

# AETHIOPICA

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**Vignette:**

Gold coin of King Aphilas, early third century CE, as drawn by A. Luegmeyer after the coin in Rennau collection. Weight 2.48 grams, diameter 17 mm.

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The journal focuses on philology, linguistics, archaeology, history, cultural anthropology, religion, philosophy, literature, and manuscript studies with a regional emphasis on Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa, and related areas. The editors welcome contributions on relevant academic topics as well as on recent research in the respective field. Each issue of **AETHIOPICA** contains reviews of books which form a substantial section of the journal.

**AETHIOPICA** is published mainly in English. Articles in French, German, and Italian are also accepted for publication. An English summary for all articles in any language is provided.

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## Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA is the twenty-fifth since the journal's founding in 1998. It is also the thirteenth issue I have worked on as editor-in-chief, one more than that of founder Siegbert Uhlig. The present time, however, does not lend itself to celebrations of any sort. The global political crisis and the situation in the Horn of Africa are having a deep impact on the scholarly community, which appears divided and radicalized on opposite or increasingly diverging positions as never before. The growing influence of diaspora communities is at times marked by waves of resurgent nationalism. The challenge posed by main-stream policy in countries of established scholarly traditions gives less and less space to small fields—as is the case of Ethiopian and Eritrean studies. The consequent lack of resources triggers the fragmentation of the scholarly scene. New balances based on mutual legitimation and acknowledgement of a common scholarly method are not obvious. The consequence of this complex situation, which reflects global changes, is that scholarly and academic freedom can be put at risk. Of all priorities envisaged in the mission of AETHIOPICA, preservation of academic freedom along with scholarly quality has been, is, and will remain the top priority of the journal.

I regret that in the past, and still now, the lack of available qualified authors has prevented AETHIOPICA from duly commemorating distinct colleagues and researchers recently passed away who were more than deserving of an obituary. I would like to remember at least some of them here, by name, as a very modest tribute to their work and memory: Johannes Launhardt (1929–2019), Mesfin Wolde Mariam (1930–2020), Steffen Wenig (1934–2022), Girma Fisseha (1941–2020).

To end on a positive note, three colleagues active in Ethiopian and Eritrean studies have received important awards this year, and we would like to mention them here: Samantha Kelly (Professor of Medieval History at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, also on our International Editorial Board), has won the Choice Outstanding Academic Title 2020, and the African Studies Review Prize for the Best Africa-focused Anthology or Edited Collection 2021, for her *A Companion to Medieval Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Leiden–Boston, MA: Brill, 2020); Verena Krebs (Junior-Professorin für Mittelalterliche Kulturräume at Ruhr-Universität Bochum) has received the Dan David Prize for her *Medieval Ethiopian Kingship, Craft, and Diplomacy with Latin Europe* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); and Massimo Zaccaria (Professore Associato in Storia e Istituzioni dell'Africa at Università degli Studi di Pavia) has received the Giorgio Maria Sangiorgi award of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei 'per la Storia ed Etnologia dell'Africa'. To all of them—the warmest congratulations from AETHIOPICA!

# **A Handlist of Illustrated Early Solomonic Manuscripts in German Public Collections**

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College London, and VITAGRAZIA PISANI, Universität Hamburg

## **1 Introduction**

Processes that revolve around the identification, collection, organization, and presentation of data and that can be subsumed under the term ‘cataloguing’ are of critical importance to research in the science and the humanities. This is true also for the field of Christian Ethiopian art that takes the material and visual culture of the Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox churches as its main object of study. Illustrated manuscripts in the Ethiopic language, as material objects that carry textual and visual information, are among the most valuable sources of data for art historians specializing in this area. These ‘hand-written artefacts’ continue to be studied individually and collaboratively by researchers specializing in fields such as philology, codicology, literary studies, biology, conservation, statistics, history, theology, sociology, and anthropology. Given that current reasonable estimates put the total number of Ethiopic codex manuscripts at 200,000 units or more, and that a significant portion of these remain undocumented or understudied, it is evident that there is a continued need for research devoted to cataloguing these items.

Catalogues of Ethiopic manuscripts have been essential tools for researchers since August Dillmann’s publication of a volume devoted to the collection of the British Museum (subsequently moved to the British Library after its foundation in 1973) in 1847. Since then, catalogues of Ethiopic manuscripts housed in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Europe, America, and other parts of the world have been published at regular intervals, though—as Alessandro Bausi observes in a study devoted to the methodological importance and historical development of cataloguing in the field of Ethiopian studies—every cataloguer has adopted a different approach to the task.<sup>1</sup>

Art historians and other specialists have also approached the task of identifying and describing illustrated Ethiopic manuscripts in different ways. Important

<sup>1</sup> Bausi 2007; see also Witakowski 2015.

early milestones include a 1939 article by Ugo Monneret de Villard, which is still in some ways unsurpassed in terms of ambition and scope even if it is quite outdated in terms of methodology, and a pioneering and not yet entirely superseded handlist of illuminated Oriental Christian manuscripts published in 1942 by Hugo Buchthal and Otto Kurz, which includes scant descriptions of some thirty-seven Ethiopian pieces in Western collections.<sup>2</sup> In general, there have only been sporadic and isolated attempts to systematize the available data, due in part to the large volume of evidence and in part to the marginalization of the field.

Significant exceptions included a volume on illuminated Ethiopic manuscripts from different periods published by Ernst Hammerschmidt and Otto A. Jäger in 1968 that features manuscripts from different periods in German collections;<sup>3</sup> a handlist of datable illustrated manuscripts from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries by Anaïs Wion and Claire Bosc-Tiessé;<sup>4</sup> and a monograph by Ewa Balicka-Witakowska that attempts to present all known examples of the theme of the Crucifixion without the Crucified.<sup>5</sup> Studies that attempt to survey the works of a single artist/scribe within a regional framework, such as those by Bosc-Tiessé, should also be mentioned as important efforts to organize the existing data.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to individual initiatives, over the years there have also been frequent calls for scholars to work collaboratively to publish reproductions and comprehensive catalogues of known examples of illustrated Ethiopic manuscripts, including Claude Lepage's proposal for a 'Publication en coopération internationale d'un catalogue des anciens manuscrits éthiopiens à miniatures'.<sup>7</sup> However, for the most part, such initiatives have failed to make progress because of a combination of logistical, financial, and operative difficulties.

Unfortunately, neither the historiography of the field nor the methodology of the various contributions to the history of Ethiopian book illumination have been examined in detail, but even a cursory review shows that there are significant lacunae and discrepancies in the existing literature due to a variety of factors including the different research interests and backgrounds of the authors, temporal and/or budgetary constraints, changing standards of scholarship, lack of

<sup>2</sup> Monneret de Villard 1939; Buchthal and Kurz 1942.

<sup>3</sup> Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968.

<sup>4</sup> Bosc-Tiessé and Wion 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Balicka-Witakowska 1997; more examples of the subject were discovered after the publication of the book, and there have been other studies focusing on a particular theme in Ethiopian art, but Balicka-Witakowska's contribution remains unsurpassed in terms of its effort to systematically review the available evidence.

<sup>6</sup> Bosc-Tiessé 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Lepage 1994. See also Leroy 1955.

coordination across institutions and countries, and the absence of shared guideline for best practice. The advent of the digital age has multiplied the tools and resources available to Ethiopianists, but it has also resulted in the emergence of new challenges and contributed to a growing recognition of the need for globally operative and descriptive frameworks that allow for interoperability and linked data.<sup>8</sup>

Among the digital platforms that have emerged in the last two decades that should be mentioned are vHMML, which contains manuscripts and microfilms of manuscripts digitized by the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library;<sup>9</sup> Mäzɡäbä Səəlat: Treasury of Ethiopian Images, which contains images of Ethiopian churches and artworks, including partially photographed manuscripts, generously provided by Michael Gervers, Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, and other scholars;<sup>10</sup> Ménestrel: Médiévistes sur le net: sources, travaux et références en ligne, which is still a valuable resource even if it appears that the website is no longer being updated;<sup>11</sup> and Beta maṣāḥəft: Die Schriftkultur des christlichen Äthiopiens und Eritreas: eine multimediale Forschungsumgebung.<sup>12</sup> Libraries and museums in Europe and America have also been launching projects to digitize their collections, thus providing researchers with remote access to a wealth of relevant data.

This handlist of early Solomonic manuscripts in public German collections was compiled keeping the above background in mind and within the framework of the AHRC-DFG funded project Demarginalizing medieval Africa: Images, texts, and identity in early Solomonic Ethiopia (1270–1527), acronymized as ITIESE.<sup>13</sup> The project, co-directed by Jacopo Gnisci and Alessandro Bausi, sets

<sup>8</sup> Twenty-first century initiatives such as Cataloging Cultural Object (CCO), described in Baca et al. 2006, and Categories for the Description of Works of Art (CDWA), as well as the older ICONCLASS classification system, have not had a major impact on the field; for a discussion of these issues that focuses on illuminated manuscripts, see Cashion 2016. It remains to be seen whether the approach of assigning XML IDs to Art Themes adopted by the Beta maṣāḥəft project and developed by Jacopo Gnisci will have an impact on the discipline, but the systematic application of the method presented in Reule 2022 is promising. The Princeton Ethiopian Miracles of Mary digital humanities project is adopting some of the principles of the CDWA for its description of the illuminations of Ethiopic manuscripts (personal communication from Wendy Belcher, 30 March 2022). For an overview of digital approaches to Ethiopian studies, see Liuzzo 2019.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.vhmml.org/>, last access on 30 March 2022.

<sup>10</sup> <http://ethiopia.deeds.utoronto.ca/lightbox1.jsp>, last access on 30 March 2022.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.menestrel.fr/?-Inventaire-des-bibliotheques-et-des-catalogues-des-manuscrits-ethiopiens-&lang=fr>, last access on 30 March 2022.

<sup>12</sup> <https://betamasahaft.eu/>, last access on 30 March 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Gnisci and Bausi 2021. Research for this contribution was supported by the AHRC-DFG project, grant ref. nos. AH/V002910/1 and 448410109. For project details and acknowledgments see <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/art-history/research/demarginalizing-medieval-africa>

out to examine the cultural significance of Ethiopic manuscripts produced during the early Solomonic period, with a special focus on pieces that feature illuminations. One aim of the project is to contribute to enriching the history of these illuminated books by producing and analysing descriptive data about them.

The present work is the first of a projected two-part survey of illuminated Ethiopic manuscripts housed in public collections in Germany and the United Kingdom. ITIESE aims to publish a second contribution, focusing on examples from the United Kingdom, in a subsequent volume of *Aethiopica*. Further funding, or contributions by other colleagues, will hopefully lead to the appearance of similar initiatives for other nations.

## 2 Objectives

In a discussion about scholarship in the digital age, Christine L. Borgman observes that ‘if related data and documents can be linked together in a scholarly information infrastructure, creative new forms of data- and information-intensive, distributed, collaborative, multidisciplinary research and learning become possible.’<sup>14</sup> This principle is also valid for handlists such as this. In fact, while most of the manuscripts presented here have either been catalogued before or mentioned in the literature, they had never been collated and presented as a single data corpus. In other words, surveys of this kind are important tools for comparative research that enable a more integrative approach to the study of book illumination in the Ethiopian empire.

Crucially, our contribution also adds to the existing literature in several ways. For example, the not entirely superseded handlist of illuminated oriental Christian manuscripts published by Buchthal and Kurz lists only one illuminated Ethiopic manuscript for Germany (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 59) out of the twenty one examples included here.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, it provides a description of both the visual and textual features of manuscripts that have not always been systematically considered in current publications: catalogues published over twenty years ago tend to omit descriptions of miniatures and their visual features, while exhibition catalogues and art historical articles tend to omit information about the textual content and physical features of the codices in which they are found. Therefore, this handlist both

<sup>14</sup> Borgman 2010, 115.

<sup>15</sup> Buchthal and Kurz 1942, 64. The two scholars mistakenly include Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Petermann II, Nachtrag 34 in their list due to a typo in Monneret de Villard 1939, 19: the Italian mistakenly refers to entry number 75 (= Petermann II, Nachtrag 34) from Dillmann 1878 rather than number 73 (= Ms. or. oct. 59).

consolidates and expands the available information and presents it in a uniform manner.

We are aware of the fact that our work also has its limitations, the most apparent being that we do not go into too much detail about the various codicological and textual features of the manuscripts presented here and that we concentrate our efforts on those units that can be ascribed to approximately 1270 CE to 1527 CE, that is to say those parts of the manuscript that belong to the period on which the ITIESE project focuses. Admittedly, the subsequent history of these manuscripts and, more generally, of book illustration in the Ethiopian empire are just as worthy of investigations, but such temporal segmentations, arbitrary as they may be, are a necessary compromise for project viability. As for the former limitation, the presence of links to descriptions of these manuscripts on the Beta maṣāḥəft website means that users of this work will be able to access more detailed records about these objects as they become available.<sup>16</sup> Linking data in this way could become standard practice in coming years, as it makes it possible to overcome some of the disadvantages of a publication, such as the fact that it cannot be updated over the years, by connecting it to records that can, theoretically, be kept updated as cataloguing practices develop.

### 3 Focus

The manuscripts included in this work come from the following institutions: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (henceforth SBPK);<sup>17</sup> Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (henceforth BSB); Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente (henceforth MFK);<sup>18</sup> Schleswig, Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf (henceforth MASG);<sup>19</sup> Tübingen, Universitätsbibliothek. In most cases, the researchers travelled to the museums and libraries to examine the pieces directly, in others we received or used the digital images of the manuscripts made available by a number of German insti-

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Beta maṣāḥəft records were created or amended by Vitagrazia Pisani and Sophia Dege-Müller, while others were created by other contributors to this catalogue. It is important to note that, at the time this article was written, the level of detail of entries varies considerably: some are quite detailed, while others just provide basic information.

<sup>17</sup> Visited in September 2021 by Sophia Dege-Müller; Meliné Pelivianian and the staff from the reading room kindly prepared and supported the visit.

<sup>18</sup> Visited in November 2021 by Vitagrazia Pisani, under the permission and kind hospitality of Dr Stefan Eisenhofer, head of the Abteilungen Afrika südlich der Sahara und Nordamerika.

<sup>19</sup> We received a set of photos of the relevant items from the museum. The photos were taken by the museum and kindly provided to us by Denis Nosnitsin on their behalf. Sophia Dege-Müller also visited the museum in September 2022, thanks to the kind hospitality of Dr Mechthild Freudenberg.

tutions. The availability of digital images helped us assess, in combination with an analysis of existing records, whether an institution held material relevant to the ITIESE project and whether the researchers needed to travel there in person.<sup>20</sup> Manuscripts that were not viewed *in situ* by us are marked with an asterisk after the shelf mark.

The ITIESE project has a strong focus on Ethiopic manuscripts from the early Solomonic period that feature figurative illustrations. These are images that typically show holy figures or scenes derived from the Bible or other types of Christian literature. Our original plan was to include only such examples in the handlist. However, since our scoping led us to also examine manuscripts decorated with headpieces or other kinds of polychrome and monochrome interlace patterns, we decided to also include these even if they are not the core focus of ITIESE, as we believe it will add to the value of this work. We have not considered those marginal or columnar signs that can be considered elements of punctuation and decoration, as we feel they are a subject that requires a different research programme.

The illuminated manuscripts surveyed below were all written in Gə'əz, though some contain later notes or information in different languages, including several *additiones* in Amharic, but also in Italian (i.e. a letter in SBPK Ms. or. oct. 59); Arabic (e.g. a gloss in SBPK Ms. or. quart. 172); and Latin (e.g. the notes penned by Hiob Ludolf in SBPK Ms. or. fol. 117, Ms. or. oct. 59, and Ms. or. quart. 172).<sup>21</sup>

#### 4 Cataloguing Scheme

This subsection offers an overview of our cataloguing practices. All entries are listed in alphabetical order according to location, repository, and shelf mark. For each entry, the following information (when available) is given:

– **Physical features:** outer dimensions in millimetres (height × width × thickness); number of units; writing support material; number of folia; number of columns. We were able to take the dimension of most of our selected manuscripts *in situ*. In the remaining cases we mark either uncertainties with a ‘c.’, or leave a question mark, when we do not have the measurement—mostly the case for the thickness of the spine. This is particularly the case for items without boards, for which we provide the leaf dimensions. Moreover, for items with multiple codicological units, we only give the outer dimensions of the ‘core’ text

<sup>20</sup> Arguably, it would have been beneficial to view and consult all manuscripts across all collections, but this was not possible due to temporal constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Ludolf, Hiob’, *EAE*, III (2007), 601b–603b (S. Uhlig).

block. As part of our approach, we are aligned with those theories that view ‘the codex as a complex object’, and believe that manuscripts with multiple codicological units require greater descriptive depth.<sup>22</sup> Foliation is treated in different ways by cataloguers and curators.<sup>23</sup> To avoid discrepancies, we adopt the existing foliation we found in the publications or in the manuscripts themselves unless we explicitly state otherwise. We also provide the column numbers.<sup>24</sup>

– **Dating:** this section indicates our proposed dating of the manuscript’s unit(s) and our criteria. For most manuscripts, the dating is tentative and based on an analysis of palaeography and visual evidence.<sup>25</sup> In such instances, we have kept the dating range intentionally wide and readers should consider that for most of such dates the dating could shift by at least  $\pm 25$  years. Some of these proposed ranges have a question mark to indicate that we are less confident about our suggestion. In a smaller number of other cases, the dating rests on the presence of colophons or additions to the manuscript that provide us with a *terminus ante quem* and/or a *terminus post quem*. For composite manuscripts we offer different dates, and list them according to the appearance of the units, but we do not focus on features that we deemed subsequent to our project’s cut-off date. In some cases, our proposals coincide with the existing literature, but in others they recalibrate proposed dates. This has also meant that we have at times excluded examples from this handlist that had been previously ascribed to an earlier date, but we are not explicit about such exclusions.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Balicka-Witakowska et al. 2015, 162–163. We do not discuss bindings, as we could not always investigate each item, and risked introducing inconsistencies in our work. We also do not comment on the state of preservation as this can be a somewhat arbitrary when concisely described with terms such as good or bad. For manuscript fragments we do not go into detail about the completeness of the text, but such information is typically provided in those existing catalogues included in the bibliography for each entry.

<sup>23</sup> For example, when SBPK Ms. or. fol. 117 was paginated, the cataloguer skipped the folium with the decoration which thus needs to be located as being in between page 256 and 257. Other examples have no foliation at all, which makes references to specific folia difficult or impossible. Such instances are pointed out in the ‘Observations’ subsection of each entry.

<sup>24</sup> Some manuscript, such as the Ethiopic Psalter (CAe 2701), have multiple layouts, whereas other fragmentary manuscripts only contain miniatures. For these latter cases, the number of columns is given as ‘0’.

<sup>25</sup> In the case of fragments that feature only illustrated pages, the palaeographic dating is based on their captions if these are deemed to be coeval.

<sup>26</sup> For instance, while Six 1994, 442–444 assigns a manuscript in the Museum Fünf Kontinente (MFK MS MfVK 88-310022) to a period going from 1400 to 1500, we have deemed this to be later than the 1530s.

– **Major works:** information is kept to a minimum since most manuscripts have been described in greater detail by cataloguers or such information will be made available through Beta maṣāḥəft. We refer only to the main texts of the manuscript and not to the *additiones*. To identify works, we draw on the Clavis Aethiopica of the Beta maṣāḥəft application that offers ‘an ongoing repertory of all known Ethiopic Textual Units’.<sup>27</sup> In addition, for manuscripts that include several works combined in a fixed sequence, such as the Ethiopic Psalter (CAe 2701),<sup>28</sup> or for multiple-text manuscripts that contain a large number of varying works, such as the *Gadla samā‘tāt* (CAe 1493),<sup>29</sup> we provide the reference to the main Clavis entry, instead of listing each single part or text. Some inconsistencies in our use of English or Gə‘əz for the work title stem from the diverging use of these two languages in the Clavis Aethiopica, which, it should be remembered, is a valuable but still unfinished tool that still does not include IDs for all known works in Ethiopic literature, therefore, also in our list some work remain without ID.

– **Miniatures:** lists the themes and folia of miniatures in the order of their appearance, also indicating if they might be of a later date. When miniatures are present, this is followed by a comment subsection which provides some information about the date, style, and main features of the images.<sup>30</sup>

– **Headpieces:** similarly to the previous section, this one lists those folia which contain headpieces and is followed by a commentary section when these are present.

<sup>27</sup> It is currently possible to find further information about these works on the app by looking them up through their Clavis number. This can be done by selecting ‘Lookup Clavis Aethiopica Number’ in the dropdown menu.

<sup>28</sup> In the majority of Ethiopic manuscripts, the Ethiopic Psalter is composed of the following parts: Psalms of David (*Mazmura Dāwit*; CAe 2000), *Canticles of the Prophets* (*Maḥāləya nabiyyāt*; CAe 1828), Song of Songs (*Maḥāləya maḥāləy*; CAe 2362), *Praise of Mary* (*Wəddāse Māryām*; CAe 2509), and *Gate of Light* (*‘Anqəša bərhān*; CAe 1113). For the history of the Ethiopic Psalter see Dege-Müller 2015; Delamarter 2017; Delamarter and Gnisci 2019.

<sup>29</sup> On this hagiographical-homiletic collection see for instance Brita 2020, 265–268; and Bausi 2002; Bausi 2019.

<sup>30</sup> We opted not to include the XML IDs of the Art Themes in this handlist for a range of reasons: first, the miniatures will be eventually included in the relevant description on Beta maṣāḥəft; second, the process of assigning such IDs is still in development and there is a risk that the IDs provided here will not correspond to those found in the relevant entries.

– **Additions:** text that has been added at a later stage or that is not part of the primary unit is treated as addition; their folia will be listed, and important features are mentioned in the Observations.<sup>31</sup>

If there are neither miniatures, headpieces, nor additions we will mark the section with ‘none’.

– **Observations:** this last section highlights physical or textual features of the manuscript which we deemed remarkable—such as colophons or ownership notes—and that provide valuable information about its history or place of origin (when known). Taking implicitly for granted that all the manuscripts in this list were written in Gə‘əz, we only mention the presence of other languages in this section.

## 5 Preliminary Findings of the Data to Highlight

Compiling the handlist allowed us to identify some significant features of the manuscripts. The fact that the entire corpus is relatively small is in itself an indication of the relative rarity of illuminated pieces from the early Solomonian period. Some of these works had been the object of research, while others have not hitherto attracted much attention. Three manuscripts from MASG Ms D 782, Ms D 855b, and Ms o.Nr. 151 are here described for the first time.

One aim of the ITIESE project is to locate evidence in illustrated manuscripts that helps situate them in a more defined chronological order or further our understanding of their production context. Thus, colophons and other notes that reveal information about the place or time of production or about the makers and patrons of manuscripts are of particular interest to us and are singled out in the data we choose to provide.

In this respect, MS MfVK 86-307646 from the Museum Fünf Kontinente in Munich is noteworthy for several reasons: first, we believe that it was illustrated by an artist who also created illuminations in other manuscripts such as Oxford, Bodleian Library (= Bodleian), MS. Aeth. e. 33; second, since its illustration bears comparison with manuscripts that have been associated to the network of followers of ʾEwostätewos, it is especially significant that this manuscript contains tangible evidence of links to this monastic order.

As for dating, the presence of a colophon that mentions Emperor Zar’a Yā’qob (r.1434–1468) in MFK MS MfVK 86-307647, a fragmentary copy of the *Miracles of Mary*, provides valuable evidence to show that the style of painting that appears in works commissioned by his father Emperor Dāwit I

<sup>31</sup> We are aware that such features are not necessarily neatly aligned with the ITIESE’s temporal cut-off.

(r.1379/1380–1413) continued to be employed, even if in an adapted manner, in the decades after the latter’s death.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, since the manuscript was produced during the reign of Zar’a Yā‘qob, it is also among the earliest witnesses to the circulation of this group of stories in the Ethiopian tradition.<sup>33</sup> Equally interesting is the fact that this manuscript appears to refer to a hitherto little-known sister of this emperor called ‘Amata Māryām, who is mentioned in the supplication formulas throughout the manuscript alongside the emperor. This identification is based on a colophon of a manuscript from Dimā Giyorgis described by Ted Erho that was commissioned by ‘Amata Māryām, daughter of King Dāwit’.<sup>34</sup>

Also worthy of comment are those manuscripts which include the names of their scribes or owners, such as Ms. or. 9844 in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (scribed by Takla ‘Iyostātyos and owned by ‘Amhā Dəngəl). Other manuscripts contain information about the places where manuscripts were produced. One such case is offered by BSB Cod.aeth.1 in Munich that was produced in Jerusalem. This piece might also have been one of the first Ethiopian manuscripts to enter a German collection, since it was acquired in 1571 by Herzog Albrecht V for the royal library of Munich, who bought it from the private collection of Johann Jakob Fugger (1516–1575).<sup>35</sup>

Another manuscript that shares a connection with Jerusalem is kept in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. fol. 117: this piece was sent to Jerusalem by the pilgrim *Nəbura ‘əd Māhyawi ‘Əgzi*’, who died along the trip and touchingly wanted at least his manuscript to reach Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup> Its final folium (p. 483ra) features an inventory of the Ethiopian church of Getesemāni in Jerusalem.<sup>37</sup> A third manuscript connected to Jerusalem is Ms. or. oct. 59, also kept in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, that features an Italian letter of recommendation

<sup>32</sup> Mercier refers to this style of painting as ‘royal’, see Mercier 2021, 134

<sup>33</sup> This ruler promoted the cult of St Mary in the Ethiopic Church and sponsored the production of manuscripts containing her miracles, see ‘Tä’ammərə Maryam’, *E Ae*, IV (2010), 789b–793b (E. Balicka-Witakowska and A. Bausi).

<sup>34</sup> The manuscript Collegetville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopian Manuscript Digital Archive (= EMDA), 00342, is a fifteenth-century *Senodos* (CAe 2317). The colophon is on fol. 96rb, <https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/533844>, last access on 30 March 2022. The palaeography of this manuscript shares some similarities with the Munich fragments.

<sup>35</sup> Six 1989, 25.

<sup>36</sup> It is difficult to refer to this manuscript as it was paginated. The leaf with the note by *Nəbura ‘əd Māhyawi ‘Əgzi*’ is paginated as number 9 and probably originally functioned as its guard leaf prior to the insertion of additional paper pages by Ludolf at the beginning of the codex. For further information on the note, see Cerulli 1943, 308–311.

<sup>37</sup> Cerulli 1943, 310.

written by the Franciscan monk ‘Bartholomeo da Milano’ for two Ethiopian pilgrims called ‘Andrea and Petro’ who first travelled to Jerusalem and then to Rome. The 1495 date of this note provides a *terminus ante quem* for the production of the manuscript.<sup>38</sup> Another Berlin manuscript, SBPK Ms. or. quart. 172, contains an Arabic note which provides information about its biography. According to the note, the manuscript was sold by an Ethiopian monk called Melyos, abbot of an Ethiopian monastery, but it is not clear if his monastery was located in Lebanon or if it is to be identified as Dabra Libānos. An Ethiopian monk identified as ‘Abd al-Sayyid later sold it to another Ethiopian monk called Muse from Dayr Bizan (Dabra Bizan?) in 1479.<sup>39</sup>

These three Berlin manuscripts were all acquired in the mid-seventeenth century by Theodor Petraeus in Palestine. Upon his death in 1673, his widow sold them to the Berlin library, then known as the Churfürstliche Bibliothek zu Cölln an der Spree, from where Ludolf borrowed them in 1692. The German scholar studied them closely and penned down descriptions of their content which are still bound together with the manuscripts. Ludolf also used them as *Vorlage* for several of his prints and added notes in Latin in them.<sup>40</sup>

Another manuscript which contains Latin additions is Cod.aeth.1 from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. The excerpts from the *Book of Hours* (CAe 1961, text 4) ends with a list of the number of hours in each month. At a later date, presumably after the manuscript reached Europe in 1571, someone pencilled down a Latin translation of these hours in the left margin. Presumably, this happened after the manuscript reached Europe in 1571. Headpieces in Ethiopian manuscripts remain poorly understood as there have been only few attempts to examine them in any systematic fashion. Thus, they cannot necessarily be taken as elements that provide definitive dating evidence, but they can be used to shore up tentative proposals based on the palaeography or style of the miniatures. The style employed for the headpiece in MASG Ms D 782, for example, was probably no longer employed after the end of the Adalite war in 1543. Some of the headpieces in this manuscript include text that was written in between the loops of the decoration. This feature is found in several other manuscripts (e.g. SBPK Ms. or. 9846, *Fragm. Aeth. 4.*, and Ms. or. oct. 1266). In most instances, the words in these headpieces provide indication for the weekly

<sup>38</sup> The Italian note is printed in Mittwoch 1926, where he also elaborates on the other manuscripts from Berlin.

<sup>39</sup> Fol. 164v. The note employs the Seleucid era 1791; it has further seen quite some attention, cf. Dillmann 1878, 5–6; Fries 1892, 19–21; Mittwoch 1926; Cerulli 1943, 331–332.

<sup>40</sup> Mittwoch 1926. To give credit to these historical additions in the manuscripts they are treated as individual codicological units.

or monthly use of the text that follows. It is not always easy to distinguish whether or not these words are coeval with the decorations, but some were likely added at a later date.

By examining some of the manuscripts *in situ*, we were also able to improve our understanding of their production process. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the chequered pattern that appears in a miniature of the Virgin and Child in SBPK Ms. or. oct. 1270 is based on ruling lines. We were also able to locate evidence for the use of a compass in several manuscripts that was most often used for the outlines of halos, as seen in MFK MS MfVK 86-307646, MFK MS MfVK 86-307647, and MASG Ms D 855b. Many of the painted folia included in the handlist were once protected by strips of fabric that functioned as a curtain. Examples of this practice include two Berlin manuscripts: SBPK Ms. or. oct. 59 and SBPK Ms. or. oct. 555.

## 6 Handlist

### I

#### **Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. 9834**

**Physical features:** 115 × 177 × 12; 1 unit; parchment; 2 folia; 0 columns.

**Dating:** 1400–1500 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** none.

**Miniatures:** (1) unknown saint, fol. 1v; (2) St Anthony, fol. 2r.

*Comment:* these two miniatures were probably once part of a manuscript, but, because of their binding (see observations) it is not possible to be certain. The two saints have distinctive s-shaped ears and an elongated angular nose with two square hooks for its alar rims. They bear some comparison with works assigned approximately to the first half of the fifteenth century.<sup>41</sup>

**Headpieces:** none.

**Additiones:** none.

**Observations:** this bifolium does not contain any text, except for the inscriptions on fol. 2r, therefore the column category remains empty. The bifolium is

<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Chojnacki 1983, figs. 66–67.

tightly bound into a sturdy leather cover with a textile rim, therefore, fols 1r and 2v are not visible.

**Bibliography:** Hammerschmidt 1973, 70–71; Six 1994, 352–353.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerHsOr9834/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).



Fig. 1 Unknown Saint and Saint Anthony, SBPK Ms. or. 9834.

## II

### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. 9844

**Physical features:** 150 × 135 × 57; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–78v; Unit 2, fols 79r–100v); parchment; 100 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1400–1500 (palaeography, visual evidence, Unit 1); 1600? (palaeography, Unit 2).

**Major works:** Unit 1: (1) *Sayfa šallāse* (CAe 2296), fols 1ra–46ra; (2) *Prayer of Mary on Golgotā* (CAe 2246), fols 47ra–66vb; (3) *Šalota ʿəṭān* (CAe 2252), fols 66vb–78vb. Unit 2: (1) *Maṣḥafa nuzāze* (CAe 1956), fols 79ra–88rb; (2)

*Maṣḥafa nuzāze* (CAe 1956), fols 88rb–95vb; (3) *Maṣḥafa nuzāze* (CAe 1938), fols 96ra–100vb.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fols 47r, 66vb.

*Comment:* the headpieces, painted with three main colour tones and featuring twists, are crudely executed.

*Additions:* none.

**Observations:** in Unit 1, the scribe Takla 'Iyostātyos and the owner 'Amḥā Dəngəl are mentioned, fols 11ra, 44va, 46ra, 62v.

**Bibliography:** Six 1994, 370–373.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerHsOr9844/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).

### III

#### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. 9846, Fragm. Aeth. 4

**Physical features:** 350 × 260 × 2; 1 unit; parchment; 1 folium; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1400–1500 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** (1) *Tərgwāme Pāwlos* (CAe 3181), fol. 1r–v.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fol. 1r.

*Comment:* a plain monochrome interlace band topped by quatrefoil motifs. Words written above the headpiece, hardly discernible, possibly coeval to the text.

*Additions:* none.

**Observations:** none.

**Bibliography:** Six 1994, 380–381.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerHsOr9846d/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).

IV

**Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz,  
Ms. or. fol. 117\***

**Physical features:** 260 × 180 × ?; 3 units (Unit 1, pp. 1–8; Unit 2, fols 1r–242v; Unit 3, between pp. 256 and 257); paper (Unit 1), parchment (Units 2, 3); 8 pp. + 242 folia (9 + 483 pp.); 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1692 (internal, Unit 1); 1400–1450 (palaeography, Unit 2); 1300–1400 (visual evidence, Unit 3).

**Major works:** Unit 1: (1) description of the content by Ludolf, pp. 1–8. Unit 2: (1) *Gadla samā 'tāt* (CAe 1493), fols 2r–241v.

**Miniatures:** (1) Cross, recto side of folium in between pages 256 and 257 (Unit 3).

*Comment:* the folium containing the miniature is upside down and the page must have been inserted at an undetermined point in time. The empty cross is comparable to those found in other Oriental manuscripts and also in Ethiopic manuscripts dating to the fourteenth century.<sup>42</sup>

**Headpieces:** none.

**Additiones:** fols 1 (p. 9ab of Unit 1), 242 (p. 483 of Unit 2).

**Observations:** the oldest unit in this composite manuscript is possibly Unit 3, the cross miniature. The manuscript was paginated with Roman numbers (possibly by Petraeus or Ludolf), and starts with the first fol. (Unit 1, paper), and continues to the first flyleaf of Unit 2 (parchment), paginated as no. 9. Unit 2 was paginated as well, starting with 1 through 483. The folium with the cross miniature, however, was not paginated. The *additiones* in this manuscript reveal its connection to Jerusalem. On p. 9ab, a note by the pilgrim to Jerusalem *Nəbura 'əd Māhyawi 'Ēgzi'*, who sent the manuscript to Jerusalem, should he not make it on his own. On p. 9b, a short note on his passing away on 16 Ṭərr. On p. 483, an inventory list of the church Getesemāni (in Jerusalem). Unit 1 is the Latin description of the contents of the manuscript by Ludolf. Additional language: Latin (Unit 1).

**Bibliography:** Dillmann 1878, 56–57; Cerulli 1943, 308–311; Zanetti 2015, 92–98.

<sup>42</sup> See the Ethiopian and Coptic examples in Balicka-Witakowska 1997, fig. 28.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrFol117/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).



Fig. 2 SBPK Ms. or. fol. 117, inserted leaf with an interlace cross between fols 256v and 257r.

V

**Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz,  
Ms. or. oct. 59**

**Physical features:** 155 × 113 × 57; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–4v; Unit 2, fols 1r–167v); paper (Unit 1), parchment (Unit 2); 4 + 167 folia, 1 column.

**Dating:** 1692 (internal, Unit 1); 1400–1450 (palaeography, visual evidence, Unit 2; *terminus ante quem* 1495, fol. 166v, Italian *additio*).

**Major works:** Unit 1: (1) description of the content by Ludolf, fols 1r–4v. Unit 2: (1) *Prayer of Our Lady Mary in Egypt to Heal Joseph's Cough* (CAe 4345), fols 1r–11v; (2) *Prayer of Mary on Bārtos* (CAe 1201), fols 15r–55r; (3) Marian prayer, fols 57r–65v; (4) one of the twenty-one prayers of Mary, prayed over water, oil, and images, fols 67r–81r; (5) *Magic Prayer to Mary* (CAe 5013), fols 82r–86r; (6) *'Anqasha bārḥān* (CAe 1113), fols 86v–97r; (7) *Wəddāse Māryām* (CAe 2509), fols 98r–108r; (8) prayer of supplication, pleading, and praise to Mary, fols 109r–142v; (9) *Dərsāna Mikā'el Homily by Timothy (Damātewos), Patriarch of Alexandria for the 12th of Ḥəḏār* (CAe 1295), fols 145r–161r.

**Miniatures:** (1) St George, fol. 14v; (2) Virgin and Child, fol. 56v; (3) Virgin in an orans pose, fol. 66v; (4) unknown apostle, fol. 81v.

*Comment:* all miniatures have identifying captions that seem to be coeval, though that of the apostle has been erased. All folia with miniatures have a line of holes at their top, which suggests they were once protected by a curtain. The figures have almond-shaped eyes with upward gazes, s-shaped eyebrows and ears that look a bit like a number six. Their style is comparable to that of illustrations associated to the scriptorium of Emperor Dāwit I, even if the quality of these illustrations does not match that of manuscripts associated to this ruler.<sup>43</sup>

**Headpieces:** fols 15r, 57r, 67r, 82r, 109r, 145r.

*Comments:* simple polychrome bands decorated with loose interlace patterns and split palmette finials. The use of similar colour tones suggests they are coeval with the miniatures.

<sup>43</sup> Compare, for example, with an unpublished miniature of St John the Baptist kept in a copy of his *Vita* from the church of Mārāwe Krəstos; with the mid-fifteenth century copy of the *Miracles of Mary* included in this handlist from the Museum Fünf Kontinente (MS MfVK 86-307647), and that was published in Mercier 2000, 80.

**Additions:** fols 143r–144v, 161v–162r, 163r–163v, 164r–165r, 165r, 166r, 166v (Italian).

**Observations:** a *terminus ante quem* 1495 is given by an Italian letter of recommendation (*additio*, fol. 166v) by the Franciscan monk ‘Bartholomeo da Milano’ for two Ethiopian pilgrims called ‘Andrea and Petro’, who travelled to Jerusalem and Rome. Additional languages: Latin (Unit 1), Italian (fol. 166v).

**Bibliography:** Dillmann 1878, 66–67; Mittwoch 1926; Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 48–50.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrOct59/main> (principal encoder Sophia Dege-Müller).

## VI

### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 220\*

**Physical features:** 180 × 120 × 75; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–138v; Unit 2, fols 139r–146v); parchment; 146 folia; 1 column (fols 1r–132v), 2 columns (fols 133r–145r).

**Dating:** 1450–1500 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** (1) Psalter (CAe 2701; ‘*Anqaša bərḥān*’ missing), fols 1r–145r.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fols 1r, 11r, 33v, 55v, 60r, 101r, 103v, 127r, 133r, 134r.

*Comments:* interlace bands with split palmettes topped by an asymmetrical pattern of interlace that recalls examples associated with the monastery of Gunda Gunde.<sup>44</sup>

**Additions:** fol. 145v.

**Observations:** none.

**Bibliography:** Dillmann 1878, 6–7; Fries 1892, 21–23; Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 183; Hammerschmidt 1977, 22 and pl. 6.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrOct220/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).

<sup>44</sup> Zanotti Eman 1993, 69, fig. 108.

## VII

**Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz,  
Ms. or. oct. 555**

**Physical features:** 150 × 130 × 70; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–118v, 120r–v; Unit 2, fol. 119r–v);<sup>45</sup> parchment; 120 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1480–1530 (palaeography, Unit 1); 1480–1530 (palaeography, Unit 2).

**Major works:** (1) *Gadla Gabra Manfas Qəddus* (CAe 1451), fols 6ra–94rb; (2) *Miracles of Gabra Manfas Qəddus* (CAe 3977), fols 94va–118ra.

**Miniatures:** (1) two holy men, fol. 4r; (2) two holy men, fol. 4v; (3) two holy men, fol. 5r; (4) a holy man and Gabra Manfas Qəddus, fol. 5v; (5) Ancient of Days, fol. 14v; (6) Abraham embracing Isaac and Jacob, fol. 15r; (7) St George on horseback, fol. 48v; (8) Virgin and Child, fol. 49r; (9) Peter and Paul, fol. 58v; (10) St Stephen the First Martyr and St John the Baptist, fol. 59r; (11) Matthew the Evangelist, fol. 92v; (12) Mark the Evangelist, fol. 93r; (13) Luke the Evangelist, fol. 105v; (14) John the Evangelist, fol. 106r; (15) St Mercurius on horseback, fol. 107r; (16) Equestrian saint, fol. 108r.

*Comments:* most of the miniatures probably originally had captions though several of these have been damaged or lost due to trimming. One hand wrote the caption for the Ancient of Days on the page opposite this image. A second hand is responsible for the captions written in black in a smaller script. It is unclear if these are coeval with the production of the illustrations. Due to damage to the captions, the pairs of facing saints on fols 4r–5r and the saint on horseback on fol. 108r are not identifiable. In terms of style, the miniatures are comparable to a leaf in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (Addis Ababa, Institute of Ethiopian Studies (= IES), 4756) and to the figures that appear on icons produced between the reigns of Emperor Zar'a Yā'qob and Emperor Ləbna Dəngəl (r.1508–1540).<sup>46</sup> Since fol. 108v contains text and its recto features a miniature of a saint, it would appear that the text and miniatures were produced at the same

<sup>45</sup> The codicological structure is difficult to examine with certainty, the exact composition of the units remains an open question. The binding of some folia of Unit 1 has been reinforced with parchment strips, out of which some have writing on them. Due to the tight binding, it is difficult to see them clearly, locate or date them, some are before fol. 66, before fol. 92, before fol. 93. They might carefully be dated to the seventeenth century. The handwriting of Unit 1 and Unit 2 (first 10 lines recto a) seems to originate in the same time period.

<sup>46</sup> Chojnacki 1983, 127; Heldman 1994, 69.

time. However, since several miniatures appear to have been retouched or painted at a later date, the exact chronology of their production remains open to interpretation. The pair of saints on fol. 5r, for example, appear quite clearly to have been retouched by a different and later hand (probably from the seventeenth century). The painted folia also have a line of holes on top, indicating that a curtain might have once covered them. Two later drawings of saints on horseback, which could date to any period between the eighteenth and twentieth century, decorate fols 105r and 107v.

**Headpieces:** fol. 6r.

*Comments:* an irregular interlace sequence extends on the upper and right margin of the page. It is likely coeval with Unit 1.

*Additions:* fols 118rb, 119ra, 119ra–119vb.

**Observations:** the names Filæppos and Takla Māryām (always erased, but partly visible) are mentioned in the supplication formulas (fols 110va, 114rb, 117va, 118ra).

**Bibliography:** Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 50–54; Hammerschmidt and Six 1983, 50–51.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrOct555/main> (principal encoder Sophia Dege-Müller).

## VIII

### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz,

#### Ms. or. oct. 1266\*

**Physical features:** 180 × 145 × 70; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–2v; Unit 2, fols 3r–185v); parchment; 185 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1700–1800 (palaeography, Unit 1); 1420–1520 (palaeography, visual evidence, Unit 2).

**Major works:** (1) *ʿArgānona wæddāse* (CAe 1146), fols 3ra–182va.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fols 3r, 23va, 30ra, 35v, 64r, 95v, 155r, 184r (secondary).

*Comments:* like most copies of the *ʿArgānona wæddāse* from this period, this manuscript does not contain figurative illustrations, but it does feature a number of elegant and elaborate polychrome frames surrounding both columns of its incipits. The heads of the frames are particularly elaborate and populated with

split palmettes that are comparable to those found in manuscripts produced around the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>47</sup>

**Additiones:** fols 1r, 1v, 2r, 2v, 182v, 183r, 183v.

**Observations:** some headpieces include text, which, however, appears to be secondary. Unit 1, used as flyleaves, contains text from another, much younger manuscript that must have been added to this manuscript at a later stage.<sup>48</sup>

**Bibliography:** Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 183; Hammerschmidt 1977, 22, pl. 25–29.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrOct1266/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).

## IX

### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 1270

**Physical features:** 178 × 140 × 37; 1 unit; parchment; 41 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1400–1450 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** (1) *Gadla Gabra Krəstos* (= *Vita of St Alexis*) (CAe 1450), fols 2ra–16vb, 19ra–24va; (2) *Miracles of Mary* (CAe 2384), fols 17ra–18vb, 25ra–25vb, 28ra–38va.

**Miniatures:** (1) unknown saint (Gabra Märyām?), fol. 1r; (2) St Gabra Krəstos, fol. 1v; (3) Virgin and Child, fol. 27v.

*Comments:* the pigment used for the skin tones of miniatures 2 and 3 has darkened. Conversely, the miniatures have captions that are not always legible because the ink has faded. If the captions to the first two images are probably coeval with the execution of the miniatures, that to miniature 3 may have been added by a later hand. The rigid and angular poses of the figures and the chequered pattern beneath the throne of the Virgin and Child are closely comparable

<sup>47</sup> See for instance, the headpieces in a psalter copied during the reign of Emperor Zar'ā Yā'qob kept in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (= BnF), Éthiopien 12).

<sup>48</sup> This impression is reinforced by examining the spine of the manuscript.

to the miniature of the Virgin and Child in Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (= EMMML), 2514.<sup>49</sup>

**Headpieces:** fols 2r, 18rb, 25r, 28r, 30ra, 33vb, 35ra.

*Comments:* the polychrome bands, which appear to be coeval with the production of the manuscript, feature interlace patterns that form a variety of cross modules.

*Additions:* fols 24va–vb, 26ra–27rb, 38vb–39r, 39r, 39v.

**Observations:** several folia of the manuscript are misplaced, being rearranged wrongly together: both texts are in disorder; some folia are also missing: text 2 is incomplete. Scribal suppletions are on fols 18rb, 30ra, 36va, with mention of personal names.

**Bibliography:** Hammerschmidt and Jäger 1968, 45–48; Hammerschmidt and Six 1983, 109–111.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrOct1270/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

## X

### Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. quart. 172

**Physical features:** 216 × 160 × 60; 2 units (Unit 1, fols 1r–4v; Unit 2, fols 1r–171v); paper (Unit 1), parchment (Unit 2); 4 + 171 folia; 1 column (fols 2r–115v, 168r–171r), 2 columns (fols 115v–167v).

**Dating:** 1692 (*apud* Mittwoch 1926, col. 1909, Unit 1); 1440–1479 (palaeography, visual evidence, Unit 2; *terminus ante quem* 1479, fol. 164vb, Arabic *additio*).

**Major works:** Unit 1: (1) description of the content by Ludolf, fols 1r–4v. Unit 2: (1) *Calculus for Church Feast Days*, fols 2r–5v; (2) *Mazmura Dāwit* (CAe 2000), fols 6ra–99v; (3) *Maḥālāya nabiyāt* (CAe 1828), fols 99v–109r; (4) *Maḥālāya maḥālāy* (CAe 2362), fols 109v–115r; (5) biblical readings, fols

<sup>49</sup> On this manuscript see Getatchew Haile and Macomber 1983, 6–14; EMMML is the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library microfilms preserved at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMMML). The miniature is reproduced in Heldman 1994, pl. xiv.

117ra–140va; (6) *Wəddāse Māryām* (CAe 2509), fols 141ra–163v; (7) Easter readings from the Four Gospels, fols 165ra–167ra.

**Miniatures:** (1) St Michael, fol. 164v (secondary?).

*Comments:* the bichrome picture of the Archangel Michael on fol. 164v, inserted beneath the textual column, probably belongs to a later period, and may be as late as the nineteenth century, but it is difficult to situate it chronologically. It may have been added at the same time as other doodles found in the manuscript, such as a hand cross on fol. 99v.

**Headpieces:** fols 6r, 109v (secondary?), 117r, 141ra.

*Comments:* confusingly, the frames in this manuscript all present different stylistic features and they may not all be coeval with the text.

**Additions:** fols 115r, 164ra–164va, 164vb (Arabic note), 167rb–168ra, 168r–168v, 170r–171r.

**Observations:** major work is the psalter with the old titles for the psalms. A note in Arabic written in 1479 mentions the price of the manuscript and its sale between several persons and places (fol. 164vb).<sup>50</sup> Unit 1 is the Latin description of the contents of the manuscript by Ludolf. Additional languages: Latin (Unit 1), Arabic (fol. 164vb).

**Bibliography:** Dillmann 1878, 5–6; Fries 1892, 19–21; Mittwoch 1926; Cerulli 1943, 331–332.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BerOrQuart172/main> (principal encoder Eugenia Sokolinski).

## XI

### Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Vollers 1096\*

**Physical features:** c. 158 × 117; 1 unit; parchment; 3 folia; 1 column.<sup>51</sup>

**Dating:** 1450–1530 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** Psalms of David (CAe 2000), fols 1r–3v.

**Miniatures:** none.

<sup>50</sup> Fries 1892, 19; Cerulli 1943, 331–332.

<sup>51</sup> The description (and dating) here is provided only of the Ethiopic fragments.

**Headpieces:** fol. 1r.

*Comments:* the style of this polychrome band (now partly discoloured) is comparable to examples dating to the second half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

*Additiones:* none.

**Observations:** the three folia consist of a single leaf (fol. 1) and a bifolium (fols 2r–3v), containing the first five psalms; they are damaged and affected by humidity (esp. fol. 1r and fol. 3v). These leaves are bound together with leaves from other manuscripts fragments written in Georgian (fols 4r–7v) and Armenian (fols 8r–11v). The three different fragments are kept together by means of a recent European binding (which includes also paper). Karl Vollers refers to the Ethiopian fragments with the shelf marks 1092 and 1096.<sup>52</sup> It is not clear whether the Ethiopian leaves were originally inventoried with the former shelf mark.

**Bibliography:** Vollers 1906, 430, 432.

**URL to BM entry:** [https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/Vollers1096/main\\_\(principal\\_encoder\\_Vitagrazia\\_Pisani\)](https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/Vollers1096/main_(principal_encoder_Vitagrazia_Pisani)).

## XII

### Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.aeth.1\*

**Physical features:** 200 × 130 × 85; 1 unit; parchment; 262 folia; 1 column (fols 6r–128v, 241r–246v, 258v, 262v), 2 columns (fols 129ra–240vb, 247ra–258rb, 259ra–261rb).<sup>53</sup>

**Dating:** 1350–1450 (palaeography, catalogue).

**Major works:** (1) Psalter (CAe 2701), fols 6r–128v, 189va–204vb, 206vb–212vb, 251va–258rb; (2) supplicative prayer, fols 129ra–144vb; (3) prayer before the Communion, fol. 144vb; (4) excerpts from the *Book of Hours* (CAe 1961), fols 145ra–180vb; (5) supplicative prayer to Mary, fols 181ra–186ra; (6) supplicative prayer to Jesus, fols 186ra–189rb; (7) hymns to Mary for Sunday, fols 204vb–206vb; (8) hymns to Mary for the week days, fols 212vb–223ra; (9)

<sup>52</sup> Vollers 1906, 430.

<sup>53</sup> Due to the limited images at our disposal (i.e. folia with *additio*, colophon, and headpieces) the text description and other information on binding and physical features of this manuscript are all based on the catalogue description of Six 1989, 20–26.

supplicative prayer, fol. 223ra–va; (10) prayers and texts from the New Testament for Saturday and Sunday, fols 224ra–238vb; (11) supplicative prayer, fols 238vb–240vb; (12) list of saint and church feasts, fols 241r–246r; (13) *Praise of Zion*, fol. 246v; (14) supplicative prayer, fol. 246v; (15) *Praise for Sunday*, fols 247ra–251va; (16) excerpts from the Song of Songs (CAe 2362), fols 258v, 259r–260r;<sup>54</sup> (17) supplication, fols 259ra–262v; 18) prayer against hail, fol. 262v.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fol. 180vb.

*Comments:* a small bichrome headpiece, decorated with an irregular pattern and a cross beneath it, marks the end of the text. It may not be coeval with the production of the manuscript.

*Additiones:* fol. 180v (left margin; Latin).

**Observations:** the manuscript has a peculiar order of texts written by different hands.<sup>55</sup> The colophon, on fol. 258rb, indicates Jerusalem as the place where it was created. Below the colophon, another note (not known if written by the same scribe) has been washed out. Text 4 ends on fol. 180v with a list of the number of hours in each month. On the left margin of the folium, a translation into Latin (*additio*) is written by a secondary hand (in pencil). The binding (probably European) consists of two wooden boards covered by a tooled leather with a gold cut; as part of the binding, four paper leaves (not paginated) are before the text block.<sup>56</sup> Veronika Six informs us that the manuscript belonged to the collection of Johann Jakob Fugger (1516–1575), and that it was acquired by Duke Albrecht V (1528–1579) in the year 1571 for the Münchner Hofbibliothek. However, it remains unknown when Fugger had acquired it and when it exactly reached the German collections.<sup>57</sup> Additional language: Latin.

**Bibliography:** Six 1989, 20–26.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/BSBaeth1/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

<sup>54</sup> The description from Six states that this text is written only on the lower half of the folia ('Auf B1.259r–260r jeweils unten 3–4 Zl.', Six 1989, 25).

<sup>55</sup> Six 1989, 20.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 25–26.

### XIII

**Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente,  
MS MfVK 86-307643**

**Physical features:** 293 × 231 × 5; 1 unit; parchment; 2 folia; 0 columns.

**Dating:** 1475–1525 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** none.

**Miniatures:** (1) St George, St Theodore, St Victor (?), and St Claudius on horseback, fol. 1v; (2) Virgin and Child, fol. 2r.

*Comments:* the images are executed in a style of painting that closely recalls examples from the turn of the sixteenth century found in monasteries in north-eastern Təgrāy, such as the Gospel of Sawne Māryām and Gospel B from Gunda Gunde.<sup>58</sup> Both miniatures have captions in red ink and were probably executed by the same artist who painted MFK MS MfVK 86-307644 and MFK MS MfVK 86-307645.

**Headpieces:** none.

*Additions:* none.

**Observations:** the bifolium contains only the two full-page miniatures above; fols 1r and 2v are blank. The binding is missing (three holes visible on the outside centrefold of the bifolium; recent cotton threads in the upper hole). It seems likely that these leaves came from the same manuscript as MFK MS MfVK 86-307644 and MFK MS MfVK 86-307645.

**Bibliography:** Mercier 2000, 87–89.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/MfVK86307643/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

### XIV

**Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente,  
MS MfVK 86-307644**

**Physical features:** 286 × 220 × 2; 1 unit; parchment; 2 folia; 0 columns.

<sup>58</sup> On the Sawne Māryām piece, see Nosnitsin 2013, 311; on the Gunda Gunde one, see Leroy 1962, 191. Both manuscripts have a page with four equestrian saints.

**Dating:** 1475–1525 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** none.

**Miniatures:** (1) Holy women and St John before the Crucifixion, fols 1v–2r.

*Comments:* although outlined by separate frames, the two miniatures form a single scene. To the left, St John and a group of holy women that includes Martha, Salome, and Mary, gaze towards the Crucifixion scene on the opposite page.<sup>59</sup> To the right, the crucified Christ is flanked by the sun and moon as well as Stephaton and Longinus. His eyes are narrowed, but not entirely closed. The miniature is executed in a style of painting that closely recalls examples from the turn of the sixteenth century.

**Headpieces:** none.

*Additions:* none.

**Observations:** the bifolium does not contain any text; fols 1r and 2v are blank. The binding is missing (three holes visible on the outside centrefold of the bifolium).

**Bibliography:** Mercier 2000, 90.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/MfVK86307644/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

## XV

### Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente, MS MfVK 86-307645

**Physical features:** 300 × 240 × 3; parchment; 1 unit; 2 folia; 0 columns.

**Dating:** 1475–1525 (palaeography, visual evidence).

**Major works:** none.

**Miniatures:** (1) Baptism of Jesus, fol. 1v; (2) Apostles and saints including Ildefonsus bishop of Toledo (= Daqasyos) and St Stephen (?), fol. 2r.

<sup>59</sup> A similar idea is found in the above-mentioned Gospel B from Gunda Gunde described in Leroy 1962, 191, though in this latter manuscript some of the women turn away from the Crucifixion scene, and the cross is flanked by angels, St Mary, and St John.

*Comments:* the miniature on fol. 1v represents an uncommon rendition of the Baptism of Jesus, in which the actual baptism takes place in the lower quarter of the page, whereas most of the illustration is taken up by a representation of the Ancient of Days presumably inspired by the Gospels passages which describe a voice coming out of heaven after the descent of the Holy Spirit. The combination of holy figures on fol. 2r is also uncommon. In this scene, St John holds a copy of his Gospel with a passage that alludes to the Crucifixion, which suggests that this miniature preceded that found in MFK MS MfVK 86-307644. Bishop Ildefonsus is depicted with a white garment in his right hand. This probably represents the apparel which the bishop received from the Virgin Mary because he wrote her book of miracles, as told in the Ethiopic Marian miracles entitled *Miracle of Hildephonsus (Dexius) of Toledo* (CAe 3586).<sup>60</sup> Why the illustrator opted to include Ildefonsus is unclear, as his work on baptism was not known in Ethiopic. The miniatures have captions in red ink that are likely coeval and not always fully legible. The images are executed in a style of painting that closely recalls examples from the turn of the sixteenth century.<sup>61</sup>

**Headpieces:** none.

*Additiones:* none.

**Observations:** the bifolium contains only the miniatures above; fols 1r and 2v are blank, without any text. The binding is missing (the centrefold damaged).

**Bibliography:** Mercier 2000, 91.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/MfVK86307645/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

## XVI

### Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente, MS MfVK 86-307646

**Physical features:** 175 × 145 × 80; 1 unit; parchment; 107 folia; 1 column.

**Dating:** 1400–1525 (palaeography, visual evidence).

<sup>60</sup> On this miracle, see for instance Budge 1933, 1–5. The bishop of Toledo, who was particularly devoted to St Mary, is attributed with the authorship of the mariological opus *De Virginate Sanctae Mariae contra tres infideles* (see ‘Tä’ammārā Maryam’, *E Ae*, IV (2010), 789b–793b (E. Balicka-Witakowska and A. Bausi), here 790a).

<sup>61</sup> See the examples discussed above for MFK MS MfVK 86-307643 and e.g. Heldman 1989, pl. 17, 18, 26.

**Major works:** (1) *Gate of Light* (CAe 1113), fols 4r–14r; (2) Nicene Creed (CAe 3308), fols 14v–15v; (3) *Gadla 'Ewosṭātewos* (CAe 1438), fols 17r–54v, 56r–107r.

**Miniatures:** (1) St Luke and St Mark (?) the Evangelists, fol. 3r; (2) St John and St Matthew the Evangelists, fol. 3v; (3) St George and the Dragon, fol. 16r; (4) St 'Ewosṭātewos, fol. 16v; (5) St Paul and St Peter, fol. 55r; (6) Virgin and Child, fol. 55v.

*Comments:* the distinctive features of the figures include: a large circular halo executed with a compass and with a white border, the upward gaze, a conical jaw, exaggeratedly large stocky bodies that are almost square in shape, the use of vestments that are decorated with colourful linear patterns and that convey no sense of the body beneath and hide the feet of the figures, short arms with large hands, and the overemphasized tapering of the maniple. The miniatures in this manuscript have features in common with a sizeable group of examples that are generally attributed to the second half of the fifteenth or early sixteenth century and that have often, even if not always conclusively, been linked to monasteries established by followers of 'Ewosṭātewos and 'Eṣṭifānos.<sup>62</sup> In this respect, the fact that this manuscript contains a copy of the *Gadla 'Ewosṭātewos* and mentions one of his followers (see observations) is likely significant. The miniatures in this manuscript are especially close, in terms of style, to those found in a psalter (IES 74) in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, in a gospel book kept at Yoḥānnəs Ma'āquddi, and in Bodleian MS. Aeth. e. 33.<sup>63</sup> The latter two appear to be the work of the same artist of the Museum Fünf Kontinente manuscript. The miniatures have captions in red ink which are however not completely readable because the leaves have been damaged by humidity; for miniature 1 the name of one figure is not readable, but it is likely to be St Mark because of the presence of the other three evangelists. The captions' handwriting appears similar to the text hand (from the same period).

**Headpieces:** fols 4r and 17r.

*Comments:* it is possible that the monochrome headpieces, which are likely coeval with the rest of the manuscript, are unfinished.

**Additions:** fols 1r–2v, 2v, 15v, 108v.

<sup>62</sup> Heldman 1989; Mercier 2004, 70–73, 80–81, 98–101, 108–109, 116–117, 124–127.

<sup>63</sup> For reproductions, see respectively Mercier 2004, 124; Gnisci 2020, 18, fig. 12; and Gnisci 2019, 72, figs. 1.5, 8.2.

**Observations:** text 3 ends with a long colophon (divided into several parts separated by a row of dots), on fols 107r–108r. The note on fol. 107v (l. 3) mentions the name of the commissioner, namely <Mā>{*n.l.*}ba 'Ēgzi',<sup>64</sup> as a disciple of 'Ewostātewos ('son of the teaching of 'Abuna 'Ewostātewos'). In the last part of the note (end of fol. 108r), the first line is erased.<sup>65</sup>

**Bibliography:** Six 1999, 401–404.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/MfVK86307646/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

## XVII

### Munich, Museum Fünf Kontinente, MS MfVK 86-307647

**Physical features:** 200 × 155 × 23; 1 unit; parchment; 17 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1434–1468 (internal).

**Major works:** (1) *Miracles of Mary* (CAe 2384), fols 2ra–3vb, 5ra–7rb, 8ra–10vb, 12ra–14ra, 15ra–16vb.

**Miniatures:** (1) St Andrew and another apostle, fol. 1v; (2) St Peter and St Paul, fol. 4v; (3) St Matthias and St Luke, fol. 7v; (4) St Thomas and St James son of Alphaeus, fol. 11v; (5) St Mark and St James the Bishop,<sup>66</sup> fol. 14v.

*Comments:* the miniatures are executed in a style reminiscent of that employed in works commissioned by Emperor Dāwit I, such as the well-known copy of the *Miracles of Mary* kept at Gəšan Māryām, and which continued to be employed until the reign of Zar'a Yā'qob who was the patron of this manuscript

<sup>64</sup> *n.l.* = *non liquet*. The name could be Mā'əqaba 'Ēgzi', a name that features in several writings related to 'Ewostātewos, and was the name of the saint himself before he became a monk, Lusini 1993, 53, 110, 119–120. A *malkə* ' in honour of a Mā'əqaba 'Ēgzi' is found in BnF Éthiopien d'Abbadie 194, fols 105v–107r.

<sup>65</sup> Only few letters of the line are decipherable; it is not clear if it contains the mention of the scribe and of his name (maybe 'Abrəhām?).

<sup>66</sup> In the caption of the miniature, St James (Yā'qob) is named as bishop ('*epiṣqoṗos*), but he can be probably identified as St James the Just, the apostle who was also bishop in Jerusalem, according to the *The Preaching of St James the Just (brother of Jesus Christ)* (CAe 2184) and *The Martyrdom of St James the Just (brother of Jesus Christ)* (CAe 1680), texts included in the Ethiopic collection of the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (*Gadla ḥawāryāt*, CAe 1461); on both texts cf. Budge 1899–1901, 73–82 (ed.), 65–75 (tr.).

(see observations).<sup>67</sup> The figures seem stylistically related to those which adorn a copy of the Pauline Epistles kept at the National Library of Addis Ababa and the *Maṣḥāfa ʾəfūt* of Gəšan Māryām.<sup>68</sup> The miniatures have captions written in red and in a handwriting that appears similar to the text hand, or from the same period. In the caption of miniature 1, only the ending of the name of the right saint is readable, i.e. {*n.l.*}ዎስ ፣ ?wos. In all likelihood, the figure is either the apostle Thaddaeus (Tādewos) or Bartholomew (Bartalomewos). The painter has used a compass to execute the halos as especially evident in miniature (5).

**Headpieces:** fols 2r, 3va, 6rb, 8r, 12ra, 13rb, 15r.

*Comments:* the colourful bands appear to be coeval with the miniatures and text.

*Additions:* fol. 17ra.

**Observations:** the manuscript is damaged. Its boards and several folia are also missing, the text is incomplete. A colophon on fol. 16vb mentions the name of Emperor Zar'a Yā'qob, his throne name Q<sup>w</sup>astāntīnos, and also identifies him as son of Dāwit. According to the note, written in the first person, the emperor donated this manuscript to an unspecified church. Together with Zar'a Yā'qob, two other persons named Habta Māryām and 'Amata Māryām are also mentioned in the supplication formulas throughout the manuscript. The latter is most probably Zar'a Yā'qob's sister.<sup>69</sup> On fol. 17ra, a donation note has been written by a later hand.

**Bibliography:** Six 1999, 403–406.

<sup>67</sup> For a reproduction, see Gnisci 2022, 8, fig. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Common features include the shape of the eyebrows, eyes, and ears, the pairing of juxtaposed saints, and the position of the feet. Heldman's suggestions that the miniatures in the Pauline Epistles manuscript are 'identical in style' to those in the Gəšan Māryām is not convincing (Heldman 1993, 178, cat. 68). This latter manuscript has been variously attributed by some to the reigns of Dāwit and by others to that of Zar'a Yā'qob. The painter of this manuscript may have also decorated a copy of the *Miracles of Mary* kept in a private collection and discussed by Mercier 2000, 80.

<sup>69</sup> 'Amata Māryām might be Zar'a Yā'qob's sister, this identification is based on a note in another manuscript from the monastery of Dimā Giyorgis (EMDA 00342) where a woman with her name is described as a daughter of King Dāwit (fol. 96rb). This latter manuscript is accessible at <https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom/view/533844> (last access on 30 March 2022), where it has been described by Ted Erho. Habta Māryām might be identified as a monk from the famous monastery Dabra Libānos, who died in 1497, 'Habta Maryam', *EAE*, II (2005), 953b–954a (O. Raineri and Red.).

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/MfVK86307647/main>  
(principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

## XVIII

### Schleswig, Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Ms D 782

**Physical features:** 197 × 155 × 65; 1 unit; parchment; 155 folia; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1425–1525 (palaeography).

**Major works:** (1) *ʿArgānona wəddāse* (CAe 1146), fols 4ra–154va.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fols 4r, 24v, 43rb, 63vb, 79r, 105v, 140r.

*Comments:* indications for the daily readings written in the loops of the decorations, very likely coeval to main hand (fols 4r, 79r, 105v, 140r).

*Additions:* fols 1ra–2va, 2va–3vb, 3vb, 42vb, 43ra, 154va, 154vb–155vb, 155vb.

**Observations:** the name of Kidāna Wald and of other individuals (erased) are mentioned in the supplication formulas (sometimes erased). Indications for the daily readings are written in the upper margin of some folia, both probably by the main hand and also by a secondary hand. Six discusses the overall collection, and the possible existence of this item,<sup>70</sup> but it had not been catalogued. The manuscript was rebound or repaired at some point. At the end, a parchment strip with text on it (dated 1850–1950) is used to attach one of the folia.

**Bibliography:** Six 1999, 423 (description of the collection, not individual manuscript).

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/GotD782/main> (principal encoder Sophia Dege-Müller)

## XIX

### Schleswig, Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Ms D 855b

**Physical features:** 191 × 158; 1 unit; parchment; 1 folium; 0 columns.

<sup>70</sup> Six 1999, 423.

**Dating:** 1380–1430 (visual evidence).

**Major works:** none.

**Miniatures:** (1) Virgin and Child, fol. 1r.

*Comments:* the Child reaches out to touch his mother's veil. This appears to be a variation of the iconographic type of the *Kykkotissa*. The Child's cruciform halo is surrounded by a pattern of triangular rays that is not attested in Chojnacki's repertoire of nimbi from the early Solomonic period.<sup>71</sup> The elaborate decorations of Mary's mantle are executed with exceptional skill. A compass appears to have been used to draw her halo. The style of the miniature bears some comparison to that of works commissioned during the reigns of Emperor Dāwit I and Emperor Yəshaq (r.1414–1429/1430), such as an illustrated collection of homilies kept at Bərbər Māryām and a *Gadla samā'at* from Məşle Fāsīladas, but we are looking at the work of a different artist.<sup>72</sup> Because of its high quality, it is hypothetically possible that this work was executed by an artist with courtly connections. The image might originally have had an inscription that is no longer readable with a naked eye.

**Headpieces:** none.

*Additiones:* none.

**Observations:** none.

**Bibliography:** Six 1999, 423 (description of the collection, not individual manuscript).

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/GotD855b/main> (principal encoder Denis Nosenitsin)

<sup>71</sup> Chojnacki 1990.

<sup>72</sup> See the discussion of patterns in Mercier 2021, 132–139, on Məşle Fāsīladas see Bosc-Tiessé, 218–222.



Fig. 3 Virgin and Child, MASG Ms D 855b , fol. 1r.

## XIX

### Schleswig, Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Ms o.Nr. 151

**Physical features:** 344 × 228; 1 unit; parchment; 1 folium; 2 columns.

**Dating:** 1400–1500 (visual evidence).

**Major works:** (1) homiliary (incomplete), fol. 1ra–1vb.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fol. 1rb.

*Comments:* simple interlace band with two curlicue elements placed in opposite directions.

*Additiones:* none.

**Observations:** the manuscript consists of a single folium (not foliated), containing only the end of an unidentified homily (fol. 1ra–b, acephalous) and the beginning of a homily on the annunciation to Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist (fol. 1rb–vb, incomplete at the end).

**Bibliography:** Six 1999, 423 (description of the collection, not individual manuscript).

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/GotD151/main> (principal encoder Denis Nosnitsin)



Fig. 4 Decorative text opening, MASG Ms o.Nr. 151, fol. 1r.

XXI

**Tübingen, Universitätsbibliothek,  
MS M.a. IX 19\***

**Physical features:** 180 × 140 × 65; 1 unit; parchment; 143 folia; 1 column.

**Dating:** 1450–1500 (palaeography, catalogue).

**Major works:** (1) Book of Sirach (CAe 2358), fols 2v–93v; (2) Book of Proverbs (CAe 2195), fols 94r–142v.

**Miniatures:** none.

**Headpieces:** fols 4r, 134r.

*Comments:* the red monochrome interlace bands, with just a few touches of black, seem near coeval with the text and may be unfinished.

*Additions:* fols 1ra, 1ra–2r, 93v, 142v, 142v, 143v.

**Observations:** scribal supplications are on fol. 93v (personal names unreadable).

**Bibliography:** Six 2000, 24–25.

**URL to BM entry:** <https://betamasaheft.eu/manuscripts/UBTAeth19/main> (principal encoder Vitagrazia Pisani).

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### Summary

Illustrated manuscripts in the Ethiopic language, as material objects that carry textual and visual information, are among the most valuable sources of data for art historians specializing in this area. This article provides a handlist of illustrated early Solomonic manuscripts housed in German libraries and museums. The contribution was created within the framework of the AHRC-DFG project Demarginalizing medieval Africa: Images, texts, and identity in early Solomonic Ethiopia (1270–1527) so our data reflects the project's research focus on visual matter. This is the first time that the illuminations of the manuscripts included in the handlist are analysed comprehensively. We believe that the resulting work sheds new light on the history of book illustration in early Solomonic Ethiopia and hope that it will provide researchers with a valuable instrument to foster comparative research and a more integrative approach to the study of Ethiopian art.