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Eastern  
**Theological  
Journal**

12/1  
2026

# Eastern Theological Journal

ISSN 2416-2213 (Print)

ISSN 3094-3167 (Online)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59241/etj.12.1>

ETJ is a peer-reviewed academic journal,  
published twice a year by the  
St Athanasius Greek Catholic Theological Institute

It can be found in the list of publications  
recognized as scientific journals by:

– the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research  
Institutes (ANVUR), in classification area 11  
(History, Philosophy and Pedagogical Sciences)

– the Committee on History  
(Történettudományi Bizottság II. FTO TTB [1901-] A)  
and the Committee on Philosophy  
(Filozófiai Tudományos Bizottság II. FTO FTB [1901-] A)  
of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia).

The Eastern Theological Journal adheres to the principles of Open Access  
and is hosted on the Open Journal Systems platform.

Annual print subscription for institutions: 55 €

Rate for private individuals: 22 €

CIB Bank

SWIFT: CIBHHUHB

IBAN: HU83 1110 0702 1920 4893 3600 0001

EU VAT NUMBER: HU19204893

Cover and typesetting: Katalin Balogh

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[www.easterntheologicaljournal.com](http://www.easterntheologicaljournal.com)

[www.szentatanaz.hu](http://www.szentatanaz.hu)

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# Variable Celebrant Prayers in the Medieval Coptic Eucharist: A Bohairic Manuscripts-Based Inventory and Introduction\*

Arsany PAUL

Keywords: *Anaphora, Coptic, Eucharist, Copto-Arabic Manuscripts, Medieval Studies, Euchologion, Liturgical History*

## Abstract

The medieval Bohairic Eucharist emerges as a constellation of overlapping local practices shaped by scribal discretion and evolving liturgical memory. That plurality comes into focus through the manuscript tradition itself. Surveying approximately 375 euchologia codices from the 13th to 20th centuries, this article identifies twenty-four alternate celebrant prayers across nine liturgical units from the raising of incense to communion, fourteen of which are entirely absent from the received printed edition of 1902. Beyond offering the first systematic inventory of variable celebrant prayers, the study shows that many prayers preserved in manuscripts never entered the received euchologion, while others privileged in print remained historically marginal. Together, these findings attest to enduring regional

\* Research for this publication was supported in part by the Mary Jaharis Center, for which I am grateful. I am likewise thankful to the librarians and governing bodies of the respective institutions for granting me access to their collections, to the anonymous peer reviewers for their constructive feedback, and to the journal editors, especially Ágnes T. Mihálykó for her insightful suggestions.

diversity despite repeated efforts toward standardization. The analysis further uncovers relationships between three previously unexamined manuscripts that preserve distinctive repertoires of alternate prayers, suggesting regional and exemplar-based liturgical families. By recovering this diverse liturgical landscape, the study positions variable prayers as a central feature of the Bohairic eucharistic tradition and a lens for understanding its historical development among the Copts and in relation to other Eastern liturgies.

### 1. *Introduction*

The apparent coherence of the Bohairic eucharistic rite masks a more protracted and uneven history of liturgical regulation. Between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, a series of instructional and regulatory works—from the anonymous *Guide to the Beginners*<sup>1</sup> to the ritual manuals of Ibn Kabar,<sup>2</sup> Ibn Sabbā,<sup>3</sup> and the *diataxis* ratified under Gabriel V<sup>4</sup>—sought to codify the northern Bohairic eucharistic tradition, plausibly as steps toward a unified formulary, yet without capturing the full breadth of regional and ritual variability that continued to characterize practice.

The printing of the 1902 euchologion of the Coptic Orthodox Church, containing, among other services, the eucharistic liturgies of Basil of Caesarea (E-BAS), Gregory of Nazianzus (GREG), and Mark/

- 1 Various redactions exist for this work as demonstrated in Miṣā'il al-Baramūsi, دلال المبتدئين (2020), 13-31; Idem, دالات الكنيسة (2024). For a German translation based on the oldest redaction, Vatican City, BAV Vatican Ar. (= VA) 117 (1323 CE), ff. 197r-205v, consult: Graf, *Liturgische Anweisungen* (1924), 119-134.
- 2 Consult ch. 17 in Villecourt, *Les observances* (1923), 249-292 and ch. 1 in Mikhail, *Guides* (2022).
- 3 See chs. 59-84 in Mistrîḥ, *Pretiosa margarita* (1966) and ch. 2 in Mikhail, *Guides* (2022).
- 4 See 'Abdallah, *L'ordinamento* (1962), 171-200 (Arabic)/361-383 (Italian) and ch. 3 in Mikhail, *Guides* (2022).

Cyril of Alexandria (CYRIL), was a monumental undertaking by hegumen ‘Abd al-Masīḥ. Although the resulting volume presents itself as a cohesive and orderly expression of a unified tradition, its formation was far more contingent upon the manuscript witnesses available to the editor and thus offers only a partial view of the diversity of certain prayers.<sup>5</sup> Owing to its status as the first printed euchologion officially authorized for ecclesial use, ‘Abd al-Masīḥ’s edition became the most influential of the tradition.<sup>6</sup> Notably, it already preserves multiple instances of optional or alternate prayers within individual liturgical units, typically left to the celebrant’s discretion. Their inclusion, together with a dedicated appendix of such alternatives, attests to an explicit awareness of ongoing euchological variability. Yet additional variants surviving only in manuscript form remain unaccounted for, and it is this broader and largely uncharted corpus of alternate celebrant prayers that forms the focus of the present study.

In 2022, while searching for a dissertation topic, I began examining euchologia manuscripts. During this process, as I was already aware that certain alternate prayers existed in the eucharistic formularies, a side project emerged. I started documenting numerous prayers in these manuscripts that never entered the Coptic Church’s received tradition. Across nine distinct liturgical units between the raising of incense until the communion rites (labeled letters A-I below), I identified a total of twenty-four alternate presider prayers, fourteen of which were not included in the *editio typica* of 1902. To complete this study, I surveyed roughly 375 Bohairic euchologia produced between the thirteenth and twentieth centuries, examining them either in autopsy or through facsimiles. While many of these manuscripts are

5 On the history of its publication and the liturgical sources consulted, see Miṣā’īl al-Baramūsī, *Notes on the Euchologion* (2018), 125-146; Idem, *خولاجي* (2017), 165-197.

6 On its authorization as the official euchologion, see Mattā’us, *القرارات الجمعية* (2001), 24.

preserved in major international collections, the majority are housed in Egyptian repositories, most of which receive their first sustained analysis here. The manuscript bibliography below provides sigla and essential codicological data for all cited codices (in bold) and all consulted witnesses (in regular type), organized by holding institution. This introductory study does not attempt an exhaustive accounting of every occurrence of each prayer across the manuscript corpus, a task better suited to a digital environment and currently being undertaken since 2025 under the direction of Arsenius Mikhail.<sup>7</sup>

Beyond assembling a numbered inventory with incipits for these alternate celebrant prayers, this study further demonstrates that some texts later treated as normative were, in earlier practice, in fact marginal. Conversely, some supplications regarded as marginal in print, if they were identified at all, appear in the manuscript tradition as the principal supplication. By situating these prayers within a broad manuscript corpus, the study also uncovers notable parallels among particular manuscripts, evidenced by the exclusive appearance of identical variable prayers, thereby suggesting preliminary relationships between codices.<sup>8</sup> Finally, it situates each prayer within the broader tradition and, where relevant, cites parallel exemplars from other Eastern liturgical corpora, highlighting broader commonalities across traditions. This initial orientation to the phenomenon of variable prayers serves only as a point of departure, as each liturgical unit and its corresponding findings warrant an independent, multi-disciplinary examination. Arsenius Mikhail has already undertaken such work for

7 Known as *The Bohairic Coptic Euchologia Project*, and accessible at: [tinyurl.com/y2tnmwf5](https://tinyurl.com/y2tnmwf5) (last accessed: 08/04/2026). See also Mikhail, *A Typology* (2025), 389-404; Idem, *The Bohairic Northern* (forthcoming).

8 See Zanetti's initial proposal, based on the variable prayers of the kiss and the fraction: Zanetti, *Esquisse d'une typologie* (1987), 407-418. For a parallel methodology in the Byzantine rite, see most recently Parenti, *Storia regionale* (2025).

the prayers surrounding the Gospel,<sup>9</sup> and I am currently conducting similar analyses of the prayers of the veil, the kiss, and the communion rites. What follows offers a concise orientation to the phenomenon of celebrant variable prayers as preserved in the Bohairic manuscript tradition.

## *2. The celebrant variable prayers*

### *A. Incense prayers*

Two nearly identical offices for the offering of incense appear in the medieval northern Coptic tradition: the morning and evening offering of incense services.<sup>10</sup> While not strictly part of the eucharistic liturgy in origin, since at least the time of Ibn Kabar in the early fourteenth century the service of the morning incense has functioned as a prerequisite for any eucharistic liturgy.<sup>11</sup> This office, which includes a sequence of intercessory petitions recited by the celebrant, communal praises, together with a psalm and Gospel pericope, remains essentially identical to the evening service. Aside from their differing sets of intercessions, both offices preserve distinct prayers recited inaudibly within the sanctuary at the altar, four of which are included in the ratified printed euchologion of 1902:<sup>12</sup>

9 See chs. 6 and 8 in Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026).

10 On these rituals among the Copts, see Quecke, *Untersuchungen* (1970), 2-13; Athanasius al-Maqrī, *صلوات رفع البخور* (2005). Specifically on the evening service, see Mikhail, *On Evening Worship* (2013).

11 Paris, BnF Ar. (= PNA) 203 (1363-1369 CE), f. 205r. Cf. Villecourt, *Les observances* (1923), 247-248; Mikhail, *Guides* (2022), 37.

12 Ṣalīb, *πνευχολογιον* (1902), 35-38 (A1), 38-40 (A2), 742-745 (A3), 745-746 (A4); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 168-170 (A1), 172-173 (A2), 808-811 (A3), 810-813 (A4).

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
A1	ⲡⲬⲥ ⲡⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲧ ⲡⲛⲓⲱⲧⲧ ⲉⲧⲟⲓ ⲛ̀ⲉⲣⲟⲧⲧ ⲟⲩⲟⲉ ̀ⲛ̀ⲁⲗⲛⲟⲓⲛⲟⲥ	المسيح إلهنا العظيم المخوف الحقيقي	O Christ our God, the great, fearful, and true
A2	ⲫⲧⲧ ⲫⲛⲓ ⲉⲧⲁⲣⲱⲱⲡ ⲉⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̀ⲛⲓⲗⲱⲣⲟⲛ ⲛ̀ⲛⲧⲉ ⲡⲟⲛⲛⲓ ⲁⲃⲉⲗ	يا الله الذي قبل إليه قربان هابيل الصديق	O God who received to himself the gifts of the righteous Abel
A3	ⲡⲬⲥ ⲡⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲧ ⲧⲉⲗⲉⲗⲡⲓⲥ ̀ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲛⲟⲩⲭⲁⲓ	أيها المسيح إلهنا رجاء خلاصنا	O Christ our God, the hope of our salvation
A4	ⲱⲡⲉ ⲉ̀ⲣⲟⲕ ⲫⲧⲧ ̀ⲛ̀ⲧⲟⲧⲉⲛ ⲉ̀ⲣⲱⲛ ⲁⲛⲟⲛ ⲃⲁ ⲛⲉⲕⲉⲃⲓⲁⲓⲕ ⲛ̀ⲁⲧⲓⲛⲱⲁ	يا اللهم اقبل منا إليك نحن عبيدك غير المستحقين	Receive to yourself, O God, from us your unworthy servants

A1, for the evening incense, and A2, for the morning incense, form part of the standard formulary of this office. By contrast, A3 (also for the evening) and A4 (also for the morning), both far less familiar in the tradition, appear only in an appended list of alternate supplications placed after all the eucharistic formularies, thus reflecting their auxiliary character.<sup>13</sup>

Ágnes T. Mihálykó has shown that A1 was already known in the southern Egyptian Sahidic tradition by the eighth century.<sup>14</sup> Both A1 and A2 occur in the oldest dated northern Copto-Arabic euchologion

13 The same pattern appears in Byzantine liturgical texts, where ancillary prayers that fall outside the core formulary typically circulate as addenda: Parenti, *La preghiera* (2011), 158-159. A similar phenomenon occurs in Copto-Arabic codices, as demonstrated in other rites: Paul, *Women and Blood* (2025), 182-183.

14 P.Rain.UnterrichtKopt. 197v (BM, EA 5876). See her discussion in Mihálykó, *Christian Liturgical Papyri* (2019), 138, 292. In Prague, Or. Inst. I from the eleventh-twelfth century, a variation of A2 occurs: Hažmuková, *Miscellaneous I* (1936), 332-333.

that preserves both the morning and evening incense offices: Cairo, Franciscan Center Museum (= CFM) 2 (13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> c.).<sup>15</sup> Yet, unlike the remarkable stability of A1 and A2 across nearly all manuscripts, A3 and A4 appear only sporadically and even then are commonly attested outside the office of incense. Their earliest attestation is found in Oxford, Bodleian Huntington (= OBH) 360 (ca. 13<sup>th</sup> c.), from the monastery of Saint Macarius in Wādī al-Naṭrūn. Given that this codex lacks a dedicated section for the office of incense, the scribe inserts these supplications within the liturgy of the word, though he marks them for the incense service.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the ubiquity of the two core prayers (A1 and A2), manuscripts through the eighteenth century preserve additional alternative supplications for these offices. In total, one further prayer circulated for the morning incense and two for the evening. The Cypriot codex Paris, BnF Copt. (= PNC) 31 dated before the fifteenth century, preserves the Bohairic-only texts of A5, A6, and A7, all of which are transmitted as an addendum to the principal text of the manuscript.<sup>17</sup>

ID	Coptic	Translation
A5	τενταλο νακ ε̅ρηι̅ ι̅νεκ̅ι̅μο̅ π̅ο̅ς ι̅νε̅σ̅ο̅ι̅νο̅υ̅γι̅ ι̅π̅π̅α̅τ̅ικ̅ον̅	We offer up before you, O Lord, the spiritual incense
A6	φ̅†̅ φ̅η̅ ε̅τα̅χ̅φ̅ο̅ς̅ ε̅βο̅λ̅ β̅εν̅ φ̅ι̅ω̅τ̅ β̅εν̅ ο̅υ̅με̅τα̅πα̅θ̅η̅ς̅	O God, who was begotten from the Father impassibly
A7	φ̅†̅ φ̅η̅ ε̅τ̅χο̅υ̅ω̅τ̅ ε̅χ̅εν̅ π̅τ̅η̅ρ̅ϗ̅ ο̅υ̅ο̅ρ̅ ι̅ε̅π̅ι̅σ̅κο̅π̅ο̅ς̅ ι̅τ̅ε̅ ε̅ν̅χ̅αι̅ ι̅β̅εν̅	O God, who looks upon all, and the overseer of all things

<sup>15</sup> CFM2, p. 403 (A1), p. 388 (A2).

<sup>16</sup> OBH360, ff. 31r-32r (A3), ff. 27v-29v (A4).

<sup>17</sup> PNC31, ff. 184r-v (A3), ff. 186r-187r (A4), ff. 183v-184r (A5), ff. 181r-182v (A6), ff. 182v-183v (A7).

The rubrics do not specify which of these prayers belongs to which service. In PNC<sub>31</sub>, the prayer titles and marginal annotations indicate only whether each supplication is addressed to the Father, as in A<sub>4</sub> and A<sub>5</sub>, or to the Son, as in A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>6</sub>, and A<sub>7</sub>. A comparable pattern, assigning the same prayers either to the Father or to the Son, appears in other witnesses including Asyūt, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Muḥarraḡ Liturgy (= AML) 14B9 (1773-1774 CE);<sup>18</sup> Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Baramūs Liturgy (= WBaL) 319 (1792-1793 CE);<sup>19</sup> Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Suryān Liturgy (= WSL) 496 (before 1895 CE).<sup>20</sup> They do not, however, state whether the prayer pertains to the morning or evening incense. Yet this distinction, precisely to which divine person the prayer is directed, offers essential clues for determining its proper placement. In OBH<sub>360</sub>, A<sub>1</sub> and A<sub>3</sub> are both identified as evening incense prayers addressed to the Son, whereas A<sub>4</sub> is designated as an incense prayer addressed to the Father.<sup>21</sup> Following the consistent logic evident across these manuscripts, we may assign A<sub>5</sub> (addressed to the Father) to the morning, and A<sub>6</sub> and A<sub>7</sub> (both addressed to the Son) to the evening incense. Such a paradigm carries theological significance, for Christ proclaimed as “the Light of the world” (John 8:12) is linked to the evening service, during which the lamp-lighting rite would have taken place and in which Christ is portrayed as a sweet-smelling evening offering (cf. Eph 5:2).<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, a celebrant could select from a

18 AML14B9, ff. 172v-173r (A<sub>3</sub>), ff. 174r-175r (A<sub>4</sub>).

19 WBaL319, ff. 201v-202r (A<sub>3</sub>), ff. 203v-205r (A<sub>4</sub>).

20 WSL496, ff. 35v-36v (A<sub>3</sub>), ff. 37v-39r (A<sub>4</sub>), which is erroneously titled for the “morning.”

21 OBH<sub>360</sub>, ff. 24v, 31r, and 27v. On the presence of prayers addressed to the Son in both the Coptic and West Syriac traditions, see: Mihálykó, *A Coptic Prayer* (2021), 165-184; Varghese, *Prayers Addressed to Christ* (2008), 88-111.

22 Broadly on these theological themes, consult Taft, ‘*Thanksgiving*’ (2001), 169-186.

total of four options for the evening incense service and three for the morning, e.g. in the case of AML<sub>14</sub>B<sub>9</sub>.

*B. Pre-Gospel prayer*

Among the notable features that shape the proclamation of the Gospel is the audible introductory rite it preserves. While the other scriptural readings in the liturgy of the word include celebrant prayers recited inaudibly and primarily inside the sanctuary, only the pre-Gospel ritual contains a prayer intoned aloud by the celebrant at the threshold of the sanctuary.<sup>23</sup> This audible supplication, accompanied by an incense offering and a procession around the altar before the Gospel reading, publicly draws attention to the solemnity and centrality of the Gospel proclamation. Two prayers before the Gospel's recitation are presented consecutively in the *editio typica*:<sup>24</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
B <sub>1</sub>	ϥⲛⲏⲃ...ϥⲏ ⲉ̀ⲧⲁⲓⲁϥⲁⲓⲥ ⲏⲏⲉⲓⲥⲁⲒⲒⲐⲐⲥ ⲏⲏⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ	السيد...الذي قال لتلاميذه القدّيسين	O Master...who said to his saintly disciples
B <sub>2</sub>	ϥⲛⲏⲃ...ϥⲏ ⲉ̀ⲧⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲥⲟⲩⲱⲣⲓⲡ ⲏⲏⲉⲓⲥⲁⲒⲒⲐⲐⲥ ⲏⲏⲁⲑⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲟⲩⲟⲗ ⲏⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲉ̀ⲑ ⲉ̀ⲃⲟⲗ ⲉ̀ⲃⲉⲛ ⲡⲓⲕⲟⲥⲓⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ	أيها السيد...الذي أرسل تلاميذه القدّيسين والرسل الأطهار في العالم كله	O Master...who sent his saintly disciples and holy apostles into the whole world

23 On these rituals in the received tradition, see Şalīb, ΠΙΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 234-260; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 356-379, as well as its historical development in ch. 2 of Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026).

24 Şalīb, ΠΙΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 90-95; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 222-227.

B<sub>1</sub>, the most common and unanimously attested in practically all examined codices, already appears in what is likely the oldest known euchologion containing E-BAS, GREG, and CYRIL, Manchester, John Rylands Library Coptic (= MRC) 426 dated to the mid-thirteenth century, making it one of the oldest known Copto-Arabic euchologia in the world.<sup>25</sup> B<sub>2</sub>, which appears far less frequently in the manuscript record and is commonly associated with GREG, is known from a comparably dated codex, OBH360 where the scribe lists it as second to B<sub>1</sub>.<sup>26</sup>

In his study of the ritual unfolding of the Gospel in the divine liturgy, Arsenius Mikhail shows that prayer B<sub>2</sub> functioned as the preferred pre-Gospel supplication in some of the earliest Greek witnesses to the Coptic anaphoras, while B<sub>1</sub> is more characteristic of Copto-Arabic redactions.<sup>27</sup> On the basis of the fourteenth-century Greek-Arabic euchologion Collegeville, Kacmarcik Ms. (= CKM) 6 from the Monastery of St. Antony, he associates B<sub>2</sub> with Alexandrian provenance and B<sub>1</sub> with Old Cairo, while also drawing textual parallels to the Melkite and Syriac traditions.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to these two prayers of the received tradition, a third and lesser-known pre-Gospel supplication also circulated in the thirteenth century. After listing B<sub>1</sub> and B<sub>2</sub> in E-BAS, the scribe of OBH360 provides a third alternative, specifying in its rubric that it is intended for use in the early morning (τροοϣη / الغدوات).<sup>29</sup>

25 MRC426, ff. 33v-35v. Cf. Rodwell, *Liturgies* (1870), 30. On its historicity, see note 143 below.

26 OBH360, ff. 38r-40v.

27 Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 368-369.

28 Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 363-364. CKM6, ff. 24r-25v (B<sub>1</sub>), ff. 23r-v (B<sub>2</sub>); Macomber, *Greek Text of the Coptic Mass* (1977), 319-320.

29 OBH360, ff. 39v-40v. See the Coptic edition and translation in Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 369-370.

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
B <sub>3</sub>	Ϥⲙⲏⲃ Ϥⲟⲥ Ϥⲏ ⲉⲧⲧ ⲙⲓⲡⲟϤⲟⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲉⲛⲉⲗ	أيها السيد الرب واهب النور الأبدي	O Master Lord, who grants eternal light

*C. Post-Gospel prayer*

Across the Bohairic manuscript tradition, a prayer designated for recitation after the Gospel appears ubiquitously throughout the sources. This post-Gospel supplication already appears in MRC426,<sup>30</sup> and has been part of the received tradition at least since then:<sup>31</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
C <sub>1</sub>	ⲡⲓⲣⲉϤⲱⲟϤϤⲏⲗⲏⲧ Ϥⲁ ⲡⲓⲛⲏⲗ ⲙⲏⲁⲓ	الطويل الروح الكثير الرحمة	O long-suffering, plenteous in mercy

Although minor textual variations occur, mainly in the ordering or omission of certain elements (especially within the Greek redactions of the Coptic anaphora), Arsenius Mikhail demonstrates that the prayer remains remarkably stable across the witnesses.<sup>32</sup> Studying this prayer's structure, Athanasius al-Maqārī identifies a threefold structure: 1) a supplication for the faithful preservation of the Gospel; 2) a series of intercessory petitions; and 3) a prayer offered on behalf of the catechumens—aspects that Arsenius Mikhail develops in greater detail.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> MRC426, ff. 36r-42v. Cf. Rodwell, *Liturgies* (1870), 30-32.

<sup>31</sup> Şalīb, *ⲡⲓⲉϤⲱⲟϤⲓⲟⲛ* (1902), 260-269; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 380-389.

<sup>32</sup> Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 443, 446-452; Dous, *Ἡ Ἀλεξανδρινή* (1997), 87-88.

<sup>33</sup> Athanasius al-Maqārī, *القُدَّاسُ الإلهي* (2011), vol. 1, 521-523; Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 442-444.

Despite the predominance of C<sub>1</sub> and its early attestation across the manuscript record, an alternative post-Gospel prayer circulated concurrently. In OBH360, the earliest known witness, C<sub>2</sub> appears in the eucharistic formulary as the first post-Gospel supplication, preceding the transcription of C<sub>1</sub>.<sup>34</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
C <sub>2</sub>	τενωερισμοτ ἱτοτκ πῶς παντοκρατωρ	نشكرك أيها الرب ضابط الكل	We thank you, O Lord, the Pantocrator

Unlike C<sub>1</sub>, which emphasizes putting the Gospel into practice while weaving together a variety of intercessions, C<sub>2</sub> briefly expresses thanksgiving for hearing the Gospel and then immediately turns toward what will unfold in the assembly, namely the offering of the Eucharist and a plea for mercy.

In his edition and translation of this prayer, Arsenius Mikhail identifies two additional manuscripts that transmit C<sub>2</sub>, namely PNC<sub>31</sub> and WSL<sub>496</sub>, where it is found in the appendix.<sup>35</sup> To these we may add two others, AML<sub>14B9</sub> and WBaL<sub>319</sub>, where it is also in an appendix.<sup>36</sup> Red Sea, Monastery of St. Antony Liturgy (= RAL) 654, an undated all-Arabic euchologion of the three liturgies, also transmits both prayers in its formulary, interestingly placing C<sub>2</sub> before C<sub>1</sub>, just like OBH360.<sup>37</sup> While OBH360 and PNC<sub>31</sub> appear to indicate that C<sub>2</sub> was recited before C<sub>1</sub>, the remaining manuscripts explicitly state in the rubric that C<sub>2</sub> is said instead of (عوضاً عن) C<sub>1</sub>. This suggests that by the time these codices were copied, either of the two variant post-Gospel prayers could be used interchangeably.

34 OBH360, ff. 41v-43r.

35 Mikhail, *Liturgy of the Word* (2026), 444-445.

36 AML<sub>14B9</sub>, ff. 177r-v; WBaL<sub>319</sub>, ff. 207v-208r.

37 RAL654, ff. 25v-26v.

The post-Gospel prayer stands as the final alternate prayer not explicitly tied to any of the three anaphoras since it belongs to the liturgy of the word, a generic service common to all formularies. By contrast, the subsequent variant supplications in the pre-anaphora, anaphora, and post-anaphora typically correspond to a specific formulary.

*D. Prayer of the veil*

The prayer of the veil is the final supplication the celebrant says inaudibly in the pre-anaphora. Functioning as an *oratio accessus*, the celebrant recites this prayer before (re)entering the altar as a preparatory rite prior to officiating the eucharistic liturgy—a topic I presented on, along with the following prayer of the kiss, at the 2024 session of the Society of Oriental Liturgy with an edition and publication forthcoming.<sup>38</sup> The Copts’ received tradition preserves a total of six altar-access prayers:<sup>39</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
D1	ϥⲧ ϥⲏ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲉⲟⲃⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲉⲧⲏⲁⲓⲣⲟⲙⲓ ⲏⲁⲧⲟⲩⲥⲁⲭⲓ ⲏⲙⲟⲥ	يا الله الذي من أجل محبتك للبشر التي لا ينطق بها	O God who in your ineffable love for mankind
D2	ⲡⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩⲧⲧ ϥⲏ ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲥⲟⲧⲧⲉⲛ	أيها الرب إلهنا الذي خلصنا	O Lord our God who has redeemed us
D3	ⲡⲟⲥ ϥⲧ ⲡⲓⲡⲁⲛⲧⲟⲕⲣⲁⲧⲟⲣ ϥⲏ ⲉⲧⲥⲱⲟⲩⲛ ⲏⲫⲙⲉⲩⲓ ⲏⲏⲓⲣⲟⲙⲓ	أيها الرب الإله ضابط الكل العارف أفكار البشر	O Lord, God the Pantocrator, who knows the thoughts of men

<sup>38</sup> *Rites of Transition: Prayers of the Veil and Kiss as Preparatory Rites in the Medieval Coptic Eucharist* (forthcoming).

<sup>39</sup> Şalib, *πνευχολογιον* (1902), 270-272 (D1), 272-273 (D2), 453-454 (D3), 455-457 (D4), 555-558 (D5), 559-563 (D6); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 390-391 (D1), 392-395 (D2), 556-559 (D3), 559-561 (D4), 646-649 (D5), 649-651 (D6).

D4	ΕΤΙ ΟΝ ΤΕΝΤΑΣΘΟ ἸΜΟΝ ΖΑΡΟΚ Φ† ΠΑΓΑΘΟΣ	وأيضًا نرجع إليك يا الله الصالح	Again, we return to you, O God the good one
D5	ΠΡΕΦΘΑΜΙΟ ἸΤΕ †ΚΤΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΡΣ	يا خالق البرية كلها	O the creator of all creation
D6	ΠῶΣ Φ† ἸΤΕ ΝΙΧΟΜ ἸΟΥΡΟ ἸΤΕ ἸΩΟΥ	أيها الرب إله القوات ملك المجد	O Lord, God of powers, king of glory

The primary prayer of the veil of E-BAS (D1), GREG (D3), and CYRIL (D5) are already attested in our earliest specimen, MRC426.<sup>40</sup> When later manuscripts include this liturgical unit, these three supplications appear most consistently in their respective formularies across the codices examined.

Although D2 and D4, the variable prayers in E-BAS and GREG, are already transcribed in the thirteenth-century manuscript OBH360,<sup>41</sup> their transmission remains very limited, with only a small number of occurrences scattered across time.<sup>42</sup> Prayer D6, the alternate supplication in CYRIL, is absent from OBH360 despite that codex containing this formulary. Most of its witnesses date from the eighteenth century.

All three alternate texts (D2, D4, and D6) are preserved in the appended prayer collections of AML14B9, WBaL319, and WSL496, with the first two codices also having the more common prayer in the respective formularies.<sup>43</sup> All six prayers also appear in two Arabic-only

40 MRC426, ff. 42v-44r (D1), ff. 116r-118v (D3), ff. 183r-185v (D5).

41 OBH360, ff. 50r-53r (D2), ff. 132r-134v (D4).

42 For instance: PNC31, ff. 170r-171v (D2), ff. 111r-112v (D4); PNA5969, ff. 3r-5r (D4).

43 AML14B9, ff. 178r-v (D2), ff. 179r-180v (D4), ff. 181r-182v (D6); WBaL319, ff. 208v-210r (D2), ff. 210r-213r (D4), ff. 213r-215v (D6); WSL496, ff. 42v-44r (D2), ff. 44r-46v (D4), ff. 46v-48v (D6).

euchologia of the three liturgies: RAL772 (1816-1861, 1874-1927 CE),<sup>44</sup> and in RAL654.<sup>45</sup> In the second, all prayers except D6 are clearly present; a lacuna occurs precisely where D6 could have appeared, leaving open the possibility of its original inclusion. A handful of manuscripts from the Eastern Desert that preserve GREG retain its variable option, D4.<sup>46</sup>

The prayer of the veil exhibits notable stability within the Bohairic tradition.<sup>47</sup> Although these six prayers circulated with differing frequencies, D1, D3, and D5 with the most prevalence, no new variant supplications have come to light despite the divergent transmission of this liturgical unit within the Greek redactions of the Coptic eucharistic formularies.<sup>48</sup>

44 RAL772, ff. 99r-100r (D1), ff. 100r-v (D2), ff. [107]r-[108]r (D3), ff. [108]r-v (D4), ff. [147]r-[148]r (D5), ff. [148]r-[149]r (D6).

45 RAL654, ff. 30r-32r (D1), ff. 32r-33r (D2), ff. 84r-85v (D3), ff. 85v-88r (D4), ff. 132r-v (D5).

46 In addition to RAL772 and RAL654, consider: Red Sea, Monastery of St. Paul Liturgy (= RPL) 134 (1718 CE), ff. 106r-108v; RPL143 (1797 CE), ff. 117r-119v.

47 The apparent stability of this prayer should not obscure the fact that it is lacking in some manuscripts, and that both euchologia London, British Library Or. (= LBO) 429, ff. 61r-v, and RPL148 (1752 CE), ff. 114v-115v, preserve a hitherto unknown optional presider's prayer of piety beginning with, "My Lord Jesus Christ the living Son of God..." (παῦς ἰη̅ς π̅ς π̅ωρη̅ ἰφ̅† ε̅τον̅ / يا ربي يسوع المسيح ابن الله الحي) in addition to a prayer of the veil. On the phenomena of prayers of piety in the Coptic tradition, consult Paul, *Praying While Officially Praying* (forthcoming).

48 A distinct prayer of the veil accompanies each of the three eucharistic formularies, as evidenced by two fourteenth-century manuscripts: Paris, BnF Gr. (= PNG) 325, which preserves one in E-BAS (ff. 23r-v) and another in GREG (ff. 89v-91v). On the transmission of these prayers, see Mikhail, *Presentation* (2020), 160-167. The second, CKM6, contains a fragmentary prayer in CYRIL (f. 109r), which is the same as a prayer in Melkite MARK: Macomber, *Anaphora of Mark* (1979), 77; Cuming, *Liturgy of Mark* (1990), 16-17.

Many of these prayers show clear parallels with other liturgical traditions, particularly those of Antioch and Jerusalem. For example, D1 corresponds to the same liturgical unit in the Syriac anaphora of James,<sup>49</sup> while D2 appears as a *Prayer of the Oblation* attributed to Basil in the same anaphora, though preserved in its Greek recension.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, D5 echoes the veil prayer found in the Syriac anaphora of John of Bostra;<sup>51</sup> this attribution even appears in the title of this prayer within the Bohairic euchological conventions.<sup>52</sup> Several prayers of the veil entered the Ethiopic tradition as well: D2 and D4, two supplications rarely attested in the Bohairic tradition, both appear in the anaphora of the Apostles.<sup>53</sup> Distinctively, D3 reworks the prayers before and after the preparation in the inherited Coptic tradition to formulate this prayer of the veil that is most common in GREG.<sup>54</sup> These brief comparisons illustrate the broader pattern of inter-traditional exchange and preservation.

#### *E. Prayer of the kiss*

The final celebrant's supplication before the commencement of the anaphora is known as the prayer of the kiss, which is proclaimed audibly at the altar with diaconal admonitions and congregational responses. Like the prayer of the veil, these supplications vary according to the eucharistic formulary being celebrated. As I presented elsewhere, the thrust of the prayers emphasize reconciliation between God and humanity and reconciliation among the assembled faithful.<sup>55</sup> The latter

49 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 2.2 (1953), 140-141; Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (1896), 84-85.

50 Mercier, *La Liturgie* (1946), 78-81.

51 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 3.1 (1981), 14-15.

52 E.g. MRC426, f. 183r.

53 Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (1896), 195.

54 Mikhail, *Presentation* (2020), 168-171.

55 See note 38 above.

finds ritual expression in the ancient liturgical practice of exchanging the kiss of peace.<sup>56</sup> A total of eight prayers of the kiss form part of the received tradition: two in each anaphora (E1 and E2 for E-BAS; E3 and E4 for GREG; E5 and E6 for CYRIL), and two additional prayers transmitted in appended material (E7 and E8).<sup>57</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
E1	ϕ† πινιω† πωραενεε	يا الله العظيم الأبدى	O God the great, the eternal
E2	εβοσι σαπῶσι ἰχουμ νιβεν ἡτε ογσαχι	عالٍ فوق كل قوة النطق	Exalted above all power of speech
E3	ϕη ετωοπ ϕη ενααωοπ	أيها الكائن الذي كان	[He] who is, who was
E4	π̄χ̄τ̄ πεννοϋ† †χουμ ετοι ἡρο†	أيها المسيح إلهنا القوة المخوفة	O Christ our God, the fearful power
E5	παρχηγος ἡτε ἡωνῆ	يا رئيس الحياة	O author of life
E6	ϕ† ἡτε †αγαπη	يا إله المحبة	O God of love
E7	ϕ† πιδημιογρως ἡτε ενχαϊ νιβεν	يا الله خالق كل الأشياء	O God, creator of everything
E8	ϕ† ογοε ϕηνηε ἡτε ογον νιβεν	يا الله سيد الكل	O God and master of all

<sup>56</sup> Phillips, *Ritual Kiss* (2010).

<sup>57</sup> Şalib, *Πνευχολογιον* (1902), 297-300 (E1), 301-304 (E2), 458-463 (E3), 463-468 (E4), 563-568 (E5), 569-572 (E6), 747-749 (E7), 749-750 (E8); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 414-417 (E1), 418-421 (E2), 560-564 (E3), 564-569 (E4), 650-655 (E5), 656-659 (E6), 812-815 (E7), 814-817 (E8). See also Zanetti's initial treatment, though he does not identify other alternatives: Zanetti, *Esquisse d'une typologie* (1987), 410-411.

Unlike the *editio typica*, OBH360 transcribes all eight prayers as part of the eucharistic formularies: E1, E2, E7, and E8 in E-BAS, and the remaining prayers in their respective anaphoras.<sup>58</sup> Similar to OBH360, RAL654 also offers these four prayers of the kiss within E-BAS.<sup>59</sup> With the exception of E7 and E8, which do not appear in MRC426, this manuscript transmits all others in their proper formularies, except for E4 an alternate prayer for the kiss in GREG, which a later hand added at the end of the codex.<sup>60</sup>

E1 through E6, the most prevalent across the three anaphoras, continued to circulate in the manuscripts consulted, though their relative positions occasionally shift. E1 remains relatively stable as the principal prayer in E-BAS compared to the other formularies.<sup>61</sup> For example, E5, given primary position in the received tradition of CYRIL, is often relegated to second place, with E6 taking precedence, as seen in OBH360 and RAL654. Within these same codices, a similar inversion occurs between E4 and E5, even though the former holds priority in the *editio typica*. A similar phenomenon appears in another early euchologion, Cairo, Coptic Patriarchate Liturgy (= CPL) 174 (mid-13<sup>th</sup> c.), which privileges E4 over E3 in GREG and E6 over E5 in CYRIL, even enduring into later centuries.<sup>62</sup> Such patterns suggest that the order later received as standard was not uniformly fixed in

58 OBH360, ff. 60r-62v (E1), ff. 62v-65r (E2), ff. 65v-67r (E7), ff. 67r-68r (E8), 137v-140v (E4), 141r-145r (E3), 204r-206v (E6), 207r-211 (E5).

59 RAL654, ff. 37r-38v (E1), ff. 38v-40r (E2), ff. 40r-41v (E7), ff. 41v-42v (E8).

60 MRC426, ff. 52r-54v (E1), ff. 54v-57r (E2), ff. 119r-123r (E3), ff. 186r-188r (E6), ff. 188v-193r (E5), ff. 279r-284v (E4).

61 Mihálykó has demonstrated that E1 was known in Southern Egypt by the seventh century, as evidenced by two Greek papyri and a Sahidic pottery ostrakon. See MPER N.S. XVII 32, PSI Com. IX 1, and O.Crum 5 in Mihálykó, *Christian Liturgical Papyri* (2019), 298, 307, 366.

62 CPL174, ff. 93r-95r (E4), ff. 95r-99r (E3), ff. 144r-145v (E6), ff. 145v-149r (E5); WBAL229 (1610 CE), ff. 64r-65v (E5), ff. 66r-68r (E4); RPL134 (1714 CE), ff. 106r-108v (E5), ff. 108v-111v (E4).

earlier manuscript contexts and could vary according to local or redactional priorities.

E7 and E8 appear far less frequently than the other known prayers, whether within an anaphora or as a supplement. A few manuscripts preserve only one of these two prayers for E-BAS. When this occurs, scribes tend to copy E8 rather than E7, as seen in PNC73 (1528 CE) from Cyprus and in a Cairene parish manuscript, Ḥārat al-Saqqāyīn, Church of the Archangel Gabriel 3/25 (1696 CE).<sup>63</sup> An exception occurs with PNC31, which retains E7 within the formulary.<sup>64</sup> More commonly, however, scribes place one or both of these supplementary supplications after the formulary. A collective example par excellence of preserving both in an appendix appears in AML14B9, WBaL319, and WSL496, each of which distinctly prioritizes E8 over E7 by listing it first.<sup>65</sup> By contrast, manuscripts such as Vatican City, BAV Vatican Copt. (= VC) 17 (1288 CE), one of the oldest firmly dated and commonly cited euchologia originally from the Monastery of St. Antony, RPL158 an undated codex, as well as the parish codex from the Nile Delta region, Ṭūkh Dalkh, Church of St. George Liturgy 140 (1751 CE), preserve only E8 in a list of added prayers appended after the formularies.<sup>66</sup>

Although additional prayers of the kiss survive in Greek and Sahidic transcriptions of the anaphoras outside the Bohairic tradition, E2 itself has a Sahidic parallel attested from at least the eleventh century.<sup>67</sup>

63 PNC73, ff. 51v-52r; Ḥārat al-Saqqāyīn, Church of the Archangel Gabriel 3/25, ff. 51v-52r. Other examples include PNC26, ff. 47v-48v; LBO429, ff. 67r-v; Cairo, Coptic Museum Liturgy (= CML) 265 (18<sup>th</sup> c.), ff. 127v-130r.

64 PNC31, ff. 35r-36v.

65 AML14B9, ff. 185v-186r (E8), ff. 186r-187r (E7); WBaL319, ff. 219v-220v (E8), ff. 220v-221v (E7); WSL496, ff. 52r-52v (E8), ff. 52v-54r (E7).

66 VC17, ff. 129r-v; RPL158, ff. 87r-v; Ṭūkh Dalkh, Church of St. George Liturgy 140, ff. 341r-343r.

67 For the two Greek witnesses, see PNG325, ff. 30r-33v and CKM6, ff. 98r-100v, with the latter finding parallel in Melkite MARK: Macomber, *Anaphora of*

Beyond this, two further examples circulated within the medieval Northern tradition:<sup>68</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
E9	ϥⲛⲏⲃ...ϥⲏ ⲉⲧⲁⲣⲁϥⲉⲙ ⲡⲱⲛⲓ ⲛⲧⲉⲛⲙⲉⲧⲉⲃⲓⲛⲏ ⲃⲉⲛ ϩⲁⲛⲏⲁⲓ	السيد...الذي تعاهد مسكنتنا بالمراحم	O Master...who visited our misery with mercies
E10	ϥⲛⲏⲃ ⲡⲟⲥ ⲓⲏⲥ ⲡⲓⲭⲥ ⲡⲓⲕⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲗⲏⲙⲓⲟⲩⲣⲗⲟⲥ	السيد الرب يسوع المسيح الكلمة الخالق	O Master Lord Jesus Christ the creator Logos

All five witnesses of E9 consistently address the prayer to the Father, thereby aligning it within E-BAS and CYRIL, both traditionally directed to the first person of the Trinity. In addition to RAL81, these witnesses include PNC31 and the three codices that preserve commonly shared prayers, AML14B9, WBaL319, and WSL496.<sup>69</sup> Our sole witness to E10 in RAL81 explicitly titles it for use in GREG (مختص بقداًس أغريغوريوس), a designation reinforced by its Christological address within the supplication's text.<sup>70</sup>

As with the prayer of the veil, I have identified several prayers of the kiss in various Syriac anaphoras. For example, E1 and E8 appear in different versions of the anaphora of James.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, E6 is attested

*Mark* (1979), 78; Cuming, *Liturgy of Mark* (1990), 17-18. A Sahidic prayer of the kiss attributed to Gregory is found in MRC21 (11<sup>th</sup> c.), which was edited by Crum as #21 in his *Catalogue* (1909), 7-8. See the Sahidic redaction of E2 in LBO3850 A10 (10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> c.), f. 3v.

68 RAL81, ff. 219v-220v (E9), ff. 224r-227r (E10).

69 PNC31, ff. 189v-190v; AML14B9, ff. 187r-188r; WBaL319, ff. 221v-222v; WSL496, ff. 54r-55r.

70 RAL81, ff. 224r-227r.

71 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 2.1 (1951), 11 (E1), vol. 2.2 (1953), 139 (E8). E1 is known in the Ethiopic anaphora of the Apostles: Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (1896), 227.

in the anaphora of John of Bostra,<sup>72</sup> while E7 corresponds to a prayer in the anaphora of Severus of Antioch.<sup>73</sup> The Copto-Arabic prayer titles for E6 and E7 commonly ascribe these texts to John of Bostra and Severus, respectively, further underscoring their link to these Syriac liturgies.<sup>74</sup> These shared texts underscore the broader process of hybridization within the Bohairic eucharistic formularies and reveal moments of interpolation from Syriac liturgical models.<sup>75</sup>

Taken together, the northern Bohairic tradition therefore preserves three variable prayers of the kiss for GREG (E3, E4, and E10). The remaining seven prayers could theoretically be employed within E-BAS and CYRIL.

#### *F. Anaphoral intercessory blessing*

Although the celebrant's anaphoral prayers had become largely stable by the mid-thirteenth century, the anaphoral post-intercessory blessing emerges as a rare variable element occasionally preserved in the manuscript tradition.<sup>76</sup> Uniquely, this anaphoral intercessory blessing, recited inaudibly by the celebrant during the deacon's audible proclamation of the diptychs, represents the only known case within

72 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 3.1 (1981), 13. The text of E6 is thematically related to the εὐχὴ εἰς ἀγάπην ἥτοι εἰρήνην known in MG53 (9<sup>th</sup> c.) from Sinai: Rossetto – Galadza, *Codex Sinai Greek NFMG 53* (2025), 344. See the text's edition from a later witness in Arranz, *L'euclologio costantinopolitano* (1996), 357.

73 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 1.1 (1939), 59.

74 OBH360, f. 204r (E6), f. 65v (E7).

75 For more, see Brakmann, *Zwischen Pharos und Wüste* (2001), 356-361.

76 The variability of this intercessory blessing within the Coptic anaphora stands as a significant exception to Taft's concept of liturgical "soft spots," which he reserves for extra-anaphoral sections of the rite that gradually attracted supplementary prayers, though the intercessions could be considered the most malleable liturgical unit within the anaphora: Taft, *Structural Analysis* (2001), 201 *et passim*.

the anaphora in which the celebrant may choose among variable prayers, if he elects to recite it at all. When written, this blessing most commonly appears in E-BAS and if it occurs in other formularies, it is referenced to E-BAS. The prayers invoke the mercy of the Trinity, God’s compassion, and, ironically, various saints, most of whom were already pronounced in the intercessions just recited audibly.<sup>77</sup>

By the fifteenth century, this ritual unit was featured in Gabriel V’s *Ritual Order*. Although his explanation preserves no full prayer, it includes detailed rubrics.<sup>78</sup> Earlier liturgical discussions, such as the anonymously authored *Guide to the Beginners* of the thirteenth century, omit any reference to this blessing, yet later derivations of this work include it.<sup>79</sup> In the received tradition, only one prayer is known:<sup>80</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
F1	†ⲧⲣⲓⲁϥ ⲉ̀ⲑⲟⲩⲁⲃ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲛ	أيها الثالوث المقدس ارحمنا	O holy Trinity have mercy upon us

Although it exists in print, I have never seen this blessing taught to newly ordained priests or practiced in parochial or monastic settings, whether in Egypt or abroad. Whether it was still in use in the early twentieth century when ‘Abd al-Masīḥ edited these formularies for print, or whether he faithfully transcribed what he encountered in his sources even if it had fallen out of use, remains difficult to determine. Even if it survived in practice at the turn of the last century, it has since disappeared. Given its absence from contemporary usage, some

77 Ṣalīb, ΠΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 352-361; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 468-475.

78 PNA98 (17<sup>th</sup> c.), f. 65v; ‘Abdallah, *L’ordinamento* (1962), 192 (Arabic)/376 (Italian). Cf. Mikhail, *Guides* (2022), 132.

79 See for instance, the developed text in Cairo, Coptic Museum Theology (= CMT) 547 (1852 CE), f. 103v; Miṣā’īl al-Baramūsī, دلال المبتدئين (2020), 160.

80 Ṣalīb, ΠΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 378-389; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 486-489.



only in manuscripts after the eighteenth century.<sup>86</sup> By contrast, the most prevalent witness is F<sub>3</sub>, which some scribes continued to copy in euchologia as late as the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>87</sup> On rare occasions, a single manuscript records two prayers, placing F<sub>4</sub> before F<sub>1</sub>, such as in LBO429 and in a parish-owned codex from the Nile Delta: Al-Barārī, Church of St. Demiana Liturgy 113 (1729 CE).<sup>88</sup> Such diversity reflects the ongoing shaping of this liturgical unit across time and place, as scribes worked with whatever alternate prayers lay at their disposal and exercised discretion in deciding which to possibly include or omit.

We might go further and suggest that this ritual unit not only allowed at least four alternate supplications but also remained optional altogether. Codex Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Coptic Central Papal Library Liturgy (= WPL) 517C (ca. 18<sup>th</sup> c.), includes the following rubric at the conclusion of the eucharistic liturgy: “This blessing is said at the time of dismissal, though if he prefers, he may say it during the commemoration. The choice is his” (تقال هذه البركة وقت التسريح وإن كان اختار يقولها في الترحيم) (والاختيار له في ذلك).<sup>89</sup> This rubric leaves open the possibility of omitting this intercessional blessing and instead reserving it for the dismissal at the end of the liturgy. Indeed, although ‘Abd al-Masīḥ knew the texts of F<sub>3</sub> and F<sub>4</sub>, he did not present them at the diptychs but rather as dismissal prayers for other services, with F<sub>3</sub> given at the end of the incense service and F<sub>4</sub> at the end of E-BAS.<sup>90</sup> This suggests that the boundaries of this

86 RAL77 (1850 CE), ff. 78r-79v; CPL408 (1873 CE), ff. 74v-77v.

87 E.g. Ḥārat al-Rūm, Church of St. Mary 59 (1809-1852 CE), ff. 42v-44r.

88 LBO429, ff. 103r-106v (F<sub>4</sub>), ff. 107r-108v (F<sub>1</sub>); Al-Barārī, Church of St. Demiana Liturgy 113 (1729 CE), ff. 100r-103r (F<sub>4</sub>), ff. 103r-104r (F<sub>1</sub>).

89 WPL517C, f. 79r.

90 Ṣalīb, ΠΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 140-146 (F<sub>3</sub>), 428-433 (F<sub>4</sub>); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 268-276 (F<sub>3</sub>), 532-535 (F<sub>4</sub>). One should note that numerous other blessings are prescribed at the conclusion of various liturgical services based thematically on the liturgical calendar. These are not examined here since their seasonal character reflects fixed, appointed usage rather than a conscious decision to select among alternate prayers.

ritual element were remarkably fluid: the blessings used at the diptychs were identical to those employed at the dismissal of the service.

*G. Pre-fraction and fraction prayers*

Following the anaphora, two audible and closely related liturgical units form the concluding rites of the post-anaphora: the pre-fraction and fraction prayers. The first functions as an introductory petition recited immediately before the second, which the celebrant pronounces while breaking the consecrated bread and as a prelude to the recitation of the Lord's prayer.<sup>91</sup> E-BAS and CYRIL share the same pre-fraction supplication (G<sub>1</sub>), whereas GREG preserves its own (G<sub>2</sub>) as part of the received tradition.<sup>92</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
G <sub>1</sub>	παλιν ον ... σε αφθρενερπεμπρα	وأيضًا...لأنه جعلنا أهلاً	Again...for he has made us worthy
G <sub>2</sub>	πεννηνβ πενσωτηρ	يا سيدنا ومخلصنا	O our master and our savior

Both G<sub>1</sub> and G<sub>2</sub> are well attested in the manuscripts from the mid-thirteenth century. Nevertheless, a lesser-known and rarely transcribed variant supplication also exists for GREG, preserved in the appendix of alternate prayers in AML<sub>14</sub>B<sub>9</sub>:<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> For more on this introductory prayer, see Mihálykó, *A New Coptic Anaphora Fragment* (2025), 294-296.

<sup>92</sup> Ṣalīb, ΠΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 383-386 (E-BAS), 656-658 (CYRIL), 527-530 (GREG); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 492-495 (E-BAS), 736-739 (CYRIL), 624-627 (GREG).

<sup>93</sup> AML<sub>14</sub>B<sub>9</sub>, ff. 191r-v.

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
G <sub>3</sub>	ⲓⲏⲥ ⲡⲓⲭⲥ ⲫⲁ ⲡⲓⲣⲁⲛ ⲛⲟϥⲭⲁⲓ	يسوع المسيح [الاسم] المخلص	O Jesus Christ, the name of salvation whose name is salvation

The closest counterparts of AML<sub>14B9</sub>, namely WBaL<sub>319</sub> and WSL<sub>496</sub>, likewise transmit this supplication in their appendices and preserve the same title.<sup>94</sup>

G<sub>3</sub> represents a Coptic translation of the pre-fraction supplication already known from the Greek version of GREG in Coptic.<sup>95</sup> The fourteenth-century Cypriot codex PNG<sub>325</sub> witnesses this same prayer, though incorporated into the eucharistic formulary itself rather than placed in an appendix.<sup>96</sup> This evidence demonstrates the revival, adoption, and translation of an earlier Greek text into Coptic for renewed liturgical use at a later period.

After this proemial supplication, the fraction proper begins. The fraction prayers are numerous. Ugo Zanetti has examined this corpus, producing an inventory of fraction prayers alongside their corresponding manuscripts.<sup>97</sup> This inventory is presently undergoing expansion through new discoveries and is being prepared for an edition by Epiphanius al-Baramūsi in his forthcoming detailed study of this liturgical unit.<sup>98</sup>

94 WBaL<sub>319</sub>, ff. 224v-226v; WSL<sub>496</sub>, ff. 57v-58r.

95 Hammerschmidt, *Die koptische Gregoriosanaphora* (1957), 148-152.

96 PNG<sub>325</sub>, ff. 122r-123r. Cf. Renaudot, *Liturgiarum Orientalium*, vol. 1 (1847<sup>2</sup>), 114. See also Mihálykó – Chase, ‘*Milan Euchologion*’ (2024), 37-40.

97 Among other studies, see his principal works: Zanetti, *Inventaire des prières* (2014), 767-800; Idem, *Fraction Prayers* (2011), 291-302.

98 A preliminary case study from this project was presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> St. Mark Foundation International Symposium in February 2025 titled, “The Fraction «ⲡⲓⲭⲁⲛⲫⲱⲩ» in Coptic Liturgy: A Study and Research Project on the Coptic Rite of the Holy Fraction and its Prayers.”

## H. Prayer after the Our Father

Following the fraction rites, the community recites the Lord's prayer. After its conclusion, the celebrant inaudibly pronounces a prayer known as the *embolismos* (ἐμβολισμός), a common genre in the liturgies of the Christian East and West since about the fifth century, which “extends” the final petition of the Our Father, “deliver us from evil”.<sup>99</sup> A total of six prayers appear in the *editio typica*.<sup>100</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
H1	ϢϢ ϣϣϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣϣϣ ϣϣϣϣ	نعم نسألك أيها الأب القدوس	Yes, we ask you O holy Father
H2	ϢϢ ϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣϣϣ ⲙⲡⲉⲣⲱⲓⲱⲓ ⲛⲁⲛ	نعم يا رب يا رب الذي أعطانا السلطان	Yes, O Lord, the Lord who has given us authority
H3	ϢϢ ϣϣϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣϣϣ ⲡⲡⲁⲛⲧⲟⲕⲣⲁⲧⲱⲣ	نعم نسألك يا الله الأب ضابط الكل	Yes, we ask you O God the Father, Pantocrator
H4	ϢϢ ϣϣϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣ ⲡⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩϣϣ	نعم نسألك أيها الرب إلهنا	Yes, we ask you O Lord our God
H5	ⲛⲁⲣⲙⲉⲛ ⲉⲃⲟⲗⲁ ⲡⲡⲉⲧⲣⲱⲟⲩ	نجنا من الشرير	Deliver us from evil
H6	ⲁⲗⲁ ϣϣ ϣϣ ϣϣⲉ ⲙⲡⲉϣⲁ ⲗⲗⲓ ϣϣⲟⲩⲉⲣⲡⲓⲣⲁⲗⲓⲛ	نعم أيها الرب الذي لم يدع أحدًا يجرب	Yes, O Lord, who did not leave anyone to be tempted

99 Taft, *Inclination Prayer* (1986), 29-60.

100 Šalīb, *ⲡⲓⲉϣϣⲟⲗⲟⲓⲟⲛ* (1902), 392-393 (H1), 533 (H2), 664-665 (H3), 666-667 (H4), 751-752 (H5), 753 (H6); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 498-501 (H1), 630-631 (H2), 742-745 (H3), 744-745 (H4), 814-817 (H5), 816-817 (H6).

Although the manuscripts examined revealed no previously unknown prayers, some peculiarities merit discussion.<sup>101</sup> As with the prayers of the veil and the kiss, each anaphora preserves a distinct and consistently transmitted *embolismos* in both the manuscript and the received tradition: H<sub>1</sub> belongs to E-BAS, H<sub>2</sub> to GREG, and H<sub>3</sub> to CYRIL. All three appear in our earliest euchologion, MRC<sub>426</sub>,<sup>102</sup> with H<sub>2</sub> also functioning as the petition recited after the Lord's prayer in both offices of incense as referenced in our earliest specimen containing that rite, CFM<sub>2</sub>.<sup>103</sup>

CYRIL, however, preserves a second alternative in the formulary, H<sub>4</sub>, which has a Sahidic redaction known by the seventh century.<sup>104</sup> In the thirteenth-century codex OBH<sub>360</sub>, H<sub>4</sub> stands as the only supplication assigned to this liturgical unit, indicating its primacy within that milieu.<sup>105</sup> It is also the *embolismos* favored in CKM<sub>6</sub> as well as in the rite of refilling the chalice, a ritual once used to consecrate eucharistic wine in cases of emergency.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, a version of this supplication is attested in Melkite MARK<sup>107</sup> and is known in the Syriac anaphoras of Timothy of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch.<sup>108</sup>

101 In PNG<sub>325</sub>, f. 60r, the Greek version of the Coptic liturgies, and in Vatican City, BAV Borgia Ar. (= VBA) 22 (1348 CE), f. 36r, a euchologion of Egyptian origin incorporated into redaction B of the Arabic *Testamentum Domini*, there appears a prayer for which no Bohairic parallel is presently attested. For the latter, see Baumstark, *Eine aegyptische Mess* (1901), 26-27; the proposed sixth-century dating, however, is contested in Budde, *Die ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora* (2004), 583, among others.

102 MRC<sub>426</sub>, ff. 93r-94r (H<sub>1</sub>), ff. 167r-168r (H<sub>2</sub>), ff. 260r-261r (H<sub>3</sub>).

103 CFM<sub>2</sub>, p. 399.

104 See Louvain, Ms. Lefort copt. 27-28A, f. 8v (ed. Doresse – Lanne, *Un témoin archaïque* [1960], 32), where it accompanies E-BAS.

105 OBH<sub>360</sub>, ff. 282r-282v; Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (1896), 182.

106 CKM<sub>6</sub>, f. 137v; Macomber, *Anaphora of Mark* (1979) 98. On the rite of refilling of the chalice, see CML<sub>330</sub> (15th c.), f. 82v; Al-Masri, *Rite of the Filling* (1940), 90. More recently on this topic, see Miṣā'il al-Baramūsi – Adel, *حفظ القربان* (2016), 140-143.

107 Cuming, *Liturgy of Mark* (1990), 50.

108 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 1.1 (1939), 42-45, 81-82.

Despite its early attestation and diffusion across multiple ritual contexts and traditions, H<sub>4</sub> appears to have circulated less widely than H<sub>3</sub>.

‘Abd al-Masīh provides two additional *embolismos* in the appendix of his euchologion: H<sub>5</sub> and H<sub>6</sub>. He assigns H<sub>5</sub> as a replacement for H<sub>2</sub> in GREG and H<sub>6</sub> as alternative in E-BAS (H<sub>1</sub>) and CYRIL (H<sub>3</sub>).<sup>109</sup> In fact, codex VC<sub>17</sub> assigns H<sub>6</sub> only to CYRIL,<sup>110</sup> a designation also found in the appended prayer lists of AML<sub>14B9</sub>, WBaL<sub>319</sub>, and WSL<sub>496</sub>.<sup>111</sup> Likewise, though the *editio typica* assigns H<sub>5</sub> as a replacement in GREG, the manuscript tradition far more frequently transcribes it within CYRIL, as witnessed in PNC<sub>26</sub>, Vatican City, BAV Borgia Copt. (= VBC) 87 (1734 CE), and CML<sub>412</sub> (1867 CE), to name a few.<sup>112</sup> Only in WSL<sub>496</sub>, where the prayer appears in an appendix, does the rubric explicitly state that H<sub>5</sub> may replace H<sub>2</sub>, the standard *embolismos* of GREG.<sup>113</sup> Thus, while ‘Abd al-Masīh envisioned a particular liturgical application for these two prayers, historical precedent overwhelmingly aligns H<sub>6</sub> with CYRIL and consistently places H<sub>5</sub> not with GREG but within CYRIL.

### I. Prayer of inclination

The final variable presider’s prayer considered occurs immediately after the *embolismos* and is introduced by a diaconal command, all of which takes place before the communion rites.<sup>114</sup> The printed edition transmits the following four prayers:<sup>115</sup>

109 Ṣalīb, ΠΙΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 751-752 (H<sub>5</sub>), 753 (H<sub>6</sub>); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 814-817 (H<sub>5</sub>), 816-817 (H<sub>6</sub>).

110 VC<sub>17</sub>, ff. 121V-122V.

111 AML<sub>14B9</sub>, ff. 207r-v; WBaL<sub>319</sub>, ff. 280r-280v; WSL<sub>496</sub>, ff. 116r-v.

112 PNC<sub>26</sub>, ff. 193r-194r; VBC<sub>87</sub>, ff. 71r-v; CML<sub>412</sub>, ff. 231v-232r.

113 WSL<sub>496</sub>, ff. 121v-123v.

114 Ṣalīb, ΠΙΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 393-394; Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 500-501. On the proper Greek orthography of these diaconal responses, see: Burmester, *Greek Kirugmata* (1936), 381.

115 Ṣalīb, ΠΙΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 394-396 (I<sub>1</sub>), 533 (I<sub>2</sub>), 667-671 (I<sub>3</sub>), 754-756 (I<sub>4</sub>); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 500-503 (I<sub>1</sub>), 630-631 (I<sub>2</sub>), 744-749 (I<sub>3</sub>), 818-821 (I<sub>4</sub>).

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
I <sub>1</sub>	ⲁⲮⲙⲟⲗ ⲉ̀ⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̀ⲕⲉ ⲛ̀ⲓⲛ̀ⲙⲟⲧ ⲛ̀ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲧⲙⲉⲧⲣⲉⲥⲉⲣⲡⲉⲑⲛⲁⲛⲉⲥ	كملت نعم إحسان	The graces of goodness have been fulfilled
I <sub>2</sub>	ⲛ̀ⲑⲟⲕ ⲡⲟ̅ⲥ ⲡⲛ̀ ⲉ̀ⲧⲁⲕⲣⲉⲕ ⲛ̀ⲡⲛ̀ⲑⲟⲮⲓ	أنت يا رب الذي طأطأت السموات	You, O Lord, who bowed the heavens
I <sub>3</sub>	ⲡⲧⲧ ⲡⲛ̀ ⲉ̀ⲧⲁⲣⲙⲉⲛⲣⲓⲧⲉⲛ ⲙ̀ⲡⲁⲓⲣⲛ̀ⲧ	يا الله الذي أحبنا هكذا	O God, who so loved us
I <sub>4</sub>	ⲡⲟ̅ⲥ ⲡⲧⲧ ⲡⲓⲡⲁⲛⲧⲟⲕⲣⲁⲧⲟⲣ ⲥⲟⲮⲧⲉⲛ ⲧⲉⲕⲟⲮⲓⲛⲁⲛ ⲉ̀ⲧⲁ̀ⲙⲁⲣⲓ	أيها الرب الإله ضابط الكل ابسط يمينك العزيزة	O Lord, God the Pantocrator, stretch out your mighty right hand

As with the prayers of the veil, kiss, and *embolismos*, each prayer of inclination is commonly assigned to a specific anaphora in the received tradition: E-BAS uses I<sub>1</sub>; GREG employs I<sub>2</sub>; and CYRIL utilizes I<sub>3</sub>. ‘Abd al-Masīḥ lists all three under separate Arabic titles as a prayer of “submission” (خضوع), though other titles for this prayer abound in the manuscript tradition. He adds one variant (I<sub>4</sub>) in the appendix of prayers which he associates with E-BAS and CYRIL. Only in the rubrics for I<sub>3</sub> and I<sub>4</sub> does he explicitly describe the supplication as occurring “before partaking of the holy mysteries” (قبل تناول السرائر المقدسة), an attempt to distinguish this prayer from a similarly titled prayer recited after the reception of communion.

I<sub>1</sub> was already in circulation by the second half of the first millennium.<sup>116</sup> As Mihálykó has shown, by the seventh century I<sub>3</sub> was already attested in Greek and Sahidic and circulating in Southern Egypt,

<sup>116</sup> VBA22, f. 36r-v; Baumstark, *Eine aegyptische Mess* (1901), 26-27. See note 101 above on the historicity of this text. See also its Sahidic redaction in LBO3850 A14, ff. 3r-v.

and she further identifies close textual parallels in Greek witnesses of the Coptic liturgy as well as in the Melkite and Syriac traditions.<sup>117</sup> In addition to these witnesses, another three alternate prayers appear in the Bohairic tradition.<sup>118</sup> They are given here according to their earliest witnesses: I<sub>5</sub> from the thirteenth-century manuscript OBH360,<sup>119</sup> and I<sub>6</sub> and I<sub>7</sub> from the eighteenth-century codex AML14B9:<sup>120</sup>

ID	Coptic	Arabic	Translation
I <sub>5</sub>	ⲛⲟⲟⲕ ⲡⲟ̅ⲥ ⲡⲉ ⲧⲁⲛⲣⲓⲕⲓ ⲛⲁⲕ ⲏ̀ⲡⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩϥ	أنت يا رب الذي ميلنا لك عقولنا	You, O Lord, are the one to whom we have inclined our mind
I <sub>6</sub>	ϥⲏ ⲉ̀ⲧⲣⲉⲙⲒ ϥⲓⲕⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲕⲉⲣⲟⲩⲃⲓⲙ	أيها الجالس على الشاروبيم	He who sits on the Cherubim
I <sub>7</sub>	ⲡⲟ̅ⲥ ⲏ̀ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲓⲣⲏⲏⲏ ϥⲓⲟⲩⲧ ⲏ̀ⲧⲉ ⲛⲓⲙⲉⲧⲟⲉⲛⲉⲛⲧ	رب السلامة وأب الرأفة	Lord of peace, Father of mercies

The most common of these alternate supplications is I<sub>5</sub>, which the Bohairic tradition attributes to John of Bostra and which also appears in the anaphora ascribed to him in the Syriac rite.<sup>121</sup> Beyond its early attestation, OBH360 presents I<sub>5</sub> as the only prayer of inclination in CYRIL. This privileging of I<sub>5</sub> as the principal prayer occurs in at least three additional euchologia,<sup>122</sup> while another four codices list it

117 Mihálykó, *Christian Liturgical Papyri* (2019), 137; Eadem, *Sabidic Papyrus Fragments* (2025), 391-407.

118 At least one is known in the Greek witnesses: PNG325, ff. 60r-61r.

119 OBH360, ff. 283r-286r; Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (1896), 183.

120 AML14B9, ff. 207v-208v (I<sub>6</sub>), ff. 208v-209r (I<sub>7</sub>).

121 Raes – Codrington, *Anaphorae Syriacae*, vol. 3.1 (1981), 37.

122 VC21 (1343 CE), ff. 67r-69v; RPL134, ff. 260v-263r; Cairo, Franciscan Center (= CFC) 250, ff. 74v-76v, with the latter found in E-BAS rather than CYRIL.

as the first prayer in CYRIL before including I3.<sup>123</sup> These manuscripts ranging from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century reveal yet another instance in which what appears normative in the received tradition diverges from the manuscript evidence, even into the early modern period.

A total of three manuscripts transmit I6 and I7. Alongside their appearance in AML14B9, both prayers also appear in its closest counterparts, WBaL319 and WSL496.<sup>124</sup> In all three manuscripts, the prayers occur in the appendix and in the same sequence: I6, followed by I7, and finally I4. Each of these three prayers is addressed to the Father, as noted in their respective titles, placing them within the orbit of E-BAS and CYRIL.

Following this liturgical unit comes the prayer of absolution, which, though it varies by the eucharistic formulary, remains stable across the manuscript tradition.<sup>125</sup> It is then followed by the call to communion, a Christological confession, and communion distribution, alongside a diverse body of roughly thirty variable texts associated with communion, including pre-communion, post-communion, and inclination prayers. Given the scope and diversity of this communion material as well as related texts for this liturgical unit preserved outside the euchologia, it warrants a separate and more detailed study, currently in preparation.

123 MRC426, ff. 261v-264r; CFM2, ff. 189v-192r; VC26 (1616 CE), ff. 232v-235r; WBaL229, ff. 143r-144v.

124 WBaL319, ff. 280v-281v (I6), ff. 281v-282v (I7), ff. 282v-283v (I4); WSL496, ff. 116v-117v (I6), ff. 117v-118v (I7), ff. 118v-119v (I4).

125 Şalīb, ΠΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ (1902), 396-400 (E-BAS/CYRIL), 533 (GREG); Nicolotti, *Il libro* (2023), 504-507 (E-BAS/Cyril), 630-631 (GREG). On this liturgical unit, see Quecke, *Zum 'Gebet der Lossprechung des Vaters'* (1979), 68-81.

### 3. *Conclusion*

The examination of this broad corpus of euchologia dated between the thirteenth and twentieth centuries reveals a largely shared Bohairic eucharistic formulary within which a limited yet persistent degree of variability remained operative at select liturgical units. Although substantial consolidation had already taken place by the fifteenth century and was further reinforced by the published *editio typica*, the manuscript record across the nine liturgical units surveyed preserves twenty-four alternate celebrant prayers outside the standard eucharistic formulary, fourteen of which are entirely unattested in the printed edition. The significance of this evidence lies less in the number of variants than in what their transmission reveals: the endurance of local observance and scribal memory within an otherwise stabilized rite, and a recurrent inversion between historical usage and later liturgical authority, whereby several prayers dominant in the manuscript tradition never entered the received euchologia, while others privileged in print functioned as marginal options in the manuscripts.

The Coptic Eucharist as preserved in the manuscript record functioned as a constellation of intersecting local practices shaped by scribes, worshiping communities, and a continually evolving liturgical memory. Euchologia served primarily as practical manuals intended for local use and thus operated as prescriptive guides—scribes recorded rites as they expected them to be performed within their own contexts and, at times, reshaped earlier traditions by adding or omitting certain prayer texts. At the same time, euchologia also function as descriptive witnesses. The diversity across manuscripts demonstrates that scribes did not merely reproduce authoritative exemplars but regularly adapted them to mirror established local usage.<sup>126</sup> This dynamic appears most clearly where manuscripts preserve multiple

<sup>126</sup>A case in point is the pair of euchologia WSL472 and WSL473, copied in 1659 CE by the same scribe, which nonetheless diverge in prayer selection,

variable prayer options for one liturgical unit, revealing an effort to acknowledge recognized diversity rather than enforce uniformity. These editorial choices, shaped by familiarity with particular texts, the transmission of Alexandrian liturgical materials of antiquity, contact with other liturgical traditions, or inherited local custom, provide critical evidence for identifying regional clusters of euchologia and tracing the formation of distinct liturgical families within the Bohairic eucharistic rite.

A recurring example in this study involves the cluster of shared prayers preserved in AML14B9, WBaL319, and WSL496, which together point to the existence of manuscript families. All three codices transmit a near-identical sequence of variant prayers, largely placed in an appendix titled “Prayers gathered from the euchologia” (صلوات مجمعة من الخولوكيات), suggesting a close textual relationship and possibly reflecting a scholarly impulse to collect liturgical material, though the consistent reproduction of these supplications across multiple books used for prayer indicates that their transmission cannot be reduced to passive archival interest alone.<sup>127</sup> Although these manuscripts are today geographically dispersed (AML14B9 in Asyūṭ in Southern Egypt, and WBaL319 and WSL496 in two monasteries in Wādī al-Naṭrūn), the scribal colophons of AML14B9 and WBaL319 attest that both were produced in the Asyūṭ region by different copyists within roughly two decades of one another.<sup>128</sup> This shared provenance, combined with their nearly identical sequencing and titles, strongly suggests dependence on a common exemplar, if not direct transmission. Taken together, these features indicate the circulation of liturgical materials across otherwise distinct localities and underscore how regional, scribal, and exemplar-

reflecting scribal and patronal discretion: Mikhail – Paul, *Coptic Prayer Books* (forthcoming).

<sup>127</sup> AML14B9, f. 172v; WBaL319, f. 201v; WSL496, f. 35v.

<sup>128</sup> See notes 129, 170, and 175 below for further details on these three codices.

based networks shaped the preservation of alternate prayer repertoires within the Bohairic eucharistic tradition into the early modern era.

The phenomenon of alternate celebrant prayers is not a peripheral curiosity but perhaps a defining feature of the medieval Bohairic euchological tradition. The manuscripts reveal a rite shaped by scribal agency and local liturgical practice dynamics that endured well into the nineteenth century. By recovering these variable prayers and tracing their placement across centuries, this introductory investigation lays a foundation for understanding the variable components of the Bohairic eucharistic liturgy and provides a renewed methodological basis for future textual, historical, and ritual analyses of this tradition.

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### Manuscripts Consulted

Shelf mark (Year in CE), cited manuscripts in **bold**

AML= *Asyūt, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Muḥarraḡ Liturgy*:

14B35 (1634), **14B9 (1773-1774)**,<sup>129</sup> 14B38 (1784).

*Al-Barārī, Church of St. Demiana Liturgy* 113 (1729).<sup>130</sup>

129 Two different scribal colophons preserve dates for this codex, revealing how long its production likely lasted. One appears on f. 83r, dated to Kiyahk AM 1490 (= 1773 CE), and the other on f. 229v, dated to 12 Tūbah AM 1490 (= 1774 CE). The scribe, ‘Abd al-Malāk nicknamed “Lucky”, concludes his colophon by noting that anyone interested in commissioning his work could find him near Biblāw, a village in the vicinity of Asyūt.

130 Based on the scribal colophon on f. 159v, this Copto-Arabic euchologion of E-BAS was completed on 1 Ba’ūnah AM 1445 (= 1729 CE).

- CF (C/M)= *Cairo, Franciscan Center*: 248 (1878), 336 (1882). Undated: 250.<sup>131</sup> *Museum*: 2 (13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> c.).<sup>132</sup>
- CKM= *Collegetville, Kacmarcik Ms. 6* (14<sup>th</sup> c.).<sup>133</sup>
- CM (L/T)= *Cairo, Coptic Museum Liturgy*: 463 (13<sup>th</sup> c.), 330 (15<sup>th</sup> c.),<sup>134</sup> 240 (1783), 80 (1796), 265 (18<sup>th</sup> c.),<sup>135</sup> 412 (1867),<sup>136</sup> 462 (19<sup>th</sup> c.). *Theology*: 547 (1852).<sup>137</sup>
- CPL= *Cairo, Coptic Patriarchate Liturgy*: 169 (1499), 173 (1573), 167 (1675), 331 (1675), 166 (1739), 181 (1771), 178 (1794), 182 (1794), 176 (1826), 407 (1840), 315 (1842), 342 (1843), 408 (1873),<sup>138</sup> 177 (1898), 183 (1899), 174 (1250-1261),<sup>139</sup> 168 (1796-1809). Undated: 165, 185, 343, 314, 179, 180.

- 131 Macomber assigns a nineteenth-century date without offering any explanation. However, the codex itself—especially its lack of detailed rubrics and its inclusion of numerous prayers rarely documented by scribes of that period—undermines this assessment. If the manuscript was indeed produced in the nineteenth century, the scribe may have possessed an older *Vorlage* to which he remained faithfully committed to its transmission, ultimately preserving features characteristic of an earlier era. Cf. Macomber, *Catalogue* (1984), 53.
- 132 Macomber, *Catalogue* (1984), 92-93.
- 133 Macomber, *Kacmarcik Codex* (1975), 391-395; Budde, *Die ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora* (2004), 77-82.
- 134 See Simaika 172 in Simaika – ‘Abd al-Masīḥ, *Catalogue*, vol. 1 (1939), 85. See the discussion on its possible later dating in Al-Masri, *Rite of the Filling* (1940), 78-79.
- 135 Consult Simaika 263 in Simaika – ‘Abd al-Masīḥ, *Catalogue*, vol. 1 (1939), 119.
- 136 See New 356 (Macomber CMB 5-4) in Macomber, *Final Inventory* (1995), 137-138.
- 137 Mīṣā’īl al-Baramūsī, دلال المبتدئين (2020), 28.
- 138 This Arabic-only euchologion of the three liturgies contains a scribal colophon on f. 119v that records equivalent dates from two calendars: 3 Bābah AM 1590 and Sha’bān AH 1290, both corresponding to 1873 CE. The named caretaker is metropolitan Yu’ānis of Manūfiyya. No catalogue entry exists in Simaika.
- 139 In conversation with Arsenius Mikhail, who identified the name of Pope Athanasius in a celebrant’s prayer (f. 27r), most likely Athanasius III who reigned between 1250 and 1261 CE, this manuscript can be plausibly redated to his tenure, rather than left undated as in the catalogue. One cannot, however, entirely rule out the possibility that the codex was produced at a later time from

*Hārat al-Rūm, Church of St. Mary*: 61 (1771 CE), **59 (1809-1852)**.<sup>140</sup>  
*Hārat al-Saqqāyīn, Church of the Archangel Gabriel Liturgy*: 3/25  
(**1696**),<sup>141</sup> 67 (1866), 3/27 (undated).  
LBO= *London, British Library Oriental*: **3850 (10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> c.)**, 1239 (13<sup>th</sup> c.),  
431 (1718), 8778 (1726), 430 (1832), 5282 (1872). Undated: **429**,<sup>142</sup> 1324,  
8777.  
MRC= *Manchester, John Rylands Library Coptic*: **21 (11<sup>th</sup> c.)**, **426 (1243-  
1261)**,<sup>143</sup> 427 (1764).  
OBH= *Oxford, Bodleian Huntington*: **360 (13<sup>th</sup> c.)**,<sup>144</sup> 403 (1405), 572  
(14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> c.).  
*Old Cairo, Church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus Liturgy*: 99 (1874).  
Undated: 67, 98.

an earlier exemplar. See Simaika 957 in Simaika – ‘Abd al-Masīh, *Catalogue*, vol. 2 (1942), 428.

<sup>140</sup>No scribal colophon was found in this manuscript. However, Pope Peter is named in several prayers, and a marginal note on f. 35r identifies this patriarch as the 109<sup>th</sup>, who reigned from 1809 to 1852 CE. This detail implies that the production of this Copto-Arabic liturgy of E-BAS was most likely within his tenure.

<sup>141</sup>A scribal colophon on f. 143v dates the manuscript’s completion to 12 Bashans AM 1412 (= 1696 CE).

<sup>142</sup>See Crum 789 in Crum, *Catalogue* (1905), 340-341. Based on his discussion with Hany Takla, Arsenius Mikhail dates this codex between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Mikhail, *Presentation* (2020), 420n65.

<sup>143</sup>On f. 83r, Cyril III ibn Laqlaq, who died in 1243 CE, appears as the last commemorated patriarch in the diptychs. This detail suggests that the codex was most likely produced during the tenure of his successor, Athanasius III, who died in 1261 CE. While it remains possible that the scribe copied an older *Vorlage* without updating the list of departed patriarchs, this dating aligns with earlier assessments that place the production of this manuscript between 1235 and 1251 CE, as reflected, for example, on the spine of the newly conserved cover of the codex. Based on this internal prosopographical evidence, however, the manuscript should be dated between 1243 and 1261 CE, with both its initial and terminal limits falling slightly later than previously proposed. See #59 in Crum, *Catalogue* (1909), 200.

<sup>144</sup>See Uri 34 in Uri, *Bibliothecae Bodleianae* (1787), vol. 1, 324.

*Oxford, Bodleian Marsh 5* (14<sup>th</sup> c.).

PN (A/C/G)= *Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France Arabe*: **203 (1363-1369)**,<sup>145</sup> **5969 (16<sup>th</sup> c.)**,<sup>146</sup> **98 (17<sup>th</sup> c.)**.<sup>147</sup> *Copte*: 82 (1307), 28 (13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> c.), 24 (15<sup>th</sup> c.), **31 (15<sup>th</sup> c.)**,<sup>148</sup> 39 (15<sup>th</sup> c.), **73 (1528)**,<sup>149</sup> **84 (1538)**,<sup>150</sup> 40 (1550), 25 (15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> c.), 83 (1602), 27 (1633), 29 (1638), 30 (1642). Undated: **26**,<sup>151</sup> 41. *Grec*: **325 (14<sup>th</sup> c.)**.<sup>152</sup>

RAL= *Red Sea, Monastery of St. Antony Liturgy*: **66 (1344)**,<sup>153</sup> 62 (1535), 98 (1657), 99 (1661), 102 (1693), 107 (1717), 100 (1728), 57 (1733), 68 (1745), 298 (1746), 75 (1755), 692 (1755), 89 (1756), 83 (1774), 69 (1784), 58 (before 1796), 87 (before 1796), 105 (1798), 74 (1807), 51 (1811), 101 (1812), 72 (1835), 737 (1837), 97 (1838), 55 (1839), 112 (1841), 70 (1842), 76 (1843), 106 (1846), 96 (1847), 742 (1848), 974 (1849), 71 (1816-1843), 54

145 Troupeau, *Catalogue*, vol. 1 (1972), 171-172; Villecourt, *Les observances* (1923), 249-250.

146 Troupeau, *Catalogue*, vol. 2 (1974), 86.

147 Troupeau, *Catalogue*, vol. 1 (1972), 75-76; ‘Abdallah, *L’ordinamento* (1962), 45-52.

148 See Delaporte 66 in Delaporte, *Catalogue* (1911), 89-91.

149 See Delaporte 74 in Delaporte, *Catalogue* (1911), 155-156.

150 Although the catalogue does not note it, f. 254v states that this Copto-Arabic codex of the three liturgies was copied from a manuscript dated to 1449 CE from the church of St. Mercurius in Darb al-Baḥr (Old Cairo). See Delaporte 68 in Delaporte, *Catalogue* (1911), 93-94.

151 Consult Delaporte 65 in Delaporte, *Catalogue* (1911), 88-89. Based on his discussion with Hany Takla, Arsenius Mikhail dates this codex before 1523 CE: Mikhail, *Presentation* (2020), 419n53.

152 Renaudot, *Liturgiarum Orientalium*, vol. 1 (1847<sup>2</sup>), 57-115; Brakmann, *Zur Stellung des Parisinus graecus 325* (1999), 97-110.

153 The scribal colophon on ff. 153v-[154]r of this Copto-Arabic euchologion of GREG records two corresponding completion dates: 10 Baramūdah AM 1060 and Dhū al-Qa‘da AH 744, both corresponding to 1344 CE. The colophon also identifies the scribe as the deacon Ṣamū‘īl ibn al-qiss Barsūmā ibn al-mu‘allim Ṣamū‘īl al-Bahnasī and names the patron as the priest Abū al-Futūḥ.

(1851), 59 (1851), 63 (1851), 77 (1850),<sup>154</sup> 95 (1851), 749 (1851), 73 (1852), 109 (before 1852), 800 (before 1852), 92 (1862), 56 (1872), 91 (1872), 65 (1875), 52 (1876), 84 (1880), 82 (1884), 61 (1885), 88 (1887), 781 (1887), 115 (1893), 79 (1895), 920 (1895), 921 (1895), 681 (1897), 763 (1898), 64 (1900), 85 (1902), 799 (1916), 658 (1921), 919 (1929), 922 (1931), 968 (1965), 93 (1718-1726), 108 (1769-1796), 111 (1809-1927), **772 (1816-1861, 1874-1927)**.<sup>155</sup> Undated: **81**,<sup>156</sup> 53, 67, 78, 80, 86, 90, 103, 104, 110, 113, 114, **654**,<sup>157</sup> 764, 771, 826, 923.

RPL= *Red Sea, Monastery of St. Paul Liturgy*: 141 (1324), 133 (1582), 205 (1711), **134 (1714)**,<sup>158</sup> 204 (1718), 135 (1751), **148 (1752)**,<sup>159</sup> 211 (1754), 155 (1766), 166 (1771), 139 (1784), 137 (1789), 136 (1793), **143 (1797)**,<sup>160</sup> 138

154 The named scribe, hegumen Istifānūs Būlus al-Ṣaqr of the monastery of St. Antony, records on f. 181v that he completed this Copto-Arabic euchologion of E-BAS on 22 Hātūr AM 1567 (= 1850 CE).

155 No date or scribal colophon appears in this all-Arabic euchologion of the three eucharistic liturgies. However, the name of Cyril is invoked in a prayer on f. 12r. This reference could indicate either Cyril IV (r. 1816-1861) or Cyril V (r. 1874-1927), whose patriarchates lie relatively close in time, making both date ranges plausible for the manuscript's production.

156 No date identified in this Copto-Arabic codex containing the three eucharistic formularies.

157 No date or colophon identified in this all-Arabic euchologion of the three eucharistic liturgies.

158 On f. 280r, Mikha'il the named scribe records the completion date of this Copto-Arabic euchologion of the three eucharistic liturgies as 29 Hātūr AM 1431 (= 1714 CE). On f. 280v, the priest Abū Sa'ad, a servant of the church of St. Mercurius near Shubṭī in the Asyūṭ area, appears as the manuscript's patron. An endowment statement on f. [285]v dated to AM 1436 (= 1719-1720 CE) and issued to the monastery of St. Paul, declares that the book belonged to Pope Peter, most likely Peter VI who reigned from 1718 to 1726 CE, during his monastic years.

159 The unnamed scribe dates this E-BAS Copto-Arabic euchologion to 14 Abīb AM 1468 (= 1752 CE), as recorded on f. 194v.

160 On f. 114r, the priest Shenouda identifies himself as the scribe, owner, and patron of this Copto-Arabic manuscript of the three liturgies. Three dated colophons appear throughout the codex, each attributing the work to Shenouda, though

(1811), 165 (1815), 202 (1818), 160 (1820), 644 (1821), 203 (before 1823), 156 (1827), 528 (1827), 153 (1830), 161 (1836), 195 (1839), 144 (1839), 140 (before 1844), 154 (1846), 167 (1846), 142 (1847), 163 (1847), 672 (1853), 209 (1853), 662 (1857), 145 (1859), 665 (1861), 151 (1862), 652 (1863), 152 (1865), 162 (1865), 190 (1869), 437 (1878), 649 (1882), 464 (1883), 673 (1883), 643 (1886), 149 (1893), 436 (1901), 646 (1905), 146 (1910), 664 (1915), 654 (1916), 660 (1918), 651 (1919), 452 (1930), 650 (1931), 657 (1936). Undated: 158,<sup>161</sup> 197, 199, 200, 582, 630, 638, 653, 655, 658, 659, 663, 667, 671, 675, 147, 150, 157, 159, 164, 191, 192, 193, 194, 206.

*Ṭūkh Dalkh, Church of St. George Liturgy*: 140 (1751),<sup>162</sup> 238 (1771).

VB (A/C)= *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Borgia Arabes*: 22 (1348).<sup>163</sup> *Coptici*: 7 (1379), 124 (1459), 87 (1734).<sup>164</sup> Undated: 32.

V (A/C/G)= *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Vatican Arabes* 117 (1323). *Coptici*: 17 (1288),<sup>165</sup> 20 (1315), 21 (1343),<sup>166</sup> 24 (14<sup>th</sup> c.), 25 (14<sup>th</sup> c.), 18 (1531), 22 (1580), 26 (1616),<sup>167</sup> 19 (1715), 78 (1722), 81 (1722), 86 (1727), 99 (1718-1726), 85 (18<sup>th</sup> c.). *Graecus*: 2281 (1207).<sup>168</sup>

the dates differ: on f. 114r, the end of Misrā AM 1513 (= 1797 CE); on f. 182r, 16 Bābah AM 1500 (= 1783 CE); and on f. [267]r, 20 Kiyahk AM 1513 (= 1797 CE). I base the manuscript's date on the agreement of the two matching colophons and on the fact that Pope John XVIII appears as the last mentioned patriarch in the diptychs (f. 215r), and the manuscript's production must therefore postdate his death in 1796 CE.

161 No date identified in this all Coptic euchologion of E-BAS.

162 Dated to 18 Misrā AM 1467 (= 1751 CE) according to the scribal colophon on f. [360v].

163 Hebbelynck, *Inventaire sommaire* (1924), 11.

164 van Lantschoot – Hebbelynck, *Codices*, vol. 1 (1947), 364-366.

165 van Lantschoot – Hebbelynck, *Codices*, vol. 1 (1937), 58-63; Wadi, *Testo della traduzione araba* (2008), 138.

166 van Lantschoot – Hebbelynck, *Codices*, vol. 1 (1937), 75-78.

167 van Lantschoot – Hebbelynck, *Codices*, vol. 1 (1937), 90-93.

168 Cuming, *Liturgy of Mark* (1990), xxx.

- WBaL= *Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Baramūs Liturgy*: 229 (1610),<sup>169</sup> 319 (1792-1793),<sup>170</sup> 251 (1812), 242 (1844), 232 (1848), 257 (1857), 239 (1858), 250 (1858), 226 (1860), 258 (1863), 243 (1864), 272 (1872), 228 (1899). Undated: 240.
- WBiL= *Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of St. Bishoi Liturgy*: 18 (1594), 16 (1779), 14 (1838), 113 (1848), 1 (1876), 112 (1884). Undated: 19, 4, 159, 17, 15.
- WML= *Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of St. Macarius Liturgy*: 151 (1771), 234 (1784), 231 (1794), 134 (18<sup>th</sup> c.), 147 (18<sup>th</sup> c.), 248 (18<sup>th</sup> c.), 144 (1846), 137 (1851), 156 (1852), 135 (1809-1852), 142 (1858), 145 (1864), 152 (1868), 148 (1883), 139 (1886), 236 (1887), 141 (1891), 232 (1899), 133 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 138 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 140 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 146 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 149 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 150 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 154 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 155 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 233 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 235 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 271 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 136 (19<sup>th</sup> c.), 143 (18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> c.), 153 (1908).
- WPL= *Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Coptic Central Papal Library Liturgy*: 509C (1774), 514C (1788), 513C (1745), 508C (1750), 517C (17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> c.).<sup>171</sup>
- WSL= *Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Monastery of the Virgin Mary, al-Suryān Liturgy*: 466 (1573),<sup>172</sup> 471 (1584), 468 (1601), 469 (before 1626), 887

169 This Copto-Arabic euchologion of the three liturgies was written by Slīmān al-ʿArīs and dated on f. [150]r to 7 Hātūr AM 1327 (= 1610 CE). ʿAbd al-Masīḥ later used it in preparing the *editio typica*: Miṣāʿil al-Baramūsī, *Notes on the Euchologion* (2018), 139.

170 The named scribe Tādrus al-Quṣūrī, records in the colophon on f. 304r that he completed the manuscript in AM 1509 (= 1792-1793 CE). The gentilic adjective indicates that he most likely hailed from the village known as Umm al-Quṣūr in the Asyūt region.

171 The dating of this uncatalogued Copto-Arabic manuscript for GREG relies on the identification of its named scribe, Jirjis ʿAbd al-Masīḥ ʿAbd al-Nūr al-Sirqināwī (f. 114r), a known monk and scribe from the monastery of St. Macarius. According to Ugo Zanetti, who catalogued the codices of that monastery, this scribe was active between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

172 The unnamed scribe from Dayr al-Suryān dates this Copto-Arabic euchologion of the three liturgies to 26 Tūt AM 1290 (= 1573 CE), as recorded on f. 218r.

(1635), **472 (1659)**,<sup>173</sup> **473 (1659)**,<sup>174</sup> 470 (before 1664), 474 (1666), 465 (1745), 481 (1751-1752), 485 (1784), 482 (1786), 680 (1790), 477 (before 1792), 494 (1800-1801), 493 (1800), 484 (1841), 479 (1809-1852), 480 (1809-1852), 486 (before 1865), 487 (1868), 488 (1871), 467 (1872), 489 (1881), 712 (1886), 503 (1893), 504 (1894), 500 (1886), **496 (before 1895)**.<sup>175</sup> Undated: 462, 475, 476, 478, 483, 490, 491, 492, 495, 497, 498, 499, 501, 502, 507, 508.

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173 The scribe Gabriel, a monk-priest of the monastery of St. Antony in the Eastern Desert, dates this exclusively E-BAS euchologion to 22 Bashans AM 1375 (= 1659 CE) on f. 222r. The manuscript was completed at the monastery of St. Bishoi in the Western Desert (f. 122r), where it was sponsored and initially owned by the monk-priest Filūthā’us of Dayr al-Suryān, before later being sold to the monk Yūḥannā of the same monastery (f. 132r).

174 This is also an exclusively E-BAS euchologion completed by Gabriel (the scribe of WSL472), though dated to 25 Abīb AM 1375 (= 1659 CE) and owned by Sulaymān, a monk-priest of Dayr al-Suryān (f. 49r).

175 At least four distinct scribal hands appear in this composite codex. However, the prayers under discussion come from the principal section of the manuscript and were written by what seems to be a single, anonymous scribe. A reader’s note records the date 8 Bābah AM 1612 (= 1895 CE), establishing this as the manuscript’s terminal date of production.

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HU ISSN 2416-2213

ISSN 2416-2213



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