابني ليعبدني فإن لم ترسل ابني فإني أقتل ابنك بكرك.	(23) فأرسل ابني ليعبدني فإن لم ترسله أقتل ابنك بكرك
(24) فلما صار موسى في الطريق في المبيت فلقيه ملك الربّ وأراد قتله	(24) وبات موسى في الطريق وتقدمه الرب وأراد أن يقتل موسى	(24) وإنّ موسى بات في الطريق فتلقّاه الرب فأراد أن يقاتل موسى
(25) فأخذت صفورا حجرا من حجر الصوان فختنت غرلة ابنيها وأخذت برجله وقالت إن اليوم عرس	(25) فأخذت صفورا طرانة فختنت غُرْلة ابنها وأخذت بقدميه وقالت إني ختنت	(25) فأخذت صفورا مرأته فختفت غُرْلة [ابنها] وأخذت بقدميه وقالت إنّي أختن
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, first fragment, left-hand side*
(4:26) الدم الختان	(4:26) دم الختان	[fol. 3r] (4:26) الدم الختان
(27) وقال الرب لهرون اخرج فتلقى موسى أخاك في القفر فخرج فلقيه في جبل الله في حوريب فعانقه وقبله	(27) وقال الله لهارون انطلق فتقدم موسى أخاك في البرية فانطلق فلقيه في جبل الله خوريب فلقيه	(27) وقال الله لهارون اذهب فتقدم[27] موسى أخاك في البريّة فانطلق فلقيه في جبل الله حوريب فقبّله
(28) فأخبر موسى هرون بجميع قول الرب الذي أرسله فيه وما أمره به من الآيات	(28) وأطلع موسى لهارون على كلام الله ورسالاته وعلى الآيات التي أوصى الله لتعمل	(28) وأطلع موسى وهارون على كلام الله ورسالته والآيات التي أوصاه الله بحملها
(29) فانطلق موسى وهرون فجمعوا أشياخ بني إسرائيل	(29) فانطلقا موسى وهارون وشيوخ بني إسرائيل	(29) فذهب موسى وهارون فجمعوا شيوخ بني إسرائيل

25 MS: وساقسي.
26 MS: يقل.
27 Hanānū] فتلقا.

(30) فقص عليهم جميع ما قال الرب لموسى وجرح جرائح وآيات قدام الشعب

(31) فآمن الشعب وسمعوا أن الربّ قد ذكر بني إسرائيل وابصر إلى خضوعهم وجثا الشعب وسجدوا للربّ

(5:1) ومن بعد هذه الخطوب دخل موسى وهرون وقالا لفرعون هكذا يقول الله ربّ إسرائيل أرسل شعبي يحجون إلى القفر

(2) فقال فرعون ومن الرب حتى اطيعه وأرسل بني إسرائيل لا أعرف الرب ولا أرسل بني إسرائيل

(3) وقال له الرب إلاه العبرانيين اعتلن لنا فنتطلق مسيرة ثلثة ايام [fol. 70v] في القفر ونذبح الذبائح لله ربنا لكيلا ينزل بنا الحرب والوباء

(4) فقال لهما ملك مصر ما بالكما يا موسى وهرون تبطلان الشعب من أعماله انطلقا إلى

(30) وقال هارون [fol. 87v] جميع كلام الله الذي قال لموسى، وصنع الآيات قدام الشعب

(31) وسمعوا أن الله قد ذكر بني إسرائيل ورأى تعبدهم فركع الشعب وسجدوا لله

(5:1) ثم إن موسى وهارون دخلا على فرعون فقالا له لكن يقول الله رب إسرائيل أرسل شعبي ليخدمني في البرية

(2) فقال فرعون من الله الذي أطيع أمره ما أعرف الله ولا أرسل بني إسرائيل فأرسلوا بني إسرائيل

(3) وقالوا له إن إله العبرانيين استعلن علينا أن ننطلق مسيرة ثلاثة أيام فنذبح لله ربنا لكيلا يوجمنا بحرب أو نموت

(4) وقال لهم ملك مصر ولم موسى وهارون يبطلان الشعب من أعمالهم فاذهبوا إلى

(30) وقال هارون لهم كل ما قال الله لموسى وصنع الآيات قدّام الشعب [28]

(31) فسجدوا قدّام الله

(5:1) وإنّ موسى وهارون دخلا على فرعون فقالا له يقول الله ربّ بني إسرائيل أرسل شعبي يحجّوا في البريّة

(2) فقال فرعون من الله الذي قال أطيع أمره

(3) فقال له الله إله العبرانين استعلن[29] علينا أن نذهب مسيرة ثلثة أيام في البريّة فنذبح لله ربنا لكي لا يصيبنا حرب ولا موت

(4) فقال لهم ملك مصر لمَ يا موسى تبطل الشعب من عملهم [...][30]

28 The following passage of verse 30 and the beginning of verse 31 is omitted due to a homoeoteleuton following the word الشعب.

29 Hanānū] استعل.

30 Hanānū reads اذهبا انت وهارون, which cannot be confirmed on the basis of the photographs. Although it is clear that there is text here, it seems to be an extension to the biblical verse.

Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, third fragment, right-hand side*
(5:4) إلى أعمالكما	(5:4) عملكم	[fol. 3v] (5:4) قد ذكرهم وذا تعبدهم[31]
(5) وقال لهم فرعون أيضاً إن شعب الأرض الآنكثير واأما تبطلانهم من أعمالهم	(5) وقال لهم فرعون إن شعب الأرض كثير وأنهما بطلاهم من أعمالهم	(5) فقال فرعون لموسى لا تُبطل الشعب من عملهم
(6) فأمر فرعون يؤمئذٍ ولاة الشعب وكتبتهم وقال لهم	(6) ووصى فرعون برؤوس عماله وعظمائه وكتّابه	(6) وأوصا عمّاله وكتّابه
(7) لا تعودوا أن تعطوا الشعب تبنا لضرب اللبن كما كنتم تعطونهم أمس وأول من أمس بل هم ينطلقون فيجمعون لأنفسهم التبن	(7) ألا تعودوا لأن تعطوا لهم تبناً للَّبِن كأمس وأول منه	(7) أن لا يعطون الشعب تبن كما كانوا يعطونهم وليطلبون هم التبن
(8) وخذوهم بحساب اللبن على ما كنتم تأخذونهم به أمس وأول من أمس ولا تنقصوهم شيئا من عملهم لان بطل ولذلك فيضجون ويقولون ننطلق فنذبح للربّ لإلهنا	(8) بل ألقوا عليهم ذلك ولا [fol. 88r] تنقصوهم من أجل أنهم بطالين وأنهم يقولون نذهب نذبح لإلهنا	(8) ولا ينقصوهم من ضريبتهم اللَّبِنَ شيء لأن لا يقولون نذهب فنذبح لإلهنا
(9) وليشتدّ العمل على الرجال حتى يهتموا به ولا يهتموا بكلام الباطل	(9) لنشدد على القوم العمل وتكرهوهم ولا يقولون كلام الباطل	(9) واشتدّوا عليهم لأن لا يطلبون الباطل
(10) فخرج ولاة الشعب وكتبتهم وقالوا للشعب هكذا يقول فرعون لست بمعطيكم تبنا	(10) فخرجوا أمراء الشعب وكتابهم فقالوا للشعب إن هذا قول فرعون ألا نعطيكم تبناً	(10) وأمر شعبه وكتابه بذلك وأنّ الشعب قال إنّ فرعون قد أمر أن لا تعطون تبن
(11) بل انطلقوا أنتم فاطلبوا التبن من حيث وجدتموه ولا ينقص من عملكم شيء	(11) واذهبوا أنتم فخذوا تبن من حيث شئتم ولا تضيعوا شيء من عملكم	(11) فاذهبوا جيبوا التبن من حيث وجدتم واعلموا أنّه لا يضع لكم شيء من العمل الذي كنتم تعملون

31 This passage also remains unclear.

(12) فتفرق الشعب في جميع أرض مصر في جمع التبن	(12) فتفرق الشعب في كل أرض مصر يجمعون التبن	(12) وافترق الشعب في أرض مصر يطلب التبن
(13) وجعل ولاتهم يلحون عليهم ويقولون ارفعوا الينا العمل كما كنتم ترفعون من قبل حيث كنتم تعطون [fol. 71r] حين فردت كتبة بني إسرائيل	(13) وجعلوا الأمراء يتشددون عليهم ويقولون ارفعوا أعمالكم كما كنتم تعملون حيث كنتم تأخذون التبن	(13) واشتدّ الأمر عليهم وأخذوهم برفع العمل كما كانوا يعملون
(14) وعوقبوا الذين ولاهم عليهم فرعون وقالوا لهم لم لم ترفعوا حساب اللبن كما كنتم ترفعون أمس واول من أمس أيضاً واليوم .	(14) فشقوا الكتاب على بني إسرائيل	(14) وشقّ مسلّطي فرعون على كتبة بني إسرائيل لهم ارفعوا حساب اللَّبِن كما كان
(15) فأتى كتبة بني إسرائيل فشكوا إلى فرعون وقالوا ما بال عبيدك تصنع بهم هذا الصنيع	(15) فاشتكوا إلى فرعون وقالوا لم يُفعل هذا الفعل بعبيدك	(15) وإنّ كتّاب بني إسرائيل شكوا إلى فرعون [وقالوا] عبيدك
(16) ليس يعطى عبيدك تبن	(16) أمرت ألا تعطنا تبناً	(16) لا يعطونا تبن
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, third fragment, left-hand side*
(5:16) ليس يعطى عبيدك تبن وتقولون لنا اضربوا اللبن وعبيدك يضربون وتخطا في أمر شعبك	(5:16) ويقولون لنا اعملوا لنا لبناً [...] بشعبك	[fol. 4r] (5:16) ويقولون إيتونا باللَّبِن كما [كانوا عبيد]ك يضربون
[fol. 71v] (17) فقال لهم فرعون أنتم قوم بطل لذلك تقولون ننطلق فنذبح لربّنا	(17) قال لهم فرعون إنّكم بطالين لذلك تقولون نذهب فنذبح لله	(17) فقال لهم فرعون إنّكم لظالمين منجل ذلك تقولون نذهب فنذبح لله
(18) والآن انطلقوا فاعملوا ولا تعطون تبنا وارفعوا حساب اللبن كما كنتم ترفعون	(18) اذهبوا الآن فاعملوا، ولا تُعْطَوا تبناًوادفعوا حساب اللبن كما كنتم	(18) اذهبوا الآن فاعملوا ولا تُعطون شيء وادفعوا اللَّبِن على حسابه

(19) فبينما رأى الكتبة في بني إسرائيل وقالوا لهم لا ينقصوا من لبنكم بل ارفعوا الينا كما كنتم ترفعون في كل يوم

(20) فلقوا موسى وهرون وهما وقوفا امامهم إذ خرجا من بين يدي فرعون

(21) فقالوا لهما الله يحكم بيننا وبينكما لأنكما حرضتما علينا فرعون وعبيده حتى ضيّق علينا بان يضع السلاح فينا فيقتلنا

(22) فرجع موسى إلى الربّ وقال يا ربّ لم أسأت بشعبك وأضررت به ولم أرسلتني.

(23) لأني ساعة أتيت فرعون فذكرت اسمك اساء إلى الشعب وشق عليهم وأنت فلم تخلص شعبك

(6:1) فقال الربّ لموسى ألا ترى ما أصنع بفرعون لإنّه سيرسلهم بيد عظيمة وبذراع عظيمة يخرجهم من أرض مصر

(2) وكلم الرب موسى وقال له أنا الرب

(3) الذي اعتلنت لإبرهيم وإسحق ويعقوب وتسميت بإله المواعيد ولم أعلمهم اسم الربّ

(4) واثبت لهم عهدي أيضاً ووعدتهم ان اعطيهم أرض كنعان أرض غربتهم التي سكنوها

(19) فزادوهم الكتاب شراً وقالوا [fol. 88r] لا تضيعوا من لبنكم وليكن مثل كل يوم

(20) فرأى بنو إسرائيل موسى وهارون مقبلان إذ خرجا من عند فرعون

(21) فجعلوا يقولون لهما لينظر الله إليكما وليرى أنكما أشقيتما أرواحنا قدام فرعون وعبيده لتخربونا خراباً

(22) فرجع موسى إلى الله وقال يا ربّ لم أسأت بهذا الشعب

(23) ولم تخلصهم

(6:1) فقال الله لموسى ألا ترى ما أفعل بفرعون بيد شديدة وذراع رفيع يخرجون من أرض مصر

(2) وكلم الله موسى وقال إني أنا الله

(3) الذي استعلنت لإبراهيم ولإسحاق وليعقوب إيلشدي الله واسم الله لم ورثهم

(4) ووثقت ميثاقاً أني أعطيكم أرض كنعان منازلهم الذي كانوا فيها

(19) [...] الكتبة بني إسرائيل شرا وقالوا لهم لا ننقصكم من حساب اللَّبِنِ شيئًا

(20) ورآهم موسى وهارون حين خرجوا من عند فرعون

(21) فقالوا لهما ينظر الله إليكما كما شققتم على أرواحنا قدّام فرعون وعبيده ليهلكونا بجورهم

(22) فرجع موسى إلى الله وقال ربّ إنّي قد أسأت بهذا الشعب فلمَ أرسلتنا

(23) قد أتينا فرعون فكلّمناه باسمك فأساء إلى الشعب ولم تخلّصه

(6:1) فقال الله لموسى الآن ترى[32] ما أنا فاعل بفرعون إنّه سيرحلهم[33] بيدٍ شديدة وذراع رفيعة

(2) إنّي أنا الله

(3) استعلنت لإبرهيم وإسحق ويعقوب

(4) وواثقته أنّي أعطيه أرض كنعان ميراثًا

32 MS: ترا.
33 MS: سايرحهم, Hanānū] سايسرحهم.

(5) وقد سمعت ضجيج بني إسرائيل أيضاً من تعبد أهل مصر وذكرت عهدي	(5) وأنا سمعت كرب بني إسرائيل أن مصر يتعبدونهم وذكرت ميثاقي	(5) وقد سمعت كرب بني إسرائيل وتعبّدهم بيدي أهل مصر
(6) ولذلك قلت لبني إسرائيل انا الربّ إلاهكم وأنا مخرجكم من تعبد أهل مصر وأنجيكم من أعمالهم وأخلصكم بيد منيعة	(6) من أجل ذلك، قل لبني إسرائيل إني أنا الله ربكم وأخرجكم من تحت أهل مصر وأخلصكم من أعمالكم وأرفعكم [fol. 89r] بيد شديدة	(6) وأنا أخلصهم بيد شديدة
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, first fragment, right-hand side*
(6:6) وذراع عليه وبأحكام عظيمة	(6:6) وذراع رفيع وبقضايا عظام	[fol. 4v] (6:6) وذراع رفيعة [...]
(7) وأختصكم لي شعبا وأكون لكم إلاها وتعرفون أني أنا الربّ إلاهكم الذي أخرجتكم من تعبد المصريين	(7) وأتخذكم لي شعباً وأكون لكم إلاهاً وتعلمون أني أنا الله إلاهكم الذي أخرجتكم من تعبد أهل مصر	(7) وأتخذكم لي شعبًا وأكون لكم [إلاهاً] لتعلموا أنّي أنا الله الذي أخرجتكم من تعبّد أهل مصر وأدخلتكم إلى الأرض[34]
(8) وأقبل بكم إلى الأرض التي رفعت يدي لأعطيها آبائكم إبرهيم وإسحق ويعقوب فأجعلها لكم ميراثاً إلى الدهر أنا الرب	(8) لأجيء بكم إلى الأرض التي رفعت يدي لأعطيها لإبراهيم وإسحاق ويعقوب فأعطيكموها ميراثاً إني أنا الله	(8) التي أوعدت إبرهيم وإسحق ويعقوب أنّي أعطيهم إيّاها ميراثًا
(9) فقال موسى لبني إسرائيل هذه الأقاويل فلم يسمعوا من موسى ولم يطيعوه من شدة حدتهم [...] الشديد	(9) فقال موسى لبني إسرائيل هذا فقلتم أن تطيعوه من أجل كرب الأنفس من تعبد الشقاء	(9) فقال هذا موسى لبني إسرائيل فلم يطيعوا موسى
[fol. 72v] (10) وكلم الربّ موسى	(10) وكلم الله موسى	(10) وأنّ الله قال لموسى
(11) وقال له انطلق إلى فرعون ملك مصر وقل له ارسل بني اسرائيل من أرض مصر	(11) وقال انطلق فقل لفرعون ملك مصر ليرسل بني إسرائيل من أرضه	(11) انطلق فقل لفرعون ملك مصر يرسل بني إسرائيل من أرضه

[34] The following passage of verse 7 and the beginning of verse 8 is omitted due to a homoeoteleuton following the word الأرض.

(12) وقال موسى للربّ إن بني إسرائيل لا يسمعنوني ولا يطيعوني فكيف يطيعني فرعون وأنا أرث المنطق ثقيل اللسان

(13) فكلم الربّ موسى وهرون وقال لهما وأوصاهما برسالة إلى بني إسرائيل و إلى فرعون ملك مصر ليخرجا بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر

(14) أسماء رؤساء ال آبائهم بنو رويبل

(15) وبنو شمعون يموال ويامين واهاد وياحين وصاحار وشاؤل ابن الكنعانية هذه المخاد شمعون

(16) وهذه اسماء بنى

Sinai MS Ar. 4

(6:16) لاوى في قبائلهم جرشون وقاهات ومراري وكان سنو حياة لاوى مائة سنة وسبعا وثلثين سنة

(17) وبنو جرشون لبني وشمعي في قبائلها

(12) فقال موسى لله إن بني إسرائيل لا يطيعونني فكيف يطيعني فرعون وأنا أرغث اللسان؟!

(13) فكلم الله موسى وهارون، وأوصاهما وأرسلهما إلى بني إسرائيل وإلى فرعون ملك مصر ليخرجوا بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر

(14) وهؤلاء أسماء أبنائهم بنو روبيل بِكْر إسرائيل أخنوخ وأفلوا وحصرون وكرمي هؤلاء قبائل روبيل

(15) بنو سمعان يموائيل [fol. 89v] ويمرين وهدوا وياحين وباخسرومي وشاؤول بن الكنعانية فهؤلاء بنو سمعان

(16) وهؤلاء بنو

Sinai MS Ar. 2

(6:16) لاوي لقبائلهم جرشون وقهات ومروى وحبرون وكانت سنى لاوي مائة وسبعة وثلاثين

(17) [وبنو] جرشون ولبنى وسمعي لقبائلهم

(12) فقال موسى لله إنّ بني إسرائيل لا يطيعوني فكيف يطيعني فرعون وأنا أرت اللسان

(13) فكلّم الله موسى وهارون وأوصاهما إلى بني إسرائيل وإلى فرعون ليخرج بني إسرائيل من مصر

(14) فكلّموا [...] الرؤوس بني روبيل بكر إسرائيل أخنوخ وأفلوا وحصرون وكرمي هذه قبائل روبيل

(15) بني سمعان يموائيل ويمرين واهاد[35] وياحين[36] وصحر وشاؤول بن الكنعانية هؤلاء[37] بنو سمعان

(16) وهذه اسماء بنى

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, second fragment, left-hand side

[fol. 5r] (6:16) لوي وقبائلهم جرشون وقاهت [...] وبلعق وكان سني لوي سبعة وثلثين ومائة[38] سنة

(17) وبني جرشون[39]

35 Hanānū] واهر.
36 Hanānū] وبكين.
37 MS: هولا.
38 MS: مية.
39 The following passage of verse 18 and the beginning of verse 19 is omitted due to a homoeoteleuton following the word جرشون.

(18) وبنو قاهاث عمرم ويصهر وحبرون وعوزيل وكانت سنو حياة قاهاث مائة وثلاثا وثلين سنة

(19) وبنو مراري محلي وموشي هذه اخذاذ بني لاوى في قبائلهم

(20) فتزوج عمرم توكاباد بنت عمه فولدت له هرون وموسى ومريم وكانت سنو حياة عمرم مائة سنة وسبعا وثلثين سنة

(21) وبنو يصهار قرح ونافج وزخري

(22) وبنو عوزيل متشيايال واياليصفن وستري

(23) وتزوج هرون [fol. 72v] إيلشبع بنت عميناداب أخت نحشون فولدت له ناداب وأليعازار وايتامار.

(24) بنو قرح أسير وهلقانا واختسف هذه قبائل قرح

(25) والعازر بن هرون تزوج بامرأة من بنات فنطيل فولدت له فنحاس هذه اسماء أشراف اخذاذ اللوايين في قبائلهم

(26) هذا موسى وهرون اللذان أمرهما الله بإخراج بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر جميع جنودهم ومقاتلتهم

(18) وبني قاهت عمرم وبصهر وحبرون وعوزائيل فجميع السنين التي عاش قاهت مائة وثلاثة وثلاثين سنة

(19) وبني مروى مجلي وموسى. هؤلاء قبائل اللويائيين لقبائلهم

(20) ونكح عمرم يوخابد ابنة عمه فولدت هارون وموسى ومريم فجميع ما عاش عمرم مائة وسبعة وثلاثين سنة

(21) وبنو يصهر قروح اخ وذكري

(22) وبنو رعوائيل ميسائيل وليصفر وستري

(23) فنكح هاورن الياشيع ابنة عميناب أخت [fol. 90r] نحشون فولدت له نادب وأيهو وإلعازر وبثر

(24) وبنو قروح أشير وهلقانا وأجياسف هؤلاء بني قروح

(25) وإلعازر بن هارون امرأته من بنات فطائيل فولدت له فنحاس هؤلاء رؤوس قبائل اللويائيين لقبائلهم

(26) هذان موسى وهارون اللذان قال لهما الله أخرجا بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر كل جنودهم.

(18) وبني قاهت وحبرون وعوزائيل مائة[40] سنة وثلثة وثلثين سنة

om (19)

(20) وأنّ عمرم نكح يوخيد ابنة[41] عمه فولدت هارون ومريم موسى فجميع ما عاش عمرم سبع وثلثين ومائة[42] سنة

(21) وبني يصهر قورح ونفج وزكري

om (22)

(23) وإن هارون نكح أليشيع [...] عمنيداب أخت نحشون فولدت له نادب وأبيهو وأليليعزار وايثمر

(24) وبني قورح[43].

om (25)

(26) وقال الله لموسى وهارون أخرجا بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر

40 MS: مية.
41 MS: ابنت.
42 MS: مية.
43 The following passage in verse 24 and verse 25 is omitted due to a homoeoteleuton following the word قورح.

(27) هما كلما فرعون ملك مصر في إخراج بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر موسى وهرون	(27) هذان قالا لفرعون ملك مصر ليخرج بنو إسرائيل من أرض مصر	(27) وإنّ موسى وهارون قالا لفرعون أخرج بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر
(28) فلما كان في اليوم الذي كلم الله موسى فيه بأرض مصر	(28) تكلم الله مع موسى	(28) فلمّا كان بعد ثلثة أيّام كلّم الله موسى
(29) كلم الربّ موسى وقال له أنا الربّ قل لفرعون ملك مصر جميع ما أمرك به	(29) وقال إني أنا الرب، قل لفرعون ملك مصر كل الذي أقول لك	(29) وقال له إنّي أنا الله الرب فقل لفرعون كلّ ما أقول لك
(30) فقال موسى لله إني أرث المنطق ثقيل اللسان فكيف يطيعني فرعون ويسمع مني .	(30) قال موسى لله أما أنا فأرث اللسان، فكيف يطيعني فرعون	(30) فقال موسى ربّ إنّي رجل رث اللسان فكيف يطيعني فرعون
	(7:1) فقال الله لموسى انظر فإني قد أعطيتك أن تكون إله فرعون ويكون هارون أخاك بيان لك	(7:1) فقال الله لموسى إنّي قد أعطيتك أن يكن إله فرعون ويكن أخاك هارون الذي يكلم فرعون أن يرسل
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, second fragment, right-hand side*
(7:2) ليُرسل بني إسرائيل من أرضه	(7:2) إسرائيل من أرضه	[fol. 5v] (7:2) إسرائيل [...]
(3) فأنا أقسي قلب فرعون فأكثر آياتي وعجائبي بأرض مصر	(3) وأنا أقسي قلب فرعون وأنا أكثر آيات [fol. 90v] وعجائب في أرض مصر	(3) [...] وأنا [...] وعجائب في أرض مصر
(4) فلا يطيعني فرعون ولا يسمع منكما فأمد يدي على مصر فأخرج جميع جنودي وشعبي بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر بالأحكام العظام فيعرف أهل مصر[fol. 73r] أني أنا الرب	(4) ولا يطيعكم فرعون فأجعل يدي في مصر وأخرج [...] وأخرج شعبي بني إسرائيل من أرض مصر بقضايا عظام فيعلم أهل مصر أني أنا الله	(4) ولا يطع فرعون وأجعل يدي [...] وأخرج بني إسرائيل بقضا عظيم ويعلم أهل مصر أنّي أنا الله
(5) اذا ما رفعت يدي على المصريين وأخرجت بني إسرائيل من بينهم	(5) إذا رفعت يدي على أهل مصر وأخرجت بني إسرائيل من بينهم	om (5)

(6) ففعل موسى وهرون كما أمرهما الرب فانتهيا إلى أمره

(7) وكان قد أتى على موسى ثمنون سنة وكان هرون ابن ثلث وثمنين سنة إذ كلما فرعون

(8) فقال الرب لموسى وهرون

(9) إن قال لكما فرعون اظهرا [...] آية وجريحة قل لهرون خذ عصاك فألقها بين يدي فرعون فتصير تنينا عظيما

(10) فأتى موسى وهرون إلى فرعون فصنعا كما أمرهما الرب فألقى هرون عصاه بين يدي فرعون وأمام أخدان فصارت تنينا

(11) فدعا فرعون بالحكماء والسحرة فصنع سحرة مصر أيضاً بسحرهم كذلك

(12) فألقى كل امرئ منهم عصاه فصارت تنانين فابتلعت عصا هرون عصيهم

(13) فقسا قلب فرعون وأبا أن يُرسلهم كما قال الربّ

(14) وقال الربّ لموسى أن قلب فرعون قد قسا وأبا أن يُرسل الشعب

(15) انطلق إلى فرعون بالغداة هو ذا هو يخرج ليغتسل فَقم ازاه على شاطئ النهر وخذ العصا التي تحولت في يدك ثعبانا

(6) ففعل موسى كما قال الله لهما كذلك فعلا

(7) وكان موسى بن ثمانين سنة وكان هارون ابن ثلاثة وثمانين سنة إذ كلما فرعون

(8) وقال الله لموسى وهارون

(9) وقال الله لموسى وهارون إن قال لكما فرعون إتياني بآية فقال قل لهارون خُذ عصاك فألقها قدام فرعون فتكون حية

(10) فدخل موسى وهارون على فرعون وقالا كما أوصاهما الله، وألقى هارون عصاه قدام فرعون وقدام أشرافهم فكانت حية

(11) ودعى فرعون الحكماء والسحرة فصنعوا سحرة فرعون مثل ذلك

(12) وألقى كل رجل منهم عصاه قدام فرعون [fol. 91r] فكُنَّ حيات فابتلعت عصا هارون عصيهم

(13) وقسا قلب فرعون وأبى أن يرسل الشعب كما قال الله

(14) وقال الله لموسى قد اشتد قلب فرعون ولم يشأ أن يرسل الشعب

(15) فانطلق إلى فرعون بالغداة فإنه يخرج إلى الماء فقُم مقابله على ضفة النهر وخُذ العصا التي كانت حية بيدك

(6) ففعل موسى وهارون كما أمرهم الله

(7) وكان هارون ابن ثلث وستين سنة حين كلّم فرعون

(8) وقال الله لهما

(9) قال فرعون ايتوني بآية فقل لهارون خُذ عصاك وألقيها قدّام فرعون فتكون حيّة

(10) ودخلا على فرعون وألقاها هارون عصاه فصارت حيّة قدّام فرعون وسحرة أهل مصر

(11) وإنّ السحرة صنعوا مثل ذلك

(12) وألقى كل رجل منهم عصاه قدام فرعون فكُنَّ حيات فابتلعت عصا هارون عصيهم

(13) واشتدّ قلب[44]

(14) فرعون فلم يرسل بني إسرائيل

(15) وقال الله لموسى اذهب غدا إلى فرعون فإنّه يخرج إلى الماء فقُم مقابله على شط النهر وخُذ العصا بيدك

44 The following passage in verse 13 and the beginning of verse 14 is omitted due to a homoeoteleuton following the word قلب.

(16) وقل إن الله ربّ العبرانيين أرسلني اليك يقول أرسل شعبي حتى يَعبدني في البرية لإنّك حتى الآن لا تسمع ولا تطيع	(16) وقل له إن الله إله العبرانيين أرسلني إليك ويقول لك أرسل شعبي يعبدوني في البرية وأنت لم تطعني حتى الآن	(16) وقل له إنّ الله الرب إله العبرانين أرسلني إليك أن ترسل شعبه ليعبدوه في البريّة فإن لم تطيع
(17) هكذا يقول الربّ بهذا تعلم إن ي أنا الربّ هانذا أضرب [fol. 73v] ماء النهر بالعصا التي في يدي فتتحول وتصير دما	(17) فهكذا يقول الله بهذه تعلم أني أنا الله أني أضرب بالعصا التي يدي النهر فيتحول الماء فيكن دماً	(17) يقول الله إنّي أضرب بعصاي النهر فيكن دم في جميع مصر
(18) وتموت	(18) فيموت	(18) ويموت
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26, first fragment, left-hand side*
(7:18) الحيتان التي في النهر ويُنتن النهر وينضوا أهل مصر على شرب الماء	(7:18) السمك الذي في النهر وينتن الماء ويقلق أهل مصر من النهر	[fol. 6r] (7:18) السم[ك...] الماء ولا يُشرب
(19) وقال الربّ لموسى مر هرون لأن يأخذ عصاه وارفع يدك على ماء المصريين على أنهارهم وعلى غدر النهر و أحيامهم وعلى دواليب مياههم فتنحوا دما فيصر الدم في جميع أهل مصر الأرض والخشب والحجارة	(19) وقال الله لموسى قل لهارون أخاك خذ عصاك فارفع يدك على ماء أهل مصر على أنهارهم وعلى قنيهم وآجامهم وعلى جميع [fol. 91v] أمياههم فيكون دما ويكون الدم في أرض مصر في الخشب والحجارة	(19) ويكن[45] الدم في الخشب والحجارة
(20) فصنع موسى وهرون كما أمرهما الربّ فرفع هرون العصا التي في يده فضرب بها ماء النهر تجاه فرعون وازاء عبيده فتحول جميع ماء النهر فصار دما	(20) ففعل موسى وهارون كما أوصاهما الله بفرعون بالعصا التي في يدي هارون وفرعون ينظر هو وعبيده فكان ماء النهر دماً	(20) ففعل هارون كما أمره الله فرفع موسى العصا فضرب به النهر وفرعون ينظر هو وعبيده وصار ماء النهر دمًا

45 The beginning of the verse is omitted in the fragment.

(21) وماتت الحيتان التي في النهر وأصل النهر وأنتن فلم يقدر أهل مصر على شرب الماء من الدم فصار الدم في جميع أرض مصر

(22) فعمل مثل ذلك سحرة مصر بسحرهم وقسا قلب فرعون فلم يطعهما كالذي قال الربّ

(23) فانصرف فرعون فدخل إلى منزله ولم يفكر في شيء من ذلك فتهاون به

(24) فاحتفر المصريون بأجمعهم حول النهار أبارا ليشربوا لأنهم لم يقدروا على الربّ من ماء النهر

(25) فكملت سبعة ايام من بعد ما ضرب الربّ النهر

(26) وقال الرب لموسى انطلق إلى فرعون وقل له هكذا يقول الربّ أرسل شعبي حتى يعبدني

(27) فإن أبيت أن تُرسله هانذا أضرب جميع حدودك بالضفادع فتدب الضفادع من النهر

(28) فيصعدن فيدخلوا [fol. 74r] إلى بيتك ومطوتك وفي مبيتتك وعلى أريكتك وأسرتك وفي بيوت عبيدك وشعبك وفي مخادعك ومعاجنك

(29) وتدب الضفادع عليك وعلى جميع شعبك

(21) فمات السمك الذي في الماء وأنتن النهر كله فلم يستطع أهل مصر يشربوا من ماء النهر لأنه كان دماً في كل أرض مصر

(22) وفعل ذلك سحرة مصر بسحرهم وغلظ قلب فرعون ولم يفعل كما أمر الله

(23) ورجع فرعون فدخل بيته ولم يبالي

(24) وحفروا أهل مصر كلهم حول النهر ليشربوا ماء من أجل أنهم لا يستطيعوا يشربوا من ماء النهر

(25) وكملت سبعة أيام من بعد ما ضرب الله

(26) وقال الله لموسى اذهب إلى فرعون فقل هكذا يقول الله أرسل شعبي ليعبدوني

(27) وإن لم تشأ أن ترسلهم فإني سأضرب تخومك [fol. 92r] بالضفادع

(28) فيحرك الماء الضفادع فيصعدن فيدخلن في بيتك ومجلسك وإلى مضجعك وإلى فراشك وعبيدك وشعبك وفي مخادعك وبيوت طعامك

(29) فيصعدن الضفادع على كل شعبك

(21) ونتن ومات السمك ولم يعد أحد يشرب منه

(22) وفعلت السحرة كذلك فغلظ قلب فرعون وأنا يفعل كما أمره الله

(23) [...] فرعون دخل بيته ولم يُبالِ

(24-25) وإن أهل مصر حفروا حول النهر ليخرجون ماء يشربوه فلم يقدروا عليه سبعة أيام [46]

(26) وإنّ الله قال لموسى قُل لفرعون يرسل شعبي ليعبدوني

(27) وإنك إن لم تفعل أضرب تخومك بالضفادع

(28) وأدخلن في بيتك ومجلسك وفراشك

(29) وفي شعبك كله

46 Verses 24 and 25 seem to be conflated.

(8:1) فقال الربّ لموسى قل لهرون أخيك أن مد يدك بعصاك على الأنهار وعلى الدواليب وعلى الآجام فأصعد الضفادع على أرض مصر	(8:1) وقال الله لموسى قل لهارون أخاك ارفع يدك بعصاك على الأنهار والأمياه والآجام وأصعد ضفادع فتغطي كل أرض مصر	(8:1) وقال الله لموسى قُل لهارون يرفع عصاه على الأنهار والآجام فأصعد الضفادع في جميع مصر
(2) فرفع هرون يده على مياه المصريين فأصعد الضفادع ففسدت أرض مصر	(2) فرفع هارون يده على كل أمياه أهل مصر فصعدت ضفادع فغطت كل أرض مصر	(2) فرفع هارون يده على ماء [...] الضفادع في جميع مصر
(3) فصنع	(3) ففعل	(3) وأن [...]
Sinai MS Ar. 4	*Sinai MS Ar. 2*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, third fragment, right-hand side*
(8:4) ودعا فرعون موسى وهرون وقال لهما صليا بين يدي الربّ فيصرف الضفادع عني وعن شعبي حتى أرسل الشعب فيذبحوا بين يدي الربّ	(8:4) ودعا فرعون هارون وموسى وقال لهما صلوا قدام الله فتذهب الضفادع عني وعن شعبي وأنا أرسل الشعب فيذبحون قدام الله	[fol. 6v] (8:4) وهارون وقال لهما [...] الضفادع وأنا أرسل الشعب [...]قدام الله
(5) فقال موسى لفرعون سل وقتا اصلي عليك فيه وعلى عبيدك وشعبك فيصرف ربّ الضفادع عنك وعن بيتك	(5) فقال موسى لفرعون سلني متى أصلي عليك وعلى عبيدك وشعبك	(5) فقال موسى لفرعون ترسل سلني حين أصلّي الله [...] الضفادع
(6) فقال له غدا فقال له موسى سيكون كما سألت فتعلم أنه لا إله غير إلاهنا	om (6)	(6) فقال فرعون غدا فقال [...] كما قلت لك تعلم أن ليس إله مثل إلهنا [...]
(7) فتنصرف الضفادع عنك وعن بيتك وعن عبيدك وعن شعبك ما خلا الضفادع التي في النهر فانها تبقى	(7) فتذهب [fol. 92v] الضفادع عنك وعن بيتك وعن شعبك وعبيدك إلا ما يبقى في النهر	(7) وذهب الضفادع إلا ما يبقى في النهر[47]
(8) فخرج موسى وهرون بين يدي فرعون فصلى موسى بين يدي الربّ من أجل أمر الضفادع التي اخرج الربّ لفرعون	(8) فخرج موسى وهارون من قدام فرعون فصلى موسى قدام الله من أجل الضفادع التي أغشى فرعون	

47 The following verses are omitted.

[fol. 74v] (9) فاستجاب الربّ لموسى فماتت الضفادع في الدور والبيوت فجمعوها	(9) ففعل الله كما صلى موسى وأمات؟؟ الضفادع من البيوت والدور والمزارع	
(10) أنابير أنابير فأصلت الأرض وانتنت . (11) فرأى فرعون والراحة وجفا قلبه فلم يسمعهما ولم يطعهما كالذي قال	(10) فجمعوا تلالاً فأنتنت الأرض (11) ورأى فرعون أنه قد استراح وغلظ قلب فرعون ولم يطع قول الله كما قال الله	(11) [...] فرعون أنّه قد استراح وغلظ قلبه ولم يطع [...]
(12) فقال الربّ لموسى أمر هرون ليرفع عصاه فيضرب ثرى الأرض فيكون القُمّل في جميع ارض مصر	(12) وقال الله لموسى قل لهارون ارفع عصاك فاضرب الأرض بها تراب الأرض فيكون قملاً على أرض مصر كلها	(12) فقال الله لموسى قل لهارون يرفع يده فليقترب بها الأرض فيكون قمل في جميع أرض مصر
(13) ففعل كذلك فرفع هروه عصاه بيده فضرب تراب الأرض فدب القُمّل في الناس والبهائم وصار جميع ثرى الارض قمل في جميع أرض مصر	(13) ففعل كذلك ورفع هارون يده بعصاه فضرب تراب الأرض فصار قملاً في السهل والدواب وكان كل تراب الأرض قملاً في أرض مصر	(13) ففعل [...]هارون يده فضرب تراب الأرض الأرض فصار قمل [...]جميع مصر
(14) فصنع مثل ذلك السحرة بسحرهم فلم يقدروا أن يصرفوا القمل فدب القمل في الناس والبهائم	(14) وفعل السحرة مثل ذلك بسحرهم ولم يستطيعوا أن يذهبوا بالقمل وكان القمل في كل البشر والدواب	(14) وإن السحرة فعلوا مثل ذلك بسحرهم فلم يستطيعوا أن يذهبوا بالقمل وكان القمل في الدواب والبشر
(15) فقالت السحرة لفرعون إنّ هو إلا فعل ربّ العلمين فقسا قلب فرعون ولم يُطعهما كما قال الربّ	(15) وقال السحرة لفرعون إنا لا نستطيع نذهب القمل وقسى قلب فرعون فلم يطعهم كما قال الله	(15) وقالت السحرة لفرعون إنّ هذا [...] من الله وأنّ الله فقسا قلب فرعون فلم

Discussion of the text

While the Qubba fragment exhibits a very dissimilar text type when compared to Sinai MS Ar. 4, it agrees to a large degree with Sinai MS Ar. 2. It shows only minor variations from the latter and may thus be considered an early witness to Arab^{Syr}1 – the translation was, therefore, done on the basis of the Syriac Peshitta.[48] In fact,

48 As has already also been suggested by D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti", 284 n. 2.

if the proposed dating is correct, this fragment constitutes not only the oldest surviving exemplar of Arab^{Syr}1, but the oldest fragment of the Pentateuch in Arabic of any provenance.

The fragment, and in particular the fact that it was found in the Qubba, adds further evidence that this version emerged and was predominantly copied in the region of Damascus.[49] Sinai MS Ar. 2 was acquired in Damascus and only subsequently bequeathed to St Catherine's in the eleventh century by Solomon, Bishop of Sinai.[50] The provenance of Bodleian MS Hunt. 186, the only other complete manuscript containing this version, is not certain. However, as it comes from the collection of Robert Huntington (1637–1701), which he assembled during his service with the Levant Company in Aleppo, it is likely to have a Syrian origin, like many other codices that Huntington brought to Oxford. Similarly the manuscript which contains part of this version that is today in St Petersburg seem to have a connection with Damascus – it was copied from a *Vorlage* prepared by the scribe Poimēn of Damascus (Bīmīn al-Dimashqī).[51]

There is a noticeable tendency in the Qubba fragment to shorten the text. It omits entire verses, and also avoids the repetition of roots, eliminates redundant parts of the verse, and contracts biblical pleonasms. Several slips of pen, due to homoeoteleuta, add to the shortened character.

Fragment of Psalms: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136–137

The fragment of the Arabic translation of the book of Psalms is found in the photographs BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136–137, taken by Violet in Damascus in 1901; the second of these photographs is in Figure 2. The fragment is also seen in the photographs taken in Berlin in 1909, now found as folios 15 and 16 of Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6.[52]

Content: Psalms 118 (MT 119):55–67, 69–78, 104–128; 119 (MT 120):1–7; 120 (MT 121):1–2, 5–8; 121 (MT 122):1–4; 123 (MT 124):8; 124 (MT 125):1–5; 125 (MT 126):1–6

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49 We know of other translations that were produced there. In the ninth century, Bishr Ibn al-Sirrī produced a translation of and commentary on Acts and the Catholic and Pauline Epistles. His version is found in Sinai MS Ar. 151, which was copied in 867 CE in Damascus for the benefit of Bishr's spiritual brother Sulaymān.

50 See Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 148–150.

51 Institute of Oriental Manuscripts MS D 226 was copied in the sixteenth century, although it preserves in the Penteuch the colophons of the exemplar from which it was copied; see Vollandt, *Arabic Versions*, 261–262.

52 The photographs are available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/ and http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000074F100000000 respectively.



Fig. 2: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137, fols. 3v, 6r (first fragment) and fols. 1v, 8r (second fragment), photographed by B. Violet in Damascus in 1901. © BBAW.

The fragment consists of two bifolia. They form part of an originally intact quire, in which they can be placed with one missing bifolium between them and one missing in the centre of the quire. This can be calculated on the basis of the missing text. Thus it can be reconstructed as the first and third bifolia, if the quire originally had four bifolia; or as the second and fourth bifolia, if the quire had

originally five bifolia. If we compare the fragment's quire structure to the two manuscripts discussed below – Sinai MSS Gr. 34 and 35 – the former appears more likely. The fragment is of parchment; ruling can be detected for the text block only; it measures 12.5 × 22 cm (one folio 11 cm),[53] and is mutilated (in particular in the upper corners of the fragment), with holes in places, and is stained. It contains 11–13 lines per page. The chapter rubrics are given in Greek, and consist of the first words of the psalm.

Script: Abbasid book hand (New Style)[54]

Date: tenth century CE

In the following edition, the fragment has been compared to two Sinaitic manuscripts which contain complete Greek and Arabic bilingual manuscripts of the book of Psalms, Sinai MSS Gr. 34 and 35.[55] In Sinai MS Gr. 36, which contains the same text, the passage covered in the fragment has not survived.

Sinai MS Gr. 34[56]

Content: blank (2r); Arabic introduction to the book of Psalms, ending with the Lord's Prayer (2v–4r); Greek text with Arabic translation (4v–232v), arranged in two columns with the Arabic to the right

232 folios, corresponds to the present fragment on fols. 186r–197r. Ruled parchment, 19 × 18.5 cm; Greek: 23–26 lines per page; Arabic: 13–16 lines per page; iron gall ink;[57] four bifolia/quire, following the Gregory Rule and opening with the hair side; quire signatures on the opening folio in the upper right margins in the form of Greek numerals. More recent quire signatures on the last folio were

53 The measurements are taken on the basis of the ruler seen in the images preserved today in the Staatsbibliothek.

54 See the contribution of Miriam L. Hjälm in this volume.

55 There is a clear textual affinity between the present fragment from the Qubbat al-khazna and a number of bilingual copies of the book of Psalms; compare my *Arabic Versions*, 57, where I indicate that these manuscripts contain the same translation. See also Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic", where I connect the known copies with a number of further manuscripts, including the Violet fragment (see below). For more on this issue, see Alexander Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra to Abed Azrié: The Arabic Bible in Context", in: *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, Miriam L. Hjälm, ed., Leiden: Brill 2017, 20: "Excursus B1".

56 Viktor Gardthausen, *Catalogus codicum graecorum sinaiticorum*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1886, 11; Kenneth W. Clark, ed., *Checklist of Manuscripts in St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai, Microfilmed for the Library of Congress, 1950*, Washington, DC: Library of Congress 1952, 1. Compare also Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 21. The manuscript itself can be accessed at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271077397-ms/?sp=1.

57 Based on a multispectral analysis that I carried out *in situ* in March 2017.

added in Arabic *abjad*. Has pen trials on the inside cover, and on fol. 1r. The cardboard cover was made from discarded parchment folios that were glued together, with a layer of leather on the outside.

Script: *maiuscula ogivalis inclinata* and Abbasid book hand

Date: copied in Mar Saba, December 929 or 930 CE[58]

Sinai MS Gr. 35[59]

Content: Greek text with Arabic translation (1r–207v), arranged in two columns with the Arabic to the left

207 folios, corresponds to the present fragment on fols. 177v–189r. Ruled parchment, 24 × 16 cm; Greek: 30–31 lines per page; Arabic: 19–21 lines per page; iron gall ink. Fols. 1–24 and 33–44 are later replacements and exhibit unskilled writing; on these, the Arabic faces inside, whereas in the rest of the codex it is always on the left. The original codex has four bifolia/quire, following the Gregory Rule and opening with the hair side. Quire signatures are found on the last folio, on the lower right margin, in Greek. New quires are marked by an asterisk on the upper left margin. The original wood cover is intact. Further folios of this manuscript, from the part that was later replaced, have been identified by Binggeli as the undertext of Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS L 120 sup. (bifolia 125/132 and 139/134).[60]

Script: *maiuscula ogivalis inclinata* and Abbasid book hand

Date: ninth century CE

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58 On the dating, see Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra," 21 n. 42.

59 Gardthausen, *Catalogus*, 11; Clark, *Checklist*, 1. The manuscript is available online at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271077452-ms/?sp=1

60 André Binggeli, "Les Trois David, copistes arabes de Palestine aux 9e–10e s", in: *Manuscripta graeca et orientalia: Mélanges monastiques et patristiques en l'honneur de Paul Géhin*, André Binggeli, Anne Boud'hors, and Matthieu Cassin, eds., Leuven: Peeters 2016, 79–117.

Edition of the fragment[61]

Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136, first fragment, left-hand side*
[fol. 177v] (118:56) وحفظت	[fol. 186r] (118:56) فحفظت	[fol. 1r[62]] (118:56) [...]
ناموسك هذا صار لي لأني طلبتُ	ناموسك هذا كان لي لأني أتعبت	ناموسك [...] حقوقك
حقوقك	عدلك	
(57) نصيبي الربّ قلت لأحفظ	(57) قسمي الربّ قلت أن أحفظ	(57) نصيبي الربّ [...]
ناموسك	ناموسك	
(58) طلبتُ وجهَكَ من كلّ قلبي.	(58) طلبتُ وجهَكَ بكلّ قلبي ارحمني	(58) طلبتُ وجهَكَ من كلّ قلبي
ارحمني مثل قواك	كقواك	ارحمني
(59) تفكّرت في طرُقي وأصرفت	(59) تفكّرت في طرُقي وأصرفت	(59) تفكّرت في طرُقي[63] وأصرفت
رجلي إلى شهاداتك	رجلي في شهاداتك	رجلي [...] شهاداتك
(60) تهيات ولم أتعربس لأحفظ	(60) تهيأت ولم أتعربس لأحفظ	(60) تهيَّأتُ ولم أتعربس لأحفظ[64]
وصاياك	وصاياك	وصاياك
(61) حبال الخُطاة اشتبكت فيَّ ولم	(61) حبال الخُطاة اشتكبت فيَّ ولم	(61) حبال الخُطاة اشتبكت فيَّ ولم
انسا ناموسك	أنسا ناموسك	أنسا ناموسك
(62) في نصف الليل كنت انتبه	(62) في نصف الليل كنت أستيقظ	(62) في نصف الليل كنت أستيقظ
لأشكرك على احكام برّك	لأعتود لك على أحكام عدلك	لأشكرك[65] على أحكام برّك
(63) أنا شريك لجميع أتقياك والذين	[fol. 187r] (63) شريك أنا لجميع	(63) أنا شريك جميع أتقياك والذين
يحفظون وصاياك	أتقياك والذين يحفظون وصاياك	يحفظون وصاياك

61 Neither this fragment, nor any other witnesses of the translation exhibited in it (see below), have hitherto been edited, with the exception of the Violet fragment (Psalm 77 (MT 78):20–31, 51–61). See Al-Jallad, *Damascus Psalm Fragment*, for a new edition of the text of the Violet fragment in Greek letters, and Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic", for a transcription into Arabic.

62 For practical reasons, I have followed in the foliation of the edited fragments the reconstruction suggested above, i.e. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136 as the first bifolium and BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137 as the third, in an original quire structure of four bifolia. It does of course remain possible that the quire originally contained five bifolia.

63 The word is vocalised with a *ḍamma*.

64 The word had been emended to لأن أحفظ in the fragment.

65 The word had been emended to لأن أشكرك in the fragment.

(64) من رحمتك يا ربّ	(64) امتلت الأرض يا ربّ رحمتك	(64) امتلأت الأرض يا ربّ رحمتك
[fol. 178v] امتلت الارض حقوقك علّمني	علّمني حقوقك	علّمني حقوقك
(65) جود صنعت إلى عبدك يا ربّ مثل كلمتك[66]	(65) صالحا فعلت مع عبدك يا ربّ ككلمتك	(65) جود صنعتَ إلى عبدك يا ربّ مثل كلمتك
(66) طيّبًا وأدبًا ومعرفه علّمني لأنّي وصاياك صدّقت	(66) صالحا وأدبًا ومعرف علمني فأنّي قد أتقيت قولك	(66) علّمني طيّبًا وأدبًا ومعر[فة] لأنّي صدّقت قولك
(67) قبل أن اذل أنا اذنبت منجل ذلك حفظت وصاياك	(67) قبل أن أتصنع أنا اذنبت لذلك حفظت وصاياك	(67) أنا أذنبت قبل أن [...]
Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137, second fragment, right-hand side*
(118:69) كثر عليّ ظلم المتعظمين وأنا بكل قلبي أفحص وصاياك	(118:69) كثر عليّ ظلم المستكبرين وأنا بكل قلبي أفحص وصاياك	[fol. 1v] (118:69) [...] عليّ ظلم [...] بكلّ قلبي أفحص وصاياك
(70) تجبن مثل اللبن قلبهم وأنا في ناموسك هَذَذت	(70) [fol. 187v] تجبن مثل اللبن قلبهم وأنا هَذَذت ناموسك	(70) [...] اللبن قلبهم وأنا هَذَذت في [نامو]سك
(71) [fol. 179r] خير لي انك واضعني لكيما ان أتعلّم حقوقك	(71) خيرة أنّك أذلَلتَني لكيما أتعلّم عدلك	(71) أخير لي أنّك أذلَلتَني لكي أن أتعلّم حقوقك
(72) ناموس فاك أخير لي من آلاف ذهب وفضة	(72) خيره لي ناموس فمك أفضل من آلاف ذهب وفضّة	(72) ناموس فاك أخير لي من آلاف ذهب وفضّة
الفصل الثاني		
(73) يداك صنعتني وَجَبَلتني فهمني وأتعلم وصاياك	(73) يداك صنعتني وَجَبَلتني أفهمني فأتعلم وصاياك	(73) يداك صنعتني وَجَبَلتني فهّمني وأتعلمَ وصاياك
(74) أتقياكَ يُبَصّروني ويفرحون لاني كلامك رجوت	(74) أتقياكَ يعاينوني فيفرحوا لأنّي على كلامك توكلت	(74) أتقياكَ يُبَصّروني ويفرحون لأنّي رجوت كلامك
(75) عرفت يا ربّ الذي في بِرّ قضاياك وبالحق وأضعتني	(75) علمت يا ربّ أنّ احكامك عدل وبحق أذللتني	(75) عرفت يا ربّ أنّ قضاياك عدلٌ وبالحقّ أذللتني

66 The order of verses is reversed in the manuscripts. Verse 65 follows verse 66.

(76) تصير رحمتك لعزائي مثل قولك لعبدك	(76) فلتكون رحمتك لعزائي كقولك لعبدك	(76) تصير رحمتك لعزائي مثل قولك لعبدك
(77) تأتيني رأفتك واحيا	(77) فلتأتيني رأفتك فأحيا فأن	(77) تأتيني رحمتك وأعيش لأن
[fol. 179v] لان ناموسك لي هذّ	[fol. 188r] ناموسك قُرّاتي	[نا]موسك لي هذّ
(78) ليخزوا المتعظمين لأنّهم نظلم أخطؤوا الي وأنا أهتمّ بوصاياك	(78) يخزون المستكبرين أنهم ظلم اتمروا فيّ وأنا أهتمّ بوصاياك	(78) ليخزوا المتعظّمين لأنّهم [نظلم] أخطؤوا إليّ وأنا أهتمّ بوصاياك.
Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136, second fragment, left-hand side*
[fol. 181r] (118:104) وصاياك فهمت منجل ذلك أبغضت جميع طريق الظلم	[fol. 189v] (118:104) فهمت لذلك أبغضت كل طريق ظلم	[fol. 3r] (118:104) [...] طريق الظلم
(105) ناموسك سراج لرجلي وضوء لسبيلي	(105) سراجاً لرجلي ناموسك ونور لسبيلي	(105) ناموسك [...] لسبيلي
(106) حلفت وأثبتُّ أن أحفظ[fol. 181v] حكم بِرّك	(106) حلفت فأقمتُ لأحفظ احكام عدلك	(106) حلفت وأثبتُّ أن أحفظَ حكم [...]
(107) تواضعت جدًّا يا ربّ احيني مثل كلمتك	(107) تضعضعت جدًّا يا ربّ احييني ككلمتك	(107) تواضعت يا ربِّ جدًّا أحيِني مثل كلمتك
(108) شَأ يا ربّ بمشية فمي وأحكامك وعلّمني	(108) مشية فمي أشو ياربّ وعلّمني احكامك	(108) شَأ يا ربِّ بمشية فمي وعلّمني أحكامك
(109) نفسي في يديك في كل حين وناموسك لم أنسا وضعوا لي الخُطاة فخًّا ولم أطغا من وصاياك	(109) نفسي في يدك كل حين وناموسك لم أنسا جعلوا الخُطاة لي فخّ ومن وصاياك لم أطغا	(109) نفسي في يدك في كلّ حين وناموسك لم أنسا وضَعتْ لي الخُطاة فخًّا ولم أطغا من وصاياك
(110) ورثتُ شهاداتك إلى الأبد لأنّها سرور قلبي	(110) ورثتُ شهاداتك للأبد لأنّها سرور قلبي	(110) ورثتُ شهاداتك إلى الأبد لأنّها سرور قلبي
(111) ميّلتُ قلبي لأصنع حدودك الي الأبد منجل المجازاة	(111) ميّلتُ قلبي لأفعل عدلك الأبد منجل المجازاة	(111) ميّلتُ قلبي لأصنع حقوقك إلى الأبد منجل المُجازاة
[fol. 182r] (113) أبغضت جايزي الناموس وناموسك أحييت	[fol. 190r] (113) أبغضت المخالفين وأحببت ناموسك	(113) أبغضت جايزي على الناموس وأحببت ناموسك

(114) أنت عوني وناصري وعلي كلامك توكلت	(114) معيني وناصري أنت وعلي كلامك توكلت	(114) وأنت معيني وناصري وعلى كلامك توكّلتُ
(115) أميلوا عني يا أهل المكر فأفحص وصايا إلهي	(115) حيدوا عنّي أيها الأشرار فأفحص عن وصايا إلهي	(115) أميلوا عنّي يا أهل المكر فأفحص وصايا إلهي
(116) انضرني مثل كلمتك وأحييني ولا تخزيني من رجائي	(116) اعضني كقولك واحييني ولا تخزيني من رجائي	(116) انصرني[...]
Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137, first fragment, right-hand side*
(118:118) أفسلت جميع الذين يتباعدون من حقوقك لأن فكرهم ظالمة	(118:118) أفسلت جميع المبتعدين عن وصاياك فإن فكرهم ظالم	(118:118) [fol. 3v]
(119) غدرة حسبت جميع [fol. 182v]خُطاة الأرض منجل ذلك أحبَبتُ شهاداتك	(119) غدرة حسبت جميع خُطاة الأرض لذلك أحبَبتُ شهاداتك	[...] من حقوقك لأنّ [...] ظالم (119) غدرة حسبت جميع خُطاة [الأرض] منجل ذلك أحبَبتُ شهادَاتك
(120) أعرش من خوفك لحمي لأنّي خشيت من قضاياك صنعت عدل وبرّ لا تسلمني للذين يظلموني	(120) انحلّ من تقواك لحمي فإني من أحكامك خشيت [fol. 190v] صنعت حكم وعدل لا تسلمني للذين يظلموني	(120)[67] أعرش من تقواك لحمي لأنّي خشيتُ من قضاياك صنعتَ عدلًا وبرًّا لا تسلِّمني للذين يظلموني
(122) انتظِر عبدك بالخير ولا يغوني المتعظمين	(122) انتظِر عبدك بالصلاح ولا يغوني المستكبرين	(122) انتظِر عبدك بالخير ولا يغوني المُتَعَظِّمين
(123) عيني قبلتا خلاصك وبقول برّك	(123) عيناي قبلتا في خلاصك وفي قولك الصادق	(123) عيني قبلتا خلاصك وبقولِ برّك
(124) اصنع مع عبدك مثل رحمتك وحقوقك وعلّمني	(124) اصنع مع عبدك مثل رحمتك وعلِّمني عدلك	(124) اصنع مع عبدك مثل رحمتك وعلِّمني حقوقك
(125) عبدك أنا أفهِمني وأعرف شهاداتك	(125) عبدك أنا أفهِمني وعلمني شهاداتك	(125) أنا عبدك أفهِمني وأعرف شهاداتك
(126) هو خين ليصنع [fol. 183r] للرب بطلوا ناموسك	(126) الوقت إذ يضيع للرب لأنهم بطلوا ناموسك	(126) هو أحان ليُصنَعَ للربّ لأنّهم بَطَلوا ناموسك

67 Verse 121 is omitted in all three sources.

(127) منجل ذلك أحببتُ وصاياك أفضل من الذهب والحجارة الكريمة	(127) لذلك أحببتُ وصاياك أفضل من الذهب والجوهر	(127) منجل ذلك أحببتُ وصاياك أفضل من الذهب والحجارة الكريمة
(128) منجل ذلك إلى جميع وصاياك استقمت وأبغضت كل طريق ظلم	(128) لذلك استقمت إلى وصاياك وكل طريق ظلم أبغضت	(128) ومنجل ذلك في جميع [...]
Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137, first fragment, left-hand side*
[fol. 186v] (119:1) إلى الرب حيث كنتُ أحزن دعوتُ واستجاب لي	[fol. 193v] (119:1) إلى الرب صرخت في حزني فأجابني	[fol. 6r] (119:1) [...] إلى الربّ [...]
(2) يا ربِّ نجي نفسي من شِفّات الظلمة ومن اللسان الغاش	(2) يا ربِّ نجي نفسي من شِفّها ظلمة ومن لسان دغل	(2) يا ربِّ نجِّي نفسي من شِفّات[...]الغاش
(3) ماذا تُعطا وماذا تزاد عند لسان غاش	(3) [fol. 194r] ماذا تُعطا وماذا تراد عند لسان دغل	(3) ماذا تُعطا وماذا تُزاد عند [لسان] غاش
(4) سهام القوّي مسنونةٌ مع الجمر البري	(4) نبل القوّي مسنونةٌ مع الجمر المبيد	(4) سهامُ القوّي مسنونةٌ مع الجمر الـ[بري]
(5) ويل لي إن غربتي قد طالت سكنت مع خيم قيدار	(5) ويلي إن غربتي قد طالت سكنت مع مساكين قيدر	(5) ويلٌ لي إنّ غُربتي قد طالت وسكنت مع مساكن قيدار
(6) كثيرا سكنت الغربة نفسي ومع باغضي السلامة	(6) كثيرا أسكنت نفسي مع باغضي السلام	(6) كثيرًا سكنتُ الـ[غربة] نفسي مع مُبغِضي السلامة
(7) كنت صاحب سلامة حين كنت أكلّمهم كانوا يقابلوني باطل	(7) وكنت مصالح لهم إذ كنت أكلّمهم كانوا يقابلوني مجان	(7) كنتُ صاحب سلامة. حين كنت أكلّمهم كانوا يُقابلوني باطل
[...]تسبيح [...]	**مزمور وعشرين ومائة تسبيح الدرج**	**مزمور مائة وعشرين [...] على رجعة الشعب من بابل**
		HPA τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου
(120:1) رفعت عيني الي الجبال [fol. 187r] من اين يأتي عوني	(120:1) رفعت عيني إلى الجبال من حيث تأتي معونتي	(120:1) رفعت عيني إلى الجبال من أين يأتي عوني
(2) عوني من الرب الذي صنع السماء والأرض	(2) معونتي من قبل الرب صانع السماء والأرض	(2) عوني من الربّ الذي صنع السماء والأرض

Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136, second fragment, right-hand side*
(120:5) الربّ يسترك علي يدك اليمنا	[fol. 194v] (120:5) الربّ يحفظك الربّ يسترك على يدك اليمين	[fol. 6v] (120:5) [...] ستر لك على يدك [اليمين]
(6) بالنهار لا تُحرقك الشمس ولا القمر بالليل	(6) بنهار لا تُحرقك الشمس ولا القمر في الليل	(6) بالنهار لا تُحرقك الشمس ولا القمر بالليل
(7) الربّ يحفظك من كل سوء الربّ يحفظ نفسك	(7) الربّ يحفظ من كل سوء يحفظ نفسك الربّ	(7) الربّ يحفظك من كلّ سوء. الربّ فَحَفِظَ نفسك
(8) الربّ يحفظ دخولك وخروجك من الآن وإلى الأبد	(8) الربّ يحفظ دخولك وخروجك من الآن وإلى الأبد	(8) الربّ يحفظ دخولك وخروجك من [الآن] وإلى الأبد
مزمومر مائة واحد وعشرين تسبيح الدرج	**مزمور واحد وعشرين ومائة تسبيح الدرج**	**مزمور [...] عشرين [...]** [...][68]
[fol. 187v] (121:1) فرحتُ بالذين قالوا لي أنا إلى بيت الربّ نذهب	(121:1) فرحتُ بالقائلين لي إلى بيت الرب ننطلق	(121:1) فرحتُ بالذين قالوا لي أنا إلى بيت الربّ نذهب
(2) قائمًا كانت ارجلنا في دورك يا أوروشليم[69]	(2) وقوفا كانت ارجلنا في ديارك أورشليم	(2) قائمًا كانت أرجلنا في دورك أورشليم
(3) أورشليم التي تبنى مثل مدينة التي شركتها جميعا	(3) أورشليم مبناه كمدينة التي شركتها جميعا	(3) أورشليم التي تبنا مثل مدينة التي شركتها جميعًا
(4) لأنه ثم صعدوا القبائل	(4) لأنّ هناك صعدت القبائل	(4) لأنّه ثمّ صعدت [...]

Sinai MS Gr. 35	*Sinai MS Gr. 34*	*BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137, second fragment, left-hand side*
[fol. 189r] (123:8) عونُنا باسمّ الرب الذي صنع السماء والأرض	[fol. 196r] (123:8) معونتنا باسم الربّ الصانع السماء والأرض	[fol. 8r] (123:8) عونُنا باسم الربّ الذي صنع [...]
مزمور مائة وأربعة عشر تسبيح الدرج	**مزمور أربعة وعشرين ومائة تسبيح الدرج**	**مزمور مائة وأربعة وعشرين داود** [...]

68 The Greek rubrics are illegible.
69 MS: ياوروشليم.

OI Π[ΕΠΟΙΘΟ]ΤΕΣ ἐπὶ [...]

(124:1) الذين يتوكّلون على الربّ مثل جبل صهيون لا يتحرّك إلى الأبد الذي يسكن أوروشليم
(2) الجبال حولها والربّ حول شعبه من الآن وإلى الأبد
(3) لأن الربّ لا يخلي عصاه الخطاة على سهم الصدّيقين لكيما لا يمدوا الصديقين ايديهم بالإثم
(4) احسن يارب الي المحسنين والمستقيمين القلب
(5) والذين يميلون إلى المعوجات يبلغ الربّ مع عملة الذنوب والسلامة على إسرائيل

Sinai MS Gr. 35

مزمور مائة وخمسة وعشرين تسبيح الدرج

(125:1) حين ردّ الربّ سبي صهيون صرنا مثل المتعزّيين
(2) حينئذٍ امتلأ فمنا فرحا ولساننا سرورا. حينئذٍ يقولوا في الأمم قد أعظم الربّ الصنيعة الي هؤلاء
(3) أعظم الربّ الصنيعة إلينا وصرنا فرحين

(124:1) المتوكّلين على الربّ مثل جبل صهيون لا يتحرّك للأبد ساكن أورشليم
(2) الجبال حولها والربّ حول شعبه من الآن وإلى الأبد
(3) أنه ليس بقو[.] الربّ عصاه الخطاة على قسيم الصدّيقين للا يضعوا الصديقين يديهم إلى السيات
(4) أحسن يا ربّ إلى الصالحين وإلى معتدلي القلب
[fol. 196v] (5) فاما الذين يحيدوا إلى التعويج فإن الربّ يبلغهم مع عمال الإثم سلام على إسرائيل

Sinai MS Gr. 34

مزمور خمسة وعشرين ومائة تسبيح الدرج

(125:1) إذا ردّ الربّ بني صهيون صرنا كالمتعزّيين
(2) حينئذٍ امتلأ فاهنا فرح ولساننا تهليل. حينئذٍ يقولون في الأمم قد عظم الربّ الصنيع مع هؤلاء[71]
(3) أعظم الربّ الصنيع معنا فصرنا فرحين

(124:1) الذين يتوكّلون على الربّ مثل [جبل] صهيون لا يتحرّك إلى الأبد الذي يسكن [أورش]ليم
(2) الجبال حولها والربّ حول شعـ[...]الآن وإلى الأبد
(3) لأنّ الربّ لا يخلي عصا [...] على سهم الصدّيقين لكيلا لا يمدّ الصدّيقين يديهم بالإثم
(4) أحسن يا ربّ إلى المحسنين والمستقيمين القلب
(5) والذين [...]

BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136, first fragment, right-hand side

[fol. 8v] **[مزمور مائة]خمسة وعشرين على** [...]

EN TΩ ἐπιστρέψαι

(125:1) حين ردّ الربّ [...] صهيون صرنا مثل المتعزّين
(2) حينئذٍ امتلأ فمنا فرحًا ولساننا سرورًا. حينئذٍ يقولون في الأمم قد [أعظم ا]ربّ الصنيعة إلى هؤلاء[70]
(3) [أعظم ا]ربّ الصنيعة إلينا صرنا فرحين

70 MS: هاولي.
71 MS: هؤلاء.

(4) اردد يا ربّ سبينا مثل أودية في التيمن	(4) اردد يا ربّ سَبينا كالأودية في ريح التيمن	(4) [...] يا ربّ سَبينا مثل أودية في التيمن
(5) الذين يزرعون بالدموع بالسرور يحصدون	(5) الذين يزرعوا بالدموع بالتهليل يحصدوا	(5) يزرعون بالدموع بالسرور يحصدون
(6) ذهوبا كانوا يذهبوا ويبكوا ويلقوا زروعهم وإتيانا يأتوا في سرور ويحملون غمورهم	[fol. 197r] (6) متظلمين كانوا يذهبوا وباكيين وضعوا زرعهم ومقبلين يأتون بتهليل يحملون أغارهم	(6) ذهوبا كانوا يذهبوا ويبكون ويلقون زروعهم وإتيانًا يأتون في سرور ويحملون غمورهم

Discussion of the text

The three manuscript sources, edited above, contain the same text type, with minor deviations. They belong to a larger group of manuscripts, which also includes the following: Sinai MS Gr. 36; Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6 (fol. 2, fragment C);[72] BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28–29;[73] Russian State Library MS 432;[74] Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 4;[75] Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Ch. Ar. Add. 137[76] with Bryn Mawr College Library MS BV 47;[77] and the Violet fragment. The manuscripts contain a translation of the book of Psalms that seems

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72 Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments*, vol. 1, part 1, *Die Überlieferung bis zum VIII. Jahrhundert, bearbeitet von Detlef Fraenkel*, Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, supplement 1, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, 64–65. An image can be seen at http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000074F100000000, fol. 2r.

73 See Miriam L. Hjälm's contribution to this volume.

74 The manuscript is described in all details, with edition and facsimiles, in Nina V. Pigulevskaya, "Greko-Siro-Arabskaja rukopis' IX v", *Palestinskij sbornik* 1, no. 63 (1954), 59–90. See also Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 20.

75 Yiannis Meimaris, *Katalogos tōn neōn aravikōn cheirographōn tēs Hieras Monēs Aikaterinēs tou Orous Sina*, Athens: Ethnikon hidryma ereunōn 1985, Greek 23/Arabic 19 (pl. 6). Compare also Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 21; Binggeli, "Les Trois David", 110; and Paul Géhin, "Manuscrits sinaïtiques dispersés I: Les fragments syriaques et arabes de Paris", *Oriens Christianus* 90 (2006), 29.

76 Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, Now in the Possession of the Trustees of the Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham*, vol. 3, *Additional Christian Arabic and Syriac Manuscripts*, Cambridge: W. Heffer 1939, 5.

77 Karl W. Hiersemann, *Orientalische Manuskripte: Arabische, syrische, griechische, armenische, persische Handschriften des 7.–18. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig: Karl W. Hiersemann 1922, 19. On this manuscript, see also James W. Pollock, "Two Christian Arabic Manuscripts in the Bryn Mawr Library", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110, no. 2 (1990), 330–331, and Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 20, as well as Anton Baumstark, "Minbar = Thron, und älteste arabische Psaltertexte", *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung* 46 (1943), 337–341, and Anton Baumstark, "Der älteste erhaltene griechisch-arabische Text von Psalm 110 (109)", *Oriens Christianus* 3, no. 9 (1934), 55–66. Images can be seen at http://archive.org/details/ArabicPsalterBV47BMCReduced.

to have been current among Melkite communities in the Bilād al-Shām in the ninth and tenth centuries, possibly earlier. ʿAbdallāh Ibn al-Faḍl, deacon of Antioch in the eleventh century, produced an Arabic version of Psalms that, as already observed by Violet, shows clear affinities to this earlier text.[78] In addition to his translation of the psalter, Ibn al-Faḍl participated in the Antiochene translation movement of Greek Patristics into Arabic.[79] His translation may in many respects be seen as a revision and standardisation of the earlier version in this group of manuscripts.

Conclusion

The two fragments that I have edited here and compared with other manuscripts highlight the importance of the Qubba collection for the study of the Arabic Bible. In both cases, the versions can be identified as also being present in manuscripts from St Catherine's Monastery, and they add important early witnesses to these versions – if, indeed, they are not the earliest witnesses to them.

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78 Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment", cols. 386 and 427–428. He identified the similarity to Ibn al-Faḍl's version through an Arabic psalter containing this version which was printed in 1899 by the Imprimerie catholique in Beirut. Violet described the two texts, the Arabic column of the fragment and Ibn al-Faḍl's version, as being closely related, even if not always identical: "sehr nah verwandt, wenn nicht mit jener Ausgabe identisch" (col. 428). He is followed in this by Georg Graf, in both *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 1:114, and *Die christlich-arabische Literatur bis zur fränkischen Zeit [Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts]: Eine literarhistorische Skizze*, Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder 1905, as well as by Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta Studien*, vol. 2, *Der Text des Septuaginta-psalters*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1907, 35.

79 See Alexander Treiger, "Christian Graeco-Arabica: Prolegomena to a History of the Arabic Translations of the Church Fathers", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015), 188–227.

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The Jewish texts from the Qubbat al-khazna

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Scholars working on Jewish texts and manuscripts are always confronted by the uneven distribution of our evidence.[1] For the period prior to the third century BCE we have no Jewish manuscripts, even though we know that Jews were producing them at least from the seventh century BCE, if not much earlier. For the period from the third or second century BCE to the first century CE, the large cache of the Dead Sea Scrolls provides much useful evidence, even though it only preserves the literary fragments of a small group of sectarian extremists living on the margins of Jewish society. For the subsequent period, from the first century CE to the ninth century, we are again confronted by a dearth of Jewish manuscripts. For this period, we only have bits and pieces of manuscripts preserved by the dry climate of the Judaean Desert, by the sands of Egypt, or in the ruins of Dura-Europus. It is only from the ninth century onwards that we begin to have an abundance of Jewish manuscripts, especially in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Judaeo-Arabic, but also in Judaeo-Persian and later in Yiddish and Ladino as well. But even here, our evidence is not evenly spread over time and space. In fact, for the period between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, most of the Jewish manuscripts we have stem from a single cache, namely the Cairo Geniza. It is only from the thirteenth century onwards that we begin to have a larger body of Jewish manuscripts from many different provenances in Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere.[2]

The Cairo Geniza, with its 300,000 inscribed pieces of paper and parchment (and, very rarely, papyrus or cloth), and with tens of thousands of manuscripts that can be partly reconstructed from these fragments, is an astonishing set of sources for the study of medieval Jewish culture and history. However, the very fact that all this textual evidence stems from a single source raises the problem of how representative it really is. This is why any find of manuscripts dating from the ninth to the thirteenth century and stemming from outside the Cairo Geniza is of great importance, and here one can think of four such finds. The first, and most important, is the large set of manuscripts and fragments collected by Abraham Firkovich (1787–1874) during his extensive travels in the Near East (now known as

1 I am grateful to Ezra Chwat, Amir Ashur, and the editors of the present volume for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper, and to Cordula Bandt for supplying me with images of the photographs from the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

2 For some statistics – based only on dated manuscripts, but quite representative nonetheless – see Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages*, ed. and trans. N. de Lange, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002, 10–11.

the Second Firkovich Collection), which includes many items dating from the ninth to the thirteenth century. Most of these items probably came from Karaite genizot, but unfortunately there are no records of the exact provenance of each item. Their contents are much less diverse than those from the Cairo Geniza, and consist mostly of literary texts, and very few documents, most of which are rather late.[3] A second, and much smaller, collection, is represented by the so-called European Geniza, that is, the fragments of Hebrew manuscripts which were recycled (mostly by Christians, and especially into book bindings) and which are slowly being identified and extracted from numerous libraries and archives all over Europe.[4] The fragments extracted in this manner tend to date from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, but some date to the twelfth century and a few are even earlier.[5] The third collection, which has only recently been found, is the so-called Afghan Geniza, whose texts are currently being studied by Shaul Shaked, Ofir Haim, and others.[6] Finally, the fourth collection, on which we shall focus here, is the small cache of Jewish manuscript fragments discovered by Bruno Violet in the Qubbat al-khazna of the Great Mosque of Damascus.[7]

Within the Qubbat al-khazna, the non-Muslim fragments were just a tiny drop within a sea of Muslim manuscripts and fragments, and the Jewish ones were just one small particle within that tiny drop. But from a Jewish studies perspective, they form a small but quite significant collection. These fragments are written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Judaeo-Arabic, and in the square script that was exclusively used by Jews, thus making their identification as Jewish certain. The current where-

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3 For the issues involved, see Zeev Elkin and Menahem Ben-Sasson, "Abraham Firkovich and the Cairo Genizot" [in Hebrew], *Peʿamim* 90 (2002), 51–95; Haggai Ben-Shammai, "Is 'The Cairo Genizah' a Proper Name or a Generic Noun? On the Relationship between the Genizot of the Ben Ezra and the Dār Simha Synagogues", in: *"From a Sacred Source": Genizah Studies in Honour of Professor Stefan C. Reif*, Ben Outhwaite and Siam Bhayro, eds., Études sur le Judaïsme Médiéval 42 and Cambridge Genizah Studies Series 1, Leiden: Brill 2010, 43–52.

4 On the European Geniza, see the studies collected in Andreas Lehnardt and Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, eds., *Books within Books: New Discoveries in Old Book Bindings*, Studies in Jewish History and Culture 42 and European Genizah 2, Leiden: Brill 2014; and see now Simcha Emanuel, "The European Genizah: Its Character and the History of Its Study", *Materia Giudaica* 24 (2019), 587–624.

5 The fragments are available in a useful online database at http://www.hebrewmanuscript.com/, where one can sort them by century.

6 See Ofir Haim, "What is the 'Afghan Genizah'? A Short Guide to the Collection of the Afghan Manuscripts in the National Library of Israel, with the Edition of Two Documents", *Afghanistan* 2 (2019), 70–90.

7 For detailed introductions to this find, see Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 825–830; Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74; Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20; and the contribution by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann in this volume.

abouts of these fragments are unknown, but black and white photographs of some of them have surfaced in recent years, and it is to these photographs, and the texts preserved by them, that the present study is devoted. It is divided into two main parts. In the first, I provide a survey of the Jewish fragments and their contents.[8] In the second, I offer my own thoughts about their possible ultimate origins, and their significance for the study of Jewish manuscripts.

The Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna: A preliminary catalogue

As noted in great detail elsewhere in the present volume, the non-Muslim fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna are currently lost; they were photographed on two different occasions, once in Damascus in 1901 and once in Berlin in 1909, but in both cases only some of the fragments were photographed.[9] The photographs taken in Damascus ended up in what is now the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (henceforth BBAW),[10] whereas those taken in Berlin ended up in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (henceforth SBB).[11] In what follows, we shall examine both sets of photographs, and list all the fragments recorded in them under the shelf-mark of each photograph. However, in order to make sense of the following catalogue, five points must be taken into consideration:

1. As there was no coordination between the two attempts at photography, the two sets of photographs do not complement each other. We have no image at all of most of the Jewish fragments found by Violet; of some fragments we have images only in one set of photographs; and in two cases (nos. 1 and 3 in the following list) we have two different images of the same fragment (marked below as: shelf-mark = shelf-mark).

2. In both sets of photographs, an attempt was made to be as efficient as possible. This means that in many cases more than one fragment was photographed in a single image, which explains why in the list below, some shelf-marks occur more than once. More importantly, in some cases only one side of a fragment was photographed, even when the other side also had a text on it. This is a recurrent

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8 A preliminary online survey was offered by Ezra Chwat, "The Dome of the Treasure: Recent Findings in the Damascus Genizah", Giluy Milta Bʿalma (blog), 30 June 2013, http://imhm.blogspot.com/2013/06/the-dome-of-treasure-recent-findings-in.html. My own survey builds upon his work, with further improvements.

9 A third set of photographs, taken by the Ottoman authorities, is currently lost; see Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 12. See also the introduction of this volume.

10 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481, available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

11 SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, available online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

phenomenon in the photographs taken by Violet in Damascus, which is why of nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 18, and perhaps also 11 and 12, we have an image of one side but not of the other, even though it was certainly inscribed (fortunately, no. 16 was photographed from both sides). However, in Berlin, greater care was taken to photograph each fragment from both sides, and in those cases in which only one side was photographed (nos. 1–3), the versos may have been blank, and therefore not photographed.

3. There were several different attempts to number the fragments. One system of numbering was done with Eastern Arabic (Indic) numerals, and added only after the fragments were photographed in Damascus – in no. 3 below, for example, one can clearly see that in the SBB image from 1909 a number is written on the fragment, but it is not yet there in the BBAW image from 1901.[12] (However, in no. 1 below, there are no Eastern Arabic numerals on either photograph.) In this system, the numbers are written in two lines, with the top number giving a number for each page, and the bottom number representing the subcollection (the Jewish fragments are numbered 8, the Syriac ones are numbered 11, the Coptic ones 7, and so on). Here, I record these numbers as "Arabic no. xxx/y". A second system of numbering was used when the fragments were photographed in Berlin, and small notes with numbers were added to each image. Here, I note these numbers as "German no. xx".

4. The photographs taken in Berlin, and currently at the SBB, include a crude ruler, and their sizes may be determined with some certainty; I provide these measurements below as "width × length". But the photographs taken in Damascus, currently at the BBAW, do not include a ruler, and their sizes are therefore far from obvious. However, when Violet took the photographs in Damascus, he used thumbnails to pin the fragments down and keep them straight. Since in two cases (nos. 1 and 3 below), the same fragments were photographed once again in Berlin, and we therefore know their sizes, we can estimate that his thumbnails were approximately 8 mm in diameter. This allows an estimate of the size of those fragments for which we have only Violet's images, and I have marked such estimates with "*c.*". However, in many of the photographs the margins of the actual fragments were left out of the photograph, thus making it more difficult to calculate their original sizes, and to analyse their codicological features.

5. Both sets of images are in black and white, and are not of the highest quality. They are therefore in most cases very hard to read. This is why some of my readings and analyses are quite tentative, and will have to be improved in due course, especially if and when the original fragments, or additional photographs, turn up in Damascus, Istanbul, or elsewhere.

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12 See Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 13 and plates 7 and 8.

In what follows, each fragment is identified by the shelf-mark of its image(s), but the arrangement of the entries, and the number given to each, are my own. In order to see how many folios, and not only how many fragments, of Jewish texts are documented by the photographs, I note in parentheses the number of folios for each of my entries. Moreover, as the Jewish texts from the Qubbat al-khazna may easily be divided into documents on the one hand, and literary texts on the other, I begin with the documents, which are easier to contextualise, both chronologically and geographically. Unfortunately, only three such documents are recorded in the photographs that have reached us.

(1) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 24 (no Arabic number; German no. 20) = BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/180 (one folio).

Parchment; 17 × 12 cm. A single folio, torn on the right, left, and bottom margins. On the top margin, there is a line of holes, perhaps the result of this document being bundled and stitched together with other documents at some point.

The top part of a torn ketubah (a Jewish marriage document) in the Palestinian style, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original document, the verso would have remained blank).[13] It is written in Aramaic, is dated 1440 Seleucid Era (= 1128 CE), and records the marriage of a certain Sasson son of Yefet and a virgin named Kulla, who had previously been betrothed (but not married), and who appoints her brother, Ghaleb son of Berakhot, as her guardian. The ketubah displays many similarities with ketubot from the Cairo Geniza, and is written under the authority of the Palestinian gaon, Maẓliaḥ (ben Shlomo ben Eliahu) ha-Kohen who is well known from the Cairo Geniza. In his edition, Amir Ashur surmises that it was written in Damascus or nearby, and even suggests that it was written by the same scribe who wrote the Geniza fragment Mosseri VII.67.2, a legal document written in Damascus sometime between 1039 and 1138 (the exact date is lost in a lacuna).[14]

(2) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 25 (Arabic no. 247(?)/8; German no. 25) (one folio).

Parchment; 19 × 22 cm. Torn on the top, right, and lower margins. The left margin of the folio is much lighter in colour than the rest, which might point to the folio having been recycled as a book binding.

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13 This document was published by Amir Ashur, "A Ketubah in the Palestinian Style with the Permission of Maẓliaḥ Gaon, from the Damascus Geniza" [in Hebrew], *Peʿamim* 135 (2013), 163–170.

14 Ashur, "Ketubah", 166.

A deed of sale of a house, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original document, the verso would have remained blank). The document was written "in the town of Damascus, which dwells on the rivers Parpar and Amana" (as in 2 Kings 5:12).[15] It records the sale of a house owned by "Elazar *ha-zaqen* (the elder), the member of the yeshiva", to the "*heqdesh* (pious foundation) of our master Ezekiel the prophet (and) priest, peace be upon him".[16] The date is lost, but a reference to "our [mast]er Sar Shalom, the *av beit din* of the whole of Israel", points to a date *c.*1170 CE.[17] The sum mentioned is sixteen dinars, and the money is to be paid in Ḥadrakh, not far from Damascus.[18]

(3) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 26 (Arabic no. 243(?)/8; German no. 2) = BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/185 (one folio).

Parchment; 25 × 38.5 cm. Torn on the right, left, and bottom margins. In the BBAW photograph, taken in Damascus in 1901, one can see threads on the bottom of the fragment, which were removed by the time the fragment was photographed in Berlin. These threads may have been used to stitch a broken part of the document, or may have been added after the document was already torn.

A legal deed, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original document, the verso would have remained blank). It was written "on Tuesday, the eighteenth of the mon[th … in the year …]hundred and sixty to the creation of the world, in the city of Tyre, that dwells on the shore of the great sea".[19] The year could be AM 4760 or 4860 or 4960, that is, 999–1000, or 1099–1100 or 1199–1200 CE (earlier

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15 For my tentative reading of this fragment, see Gideon Bohak, "A Jewish document from Damascus, ca 1170 CE (Sta. Bi., Or. Sim. 6, fol 25)", unpublished manuscript, 2019, https://telaviv.academia.edu/GideonBohak. I am grateful to Amir Ashur and Miriam Frenkel for discussing with me this document and the next.

16 For such documents, as found in the Cairo Geniza, see Moshe Gil, *Documents of the Jewish Pious Foundations from the Cairo Geniza, Edited with Translations, Annotations and a General Introduction*, Publications of the Diaspora Research Institute 12, Leiden: Brill 1976. His document no. 33 (London, British Library MS Or. 5566B.7) is comparable with ours.

17 For this well-known figure, see, for example, Simcha Assaf, "Letters of R. Samuel ben Eli and His Contemporaries" [in Hebrew], *Tarbiz* 1, no. 1, pp. 105 and 116, and no. 2, p. 81; Sandra Benjamin, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press 1995, 206. See also Marina Rustow, "Sar Shalom ben Moses ha-Levi", in: *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, Norman A. Stillman, ed., Leiden: Brill 2010, 4:254–255.

18 Ḥadrakh is first mentioned in Jewish sources in Zech. 9:1, and re-emerges in rabbinic literature (Sifre Deuteronomy 1; see Louis Finkelstein, ed., *Siphre ad Deuteronomium*, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America 1969, 7). For its Jewish community in the twelfth century, see Assaf, "Letters of R. Samuel ben Eli", no. 1, pp. 104 and 122, and no. 2, p. 80; Benjamin, *World of Benjamin of Tudela*, 206.

19 For my tentative reading of this fragment, see Gideon Bohak, "A Jewish Document from Tyre, Perhaps 1100 CE (Sta.-Bi., Or. Sim. 6, fol 26 = BBAW, GCS-Akz 481.185)", unpublished manuscript, 2019, https://telaviv.academia.edu/GideonBohak.

or later dates seem unlikely, given the handwriting). The deed records the sale of real estate by "Ephraim ben Menashe [… … …] the member of the Great Sanhedrin (i.e. the yeshiva), may his memory be for a blessing, known as the son of al-Bunduqi".[20] The buyer is identified as "Benjamin ha-Levy, son of Shemariah *ha-zaqen* ha-Levy, son of Joseph ha-Levy, may he rest in Eden". The property itself, which consists of half a house, is described at great length, but the price paid for it, "in the coinage of the kingdom", is lost in a lacuna. Both the seller and the buyer are thus far unattested in the Cairo Geniza, but the reference to the yeshiva would argue for a date in 1100 CE, as the Palestinian yeshiva moved from Jerusalem to Tyre in the early 1070s, and left Tyre around the time of the First Crusade.[21]

To sum up the documentary evidence, we may note that two of the documents (nos. 1 and 2) certainly date from the twelfth century, and the third one (no. 3) probably dates from the very beginning of that century. We may also note that one of the documents (no. 2) was certainly written in Damascus, one (no. 1) was probably written there, and the third was written in Tyre. Thus, although there are no direct links between these three documents, they point to a rather limited geographical and chronological framework, and the geographical framework fits well with their presence in the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus.

With this in mind, we may move on to the literary texts, which are far more numerous.

(4) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/179 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*25 × *c.*34 cm. Well preserved, but for a few holes. The folio was folded after it was detached from the codex from which it came.

A folio from a biblical codex, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original folio, the verso would have been inscribed). The text covers Exodus 25:37–26:12, written in two columns per page, is fully vocalised, and is accompanied by Masoretic notes on the bottom of the page.

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20 The latter moniker appears several times in Cairo Geniza documents, and was translated by Goitein as "the Venetian". See Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1967–1993, 1:54.

21 See Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*, trans. Ethel Broido, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992, sections 899 and 916. Chwat, "The Dome of the Treasure", has suggested a possible date of 31 January 1100, adding that "If the date is correct, this is soon after Tyre absorbed refugees from Jerusalem, sacked in the First Crusade".

(5) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/157 (one folio or more?).

Parchment; *c.*22.5 × *c.*28 cm. Well preserved, but for one hole.

A folio from a biblical codex, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original folio, the verso would have been inscribed).[22] The text covers Exodus 33:15–34:19, is written in three columns per page, is fully vocalised, and is accompanied by Masoretic notes on the top of the page.

(6) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/180 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*25 × *c.*26.5 cm. Torn on the left margin, and slightly holed.

A folio from a biblical codex, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original folio, the verso would have been inscribed). The text covers Deuteronomy 30:1–10, is written in three columns per page, is fully vocalised, and is accompanied by Masoretic notes on the bottom of the page.

(7) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/181 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*16 × *c.*21 cm. Torn on the right and bottom margins, and slightly holed.

A folio from a biblical codex, only the recto of which was photographed (in the original folio, the verso would have been inscribed). The text covers Isaiah 30:22–31:4, is written in a single column, and is vocalised, probably in a different colour of ink than that of the text itself. On the top margin, and at 180 degrees to the main text, there is a two-line note in Arabic that was added at a later stage, and which I am unable to decipher.

(8) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/182 (two folios).

Parchment; *c.*38 × *c.*15 cm. Slightly holed.

A bifolium from a codex, only one side of which was photographed (in the original bifolium, the other side would have been inscribed). The recto of the first folio covers Esther 3:6–7, and the verso of the second folio covers Esther 5:8–10, so there are several folios missing between them, and several more folios missing before the first folio and after the second. As the book of Esther runs to about 3070 words, and in this codex there are around forty-five words per page, the orig-

[22] In the bottom left of the photograph, another folio seems to "peep out" behind the one that was photographed, which raises the possibility that only one side of one folio – out of several folios – was photographed.

inal codex probably contained approximately sixty-eight pages, or thirty-four folios, or seventeen bifolia. The text is vocalised, and there are some Masoretic notes on the bottom.

(9) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 33–42 (Arabic nos. 218/11–237/11; German nos. 1–10) (ten folios, of which six have Hebrew script).

Parchment quire, each bifolium measuring 20 × 11.5 cm. Well preserved.

A palimpsest, with Syriac text written on cut-up pieces from a vocalised biblical manuscript in Hebrew. It is not clear whether the quire was photographed in its entirety. The Hebrew text is visible in folios 36–40, and contains different sections from Job 31.[23]

(10) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/181 (two folios).

Parchment; *c.*21 × *c.*12 cm. A bifolium, only one side of which was photographed (in the original fragment, both sides were inscribed). Torn on the bottom and left margins.

A palimpsest, with Syriac text written on a folio from a vocalised biblical manuscript in Hebrew, of which only a few words may be read. The Hebrew text is written in two columns; it begins in Genesis 35:29 and runs to the middle of chapter 36.[24]

(11) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/182 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*6 × *c.*36 cm. A rotulus (vertical scroll), made up of at least three pieces of parchment stitched one below the other.[25] The extant part is well preserved.

A parchment rotulus, photographed from one side only (in the parchment rotuli from the Cairo Geniza, the verso is either blank or inscribed). The text is Mishnah Avot 1, from its very beginning to 1:8, and is vocalised. The original rotulus may have been much longer, or the text may have continued on another rotulus.

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23 See a more detailed description of this manuscript in the contribution by Grigory Kessel in this volume; note that he refers to the manuscript as "photographs nos. 67–85", rather than by its folio numbers.

24 Once again, the contribution by Grigory Kessel in this volume gives a more detailed description.

25 On the many rotuli in the Cairo Geniza, see Gideon Bohak, "The Magical Rotuli from the Cairo Genizah", in: *Continuity and Innovation in the Magical Tradition*, Gideon Bohak, Yuval Harari, and Shaul Shaked, eds., Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 15, Leiden: Brill 2011, 321–340; Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "Cheap Books in Medieval Egypt: Rotuli from the Cairo Geniza", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 4 (2016), 82–101.

(12) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/186 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*16 × *c.*20.5 cm. Torn on right and left margins; it is not clear whether this is a part of a scroll, or a page from a codex. Only one side was photographed (if this is a scroll, the verso probably remained blank, but if it is a codex, it would have been inscribed). On the top left side, the parchment was broken, and stitched together with thread at a time when it was still being used.[26]

Passover Haggadah, written in columns, of which the first is mostly missing, but the second and third are mostly preserved. The extant sections include a small part of the "Ma Nishtana" ("How is this night different?") section, and, after a large lacuna, the citation of Deuteronomy 26:5–8, the statement that it was God Himself, and not one of his messengers, who brought Israel out of Egypt, and some of the rabbinic midrashim on the Passover, up to the citation of Psalms 113 and 114. The text is much shorter than the "standard" Haggadah, and reflects the earlier Palestinian version, as attested in several Geniza fragments.[27]

(13) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 17–18 (Arabic nos. 77/8–80/8; German no. 8) (two folios).

Paper; 30 × 22.5 cm. A well-preserved bifolium, both sides of which were photographed.

The text contains a section of Rav Saadiah Gaon's (882–942) detailed commentary (*sharḥ*) on the Bible.[28] The first folio deals with Leviticus 16:13, and the second deals with Leviticus 16:21–22. One or more bifolia are missing between the first and second folios, and the original manuscript would have been much larger.

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26 Part of the parchment also displays concentric circular fold lines, the nature of which eludes me.

27 See Menahem Kasher, *Haggadah Shlema* [in Hebrew], Jerusalem: Torah Shlema Institute 1955, 42–44; and E.D. Goldschmidt, *The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History* [in Hebrew], Jerusalem: Bialik 1960, 73–82, whose text (based on the Geniza fragment Philadelphia, Center for Advanced Judaic Studies MS 211) closely resembles ours. For other fragments of the Palestinian Haggadah from the Cairo Geniza, see Jay Rovner, "An Early Passover Haggadah According to the Palestinian Rite", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 90 (2000), 337–396; Jay Rovner, "A New Version of the Ereṣ Israel Haggadah Liturgy and the Evolution of the Ereṣ Israel *Miqra' Bikkurim* Midrash", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 92 (2002), 421–453; Jay Rovner, "Two Early Witnesses to the Formation of the *Miqra Bikurim Midrash* and Their Implications for the Evolution of the Haggadah Text", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 75 (2004), 75–120.

28 This was first identified by Ephraim Ben-Porat, who noted that the text of the first lines of the second folio overlaps with the last lines of the Genizah fragment Jewish Theological Seminary Library ENA 3172.9.

(14) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 19–20 (Arabic nos. 55/8–56/8; German no. 10) (one folio).

Paper; 13 × 15.5 cm. A single folio. Well preserved, but slightly effaced; both sides were photographed.

The Judaeo-Arabic text contains the beginning of a poem on the Decalogue which is attested in numerous manuscripts, and is usually attributed to Saadiah Gaon, but in some Cairo Geniza fragments it is attributed to a certain Rabbi Elazar ben Elazar. The text found in this fragment is not identical with, but is close to, the one edited by Eisenstädter, and is even closer to the text found in the Geniza fragments Bodleian Library MS Heb. e 76.37–38 + Cambridge University Library MS T-S Ar. 43.258, British Library MS Or. 5563D.39, Cambridge University Library MS T-S K 5.68, and many other fragments.[29]

(15) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 23–24 (Arabic nos. 185/8–188/8; German no. 19 for both folios) (two folios).

Parchment; two separate folios, 3.5 × 5.5 cm each. Well preserved.

Two folios, photographed from both sides. A Judaeo-Arabic glossary to Mishnah Shabbat, one folio covering chapter 1, mishnayot 3–5, the other covering chapter 2, mishnayot 4–7. Given the small size, these could be two broken pieces from a rotulus (inscribed in the same direction on recto and verso), but are more likely to be two folios from a set of loose "index cards" with which to study, or teach, the Mishnah. Between these two folios, two or three folios are missing, and the entire set would have been quite large.

(16) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/183–184 (two folios).

Parchment; *c.*46 × *c.*25 cm. A bifolium, torn and holed; photographed from both sides.

This bifolium was a part of a larger codex, which contained at least two different texts; the order of the folios is unknown, and the one given here is arbitrary.[30]

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[29] See Wilhelm Eisenstädter, *Saadja's arabischer Midrasch zu den Zehn Geboten*, Vienna: Jacob Schlossberg 1868, 1–3; for the debates about the attribution of this text, see Joshua Blau, "A Poem on the Decalogue Attributed to Saadiah Gaon", in: *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition*, Ben-Zion Segal, ed., trans. Gershon Levi, Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1990, 355–361; Joseph Dana, "The *Piyyuṭ* on the Ten Commandments Ascribed to Saadiah Gaon", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 86 (1996), 323–375.

[30] I am grateful to Shulamit Elizur, Haggai Ben-Shammai, Uri Rubin, Hillel Newman, and Yoram Erder for their help in trying to identify both texts. I hope to publish the texts themselves elsewhere.

Folio 1: An unknown apocalyptic vision in Hebrew. Both the beginning and the end are lost. The text consists of the first-person account of a person – probably the patriarch Abraham – who hears voices and responds to them, and who travels around and sees his daughter, the congregation of Israel, and his mistress, who bakes bread (for?) "the sons of Hagar". He also sees himself riding on a mule, and apparently going to Jerusalem, where he sees himself sitting in the Temple, with his poor brothers. He next sees an old woman, whose actions are mostly lost in the lacunae, and another woman, who apparently cites biblical verses of consolation. He then hears a *bat qol* (a voice from heaven) which speaks to him in Arabic (written in the early phonetic spelling) and apparently explains to him why the salvation of the Jews has been delayed, and quotes more biblical verses. He then sees "Muhammad the messenger" (a clear reference to Muhammad and his common epithet, *rasūlu Allah*), and talks to him, and subsequently prays to God for forty days and hears another *bat qol*, where the text breaks off. Throughout the text, there are numerous citations of and references to biblical verses, including Hosea 7:1, several consecutive verses from Jeremiah 31, from Hosea 4, and from Deuteronomy 9. Given the explicit references to Muhammad, and to the sons of Hagar (i.e. the Arabs), there is no doubt that this text was written after the Muslim conquest of Palestine, and reflects the doubts and worries, and perhaps also the messianic expectations, of Jews in the early Muslim period (an early date is also supported by the use of the phonetic spelling for writing Judaeo-Arabic, a system that went out of use by the end of the first millennium). It thus joins a small group of Jewish apocalyptic texts of the early Islamic period, and deserves a much closer study.[31]

Folio 2: A long Hebrew acrostic piyyut, of which both the beginning and the end are lost. The extant text preserves seven lines beginning with the letter *mem*, twenty-seven lines beginning with *nun*, and nine beginning with *samekh*. (At the bottom of each page, the scribe wrote the first word of each line of that section of the poem, which further highlights its acrostic nature). Assuming that the original poem had twenty-seven lines for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, it must have been almost 600 lines long, and must have covered some twenty-seven pages of the original manuscript. The text contains descriptions of God's actions, requests that He forgive His people's sins, and hopeful references to His salvation, such as "In your mercy, YHWH, console the daughters of Zion / and in your grace make the daughters of Jerusalem rejoice … raise the head of all the daughters of Zion / for they, the daughters of Jerusalem, fear your glory every day". The extant parts

[31] For other apocalyptic texts from this period, which look quite different, see I. Lévi, "Une Apocalypse judéo-arabe", *Revue des études juives* 67 (1914), 178–182; Bernard Lewis, "An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13 (1950), 308–338; Philip S. Alexander, "Late Hebrew Apocalyptic: A Preliminary Survey", *Apocrypha* 1 (1990), 197–217; for their historical contexts, see Boaz Shoshan, "The Muslim Conquest of Jerusalem" [in Hebrew], *Cathedra* 160 (2016), 29–48.

of the text provide no historical clues about its possible date or about its author, and it is not clear whether it is directly related to the apocalyptic text in folio 1 or is a different text, copied in the same manuscript because of the many commonalities between the two Hebrew texts, including the hope for salvation and the centrality of Jerusalem.

(17) SBB MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 19–22 (Arabic nos. 83/8–84/8, 87/8–90/8, 93/8–94/8, 109/8–110/8, 145/8–148/8; German nos. 11–17)[32] (seven folios).

Parchment; seven separate folios of irregular shape, ranging in width between 12 and 15 cm and in length between 7.5 and 10 cm. Well preserved, and photographed from both sides.

Folios from a larger booklet of magical recipes.[33] The spells are written in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic and some Hebrew, with sporadic Babylonian vocalisation, and the instructions to be followed are sometimes written in Aramaic, and sometimes in Judaeo-Arabic in early phonetic spelling. The spells themselves contain many elements that point to a Babylonian, rather than a Palestinian, origin, including many parallels with the spells found on the Babylonian incantation bowls.[34] They also display some parallels with the magical texts from the Cairo Geniza, but the latter tend to reflect the Palestinian magical tradition more than the Babylonian one.[35]

(18) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/186 (one folio).

Parchment; *c.*7 × *c.*21 cm. The folio was cut to the shape of the sole of a shoe, clearly reflecting a secondary use, probably in an anti-Jewish context.[36] It was photographed from one side only (in the original folio, the verso would also have been inscribed).

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32 The non-consecutive Arabic numbering of the folios probably reflects the fact that they were found separately, and brought together only at a later stage; it might also imply that in the original booklet, the third and sixth folios originally formed one bifolium, and the same for the fourth and fifth folios.

33 Published by Gideon Bohak and Matthew Morgenstern, "A Babylonian Jewish Aramaic Magical Booklet from the Damascus Genizah", *Ginzei Qedem* 10 (2014), 9*–44*. In our publication we offered an eleventh-century dating, but Malachi Beit-Arié has subsequently told me that it probably dates to the tenth century, and perhaps even earlier.

34 See Bohak and Morgenstern, "Babylonian Jewish Aramaic Magical Booklet", 13*–18*.

35 See Gideon Bohak, "Babylonian Jewish Magic in Late Antiquity: Beyond the Incantation Bowls", in: *Studies in Honor of Shaul Shaked*, Yohanan Friedmann and Etan Kohlberg, eds., Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities 2019, 98–102.

36 The recycling of parchment manuscripts into medieval clothing is well attested (see, for example, Nora Wilkinson, "'Texts and Textiles': Finding Manuscripts in Unusual Places",

Rashi's (Rabbi Shlomo Yiẓhaqi, 1040–1105) commentary on the Talmud, b. Sukkah 15b–16a, in a Spanish or Provençal hand of the fourteenth century.

Looking at the literary texts, we see the kind of mixture that we also find in the Cairo Geniza, but with three major differences. First, even when we omit the two biblical texts which were recycled into Syriac palimpsests (nos. 9 and 10), five of the remaining sixteen fragments contain biblical texts, which seems to be about two or three times more than we would expect on the basis of a comparison with the Cairo Geniza. This is no doubt due to the interests of Bruno Violet, which also explains why all of the biblical fragments were photographed in Damascus and the photographs are now at the BBAW.[37] In fact, if we had access only to the photographs taken by Violet, we might have concluded that the Jewish manuscripts found in the Qubbat al-khazna consisted mostly of biblical texts.[38]

Second, the extant photographs of the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna contain no fragments of the Babylonian Talmud, which we would certainly expect in any major collection of medieval Jewish manuscripts. At first sight, we might be tempted to suggest that we are dealing with a Karaite collection of manuscripts, but the presence of one fragment of the Mishnah, another with a mishnaic glossary, a Passover Haggadah, texts by Saadiah Gaon, a ketubah signed by a Rabbanite leader, and another document dealing with members of the yeshiva would strongly argue against a Karaite connection. Thus, it is more likely that the talmudic fragments were not selected for photography, whether by design or by accident, both in Damascus and in Berlin.

Finally, a third observation that comes to mind is that the presence of a fragment of Rashi's commentary, in a Spanish or Provençal hand, is quite an anomaly. All the other fragments are clearly of Oriental origin, and while most of them cannot be dated with certainty, they all date to between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries. Thus, the presence of a European Jewish text, written in a European hand, and probably later than the other fragments, is unexpected. Just as the Syriac palimpsests probably did not reach the Qubbat al-khazna together with the other

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The Conveyor (blog), 6 June 2014, https://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/theconveyor/2014/06/06/texts-and-textiles-finding-manuscripts-in-unusual-places/), as is the recycling of looted Hebrew manuscripts into shoes and boots; and see Emanuel, "European Genizah", 600.

37 Interestingly, when the fragments were photographed in Berlin in 1909, fragments of the Hebrew Bible were not photographed, apart from those where the Hebrew text was the *scriptio inferior* of a palimpsest, and this in spite of von Soden's interest in biblical manuscripts; apparently, he was more interested in the Christian biblical manuscripts than in the Jewish ones.

38 In addition, it is worth noting that all five biblical fragments were written by professional hands, and four of them are vocalised and accompanied by Masoretic notes. In the Cairo Geniza, there are many fragments of high-quality bibles, but also many fragments of low-quality copies, devoid of vocalisation and Masoretic notes and sometimes written by less professional hands.

Jewish manuscripts, but with the Syriac ones, so the Rashi fragment probably reached it through some channel other than that which brought the other Jewish fragments to the Great Mosque of Damascus.

The origin and significance of the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna

Having surveyed the extant Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna, we may now turn to a broader analysis of how they may have gotten there, and a further evaluation of their overall significance. However, before embarking on this analysis, I would like to turn to – and to dismantle – an apparent symmetry between the Qubbat al-khazna and the Cairo Geniza. For at first sight, we might assume that the presence of Jewish texts in the Great Mosque of Damascus is not that different from the presence of numerous Arabic, and Muslim, texts in the Cairo Geniza. However, such a comparison would utterly fail to note the dynamics of cross-cultural contacts in the Middle Ages, and the very different situation of Jews and Muslims in medieval Cairo or Damascus. For the Jews, as a minority community, knowledge of the Arabic language and of Arabic texts – be they legal, administrative, medical, philosophical, historical, or religious – was a matter of great importance, whence the ubiquitous presence of all types of Muslim texts in the Cairo Geniza. But Muslims, being the majority community, had no need to study Aramaic or Hebrew, or to read Arabic texts written in the Hebrew alphabet. A Hebrew Haggadah for Passover, or a deed of sale written in a mixture of Aramaic, Judaeo-Arabic, and Hebrew, would have been utterly useless to the visitors of the Great Mosque of Damascus, and the presence of such texts there is quite unexpected.[39] And even if we assume that some Jewish legal documents were deposited in the Great Mosque in some kind of legal or administrative archive, the literary texts certainly had no reason to be deposited there. Moreover, as Violet's finds have shown us, the presence of Jewish texts in the Qubbat al-khazna is part of a wider phenomenon of non-Muslim texts found there, including many Christian texts in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Latin, Old French, Coptic, and Christian Palestinian Aramaic, and some Samaritan fragments as well. But having said that, we may also note that if the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna

[39] In the case of the Cairo Geniza, it is clear that some Arabic/Muslim texts reached it as scrap paper, to be reused by the Jewish scribes for writing their own texts; see, for example, Marina Rustow, "The Diplomatics of Leadership: Administrative Documents in Hebrew Script from the Geniza", in: *Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Medieval and Early Modern Times: A Festschrift in Honor of Mark R. Cohen*, Arnold E. Franklin, Roxani Eleni Margariti, Marina Rustow and Uriel Simonsohn, eds., Leiden: Brill 2014, 328–329. However, with the possible exception of no. 2, the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna show no sign of having been used as scrap paper or parchment, even if this possibility cannot be ruled out (especially in those cases where we have images of one side only of each document).

represent the remains of a synagogue geniza, similar to the Cairo Geniza (as we will soon suggest), this geniza may have contained many texts in Arabic script, even Muslim texts, just like the Cairo Geniza, and may even have contained some Christian texts. Such fragments, if they ever got to the Qubba, would not have been recognised by Violet, or by us, as having come from a Jewish context, and therefore entirely elude us.

Looking at all the Jewish fragments at once, we may ask several different questions. First, how representative are the fragments in these photographs with respect to the Jewish fragments found by Violet in the Qubbat al-khazna? Second, do these fragments represent a coherent Jewish archive? Third, did they arrive in the Qubbat al-khazna all at once, or one piece at a time?

When it comes to the first question, we may note that in his diary, Violet mentions finding 150 folios of Hebrew texts.[40] As one can see from the catalogue given here, the photographs currently available to us preserve twenty-six folios or slightly more (depending on how we count no. 5), plus eight folios on which Hebrew script is visible under a Syriac palimpsest. This clearly means that with only one-sixth or so of the fragments accessible to us, we should be very wary of reaching any final verdict on the nature of all the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna. Moreover, as we have already noted, the decision as to which fragments to photograph was not taken at random, and was not based on an attempt to cover all the different kinds of Jewish fragments found by Violet. In fact, the photographs taken by Violet himself and currently preserved in the BBAW show a clear bias towards biblical manuscripts, and perhaps even for better-quality biblical manuscripts, and the absence of talmudic fragments from both sets of photographs might also be quite telling.

As to the second and third questions, I think we may safely conclude that we are not dealing with a family archive, since the fragments surveyed above clearly stem from different times and places, and there are no overlaps between them (e.g., no personal names that recur in several documents, and no connections between the literary pieces and the documents).[41] However, this does not mean that they came to the Qubbat al-khazna one piece at a time, over a long period of time, and such a scenario would seem quite unlikely, as there was no reason for the Jews of Damascus to regularly deposit their old manuscripts in the Great Mosque. Moreover, with the exception of the fragment of Rashi's commentary, the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna display a certain temporal and geographical coherence. Furthermore, unlike the Greek or Syriac fragments found in the Qubba, some of which date to before the rise of Islam or to its first two centuries, none of the Jewish fragments are that early. Thus, it would make sense to assume

40 I am grateful to Cordula Bandt for this information.

41 In this, they differ from the so-called Afghan Geniza (see above, n. 6), some of whose fragments clearly belonged to a single Jewish family.

that what we have here are the remains of the geniza of a medieval synagogue, analogous to and contemporaneous with the Cairo Geniza, except that the contents of this geniza, or some of them, were moved at some point to the Qubbat al-khazna.[42] We do not know where this synagogue was located, but Damascus is certainly one likely location, and Tyre is another, especially as some of the non-Jewish documents also point in this direction.[43] And we do not know when the fragments were moved from the synagogue geniza to that of the mosque; if we ignore the Rashi fragment, we could argue that this might have happened sometime in the twelfth or thirteenth century, perhaps as a result of the Crusades – and here we may quote the suggestion made by Arianna D'Ottone that some of the Latin materials found in the Qubbat al-khazna might "have been booty following the successful Muslim campaigns that started after 1187 and ended with the conquest of Tyre in 1291".[44] Only the Rashi fragment might require a different kind of explanation.

To end this survey, we may return to its beginning, and to the wider significance of the Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna from the perspective of Jewish manuscript studies. On the one hand, this is a very small collection, a tiny fraction of the Cairo Geniza collection or the Firkovich collections, and smaller even than the "Afghan Geniza". It also contains very few surprises, as both its documents and its literary texts are easily paralleled by Cairo Geniza fragments. In that respect, only fragment no. 16 is something of an exception, as the apocalyptic vision written upon it is unattested elsewhere, and deserves a closer analysis. But having said that, it is important to recall that the photographs we currently have cover only one-sixth of the Jewish fragments discovered by Violet, so more surprises may lie in store if and when the original fragments – or additional photographs thereof – are discovered. But even if that never happens, the Damascus fragments we do

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42 Moreover, unlike the materials collected by Firkovich, where there is a large proportion of well-preserved quires (rather than small fragments) with literary texts, and very few documents, the Qubbat al-khazna fragments are as fragmentary as those of the Cairo Geniza, and consist of documents as well as literary and sacred texts. For Firkovich's habit of hand-picking the fragments he found useful and discarding the rest, see Elkin and Ben-Sasson, "Abraham Firkovich", 57, 64, 66, 76–79.

43 For two non-Jewish texts from the Qubbat al-khazna that might point to a Tyrian origin, see the Latin letter of safe conduct given by King Baldwin III of Jerusalem to "Bohali [= Abu Ali] filium Ebenisten mercatorem videlict Tyrensem" (see von Soden, "Bericht", 827; however, being a merchant, this Abu Ali could have reached Damascus and died there, thus explaining how this letter ended up in the Qubba), and the Koran of Amājūr, which travelled from Tyre to the Qubba (see François Déroche, "The Qurʾān of Amāǧūr", *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 [1990–1991], 59–66; note, however, that on pp. 64–65 Déroche indicates that whereas this and another Koran were moved from Tyre to Damascus, other Korans were moved there from Ramla, Ascalon, and Jerusalem).

44 Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 76–77.

have provide an important lens through which to examine the Cairo Geniza materials. For when considering the Cairo Geniza, one always wonders how unique it was, in its mixture of documentary and literary pieces and of sacred and profane texts. Looking at the Damascus fragments – which look quite like the fragments in the Cairo Geniza, but certainly do not stem from there – makes me think that the Cairo Geniza was not so unique. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there apparently were more such genizot, probably kept in the synagogues of different communities.[45] What was unique about the Cairo Geniza was not its existence, or what was deposited in it, but the fact that it had never been looted or destroyed, at least not until the late nineteenth century. The Jewish fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna probably represent the scattered remains of another geniza – one that was not so lucky.

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[45] For the practice of geniza in the Jewish world, see Joseph Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices in Islamic and Jewish Traditions", *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 43 (1986), 36–58; Malachi Beit-Arié, "Genizot: Depositories of Consumed Books as Disposing Procedure in Jewish Society", *Scriptorium* 50 (1996), 407–414.

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From Palestine to Damascus to Berlin: Early Christian Arabic texts from the Qubbat al-khazna in the Violet collection

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Among the hundreds of Christian Arabic Bible manuscripts (or reproductions of such) that have survived to this day, the so-called Violet fragment, a Greek–Arabic rendition of parts of Psalm 77 (MT 78), stands out: the Arabic text is written with Greek majuscule letters – an uncommon practice among Arabic-speaking Christians of the Byzantine rite.[1] The peculiarities of the Violet fragment initially encouraged scholars to date it to pre-Islamic times, but today a tenth-century date of origin is commonly accepted.[2] A significant reason for the fame of this fragment, still often included in discussions of the early stages of the Bible in Arabic, is that Bruno Violet himself edited it and thereby made it available to the scholarly community.[3] Thanks to the efforts made by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, the rest of the photographs taken of his collection have recently been made accessible online.[4] Thus scholars are now able to investigate new witnesses to the fascinating, rich,

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[2] Maria Mavroudi, "Arabic Words in Greek Letters: The Violet Fragment and More", in: *Moyen arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire: Actes du premier colloque international (Louvain-la-Neuve, 10–14 mai 2004)*, Jérôme Lentin and Jacques Grand'Henry, eds., Leuven: Université catholique de Louvain, Institut orientaliste 2008, 321–354; Ronny Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch: A Comparative Study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Source*s, Leiden: Brill 2015, 55–58; Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment", in: Ahmad Al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzi*, Chicago: Oriental Institute, 2020, 93–110.

[3] Bruno Violet, "Ein zweisprachiges Psalmfragment aus Damaskus", *Orientalistische LiteratturZeitung* 4, nos. 10–12 (1901), 384–403, 426–441, 475–488.

[4] The photographs in the BBAW are available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/; and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin photographs are MSS simulata orientalia 5 and MSS simulata orientalia 6, available at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de.

and multifaceted history of the Bible in Arabic, many of which are as important as the bilingual rendition of Psalm 77 in the famous Violet fragment.[5]

Judging by extant manuscript sources, biblical texts played a pivotal role in the transmission of the Greek and Syriac heritages to the Arabic environment.[6] The Qubbat al-khazna findings indicate that not only were such translations issued and copied for the sake of local communities, but scribes at the monasteries of Palestine also produced texts for use beyond the boundaries of "the Holy Land". In the present study, I will briefly survey three biblical texts in the collection assembled by Violet in Damascus and photographed in 1901 and argue – on palaeographical grounds – that these originated in Palestine (including Palaestina Tertia, i.e. Sinai). As such, the present paper is part of a larger palaeographical study aiming at classifying early Christian Arabic manuscripts, that is, texts produced during the long ninth century.[7]

The fragments discussed below are singled out from the corpus based on their ancient-looking scripts (see discussions below).[8] Initially, the list containing such scripts included photographs of five manuscripts, but the Arabic texts in two of them turned out to be of Muslim origin. The first of these two, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/32–33, consists of parchment fragments of the Koran (Q 6:49–55; 57–65; 66–71; 73–83). It exhibits many ancient features yet also more modern traits, which betray a later date of origin. The second manuscript, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/40–41, is also made up of parchment fragments, and seemingly constitutes a legal text, and we will return to this copy in the conclusion. However the main fragments to be discussed are:

1. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 + BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/196: Exodus
2. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28–29: Psalms by Anthony of Baghdad
3. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136–137: Psalms

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5 For an overview of the Qubba findings, see Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013; and Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20. See also the introduction of this volume.

6 For an account of early Arabic Bible translations, see Miriam L. Hjälm, "Scriptures beyond Words: 'Islamic' Vocabulary in Early Christian Arabic Bible Translations", *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 15 (2018), 49–69.

7 For the larger study, see Miriam L. Hjälm, "A Paleographical Study of Early Christian Arabic Manuscripts", *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 17 (2020), forthcoming. A shorter version of the study is forthcoming as Miriam L. Hjälm, "4.1.3.2.11 Arabic Palaeography", in: *The Textual History of the Bible*, vol. 3, *A Companion to Textual Criticism*, Armin Lange et al., eds., Leiden: Brill (forthcoming).

8 A more thorough study of the photographs of the Violet findings *in situ* may reveal additional early witnesses.

The palaeographical categories used to analyse these fragments are based on my analyses of more than a hundred manuscripts (including many *disjecta membra*) which are commonly dated by scholars to, in, or around the ninth century (*c.*750–950 CE). I have discussed these categories at length elsewhere.[9] In short, the classification builds on the main division between Early Abbasid and New Style scripts identified by François Déroche, to which it adds further subcategories and a new category based on non-Koranic book hands (in essence, all Christian Arabic manuscripts may be understood as "non-Koranic/scriptural" book hands, since no distinction is made between biblical and non-biblical scripts).[10] The following categories are identified, and typical features in them will be discussed where relevant:

1. Early Abbasid scripts (cf. Kufic/Christian Kufic)
   1.1 angular scripts
   1.2 semi-angular scripts
2. New Style scripts (cf. Eastern Kufic, Broken Kufic, etc.)
   2.1 cursive scripts
   2.2 transitional scripts
3. Plain scripts

Fragment set 1: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 and 481/196 and qāf *with a dot below the* rasm

The fragments BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 and 481/196 belong to a Greek–Arabic palimpsest in oblong format where both layers contain biblical texts.[11] The upper Arabic layer has been studied by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, who published one of the three bifolia of what could be the earliest extant Arabic version

9 Hjälm, "Paleographical Study"; Hjälm, "Arabic Palaeography". The categorisation found in these works is only a first attempt to classify the entire early corpus, which no doubt is in need of further refinement.

10 François Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition: Qur'ans of the 8th to the 10th Centuries AD*, London: The Nour Foundation & Oxford University Press 1992.

11 See Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 261–284, and further bibliography there. It was identified by Malak Hanānū, who also published a photograph of one folio in "Min al-tawrah", *Majallat al-Majmaʿ al-ʿilmī al-ʿarabī* 39, no. 2 (1964), p. 329, tav. 1.

of Exodus.[12] Based on grammatical and palaeographical peculiarities, she states that it is likely that the fragments originated from the Palestinian area.[13] Most importantly for the present study, she points out that *qāf* is written with a dot below the consonantal skeleton (*rasm*). Scholars have identified this way of writing *qāf* as a feature typical of South Palestinian manuscripts of the eighth and early ninth centuries,[14] and if this is correct, these Qubba fragments should be counted among our most ancient Christian Arabic texts.

We find this way of dotting *qāf* in Sinai MS Ar. 154, for example, which on palaeographical grounds represents the oldest extant Christian Arabic text.[15] Whereas a substantial number of manuscripts dated during the long ninth century typically contain one or more older-looking features,[16] Sinai MS Ar. 154 exhibits a relatively high number of such traits.[17] For instance, the tails of final *nūn* and final *mīm* seldom descend below the baseline in this horizontally extended script, while vertical strokes, such as on the *ṭāʾ* grapheme, are normally quite straight and there is notably little movement in the script. In my palaeographical classification,

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12 D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi", 276–281, 284. That the two photographs contain the same text was noted by Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments*, vol. 1, part 1, *Die Überlieferung bis zum VIII. Jahrhundert, bearbeitet von Detlef Fraenkel*, Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum, supplement 1, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, 64, photo 196. The earliest dated Arabic version of the Pentateuch is Sinai MS Ar. 2, dated 939/940 CE. It is available online at https://www.loc.gov/item/00279385755-ms/ (accessed 14 October 2019).

13 D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi", 279.

14 For more on the various forms of *qāf* attested in the Christian Arabic corpus, see Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, "Once Again on the Earliest Christian Arabic Apology: Remarks on a Palaeographic Singularity", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 69, no. 2 (2010), 195–197, who builds on Nabia Abbott, "An Arabic Papyrus in the Oriental Institute: Stories of the Prophets", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 5 (1946), 169–180; Sayyid Muhammad Imamuddin, *Arabic Writing and Arab Libraries*, London: Ta Ha 1983, 10–11; and Paolo La Spisa, "Cross Palaeographic Traditions: Some Examples from Old Christian Arabic Sources", in: *Creating Standards: Interactions with Arabic Script in 12 Manuscript Cultures*, Dmitry Bondarev, Alessandro Gori, and Lameen Souag, eds., Berlin: De Gruyter 2019, 98–100. As D'Ottone Rambach notes, this way of writing *qāf* is also attested for instance in the Ṣanʿāʾ palimpsest.

15 Sinai MS Ar. 154 is available online at https://www.loc.gov/item/00279384386-ms/ (accessed 15 November 2019). For an edition, see Margaret Dunlop Gibson, ed., *An Arabic Version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Seven Catholic Epistles from an Eighth or Ninth Century MS. in the Convent of St. Catharine on Mount Sinai, with a Treatise On the Triune Nature of God, with Translation, from the Same Codex*, Studia Sinaitica 7, London: Cambridge University Press 1899, ix. On the dating of the manuscript, see Monferrer-Sala, "Once Again". Based on a tentative identification of the copyist as "Moses the Monk", Alexander Treiger has suggested a date around 814 CE; Alexander Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra to Abed Azrié: The Arabic Bible in Context", in: *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, Miriam L. Hjälm, ed., Leiden: Brill 2017, 39–40 n. 120a.

16 E.g. dotting *qāf* below the *rasm*, arranging the dots on *shīn* horizontally, finishing independent *alif* with a right-bend foot at the baseline, and leaving the upper strokes on middle *ʿayn* unconnected or forming them into a heart.

17 See for instance Sinai MS Ar. 154 fol. 24r (hand 1) and fol. 99r (hand 2). Note that final *nūn* and middle *ʿayn*, and to some extent independent *dāl* and final *kāf*, are featured differently by the two hands.

the two hands that copied Sinai MS Ar. 154 stand out from all other early Christian Arabic scripts in this sense (cf. angular scripts in my classification).

The same way of dotting *qāf* is found in a number of other early Christian Arabic manuscripts, including the bilingual psalter in Sinai MS Gr. 36, which seems to be a later witness to the same group as Sinai MS Ar. 154. Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 16, a Gospel translation dated 873 CE, also exhibits a *qāf* dotted below.[18] The same or a similar hand copied Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 17 and Sinai MS Ar. 54 though the latter has (erroneously?) been dated to the tenth century by previous research.[19] Another ninth-century manuscript dotting *qāf* below the consonantal body is Sinai MS Ar. 155 and its *disjecta membra*.[20]

Yet another fairly early, undated hand, Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 8 and 28, likewise exhibits the same way of dotting *qāf*. Hikmat Kashouh noted that the manuscript of this primarily Greek-based Arabic Gospel translation contains typically ancient palaeographic features, such as the splitting of words across two lines (cf. Sinai MS Ar. 154) and notably few diacritical dots, and argues that the translation belongs to the early ninth or even the second half of the eighth century.[21] The overall style is indeed unique with its exceptionally horizontally elongated and angular features, and this uniqueness makes proper comparisons with similar-looking manuscripts difficult. Based on specific letter shapes, there are in my opinion no compelling reasons to place it in the eighth century, as more modern features appear in it as well (e.g. its many descenders and the modern top of middle *ʿayn*; compare fig. 2 below). The same scribe copied Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 27 (containing *logoi*) and we will return to this hand below.

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18 The dots on *shīn* differ in these copies, yet such a practice may alternate also within a manuscript. Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 16 is dated in Meimaris's catalogue to 859 CE, which makes it the oldest dated Christian Arabic Bible translation; Yiannis Meimaris, *Katalogos tōn neōn aravikōn cheirographōn tēs hieras monēs Aikaterinēs tou Orous Sina*, Athens: Ethnikon hidryma ereunōn 1985. Mark Swanson, however, suggests that the year should be calculated according to the Alexandrian era, and redates it to 873 CE; see Mark N. Swanson, "Some Considerations for the Dating of fi Taṯlith Allāh al-wāḥid (Sinai ar. 154) and al-Ǧāmiʿ wuǧūḥ al- imān (London, British Library or. 4950)", *Parole de l'Orient* 18 (1993), 133–134. Hikmat Kashouh found the continuation of this manuscript in Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 14; see Hikmat Kashouh, *The Arabic Versions of the Gospels: The Manuscripts and Their Families*, Berlin: De Gruyter 2012, 86 n. 9. Dmitry Morozov noted that Tischendorf XXXI, that is Leipzig University Library MS 1059A (now lost, but a facsimile is preserved in Fleischer, table 2, no. 2), holds another part of this manuscript; Dmitry Morozov, "On the Date of the Most Ancient Arabic Gospel Manuscript" [in Russian], *Kapterevskie Chteniya: Sbornik statey* 6 (2008), 20–21, especially n. 11; Heinrich L. Fleischer, *Kleinere Schriften*, vol. 3, Leipzig: Hirzel 1888, Taf. II.

19 Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 86–87.

20 The various parts are found in British Library MS Or. 8612, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek MS Ar. 1071, and Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Syr. 378. See Paul Géhin, "Manuscrits sinaïtiques dispersés I: Les fragments syriaques et arabes de Paris", *Oriens Christianus* 90 (2006), 32–39.

21 Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 96–112.

Before turning to that manuscript, it should be pointed out that we sporadically find this way of writing *qāf* in a Muslim paper copy, Leiden University Library MS Or. 298, dated 866 CE, which shares other features with the semi-angular scripts of my classification as well (i.e. with the Palestinian scripts sometimes referred to as "Christian Kufic").[22] Thus this trait is not confined to the late eighth and early ninth centuries but was also used in the second half of the ninth century and later; another example can be seen in Bryn Mawr College Library MS BV 47, dated to the early tenth century (see below), which often features *qāf* dotted below the *rasm*.[23] Like the Muslim Leiden copy, some Christian manuscripts dated around this time contain both the older version of *qāf* and the modern one, including Sinai MS Ar. 155, Sinai MS Ar. 1, and Sinai MS Ar. 70.[24] This parallel use indicates that the older way of writing *qāf* was indeed on its way out in the ninth century, yet also that it played a conservative function.[25] Thus, its appearance is not a compelling reason to date a manuscript as early, unless this feature is accompanied by additional, typically old-looking features.

This way of marking *qāf* is to my knowledge only attested in the Christian Arabic manuscripts that fall into what I label Early Abbasid scripts (i.e angular and semi-angular scripts) and not in the New Style scripts nor in Plain scripts. This is important for our present study since it is overwhelmingly the Early Abbasid scripts in the Christian corpus that are connected to the larger Palestinian area, whereas some samples of the New Style scripts and Plain scripts are connected with the East (see below).[26] Due to the overall impression of writing, especially the dense writing, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 + BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/196 roughly fits into the Group A category of semi-angular scripts. This category contains handwrit-

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22 The Leiden copy is titled *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, originally composed by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām (d. 223/837).

23 The manuscript is viewable online at https://archive.org/stream/ArabicPsalterBV47BMCReduced/ArabicPsalterBv47Bmc#page/n87/mode/2up.

24 Cf. Heinrich L. Fleischer, "Zur Geschichte der arabischen Schrift", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 18, no. 1 (1864), 291; Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, "Liber Iob detractus apud Sinai Ar. 1: Notas en torno a la Vorlage siriaca de un manuscrito árabe cristiano (s. IX)", *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 1 (2003), 119–142; Russell A. Stapleton, "An Edition of the Book of Daniel and Associated Apocrypha in Manuscript Arabic 1", PhD dissertation, Brandeis University 1989; Miriam L. Hjälm, *Christian Arabic Versions of Daniel: A Comparative Study of Early MSS and Translation Techniques in MSS Sinai Ar. 1 and 2*, Leiden: Brill 2016, 74–77.

25 In his article "Cross Palaeographic Traditions", La Spisa also points out the similarity between Muslim and Christian practice and states that between "the 7th and 9th centuries, the standardisation of diacritical points was not yet established" (p. 100). Based on the manuscripts mentioned above, I would argue that the lack of standardisation stretched into the (early) tenth century.

26 In connection to *qāf*, it should also be pointed out that the hand of Vatican Library MS Borg. 85, Sinai MS Ar. 71, and Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 44 marks *qāf* with one dot above the *rasm*.

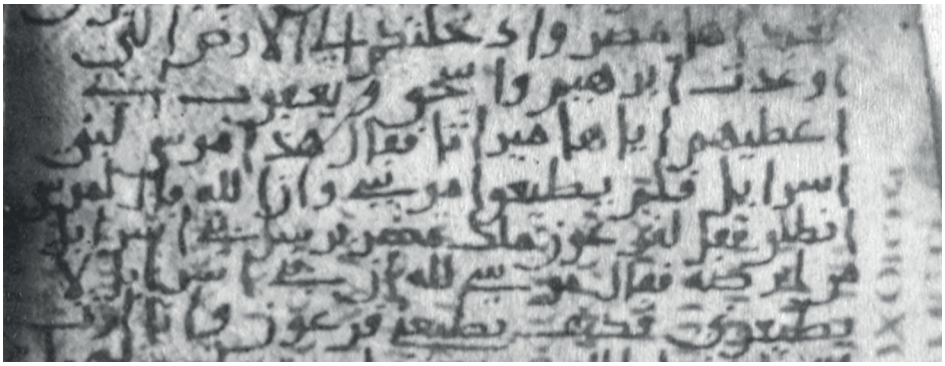


Fig. 1: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/27, photographed by Bruno Violet in 1901. (© Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.)

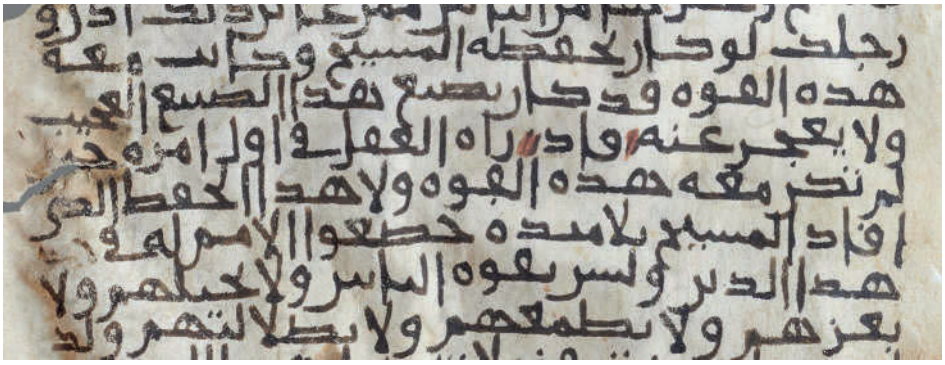


Fig. 2: Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 27 (no fols.). (© The Mount Sinai Monastery, Egypt.)

ing that exhibits a rather angular shape, often disproportionally horizontally extended *ṣād*, *ṭāʾ*, or *kāf*, and at least one ancient letter form. These fragments from the Violet collection (fig. 1) can be compared with Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 27 (fig. 2), an example of this type of script.

However, on a more detailed analysis, where single letters are compared, these Violet fragments exhibit more modern shapes as well, such as a curvy New Style *alif*, and no typically ancient letter form besides *qāf* is attested.[27] In addition, the script is more vertically than horizontally extended (compare the extension of vertical versus horizontal strokes on *ṭāʾ* in the two manuscripts in figs. 1 and 2). As such, it

[27] D'Ottone Rambach argues that the shape of final *kāf* is reminiscent of what Déroche describes as a late eighth-century feature; see François Déroche, "Un critère de datation des écritures coraniques anciennes: Le kāf final ou isolé", *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 11 (1999), 87–94 and tables 15–16. This shape of final *kāf* is difficult to classify as it appears in Ḥijāzī, Early Abbasid, and also New Style scripts; cf. Déroche, *Abbasid Tradition*, especially 30–31, 48–52, 142, 173.

seems to be a transitional hand, exhibiting features typical of both angular and New Style scripts, common in the corpus of early Christian Arabic manuscripts.[28]

To conclude, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/26–27 and 481/196 appear to be among the old strata of the Christian Arabic corpus, but not necessarily from the late eighth or early ninth century – possibly from the latter half of the ninth century. The hand in which these fragments is written displays certain similarities in style with the otherwise unique hand in Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 8/28 (likewise a Greek–Arabic palimpsest) and MS Ar. NF Parch. 27. Kashouh is uncertain of the geographical origin of Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 8/28.[29] However, the practice of dotting *qāf* below the *rasm* is commonly attested in the Palestinian area and to my knowledge is not found in Christian Arabic manuscripts connected to the Damascus area.[30] This leads me to conclude, with D'Ottone Rambach, that there are good reasons to assume that this ancient version of Exodus travelled from Palestine to Damascus.

Fragment set 2: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28–29 and Anthony of Baghdad

On palaeographical grounds, I suggest that our next sample, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28–29, is written by Anthony of Baghdad. Anthony David, son of Sulaymān, of Baghdad is known from the colophons of two manuscripts dated 885–886 CE: Vatican Library MS Ar. 71 and Strasbourg, National University Library MS Oriental 4226 (Ar. 151). The colophons inform us that Anthony was active at the Palestinian Monastery of Mār Sābā and that the copies were requested by a certain Anbā Isḥāq on behalf of the monastery on Mount Sinai. Both copies contain homilies, and hagiography. In an article published in 1989, Sidney Griffith sums up the previous research on these two manuscripts. The content of the Vatican manuscript was described by Angelo Mai in the fourth volume of his *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio*, published in 1831,[31] while the manuscript in Strasbourg was first analysed by J. Oestrup in 1897.[32] In 1907, Ignace Kratchkovsky published five leaves of the continuation of the latter manuscript, including the colophon

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28 Compare Group C of the semi-angular scripts in Hjälm, "Paleographical Study"; Hjälm, "Arabic Paleography".

29 Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 112; Meimaris, *Katalogos*, 29.

30 Compare the Plain scripts in Hjälm, "Paleographical Study".

31 Angelo Mai, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio*, vol. 4. Rome: Typ. Vaticanis 1831, 143–145. The date here is 788 CE and not 885 CE as expected, i.e. *rabīʿ al-awwal 272 hijra*. In 1914, Eugène Tisserant published the colophon in Arabic in his *Specimina codicum orientalium*, Bonn: Marcus et Weber 1914, xxxviii–ix, where the date was corrected. Cf. Sidney H. Griffith, "Anthony David of Baghdad, Scribe and Monk of Mar Sabas: Arabic in the Monasteries of Palestine", *Church History* 58, no. 1 (1989), 8–9.

32 J. Oestrup, "Uber zwei arabische Codices sinaitici der Strassburger Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 51 (1897), 455–471.

(now known as National Library of Russia MS Ar. N.S. 263), but it was Gérard Garitte who, in an article published in 1969, discovered that they originally belonged to the same manuscript.[33] By then, Willi Heffening had discovered another part of the copy in the Mingana Collection in Birmingham, and soon Michel van Esbroeck found the remaining portions in the same library: Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Arab. Chr. 93 and MS Mingana Ch. Ar. Add. 136.[34]

It was later discovered that Anthony's production was not limited to these two manuscripts. In 2003, Kate Leeming noted that Sinai MS Ar. NF 35, containing homilies and troparia, was written by the same hand as those copied by Anthony.[35] The most important contribution to our understanding of Anthony's work, however, is a recent article by André Binggeli in which he convincingly argues that six additional manuscripts should be attributed to Anthony: the bilingual Greek–Arabic psalter in Sinai MS Gr. 35 and its continuation in Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS L 120 sup.; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek MS ar. 1069; Sinai MS Ar. 428; Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Arab. Chr. 132 (B); and Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 20.[36] In addition to the manuscripts mentioned by Binggeli, Anthony seems to have composed the lower part of a folio preserved in the fragment Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 21.[37] Even more notable, if my observation is correct, is the fact that BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28–29, our Greek–Arabic palimpsest found in the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus, contains one of his copies. Anthony's slender hand and many New Style curves stand out in the Christian Arabic manuscript production (an example of cursive script, in my classification). Compare the fragment from Damascus (fig. 3) with Anthony's hand in Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 35 (fig. 4).

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33 Ignace Kratchkovsky, "Novozavetniy apokrif v arabskoy rukopisi 885–886 goda", *Vizantijskij Vremennik* 14 (1907), 246–275; Gérard Garitte, "Homélie d'Éphrem 'Sur la mort et le diable': Version géorgienne et version arabe", *Le Muséon* 82 (1969), 123–163. Cf. Griffith, "Anthony David of Baghdad", 8–9.

34 Willis Heffening, "Die griechische Ephraem-Paraenesis gegen das Lachen in árabischer Übersetzung", *Oriens Christianus* 23 (1927), 94–119; Michel van Esbroeck, "Un feuillet oublié du codex arabe or. 4226, à Strasbourg", *Analecta Bollandiana* 96 (1978), 383–384. Cf. Griffith, "Anthony David of Baghdad", 8–9.

35 Kate Leeming, "The Adoption of Arabic as a Liturgical Language by the Palestinian Melkites", *ARAM* 15 (2003), 243.

36 André Binggeli, "Les Trois David, copistes arabes de Palestine aux 9e–10e s", in: *Manuscripta graeca et orientalia: Mélanges monastiques et patristiques en l'honneur de Paul Géhin*, André Binggeli, Anne Boud'hors, and Matthieu Cassin, eds., Leuven: Peeters 2016, 79–117; see also André Binggeli, "Early Christian Graeco-Arabica: Melkite Manuscripts and Translations in Palestine (8th–10th Centuries AD)", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015), 228–247.

37 This fragment might have been misplaced into this shelf-mark, which contains another fragment as well.

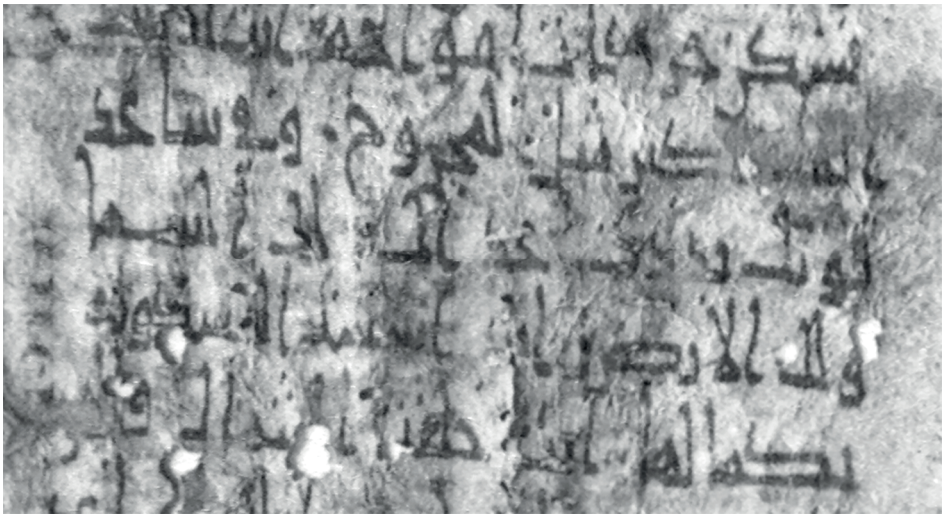


Fig. 3: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/29 (verso), photographed by Bruno Violet in 1901. (© Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.)

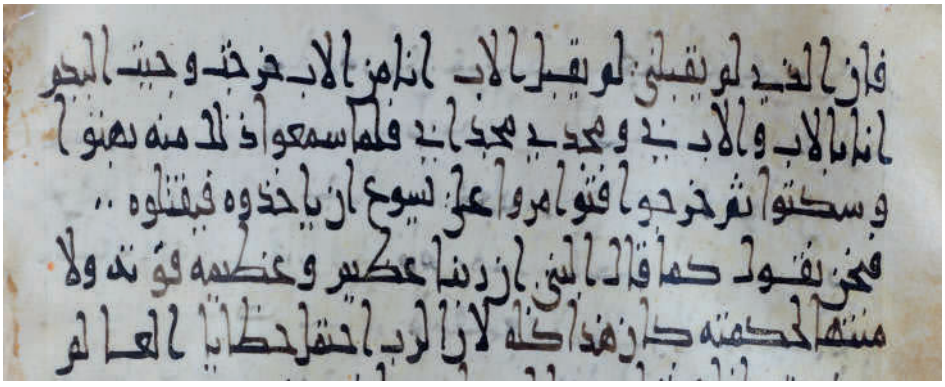


Fig. 4: Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 35 (no fols.). (© The Mount Sinai Monastery, Egypt.)

The two Qubba photos contain parts of Psalms 82–83 and Psalm 88 (according to the Septuagint numbering system).[38] These portions reflect the same version of the Psalms as that copied by Anthony in the Greek–Arabic bilingual Sinai MS Gr. 35.[39] The Arabic text on the upper part of the left page of BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/29 contains Psalm 82:16–19. In the transcription here, the missing parts are filled in

[38] BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/29, left side, contains parts of Psalms 82:16–83:4; the right side has Psalm 88:7–14. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/28, right side, contains parts of Psalm 83:4–11; and the left side has Psalms 87:18–88:6.

[39] Sinai MS Gr. 35 is viewable online at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271077452-ms/?sp=122&r=-0.342,0.063,1.666,0.807,0. Vollandt came to the same conclusion in his study.

from the bilingual Greek–Arabic rendition in Sinai MS Gr. 35 (fol. 120r), whose renderings are practically identical:

بساعقتك[40] وبزجرك[41] تعر [بس]هم[42] املا

وجوههم هوانا ويطلب[ون اسمك] يا رب

فيخزوا ويتسجسوا الي [ابد الا]بدين

ويبهتوا ويهلكوا ويعر[ف] وا ان اسمك

الرب انت وحدك العالي على جميع

الارض

With these fragments, we have solid proof that a text produced in Palestine was used not only in Sinai but as far away as Damascus.

It is interesting that Anthony, through his *nisba*, is connected to Baghdad. Even though the New Style scripts were by no means an exclusively or even typically Eastern product, one cannot but notice that what Déroche labels New Style has often been referred to as "Eastern Kufic". Another New Style hand apparently from the East is found in National Library of Russia MS Ar. 327 dated 892 CE – an Arabic translation often assumed to be of Eastern Syriac origin.[43] Thus, whereas most manuscripts linked to Palestinian monasteries are angular (i.e. "Kufic", or "Christian Kufic"), the New Styles may originally have been imported from the East to Palestine where they were adapted. What appears to be an example of the latter includes the early tenth-century hand of David of Ashkelon and the many transitional semi-cursive scripts seemingly connected to Sinai (cf. transitional scripts in my classification).[44]

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40 Probably from بصاعقتك "by your stroke of lightning", and caused by the loss of emphatic sound. Sinai MS Gr. 34 (fol. 133r) reads بعاصفك "by your violent wind".

41 Compare Greek τῇ ὀργῇ "anger" in contrast to Syriac *qarḥā* "storm" from MT *sūfā* with the same meaning.

42 Seemingly preceded by *li* in the Violet fragment.

43 Compare Franz Delitzsch, "Über eine alte arabische Handschrift des Hebräerbriefes", in: *Commentar zum Briefe an die Hebräer: mit archäologischen und dogmatischen Excursen über das Opfer und die Versöhnung*, Franz Delitzsch, ed., Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke 1857, 764–769.

44 For a recent survey on David of Ashkelon, see Binggeli, "Les Trois David"; see also Hjälm, "Paleographical Study".

Fragment set 3: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136–137

Our last fragment, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136–137, constitutes another carefully written translation of Psalms into Arabic, containing parts of Psalms 118:57–125:6 (according to the numbering system in the Septuagint; note that text in the upper parts are missing on each fragment).[45] On palaeographical grounds, the script, like Anthony's hand, is extended vertically rather than horizontally and displays a cursiveness typical of New Style scripts. Yet, it is not executed with the same thorough cursiveness as the New Style scripts proper (i.e. the cursive scripts), and seems to represent a transitional stage between New Style scripts and the simpler, rounder *naskh* scripts (or transitional scripts, in my categorisation), which to a large degree superseded both Early Abbasid and New Style scripts in tenth-century Palestine. The transitional handwriting is exceedingly common in what appear to be largely early tenth-century manuscripts preserved at St Catherine's Monastery, some of which can be directly connected to Sinai.[46] Compare for example Sinai Ar. NF Parch. 38 (fig. 6) and the Qubba fragment (fig. 5), and note in particular the oblique top stroke on final *kāf*, a feature that in general seems to be common from the tenth century onwards.[47]

Although this copy is not particularly old, it is an important finding as it represents another witness to the same version of Psalms 118–121 (MT 119–122) as that in the Greek–Arabic text copied by Anthony mentioned above.[48] Compare the rendition of Psalm 119:2–7 in BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/137 (fol. 2v), here collated with the almost identical rendering in Sinai MS Gr. 35 (fol. 186v):

يا رب تحي نفسي من شفات [الظلمة ومن السان]

الغاش ماذا تعطا وماذا تزاد عند [لسان]

غاش سهام القوي مسنونه مع الجمر البر[ي]

ويل لي ان غربتي قد طالت سكنت مع مساكن[49]

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45 Fol. 1r contains Psalm 125:1–6; fol. 1v, Psalms 123:8–124:5; fol. 2r, Psalms 120:5–121:4; fol. 2v, Psalms 119:2–7, 120:2; fol. 3r, Psalm 118:118–128; fol. 3v, Psalm 118:104–116; fol. 4r, Psalm 118:69–78; fol. 4v, Psalm 118:57–67.

46 For some of these manuscripts, see Alain George, "Le palimpseste Lewis-Mingana de Cambridge, témoin ancien de l'histoire du Coran", *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 155, no. 1 (2011), 377–429.

47 Cf. George, "Le palimpseste Lewis-Mingana de Cambridge", 405–416.

48 For this and additional bilingual manuscripts, see Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 1, Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 1944, 115–116.

49 Sinai MS Gr. 35 has instead خيم.

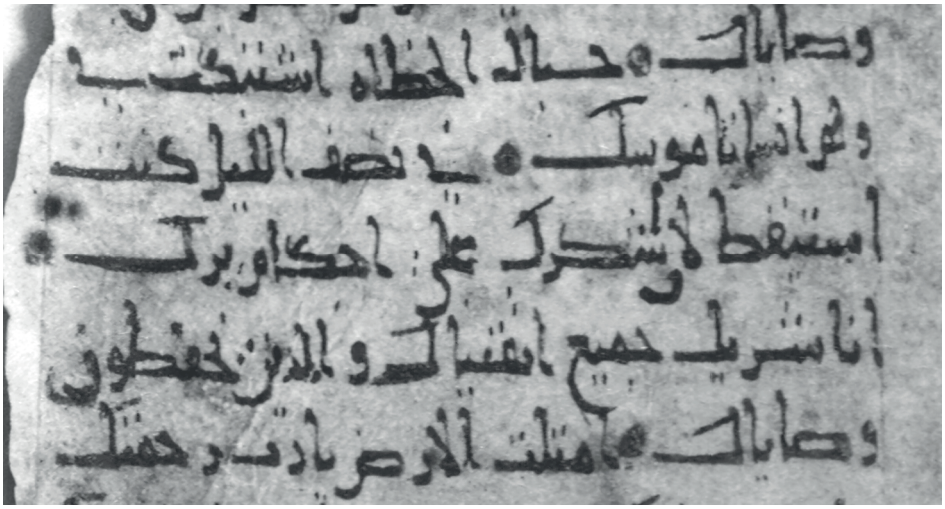


Fig. 5: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/136, photographed by Bruno Violet in 1901. (© Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.)

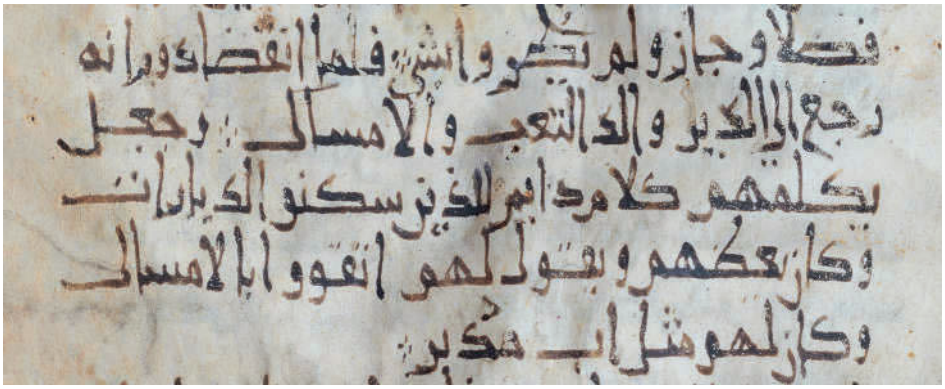


Fig. 6: Sinai Ar. NF Parch. 38 (no fols.). (© The Mount Sinai Monastery, Egypt.)

قيدار كثيرا سكنت ال[غربه] نفسي ومع معصي[50]

السلامه كنت صاحب سلامه حين كنت

اكلمهم كانوا يقابلوني باطل

It should finally be noted that Anthony's rendition of Psalm 77:28–31 (MT 78) in Sinai MS Gr. 35, fol. 109r–110r, is very similar to that of the so-called Violet frag-

50 Sinai MS Gr. 35 has instead ماعصي(?).

ment, where the Arabic text is written in Greek uncials, although it differs in details, as does the printed Jesuit version (Beirut, 1899) used by Violet for comparison. In addition, what appears to be a contemporary or even earlier copy, Sinai MS Gr. 36, also bilingual, transmits the same version of Psalm 77 (fol. 184v), as does the bilingual Sinai MS Gr. 34 (beginning on fol. 123r), dated to 929–930 CE.[51] The same version (but with notable variations) is furthermore attested in the trilingual Greek–Syriac–Arabic fragments reproduced by Nina Pigulevskaja (Russian State Library MS 432).[52] It is interesting to note that the hand in the trilingual fragments is very similar to that of another Psalm rendition in the Qubba collection: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/142–143, which contains Psalms and Odes, and their relation should be investigated further.[53] In contrast, the Psalm rendition in Bryn Mawr College Library MS BV 47 (former Zurich MS Or. 94), dated 916–917 CE, seems to transmit another version than that copied by Anthony.[54] The missing folio of this manuscript (containing Psalms 1–2) is extant as Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Arab. Chr. Add. 137, on palaeographical grounds (mis-)dated to 830 CE by Alphonse Mingana.[55]

A brief comparison of additional psalms gives a more complex picture of early Arabic Psalm translations. Based on Psalms 1 and 22 (Septuagint), Sinai MS Gr. 36 and Sinai MS Gr. 34 transmit one and the same version with minor deviations, whereas Sinai MS Gr. 35, which was copied by Anthony, exhibits a different one. Thus, it appears that at least three different versions of Psalms circulated in the ninth and tenth centuries, yet at least two of these versions were somehow related, as we have seen in the comparison of Psalm 77 above. [56]

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51 Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 21 and further references there.

52 Nina V. Pigulevskaja, "Greko-Siro-Arabskaja rukopis' IX v", *Palestinskij sbornik* 1, no. 63 (1954), 59–90.

53 Thanks to Ronny Vollandt for showing me the hand list of the Qubba findings where these passages are identified; see also Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic".

54 On this manuscript, see Anton Baumstark, "Der älteste erhaltene griechisch-arabische Text von Psalm 110 (109)", *Oriens Christianus* 3, no. 9 (1934), 55–66. Cf. James W. Pollock, "Two Christian Arabic Manuscripts in the Bryn Mawr Library", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110, no. 2 (1990), 330–331; Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 20. Many thanks to Peter Tarras for discussing this manuscript with me. The manuscript is viewable online at https://archive.org/stream/ArabicPsalterBV47BMCReduced/ArabicPsalterBv47Bmc#page/n87/mode/2up. The test sample is however quite similar.

55 Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, Now in the Possession of the Trustees of the Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham*, vol. 3, *Additional Christian Arabic and Syriac manuscripts*, Cambridge: W. Heffer 1939, 5.

56 I have not been able to study the version of these passages in David of Ashkelon's Psalm rendition preserved in Sinai MS Ar. NF Parch. 4; cf. Binggeli, "Les Trois David". For additional Psalm renditions, see Graf, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 114–126, although many of these need to be re-evaluated in light of new findings; Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra", 20–21; and further references there.

Concluding remarks

In the present paper, I hope to have demonstrated that there are sound reasons to assume that at least three of the manuscripts brought by Violet from Damascus to Berlin originated in the Palestine area. Palaeographically, the three sets of fragments fit quite well into three of the five categories established for early Christian Arabic texts in a more extensive study of this corpus. Based on these findings, it seems likely that not only these fragments but also others (including the so-called Violet fragment) could have originated in Palestine.

It is well known that manuscripts also travelled in the opposite direction, namely from Damascus to Palestine, as is the case with the earliest dated Christian Arabic manuscript, Sinai MS Ar. 151, an epistle text composed by Bishr Ibn al-Sirrī and dated in 867 CE. There is some dispute, however, as to whether the colophon in this manuscript (and hence the entire manuscript) is original or copied. I have argued elsewhere that it is original and the reason that it does not resemble other ninth-century manuscripts is simply because it came from a different area and hence was subjected to a different scribal praxis.[57] This style represents the last, poorly attested category, labelled Plain scripts in my classification. One of the Muslim manuscripts found in the photographs taken by Violet, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/40–41, the legal text mentioned in the introduction to this paper, exhibits the same simple style that lacks both the horizontal elongation typical of the angular scripts and the cursiveness and sharp angles characteristic of the New Style scripts – compare MS Ar. 151 in figure 7 with the legal text in figure 8.

The fragments of this Muslim text in Violet's photograph lack the heart-shaped *ʿayn* present in Bishr's translation, and they are probably of somewhat later origin, but what is important for this study is that the style of writing in the manuscript may have been used around Damascus, a possibility which is supported by additional manuscript findings.[58]

Finally, it is interesting to note that at least three different Qubba fragments represent the same version of Psalms as that attested in bilingual renditions associated with the Byzantine communities under Muslim rule. This reveals how widespread this version of Psalms really was.

The intellectual activities in Palestine were nourished not only by the ascetic life of the monastic communities but also by the steady influx of pilgrims and

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57 Hjälm, "Paleographical Study"; Hjälm, "4.1.3.2.11 Arabic Palaeography", and further references there. See also Vevian Zaki, "A Dynamic History: MS Sinai, Arabic 151 in the Hands of Scribes, Readers, and Restorers", *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 11 (2020), pp. 200-259.

58 It resembles Sinai MS Ar. 2, which is also connected to Damascus, and dated 939–949 CE. On this manuscript, see Hjälm, *Christian Arabic Version of Daniel*; Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*; and Miriam Lindgren [Hjälm] and Ronny Vollandt, "An Early Copy of the Pentateuch and the Book of Daniel in Arabic (MS Sinai – Arabic 2): Preliminary Observations on Codicology, Text Types, and Translation Technique", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 1 (2013), 43–68. See also Vollandt's contribution in this volume.

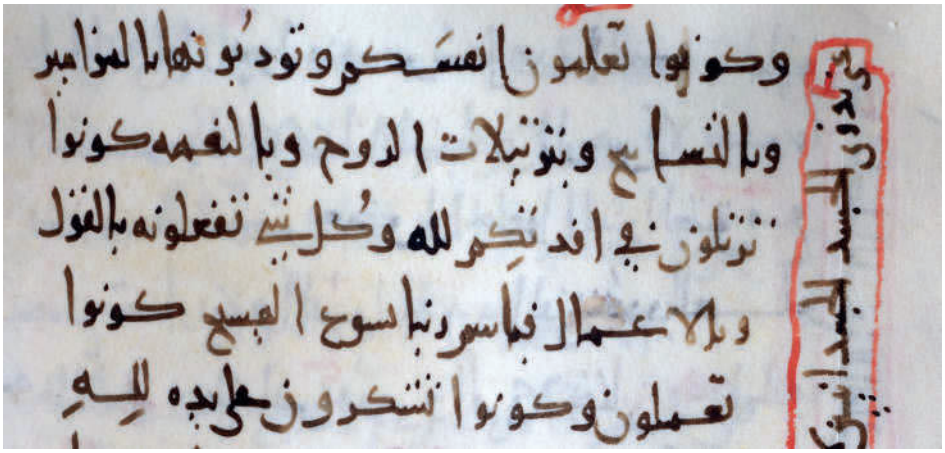


Fig. 7: Sinai MS Ar. 151, fol. 127v. (© The Mount Sinai Monastery, Egypt.)

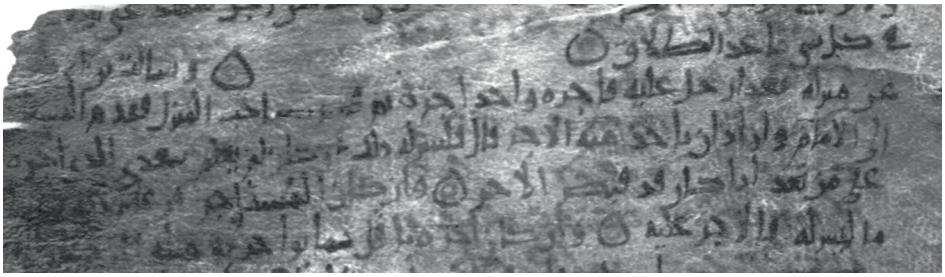


Fig. 8: BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/40 (upper photo), photographed by Bruno Violet in 1901. (© Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.)

monks who came to visit the holy sites. As a result of the substantial investment of effort and skill in scribal activity in the monasteries, this rich intellectual heritage, characterised by complex cultural and intellectual cross-fertilisation, took the physical form of manuscripts that were carried well beyond the borders of Palestine. Thanks to Violet, who was convinced of the value of the intellectual legacies of the Near East and took great measures in documenting them, we now have further proof that the endeavours of these Palestinian scribes reached a wider audience than was once supposed.

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Fragments of Syriac manuscripts discovered in the Qubbat al-khazna

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Alongside Greek texts, fragments of Syriac manuscripts constitute one of the largest groups of non-Arabic fragments discovered in the Qubbat al-khazna.[1] During his research stay in Damascus in the years 1900 and 1901, Bruno Violet documented the results of his examination of the extant manuscript materials, and according to Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann the total number – excluding fragments of Islamic manuscripts – amounts to approximately 1500 fragments.[2] Once the notebook of Bruno Violet[3] is made accessible for study, it will be possible to give a more precise estimate of the fragments in Syriac that were held at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus at the time of Violet's examination. As far as more recent history of the Syriac fragments is concerned, there can be no doubt that the fragments were transferred to the National Museum of Damascus,[4] where they were available for consultation by researchers over the course of the twentieth century. It still remains to be seen what the repercussions for the fragments might have been of the civil war in Syria as well as the closure of the museum in 2012–2018 with the transfer of the artefacts for safeguarding purposes.

Out of the 214 photographs preserved at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) that were taken by Violet in 1901 in Damascus, roughly half contain images of Syriac manuscripts; they are outnumbered only by

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1 Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 828: "Die Hauptmasse der christlichen Bestandteile dieses Trümmerhaufens nationaler Literaturen bilden naturgemäß Überreste des syrischen und des griechischen Schriftums" (The bulk of the Christian elements in this pile of remains of national literatures are naturally remnants of Syrian and Greek writings).

2 Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 10. For a general presentation of the Qubba fragments, see the introduction to the present volume, and also Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74.

3 Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 484.

4 This must have taken place after the return of the fragments from Berlin. William Hatch documents that he "saw many fragments of manuscripts in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Coptic, and Arabic" during his visit in 1929; see William H.P. Hatch, "An Uncial Fragment of the Gospels", *Harvard Theological Review* 23 (1930), 151. It should be stressed, however, that the mere location of a fragment at the National Museum does not warrant its provenance from the Umayyad Mosque; for instance, Tchatchibaya studied the fragments of a Georgian manuscript at the museum (Marika Tchatchibaya, "Fragments de manuscrits géorgiens du Musée de Damas", *Les Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes* 32 (1982), 59–82), while the presence of Georgian fragments has not been recorded in the Qubbat al-khazna.

the fragments of Greek manuscripts.[5] This number, however, does not correspond to the actual number of fragments photographed, because quite often one image contains up to three different fragments (some were photographed only from one side, others from both). Besides the photographs that Violet took in 1901, there are two sets of photographs, preserved at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin as MSS simulata orientalia 5 and MSS simulata orientalia 6, which were taken in 1909 when the fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna were in Berlin.[6] As it happens, all the Syriac fragments in the first of those sets – MSS simulata orientalia 5 – had already been photographed by Violet in 1901, and are therefore in the BBAW collection as well. One should of course keep in mind that only a subset of the fragments were photographed, first in Damascus and later in Berlin.

The first assessment of the Syriac material from the Qubba was made by Hermann von Soden, and it does not sound too praising. In his own words, "hervorragendes scheint sich darunter nicht zu befinden" (there does not seem to be anything outstanding in it).[7] This evaluation probably explains why, although the images have been available in Berlin for a hundred years, they have not attracted much scholarly attention, at least in comparison with the fragments of Greek manuscripts.

Before proceeding to a survey of the scholarship, it should be stated that the very first study and attempt at identification, particularly of the fragments of biblical manuscripts, was done by Violet himself. Some of the images show his identifications of biblical text written in pencil directly on the fragments.[8] Furthermore, the placement of fragments in the images attests to his attempt to group fragments as belonging to the same manuscript, or at least as having a similar handwriting.

With regard to the identification and general description of the Syriac fragments in Violet's photographs, although all the Syriac fragments were reportedly examined by specialists, nothing is available in print. The two survey articles – by von Soden and by Bandt and Rattmann – provide brief general overviews based on examinations of the Syriac material by Eduard Sachau and Sebastian Brock respectively.[9]

To the best of my knowledge, only three Syriac texts available in the Berlin photographs have been edited thus far. Werner Strothmann edited the most extensive text (thirty-five folios) among those that were photographed, namely the *Commen-*

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5 The photographs taken by Violet in 1901 are available online at the website of the BBAW at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

6 The two sets in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin are available online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

7 Von Soden, "Bericht", 829.

8 E.g. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/85, 481/86, 481/144 and 481/146.

9 Von Soden, "Bericht"; Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise".

tary on Ecclesiastes by Theodore of Mopsuestia.[10] According to Strothmann, the manuscript dates back to the sixth or seventh century,[11] but this dating is undoubtedly too early and the manuscript must have been copied no earlier than the eighth or even the ninth century. Just as with many of Theodore of Mopsuestia's other works, no Greek manuscript containing this text is extant, and hence the fragmentary Damascus manuscript is a unique witness to this exegetical treatise of Theodore.[12]

Twelve leaves which were attached to that same manuscript prior to it being photographed in the early twentieth century (though originally belonging to an independent manuscript) contain yet another work of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the *Commentary on the Nicene Creed*, which forms a part of his larger work, *Catechetical Homilies*.[13] The work is lost in Greek, but preserved in full in Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Syr. 561. Raymond Tonneau and Robert Devreesse prepared a facsimile edition of this text and registered the disparities of the Damascus fragment in the footnotes to the French translation.[14]

Emiliano Fiori has recently studied and edited a Qubba fragment from a pharmacological work that displays some similarities with the *Syriac Book of Medicines*,[15] one of the most important medical works in Syriac.[16] Although Fiori characterises the script of the fragment as ninth-century Serto,[17] it would be more accurate to identify it as East Syriac script, for which we have other attestations.[18]

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10 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/87, 481/99–133 = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 13r–47v (no. 26 in the list in the appendix). Werner Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment des Ecclesiastes-Kommentars von Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1988.

11 Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment*, xix.

12 A number of later Syriac exegetical works have preserved some quotations that go back to the same translation attested by the Damascus fragment.

13 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/87–99 = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 1r–12v (no. 25 in the list in the appendix).

14 Raymond Tonneau and Robert Devreesse, *Les Homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste: Reproduction phototypique du Ms. Mingana Syr. 561*, Studi e Testi 145, Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 1949. The *Commentary on the Nicene Creed* had also been edited previously by Mingana, using the same manuscript; see Alphonse Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, Woodbrooke Studies 5, Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons 1932.

15 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/177–178 (no. 31 in the list in the appendix). Emiliano Fiori, "A Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment in Syriac: Evidence of Recipes and Prescriptions from the Qubbet el-Ḫazne of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus", *Aramaic Studies* 15 (2017), 200–229.

16 For an edition and English translation, see E.A. Wallis Budge, *Syrian Anatomy, Pathology and Therapeutics, or "The Book of Medicines"*, London: Oxford University Press 1913.

17 Fiori, "Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment", 203.

18 For example, Cadbury Research Library MS Mingana Syr. 661 displays an even more developed form of the type of cursive East Syriac script that was characterised by Mingana as "an early East Syriac hand bordering on a West Syrian *sirṭa*". Mingana dated this approximately to the year 1100; Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, Now in the Possession of the Trustees of the Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham*, vol. 3, *Additional Christian Arabic and Syriac manuscripts*, Cambridge: W. Heffer 1939, 95.

The small number of additional studies that deal with the Syriac fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna were made based not on the Berlin reproductions but on the actual fragments, after they had been transferred to the National Museum of Damascus (Department of Byzantine Art). Thus, William Hatch, an American New Testament scholar, visited the museum in 1929 and found a two-folio fragment of a palimpsest. Although Hatch was particularly interested in its *scriptio superior*, which contained ninth-century Gospels of Matthew and Luke in Greek, he indicated that the *scriptio inferior* "was a good Estrangelâ hand of an early date".[19] According to Hatch, this fragment came from the Umayyad Mosque; it is not present among the reproductions available in Berlin.

Then Pieter de Boer, a Dutch biblical scholar, visited the museum in 1967 and photographed some fragments of biblical manuscripts.[20] His attention was particularly directed at the leaves of the East Syriac Pentateuch manuscript.[21] In the process of comparing those leaves with other East Syriac biblical manuscripts, he discovered another part of the same manuscript, preserved in the library of the Oriental Institute in Chicago (under the shelf-mark A 12084), which consists of thirty folios. Both parts of the manuscript were used in the critical edition of the Peshitta Old Testament. Apparently based on the photographs made by De Boer, a brief description appeared in due course that covered, besides the leaves from the Pentateuch, also additional biblical fragments (nos. 60–70, 81–86, 148, and 174–175 in the BBAW collection).[22]

We know something of the more recent history of this Pentateuch manuscript.[23] Bernhard Moritz, a German Arabist and expert in Arabic palaeography, director (in 1896–1911) of the Khedival Library in Cairo, visited Violet during the course of his work in Damascus in the year 1900. As was later discovered, Moritz made off with the Pentateuch manuscript, taking it to Cairo. The loss was realised and Violet was accused of the theft. When he himself visited Moritz in Cairo few

19 Hatch, "Uncial Fragment", 149.

20 His description is worth quoting in extenso: "I have searched three times in vain to trace the collection in Damascus. In the spring of 1967 Dr Huygens, a historian of my university who is looking for a Latin and old-French fragment from the same collection, showed me a letter from a Syrian authority from which it was clear that at least a part of the collection was kept in a strong-room in the National Museum of Damascus. During my visit to Damascus in April 1967 I was able to trace the fragments. Mr Bachir Zouhdi, the keeper of the department of Byzantine Art of the Museum, kindly showed me the collection. A small part of it is in the department of Byzantine Art on exposition, but most of it is kept in small cardboard boxes locked up in a safe in a cellar of the Museum"; P.A.H. de Boer, "Dispersed Leaves", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 13 (1968), 33–34. The photographs made by De Boer are preserved at the Peshitta Institute (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); they have been recently digitised and made available online at the website of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, at https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/502943.

21 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/60–70 (no. 1 in the list in the appendix).

22 Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement to the List of Old Testament Peshiṭta Manuscripts", *Vetus Testamentum* 18, no. 1 (1968), 130.

23 In what follows I depend on Bandt and Rattmann, "Damaskusreise", 10–11.

months later, he demanded the manuscript's return, whereupon Moritz ripped it in two, giving one part to Violet. The other was itself later acquired by the Oriental Institute in Chicago as a part of Moritz's private collection.

A number of years after De Boer visited Damascus, another European scholar, Joseph-Marie Sauget, *scriptor orientalis* of the Vatican Library, was visiting the National Museum there and noticed the presence of a unique piece.[24] It was a fragment of the Liturgy of James, brother of Christ, a significant part of which was written in Greek using the Syriac alphabet. This particular type of allography is known from only a handful of examples.[25] The fragment in question is of Melkite origin and was cautiously dated by Sauget to the ninth or tenth century. Sauget had noticed the presence of a *scriptio inferior* in Syriac, and the undertext was identified by Sebastian Brock as containing Genesis 32–34.[26] This fragment is not present among the reproductions available in Berlin.

In the 1990s and the 2000s, the National Museum of Damascus organised a number of exhibitions in Europe in a bid to promote the heritage of Late Antique Syria. Among the objects on display were a few fragments of Syriac manuscripts all of which appear to come from the Qubbat al-khazna. The exhibitions were accompanied by well-illustrated catalogues that featured reproductions. The catalogue, *Syrien: Von den Aposteln zu den Kalifen*, for example, reproduces two Syriac fragments which were exhibited in Austria.[27] Although there is no description of their content, both fragments have been identified by Sebastian Brock.[28] The first is a palimpsest: an old Syriac biblical manuscript containing Genesis was reused at some point around the eleventh century for a copy of a treatise by an East Syriac monastic author, Isaac of Nineveh. The second fragment, likewise of Melkite origin, contains a paschal calendar. Only one of these two fragments is present in Violet's photographs of 1901, namely that containing the text of Isaac of Nineveh.[29]

Another exhibition from the National Museum of Damascus took place in Germany, and was likewise accompanied by a well-illustrated catalogue, *Die Kunst der frühen Christen in Syrien*. This time only one Syriac fragment is featured, and this

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24 Joseph-Marie Sauget, "Vestiges d'une célébration gréco-syriaque de l'Anaphore de saint Jacques", in: *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert van Roey*, Carl Laga, Joseph A. Munitiz, and Lucas Van Rompay, eds., Leuven: Peeters 1985, 309–345.

25 See, for instance, Paul Géhin, "Écrire le grec en lettres syriaques: Les hymnes du Sinaï syr. 27", in: *Scripts Beyond Borders: A Survey of Allographic Traditions in the Euro-Mediterranean World*, Johannes den Heijer, Andrea B. Schmidt, and Tamara Pataridze, eds., Publications de l'Institut orientaliste de Louvain 62, Leuven: Peeters 2014, 155–186.

26 Sebastian P. Brock, "Notulae Syriacae: Some Miscellaneous Identifications", *Le Muséon* 108 (1995), 70.

27 Erwin M. Ruprechtsberger, ed., *Syrien: Von den Aposteln zu den Kalifen*, Mainz: Von Zabern 1993, 517; note that the catalogue's indication of three manuscripts present among its reproductions is erroneous.

28 Brock, "Notulae Syriacae", 69–70.

29 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/206 (no. 29 in the list in the appendix).

can be recognised as the fragment of the Anaphora of James studied by Sauget and mentioned earlier.[30] Interestingly, whereas *Syrien: Von den Aposteln zu den Kalifen* does not indicate the provenance of the fragments and only provides inventory numbers, *Die Kunst der frühen Christen in Syrien* explicitly mentions the Umayyad Mosque.

A more detailed description of the Syriac fragments in the photographs taken by Violet in 1901 can be found in the appendix, but in what follows I shall provide by way of an introduction some general remarks. In total, one can distinguish thirty-one different Syriac manuscripts to which the fragments once belonged. As far as dating is concerned, the oldest can be safely placed in the sixth century, whereas the most recent ones were copied no later than the twelfth. All of the fragments appear to be written on parchment.

Though generally speaking each of the three Syriac ecclesiastical traditions is represented – Syriac Orthodox, East Syriac, and Melkite[31] – it is noteworthy that there is only a single fragment from a Syriac Orthodox manuscript copied in Serto,[32] the standard West Syriac book hand from the ninth century onwards. The vast majority of the fragments are written in Estrangela and belong to the first millennium. Given that this Syriac script was employed by all three Syriac traditions before the formation of independent and distinct forms of handwriting, it is not always possible to differentiate such early Estrangela manuscripts on palaeographical grounds alone.

There are a surprisingly large number of fragments of East Syriac manuscripts, although in general it is the manuscripts of the Church of the East that suffered most during the medieval period in comparison with other traditions of Syriac Christianity. Hence the material from the Qubbat al-khazna is a welcome addition to the corpus of East Syriac manuscripts. Melkite manuscripts are also represented among the Syriac Qubba fragments; the two most recent fragments in the collection (eleventh or twelfth century) are written in Melkite script.[33]

It is not possible to clearly trace the history of the Syriac manuscripts before they reached the Qubbat al-khazna. Nevertheless, it certainly seems reasonable to imagine that the Syriac manuscripts came from two churches or monasteries, one

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30 Mamoun Fansa and Beate Bollmann, eds., *Die Kunst der frühen Christen in Syrien: Zeichen, Bilder und Symbole vom 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert*, Mainz: Von Zabern 2008, 192–193. The same fragment features in yet a further catalogue – Efi Andreadi, ed., *Συρία: Βυζαντινά χρόνια*, Athens: Megara, 2001, 211 – but this time without illustration.

31 For a general presentation of Syriac manuscripts see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Art of the Scribe", in: *The Hidden Pearl: The Syrian Orthodox Church and its Ancient Aramaic Heritage*, vol. 2, *The Heirs of the Ancient Aramaic Heritage*, Sebastian P. Brock et al., eds., Rome: Trans World Film Italia, 2001, 243–262; and Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet, "Writing Syriac: Manuscripts and Inscriptions", *The Syriac World*, Daniel King, ed., London: Routledge, 2019, 243–265.

32 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/181 (no. 16 in the list in the appendix).

33 MSS simulata orientalia 6, photographs nos. 67–85, and BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/206 (nos. 18 and 29 in the list in the appendix).

East Syriac and one Melkite. However, given that the most recent East Syriac manuscripts can be dated to the tenth century, whereas the latest Melkite manuscripts stretch to at least the twelfth century, it is likewise possible to propose a single source for all the manuscripts, perhaps a Melkite church or monastery that over the course of time accumulated manuscripts from other Syriac traditions. It may, of course, be the case that the reality of history was much more complex, with a scattering of manuscripts coming from one place and others from elsewhere. Nevertheless, a clear stratification within the collection (old manuscripts then East Syriac manuscripts then Melkite manuscripts) supports the idea that most of the manuscripts were preserved in one location before their eventual transfer to the Qubbat al-khazna.

Each of the three Syriac traditions involved had dioceses with a centre in Damascus. And, of course, each of these had monasteries located in the area.[34] It is, however, reasonable to posit a possible connection of the Syriac manuscripts and fragments with Palestine, where all three traditions were similarly well represented. Interestingly enough, we are aware of rather active contacts between the East Syriac and Melkite traditions that took place in the period of the seventh to the ninth centuries in Palestine.[35]

By way of example, one might mention the case of the fragment that belonged to the manuscript containing a work by Isaac of Nineveh. This seventh-century East Syriac author happened to become very popular in the Melkite milieu. In particular, we know that the so-called *First Part* of his corpus was translated into Greek in the eighth or ninth century in the Orthodox Monastery of St Saba in the Judean Desert.[36] It has now been firmly established that the Greek translation was made from the Syriac text after it had undergone editorial revisions aimed at san-

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34 For ecclesiastical geography and hierarchies, see Jean Maurice Fiey, *Pour un Oriens Christianus Novus: Répertoire des diocèses syriaques orientaux et occidentaux*, Beiruter Texte und Studien 49, Beirut: Franz Steiner Verlag 1993; and Klaus-Peter Todt and Bernd A. Vest, *Syria (Syria Prōtē, Syria Deutera, Syria Euphratēsia)*, Tabula Imperii Byzantini 15, Vienna: ÖAW 2015. The presence of the East Syriac community in Damascus was surveyed in Jean Maurice Fiey, "Les insaisissables Nestoriens de Damas", in: *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert van Roey*, Carl Laga, Joseph A. Munitiz, and Lucas Van Rompay, eds., Leuven: Peeters 1985, 167–180.

35 A Palestine connection has likewise been proposed for fragments in other languages; see, e.g., Alin Suciu, "A Bohairic Fragment of the Acts of Matthew in the City of the Priests and Other Coptic Fragments from the Genizah of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus", *Le Muséon* 131 (2018), 261–262; Radiciotti and D'Ottone, "I frammenti", 56–59; Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment" in: Ahmad Al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment. Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī*, Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110. See also Miriam Hjälm's contribution in this volume.

36 Sebastian P. Brock, "Syriac into Greek at Mar Saba: The Translation of Isaac the Syrian", in: *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, Joseph Patrich, ed., Leuven: Peeters 2001, 201–208; Sebastian P. Brock, "Isaac the Syrian", in: *La Théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, Carmelo G. Conticello, ed., Brepols: Turnhout 2015, 1:327–372.

itising passages unacceptable to the Chalcedonian Orthodox. It is fortunate that an early Melkite Syriac copy of the *First Part* has been preserved. The manuscript Sinai Syr. 24 is datable to the end of the eighth or beginning of the ninth century, and was produced at the Monastery of St Saba.[37] As a matter of fact, among the Damascus fragments may be found not only an early fragment from the Melkite copy of the *First Part* (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/206), but also the oldest known manuscript witness to the Greek translation – one part of the manuscript is known from the photographs taken by Violet (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/1–22, 47), while the other is in the Bibliothèque national de France (MS Suppl. Gr. 693).[38] Hence, the possible connection of the fragments found in the Qubbat al-khazna with the region of Palestine merits attention.[39]

Most of the Syriac fragments can be identified as coming from thirteen different biblical manuscripts. Fragments of liturgical content can be allocated to eight liturgical manuscripts; among the fragments of theological, exegetical, and homiletic content one can distinguish seven different manuscripts. A number of the fragments are palimpsests. One of these has a *scriptio inferior* in Syriac,[40] another in Hebrew.[41] One relatively extensive manuscript fragment[42] was made from the reused parts of two different Syriac manuscripts. Finally, Syriac is present as *scriptio inferior* in a double palimpsest fragment, with Greek as the second text layer and Arabic on top.[43]

The prominence of biblical fragments among the Violet photographs of 1901 may not necessarily indicate that these formed the largest group among the Syriac fragments preserved at the Qubbat al-khazna (although this is very likely to be the

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37 Grigory Kessel, "Sinai syr. 24 as an Important Witness to the Reception History of Some Syriac Ascetic Texts", in: *Sur les pas des Araméens chrétiens: Mélanges offerts à Alain Desreumaux*, Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet and Muriel Debié, eds., Cahiers d'études syriaques 1, Paris: Geuthner 2010, 207–218.

38 The identification of the text of both parts was made in Kurt Treu, "Remnants of a Majuscule Codex of Isaac Syrus from Damascus", in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. 16, no. 2, Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., Texte und Untersuchungen 129, Berlin: Akademie 1985, 114–120. Treu dates the Greek manuscript to the ninth century.

39 The presence of Syriac communities in Palestine (including Jerusalem) during the medieval period is surveyed in, for example, Otto Meinardus, "The Nestorians in Egypt: A Note on the Nestorians in Jerusalem", *Oriens Christianus* 51 (1967), 112–129; Jean Maurice Fiey, "Le pèlerinage des Nestoriens et Jacobites à Jérusalem", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 12 (1969), 113–126; Johannes Pahlitzsch, "St. Maria Magdalena, St. Thomas und St. Markus: Tradition und Geschichte dreier syrisch-orthodoxer Kirchen in Jerusalem", *Oriens Christianus* 81 (1997), 82–106; Sabino Chialà, "Monaci siro-orientali in Palestina: Echi della riforma di Abramo di Kashkar", in: *Knowledge and Wisdom: Archaeological and Historical Essays in Honour of Leah Di Segni*, Giovanni Claudio Bottini, Lesław Daniel Chrupcała, and Joseph Patrich, eds., Milan: Terra Santa 2014, 215–235.

40 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/181 (no. 16 in the list in the appendix).

41 MSS simulata orientalia 6, photographs nos. 67–85 (no. 18 in the list in the appendix).

42 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/197–203 (no. 17 in the list in the appendix).

43 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/207–208 (no. 5 in the list in the appendix).

case). Rather, this may – at least in part – reflect the interests of von Soden, who initiated Violet's research trip.

Among the biblical text fragments that I have been able to identify in the context of the present study, two deserve special attention. The oldest undertext of the double palimpsest belonged to a manuscript containing 1 Samuel which can be dated to the sixth century.[44] The oldest known manuscript witnesses to 1 Samuel belong to the sixth century and were used in the critical edition of the Peshitta Institute (6h1, 6h4, 6h19, 6k8). The Damascus fragment is a valuable addition, although given the palimpsested nature of the fragment not much can be deciphered based on the photographs.[45]

One loose leaf contains a revision of the Peshitta version of Proverbs made on the basis of the Septuagint.[46] Although on a number of occasions the anonymous revision anticipates the Syro-Hexapla, there are few occurrences where it differs from both the Peshitta and the Syro-Hexapla. This revision appears to be not otherwise known and hence it is a unique document witnessing to the attempts of revising the Peshitta translation against the Septuagint.[47]

One further fragment from a work of Theodore of Mopsuestia has been identified, which contains a part of his *Commentary on the Psalms*.[48] This work is otherwise attested in only a single manuscript (Cambridge University Library MS Or. 1318), datable to the end of the nineteenth century. Having at our disposal even a tiny scrap of a copy which is a thousand years older than the Cambridge copy allows us to observe the deterioration in the quality of the text in the course of its long transmission history.[49]

Four leaves of an ninth-century manuscript contain hymns, one of which turns out to be a part of the mēmrā *On Enoch and Elijah* by a fourth-century Syriac author Narsai.[50] According to William Macomber, the hymn is attested in eight manuscripts, the oldest of which goes back to the eighteenth or nineteenth century.[51] The homily was edited by Judith Frishman based on the six manuscripts.[52] The

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44 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/207–208 (no. 5 in the list in the appendix).

45 The application of multispectral imaging could facilitate the study of the fragment.

46 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/148–149 (no. 10 in the list in the appendix).

47 We know about revisions of other Old Testament books against the Septuagint; see, for instance, Sebastian P. Brock, "Mingana Syr. 628: A Folio from a Revision of the Peshiṭta Song of Songs", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 40 (1995), 39–56.

48 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/190–191 (no. 27 in the list in the appendix).

49 I was kindly informed by Sebastian Brock and Jack Tannous that the uncatalogued MS 7 in the Robert Garrett Collection of Syriac Manuscripts in Princeton University Library is a sixth-century Syriac copy of Theodore's *Commentary on the Psalms*. No further details about the manuscript or its content are known to me.

50 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/138–139 (no. 22 in the list in the appendix).

51 William F. Macomber, "The Manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies of Narsai", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 39 (1973), 305, no. 76.

52 Judith Frishman, *The Ways and Means of the Divine Economy: An Edition, Translation and Study of Six Biblical Homilies by Narsai*, PhD dissertation, Universiteit Leiden 1992.

Damascus fragment demonstrates significant textual variation in comparison with other copies. Furthermore, this fragment is now the oldest known manuscript witness to the collection of works of Narsai. The other text(s) of the fragment are remarkably reminiscent of Narsai's *oeuvre* and may belong to his corpus as well.

A hymn by another early Syriac author, Ephrem of Nisibis (d. 373), is preserved in a fragment from a sixth-century manuscript.[53] The text can be identified as the first hymn on resurrection of Ephrem (*De resurrectione* 1). The text was edited by Edmund Beck based on one defective manuscript (British Library MS Add. 14627).[54] As was demonstrated by Jean Slim and Sebastian Brock, the missing portion from the beginning of the hymn is preserved in the liturgical hymnary of the Syriac Orthodox Church.[55] With the help of the Damascus fragment, one can now verify the evidence of the liturgical text. It remains to be explored whether other text(s) in the fragment belong to Ephrem.

The collection of fragments of Syriac manuscripts once preserved in the Qubbat al-khazna is of indisputable importance and significance. Thanks to the photographs kept at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, there is the opportunity at least for an initial study; it remains to be seen precisely which fragments were moved from the Qubbat al-khazna to the National Museum of Damascus (or perhaps elsewhere).[56] Containing leaves of East Syriac, Syrian Orthodox, and Melkite manuscripts dating for the most part to the first millennium, this remains today one of the few collections that have not been fully explored, and the large proportion of East Syriac fragments distinguishes this collection from others and deserves special attention. The study of these remnants of Syriac manuscripts will not only add additional manuscript witnesses to the works of Syriac literature but also shed light on the presence and contact of different Christian communities in the region.

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53 BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/77–80 (no. 21 in the list in the appendix).

54 Edmund Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Paschahymnen (De Azymis, De Crucifixione, De Resurrectione)*, CSCO 248 and Scriptores Syri 108, Leuven: Peeters 1964.

55 Jean Slim, "Hymne I de saint Éphrem sur la Résurrection", *L'Orient Syrien* 12 (1967), 510; Sebastian P. Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's Madrashe in the Syriac Liturgical Tradition", *Studia Patristica* 33 (1997), 499.

56 It deserves to be noted that the published museum guides mention quite a substantial number of Syriac manuscripts; see, for instance, Abu-l-Faraj al-Ush, Adnan Joundi, and Bachir Zouhdi, *A Concise Guide to the National Museum of Damascus*, Damascus: Ministry of Culture 1999, 139–140.

Appendix:[57]
Fragments of Syriac manuscripts in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481)[58] *and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (MSS simulata orientalia 5 and MSS simulata orientalia 6)*[59]

Each number in the list below corresponds to an independent manuscript. The fragments are arranged according to thematic order. If two fragments are present in one image, I refer to these as "left", "right", "upper", or "lower". If there are more fragments, I add an additional letter (A, B, C) to the image number for the sake of differentiation.

1. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/60–70

Pentateuch
1 col. – 32–34 l. – *c.*24.5 × 18 cm
Extant text: Gen. 50:7–26, Exod. 1:1–21, Exod. 3:13–14:21, Lev. 6:18–8:5, Num. 18:9–20:5
Estrangela, East Syriac vowel signs, tenth century
Siglum 10b2 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta
[another part of the same manuscript is now Chicago, Oriental Institute MS A 12084]

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 60 (bifolium): Exod. 12:35–14:2
No. 61 (two loose leaves): Num. 18:9–19:2, Exod. 14:3–21
No. 62 (bifolium): Exod. 12:3–35
No. 63 (bifolium): Exod. 10:8–12:3
No. 64 (bifolium): Exod. 9:6–10:8
No. 65 (bifolium): Exod. 7:19–9:6
No. 66 (bifolium): Exod. 6:1–7:19
No. 67 (bifolium): Exod. 4:9–6:1
No. 68 (two loose leaves): Gen. 50:25–26, Exod. 1:1–21, Exod. 3:13–4:9
No. 69 (two loose leaves): Lev. 7:21–8:5, Gen. 50:7–25
No. 70 (two loose leaves): Num. 19:2–20:5, Lev. 6:18–7:21

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57 The following description should serve as an aid for future research until the publication of a detailed catalogue of the fragments.
58 Available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.
59 Available online at http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000AD1D00000000 and http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000074F100000000.

2. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/81–82

Exodus
1 fol. (upper half) – 2 cols. – max. 21 l. – 20.5 × 11.5 cm
Extant text: Exod. 7:22–27, 8:1–5, 8:9–14, 8:16–20
Estrangela, sixth century
Siglum 6k10 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 81 A: Exod. 7:22–27, 8:1–5
No. 82 A: Exod. 8:9–14, 8:16–20

3. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/174–175

Judges
1 fol. (upper half) – 2 cols. – max. 13 l. – 15.25 × 22.25 cm
Extant text: Judg. 8:5–7, 8:8–10, 8:11–13, 8:14–16
Estrangela, seventh century
Siglum 7k17 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 174 A: Judg. 8:11–13, 8:14–16
No. 175 A: Judg. 8:5–7, 8:8–10

4. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/148

2 Samuel
1 fol. (upper half) – 1 col. – max. 10 l. – 16.5 × 11 cm
Extant text: 2 Sam. 7:25–27
Estrangela, sixth or seventh century
Siglum 7k16 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 148 B: 2 Sam. 7:25–27

5. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/207–208

Scriptio inferior: 1 Samuel
2 fols. – 2 cols.
Estrangela, sixth century

Two folios of a double palimpsest with the *scriptio superior* in Arabic (unidentified) and two layers of *scriptio inferior*, one in Greek (unidentified) and another in Syriac. Only one side of each folio was photographed.

No. 207: text begins with 1 Sam. 10:5
No. 208: 1 Sam. 7:16–8:9

6. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/83–86

2 Kings
2 fols. (the upper part is torn) – 1 col. – max. 28 l. – 24 × 16.5 cm
Extant text: 2 Kgs 10:14–25, 10:30–11:5, 15:4–18, 15:23–37
Estrangela, East Syriac vowel signs, ninth century
Siglum 9k4 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 83 (right): 2 Kgs 10:15–25
No. 84 (left): 2 Kgs 10:30–11:5
No. 85 (left): 2 Kgs 15:4–18
No. 86 (left): 2 Kgs 15:23–37

7. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/85–86

Psalms
1 fol. – 1 col. – 34 l.
Extant text: Ps. 69:17–71:22
Estrangela, East Syriac vowel signs, ninth century

No. 85 (right): Ps. 69:17–70:6
No. 86 (right): Ps. 70:6–71:22

8. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/148–149, 481/174–175

Psalms
2 fols. – 1 col. – 20–21 l.
Extant text: Ps. 42:12–44:4, 68:6–22
Estrangela, seventh century
Quire signature "6" (no. 175)

No. 174 B: Ps. 43:4–44:4
No. 175 B: Ps. 42:12–43:4
No. 148 C: Ps. 68:15–22
No. 149 A: Ps. 68:6–14

9. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/174–175

Psalms
1 fol. (upper part) – 2 cols. – max. 12 l. – 19 × 10.25 cm
Extant text: Ps. 106:18–22, 106:28–32, 106:38–42, 106:47–48
Estrangela, East Syriac vocal signs, eighth century
Siglum 8k2 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 174 C: Ps. 106:38–42, 106:47–48, beginning of the title of Ps. 107
No. 175 C: Ps. 106:18–22, 106:28–32

10. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/148–149

Proverbs (unknown revision)
1 fol. – 1 col. – 23-24 l.
Extant text: Prov. 24:30–25:11
Estrangela, seventh century
Quire signature "6" (no. 148) and one marginal note (no. 149)

No. 148 A: Prov. 24:30–25:4
No. 149 B: Prov. 25:4–11

The text appears to be a revision of the Peshitta translation on the basis of the Septuagint (Pe) and occasionally agrees with Syro-Hexapla (Syh). Selected variant readings (D represents the Damascus fragment):

24:30 ܕܫܝ D, Syh : ܕܠ Pe
24:34 ܕܠ ܟܡ D, Syh : ܟܐܠܠ ܟܐܕ Pe
25:11 ܕܒܐܝ ܕܒܕ D, Syh : ܕܒܕܐ ܟܐܕܒ Pe

25:10a (absent in Pe)
ܐ ܠܐ ܟܡܐ ܟܐܡܐܒ ܠܐ ܟܫܐ ܒܐ ܒܐ ܐ ܠܐ ܐ ܟܐܫ ܟܐܒܫܐ ܟܐܒܠ
(Syh) ܟܒܠܐ ܒܐܒܒ ܐܠܐ ܟܐܝܐ

[ ]ܐ ܒܐ ܒܐ ܐ ܒ ܒܐܒ ܟܐ ܒܒ ܟܠ ܒ ܒܐ ܟܐܫ ܟܐܒܫܐ ܟܐܒܠ
(D) ܟܒܫ [ ] ܟܠ ܟܐܝ ܐ ܐ ܟܐ

χάρις καὶ φιλία ἐλευθεροῖ, ἃς τήρησον σεαυτῷ, ἵνα μὴ ἐπονείδιστος γένῃ, ἀλλὰ φύλαξον τὰς ὁδούς σου εὐσυναλλάκτως (LXX)

11. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/83–84

Sirach
1 fol. (the upper part is torn) – 1 col. – 32 l. – 24 × 16.5 cm
Extant text: Sirach 36:27–37:18, 37:38–38:20
Estrangela, East Syriac vocal signs, ninth or tenth century
Siglum 10k7 in the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta

Lit.: Peshiṭta Institute, "Fourth Supplement", 130.

No. 83 (left): Sirach 36:27–37:18
No. 84 (right): Sirach 37:38–38:20

12. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/146–147

Matthew
1 bifolium – 1 col. – 23 l.
Extant text: Matt. 10:31–11:18
Estrangela, seventh century
Running title (no. 146)

No. 146 A: Matt. 10:39–11:10
No. 147 A: Matt. 11:10–18, 10:31–39

13. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/150–151

Matthew
1 bifolium (lower part is lost) – 1 col. – max. 25 l.
Extant text: Matt. 26:63–27:3, 27:10–24, 27:31–49, 27:56–28:4
Estrangela, East Syriac vocal signs, tenth century

No. 150 A: Matt. 26:63–27:3, 27:56–28:4
No. 151 A: Matt. 27:10–24, 27:31–49

14. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/144–145

New Testament lectionary
3 fols. (one complete and two fragments) – 1 col. – 34–35 l.
Extant text: Matt. 10:5, 10:15, Acts 6:3–7, 6:8–12, 6:12–7:2, 7:51–53, 7:54–60, 1 Cor. 12:15–14:5, Phil. 2:12.
Estrangela, East Syriac signs, tenth century
Rubric: Friday of the confessors (no. 145)

No. 144 A: 1 Cor. 12:15–31
No. 144 B: Acts 6:12–7:2, 7:51–53
No. 144 C: Acts 7:54–60
No. 145 A: 1 Cor. 12:31–14:5
No. 145 B: Acts 6:3–7, Phil. 2:12
No. 145 C: Matt. 10:5, 10:15, Acts 6:8–12

15. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/150–151

Liturgical / prayer
2 fols. – 1 col. – 16 l.
Estrangela, eighth century

No. 150 B
No. 150 C
No. 151 B
No. 151 C: includes
ܟܬܒܐ ܕܡ ܟܬܒܐ ܡܬܟܣ ܒܢ ܒܥܒ ܒܢ ܐܝܣ ܟܬܒܐ ܒܠܟ ܟܐ ܕܡ ܒܠܐ ܟܬܒ ܟܐ
ܒܠܒ [ ] ܟܘܡܐ ܟܬܒܘ [ ] ܠ

16. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/181

Syriac Orthodox liturgical, possibly a weekday prayer book (*šḥīmō*). Palimpsest (Syriac).

Scriptio superior
Bifolium (fragment of the central part) – 1 col. – max. 15 l.
Serto, eleventh or twelfth century
Palimpsest: *scriptio inferior* in Syriac Estrangela
The fragment may have belonged to the same manuscript as the next one.

No. 181:
Rubric: ܟܐܣܐ ܒܠܐ ܟܒܠ ̣ ܝ
Inc.: ܟܣܥܬ ܠܟ ܟܬܥܒ

Scriptio inferior (Syriac)
Almost completely illegible.

17. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/197–203

Syriac Orthodox weekday prayer book (*šḥīmō*). Palimpsest (Syriac).

Scriptio superior
14 fols. (?) – 1 col. – 15–17 l.
Serto, eleventh or twelfth century
The fragment may have belonged to the same manuscript as the previous one.

No. 197: The lower opening contains the beginning of the ninth hour for Friday
No. 198
No. 199
No. 200: The lower opening comes from the morning service for Tuesday
No. 201
No. 202
No. 203

Scriptio inferior of two types:

– 1 col., Estrangela, seventh century
Hymns in honour of Mary that include: ܪܓܙܐ ܡܪܝܡ ܒܬ ܡܠܟܐ
Visible on no. 197 (upper), 197 (lower, left-hand page), 198 (lower), 199 (upper and lower), 200 (lower, right-hand page), 201 (upper, left-hand page), 202 (upper and lower)

– 2 cols., Estrangela, eighth century
Possibly, a theological or an exegetical work
Visible on no. 197 (lower, right-hand page), 200 (lower, left-hand page), 201 (lower)

18. MSS simulata orientalia 6, photographs nos. 67–85

Melkite liturgical. Palimpsest (Hebrew).

Scriptio superior
10 fols. (complete quire?) – 1 col. – 9–10 l.
Melkite hand, twelfth century
MSS simulata orientalia 6, photograph no. 67: includes
ܡܠܟܐ ܡܫܝܚ [ ] ܕ ܡܠܟܐ ܥܠܡ ܟܠܗ ܡܫܬܥܝ ܡܢ ܥܠܡ ܟܠܗ
MSS simulata orientalia 6, photograph no. 71: includes
ܪܚܡ ܡܫܝܚ ܒܝ ܪܥܡ ܡܠܟ ܡܠܟ ܪܚܡܢ ܗܘ . ܐܠܗܐ [ ] ܒܪ ܐܠܗܐ ܥܡ ܬܫܒ
ܠܟ ܡܢ ܪܚܡ ܥܠܡ ✣ ✣✣
MSS simulata orientalia 6, photograph no. 75: includes
ܥܡܡܐ ܒܝܕ ܡܠܐܟ ܒܫܡ ܡܠܟܐ ܐܢ ܥܠܡ ܬܫܒ

Scriptio inferior (Hebrew)

19. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/81–82

Hymn in honour of a martyr
1 fol. (outer column only) – 2 cols. – 33 l.
Estrangela, seventh century

No. 81 B: includes

ܕܝ ܠܐ ܒܢ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܫܘܥܕܐ ܒܢ ܡܐ ܕܠ ܡܫܟܚ ܡܢ ܐܠܐ ܘܠܐ ܒܢ ܚܕ ܕܠ ܡܠܟ ܗܘ
ܕܫܘܡܗ ܡܠܟ ܕܠ ܒܢ ܒܥܠ ܚܝ ܕܠ ܚܝ ܒܢ ܐܒܗ ܕܫܘܥܕܐ ܡܢ ܕܫܘܟܠ

No. 82 B

20. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/213–214

Hymns for the deceased, attributed to Ephrem of Nisibis and Jacob of Serugh
2 bifolia – 1 col. – 22 l.
Only one side of each bifolium was photographed.
Estrangela, ninth century

No. 213:
Title: ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܥܠ ܠ ܡܟܠܐ ܒܝܕܗ ,ܙ ܡܡܪܐ ܕܫܘܫ
Inc.: ܕܫܘ ܒܗ ܡܙܡ ܡܫܘܫ ܙܥ ܗܠ ,ܫܬ
No. 214:
Title: ܡܟܠܐ ܫܡܫ ,ܙ ܡܫ ܠ ܡܫܡ .ܡܬܥ ܡܟܠ ܙ ܡܫ ܫܡ
Inc.: ܕܫܘ ܫܫ ܕܫܘܟܠ ܡܠܟ ,ܫܬ

The same two hymns can be found in other manuscripts, for example in Diyarbakır, Syrian Orthodox Church of Meryem Ana MS 32 (DIYR 32).

21. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/77–80

Hymns, one by Ephrem of Nisibis[60]
2 fols. – 2 cols. – 37–38 l.
Estrangela, sixth century

No. 77, col. 1:
Rubric: ܡܙܡܫ ܒܙ ܕܫܘܫ
Inc.: ܫܙܫ ܡܙܥ ,ܡܫܡܠܫܫ ܕܙܫܡ ,ܙ ܠ ܗܫ
No. 77, col. 2: Ephrem of Nisibis, *De resurrectione* I:1–4 (ed. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers*, p. 78, l. 8 – p. 79, l. 3)

[60] I am grateful to Sebastian Brock for his help with identification of this text.

No. 78: Ephrem of Nisibis, *De resurrectione* I:4–18 (ed. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers*, p. 79, l. 3 – 81, l. 22)
No. 79: Unidentified
No. 80: Unidentified

22. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/138–139

Hymns for the deceased, one by Narsai
4 fols. – 1 col. – 22–24 l.
Estrangela, ninth century

No. 138 (upper):
Title: ܡܬܝܫܒ ܩܠ
Inc.: ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܪܝ ܠܥܒܕܘ
No. 138 (lower):
Title: ܩܠ ܠܡܪ
Inc.: ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܪܝ ܠܡܐ ܥܒܕܬ ܠܟ ܐܡܪ
No. 139 (lower, left-hand page): Narsai, mēmrā 76, *On Enoch and Elijah* (ed. Frishman, *Ways and Means*, p. 4, ll. 30–52)
No. 138 (upper, right-hand page): Narsai, mēmrā 76, *On Enoch and Elijah* (ed. Frishman, *Ways and Means*, p. 4, l. 52 – p. 6, l. 76)
No. 139 (upper, left-hand page): Narsai, mēmrā 76, *On Enoch and Elijah* (ed. Frishman, *Ways and Means*, p. 5, l. 77 – p. 6, l. 98)
No. 138 (lower, right-hand page): Narsai, mēmrā 76, *On Enoch and Elijah* (ed. Frishman, *Ways and Means*, p. 6, ll. 99–110)

The text of Narsai's mēmrā 76 was edited in Frishman, *Ways and Means* based on six manuscripts, all from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. The Damascus fragment offers multiple variant readings, and I shall analyse it elsewhere.

23. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/152–153

Paraphrase of the history of the Maccabean brothers
1 fol. (lower half) – 2 cols. – max. 29 l.
Estrangela, eighth century
Quire signature "14" (no. 153)

No. 152 (lower): Close to 2 Macc. 6:27–7:27
No. 153 (lower): Close to 2 Macc. 1:10–6:27

24. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/152–153

Scholia / commentary on the New Testament
The fragment deals with the subject of Christ's crucifixion and contains a reference to Gal. 6:7 ("God is not mocked"); the loan word *skōlīōn* (σχόλιον) features prominently.
Estrangela, sixth century

No. 152 (upper)
No. 153 (upper)

25. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/87–99 = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 1r–12v

Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Nicene Creed* (a part of the *Catechetical Homilies*, CPG 3852)
12 fols. – 1 col. – 27–30 l.
East Syriac hand, eighth century

Nos. 87 (right), 88–98, 99 (right) = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 1r–12v
Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Nicene Creed*, homilies 8–10 (ed. Tonneau and Devreesse, *Les Homélies catéchétiques*, MS Mingana Syr. 561, fol. 51v l. 1–fol. 71r).
No. 99 (right) = fol. 12v contains the Nicene Creed.

Lit.: Tonneau and Devreesse, *Les Homélies catéchétiques* [facsimile edition based on MS Mingana Syr. 561 with variant readings of MSS simulata orientalia 5 in the notes to the French translation].

26. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/87, 481/99–133 = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 13r–47v

Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* (CPG 3836) and a saint's life (?)
35 fols. – 1 col. – 26–28 l.
East Syriac hand, ninth century
Quire signatures "9" (fols. 21r, 30v), "10" (fols. 31r, 40v)

No. 99 (left) = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fol. 13r (modern foliation of the bound volume containing the photographs), page 149 (modern pagination in Eastern Arabic numerals present in the manuscript)
The final part of, perhaps, a saint's life, includes:
ܗܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܠܗ ܒܝ ܥܡ ܟܠ. ܕܥܒܕ ܠܗ ܒܟ ܒܝ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܝ ܕܐܡܪ ܟܬܒ ܐܢܐ
ܒܟܬܒ ܒܟܬܒ

Nos. 100–133, 87 (left) = MSS simulata orientalia 5, fols. 13v–47v (modern foliation of the bound volume containing the photographs), pages 150–218 (modern pagination in Eastern Arabic numerals present in the manuscript)
Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* (ed. Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment*, p. 1–86)

Lit.: Werner Strothmann, "Der Kohelet-Kommentar des Theodor von Mopsuestia", in: *Religion im Erbe Ägyptens: Beiträge zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte zu Ehren von Alexander Böhlig*, Manfred Görg, ed., Ägypten und Altes Testament 14, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz 1988, 186–196; Werner Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment* [edition covers fols. 13v–46v and reproduces fol. 47rv in facsimile].

27. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/190–191

Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Against the Allegorists* (from *Commentary on the Psalms*, CPG 3833)
1 fol. (upper half) – 1 col. – max. 15 l.
East Syriac hand, eighth century
The fragment may belong to the same manuscript that contained Theodore of Mopsuestia's *Commentary on the Nicene Creed*.
According to Van Rompay,[61] the treatise *Against the Allegorists* is to be regarded as an introduction to the commentary on Ps. 118.

No. 190 A: Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Against the Allegorists* 3 (ed. Van Rompay, *Theodore de Mopsueste*, p. 11, ll. 4–18)
No. 191 A: Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Against the Allegorists* 3 (ed. Van Rompay, *Theodore de Mopsueste*, p. 10, ll. 5–18)

Some notable variant readings against the edition of Van Rompay, which is based on Cambridge University Library MS Or. 1318 (late nineteenth century), include:

p. 10.5 Van Rompay ܚܡ] ܚܠ – p. 10.5 Van Rompay ܡܫܬܘܫ] ܡܫܬܘܫ – p. 10.6 Van Rompay ܡܫܡܠ] ܡܫܝܠ – p. 10.9 Van Rompay ܡܫܡܠ] ܡܫܝܠ – p. 10.1 Van Rompay ܫܘܡ] *om.* – p. 10.15 Van Rompay ܡܫܬܝܥ] ܡܝܫܘܘ ܡܫܬܝܥ – p. 10.18 Van Rompay ܡܠ] ܥܡ

p. 11.4 Van Rompay *lacuna*] ܡܝܫܥ *parum clare* – p. 11.5 Van Rompay ܫܚܕ] ܫܚܕ – p. 11.8 Van Rompay ܡܚܠܚܠ] ܡܚܠܚܠ – p. 11.8 Van Rompay ܒܡܚܕ *corr.*: ܫܚ ܒ cod.: ܒܡܚܕ

[61] Lucas Van Rompay, *Theodore de Mopsueste, Fragments syriaques du Commentaire des Psaumes (Psaume I 18 et Psaumes 138-148)*, CSCO 435 and Scriptores Syri 189, Leuven: Peeters 1982.

28. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/190–191

Theological treatise
1 fol. (upper half) – 1 col. – max. 20 l.
East Syriac hand, eighth century
Allusion to 1 Thess. 3:5

No. 190 B
No. 191 B: includes
ܟܬܒܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܡܠܐ ܐܓܪ [ ] ܠܗ ܥܒܕ ܐܢܐ ܒܟ ܩܛܝܢܐ ܒܝܬ ܐܠܗܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ ܟܬܒ ܕ

29. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/206

Isaac of Nineveh, *First Part*, 1.5–6. Palimpsest (Syriac): Gen. 49.

Scriptio superior
1 bifolium – 1 col. – 16 l.
Melkite hand, eleventh century

No. 206: Isaac of Nineveh, *First Part*, end of homily 5–beginning of homily 6 (ed. Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus Ninivita*, p. 80, l. 11 – 81, l. 11)[62]

Variant readings against the edition of Bedjan, which is based on Bibliothèque national de France MS syr. 359 (1234–1235 CE):
p. 81.2 Bedjan ܒܪܝܐ ,ܡ] ܚܕ ܒܪܝܐ ,ܡ – p. 81.3 Bedjan ܟܬܒܟ] ܟܬܒܬ – p. 81.3 Bedjan ܐܡ] ,ܐܒܪ

Lit.: Brock, "Notulae Syriacae", 69.

Scriptio inferior
1 fol. – 1 col. – 28 l.
Estrangela, sixth century
Gen. 49:16–29

Lit.: Brock, "Notulae Syriacae", 70.

30. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/146

Homily on the resurrection of the dead
1 fol. – 1 col. – 23 l.
Estrangela, sixth century
Contains a reference to Num. 16.
Quire signature "1" on No. 147.

62 Paul Bedjan, *Mar Isaacus Ninivita: De perfectione religiosa*, Paris: Otto Harrassowitz 1909.

No. 146 B: includes

ܟܬܒ ܕ ܒܝܬ ܪܒܝܬܐ ܟܝܦ ܟܬܒ ܡ ܐܒܝ ܒ ܪܒ ܩܘܪܝܩܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ

No. 147 B

31. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/177–178

Medical recipes
1 bifolium – 1 col. – max. 32 l.
East Syriac hand, tenth century

No. 177 (ed. Fiori, "Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment", pp. 208–209, 214–215)
No. 178 (ed. Fiori, "Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment", pp. 211, 212–213)

Lit.: Emiliano Fiori, "Hitherto Unknown Medical Fragment" [contains edition and translation of the fragment].

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Some Greek hymnographic fragments from Damascus: Script types and texts

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This paper is devoted to a small but significant handful of fragments of Greek manuscripts from the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus that contain Christian hymns, and in particular to their palaeographical features and textual content.[1] In fact, these fragmentary manuscripts, which are known only thanks to early twentieth-century photographic reproductions now kept in Berlin,[2] seem to be particularly valuable from the point of view of both the history of Greek writing and the history of Byzantine liturgical books.

Recently, there has been growing interest in liturgical and hymnographic Greek manuscripts,[3] principally as a consequence of the increasing number of available important sources, such as, for example, the new fragments from Sinai which were discovered in 1975.[4] Nevertheless, not many of the Greek fragments from the

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1 The authors have jointly conducted this research and have discussed the details of this contribution together. Nonetheless, Francesco D'Aiuto is responsible for preparing the introduction and the first half of the paper (§ I), Donatella Bucca for the second half (§§ II–III).

2 The undeniable merit of having attracted attention again recently to this long-underestimated discovery – after the two articles by Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Nouveaux documents sur l'histoire religieuse et sociale de Damas au Moyen Âge", *Revue des études islamiques* 32, no. 1 (1964), 1–25; and "À propos des documents de la Grande Mosquée de Damas conservés à Istanbul", *Revue des études islamiques* 33, no. 1 (1965), 73–85 – belongs to Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74 (with further bibliography), later followed by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20 (with a reconstruction of Violet's mission on the basis of archival documents).

3 For the various kinds of hymns and hymn-books of the Greek Church which are mentioned in this paper and for their history see e.g. Kenneth Levy and Christian Troelsgaard, "Byzantine Chant", in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Stanley Sadie, ed., 2nd ed., London: Grove 2011, 4:734–756; Stig S. Frøyshov, "Byzantine Rite", in: *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*, J.R. Watson and Emma Hornby, eds., 2013, https://hymnology.hymnsam.co.uk/; Stig S. Frøyshov, "Rite of Jerusalem", in: *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*, J.R. Watson and Emma Hornby, eds., 2013, https://hymnology.hymnsam.co.uk/.

4 For an inventory of the Greek "new finds" from Sinai, see Panayotis G. Nicolopoulos, ed., *Ἱερὰ Μονὴ καὶ Ἀρχιεπισκοπὴ Σινᾶ. Τὰ νέα εὑρήματα τοῦ Σινᾶ*, Athens: Ministry of Culture, Mount Sinai Foundation 1998; or its English translation, *Holy Monastery and Archdiocese of Sinai: The New Finds of Sinai*, Athens: Ministry of Culture, Mount Sinai Foundation 1999.

Qubbat al-khazna have been fully exploited in this respect,[5] notwithstanding the fact that they can provide some useful additional data about a period in the history of Greek liturgical books that is otherwise quite poorly documented. Unfortunately, the analysis of these fragments can be carried out only thanks to the limited selection of photographs that were taken in Damascus and Berlin more than one hundred years ago. Our survey will, therefore, necessarily be incomplete, because on one hand we do not have access to the original manuscripts and, on the other hand, the available images of each fragment are in most cases only partial. Should the original manuscripts become available again, it will be possible to check and develop our observations.

As is well known, the majority of the Greek fragments discovered in Damascus by Bruno Violet in 1900–1901 consisted either of biblical texts, or of texts of Christian religious literature (including works of the Church Fathers), or ascetical literature. Indeed, only a relatively small number of the photographs show the presence of Greek hymns in the collection. However, one can speculate that hymns were perhaps the content of a much wider number of fragments than those represented in Violet's images. On one hand, the interest of the German scientific mission to Damascus in this kind of liturgical texts was probably quite limited, and, on the other, Violet met with many difficulties and restrictions in his scien-

[5] For bibliography and general information about the Greek fragments from Damascus, see Jean-Marie Olivier, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs de Marcel Richard*, 3rd ed., Corpus Christianorum, Turnhout: Brepols 1995, 257–259. Among the contributions on single Qubba fragments or groups of items in various languages, see e.g. Kurt Treu, *Majuskelbruchstücke der Septuaginta aus Damaskus*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1966; Kurt Treu, "Bruchstück einer griechischen Hymnenhandschrift aus Damaskus", in: *Festschrift für Fairy von Lilienfeld zum 65. Geburtstag*, Adelheid Rexheuser and Karl-Heinz Ruffmann, eds., Erlangen: Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg 1982, 431–445 (specifically about Qubba fragment no. 165 in Bruno Violet's photographs from 1901); Kurt Treu, "Remnants of a Majuscule Codex of Isaac Syrus from Damascus", in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. 16, no. 2, Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., Texte und Untersuchungen 129, Berlin: Akademie 1985, 114–120 (about Qubba fragments nos. 1–23 in Bruno Violet's photographs from 1901 + Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Suppl. gr. 693: Isaac Syrus, in sloping ogival majuscule, ninth century); Werner Strothmann, *Das syrische Fragment des Ecclesiastes-Kommentars von Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1988; Kurt Treu, "Fragment einer griechischen liturgischen Rolle aus Damaskus", *Sacris erudiri* 31 (1989–1990), 417–427 and pls. 23–24 (about Qubba fragments nos. 25a and 24b in Bruno Violet's photographs from 1901: hymnographic fragments for the month of January, ninth century); Arianna D'Ottone, "Frammenti coranici antichi nel Museo nazionale di Damasco", in: *Dirāsāt Aryūliyya: Studi in onore di Angelo Arioli*, Giuliano Lancioni and Olivier Durand, eds., Rome: La Sapienza Orientale 2007, 217–239; Maria Mavroudi, "Arabic Words in Greek Letters: The Violet Fragment and More", in: *Moyen arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire*: *Actes du premier colloque international (Louvain-la-Neuve, 10-14 mai 2004)*, Jerome Lentin and Jacques Grand'Henry, eds., Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain, Institut orientaliste 2008, 321–354; Dieter Harlfinger, "Beispiele der maiuscula ogivalis inclinata vom Sinai und aus Damaskus", in: *Alethes philia: Studi in onore di Giancarlo Prato*, Marco D'Agostino and Paola Degni, eds., Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2010, 2:461–477.

tific survey and photographic campaign, which obviously prevented him from reproducing the whole collection of fragments. It is reasonable to think that he must have chosen very carefully the limited number of items to reproduce among the abundant available manuscript material, and we can imagine that he probably omitted those hymnographic or liturgical fragments that did not appear particularly ancient or interesting to his eyes.

Be that as it may, of the 214 photos taken by Violet during his scientific mission to Damascus (1900–1901),[6] and the further 147 photographs that were taken when a sizeable number of fragments were sent to Berlin to be fully investigated by specialists (1903–1909)[7] – that is, out of a total of 361 photographs – only eighty-six images show Greek manuscripts. Among those, fourteen photographs (that is, about 16 per cent) contain hymnographic texts. As we will see, these fourteen photographs of fragments containing hymns belong to eight different hymnographic books (nos. 25a + 24b; 165; 166a + 167a + 168a + 169a; 172 + 173; 176a; 192a; 192b; 193 + 194).[8]

I. Some palaeographical remarks on the Greek fragments

In the second part of this paper, we analyse the content of the hymnographic fragments in detail, but, as a first step, it seems worthwhile drawing the readers' attention to the importance of the Greek Qubba fragments from a palaeographical point of view as well. Some figures can help us to visualise the relative proportion of different script types, although, for practical reasons, the numbers we discuss here refer to each single photographic frame that portrays a specific kind of script, rather than to the physical fragments as codicological units. In fact, in order to know the exact number of original manuscripts documented in these photographs, or the exact number of witnesses for each script type, all content would need to be definitively identified and the codicological units of all fragments would have to be reconstructed (albeit only virtually). Clearly, these are very complex tasks, still far from having been accomplished for all items. Therefore, for practical reasons, the numerical data here refer not to the fragments themselves (since, moreover, two or three fragments are sometimes assembled in the same plate, or, on the other hand, seem to be portrayed as recto and verso in more than one picture), but only to their im-

6 Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481, available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

7 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 5 and 6, available online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

8 We cite the fragments according to the numbering of the photographs taken by Bruno Violet, now kept in Berlin at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481). When we add a letter after the number of the photograph, we are referring to a specific item within a photograph portraying several manuscript fragments: letters (a, b, c, etc.) are given to single fragments based on a left-to-right and top-to-bottom ordering.

ages. In terms of proportions, however, even these rough numerical estimates can give a reliable impression of the real proportions of the graphic phenomena:

- biblical majuscule: in 22 photographs
- sloping ogival (or pointed) majuscule: in 47 photographs
- upright ogival (or pointed) majuscule: in 1 photograph
- "mixed" (majuscule/minuscule) script: in 18 photographs
- minuscule scripts: in 7 photographs

In fact, within the extant images of the Damascus fragments, a relatively narrow range of types of Greek book hand is attested.[9] The Greek minuscule scripts, in particular, are rare: they are attested in only seven images, which moreover show fragments where the minuscule script sometimes coexists with a majuscule script. However, one can imagine that the fragments of Greek minuscule manuscripts must have been for the most part neglected during the photographic campaign, because they were considered to be more recent – and therefore less promising for research purposes – than the majuscule ones. Consequently, the Greek majuscule scripts form a strong majority, and, among them, the so-called biblical majuscule is quite well documented, since it is attested in twenty-two photographs, some of which, however, show various pages of the same fragment several times. The so-called sloping ogival (or pointed) majuscule is even better witnessed: it can be recognised in forty-seven photographs, and is attested in particular in its Syro-Palestinian type,[10] a variety of this script that is characterised by a strong inclination of the letter axis towards the right. As for the upright ogival majuscule, there is only a single witness, which is not very surprising, if one considers that, in general, the upright variant of the ogival majuscule is far less common than the sloping one.

From a palaeographical point of view, a totally novel and surprising aspect of the Greek fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna consists in the large number of items, comparatively speaking, which are written in the so-called mixed script (eighteen photographs, portraying ten fragmentary manuscripts), which is a rare kind of Greek book hand that was identified by palaeographers only in the late 1970s (see figs. 1–2 for examples from the Qubba documents).[11]

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9 For more information about the types of Greek book hand that we will name, and for the relevant bibliography, see Lidia Perria, *Γραφίς: Per uno studio della scrittura greca libraria (secoli IV a.C.–XVI d.C.)*, Quaderni di Nea Rhome 1, Rome: Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata" and Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana 2011; an English translation is in press as *An Introduction to Greek Palaeography (4th Century B.C.–16th Century A.D.)*, translated by Richard Westall.

10 Perria, *Γραφίς*, 50.

11 Perria, *Γραφίς*, 67–68. For a recent synthesis on this book hand, with earlier bibliography and the identification of new manuscript witnesses, see Francesco D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista' maiuscolo-minuscola d'area mediorientale", in: *Griechisch-byzantinische Handschriftenforschung: Traditionen, Entwicklungen, neue Wege*, Christian Brockmann, Daniel Deckers, Dieter Harlfinger, and Stefano Valente, eds., Berlin: De Gruyter 2020, 145–169, 759–763 (pls. 1–5).

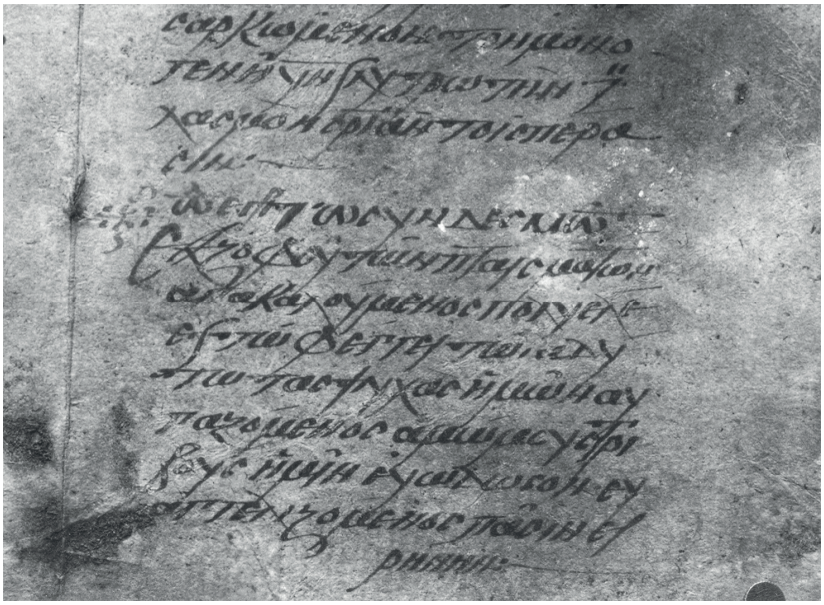


Fig. 1: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/165, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (detail from the right-hand page of the fragment). © BBAW.



Fig. 2: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/176, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (detail from the left-hand fragment, here no. 176a). © BBAW.

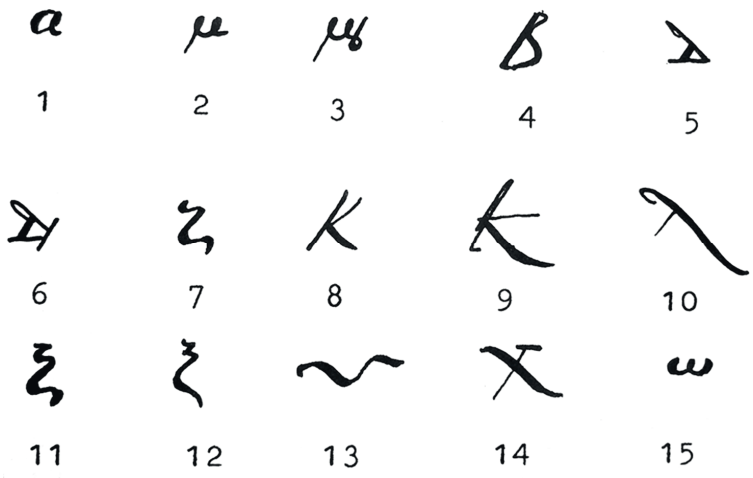


Fig. 3: "Mixed script": Typical letter forms (from Perria, "Il *Vat. gr.* 2200", 59).

This is a curious script that was created most probably at the end of the eighth century and seems to have been employed up to the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century. It consists in a well-balanced mixture of a majority of majuscule letter forms taken from the sloping ogival majuscule, and of a limited and carefully chosen number of letters taken from the minuscule script, which is represented here in particular by *alpha* and *my* (1–3 in fig. 3). Moreover, this script is also clearly recognisable thanks to some peculiar majuscule letter forms (4–15 in fig. 3).

Until a few years ago, this rare type of writing was attested in a handful of witnesses that seemed to connect it quite firmly to the Palestinian area, and in particular to Sinai.[12] The mixed script had been identified for the first time in 1975, on the occasion of the famous discovery, at St Catherine's Monastery on Sinai, of a large number of fragmentary manuscripts in various languages, namely Greek, Arabic, Syriac, Slavonic, Georgian, and even Caucasian Albanian. Among these "new finds" – or νέα εὑρήματα, as they are commonly labelled – there were fragments of seventeen Greek manuscripts that witnessed this type of writing, a book hand that was unknown until then: these are the fifteen fragmentary manuscripts that later received the shelf-marks Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery MS Greek NE [= νέα εὑρήματα, i.e. "new finds"] ΜΓ [= μεγαλογράμματος, i.e. "majuscule"] 15, 24, 26, 29, 37, 48, 52, 81, 82, 83, 84, 88, 91, 99, and 109; but there were also two additional items where the mixed script was employed only as *Auszeichnungsschrift*, that is, as a distinctive script for titles and rubrics (Sinai MS Gr. NE ΜΓ 2 and 10).[13]

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12 Linos Politis, "Nouveaux manuscrits grecs découverts au Mont Sinaï: Rapport préliminaire", *Scriptorium* 34 (1980), 13–14 and pls. 7c–8; see also James H. Charlesworth, "The Manuscripts of St Catherine's Monastery", *Biblical Archaeologist* 43, no. 1 (1980), 32.

13 For selected images, and the relevant entries of the summary catalogue, see Nicolopoulos, *Νέα εὑρήματα*.

A few years later, in 1984, Lidia Perria found the same type of book hand in a famous Syro-Palestinian Greek manuscript written in Hagiopolite minuscule on early Arabic paper that is now kept in the Vatican Library (MS Vat. gr. 2200), a codex where the mixed script was employed, once more, as a distinctive script. Perria described this manuscript, which is extremely interesting from textual as well as codicological and palaeographical points of view, in a long article, in which also she offered a refined study of the mixed script, analysing this writing style for the first time in a very precise manner.[14] Since then, some further fragmentary manuscripts from various collections have been added to the dossier of the mixed script, which by now – thanks to some new identifications proposed by Francesco D'Aiuto and other scholars – has reached approximately thirty witnesses.[15] Now, the fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus provide us with ten further manuscripts written in mixed script that have remained unknown until now, thus contributing a notable increase in the number of the items so far listed under this script type.[16]

Moreover, the Damascus fragments fully confirm what already seemed to emerge from previous studies on other witnesses, namely that the mixed script played the role of a secondary or auxiliary type of writing.[17] It was neither used for luxury books nor was it employed to transcribe biblical manuscripts.[18] Between the ninth and tenth centuries, the Holy Scriptures continued to be copied in majuscule script, especially in ogival majuscule; the mixed script was instead employed quite often in the Middle East for liturgical or hymnographic texts,[19] and

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14 Lidia Perria, "Il *Vat. gr.* 2200: Note codicologiche e paleografiche", *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s., 20–21 (1983–1984), 58–61 and pls. IV, VI (reprinted in *Tra Oriente e Occidente: Scritture e libri greci fra le regioni orientali di Bisanzio e l'Italia*, Lidia Perria, ed., Testi e studi bizantino-neoellenici 14, Rome: Sapienza Università di Roma 2003, 35–38 and pls. IV, VI).

15 Francesco D'Aiuto, "Un antico inno per la Resurrezione (con nuove testimonianze di 'scrittura mista' d'area orientale)", *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s. 45 (2008), 3–135 (with XII plates).

16 For a general list of all the known witnesses of "mixed script" (41 items, including the Damascus fragments), and for information on each item, see D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 161–169 (esp. 163–164 [= nos. 5–14] for the fragments from the Qubba). The overall number of known witnesses of this book hand is destined to grow further thanks to research recently conducted by Konrad Hirschler on other fragments from Damascus (either preserved *in situ* or in other places) and by Giulia Rossetto on the Sinai palimpsests: we wish to thank these scholars for sharing their information with us.

17 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 155.

18 The only (apparent) exception are nos. 75a and 76a in Violet's photographs of the Damascus fragments, which show a small scroll containing Psalm 90. However, this fragment seems to belong to the category of "apotropaic" rolls for individual devotional use – booklets that one could hang from one's neck or carry around – which could explain the occasional choice of a kind of script that has not so far been attested in manuscripts of genuinely scriptural content; see D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 163.

19 This is true for example of the Damascus fragments in Violet's photographs nos. 23c (?), 165, 166a + 167a + 168a + 169a, 172 + 173, 176a, 192b.

was sometimes also used for patristic or ascetic texts[20] as an alternative to the more common ogival majuscule, or again for modest books intended for a practical use, such as some rudimentary bilingual lexica[21] or school textbooks.[22] Moreover, it could be frequently used in these regions as a distinctive script in association with other Greek book hands, especially in manuscripts written in sloping ogival majuscule or in Hagiopolite minuscule.[23] In fact, although some of the most beautiful examples of mixed script can reach a high degree of calligraphic elegance,[24] this type of book hand – that most probably had its roots in the bureaucratic scripts employed in the ecclesiastical chanceries of the major centres of Syria and Palestine – remains a less formal writing style characterised by greater rapidity and freedom than the coeval majuscule scripts.

Finally, the last aspect that we would like to emphasise is that the fragments from Damascus markedly extend northwards the area of diffusion of the mixed script. Until recently, Sinai has been considered as the main centre of, if not origin, at least irradiation and spreading of this type of writing. The Greek scholar Panayotis Nicolopoulos had initially even proposed calling this script "Sinaitic demotic majuscule". However, recent research hypothesises that this script was most probably spread throughout the entire Middle East, present not only on Sinai and in Palestine, but probably also in Syria,[25] with some occasional projections even to the Far East, along the Silk Road, up to the oasis of Turfan in Chinese Turkestan, whence comes an isolated witness.[26] Now, the Qubba fragments show very clearly that manuscripts written in mixed script were read (and most probably written) in Syria as well. In fact, apart from these fragments, whose probable origin in Syria can be cautiously inferred from their centuries-long preservation in the Qubba's repository,

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20 See e.g. Sinai MS Gr. NE ΜΓ 48 + Sinai MS Gr. "Chest" I 55 (John Climacus's *Scala Paradisi*); see D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 165, 167–168.

21 See e.g. the Damascus fragment in Violet's photographs nos. 42 + 43, which contains Graeco-Arabic lexical *hermeneumata*. Francesco D'Aiuto and Arianna D'Ottone Rambach are currently preparing an edition and study of this fragment.

22 For instance, Sinai MS Gr. NE ΜΓ 26 (a paraphrasis of the *Iliad*); see Panayotis G. Nicolopoulos, "L'Εξήγησις de l'Iliade de Sophrone patriarche d'Alexandrie (841–860)", *Byzantion* 73 (2003), 246–249. For further bibliography, see D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 167 no. 28.

23 See e.g. the Damascus fragments nos. 71 + 72 in Violet's 1901 photographs (a scroll of the Liturgy of St James, in sloping ogival majuscule of the Syro-Palestinian type).

24 E.g. Vatican Library MS Vat. gr. 2200 (*Doctrina Patrum* and other theological writings, in Hagiopolite minuscule, with mixed script used as *Auszeichnungsschrift*); Vatican Library MS Vat. gr. 2282 (Graeco-Arabic scroll: Liturgy of St James, in sloping ogival majuscule of the Syro-Palestinian type, with mixed script used as *Auszeichnungsschrift*).

25 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 159–161; see also D'Aiuto, "Un antico inno".

26 Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Museum für Asiatische Kunst MS So. 12.955 + 12.950 (2) (Sogdian Psalter with Greek marginalia); see Nicholas Sims-Williams, "A Greek-Sogdian Bilingual from Bulayïq", in: *La Persia e Bisanzio: Convegno internazionale (Roma, 14–18 ottobre 2002)*, Atti dei Convegni Lincei 201, Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei 2004, 623–631; D'Aiuto, "Un antico inno", 13–19.

one should consider that the only manuscript in mixed script whose place of origin can be identified with certainty – the beautiful Graeco-Arabic liturgical scroll Vat. gr. 2282, where the mixed script is used for distinctive purposes – is evidently a manuscript originating from the city of Damascus, as can be inferred from the text of the prayer before the communion for the archbishop of that city: "our holy fathers and archbishops, from St Ananias the disciple of our Lord, who was the first archbishop of our city [i.e. Damascus], up to so-and-so [μέχρι τοῦ δ(εῖνα)], archbishop of our Christ-loving metropolis".[27]

II. The content of the Greek hymnographic fragments

Apart from their value for palaeographical research, the study of the Greek hymnographic fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna may also provide an important contribution to our knowledge of the early hymnographic production of the Greek Church. As we have already said, among the photographs that Bruno Violet took in 1901 of the fragments, now found in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (shelf-mark BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481), only fourteen images – portraying fragments belonging to eight different manuscripts – show Greek hymnographic texts:

- nos. 25a + 24b
- no. 165
- nos. 166a + 167a + 168a + 169a
- nos. 172 + 173
- no. 176a
- no. 192a
- no. 192b
- nos. 193 + 194

A detailed analysis of the content of these fragments has brought to light some unedited hymnographic texts, most of which are anonymous, while the remainder are traditionally (but often uncertainly) ascribed to some well-known hymnographers. Moreover, we came across a witness for an old liturgical commemoration that did not survive in later offices, and we discovered some unattested liturgical offices whose context and character has not yet been identified elsewhere. Finally, the way the content of certain fragments is arranged provides us with further elements that

[27] For the origin of this scroll in Damascus, see Anton Baumstark and Theodor Schermann, "Der älteste Text der griechischen Jakobosliturgie", *Oriens Christianus* 3 (1903), 218–219. See also D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 158, 160, 162–163 no. 4.

allow us to improve our comprehension of structure and content of the earliest liturgical and hymnographic books of the Greek Church.[28]

But let us begin the analysis of the individual fragments.[29]

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[28] In recent years, scholars have shown a growing interest in the study of the ancient hymnographic repertoire of the Greek Church as well as in the reconstruction of the origin and historical development of Byzantine liturgical books. Restricting ourselves only to works dealing with Greek manuscripts, see Peter Jeffery, "A Window on the Formation of the Medieval Chant Repertories: The Greek Palimpsest Fragments in Princeton University MS Garrett 24", in: *The Past in the Present: Papers Read at the IMS Intercongressional Symposium and the 10th Meeting of the Cantus Planus, Budapest & Visegrád, 2000*, László Dobszay, ed., Budapest: Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music 2003, 2:1–21; Francesco D'Aiuto, "Per la storia dei libri liturgico-innografici bizantini: Un progetto di catalogazione dei manoscritti più antichi", *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*, 3rd ser., 3 (2006), 53–66; D'Aiuto, "Un antico inno"; Francesco D'Aiuto and Donatella Bucca, "Per lo studio delle origini della Paracletica: Alcuni testimoni *antiquiores* d'ambito orientale e italiota", in: *Bisanzio e le periferie dell'Impero: Atti del Convegno Internazionale nell'ambito delle Celebrazioni del Millenario della Fondazione dell'Abbazia di San Nilo a Grottaferrata (Catania, 26–28 novembre 2007)*, Renata Gentile Messina, ed., Acireale: Bonanno Editore 2011, 73–102; Roman Krivko, "A Typology of Byzantine Office Menaia of the Ninth–Fourteenth Centuries", *Scrinium: Journal of Patrology, Critical Hagiography and Ecclesiastical History* 7/8, no. 2 (2011–2012), 3–68; Alexandra Nikiforova, *Iz istorii Minei v Vizantii: Gimnografičeskie pamjatniki VIII–IX vv. iz sobranija monastyrja Svjatoj Ekateriny na Sinae*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Pravoslavnogo Svjato-Tichonovskogo gumanitarnogo universiteta 2012; Alexandra Nikiforova, "The Tropologion Sin. gr. NE/MΓ 56–5 of the Ninth Century: A New Source for Byzantine Hymnography", *Scripta & e-Scripta* 12 (2013), 157–185; Tinatin Chronz and Alexandra Nikiforova, "Beobachtungen zum ältesten bekannten Tropologion-Codex Sinaiticus graecus MΓ 56+5 des 8.–9. Jhs. mit Erstedition ausgewählter Abschnitte", in: *Σύναξις καθολική: Beiträge zu Gottesdienst und Geschichte der fünf altkirchlichen Patriarchate für Heinzgerd Brakmann zum 70. Geburtstag*, Diliana Atanassova and Tinatin Chronz, eds., Orientalia – patristica – oecumenica 6.1, Vienna: Lit Verlag 2014, 1:145–174; Alexandra Nikiforova, "The Oldest Greek Tropologion Sin. Gr. MΓ 56+5: A New Witness to the Liturgy of Jerusalem from outside Jerusalem with First Edition of the Text", *Oriens Christianus* 98 (2015), 138–173; Svetlana Kujumdževa, *The Hymnographic Book of Tropologion: Sources, Liturgy and Chant Repertory*, Abingdon: Routledge 2018; Mariafrancesca Sgandurra, "I più antichi *Pentecostaria* manoscritti: Il problema della denominazione e della formazione del libro liturgico del periodo pasquale", in: *Dialoghi con Bisanzio: Spazi di discussione, percorsi di ricerca; Atti dell'VIII Congresso dell'Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini (Ravenna 22–25 settembre 2015)*, Salvatore Cosentino, Margherita Elena Pomero, and Giorgio Vespignani, eds., Quaderni della Rivista di Bizantinistica 20, Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 2:963–980.

[29] In describing the content of each manuscript fragment, the following bibliographic abbreviations will be employed:
An = *Ἀκολουθίαι τῶν ἀνώνυμων...*, *Ἀκολουθίαι τῆς ἁγίας Μεταλήψεως, καὶ αἱ θεῖαι Λειτουργίαι τῶν ἐν ἁγίοις πατέρων ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου Χρυσοστόμου καὶ Βασιλείου τοῦ μεγάλου...*, (curante Ph. Vitali, Romae) 1738.
EE = Sophronios Eustratiades, *Εἱρμολόγιον*, Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη 9, Chennevières-sur-Marne 1932.
EPh = *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος* 1 (1908)-...
HR = *Ὡρολόγιον τὸ μέγα*, ἐν Ῥώμῃ: ed. Propaganda Fide, 1876.
MR = *Μηναῖα τοῦ ὅλου ἐνιαυτοῦ*, I-VI, ἐν Ῥώμῃ: ed. Propaganda Fide, 1888–1901.
PaR = *Παρακλητική, ἤτοι Ὀκτώηχος ἡ Μεγάλη* [...], ἐν Ῥώμῃ: ed. Propaganda Fide, 1885.
PG = *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, I–CLXI, Parisiis: apud J.-P. Migne editorem, 1857–1866.

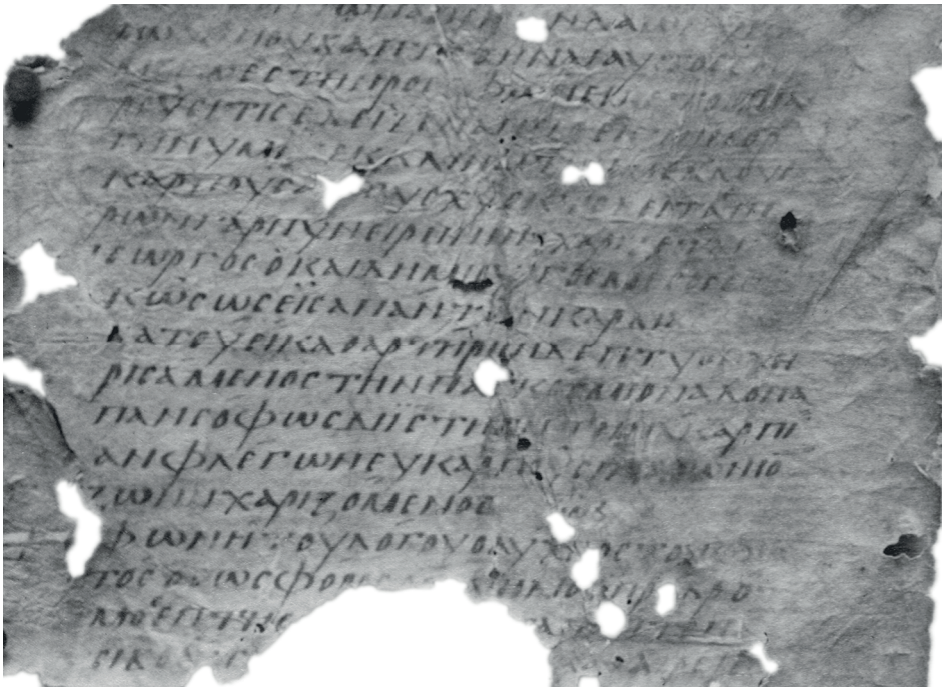


Fig. 4: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/24, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (detail from the right-hand fragment: part of a scroll, here no. 24b). © BBAW.

(1) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/25a + 481/24b

The fragment seen in Violet's 1901 photographs nos. 25a + 24b consists of a small portion of an opisthographic (i.e. written on both sides) parchment scroll (see fig. 4).[30] The features of the script, which is the so-called sloping ogival majuscule, suggest a ninth-century dating and a Syro-Palestinian origin.

In 1989–1990, Kurt Treu studied this fragment, transcribed the entire text, and identified almost all the edited hymns.[31] The texts of the first ten lines of photograph no. 25a remain unidentified; an unedited theotokion and the beginning of a canon in honour of St Basil the Great follow. The canon, traditionally attributed to John of Damascus, is published in all the current printed editions of the Menaia.[32] The

30 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 150 n. 26.

31 See Treu, "Fragment".

32 In this study, we will quote the Roman editions by Propaganda Fide as the standard reference editions of the Byzantine liturgical books. In the transcription of incipits we have tried to reconstruct, whenever possible, the right sheet sequence. Moreover, we have systematically added breathings and accents and normalised the sometimes faulty orthography of the manuscripts, introducing, when necessary, capital letters for proper names and the beginnings of sentences.

other side (the verso) of this scroll's fragment (photograph no. 24b) preserves the central portion of the well-known canon for the Theophany ascribed to Cosmas of Maiouma:

> [no. 25a] lines 1–10: unidentified texts;[33] lines 11–13: <theotokion>, inc. Χαῖρε, παρθένε θεοτόκε, ὅτι ἔτεκες...[34] <ἦχ. α΄> (*PaR* 97, where, in this incipit, instead of παρθένε we read Μαρία); lines 14–15: heading, not readable today, for the following hymn; lines 16–30: <**John of Damascus**, canon for St Basil the Great, first ode, heirmos>, inc. Δεῦτε λαοὶ ᾄσωμεν ᾇσμα Χριστῷ... <ἦχ. β΄> (EE 37–38, no. 51), inc. (troparia) [Σο]ῦ τὴν φωνὴν ἔδει παρεῖναι... (*MR* III 12), [Τὸ ἐμπ]α[θ]ὲς σκίρτημα τῆς τυραννούσης σαρκὸς... (*MR* III 13), [Τῶν ἀρετῶν σὺ τὴν τραχεῖ]αν... des. mut. [ἐπὶ τὴν λείαν ἔφ]θασας [... (*MR* III 13; in our Damascus fragment the second troparion of the printed edition is missing);
>
> [no. 24b] lines 1–30: <**Cosmas of Maiouma**, canon for the Theophany>, inc. mut. (fourth ode, last troparion) ...εὐλα]βοῦμαι· [εἰ γὰρ βαπτίσω σε, κατή]γορόν μοι... <ἦχ. β΄> (*MR* III 148), <fifth ode, heirmos>, inc. [Ἰησοῦς ὁ ζω]ῆς ἀρχηγὸς... (EE 36, no. 49), inc. (troparia) [Συνελθόντ]ων ἀπείρων λαῶν... (*MR* III 149), Γεωργὸς ὁ καὶ δημιουργὸς... (*MR* III 149), sixth ode, <heirmos>, inc. Ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ Λόγου... des. mut. ...προ]καθαίρεσθε· [ἰ]δο[ὺ... (EE 36–37, no. 49; the text of the whole canon inc. Ἀδὰμ τὸν φθαρέντα ἀναπλάττει... is printed in *MR* III 146–154).

It is difficult to guess whether this fragment, containing the office for 1 January (St Basil the Great) and 6 January (Theophany), was a witness of the ancient Tropologion – that is, the archaic and undifferentiated hymnographic book containing offices for the entire liturgical year, for both fixed and movable feasts – or if it already belonged to a scroll of the Menaion, the liturgical book containing the offices for fixed feasts only. However, since this fragment seems to show part of one of the last liturgical offices transcribed on the recto of the scroll (1 January) and part of one of the first offices written on the verso (6 January), the entire scroll could hardly have contained an archaic Tropologion for the whole liturgical year, which, in its oldest *Textform*, should have been regularly starting with Christmas and ending in the commemorations of the first part of the month of December. Therefore, it seems more probable that the fragment was a witness of a hymnographic collection (a Menaion?) for the whole year, but organised according to the "classical" Byzantine liturgical year starting from September and ending in August, or that it was a manuscript containing only a portion (e.g., three months: December to February?) of the same cycle of the movable feasts.

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33 For the transcription of the text, see Treu, "Fragment", 423.

34 This short hymn was not identified in Treu, "Fragment", 420, probably because of the textual variant in its incipit.

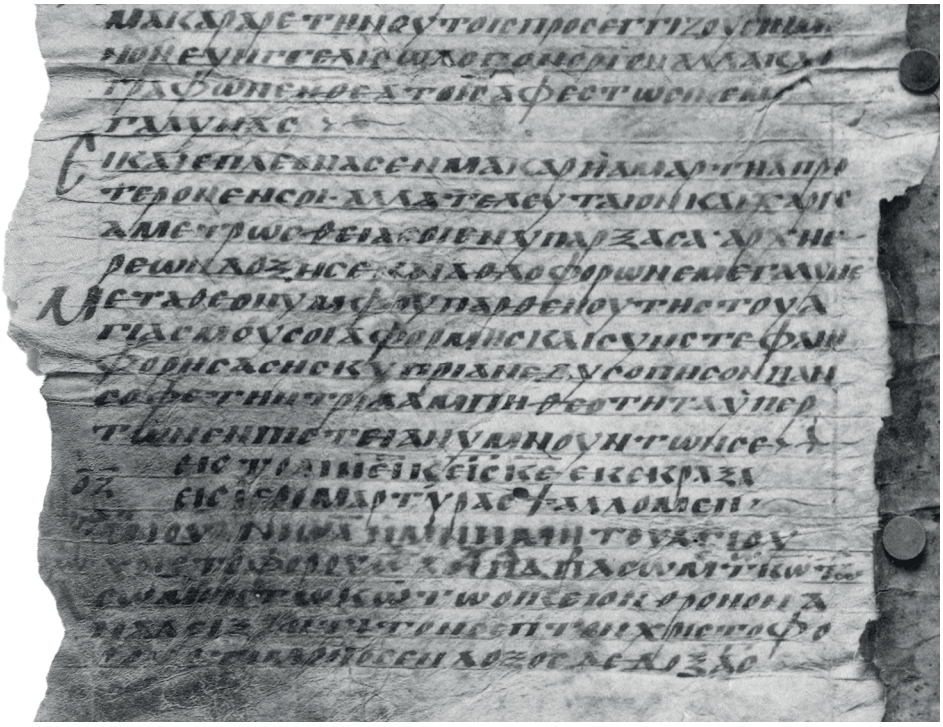


Fig. 5: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/192, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (detail from the left-hand fragment: folio from a lost codex, here no. 192a). © BBAW.

(2) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/192a

Contrary to the previous example, there are some useful clues that can help us to better define the structure of the hymnographic book that fragment no. 192a once belonged to (see fig. 5). This is a truly surprising fragment: only a single folio, though really interesting for the information it conveys about its book structure, commemorations, and content. From the only image we have, we can infer that the original manuscript was written in a sloping ogival majuscule that is characterised by a heavy contrast between thin and thick strokes, whose appearance, once again, suggests a ninth-century dating and a Syro-Palestinian origin.

This fragment preserves the end of a hymn in honour of St Cyprian (most likely for 30 May) and the beginning of a canon for St Christopher to be sung on 1 June.[35] The folio seems to belong to the early hymnographic collection called

[35] On these two rare commemorations, see Gérard Garitte, *Le calendrier palestino-géorgien du Sinaiticus 34 (X^e siècle)*, Subsidia Hagiographica 30, Brussels: Société des Bollandistes 1958, 237 and 239. The calendar of the composite manuscript he discusses (Sinai MS Geo. 34) exhibits the Hagiopolite cycle of fixed feasts in the main part of its entries; the main copyist

Tropologion, which, as already pointed out, contained both fixed and movable feasts arranged and combined into one single uninterrupted calendar order. In fact, in the lower part of the photograph, to the left, next to the rubric of the canon for St Christopher, it is possible to see the number οζ΄ (i.e. 77) written by the same copyist who transcribed the text; this number refers to the continuous numbering of the feasts which were included in the whole Tropologion manuscript. As far as we know, the oldest and best preserved extant Greek Tropologion, manuscript Sinai Gr. NE ΜΓ 56 + 5, shows a similar numbering which starts from the *proheortia* ("pre-feast") of the Nativity of Christ (no. 1) and continues through the subsequent commemorations of the whole liturgical year – including the Lenten and Paschal movable cycles, whose commemorations are scattered between February and April – until 12 June, feast day of St Joseph of Arimathea (no. 73).[36] According to recent research on the origin of Greek liturgical books, this kind of book structure seems to correspond to the "new Tropologion", attested between the seventh and ninth centuries, that we know only from its Georgian and Syriac translations and from very scarce and fragmentary Greek witnesses.[37] In Sinai MS Gr. NE ΜΓ 56 + 5, generally assigned to the eighth or, more plausibly, the ninth century,[38] the office for 1 June – which is intended, there, for the commemoration

was the well-known Georgian monk Ioane Zosime (second half of the tenth century), who explicitly revealed, at the end of the calendar, the models he employed (an Hagiopolite Lectionary, a Greek source, a Hierosolymitan exemplar, a Sabaite model). As far as the commemoration of St Cyprian is concerned, historical sources have often conflated Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, who was martyred under Valerian, with Cyprian the Magician from Antioch, martyred with his converter Justina under Diocletian; see e.g. oration 24 of Gregory of Nazianzus in *PG* 35, 1169–1193; Justin Mossay and Guy Lafontaine, eds., *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 24–26*, Sources chrétiennes 284, Paris: Editions du Cerf 1981. As for Christopher's commemoration on 1 June, it is also recorded in the Syriac fragment Sinai MS Syr. NE M52N (ninth or tenth century), recently described in Philothée du Sinaï, ed., *Nouveaux manuscrits syriaques du Sinaï*, Athènes: Fondation du Mont Sinaï 2008, 512.

36 This Sinai codex as a whole has come down to us in good condition, except for some lacunae; a list of its liturgical offices, according to their numbering in the manuscript, is published in Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 143–148. The Russian scholar believes that its calendar is of Palestinian type and origin, with particular commemorations celebrated in Jerusalem and Egypt; see Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 163–172.

37 See Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 138–140, especially nn. 6 and 7; Kujumdževa, *Hymnographic Book of Tropologion*.

38 Unfortunately, the manuscript does not offer objective pieces of internal evidence that can be used for a more precise dating. Paul Géhin and Stig Frøyshov, who first identified the two Greek fragments as part of the same manuscript, date it to the eighth or ninth century; see Paul Géhin and Stig Frøyshov, "Nouvelles découverts sinaïtiques: À propos de la parution de l'inventaire des manuscrits grecs", *Revue des études byzantines* 58 (2000), 179. Svetlana Kujumdževa is of the same opinion; see Kujumdževa, *Hymnographic Book of Tropologion*, 75–76. On the basis of its palaeographical features, Alexandra Nikiforova privileges the second half of the ninth century; see Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 141–142. Personally, we would be cautiously inclined to date it to before the middle, or at the latest within the third quarter, of the ninth century. In it, the remarkable absence of canons composed by Joseph the Hymnographer (d. 886), which spread almost immediately also to the the Syro-Palestinian area, should not be underestimated; see e.g. the Octoechos Sinai MS Gr. 824,

of the martyrs Pistis, Elpis, and Agape – bears the number 69, a number which is close enough to the one we find recorded in the Damascus fragment. On the basis of the dating of the Damascus fragment and of this comparison of numberings, it seems likely that the original manuscript from which our fragment derives also started from the Nativity of Christ on 25 December, reflecting the usual calendar arrangement of seventh- to ninth-century Tropologia.

Furthermore, at the end of the first canon of this fragment, we can read a rubric warning the reader that other hymnographic pieces – most likely stichera – for orthros and vespers were to be found in the common service for the hieromartyrs. One can therefore imagine that this was probably a reference to a final section of the manuscript containing chants for the main "common" services (such as for martyrs, prophets, venerable ones, and apostles). In fact, such an arrangement can be observed in some early Syriac and Georgian manuscripts.[39]

> [no. 192a] lines 1–22: <canon for St Cyprian>, inc. mut. (eighth ode, last troparion?) ...] ὡς ἐκεῖνοι κατετρύφησας θεολογῶν μάκαρ Τριάδα... (unidentified strophe); ninth ode, heirmos, inc. Λίθος ἀχειρότμητος... <ἦχ. δ΄> (EE 94, no. 133), inc. (troparia) Παῦλον ἐμίμησας τὸν μέγαν, Κυπριανὲ πανεύφημε..., Ἀποστολικὴν κατορθώσας, Κυπριανὲ παμμάκαρ, ἀρετὴν..., Εἰ καὶ ἐπλεόνασεν μάκαρ ἡ ἁμαρτία πρότερον ἐν σοὶ..., <theotokion>, inc. Μετὰ θεονύμφου παρθένου τῆς τοῦ ἁγιασμοῦ σοι... (unedited troparia); lines 23–24: rubric ("for orthros and vespers <look at the service> for hieromartyrs": Εἰς τὸ Αἰνεῖτε καὶ εἰς τὸ Κύριε ἐκέκραξα εἰς ἱερομάρτυρας ψάλλομεν); lines 25–29: 1 June: St Christopher (Μηνὶ Ἰουνίῳ α΄ ἡ μνήμη τοῦ ἁγίου Χριστοφόρου), <canon>, first ode, heirmos, inc. Ἄσωμεν τῷ Κυρίῳ τῷ <διαγαγόντι>... ἦχ. πλ. δ΄ (EE 224, no. 321), inc. (troparion) Ἄσωμεν τῷ Κυρίῳ τῷ οἰκεῖον θρόνον ἀναδείξαντι... (see Sinai MS Gr. 637, fol. 76r). The fragment ends with the transcription of the whole text of this first troparion.

If we now return to its content, this Damascus fragment provides us with some interesting details on a couple of archaic liturgical commemorations that no longer survive. The two feasts recorded, namely, the commemorations of the bishop St Cyprian on 30 May and of the martyr St Christopher on the 1 June, are missing from the Greek Synaxaria on these very dates. However, these feasts are recorded on the same days in two tenth-century manuscripts of the Georgian Hymnal, the so-called "new Iadgari": these manuscripts are witnesses of the Jerusalem *proprium* before the process of wide diffusion of the "standard" Byzantine calendar, which

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from the late ninth or the early tenth century, described and analysed in Donatella Bucca, "Un antico manoscritto innografico di origine orientale: Il *Sin. gr.* 824", *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s., 43 (2006), 87–136.

39 See Nikiforova, "Tropologion", 171–172; Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 160; Alexandra Nikiforova and Tinatin Chronz, "The *Codex Sinaiticus Liturgicus* Revisited: A New Edition and Critical Assessment of the Text", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 83 (2017), 95–100, with further bibliography.

replaced the local liturgical habits and commemorations.[40] In the later Greek liturgical tradition, the feast of St Cyprian was replaced by other commemorations, while that of St Christopher was moved to a different date.[41]

Finally, as far as the old repertoire of unedited hymnographic texts is concerned, the most interesting hymn is the canon for St Cyprian, which seems to be completely unknown to Greek manuscript tradition, whereas it survives in a Georgian apparently unpublished translation.[42] Unfortunately, only the Greek text of its ninth ode has been preserved in this fragment. The canon in honour of St Christopher is also unpublished; it is, however, recorded in the list of unedited canons by Helene Papaeliopoulou-Photopoulou, who found it in the manuscript Sinai Gr. 637, fols. 76r–78v (on 1 June), and then also by Dorotei Getov.[43] Recently, Aleksandra Nikiforova has identified its presence in the Tropologion Sinai MS Gr. NE ΜΓ 56 + 5 as well, where it was recorded on 27 April.[44]

(3) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/172 + 481/173

Another fragment of a manuscript from Damascus, which probably contained the cycle of the fixed feasts, is in photographs nos. 172 + 173 (fig. 6). It consists of two parchment bifolia that have been later sewn together in order to be reused as a modest vellum binding for another codex.[45] These leaves are palimpsest and their

40 More precisely, the feast of St Cyprian on 30 April is present in the Palestino-Georgian calendar but also in two Georgian "New Iadgari" witnesses – Sinai MSS Geo. 1 (first half of the tenth century) and 64 (second half of the tenth century) – whereas Greek Synaxaria inscribe St Cyprian the Magician (together with St Justina) on 2 October.

41 Christopher, martyred in Lycia, is now commemorated by the Eastern Church on 9 May.

42 See the catalogue by Elene Met'reveli et al., eds., *Sakartvelos ssr mecnierebata ak'ademia. k'. k'ek'elizis saxelobis xelnac'erta inst'it'ut'i, kartul xelnac'erta ayc'eriloba, sinuri k'olekcia* [SSR Georgian Academy of Sciences. "K. Kekelidze" Institute of Manuscripts, Catalogue of the Georgian Manuscripts, Sinai collection], vol. 1, Tbilisi: Mecniereba 1978, 25 no. 14 (Sinai MS Geo. 1, fols. 168r–170r) and 204 no. 96 (Sinai MS Geo. 64, fols. 181v–182v). We are grateful to Gaga Shurgaia for checking the online reproductions of these manuscripts for us and confirming that they contain the Georgian translation of some of the very same ninth-ode troparia of the Greek canon for St Cyprian found in the Damascus fragment.

43 He. Papaeliopoulou-Photopoulou, *Ταμεῖον ἀνεκδότων βυζαντινῶν ᾀσματικῶν κανόνων, seu Analecta Hymnica Graeca e codicibus eruta Orientis Christiani*, vol. 1, *Κανόνες Μηναίων*, Athens: Syllogos Pros Diadosin Ophelimon Biblion 1996, 210 no. 638; Dorotei Getov, "The Unedited Byzantine Liturgical Canons in the Library of Congress Microfilms of the Greek Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai", *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*, 3rd ser., 6 (2009), 76 no. 87. But the presence of this canon in Sinai MS Gr. 637 had already been pointed out in *EPh* 30 (1931), 538.

44 Nikiforova, *Iz istorii Minei v Vizantii*, 227 no. 51.3. The Syriac fragment also shows an entry dedicated to St Christopher on 27 April, see Philothée du Sinaï, ed., *Nouveaux manuscrits syriaques*, 511; however in this instance the epithet of martyr is missing, this being, perhaps, a different saint from the one celebrated on 1 June (see footnote 35).

45 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 151, and 164 no. 11.



Fig. 6: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/172, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901. © BBAW.

lower script, a biblical majuscule, is barely visible. The *scriptio superior*, written in mixed script book hand, preserves some parts of the office for the beheading of St John the Baptist, on 29 August. To be precise, they contain some stichera and the final portion of the edited canon for this feast, traditionally ascribed to John the Monk. This fragment thus seems to provide a wider selection of hymnographic texts than the previously discussed fragments, with stichera in addition to the canon. It is impossible to tell whether this relates to the importance of the feast of St John within the Byzantine liturgical calendar or is connected with a more advanced phase of development of the liturgical book.

[no. 172, right-hand page] lines 1–18: barely legible, unidentified hymns, e.g. line 1: des. ...]οι ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας, line 2: inc. (sticheron?) Κατακλείστου σου ὄντος [ἐν τῇ] φρουρᾷ Ἰωάννη..., line 8: inc. Θεὸς οἶδε (?) παρόντων...; lines 19–21: inc. (?) Παρθενικῆς ἐκ νηδύος [ἐβόας· (?) Εὐλογεῖτε] πάντα τὰ ἔργα κυρίου τὸν [κύριον· ὑμνεῖτε] καὶ ὑπερυψοῦτε αὐτὸν; lines 22–24: <sticheron for vespers>, inc. Πρόδρομε τοῦ [σωτῆρος σὺ βασιλεῖς ἤλ]εγξας... <ἦχ. πλ. δ΄> (*MR* VI 524, 529);

[no. 173, left-hand page] lines 1–21: barely legible, unidentified hymns, e.g. line 2: ...Π]ροδρόμου τὴν μνήμην ὑμνοῦμεν [...] ἀπαύστως εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, line 4: inc. mut. ...παράσχου τὴν χάριν [...πρεσ]βείαις τοῦ Προδρόμου [...] Χριστὲ σὲ ὑμνοῦσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, line 7: inc. mut. ...] ἀσωμάτοις χορείαις τὴν [..., line 10: inc. mut. ...] πλατυτέρα[...;

[no. 173, right-hand page] line 1: <29 Aug., Beheading of St John the Baptist>, desinit of an unidentified text; lines 2–18: <**John the Monk**, canon>, eighth ode, heirmos, inc. Ἑπταπλασίως... <ἦχ. πλ. δ΄> (EE 219, no. 314), inc. (troparia) Ὁ προδραμὼν τοῦ τόκου σου... (*MR* VI 537), Παρθενικῆς γεννήσεως... des. mut. κραυγάζων νεκροὶ [... (*MR* VI 537; the complete canon inc. Τὸν ἀπὸ νηδύος στειρωτικῆς... is printed in *MR* VI 531–538);

[no. 172, left-hand page] lines 1–9: <eighth ode>, inc. (troparion) [Τῆς κε]φαλῆς τοῦ σώματος [ἐ]χωρίσθης σου πρόδρομε... (*MR* VI 537, where it appears as third troparion); line 10: unidentified text, perhaps Ἔ]τρεμε ὁράσει θεότητος (incipit tantum); lines 11–20: ninth ode, heirmos, inc. Ἔφριξε πᾶσα ἀκοὴ... (EE 222, no. 317), inc. (troparia) Ἔφριττεν φάλαγξ πονηρὰ... (*MR* VI 538), Φάραγξ μὲν φύσις ταπεινὴ [... (*MR* VI 538).

(4) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/166a + 481/167a + 168a + 169a

Unlike the three fragments that we have discussed to this point, the remaining ones preserve a different selection of the chant repertoire, that is, the offices for the weekly cycle, including hymns for both the Sunday Octoechos services and the other days of the week. Three of these further fragments also share the same kind of script, a less refined variant of the mixed script. These are the items in Violet's photographs nos. 166a + 167a + 168a + 169a, 176a, and 192b, probably datable to the ninth century, though it is difficult to date this kind of writing more precisely. It is necessary to take a closer look at each of them.

The fragments in photographs nos. 166a + 167a + 168a + 169a are fragments from a parchment scroll written on both sides[46] (fig. 7). They contain different kinds of hymnographic texts, such as troparia, canons, kathismata anastasima, and theotokia. The hymns seem to be organised both in an eight-mode sequence and according to the distinction of the various hymnographic genres. The study of the four available images does not allow us to define clearly the typology of this liturgical book. The partially unedited hymnographic material we could identify refers to the Sunday Octoechos office. Several similar examples of fragments with Octoechos hymns can also be found among the "new finds" of the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai.

46 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 151, 157, and 164 no. 10.



Fig. 7: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/166, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (detail from the left-hand fragment: part of a scroll, here no. 166a). © BBAW.

According to recent studies, in the older manuscripts a section containing the Octoechos hymns for Sundays might have concluded a comprehensive volume combining, at its beginning, offices for both fixed and movable feasts for all the year. This kind of overall comprehensive hymnal, which is thought to have included the hymns for the whole liturgical year, that is the "new Tropologion", would have been the only chant book of the Jerusalem rite between the seventh and ninth centuries.

[nos. 166a + 167a] lines 1–31: <troparia katanyktika of the first authentic mode>, inc. Εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις... (*PaR* 24, 37, where the hymn is labelled as kathisma katanyktikon), Τὸν πλοῦτον θεωρήσας τῶν ἀρετῶν τοῦ Ἰὼβ... (*HR* 192; in the printed edition it appears as apolytikion for St Job, on 6 May), Ὅτι ὡμοιώθην ἐγὼ ἀκανθηφόρ[ῳ ἀρούρᾳ ?]... (unedited text), Ὅτι πολλοί οἱ πολεμοῦντές με ἀπὸ ὕψους... (unedited text), Ἐν πλήθει πταίσματων κατακαμπτόμενος... (unedited text); lines 32–53: <kathismata prosomoia of the first authentic mode>, inc. Σωτηρίαν εἰργάσω κύριε ἡμῖν διὰ ξύλου τοῖς ἁμαρτολοῖς... (unedited text; the

hymn is preceded by the indication of its model, e.g. the kathisma katanyktikon Εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις..., *PaR* 24, 37), Τὸν τύπον τοῦ σταυροῦ σου προσκυνοῦμεν... (unedited text; the hymn follows a heading with the indication of its model, e.g. the apolytikion Τοῦ λίθου σφραγισθέντος..., *PaR* 4), Τοῦ [... heavily mutilated text]; lines 54–63: troparia staurosima <of the first authentic mode>, inc. Σταυρὸς κατεπάγη ἐν Κρανίῳ... (*PaR* 49, 74), Διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ σου... (*PaR* 60, 83), Διὰ βρώσεως ἐξήγαγε... (*PaR* 22, 35, 48, 60, 72, 83, 98, where it is labelled as makarismos), Ὅτι τὸ πέλαγος πολὺ... (*PaR* 24, 37, here it is included among the aposticha katanyktika), [no. 167a; note that lines 1–15 of this photograph repeat the last fifteen lines of photograph no. 166a] lines 16–23: inc. Σπουδ[..., Νουν πραει[... (barely legible, unidentified troparia); lines 24–60: **Cosmas the Monk**, <canon>, acrostic Πανηγυριζέτωσαν οἱ θεόφρονες (the acrostic of this unedited canon has been employed also for other hymns with various texts and content, see e.g. *MR* VI 412; Papaeliopoulou-Photopoulou, *Ταμεῖον*, 40 no. 35, 249 no. 772), heirmos, inc. Παγιωθεῖσα ῥευστὴ οὐσία... <ἦχ. α΄> (EE 3, no. 4), inc. (troparia of unedited canon) Ἀποσφαλέντας τοῦ θείου..., Νενεκρωμένους ἡμᾶς..., Ῥάβδος βλαστάνης..., third ode, heirmos, inc. Ἡ δημιουργικὴ καὶ συνεκτικὴ... (EE 3, no. 4), Γ[υμ]νώσ[ας ὁ] ἐχθρὸς τῆς δεσποτικῆς [... σ]τολῆς με ὑπόδικον κατεστήσατο...;

[nos. 168a + 169a (reverse side respectively of photographs nos. 167a + 166a)] lines 1–8: illegible texts belonging to the eighth ode of a canon; lines 9–37: ninth ode, heirmos and troparia (illegible texts); lines 38–62: kathismata anastasima (illegible texts), [no. 169a; note that lines 1–11 of this photograph repeat the last eleven lines of photograph no. 168a] lines 12–21: illegible texts; lines 22–58: kathismata theotokia (illegible texts).

(5) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/176a

Despite the fact that it is very short, the fragment in Violet's photograph no. 176a deserves our attention[47] (see fig. 2). It contains the final troparia of a Sunday anastasimos canon, which suggests it might belong to a book containing the octoechal cycle, where it was probably placed within the section dedicated to the fourth authentic mode. The same anonymous hymn was published by Sophronios Eustratiades, on the basis of some manuscripts from Mount Athos, whose text partially differs from that of the Damascus fragment. According to Eustratiades, the style of the hymn can be attributed to Cosmas.[48]

47 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 151, 157, and 164 no. 12.

48 Sophronios Eustratiades, "Κοσμᾶς Ἱεροσολυμίτης ὁ ποιητής, ἐπίσκοπος Μαϊουμᾶ", *Νέα Σιών* 28 (1933), 268 n. 1. The author states that the unedited canon is anonymously transmitted by the Athonite manuscripts Lavra B 6 fol. 49r (thirteenth century), Γ 21 fol. 99v (sixteenth century), and Θ 73 (fifteenth century).

This canon cannot be found in the manuscript tradition of the Octoechos/Paracletica nor in the printed editions of the same liturgical book. Again, this fragment constitutes a further piece of evidence for the fact that a large quantity of non-uniform hymnographic material spread widely and quickly throughout the Byzantine Empire before the standardisation of this liturgical book.

[no. 176a] lines 1–3: text no longer visible; lines 4–27: <**Cosmas of Maiouma**, canon anastasimos, eighth ode>, inc. (troparion) [Τρισηλίῳ φωτὶ αὐγ]αζόμενοι... <ἦχ. δ΄> [Eustratiades, "Κοσμᾶς", 331; the whole canon inc. Ἐμφράττεται δεινῶν παρανόμων τὸ στόμα... is published in Eustratiades, "Κοσμᾶς", 268–272, 330–333], inc. mut. (theotokion?) ...]και παρθένον τιμήσω[... τ]ὸν ἄναρχον Λόγον... (unidentified text); <ninth ode, heirmos>, inc. Κρυπτὸν θεῖον ἄχραντον... [EE 96, no. 135], inc. (troparia) Τοῖς βρόχοις... [Eustratiades, "Κοσμᾶς", 332], Φωτὶ τοῦ προσώπου σου καταλαμφθέντες.... [Eustratiades, "Κοσμᾶς", 332].

(6) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/192b

Violet's photograph no. 192b probably also contains a fragment of a resurrectional office (see fig. 8).[49] Apart from unedited or unidentified texts, it preserves some troparia belonging to a well-known anastasimos canon.

[no. 192b] lines 1–31: <**John the Monk**, canon anastasimos, ἦχ. πλ. α΄>, des. (fifth ode, troparia) ...] ἀφράστ<ως προμ>ηθούμενος (*PaR* 373; the complete canon inc. Σὲ ἡ ἀκανθηφόρος Ἑβραίων συναγωγὴ... to be sung on the Sunday of the fifth week is printed in *PaR* 369–377), Σύ με μετημφίασας πρὸς ἀφθαρσίαν... (*PaR* 373), <theotokia>, inc. Σὺ δικαιοσύνην τε καὶ ἀπολύτρωσιν... (*PaR* 373), Ἡ τὸ ἀνερμήνευτόν σου φῶς τεκοῦσα... (unedited text); <sixth ode, heirmos>, inc. Ἐβόησα ἐν θλίψει μου πρὸς σὲ τὸν φιλάνθρωπον... <ἦχ. πλ. α΄> (EE 140, no. 196; in the printed edition it appears as second heirmos of the sixth ode in a Sinaitic akolouthia), inc. (troparia) Ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ ἐξέτεινας, Χριστέ, τὰς παλάμας σου..., Ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν τριήμερος, Χριστέ..., <triadikon>, inc. Δοξάσωμεν τὴν ἄτμητον Τριάδα ἄναρχον Πατέρα..., <theotokion>, inc. Ἀγγέλων σε τὰ τάγματα δοξάζει θεόνυμφε..., (ἄλλος) inc. Ἐβόησα ἐν θλίψει μου δεόμενος... (unedited texts; troparia from another canon?).

[49] D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 151, 157, and 164 no. 13.

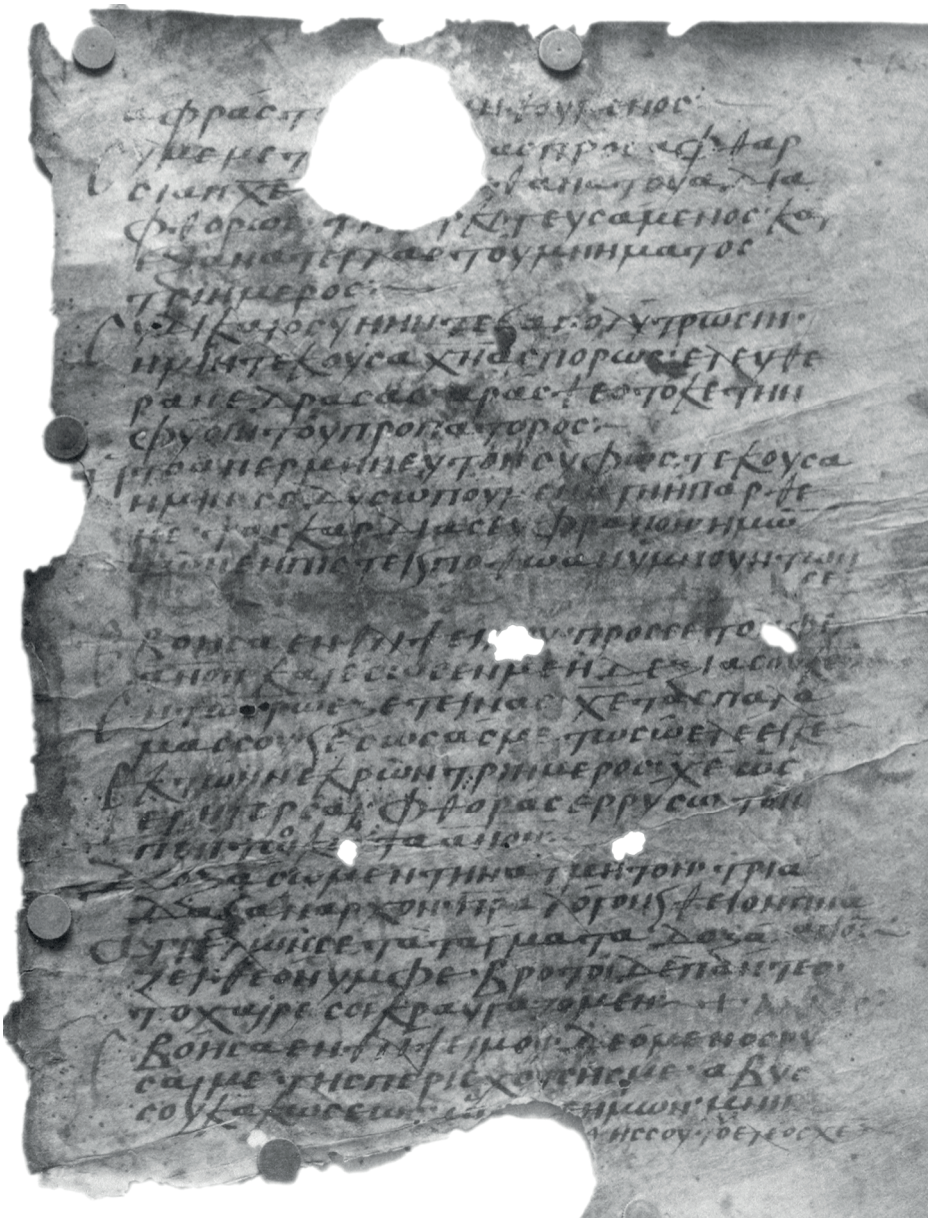


Fig. 8: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/192, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901 (right-hand fragment: folio from a codex, here no. 192b). © BBAW.

(7) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/165

The final two fragments show a somewhat different content; however this has not yet been clearly identified. The first of these, that is to say the fragment in photograph no. 165, comes from a ninth-century manuscript written on paper.[50] According to Bruno Violet's description, only ten folios of the original codex survived; unfortunately, just a single image is available to us (see fig. 1).[51] It reproduces two non-consecutive pages preserving troparia from two unedited canons for the liturgical cycle of the Pentecostarion or of the Octoechos. The scribe used quite an elegant and fluent mixed script which is characterised by an emphasis on the diagonal traits and a heavy contrast between thin and thick strokes. An Oriental origin from the Syro-Palestinian region, perhaps from Damascus, might prudently be suggested.

In 1982 Kurt Treu published this fragment;[52] he proposed dating it to the ninth century, on the basis of the traditional identification of Cosmas of Maiouma as the author of the heirmos of the fifth ode, which is transcribed on the recto.

> [no. 165, left-hand page] lines 1–19: inc. (troparia) Ἀεί σου δοξολογοῦμεν τὴν τριήμερον, σωτήρ, ἔγερσιν..., Ἐν τῷ τάφῳ τεθαμμένος ἀλλ' ἐν Ἅδῃ..., Διὰ σπλάγχνα σου ἐλέους σαρκωθῆναι... des. mut. ...ἀπηξίωσας σταυρωθείς τε ε[... (Treu, "Bruchstück", 140);
>
> [no. 165, right-hand page] lines 1–19: des. ...] κόσμον ἐλθόντα δοξάζομεν, inc. Ἐν γυναιξὶ μακαρία εὐλογημένη...; fifth ode, heirmos <ἦχ. πλ. β΄>, inc. Τῷ συνδέσμῳ... (EE 163, no. 229), inc. (first troparion) Ἐκ ζόφου τῶν πταισμάτων ἀνακαλούμενος... (Treu, "Bruchstück", 141).

(8) BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/193 + 481/194

The last two of Violet's photographs containing hymnographic fragments, that is to say nos. 193 + 194, show both sides of the same parchment bifolium (see figs. 9–10). This fragment was transcribed in a disrupted and inaccurate slightly sloping ogival majuscule, which can be dated to the ninth or tenth century. It contains the "common" office for hieromartyrs and venerable ones[53] written on palimpsest leaves that contained an earlier unidentified text transcribed in an upright ogival majuscule.

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50 D'Aiuto, "La 'scrittura mista'", 151, 155, 157, and 163–164 no. 9.

51 Treu, "Bruchstück", 432.

52 Treu, "Bruchstück".

53 See Nikiforova, "Tropologion", 171–172; Nikiforova, "Oldest Greek Tropologion", 160; Nikiforova and Chronz, "The *Codex Sinaiticus Liturgicus* Revisited", 95–100.

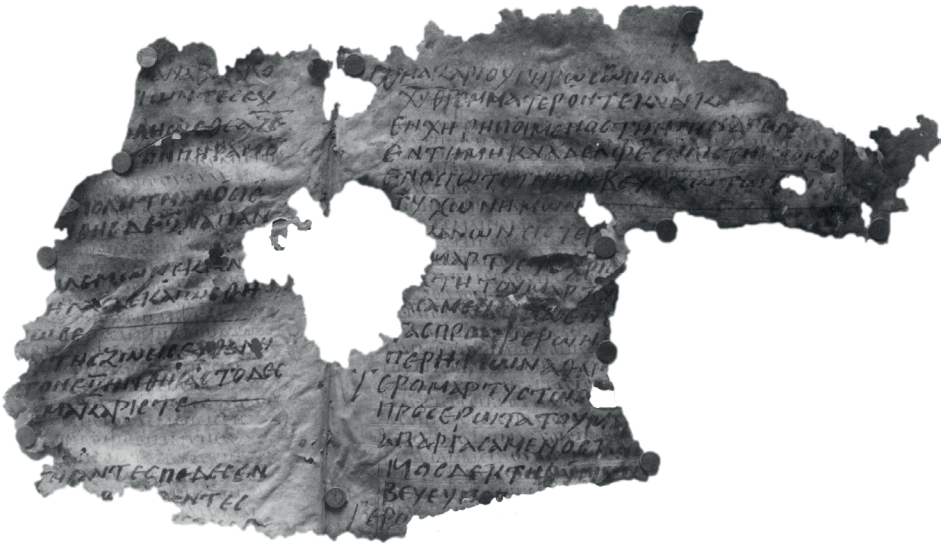


Fig. 9: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/193, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901. © BBAW.

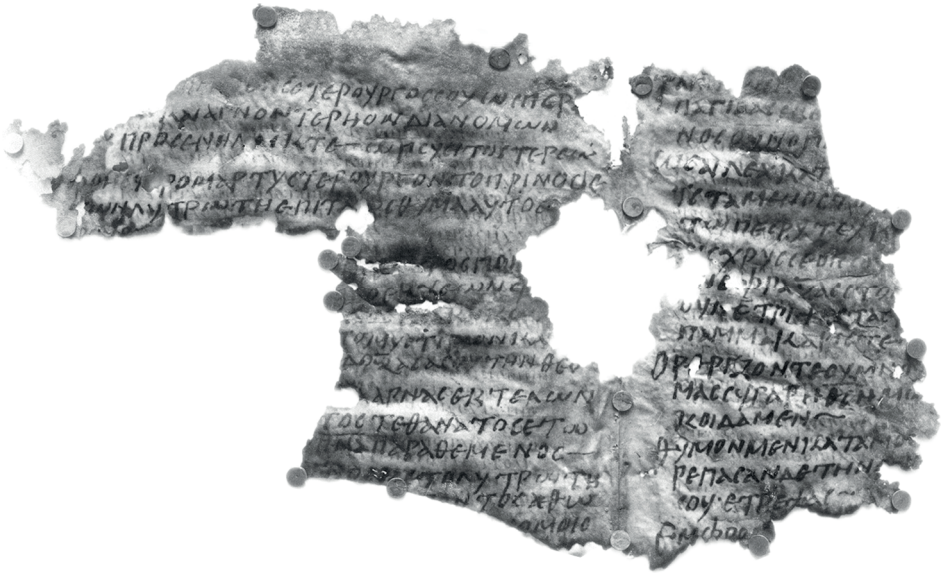


Fig. 10: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/194, photographed by Bruno Violet in Damascus in 1901. © BBAW.

In the *scriptio superior*, in particular, we have identified the beginning of a "common" canon for a hieromartyr which seems to be unedited; part of another incomplete (but already published) "common" canon, again for a hieromartyr; and a portion of an edited "common" canon for a venerable one.

[no. 193, right-hand page] lines 1–6: inc. Ὦ μακαρίου γήρως... (unidentified text); lines 7–18: canon for a hieromartyr, inc. (first ode, troparia) [Ἱερο]μάρτυς τοῦ Χριστ[οῦ..., Ἱερομάρτυς τῶν..., Ἱερομ[άρτυς... (illegible, unidentified troparia);

[no. 194, left-hand page] lines 1–3: <canon for a hieromartyr>, inc. (troparion), [Σοὶ τῷ ἀρχιποιμέν]ι ὁ ἱερουργός σου... <ἦχ. πλ. δ΄> (*An* λδ΄, where it appears as second troparion of the first ode; the complete canon inc. Δίπλοκον εὐσεβείας... is printed in *An* λδ΄–λς΄ with variants); lines 3–8: third ode, heirmos, inc. Σὺ εἶ τὸ στερέωμα... (EE 224, no. 321), inc. (troparia) Ὤφθης ἱερομάρτυς ἱερουργῶν τὸ πρὶν ὅσιε... (*An* λδ΄), [Γέγονας πιστότατος οὐ μισθωτ]ὸς ποιμ[ὴν ὅσιε... (*An* λδ΄); lines 9–17: fourth ode, heirmos, inc. Εἰσακήκοα [κύριε τῆς οἰκονομίας σου] τὸ μυστήριον... (EE 225, no. 322), inc. (troparia) [Τὰ τῶν λύκων συστήματα] ἄρνας ἐκτελῶν... (*An* λδ΄, with final variant), [Ὡς εὐώδης καὶ] πάναγνος καὶ τῷ λυτρωτῇ... (*An* λε΄);

[no. 194, right-hand page] lines 1–10: illegible, unidentified troparia, ending with a theotokion, likely belonging to a canon for a venerable one; lines 11–17: <fifth ode, heirmos?), inc. Ὀρθρίζοντες ὑμν[...]μας... <ἦχ. πλ. δ΄> (unidentified in EE), inc. (troparia) Θυμὸν μὲν κατὰ μό[νου τοῦ ὄφεως... (*An* μβ΄–μγ΄), Ἐμφρό[νως τὰς αἰσθήσεις... (*An* μγ΄);

[no. 193, left-hand page] illegible, unidentified troparia.

III. Concluding remarks

To sum up, the study of early hymnographic manuscript production is clearly a troublesome issue. Few sources are available; moreover, most of them are fragmentary and very often not accessible (e.g. the Sinai "new finds", and the fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna); finally, the comparative studies on Georgian, Syriac, and Armenian translations of the early hymnody of the Jerusalem rite are far from being exhaustive.

If one considers their archaic features, some of the Damascus fragments discussed here, like several fragments from the Sinai "new finds", probably witness quite an early stage of the all-comprehensive hymnographic book known as the Tropologion. We do not know exactly how and when it was split into its various components, giving rise to the different liturgical books that are still used by the Greek Church today.

The extant evidence suggests that for centuries an uninterrupted activity of hymnographic composition produced a huge and manifold repertoire, whose texts were often linked to local liturgical traditions. However, most of them were gradually abandoned to create a uniform repertoire of Byzantine liturgy, probably fa-

vouring the spread of those hymns that were considered the most refined and significant from a stylistic, poetical, and musical point of view.

The fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus, together with the coeval Sinai "new finds", allow us to recover older texts and book structures that were later dismissed, improving our knowledge of the early liturgical hymnography of the Greek Church. But, to a certain extent, this study is also significant in terms of codicological and palaeographical research. For instance, it has confirmed that parchment and paper scrolls were largely used to transcribe hymnographic texts, and it is clear that such book formats were considered particularly suitable for this content. Our analysis has also shown a marked preference for the mixed script for the transcription of hymnographic texts: five hymnographic fragments of the eight we have identified in the Damascus collection are written in this rare kind of script. This fluid, quick, and compact script was evidently considered suitable for these modest liturgical books that were destined for practical, daily usage, while the majuscule scripts were still normally reserved for the Holy Scriptures or for the works of the Church Fathers.

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Reconsidering the Latin fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna in the Great Mosque of Damascus

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The daring events that in the space of a decade at the beginning of the twentieth century led to the survey, study, and finally disappearance of the manuscript and printed fragments preserved in the Qubbat al-khazna of the Umayyad Great Mosque of Damascus have in recent years been the subject of renewed and deeper attention, thanks to the initiative and efforts of numerous researchers.

The publication of Bruno Violet's materials by Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann[1] and the generously renewed circulation of photographic materials have not only clarified the sequence of events, but also made possible new studies on the basis of the photographs now available, which are superior in number and variety to those previously found in printed publications and on the web. Not only that, the new survey has made clear the need for a broader study, which would frame the "recovered" manuscript materials in a broader historical and cultural context, positioning them within the phenomenon of the circulation of books in medieval Damascus.[2] It is with this perspective and with this enthusiasm that in recent years I have devoted myself to a survey of the fragments from the Qubba that are in the Latin alphabet, resulting in a recently published work.[3] On the basis of the reconnaissance I have carried out, the number of identified fragments in Latin script has significantly increased compared to previous publications; the hypotheses I have formulated about dating and localisation on a palaeographic basis are now available to any interested researcher. In this paper, after summarising the results obtained so far, I intend to add some detail and reflect on the presence of these materials in the Qubba, in order to contextualise them. Lastly, I will try to offer a comparison with a piece from a different context, in order to expand the possible hypotheses about the significance of the presence of Latin in late medieval Mediterranean areas. Note that fragments written in the Latin alphabet but in vernacular languages are excluded from this detailed review.

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1 Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20; see also Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63–88.

2 See Konrad Hirschler's contribution in this volume.

3 Serena Ammirati, "The Latin Fragments from Qubba[t] al-Khazna of Damascus: A Preliminary Palaeographical and Textual Survey", in: *Palaeography between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome* (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, 95–117.

My reconnaissance work started by comparing the documentation available in the academic literature and on the web with the corpus of photographs kept at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481).[4] Photographs of a few Damascus fragments that had been taken in Berlin in 1909 were available in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (MSS simulata orientalia 6),[5] and among them, some Latin items could be recognised. A first survey of the Latin items had been undertaken and published by von Soden and Tobler in 1903.[6] It included the following fragments in Latin and Old French:

- liturgical fragments, prayers, and liturgical chants with different neumatic systems
- a fragment from the Merovingian–Carolingian period
- a tenth-century fragment
- an illuminated fragment, dating back to the twelfth century
- a Greek text written in Latin script
- a safe conduct from Baldwin III of Jerusalem
- a fly-leaf with thirty-eight lines of the well-known legend of St. Mary of Egypt (Sancta Maria Aegyptiaca)
- a bifolium bearing some lines of the "Song of Fierabras"
- two bifolia with a tale about the wondrous birth of Jesus

A comparison between the list of fragments published in 1903 and the photographs in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin revealed that there was no exact correspondence between the 1903 survey and the 1909 photographs.

Even from a preliminary comparison between the 1909 photographs in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (MSS simulata orientalia 6) and the photographs taken by Violet in 1901 kept in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481), I could detect some differences between the two sets of photographs: in those taken in Berlin in 1909 we can see traces of restoration, and also a ruler, which has helped in obtaining rough measurements not only for the measured documents themselves, but also for others reproduced with them, by using the ratios of the documents. In addition, it is possible to verify that not all the Latin fragments visible in the Violet photos of 1901 are examined in the article by von Soden. Moreover, we should also bear in mind that the total number of photographs taken by Violet (214) and those taken in Berlin in 1909

4 Available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

5 Available online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

6 Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 825–830; Adolf Tobler, "Bruchstücke altfranzösischer Dichtung aus den in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriften", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 43, 960–976.

(102) represent only a fraction of the 1558 fragments selected by Violet to be sent to Berlin.

On the basis of the research I conducted and published in 2018,[7] we know to date of the following fragments in Latin script from the Qubbat al-khazna.

1. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154-I:[8] The safe conduct from Baldwin III (1143–1163).

2. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154-II: Eight fragmentary lines of a text that appears to be the final part of a document (mid-twelfth century). The mention of the apposition of a *sigillum meus* might have been the ending part of a disposition issued by a certain *Hugo*, and of which one of the witnesses might have been *Raimundus*. It remains difficult to identify those people, but both names are consistent with the prosopography of the Crusades and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.

3. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154-III: The remnant of a lower corner of a parchment folio, contains "drafts" of four different texts written by the same hand in a minuscule documentary hand possibly from the beginning of the thirteenth century.

4. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154-IV: A small parchment leaf, possibly used as a phylactery, maybe worn by a Crusader. Script is a Caroline minuscule which shows some transition elements, and can be located to northern France or England and dated to the twelfth century.

5. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/155-I and 481/156-I: A bifolium containing verses from the "Song of Fierabras". This fragment was edited by Tobler in 1903 and has been recently re-examined by Laura Minervini, who dates this fragment to the first half of the thirteenth century.[9]

6. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/155-II and 481/156-II: Both sides of the leaf containing the life of St Mary of Egypt (Sancta Maria Aegyptiaca), also edited by Tobler in 1903, and of which the recto is additionally reproduced in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 44r.[10]

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7 Ammirati, "Latin fragments", 103–119; see that article also for further bibliography and plates.

8 Note that many of the photographs contain more than a single fragment. Where this is the case, I have labelled the different fragments as "I", "II", and so on.

9 Laura Minervini, "Sui frammenti epici della moschea di Damasco (*Fierabras*, lasse 106–108, 117–118)", in: *Codici, testi, interpretazioni: Studi sull'epica romanza medievale*, Paolo Di Luca and Doriana Piacentino, eds., Naples: Napoli University Press 2015, 93–103. Laura Minervini's re-examination is based on the photographs available in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 51r–52r. See also the paper by Laura Minervini and Gabriele Giannini in this volume, "The Old French texts of the Damascus Qubba".

10 Updated bibliography for the textual tradition can be found in Minervini, "Sui frammenti", 95.

7. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/155-III and 481/156-III: A parchment fragment, from the central section of a bifolium, which bears lines of a poem about the childhood of Godfrey of Bouillon, belonging to the so-called Cycle of the Knight of the Swan, composed after 1099. The script is a transition minuscule, and can be dated to between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century; as for the location, I would suggest possibly north-eastern France or (less probably) England.[11]

8. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/158: A parchment bifolium containing chants. The notation is neumatic of the French type, in use in the north of France. In this version, diastematic on four lines with keys of C, it is attested from the beginning of the twelfth century, rarely before this date. It is clearly an antiphonary in content. The bifolium, judging from the text, could be the outer bifolium of a quire, because there is a great deal of text missing between the verso of the left sheet (Third Sunday of Advent, the first legible text being CAO 7744b)[12] and the recto of the right (Monday of the *tempus per annum*, the last legible text being CAO 3585 and 3359).[13]

9. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/159-I: A bifolium containing the *Sequentiae* of Notkerus Balbulus Sangallensis. The script is a Caroline minuscule in the so-called "schrägoval" style,[14] datable to the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century.

10. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/159-II and 481/160-II: A folium from a parchment codex, with epigrams 27–31 of Prosper Aquitanus. The script is a late Caroline minuscule verging on Gothic script, datable to the beginning of the twelfth century.

11. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/160-I: The upper half of a quire with remnants of Bernard of Angers, *Liber miraculorum sanctae Fidis*. Based on the script, a late Caroline minuscule, the fragment can be dated to the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century, having originated in northern France.

12. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/161-I and 481/162-I: A parchment leaf, partially damaged in the upper and lower part. Contains Bede's *De die iudicii* and the first four lines of the *Collectio monostichorum* of the *Disticha Catonis* (inc. *Utilitibus monitis* expl. *committere cordi*), written by the same hand and probably continuing onto another leaf of the original manuscript. The script is a Caroline minuscule that

11 See also the paper by Laura Minervini and Gabriele Giannini in this volume.
12 CAO refers to R.-J. Hesbert, *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, Rome: Herder 1963–1969.
13 I am deeply indebted and grateful to Laura Albiero, who kindly provided me with her expertise *per litteras* (June 2019).
14 The origin of the script is connected to Regensburg, Tegernsee, and the monastic scriptoria of Austria.

can be dated to the second half or end of the eleventh century (perhaps originating in England or northern France).

13. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/161-II and 162-II: Four pages of Vitalis Blesensis's *Geta*, a transposition of Plautus's *Aulularia* in elegiac distich. The script appears to be a *libraria* and can be dated to the thirteenth century.

14. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/163: A poetical text interspersed with prose, ascribed to either Petrus Blesensis (under the title *De poenitentia*) or Johannes de Garlandia (under the title *Poenitentiarius*). Based on the writing, the fragment can be dated to the fourteenth century and is most probably of French origin.

15. BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/164: The oldest Latin fragment preserved, it contains the tale of the martyrdoms of Sts Eustathius and Pancras. Some of the graphic features that can be seen seem to ascribe the manuscript to an early date (ninth century) and to the Beneventan area.

16. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 49r and 50r: Two non-contiguous leaves, probably the sleeve of the small format leaves, with verses on the birth of Jesus. On fol. 49r there is a prayer or enchantment, a portion of text which I have not yet been able to identify, although I can make out *accipe lancelolam et sag(itta)m*, the river Jordan, the twelve apostles, the names of the four Gospel writers, and perhaps the names of the prophets in Greek. The leaf which is referred to as 49 no. 8 and 50 no. 10 bears a liturgical trope for St Nicholas of Bari with square notation: *sospitati dedit egros olei perfusio* (with tiny textual variants; see CAO 6679). At the end of chant on 50 no. 10 there is an addition by the same hand as 49 no. 7, possibly, an exorcism, where Greek is – as expected in the case of formulas and anaphoras of this type – written in Latin characters.

By comparing the two sets of photographs available – those taken by Bruno Violet in 1901 kept in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154–156 and 481/158–164) and those taken in Berlin in 1909 kept in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 44–53) – we can now affirm that the Latin fragments that are at this point known from the Qubba amount in total to sixteen different extant manuscripts (single fragments and groups), and to nineteen different texts (sometimes different texts on the same leaf) – three texts had already been edited/censed; twelve were largely identified and discussed in 2018; and four are still to be identified.

A survey of the Greek manuscripts reproduced in the photographs taken by Violet has not led to the identification of any Latin texts written in Greek script, although von Soden had mentioned such texts. On the contrary, some of the leaves seem to contain formulas in the Greek language written in Latin script (see Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 50).

Unfortunately, the material surveyed so far constitutes only a small part of the fragments in the Latin language and script that were examined by Bruno Violet;

in the pages of his notes, in fact, kept at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 484a), Violet mentions two fragments from a bifolium in ancient French (probably, the "Song of Fierabras"), for a total – so the structure of the note would seem to suggest – of four pages; to it are added approximately 150 fragments in Latin, for a total – Violet writes – of 150 pages. The data itself, as well as being imprecise in the correspondence between sheets and pages (not all the fragments will have writing on the reverse, but certainly many of those already found do), is obviously approximate, and suggests that what was written in the notes might have been a first provisional assessment, pending further investigation. Later on in the notes, more detailed classifications are given of the Greek fragments, which often give the maximum dimensions of each fragment.

The huge distinction between the total number of Latin fragments seen by Violet and the number identifiable in the photographs which he took in 1901 is evident, and shows once again the element of uncertainty in our investigations, as well as the need for caution in drawing conclusions from what is available. Yet it is legitimate at least to affirm that the sixteen fragments identified not only cover a chronological arc from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries, but also attest the works of medieval Latin literature of different genres of vast or very vast circulation; with the exception of the documentary material (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/154) and, perhaps, the notebook in MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 49–50, they are all manuscripts of Western origin, with many from areas of France or England.

I have already reflected elsewhere on how these materials arrived in Damascus;[15] to those considerations I would now like to add another element: the form and state of conservation of all the surviving items are such as to suggest that their presence in the Qubba is due not to their primary conservation, but to their reuse in the making and preservation of other books. I think of the form, clearly derived from clean cuts, of the safe conduct of Baldwin III, or that of the *Liber miraculorum* of Bernard of Angers, the result of one or more cuts in the sheets; or the folds still visible on BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/158 and 481/164. For the first two, it is conceivable that they were reused as strips of reinforcement of ligatures; for the last two, as book covers. It is also interesting to note that these functions must have also ceased to have been performed by our fragments before they entered the Qubba – it is difficult to think that they were removed from their later function when Violet opened the Qubba; it is more reasonable to assume that they had arrived in the Qubba either as secondary processing waste or to be readopted with the same second function in other books. For other fragments, less geometrical in shape, we may think that they had not yet been cut for their first use: it was possible to obtain useful parchment even from fragments with the most jagged edges and holes, for the most diverse functions; one of the simplest reuses, even in the

15 Ammirati, "Latin fragments", 119–120.

production of printed books, consisted of compacting old sheets to create the thickness of the plates of the binding.

These reflections acquire a little more certainty when compared with what Konrad Hirschler illustrates in his contribution to this volume on the method of wrapping and binding manuscripts kept in the al-Asad National Library of Damascus, where there are many fragments, even Latin ones, readopted for the binding of Muslim medieval manuscripts, not infrequently also because of their perceived aesthetic value. Hirschler mentions some Latin sheets with musical notations readopted for this purpose, and it will be recalled that of the fifteen surviving Latin items, three contain musical texts (BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/158 and 481/159-I, and MSS simulata orientalia 6, fol. 49r), with neumes and precious illuminations. We are, in short, as Hirschler rightly states, not in the presence of a "static" repositorium, but of an integrated "mine" of book materials in the practices of book production and conservation of medieval Damascus.

On the basis of this reconstruction, similar considerations may perhaps be advanced for similar contexts, such as Latin fragments found in the Cairo Geniza, often considered as a good comparison for the Damascus Qubba. A careful examination of the fragments of the Geniza, mostly available online thanks to the efforts of the Friedberg Genizah Project,[16] has led over the years to the identification of numerous fragments in the Latin language and script, some of them printed, some of them handwritten; some palimpsested bifolia originally belonging to a Late Antique uncial manuscript containing the work of St Augustine have long been known and studied.[17] Thanks to the help of Gideon Bohak, I have recently had the chance to study three small scraps of parchments, all written on both sides, bearing the same Latin script, the same text (lines from book 5 of the *Ilias Latina*), belonging to the same original manuscript, nowadays kept in Cambridge University Library (under the shelf-mark T-S Misc. 27, fragments 2c, 2d, and 2e). Their current shape suggests they might have been cut from their original leaves and reused somewhere else, possibly to strengthen the bindings of other books. As happens for the Qubba items, nothing can be said about the "coffin" manuscript; nonetheless, some progress can be made on the original manuscript to which they all belonged. They all contain verses from a poem known as *Ilias Latina*: originally composed by Baebius Italicus in the age of Nero, this text, which is a Latin epitome (approximately 1000 verses) of the Homer work, had a great success in the Middle Ages, especially in schools,

16 https://fjms.genizah.org/.

17 Ben Outhwaite, "St Augustine in the Genizah", Fragment of the Month (blog), May 2007, Cambridge University Library, https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fragment-month-20-3. Outhwaite found another piece of Cambridge University Library MS Add. 4320, published by F. Crawford Burkitt, "Augustine-Fragment in the Cairo Genizah", *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1916), 137–138.

and is always found in miscellaneous manuscripts together with other Latin re-elaborations of the Trojan sagas, both prose and verse, in the so-called *Libri Catoniani*.[18] The script of the leaves is a Caroline minuscule, not of the oldest type. Some common abbreviations occur. Compared to other witnesses of the *Ilias Latina*, I would suggest for our fragments an origin in north-eastern France and a dating to the eleventh or twelfth century. These fragments contain precisely the same type of text and script, have the same provenance, and the fragments have the same shape as the Latin pieces found in the Qubba.

In conclusion, this small survey has shown how this type of research can contribute to making the presence of large repositories of multilingual and multiscriptual materials in the Middle East less static, framing it in terms of the practice of conservation and reuse of manuscript materials, which is larger and more varied than has been believed so far. Thus there is a need, and a hope, for a wider interdisciplinary collaboration, which is already providing promising results – for the Damascus Qubba as well as the Cairo Geniza.

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[18] Extensive description and plates are in Gideon Bohak and Serena Ammirati, "The *Latin Iliad* in the Cairo Genizah (T-S Misc. 27.2 c-e)", Fragment of the Month (blog), February 2019, Cambridge University Library, https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fotm-2019/fragment-0.

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The Old French texts of the Damascus Qubba

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Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, four Old French pieces were stored in the Qubbat al-khazna adjacent to the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. All of them are now nowhere to be found. Three went to Berlin in 1903, where they were photographed and studiously edited by Adolf Tobler before being sent back to Damascus in 1909.[1] The black and white photographs taken at the time are kept in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin as MSS simulata orientalia 6, photographs 89–105 (or fols. 44–52), and they are now the sole direct testimony we possess of the documents.[2] The last piece, the most fleeting of the four in terms of materiality, never left Damascus and is available for consultation through photographs taken *in situ* and held at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Berlin under shelf-mark BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/155–156.[3]

An apologetic poem against Judaic criticisms

Photographs nos. 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, and 101 of MSS simulata orientalia 6 in Berlin show images of a parchment quire made of four folios with an extra folio and a quire cover attached to it. The best-kept folios, the first two (nos. 91, 93, 95),[4] had dimensions of about 90 × 75 mm according to the Swiss master,[5] with the writing frame oscillating in the range of 60/65 × 50/55 mm. With the main text being written on one column of fifteen to seventeen lines,[6] thereby occupying three and a half folios, one can surmise that the ruling unit went up to about 4 mm, in spite of the fact that the photographs show no trace of ruling. The transcription of the

1 Adolf Tobler, "Bruchstücke alfranzösischer Dichtung aus den in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriften", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 43 (1903), 960–976. From 1867, the Swiss master was teaching at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin; see Franz Lebsanft, "Adolf Tobler (1835–1910). I: 'Der gesamte Reichtum der Menschennatur'", in: *Portraits de médiévistes suisses (1850–2000). Une profession au fil du temps*, Ursula Bähler and Richard Trachsler, eds., Geneva: Droz 2009, 61–95.

2 This collection, titled "Photographien von ausgewählten Fragmenten aus der Omayyaden-Moschee in Damaskus in verschiedenen Sprachen", has recently been digitised and can be accessed at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/.

3 The photographs are now available online at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/.

4 For the convenience of the reader, these folios will be referred to as 1 (no. 93 right (recto) + no. 91 left (verso)), 2 (no. 91 right (recto) + no. 95 left (verso)), and 3 (no. 95 right (recto) + no. 97 left (verso)), and also the recto of fol. 4 (no. 97 right).

5 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 969.

6 Fifteen lines on fol. 1, sixteen on fols. 2r and 3v, and seventeen on fols. 2v and 3r.

text was abruptly interrupted at line 13 of fol. 4r. The script is a Pregothic from the second half of the twelfth century, a variety of script used in vernacular texts until the beginning of the thirteenth century,[7] here traced in brown or black ink by a skilled scribe. His style is characterised by the systematic use of uncial *d* (fol. 1v1 *loderaisnement*, v2 *donent*, v3 *desdire*, etc.), the absence of round *s* and the sustained use of straight *s* in every position (1v3 *sentence* and *desdire*, v2 *nessance*, v9 *gabriels liangeles*, v10 *estranges*, etc.), the use of round *r* solely after *o* (1v8 *porta*, v10 *pordru*, etc.) and the continued use of straight *r* after a bowl letter (1v6 *uendreit*, v9 *gabriels* and *p(ri)rmes*, etc.), the drawing of capital *M* and *N* (1v10 *Mespois*, 2v4 *Mult*, 2v2 *Nefu*, 4r7 *Ne*, 4r8 *Nede*, etc.), the frequent abbreviation for *que* being "the first letter followed by a sign which normally takes the form of a semi-colon" (3r8, r14, r17),[8] and lastly the one-time use of a monogram for *de* (2v5) as well as a rather hard-to-distinguish *æ* ligature (3r15 *sæm(en)ce*).[9]

Having at his disposal a reduced surface but still wishing to maintain proper margins, the scribe first transcribed his main text's hexasyllables in long lines, isolating them with the help of a period positioned at the line or at half-height as well as by drawing a capital for the first letter of each verse's first line. Working in such a manner seems to have allowed him to abide by the writing frame, most notably on fol. 1r, even if the beginning of each line only occasionally lines up with the beginning of the ruling lines. From fol. 2r onward, the scribe then decided to organise his copy in a more compact fashion, opting for one verse (two hexasyllables) per line, a choice made possible by his nearly constant exceeding of the vertical line which delimits the writing frame to the right and by the extensive use of abbreviations. The lines remain separated by a period and the second line of the verse does not usually sport a capital initial, but this option has made it possible to detach and to align the first, often capital, letter of each verse. It is implemented in a rather hesitant and imperfect manner on fol. 2r but becomes coherent from fol. 2v onward. The *mise en texte* achieved on fol. 2 is typical of twelfth-cen-

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7 Albert Derolez, *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books: From the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2003, 56–71; also Maria Careri, Christine Ruby, and Ian Short, *Livres et écritures en français et en occitan au XII^e siècle: Catalogue illustré*, Rome: Viella 2011, xlix–l.

8 Derolez, *Palaeography*, 68, and type 77. On the other hand, *qui* is usually shortened with a superscript *i*: fol. 3r10 *q*(*ui*)*fu eq*(*ui*)*ere*, 3v5 *Q*(*ui*), etc.

9 The ligature is well known in the Anglo-Norman *scripta* (Ian Short, *Manual of Anglo-Norman*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Anglo-Norman Text Society 2013, 78–79 and 106) and surfaces sporadically on the mainland in various positions; see, among others, D'Arco Silvio Avalle, "Cultura e lingua francese delle origini nella *Passion* di Clermont-Ferrand" [1962], in: *La doppia verità: Fenomenologia ecdotica e lingua letteraria del Medioevo romanzo*, Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo 2002, 508; Carl Theodor Gossen, *Französische Skriptastudien: Untersuchungen zu den nordfranzösischen Urkundensprachen des Mittelalters*, Vienna: Böhlaus 1967, 39, 79–80, and 357; Geneviève Hasenohr, ed., *Le Jeu d'Adam*, Geneva: Droz 2017, xxxiii and xli.

tury manuscripts containing hexasyllabic verses,[10] and the typological conformity is bolstered by the rare decorative – the red letter with sparse internal flourishes extending over three ruling units on fol. 1r1–3[11] – or peritextual elements found throughout the manuscript – the Latin heading on fol. 1r1 (*De mater domini Jesu Christi*) traced in capital letters and potentially in red ink.

The text contained in the booklet where fols. 1r–4r are host to 200 hexasyllables and a few feet is not known by any other testimony.[12] It is an apologetic poem meant to counter the *genz judäisme*'s denial (l. 9)[13] of the Incarnation (ll. 9–24) and especially of the virginal conception of Christ (ll. 135–142, 165–185), a goal vigorously proclaimed at l. 17 ("A lor raisun destruire") and 141 ("A lor raisun cunfundre"). The argument destined to repel demurral and sarcasm is based at its core on the typological correspondence between the trial of the Aaron rod (Numbers 17) and the virginal conception in Mary's womb, a demonstration taken from the third paragraph of a sermon attributed to St Augustine – no. CCXLV (*De mysterio Trinitatis et Incarnationis*) in the Maurist edition[14] – where the same anti-Judaism apology and polemic are put forth. The author of the vernacular text opens up by stating his debt towards Augustine, but before getting to the typological argument and after piecing together a summary of the Annunciation and the Conception, he chooses to source some well-known apocryphal material from the *Infancy Gospel of James*: Joseph's doubts concerning Mary's pregnancy (ll. 55–108), the angel appearing to Joseph (ll. 109–130), and the husband becoming trusting again (ll. 131–134). Only after setting the scene and the characters does he resume the course of his rather explicit pseudo-Augustinian argumentation ("Profero de historia Veteris Testamenti necessarium exemplum contra Judæum […]")[15] and showcase the trial of the Aaron rod (ll. 143–164). Unfortunately, however, the sudden end of the

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10 Geneviève Hasenohr, "Traductions et littérature en langue vulgaire", in: *Mise en page et mise en texte du livre manuscrit*, Henri-Jean Martin and Jean Vezin, eds., Paris: Promodis-Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie 1990, 237–238; as well as Careri, Ruby, and Short, *Catalogue*, xxx and, for an example, 74–77 (British Library MS Cotton Nero A V (Philippe de Thaon): third quarter of the twelfth century).

11 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 969. The coloured letter *O* is a simplified version of a type common in twelfth-century ecclesiastical manuscripts and well represented by the red lettrine (*O*) of the *Bible glosée* from Bibliothèque municipale d'Angers MS 71, fol. 137r – the letter is available through the digitised catalog Initiale, put together by the Section des manuscrits enluminés of the Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes (IRHT-CNRS) at http://initiale.irht.cnrs.fr/.

12 Arthur Långfors, *Les Incipit des poèmes français antérieurs au XVI^e siècle* [1918], 2nd ed., Geneva: Slatkine 1977, 244. Tobler's excellent edition ("Bruchstücke", 969–976) therefore remains just as relevant, particularly so when considering the extreme scarcity of questionable readings therein: l. 105 *ferai* MS maybe *farai* (fol. 2v15), l. 120 *prainz* MS *p(re)inz* (fol. 2r5), l. 140 *semence* MS *sæm(en)ce* (fol. 3r15).

13 For this construction, see under *judaïsme* in DEAF J 656, n. 1.

14 Joseph-Maxence Péronne et al., eds., *Œuvres complètes de saint Augustin, évêque d'Hippone*, vol. 20, Paris: Louis Vivès 1873, 435–438. The source had already been identified by Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 970.

15 Péronne et al., *Œuvres*, 436–437.

transcription after the first feet of l. 201 puts a stop to the typological correspondence and to its development.

The text itself as well as its partial copy can be traced back to the south-west of the oïl territory,[16] which is non-negligible considering that apart from the *Sponsus*, whose original version was French but not necessarily Poitevin, no Poitevin or Saintongeais text appears before the thirteenth century.[17] Furthermore, vernacular manuscripts from the south-west are extremely rare up until the beginning of the thirteenth century – the only ones are the single testimony of Étienne de Fougères's *Livre des Manières* (Bibliothèque municipale d'Angers MS 304), dated late twelfth or early thirteenth century, and potentially the western or south-western *Roman de Thèbes* fragment (late twelfth century) held in the same library under shelf-mark 26.[18]

As the main text abruptly comes to a stop at the beginning of line 13 on fol. 4r, the remaining lines have not been put to use by the scribe. Another *grosso modo* contemporaneous but less skilled hand, however, saw in the blank verso of fol. 4 a perfect opportunity to transcribe eleven lines of Latin prose in brown or black ink. On the photograph (no. 99 left), this adventitious text sometimes has its final segments hidden by the edge of the folio attached to the booklet, and its contents are that of a Latin charm against wounds and fistulas belonging to the well-known genre of so-called hemostatic charms, which aim to stop haemorrhages: it relates the legendary episode of the sudden stopping of the Jordan River's flow during Christ's baptism and ends with a pharmacological indication. This merging of traditions is not surprising: medieval mentality classifies verbal and pharmacological remedies as members of the same register and establishes an operational and typological continuity between them, hence the "intégration massive" of the charms in the collections of recipes.[19] While Adolf Tobler had already pointed out how unrelated the main text and fol. 4v's "lateinische Beschwörungsformel" (Latin incantation) were,[20] it is worth stressing that from a codicological standpoint the addition of such texts is quite customary: in twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts they are often found in margins, in blank spaces, on guard leaves, or on covers.[21]

The editor did not devote much time to the quire's surrounds, for he merely noted in passing that a fifth leaf was attached to it ("angeheftet") and that it was

16 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 970–973; and Gilles Roques, "Aspects régionaux du vocabulaire de l'ancien français", PhD dissertation, Université de Strasbourg II 1980, 317–318.

17 Pierre Gauthier, "Französische Skriptaformen VI: Saintonge, Poitou", in: *Lexikon der romanistischen Linguistik*, vol. 2, no. 2, Günter Holtus, Michael Metzeltin, and Christian Schmitt, eds., Tübingen: Niemeyer 1995, 368.

18 Careri, Ruby, and Short, *Catalogue*, 4–5 and 2–3.

19 Edina Bozoky, *Charmes et prières apotropaïques*, Turnhout: Brepols 2003, 34.

20 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 969.

21 Bozoky, *Charmes*, 67 and 82–83; and also Marcello Barbato, *Incantamenta latina et romanica: Scongiuri e formule magiche dei secoli V–XV*, Rome: Salerno Editrice 2019, xcv–cii.

covered by a pinned quire guard ("Umschlag").[22] Thus we may now make a few more observations concerning the elements that were added to the quire. However diminished it appears today due to vermin damage, fol. 5 (nos. 99 right [recto] and 101 left [verso]) must have had similar dimensions to those of fols. 1–4. Its full recto as well as the top half of its verso contained a Latin invocation to St Nicholas complete with musical notations and traced in a precise Pregothic script, while the bottom half of fol. 5v contained a Greek incantation in Latin characters laid out in long lines by a rather crude and rudimentary hand.

The invocation to St Nicholas (*Sospitati dedit egros olei perfusio*), one of the most celebrated saints of the medieval sanctoral cycle, is known through numerous copies.[23] It conjures up the fundamental characteristics of the saint – the sacred oil emanating from his body and curing the ill, the protection afforded to endangered seafarers and to castaways, the excerpt relating to the Jewish moneylender who converted to the Christian faith, and so on. What truly sets this testimony apart is the non-linear (without ruling) diastematic (using intervals) notation with which it is provided: it is a variety of music notation that is characteristic of the twelfth century.[24] The same invocation is further found provided with Aquitanian notation (diastematic and linear) at fol. 246v of the famous Marseilles Antiphonary (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 1090), dated to the late twelfth century.[25]

The Greek incantation in Latin characters overflows from the bottom half of fol. 5v to the quire guard (no. 93 left), where it takes up five long lines at the top of what can be hypothesised to be a bifolium on parchment, the partial photograph not permitting any definitive conclusion to be established. All of this confirms the interconnection between the quire (fols. 1–4), the added folium (fol. 5), and the quire guard, the three of them being characterised (a) by the addition of typical adventitious texts, namely the Latin and Greek incantations, albeit committed to writing by different hands; (b) by the multilingualism specific to the marginal spaces of codicological units – a multilingualism with a rather assertive Mediterranean quality in this case (Old French [fols. 1r–4r], Latin [fols. 4v–5v], Greek [fol. 5v + quire guard]); and lastly (c) by a contiguity that must date to an early stage, considering the Pregothic quality of the hands behind the Latin texts.

22 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 969.

23 See no. 6697Pa of the Cantus Index: Catalogue of Chant Texts and Melodies, at http://cantusindex.org/.

24 We are grateful to Francesco Carapezza from the Università degli Studi di Palermo for these indications.

25 An excellent colour digital reproduction of this collection is available on Gallica at http://gallica.bnf.fr/.

Excerpt from the Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne

The folium on parchment shown on photographs nos. 101 (right [recto]) and 89 (verso) of MSS simulata orientalia 6 measured "7 Centimeter Höhe und 5 Breite", and the lines (twenty for recto, eighteen for verso) were laid out across one column inside a frame provided with 52 × 32 mm ruling. These measurements are skewed by the considerable shrinkage the folium suffered before 1903, "unter der Wirkung von Feuchtigkeit" (under the effect of moisture),[26] which also makes its content harder to read. The content in question is an excerpt (ll. 967–1004) of the *T* version (1535 l.) of the *Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne* in octosyllabic verses,[27] which appears to have been written in England in the last quarter of the twelfth century and to have benefited from a significant dissemination (eight copies including the present fragment). In spite of the critical state in which this rag of a manuscript was at the time of its discovery and in spite of the modest quality of the photographs taken in Berlin, one can still surmise that this "petit fragment anglo-normand"[28] was once part of a bigger entity (quire, booklet, or volume) from which it has been torn off, as is evidenced by its ragged outline – a modest triangular section of the other half of the bifolium was torn alongside this folio, which has also lost its bottom corner and the surrounding area near the seam margin. Every line features a single verse[29] but the initials of each line (capital or minuscule) are neither separated nor aligned and the writing sits uneasily on the baseline of the established ruling unit. A shocking change of ink and writing instruments takes place between ll. 12 and 13 of the recto: the hand seems to remain the same, however, but the questionable quality of the testimony does not allow any strong claim on the matter. That being said, one can notice that the writing on the folio is reminiscent of the ordinary and quite crude style "à la limite du brouillon" (not far from a rough draft)[30] used in England in the second half of the twelfth century and around 1200 for texts added in certain quires or manuscripts: straight *r* is constant, even after *o* (r2 *oresun*, r10 *docor*, r15

26 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 966.

27 Peter F. Dembowski, ed., *La Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne: Versions en ancien et en moyen français*, Geneva: Droz 1977, 25–111. The editor cites fragment F^2 (27) and uses it to establish the critical text, as shown by the critical apparatus (96–97). It had previously been carefully published by Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 966–969, who numbered the salvaged verses 979–1016 following Matthew Cooke, ed., *Robert Grossetete's "Chasteau d'amour", to which are added "La Vie de sainte Marie Egyptienne" and an English version of the "Chasteau d'amour"*, London: Caxton Society 1852, 62–113. We have almost no observations to make regarding this edition: l. 992 (980 from Dembowski, *Vie*, 54) *tochot* MS *tochot* or *tochet* (r14), l. 996 (986) *laveit* MS maybe *le æ(u)eit* (r18), l. 1001 (989) *fantome* MS maybe *fa(n)tieme* (v3), l. 1011 (999) … *espeneir* MS maybe *per espeneir* (v13).

28 Dembowski, *Vie*, 27.

29 Concerning this customary layout for verse texts, one that is already the most frequent, by far, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Hasenohr, "Traductions", 235), see Careri, Ruby, and Short, *Catalogue*, liii-liv.

30 Careri, Ruby and Short, *Catalogue*, l.

paor, r8 *drecet*, r17 *preere*, etc.), and straight *f* and *r* often drop below the baseline (r2 *faces*, r8 *drecet*, r10 *docor*, etc.) while the letters *g*, *p*, and *q* are, oddly enough, entirely drawn above it (r1 *eglese* and *gra(n)t*, r6 *goert*, r7 *agarde*, r15 *grant*, r16 *agarant*, r2, r6, and r10 *per*, r3 *pas*, r10 *piem(en)t*, r17 *preere*, r19 *plus*, r11 and r14 *que*, v1 *qot*, etc.).

Fierabras *bifolium*

Pictured on photographs nos. 103 and 105 of MSS simulata orientalia 6 is a parchment bifolium in pristine condition with dimensions seemingly very close to its original ones.[31] Each leaf was built around a well-prepared writing surface, with measurements of approximately 196 × 110 mm and a writing frame of approximately 140/150 × 70/80 mm. These are essentially the same dimensions and justification found in an epic manuscript such as the Paris *Girart de Roussilon* (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 2180: south-western France, mid-thirteenth century) with its 183 × 118 mm leaves and decasyllables seated on a writing frame of 145 × 79 mm.[32] A skilled scribe has used brown or black ink to transcribe thirty lines thereon in a single column, with one alexandrine per line (ruling unit: 4.5/5 mm): the line initials, both capital and minuscule, are detached and painstakingly aligned while a dotted line located on the right side provides visual balance to the vertical chain of initial letters;[33] reserved spaces over two ruling units were prepared for the initial letters meant to signal the beginning of each laisse (coloured or pen-flourished initials), but these were never executed on the bifolium such that all that remains are the marginal guide letters. The script is a polished, tidy, and constant small Gothic from the first half of the thirteenth century:[34] straight *s* is dominant throughout (fol. 1r3 *ses saintes*, r6 *meschies*, r16 *tos eslaissies*, etc.) and straight *r* is constant after bowl letters (1r15 *drecies*, r18 *diaspre*, r28 *enbrases*, etc.), while round *r* is well established behind *o* (1r1 *sentornerent*, r4 *demort*, r8 *corecies*, etc.) even though straight *r* can sometimes be spotted in the position (e.g. 1v6

31 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 960–966, had already established that the first folio is the one whose recto and verso are seen in photographs nos. 103 (right) and 105 (left) respectively, the second folio being the one whose recto and verso are respectively seen on the right in no. 105 and on the left in no. 103. The bifolium was recently afforded a brand new study as well as a new edition of its verses in Laura Minervini's "Sui frammenti epici della moschea di Damasco (*Fierabras*, lasse 106–108, 117–118)", in: *Codici, testi, interpretazioni: Studi sull'epica romanza medievale*, Paolo Di Luca and Doriana Piacentino, eds., Naples: Napoli University Press 2015, 93–103.

32 Maria Careri et al., *Album de manuscrits français du XIII^e siècle: Mise en page et mise en texte*, Rome: Viella 2001, 59–62.

33 In the best manuscripts, this habit typical of Anglo-Norman scribes, at least in the beginning, manages to enhance the visual balance of the page through the effect of symmetry created between the alignment of the initials on the left and the alignment of dots on the right (Hasenohr, "Traductions", 246 and 248).

34 Minervini, "*Fierabras*", 96. Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 960 described it as a "Schrift des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts" (script of the thirteenth century).

diuore), the fusion of opposite bowls does not usually occur (*b*/*e*: 1r2 *achemines*, *d*/*e*: r3 *dex*, *b*/*o*: r3 *bontes*, *d*/*o*: r12 *dolans*, etc.), and abbreviations are plentiful but customary (ellipsis, tildes, superscript letters, shorthand symbols, etc.).

The bifolium houses two excerpts of the extended version of *Fierabras*, one sixty alexandrines long and the other fifty-nine.[35] This late twelfth-century chanson de geste is part of the small Cycle of the Relics nestled inside the bigger epic Cycle of the King, and based on the twelve extant copies we possess, whether whole or fragmentary,[36] the extended version circulated widely up until the fifteenth century. As the two excerpts do not follow each other – they are located at ll. 4221–4280, which corresponds to the end of laisse 106, the entire laisse 107, and the beginning of laisse 108 (fol. 1), and at ll. 4624a–4678, which corresponds to the second half of laisse 117 and to the first half of the following laisse (fol. 2) in the reference edition[37] – and as the two of them took up anywhere between 340 and 360 lines, approximately, it is reasonable to conclude that three bifolia each containing about 120 lines used to be positioned between the two halves of the bifolium found in Damascus in the early twentieth century.[38] It is therefore possible that its original form was that of the exterior bifolium of a quaternion, according to the most widespread configuration in the making of small-format epic manuscripts since at least the Bodleian Library's Digby 23.[39] The bifolium's *scripta* shows little to no marking, as only a few rare instances of traits linked to north-eastern continental varieties can be identified.[40]

Enfances Godefroi scraps

The severely damaged middle section of another epic bifolium on parchment never made it to Berlin, but was photographed *in situ* alongside two other pieces taken from the Qubbat al-khazna (including the *Fierabras* bifolium just discussed) thanks to the team led by Bible scholar Bruno Violet (1871–1945). What little is left of the bifolium is now accessible solely through the black and white photographs kept at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.[41]

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35 According to the numbering in Marc Le Person, ed., *Fierabras, chanson de geste du XII^e siècle*, Paris: Champion 2003, l. 4659 on fol. 2v is written on two lines (9–10).

36 Le Person, *Fierabras*, 22–52.

37 In it the chanson has a little over 6400 alexandrines laid out in monorhyme laisses.

38 Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 961 had already come to the same conclusion.

39 Careri, Ruby, and Short, *Catalogue*, 126–127.

40 Minervini, "*Fierabras*", 98.

41 The photographs, now available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/ (nos. 155–156), are reproduced in Serena Ammirati, "The Latin Fragments from Qubba^t al-Khazna of Damascus: A Preliminary Palaeographical and Textual Survey", in: *Palaeography between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome* (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, 108, pls. 2–3 (the fragment is located on

Two circumstantial matters make this piece that much harder to apprehend: the middle section is in nothing short of a slovenly condition (highly uneven edges, holes, tears, stains, etc.), and the photographer neglected to document every single scrap, leaving a rather substantial portion of the bottom section outside of the frame. A few observations can nonetheless be made: each leaf's single column contained thirty written lines, as can still be seen on fol. 1v;[42] based on the data we possess concerning the other pieces photographed at the same time, the fragment must have measured approximately 150/160 × 90 mm.[43] The writing frame of the original leaves was thus probably around 125/135 mm high (ruling unit: around 4.5 mm) and 80/90 mm wide. This hypothetical information points at a global size of 160/180 × 110/130 mm, which comes quite close to another older and fragmentary testimony of the Crusade Cycle, Burgerbibliothek of Bern MS 627 (mid-thirteenth century), where the alexandrines of the *Chevalier au cygne* and the *Enfances Godefroi* are laid out in a similar mould consisting of a single twenty-six-line column in a 135 × 90 mm writing frame on a 180/185 × 120/125 mm leaf.[44]

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the bottom right side). After Ammirati, "Survey", 107–109 drew attention to it, the fragment was the focus of Marco Miglionico's master's thesis, "Un frammento in antico francese dalla Qubbat al-Khazna di Damasco: Questioni di paleografia, codicologia e filologia", Università degli Studi Roma Tre 2018. We are grateful to the advisor, Serena Ammirati, for granting us access to that thesis.

42 Out of convenience for the reader, "fol. 1" is used to refer to the folio whose remains of the recto are seen on the right side of the photograph no. 156 printed in Ammirati, "Survey", 108, pl. 3, its verso being to the left of no. 155 or pl. 2. What remains of fol. 2 is thus the small trapezoidal parchment piece located on the right side of no. 155 or pl. 2 (recto) and on the left side of no. 156 or pl. 3 (verso).

43 Ammirati, "Survey", 107 and 109, gives dimensions of approximately 130 × 90 mm, as does Miglionico, "Frammento", 12: "mm 130 × 90 (mm 116 × 69 la misura dello specchio di scrittura)". It must be borne in mind however that Adolf Tobler held the original *Fierabras* bifolium in his hands and gives a measurement of "19.5 Centimeter hoch" (Tobler, "Bruchstücke", 960), whereas the photographs of the fragment taken both in Berlin and in Damascus cut out its bottom margin.

44 Geoffrey M. Myers, "The Manuscripts of the Cycle", in: *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, vol. 1, *"La Naissance du Chevalier au cygne", "Elioxe", "Beatrix"*, Jan A. Nelson and Emanuel J. Mickel, eds., Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 1977, liv–lv and lxxxii–lxxxiii, nn. 109–113; and also Emanuel J. Mickel, ed., *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, vol. 3, *"Les Enfances Godefroi" and "Le Retour de Cornumarant"*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 1999, 14. It goes without saying that these parameters are also found outside of epic manuscripts: see for example fol. 82r in Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 5667, fols. 1–95, a Latin and French miscellany dated to the first third of the thirteenth century and comprising both prose and verse texts dedicated to St Genevieve, which measures 169 × 108 mm, has a 115 × 68 mm writing frame, and lays out Renaut's octosyllables concerning the life of the saint in one column provided with thirty drawn lines (Careri et al., *Album*, 11–14); also consider fol. 22r in Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 13315, an early thirteenth-century collection of prose sermons and Bible commentaries written in Latin and in French which measures 175 × 117 mm and has a single twenty-eight-line colum provided with a justification of 133 × 73 mm (Careri et al., *Album*, 171–174).

The ruling marks still visible on the photographs are a clear indication of the professional setting of which this piece is a product: the line initials, usually in capital letters, are framed inside a seemingly two-part small column that creates a satisfying vertical alignment and a consistent spacing; blank spaces spanning two ruling units were created to house initial letters, a feature which entailed the indentation of the adjacent lines, and they were ultimately used for coloured letters; the scribe appears to have written the first line of each column above the top line;[45] as was the case in the bifolium of the epic *Fierabras* previously discussed, a dotted line was traced to the right, where the lines for writing intersect with the vertical line that marks the end of the column. The scribe used a brown or black ink to write one verse per line in a script that the few legible parts allow one to believe is a neat and sufficiently skilful professional Gothic from the first half of the thirteenth century.[46] Worth noting is the use of straight *s* at the end of the unit (fol. 1r2 *Lirois*, r10 […]*ins les*, r15 *puis*, etc.) or of the trailing *s* dipping below the writing line (1r8 *deses* and *fils*, r12 *fils*, r17 […]*iels*, etc.),[47] and even round *s* at the end of a line (2v […]*aus* and […]*s*), the systematic use of round *r* after *o* (1r2 *cornu*[…], r6 *pore*[…], r10 *nori*, etc.), the unwillingness to fuse opposite bowls (*b*/*e*: 1r18 *ca(m)beriere*, *d*/*o*: r14 *gardoit*, *p*/*e*: r14 *apele*, *p*/*o*: r6 *pore*[…], etc.), the use of the shorthand symbol for *et* without a crossbar (1r15),[48] and the lengthening of both the ascenders in the top margin (straight *s* and *l* on 1r1) and the descenders in the bottom margin (*p* on 1v30).

The only coloured letter that can be studied fully is the *U* on fol. 1r7–8.[49] With its right side descender dipping far below the letter's base and being cut diagonally, this coloured letter showcases an unusual physiognomy reminiscent of the playful experiments made on the same letter *U* in twelfth-century monastic manuscripts, where the right side of the letter was isolated from the rest and could extend vertically, even below the base of the letter. This particular tendency can also be seen in the lettrines in Bibliothèque Mazarine MS 296, fol. 98r (Poitou, mid-twelfth century) and Bibliothèque municipale de Douai MS 199, fol. 51r (Anchin Abbey, third quarter of the twelfth century), as well as in the hybrid letter clad in zoomorphic patterns found in the technically and stylistically sophisticated Bibliothèque

45 On this layout feature of particular relevance for dating purposes, see Careri et al., *Album*, xxiv.

46 Ammirati, "Survey", 109, considers the writing to be dated to somewhere "between the end of the XII and the beginning of the XIII century", a position shared by Miglionico, "Frammento", who also believes it might be of insular origin (p. 57).

47 Derolez, *Palaeography*, 107 and type 19. Let us keep in mind that this *s* form is well established in manuscripts made in northern France in the first half of the thirteenth century, as is exemplified by its sustained use in the already cited Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 5667, fols. 1–95 (Careri et al., *Album*, 12–13).

48 This is known to be especially persistent in French manuscripts from the first half of the thirteenth century (Careri et al., *Album*, xxxii).

49 The other one, the letter *L* from fol. 1r27, has been largely kept out of the photographic frame.

municipale de Douai MS 301, fol. 10v (Marchiennes Abbey, first half of the twelfth century).[50] The initial found in the scraps once located in Damascus appears to be both a simplified and artificial imitation of this decorative pattern.

The mutilated bifolium contains two significantly damaged passages (no line being legible in its entirety) of the *Enfances Godefroi*, a late twelfth-century chanson de geste belonging to the Crusade Cycle and containing 3745 alexandrines spread over 148 laisses in the reference edition.[51] Folio 1r most likely used to house ll. 681–710, that is, the last five alexandrines (ll. 681–685) of laisse 28 (as well as an extra verse [682.1] found in most copies of the chanson),[52] all of laisse 29 (ll. 686–706 except 705, missing in most copies),[53] and the beginning of laisse 30 (ll. 707–710), only a few letters of l. 707 being visible as the photograph's frame leaves out the rest. The verso of the same folium also used to contain 30 verses (ll. 711–740): the remainder of laisse 30 (ll. 711–719), all of laisse 31 (ll. 720–736), and the beginning of the following laisse (ll. 737–740). The harvest is much more meagre on fol. 2, where nothing but a small trapezoidal surface near the inner bottom corner of the original leaf remains. On the recto one can still read the first letters of the first nine alexandrines making up the second portion of laisse 70 (ll. 1931–1939), the verso showcasing the last letters of a few verses belonging to laisse 72. Some rare usable scriptological clues point to a localisation in the north-eastern quadrant of the continental francophone domain,[54] thus matching up with the presumed origin of the majority of extant *Enfances Godefroi* copies.[55]

The very last alexandrine one can read on fol. 1v is l. 740 and it is possible that the first written line of fol. 2r contained l. 1910 of laisse 69. Based on the reference edition, then, one must acknowledge how massive a gap there is between the amount of text contained on both halves of the bifolium – around 1170 verses, which represents nearly a third of the chanson.[56] A simpler solution is within reach, however. Laisses 33–61 (ll. 761–1688) of the *Enfances Godefroi* are only extant in three testimonies (*BCD*) which constitute the core of the second version edited by Mickel. In contrast, the testimonies of the first version (*AFIS*) as well as the

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50 All of these *U*'s are documented in the digital catalog Initiale, available at http://initiale.irht.cnrs.fr/.

51 Mickel, *Enfances*. This edition obviously does not acknowledge the very fragmentary testimony (9–15) discussed here, as is also the case for Myers, "Manuscripts", and for Emanuel J. Mickel, "The Manuscripts of the *Enfances Godefroi*", *Romania* 115 (1997), 434–450. It is further absent from the numerous contributions Mickel has made since the publication of the edition.

52 Mickel, *Enfances*, 308.

53 Mickel, *Enfances*, 309.

54 More specifically /ka/ in *ca(m)bre* (l. 726 in the edition of the fragment found in the appendix) and in *ca(m)beriere* (697), *s* used to render /s/ in *pasa* (681), *laisa* (688), and *s'asist* (702), *le* and *se* for the feminine singular article and possessive determiner (702, 719, 737; 695, 698), the feminine singular past participle *moillie* (698), and the infinitive *veïr* (682.1).

55 See the note immediately before the edition of the fragment in the appendix.

56 Ammirati, "Survey", 109, has also noted this issue.

ones modelled after it (*EG*) do not contain them, and the testimony to which belonged the piece once located in Damascus might have shared that feature. If this were accurate, the content gap between the two halves of our bifolium would come down to around 240 verses, an amount of text that could very well be contained within two similar bifolia. If these were assembled in a quaternion as is customary for small-format epic manuscripts, it is quite likely that our bifolium was the second in the quire.

Provenance and presence in the Qubba

We do not know how or when the Old French fragments entered the treasure of the Great Mosque of Damascus. We may conjecture that they were part of books owned by some Frankish inhabitants or Western visitors in the Latin East. Travellers often brought a few books with them and Syria's main city was not far from the borders of the Kingdom of Jerusalem,[57] with which relationships of various kinds – and not of a necessarily hostile nature – existed at all times, at different levels. An example is provided by a Latin document once preserved in the same Qubbat al-khazna, a safe conduct issued by the chancery of Baldwin III, king of Jerusalem (r. 1143–1163), for *Bohali filium Hebencstin*, an Arab merchant from Tyre.[58] But it is worth remembering that the Orthodox shrine of Our Lady of Ṣaydnāyā – some twenty miles away from Damascus – was a popular destination for Eastern as well as Western Christian pilgrims who travelled there to worship a miraculous icon of the Virgin; Muslims were also reported (in Christian sources) to occasionally visit this holy place.[59] It is also worth remembering that in 1260

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57 We use the word "border" metaphorically, since strictly speaking borders did not exist in the Middle Ages; see Ronnie Ellenblum, "Were there Borders and Borderlines in the Middle Ages? The Example of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem", in: *Frontiers in the Middle Ages: Concepts and Practices*, David Abulafia and Nora Berend, eds., Aldershot: Ashgate 2002, 105–119.

58 The document was published and studied by Hans Eberhard Mayer, "Une lettre de saufconduit d'un roi croisé de Jérusalem pour un marchand musulman", in: *La présence latine en Orient au Moyen Âge*, Ghislain Brunel and Marie-Adélaïde Nielen, eds., Paris: Centre historique des Archives nationales-Champion 2000, 27–35; Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Die Urkunden der lateinische Könige von Jerusalem*, vol. 1, Hannover: Hahnsche 2010, 492–494. As with other fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna, the edition was based on the extant photographs, since the actual location of the original is unknown. For a shorter documentary fragment from the Crusader states, see Ammirati, "Survey", 105.

59 See Daniel Baraz, "The Incarnated Icon of Saidnaya Goes West: A Re-Examination of the Motif in the Light of New Manuscript Evidence", *Le Muséon* 108 (1994), 181–191; Laura Minervini, "Leggende dei cristiani orientali nelle letterature romanze del Medioevo", *Romance Philology* 49 (1995), 1–12; Bernard Hamilton, "Our Lady of Saidnaya: An Orthodox Shrine Revered by Muslims and Knights Templar at the Time of the Crusades", in: *The Holy Land, Holy Lands, and Christian History*, Robert N. Swanson, ed., Woodbridge: Boydell 2000, 207–215; Benjamin Z. Kedar, "The Convergence of Oriental Christian, Muslim and Frankish Worshippers: The Case of Saydnaya and the Knights Templar", in: *The Crusades and the Military*

Bohemond VI, prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli, took part with his men in the Mongol raid on Aleppo and Damascus – according to a contemporary (Old French) source, the Franks even entered the Great Mosque and celebrated a mass there.[60] Much more frequently, however, raids went in the opposite direction and Frankish villages were plundered by Muslim armies. The Mamluk conquest of the Crusader states on the mainland,[61] completed in 1291, involved cities such as Tyre, Beirut, and Sidon, and their spoils would be scattered around in the area. That is to say that, even if we do not know the exact circumstances that brought these – and possibly other – Old French books into the Qubbat al-khazna, we can plausibly imagine the historical framework in which this peculiar form of "cultural exchange" took place.

Evaluating the Old French fragments in a cultural perspective raises several problems. First, why French? Texts written in different languages and scripts were kept in the Qubbat al-khazna: Arabic, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, and Old French.[62] The latter is the only western European vernacular represented in the Syrian repository, due to the fact that it was largely used, in writing and in speech, in the neighbouring Crusader states. French speakers were a prominent component of the local multilayered society: the ruling class belonged mostly to the French and Occitan aristocracy and many (perhaps the majority) of the European settlers came from various regions of present-day

Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity, Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovsky, eds., Budapest: Central European University 2002, 89–100. The convent appears in many Latin and vernacular pilgrims' guides and in one of Matthew Paris's maps of the Holy Land as an important landmark of the region; see Henri Michelant and Gaston Raynaud, *Itinéraires à Jérusalem et descriptions de la Terre sainte rédigés en français aux XI^e^, XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles*, Geneva: Fick 1882, 131–132; Gabriele Giannini, *Un guide français de Terre sainte, entre Orient latin et Toscane occidentale*, Paris: Classiques Garnier 2016, 132–133. Sharing shrines across religious boundaries was not infrequent in the medieval Levant: for a careful evaluation of the phenomenon, see Christopher MacEvitt, "Processing Together, Celebrating Apart: Shared Processions in the Latin East", *Journal of Medieval History* 43 (2017), 455–469.

60 See Laura Minervini, ed., *Cronaca del Templare di Tiro*, Naples: Liguori 2000, 82–83. Interestingly enough, the chronicler – a native inhabitant of the Latin East, with some knowledge of Arabic – maintains that inside the mosque the Saracens worshipped Muhammad ("en la q*ue*le yglize aourere*n*t par dedens les sarazins a Mahomet"). This raid is an early episode of the Mongol–Mamluk war (1260–1320). The fleeting military alliance with the Mongols did not lead to a long-term Frankish conquest of Damascus and its surroundings; see Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War 1260–1281*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995.

61 That is, the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099–1291), the Principality of Antioch (1098–1268), and the Counties of Tripoli (1104–1289) and Edessa (1098–1149).

62 See Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubba^t^ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74; Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63–88.

France. For several reasons,[63] French rather than Occitan became the general language of the Frankish (or Latin) group, who held a privileged political, juridical, and socio-economic position vis-à-vis the indigenous population, composed of Muslims, Eastern Christians, and Jews. The Latin East was a multilingual space with an asymmetrical distribution of languages – a basic knowledge of French was probably not uncommon, especially in urban settings, but the same was not true of Arabic or Greek. Be that as it may, the importance and wide diffusion of French help to explain the presence of some scraps of Old French texts in the Qubbat al-khazna, although this does not rule out the possibility that books written in Italian, English, or German could also have been kept in the Damascus repository.

Secondly, where do these fragments come from? It is nowadays possible to locate the geographical origin of a manuscript, thanks to the chemical analysis of the inks used by its scribe(s), but this possibility is clearly ruled out in the case of the Damascus fragments accessible only through photographs. Books in Old French were produced throughout a vast area of Europe – from France itself to England, Flanders, and Italy – but also beyond the sea, in the Holy Land and in Cyprus. Since the 1950s, much scholarly work has been devoted to the identification of the stylistic features of decorated manuscripts from the Latin East and to the characterisation of the *scripta* – that is to say, the written regional variety – of the so-called Outremer French.[64] The manuscript production of the Latin scriptoria in the Levant, however, has scarcely been characterised from codicological and palaeographical standpoints.[65] The Damascus Old French fragments belong to

63 See Laura Minervini, "What We Know and Don't Yet Know About Outremer French", in: *The French of Outremer: Communities and Communication in the Crusading Mediterranean*, Laura K. Morreale and Nicholas L. Paul, eds., New York: Fordham University Press 2018, 15–29.

64 See Hugo Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford: Clarendon 1957; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre 1275–1291*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1976; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land, from the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2005; Pierre Nobel, "Écrire dans le Royaume franc: La *scripta* de deux manuscrits copiés à Acre au XIII^{e} siècle", in: *Variations linguistiques: Koinés, dialectes, français régionaux*, Pierre Nobel, ed., Besançon: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté 2003, 33–52; Laura Minervini, "Le Français dans l'Orient latin (XIII^{e}–XIV^{e} siècles): Éléments pour la caractérisation d'une *scripta* du Levant", *Revue de linguistique romane* 74 (2010), 121–198; Cyril Aslanov, "Crusaders' Old French", in: *Research on Old French: The State of the Art*, Deborah L. Arteaga, ed., Dordrecht: Springer 2013, 207–220; Fabio Zinelli, "The French of Outremer Beyond the Holy Land", in: *The French of Outremer: Communities and Communication in the Crusading Mediterranean*, Laura K. Morreale and Nicholas L. Paul, eds., New York: Fordham University Press 2018, 221–246.

65 For some features of a "Mediterranean" Gothic writing, diffused in Sicily and the Latin East, see Armando Petrucci, *Breve storia della scrittura latina*, Rome: Bagatto 1989, 134–135; Paolo Cherubini and Alessandro Pratesi, *Paleografia latina: L'avventura grafica del mondo occidentale*, Vatican: Scuola vaticana di paleografia, diplomatica e archivistica 2010, 465–466. These features are found in some highly decorated Latin manuscripts, but are not sufficient for the precise characterisation of a writing style.

small-size manuscripts provided with minimal decoration,[66] and they do not share any grapho-phonetic or lexical peculiarities with the Outremer French *scripta*. We are therefore left with the realistic hypothesis that the Old French manuscripts whose fragments survived in the Qubbat al-khazna were produced in Europe – their *scripta* point to north-eastern and south-western regions of France (north-eastern in the case of *Fierabras* and the *Enfances Godefroi*, south-western for the apologetic poem), as well as to the Anglo-Norman world (the *Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne*), these claims being further supported by the palaeographical and codicological analysis given above.

Thirdly and lastly, why these specific texts? If, as suggested above, the Old French fragments were related to the Latin East, their owners could have been long-time settlers, newcomers, or short-term visitors freshly arrived from Europe. The books they lost in unknown circumstances were the product of European scriptoria and the texts copied therein were originally composed in France and in England. These texts belong to the vernacular traditions of epic poetry (the two chansons de geste) and of literature centred around religious subject matter (the apologetic and hagiographic poems).

Unsurprisingly, all kinds of religious literature were thoroughly enjoyed by the Latin population of the Crusader states. The local production – mostly in Latin, but also in French – included prayers, sermons, descriptions of holy places, monastic rules, liturgical works, canon law treatises, reports on Islam and Eastern Christianity, and so on.[67] But religious texts originating from different regions also found their readership in the area, as is witnessed by the lists of books owned by the libraries of the episcopal churches of Nazareth and Sidon,[68] as well as by most

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66 According to Folda, *Crusader Art*, 107, it was only from 1250 that scriptoria in the Crusader states began producing decorated manuscripts of Old French texts, the first being the "Bible d'Acre", dated to *c.*1254.

67 On the cultural life in the Latin East, more lively than previously thought, see Benjamin Z. Kedar, "Intellectual Activities in a Holy City: Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century", in: Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Franks, Muslims and Oriental Christians in the Latin Levant*, Aldershot: Ashgate 2006, §9; Laura Minervini, "Modelli culturali e attività letteraria nell'Oriente latino", *Studi medievali* 43 (2002), 337–348; Jonathan Rubin, *Learning in a Crusader City: Intellectual Activity and Intercultural Exchanges in Acre, 1191–1291*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2018; Anthony Bale, "Reading and Writing in Outremer", in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the Crusades*, Anthony Bale, ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019, 85–101.

68 James S. Beddie, "Some Notices of Books in the East in the Period of the Crusades", *Speculum* 8 (1933), 240–242; Annelise Maier, "Die Handschriften der *Ecclesia Sidonensis*", *Manuscripta* 11 (1967), 39–45; Benjamin Z. Kedar, "Gerard of Nazareth, a Neglected Twelfth-Century Writer in the Latin East: A Contribution to the Intellectual and Monastic History of the Crusader States", in: Benjamin Z. Kedar, *The Franks in the Levant, 11th to 14th centuries*, Aldershot: Variorum 1993, §4; Benjamin Z. Kedar, "On Books and Hermits in Nazareth's Short Twelfth Century", in: *Nazareth: Archaeology, History and Cultural Memory*, Mahmoud Yazbak and Sharif Sharif, eds., Nazareth: Municipality of Nazareth 2012, 43–53; Miriam Rita Tessera, "Dalla liturgia del Santo Sepolcro alla biblioteca di Sidone: Note sulla produzione libraria latina di Oltremare nel XII–XIII secolo", *Aevum* 79 (2005), 407–415.

fragments of Latin books kept in the Qubbat al-khazna in Damascus.[69] Among the decorated manuscripts ascribed to the Acre scriptorium are two Old French bibles (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 5211 and Bibliothèque nationale de France MS naf. 1404), dated to *c.*1254 and *c.*1280 respectively and associated with aristocratic patronage.[70] The small, humble manuscript in which the Old French poem about St Mary of Egypt was copied was apparently aimed at a different audience: the story of the Egyptian prostitute who chose, after visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, to become a penitent hermit in the Transjordanian desert, had an immediate appeal among Western pilgrims on their way to the holy places. The saint, moreover, was venerated in the Orthodox and Coptic churches, thus representing an element of cultural convergence between the Franks and the local Christians.[71] As for the apologetic poem – the beginning of a vernacular work of anti-Jewish polemics based on various Latin sources – its fragmentary condition and the isolation of its record prevent a deeper analysis. However, the hexasyllabic text is copied in a booklet of unpretentious appearance together with a supplication to St Nicholas and two spells in Latin and in Greek, thus pointing to forms of popular devotion that were common in Europe as well as in the East. We are confronted here with a good case study of textual stratification: this tiny booklet was probably prepared in France and later brought to the Levant, where other texts were added in its margins. Such textual additions refer – just as the worship of St Mary of Egypt mentioned above – to an area of "shared culture" between Latin pilgrims and Eastern (especially Orthodox) Christians.

If the Old French fragments of religious texts seem to perfectly fit in the cultural landscape of the Crusader states, the situation is not as straightforward with the epic fragments. Not a single manuscript containing epic literature has yet been identified as a product of any of the Latin scriptoria of the Levant. But manuscripts of chansons de geste brought from Europe certainly circulated in the region: thus,

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69 Ammirati, "Survey", 109–119. It is possible that "at least some [Latin manuscripts] were produced by Christian communities in Palestine, able to use Latin as the language of liturgy, and composed by local men rather than Franks" (Ammirati, "Survey", 122), but the bulk was obviously imported from Europe.

70 Folda, *Crusader Art*, 107–111, 148–149; Pierre Nobel, ed., *La Bible d'Acre: Genèse et Exode*, Besançon: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté 2006.

71 For the complex relationships between the Franks and the Christian communities of the East, see Benjamin Z. Kedar, "Latins and Oriental Christians in the Latin Levant, 1099-1291", in: Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Franks, Muslims, and Oriental Christians*, Aldershot: Ashgate 2006, §5; Christopher MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2008; David Jacoby, "Intercultural Encounters in a Conquered Land: The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", in: *Europa im Geflecht der Welt: Mittelalterliche Migrationen in globalen Bezügen*, Michael Borgolte et al., eds., Berlin: Akademie 2012, 144–146; Alan V. Murray, "Franks and Indigenous Communities in Palestine and Syria (1099–1187): A Hierarchical Model of Social Interaction in the Principalities of Outremer", in: *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*, Albrecht Classen, ed., Berlin: De Gruyter 2013, 291–309; MacEvitt, "Processing Together".

for example, in the inventory of the belongings of Count Eudes of Nevers, who died in Acre in 1266, one finds, together with a breviary and a missal, "li romanz des Loheranz et li romanz de la terre d'outre mer, et li Chançoners", that is to say one or more epic poems of the Lotharingian Cycle (*Geste des Loherains*), the vernacular version of the chronicle of William of Tyre, and a collection of lyrical poetry.[72] Two songs belonging to the core of the Old French Crusade Cycle – the *Chanson d'Antioche* and the *Chanson des Chétifs* – are said to have been composed in the East and later reworked in France. This attribution is far from certain and is indeed disputed by modern scholarship,[73] but it proves that, in the late twelfth century, both France and the Holy Land were perceived as suitable environments for the composition, re-elaboration, and diffusion of Old French epic poetry. In this perspective, the fragments of the *Fierabras* and the *Enfances Godefroi* are certainly not misplaced in the Latin East. The former, set in Spain, is a chanson de geste from the Cycle of the King – that is, Charlemagne, who was commonly believed to have recovered the Holy Land at the behest of the Byzantine emperor.[74] The ill-fated military expedition to Spain in 778 was transformed over time into a paradigm of Christian war against Islam, making of Charlemagne "an icon of the crusading movement".[75] The *Enfances Godefroi*, on the other hand, is one of the poems that expanded, in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the original core of the Crusade Cycle mentioned above. Set in northern France, it celebrated the birth and early life of Godfrey of Bouillon – in the meantime, the lord of Bouillon had emerged as the hero of the First Crusade and become an extremely popular figure in fictional literature.[76] The legends surrounding the wondrous origin of his family were well known in the East, as can be witnessed by the allusion William of Tyre makes to the *cigni fabula* – according to the chronicler, the

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72 Martial A. Chazaud, "Inventaire et comptes de la succession d'Eudes, comte de Nevers (Acre 1266)", *Mémoires de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France* 32 (1871), 188. The word *romanz* here refers generically to any kind of vernacular narrative texts.

73 See David A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100-1300)*, Geneva: Droz 1988, 107–125; Emanuel J. Mickel, "Writing the Record: The Old French Crusade Cycle", in: *Epic and Crusade*, Philip E. Bennett, Anne E. Cobby, and Jane E. Everson, eds., Edinburgh: Société Rencesvals British Branch 2006, 39–64; Jean Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes: Introduction critique aux sources de la première croisade*, Geneva: Droz 2010, 72–73, 269–278; Marianne Ailes, "The *Chanson de geste*", in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the Crusades*, Anthony Bale, ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019, 25–38.

74 Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011.

75 Anne Latowsky, "Charlemagne, Godfrey of Bouillon, and Louis IX of France", in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the Crusades*, Anthony Bale, ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019, 206.

76 Simon John, "Godfrey of Bouillon and the Swan Knight", in: *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages: Realities and Representations; Essays in Honour of John France*, Simon John and Nicholas Morton, eds., Farnham: Ashgate 2014, 129–142; Latowsky, "Charlemagne", 201–204.

swan tale was not even worth mentioning, since it lacked any credibility.[77] Thus both *Fierabras* and the *Enfances Godefroi* are epic narratives that one would expect to be sung, recited, read, or copied in the Crusader states.

Codicological perspectives

From the codicological viewpoint, the Old French pieces found in the Qubbat al-khazna of Damascus are remarkable for at least two reasons, which clearly divide them between the religious texts and the chansons de geste – and the contrast is only partially related to chronological considerations.

The fragments of epic poetry are good indications of the evolution of the thirteenth-century single-column small-format epic book.[78] Created in the twelfth century, this book type conforms naturally to the features of the most common clerical production in terms of manuscripts – a mediocre to poor-quality medium, format smaller than or equal to 320 mm (adding together the width and the height of the folio), twenty- to thirty-line single-column layout, professional but at times sloppy writing, minimal decoration, and so on.[79] In the thirteenth century, however, new models in book production, the rise of vernacular manuscripts, and the tastes and expectations of a new audience pushed this older type of book to evolve considerably. The two Damascus fragments are prime examples of how the frame may remain intact – with the format staying small (195 × 110 mm for *Fierabras*; around 160/180 × 110/130 mm in the case of the *Enfances Godefroi*) and the layout not moving away from the thirty-line single-column model – while every other parameter undergoes a refinement process: based on what can be seen on the photographs, the writing is now not only professional but masterfully executed, the *mise en texte* boasts slightly separated and carefully aligned verse initials, the size of the margins helps improve the visual balance of the page, and a higher quality medium is used.

On top of all of these considerations comes the fact that these fragments are among the oldest testimonies of the circulation of their respective chansons de geste. Between the mid-thirteenth century and around 1320, the extended version of *Fierabras* probably circulated widely and consistently, from the west or Normandy (Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial MS

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77 "Preterimus denique studiose, licet id verum fuisse plurimorum astruat narratio, cigni fabulam, unde vulgo dicitur sementivam eis fuisse originem, eo quod a vero videatur deficere talis assertio" (Guillaume de Tyr, *Chronique*, Robert C.B. Huygens, ed., Turnhout: Brepols 1986, 427).

78 This subject is discussed with further documentary evidence in Gabriele Giannini, "Chicago, Montréal, Bruxelles, Damas, etc.: Vieux fragments, vieilles questions reformulées", in: *Actes du XXI^e Congrès international de la Société Rencesvals (Toronto, 13–17 août 2018)*, Dorothea Kullmann and Anthony Fredette, eds., Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (in press).

79 Hasenohr, "Traductions", 239–243.

M.III.21, fols. 33r–96v: third quarter of the thirteenth century)[80] to Picardy (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 12603, fols. 203r–238r: *c.*1300), from Lorraine and Wallonia (the Metz folio and the Brussels fragment [Royal Library of Belgium MS IV 852, no. 9]: second half of the thirteenth century; the Mons bifolium: early fourteenth century)[81] all the way to England (former Bibliothèque de l'Université catholique de Louvain MS 171, fols. 53r–130v: second half of the thirteenth century; Hannover, Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek MS IV 578, fols. 25r–100v: early fourteenth century)[82] and to Saint-Brieuc (Vatican Library MS Reg. lat. 1616, fols. 21r–92v and 103r–108r: 1317). Yet the Damascus bifolium seems to have been made at an earlier date than even the oldest extant manuscripts and fragments of *Fierabras*.

Moreover, the oldest testimonies of the Crusade Cycle were, in the eyes of its American editors, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 77 (mid-thirteenth century), in which the *Chétifs* (pp. 373–392) makes up part of a severely damaged collection;[83] the two *Chanson d'Antioche* leaves held as Bibliothèque municipale de Laon MS 398, pastedown and fol. 1 (middle or third quarter of the thirteenth century);[84] and the aforementioned Bern manuscript (Burgerbibliothek of Bern MS 627 [*Chevalier au cygne* and *Enfances Godefroi*]: mid-thirteenth century). It was not until 1997 that a considerably older copy of the so-called *Beatrix* version of the *Naissance du Chevalier au cygne* was uncovered – the elegant, nearly intact folios of Mon-

80 Gilles Roques, "Review of Marc Le Person, *Fierabras*", *Revue de linguistique romane* 68 (2004), 575.

81 The first of these fragments, whose current location is unknown, had been given a second life as a binding and was sent to Gaston Paris in 1870 after its discovery in Metz; Victor Friedel, "Deux fragments du *Fierabras*: Étude critique sur la tradition de ce roman", *Romania* 24 (1895), 1. The dating of the second to the fourteenth century (André de Mandach and Martine Thiry-Stassin, "Les fragments inédits du *Fierabras* de Namur", *Romania* 109 (1988), 90), welcomed by Le Person, *Fierabras*, 47, seems dubious to us; see Gabriele Giannini and Giovanni Palumbo, "Une mine de fragments littéraires à Bruxelles", in: *Atti del XXVIII Congresso internazionale di linguistica e filologia romanza (Roma, 18–23 luglio 2016)*, Roberto Antonelli, Martin Glessgen, and Paul Videsott, eds., Strasbourg: Éditions de linguistique et de philologie 2018, vol. 2, 1133. The current location of the bifolium from the Archives de l'État in Mons (Omer Jodogne, "Fragments de Mons: II. *Fierabras*", *Les Lettres romanes* 6 (1952), 240–256) has not been established (Giannini and Palumbo, "Bruxelles", 1128, n. 3). Only the Strasbourg folio (Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire MS 349) remains *sub judice*. It comes from a small-format manuscript, seems to be of Eastern provenance, and has been dated to the fourteenth century, with no further information being provided; see Friedel, "*Fierabras*": 2 and 1.

82 The first of these vanished in 1940 during World War II (Le Person, *Fierabras*, 26).

83 Paul Meyer, "Un récit en vers français de la première croisade fondé sur Baudri de Bourgueil", *Romania* 5 (1876), 2 and 56–61; and also Myers, "Manuscripts", lii–liv and lxxxi–lxxxii, nn. 101–108.

84 Robert Bossuat, "Sur un fragment de la *Chanson d'Antioche*", *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 32 (1931), 110–118. The revised dating is due to Geneviève Hasenohr, "Note sur un fragment de la *Naissance du Chevalier au cygne* (*Beatrix*)", *Romania* 115 (1997), 251 and n. 4.

treal, McGill Library, Rare Books and Special Collections MS 145.[85] The Damascus scraps of the *Enfances Godefroi* now confirm the early circulation – before the mid-thirteenth century – of the Crusade Cycle and further suggest that in spite of their scantiness, the various chansons of the cycle may have gone through a first phase where they circulated outside of cyclical manuscripts, in an isolated or semi-autonomous state: one way or another the manuscripts and fragments dated to the first half or to the middle of the thirteenth century belong for the most part to the twenty-six-line (Bern) or thirty-two-line (Laon and Montreal) single-column small-format book category, and therefore they cannot materially hold more than two or three chansons.[86]

The other two pieces – the apologetic poem and the *Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne* – are striking mainly because of their format. The smallest extant vernacular manuscripts or fragments from the twelfth century, all of them of insular origin it seems, measure 141 × 96/108 mm (Cologny, Fondation Bodmer MS 17 [*Voyage de saint Brendan* by Benedeit]: perhaps first half of the twelfth century), 130 × 110 mm (London, Society of Antiquaries MS 716 [*Vie de Thomas Becket* by Guernes de Pont-Sainte-Maxence]: third quarter of the twelfth century), or 137 × 92 mm (Bibliothèque municipale d'Orléans MS 1462 [miracles of the Virgin]: second half of the twelfth century).[87] It goes without saying that this greatly scaled-down format entails a single column with fewer writing lines: sixteen or seventeen in the Bodmer manuscript, nineteen to twenty-one in the Society of Antiquaries bifolium, twenty-one in the Orléans bifolia. In our examples these downsized columns contain fifteen to twenty lines (fifteen to seventeen for the main text of the apologetic poem, eighteen to twenty in the hagiographic), but the format of the leaves is reduced by a quarter or by half respectively (90 × 75 mm and 70 × 50 mm) compared to the smallest twelfth-century vernacular books known to us, which still come in at 130/141 mm high and 92/110 mm wide.

The size difference remains striking even if we take into account how the storage conditions of the Damascus pieces might have had a negative impact on the integrity of their edges – in truth they do not appear to have suffered major reductions or ablations – and, above all, how the humidity to which the *Vie de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne* was exposed caused it to shrink considerably. Beyond the strained testimony of this last piece, a fatal question nonetheless arises: would it be possible for the apologetic poem (and potentially the hagiographic as well) to be a lesser-known avatar of the vernacular book typology popular in the twelfth century, the portable unbound or roughly assembled booklets meant not for preservation, but for fast-paced and poorly organised circulation, having made it to the modern age thanks

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85 Hasenohr, "*Beatrix*". The fragment was mentioned by Seymour de Ricci and William Jerome Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, vol. 2, New York: Wilson 1937, 2219, but it is not taken into account by Myers, "Manuscripts".

86 Giannini, "Chicago".

87 Careri, Ruby, and Short, *Catalogue*, 38–39, 106–107, 122–123.

to nothing but exceptional and fortuitous circumstances? Oscillating between the conscientious work of the apologetic text's scribe and the uncertain, clumsy approach of the scribe of the other folio, the craftsmanship of these pieces shows that models – of writing, of page layout, of decoration, and so on – are ever-present in the minds of the scribes who try to conform to them, which negates any attempt to label these testimonies as mere accidents or anomalies.

In the face of such an imposing body of preserved material, we sometimes tend to forget that the true vehicle of circulation of medieval literature, the *libellus* or booklet – "le cahier ou le groupe de quelques cahiers conçu comme une entité indépendante, dont le contenu constitue une unité textuelle autonome" and which was meant to be sewn roughly and often left without a cover[88] – is utterly off limits to us by virtue of its inability to cross the barrier of time without the rare help of exceptional circumstances (the Damascus geniza, for example). Should we accept the relevance of this typological interpretation, we cannot but recognise that the apologetic piece is not necessarily fragmentary. Its main text is incomplete indeed, and the aggregation of entirely typical adventitious pieces, characterised by the multilingualism specific to the margins of codicological units and by a strong Mediterranean quality, simply serves to show how intensely utilised the booklet could be. It remains wholly possible for this very booklet to have fulfilled its purpose autonomously or through a more or less coherent integration inside a larger entity. In sum, perhaps serendipity in the form of an antechamber of destruction turned into conservation agent has laid before our eyes testimonies of a medieval textuality that, for once, gives precedence to texts and to their circulation over their medium and their hoarding.

Appendix

The fundamental pieces of the Crusade Cycle are the *Chanson d'Antioche* and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*, both written between 1150 and 1180. These chansons were reworked at the end of the twelfth century by a certain Graindor de Douai who might also have added the *Chétifs* between the two other pieces. The core was later augmented with chansons which either expand on the figure of Godfrey of Bouillon and his endeavours and those of his lineage or recount the events that took place after the fall of Jerusalem. The *Enfances Godefroi*, like the *Chevalier au cygne* and *Elioxe*, belong to these "genealogical branches considered essential to Godfrey's background";[89] they are centred around the marriage of Ide, the

[88] "The quire or group of quires conceived as an independent entity, the content of which constitutes an autonomous textual unit"; Geneviève Hasenohr, "Les recueils littéraires français du XIII^{e} siècle: Public et finalité", in: *Codices Miscellanearum: Colloque Van Hulthem, Bruxelles 1999*, Ria Jansen-Sieben and Hans van Dijk, eds., Bruxelles: Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique 1999, 37.

[89] Mickel, *Enfances*, 38–39.

daughter of the Chevalier au cygne, to Eustache de Boulogne, the birth of the couple's three children (Eustache, Godefroi, and Baudouin), and the feats of the young Godefroi before he took the cross. Though its chronology is uncertain, the *Enfances Godefroi* has clearly been written by someone who knew the area between Cambrésis and Boulonnais like the back of his hand.[90]

The reference edition of the *Enfances Godefroi*, published in 1999, is based on ten testimonies; one of these (*S*) is incomplete due to a material lacuna:[91]

A	Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 12558, fols. 46r–58r	Artois or Boulonnais, *c.*1260[92]
B	Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 786, fols. 134v–153r	Tournai, *c.*1285
C	Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 795, fols. 64r–88r	Amiens or Douai, *c.*1270–1280[93]
D	Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 1621, fols. 36r–60r	Somme, mid-thirteenth century[94]
E	Bibliothèque nationale de France MS fr. 12569, fols. 60v–76r	Arras, *c.*1280[95]
F	Burgerbibliothek of Bern MS 320, fols. 9v–25v	North-east, *c.*1250–1275
G	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 3139, fols. 70r–86v	Tournai, 1268[96]
H	British Library MS Royal 15.E.VI, fols. 332v–336r	Rouen, *c.*1445[97]
I	British Library MS Add. 36615, fols. 31v–40r	Normandy, *c.*1300
S	Burgerbibliothek of Bern MS 627, fols. 80v–117v	North, mid-thirteenth century

90 Emanuel J. Mickel, "Where Was the *Enfances Godefroi* Written", *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 109 (2008), 57–69.

91 Mickel, "Manuscripts", and Mickel, *Enfances*, 9–15.

92 Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1260-1320*, part 1, vol. 2, London: Harvey Miller 2013, 155–156.

93 Stones, *Manuscripts*, part 1, vol. 2, 217–219.

94 Ronald N. Walpole, ed., *The Old French Johannes Translation of the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1976, 2:24.

95 Stones, *Manuscripts*, part 1, vol. 2, 163–164.

96 Stones, *Manuscripts*, part 1, vol. 2, 156.

97 Anne D. Hedeman, "Collecting Images: The Role of the Visual in the Shrewsbury Book (BL Ms. Royal 15 E. vi)", in: *Collections in Context: The Organization of Knowledge and Community in Europe*, Karen Fresco and Anne D. Hedeman, eds., Columbus: Ohio State University Press 2012, 99–119.

Biblioteca nazionale universitaria di Torino MS L.III.25, fols. 38v–47r (Picardy, *c.*1300) was not taken into account by the editor because of the severe fire damage it sustained in 1904.

The reference edition distinguishes clearly between two versions.[98] The first, which may represent "an earlier, less developed stage",[99] is best preserved in manuscript *A*, followed by *F*, *I*, and *S*, and is extensively shortened in *H*. The second version, which adds four major narrative expansions, is preserved in *B*, a manuscript focusing on the adventures of Godefroi in England, as well as in *C* and *D*. Manuscripts *E* and *G* "follow the *A*-version to a point before following an exemplar with the additions of *D*".[100] With that information in mind, the editor gave precedence to the second version of the *Enfances Godefroi* and based his edition on manuscript *D* so as to showcase "a branch in the very process of growth"[101] and the work of a writer motivated by a desire to praise the house of the counts of Boulogne.

The laisses preserved only partially by our fragment (28–32, 70, 72) concern the childhood of Ide's three sons, particularly the episode of the young maid who chose to breastfeed the children despite it being prohibited (laisses 29–31), as well as Godefroi's battle against Guion, the usurper of the legacy of castellan Yvon's daughter, when he was seventeen and had been granted knighthood (laisses 69–79).

Round brackets are used for abbreviations and square brackets for unreadable letters and words (due either to faded ink or to the poor condition of the parchment); letters only partially readable are in italics. Laisses and verses are numbered according to the 1999 edition. Mickel's text and the *varia lectio* provided therein are used to fill the gaps in our own text.

[laisse 28]

…

[P]uis en pasa ça olt(re) p*o*[r voir le vos afi,]	681	fol. 1r
li rois Cornu[marans, et vint comme tapi.]	682	
P(or) veïr les .*i*[ii. freres qui tant furent ami.]	682.1	
Tot fu*i*[ssent a cotiax estranlé et mordri,]	683	
Se ne fu[st .i. sains abés, par qui Dex les gari,]		
Si (com) poré[s oïr se le veir vos] *e*[n di.]	685	

98 Mickel, *Enfances*, 23–26 and 28–37.

99 Mickel, *Enfances*, 24. See also the developing reflection concerning the status of this version in Mickel, "Writing", 54–55, and in Emanuel J. Mickel, "Cyclical Evolution: BNF MSS 12558, 781 and the *Enfances Godefroi*", *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 105 (2004), 483–489.

100 Mickel, *Enfances*, 24.

101 Mickel, *Enfances*, 25.

[laisse 29]
Unq(ue)*s* [la] *(con)*tesse Ide, q(*ui*) *t*[ant fu prox et bele,]
un so*l* de ses .iii. fils p(ar) n[isune querele]
ne laisa alaitier ne feme [ne ancele,]
[a]ins les nori la dame tos .i[ii. a sa mamele.]
[E]le ala oïr messe un j[or a sa chapele] 690
[S]es .iii. fils (com)manda un[e soie pucele.]
[L]i moiens s'esvella q(ui) form(en)t c*r*[ie et herle ;]
[ce]*l*e q(ui) le gardoit apele une dan[sele],
[l'enfa]*n*t fist alaitier (et) puis l'en [achisele],
[ne cui]*d*a q(ue) se mere en fust une ce[nele.] 695
[Moult] mels volsist cel jor q(u'e)le fust [a Nivele.]
Q[ua]nt *l*[a con]tesse vint, sa ca(m)beriere [apele] :
"Di v[a por] q(u'a) cis enfes moillie se [maissele ?"]
"Da[me, s']*e*svella ore, si menoit [grant haele,]
jel [fis bien] alaitier a une dam[oisele."] 700
Q(ua)nt [l'entent la] (con)tesse, tos li cor[s li cancele ;]
[de] *l*e d[olor qu'ele ot] s'asist sor un[e sele,]
m[oult] f[orment li sospi]re li c[uers sos la memele.]
Q(ua)nt [ele volt parler, si s]e [clama mesele,] 704
a l'enfa[nt est] c[oru, si le prist par l'aissele]. 706

[laisse 30]
L[a dame prist l'e]*n*fa[nt qui la char avoit tenre] 707
…
[une ceulte porprine, et puis f]ist l'enfant p(re)nd(re). 711 fol. 1v
[Seure l'a fait roller, puis par les pi]*é*s pendre,
[son lait c'ot alaitié li ot fait moult tost] re(n)dre ;
[puis en fu a tos jors sa force et ses fais g](*ra*)[i]ndre.
[La pucele ert plus coie que en yver cal]endre ; 715
[sa dame le manache, moult li fera cher ven]dre,
[mais ele s'enfuï, ne] *l'*osa pl(us) at[endr]e,
[anchois passa aous] (et) li mois de sep[t]e[m]bre
[c'osast venir a cort p](or) le contesse offendre.

[laisse 31]
[Moult par fu la cont]*es*se sainte de bone foi, 720
[l'enfant a recouchié la ou] gisent li troi ;
[tant l'alaita la dame] q(*u'e*)[le l']*a* tot *f*[ait c]*oi*,
[de son mantel her]mine erent c[overt to]t troi.
[Li quens vint d]el mostier, [o u]n so(n) dru Joifr[oi],
[la contesse] *d*emande, on [li m]*o*stra al *d*[oi], 725

[puis entra en l]a ca(m)bre belem(en)t, *en* [reçoi],
[s'apela la cont]esse, q(ui) g(ra)nt ire ot en soi.
["Dame", ce dist] li cuens, "c(er)tes m(er)velles *v*[oi] :
[vos soliiés lev]er tos jors encontre [moi],
[or ne le volés f]*a*ire, *tel* q(u'e)st ço dites *m*[oi]."
["Sire", dist la contes]se, "[n']en aiés pas an*o*[i].
[Jo sui as plus ha]u homes, *t*(*re*)[s] *b*i*en l*e *s*[ai et croi],
[que vos nen estes,] sire, p(ar) l*a f*o[i que vos doi],
[car j'ai sos mon mantel .i. conte, .i. duc, .i. roi."
Quant li cuens l'entendi, si en sosrist en soi ;
quida que l'eüst dit par gex et par] *gab*[oi].

[laisse 32]
[Quant l]i c*u*[ens Eustache o]*t* le p(ar)ole oïe,
[vers l]e l[it s'aclina, puis apela s'a]mie :
["Dame,] ne di[tes mais si fait]e gaberie,
[tex le] poroit [oïr quel tenr]*o*it a f*o*lie."
…

[laisse 70]
…
T[ost li fu amenés li bais de Cornoalle.]
Il n'a *c*[heval en Franche qui celui contrevalle.]
En un[e cambre a volte, qui fu faite a entalle,]
s'arm[a li castelains a l'aduré corage.]
M(ou)lt [tres joiesement, samblant fait ne l'en caille,]
ne dot[e Godefroi vaillissant une malle ;]
pl(us) cov[oite a lui joindre qu'espreviers ne fait qualle.]
Mais t[ex hom est moult liés devant le commenchalle,]
[Qui] n'a pa[s le meillor, quant vient a la finalle.]

[laisse 72]
…
[Ses cosins devés estre et ses amis carn]aus.
[Se le desiretés, ce iert pechiés et max]
[malgré vos en sara li Pere esperitaus !"]
[Et quant Guis l'entendi, en fist .ii. rius fa]*u*s :
["Amis, fustes vos moines en l'ordre de Chista]us,
[quant si parler savés escritures ro]*i*aus,
…

682.1 The verse is found in all manuscripts but *D*.

704 In *D* the verse is followed by *Isnelement sali, d'ire tote cancele* (705), lacking in all other manuscripts.

721 *Troi* is probably a scribe's slip of the pen for *doi*.

725 We tentatively read *demande*, but the first letter of the word is very uncertain.

726 *En* is uncertain.

1962–1967 Only the final letters of four verses are readable. Since each folium had thirty lines, we presume that ll. 1962–1967 were copied here, but this is a mere guess given the mobility of the textual tradition.

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The Armenian fragments of the National Museum in Damascus

*Levon Khachikyan and Artashes Matevosyan**

*[Translation: Arevik Sargsyan**]*

The ancient church named after John the Baptist is one of the architectural marvels of Damascus, the capital of the Syrian Arab Republic. It was converted into a mosque during the rule of Caliph al-Walid (705–715) and became famous under the name of the Umayyad Mosque. There are three cupola-shaped buildings on columns in its courtyard, the most noteworthy of which is the circular structure known as the Qubbat al-khizāna [this term is in Arabic in the original] (Treasury).

At the end of the nineteenth century the German scholar D.H. von Soden travelled to the East for research and took a particular interest in an oral tradition attested throughout Damascus. According to this tradition, Christian manuscripts had been preserved in the aforementioned domed building since ancient times and they could only be brought out as the result of a special decree from the sultan. Through the intervention of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was possible to acquire the required permission to open the Treasury and to produce a catalogue of the manuscripts deposited here.[1]

The scholars expected earth-shattering academic discoveries, but they were initially disappointed:

> Old sacks were found in the Treasury and they contained a great number of documents on the economic transactions of the mosque, as well as fragments of the Koran, Arabic and Turkish religious writings, etc., stored away in disorder. Among them were also sheets written in Greek, Syriac, Latin, Old French, Hebrew, Coptic, Georgian and Armenian. The rainwater had severely damaged the fragments; they were moth-eaten and mice had nibbled at them. After nine months of hard work we managed to preliminarily sort out and identify those manuscripts and fragments, which might be of general interest. In ad-

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* [L. Xač'ikean and A. Matewosean. Square brackets indicate the editors' and translator's insertions.]

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1 According to the information provided by one of the employees of the National Museum, this work was successful thanks to the support of the German emperor Wilhelm, who was in the Near East in 1898.

> dition, an opportunity emerged to move the selected manuscripts temporarily to Germany to undertake a more thorough study, for which respective experts were invited.

The task of elucidating the content of the Armenian fragments was assigned to Dr Lewon Gyanjec'ean, who had some experience and skill in describing Armenian manuscripts.[2]

Summarising the outcomes of studying these manuscripts in different languages, D.H. von Soden presented a report at a meeting of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences on 30 July 1903. He concluded:

> This is not a first-rate treasury, from which the collaborative efforts exerted to uncover the secrets of the treasury would be repaid. Nevertheless, in their entirety these fragments of old literature are distinctive and even charming. How many cultural layers might these ancient and venerable fragments hide in their folds?[3]

Naturally, the few lines by von Soden concerning the Armenian fragments discovered in Damascus arouse our curiosity:

> They are said to have been written no later than the tenth century, and they contain parts of the Bible, ecclesiastical books and works by Holy Fathers, hagiographies, literary notes, and writing exercises. Some of them are very valuable for the study of the history of the language. The lengthiest fragment is a psalter with twenty psalms. The six folios preserved from the Gospel of Matthew, which bear a resemblance to the oldest manuscript Gospel preserved at the Lazaryan seminary in Moscow, are the most valuable.[4]

After these preliminary studies, the fragments of Armenian manuscripts, together with other handwritten material found in Damascus, were returned to the museum where they belonged. They are now, as we have already said, kept in the National Museum of Damascus. In February 1966, one of the authors of this article, Levon Khachikyan, on his way to Jerusalem, saw some of them exhibited in one of the corners of the museum (along with Syriac fragments). On the way back home, visiting the museum once again, he managed to briefly describe the fragments and to excerpt pieces from them thanks to the obliging permission of the administration.

To carry out a detailed study, however, it was necessary to have microfilm copies of the fragments at hand. These were prepared for the Maštoc' Matenadaran by the commission of the director of the Tarkmanchats School of Damascus for translation, our good friend Tiran Akinean. In February 1967, after having received

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[2] Subsequently, L. Gyanjec'ean and N. Finck published an academic catalogue of 109 Armenian manuscripts at the University of Tübingen (see *Verzeichnis der armenischen Handschriften der Königlichen Universitätsbibliothek*, Franz Nikolaus Finck and Levon Gjandschezian, Tübingen 1907).

[3] Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente, von D.H. Soden (Sitrungsber. [sic] d. Kön. Preuss. Akademie d. Wiss, XXXVIII-XL, 23, 30, July, 1903, pp. 825–830). On this report see also the brief notice of Mesrop *Vardapet* Ter-Movsisean published in the journal *Ararat*, July and August 1904, p. 689 [original Armenian article has "1940"].

[4] Ibid., p. 828.

these copies and taking pictures of them, L. Khachikyan and A. Matevosyan began the codicological description of the Armenian fragments. A. Matevosyan undertook the hard task of transcribing them.

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The Armenian fragments held in the National Museum in Damascus are classified under the numbers 7, 10, and 11. It must be assumed that these series of numbers were specifically assigned to the handwritten material discovered in the Treasury. We can clearly read property numbers and page numbers in Arabic numerals on the microfilm copies at our disposal. Thus, according to the copies, no. 7 contains fifteen fragments of parchment folios with the page numbers 1–4, 27–46, 70–71, 77–78, and 97–98; no. 10 contains seventeen folio fragments with the page numbers 1–19, 23–26, 33–40, 57–58, 69–70, 147–148, and 151–156; and no. 11 has two Armenian fragments with the page numbers 193–194 and 198.[5]

These page numbers are devoid of academic value; fragments belonging to the same manuscript are [often] not classified in sequence and they are [sometimes even] arranged under different numbers. After arranging the fragments that belonged to the same manuscripts and categorising them by content, we have found that this collection of fragments has thirty-four[6] folios of thirteen fragmentary parchment manuscripts and a fragment of one letter (written on paper).

Is this really the precise number of Armenian fragments found in the Treasury, or just a part of them? That is, were some of them available to the scholarly world at one point but then they subsequently disappeared? This question arises when we compare the fragments we have at hand with the information of the 1903 report, which by itself is so terse that it does not add anything substantial to our knowledge. We know that L. Gyanjec'ean noticed [in Berlin] a fragment of one single manuscript containing passages from twenty psalms, and today we have just three fragments from different manuscripts that in total contain extracts from only seven psalms. In 1903 the Armenian fragments contained six folios of the Gospel of Matthew, but today we have only five such folios (one folio is missing). We do not have any further information, but these suffice to question the completeness of the copies of the Armenian fragments of Damascus we have at our disposal. Most likely, it will come to light at some point that some of the fragments taken to Germany at the end of the last century were either never returned or else were

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5 It must be assumed that the missing page numbers of nos. 7, 10, and 11 refer to fragments of manuscripts in other languages. However, one cannot exclude the possibility that there were other Armenian fragments among them, which are missing or inaccessible to us. [On these numbers see the contributions by Gideon Bohak and by Cüneyd Erbay and Konrad Hirschler in this volume.]

6 [The number thirty-four given here differs from the sum of the folios given in the list below (thirty-three). This difference most likely goes back to the bifolium in no. 7 which is here counted as two folios, but in the list as one folio only.]

mixed with other fragments or with various museum materials in the National Museum.

When and how was the original collection of manuscript fragments that were found in the Treasury in the Umayyad Mosque put together? Is the assumption of D.H. von Soden correct that it developed over centuries as a result of the closure of Armenian churches and the confiscation of church literature? To answer this question, it is necessary to first identify the period of the writing of the manuscript fragments. In the descriptive section of the fragments we have attempted to identify the approximate period of the writing of each fragment on the basis of palaeographical data. Summarising our results, we can say that the earliest fragments were written in the eighth century (most likely the one palimpsest fragment dates to the fifth century), and the latest fragment is a letter written in the thirteenth century in a Cilician dialect. The [other] fragments [from the Qubbat al-khazna] in Greek, Syriac, Latin, and other languages are also very old (the latest exemplar of the Latin fragments dates to the twelfth century).[7]

These dates suggest that the Treasury manuscript collection originated in the thirteenth century, and in this period the state authorities would hardly be envisaging actions to close Armenian churches and confiscate ritual literature. In the history of the Near East the thirteenth century, and particularly its second half, is a period when the state power of the Mamluks reached its apogee while the Crusader states weakened and collapsed. The victorious wars continuously waged in the previous century under the leadership of Saladin were continued in this period as well. Antioch was captured in 1268, Tripoli was seized in 1289, and the stronghold and port of Acre (Ptolemais), the last refuge of the Crusaders in the Near East, was conquered in 1291. Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil (1290–1294) directed his military power against the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, which did not have any military support, and he conquered a number of provinces. On 28 July 1292, after a month-long siege, the troops of Ashraf occupied the famous Rumkale (Hromkla) fortress on the shores of the Euphrates that had been the seat of Armenian catholicoi for almost one and a half centuries. The Mamluks took as prisoners the inhabitants of Rumkale, who were under the protection of Catholicos Stepʻanos, and plundered "the invaluable treasures of the divine and all that they could lay their hands on".[8] The historian Orbelean lists the holy relics and objects seized – the right hand of Gregory the Illuminator and his crozier, the slippers of the virgin Hripʻsime, and so on. He also notes that the sultan went to Damascus with considerable booty and paraded the catholicos in the city's public places to commemorate his victories. Then Catholicos Stepʻanos was taken to Egypt, where he passed

7 [On this issue see the contribution by Serena Ammirati in this volume.]

8 Stepʻanos Orbelean, *The History of the Syunikʻ Province* [Պատմութիւն Նահանգին Սիսական], Tbilisi, 1910, p. 443.

away a year later.[9] Yet, according to the details of a colophon written shortly after these incidents, the unfortunate catholicos passed away in Damascus:

> This year (1291) they destroyed the beautiful city of the Romans, on the shores of Acre and Tripoli, and the Christian churches became enclosures for flocks and shepherds. After a year (1292) he occupied the marvellous castle of Rumkale, which was the residence of the Armenian patriarchs. And everyone was enslaved including the catholicos, whose name was Stepʿanos, and arriving in the city Damascus he became an ascetic.[10]

The prominent scholar Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi, who had intended to donate his rich personal library to the Catholicosate of Rumkale (taking into account its impregnable position and its fame of being unassailable), deeply grieved upon hearing the news of the fall of Rumkale and the plunder of its holy relics and objects. He wrote, "They robbed all relics … and the church's ornaments, and silver and golden crosses, and tore into small pieces the Bible with the golden binding." Shortly afterwards, reflecting again upon this sad event, he lamented, in particular, the loss of the catholicosate's books. "The treasures of the sacred divine manuscripts were stolen."[11]

This historical data suggests that manuscript books may have taken a central place within the booty that was moved from the Catholicosate of Rumkale to Damascus, particularly as most of them, as indicated by Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi, had golden and silver bindings. Time has passed, the valuable bindings were torn from the manuscripts, and old torn-up parchment folios without bindings were stuck into old sacks to be preserved in the dome called the Treasury. If our conclusion is right, the Armenian fragments kept in the National Museum in Damascus are sacred relics of the manuscript treasures of the famous centre of Armenian culture, the outstanding manuscript repository (Matenadaran) of Rumkale, which were seized and scattered.

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Based on the palaeographical details, we can demonstrate the fact that the surviving Armenian fragments of the National Museum originally belonged to thirteen different manuscripts written on parchment, and also a letter. In terms of their content they are divided into the following groups:

1. relics of the Old Testament – fragments of four [manuscripts] (4 folios) [nos. 1–4 in following description]
2. relics of the New Testament – fragments of two [manuscripts] (7 folios) [nos. 5–6 in following description]

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9 Ibid., p. 444.

10 Maštocʿ Matenadaran, Fragment no. 919 (compare *Azgagrakan Handēs*, No. 12, 1905, pp. 155–156; *Ararat*, 1911, pp. 223–224, etc.).

11 T. Palean, "Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts of the New Library of St Karapet Monastery of Caesarea" [«Ցուցակ հայերէն ձեռագրաց Ս. Կարապետի վանուց նոր գրադարանի ի Կեսարիա»], *Handēs Amsōrya*, 4–6, 1960, pp. 265–267.

3. liturgy – fragments of three [manuscripts] (5 folios) [nos. 7–9 in following description]
4. martyrology – fragment of one[12] [manuscript] (5 folios) [no. 10 in following description]
5. homily – fragments of two [manuscripts] (3 folios) [nos. 11–12 in following description]
6. miscellany – fragment of one [manuscript] (9 folios) [no. 13 in following description]
7. epistolary literature – fragment of one [manuscript] (1 piece) [no. 14 in following description]

The following description of the fragments follows the order of the list above, and we publish one or two photographs of each item and provide commentaries on the value and significance of each fragment. Sadly, we do not have the necessary information about the physical features (such as size) of the fragments.

1. (National Museum, Damascus (henceforth N.M.D.), No. 10, pp. 69–70)

Psalms 39:16–18, 40:1–9

This is a folio which has deteriorated at the edges. Only the passage "կրեսցին ամաւթ առ[ժամայն]…միթէ որ ննջ[իցեն]" (Ps. 39:16–40:9) has survived. It is written in upright *erkat'agir* (uncials) with eighteen lines per page. The eighteenth verse of Psalm 39 is abbreviated as "ես աղքատ եւ տնանդ (read տեառնանդ) եմ Աստուա]ծ եւ փրկիչ իմ. եւ դու Ա[ստուա]ծ իմ մի յամենայն]". The words with the suffix "թիւն" are written in the form "թին" (without siglum, the symbol indicating a scribal abbreviation), such as "փրկութին", "նանրութին", or "անաւրէնութինս". Likely, it was written in the ninth to tenth centuries. We publish the comparatively well-preserved page B (see fig. 1).

12 [The original has "two", which is – as the following list shows – wrong. If "two" was correct, the figure of "thirteen manuscripts" that the authors mention would be wrong as well.]

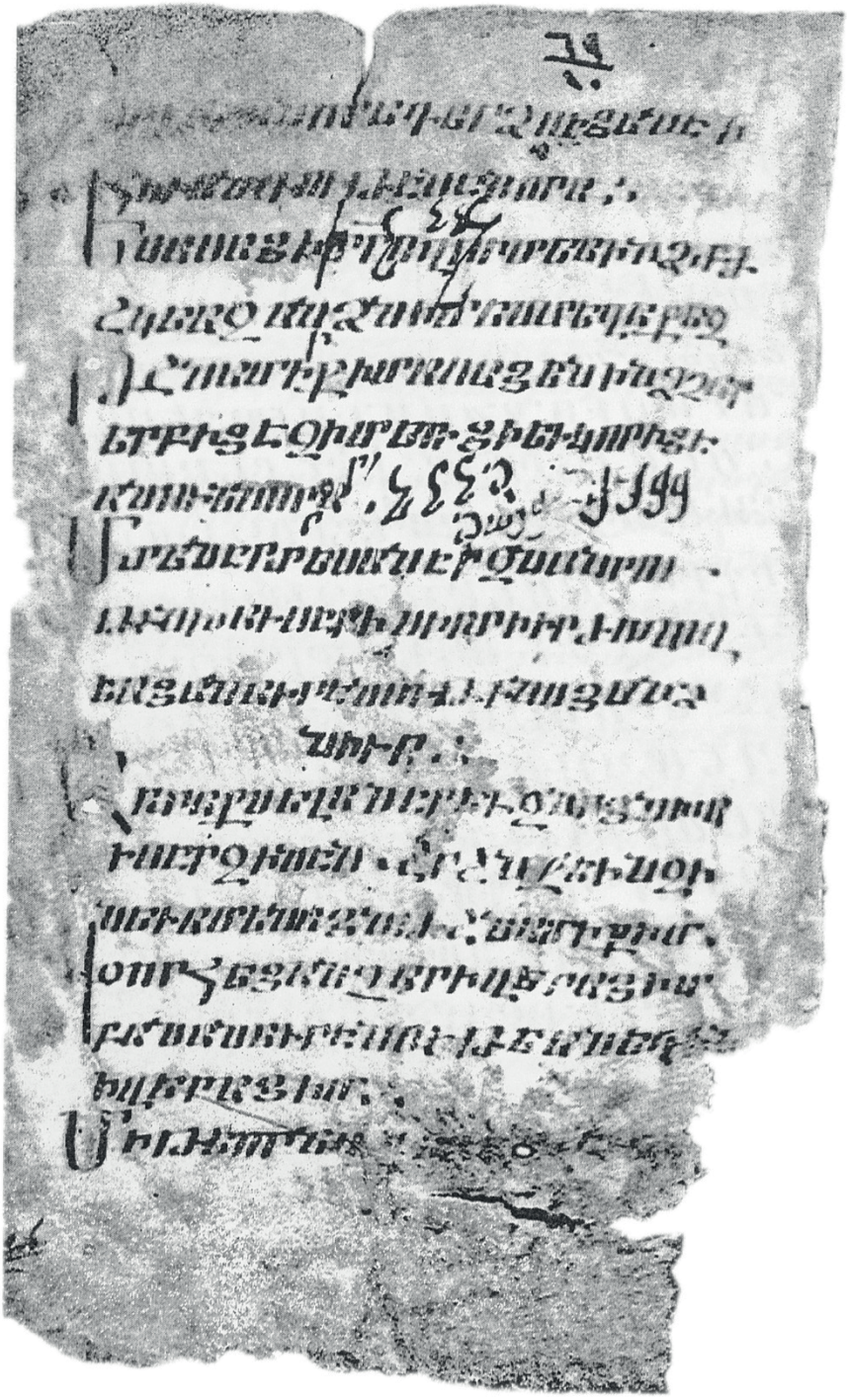


Fig. 1.

2. (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 147–148)

Psalms 41:9–12; 42:1–5 (complete); 43:1–5

Only one folio has come down to us. It comprises the passage from Psalm 41:9 beginning with the words "…Ի տուէ պատուիրեաց…" up to the words of the fifth verse of Psalm 43, namely "…դու ինքն ես թագաւոր".

The fragment is particularly remarkable with regard to its palaeography. The first page (sixteen lines) is written mainly in *erkat'agir* that looks more like *bolorgir* (minuscule) due to the use of the forms of upright *erkat'agir*. The first four lines of the second page are written in the same manner, and for the next eighteen lines entirely different types of script (mixed *bolorgir* and upright *erkat'agir*) were employed. Thus, on the same page we find various types of scripts written side by side, sequentially, which suggests that these types of scripts existed contemporaneously. The texts show considerable semantic and orthographical differences compared to the printed edition,[13] therefore we transcribe them in full and reproduce both pages (see figs. 2–3). We have not changed the layout in the transcription, except for replacing the symbol of siglum placed on abbreviated words.

The first page reads:

"ի տվէ պատւրեաց տէր դողորմու
թիւն իւր ի գիշե
րի աւրհնութիւն նոր
եւ աղաւթք իմ առ Ած. վասն կենաց
իմոց: Ասացի Այ. իմոյ ընդունելի
իմ ես դու ընդէր մոռացար զիս ընդ
հր. տրտում գնամ ես ի նեղեալ
թշնամեաց իմոց: Ի փշրեալ ոսկ
երաց իմոց նախատեցին զիս թշն
ամիք իմ յասեալ ընդ իս թե ուր
է Ած. քո: Արդ ընդ*հր* տրտում ես
անձն իմ կամ ընդ*հր* խռով
եալ ես յուսա առ Ած. խ*ուս*տով
տն*ւ* նմա փրկիչ երեսաց իմոց Ած. է:
Դատ արա ինձ Ած. եւ իրաւ արա
ինձ ի դատաստանի իմում:
Յազգէ որ ոչ է սուրբ ի մարդ:

[13] We have used the 1860 Venice edition of the Bible. *The Bible, Old and New Testaments, According to the Ancient Monk Scribes and the Greek Original* [Գիրք Աստուածաշունչ Հին եւ Նոր կտակարանաց, ըստ միաբան վաղեմի գրչագրաց մերոց եւ յոյն բնագրաց], Venice, 1860.

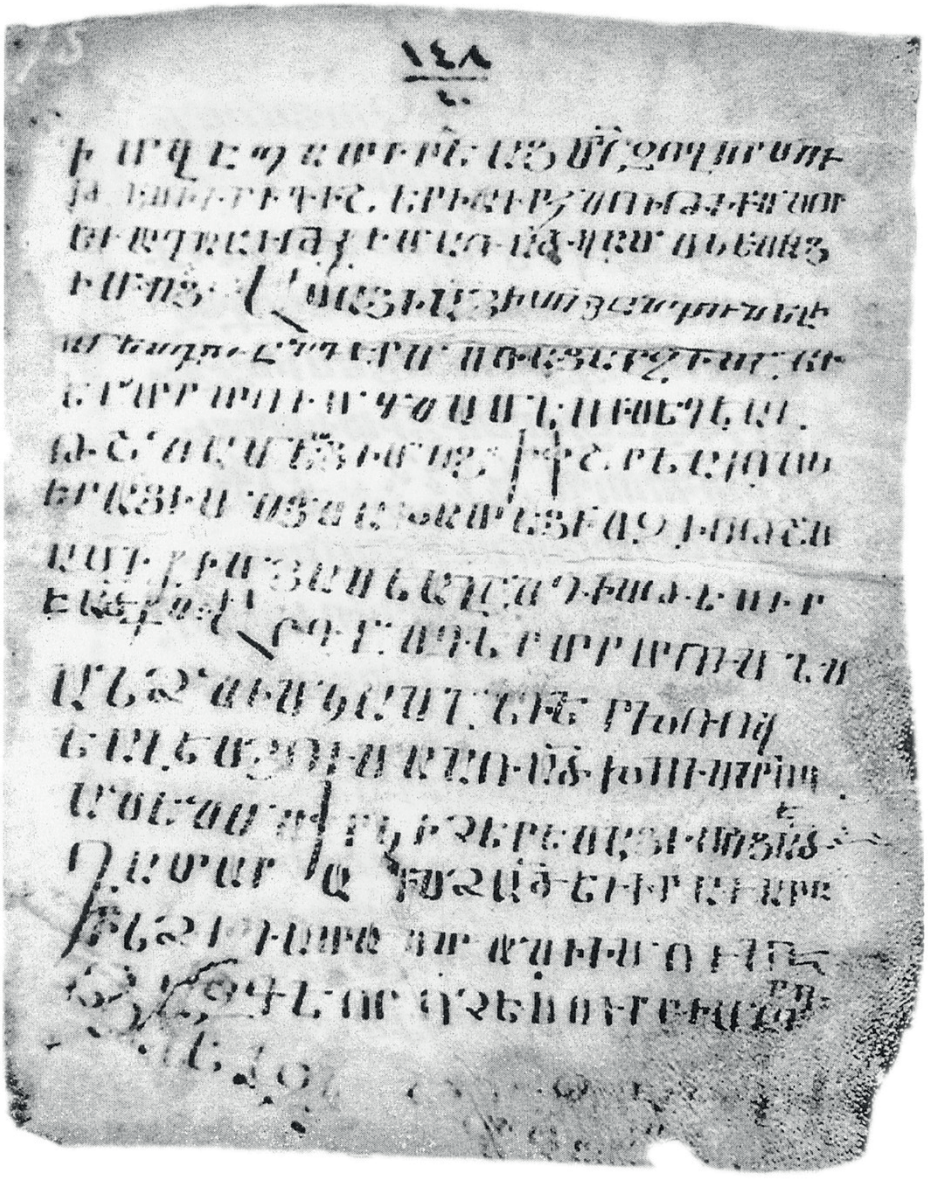


Fig. 2.

The second page reads:

ո մեղաւորե նե[ն]գաւորէ փրկէ զիս
դու Ած. հզուրիչ իմ ընդեր մոռ
ացար զիս ընդեր տրտում գնամ ես
ի նեղեալ թշնամեաց իմոյց:
Առաքեա տէր զլոյս քո եւ զճշմարտութիւն
ս քո զի նոքաւք առաջնորդեցեր հանդէս զ
մեզ ի լեռն սուրբ եւ ի յարկս քո: Մտից առաջի սեղանոյ այ. առ
Ած. որ ուրախ առնէ զմանգութ
իւն իմ: խաւստովան եղեաց քեզ աւրհնութեամբ
Ած.Ած. իմ: Արդ ընդեր տրտում ես անձն իմ
կամ ընդեր խռովես զիս յուսա առ Ած. խաւ
ստովանեա նմա եւ փրկիչ երեսաց իմոց Ած. է:
Ի կատարած որդոցն Կորխա իմաստութիւն ԽԳ.
Ած. ականջաւք մերաւք լուաք զոր հարքն մեր
պատմեցին մեզ: զգործն զոր գործեցեք*ից*ին
յաւուրս նոցա յաւուրսն յառաջինսն: Ձեռ
ն քո խլեաց զհեթանոս եւ զնոսա տնգեցեր չա
րչարեցեր զժողովուրդս քո եւ հանէ զնոսա:
Ոչ թե սրով իւրով ժառանգեցե զերկիր եւ
ոչ բազուկ նոցա թե փրկեցե զնոսա: Այլ ա
ջ քո են բազուկ քո եւ լոյս երեսաց քոց զի հա
ճեցար ընդ նոսա: Դու ինքն ես թագաւոր:

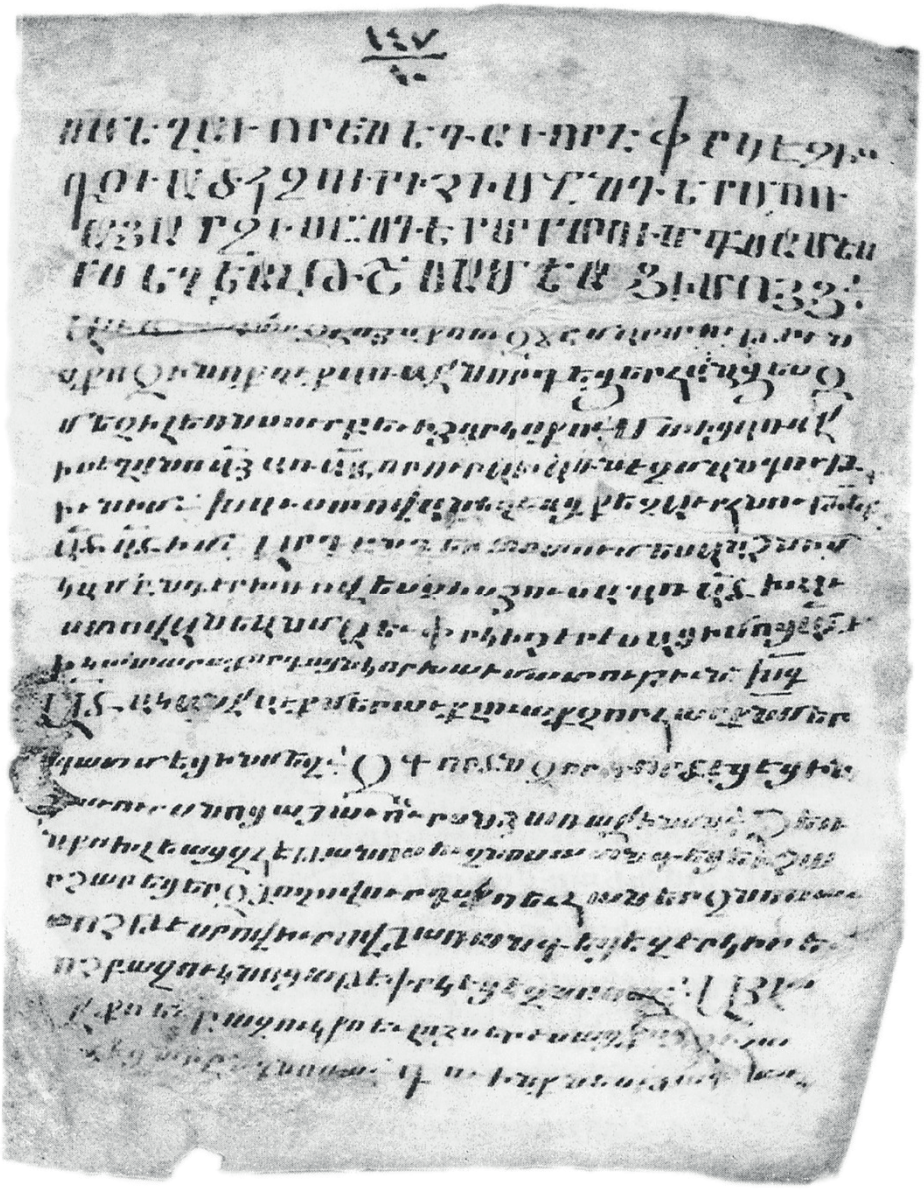


Fig. 3.

3. (N.M.D., No. 9, pp. 57–58)

Psalms 44:10–45:3

This is a palimpsest folio which has deteriorated on the edges. The underlying text, which was probably written in the fifth century, is not completely erased. In consequence, having access to the original will allow the text to be deciphered. The new writing is *bolorgir* mixed with *erkat'agir* from the eleventh to twelfth centuries. It begins with the words "կացէ դշխոյ ընդ աջմէ քումմէ…" (Ps. 44:10) and continues up to the passage "…փոփոխել լերանց ի սիրտս ծովու" (Ps. 45:3). We publish the photograph of the first page (see fig. 4).

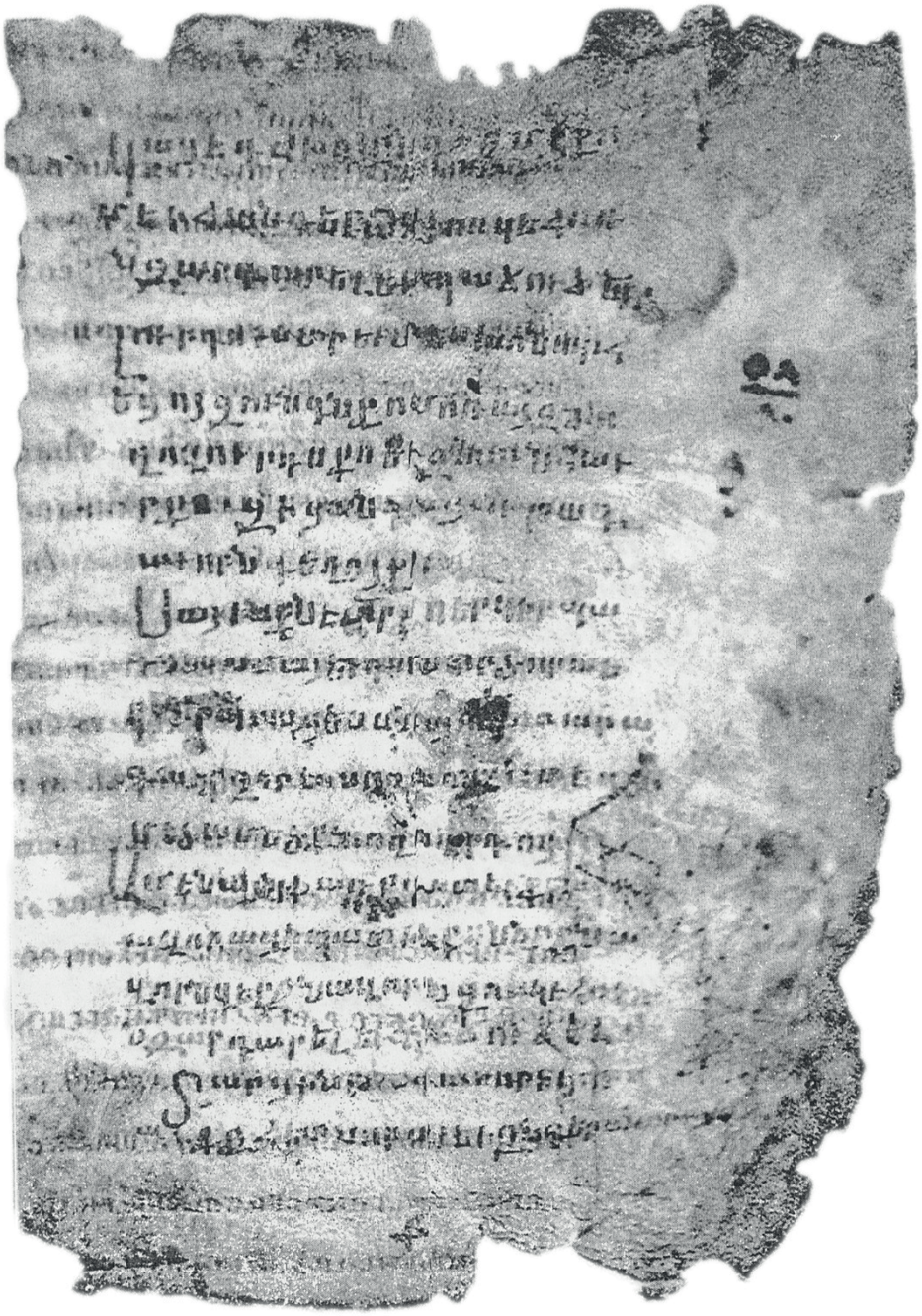


Fig. 4.

4. (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 23–24)

The prophecy of Daniel

This is a one-folio fragment written in two columns. The upper part is torn and damaged. It is written in upright *erkat'agir* having elements of rounded *erkat'agir*. Five lines have survived in the column on the left of the first page, as well as eleven lines in the column on the right. Judging from the ligature, we conclude that the page originally had sixteen lines. This fragment is of some interest as it differs from all other ancient manuscripts known to us: it was larger from left to right than from top to bottom. In other words, it had the form of a notebook (see fig. 5). It comprises the passages Daniel 3:49–50, 5, 51, 5–56 (the first page), and 3:61–67, 72–76 (the second page). In comparison with the printed text, it shows one or two notable differences (in chapter 3, the word "ջեր" is written in front of the word "տապ" in verse 66; in the same chapter, the word "տալթ" is inserted in front of the word "սառն" in verse 67; and so on). Likely, it was copied in the tenth to eleventh centuries.

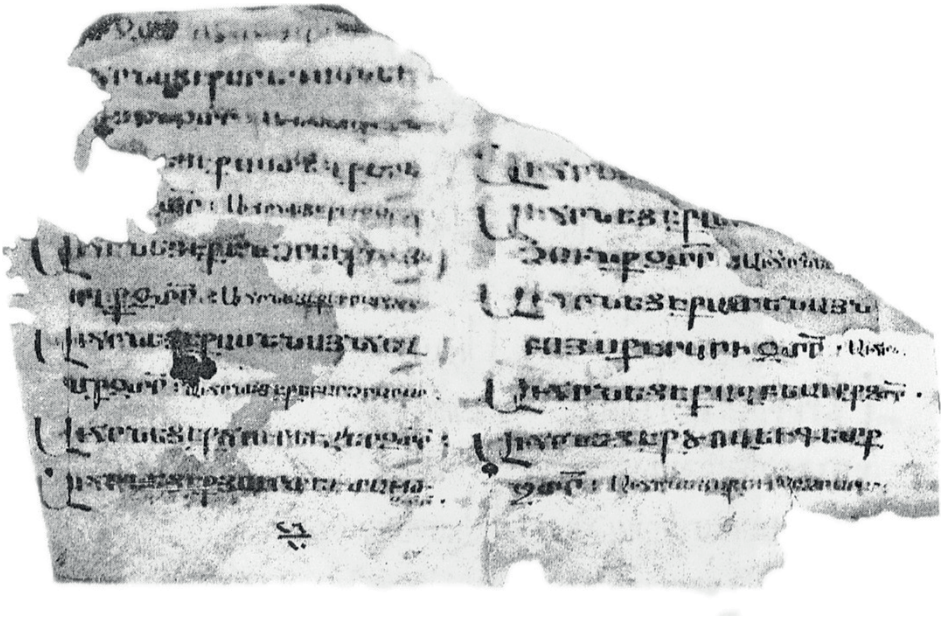


Fig. 5.

5. (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 1–10)

The Gospel According to Matthew

Five parchment folios have survived, the middle parts of the column on the left of the page are torn, deteriorated and stained from top to bottom. The folios are written in rounded *erkat'agir* in two columns. Each page contains a text with eighteen lines, and in the lower margin the numbers of the chapters of the Canon Table are marked in small letters within 2–4 lines. It comprises one extensive passage from the Gospel According to Matthew, beginning with the words "…թէ ի բազում խօսից իւրեանց" (Matt. 6:7) and continuing up to the words "Աղուես[սուց որջք գոն]" (Matt. 8:20). It scarcely differs from the print version. On the basis of palaeographical data, we assume that it must have been written in the ninth to tenth centuries (some forms of the letters are similar to the corresponding forms of the letters of [Maštocʻ Matenadaran] MS No. 6202, copied in 909). We publish a photograph of page 5b, which is comparatively well preserved.

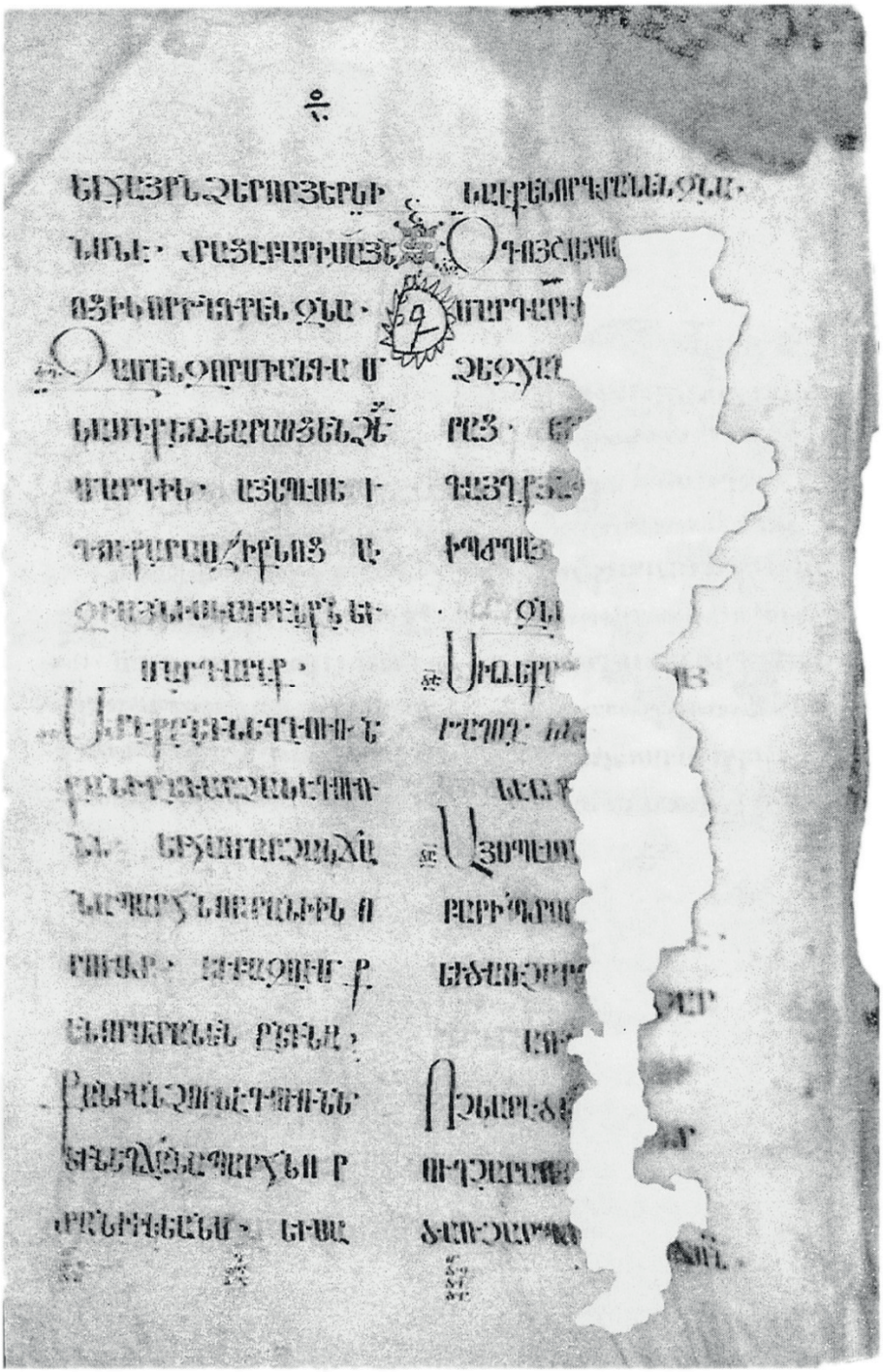


Fig. 6.

6. (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 151–152)

The Epistles of Paul

Only fragments of two severely damaged folios have survived written in rounded *erkat'agir*. The folios of this manuscript originally had two columns consisting of twenty-one lines in each column. Nevertheless, on the fragmentary pages that have come down to us, only illegible traces of the lines of one column have been preserved. The first side of the first folio comprises a few lines from chapters 8 and 9 of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians ("զայրացուցեալ ի Քրիստոսէ…այդ դէպ ձեզ եմ"). On the other side of the folio a few words can barely be discerned. The second folio, which has been preserved in a comparatively better state, comprises passages from the Letter to the Hebrews, namely Hebrews 11:16–24. The fragments are very old, very likely written even earlier than the ninth century. This is evident from both the ancient form of the characters and the large capitals which go outside the writing field to occupy considerable space in the margin on the right side. We present the photographs of the first pages of these fragments (see figs. 7–8).

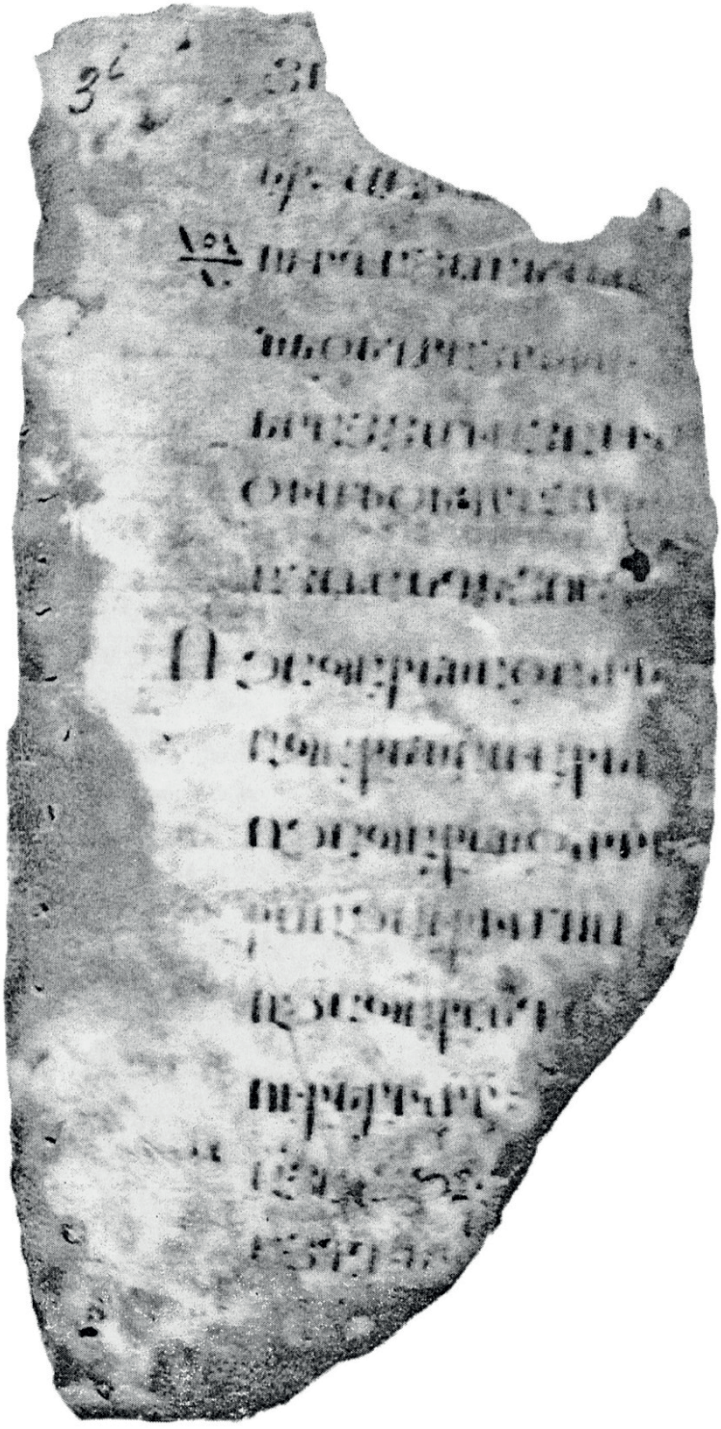


Fig. 7.

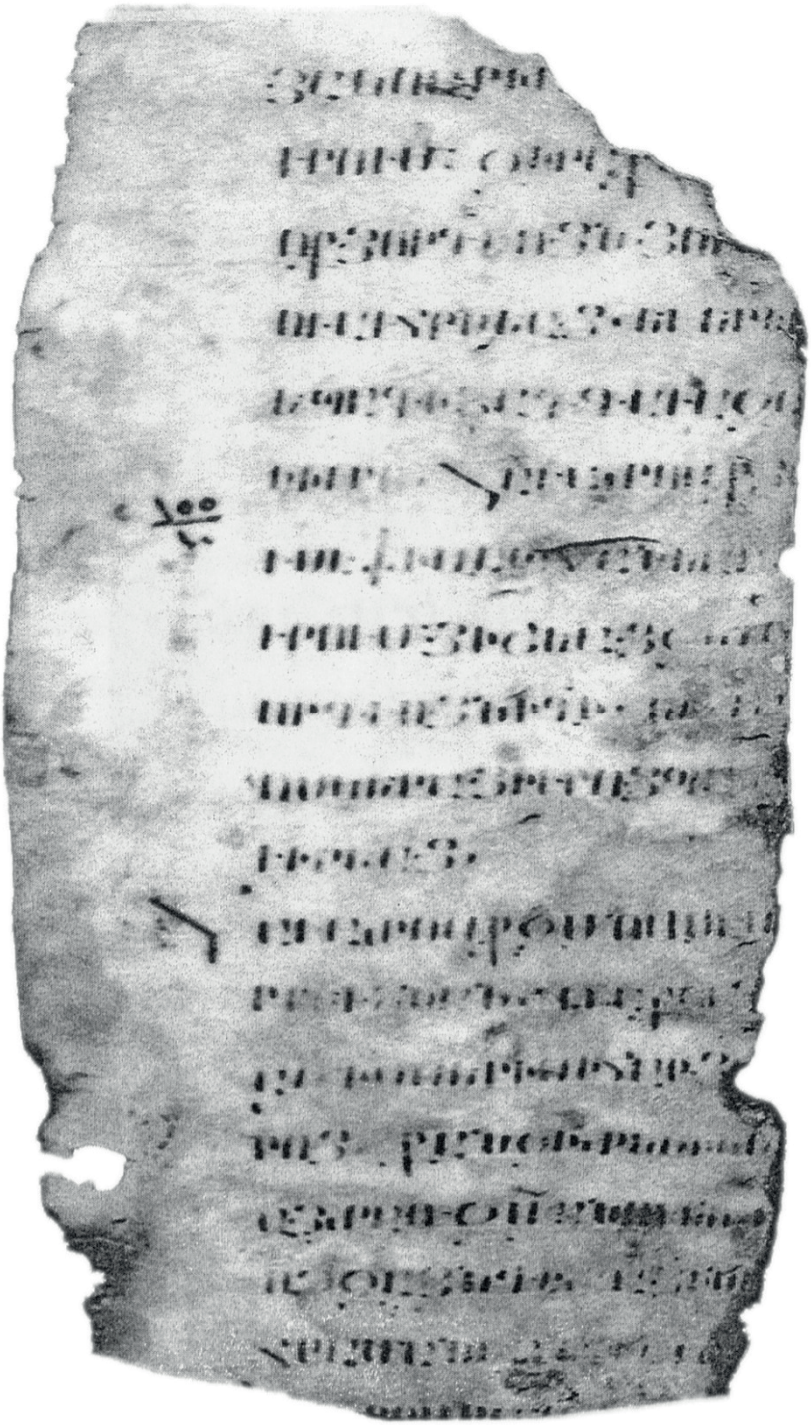


Fig. 8.

7. (N.M.D., No. 7, pp. 1–4)

Lectionary

One bifolium has survived with four pages. The lower right margin of the first page is torn. The text is laid out in a single column; the handwritten copy is executed in the most ancient type of *bolorgir*. The fragment comprises verses 22–25 of Isaiah 55, and the complete third chapter of Paul's Letter to the Philippians, in addition to verses 1–9 of the fourth chapter. The fragment is headed with the title: "A Passage from Paul's Letter to the Philippians" [Պօղոսի առաք. ի Փի[լի]պիացոց թղթոյն է ընդ[երցուած]], and ends with a passage under the heading: "Gospel According to Luke" [Աւետարան ըստ Ղուկասի]. It shows insignificant differences when compared with the print version. In a number of words, instead of the letter "h" the letter "խ" is written (e.g., "խնասցեն, վստախութիւն, խնազանդեցուցանել, նախատակեցան, չախ"), a scribal phenomenon that is characteristic of scribes of Vaspurakan. We publish the photographs of the first and last pages (see figs. 9–10).

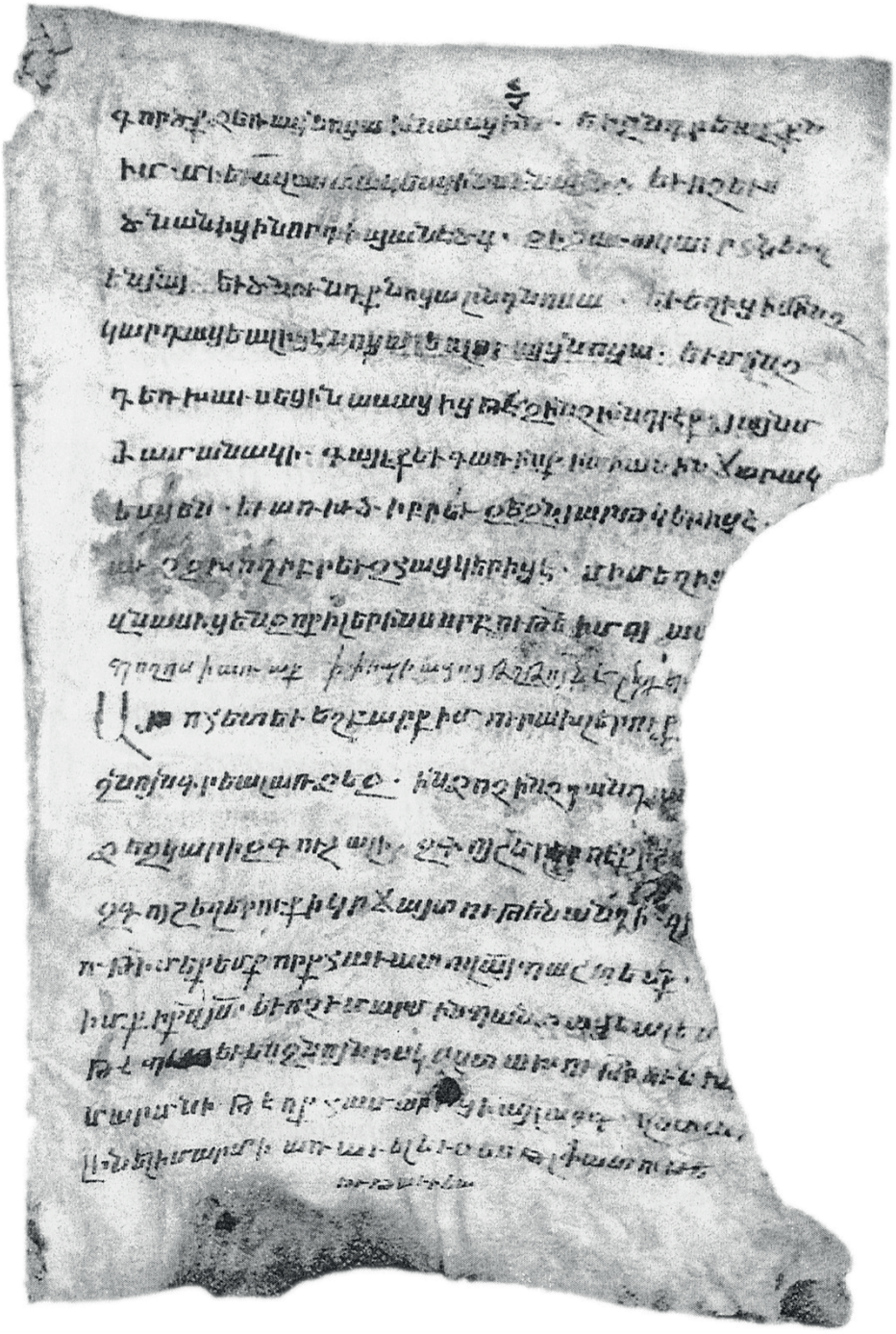


Fig. 9.

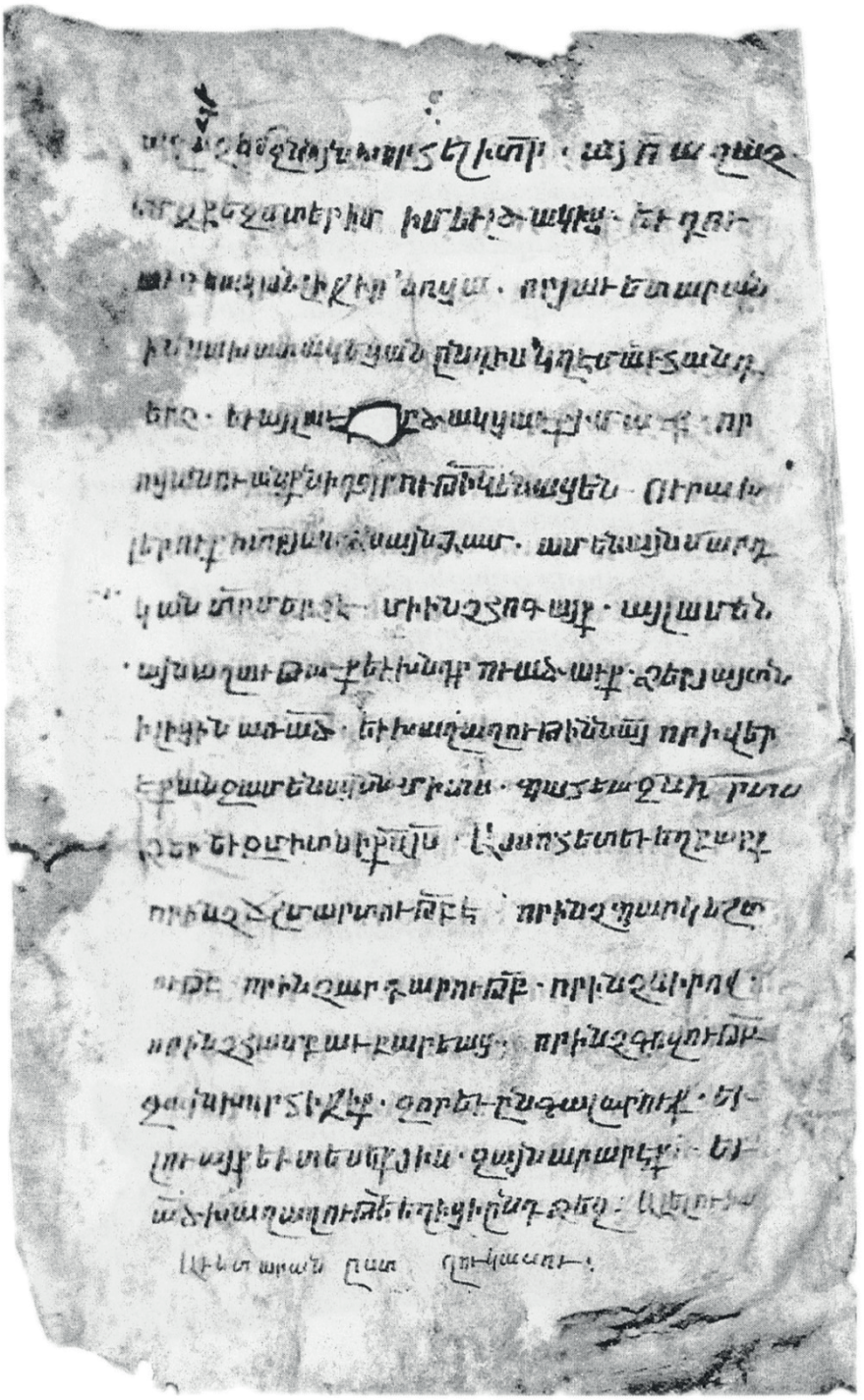


Fig. 10.

8. (N.M.D., No. 7, pp. 77–78)

Lectionary

One folio has survived. The first page is so deteriorated that the writing is difficult to decipher. It is written in rectilinear *erkat'agir* in a single column of twelve lines per page. The spaces between the lines are two times the space occupied by the text. It is executed in this manner to provide space for musical *xazes* (neumes); the *xazes*, written in red ink, are barely discernable. This is one of the oldest fragments having *xazes*, likely written in the eleventh century. It comprises verses 1–4 of Isaiah 50; after each verse is written "լուսաւորել աղա[չեմք]", after which, as a full stop, four dots are placed in the shape of a cross. We publish the photograph of page B (see fig. 11).

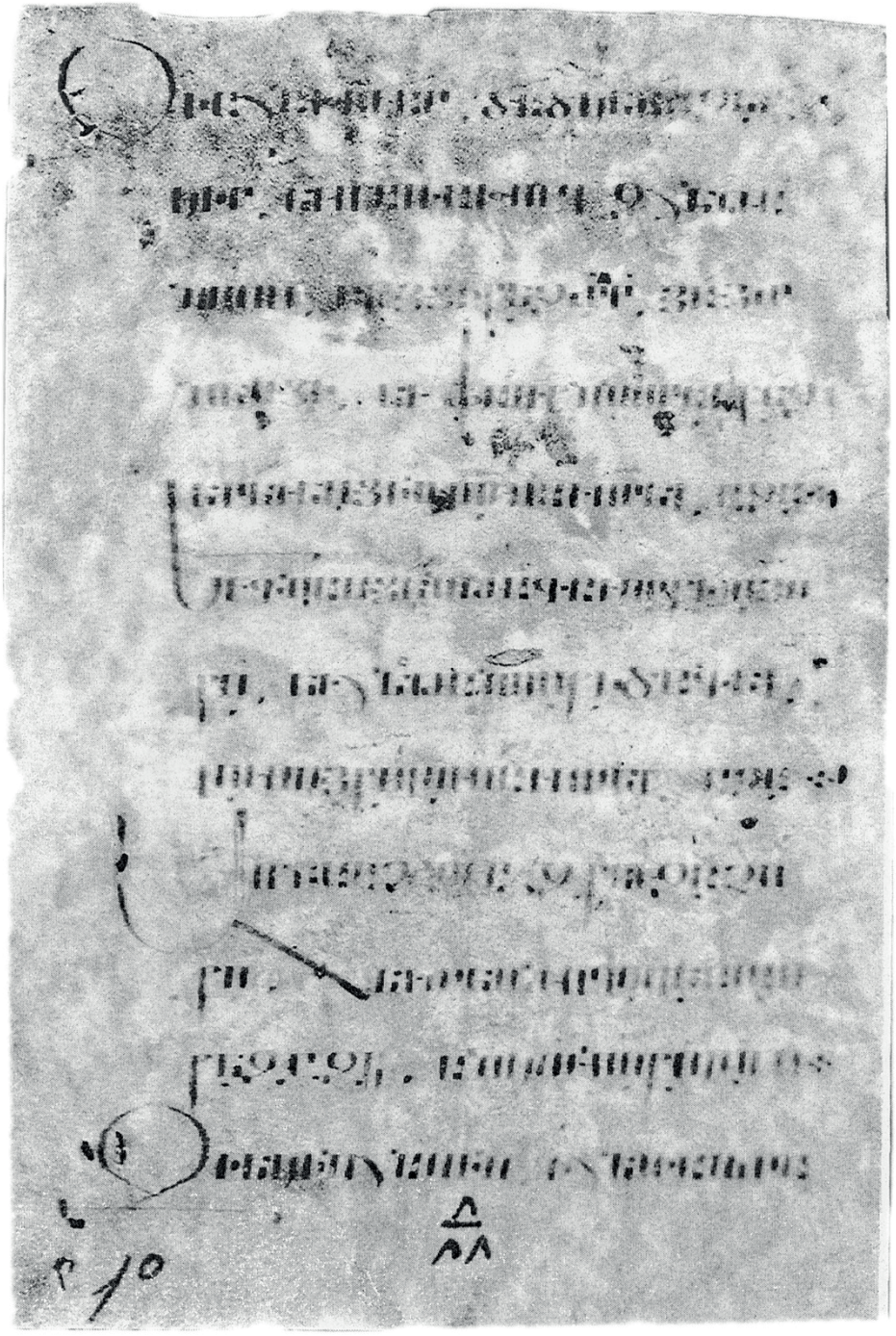


Fig. 11.

9. (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 153–154 and No. 11, pp. 193–194)

Lectionary

These manuscript fragments, written in upright *erkat'agir* and two columns, are registered under different numbers in the National Museum, but they are undoubtedly from the same manuscript (it was possible to find this out by comparing the forms of the letters in detail). The manuscript to which these fragments belong was most likely a lectionary. The first folio we have is incomplete. It comprises a passage from chapter 3 of the Proverbs of Solomon ("…տէր յամե[նայն սրտէ] քոց…[մի լինի ի]մաստուն", Proverbs 3:5–7), and then verses 11–19 of Jeremiah 1. It was impossible to identify the content of the second folio.

The text of the first page reads:

[Ամե]նայն չարեացն իւ[րեանց]
զի թողին զիս եւ զ[ոհեցին]
Աստուծոյ աւտա[րաց եւ
եր]կիրպագին գոր[ծոց
ձեռ]աց իւրեանց: Եւ դու պն
դեա] զմէջ քո: Արի եւ [ասա ն
ոցա] զամեայն զո[ր մի ան]
կամ պատուրի[եմ քեզ
մ]ի երկիցես յե[րեսաց
նոցա՞] մ[ի] զանգի[տիցես]---:

On the first page of the second folio only isolated words can be deciphered (e.g., "կենդանութիւն կենաց", "ողորմութիւն", "[զաւր]ութիւն սըրտի եւ եւայլն]"), and these do not form a coherent text. In the fragment we encounter the ancient way of writing of the letter "Կ", and a ligature of the letters "ՊԱ", which is very rare in our manuscripts. It was likely written in the tenth century. We publish the photographs of the first pages of two fragments (see figs. 12–13).

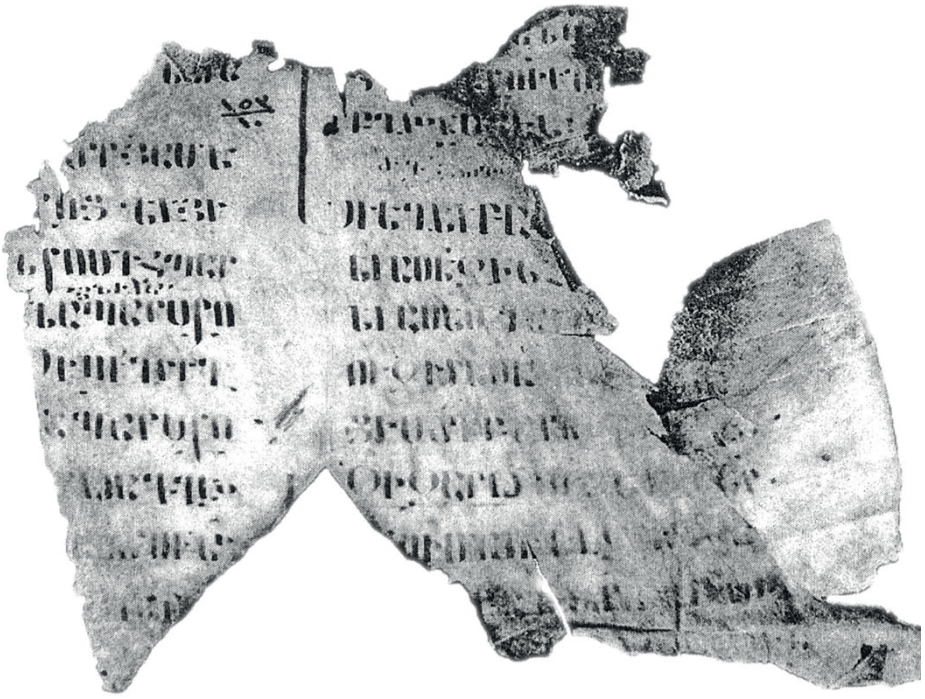


Fig. 12.

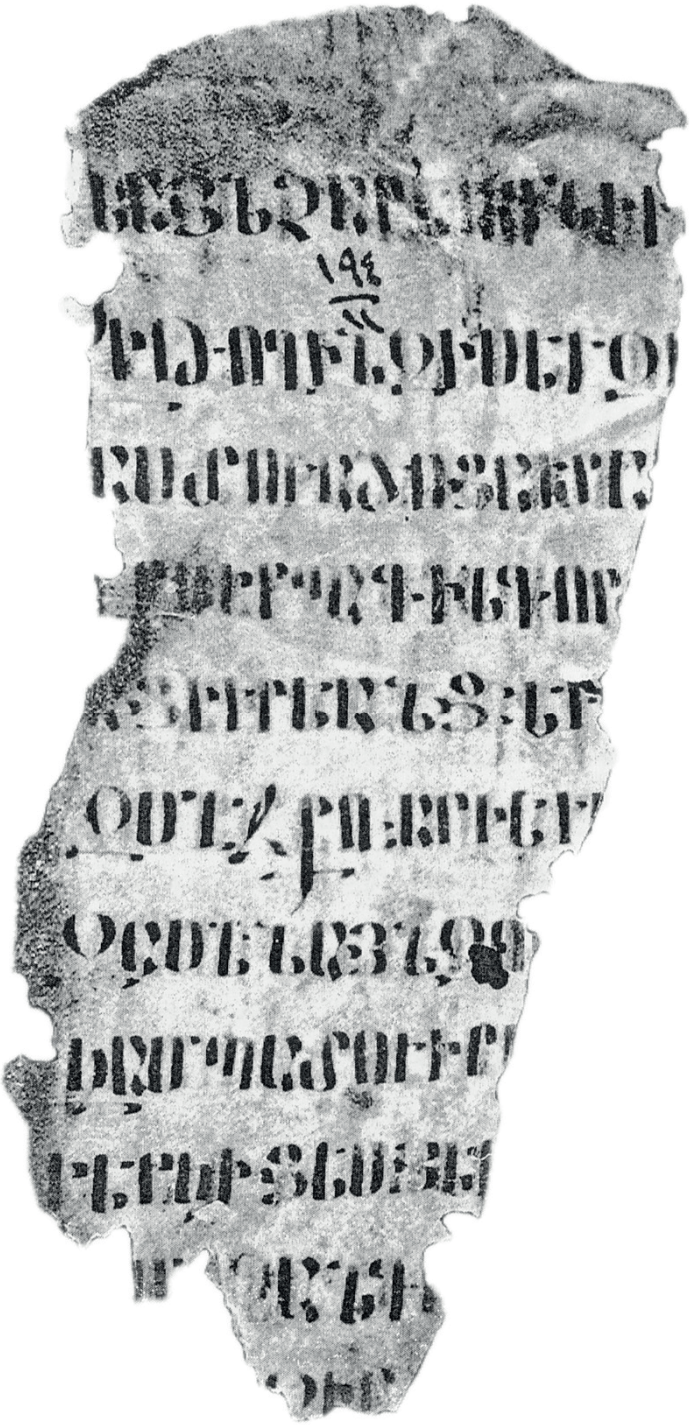


Fig. 13.

10. (N.M.D., No. 7, pp. 45–46 and No. 10, pp. 33–40)

Testimony of St Minas and His Companions

The testimony of Minas entered the Armenian synaxaria, homilies, and *tonakan*s with editorial changes. Our fragment consists of five deteriorated sheets that differ considerably from the print version[14] and is identical to the text in the miscellany called "Tonakan" (compare Maštocʿ Matenadaran, MS No. 3777, pp. 224b–232a). It comprises non-sequential passages of one-fifth of the whole hagiography. The fragment is written in old *bolorgir* with elements of cursive letters (*šłagir*). There are a few similar manuscripts dating back to the twelfth to thirteenth centuries and these folios were copied in the same period. As an exemplar, we publish the photograph of one of the well-preserved folios (N.M.D., No. 10, p. 39; see fig. 14).

[14] See *Book, which is Called Synaxarion* [Գիրք որ կոչի Այսմաւուրք], Constantinople, 1730, pp. 234–238; M. Avgerean, *Complete Volume of Lives of Saints and Martyrologies* [Լիակատար Վարք Սրբոց եւ Վկայաբանութիւն Սրբոց], vol. 9, Venice, 1813, pp. 341–367.

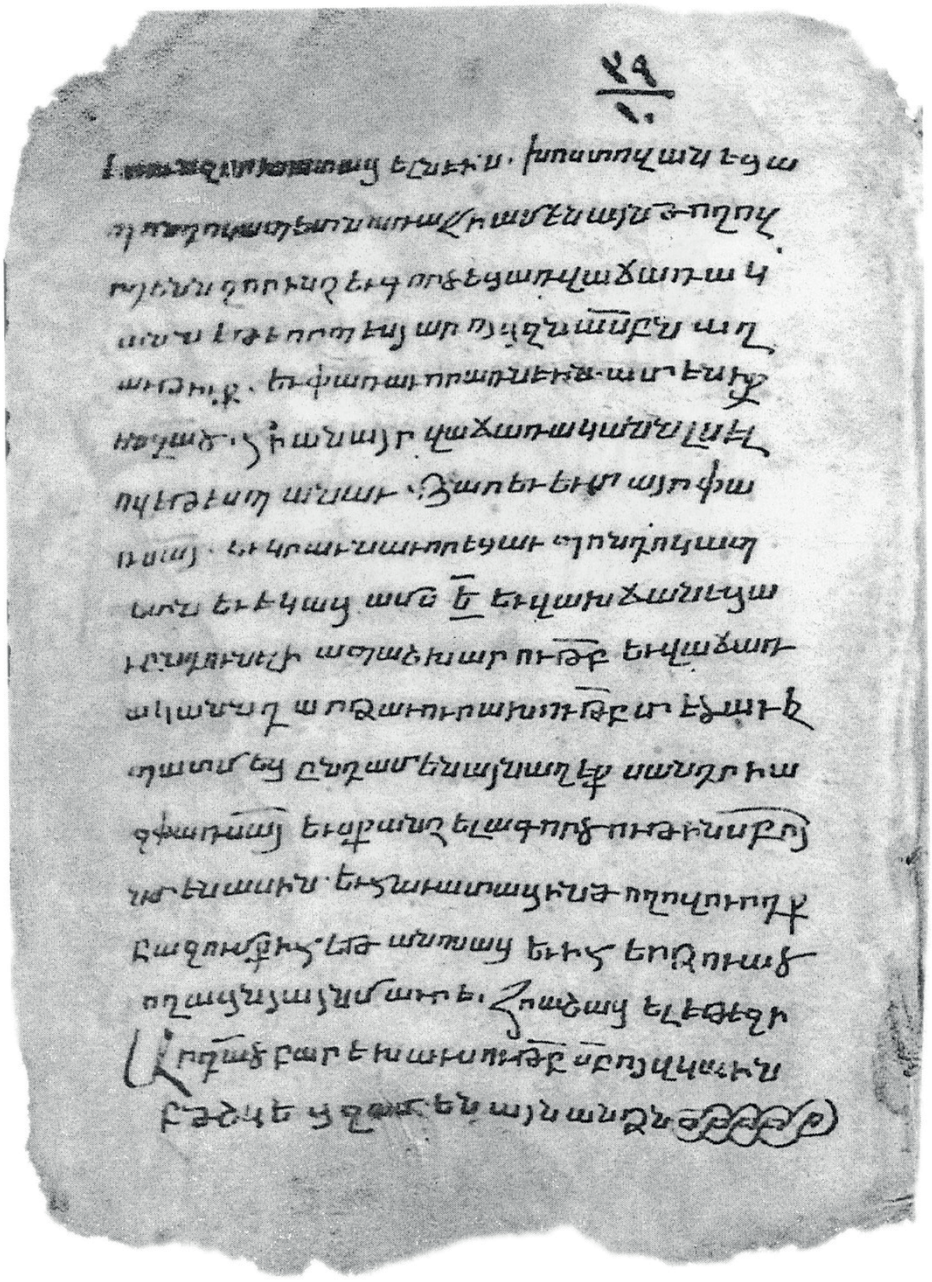


Fig. 14.

11. (N.M.D., No. 7, pp. 70–71)

Homily of Rev. John Chrysostom for the Consolation of the Mournful

This text occupies one folio in total. It is, apparently, a copy of one paragraph of one of the homilies of John Chrysostom. The manuscript to which this fragment belonged was most likely a miscellany of various didactic materials compiled in the thirteenth century. It is written in old *bolorgir* with elements of cursive letters. We publish photographs of both pages (see figs. 15–16).

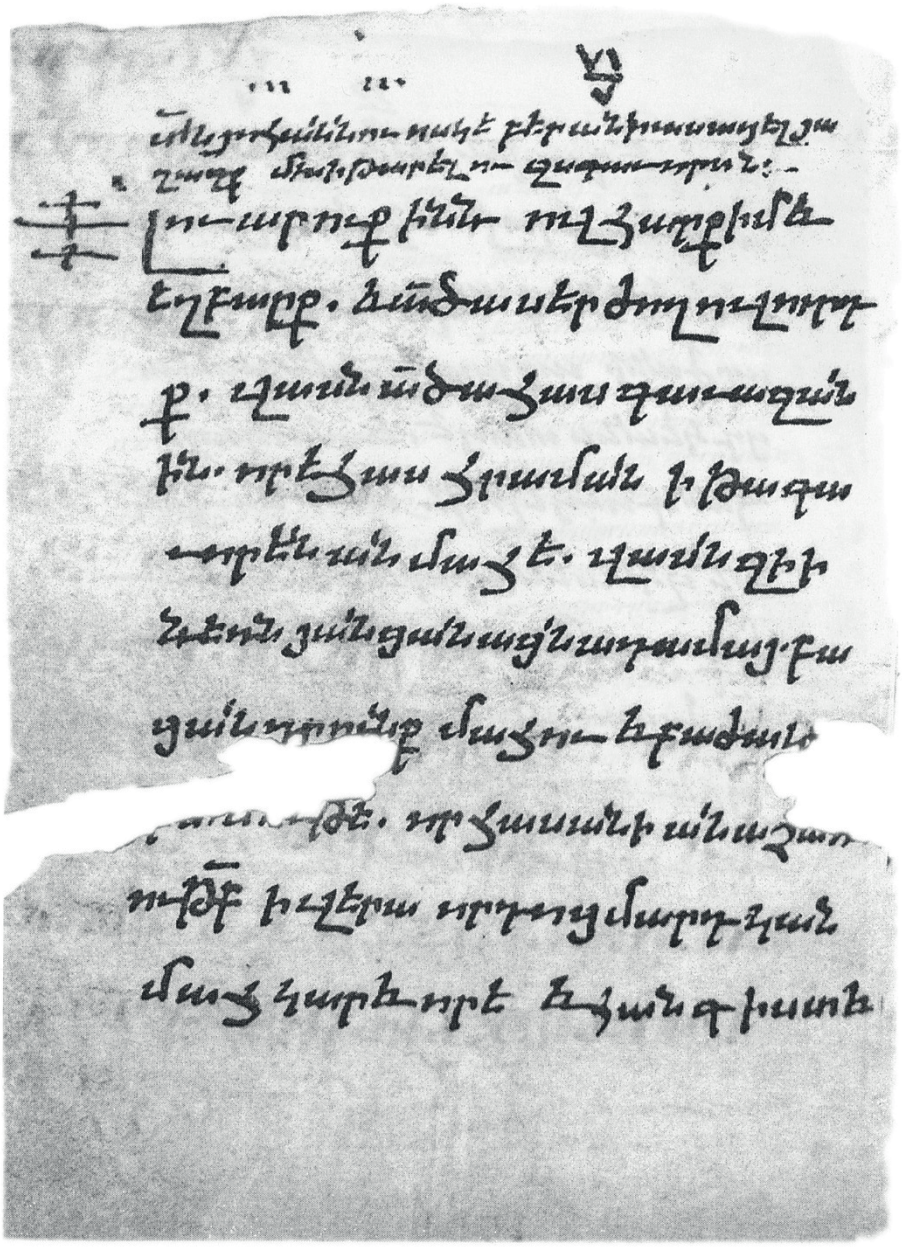


Fig. 15.

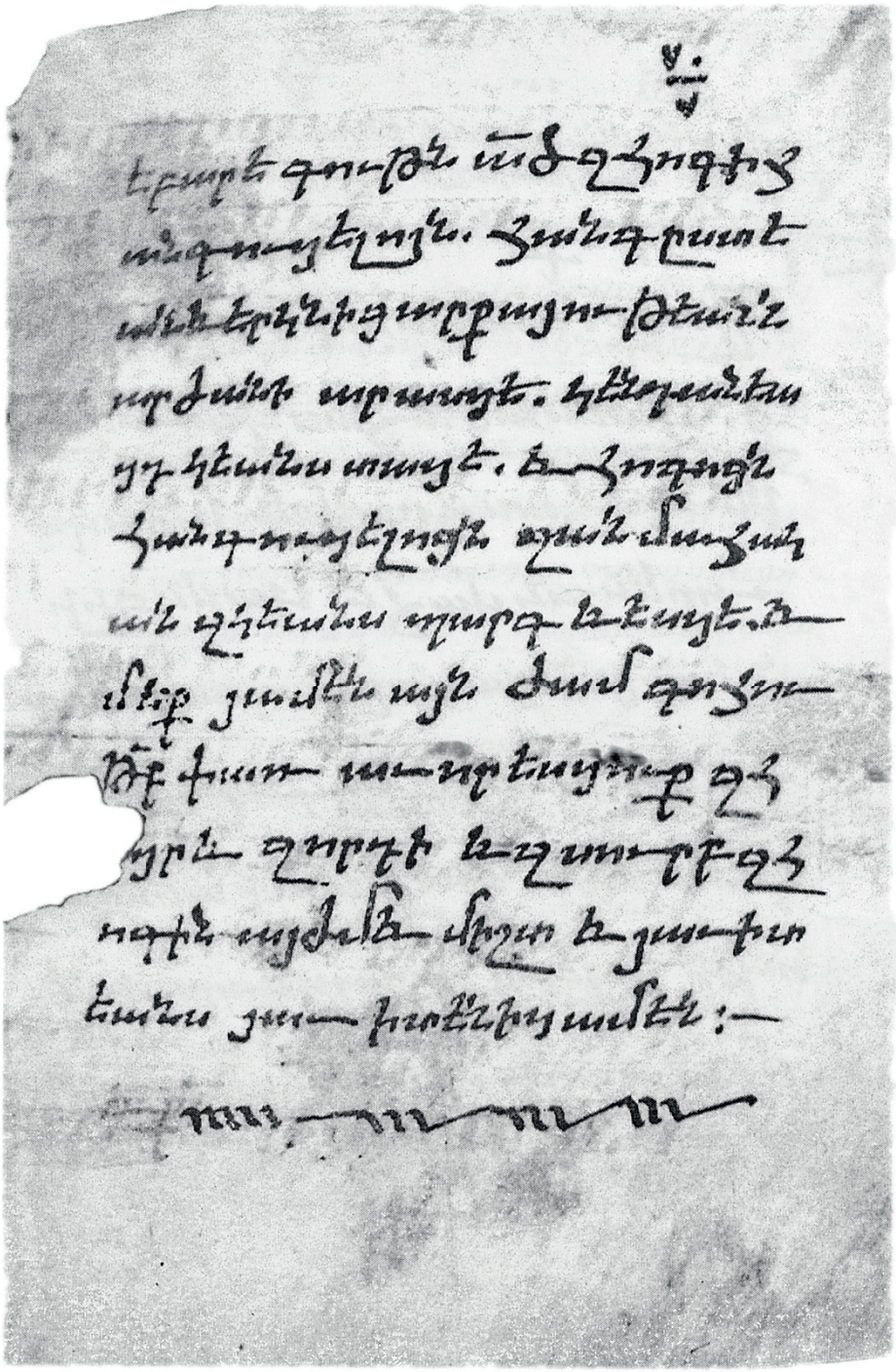


Fig. 16.

12. (N.M.D., No.7, pp. 97–98 and No. 10, pp. 23–24)

Mystagogical Catechesis of Cyril of Jerusalem

One of the two sheets (N.M.D., No. 10, pp. 23–24) is very deteriorated and decayed and thus hardly legible. The other is comparably well preserved. It comprises excerpts from the thirteenth chapter of the famous work *Mystagogical Catechesis* by Cyril of Jerusalem.[15] There are considerable semantic differences between the fragment and the print version. Thus, for instance, in front of the sentence "զի լուծցէ զմեղս որ ի կանանց մտին" of the print version (p. 254), the fragment has the words "որով լուծաւ մեղքն որ մտին յաշխարհի", and so on, in front of the passage "եւ զի լուծցին մեռեալք" (p. 266) it has "եւ զի լուցին մեղքն", and so on.

The fragment is laid out in two columns. Each column comprises twenty-nine lines. The letters have the form of more upright slanted *erkat'agir* inclining more to the right than regular *erkat'agir*; this is a peculiar scribal feature of this fragment. Most likely, it was copied in the eleventh to twelfth centuries. We publish the photographs of the first pages of both, the well-preserved folio and the poorly-preserved folio (see figs. 17–18).

[15] Երանելոյն Կիւրղի Երուսաղեմայ Հայրապետի կոչումի ընծայութեան, Vienna, 1831. The fragment comprises selected excerpts from pages 253–268 of the print version.

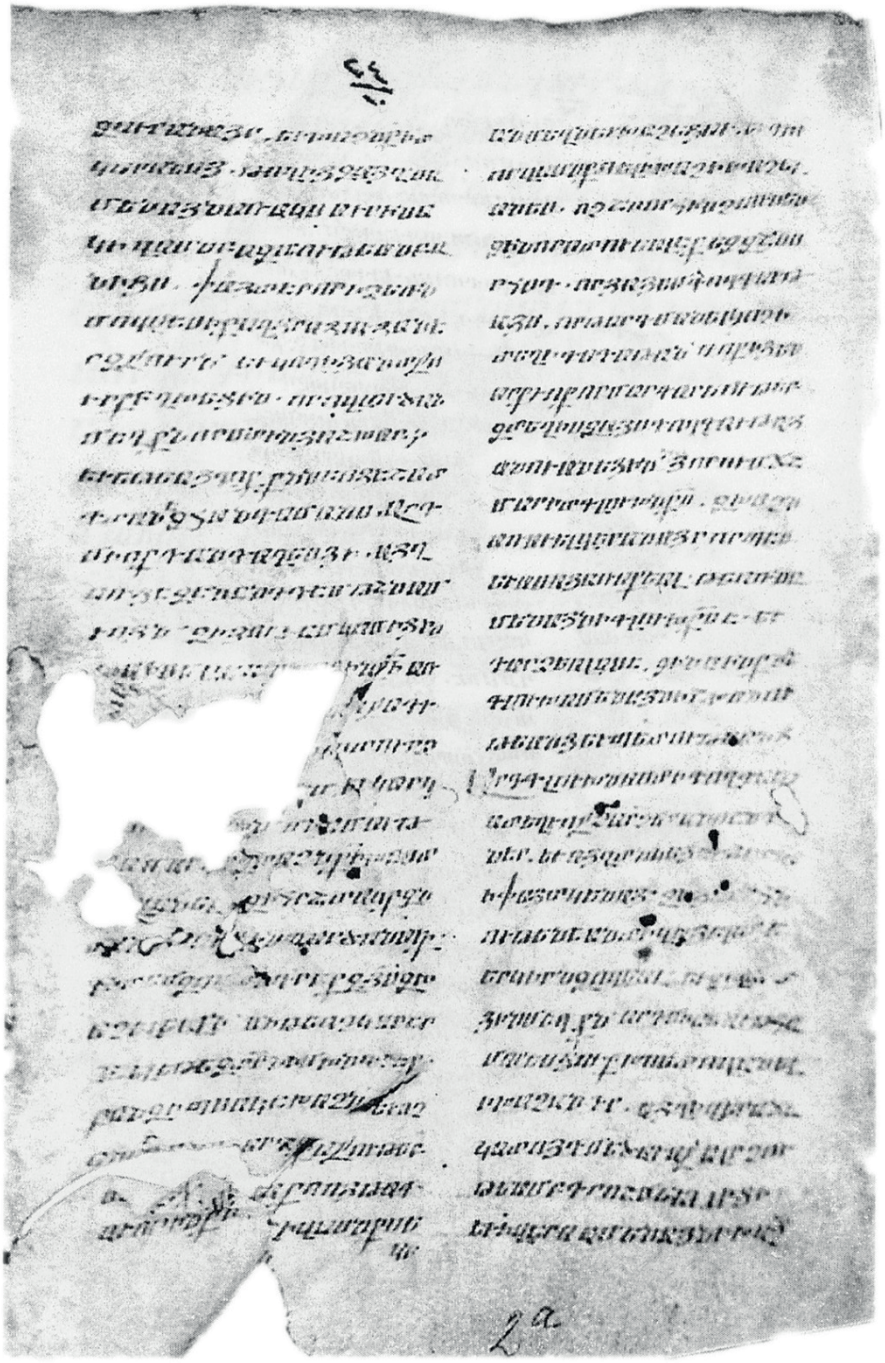


Fig. 17 [=Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz-Nr. 481/188 (left folio), available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/]. © BBAW.

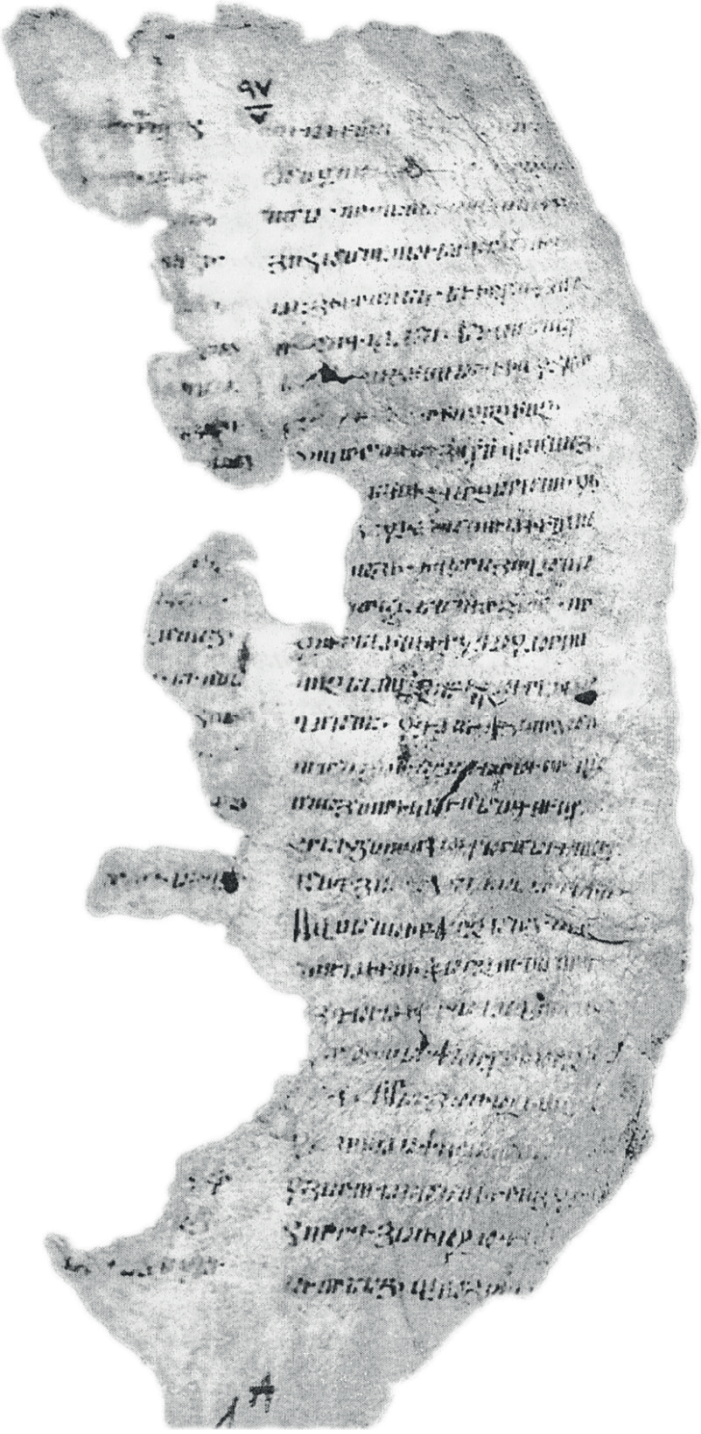


Fig. 18.

13. (N.M.D., No. 7, pp. 27–44)

Miscellany

This text, with the largest number of folios (nine) and pages (eighteen), belongs to a miscellany with noteworthy material. From a codicological perspective, the first two folios are of great interest, being produced during the copying of the manuscript by sewing two parchment half-folios together with the help of leather threads. This bifolium carries a text consisting of a total of seventeen lines (the stitched part was considered unfit for writing). It thus differs from the other folios of the manuscript (which have twenty lines), which were each made of one complete parchment. The text is laid out in a single column. The script is upright *erkat'agir*, written probably in the tenth to eleventh centuries. Three different materials have been copied on the preserved folios.

On the first page of the first folio we find what are probably the last lines of a commentary on an unknown work. To elucidate its contents, additional research needs to be carried out. To facilitate this work, we provide the transcription of that page and the photograph below (see fig. 19).

Կասեցուցեր. զծով մեղաց ցամաք
եցուցեր. եւ զգետ անաւրենութենս
կասեցուցեր. եւ զանձրեաւ սաստիկ
մարդասիրութեան տեղեցեր ի մարդիկ.
Առաքեցեր. այսինքն առաքեաց մի
ածին որդին Այ. զսուրբ զառաքեալսն
ընդ ամենայն աշխարհ ասելով. եր
թայք աշակերտեցեք զամենայն հեթ
անոսս եւ եղեալ նոցա երիվար սուրբ
հոգին ընթացան ընդ ծագս տիեզերաց
եւ դարձուցին զազգս մարդկան յերկ
րպագութենէ կռոցն յաստուածպաշտու
թիւն. զոր տեսեալ զայս անդնդային
բանակն դիւաց. եւ տագնապել---.

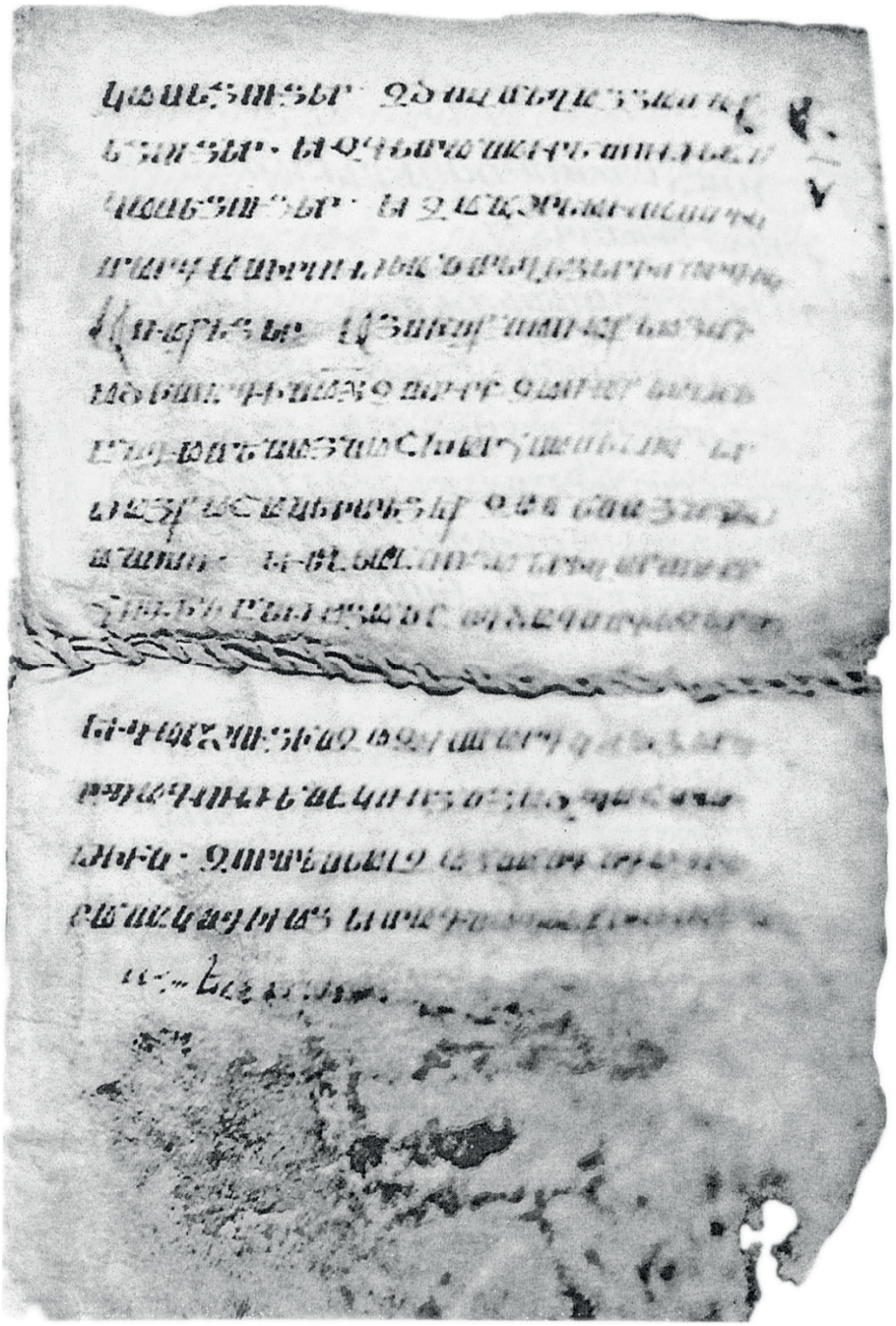


Fig. 19 [=Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz-Nr. 481/188 (right top, right folio), available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/]. © BBAW.

The second text in the fragment is much more important. It occupies the next page of the above-mentioned folio and the entire next folio. It is a continuous text and comprises an extract from the *Commentary on the Prophecy of Isaiah* by John Chrysostom.

As is known, the full text of that work by Chrysostom (with partial defects) has survived only in the Armenian translation of the Golden Age. From the Greek original, only the beginning from chapter 1 up to verse 10 of chapter 9 has been preserved. The only manuscript of the Armenian translation known to us so far is kept in the library of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice, and the print version is based on that.[16] The text is incomplete at the beginning, at the end and in parts in the middle. It begins with the second verse of chapter 2 of the Prophecy of Isaiah and ends with a commentary on the eighth verse of chapter 54. It does not have the commentaries on Isaiah 21:2 or 30:6 (one-sixth of the full text is missing). Our fragment carries the heading "Commentary on Isaiah by John Chrysostom" and comprises the commentary on the words "ի գիշերաց կանխելով" in the ninth verse of chapter 26.[17] It is thus one of those monuments that restore some extracts of the deplorable loss of Greek literature. Below, we give the transcription, as well as photographs (see figs. 20–22) of the illegible folios.

[16] *Commentary on Prophet Isaiah by Blessed John Chrysostom* [Երանելոյն Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի մեկնութիւն Եսայեայ մարգարէի], Venice, 1880.

[17] In the edition of the Armenian translation of the Bible regarded as scientific (Venice, 1860), this part has the form "գիշերաց կանխէ". It is worth mentioning that the work of John Chrysostom under discussion contains the complete text of the prophecy of Isaiah in fragments. There are essential differences in some places compared to the print version. On the basis of the characteristic traits of those differences, we may assume that the primitive Armenian translation of the prophecy of Isaiah from Syriac has been preserved in this commentary together with other books of the Holy Scripture. These books, as described by Koriwn, were translated first in haste and were later corrected based on the Greek original of the Bible brought from Constantinople. According to Movses Xorenac'i, "It was translated one more time diligently". Therefore, these parts of the prophecy of Isaiah are worth to be thoroughly examined. Together with the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles and other parts having traces of the original translation of the Bible, they will greatly contribute to the task of defining the nature and volume of linguistic and literary works produced at the dawn of Armenian literature.

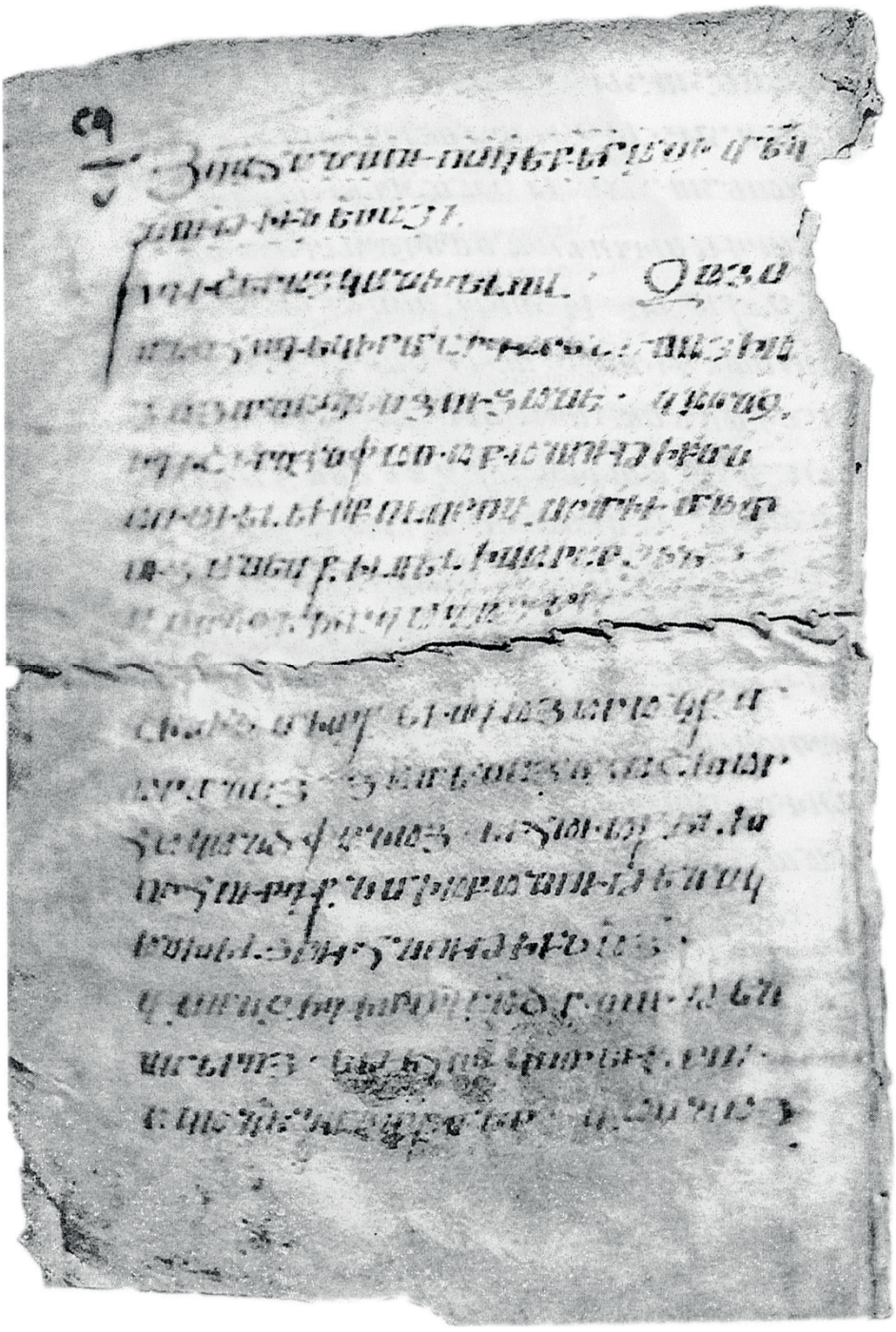


Fig. 20.

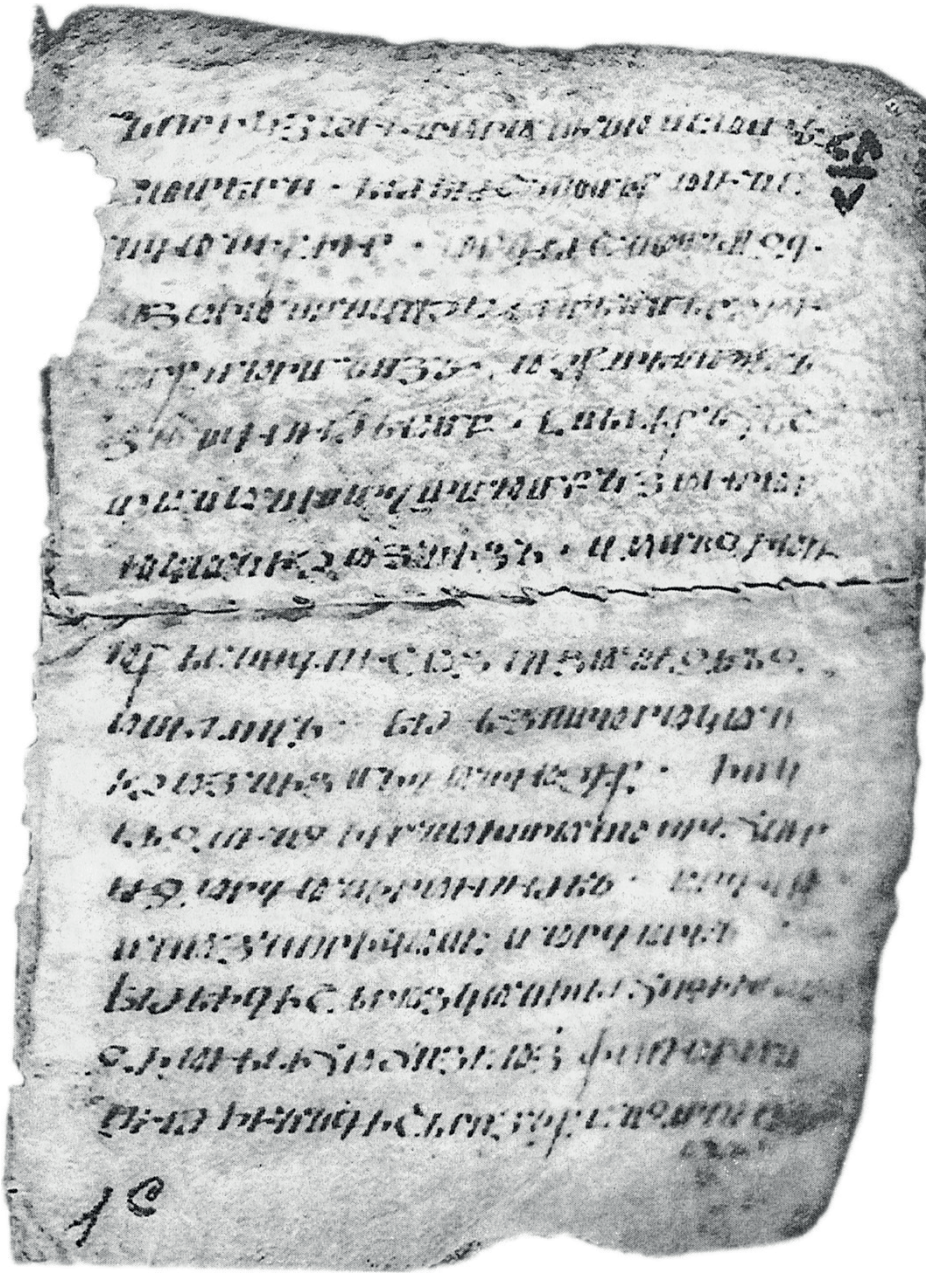


Fig. 21.

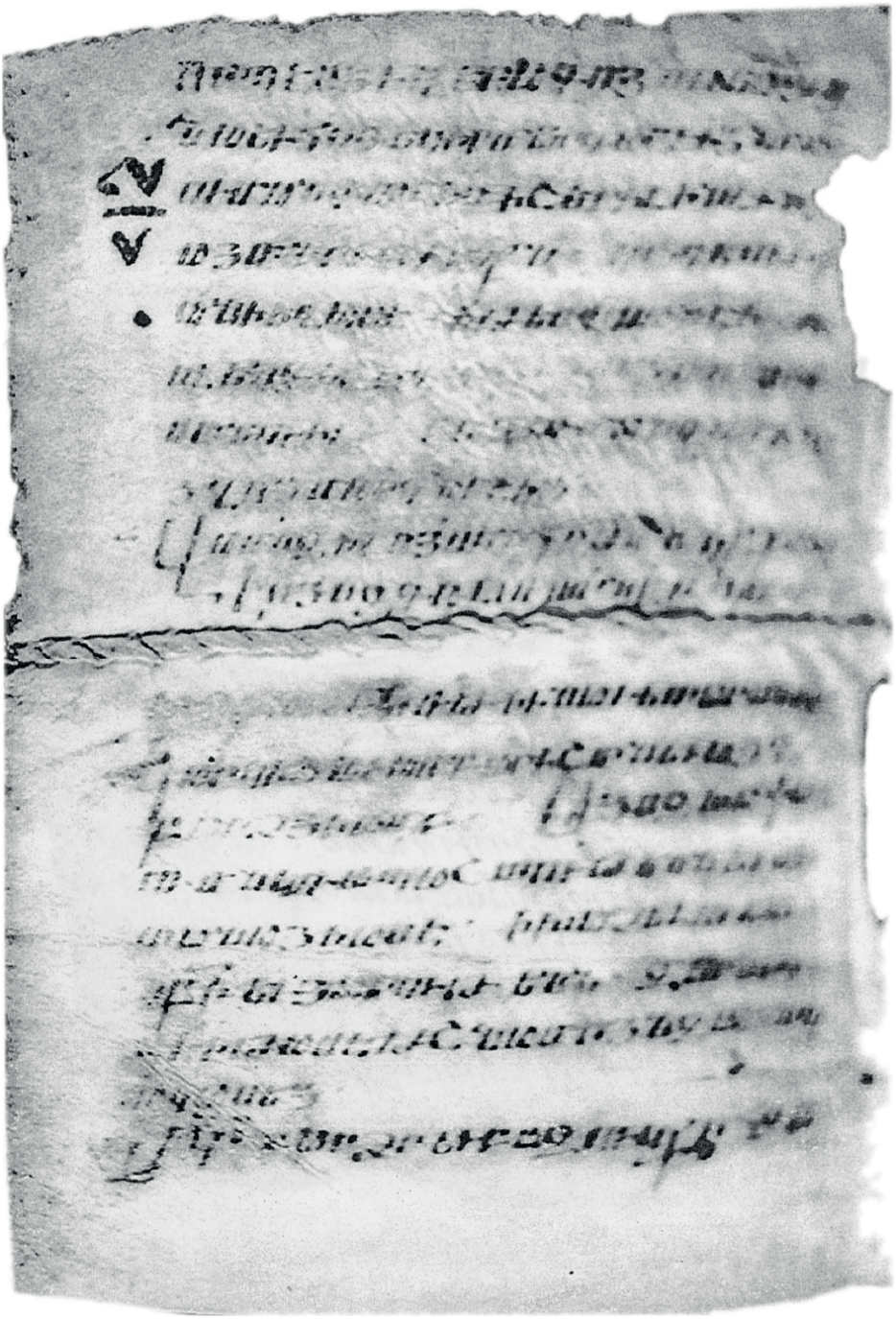


Fig. 22 [=Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/188 (right top, left folio), available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/]. © BBAW.

Fragment, p. 2

Commentary of John Chrysostom on the Prophecy of Isaiah

Ի գիշերաց կանխելով. զայս
մեզ հոգեկիր մարգար[են Ե]սայիա
յայտնապէս ցուցանէ. վասն զ
ի գիշերոյն փառսբանութիւնն
առաւել եւս բոլորով սրտիւ մատ
ուցանեմք ի լսելիս արարչին
վասն զի խաղաղութե[ամբ]
լինին միտք եւ սգայարանք մ
արմնոյ. յամենայն յաշխար
հական ծփանաց. եւ հաւաքել խ
որհուրդքն միաբանութեան կ
անխել յաւրհնութիւն Այ.
վասն զի գիտող է Ած. բնութեն
ս մերոյ. եթե հոգն՞ կամ եւ ցրու
ական են միտք մեր [վ]ասն այ[նորիկ].

Fragment, p. 1:

[այ]նորիկ յաւ/տարանին ասէ ատե
[ն]ատերն. եթե թշնամիք առն ը
նտանիք իւր. արդ թշնամիք զգ
այարանս կոչե որ են մերձաւ
որք մարմնոյն. աչք տեսանեն
ցանգութեամբ. լսելիքն հեշ
տանան խտղտմամբն յաւտար
ականի ձայնիցն. վասն զի առ
աքելն սգուշացուցանէ զմեզ
ասելովն. եթե յոտարական
ի ձայնից մի դանդաչեք. իսկ
լեզուն զիւրն ախտանա որ է հուր
եւ զարդ անիրաւութեն. արդ վա
սն այնորիկ ասէ մարգարեն.
եթե ի գիշերաց կանխել հոգի իմ,
զի ավելի հաճոյ է Այ. փառաբան
ութիւնն գիշերոյն քան զտուըն[ջ]են:

Fragment, p. 2:

որպէս եւ վերագոյն ասացաք
նաեւ հոգեկիր մարգարեիցն բազ
ում անգամ ի գիշերի լինեին յ
այտնութիւնքն որպէս եւ Դ
անիեղ ասէ. եթե տեսանէի ի տե
սլեան գիշերոյ նոյնպէս եւ
մա --- առիթ --- անգամ եւ ա
յղոց մարգարեից.
վասն զի լոյս էր հզ[աւր] --- իք քո իսկ
լոյս զգալուստն Քի. կոչի
--- ութիւն աւետարանաւ
կարգեաւ ամբարիշտն եւ այդ
բարձցի ամբ. Այս զխափան
ումն կռապաշտութենն եւ սա
տանայի ասէ. ի խաչելութեն
ն Քի. եւ յարութենն զոր եւ Դ
աւիթ ասէ. թշնամոյն զայն պ
ակասեց
Տէր բարձր եւ բազուկ քո հզո[ր]:

The following fragments that have come down to us from the miscellany under discussion are seven sheets (fourteen pages) and contain an extensive part of the *Regulation of the Translations of the Holy Scripture* by Epiphan of Cyprus [Epiphanius of Salamis], which has interesting information on Aquila, Symmachus of Samaria, and Theodotion. There are also details on the Hexapla created on the basis of translations of the Holy Scriptures and their classification by Vorogines [Origen] in Jericho and Emmaus. There is also an almost complete list of the Roman emperors of the second and the third centuries, from Hadrian (117–138) to Decius (249–250), which briefly lists the events that occurred during their reigns that have significance for the history of the Christian church. The complete text of this work of Epiphan, with a section dedicated to the activity of seventy translators (which is a part of the beginning), has been preserved in the most ancient paper manuscript (981) preserved in Maštocʻ Matenadaran. Our fragments and this complete manuscript provide an opportunity to prepare the full text of this remarkable work in translation for publication. It must be noted that this work from Cyprus, abridged and edited, has found its place in the miscellany called *Commentary on Psalms and Tonapatchar* by Vardan Arewelcʻi. As an exemplar we publish one bifolium (see fig. 23).

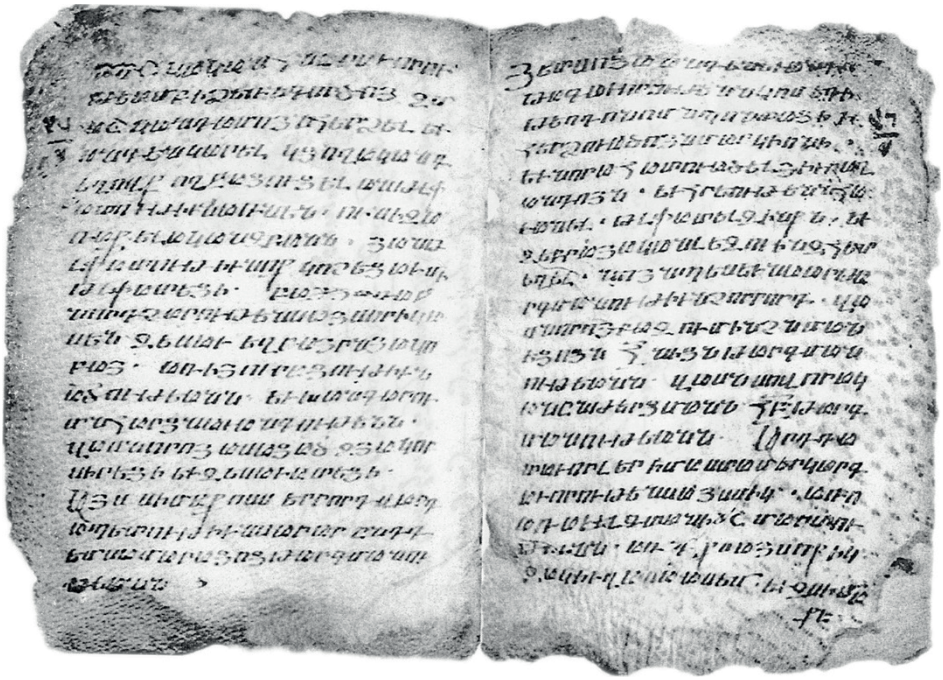


Fig. 23.

14. (N.M.D., No. 11, p. 198)

Letter

Among the Armenian fragments from Damascus, this is the only one written on paper. It is a fragment of a letter; the upper part as well as the left-hand edge (for a width of 2–3 letters) have been lost. The fragment contains nine lines written in a dialect and in cursive scripts developed in Cilician Armenia for official records.

The letter writer is an Armenian feudal lord who has serfs under his control. The letter appears to be addressed to a high-ranking clergyman. It touches upon a dispute related to irrigation, which occurred between the letter writer and the serfs who cultivated the lands of the addressee. The letter writer – assuring the addressee of his respect and love and indicating their common economic interests – hopes that the argument will be settled, perhaps on more favourable terms than before. We provide the transcription and the photograph (see fig. 24).

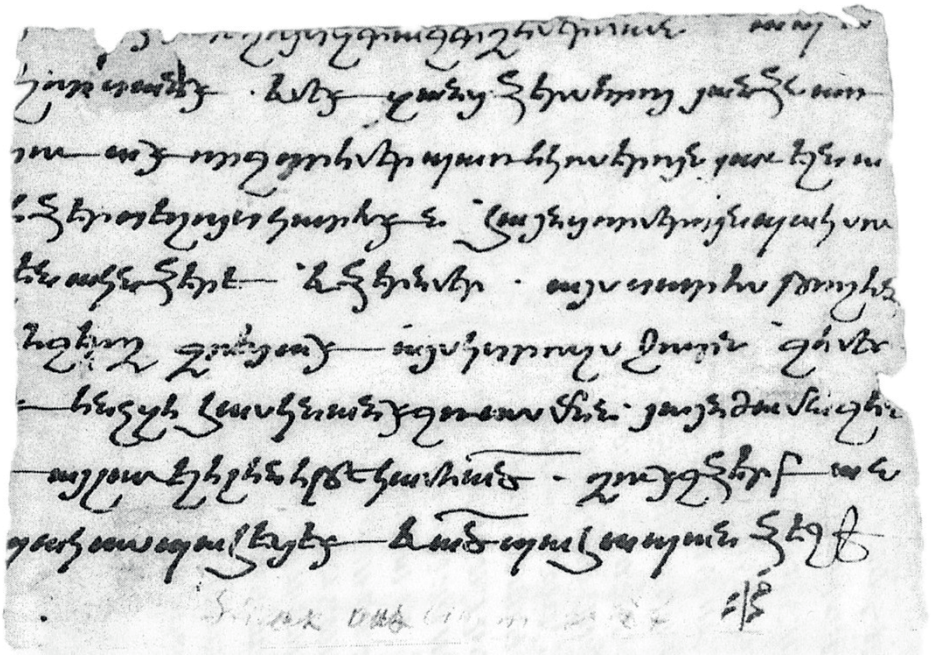


Fig. 24.

--- տեղոյտ զերա՞ զերդ ի մեր տան ապա
--- ել որ տանք. եւ մեք վանց ձեր սիրոյ յանձն առ
[աք] տուաք որ զոր ի մեր պառիկոսերոյն յաւելնա
--- ի ձեր տեղոյտ կարիքն, հայնց որ մերոցն պակսու
--- էն ակն ձեր է եւ ձերն մեր. այս տարիս թողի ձ
--- ի զերդ գրեցաք այս կտրողս ջուրն զի մեք
--- ք ինչվի հասկնանք զռասմնն. յայն ժամն զին
--- այլ ավելի լինի թէ կամի Ա[ստուա]ծ, դուք զձեր բան
[ան]պակաս պահեցէք եւ Ա[ստուա]ծ պահապան ձեզ:

***

The Armenian fragments of the National Museum in Damascus, as we have said, consist of small fragments of fourteen ancient texts. However, they contribute considerably to Armenian palaeography and provide useful material for the task of academically publishing the Holy Scripture. They supplement our knowledge of the memorials of the Golden Age of Armenian translational literature. Their charm, nevertheless, is increased by the probability that, among these fragments that have come down to us, there are also sacred relics of the torn and scattered manuscript treasures of the wealthy library of the fortress of Rumkale, which was an outstanding centre of medieval Armenian culture.

Unpublished exemplars of block-printed Arabic amulets from the Qubbat al-khazna

Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (Sapienza University of Rome)

Scholarship is not immune to clichés.[1]

The recurrent cliché[2] about block prints is that they all come from Egypt, a region that has also been considered in the scientific literature as the only region of production of other objects, such as glass weights.[3] However, for both glass weights and block prints, growing evidence points to a variety of provenances that go beyond the borders of Egypt and stretch from Iran to al-Andalus.

The two Syrian block-printed amulets I will discuss here are currently at the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul.[4] They attest to a further area of production of Arabic block-printed amulets: Syria. The majority of the known documents found in Damascus are, in fact, linked to Bilād al-Shām (Greater

1 I wish to thank Konrad Hirschler (Berlin) and Lutz Ilisch (Tübingen), always willing to discuss both numismatic and non-numismatic topics, and Julia Gonnella and Nicoletta Fazio (Museum of Islamic Art, Doha) for the pictures of the blocks for block printing.

2 In printing, "cliché" is another name for a "stereotype", that is, "a plate cast from a printing surface".

3 For the "Egyptian provenance" of glass weights, see Stanley Lane-Poole, *Catalogue of Arabic Glass Weights in the British Museum*, London: Longmans and Paris: Rollin & Feuardent 1891, xvii–xviii. For the "Egyptian provenance" of block prints, see Mark Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints from the Collection of Aziz S. Atiya", *Arabica* 55 (2008), 571. Schaefer, in his turn, considers that Egypt and Iraq were regions where block-printed amulets were produced, while Syria was the region where pilgrimage certificates were produced; see Karl R. Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing: State of the Field", in: *Historical Aspects of Printing and Publishing in Languages of the Middle East: Papers from the Third Symposium on the History of Printing and Publishing in the Languages of the Middle East, University of Leipzig, September 2008*, Geoffrey Roper, ed., Islamic Manuscripts and Books 4, Leiden: Brill 2014, 14. For pilgrimage certificates in which small parts are stamped using the technique of block printing, see Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Certificats de pèlerinage d'époque ayyoubide: Contribution à l'histoire de l'idéologie de l'Islam au temps des croisades*, Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades 19, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2006; and Şule Aksoy and Rachel Milestein, "A Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates", in: *M. Ugur Derman Festschrift: Papers Presented in Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, İrvin Cemil Schick, ed., Istanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi 2000, 101–134.

4 For the difficulties in accessing the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum's collections in the past, see Konrad Hirschler, "Review of Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Gouvernance et liberalité de Saladin d'après les données inédites de six documents arabes* (avec un appendice de Jean Richard), Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2015", *Der Islam* 93, no. 1 (2016), 286.

Syria),[5] and it is therefore possible to hypothesise a local Syrian production for the two block prints I present here.[6] While there are only two of them, these witnesses from Damascus significantly enlarge the horizons in which this kind of material is attested in the Arabic world.

Block printing is a technique – used before print with movable types – rooted in the use of seals in ancient China in around 2000 BCE, where they were first employed to make impressions in clay. Later on, in the third century CE, seals were used to stamp other flat and soft material (e.g. paper, leather, or textiles). The Chinese thus arrived at xylography by way of adjusting, improving, and enlarging the sphere of use of seals – and their contents – to a variety of media. The point of connection between this Far Eastern technique and the Arab-Islamic world is Central Asia during the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, where the political and religious connections with China and Buddhism offered the context for an exchange of techniques as well. Both the marriage between a Samanid ruler and a

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5 On the "primarily Damascene" nature of the Qubba material, see François Déroche, "In the Beginning: Early Qurʾans from Damascus", in: *The Art of the Qurʾan: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, eds., Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery 2016, 64. I would like to recall here the case of the Koran of Amājūr, a third/ninth-century Koran that Amājūr, the governor of Syria in 256–265/870–877, endowed to an institution in Ṣūr (Tyre), which was preserved in the Qubbat al-khazna of the Great Mosque in Damascus. The Koran of Amājūr has been dismembered: nowadays the bulk of its folios (242 folios) are in Istanbul while other single folios are preserved in various Eastern and Western public and private collections. For the three folios of the Koran of Amājūr and for other Koranic fragments from the Qubba preserved at the Museum of Calligraphy (*Matḥaf al-khaṭṭ*) in Damascus, see Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Frammenti di manoscritti arabi: Una conoscenza frammentaria", in: *Frammenti di un discorso storico: Per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, Caterina Tristano, ed., Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo 2019, 268–275 and figs. 2–4. For other fragments seemingly coming from Tyre, see Gideon Bohak's contribution in this volume.

6 The only other known group of documents in the Qubba material closely linked to Syria, and Damascus in particular, are the pilgrimage certificates, some of which, probably not by chance, include block-printed elements (see below). On the other hand, it cannot be completely excluded that these amulets, found in the Qubbat al-khazna of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, could have been produced in Egypt – or elsewhere – and then travelled to Syria. There are indeed such "travelling witnesses" in the Qubba. These include some Koranic fragments in Maghribi script, which originate from the western part of the Dār al-Islām – see François Déroche, "Deux fragments coraniques maghrébins anciens au Musée des arts turc et islamique d'Istanbul", *Revue des études islamiques* 59 (1991), 229–235; some fragments that came from the Latin West – see Serena Ammirati, "The Latin Fragments from the Qubbat al-Khazna of Damascus: A Preliminary Palaeographical and Textual Survey", in: *Palaeography between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome* (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, 119 and pl. 10; Coptic fragments, probably brought to Damascus from Jerusalem – see Alin Suciu, "A Bohairic Fragment of the Acts of Matthew in the City of the Priests and Other Coptic Fragments from the Genizah of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus", *Le Muséon* 131 (2018), 261–262; and the striking case of the pages of a Bible printed in London in 1830 – Ammirati, "The Latin Fragments", 100.

Chinese princess and the alliance of the court of Bukhara with a powerful Buddhist governor in the first half of the fourth/tenth century offered the cultural and material background for the transfer of block-printing knowledge.[7]

Thanks to the research carried over the last decade or so, the total number of block-printed texts known amounts to about a hundred witnesses,[8] half of which are preserved in Vienna in the papyrus collection of the Austrian National Library. The Viennese collection is formed essentially of Egyptian materials, and this explains the predominance of Egypt in the study of block prints thus far.[9] However, as Karl Schaefer pointed out in 2006, "as more block prints come to light, the likelihood increases that their geographic origins become more varied".[10]

Block-printed amulet 1

Shelf-mark

Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, YAZMA in bundle no. 13327 (see fig. 1).

Description

Paper,[11] 21 × 17 cm, red and black ink for the text, some red watercoloured areas (now faded). Shows a complex architecture that combines both text and images. The script is multi-oriented, of varied size and style. There are clear traces of folding (vertical and horizontal).

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7 See Arianna D'Ottone, "A Far Eastern Type of Print Technique for Islamic Amulets from the Mediterranean: An Unpublished Example", *Scripta: An International Journal of Codicology and Palaeography* 6 (2013), 73.

8 Karl R. Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms: Medieval Arabic Block Printed Amulets in American and European Libraries and Museums*, Leiden: Brill 2006, contains seventy; Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", has eight; D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type", has two; Sebastián Gaspariño García, "Amuletos de al-Andalus", last updated 28 June 2014, http://www.amuletosdealandalus.com, has four (P34, TP1-1, TP1-2, and TP1-3).

9 Established in 1883 as the private collection of Archduke Rainer of Austria, who purchased some thousand pieces coming from the excavations at Arsinoe, the Vienna collection of papyri is now the largest in the world; see Sobhi Bouderbala, Sylvie Denoix, and Matt Malczycki, eds., *New Frontiers of Arabic Papyrology*, Islamic History and Civilization 44, Leiden: Brill 2012, x.

10 Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 41 n. 1. For block prints from al-Andalus, see *supra*. For block prints from Eastern Iran, see Ramsey Fendall, *Islamic Calligraphy*, Exhibition Catalogue 27, London: Sam Fogg Gallery 2003, nr. 22.

11 The material evidence currently available attests that block prints were made on paper, however two block-printed amulets on parchment have been reported in the museum of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and in the Heidelberger Papyrussammlung of the Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg; see Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 230 and 234; and D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type", 69. Unfortunately, both have been lost.



Fig. 1: The first block-printed amulet. (Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, inv. no. 13327.)

Illustrations

At the top centre: an arch, below which one reads *ṣifat al-rawḍa* (representation of the garden);[12] on the left: the minbar, the Prophet's pulpit; on the right: the three

12 For the use of the word *ṣifa* employed to describe the images and linked to the early, unillustrated manuscript production of the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt* text, see Jan Just Witkam, "The Battle of Images: Mekka vs. Medina in the Iconography of the Manuscripts of al-Jazūlī's *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt*", in: *Theoretical Approaches to the Transmission and Edition of Oriental Manuscripts: Proceedings of a Symposium held in Istanbul, March 28–30, 2001*, Judith Pfeiffer and

tombs of the Prophet and his companions Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. This arrangement is traditional, and – in the words of Jan Just Witkam – is linked to a "well-known Prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) reported by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in his Musnad: 'Whatever is between my grave and my pulpit, is one of the gardens of Paradise, and my pulpit is by my basin'".[13] The last part of this tradition ("and my pulpit is by my basin") "refers to an eschatological concept, the Prophet's basin being the meeting place on the Day of Resurrection, or it may refer to the basin in Paradise".[14]

The use on amulets of religious images, or the use of images linked to popular religious beliefs, is instrumental in reaching the highest number of people – both literate and illiterate – through meaningful symbols. In particular, these illustrations are typical of Maghribī manuscripts containing the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt* by al-Jazūlī,[15] a collection of blessings on the Prophet Muhammad.[16] However, the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt* manuscripts are much later than this Damascus block-printed amulet, as al-Jazūlī died between 870/1465 and 875/1470. The question is, then, what inspired the artists who illustrated those manuscripts[17] and how did the iconographic set employed in this block-printed amulet travel, both in time and space, from seventh/thirteenth-century Syria to the Maghreb of the ninth/fifteenth-century.[18]

Manfred Kropp, eds., Beiruter Texte und Studien 111, Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission 2007, 72. For the *ṣifat al-Rasūl* on the calligraphic panels of the Ottoman period, see Michael Cooperson, "Images Without Illustrations: The Visual Imagination in Classical Arabic Biography", in: *Islamic Art and Literature*, Oleg Grabar and Cynthia Robinson, eds., Princeton: Markus Wiener 2001, 17.

13 Witkam, "Battle", 72.

14 Witkam, "Battle", 73.

15 See Mohamed Bencheneb, "Al-Djazūlī, Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. Abī Bakr al-Djazūlī al-Samlālī", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, Leiden: Brill 1991, 527.

16 See Jan Just Witkam, *Vroomheid en activism in een Islamitisch Gebedenboek: De Geschiedenis van de "Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt" van al-Ǧazūlī*, Leiden: Legatum Warnerianum Universiteitbibliotheek Leiden 2002, 73–92; Witkam "Battle", 71–73; Jan Just Witkam, "Images of Makkah and Madinah in an Islamic Prayer Book / Ṣuwar Makka wa-l-Madīna kamā zaharat fī Kitāb li-l-Adʾiya al-islāmiyya", *Ḥaditth al-Dār* 30 (2009), 27–2 (English) and 28–33 (Arabic); Farouk Yahya, *Magic and Divination in Malay Illustrated Manuscripts*, Arts and Archaeology of the Islamic World 6, Leiden: Brill 2016, 15. It seems relevant to note that in Eastern copies of the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt* the illustrations represent, instead, the holy cities of Mecca and Medina; see Witkam, "Battle", 70.

17 For the Eastern illustrated manuscripts of al-Jazūlī's text that show the flat projection of Mecca and Medina, Witkam has hypothesised that an iconographical source of inspiration was an illustrated pilgrimage guide, such as the Persian *Futūḥ al-Ḥaramayn* by Muḥyī al-Dīn Lārī (d. 933/1526–1527), or some Iznik tiles; see Witkam, "Battle", 74. For an early illustration of the Masjid al-Ḥaram on a marble slab coming from the Maqām Ibrāhīm in Mosul, see Vincenzo Strika, "A Kaʿba Picture in the Iraq Museum", *Sumer* 32 (1976), 195–201 and figs. 1–10. For the depiction of Mecca and Medina in Ottoman tiles, see Charlotte Maury, "Depictions of the Haramayn on Ottoman Tiles", in: *The Hajj: Collected Essays*, Venetia Porter and Liana Saif, eds., Research Publication 193, London: The Trustees of the British Museum 2013, 143–159.

18 For the dating of this block-printed amulet to the seventh/thirteenth century, see below. For the influence, in their turn, of early Maghribī manuscripts of the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt* on later Ottoman illustrated codices, see Sabiha Göloğlu, "Depicting the Islamic Holy Sites: Mecca,

Considering the presence of Maghribī communities in Damascus in the seventh/thirteenth century, it is possible to hypothesise that the Syrian block-printed amulets might have been the iconographical source for the illustrations of al-Jazūlī's text in the western part of the Arabic lands.[19] This hypothesis seems to be strengthened by the fact that illustrated pilgrimage scrolls, such as those found in the Damascus Qubba, "served as source for depictions in many other media including ceramic tiles, pilgrimage manuals and biographies of the Prophet made in later centuries".[20] It appears, then, that such amulets are not only interesting for their printing technique, nor just for their role within magic and devotion,[21] but also as the source of important iconographical innovations.[22]

The reuse of this specific set of images or symbols – which first appeared on block-printed amulets – to illustrate al-Jazūlī's *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* is not completely surprising if one considers the link between the magical nature of the amulets and the property attributed to al-Jazūlī's text: in Morocco, for example, it is believed that owning a copy of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* brings luck.[23] In Burkina Faso, the Zara community still uses the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* to contact spirits – jinn – and in Ghana, copies of al-Jazūlī's text are employed in magical contexts.[24] As Kitty Johnson has noted:

> Symbols deployed in the Lilly *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*'s painted panels represented the power of letters, which in turn could take on an abstract and symbolic meaning. Conversely the designs also would have help strengthen the faith of those closely acquainted with Islamic pietistic practices and the Arabic language.[25]

Medina, and Jerusalem in Late Ottoman Illustrated Prayer Books", in: *15th International Congress of Turkish Art*, Michele Bernardini, Alessandro Taddei, and Michael Douglas Sheridan, eds., Ankara: Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2018, 327. This constitutes further proof of the circulation and reception, beyond geographical borders, of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* illustrations.

19 See Louis Pouzet, "Maghrébins à Damas au VII[e]/XIII[e] siècle", *Bulletin d'études orientales* 28 (1975), 167–199; and Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VII[e]/XIII[e] siècle: Vie et structure religieuse d'une métropole islamique*, Beirut: Dar Machreq 1988.

20 Sheila Blair, "Inscribing the Hajj", in: *The Hajj: Collected Essays*, Venetia Porter and Liana Saif, eds., Research Publication 193, London: The Trustees of the British Museum 2013, 163.

21 See Finbarr Barry Flood, *Technologies de dévotion dans les arts de l'Islam: Pèlerins, reliques et copies*, Paris: Hazan-Musée du Louvre 2019.

22 For an inverse movement of the manuscript material found in the Qubba – from the Maghreb to Bilād al-Shām – see Konrad Hirschler's contribution in this volume.

23 See Witkam, "Battle", 70.

24 For an instructive comparison between medieval block-printed amulets and similar texts produced in the modern period and the continuity between the two, see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 567–568.

25 Kitty Johnson, "An Amuletic Manuscript: Baraka and Nyama in a Sub-Saharan African Prayer Manual", in: *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, Christiane Gruber, ed., Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2010, 268.

Text

On each of the borders of the amulet there is a Koranic quote from *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* (Q112:1–4), in fully vocalised *naskh*. This quote contains the declaration of the oneness of God, and it is one of the most often employed Koranic quotes on both magical and sacred inscriptions.[26] This frequent use may be due to the fact that its recitation is equal to reciting a whole third of the Koran.[27] Sura 112, more than others, insists on the fact that God is the true and ultimate source of help and aid.[28]

In the centre of the amulet is the inscription *wa-lillāh al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā* (To Allah belong the best names). This is the beginning of a Koranic quote (sūrat al-Aʿrāf, Q7:180) that continues in the text box below (see line 1 here), which also contains other Koranic references as well as quotes from well-known prayers (Ar. *duʿā*, see line 2) and invocations:[29]

1	**So, invoke Him by them.**[30] In the name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate. **Indeed, I have turned**	١ فادعوه بها[31] بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم اللهم انى وجهت
2	**my face** toward You, o God! I delegated my command to You, o God! There is no	٢ وجهي[32] اليك اللهم انى فوّضت امري اليك اللهم لا
3	refuge and no escape from You except to You. O ʿUday, when I am struggling,	٣ ملجا ولا منجا منك الا اليك يا عدي عند شدتي و
4	o my solace, when I am lonely. O the one who remembers me, when I am exiled, o […]	٤ يا مؤنسي في وحدتي ويا حافظي في غربتي يا [...]

[26] For an index useful to determine the frequency of sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ (and other Koranic quotes) in block-printed charms, see Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 241; and for verses 1–4 of Sura 112 in two other specimens, see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 543–544.

[27] See E.A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions*, New York: Dover 1978, 60–61.

[28] See Francesca Leoni, "Sacred Words, Sacred Power: Qurʾanic and Pious Phrases as Sources of Healing and Protection", in: *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural*, exhibition catalogue, Francesca Leoni, ed., Oxford: Ashmolean Museum 2016, 57. What some researchers consider an anti-Christian tendency in Sura 112 is instead interpreted as an anti-pagan tendency by Mun'im Sirry, *Scriptural Polemics: The Qurʾān and Other Religions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014, 133.

[29] On the religious contents of block-printed amulets and their direct and oblique references to the Koran, see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 565. On the link between the Koran and magic (*sihr*) and the use of invocations containing a number of Koranic quotes in talismanic practices, see Constant Hamès, ed., *Coran et talismans: Textes et pratiques magiques en milieu musulman*, Paris: Karthala 2007.

[30] The use of bold font signals that the text is a quote.

[31] Q7:180.

[32] Q6:79.

These four lines of text are followed by a "magic square" which consists of a grid of thirty-six squares (see table 1). Each cell, with chamfered corners, contains the invocation of one of Allah's "best names" in a vocative form. The number of "best names" was actually far higher, sometimes even reaching the figure of 500, but as Venetia Porter has noted, "at various times selections amounting to 99 were made by various authorities"[33] and indeed, according to a well-known Prophetic tradition attributed to Abū Hurayra, Muhammad said that "God has ninety-nine names, one hundred less one, and whoever enumerates them shall enter paradise".[34] Those names are frequently referred to by their numerical value in magical squares, so their arrangement in this grid is not unusual, and can also be found on other block-printed amulets.[35]

From a linguistic point of view, it is possible to note the use of the letter *ṭāʾ* instead of *dāl* in *yā majīd* and that of the letter *ḍād* instead of *ẓāʾ* in *yā ʿaẓīm*. From an orthographical point of view, the inversion of some letters in the word *mawlā* is remarkable, probably caused by the complexity of carving the text in negative on the stamping-block.[36] From a "typographic" point of view, it is interesting to observe that, in *yā wakīl*, the final letter looks like a *rāʾ*, but the missing upper part of the letter *lām* is probably due to a lack of ink – this same flaw can sometimes appear in modern printed books.

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33 See Venetia Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum*, Research Publication 160, London: The Trustees of the British Museum 2011, 130. The names of God feature large in the work of al-Būnī (seventh/thirteenth century), sufi and "magician", who devoted an entire section of his *Shams al-Maʿārif* to their discussion, as well as dedicating an entire other separate work to them. On al-Būnī and his works, see Noah Gardiner, "Forbidden Knowledge? Notes on the Production, Transmission, and Reception of the Major Works of Aḥmad al-Būnī", *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12 (2012), 81–143. On magic in Islam, see also Liana Saif, "From *Ġayat al-ḥakīm* to *Šams al-maʿārif*: Ways of Knowing and Paths of Power in Medieval Islam", in: "Islamicate Occultism: New Perspectives", Matthew S. Melvin-Koushki and Noah Gardiner, eds., special issue, *Arabica* 64 (2017), 297–345.

34 See Venetia Porter, Liana Saif, and Emily Savage-Smith, "Medieval Islamic Amulets, Talismans and Magic", in: *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, vol. 1, *From the Prophet to the Mongols*, Finbarr Barry Flood and Gulru Necipoğlu, eds., Oxford: Wiley Blackwell 2017, 536.

35 See, for example, the specimen in Cambridge University Library MS T-S NS 306.27, given in Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 94–96 and pl. 13.

36 For a case of two letters engraved in retrograde on a glass weight, produced from a metal mould engraved in negative, see Paul Balog, "Contributions to the Arabic Metrology and Coinage", *Annali: Istituto italiano di numismatica* 27/28 (1980–1981), 116.

Table 1: The magic square containing names of God, from the block-printed amulet, with a translation.

يا مجيط [كذا، ليا مجيد]	يا ملك	يا رحيم	يا رحمن	يا رب	يا لله [كذا]
يا واسع	يا بصير	يا تواب	يا حكيم	يا عليم	يا وكيل
يا اله [كذا]	يا شاطر	يا [...]و	يا كافي	يا سمع [كذا، يا لسميع]	يا بديع
يا حاي	يا باسط	يا قابض	يا حليم	يا عفو	يا واحد / واجد
يا حميد	يا غني	يا ولي	يا عضيم [كذا، يا لعظيم]	يا علي	يا قيوم
البصير	لاو [كذا] يا نعم	يا نعم الم	يا سريع	يا قائم	يا وهاب

Oh Most Glorious	Oh King	Oh Merciful	Oh Compassionate	Oh Lord	Oh God
Oh Far-Reaching	Oh All-Seeing	Oh Forgiving	Oh Wise	Oh Omniscient	Oh Trustee
Oh God	Oh Most Clever	Oh […]	Oh Most Sufficient	Oh Hearer	Oh Incomparable
Oh Living	Oh Outstretcher	Oh Restrainer	Oh Slow to Anger	Oh Pardoner	Oh Only One/ Perceiver
Oh Praise Worthy	Oh Independent	Oh Protector	Oh Supreme	Oh High	Oh Everlasting
All-Seeing	/ Lord, Oh Excellent	Oh Excellent /	Oh Quick [to Contentement]	Oh Stable	Oh Constant Giver

At the bottom, five or so incomplete lines of text contain a request formula, which is common in this kind of material: "I ask You by the truth of these names …". This is then followed by a request to protect the wearer of the amulet from diseases (*amrāḍ*) and other ailments.[37]

[37] On the scant attention paid by scholarship to prayers and invocations and on the petitionary nature of a text "intended to persuade God to intervene on behalf of the supplicant on

5	I ask You, by the truth of these names, You have to send away, from	اسألك اللهم بحق هذه الأسماء عليك ان اصرف عن	٥
6	who carries[38] this text of mine, all the diseases and illnesses[39] and	حامل كتابي هذا جميع الامراض والاسقام ومن	٦
7	all inflammations of the skin (erysipelas),[40] ulcerations, pains, accidents	الجملة [كذا] الحمرة والسعفة والحُرقة والعرضة و	٧
8	and weird things and from who is sick […] …	الغريبة ومن وجع [...] الا [...] والضد عير وا	٨
9	[…] against everything […][41]	لعشق اليك [...] اليك على كل شيء	٩

The comparison of this fragment with other specimens is useful in order to propose a possible date. The script in the margins compares closely to that found in a block-printed fragment in the Austrian National Library (A. Ch. 12.149),[42] which has been dated, on palaeographic evidence, to the fourth/tenth century by Karabacek. This is compatible with the observation that the script employed in the text of the block print. This shows a total absence of diacritics, is close to the script found in Korans of the first Abbasid period (second/eighth–fourth/tenth centuries).[43] An even closer comparison can be done, both for the document's shape and for the script, with ancient Korans in scroll form, found in the Damascus depository.[44] Last, but not least, I must note that first/seventh-century Korans,[45] as well as engraved gems and glass discs of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries,[46] show a similar form of the final *yāʾ* that underlines the preceding letter (or almost the

specific issues", see Guy Burak, "The Section on Prayers, Invocations, Unique Qualities of the Qurʾan, and Magic Squares in the Palace Library Inventory", *Muqarnas*, supplement 14 (2019), 343.

38 The name of the beneficiary is never mentioned explicitly but rather is designated through a neutral expression; see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 569.

39 For the rhyming pairs of afflictions in block-printed amulets or their enumerations, see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 569.

40 This kind of ailment is mentioned by Ibn Dāniyāl in his list of amulets effective against various inconveniences; see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 567.

41 The reading ends here since the witness is damaged.

42 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*.

43 See D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type", 72–73.

44 See Solange Ory, "Un nouveau type de *muṣḥaf*: Inventaire des corans en rouleaux de provenance damascaine conservés à Istanbul", *Revue des études islamiques* 33 (1965), 87–149.

45 See Asma Hilali, "The Writing Process in a 7th Century Qurʾān Manuscript: The Upper Text of the 'Sanaa Palimpsest' as Example", in: *Palaeography Between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome* (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, 144.

46 See Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 23 and 38 n. 56; Alexander Morton, *A Catalogue of Early Islamic Glass Stamps in the British Museum*, London: British Museum 1985, no. 383 (also illustrated in Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 23).

entire word) as in this amulet (l. 4; l. 9, last word). On the other hand, the very fluent *naskh* with *sukūn* and vowels at the top of the text suggests a more recent date for that text, and it is a meaningful clue for assessing a date, since it represents a *terminus post quem*. Based on this latest element, and considering that the use of the angular script without diacritical dots – often employed for this kind of magical objects also in connection with popular beliefs[47] – and all the old-looking graphical features and devices relate to an antiquarian taste employed on purpose to confer to the amulet a solemn allure, I tentatively propose to date this amulet to the seventh/thirteenth century.

As for the visible fold lines, it seems possible to tentatively suggest that the amulet, once folded, reached a size of 4 × 3 cm, since there is 4 cm space between the four apparent vertical lines, and the horizontal lines appear every 3 cm. The fact that this amulet, as well as the next to be discussed and many others, were folded is linked to the fact that they were usually put in metal cases and worn.[48]

Block-printed amulet 2

Shelf-mark

Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, YAZMA in bundle no. 13327 (see figs. 2 and 3).

Description

Paper, 35 × 14 cm, red ink and some remnants of a handwritten upper part in black ink. Combines a figurative part on top, text in the middle, and a box of "magical connected letters" at the bottom.

Illustrations

A *khamsa* (palm-shaped amulet)[49] is depicted in the top centre, within an architectural frame made of arches from which lamps are hanging. The top right has *bismillāh*. Under the arches: on the right, below a lamp, the word *miḥrāb* […]; and below a pointed dome, *al-ḥamd lillāh* (?); in the centre: *al-kaff* (the palm) – *miḥr/āb* split in two parts – *al-dāw*[…].

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47 See Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 564; on the connection between "antiquity" and "efficacy", see Flood, *Technologies des dévotion*, 118-123.

48 For an example of a folded block-printed amulet and its case, see D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type".

49 See Cyril Glassé, *The New Encyclopedia of Islam*, Walnut Creek: Rowman & Littlefield 2003, 169.



Fig. 2: The second block-printed amulet. (Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, inv. no. 13327.)



Fig. 3: The reverse of the second block-printed amulet. (Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, inv. no. 13327.)

It must be noted that the *khamsa* is a left hand, as the thumb is on the right, and we see its nails. This is a significant detail since, as el-Aswad has pointed out, "the power of the left hand is always somewhat occult and illegitimate; it inspires terror and revulsion … Even if it is not betrayed by its appearance, the hand of sorcery is always the cursed hand."[50]

The palm of the *khamsa* contains a lengthy inscription, which starts from the thumb with a *basmala*. The baseline which connects the letters is a recurrent device on magical objects such as engraved gems, magic bowls, and bronze animals. This type of script was studied by Paul Casanova (1861–1926)[51] and he named it *coufique linéaire* or linear Kufic. Three key features of this script have been pointed out: "the shape of the letters" (especially *hāʾ*, *ʿayn*, and *ḥāʾ*), "the continuous base line and its appearance in positive and negative".[52] The final aspect seems particularly interesting since, as Venetia Porter has stressed, it can be considered as "a way of further obfuscating the text and rendering it more 'magical'".[53] Indeed, "individual letters cannot easily be differentiated within the lines, and even when there are breaks, the meaning is generally unclear".[54]

Below the *khamsa* there is a block of text that starts with a *basmala* and that is followed by the usual formula of requesting God for protection. Unfortunately, the paper is torn and the text is not complete.

1	In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate[55] […]	١ بسم الله الرحمن الر[حيم ...]
2	Oh God, I ask You – Oh God – to intensify Your glory and to raise Your […]	٢ اللهم انى اسألك يا الله بعز عزك بطول [...]
3	power at the most of Your strength confirming Your support […]	٣ تطول شديد قوتك بتأكيد توكيد [ك ...]
4	[?] seeks refuge of your word for protecting him […]	٤ ك يعيذ نفاذ انفاذ كلمتك [كذا] لتحميه [...]

50 See el-Sayed el-Aswad, "Magic Bodily Members: Human Eye and Hand, Motif D990", in: *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature: A Handbook*, Jane Garry and Hasan El-Shamy, eds., New York: M.E. Sharpe 2005, 144.

51 See F. Pouillon, ed., *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*, Paris: IISM-Karthala 2012, 197.

52 Venetia Porter, "The Use of the Arabic Script in Magic", in: *The Development of Arabic as a Written Language* (*Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 40, supplement), Michael C.A. Macdonald, ed., Oxford: Archaeopress 2010, 132.

53 Porter "Use", 133. On the "characters" employed in magical context in the Western Middle Ages, see Benoît Grévin and Julien Véronèse, "Les 'caractères' magiques au Moyen Âge (XII^{e}–XIV^{e} siècle)", *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 162 (2004), 305–379.

54 Porter, *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 177.

55 For the *basmala* in amulets as an initial apostrophe to God that can be replaced by the *takbir* or a simple vocative (*yā Allāh*), see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 569.

5	[…] your son […]	٥ [...] حيد وحـ[...] ابنك بتجيل تجليل تهليل [...]
6	for the glory of grace and the perfection of Your Lordship […]	٦ بجلال جمال وكمال ربوبيتك [...؟] سيا ض[...]
7	**for the fulfilment of the forgiveness of the protection of Your mercy** […]	٧ برضوان غفران امان رحمتك بتقديس بعض [...]
8	**for the excellence of the growth and the height of Your status** I ask you to heal the bearer [*of this text of mine* …]	٨ بِسُمُوِ نمو وعلو رفعتك[56] اسألك ان تشفي حامل [كتابي هذا...]

At the bottom there is a rectangle formed of a text with connecting letters – a quote of the *āyat al-kursī*, that is, verse 255 from sūrat al-Baqara – framed by a line of elegant, cursive script containing the *shahāda*.

1	In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate – Allah, there is no deity except Him [*the Ever-Living*]	١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الله لا اله الا هو [الحي]
2	the Sustainer. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the [*hea-*]	٢ القيوم لا تأُخذه سنة ولا نوم له ما في ا [لسـ]
3	vens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede [*with him*]	٣ موات وما في الارض من ذا الذي يشفع [عنده ...]

Considering the presence of diacritical points and of additional diacritical signs, which distinguish homographic letters, as well as the use of the *naskh* type of script, I would suggest that this amulet dates from the seventh/thirteenth or eighth/fourteenth century.

As for the size of the folded amulet, the fold lines which are especially apparent on the back suggest a square form of 4 × 4 cm.

Block prints in the Dār al-Islām: Some notes

It is well known that in the mid-fifteenth century Gutenberg developed a printing technique with movable type. In Europe, this technique was used in 1514 to print the first ever printed book in Arabic, the *Kitāb ṣalāt al-sawāʾī*, a book of prayers

[56] The words in bold font belong to the "Prayer of the arrow of the night to the Lord of the Time" (*duʿāʾ salm al-layl li-ṣāḥib al-zamān*).

which was published in Fano (Italy) by Gregorio Gregori.[57] As for Arabic-script book production in Islamic lands, the technique was only introduced in the twelfth/eighteenth century.[58]

But the Dār al-Islām had used the technique of block printing from the third/ninth or fourth/tenth century onwards, and it is thus attested there long before Marco Polo returned from Asia in the thirteenth century CE. It is not an Arab invention, however, since the Arab-Islamic world acquired this technique in Central Asia – from where they also obtained the technique of paper-making – through contact with the Chinese. In China itself, block prints had long been used, in connection with the highly developed art of making paper.[59]

We have some information about the people who must have been involved in both the production and the sale of amulets of this type, thanks to sources from both the eastern and western lands of the Dār al-Islām, through texts by Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī (fl. fourth/tenth century) and Vaṣṣāf (655/1257–729/1329) from Iran, and by Ibn al-Abbār (595/1199–658/1260) from Spain or north Africa, as well as Egyptian sources, with the writings of al-Ābī (d. 430/1030) and Ibn Dāniyāl (d. 710/1310).[60] In the Islamic world the technique of block printing is attested by a variety of documents ranging from amulets, charms, or talismans to pilgrimage (hajj and *ʿumra*) certificates, and from paper money to the Koran.[61]

When it comes to block prints, Damascus is known for the pilgrimage certificates which were found in the Qubba, some of which were realised using matrices for specific portions of the text.[62] These hajj certificates, in which block-printed elements can be detected, date back to the seventh/thirteenth century.[63] In connection with the printing technique and this specific type of document, often illustrated, it seems worth recalling here a modern, Shiite hajj certificate produced

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57 Although it is more likely that it was produced in Venice; see Celeste Gianni and Michele Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb ṣalāt al-sawā'i*: Protagonisti, vicende ed ipotesi intorno al primo libro arabo stampato con caratteri mobili", *Culture del testo e del documento* 13, no. 38 (2012), 131–185.

58 The first printed book with movable characters in the Arab world was a bilingual psalter in Syriac and Arabic (in Syriac letters, that is, Karshuni) produced in 1610 in Lebanon. In Ottoman Syria, the first printed books in the Arabic language and script were linked to the Antiochian patriarchate; see Ioana Feodorov, "Beginnings of Arabic Printing in Ottoman Syria (1706–1711): The Romanians' Part in Athanasius Dabbās's Achievements", *ARAM* 25, nos. 1/2 (2013), 231–260.

59 See D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type", 73.

60 See Jacob M. Landau, "Ibn Dānyāl", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, Leiden: Brill 1986, 742.

61 See Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing", 14.

62 See Sourdel and Sourdel-Thomine, *Certificats de pèlerinage*; and Aksoy and Milestein, "Collection".

63 See Sourdel and Sourdel-Thomine, *Certificats de pèlerinage*, 352 pl. 42, a pilgrimage certificate dated 622/1225; fig. 3, pilgrimage certificate no. 45 (group E), dated 634/1237; and fig. 5. The thirteenth century is a date coherent with the dating hypothesised for the two amulets presented here.

by way of lithography[64] at the end of the nineteenth or at the beginning of the twentieth century. [65]

From a chronological point of view, it is also worth stressing the importance of an early Koranic block print in the papyrus collection at the Austrian National Library, Ch. Ar. 12150. Datable to the fourth/tenth century and containing the first six verses of sūrat al-Sabāʾ (Sura 34), this turns out to be the earliest extant example of a (block-)printed Koranic text. Unlike other block prints which mix citations from the Koran, prayers, and invocations, this one contains only the Koranic text. Already in the 1894 guide to the collection, this block print was listed separately from the other talismans (nos. 929–945 and nos. 947–948).[66] Due to its fragmentary state it is not possible to determine how long the text was, but it is relevant that portions of the Koran circulated in (block-)printed form as early as the fourth/tenth century. It would be interesting to ascertain, through future discoveries, if the Viennese example represents an *unicum* or if it is possible to imagine a production of, and a market for, Koranic block-printed excerpts already in early Islamic times.

The osmosis between block-printed material, especially amulets, and Koranic manuscript production is not limited to the text, since they also share some decorative features. For example, the interlaced motif in the centre of the panel in a block-printed amulet at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession no. 1978.546.39),[67] which has an epigraphic border and pendant at the end, echoes in

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64 Lithography differs from xylography because of the material – stone for lithography and wood (or metal) for xylography – in which the text or images are carved, but these printing techniques are closely related since both share the principle of a "block" used for printing.

65 Ulrich Marzolph, "From Mecca to Mashhad: The Narrative of an Illustrated Shiite Pilgrimage Scroll from the Qajar Period", *Shangri La Working Papers in Islamic Art* 5 (2013), 1–33.

66 "Dieses Blatt gebört zu den grössten Merkwürdigkeiten der erzhezoglichen Sammlung"; Karabacek, *Papyrus*, 248. It seems inaccurate to write that these exemplars are "all amulets containing printed prayers for the protection of their bearers against various dangers they risked encountering or to which they might be exposed" (Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing", 4), since the Koran does not fit in the category of "prayers" but is singled out as being the sacred text of Islam. On the other hand, it seems important to recall that for manuscript rolls containing Koranic excerpts, Solange Ory hypothesised a talismanic function; see Ory, "Un nouveau type de *muṣḥaf*".

67 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 216–217 and pl. 54. The amulet comes from Egypt and it is part of the corpus of Fustat fragments; see Ernst J. Grube, "A Drawing of Wrestlers in the Cairo Museum of Islamic Art", *Quaderni di studi arabi* 3 (1985), 100, no. 59. A single block-printed text in Hebrew, found in the Cairo Geniza, is nowadays in Cambridge University Library, MS Or. 1080 J50; see Paul B. Fenton, "Une xylographie arabe médiévale à la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg", *Arabica* 50, no. 1 (2003), 116; and Paul B. Fenton, "Hebrew Print from 1300s", *Genizah Fragments* 3 (1983), 1–2. The fact that this exemplar was in a box containing "nothing of any interest or value" according to the view of a curator, as reported by Stefan Reif – see Stefan C. Reif, *A Jewish Archive from Old Cairo: The History of Cambridge University's Genizah Collection*, London: Routledge 2013, 242 – recalls the first impression expressed by von Soden when considering the Damascus fragments; see Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbat al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45. It seems relevant to point out that the Taylor-Schechter Geniza Collection also holds four Arabic block-printed

its oblong shape, in its pendant, and in its geometrical décor the decorated full pages of some third/ninth- and fourth/tenth-century Korans, such as Bibliothèque national de France MS Ar. 341.[68]

Until recently it was believed that the use of the technique of block printing was limited in time in the Islamic lands, since the known block-print witnesses are attributable to a span of time that goes from the ninth or tenth century CE to the fourteenth century CE, when they suddenly disappear. This chronological frame has been determined on the basis of archaeological finds from the tenth and thirteenth centuries, and thanks to palaeographic clues.[69] Karl R. Schaefer has recently again brought to the attention of scholarship an Arabic printing block, in metal, preserved at the Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow.[70] Schaefer does not comment on the date of the block, but its script can be dated to the twentieth century. To this example, it is possible to add at least two more metal blocks,[71] belonging to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha (inv. nos. MW 634.2011 and MW 635.2011), both attributed to north-west Africa during the seventeenth–nineteenth centuries (figs. 4 and 5).[72]

The chronological gap between the block-printed witnesses, dated between the ninth and the fourteenth centuries CE, and the blocks for block printing, created between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, makes one wonder about the circumstances that brought to end the production of block prints in the fourteenth century,[73] and those that brought the blocks back in use for block printing between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries.

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amulets – see Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 81–96 – and that block-printed material is thus attested in at least three (Damascus, Fustat, and Cairo) of the five major geniza and geniza-like deposits of manuscript material in the Middle East.

68 See Marie-Geneviève Guesdon and Annie Vernay-Noury, eds., *L'art du livre arabe du manuscript au livre d'artiste*, exhibition catalogue, Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France 2001, 88 n. 57.

69 See Daniel S. Richards, "Written Documents", in *Fustat Expedition, Final Report*, vol. 2, *Fustat-C*, Władysław Kubiak and George T. Scanlon, eds., Winona Lake: American Research Center in Egypt, and Eisenbrauns 1989, n. 18, for the lower limit of the tenth century. For archaeological material giving the upper limit of the thirteenth century, see Li Guo, *Commerce, Culture and Community in a Red Sea Port in the Thirteenth Century: The Arabic Documents from Quseir*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts 52, Leiden: Brill 2004. For palaeographical comparisons and dating, see Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Arabic Papyri in the University Museum in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)*, Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei: Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche 8:25, Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei 1981, 174–176 and pl. 19.

70 See Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing", 10–11 and fig. 4.

71 These two blocks are modern, like the block in Glasgow. For the medieval period, we still have to face "the near-total absence of external evidence (such as print molds, or contemporary descriptions)"; Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 574.

72 See Barry Flood, *Technologies de dévotion*, 247, figs. 48–49b (detail).

73 The disappearance of block-printed amulets has so far only been linked with economic reasons, such as the limited purchasing power of the populace; see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 573–574.



Fig. 4: Metal block for block printing. (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, inv. no. MW 634.2011.)



Fig. 5: Metal block for block printing. (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, inv. no. MW 635.2011.)

If the modern blocks just mentioned are all in metal, the material employed for the medieval blocks in use in the Islamic world is debated. In 1987 Richard Bulliet suggested that metal blocks, made of tin, were used for the black-on-white impressions, the most common, while wood would only have been used for white-on-black texts, which tend to be of larger size.[74] He also suggested another possible way of producing block prints, using a clay tablet inscribed by hand in reverse, which once dried would have been covered with a thin sheet of tin that was then pounded to force it into the grooves of the letters in the clay; this technique is reminiscent of Mesopotamian scribal practices. Another possibility, according to Bulliet, was that molten tin was simply poured into a clay mould which was inscribed in positive.

In 2008 Mark Muehlhaeusler suggested that the technique employed may be comparable to those of numismatic die-engravers,[75] making reference to a lead model which would have been used "to produce a mould of fine clay, with which the final die of bronze or iron was cast".[76] There is, in fact, more than one connection between block prints and numismatics. Inspired by the Chinese practice, the Ilkhanid Gaykhātū (r. 690/1291–694/1295) introduced banknotes in his land:[77] a paper currency circulated in Iran for about two months in the autumn of the year 693/1294.[78]

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74 See Richard W. Bulliet, "Medieval Arabic Ṭarsh: A Forgotten Chapter in the History of Printing", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107, no. 3 (1987), 435.

75 See Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 563–564.

76 See Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 563. However, the archaeological evidence of a lead model die referred to by Muehlhaeusler is in fact a forger's model used to cast bronze or iron dies that were used to produce fake coins. Whether in the Latin West or in the Arabic East, the great majority of coin dies that are unearthed are forger's dies, not official ones, as the official dies were destroyed to prevent their illegal reuse. As for medieval treatises on the work of mints, the Yemenite al-Hamdānī (d. 334/945) – see Oscar Löfgren, "al-Hamdānī", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, Leiden: Brill 1986, 124–125 – gives important insights on the production of coin dies in his *Kitāb al-Jawharatayn*: metallic dies were directly engraved by skilled craftsmen into the iron or bronze; see Christopher Toll, *al-Hamdānī, Kitāb al-Ǧauharatain al-ʿatiqatain al-māʾiʿatain min aṣ-ṣafrāʾ wa-l-baiḍāʾ: Die beiden Edelmetalle Gold und Silber*, Studia Semitica Upsaliensia 1, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wissel 1968; and Christopher Toll, "Minting Technique According to Arabic Literary Sources", *Orientalia Suecana* 19/20 (1970–1971), 125–139.

77 See Bernhard Spuler, "Gaykhātū", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, Leiden: Brill 1991, 982; Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing", 13.

78 See Kornél Jahn, "Čao", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, Leiden: Brill 1991, 14. These notes were called *čao* in Persian, which is a transcription of the Chinese term *ṭṣ'au*. Of oblong shape, they carried, within a circle and a state seal, the *shahāda* in addition to some Chinese, the Tibetan name of Gaykhātū ("very costly pearl"), and the designation of the value (varying from half a dinar to ten dinars). For modern, block-printed banknotes in cotton and paper, produced in Khotan (Eastern Turkestan) between 1934 and 1937, see François Thierry, "La Division perdue: Les Émissions monétaires de la 36e Division de Ma Hushan à Khotan (1934–1937)", in *L'Armée et la monnaie II: Actes de la journée d'études du 25 avril 2009 à la Monnaie de Paris*, Dominique Hollard, ed., Recherches et travaux de la Société d'études numismatiques et archéologiques 3, Paris: Séna 2010, 93–111 and pls. 7–8.

It has been assumed that, like the Chinese originals,[79] these notes were printed by means of wooden blocks.

Despite the absence of surviving of wooden blocks for block printing, the hypothesis that the first Arabic blocks were made of wood seems an option not to be discarded if one considers, in particular, inscribed wooden carved panels. The scripts employed in these panels and the floriated background of many inscribed friezes[80] can be compared, for example, with the visual effect of block-printed amulets with a written background, such as one found in Cambridge University Library, Michaelides charta E 31. Ornamented backgrounds – floriated or inscribed ones – create depth for the inscription in relief, and it has been suggested that this expedient renders the main text more legible.[81] This observation would imply, for the Cambridge amulet just mentioned, a difference in importance between the predominant central inscription (also enhanced with touches of red) and the less-significant background text.

All in all, it seems likely that, over time, the technology of block printing developed and that the material of the blocks in which the texts were carved might have changed, passing from wood, for the early specimens, to metal, for more recent exemplars.

Notwithstanding the material of the blocks, the technique of block printing offers the possibility of rapidly producing entire series of text run off the same block. Until recently, however, the known and published examples of amulets were often thought to all be unique and to present different texts.[82] This assumption, though, is being challenged by growing counter-evidence of multiple specimens carrying the same texts, such as:

– Four twin-sets of block-printed amulets carrying the same text, with words appearing in the same line and in the same position. The first twin-set is split between the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto and a private collection in California.[83] An-

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79 In his *Tansūqnāma*, Rashīd al-Dīn (*c.*645/1274–718/1318) also made a reference to Chinese printed books with the expression *sahifahā-i chūb* (wooden pages), that is, pressed on paper; see D.O. Morgan, "Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb", in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, Leiden: Brill 1995, 443–444; Persis Berlekamp, "The Limit of Artistic Exchange in Fourteenth-Century Tabriz", *Muqarnas* 27 (2010), 216–217.

80 See for example the section of a frieze with an embossed inscription in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (inv. no. 1744) dated to the fifth/eleventh or sixth/twelfth century, illustrated in *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April–4 July 1976*, exhibition catalogue, London: Arts Council of Great Britain 1976, 286, no. 445.

81 See Kjeld von Folsach, "Panel, Carved and Painted Wood", in: *Sultan, Shah, and Great Mughal: The History and Culture of the Islamic World*, exhibition catalogue, Kjeld von Folsach and Peder Mortensen, eds., Copenhagen: The National Museum 1996, 88 n. 48.

82 At the moment, no block print with the same layout and text as the two specimens presented here is known.

83 For the first set, see D'Ottone, "Far Eastern Type"; and on the Aga Khan exemplar, see Christiane Gruber, "From Prayer to Protection: Amulets and Talismans in the Islamic

other pair of twin amulets are in the Michaelides Collection in Cambridge University Library (Michaelides charta E 29 and E 30).[84] The third twin-set is split between the Austrian National Library in Vienna (A. Ch. 12.141)[85] and the Atiya collection at the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah (Or. P. 1562).[86] The fourth is between the Columbia University Library[87] and the Lilly Library of the University of Indiana, Bloomington (Misc. mss. Atiyah Gift no. 9).[88]

– A scroll that seems to carry a sequence of two identical texts, one after the other, separated by some blank space. It has been suggested that this was intended to be cut at a later stage into small, portable amulets (see fig. 6).[89]

Final remarks

The two amulets described in this paper are precious additions to the corpus of known block-printed amulets, since both the texts and the images they carry are *unica* and therefore they enlarge the grammar and the lexicon of this very specific kind of object. Moreover, they witness the production of block-printed charms in Syria, thus enlarging the map of the regions in which the production of this material is attested, and they offer a possible clue to the source of the illustrations of texts such as the *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* by al-Jazūlī.

Arabic block-printed amulets are still relatively rare, but the discovery of new block-printed material in the holdings of collections, museums, and libraries can contribute to adjust the proportions and our perspective on a cultural phenomenon that has begun receiving attention only recently.[90] We do not know, for example, how many block prints are preserved in Istanbul: the more than 200,000 fragments from the Qubbat al-khazna now present in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, of which only a small part has been published and no catalogue exists, might conceal many more surprises.

World", in: *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural*, exhibition catalogue, Francesca Leoni, ed., Oxford: Ashmolean Museum 2016, 33–51 – apart from the identification of a few more words from a Koranic quote, this latter adds little to what was already noted in "Far Eastern Type".

84 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 68–70 and pls. 4–5.

85 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 133–134 and pl. 26.

86 See Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 542–544.

87 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 170–176 and pls. 40–40c.

88 See Schaefer, *Enigmatic Charms*, 177–180 and pl. 4; Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 552–557.

89 See Richards, "Written Documents". This way of producing amulets has been already suggested for the Cambridge twin charms, Michaelides charta E 29 and E 30; see Muehlhaeusler, "Eight Arabic Block Prints", 556.

90 See Schaefer, "Medieval Arabic Block-Printing", 2.



Fig. 6: Block-printed amulet with the same block repeated, found in Fustat. (From Richards, "Written Documents".)

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Books within books: The link between Damascene reuse fragments and the Qubbat al-khazna

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We are slowly starting to understand what the Qubba actually was, what its function was, and what material was deposited in it.[1] As a consequence, the time has come to widen our perspective and look at the role of this depository within the wider Damascene manuscript culture. In this spirit, the present paper turns away from the building and from the known Qubba corpus to examine a set of fragments that we find outside the Qubba itself, namely parchment fragments reused in medieval Damascene manuscripts. We find these fragments with a variety of material functions: as part of pasteboards, as outer binding covers, as sewing guards, and as wrappers of small booklets. The texts on these parchments are, just like the Qubba material, in a multitude of scripts and in a multitude of languages, and they come from various religious contexts: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim. The argument that follows is that the strikingly similar profiles of the reuse corpus on the one hand and the Qubba corpus on the other indicate that these binding fragments were intimately linked with the Qubba. The exact nature of this link is yet to be firmly established, but I propose that manuscript producers in Ayyubid and Mamluk Damascus used the Qubba as a storehouse from which they sourced binding materials. This, in turn, means that the Qubba was not a one-way depository into which material was simply put, but that it had a more complex role within the topography of the written word in Damascus. To make these points, this contribution will first introduce the profile of the "reuse corpus", that is the reused fragments. In a second step, the article will discuss the "host corpus", the manuscripts in which we find these fragments. Finally, the article's third part will deal with the significance of these reuse practices for the field of Qubba studies.

Right from the outset it needs to be underlined that the reuse of old writing material is obviously an almost universal practice and not specific to either Damascene or Arabic manuscript culture.[2] For Egypt, Frédéric Bauden has unearthed

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[1] This article is the result of a research interest over the last few years. I have to thank numerous colleagues who have discussed with me aspects of this topic over that time, in particular those who attended my presentations in London (2015), Beirut (2015), Cambridge (2016), Princeton (2017, with particular thanks to Marina Rustow and Eve Krakowski), Cairo (2017), Mainz (2017), Münster (2018), Berlin (2018), New York (2019, with particular thanks to Peter Miller), and Beirut (2019).

[2] Erik Kwakkel, "Discarded Parchment as Writing Support in English Manuscript Culture", in: *English Manuscripts before 1400*, A.S.G. Edwards and Orietta Da Rold, eds., London: British

petitions reused to produce notebooks and Marina Rustow has shown how widespread reuse practices were in the Geniza.[3] Anne Regourd, in turn, has edited death certificates from the Red Sea port of al-Quṣayr that were reused to write private letters.[4] In addition, reuse practices existed well beyond the world of books, and we find Arabic fragments used as arrow flights or reused to produce textiles and headgear.[5] However, for Damascus no systematic work has been done so far, except for a brief introductory article and the examination of the case of a late ninth/fifteenth-century scholar who reused his own documentary "archive" to produce manuscripts.[6] More importantly, the field of Arabic-script manuscript studies as a whole does not yet conceive of this phenomenon as a set of practices worthy of dedicated study, but has rather been interested in enlarging the corpus of available texts and documents. This paper, by contrast, puts reuse at its centre as a meaningful cultural practice. In its approach, it draws on "material philology" with its dedicated interest in the "thingness" of books and fragments, rather than exclusively focusing on these items' textuality.[7]

This paper is based on a corpus of Damascene manuscripts that I have built up over the course of the last few years. The Damascene nature of these manuscripts is mostly evident from the manuscript notes that we find on them, in particular those referring to the scholarly transmission of the text. Such "*samāʿ* notes" regularly contain information on where the reading and transmission of a text took place, so that the geographical trajectory of the manuscripts in question can be

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Library Board 2012, 238–261; Elisabetta Caldelli, *I frammenti della Biblioteca Vallicelliana: Studio metodologico sulla catalogazione dei frammenti di codici medievali e sul fenomeno del loro riuso*, Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo 2012; Francesco D'Aiuto, "Graeca in codici orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana (con i resti di un manoscritto tardoantico delle commedie di Menandro)", in: *Tra Oriente e Occidente: Scritture e libri greci fra le regioni orientali di Bisanzio e l'Italia*, Lidia Perria, ed., Rome: Università di Roma La Sapienza 2003, 227–296.

3 Frédéric Bauden, "The Recovery of Mamluk Chancery Documents in an Unsuspected Place", in: *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society*, Amalia Levanoni and Michael Winter, eds., Leiden: Brill 2004, 59–76; Marina Rustow, "A Petition to a Woman at the Fatimid Court (413–414 A.H./1022–23 C.E.)", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 73 (2010), 1–27.

4 Anne Regourd, "A Late Ayyubid Report of Death Found at Quṣayr al-Qadim", in: *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, Alexander T. Schubert and Petra M. Sijpesteijn, eds., Leiden: Brill 2015, 11–26.

5 David Nicolle, *Late Mamlūk Military Equipment*, Damascus: IFPO 2011; Lucian Reinfandt, "Recycled Documents in Textiles from Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Egypt", paper presented at the 21st Colloquium on the History of Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras, University of Ghent, 10 May 2012; Tamer El-Leithy has an ongoing research project on documents and headgears.

6 Konrad Hirschler, "Document Reuse in Medieval Arabic Manuscripts", *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin* 3, no. 1 (2017), 33–44; Konrad Hirschler, *A Monument to Medieval Syrian Book Culture: The Library of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādi,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2020.

7 The seminal reference point remains Stephen Nichols, "Philology in a Manuscript Culture", *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies* 65, no. 1 (1990), 1–10.

confidently traced. This corpus was not systematically built up in the framework of a project on reuse, but is rather a "spin-off" of a project on a late Mamluk Damascene book collection.[8] Consequently this paper cannot yet offer a systematic survey nor can it offer precise numbers on questions such as the proportion of Damascene manuscripts that include such reuse material.

In total, I have surveyed some 4000 manuscripts, either the actual copies or digital reproductions. Among these manuscripts, I have identified some 400 reuse fragments in different scripts and languages. All host manuscripts, in contrast, are exclusively in Arabic and were without exception produced in Muslim contexts. The vast majority of these manuscripts are still in Damascus, in the al-Asad National Library (henceforth ANL), with a significant additional number distributed in other libraries across the globe, including libraries in Cairo, Berlin, Dublin, Paris, and Princeton.[9] The term "reuse" refers here exclusively to fragments that were reused in the context of binding books and not to mere palimpsests. The world of palimpsests partly overlaps with that of reuse for binding purposes and thus some palimpsests are indeed part of the corpus. However, palimpsests without evident traces of reuse as binding material are not part of this corpus.

The reuse corpus

For the purpose of this paper, we can divide the corpus of reused fragments into two broad clusters: fragments of (mostly) Muslim texts in Arabic script, and fragments of non-Muslim texts (especially Christian) in a variety of scripts other than Arabic (especially Greek, Syriac, and Latin). The presence of the non-Muslim fragments is particularly noteworthy in a host corpus that exclusively contains Arabic-script Muslim manuscripts. The relative distribution of these two clusters reflects what we know so far from the Qubba and this is an important part of the argument in this paper, that there is a striking similarity between the reuse and the Qubba corpora. Muslim fragments in Arabic script are the majority and the non-Muslim fragments form a minority. However, the proportion of non-Muslim fragments in the reuse corpus (around 100 out of 400) is significantly higher than in the Qubba corpus (probably a low four-digit number out of more than 200,000). We will return to this high proportion and the possible meanings of reusing these non-Muslim fragments in the third part of the paper.

The Arabic reuse fragments can in turn be divided into two groups, documents and non-documentary texts. The larger group of these two is the documentary

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8 Hirschler, *Monument*.

9 In the early twentieth century, Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt undertook the only other brief attempt to identify a reuse corpus of Damascene manuscripts. In his case, though, this was limited to manuscripts that had remained in the city (see Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt, *Khazā'in al-kutub fī Dimashq wa-ḍawāḥihā*, Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif 1902, 28) and never led to a dedicated publication.

group, which includes in particular fragments of documents that were produced or used in the context of *qāḍī* justice. Among these, the most important body are documents related to marriage and divorce, with a substantial further number of sale deeds, especially of real estate. By contrast, documents linked to the sphere of the state, such as petitions, edicts and grants of *iqṭāʿ*, are virtually absent, and the same goes for commercial documents other than real estate deals.[10] This profile of the documentary group is again highly relevant for our purposes as the documentary Qubba corpus has exactly the same profile: looking at the published Qubba documents, we have large numbers of documents on marriage and divorce as well as on real estate deals, but little else.[11] The absence of state-related and non–real estate commercial documents from the reuse corpus is particularly striking, as they are also almost completely absent from the Qubba corpus. This congruence of the corpora in terms of the absence of state-related and commercial documents is all the more conspicuous once we compare this absence in the Damascus corpora with the Egyptian case. The ever-present sister of the Qubba, the Cairo Geniza, has a high number of precisely such state-related and commercial documents, and the few known Egyptian cases of reuse are state-related documents.[12]

An in-depth discussion of why the Qubba's Arabic documentary fragments have this very peculiar profile is beyond the scope of this paper. In my view, there are two lines of explanation that are worth pursuing. Firstly, the Geniza was a community depository and thus reflects to a much larger degree the whole range of documents that circulated within a socially highly diverse group of users. The Qubba, on the other hand, seems to be much more restricted in terms of the social profile of its users, who seem to primarily come from the scholarly community.[13] This might explain the low number of commerce-related documents in Damascus.

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[10] For one of the few known commercial documents not dealing with real estate, see Said Aljoumani and Konrad Hirschler, "Trading Fruits and Legumes on a Medieval Damascene Market: The Documentary and Archival Life Cycle of an Account Book from the Qubbat al-Khazna (Şam Evrakları 13327)", in: *Festschrift in Honour of Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu for his 75th Birthday*, Hatice Aynur, Didar Bayır, Fatma Şen, and Tuncay Zorlu, eds., Istanbul 2020 (forthcoming).

[11] Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation à Damas au Moyen Âge: Un corpus de 62 documents juridiques inédits entre 337/948 et 698/1299*, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2013; Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Propriétés rurales et urbaines à Damas au Moyen Âge: Un corpus de 73 documents juridiques entre 310/922 et 669/1271*, Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 2018.

[12] Bauden, "Recovery"; Rustow, "Petition". In the same vein, Frédéric Bauden, "Antiquarianism and Manuscripts: Spoliation in Arabic Medieval Books", paper presented at the workshop "Antiquarianism in the Islamic World", Bard Graduate Center, New York, 9–10 May 2019, discusses a Rasulid letter to the Mamluk Sultan al-Muʾayyad Shaykh dated 817/1415 and reused in the manuscript Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library MS Süleymaniye 4340.

[13] This statement is, as so often in Qubba studies, highly tentative. Most known documents go back to the photographs taken by Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine in the 1960s (see the introduction to this volume on this). Yet they have never published an account indicating whether they examined all fragments or whether they photographed all documents.

Secondly, it is possible that the nearby citadel, the topographical centre of the "state" in Damascus, was the place to deposit state-related documents. The German traveller Hermann von Pückler-Muskau (1785–1871) reported in the 1830s that he saw a room full of manuscripts and papers in the citadel, and his description of how he accessed this room ("through a partly bricked hole") and its contents ("numerous half-mouldered and tattered manuscripts") indicate a space very similar to the Qubbat al-khazna.[14] It is thus worth considering the possibility that the documentary Qubba material mostly reflects archival holdings of documents produced in the vicinity of the "civilian" judges, while "state"-related paperwork went into a "qubba" in the citadel. In any case, however we explain the peculiar profile of the Qubba documents, the matching profile of the reuse corpus is another strong indicator of the close links between the reuse and the Qubba corpora.

The documentary reuse and Qubba corpora not only match in terms of their profiles, as we have just seen, but also in terms of the dates when these documents were produced. In both cases we find some documents from the fifth/eleventh century,[15] a sharp increase in the sixth/twelfth century,[16] a peak in the seventh/thirteenth century,[17] a sharp decline in the eighth/fourteenth century,[18] and very little thereafter. This chronological congruence is noteworthy as document production in Damascus certainly did not stop in the eighth/fourteenth century. In consequence, we might have expected – assuming the standard survival bias – that the closer we move to the present the more documents we would find. However, the Qubba documentary corpus tells a very different story, namely one where Damascenes used this building to deposit some documents from the late Seljuk to the mid-Mamluk period, while thereafter the function of the Qubba as a depository for documents must have ended or at least become less important. In other words, throughout its more than 1000-year history, the Qubba functioned only for roughly 250 years as a deposit for (mostly legal) documents. That the reuse corpus consists of similar legal documents from exactly the same period is thus a strong indicator that these two corpora share historical links.

Let us now turn to one example within the body of Arabic documents of the reuse corpus related to marriage and divorce. When leafing through the pages of ANL MS 3748, the reader immediately sees that something strange is going on between folia 143b and 158b. Suddenly, some of the pages carry two different scripts, with the main text squeezed between the lines of a much larger script (see

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[14] Cited in Boris Liebrenz, *Die Rifāʿiya aus Damaskus: Eine Privatbibliothek im osmanischen Syrien und ihr kulturelles Umfeld*, Leiden: Brill 2016, 186–187: "Nachdem wir in ein zum Theil vermauertes Loch hineingekrochen und eine schwankende Treppe in dunkler Nacht hinaufgetappt waren, auf der, wie wir beim Öffnen der Rüstkammer erst gewahr wurden, eine Menge halb vermoderter und zerrissener Manuscripte lagen …"

[15] For instance, ANL MS 3853, fols. 136b and 155a (year 432/1041), in the reuse corpus.

[16] For instance, ANL MS 3821, fols. 194b and 205a (year 572/1176), in the reuse corpus.

[17] For instance, ANL MS 3764, fols. 111b and 128a (year 620/1223–1224), in the reuse corpus.

[18] For instance, ANL MS 3827, fols. 20b and 35a (early 700s/1400s), in the reuse corpus.

fig. 1). What had happened here is that the producer of this manuscript cut a rather splendid marriage-related contract (the original size must have been around 68 × 92 cm) into fourteen pieces to reuse them as folia for a small booklet. As the document's verso was blank (seemingly this couple did not divorce) we observe in manuscript 3748 that pages with the script of the contract (the left-hand side in fig. 1) alternate with pages without the script of the contract (the right-hand side in fig. 1). Two rather wealthy spouses had concluded this marriage in the year 524/1130: the husband, a known Damascene scholar, undertook to pay his wife a deferred marriage gift of fifty gold dinars. The families of husband and wife both originally hailed from the Eastern lands, more precisely Iṣfahān, and they made the transaction, rather unusually in the Damascene context, in "red Iṣfahānī Sulṭānī dinars". Otherwise, this document matches exactly what we know of Damascene marriage-related contracts from the published Qubba specimens in terms of date, textual formula, and documentary practices.[19]

A second example from the body of Arabic documents related to marriage and divorce within the reuse corpus is contained in ANL MS 3822. It dates to the heyday of this corpus, the seventh/thirteenth century, and is a divorce contract, many of which we also find in the Qubba corpus.[20] This parchment contract from the year 621/1224 was not cut into pieces, but the producer laid it as a "wrapper" around this small booklet (such wrappers will be further discussed below). We see that the title of the booklet is at the top of the page, but that the wording of the contract and the signatures of the witnesses take up most of the space (fig. 2). The vast majority of the divorce contracts in the Qubba corpus refer to *khulʿ* divorces, that is, the dissolution of the marriage by returning part of or the entire marriage gift. The document from 621/1224 is an example of such a *khulʿ* divorce, and this is the case for the vast majority of divorce contracts in the reuse corpus – again neatly mirroring what we find in the Qubba corpus.

Having discussed the documentary group within the reuse corpus, we can move on to the Arabic non-documentary texts. This corpus is significantly smaller and shows one major difference from the Qubba material, namely that there are no Korans in the reuse corpus. This is not too surprising, as manuscript producers probably did not deem the reuse of Koranic parchments appropriate in the production of new books. However, the matter is not that simple, since we do find in this non-documentary corpus fragments that are quite close to sacred texts as they include quotes from the Koran. These are texts from the field of Islamic law, *fiqh*, such as the Mālikī *Mudawwana* by Saḥnūn (d. 240/855),[21] which contains quotes from hadith and the Koran. Damascene manuscripts producers evidently had no qualms about cutting and pasting such material into their new manuscripts. The

[19] Mouton, Sourdel, and Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation*.
[20] Mouton, Sourdel, and Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation*.
[21] Reused in ANL MS 3841.

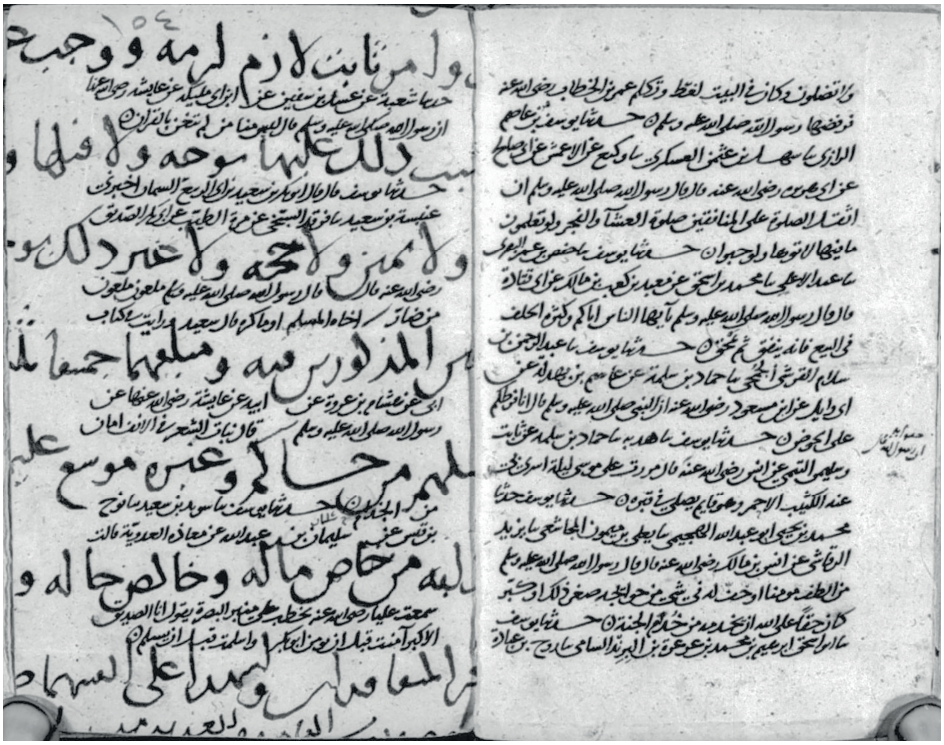


Fig. 1: Reused marriage-related contract dated 524/1130. (ANL MS 3748, fols. 153b/154a. al-Asad National Library.)

boundaries between what was acceptable and what was not acceptable when it came to the reuse of fragments certainly depends on local factors and deserves more attention in future. I strongly doubt that there are homogeneous "Islamic" or "Middle Eastern" Qubba and Geniza practices that can be understood with reference to normative texts.[22]

What is striking in the fragments that fall into the group of Arabic non-documentary texts is the high proportion of Mālikī texts written in Maghribī script. Texts in Maghribī script are certainly part of the Qubba material – for instance, the only non-Koranic Qubba fragment mentioned in the 1930 *Dalīl mukhtaṣar* (Summary Guide) of the Damascene National Museum was a Mālikī hadith collection.[23] The problem, however, is that the Arabic non-documentary fragments in the Qubba corpus remain a complete terra incognita. As we have seen in the introduction to this volume, apart from the Koranic fragments they have hardly been

[22] Joseph Sadan, "Genizah and Genizah-like Practices in Islamic and Jewish Traditions", *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 43 (1986), 36–58.

[23] al-Amīr Jaʿfar al-Ḥasani, *Dalīl mukhtaṣar: al-Ḥukūma al-sūriyya, Dār al-āthār bi-Dimashq*, Damascus: Mufid 1930, class mark ʿ/273.

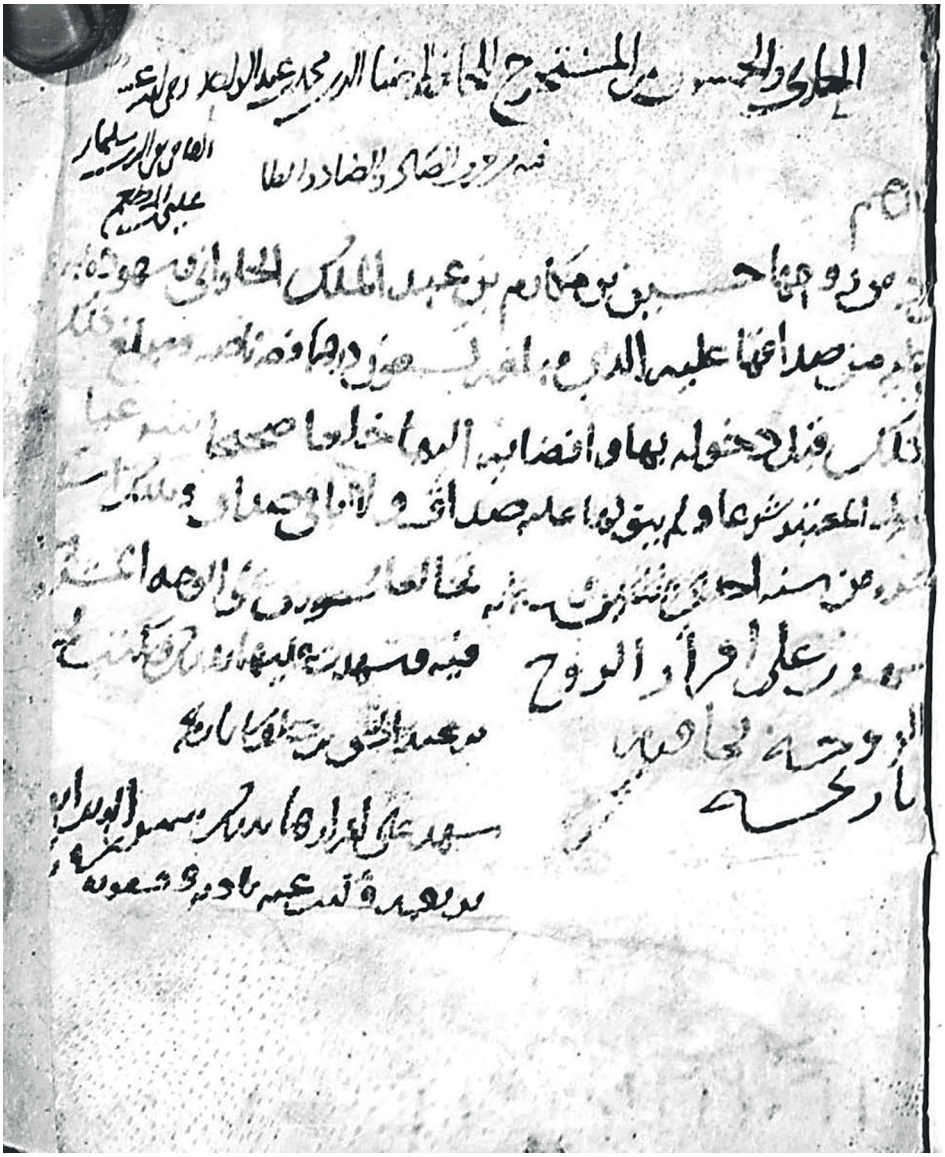


Fig. 2: Reused marriage-related contract dated 621/1224. (ANL MS 3822, fol. 1a. al-Asad National Library.)

studied at all. In consequence, it is impossible to get even a rough idea of what is there or of how important subcorpora such as fragments in Maghribī script are. During my own, very impressionistic, work on the Qubba material in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul, I saw pieces in Maghribī script, but they were far from forming the majority. There must thus be some reason why these pieces feature so prominently in the reuse corpus and why manuscript producers

preferred to reuse such pieces. We will return to this question in the final part of the paper.

To discuss the fragments of this non-documentary group, by way of example we can turn to ANL MS 3841, which brings us back to the *Mudawwana* by Saḥnūn. In this case, the manuscript producers took three parchment folia of the original work, using them as wrappers for small booklets, just as in the case of the 621/1224 divorce contract, so that they became six folia in the new manuscript. Also as was the case with the divorce contract, we see that the user wrote the title of his new booklet at the top, but that the original text of the *Mudawwana* takes up most of the space on the page (fig. 3). In addition, we find a further folio in Maghribī script in the same manuscript.[24] Umberto Bongianino identified these parchments as having been written in the Ifrīqī script used in Qayrawān,[25] and he argues that this script had fallen into disuse by the late fifth/eleventh century.[26] Most likely, Maghribī migrants to Syria, of whom there were plenty in the following two centuries,[27] brought these books to Damascus. Manuscripts in Maghribī script thus became a significant element in Damascene manuscript culture and after they had fallen into disuse some of them found their long-term resting place in the Qubba, whereas others, those in the reuse corpus, were repurposed to produce new manuscripts.

Apart from the fragments of (mostly) Muslim texts in Arabic script, the second large cluster in the reuse corpus consists of the fragments of non-Muslim texts in numerous scripts. In contrast to the case of the Arabic-script cluster, in this cluster we do not find any documentary texts. This absence of non-Muslim documents again neatly matches the profile of the Qubba corpus, where we find that documents in scripts other than Arabic are virtually absent as well. One exception is the famous safe-conduct document issued in Latin for a Muslim trader by the Frankish king Baldwin III in the mid-sixth/twelfth century;[28] the only other known examples are three documents in Hebrew script that we find among the photographs taken in Berlin in 1909.[29] Other than that, it seems that the vast majority of non-Muslim material in the Qubba is of a non-documentary nature. The most famous example

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[24] ANL MS 3841, fols. 18a/b, 31a/b; 62a/b, 73a/b; 209a/b, 220a/b; not *Mudawwana*: 223a/b, 245a/b.

[25] Personal communication, June 2016.

[26] Umberto Bongianino, "The Origin and Development of Maghribī Round Scripts: Arabic Paleography in the Islamic West (4th/10th–6th/12th century)", PhD dissertation, University of Oxford 2017, 25–32.

[27] Louis Pouzet, "Maghrébins à Damas au VII^{e}/XIII^{e} siècle", *Bulletin d'études orientales* 28 (1975), 167–199.

[28] Hans Eberhard Mayer, "Abū ʿAlis Spuren am Berliner Tiergarten", *Archiv für Diplomatik* 38 (1992), 113–133.

[29] Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin MSS simulata orientalia 6, fols. 24r, 25r, and 26r (available online at https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/); see the contribution by Gideon Bohak in this volume.

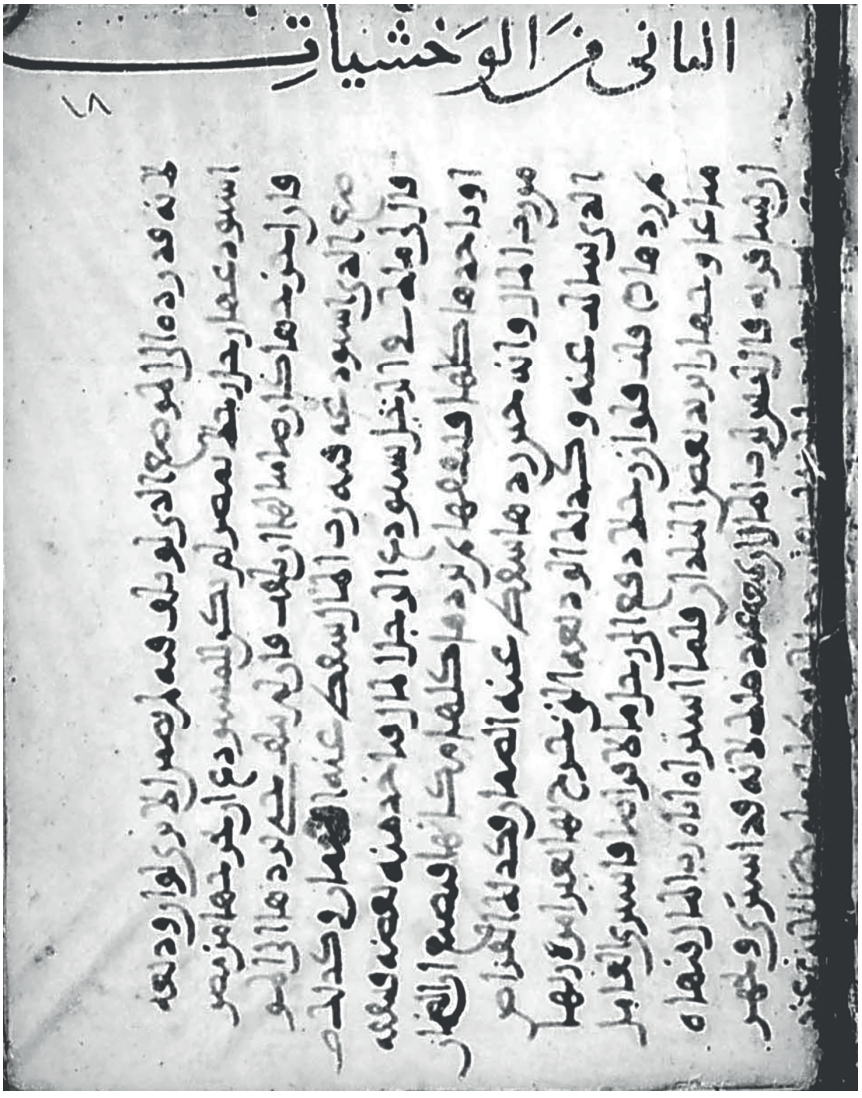


Fig. 3: Reused folio of the *Mudawwana* by Saḥnūn (turned by 90 degrees). (ANL MS 3841, fol. 18a. al-Asad National Library.)

of such "literary" non-Muslim texts in the Qubba corpus is certainly the Violet fragment, a bilingual Greek–Arabic Bible fragment.[30] As with the Arabic-script cluster, the similarities between the cluster of non-Muslim texts in the reuse corpus and those of the Qubba corpus are once again conspicuous and go well beyond the shared (near-)absence of documentary material. The most salient overlap between the two corpora is the sheer range of scripts and languages. In the reuse corpus, we find fragments in Greek,[31] Latin,[32] Syriac,[33] Hebrew,[34] Georgian,[35] and Armenian.[36] Similar to the Qubba corpus, these fragments are thus testament to the "multilingual and multicultural society" in which they were produced and in which they circulated.[37] The vast majority of the fragments in both corpora come from sacred or liturgical texts including Greek sermons, Latin hymns, and Hebrew commentary literature, as well as Bibles in Georgian, Syriac, and Armenian. In the reuse corpus, sermons have a particularly salient position and future research will show whether the same is true for the Qubba corpus of non-Muslim texts. Among the languages in the reuse and the Qubba corpora, Greek and Syriac take pride of place. This is not surprising as both were widely used as liturgical languages in the Christian communities of Damascus and Bilād al-Shām at large. One such example is a folio of a Greek Menaion for December (fig. 4), a liturgical book containing hymns, reused as a wrapper.[38] Here we see – just as in the cases of the Muslim material above – that the producer of the manuscript wrote the Arabic title of the new booklet at the top of the page (in addition to the red endowment notice written over the Greek text and further notes in the margins on the left-hand side).

Particularly interesting is the presence of Latin fragments, which have a relatively modest position in the Qubba corpus but a prime position, rivalling even Greek, in the reuse corpus.[39] These fragments bear witness to manuscript culture within the Frankish communities of the Middle East, who had settled in the region in the

[30] On this, see Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment" in: Ahmad Al-Jallad, *The Damascus Psalm Fragment: Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī,* Chicago: Oriental Institute 2020, 93–110.

[31] For example, ANL MS 3821.

[32] For example, ANL MS 1039.

[33] For example, ANL MS 1232.

[34] For example, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 983.

[35] For example, ANL MS 3817.

[36] For example, ANL MS 3831.

[37] Arianna D'Ottone, "Manuscripts as Mirrors of a Multilingual and Multicultural Society: The Case of the Damascus Find", in: *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society,* Barbara Crostini and Sergio La Porta, eds., Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier 2013, 63–88.

[38] Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 986, fol. 117a. I am greatly indebted to Francesco D'Aiuto, who generously shared his knowledge of Greek texts.

[39] On the Latin fragments in the Qubba corpus, see Serena Ammirati's article in this volume.



Fig. 4: Reused folio of a Greek Menaion of December (turned by 90 degrees). (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 986, fol. 117a. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

course of the Crusades.[40] That the Qubba and the reuse corpora are the only Arabic and Muslim contexts in which we find such specimens is a further indicator of the close link between these two corpora. Within the reuse corpus, it seems that manuscript producers favoured in particular Latin fragments with musical notations. One such example is a folio of a Latin breviary with musical notations (fig. 5) that a manuscript producer reused as a wrapper for a new booklet[41] – we see by now how popular wrapping booklets was in Damascus. Here again we find an endowment notice and notes on the content of the booklet.

What we have seen in the first part of this paper is that there are numerous indicators that the reuse corpus of Damascene manuscripts and the Qubbat al-khazna corpus are historically closely linked. Firstly, those fragments that can be dated – the documents – come from the same 250-year period (circa 500/1100–750/1350). Secondly, those fragments that can be regionally placed all originate from Damascus or the surrounding lands. Thirdly, both corpora display very close resemblances in their distinctive thematic profile and in incorporating highly diverse languages and scripts. This is true whether we compare the two overall corpora or specific subcorpora within them. In sum, while there is no smoking gun to show that Damascene manuscript producers did indeed source fragments from the Qubba, the outstandingly strong congruence between these two corpora makes this scenario at least highly likely.

The host corpus

We have seen the strong links between the reuse fragments and the Qubba fragments and will now turn to the manuscripts in which we actually find these reuse fragments, the "host corpus". The main aim of this discussion is to provide some historical context to the reuse practices, especially to situate them better in time and place. The main argument will be that the reuse took place in Damascus within a clearly distinct period, namely between the sixth/twelfth and eighth/fourteenth centuries. In addition, discussing the host corpus will allow us to bring in further evidence on the link between the reuse and the Qubba corpora.

Quite surprisingly, the vast majority of host volumes in which we find the reuse corpus belong to a single thematic field, hadith – that is, texts preserving the deeds and words attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. This extraordinarily close corre-

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[40] The history of Latin and Arabic is only beginning to be investigated. See, for instance, Arianna D'Ottone and Dario Internullo, "Arabic in Latin Letters: The Case of the Papyrus British Library 3124", in: *Palaeography between East and West: Proceedings of the Seminars on Arabic Palaeography at Sapienza University of Rome* (*Rivista degli studi orientali*, n.s., 90, supplement 1), Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, ed., Pisa: Fabrizio Serra 2018, 53–72; Daniel König, ed., *Latin and Arabic: Entangled Histories*, Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing 2019; and Julian Yolles' forthcoming book *Making the East Latin: The Latin Culture of the Twelfth-Century Levant*.

[41] Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 986, fol. 19a.

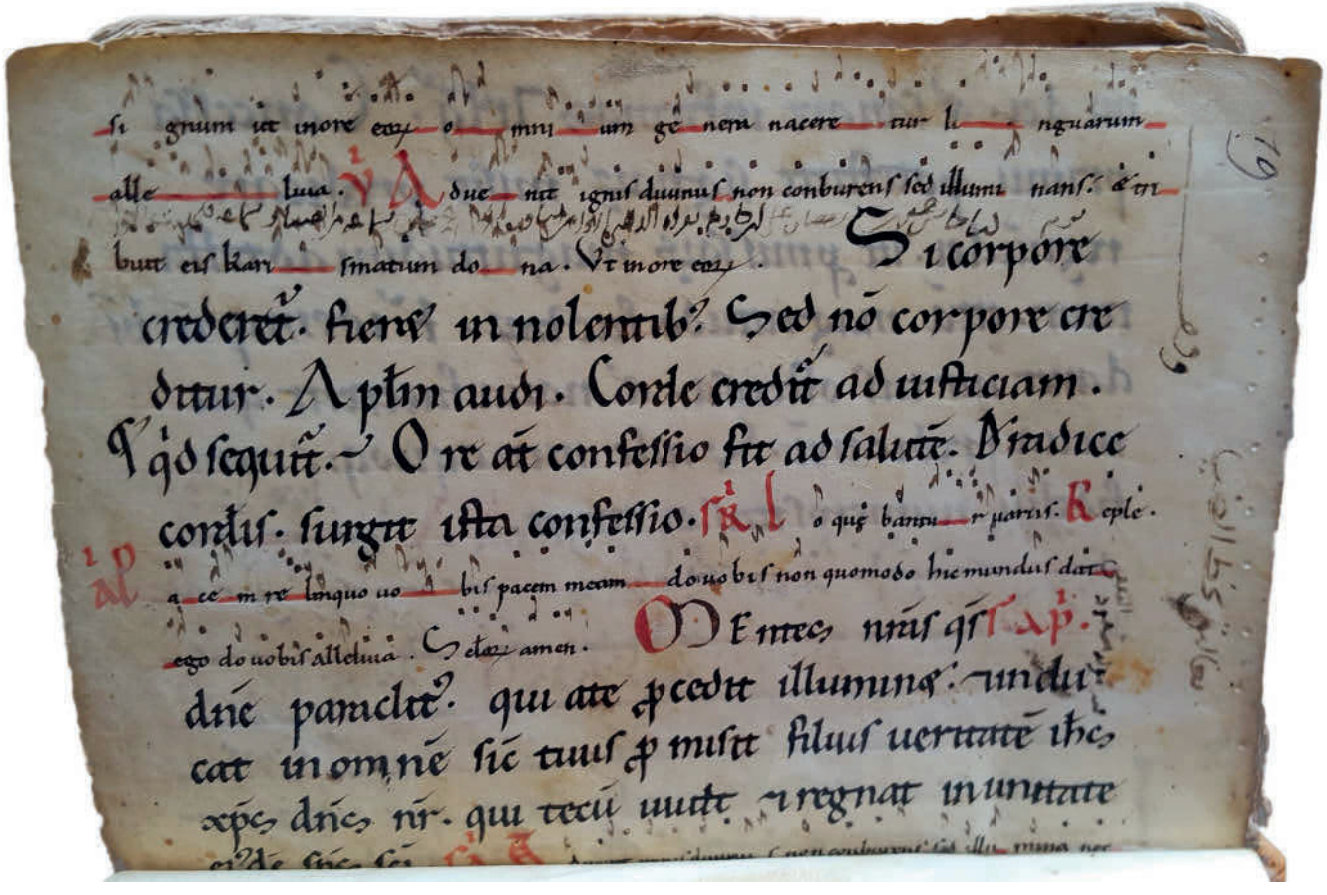


Fig. 5: Reused folio of Latin breviary with musical notations (turned by 90 degrees). (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 986, fol. 19a. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

lation between the reuse of fragments and this single theme does not stem from any thematic affinity between hadith texts and the reuse fragments. Rather, the unique position of hadith manuscripts in the host corpus is linked to the specific materiality of these manuscripts in Damascus between the sixth/twelfth and eighth/fourteenth centuries.

Hadiths had started to circulate right after the development of Islam and from the third/ninth century onwards these traditions were increasingly subject to a process of "canonisation". As a result, authoritative written collections of hadiths, most famously those by the two scholars al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) and Muslim (d. 261/875), came into being. These collections established a (never entirely fixed) canon of traditions that was increasingly deemed authentic – a process that lasted well into the sixth/twelfth century. However, this process was controversial as it prioritised the written mode of transmission to the detriment of oral practices.[42] Crucially, it challenged the professional identity of those scholars who primarily transmitted hadith: what was the point of having a large group of highly specialised scholars safeguarding the textual witnesses of the prophetic model in oral modes of transmission when all these witnesses had now become accessible in an established corpus of written texts?

The field of hadith scholarship reacted to the challenges of the canonisation process by developing an "ideology of orality". This asserted that the continuous oral transmission of the traditions was valuable in its own right as an essential and distinguishing trait of the Muslim community. Continuing to transmit traditions, despite the existence of the authoritative collections, was reconfigured as an act of piety linking each generation anew to the Prophet.[43] This "post-canonical" reconfiguration of the field of hadith studies resulted in the emergence of new textual genres that bore witness to the continued vivacity of the field, such as the *muʿjam* or *mashyakha* (presenting an author's shortest and most prized chains of transmission) and collections of forty hadiths.

In material terms, the rise of post-canonical hadith transmission meant that short collections of hadiths, or booklets, became extraordinarily popular in Damascus from the sixth/twelfth century onwards – my rough estimate is that a high four-digit number of them were produced. Rather than engaging in the first place with the grand "canonical" collections of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and so on, many hadith scholars of this period centred their scholarly activities on these brief collections that (mostly) contained hadiths drawn from the canonical collections. These booklets were very cheap to produce and were clearly objects for everyday use – they were emphatically not books with select paper, fine bindings, decora-

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42 Jonathan A.C. Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Ḥadīth Canon*, Leiden: Brill 2007.

43 Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition: A Social and Intellectual History of Hadith Transmission across a Thousand Years*, Leiden: Brill 2020.

tion, or careful mise-en-page. Rather, these booklets share six fundamental characteristics that set them apart from manuscripts in other fields of knowledge:

(1) they are thin and small,
(2) they are made from low-quality paper,
(3) they are unbound,
(4) they have protective wrappers,
(5) they were growing booklets with further folia continually added, and
(6) they carry what I call additional "secondary", "tertiary", and so on title pages.[44]

As is evident from the examples that we have seen in the first part of this paper, it is the fourth point that is of central importance for understanding the material logic of Damascene reuse practices. We have repeatedly seen that the reuse fragments appear as outside wrappers, turned by 90 degrees, with the Arabic title written on them, and this is indeed the most common material shape in which we find them in the reuse corpus. By contrast, the case of the marriage-related contract from 524/1130, where the manuscript producer reused the fragments as folia for the main text inside the manuscript, is rare.

Post-canonical hadith booklets were generally unbound, and thus manuscript producers and users in Ayyubid and Mamluk Damascus laid old parchment sheets around the paper booklets so that these vulnerable items at least had a sturdy protective wrapper. Reusing parchment sheets gave their booklets some protection from the vicissitudes of life, which included water spillage, inattentive users ripping off the front page, being stuffed into bags, and so on. To illustrate the material logic of these parchment wrappers, we can return to the divorce contract from 621/1224. This parchment contract was laid around a thin booklet that consisted of no more than twenty-two folia. The booklet contains the text of the fifty-first part of the *Selected Hadiths that are in neither al-Bukhārī nor Muslim* compiled by one of the most famous of all Damascene post-canonical hadith scholars, Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Maqdisī (d. 643/1245). The copy preserved in the al-Asad National Library is a *unicum* as is the case with virtually all such post-canonical booklets.[45] It was produced in the late 630s/early 1240s in Damascus with eleven bifolia that were stacked on top of each other and vertically folded in the middle to produce the twenty-two-folia booklet. This thin and flimsy paper booklet was subsequently enwrapped and sewn with our parchment contract to protect it. This same procedure

[44] For more details, see Hirschler, *Monument*; and Konrad Hirschler, "The Materiality of *Ḥadīth* Scholarship in the Post-Canonical Period", in: *Beyond Authenticity: Towards Alternative Approaches to Ḥadīth Narrations and Collections*, Mohammad Gharaibeh, ed., Leiden: Brill 2021 (forthcoming). For a comparable corpus of cheap books from the Geniza, see Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "Cheap Books in Medieval Egypt: Rotuli from the Cairo Geniza", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 4, (2016), 82–101.

[45] ANL MS 3822/1.

can be seen in virtually the entire reuse corpus, where the large majority of parchment fragments follow this material logic.

Most fragments in the reuse corpus thus served as wrappers of post-canonical hadith booklets. Yet the majority of Damascene booklets are outside the host corpus because they do not carry reused parchment wrappers. There are two possible reasons for this: either these wrapper-free booklets never carried one in the first place, or this wrapper was removed at a later stage in the booklets' life cycle. The first line of reasoning is certainly possible, but I am hesitant to see this as an explanation for the phenomenon of wrapper-free booklets as a whole. Post-canonical hadith booklets were not items that calmly rested on the bookshelves of libraries. They were rather highly mobile creatures, as we can see from the thousands of manuscript notes of transmission that we find on them. These notes show that scholars repeatedly read out the booklets to new generations of their peers and non-scholars in mosques, madrasas, Sufi convents, private houses, markets, and gardens.[46] Manuscript producers and owners thus had a very strong incentive to come up with some kind of solution to protect the booklets against the perils of this mobile life. The only solution for this dilemma of which we actually find traces are our wrappers and it is fair to assume that Damascene manuscript producers and users widely adopted this technique.

The second line of reasoning, that many wrappers were removed at a later stage, is a viable option, at least for some of these wrapper-free booklets. What is more, there is one moment in the trajectory of these booklets that shows that this is precisely what happened to them. Post-canonical hadith scholarship went into steep decline in the course of the eighth/fourteenth century in Damascus and ground to a halt in the ninth/fifteenth century. The production of new booklets virtually ceased and scholars wrote hardly any further notes of transmission on the existing booklets. The existing booklets started to fall out of circulation and to be of less and less social and cultural relevance. In response to this, a late ninth/fifteenth-century Damascene scholar, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī (d. 909/1503), systematically collected the booklets that he could still find in the city with the aim of preserving them. This turned out to be a massive project to safeguard "cultural heritage" and build a "monument to medieval Syrian book culture" that occupied him for many years and cannot be described in detail here.[47]

Of direct relevance for the present paper is that this scholar not only collected these booklets, but materially transformed them: he bound up to twenty of these booklets into large-scale composite manuscripts with "proper" bindings. As a re-

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[46] On such manuscript notes, see Andreas Görke and Konrad Hirschler, eds., *Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources*, Würzburg: Ergon 2011; and Stefan Leder, "Hörerzertifikate als Dokumente für die islamische Lehrkultur des Mittelalters", in: *Urkunden und Urkundenformulare im klassischen Altertum und in den orientalischen Kulturen*, Raif Georges Khoury, ed., Heidelberg: Winter 1999, 147–166.

[47] Hirschler, *Monument*.

sult, the booklet in which we find the above-mentioned marriage-related contract from 524/1130 reused as folia, is today found in a composite manuscript between folia 143b and 158b. In this composite manuscript, today ANL MS 3748, we find it together with eight other booklets that prior to Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī's intervention had all been stand-alone booklets.

In the process of producing these massive composite manuscripts, the old wrapper parchments became rather pointless as the new heavy bindings now protected all the booklets in any such manuscript, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī thus removed many of them. One example of this can be seen with a booklet which today makes up the sixth item in the composite manuscript 3796 in the al-Asad National Library, and which contains the text of the tenth part of the *Fawāʾid al-Mukhalliṣ* (referring to Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mukhalliṣ, d. 393/1003).[48] This is a wrapper-free booklet, and there is no sign that this post-canonical hadith collection ever carried a protective parchment wrapper. However, in the binding of another of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī's composite manuscripts, today composite manuscript Supplément Turc 983 in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, we find the very parchment that was previously the wrapper of this booklet. Most likely, Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī removed the wrapper from the *Fawāʾid al-Mukhalliṣ* booklet as there was no longer any material need for it, and then he subsequently reused it for the cover of another of his new creations. As he produced so many of these composite manuscripts, he had a high demand for binding materials, and old parchment wrappers were certainly an attractive pool to tap into. Producing covers by reusing parchment sheets that had already been reused as wrappers of booklets was not just an efficient and cheap solution; it reproduced the visual appearance of the old booklets on the outside of the new composite manuscripts so that future manuscript users would know what kind of material to expect. One might read them as the visual markers of post-canonical hadith texts.

The role of "wrapper" should be seen as just one stage in the life cycle of these parchment fragments. It was in some cases a very long stage – for example, when we see the parchment fragment still as a wrapper today – but in many other cases, such as with the parchment wrapper of the *Fawāʾid al-Mukhalliṣ*, this stage was rather short. In the case of the *Fawāʾid al-Mukhalliṣ* wrapper, we are lucky that the fragment remained in the reuse corpus, even if it shifted its position from booklet wrapper to composite manuscript binding. However, the story gets more complicated still as users sometimes completely removed reuse parchments from the host corpus. This in turn alerts us to the fact that the reuse corpus is far from being a neatly delineated group of parchments. Rather, in many cases we see that a fragment that was once a stand-alone fragment and is so again today must have served at some intermediate point as a binding fragment.

48 Hirschler, *Monument*, entry 461e.

The prime example of this takes us to a collection that we have not discussed so far, the Schøyen Collection in Oslo and London. In 1993, this collection bought from Sotheby's a set of twelve fragments in a variety of languages and scripts, including Latin, Armenian, and Greek. Today these fragments carry the class mark 1776 in the Schøyen Collection.[49] They are of interest to us as eleven of these fragments carry Arabic script on them.[50] In the Schøyen catalogue some of these notes are misread, and one of the fragments (1776/04; see fig. 6) is described as containing the "most quintessential of Middle Eastern romances and fairy tales, Thousand and One Nights, also known as the Tales of the Arabian nights";[51] and the fragment is thus classified as "children's literature". This is a misreading, as the Arabic text has nothing whatsoever to do with "Middle Eastern romances and fairy tales", but is the title of a post-canonical hadith collection. The reference to the *Thousand and One Nights* goes back to the Sotheby's sale catalogue, which marketed the items as "a series of fascicules of the Tales of the Arabian Nights" – a reference that certainly made these items more attractive to potential buyers, but is simply nonsense.

We can narrow down the provenance of these twelve fragments bought by the Schøyen Collection still further, and here we will look at one example to illustrate this. The fragment that is misclassified as children's literature, item 1776/04, is a parchment fragment with a Latin homiliary, and we can see that it contains the Arabic title in a position that we have previously seen in parchment wrappers (fig. 6). What is more, under the title are two brief notes on hadiths contained in the booklet that this fragment once enwrapped. These notes are in the distinctive hand of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī himself, and we find numerous similar notes on other booklets that he bought in the course of his safeguarding project. The Arabic title on fragment 1776/04 reads: "The first and the second [part] of the reading to [ʿĪsā b. ʿAlī Ibn al-Jarrāḥ] al-Wazīr [d. 391/1001] on the authority of [ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad] al-Baghawī." Satisfyingly, we find this exact booklet in one of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī's massive composite manuscripts, ANL MS 3774, where the booklet has become the sixth item and occupies folia 54–76.[52] When we open the Damascus manuscript, it is evident that a folio is missing as the front of this booklet bears

[49] The fragments in the class mark 1776 were sold to a buyer (so far unknown) in the auction *The History of Western Script: A Selection from The Schøyen Collection, in Celebration of the Collector's Eightieth Birthday*, Dreweatts (London), 8 July 2020, lot 46.

[50] On the Damascene provenance of these fragments and their link to the Qubbat al-khazna, see Konrad Hirschler, "Saleroom Fiction versus Provenance: Historicising Manuscripts via their Marginal and Material Logic (Schøyen Fragments 1776)", *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* (forthcoming).

[51] Schøyen Collection, "Tales of the Arabian Nights", catalogue page for MS 1776/04, https://www.schoyencollection.com/24-smaller-collections/childrens-literature/homiliary-st-gregory-ms-1776-04 (accessed 16 August 2019).

[52] Hirschler, *Monument*, entry 481h.

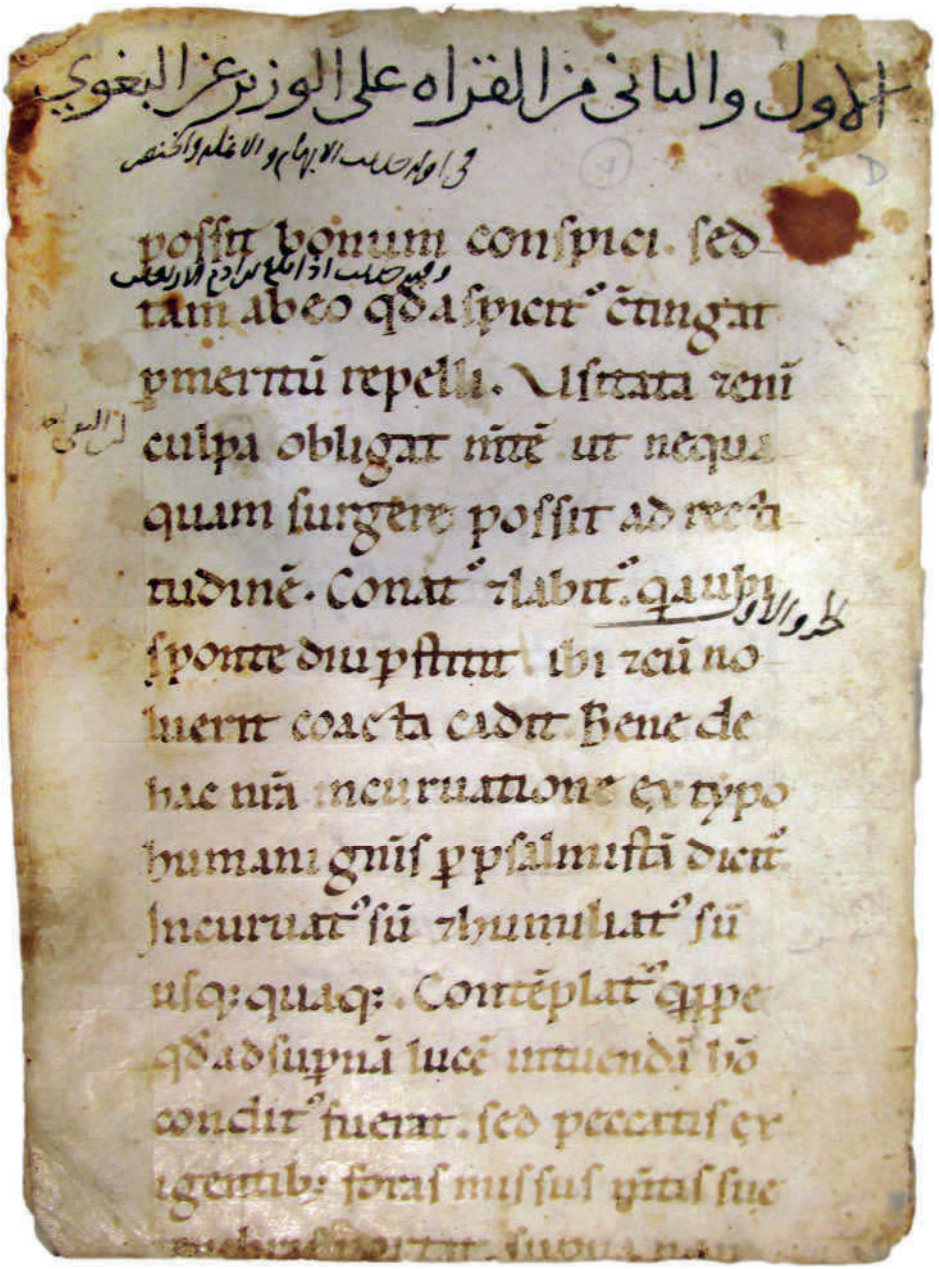


Fig. 6: Reused folio of Latin homiliary. (Oslo and London, The Schøyen Collection MS 1776/04. © The Schøyen Collection.)

no title – and the missing folio had once been a parchment wrapper, and is today known as fragment 1776/04.

In other words, the fragment that sits today in the Schøyen Collection as fragment 1776/04 is part of the Damascus reuse corpus, and is thus also closely linked to the Qubba. The same is true for all twelve items within the class mark 1776 in the Schøyen Collection.[53] That the fragments had previously been in the possession of a "private owner, Damascus, Syria (-1993)"[54] makes it highly likely that Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī removed these wrappers from their respective booklets once their material function had become pointless. However, he did not reuse them for other purposes (such as covers) and they must have had a shared trajectory with other such removed wrappers for some 500 years in the city of Damascus.

We have no information yet as to where such former reuse fragments were (and in many cases probably still are) held in Damascus. However, there is one trace to a private collection. When Bruno Violet was working on the Qubba material in Damascus in 1900 and 1901 he was also looking for additional material outside the Qubba itself. This led him into the Ottoman public library (al-Ẓāhiriyya) and brought him into close contact with local scholars and collectors. One of them was a certain "Mr Ḥajāz" who was an employee of the Banque Ottomane. This Ḥajāz (we do not yet know who he was) loaned non-Arabic fragments from his private possession to Violet, who describes them as "having served as protections of Arabic manuscripts" (die alle zum Schutze arabischer Handschriften als Deckblätter gedient haben müssen).[55] We are fortunate to have a photograph of one of these fragments (fig. 7), where we see the Arabic title "First [part] of the Teachings of Jaʿfar al-Thaqafi", once again a title that refers to a post-canonical hadith booklet.[56] This fragment is a bifolium taken from a tenth-century Prophetologion (an Old Testament lectionary), here with musical notation written in sloping ogival majuscule.[57] It is thus evident that private collectors in Damascus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries held such former reuse fragments in their possession.

The cases of the Schøyen Collection and the Ḥajāz fragment show that the host corpus is not the only place where we can find reuse fragments, but that former reuse fragments circulated in the wider manuscript topography of Damascus. There is a further – and final twist – to the story of the reuse fragments and the host corpus. In the argument above, the Qubba was not a one-way depository, as

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53 Hirschler, "Historicising Decontextualised Manuscripts".

54 Schøyen Collection, MS 1776/04 (https://www.schoyencollection.com/24-smaller-collections/childrens-literature/homiliary-st-gregory-ms-1776-04, accessed 16 August 2019).

55 Letter from Violet to Harnack, 14 June 1900, archive of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. My thanks go to Arnd Rattmann for providing me with this reference.

56 My thanks go to Arnd Rattmann for providing me with this reference and the photograph.

57 I thank Francesco D'Aiuto for providing the identification of the Greek text.



Fig. 7: Reused folio of Greek Prophetologion; photograph by B. Violet in Damascus in 1900. (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities [no class mark]. © BBAW.)

manuscript producers accessed it to source fragments for reuse purposes. In addition, we have seen that the reuse corpus is again not a one-directional corpus into which fragments went, but that fragments left this corpus for new destinations, such as private collections, as well. However there are also traces of an additional link between the Qubba and the reuse corpus, namely that fragments that went into the reuse corpus could subsequently go (or return?) to the Qubba – thus rendering the trajectory of these items even more colourful. For instance, among the photos of Qubba material that Violet took in Damascus in 1901 are several items that carry Arabic writings on them. One of them is a Samaritan bifolium that carries Arabic script and looks very much as if it was reused as a wrapper at some point in its life cycle (fig. 8).[58] Another case is the Violet fragment of a bilingual Greek–Arabic Bible mentioned earlier. This bifolium also had a life stage of reuse before it entered the Qubba.[59] A final example of a Qubba fragment with a prior life stage of reuse and photographed by Bruno Violet is a Greek fragment of the

[58] Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/45, available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/. My thanks go to Arnd Rattmann for drawing my attention to this fragment.

[59] Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic".



Fig. 8: Reused folio of Samaritan fragment; photograph by B. Violet in Damascus in 1901. (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/45. © BBAW.)

Proverbs discussed by Karl Treu.[60] These examples show an intricate relationship between this deposit of disused books and documents on the one hand and reuse practices on the other. Such a complex relationship is certainly not unique for the Qubba, and, as Serena Ammirati highlights in her contribution to this volume, the Cairene Geniza displays a similar interplay between depository and reuse.

We still do not know who deposited what materials when in the Qubba, nor for what reasons. However, the reuse corpus shows that the Qubba was neither a closed-off building nor an isolated space of no relevance to Damascene society. Rather, it seems that the Qubba material was closely integrated into the city's written culture and bookmaking practices – this depository was an essential part of the manuscript topography of Damascus. When Europeans claimed to have "discovered" the Qubba and its contents, this merely heralded the next stage in a long history of how individuals have interacted with the contents of this building.[61] The example of reuse practices clearly shows that future research will bring to light a story that is much more complicated than a clearly delineated Qubba corpus housed in the building until Europeans discovered it.

Why reuse fragments? Parchments as spolia

So far, we have seen that reusing fragments was an intricate part of Damascene manuscript culture, especially in the field of hadith transmission. The final question tackled in this paper is why manuscript producers and users opted for this practice in the first place. The first possibility that comes to mind is that this was primarily a pragmatic move to source cheap and sturdy material. As we have repeatedly seen, there is indeed a clear material logic to the reused fragments, whether they appear as wrappers or as material reused for "proper" bindings. This pragmatic line of explanation is certainly a major factor, but the following will argue that the reuse practices in Damascus are more multifaceted and have also to be taken seriously as practices that ascribed new meanings to these fragments.

Before considering why fragments were reused, it is important to note that Damascene manuscript producers and users almost never opted to make palimp-

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[60] Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, BBAW/GCS, Akz.-Nr. 481/170, available at https://bibelexegese.bbaw.de/handschriften/damaszener-handschriften/. Kurt Treu, *Majuskelbruchstücke der Septuaginta aus Damaskus*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1966. I thank Ronny Vollandt for drawing my attention to this fragment.

[61] On the Ottoman-period engagement with the Qubba, see the contribution by Cüneyd Erbay and myself in this volume. On the European discovery of the Qubba, see the paper by Boris Liebrenz in this volume, and also Paolo Radiciotti and Arianna D'Ottone, "I frammenti della Qubbaṭ al-ḫazna di Damasco: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea Rhome* 5 (2008), 45–74; Cordula Bandt and Arnd Rattmann, "Die Damaskusreise Bruno Violets 1900/1901 zur Erforschung der Qubbet el-Chazne", *Codices Manuscripti* 76/77 (2011), 1–20.

sest fragments before they reused material for binding purposes.[62] As the reuse fragments are made of parchment, it would have been relatively easy to scrape or wash off the writing on them. Thus the absence of palimpsest practices makes it probable that manuscript producers and users were not entirely disinterested in what they reused. This is particularly noteworthy because these fragments are visually so striking: it would be difficult to miss the non-Arabic scripts when leafing through an Arabic-script booklet, and the same goes for the Arabic reuse fragments, whether they are in Maghribī script or documentary hands. It must have been a deliberate decision not to engage in palimpsest practices.

Returning to a consideration of the reuse of fragments, the sole explanation other than pragmatism offered in scholarship so far for the existence of these striking elements in Damascene manuscripts is only partly convincing. Georges Vajda remarked, almost in passing, that the manuscript producers and users had little concern for these fragments "in particular when it was war booty or property of groups physically eliminated or expulsed by a hostile majority: massacres or expulsion of religious minorities, be they Jewish, Christian, or Muslim".[63] This assumption of "hostile" reuse goes hand in hand with one of the instances where a modern scholar commented upon the presence of Latin and Old French items in the Qubba: Hermann von Soden wrote in his short survey of the pieces lent to Berlin that it was "probably [Muslim] fanaticism, which tore these parchments into pieces to seal them away in the Qubba, even traces of blood are evident".[64] The search for bloody traces of past wars and invasions is certainly a widely spread topos in this period's discussion of medieval manuscripts. When George Borrow published his *Wild Wales* in 1862, he wrote in a similar vein upon visiting Lampeter:

> The grand curiosity [in this library] is a manuscript Codex containing a Latin synopsis of Scripture [Peter of Capua's *Distinctiones Theologicae*] which once belonged to the monks of Bangor Is Coed. It bears marks of blood with which it was sprinkled when the monks were massacred by the heathen Saxons, at the instigation of Austin the Pope's missionary in Britain.[65]

There is no doubt that some of the Latin and Old French items in the Qubba had changed ownership in the framework of armed conflict against the Franks. In the same vein, the Crusaders had plundered Jewish books in Jerusalem after the con-

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[62] One rare exception is ANL MS 954, fols. 41a/b and 46a/b.

[63] Georges Vajda, "Trois manuscrits de la bibliothèque du savant damascain Yusuf Ibn-Abd al-Hadi", *Journal Asiatique* 270 (1982), 231.

[64] Hermann von Soden, "Bericht über die in der Kubbet in Damaskus gefundenen Handschriftenfragmente", *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1903), no. 39, 827: "Vielleicht war es der Fanatismus, der diese Pergamente, auch Blutspuren fehlen nicht an ihnen, in Fetzen zerriß, um sie dann durch Einschließung in der Kubbet unschädlich zu machen".

[65] George Henry Borrow, *Wild Wales: Its People, Language and Scenery*, London: Murray 1862, ch. 95. I thank Elaine Treharne at Stanford University for drawing my attention to this reference.

quest of the town in 1099.[66] Against this background of books being transferred as part of a hostile act, a case of "hostile reuse" can certainly be made for some examples in the reuse corpus. There are cases where the producer of a manuscript has consciously built in a Frankish or Crusader parchment to express a sentiment of superiority and to celebrate the fact that this written artefact had come into his possession. For instance, ANL MS 1039 is another composite manuscript created by Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī,[67] and one of its booklets contains the text of *The Cited Tales of the Wondrous Doings of the Shaykhs of the Holy Land* by Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Maqdisī. This text has a very close connection to Frankish rule in Palestine as Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn's ancestors had migrated from these lands controlled by "unbelievers";[68] and this particular booklet was wrapped in a Latin parchment carrying the text of 1 Maccabees.[69] In this case, there is little doubt that reusing the fragment of a text belonging to the Frankish community that had led to the migration of the author's ancestors from Palestine to Damascus was quite a statement.

However, hostile reuse is not necessarily the whole story. It is striking that the non-Arabic and non-Muslim fragments are reused in exactly the same way as the Arabic documents and the Arabic law books. The simple act of reuse is certainly not hostile by itself and one would have to argue for such a meaning in each case individually, as argued above for the wrapper parchment of the *Wondrous Doings* – one cannot simply assume that reuse was a hostile act per se.

Consequently, I propose that we read reuse fragments in the same way as building spolia. Scholarship moved away from the simple idea that spoliation was necessarily either the outcome of a pragmatic act or a hostile act a long time ago. The incorporation of "foreign" elements into a new building can occur for a variety of reasons (and whether elements were in fact foreign for the people of the time is often open to discussion). Even for the case of "Crusader" spolia in Ayyubid Jerusalem, Finbarr Barry Flood has convincingly shown that the traditional assumption of this reuse being a case of Muslim patrons displaying victory over the religious other is not that easy to support. Rather, contemporaries ascribed a range of meanings to these spolia that Flood termed "an ambiguous aesthetic".[70] To read reuse fragments as spolia is

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66 Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992, 831–835.

67 Hirschler, *Monument*, entry 476i.

68 Daniella Talmon-Heller, "The Cited Tales of the Wondrous Doings of the Shaykhs of the Holy Land by Diya al-Din Abu ʿAbd Allah Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahid al-Maqdisi (569/1173–643/1245): Text, Translation and Commentary", *Crusades* 1 (2002), 111–154.

69 ANL MS 1039, fol. 89a.

70 Finbarr Barry Flood, "An Ambiguous Aesthetic: Crusader Spolia in Ayyubid Jerusalem", in: *Ayyubid Jerusalem: The Holy City in Context 1187–1250*, Robert Hillenbrand and Sylvia Auld, eds., London: Altajir Trust 2009, 202–215. See also Konrad Hirschler, "Frankish-Muslim Relations in the Ayyubid Period, *c.*589/1193–*c.*648/1250", in: *The Cambridge History of the Crusades*, vol. 2, *Expansion, Impact and Decline*, Jonathan Phillips and Andrew Jotischky, eds., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2021 (forthcoming).

particularly tempting when they are associated with the Qubbat al-khazna, since – at least in its current shape – that building itself rests on spolia columns.

As with building spolia, there are at least two other lines of explanation that emerge from the reuse corpus besides pragmatism and hostile reuse, what might be called "affirmative reuse" and "aesthetic reuse". With affirmative reuse, I refer to those instances where we can actually make a case that the manuscript producer or user chose a specific fragment because he or she considered this item to add to the manuscript's intended function. In these cases, reuse is the exact opposite of hostile reuse, and the user must have consciously chosen to incorporate the spolia fragments into the new manuscript and repurpose them.

A pertinent example of affirmative reuse is that of the marriage-related contract from 524/1130 discussed above, where the manuscript producer cut the contract into fourteen pieces to reuse as folia to produce a small booklet. This new booklet is a standard post-canonical hadith booklet and carries the prosaic title *Hadith of [Muḥammad b. Ayyūb] Ibn Ḍurays [d. 294/906]*.[71] The interesting element is that the writer and owner of this booklet is none other than the son of the couple whose marriage the contract documented.[72] In other words, we have here a son lovingly cutting his parents' marital paperwork into pieces to make writing material for a new booklet.

This act might indicate rather troubled relationships within this family, but in fact the son's intention was affirmative. The text of this booklet was of crucial importance to him as it inserted him into prestigious and short lines of transmission back to the Prophet Muhammad – the central purpose of post-canonical hadith scholarship. This booklet was thus an important stepping-stone in the career of an aspiring scholar and the numerous notes in the manuscript documenting his transmission of the text show that he was quite successful in this aim. Repurposing the marriage-related contract of his parents had the benefit of combining the scholarly prestige embedded in the hadith text (and the growing number of transmission notes) with the social prestige embedded in the contract. As mentioned earlier, his family belonged to the wealthy strata of Damascene society, and so the new booklet elegantly combined cultural and social prestige. It thus functioned as a kind of curriculum vitae, allowing the son to display where he came from (and probably where he aspired to go). When leafing through the booklet one gets the impression that he did not leave the succession of the contract's fragments in the booklet to chance. The reader encounters in the first fragment of the original contract a passage with parts of two lines where the names of the scholar's father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather are clearly legible. In addition, he made sure that the reader did not miss the sum of fifty dinars in this first encounter with the fragment.[73] Even

[71] Hirschler, *Monument*, entry 564f (ANL MS 3748/6).
[72] His role is evident from the notes of transmission such as ANL MS 3748/6, fol. 158b (dated 586/1190).
[73] ANL MS 3748/6, fol. 144b.

though cutting a contract into pieces might seem at first glance a destructive act, the real intention here was the exact opposite. It was an act of spoliation to preserve what was important and to repurpose it for one's own benefit.

As well as affirmative reuse, aesthetic reuse seems to have played a major part in Damascene reuse practices. It is evident that the manuscript producers wanted to retain the text of their spolia – as we have seen, we find almost no palimpsests. They clearly had an interest in preserving the original text and this is also evident from the way the fragments are repurposed. The wrapper fragments, for instance, were generally employed in a way that allowed the producers to write the new title in existing margins without having to remove part or all of the original text (see e.g. figs. 3, 6, 7, and 8).

In the case of the Maghribī fragments and the non-Arabic fragments, it seems that incorporating the exotic was a major driving force. In this sense fragment reuse was not too different from reusing building spolia where, as has been argued with reference to the Frankish or Crusader spolia in Jerusalem, "the use of spolia … constituted an engagement with some of the aesthetic values and decorative principles of an antecedent tradition".[74] In some sense, it could be argued that the deliberate preference for Maghribī fragments comes down to a fascination with what was clearly a rather foreign element in Damascene manuscript culture. Anybody with even the most basic levels of literacy would have recognised that the script on this wrapper was clearly distinct from the standard scripts employed in the city. What exactly was written on these fragments was most likely not of major interest – it was their "exotic" visual appearance that counted. The fragments' materiality reinforced this exotic element. Damascene manuscript culture had fully transitioned from parchment to paper by the sixth/twelfth century. The only exceptions were Korans and some legal documents, where we find the use of parchment well into the eighth/fourteenth century;[75] manuscripts with hadiths or on law were without exception written on paper. The Maghribī parchment fragments thus had a distinctively archaic feel to them. One might wonder to what extent antiquarian interests drove reuse practices – that is, an interest in preserving objects of the past while being fully conscious of their pastness and believing that this pastness deserved to be salvaged precisely because it was long gone.[76]

Even more exotic than the Maghribī fragments were those fragments in scripts other than Arabic. As mentioned above, it is particularly noteworthy that Damascene manuscript producers and users loved to reuse Latin-script fragments, in particular those with musical notation, as seen for example in figure 5. Within

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74 Flood, "Ambiguous Aesthetic", 214.

75 For Damascene parchment documents, see Mouton, Sourdel, and Sourdel-Thomine, *Mariage et séparation*.

76 On antiquarianism, see for instance Peter N. Miller and François Louis, eds., *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500–1800*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2012.

Damascus, Latin was certainly the more exotic script when compared with Greek or Syriac. In addition, pages with musical notation must have been exceptionally flashy, as Arabic culture had not developed any such written system to record music, and manuscript users would perceive these weird dots and strokes between the lines as a visually attractive element and were particularly inclined to reuse such fragments for aesthetic reasons. Similarly, while scripts such as Greek or Syriac were much less foreign to a Damascene reading audience, they were certainly striking within the context of Arabic booklets. Here, the visual attractiveness might have also been a conscious reference to the city's past, a nod to earlier Damascene manuscript cultures that were much more multiscriptual and multilingual.

When Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī brought so many of these booklets into his possession in the late ninth/fifteenth century he arguably shared this aesthetic appreciation. As we have seen, he repeatedly used fragments that had been wrappers as the covers of his new composite manuscripts. One such fine example is a Hebrew fragment that we see today on the outside of the composite manuscript Supplément Turc 984 in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (fig. 9). Even though time has taken its toll and the parchment has damage on the margins, this manuscript still has a striking appearance. When Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī wrote a list of the manuscripts that he had created, he repeatedly noted with evident self-satisfaction "and it is one of the precious [books]".[77]

The elephant in the room is the following question: how exactly did the fragments find their way from the Qubba into the booklets? This paper certainly cannot settle the question conclusively, but it can point to one likely path. The sale of scrap paper and parchment on the paper market was certainly quite normal. For instance, after the transition to paper it was standard practice for discarded books to be sold on the market to paper makers for pulping. Hence, writers of normative works, such as the well-known fourteenth-century treatise by the Egyptian author Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 737/1336), were worried and warned that pulping had its limits. He explicitly censured those who sold paper for this purpose with Koranic text, hadiths, or the names of God, the prophets, and the angels on it.[78] In the same vein, we read of undeserving relatives who accessed a scholar's library to dismantle the bound volumes and sell them for their scrap paper value by weight. Moreover, there was always the possibility that paper could be reused for other purposes such as wrapping foodstuffs.[79] The neighbourhoods around the Umayyad Mosque were the most bookish and "paperish" areas of Damascus and to their north we find in the Kallāsa Quarter a well-established book market. More importantly, just outside the mosque to its west was the massive bookbinders' market

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[77] "*Wa-huwa min al-nafāʾis*"; for instance Hirschler, *Monument*, entries 404q, 411u, 412k, 446k, 463o, 468s, 485o, 488o.

[78] Ibn al-Ḥājj, *al-Madkhal li-Ilm al-Ḥājj*, Cairo: Dār al-turāth *c.*1992, 4:82.

[79] Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *The Book in Mamluk Egypt and Syria (1250–1517): Scribes, Libraries and Market*, Leiden: Brill 2018, 12.

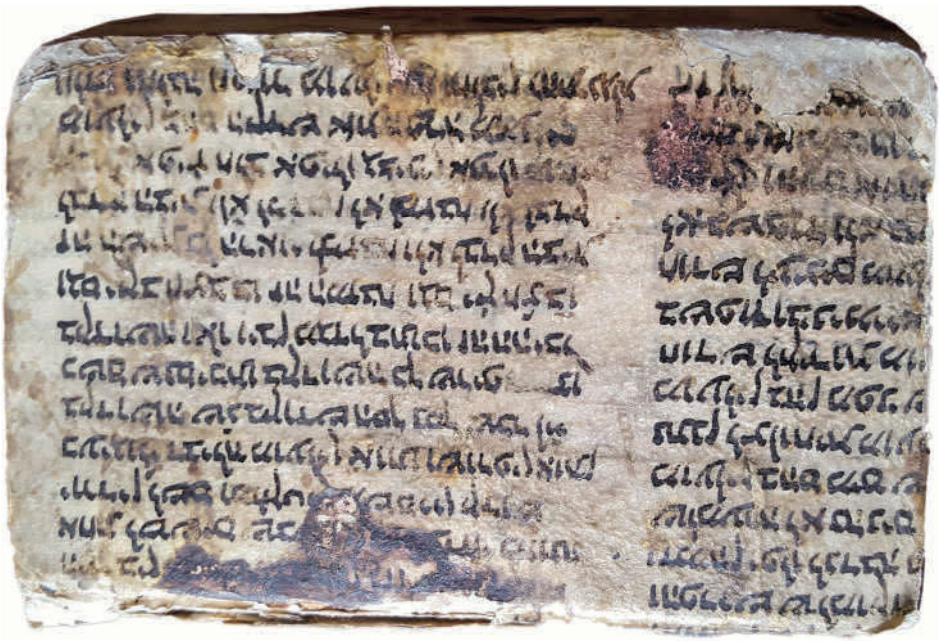


Fig. 9: Hebrew folio reused as a binding cover. (Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Supplément Turc 984. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

and the paper market (*sūq al-warrāqīn*) in Bāb al-Barīd.[80] It is likely that parchment fragments from the Qubba found their way into this market as well (which was less than fifty metres from the Qubba) and subsequently into the booklets of our corpus.

In sum, reuse practices have to be seen in terms of a range of motivations that went far beyond pragmatism and hostile reuse. We must add at least affirmative reuse and aesthetic reuse as additional factors that make sense of the numerous booklets and manuscripts with reuse fragments in our corpus. Most importantly, each of these booklets and manuscripts has its own idiosyncratic story. Their producers and users are poorly served if they are depicted as nothing but waste pickers or aficionados of blood-spattered pages. These fragments were attractive because they were available at a low cost or no cost at all, and they certainly might have been reused as an expression of hostility. Yet these manuscript producers and users have more complex stories to tell once we start to consider reuse seriously as a culturally meaningful practice undertaken by social actors.

[80] Hirschler, *Monument*, ch. 2.

Conclusion

The discussion of reuse practices in Damascene hadith booklets, primarily produced and circulating between the fifth/eleventh and eighth/fourteenth centuries, has shown that Qubba fragments are found well beyond the known collections. For the Cairo Geniza, we have a comparable case, where producers of cheap rotuli tended particularly to reuse Arabic administrative documents; but the beauty of those books is that they subsequently returned to the Geniza and have thus retained a much clearer corpus identity.[81] For the Qubba, we have seen examples of some fragments being reused and subsequently returning to the Qubba, but the much larger part of the reuse corpus is today in the covers of manuscripts distributed across libraries around the globe that have no evident connection with the Qubba. The fragments in the Schøyen Collection show furthermore that these fragments reappear in very unexpected locations. The example of this reuse corpus thus alerts us to the fact that reconstituting what was in the Qubba can lead us down rather unexpected and at first glance secondary roads. The question of which exact fragments have a Qubba provenance and which do not will certainly be a major issue in future scholarship. The Qubba corpus, in other words, has quite obscure boundaries at the moment.

These unclear boundaries, in turn, go back to the fact that the Qubba corpus did not lie dormant for centuries before its "discovery" in the late nineteenth century. We know that material went into the Qubba right up to the very moment of its "opening". Bruno Violet himself saw recent financial documents from the mosque and an Arabic Bible printed in London in 1830 among the Qubba material.[82] More importantly, this paper has argued that the Qubba was not a one-way depository, but an integral part of the wider Damascene manuscript culture. Fragments from the Qubba were able to find their way into manuscripts and were reused in a variety of ways – here we have only focused on one of their functions, as wrappers of booklets. These reused fragments could subsequently return to the Qubba, where we find them as fragments that only at first glance seem to have had an unproblematic and linear Qubba trajectory. Only by seeing the Qubba as one part of the topography of the written word in Damascus will we be able to understand its history and, more importantly, the history of individual items.

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Cordula Bandt obtained her PhD in Jewish Studies and Ancient Greek from Freie Universität Berlin with an *editio princeps* of the anonymous sixth-century Christian treatise *About the Mystery of the Letters*. She has been a staff member since 2007 of the long-term editorial project "Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller (GCS) / Die alexandrinische und antiochenische Bibelexegese in der Spätantike" at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Currently, she is preparing a new critical edition of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Commentary on Psalms* (Psalms 51–100). Her further research areas include alphabet and letter speculations in Jewish and Christian tradition, Greek catenae on Psalms, and Bruno Violet's photographs of the manuscript fragments he found in the Qubbat al-khazna.

Gideon Bohak holds the Jacob M. Alkow Chair for the History of the Jews in the Ancient World at Tel Aviv University, where he teaches in the Department of Jewish Philosophy and Talmud. His research focuses on the history of Jewish magic and on magical, mystical, astrological, and divinatory texts from the Cairo Geniza. His most recent books include *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), and *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic* (Cherub

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Donatella Bucca is currently an independent scholar of Greek palaeography and Byzantine musical palaeography. Since 2000 she has been conducting Byzantine research in different institutions. She studied Byzantine musical palaeography at the University of Copenhagen (2000) and Greek palaeography at the University of Messina (Italy), where she obtained her PhD in 2004. In 2006 she received a four-year research grant from the University of Messina to study the manuscript tradition of the *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets of Theodoret of Cyrus*, and between 2017 and 2019 she was a research fellow on Greek palaeography at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata", participating in the project of cataloguing Italo-Greek manuscripts preserved in Italian libraries. Since the 2017/2018 academic year she has been offering the course "Introduction to Greek Palaeography" at the Pontificium Institutum Augustinianum in Rome as a visiting professor. She is the author of a catalogue of Greek musical manuscripts (*Catalogo dei manoscritti musicali greci del SS. Salvatore di Messina*). Her scientific research and publications focus on the history of the oldest Greek liturgical and musical books, Greek hymnography, musical Greek palaeography, and Greek palaeography.

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Arianna D'Ottone Rambach is Professor of Arabic Language and Literature at Sapienza University of Rome, a junior fellow of the Sapienza School for Advanced Studies (SSAS), and the coordinator of the PhD programme "Civilizations of Asia and Africa". Together with Paolo Radiciotti (1951–2012), she gave impulse to the rediscovery of the history of the Qubbat al-khazna find ("I frammenti della Qubbat al-ḫazna: A proposito di una scoperta sottovalutata", *Nea*

Rhome 5, 2008). Editor of the volume *Palaeography Between East and West* (Fabrizio Serra, 2018), she has authored several works on Classical Arabic literature, Arabic palaeography and codicology, numismatics, and papyrology. In 2018 she was awarded the Samir Shamma Prize of the Royal Numismatic Society (London). She is currently the principle investigator of the project "Rediscovering the Oriental School at Sapienza University. Celestino Schiaparelli's Bequest: His Library and Unpublished Papers" (2017–2020).

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Gabriele Giannini has been teaching at the University of Montreal since 2012 and is now the director of its Centre for Medieval Studies. He is a Romance philologist trained at the universities of Bologna, Rome (Sapienza), and Göttingen, as well as at the École pratique des hautes études (Paris), and his research focuses on the materiality of textual transmission. His interests include the development of French literature in Italy through its manuscript circulation, apocryphal and hagiographic literature in both *langue d'oc* and *langue d'oïl*, and texts originating from or circulating in the Latin East. His edition of the French *Life of Saint Agnes* in decasyllabic quatrains is forthcoming in the Anciens auteurs belges collection of the Académie royale de Belgique.

Konrad Hirschler is Professor of Islamic Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin and was previously Professor of Middle Eastern History at SOAS (University of London). His research focuses on Egypt and Syria in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (*c.*1200–1500) with a focus on social and cultural history. Over the last few years, he has worked primarily on the history of reading, of the book, and of libraries in the Syrian lands with an emphasis on social contexts and material cultures. His main current project is concerned with a private book collection from fourteenth-century Jerusalem. He is the author of *A Monument to Medieval Syrian Book Culture: The Library of Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020), *Medieval Damascus: Plurality and Diversity in an Arabic Library* (Edinburgh University Press, 2016), *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh University Press, 2012), and *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors* (Routledge, 2006).

Miriam L. Hjälm defended her doctoral thesis on Early Christian Arabic versions of Daniel (Brill, 2016) at Uppsala University in 2015. The same year, she

joined the "Biblia Arabica" project at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich where she continued to work on pre-modern Bible translations composed by Christian Arabic speakers. She particularly focused on translation techniques and palaeography, and composed several overviews of the Christian Arabic Bible endeavour (see *The Textual History of the Bible*, 3 vols., Brill, 2016–2020). In 2017 she became a lecturer at the Department of Eastern Christian Studies at the Stockholm School of Theology where she is teaching courses on Bible reception, languages, and the history of religion. The same year, she began a research project sponsored by the Swedish Research Council, working on the perception and use of the Bible among Christian Arabic speakers in medieval times, with special attention paid to how Jews and the Hebrew Bible are depicted by these Christians.

Fabio Ioppolo is a graduate student at the Institute for the Near and Middle East of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, specialising in the history and literature of Jews in the region. He is a research assistant in the projects "Manuscript Hunters" and the "Qaraite and Rabbanite Calendars: Origins, Interaction, and Polemic". His research interest focuses on the codicology, palaeography, and production background of Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts.

Grigory Kessel is a research associate at the Institute for Medieval Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as well as at the University of Manchester. His research focuses on the literary heritage of Syriac Christianity with particular attention to manuscripts. Besides manuscripts, his publications deal with Syriac medical and monastic texts. He has participated in a number of cataloguing projects, including the "Sinai Palimpsests Project" and that of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library. He was a recipient of a fellowship in Byzantine studies at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and is currently a holder of the ERC Starting Grant "HUNAYNNET: Transmission of Classical Scientific and Philosophical Literature from Greek into Syriac and Arabic" that is working on creating a digital trilingual and linguistically annotated parallel corpus of Greek scientific and philosophical literature and the Syriac and Arabic translations thereof.

Levon Stepani Khachikyan (1918-1982) was one of the foremost historians and philologists in Armenian Studies in the twentieth century. He was head of the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, the Matenadaran, from 1944. Between 1949-1954 he also worked in the Institute of History of Academy of Sciences of Armenian SSR. In 1954 he became the director of the Matenadaran and headed it till the end of his life.

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Artashes Matevosyan (1922-2004) specialized in Armenian codicology and was member of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He was the author, amongst other, of *A Book of Knowledge and Belief by the Priest David: The Oldest Armenian Manuscript on Paper (981)* (Nairi, 1997, in Armenian) and editor of books such as *Colphons of the Armenian Manuscripts (Thirteenth Century)* (Yerevan, 1984).

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Ronny Vollandt is Professor of Judaic Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich and currently the first chairperson of the German Association of Jewish Studies. His teaching focuses on rabbinic Judaism and on the intellectual history of Jews in the Islamicate world. He researches Arabic versions of the Bible, Judaeo-Arabic literature, and Jewish cultural heritage, and above all manuscripts, in the Near East. He is the author of *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch: A Comparative Study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Sources* (Brill, 2015, awarded the Boehlig prize in 2017), and co-directed the research project "Biblia Arabica". Together with Dr Miriam Goldstein (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), he recently received a DFG grant Award for Research Cooperation and High Excellence in Science for the edition, identification, and cataloguing of manuscripts related to Bible exegesis and translation in the Firkovich collections. He is keen on passing on his passion for studying medieval Jewish manuscripts, their codicology, repositories, and acquisition histories to his students (https://www.manuscripthunters.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/).

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