LIV INGEBORG LIED

Invisible Manuscripts: Textual Scholarship and the Survival of 2 Baruch

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and the Survival of 2 Baruch

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Dedicated to all the hands that carried 2 Baruch through history.

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Preface and Acknowledgements

This is a volume that has been a long time in the making. The initial idea of writing about the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch was first conceived back in 2005, when I was still a PhD-student at the University of Bergen (Norway) and about to finish my dissertation on the conceptions of the Land of Israel in that book. I was heavily invested then in understanding 2 Baruch in the context of the literary world of early Judaism. To be honest, I had not given the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch much thought. I knew the manuscripts as "text witnesses," of course, but I had neither seen nor otherwise engaged with any of them. I had never thought about the manuscripts as cultural artifacts in their own right: I knew very little about their production or the makeup of the collections of books they contained, who were their stewards, or how had they been used, interpreted and handled over time. Why should I? For my purpose back in 2005, there were perfectly fine text editions, translations and commentaries that helped me to engage with the literary contents of the text of 2 Baruch, and a facsimile edition provided me with adequate access to the main Syriac text witness. I remember being slightly annoyed when one of the professors at my *alma mater* asked me to say something about the manuscript tradition of 2 Baruch at an informal workshop organized by the research seminar that I attended at the time. I also remember very well my initial surprise and the spark of curiosity that my preparations for that small paper eventually ignited. I guess many of us who conduct research and write academic texts for a living know the feeling: that moment of pure and honest intellectual curiosity and that urge to know more – paired with a dash of shame for not knowing already. I was working on a Jewish text, presumably written in Greek or Hebrew, but the manuscripts were in Syriac and apparently Christian. I was writing about late-first or early-second-century CE literary conceptions, but the manuscripts and the texts copied in them were half a millennium younger, sometimes more. I was writing about a non-scriptural, pseudepigraphal misfit – how could it be that all the preserved manuscripts seemed to copy it among books commonly found in Old Testament codices? Why was the academic narrative about 2 Baruch so different from the world that the manuscripts hinted at for this book? Most importantly, why had I not cared to learn anything about the manuscripts until I was gently obliged to do so? Why did it take me so long to understand that manuscripts matter?

I am writing this preface in Oslo in 2020. I am aware that, with the exception

of the latter two (shame-driven) questions, these considerations were still not readily conceived and clear in my mind on that autumn day of 2005. They are retrojections, summarizing some of the main issues that have occupied me while writing this book. The considerations have grown out of my developing work on the manuscripts in various research libraries across Europe and the US, as well as my ongoing attempts to put the outcome of that work into critical dialogue with the perspectives and practices that have been, and still are, shaping textual scholarship in the fields that deal with writings such as 2 Baruch. Over the years, these have led me to work on a much broader set of writings, to crisscross academic borders, and to take on the methodological, theoretical and ethical challenges that accompany a manuscript-oriented approach to textual scholarship. My work on each of these challenges has developed into sub-projects and publications in their own right, but they have all grown out of my interest in the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch. Now, fifteen years later, these intellectual detours and byways are hopefully contributing to making the current book more interesting, more relevant and readable to a larger audience than the one that would otherwise have made a monograph on 2 Baruch a priority. In addition, by being painfully transparent about my own intellectual history here at the outset, I want to make it very clear that when I address "issues" and "gaps" in previous scholarship, I am also addressing the shortcomings of my own research record.

I would never have been able to write this book without the help, support and encouragement of a large academic community. I am forever grateful to Einar Thomassen and Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, my intellectual parents at the University of Bergen, and to Jostein Børtnes, who challenged me to look more closely at the manuscripts, thus setting off the whole undertaking.

I have written most of this volume in my office at the MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society in Oslo. In terms of thanks, there are many people to mention – all my colleagues at MF, really, but particularly these colleagues for their support of the current project: Kristin B. Aavitsland, Iselin Frydenlund, Matthew P. Monger, Brent Nongbri, Blossom Stefaniw, Esther Brownsmith, Victor Ghica, Kristin Joachimsen, Karl Olav Sandnes and Vidar L. Haanes. I also owe a great deal to other friends and colleagues, among them Hugo Lundhaug, Marianne B. Kartzow, Sissel Undheim, Aslak Rostad, Årstein Justnes, Lisbeth Mikaelson, Nils H. Korsvoll and Torleif Elgvin.

I am indebted to Francis Borchardt, J. Gregory Given, Matthias Henze, Karel C. Innemée, Ephrem Ishac, Grigory Kessel, George A. Kiraz, Eva Mroczek, Daniel Picus, Hanna Tervanotko, Emidio Vergani and James Walters for reading and responding to chapter drafts or larger parts of the volume.

As this book is interdisciplinary at heart, it would not have been conceivable without dialogue across several fields. I have benefitted considerably from the interaction with Robert A. Kraft, Michael E. Stone, Annette Yoshiko Reed, Loren Stuckenbruck, George Brooke, Benjamin G. Wright III, James R. Davila,

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[1] In Norwegian, "2 Baruch" reads "Andre Baruk."

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Abbreviations

AbrN	*Abr-Nahrain*
AJSR	*Association for Jewish Studies Review*
AS	*Aramaic Studies*
ATA	Alttestestamentliche Abhandlungen
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CRINT	Compendium Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EJL	Early Judaism and Its Literature
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GRBS	*Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HS	*Hebrew Studies*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCSCS	*Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies*
JCSSS	*Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JEastCS	*Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JSHRZ-St	Studien zu den jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LSAWS	*Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic*

LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
MPI	Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden
NedTT	*Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift*
OIS	Oriental Institute Seminars
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OrChrAn	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
ParOr	*Parole de l'Orient*
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
SAC	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SC	Sources chrétiennes
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum/Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
TSK	*Theologische Studien und Kritiken*
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAC	*Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

General Introduction

The Invisibility of Manuscripts:
Tracing the Transmission of 2 Baruch –
Challenging Textual Scholarship

Have you ever seen a manuscript? If you have not, I do not blame you. Although major research libraries worldwide have large collections of manuscripts in their keeping, these manuscripts have been functionally invisible in textual scholarship. For a long time, the manuscripts mattered to textual scholars primarily if they managed to make themselves transparent, efficiently guiding the scholarly gaze to a text behind and beyond them.

The current volume deals with one of the most striking omissions in the research history of 2 Baruch: *the general inattention paid to manuscripts as cultural artifacts.* Their material constitution and their production, circulation and presence in time and place, as well as their relationships with their historical stewards, remain generally untouched by textual scholars. This is an omission that research on 2 Baruch shares with scholarship on many other early Jewish books in Christian transmission. The manuscripts that preserve the extant texts of these books have certainly played a crucial role in as far as they have served as witnesses to the early text, but other aspects of their existence have generally not attracted the attention that they deserve.

In this volume, I will argue that in the case of 2 Baruch, the consequences of this inattention are far reaching. One point is that there are obvious gaps and glitches in our[1] knowledge about the constitution of the manuscripts that we apply as our source materials. These gaps and glitches represent important methodological challenges to the work we have already undertaken. Manuscripts are arguably much more than the text history distilled from the copies that embody it. However, since we have not studied other dimensions of the manuscripts, we do not really know what is hiding in the cracks. Another, equally important issue is that we are systematically missing out on the fas-

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[1] I use the pronoun "we" in this volume to refer to "we, the textual scholars." Occasionally the context will qualify it further as "we, the textual scholars working on 2 Baruch." I apply the term "textual scholar" to refer to a trained academic expert specializing in texts transmitted in a manuscript culture (that is, a culture in which the reproduction and multiplication of texts require manual copying). I use the term generously in the sense that I include both scholars who (mostly) produce (critical) editions and translations of texts and scholars who (mostly) identify as interpreters/exegetes of those texts.

cinating worlds of the manuscripts themselves, the communities that treasured them and the continuing life of the copies of 2 Baruch among the manuscripts' stewards. Third and finally, we have been unable to see that our research depends thoroughly on manuscripts that essentially belong to someone else. The manuscripts were produced, engaged with and owned by other communities than the ones to which scholars have typically ascribed ownership of the literary work. In the case of 2 Baruch, these communities were Christian minority communities in the Middle East, primarily Syriac Christians. It is due to their efforts that textual scholars can access 2 Baruch at all, but for more than hundred and fifty years of research history, all of this has been hidden from sight.

The Academic Narrative of 2 Baruch

The research history of 2 Baruch starts in the 1860s when Antonio M. Ceriani identified the only known copy of the book in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan.[2] This first phase of the history of research of 2 Baruch coincides with a decisive period in textual scholarship. This is the period that saw the consolidation of historical-critical approaches to ancient writings and their contexts.[3] It is a period that promotes scientific ideals and a notion of professional practices. It sees the budding specialization of academic fields, still recognizable to us today, and its resulting division of labor.[4] The scholars who first published editions, translations and exegetical studies of 2 Baruch were European scholars, typically theologians and biblical scholars with Protestant or Catholic backgrounds, many of them with a pronounced scholarly interest in the Jewish context of the New

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[2] Antonio M. Ceriani published a Latin translation of 2 Baruch in 1866 ("Apocalypsis Baruch, olim de graeco in syriacum, et nunc de syriaco in latinum translata," in *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* 1.2 [Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosianae Mediolani, 1866], 73–98). 1866 is the formal year of publication. The part containing 2 Baruch was initially published in 1865. It was rebound and republished in a larger volume containing formerly published pieces from the period 1864 to 1866.

[3] Cf., e. g., James Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 234, 357–68; James S. Timpanaro, *The Genesis of Lachmann's Thought*, trans. and ed. Glenn W. Most (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), and Glenn Most's foreword in particular. Cf., Matthew J. Driscoll, "Words on the Page: Thoughts on Philology Old and New," in *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability, and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature,* ed. Judy Quinn and Emily Lethbridge (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010), 87–104 at 88–90; Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 24–32; Gregory L. Cuéllar, *Empire, the British Musem, and the Making of the Biblical Scholar in the Nineteenth Century: Archival Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 8, 95–103.

[4] Turner, *Philology*, 232–33; Lorenzo DiTommaso, "The 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha' as Category and Corpus," in *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission,* ed. Alexander Kulik et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 254–79 at 259–60.

Testament and Christian origins.[5] Their scholarship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries benefitted greatly from the arrival in Europe of manuscripts originating from the Middle East.[6] Throughout the early modern and modern periods, substantial amounts of manuscripts reached European shores and provided scholars with access to the extant texts of books so far unknown or known only by title from late antique and medieval book lists and literature.[7] The scholars who first lay hands on the surviving copies of 2 Baruch were children of a print culture and carried its notions of authorship, text production and text transmission.[8] They were educated in a modernist academic culture with a general suspicion of materiality and gave priority to immaterial ideas.[9] Furthermore, the publications that they have left us hint at the influence of the

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[5] Cf., e. g., Robert H. Charles, who in his 1896 edition of 2 Baruch states that "The Apocalypse of Baruch belongs to the first century of our era. [It is thus] contemporaneous with the chief New Testament writings. It is this fact that constitutes the chief value of the work" (*The Apocalypse of Baruch, Translated from the Syriac, Chapters I–LXXVII from the Sixth Cent. MS in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, and Chapters LXXVIII–LXXXVII – the Epistle of Baruch – from a New and Critical Text Based on Ten MSS and Published Herewith. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Black, 1896)*,* xvii, cf., also, vii, xi). Cf., also his *Religious Development between the Old and New Testament* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1914), 9.

[6] See Cuéllar, *Empire*, 6, 19–20, 124–26.

[7] Many of the manuscripts were acquired from monasteries in the Middle East. Others were unearthed in (archaeological) digs, many of them in Egypt. See, William Wright, "Preface," in *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, Part III* (London: British Museum, 1872), i–xxxiv; William Cureton, *The Festal Letters of Athanasius, Discovered in an Ancient Syriac Version* (London: Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts, 1848), i–xxxii; Bernhard P. Grenfell, "Oxyrhynchus and Its Papyri," *Egypt Exploration Fund Archaeological Report* (1896–97): 1–12; Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *The History of the Monasteries of Nitiria and of Scetis*, part II of *The Monasteries of Wâdi 'n Natrûn* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), Columba Stewart, *Yours, Mine, or Theirs? Historical Observations on the Use, Collection and Sharing of Manuscripts in Western Europe and the Christian Orient,* Analecta Gorgiana 126 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009); David C. Parker, *Codex Sinaiticus: The Story of the World's Oldest Bible* (Peabody: Hendricksen, 2010); Janet Soskice, *The Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels* (New York: Vintage, 2010); Brent Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018). For an example of a travel account with particular relevance for the present volume, not the least as a case for Victorian orientalism, see Robert Curzon Jr., *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (London: J. Murray, 1849).

[8] See, e. g., the description of the inspired author who pens his book in Bruno Violet, *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1924), xc. Cf., Joseph A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); John Bryant, *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Revision and Editing for Book and Screen* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2002).

[9] Cf., Andreas Reckwitz, "The Status of the 'Material' in Theories of Culture: From 'Social Structure' to 'Artefacts'," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 32/2 (2002): 195–217; Peter Pels, "The Modern Fear of Matter: Reflections on the Protestantism of Victorian Science," *Material Religion* 4/3 (2008): 264–83; James W. Watts, "The Three Dimensions of Scriptures," in *Iconic Books and Texts,* ed. James E. Watts (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 9–32.

colonial narratives of their day with a clear distrust in the ability of manuscripts to survive in "oriental libraries" and among their Middle Eastern guardians.[10]

The main features of the lingering academic narrative of 2 Baruch were established under these historical conditions. From the very beginning, and with very few exceptions along the way,[11] scholars have represented 2 Baruch as a Jewish book, written in Palestine and dating to the first centuries of the common era.[12] A source-critical approach to 2 Baruch, first proposed by Richard Kabisch, soon gave way to a conception of the book as a complex, but still discrete, unified and consistent literary work.[13] Already at an early stage, scholars approached the book as the product of a single, autonomous author, alternatively of an author–redactor, who shaped and finished the composition based on materials previously known to him.[14] Scholars understood 2 Baruch as a literary reaction to the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem by the Romans (70 CE). As such, scholars read 2 Baruch, often in tandem with 4 Ezra, as a source to Jewish thought in the period between the destruction of the second temple and the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–35 CE). The representation of 2 Baruch as "apocryphal" had already occurred on its initial publication, in Ceriani's editions.[15] Other scholars approached it as "pseudepigraphal."[16] Regardless of the exact nomen-

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[10] See, e. g., Todd M. Hickey and James G. Keenan, "At the Creation: Seven Letters from Grenfell, 1897," *Analecta Papyrologia* 28 (2016): 351–82 at 369; Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis*, part III of *The Architecture and Archaeology* (New York: Arno Press, 1973 (reprint)), 176. Cf., Stewart, *Yours, Mine, or Theirs*, 622–27 and Cuéllar, *Empire*.

[11] Cf., the discussion of Theodore Zahn and Rivka Nir's position in chapter 7.

[12] Ferdinand Rosenthal, *Vier apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba's* (Leipzig: Otto Schulze, 1885); Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch,* vii–vii; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, xci–ii.

[13] Richard Kabisch, "Die Quellen der Apokalypse Baruchs," *Jahrbücher für Protestantische Theologie* 18 (1892): 66–107; Eugène de Faye, *Les apocalypse juives: essai de critique littéraire et théologique*. Thèse présentée à la Faculté de Théologie protestante de Paris (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1892), 25–28; Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch,* ix–x, xxii–xxx. The source-critical approach was criticised already by Carl Clemen ("Die Zusammensetzung des Buches Henoch, der Apokalypse des Baruch und des vierten Buches Esra," *TSK* 11 [1898]: 211–46).

[14] See, Heinrich Ewald, "Stück 43," *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* (1867): 1705–20 at 1706–7. Cf., Violet, *Apokalypsen,* lxxiv, xc.

[15] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch," i–ii; idem, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," in *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* 5.2 (Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosianae Mediolani, 1868), 113–80 at 113 (Note the confusion of dates of Ceriani's volumes, both in the editions themselves and in the research literature. Fascicle 5.2 is not dated in the volume, Fascicle 5.1 is dated 1868. The catalogue in the Ambrosian Library has 1868, but the publication of the volume in its present form may well have been in 1871). The assessment and nomenclature were taken over immediately, for instance by Ewald in 1867 ("Stück 43," 1706).

[16] William J. Dean, *Pseudepigrapha: An Account of Certain Apocryphal Sacred Writings of the Jews and Early Christians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1891), 1, 130; Robert H. Charles, "Preface," in *Pseudepigrapha,* vol. 2 of *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English with Introduction and Critical and Explanatory Notes to the Several Books,* ed. Robert H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), i–ii.

clature, 2 Baruch has always remained safely contained and categorized as "non-canonical."

Scholarship on 2 Baruch has certainly developed since its early years. New contributors working under other historical and cultural circumstances have brought new, sometimes field-changing, insights and approaches to the study of the book.[17] Students of 2 Baruch have also benefitted from ongoing discussions in the broader field of Early Jewish Studies, for instance debates about text production, authorship and pseudepigraphy and key discussions about canon and categorizations of books, as well as the important nuancing that scholarship has brought to the academic constructions of "Judaism" in the ancient world.[18] In addition, although traditional editorial procedures generally prevail, debates about the methods and epistemologies of textual scholarship in the broader sphere of early Jewish and Christian literatures have slowly started to inform the study of 2 Baruch.[19]

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[17] Major, and/or much debated, lengthy contributions since the 1960s include: Wolfgang Harnisch, *Verhängnis und Verheissung der Geschichte: Untersuchungen zum Zeit- und Geschichtsverständnis im 4. Buch Esra und in der syr. Baruchapokalypse,* FRLANT 97 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969); Pierre-M. Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque de Baruch: Introduction, traduction du syriaque et commentaire,* 2 vols, SC 144–45 (Paris: Cerf, 1969); Anitra B. Kolenkow, "An Introduction to 2 Baruch 53, 56–74: Structure and Substance" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1971); Sven Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," part IV, fascicle 3, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), i–iv, 1–50; Gwendolyn B. Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed? A Literary Analysis of 2 Baruch*, SBLDS 72 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984); Frederick J. Murphy, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch*, SBLDS 78 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); Adriana Drint, "The Mount Sinai Arabic Version of IV Ezra: Text, Translation and Introduction" (PhD diss., Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1995); Mark F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message,* JSPSup 42 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); Rivka Nir, *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, EJL 20 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Liv Ingeborg Lied, *The Other Lands of Israel: Imaginations of the Land in 2 Baruch*, JSPSup 129 (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading 2 Baruch in Context*, TSAJ 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). Cf., also, the two edited volumes, Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason M. Zurawski, eds., *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall,* JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski, *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies,* LSTS 87 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014); Lydia Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost the Temple: Crisis and Response in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch*, Studia Antiqua Australiensia 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020). I return to other major text editions and translations in chapters 1 and 5.

[18] Among the most influential publications are: Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Robert A. Kraft, "Para-mania: Before, beside and beyond Biblical Studies," *JBL* 126 (2007): 5–27; Annette Yoshiko Reed, "The Modern Invention of 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha'," *JTS* 60 (2009): 403–36; Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011); Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[19] Some influential publications are David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Eldon Epp, "The Multivalence of the Term 'Original

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the academic narrative of 2 Baruch has proven surprisingly robust.[20] Indeed, I have myself reiterated it on several occasions in my scholarship during the last decades.[21] As this volume will show, it remains a possibility that the hypotheses of this dominant academic narrative are correct. However, it is crucial to be aware that the academic narrative that scholars of 2 Baruch have inherited is rooted in the epistemologies, professional practices, priorities and matters of concern of European scholars working in the early modern and modern periods. The risk is that, while the narrative about 2 Baruch continues to circulate, we forget that the various features that constitute it depend heavily on the approaches that enabled it.

The Weight of the Historical-Critical Inheritance

As suggested by the above reiteration of the academic narrative, the approach to 2 Baruch has been overwhelmingly historical-critical. Scholars have aimed to reconstruct and to study the earliest possible, or original, form of the text of 2 Baruch in its early, or original, historical and literary contexts. To this aim, the manuscripts that preserve copies of 2 Baruch have played a dedicated role as witnesses to the early text. They have been used as evidence of the text that lies behind them. This means that the interest in the manuscripts has primarily been text-critical. Text editions of 2 Baruch display detailed attention to the text copied into the columns of manuscript pages in so far as it provides ac-

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Text' in New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 92 (1999): 245–81; Carol Bakhos, ed., *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, JSJSup 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Peter Schäfer and Chaim Milikowsky, "Current Views on Editing of Rabbinic Texts of Late Antiquity: Reflections on a Debate after Twenty Years," in *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, ed. Martin Goodman and Philip S. Alexander, PBA 165 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 79–88; Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar, eds., *Composition, Rewriting and Reception of the Book of Jubilees* (Special issue; *RevQ* 104/26 [2014]); Brennan W. Breed, *Nomadic Text: A Theory of Biblical Reception History*, Indiana Series in Biblical Literature (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014); Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jennott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, STAC 97 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015); Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, eds., *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017); Matthew D.C. Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Frank Feder and Matthias Henze, eds., *Deuterocanonical Scriptures,* vol. 2 of *Textual History of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

[20] Cf., among many others, Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:21–32; Murphy, *Structure and Meaning*, 1–2; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch,* 33–34; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism,* 9–10; Matthias Henze, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: The Status Quaestionis," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall,* ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason M. Zurawski, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 3–27; Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost the Temple*, 3–35. Cf., further, DiTommaso, "OTP as Category and Corpus," 268–69 for the broader trends.

[21] See, e.g., Lied, *Other Lands*, 1–2.

cess to the textual history of the book and ideally to the earliest possible text of 2 Baruch. However, the historical-critical approach rests in the assumption that the early text is indeed accessible through text-critical procedures. It also takes for granted that the early text and its context are the most interesting text and context and, it presumes that the feature of the manuscripts that really matters to the endeavor of studying 2 Baruch is the text in the columns. In so doing, it brackets the text from the rest of the manuscript and treats it as immaterial. Other features of the manuscript and its history are not considered equally relevant.

In his most recent comprehensive monograph on 2 Baruch, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading 2 Baruch in Context* (2011), Matthias Henze writes:

> Judged on its reception history, *2Bar* and the apocalyptic program it advocates must be considered a failure. Shortly after its composition the work suffered a fate every writer dreads, the cruellest curse of them all – the apocalypse was condemned to *damnatio memoriae*. The religious authorities refrained from referring to it, instructors banned it from their curricula, scribes ceased to copy it, and, as a result, *2Bar* soon sank into oblivion. Not a single Jewish manuscript of the text survives, and there are no undisputed references to or quotations of it in the literature of antiquity. As a result, *2Bar* was entirely forgotten for almost two millennia – until it was rediscovered in the nineteenth century in a single oriental Christian biblical manuscript. The author of *2Bar* can justifiably be called a "historical loser," a creative author whose ingenious work faded from view soon after it was composed and hence failed to make the impact for which it was intended.[22]

I choose to quote this paragraph in full – not because it stands out but precisely because it displays a widely shared approach in scholarship and thus illustrates one of the crucial challenges of the academic narrative of 2 Baruch. In this paragraph, Henze argues that the author is a "historical loser" and his work a failure.[23] Compared with many other writings surviving from antiquity, 2 Baruch has obviously not been the world's most popular book. In this regard, Henze's conclusion is correct. The interesting aspect of this quote, though, is not its conclusion but how Henze argues it. He asserts that ancient communities stopped using 2 Baruch, that no Jewish manuscripts or quotations in other literature survive[24] and that the book does not appear on the historical scene again until the

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[22] Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 8.

[23] Cf., Violet (*Apokalypsen,* xciii): "Die Ap. Baruch selber ist kein Stück der Weltliteratur geworden; […]," and Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458–59.

[24] I agree with Henze that no certain quotations of 2 Baruch survive in late antique literature. Previous scholars have held that the Epistle of Barnabas 11:9 and 16:6 and Cyprian, *Testimonia ad Quirinum* 3.29 and (sometimes) Irenaeus, *Adversus Haeresis* 5.33, contain quotations from 2 Baruch (Cf., Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xix–xx; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxvi, xciii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:55–56, 272–80). It remains possible that these passages allude to or share some literary contents with the writing we today would recognize as "2 Baruch," but un-

mid-nineteenth century when a Christian manuscript was rediscovered in Milan. In this line of argumentation, manuscripts live a curious half-life. They exist as material artifacts in the sense that a manuscript can be retrieved from a European library but they are invisible as historically situated cultural artifacts. Although copies of 2 Baruch survive in manuscripts from the fourth century onward, the manuscript transmission does not count as reception. Thus, vital parts of the embodied life and circulation of 2 Baruch among the late antique and medieval communities that produced and engaged the manuscripts vanishes from sight in the two-millennia gap.

It is in many ways remarkable that our only traceable sources on the existence of 2 Baruch are allowed no place in the academic narrative about this book. It is even more remarkable that this is the dominant view on manuscripts in textual scholarship. In line with the historical-critical approach, the manuscripts exist in so far as they serve as witnesses to an early text beyond themselves, but they are invisible beyond this specific function ascribed to them by modern scholars. This says something about the explanatory power – and the blind spots – that widely shared epistemologies and practices[25] may produce. They force some things to be "source" (the text in the columns) and other things to be "non-source" (most other aspects of the manuscripts). The manuscripts become invisible in plain sight.

At the current moment in 2 Baruch's research history, it is hard to discern whether, how and the extent to which the dominant representation of the book is basically the product of a durable academic narrative and the epistemologies and practices that initially molded and continue to uphold it. To find out, the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch *qua* reception history deserves more attention, and the academic narrative of 2 Baruch would benefit from critical engagement. What changes if we free the manuscripts from their translucent existence and admit that they cast a shadow? What happens if we allow the cultural artifact to count as source?

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less the text of the passages in question have changed in transmission, I do not see that any of them qualify as "quotes from 2 Baruch." (In chapter 6 of the current volume, I argue that 2 Baruch has indeed changed in transmission. However, we have no positive evidence of the transformation of the passages in focus here). Note that Daniel M. Gurtner refers to the passage in Cyprian as a Latin "excerpt" of 2 Baruch (Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text. With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordance*, Jewish and Christian Texts Series [Edinburg: T&T Clark, 2011], title and 7). This is a misleading (although traditional) use of the term "excerpt" and the claim that the passage in *Testimonia ad Quirinum* is a quote from 2 Bar 48 is problematic. I return to Dionysius bar Salibi's quote of 2 Bar 85:3/1 Ep. Bar. 8:3 in chapter 5 of the present volume.

[25] When I talk about "practices" in the present volume, I refer to "patterns of action." I will use the term to talk about historical patterns of action discernible in the source material as well as patterns of action in contemporary textual scholarship. In the latter case, I refer to professional practices in terms of systemic, path-dependent patterns of action.

Early Jewish Writings in Christian Transmission

A substantial number of the books that scholars commonly identify as Jewish writings of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods[26] survive as extant texts in later Christian manuscripts only. In fact, with the exception of the writings that appeared in the fragmentary remains of manuscripts ascribed to the caves close to the Dead Sea or found in the Cairo Genizah, this is the case for a majority of early Jewish writings.[27] This means that these writings are accessible to scholars today because they were copied into manuscripts that were Christian productions, intended for and engaged with by late antique or medieval Christian readers.

A Longstanding Methodological Discussion

The Christian manuscript transmission of early Jewish texts has been noted and recognized as a methodological challenge to the study of Jewish antiquity for a long time.[28] Louis Ginzberg commented on the situation in the first decade of the twentieth century in his *Legends of the Jews*.[29] Since the early-1970s, it has been repeatedly pointed out as an important methodological challenge, most prominently by Marinus de Jonge, Robert A. Kraft and Michael E. Stone.[30]

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[26] The term "early Jewish" is certainly imprecise (and it comes with a long history that I will not reiterate here). Still, it is in frequent use. In this volume, I will use the term to refer to a period in Jewish literary history, "the Hellenistic and early Roman periods," that is, roughly, the time between 323 BCE and 200 CE. I do not apply the term "Second Temple Period" primarily because the assumed initial writing of 2 Baruch took place in the late-first or early-second century CE, that is, after the fall of the temple. I acknowledge that many of the writings that later became "biblical" were also growing and changing in this period but these writings are most often excluded when scholars refer to writings of the Hellenistic and early Roman period.

[27] There are certainly some important exceptions to this rule: the writings found among the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Cairo Genizah (e. g., Jubilees, writings ascribed to Enoch, the Testament of Levi, the Testament of Naphtali, etc.). These manuscripts, most of them surviving only in fragments, point to a Jewish transmission of these writings. Cf., Stone, *Ancient Judaism*, 16–25, 182–94; Liv Ingeborg Lied and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Fifty Years of the Pseudepigrapha Section at the SBL*, ed. Matthias Henze and Liv Ingeborg Lied, EJL 50 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 203–29 at 205–11 for a presentation of the issue and an overview of the debate.

[28] Charles is among the early contributors to the study of 2 Baruch that are well aware of the Christian transmission of 2 Baruch but who do not address it as a methodological problem (*Apocalypse of Baruch*, viii–ix). Cf., furthermore, Violet, *Apokalypsen*, xciii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458–59.

[29] Louis Ginzberg, "Preface," in *From Creation to Jakob*, vol. 1 of *The Legends of the Jews,* trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909), xxi–xxix at xxvi–ii.

[30] Cf., in particular, Marinus de Jonge's foreword in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of Their Text, Composition and Origin*, 2nd rev. ed. (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975). This monograph was first published in 1953, but the explicit reflection appears in the foreword of the second edition. Cf., Robert A. Kraft, "The Multiform Jewish Heritage of Early

They stressed the risks involved in the use of Christian manuscript materials for distilling information about early Jewish texts without first exploring the significance of the manuscripts as sources to Christian interests and activities. Following the lead of de Jonge, Kraft and Stone, scholars such as David Satran, Martha Himmelfarb, John C. Reeves and William Adler produced highly valuable studies, beginning in the 1990s.[31] James R. Davila discussed the provenance of pseudepigraphical writings in 2005.[32] The discussion in the field is an

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Christianity," in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty. Part Three: Judaism Before 70*, ed. Jacob Neusner, SJLA 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 174–99; idem, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity" (paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the SNTS, Duke University, Durham, NC); Michael E. Stone, "Categorization and Classification of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," *AbrN* 24 (1986): 167–77.

[31] Among the most important contributions are: David Frankfurter, *Elijah in Upper Egypt: The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity,* SAC (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); William Adler, "Jacob of Edessa and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Chronography," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha*, ed. John C. Reeves, EJL 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 143–71; Martha Himmelfarb, "Some Echoes of Jubilees in Medieval Hebrew Literature," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha,* ed. John C. Reeves, EJL 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 115–41; David Satran, *Biblical Prophets in Byzantine Palestine: Reassessing the Lives of the Prophets,* SVTP 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1995); John C. Reeves, ed., *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha,* EJL 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994); idem, "Exploring the Afterlife of Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Medieval Near Eastern Religious Traditions: Some Initial Soundings," *JSJ* 30/2 (1999): 148–77; Marinus de Jonge and Johannes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Daniel C. Harlow, *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch (3 Baruch) in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity*, SVTP 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); idem, "The Christianization of Early Jewish Pseudepigrapha: The Case of 3 Baruch," *JSJ* 32 (2001): 416–44; Ross S. Kramer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Michael A. Knibb, "Christian Adoption and Transmission of Jewish Pseudepigrapha: The Case of 1 Enoch," *JSJ* 32 (2001): 396–415; Pierluigi Piovanelli, "In Praise of 'The Default Position', or Reassessing the Christian Reception of the Jewish Pseudepigraphic Heritage," *NedTT* 61 (2007): 233–50. And importantly, de Jonge, Kraft and Stone continued their work. See, e.g., Marinus de Jonge, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as Part of Christian Literature*, SVTP 19 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Robert A. Kraft, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity," in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha,* ed. John C. Reeves, EJL 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 55–86; idem, "The Pseudepigrapha and Christianity, Revisited: Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions," *JSJ* 32/4 (2001): 371–95; idem, *Exploring the Scripturesque: Jewish Texts and Their Christian Contexts,* JSJSup 137 (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Michael E. Stone, "Methodological Issues in the Study of the Text of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," in *Selected Studies in Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha, with Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition*, SVTP 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 124–30; idem, *Ancient Judaism*, 172–94; Ariel Gutman and Wido T. van Peursen, *The Two Syriac Versions of the Prayer of Manasseh,* Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 30 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011), esp. 41–53; Benjamin G. Wright, III, "A Character in Search of a Story: The Reception of Ben Sira in Early Medieval Judaism," in *Wisdom Poured Out Like Water': Studies in Jewish and Christian Antiquity in Honor of Gabriele Boccaccini*, ed., J. Harold Ellens et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018), 377–95.

[32] James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other,* JSJSup 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

ongoing one and much progress has been made in recent years by scholars such as Annette Yoshiko Reed, Lorenzo DiTommaso and Loren Stuckenbruck.[33] Most recently, in 2019, the anthological collection *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission* appeared.[34]

This ongoing discussion responds to a situation created by the dominant historical-critical approach and text-critical practices in the field. Adler summarized the main challenge facing the critical study of early Jewish texts in an excellent manner. He noted that our sources *are* the received texts and that their development cannot easily be disentangled from their receiving contexts.[35] In other words, the texts that scholars have access to in Christian manuscripts but systematically study as Jewish are entangled texts. Scholars have no direct access to the early Jewish texts. They are mediated by and embodied in Christian manuscripts and embedded in longer histories of manuscript engagement.

Even though this is now a well-known and widely recognized methodological point, disciplinary path-dependencies[36] tend to preserve the legitimacy and

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[33] Cf., e.g., the contributions of Lorenzo DiTommaso, "Pseudepigrapha Research and Christian Origins after the *OTP*," in *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins: Essays from the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, ed. Gerbern S. Oegema and James H. Charlesworth (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 30–47; Christfried Böttrich, "'Die Geschichte Melchisedeks' (histMelch) im slavischen Kulturkreis," in *Old Testament Apocrypha in the Slavonic Traditions: Continuity and Diversity*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Christfried Böttrich, TSAJ 140 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 163–207; Maria Cioată (Haralambakis), *The Testament of Job: Text, Narrative and Reception History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "The Book of Enoch: Its Reception in Second Temple Judaism and in Christianity," *Early Christianity* 1/4 (2013): 7–40; Ted M. Erho and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "A Manuscript History of *Ethiopic Enoch*," *JSP* 23/2 (2013): 87–133; Liv Ingeborg Lied, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity: Variants and Variance in the Reception History of 2 Baruch," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, JSJSup 164. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 403–28; eadem, "Text – Work – Manuscript: What is and Old Testament Pseudepigraph*on*?" *JSP* 25/2 (2015): 150–65; eadem, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus (7a1): Studying Old Testament Pseudepigrapha in Their Manuscript Context," *JSP* 26/2 (2016): 67–107; Matthew P. Monger, "The Many Forms of Jubilees: A Reassessment of the Manuscript Evidence from Qumran and the Lines of Transmission of the Parts and Whole of Jubilees," *RevQ* 30/2 (2018): 191–211; Annette Yoshiko Reed and John C. Reeves, *Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. Volume 1: Sources from Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts"; Bruk Ayele Asale, *1 Enoch as Christian Scripture: A Study in the Reception and Appropriation of 1 Enoch in Jude and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewaḥǝdo Canon* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2020).

[34] Alexander Kulik, et al., eds., *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[35] William Adler, "Parabiblical Traditions and their Use in the *Palaea Historica,*" in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature,* ed. Menahem Kister et al., STDJ 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 1–39 at 12.

[36] I borrow the term from Mirjam Künkler and Shylashri Shankar, "Introduction," *A Secular Age beyond the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 1–32.

prominence of exploring the early text in its early context. With some exceptions, editing has not changed. Interpretative studies have changed only to a limited degree. This is hardly surprising, though. If we do not imagine ourselves able to access the early text, a substantial part of the empirical foundation of a field of Early Jewish Studies becomes uncomfortably shaky. Occasionally, we cannot even be sure that the writings that we explore as ancient and Jewish ever existed as such.[37]

The Christian Manuscript Transmission of 2 Baruch

2 Baruch survives – in parts or as a whole – in seven manuscripts all together.[38]

Shelfmark	Language	Dates[39] and contents
New York, Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, P.Oxy. III 403	Greek	Late fourth/early fifth- century fragment. 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B 21 inf. and bis inf. ("Syriac Codex Ambrosianus")	Syriac	Late sixth/early seventh- century Old Testament codex. 2 Bar 1–87
St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589	Arabic	Ninth–eleventh-century Old Testament codex. 2 Bar 3:2–25:2; 29:5–87:1
London, British Library, Add. 14,686	Syriac	Lectionary manuscript, dated 1255. 2 Bar 44:9–15

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[37] Martha Himmelfarb says, "[F]or scholars of Second Temple Judaism, who have few enough texts to work with as it is, it is extremely frustrating to be told that some of them don't belong to us" ("3 Baruch Revisited: Jewish or Christian Composition, and Why It Matters," *ZAC* 20/1 [2016]: 41–62 at 51).

[38] The research literature on 2 Baruch sometimes mentions other manuscripts. In the introductory chapter of his 2009 text edition, Daniel M. Gurtner writes that lections from 2 Baruch survive in four lectionary manuscripts and "one additional manuscript" (Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 7). To my knowledge no additional manuscript exists. Gurtner probably refers to Mark Whitters's description of the lectionaries as "lectionaries and prayer books" (Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 5, and email correspondence [29 January 2013]). In *Les apocryphes syriaques,* the text of the single leaf identified by the shelfmark Paris, BnF, Supplément turc 983, f 113/126 is mistakenly ascribed to 2 Baruch (Muriel Debié, "Les apocalypses apocryphes syriaques: des textes pseudépigraphiques de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testaments," in *Les apocryphes syriaques*, ed. Muriel Debié, Alain Desreumaux, C. Julien and F. Julien; Études syriaques 2 [Paris: Geuthner, 2005], 111–46 at 114–15). The text is 4 Ezra 8:33–41a and 41c–47, not 2 Baruch. Cf., Bernard Outtier, "Un fragment syriaque inédit de *IV Esdras,*" *Apocrypha* 4 (1993): 19–23 and Liv Ingeborg Lied and Matthew P. Monger, "New and Forgotten Sources to 4 Ezra," in *The Embroidered Bible: Studies in Biblical Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Honour of Michael E. Stone*, ed. William Adler, Matthias Henze and Lorenzo DiTommaso (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 639–52.

[39] All dates are CE.

Shelfmark	Language	Dates and contents
London, British Library, Add. 14,687	Syriac	Lectionary manuscript, dated 1256. 2 Bar 72:1–73:2
Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 33	Syriac	Thirteenth-century lectionary manuscript. 2 Bar 44:9–15
Pampakuda, A. Konat Collection, Ms. 77	Syriac	Lectionary manuscript, dated 1423. 2 Bar 44:9–15 and 72:1–73:2

As this table shows, the manuscripts that include 2 Baruch date from the late fourth/early fifth century to the third decade of the fifteenth century. In other words, the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch span a millennium. The book is attested in Greek, Arabic and Syriac. The Syriac attestation is clearly the most substantial. The table also suggests that the amount of surviving manuscripts is fairly limited. Although it is likely that other manuscripts once containing it are now lost, the survival of a mere seven manuscripts to date indicates that the circulation of 2 Baruch was probably never large.[40] However, that realization does not mean that the manuscripts that actually include the book – as a whole or in part – are less interesting.

In all due likelihood, the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch are all Christian productions. When I say that these manuscripts are "Christian," I base this judgement on a set of interrelated factors. On some occasions, notes inserted into the pages of the manuscripts label them as products of a Christian community, intended for Christian readers. The manuscripts may have been commissioned by Christian sponsors and/or copied by scribes who self-identified as Christians.[41] In addition, as the table shows, the manuscripts may contain collections of texts that are distinctly Christian, such as Christian scriptures or specialized volumes dedicated for use in worship practices. Furthermore, many of the manuscripts have been kept in the storerooms of monasteries and carry the signs of engagement by later active readers who identified as Christians. I will provide a thorough presentation of the individual manuscripts in the chapters that follow and return to a discussion of their provenance in chapter 6.

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[40] The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe survives in an additional fifty-three manuscripts. As chapter 5 will show, this epistle may well have originated with 2 Baruch and is in that regard "a part of 2 Baruch." However, the epistle enjoyed a widespread, autonomous circulation detached from 2 Baruch. Since this detached epistle is not the same as and not reducible to 2 Baruch, I do not treat these manuscripts here. Cf., the presentation and discussion in chapters 5 and 6 of the current volume.

[41] Scribes and others involved in the production and preservation of the manuscripts sometimes refer to their monastic or ecclesiastical titles (e. g., priest, monk), they may invoke the trinity or Christ, or they employ other formulas of faith.

The Survival of 2 Baruch among Syriac Christians

In the current volume, I focus primarily on the sixth/seventh- through thirteenth-century Syriac manuscripts that contain copies of 2 Baruch.[42] A "Syriac manuscript" is a manuscript written in a Syriac script and produced in accordance with the traditions of a Syriac manuscript culture.[43] These manuscripts were intended for Syriac-using readers.[44]

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[42] This means that, although all the manuscripts that contain 2 Baruch play a part in the study, I do not provide detailed studies of the P.Oxy. III 403, Arabic Manuscripts 589 or Ms. 77. The reasons for this choice are as follows: I do not explore Arabic Manuscripts 589 in detail because I do not read Arabic. My study of the P.Oxy. III 403 is limited due to its fragmentary condition and hence, the lack of contextual information – this volume deals with texts in their manuscript contexts. I could have explored Ms. 77 in much more detail. My decision not to do so is mainly motivated by the need to keep the current volume maneuvrable. Ms. 77 takes us to a fifteenth-century production context and later circulation in India. If I were to study the inclusion of 2 Baruch in this manuscript and in its context of engagement in the detail that it deserves, it would have added at least one more chapter to the volume.

[43] See, William Wright, "Preface," *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838* (London: British Museum, 1870–72) III:i–xxxiv at xxv–xxxiv; William H. P. Hatch, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* (Boston, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1946); Alain Desreumaux and Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits syriaques* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1991); Jean-Claude Haelewyck, "Le canon de l'Ancien Testament dans la tradition syriaques (manuscrits bibliques, listes canoniques, auteurs)," *L'Ancien Testament en syriaque,* ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Philip Le Moigne, Études Syriaques 5 (Paris: Geuthner, 2008), 141–72; Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Muriel Debié, eds., *Manuscripta Syriaca. Des sources de première main*, Cahiers d'études syriaques 4 (Paris: Geuthner, 2015); Pier G. Borbone and Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, "Syriac Manuscripts," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Alessandro Bausi et al.*;* COMSt; (Hamburg: Tredition, 2015), 57–59; Pier G. Borbone, Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, and Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, "Syriac Codicology," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Alessandro Bausi et al.; COMSt; (Hamburg: Tredition, 2015), 252–66; Andrea Schmidt, "Syriac Palaeography," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Alessandro Bausi et al.; COMSt; (Hamburg: Tredition, 2015), 316–; J. F. Coakley, "Manuscripts," in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, ed. Sebastian P. Brock et al. (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011), 262–63; Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, "Writing Syriac: Manuscripts and Inscriptions," in *The Syriac World*, ed. Daniel King (London: Routledge, 2018), 243–65.

[44] I borrow the conceptualization "Syriac-using" from George A. Kiraz (email-correspondence, 10 December 2019). As Kiraz points out, Syriac was a language used to express literature, first and foremost the literatures of the Syriac churches. For much of its history, it was not the spoken language of those who engaged with the manuscripts. Their spoken language took on other forms of Aramaic. Over the centuries, the everyday colloquial language of many of those who lay hands on the manuscripts that include 2 Baruch would increasingly have been Arabic. Some would potentially have been multilingual. Depending on the time and place, they would know, e.g., Greek, Coptic, Persian and/or other languages. Their knowledge and understanding of Syriac would vary, but they would still read, hear and otherwise engage with texts expressed in this language in dedicated literary and liturgical practices. For a convenient overview, cf., Aaron M. Butts, "Syriac Language," in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, ed. Sebastian P. Brock et al. (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011), 390–91. Cf.,

The Syriac manuscripts that I explore in the current volume are undoubt-edly the products of Christian communities. Among the several factors that substantiate this conclusion, it suffices at this point to say that the manuscripts that contain 2 Baruch are identifiable as one Old Testament codex and four lectionary manuscripts. The surviving manuscripts belong to the West Syriac manuscript tradition.[45] Some of them originate from the northern parts of Egypt. Others were probably produced in northern Mesopotamia/south-eastern Turkey or somewhere in today's Iraq. During Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Syr-iac Christian minority communities were spread throughout the Middle East, the Mediterranean basin, central Asia and beyond. As they moved, they took manu-scripts with them. The manuscripts then continued to migrate between com-munities, facilitated by their use of a common literary and liturgical language.[46]

The Transmission History of 2 Baruch: Questions and Challenges

The surviving manuscript attestation suggests that 2 Baruch's transmission his-tory is in crucial ways typical of the writings that scholars ascribe to Jewish antiquity. 2 Baruch survives in Christian manuscripts, all of the manuscripts are significantly later than the book's assumed time of origin and all of them were produced by other communities than the ones to which scholars ascribe own-ership of the literary work. Thus, a closer look at 2 Baruch's transmission his-tory provides an opportunity to address some of the key challenges that scholars of early Jewish writings in Christian transmission are facing. In this sense, the current study of 2 Baruch serves as a case study.[47]

Lucas Van Rompay, "Past and Present Perceptions of Syriac Literary Tradition," *Hugoye* 3/1 (2000): 71–104 at 93.

[45] The origin of the Codex Ambrosianus has been debated. See chapter 1 of the current volume.

[46] Cf., e. g., Van Rompay, "Past and Present Perceptions," 71–103; Sebastian P. Brock, "With-out Mushē of Nisibis, Where Would We Be? Some Reflections on the Transmission of Syr-iac Literature," in *Symposium Syriacum VIII*, ed. R. Ebied and H. Teule, *JEastCS* 56 (2004), 15–24; Lucas Van Rompay, "Le couvent des Syriens en Égypte aux 15e et 16e siècles: l'apport des colophons syriaques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France," *ParOr* 41 (*Mélanges offerts à l'abbé Élie Khalifé-Hachem)* (2015): 549–72; Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Muriel Debié, *Le monde syriaque: Sur les routes d'un christianisme ignore* (Paris: Les belles lettres, 2017), 7–10, 30–37, 117–41; Michael Penn, "Know Thy Enemy: The Materialization of Orthodoxy in Syriac Manuscripts," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 221–41.

[47] A case study is a study that explores one instantiation of a larger phenomenon in a way that is fruitful and interesting for the understanding of the larger situation but which claims neither generalizability nor the ability to explain all other instantiations.

"Undoubtedly Jewish"

In fact, the transmission history of 2 Baruch is in many ways a particularly interesting case. As suggested by the brief presentation of the established academic narrative about 2 Baruch, above, the scholarly consensus holds that 2 Baruch is a first/second-century CE Jewish writing. With the exception of Theodor Zahn's *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (1924) and Rivka Nir's publications,[48] this assessment of the origins of 2 Baruch has been unanimous. Indeed, unlike some other writings in which issues of origin remain contested, scholars have approached 2 Baruch as "undoubtedly Jewish."[49] In addition, since the Jewish origin of 2 Baruch has been assumed to be particularly clear, scholars have used parallels with 2 Baruch to tie down other more questionable texts as Jewish too or alternatively to link parallels in New Testament texts to a secure Jewish context.

It is the intention of this volume neither to exaggerate the divide between something "Christian" and something "Jewish" in the surviving literature nor to deny the problems inherent in these academic categorizations.[50] I am interested

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[48] Theodore Zahn, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* 18 (Leipzig: Deichert, 1924), 1:130–44. In *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, Nir argues the Christian origin and identity of 2 Baruch (*Destruction of Jerusalem,* 5–6, 11–15, 199–201). Nir's book was reviewed in several journals, and while most reviewers found her hypothesis interesting and her investigation thorough, they were equally critical of her methodology and her categorizations and historical assumptions. According to her critics, the study was ideologically biased and based on a very narrow definition of what counts as "Jewish." As a result, on the basis of her chain of arguments, her conclusions could not be upheld. Nir's hypothesis was rejected, and the majority hypothesis remained the favored proposition. I was one of Nir's reviewers (Liv Ingeborg Lied, Review of *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch,* by Rivka Nir, *JSS* 50 (2005): 403–5). In retrospect, I still maintain that her argumentation and analytical frame were flawed and that the findings cannot be upheld in the way that Nir argued them. However, the potential Christian flavor of 2 Baruch deserves closer study, albeit framed and argued in a radically different way from Nir's approach. Under other circumstances, Nir's volume could have served as one of the most important conversation partners of this volume, but, due to its biases, I choose to restrict the treatment of it to this footnote and a paragraph of chapter 7.

[49] Most recently, this claim was made by Sergey Minov, "Syriac," in *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission*, ed. Alexander Kulik et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 95–137 at 106–10. Cf., similar claims in, e. g., Davila, *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha*, 126–31; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism,* 10, 32; Himmelfarb, "*3 Baruch* Revisited," 49–50). See, also, Violet: "Die Baruch-Apokalypse hat mit dem Christentum innerlich gar nichts zu tun, […]" (*Apokalypsen*, xcii–iii).

[50] The number of publications that address this issue is overwhelming. Cf., e. g., Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, TSAJ 95 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Judith M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Ra'anan S. Boustan et al., eds., *Envisioning Judaism: Studies in Honor of Peter Schäfer on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday,* 2 vols. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,

in the cluster "early-and-Jewish" and the argumentative scaffolding of the academic debate that has shaped the "early-Jewishness" of 2 Baruch. How and on what basis have scholars argued 2 Baruch's provenance in a first/second-century Jewish context and what features may this identification overlook?

In the chapters that follow, I will explore some of the foundations of this consensus, which is firmly based in a study of literary contents. Hence, it depends on an approach to 2 Baruch as an immaterial text.[51] What happens if we reconnect the study of the immaterial text with a study of the text embodied in the manuscripts and thus also embrace this dimension of 2 Baruch's historical presence in the world?

Furthermore, the consensus privileges a study of origins. This focus may turn out to be problematic in two related ways. First, the assumption that origins are what really matters when we study a book like 2 Baruch is a matter of paradigmatic choice. The focus has been repeated so often that it has become neutral, but it is not the only option by far. As the last decades' increasing interest with reception history across the humanities has shown, there are definitely other intriguing phases in the life of a writing.[52] At different points in a long life, a writing may for instance be "Jewish" at one point and "Christian" or something else at another. Assuming that a writing always remains what it once was (or may have been) is neither a logical claim, nor a fruitful approach for an academic study. If we explore the life cycle of a writing, we may come to hold that its origin is just one point in time in a long row of interconnected points. It may not even be the most interesting one.

2013); Annette Yoshiko Reed, "'Jewish-Christian' Apocrypha and the History of Jewish/Christian RelNaN49 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 87–118.

[51] I acknowledge that the claim that earlier scholarship on 2 Baruch explores an immaterial text covers over a spectrum of approaches. At the one end, it includes the work of scholars who, due to the traditional division of labor in the field between those who work on manuscripts in order to produce critical text editions and those who identify as interpreters of texts and basing their work on the editions published by their colleagues, have never studied or even seen a manuscript. At the other end, it also includes the work of scholars who are indeed well acquainted with manuscripts and have worked on them all their lives but who have studied them primarily in their capacity as witnesses to texts beyond and behind the manuscripts. There is no doubt about the expertise of these scholars or the relevance of their studies. The point here is to highlight a difference in approach: between applying the text in the columns of manuscripts to explore the text history or literary tradition of a writing beyond the manuscript and studying the text as embodied in manuscripts and its use in the communities that produced and engaged with the manuscripts.

[52] For the post mid-1990s attention to reception history in the study of early Jewish writings, see DiTommaso, "OTP as Category and Corpus," 269–76.

Second, it is a matter of fact that the manuscript sources that preserve 2 Baruch stem from the period between the fourth/fifth and the fifteenth century. Significantly more ancient manuscripts of 2 Baruch do not survive (presuming that they existed). The surviving manuscripts are arguably primarily sources to their own contemporaneous circumstances.[53] However, given that the structures of the field invite us to study origins, they have never been approached as such.[54]

It is telling of the force of the dominant historical-critical approach that scholars have consistently chosen to study 2 Baruch in a period for which we have no sources, neither to its shape nor to its very existence. This choice thus depends on a deep trust in the ability of traditional text-critical procedures to bridge the gap. It also presumes a distinct epistemology of text production and text transmission. The traditional use of a manuscript copy as a witness to an older text rests in the assumption of a certain "sameness" and thus a notion that the literary text of a writing was relatively fixed early on and that the processes of transmission did not change it beyond recognition. How solid is the academic narrative about 2 Baruch when we factor in a study of the manuscripts as sources to their contemporaneous realities and question our access to the early text by means of those manuscripts, and how solid is it if we question the traditional assumptions of text production and text transmission?

A Story Never Told: Manuscript Transmission as Syriac Christian Reception History

The most serious side effect of the systematic attention paid to origins in the study of 2 Baruch is the equally systematic inattention to other parts of 2 Baruch's longer life. This inattention has involved neglect of the manuscript transmission[55]

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[53] See, e. g., Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 223–4.

[54] The exceptions are my own previous publications (2012–2020), e. g., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "The Reception of the Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Traditions: The Case of *2 Baruch*," in *'Non-canonical' Religious Texts in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Lee M. McDonald, T&T Clark Jewish and Christian Texts Series 14 (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 52–60; eadem, "Die syrische Baruchapokalypse und die 'Schriften' – Die syrische Baruchapokalypse als 'Schrift'," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Scriptures,* ed. Eibert Tigchelaar, BETL 270 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 327–49; eadem, "Between 'Text Witness' and 'Text on the Page': Trajectories in the History of Editing the Epistle of Baruch," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017)*,* 272–96; eadem*,* "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus."

[55] In this volume, I apply the term "transmission" in a broad sense to refer to the interconnected cultural practices of preservation, mediation, spread and transformation of writings and their texts in an ongoing, diachronic process in which (in this case) the book of 2 Baruch is handed over to new readers. A transmission process may include – but neither presumes nor privileges – any given point of origin (Breed, *Nomadic Text,* 2–3). This means that I do not assume a "finished" writing as a point of departure and, thus, that processes of text production and text transmission may overlap. Likewise, the transmission process is potentially also a multilinear process of engagement (cf., chapter 6 of the current volume). I understand "manuscript

qua reception history,[56] which implies that scholars have left untouched the richness of what actually remains.[57] The manuscripts that survive have other stories to tell about the longer life of 2 Baruch. This story of the embodied circulation of 2 Baruch is interesting in its own right as a history of Syriac Christian engagement with this writing. In contrast to the assumed early context of 2 Baruch, this is a context that offers information about 2 Baruch's functions, identification and use. It provides an unprecedented abundance of information (at least by the standards of scholars trained in the study of first/second-century contexts) about some select moments of engagement, and it comes with some neat surprises.

The current volume takes the surviving manuscripts as its starting point. I study 2 Baruch as an integral part of the literature of the late antique and medieval Syriac Christian communities that demonstrably transmitted, used and – as I will show in the subsequent chapters – transformed it. While acknowledging that earlier versions of the book may well be ancient and Jewish, the manuscript materials that are available to us in the Syriac context invites a different study of 2 Baruch. What do the Syriac manuscripts suggest that 2 Baruch is, and how did Syriac-using Christians engage with this writing over time? How did 2 Baruch develop in Syriac Christian transmission – and why is knowledge about the Syriac transmission essential to scholars of ancient Jewish writings when the Syriac manuscript transmission is, as it were, something that happened "later"?

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transmission" as the traceable history of a literary book (and expected parts) as embodied copies in extant manuscripts. "Manuscript transmission" hence involves attention to the processes of copying of texts and their inclusion in bound volumes, traces of later engagement with embodied copies and physical handling of textual artifacts. Manuscript transmission has often been excluded from studies of reception history but, in my opinion, it deserves attention as an aspect of reception history in its own right. I apply the term "circulation" to grasp the horizontal, simultaneous movements of literary writings or manuscript artifacts.

[56] In the current volume, "reception history" refers to a (perceived) chain of traceable moments of engagement with a writing – intellectually, literarily, palpably, ritually, etc.

[57] The focus of this study is on manuscript transmission. I do not claim to cover all aspects of any conceivable, comprehensive reception history of 2 Baruch. It is very likely that the historical transmission of 2 Baruch was broader, took on more forms and was expressed through more media. In a manuscript culture, textual artifacts were relatively rare and textualization was only one technology of memorization, among others. A hypothetical larger historical process potentially included a number of interrelated practices, such as ongoing oral, aural, visual and palpable engagement. Excerpted passages, or stories associated with their literary contents, would have been mediated by, for instance, sound. Some passages may have been performed. Their main figures and stories may have appeared in art and other visual representations (Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "The Transmission History of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters,* 2nd rev. ed., ed. Matthias Henze and Rod Werline (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2020), 567–96. However, these other hypothetical forms of mediation are lost. Furthermore, if we want access to the writing, 2 Baruch *qua* extant text the manuscript transmission is all that remains. Cf., chapters 6 and 7 of the present volume.

Issues of Access and Issues of Belonging: The Methods and Ethics of Textual Scholarship

This volume aims to highlight some of the challenges that result from the combination of a particular historical situation of text transmission on the one hand and an equally historically situated set of scholarly epistemologies and procedures on the other. These challenges are of both a methodological and an ethical nature.

As pointed out above, the methodological challenges of exploring early Jewish writings in Christian transmission have been recognized for a long time. Today, most scholars of Jewish antiquity acknowledge the complexities of this situation. The methodological obstacles have been addressed, first and foremost, as an issue of access. Since no ancient Jewish manuscripts survive, the access to (hypothetical) early Jewish writings depends fully on the mediating capacity of Christian manuscripts and the ability of scholars to establish methodologically viable procedures for accessing the early text. Previous scholarship has shown very well that the problems that the issue of access raises to dominant procedures of textual scholarship are, indeed, real. I will address the various aspects of this methodological challenge pertaining to the study of 2 Baruch in the subsequent chapters. How do the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch shape our access to this writing, and can the (hypothetical) early Jewish text of 2 Baruch be disentangled from the embodied copies of 2 Baruch, preserved in Christian manuscripts?

However, even after the methodological obstacles have been mapped, there is still a surplus that has not yet been accounted for in previous research. This surplus concerns the ethics of textual scholarship.[58] Indeed, the ethical challenges of exploring early Jewish texts in Christian transmission are particularly complex. Jewish communities did not themselves continue to preserve the writings in the shape of written documents; alternatively, the manuscripts that they may once have produced did not survive.[59] Various Christian communities took over

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[58] In the present context, I understand "ethics" or more precisely, "research ethics," as the professional reflections, norms, values and arrangements that shape and regulate research practices. It is crucial to note that the category of ethics will never be "clean." There will always be overlap between ethics and method, ethics and overarching epistemologies, ethics and politics, etc.

[59] This question is the topic of a long research debate. See, e. g., Steven A. Ballaban, "The Literature of the Second Temple in Pirqe D'Rabbi Eliezer and Josippon; The Enigma of the Lost Second Temple Literature: Routes of Recovery" (PhD diss., Hebrew Union College, 1994); Reimund Leicht, "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh'," *JSQ* 3 (1996): 359–73; John C. Reeves, "Exploring the Afterlife of Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Medieval Near Eastern Religious Traditions: Some Initial Soundings," *JSJ* 30/2 (1999): 148–77; Ida Fröhlich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Geniza Studies," in *David Kaufmann Memorial Volume: Papers Presented at the David Kaufmann Memorial Conference, November 29 1999*, ed. Éva Apor (Budapest: Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2002), 61–67; Jenny R. Labendz, "The Book of Ben Sira in Rabbinic Literature," *AJSR* 30 (2006): 347–92; Michael E. Stone, "The Armenian Apocryphal Literature: Translation and Creation," in *Apocrypha,*

these writings and copied them as their own. Many of these communities were Christian minority communities, often sojourning in the Middle East.[60]

Analytically, we may address this transmission process as yet another example of the wider phenomenon of Christian appropriation of Jewish writings. The most well-known example of this phenomenon is, obviously, the Christian Old Testament. From this perspective, the scholarly reconstruction of early Jewish texts may be understood as a response to Christian supersessionism and as a way of reclaiming the immaterial literary heritage of early Jewish communities.[61]

The goal of reclaiming and reconstructing Jewish literatures of the past is important in its own right. Unfortunately, though, the way in which this reconstruction has been carried out in research has left the scholarly community with some ethically problematic side-effects. A crucial dilemma is that the attention to a Jewish immaterial literature has come at the cost of the attention to the material heritage of, typically, Christian minority communities. When scholars study 2 Baruch they depend fully on the cultural products of medieval Syriac Christian communities. We know this writing because these communities copied it and preserved the manuscripts that contained it.

Traditional historical-critical approaches have not acknowledged the ethical complexity of this situation. The practices that they inspire have treated the manuscripts and their copies as faint and imperfect witnesses to something genuine, as unreliable, and even as sites of potential corruption of the ancient heritage. This has created a clear imbalance in scholarly focus. The knowledge that we have acquired about possible Jewish pasts remains invaluable. However, this knowledge production has come at the cost of the equally valuable pasts of other historical communities. Since we are dealing with minority communities on either side, the ethical dilemma is accentuated. We do not want to erase Jewish pasts or to overlook Christian supersessionism, but neither do we want to disregard the material heritage of Syriac Christian communities.

The ethical complexity grows when we add to this situation a reflection on the explicit motivation of our academic predecessors in the field. In the early

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Pseudepigrapha and Armenian Studies, ed. Michael E. Stone (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 1:105–37; Arye Edrei and Doron Mendels, "A Split Jewish Diaspora: Its Dramatic Consequences," *JSP* 16 (2007): 91–137; Stone, *Ancient Judaism,* 16–25, 184–85; Menahem Kister et al., "Preface," in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature,* ed. Menahem Kister et al., STDJ 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), vii–xii; Martha Himmelfarb, "Rabbinic and Post-Rabbinic Jewish," in *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission,* ed. Alexander Kulik et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 431–48.

[60] Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 211–12.

[61] The process of academic recovery and of re-claiming Jewish texts of the Hellenistic and Roman period starts in the sixteenth century, emblematically with the publication of Azariah de'Rossi's *The Light of the Eyes* (See, Azariah de'Rossi, *The Light of the Eyes,* trans. Joanna Weinberg [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001]).

phases of the research history of 2 Baruch, the motivation of Protestant and Catholic researchers for approaching Hellenistic and Roman period Jewish literature was often to establish a Jewish context of Christian origins. Thus, this is a reconstructed Jewish context in the service of scholarship on Christian origins. In other words, in the worst-case scenario, modern scholars have employed the manuscript heritage of medieval Christian minority communities to reconstruct early Judaism in their own image.

Let me express very clearly that the academic fields that explore the literatures of Jewish Antiquity have progressed since their early days. Today, scholars would no longer get away with expressing explicitly the biases of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century scholarship. However, this is precisely why we need to keep an eye on philological practices and academic narratives: they tend to keep old truths alive implicitly because they are taken for granted. The current scholarly consensus on 2 Baruch shows that we still have not untied the ethical knots that we inherited from our predecessors. Research on 2 Baruch has not paid attention to the efforts of historical Syriac Christian communities in the preservation of 2 Baruch – the focus remains on the literary text, detached from its material entanglements. Likewise, the most widespread use of 2 Baruch in contemporary scholarship is still as a reservoir of parallels to select New Testament passages. Scholars continue to mine 2 Baruch to establish a context for Christian origins. In other words, although the biases of our predecessors were exposed a long time ago, the consequences of their matrix nevertheless pass largely under the radar. We are left with invisible manuscripts, a cultural heritage that is generally overlooked and scholarly representations of early Jewish texts that are lacking in methodological and ethical transparency.

The questions that I will pose are the following: how have textual scholars treated the cultural artifacts of the manuscript-producing third party? Whose efforts, whose artifacts and whose heritage claims have we side-lined?[62] At the same time, how can textual scholars acknowledge the *material* cultural heritage of the manuscript-producing "other" without running the risk of erasing Jewish pasts – the equally legitimate claims of a Jewish *literary* heritage?

New Philology

To develop textual scholarship that both embraces the consequences of these methodological challenges and ethical dilemmas and constructively opens up new vistas, the present project will draw on insights developed in so-called

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[62] Furthermore, how should we deal with these issues without falling prey to certain branches of a contemporary "Christianity as persecuted minority"-rhetoric?

New Philology.[63] New Philology[64] is a perspective on textual scholarship that advocates the exploration of texts as they occur in the particular manuscripts that embody them. Focusing on writings transmitted in a manuscript culture, New Philology highlights the textual and material individualities of each copy of a writing and views the material embodiment as part of the constitution of the text. Thus, rather than applying manuscript copies as witnesses to something older, which implies bracketing the text from the object that contains it, New Philology inspires studies of texts within individual manuscripts as snapshots of an evolving text tradition and promotes an exploration of the various practices of which the manuscript and the texts copied in it were a component.[65]

The shift of perspective that New Philology enables is vital to my study of the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch.[66] First, New Philology offers a way of bringing the embodied copies of 2 Baruch back into scholarly focus as equally interesting and important as any (hypothetical) early text. New Philology approaches manuscripts as artifacts produced and engaged with at particular times and places. The texts copied into these manuscripts are fruitfully explored as

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[63] "New Philology" is sometimes (and perhaps increasingly) referred to as "Material Philology." In the current volume, I use the term "New Philology" to talk about an established perspective in the larger field of philology/editorial theory. I use the conception, "a provenance aware, material philology" to talk about a methodological procedure. New Philology shares several traits with and developed in the same academic climate as, for instance, Book History, Media Archaeology and new iterations of Textual Criticism and Manuscript Studies. Hence, New Philology was never an island. For recent applications of similar, overlapping and/or compatible, perspectives on early Jewish and Christian texts and manuscripts, see, e.g., Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*; Nongbri, *God's Library;* Larsen, *Gospels before the Book;* Knust and Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone.*

[64] The branch of New Philology employed here originated in the late 1980s, growing out of the study of medieval vernacular literatures – the study of French and Norse literatures in particular. This European branch of New Philology is emblematically associated with Bernard Cerquiglini and Stephen G. Nichols (Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante. Histoire critique de la philologie* [Paris: Seuil, 1989]; Stephen G. Nichols, "The New Philology: Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture," *Speculum* 65/1 [1990]: 1–10. Cf., also, Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poetique medievale* [Paris: Seuil, 1972]). In Norse studies, Matthew J. Driscoll is a household name (See, e.g., his article "Words on the Page"). Cf., equally emblematically, Arthur J.O. Anderson, *Beyond the Codices: The Nahua View of Colonial Mexico,* Latin American Studies 27 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976) for the use of the term "New Philology" in the philological-ethnological study of native Mexican texts. The research literatures of the European and Latin-American branches of New Philology are often-times curiously unrelated. New Philology remained generally unknown to scholars of early Jewish and Christian writings until the 2010s. Since then, the approach has gained increasing popularity. Cf., Lied and Lundhaug, *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions*, for a more detailed presentation and examples of use of the approach.

[65] Cf., Nichols, "The New Philology"; Cf., Driscoll, "Words on the Page," 90–95.

[66] I have introduced New Philology in previous publications (Hugo Lundhaug and Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Studying Snapshots: On Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, TUGAL 175 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017], 1–19). Thus, in the following, I present only the aspects of the approach that are decisive to my current study.

constituent parts of the cultural artifacts and thus as relevant to the historical communities that produced the manuscripts.

Second, the focus on a copy in a manuscript suggests that the study of a writing involves other aspects of the manuscript than just the text in its columns. A study inspired by New Philology takes an interest in the material and aesthetical constitution of the artifact, the layout on the page and the various paratextual elements (such as titles and subsection headings) that present the text to a reader. All of these elements tell us something about how those who engaged with the manuscript met the copy.

Third, a study inspired by New Philology also takes into consideration the shifting capacities ascribed to manuscripts as they continued to circulate. Those who laid hands on the manuscripts put them to use in different practices, and often the manuscripts were more to them than just text carriers. Such a study thus explores the surviving traces of verbal and non-verbal engagement amassed in the manuscripts over time. It takes an interest in the various attested relationships between a manuscript and its stewards and explores the impact of shifts in the engagement with texts embodied in the manuscript.

Fourth, New Philology approaches texts as unfinished, evolving texts. Texts change in transmission; their interpretation, application and contextualization likewise change as they circulate. Surviving manuscripts provide glimpses of such an evolving textual transmission in the sense that they offer a look at the constitution of a writing at given times and places in history. The consequence of such a view on manuscripts and the texts preserved in them is that they are regarded as less reliable as witnesses to older, assumed ancient texts but more apt for studies of the historical contexts in which they were copied and used.[67]

Thus, New Philology invites studies that explore the ways in which texts preserved within manuscripts are the results of continuing processes of engagement over time, how various readers handled manuscripts and their embodied copies and how the material forms in which the copies survive may have shaped their interpretations.

By focusing on extant manuscripts and the texts copied in them, New Philology enables a new and different study of 2 Baruch. It allows me to explore the longer and ongoing life of 2 Baruch in particular material embodiments. Since New Philology discards the idea that a writing was finished early on and continued to circulate as such, it challenges me to think differently about text production and text transmission as well as about provenance.[68] It diverts my attention away from the assumed first- or second-century context and instead lets me explore

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[67] Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante,* 77–78; Nichols, "The New Philology," esp. 7–9; Driscoll, "Words on the page," 90–91, 102–4; Lundhaug and Lied, "Studying Snapshots," esp. 6–8.

[68] I apply the term "provenance" in this volume to refer to chains of ownership and object movement. Note that I do not single out "origin" from this process – but neither do I exclude it. I am interested in the continuum.

2 Baruch as a book that evolved as it traveled and that is equally interesting in all its later manifestations. In a critical capacity, New Philology also inspires me to engage the various aspects of the established academic narrative of 2 Baruch and the epistemologies and procedures that uphold it.

New Philology is equally normative and equally shaped by the academic communities that produced it as the historical-critical approaches that it challenges. I am not exchanging something normative for something "neutral." Rather, I propose that the approach New Philology prescribes will provide a better grasp of the 2 Baruch that has, in fact, come down to us than the established historical-critical approach has offered.

"Manuscript," "Text," "Book," "Work"

Just like most textual scholars of my generation, I was trained in historical-critical approaches and learned to talk about texts, writings and manuscripts through their designated vocabulary. One of the main challenges of writing the current volume has been to establish a vocabulary that makes it possible to talk about the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch without simultaneously introducing the path-dependent conceptions of the paradigm with which I grew up.

My solution is, partly, to shed some terms. One pertinent example of a term that I have discarded is "(text) witness." This frequently used term refers to a manuscript or a copy of a writing in a manuscript. It grasps the function of the manuscript/the copy to the work of the text critic, but it leaves out all the other features.[69] When this term appears in the current volume, I use it to talk explicitly about procedures and conceptions within a historical-critical paradigm. I have kept some other parts of the established vocabulary. Among the terms that appear in this volume in their common capacity are "exemplar," "*Vorlage*" and "version."[70]

Another part of the solution is to establish a clearly defined vocabulary dedicated to the task. New Philology served as a guideline, but since each study and each set of manuscript materials have their own particular challenges, I have adapted its vocabulary to my needs.[71] The key terms in the following are

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[69] Kyle McCarter, for instance, defines "witness" as "Any manuscript (including a translation of a manuscript, a fragment of a manuscript, or a quotation from a manuscript) providing testimony to a text" (Kyle McCarter, *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible,* GBS Old Testament Series [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986], 79).

[70] I will use the term "version" to refer to the linguistic form of a writing. I will use the terms "exemplar" and *Vorlage* interchangeably to refer to the written model upon which the scribe based the copy of a text. In other words, these terms refer to a manuscript in a particular capacity, in use in a dedicated practice.

[71] New Philology is dedicated to studies of texts transmitted in a manuscript culture. That means that it covers very different materials, such as highly fragmented remains of scrolls from the area around the Dead Sea on the one hand and well-preserved, fifteenth-century, Latin

"manuscript," "text," "book" and "work." Inspired by Matthew J. Driscoll, I understand "manuscript" as "a text-bearing cultural artifact," which is to say, a historically unique material object that, among other things, preserves text.[72] I apply the term "text" to "a series of words in a particular order on the manuscript page."[73] In this volume, the term "book" is used to refer to a literary form: a discrete, identifiable and relatively substantial block of text.[74] In addition, I apply the term "work" to denote a conceived literary entity. A "work" is a representation and an abstraction. It is a cognitive placeholder and a cultural conveyer.[75] Work conceptions can be historical phenomena and thus part of what we study, traces of which can be explored, for instance, in rubricated titles in manuscripts. The conception of a work can also be a contemporary scholarly projection – something that researchers bring to bear on the available source materials. The name "2 Baruch," for instance, is a conception on the work-level and the product of a specific academic discourse.[76] It is the name that textual scholars use to denote a literary entity that they identify as an early Jewish book.

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deluxe codices on the other. When a perspective migrates from one academic field to another, some adjustments should and will occur. See, e. g., Eibert Tigchelaar, "Editing the Dead Sea Scrolls: What Should We Edit and How Should We Do It?" *Zenodo* 2019, https://zenodo.org/record/2560997#.Xp_tYcgzY2w (accessed 22 April 2020).

[72] A "manuscript" is an inscribed material artifact carrying text copied by hand. The term "manuscript" may cover a wide range of forms and materials or their fragmented remains. "Manuscript" may refer to everything from rough notepads to *deluxe* artifacts.

[73] Driscoll, "Words on the Page," 93–95. Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Text–Work–Manuscript: What Is an 'Old Testament Pseudepigraph*on*'?" *JSP* 25/2 (2015): 150–65. The term "text" in this volume refers to the words on the manuscript page, as stated above. However, I sometimes apply the term to refer to the hypothetical early text, also imagined to be words on the pages of a hypothetical early manuscript, or I apply it to refer to a diachronic text transmitted through history. I will distinguish these three layers of meaning by qualifying "text" whenever necessary. Furthermore, I apply the term "layout unit" to denote a textual entity in manuscripts that is distinguishable within the general flow of text by textual or visible features, such as (but not limited to) rubricated titles or end titles, paragraphing graphemes, spacing, decorations, and marginal annotations.

[74] A "copy" is the materialization of a literary book in a specific manuscript. I apply the term "volume" to talk about the material capacity of a modern, bound collection (for instance, the current volume). I use the terms "manuscript" and sometimes the more specific term "codex" (when that is the format of the manuscript) to refer to the material capacity of historical bound collections. The term "writing" refers to any discrete and coherent literary form that is identified as a unit – of any size (unlike "book" which I reserve for literary writings of a substantial size).

[75] Typically, some scholars will understand a "work" as the composition that its author intended it to be. Others may understand a work as the sum of all the existing manuscript copies. In the case of 2 Baruch, these reflections are particularly interesting since one single manuscript (the Codex Ambrosianus) has played a particular role in its history of research. The link between the various representations of the copy of 2 Baruch in this manuscript and the conception of 2 Baruch as a "work" is thus interesting (Cf., Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lvi; Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed*, 1; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism,* 25). I will return to this issue in chapters 1 and 7.

[76] 2 Baruch is named the second book of Baruch because scholars already knew another book of Baruch: The Book of Baruch/1 Baruch.

This deliberation over key terms is at the heart of my study. The vocabulary enables me to distinguish clearly between the text on the pages of a manuscript (materially available), the notion of a book (literary form) and the conception of a work (cognitive placeholder) in ways that both correct former imprecisions and build new insights. As Driscoll suggested, in all of this, New Philology puts the manuscript at the center of scholarly investigation. Whereas the historical-critical approach stresses the relationship between the text and the work, relegating the manuscript to a witness-function, New Philology explores the relationships between the manuscript and the other two.[77]

Method: Towards A Provenance-Aware, Material Philology

Whereas New Philology is the epistemological guide of the current study, I have come to refer to the method that I am trying out in this volume as a provenance-aware, material philology. This procedure aims to bring the notion of the literary book and the material copy of the text back together and to allow both to matter in the scholarly narrative about a work. The attention to provenance implies that the study includes an awareness of chains of ownership and stewardship – not only in this corner of the General Introduction, but as a continuously relevant feature throughout the analysis. My attention to expressions of belonging concerns both traceable manuscript–steward relationships and the (assumed) extended, longer chain of ownership of the book.

This proposed method demands that I explore the embodied text in its manuscript context. This means that the material form of the text and its context in the manuscript matters to the way in which I understand the book. It implies that the production process, observable material qualities and known history of the manuscript as a cultural artifact matter too. It means that I pay attention to traces of engagement with the copy over time by the many hands that carried the manuscript through history and thus ensured its survival. The procedure also acknowledges that the manuscripts belonged to someone and that they may still matter to their wardens. I take interest in the remaining traces of manuscript–steward connectivity and, when possible, I pay attention to the cultural practices of which the manuscripts and the texts embodied in them were a part. At the same time, realizing that writings such as 2 Baruch may have circulated for a long time, also before they materialized in the manuscripts that we know today, I recognize that the book that I explore also belongs to the communities that (assumedly) first composed and engaged with it, but that for various reasons did not themselves transmit it in the shape of manuscripts – at least not manuscripts that survive. As a textual scholar and as a citizen of the twenty-first-century world,

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[77] Driscoll, "Words on the Page," 95.

I need to be aware of the variety of both historical and contemporary claims of ownership and belonging. Not that I have to take sides or accept all claims, but as I explore books with a long history I have to acknowledge them as part of the larger world in which I am maneuvering.[78]

A close engagement with the manuscript artifacts in all their unruly glory has been crucial to the present project. Over a period of ten years (2011–2020), I have spent time with the manuscripts that contain (parts of) 2 Baruch in the libraries that currently hold them. This has involved several research stays at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan and at the British Library in London as well as a visit to the Christoph Keller, Jr. Library at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. It has also involved stays at libraries in Paris, Lund, Cambridge and Florence to consult manuscripts that either include the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe or serve as comparanda to the Codex Ambrosianus.[79] Working with the actual artifacts provides a multisensorial, hands-on experience with the writings as a part of the text-bearing object in ways that this project could not manage without.[80] In addition to the study of the materially available manuscripts, I have studied them remediated as digital images. Ceriani's facsimile of the Codex Ambrosianus has also been invaluable,[81] as have the library catalogues of the Dayr al-Suryan (the Monastery of the Syrians), the British Library and the Bibliothèque nationale de France.[82] The *List of Old Testament Peshiṭta Manu-*

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[78] I am inspired by the ongoing discussions in the field of Critical Heritage Studies. Cf., e. g., Rodney Harrison, *Heritage: Critical Approaches* (London: Routledge, 2013).

[79] The dates of the various stays occur in the relevant footnotes of the following chapters.

[80] The ethical challenges of working on these Middle Eastern manuscripts in European and US libraries are not lost on me. All the manuscripts I have studied were brought to Europe before national laws and international conventions regulated trade in cultural heritage artifacts, but their transfer to Europe were still the result of colonial power structures. See, in particular, the discussions in Cuéllar, *Empire*.

[81] Antonio M. Ceriani, *Translatio Syra Pescitto Veteris Testamenti ex codice Ambrosiano, sec. fere VI photolithographice edita*, vol. 2 (Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosianae Mediolani, 1883), 364–66. I have employed the Gorgias Press reprint: Antonio M. Ceriani, ed., *A Facsimilie Edition of the Peshiṭto Old Testament Based on Codex Ambrosianus (7a1)* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2013).

[82] William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838,* 3 vols. (London: British Museum, 1870–72); Hermann Zotenberg, *Catalogues manuscrits syriaques et sabéens (mandaïtes) de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Impremerie nationale, 1874); François Nau, "Notices des manuscrits syriaques, éthiopiens et mandéens, entrés à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris depuis l'édition des catalogues," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 16 (1911): 271–323; Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, *Manuscrits syriaque de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (nos 356–435, entrés depuis 1911), de la Bibliothèque Méjanes d'Aix-en-Provence, de la Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon et de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg: Catalogue* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997); Sebastian P. Brock and Lucas Van Rompay, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts and Fragments in the Library of Deir al-Surian, Wadi al-Natrun* (Egypt), OLA 227 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014). I have consulted the catalogue of oriental manuscripts in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurentiana (Stefano E. Assemani and A. F. Gori, *Bibliothecae Meiceae, Laurentianae et Palatinae codium Mms. Orientalium catalogus, sub auspiciis regiae celsitudinis serenissimi Francisci III* [Florence:

scripts: Preliminary Issue has been of great support to my ongoing work.[83] The collection of index cards and microfilms at the Peshitta Institute in (then) Leiden has been important as well.[84] The apparatus and notes of the published, and unpublished, (critical) editions of 2 Baruch and the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe have been a valuable source as well as an object of critical exploration.[85]

This study can be described as a triangulation between a critical appreciation of an academic narrative of 2 Baruch and the practices that shaped it, an empirical study of copies of writings embodied in manuscripts and the surviving traces of former active readers embellishing these copies and a constructive rethinking of the epistemological, methodological and ethical bases of textual scholarship.

Interdisciplinarity: A Brief Note on Gains and Challenges

At the time of writing, I have worked on 2 Baruch for 20 years. In the first decade, I studied 2 Baruch as a first- or second-century CE Jewish book. During the latter decade, I explored the Syriac manuscript transmission of this book and, inspired by New Philology, I discussed how that history of transmission matters to textual scholarship on early Jewish writings. This shift of perspective a decade ago showed me something that indeed appeared very odd once I started thinking about it. I realized, first, that my study of 2 Baruch both as a part of Jew-

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Typographio Albiziniano, 1742]), but I found Pier G. Borbone's article, "Un progetto di Bibbia Poliglotta di Giovanni Battista Raimondi e il ms Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 58 (9a1)," Academia Ambrosiana, *Orientalia Ambrosiana* 5 (2016): 191–285, to be more helpful for my purposes.

[83] *List of Old Testament Peshiṭta Manuscripts (Preliminary Issue),* ed. Peshitta Institute Leiden University [Willem Baars] (Leiden: Brill, 1961). I have used the 1961 edition of the *Peshiṭta List* including the updates in the Peshitta Institute Communication, published since 1962 in *Vetus Testamentum* and continuing after 1999 in the *Journal for the Aramaic Bible/ Aramaic Studies*. The *Peshiṭta List* is invaluable but it also contains its share of mistakes. My privately owned exemplar once belonged to the late David S. Lane and contains his helpful annotations. His corrections and extensive notes have aided my study on several occasions.

[84] My 2013 stay at St. Ephrem the Syrian Monastery in Glane, the Netherlands, and the invaluable guidance of Mor Polycarpus Augin Aydin, provided me with a new understanding of how worship is celebrated today, how service books are used and how scriptures are read. During a visit to Egypt in 2002, I made an acquaintance with the Monastery of the Syrians and its environments in the Wadi al-Natrun and St. Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai Peninsula. Ideally, my study would have included an exploration of manuscript engagement among Syriac Christians in Kerala (India), a visit to relevant sites in Syria and south-eastern parts of Turkey, a second trip to the Monastery of the Syrians and a stay at the Vatican Library in Rome. Each of these trips have at some point been planned but was cancelled in the period between 2005 and 2020 due to shifting political situations in Egypt, Syria and Turkey in this period, the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic in 2019/20, and my caring for young children throughout the entire period in which this volume has been in the making. Still, I am very grateful for the research trips that I have indeed undertaken, and I am very aware that it is due to my economically privileged status that they have been possible.

[85] Cf., chapters 1 and 5 in particular.

ish Antiquity and as a part of medieval Syriac Christian manuscript traditions was based on the very same sources. I applied the same manuscript sources to study the literary worlds of two different historic communities, centuries apart. Second, I realized that I had studied 2 Baruch for a decade without having any idea about the ways in which scholars of Syriac manuscripts understood my favourite book. Another way of formulating this insight is that scholars of Jewish Antiquity and scholars of Syriac Christian manuscripts study the same sources but take part in separate academic discourses. The "object of study" is thus not the same even though the sources are.

The study that manifests in this volume takes a debate in Early Jewish Studies as its point of departure; it explores the manuscript materials otherwise studied by (mainly) Syriac scholars; it listens in on scholarship in Liturgical Studies and on Egyptian monastic traditions; and in trying out approaches inspired by New Philology, it learns from, combines and challenges the procedures of text critics, manuscript scholars, media scholars, critical heritage scholars and literary scholars. In other words, this study is deeply interdisciplinary in nature. The main benefit of this research position is that the disciplining effects of field-dependent academic discourse are dragged out into broad daylight. It allows a new look at disciplinary definitions of "the object of study" and how they relate to the manuscript sources that survive.

At the same time, the interdisciplinary character of the project has left me both terrified and humble. I have been overwhelmed by a deep respect of the expertise and knowledge of my colleagues in either field. Over the years, I have realized that by criss-crossing academic fields, I have put myself in a position in which I am never the expert in the debates that are assessed as central to either of them. Instead, I am building expertise in the ties that bind fields together. That position makes me vulnerable. Potentially, this volume contains a more wide-reaching interpretation than some codicologists would favor, too many manuscript details to the taste of the literary scholar, not enough engagement with the wider treasure of Syriac literature to satisfy a Syriac scholar, and less comparison with other, early Jewish texts than scholars of Early Jewish Studies would require. I invite my readers to fine-tune their interdisciplinary musicality. This study lives and breathes "betwixt and between" and therein lies the interdisciplinary challenge.

In order to alleviate this interdisciplinary challenge, I have adopted some procedures to balance and ensure transparency, reader friendliness and sufficient documentation. I provide the Syriac text in Syriac script when necessary, but I always translate it into English. As a general rule, I provide the Syriac text in the closest possible agreement with the text that appears on the manuscript page. My English translations from the Syriac are literal translations. When a Syriac term is already established in English usage (for instance, "Peshitta"), I apply the conventional and simplest form. I choose West Syriac spelling when both East and West Syriac norms are equally common in the research literature (for instance,

"Estrangelo" and "Serto"). I apply the conventional English names of well-known books, such as the books of the Old Testament. I also use the simplest possible established name forms of known historical figures, such as Moses of Nisibis and Dionysius bar Salibi. On the occasions that I name an otherwise unknown historical person, in respect of linguistic and cultural heritage, I provide a transliterated form of the name. However, in order to minimize distraction, I have opted for a readable form, at the risk of being imprecise. Furthermore, I define all key analytical terms and I explain concepts that I expect to be unknown to many of my readers. To ensure transparency, the volume includes images of manuscripts.[86] On the occasions that the manuscripts are digitized, I provide the URLs so that the reader can check my interpretation visually. Transparency is also the motivation behind the numerous footnotes. Finally, in respect of my readers, I always make note of my doubts, my academic shortcomings and my dependence on the work and expertise of others.

Luckily, the study of the Christian transmission of early Jewish texts is already an established interdisciplinary field – it is not an emerging interdisciplinary field.[87] If that were the case, my vulnerability would have been even more palpable and the communicative gap even more pronounced. The field of study has already been acknowledged as a branch of Early Jewish Studies – and as a branch of Syriac Studies. I owe a great deal to the pioneers and forerunners in both branches.[88] As pointed out above, the insights that their studies have produced are currently widely recognized. They deserve to be field-changing, but they have

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[86] Ideally, this volume should have included more images. However, the COVID 19 pandemic made it impossible for me to optain five of the images I originally wanted to include. The service desk at the library in question was temporarily shut down.

[87] Eystein Gullbekk and Katrina Byström, "Becoming a Scholar by Publication – PhD students Citing in Interdisciplinary Argumentation," *Journal of Documentation* 75/2 (2019): 247–69.

[88] For the study of early Jewish literatures in Syriac Studies, see, e.g., Sebastian P. Brock, "Abraham and the Ravens: A Syriac Counterpart to Jubilees 11–12 and its Implications," *JSJ* 9 (1978): 135–52; idem, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources," *JJS* 30 (1979): 212–32; David Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Literature," in *Society of Biblical Literature: 1991 Seminar Papers,* ed. E. H. Lovering, SBLSP 30 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 745–65; Debié, "Les apocalypses apocryphes syriaques," 111–46; David G. K. Taylor, "The Patriarch and the Pseudepigrapha: Extra-Biblical Traditions in the Writings of Kyriakos of Tagrit (793–817)," in *Sur les pas des Araméens chrétiens: Mélanges offerts à Alain Desreumaux,* ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Muriel Debié, Cahiers d'études syriaques 1 (Paris: Geuthner, 2010), 35–61; Adam H. Becker, "Polishing the Mirror: Some Thoughts on Syriac Sources and Early Judaism," in *Envisioning Judaism: Studies in Honor of Peter Schäfer on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday,* 2 vols, ed. Ra'anan S. Boustan et al. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), II:897–915; Witold Witakowski, "Syriac Apocalyptic Literature," in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective,* ed., Kevork Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta, SVTP 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 667–87; Minov, "Syriac," 95–137; Aaron M. Butts and Simcha Gross, eds., *Jews and Syriac Christians: Intersections across the First Millennium,* TSAJ 180 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020).

still not changed scholarly practices in the wider field of Early Jewish Studies. I hope that the present study will give yet another push in that direction.

The Aims of the Volume and a Presentation of Its Chapters

The current volume has three aims and, accordingly, you may choose to engage with it in three different ways. You may choose to read it as a contribution to the exploration of the Syriac reception history of 2 Baruch. The manuscript transmission of a book is an important aspect of its reception history, but so far this part of 2 Baruch's story has never been told. Thus, the current volume aims to improve our knowledge about the longer life of this specific writing among Syriac Christians to add to, nuance and challenge the present scholarly consensus on 2 Baruch. Alternatively, you may choose to engage with this volume as a contribution to a particular debate in the field of Early Jewish Studies, with the explicit goal of taking it one step further. Finally, you may read the current study as a contribution to an ongoing discussion about the methodological, epistemological and ethical challenges to textual scholarship, broadly conceived. The textual, material and cultural history of 2 Baruch serves as the main case of the volume, but each chapter is explicitly devoted to an identifiable, shared, dilemma.[89] The volume critically engages the effects of the dominant historical-critical paradigm and constructively advocates materially-oriented, provenance-aware textual scholarship. Hence, the book should be relevant to groups of scholars working on old texts based on surviving younger manuscripts – that is, most scholars working on ancient texts. I hope the volume will also prove interesting to scholars working on other manuscript cultures and researchers who specialize in contemporary heritage practices among Christian minority groups in the Middle East.

Chapter 1 explores the inclusion of 2 Baruch in the sixth/seventh-century CE Codex Ambrosianus – the oldest extant Peshitta Old Testament *pandect*. Textual scholars have so far only approached this copy of 2 Baruch as a "witness" to the assumed early text and hence kept their interpretation of it from the manuscript context in which it survives. I challenge this approach and explore the copy of 2 Baruch in the codex as a meaningful and indeed necessary, part of its collection of books.

Chapter 2 presents the traceable history of the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus, and along with it, the embodied copy of 2 Baruch. Notes commem-

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[89] Since each chapter addresses a selected issue, I assume that some readers will only read one or a few chapters. This affects the design of the volume. First, I provide a comprehensive methodological/epistemological frame for each chapter. Second, the first time I mention a manuscript in a new chapter, I provide a full identification (city, collection, shelfmark). By repeated mention in the same chapter, I employ only the shelfmark.

orating the efforts of a donor, owners and a binder inscribed on the first and last folios of the codex shows that it spent a large part of its life in the Monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi al-Natrun in Egypt. To understand the ongoing engagement with 2 Baruch, I explore the various functions of the Codex Ambrosianus as a circulation-object – as a culturally relevant material artifact filling several identifiable roles in social interaction beyond its role as a text-carrier. Thus, the chapter focuses on the many hands that carried the codex through history and the practices that, as it were, came to ensure the preservation of the codex and hence the survival of the copy that has served as the main "witness to" 2 Baruch.

Chapter 3 is the last of three chapters that deal with the Codex Ambrosianus. In this chapter, I explore the verbal notes and nonverbal marks that share the pages with the text in the columns and I focus on the traces of such active reader engagement that materialize in the margins of the copy of 2 Baruch. The chapter participates in a longstanding discussion in scholarship about the purpose and use of the Codex Ambrosianus. One strand of this discussion holds that this codex was not intended for liturgical use and this assessment of the codex has impacted the research history of 2 Baruch. In this chapter, I ask whether active readers honored the (assumed) non-liturgical intent of its producers, and if they did not, what the surviving traces of readers' activities may tell us about their reading practices. Shifting the attention to the notes and the marks in the margins and their relationships with the text in the column, I discuss how the study of reader engagement nuances the conception of 2 Baruch as a book appearing in a codex scholars have described as being "withdrawn from normal liturgical use."

Chapter 4 explores the thirteenth-century lectionary manuscripts that preserve lections from 2 Baruch and their usage among some Syriac Christians. Based on the information that is preserved in the manuscripts, London, British Library, Add. 14,686 and 14,687, I reconstruct one hypothetical, but likely, historical context of engagement with the lection from 2 Bar 72:1–73:2. The lection is scripted to be read on Easter Sunday, the most important Sunday of the church year. Notes, colophons and traces of use surviving in the manuscripts suggest that this lection was indeed read, probably in the Church of the Holy Virgin, the main church of the Monastery of the Syrians. Chapter 4 challenges the scholarly imagination of 2 Baruch as a historical failure and laments the general lack of attention to 2 Baruch's salient and surprising reception history.

In chapter 5, I explore the paratextual identifications of the epistle that constitutes chapters 78–86 of 2 Baruch, the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah, and the epistle that shares most of its literary text but that circulates in fifty-three Syriac manuscripts under another name, the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. Former editors have conceived of the two epistles as one singular epistle, the *Epistle of Baruch*. In this chapter, I argue that the rubricated titles as well as the collection contexts in the manuscripts consistently represent them as two different epis-

tles. Hence, whereas the historical-critical focus on the early/original text and the text-critical priority of the text in the columns has discarded paratexts as later interpretation, I suggest that this lack of attention to paratexts has created a representation of an *Epistle of Baruch* in published editions that is basically out of sync with the available manuscript sources.

Chapter 6 is the first of two chapters that synthesize the findings of the former five chapters of the volume. In this chapter, I explore in detail the entangled transmission and transformation of 2 Baruch and question the assumption of access to a hypothetical early/original text that serves as a guarantee for a viable study of the early Jewish book. The chapter demonstrates that the 2 Baruch that has come down to us in surviving manuscripts is thoroughly shaped by the communities that produced, engaged with and preserved these manuscripts and it explores *how* this takes place. The chapter shows that everything we think we know about the early Jewish writing 2 Baruch is molded by the practices, priorities and various circumstances of the Greek, Arabic and Syriac Christian communities that preserved it.

In the final chapter of this volume, I challenge the dominant scholarly narrative of 2 Baruch as a first/second-century, Jewish, "apocryphal" or "pseudepigraphal" book, written in response to the fall of the second temple in Jerusalem, by pointing out the paradoxical gap between what counts as source in this narrative and the information provided by the surviving manuscripts. I explore the epistemological, methodological and ethical challenges of the practices of textual scholarship that remain inattentive to manuscripts as cultural artifacts and I outline alternative procedures for a provenance-aware, material philology for the future.

Chapter 1

Removing the Brackets:
2 Baruch in the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus

The history of research on 2 Baruch starts with the rediscovery of the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana.[1] In 1866 [1865], Ceriani published a Latin translation.[2] In 1868, he published an edition of the Syriac text, and in 1876–1883, a two-volume facsimile edition of the codex appeared.[3] In the decades that followed, the Syriac text of 2 Baruch was published anew by Michal Kmosko and translated into German by Victor Ryssel and into English by Robert H. Charles,[4] establishing the sixth- or seventh-century Syriac copy surviving in the Codex Ambrosianus as the key witness to 2 Baruch.[5] For forty years, from 1865 until 1903, when Grenfell and Hunt published the Greek fragment containing 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3, the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus was the sole known source to any part of 2 Baruch. For more than a hundred years it was the only manuscript providing scholars with a complete text. Even after the 1974 discovery of St Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589, the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus continued to serve as the preferred text witness.[6] It remains the oldest and fullest copy available to date.

I am not exaggerating when I claim that the copy preserved in the Codex Ambrosianus has played a pivotal role throughout the history of research on 2 Baruch.

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[1] The introduction of this chapter is a revised version of Lied, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus," 68–73. The text is reused with Sage Publishing's permission.

[2] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch," 73–98.

[3] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 113–80; idem*, Translatio Syra Pescitto*, 346–66.

[4] Michal Kmosko, "Apocalypsis Baruch filii Neriae, translatus de graeco in syriacum," in *Patrologia syriaca*, ed. R. Graffin (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Socli, 1907), cols. 1068–300; Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch;* idem, "II Baruch," in *Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2 of *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English,* ed. Robert H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 470–526; Victor Ryssel, "Die syrische Baruchapokalypse," in *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*, ed. Emil Kautzsch, 2 vols. (Tübingen: E. Rothstein, 1900), 404–46.

[5] Soon, exegetical and philological studies of the book appeared as well as more translations. E. g., Joseph Langen, *De Apocalypsi Baruch anno superiori primi edita: Commentarion* (Freiburg: Herder, 1867); Otto F. Fritzsche, *Libri Apocryphi Veteris Testamenti Graece* (Lipsiae: F. A. Brockhaus, 1871); Rosenthal, *Vier apokryphische Bücher*; Dean, *Pseudepigrapha,* 130–62.

[6] The edition of the Arabic codex was published in 1986 (Fred Leemhuis, Albertus F. J. Klijn and Geert J. H. van Gelder, *The Arabic Text of 2 Baruch: Edited and Translated with a Parallel Translation of the Syriac Text* [Leiden: Brill, 1986]).

In fact, the academic study of 2 Baruch depends thoroughly on it. Before its retrieval and identification, scholars knew of an alleged "pseudepigraphon" ascribed to Baruch by title from mentions of it in medieval Greek lists of apocryphal books.[7] The retrieval of the codex provided scholars with an extant and available text.

Given the importance of this particular copy to the history of research on 2 Baruch, it is striking that the codex – *qua* cultural artifact – plays a marginal role in the scholarship on the book. The first comprehensive study of the inclusion, location and function of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus was published only in 2016 by the present author.[8] To the extent that questions regarding the place of 2 Baruch in this codex had been raised before 2016, they had primarily been broached by scholars invested in Syriac manuscript traditions and not by scholars of 2 Baruch.[9] With some exceptions,[10] and although the text of the copy has been scrutinized in great detail, scholars of 2 Baruch have generally treated it in isolation from the rest of the codex, using it to discuss the – hypothetical – first- or second-century Jewish writing. In other words, the extant text of 2 Baruch, which is available to us in the shape of a copy in the material embodiment of the parchment sheets of the Codex Ambrosianus, has been systematically explored detached from the material contexts in which

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[7] The so-called Stichometry of Nicephorus (ninth century) and the (presumably sixth-century) Pseudo-Athanasian Synopsis of Holy Scriptures mention a Baruch pseudepigraphon among the apocryphal books. Cf., Montague R. James, *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament: Their Titles and Fragments* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1920), ix–xiv; Albert-Marie Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), xiv–xv; Edmon L. Gallagher and John D. Meade, *Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity: Texts and Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 118–28. There is no necessary connection between the book mentioned in the list and the extant text in the Codex Ambrosianus. However, the awareness of a Baruch-pseudepigraphon in a list of apocryphal books probably influenced the scholarly identification of the newly found extant text ascribed to Baruch.

[8] Lied, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus."

[9] Cf., e. g., Debié, "Les apocalypses apocryphes syriaques," 114–17; Sebastian P. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, Gorgias Handbooks 7, 2nd rev. ed. (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), 43, 115–17; Wido T. van Peursen, "Introduction to the Electronic Peshitta Text" (Preliminary version; available on Academia.edu https://www.academia.edu/12601080/Introduction_to_the_Electronic_Peshitta_Text [accessed 25 April 2020]), 1–19 at 5, 12–13; idem, "La diffusion des manuscrits bibliques conserves: typologie, organisation, nombre et époques de copie," in *L'Ancien Testament en syriaque*, ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Philip le Moigne, Études syriaques 5 (Paris: Geuthner, 2008), 193–214 at 203–4; Philip M. Forness, "Narrating History through the Bible in Late Antiquity: A Reading Community for the Syriac Peshitta Old Testament in Milan (Ambrosian Library, B 21 Inf)," *Le Muséon* 127/1–2 (2014): 41–76, at 59–60.

[10] Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:33–56, 161–62; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch,* 4–12, 21–23. These scholars dedicate more space to the manuscripts than others, but their main focus remains on the early text. Whitters's account contains some unfortunate mistakes (cf., his page 5 in particular). Cf., Lied, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity"; eadem, "Between 'Text Witness' and 'Text on the Page'."

it survives. This focus is the necessary result of a disciplinary discourse that has privileged the early (original) context and its general confidence in text-critical methods. Unfortunately, this approach has left the sixth/seventh-century manuscript in which 2 Baruch survives in the dark, including the historical contexts that produced and engaged with the manuscript and the entanglements of 2 Baruch with those contexts.

As pointed out by de Jonge, Kraft and Stone, a methodologically cautious way of approaching a late manuscript copy of an assumed early Jewish text would be first to study it in the immediate material and cultural context in which it is preserved, before eventually, and if defendable, turning to the hypothetical early text.[11] Such a procedure would in fact be particularly commendable in the study of 2 Baruch precisely because the text of this book survives in full in only one copy and because of the status that this copy holds in the history of research.

Furthermore, the Codex Ambrosianus and its copy of 2 Baruch deserves to be explored in their own right, not only in the service of methodological transparency. The inclusion, location and function of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus are interesting as a case of sixth/seventh-century engagement with the book. The codex is in this sense an obvious but still curiously untapped source to the longer life of 2 Baruch: what "is" the Codex Ambrosianus, and how can we understand the inclusion, order and selection of the books in the codex? What can we say about the functions of the codex and the books included in it in the sixth/seventh century, and why does it matter for the interpretation of 2 Baruch?

1.1 The Codex Ambrosianus: A Brief Codicological Description[12]

The so-called Syriac Codex Ambrosianus, B 21 inf. and bis inf. of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, is the oldest Peshitta Old Testament *pandect* that has survived.[13] The codex[14] is widely known under the *Peshiṭta List* siglum 7a1.[15]

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[11] Cf., the General Introduction.

[12] This chapter contains an abbreviated version of the full codicological presentation published in Lied, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus," 74–79.

[13] A *pandect* is a full-bible codex. A *pandect* gathers together all (or most) biblical books into one bound volume or a two-volume set. The term refers sometimes to codices that include both the books of the Old and the New Testament and at other times to full Old Testament codices. In the current volume, I understand both these categories of codices as *pandects*. It remains an open question (or an empirical question to be explored in each case) whether a *pandect* is defined as a comprehensive collection of *books*, a comprehensive collection of discrete *collections* or maybe both.

[14] I use the term "codex" in this volume to refer to a handwritten leaf-book. The codices that I have studied for the purpose of writing this volume have all been multi-quire codices ("quires" are stacks of folded sheets, shewn, stitched or otherwise kept together). This means that the codices are made up of multiple quires assembled into one material unit (a "text block") which has subsequently been bound. Cf., Maria Luisa Agati, *The Manuscript Book: A Compendium of*
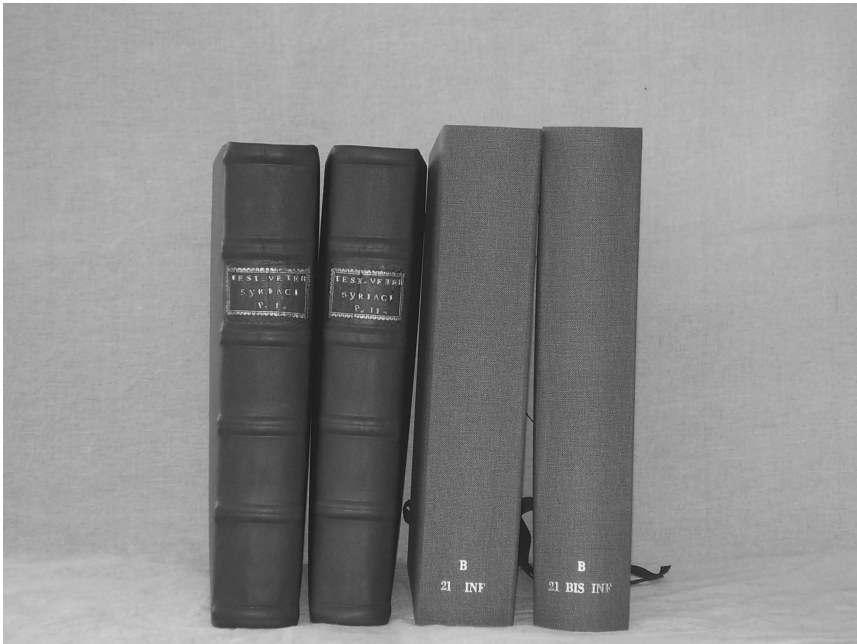
Figure 1: The Codex Ambrosianus bound in two volumes. Photo credits: Andrea Oltolina, Laboratoria P. M. F. di Dumenza.

Codicology, trans. Colin W. Swift, Studia Archaeologica 214 (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2017), 21–23; Georgios Boudalis, *The Codex and Crafts in Late Antiquity* (New York: Bard Graduate Center, 2018).

[15] The Codex Ambrosianus serves as the main manuscript source for the editions of the Peshitta Old Testament, published by the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament and the Leiden Peshitta Institute in the series *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* since 1966 (1972). Cf., P. A. H. de Boer, "Towards an Edition of the Syriac Version of the Old Testament," *VT* 31 (1981): 346–57; idem, "Preface," in *Preface, Genesis–Exodus,* part I, fascicle 1 of *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), v–xiv. For some further nuance of the choice and use of the Codex Ambrosianus for this purpose, see Bas ter Haar Romeny, "The Syriac Versions of the Old Testament," in *Nos Sources: Arts et Littérature Syriaques*, ed. Maroun Atallah, Sources Syriaques 1 (Antélias: Centre d'Études et de Recherches Orientales, 2005), 75–103 at 81–84. Some important studies of the Codex Ambrosianus are, Antonio M. Ceriani, "Le edizioni e i manoscritti delle versioni siriache del Vecchio Testamento," in *Memorie del R. Istituto Lombardo di Science e Lettere* XI:III (Milan: Bernardoni, 1869), 1–28; idem, "Praefatio"; Leo Haefeli, *Die Peschitta des alten Testamentes mit Rücksicht auf ihre textkritische Bearbeitung und Herausgabe,* ATA 11/1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1927); Cesare Pasini, "La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana," in *Storia, cristologia e tradizioni della Chiesa Siro-orientale,* ed. Emidio Vergani and S. Chialà, Atti del 3° Incontro sull'Oriente Christiano di tradizione siriaca (Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 2006), 13–25; van Peursen, "Introduction"; idem, "Diffusion des manuscrits"; Emidio Vergani, "An Introduction to Ceriani's Reprint of the Ambrosian Manuscript B 21 Inf. (Codex Ambrosianus 7a1)," in *A Facsimilie Edition of the Peshiṭto Old Testament Based on Codex Ambrosianus (7a1)* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2013), vii–xiii; idem, "Il colofone della Syro-Pšiṭṭā Ambrosiana,"

The Codex Ambrosianus is a large, *deluxe* parchment codex, measuring 36 (36.5) cm by 26 cm.[16] The codex consists of three hundred and thirty folios organized into thirty-five quires.[17] Paper guard leaves and a frontispiece were added in the eighteenth century.[18] According to the frontispiece, the codex was originally a single-tome codex. In 1774, the codex was divided into two volumes, and this is how the Biblioteca Ambrosiana keeps it today.[19] Given its old age, the Codex Ambrosianus is remarkably well-preserved. The quires and the surviving leaves are mostly intact.[20] The edges of the folios at the beginning of the codex are worn, and some discoloring, caused by mold, appears in the upper parts of the last three folios.[21]

In preparation for the inscription of the text in the columns, the codex was pricked[22] and ruled vertically.[23] The text of the writing area is organized into three columns, each containing between fifty and seventy lines of text, reflecting

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in *Studi orientalistici in Ambrosiana nella cornice del IV centenario, 1609–2009*, Orientalia Ambrosiana 1 (Rome: Bulzoni, 2012), 287–312; Forness, "Narrating History"; Lied, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus."

[16] I measured folios 37, 172 and 265. The folio size displays very little variation throughout the codex. The writing area measures 26.5 cm by 20 cm in the first part and 24 cm by 19 cm in the latter. All measurements of the writing area take the pricking as the point of departure.

[17] The quires are mostly *quinions. Quinions* are quires consisting of five sheets. Already in the early centuries, this was the most common quire format in Syriac manuscript production (Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 255; Wright, "Preface," xxvi). The exceptions are quires *kaph-dalath* (24) and *lamad-alaph* (31) which apparently are *quaternia* (consisting of four sheets).

[18] The title and the first sentences of the frontispiece reads: "Testamentum Vetus Universum cum Historia Machabæorum charactere, et stylo Syro. Sic olim inscripserat Antonius Giggeius, qui primus Orientales Bibliothecæ Ambrosianæ Codices tractavit." In addition to the frontispiece in B 21 inf., two lists of books are added, one in each of the volumes. The frontispiece and the list of books are on paper. Digital images are available at B21inf, images 009 and 011: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82801083c7 and at B21bis-inf image 009: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (both accessed 18 June 2020).

[19] Line two of the frontispiece reads: "Unicum antea Volumen in duo divisum, et religatum est anno MDCCLXXIV." The two volumes are currently bound in museum bindings from 2008. Cf., furthermore, chapter 2 of the current volume.

[20] With the exception of the folio that contained Num 3:23–5:10 (between folios 39 and 40) and the folios containing two sections in Chronicles (I, 12:18–17:25; II, 13:11–20:3), which are missing, the codex has generally been considered complete. The loss of sheets in Chronicles among the outer sheets of the quires suggests that they disappeared at a time when the binding of the codex was weak. Cf., chapter 2.

[21] The codex has been repaired on several occasions (Conversation with the conservator, Andrea Oltolina, Biblitoeca Ambrosiana, 17 March 2016. Cf., furthermore, Cesare Pasini, "Catalogazione e conservazione nel fondo manoscritto dell'Ambrosiana," *La Bibliofiliia* 104/3 [2002]: 283–97 at 293).

[22] In many folios, the pricking is still visible in each of the four corners of the columns.

[23] There is no horizontal ruling in the codex, which is not to be expected, since Syriac codices were generally not ruled horizontally until the twelfth- or thirteenth century (Marlia M. Mango, "The Production of Syriac Manuscripts, 400–700 AD," in *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe de Gregorio and Marilena Maniaci [Spoleto: Fondazione CISAM, 1991], 161–79 at 174; Borbone et al*.,* "Syriac Codicology," 256).

the page design of a *deluxe* codex. The script is a regular, partly pointed[24] Estrangelo inscribed in a brownish black ink. The inscription of the text is relatively tight and the margins are kept straight.

Ceriani held that a single scribe was responsible for the inscription of the text.[25] This is uncommon in such a large production, but Ceriani's hypothesis still stands. This otherwise unknown scribe organized and marked the various layout units of the codex by adding a title and an end title to each book[26] and running titles in the upper margins, as well as the occasional subsection heading in red ink.[27] Rosettes in various shapes and numbers mark paragraphs and possibly also larger sense units.[28]

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[24] According to de Boer, it is uncertain who added diacritical and vocalization points and when. Furthermore, the system is inconsistent ("Preface," ix).

[25] Ceriani, "Praefatio," 7; Antonio M. Ceriani, *Fragmenta latina Evangelii S. Lucae, Parvae Genesis et Assumptionis Mosis, Baruch, Threni et Epistola Jeremiae, versionis syriacae Pauli Telensis com notis et initio prolegomenon in integram ejusdem versionis editionem*, vol 1 of *Monumenta sacra et profana* (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1861), xiv–xv.

[26] I employ the term "title" to refer to a formulation of an established identification of a given literary entity that is graphically separate from the rest of the text copied in the writing area by the color of the ink and the occasional use of decoration (cf., furthermore, chapter 5). More specifically, I reserve the use of "title" for formulations that mark the beginning of a copy of a book and that appear in the writing area with the rest of the text. I employ the term "end title" for a rubricated title identifying the end of the layout unit, most typically a book or a discrete collection of books. For longer notes marking the end of a book, I apply the term "subscription." "(Subsection) headings" refer to formulations that mark the beginning of a subsection of a book. "Superscript titles" appear above and at a certain distance from the text in the writing area, visually semi-detached from that text by means of, for instance, the script size and the skipping of lines in addition to the color of the ink. "Running titles" appear in the upper margins of the manuscript pages. These annotations in the upper margins occur systematically. They appear in the first folio of each new quire of a codex and occasionally at the end of a quire as well, identifying the literary entity inscribed in the quire. The inscription of running titles would help binders to order the quires of the text block in the correct order. They would also aid later readers. Running titles sometimes identify books and at other times indicate discrete collections.

[27] This use of red ink for these purposes is common in Syriac manuscripts. Cf., Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 254. Note that Forness ("Narrating History") builds parts of his study of the collection structure of the codex on the layout of the titles, but the various sets of titles are not as consistent as he assumes in his analysis.

[28] Cf., Johannes C. de Moor, "Unit Division in the Peshiṭta of Micah," *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 1 (1999) 225–47; Konrad D. Jenner, "The Unit Delimitation in the Syriac Text of Daniel and Its Consequences for the Interpretation," in *Delimitation Criticism: A New Tool in Biblical Scholarship*, ed., Marjo Korpel and Josef Oesch, Pericope 1 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2000), 105–29; Sebastian P. Brock, "Text Division in the Syriac Translation of Isaiah," in *Biblical Hebrew, Biblical Texts: Essays in Memory of Michael P. Weitzman*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert and Gillian Greenberg, JSOTSup 333 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 200–21; idem, "Text History and Text Division in Peshiṭta Isaiah," in *The Peshitta: Its Early Text and History*, ed. P.B. Dirksen and M.J. Mulder (Leiden, Brill, 1988), 49–80. Cf., also, Konrad D. Jenner, "De perikopentitels van de geïllustreerde Syrische kanselbijbel van Parijs" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1993). The codex displays some variation in the execution of paragraph marks.

The scribe skipped a number of lines after each book.[29] These expanses of skipped lines between the book units, which vary considerably in size throughout the codex, are on some occasions left blank. At other times, colorful bands filled with interlaces and geometrical figures adorn these spaces.[30] The bands serve both as decoration and as readers' aids, helping those who engaged with the codex to identify the end of one book, or a collection of books, and the beginning of another. Apart from the bands, the decoration in the codex is relatively sparse.[31] It consists mainly of configurations of black and red dots, combinations of dots and dashes or dotted wavy lines. These adorn titles, end titles, subsection headings and running titles, and they sometimes make up paragraphing graphemes in the body of text in the columns.[32]

Quire *kaph-beth* (22) displays a subtle, partial shift in the page layout and unit organization of the codex. From folio 209r onwards, a quadruple-dot grapheme[33] marks out the first line of each column in the writing area. Starting on the same page, a two-dot, horizontal grapheme in the margin or intercolumn on the right-hand side of the column now accompanies the rosette – the most consistent paragraph mark throughout the codex.[34] The crafting of the quire marks changes too, both in the ductus and the decoration. Importantly, the system of running titles of the codex, which is used consistently from quire *alaph* (1) to quire *kaph-beth*, disappears, only to reappear in quire *lamad-beth* (32).[35] From folio 218v to folio 286r, the decoration is missing in most of the open spaces

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[29] It is possible that at least some of the expanses between the books were intended for illuminations. Illuminations adorn both Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Syr. 341 and Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Ms Oo I. 1,2 (cf., the presentation of these codices below). Occasionally, the scribe also singled out subsections of books by skipping one or two lines. Cf., for instance, the line skipped before the "Hymn of Judith" on folio 223r.

[30] It is unlikely that the scribe crafted these bands. Cf., for instance, the decoration before and after 4 Maccabees, which contains the title of the book (ff. 313v and 320r). This additional book title, embedded in the decoration, is clearly by another hand. The bands may have been added by someone in the production team or they may have been added later.

[31] Syriac codices are generally sparsely decorated (Marlia M. Mango, "Patrons and Scribes indicated in Syriac Manuscripts, 411–800 AD," *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantistik* 32/4 [1982]: 3–12 at 3). Cf., further Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, "Syriac Decorated and Illuminated Manuscripts: A Codicological Approach," in *Manuscripta Syriaca. Des sources de première main*, ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Muriel Debié; Cahiers d'études syriaques 4 (Paris: Geuthner, 2015), 321–41 at 339, for a more comprehensive study.

[32] Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 259–60; Balicka-Witakowska, "Syriac Decorated and Illuminated Manuscripts," 325–27.

[33] Cf., Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 257. However, the use of the grapheme in the Codex Ambrosianus is not consistent with their general description of its use in Syriac manuscripts.

[34] Cf., B21bis-inf, image 077: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[35] For this latter point, cf., Forness, "Narrating History," 45. Note however, that the top margin of folio 259r (the folio contains text from 2 Baruch), located in the segment that lacks running titles, contains an erasure that might have been a running title. Cf., chapter 3 of the current volume.

between book units and likewise in the embellishment of end titles. The *ke-phalaia*-marks, added by a later hand, also appear for the last time in quire *kaph-beth*, on folio 211v.

Some of these shifts are probably the result of a change in the preparation for the inscription of the codex. Others involve the addition of aids to binders and readers. Some shifts may thus indicate a change in the production team or a change in their procedures over time. Other changes may reflect the use of different exemplars, or diverse copying conventions of specific books or collections, influencing the layout.[36] Yet other shifts may indicate a certain fatigue among the producers of the codex.[37]

1.1.1 The Copy of 2 Baruch

The copy of 2 Baruch fills folios 257r–267r of the codex.[38] In general, the *mise-én-page* of the copy adheres closely to the general layout of the codex, including the shifts that occur in quire *kaph-beth*. The scribe started copying the text of 2 Baruch at the top of the mid column of folio 257r.[39] He[40] ended the copy in the upper part of the mid column of folio 267r, skipping nine lines before the inscription of the next book. The scribe inscribed the title, the end title and four subsection headings in red ink. The title of the book appears in the first three lines of the copy. It reads, ܟܬܒܐ ܕܓܠܝܢܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ ܀ ܕܡܬܦܩ ܡܢ ܝܘܢܝܐ ܠܣܘܪܝܝܐ, "The Book of Revelation of Baruch bar Neriah, Which Was Translated from Greek into Syriac." An end title appears in the last two lines and reads ܫܠܡ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ, "The Book of Baruch bar Neriah Is Ended." Headings in red ink single out three prayers of Baruch bar Neriah on folios 259r, 261v and 263r, respectively.[41] In addition, a subsection heading on folio 265v identifies the epistle recorded in 2 Bar 78–86: ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ . ܕܟܬܒ ܠܬܫܥܐ ܫܒܛܝܢ ܘܦܠܓܗ, "The Epistle of Baruch Son of Neriah, Which He Wrote to the Nine and a Half Tribes."

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[36] The layout of Chronicles, for instance, follow conventions and stands out from the rest of the codex, for instance by its use of other paragraphing marks.

[37] In the latter part of the codex, an increasing amount of the rosettes are left unfinished. Cf., the discussion of this feature in chapter 6 of the current volume.

[38] Cf., images 173 through 193 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[39] The scribe left the last eighteen lines of the first column of the folio blank.

[40] It is most likely that the scribe was a man. Cf., furthermore, chapter 4 of the current volume.

[41] The last one and a half lines of the first column on folio 259r consist of a series of dotted wavy lines. The feature is unparalleled in the copy of 2 Baruch. Their function is probably to fill out the empty space in the lower part of the column. The "Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah" in 2 Bar 21 starts at the top of the mid-column of the folio and the scribe probably wanted to avoid inscribing this title at the bottom of the column. Cf., image 177 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).
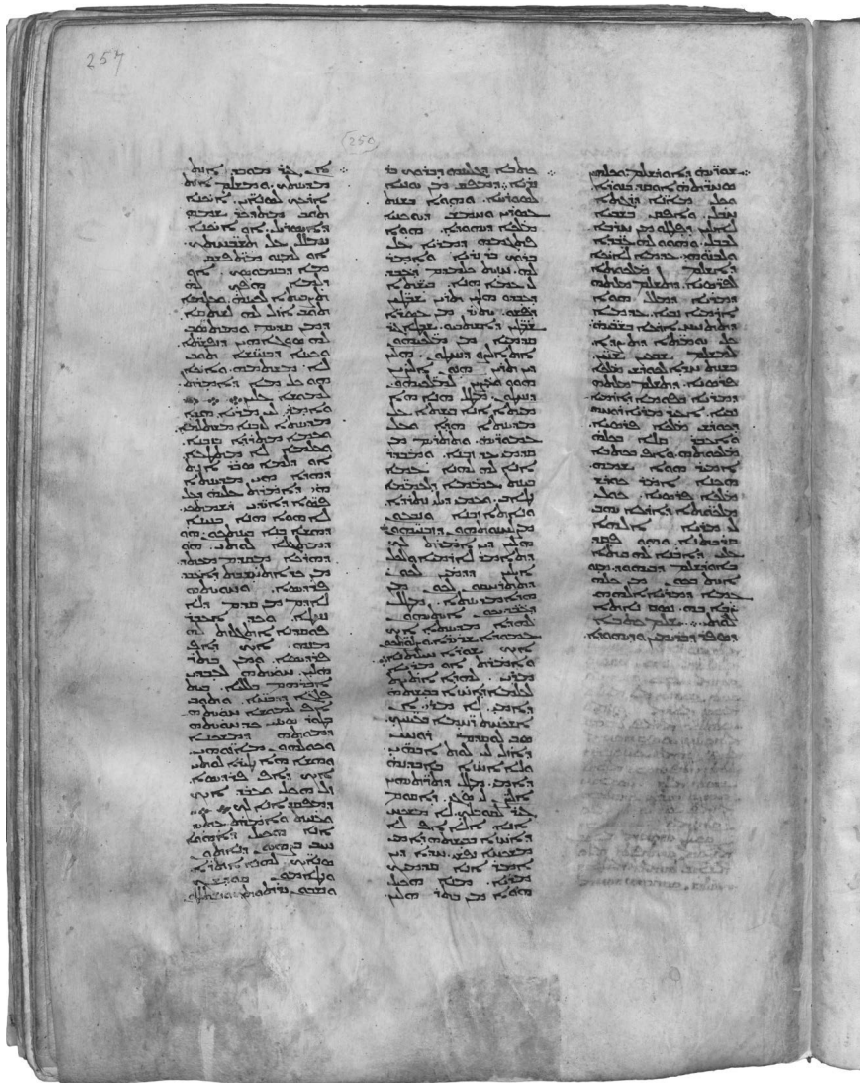
Figure 2: The location and title of the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus, folio 257r.
© Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

Four additional features of the copy deserve an initial, brief mention. First, on folio 259v, a series of additional, small, three-dot rosettes in red and black ink appear in the margins and intercolumns. They mark out the beginning of sections and sentences in 2 Bar 22, 24, 26 and 27. These small rosettes are otherwise unparalleled in the codex. Second, some corrections appear in the copy. Some are inscribed on the top of erased areas in the column in the same handwriting as the rest of the copy.[42] This indicates that the correction was the work of the scribe. On other occasions, a three-dot grapheme inserted above a word in the column, a stroke or a two-dot, vertical grapheme in the intercolumn signals a correction.[43] These corrections may be the work of a member of the production team (the scribe included) or a later reader.[44] Third, an additional note appears in the lower part of the first intercolumn of folio 265r. Fourth, an erasure has partly removed and partly smeared the ink of a note in the upper margin of folio 259r. I will explore the latter two features in more detail in chapter 3 of the current volume.

1.1.2 The Unknown Origins of the Codex Ambrosianus

Unfortunately, the Codex Ambrosianus does not contain a scribal colophon, which could have provided information about the place of production and the date of completion of the copying process.[45] David G. K. Taylor has suggested that the codex was produced no earlier than the year 541/2, since the headings in the Psalter display dependence on the Psalm commentary of Daniel of Salah, which he wrote in 541/2.[46] Thus, the 540s may serve as a *terminus post quem* for

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[42] Cf., e.g., folio 261r (mid column).

[43] Cf., e.g., the variety of corrections on folio 266r. Cf., the convenient overview of corrections in the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah in Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 236.

[44] Cf., chapter 6 of the current volume.

[45] I reserve the term "colophon" for the scribal note added, most commonly, on the last page/one of the last pages by the hand that copied the main body of text of the codex to formulaically mark the end of the inscription process (Sebastian P. Brock, "Fashions in Early Syriac Colophons," *Hugoye* 18/2 [2015]: 361–77 at 361; Thomas A. Carlson, "Formulaic Prose? Rhetoric and Meaning in Late Medieval Syriac Manuscript Colophons," *Hugoye* 18/2 [2015]: 379–98 at 379–80). On Syriac colophons in general, see Marlia M. Mango, "Artistic Patronage in the Roman Diocese of the Oriens, 312–634 AD" (PhD diss., 1985); eadem, "Patrons and Scribes."

[46] The year 542 CE (853 A. Cr.) appears in his commentary on Psalm 83. David G. K. Taylor, "The Psalm Headings in the West Syrian Tradition," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium*, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny, MPI 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 365–78 at 370; idem, "The Psalm Commentary of Daniel of Sala and the Formation of Sixth-Century Syrian Orthodox Identity," *Church History and Religious Culture* 89/1–3 (2009): 65–92 at 71; idem, "The Psalm Titles in Biblioteca Ambrosiana Ms B 21 Inf (7a1), and the Origins of the Manuscript" (paper presented at Interpretation, Materiality and Reception: New Perspectives on Ms. B 21 Inf. [Ambrosian Library], Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, 5 May 2016).

the production of the codex.[47] A donor note on folio 330r of the codex offers a *terminus ante quem*. This note suggests that the donor, Abu 'Ali Zekiri, donated the codex to the Monastery of the Syrians in the first decade of the eleventh century.[48] The codex was probably produced well before the eleventh century though. The scholarly consensus assigns a date to the codex in the late-sixth or the early-seventh century.[49] Some codiocological, paleographical and collection features support this consensus. The codex is large compared with most other Syriac codices, and the text is organized in three columns. With some exceptions, Syriac codices of this format and layout are not commonly found after the mid-seventh century.[50] In addition, the Estrangelo script of the codex has been dated paleographically to the sixth or seventh century.[51] As has been pointed out by, for instance, Sebastian P. Brock and Emidio Vergani, some of the books in the codex attest to a pre-*textus receptus* form of the texts. This also suggests a pre-ninth/tenth-century date of the codex.[52] Likewise, the fact that the codex contains neither the Beth Mawtabhe collection[53] nor the Odes as a discrete unit suggests a

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[47] In 1878, Theodor Nöldeke suggested that the codex was produced after 617, because parts of the text of the Psalter was based on the Syro-Hexapla (Review *of Translatio syra pescitto Veteris Testamenti ex Codice Ambrosiano,* vol. 1.2, by A.M. Ceriani [London: Williams and Norgate, 1878], in *Literarisches Centralblatt für Deutschland* 29 [1878]: 871–72). Nöldeke's proposal has later been refuted.

[48] Cf., the detailed presentation of this note in chapter 2.

[49] Cf., e.g., Ceriani, *Le edizioni e i manoscritti*; idem, "Praefatio," 7; Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxii–xxiii; Enrico Galbiati, "I fondi orientali minori (siriaco, etiopico, armeno) dell'Ambrosiana," *Atti del convegno di studi su la Lombardia e l'Oriente. Milano 11–15 Giugnio 1962* (Milan: Istituto Lombardo Accademia di science e lettere, 1963), 190–99 at 192; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:33–35; Haefeli, *Die Peschitta des alten Testamentes*, 77; de Boer, "Preface," vii; Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," ii; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 14, 18–19; Debié, "Les apocalypses apocryphes syriaques," 114; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 115; Vergani, "Introduction," x. A ninth/tenth century date was also suggested early on, but this hypothesis has been rejected (G.B. de Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti*, Vol. 1 [Paris, 1784], clix; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:34 n. 1).

[50] Hatch, *Album*, 13–14, 45; Wright, "Preface," xxvii; Mango, "Production," 175–76. Cf., also, Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:35 and Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 258. There are some notable later exceptions, for instance the twelfth-century Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Ms Oo. I. 1,2. Some additional codicological features point to the likelihood of an early date assignment. The ruling of the page, the organization of the quires and the fact that quire numbers occur only on the first recto page of a new quire support an early dating. Horizontal ruling is not found in Syriac codices until the twelfth/thirteenth century (Cf., Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 256; Mango, "Production," 163, 167). Note however, that although Mango suggests that quire numbers were normally not decorated until after 640 ("Production," 177), the quire marks of the Codex Ambrosianus are indeed embellished.

[51] Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch,* 1:34; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 19; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 42; Vergani, "Il colofone," 305.

[52] Cf., e.g., Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 46; Vergani, "Introduction," x.

[53] The collection known as the Beth Mawtabhe ("sessions") appears only in the Syriac tradition and is found particularly in East Syriac manuscripts. The collection commonly contained Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Qohelet, Ruth, Song of Songs, Job and Ben Sira. The collection appears in the surviving manuscript material from the ninth century onwards and

date before the eighth/ninth century.[54] In the current volume, I do not attempt to date the codex with more precision than previous scholars have already offered. I support the majority hypothesis that the codex was produced in the sixth or seventh century, most likely in the seventh.[55]

The place and milieu of origin of the Codex Ambrosianus remains unknown. We know neither who commissioned the codex and where it was copied, nor the identity of the individuals or institutions involved in the manufacturing process.[56] What we must assume, though, is that the codex was manufactured in a professional environment and that it is the product of many hands. The making of a *deluxe* codex is neither the venture of any single individual nor an *ad hoc* undertaking. The codex is of West Syriac origin, and several scholars have proposed that it was manufactured somewhere in Mesopotamia.[57] Mesopotamia was the heartland of Syriac Christians at the time, and it is likely that a manuscript of the magnitude of the Codex Ambrosianus would have been produced in one of the major centers of West Syriac scholarship.[58] Other Syriac manuscripts dating to the period before the year 900 mention the towns of Edessa, Mabbug, Amida, Tell Dinawar and Nisibis as their place of production.[59] Although keeping in mind that large numbers of the Syriac manuscripts that were once in existence are now lost and that another picture might have emerged if more had survived, this geographical distribution still indicates that the southeastern parts of Turkey/the northernmost parts of Mesopotamia were hotspots of the manuscript manufacture at the time when the Codex Ambrosianus was produced. Edessa has been suggested as a possible place of origin.[60] Another suggestion is that the codex may originate from, or at some point was brought from, Takrit.[61] It remains unfortunate that we do not know the place of origin

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displays a certain stability in subsequent centuries (Cf., Willem Baars, "On the Order of Books in a Beth Mawtabhe," Peshitta Institute Communications 5, *VT* 17 (1967): 132–33; van Peursen, "Diffusion des Manuscrits," 197; idem, "Introduction," 3).

[54] The earliest surviving manuscripts containing Canticles/Odes as a distinct unit stem from the eighth century. Cf., Heinrich Schneider, "Canticles or Odes," part IV, fascicle 6, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), i–xvi; 1–35 at ii.

[55] According to Hatch, there are no surviving dated Syriac manuscripts from the period 621/22–682. Hatch ascribes the lacuna to the political unrest in key areas at the time (*Album*, 45).

[56] For a broader overview of the known origins of early Syriac manuscripts, see Mango, "Patrons and Scribes," 3–6, 8.

[57] Taylor, "Psalm Titles." Another suggestion is that the manuscript originates in Syria (Galbiati, "I Fondi orientali minori," 193).

[58] Cf., e. g., Wright, "Preface," iii–v; Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 15–24.

[59] Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 263. Edessa is the most frequently appearing city in the earliest manuscripts. Seven surviving manuscripts from the fifth and sixth century mention it.

[60] Taylor, "Psalm Titles."

[61] Pasini, "La Siro-Peshitta," 17; Vergani, "Introduction," ix–x; Vergani, "Il colofone," 267, 287.

of the Codex Ambrosianus. In the current volume, I will take as my point of departure the fact that the origin of the codex is unknown.

This chapter's focus on the inclusion, location and function of 2 Baruch suggests that I am exploring the codex as a production unit, that is, as the outcome of the production phase. Since the origins of the Codex Ambrosianus are unknown, this procedure warrants an initial methodological reflection. It is not the goal of this chapter to reconstruct its milieu of origin. I restrict the analysis to a study of the surviving traces of the manufacturing process in the ways in which and the extent to which they are still visible in its product, the codex. I explore codicological features, such as the page layout, paratextual features,[62] delimitation devices and unit organization to reveal key aspects of the inscription of the copy of 2 Baruch.[63] Furthermore, I will study the overall plan of the codex as it has come down to us in the shape of the order of books. In addition, the larger lot of surviving Syriac manuscripts from the fifth to the twelfth century containing Old Testament books helps me to contextualize both the particularities and the commonalities of the codex.

1.1.3 The Identification and Selection of Books in the Codex Ambrosianus

A superscript title in the upper margin of folio 1v tells us how those who produced the Codex Ambrosianus identified it and its collection of books.[64] The title reads, ܟ݈ܠ ܣܠܡ ܘܚܝ ܢܫܪܐ ܡܟܬܒ ܠܚܕܬܐ ܟܬܒ ܦܢܕܩܛܣ ܡܫܪܝܢܢ ܟܬܒܬܐ ܕܥܬܝܩܬܐ ܟܠܗ ܘܚܕܬܐ "By the Strength of Our Lord We Begin to Write this *Pandect*-Book of the Whole Old [Testament] and of the New [Testament]."

This superscript title identifies the codex as a *pandect* containing both the Old and the New Testament. The first part of the title, "By the Strength of Our Lord We Begin to Write," is a commonplace. The use of the Greek loanword "pandect" (ܦܢܕܩܛܣ) is less common and serves as the main indication of the type of manuscript and the collection of the codex.[65] The Syriac term ܟܬܒܐ, "book,"

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[62] I apply the term "paratextual features" to refer to elements such as titles and end titles of book units and collections, headings of subsections and special paragraphs in the books as well as running titles in the top margins identifying the books and collections copied on these pages. Cf., further, chapter 5.

[63] This study of the Codex Ambrosianus is based on my inspection of the codex in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 28 June 2011, 27–29 June 2014, 23–26 November 2014, and 14–18 March 2016, as well as my work on B 21 ter inf. and the 2013 re-edition of Ceriani's photolithographical edition (Ceriani, *Facsimilie Edition*). I am indebted to Federico Gallo, Emidio Vergani and Stefano Serventi for their kind assistance during my stays in Milan.

[64] In Syriac codices folio 1r was commonly left blank. Also, Syriac codices did not include a frontispiece. An ownership note, added later, covers folio 1r of the Codex Ambrosianus. Cf., chapter 2.

[65] I have come across the term in the superscript title of the Codex Ambrosianus and in running titles of Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Ms Oo I. 1,2, e.g., on folio 91r as well as in Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58, on folios 64v–65r.
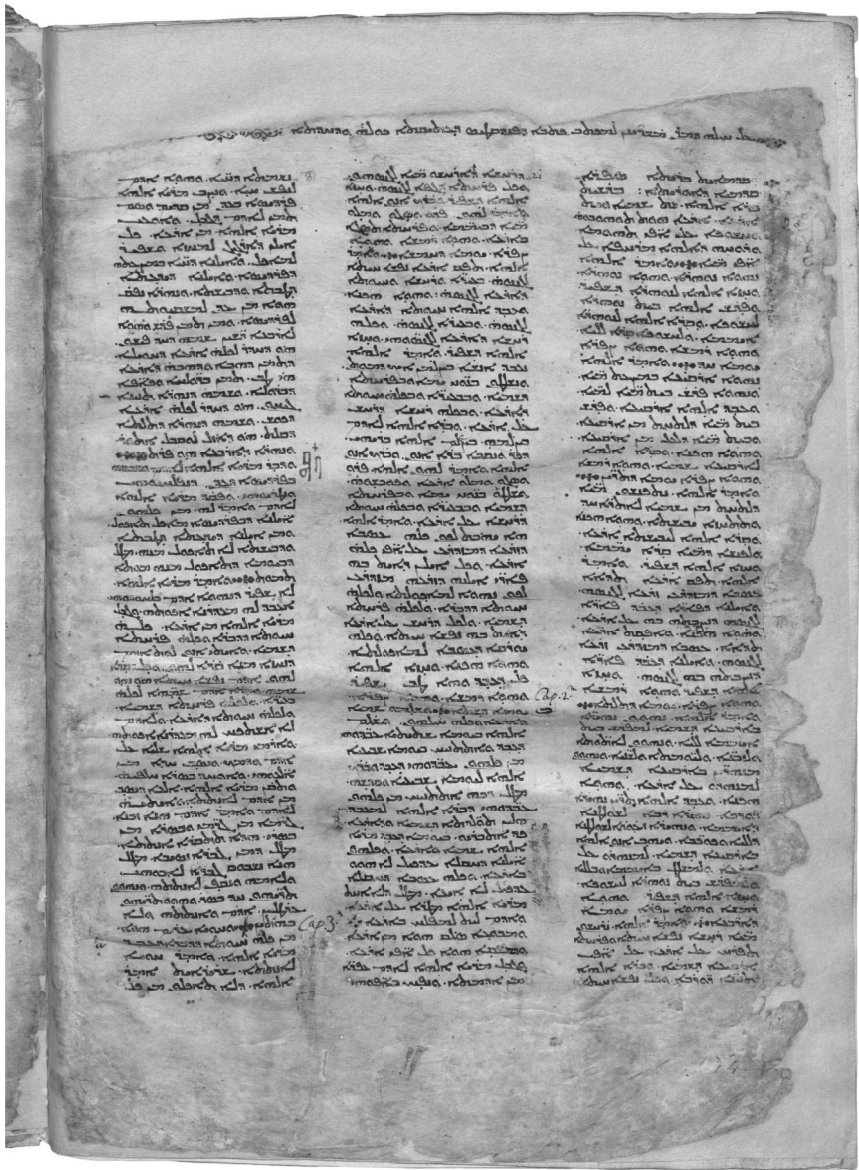
Figure 3: The superscript title of the Codex Ambrosianus, folio 1v. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

or "volume," or "codex" carries much of the same range of meanings as today's English term "book" in the sense that it refers both to a discrete literary entity of a certain length and to an inscribed material artifact. In Syriac titles, colophons and notes, the term is often used to refer to the material text-bearing artifact, the codex.[66] Hence, I understand the expression ܟܬܒܐ ܕܦܢܩܝܬܐ literally as "codex-of-the-*pandect*-type."

Furthermore, the title implies that the codex contains the full Old Testament, as well as the New Testament. The word "testament," ܕܝܬܩܐ / ܕܝܬܩܐ / ܕܐܝܬܩܐ, does not occur in the title. However, this omission of "testament" is conventional. The "Old Testament" was commonly referred to as "The Old." The occurrence of the word ܟܠܗ "whole" in the title may be pleonastic since the codex has already been identified as a *pandect*. However, the expression ܥܬܝܩܬܐ ܟܠܗ, "the whole Old [Testament]" also appears in literary texts and may suggest that this was an equivalent way of referring to a full-bible codex in Syriac.[67] It is noteworthy that, although the title signals the inclusion of the New Testament, no New Testament books are part of the codex, at least not as it has come down to us.

With the marked exception of the reference to the New Testament, the title aptly reflects the collection of books copied in the codex. The codex indeed includes "the whole Old [Testament]." The books included in the extant codex are, in their order of inscription,[68] the following:

B 21 inf.	B 21 bis inf.
Genesis	Epistles of Jeremiah and of Baruch
Exodus	Ezekiel
Leviticus	Twelve Prophets
Numbers	Daniel, Bel and the Dragon
Deuteronomy	Ruth
Job	Susanna
Joshua	Esther
Judges	Judith
Samuel	Ben Sira
Psalms	Chronicles
Kings	2 Baruch, the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah
Proverbs	4 Ezra
Wisdom of Solomon	Ezra-Nehemiah
Qohelet	1 Maccabees
Song of Songs	2 Maccabees
Isaiah	3 Maccabees
Jeremiah, Lamentations	4 Maccabees
	5 Maccabees/Josephus, Jewish War, book 6

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[66] Cf., chapter 2 of the current volume.

[67] See, e.g., the Letter of Timothy 1. Cf., Martin Heimgartner, *Die Briefe 42–58 des ostsyrischen Patriarchen Timotheos I.: Textedition,* CSCO 644; Syr. 248 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 80.

[68] This figure reflects the current division of the codex into two volumes.

1.2 A Bird's Eye View: The Codex Ambrosianus and
Other Surviving Syriac Old Testament Manuscripts

The Codex Ambrosianus contains a comprehensive collection of Old Testament books and explicitly self-identifies as an Old Testament *pandect*. In the context of the present investigation of the inclusion, location and function of 2 Baruch in this particular codex, it is tempting to jump to conclusions: since 2 Baruch is part of an Old Testament codex, 2 Baruch is an Old Testament book. However, the fact that a book is included in an Old Testament codex does not automatically make it an Old Testament book. Occasionally, late antique and medieval codices contain additional books. To understand what the Codex Ambrosianus may have been at the time of its production, and thus to discuss what 2 Baruch might have been to those who engaged with it, I will explore the codex in the context of the larger lot of surviving Syriac Old Testament manuscripts before I turn to the inclusion of 2 Baruch in the particular embodiment of the Codex Ambrosianus. These procedures represent two different approaches, and as we shall see, they offer different kinds of insights.

The first approach proposes a systematic look at other extant Syriac Old Testament manuscripts.[69] Two aspects of this sentence demand a brief explanation before we proceed. First, the category, "the Old [Testament]," reaches all the way back to the earliest Syriac literary sources. It appears, for instance, in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* 2, assumedly written in 337.[70] The conceptualization of the category is widespread in early Syriac literature. This indicates that at the time of the production of the Codex Ambrosianus the concept of an Old Testament would have been commonplace. The books appearing in bound collections identifiable as "Old Testament manuscripts"[71] were translated into Syriac from either Hebrew or Greek in earlier centuries[72] and would have been known – at

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[69] I focus mainly on West Syriac manuscripts, but I do not assume any necessary hard divide between West and East Syriac traditions (Cf., e. g., Michael P. Weitzman, "The Originality of Unique Readings in Peshitta MS 9a1," in *The Peshitta: Its Early Text and History*, ed. P. B. Dirksen and M. J. Mulder (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 225–58; Konrad D. Jenner, "A Review of the Methods by Which Syriac Biblical and Related Manuscripts Have Been Described and Analyzed: Some Preliminary Remarks," *Aram* 5/1–2 (1993): 255–66 at 261; Van Rompay, "Past and Present Perceptions," 89, 95 and 97. Hence, both East and West Syriac manuscripts appear in my comparative set of manuscript materials.

[70] I am grateful to David G.K Taylor for making me aware of this reference (Email-communication via the Hugoye-list, 25 February 2019). I am also grateful to James Walters for pointing me to a wider set of early occurrences of the term.

[71] I apply the term "Old Testament manuscript" to stress that I am not referring to an "Old Testament" as such, but to material objects that manifest this category in different ways. An Old Testament manuscript, thus, is a manuscript that was copied (at least primarily and initially) to preserve and circulate copies of one or more books commonly associated with the category "Old Testament."

[72] The books of the Hebrew Bible, and Ben Sira, were translated from Hebrew. The other books that are also found in Syriac Old Testament manuscripts but not in the Hebrew Bible were

least to an elite stratum – as books associated with Hebrew and/or Greek biblical collections. Thus, at the time of the production of the Codex Ambrosianus, we can assume that, with some possible exceptions and with fruitful local variation, Syriac communities recognized these books as Syriac Old Testament books.[73]

Second, to contextualize the Codex Ambrosianus, I will explore manuscripts dated to (or assigned a date in) the period between the mid-fifth and the end of the twelfth century. I choose the fifth century as my starting point since the earliest surviving Syriac Old Testament manuscripts stem from this century. I let the twelfth century close the period, although this is in some ways an artificial end point. The distribution of surviving Syriac *pandects* motivates this choice.[74] Four Peshitta Old Testament *pandects* survive from the time before the end of the twelfth century.[75] The Codex Ambrosianus is the earliest (sixth/seventh century). The oldest parts of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Syr. 341 are most commonly dated to the seventh/eighth century.[76] Scholars have as-

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translated from the Greek (Brock, *Bible in Syriac Tradition*, 17). For comprehensive discussions of the multifaceted processes of translation of the Old Testament books and the dating of this process, see, e. g., Brock, "Jewish Traditions," 212–32; idem, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 23–39; idem, *A Brief Outline of Syriac Literature*, 2nd rev. ed. Moran Etho 9 (Kottayam: St Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, 2008); Michael P. Weitzman, "The Interpretative Character of the Syriac Old Testament," in *From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300),* vol. 1 of *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1996), 587–611; Alison Salvesen, "Jacob of Edessa's Version of 1–2 Samuel: Its Method and Text-Critical Value," in *Jacob of Edessa and the Syriac Culture of His Day,* ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny, MPI 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 127–44; Jonathan Loopstra, "The Syriac Bible and Its Interpretation," in *The Syriac World*, ed. Daniel King, (London: Routledge, 2019), 293–308. It has been suggested that 2 Baruch was translated from Greek and thus became part of Syriac literature in the fourth century. See Bundy, "Pseudepigrapha in Syriac Literature," 759; Minov, "Syriac," 99, 104–5.

[73] The reference to "Old Testament" is not particularly widespread in title identifications in Syriac manuscripts. The designation appears in some *pandects,* as well as in specialized, anthological manuscripts that contain excerpts from biblical books (lectionary manuscripts and so-called masoretic manuscripts). Cf., e. g., London, British Library, Add. 12,139, folios 1v and 137v; Add. 17,162 folio 10v and Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 14, folio 110r.

[74] The *Peshiṭta List* lists 20 *pandects*. The large majority of them stem from the seventeenth century. From the period between the thirteenth and sixteenth century no complete, full-text *pandects* survive.

[75] I inspected Paris, BnF, Syr. 341 during 11–13 March 2013 and 14 March 2017; Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58, 6–7 June 2019; and Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo I. 1,2, 12–13 March 2015. It is possible that the reused manuscript in the fragmentary, palimpsest London, BL, Add. 17,195 (and the fragment, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 21.148.14) was also once an Old Testament *pandect* (Cf., Wright, *Catalogue,* 3:914–15; Grigory Kessel, email correspondence, 18 May 2020. Kessel and Van Rompay are currently preparing a catalogue of the manuscripts of the museum).

[76] Henri Omont, "Peintures de l'Ancien Testament dans un manuscrit du viiᵉ ou du viiiᵉ siècle," *Monuments Piots* XVII (1909): 85–98; Nau, "Notices des manuscrits," 297. The dating is contested. Reiner Sörries dates the oldest parts of the manuscripts to the late-sixth or early-seventh century (*Die syrische Bibel von Paris. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, syr. 341: eine frühchristliche Bilderhandschrift aus dem 6. Jahrhundert* [Wiesbaden, L. Reichert, 1991]). The

signed a ninth-century date to the original parts of Florence, Biblioteca Med-
icea Laurenziana (Med. Laur.), Or. 58.[77] Finally, the youngest manuscript in
the selection, Cambridge, Cambridge University Library (Camb. UL), Ms Oo.
I. 1,2, was probably manufactured in the twelfth century.[78] Thus, my selection
of the period up until the year 1200 invites a comparison with these three other
surviving *pandects* but also ensures the inclusion of a critical mass of other
manuscript types.[79]

1.2.1 Manuscript Types

A look at the surviving Syriac manuscripts shows that the codices that contain
Old Testament books are of various types. A first category of Syriac Old Tes-
tament manuscripts contains a single book.[80] The relatively high frequency of
such manuscripts vis-à-vis other types in the earliest (fifth through seventh)
centuries suggests that the singular-book type may have been an early preferred
format.[81] The books of Job, Joshua, 1–2 Samuel, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah,

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provenance of the codex is also contested. It may be of East Syrian origin (*Peshiṭta List*, 37),
of West Syrian origin (Marinus D. Koster, *The Peshiṭta of Exodus: The Development of Its Text
in the Course of Fifteen Centuries* [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1977]), 557; or a combination (Jenner,
"Review of the Methods," 260; idem, "De perikopentitels," 350–55).

[77] William E. Barnes, *The Peshitta Psalter According to the West Syrian Text, Edited with an
Apparatus Criticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904). Barnes assigned a ninth-
century date to the manuscript and proposed a West Syriac origin. In the catalogue of the Bib-
lioteca Medicea Laurentiana, Assemani ascribes a sixth-century date to the manuscript (*Bib-
liotheca Mediceae Laurentianae,* 49–50). Borbone defends the ninth-century dating for the
original part of the manuscript (on parchment [ff. 9–140]), although affirming that the date is
hypothetical. The first part of the codex (ff. 1–8), on paper is dated to the fourteenth century,
whereas the last section (ff. 141–54, also on paper) is assigned a date in the sixteenth century
(Borbone, "Bibbia Poliglotta," 203).

[78] Ms Oo I. 1,2 is of West Syriac origin and assigned a date in the twelfth century (William
Wright and Stanley A. Cook, *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library
of the University of Cambridge,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901), 1037–
44 at 1037; Barnes, *Peshitta Psalter*, xxvi–xxvii; *Peshiṭta List*, 4.

[79] I base the following section, first, on my own inspection of the manuscripts and microfilms
in the libraries in London, Cambridge, Paris, Milan, Lund and Florence, and partly on digitally
available manuscripts, pdfs, facsimiles and my own pictures of manuscripts. Second, I learned
a lot from consulting the microfilm library and library cards of the Peshitta Institute. Third, I
have used the 1961 edition of the *Peshiṭta List* including the updates. Fourth, I have applied the
relevant library catalogues. Cf., the General Introduction.

[80] The following books are typically identified as one book in Syriac Old Testament manu-
scripts: 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Daniel-Bel-Dragon (de
Boer, "Introduction," xii). Jeremiah, Lamentations and Epistles of Jeremiah and of Baruch are
often also understood as one book in Syriac traditions.

[81] The reasons for this are probably technological and economic (cf., Harry Y. Gamble,
Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts [New Haven: Yale
University Press, 1995], 66–68). It is easier to produce a robust, small codex than a large one.

Ezekiel, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah and, during the first millennium, Ben Sira are among the books that circulated and survived in this format.[82]

The second type of Syriac Old Testament manuscripts that also circulated early on contains a discrete collection of books. Such manuscripts contain, for instance, the Pentateuch,[83] or the Book of Women.[84] Some of these collections, such as the Pentateuch, were fixed, whereas other collections display a larger degree of flexibility.[85] A subcategory of the collection are pairs of books. 1 and 2 Maccabees, as well as Joshua and Judges, are among the books that were copied and circulated together.[86]

The third category of Syriac manuscripts containing Old Testament books are codices, that for various reasons assemble books, that were seldom copied and bound together. An example is London, British Library (BL), Add. 12,172, which brings together Genesis, the History of Eleazar, Shamuni and Her Seven Sons, as well as the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. Some manuscripts bind Old Testament books with other books. An example of the latter type is London, BL, Add. 17,107, which at some point bound Ezekiel with the *Demonstrations of the Fathers*.[87]

Fourth, a broadly conceived category of Old Testament manuscripts also includes anthological collections of excerpts from Old Testament books, such as masoretic manuscripts[88] and lectionary manuscripts.[89]

Note that all arguments based on quantitative measures are at risk of bias; since many manuscripts are lost, we do not have access to any "complete" picture.

[82] Some examples of such manuscripts are London, BL, Add. 12,133 (Exodus), Add. 12,142 (Ben Sira), Add. 14,432 (Isaiah), Add. 17,104 (Chronicles) and Or. 8732 (Ezra-Nehemiah).

[83] E. g., London, BL, Add. 14,425.

[84] E. g., London, BL, Add. 14,652; Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 9.

[85] The Book of Women is attested already in sixth-century manuscripts (e. g., Add. 14,652), and typically contained Esther, Ruth, Susanna and Judith. Sometimes one or more of these books are missing and some manuscripts will include Thecla (e. g., Ms. Syr. 9). Susanna is sometimes copied with Daniel instead (e. g., London, BL, Add. 14,445). In other words, a single book could be associated with more than one collection. Cf., further, Bradley J. Marsh, Jr., "The Story of Susanna in Syriac: A Preliminary Survey of Diversity," *AS* 17 (2019): 1–24 at 3–4.

[86] E. g., London, BL, Add. 14,439.

[87] Cf., further, London, BL, Add. 12,136 and Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 5.

[88] A Syriac "masoretic manuscript" is a codex containing sample texts (i. e., excerpts or "words and readings") from the Old and New Testaments, as well as (often) from patristic writings. They are philological, grammatical and orthographical collections with an educational purpose that would accompany the reading of the bible, with the aim of promoting correct pronunciation of words and avoiding grammatical misunderstandings. A masoretic manuscript typically covers a (perceived) comprehensive collection of biblical books organized in their (perceived) order. The oldest surviving (East Syriac) masoretic manuscripts date to the ninth century. Cf., Mango, "Production," 172; Andreas K. Juckel, "The 'Syriac Masora' and the New Testament Peshitta," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium,* ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny, MPI 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 107–21.

[89] A "lectionary manuscript" is a manuscript that contains a collection of lections excerpted from biblical books organized in their prescribed sequence of recital during the liturgical year, to facilitate the retrieval and reading of scripture in a worship context. I reserve my use of the

This tentative categorization may hide the fact that some manuscripts changed as they circulated. Sometimes, two or more books or collections that were originally bound separately were joined together in a new, singular volume.[90] Likewise, books that at some point were copied together could, at a later point in time be bound individually, creating new, distinct codices.[91] Hence, the categories of Old Testament manuscripts that I describe above were not entirely fixed. They could change in accordance with the needs, priorities and restraints of new situations and new owners.

It is within this broad ecology of Syriac Old Testament manuscripts that we find a few surviving *pandects*. Although a fair share of the *pandects* that were in circulation at some point have probably been lost, it is still likely that such full-bible codices were relatively rare.[92] They would have been expensive and time consuming to produce and impractical to use.

When we talk about "the Old Testament" today, we tend to imagine it as "a unified textual entity, a specific selection of texts collected into a defined corpus,"[93] materialized in a discrete bound volume containing all the books of that corpus.[94] The Codex Ambrosianus would seem to fit the modern imagination of the Old Testament precisely – a kind of perfect materialization of the conception. However, this overview of the larger repertoire of bound volumes in the Syriac traditions creates a more nuanced picture. First, a *pandect* is only one type of Syriac Old Testament manuscript among others. It is certainly fruitful to approach the Codex Ambrosianus as an Old Testament codex, but the category also applies to other surviving manuscripts with a different constitution. Second, to the extent that Syriac Christians would come across and engage with Old Testament manuscripts at all, it is likely that the format that they would encounter most frequently would be manuscripts containing one book or a collection of books. This implies that, in the light of the larger lot of surviving Syriac manuscripts, the copy of 2 Baruch survives in a type of Old Testament manuscript that would come across as extraordinary.

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term for manuscripts that contain the full, excerpted text of the lections. The oldest surviving lectionary manuscripts of this kind are London, BL, Add. 14,485 and the two-volume set Add. 14,486/14,487, all dated 824. This definition implies that I exclude, for instance, indices of readings (Cf., London, BL, Add. 14,528). Cf., furthermore, chapter 4 of the current volume.

[90] See e. g., Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 1, 6 and 9.

[91] Add. 17,107 probably attests to both processes. An additional note in the shape of a running title in the top margin of the first opening of the codex signals the inclusion of the *Demonstration of the Fathers*. This suggests that this book was bound with Ezekiel post-production. However, today Add. 17,107 only includes Ezekiel which suggests that the two books were at some point separated again.

[92] Brock, *Bible in Syriac Tradition*, 17. Note that *pandects* were generally rare, not only in Syriac traditions but in other traditions too.

[93] This is Eva Mroczek's definition of a "bible" (*Literary Imagination*, 3). The adaption to the "Old Testament" is mine.

[94] This is an imagination that, to a large degree, is shaped by bibles produced in a print culture in, predominantly, Catholic and Protestant areas.

1.2.2 Selections of Books

The second aspect that deserves further study if we want to understand the inclusion of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus in the context of the larger lot of Syriac manuscripts is the selection of books in the four surviving pre-thirteenth-century *pandects*.[95]

Codex Ambrosianus (sixth/seventh century)	Paris, BnF, Syr. 341 (seventh/eighth century)	Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58 (ninth century)	Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo I. 1,2 (twelfth century)[96]
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus	[Exodus][97]	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers	Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy
Job	Job	Joshua	Job
Joshua	Joshua	Judges	Joshua
Judges	Judges	1–2 Samuel	Judges
1–2 Samuel	Ruth	1–2 Kings	1–2 Samuel
Psalms	1–2 Samuel	1–2 Chronicles	Psalms
1–2 Kings	1–2 Kings	Psalms	1–2 Kings
Proverbs	1–2 Chronicles	Odes, including the Prayer of Manasseh	1–2 Chronicles
Wisdom	Proverbs	Isaiah	Proverbs
Qohelet	Qohelet	Jeremiah, Lamentations	Qohelet
Song of Songs	Song of Songs	Ezekiel	Song of Songs
Isaiah	Wisdom	Twelve Prophets	Wisdom
Jeremiah, Lamentations	Prayer of Manasseh	Daniel, Bel and the Dragon	Isaiah
Epistles of Jeremiah and Baruch[98]	Isaiah	Ruth	Jeremiah, Lamentations

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[95] The table is inspired by Brock's table in *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* ("Table 2: Order of Books in Complete Old Testament Manuscripts" on page 116) but I have adjusted it in accordance with my own observations of the codices.

[96] The folios of Ms Oo I. 1,2 are currently kept unbound. Due to their fragile state, I was only allowed to inspect a limited number at the Cambridge University Library in March 2015, i.e., the folios containing the latter part of Jeremiah/Lamentation, the Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah and parts of Ezekiel. I consulted the microfilm of the entire manuscript. Digital images of the entire manuscript were published online in 2020: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OO-00001-00001/1 (accessed 27 October 2020).

[97] The system of numbering of each book recorded in the oldest parts of the manuscript strongly suggests that Exodus was originally there; Numbers is recorded as book *dalath* (4) on folio 13r.

[98] The running title identifies the three epistles as one discrete entity: ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܐܪܡܝܐ ܘܕܒܪܘܟ "The Epistles of Jeremiah and of Baruch" (f. 176r). Headings identify each epistle, in the following order: Epistle of Jeremiah (f. 176r); First Epistle of Baruch (f. 176v); Second Epistle of Baruch (f. 177v).

Codex Ambrosianus (sixth/seventh century)	Paris, BnF, Syr. 341 (seventh/eighth century)	Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58 (ninth century)	Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo I. 1,2 (twelfth century)
Ezekiel	Jeremiah, Lamentations	Susanna	Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah[99]
Twelve Prophets	Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah[100]	Esther	Ezekiel
Daniel, Bel and the Dragon	Ezekiel	Judith	Twelve Prophets
Ruth	Twelve Prophets	Ezra-Nehemiah	Daniel, Bel and the Dragon
Susanna	Susanna		Ruth
Esther	Daniel, Bel and the Dragon		Susanna
Judith	Psalms		Esther
Ben Sira	Odes		Judith
1–2 Chronicles	Esther		Ezra-Nehemiah
2 Baruch	Judith		Ben Sira
4 Ezra	Ezra-Nehemiah		1 Maccabees
Ezra-Nehemiah	Ben Sira		2 Maccabees
1 Maccabees	1 Maccabees		3 Maccabees
2 Maccabees	2 Maccabees		4 Maccabees
3 Maccabees	3 Maccabees		3 Ezra
4 Maccabees			Tobit
5 Maccabees/ Josephus, Jewish War, book 6	Fragments of: Gospel of Luke Acts Catholic Epistles (James) Pauline Epistles[101]		Gospels Pauline Epistles Acts and Catholic Epistles Books of Clement

A comparison of the selection of books in the four *pandects* invites three observations. The first observation is that, although they share most of the books,

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[99] The use of illuminations after Jeremiah and Lamentations (f. 161r: https://cudl.lib.cam. ac.uk/view/MS-OO-00001-00001/351) and before Ezekiel (f. 163v: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/ view/MS-OO-00001-00001/356) suggests that the three epistles are perceived as a discrete entity (both URLs accessed 27 October 2020). The epistles appear in this order, each identified by a heading: First Epistle of Baruch; Second Epistle of Baruch; Epistle of Jeremiah.

[100] Syr. 341 records and identifies with a dedicated title each of the epistles at the end of the larger Jeremianic book (ff. 159r–162r) in this order: First Epistle of Baruch; Second Epistle of Baruch; Epistle of Jeremiah. The illumination (displaying Ezekiel) appears on folio 162r, after the Epistle of Jeremiah (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10527102b/f329.item [accessed 28 October 2020]). There is no illumination between Lamentation and the First Epistle of Baruch (f. 159r).

[101] Fragments of Philippians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews are identifiable. The manuscript is available online and the pages in question can be observed here: https://gallica. bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10527102b/f5.image (accessed 27 April 2020).

none of them contain exactly the same collection or number of books. Second, all four *pandects* exclude books that scholars working in the twenty-first century expect to find there. As pointed out above, Or. 58, at least in the shape in which it has survived, preserves a smaller collection than the other three and excludes, for instance, Job, Ben Sira and Proverbs.[102] Third, all of the *pandects* contain writings that are either unique to one of them, or relatively infrequent in Syriac manuscripts. Ms Oo I. 1,2, for instance, includes Tobit. Syr. 341 and Or. 58 includes the Prayer of Manasseh.[103]

The Codex Ambrosianus includes both features that are commonly found and features that are less frequent in the surviving early *pandects*. Most of its books also appear in the other *pandects*. However, the Codex Ambrosianus contains three books that are seldom found in Syriac Old Testament codices: 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and Jewish War, book 6/5 Maccabees. As the table shows, 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra appear after Ben Sira and Chronicles, and before Ezra–Nehemiah. Jewish War, book 6/5 Maccabees is the last book of the codex. Although all four *pandects* include books that are relatively infrequent, the selection in the Codex Ambrosianus includes books that are particularly rare.[104] One more Syriac manuscript preserves the sixth book of Jewish War.[105] 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch do not appear in the shape of full discrete books in any other known Syriac Old

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[102] Note that the latter part of the ninth-century codex does not survive (Cf., Haelewyck, "Le canon," 143 and footnote 77 above). Roger Beckwith has argued that this part of the codex could have included Ben Sira (*The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* [London: SPCK, 1985], 195–96).

[103] The folio in Syr. 341 that includes the Prayer of Manasseh (f. 131) is a fourteenth-century replacement sheet. Gutman and van Peursen assume that it was also included in the eighth-century layer of the codex (*Two Syriac Versions,* 14). The masoretic manuscripts display similar variation. The variation concerns both the selection and the order of books. Symptomatically, the location of Job, Psalms and Ben Sira varies. The Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah are among the writings that are sometimes included and sometimes left out. Cf., London, BL, Add. 12,138; 12,178; 14,482; Paris, BnF, Syr. 64; Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 14; and Lund, Medeltidshandskrift 58.

[104] Hypothetically, there are books that are "missing" from the Codex Ambrosianus, even though it claims to be "complete." Based on the selection of books in the other *pandects,* we could expect to find Tobit, the Psalms of Solomon, Canticles/Odes, 1 (3) Ezra, in addition to the Prayer of Manasseh (Cf., de Boer, "Preface," vii–viii; van Peursen, "Introduction," 3). Some of these "lacks" can readily be explained by the early date of the manuscript. For instance, the earliest surviving manuscripts containing Canticles/Odes as a discrete unit stem from the ninth century. Other choices make sense when we consider the overall plan of the codex, to which I return below.

[105] This ninth-century manuscript, Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 9 (9A+B), contains Jewish War, book 6, 3 Maccabees, the Book of Women (including Thecla), and Tobit. Short extracts from books three and seven occur in Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 28 (See, Lucas Van Rompay, "Flavius Josephus' *Jewish War* in Syriac: Ms. Milan, Bibliotea Ambrosiana B 21 Inf. and Two Recently Studied Manuscripts from Deir al-Surian," in *Gli studi di storiographia. Tradizione, memoria e modernitá*, ed. Alba Fedeli et al., Orientalia Ambrosiana 6 (Milan: Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 2019), 433–49).

Testament manuscript.[106] Thus, again, from a comparative point of view, the copy of 2 Baruch reaches us in an extraordinary manuscript.

1.2.3 An Odd Book in a Unique Codex? The Risk of Methodological Flaw

When we look at the Codex Ambrosianus from a bird's eye view, comparing this codex with other surviving Syriac Old Testament manuscripts from the fifth through the twelfth century, the following picture emerges. The Codex Ambrosianus is a *pandect* and thus rare. Only four such codices survive from the period before 1200. Its selection and order of books are unparalleled among *pandects*. In addition, the Codex Ambrosianus remains the only known *pandect* that includes 2 Baruch. Thus, from this point of view, 2 Baruch is a singularly attested book in a unique Old Testament manuscript.[107]

As noted above, different approaches will typically produce different insights. To put it another way, what we see will always depend on our approach and the questions that we ask. The comparative approach provides an invaluable orientation of the larger lot of Syriac manuscripts. However, it is also important to keep the methodological flaws of this approach in check.

First, it is highly likely that a large number of the manuscripts that once circulated in Syriac communities are now lost.[108] Since we do not know what is lost, though, we cannot draw firm conclusions based on quantitative measures. We can talk about frequency and commonality with reference to the surviving manuscripts, but any comprehensive view is out of reach. This means that we do not know how unusual the selection of books in the Codex Ambrosianus was. We cannot exclude the possibility that there were other codices with the same selection of books – 2 Baruch included. Having said that, the materials that are left from the fifth through the twelfth century suggest neither that 2 Baruch circulated widely nor that 2 Baruch was a standard book in Old Testament *pandects*. We need to balance the likelihood that 2 Baruch was also attested elsewhere with the risk of over-representing a phenomenon that may have been exceptional.

The second risk associated with a comparative approach is that it compares a manuscript produced in the sixth/seventh century with manuscripts produced later. The Codex Ambrosianus is the oldest *pandect* that has come down to us.

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[106] Note, though, that later lectionary manuscripts include excerpts of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra. I explore these manuscripts in chapter 4 of the current volume.

[107] For a discussion of the status of 2 Baruch as "apocrypha" in the Syriac manuscript materials, see chapters 4 and 7.

[108] Kristian S. Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting: Appropriation, Influence and the Manuscript History of Early Syriac Literature," JCSSS 15 (2015): 51–65 at 53; Coakley, "Manuscripts," 262; Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 216. Cf., Jonathan Green and Frank McIntyre, "Lost Incunable Editions: Closing in on an Estimate," *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*, ed. Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 55–72 at 64.

No contemporaneous or earlier *pandect* survives. Thus, the comparative approach provides insights into later developments, but it gives meager access to the synchronous context.

Third, we must keep in mind that very few Syriac Christians "on the ground" would have had access to the bird's eye view that I have presented here – it remains restricted, mostly, to twenty-first-century scholars. The perceptions of those who lived and engaged with the various manuscripts locally would depend on the conceptions and traditions, as well as the resources and material artifacts that were available in the place where they lived or retrievable through their networks.

Finally, the study of the selection of books in the four *pandects* shows that the number of *pandects* surviving between the fifth and the end of the twelfth century is too small to allow clear conclusions. Due to the small number, uniqueness ends up being typical, or *vice versa*: it becomes typical to be unique. The Codex Ambrosianus is typical in the sense that none of the four *pandects* contains the same selection of books, hence the codex is typical because it is unique. At the same time, it differs from the others and is in that sense unique, because it includes books that are not found in other surviving Old Testament manuscripts.

We must consider the validity of the comparative approach to the study of the inclusion of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus. A valid and fruitful conclusion that the surviving materials do allow is that the selection and inclusion of the books in an Old Testament *pandect* were not entirely fixed.[109] A *pandect*, then, is a material representation of completeness, but that completeness was perceived differently at different times, at different places and by different communities. That does not make the surviving instantiations of a perceived completeness less interesting. Whether 2 Baruch may be categorized as "an Old Testament book" and, if so, what the function of its inclusion may be, can hardly be studied at a general level. Rather, the inclusion of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus deserves attention as part of one particular materialization of Old Testament completeness.

1.3 The Codex Ambrosianus on Its Own Terms: Exploring 2 Baruch in Its Material Embodiment

To achieve a nuanced understanding of the inclusion, location and function of the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus, I will explore the codex on its own terms. The aspect that deserves immediate attention is its order of books.[110]

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[109] Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 43.

[110] This focus implies that the order, and the inclusion, of books in a codex is not accidental, but rather a purposeful organization that reveals information about its functions and constituent parts. This approach is not novel. Cf., e.g., Michael E. Stone, "Two Armenian Manuscripts

1.3.1 The Order of the Books of the Codex Ambrosianus

The order of the books of the Codex Ambrosianus has already attracted some attention in previous scholarship. As, among others, Michel van Esbroeck and Roger Beckwith have rightfully noted, three features may help us to understand this order. First, the books are ordered chronologically. The codex orders the books by reference to their location in the overall biblical narrative of their main protagonist or by the figure to which a book is traditionally ascribed.[111] For instance, the location of Psalms between Samuel and Kings makes sense because Psalms is ascribed to David. Likewise, Job is located after the Pentateuch, maybe reflecting a tradition that suggests that Moses was the author of Job, or alternatively a tradition of associating Job with Jobab, placing him in the time of the patriarchs.[112] In this way, most of the books in the codex follow one another in a chronological account, linked together by a chain of narrative-carrying figures.

Second, the Codex Ambrosianus extends the chronological biblical storyline all the way up to the destruction of the second temple. The description of this final destruction of the Jerusalem temple appears in the last book of the codex, the sixth book of Josephus's Jewish War.[113] In other words, the books of the Codex Ambrosianus extend from creation (Genesis) to destruction.

Third, as Philip Forness noted,[114] some of the books in the codex break with the overall chronology. Their location may be better explained by traditions of co-circulation and their association with discrete collections in Syriac manuscript traditions. For instance, the copying of Ruth, Susanna, Esther and Judith

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and the *Historia Sacra*," in *Apocryphes arméniens: transmission – traduction – creation – iconographie*, ed. Valentina C. Bouvier, Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Bernard Outtier (Lausanne: Éditions du Zèbre, 1999), 21–26; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 21–23; Michael Penn, "Monks, Manuscripts, and Muslims: Syriac Textual Changes in Reaction to the Rise of Islam," *Hugoye* 12/2 (2009): 235–57, at 249; Forness, "Narrating History," 42–43.

[111] Michel van Esbroeck, "Les versions orientales de la Bible: une orientation bibliographique," in *The Interpretation of the Bible: The International Symposium in Slovenia,* ed. Jože Krašovec, JSOTSup 289 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 399–507 at 487; Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon,* 195. Cf., also, Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 43–44, 117; Liv Ingeborg Lied, "The Reception of the Pseudepigrapha in the Syrian Traditions: The Case of 2 Baruch" (paper presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Boston, 23 November 2008); Forness, "Narrating History," 57–58; Vergani, "Introduction," x.

[112] Van Esbroeck, "Les versions," 487; Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon*, 195; David Philips, "The Reception of Peshitta Chronicles: Some Elements for Investigation," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium*, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny, MPI 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 259–95 at 261 n. 11; Haelewyck, "Le canon," 144. Several Syriac *pandects* place Job after the Pentateuch, among them, Syr. 341 and Ms Oo I. 1,2.

[113] van Esbroeck, "Les Versions," 487; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 21–22; Martin Leuenberger, "Ort und Funktion der Wolkenvision und ihrer Deutung in der Syrischen *Baruchapokalypse*," *JSJ* 36 (2005): 206–46 at 209–10; Forness, "Narrating History," 61.

[114] Forness, "Narrating History," 49, 56.

in one sequence on folios 213r through 223v probably reflects the fact that they circulated together as the Book of Women.[115]

1.3.1a Copying 2 Baruch after Chronicles

What is the place of 2 Baruch in this overall chronological order? The fruitful proposals of previous scholarship provide a clue as to why 2 Baruch was included in the Codex Ambrosianus and why it appears exactly where it does, between Chronicles and 4 Ezra.

The opening lines of the copy of 2 Baruch reads:

ܘܗܘܐ ܟܒ ܡܚܝ
ܐܬܒܚܐ ܕܝܟܘܣܗ ܡܠܟܗ
ܟܘܗ . ܢܘܗܐ ܕܒܗܪܐ ܟܠܚ
ܠܥ ܐܟܘܗ ܪܐܫܝ ܓܠܦܘܗ
ܡܐܪܟܐ ܐܝܢ ܒܪ ܢܘܪܝ
ܡܠ.

> And it happened in the twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah King of Judah. The word of the Lord was upon Baruch bar Neriah and he said to him […] (2 Bar 1:1).

As these introductory sentences suggest, the frame narrative of 2 Baruch is set during the reign of King Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) of Judah.[116] We meet the protagonist Baruch and his followers on the eve of the destruction of the first Jerusalem temple (1:1–2:2). The Chaldean army has reached the gates of the city, and Baruch, Jeremiah and the small remaining group of righteous people leave the city for the Kidron valley (5:5–6:1). 2 Bar 6–8 gives an extraordinary account of the destruction of the temple. Before the Chaldeans enter, God's presence vacates the temple and angels descend into the Holy of Holies to remove the holy vessels and other artifacts of importance to the cult. An angel commands the earth to receive them in order to protect them until the last times, and four angels tear down the walls of the city (6:3–8:1). In this way, when the Chaldeans enter, what is left for them to destroy is nothing but an empty shell (8:2–4). The Chaldeans bring the two tribes (1:2–2) and King Zedekiah to the Babylonian king (8:5). When Baruch, Jeremiah and the group of righteous have mourned and fasted for seven days, Jeremiah follows the exiles to Babylon to support them (9:1–10:2). Baruch, though, remains in the wilderness outside the city to learn what will happen at the end of time (10:3).

As this brief recapitulation of the first ten chapters of 2 Baruch suggests, there are good reasons to situate a copy of 2 Baruch after Chronicles. Although 2 Baruch's account differs from the account in Chronicles, the opening chapters have important elements in common with the last chapter of the preceding book

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[115] The oldest preserved manuscript dates to the sixth century (London, BL, Add. 14,625). Cf., Marsh, "The Story of Susanna," 3–4.

[116] Cf., Forness, "Narrating History," 59–60.

(2 Chron 36). One such element is the reference to the three wicked kings of Judah and their reigns, mentioned in 2 Chron 36: Jehoiakim, Jeconiah/Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. King Jeconiah, the son of King Jehoiakim (2 Chron 36:5) already appears in the opening sentence of 2 Baruch (1:1).[117] He also appears in 2 Chron 36:9. 2 Bar 8:5 briefly mentions King Zedekiah, as does 2 Chron 36:11. 2 Baruch does not name King Jehoiakim. However, it is possible that the year that 2 Bar 1:1 mentions in association with King Jeconiah might have brought his father to mind. The twenty-fifth year may have been associated with the immediate section preceding 2 Bar 1:1 in the codex – that is, 2 Chron 36:5 – in which "twenty-five" was King Jehoiakim's age when he started to reign in Jerusalem.[118] The reference to the two, possibly three, wicked kings of Judah in 2 Bar 1–8 establishes the chronology and leaves no doubt about the setting of the frame story of 2 Baruch: the story starts immediately before the exile to Babylon. In this way, 2 Baruch continues where Chronicles ends, at the time and place of the last kings of Judah.

Another element that links the narrative of 2 Baruch to Chronicles is the focus on the fall of Jerusalem and the fate of the temple and its vessels. To be precise, 2 Baruch also tells this story but gives a different, more spectacular version of it. According to 2 Chron 36:18–19, the Chaldeans brought the vessels with them to Babylon, burned the temple, broke down Jerusalem's walls and led its inhabitants into exile. In 2 Baruch as well, the Chaldeans seize the temple, the city and its remaining inhabitants, but, at that point, everything of value – be it people or artifacts – had already been removed. 2 Baruch's story about the invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of the first temple is more detailed and describes a different outcome from the account in 2 Chron 36. Hence, the two narratives are far from similar, but there is no doubt that both books provide versions of the same event.

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[117] Whereas the copy of Chronicles that precedes 2 Baruch keeps the form ܝܘܝܟܝܢ (2 Chron 36:9; also 2 Kings 24:8), 2 Baruch applies the form ܝܟܘܢܝܐ. This form is attested elsewhere in the Peshitta, for instance, in Jer 24:1 and in 2 Ep. Bar. 3:1 (Both Jer 24:1 and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe 1:3 reads: ܝܟܘܢܝܐ ܒܪ ܝܘܝܩܝܡ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ, "Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim king of Judah"). Cf., also the use of the Greek name Ιεχονιας in the Septuagint Chronicles and the general confusion in the Greek materials.

[118] This reference to the twenty-fifth year in 2 Bar 1:1 is the topic of a longstanding debate in studies of 2 Baruch (cf., the overview in Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 26–28). Scholars have debated whether the mention of the twenty-fifth year in 2 Bar 1:1 refers to Jeconiah's age at the time of the destruction or the year of his reign. Furthermore, as this debate has also illustrated, no matter how it is interpreted, the reference to the twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah does not match the information in other literary accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem – unless it is based on an erroneous reading of 2 Kgs 24:8–12. I offer no solution to the riddle; it may not be neatly solvable. It is possible, though, that the copying of 2 Baruch after Chronicles may have influenced the word choice in the introductory chapter of the copy of 2 Baruch. Since there is no way of proving this, though, I leave this hypothesis here.

The most important clue to understanding the location of 2 Baruch after Chronicles may still be the references to the protagonists, Baruch and Jeremiah. As suggested above, the Codex Ambrosianus orders its books chronologically by reference to figures. The prophet Jeremiah figures prominently in the latter part of Chron 36. Chronicles presents the exile of the remaining people of Judah as the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy that the land would lay desolate for seventy years to make up for the lacking Sabbaths (36:20–21). Chronicles ends on an optimistic note, briefly recording the return of the exiles and the rebuilding of the temple. In addition, Chronicles describes these events as the fulfilment of the "word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah" (36:22). In the opening section of 2 Baruch, we meet Jeremiah again, but this time in a less prominent role. Indeed, 2 Baruch describes him as one of the righteous people in Jerusalem and names him as one of the noblemen who have to leave the city before the angels can destroy it (2:1–2; 5:5). In 2 Bar 9:1, Jeremiah mourns and fasts with Baruch for seven days, before God commands Baruch to tell Jeremiah to go with the captives to Babylon to support them (10:2). This he does, at God's command, mediated by Baruch's words (10:4–5).[119] From this point onwards, Jeremiah plays a minor role in 2 Baruch. It is Baruch, the son of Neriah – elsewhere often identified as Jeremiah's scribe – who serves as the protagonist in 2 Baruch. The opening sentence translated above (1:1), already signals Baruch's role. As, among others, Henze has pointed out, the formulaic expression, "The word of the Lord was upon Baruch bar Neriah" suggests that 2 Baruch casts him in the role of prophet.[120] Baruch's instruction to Jeremiah, the description of his leadership and his communication with God leave no doubt about Baruch's status. Again, this feature is an argument in favor of copying 2 Baruch after Chronicles. Chronicles ends with Jeremiah the prophet – 2 Baruch starts by ascribing prophetic status to his (former) scribe. We see progress in the storyline inscribed in the order of the books in the Codex Ambrosianus.

The spatial location of Baruch is a particularly intriguing elements of this story. As noted above, 2 Bar 10:2 says that Jeremiah goes to Babylon, whereas Baruch stays in Judah. In fact, 2 Bar 10:3 insists that Baruch should remain in the proximity of Zion since this is where God will show him what will happen at the end of days. This is where he receives knowledge, and from this spot he distributes his knowledge to the tribes in exile. This spatial setting is interesting as it differs from the description in Jer 43:6–7, which states that Jeremiah and

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[119] 2 Bar 32:1–2 describes this differently. According to this passage, Jeremiah is the main figure of the event.

[120] Cf., Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 44. Cf., J. Edward Wright, *Baruch ben Neriah: From Biblical Scribe to Apocalyptic Seer* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 165, 169; Balázs Tamási, "Baruch as Prophet in 2 Baruch," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason M. Zurawski, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 195–217 at 205, 207. Cf., Peshitta Jer 1:2 ܗܘܐ ܥܠܘܗܝ ,ܗܘܐ ܥܠܘܗܝ and Peshitta Ezek 1:3 ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܦܬܓܡܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܥܠ ܚܙܩܝܐܝܠ. Cf., 2 Bar 33:1–3.

Baruch went to Egypt. It also varies from the description in the Greek version of 1 Baruch, which locates Baruch in Babylon (1 Bar 1:1–3).

2 Baruch's stress on Baruch's location may attest to a shared literary imagination among Syriac Christians. A small, but salient, variant in the introductory address of Peshitta 1 Baruch, that is, the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe,[121] may point in this direction. The address says that "these [things] he wrote to Babylon" (ܗܠܝܢ ܟܬܒ ܠܒܒܠ), not "in Babylon," as, for instance, the Greek version of 1 Baruch has it.[122] This variant is common in Peshitta manuscripts.[123] This means that there probably was a tradition among Syriac Christians of locating Baruch outside Babylon – 2 Baruch identifies that place as Judah. Thus, copying 2 Baruch after Chronicles in the Codex Ambrosianus provides an excellent opportunity for adding information that is not found elsewhere about the events that took place in Judah, in the vicinity of the ruins of Jerusalem, while Jeremiah, the kings and the people were in exile.

Thus, 2 Baruch continues the biblical narrative where Chronicles ends it. The move from the narrative of Chronicles to the story world of 2 Baruch is far from frictionless, but there is little doubt that 2 Baruch starts where Chronicles stops. The opening chapters of 2 Baruch repeat, add to and transform the story told in Chronicles. In this way, copying 2 Baruch after Chronicles provides a good opportunity to dwell more on the events that took place in Judah at the destruction and after the fall of the first temple in Jerusalem.

1.3.1b Copying 4 Ezra after 2 Baruch

The continuation of the biblical story is also evident in the transition between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra. The last section of 2 Baruch, 2 Bar 78–86, contains Baruch's epistle to the nine and a half tribes. According to 2 Bar 77, Baruch writes two epistles while sitting "under the oak":[124] one epistle to the two and a half tribes and another to the nine and a half tribes. The nine and half tribes dwell "across the river," and Baruch's epistle reaches them by means of an eagle. The two and a half tribes sojourn in Babylon. Baruch trusts three men to bring them their designated epistle (77:12, 17–20). Whereas the epistle to the nine and a half tribes is extant in chapters 78–86, the epistle addressed to the two and a half tribes is not part of the extant text of 2 Baruch, and it probably never was.[125] Still, it is clear from the literary context in chapter 77, that both letters were to contain Baruch's final admonition of the tribes in exile, bringing them knowledge, hope

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[121] Cf., furthermore, the presentation in chapter 5.

[122] Cf., image 014 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[123] Cf., Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 319. Cf., furthermore, chapter 5 of the current volume.

[124] Baruch dwells in the wilderness of Judah, potentially outside Hebron or in the Kidron valley (See Lied, *Other Lands*, 147–63).

[125] Cf., further, the extensive discussion of the epistles in chapter 5.

Figure 4: 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, Codex Ambrosianus, folio 267r. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

and strength (77:12). Baruch is quite literally reaching out across geographical barriers, from beneath the oak to the places of exile of the tribes of Israel. 2 Baruch ends with a postscript: Baruch folds and seals his letter, ties it to the neck of the eagle and sends it off (2 Bar 87).[126]

In the order of books in the Codex Ambrosianus, the copy of 4 Ezra appears immediately after 2 Baruch (folios 267r–276v). As 4 Ezra takes over, we meet Ezra and the exiles in Babylon:

> ܡܢ ܐܠܬܝܢ ܫܢ̈ܝܢ ܠܘܒܕܢܗ
> ܕܡܕܝܢܬܢ ܐܢܐ ܫܠܬܐܝܠ
> ܕܐܢܐ ܗܘ ܥܙܪܐ ܒܒܒܠ
> ܗܘܝܬ ܘܟܕ ܪܡܐ ܗܘܝܬ
> ܥܠ ܬܫܘܝܬܝ ܡܬܕܘܕ ܗܘܝܬ
> ܘܡܚܫ̈ܒܬܐ ܣܠܩܢ ܗܘܝ
> ܥܠ ܠܒܝ ܡܛܠ ܕܚܙܝܬ ܚܘܒܠܗ
> ܕܨܗܝܘܢ ܘܣܘܓܐܗ ܕܗܢܘܢ
> ܕܥܡܪܝܢ ܒܒܒܠ

In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city, I, Salathiel, who is Ezra, was in Babylon. I was lying on my bed and I was troubled and thoughts welled up in my heart because I saw the destruction of Zion and the abundance of those who live in Babylon (4 Ezra 3:1–2).

The opening sentences set 4 Ezra in the thirtieth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, that is, thirty years after the narrative setting of the opening and closing chapters of 2 Baruch.[127] Furthermore, 4 Ezra situates a troubled Ezra in Babylon. In this way, 4 Ezra continues the story about the community that received Baruch's epistle to the two and a half tribes thirty years earlier. The thematic connection is also intact. The desolation of Zion and the abundance of Babylon troubles Ezra just as much as they troubled Baruch in 2 Bar 1–10 (see also 11:1–2).

Adding to this, a look at the titles of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra shows how the Codex Ambrosianus flags the chronology paratextually by referring to the two protagonists of the books. The title of 2 Baruch is "The Book of Revelation of Baruch bar Neriah, Which Was Translated from Greek into Syriac" (folio 257r). The title of 4 Ezra reads "The Book of Ezra the Scribe, Who Is Called Salathiel" (folio 267r).[128] Ezra is described by reference both to his office as scribe and to his other name, Salathiel (cf., 4 Ezra 3:1). The mention of Baruch and Ezra was an important tool in the paratextual communication of biblical chronology. Baruch operated during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) at

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[126] Cf., Lied, *Other Lands*, 170–83, for a comprehensive discussion of the spatial aspects of this narrative.

[127] Cf., Forness, "Narrating History," 60.

[128] ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܙܪܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܬܩܪܐ ܫܠܬܐܝܠ

the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezra is the scribe who aided the exiled people in Babylon. The explicit references to them in the titles invoke the biblical narratives associated with them, and the location of the books in the codex would seem to be chronologically correct.[129]

This brief presentation of the narrative links between Chronicles and 2 Baruch[130] and the narrative and paratextual links between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, highlights the gains of seeing the three books aligned with the general chronological order of the books in the Codex Ambrosianus.

1.3.2 From Ben Sira to Ezra–Nehemiah: The First Temple and a Non-Collection

A broader look at the immediate books surrounding 2 Baruch provides more information about the added value of including 2 Baruch in the codex. Indeed, the section that starts with Ben Sira and ends with Ezra–Nehemiah is a particularly interesting part of the Codex Ambrosianus. It is interesting in the context of the larger lot of Syriac manuscripts, in comparison with the other three surviving pre-thirteenth-century *pandects*, and importantly, in the light of the order and layout of the Codex Ambrosianus itself.

First, the section contains books that before the ninth century are known only from *pandects* or from codices containing singular books.[131] Before the occurrence of the Beth Mawtabhe collection in the Syriac manuscript tradition, which includes Ben Sira, we find none of these books in discrete collections.[132]

Second, whereas the Codex Ambrosianus copies Chronicles after Ben Sira together with 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and Ezra-Nehemiah, the other three *pandects*

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[129] The titles do not have to be the invention of those who produced the codex. It is more likely that they were established already. This does not rule out the possibility that the titles were also adding chronological information, underlining the rhetoric of the codex.

[130] There is no obvious paratextual link between Chronicles and 2 Baruch. As Philips demonstrated, Chronicles is the only Syriac Old Testament book that bears a title that is a direct transliteration of its Hebrew title (ܕܒܪ̈ܝܡܝܢ) ("Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 266). In the Codex Ambrosianus, the end title refers to it as ܣܦܪ ܕܒܪ̈ܝܡܝܢ ܩܕܡܝܐ (f. 257r). This is probably a short version of a longer name of the book (Cf., the end title in Syr. 341: ܕܒܪ ܣܦܪ ܣܠܡ). It is tempting to suggest – hypothetically – that some Syriac readers would (mis)interpret ܕܒܪ̈ܝܡܝܢ as "of Benjamin" (Ben Sira, which precedes Chronicles in the codex, is called ܒܪ ܣܝܪܐ). If they did, the end title would read "The Book of Benjamin and of Judah." If so, they could have assumed a link between Chronicles and 2 Baruch in that they both focus on the destiny of the two tribes in the southern kingdom of Judah.

[131] Cf., Baars, "Order of Books," 132–33. No older or contemporary Syriac manuscripts containing 2 Baruch and/or 4 Ezra survive. Hence, we do not know if they circulated alone, together or in combination with other books. It is possible, though, that 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra were circulating together. Cf., Lied, "2 Baruch and the Codex Ambrosianus" and chapter 6 of the current volume.

[132] Forness, "Narrating History," 56.

place Chronicles after 1–2 Kings in the context of historical and wisdom books.[133] Likewise, they all copy Ezra-Nehemiah directly after Judith. The Codex Ambrosianus copies Ben Sira, Chronicles, 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra between them. In addition, two of the *pandects* – Syr. 341 and Ms Oo I. 1,2 – locate Ben Sira after Ezra-Nehmiah. Hence, the order is unprecedented in surviving *pandects*.

Third, the order of the books and the layout features of the Codex Ambrosianus suggest that the five books that are copied one after the other on folios 233v–286v make up a sequence of books but that this sequence was probably not recognizable as a traditional, known collection. Discrete collections frame this sequence on both sides. The four volumes of the Book of Women precede it, and the five-volume Book of Maccabees follows it.[134] In terms of layout, the sequence stands out from its surroundings, for instance, by a lack of running titles in the upper margins.[135] The running titles, which were last seen on quire *kaph-beth*, reappear only in the top margins of quire *lamad-beth*, at the start of the copy of the first volume of the Book of Maccabees.[136] One possible explanation for the lack of running titles could indeed be that these five books normally did not circulate as a collection. Whereas running titles sometimes identify a book only, they often identify the collection of which the book is a part or they refer both to book and to collection identities. We see references to a collection identity, for instance, in the running titles of the Pentateuch, the Twelve Prophets and the Book of Maccabees.[137] Hence, this lack of running titles in the sequence of five books may indicate that the production team copied the five books from different exemplars, which means that they did not have a model for copying them as a collection.[138]

In other words, the section of the Codex Ambrosianus that includes Ben Sira, Chronicles, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and Ezra–Nehemiah stands out. It stands out

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[133] Cf., Philips, "Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 260–62.

[134] For the identification and circulation of the Book of Women, see footnote 85 above. Several paratextual features mark the Book of Maccabees out as a distinct collection. Each of the five Maccabean books is identified as "volume" or "book" [ܟܬܒܐ/ܣܦܪܐ], numbered 1 through 5 of the larger Maccabean "book" (ܣܦܪܐ ܕܡܩܒܝܐ, f. 330r). The running titles in the upper margins identify the volumes by their place in the collection and the end title/epigraph on folio 330r briefly summarizes the contents of all five. The volumes are also assumed to have shared authorship: they are ascribed to Josephus. The ascription of Maccabees to Josephus has a long tradition in Syriac sources. Cf., van Peursen, "La diffusion," 202–3.

[135] Cf., the codicological description of the codex above. The decorations in the open expanses between the books are also lacking. These decorations reappear only on folio 286r, after the copy of Ezra-Nehemiah. I assume that the decorations are a later addition. Since this chapter deals with the Codex Ambrosianus as a production unit, I do not engage them here.

[136] ܣܦܪܐ ܕܡܩܒܝܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ, "The first volume of (the) Maccabees."

[137] E. g., ܣܦܪܐ ܕܟܗܢܐ ܕܗܘ ܘܝܩܪܐ (ff. 4v–5r) and ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܝܘܚܢܢ ܣܒܪܬܐ (ff. 200v–201r).

[138] It is most likely that the production team based the copying of the books of the Codex Ambrosianus on several exemplars. Cf., Jenner, "Review of the Methods," 257; Lied, "2 Baruch and the Codex Ambrosianus," 97.

codicologically, and it stands out because it includes a sequence of books, copied together between two identifiable collections but appearing in an unprecedented combination and order, that are not elsewhere known to be part of a separate collection. It remains possible that these books were grouped together precisely because, at the time, none of them belonged to any specific collection of Old Testament books. However, it is also possible that these books were copied in the order in which we find them because, in this particular order and location, they serve a purpose in the overall plan of the codex.

1.3.2a The First Temple: Solomon, Simon the High Priest, Baruch and Ezra

How do the three books in the middle of the section relate to the first and last books? Ben Sira appears before Chronicles, as the first of this section of five books. No other known Syriac manuscript copies Ben Sira and Chronicles together – in this or any other order.[139]

The logic of the chronological ascription to figures, found elsewhere in the codex, also sheds light on the location of Ben Sira. Several Syriac bible commentaries and lists of biblical books ascribe Ben Sira to Solomon.[140] Some also ascribe Solomonic authorship to Chronicles.[141] This means that the Codex Ambrosianus locates two books associated with Solomon in immediate proximity to each other, but separates them from the other books that the Syriac tradition typically ascribes to him: Proverbs, Wisdom, Qohelet and Song of Songs, copied on folios 132v–145v.[142] Furthermore, these two books attributed to Solomon precedes the books ascribed to Baruch and Ezra. Hence, the five books in this section may have been gathered together because they are all ascribed to figures that the biblical narrative associates with Jerusalem and its first temple. After

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[139] Cf., David Philips, "Musical Instruments in the Peshitta to Chronicles and Contacts with the Peshitta to Ben Sira," *Muséon* 108 (1995): 49–67, at 50.

[140] In the *Book of Scholion,* memre 1–5, Theodore bar Kohni identifies Proverbs, Ben Sira and Qohelet as "Solomon." But the selection of books is contested: memra 5.1 suggests that three books of "Solomon" are Proverbs, Qohelet and Song of Songs. John bar Penkaye lists four books: Proverbs, Qohelet, Song of Songs and Ben Sira (Lucas Van Rompay, "1.1.3 The Syriac Canon," in *The Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, vol. 2 of *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. Frank Feder and Matthias Henze [Leiden: Brill, 2020], 136–65 at 146).

[141] Isho'dad of Merv claims Solomonic authorship of Chronicles in his *Commentary on the Beth Mawtabhe*. Isho'dad probably builds on Theodore bar Kohni, who also ascribes Solomonic authorship to Chronicles in the *Book of Scholion,* memra 3.116 (See Philips, "Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 286–88).

[142] The tradition of ascribing books of wisdom to Solomon is evident in lists and commentaries. There is less agreement about the number and identification of the Solomonic books. Some lists ascribe five books to Solomon, some four and yet others three. Ben Sira shares the destiny of Wisdom, Song of Songs, Chronicles and Ruth in that the book is sometimes included and other times it is not. Cf., Van Rompay, "1.1.3 The Syriac Canon," 143, 146; Haelewyck, "Le canon," 152–53; Phillips, "The Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 291 n. 129. Cf., also, Stuckenbruck, "Apocrypha and the Septuagint," 188.

all, Solomon was not only renowned for his wisdom. He was also known as a temple builder.[143]

In addition, the focus on the first temple shines through in the last chapters of Ben Sira. Chapter 50 praises Simon the high priest, famous for fortifying the temple in Jerusalem (50:1–21).[144] Hence, not only does the location of the book honor the chronology of key biblical figures – together with the other four books, Ben Sira elaborates on the destiny of the first temple.[145]

The last of the five volumes in the section, Ezra–Nehemiah, is intimately connected to 4 Ezra in the Codex Ambrosianus. The codex joins 4 Ezra and Ezra–Nehemiah together paratextually as the first and second volumes of a singular "Book of Ezra."[146] Chronologically, Ezra–Nehemiah describes the return of the exiled tribes of Israel to Jerusalem. The exiles return to build the second temple, repopulate Jerusalem and to reinforce the city with a wall.

Summing up, the section of the Codex Ambrosianus in which 2 Baruch appears provides a comprehensive narrative about Jerusalem and its temples. Ben Sira is ascribed to Solomon, and through the book's focus on Simon, the sequence of five books starts with a symbolic reference to temple building and temple fortification. The section continues with Chronicles, which focuses on the temple and Jerusalem throughout and ends with the destruction of the first temple. 2 Baruch takes over, re-telling the story of the destruction and adding new information about the righteous few who remained behind in Judah. In the two-volume Book of Ezra, we follow the exiles in Babylon, their return to Jerusalem and the building of the second temple. As pointed out above, the Codex Ambrosianus is the only pre-thirteenth-century *pandect* that does not copy Ezra-Nehemiah directly after Judith. From the comparative angle, the inclusion of the books of Ben Sira, Chronicles, 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra in the Codex

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[143] 2 Baruch may serve as an example of the same phenomenon. The book is also located here, although other writings ascribed to Baruch appear after the Book of Jeremiah and Lamentations in the codex.

[144] J. F. Coakley has pointed out that, among others, Isho'dad of Merv identifies Ben Sira as the son of Simon the High Priest ("The Old Man Simeon (Luke 2.25) in Syriac Tradition," *OCP* 47 [1981]: 189–212); Wido T. van Peursen, "Ben Sira in the Syriac Tradition," *The Texts and Versions of the Book of Ben Sira: Transmission and Interpretation,* ed. Jean-Sébastien Rey and Jan Joosten, JSJSup 150 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 143–65 at 161–63. Hence, the author figure in the book of Ben Sira may also have signposted the chronology. I am grateful to Benjamin G. Wright III for his helpful input on this matter.

[145] The alternative interpretation is that there is a tripartite division in the section. 4 Ezra and Ezra-Nehemiah make up one book. 2 Baruch is copied after and in connection with Chronicles because it shares thematical focus and mentions the same figures – this was a common strategy. Ben Sira stands alone.

[146] Entitled "Of the Same Ezra, the Second Volume" (ܬܪܝܢ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܙܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܝܠܗ). Cf., image 213 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020). On the two-volume book of Ezra, see Liv Ingeborg Lied and Matthew P. Monger, "7.2.2. Syriac," in *Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, vol. 2 of *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. Frank Feder and Matthias Henze (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 481–88 at 484.

Ambrosianus thus increases the narrative focus on Jerusalem and its first temple and offers a much more comprehensive narrative of the events that took place on the outskirts of Jerusalem before the return from the Babylonian exile.

1.3.2b Two Temples and Their Destruction: From Ben Sira to Jewish War, Book 6/5 Maccabees

The fact that the books 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and Josephus, Jewish War, book 6 – and precisely these three rarely attested books – appear among the last ten books of the Codex Ambrosianus is no coincidence. As van Esbroeck and Forness have successfully argued, the final ten[147] books of the codex share a particular focus on Jerusalem and its temples while at the same time obeying the overall chronological logic of the codex. From this perspective, the sequence that starts with Ben Sira and ends with Jewish War, book 6/5 Maccabees makes up a larger section of the codex that allows that narrative to extend from the building and destruction of the first temple all the way to the destruction of the second.[148] In other words, whereas the first five books (from Ben Sira to Ezra–Nehemiah) expand on the destruction of the *first* temple and its aftermath, the last five volumes (making up the Book of Maccabees) end with the destruction of the *second*.

1.4 Biblical Historiography: The Destructions of Jerusalem and the End of the Old Covenant

Forness suggested that the Codex Ambrosianus may fruitfully be understood within a broadly defined genre of historiography. Robin Darling Young proposed that the codex may have come across as an equivalent – or a companion – of contemporary West Syriac chronologies.[149] As is widely recognized, the distinction between "bible" and "historiography" was not clear-cut in the sixth/

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[147] Forness sometimes counts ten and other times nine, depending on whether he includes Ben Sira or not.

[148] Van Esbroeck, *Les versions*, 487; Forness, "Narrating History," 58–63. Previous scholars have occasionally approached these ten books as an appendix of contested books. Cf., Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon,* 195–96; Willem Baars, "Neue Textzeugen der syrischen Baruchapokalypse," *VT* 13:4 (1963): 476–78 at 477; Philips, "Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 262; Haelewyck, "Le canon," 143. Cf., the discussion of the status of 2 Baruch in chapters 4 and 7 of the current volume.

[149] Forness, "Narrating History," 57; Robin Darling Young, "The Historical Context of the Syriac IV Ezra and Other Books about Warfare and the Fall of Jerusalem" (paper presented at the conference Interpretation, Materiality and Reception: New Perspectives on Ms. B 21 Inf. [Ambrosian Library], Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, 5 May 2016). Young's overall argument is that the Codex Ambrosianus develops historiographical writing as a history of calamity with an apocalyptic flavor in response to the various disasters experienced by Syriac Christians in the period after 540 CE. Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch* I, 162.

seventh centuries.[150] From its very beginning, West Syriac history writing was growing out of, thoroughly invested in and intermingled with biblical history.[151] Syriac historiographical texts apply the biblical narrative in the construction of an ancient past and to narrate world history. Biblical history played a role in the construal of a West Syriac salvation history.[152] In such a context, the chronological order of the books in the Codex Ambrosianus can be interpreted as an attempt of shaping a biblical narrative that extends all the way to the first century CE. The codex is "historiographical" just as much as it is "biblical." Indeed, it may be approached as a materialization of a biblio-historiographical narrative in the shape of an Old Testament codex.

1.4.1 Destruction: The End of the Old Covenant and the Beginning of the New

The discussion above shows that the Codex Ambrosianus builds a comprehensive storyline that extends from creation to the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem.[153] The last ten books of the codex betray a thematic focus on Jerusalem, its falls and the destruction of its two temples.[154] The paratextual identifications of the last book of the codex, 5 Maccabees/Jewish War, book 6, repeatedly communicate to the reader that the final destruction of Jerusalem is the end point. This end point is spelled out in the title, "Memra of the Last

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[150] Muriel Debié, *L'écriture de l'histoire en Syriaque. Transmission interculturelles et constructions identitaires entre hellénism et islam*, Late Antique History and Religion 12 (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 230.

[151] Historiographical texts in the Syriac traditions are numerous and varied (See, Debié *L'écriture de l'histoire*, 245–47). A particular West Syriac history writing develops in the sixth century as part of the overall identity building of the separatist community and church (Debié, "Syriac Historiography," 94. Cf., also, Sebastian P. Brock, "Syriac Historical Writing: A Survey of the Main Sources," *Journal of the Iraq Academy, Syriac Corporation* 5 [1979–1980]: 1–30).

[152] Muriel Debié, "Syriac Historiography and Identity Formation," in *Religious Origins of Nations? The Christian Communities of the Middle East*, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 93–114 at 94, 95, 98, 103, 105; eadem, *L'écriture de l'histoire,* 241, 342. Cf., Jan van Ginkel, "Jacob of Edessa and West Syriac Identity," in *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction Since the Rise of Islam*, ed. Jan van Ginkel, Heleen Murre-van den Berg and Theo M. van Lint (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 67–76 at 73; Nathanael Andrade, "Syriac and Syrians in the later Roman Empire," in *The Syriac World*, ed. Daniel King (London: Routledge, 2019), 157–74 at 167. For a broader study of the use of the bible in Christian chronography and knowledge production, see Blossom Stefaniw, *Christian Reading: Language, Ethics, and the Order of Things* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), esp. 189.

[153] As Debié has pointed out, Syriac chronicles, such as *The Chronicle of 1234*, apply the Maccabean volumes as sources to the Roman period (*L'écriture de l'histoire,* 342). Note that the temple figures as a node also in other Syriac history writing (Debié, *L'écriture de l'histoire*, 248–49).

[154] Van Esbroeck, *Les versions*, 487; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 21–22; Leuenberger, "Ort und Funktion," 209–10; Forness, "Narrating History," 61.

Destruction of Jerusalem"[155] (folio 320v), in the two running titles in the upper margins, reading "The Fifth Memra of Josephus on the Destruction of Jerusalem"[156] (folios 323v–324r) and "The Fifth Book. Which Relates to the Last Destruction of Jerusalem"[157] (folios 328v–329r) and finally, in the subscription of the Book of Maccabees on folio 330r, which ascribes the destruction explicitly to the Roman Emperor Titus.[158] In other words, this biblio-historiographical Old Testament ends expressively with destruction.

As Muriel Debié showed, West Syriac historiographical literature often portrays [West Syriac] Christians as the chosen people, as the true Israel, taking the place of the Jewish people.[159] The idea that "the new covenant" had taken over the former position of "the old covenant" was widespread.[160] The story of the final destruction of Jerusalem fits this narrative about the divine rejection of the Jews.[161] Indeed, the notion that Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans to punish the Jews was a Christian trope.[162] As Naomi Koltun-Fromm pointed out, Syriac writers refer to the idea of a forever-destroyed Jerusalem as a continuing punishment for the Jews.[163]

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[155] ܬܠܥܝܢ ܕܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܐܝܟ ܚܘܪܒܐ ܕܠܥ ܕܐܝܟܐ

[156] ܬܠܥܝܢ ܕܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܐܝܟ ܚܘܪܒܐ ܕܠܥ ܘܩܪܡܐܣܒܐ ܕܐܝܟܐ

[157] ܬܠܥܝܢ ܕܐܘܪ[…]ܐ ܚܘܪ ܠܥ ܕܐܚܡܐ ܘܐܡܣܟܐ ܗܗܒܐ

[158] ܕܡܣܟܐ ܕܝ ܚܠ ܚܘܪܒܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܕܝܢ ܠܛܠܡ ܒܪ ܗܘܢ ܕܐܩܣܣܡܣܝܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܪܗܘܡܝܐ "[…] the fifth [volume] on the last destruction of Jerusalem by Titus son of Vespasian, King of the Romans" (f. 330r). Cf., image 319 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[159] Debié, *L'Écriture de l'histoire*, 241.

[160] Cf., e.g., Stanley Kazan, "Isaac of Antioch's Homily against the Jews," *OrChr* 45 (1961): 30–53; A. Peter Hayman, "The Image of the Jews in the Syriac Anti-Jewish Polemic Literature," in *To See Others as Others See Us: Christians, Jews and 'Others' in Late Antiquity*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs (Chico: Scholars Press, 1985), 423–41; Stephen D. Benin, "Commandments, Covenants and the Jews in Aphrahat, Ephrem and Jacob of Sarug," in *Approaches to Judaism in Medieval Times,* vol. 1, ed. David R. Blumenthal, BJS 54 (Chico, Scholars Press, 1984), 135–56; Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135–425)* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1986); David G. K. Taylor, *Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity: A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus* (Leiden: Brill, 1995); Adam H. Becker, "Anti-Judaism and Care for the Poor in Aphrahat's *Demonstration 20*," *JECS* 10 (2002): 305–27; idem, "L'antijudaïsme syriaque: entre polémique et critique interne," in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque*, ed. Flavia Ruani, Études Syriaques 13 (Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 181–208; Christine Shepardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy: Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008); Butts and Gross, eds., *Jews and Syriac Christians.* The notion of the old covenant being replaced by the new is evident already in Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 2.

[161] Certainly, an "Old Testament" is by its very nature supersessionist, since it assumes a "New Testament."

[162] Cf., e.g., Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 1,1.

[163] Naomi Koltun-Fromm, "Syriac Fathers on Jerusalem," in *Jews and Syriac Christians: Intersections across the First Millennium*, ed. Aron M. Butts and Simcha Gross, TSAJ 180 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 171–86 at 172. I am grateful to Koltun-Fromm for sharing the preprint article with me. Cf., Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 19; Ephrem, *Hymns against Julian* 4,20 (cited by Koltun-Fromm, "Syriac Fathers," 174–6).

Forness proposed that the last ten books of the Codex Ambrosianus could have been used in anti-Jewish polemic.[164] Finding traces of an anti-Jewish discourse in a sixth/seventh-century Syriac codex would certainly not be surprising. Anti-Jewish polemic is widely attested in Syriac literature. Literary accounts suggest that Syriac Christians would associate book 6 of Josephus's *Jewish War* with such a discourse.[165] The scribal colophon of Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 9, an eighth- or ninth-century manuscript that contains an extract from *Jewish War*, says:

> And in that first book [Josephus, *Jewish War*, book 6] the final consummation of the (divine) Justice concerning them, which did not tolerate the extent of their arrogance with respect to Christ, which (arrogance) therefore, received the verdict of eternal extermination.[166]

Thus, when book 6 of Josephus's *Jewish War* figures as the last book in the collection of Old Testament books copied into the Codex Ambrosianus, it signals a specific frame of interpretation. It marks the violent end of God's covenant with the Jews.[167]

If *Jewish War*, the last book of this exemplar of the Old Testament, marks the end of the old covenant, does the New Testament, representing the new covenant, take over? In my initial presentation of the codex, I pointed out that the superscript title of the Codex Ambrosianus signals the inclusion of the New Testament.[168] Still, the New Testament is not part of the codex as it has come down to us. Ceriani and Jean-Claude Haelewyck are among the scholars who have argued that the last part of the original codex is missing.[169] Supporting their view, two of the other early *pandects,* Syr. 341 and Ms Oo I. 1,2, include New Testament books in the latter quires.[170] A missing New Testament could also explain why there is no scribal colophon on folio 330r of the Codex Ambrosianus.

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[164] Forness, "Narrating History," 66.

[165] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* and *Theophania*; Sergius the Stylite's *Disputation against a Jew* (Cf., A. Peter Hayman, *The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite against a Jew,* CSCO 338–339 [Leuven: Peeters, 1973]). Abdisho refers to Josephus's *Jewish War*, book 6, as the "Book of the Last Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus" in his *Catalogue of the Books of the Church* (cf., e. g., Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau 312, f. 44v). Cf., Joseph S. Assemani*, Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana. Tomi terti, pars prima. De scriptoribus syris nestorianis* (Rome, 1725), 7.

[166] Translation by Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 43, also quoted in Forness, "Narrating History," 66.

[167] Indeed, Josephus's works, and particularly *Jewish War*, were commonly used among Christians to argue that the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple constituted divine punishment of the Jews. Cf., Heinz Schreckenberg, "Josephus in Early Christian Literature and Medieval Art," in *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity*, ed. Heinz Schreckenberg and Kurt Schubert, CRINT 3/2 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1992), 1–138.

[168] Or, if you like, the "New Covenant." ܕܝܬܩܐ means both "testament" and "covenant."

[169] Cf., e. g., Ceriani, "Praefatio," 7; Haelewyck, "Le canon," 143.

[170] In the case of Syr. 341, these books survive in fragments.

Colophons are frequently, although not always, found on one of the last folios of Syriac codices, so a hypothetical scribal colophon could instead have appeared on the last page of a lost New Testament.[171] Another option is that a second tome – a volume containing New Testament books – accompanied the surviving codex. At the very least, those who inscribed the title of the Codex Ambrosianus on folio 1v may have planned for the copying of the New Testament. To those who came across the title as the codex started to circulate, the title would have created an expectation of a New Testament following the Old and a reading of the codex in accordance with such an expectation.

Thus, it is imaginable that the Codex Ambrosianus was part of the narrative of how the old covenant between God and the Jewish people came to an end at the final destruction of their town and temple. This final destruction would mark the shift to the new Israel and the new covenant described in the New Testament. If so, the Codex Ambrosianus is a materialization of a supersessionist biblio-historiographical project. Indeed, an "Old Testament" is by its very nature supersessionist, since it assumes a "New Testament," but the Codex Ambrosianus heightens this rhetoric by letting its Old Testament end with a tale of destruction. It assumes the final rejection of the old Israel, and it signals the fulfilment of the old covenant in the new.

1.5 Bound and Belonging: 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus

The history of research on 2 Baruch started with the retrieval of the Codex Ambrosianus. Indeed, the copy of it in this particular codex has shaped the entire academic study of this book. Scholars have treated the copy of 2 Baruch as a "text witness," using it to access a first/second-century Jewish writing. This is an approach that brackets the copy from the rest of the codex and that disregards the nature of the codex as a cultural artifact. In the current chapter, I have attempted-ed to remove these discursive brackets to explore 2 Baruch as a natural and necessary part of the codex that preserves it.

This chapter presented two different approaches to the Codex Ambrosianus and its inclusion of 2 Baruch. The comparative approach suggested that the codex would probably have been relatively unusual and likewise, that the in-

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[171] Opposing such a view, a feature of the last quire of the codex may suggest that the preserved codex is complete as it is. The distribution of running titles of quire *lamad-heh* (35) indicates that it was planned as the final quire of the codex. Whereas, the common pattern of running titles in the latter section of the codex is to find them inscribed on the folios marking the shift from one quire to the next only, quire *lamad-heh* has a running title in the upper margin of the central opening of the quire (ܗܐܬ, sheet *heh*) as well. This may indicate that at the time when the running titles were inscribed in the codex, there were no further plans to facilitate the shift from quire *lamad-heh* to a hypothetical *lamad-waw* (36) by means of a running title and thus no plans to add a hypothetical next quire to the text block.

clusion of 2 Baruch remains unparalleled. The study of the Codex Ambrosianus
on its own terms, on the other hand, proposed that precisely because the codex
is unique among surviving Syriac manuscripts, it is particularly meaningful to
explore it as a manuscript with a purposeful design. The Codex Ambrosianus
orders its books chronologically, narrating biblical history from creation to the
destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The codex thus forms a comprehensive Old
Testament story, extending it through time and stressing the destructions of the
two Jerusalem temples. Indeed, the codex ends with the destruction and the ter-
mination of the old covenant. It is likely that this biblio-historiographical codex
served the construction, interpretation and remembering of a West Syriac Chris-
tian biblical past.

Neither of the approaches that I have presented in this chapter would claim
that 2 Baruch was frequently found nor that the book was a fixed part of Syriac
Old Testament codices; yet neither of them would see the inclusion of 2 Baruch
in this particular codex as an anomaly. From a bird's eye view, the order of
books in pre-thirteenth-century *pandects* was not yet fixed, and 2 Baruch is one
of the books that proves this flexibility. The study of the Codex Ambrosianus,
in its own right, shows that 2 Baruch belongs where we find it. It is likely that
2 Baruch appears among the books of the Codex Ambrosianus because this Old
Testament *pandect* serves historiographical purposes. The inclusion of 2 Baruch
purposefully fills a gap and expands the biblical narrative. 2 Baruch provides
otherwise unattested information about the fall of Jerusalem, its first temple, and
the aftermath of the destruction, focusing on Baruch's access to and distribution
of knowledge from his dwelling place in Judah.

How does this find fit the dominant academic narrative of 2 Baruch? This
narrative holds that 2 Baruch is apocryphal or pseudepigraphal. However,
assuming that 2 Baruch is *a priori* "apocryphal" is not a relevant or fruitful
analytical approach when the goal is to study a particular surviving manuscript.
That approach would prevent us from asking what work 2 Baruch is undertaking
in the precise context in which we find it. When I do ask that question, I find that
in this particular material embodiment, 2 Baruch is a necessary Old Testament
book in a biblio-historiographical Old Testament codex.

The dominant academic narrative also holds that 2 Baruch was composed to
comfort Jewish communities after the fall of the second temple.[172] This may still
be correct, but the current study infers that the embodied copy of 2 Baruch in the
Codex Ambrosianus serves the opposite purpose. 2 Baruch is part of a superses-
sionist, potentially anti-Jewish argument of the failure of the old covenant, crys-
talized in the destruction of Jerusalem and the two temples.

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[172] Cf., explicitly, Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed*, 9 and Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost
the Temple*, esp. 3–17.

These findings display an interesting dilemma in the dominant practice of textual scholarship. As long as only the immaterial text qualifies as "source," whereas other aspects of the material copy are disqualified as "non-source," it makes sense to study 2 Baruch as an apocryphal/pseudepigraphal book composed to comfort Jewish communities after the fall. However, if we qualify other aspects of the copy as "source" as well, and study it in the context of the codex in which it appears, the opposite picture emerges. These insights are particularly important because of the privileged status of the Codex Ambrosianus's copy of 2 Baruch in the history of research on the book. Since this copy was one of a kind, for such a long time, and since it is still the preferred witness to the early text, it has dominated the scholarly imagination of its contents. Ironically, then, the only source of our imagination of the early apocryphal/pseudepigraphal text, which we construe as a comfort after the fall, turns out to be an Old Testament book in an Old Testament codex that uses temple destruction to argue the rejection of the old covenant.

Chapter 2

The Hands That Carried It:
The Embodied Circulation and Survival of 2 Baruch

For a long time, textual scholarship was haunted by a double obsession with origins: the origins of literary works and the origins of manuscripts. In line with the basic tenets of a historical-critical paradigm, text critics and exegetes have traditionally held that a text is primarily to be reconstructed and interpreted in its context of production and intended readership. They have treated manuscripts as invaluable sources, primarily because they serve as witnesses to that perceived early text, often identified as a discrete writing: who composed it, how did he[1] do it, for whom, to what end and what was this text – originally? The various sub-disciplines of the academic field of Manuscript Studies on their part have certainly focused on the manuscripts in their own right. Still, until recent decades, a major share of the attention paid to manuscripts among codicologists, palaeographers and other specialists has typically been devoted to the production phase. Scholars have focused on questions such as the following: who manufactured the manuscript, where and for what purpose and how is the manuscript to be identified in terms of its original format, contents, collection, function or intended use?

This double obsession with origins has directed textual scholarship into double trouble.[2] The dedicated focus on the origins and early contexts of a text among text critics and exegetes has created an impression of the text as immaterial literature – bracketed from its material contexts in surviving manuscripts. As pointed out in the previous chapter of this volume, the side effect of this procedure is that the immediate material and literary context of the text in a manuscript is lost to creative and critical enquiry. However, adding a focus on the origins of manuscripts is not enough. It hides the obvious fact that the production phase is only the initial phase of the potential long life of a manuscript. Sometimes, as the manuscript continued to circulate, its contents, functions and usages and occasionally its format, as well as its "who, where, why and how" changed or took on new facets – and along with them the material embodiment of the text.

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[1] In scholarly discourse, the author function is generally gendered male.

[2] My use of the concept "double trouble" is inspired by the title of Marianne Bjelland Kartzow's monograph *The Slave Metaphor and Gendered Enslavement in Early Christian Discourse: Double Trouble Embodied,* Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World (London: Routledge, 2018).

A narrow focus on manuscript origins implies that we privilege one particular point in time over all the others and that we stop taking an interest in the manuscript at the precise point in time at which it became an artifact of relevance to social practice.

The outcome of the combination of these two traditional restraints on academic study – the focus on the origins of text and of manuscript – is that we lose important information about the continued life of a book. We lose sight of the social and cultural functions that a manuscript may have had to those who engaged with it and the ways in which the functions ascribed to the manuscript may have colored the engagement with the writings copied in it. In this manner, we miss the traceable, later use of the embodied copy of a book. In addition, we become blind to the practices that ensured the preservation of the manuscript and the writings copied in it. Such information may be readily available, but in the case of 2 Baruch the double obsession with origins has efficiently kept it out of scholarly sight.

The Codex Ambrosianus has survived for more than fourteen hundred years. The current chapter will explore the surviving traces of the hands that carried this codex through history:[3] the hands that handled and cared for it and that noted their claim to and relationship with this codex on its first and last pages. In other words, in this chapter, I turn my attention away from the production phase and the exploration of the Codex Ambrosianus as a "production unit" to an investigation of the codex as a "circulation unit," focusing on the centuries in which the codex was a socially relevant artifact.[4]

The chapter benefits from two insights developed within the fields of Manuscript Studies, Media Studies and Book History that cannot be overstated. First, a manuscript is more than a text carrier.[5] To understand its cultural and social roles, we need to take seriously the other functions that a manuscript such as the Codex Ambrosianus took on as it circulated. Second, we need to keep in mind the necessity of actively considering the role of the manuscript as a vehicle for transmitting the conception, interpretation and experience of the writings that

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[3] I am grateful to Eva Mroczek who first used this metaphor in a conversation (November 2017).

[4] For the terms "production unit" and "circulation unit," see Patrick Andrist, Paul Canart and Marilena Maniaci, *La syntaxe du codex. Essai de codicologie structurale*, Bibliologia 34 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 79–80. Depending on the materials and topic under scrutiny, the divide between production and circulation should not necessarily be exaggerated. Still, it remains theoretically important to highlight that the study of the production phase of a codex gives us only a fraction of the story of a codex.

[5] Donald F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (London: British Library, 1986), 5–7; Patrick Andrist, "Toward a Definition of Paratexts and Paratextuality: The Case of Ancient Greek Manuscripts," *Bible as Notepad: Tracing Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, Manuscripta Biblica 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 130–49 at 138.

it contains.[6] There is no such thing as an un-mediated text.[7] I also wish to add a third insight myself: the history of manuscript transmission is both a history of reception and a history of the survival of a book. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, 2 Baruch survives as a "complete text" in the Codex Ambrosianus only, and the research history of 2 Baruch depends thoroughly on it. Hence, the practices that ensured the codex's survival through history are the practices that, as it were, came to enable the contemporary academic study of 2 Baruch.

These insights suggest that if we are to understand how 2 Baruch has been conceived and engaged with, we need to know how the Codex Ambrosianus was understood and handled, concentrating on the aspects of the codex that have probably affected the interpretation and survival of this particular book. In other words, it is likely that the interpretation of 2 Baruch was affected by its inclusion in a *deluxe* codex such as the Codex Ambrosianus. Furthermore, if we are to understand the copy that serves as our main source to 2 Baruch, we need to explore the efforts of the hands that carried it and acknowledge that there would be no study of 2 Baruch at all without them.

Where and in what kind of communities did the Codex Ambrosianus – and this particular embodiment of 2 Baruch along with it – circulate? What social and cultural/religious functions did the codex fill in addition to being a text carrier? And how does the circulation history of the Codex Ambrosianus matter to the survival of 2 Baruch until our day?

2.1 Snapshots of a History of Engagement with the Codex Ambrosianus

As I pointed out in the first chapter of this volume, the origins of the Codex Ambrosianus are unfortunately unknown. Likewise, our knowledge about the early history of the codex is limited and likely to remain so. Still, some information about the circulation of and engagement with the codex survives. In the first part of this chapter, I will sketch out the known history of the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus, focusing my account on the period from the eighth century to the first decade of the seventeenth century.[8] Folios 1r and 330r–v contain rela-

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[6] Cf., Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), viii–ix, 9–10, 90–91; Donald F. McKenzie, *Making Meaning: 'Printers of the Mind' and Other Essays*, ed. Peter D. McDonald and Michael F. Suarez, Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 198–236; idem, *Bibliography*, 4; Cf., Driscoll, "Words on the Page," 91, 102; Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 10.

[7] Chartier, *Order of Books*, 9–10.

[8] For the history of the transmission of the Codex Ambrosianus, see Ceriani, "Praefatio," 7–8; Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 190–96; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 13–25; Vergani, "Introduction," vii–ix and Vergani, "Il colofone." Due to Galbiati, Pasini and

Figure 5: Notes from a donor, an owner and a binder, folio 330r. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

tively lengthy notes inscribed at various points in this period by owners of the codex, by a donor and by a binder. Such notes, as well as scribal colophons,[9] are common in Syriac manuscripts. In fact, they appear with higher frequency in Syriac manuscripts than in many other manuscript traditions,[10] and they may provide glimpses into the history of the circulation of a manuscript.

A brief methodological reflection is essential at this point since these notes were certainly not inscribed in the codex to provide twenty-first-century scholars with accurate, unmediated, historical information – they were added to perform other kinds of work. If we wish to use them as sources to historical events and contexts, we need to handle them with care. As Brock, Thomas A. Carlson, and Adam Bremer-McCollum have shown, the notes are clearly shaped by culturally shared genre conventions. They tend to follow a template and they contain a formulaic language.[11] These aspects are highly interesting in their own right. As the first step, though, I will tease out traces of historical information about the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus.

2.1.1 Tracing Circulation: Entering the Monastery of the Syrians

The first note that deserves our attention is the note in the mid column of folio 330r.[12] This donor note, written in a partly pointed Estrangelo with some Serto letters, is important for the study of the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus:

ܚܣܝܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܡܪܝ ܒܢ‎
ܐܟܬ݂ܒ ܗܘ ܒܕܝܪܐ‎
ܐܢܬ ܠܬܚܠܬܝ ܗܟ‎
ܠܚܘܚܠܡ ܘܚܢܐ‎
ܚܒܕܐ ܘܠܝ ܗ ܩܝ‎

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 [9] I distinguish between "colophons" and "notes" in the present volume. As pointed out in chapter 1, I reserve the term "colophon" for the scribal note. I use the term "[additional] notes" or "[secondary] annotations" about notes inscribed later by other hands, such as correctors, binders, readers, owners, etc. The current chapter explores the notes on folios 1r and 330r. I engage the notes added by active readers in the rest of the codex in chapter 3.

 [10] Cf., further, Brock, "Fashions," 261; Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 379.

 [11] Brock, "Fashions," 361, 371; Carlson, "Formulaic prose?" 379; Adam Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons of Scribes and Readers in Georgian Biblical Manuscripts from Saint Catherine's Monastery (Sinai)," in *Bible as Notepad: Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, Manuscripta Biblica 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 111–24. As pointed out by Carlson, this does not mean that they are meaningless (cf., below). My present concern is that if we want to draw any historical information from such notes, we need to be aware of these literary conventions (Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 381, 389, 391).

 [12] Cf., image 319 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

ܩܘܫܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܠܗ
ܪܡܐ ܘܪܒܝܢ ܠܡܠܟܘܬܟ
ܘܐܬ ܕܘܠܐ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ
ܕܒܦܘܪܩܢܐ ܢܦܫܗ
ܦܠܟܐ ܕܒܢܝܢܣܗܘܢ,
ܐܡܟܐ ܕܒܪ ܕܗ
ܠܗܘ ܐܟܠܐ ܐܪܟ
ܢܒܬܪܟ ܕܒܘܗܐܬܐ
ܐܬܝ ܐܝܬ ܕܒܢܐ
ܐܠܘܐ ܐܬܘܪܐ
ܕܐܘܩܝܡܐ ܡܠ
ܢܒ ܩܘܐܐ ܠܗܘܡܢܐ
ܡܐ ܢܝ ܠܒ ܡܠܘܗ,
ܕܐܟܘܡܠܪ ܪܚܢܙ,
ܒܕ ܐܡܪܐ. ܒܝܢ ܡܢܐ
ܚܘܡܘܬ ܕܕܒܝ ܠܗ
ܠܐܟܘܡܠܪ ܪܚܢܙ,
ܘܟܐܡܐ ܠܗ ܘܠܬܒܢܝܢܣܗܘܢ,
ܡܢܠܗܠܡܝ, ܚܬܒܢܐ
ܕܩܘܪܫܐ ܕܠܝܢ ܕܝܠܟܐ
ܒܚܢܝܟܐ ܕܠܝܢ.
ܐܐܡܝܢ ֍

Messiah our God, when you enter your Kingdom, recall Abu 'Ali Zekiri your servant, son of the deceased Yuḥanon, who bought this book for the redemption of his soul and a good remembrance of his departed ones, so that it could be for study of the solitary brothers who are in the holy monastery of the house of *Yoldat Aloho*, which is in the desert of Scetis. Let anyone who reads this memorial pray for Abu 'Ali Zekiri and say: Lord, on the day of judgement, have mercy on Abu 'Ali Zekiri, giving him and his departed ones a place to sit and including him in the assemblies of your holy ones on your right-hand side. Amen.

This donor note claims that Abu 'Ali Zekiri, son of Yuḥanon, purchased the Codex Ambrosianus for "the holy monastery of the house of *Yoldat Aloho*," that is, the Monastery of the Syrians. This note signals a starting point for the known life of the codex in a particular monastic environment and provides us with the opportunity to explore some snapshots of its circulation in a traceable historical locale. The donor, Abu 'Ali Zekiri, is mentioned in other manuscripts as well,[13] and the notes in these manuscripts contain more information, confirming and supplementing the note in the Codex Ambrosianus.

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[13] London, BL, Add. 12,146, Add. 12,147, Add. 12,148 and Add. 12,149. He is also mentioned in the manuscript currently carrying the shelfmark Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 40 (e.g., f. 13r). As Brock and Van Rompay have established, Add. 12,149 and Ms. Syr. 40 were part of the same manuscript (*Catalogue*, 291). Add. 12,146 and 12,147 is a two-volume *fenqitho,* as are Add. 12,148 and Add. 12,149/Ms. Syr. 40. These four codices are similar in dimension and layout and copied by the same scribe between 1005 and 1007 (Cf., Wright, *Catalogue*, 1:258–69; Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 291–92).

2.1.1a The Monastery of the Syrians, the Takritan Community and Abu 'Ali Zekiri

The Monastery of the Syrians[14] lies approximately fifty kilometers west of the western branch of the Nile, between Cairo and Alexandria.[15] Ancient Scetis, comprising roughly the same area as contemporary Wadi al-Natrun, is a well-known Christian monastic and ascetic center, inhabited since the fourth century.[16] The monastery was first established by Coptic monks and has remained a formal part of the Coptic Church throughout its history.[17] The traceable history of an organized community of Syriac monks in the monastery starts in the second decade of the ninth century and ends in the early seventeenth century. This means that the explicit Syriac presence in the monastery lasted for approximately eight hundred or nine hundred years – in cohabitation and interchange with Coptic monks.[18] For many of these centuries, the Monastery of the Syrians served as an important center of Syriac liturgical life, culture and learning in the Mediterranean world.

In the earliest phase of Syriac Christian presence, Takritan monks assumedly dominated the monastery. Manuscript notes suggest that the monastery was

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[14] The monastery is known by several names in research literature: "The Monastery of the Syrians," "The Syrian Monastery," "The Monastery of the Mother of God of Abba Bishoi [of us Syrians]," "The Monastery of St. Mary Deipara," "The Monastery of St. Mary the Bearer (Mother) of God," "The Monastery of the Holy Virgins of the Syrians," "Dayr al-Suryan/Deir al-Surian," etc.

[15] I visited the Wadi al-Natrun in the autumn of 2002.

[16] *Life of Macarius*, XIX, 1–2.

[17] Johannes den Heijer, "Relations between Copts and Syrians in the Light of Recent Discoveries at Dair as-Suryān," in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium,* ed. Mat Immerzeel and Jacques van der Vliet, OLA 133 (Louvain: Peeters, 2004), II:923–38.

[18] The early history of the monastery has been subject to much debate (in response to Evelyn-White's theory of a Takritan purchase of the monastery in 710). Records of Syriac presence appear from 818/19 and onwards, for instance in the form of manuscript notes and inscriptions in the main church of the monastery, the Church of the Holy Virgin. Cf., Karel Innemée and Lucas Van Rompay, "La présence des Syriens dans le Wadi al-Natrun (Égypt)," *ParOr* 23 (1998): 167–202; Lucas Van Rompay and Andrea B. Schmidt, "Takritans in the Egyptian Desert: The Monastery of the Syrians in the Ninth Century," *JCSSS* 1 (2001): 41–60; Bigoul al-Suriany, "The Manuscript Collection of Deir al-Surian in Wadi al-Natrun," *JCSCS* (2001/2): 53–64; Lucas Van Rompay, "Les inscriptions syriaques du Couvent des Syriens (Wadi al-Natrun, Égypte)," in *Les inscriptions syriaques*, ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, Muriel Debié and Alain Desreumaux, Études syriaques 1 (Paris: Geuthner, 2004), 55–74; Karl-Heinz Brune, "The Multi-ethnic Character of the Wadi al-Natrun," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Wadi al-Natrun*, ed. Maged S.A. Mikhail and Mark Moussa (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2009), 12–23 at 20–21. The decline of Syriac presence is less debated. It is possible that Syrian presence in the monastery subsided, or that Syriac monks were assimilated with their Coptic cohabitants. Cf., Otto F.A. Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1992 [1961]); 125–6; den Heijer, "Relations between Copts and Syrians"; Lucas Van Rompay, "Coptic Christians, Syriac Contact with," in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, ed. Sebastian P. Brock et al. (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011), 103–6 at 104–5.

in contact with Mesopotamian communities and with the city of Takrit. Furthermore, benefactors from the Takritan community living in Fustat (Old Cairo) were instrumental in and important to the welfare of the monastic establishment. They provided the monastic community with the books necessary for upholding Syriac liturgical life, among other items.[19]

Abu ʿAli Zekiri must have been one of the benefactors from the Takritan community in Fustat, supplying the Monastery of the Syrians with manuscripts. The note on folio 1r in the Codex Ambrosianus, to which I return below, identifies him as "the Takritan" (ܬܩܪܝܬܢܝܐ).[20] A note in London, BL, Add. 12,146 describes him as a chief of the community of Takritans (ܪܝܫܐ ܕܒܢܝ ܬܩܪܝܬ) in Egypt (folio 234v). London, BL, Add. 12,147, Add. 12,148 and Add. 12,149 portray Abu ʿAli Zekiri as the patron of the scribe of these codices, the monk Yeshuaʿ.[21] In the colophon of Add. 12,148, Yeshuaʿ reports that he wrote the four codices[22] in "the house," or maybe "the court" (ܕܪܬܐ) of Abu ʿAli Zekiri, commissioned by him for the Monastery of the Syrians. In other words, the chief of the Takritans and donor of the Codex Ambrosianus had other manuscripts produced for the monastery as well.[23]

The donor note in the Codex Ambrosianus does not tell us precisely when Abu ʿAli Zekiri purchased the codex for the monastery. Still, the notes in Add. 12,146–12,149 and Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 40 may help us approximate the period during which he served as its benefactor. According to the notes in Add. 12,148 and Add. 12,149, Yeshuaʿ finished the copying of the four codices in 1006/7.[24] This date does not tell us precisely when Abu ʿAli Zekiri donated the codices, but since he had these manuscripts produced explicitly for the monastery, we may assume that they were taken there not long afterwards.[25] Likewise, although we

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[19] Ugo Monneret de Villard, *Le Chiese della Mesopotamia,* OLA 128 (Rome: Pot. Institutum Orientalim Studiorum, 1940), 66–74; Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries*, 123–4; Van Rompay and Schmidt, "Takritans in the Egyptian Desert" 43–46; Cf., also, al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 54–55.

[20] Compare Add. 12,149, folio 84r, which confirms that he is "known as the Takr[itan]" ܡܬܝܕܥ ܐ ܬܩ[.....]

[21] Yeshuaʿ's name appears frequently in colophons, notes and as part of decorative elements, commonly in connection with the name of Abu ʿAli Zekiri (cf., in particular the decorative notes in Add. 12,147, e. g., ff. 75r, 166v). He refers to himself as "Yeshuaʿ," "Yeshuaʿ the monk," "Yeshuaʿ the sinner" (e. g., Add. 12,147, f. 75r; Add. 12,148, f. 233v; Add. 12,149, f. 67v), as "Yeshuaʿ […] son of Andrya from Ḥisn Zayd in Mesopotamia" (ܝܫܘܥ [...] ܒܪ ܐܢܕܪܝܐ ܡܢ ܚܣܢܐ ܙܝܕ) (e. g., Add. 12,148, f. 233v; Add. 12,149, f. 84r), or simply as "Yeshuaʿ who wrote" (my inspection of the manuscripts in London, 7–8 May 2019). Cf., Wright, *Catalogue*, 1: 260, 268; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 17; Vergani, "Il colofone," 275.

[22] I.e., Add. 12,146; Add. 12,147; Add. 12,148; Add. 12,149/Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 40.

[23] To my knowledge, no one has suggested that the Codex Ambrosianus has been copied in Egypt, or that Abu ʿAli Zekiri was its initial commissioner.

[24] All dates in this chapter are CE, unless I indicate otherwise.

[25] Cf., further, Haefeli, *Die Peschitta des alten Testamentes*, 77; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 17. It should be noted, for the sake of precision, that the end of copying does

do not know for sure that the Codex Ambrosianus was donated alongside these four codices, it is likely that the Codex Ambrosianus arrived at the monastery while Abu ʻAli Zekiri was active. Vergani dated the note paleographically to the tenth/eleventh century[26] and it thus makes sense to assume that the codex entered the Monastery of the Syrians in the first decade(s) of the eleventh century.[27]

2.1.1b The Collection of Manuscripts in the Monastery of the Syrians

The Monastery of the Syrians is famous for its collection of manuscripts. Before the first European travelers and manuscript hunters arrived in the Wadi al-Natrun, assumedly in the mid-sixteenth century,[28] the collection contained Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic and Greek as well as Syriac manuscripts, some dating from as early as the fifth and sixth centuries.[29] The collection was massive, comprising biblical, liturgical, historical, theological, ascetical and philosophical as well as other scientific texts of the day.[30]

According to Lucas Van Rompay and Andrea B. Schmidt, the first manuscripts in the monastery collection were donated to and bought for the monastery during

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not imply the end of the production of a codex. A codex is not finished until its quires are ordered and the text block bound.

[26] Vergani, "Il colofone," 283.

[27] Note that the donor note does not say who penned it. The handwriting of Yeshuaʻ, well attested in Add. 12,146–12,149/Ms. Syr. 40, does not match the hand responsible for the donor note in the Codex Ambrosianus. Furthermore, in the large majority of colophons and notes in these four manuscripts, Yeshuaʻ eagerly shares his name. Thus, Yeshuaʻ is probably not responsible for the note. However, the narrative contents, phrasing and names appearing in the colophons and notes of Add. 12,147–12,149/Ms. Syr. 40 display a considerable overlap with the donor note. This may suggest that someone who was part of the production of the four codices, in connection with the production team or knew the other manuscripts well penned it. The name of "ʻAbdo, priest and monk" (ܥܒܕܐ ܩܫܝܫܐ ܘܕܝܪܝܐ) shows up on several occasions in Add. 12,146–12,149 (e. g., in a framed note in Add. 12,148, f. 233v and in a vertical note in Add. 12,146, f. 234v). He says that he took pains with/cared for (variations over ܝܗܒ) the manuscripts, that he "completed"/"perfected" them (ܐܫܠܡܥ) (Add. 12,146, f. 234v), and that he "restored"/ "corrected" (ܬܩܢ) them (Add. 12,149, f. 84r and Add. 12,148, f. 233v). An ʻAbdo is also mentioned in a decorative note (in Yeshuaʻ's handwriting) in Add. 12,148, f. 108v as a scribe/ copyist (ܟܬܘܒܐ ܐܘ ܣܦܪܐ). Hence, ʻAbdo probably acted as a corrector of Add. 12,146–12,149, potentially as part of the last phase of the production process (and/or at a later time when the manuscripts were in need of care [Vergani, "Il colofone," 276]). An ʻAbdo is also mentioned in the colophon of Add. 12,149 (f. 84r) as a monk and priest. Hence, he is recorded to be present in the monastery at the time when the manuscripts were finished. This *may* be the same person that corrected the manuscripts. If so, it is tempting to suggest that (unless Abu ʻAli Zekiri himself wrote it) ʻAbdo may have been the one who penned the note in the Codex Ambrosianus.

[28] According to Borbone, Guillame Postel may have been the first who brought manuscripts from the Monastery of the Syrians to Europe. He visited Egypt in 1535–37 ("'Monsignore Vescovo di Soria', also Known as Moses of Mardin, Scribe and Book Collector," *Hristianskij Vostok. Serija, posvjashchennaja izucheniju hristianskoj kultury narodov Azii i Afriki*, vol. 8 (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, 2017), 79–114 at 98.

[29] Cf., e. g., Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 17, 21.

[30] Wright, "Preface," iii.

the first half of the ninth century. These manuscripts were assembled for the purpose of providing the monks with Syriac liturgical and biblical books, as well as other literature.[31] This first period of acquisition bears witness to the above-mentioned connection of the Syrian Monastery to the Takritan community in Fustat. Colophons and notes identify the monks who acquired the manuscripts for the monastery as Takritans, and many of the codices that they brought with them originally stemmed from the city of Takrit.[32] However, as also mentioned above, the monastery soon attracted Syriac monks from other parts of Egypt and the wider Mediterranean area, and these monks reportedly brought additional manuscripts with them. These manuscripts originated from Mesopotamia as well as from the northern parts of Egypt and from Syria.[33]

The famous abbot of the Monastery of the Syrians, Moses of Nisibis, deserves particular mention. He spent the years from 926/27 to 931/32 in Baghdad and Mesopotamia, and eventually returned to the monastery, taking with him more than two hundred and fifty manuscripts.[34] A large number of the manuscripts acquired in Baghdad were of Mesopotamian origin. He may have purchased additional items on his way home.[35] Syriac manuscripts continued to be taken to the monastery until the first decades of the seventeenth century.[36] The latest recorded donation of a Syriac manuscript took place in 1634.[37]

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[31] Van Rompay and Schmidt, "Takritans," 43–47; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 55.

[32] Wright, "Preface," iv; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 55; Brock and Van Rompay, "Introduction," xiv; Van Rompay and Schmidt, "Takritans in the Egyptian Desert," 43–49; Evelyn-White, *History of the Monasteries*, 439–58; Immerzeel, "Play of Light," 257–59. There is ample evidence for contact between the Monastery of the Syrians and the city of Takrit. Some manuscripts indicate that there was trade between the city and the monastery, effectuated by Takritans living in Egypt. This trade included Syriac books taken from Syria and Mesopotamia to Syriac-reading Christians in Egypt. The contact between the Monastery of the Syrians and the Takritan community there is well documented (Evelyn-White, *History of the Monasteries*, 3ll–12; Wright, "Preface," iii–v; Wright, *Catalogue*, 1:280; Sebastian Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis").

[33] Wright, "Preface," iv; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 55; Van Rompay and Schmidt, "Takritans in the Egyptian Desert," 47–48.

[34] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis,"l6.

[35] Wright, "Preface," iv; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 55–56. Moses of Nisibis continued to enlarge the collection also after his return to the monastery (Wright, "Preface," iv). Manuscript notes mention several donors from the early-ninth century and onwards. Some are lay benefactors; others are abbots or monks. Some prominently present donors are the Takritan Ḥauran bar Dinara, the abbot bar 'Iday (ninth century) and Ephrem the patriarch of Alexandria (977–981) (Wright, "Preface," iv; *Catalogue*, 1:292, 295; 2:612; 3:1116; Brock and Van Rompay, "Introduction," xiv).

[36] Wright, "Preface," iv. The abbot Severus reportedly collected forty-one manuscripts. Cf., Jules Leroy, "Un témionage inédit sur l'état du monastère des Syriens au Wadi 'n Natrun au début du XVIe siècle," *BIFAO* 65 (1967), 15–19; Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, xv; Lucas Van Rompay, "A Precious Gift to Deir al-Surian (AD 12ll): Ms. Vat. Syr 13," in *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone – Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock,* ed. George A. Kiraz, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 3 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009), 753–49.

Colophons and notes suggest that in the time of Moses of Nisibis manuscripts were also produced on the premises. Moses of Nisibis himself is supposedly responsible for Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 30, copied in the monastery in 903/4.[38] London, BL, Add. 14,469 is another manuscript that was produced there, dated 936.[39] Other manuscripts, such as the four manuscripts that Abu ‘Ali Zekiri donated, were copied for the monastery in 1006/7, although not on the premises.[40] In later centuries, several colophons and notes attest to continued scribal activity.[41]

2.1.2 Noting Ownership: Eighth through Eleventh Centuries

The note located in the upper-middle part of the left column is the most complex note on folio 330r of the Codex Ambrosianus. The note consists, first, of a primary layer written in Estrangelo with some Serto letters, still readable in the upper and lower sections of the note. Second, a mid-section, written by another hand in an archaicising Estrangelo,[42] overwrites the erased middle part of the note with a younger layer of text. In this present shape, the note reads:

ܠܐܒܘܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ
ܕܒܪܬ ܐܦܪ̈ܐ ܘܕܝܪܐ
ܘܗ ܩܕܝ ܠܐ ܗܘ ܕ ܒܝ
ܡ ܕܐܦ̈ܐ ܒܛܝ ܡ ܕ ܝ
ܐܝܟ ܕܒܡ̈ܝܢ ܐܝܟ
ܕܠܐܒ̈ܢ ܡܐܒܟ ܘܪ̈ܐܝ
ܕܡܗ̈ܢ ܕܒܚܠܕ ܡ
ܒ ܩܐܝ ܩܐ ܝ ܢ ܕ
ܕܝܐ ܐܒܐ ܕܕ ܠܐܟܐ
ܟܕܝ ؛ ܕ ܢ ܝܗܘܢܕ
ܘܐܒܝ̈ܢ ܐܟܝܐ ܝ ؛
ܡ ܕ ܠ ܡ ܡܒܒ ܠܐ
ܐܝܟ ܘܗ ܐܪܝܒܝܠܕ
ܕܕܝ ܒܐܝܟܐ ܠܕ ܠ ܝܝܕ
ܘܗ ܢ ܝ ܐܟܠܕܐ ܝ ܟ
ܠܕܝܟ ܝ ܐܝܟܘ ܕܟܒܕ
ܝ ܐܕܐ ܡ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܟܕܝ

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[37] London, BL, Add. 14,736 (Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, xv).

[38] Wright, “Preface,” iv; al-Suriany, “Manuscript Collection,” 56; Brock and Van Rompay, “Introduction,” xiv, xxi; Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 223.

[39] Wright, *Catalogue*, 1:75–76.

[40] Cf., further, al-Suriany, “Manuscript Collection,” 56; Brock and Van Rompay, “Introduction,” xv.

[41] Syriac manuscripts were produced in the Monastery of the Syrians in the tenth century (Van Rompay, “Coptic Christians, Syriac Contacts with,” 104).

[42] Vergani, “Il colofone,” 284.

In praise and honor of the Holy Trinity, strove and obtained this codex with the aid of God and by the labor of his hands, for the advantage of his soul and the remembrance of his departed ones **the monk ʿAbd al-Masiḥ son of Haitam son of David – may God grant them to be long remembered – of the city of Damascus.** But seek from each one who reads this memorial, to pray for everyone who has had a part [in it], whether in the word or in deed, and according to his prayer may it turn out just so. Amen.

As suggested by the overwritten, most recent layer of the text – in bold above – the codex was once in the possession of a certain ʿAbd al-Masiḥ. In its current shape, I understand the note as an owner note. It mentions the owner's name and the beneficial purpose of acquiring the artifact and requests remembrance and prayers for him and his dead relatives.[43]

Based on paleographical analysis, Vergani dated the oldest layer of this note to the period between the eighth/ninth and the eleventh century.[44] That layer of the note may thus take us back to the earliest traceable period of engagement with the codex, before the donation of the codex to the Monastery of the Syrians. Vergani hypothesized that the note may originally have been a commissioner note, naming the person who commissioned the codex. ܩܢܐ, "obtain," may imply both the "commissioning" of the codex and the "purchase" of an already existing artifact.

Regardless of who the original note writer was, the mid-section that carried the name was erased to leave room for the name of the new owner. Erasing the name of a former commissioner/owner and substituting a new one for it is a practice that is relatively well-attested in Syriac manuscripts.[45] Since the name and any potential information about the earlier owner have been erased, though, our knowledge of this early phase remains, for now, meager.

The overwritten area, the youngest part of the note, is difficult to date paleographically due to its archaizing script. It mentions ʿAbd al-Masiḥ, a monk from the city of Damascus, a son of Haitam, son of David. The name ʿAbd al-Masiḥ, meaning "Servant of the Messiah," is far too common of a monastic name to make any certain historical identification. However, the colophon of Add. 12,148, one of the manuscripts donated to the monastery by Abu Ali Zekiri, mentions two monks called ʿAbd al-Masiḥ in the Monastery of the Syrians at the time (folio 233v). One is referred to as "bar Lauzi" and is thus not a likely candidate. The second is described as an archdeacon of the monastery in 1006/7. This archdeacon may be the ʿAbd al-Masiḥ mentioned in the note

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[43] Brock, "Fashions," 365; Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 383–89; Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 113–15.

[44] Vergani, "Il colofone," 283–84 and email correspondence, 26 July 2016. Ceriani dates it to before the eleventh century ("Praefatio," 7).
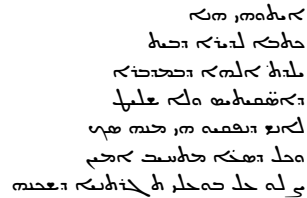
[45] Cf., e.g., Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 27, folio 94r. Cf., Brock, "Colophons," 102; Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 163; Michael Penn, "Moving beyond the Palimpsest: Erasure in Syriac Manuscripts," *JECS* 18 (2010): 261–303 at 268–70; idem, "Know Thy Enemy," 221–41.

due to the name overlap, his presence in the monastery at the approximate time of the donation of the Codex Ambrosianus and his appearance in Add. 12,148. However, this suggestion remains a hypothesis only.

Regardless of whether the ʿAbd al-Masiḥ of the note on folio 330r is identical to the archdeacon in Add. 12,148, these features may suggest that the erasure and overwriting of the owner note was the work of a monk present in the Monastery of the Syrians at this time.[46] He may have been understood, or he may have understood himself, as the owner of the manuscript. Alternatively, he may have erased the name of the former owner/commissioner and inserted his own primarily to benefit from the blessings and promise of remembrance assumed to be achieved by the note.

2.1.2a Confirming Ownership and Guarding the Codex

The next note deserving our attention is a note inscribed on folio 1r of the codex:[47]

<div dir="rtl">

ܐܘܬܒܝ, ܡܗ ܟܡܐ

ܟܡܐ ܠܕܝܪܐ ܕܒܪܬ ܝܠܕܬ

ܐܠܘܐ ܕܒܡܕܒܪܐ ܕܐܠܘ ܢܝܠ

ܕܫܘܠܛܢ ܘܠܐ ܥܠܝܘ

ܡܢ ܡܢܗ ܡܦܩܘܡ ܙܢܐܝ

ܟܡܐ ܟܣܝܕ ܚܣܟܐ ܡܟܗ ܠܕܠ

ܘܡܣܟ ܐܠܗܝܟ ܚܡܕܠ ܐܠ ܝ

</div>

> This book belongs to the Monastery of the house of *Yoldat Aloho*, which is in the Scetis desert. And it is not permitted for anyone to remove it[48] from it[49] ever, and anyone who dares will be condemned. Amen. Pray for Abu ʿAli the Takritan who bequeathed it.

This note, executed in a large, ornamental script – a hollow Estrangelo – covers folio 1r entirely.[50] The note is partly an owner note, saying that the codex belongs to the Monastery of the Syrians, partly a memorial to Abu ʿAli Zekiri, "the Takritan," and partly a protective note and curse – an *anathema* – daring anyone to remove the codex from the monastery. Such notes are common in Syriac manuscripts, and several of them are known from other codices once kept in

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[46] Again, allowing for some speculation, it is possible that ʿAbd al-Masiḥ is identifiable as "ʿAbdo, priest and monk," known from Add. 12,146–12,149, now writing in an archaizing Estrangelo. Vergani correctly holds that there is no way of verifying that the two are the same ("Reception History," 5).

[47] Cf., image 013 of B21inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82801083c7 (accessed 18 June 2020).

[48] I.e., "the codex."

[49] I.e., "the monastery."

[50] As pointed out in the previous chapter, folio 1r was commonly left blank by Syriac scribes. This open space served as a convenient location for the later inscription of notes (Cf., e.g., Brock, "Fashions," 372).

the monastery.[51] For the present purpose, this note is interesting because it confirms that the codex was kept in the monastery and branded as the monastery's legitimate possession.

2.1.2b Rebound 1415/16

The final note on folio 330r appears in the lower left column, written in Serto, framed and dated to the year 1415/16 CE:

ܐܬܟܪܟ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ
ܕܥܬܝܩܬܐ ܒܫܢܬ
ܐ ܙ ܟ ܕܝܘ̈ܢܝܐ ܒܝܕ ܝܥܩܘܒ
ܚܛܝܐ ܡܣܟܢܐ ܒܥܐ
ܡܢܟܘܢ ܕܟܕ ܦܓܥܝܢ
ܕܬܥܠܘܢ ܡܢ ܨܠܘܬܐ [52]
ܚ ܠܐ ܠܚܠܫܘܬܝ،

> This book of the Old [Testament] was bound in the year 1727 of the Greeks by the sinner Ya'qub, the poor, seeking from you who come across it that you utter a prayer for my weakness.

According to this note, Ya'qub, who describes himself, in the language of humility frequently found in colophons and notes, as a poor and weak sinner,[53] bound the codex in the year 1727 of the Greeks (1415/16 CE).[54] The note does not say explicitly that the codex was kept at the Monastery of the Syrians at the time. However, Ya'qub also left a note in another manuscript in the monastery, dated the same year.[55] Thus, it should be safe to conclude that the rebinding of the Codex Ambrosianus in 1415/16 took place on the premises of, or on request by, the monastery.[56]

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[51] Cf., e.g., Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 29; 48; Brock, "Fashions," 368–70. Curses against book-thieves are quite commonly found across manuscript traditions. Cf., e.g., Marc Drogin, *Anathema: Medieval Scribes and the History of Book Curses* (Montclair: Allanhead & Schram, 1983); Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 120–21.

[52] ܚ ܠܐ (Vergani, "Il colofone," 278).

[53] Brock, "Fashions," 361, 365–66; Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 387; McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 115–16.

[54] For the calendars used by Syriac scribes in notes and colophons, see Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, "Le temps du copiste. Notations chronologiques dans les colophons de manuscrits syriaques," in *Proche-Orient ancien temps pensé, temps vécu. Actes de la table-ronde du 15 novembre 1997*, ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Hélène Lozachmeur (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1998), 197–210 at 200; Sebastian P. Brock, "Dating Formulae in Syriac Inscriptions and Manuscripts of the 5th and 6th centuries," in *From Ugarit to Nabataea: Studies in Honor of John F. Healey*, ed. George A. Kiraz and Z. al-Salameen (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012), 85–106; Brock, "Fashions," 363–4.

[55] Cf., London, BL, Add. 12,143, folio 464v.

[56] It is not likely, but should not be completely ruled out, that the binder Ya'qub equals Rabban Ya'qub who copied Paris, BnF, Syr. 210 in the monastery in 1403/4 (See Van Rompay, "Le couvent," 551–54, and cf., Vergani, "Reception History," 407).

2.1.2c From Scetis to Milan

Finally, a note in Latin on folio 330v signals the transfer of the Codex Ambrosianus to new owners. The note says, "Codex hic aduectus ex Aegypto, emptus a Monast[eri]o S. Mariæ Matris Dei in deserto Schytin." It was probably penned by Antonio Giggi, Doctor of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana.[57] The note is not dated, so it does not tell us precisely when the codex was transferred to the library in Milan. According to the library catalogue, the codex has been in the library's keeping since 1611. This may well be correct.[58] As Enrico R. Galbiati has pointed out, it is likely that the manuscript was in the possession of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana at, or not long after, its opening in 1609.[59]

The details of the history of acquisition of the codex remain debated. Three hypotheses have gained some traction. The first hypothesis is that the Maronite monk Michele took the codex from Egypt to Italy in the early-seventeenth century. It is known that Frederico Borromeo, the founder of the Biblitoeca Ambrosiana, sent Michele Maronita to the Middle East to identify valuable manuscripts and take them to the newly opened Milan library. What we do not know is whether he ever reached Egypt. It is possible, though, that he visited the Monastery of the Syrians and acquired the Codex Ambrosianus.[60]

The second hypothesis is that Michele Maronita never reached Egypt but that he was still able to purchase the manuscript through other channels. As Galbiati has suggested, it is possible that the manuscript had already been removed from the monastery in the early-seventeenth century and that Michele bought it from a community of Syrians in Cairo.[61]

The third hypothesis agrees with the second one in that the Codex Ambrosianus had already left the monastery when the Biblioteca Ambrosiana purchased it. However, this hypothesis holds that it may have been Moses of Mardin who acquired it from Egypt, and not Michele Maronita. Moses was demonstrably in Egypt in 1576–77 and he took other manuscripts that once belonged to the Monastery of the Syrians with him back to Rome.[62] If either of

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[57] Ceriani, "Praefatio," 8; but cf., Cesare Pasini, "La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana," 13–25. A similar note appears in C 313 inf.

[58] Cf., http://ambrosiana.comperio.it/opac/detail/view/ambro:catalog:28063 (accessed 15 June 2020). The eighteenth-century frontispiece repeats the information in the note on folio 330v, with a slight variant: "Codex avectus ex Aegypto, et emptus ab Scetensi Coenobio S. Mariæ Matris Dei in solitudine Nitriæ." An additional note in the margin states that the source of this information is Ioseph S. Assemani's *Bibliotheca Orientalis* and Stephanus Evodius' *Acta Martyrium Orientalium*. Furthermore, both Borromeo and Giggi record the presence of the codex in the library in the 1620s. Cf., Vergani, "Introduction," viii.

[59] Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 190.

[60] Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 192; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 15; Vergani, "Introduction," viii–ix.

[61] Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 193.

[62] Cf., Pier Giorgio Borbone, "'Monsignore Vescovo di Soria'," 96–98. Bogaert mentions Giggi as a possible candidate (*Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:37, n. 1).

the two latter hypotheses is correct, the Codex Ambrosianus may have left the monastery as early as in the mid-sixteenth century. This, though, remains unknown.

2.1.3 Summing Up: The Monastic Circulation of 2 Baruch

This brief sketch of the traceable circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus, based on the notes inscribed in the codex itself, suggests that some knowledge about its post-production life can reasonably be established. Most importantly, these surviving snapshots of the long history of the circulation of the codex demonstrate that the Monastery of the Syrians kept it for a substantial period of time, perhaps as long as six hundred years.[63] The effect of this finding on our understanding of the circulation of the codex is vital.

First, it tells us that an important traceable context of engagement with the Codex Ambrosianus was monastic.[64] The implication is that the engagement with 2 Baruch in this particular embodiment would be monastic as well. It is most likely that the readers were Syriac-using monks. Second, the sketch shows that, on the occasions that it is possible to establish a location based on the notes, that location is the northern parts of Egypt.[65] I cannot rule out the idea that the oldest layer of the owner note in the left column of folio 330r originates from the period before the codex arrived at the Monastery of the Syrians, from a location outside Egypt, but until the Biblioteca Ambrosiana permits advanced imaging of the erased section of the note, this will remain unknown.

Summing up, those who owned, handled and potentially read the texts copied into the Codex Ambrosianus in the period from the early eleventh to the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century were probably Syriac, or at least Syriac-

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[63] I interpret "of the city of Damascus" as a reference to the origin of the monk ʿAbd al-Masiḥ. It is very common in such notes to identify figures by reference to their place of origin. It has been proposed, though, that the codex was once located in Damascus (cf., Ceriani, *Fragmenta*, xiv; Pasini, *La Siro-peshitta dell'Ambrosiana*, 18; cf., further, Ceriani, "Praefatio," 7; Vergani, "Colofone," 302–3; Vergani, "Introduction," x). If so, it is neither clear at what point in its history of circulation it was held there, whether the part of the note under scrutiny reveals information about the period before the codex entered the Monastery of the Syrians (Ceriani's hypothesis) nor whether it suggests that the codex was taken from the monastery to (allegedly, a monastery in) Damascus at some later point. It is well documented that there was contact between the monastery and other monasteries in today's Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey (Van Rompay, "Le couvent," xv–xvi). Hence, we should not rule out the possibility of a period of ownership in Damascus. However, as will be pointed out below in the description of the binder's note, if the codex was indeed kept in Damascus for a while, it must have been returned to the Monastery of the Syrians before Yaʾqub rebound it.

[64] I employ the term "monastic" to refer to the ordering of life, the institutional, material, epistemological and societal structures and practices as well as aspects of the spatial location of (in this case) monks living together in a regulated community – a monastery.

[65] Cf., furthermore, chapter 6 for a discussion of the effect of this combination.

reading, monks or others dwelling in or visiting the monastic community in the Monastery of the Syrians. The codex was one among numerous manuscripts kept on the premises of this monastery, and to various degrees, available to those who dwelled there.

2.2 Engagement Practices

In the above sketch, I focused on the remaining traces of the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus, providing a matter-of-fact distillation of the historical information that the additional notes in the codex grant us. However, as mentioned above, the goal of these notes was never to provide pure historical information; they carry out other types of work. Hence, we can glean more and different information from them. My interest in the following section lies in exploring some of the practices in which the codex has taken part during its history of use as well as in discussing the conceptions of the codex – its identification and status – by those who handled it. Thus, I will trace some modes of engagement with the codex and some functions of the manuscript, as suggested by the notes. This point may thus serve as a helpful correction to how textual scholars normally treat and think about manuscripts, primarily as carriers of texts.

2.2.1 Practices of Remembrance and Protection: Donation and Ownership

The first set of engagement practices that requires attention is donating and owning manuscripts, as well as the practice of recording donation and ownership. The donor note on folio 330r of the Codex Ambrosianus and the general history of acquisition of manuscripts for the Monastery of the Syrians, show that donating manuscripts must have been an identifiable and meaningful social practice at the time. According to notes in other surviving Syriac manuscripts, donations were often given when entering the monastery[66] and can hence be perceived as a token associated with joining a new social group. Donations of manuscripts are also frequently presented as gifts from abbots and powerful lay benefactors. These acts of gift-giving may be seen as an efficient act of social signaling available to those who had the means to perform it within an economy of gift-exchange, presenting the donor as a person of grace and magnitude, and signaling a bond between the donor, his community and the recipients. The donor note in the Codex Ambrosianus is quite typical in this regard, representing the chief of the Takritans as an influential and generous friend of the monastery. The Codex Ambrosianus was a sizeable volume, as were the other four codices

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[66] Cf., e. g., Wright, "Preface," iv; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 55.

that he had produced for the monastery.[67] These volumes must have made up a grandiose donation of considerable value.[68]

Related to the act of donating a manuscript is the act of recording the donation in the artifact. In the case of the Codex Ambrosianus, Abu 'Ali Zekiri's act is probably recorded by a scribe.[69] The note employs formulaic phrases, living up to the typical expectations of such notes, and it would probably be easily recognizable as a donor note to those who came across it later on folio 330r.

These two related practices associated with donations provide a sometimes overlooked take on the role of manuscripts. First, the manuscripts are the donated object and as such they are artifacts relevant to social interaction. Second, manuscript folios are also the media that preserve the memory of the act of donation.[70]

Since the deeds of the donor have been noted in the donated artifact itself, these figures and their acts are represented as important. Furthermore, acts of donation and the recording of these acts have apparently been seen as occasions for playing out a broader repertoire of remembrance-ensuring formulae, activating the function of manuscript pages as media more broadly.[71] In the Codex Ambrosianus, the one who inscribed the note asks for the redemption of the soul of the donor, and the remembrance of the donor's ancestors. The note itself figures as the trigger: those who read it should pray for them.[72] Indeed, the note is a memorial (ܥܘܗܕܢܐ, "memorial," or "record," or "note"). In this way, the manuscript pages appear as an apt medium for preserving the memory of the donor, as well as his deceased relatives.[73] They provide an appropriate space for ensuring remembrance and an opportunity to request prayers from the monastic brothers who would engage with the manuscript. The manuscript, thus, becomes the medium that aids the soul on the day of judgement.

Some further observations can be made about the owner notes on folios 1r and 330r. On the one hand, these notes attest to some of the same functions as the donor note. The note on folio 1r requests its readers to pray for Abu 'Ali Zekiri;

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[67] The four manuscripts Add. 12,146–12,149 measure approximately 40 cm by 32 cm. They originally consisted of between two hundred and thirty and three hundred and fifty folios. In other words, they were majestic tomes.

[68] Possibly, the donation may even have been larger. This remains unknown.

[69] Cf., footnote 27 above.

[70] Generally, the number of additional notes in Syriac (and other) manuscript suggests that the margins and empty pages served as appropriate media for notes. The availability of writing space is an important medial quality in its own right. As Kipp Davis has pointed out, by their mere availability, these margins and folios "begged" to be annotated ("Margins as Media: The Long Insertion in 4QJerᵃ (4Q70)," in *Bible as Notepad: Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, Manuscripta Biblica 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 39–53 at 51–52.

[71] Cf., Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 122–23.

[72] Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Textual Scholarship, Ethics and Someone Else's Manuscripts," essay, *Ancient Jew Review* (21 May 2019). https://www.ancientjewreview.com/articles/2019/5/21/textual-scholarship-ethics-and-someone-elses-manuscripts (accessed 26 August 2019).

[73] Cf., Van Rompay, "A Precious Gift," 741; Penn, "Know Thy Enemy," 253.

similarly the owner note in the left column of folio 330r also asks those who read it for prayers.[74] The note further states that one of the reasons for the lengths to which the owner went to purchase the codex was "the advantage of his soul and the remembrance of his deceased ones." The fact that the monk ʿAbd al-Masiḥ took the step of erasing the former name in the note and inscribing his own in its place attests to the efficacy ascribed to such notes. This relatively common practice may be interpreted as a form of branding the manuscript but should probably also be understood in the light of its perceived agency: inscribing your name and the names of the deceased in the manuscript will help you and your loved ones on the day of judgement.[75] The frequent occurrences in Syriac manuscripts of notes requesting prayers for the departed suggests that inscribing and reading the notes and the handling of the codex were part of the larger cultural economy of care for the dead. Indeed, from this perspective, erasing the name of a former owner – and given the size of the erasure, assumedly his genealogy as well – is not an innocent act. ʿAbd al-Masiḥ not only erased a name; he also erased a memorial and the former owner's chance of benefitting from the ongoing, powerful prayers of the monastic community.[76]

The note on folio 1r adds an extra dimension to understanding the role of the manuscript as a medium. This combined owner note, memorial and curse against thieves was meant to protect the artifact itself. Again, the note was probably understood as an efficient tool in the manuscript as both the medium for requesting and receiving protection.[77]

Thus, the notes in the Codex Ambrosianus suggest that the codex has been an artifact of a certain social relevance and importance. Furthermore, they attest to the widespread function of Syriac codices as media of remembrance, protection and prayer requests. Since such notes are also found in modest manuscripts, the note itself – ink on parchment – may be considered the most important medium, and the act of inscribing it is likely to be regarded a potent act.[78] However, *deluxe* codices such as the Codex Ambrosianus were probably seen as particularly apt and efficient media for such requests, enhancing and adding to the efficiency

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[74] Prayer requests are frequent in Syriac notes and colophons (Cf., e. g., Brock, "Fashions," 364).

[75] Cf., further discussions of the (ritual) efficacy and power of writing in, e. g., Scott Nogel, "'Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign': Script, Power, and Interpretation in the Ancient Near East," in *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World*, ed. Amar Annus; OIS 6 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010), 143–62; Penn, "Know Thy Enemy," 235–36.

[76] Cf., e. g., Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 122–23.

[77] The note might have been instrumental in keeping the codex in the monastery for six hundred years. One of the European travellers who visited the monastery in the nineteenth century, the British aristocrat Robert Curzon, wrote that the monks were unwilling to sell the manuscripts due to the *anathema* inscribed in them. Given the colonialist tone of the novel, this piece of information should be treated critically. Cf., further, Cureton, *Festal Letters*, ix–x.

[78] Cf., Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 397.

of the notes.[79] Finally, we should not rule out the possibility that the addition of notes by important figures such as a chief, and possibly an archdeacon, would also enhance the value of the codex to its owners.

2.2.2 Practices of Care: Storing, Keeping and Binding

The second set of practices of which the codex was part is practices of care. I apply this concept to talk about practices that served to protect and keep the codex throughout the ages, such as apt storage and the rebinding of the text block when the old binding wore out.

As pointed out above, the Monastery of the Syrians is particularly famous for its important and vast collection of manuscripts. The exact number of manuscripts kept at the monastery when it was in its prime remains unknown. Gilles de Loche, who visited the monastery in 1633, reported that he saw eight thousand manuscripts.[80] The specific numbers may not be trusted, but the impression of a sizable collection of manuscripts can. Where did the monastery keep its large collection and what was the state of preservation of the manuscripts? In the article, "The Manuscript Collection of Deir al-Surian in Wadi al-Natrun," the former curator of the current library of the Monastery of the Syrians, Bigoul al-Suriany, identified a storage room on the first floor of the tower (the *qasr*) as the most probable location of "the ancient library."[81] Indeed, several historical accounts have noted the presence of manuscripts in the tower.[82] European travelers who found their way to the monastery in the seventeenth through twentieth centuries observed manuscripts in different parts of the tower.[83] Robert Curzon, who visited the monastery in the 1830s, reported that he saw manuscripts in a small room attached to the wine/oil cellar as well as in storerooms in the upper

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[79] McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 122–23.

[80] Brock and Van Rompay, "Introduction," xvi.

[81] Al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 59. This is very likely the same room that Evelyn-White describes as such: "It is probable that this was originally the library where books were kept in the inconvenient Oriental fashion, heaped in piles or stowed away in chests" (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 176).

[82] A note in London, BL, Add. 14,699 says that Thomas from Mardin visited the monastery in 1624 and that he saw "books without number, arranged without any order" in this location. He allegedly dusted and counted them, four hundred and three manuscripts all together, and arranged them in the tower (Wright, *Catalogue*, 1:305–6; translated into English by Brock and Van Rompay [*Catalogue*, xv]). According to a note in Dayr al-Zaʾfarān 116 (CFMM 261), a sixteenth-century copyist noted that he "went up" the large tower and saw Syriac manuscripts "countless and numberless in their quantity" (Adam Bremer-McCollum, "Jerome's Life of Paul the Hermit in Syriac and a Colophon on Dayr al-Suryan," *Hmmlorientalia Blog*, 1 October 2014, http://hmmlorientalia.wordpress.com/2014/10/01/jeromes-life-of-paul-the-hermit-in-syriac-and-a-colophon-on-dayr-al-suryan/ [accessed 26 August 2019]).

[83] According to Evelyn-White, the tower consists of a basement and three upper floors (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 175).

tower.[84] A small room equipped with cupboards filled with manuscripts was also attached to the Church of St. Michael on the upper floor of the tower.[85] In his day, Hugh G. Evelyn-White described this room as "the modern library."[86] Apparently, the tower still housed several manuscripts as late as the 1970s, when they were moved to a new building.[87]

Some accounts have also suggested that manuscripts were stored in other parts of the monastery. The monastic community probably kept the manuscripts in clusters in more than one location, depending, for instance, on their usage, relevance and state of preservation. For example, as could be expected for manuscripts in daily use, both Evelyn-White and Henry Tattam observed codices in the churches of the monastery during their visits.[88] Furthermore, because the Monastery of the Syrians has a long history, it is likely that the manuscripts in the monastery's keeping were located in various places and in different spatial arrangements from its foundations as a Syriac monastic settlement in the ninth century until 19 May 2013, when the new, dedicated library and conservation center were officially inaugurated.[89]

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[84] Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries,* 75–76, 84 (cf., also Curzon's note on the flyleaf of London, BL, Or. 8729). Cf., Wright, "Preface," viii–ix; Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 172, 177; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 58. Another early modern European traveler, the monk Gabriel Eva, refers to a cave or cellar filled with manuscripts around the year 1707 (Cureton, *Festal Letters,* 128; Wright, "Preface," vi). Similarly, manuscripts were spotted in a vault as well as in another room in the tower by Henry Tattam in 1838 (Cureton, *Festal Letters,* 128).

[85] According to Evelyn-White, this church dates to 1480 (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 178). Cf., Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscriptions," 1.

[86] *Architecture and Archaeology*, 177. Wright ("Preface," vi) also mentions Claude Sicart, who reports to have seen chests containing old manuscripts in the monastery. According to al-Suriany, these chests were located in the tower ("Manuscript Collection," 57).

[87] Cureton, *Festal Letters,* 128; Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries*, 75; al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 59.

[88] Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 178; Cureton, *Festal Letters,* 128. Cf., also, Wright, "Preface," xii. Cureton also notes that Tattam observed more manuscripts in an otherwise unidentified "apartment" in the monastery, possibly referring to one of the rooms in the tower.

[89] http://www.thelevantinefoundation.co.uk/page/library (accessed 26 August 2019). As pointed out above, al-Suriany refers to the collection as "the ancient library." Indeed, the collection of manuscripts in the Monastery of Syrians has on several occasions been referred to as such (Cf., e. g., Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries,* 75–76; Cureton, *Festal Letters*, iv; Wright, "Preface," iii). However, it would be a mistake to imagine the existence of a library in the modern sense of the word. The concept of a library would imply a level of systematic ordering and co-location of the manuscripts on the premises, as well as a certain degree of access and retrievability of books, that does not necessarily fit the traces of historical information left to us. I therefor find it more fruitful to avoid the term "library" and rather use the more general term "collection" (Cf., e. g., Chartier, *Order of Books*, 65–66). It may also be fruitful to imagine the various spatial and material arrangements of the collection aided by a handful of more specific terms, such as "storage room," "genizah" and "treasury."

Notes in manuscripts and travel reports from early modern visitors alike suggest that the manuscripts were neither organized in an orderly manner nor easily retrievable. Some hold that the manuscripts kept at the Monastery of the Syrians were decaying. Some features of these notes and the reports beg methodological caution, though. The descriptions of decay and disorderly conditions in manuscript notes must be understood in the light of the rhetoric of such notes. References to a mass of unruly volumes tend to stress the massive effort of the one who sets out to repair and organize them and thus serves as an important argument for his prayer requests. Reports from European visitors, such as Evelyn-White, Curzon and Tattam, often emphasize "inconvenience," chaos and the monks' general inability to care for the manuscripts, hence by implication begging for European intervention.[90] These reports are tainted by dominant discourses of the colonial other in Europe in their time and cannot be taken at face value.[91]

The way in which scholars represent the state of preservation of the manuscripts has changed, as have their purposes in referring to an unfortunate state of preservation. In recent decades, accounts rather stress the efforts that generations of monks have made to care for the manuscripts in the monastery's keeping.[92] Still, given the many separate reports of decay, it is reasonable to believe that parts of the manuscript collection of the Monastery of the Syrians have, at various points in time, been decomposing.[93] Parts of the storage may have served *geniza* purposes.[94] Furthermore, in a collection of manuscripts as large as the one kept at this monastery, there will necessarily always be manuscripts in need of renovation and rebinding. Manuscript care is a continuous task.[95] Bindings

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[90] Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries,* 75–78; Cureton, *Festal Letters*, ix; Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology,* 176.

[91] Maja Kominko, "Crumb Trails, Threads, and Traces: Endangered Archives and History," in *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme*, ed. Maja Kominko (London: Open Book Publishers, 2015), xlix–lxv at lii. Cf., Chartier, *Order of Books*, 61–88, on the early modern or modern trends that made Europeans dismiss "oriental libraries."

[92] This drive is clearly visible, for instance, in Brock and Van Rompay's introduction to the 2014 catalogue of the manuscripts (Cf., in particular, "Introduction," xiii).

[93] Cf., e. g., Add. 14,699. Cf., further the presentation in Wright, "Preface," iv–viii. Moses of Mardin found single fascicles originating in the monastery for sale in Cairo in 1576–77 (Borbone, "'Monsignore Vescovo di Soria'," 98 n. 100). This may attest to the state of some of the manuscripts in the monastery at that point. Cf., further reports from the work of the Deir al-Surian Conservation Project (https://www.facebook.com/DeirAlSurianConservationProject/) and the Levantine Foundation (http://www.thelevantinefoundation.co.uk/page/Preservation%20and%20Conservation (both accessed 26 August 2019).

[94] Marina Rustow defines "geniza" as "the long lived habit of consigning worn-out texts […] not to outright destruction but to a slow decay in dignified limbo, usually in a storage chamber or cemetery" (*The Lost Archive: Traces of a Caliphate in a Cairo Synagogue* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020], 1–2).

[95] Cf., e. g., the notes on several stages of rebinding, restoration and renewal in Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 30 (ff. 166v, 167r).

wear out, and unless someone replaces them, the text blocks are vulnerable to fragmentation and decay. Given the mere size of the collection at the monastery, and the effort that it would have taken to keep it orderly, it would in fact be more surprising if the collection were in perfect shape at any given time than to come across accounts suggesting that it was not.

2.2.2a Binding and Rebinding the Codex Ambrosianus

If some of the manuscripts in the depository of the Monastery of the Syrians were left to decay, the Codex Ambrosianus was certainly not one of them. Any exploration of the state of preservation of the codex must start with an observable fact: it is beyond doubt that the Codex Ambrosianus is well kept. Compared with many other manuscripts dating to the first millennium CE, this manuscript is indeed remarkably well preserved. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the codex is almost complete – only a few folios are missing. In addition, most of the folios are in good shape, apart from the outer margins of the first folios of the codex, which are worn, and the upper part of the last three folios, which are discolored by mold. Even this superficial description of the physical state of the manuscript gives us an initial indication that the codex must have been wellcared for and kept safe during its six-hundred-year stay at the Monastery of the Syrians.

The few physical imperfections of the codex are probably best explained by the hypothesis that at some point in time, the binding of the codex was defective and in need of replacement. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the lost folios are the first and last folios of their respective quires; that is, they were part of sheets *alaph* (1) and *beth* (2). These sheets are the outermost and most vulnerable sheets of an unbound text block. The spine of the codex had probably become weak, the quires dismantled and some sheets went missing. The mold on the last folios may be indicative of the same situation. Once the binding of a codex no longer serves its primary purpose – to protect the text block – humidity taints its outermost sheets.

As we have seen in the discussion of the notes on folio 300r above, a binder has left us a message. Ya'qub lets us know that he bound the codex in the year 1415/16. This information suggests, then, that the binding was worn at this point and that Ya'qub took care to rebind it.[96] This note is the first recorded binding

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[96] As pointed out in the above description of the note, Ya'qub rebound at least one more codex that year (Add. 12,143). In his note in this codex (f. 464v), Ya'qub applies the same formulaic description of his work but, whereas he says that he "bound and renewed" [ܐܬܚܕܬ and ܐܣܪܗ] Add. 12,143, he simply "bound" [ܐܣܪܗ] the Codex Ambrosianus. The terms are commonplace (compare London, BL, Add. 14,434 [f. 79v], Add. 12,178 [f. 247v] and Ms. Syr. 30 [ff. 166v, 167r]) and the differences between the two notes may merely reflect variations within a formulaic statement. It remains possible, though, that the exclusion of one commonly used term may indicate the generally good state of preservation of the Codex Ambrosianus.

of the codex, but due to its good state of preservation, the codex must have been rebound regularly during the approximately eight hundred years of engagement from the sixth/seventh century to 1415/16.[97] The pictures that the conservators took of the spine during the 2008 conservation campaign display holes pierced into the spine folds of the quires indicating two alternative sewing stations. This shows, basically, that the text block has been bound previously. However, these pierced holes can hardly be dated, and they do not tell us how many times the codex has been rebound, given that binders may have reused the existing holes when rebinding it.

Records confirm that, after 1611, the codex was rebound at least three times while in Italian ownership. The note on the pastedown of the codex that says that it was divided into two volumes in 1774,[98] implying that it was rebound at the time. The two volumes were also rebound in 1911[99] as well as most recently in 2008.[100] If the bindings were in poor shape on the codex's arrival in Milan, it is possible that it was also rebound in the early seventeenth century since codices brought to Europe in this period were routinely rebound upon arrival.[101]

Given that all the medieval bindings are lost, we do not know what the exterior of the codex would have looked like as it continued to circulate. However,

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[97] It is also possible that a binder is responsible for inscribing the two catchwords in the left lower margins of folios 12v and 48v, since catchwords were generally not in use by scribes when the Codex Ambrosianus was produced (Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 257). These catchwords ܚܡܫ and ܥܠܝ appear in the lower margin underneath the third column on each of the two pages, referring to the first word of the first column on the next page. The binder may have added the catchwords to help him order the sheets before binding the codex.

[98] "Unicum antea Volumen in duo divisum, et religatum anno MDCCLXXIV."

[99] Notes on the pastedowns of each of the two volumes indicate that the volumes were rebound then: "Leg. Nov. 1911" (Cf., Pasini, "La Siro-peshitta," 15 n. 6 and 7).

[100] The last rebinding so far took place in the workshop of the Dumenza monastery, the Laboratoria P. M. F. di Dumenza, in Northern Italy. The binders documented all the steps of the process photographically. According to Andrea Oltolina, one of the two binders who were in charge of the process, the workshop rebound some two to three hundred books and codices for the Biblioteca Ambrosiana between the turn of the century and up until 2008. The Codex Ambrosianus was one of them. The binding that they removed during this last round of conservation was a monastic binding, consisting of two wooden boards, with goat leather covering the spine and parts of boards but leaving most of the wooden boards uncovered. The bindings that were removed in 2008 were the bindings from 1911. The pastedowns were reused. The present bindings of the two-volume codex are red, goat-leather covered museum cardboard bindings. I am grateful to Oltolina for his kind assistance and for sharing his knowledge about the recent rebinding process and the photo documentation thereof with me (Milan, 17 March 2016 and subsequent email conversation).

[101] To my best knowledge, no documentation of the medieval binding survives. Pasini notes that the Biblioteca Ambrosiana keeps no records of seventeenth-century manuscript conservation but he does not rule out that some codices were rebound upon arrival ("Conservazione," 293). Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "The Syriac Manuscripts in the British Library: What Happened to the Bindings?" *Religion–Manuscripts–Media Culture Blog*, 24 January 2014, http://livlied.blogspot.no/2014/01/the-syriac-manuscripts-in-british.html (accessed 27 August 2019).

the bindings of Syriac codices were relatively uniform, and it is likely that the bindings of the codex consisted of two wooden boards and a cloth lining the spine and parts of the boards.[102] Since the Codex Ambrosianus was a *deluxe* codex, we may assume that leather would cover the spine and the wooden boards fully. The leather might also have been embossed or engraved at various points of the codex's existence. Equally interesting is that, from a diachronic perspective, the many events of rebinding means that a changing appearance would be part of the very constitution of the codex. Care implies change and that change, as it were, ensured survival.

The current condition of the Codex Ambrosianus is in many ways remarkable. The state of preservation is partly the result of the dry and uniform Egyptian climate, which I will return to in chapter 6.[103] However, the codex would never have reached us in its current condition unless binders (and others) had cared for it – again and again. Thus, the material artifact itself attests to their practices of care. Likewise, the notes inscribed in the artifact indicate discourses of care that are widespread in Syriac manuscripts. This language of hard work and effort is an important repertoire for expressing the flavor of the task.

2.2.2b Assets and Expectations in an Economy of Redemption

For a long time, scholars disqualified additional notes as objects of literary study. Although they used them to establish "facts," they otherwise dismissed them because they considered them formulaic.[104] However, as Carlson suggested, the aspects that once disqualified the notes as literary texts make them highly valuable sources to a culturally shared language repertoire.

The note that Ya'qub left his readers hints at one of the functions of the notes and the reasons for his striving: it establishes a contract between the note-writer and the reader. Ya'qub made the effort to rebind the codex. In return, he requests the reader who comes across it and who benefits from the fruits of his

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[102] Cf., Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, "Cahiers et signatures dans les manuscrits syriaques. Remarques sur les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale de France," in *Recherches de codicologie comparée: la composition du codex au Moyen Âge en Orient et en Occident*, ed. Philippe Hoffman (Paris: Presses de l'École normalesupérieure, 1998), 153–69; Borbone et al., "Syriac Codicology," 265–66; Youssef Dergham and François Vinourd, "Les reliures syriaques: essai de caractérisation par comparaison avec les reliures byzantines et arméniennes," in *Manuscripta Syriaca. Des sources de première main,* ed. Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and Muriel Debié, Cahiers d'études syriaques 4 (Paris: Geuthner, 2015), 271–304. Evelyn-White describes the book covers he saw in the main hall on the first floor of the tower like this: "wooden boards covered with leather, and ornamented with simple stamped designs of large-headed bronze rivets" (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 176–77). Cf., Cureton's brief description of the "original wooden bindings" of the lot of manuscripts arriving in London in the nineteenth century (*Festal Letters*, xii–xiv). I examined the medieval bindings of London, BL, Or. 13,465 and Or. 8729 in the British Library, 3 March 2013.

[103] Borbone and Briquel Chatonnet, "Syriac Manuscripts," 58.

[104] Carlson, "Formulaic Prose?" 380–81.

labor to pray for his weakness.[105] Thus, these notes bear witness to an economy of redemption. The prayers of readers are redemptive currency, reimbursing the binder on the day of judgment for his tireless work to preserve the codex. The textual artifact and the note itself served as media, aiding the redemption of "the sinner Ya'qub, the poor."

We do not know if the readers heeded that call, but the formulaic shape of the notes testifies to culturally shared scripts. Precisely because the note was formulaic, the readers would be able to identify the intention of the note and know what to do to fulfil their part of the contract. Thus, the practice of handling a codex and reading the texts copied in its columns was part of a larger cultural ecology of engaging with the manuscripts. The additional notes were part of that ecology. To readers who knew the cultural codes, the notes were not foreign to the rest of the text inscribed in the artifact. The notes tell us something about ongoing subject–object relations over time and about continuing soul-saving efforts as an intrinsic part of a reading practice.

2.2.3 Treasuring, Studying and Categorizing a Special Old Testament Codex

The above examination of the history of the circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus has painted a picture of the social and cultural/religious roles of the codex, beyond its function as a text carrier. The codex has served as a donation and an item worth owning, branding and protecting, as well as a medium for ensuring remembrance and a good afterlife. One salient question remains: what do the notes of the donor, the binder and the owners of the Codex Ambrosianus themselves suggest that this artifact "is" and how does this matter to the circulation, interpretation and survival of 2 Baruch?

2.2.3a A Valuable Material Artifact

An interesting feature of donor and owner notes in Syriac manuscripts is that many of them refer to the artifact simply as ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ "this book," that is, "this codex" without any further specification of its contents. The notes that refer to the manuscript in these terms do not tell their readers about the collection of literary texts that the codex contains – they focus on the artifact and the relationship of the donor or owner to that artifact.[106]

The donor note in the Codex Ambrosianus is one example of this feature. It refers to the codex simply as ܠܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ, "this book/codex," the object that Abu

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[105] The logic is explicit, for instance in Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, book 1, ch. 1: "Give us your prayers, then, so that our labors may bear fruit."

[106] Cf., furthermore, the discussion in chapter 7.

'Ali Zekiri bought and gave to the monks. Likewise, the owner note on folio 1r refers to ܟܬܒ ܗܢ as a material artifact that belongs to the Monastery of the Syrians and that should not be removed. The owner note on 330r is particularly elaborate. The figure whose name has been erased and replaced by ʿAbd al-Masiḥ "obtained" ܟܬܒ ܗܢ "by the aid of God and by the labor of his hands." The note stresses the toil of ʿAbd al-Masiḥ and his erased forerunner in acquiring the codex. Hence, all three notes are preoccupied with the effort and care put into the acquisition and protection of a material artifact and the functions of the in-scribed artifact vis-à-vis a human agent, as a donation, as property or as a socio-economical and soul-saving investment.

Indeed, all the traces of social practices that I have discussed so far seem to highlight one aspect of the Codex Ambrosianus: these traces suggest that the codex has been treasured as a valuable material artifact.[107] Approaching the Codex Ambrosianus as a valuable commodity, a treasure, is potentially the one perspective that makes the most sense of the surviving snapshots of its cir-culation.[108] The codex served as a token of the generosity of the chief of the Takritans, as a means of exerting influence over and displaying cultural/religious identification with the monks and the monastery, as well as making sure that they were equipped for liturgical practice, thus vicariously upholding important wor-ship practices for the larger community. The present state of preservation of the codex and its history of rebinding also suggests that its owners have continu-ously ascribed value to it. Finally, the wish to keep the codex as the property of the monastery by inserting a curse against thieves confirms that the codex was valuable to the monastic community.[109]

The most recent note in the manuscript, the Latin note inscribed on folio 330v, is also suggestive of the value ascribed to the codex by its early modern own-

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[107] The aesthetic qualities of the binding mattered to the overall appreciation of the codex. However, since none of the medieval bindings survive, we do not have the source material to consider this aspect. Cf., further, chapters 3 and 4 of the present volume.

[108] For a calculation of the costs of production of Syriac manuscripts, see Mango, "Patrons and Scribes," 7–8. To some degree, this assessment is not particular to the Codex Ambrosianus. Also ordinary manuscripts were donated, repaired and rebound. Thinking about manuscripts more generally as treasures may also be relevant as to how we imagine the storage of the larger collection of manuscripts in the monastery. The storage of manuscripts in the tower may be one indication of this status. The tower is the place in the monastery where the collection would assumedly be safest: a stronghold and safe-place for the valuables in the monastery in case of violent intrusion or visits from manuscript-hunting European aristocrats. See, e.g., the de-scription in the preface of Murad Kamil's "Catalogue of the Syrian Manuscripts Newly Found in the Monastery of St. Mary Deipara in the Nitrian Desert" (Unpublished, 1960): "Between 1845 and 1847 Pacho bought many mss. which for the greater part were sold to the British Museum. In spite of the hunt for mss. a number of mss. remained in the monastery, probably purposely hidden by a monk in the time of Pacho."

[109] A colophon in London, BL, Add. 12,160 (discussed by Brock, "Fashions," 368–69) says that penalties for someone who steals or mistreats a manuscript will be like the penalties of someone who "plunders a sanctuary."

ers. The Codex Ambrosianus was among the first artifacts to be brought from Egypt to Europe by visitors. The codex was already long gone once the crowd of European manuscript hunters hit Egyptian shores in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[110] The one or ones who took the Codex Ambrosianus to Milan apparently knew what they were doing. They took not only the Codex Ambrosianus, but probably also the eighth-century Hexaplaric Old Testament codex, today identified by the shelfmark Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 313 inf.[111] Both manuscripts were old, complete, *deluxe* codices of the Old Testament; both were exquisite material artifacts – the perfect, venerable items to help boost the status of the newly opened library in Milan.

2.2.3b "For Study"

The binder note and the donor note may shed some additional light on the perceptions and categorizations of the codex. They provide us with two indications of the conception of the codex on two select occasions by individuals who engaged with it.

The donor note, which I turn to first, presents the purpose of Abu 'Ali Zekiri's donation of the codex to the monastery and suggests the function that it was supposed to fill there. According to the donor note, Abu 'Ali Zekiri acquired the codex for the monastery "so that it could be for study of the solitary brothers." The Syriac term ܗܘܓܝܐ may be translated as "study," as I have suggested in the above translation, but the term has a broad usage. It may also mean "interpretation," "meditation" and "reading."

It is possible that the note writer used the term ܗܘܓܝܐ without particular concern for its range of meanings. Still, the choice of terminology is interesting because the term is relatively uncommon in such notes. For instance, it does appear in the colophon of London, BL, Or. 8729 (folio 247v) and in a note in Add. 17,107 (folio 68v).[112] However, the other codices that Abu 'Ali Zekiri donated to the

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[110] Cf., furthermore, Wright, "Preface," v–xvi; Brock and Van Rompay, "Introduction," xv–xvii; Vergani, "Il colofone," 264–74 for extensive accounts of visitors, acquisition and transferal of manuscripts from the Monastery of the Syrians to Europe. In retrospect, there is no doubt that the European history of acquisition of manuscripts from the monastery was, in so many ways, deeply problematic. See, e. g., Stewart, "Yours, Mine, or Theirs?"

[111] Unlike the library record for B 21 inf. and bis inf., the record for C 313 inf. does not say when the manuscript became part of the collection of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (See https://ambrosiana.comperio.it/opac/detail/view/ambro:catalog:32904 [accessed 7 May 2020]). C 313 inf. was a two-volume set. The volume kept in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana today is the second tome, containing the latter part of the Old Testament (Psalms, Wisdom books, Prophetic books). The first tome, which may have been the one that once belonged to Andreas Masius, is assumedly lost (Cf., Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 192–93).

[112] The note on folio 68v of Add. 17,107 (a manuscript containing the book of Ezekiel, dated to 541 CE) says that the codex in question was brought to the monastery, probably as one among more manuscripts, so that they [the brothers] could "read in them" and "study in them," ܘܢܗܓܘܢ

monastery apply the more widely used word ܩܪܐ, "read."[113] Likewise, notes in other surviving Syriac Old Testament manuscripts most often also apply the term ܩܪܐ to represent the implied or scripted usage of the manuscripts.[114] The word ܩܪܐ typically appears in two contexts. Either, the codex in question was taken to a given monastery to be read (ܩܪܐ) there[115] or the writer of the note encourages all those who read (ܩܪܐ) in the codex to pray for him.[116]

Given that the use of the term ܗܓܐ is comparatively infrequent, it is possible that the donor note prescribes a particular use of the Codex Ambrosianus. The use of the term may indicate that the codex was taken to the monastery to meet the scholarly needs of the monks.[117] It is also possible that the choice of the term ܗܓܐ was guided by a wish to invoke well-known biblical scenes and imagery in which meditation on the Law is the focus. ܗܓܐ appears in several passages describing sacred obligations and promises of redemption, connected to meditation on the Law, such as in Ps. 1:1 and Josh 1:8. The use of the term, and hence the sharing of the connotations that it might have invoked in those familiar with biblical imagery, is indeed salient in a donor note inscribed in an Old Testament codex, recording the donation of this particular exemplar of the Old Testament. It might add a heightened sense of value to the textual artifact, since this artifact is the material representation of the Book of the Law described in the text (indeed, a writing found in the artifact itself). As a result, it would heighten the redemptive efficacy of Abu 'Ali Zekiri's act of donation.[118]

ܩܘܡ ܕܘܬܗ ܕܗܠ ܗܘ. The two terms may, in this case, be seen as synonyms or they may refer to related or complementary, distinct practices or different fields of connotation. In Or. 8729, the term appears in the beginning of the colophon, in the description of the purpose of production of this Gospel lectionary: "for the reading (ܗܓܐ) of the sagacious and God-loving brothers" (translated by Amir Harrak, "Bacchus, Son of Mattay: A Master Calligrapher in the Mongol Period," in *From Ugarit to Nabataea: Studies in Honor of John F. Healey,* ed. George A. Kiraz and Z. al-Salameen [Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012], 107–22 at 110).

[113] E. g., Add. 12,146, folio 72v; Add. 12,149, folio 233v.

[114] My search for the use and frequency of the term is based on a selection of Old Testament codices, and is as such not to be understood as all-encompassing.

[115] E. g., London, BL, Add. 14,437, folio 122v.

[116] E. g., London, BL, Add. 12,136, folio 100v.

[117] If so, it is still not clear exactly what reading practices the note writer implies by the choice of the term ܗܓܐ. Exegesis and familiarization with the literary contents may be implied. Reading for edification and instruction is also imaginable. Possibly, the concept suggests preparation for public reading in the sense that the codex could be used to make sure that the reader got the recital and pronunciation, that is, the sound and performance of the text right. It is also possible that the note writer envisions the codex as a model for further copying of biblical texts or that the note refers to its text-critical value. It may also have been perceived as an archive of scriptural works to be consulted by the monks.

[118] I am grateful to Michael E. Stone, for a stimulating conversation (20 November 2017) and to Matthias Henze for bringing up this point in a discussion (5 April 2017).

2.2.3c "This Old Testament Codex"

As pointed out above, the majority of the notes in the Codex Ambrosianus and many other notes in Syriac manuscripts, refer to the codex that preserves them simply as ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ. As a welcome exception, Ya'qub identified the collection contained in the Codex Ambrosianus when he rebound it in 1415/16. Ya'qub referred to the codex as "this book of the Old [Testament]," ܕܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܬܝܩܬܐ ܗܢܐ. Again, ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ refers to the material entity that is in need of a new binding. As pointed out in the previous chapter, ܥܬܝܩܬܐ "the Old," is a common identification of the Old Testament. In other words, in 1415/16, Ya'qub rebound a material artifact that he interpreted as an Old Testament codex.[119]

Stressing the fact that Ya'qub explicitly referred to the codex as an Old Testament may appear to be a statement of the obvious. After all, the Codex Ambrosianus is identified as such in the title on folio 1v. Furthermore, the codex is a *pandect*, containing a collection of books typically identified as "Old Testament." However, as chapter 1 also showed, the Codex Ambrosianus is in many regards a rare exemplar of the Old Testament, and scholars have often highlighted its particularities.[120] Hence, it matters that this note, which provides an identification of the codex from the early-fifteenth century, identifies it as an Old Testament.

It is particularly interesting that a binder identified it as such, since he had (literally) hands-on knowledge of the manuscripts in the monastery and probably came across a large variety of them. As mentioned above, Ya'qub rebound at least two codices in 1415/16, indicating that he was actively involved with the manuscripts in the monastery at this time. Ya'qub would probably have encountered different material formats and different types of collections of books identifiable as "Old Testament." In other words, what constituted an "Old Testament" to Ya'qub may well have included a heterogeneous group of textual artifacts, and the note that he left us shows that, to him, the Codex Ambrosianus fell within the boundaries of this pluriform manuscript category.

2.3 The Codex Ambrosianus as a Vehicle for
the Engagement with and Survival of 2 Baruch

This chapter has charted the traceable snapshots of the historical circulation of the Codex Ambrosianus – the material carrier of the copy of 2 Baruch. The codex has lived a long life with the text of 2 Baruch inscribed in it. As the codex cir-

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[119] Ya'qub applies the same format for the note on folio 330r and the note he left us in Add. 12,143. On folio 464r of that codex he writes: ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܦܘܫܩܐ ܗܢܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܐܬܚܕܬ ܗܘ ܩܕܝܫܐ, "[…] this book of (i. e., containing) the commentary to the Holy Gospel […]." In other words, this is probably Ya'qub's designated way of specifying the category of the manuscript.

[120] Cf., the presentation in chapter 1 and, further, the discussion in chapter 3.

culated, so did this particular copy of 2 Baruch. The hands that held the codex also held the copy of 2 Baruch.

The notes from the donor, owners and binder of the codex show that, for approximately half a millennium, the codex belonged to the Monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi al-Natrun. This means that a large part of the codex's history of circulation is monastic, and that this part of its long history played out in the northern parts of Egypt. This also means that a substantial share of the engagement with 2 Baruch in this particular material embodiment was monastic as well. Thus, on the occasions when a reader engaged with the copy of 2 Baruch, that reader was probably a monk – a monk who had access to the codex somewhere in the large collection of manuscripts in the monastery. He would have opened the covers of the *deluxe* codex and leafed through other Old Testament books to reach the relevant folios or he may have happened upon the book by chance. Either way, it is likely that his impression of 2 Baruch would have been colored by the other books, the format, aesthetics and the layout of the codex in which he found it. 2 Baruch was present for him in a venerable manuscript of "the Old," brought to the monastery by the chief of the Takritans and connecting the reader to a Syriac heritage and community in Egypt and beyond.

The notes that survive on the first and last pages of the manuscript also show that the Codex Ambrosianus filled an array of social and cultural/religious functions for those who left their mark on it. The codex was a valuable artifact, worth donating, owning, caring for and protecting. Shifting ownership over time moved it in space, from (assumedly) Mesopotamia and Fustat to the Monastery of the Syrians, before it ended up in Milan. Practices of protection and care ensured the codex a long life, partly by changing its material constitution and partly by preserving it. The notes that I have explored in this chapter suggest that these efforts were reimbursable in an economy of redemption, to be cashed out in prayers. The pages of the codex had their own redemptive efficacy, aiding the note writers and their relatives on the day of judgment. The notes bound people (living and dead), objects, texts and destinies together. The notes also suggest that whatever else the Codex Ambrosianus may have been to its owners, it remained an Old Testament codex as well – the donor possibly intended it to be "studied."

This is the traceable circulation of the codex that carried 2 Baruch through history. Why does this history of circulation matter to the dominant academic narrative of 2 Baruch? It matters, first, because it shows how the copy of 2 Baruch is intimately connected to the codex that contains it and the practices of the communities that engaged with it. Those who read and handled 2 Baruch were bound by the contract formulated by the notes inscribed in the codex to pray for the note-writers. In other words, the copy was an integral part of an artefact-oriented cultural practice. Reading 2 Baruch ensured the remembrance of those who had invested in the continuing life of the codex because the act

of reading presupposed prayers. Thus, 2 Baruch was not an immaterial text, or foreign to the reading practices of Syriac Christians. The copy was an intrinsic part of the larger cultural engagement with manuscripts.

Second, the history of circulation of the codex matters because the practices that it recapitulates came to ensure our current access to the only extant complete copy of the book. In fact, the care for and appreciation of the codex as a culturally, religiously and economically valuable artifact ensured the very survival of the copy of 2 Baruch. The Monastery of the Syrians provided a stable repository for the codex. Binders such as Ya'qub cared for it; others branded it and tied it to the monastery. The material constitution of the manuscript as a *deluxe* codex made it worth protecting. The fact that it contained the books of the Old Testament – all of them – would have made the efforts even more worthwhile.

In other words, were it not for the fact that 2 Baruch was included in a codex of such magnitude in the first place and the fact that these features of the codex made it worth protecting, we may not have known 2 Baruch at all – or at least not until the 1970s. The survival of the one, assumedly complete, copy that has come down to us depends on the appreciation of the material aspects of the codex itself, the cultural assessment of it in the communities in which it circulated and all of the individuals who preserved the Codex Ambrosianus. Without them, the research history on 2 Baruch would look very different. In effect, our current access to the text of this book depends thoroughly on their work and we owe the very survival of 2 Baruch in the embodiment of the Codex Ambrosianus to the many hands that cared for the codex and kept it throughout the ages.

It is thus discomforting that it took more than hundred and fifty years for this part of the story of 2 Baruch to be told. Although the sources that we need to narrate key parts of it are available, scholars of 2 Baruch have never given priority to the circulation history of the book. Thus, although this circulation history is interesting and valuable in its own right, it has fallen victim to the double trouble of textual scholarship: it sheds light neither on the origin of the text nor on the origin of the codex. In terms of ethics, the consequence of the lack of attention paid to the circulation history is the invisibility of those who ensured the survival of the manuscript. We depend fully on their labor. Whereas they have asked us to remember them, the priorities and practices of textual scholarship have pushed them into oblivion.

Chapter 3

Active Readers Have Their Say:
Engaging with the Copy of 2 Baruch

The text in the columns of Syriac manuscripts often shares the page with additional notes and marks. These notes and marks appear in the margins, between the lines and in the intercolumns. Later hands added them after the process of copying the text into the columns was complete. As such, they are signs of engagement with the codex by active readers.[1] Some are short verbal notes; others are non-verbal marks. They may be intentional and even the result of a structured effort or they may be the accidental traces of physical handling. Although the scholarly interest in additional notes has experienced an increase in recent years,[2] the large majority of these notes and marks in Syriac (and other) manuscripts are still largely untapped sources of information on the long life of codices and the texts embodied in them.

   With the exception of Konrad D. Jenner's brief, but important, 1993 article, "A Review of the Methods by Which Syriac Biblical and Related Manuscripts Have Been Described and Analysed: Some Preliminary Remarks," his PhD thesis, "De perikopentitles van de geïllustreerde Syrische kanselbijbel van Parijs" (1994), and Vergani's article, "Reception History and Annotations on the Ambrosian Peshiṭta" (2019), the study of additional notes in the Codex Ambrosianus is still

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[1] I apply the term "active reader" to refer to a reader who has left visually accessible marks on the manuscript in the process of preparing for, facilitating, improving or in other ways commenting on the reading of and engagement with the copied text (my use of the term is inspired by Anthony Grafton's terms "active reader"/"active reading" in, "The Humanist as Reader," in *A History of Reading in the West,* ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999], 179–212 at 207–9). I apply the term "reading" broadly to refer to various forms of engagement with a text in the given material shape of a manuscript. I include practices such as reciting text in various settings, reading for oneself, brief viewing, "scrolling" and other handling with the purpose of consulting the textual contents on the pages of the manuscript. My use of the term may include practices that we, today, would see as separate, including memorization, engaging with text that has already been memorized (text as support), reading aloud, as well as slow reading (Cf., Bremer-McCollum, "Notes and Colophons," 112; Penn, "Know Thy Enemy," 235).

[2] Cf., e. g., Lied and Maniaci, eds., *Bible as Notepad*; Jeff W. Childers, *Divining Gospel: Oracles of Interpretation in a Syriac Manuscript of John*, Manuscripta Biblica 4 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

in an early phase.[3] The traces of active readers surviving in the copy of 2 Baruch have barely been mentioned in earlier scholarship at all.

Some of the notes and marks in the Codex Ambrosianus probably escaped attention in the past because scholars based their work on Ceriani's facsimile edition. Leo Haefeli, for instance, noted that:

> Sonst fand der Druck kaum einen Buchstaben im Original vor, der undeutlich geschrieben oder korrumpiert war. Ceriani hat hierauf den Steindruck selber mit dem Original verglichen, so daβ man sagen darf, der Druck ersetzt die Handschrift sozusagen vollkommen.[4]

On the publication of the two volumes in 1878 and 1883, the scholarly community celebrated the facsimile edition as a technological masterpiece, and for good reasons. At the time, the publication of the photolitographical edition marked a huge step forward, rendering the text in the columns easily readable. Due to its general accessibility, the facsimile remains an invaluable tool to date.[5]

However, many of the marks and some of the faint notes that survive on the pages of the codex do not show in the edition. Furthermore, notes that someone had attempted to erase (by scraping or smearing) are occasionally readable in the manuscript but not in the facsimile.[6] Since scholars trusted the facsimile, as Haefeli did, or since they had no other choice than to trust it due to the inaccessibility of the manuscript itself, many of the notes and marks in the Codex Ambrosianus have passed under the scholarly radar.

In addition, a large number of the notes are in fact clearly visible in the facsimile, but despite this scholars have not studied them. An important reason for the limited interest is that scholars have used the Codex Ambrosianus primarily for text-critical purposes and prioritized the exploration of the text in the columns. Since the notes and marks are the products of later hands, scholars have

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[3] Jenner, "Review of the Methods," 255–66; idem, "De periokopentitles," 372–400, 412–13; Emidio Vergani, "Reception History and Annotations on the Ambrosian Peshitta," in *Gli studi di storiographia. Tradizione, memoria e modernitá,* ed. Alba Fedeli et al., Orientalia Ambrosiana 6 (Milan: Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 2019), 401–24. See, also, Ceriani, *Fragmenta,* xiv; Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Details in the Margin – Not Marginal Details: A Liturgical Annotation in the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus," Blog post, Religion – Manuscripts – Media, 24 September 2015 (http://livlied.blogspot.no/2015/09/details-in-margin-not-marginal-details.html [accessed 20 April 2020].

[4] Haefeli, *Peschitta des Alten Testamentes*, 75. Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "What Facsimiles May Do for You: The Syriac Codex Ambrosianus (7a1) Reimagined," *Religion–Manuscripts–Media Culture Blog*, 20 May 2016, http://livlied.blogspot.no/2016/05/what-facsimiles-may-do-for-you-syriac.html (accessed 20 April 2020).

[5] The accessibility of the facsimile edition was one of the reasons for using the Codex Ambrosianus as the main manuscript source for the editions of the Peshitta Old Testament, published by the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament and the Leiden Peshitta Institute (de Boer, "Preface," 7).

[6] Now they are observable in the digitized, online images of the codex. Cf., e. g., the note close to Job 14:7, in the mid outer margin of folio 63v in image 138 of B21Inf. (http://213.21.17 2.25/0b02da82801083c7 [accessed 22 May 2020]).

categorized them as irrelevant to the project of editing and interpreting the text. Another reason may be a concern for aesthetics. Some scholars may have opined that these traces of active readers disturb the aesthetics of the venerable codex and are better overlooked.

In the current chapter, I explore the traces of active readers that survive on the pages of the Codex Ambrosianus as important sources to the continuing engagement with the manuscript. The notes and marks allow us to catch glimpses of how readers put the codex to use over time and to explore readers' engagement with the copy of 2 Baruch. Importantly, the study of the notes also provides an important corrective tool for the discursive references to the Codex Ambrosianus in the scholarly narrative of 2 Baruch. What can we learn about the use of the Codex Ambrosianus and the reader engagement with 2 Baruch if we allow ourselves to listen to the voices in the margins?

3.1 Notes and Marks in the Codex Ambrosianus

In comparison with many other Syriac manuscripts, the margins and intercolumns of the Codex Ambrosianus are relatively clean. Indeed, and as pointed out in the two previous chapters, the current material state of the codex suggests that its use cannot have been extensive. Still, there is no doubt that it has, in fact, been put to use and that it carries the marks of active readers.[7]

Four categories of traces of active readers survive on the pages of the codex.[8] The first trace is thumbing – involuntary signs of physical handling left on its

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[7] This chapter deals with additional notes and marks entered secondarily, by people other than the scribe. My criteria for determining whether a note belongs to this category are the following: first, the notes and marks are most often located outside the columns. Second, the notes and marks generally contain scripts that are inconsistent with the script of the text in the columns. Often, the ductus, the drafting of certain letters, and the level of consistency differs from the text of the writing area, as does the size of the note or mark. Third, often another ink has been used, and the level of preservation of that ink may differ from the ink of the text in the columns. The identification of a note or mark as secondary is often determined by a combination of these factors. It is, of course, possible, that the scribe who copied the main body of text in the codex added notes too, using another ink, script, or writing technique. Some of the notes and marks in the codex may have been inscribed by other participants in the production process, such as an overseer correcting mistakes. Although these notes are technically by another hand, they are still part of the production process and as such they are not the primary interest of the present chapter. See, further, Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Bible as Notepad: Exploring Annotations and Annotation Practices in Biblical Manuscripts," in *Bible as Notepad: Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, Manuscripta Biblica 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 1–9; Daniel K. Falk, "In the Margins of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Bible as Notepad: Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, Manuscripta Biblica 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 10–38 at 11.

[8] I could have added a fifth category, non-verbal adornments, to the list. It is likely that the decorations were added to the codex after the copying of the text (cf., chapter 1). There are also

pages by the hands that touched it. The distribution of thumbing that survives[9] displays a relatively common pattern. Visible signs of thumbing appear mainly in the outer margins of the codex – typically with the highest density on the edge of the lower half of the folios.[10] Furthermore, the distribution suggests that the first part of the codex, and particularly the copy of Genesis, has been handled more frequently than the other parts. In the rest of the codex it is less frequent, but relatively even.

The second surviving trace of active readers worthy of our attention is wax stains. These stains were probably caused by wax candles used to facilitate reading in dim light. Some wax stains may have entered the codex during the production process. Others appear on top of the text in the writing area, which suggests that they ended up there at a later point in time. These stains are interesting to the current study because they constitute the physical remains of reading practices.[11] Wax stains are frequently found in Syriac codices,[12] and the Codex Ambrosianus is no exception. Although the stains are relatively few

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some examples of erasures of former decorations and additions of new decorative elements (cf., e. g., f. 212r. My lack of knowledge of Syriac decorations and illuminations prevents a closer study. Since there are no additional decorative elements in the copy of 2 Baruch, my shortcoming is less acute.

[9] The team that rebound the Codex Ambrosianus in 2008 noted that, although its conservation of the codex was gentle, traces of handling had been removed during earlier conservation campaigns (conversation with Oltolina, Milan, 17 March 2016). During the nineteenth (and the twentieth) century, this was a highly common practice in European libraries (Cf., Laura E. Parodi, "Chapter 5. Conservation and Preservation," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Alessandro Bausi et al. (Hamburg: Tredition, 2015), 539–43). Furthermore, the quality of the parchment of the Codex Ambrosianus varies, hence the receptiveness and preservation of the greasy substances left by thumbing vary too. Finally, these signs of physical handling are difficult to date. The marks may in principle have been left there at any point throughout the long history of the codex, even by modern and contemporary readers. An example of traceable nineteenth-century handling is the ink smears and thumbing in red and cyclamen color, which may be ascribed to Ceriani's work on the codex in the 1890s. Ceriani used a red (vol. 8) and cyclamen colored (vol. 1) pen to take notes in B 21 ter inf. and bis inf. (that is, his personal copy of the facsimile edition). The pen tainted his hands and contaminated the pages of the codex. Cf., e. g., fascicle 8, pp. 554, 556, 563; fascicle 1, pp. 6, 12 (cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Consider the Most Trivial Mystery of All Mysteries of the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus Solved," *Religion–Manuscripts–Media Culture Blog*, 4 May 2016 (http://livlied.blogspot.no/2016/05/consider-most-trivial-mystery-of-all.html [accessed 20 April 2020]).

[10] Cf., Katryn M. Rudy, "Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use in Medieval Manuscripts Using a Densitometer," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 4/1–2 (2010): 1–44 at 2–5.

[11] The interest in the physical and chemical aspects of manuscripts and the biological remains of readers' engagement with ancient and medieval codices is currently on the rise. Cf., e. g., the work of Ira Rabin at the Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfing (Berlin), as well as the current DNA analysis project at the Bodleian Library in Oxford http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/07/goats-bookworms-monk-s-kiss-biologists-reveal-hidden-history-ancient-gospels (accessed 28 August 2019).

[12] I have come across wax stains in the majority of the Syriac manuscripts that I have studied. They are (logically) particularly frequent in manuscripts that were in regular use, such as some lectionary manuscripts and service books.

compared with some other codices, traces of wax appear throughout the codex.[13] There are wax stains on the pages containing the copy of 2 Baruch as well.[14] This suggests that different parts of 2 Baruch, or alternatively the whole of the text, have been read by one or more readers who were in need of additional light to decipher it.

The third visible trace of engagement by active readers is additional notes – both *ad hoc*, singular notes and more systematic series of notes running through the codex. The Codex Ambrosianus may display a lower frequency of such notes than some other extant Syriac biblical manuscripts,[15] but the amount and distribution of notes in the codex is far from exceptional.[16] The most commonly found types of additional notes in the Codex Ambrosianus are markers of unit division, corrections, verbal notes and symbols highlighting special contents or passages in the text and, as we shall soon see, liturgical notes.[17] Thus, active readers added aids to navigate the codex and to assure the correct reading of a given piece of text, as well as to identify and retrieve the location of sections that they found interesting and appropriate for a particular practice.

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[13] Cf., e. g., folios 58r, 110r, and 267r. Again, conservation has made the study of wax stains, and hence indications of readers' engagement, more difficult. In fact, all the wax stains that I observed in the Codex Ambrosianus show attempts of removal using a sharp tool. Signs of this process are visible as slight damages to the surface layer of the parchment or as scraping of the parchment. The attempt to remove wax stains is mentioned explicitly in the documentation from the 2008 campaign. A note in the current binding states: "Operazioni di lavoro svolte: controllo della numerazione, sfascicolazione, spolveratura e sgommatura del margine superiore delle pagine, rimozione delle deiezioni di insetti e delle macchie di cera; (…)" (Cf., http://213 .21.172.25/0b02da82801083c7 [accessed 21 May 2020], image 003), but removal may also have taken place earlier. However, even though the tactile traces of wax have gone, due to the oily components of the wax that soaks into the parchment and the tendency of the wax to leave circular shapes on the surface, such stains are still detectable as circular discolouring of the parchment.

[14] Stains appear on folios 258v, 261r, 263r and 267r.

[15] Like, for instance, Paris, BnF, Syr. 341 and Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58. Cf., furthermore, the study of the Rabbula Gospels and its many notes (Massimo Bernabò, ed., *Il Tetravangelo di Rabbula. Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 1.56: L'illustrazione del Nuovo Testamento nella Siria del VI secolo* [Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008]).

[16] Compare, e. g., London, BL, Add. 17,105 (dated to the same time period); or Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo. I. 1,2 (cf., chapter 1 of the current volume). Neither of them contains substantially more notes than the Codex Ambrosianus.

[17] These categories of additional notes are common. Examples of corrections appear, e. g., on folios 8v and 244r. Cross-shaped symbols in the margins may draw attention to specific sections or serve as unit division markers (cf., e. g., ff. 241r, 238v). Markers of unit division are particularly frequent and follow several different systems. The most pronounced (and most frequently studied) are the *kephalaia*-marks, found in sections of the first part of the codex (in Genesis, Exodus, Numbers and Leviticus, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel but not in Deuteronomy, Psalms, Kings, Proverbs, Wisdom of Solomon, Song of Songs, Qohelet and Jeremiah [but cf., f. 171v, first intercolumn]). The *kephalaia*-marks probably imitate the use in C 313 inf. (Ceriani, "Praefatio," 8; Brock, "Text Division," 200–21).

The fourth category of engagement by active readers that survives on the pages of the codex – 2 Baruch included – is erasures. The erasures in the Codex Ambrosianus take different shapes. Some are the result of scraping the parchment with a sharp tool. Others are better described as "smears" – more or less successful attempts at effacing the ink. Some of the erasures in the codex took place in the production process, carried out by the scribe or a corrector and not by later readers.[18] Other erasures are the result of reader engagement, for instance the partly erased additional notes in the margins of Genesis (folios 1v–11v).[19]

To what extent can we use these traces of active readers to say something about identifiable historical readers or communities? It is important to keep in mind that a large part of the additional notes and marks in the Codex Ambrosianus are difficult or impossible to date. Many of the verbal notes are typically very brief, and some of them are archaizing;[20] as such, they are hard to date paleographically. Hence, as a methodological precaution, we must acknowledge that some of these notes could have entered the codex at any point during the long history of circulation of the codex, in principle also after the codex arrived in Milan.[21]

It is equally important to remember that much of the historical reader engagement may not have left a trace at all. Many readers would have engaged with the codex without writing in it, and others did not even leave traceable, involuntary marks on its pages.[22] Furthermore, it is evident that some signs of later reader engagement, such as wax stains, have been removed during con-

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[18] On some occasions the scribe scraped the parchment with a sharp tool to remove the ink of a mistaken word(s). Subsequently he overwrote the erasure with the correct word(s) (e.g., ff. 261r, 275v).

[19] These partly erased notes were probably inscribed relatively early. At least they were both inscribed and erased before the inscription of the *kephalaia*-marks. Cf., folio 7v, second intercolumn, where the *kephalaia*-mark has been moved slightly to the right since its preferred space was already occupied by the erased liturgical note.

[20] E.g., potentially, the catchwords on folios 12v and 48v (cf., chapter 2).

[21] It is evident that some of the notes in the manuscript were indeed inscribed by its Italian owners, for instance the folio numbers (in Arabic numerals) in the upper margins of some folios, some names of biblical books and brief annotations in Latin (e.g., on f. 224r–v) as well as the chapter enumeration. Some of this activity can be ascribed to the editorial practices of Giggi and Ceriani (cf., his "Praefatio," 8). Although a majority of these notes are recognizable as the product of the European owners due to the script that they applied, it cannot be ruled out that some of the notes and signs in Syriac script could also have been added while in Italian ownership. The production of Syriac manuscripts continued in Italy in the period after the Codex Ambrosianus ended up in Milan (Cf., e.g., Galbiati, "Fondi orientali minori," 190–92; Borbone, "'Monsignore Vescovo di Soria'," 80, 89). Or. 58 contains several examples of notes added by Italian scholars writing in Syriac scripts (Cf., Borbone, "Un progetto di Bibbia Poliglotta," 204–7; my own inspection of the codex in Florence, 6–7 June 2019). In addition, it cannot be ruled out that either Michele Maronita or Moses of Mardin, who may have brought the codex from Egypt, could be responsible for some of the notes in the Codex Ambrosianus.

[22] Thus, these readers do not qualify as "active readers."

servation.[23] Although conservators today would generally not remove remains of ink from the margins of a manuscript, it is evident that this has happened at some point during the history of conservation of the Codex Ambrosianus.[24]

The goal of the current study is not to date the readers' marks and notes, to identify their originators or to draw firm conclusions about the locations where they entered the codex. Rather, I primarily aim to explore the types of engagement practices in which 2 Baruch, in the particular embodiment of the Codex Ambrosianus, was a part. With the above precautions in mind, it is still reasonable to assume that many of the notes and marks in the codex are the remains of medieval Syriac Christian reading practices. Since the codex was kept in the Monastery of the Syrians for more than half a millennium, many of the notes are likely to have originated there, reflecting monastic reading practices.

3.2 "Nicht für kirchliche Zwecke"

The category of liturgical notes added to the Codex Ambrosianus by later hands is of particular interest to the current chapter. The study of these notes challenges the conceptions in previous research about the function of the codex, the assessment of the inclusion of 2 Baruch in it and the value of exploring additional notes.

In the preface of the facsimile edition, Ceriani stated that the codex does not appear to have been produced for liturgical purposes.[25] To substantiate his claim,

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[23] The chemical substance of the wax could have been tested and potentially dated had it not been removed during the conservation of the codex.

[24] As noted in chapter 1, a two-dot grapheme appears in the margin or intercolumn on the right-hand side of the column on the pages of the latter part of the codex (f. 209r onwards), complementing the use of rosettes. This two-dot grapheme has been erased on several occasions, presumably by later conservators who mistook it for dirt and did not see that the system of symbols marking the unit division had changed. It is possible that it has been mistaken for fly droppings. Cf., the note from the 2008 conservation team, which mentions "rimozione delle deiezioni di insetti."

[25] Ceriani wrote: "Codex noster non videtur scriptus in usum ecclesiasticum, cum desint notae lectionum, quae solent codicibus Syris in textu vel margine apponi, nec vestigum sit indicis earum praemissi, ut interdum fit in iisdem codicibus. Una vel altera primae manus nota lectionis in textu pro sua raritate videtur ex eo irrepsisse, quod saltem unus alterve liber ex codicibus ecclesiasticus describeretur" ("Praefatio," 8). The meaning of "usum ecclesiasticum" is not necessarily straightforward. However, since the next subclause refers explicitly to liturgical notes, my interpretation of the expression is that the codex was not copied to be in liturgical use. The term "liturgical" is used in many ways in scholarship, hence the English expression "liturgical use" is not necessarily clear either. In the present volume, if nothing else is explicitly noted, I apply the expression "liturgical use" to refer to the usage of scripted scriptural readings in particular, in public, structured worship practices. In other words, I imply a relatively strict use of the term. Cf., furthermore, the discussion in chapter 4.

he pointed out that the codex includes only some scattered liturgical titles and notes and that it does not contain an index that would help the reader to navigate and identify the dedicated readings of liturgical events. Ceriani's hypothesis gained traction in later research and for a long time it shaped the scholarly conception of the Codex Ambrosianus as a codex that was not intended for public service.

In 1963, Ceriani's hypothesis entered the research debate on 2 Baruch. In the article "Neue Textzeugen der syrischen Baruchapokalypse," Willem Baars stated that:

> Die Auffassung liesse sich ja verteidigen, dass die Mailänder Handschrift, die ausser der Baruchapokalypse noch zwei andere Schriften (nämlich das 4. Buch Esra und einen Teil des 7. Buches von Flavius Josephus' 'Bellum Judaicum') zu der üblichen Reihe biblischer Schriften hinzufügt, nicht für kirchliche Zwecke bestimmt war. Dass viele Rubriken und liturgische Vermerke, die sich in anderen Handschriften dieser Zeit finden, hier fehlen, könnte eine solche Schlussfolgerung wahrscheinlich machen.[26]

In this passage, Baars defended Ceriani's hypothesis that the codex was not meant for use in public worship contexts.[27] He argued that the codex lacks many of the liturgical rubrics and marks that other manuscripts produced at the time would typically contain. Baars then connected this feature of the codex with its inclusion of 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and book 7 (*sic*) of Josephus's Jewish War. Baars's assessment of the Codex Ambrosianus and the connection that he established between the hypothesis of non-liturgical intention and the inclusion of the three books are part of his engagement with Emile Schürer's 1909 claim that there are no signs of the use of 2 Baruch among Christians.[28] In other words, Baars linked the special character of the codex to the failing success of 2 Baruch. In his article, Baars applied Ceriani's hypothesis rhetorically to highlight the importance of the finding that he published; Baars's article reported the surprising appearance of lections from 2 Baruch in two Syriac lectionary manuscripts.[29] The character of the Codex Ambrosianus served to stress this element of surprise.

In his presentation of the Codex Ambrosianus in the introductory chapter of the 2003 monograph, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Mes-*

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[26] Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477 n. 3.

[27] Baars did not define "kirchliche Zwecke," but it is likely that he was referring directly to Ceriani's use of the term "in usum ecclesiasticum" ("Praefatio," 8). Baars linked his discussion to the lack of liturgical rubrics and marks, hence it is safe to assume that he implied public worship practice.

[28] "Von einer Benützung des Buches in der christlichen Kirche findet sich keine sichere Spur" (Emlie Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, Vol. 3 [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1909], 313). However, two sentences later, he also stated: "Doch beweist die Erhaltung des Buches durch die Mailänder Peschito-Handschrift, daß es wenigstens in der syrischen Kirche auch später noch gebraucht wurde."

[29] I will explore the four extant lectionary manuscripts that contain readings from 2 Baruch in the next chapter of this volume.

sage, Mark F. Whitters heightened this rhetoric. Whitters stated that, "[t]he text was remarkably devoid of scribal notes, even though the folio pages offered generous margins. It was, as Ceriani noted, as if the book had been withheld from normal ecclesial usage."[30] As this passage shows, by 2003, the claim about the non-liturgical intention of the Codex Ambrosianus had been transformed into a claim about its non-liturgical usage. Whitters directed our attention to the assumed peculiarities of the codex: the codex is "remarkably devoid" of notes even though the margins invite them and the codex is "withheld" from otherwise "normal" ecclesial use. The claim appeared in the introductory part of Whitters's book, where he presented the text and text traditions of (what he referred to as) the Epistle of Second Baruch and established the difference between the wide circulation of this epistle and the singular attestation of the book, 2 Baruch. Also in Whitters's case, the peculiarities of the Codex Ambrosianus thus became part of a narrative about 2 Baruch's failure.

As this trajectory of the academic discussion about the Codex Ambrosianus shows, three arguments have been put forward to argue the codex's incompatibility with liturgical engagement. The first argument is that there is no index in the codex. The second is that, whereas other contemporaneous codices contain liturgical titles, there are hardly any such titles in the Codex Ambrosianus. The third argument is that the margins of the codex contain few liturgical notes added by later hands.[31] The first two arguments concern the purpose of the Codex Ambrosianus as a production unit; the third has to do with the engagement of the codex as a circulation unit.[32] In the research history of 2 Baruch, all three have been used to argue the connection between the liturgical inaptness of the codex and a lack in the history of circulation of 2 Baruch.

In his 1993 article, Jenner critically reiterated Ceriani's claim about the Codex Ambrosianus and addressed all three arguments. He held that a reader could have navigated the codex with the aid of an external index. An example of such an index survives in the sixth-century manuscript London, BL, Add. 14,528.[33] Jenner then showed that the occasional liturgical title does occur in the Codex Ambrosianus and that the codex does not stand out from other early codices in this regard.[34] He also pointed out that later hands have indeed added some li-

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[30] Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 5.

[31] I apply the term "liturgical titles" to talk about rubricated titles in the text of the columns that bookmark lections from scripture. I apply the term "liturgical notes" to refer to additional notes in the margins that serve the same purpose.

[32] For the terms "production unit" and "circulation unit," see chapter 2.

[33] Jenner, "Review of the Methods," 256–59.

[34] E. g., folios 61v, 62v, 82r, and 132v. Cf., Jenner, "Review of the Methods," 256–59; idem, "De perikopentitels," 455–60. However, in my view, the liturgical titles occurring in Job, Samuel and Proverbs are better understood as the result of the scribe's faithful adherence to his *Vorlage*, than as an attempt to prepare the codex for worship practice. The scribe probably copied the text of the various books from different exemplars, containing one book, or a small-

turgical notes in the margins.[35] Based on these findings, Jenner concluded that the codex could have been produced for liturgical use and, furthermore, that there is reason to believe that the codex was in fact put to use in public service.

As Jenner's study indicated, Ceriani's hypothesis and the arguments that scholars have put forward to defend it are ripe for further critical engagement. In the current chapter, I turn my attention to the third and last argument – the lack of additional liturgical notes in the margins. Based on a new study of these notes, I revisit the conclusions that scholars have drawn about the impact of the Codex Ambrosianus on the destiny of 2 Baruch.

3.2.1 Liturgical Notes in the Codex Ambrosianus

Whereas Jenner based his 1993 study on Ceriani's facsimile edition,[36] I base the following presentation on a close study of the codex in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana.[37] Many of the notes that I present here were also mentioned by Jenner. Given that he had access to the facsimile only, his results are astonishing. However, since he was not able to consult the manuscript in Milan at the time, some of the notes were simply not accessible to him. The following presentation covers substantially more occurrences than Jenner's analysis, but I still do not make claims that my analysis is exhaustive. Advanced imaging would probably reveal that even more notes were at some point, aiding the reader's navigation of the codex.[38]

3.2.1a A Series of Notes in Gen 1–39

The first example of liturgical notes in the Codex Ambrosianus is the series of fifty partly erased notes in the margins of the copy of Gen 1–39, on folios 1v–11v.[39]

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er collection of books. Some of them may have contained liturgical titles, others may not (See Lied, "2 Baruch and the Codex Ambrosianus," 97–98). Given that the Codex Ambrosianus was manufactured in the seventh century, the copying would rely on manuscripts that were older than that. The surviving manuscripts from the fifth and sixth centuries typically contain few liturgical titles (Brock, "Syriac Versions in Liturgy," 6–7).

[35] Jenner also showed that the text division of some of the books of the codex corresponds to the division found in manuscripts that were used for public reading. Furthermore, although the codex lacks the Odes and the associated prayers, the inclusion of the Odes should not be expected due to the early date of the codex ("Review of the Methods," 256–57).

[36] Jenner noted that the Biblioteca Ambrosiana was under restoration when he wrote the article and that the consultation of the codex was impossible ("Review of the Methods," 256; conversation, 12 December 2013).

[37] The following presentation builds on my inspection of the codex in Milan. Thanks are due to Lucas Van Rompay for the collaboration on 5 May 2016, and to Emidio Vergani for several conversations in the period from 2014 to date.

[38] Cf., the discussion below of the erasure on folio 259r.

[39] Cf., the digital images online (B21Inf., images 014–034: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82 801083c7 [accessed 22 May 2020]). The notes on folios 1v–11v are inscribed vertically in the

The notes are visible in the manuscript today as ink smears. The attempted erasure has left some of the notes unreadable, whereas others are – although to varying degrees – still decipherable. The word ܩܪܝܢܐ, "lection," is discernible on several occasions.[40] The word ܒܚܕܒܫܒܐ, "Sunday," is sometimes discernible as well, for example in the note in the first intercolumn of folio 3v.[41] Each of the erased notes is systematically followed by associated notes marking the end of the lection. These notes read ܫܠܡ, "ended [is]" and each of them is numbered. The notes in Gen 1–39 make up an ordered series of lections. They share the same format, they are the product of the same hand and they cover a substantial part of Genesis – where one note ends, the next takes over.

   Vergani pointed out that many of the notes identify lections for liturgical events between Easter Sunday and Pentecost.[42] According to Vergani, this identification and the number of notes, may indicate that the passages were to be read as a *lectio continua* during the Easter season. Vergani also observed that the set of liturgical notes in the copy of Genesis is in exact agreement with a Coptic Pentateuch manuscript.[43] Given the history of the Codex Ambrosianus, this suggests that the notes probably entered the codex in the Monastery of the Syrians.[44]

   As pointed out above, the additional liturgical notes in the margins of Genesis (folios 1v–11v) were later partly effaced (smeared). The erasure of liturgical titles and notes is not uncommon in Syriac codices. The phenomenon appears, for instance, in Paris, BnF, Syr. 341.[45] One explanation is that the lections simply fell out of use.

3.2.1b The Consecration of the Myron

A second series of additional notes in the codex supplies readings for the Consecration of the Myron.[46] Just like the notes in Gen 1–39, each of the notes consists of two parts. An initial part identifying the lection and indicating where it

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margins and in the intercolumns. The notes, in Serto, are written in black ink, most commonly in a two-lines layout. They are located close to the relevant columns and linked to the text in the columns by the use of a symbol (a dash and a circle, alternatively a dash and two circles, one at each end of the dash). This superlinear symbol appears over the starting word of the sentence that it relates to and reoccurs in the margin at the beginning of the note. The last word of the lection is also marked with this symbol.

   [40] Cf., e. g., the second note in the first intercolumn of folio 1v; the first note in the first inter-column of folio 2; the note in the outer margin of folio 4v; and both the notes appearing on folio 6v.

   [41] Cf., also the two notes on folio 9v.

   [42] Cf., e. g., folio 4v (cf., Vergani, "Reception History," 412).

   [43] Vergani, "Reception History," 414.

   [44] Cf., the discussions of coexistence of Syriac and Coptic monks in the monastery in chapters 2 and 4.

   [45] Cf., e. g., folios 92r, 93r, 94r, 119r, 137r, 139r and 142r.

   [46] These notes are inscribed vertically in the intercolumns and margins in brownish black ink.

starts, reads ܪܡܘܪܐ ܚܡܙ., "For the Consecration of the Myron." The latter part reads simply ܥܠܡ, "ended [is]," sometimes suggested only by the abbreviation ܀,[47] indicating the end of the lection.[48] The notes were inscribed by at least two hands.[49]

The first of these notes appears in the first intercolumn of folio 8v, and the last that I have been able to identify is located on folio 197r. Some of the notes are easily readable in the manuscript, such as the notes on folios 8v, 144v and 157r.[50] Other occurrences of these notes have been either partly[51] or fully erased. Many of the fully erased notes may still be identified as examples of the same system because the ink has contaminated the adjacent folio and the letters can be deciphered there. At other times, the erasure has affected only part of the note, or has just smeared the ink without fully removing it.[52] If we assume that all of these notes were at one point identifying lections for the Consecration of the Myron, there are at least twenty such notes in the codex.[53] One possible explanation for the substantial number is that the twenty notes belong to different sets, inscribed at different points in time. At least one set of notes was erased as it fell out of use, giving way to new ones.

3.2.1c Nativity, Pentecost, Epiphany and Commemoration of the Just

The third and final example of liturgical notes added by later hands consist of two notes appearing on folios 42v and 44v, and three notes on folios 6v, 63v and 177v.[54] These notes do not belong to a unified system, as the two categories of notes discussed above did. It is likely, though, that the notes on folios 42 v and

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[47] Cf., folio 144v, the mid second intercolumn.

[48] Some of the notes are numbered with Syriac letters, for instance the notes occurring on folios 144v and 157r.

[49] Most of the readable notes seem to have been inscribed by the same hand, but some of them are by other hands (cf., e.g., the notes on ff. 144v and 8v). It is also possible that what appears in the codex today as a two-part note, marking the beginning and end of the reading, is the result of two processes of inscription – at least in some of the instance discussed here. Some of the end notes were inscribed by the same hand that wrote the note on folio 144v. This hand is characterized, for instance, by a particularly open *shin*. Cf., e.g., folio 157r.

[50] Cf., the digital images B21Inf, images 028, 300 and 325, http://213.21.172.25/0b02da828 01083c7 (accessed 22 June 2020).

[51] Cf., the notes on folios 61r, 69r, 86r, 103r, 124v, 132v, and 169v.

[52] Cf., e.g., folios 25r, 80v, 121r, and 197r. On some occasions, for instance, the end-note has not been erased. On other occasions, the layout and location of these erased areas give away the standard two-part format of the system of notes, starting with the identifying note and ending with the end-note at a certain distance from it in the intercolumns, but these areas are so successfully erased that their former content cannot be ascertained beyond reasonable doubt. Cf., e.g., folios 138v and 139v.

[53] Jenner observed nine notes based on the facsimile edition ("Review of the Methods," 257).

[54] Cf., the digital images (B21Inf, images 024, 096, 100, 138, http://213.21.172.25/0b02d a82801083c7 and B21bis-inf., image 014, http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (both accessed 22 May 2020).

44v and the three notes on folios 6v, 63v and 177v, respectively, were inscribed by the same hand.

The two notes appearing on folios 42v and 44v are in black ink and written vertically, both in the upper second intercolumn. The first, ܪܦܢܛܩܘܣܛܝ, "For Pentecost," appears close to Num 11:25. The second reads ܠܕ ܐܠܕܐ[.]ܗ, "Lection for the Nativity of God," in the intercolumn close to Num 17:22.

The three liturgical notes on folios 6v, 63v and 177v are also inscribed vertically but in red ink and thus presumably emulate rubricated liturgical titles.[55] The note found in the outer margin of folio 177v is situated close to the first column containing the end of chapter 7 and the beginning of chapter 8 of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. The note reads ܩ, with a superlinear stroke,[56] and ܕܙܕܝܩܐ, "Lection for [the Commemoration of] the Just." This note is located in the proximity of the first line of a passage that is also copied as a lection in a handful of Syriac lectionary manuscripts.[57]

The second liturgical note appears on folio 63v, in association with Job 14:7.[58] This note, in faded red ink, is located in the outer margin of the page, and reads ܩܕܝܠܕܐ, "Lection for the Nativity." Finally, the liturgical note situated in the second intercolumn on folio 6v, reads ܩܕܢܝܣܐ, "Lection for Epiphany." This note is of particular importance to the present discussion because diacritical marks and West Syriac vowel signs in red ink have been added to the text that it scripts for reading, probably by the same hand.[59] The reading aids added to the text on this occasion strongly suggest that the Codex Ambrosianus was used as a cult object to support the recitation of the text in the context of public worship.

3.2.2 A Codex for Special Occasions?

This brief overview of the occurrences of liturgical notes shows that later hands added several such notes to the Codex Ambrosianus. This practice highly recommends the interpretation that the codex has served as the source of scriptural reading at events of public worship. Hence, dedicated attention to

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[55] These notes resemble the format of such titles in Syriac manuscripts, and are similar to the liturgical titles that were in fact copied in the columns of the Codex Ambrosianus by the scribe, for instance in Job (f. 62v) and in 1 Samuel (f. 82r).

[56] The note contains the common abbreviation of "lection," *qoph*, here occurring without the superlinear stroke.

[57] 1 Ep. Bar. 8:1–7, alternatively 8:1–15, or 8:1–3 + 8–15, appears in London, BL, Add. 14,485 (ff. 64v–65r), Add. 14,486 (ff. 74v–75r) and Add. 14,687 (ff. 74r–75v); Bartella, Syriac Catholic Church of St. George (f. 49r–v); Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library, 2 (f. 49 r–v). I have not consulted the latter two manuscripts and depend fully on Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, xxxv–xxxvi. Cf., further, the discussion in chapter 5 of the current volume.

[58] Thanks are due to Geert Jan Veeldman (Milan, 6 May 2016).

[59] See the lower part of the mid column and the upper part of the third column in digital image 024 (B21Inf, http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82801083c7 [accessed 22 May 2020]).

these additional notes shows that scholars' third argument defending Ceriani's hypothesis cannot be upheld.

The use of the codex in liturgical practices was probably not frequent, though. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the Codex Ambrosianus is so well preserved that it cannot have been the object of regular wear and tear. In fact, the liturgical notes themselves may hint at the kind of use to which the codex was subject. As pointed out above, Vergani proposed that the series of notes in Genesis was to be read during the Easter season. Furthermore, according to Gregory bar Hebraeus and Moses bar Kepha, the liturgy of the Consecration of the Myron took place on Maundy Thursday, at the third hour.[60] The other additional notes that I presented above provide lections for major festivals of the church year: Nativity, Pentecost and Epiphany. The potential exception is the note inscribed in the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, which prescribes a lection for an event of commemoration.[61] In other words, the large majority of the notes suggests that this venerable, *deluxe* codex was is use in public service on special occasions. Furthermore, the erasure and replacement of liturgical notes marking the lections for the Consecration of the Myron imply that the Codex Ambrosianus was put to use on special occasions over time.

3.3 Engaging with the Embodied Copy of 2 Baruch

Given the connection that previous scholars have made between the non-liturgical purpose and use of the Codex Ambrosianus and the destiny of 2 Baruch, the notes and marks that survive in the copy of 2 Baruch deserve special attention.

The state of the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus suggests that the frequency of use was not particularly high. The pages that contain 2 Baruch are relatively clean. The margins and the available space in the writing area display few interventions. Hence, there is no reason to exaggerate the identifiable level of engagement with 2 Baruch. Still, a low frequency of traceable use does not make the signs of engagement that are, indeed, present in the copy less interesting. It is clear that the sheets display remaining traces of thumbing – with more or less the same density as the majority of the other books in the codex. It is also clear that the text contains a handful of corrections, which means that someone cared about the correct reading of the text.[62] As mentioned

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[60] Lections from the Old Testament were regularly read during the first part of this liturgy. Cf., bar Hebraeus, *Nomocanon* 3; bar Kepha, *Commentary on Myron* 1 (Baby Varghese, *Moses Bar Kepha: Commentary on Myron*, Texts from Christian Late Antiquity 34 [Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2014], viii, 7).

[61] For the location of this event in the church year, see the discussion in footnote 134 below.

[62] I return to the issue of corrections – and non-corrections – in chapter 6.

in chapter 1, a brief verbal note appears in the first intercolumn of folio 265r, and another, faintly preserved one, is in an erased area in the upper margin of folio 259r. On folio 258v, a cluster of wax stains is visible on the lower, inner part of the page. It is to these scant, but intriguing, traces of engagement that I now turn.

3.3.1 2 Bar 72:1 and the ܟܬ notes

In the lower part of the first intercolumn of folio 265r, close to the column containing 2 Bar 72:1, a later hand has inscribed a Serto note. The note reads ܟܬ (*kaph-taw*). This note is one of a series of such notes in the margins and intercolumns of the Codex Ambrosianus. They appear twenty-seven times in total. On fourteen occasions, the note is recorded in the same form as on folio 265r, reading ܟܬ.[63] At other times, the word is spelled out. Unfortunately, the hand is often unclear. In some of the occurrences the ink is smeared or has bleed and sometimes the last two letters are sloppily or insufficiently shaped and therefore difficult to read. Accordingly, the spectrum of interpretations of this word is ܟܬܒ, ܟܬܘܒ or ܟܬܒ.[64] Hence, it is likely that the note in the intercolumn close to 2 Bar 72:1 is an abbreviation, either of ܟܬܘܒ, the imperative "write!," the passive ܟܬܒ, "written" or the perfect/participle ܟܬܒ, "wrote" or "writing."

The ܟܬ notes – in their variant spellings – are inscribed vertically on the right- or left-hand side of the column. On many occasions, they appear next to the introductory lines of a new section in a text, marked by titles, subsection headings, rosettes or other additional delimitation marks in the margins and intercolumns.[65] The notes are most commonly inscribed in black ink but sometimes also in red.[66] The same hand is responsible for many of the notes. However, on some occasions the note appears to have been inscribed in two sittings – by the same or by a different hand. In these instances, the note first read ܟܬ, before someone added the last two letters (ܒ) in a smaller letter size. This is the case, at least, for the notes that survive on folios 125r, 202v, 204v and 237v.[67]

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[63] Seven of them read ܟܬ (ff. 63v, 138r, 156v, 196v, 203v, 212v, 265r and possibly also 200r). In addition, the notes on folios 125r, 202v, 204v and 237v and potentially 45r, 115v and 131v originally also read ܟܬ. Cf., the presentation of the two-tire notes below.

[64] On folios 6r, 122v and 182v the best reading is ܟܬܘܒ. On folios 36v, 37r and 45r, the third letter in the word may be interpreted as a negligently shaped *waw*, or as a *yud*. On folios 115v the note is preferably read ܟܬܒ. On yet other occasions, for instance on folios 131v, 173r and 198r, the note reads ܟܬܒ, including neither *yud* nor *waw*.

[65] Cf., e. g., folios 6r, 37r, 45r and 138r.

[66] Cf., folios 63v, 125r, 138r, 156v, 200r, 203r–v and 205r–v.

[67] Potentially also the notes on folios 45r and 115v.
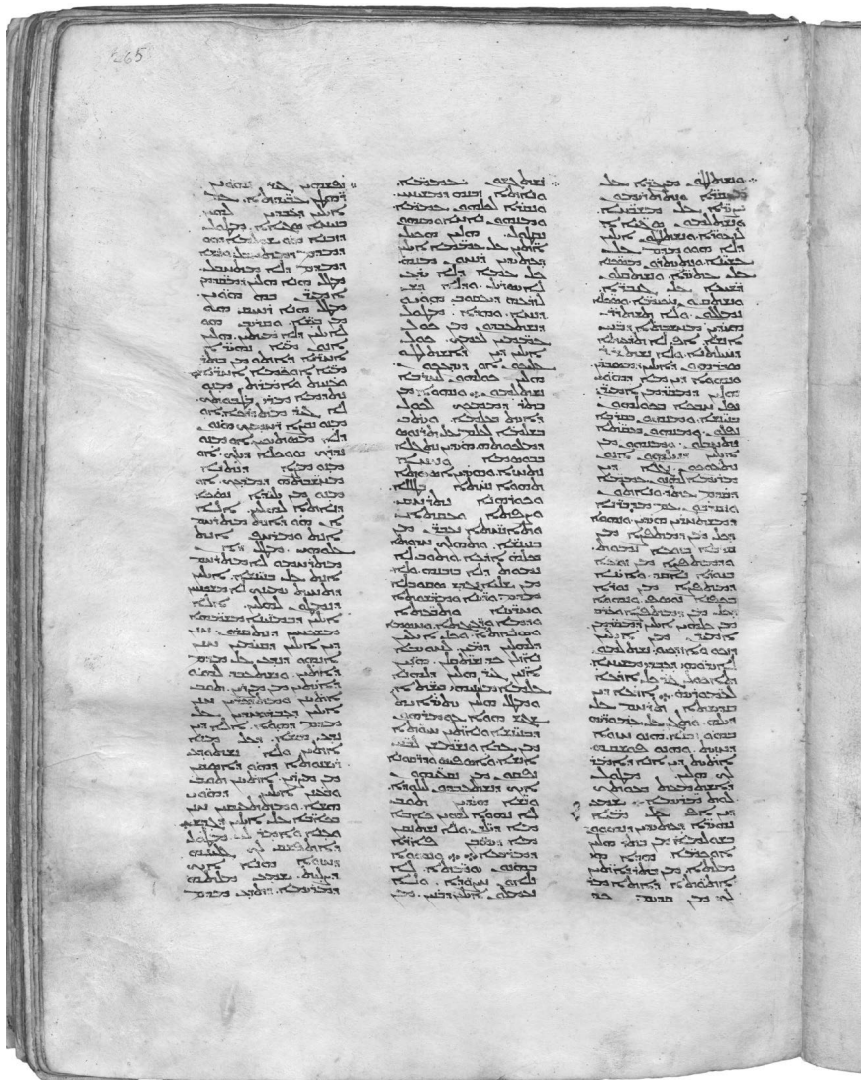
Figure 6: The ܠܗ note on folio 265r of the Codex Ambrosianus. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

3.3.1a The Distribution of the ܚܠ Notes

The first appearance of a note is on folio 6r and the last note is on folio 265r. This final note is the one that marks out 2 Bar 72:1. Looking at the distribution in the codex, a majority of the notes are found in Kings (four occurrences) and in Twelve Prophets (twelve occurrences). In Isaiah, the note appears twice. It appears singularly in Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Job, Wisdom of Solomon, Jeremiah, Bel and the Dragon (Daniel), Ben Sira and 2 Baruch.

List of ܚܠܟ / ܚܠܝܬ / ܚܠܘܗ (ܚܠ) notes in the Codex Ambrosianus

B 21 inf.	B 21 bis inf.
Gen 22:1	Ezek 13:17
Lev 22:26	Hos 4:1
Num 19:1	Hos 14:4
Job 14:7	Amos 4:9
1 Kgs 3:5	Amos 6:8
1 Kgs 20:28	Mic 2:1
2 Kgs 6:1	Zeph 3:10
2 Kgs 23:21	Hag 1:7
Wis 1:1	Hag 1:17
Isa 49:7	Zech 7:8
Isa 58:11	Zech 10:7
Jer 50:4	Zech 13:7
	Dragon 34
	Sir 51:20
	2 Bar 72:1

Any attempt to date the notes must take into consideration the fact that they are very brief and leave us limited information. As a piece of codex-internal evidence, it is clear that the ܚܠ notes are later than some other additional notes found in the codex. As pointed out above, a series of erased liturgical notes appears on the pages containing Genesis, and on folio 6r a ܚܠ note is inscribed on top of one of these erasures. This suggests that the ܚܠ notes were added after the liturgical notes had been both inscribed and erased.[68] A very tentative paleographical analysis of the ܚܠ notes would indicate a dating of the notes after the mid-twelfth century. The Serto *taw* appears without the characteristic loop and downward projecting prongs. Instead, the lower stroke of the *taw* is horizontal, a feature that characterizes this letter in dated manuscripts from the mid-twelfth century onwards.[69]

The ܚܠ note in the copy of 2 Baruch has generally escaped scholarly attention. Ceriani mentioned its existence briefly in his edition of the Syriac text, but

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[68] Vergani did not date the notes in his 2019 article, but he indicated that they are early ("Reception History," 410–12).

[69] Cf., Hatch, *Album*, plate cxxviii (p. 179) and continuing.

stated that he did not know its meaning.[70] In his commentary on 2 Baruch, Pierre-M. Bogaert read the note as a misshaped *qoph* (ܩ), and interpreted it as the commonly found abbreviation of ܩܪܝܢܐ, "lection." Hence, he understood it as a liturgical note. Bogaert's interpretation is understandable, given that the note appears at the exact starting point of the lection from 2 Baruch, attested in the lectionary manuscript London, BL, Add. 14,687 (72:1–73:2).[71] However, Boagert's reading of the note is not correct.[72]

3.3.1b "Copy from Here": Instructions to a Scribe?

What can the function of the ܟܬ notes be? An initial suggestion is that the notes are there to draw attention to specific passages and that the various passages marked out by the notes have something in common. The element that they share may be their contents, their shortcomings, their intended use or their function to the one(s) who inscribed them.

A first possible interpretation of the notes, which was brought up in conversations during the early phase of my investigation, is that the ܟܬ note marks the appearance of the holy name.[73] Indeed, a large majority of the passages contain the words ܡܪܝܐ, "Lord," or ܐܠܗܐ, "God," or both in their opening sentence. However, since five of the passages do not, this function of the note seems less likely.[74]

Another possible interpretation of the notes, which privileges the reading ܟܬܝܒ, is that they mean "[It is] written." In Syriac literary texts, the word ܟܬܝܒ sometimes appears formulaically to introduce a biblical citation.[75] The ܟܬ notes may thus represent this formula. However, the occurrence of ܟܬܝܒ in literary texts does not necessarily imply that it would be applied customarily in the same capacity as a marginal mark. If so, we should expect to find ܟܬܝܒ in this capacity in other manuscripts as well.

Yet another interpretation that also favors the reading ܟܬܝܒ, is that the note is a text-critical mark. It may signpost the reader's awareness of a variant. If so, this would be an interesting finding in its own right, since it would indicate that an active reader was aware of other copies and readings of this sentence. I have not come across the use of ܟܬܝܒ in this manner in Syriac manuscripts, but it is pos-

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[70] "(…) in margine sinistro seriori manu charactere maronitico ܟܬ; quid sibi velit nescio" (Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 161–62).

[71] Cf., further, chapter 4 of the current volume.

[72] Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 2:127.

[73] Thanks are due to Lucas Van Rompay, Sebastian P. Brock, Emidio Vergani, Robert A. Kraft, Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, Daniel Picus and Pier G. Borbone, who have all generously discussed potential meanings of the note with me.

[74] Job 14:6 (f. 63v), 2 Kgs 6:1 (f. 125r), Mic 2:1 (f. 200r), and Zeph 3:10 (f. 202v) and 2 Bar 72:1 (f. 265r). Note, though, that these sentences refer to agents that speak for the Lord, such as angels and prophets.

[75] Cf., e. g., Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 14,2.

sible that the note imitates the use of the Greek text-critical mark γρ/γράφεται in this capacity.[76] A challenge to this interpretation is that some of the notes in the codex are better read as ܟܬܘܒ and that the common denominator of the marked passage does not seem to be the existence of major variants in the sentences.[77]

Grigory Kessel suggested in email correspondence that the ܟܬ notes may be an abbreviation of ܟܬܘܒ and that the notes were inscribed in margins and inter-columns of the codex to mark out passages for further copying.[78] If so, these notes read "write!" and prepare passages to be recopied by a scribe. An argument that favors this interpretation is that ܟܬܘܒ / ܟܬ notes also appear in other Syriac manuscripts.[79] They occur, for instance, in London, BL, Add. 14,658,[80] in Add. 12,145,[81] and in Add. 14,485.[82] This means that there was an established practice of employing ܟܬܘܒ / ܟܬ as a marginal note – even though the practice may not have been widespread.[83] In Add. 14,658, both the abbreviated and the full version of the notes appear. On some pages ܟܬ and ܟܬܘܒ appear side by side, inscribed by different hands.[84] This may indicate that they are equated and served the same function.

Thus, although I acknowledge that other interpretations remain possible, I understand the ܟܬ notes in the Codex Ambrosianus as the remaining traces of

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[76] Agati, *Manuscript Book*, 293.

[77] Known variants occur in Gen 22:1, 1 Kgs 3:5, 20:28; Isa 49:7 ([The Peshiṭta Institute Leiden], *Kings*, Part 2, fascicle 4 of *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version,* [Leiden: Brill, 1977], 11, 72; Marinus D. Koster, *Preface, Genesis–Exodus,* part I, fascicle 1, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* [Leiden: Brill, 1977], 36; Sebastian P. Brock, *Isaiah*, part 3, fascicle 1, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* [Leiden: Brill, 1977], 89). It remains possible that the note writer knew other copies with other variants.

[78] Kessel, email communication (13 February 2017).

[79] The *waw* is also sometimes written in a sloppy manner in these manuscripts, which occasionally makes it look similar to a *yud*.

[80] I am grateful to Kessel for bringing this manuscript to my attention. My inspection of the manuscript in the British Library (London, 8 May 2019) showed that ܟܬܘܒ / ܟܬ notes appear on folios 129r, 141r, 156r–v, 157v, 158r, 163v, 165v, 166r, 167v, 172r, 185v and 186v.

[81] My inspection of the manuscript (London, 8 May 2019) confirmed that the ܟܬܘܒ note appears on folios 168v, 175v, 184r and 236r.

[82] The ܟܬ note appears on folios 63v and 64r (inspected in London, 8 May 2019).

[83] In two of these manuscripts, it makes little sense to read the note as a formulaic introduction to a passage from scripture (i. e., "[It is] written"), or as a mark that points out occurrences of the holy name. Add. 12,154 is a miscellaneous codex. The ܟܬܘܒ notes appear in treatises containing riddles, a commentary on the sacraments of the church, and a reply to a question by the heretic Probus to monks of Antioch. Add. 14,658 contains collections of philosophical texts. The ܟܬܘܒ notes appear in association with, for instance, a treatise by Sergius of Resh'ayna and Sayings of Menander. Add. 14,485 is a lectionary manuscript. In this context, it would in principle make sense to read the note as "It is written" since it appears next to lections from Qohelet and Job.

[84] See folios 156r and 163v.

the preparatory stage of a process of recopying a selection of biblical passages.[85] The notes contain instructions to a scribe: "copy from here!"[86] If this interpretation is correct, the ܠܟ notes bear witness to a process of transmission of a series of passages, which were to be excerpted and copied into a new manuscript. Based solely on the evidence in the Codex Ambrosianus, we would know neither whether such re-copying of the passages in fact took place nor whether the passages marked out by the note ended up in a new, discrete manuscript. Nevertheless, the notes display this intention.

3.3.1c Preparing 2 Bar 72 for Copying in a Lectionary Manuscript?

As Brock has pointed out, a substantial number of the Syriac manuscripts that survive after the ninth century contain anthological collections of excerpted texts, not collections of book-length copies.[87] In fact, this is a major trend in manuscript production in the period. The books of the Syriac Old Testament were no exception. The circulation of excerpts was a common form of transmission of these books. The manuscripts that typically include excerpts from Old Testament books are lectionary manuscripts, masoretic manuscripts and some service books (e. g., some *fenqiotho*).[88] My tentative palaeographical dating of the ܠܟ notes to the period after the mid-twelfth century suggests that the marking took place at a time that saw the production of specialized codices containing excerpted parts of books. Thus, seeing traces of excerption practices from this period in the books of an Old Testament *pandect* is not surprising.

As I pointed out above, Bogaert's reading and interpretation of the ܠܟ note on folio 265r as a liturgical note was mistaken. However, even though the ܠܟ notes in the codex are not liturgical notes, it is likely that they marked out passages intended to be inscribed in a liturgical manuscript. Indeed, since the 1963 publication of Baars's article, scholars have known that 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 appears in the thirteenth-century lectionary manuscript Add. 14,687.[89] The ܠܟ note in the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus that appears next to 72:1 thus marks an interest in the same passage.

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[85] It cannot be ruled out that the various subcategories, for instance the notes inscribed in red ink, mark out different groups of passages.

[86] This interpretation of the notes could also make sense out of the two-tier ܟܬܒ notes – the notes written in two sittings mentioned above. First, the passages were marked for copying by entering ܠܟ in the margin; then, the scribe who undertook the copying finished the note, adding ܬܒ, marking them as "written."

[87] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisbis," 19–21 and 23; Brock, "Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 7; Brock and Van Rompay, "Introduction," xxi; Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 55–56. Confer the manuscripts listed in Brock, "Tentative Checklist," 25–36.

[88] Cf., the presentation in chapter 1 and the further discussions in chapters 4 and 6.

[89] Cf., chapter 4 of the current volume.

Lections from 2 Baruch are not frequently found in surviving Syriac lectionary manuscripts, but in Add. 14,687 the lection from 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 occurs twice.[90] This manuscript is therefore a good place to look for a correlation between the ܒܐ marked passages in the Codex Ambrosianus and the selection of lections in a surviving lectionary manuscript. Add. 14,687 is one volume of a two-volume set, so the comparison must include its companion, London, BL, Add. 14,686, as well.[91] The comparison shows that eighteen of the twenty-seven ܒܐ-marked passages appear in these two lectionary manuscripts.[92] Some of the passages are scattered across the manuscript and the correlation may appear to be co-incidental. However, some patterns occur. Four out of five lections in Add. 14,686 were scripted to be read during Passion Week.[93] In Add. 14,687, the Lenten season reveals a structured pattern (folios 91v–112r). With the exception of the Sunday of the fifth week of the Fast (104v–107v), lections corresponding to the ܒܐ marked passages appear as the first, and/or second prescribed reading for each of the events of the season. A lection from Isaiah[94] and one reading from the Epistles of Paul systematically follow each of them.[95] A comparison with the lectionary manuscripts, London, BL, Add. 12,139, Add. 14,485, Add. 14,486 and Add. 14,487 and the list of lections in Add. 14,528 suggests that none of these readings were commonly read at these events.[96] This makes it even more likely

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[90] The passage appears on folios 157v–158r and 175r–176r.

[91] See the thorough presentation of the two manuscripts in chapter 4.

[92] Add. 14,687: Lev 22:26–31 (f. 48r–v); Isa 49:7–13 (f. 57r–v); Hos 4:1–11 (ff. 91v–92r); Zech 7:8–14 (ff. 94v–95r); Jer 50:4–7 (f. 97r); Amos 4:9–5:4 (ff. 99r–100r); Mic 2:1–8 (f. 100 r–v); Hag 1:7–11 (ff. 102v–103r); 1 Kgs 3:5–15 (ff. 108v–110r); Amos 6:8–14 (ff. 152v–153v); 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 (f. 167v–168r); Wis 1:1–8 (ff. 162v–163v); 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 (ff. 175r–176r). Add. 14,686: Gen 22:1–14 (ff. 130r–131r); Job 14:7–22 (f. 72r–v); 2 Kgs 23:21–25 (ff. 140v–141v); Zeph 3:14–20 (ff. 127v–128r); Zech 13:7–14:5 (ff. 143r–144r).

[93] Zeph 3:14–20 on Palm Sunday and Gen 22:1–14 on the Monday, 2 Kgs 23:21–25 on the Thursday and Zech 13:7–14:5 on the Friday of the Passion Week. All these four lections are frequently found in lectionary manuscripts, but most manuscripts do not script them for use during Passion Week. However, Add. 14,487 also ascribes the readings from Zephaniah and Zechariah to the same events.

[94] The exception is the second reading of the Sunday of the third week, where Mic 2:1–8 appears (f. 100r–v).

[95] Hos 4:1–11 (ff. 91v–92r) is the first reading from the Old Testament on the Friday of the first week of the Fast. Zech 7:8–14 (ff. 94v–95r) is the first reading on the Saturday of the first week and Jer 50:4–7 appears as the first prescribed reading on the Sunday of the second week. At the event of third Sunday of the Fast, Amos 4:9–5:4 (ff. 99r–100r) is the first reading, followed by Mic 2:1–8 (f. 100r–v) as the second. Hag 1:7–11 (ff.102v–103v) is the first reading of the fourth Sunday of the Fast. The fifth Sunday breaks the pattern, before 1 Kgs 3:5–15 (ff. 108v–110r) is scripted to be read as the second reading on the Sunday of the sixth week of the Fast.

[96] I consulted London, BL, Add. 12,139, Add. 14,485, Add. 14,486 and Add. 14,487 in London on 8 May 2019. I have also used the Thales Lectionary Database (http://www.lectionary.eu/ [last accessed 20 May 2020])

that there is a connection between the ܠ‍‍ܟ-marked passages and the lections for the Lenten season in Add. 14,687.[97]

The occurrence of the pattern in Add. 14,687, in particular, and the relatively high level of overlap between passages noted in the Codex Ambrosianus and lections copied in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 suggest that the inscription of the ܠ‍‍ܟ notes may have been part of the preparation for the copying of a lectionary manuscript.[98] This does not mean that the Codex Ambrosianus must be the *Vorlage* of the two-volume set, Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687.[99] The inscription of the ܠ‍‍ܟ notes in the codex may have been part of the preparation for the copying of a lectionary manuscript that does not survive but that displayed similarities to the selection and order of lections in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687. Thus, it is likely that the note is indicative of a post-mid-twelfth-century process of manu-script production in which 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 was included in a somewhat wider selection of lectionary manuscripts that do not survive today. Although the in-clusion of a passage from 2 Baruch in lectionary manuscripts was probably not a widespread phenomenon, the ܠ‍‍ܟ notes suggest that at some point more manu-scripts contained it.[100]

This interpretation of the ܠ‍‍ܟ notes is interesting to the present study of 2 Baruch in the embodiment of the Codex Ambrosianus for several reasons. First, it suggests that some Syriac scribes continued to engage with the Codex Am-brosianus as an exemplar worth copying. This finding is particularly interesting

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[97] Note, also, that six of the lections are prescribed in various lectionary manuscripts and indices for reading on Easter Sunday (Gen 22:1 [Add. 14,528]; 1 Kgs 3:5 [Add. 14,528]; 2 Kgs 6:1 [Add. 14,486], 2 Kgs 23:21 [Paris, BnF, Syr. 27]; Zeph 3:10 [Add. 14,486]; 2 Bar 72:1 [Add. 14,687]).

[98] A large part of the marked passages (Gen 22:1; Num 19:1; Job 14:7; 1 Kgs 3:5; 2 Kgs 6:1, 23:21; Wis 1:1; Jer 50:4; Ezek 13:17; Hos 4:1, 14:4; Amos 4:9, 6:8; Zeph 3:10; Hag 1:7; Zech 7:8, 13:7; Dragon 34 and 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 appear as the first sentence of lections in extant lectionary manuscripts or indices, or marked out by liturgical titles in Old Testament codices (e. g., London, BL, Or. 8609; Add. 12,139; Add. 14,443; Add. 14,485; Add. 14,486; Add. 14,487; Add. 14,528; Add.14,686; Add. 14,687; Syr. 27; Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 33). Thus, they are known from other contexts to be scripted for reading in worship contexts. Yet other ܠ‍‍ܟ-marked pas-sages also contain liturgical notes in the margins in the Codex Ambrosianus (Gen 22:1 [f. 6r] and Job 14:7 [f. 63v]). Furthermore, nine of the extant twenty-seven notes are written in red ink, signalling that they might have emulated rubricated titles. Liturgical titles in the body of the text (e. g., ff. 61v and 62v) and in additional notes in the margins of the codex (e. g., f. 177v) are inscribed in red ink. Most of the marks appear in connection either with rosettes or with other subsection headings. As Jenner has shown, many of the rosettes in the Codex Ambrosianus concur with the starting point of known lections in lectionary manuscripts (Jenner, "Review of the Methods," 258–59).

[99] Cf., furthermore, the discussions in chapters 4 and 6.

[100] Two other lectionary manuscripts, the fragmentary London, BL, Add. 14,736 and the almost complete Ms. Syr. 33, contain similar, but not entirely identical, series of lections to Add. 14,686. This shows, first, that Syriac scribes copied this series of lections into more manu-scripts and, second, that the choice of lections display some flexibility. Cf., the discussion of these manuscripts in chapter 6.

since some scholars hold that the Codex Ambrosianus represents a text-historical dead end. Many of the books copied in this codex do not contain the text recensions that later would become the *textus receptus* of the Syriac traditions.[101] This remains a precise interpretation of the general situation, but the appearance of the ܠܗ notes indicates that parts of the codex were prepared for copying and that the imagination of the codex as a dead end would benefit from more nuance.

Second, the fact that 2 Bar 72:1 is one of the passages that the ܠܗ notes mark out is interesting to our knowledge about the history of transmission of 2 Baruch. Basically, it suggests that someone intended this passage of the text to be excerpted and copied. This is interesting in its own right because it shows that this part of 2 Baruch circulated more widely than our present knowledge indicates. It is also interesting because the one who inscribed the note prepared it to be copied together with other passages from Old Testament books. This gives us another indication of the identification of, and engagement with, a passage originating with 2 Baruch *qua* "Old Testament." As I suggested in chapter 1, in the context of the Codex Ambrosianus, 2 Baruch can fruitfully be approached as an Old Testament book. Now we see a hint that a reader has engaged with it as such.

Third, regardless of the hypothetical circulation of the passage outside the Codex Ambrosianus, the presence of the notes in the codex may also have affected subsequent readers' engagement with 2 Baruch in this particular embodiment. By systematically bookmarking specific passages of the books, the notes may have heightened the attention to the marked passages among later readers. If these readers read the marked passages in the codex systematically, their reading may have shaped an excerptive reading practice; reading across books and focusing on the marked passages. As pointed out above, many of the passages marked by the ܠܗ notes contain the holy name. They also often refer to the words of God, or an agent speaking on his behalf, admonishing Israel, its leaders and kings, or humankind in general. If a reader engaged with them as a series of thematically related sequences, he (or she) could have read them as a series of commands, exhortations and admonitions, pointing to God's promises and judgment and the imminent retribution and redemption of his people.[102]

No matter how we interpret the notes, their very existence may help keep our contemporary imagination of 2 Baruch as a book that does not fully belong in an Old Testament codex in check. The series of ܠܗ notes and the reading that they may have engendered show that 2 Baruch was a relevant and integral part of this codex. At least one active reader certainly found this book to belong. This

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[101] David J. Lane, *The Peshiṭta of Leviticus*, MPI 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 1; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 55.

[102] If he or she isolated the notes in red ink, the large majority of passages would address the coming judgement of the righteous and the wicked (Job 14:7, 2 Kgs 6:2, Wis 1:1, Isa 28:11, Mic 2:1, Hag 1:7, Hag 1:17, Zech 10:7 and Zech 13:6).

reader's actions may subsequently have caused later readers to more fully appreciate the input of this passage in 2 Baruch when reading across biblical books.

Finally, the note provides a first indication of a phenomenon that I will return to later in the current volume; namely that one of the main forms of 2 Baruch's transmission among Syriac Christians was in the shape of bits and pieces.[103]

3.2.1 An Erased Note and a Cluster of Wax Stains: Two Hypotheses

The second sign of engagement with the copy of 2 Baruch is an erased area in the top margin of folio 259r. Luckily, the erasure was not entirely successful. Although scraped with a sharp tool, traces of ink are still visible to the naked eye.[104] On inspection, I could spot the remains of five or six letters.[105] The discernable letters make up the remains of a word, probably [.]ܝܟ[.]ܕ or [.]ܕ[.]ܕ. The first letter is a *dalath*. The second letter is uncertain. The third letter may be a *kaph* or a *beth*. The fourth letter is probably a *yud*. The last letter(s) of the word is not discernible. It is even difficult to distinguish between hypothetical letters, dots and decoration in this latter part.[106] Given the state of preservation of the note, all interpretations remain hypothetical. One proposal, which makes sense of the traceable letters and takes the size of the unclear letters into account, is that the word reads ܢܒܝܐ, "of the prophet" (singular), or ܢܒܝܐ, "of the prophets" (plural). In addition to this single word, faint traces of ink and the size of the erased area[107] suggest that at some point the note consisted of more words or, alternatively, words and decoration.

3.2.1a Hypothesis A: Identifying 2 Baruch in a Running Title by Another Name?

Despite the poor preservation of the note, the position and size of the erased area and the color of the ink of the letters allow at least two hypotheses regarding the function of the note that it once contained.

The first hypothesis is that the partly erased word was, at some point, part of a running title. An argument for this interpretation is its location on the page and its position in the quire. The erasure is located above the mid column of folio 259r. This is the first page of quire *kaph-ḥeth* (28). As pointed out in chapter 1

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[103] Cf., furthermore, chapters 4, 5 and 6.

[104] Cf., the digital image (B21bis-inf, image 177: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d [accessed 22 May 2020]).

[105] I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Lucas Van Rompay in the deciphering of the note (Milan, 5 May 2016).

[106] It is very likely that advanced imaging would make it possible to read the erased note. I made an initial attempt to read it with a Dino-Lite microscope, but I was not successful (26 November 2014).

[107] The erased area measures approximately 8 cm by 1.5 cm.

of the current volume, the Codex Ambrosianus contains running titles in quires *alaph* through *kaph-beth*, and in quires *lamad-alaph* (31) through *lamad-heh* (35). These titles identify the book or the collection of books.[108] In both of these parts of the codex, the running titles appear in the upper margin of the first folio of the new quire, and this is precisely where we find the erased area. The copy of 2 Baruch begins in the middle of quire *kaph-zayn* (27) (folio 257r; sheet *dalath* [4]). Quire *kaph-ḥeth* would be the first quire that starts with the copy of 2 Baruch on sheet *alaph*. Hence, if a running title were to appear anywhere in this copy at all, this would be the place.[109] The second argument for the hypothesis that the erased note contained a running title is the size of the letters and the color of the ink. The visible letters are larger than the script of the copy in the writing area below it[110] but similar in size to the letters of the running titles in the volumes of the Book of Maccabees in quires *lamad-alaph* through *lamad-heh*.[111] Furthermore, the erased letters are in red ink, just like the other running titles in the codex.

If the erased words are the remains of a running title, this would be interesting to the present discussion because neither the reading [..]ܚܪ[.]ܢ nor the reading [..]ܒܪ[.]ܢ matches any of the words found in the title and end title of the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus.[112] One option is that the running title identified the book with a different name and, hence, that some Syriac Christians would know 2 Baruch under more names.

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[108] In the first twenty-two quires of the codex, the running titles appear systematically on the verso page of the last folio of the quire and on the recto page of the first folio of the next quire, connecting the two. The final four quires of the codex, containing 1–5 Maccabees, have a different system of running titles. These quires have a running title on the recto page of the first folio, but with the exception of quire *lamad-dalath* (34), no running title appears on the verso page of the last folio. (The final quire [*lamad-heh*] also contains a running title in the central opening of the quire. Cf., the discussion in chapter 1.) The two systems of running titles also differ from one another in the way in which the titles are decorated. Vignettes adorn the running titles in the first part of the codex, whereas the title décor in the final part of the codex consists of rosettes/diamonds.

[109] That is, if we assume that the hypothetical running title follows the system of the latter part of the codex.

[110] The letters measure between three and five millimeters. The letters of the text in the writing area measure two to four millimeters.

[111] The first running title in this part of the codex appears on folio 296r.

[112] The first letter, the *dalath*, may lead us to expect "of Baruch," (hypothetically: ܕܒܪܘܟ). The running titles of the books in the Codex Ambrosianus that are associated with the name of a specific figure, such as the prophetic books, routinely contain the particle -ܕ, "of," and the name of the figure (cf., e. g., "[The prophecy] of Isaiah," ff. 146r, 151r and 156r; "[The prophecy] of Jeremiah," ff. 161r, 166r and 171r; "[The prophecy] of Ezekiel," ff. 181r, 186r and 191r; "[The prophecy] of Hosea," f. 196r). Thus, it would not be surprising if the erased area on folio 259r had contained such a reference to the Baruch figure. However, this can hardly be the case since the surviving letters do not match up.

Indeed, it is relatively common in Syriac manuscripts to identify the same book by multiple names or by variations of the same name.[113] The title and end title of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus are, for instance, not identical.[114] Furthermore, the books of the Pentateuch, the Twelve Prophets and the Book of Maccabees are identified both as discrete books and as parts of a collection.[115] 5 Maccabees/book 6 of Jewish War has multiple title identifications.[116] Likewise, a framed and adorned note at the beginning and end of the copy of 4 Maccabees (folios 313v and 320r) reads: ܫܡܘܢܝ ܘܫܒܥܐ ܒܢܝܗ ܘܐܠܝܥܙܪ ܡܠܦܢܗܘܢ, "Shamuni and Her Seven Sons and Eleazar, Their Teacher."[117] These notes may provide an additional title of the book unit, or they may identify a narrative of special interest within this book.[118] Hence, the hypothetical erased title in the top margin of folio 269r may bear witness to an identification of 2 Baruch that would include ܢܒܝܐ, "of the prophet" or ܢܒܝܐ, "of the prophets." This ascription would not have been unprecedented. Add. 14,686, one of the lectionary manuscripts that contain a reading from 2 Baruch, identifies that reading as ܡܢ ܒܪܘܟ ܢܒܝܐ, "From Baruch, the Prophet" (folio 77r). Some late *pandects* also explicitly refer to Baruch and his prophecy in running titles and marginal notes.[119]

Now, as pointed out in chapter 1, there are generally no running titles in quires *kaph-gamal* (23) through *lamad-alaph* (31) of the Codex Ambrosianus. Finding a running title in this part of the codex would therefore be surprising. One possibility is that the one who inscribed the title on folio 259r as part of the production process made an honest mistake. He may, for instance, have inscribed the title of another book in the quire containing 2 Baruch.[120] If the inscription of the running title was a mistake in the first place, it is no wonder

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[113] Cf., e. g., the identifications in Syriac manuscripts of Deuteronomy and Chronicles.

[114] Cf., chapter 1.

[115] Cf., chapter 2.

[116] Cf., chapter 1.

[117] This is a translation of the note on folio 320r.

[118] Cf., the identification of 4 Maccabees with this narrative in the final end title of the five-volume Book of Maccabees (f. 330r), and note that the story of Shamuni and her sons also circulated as a discrete, autonomous entity (e. g., London, BL, Add. 12,172 – at this occasion an extract from 2 Maccabees).

[119] Cf., Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 228. Note that Baruch is mentioned among the prophets already by Ephrem (Haelewyck, "Le Canon," 158).

[120] It would have been tempting to suggest that the title may have read ܕܡܩܒ̈ܐ, "of the Maccabees." If so, the title could be a simple mistake – the one who inscribed it put it in the wrong quire. However, this is not likely, since there is not enough room for two letters between the *dalath* and the *kaph*/*beth*. Another suggestion that would make sense, but that is also unlikely for the same reason, is ܕܥܪ̈ܒܐ, "of the Arabs." According to Drint, the Arabic version of 2 Baruch in St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589 contains all the same rubricated subheadings as the Syriac version but with one exception: it does not rubricate the prayer in 2 Bar 21 (Adriana Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," in *Textual History of the Bible,* vol 2, *Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, ed. Frank Feder and Matthias Henze [Leiden: Brill, 2019], 53–59 at 58). It would be possible that a reader with knowledge of the Arabic transmission of the book would note that the title is not rubricated in that version. If so, the note qualifies as a text-critical note.

that someone erased it. Another possibility is that an active reader added the title in the top margin at a later point to facilitate the retrieval of the book but that yet another reader eventually erased it because it did not match the general layout of the section in question.[121] The Codex Ambrosianus contains a handful of corrections of the layout of the page, showing that the layout mattered to those who produced and engaged with the codex not only due to aesthetical motivations but probably also to ensure consistency.[122]

3.3.2b Hypothesis B: A Liturgical Note?

The second hypothesis is that the erased area contained a liturgical note, added at some point by an active reader. This hypothesis equally makes good sense of the surviving features of the erased area as the first hypothesis does. The Codex Ambrosianus contains other liturgical notes in red ink. Some were copied by the scribe in the columns and others by later readers in the margins.[123] The location of the erased area in a position where we would typically find running titles could be coincidental. Instead, the proximity to the text that it points to in the column underneath it could be the feature that decided the location.[124] Furthermore, the assumed first letter of the erased word, *dalath*, would support this interpretation, since other additional liturgical notes in the codex often include the prefixed *dalath* (ܟ-ܕ) indicating the event of reading.[125] One example is ܕܦܢܛܩܘܣܛܐ, "For Pentecost," situated close to Num 11:25 (folio 42v); another is the series of notes, "For the Consecration of the Myron" (ܕܡܘܪܘܢ ܕܩܘܕܫ).[126] Furthermore, just like the liturgical notes that a later hand added in the first eleven folios of Genesis, the liturgical note in 2 Baruch may have been erased because it fell out of use. If the note is indeed a liturgical note, ܕܢܒܐ could be the last word in a note prescribing a scriptural reading for the commemoration of the prophets (ܕܢܒܐ ܡ/ܕܢܒܐ ܕܘܟܪܢܐ ܡ). We find liturgical notes marking lections for this event, for instance, in the sixth-century Old Testament manuscripts London, BL, Add. 14,432 and Add. 14,445.[127] Lections for this event also appear in the lectionary manuscripts Add. 12,139 (folio 126r) and Add. 17,923 (folio 139r). Neither of them contains a lection from 2 Baruch, though.

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[121] Cf., the appearance of additional running titles in the upper margins in, e. g., London, BL, Add. 14,446, folio 6r and Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58, folios 64v–65r.

[122] Cf., the erasure and correction of the running title ܕܐܪܡܝܐ, "Of Jeremiah" on folio 171r. Cf., also, the erasure and replacement of the decorative elements that adorn the end title of Daniel, the title of Bel (f. 212r), and the title of Ruth (f. 213r).

[123] Cf., for example, the liturgical titles in Job (f. 62v) and in 1 Samuel (f. 82r) and the notes in the margins of folios 6v, 63v and 177v.

[124] The note in folio 42v starts in the upper margin. In Add. 14,466 (f. 6r) a liturgical note appears in exactly the same spot in the upper margin.

[125] Cf., the description above of the note on folio 63v.

[126] Cf., e. g., folios 144v and 157r. An argument against this hypothesis is that most of the liturgical notes in the margins of the Codex Ambrosianus are inscribed vertically.

[127] Cf., Jenner, "De perikopentitels," 422–24.

As mentioned above, the erased area sits directly above the mid column of folio 259r. This column contains a prayer (2 Bar 21). A title in red ink identifies it as ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܨܠܘܬܗ, "The Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah."[128] As pointed out in chapter 1, the Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah is one of three prayers in 2 Baruch. Each of them was rubricated at the time of the production of the codex.[129] In Syriac manuscripts, subsection headings in red ink typically identify and aid the retrieval of narrative subsections of a larger work, or alternatively sections of particular interest or established use. Prayers marked out with headings in red ink in a Syriac manuscript are relatively common, also in early Old Testament manuscripts.[130] Thus, the prayer in folio 259r was probably rubricated according to set practices and understood as a subsection of a particular type. We do not know whether the heading indicates that the prayer was (just) a literary unit of special interest, whether it was marked out because it was already part of a discernable reading practice or whether the scribe intended to facilitate future engagement. Regardless, if the erased area in the upper margin of folio 259r was indeed a liturgical note added by a later hand, it is likely that it would identify the event of the reading of the prayer which is highlighted by a heading in the column just below it.

A second observation may support the hypothesis that readers granted some special attention to the Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah. On folio 258v, the remains of a cluster of wax stains appear in the lower parts of the second and third columns, in the second intercolumn and in the inner margin of the page.[131] There are certainly several ways of interpreting such a cluster of wax stains. It is possible that one poor soul, just by chance, had an accident with a candle at this particular location while leafing through the codex. However, what makes the cluster interesting is that if you open the Codex Ambrosianus to look for the page that holds it, you will find that folios 258v and 259r face each other and form an "opening" (ܦܬܚܐ). In other words, the rubricated Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah,

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[128] The prayer ends in the mid-first column of folio 259v, marked out by three rosettes in the writing area and an additional small rosette in the outer margin. The small rosettes in the outer margin are particular to this page of the manuscript (cf., chapter 1). They appear again adjacent to 2 Bar 24–27. It is possible that the rosette in the mid first column marks the beginning of chapter 22 and not the end of chapter 21. The rosettes on folio 259v are highly interesting in their own right, but I see them as part of the production context and not as the result of later reader engagement. Hence, I do not discuss them in the present chapter.

[129] See also the prayers in 2 Bar 48 (f. 261v) and 2 Bar 54 (f. 263r).

[130] The Codex Ambrosianus includes seven rubricated prayers in addition to the prayers of Baruch. These are: the "Prayer of Hannah" (f. 82r), the "Prayer of Jeremiah" (f. 175v), the "Prayer of Jonah" (f. 199v), the "Prayer of Habakkuk" (f. 202r), the "Prayer of Hananiah and His Friends" (f. 208r) and two prayers of Ezra, similarly marked, in the copy of 4 Ezra (ff. 268v and 272r). Cf., further, Lied, "2 Baruch and the Codex Ambrosianus," 98–99.

[131] See the digital image (B21bis-inf, image 176: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d [accessed 22 May 2020]).

the partly erased note in the upper margin and the clustered wax stains all appear in the same opening of the codex.

The wax stains *per se* cannot tell us what reading practice engendered them or where the engagement took place. They suggest an event of reading in a dimly lit room, but in the Middle Ages, a lack of sufficient reading light would characterize many indoor locations. However, as pointed out above, additional liturgical notes spread across the margins and intercolumns of the pages of the Codex Ambrosianus strongly suggest that this codex supported the reading of scripture in public worship contexts. This means that we can presuppose that, on particular occasions, readers have engaged with this Old Testament codex in a church room. Medieval churches would generally be dimly lit and oil lamps and wax candles were important sources of light.[132] Indeed, the risk of spilling wax in such surroundings is mentioned in Syriac manuscripts themselves. A Garshuni colophon of a codex copied in Mardin in 1772, for instance, warns priests and deacons of the danger of drops of wax and of fire when flipping the pages of the manuscript.[133]

The nature of the evidence is too incomplete to draw any firm conclusions, but given the combination of information about reader engagement with the Codex Ambrosianus at large and the verbal and material traces that survive in the opening 258v–259r, it is not unreasonable to propose that someone read the Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah in the material embodiment of this codex at an event of the commemoration of the prophets.[134]

3.4 Active Readers Have Their Say

What reading practices do we catch glimpses of in the margins of the Codex Ambrosianus? What do the marks and notes that we find there tell us about active readers' use of the codex and of the copy of 2 Baruch?

The current chapter has shown that although the engagement with the Codex Ambrosianus may not have been extensive, active readers certainly put the codex to use.[135] They have left us both verbal marks and notes and other signs

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[132] Cf., furthermore, chapter 4.

[133] Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs, Ms. 627 (CFMM 00627) (https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/503796 [accessed 4 June 2020]). I am grateful to Ephrem Ishac for bringing this colophon to my attention. I have come across burn marks in several service books, among them, in New York, Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, Ms. LIT 593.

[134] Events of commemoration were not fixed. Hence, it is not clear when the event of the commemoration of the prophets – and of the just – was celebrated. The index of lections in Add. 14,528 and the lectionary manuscripts Add. 12,139, Add. 14,490, Add. 14,709 and Add. 14,705 locate all or most of the lections for events of commemoration at the end.

[135] Indeed, one of the reasons why the codex has survived in such a good shape until today is the very fact that it was not subject to extensive use.

of engagement. The remaining traces of their activities show that these readers cared about the correct reading of the texts; they added aids to help them navigate the codex and they erased aids that were no longer helpful. The notes and marks also suggest that the codex was read in locations with insufficient light and that readers engaged the codex over time.

The preserved traces of the practices of active readers show that the codex served many purposes during the course of its long life. This is not surprising for a codex that has survived for as long as the Codex Ambrosianus. In chapter 1, I concluded that it was probably a biblio-historiographical codex. In chapter 2, I showed that the codex was a valuable artifact that was worth protecting. It served as a medium for prayer requests and the improvement of the note writers' chances on the day of judgment, while it also continued to be approached as an Old Testament codex. The current chapter adds more functions to what may now appear to be a multi-function codex.

First, the ܠܗ notes suggest that a scribe used the codex as an exemplar. There is no evidence that this particular use of the Codex Ambrosianus was widespread. However, the use of the codex to support the recopying of excerpted passages into anthological collections is interesting, since the practices reflect an important trend in post-ninth-century Syriac manuscript production. This usage of the Codex Ambrosianus as an exemplar indicates that some of those who laid hands on it may have approached it as a learned codex. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the donor note on folio 330r suggests that Abu 'Ali Zekiri took the codex to the Monastery of the Syrians to aid the studies of the monks dwelling there. Indeed, the format of the codex and its collection of books made it particularly fit for learned use.[136] The Codex Ambrosianus is a *pandect* and thus contains available models for the further copying of "all" the biblical books. Some may have approached it as an archive, a corpus collection, or as a repository – a way of preserving texts and aiding future accessibility.[137] Furthermore, if the Codex Ambrosianus served as a historiographical tool, its chronography would aid the learning and memorization of Syriac Christian biblical history.

Second, the current chapter has also shown that active readers prepared the codex for use in public worship contexts by adding liturgical notes in the margins. Indeed, the spread of wax stains, the occurrence of additional diacritical marks and vowel signs and the erasure and replacement of liturgical notes that were no longer in use strongly suggest that the codex was not only prepared for use but that it actually served as the material support for reading from scripture in

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[136] In the lot of Syriac manuscripts there are other more obvious candidates. The eighth-century Syro-hexaplaric manuscript C 313 inf., for instance, refers to variant and parallel readings in the margins. Some masoretic manuscripts have particularly broad outer and lower margins, literally inviting additional notes.

[137] Cf., Mango, "Patrons and Scribes," 5–6.

public services. The liturgical notes that survive indicate that this was a codex for special occasions. Since the medieval bindings have been lost, we do not know how the aesthetics of the codex would enhance its potential iconic function.[138] However, we may assume that the size and material qualities of this *deluxe* codex would have contributed to a heightened atmosphere in the church room during the liturgy of the Consecration of the Myron, during major festivals and, for a while, also during the Easter season.

This latter point underscores that active readers deserve a place in the long-standing discussion about the hypothetical non-liturgical purpose and use of the Codex Ambrosianus. Since the notes and marks that they have left us show that the codex has indeed been in liturgical use, the third argument, identified above, falls. The margins are certainly not filled with notes, but my study identifies at least seventy-five additional liturgical notes in the codex. Indeed, the existence of a (still) fairly limited amount of additional notes does not necessarily imply the liturgical inaptness on the part of the codex – it may suggest a restricted and dedicated liturgical use of the codex.

My study of the notes and marks that remain in the copy of 2 Baruch suggests that a scribe prepared one select passage for recopying. He may have used the codex as an exemplar to ensure the continued circulation of a lection from 2 Baruch in lectionary manuscripts. The study also proposes that Syriac readers may either have known 2 Baruch under an additional name or prescribed the Prayer of Baruch bar Neriah for reading at a commemorative event. Both interpretations are possible and interesting, but, if the latter is correct, they used the copy of 2 Baruch as a support for scriptural reading. This means that active readers not only prepared the Codex Ambrosianus for use in public service but may also have used the embodied copy of 2 Baruch in liturgical practice. As the next chapter will show, in the thirteenth century, some Syriac Christians read 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 on Easter Sunday. Thus, the assumed peculiar features of the Codex Ambrosianus did not prevent later readers from appreciating readings from 2 Baruch, neither in the embodiment of this particular codex nor in the shape of excerpted readings in a specialized lectionary manuscripts. Thus, and as chapter 2 of this volume also proposed, the Codex Ambrosianus did not prevent the survival of 2 Baruch – it is more likely that it promoted it.

The current chapter has shown that scholars need to rethink what counts as source. Additional notes and marks have been overlooked by scholars for far too long. The input from the voices in the margins may both enrich our understanding of the status and use of the Codex Ambrosianus and add some necessary corrections to the scholarly narrative of 2 Baruch.

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[138] Cf., the discussion in chapter 2.

Chapter 4

An Easter Sunday Surprise:
The Thirteenth-Century Engagement with 2 Baruch

It came as a surprise to the scholarly community, back in 1963, that Willem Baars had identified lections from 2 Baruch in Syriac lectionary manuscripts. Baars reported finding 2 Bar 44:9–15 and 72:1–73:2 in two thirteenth-century manuscripts, London, BL, Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687.[1] The latter passage, which is the one that I will focus on in this chapter, was even scripted to be read on Easter Sunday, the most important Sunday of the church year.

The reason for the surprise was threefold. First, 2 Baruch is generally not widely attested and, consequently, lections from 2 Baruch are not frequently found in lectionary manuscripts either. Indeed, in 1963, no other occurrence of such a lection had yet been published. Second, as Baars pointed out, scholars had long held that there were no traces of use of this book among Christians.[2] Third, finding passages from 2 Baruch scripted to be read in a Syriac public worship context did not fit with the dominant academic narrative about 2 Baruch.

Since 1963, two more Syriac lectionary manuscripts containing lections from 2 Baruch have surfaced: Ms. 77 of the A. Konat Collection in Pampakuda in Kerala and Deir al-Surian, Syr. Ms. 33 still kept at the Monastery of the Syrians. There is no longer any doubt that excerpted passages from 2 Baruch were included in selected lectionary manuscripts and, therefore, that some Syriac Christians prepared parts of this book for use as lections from scripture in public worship.

The incongruence between the foundational assumptions about 2 Baruch in the history of scholarship and the finding that gave rise to the initial surprise prompts some new and intriguing questions. How has the dominant academic narrative about 2 Baruch, which is shaped by scholarly discourses in the field of Early Jewish Studies and designed to explain the origins and early reading contexts in the first/second century CE, influenced the interpretation of later stages of the life of the writing? Furthermore, how may the study of the thirteenth-century reading context of a lection excerpted from 2 Baruch offer corrections and nuances to the academic narrative about a "historical loser"?

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[1] Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477.
[2] Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477. See, also, chapter 3 of the current volume.

Whereas the previous chapters focused on the context of and engagement with 2 Baruch in one specific material embodiment (the Codex Ambrosianus), the present chapter aims to approximate one selected historical reading context in the thirteenth century.[3] Based on the multi-faceted information that survives from this context, mainly in manuscripts but also in architectural features, inscriptions and mural paintings, I will construct a hypothetical – albeit likely – historical context of the reading of a lection from 2 Baruch. I am curious to find out what the materials that remain may tell us about the engagement with 2 Baruch in this particular receiving context, and I am interested in tracing potential patterns of interpretation of the lection in the Syriac Christian communities that chose to read it on Easter Sunday.

The current chapter draws attention to two underlying epistemological assumptions that have affected the scholarship on 2 Baruch. Both assumptions are in need of correction. The first assumption is that the only historical context worth knowing when we study a writing is its time and place of origin. Indeed, for a long time, scholars have taken an interest in questions of authorship, the history of composition, the milieu of origin and, sometimes, the earliest reading communities. The assumption that a text is primarily to be interpreted in light of its historical context of composition is one of the fundamental pillars of the historical-critical approach. There is certainly much to commend this position, yet the implication of this practice is that most of the later history of engagement with 2 Baruch has been considered to be beyond and outside the scope of scholarship. However, as the bourgeoning field of reception history shows, these other historical situations of engagement are interesting too. There is no reason to privilege only one context, when it is just the first of many in a long and varied history of traceable engagement. In the case of 2 Baruch, this issue becomes particularly important since we know very little about the first/second-century communities and contexts in which the writing presumably first came to life, whereas the materials available for a study of the thirteenth-century context would exceed even the wildest dream of scholars devoting their careers to the first centuries CE. Still, so far, the thirteenth-century engagement remains mostly uncharted territory.[4]

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[3] When I talk about "reading context" in the following, I refer to the material, spatial, performative and medial conditions of the reading practice in a given setting.

[4] The exceptions are Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458–59; Lied, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity," and eadem, "En ny kontekst for 2 Baruks eskatologi," in *Mellan tid och evighet: eskatologiske perspektiv i den tidliga kyrkan*, ed. Thomas Arentzen, Uffe H. Eriksen and Henrik R. Johnsén, Patristica Nordica Annuaria 9 (Lund: Artos Academic, 2016), 71–92. My essay, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity: Variants and Variance in the Reception History of *2 Baruch*" contains some unfortunate mistakes. Although the main ideas of the essay are still fruitful and valid, these mistakes show that the publication was premature. I correct the errors in the current chapter.

The second assumption that affects scholarship is this: given that 2 Baruch was a "non-canonical," marginal loser in its context of origin, it would also be a "non-canonical," marginal loser in later contexts. This assumption, which remains tacit and logically flawed, prevents scholars from seeing how the assessment, conception and characterization of a writing may change over time.[5] The assumption may be a side effect of the privileged focus on origins and its assumed explanatory powers, or the result of disciplinary boarders, which have left large areas uncharted. Since 2 Baruch has been defined as a first/second-century writing, it has been regarded as the academic property of the domain of Early Jewish Studies. Those who specialize on early Judaism typically develop expertise in this particular historical period (approximately the third century BCE – second century CE) but with some important exceptions, they would not study writings diachronically. This has led to substantial knowledge of the conception of a given writing on a horizontal axis, but change over time remains a blind spot. The study of the reception history of a writing thus not only provides the opportunity to learn more about its longer life; it also offers a unique opportunity to challenge key aspects of the academic narrative. We should allow the materials that remain from the thirteenth century to talk back to, correct and nuance that narrative.

4.1 Scripting 2 Baruch to be Read in Public Worship:
The Lectionary Manuscripts

As mentioned above, four surviving West Syriac lectionary manuscripts contain lections excerpted from 2 Baruch.[6] The manuscripts in question are Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687,[7] Ms. Syr. 33 and Ms. 77. All four manuscripts contain lections from the Old Testament and Pauline Epistles/Catholic Epistles and Acts for reading on Sundays and dominical feasts of the church year. Colophons date Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 to the years 1255 and 1256 CE, respectively. Ms. Syr. 33 is unfortunately not dated, but the cataloguers Brock and Van Rompay assigned to it a date in the first decades of the thirteenth century.[8] A note in the fourth

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[5] That is, if we accept the hypothesis that 2 Baruch was "non-canonical" in its assumed originating context.

[6] It is likely that these lections were also found in a fifth lectionary manuscript, London, BL, Add. 14,736. Cf., chapter 6 of the present volume.

[7] The Leiden Peshitta project has assigned the sigla 12l2 to Add. 14,686 and 12l3 to Add. 14,687.

[8] Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 249. Note that Add. 14,686 and Ms. 33 display clear similarities. They share the same organization of events, and with some exceptions, they contain the same lections. See Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 249–52; Nils H. Korsvoll, Liv Ingeborg Lied and Jerome A. Lund, "British Library Additional 14,686: Introduction, List of Readings, and Translation of Colophon and Notes," *Hugoye* 19/2 (2016): 385–402 at 388.

manuscript, Ms. 77, dates its completion to the year 1423 CE.[9] All four manu-
scripts contain either 2 Bar 44:9–15 or 72:1–73:2 or both. 2 Bar 44:9–15 appears
in Add. 14,686 (folio 77r–v) and Ms. Syr. 33 (folios 74v–75r). 2 Bar 72:1–73:2
appears in Add. 14,687 (folios 157v–158r and 175r–176r). Ms. 77 contains both
lections (folios 50r and 102r).

4.1.1 London, British Library, Add. 14,687

The manuscript in focus in this chapter is Add. 14,687 – the lectionary manu-
script that contains the lection, 2 Bar 72:1–73:2.[10] Add. 14,687 is a relatively well-
preserved paper codex, measuring 17 cm by 26 cm.[11] The codex consists of two
hundred and one leaves organized in twenty-one quires. The first leaf has been
lost and the medieval bindings of the codex have not survived.[12] The codex is
ruled vertically and horizontally, and the text in the writing area is laid out in
two columns. The script is "a good, regular"[13] Estrangelo. The letters are rela-
tively large, measuring between 3 mm and 1 cm. The titles of events and lections
are inscribed in red ink. Diamond-shaped constellations of dots adorn the quire
marks. A later hand has added occasional vowel signs and diacritical points. The
manuscript contains notes from correctors and later active readers.[14]

The lectionary manuscript covers sixty-eight Sundays and feast days.[15] It
starts with the Consecration of the Church[16] and ends with the Festival of the

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[9] Ms. 77, folio 147r. This manuscript is, as far as I am aware, mentioned for the first time in
an English publication in Dedering's 1973 critical edition of 2 Baruch ("Apocalypse of Baruch,"
iii). The manuscript is available on microfilm and in digital images from HMML. The Leiden
Peshitta project has assigned the siglum 15l5 to it.

[10] I studied London, BL, Add. 14,687 in the British Library on 3–8 March 2013, 20–21
February 2014 and 7–10 May 2019. I have also worked on the basis of digital images of the
manuscript provided by the British Library. Wright describes the manuscript briefly (*Cata-
logue*, 172–73).

[11] Paper was in frequent use in Syriac manuscript production after the tenth century (Borbone
et al., "Syriac Codicology," 253).

[12] The codex was rebound by Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO) for the British
Museum, probably in the 1940s. Unfortunately, the HMSO did not keep any records or
photographs of the older/original binding of the codex (email correspondence, Martyn Jones,
13 June 2013).

[13] Wright, *Catalogue*, 1:172.

[14] See, in particular, the additional notes on folio 201r–v. For an example of a correction in
the margin, see folio 60r. The codex contains several examples of scribbling of symbolic shapes
and geometrical figures. Cf., e. g., folios 66r, 67r–68v and 81v.

[15] The manuscript contains 61 rubricated events. However, as the headings for the events of
the Easter season indicate, the lections recorded for these events were also to be read during the
days of the Week of White (cf., the presentation below).

[16] The first folio of the codex and the hence the heading, is lost, but the identity of the first
event can be inferred first, from the fact that Add. 14,686 starts with this event and, second, from
the fact that this is the common starting point of Syriac lectionary manuscripts (Arthur Vööbus,
A Syriac Lectionary from the Church of the Forty Martyrs in Mardin, Tur 'Abdin, Mesopotamia,

Figure 7: The colophon of London, British Library, Add. 14,687, folio 198r. © The British Library Board.

Cross (folio 197v).[17] The number of lections for each event varies between two and nine. For ordinary Sundays, the manuscript most commonly prescribes three lections. For important feast days such as Nativity, Epiphany, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday it provides seven to nine lections. The first lections for each event are Old Testament lections. Often, the first lection is from the Pentateuch and the second is often from the historical or wisdom writings, whereas later Old Testament lections are drawn from prophetic books. However, this feature is not consistent.[18] The choice of lection depends on the number of lections, their literary contents and the relevance to the event in question. The last lection prescribed for each event is from the Pauline Epistles.

The colophon on folio 198r provides key information about the production and purpose of the manuscript:

ܥܦܠܬ ܗܕܐ ܘܡܘܫܠܬܐ܂ ܠܟܠܗ ܚܝܠܐ ܘܐܬܐ ܘܗܦܢܝ ܦܬܝܟ
ܕܚܠܘ ܬܢܝܟ܂ ܘܬܦܥܕܐ ܘܕܟܐܬܐ ܬܕܐܟܐ ܚܡ ܡܬܕܬܗܬܐܿ
ܬܥܢܐ ܕܠܟ ܡܢܬܥܕܬܐܐ ܘܟܬܦܝ ܡܥܕܐ ܕܢܐܝܟ ܢܬܟ܂
ܚܒܢ ܐܬܢܐ ܚܬܕܬܟܐ ܫܡܟܐ ܚܡ ܚܡܢ ܟܐܘܬܟܬܥܬܐ ܚܢܘܡ
ܘܦܠܓܡ ܬܘܡܐܿ ܚܘܡܝ ܡܬܬܬܐ ܘܗܕܬܐ܂ ܚܙ܇ ܐܬܒܝܫܥ
ܦܐܠܦܝܢܟܐ ܕܐܠܬܬܬܡܫ ܚܬܕܐ ܚܡ ܬܠ ܗܡܬܐܟܬܐܿ ܐܠܟ ܐܢܝ ܐܟܐ
ܗܘ ܚܘܟ ܟܟܐ ܀ ܐܟܬܬܬܡ ܚܡ ܗܡ܂ ܡܬܕܬܬܗܿ ܚܢܐ ܟ
ܡܬܥܐܟ ܬܢܠܐ ܕܕܠܟܐ ܬܠ ܗܡܬܢܟ܂ ܘܟܬܕܬܟ ܘܬܚܝ ܐܢ
ܟܐܘܬܟ ܐܦܡܠ ܠܚܟܐ ܀ ܕܚܒܕ ܚܢܝ ܚܡ ܗܡܟ ܚܣܢܟ ܡܚܠܟ
ܗܬܟܐ ܡܬܬܬܐ ܘܬܚܕܐ ܟܚܚܡܥ܂ ܠܗ ܠܬܢܐ ܕܐܢܟ ܘܐܦܢܟܐ܂
ܟܬܚ ܕܢܦܢܝ ܡܥܬܚܡܥ ܚܡܝ܂ ܘܢܝ ܠܡ܇ ܚܠܡ܇ ܘܚܠ
ܟܬܡܡܗܝ܇ ܡܬܕܐ ܟܬܡܐ ܠܠ ܟܬܕܡ ܟܐܘܬܟܡܬܥܐ ܚܬܝ ܟܐܘܠ
ܘܬܚܦܬܡܐ ܚܚܡܬܬܟ ܘܕܚܚܦܬܟܠܝ ܬܬܝ ܐܢ ܡܬܕܬܐ܂
ܚܬܟ ܠܚܠܬܝ ܬ ܕܟܟ ܐܟ ܡܥܬܬܟܚ ܐܝܟ ܬ ܚܠ ܟ ܟ ܠܣ
ܐܝܟ ܚܬܡ ܬܠ ܐܟܘܟ ܦܢܦܚܟ ܕܦܢܐ ܚܡܡܝ ܪ ܚܢ ܚܟܚܝ ܝ
ܚܢܡܗܝ ܕܠ ܢܥܬ ܦܕܐܟ ܐܘ ܠܠܟ ܢܐܢܝ ܚܚܟܟ ܐܠ
ܒܬܘܕܠ ܠܚܬܠܟ ܡܚܢܬܟ ܚܠܠ ܬܕܠ ܕܢܟ ܢܥܦܢܙ ܗܠܚܐ
ܟܢܝ ܚܦܥܬܠܟ ܐܝܟ ܝܝ ܝ ܐܠܐܡ ܚܠܬܕܘܬ ܐܦܘܢܟ ܐܚܡܝ ܐܟܢܪ
ܦܠܠܝ ܢܠܠܬܠܬܟ ܘܚܡܚܬܥܟ ܕܕܢܝܟ ܢܬܟ ܦܬܦܟ ܦܬܕܣܟ܂ ܡܣܚܢܟ
ܚܣܬܟ ܘܟܬܕܚܡܝ ܥܕܢܟ ܚܡ ܐܥܬܝܟ ܚܡܢܟ܇ ܚܚܦܢܝ
ܐܝܟ ܬ ܚܠ ܝ ܝ ܚܣ ܐܝܟ ܡܬܚܚܡܝ܇ ܕܠ ܐ ܐܚܬܠܘܣܝ ܚܠܠ
ܚܣܒܠܘܬ ܕܚܚܬܚܬܐ܂ ܗܡ ܗܿ܇ ܕܐܝܢ ܢܚܟ ܠܟ ܚܝ ܬܝ ܐܢܠܟ ܟܘܠܟ

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[17] The lections for the event of the Consecration of the Water appear on folios 198v–201r, after the event of the Festival of the Cross and the colophon, but a note on folio 34v states that these lections were left out by mistake and added at the end. This note and the addition are more than an occasional mistake, though. Cf., footnote 33 below.

[18] Although the above structure is relatively common, there was no single, authoritative order of readings. Several standards coexisted and both reading traditions and the literary relevance of a lection for a certain event would have affected the choice. Cf., Anton Baumstark, *Nichtevangelische syrische Perikopenordnungen des ersten Jahrtausends* (Münster: Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1921), 79; Francis C. Burkitt, "The Early Syriac Lectionary System," *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1923), 301–38 at 321.

ܗܘܐ ܓܝܠܠ ܦܠܓܗ ܬܪܝܢ ܡܢ ܦܘܪܫܢܐ ܩܪܝܢܐ ܕܟܠܗ ܫܢܬܐ܂ ܗܐ ܘܗܐ ܬܚܠ ܘܫܠܡ
ܘܫܚܪ܂ ܘܚܘܬܡܗ ܐܬܚܫܒ ܗܘܐ ܘܢܬܚܫܒ ܥܠܝܗ܂ ܘܫܠܡܝ ܫܢܬܐ
ܥܟܠܐ ܐܪܒܥܐ ܘܚܡܫܐ ܐܪܒܥ ܡܢ ܝܘܢܝܐ ܕܡܗܝܡܢܐ܂ ܘܩܘܗܝ ܒܚܢ ܚܒ ܚܒ ܐܠܟ ܐܘܠܟ
ܘܠܡܫܚܗ ܗܝ܂ ܕܚܬܐ ܬܝ ܠܡܐܠܕܬ ܝܠܕܬ ܐܠܗܐ ܠܢ ܕܡܚܢܫܐ ܠܪܘ ܘܗܘ
ܕܒܣܘܪܝܐ ܘܒܦܘܪܫܢܐ ܚܢܝ ܠܗ ܚܠܗ܂ ܟܠ ܗܘ ܢܫܢܝܫܐ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ
ܗܝ ܠܗ ܚܠ ܐܢܝ ܣܒܕܗ܂ ܗܝ ܠܗ ܚܠ ܐܢܫܐ ܕܥܠ ܐܬܚܫܒ ܐܢܝ ܗܢܐ ܟܠܗ
ܕܗܒܝܪ܂ ܗܝ ܠܗ ܚܠ ܕܕܐ [19] ܕܠܪ ܐܢܝ ܐܪܒܥܬܐ ܬܚܒܕ܂ ܗܝ ܠܗ ܚܠ ܚܠ ܕܠܐ ܐܬܚܫܒܐ ܗܫܗ܂

ܥܡܕܝܟ ܐܠܗܐ ܘܠܒܪܐ ܘܠܪܘܚܐ ܩܘܕܫܐ
ܩܘܪܒܐ ܠܚܠܡ ܚܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܘܐܡܝܢ܂

This second half of the division of the readings for the whole year, of Sundays and dominical feasts, has come to its end and completion together with its companion in the year 1567 of the perfidious Greeks, in January,[20] on its fifth day, on a Wednesday,[21] as the bell sounded at noon. In the days of the overseers of the church, Mar Athanasius was patriarch of Alexandria. For the church of us Syrians was without a head at that time. For she[22] and her companion were written at the Holy Monastery of *Yoldat Aloho* of us Syrians, which is in the desert of Egypt, that is, "Weighing the Heart." For an old [man], weak and full of spots and sores by the name of Bakos wrote them for the aforementioned monastery so that they could read and serve with them, and [so that] they may pray for him and for his parents, and that there would be a memorial for him and a participation in the prayers and in the liturgical services and in the Eucharists that are celebrated at this holy monastery forever. So, I beseech and I entreat, as I fall down before every discerning brother who reads in them or copies from them, that if he finds a slip of the pen or a mistake he should set them right in love and not blame the culpable and guilty [one], because every creature is incomplete and no person is perfect but God alone. And you, my fathers and my brothers, a powerful unit, the congregation of chaste and holy monks and the renowned solitaries and true anchorites, with the honored head of the monastery, I implore, as I fall down before you, that you do not blame me because of the weakness of the writing so that I did not reduce her[23] – God [is my] witness! Because I am weak due to old age and my hands, behold, they tremble and my eyes have become dim. And constant illnesses, behold, they trouble me and every day I ask for death. So I beseech from your kindness that you will be intercessors between God and my lowliness, that perhaps in your prayers [there will be] pity with me and absolution for me. And he, who in love and discernment prays for me will also be absolved by God.

And pray for Rabban Habib, and pray for my brother in the blood, Rabban Sergius, who has departed. And pray for my uncle, Rabban Isaiah, who has departed and pray for all who are associated [with us].

Praise to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen and amen.

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[19] The word ܕܕܐ, "uncle," is a later correction, probably by the scribe himself.
[20] That is, the Later Conun.
[21] Literally, "the fourth day of the week."
[22] That is, "this second volume."
[23] That is, "the writing."

As this colophon shows,[24] the scribe, Bakos, identified the manuscript as ܩܘܒܐ
ܡܬܐ, that is, a lectionary.[25] The colophon suggests that Bakos copied the
lectionary manuscript in the Monastery of the Syrians[26] in the month of Later
Conun in the year 1567 of the Seleucid era,[27] that is, in January 1256 CE. Bakos
described himself by means of conventional scribal humility as old, weak, full
of defects and with trembling hands and dim eyes.[28] Although the quality of the
script in the manuscript clearly contradicts his pious claims to trembling hands
and dim eyes, he must nevertheless have been a mature man in 1256. Bakos was
a prolific scribe who had already had a long career.[29] As Brock argued, Bakos
is probably responsible for at least eleven surviving dated manuscripts, copied
in the period from 1208 to 1257.[30] The first six manuscripts were copied at the
Mountain of Edessa, whereas he copied the latter five in the Monastery of the

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[24] The colophon of Add. 14,687 is very similar to other colophons Bakos wrote, particularly
the colophon of Add. 14,686, folio 205v (see Korsvoll, Lied and Lund, "British Library
Additional 14,686," 398–401). The colophon also shares many features with the colophons of
London, BL, Or. 8729 and Add. 17,256. These colophons were translated into English by Harrak
("Bacchus, Son of Mattay," 113, 108–14).

[25] Literally, "division of the readings." Cf., also, the subscription on folio 197v: ܥܠܡ
ܦܠܓܘܬܐ ܗܕ ܬܪܝܢܝܬ ܕܩܪܝܢܐ ܘܣܘܡܬ ܕܥܐܕ̈ܐ ܡܪ̈ܢܝܐ, "Ended is this second part of the readings for the
dominical feasts."

[26] The colophon reads: "the Holy Monastery of *Yoldat Aloho* of us Syrians, which is in the
desert of Egypt, that is, 'Weighing the Heart' (or: 'Measure of the Heart')." Both the name of the
monastery and the name of the Scetis desert are commonplace and known from other colophons
in manuscripts copied by Bakos (Cf., e. g., London, BL, Add. 17,253, Add. 14,678, Add. 14,715
and Add. 17,256. Cf., Sebastian P. Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts Copied at Deir al-Surian,"
in *Between the Cross and the Crescent: Studies in Honor of Samir Khalil Samir, S. J., on the
Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Željko Paša, S. J. [Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale,
2018], 355–72 at 358).

[27] Bakos applied the expression, "the perfidious Greek" (ܝܘܢܝܐ ܢܬܝܒ) in several colophons.
For the use of the expression, see Hubert Kaufhold, "'Gesegnete Griechen' – 'verfluchte
Griechen' in syrischen Kolophonen," in *Koinotaton Doron: Das späte Byzanz zwischen Macht-
losigkeit und kultureller Blüte (1204–1641),* ed., Albrecht Berger et al., Byzantinisches Archiv
31 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 61–69; Sebastian P. Brock, "Perfidious Greeks, Blessed Greeks,
Blessed Muslims and the Memory of Alexander in the Dating Formulae of Syriac Manuscripts,"
in *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed.,
Sidney H. Griffith and Sven Grebenstein (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), 13–25; Brock,
"Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 358–59.

[28] Cf., the discussion in chapter 2 of the present volume.

[29] The colophon of Or. 8729 identifies him as "Bacchus son of Mattay son of Moses son of
Isiah of Bēt-Ḥudayd," and as a monk and priest (Harrak, "Bacchus, Son of Mattay," 109–10).
Bēt-Ḥudayd/Beth-Khudayda is present-day Qaraqosh. On Bakos's scribal career, see Jules
Leroy, "Deux scribes syriaques nommés Bakos," *L'Orient Syrien* 7 (1962): 103–20; Harrak,
"Bacchus, Son of Mattay," 107–22; Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 359. Cf., also Van
Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 357–8 on Bakos's colophons and the similarities
to the latter part of the scribe Aziz's colophon in Paris, BnF, Syr. 56, folio 191v.

[30] Harrak, "Bacchus, Son of Mattay," 112–14; Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 359.
Harrak mentioned neither Add. 14,687 (1256) nor Add. 14,715 (1257). He described Add. 14,686
as the oldest manuscript ascribed to Bakos (1255) (Harrak, "Bacchus, Son of Mattay," 108, 114).

Syrians. The manuscripts produced in the Monastery of the Syrians indicate that Bakos was active there at least in the period between 1247/8 and 1257.[31]

The first part of the colophon of Add. 14,687 indicates that the manuscript has a companion volume (ܣܕܬܗ). The companion volume must be Add. 14,686, which Bakos copied in 1255, also in the Monastery of the Syrians. Both manuscripts are paper codices of approximately the same size and page layout and with almost identical colophons.[32] The two accompanying volumes cover the same events, but they prescribe two different sets of lections for each Sunday and feast day.[33] Both contain selections of Old Testament lections, but whereas Add. 14,686 contains the Catholic Epistles and Acts (ܦܪܟܣܝܣ),[34] Add. 14,687 contains the Epistles of Paul (ܦܘܠܣ).[35] A likely hypothesis is that these two manuscripts were meant to complement each other as a two-volume set. The first argument for this inference is the codicological similarities, their common origins, their shared set of events and the fact that both colophons refer to a companion volume. The second argument is that Catholic Epistles and Acts represent another category of liturgical reading from the Epistles of Paul, and the congregation would thus need both volumes to gain access to all the prescribed readings. In the twelfth-century *Commentary on the Eucharist,* bar Salibi stated that Prophets were read before the Catholic Epistles and Acts. After that the Epistle of Paul was read, before the lection from the Gospels.[36] The third argument is the ordering of the lections in Ms. 77 of the A. Konat Collection. According to the superscript title and the colophon, this manuscript includes the categories Law, Prophets, Catholic Epistles and Acts, and Pauline Epistles.[37]

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[31] Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 358–59, 365; idem, "Manuscripts Copied in Edessa," in *Orientalia Christiana: Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter Bruns and Heinz Otto Luthe, Eichstätter Beiträge zum Christlichen Orient 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013), 109–27 at 116–18.

[32] There is a minimal size difference between the two codices (Add. 14,686 measures 18 cm by 26 cm, whereas Add. 14,687 measures 17 cm by 26 cm). Bakos allegedly completed Add. 14,686 on the twenty-seventh day of the month of Elul, in the year 1566 of the Seleucid era, whereas Add. 14,687 was finished on the fifth day of the Later Conun in the year 1567. The prayer requests in the two colophons differ slightly. Add. 14,687 adds those who "associated themselves [with us]" (a similar claim appears in the colophon of Or. 8729). Finally, the Doxology that follows the colophon of Add. 14,687 includes two "amens," not one.

[33] Both manuscripts start with the Consecration of the Church and end with the Festival of the Cross. Both include the lections for the Consecration of the Water at the end of the manuscript, and both include the marginal note (Add. 14,686, f. 33r; Add. 14,687, f. 34v) marking the displacement of this event from its expected place.

[34] The manuscript includes lections from 1 and 2 Peter, 1 John and James in addition to Acts. Most of them are identified as ܦܪܟܣܝܣ ܕܫܠܝܚܐ, sometimes as ܦܪܟܣܝܣ, and sometimes simply by reference to the epistle of a specific apostle.

[35] The Epistle lections in the Add. 14,687 are consistently identified as ܦܘܠܣ and sometimes also by explicit references to Paul. The manuscript contains lections from Hebrews, Romans, Ephesians, Galatians, Titus, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians and Philippians.

[36] Cf., bar Salibi, *Commentary on the Eucharist,* 4,11 (quoted in full below).

[37] Folios 1r and 146r.
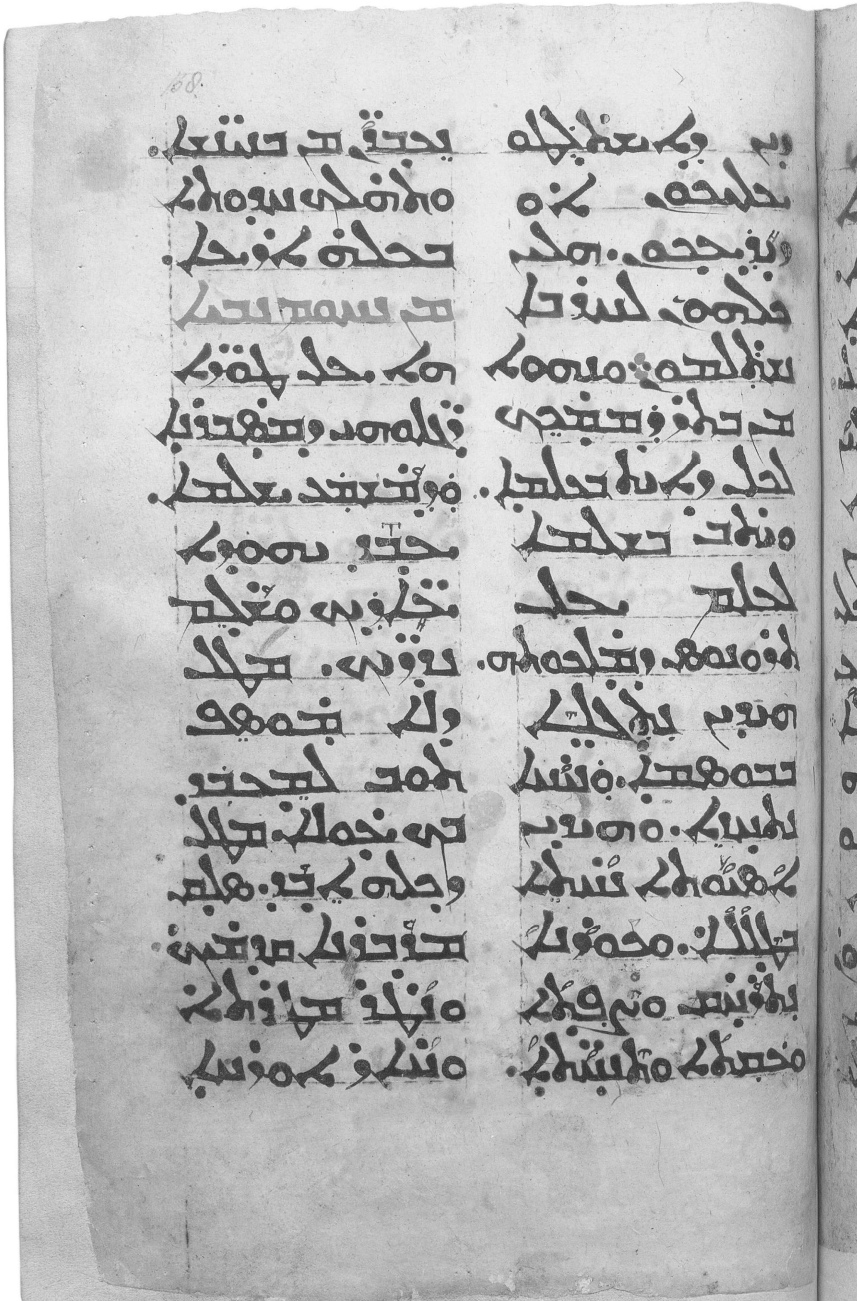
Figure 8: "From Baruch." London, British Library, Add. 14,687, folio 157v and 158r.
© The British Library Board.

ܘܚܠ ܒܝܓܠܘܢܒܚܘ ܀܀
ܚܬܚܚ ܂ ܘܝܟܘ
ܘܢܚܒ ܣܢܟ ܠܐܠܘܗ ܒܚܬܚܚ
ܒܚܒܠܐܟ ܒܒܒܟ ܘܚܚܘܚ ܂ ܂ ܟܒܚ ܘܚܚܘܗ ܒܒܠܘܟܗ
ܚܚܒ ܥ ܠܘܗܒ ܂ ܀ ܗܠܡ ܘܚܚܒ ܀ ܀ ܀
ܕܚ ܚܬܘܚ ܥܒܕ ܒܚܕ ܒܚܬܚܚ
ܘܒ ܟܘܦ ܂ ܒܚܕ ܂ ܟܡܠܡ ܘܒܚܩܒܒܡ
ܟܠ ܥܘܢܬܟ ܘܒܢܒܗ ܚܚܘܗ ܂ ܟܠ
ܘܚܚܛܘܒܡ ܘܚܘܚܘܗ ܚܚܛܠ ܘܠܟ ܬܘܒܕ
ܟܚܘܠܚܛܠ ܡܚ ܠܟܚܒܘܢܒܠܚ ܚܒܠ
ܚܚܘ ܘܡܚ ܂ ܘܒܝܚ ܠܕܘܚܚܘ
ܠܟܘܚܟܚܛܠ ܂ ܗܘܒܐ ܘܒܚܚܘܚܒ ܂ ܚܘܚܘ
ܘܗܕ ܚܠܟܠܚ ܕܚ ܘܝܒܟ ܂ ܘܗܘܟ
ܚܛܘ ܘܒܚܩܢܠܚ ܘܚܠܕ ܘܒܥܢܟܚܒܕܘܗ
ܟܚܬܘܗ ܘܒܟܠܟܚܒܩ ܚ ܚܠ ܚܬܚܚ
ܠܗ ܚܩܚܚܘܗܒܚ ܂ ܒܚ ܚܚܒܝ ܂ ܒܠܕ ܟܟܚܒܠ
ܒܢܢ ܠܒܚܘܗܒ ܂ ܚܬܚܠ ܂

As the presentation below will show in more detail, the selection of lections in the manuscript overlaps to a significant degree with the selection of lections in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687. Ms. 77 combines lections from Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 alternately.

All the five dated manuscripts that Bakos copied in the monastery were specialized liturgical manuscripts.[38] They were copied to be used in worship contexts. As indicated in the colophons of Add. 14,686 and 14,687, Bakos copied these two manuscripts "for the aforementioned monastery so that they could read and serve with them." He hoped to be remembered "in the liturgical services and in the Eucharists that are celebrated at this holy monastery forever."[39] In other words, to the extent that we can use a scribal colophon as a source indicating scribal intent, these lectionary manuscripts were intended for use in the Monastery of the Syrians, designed to help the monks uphold Syriac liturgical life.[40]

4.1.2 The Lection: "From Baruch" and the List of Readings for Easter Sunday

The lection excerpted from 2 Baruch, 2 Bar 72:1–73:2, appears on folios 157v–158r of Add. 14,687. A heading identifies the lection as ܡܢ ܒܪܘܟ, "From Baruch," and reads:[41]

f. 158r, left column	f. 158r, right column	f. 157v, left column	f. 157v, right column
ܒܚܙ̈ܝ ܡܢ ܚܢܢܟ̈ܐ	ܡܢ ܕܐܪܥܐܠܝܠܗ	ܡܟܐܗܠܐ ܐܢܟܐ	ܥܓܕ
ܘܠܐܗܘܢ ܫܘܡܗ̈ܐ	ܐܟ ܚܠܡܝ̈	ܘܚܩܣܪ ܡܬܘܐ	ܕܡ ܟܐܒ ܚܠ
ܚܠܐܗ ܐܢܟ̈ܐ.	ܘܬܚܡܝ̈ ܡܠܡ	ܠܚܠܡܗ̈ ܚܬܚܟ̈.	ܟܢܟ ܢܘܡܢ̈ܟ
	ܚܠܡܝ̈ ܠܫܢ̈ܟ	ܘܚܢܣܘ ܢܐܣܟ̈	ܘܕܚܒ̈ܝܒ ܕܘܡܘܢ

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[38] Psalms for the Hours (Add. 17,257); Psalms (Add. 17,256); two lectionary manuscripts (Add. 14,686 and 14,687); and Supplicatory hymns (Add. 14,715). Cf., Evelyn-White, *History of the Monasteries*, 449; Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 358–59. Cf., furthermore, the discussion in chapter 6 of the present volume.

[39] Cf., the discussion of the functions of colophons and notes as memorials in chapter 2 of the present volume.

[40] Unless further specified, I apply the term "liturgy"/"liturgical" to refer to structured and prescribed, publicly shared worship practices (cf., chapter 3). According to Varghese, "the Syrians have no technical term with an exclusive meaning (similar to *leitourgia*) to denote the liturgical phenomenon" (*West Syrian Liturgical Theology,* Liturgy, Worship and Society [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004], 35). In the colophon of Add. 14,687, Bakos describes the purpose for copying the manuscript as "so that they might read and serve with them" and the context of that use as "in the services and in the eucharist celebrations that are celebrated in this holy monastery." He applies the terms ܩܪܐ "read," ܫܡܫ "serve," as well as ܬܫܡܫܬܐ "liturgical services" (offices), ܩܘܪܒܐ "Eucharist" (divine liturgy) and ܚܕܬܐ "celebrate," to describe the practices in which the lectionary manuscript was meant to take part (f. 198r).

[41] In order to avoid overcrowding the Syriac text and thus to ensure readability, I have not included the additional dots that the corrector (or another active reader) added to the lection. The interested reader can consult the images in figure 8.

f. 158r, left column	f. 158r, right column	f. 157v, left column	f. 157v, right column
ܘܗܘܐ ܕܠܓܠܬܥ ✣	ܘܚܟܫܚ ܕܐܗ ܡܢ	ܢܒܠܢܝ ܘܐܗܘܟܚ	ܡܢ ܕܠܟܥܠܘܟ
ܡܝ ܕܐܗ ܕܡܟܚܝ	ܐܚܟܝ ܡܥܠ ܘܝܠܗ	ܡܠܝ ܡ	ܡܠܗ ܗܐܕ
ܚܠܚܟ ܐܟܝ ܕܠܚܠ	ܚܟܚܚ ܚܠ	ܘܡܟܢܚܐ	ܗܘܐܡ ܘܡܟܢܚܐ
ܚܟܠܥ ܕܘܗܢܘ	ܕܐܗܘܚܟܕ ܡܠܝ	ܕܠܗܟܥ ܡܝ	ܡܝ ܐܟܠܗܡ ܗܝ
ܚܠ ܚܠܠ	ܚܠ ܐܗܕ ܝܒܝܢܝ	ܘܝܠܗܐܟ ܗܐܕ	ܘܝܠܗܐܟ ܗܐܕ
ܘܗܢܚܠܚܟܕ ܘܘܘܐܗ	ܕܡܢܢܐ ܕܠ ܚܚܟ	ܚܕ ܐܟܟܚܟ ܠܡ	ܚܕ ܐܟܟܚܟ ܠܡ
ܟܥܠ ܠܥ ܝܒܝ ܗܡ	⁴² ܐܪܐܟܘ ܠܒܐܟܟܡܥܟ	ܚܟܚܟ ܢܝܥܠ ܠܥ	ܚܟܚܟ ܢܝܥܠ ܠܥ
ܐܟܢܡ ܟܘܡܗܘܟܚ	ܚܟܢܐܠ ܘܝܒܐ		
ܡܝܒܝ ܐܟܒܠܐܗ	ܗܘܡ ܘܗܡܟܚܕ		
ܐܟܢܘܐ ܐܘܗܢܘܟ	ܐܟܡܗܘ ܝܒܝܢܝ		
ܐܟܘܗܡ .ܟܠܠܟܒ	ܚܟܕܘܗܟܥܢ ܕܠܚ		
ܐܟܗܘܩ ܝܡ ܕܢܚܟܠܘ	ܡܟܚܟ ܚܠ ܡܝ		
⁴³ ܐܟܢܫܚܠܘܟܗ ܘܐܟܡܚܘ	ܝܠܡܥ ܚܠ ܢܟܕܠ		

Hear, now, also about the bright waters that will come at the end after these black [ones]. This is the word. After the signs have come, as it was said to you before, when the nations will be in uproar and the time of my Messiah has come, he will call all the nations and he will let some among them live and kill others. These [things], then, will come upon the nations that were prepared to be spared by him: each nation that did not know Israel or tread down the seed of Jacob will live. And this [happens] because some from among all the nations will be subjected to your people. All those who have ruled over you or who have known you will be surrendered to the sword. And it will happen after he has brought down everything that is in the world and sits in peace everlasting on the throne of his kingdom, he will be revealed in joy and rest will appear. Then healing will descend with shade, and drought will be removed,[44] and anxiety and sadness and lament will vanish from mankind and gladness will proceed through the whole earth.

This passage describes the events that will occur at the end, at the coming of the Messiah. The passage depicts, first, the gathering of the nations and the messianic judgment, resulting in punishment or redemption. The passage goes on to describe the Messiah seated on the throne of his kingdom, his revelation and the subsequent eschatological transformation of the world into a world of bliss. The first line of the passage, which mentions the bright waters that will come after

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[42] It is interesting to note that the additional vowel signs here simply indicate the regular vocalization of the singular and plural forms of the feminine noun. On the one hand, one might have expected the reader to have known this. Hence, the reader who needed the extra aid might not have been a very experienced reader of Syriac. On the other hand, the words appearing in this sentence are relatively infrequent in the Peshitta. The reader may have been unfamiliar with them and thus in need of some extra help at this point.

[43] The *dalath* is a later addition but probably a scribal correction.

[44] The text of the Codex Ambrosianus (f. 265r) reads ܟܘܪܗܢܐ, "disease," not ܩܝܕܐ, "drought" or "heat." It is possible that ܩܝܕܐ is a scribal mistake. However, since the lection in folios 175r–176r shares the same reading (ܩܝܕܐ) it is more likely that it reflects a different interpretation of the text.

the black ones, hints at the larger section from which the passage is excerpted. In the literary context of 2 Baruch, this passage provides the interpretation sequence of the final, bright waters from the apocalyptic section sometimes called the Apocalypse of the Cloud (2 Bar 53; and its interpretation: 55–74).[45] However, even though the passage was at some point excerpted from 2 Baruch, in the context of the lectionary manuscript, neither the context of the Apocalypse of the Cloud nor the context of 2 Baruch have necessarily been perceived as the immediate literary frame of this passage. In the lectionary manuscript, the passage provides an account of the messianic age and the transformations that it brings about, contextualized anew in the lectionary manuscript as one of the prescribed readings for Easter Sunday.

The lection "From Baruch" is the fourth of seven lections that Add. 14,687 prescribes for reading on the Great Sunday of the Resurrection (ܚܕ ܒܫܒܐ ܪܒܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ), that is, Easter Sunday. Add. 14,687's list of readings for Easter Sunday (folios 155r–160r) is as follows:

> Num 10:1–10 (155r–v)
> 1 Sam 21:1–7 (155v–156v)
> Isa 61:10–62:5 (156v–157v)
> 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 (157v–158r)
> Nah 1:15–2:7 (158r–v)
> Isa 60:11–16 (158v–159v)
> 1 Cor 15:20–28 (159v–160r)

The seven lections for Easter Sunday reflect the overall selection of the manuscript: it provides readings from the Old Testament and the Pauline Epistles. Seven is already a relatively high number of lections. However, West Syriac lectionary manuscripts and indices sometimes ascribe as many as fifteen lections from the Old Testament and the Epistles to important Sundays and feast days.[46] Indeed, if we assume that Add. 14,686 accompanied Add. 14,687 in the church room, the total number of prescribed lections would be fourteen. The list of lections for Easter Sunday in Add. 14,686 (folios 154r–160r) is as follows:

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[45] Klijn included this title in his edition of 2 Baruch to refer to 2 Bar 53, 55–76 (Albertus F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, vol. 1 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed., James H. Charlesworth [New York: Doubleday, 1983], 615–53 at 639). The copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus does not include this heading but it is fitting in the sense that it summarizes the contents of the section (with the exception that Klijn made the "cloud" plural. 2 Bar 53 mentions only a single cloud).

[46] Cf., e. g., London, BL, Add. 14,528 (folios 171v–172v). Cf., Baumstark, *Nichtevangelische syrische Perikopenordnungen*, 78–79, 120; Burkitt, "Lectionary System," 320–21; Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 152–54, 156; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 135.

Ex 40:17–23 (154r–v)
Isa 60:1–7 (154v–155r)
Judg 6:11–16 (155r–v)
Joel 2:21–3:5 (155v–156v)
Mic 7:11–20 (156v–157v)
Dan 6:19–25 (157v–158r)
Acts 2:22–43 (158r–160r)

Add. 14,686 prescribes lections from the Old Testament and from Acts. In comparison, Ms. 77 provides the following list of lections for Easter Sunday (folios 100r–103r):

Ex 40:17–23 (100r–v)
Num 10:1–10 (100v)
Isa 60:1–7 (100v–101r)
1 Sam 21:1–7 (101r)
Judg 6:11–16 (101r–v)
Isa 61:10–62:5 (101v)
Joel 2:21–3:5 (101v–102r)
2 Bar 72:1–73:2 (102r)
Mic 7:11–20 (102r–v)
Nah 1:15–2:7 (102v)
Dan 6:19–25 (102v–103r)
1 Cor 15:20–28 (103r)

As this list of lections shows, Ms. 77 leaves out the last reading of Isaiah in Add. 14,687 and the reading from Acts 2:22–43 in Add. 14,686.[47] These changes aside, Ms. 77 remains faithful to the selection of lections in the two older lectionary manuscripts and prescribes alternate lections from them. Thus, although this suggestion remains hypothetical, Ms. 77 serves as an indication of how Add. 14,687 and "its companion" functioned together and how the lists of lections in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 were read on Easter Sunday.

Interestingly, Easter Sunday is not the only event in Add. 14,687 that prescribes 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 for reading. The passage appears again, identified once more as "From Baruch," ܡܢ ܒܪܘܟ, on folios 175r–176r. The event heading on folio 174v reads: "The Lections for the Eighth Sunday after the Resurrection, and also New Sunday" (ܡܬܢܐ ܕܚܕ ܒܫܒܐ ܕܬܡܢܝܐ ܕܒܬܪ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܬܘܒ ܚܕ ܒܫܒܐ ܚܕܬܐ). As the heading indicates, the series of lections (folios 174v–177r)[48] is prescribed to be read on two different occasions: on the Eighth Sunday after Easter and on New Sunday. The Eight Sunday after Easter is the last Sunday of the Easter

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[47] At some point, Acts fell out of use in the Eucharistic liturgy. This is the case at least in the mid-sixteenth century (George A. Kiraz, email correspondence, 10 December 2019).

[48] The list of readings in Add. 14,687 is: Wis 6:21–7:7 (ff. 174v–175r); 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 (ff. 175r–176r); Isa 43:5–13 (f. 176r–v); Col 1:3–10 (ff. 176v–177r). Add. 14,686 adds: Jer 1:4–12 (ff. 175v–176r); 2 Sam 7:18–26 (ff. 176r–177r); Jer 26:1–6 (ff. 177r–178r); Acts 6:8–7:1+7:54–60 (ff. 178r–179r).

season recorded in the manuscript. New Sunday is the first Sunday after Easter, but also the culmination of the Week of White. All the event headings in the part of the manuscript that records the lections for the Easter season suggest that the lections double as readings prescribed for each of the Sundays in this season as well as for each of the days of the Week of White.[49] Hence, it is a feature that characterizes the entire season. The implication for 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 is that this lection is scripted to be read all together three times during this season: first, on Easter Sunday, then on New Sunday and, finally, on the Eighth Sunday after the Resurrection. This repetition of a single lection was not uncommon. If considered appropriate, a lection could be used several times.[50]

Summing up, for the present study of the engagement with 2 Baruch, this initial look at Add. 14,687 and Add. 14,686 provides a handful of interesting observations. First, it is very likely that the passage excerpted from 2 Baruch functioned in this context as a lection from an Old Testament book. Its very inclusion in Add. 14,687 would support that claim. Second, the order of the lists of lections suggests that the lection was understood as a reading from a prophetic book. It figures among other prophetic readings.[51] Third, in both of the occurrences, the headings identify the lections as "From Baruch." This suggests that the passage retains its association with a book of Baruch, but it cannot be taken for granted that the book that would come to mind would be the book that we today identify as "2 Baruch." Fourth and finally, it is reasonable to assume that the lection from 2 Baruch was deemed appropriate reading. Indeed, it was appropriate enough to be prescribed for reading on Easter Sunday and to be repeated twice during the Easter season. In this manner, the passage would have been heard both at the beginning and at the end of the season, as well as at the culmination of the Week of White.

4.2 Reading 2 Baruch on Easter Sunday: Approximating a Thirteenth-Century Context of Engagement

A lectionary manuscript is a textual artifact that prescribes lections from scripture for reading in a public worship context. As suggested by the above presentation of Add. 14,687, the manuscript that contains the lection may yield some information about the engagement with the lection excerpted from 2 Baruch at its time of production. However, lectionary manuscripts and their texts are not only interesting in their own right as textual artifacts and as containers of texts – they are even more intriguing when we connect them to the contexts of use that

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[49] Cf., also, the same doubling in Add. 14,686 and Ms. Syr. 33.
[50] Burkitt, "Lectionary System," 322.
[51] In Add. 14,686, the lection from 2 Bar 44:9–15 is identified as "From Baruch, the Prophet," ܡܢ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ܂.

they were designed to serve. A lectionary manuscript is also a specialized ritual artifact. We cannot fully understand the use of the lection "From Baruch" without approximating potential contexts in which it was read and heard. Where – in what spatial contexts – is it likely that the lection would have been recited? Of what ritual event and liturgical context would the lection be part? How would the lection be performed and embodied, who gave voice to it, and (how) would the materiality of the codex matter? Who would listen, and what would those in attendance see and smell while listening to the lection? Consequently, how would a community of worshippers interpret the literary contents of the lection? These are bold questions, and any answers to them will remain hypothetical. Nevertheless, posing them and attempting to answer them will open up the possibility of gaining new insights into the engagement with 2 Baruch in one specific thirteenth-century context.

4.2.1 Material and Verbal Traces of Engagement in the Manuscript

In the above description, I have shown that, according to the colophon, the scribe Bakos copied the lectionary manuscript Add. 14,687 and its companion for use in worship contexts in the Monastery of the Syrians, and that a lection from 2 Baruch was prescribed for reading in such contexts. Some additional features of Add. 14,687 confirm that this is indeed a manuscript intended for use. The manuscript is a paper codex of the "utilitarian size," common in Syriac service books that were produced for regular, public usage.[52] The letters of the script are large, which makes the manuscript easy to read, even at some distance. Each event, that is, each Sunday or feast day, each season and each lection is marked with a heading. In this way, the manuscript is set up to help the reader find his way. Indeed, it is designed to facilitate scriptural reading in a Christian worship context. Still, logically, the inclusion of 2 Baruch in a lectionary manuscript does not automatically mean that it was actually put to use.[53] Hence, to make sure that this was the case, we must look for traces of engagement.[54]

The material condition of Add. 14,687 is relatively good. This implies that it cannot have been subjected to heavy use over time. However, there is little doubt that the manuscript has indeed been in use. In the outer and lower margins of the folios, there are clear signs of thumbing. Many sheets are worn. Some pages show traces of fluids that have smeared the ink, and wax stains are spread out

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[52] Cf., Mango, "The Production of Syriac Manuscripts," 175–76.

[53] An argument could also be made for the unlikeliness that a lectionary manuscript would be copied at all if it were no longer required in worship. However, manuscripts could, in principle, be produced for the archive.

[54] The methodological principles that I laid out in the previous chapters of this volume also apply to the current chapter.

throughout the codex. In addition, a later hand (or later hands) has added Greek vowel signs and diacritical points to facilitate public reading.

A corrector has left us a note on folio 201v. He[55] tells us that he has corrected the use of *seyame* in the manuscript as well as the use of *qushoyo* and *rukokho*.[56] The note writer is concerned with the correct pronunciation. Maybe, at the time when he wrote this note, those who read the texts in the worship context needed some extra guidance. In the thirteenth century, it is probable that the readers' everyday language would have been Arabic.[57]

Another active reader[58] added a brief prayer request on the same page, asking us to pray for the scribe: "Pray for the sinner who wrote" (ܨܠܝ ܥܠ ܚܛܝܐ ܕܟܬܒ). A Garshuni[59] note on folio 201v shows that yet another note writer, who presented himself as a monk from the village of al-Manquq in the district of Mardin, used empty space on the pages of the codex for another purpose than the one that Bakos would probably have intended. This note writer identified his own note (twice) as a writing exercise (*tadjrīb al-qalam*).[60]

The folios containing the lection from 2 Baruch show clear signs of engagement. Folios 157v and 158r contain additional vowel signs and diacritical points and signs of thumbing in the lower, outer margin. The intercolumn of folio 158r includes a wax stain that someone has later tried to remove. Folios 175r–176r, which contains the other recording of 2 Bar 72:1–73:2, exhibit several traces of engagement. They show the remains of fluids, several wax spots, additional diacritical points and vowel signs. The outer margins are relatively heavily worn. Summing up, this lectionary manuscript – and the lections from 2 Baruch within it – was not only intended for use but also undoubtedly put to use.

Is it possible to ascertain where the manuscript would have been engaged with and by whom? The active readers who left us notes on folio 201r–v unfortunately

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[55] It is unlikely that the note writer was a woman, but it cannot be ruled out completely since some notes in Syriac manuscripts were written by women. Cf., Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library Ms. 183 (William F. Macomber, *Final Inventory of the Microfilmed Manuscripts of the St Mark's Convent Jerusalem. Manuscripts in Syriac, Garshuni, Arabic. April 16, 1990* [Provo: Brigham Young University, 1995], 232), possibly Ms xxviii of Murad Kamil's handlist/ Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 6 (Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 26–32), and London, BL, Add. 14,652 (studied in London, 10 May 2019).

[56] *Seyame* is the two dots placed over (mainly) nouns and adjectives to indicate that they are plural. *Qushoyo* is indicated by a dot above a letter. It indicates that the pronunciation of the *be-gadkepat*-consonant in question is hard (plosive). *Rukokho* is indicated by a dot below a letter, indicating that the pronunciation of said consonants is soft (fricative) (Takamitsu Muraoka, *Classical Syriac: A Basic Grammar with a Chrestomathy,* 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 8; Cf., George A. Kiraz, *The Syriac Dot: A Short History* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2015), 24–30, 82–93.

[57] Other languages may well have been represented at the monastery as well, depending on the origin of its dwellers and visitors.

[58] It cannot be ruled out that Bakos himself added this prayer request in serto script.

[59] Garshuni is (in the present case) Arabic written in Syriac script.

[60] I am grateful to Amund Bjørsnøs for his help with translating the Garshuni note.

did not share with us where they were located when writing their notes.[61] Still, circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that Add. 14,687 was put to use in the Monastery of the Syrians. First, the manuscript was produced in the monastery and explicitly claimed to be copied in order to be used there. Second, there are no notes in the manuscript that positively show that the manuscript travelled elsewhere. Third, the manuscript was still in the keeping of the monastery when the British Museum acquired it in the early 1840s.[62]

4.2.2 The Monastery of the Syrians in the Thirteenth Century

Bakos finished copying Add. 14,687 in 1256. Hence, the period of interest to the present chapter is the thirteenth century, mainly the latter half of this century. Much remains unknown about the situation in the monastery at this time, but a few points can be maintained.

First, the Syriac presence continued and Syriac and Coptic monks still cohabitated the monastery.[63] Second, the first part of the thirteenth century has often been described as the culmination of a prosperous period in the monastery, starting in the ninth century and continuing until the late-thirteenth/early-fourteenth century.[64] Indeed, some features suggest a relatively high level of activity in the monastery until the late 1250s. Nine surviving, dated Syriac manuscripts were produced by scribes working in the monastery from 1223 to 1257, and more, undated manuscripts can probably be assigned a date in the first part of the thirteenth century as well.[65] This means that the thirteenth century saw a high level of scribal activity in the monastery.[66] As the colophons in the manuscripts that Bakos copied show, many of these manuscripts were meant for use in the monastery. In addition, as pointed out above, the main bulk of the manuscripts that he copied were liturgical manuscripts. Thus, this production of specialized manuscripts indicates a continuing liturgical activity on the premises. An important further indication of the favorable situation of the monastery in the early- and mid-thirteenth century is the building activities that took place in its main church, the Church of the Holy Virgin. As recent research and conservation campaigns have shown, the walls of the church were replastered and

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[61] The monk from al-Mankuk tells us where he is from – a common trait in additional notes and a way of expressing identity – he does not tell us where he is located when writing the note. Cf., chapter 2 of the present volume.

[62] According to Wright, the manuscripts with the shelfmarks Add. 14,425–14,739 arrived at the British Museum on 1 March 1843 ("Preface," xiii).

[63] Innemée and Van Rompay, "La présence," 192–94.

[64] Leroy, "Un témoignage inédit," 12; Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries*, 125; Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 344.

[65] As, for instance, Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 33.

[66] Cf., Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 344; Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 357–58; cf., Brock, "Checklist," 32–36, 45.

repainted at this point.[67] The presence of inscriptions in Syriac script in this layer of paint on the walls and in the semi-domes[68] suggests both that the monastery was wealthy enough to undertake such restorative work and that the church was still used for Syriac liturgical practice at the time.[69]

Third, relatively little is known about the latter decades of the thirteenth century.[70] Some dated manuscripts do survive from these decades[71] and an inscription dated 1285/6 attests to building activity,[72] but as Evelyn-White already proposed, it is likely that activities of a literary or cultural kind experienced a certain decrease at this point.[73] The latter half of the thirteenth century has generally been considered a time of hardship for Christians in Egypt.[74] Furthermore, the fall of the Abbasid kalifate and the conquest of Mosul and Bagdad by the Mongols in 1258 affected the life of the community in the Monastery of the Syrians as well. The contact with monastic communities in other regions declined, at least temporarily. Still, due to the precarious situation in these Syr-

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[67] Jules Leroy was the first to date this layer to the thirteenth century (*La Peinture murale chez les coptes, 2: Les peintures des couvents du Ouadi Natrun*, Memoires publiés par les membres de l'Institute français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 101 [Cairo: IFAO, 1982], 65–74). Cf., Paul P. V. van Moorsel, "La grande annonciation de Deir es-Sourian," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 95 (1995): 517–37 at 519; Lucas Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions in Deir al-Surian: Some Reflections on Their Writers and Readers," *Hugoye* 2/2 (1999): 189–202 at 192. The exact dating of the process of renovation is uncertain. It must have taken place after the year 1155 (Innemée, "New Discoveries," 33).

[68] There are inscriptions of various sorts (explanatory, didactical, commemorational, graffiti, etc.) in Syriac, Greek, Coptic and Armenian in the various layers on the walls. In the semi-domes, Syriac script is dominant (Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 193–94). Cf., Karel C. Innemée, Peter Grossmann, Konrad D. Jenner and Lucas Van Rompay, "New Discoveries in the al-'Adrâ' Church of Dayr as-Suryân in the Wâdi al-Naṭrûn," *Mitteilungen zur christlichen Archäologie* 4 (1998): 96–103; Innemée and Van Rompay, "La présence," 167–202; Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 192–93. Syriac and Greek inscriptions also appear in the thirteenth-century layer of paint on a column in the northern nave (Innemée, "New Discoveries," 36).

[69] Innemée, "Mural Painting in Egypt," 6; ibid, "New Discoveries," 25. Note that I am not suggesting that it must have been a uniquely Syriac liturgical space. There could have been both Coptic and Syriac worship practices or attendance, in the church (cf., Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 191, 200). Evelyn-White noted that an early traveler, Jean de Thévenot, described two churches in the monastery in 1657, one for Copts and one for Syrians (*Architecture and Archaeology,* 171).

[70] Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries*, 125; Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscription," 110; Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 344.

[71] Syr. 56 (dated 1264) and London, BL, Add. 14,699 (dated 1291/2). Cf., Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 359–60; Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 357–58. Al-Souriany noted that Arabic (1280), Coptic (1281) and Syriac manuscripts were copied in the monastery at the time ("Manuscript Collection," 285); Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscription," 111.

[72] Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscription," 111; Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 357.

[73] Evelyn-White, *History of the Monasteries,* 450. Cf., also, Van Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 358.

[74] Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscription," 111.

iac heartlands, refugees from Syria and Iraq, and new monks originating from
Mosul and Edessa, for instance, apparently joined the monastery during these
decades. A group of monks arrived from Syria in 1254 and the number of monks
at the monastery grew relatively large.[75]

For the purpose of exploring the engagement with the lection extracted from
2 Baruch in the monastery after the copying of Add. 14,687 in 1256, the infor-
mation that can be gleaned from the above accounts about the thirteenth century
matters. Since the Church of the Holy Virgin was restored in the first part of the
thirteenth century and was the principal church of the monastery, it probably
remained in use as a Syriac liturgical space during the decades immediately
following its restoration.[76] If the lectionary manuscript was put to use anywhere
in the monastery, this newly restored church room is the most likely place. Fur-
thermore, the early- and mid-century production of specialized liturgical books
suggests that the community would also have been well equipped for liturgical
services in the decades that followed. In addition, since the Syriac presence
continued in the monastery in the thirteenth century, there would have been ritu-
al specialists in place to perform liturgical service.

4.2.3 The Church of the Holy Virgin

The Church of the Holy Virgin was probably built in the mid-seventh century.[77]
Since then, the church has been in more or less continuous use.[78] Fortunately,
our knowledge about this particular church is relatively advanced. Since the

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[75] Evelyn-White, *History of the Monasteries*, 390–91; Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries*,
125. For the contact with monastic centers and other Syriac communities, see Bas Snelders and
Mat Immerzeel, "The Thirteenth-Century Flabellum from Deir al-Surian in the Musée Royal
de Mariemont (Morlanwelz, Belgium). With an Appendix on the Syriac Inscriptions by L. Van
Rompay," *Eastern Christian Art* 1 (2004): 113–39. Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 366; Van
Rompay, "L'Histoire du Couvent des Syriens," 357; Karel C. Innemée, Lucas Van Rompay and
Dobrochna Zielińska, "The Church of the Virgin in the Dayr al-Suryān: Architecture, Art, and
History between Coptic and Syriac Christianity," preprint forthcoming in *The Byzantine Near
East*, ed., Elizabeth S. Bolman, Scott F. Johnson and Jack Tannous (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press), no pages.

[76] The research literature has also sometimes referred to the Church of the Holy Virgin as
"the Church of the Virgin" or "the Church of al-'Adra." Evelyn-White described the existence
of five additional minor churches and chapels in the monastery, three of which were still stand-
ing at his time of writing (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 171–72, 178, 212–20). Cf., Jules Leroy,
"Le décor de l'église du couvent des Syriens au Ouady Natroun," *Cahiers archéologiques* 23
(1974): 151–67 at 165; Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 189; Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New
Syriac Inscription," 109.

[77] Peter Grossmann held that the church was completed in 645/46 CE (*Christliche Architek-
tur in Ägypten*, Handbook of Oriental Studies 62 [Leiden: Brill, 2002], 73, 502). Cf., Innemée,
"Conservation Work," 263.

[78] In 1778, Charles S. Sonnini reported that the Coptic monks were not using the church
(Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 172). Innemée pointed out that the church was

mid-1990s, teams of scholars have explored its architecture, the changes made
to the structures and architectural details of the building over the centuries, the
layers of mural paintings on the interior walls and inscriptions found on the
walls and on other parts of the interiors.[79] Due to the knowledge that has been
assembled by these teams, we have access to parts of the spatial context that
surrounded the people who congregated here in the thirteenth century. This in-
formation is significant because the spatial context is understood as an integral
aspect of the service. What may the information known about the church room
tell us about the spatial dimensions of the worship context in which the lection
from 2 Baruch is most likely to have been read in the thirteenth century?

Following Karel C. Innemée,[80] the leader of the conservation and exploration
works since 1995/1996, the Church of the Holy Virgin was originally built as
a Coptic church: a relatively small three-aisled basilica.[81] Architecturally, the
church was structured in a nave, a khurus and a haykal with an apse.[82] There is a
dome above the khurus as well as semi-domes at its northern and southern ends.
The roof over the nave was originally wooden[83] and there is a semi-dome at its
western end.[84] Over the centuries, the church underwent renovation and change

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reconsecrated in 1782. That means that it had been out of use, probably due to renovation ("New
Discoveries," 2). Cf., http://deiralsurian.uw.edu.pl/ (accessed 12 October 2019).

[79] The research on and preservation of the church has been ongoing since the mid-1990s,
initiated by Karel C. Innemée and Ewa Parandowska, lead first by the Leiden University and
later by the Universities of Amsterdam and Warsaw, with local as well as international con-
tributions (http://deiralsurian.uw.edu.pl/about-the-current-project/ [accessed 12 October 2019]).

[80] I am neither an art historian, an archaeologist nor an expert in medieval church architecture.
Hence, in this section, I depend fully on the research of others and I make very modest claims
for my own interpretation of the materials. Note also that my description of the church in the
present chapter is selective, focusing on the aspects that matter to the interpretation of the read-
ing of the lection "From Baruch." For a more comprehensive treatment, see the extensive pub-
lication records of Innemée and Van Rompay in particular (listed at the project website of the
conservation team: http://deiralsurian.uw.edu.pl/publications/ [accessed 28 October 2019] and
appearing in my footnotes below). See, also, Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*,
180–207; Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries;* Leroy, *Peintures des couvents;* Gertrud van
Loon, *The Gate of Heaven: Wall Paintings with Old Testament Scenes in the Altar Room and
the Hurus of Coptic Churches* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1999);
Grossmann, *Christliche Architektur,* 71–76, 501–3.

[81] Evelyn-White measured its interior as 24.3 meters by 10.3 meters (*Architecture and
Archaeology*, 180).

[82] A khurus is a transitional area between the nave and the haykal. According to Peter Gross-
mann, the Church of the Holy Virgin was the first of its kind in Egypt to introduce this feature
(*Christliche Architektur,* 73). Cf., Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 211; van Loon, *Gate of
Heaven,* 206.

[83] The wooden roof was replaced with a barrel-vault. A recent investigation shows that the
present barrel-vault must have been constructed during the renovation preceding the recon-
secration in 1782 (Karel C. Innemée, email correspondence, 19 November 2019; Innemée, Van
Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages).

[84] The western semi-dome is a later addition, but it must have been added early on, probably
some decades after the church was built (Innmée, "New Discoveries," 1, 3, 34).

on several occasions.[85] In the tenth century, the original haykal was modified. A square sanctuary was constructed, replacing the original haykal and the eastern apse.[86] The haykal was surmounted by a dome, and the lower parts of the interior walls were decorated by stucco.[87] In the same period, ivory-inlaid, wooden folding doors were added between the haykal and the khurus (914 CE) and in the doorway separating the nave from the khurus (926/27 CE).[88]

The scholars involved in the conservation and exploration project have identified at least five layers of plaster and mural paintings on the interior walls of the church.[89] The layer of primary interest to the present chapter is the thirteenth-century fourth layer.[90] Unfortunately, much of the pictorial program of this layer was destroyed when the walls were covered by undecorated plaster in 1781/1782 (the fifth layer). However, parts of it are still accessible, particularly the paintings in the semi-domes but also the partly preserved paintings on the southern wall and on the columns in the nave.[91] In addition, recent discoveries of fragments of tenth-century paintings in the dome of the khurus and the zone underneath it are relevant to the present discussion. The team working in the church in the autumn of 2019 found this layer of paint directly underneath the eighteenth-century plaster. Since they were covered only in 1781/1782, these paintings would have been visible to a thirteenth-century congregation.[92]

What scenes and imageries do the paintings in the thirteenth-century church room display? The paintings in the dome of the khurus show standing figures representing the minor prophets and narrative scenes associated with the major prophets. The zone under the dome displays scenes of conversions by apostles and others.[93] The three semi-domes in the khurus and the nave contain motifs that together form a cycle of events from the life of the Virgin and of Christ.[94]

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[85] For a full presentation of the history of renovation and change, see, Innemée, "New Discoveries."

[86] Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 207; Innemée, "New Discoveries," 34; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 212.

[87] Innemée, "New Discoveries," 2; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 212.

[88] Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 171; Leroy, "Le décor de l'église," 154–61; Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 191; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 211; Grossmann, *Christliche Architektur*, 73.

[89] Cf., Innemée, "Mural Paintings in Egypt," 2–6 and his "New Discoveries," 2–40 for a fuller description of the stratigraphy of the layers.

[90] Cf., the discussion of the dating in footnote 67 above. The paintings and furnishings draw on Coptic, Syriac and Byzantine traditions (Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages).

[91] Innemée, "Mural Paintings in Egypt," 6; Innemée, "New Discoveries," 33–34.

[92] The discovery of these paintings remains unpublished. Karel C. Innemée has generously allowed me to refer to the unpublished findings (email correspondence, 17 and 19 November 2019).

[93] Karel Innemée, email correspondence, 19 November 2019.

[94] When referring to the figures in the paintings and in the worship practice, I refer to them in terms of their assumed liturgical/theological functions and tradition of interpretation.

The southern semi-dome contains the Annunciation and the Nativity.[95] The Western semi-dome contained the third motif, the Ascension. The northern semi-dome contained the Dormition – the fourth and last motif of the cycle.[96]

On the southern wall in the nave, paintings with scenes from the Book of Daniel appear. One partly preserved painting displays the three youths in the fiery furnace (Dan 3:1–30). The scene also includes an angel and King Nebuchadnezzar seated on a throne. Another painting depicts Daniel and Habakkuk. The painting, which is poorly preserved, shows Daniel, as well as the scene from Dan 14:33–39/Bel and the Dragon, in which an angel lifts Habakkuk by the hair to transfer him to Babylon to feed Daniel. The southern wall also displays a fragment of a painting of otherwise unidentifiable saints in military costumes. Potentially, the lower sections of the walls of the nave also contained images of saints.[97] Columns in the east of the nave contain paintings of the patriarch Dioscorus of Alexandria and the patriarch Severus of Antioch.[98]

An additional architectural element that was also present in the thirteenth-century church room is the tenth-century accordion-type wooden doors.[99] The doors represent exquisite craftsmanship in their own right,[100] but in the present discussion, I restrict the description to the iconography of the panels. The top row of the panels[101] on the doors between the khurus and the haykal shows Dioscorus, Mark, Christ (Emmanuel), Mary, Ignatius and Severus. The top row of panels on the doors between the khurus and the nave displays Peter, Mary, Christ and Mark. In both sets of doors, Mary and Christ are the central figures.[102]

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[95] The semi-dome is divided into two sections, each containing one of the motifs.

[96] Innemée, "New Discoveries," 34–36. Cf., Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 183–85, 190–93; Leroy, "Le décor de l'église," 163–67. The paintings in the western and northern semi-domes have been separated from the underlying eighth-century paintings and transferred to the museum next to the church.

[97] Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages.

[98] For the description of the paintings included in the thirteenth-century layer, I follow Innemée, "New Discoveries," 38–40. The identification of Dioscorus is certain, since a Syriac inscription identifies him. The identification of Severus is likely since he often appears as Disocorus's counterpart (Innemée, New Discoveries," 36–37).

[99] These doors were commissioned by the abbot Moses of Nisibis (Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 187, 197, 207; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 212).

[100] For a comprehensive description and analysis of the doors, see Leroy, "Le décor de l'église," 154–61; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian" and Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 187–90, 197–200. Cf., also Elizabeth S. Bolman, "Veiling Sanctity in Christian Egypt: Visual and Spatial Solutions," in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon E. J. Gertsel (Washington D. C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2006), 72–104 at 91–92 for the wider Egyptian context and the exceptional character of the doors.

[101] The lower rows contain crosses and geometrical figures.

[102] The doors between the haykal and the khurus show Mary on the right-hand side of Christ, whereas the doors between the khurus and the nave have Christ on Mary's right-hand side (Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 213, 215).

The known, fragmentary remains of the pictorial program on the walls, domes, columns and doors suggest that those who gathered in the church room in the thirteenth century were surrounded by scenes from narratives of the Old Testament and the Gospels and by portrayals of authoritative figures of the anti-Chalcedonian tradition. The cycle of scenes in the semi-domes of the khurus and the nave is a relatively commonly found cycle in church paintings. The cycle, which Innemée and Van Rompay referred to as an "abbreviated *Dodeka-orton*,"[103] represents key events in the Christian salvation narrative and invokes central Christian liturgical feasts.[104]

Scenes from the Old Testament are commonly found in wall paintings in Egyptian churches.[105] Portraits, or rows, of prophets often appear.[106] Another well-known and widespread motif is the painting of the three youths in the fiery furnace from Dan 3. The story of the three young men at Nebuchadnezzar's court was popular throughout the Middle Ages, and the three youths were regarded as saints. According to Gertrud van Loon, the motif may have been understood as an example of God's protection of his people and salvation from death. Due to the young men's refusal to worship idols, their ascetic lifestyle at the Babylonian court and their self-sacrifice, they were popular in monastic contexts and honored as martyrs, ascetics and sometimes monks. Sometimes the motif was understood as a prefiguration of Christ's sacrifice, as a prefiguration of the Eucharist or even as an image of Paradise.[107]

Depictions of Daniel were relatively common in wall paintings at the time too, but the motif of Daniel and Habakkuk found on the southern wall of the nave is rare. It is possible that the miraculous character of the chosen events from the Book of Daniel may have influenced the interpretation of the painting. Daniel and Habakkuk's status as prophets would probably matter as well.[108] The Daniel imagery on the southern wall may have been part of a larger context of prophets. The murals may have represented the major prophets.

Innemée interpreted the depictions of Mark, Peter, Dioscorus, Severus and Ignatius in the door panels as representatives of the two patriarchates in Anti-

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[103] Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages. "Dodekaorton" refers to the twelve major feasts of the liturgical year.

[104] It is likely that the choice of this cycle reflects the fact that Virgin Mary is the patroness of the church as well (see Leroy, "Le décor de l'église," 165; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 214). Note that the Autumn 2019 campaign also discovered more scenes from the life of Christ in the nave. In email correspondence (17 November 2019), Innemée suggested that these paintings could have been part of a complete *Dodekaorton* in the original setting.

[105] Cf., van Loon, *Gate of Heaven*, 196.

[106] Van Loon, *Gate of Heaven,* 91.

[107] Van Loon, *Gate of Heaven,* 53–54, 77–78, 90–91, 169–76, 191.

[108] Cf., François Cassingena-Trévedy, "L'Organisation du cycle annuel," in *Les liturgies syriaques,* ed. François Cassingena-Trévedy and I. Jurasz, Études syriaques 3 (Paris: Geuthner, 2006), 13–48 at 42–43.

och and Alexandria; their first bishops and their doctrines.[109] These iconographic choices point back to the history of the monastery, the ongoing cohabitation of Coptic and Syriac monks and the core theological, liturgical and political positioning of the monastic community.

The fragmentary nature of the thirteenth-century pictorial program in the Church of the Holy Virgin suggests that we need to exert caution when we interpret it.[110] However, two points should be made. First, it is likely that the motifs of the paintings were connected to the functions of the various parts of the church. As van Loon pointed out, iconological aspects of the paintings in the haykal and the khurus are connected with the functions of these parts of the church. According to van Loon, the paintings shape "an adequate space for the rituals which were performed there."[111] It is thus not a coincidence that the imagery of the paintings in the dome of the haykal highlights Eucharistic imagery, whereas the dome in the khurus contains depictions of prophets and apostles.[112] The khurus is, in all due likelihood, the place where the lections from scripture would be read.

Second, one might perhaps say that the congregating community was surrounded by – and part of – an ongoing story of related events, of miraculous intervention, sacrifice and redemptive acts: starting with figures and narratives rooted in the Old Testament, continuing through the depictions of the life of the Virgin and of Christ from the Gospels, adding the lives of saints to it and moving on to the wider heritage of the community. This reading of the pictorial program suggests that it offers a layering of traditions, attesting to and providing visual and palpable[113] access to an evolving *historia sacra*.

At the same time, we cannot take for granted the idea that such an ideal, comprehensive grasp of the church interior would necessarily have been available to those who gathered in the church. The repertoire of architectural elements that they had visual access to would depend on their role in the worship practice and their placement in the church. Two features in particular would influence what the congregating community saw: the doors and the sources of light.

The khurus in the Church of the Holy Virgin serves as a transitional area between the nave and the haykal. When the church was rebuilt and doors were

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[109] Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 213–15. The two patriarchates are commonly mentioned together in inscriptions and notes in manuscripts found in the monastery (Van Rompay and Schmidt, "New Syriac Inscription," 110).

[110] Innemée, "New Discoveries," 33, 48.

[111] Van Loon, *Gate of Heaven*, 109.

[112] Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages.

[113] Note that paintings are also palpable objects. The part of the second layer of paint that survives shows that the lower section of the walls was decorated with *dado,* an imitation of columns and of marble. Figurative paintings were located on the upper parts of the walls. Innemée held that the reason for this layout was the protection of the figurative paintings. Their location in the upper section kept them out of reach ("New Discoveries," 2–3).

added in the tenth century, the divisions of the church must have become more pronounced and the sight lines restricted. The doors between the khurus and the haykal limited the visual access to the haykal. That restriction had a liturgical function, limiting the view to the sanctuary during the most sacred parts of the service.[114] The doors that were installed in the doorway in the axis of the nave in 926/927 would potentially also have limited the visibility eastwards from the nave to the khurus – the space where much of the liturgical activity would have taken place. However, since the closing off of the khurus would have no liturgical function, the folding doors between the khurus and the nave were probably kept open most of the time, securing – with some limitations – the sight lines from the nave.[115]

Furthermore, the above description of the church's interior takes as its point of departure an all-embracing, electricity-lit view at the surroundings. Such a view is not representative of the visual impression of those who gathered in the church room in the thirteenth century. During the day, windows in the khurus and the nave would let daylight in, but oil lamps and candles would probably be an important additional source of light at any hour.[116] Innemée noted that one of the reasons why the thirteenth-century layer of plaster and paint eventually cracked and flaked and made the eighteenth-century renovation necessary was the condition of the eighth-century layer: "A thin layer of greasy dirt, caused by oil lamps and incense, prevented the layer of encaustic paint from attaching well."[117] This layer of greasy dirt, then, is the physical remains of the source of light in the church. Furthermore, as pointed out above, the existence of wax stains from candles in the lectionary manuscript suggests that candles were certainly an additional light source.[118] Hence, we must try to imagine how the

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[114] Cf., Jean Sader, *Le lieu de culte et la messe Syro-occidentale selon le "De oblatione" de Jean de Dara* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1983), 45–49; R. Hugh Connolly and Humphrey W. Codrington, *Two Commentaries on the Jacobite Liturgy* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1913), 17; Bolman, "Veiling Sanctity," 91–92; Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian" 211–12.

[115] Innemée, "Doors of Deir al-Surian," 215. Cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 49. The congregating community would presumably stand (bar Salibi, *Commentary on the Eucharist* 5,5), and could potentially move around to see better.

[116] Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 69–70; Catherine McVey, "The Domed Church as Microcosm: Literary Roots of an Architectural Symbol," *DOP* 37 (1983), 99–121 at 114. The research literature published before 2019 leaves the impression that the church must have been relatively dark (Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 171, 174, 200–3; Innemée, "New Discoveries," 41. Cf., Innemée, "Deir al-Surian," 177–78 and idem, "Mural Paintings in Egypt," 6.). The thirteenth-century restorations did make the interior darker, but new discoveries in the autumn of 2019 suggest that ten clerestory windows and the windows in the khurus were still not blocked in the thirteenth century. They were blocked during the renovation in the eighteenth century (Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages).

[117] Innemée, "Newly Discovered," 217.

[118] Cf., the warning to priests and deacons about the risk of stains and fire in the previous

various paintings and architectural details may have appeared in this light and from the point of view of the various actors. These elements of the interior of the church would probably be only partly visible, many of them at a distance and from below.

The atmosphere created by the limited daylight, the candles and lamp light and the partial visual access to the rich adornment of the walls and domes of the church probably should be included in our approximation of the thirteenth-century church room.[119] The restricted accessibility and the flickering lights were integral parts of the experience of the liturgical space.

4.2.4 A Multi-Medial and Multi-Sensorial Reading Context: Sight, Touch, Sound and Scent

The above approximation of the thirteenth-century Church of the Holy Virgin provides the most likely spatial context for the reading of the passage from 2 Baruch on Easter Sunday. I turn now to what we, with due caution, may infer about the act of reading the lection on the one hand and the act of experiencing the lection read in this church space on the other. In other words, I turn to the multi-medial deliverance of, and multi-sensorial access to the lection in this particular space.[120] In the worship context, the lections recorded in a lectionary manuscript were read aloud and thus heard through the medium of sound. They were visually, audibly and palpably accessible in particular material embodiments, and they were experienced in particular spatial settings that provided a fuller set of visual, audible and olfactory media. How was the lection "From Baruch" read and performed in this particular spatial context; who gave voice to and embodied it; where in the church room would the reader be situated; how would the congregating community have access to the lection and what was the role of the lectionary manuscript itself in the worship context?

The information found in the lectionary manuscript Add. 14,687 has still not been exhausted, so I will start there. The heading on folio 155r that introduces the Sunday of the Resurrection (Easter Sunday) and the first lection ends with

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chapter of this volume, as well as Curzon's description of lectionary manuscripts stained with wax (*Visit to the Monasteries*, 78–82).

[119] On church atmosphere, see in particular, Gernot Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures– The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 167–81; Andreas M. Gregersen, "Exploring the Atmosphere inside a Liturgical Laboratory," pre-print draft. Cf., also, Evelyn-White's description of the church itself as a lamp (*Architecture and Archaeology*, 202–3).

[120] In recent decades, a series of studies has been published, particularly in Medieval Studies, that focuses on the multi-medial and multi-sensorial experience of worship practice. Cf., in particular, Hans H. Lohfert Jørgensen, Henning Laugerud and Laura K. Skinnebach, eds., *The Saturated Sensorium: Principles of Perception and Mediation in the Middle Ages* (Århus: Århus University Press, 2015).

the formulaic ܒܪܟ ܡܪܝ, "Father, give your blessing/Bless, my lord" The use of this expression in a liturgical context suggests that the one who read the lections was not the celebrant. The reader formulaically asks the celebrant for blessings: permission to read.[121] Hence, it is likely that the reader was a monk, performing tasks equivalent to the tasks of a deacon.[122]

As suggested above, it is likely that the reading of the Old Testament lections took place in the khurus of the Church of the Holy Virgin.[123] This means that the lection "From Baruch" would have been read and performed in a central liturgical space in the church. No lecterns or reading tables (ܠܘܚܐ) survive from the church.[124] Hence, we do not know exactly where the lectionary manuscripts Add. 14,687 and Add. 14,686 – the material sources of the lections from the Old Testament and the Epistles – would have rested when the lections were read. Given the length and the number of Old Testament lections for Easter Sunday,[125] though, the manuscripts must have been objects of ritual concern for some time and their material and aesthetic qualities would have mattered to the overall experience.

The exteriors of the codices were probably relatively modest. As pointed out above, the mediaeval bindings have been lost, but due to the relative uniformity of Syriac book covers we may assume that they were covered by leather-bound wooden boards.[126] The leather may have been ornamented, but this remains unknown. Due to their function in the worship context as the material sources of readings from scripture, the lectionary manuscript would probably be imbued

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[121] Cf., Moses bar Kepha, *Explanations of the Mysteries* (translated by Connolly and Codrington [*Two Commentaries*, 36]): "*Concerning 'Bless, my lord', which the deacon says to the priest.* (…) Secondly: because the deacon, by saying *Bless, my lord*, really asks the priest to bless and pray." See, furthermore, Jean Paul Deschler, *Word and Meaning: A Glossary in Liturgy and Iconography with Special Reference to the Theology of the Eastern Churches* (Kottayam: SEERI, 2012), 56; Andreas Heinz, *Feste und Feiern im Kirchenjahr nach dem Ritus der Syrisch-Orthodoxen Kirche von Antiochien,* Sophia 31 (Trier: Paulinus-Verlag, 1998), 463. I am grateful to Mor Polycarpus Augin Aydin for allowing me to participate in and learn from the worship practice at the Syriac Orthodox Monastery St Ephrem in Glane, the Netherlands (8–11 December 2013).

[122] Cf., e. g., George, Bishop of the Arab Tribes, *Exposition of the Mysteries* (translated by Connolly and Codrington [*Two Commentaries*, 11–12, 16]): "(…) he who draws near to Christianity should first learn the faith, after he has been for a stated time a hearer of the holy Scriptures at the hand of the deacons." Cf., furthermore, Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 86–87; Mateusz Potoczny, "Proclamation of the Biblical Readings in the Eucharistic Liturgy of the Syriac Church," in *Mitropolia Olteniei: Revista Facultăţii de Teologie din Craiova* (Craiova: Editura Mitropolia Olteniei, 2006), 71–85 at 78–81.

[123] Innemée, Van Rompay and Zielińska, "Church of the Virgin," no pages; Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 41–43; Varghese, "La structure," 150; van Loon, *Gate of Heaven*, 120, 122.

[124] Potentially there would be none for an Old Testament and Epistles lectionary. Van Rompay, email correspondence, 28 September 2018. Cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 42–43.

[125] I assume that all the lections from the Old Testament were read on the occasion. Cf., the description below of the narrative coherence and development of the lections.

[126] Cf., the presentation of Syriac bindings in chapter 2 of the present volume.

with a certain authority. However, a Gospel codex or a Gospel lectionary, which must have been present in the church room at the same time, would probably have received the major share of the attention.[127] The Gospel codex/lectionary was an important ritual artifact that enjoyed a marked iconic function. As Brock pointed out, many of the Gospel lectionaries that were produced in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were *deluxe* codices. These codices were large, they were sometimes illuminated and their bindings were ornamental. Such a luxury volume would thus outshine an Old Testament and Epistles lectionary manuscript of the "utilitarian size" with no illuminations and – presumably – a more modest exterior.[128]

The visual and palpable access to and experience with the materially present Old Testament and Epistles lectionary manuscripts would also depend on the way in which the monks handled them.[129] They may have held the volumes in their hands or the codices may have rested on a (now lost) lectern or table. They may have read and recited the text, performing the lection in close engagement with the lectionary manuscript, or they may have known the lection more or less by heart after repeated reading.[130] If so, the recital would be more independ-

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[127] I apply the term "Gospel codex" to a codex that contains the full texts of the Gospels and the term "Gospel lectionary" to a codex that contains a collection of excerpted lections from the Gospels. The lections from the Old Testament, Pauline Epistles, Catholic Epistles and Acts were copied sometimes into one volume, and at other times into two volumes (Old Testament and Pauline Epistles; Old Testament, Catholic Epistles and Acts). Gospel lections normally appeared in a separate volume. This specialization of the lectionary manuscripts may reflect the conditions of production. Also, if the codex grew too large it would be harder to maneuver and the spine would break more easily. The specialization may also reflect (or create) a difference in status and usage (cf., Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition,* 45–46; Sebastian P. Brock, "The Use of the Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium*, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny, MPI 15 [Leiden: Brill, 2006], 3–25 at 7). Note also that both Gospel lectionaries and full-text Gospel codices were in use in the thirteenth century (Brock, "Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 8–9).

[128] Brock, "Manuscrits liturgiques," 271; idem, "Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 7. An example of such a *deluxe* Gospel lectionary is Or. 8729 (dated 1230), one of the manuscripts Bakos copied while still at the Mountain of Edessa and later donated to the Monastery of the Syrians (Studied in the British Library, 3 March 2013 and 10 May 2019). On the iconicity of Gospel lectionaries/books, their material dimensions and liturgical functions in the Christian East, cf., Codrina Miller Parmenter, "The Iconic Book: The Image of the Bible in Early Christian Rituals," in *Iconic Books and Texts,* ed. James W. Watts (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 63–92 and Bruno Reudenbach, "Der Codex als Verkörperung Christi," in *Erscheinungsformen und Handhabungen Heiliger Schriften,* ed., Joachim Friedrich Quack and Daniela Luft, Materiale Textkulturen 5 (Berlin: De Guyter, 2014), 229–44.

[129] For the importance of exploring human handling of scriptures *qua* material artifacts in particular spatial settings, see Daniela C. Luft, "Einleitung: Heilige Schriften und ihre Heiligkeit in Umgang und materieller Präsenz," in *Erscheinungsformen und Handhabungen Heiliger Schriften*, ed., Joachim Friedrich Quack and Daniela Luft, Materiale Textkulturen 5 (Berlin: De Guyter, 2014), 3–38 at 3–4, 14–20.

[130] The vowel signs and diacritical signs added by a later hand in the manuscript suggest that the reader must have depended on the manuscript, at least in a preparatory phase or the first times he read the lection in a worship context.

ent of its material source, ascribing the manuscripts more of a memory aid and support function. If the manuscripts were resting on a lectern or table, others present in the khurus may have gathered around them, following the reading of the text from various angles, and someone may have turned the pages.[131] In the khurus, the monk would have read the lection from 2 Baruch and handled the lectionary manuscript surrounded by the paintings of the prophets, the apostles, the Virgin and Christ in the dome and semi-domes above him and other (unknown) paintings on the walls around him. Those who accompanied him in the khurus may well have experienced the visual and palpable aspects of the multimedial context of the reading as such.

To those assembling in the nave, chances are that they would be aware of the material presence of the lectionary manuscripts but that they would not see them particularly well, if at all. Their visual access would depend on their placement in the nave, the varying sightlines through the doorway into the khurus and where the codices were resting during the reading. It is possible that those who congregated in the nave would rather have seen the reader during the oral performance in this position – in full or in part. If they could not see the volumes, he would become the primary visual embodiment of the narrative contents of the lection through the act of reading.[132]

Importantly, the lection would also manifest in the church room through the medium of sound. Again, the monk would embody the lection: it was present in the shape of his voice.[133] It is not known whether Old Testament lections were chanted or read flat at the time. As Susan Ashbrook Harvey pointed out, if a lection was not chanted, it is still likely that it would have been "uttered in a way that makes the voice bear."[134] Thus, the voice would distinguish the reading of the lection from everyday utterances as well as making sure that it would fill the church room.

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[131] Cf., e. g., George A. Kiraz, *Orthography*, vol. 1 of *Turras Mamlla: A Grammar of the Syriac Language* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012), 115, 214.

[132] I am grateful to Benjamin G. Wright III for this important observation.

[133] George of the Arab Tribes, *Exposition of the Mysteries* (translated by Connolly and Codrington [*Two Commentaries*, 11–12]): "Now the hearing of the Scriptures which comes through the deacons, who are the cleansers, cleanses them from old habits and forms them a new form and a new creature, as it were in the womb."

[134] Harvey suggested that Syriac worship would be a "loud abounding worship." Many elements, such as prayers, songs, sermons and at least some readings, were sung and/or chanted, or "uttered in a way that makes the voice bear." Harvey described this mode of presentation as a way of speaking without a microphone – a mode that can still be heard in churches and markets in the Middle East today ("Women's Voices, Women's Stories: Presence and Absence in Ancient Syriac Liturgy" (paper presented at the University of Oslo, 12 December 2016). Note that the Gospel lection would stand out from the reading of the Old Testament and Epistles by the way in which it was read: it was probably chanted, potentially by the main celebrant (Potoczny, "Proclamation," 81).

Harvey showed in her seminal book, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* that the church room would probably be well scented.[135] As pointed out above, the material remains of incense were part of the layer of dirt that made it harder for the thirteenth-century layer of plaster to attach to the church walls. We do not know if the reading of the Old Testament lections would have been preceded by censing or precisely at which points in the service the censing would take place,[136] but the accumulating outcome of censing over time would probably stick to the walls anyhow – also in the thirteenth-century layer of paint, the wooden parts of the interiors, the fabrics in the room and possibly also the leather-covered bindings of the lectionary manuscript.[137]

Summing up, the lection from 2 Baruch would presumably have been read in the multi-sensory and multi-media context of the church room. The lection would have been seen and handled in a materially present codex, it would have been heard by means of the monk's voice and it would potentially have been experienced as embodied in him. The scents, the lights, the soundscapes and the atmosphere in the church room would be an intrinsic part of that experience. As Harvey pointed out, everything is heightened during worship. You do not have ordinary light – you have the light from candles and oil lamps. You do not have ordinary air – you have incense. You do not have ordinary speech – you have heightened speech.[138] This is the context in which the lection from 2 Baruch would presumably have been read on an Easter Sunday in the latter part of the thirteenth century.

4.2.5 Reading 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 on Easter Sunday

I have come to the most intriguing piece of information that survives about the engagement with the lection excerpted from 2 Baruch, namely that 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 was read on Easter Sunday. As pointed out above, Easter Sunday was the most important Sunday of the entire church year. On Easter Sunday, "The Holy Sunday of the Resurrection," the community celebrated the resurrection of the Christian Christ. This Sunday represents the culmination of all the Sundays of the

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[135] Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015). Cf., furthermore, Bar-Sawme, "Comparing," 20.

[136] George of the Arab tribes, John of Dara, Moses bar Kepha and Dionysius bar Salibi differ on this point (Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 86–87; Varghese, *Commentary on the Eucharist*, 21–22).

[137] If you want to, you can imagine the other smells. The scent of incense would mix with smells from a relatively large group of people congregating in the church on this feast day.

[138] Harvey, "Women's Voices." See, also, Evelyn-White, *Architecture and Archaeology*, 202–3; McVey, "Domed Church," 114. Cf., bar Salibi, *Commentary on the Eucharist* 5,4 (translated by Varghese [*Commentary*, 23]): "Again, the lights in the whole of the church symbolize the lamps of our souls."

church year. It is "das Fest der Feste und der Feiertag über allen Feiertagen."[139] It also points forward to the Great Sunday, the day when Christ is expected to come again.[140] This is the context in which the monastic community in the Monastery of the Syrians found it opportune to read 2 Baruch. In what liturgical context would they have read the lection, and how would the narrative contents of the lection have related to the other lections that they also read at this event?[141]

As suggested by the discussion so far, the information that Add. 14,687 provides for us about the prescribed use of 2 Baruch in Syriac liturgical practice is essential for any study of the thirteenth-century engagement with 2 Baruch. For one, this manuscript proves that a passage originating from 2 Baruch was found worthy of inclusion in a lectionary manuscript at the time. Furthermore, it suggests that the lection from 2 Baruch has been read as a lection from a prophetic book and that the lection was not read by the celebrant. All these elements have given us a lead in the exploration of the engagement with the lection, and yet there are important pieces of information that the lectionary manuscript does not convey. First, it does not tell us how the service was structured and how the lection would fit into the larger whole. Second, it also does not tell us at which office the community would read and hear the lection. Third, it does not reveal which Gospel lection would accompany the lections from the Old Testament and the Epistles. To answer these questions, we must turn to external sources.

One of the major challenges to a study of West Syriac liturgical practices in a specific local setting at a particular time is the general diversity, creativity and adaptability of this liturgical tradition. It changed over time, it displayed local variation, manuscripts bear witness to different practices and standardizations and individual monasteries enjoyed a certain freedom in their arrangement of liturgical matters.[142] This variety is fascinating in its own right, but it makes it harder to pin down the local, thirteenth-century ritual context of the reading of the lection "From Baruch" in the Church of the Holy Virgin. We must accept that some of the elements of the structure of the service will remain unknown.[143]

Still, some parts of it can be identified. The lections in Add. 14,687 and Add. 14,686 were in all due likelihood prescribed for reading in the Eucharistic lit-

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[139] Heinz, *Feste und Feiern*, 85. Cf., furthermore, Cassingena-Trévedy, "L'organisation du cycle annuel," 25–26.

[140] Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 107, 122–27, 155.

[141] In this section, I assume that the general layout of the West Syriac liturgy known from the period was structuring the worship practice locally. Still, to a large degree I refrain from making inferences when the materials do not allow for them and, I note this when my interpretation is uncertain.

[142] Cf., Baumstark, *Nichtevangelische syrische Perikopenordnungen*, 79; Burkitt, "Lectionary System," 1–38; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 134; idem, "Syriac Version in the Liturgy," 3; Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 2–3, 155; Cassingena-Trévedy, "L'Organisation du cycle annuel," 13–14.

[143] The surviving manuscripts display a large variety, including in the thirteenth century. See, e.g., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 92–93; Brock, "Manuscrits liturgiques," 274–77.

urgy.[144] They were read during the pre-anaphora, as part of the Liturgy of the Word. Baby Varghese described the main elements of the pre-anaphora rites in the period before the fourteenth century as follows: the acclamation of the *Qadishat Aloho*;[145] the reading of lections from scripture – often preceded, or followed, by psalms or hymns;[146] an entrance-sedro; and one or two prayers of access.[147] It is not certain whether the lections from the Old Testament were read continuously or whether each lection was preceded by a formulaic utterance.[148] Since occasional vowel signs have been added to the headings of the lections in Add. 14,687, it is likely that the headings would have been read aloud, identifying the lections for the audience.[149] The lections would otherwise have been recited one after the other as part of one sequence.[150]

We will probably never know for sure at which office the lection from 2 Baruch was read. The heading on folio 155r does not provide this information.[151] However, the identification of individual lections and the high number of lections that Add. 14,687 and its companion prescribe for the event give us a clue if we compare them with other lectionary manuscripts, indices and service books that do specify the offices at which lections from the Old Testament

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[144] "Eucharistic liturgy" refers to one of the sacraments, not only the limited Eucharist celebration. This means that it includes the preparatory rites, the pre-anaphoric rites (with the Liturgy of the Word) and the anaphoric rites. Note also that the division between the preparatory and the pre-anaphoric rites may not have been sharp. Cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 81–132, esp. 81; Varghese, "La structure," 146 and 150.

[145] The *Trisagion*: "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal." Cf., Sebastian P. Brock, "The Trice Holy Hymn in the Liturgy," *Sobornost* 7 (1985): 24–34, esp. 28.

[146] George of the Arab Tribes, Moses bar Kepha and Dionysius bar Salibi place the psalm before the readings. John of Dara suggested both that psalms would be sung after the Old Testament lections and the Epistles and that psalms would be sung before the reading of the lections. Pseudo-Dionysius holds that psalms were sung between the lections (Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 81, 86–87, 93, 96).

[147] Varghese, "La structure," 150. A sedro is – in this setting – "a long prayer in the form of expositions of meditations" (Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 186). Cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 81–89. See Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 81–82 for a further discussion about the structure and the place of the lections in it. It is possible that a (first) sedro and a ma'nito (response) also proceeded the reading of the lections (Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 89). Cf., the descriptions and expositions of the structure in George of the Arab tribes, *Exposition of the Mysteries* (Connolly and Codrington, *Two Commentaries*, 16) and in Moses bar Kepha, *Explanations of the Mysteries* (Connolly and Codrington, *Two Commentaries*, 26–30).

[148] As mentioned above, the heading that introduces the readings for Easter Sunday in Add. 14,687 (folio 155r) shows that a formulaic ܕܢܚܬܐ, preceded the reading of the series of lections, suggesting that they were ritually introduced by the reader asking the celebrant for the blessing.

[149] E. g., folios 102r and 103v.

[150] According to John of Dara (quoted by Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 87): "Ensuite a lieu en ordre la lecture des livres de l'Ancient et du Nouveau Testament par les diacres. C'est à-dire, […] sont lus les livres, en ordre, l'un après l'autre."

[151] Some West Syriac lectionary manuscripts provide this information, at least for some of the Sundays and feast days (e. g., Add. 14,487 and the index in Add. 14,528). Many manuscripts leave this information out, though.

and the Epistles were read. The sixth-century index of lections preserved in Add. 14,528 prescribes fifteen lections for the Day at Easter Sunday. Four of the lections overlap with the lections in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687.[152] London, BL, Add. 14,486 gives twelve lections for Qurobo (Eucharist). This manuscript dates to the year 824 and shares five of the readings.[153] The companion volume,[154] Add. 14,487, prescribes twelve readings for Ramsho (Evening). Four of them overlap with the list of readings in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687.[155] Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 37,[156] a ninth-century *fenqitho* that is still kept in the Monastery of the Syrians, describes the structure of four offices at Easter Sunday.[157] It provides long lists of readings from the Old Testament and Epistles for two of them: Ramsho[158] and the Third Hour.[159] Three of the lections prescribed for the Third Hour in this manuscript are identical to the lections we find in the list of readings for Easter Sunday in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687.

The manuscripts listed here are all considerably older than Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687, and the time gap demands that we tread carefully. However, the level of overlap despite the time gap indicates that some of the lections were traditionally read on Easter Sunday. This is the case for 1 Cor 15,[160] and for a while, Acts 2:22–43. The lections from Isaiah, Daniel and Judges also appear across lectionary manuscripts. However, individual manuscripts prescribe the lections for different offices. The comparison suggests that the most likely offices for the engagement with the lections found in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 were Ramsho, the Third Hour, or Qurobo.[161] This is probably as close as we can come to approximating the hour of reading of 2 Bar 72:1–73:2.

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[152] That is, Judg 6:11–16 (Add. 14,528 has Judg 6:11–40); Isa 61:10–62:5 (Add. 14,528 has 61:10–62:9); Joel 2:21–3:5 (Add. 14,528 has Joel 2:21–29) and Acts 2:22–43.

[153] Ex 40:17–23; Judg 6:11–16; Dan 6:19–25 [24]; 1 Cor 15:20–28 (Add. 14,486 has 1 Cor 15:1–33) and Acts 2:22–43.

[154] Odilo Heiming (with Maria Laach) described these two manuscripts in terms of "Doppellektionar" ("Ein jakobitisches Doppellektionar des Jahres 824 aus Harran," in *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. Patrick Granfield and Josef A. Jungmann [Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1970], 2:768–99, at 768 and 770).

[155] Num 10:1–10; 1 Sam 21:1–7; Isa 60:1–7; 1 Cor 15:20–28.

[156] I have not been able to access this manuscript. My description builds on Brock and Van Rompay's catalogue (*Catalogue*, 260–71).

[157] The offices are Ramsho, Lilyo (Night Office), Safro (Morning Office) and Third Hour.

[158] Thirteen Old Testament lections, followed by one lection from Acts (2:22–28), one from 1 Corinthians (15:1–19) and one from Matthew (28:1–15). Note that this *fenqitho* includes the Gospel reading as well (ff. 60v–67r, according to Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 264).

[159] Fourteen Old Testament lections, followed by a single lection from Acts (2:22–37), 1 Corinthians (15:20–28) and Luke (24:13–31) (ff. 83v–85r, according to Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, 265–6). A single Old Testament lection (Dan 6:19–23) is scripted to be read at Safro.

[160] West Syriac lectionary manuscripts relatively often prescribe 1 Cor 15 for reading on Easter Sunday, but most commonly, they prescribe verses 1–15 [19] (Cf., e.g., London, BL, Add. 12,139, f. 80r).

[161] I am grateful to Sebastian P. Brock for discussing the matter with me and for sharing his suggestions (email correspondence, 12 August 2015).

The query about the offices is also a query about the identity of the Gospel lection that accompanied the lections from the Old Testament, the Pauline Epistles, Catholic Epistles and Acts at the time of reading the lection from 2 Baruch. Several Gospel lectionaries and full-text codices of the Gospels that were presumably present in the Monastery of the Syrians in the thirteenth century survive. Hence, it is not possible to determine exactly which of these codices were used together with Add. 14,687 and its companion.[162] However, surviving manuscripts show that four Gospel lections were traditionally read on Easter Sunday: Matt 28:1–5 [10/15/20], Mark 16:1[2]–11; Luke 24:13–31 or John 20:1–8 [18].[163] If we assume – hypothetically – that 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 was read at Ramsho, it would have been accompanied by the lection from the Gospel of Matthew. If it were read at Qurobo it could have been read with the lections from the Gospel of Mark or the Gospel of John and if it were read at the the Third Hour the lection from the Gospel of Luke would be its companion.

Summing up, the lection from 2 Baruch was presumably read as part of the Eucharistic liturgy, in the Liturgy of the Word. The lection would have been read after the *Qadishat Aloho*, the recitation of psalms or hymns and the monk's request for blessing, in a sequence of passages from the Old Testament, Catholic Epistles and Acts, and Pauline Epistles, before the reading of the Gospel lection. The office at which the lection was read remains unknown.

4.2.6 Interpreting the Lection "From Baruch" on Easter Sunday

How would the community that gathered to hear the reading of the lection "From Baruch" have understood and interpreted what they heard? It should be made very clear at the outset that any actual historical interpretation taking shape in the mind of any one thirteenth-century congregant is inevitably lost to us. However, since parts of the spatial and performative conditions, the infrastructures of reading and some information about the groups that would have

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[162] The codex in question may also be lost.

[163] The manuscripts and catalogues that I have consulted show that these passages from the Gospels were commonly read on Easter Sunday but that the order and ascription to the various offices varied. The lection from the Gospel of Matthew is attested at Ramsho in Add. 14,490; Add. 18,714; Add. 14,689; Add. 14,486 and Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 37 (ninth century). The lections from Luke and John are both prescribed for reading at Safro (14,490; Add. 18,714; Add. 14,689; and Ms. Syr. 37). Luke is also attested at the Third Hour and at Lilyo (Ms. Syr. 37 and 34). The lections from Mark and John are sometimes also prescribed for reading at Qurobo (Add. 14,490; Add. 18,714; and Add. 14,486). In the catalogue entry to Rich 7170 (thirteenth century), F. Rosen and J. Forshall lists the following Gospel lections for Easter Sunday: Ramsho: Matt 28:1–10; Eucharist at Ramsho: Matt 28:11–20; Lilyo: Mark 16:2–11/Luke 24:1–12; Safro: John 20:1–12 (*Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum orientalium. Pars I, Codices syriacos et carshunicos amplectens* [London: British Museum, 1838], 40).

assembled in the church on an Easter Sunday are indeed known, we may make some likely inferences.

Let us start with the congregants. On an Easter Sunday in the latter part of the thirteenth century, a diverse group of people would probably have gathered in the Church of the Holy Virgin. Monks with knowledge of Syriac language and liturgy would have performed the service. In the thirteenth century, Syriac was probably the main liturgical language in the monastery.[164] Still, we also know that the monastery had a mixed Coptic-Syriac population at the time.[165] The church may have been a shared liturgical space, or at least there may have been monks present during the service who did not fully master Syriac or who were more familiar with a Coptic liturgy.[166] Furthermore, the monastery in the Wadi al-Natrun was never an island. The monastery attracted Syriac monks from other parts of Egypt, the Mediterranean area and the Middle East. As pointed out above, historical records show that refugees from Syria and Iraq arrived in the monastery in the mid-1250s. Monasteries such as the Monastery of the Syrians received visitors, pilgrims and temporary dwellers as well. For important festivals and feast days, there would probably also have been lay participation in the church. Some participants could have been local workers; others might have been part of the extended economical, charitable and educational sphere of the monastic community.[167]

It is thus likely that those who congregated in the church interpreted the lection "From Baruch" in different ways. Their interpretation depended on their knowledge of Syriac; their denominational, regional, cultural and educational background; their role in the worship practice; their location in the church room; and the extent to which they paid attention to the reading or were simply taking in the atmosphere in the church on that day. Hence, there would not have been one interpretation; there would have been many.

To the congregants who were well educated and knowledgeable about liturgical theology, many layers of interpretation of the lection were available. Surviving West Syriac commentaries on the Eucharist provide knowledge about some of the interpretative categories that learned congregants could have

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[164] Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 200.

[165] Brock and Van Rompay, *Catalogue*, xv; Van Rompay, "Coptic Christians, Syriac Contact with," 103–6.

[166] There are, for instance, Coptic inscriptions on the folding doors and on the painting of the Ascension in the western semi-dome (Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 191, 193). In the thirteenth century, Arabic would be the language in everyday use for both groups (al-Suriany, "Manuscript Collection," 53, 56). Note, for instance, the presence of an Arabic devotional note containing the opening lines of the Greater Doxology in Add. 14,686 (f. 208v), and the Garshuni writing exercise in Add. 14,687, folio 201v (mentioned above). However, Van Rompay stressed that there are no Arabic inscriptions in the church (cf., Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 200). On polyglot lectionaries from the Wadi al-Natrun, see Brock, "Manuscrit liturgiques," 272.

[167] Cf., Grossmann, *Christliche Architektur*, 71.

activated when hearing an Old Testament lection read during a service. In his *Commentary on the Eucharist,* chapter 4,11, bar Salibi wrote:

> Let us now discuss about the reading of the Old and New Testaments in the *qûrôbô*. The scriptures are read so that they may give nourishment to the soul, as bread and water nourish the body. Secondly, the scriptures contain the teaching of life and the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Old Testament is read first, to testify that the New is true. The New (Testament) is read later to indicate that it is new and that (all) which was said in the old had been fulfilled in it. Again why do we read the Prophets and the New (Testament Epistles) and at last the Gospel? We answer (as follows): like a king who sends forerunners to a place which he wishes to visit, to announce the news of his arrival, the (books of) the prophets are read before the Gospel. After the Prophets, the *Praksis* or the Acts of the Apostles, who were the eye-witness and the ministers of the Word of God, (is read): for the prophets sowed and the apostles reaped and the souls are nourished from the same sheaf. After that the Epistle of Paul is read, because he became the disciple last (of all). However, immediately he excelled more than the other apostles in the proclamation (of the Gospel, as he says): I have labored more than them (1 Cor 15:10). Finally the Gospel is read, because the Evangelists wrote after the Ascension.
>
> After the reading of the Gospel, they go around the nave in a procession. In this procession, the lights go first, symbolizing the prophets and John the Baptist who shone like stars before the Sun of justice.[168]

As this quote from bar Salibi suggests, the reading of the Old Testament lections are understood as valuable in their own right, since they nourish the soul and provide teaching for life. Even more so, though, the lections from the Old Testament attest to the validity of the New. They provide proof that the New Testament is true, while the New Testament also represents their fulfillment. According to bar Salibi, the Old Testament is read first because it provides access to the first phase of a longer history of salvation. The Prophets are the forerunners of the Apostles and of Paul, and both find their culmination in the reading of the Gospels.

As pointed out above, in the Eucharistic liturgy, all the lections from the Old Testament, the Catholic Epistles and Acts, the Pauline Epistles and the Gospels would probably have been read following each other, and hence the relationship between them would be accentuated. The structure and performance of the liturgical practice would have underscored the notion of two testaments in its structure and this notion could also have carried over to the interpretation. One sows (the Old); the other reaps (the New/Gospels). Hence, both the structure of the event and the theology of the commentaries that might have been available to learned monks present in the church room would have promoted a notion of

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[168] Translated by Baby Varghese (*The Commentary of Dionysius bar Salibi on the Eucharist*, Môrān ʿEthō 10 [Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011], 20–21). There are several minor orthographical mistakes in the edition of this text. Since they are minor, I have corrected them in my rendering of the text.

development from one testament to the other and a conviction that the New Testament fulfills and sets a seal on the Old.[169]

Given the premises that the lections prescribed for Easter Sunday in Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 were read together and that all the lections were read at the same office,[170] the congregants who knew Syriac well enough to follow the reading might have heard that the lections build a narrative of the victory and salvation of the righteous. They guide the reader from the initiation of the tabernacle (Ex. 40:17–23), the assembling of the congregation, the sound of the trumpet and the preparations for the entrance into the promised land (Num 10:1–10), via a narrative about the holiness of the men who have kept themselves away from women (1 Sam 21:1–6) and the Lord's reassurance to Gideon that he will be victorious (Judg 6:1l–16), to a depiction in Isa 61:10–62:5 of the day when Jerusalem will be saved. Joel 2:21–3:5 describes the signs that God will send as the day of judgment is imminent, and proclaims the survival of those who calls on the name of the Lord and find refuge in Zion. At this point, the lection "From Baruch" follows. 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 describes the event of the coming of the Messiah, his universal judgement and his subjugation and punishment of those who have trodden down God's people. The lection also describes the life- and world-changing transformations that will occur as the Messiah sits down and is revealed on the throne of his kingdom. There will be peace, joy, rest and healing throughout the earth. Mic 7:1l–20, Dan 6:19–25, Nah 1:15–2:7 and Isa 60:1l–16

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[169] Bar-Sawme, "Comparing," 10–11, 15–17, 21. The learned congregants might have interpreted the references to the Old Testament typologically, or potentially, they may have interpreted them allegorically. Both methods of interpretation are represented in West Syriac commentaries (Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 17–19). Note that there are clear similarities between bar Salibi's understanding of the functions of the Old Testament and that of other Syriac commentators. George of the Arab Tribes, *Exposition of the Mysteries* (translated by Connolly and Codrington [*Two Commentaries*, 16]) wrote: "The hearing of the holy Scripture and their meaning is the constant and spiritual food of the soul, (and is), as it were, instead of the bread and the water with which the body is nourished. But that the Old Testament is read before the New, signifies that that which the Old said the New was shewn to have been fulfilled." Moses bar Kepha, *Explanations of the Mysteries* (translated by Connolly and Codrington [*Two Commentaries*, 29]): "And we say, for this reason the Old Testament is read first: that it may be a witness to testify to the New that it is true. Again, the New is read afterwards, that the New may declare that what the Old said has been fulfilled and accomplished." Gabriel of Qatar's seventh-century commentary on the liturgy reads as follows: "(…) the psalms of the Old Testament were arranged so as to be used as a demonstration of the prior character of the Old Testament, preceding in time the New Testament; accordingly as a result we culminate all our services with new poetic texts, so as to demonstrate that the New Testament has fulfilled and set the seal on the Old Testament, (…)" (translated by Sebastian P. Brock ["Gabriel of Qatar's Commentary on the Liturgy," *Hugoye* 6/2 (2003): 197–248 at 221]).

[170] It is possible that sub-groups of the lections were read at different offices (cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 91). It is also possible that they did not read all the lections but made choices. Add. 14,528 indicates that the reader could choose between lections, but only between readings from the same book.

develop on the topics of trust in God, glorious battle, victory, revenge and punishment of the enemy.

In this way, the lection "From Baruch" and the other Old Testament readings lay the ground for, and prophesy,[171] the events narrated in the lections from Acts, the Catholic and Pauline Epistles and ultimately the Gospels. Acts 2:22–43 ensures that Jesus from Nazareth is the Messiah that David talked about. He died, was resurrected and sits at the right hand of God. The lection also admonishes those who heed the call to be baptized. The last lection that Add. 14,687 records is 1 Cor 15:20–28. The first part of this passage asserts that all die in Adam, but that those who belong to Christ will be made alive in him (15:20–23). Verses 24–28 describe the end of times. After he has destroyed all earthly rulers and put all enemies under his feet, Christ hands the kingdom over to God. At this point even death is destroyed and all things are put under his subjection, even Christ, so that "God may be all in all."

The congregants who paid attention to the development in the lections may have noted both the thematic development and the fulfilment of the prophecies. 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 describes the messianic destruction of all earthly powers and the establishment of the kingdom. The lection from Acts certifies Jesus's messianic identity and the hope of the congregation. 1 Cor 15:20–28 takes this one step further, to the point when Christ hands over the kingdom to God. This lection also introduces the resurrection of the dead – the coming of those who belong to Christ. From this perspective, the lection "From Baruch" would probably have been read as an eschatological prophecy of the messianic reign at the end of time. The reference to the Messiah figure in the lection would have been understood as a prediction of the Christian Christ and the description of the righteous remnant that experiences the joy and rest of the messianic kingdom would have been interpreted as a prophecy of the destiny of those who belong to Christ.[172]

It is unfortunate that we do not know precisely which Gospel lection brought the series of readings on Easter Sunday to its culmination. This lection was the reading for which all other lections were preparing. Thematically, the readings from the Old Testament were commonly picked to fit the Gospel reading, to illustrate aspects of it and to serve as prophetic evidence for the content of the

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[171] In some of the commentaries, all the readings from the Old Testament are talked about as "prophetic." This tells us something about the function ascribed to the Old Testament: it points to the coming of Christ and the fulfillment of the Old in the New. Cf., Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 81, 90.

[172] Some other aspects of the cycle of readings on Easter Sunday may have come into play in different congregants' interpretation of the lections as well. It is likely, for instance, that the monks who were present would have identified with "the men who have kept themselves away from women" in the second lection (f. 158r; 1 Sam 21:1–6). It is equally possible that the monks and others present would have interpreted the narrative of the group of the righteous that fights the good fight in the various lections figuratively as a reference to their own salvation history and their place in it.

Gospel text.[173] However, as noted above, it must have been one of four lections: Matt 28:1–5, Mark 16:1–11, John 20:1–8 or alternatively Luke 24:13–31. If it was either of the first three, the lection from the Gospels provides the narrative of the women at the empty tomb, variants of which are found toward the end of these three Gospels. If they read Luke 24:13–31, the series of readings ends with the story about the appearance and the apostles' recognition of Jesus at Emmaus. In other words, regardless of which lection it actually was, the Gospel lection would focus on the first witnesses' experience of the resurrected Christ.

To congregants familiar with the theological interpretations associated with Easter Sunday, yet other interpretative layers might have added to the understanding of the reading "From Baruch." According to Varghese, the celebration of Easter Sunday is closely associated with the expectations of resurrection and salvation on the "great and eternal Sunday." It is interlinked with conceptions of creation and recreation, rest and eternal life. This day symbolizes the change from darkness to light, from death to life and the transition to a new age, or another world.[174] The literary contents captured in the lection excerpted from 2 Baruch would certainly have fit the occasion and lent themselves easily to reading on such a day. Although the lection describes neither the resurrection, nor the final consummation of the kingdom on "the great Sunday" – both found in 1 Cor 15 – it provides the description of a key event in the redemption narrative that is closely associated with the celebration on Easter Sunday: the second coming of Christ, his enthronement and his revelation.

To the extent that the paintings in the semi-domes and the panels in the doors were visually available to the congregants, some might have connected the pictorial representations of the Messiah[175] with the literary representations of him in the lection from 2 Baruch. The depiction of the coming of the Messiah and the messianic reign may have added to the "abbreviated *Dodekaorton*" in the semi-domes, linking all of them to the broader, eschatological, salvation narrative.[176]

It is also possible that some congregants would have associated the description in the lection "From Baruch" of the healing and joy that will proceed through the whole earth with the liturgical practices, the church room itself, and the experience of being present in that liturgical space on an Easter Sunday. The interpre-

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[173] Burkitt, "Lectionary System," 21; Baby Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology,* 155; Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 136–37.

[174] Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 107, 122–27, 135, 155. The lection expresses the breakthrough of the messianic kingdom with a light metaphor (the last bright waters, ܢܗܝܪܐ ܐܚܪܝܐ), and it depicts the new, glorious life of the righteous as a life of rest, peace, joy and healing.

[175] Syriac inscriptions in the painting reads ܡܫܝܚܐ, "Messiah," and ܝܫܘܥ, "Jesus." See, Van Rompay, "Syriac Inscriptions," 192–93.

[176] Potentially, some of the congregants could have connected the depiction of the Messiah enthroned in the upper part of the painting of the Ascension in the western semi-dome with the motif of the Messiah seated and revealed on his throne in the lection "From Baruch."

tation of the church as a micro-cosmos was commonplace in the Middle East in the Middle Ages, and according to bar Salibi, a procession around the nave would follow the reading of scripture.[177] The experiences of the transformations that, according to 2 Bar 73:2, proceed throughout the earth could thus have been associated with the procession around the nave.[178]

However, we cannot expect that all the congregants in the Church of the Holy Virgin would have been aware either of the theological layers of interpretation of a reading from the Old Testament or the full potential of liturgical meaning associated with Easter Sunday. To some of the congregants, other interpretations of the contents of the lection "From Baruch" may have come more easily to mind. The monastery received refugees from Syria and Iraq in the mid-1250s, and the situation in the Syrian heartlands must have been familiar to the community in the Monastery of the Syrians. If the refugees were present in the church, it is possible that the imagery of judgment, the destruction of the nations "who have ruled over you" and victory would have struck a chord. It might have facilitated an eschatological reflection on the Easter liturgy. Thus, the reading of the lection might have become particularly meaningful to some of the congregants given the political situation in the latter part of the thirteenth century.[179]

Finally, all the available traces of the context of reading of the lection "From Baruch" point to the conclusion that those who took part in the service would have assumed that they were listening to a lection from the Old Testament. The lection, once excerpted from 2 Baruch, is part of a lectionary manuscript that contains readings from the Old Testament and the Epistles of Paul. This manuscript would have been present in the church room and engaged with and handled during the reading of the lection. The monk would have read the heading, "From Baruch," which would identify the lection with a book ascribed to a relatively well-known figure from the Old Testament narrative world, Baruch the scribe of Jeremiah. The lection would have been read together with other lections, connecting it even more closely to the category "Old Testament" and the Prophets. The reading "From Baruch" was probably chosen due to its thematic focus on judgment and messianic victory and reign, meant to aid the interpretation of the given Gospel reading. Importantly, and adding to this, the mode of reading,

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[177] In his *Commentary on the Eucharist* (5,3 and 4), bar Salibi suggested some alternative timings of the procession, either before or after the reading of the Gospels (Varghese, *Commentary*, 21). It is also likely that a procession was part of the preparatory rite, that is, before the reading of the lections (Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 99, quoting bar Kepha).

[178] Cf., Bar-Sawme, "Comparing," 19; Potoczny, "Proclamation," 82; McVey, "Domed Church," 91, 118.

[179] I am grateful to Jan Retsö, who brought up this idea in a seminar at the University of Gothenburg (12 April 2018) and to Ephrem Ishac who pinpointed the importance of this interpretative trajectory (email correspondence, 3 June 2020). Cf., also, Ephrem Ishac, "Eschatology in Jacob of Edessa's Anaphora," *Proceedings of the 5th Edition of the Annual International Patristic Symposium* (Diocese of Severin and Strehaia, Romania, 2018).

the spatial arrangements in the church, the order of the lections and the place of the scriptural reading in the service would have categorized "From Baruch" as a lection apt for reading at the event of Easter Sunday – regardless, even, of whether all the congregants understood the contents of what they heard. "From Baruch" would have sounded like an Old Testament reading, it would be performed as such, it might even have smelled as such, and it would have filled the church room, resounding off its painted walls, on this festive spring day in the latter part of the thirteenth century.

4.3 The Revenge of a Historical Loser

I have taken you on a *tour de force* through a hypothetical, but still likely, situation of engagement with an excerpted passage from 2 Baruch. It is time to summarize the outcome and to ask the important question: so what?

My exploration of the thirteenth-century reception of a particular passage of 2 Baruch started with a manuscript. Add. 14,687 prescribes 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 for reading on Easter Sunday. The colophon and additional notes situate the manuscript in the post-1256 environment of the Monastery of the Syrians. The investigation then addressed the spatial reading context. The main church of the monastery, the Church of the Holy Virgin, had just been renovated at the time, and due to recent decades' thorough explorations of the architectural features, inscriptions and paintings in this church, we can approximate a spatial context for the thirteenth-century reading of the lection. Other manuscripts that were once kept in the monastery provide information about the offices and of the alternative Gospel lections read at the same event. Additional notes in manuscripts once housed there and inscriptions on the walls of the church provide some insights into the demography of those who congregated in the church on a feast day. Finally, commentaries composed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries give us some clues about the interpretative tools that the educated part of that congregation had access to as they heard the lection being read. The actual historical situation is lost, but the traces left to us are still significant enough to warrant a multi-dimensional interpretative approximation of a thirteenth-century event of the reception of a passage excerpted from 2 Baruch.

The main outcome of this exercise is the finding that the lection "From Baruch" would have been prescribed for reading and that it would have been read and, in all likelihood, also perceived and experienced as a lection from the Old Testament. All the traces that remain point univocally in this direction. Furthermore, as I indicated in the introductory part of the present chapter, Easter Sunday is not the only event in Add. 14,687 that prescribes it for reading. The passage "From Baruch" was to be read on New Sunday as well as the Eight Sunday after the Resurrection. This multiple attestation of the lection means

that it was considered relevant, appropriate and maybe also important. Hearing it read three times during the Easter season would at least have made the lection familiar to those who read and listened to the reading, and as it was read both at the beginning and at the end of the season, it would in effect have framed it.

Since four surviving lectionary manuscripts contain lections from 2 Baruch, it is unlikely that Add. 14,687 included a lection from 2 Baruch by mistake. It is more likely that there was a tradition, or at least a chain, of copying and reading 2 Baruch as part of the Old Testament in worship contexts.[180] As four lectionary manuscripts containing lections from 2 Baruch have come down to us, it is likely that there were once more.[181] I am not suggesting that 2 Baruch was part of the standard repertoire of West Syriac lectionary manuscripts. Lections from 2 Baruch would have been part of some manuscripts, but absent from many others. We may understand this feature in different ways. From the bird's eye view, the flexibility of lectionary manuscripts underscores that there was no "canon" of established readings in the West Syriac tradition. Although most Old Testament lectionaries included readings from the more common Old Testament books, there is pronounced variation.[182] From this perspective, the inclusion of a lection from 2 Baruch bears witness to this general variance. From the local perspective, though, it should perhaps not surprise us that passages from 2 Baruch became part of the lectionary manuscripts that were copied, precisely, in the Monastery of the Syrians. As the previous chapters have shown, 2 Baruch is one of the books of the Codex Ambrosianus. This *pandect* was kept in the monastery in the thirteenth century, and as I pointed out in chapter 3, the passage from 2 Baruch that ended up in Add. 14,687 is singled out for further copying by a ܗ note in the margin. In other words, although it is unlikely that all Syriac Christians at all times would have read excerpts from 2 Baruch as excerpts from the Old Testament, there is little doubt that, in the thirteenth century, at least one monastic community did.

So what? It can obviously be argued that the present chapter's detailed and multi-dimensional description of the engagement with an Old Testament lection in Syriac worship practice is unnecessarily excessive and basically banal. I am reconstructing how a Christian congregation engaged with a lection from the Old Testament on an Easter Sunday. There is arguably nothing special about this situation. The factor that makes the exercise of the present chapter interesting is our twenty-first-century understanding, categorization and assessment of the

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[180] Cf., furthermore, the discussion of transmission networks and the importance of the Monastery of the Syrians in chapter 6.

[181] Cf., the discussion about lost manuscripts in chapter 6.

[182] Lections from books that may elsewhere be described as "apocryphal" are relatively common in Syriac lectionaries, for instance, in the two oldest lectionaries found in the Syrian Monastery. Note that the four oldest Syriac *pandects* also include different sets and orders of books (cf., further, Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 115–16; Vööbus, *Syriac Lectionary*, XVI; Sader, *Le lieu de culte*, 90–93. Cf., chapter 1 of the present volume).

text the congregation read. The thirteenth-century reading of the lection "From Baruch" on Easter Sunday clashes with the established scholarly imagination of and narrative about 2 Baruch. Thus, this exercise graciously allows us to nuance that narrative and to revisit the epistemologies and practices that produced it.

First, the very fact that no one has studied the thirteenth-century context of engagement with 2 Baruch tells us something about the focus and priorities of scholars during one hundred and fifty years of scholarship. With very few exceptions, the first- or second-century CE context is the only historical context that scholars have explored. Later manuscripts are "text witnesses." When Baars gave name to the article that first brought attention to the occurrence of lections from 2 Baruch in lectionary manuscripts, "Neue Textzeugen der syrischen Baruchapokalypse" ("New Text Witnesses to the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch") it reflected this scholarly orientation. The title suggests that the main relevance and usage of the new manuscript finding are their functions as witnesses to the text of 2 Baruch – to something behind the manuscripts and their synchronous context. The flip side of the focused dedication to the historical context of origin, is the lack of attention to the identifiable receiving contexts of 2 Baruch. The materials that survive from the thirteenth century offer us a peek into a rich context of engagement, but scholars of 2 Baruch have never touched it.

Second, this chapter also illustrates that attention to the multi-medial character of historical engagement with texts is also generally lacking. Scholarship has mostly focused on writings such as 2 Baruch as immaterial texts, as literature. As the previous chapters showed: the manuscript that contains the only full copy of 2 Baruch has hardly been explored in its own right as a cultural artifact. The present chapter adds, that to understand the reading of the lection from 2 Baruch, we need to factor in both the idea that the lection is part of a cultural artifact – a lectionary manuscript that lends itself to study – and the idea that this artifact is part and parcel of a particular, localized practice. That practice made the lection available orally, aurally and as a palpable reality in a particular space.[183] The sound and sight of the lection would interact with other visual, aural, olfactory and bodily expressions in that setting. Together, these interacting expressions would influence the intellectual and sensory engagement with the lection. This means that so far, we have not paid proper attention to the broader cultural constellations and cluster of practices in which those who engaged with 2 Baruch met it. No text is read in a void, and the more we know about the contexts of reading, the more we may know about what 2 Baruch could have meant to those who engaged with it.

Third, as I pointed out in the General Introduction, 2 Baruch was addressed as "apocryphal" at its very presentation to the academic community in the

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[183] Luft, "Einleitung: Heilige Schriften," 3–4.

mid-1860s.[184] This categorization of 2 Baruch has lingered in academic discourse and framed all scholarly interaction with it. This discourse identifies 2 Baruch as "apocryphal," "pseudepigraphal" or as "bad company" – even for other "apocryphal" books.[185] In light of my findings in this volume so far, it is important to flag this interpretative frame. It makes the finding of lections from 2 Baruch in a Syriac lectionary manuscript "surprising," but it does not provide a fruitful analytical grasp on the manuscript materials that have in fact come down to us. Furthermore, and as pointed out initially, a logical glitch has accompanied this analytical frame: we tend to assume that if we know the origins, we hold the key to the entire phenomenon. In other words, if 2 Baruch was marginal, non-canonical, apocryphal or pseudepigraphal in its context of origin, it was always marginal, non-canonical, apocryphal or pseudepigraphal. However, a hypothesis about a book's origin does not necessarily predict what it later became – it remains a hypothesis restricted to its origins. The case that I have explored in this chapter is just one of more case-studies that could illustrate how the transmission history of 2 Baruch has more in store for us than scholarship has typically granted it.[186] If we allow more historical contexts to be equally interesting, valid and relevant to the assessment of 2 Baruch as its assumed origins, the impression of the book changes.

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[184] Cf., e. g., Ceriani, *Fragmenta*, i–ii; idem, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 113.

[185] E. g., Philips, "Reception of Peshitta Chronicles," 261–63, and with some reservations, Haelewyck, "Le canon," 143.

[186] For instance, how would lections from 2 Bar 44:9–15 and 4 Ezra 7:26–42 be read on the Sunday of the Dead (Add. 14,686, ff. 75v–77v; Ms 33, ff. 72v–75r)? And how would 2 Bar 44:9–15 and 72:1–73:2 have been engaged with in India?

Chapter 5

Salient Paratexts: The Epistle and the Epistles

The last section of the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus contains an epistle (folios 265v–267r).[1] A subsection heading identifies the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 as "The Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah, Which He Wrote to the Nine and a Half Tribes."[2] Interestingly, the Codex Ambrosianus also contains another copy of an epistle, the contents of which overlaps with the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86.[3] That epistle is identified as "The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, Which He Sent from the Midst of Jerusalem to Babylon."[4] It is copied together with two other epistles ascribed to Jeremiah and Baruch and is located after Jeremiah and Lamentations.[5] In Syriac manuscripts, the epistle integral to 2 Baruch is known only from the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus, but the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe circulated widely. At the time of writing this volume, fifty-three other, surviving, Syriac, Peshitta, Old Testament manuscripts are known to contain it – as a whole or in the shape of excerpted parts. The epistle integral to 2 Baruch and the copy of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Codex Ambrosianus share 81.2 % of the text.[6] This means that the texts of the two copies are indeed similar. Based on this high degree of overlap in the literary contents, editors have applied the copies of either epistle as witnesses to the text of one and the same writing, approaching the two epistles as one singular epistle, commonly referred to in scholarship as the *Epistle of Baruch*. Since the level of variance between the text of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch and the

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter was published under the title "Between 'Text Witness' and 'Text on the Page': Trajectories in the History of Editing the Epistle of Baruch" in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 272–96. The essay has been brought up to date with new publications and manuscript findings and repurposed to fit the current volume. It is included here with De Gruyter's permission.

[2] ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ. ܕܟܬܒܗ ܠܬܫܥܐ ܫܒܛܝܢ ܘܦܠܓܗ (f. 265v). Cf., image 190 of B21bis-inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[3] Cf., chapter 1 of the current volume.

[4] ܗܘܬ ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܩܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܫܕܪ ܡܢ ܓܘ ܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܠܒܒܠ (f. 176v). The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe appears on folios 176v–177v. Cf., image 012 of B21bis.inf: http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280112d9d (accessed 18 June 2020).

[5] Folios 176r–179r.

[6] The Textual Comparison Module of the Logos Bible Software, accessed via Logos Bible Software on 18 April 2016. Put differently, Albrektson et al. note that the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 has 120 unique readings (*Jeremiah,* 237).

epistle copied in all the other extant Syriac manuscripts is far from uncommon for a writing in transmission, editors have approached the copies of the epistles in the surviving manuscripts as two "types of text,"[7] or two "versions,"[8] of the same writing. For critical editions of 2 Baruch, the implication of this practice is that the copies of the epistle circulating independently of 2 Baruch in Syriac manuscripts have been applied as witnesses to the epistle that make up the last chapters of 2 Baruch.

Allow me to spell out what that means. First, it means that editors of 2 Baruch have used the copies available in these other Syriac manuscripts to establish the best text of an epistle that is ultimately imagined to be part of a Jewish, first/second-century book. Second, and as this chapter will show, it means that editors have kept their eyes firmly on the text written in black ink in the columns while overlooking other features on the manuscript page that insist on communicating to their readers that there are two different epistles in circulation, not one.

There is nothing peculiar about this editorial practice. On the contrary, keeping the text in the columns in focus is in general agreement with the predominant procedures. The aim of critical editions of 2 Baruch has been to establish the best possible text of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86, and to achieve this goal, editors have employed the texts available to them in surviving Syriac copies. However, this procedure overlooks one important aspect, which traditional textual criticism was not designed to grasp:[9] it tends to ignore paratextual features that serve to identify copies of writings in the manuscripts in which they occur. When these features are noted, for instance in the critical apparatus, as just another variant,[10] they are not granted interest as a source that may tell us how those who copied and engaged with the writings understood them.

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[7] This is Charles's term (*Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiv–xxv).

[8] This is the term used by, e.g., Donald M. Walter et al., eds., *The Syriac Peshiṭta Bible with English Translation: Lamentations, Prayer of Jeremiah, Epistle of Jeremiah and Epistles of Baruch* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2013) and by Bertil Albrektson, Sven Dedering, Donald M. Walter, Konrad D. Jenner and Geert J. Veldman, *Jeremiah – Lamentation – Epistle of Jeremiah – Epistle of Baruch – Baruch*, part III, fascicle 2, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshiṭta Version* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

[9] In recent times, this has slowly started to change. Cf., e.g., Garrick V. Allen, *Manuscripts of the Book of Revelation: New Philology, Paratexts, Reception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020). Cf., also, the Paratexts of the Bible-project, chaired by Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist (http://www.paratexbib.eu/ [accessed 2 June 2020]), Allen's Titles of the New Testament-project (https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/hr/rf1284_postdoctoral_researcher_tint_project_level_1_-_job_spec.doc.pdf [accessed 2 June 2020]), and the ongoing research projects of Jennifer Knust, Tommy Wasserman, Jeremiah Coogan and David Davage. However, with the exception of Lied, "Between 'Text Witness' and 'Text on the Page'," this change has yet to benefit scholarship on 2 Baruch.

[10] Cf., e.g., Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," 647 n. 78.

In this chapter, I will apply the term "paratext"[11] to refer to textual elements that serve to communicate between a text copied in a manuscript and its producers on the one hand and a reader on the other. Thus, a paratext is not part of the literary text copied in the column, *per se*, but it is intimately linked to that text both in terms of spatial proximity on the manuscript page and in terms of literary contents.[12] It shares the page, it appears alongside the text and it communicates beyond the text, but it remains relevant primarily due to its relationship to the text.[13] Paratexts are part of the cultural repertoire of the community and tradition that produced and engaged with the manuscripts. They may serve various purposes. They are labels identifying a certain layout unit. They are readers' aids, helping readers to find their way. Paratexts may also be exegetical in nature, guiding the interpretation of the literary text. Often, paratexts serve several of these purposes at the same time or one function may not be easily distinguishable from another.

I am particularly interested in one type of paratext in this chapter: rubricated titles and headings, most commonly inscribed in the manuscript in the production process. As pointed out in chapter 1, rubricated titles and headings may come in various shapes and in different locations vis-à-vis the text of the copy of the book. "Running titles" appear in the upper margins of the manuscript pages. "Superscript titles" also appear above and at a certain distance from the text that follows them, visually semi-detached from that text. Other rubricated titles appear in the columns. "Titles" mark the beginning of a copy of a book, but do not stand out by other means than the ink color, and at times, some subtle decorations such as clusters of dots, dashes and/or wavy lines. A rubricated title may also appear at the end of the layout unit. Sometimes such an "end title" appears alone as a discrete feature. At other times, the identification at the end of the unit may appear as an integral part of a postscript, or in addition to a postscript. "(Subsection) headings" refer to formulations that mark the beginning of a subsection of a book.[14]

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[11] The term originates with Gérard Genette, (especially, *Palimpsestes. La literature au second degré* [Paris: Seuil, 1982]; and his work in English translation: *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997]; idem, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997]). However, since Genette based his study on European print culture, I have redefined and adjusted the interpretation of the concept to fit studies of a Syriac manuscript culture. The use of the concept is contested in manuscript studies. Cf., e.g., the excellent overview in Andrist, "Toward a Definition of Paratexts and Paratextuality," 130–35.

[12] In some manuscript traditions and in some literary corpora, the divide is not this simple. For instance, some traditions use "incipits," that is, they use the first words of a literary text as the identification of a writing. Note also, that since this is not a feature that appears in the material that I explore in the present chapter, I do not employ this term.

[13] Cf., Genette, *Palimpsestes*, 7, 9, 10; idem, *Paratexts*, 2, 9–10.

[14] Cf., furthermore, the presentation of the terms in chapter 1.

The rubricated titles and headings that I am looking at have two features in common. The first feature is a function-feature: they identify and label the layout unit to which they appear in immediate proximity.[15] The second feature is a layout-feature: the titles and headings are, most frequently, copied in red ink (*ruber* = red).[16] The use of red ink sets them visually apart from the rest of the text in the columns, which Syriac scribes copied in black (or brownish black) ink. Students of Syriac manuscripts are fortunate since these manuscripts contain rubricated titles more often than many other manuscript traditions. They provide access to snapshots of the communication of the writing's identification to a reader. As such, to us, they are invaluable traces of historical perceptions and identifications of a given writing.

This chapter surveys the extant Syriac manuscripts that contain copies of the epistle that scholars approach as the *Epistle of Baruch*, exploring the paratextual features that communicate the identifications of the epistle(s) copied in the Syriac manuscript tradition. I will apply the outcome of this exploration to discuss the main trajectories of the editorial history of the *Epistle of Baruch* from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century, bringing the history of editing into a critical dialogue with the available manuscript paratexts. I will look systematically for the identification and location of the epistle(s) in the manuscripts and ask why, how and the extent to which these paratextual features could – and should – matter to current editorial practices. Hence, I will deal with scholarly identifications of writings, editors' assessments of the value of paratextual features on the manuscript page, the contexts and locations of copies in manuscripts and editors' perceived access to an ancient writing, as well as the prevailing notions in academia regarding the use of manuscripts. Why is the paratextual identification significant when this identification is demonstrably the product of the later manuscript tradition, while it is the text of the copy that the editor needs to meet his or her goal? What is the relationship between the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 and the epistle attested to in the fifty-three other copies, and what may these other copies tell us about the transmission history of the larger book, 2 Baruch? To what, really, are these copies bearing witness, and why does it matter?

A brief note on terminology is necessary before I proceed. I will apply the term "*Epistle of Baruch*" – in italics – to talk about editors' conception of a singular

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[15] Note that I am not suggesting that the term "title" is equally fitting for all rubricated elements in all manuscript traditions, or even in all Syriac manuscripts. Rubricated text can do more and other work than to identify and give name to writings. However, it is a fruitful term when I explore the series of rubricated words that mark the beginning and end of the copies of the epistles ascribed to Baruch in Syriac manuscripts.

[16] On occasions, Syriac scribes applied chrysography to titles (Cf., e.g., London, BL, Add. 14,485 and Add. 14,486). The ink of some titles may appear in other colors as well, but this is rare in the materials that I have studied for the present chapter.

work. I understand their application of *Epistle of Baruch* as an *etic* approach – the term is used analytically, or habitually, from an outsider's perspective. I will apply the terms "First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe," on the one hand, and "Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah," on the other, to talk about native (*emic*) work identifications in the manuscripts. To ensure reader-friendliness and a need for variation, I will also use the terms "the epistle of 2 Bar 78–86" and "the epistle integral to 2 Baruch" descriptively to refer to the latter epistle. On the occasions that I refer to any, either or both of the epistles in context of the presentation of former practices, I will apply "epistle(s)" to remind myself and my readers that the "epistle" may well be plural. When the context in a passage ensures that the use of the term cannot be misunderstood, I apply "the epistle" or "this epistle."

5.1 An Overview of Extant Manuscripts

As the first step, I will survey the extant manuscripts.[17] The survey is based on the 1961 preliminary edition of the *Peshiṭta List*[18] and the updates in the Peshitta Institute Communication, published since 1962 in *Vetus Testamentum* and continuing after 1999 in the *Journal for the Aramaic Bible*/*Aramaic Studies*.[19] Furthermore, I consulted an unpublished list of lectionary manuscripts kept at and generously shared with me in 2013 by the Peshitta Institute.[20] The contents of this list were later published in Bertil Albrektson, Sven Dedering, Donald M. Walter, Konrad D. Jenner and Geert J. Veldman's 2019 edition of the *Epistle of Baruch*. They also added five more manuscripts.[21] In addition, my survey in-

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[17] I have consulted twenty-one manuscripts firsthand in the library collections in Cambridge, London, Lund, Milan and Paris. Some other manuscripts are available online (e. g., Pampakuda, A. Konat Collection, Ms. 77 and St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589), whereas others are available through microfilms (in Leiden and in Cambridge) or digital images (e. g., via HMML). The remaining occurrences of the epistle are only known to me through their mentions in catalogues and in the critical apparatus of text editions. Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "2.2.3 Syriac," in *Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, vol. 2 of *The Textual History of the Bible,* ed. Frank Feder and Matthias Henze (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 46–53.

[18] *Peshiṭta List,* 99–100. The list counts thirty-eight manuscripts. I do not recount these manuscripts here, as they are readily available in this list.

[19] The survey of the Peshitta Institute Communication adds two manuscripts, designated Jerusalem 42 and Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Dd 7.13. They are found in the 1968 Fourth Supplement and in the 1977 Fifth Supplement.

[20] This list was developed by Baars. It adds five lectionary manuscripts to the survey (London, BL, Add. 14,485, Add. 14,486, and Add. 14,687, Bartella, Syriac Catholic Church of St. George [dated 1466], and Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library, 2). With thanks to Konrad D. Jenner, Wido T. van Peursen and Bas ter Haar Romeny.

[21] Diyarbakir, Syriac Orthodox Parish Church, 1/1 (15a3); Alqosh, Chaldean Archdiocese of Alqosh, 22 (19e3); Erbil, Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil, MS 3 (19e4); Erbil, Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil, MS 4 (19e5); Karkosh, Private Library, 01 (19g9) (Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, xvii–xxxvi, 252–63).

cludes Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 14,[22] Karkuk, Chaldean Archdiocese of Karkuk, ACK 002[23] as well as St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589. As mentioned above, the number of manuscripts containing the epistle(s), in full or in parts, is now fifty-three, but there might still be more manuscripts out there that have not yet been listed here.[24] Apart from the single Arabic codex, all these manuscripts are Syriac manuscripts.[25] The oldest date from the sixth or seventh century, the youngest are from the nineteenth century.[26] As I noted above, the epistle integral to 2 Baruch is preserved in one single Syriac manuscript only, that is, in the Codex Ambrosianus. All other manuscripts copy the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. This means that a conceived *Epistle of Baruch* circulated, primarily, detached from 2 Baruch. It also means that, in contrast to the epistle integral to 2 Baruch, the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe enjoyed wide circulation. Although drawing conclusions simply on the basis of the number of extant copies can certainly be misleading, when large parts of the manuscript materials once circulating are probably lost, this feature is still noteworthy. The one to fifty-three ratio of surviving Syriac manuscripts indicates that the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah was probably rare.

What kinds of manuscripts included the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Syriac context? This epistle appears in Peshitta Old Testament manuscripts of various formats, copied throughout the entire time span indicated above. It is part of *pandects*[27] as well as codices containing collections of prophetic books, the oldest presumably being the sixth-century London, BL, Add. 17,105. The epistle is also part of some composite codices containing less familiar collocations of Old Testament books.[28] In some East Syriac codices, dating from the sev-

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[22] This manuscript was described by Brock and Van Rompay (*Catalogue,* 64).

[23] I am grateful to James Walters for bringing this 19th century manuscript to my attention.

[24] This list counts manuscripts as discrete entities. If the two copies in the Codex Ambrosianus are counted separately the number is fifty-four.

[25] Note that the Arabic copy of 2 Baruch in Arabic Manuscripts 589 also copies the epistle with 2 Baruch. It is a matter of debate, though, whether the epistle appears in this codex as an integral part of 2 Baruch, or whether it is copied as an autonomous unit after 2 Bar 1–77. As P. Sj. van Koningsveld pointed out, chapter 77 ends with a colophon ("Thus it was [found] in the Book"). Before the title of the epistle, the Arabic copy also adds the *basmalah*, which often serves as an opening formula. The last sentence reads "[Here] ends the Epistle of Baruch" ("An Arabic Manuscript of the Apocalypse of Baruch," *JSJ* 6/2 (1974/5): 205–7 at 206). These features suggest that the Arabic scribe treated the epistle as an independent writing. Nevertheless, the manuscript also suggests that the epistle still circulated and was copied in close association with the rest of 2 Baruch. The manuscript is accessible online: https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279390714-ms/ (accessed 3 June 2020). See image 31.

[26] This overview excludes occurrences of the epistle in printed books. Note that the copying of Syriac books by hand persisted as a continuing practice alongside print.

[27] The epistle appears, for instance, in Paris, BnF, Syr. 341, Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo I.1,2 and in the Codex Ambrosianus. Cf., chapter 1 in this volume.

[28] Cf., e. g., London, BL, Add. 12,172. After the tenth century, some Old Testament codices excluded the epistles. However, judging from the manuscripts that have come down to us, this tendency was not dominant at any point (cf., Lied, "2.2.3. Syriac," 49–51).

enteenth century onwards, the epistle appears in a collection of books identified as "Maccabees." These late manuscripts contain 1–3 Maccabees, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Proverbs, Judith, Esther, Susanna, the Epistle of Jeremiah, the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe (that is, 1 Baruch).[29] The *Peshiṭta List* refers to these manuscripts as collections of "apocryphal books."[30] However, Van Rompay is among the scholars who sees this phenomenon rather as a full inclusion of these books as a discrete collection of Old Testament books – identified as "Maccabees" – alongside the other collections: Pentateuch, Beth Mawtabhe, Prophets and Psalms ("David").[31] Excerpted passages from the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe also appear in lectionary manuscripts (ninth–sixteenth centuries),[32] as well as in masoretic manuscripts (tenth–thirteenth centuries).[33] This means not only that this epistle was part of Old Testament codices but also that it was used and engaged with by Syriac Christians as an Old Testament writing.

We have no surviving record of the epistle(s) before the sixth century. This does not mean that either or both epistles could not have been copied in the Syriac tradition in earlier centuries – indeed it is likely that it, or they, were. However, we have no secure knowledge of or access to either, in Syriac or in any other tradition, before that time. Furthermore, the fact that either form of the epistle is primarily attested in Syriac manuscripts suggests that it was read first and foremost in the Syriac tradition. We know that the epistle integral to 2 Baruch was translated into Arabic, probably from Syriac,[34] and although new manuscripts in Arabic or other language traditions might come to light in the future, it is at present not attested to in any other tradition. In this sense, the epistle(s) conceived as the *Epistle of Baruch* is a Syriac Christian writing. Alternatively, at the very least, we have access to it in the shape of Syriac copies in Syriac Christian manuscripts.[35]

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[29] *Peshiṭta List*, 76. Cf., Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 248–49.

[30] *Peshiṭta List*, vii.

[31] Van Rompay, "1.1.3 The Syriac Canon," 152 n. 100.

[32] That is, in Add. 14,485, Add. 14,486, Add. 14,687; Bartella, Syriac Catholic Church of St. George; and Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library 2.

[33] London, BL, Add. 7183, Add. 12,178, Add. 14,482, Add. 14,684; Chicago, Oriental Institute Library; Mosul, Church of St. Thomas; Lund, University Library, Medeltidshandskrift 58; Paris, BnF, Syr. 64; Rome, Vatican Library, Vat.sir. 152; Rome, Vatican Library, Barb.or. 118; Rome, Vatican Library, Barb.sir. 117; and Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 14.

[34] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, vii. Cf., also Drint, "The Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 7, 11–14.

[35] Again, this does not mean that it may not have circulated in other contexts, but rather that the manuscript evidence that is available to us is Syriac and Christian.

5.2 Trajectories in the History of Editing of the *Epistle of Baruch*

The history of European editing of the *Epistle of Baruch* follows two trajectories. The modern and early modern editorial history of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is relatively long.[36] Early editions of this epistle were part of both the Paris Polyglot (1629–45) and the London (B. Walton) Polyglot (1655–57).[37]

Ceriani's publications of the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah in the 1860s represented a major breakthrough for the study of the epistle extant in 2 Bar 78–86.[38] The publication also complicated the picture – in interesting ways. The *Epistle of Baruch* had already been represented as part of the tradition of the Syriac Peshitta Old Testament, circulating among Syriac Christians. Now it also became known as part of 2 Baruch and thus conceived as integral to a Jewish book from the first or second century CE. For some editors, the goal would thus still be to publish a good edition of a Syriac Old Testament writing, whereas for others, the aim would now be to provide the best possible text of the latter part of an assumed first- or second-century Jewish book.

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[36] The publications discussed in this essay are publications intended solely or primarily for an academic audience. I do not deal with exegetical and interpretative studies of the *Epistle of Baruch*. These studies are almost exclusively found in the context of more general treatments of 2 Baruch. Cf., in particular, the work of Whitters (*Epistle of Second Baruch,* 272–88; idem, "Testament and Canon in the Letter of Second Baruch (*2 Baruch 78–87*)," *JSP* 12 [2001]: 149–63) and Lutz Doering ("The Epistle of Baruch and Its Role in *2 Baruch*," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction After the Fall,* ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini [Leiden: Brill, 2013], 151–73; idem, "Configuring Addressee Communities in Ancient Jewish Letters: The Case of the Epistle of Baruch (2 Baruch 78–86)," in *Letters and Communities: Studies in the Socio-Political Dimensions of Ancient Epistolography*, ed. Paola Ceccarelli, Lutz Doering, Thorsten Foegen and Ingo Gildenhard [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018], 271–87). The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe remains largely unexplored in scholarship. In addition to the editions that will be discussed below, cf., however, Hans R. Bosker, "A Comparison of Parsers: Delilah, Turgama and Baruch" (bachelor thesis, University of Leiden, 2008).

[37] The Paris Polyglot is probably based on the seventeenth-century Paris, BnF, Syr. 6. The London Polyglot is assumed to be based on the equally late Egerton 704 and Bodleian Syr 1 (Charles, *The Apocalypse of Baruch,* xxx; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:46). The 1823 edition of Samuel Lee is supposedly based primarily on the London Polyglot. The Urmia edition (1852) likewise applies the London Polyglot as well as the edition of Samuel Lee (Brock, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 130). The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe was also published by Paul de Lagarde in 1861, based on Add. 17,105, with references to variants in the London Polyglot (*Libris Veteris Testamenti Apocryphi Syriace* [Lipsiae: F.A. Brockhaus, 1861], 88–93). Charles referred, somewhat sarcastically, to this edition stating: "This is merely *b* [Add. 17,105] in a printed form, and not an edition of the Syriac text based on the Nitrian MSS" (Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxx–xxxi).

[38] Cf., chapter 1 of the current volume.

5.2.1 Trajectory A: The Epistle of Baruch as an Integral Part of 2 Baruch

The base text of Ceriani's 1868 edition is the text of the epistle found in the Codex Ambrosianus folios 265v–267r (2 Bar 78–86).[39] Ceriani's edition of the *Epistle of Baruch* is, to a large degree, faithful to the text of this copy. He corrected punctuation and diacritical marks but made very few changes to the consonantal text.[40] Variants that were known to him from other manuscripts "qui ad manus erant" he noted in the critical apparatus.[41] The manuscripts "at hand" to Ceriani in Milan in the 1860s were the copy of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Codex Ambrosianus (folios 176v–177v) and A 145 inf. of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana (dated 1615), as well as Add. 17,105 and the lectionary manuscript Add. 14,485, which he knew from his visits to London.

Ceriani never published a separate edition of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe.[42] Its existence is first and foremost represented by the variants noted in the critical apparatus and by the mention of it in the forewords to the Syriac text and the Latin translation.[43] The handwritten notes[44] in the margins of the photolithographical edition of the Codex Ambrosianus show that Ceriani understood the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 as primary. This is suggested by the fact that he identified the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in folios 176v–177v as "Ep. Bar. Apoc."[45] and applied the chapter enumeration of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch,[46] which starts with 78 and ends with 86.[47]

Charles's 1896 critical edition of 2 Baruch included the critical text of the *Epistle of Baruch*, based on thirteen attestations in twelve Syriac manuscripts.[48]

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[39] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 167–80.

[40] Cf., also, Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," ii n. 1.

[41] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 167.

[42] He did publish the LXX versions of 1 Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah (Ceriani, *Monumenta sacra et profana* 1.1). According to Vergani, Ceriani intended to publish a comprehensive critical edition of the Peshitta Old Testament, and his notes are still kept in the Ambrosian Library (B 21 ter inf.), but unfortunately Ceriani never completed this task ("Introduction," xiii).

[43] Ceriani, "Apocalypsis Baruch," 1; ibid, "Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 113.

[44] The names of the books and the chapter numbers were entered by Ceriani. Cf., Vergani, "Introduction," XII.

[45] Note that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is given another title by the scribe on the very same manuscript page.

[46] Ceriani, *Translatio Syra*, 364–66. Note also that Ceriani commented on a marginal note written in the outer margin of folio 177v, which contains the copy of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, in his treatment of the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah. In other words, he described a codicological feature of the former folio as relevant to the latter based on the notion that the work is the same.

[47] The postscript in folio 267r is enumerated chapter 87.

[48] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiii–xxviii, 124–67; idem, "II Baruch," 470–74. As mentioned above, the Codex Ambrosianus contains copies of both epistles. Hence, Charles consulted twelve manuscripts, but thirteen copies. Charles referred to the two copies in terms of two "manuscripts," a practice that was not uncommon in his day. In addition to these twelve manuscripts, Charles used the Paris and London Polyglota.

The manuscripts that Charles applied were the Codex Ambrosianus with its two copies (the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is his manuscript *a*; the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah bears the siglum *c*),[49] Add. 17,105 (*b*) and ten other manuscripts found in London, Oxford and Paris and hence available to Charles, who was working in Ireland and England at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.[50] Four of these manuscripts dated from the seventeenth century; six have been assigned dates in the tenth to the twelfth centuries. Nine of them contain collections of Old Testament books, transmitting a complete text. The remaining three manuscripts are masoretic and transmit excerpted passages. Hence, whereas the edition of Ceriani had primarily been based on one single manuscript, Charles's edition of the *Epistle of Baruch* was the first to apply more manuscripts in an endeavor to create a critical text.[51] Charles's critical text can be understood as eclectic in the sense that he brought in readings from different manuscripts. Charles corrected *c*, and his goal was to present "the best text," in other words, the most original text.[52] Still, *c* is his most important witness and the edition might be considered a comparative study of *c* with the other available manuscripts in order to "ascertain the critical value of *c*."[53]

Charles developed a *stemma*, depicting "two types of text."[54] *c* represents one type, and all other manuscripts represent the other. Among the manuscripts representing this second type of text, he described the oldest manuscripts as the most trustworthy and belonging to another subgroup from the younger manuscripts. Charles noted, furthermore, that *c* often stands alone, both when it attests to "the true text" and when it is "corrupt," but also that this subgroup of old manuscripts preserves "the true text" more often than *c*. In other words, according to Charles, manuscripts *a* and *b* (i. e. Codex Ambrosianus folios 176v–177v and Add. 17,105) contain the oldest text more often than *c*.[55] He also proposed that both types of text ultimately derive from a common ancestor but that the two types were already developed in the sixth–seventh centuries. He suggest-

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[49] Ceriani was the first to apply the *siglum a* as a designation of Codex Ambrosianus folios 176v–177v ("Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae,"167). He also applied the sigla *B, d,* and *m,* and in addition *l, p, u,* and *w* which refer to the already existing editions of the text known to him (i. e., the London and Paris Polyglota and the edition of de Lagarde).

[50] For a complete list, cf., Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiii–xxiv.

[51] Fritzsche published an emended edition of Ceriani's Latin translation, not the manuscripts, in 1871 (*Libri Apocryphi Veteris Testamenti Graece*). He recorded the emendations of his predecessors Walton, de Lagarde and Ceriani in the footnotes. I do not discuss Fritzsche's work any further here. Cf., Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiii.

[52] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, ix, xxiii.

[53] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiii.

[54] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiv–xxv.

[55] Note that Charles did not say which manuscript he considered to be the oldest (*a/c* or *b*): he talked about the age of the text forms and works in circulation.

ed that they had been circulating independently for a while, possibly since the fourth century.[56]

Based on this analysis, Charles concluded: "As a further result of this examination, we have come to feel that so long as we follow its guidance, we can nowhere greatly err from the sense of the Hebrew original."[57] In other words, when the Codex Ambrosianus copy of 2 Bar 78–86 is corrected and checked by comparing it with the other available copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, the road to the assumed Hebrew first- to second-century text of 2 Bar 78–86 and, by implication, 2 Baruch, is considered safe to travel. In yet other words, the differences between the preserved texts aside, Charles assumed the existence of a single, hypothetically original, *Epistle of Baruch*.

Charles's choice of manuscripts and the *stemma* that he developed had a great influence on all later studies of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86. Early translators, such as Kmosko and Violet, followed Charles to a large degree.[58] Likewise, in a critical edition and translation published in 2009, Daniel M. Gurtner chose to reproduce the text of folios 265v–267r of the Codex Ambrosianus as the base text with only a few corrections, listing Charles's manuscripts in the introduction and noting variants found in them in the apparatus.[59]

For Bogaert, Charles's study also served as an important point of departure, although he both expanded and sometimes challenged his points of view. Bogaert's 1969 commentary on 2 Baruch, the epistle included, benefitted from the publication of the *Peshiṭta List* in 1961. This list counted thirty-eight manuscripts containing the "Epistola Baruch,"[60] and Bogaert added yet another one[61]; hence, his list of manuscripts included twenty-seven more manuscripts than the list presented by Charles. Bogaert thus developed the *stemmata* of Charles and Violet, adding four important manuscripts: Paris, BnF, Syr. 6, 64, and 341, as well as Cambridge, Camb. UL, Ms Oo I.1,2.[62] In addition, just like Charles before him, Bogaert observed that the Codex Ambrosianus contains two copies of the *Epistle of Baruch*, that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe enjoyed

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[56] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxii–xxx.

[57] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxix.

[58] Kmosko, "Apocalypsis Baruch filii Neriae," 1210; Violet, *Apokalypsen,* lvi–lxii. Violet made some small adjustments to Charles's *stemma* (*Apokalypsen*, lviii).

[59] Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 9–10, 124–47. Cf., Jerome Lund's review of Gurtner's book in *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text with Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction and Concordances*, by Daniel M. Gurtner, *HS* 52 (2011): 448–50.

[60] *Peshiṭta List*, 99.

[61] Add. 14,485, which Ceriani had already applied.

[62] Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:43–46. Note that Charles, Kmosko and Gurtner did not use Syr. 341, or Ms Oo I.1,2. These manuscripts could all be considered highly important, early witnesses. Likewise, they did not apply Add. 14,485, even though Ceriani had already made use of it. Gurtner did not use manuscripts known to us at least from 1961 from collections and libraries in, e. g., Rome and the Middle East.

an autonomous circulation among Syriac Christians detached from 2 Baruch
and that the text integral to 2 Baruch is different from the text of the epistle in
all the other manuscripts. However, Bogaert also held that it is still likely that
both stem from a common earlier Syriac ancestor, but in contrast to Charles, he
judged the epistle integral to 2 Baruch to contain the oldest Syriac tradition, see-
ing the autonomous circulation of the detached epistle in the Syriac tradition as
a secondary phenomenon.[63]

As we can see, all the editors of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 have imagined the
Epistle of Baruch primarily as an integral part of 2 Baruch. They have all ac-
knowledged two types of epistle text, they have seen the Epistle of Baruch bar
Neriah as an early, sometimes the earliest, version and they have applied manu-
scripts containing both the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the Epistle of
Baruch bar Neriah as witnesses to an assumed common ancestor – a hypothetical
early, or original, epistle.

5.2.2 Trajectory B: The Epistle of Baruch as Part of the Peshitta Epistles of Jeremiah and Baruch

In 1973, Sven Dedering published his edition of 2 Baruch – containing chapters
1–77 only. He chose not to publish the *Epistle of Baruch* since, according to
Dedering, "the usual form of this text is that found with the Epistles of Jeremiah
and Baruch."[64] Dedering thus aimed to publish the *Epistle of Baruch* together
with these other two epistles as part of the larger Leiden project of editing and
publishing the texts of the Peshitta Old Testament, taking the text in the Codex
Ambrosianus folios 176v–177v as his base text. Unfortunately, Dedering died
before he could finish his edition of the *Epistle of Baruch*. However, his unpub-
lished preliminary work on that edition still exists in the form of a handwritten
document kept by the Peshitta Institute.[65] This handwritten document makes it
clear that Dedering indeed regarded copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the
Scribe as the default text. He described the copy integral to 2 Baruch as, "a
derivation from the basic text."[66] "The basic text" he identified as the type of text

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[63] Bogaert did not claim that the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah was necessarily "originally"
part of 2 Baruch in its, according to Bogaert, Greek original. He noted that the Epistle is
thoroughly integrated into the composition as we have it in the sole Syriac witness to the com-
plete version of 2 Baruch, but also that the one who once authored 2 Baruch before it was trans-
lated into Syriac could have made use of an earlier independently circulating text (Bogaert,
Apocalypse de Baruch, 1:72–73, 78).

[64] Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," iv.

[65] I was kindly allowed to scan Dedering's document. All references to page numbers, below,
refer to Dedering's handwritten page numbers in this scan.

[66] Note, however, that he adopted Ceriani's chapter enumeration (78–86), which is based on
the enumeration of the epistle as an integral part of 2 Baruch.

found in folios 176v–177v of the Codex Ambrosianus, as well as in other manuscripts that preserve this epistle.[67]

Dedering's judgment is, in this regard, different from that of Charles and Bogaert, probably, and at least partly, because the planned edition of the *Epistle of Baruch* was part of the larger Leiden Peshitta project. Still, on the other hand, it remains interesting to note that Dedering's choice is in fact similar to the choice of Charles and Bogaert in another regard: he also represented the *Epistle of Baruch* as one, single writing. He edited 2 Baruch without the epistle in his 1973 edition, despite the fact that the Leiden Peshitta project was based on the Codex Ambrosianus, in which the epistle copied in folios 265v–267r is an integral part of 2 Baruch. In other words, just like Charles and Bogaert before him, Dedering explicitly acknowledged the two types of text as autonomous, "different textual traditions,"[68] but he still treated the two as witnesses to a singular epistle. He aimed to edit the *Epistle of Baruch* in the context in which it is normally found in the Syriac tradition, disregarding it in the other, despite the manuscript information to the contrary. Where Charles and Bogaert let the interest in the hypothetical older Greek or Hebrew text of 2 Baruch guide their choices, Dedering allowed the early text of the Syriac context to guide his. In other words, although the *Epistle of Baruch* bears many signs of being two works in the history of Syriac transmission, only one is acknowledged in the edition.

The volume published by Donald M. Walter, Gillian Greenberg, George A. Kiraz and Joseph Bali in 2013 is another edition that identifies the *Epistle of Baruch* as a writing belonging to the Syriac tradition. The publication includes Lamentations, the Epistle of Jeremiah and the first and second epistle of Baruch, with the aim of making these writings available to the religious communities that still use them.[69] While the edition is based on the 1887–91 Peshitta Mosul text, it also includes two appendices listing variant readings from the Codex Ambrosianus. Appendix 2 lists variant readings in the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe (folios 176v–177v). Appendix 4, part 2, lists the variants of both copies in the Codex Ambrosianus, referring to the text of folios 265v–267r as the "Apocalypse of Baruch," seeing the epistle there as part of the larger book of 2 Baruch.[70] In a footnote, the editors described the epistle integral to 2 Baruch as a "variant version" and yet, unlike Dedering, as a variant that still fully belongs to 2 Baruch in the codex context in which it is found.[71] As such, Walter et al. acknowledge the two contexts as equally legitimate.

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[67] Dedering, "Epistle of Baruch," [2]. Dedering based his edition on the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus 176v–177v, but consulted twenty-six other manuscripts. He did not consult masoretic manuscripts.

[68] Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," iv.

[69] Walter et al, *Lamentations*, vii.

[70] Walter et al, *Lamentations*, xli–xlvii.

[71] Walter et al, *Lamentations*, xxxiv n. 2.

The rich and long-awaited critical edition of the *Epistle of Baruch* in the *Old Testament in Syriac: Peshiṭta Version* series was published in 2019 by Albrektson et al.[72] Like the other editions explored under the heading of Trajectory B, the goal of this volume was to present the best possible text of the *Epistle of Baruch* as it has been transmitted in the Peshitta tradition. Albrektson et al. referred to the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah as "two versions" of the same writing, the *Epistle of Baruch*. The editors explicitly followed Dedering's designation, referring to the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe as the "first version" and the epistle integral to 2 Baruch as "the second version."[73] In the introduction to the volume, the editors referred to this second version as a variant, containing "many readings which are not shared by the general tradition."[74] In the critical edition of the text, the editors employed the copy of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus as one among several witnesses.[75] They showed a clear awareness of the fact that the two versions are not identical and that they differ in many regards, but they choose to treat them as one and the same work.[76]

5.2.3 Editorial Trajectories: Aims, Epistemologies and Procedures

As the above presentation of the two trajectories shows, editors have represented the *Epistle of Baruch* in two different ways, depending on the explicit aims of the editions. Editors following Trajectory B construe the *Epistle of Baruch* as a writing integral to the tradition of the Syriac Peshitta Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah. They typically see the copy of the epistle in 2 Baruch as a variant of the common text, which they find in copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. This view stands in some contrast to the representation of the *Epistle of Baruch* by the group of editors following Trajectory A. They see the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 as primary – some of them consider it the more original – and they use the other copies in Syriac manuscripts to approximate the best text of this epistle, also understood as the *Epistle of Baruch*. With varying degrees of caution, editors of 2 Baruch have valued copies of the epistle found in other Syriac manuscripts as good or bad witnesses to the hypothetical early text of 2 Bar 78–86.

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[72] The edition is the outcome of the work of several scholars over time. It includes, but is certainly not restricted to the unpublished work of Dedering.

[73] Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," iv n. 2; Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 226–27. At the same time, they also kept the chapter numbering established by Ceriani (Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 230–31).

[74] Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, viii–ix, cf., 236–37.

[75] Cf., the transparent description of their use of it in Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 233–38.

[76] Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 227 n. 6, 230 n. 14.

Editors of both trajectories base their editions on the Syriac manuscripts available to them.[77] All the editors are aware of the differences between the texts of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the epistle integral to 2 Baruch copied into these manuscripts. Many editions thoroughly note variant readings.[78] Editors also point out that the differences between the two text types are probably due to the fact that they have been transmitted separately and thus belong to different chains of transmission in the Syriac tradition. This has been acknowledged ever since the first critical edition was published by Charles. Nevertheless, despite the traceable differences in the text transmission, both trajectories represent the epistle(s) as a singular writing, as the *Epistle of Baruch*.

This outcome makes sense if, but only if, we take the dominant editorial epistemologies and practices into account. The focus of both editorial trajectories is on producing maneuverable editions of the best possible text of the *Epistle of Baruch*. Most commonly, the "best text" means the early, hypothetical text. Both trajectories trust that a retrievable early text can be derived through procedures of textual criticism. This warrants a study of both Syriac textual traditions as witnesses to the text of one and the same writing. Variants in the texts copied in the manuscripts belong to the domain of later transmission and can be overcome. However, since the goals of the two trajectories diverge, Trajectory A overcomes the variants to produce the best possible text of the first/second-century Jewish epistle in 2 Bar 78–86, whereas Trajectory B overcomes them to present the best text of the Syriac Christian, Peshitta epistle.

Since the explicit goals of the two editorial trajectories diverge, we are now in a unique position to see how their aims, epistemologies and procedures have conditioned the representation of a writing. In fact, the editorial practices that shaped the editions may play a vital role in the outcome that they reach. The practices may end up shaping the representation of a writing in ways that are not compatible with the information that survive in the manuscripts. The text in the columns, inscribed in black ink, has served as "source" and has been explored with a high level of rigor. Paratexts, however, have not been granted the same status, even though they co-exist on the manuscript pages.

This is why an exploration of the paratexts in manuscripts is essential. In the following, I focus on both the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 and the First Epistle of

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[77] Of course, what manuscripts editors have had access to vary over time, as well as with their geographic location, with their ability to travel and to gain access, and with their economic resources. The first editors based their editions on a handful of manuscripts. At the time when the most recent edition was published, approximately thirty-five manuscripts would, in principle, have been available to the editor.

[78] The variant readings are the aspects of the transmission of the two epistles that is best researched, and thus I do not include a description of them here. See, e. g., the convenient lists in Walter et al., *Lamentation*, xxxiv–xxxvi, and xlii–xlvii (but note the mistake in the rendering of verse 9:3 in the third column); the overview in Albrektson, *Jeremiah*, 231–66 and the critical apparatus in the editions of Albrektson et al. and Dedering.

Baruch the Scribe as parts of Syriac Christian literary culture and its physical media. However, given the focus on 2 Baruch of the present volume, in the following I apply these materials to engage the editions of Trajectory A only.

5.3 What Do the Copies Say That They Are?
Identifications and Collocations

The following section explores paratexts that identify the layout units in the Syriac manuscripts that scholars have commonly referred to as witnesses to the text of the *Epistle of Baruch*. The study of paratextual features, in this case rubricated titles, will give us an indication of how those who copied and otherwise took part in the production of the manuscripts named and identified these layout units. It will also give us a sense of how those who later engaged with the manuscripts – those who saw and read or, alternatively, heard the titles and headings being read aloud – could have identified the text. These paratexts cannot be studied independently of the order and collocation of the books and writings in the manuscripts. The titles tend to reflect this order and hence the culturally shared expectations about writings assumed to belong together.

5.3.1 The Identifications in Masoretic
and Other Old Testament Manuscripts

Let us return, once again, to the Codex Ambrosianus, which is the sole Syriac manuscript that contains a copy of the epistle of 2 Bar 78–86, as well as the only manuscript that records copies of both the epistle integral to 2 Baruch and the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe.

As pointed out in the introduction to the current chapter, the epistle on folios 176v–177v bears the title "The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, Which He Sent from the Midst of Jerusalem to Babylon." The title of this epistle in the Codex Ambrosianus is particularly elaborate.[79] There is variation in the exact wording of the rubricated titles across the fifty-three surviving manuscripts containing it. There is also variation within single manuscripts: titles, end titles and running titles are not necessarily identical.[80] Although the identifications are not uniform, the titles of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the various manuscripts still diverge systematically from the title of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86.[81]

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[79] Many manuscripts do not include "the Midst of."

[80] Indeed, as pointed out in chapter 3, this is common in Syriac manuscripts.

[81] Cf., Dedering, "Epistle of Baruch," [20]. Note, however, the intriguing exception in London, BL, Add. 12,178, a masoretic manuscript from the ninth–tenth centuries, which identifies the passage from the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe as "The First Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah" (f. 111v), not "the Scribe."

A large majority of the masoretic and other Old Testament codices include three main elements in their identification of the epistle. First, it is described as the "First Epistle" (ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܩܕܡܝܬܐ). Second, it is identified with Baruch who is most often described as "the Scribe" (ܣܦܪܐ). Third, it is commonly identified as the epistle "Which He Sent from Jerusalem to Babylon" (ܕܫܕܪ ܡܢ ܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܠܒܒܠ).[82] In other words, they highlight Baruch's office as scribe, the geographic locations of the sending and receiving parties and the place of this particular epistle in a list that counts more epistles than just one.

Let us first deal with the ascription "First Epistle." This part of the identification reflects the order of books and the context in which Syriac Old Testament manuscripts copy the epistle. The "First Epistle," in all due probability, bears this name because scribes commonly recorded it together with another epistle of Baruch, appropriately named "The Second Epistle of Baruch" (ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܬܪܝܢܝܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ). This "Second Epistle" is the title in the Peshitta of 1 Baruch, or, the Book of Baruch, which is also known to us from Greek, Latin, Coptic and other language traditions.

In order to understand the remaining two sense aspects of the title, "Baruch the Scribe" and "from Jerusalem to Babylon," a look at the context of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in Syriac codices is instructive once again. In these manuscripts, the two Baruch-epistles (the First and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe) are commonly, although not always, grouped together with a third epistle, the Epistle of Jeremiah.[83] These three epistles were apparently assumed to belong together. At least, they were regularly copied together.[84] Sometimes, as is the case in the Codex Ambrosianus, the three epistles appear under a common title formulation, "The Epistles of Jeremiah and of Baruch" (ܐ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܐܪܡܝܐ ܘܕܒܪܘܟ).[85]

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[82] The sixth-century biblical manuscript, Add. 17,105, for instance, identifies it as "The Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, Which He Sent from Jerusalem to Babylon" (f. 116r) in the title, dropping "First," but then refers to it as the "First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe" in the end title (f. 121r). Cf., further, e. g., London, BL, Add. 12,172, folio 192v, Egerton 704, folio 373r and Add. 14,684, folio 24r which simply read, "First Epistle of Baruch" (cf., Add. 14,482, f. 47r), a common short title found in the masoretic manuscripts. Cf., further, Dedering, "Epistle of Baruch," [20] and Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 229.

[83] The Epistle of Jeremiah is lacking from some manuscripts (e. g., Add. 17,105). On some occasions it was probably not included in the first place. On other occasions, the folios containing this epistle may have been lost. On yet other occasions, the text that we identify as the Epistle of Jeremiah appears as the last chapters of the Second Epistle of Baruch. Cf., further, Lied, "2.4.3. Syriac," 92–94; Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 228–29.

[84] For instance, the one who repaired Paris, BnF, Syr. 11 extracted folios containing exactly these three epistles from another codex and reused them in the codex in question. Note also the shared and continuous *kephalaia*-marking in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, A 145 inf., suggesting that the three epistles were seen as one unit.

[85] Cf., e. g., the running title in folio 176r. Typically, the name of each of the three epistles then appears in titles in the text column at the beginning of each text unit.

When these three epistles are found together, they are sometimes approached as a unit in their own right, but copied attached to or in proximity to Jeremiah and Lamentations. At other times, scribes copied the epistles as integral to the larger Book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah, Lamentations, Epistles of Baruch and Jeremiah). The running titles in the upper margins of the folios containing the epistles may reflect this identification. They may read "Jeremiah" or, alternatively, "Jeremiah, the Prophet" and include writings ascribed both to Jeremiah and to Baruch. Likewise, the three epistles may be recorded before the general end title of the Jeremiah corpus, noting, that the writing of Jeremiah is ended.[86] These practices suggest that the epistles were understood as Jeremianic writings or associated with a larger Jeremianic cluster.[87]

In this context, the second aspect of the title, "Baruch, the Scribe," is meaningful, too. When the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is recorded together with these other epistles and thus presented as a written message recorded by a scribe, located after two other books ascribed to Jeremiah, it certainly makes sense to refer to Baruch here in his role as Jeremiah's scribe.

The third aspect of the title, that is, the focus on the geographical location of the sender and the recipients, also makes sense in the context of the Jeremiah corpus. The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe was "Sent from (the Midst of) Jerusalem to Babylon."[88] The narrative focus on Babylon is evident in Jeremiah as well as in the Epistle of Jeremiah. Jer 29:1–5 states explicitly that an epistle was sent by Jeremiah from Jerusalem to the exiles in Babylon. It is possible that this focus is one reason for recording the epistles associated with Baruch the scribe in close proximity to Jeremiah and Lamentations.[89] As pointed out in chapter 1, the title and introductory address of the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Peshitta version are particularly intriguing in this regard. Unlike other versions of 1 Baruch, which holds that Baruch wrote this book in Babylon, the Peshitta states that Baruch wrote the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe to or for Babylon (ܠܒܒܠ).[90] This means that the Peshitta represents both the epis-

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[86] There is variation between manuscripts. Sometimes codicological features, such as indentions, blank spaces and decorations, can be interpreted either way (cf., Paris, BnF, Syr. 64, ff. 57r–77r, at f. 77r. Cf., also London, BL, Add. 14,684, ff. 24r–25r).

[87] 1 Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah are commonly found attached to, or at least in the proximity of, Jeremiah and Lamentation in many language traditions, for instance in early Coptic, Greek and Latin codices, as well as in the Syro-Hexapla (see Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 313 inf.). The feature that is special to the Syriac, Peshitta tradition is that it includes yet another epistle of Baruch, i. e., the First Epistle.

[88] Cf., e. g., folio 177v of the Codex Ambrosianus; Syr. 341, folio 160r.

[89] The address of the sender, the Jerusalem area, is of particular interest to the present study. I explored it briefly in chapter 1 and will return to it in chapter 6.

[90] Cf., the discussion in chapter 6.

tles as letters sent to Babylon and that the Peshitta underscores the geographical context of the recipients.[91]

The relevance of studying the titles in their book and collection contexts becomes even clearer when we compare the identification of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe with the identification of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch. As mentioned initially, the subsection heading of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch is "The Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah, Which He Wrote to the Nine and a Half Tribes." This title presents Baruch as the son of Neriah. Thus, the title of this epistle reflects the general title of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus and the elevated status of Baruch in this book.[92] Baruch, the main protagonist and the one who receives the revelation, is presented with reference to his own genealogy and not by mention of his role vis-à-vis another major *persona*, Jeremiah.[93]

Moreover, the title of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 addresses the nine and a half tribes – it does not refer to Babylon. This is probably best understood in the light of one of the literary markers of the compositional structure of 2 Baruch.[94] As Bogaert pointed out, the audience of Baruch's instruction grows throughout the book.[95] In the first part, the audience is small. It consists of the righteous few who left Jerusalem with Baruch and Jeremiah before the destruction of the city (e. g., 2 Bar 5:5–7). In 2 Bar 31:1–3 and in 44:1, the audience increases and consists of all the elders in addition to the named righteous followers. In 77:1–2, Baruch gathers "the people" in his vicinity, "from the greatest to the smallest." At the end of the book, the audience grows considerably. According to 2 Bar 77:18, Baruch sits down under an oak somewhere in the wilderness of Judah to write letters:

ܘܗܘܐ ܟܕ ܙܙ
ܘܝܬܒܬ ܬܚܝܬ ܐܝܠܢܐ ܕܗܛܢܬܐ.
ܐܬܝܬ ܒܪ ܐܪ ܒܪܘܢ.
ܘܟܬܒܬ ܬܠܬ ܐܓܪܬܐ.
ܠܝܠܝܠܐ ܡܚܘܢܐ. ܠܐ ܘܐܡܪ
ܘܗܘܐ ܐܡܪ ܠܐ ܐܠܐ ܐܪܐ
ܚܠܝܬܘܢ. ܘܟܬܒܬ ܠܗ
ܬܬܒ ܬܬܒ ܐ ܟ ܐܛ . ܚܙ
ܬܪܝ ܡܢ ܬܝܢ ܐܪܐ ܠܝܬܐ
ܠܟܬܒ ܡܘܠܗܡ. ܘܝܢܬܐ

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[91] 2 Bar 78:1 states that the nine and half tribes – the recipients of the epistle of 2 Bar 78–86 are "at the other side of the river" [ܢܗܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܥܒܪ]. 77:22 suggests that they are beyond the many waters of the Euphrates. This may be understood as Babylon but also as a location beyond Babylon. Cf., Lied, *Other Lands*, 171–73.

[92] "The Book of Revelation of Baruch bar Neriah, Which Was Translated from Greek into Syriac" (f. 257r).

[93] Cf., Wright, *Baruch ben Neriah*.

[94] At least as we know it from the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus.

[95] Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:58–61.

ܘܗܘܐ ܒܥܣܪܝܢ ܘܚܕ ܠܝܪܚܐ ܕܬܡܢܝܐ ܗܢ
ܬܘܠܬܐ ܐܢܫܝ.

> And it happened on the twenty-first [day] of the eighth month. I, Baruch, came and sat
> under an oak in the shadow of the branches. Nobody was with me, I was alone. And I
> wrote these two letters. One I sent by means of an eagle to the nine and a half tribes and
> the other I sent to those who were in Babylon by means of three men (2 Bar 77:18–19).

This passage states that Baruch writes two epistles (not to be confused at this
point with the First and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, attached to
Jeremiah and Lamentations):[96] one epistle to the two and a half tribes and
another to the nine and a half tribes.[97] The epistle addressed to the two and a half
tribes, who are in Babylon, is not extant in 2 Baruch. The fact that it is not ex-
tant does not make it less important in the literary context in which the mention
occurs. The mention of this epistle signals that Baruch's message reaches all
twelve tribes. Thus, by means of letter-writing, and with the help of "three men"
(77:19) and "an eagle" (77:19–26; 87:1), Baruch's audience is, in effect, all Israel.
Thus, noting this development in the narrative of 2 Baruch makes sense of the
inclusion of the element "Which He Wrote to the Nine and a Half Tribes" in the
heading of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86.

In other words, the title of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 reflects its context of in-
clusion in 2 Baruch in the same way that the title of the First Epistle of Baruch
the Scribe reflects the Jeremianic context in which it is found in the majority of
Peshitta manuscripts.

5.3.2 The Identification of the First Epistle of Baruch
the Scribe in Lectionary Manuscripts

The lectionary manuscripts highlight the Jeremianic context and identification of
the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe even further. As I pointed out in the above
survey of Syriac manuscripts, five surviving lectionary manuscripts preserve all
together seven lections excerpted from this epistle.[98] Most of the manuscripts
copy variations of the same passage: 1 Ep. Bar. 8:1–15. In addition, Add. 14,485
also includes a lection from 6:8–23 (folios 119v–120r) and Add. 14,486 contains
7:1–8:3 (folios 76v–77r).

The feature that is interesting in the present context is that, with one ex-
ception, all the preserved lectionary manuscripts identify these lections as "From

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[96] However, it is possible that Syriac Christians would have associated the two epistles in
2 Baruch with the two epistles ascribed to Baruch and attached to Jeremiah and Lamentations.

[97] For details and a discussion of the identities of the respective tribes, see, Lied, *Other
Lands*, 59–109, 170–75.

[98] London, BL, Add. 14,485; Add. 14,486; Add. 14,687; Bartella, Syriac Catholic Church of
St. George; Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library, 2.
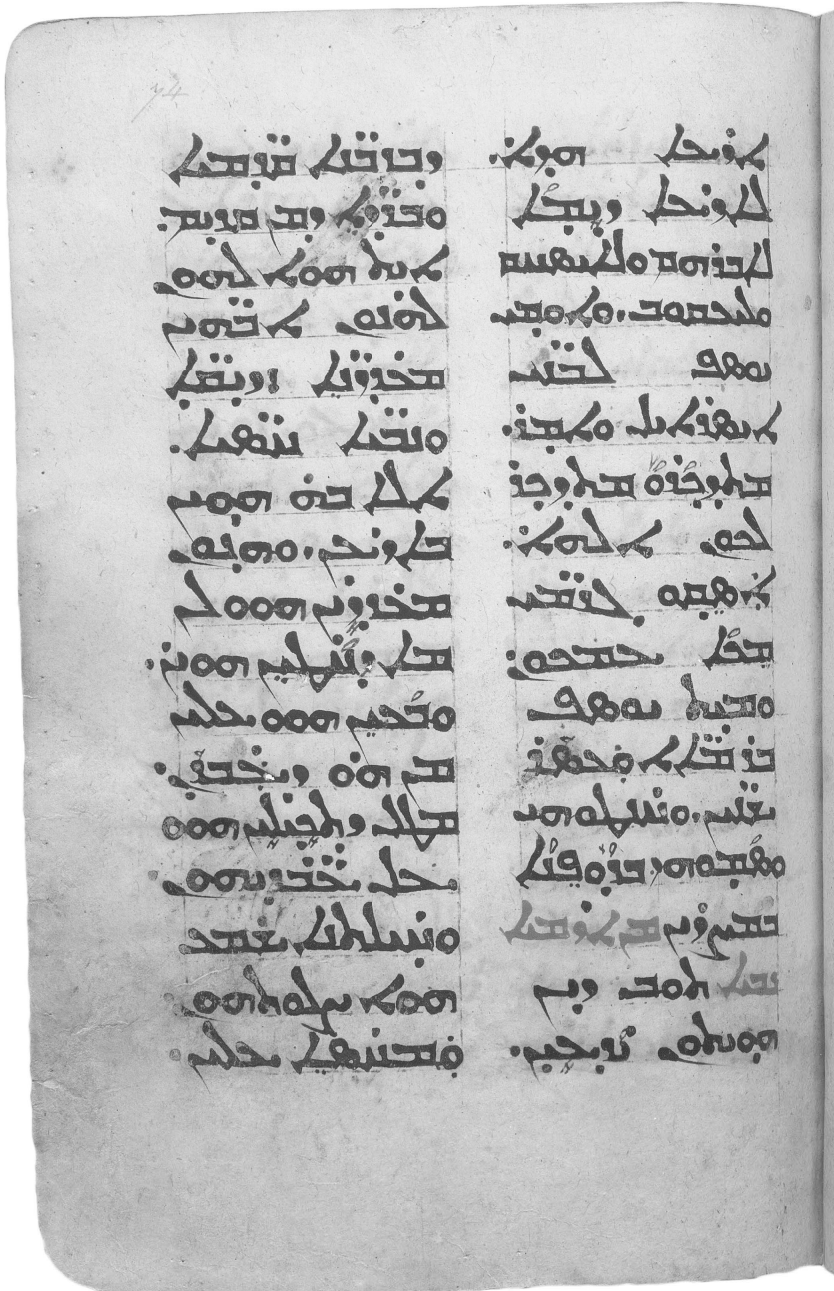
Figure 9: "From Jeremiah, the Prophet." London, British Library, Add. 14,687, folio 74r. © The British Library Board.

Jeremiah" (ܡܢ ܐܪܡܝܐ), or "From Jeremiah, the Prophet" (ܡܢ ܐܪܡܝܐ ܢܒܝܐ).[99] The exception, Add. 14,486, identifies one of the lections that it excerpts from the epistle as "From Jeremiah, the Prophet," just like the others, but it refers to the other lection as "From the Epistle of Baruch" (ܡܢ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܒܪܘܟ) (folios 76v–77r).

Albrektson et al. argued that this ascription of the lections to Jeremiah should not be used as an argument for seeing the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe as part of a Jeremianic corpus. They preferred to approach it as part of a dedicated Baruch corpus. They referred to the fact that lections in some Syriac lectionary manuscripts are sometimes incorrectly ascribed to another biblical book. They pointed to two examples in which lections from (the Book of) Jeremiah has been ascribed to Samuel and Isaiah and one example of (the Second Epistle of) Baruch has been identified as a lection from Isaiah.[100] It is correct that misattributions of lections sometimes appear in Syriac lectionary manuscripts. However, in the case of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe there are no surviving examples of such misattributions. This epistle is systematically ascribed to Jeremiah. The ascription to Baruch in Add. 14,486 is the exception that proves the rule.[101] The two lections in this particular lectionary manuscript appear in close proximity to each other (folios 74v–75r and 76v–77r). The difference in naming may, for instance, be due to aesthetical considerations and a concern for variation. Those who produced the manuscript were probably aware of different levels of identification of this epistle and the possibility of naming it accordingly: they knew that this epistle was ascribed to Baruch, but they also knew that the epistle was commonly part of a larger Jeremianic corpus of writings.

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[99] Two lections in Add. 14,485 (ff. 64v–65r and 119v–120r); Add. 14,486 (ff. 74v–75r and 76v–77r); Add. 14,687 (ff. 74r–75v); Bartella, Syriac Catholic Church of St. George (f. 49r–v); Jerusalem, Monastery of St. Mark Library, 2 (f. 49 r–v). For the last two references, I depend on Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, xxxv–xxxvi.

[100] Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 226 n. 4, xxi and xxxv.

[101] This point is part of Albrektson et al.'s arguments against the hypothesis that the epistles ascribed to Baruch tended to become part of the larger Jeremianic corpus in Syriac manuscripts. This hypothesis was presented in Matthias Henze and Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Jeremiah, Baruch, and Their Books: Three Phases in a Changing Relationship," in *Jeremiah's Scriptures: Production, Reception, Interaction and Transformation*, ed. Hindy Najman and Konrad Schmid, JSJSup 173 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 330–53. Albrektson et al.'s argumentation builds on two observations, the first being the case of misattributions. Their other observation concerns descriptions of the relationship between Jeremiah and Baruch in marginal notes in Florence, Med. Laur., Or. 58; Rome, Bibl. Casan., Ms. 194 and Rome, Vatican Library, Vat.sir. 7, stating "Jeremiah caused Baruch to write" (*Jeremiah*, 226 n. 4). If I interpret them correctly, Albrektson et al. understood this as an argument in favor of considering the Baruch corpus as distinct from the Jeremiah corpus. To my mind, these notes could equally well be understood as an indication of the relationship between the two figures and their books, the perceived dependence of the Baruch figure on the Jeremiah figure and the inclusion of writings ascribed to Baruch into a larger corpus of Jeremiah writings.

The study of the surviving lectionary materials suggests that lections from the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe would most frequently have been understood by Syriac Christians as integral to Jeremiah, and that these lections were read in worship contexts as lections from Jeremiah. Even if the listeners knew that the lection stemmed from an epistle ascribed to Baruch, it could still be understood as a container of the words of Jeremiah, since Baruch's writing was the medium of his voice. This means that many Syriac Christians would also have associated the lections and their narrative contents with Jeremiah. We know, for example, that this holds true for bar Salibi. He referred explicitly to the sentence that we identify today as 2 Bar 85:3/1 Ep. Bar. 8:3 as "From Jeremiah" in his *Treatise against the Melchites,* chapter 8: "Now listen to what Jeremiah says: 'Now that the just have gone to their rest, and the prophets have died, and we have left the land, we have nothing but the mighty one and his law'."[102]

5.3.3 The Epistle, or Rather the Epistles

How does this attention to the rubricated titles that identify the copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the epistle integral to 2 Baruch add to and challenge the existing perspectives on a singular *Epistle of Baruch*? As editors established a long time ago, the so-called *Epistle of Baruch* existed as two related but distinct types of text, circulating and copied in two chains of transmission in the Syriac context. The current chapter adds the observation that the remains of cultural identification that survive in the shape of paratextual features on the manuscript page suggest that these two "text types," or "versions," may fruitfully be approached as two separate epistles. Hence, although the two epistles may originally have been one and the texts of these two epistles clearly overlap, they circulated and were identified as two different works by those who copied and engaged with them. Regardless of shared literary contents and potential origins, Syriac manuscripts provide two, equally legitimate, contexts and identifications of them, and, in the cultural context that preserves them, the one epistle is not reducible to the other.

This insight has implications for how we approach both epistles and both contexts of copying in an edition. First, it means that the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 truly belongs with 2 Baruch. As suggested in the introduction to the present chapter, the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah is preserved as an integral part of 2 Baruch in the only Syriac manuscript that contains this book. The layout of the text of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus suggests that in this particular copy the epistle is a discrete unit identified by a heading. However, similar to the three

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[102] Translation by Alphonse Mingana, *Woodbroke Studies: Christian Documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Garshuni, Edited and Translated with a Critical Apparatus* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1927), 1:51 (see also, 51 n. 8).

prayers of Baruch in the same copy,[103] the epistle remains a subunit integral to the larger book-entity of 2 Baruch.[104] The epistle is further integrated into 2 Baruch by the postscript of the entire book in 2 Bar 87. The postscript resumes the frame narrative of 2 Bar 77, noting that Baruch finished the copying and sent off the epistle by means of an eagle (87:1). 2 Baruch ends with the end title, "The Book of Baruch bar Neriah is Ended," which refers to the whole book-entity.[105] Furthermore, several scholars have argued that the epistle is an integral part of 2 Baruch on the basis of shared narrative contents and the development of the narrative plot.[106] Finally, a look at the only manuscript outside the Syriac sphere of circulation that preserves the epistle with 2 Baruch, Arabic Manuscripts 589, shows that the epistle continued to circulate with the rest of the book there as well.[107] The inclusion of the epistle in this Arabic manuscript shows that although the circulation has probably been limited, the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah was also copied attached to 2 Baruch beyond the Codex Ambrosianus.

Thus, although the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah appears as part of 2 Baruch in one Syriac manuscript only, there are no indications in any surviving materials that 2 Baruch circulated without it.[108] Hence, there is no reason based on the materials that are currently available to us to argue that it does not belong there.[109]

Second, the fact that this epistle is preserved as an integral part of 2 Baruch in one single Syriac manuscript only should not pass unnoticed. The most common way of approaching epistles ascribed to Baruch was to find them attached to books associated with Jeremiah. On the many occasions that the First Epistle of

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[103] Cf., chapters 1 and 3 of the present volume.

[104] The epistle is identified and marked out by a heading in red ink, but it is not separated out from the rest of the text, for instance by decorative graphemes or borders or by the skipping of lines. Still, the variation in the execution of the titles in the Codex Ambrosianus makes it impossible to draw firm conclusions based on this criterion only. Ceriani, for example, described the epistle as the last part of 2 Baruch ("extrema parte") but noted that the heading makes the Epistle appear "quae a libro separata" ("Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae," 113 and 167; *I,I,*1). Cf., also Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 235.

[105] The widespread translation of 2 Baruch by Klijn in the 1983 edition of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* has probably contributed to a certain degree of confusion here since it translates the end title as "The end of the letter of Baruch, the son of Neriah" ("2 [Syriac Apocalypse of] Baruch," 652). This is not correct.

[106] Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch,* 1:67–78; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch,* 35–65; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism,* 369, and Doering, "The Epistle of Baruch," 172.

[107] In the Arabic codex, the epistle is also identified as "The Epistle of Baruch, the son of Neriah, which he wrote to the nine and a half tribes" (Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 115).

[108] This does not mean that it is unthinkable that it did. However, we have no knowledge about it.

[109] Some editions and exegetical studies present 2 Baruch without the epistle. Cf., e.g., Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," iv; Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed?*, 1; Adam H. Becker, "2 Baruch," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture,* ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel and Lawrence H. Shiffman (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 2:1565–85. Cf., also, van Koningsveld, "Arabic Manuscript," 206.
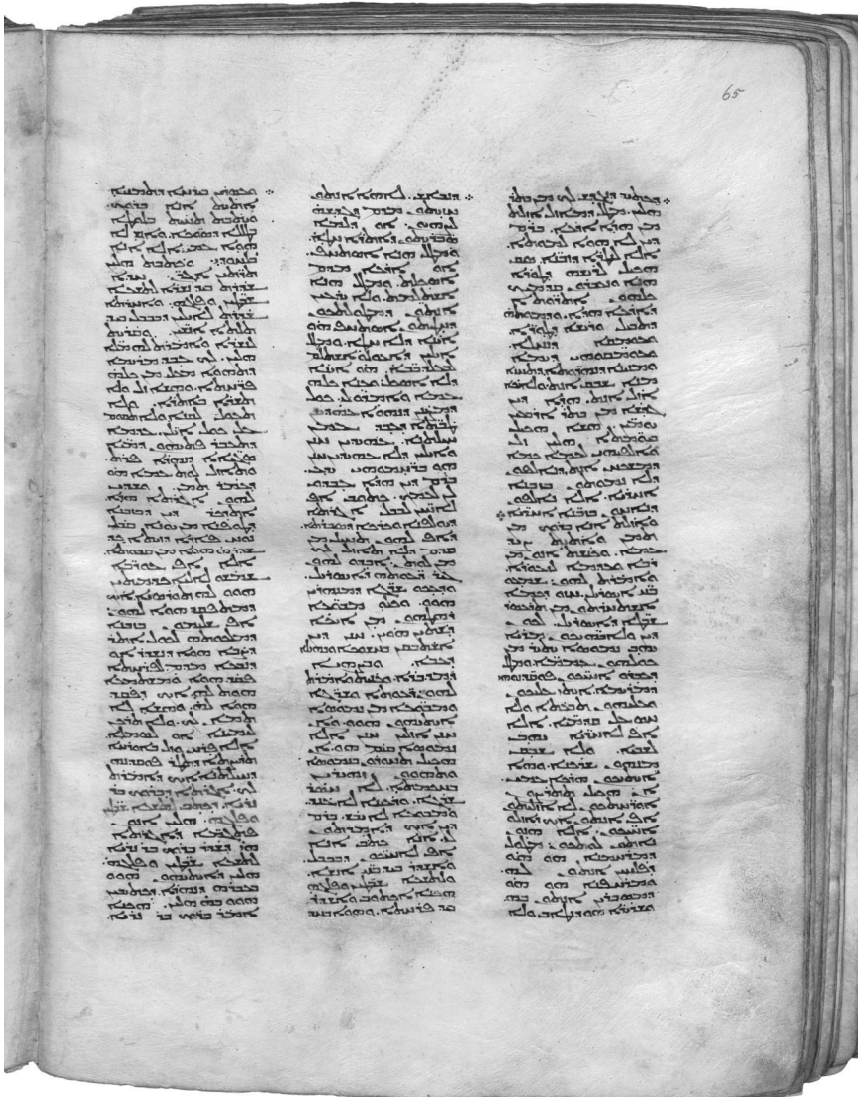
Figure 10: "The Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah." Codex Ambrosianus, folio 265v (left column, lines 9 and 8 from the bottom). © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana/Mondadori Portfolio.

Baruch the Scribe is part of a Jeremianic corpus, it is legitimately part of that corpus as well: read, excerpted and engaged with as such by Syriac Christians.

   This recognition of two separate works is likely already to have been in existence in the sixth/seventh centuries, when the scribe of the Codex Ambrosianus copied two epistles, in two different contexts, under two different names. The curious fact that the assumed *Epistle of Baruch* was copied twice in this codex is less striking when we realize that the two epistles were probably already in circulation independently of each other. They were used and understood as two separate entities equally worthy of being copied into this *deluxe* manuscript of the Old Testament.

5.4 Salient Paratexts

The exploration of the present chapter adds to our existing knowledge of the transmission of 2 Baruch and its epistle. However, the present analysis also challenges the text-critical procedures and the epistemologies represented by the scholarly editions of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch. These challenges concern the traditional application of "text-on-the-manuscript-page" as a "witness" to something beyond itself that matters primarily because it is understood to be "the same" writing as the early text.

5.4.1 Works and Witnesses: Same, Same, but Different

The first challenge is the way in which editors conceive of works. All the editors of the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86 portray the *Epistle of Baruch* as a singular, early Jewish epistle. This fact brings into question how editors use the available source material. The editorial procedures described above presume that the editor regards the *Epistle of Baruch* as a literary entity that was formed and identified early on and then transmitted and circulated as the same, stable entity throughout the centuries, regardless of later changes incurred in its transmission. Otherwise, it would make no sense to use much younger manuscripts as witnesses to the older text. The present study shows that this is not a straightforward practice. A text in circulation may be reidentified, relocated and recontextualized and thus become a different work to those who engaged with it later from the work it once was or might have been. Editions of 2 Bar 78–86 have had a tendency to disregard what the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe was to Syriac Christians, and what it became though centuries of circulation, assuming that it remained the same work that it once was, or simply used it as a means to reach the assumed early text of the *Epistle of Baruch*.

This first challenge concerns not only conceptions of works but also editors' general understanding of text production, stability and variance in texts: more specifically, the variance found in "the two types of text" and the information that can be gleaned from it. When Charles noted that the extant masoretic manuscripts "support" manuscript *a*, and not manuscript *c*,[110] he implied that these tenth- to thirteenth-century manuscripts support a hypothesis that the readings in *a* are, on many occasions, more likely to bear witness to the earliest form of the text of 2 Bar 78–86 than *c* does. He also claimed that they "ascertain the value of *c* in those chapters in which it stands alone, i.e., i–lxxvii" (that is, the first 77 chapters of 2 Baruch).[111] Building on the same observation that the copies in the masoretic manuscripts have more in common with the copy that Charles referred to as *a* than with *c*, but rephrasing it to accommodate my findings from the study of paratexts and copying contexts above, I suggest that these manuscripts rather reflect the general tendency in the use of the epistle by Syriac Christians. The fact that the texts in the masoretic manuscripts have more in common with the text of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe than with the text of the epistle integral to 2 Baruch simply shows us that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe was the one from which scriptural lections and sample texts for masoretic manuscripts were collected.[112] We can also see that the text of this epistle was shaped over time to fit its contexts of use among Syriac Christians. In other words, these manuscripts suggest that this epistle was the one that they favored and traditionally circulated. The manuscripts show us that this epistle was widely distributed and continued to be changed, used and adjusted to meet the needs of new readers.

Charles's aims and procedures are legitimate within a historical-critical paradigm in which the hypothetical original, or early, text and its early historical context guide the editor. From this perspective, the Syriac copies of the text are first and foremost interesting in their capacity as immaterial witnesses to something older. This paradigm is geared to facilitate a study of the history of the text and the original composition and encourages us to read the available textual traditions "backwards." However, as the case of the *Epistle of Baruch*

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[110] Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxvi.

[111] Charles used these other manuscripts to ascertain the "trustworthiness of the MS. *c*". I.e., he used the manuscripts to check how good a witness *c* in general is as a witness to the second-century CE 2 Baruch (Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiii).

[112] Albrektson et al. stated that the text tradition of the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah was not adopted by later manuscripts but noted that some of its readings are shared with other manuscripts (*Jeremiah*, 231). Some Syriac copies and the surviving Arabic copy of the epistle show that some scribes were probably aware of both versions (cf., Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 12). Traces of such learned, text-critical engagement with texts are evident as historical phenomena in some Syriac manuscripts (cf., Albrektson et al., *Jeremiah*, 231, 235). Hence, some copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe suggest that the two text traditions on some occasions cross-pollinated. However, on the conceptual and organizational levels, the two epistles have consequently been kept apart.

suggests, this procedure may demand that the editor systematically reads the text detached from the material and cultural contexts in which it is found. Editors have described the fact that in these manuscripts, the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is recorded under another name and in the context of books other than 2 Baruch, but they have not considered the consequences of it. Likewise, the relevance, significance and signs of engagement by Syriac users, such as the excerption and recollection of passages from the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in masoretic and lectionary manuscripts, have not been taken into consideration. This procedure detaches the text "proper" from other textual features of the manuscript, but the editions do not make explicit the epistemological and methodological foundations legitimizing this practice.

5.4.2 Before the Manuscripts: Bracketing the Only Tradition that Preserved the Epistles

This first challenge is intimately linked with a second challenge: with the exception of the one surviving Arabic manuscript, the Syriac manuscripts are the only sources that we have for either epistle. Nevertheless, in editions of 2 Baruch, these manuscripts and the culture that produced them have not been deemed relevant. The main aim of these editions has been to provide a text that lies behind them. Although we may assume, with Charles and Bogaert, that an early *Epistle of Baruch* has been translated from Hebrew and/or Greek, and that it is likely to have had a history of transmission before our first available access to it in Add. 17,105 and the Codex Ambrosianus, the fact remains that the Syriac manuscripts constitute the only sources that are presently available.

This matters to the way in which we apply the sources and reflect on our use of them, even if our goal is to establish the earliest possible text. As pointed out in the above discussion of the two epistles in the Codex Ambrosianus – one integral to 2 Baruch and one copied with the epistles of Jeremiah and Baruch after Jeremiah and Lamentations – there were already two identifiable epistles in the Syriac context in the sixth/seventh centuries. We have no other sources for an earlier epistle. This means that the epistles were already two works in the context of the Syriac tradition, and it is likely that the Syriac transmission had either already changed both of them or for all we know, perhaps even composed them. We may well discuss, with Charles and Bogaert, which type of text might be most likely to contain the oldest readings and hence be the best witness to the presumed early text, but whatever we do, we cannot move beyond the fact that all these readings are already the products of Syriac translation, copying, editing and re-copying. Logically, then, the Syriac history of transmission is both the "reference" and the "referent" of the entire argument.

The consequence of traditional editorial practices is that the cultural specificity and interpretational activity of the tradition that, in fact, produced and used the manuscripts are not deemed interesting. This approach would be considered methodologically problematic by other academic fields dealing with material artifacts – the artifacts should at the very least be studied in the context of the culture that produced and engaged with them. It is both ethically and methodologically problematic when the Syriac materials are the only materials available. These manuscripts have been viewed as a later reception with no bearing on the analysis of the hypothetical early text. However, the fact remains: these "received" texts of the epistles, which are normally considered secondary to the editorial project, are our only sources and the entire discussion of the hypothetical early text is necessarily also based on them. What the epistle(s) developed into is indeed the only available source for what the epistle(s) might once have been.

5.4.3 Out of Proportions: The Limited Circulation of 2 Baruch and Its Epistle

The third challenge to the dominant editorial practice is that it creates an impression of the circulation of 2 Baruch that is out of proportions to the actual evidence. When editors use a spectrum of Syriac manuscripts as witnesses to the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86, these procedures may prompt a disproportionate impression of the level of popularity of 2 Baruch among Syriac Christians. The transmission of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is not evidence for the transmission of 2 Baruch. Throughout their history of circulation, the fifty-three copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe have hardly ever been referred to or identified as "a part of 2 Baruch" by anyone other than their modern editors. The identification of the text of this epistle as "witnesses to 2 Baruch" is thus not a label that tells us what this text unit was to those who engaged with it. Rather, it tells us how modern scholars have found the occurrences of the text to be valuable and helpful.

The flip side of this coin, is that when we follow traditional editorial procedures we miss out on the opportunity to study either epistle in contexts other than their assumed original or early one. Instead of seeing the Syriac manuscripts and their texts exclusively as more or less corrupt witnesses to an earlier text, we could rather see them as meaningful to the cultural context in which we find them. The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe has been used in Syriac liturgical and educational contexts, but this use has rarely been studied. If we study the epistles as integral parts of the manuscripts in which they occur and the transmission of writings as a process that may both transform them and even let them take on other identifications as they circulate, we open up the possibility of gaining new, intriguing insights.

5.5 Beyond 2 Baruch

This chapter has provided a methodological reflection on the editorial practices that have shaped editions of the so-called *Epistle of Baruch* and the epistemologies that have guided them. The study of the Syriac manuscripts containing the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe and the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah illustrates how paradigmatic conceptions and models of text production and transmission, categorizations of texts and works and default ways of assessing the available historical information from periods other than the hypothetical original or early historical context of a given writing affect what we see in our surviving historical sources.

The editors who have used manuscripts containing the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in their quest for the most original reading of the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah have systematically disregarded the paratextual information in the manuscripts which suggests that, for those who produced and used the manuscripts, this epistle was a different entity with its own history and context of interpretation than the epistle in 2 Bar 78–86. They may well have originally come from one, singular text, but our sources present them as two distinct works, each of them carrying the marks of the communities that preserved them.

What the present study of the epistles shows is that we are not looking at the reception history of the *Epistle of Baruch* as a stable part of 2 Baruch but rather at the complex and continuing use, transformation and engagement with two epistles that systematically defy editors' categorization of what the *Epistle of Baruch* "really is" or "once was."

Excursus: Paratexts and the Origins of the Syriac Epistles

Can the paratexts tell us anything about the origins of the two epistles and whether or not one or both originated with 2 Baruch? As noted above, the discussion about the origins of the epistles is a longstanding and ongoing one.[113] Generally, the present volume does not deal with origins, so I relegate this question to an excursus. I make a simple observation about the paratexts and introductory addresses of the epistles ascribed to Baruch. I do not aim to solve the

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[113] Among the most important are Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch,* xxx; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxvii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:67–73, 77–78, 345–55; Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed,* 98–101; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch,* 4, 12, 23–33, 151; idem, "New Observations," 285–88; Doering, "Epistle of Baruch and Its Role," 157. Cf., also, Rivka Nir, "'Good Tidings' of Baruch to the Christian Faithful (The Epistle of 2 Baruch 78–87)," in *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies*, ed., Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski, LSTS 87 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 72–93.

riddle about the origins of the epistles beyond their Syriac transmission, but I may shed some light on their circulation in the Syriac manuscript tradition.

As mentioned above, the title of the epistle of 2 Bar 78–86 reads, "The Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah, Which He Wrote to the Nine and a Half Tribes." The introductory address that follows the title states, "These are the words of the epistle that Baruch bar Neriah sent to the nine and a half tribes, those who were across the river, in which these things were written" (78:1).[114] As pointed out above, this epistle is one of two epistles that Baruch wrote to the tribes in exile, one to the two and a half tribes in Babylon and another to the nine and a half tribes. In two occurrences, 2 Baruch does not specify the dwelling place of the nine and a half tribes (77:17, 19). The book refers to it once as "across the river"[115] (ܥܒܪܐ ܕܢܗܪܐ) (78:1) and once as across "the many waters of the river Euphrates" (ܥܒܪ ܡܝ̈ܐ ܣܓܝ̈ܐܐ ܕܢܗܪܐ ܦܪܬ) (77:22). The latter reference may indicate that their place of dwelling could be Babylon as well, but it is more likely a reference to the Assyrian captivity of the tribes of the northern kingdom. On several occasions 2 Baruch stresses that the nine and a half tribes are other addressees than the two and a half tribes and that they dwell in another place than them, further away beyond "the many waters" of the river, a place only reachable by means of an eagle (77:17, 18; 85:6, 87:1).

The epistle that the Peshitta copies as part of, or associated with, the Jeremianic corpus bears the title "The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, Which He Sent from (the Midst of) Jerusalem to Babylon." The introductory address reads, "These are the words of the epistle that Baruch bar Neriah sent to the nine and a half tribes, those who were across the river Euphrates, in which these things were written." Two aspects of the title and address are worthy of our attention. First, although the nine and a half tribes are still the recipients of the introductory address, the title of this epistle is different. Second, the address is almost identical to the one in the epistle of 2 Bar 78–86, but it adds "Euphrates" (ܦܪܬ). In other words, the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe specifies explicitly that this is a letter to Babylon, despite the retained mention of the nine and a half tribes. As mentioned above, the Peshitta version of the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe holds that Baruch wrote this letter to (or for) Babylon. Hence, the paratextual layers of both the First and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Peshitta highlight that these letters were sent "to Babylon."

It may not be the only explanation, but the easiest way of explaining the differences in the title and address is to propose that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe derives from the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah and, hence, most likely from Syriac 2 Baruch. As the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe started to be

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[114] ܗܠܝܢ ܐܢܘܢ ܦܬܓܡ̈ܐ ܕܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܫܕܪ ܒܪܘܟ ܒܪ ܢܪܝܐ ܠܬܫܥܐ ܫܒ̈ܛܝܢ ܘܦܠܓܗ ܗܢܘܢ ܕܒܥܒܪܐ ܕܢܗܪܐ ܗܘܘ ܕܒܗܝܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܟܬܝ̈ܒܢ ܗܘܝ.

[115] Literally, "at the other shore of the river."

copied with other Jeremianic literature in the Peshitta, the titles and addresses of both the First and the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe were changed to accommodate them to the new context. They both became epistles, and Baruch wrote both of them to Babylon. The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe retains large parts of the text but changes the title and a salient detail in the address to make it fit a new context of copying and interpretation. The Peshitta is the only tradition that ascribes two epistles to Baruch, and with the exception of the Arabic tradition, the Syriac manuscript tradition is the only one that we know preserved and engaged with 2 Baruch. It is interesting, thus, that this phenomenon occurs here and hard to imagine that it is a coincidence.

This variance in Syriac paratexts and introductory addresses does not provide information about any hypothetical original constitution of 2 Baruch beyond and behind the Syriac manuscript tradition. It does not tell us whether the epistle was part of a pre-Syriac 2 Baruch or whether it became attached to the rest of the book at some point during its circulation. The paratexts bear witness to changes that occurred in the Syriac transmission. Still, if my hypothesis here is correct, then the epistle that became the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Peshitta is arguably Syriac 2 Baruch's most important contribution to a wider field of Syriac literature.

Chapter 6

A Question of Access: Entangled
Transmission, Entangled Transformation

Sometimes it is helpful to state the obvious: we know 2 Baruch today because late antique and medieval scribes found it worth the effort to copy this book and because the communities that they belonged to continued to preserve the manuscripts that contain it. It is this transmission process – a process that scholarship tends to approach as "after the fact" – that has created the manuscripts that scholars employ when they explore the first/second-century writing 2 Baruch. A significant corollary to this fact is that our academic knowledge about the hypothetical early 2 Baruch is shaped by the mediating capacity of medieval manuscripts and dependent on all the hands that produced, cared for and kept these manuscripts over the centuries. This also means that our access both relies on and is restricted by the manuscript materials that survive. We have access to 2 Baruch through these manuscripts and these manuscripts only.

The General Introduction to the current volume presented the methodological debate that surrounds the study of early Jewish writings in Christian transmission. One of the points that Kraft has stressed repeatedly is that the academic priority of the early Jewish writing has led scholars to pursue a "relatively uncontrolled and hasty approach" to the surviving manuscript materials. Kraft advised scholars to examine the manuscripts' "significance as witnesses to Christian interest and activities" before using them as witnesses to early Jewish texts.[1] Adler pointed out that our sources are the received texts and that their development cannot easily be disentangled from their receiving contexts.[2] In other words, to understand what scholars of early Jewish writings are up against, we need to address the Christian priorities and practices that shaped the products that are left for us to study and we need to explore what the entanglements that Adler identified look like "on the ground." Afterwards, we may ask ourselves whether we still want to take the second step that Kraft presumed in his presentation – the step back to the early Jewish text.

The present chapter is the first of two that will synthesize the findings of the first five chapters of this volume. Drawing on the conclusions of those previous chapters and adding some new findings from a larger contextual manuscript

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[1] Kraft, "Pseudepigrapha in Christianity," 4.
[2] Adler, "Parabiblical Traditions," 12. Cf., the discussion in the General Introduction.

material, I will explore what entanglement entails in the case of the transmission of 2 Baruch. The conception of "entanglement" is instructive in the way in which it postulates an intertwinement between the development of writings and the cultures that received and transmitted them. As such, it flags a phenomenon that we need to grasp, but to make the concept productive for empirical analysis, we need to test what it may help us to understand in the study of an actual historical case. Thus, the chapter will identify the main historical factors that came to decide the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch and explore how these factors eventually shaped the 2 Baruch that has come down to us and how they are interconnected with identifiable cultural and material processes.

This chapter also has a critical aim. It is driven by and structured as a critical engagement with the academic epistemologies and procedures that have shaped the way in which scholars currently perceive 2 Baruch. As previous chapters have pointed out, scholarship has consistently privileged the assumed period of origin of 2 Baruch and generally approached it as early and Jewish. The manuscripts and their embodied copies have not received attention in their own right. Research on 2 Baruch has not fully integrated the consequences of that procedure and the fact that these copies in the surviving manuscripts constitute our only access to the book.[3]

This blind spot in previous scholarship – my own pre-2011 publications included[4] – is probably the result of three factors. First, the traditional epistemological presupposition in the field is that writings leave their originating communities as more or less "finished" entities. Although textual scholarship allows for messy realities while a writing is still in the making, scholars have assumed that, at a certain point, the text is fixed. As the General Introduction pointed out, and as chapter 5 showed, this assumption of early fixity is paired with the notion of a relatively high degree of textual stability in the transmission processes – at least to the extent that a necessary "sameness" can be established between the assumed early writing and copies of it in manuscripts produced later. This is how a later copy can serve as a "witness" to the early text in the first place. A notion of "sameness" also underlies the academic use of the identification "2 Baruch" as equally fitting for all stages and forms of its transmission.

Second, this epistemological assumption is thoroughly intertwined with a set of methodological practices that have been so dominant that the scholarly guild used to see them almost as neutral. In the branches of textual scholarship that have shaped the study of 2 Baruch, scholars have traditionally applied methods such as source criticism and redaction criticism to explore the process of text formation until the point in time in which they identify the writing as finished. From

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[3] Cf., e. g., Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost the Temple,* 33–34.
[4] Cf., in particular, Lied, *Other Lands*, but also a series of articles published before 2012.

this point onwards, textual criticism takes over. It is well known to all scholars that texts change in transmission – this is why textual criticism was developed in the first place – but the changes that occur after the writing is assumed to be finished are perceived of and treated differently from the changes that take place before that point in time. The application of textual criticism for the purpose of recovering the assumed finished, early text depends both on the idea that a text can indeed be finished and on a conviction that changes to a text occurring in transmission can be overcome (and indeed that they should be overcome) by text-critical procedures. It does not really matter, then, that a text changes, and how those changes reflect the historical contexts that created them, since the alterations can and should be bridged anyway.

Third, the interest in and priority of the early text as the literature of early Jewish communities presume that scholars explore it as an immaterial text, bracketed from its material context in the manuscripts. It is a matter of fact that the manuscript materials that remain first and foremost provide access to the synchronous realities of their production and engagement. Scholars of 2 Baruch have only used them for diachronic purposes, aiming to reach back to that early text. The previous chapters of this volume have provided case studies of the text in its synchronous material, historical and social contexts. The material artifacts are certainly medieval products, but then what about the embodied copies of the texts that they contain?

Philological practices and epistemologies are currently changing rapidly, or at the very least, a historical-critical, origins-centered philology is no longer monopolizing the field. However, the academic narrative of 2 Baruch is still thoroughly molded by the traditional approaches. It is time to pose new questions that can challenge the blind spots that they have created. We need to ask how the copies of texts that scholars apply as sources were shaped by their transmission process, the ways in which and the extent to which the 2 Baruch that remains for us to explore in the context of surviving manuscripts is a product of its history of transmission and, finally, whether our faith in text-critical procedures has made us blind to the complexity of the task of moving beyond and behind the manuscripts. Can textual scholars disentangle an early 2 Baruch from its later processes of transmission? If not, what are the repercussions?

6.1 The Manuscript Transmission of 2 Baruch: The Main Features

In this section, I identify some of the key features of the transmission history of 2 Baruch. Each of the features has influenced aspects of the transmission of 2 Baruch. When studied together, these features provide important insights into how and why 2 Baruch survives today and why it survives precisely as it does.

6.1.1 A Christian Manuscript Transmission

As noted in the General Introduction, and as many scholars of early Jewish literature have pointed out before me, a large amount of early Jewish writings were preserved throughout Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages by Christian communities. Indeed, with some notable exceptions, the general preservation in Christian communities counts as one of the major features of the transmission history of these writings. There is no reason to believe that written, book-sized documents were the only form of transmission of the writings throughout history. Nor is it reasonable to assume that Christian communities were the only ones to engage with the narratives, tropes and interpretative solutions that they promoted.[5] However, it remains a fact that a large number of the manuscripts that today make these writings available to scholars are Christian; hence, these are the manuscripts that provide us with access to the extant texts.[6]

As I have shown in the previous chapters of the current volume, 2 Baruch is no exception to this rule. In Syriac transmission, 2 Baruch survives in an Old Testament *pandect*. Excerpted lections of the book appear in lectionary manuscripts containing lections from the Old Testament and Epistles to be read in Christian worship contexts. This means that 2 Baruch occurs in dedicated collections of Christian biblical writings. Verbal and other signs of use by owners, donors, binders and active readers in the manuscripts, as well as the institutional context in which the manuscripts were kept before they ended up in European collections, also recommend the conclusion that those who engaged with 2 Baruch in these embodiments would primarily have been Christians.

Outside the Syriac-using sphere, the traces that remain of 2 Baruch in extant manuscripts also seem to indicate a Christian transmission. The surviving Greek fragments,[7] New York, Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, P.Oxy. III 403, are most likely the product of Christian manufacture.[8] First, P.Oxy. III 403 contains frag-

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[5] Narratives, tropes and interpretative solutions also appear in the literatures of Islamic, Manichean, later Jewish and other communities. Cf., e. g., John C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichean Cosmogony: Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992); idem, "Exploring the Afterlife"; Reed and Reeves, *Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages;* Adler, "Jacob of Edessa"; idem, "Parabiblical Traditions"*;* Kulik et al., *Guide to Early Jewish Texts;* Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts"; Lied, "Transmission History."

[6] Cf., the presentation in the General Introduction.

[7] I am grateful to Brent Nongbri for his guidance in the field of study dedicated to the Oxyrhynchus papyri.

[8] Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458. Cf., Meron M. Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews': The Jewish Community of Oxyrhynchus in Light of Non-documentary Texts on Papyrus," in *Sources and Interpretation in Ancient Judaism: Studies for Tal Ilan at Sixty*, ed. Meron M. Piotrkowski, Geoffrey Herman and Saskia Dönitz (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 143–73 esp. 150–53; Nongbri, *God's Library*, 232.

ments of a papyrus codex,[9] a format associated with Christian manuscript production.[10] Second, the paleographical dating of the Greek handwriting[11] to the late fourth or the early-fifth century[12] suggests a Christian provenance.[13] Third, the fragments were found at Oxyrhynchus.[14] In the fourth/fifth centuries, this town had a sizable Christian population.[15]

In addition, St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589, the manuscript that contains the Arabic book-length copies of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, is today generally assumed to be a Christian artifact.[16] The Arabic text of 2 Baruch in this codex is a Middle Arabic (Christian Arabic) translation of a Syriac text.[17] The scribe, who was responsible for the copying of both books, probably was

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[9] See Liv Ingeborg Lied, "2.2.2 Greek," in *Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, vol. 2 of *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. Frank Feder and Matthias Henze (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 45–46.

[10] The hypothesis of the Christian preference for the codex dates back to Colin H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat (*The Birth of the Codex* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987]). The hypothesis is still dominant, but it has been challenged, for instance by Roger S. Bagnall (*Early Christian Books in Egypt* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009]) and others (cf., the discussion in Nongbri, *God's Library*, 23–24, 234–37). The use of papyrus may favor a hypothesis of Christian production, too, since most texts found at Oxyrhynchus that are explicitly Jewish are on parchment. There are some notable exceptions though, particularly fragments of piyyutim (Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews'," 154). See, furthermore, Malcolm Choat, *Belief and Cult in Fourth Century Papyri* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

[11] A large part of Christian writings was written in Greek (Nongbri, *God's Library*, 236). The Oxyrhynchus papyri contains examples of identifiably Jewish fragments written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic (Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews'," 144, 149–50; cf., P. A. H. de Boer, "Notes on an Oxyrhynchus Papyrus in Hebrew: Brit. Mus. Or. 9180 A," *VT* 1/1 [1951]: 49–57).

[12] See Lied, "2.2.2 Greek," 45; Nongbri, *God's Library*, 242–43.

[13] Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews'," 150–53; Nongbri, *God's Library,* 228–46 and n. 42.

[14] Unfortunately, we do not know exactly where the assistants of Grenfell and Hunt made the discovery.

[15] Grenfell, "Oxyrhynchus and Its Papyri," 1; Peter J. Parsons, *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish: Greek Papyri Beneath the Egyptian Sand Reveal a Long-Lost World* (Chatam: Phoenix, 2007), 193–97. Although a Christian provenance remains most likely, a Jewish provenance of P.Oxy. III 403 should not be ruled out completely. A Jewish community was demonstrably part of the Oxyrhynchus populace from the first to the sixth century, and none of the above criteria are waterproof. In addition, the category of "Jewish" is tricky in this historical context, and the fact that the Oxyrhynchus papyri are still awaiting publication means that we have no access to any conceivable "whole." Cf., A. E. Cowley, "Notes on Hebrew Papyrus Fragments from Oxyrhynchus," *JEA* 2/4 (1915): 209–13; Aryeh Kasher, "The Jewish Community of Oxyrhynchus in the Roman Period," *JJS* 32 (1981): 151–58; Eldon J. Epp, "The Jews and the Jewish Community in Oxyrhynchus: Socio-Religious Context for the New Testament Papyri," in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World*, ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 13–52; Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews'," 145–48.

[16] The provenance was a matter of discussion early on (Fred Leemhuis, "The Arabic Version of the Apocalypse of Baruch: A Christian Text?" *JSP* 4 [1989]: 19–26 at 19–22). Cf., Albertus F. J. Klijn, "The Character of the Arabic Version of the Apocalypse of Baruch," in *Jüdische Schriften in ihrem antik-jüdischen und urchristlichen Kontext*, ed. Hermann Lichtenberger and Gerbern S. Oegema, JSHRZ-St 1 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2002), 204–8; Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," 616.

[17] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 4.

either a Christian himself or he copied from a *Vorlage* that already contained identifiably Christian elements. The subsection headings and marginal notes of the copy of 4 Ezra, which are in the same hand as the rest of the text in the columns, contain explicit Christian interpretations. For instance, the heading "Prophecy of Ezra about the Crucifixion of the Messiah and about His Disciple" occurs before 4 Ezra 5:3, and "About the Incarnation of Our Lord the Messiah" is inscribed next to 4 Ezra 5:51.[18] Furthermore, the fact that the manuscript was kept in the collection of St. Catherine's Monastery suggests that it was read and preserved by Christians. This Christian engagement is corroborated by the fact that folio 68r contains a note from a monk, recounting his experiences of an Easter service in the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem in the eleventh century.[19]

Aziz Suryal Atiya's handlist of the Arabic manuscripts and scrolls in the Monastery of St. Catherine (1955) orders Arabic Manuscripts 589 under the rubric "Old Testament (selection)." According to Atiya, it contains "The Prophecy of Baruch and the Book of Ezra from the Old Testament."[20] Later, van Koningsveld identified the Prophecy of Baruch as 2 Baruch (1974/5)[21] and Stone the Book of Ezra as 4 Ezra (1976).[22] Still, Atiya's identification of, at least, 4 Ezra[23] agrees with earlier Arabic interpretations of this writing as "First Ezra," and the conception of the manuscript as an Old Testament manuscript should not necessarily be considered faulty.[24]

Indeed, there are other reasons for assuming that Arabic Christians could have considered the codex to be an Old Testament manuscript. The codex contains two writings only: 2 Baruch[25] and 4 Ezra. Drint noted that the scribe who copied Arabic Manuscripts 589 also copied St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 7. This codex has the same layout and is written on the same kind of paper.[26] It contains 1 and 2 Chronicles – also in translation from Syriac. As Drint

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[18] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 44–49, 95–106. There are no marginal notes in 2 Baruch (Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 104).

[19] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 442–6.

[20] Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1955), 24.

[21] Van Koningsveld, "Arabic Manuscript," 205–7. According to van Koningsveld, Baars was the one who identified the text as the Apocalypse of Baruch.

[22] Michael E. Stone, "A New Manuscript of the Syro-Arabic Version of the Fourth Book of Ezra," *JSJ* 8 (1976/7): 183–84.

[23] At the time of writing, there are no other known occurrences of 2 Baruch in Arabic.

[24] See Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 15–20. Cf., Lied and Monger, "7.2.2 Syriac," 484–85.

[25] Whether the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah in the Arabic manuscript is best interpreted as part of 2 Baruch or as an autonomous writing copied after 2 Baruch is open to discussion (cf., chapter 5 of the present volume).

[26] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," iv; Atiya, *Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, 3. The manuscripts are available online (both accessed 13 December 2019): https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279385834-ms/ and: https://www.loc.gov/item/00279390714-ms/

pointed out, it is likely that Arabic Manuscripts 7 and 589 are part of a series and that the two codices contain the same books that also occur together in the Codex Ambrosianus.[27] The Syriac copies in the Codex Ambrosianus need not be the direct source of the Arabic translation of the two Arabic codices. Still, they may bear witness to a larger project of copying the books of the Old Testament, which transmitted the same selection and order of books as the Codex Ambrosianus.

Thus, all of the surviving manuscripts that contain fragments and whole copies of 2 Baruch are Christian. Furthermore, although it is possible that other manuscripts with other proveniences were once in circulation, the fact remains that 2 Baruch is known to us today because Christian communities copied and preserved it.

6.1.2 Monastic Preservation

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the current volume demonstrated that important parts of the known circulation of and engagement with 2 Baruch were monastic. As pointed out in chapter 2, the Monastery of the Syrians kept the Codex Ambrosianus for approximately six hundred years. Abu ʿAli Zekiri donated it to the monastery in the early eleventh century, and many of the signs of reader engagement that are still accessible on the pages of the codex attest to the reading practices of active monastic readers.[28] Chapter 4 presented a hypothetical, but likely, context of engagement with the lectionary manuscript London, BL, Add. 14,687 and its companion, Add. 14,686. According to the colophon, the monk Bakos copied this manuscript in the Monastery of the Syrians for use on the premises and in all due likelihood, this was where it was put to use.

The provenance of some of the other surviving manuscripts that contain 2 Baruch was also monastic. The origin of Deir al-Surian, Ms. Syr. 33, the third lectionary manuscript that contains a lection from 2 Baruch, is not known, but this manuscript was also kept at the Monastery of the Syrians and can still be found there in the twenty-first century. A note in the lectionary manuscript Pampakuda, A. Konat Collection, Ms. 77 states that the codex was completed in 1493 CE in the Monastery of Qarṭmin.[29] As pointed out above, Arabic Manuscripts 589 belongs to St. Catherine's Monastery and is still part of the sizable collection on its premises. This Arabic manuscript was probably not produced

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[27] Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 58. Note also, that the first additional note on folio 68r (by a later hand) refers to Ezra and Nehemiah (Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 440). This is the next book occurring in the Codex Ambrosianus.

[28] Cf., chapter 3.

[29] The note on folio 147r tells us that Gabriel son of Yeshuaʿ of Beth Severina, from the monastery of Qarṭmin, bound, glued and sewed the codex in the year 1802 of the Greeks, that is, in 1492/3 CE, marking the completion of the production of the codex.

at the monastery,[30] but it was certainly kept and engaged with there. Drint hypothesized that the monk who wrote the extensive note on folio 68r may have served as a librarian in the monastery.[31] He left us notes in other manuscripts in the monastery's collection as well. Hence, the codex demonstrably led a substantial part of its life at the disposal of the monastic community in the Sinai Peninsula.[32]

It is not surprising, and certainly not coincidental, that the provenance of the manuscripts that have come down to us tends to be monastic. Monastic communities offered environments that were, at least in part, learned environments. Such environments would harbor scribal and conservational expertise and a populace with a certain level of literacy as well as the facilities for storing manuscripts over time. Indeed, it is possible that this history of monastic ownership of the manuscripts indicates that the circulation of 2 Baruch was predominantly monastic. If so, monastic readers were among the book's primary readers, at least throughout the Middle Ages. Another possibility is that the manuscripts are found in monastic repositories because of their capacity for offering optimal survival conditions. Thus, this find-context does not necessarily offer a fruitful representation of the more comprehensive historical realities.[33] No matter how we understand this situation, the monastic interest in and preservation of the book constitutes an important factor in the transmission history of 2 Baruch and a reason for its survival throughout the centuries.

6.1.3 Without the Monastery of the Syrians, Where Would We Be?

Let us face it: without the Monastery of the Syrians, where would scholarship on 2 Baruch be? The heading of this subsection paraphrases the title of Brock's much-cited 2004 article, "Without Mushē of Nisibis, Where Would We Be: Some Reflections on the Transmission of Syriac Literature." In this article, Brock showed that we owe a great deal of our contemporary knowledge about Syriac literature to the efforts of Moses of Nisibis and the community of monks

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[30] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 8, 114.

[31] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 446.

[32] The only known manuscript that cannot with certainty be associated with a monastic settlement is P.Oxy. III 403. Due to its fragmented condition, it is difficult to ascertain the origin of the manuscript to which these fragments once belonged. There were monastic communities in Oxyrhynchus at the time in which the fragments were produced (Parsons, *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish,* 193–97), and the handwriting in the fragment belongs to a trained scribe. Both aspects could point to a monastic provenience, but I cannot exclude other options.

[33] Even if we assume predominantly monastic production and preservation, that would not prevent others from engaging with 2 Baruch. As chapter 4 pointed out, monastic communities were never islands. The liturgical celebrations on feast days such as Easter Sunday probably attracted lay attendance. It is also well known that scribes originating elsewhere borrowed manuscripts from monasteries, for instance to facilitate the copying and further spread of the writings.

in the Monastery of the Syrians. The fact that Moses of Nisibis collected a large number of manuscripts in the tenth century and that the monastery preserved these early manuscripts over the centuries means that we have access to parts of Syriac literature that would otherwise be lost.[34] How did the preservation of and engagement with 2 Baruch in the Monastery of the Syrians influence its transmission?

6.1.3a Monasteries in Egypt: Climate and a Stable Repository

An aspect that should never be underestimated is the unbeatable combination of the Egyptian climate and a stable repository.[35] The importance of the dry and uniform Egyptian climate for manuscript preservation has been pointed out on many occasions.[36] Unlike other regions, which may be affected by seasonal change, Egypt offers perfect conditions for manuscript preservation. In fact, with the exception of Ms. 77, currently kept in Kerala, all other known manuscripts that contain text from 2 Baruch survived in Egypt or were preserved there until they were brought to Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. Even discarded manuscripts can survive in this climate. A large number of the manuscripts that Grenfell and Hunt's teams of workers uncovered in the late-nineteenth century at Oxyrhynchus were found in the town's rubbish mounds.[37] As Meron M. Piotrkowski pointed out, these mounds are located west of the Nile in an area where there is very little rain, and over the years, the manuscripts that were disposed of there were covered by sand.[38] The dry climate and the sand preserved them in ways that would have been unthinkable in humid regions of the world.[39]

The presence of a relatively stable repository is also vital to the survival of manuscripts.[40] No matter how dry the climate may be, stability, protection and practices of care matter to their survival rate.[41] Political and social instability,

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[34] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 15–24.

[35] See, Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 216.

[36] Cf., e. g., Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 18; idem, "Liturgies Syriaques," 268; Roger S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Borbone and Briquel Chatonnet, "3.1.2. Syriac Manuscripts," 58.

[37] See, AnneMarie Luijendijk, "Sacred Scriptures as Trash: Biblical Papyri from Oxyrhynchus," *VC* 64 (2010): 217–54. See also Roberta Mazza's critical treatment of the origin story of the Oxyrhynchus papyri, questioning who really discovered the papyri ("The Finding of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri between Myth and Reality," paper presented at the Egyptian Exploration Society [via Zoom], 11 March 2021).

[38] Piotrkowski, "'Literary Jews'," 144.

[39] Note, though, that even here moisture has probably destroyed much of the materials. Papyri were only found in certain layers in the mounds (Grenfell, "Oxyrhynchus and Its Papyri," 8; Nongbri, *God's Library*, 221, 338).

[40] Cf., Andrew Pettegree, "The Legion of Lost: Recovering the Lost Books of Early Modern Europe," *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*, ed. Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 1–27 at 3.

[41] Cf., chapter 2 of the current volume.

frequent use, change in ownership, the movement of manuscripts and/or their owners, cultural irrelevance, or inattention to material conditions will eventually lead to manuscript deterioration.[42]

The effect of the combination of climatic factors and stability can readily be seen in the fact that a large part of the surviving Syriac manuscripts, particularly manuscripts dating from the period before the year 1000, have been found in the repositories of two monasteries in Egypt, each with a long history. As pointed out above, the Monastery of the Syrians preserved a major share. Other manuscripts survived in the keeping of St. Catherine's Monastery.[43] As we have seen, these are the two manuscript collections in which copies of 2 Baruch have been discovered.

6.1.3b The Local, the "Legion of Lost" or a Node in a Network

On several occasions throughout this volume, I have stressed that the circulation of 2 Baruch was probably not far-reaching. There is no reason to believe that all Syriac Christians would have known about this book. I assume neither that 2 Baruch was part of the standard repertoire of Peshitta Old Testament *pandects* nor that there would be comprehensive use of a lection from 2 Baruch on Easter Sundays. Instead, it is reasonable to assume that some Syriac Christians knew 2 Baruch, that some of them conceived of and engaged with it as an Old Testament book and that some among them would enjoy hearing it read on Easter Sunday. Is it possible to identify "some" Syriac Christians more closely, and how is it fruitful to imagine such a limited circulation and transmission?

Chapters 1 through 4 showed that the Monastery of the Syrians plays an essential role in any exploration of the transmission history of 2 Baruch. The large majority of the surviving manuscripts that contain 2 Baruch – in whole or in parts – was found there. One way of approaching the relationship between the Monastery of the Syrians and 2 Baruch would be to hypothesize that the transmission of 2 Baruch was a local phenomenon. As chapter 4 pointed out, Syriac monasteries enjoyed a relatively large degree of freedom, and local variations were common. It is thus possible that the status that 2 Baruch held in the Monastery of the Syrians was unparalleled elsewhere. A tradition of copying and reading this book may have developed there that did not have an equal impact on other Syriac reading communities. If so, the reason why manuscripts containing 2 Baruch turn up in this particular collection, and not elsewhere, could be that this is where this book was in use.

A second and different way of approaching the transmission history of 2 Baruch and the role of the Monastery of the Syrians in it would be to imagine

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[42] Cf., Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 53; Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 216–17.

[43] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 21; Coakley, "Manuscripts," 262–63.

that 2 Baruch was also of some importance elsewhere but that this broader circulation has been lost. In all likelihood, we have access only to a limited part of what must have been a larger transmission history: it would be truly remarkable if all the manuscripts that ever contained 2 Baruch survived. Even though parchment and papyrus have turned out to be exceptionally durable media – particularly in the Egyptian climate – a major share of all the manuscripts once in existence in the world has been lost due to chemical decay, accidents and a spectrum of other reasons.[44]

In fact, some scattered features of the manuscripts that do survive strongly recommend the hypothesis that other manuscripts containing 2 Baruch were once in circulation. One indication is a curious omission in the Codex Ambrosianus's copy of 2 Bar 27. Chapter 27 lists the calamities that will characterize the end of days. Twelve different types of calamities will occur, each one associated with a division of time into twelve parts (27:1). In the manuscript, each calamity is marked out by a small rosette in the margin (folio 259v), and in the literary text, each of them is explicitly numbered, starting with the first and ending with the twelfth. The seventh part is missing, though.[45] The resulting text of chapter 27 moves directly from calamity six to calamity eight. This feature makes the most sense as a copying mistake. We do not know whether the scribe of the Codex Ambrosianus was responsible for the mistake or whether he copied his *Vorlage* faithfully, including the omission that was already there. In either case, the mistake suggests that there were once other copies of 2 Baruch.[46]

In chapter 3, the study of the ܗ note suggested that, at some point, a scribe prepared the copying of a lectionary manuscript which is now lost, but that shared some features with the surviving manuscripts Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687. Another indication of a lost lectionary manuscript emerges from the dedicated study of Add. 14,687. As I have pointed out elsewhere, not only do the two copies of 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 in Add. 14,687 differ from the passage in the Codex Ambrosianus's copy of it but there is variation between the two texts copied on folios 157v–158r and 175r–176r of the lectionary manuscript. The variance between the two occurrences in Add. 14,687 is easiest to explain as the result of copying from an older lectionary manuscript in which 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 already appeared twice.[47]

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[44] Cf., James H. Charlesworth, "Introduction," in *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, vol. 1 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), xxi–xxxiv at xxi–xxiii; Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 53; Lied and Stuckenbruck, "Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts," 216. Cf., Pettegree, "The Legion of Lost."

[45] This assumedly lost calamity is identified or implied in many editions as the fictive verse, 2 Bar 27:8.

[46] Note that the fictive 27:8 is missing in the Arabic version as well. This shared mistake suggests that there was a relationship either between the two codices, the text transmission or the text tradition behind the two copies.

[47] See the discussion of this aspect in Lied, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity," 416–19.

The selection and order of the lections of yet another lectionary manuscript, the fragmentary thirteenth-century London, BL, Add. 14,736,[48] suggests that a lection from 2 Baruch is likely to have been part of this manuscript as well. The section in question is lost, and so a claim regarding its inclusion remains hypothetical, but the surviving parts of this manuscript contains the same selection and order of lections as Add. 14,686 and Ms. Syr. 33 – all three copied in the thirteenth century and kept at the Monastery of the Syrians. Both those manuscripts script 2 Bar 44:9–15 to be read on the Sunday of the Dead.[49] Furthermore, if Ms. Syr. 33 and Add. 14,736 were parts of two-volume sets, they may also have had companion volumes containing 2 Bar 72:1–73:2.

The comparison of the Syriac version of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus and the Arabic version in Arabic Manuscripts 589 also suggests that, at some point, other Syriac and/or Arabic manuscripts were once in existence. Van Koningsveld and Leemhuis et al., proposed that the initial Arabic translation was a translation from a Syriac text that was closely related, but not identical, to the surviving copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus. They hypothesized that this Syriac copy may have been older than the one that we know from the Codex Ambrosianus.[50] Leemhuis et al., also suggested that the surviving tenth- or eleventh-century Arabic copy of 2 Baruch is a copy from an older Arabic manuscript written in Kufic ductus.[51] In other words, if this interpretation is correct, the extant Arabic copy was not the first – 2 Baruch was already circulating in Arabic translation at the time.

Both the hypothesis about local use and the hypothesis about the "legion of lost"[52] make sense of the remaining manuscript sources, but it is still possible that a third model of thinking would paint a more representative picture. This third alternative would represent the transmission of 2 Baruch in terms of nodes and networks. In such a model, the Monastery of the Syrians would function as an important node in a network of intersecting lines. We could even imagine the monastery as the effective center of such a network – a hub. This model would honor the stress of the first hypothesis on a strong local presence, and it would allow us to factor in the idea that a certain amount of manuscripts that were once at home in the monastery and elsewhere must be lost. Thinking in terms of nodes and intersecting lines in a network makes sense of what earlier scholarship has shown about the migration of people and artifacts in and out of the monastery, the connectivity of the monastic community in the Scetis desert with other mo-

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[48] Cf., the presentation in chapter 4.

[49] London, BL, Add. 14,686 (f. 77r–v) and Deir al-Suryan, Syr. Ms. 33 (ff. 74v–75r). Note that London, BL, Add. 14,736 still contains a lection from 4 Ezra 12:31–38 (f. 18v), to be read at the event of the Revelation of Joseph (Lied and Monger, "Look to the East," 647–51; eidem, "7.2.2. Syriac," 482).

[50] Van Koningsveld, "Arabic Manuscript," 206; Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, vii, 6, 12.

[51] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 5; Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 54.

[52] I borrow the conception from Pettegree, "The Legion of Lost."

nastic communities and some of the social functions of noting manuscript own-
ership and donations, discussed in chapter 2 of the current volume.[53]

If we assume this model, we could explore the transmission and circula-
tion of 2 Baruch as dependent on the practices of this particular hub and on
the various identifiable connecting lines in its social networks. For instance, as
pointed out in chapter 1, the Codex Ambrosianus may have originated in Meso-
potamia, before Abu 'Ali Zekiri, the Takritan, donated it to the monastery. The
connections of the Monastery of the Syrians with Mesopotamia, with the city
of Takrit and with the community of Takritans in Fustat are well known. The
Codex Ambrosianus is a cultural artifact that moved in space by means of the
social networks of which the monastery was a part and it was simultaneously a
precious gift that reinforced the social ties between the actors in that network.
As an integral, embodied part of this particular codex, the copy of 2 Baruch be-
came part of its journey. From this point of view, 2 Baruch's transmission story
would follow the movements of those who carried it, migrating by means of
their hands and feet.

Furthermore, as illustrated in chapters 2, 3 and 4, the Monastery of the Syr-
ians would function as an effective center of engagement with 2 Baruch. This
is the community that copied excerpts of 2 Baruch into lectionary manuscripts
(by means of a monk originating in Qaraqosh and spending his youth at the
Mountain of Edessa). It is imaginable that Bakos copied the lectionary manu-
script based on a *Vorlage* that he had brought with him from Edessa. We know
that he brought a Gospel lectionary (London, BL, Or. 8729).[54] If so, this could
indicate a second reentry of 2 Baruch-related materials through the social net-
works of the monastery. This scenario cannot be ruled out, but since the selection
and order of lections in Add. 14,686 bears a very close resemblance to another
lectionary manuscript kept at the monastery – Ms. Syr. 33 – this is less likely.
Ms. Syr. 33 is assumed to be older than Add. 14,686 and it was copied by another
hand. This implies that there was already a chain of transmission of lectionary
manuscripts containing lections from 2 Baruch in the monastery when Bakos
copied Add. 14,687. The ܠܐ notes in the Codex Ambrosianus points in the same
direction: someone at the monastery prepared the copying of a new lectionary
manuscript, which is now lost.

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[53] I am inspired by so-called social network analysis here. Originating in the social sciences,
the use of (social) network analysis in the historical study of the circulation of manuscripts
and texts is now so widespread that it has its own journal (The Journal of Historical Network
Research) and its own academic fora. Cf., the bibliography on the website Medieval SNA
(https://medievalsna.com/bibliography/ [accessed 28 February 2020]). For an example of a
successful application of network-models, see Cavan W. Concannon, *Assembling Early Chris-
tianity: Trade, Networks, and the Letters of Dionysius of Corinth* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni-
versity Press, 2017).

[54] Cf., Brock, "Manuscripts Copied in Edessa," 118.

This third model invites us to conceive of the surviving information as the remaining traces of a node and its networks. The fortunate combination of climatic conditions, practices of care and relative stability have preserved information about the engagement with 2 Baruch in this one particular node: we have access to 2 Baruch in the shape and format in which they preserved it. Over the centuries, there may very well have been other nodes in an extended network that may also have played a generic role in the transmission history of 2 Baruch. Today, all that remains of them are hints. Takrit or Edessa may, for instance, have served as such productive nodes in a larger, multi-node network. The monasteries in the Tur Abdin area[55] and one or more of the monastic communities in the vicinity of Jerusalem probably participated as well.[56] Whether they preserved 2 Baruch in the same format or in other formats than the one known from the Monastery of the Syrians we do not know.

6.1.4 An Old Testament Book: Infrastructures, Status and Agency

The above models of the transmission of 2 Baruch focus on human transmitters and networks of human agents: on the hands that copied 2 Baruch and on the feet that moved it from one place to another. However, in addition to and interwoven with these human efforts, a point could also be made for the infrastructures that enabled the spread of 2 Baruch along certain trajectories and the potential agency of particularly valuable artifacts. A focus on these infrastructures and agencies will shed light on features that might pass unnoticed if our analytical gaze rests only on humans. When I talk about "infrastructures" I refer to the organizing and disciplining capacities of structures and affordances, such as media and materiality, traditions and norms, collections and lists. Such infrastructures certainly depend on humans, their actions and their judgments, but they also operate beyond and across any specific person.[57]

One such infrastructure that has been at work in the transmission of 2 Baruch and that probably had bearings on its continued life is its definition in Syriac sources as an Old Testament book. Indeed, all the manuscripts that I have ex-

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[55] Thinking in terms of nodes and intersecting lines in a network may also help us to make sense of some of the outliers, for instance the lectionary manuscript Ms. 77. The binder note on folio 147r tells us that Gabriel completed the production of the manuscript at the monastery of Qarṭmin. This note also refers to his stays in Jerusalem and then in the Wadi al-Natrun. The manuscript is presently in Pampakuda, India. Ms. 77 has not been part of the primary materials of the present study and deserves more attention in future research.

[56] Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 40–41.

[57] I am inspired by the application of this concept in the field of media studies. Cf., in particular, John Durham Peters, *The Marvelous Clouds: Towards a Philosophy of Elemental Media* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, eds., *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures (The Geopolitics of Information)* (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2015).

plored in the current volume are Old Testament manuscripts: a *pandect*, a bound collection of two books and lectionary manuscripts. We know that 2 Baruch gained access to an Old Testament *pandect* in the sixth/seventh century. We do not know whether the book would have been included in bound collections of Old Testament books up until that point, but from then onwards the Old Testament trajectory serves as an infrastructure for the continued transmission of 2 Baruch.

Another, related, infrastructure is the development of a set selection of liturgical readings. The surviving manuscript materials show that once a list of lections from scripture had materialized into a lectionary manuscript, it increased the likelihood that the copying of a particular selection from a biblical book would be repeated. An example is the above-mentioned inclusion of 2 Bar 44:9–15 for reading on the Sunday of the Dead in the lectionary manuscripts Ms. Syr. 33, Add. 14,686 and Ms. 77. To put it bluntly, the fact that some passages of 2 Baruch were copied into more than one lectionary manuscript – and not other passages from the same book – is not a coincidence. Once a selection had been made and a lection had become part of a repertoire, this repertoire and its rig became an infrastructure for transmission. This of course does not mean that lections were, in any way, guaranteed a long life in public reading contexts – the flexibility of Syriac liturgical traditions has been duly noted. However, seeing the set selection and ordering of lections as an infrastructure still explains why select parts of 2 Baruch would systematically have enjoyed much wider circulation than others.

Chapter 1 of the present volume showed how certain Old Testament books routinely circulated together as collections and that they were often copied in a certain order. Once such an order or notion of a collection was established, it could become an infrastructure for transmission in its own right. It is imaginable that some books circulated and survived, first and foremost, because they belonged in a certain constellation and not due to a particular interest in the individual book. One possible example of this phenomenon is Arabic Manuscripts 589 and 7. As pointed out above, these codices mirror the order of books found in the Codex Ambrosianus. It is not necessarily the case that the interest in 2 Baruch in its own right is the reason for its inclusion in this order. As I also pointed out in the above presentation, the copy of 4 Ezra in Arabic Manuscripts 589 is embellished with exegetical headings and marginal notes, which would clearly aid the interpretation and use of that book. While situated next to it, the copy of 2 Baruch contains neither notes nor headings. This may indicate that the Arabic scribe copied 2 Baruch into this codex due to a notion that it belonged with 4 Ezra and not necessarily due to a profound interest in 2 Baruch as such.

This focus on infrastructures helps us see two important points more clearly. First, it makes sense to approach the circulation of 2 Baruch as a result of Syriac Old Testament manuscript traditions and their ordering constellations. This

indicates how strongly the circulation of a book, such as 2 Baruch, is entangled with the culture that transmitted it. It highlights that we, today, have access to this book and excerpts from it in the way that we do because Syriac Christians arranged them in a certain way that was repeated later on, which ensured their survival.

Second – on a pessimistic note – the focus on infrastructures suggests that it may not be because of 2 Baruch's high esteem that Syriac and later Arabic Christians preserved it. 2 Baruch's survival may depend just as much on the infrastructures that upheld it: notions of order, of collections and of co-circulation with certain other books. We cannot understand the transmission of 2 Baruch without also understanding the infrastructures that the book became part of and its entanglement with the traditions, norms and priorities of the cultures that preserved it. If we only focus on the discrete book we miss out on vital information.

An additional feature of the transmission history of 2 Baruch that should not pass unnoticed in a discussion of infrastructures is the potential agency of a very particular non-human agent: the Codex Ambrosianus. The decisive role of the Codex Ambrosianus in the history of transmission of 2 Baruch should be clear from previous chapters. The very fact that the current volume dedicates three chapters to the codex attests to its importance. However, I have not talked about this importance in terms of "agency" before, that is, assuming that once the significance of this codex was established socially, this material artifact affected the transmission of 2 Baruch by its very existence. The codex affected it by being part of social clusters that consist of humans, their practices, the material objects and constellations that shape actions, and the infrastructures that order assessment and priorities.[58]

In the case of the Codex Ambrosianus, this perspective might tease out some interesting further nuances of the life of 2 Baruch that again may move us beyond a myopic look at this book and highlight, instead, its entanglements with its literary and material surroundings. It may be that the very presence of the Codex Ambrosianus in the Monastery of the Syrians made this monastery a hub for the transmission of 2 Baruch. The fact that 2 Baruch was inscribed into this venerable old codex may have shaped its status as an Old Testament book and its place in the biblical historiography of the community. It is likely that the identity, contents, aesthetical and material affordances of this codex guaranteed the use of lections from 2 Baruch as scriptural readings. It is unlikely that monks dwelling in the Monastery of the Syrians would find 2 Baruch in many other Old Testament codices kept on the premises, but the ܠܗ note in the margin close to 2 Bar 72:1 in the Codex Ambrosianus shows an active reader's attention to the passage

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[58] My thinking about material artifacts and their agency is inspired by some trajectories of practice theory. For a clarifying overview of this theoretical field, see Reckwitz, "The Status of the 'Material'."

in this particular embodiment. The inclusion of 2 Baruch in the venerable codex probably validated the aptness of the book and the eligibility of the passage for liturgical use. Put differently, because later readers came across 2 Baruch in this Old Testament codex they included excerpts of it alongside excerpts from other Old Testament books. It is indeed imaginable that without this particular codex and its agency in the community in which it was kept, the history of transmission of 2 Baruch would have looked very different. In fact, as suggested in chapter 2, it is possible that we would not have known 2 Baruch at all.

6.1.5 The Relevance of Literary Contents

A final feature that influenced the transmission of 2 Baruch is the relevance of its literary contents. To academic disciplines dedicated to the study of literary texts, pointing to the explanatory power of a book's literary contents in its continuing transmission may appear as a given. However, in the present discussion, I have chosen to present it as the last of many features, not to undermine its importance, but respectfully to lead my readers with a background in these disciplines to see that literary contents are only one of several aspects that explain the continued engagement with 2 Baruch.

Indeed, it is beyond doubt that the relevance of its literary contents is one of the reasons why scribes continued to copy 2 Baruch. The main hypothesis of chapter 1 is that the Codex Ambrosianus includes 2 Baruch because it fills a void in the extended biblical storyline. The codex includes the book and situates it where it does, due to 2 Baruch's focus on the destruction of the first temple in Jerusalem and the events that follow in the city's vicinity in the aftermath of its destruction. Hence, the literary contents of the book are probably the reason why 2 Baruch was included in this codex in the first place. Another example of the salience of 2 Baruch's literary contents is the choice of reading 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 as a lection from the Old Testament on Easter Sunday. As chapter 4 suggests, the rich description of the Messianic reign in this passage fits not only the event of Easter Sunday but also the contents of other lections that the lectionary manuscripts Add. 14,686 and Add. 14,687 provide to be read at the event.[59]

Pinpointing the attested engagement with literary contents is interesting both because it highlights some of the parameters of 2 Baruch's history of transmission and because it facilitates a critical engagement with some of the main discourses of previous scholarship. The first issue is the selections that took place in transmission. A general point of logic is that even though Syriac Christians may

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[59] Furthermore, I have noted in previous chapters, but not explored, the reading of a lection from 2 Bar 44:9–15 at the event of the Sunday of the Dead. It is likely, though, that the passage's focus on righteousness and afterlife and its general literary qualities would be reasons for the selection.

well have transmitted a text that was originally older and Jewish, they would neither have known the intentions of any originating community, nor have been familiar with the disciplinary discourses that came to decide what twenty-first-century scholarship would consider to be the book's most interesting parts. They transmitted 2 Baruch because they needed it for their own purposes, and the transmission happened on their terms.

This point is particularly important when we consider excerption practices. For one, contemporary studies of select passages of 2 Baruch, which reflect the priorities and concerns of the contemporary academic debates, have not necessarily dealt with the passages that engaged those who transmitted the text. The much-referenced resurrection and transmission scene in 2 Bar 49–50, for instance, made no particular imprint on surviving manuscripts. In fact, as I will return to below, active Arabic readers even erased parts of it.[60] This suggests that, although the literary contents of 2 Baruch are important, relevance is not an intrinsic quality of the text: it is a relational phenomenon. It is the relevance of the text to the transmitters' tastes, reading practices and events that decides what they end up copying.

Another issue that a focus on literary contents may help us to see is the disproportionally great importance that the scholarly debate has attributed to the status of 2 Baruch. Throughout the research history, the status of 2 Baruch as "apocryphal" or "pseudepigraphal," has served as a major explanatory key to the history of the book. This focus is part of a general concern with canon and authority in contemporary academic discourses but it may not fruitfully grasp the concerns of the transmitting party. One point is that this assessment is clearly not able to grasp a major aspect of the transmission history of 2 Baruch: its transmission as an Old Testament book. Another issue is that the preoccupation with status has made scholars blind to the function of other factors. The Codex Ambrosianus is, once again, an example. I certainly do not deny that 2 Baruch must have enjoyed a certain status in order to be included in a *deluxe* Old Testament codex in the first place.[61] On the contrary, it is unlikely that just any book would end up between its covers. Nevertheless, as chapter 1 showed, the inclusion of 2 Baruch in this codex is likely to rely just as much on the perceived relevance of its literary contents to the historiographical project that the codex served to materialize. The scripted reading of 2 Baruch on Easter Sunday is another example. Even though Easter Sunday is the most important Sunday of the church year, that does not mean that 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 entered the list of readings of Add. 14,687 because 2 Baruch was considered to be the most important Old Testament

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[60] Erasure is certainly a form of engagement with a text, but it is noteworthy that the deleted parts were not overwritten.

[61] Furthermore, as suggested by the above discussion of the potential agency of the Codex Ambrosianus, it is likely that the inclusion of 2 Baruch in this codex could indeed have improved its status.

book. Although the lection would not have been included at all had it not been conceived as a lection from the Old Testament, this is probably just one of the reasons for its inclusion. Had the literary contents of 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 not been perceived as relevant to the event of Easter Sunday, it would never have been included in Add. 14,687.

6.1.6 The Entangled Transmission of 2 Baruch

Summing up, the known manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch depends on specific circumstances and cultural contexts. It does not happen in a void. The known transmission of the book is Christian. An important part of this Christian transmission history is monastic. It takes place in Egypt, with an identifiable node in a well-connected monastic community. The monastic community in the Monastery of the Syrians offered the storage facilities, the climate and stability, the knowhow and the care that ensured the preservation of the book. The transmission of 2 Baruch also depends on the agency of a particular text carrier, the Codex Ambrosianus. This codex probably guaranteed its validity as an Old Testament book and thus its further transmission in lectionary manuscripts. The transmission of the book also relies on the continued relevance of 2 Baruch's literary contents, particularly its description of the Messiah, Jerusalem and the epistles that Baruch sent across the river(s) to the East.

This exploration of the transmission history shows how the 2 Baruch that we know today depends on and is thoroughly entangled with its – predominantly Syriac Christian – transmission process. The transmission depends on its transmitters, their institutional organizations, their infrastructures and material environments and their knowledge production, priorities and economy. It depends on their literary taste, selections, theological imagination and religious needs. It is one thing to point this out – descriptively – as traceable aspects of historical processes. It is another thing to acknowledge their explanatory value. These are the factors that systematically decide what remains and, thus, what is left for us to explore. It means, among other things, that those who wish to explore 2 Baruch as a first/second-century CE Jewish book are fully dependent on the remains of a transmission history that is deeply entangled with the Syriac traditions that molded it.

6.2 Transmission Means Transformation: Main Adjustments

This volume sets out to explore the transmission history of 2 Baruch. Or, let me put it this way: if "the transmission history of 2 Baruch" were ever a precise representation of realities on the ground, writing this volume would have

been easy, but it is not. On the ground, transmission is seldom a linear process. Transmission involves transformation – sometimes to the extent that it no longer makes sense to talk about a consistent history of transmission of an easily identifiable book.[62]

So what is it that I am studying, really, when I say that I am studying the transmission of 2 Baruch? How does this representation grasp the materials that survive, and how does it make sense of the ways in which these remains are entangled with particular material, historical and cultural constellations? Building on the previous chapters of the volume, the following section explores five arenas of transformation that matter to our conception of the circulating entity: the format of the literary and layout entity, the contents of the literary text, the ascription of writings to figures, the co-circulation of books in manuscripts and the reinterpretation of literary contents.

6.2.1 Adjusting the Format: In Bits and Pieces

This volume started with a focus on 2 Baruch as a "book."[63] In line with the tendency in the history of research to represent 2 Baruch as a discrete and well-conceived composition, I presented 2 Baruch as a book-sized entity with a clear work-identification. This conception of 2 Baruch and the focus on the book in research is by no means wrong. 2 Baruch appears in the Codex Ambrosianus as a book. Arabic Manuscripts 589 lacks the first part and contains a slightly different form of the text, but there is no doubt that this codex also provides a copy of the book 2 Baruch. In other words, two known manuscripts contain copies that we can fruitfully and with confidence name "copies of 2 Baruch," and they show that there was once transmission and circulation of a book-sized 2 Baruch.

However, a limited focus on the book format is not satisfactory. This is only one of the ways in which 2 Baruch circulated. The lectionary manuscripts that preserve lections from 2 Baruch contain excerpted passages. This is what lectionary manuscripts are and do: they circulate lections excerpted from biblical books; they do not contain complete texts. In addition, if we assume, as many scholars have done, that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe was at some point excerpted from Syriac 2 Baruch before it started to circulate independently in Syriac transmission, the number of manuscripts that contain an excerpted part of 2 Baruch grows to fifty-eight.[64]

Excerption does not only happen through processes of copying; it happens through practices of reading as well. It is, of course, likely that some readers

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[62] Cf., e. g., Bryant, *Fluid Text*, 3–5; Peter Schäfer, *Mirror of His Beauty: Feminine Images of God from the Bible to the Early Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 232.

[63] Cf., the definition of "book" in the General Introduction.

[64] Cf., the discussion in chapter 5.

would have engaged with the book-sized copies of 2 Baruch as complete books and read them as continuous texts. However, some features of the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus suggest that this may not have been a frequent reading practice. As I proposed in chapter 3, the reading practices that have left visual traces in the codex suggest that 2 Baruch has been read in bits and pieces. Active readers marked out the passage that starts with 2 Bar 72:1 and paid particular attention to the prayer in 2 Bar 21. I have noted the lack of the seventh affliction in 2 Bar 27. No readers have highlighted this rather obvious lack, though. Not that they had to, but if several readers had read 2 Bar 27 as part of a comprehensive reading of the book it would not have been surprising to see them either signposting the gap or trying to bridge it with a correction. Such corrections in the shape of additions of missing text in the margins and intercolumns appear elsewhere in the codex.[65] Some other mistakes in the text of 2 Baruch were indeed corrected, although many of these corrections may have entered the codex in the production process.[66] There are no corrections in the copy that are undeniably the product of post-production hands.[67] It is also noteworthy that a considerable number of the rosettes in the latter part of the copy of 2 Baruch were never completed.[68] The initial horizontal strokes of the rosettes, inscribed in brownish black ink as part of the copying of the text in the columns, are there to identify the end of sense units, but no one added the four red dots that would have completed them. If 2 Baruch were a much-read book, it is likely that some later active reader would have completed them, not least since delimitation marks are among the most common additional marks that active readers inscribed in the codex.[69]

Nonetheless, the findings from chapters 3 through 5 leave little doubt that a circulation in bits and pieces played an important role in the transmission history of 2 Baruch. The Syriac engagement presumably led to the creation of an autonomously circulating epistle and to independently circulating liturgical lections, as well as particular reader attention to select passages.

6.2.1a Excerption, Manuscript Specialization and the Monastery of the Syrians

A look at the historical development of Syriac manuscript production shows that this finding should hardly surprise us. As Brock pointed out in several publications, during the period after the ninth century, a substantial part of the manuscripts that Syriac scribes copied contained anthological collections of excerpted texts. In other words, after this time the copying of full books became

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[65] Cf., e. g., folios 8v, 25r and 74r.

[66] Cf., e. g., folios 261r, 265v and 266r–v.

[67] Note that Albrektson et al. propose that there are more corrections in the epistle copied in 2 Bar 78–86 than in the copy of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe (*Jeremiah*, 236).

[68] Cf., in particular, folios 266r–v.

[69] Cf., chapter 3 of the current volume.

less frequent. Brock suggested that there may be economical reasons for this shift. Writing materials were costly, and it would have been more expensive to copy full books than to copy only the parts of the texts that were in use in a dedicated practice.[70] This development meant that Syriac manuscripts became more specialized. For instance, instead of copying a full Old Testament manuscript, scribes copied lectionary manuscripts, designed specifically to aid the reading of scripture in a public worship context. The scribe Bakos is a pertinent example. Bakos is renowned for his productivity and among the remains of his production, many of the manuscripts that he copied were anthological collections.[71]

As Brock showed, this tendency is not universally applicable, but it is a dominant feature of the period. In manuscripts dated to the eighth/ninth century and later, the literature associated with Ephrem and Aphrahat, for instance, comes down to us mainly in excerpted parts. This tendency also holds true for the literature associated with other important Syriac figures, such as Philoxenus of Mabbug and John of Ephesus. Excerpts from their writings became part of liturgical compilations and monastic anthologies.[72]

Thus, the circulation of 2 Baruch in bits and pieces would be a highly common form of transmission in the period after the ninth century.[73] This mediation does not necessarily suggest the irrelevance of 2 Baruch.[74] Rather, it is a sign of a certain applicability. It hints at an already-established practice of use that now materialized in specialized manuscripts because the pieces were considered relevant and needed. In addition, as these specialized manuscripts continued to circulate and give life to new copies, they became a viable way of transmitting the selected passages from 2 Baruch as integral parts of new compilations.[75]

One additional takeaway from Brock's exploration of the surviving Syriac manuscript materials is that we are, in fact, lucky to have a complete copy of 2 Baruch at all. Brock pointed out that a large number of the book-sized copies that are extant among Syriac manuscripts survive because scribes copied them in this format before the shift in the ninth century and because they were sub-

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[70] Brock, "Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 7.

[71] Cf., Brock, "Dated Syriac Manuscripts," 358–59. While in Edessa, he also copied manuscripts of the Gospels (Brock, "Manuscripts Copied in Edessa," 116–18).

[72] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 18–21. Cf., Grigory Kessel, "Syriac Monastic Miscellanies," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Alexander Bausi et al. (Hamburg: Comparative Manuscript Studies, 2015), 411–14 esp. 411–12.

[73] Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 21 and 23; idem, "Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 7. Confer the manuscripts listed in Brock, "Tentative Checklist," 25–36. For literature outside the Syriac realm, see, e.g., Sébastien Morlet, *Lire en extraits. Lecture et production des textes, del'Antiquité à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2015).

[74] Cf., Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 5.

[75] See Kessel, "Syriac Monastic Miscellanies," 411–12; Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 55–56. Cf., Chartier, *Order of Books*, 90.

sequently taken to and kept at the Monastery of the Syrians.[76] Once again, the key role of the Monastery of the Syrians in the transmission history of 2 Baruch is evident. The survival of full copies of books tends to be linked to the preservation of early manuscripts, and as it were, the Monastery of the Syrians provided the repository that came to guarantee their survival. Were it not for the Monastery of the Syrians, the chances are that we would only know pieces of 2 Baruch from anthological compilations.

This attention to the formats displays, once again, the extent of the transmission of 2 Baruch's entanglement with the Syriac tradition that preserved it and consequently, the dependence of our access to 2 Baruch on the historical processes that shaped its mediation.

2 Baruch also survives in bits and pieces. It does so due to economic circumstances and the developing specialization of Syriac manuscript production in the Middle Ages. Importantly, the attention to this adjustment of formats may arouse our curiosity regarding what the transmission practice created among those who engaged with pieces of 2 Baruch. Readers who engaged with the parts that circulated independently would have read them in the context of other selected pieces from scripture, or they would have engaged with them in the context of other literary corpora. These corpora would have equipped them with new and other hermeneutical potential that made for equally interesting new interpretations and reading practices.[77] The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe is a case in point. As the appendix to chapter 5 proposed, it is likely that the epistle that became the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe originated with Syriac 2 Baruch. However, it already circulated independently from 2 Baruch in the sixth/seventh century and became a standard part of many Peshitta Old Testament codices. Potentially, we may interpret the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe as an epitomized work that came to stand-in for the book-length copy of 2 Baruch in Syriac transmission.[78] Copying 2 Baruch in its entirety may have become too expensive and too cumbersome and generally may not have met the needs of Syriac-reading communities.[79]

Neither of these aspects pertaining to formats can be disentangled from the historical processes that decided 2 Baruch's transmission. This is not neutral information. The entanglement decides what remains.

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[76] Or alternatively, in St. Catherine's Monastery. Cf., Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisbis," 21 and 23.

[77] Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," esp. 55–56, Cf., Chartier, *Order of Books*, 90 and Morlet, *Lire en extraits.*

[78] Cf., Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 18.

[79] Again, epitomized works are not foreign to the history of Syriac literature. Cf., Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 56; Minov, "Syriac," 115–29.

6.2.2 Adjusting the Text to New Audiences and Needs

Paying attention to the changes that entered the literary text of 2 Baruch through the transmission process has been an important issue ever since the publication of Charles's critical edition of the book. Due to the efforts of previous editors, textual change and the resulting variance across manuscript copies constitute one of the features that has been covered best in the history of research on 2 Baruch. This is the reason why I have granted the aspect of textual variance relatively little attention in this volume.

Obviously, the way in which editions of 2 Baruch frame and assess textual change and the variance that it produces correlate with their purpose. Some editors have noted variance for comparative reasons, in terms of "differences" and "similarities." Others have paid attention to variance as "corruption." The motivation for noting and engaging with the variance has typically either been to contain the variance to create a readable text for communities that would still like to use it, or to move behind the chaotic pluriformity to gain access to the singular, early text by means of textual criticism. In all these cases, the attention to variance has been part of a backwards-looking project.[80]

Inspired by perspectives such as New Philology, the motivation for the scholarly attention to textual variance in manuscripts is shifting. Instead of noting the variance in the text of a copy as something that distorts the access to an earlier text, scholars focus increasingly on the changes that occur in transmission as interesting sources to continuing engagement with the text.[81] They pay attention to the contemporaneous circumstances of each copy and their materialization in manuscripts to explore the ongoing adjustment of a text in transmission. This perspective provides a forward-looking gaze and takes an interest in how texts continue to evolve. During the 2010s, this alternative perspective on textual variance slowly crept into the study of 2 Baruch as well.[82]

A point on method is necessary before I proceed. The manuscript attestation of 2 Baruch is limited. We do not know exactly how the surviving manuscripts relate to each other, and, although it is likely that more manuscripts once contained the book, we do not know how many we have lost, what collections those manuscripts would have contained or whether different forms of the text of 2 Baruch circulated simultaneously. This means that the manuscripts provide

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[80] Cf., Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxiv–xxv; Dedering, "Apocalypse of Baruch," ii–iv; Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 4; Baars, "Neue Textzeugen," 477; Leemhuis et al., *The Arabic Text*, vii; Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 53.

[81] The literature that promotes this perspective is growing rapidly. See the introduction to New Philology in the General Introduction. Cf., also the overview in Lundhaug and Lied, "Studying Snapshots," 1–19, esp. 9–10.

[82] Cf., e.g., Lied, "Reception of the Pseudepigrapha" (2012); eadem, "*Nachleben* and Textual Identity" (2013).

"snapshots of an evolving tradition";[83] potentially of a pluriform and evolving tradition. Writing a comprehensive textual history of 2 Baruch is therefore obviously impossible. In the following, I will thus focus on the two manuscripts, P.Oxy. III 403 and Arabic Manuscripts 589, that when compared with the copy in the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus, provide access to two snapshots of the development of the text. When possible, I will explore how this development is intertwined with the historically specific processes that created them.

6.2.2a The Greek Fragments and the Syriac Copy in the Codex Ambrosianus

Fragments of a fourth/fifth-century Greek version of 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 survive.[84] These Greek fragments are of particular relevance to the present discussion, first, because they prove that 2 Baruch – or parts of it – existed before the sixth century. This is not a statement of the obvious. 2 Baruch's existence in the early centuries of the common era is a hypothesis that needs to be argued. Second, the Greek fragments are important because they provide a unique glimpse into the state of the text of 2 Baruch before the sixth/seventh-century production of the Codex Ambrosianus – the copy that has served as the text witness *par excellence* throughout the research history of 2 Baruch.[85]

The title of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus shows that those who manufactured the codex identified its text as a translation from Greek to Syriac. Some mistakes in the Syriac text strongly suggest that this was indeed the case.[86] The fact that the Syriac text has at some point, been translated from Greek does not mean that the surviving Greek fragments from Oxyrhynchus contain the text from which the surviving Syriac translation was made.[87] There may have been more manuscripts and more text forms circulating both in Greek and in Syriac

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[83] Cf., the General Introduction. Cf., Lundhaug and Lied, "Studying Snapshots," 1. The use of the metaphor in Lundhaug and Lied is inspired by David C. Parker, "Textual Criticism and Theology," *Expository Times* 118/12 (2007): 583–89 at 586.

[84] For a more detailed codicological description, see Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 3–4; Lied, "2.2.2 Greek," 45–46.

[85] Cf., chapter 1 of the present volume.

[86] The most famous mistake is the occurrence of the Syriac ܗܝ ܒܝܬܐ "ornament/decoration" in 2 Bar 3:7 in a context in which "world" or "universe" or "kosmos" would make much more sense. The Greek term κόσμος carries both meanings. Cf., Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxii, for a convenient overview.

[87] Cf., Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxiii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:370. Note that papyrus fragments with Syriac script were also found at Oxyrhynchus (D. S. Margoliouth, "Notes on Syriac Papyrus Fragments from Oxyrhynchus," *JEA* 2/4 [1915]: 214–16). This does not mean that this must have been the place where a translation took place, but it shows that knowledge of both languages was present in this city. On features of the widespread Syriac translation from Greek at the time, see Sebastian P. Brock, "Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity," *GRBS* 20 (1979): 69–87; idem, *Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 7–9, 14–15, 17–19, Aaron M. Butts, *Language Change in the Wake of Empire: Syriac in Its Greco-Roman Context,* LSAWS 11 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016); Minov, "Syriac," 103–5.
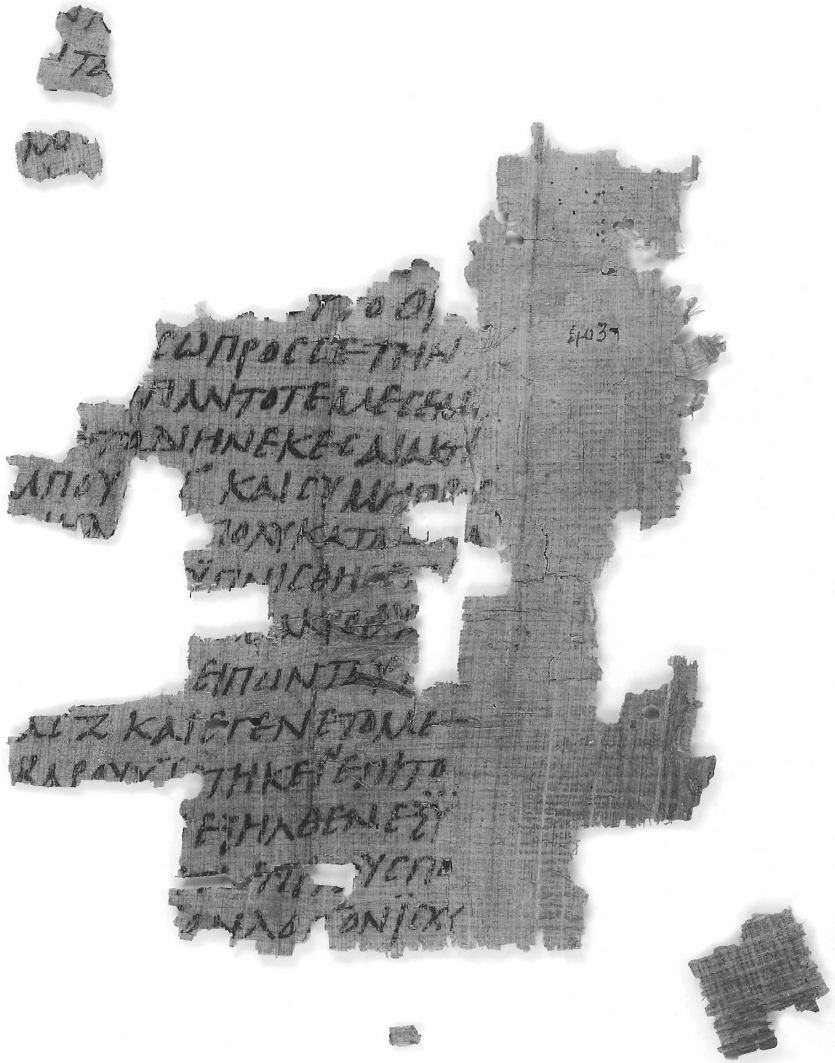
Figure 11: New York, Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, P.Oxy. III 403, recto. © Special Collections, Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, General Theological Seminary.

at the same time. Nevertheless, we have access to a Greek fourth/fifth-century version of chapters 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 and a sixth/seventh-century Syriac book-sized version and their mere existence enables us to explore some similarities and differences and to observe that change took place.

In the 1903 publication of the fragments, Grenfell and Hunt had already compared the Greek text with the Syriac.[88] Following their lead, several scholars have listed and commented on the similarities and differences.[89] Hence, I will not reiterate the detailed accounts of the variance here. Rather, drawing on the findings of previous research and aided by my own inspection of the fragments in New York,[90] I will focus on the types of changes that the Syriac text attests to in comparison with the Greek text. With the above methodological reservations in mind, this investigation may provide us with a notion of the level of variation and some glimpses of the transformations that 2 Baruch underwent in translation and transmission before the sixth/seventh century.

When comparing the Greek text of P.Oxy. III 403 with the text preserved in Syriac, the general impression is that the overall order and contents of the text in chapters 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 have remained relatively stable[91] in transmission. The surviving text on the recto and verso of the main Greek fragment[92] fits the format and length of the text that we know from Syriac 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3.[93] However, within this frame of relative stability, numerous micro-level instances of variance show that the text of these chapters changed between the fourth/fifth and the sixth/seventh centuries: before, after or during translation from Greek to Syriac or in the subsequent Syriac copying and adaption. The level of variance has led scholars to describe the translator as "less accurate"[94] and the translation as "a free rendering"[95] of the Greek version.[96]

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[88] They received assistance from Charles (see Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 3; Robert H. Charles, "II Baruch," 472.

[89] Cf., in particular, Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxii–lxiv, 219–23; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:40–43, 363–70. Cf., also Daniel M. Gurtner, "Second Baruch from Greek into Syriac: An Examination of Translational Features and Their (Potential) Implications" (paper presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Denver 17 November 2018). I am grateful to Gurtner for sharing the unpublished paper with me.

[90] I am grateful for the help and hospitality of the Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, at the General Theological Seminary in New York (2 May 2013).

[91] By "relatively stable" I mean that the Syriac copy has kept the order and length of the text in the relevant chapters intact.

[92] P.Oxy. III 403 consists of five fragments from the same papyrus sheet. Four of them are very small; one of them does not contain ink. Grenfell and Hunt do not mention the four smaller fragments in their edition (See, Lied, "2.2.2 Greek," 45).

[93] See, Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxiii; Lied, "2.2.2 Greek," 46.

[94] Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 4.

[95] Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," 616.

[96] Cf., furthermore, Violet, *Apokalypsen,* lxii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1: 363, 370.

First, on a few occasions, the Syriac is expansive.[97] Second, the Syriac some-
times clarifies, or at least chooses an interpretation, where the Greek is ambig-
uous.[98] Third, the Syriac sometimes simplifies Greek expressions (2 Bar 13:11) or
excludes parts from the Greek (2 Bar 12:3).[99] Fourth, the Syriac introduces nu-
merous minor alterations that affect nuances but that do not change the overall
meaning of the text.[100] There are also examples of scribal errors and misspellings
in the Greek fragment, corrected by a later hand.[101]

This very brief overview shows that, although the format and order of 2 Bar
12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 remained relatively stable, the surviving Syriac version
varies from the surviving Greek one. In fact, the micro-level changes are nu-
merous and on some occasions, these changes introduced new conceptions and
ideas to the text.

For the overall argument in this chapter it is important to keep in mind that
the surviving Greek fragments contain 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 only. Ac-
cording to estimates, the Syriac copy of 2 Baruch amounts to approximately
eight thousand eight hundred words. The surviving Greek fragments contain
seventy surviving complete words and twenty-nine partially surviving words,
reconstructed by Grenfell and Hunt.[102] Thus, the variance summarized above,
and described in detail in previous publications, appears within the very limited

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[97] A pertinent example of this trend is the addition of three verbs in Syriac 2 Bar 12:3, each of
them duplicating a singular Greek verb (*verso*, 6–8). See Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse
of Baruch," 4; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxiii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:365; Gurtner,
"Second Baruch from Greek into Syriac," no pages.

[98] The Syriac of 2 Bar 13:12, for instance, specifies who the agent and recipients of the bene-
fits are ("I have benefitted you" [ܠܟܘܢ ܐܛܐܒܬ ܐܢܐ]). The Syriac of 14:1 adds/clarifies that this
happens "After these things" (ܗܠܝܢ ܒܬܪ ܡܢ). Cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch* I, 368.

[99] The Greek of 2 Bar 12:3 includes "and you" (και συ). The Syriac does not. Bogaert,
Apocalypse de Baruch, 1:365.

[100] Cf., Grenfell and Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 6–7; Gurtner, "Second Baruch from
Greek into Syriac," no pages.

[101] A later hand corrected a potential scribal error in 2 Bar 14:2 (*recto*, line 11), adding an
initial *alpha*, changing the first-hand μαρτυρησαν[… into αμαρτυρνσαν[… (Cf., Grenfell and
Hunt, "403. Apocalypse of Baruch," 7; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:370). The initial error
in the Greek fragment may indicate that the text was copied from a *Vorlage* that was visually
available to the scribe, which hints at the existence of an older manuscript containing 2 Baruch
and thus at least one more chain in the history of transmission of the text. The fact that someone
corrected it may also suggest that a reader was familiar with another reading/the reading of the
Vorlage, which he or she considered to be the correct reading.

[102] My count of "complete words" is generous and includes some words that have been
partially damaged but for which there is no doubt about the reading since remains of all the
letters survive. "Partially surviving words" refer mostly to the words that have been damaged
by vertical damage patterns. This means that letters are missing and that Grenfell and Hunt
reconstructed them. The number includes the partially preserved words surviving on all the
five fragments that make up P.Oxy. III 403. Gurtner counted 166 words ("Second Baruch from
Greek into Syriac," no pages). His word count includes Grenfell and Hunts reconstructions of
the missing Greek text based on the Syriac. It is not based on what can currently be seen in the
papyrus fragment.

span of ninty-seven surviving words. We can only hypothesize what the level of variance would have been had more parts of the Greek text survived. If we were to make such an estimate, we would have to factor in that we know neither whether the form of the book that the Syriac copy preserves would resemble the form in which it circulated in Greek, nor whether other chapters would have shared the same relative stability that we see in the surviving fragments. The text that remains shows that those who transmitted and translated 2 Bar 12:1–13:2 and 13:11–14:3 were willing to adapt these passages of the text to new cultural and linguistic repertoires. They may well have adapted other parts of the text too.

6.2.2b The Syriac Copy in the Codex Ambrosianus and the Copy in Arabic Manuscripts 589[103]

The copy of 2 Baruch in the Arabic Manuscripts 589 offers a particularly intriguing window on the changes that occurred in the text of 2 Baruch as it continued to circulate and migrate into new contexts. As pointed out above, the Arabic manuscript preserves an almost complete copy, which means that, in contrast to the above exploration of the text preserved in the Greek fragments, we may in this case compare two book-length copies. On the macro level, a certain stability deserves notice. The length of the Arabic copy generally matches that of the Syriac one. Both copies include the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah.[104] There are no other major changes to the formats of the two copies. However, once more, on the micro level, the level of textual variance is tangible. Thus, Drint described the Arabic translation as a "rather free rendering of the Syriac text."[105]

In their edition, Leemhuis et al. provide both detailed lists and a systematic categorization of the textual variance of the Arabic version.[106] They started by pointing out that 2 Bar 1:1–3:1 and 25:3–29:4 are missing, but that they are lacking only because the outer sheet of the first quire has been lost. They pointed out that some other passages of a certain length are also missing (2 Bar 42:3, 5; 85:9–10). These passages were probably not included in the first place. Furthermore, according to Leemhuis et al., the Arabic copy omits some words and phrases, condenses others and renders some passages twice. There are examples both of literal translations of and explicit deviations from the Syriac. Finally, a

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[103] Since I do not know Arabic, this paragraph depends fully on previous research. Based on digital images, I have checked the layout of the page, the inferred changes made to it and the visually available material constitution of the manuscript.

[104] Although, as pointed out in chapter 5, it is possible that the Arabic codex represents the epistle as an autonomous work, circulating with 2 Baruch.

[105] Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 53. Cf., Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version," 102. Leemhuis et al. agree that "the Arabic translator handled his text rather freely" (Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 11).

[106] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 5–12. Cf., also Drint, "Mount Sinai Arabic Version"; eadem, "2.2.4 Arabic."

corrector or an active reader has attempted to erase two passages – 2 Bar 50:4 and 56:10–14.[107]

Some parts of the variance in the Arabic copy can fruitfully be understood as scribal errors. According to Leemhuis et al., some changes are for instance due to the scribe's misreading of his Kufic *Vorlage* or the result of skipping or duplication of words and lines in the copying process.[108] However, both Drint and Leemhuis et al. ascribed a fair share of agency to the Arabic translator or scribe, whom they describe as disagreeing with, adjusting, interpreting or misunderstanding the Syriac text. Importantly, they assumed that many of the variant readings may have been introduced to "give a better reading" of the text.[109] It is particularly interesting to note that some of the changes concern passages with contested contents. The partial erasure in 50:4 attempts to delete the description of the post-resurrection recognition and judgment scene. The partly erased area in 56:10–14 contains the description of the fallen angels. Drint interpreted this as a reaction to questionable ideas in the text. A corrector, or an active reader, found these passages of 2 Baruch to be problematic.[110]

Leemhuis et al. held that the translator adapted the translation to the vocabulary of his environment.[111] Drint elaborated on this point, using the occurrence of Quranic idioms in the Arabic copy as a case in point. According to Drint, since Islamic religious terminology was already part of the vocabulary at the time of the translation and copying of 2 Baruch, it is not surprising to see "a definite Islamic tenor" to the text. The most obvious example of such an adjustment to the cultural/religious context and its idioms is the use of the *basmalah* formula at the beginning of the copy of the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah in 2 Bar 78:1.[112]

Summing up, the Arabic copy of 2 Baruch provides a fascinating look into the adjustments that the text of 2 Baruch underwent as it crossed over from a Syriac to an Arabic linguistic and cultural sphere. The Arabic copy suggests that the translator, and/or the scribe, adjusted the language and the contents to new audiences, tastes and circumstances.

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[107] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 5–12. Note that the erased area in chapter 56 is not large enough to include the text of all these verses. Probably, some of the verses were already missing in the copy before someone erased the remaining text.

[108] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 5–7. Cf., furthermore, Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 55–56.

[109] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 1l, Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 57.

[110] https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279390714-ms/ (accessed 2 March 2020). See images 18 and 23.

[111] Leemhuis et al., *Arabic Text*, 8.

[112] Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 55. Cf., chapter 5 of the current volume.
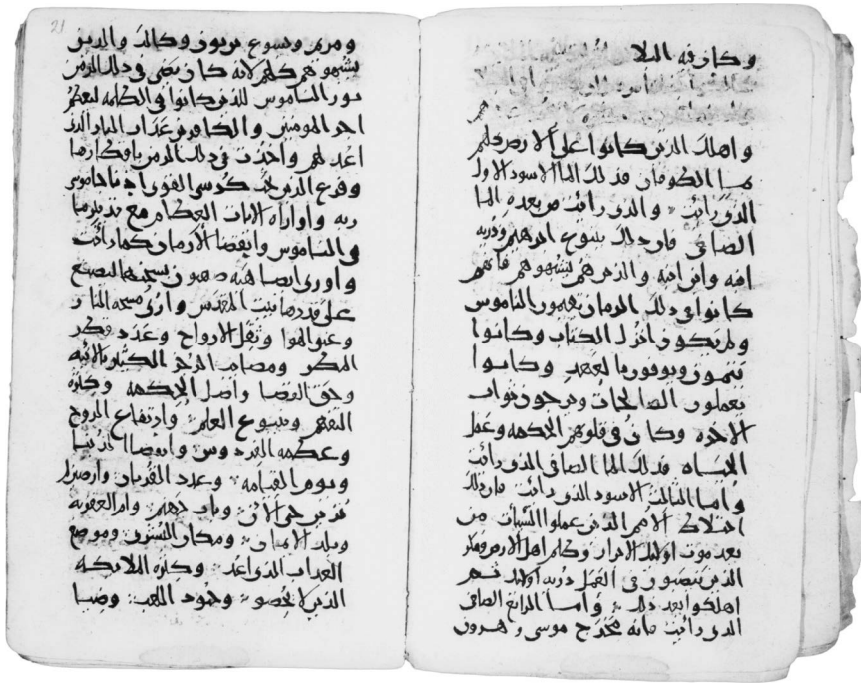
Figure 12: Erasure. St. Catherine's Monastery, Arabic Manuscripts 589, folio 20v. Photo credits (public domain): Library of Congress Collection of Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai.[113]

6.2.2c The Evolving Text

These examples provide scant but valuable glimpses of the changes that transformed the text of 2 Baruch as it continued to circulate. The fact that texts change in transmission is well known. Indeed, texts transmitted in a manuscript culture will inevitably change. The questions are rather how we value and apply this information, what our purpose for engaging with manuscript variance is and what a critical appreciation of former scholarly treatment of textual transformation may help us to see.

The first point is that, with the exception of the information we may gather from the Greek fragment, we know very little about the condition of 2 Baruch before the sixth/seventh century. It is crucial to highlight that the procedure of using the sixth/seventh-century copy as a witness to a first/second-century text depends fully on the conviction that textual criticism may safely bridge the five-hundred-year gap between the oldest book-length copy and the assumed period

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[113] https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00279390714-ms/?sp=23&r=0.005,0.003, 0.984,0.393,0 (accessed 2 March 2020).

of origin of the text. Regardless of our confidence in text-critical procedures, the fact remains that our access to a pre-sixth-century text is severely restricted. This also means that we know very little about the ways in which and the extent to which changes entered the text of 2 Baruch during transmission before the sixth century. This point is important in its own right and represents a challenge to the study of 2 Baruch as a first/second-century text. It is also a challenge to studies that have looked for potential Jewish and Christian layers in the text. There is simply no way of knowing what the text looked like in the first centuries of the common era – if indeed we accept unconditionally the claim that this is the period in which 2 Baruch originated.

Second, the exploration of the Greek and Arabic versions and the comparison with the Syriac copy in the Codex Ambrosianus provide examples of the types of changes that affected the text. We have seen that on the macro level the overall order of the Arabic text remained relatively stable. Indeed, none of the surviving sources positively suggest that the literary text of the book-length copy of 2 Baruch underwent major transformations. However, this is a claim that needs to be held in check by paying simultaneous attention to some complicating factors. It is undeniable that parts of the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch has been lost and potentially could have pointed us in other directions. Furthermore, the Greek fragment is so small that we cannot use it to say anything definite about the condition of a (hypothetical) larger fourth/fifth-century text form.[114] Finally, the notion of relative stability on the macro-level is created primarily by the comparison of the Syriac and Arabic copies. It remains possible that this stability is a post-sixth/seventh-century phenomenon. We do not know for certain that all the various sections of 2 Baruch were included from the very beginning.[115]

As we have also observed in the above analysis, on the micro level, the changes are numerous. Some of these changes can profitably be described as deliberate interventions. In many of the cases, these interventions suggest that the text of 2 Baruch was adjusted to new audiences. Adjustments, such as the addition of the *basmalah*-formula, make sense and they become fascinating items of study in their own right when we explore them in the light of the cultural/religious contexts that produced them. For the purpose of the present discussion, the important point is that the extant manuscripts provide access to

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[114] We may imagine that the larger form was a book format, more or less similar to the Syriac copy of 2 Baruch, or that P.Oxy. II 403 constitutes fragments of an anthological collection of shorter pieces.

[115] That is, if such a beginning can ever be established or fruitfully imagined (cf., Breed, *Nomadic Text*, 2–3). A relevant question is whether 2 Baruch itself is a compilation: an archive of smaller literary pieces associated with Baruch and kept together by a frame narrative. We do not know when 2 Baruch acquired its present structure. We do know, though, that Syriac scribes took part in the construction of similar compilations (Cf., Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 55–58). Furthermore, the composite character of 2 Baruch may have made readers treat it as a compilation.

snapshots of a more comprehensive history of transmission. They show that 2 Baruch evolved both before and after its inscription into the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus.

This insight leads me to my third and final point. When text critics apply the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus as a "witness" to an early/ earlier text, they take one snapshot of an evolving text and use it either as a representation of an unknown earlier text form or to talk about the entire history of the book. It is very likely that the Syriac text of the Codex Ambrosianus's copy was already molded by Syriac linguistic, cultural and religious conventions and by the use of Syriac idioms, expressions and metaphors in a translation and adaption process, adjusted to the assumed needs of a Syriac-using audience and shaped by scribal conventions as well as the tastes and priorities of manuscript commissioners and correctors.[116] In other words, just as the Arabic copy reflects Arabic cultural, religious and linguistic realities, the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus in all likelihood reflects its Syriac Christian cultural, religious and linguistic environments.[117]

6.2.3 Adjusting the Attribution to Figures: Baruch and Jeremiah

An intriguing category of adjustment that took place during the Syriac transmission of 2 Baruch concerns the attribution of writings to figures. Paratextual identifications suggest a multifaceted relationship in the Syriac literary imagination between the figure of Baruch and the figure of Jeremiah as well as the writings ascribed to them. Baruch appears both as a figure of some authority in his own right and as Jeremiah's scribe. In yet other contexts, he vanishes from sight.

Some of the writings associated with Baruch present him paratextually as an independent figure. As chapters 1 and 5 have shown, the Codex Ambrosianus attributes 2 Baruch and its epistle to "Baruch bar Neriah." Baruch is identified by reference to his own genealogy, and 2 Bar 1:1 introduces him formulaically as a prophet. The lectionary manuscripts that preserve lections from 2 Bar 44:9–15 and 72:1–73:2 attribute these lections to "Baruch" or to "Baruch, the

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[116] Cf., Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," for a bird's eye view on Syriac scribal practices. For studies of Syriac language, typology and idioms with particular relevance to 2 Baruch, in particular for 2 Bar 49, see: Sebastian P. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter*, ed. Margot Schmidt and Carl F. Geyer, Eichstätter Beiträge 4 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1982), 11–38. For 2 Bar 30, see Eugen J. Pentiuc, "The Nature of the Resurrected Bodies: 2 Baruch and the New Testament," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze, Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 310–34 esp. 309–11.

[117] Pentiuc, "Nature of the Resurrected Bodies," 309–11, 334.

Prophet."[118] Thus, these paratexts present Baruch as a literary *persona* of some magnitude.[119]

Other writings identify Baruch as Jeremiah's scribe. This is the case for the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe. In masoretic manuscripts and other Old Testament codices, the epistle remains attributed to Baruch, but Baruch is identified with reference to his relationship with and dependence on Jeremiah and his literary function in a corpus built around the greater biblical figure.

The third category of paratexts bears witness to a reattribution of Baruchian passages and writings to Jeremiah – the figure and/or the corpus. As I pointed out in chapter 5, the large majority of surviving lectionary manuscripts identifies lections excerpted from the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe paratextually as "From Jeremiah." This means that Syriac congregations would hear them identified and probably interpreted as such. Thus, in these lections, the Baruch figure disappears as a literary anchoring of the passages. He gives way to his master.[120] We know that this identification of the textual contents of the lections

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[118] Potentially, the erasure on folio 259r contains a mention of the prophets too. Cf., the discussion in chapter 3.

[119] The Baruch figure generated literary creativity among Syriac Christians, both as a figure of some authority in his own right and as Jeremiah's scribe. The Syriac Christian baruchian literature consists of writings that are extant, writings that might be lost and today known only by title, and writings that were presumably always fictitious. Both fictitious and extant writings would create an impression of Baruch as a literary *persona*. In addition to 2 Baruch, and the First and Second Epistles of Baruch the Scribe, some would also have known of a book of Baruch, circulating among the Greek speaking Christians and included in Syro-Hexaplaric manuscripts (1 Baruch). They may, or they may not, have been familiar with its contents. They may have imagined it as yet another book attributed to Baruch, they may have believed that 2 Baruch was that book since the end title of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus, in fact, identifies it as such, or they may have known that the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe in the Peshitta was identical to it. Some Syriac readers might also have been aware of the two epistles attributed to Baruch at the end of 2 Baruch – one extant and one known only by mention – and conceived of the epistles to the two and a half, and nine and a half tribes, respectively, as part of a larger Baruch corpus as well. If either of the prayers of Baruch in 2 Baruch, for instance the prayer in 2 Bar 21, were read detached from the larger work, this would add yet another item to the list. A few Syriac readers may have come across the mention of a Baruch book in the Apostolic Constitution or a reference to an apocalypse of Baruch in apotropaic texts. However, most Syriac audiences would have known about Baruch's literary accomplishments first and foremost through reading or listening to the biblical book of Jeremiah. According to the biblical narrative, that book would itself be the outcome of Baruch's craftsmanship. Jer 36 tells the story about yet another scroll penned by Baruch, but cut and burned by the king. As mentioned above, Patriarch Timothy I's letter associates the Baruch figure with the hiding and preservation of books. In the Syriac literary imagination, thus, there was the potential for retrieving more books, including books of Baruch. Cf., in particular, Pierre-M. Bogaert, "Le nom de Baruch dans la literature pseudépigraphique: L'Apocalypse syriaque et le livre deutérocanonique," in *La literature juive entre Tenach et Mischna. Quelques problems*, W. C. van Unnik, RechBib 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1974); Wright, *Baruch ben Neriah,* 56–72; Nils H. Korsvoll and Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Enoch and Baruch: Unusual Suspects in a Syriac Amulet," *JNES* 75/2 (2016): 349–60.

[120] Henze and Lied, "Jeremiah, Baruch, and Their Books," 352.

lived on in Syriac literary imagination, illustrated by bar Salibi's identification of 2 Bar 85:3/1 Ep. Bar. 8:3 as a quote from Jeremiah.[121]

As Kristian Heal showed, reattribution is a relatively widespread phenomenon in Syriac literature. An attribution to a well-known figure or author may be a way of domesticating, preserving or increasing the authority of writings that were either anonymous or associated with a lesser figure in the tradition.[122]

6.2.4 Adjustment by Co-circulation? 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra

One of the perennial questions in the history of research on 2 Baruch concerns the book's relationship to 4 Ezra. Ever since the publication of Ceriani's edition, it has been clear that there are several similarities between the two books, and a long list of scholars has attempted to explain how the books relate to each other.[123] According to Henze, the most common way of explaining the relationship between the two books is to assume that one of them used the other as a source, or that one reacted to the other. Some scholars have argued the priority of 4 Ezra and others the primacy of 2 Baruch. Scholars have explained the similarities of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra as a factor of the pre-redactional and redactional layers, as a consequence of the way in which the books were written by author-redactors, or as the outcome of a more complex production process in the period before each book reached its "final form" in the first- or second-century intellectual environment.[124] Henze criticized the simple linearity that characterized previous explanatory models.[125] He rejected both a source-critical and single author-redactor model and proposed instead "an integrative model of oral performance and literary composition." He suggested that the production of the two writings "involved both oral and written modes of composition, revision, and transmission" and that this process explains the parallels between the books.[126]

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[121] Cf., the discussion of this paragraph from the *Treatise against the Melchites* in chapter 5. Note that this is a passage that is relatively widespread in liturgical use. This may suggest that bar Salibi knew the quote from liturgical reading.

[122] Heal, "Five Kinds of Rewriting," 53–55.

[123] Henze offered a comprehensive overview of the connections between the two books and of previous research on the matter in his 2011 monograph; thus, I will not reiterate the details of the discussion here (*Jewish Apocalypticism*, 149–86). Some of the most influential contributions are: Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, lxvii–lxxvi; Violet, *Apokalypsen*; Klaus Berger, *Synopse des Vierten Buches Esra unter der Syrischen Baruch-Apokalyse,* TANZ 8 (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1992); George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishna: A Historical and Literary Introduction. Second Edition* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005); Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 148–86; Michael E. Stone and Matthias Henze, *4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Translations, Introductions, and Notes* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013), esp. 1–2.

[124] Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 157–59, 182.

[125] Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 155.

[126] Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 158–59, 181–86.

Henze's hypothesis has brought the debate a large step forward. Still, among all the alternative models that scholars have offered to explain the relationship between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, one feature remains stable: scholars – Henze included – explain the relationship between the books as a product of their prehistory and/or the process of composition in the first centuries CE. In other words, the discussion has neither factored in the manuscripts that provide access to the texts in the first place nor asked whether the transmission process may have affected the formats or literary contents of the books. I do not intend to solve the case of the relationship between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra in the following. My aim here is simply to point out that the manuscript transmission obviously deserves attention in the next round of discussion on the relationship between these two books and that this focus may have repercussions, in particular, for our understanding of 2 Baruch.

As I have pointed out in previous publications, 2 Baruch co-circulated with 4 Ezra in manuscript transmission.[127] With the exception of the Greek fragments, the manuscript context of which remains unknown precisely due to their fragmentary condition, all known manuscripts that contain 2 Baruch also contain 4 Ezra.[128] Both the Codex Ambrosianus and Arabic Manuscripts 589 copy them together – one book immediately following the other.[129] The lectionary manuscripts that contain lections from 2 Baruch also contain lections from 4 Ezra.[130] On the occasion of the Sunday of the Departed, Add. 14,686, Ms. Syr. 33 and Ms. 77 even script 4 Ezra 7:26–42 and 2 Bar 44:9–15 to be read together at the same event.[131] It is vital to note that the manuscripts that have served as witnesses to the hypothetical early text of 2 Baruch are precisely the manuscripts listed here. As the analyses in the present chapter also suggest, the text of 2 Baruch changed in transmission. A case in point is Drint's observation of "instances were [*sic*] the Arabic version of *2 Baruch* seems to use phrases from *4 Ezra* which do not occur in *Syr-2 Bar*." She listed examples of the phenomenon and concludes that:

> These renderings might be the result of logical interpretation, but they might also be a witness of the translator's acquaintance with the contents of *4 Ezra* or indicate that the *Vorlage* of the translator had more in common with *4 Ezra* (…) than the surviving Syriac manuscript (…).[132]

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[127] Lied, "2 Baruch and the Syriac Codex Ambrosianus," 96–101; Lied and Monger, "Look to the East," 650.

[128] Whereas copies of 4 Ezra appear independently of 2 Baruch, 2 Baruch is nowhere to be found without 4 Ezra.

[129] Cf., chapter 1 and the above discussions of the present chapter.

[130] Cf., chapter 4. Note that Add. 14,687 does not contain lections from 4 Ezra, but since it comes with a companion that does (Add. 14,686), the claim remains valid.

[131] Add. 14,686, folios 75v–77v; Ms. Syr. 33, folios 72v–75r. Ms. 77, folio 49v–50r.

[132] Drint, "2.2.4 Arabic," 56.

Drint's analysis suggests that the Arabic version of 4 Ezra may have influenced Arabic 2 Baruch. The example illustrates that it may be unwise to rule out the possibility that this has also happened earlier and that at least some of the similarities between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra are the results of their ongoing co-circulation in the centuries after the period when scholars have generally assumed the two books to be "finished."

In the name of methodological transparency, thus, the discussion of the relationship between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra should bear in mind that the surviving manuscript materials do not allow us to verify positively that 2 Baruch's similarities to 4 Ezra are the result of developments in the first centuries CE. At least some of the similarities between them may be a result of their later co-circulation. In the name of epistemological rigor, we should not assume *a priori* that texts become fixed early on and that they would not change in later transmission. At the very least, the manuscript transmission deserves to be taken into consideration in the future continuation of the debate.

6.2.5 Adjustment by Reinterpretation: The Messiah, Jerusalem and Knowledge Transfer beyond the Rivers

As pointed out in the previous chapters of this volume, both the manuscript transmission and the identifiable historical contexts of engagement with 2 Baruch show that Syriac Christians would have interpreted the literary text in different ways from (hypothetical) first/second century CE Jewish readers. Hence, if we assume that 2 Baruch was initially a Jewish book that was subsequently transmitted by Christians, the interpretation of the literary contents was not stable in transmission either.

The most obvious example is indeed the use of 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 on Easter Sunday. 2 Baruch was read at the celebratory event of the resurrection of the Christian Christ. The lectionary manuscript stages the description of the Messiah and the Messianic reign in this passage as an Old Testament prophecy about the second coming of the Christ. On an Easter Sunday, the contents of the passage would have been part of the Christian redemption narrative.[133] Another example is the focus on Jerusalem and the destruction of the two temples in the Codex Ambrosianus. If the hypothesis of chapter 1 is correct, the description of the two destructions constituted a supersessionist narrative in which the new covenant replaces the old one. The literary contents of 2 Baruch would have fitted into such a larger eschatological matrix. Potentially, the interpretation of the sections on Jerusalem would have been informed by religious and political concerns for Jerusalem in the sixth/seventh centuries onwards.[134] In other words, 2 Baruch

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[133] Cf., chapter 4 of the current volume.
[134] Cf., e. g., Koltun-Fromm, "Syriac Fathers on Jerusalem," 141–55.

would not be read for comfort and for reorientation after the fall of the temple but rather as an episode in the story of the end of the old covenant and the beginning of the new.

It is possible that the description of the writing and dispatch of the two epistles in 2 Bar 77 was interpreted in a similar way. In 2 Bar 77, Baruch writes letters to the exiled tribes in the East.[135] Syriac Christians would probably have found this focus on the land beyond the Euphrates intriguing. They could have interpreted this scene as an event of knowledge transfer from the old covenant in its traditional space, symbolized by the ruins of Jerusalem and an oak,[136] to the new covenant beyond the river. The Baruch figure would have been a perfect fit to this interpretational trajectory. Syriac Christians probably knew Baruch as a steward of old knowledge and of lost or hidden books. The well-known scene in Jer 36 features Baruch as the one who penned both the scroll that was lost in the fire and the one that replaced it. The eighth/ninth-century letter of the East Syriac patriarch Timothy I, associates the Baruch figure with the hiding and preservation of books before the destruction of Jerusalem.[137] In the Syriac Christian literary imagination, thus, the epistles that Baruch drafted under the oak shortly after the destruction explained how the new covenant gained access to and became heir to the knowledge of the old.

6.2.6 The Entangled Transformation of 2 Baruch

The transmission of 2 Baruch inevitably transformed it. The format of the writing changed as it was increasingly transmitted in bits and pieces. The contents of the text changed through the process of translation, copying and recopying. The ascription of the writing to figures changed too. It is possible that the co-circulation with 4 Ezra also had an effect on 2 Baruch, and it is evident that the text was reinterpreted by the new communities that laid hands on it.

These transformation processes have probably been vital to the very survival of 2 Baruch.[138] Had the text not been adjusted in translation into Syriac and Arabic, Christian readers would have found parts of it incomprehensible, offensive or

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[135] Cf., chapter 5.

[136] See Lied, *Other Lands*, 154–59.

[137] See the English translation in Sebastian P. Brock, *A Brief Outline of Syriac Literature*, 2nd ed. (Kottayam: SEERI, 2009), 240–45.

[138] A key issue that remains underdeveloped in the current volume is translation. It is beyond doubt that had the text not been translated into Greek and into Syriac and Arabic, the transmission history of 2 Baruch would have been different. An argument could be made for the claim that 2 Baruch survived because it was translated. On the importance of translation into Greek, see, in particular, Stone, *Ancient Judaism*, 18, 23 and 179; Martha Himmelfarb, "The Pseudepigrapha in Greek: Translation, Composition, and the Diaspora," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Fifty Years of the Pseudepigrapha Section at the SBL*, ed. Matthias Henze and Liv Ingeborg Lied, EJL 50 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 263–86 at 263–73.

maybe irrelevant. Had it not been excerpted and circulated in smaller pieces and in epitomized parts, Syriac commissioners and scribes may not have had the resources to copy it. Had 2 Baruch not circulated together with 4 Ezra, the transmission could have been less frequent. Had the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe not been copied as part of the Jeremianic corpus, and had the lections from it not been read as "From Jeremiah" in public worship practice, textual snippets originating from 2 Baruch might have enjoyed a lesser circulation.

It is also essential to note how thoroughly entangled the transformations that did occur are with identifiable historical processes in the transmitting communities. The format changed because Syriac manuscript production changed. Alterations in the text complied, at least in part, with the taste, needs and linguistic repertoires of new communities of readers, among them, eleventh-century Arabic Christians. Changes in attribution to figures may be the result of the ordering of Syriac Old Testament writings in collections or the culturally charged outcome of re-ascribing a writing to a greater biblical figure.

The 2 Baruch that has come down to us and that constitutes the writing that we have access to is the result of all these transformational adjustments that happened in transmission. On the way, 2 Baruch became "more than 2 Baruch" – it mushroomed and generated new, autonomously circulating entities. Some of these entities would no longer be associated with 2 Baruch. One of its children even came to outshine it: the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe reached a level of success that the book-sized writing never achieved, potentially its success even came at the expense of 2 Baruch.

6.3 Questioning Access

As this chapter has duly pointed out, the processes of textual transmission are messy. Lines of transmission are broken or interrupted, texts grow, their identifications, attributions and material carriers may change as they travel and they germinate in ways that make new literary entities appear. As this chapter has also shown, the transmission of a writing is intertwined with historically specific cultural processes and infrastructural features – it never takes place in a void. The fate of a book and its offshoots is part of and dependent on local negotiations and the changing conditions of historical communities. Transmission depends on issues of availability, the appreciation and resulting agency of valuable material artifacts, notions of relevance and status, networks of knowledge transfer, and importantly, the pure luck of climatic conditions – paired with the presence of stable storage facilities and individuals who care for it. There is no doubt that the hands that carried 2 Baruch through history transformed it, but, crucially, that its transformation also ensured its survival. The writing that we have access to is the outcome of all of these entangled developments and it is due to its

continued circulation under these specific conditions that we, today, can read the text of 2 Baruch.

It is important to keep in mind that the manuscripts that survive due to these specific circumstances constitute our only access to 2 Baruch. Had the circumstances been otherwise, 2 Baruch may not have survived at all or we may have ended up with "another 2 Baruch" since the writing would have transformed differently in response to other economic, religious and practical needs. Likewise, had other manuscripts come down to us, or had some of the known ones been lost, we would have had access to a different 2 Baruch. It is likely that a larger pool of manuscripts once existed, and we have good reason to believe that the selection of surviving manuscripts is systematically biased. To a large extent, it mirrors the interests, capacities, priorities and networks of an identifiable monastic community in Egypt. The materials that remain do not reflect any conceivable totality of what 2 Baruch was or might have been. We have access to very specific snapshots.

The call to pay attention to the manuscripts has been pronounced in scholarship on early Jewish texts in Christian transmission since at least the 1970s, but as pointed out in the General Introduction, so far, the practices of textual scholarship have generally not changed. As this chapter has shown, the texts, the formats and the identifications of the entity that scholars refer to as "2 Baruch" are profoundly entangled with the manuscripts that preserve them, the traditions that decided the production of the manuscripts and the historical communities that kept and engaged with the writing in these material embodiments. Still, this thoroughly entangled character of 2 Baruch's transmission process has not been addressed. The result is that we find ourselves in a paradoxical situation in which scholarship is completely dependent on what remains, but at the same time it neither pays attention to what those remains are nor allows the consequences to affect the academic study of 2 Baruch.

Chapter 7

Someone Else's Manuscripts:
Textual Scholarship and the Academic
Narrative of 2 Baruch

The goal of the current volume has been threefold. First, my exploration of the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch is a contribution to our knowledge about the reception history of this book among Syriac Christians. Second, I have engaged with this manuscript transmission as a case study, discussing the effects of the historical-critical approach to academic knowledge production about early Jewish writings in Christian transmission. Third, and finally, the volume contributes to the ongoing methodological debate about the dominant practices of textual scholarship – from the point of view of New Philology.

In the following, I will first sum up the findings of each of the preceding chapters before isolating the major contributions and repercussions of the volume.

7.1 Summing Up: The Syriac Manuscript Transmission of 2 Baruch

2 Baruch survives – as a whole or in bits and pieces – in seven manuscripts. Chapter 1 of the current volume addressed the sixth- or seventh-century, Syriac Old Testament *pandect*, the Codex Ambrosianus. For a century and a half, the copy of 2 Baruch in this codex has served as the witness *par excellence* to the text of this book. Throughout this period, and in line with the dominant aims and practices of the historical-critical approach, scholars have appreciated the copy as an immaterial witness to the assumed early text of 2 Baruch and not as a text embodied in a culturally specific material artifact. Chapter 1 aimed to remove the brackets into which scholarship has placed the copy and to explore 2 Baruch as a writing that truly belongs in the codex where we find it.

As previous scholars have pointed out, the Codex Ambrosianus orders its books in the chronological order of the biblical narrative and its main protagonists. Thus, the order of the books in the codex creates a biblio-historiographical narrative that starts with creation and ends with the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem. The chapter found that those who produced the codex probably included 2 Baruch among its books because it fills a gap in

the story about the destruction of the first temple in Jerusalem and the events that took place in the vicinity of the city in the aftermath of the fall. This hypothesis makes sense of the selection and order of the books in 2 Baruch's immediate context and sheds light on the function of the latter ten books of the codex. In line with the findings of previous research, I hold that the Codex Ambrosianus is the materialization of a contemporaneous supersessionist and, potentially, anti-Jewish rhetoric. The codex ends with the final destruction of the old covenant, its institutions and its spaces and 2 Baruch is one of the books that facilitate and carry this narrative. There is reason to believe neither that 2 Baruch would have been part of all Syriac Old Testament *pandects* nor that its transmission as an Old Testament book was necessarily widespread. Still, in the Codex Ambrosianus 2 Baruch serves this purpose. It takes part, it is bound there and it belongs to this codex as an Old Testament book.

In chapter 2, I turned to the history of the Codex Ambrosianus as a circulation object and hence the history of transmission of 2 Baruch as an embodied part of this particular material carrier. As the codex moved, so did the copy of 2 Baruch. As new hands held it, they came across the copy of 2 Baruch within it. Therefore, tracing the history of the codex also allows us a peek into the contexts that received 2 Baruch. Chapter 2 explored the notes that donors, owners and binders left their readers on the first and last pages. Based on the information that these notes provide, I first reiterated the traceable history of engagement with the codex. This known history of engagement is monastic. The codex migrated to the Monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi al-Natrun in Egypt and spent approximately six-hundred years in its keeping.

The second part of the chapter traced the engagement practices that the notes bear witness to and showed that the Codex Ambrosianus was much more than a text carrier. It served as a purposeful medium for remembrance practices. The codex also attests to practices of care. Indeed, it filled a number of social and cultural/religious roles, while remaining a valuable Old Testament codex. The chapter ended by pointing out how the survival of the only known full copy of 2 Baruch depended thoroughly on the appreciation of the codex by those who engaged with it as well as on the practices of care of the individuals who preserved it.

Chapter 3 tuned in to the voices of active readers and what they had to say about the use of the Codex Ambrosianus and the copy of 2 Baruch embodied in it. I surveyed the additional verbal notes and non-verbal marks of engagement that still survive in the codex. These notes and marks share the page with the text in the columns, but far too often scholars have neglected them. The chapter engaged in a longstanding discussion in scholarship that questions whether the codex was intended for – and used in – public worship practice. The hypothesis of the non-liturgical purpose of the Codex Ambrosianus has affected the academic narrative of 2 Baruch and contributed to its construal as a narrative of failure.

The survey of the notes and marks showed that there is no doubt that the Codex Ambrosianus was used in public worship practices. The venerable *pandect* was probably in use on special occasions. The latter part of the chapter explored the traces of engagement with the copy of 2 Baruch that appear on the folios that contain it. The study of a series of ܠܐ notes that runs across the books of the codex and that includes a note in the intercolumn close to 2 Bar 72:1, suggests that someone prepared this passage for copying into a lectionary manuscript. A partly erased note in the upper margin of folio 259r and a series of wax stains suggest that the Prayer of Baruch attracted particular attention, potentially in a worship context. Thus, the chapter showed that active readers put the Codex Ambrosianus and the copy of 2 Baruch to use both in learned and in liturgical practices. Hence, the hypothesis of non-liturgical purpose and use needs revision, as does the interpretation of the role of the codex in the academic narrative of 2 Baruch.

In chapter 4, I left the Codex Ambrosianus and turned to the surviving Syriac lectionary manuscripts that contain lections from 2 Baruch. The chapter focused on London, BL, Add. 14,687 in particular, but also included its companion, Add. 14,686. Add. 14,687 contains a nice little surprise: it scripts 2 Bar 72:1–73:2 for reading as a lection from the Old Testament on Easter Sunday. Based on the information available in the rich colophon and other notes surviving in the manuscript, I situated the use of it in the Monastery of the Syrians and constructed a hypothetical, yet likely, context of historical engagement with the lection from 2 Baruch. The lection was probably read in the Church of the Holy Virgin on Easter Sundays in the second half of the thirteenth century. In this context, the lection would have been performed, and presumably experienced and conceived, as a lection from the Old Testament. The goal of the chapter was both to address the element of surprise – the reasons why this usage would be particularly notable to scholars of 2 Baruch – and to stress that, in its present condition, scholarship on 2 Baruch is lacking. Scholars have never studied the undoubtedly most well-attested and rich context of historical engagement that remains for us to explore, and they have not integrated into the academic narrative what it means that a section from the book was read on Easter Sunday.

Chapter 5 explored the paratextual identifications of the epistle that constitutes the last chapters of 2 Baruch (the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah) and the epistle that shares most of its text but that circulates under another name (the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe) and is copied in the Peshitta with the Jeremianic corpus. Whereas former editors of these epistles have conceived of them as one singular epistle – the *Epistle of Baruch* – I argued that their rubricated titles as well as their contexts and locations in the manuscripts consistently represent them as two different epistles. Hence, the paratexual identifications suggest that we should treat them as such, as two different works. Although it is likely that the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe once originated with Syriac

2 Baruch, the two epistles already functioned as two discrete works in Syriac traditions at the time of our first manuscript attestation in the sixth century and they continued to develop in two different trajectories. Thus, when editors use the copies of the First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe as "witnesses" to the Epistle of Baruch bar Neriah, they risk using the text of another work, with another identity and a separate history of circulation among Syriac Christians, as a source to a writing that they assume to have been a first/second-century Jewish epistle.

Drawing on the findings of the previous five chapters, chapter 6 explored the entangled transmission and transformation of 2 Baruch. The chapter pointed out that the only media that provide scholars with access to 2 Baruch are the surviving manuscripts. These manuscripts contain the received text. That text serves as our source to an assumed early text. This means that all of our knowledge about the contents and formats of 2 Baruch depends on the mediating capacities of these manuscripts. The chapter demonstrated how the 2 Baruch that has come down to us was shaped by the practices of the communities that produced and preserved the manuscripts. This means that everything we think we know about the early Jewish book depends on the historical processes and practices of the receiving Greek, Syriac and Arabic Christian communities. The historical development of 2 Baruch is demonstrably intertwined with its receiving contexts, and the materials that survive can neither be disentangled from nor properly understood unless we factor the transmitting contexts into our study.

7.2 Takeaway 1: Manuscript Transmission as Syriac Reception History

This volume offers a comprehensive presentation of the Syriac manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch. As such, the volume provides, for the first time, a study of this vital part of 2 Baruch's reception history.

A study of manuscript transmission will never cover all aspects of any conceivable comprehensive reception history of a writing. It covers only verbal, written expressions, and a study of manuscripts will always be limited by the materials that survive. With these restrictions in mind, the exploration of the previous chapters suggests, first, that the reception history of 2 Baruch was never a wide-ranging phenomenon. 2 Baruch comes down to us in a handful of manuscripts. Although more manuscripts containing 2 Baruch have been in circulation, there is no reason to overestimate the quantity or to exaggerate the book's reach. Based on what remains, the most likely scenario is that 2 Baruch enjoyed a certain circulation in some communities and their networks while being generally unknown to others.

Second, regardless of what has been lost, the surviving manuscript materials show that Christian communities copied 2 Baruch. No manuscripts of un-

deniably Jewish, Islamic or other provenance are extant, but Greek, Syriac and Arabic Christians have positively engaged with 2 Baruch and found it worth the effort to preserve it. The manuscripts that survive are mainly Syriac manuscripts. This may mean that Syriac Christians were 2 Baruch's primary historical stewards, or it may indicate that this is where manuscripts containing the book endured. Syriac-using monastic milieus kept the book and it is likely that these milieus harboured a large share of its active readers. In fact, we know neither whether nor the extent to which 2 Baruch would have been known outside monastic environments. It is noteworthy that most of the manuscripts survive in Egypt, in the repositories of two major monastic settlements. In particular, the role of the Monastery of the Syrians in the preservation and ongoing appreciation of 2 Baruch is undeniable.

Third, in the Syriac Christian context, 2 Baruch survives as an Old Testament book. All the extant manuscripts represent it as such – without exceptions. The analyses of the previous chapters suggest that the book played a part in the biblio-historiographical project materializing in the Codex Ambrosianus and that lections from the book were read in public worship contexts, for instance on Easter Sunday, over a couple of centuries. This identification of the book does not mean that 2 Baruch would by necessity always have been conceived of as an Old Testament book or that everyone would have perceived it as such, but it proves that some apparently did. Indeed, this is the only identification of 2 Baruch that is available to us through surviving manuscripts.

Fourth, most of the manuscripts transmit 2 Baruch in bits and pieces. This is the case with the lectionary manuscripts. It is also the case with the most important contribution of 2 Baruch to Syriac literature: the epistle, which at some point was presumably excerpted from the latter part of 2 Baruch. The First Epistle of Baruch the Scribe enjoyed wide circulation. It circulated autonomously – detached from and beyond 2 Baruch.

Fifth and finally, we know snapshots of 2 Baruch's transmission history from the fourth or fifth century until the fifteenth century. It is important to stress that all we have are snapshots. They provide windows into the life of the book at select points in time and suggest that the book evolved. It is equally important to note that we know nothing about 2 Baruch's existence in the period before the fourth century. We do not have evidence that the book even existed in the first/second century CE. That does not mean that it could not have done so, but it means that we have no knowledge about it. At the very least, the manuscripts provide no unmediated access to a hypothetical early text.

An inquiry into the Syriac manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch is not only a study of the reception history of this particular book. It is also a small contribution to the study of late antique and medieval Syriac Christian literary, cultural and religious life. More specifically, this volume is a humble addition to our knowledge about Syriac Christian literary history, to book, reader and

manuscript history and to the history of the use of biblical writings, particularly in monastic circles. Hopefully, the volume can also benefit the study of the long and continuing traditions of the Monastery of the Syrians.

7.3 Takeaway 2: Revisiting the Academic Narrative about 2 Baruch and Its Context in Scholarship on Early Jewish Writings

In this volume, I have used the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch as a case study, exploring how our understanding of this book may change if we consider the manuscripts that preserve embodied copies of it as cultural artifacts in their own right and as legitimate contexts for the study of the book. Thus, my findings are relevant both to the study of 2 Baruch and to the study of other (presumably) early Jewish writings in Christian transmission.

The scholarly consensus holds that 2 Baruch is a first- or second-century CE Jewish writing. 2 Baruch is commonly understood to have been composed as a response to the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE to comfort a Jewish community that experienced the consequences of that fall. Scholars have approached 2 Baruch as a well-conceived, book-sized composition to be read as an integral whole. In addition, according to the dominant academic narrative, 2 Baruch is "non-canonical": "apocryphal" or "pseudepigraphal." Indeed, 2 Baruch has a reputation as a failure with no afterlife to speak of. The current volume suggests that if we study the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch as cultural artifacts, each of the key elements of this academic narrative is basically at odds with the surviving sources. In other words, the manuscripts that have so far served as witnesses to the early text propose a different conception of what 2 Baruch is once we take other aspects than the text in the columns into account.

First, as the preceding chapters have shown, the surviving manuscripts consistently represent 2 Baruch as an Old Testament book.[1] From an *etic* point of view, it is still possible to argue that the book should be categorized as "apocryphal," or "pseudepigraphal." 2 Baruch was translated from Greek, not Hebrew; it appears among the last ten books of the Codex Ambrosianus; it does not appear in any other known early Syriac Old Testament *pandect*; and it is evident that some Syriac lectionary manuscripts do include lections from "apocryphal" books. The question that we must ask ourselves is whether this is the analytical grasp that best explains the surviving manuscript occurrences of 2 Baruch. As scholars of West Syriac Christian traditions have long pointed out, a language of "canon," and hence of "apocrypha" and "pseudepigrapha," does

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[1] As chapter 6 pointed out, the Greek papyrus sheet is a possible exception to this rule. It is simply too fragmentary to justify any safe identification.

not fruitfully comprehend these communities' understanding of and engagement with biblical writings. Biblical writings were certainly considered sacred by West Syriac Christians, but the greater flexibility and a higher degree of local freedom characterize this tradition.

My study of the Syriac manuscripts suggests that, instead of approaching 2 Baruch within a discourse of canon, which for a long time was a predominant discourse in the field of Early Jewish Studies, it makes more sense to ask what the function and identification of 2 Baruch may be in the manuscript contexts in which it in fact appears. This is particularly important for a manuscript as old as the Codex Ambrosianus, for which there are no surviving, contemporaneous *comparanda*. My conclusion is that 2 Baruch appears in this codex not as "apocrypha" but because it fills a void in the biblical narrative. Its literary contents made the book a necessary part of this biblio-historiographical codex. The second finding is that lections from 2 Baruch appear in lectionary manuscripts both because their literary contents were fitting for the event and because the book had, at that point, been naturalized as an Old Testament book – although only in some communities and networks. It is unlikely that 2 Baruch would be "Old Testament" always and to all, but that does not make it less so within the communities that arguably engaged with it as such.

2 Baruch is not the only book that scholars have approached as originally Jewish and "apocryphal" or "pseudepigraphal" to appear in Old Testament codices of various formats. As this volume has shown, 4 Ezra appears in Syriac Old Testament codices as well. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the provenance of which is highly debated, was copied after Genesis or after the Pentateuch in some Armenian manuscripts.[2] Instead of assuming that these books are necessarily "apocryphal" and ending our investigation on that note, we may rather ask what kind of work they were doing in the contexts where scribes copied them. This applies also to books that were copied in other kinds of collections. Books such as the Testament of Job, 3 Baruch and Joseph and Aseneth are found, for instance, in hagiographical and homiletical collections.[3] The identification of the collections that preserve these books may provide indications of how they were perceived and how they may have been used.

Second, the scholarly narrative suggests that 2 Baruch served to comfort a Jewish community after the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem. The studies in chapters 1 and 6 complicate this aspect of the majority hypothesis. The Codex Ambrosianus may have served, and promoted, an anti-Jewish rhetoric by demonstrating how the old covenant came to a violent end with the final de-

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[2] Cf., e. g., Michael E. Stone, "The Book(s) Attributed to Noah," *DSD* 13/1 (2006): 4–23.

[3] Harlow, *Greek Apocalypse of Baruch*; Cioată, *Testament of Job*; Cristoph Burchard, *A Minor Edition of the Armenian Version of "Joseph and Aseneth,"* Hebrew University Armenian Studies 10 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010); Margaret Dimitrova, "Selected Publications of Anissava Miltenova," *Scripta & E-Scripta* 8–9 (2010): 498–507.

struction of the Jerusalem temple. If so, 2 Baruch would not offer comfort to Jewish communities after the fall. In this material form and in the immediate context in which it appears, its function would be to the contrary. It would communicate to the reader of the codex how the destruction of the first temple fits into the overall narrative of the failing relationship between the Jewish people and their god. This does not mean that 2 Baruch could not, at some point, have been composed to comfort a Jewish community. It means, though, that the "witness" that scholars have employed to gain access to the text may in fact have been used to meet the opposite demand by those who produced and engaged with that "witness."

Third, the realization that a major part of 2 Baruch's transmission history circulates it in bits and pieces questions the privileged focus in previous research on the discrete, complete book. The focus on the "complete text" as a relevant and important context in its own right developed as a sound reaction to the widespread scholarly mining of texts considered to be non-canonical in the ongoing hunt for parallels to ideas attested to, in particular, in New Testament books.[4] The insistence on the complete text aimed to protect the integrity of (assumed) early Jewish books, such as 2 Baruch, and to make sure that scholars interpreted the conceptions and topics that appear in these books as part of the literary context to which they belong. This project is laudable in its own right, but it is simultaneously important to note two complications. The focus on the early text and the use of manuscript copies as witnesses to that text implies that the format of the text in the manuscript is assessed as being less important than the early text to which it is assumed to bear witness. This interest in the manuscript as a "witness" may thus hide what the manuscript in fact contains. A manuscript that scholars refer to as "a witness to 2 Baruch" may, for instance, be a short extract repurposed as a lection ascribed to Jeremiah. The second complication is that historical readers and audiences certainly engaged with 2 Baruch in more ways than just as a book. In fact, it is likely that more Syriac-using readers and listeners have enjoyed bits and pieces than the book-sized writing. Indeed, the widespread existence of compilations and anthological collections in a broad variety of manuscript traditions suggests that this was a wide-reaching trend. Hence, as pointed out in chapter 6, studying 2 Baruch as a book is not wrong, but privileging this format at the cost of other formats risks misrepresenting the known circulation and it fails to do justice to the material and verbal traces that remain from historical reading practices. Ironically, the cherry-picking approach to 2 Baruch in the New Testament department may well have come closer to emulating these historical reading practices and traceable contexts of use than the book-and-composition focus of scholars of 2 Baruch has.

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[4] See Levison, "Looking Ahead," 398–401.

Fourth, with the pronounced exception of Zahn and Nir's scholarship, the first- or second-century CE[5] Jewish provenance of 2 Baruch has been unanimously accepted among scholars of early Jewish writings. Again, the current volume does not suggest that this hypothesis is necessarily incorrect. However, based on my exploration of the manuscripts, it deserves scrutiny.

It remains possible that a writing similar to, or displaying clear overlaps with, the writing that we know today as 2 Baruch circulated in some Jewish communities in the first centuries of the common era. The finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the period after 1947 showed that early manuscripts containing Jewish writings, also writings so far unknown to scholars, may surface. The discovery of the Scrolls also showed that many of the writings known only in much younger copies had remained remarkably stable – given the substantial time gap. However, as the last decades of Scrolls scholarship have made clear, both the formats and the literary contents of the texts had evolved. Some manuscripts show that changes had occurred on the micro level; others bear witness to macro-level changes in the text traditions.[6] This analogy to the Scrolls suggests, on the one hand, that it would be unwise to deny the possibility that 2 Baruch existed and materialized as a Jewish writing in the first centuries of the common era. On the other hand, it would be equally unwise to assume that the copies that have come down to us in much younger manuscripts provide access to the writing "as it was" or that writings were transmitted unchanged. Now, in contrast to Scrolls scholars, scholars of 2 Baruch do not enjoy the privilege of having access to early Jewish manuscripts. Hence, since we do not have access to the early Jew-

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[5] I have not dealt with the longstanding discussion in previous scholarship of the time of origin of 2 Baruch. The hypothesis that 2 Baruch was written in the first/second century CE has been argued partly by reference to parallels with 4 Ezra and other writings commonly ascribed to these centuries and partly by reference to the mention of "the twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah King of Judah" in the narrative framework of the book (2 Bar 1:1) (cf., the research history in Daniel M. Gurtner, "The 'Twenty-Fifth Year of Jeconiah' and the Date of *2 Baruch*," *JSP* 18/1 [2008]: 23–32). The text-internal, literary argument has long been under attack and is today generally considered to be symbolic (cf., Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:287–88; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 26–29). The line of argumentation that points to parallels with other texts to argue a first/second-century dating is also problematic. As chapter 6 pointed out, 2 Baruch changed in transmission and at least some of its parallels with 4 Ezra may be the result of a long period of co-circulation of the two books. Furthermore, we cannot rule out the possibility that 2 Baruch's similarities to the conceptions found in some New Testament texts (for instance, 1 Corinthians) are the results of adjustments in Christian transmission. In other words, this line of argumentation depends, first, on the assumption that parallels are the products of the composition phase and, second, on an assumption that writings do not change to any large degree in transmission. Since this volume is not concerned with the origins of 2 Baruch, I leave this quandary to others and will not attempt to solve it. I simply note that the first/second-century date of 2 Baruch has remained an important aspect of its academic narrative.

[6] Cf., e. g., Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible*, VTSup 169; (Leiden: Brill, 2015); cf., Mroczek, *Literary Imagination,* 3.

ish book, we do not know its constitution and we cannot even be sure that an early 2 Baruch in fact existed.[7]

What we do know is that 2 Baruch exists in younger, Christian, manuscripts and that our access to the book is mediated by these very manuscripts. The study of the manuscripts in the current volume confirms that 2 Baruch changed in transmission, which means that it changed in Christian transmission.[8] The implication of this fact is that the copies that have come down to us provide access to texts that are arguably diachronically Jewish-and-Greek/Syriac/Arabic-Christian – depending on the manuscript approached. This Jewish-Christian text manifests in manuscripts that are the cultural artifacts of various Christian communities. In terms of their formats, their materiality, their visually accessible layout, their production and their ownership, the copies are Christian.

In other words, in terms of its literary history – and given that we uphold the majority hypothesis of a Jewish origin – 2 Baruch is seamlessly Jewish-Christian. In all other respects, 2 Baruch is functionally Christian. It is in this light that we must revisit the claim in scholarship that 2 Baruch is Jewish. This is a claim that concerns the origin of the writing but disregards a shifting sense of belonging over time. It is a claim that struggles to come to terms with access. It is also a claim that favors a study of the literary contents of the text but does not take other aspects of 2 Baruch's manifestation into account.

This line of thought may also shed light on the minority position, represented here by Nir. According to Nir, 2 Baruch is by origin a Christian composition.[9] The biases of her 2003 study have been discussed extensively elsewhere and need not be reiterated here.[10] The points that I would like to make concern her implicit assumptions of text production and text transmission and her focus on literary contents at the expense of other aspects of the available sources to 2 Baruch. First, just like most of her colleagues in the guild, Nir focused on origins. She saw the Christianity of 2 Baruch as a feature of its composition. She did not factor in the possibility that the literary contents of 2 Baruch may have evolved in transmission and that some of the aspects that she explored as "Christian" may have entered the text as it continued to circulate. The manuscript that Nir and all other scholars depend on and apply as a witness to the early

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[7] Cf., Stone, *Ancient Judaism,* 24–25.

[8] It is of course likely that the writing also changed before and/or outside Christian transmission.

[9] Nir, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 5, 6, 9, 201.

[10] Cf., e. g., the following reviews: Beate Ego, Review of *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, by Rivka Nir, *ZAW* 116 (2004): 470; Matthias Henze, Review of *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, by Rivka Nir, *JSP* 15 (2006): 145–48; Frederick J. Murphy, review of *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, by Rivka Nir, *CBQ* 66 (2004): 326–27; Lied, Review of *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, 403–5.

text of 2 Baruch dates to the sixth or the seventh century. 2 Baruch had already been copied and recopied for half a millennium when a scribe included the book in the Codex Ambrosianus. As I pointed out in chapter 6, it is very likely that the text of 2 Baruch that we know from this codex had already been adjusted to serve a Syriac Christian audience, not least by its translation into Syriac. Thus, it is possible that some of Nir's suggestions, for instance about the description of the return of the Messiah in 2 Bar 30:1, deserve more attention, not as the outcome of an original Christian composition, but as subtle hints of a diachronically evolving Jewish-Christian text. My second point is that Nir's study includes no mention of the manuscripts that serve as the sources of the literary study – again, this is a practice that she shares with many of her colleagues. A study of the proposed Christian character of 2 Baruch would have been easier to argue had she taken the manuscripts into account. The manuscripts and the embodied copies of 2 Baruch that they contain are undoubtedly Christian.

Indeed, on the occasions when previous scholarship has looked for the potential Christian elements of 2 Baruch, scholars have dedicated the search primarily to cues in the literary text, particular terms or interpretational trajectories that would give away a Christian authorship or redaction.[11] This is an important aspect of a larger, multidimensional study, but, if it is performed in isolation from a broader exploration of the manuscripts that contain the literary text or presented as the only approach to the matter, the risk of overlooking explanatory factors is overwhelming. The elephant in the room is the fact that 2 Baruch was transmitted in Syriac and Arabic Christian communities as an Old Testament book. As is certainly well known, Christians adopted the books of the Hebrew (and the Greek) bible and used them as Christian scriptures. With some exceptions – 4 Ezra/2 Esdras is a case in point – they did not make explicit changes to the wording of the literary texts of Old Testament books to make them "more Christian."[12] They reordered them and reinterpreted them as books of the old covenant – books that to them had their own value in a Christian salvation narrative. Hence, since 2 Baruch was transmitted as an Old Testament book, copied into collections of other Old Testament books, we should not necessarily expect to see the addition of explicit elements of Christian dogma, terms, figures or story worlds to the literary text. We should rather look for changes that reflect Christian notions of what an Old Testament book was supposed to be and that facilitate a Christian rhetoric and interpretation of the matters of the old covenant and its narrative world. Hence, as a consequence, some of the features that scholars have identified to argue the Jewishness of 2 Baruch may

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[11] Cf., e. g., Davila, *Provenance on the Pseudepigrapha,* 126–131, esp. 126, and also, 121–22. Cf., furthermore, the presentation in the General Introduction.

[12] Cf., Davila, *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha*, 74–119 for a broader discussion of this issue. Cf., furthermore, Satran, *Biblical Prophets*, 76.

very well be a Jewishness that Greek, Syriac and Arabic Christians had created in their own image.[13]

Fifth, and finally, the study of the manuscripts in the current volume suggests that 2 Baruch was not a complete loser after all. At the very least, this claim would benefit from greater nuance. We have positive evidence that some communities, at some points in time, copied and engaged with this book as an Old Testament book. In the wider picture, 2 Baruch may still be a failure. The lack of inclusion of the book in the large majority of surviving manuscripts – be they Jewish, Christian, or other – speaks to its limited popularity. And still, the manuscripts that remain and that include it provide us with glimpses of scattered glory.

It remains possible that the dominant scholarly hypothesis about the provenance and status of 2 Baruch is correct. The current volume has not falsified it. However, that fact may reflect the main problem of the majority hypothesis: it can be neither verified nor falsified. The source situation does not allow for either of the options. In fact, the current study has displayed a disconnection between the academic narrative of 2 Baruch and the manuscripts that provide access to this writing. This disconnection invites further reflections on what the building blocks of the majority hypothesis are and how they relate to the available source materials. In the General Introduction, I showed that the hypothesis has inherited the assessments and epistemological underpinnings of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship. I also pointed out its dependence on the basic methodological promise of text-critical scholarship that a five-hundred-year time gap can be overcome. Further, it has inherited the assessment of what counts as source, inherent in text-critical approaches. The question then is whether, and to what extent, the academic narrative that this hypothesis has engendered is first and foremost a product of the paradigms and procedures of an academic field. My worry is that the academic narrative of 2 Baruch may be a product of the matters of concern and the major discourses of the academic fields invested in the study of early Jewish texts and Christian origins and that the representation of 2 Baruch has taken on a life on its own at arm's-length from the manuscripts. If so, the traditional division of labor in textual scholarship has facilitated the situation and is part of the problem. The guild distinguishes between those who work on manuscripts and produce editions and those who identify as interpreters of texts and who base their work on the editions that their colleagues have produced. Among the members of the latter group, many have not been trained to work on manuscripts, and consequently some of them have neither seen nor studied a manuscript.

The manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch are medieval, Christian manuscripts. They bear witness to the synchronous realities of medieval, Christian communities and their traditions. The extent to which these manuscripts and their

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[13] Cf., Davila, *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha*, 127–28.

copies of 2 Baruch are apt sources to an early Jewish writing is not a matter that should be taken for granted or an issue that should continue to pass under the radar in the manner that it has been allowed to so far. The burden of the proof in this matter falls not on me, though, but on the scholars who uphold the majority hypothesis.

7.4 Takeaway 3: Challenging the Dominant Practices of Textual Scholarship

Inspired by New Philology, the chapters of the current volume have addressed methodological, epistemological and ethical challenges to textual scholarship. All these challenges are the products of practices molded by, and construed within, the epistemological frameworks of the historical-critical paradigm. My critical engagement with this framework concerns, primarily, its longstanding focus on the early text and its historical and literary context, a notion of text production and transmission whereby texts are seen as finished early on, the deep trust in the ability of text-critical procedures to provide access to that early text and an approach to texts as functionally immaterial.

   All the challenges that I have chosen to focus on in this volume are symptoms of the same consistent fault line: the general inattention to the surviving manuscripts as cultural artifacts. As already asserted in the General Introduction, the manuscripts have been invisible to scholars of 2 Baruch and have hardly played any role in the academic debate. This inattention has effectively barred studies of the book as an embodied text. Although the manuscripts are the immediate contexts of the text, the text has not been explored in the material context in which it arguably appears or in the cultural contexts of the communities that produced and engaged with its carriers. Scholars have also ignored the possibility of a systematic bias in the survival of manuscripts and the deeply entangled character of our sources. Finally, this lack of attention to the manuscripts has made scholarship blind to the fact that the survival of 2 Baruch depends on the activities of a third party: the communities that produced and preserved the manuscripts. The lacking attention to the manuscripts as cultural artifacts has led to a disinterest in chains of manuscript ownership, traceable events of reception and the concerns of the receiving tradition. It has fostered an indifference to the efforts of the communities that preserved the book.

   A key question that I have asked myself in the writing of the present volume is the following: what counts as "source" and what counts as "non-source" in a research field dominated by a historical-critical approach? Scholarship on 2 Baruch has engaged only with the text in the columns of the manuscripts' pages as "source." Other aspects of the manuscripts they have assessed as "non-source." The result is that these other features have remained unexplored. In each

chapter of the volume, I have aimed to re-center one such aspect and to qualify it as "source." The first aspect that I put back into focus was the material and collection context of the Codex Ambrosianus. The continuing engagement with a circulating manuscript and the various roles that such a manuscript would take on beyond its function as a text carrier and production unit formed the second aspect. The third aspect that I investigated was the widespread inattention in scholarship to additional notes and marks in margins and intercolumns. The lack of focus on historical contexts of engagement beyond the context of origin was the fourth issue that I raised. The fifth aspect was the lacking concern for paratextual identifications of books and writings. Finally, chapter six highlighted the dependence of textual scholars on the mediating function of the manuscripts and the entanglement of embodied texts with the practices and circumstances of the receiving cultures. As pointed out in the reassessment of the academic narrative about 2 Baruch, above, the representation of 2 Baruch changes when these aspects of the manuscripts become part of the equation.

Another issue that I have pondered over is this: what are the effects on his- torical-critical scholarship of the dependence on a singular manuscript witness? As pointed out in chapter 1, throughout the history of research on 2 Baruch, a single copy has served as the only (1865–1903), or the only full (1903–to date) witness to the early text. Since the copy of 2 Baruch in the Codex Ambrosianus was the only available copy for such a long time, the dependence is undeniable. Due to their traditional reliance on a historical-critical approach and on text- critical procedures (implicit or explicit), scholars have often not kept the notion of the text-on-the page of the copy from the notion of the early text.[14]

Textual criticism was designed to help the text critic navigate and choose between manuscripts and/or variant readings to establish the best witnesses to an early text. It developed in fields with higher numbers of available manu- scripts, such as New Testament Studies and Classics. Scholars of 2 Baruch have applied the same epistemology and procedures to tackle the opposite situation – a situation that these procedures were not designed to handle. Since there is only one manuscript, there is no lush flora of witnesses and variants that could have reminded the scholar about the particularities of surviving manuscripts. As a result, the singular copy may easily have come to stand in for the early text. This is unfortunate because it creates a notion of textual stability,[15] and we end up using a text that has been molded through half a millennium of

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[14] Cf., e.g., Violet: "Unter der Bezeichnung Baruch-Apokalypse verstehe ich in diesem Buche diejenige Schrift, welche für uns bisher in ihrer Gesamtheit nur aus dem syrischen Bibel- codex zu Mailand bekannt geworden ist […]" (*Apokalypsen*, lvi).

[15] Hugo Lundhaug, "An Illusion of Textual Stability: Textual Fluidity, New Philology, and the Nag Hammadi Codices," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manu- script Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017)*,* 20–54.

transmission by Greek and Syriac Christian communities as if it were an un-
mediated Jewish text.[16] I am even tempted to argue that the text of this particular
sixth/seventh-century copy functionally became first/second-century 2 Baruch
in modern scholarship in that it shaped the scholarly imagination of the literary
contents, format and structure of the book. If I am correct, we find ourselves in
the curious situation in which the text of a re-appropriated sixth/seventh-century
Syriac Christian copy has been identified as an early, Jewish work.

As I have argued in the current volume, the manuscripts that remain for us to
explore are snapshots, not one-to-one representations of an early text. The writing
that we conceptualize as "2 Baruch" is an evolving entity. The copy in the Codex
Ambrosianus is one but neither the only extant nor the only imaginable materi-
alization. One might reason that the use of the copy in the Codex Ambrosianus
as a witness happened by necessity – when this is the only witness, how can we
otherwise study the early Jewish text? This question and the potential answers
that we offer to it allow us a peek into the effect of epistemologies and long-
standing scholarly priorities in a field. It is true that a study of the early text can-
not escape the sixth/seventh-century copy, but the early text and its context are
not the only text and context of 2 Baruch that we can or should study. Given the
manuscript availability, it might not even be the most obvious one.

7.5 In Appreciation of What Remains

What are the wider implications of my case study of the manuscript transmis-
sion of 2 Baruch for future practices of textual scholarship? As noted above,
the current volume has addressed the effects of the general inattention among
textual scholars to manuscripts as cultural artifacts. This inattention has had
clear consequences for the representation of and knowledge about 2 Baruch.
The preceding chapters have applied the insights generated by New Philology
to pinpoint some of the glitches that the dominant historical-critical approaches
have produced. Hopefully, the identification of these glitches may both engender
new creativity in textual scholarship and serve future debates of professional
practices well beyond the study of this particular book.

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[16] Henze offered a spot on reflection on this methodological issue. Note though, that he does
not change his procedures accordingly: "That *2Bar* survives in its entirety in a Syriac translation
that now forms the basis for all modern interpretations raises a number of methodological is-
sues. By necessity I will treat the Syriac *as if* it were the original version, looking for linguistic
markers in the text, verbal echoes, puns, and so forth, all in full awareness that the Syriac is a
tertiary version made from the Greek, which in turn is a translation of the lost Hebrew original.
Also, throughout this study I will refer to the person who produced the Syriac text as the 'author'
of *2Bar*, even though, strictly speaking, this person is the translator or, at best, its scribe rather
than its original author" (Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism,* 25).

The first and major point is that a textual scholarship that is blind to manuscripts as cultural artifacts misses out on the fascinating worlds of manuscripts! The study of manuscripts, the texts embodied in them and the impact of the many hands that shaped them creates radically new takes on the interpretation of old writings. Hence, a manuscript-oriented philology is a richer philology. A philology that praises "the copy" bears a promise of new insights. It opens up the possibility of new stories about manuscript engagement, glimpses into the manifold relationships between manuscripts and their stewards and some welcome new knowledge about the usages of (assumed) early texts in new historical contexts.

Intimately linked with the realization that manuscripts are cultural artifacts is the insight that manuscripts are someone's manuscripts. They belonged to someone, and they mattered to someone. This insight may appear obvious, but its repercussions are wide ranging. It pinpoints that the manuscripts that textual scholars have used as "witnesses" to texts beyond themselves are the products of someone's efforts. Far too often, these efforts have been overlooked because the manuscripts have remained invisible components of historical-critical scholarship. Even though we owe the very existence of the copies that textual scholars use as their sources to the communities that produced and preserved the manuscripts, they have still been forgotten. Alternatively, scholars have tried to eliminate signs of engagement by those who copied, kept and engaged with the texts. Changes to the texts in the copying process have been approached as "corruption," and signs of active readers on the pages of the manuscripts have been effaced, overlooked or treated as clutter. Indeed, the traditional text-critical endeavor implies systematic circumvention and sometimes a slight disregard for the manuscript producing party.

The insight that manuscripts are always someone's manuscripts becomes particularly salient when we acknowledge that they tend to be someone else's manuscripts. A large share of the writings scholars commonly ascribe to Jewish antiquity survives in manuscripts produced by Christian minority communities in the Middle East. When scholars study the writings in question, they are fully dependent on the cultural products of these communities to access the extant texts. We know the writings only because they copied them and continued to care for the manuscripts that contained them. Frequently, the manuscripts continue to matter to their stewards today or, alternatively, to contemporary communities that still identify with their historical stewards.

The study of early Jewish texts in Christian transmission is ethically demanding in this regard. In a struggle to retrieve the remains of Jewish pasts, scholarship has side-lined the pasts of equally marginal minority communities. Scholars of 2 Baruch have applied the manuscripts for their own purposes, at the risk of misrepresenting both the literature of early Judaism and the cultural artifacts of Syriac Christian communities. Textual scholarship would have much to gain by

recognizing that its sources are someone else's manuscripts and that we know the texts because of – not despite – them.

The traditional and widespread notion in the guild that textual scholars work on immaterial texts has also had repercussions for our communication with neighboring academic fields and our sense of participation in the world around us. During the last decade, disciplines with a long history of identifying their academic professionals as scholars of material culture, such as museology, archaeology and papyrology, have hosted heated debates about academic ethics and the treatment of archaeological and heritage artifacts. These debates, which have focused on issues of provenance and authenticity, have been pivotal to the production of new policy documents in professional societies such as the American Society of Papyrologists (2007), the Association International de Papyrologues (2010) and the American Schools of Oriental Research (2015).[17] Their policy documents display both the fundamental influence of major international conventions, such as the 1970 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, and a broader international discourse about cultural heritage artifacts among national governments, heritage professionals and society at large. The documents also reflect a concern for the effects of a precarious political climate, particularly in the Middle East. It is thus interesting that the professional society to which many scholars of early Jewish texts belong – the Society of Biblical Literature – did not have a policy document regulating the professional treatment of "ancient artifacts" until the fall of 2016.[18] This situation illustrates well the paradox in the history of textual scholarship: although inscribed material artifacts constitute the source materials for the study of ancient writings, and although their texts can thus fruitfully be considered to be materially embodied texts, textual scholars have not been identified as a guild working with material artifacts.

Since we have assumed that these debates do not concern us, we have missed out on debates that have been taking place in fields that identify their academic professionals as scholars of material culture. The discussions that have served to regulate the ways in which cultural artifacts are engaged with in these other disciplines have thus not had a comparable effect on practices of textual scholarship. Still, a majority of the manuscripts that today serve as our sources have been removed either from an archaeological site[19] or from the communities that once served as their custodians.[20] This "removal" of manuscripts during the period of European colonization of the Middle East played an important role in the very shaping of modern philological disciplines. The manuscripts that were

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[17] See, Roberta Mazza, "Papyrology and Ethics" (paper presented at the 28th International Congress of Papyrology. Barcelona, 5 August 2016).

[18] https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/SBL-Artifacts-Policy_20160903.pdf (accessed 21 March 2020).

[19] Mazza, "Papyrology and Ethics," no pages.

[20] Stewart, *Yours, Mine, or Theirs*, 627–28.

brought to Europe became our primary source materials. We are currently see-
ing an emergent debate about the colonial projects that once shaped academic
fields, and this debate is also relevant to textual scholars: when we edit or inter-
pret texts, we do so based on someone else's manuscripts.

The present volume provides an opportunity to challenge and to re-think some
of the practices that have shaped scholarship on 2 Baruch in particular and early
Jewish texts in Christian transmission in general. Scholars of these texts must
strive to strike a balance between upholding a remembrance of Jewish pasts and
protecting the cultural artifacts of Christian minority communities from aca-
demic oblivion.[21] In fact, studies that do so may open up new and exciting vis-
tas. My suggestion is that we develop a provenance-aware textual scholarship, a
material philology that takes the longer chain of historical transmission of these
texts seriously into consideration, acknowledging claims both to material and
to literary heritage. If we move beyond the one-sided focus on origins and ac-
knowledge more points in time as being equally interesting, valid and relevant,
we may allow ethical and methodological reflections about the historical lines of
shifting associations to shape our academic practices. When we allow the manu-
scripts that carry the texts the place that they deserve in our studies we reduce
the risk of misrepresenting our sources and of introducing systematic bias into
our academic narratives. Simultaneously, we open a treasure trove of missed op-
portunities. We catch new glimpses of the long lives of writings that once were,
or may have been, early Jewish writings and, importantly, we honor the many
hands that carried the writings through history.

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[21] Cf., Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Syriac Manuscripts, New Philology and the Ethics of Textual
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versity, Providence, 17 June 2019); eadem, "Textual Scholarship."

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