Publishing Information

Homiletic Collections in Greek and Oriental Manuscripts
Edited by Jost Gippert and Caroline Macé

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INTRODUCTION

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Announcement
1 Terminology

In Arabic there are two words that may be translated as ‘homily’: turǧām (تُرجَم) and mīmar (مِيمر), sometimes also pronounced maymar. Both words are derived from the Syriac language: turǧām is essentially the Syriac word tūrgāmā (ܬܘܪܓܳܡܳܐ), which means ‘homily’ as well as ‘interpretation’ or ‘explanation’. In Arabic, turǧām is a particular ‘Christian term’ in contrast to the very common Arabic word tarǧama (ترجمة) meaning ‘translation’, which is built upon the same four radicals (root consonants).

In the Christian Arabic tradition, a turǧām is very often rhymed. It usually consists of an explanation of New Testament texts.1 Thus, it is a sermon that follows the Gospels. In the Eastern Syriac tradition, a tūrgāmā is an expository anthem preceding a reading of the Gospels or of Paul’s Epistles. In Syriac, the word may also mean ‘allegory’, ‘commentary’, ‘discourse’ or even ‘funeral oration’. There is also an Ethiopic word that is based on the same four radicals, viz. tərgwāme (ትርጓሜ) meaning ‘commentary’ or ‘exegesis’ and signifying mainly Biblical commentaries.

Mīmar, also a very specific Christian Arabic term, is derived from the Syriac word mimrā (ܐܳܪܡܐܺܡ) meaning ‘discurso’ or ‘homily’ or ‘theological discourse’ in Arabic. An Arabic mīmar is usually not rhymed, whereas in Syriac a mimrā normally signifies a metrical homily. Ephrem the Syrian, for example, wrote many of these metrical homilies or mimrē (which is the plural of mimrā).

2. Arabic homiletic collections

2.1 Designation of the collections in catalogues

It is not really easy to find homiliaries in catalogues of Arabic manuscripts, because collections of homilies may have different names in Arabic, depending on their content. The general term for ‘homiaries’ (كتاب الميامير, kitāb al-mayāmīr), may be translated as ‘Book of mīmars’. However, we also find them mentioned as:

- kitāb al-mawāʾiz, ‘Book of Exhortations’
- kitāb al-ḥuṭḥab, ‘Book of Speeches’, i.e. ‘Sermons’
- kitābʿ al-ʾiẓāt liṣ-ṣiyām al-kabīr ’aw aʿyād uhrā masḥūra, ‘Book of exhortations for Lent and other important feast days’
- rawḍat al-wāʾiz, ‘Meadow of the preacher’
- būq as-samāʾ, ‘The trumpet of Heaven’.

Besides the titles given above, homiliaries can be found in connection with ‘Saints’ Lives’, ‘Acts’ and ‘Martyrdoms’ or even as ‘Prayer Books’ and ‘Service Books’. Thus, Arabic manuscript catalogues (especially the older ones) do not in fact classify such collections under a specific or well defined rubric so far.

2.2 Authors of homilies found in Arabic homiliaries

If we follow Graf’s monumental Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur,2 especially volumes I and II, we find mainly homilies by the following Greek and Syriac authors in Arabic translations. Most of them are well known:

- Theophilus (Monophysite) bishop of Alexandria (c.385–412)
- Gregory of Nyssa (c.335–395)
- John Chrysostom (c.349–407) (very copious)
- Epiphanius of Salamis (c.320–403)
- Cyril of Alexandria (c.376–444)
- Theodosius of Alexandria (Monophysite, sixth century)
- Ephrem the Syrian (c.306–373)
- Jacob of Sarug (c.451–521)

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It is possible to arrange homiletic collections in accordance with different denominations or Churches. In doing so, we may again follow Graf. The given list is, like the one above, extracted from Graf’s Geschichteder christlichen arabischen Literatur. I mention only important authors before the fifteenth century, some of them not native Arabs or not Arabic-speaking:

- **Jacobite Church (Syrians)**
  - Moses bar Kepha (†903)
  - Michael the Syrian (†1199)
- **Coptic Church (Egyptians)**
  - Būlus al-Būšī (twelfth/thirteenth century)
  - Al-Waġīh Yūḥannā al-Qalyūbī (thirteenth century)
  - Aṣ-Ṣafī abu’l-Faḍāʾil ibn al-ʿAssāl (thirteenth century)
  - Al-Muʾtaman Abu-Isḥāq ibn al-ʿAssāl (thirteenth century)

- **Melkite Church**
  - Šams ar-Riʾāsa Abu’l-Barakāt ibn Kabar (thirteenth/fourteenth century)

- **Nestorian Church**
  - Abū Ḥalīm Īlīyā ibn al-Ḥadīṭī (†1190).

3. Works by pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite or attributed to him in Arabic homiletic collections

There are essentially only two Dionysian texts in Arabic that are explicitly called mīmar, i.e. ‘homilies’: the Narratio de vita sua (CPG 6633, hereinafter NVS) and ‘On Good and

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Evil’, an extract of *De divinis nominibus* (IV, 18‒35). Neither of these two texts is a ‘homily’ in the proper sense. The *NVS* is a report in which Dionysius the Areopagite allegedly narrates his conversion to Christianity. It is related to the seventh letter to Polycarp attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite and belonging to the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. In this letter, Dionysius relates that he saw the solar eclipse during the crucifixion of Christ when he was in Heliopolis. The *NVS* also reports this experience and connects it with St Paul’s speech at the Areopagus. The two events finally led to his baptism.

### 3.1 Narratio de vita sua

We find the *NVS* mainly in homiletic collections such as the ‘Holy Book of Homilies’, where it follows a homily of Benjamin I of Alexandria (fl. 623‒661) about the ‘Wedding in Cana’. We otherwise find the *NVS* in collections of saints’ lives and, possibly, in lectionaries for the Passion Week. There is, for example, a fragment of a codex consisting of eight leaves from the Mingana Collection in Birmingham (additional Christian Arabic ms. 247 [add. 258], about 1400 ce) which may have belonged to a lectionary. It is difficult to say where it is to be located; it came from the Church of Our Lady in a place spelt (نیاخي الضابرة Niyāḫī aḍ-Ḍābira) and may perhaps be of Coptic origin. The assumption that it might have been a lectionary is quite probable for two reasons: first, it contains a note indicating when the text was to be read, namely, after

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5 The *Corpus Dionysiacum* comprises four treatises (*De divinis nominibus, De coelesti hierarchia, De ecclesiastica hierarchia, De mystica theologia*) and ten letters (*Epistolae*). It was originally ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite mentioned in Acts 17:34, which does not prove to be true.

6 In Ethiopic, we find the *NVS* in connection with a homily by Benjamin I, as well. The homily in question is different though; it is on the crucifixion of Christ. In Arabic, on the other hand, the *NVS* follows the homily of Benjamin I; in Ethiopic it is included in it. Cf. Müller 1968, 43–49 (47).

7 ‘A locality the name of which cannot be read with safety’ as Mingana says, see Mingana 1939, 52.
the prayer of the sixth hour on Good Friday; and second, the
text is followed by a homily of Jacob of Sarug on the angel
who guarded the Paradise of Eden and on the believing
malefactor, i.e. the thief on the right side of Jesus when he
was crucified, which was read after the prayer of the ninth
hour on Good Friday. This homily of Jacob usually follows
or precedes the \textit{NVS} immediately in Ethiopic lectionaries for
the Passion Week. Ethiopic lectionaries, on the other hand,
were adopted from the Coptic Church in the fourteenth
century and thus translated from Arabic.

Arabic homiletic collections containing the \textit{NVS} are found
in the following manuscripts:

1. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Fonds arabe, 147
   (fols 146–162).
   Paper; fifteenth century; 326 folios; 25 × 16 cm; 15–17 lines.
   McGuckin 1883–1895, 32–33.

2. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Fonds arabe, 212
   (fols 129–134).\textsuperscript{8}
   Paper; 1601; 322 folios; 21 × 15 cm; 17 lines.
   McGuckin 1883–1895, 53.

3. University of Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library,
   Mingana Collection, additional Christian Arabic ms. 247
   [Chr. Arab. add. 258] (fols 1–6).
   Paper; fourteenth century; 8 folios; 20.6 × 14.7 cm; 12 lines.
   Mingana 1939, 51–52.

4. Cairo, Coptic Museum, 455 [Graf], 654 [Simaika, serial
   number] (fols 33–39).
   Paper; 1741; 244 folios; 21 × 16 cm; 14 lines.
   Graf 1934, 170.
   Simaika and ‘Abd al-Masīḥ 1942, 299.

5. Cairo, Coptic Museum, 446 [Graf], 861 [Simaika, serial
   number].
   Paper; 1782; 208 folios, 32 × 23 cm; 17 lines.
   Graf 1934, 166.
   Simaika and ‘Abd al-Masīḥ 1942, 388.

6. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. ar. 75
   (fols 157–168\textsuperscript{a}).
   Paper; thirteenth/fourteenth century.
   Mai 1831, 154.
   Sauget 1984, 201–240.

\textsuperscript{8} McGuckin erroneously says that it is on folios 122–135.

\textsuperscript{9} Graf 1947 gives page numbers: 666–710.

The content of all of these collections varies. In Paris, Fonds
arabe, 147 we find homilies about the resurrection, the death
or the body of Christ. In Paris, Fonds arabe, 212 we find
homilies about the circumcision of Christ and his entry into
the temple, combined with saints’ lives. Cairo 446 contains
18 homilies of the Fathers for Lazarus Saturday and Palm
Sunday. In all cases, the \textit{NVS} is read on the sixth hour of
Good Friday. In this usage, the Ethiopic Church follows the
Coptic Arabic Church.
3.2 ‘On Good and Evil’

‘On Good and Evil’ is extant in different kinds of collections. The text is found, for example, as an appendix to the work of Simʿān al-Kalīl al-Maqāra (Macarius), which is called ‘Garden of the Anchorite and Benediction of the Solitary’.10 In his book, Simʿān (Macarius) praises moral virtues such as patience, forgiveness, humility, piety and faith. Its subject is thus the Good, which makes it a proper place to add the Dionysian treatise on Good and Evil.

We further find ‘On Good and Evil’ in manuscripts containing texts from the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. It is sometimes located after the eighth letter of Dionysius (the letter to Demophilus), which is – broadly speaking – about doing good or acting righteously in the Church. It is otherwise placed between the Apocalypse of John and the Dionysian ‘Celestial Hierarchy’.


3.3 The Epistola de morte Apostolorum Petri et Pauli

In addition to the liturgical books mentioned above, the *NVS* is sometimes found in homiletic collections, too, where it appears after the *Epistola de morte Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* ([CPG 6631](#), hereinafter *EMA*).11 The *EMA* ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite is, as the title says, an epistle (رسالة *risāla* in Arabic). It is never called a ‘homily’, neither in Arabic nor in Syriac, although about a third of all Arabic translations of the *EMA* extant in Arabic manuscripts (as far as I have been able to locate them as yet) are found in homiletic collections. Another large part of Arabic translations of the *EMA* appears in manuscripts containing the Pauline Epistles, either as a sort of preamble or preface or as an apostil or postscript. Two Arabic manuscripts in Göttingen containing

11 A critical edition of this text, also covering translations from almost every Christian oriental language, is being prepared by the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities (Patristic Commission) and is expected to be published in 2020.
the EMA, for instance, are collections of Pauline epistles.\textsuperscript{12} The EMA is otherwise extant in collections of saints’ lives and martyrdoms or in various collections, dogmatic or other.

The EMA is not really a homily, as mentioned above. It is a ‘Letter of Consolation’, and it was written by (a certain) Dionysius to Timothy, Paul’s disciple, on the occasion of St Paul’s and St Peter’s martyrdom. If we take a closer look, we find it to be a eulogy for St Paul, telling the story of his martyrdom. The martyrdom of St Peter is mentioned only briefly, with the information that he was crucified upside down.

Arabic homiletic collections containing the EMA are found in the following manuscripts:

\begin{enumerate}
\item Melkite\textsuperscript{13}:
  \begin{enumerate}
  \item Jerusalem, Melkite Seminary of St Anne of the White Fathers, 38 (207–214).
    Paper; 1874; 150 folios; 20.5 × 13 cm.
    Sauget 1986.
  \item Lebanon, Dair Mār Đūmiṭ Faitrūn, 10.
    Paper; 1710\textsuperscript{14}.
    Paper; seventeenth century; 452 pages; 23 × 17 cm.
    Sbath 1928, 201–203.
  \end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{12} Göttingen, State and University Library, Arab. 104 and Arab. 105.

\textsuperscript{13} The division into Melkite, Jacobite and Maronite homiletic collections is not meant to be strict. Jacobite homiletic collections, for example, were indeed used in the Melkite Church, with Monophysite statements sometimes being marked as heretical. Numbers seven and eight of the Melkite group are, for instance, most probably of Jacobite origin.

\textsuperscript{14} Graf mentions the date 1694, see Graf 1947, 490.
4. Lebanon, Dair aš-Šuwair, 335.  
Paper; eighteenth/nineteenth century.  
Nasrallah 1961, 228.

5. Lebanon, Harissa, 37.  
Paper; seventeenth century; 379 pages; 22 × 16 cm.  
Nasrallah 1958, 66–69.  
Sauget 1986.

Paper; eighteenth century; 278 folios; 36 × 21 cm.  
Cheikho 1905, 471–473.  

7. Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale, 511 (fols 334r–341v [655–668]).  
Paper; 1867; 668 pages; 23.5 × 18 cm.  
Cheikho 1926, 215 [309].

8. Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale, 512 (fols 152r–156r [352–361]).  
Paper; sixteenth century; 744 pages; 21 × 14 cm.  

9. Mt Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, ar. 448r (fols 24r–28r).  
Paper; thirteenth century; 323 folios; 21 × 13 cm.  
Dunlop Gibson 1894, 86–87.  
Clark 1952, 35b.

10. Mt Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, ar. 475 (fols 157r–164r, incomplete).  
Paper; thirteenth century; 272 folios; 21 × 11 cm.  
Dunlop Gibson 1894, 92–93.  
Clark 1952, 36a.

11. Mt Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, ar. 482 (fols 269r + 271r–276r).  
Paper; thirteenth century; 297 folios; 24 × 15 cm.  
Dunlop Gibson 1894, 94.  
Clark 1952, 36a.

b) Jacobite:  
Bombycinus (silken paper); 1551 (Garshuni); 437 leaves.  
Assemanti and Assemanti 1759, 416–426.

Paper; nineteenth century; 93 folios; 21.7 × 15.4 cm; 20 lines.  
Mingana 1933, 822–825.

3. Cairo, Coptic Museum, 799 [2].  
Paper; 110 folios; 39 × 23 cm; 16 lines.  
Simaika and ‘Abd al-Masīḥ 1942, 361.

4. Cairo, Library of the Church of St Sergius and Bacchus, 110 (fols 42r–52v).  
Paper; 1716; 214 folios, 20.0 × 14.5 cm; 13 lines.  

c) Maronite:  
Paper; end seventeenth century; 27 × 20 cm.  

Why do we find the *EMA* in homiletic collections? The reason is that in the Coptic-Arabic tradition the *EMA* was read on 29 June, the day of the martyrdoms of St Peter and St Paul. It covers basically the same story as the account of their martyrdom given in the Coptic synaxary (a liturgical book containing hagiographies), but it goes into greater detail about St Paul.

4. Conclusion  
Whereas the Dionysian writings proper, as we may style them, were passed down because they were being collected in the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, smaller and more dubious writings that were also ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, such as the *EMA* and the *NVS*, were obviously handed down from one generation to the next because they were read as homilies and preserved in synaxaria, homiliaries or menologias, among other collections, and thus survived in manuscripts until today.

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13 See for example St George Coptic Orthodox Church 1995, 417–418. The exact Coptic date is the 5th of the month of Abbī.
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St George Coptic Orthodox Church (1995), Coptic Synaxarium (Chicago, Illinois: St. Mark Coptic Church).

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18 – Canones: The Art of Harmony. The Canon Tables of the Four Gospels, edited by Alessandro Bausi, Bruno Reudenbach, and Hanna Wimmer

The so-called ‘Canon Tables’ of the Christian Gospels are an absolutely remarkable feature of the early, late antique, and medieval Christian manuscript cultures of East and West, the invention of which is commonly attributed to Eusebius and dated to first decades of the fourth century AD. Intended to host a technical device for structuring, organizing, and navigating the Four Gospels united in a single codex – and, in doing so, building upon and bringing to completion previous endeavours – the Canon Tables were apparently from the beginning a highly complex combination of text, numbers and images, that became an integral and fixed part of all the manuscripts containing the Four Gospels as Sacred Scripture of the Christians and can be seen as exemplary for the formation, development and spreading of a specific Christian manuscript culture across East and West AD 300 and 800.

This book offers an updated overview on the topic of ‘Canon Tables’ in a comparative perspective and with a precise look at their context of origin, their visual appearance, their meaning, function and their usage in different times, domains, and cultures.

20 – Fakes and Forgeries of Written Artefacts from Ancient Mesopotamia to Modern China, edited by Cécile Michel and Michael Friedrich

Fakes and forgeries are objects of fascination. This volume contains a series of thirteen articles devoted to fakes and forgeries of written artefacts from the beginnings of writing in Mesopotamia to modern China. The studies emphasise the subtle distinctions conveyed by an established vocabulary relating to the reproduction of ancient artefacts and production of artefacts claiming to be ancient: from copies, replicas and imitations to fakes and forgeries. Fakes are often a response to a demand from the public or scholarly milieu, or even both. The motives behind their production may be economic, political, religious or personal – aspiring to fame or simply playing a joke. Fakes may be revealed by combining the study of their contents, codicological, epigraphic and palaeographic analyses, and scientific investigations. However, certain famous unsolved cases still continue to defy technology today, no matter how advanced it is. Nowadays, one can find fakes in museums and private collections alike; they abound on the antique market, mixed with real artefacts that have often been looted. The scientific community’s attitude to such objects calls for ethical reflection.