

Nick Posegay
University of Cambridge



An Early Arabic Translation of Exodus 15 from a Palestinian Melkite Psalter in the Cairo Genizah

*Introduction*¹

The Cairo Genizah is famous for preserving vast quantities of Jewish manuscripts from medieval Fustat (“Old Cairo”) and the surrounding Islamicate world.² For decades, it has also been known to contain a small, yet significant, subset of Christian manuscripts. The best studied of these Christian manuscripts are palimpsests of the Gospels and other biblical texts in Greek and Christian Palestinian Aramaic, some of which were published more than 120 years ago.³ More recently, Christa Müller-Kessler has surveyed Genizah collections and compiled a corpus of CPA palimpsests that now numbers several dozen fragments.⁴ Syriac and Coptic manuscripts are also present in the Cairo Genizah in small amounts.⁵ The presence of

¹ This research was funded by a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship project, “Interfaith Exchange in the Intellectual History of Middle Eastern Languages.”

² A *genizah* (pl. *genizot*) is a hidden space used by Jewish communities to dispose of manuscripts, typically sacred texts, that are too old or damaged for further use. The term ‘Cairo Genizah’ refers to a group of *genizot* centred around the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat (‘Old Cairo’) that saw use between the 11th and 19th centuries. Most manuscripts from these *genizot* are now in American and European library collections. For the history of the Cairo Genizah and details about its manuscript corpora, see Stefan C. Reif, *A Jewish Archive from Old Cairo: The History of Cambridge University’s Genizah Collection* (London; New York: Curzon, 2000); Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza* (New York: Nextbook, Schocken, 2011); Nick Posegay, ‘Searching for the Last Genizah Fragment in Late Ottoman Cairo: A Material Survey of Egyptian Jewish Literary Culture’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 54, no. 3 (2022): 423–41, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743822000356>; and Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, *The Cairo Genizah and the Age of Discovery in Egypt: The History and Provenance of a Jewish Archive* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2022).

³ Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson, *Palestinian Syriac Texts from Palimpsest Fragments in the Taylor-Schechter Collection* (London: C. J. Clay & Sons; Cambridge University Press, 1900).

⁴ Christa Müller-Kessler, ‘Recent Identifications among the Palimpsests from the Cairo Geniza: A Comprehensive List of Christian Palestinian Aramaic Texts’, *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20 (2023), pp. 118–24.

⁵ For Syriac material, see Sebastian Brock, ‘East Syrian Liturgical Fragments from the Cairo Genizah’, in *Oriens Christianus*, vol. 68 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), pp. 58–79; Sebastian Brock, ‘Some Further East Syrian Liturgical Fragments from the Cairo Genizah’, in *Oriens Christianus*, 74 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990), pp. 44–61; George A. Kiraz, ‘A Young Syriac Pupil in the Cairo Genizah: Or.1081 2.75.30’, *Fragment of the Month (August)*, Cambridge University Library: Genizah Research Unit, 2018,

fragments in these languages raises questions about the relationships between the Jews of Cairo and the Christian communities that lived alongside them.⁶ By far, however, the most common Christian manuscripts in the Genizah are those written in Arabic, the common *lingua franca* of Cairo's Christians and Jews for most of the second millennium CE. Such manuscripts include works of science, medicine, and philosophy by Christian authors, as well as theological treatises and Bible translations.⁷

In the last few years, scholars have given even greater attention to the corpus of Christian Arabic Bible translations that survive in Genizah collections. As part of his landmark study on Pentateuch translation, Ronny Vollandt identified more than 30 Genizah fragments of various Old and New Testament books that Christians translated in the Middle Ages.⁸ In 2022, Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala published a small Genizah fragment of John 19, dating it to approximately the tenth century and arguing that it is based on a Syriac source text.⁹ Then in

<https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fotm-2018/fragment-6>; Alan Elbaum, 'A New Judaeo-Syriac Fragment from the Genizah: ENA 3846.2', *Fragment of the Month (February)*, Cambridge University Library: Genizah Research Unit, 2022, <https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fotm-2022/fragment-0>. The Coptic portions of the Genizah have not been well studied, but see: Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, 'Christian Palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah', *Revue d'histoire Des Textes*, no. 8 (1978), p. 110, p. 126; Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 197-199; Renate Smithuis, 'A Short Introduction to the Genizah Collection in the John Rylands Library', in *From Cairo to Manchester: Studies in the Rylands Genizah Fragments*, ed. Renate Smithuis and P.S. Alexander, *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement* 31 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 23.

⁶ On Christian communities in Fustat, see Audrey Dridi, 'Christians of Fustat in the First Three Centuries of Islam: The Making of a New Society', in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow, *Oriental Institute Museum Publications* 38 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago, 2015), pp. 33-40; Audrey Dridi, 'Christian and Jewish Communities in Fustāt: Non-Muslim Topography and Legal Controversies in the Pre-Fatimid Period', in *The Late Antique World of Early Islam: Muslims among Christians and Jews in the East Mediterranean*, ed. Robert G. Hoyland (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2021), pp. 107-132.

⁷ Krisztina Szilágyi, 'Christian Books in Jewish Libraries: Fragments of Christian Arabic Writings from the Cairo Genizah', *Ginzei Qedem* 2 (2006), pp. 107-162.

⁸ Ronny Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch: A Comparative Study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Sources* (Brill, 2015), pp. 328-239, <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004289932>; Ronny Vollandt, 'Biblical Translations into Christian Arabic Preserved in the Cairo Genizah Collections', *Biblia Arabica* (blog), 2019, <https://biblia-arabica.com/biblical-translations-into-christian-arabic-preserved-in-the-cairo-genizah-collections/>.

⁹ Writing for the Princeton Geniza Project, Samuel Bassaly and Peter Tarras estimated a date for this fragment in the ninth century, based on its early script style (Princeton Geniza Project, T-S Misc.27.4.24b, <https://geniza.princeton.edu/documents/35301/>, accessed 3 September 2023). Monferrer-Sala rightly points out that the manuscript is made of paper, so a tenth-century date is more likely; Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, 'A Fragment of the Gospel of John Preserved in the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Collection', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 19 (2022), p. 209.

2023, Peter Tarras published another fragment, this one from Revelation 4-5, which he argues is based on a Coptic source and dates no earlier than the eleventh century.¹⁰

This article presents yet another Christian translation from the Genizah, this time of Exodus 15, preserved in two fragments of an Arabic psalter (MSS CUL T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210). The style of its Arabic script suggests that it was copied by a well-trained scribe in the late 9th or early 10th century. Such a date makes it the oldest Christian Arabic Bible translation yet found in the Genizah. Linguistic analysis further indicates that its translator had access to the Peshitta and the Septuagint of Exodus 15 during their work. Most likely, this translator was a ninth-century Melkite Christian who spoke both Syriac and Arabic.

Description

The two Genizah fragments of interest here are Cambridge University Library, Taylor-Schechter New Series (T-S NS) 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210. Together they make up the innermost bifolium of a parchment quire, measuring 15.3cm x 20.1cm (see figs. 1-2). Citations from the reconstructed manuscript in this article will take the format 1r.1 (folio 1 recto, line 1). Each leaf is about 10 cm wide, and both are torn, with several pieces missing from the middle of f1 and the bottom of f2. Each page has 13-14 lines of Arabic text in a monochrome brown-black ink (most likely iron gall, given the fading on 2v.13-14). A heading appears in red ink on 1v.6-7, and small red circles separate short textual units (approximately half-verses) throughout the manuscript. Most of the text is also badly rubbed, in some places to the point of illegibility, with 1r being practically indecipherable.

¹⁰ Peter Tarras, 'A Fragment of the Book of Revelation in the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Collection (T-S AS 177.202)', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20 (2023), p. 275.



Figure 1. T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210 reconstructed, ff. 2v-1r.



Figure 2. T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210 reconstructed, ff. 1v-2r.¹¹

Due to the extensive damage to the text, previous attempts to identify these fragments have been unsuccessful. Avihai Shvitiel and Friedrich Niessen described the contents as a “theological text with allusions to Qur’anic [sic] verses”.¹² Consequently, Aleida Paudice reproduced that description in her studies of Qur’anic material in Genizah collections, and

¹¹ Thank you to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Library for providing images of these fragments.

¹² Avihai Shvitiel and Friedrich Niessen, *Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections: Taylor-Schechter New Series*, Cambridge Genizah Series 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), no. 6795.

Ronny Vollandt did not examine this manuscript in his work on Christian Arabic Bible translations.¹³

A more accurate description is that these fragments are part of a Melkite Christian Arabic psalter, specifically the beginning of the section containing the nine ‘canticles’ or ‘biblical odes’ that appear at the end of such psalters in the Orthodox Church.¹⁴ The canticle that occupies most of this article begins with the red heading on 1v.6-7, which reads: “The first song by Miriam, the sister of Aaron, and Moses.” This title indicates the “Song of the Sea,” which Moses and the people of Israel sing first in Exodus 15:1 before Miriam joins them in Exodus 15:20.¹⁵ The rest of 1v.7-14, 2r, and 2v are the text of Exodus 15:1-16, which breaks off in the middle of verse 16 (2v.14). This text presumably continued on the next leaf of this codex through the end of the song in verse 19, which was followed by the “second song” of Moses from Deuteronomy 32:1-43. The discussion below focuses only on the Exodus translation.

The damage to the manuscripts has prevented me from deciphering and positively identifying the other texts which precede the Song of the Sea (i.e. 1r.1-14 and 1v.1-5). Lines 1r.1-14 may be the Arabic text of Psalms 149 and 150 (or 150 and 151), with the green circle in the margin marking the division between the two. The five lines before the rubricated heading (1v.1-5) would then be a colophon marking the end of the book of Psalms (including one of the few legible phrases, in 1v.4, *قيامه الموتى* ‘the resurrection’). This layout would correspond to the arrangement of other Arabic psalters, with the Song of the Sea also following a colophon at the end Psalm 150/151 in Bryn Mawr College MS BV 47, ff. 71v-72r (916-17 CE), Sinai Arabic 32, ff. 116v-117r (ca. eleventh century), and Sinai Arabic 52, ff. 221v-222r (ca. twelfth century). Such psalters also tend to have rubricated headings that label each canticle with the

¹³ Aleida Paudice, ‘On Three Extant Sources of the Qur’an Transcribed in Hebrew’, *European Journal of Jewish Studies* 2, no. 2 (1 December 2008), p. 241, <https://doi.org/10.1163/187247109X454422>; Aleida Paudice, ‘Hebrew Translations and Transcriptions of the Qur’an’, in *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day*, ed. Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 646; Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 328-329; Vollandt, ‘Biblical Translations into Christian Arabic’.

¹⁴ Traditionally, in the Orthodox Church, the First Song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-19), the Second Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43), the Prayer of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10), the Prayer of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3:1-19), the Prayer of Isaiah (Isaiah 26:9-20), the Prayer of Jonah (Jonah 2:2-9), the Prayer of the Three Holy Children (Daniel 3:26-56), the Song of the Three Holy Children (Daniel 3:57-88), and the *Magnificat* and *Benedictus* (Luke 1:46-55 and Luke 1:68-79). Some psalters include the Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29-32) as an additional canticle (e.g. MS Bryn Mawr College Library BV 47, f. 73v). The First Song of Moses is also attested as the First Song of Miriam (as in these Genizah fragments and Bryn Mawr College Library BV 47, f. 72r).

¹⁵ “Then Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. And Miriam sang to them...” (Exodus 15:20-21, ESV). See edition below for the Arabic text of the heading.

term *تسبيحة* (calqued from Syriac ܬܫܒܚܬܐ) and often use dots or red circles to separate verses.¹⁶ The Genizah fragments accordingly exhibit all of these features.

There are no vocalisation signs in the manuscript, no *hamzas*, no diacritics like *shadda* or *sukūn*, no *ihmāl* signs, and only sporadic diacritic dots. Despite what has been suggested for other Christian Arabic manuscripts in the Genizah, the absence or inconsistent application of consonantal diacritics in medieval Arabic manuscripts is so common that it should be expected regardless of whether a manuscript is copied in Qur'anic, Classical, or 'Middle' Arabic.¹⁷ Consequently, the absence of a diacritic feature in a manuscript cannot be taken as evidence for the absence of a phonological feature in speech. Therefore, the absence of many dots (as well as signs like *shadda* and *hamza*) in this psalter does not tell us anything about the scribe's Arabic dialect. The one diacritic system that is somewhat useful for dating is this scribe's consistent use of a single supralinear dot for *fā'* and a pair of supralinear dots for *qāf*. This system only became widespread among Arabic scribes during the ninth century. The other diacritics that are present do not demonstrate any of the older Arabic practices – such as the *qāf* with a single dot – that can be used to date manuscripts to the period before the 9th century.¹⁸ As such, we must rely on palaeographic analysis to estimate a date of production after that. Such analysis in comparison with other dated Christian Arabic manuscripts suggests that these fragments were copied in the late ninth or early tenth century.

¹⁶ See also Sinai Arabic 21, 143r-144v (ca. eleventh century), Sinai Arabic 31 (ca. twelfth century), and Sinai Arabic 53, ff. 141v-142r (ca. twelfth century).

¹⁷ Diacritics can be useful evidence for detecting the interference of dialectal features in the writing of Arabic scribes, but primarily when scribes *include* dots that are not 'correct' in Classical Arabic. For example, if instead of *ثلاثة* 'three', a scribe wrote *ثلثة* using two dots on each *tā'*, that would be evidence to suggest that their dialect lost the interdental fricative /th/ typically represented by *ث*. However, if the scribe left out the dots entirely and wrote *لمه*, we could not use that as evidence that their dialect had merged the interdental fricative /th/ and plosive /t/. It only shows that the scribe, in that instance, did not think that the reading was sufficiently ambiguous to warrant the inclusion of distinguishing dots. Similarly, if a scribe wrote the word *دخل* 'he entered' incorrectly as *ذخل*, the added diacritic dot on the *dāl* may be evidence of a 'hypercorrection'. That is, the scribe's Arabic dialect may have lost the distinction between the alveolar stop /d/ and fricative /dh/, but they were aware that those sounds were differentiated in Classical Arabic. Not knowing exactly when that difference occurs, they overcorrected by adding a dot where it does not belong. Contrast the discussion of diacritics in Monferrer-Sala, 'A Fragment of the Gospel', 209.

¹⁸ Beatrice Gruendler, 'Arabic Script', in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*, ed. J.D. McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 140; Andreas Kaplony, 'What Are Those Few Dots for? Thoughts on the Orthography of the Qurra Papyri (709-710), the Khurasan Parchments (755-777) and the Inscription of the Jerusalem Dome of the Rock (692)', 2008, 93-94; Miriam L. Hjälml, 'A Paleographical Study of Early Christian Arabic Manuscripts', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 17 (2020): 68, <https://doi.org/10.21071/cco.v17i0.1148>.

Palaeography and Dating

The script of T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210 is a relatively unadorned semi-cursive style with features of several different scripts that Miriam Hjälms has identified in her classification of Christian Arabic palaeography. Some of these features are characteristic of her “semi-angular” groups as well as the “cursive” subtype of New Style. For example, the script in this Genizah psalter exhibits significant horizontal extension, particularly in the letters *kaḥf* and *ṣad/ḍād*, typical of the scripts that Hjälms calls “semi-angular” Group A. Yet the psalter script is also less angular than Group A, somewhat resembling Group B and more cursive styles.¹⁹ It further exhibits certain letter forms typical of a cursive New Style – including an *s*-shaped independent *alif* and *tā'* with a rightward-leaning shaft that extends far past its belly – but it lacks the vertical extension characteristic of the New Styles.²⁰ As Hjälms and others have shown, all of these related script types are attested in Christian manuscripts already in the late 9th and early 10th centuries.²¹

The best comparison for the Genizah psalter is what Hjälms designates “plain” scripts, represented by just a few manuscripts which lack the typical features of angular scripts, yet do not appear to be based on New Style developments: Sinai Arabic 2 (dated 939/40), Sinai Arabic 151 (dated 867), and Sinai Arabic 597 (dated before 1002).²² Of these three, Sinai Arabic 2 is the only one whose date has not been called into doubt. Sinai Arabic 151 is often regarded as the earliest dated Christian Arabic Bible, but some scholars question whether the colophon dating it to 867 might be a copy of an earlier manuscript. Noting the similarities between its script and Sinai Arabic 2, Alexander Treiger has proposed that Sinai Arabic 151 should be redated to the early tenth century.²³ Additionally, he has shown that the 1002 CE date commonly cited for Sinai Arabic 597 does not belong with the original ‘plain’ script hand in that manuscript. He thus also redates that manuscript to the early 10th century based on its palaeographic similarities to Sinai Arabic 2.²⁴

¹⁹ Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, pp. 52-53, 56 and pp. 64-69.

²⁰ Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, pp. 64-65.

²¹ See also Mark N. Swanson, ‘Some Considerations for the Dating of *Fī Taḥlīth Allāh Al-Wāḥid* (Sinai Ar. 154) and *al-Ġāmi' Wuḡūḥ al-Imān* (London, British Library Or. 4950)’, *Parole de l’Orient*, no. 18 (1993), pp. 115-141; Hikmat Kashouh, *The Arabic Versions of the Gospels: The Manuscripts and Their Families*, *Arbeiten Zur Neutestamentlichen Textforschung* 42 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

²² Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, pp. 73-74.


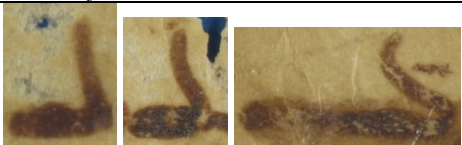
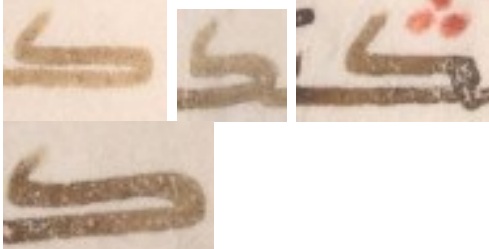

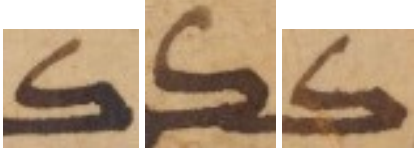
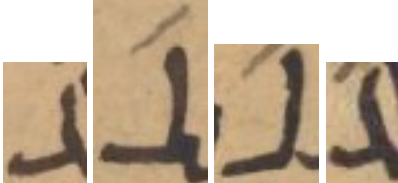
²³ Joshua Blau, ‘Über Einige Christlich-Arabische Manuskripte Aus Dem 9. Und. 10. Jahrhundert’, *Le Muséon: Revue d’Études Orientales* 75, no. 1-2 (1962), pp. 101-108; Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, 27, n. 24; Alexander Treiger, ‘From Theodore Abū Qurra to Abed Azrié: The Arabic Bible in Context’, in *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, *Biblia Arabica* 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), p. 40; Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, p. 72, n. 72.

²⁴ Treiger, ‘From Theodore Abū Qurra’, p. 42, n. 128.

More recent analysis by Vevian Zaki suggests that Sinai Arabic 151 is likely not a copy of an earlier manuscript,²⁵ and therefore the extant colophon is original to the codex in which it appears. Hjälms thus accepts its 867 date. She also stresses the differences between Sinai Arabic 151 and the other two manuscripts in this group, suggesting that even if they belong to the first half of the tenth century, it is plausible that Sinai Arabic 151 is earlier. One detail she highlights is that Sinai Arabic 151 lacks the top stroke of final *kāf*, whereas the stroke appears more often in Sinai Arabic 2 and 597.²⁶ This is a feature that Sinai Arabic 151 shares with the Genizah psalter:

Tables 1-8. T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210 compared to other 'plain' hands²⁷

In the 'plain' style, including for T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210, initial and medial *kāf* is typically a pair of parallel horizontal strokes with a short oblique top stroke. There is often considerable horizontal extension in the base. Final *kāf* resembles final *dāl*, with no top stroke or only a secondary stroke detached from the body of the letter.

	Initial <i>kāf</i>	Final <i>kāf</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210		
Sinai Arabic 151		
Sinai Arabic 2		

²⁵ Vevian F. Zaki, 'A Dynamic History: MS Sinai, Arabic 151 in the Hands of Scribes, Readers, and Restorers', *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts*, 2020, pp. 219-220, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1878464X-01102004>.

²⁶ Hjälms, 'A Paleographical Study', p. 73, note 74.

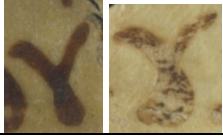

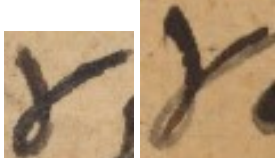
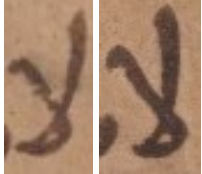
²⁷ Samples from Sinai Arabic 151 ff. 6v-8r, Sinai Arabic 2 ff. 106v-107r, and Sinai Arabic 597 f. 12r-v.



The shape of *alif* varies considerably in the plain scripts. Some demonstrate the *s*-shape typical of NS scripts, but others have only a slight righthand return at the baseline or no return at all. There is also significant variation in the height of *alif*, but in general, the plain style lacks the vertical extension seen in the ascending strokes of NS.

	Independent <i>alif</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	
Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	




Plain scripts display the ‘gamma’ shaped *lām-alif*, even though this ligature is often considered a later feature.²⁸ It can lean right or left, though the degree of obliqueness varies between manuscripts.

	<i>Lām-alif</i> ligature
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	
Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	



Like *kāf* in initial and medial positions, *ṣād/ḍād* consists of two parallel lines that make up a narrow belly with considerable horizontal extension. In some cases, especially in Sinai Arabic 151 (and to a lesser extent, the Genizah psalter), the belly may be pinched short instead. Tails also tend to be short and the typical lefthand denticle is minimal or absent.

	<i>ṣād/ḍād</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	

²⁸ Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, 73.

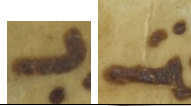



Sinai Arabic 151	
Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	

Tā' / zā' has a similar horizontal extension to *ṣād* and *kāf*, and the belly of the letter may also be pinched short. The shaft curves slightly and leans heavily to the right. This obliqueness is present in all four 'plain' manuscripts, but it is most extreme in the Genizah psalter, where the shaft can extend far past the belly of the letter.

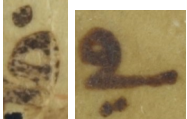
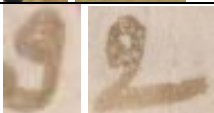
	<i>Tā'</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	

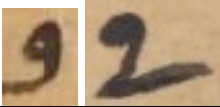

Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	

Final *bā'* and its homographs display a typical 'half-bow' shape that usually lacks a finishing band, although this feature is less common in Sinai Arabic 597.


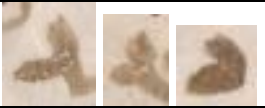


	Final/independent <i>bā' / tā' / thā'</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	
Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	

The head of initial *fā'* is frequently lifted off the baseline, with a small counter that is often closed or nearly closed. The *fī* ligature is consistent throughout the script type, with a sharp downward stroke that connects the head to a far-right extended return.

	<i>fā'</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	

Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	

Finally, *dāl* lacks the top serif typical of Early Abbasid script styles. It often appears as a simple semicircle.

	<i>dāl</i>
T-S NS 305.198/T-S NS 305.210	
Sinai Arabic 151	
Sinai Arabic 2	
Sinai Arabic 597	

Based on the comparisons here, it seems that Sinai Arabic 2 is the latest of the four manuscripts in this group. It has notably less horizontal extension (particularly with initial *kāf*), a more modern final *kāf* shape, a less oblique *tā'*, and is generally more curvilinear than the other hands. This assessment concurs with Treiger's conclusion that Sinai Arabic 597 predates Sinai Arabic 2 and can be placed earlier in tenth century, before 939/940. It is also relevant that both Sinai Arabic 2 and 597 are made of paper, whereas Sinai Arabic 151 and the Genizah psalter are parchment. While not proof of their chronology, paper only gained widespread adoption in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt in the ninth and tenth centuries.²⁹ Paper Arabic manuscripts thus *tend* to be later than parchment manuscripts in this period, so the Genizah psalter is likely older than both Sinai Arabic 2 and Sinai Arabic 597. Hjälms's survey suggests a general shift

²⁹ Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009), p. 186; François Déroche et al., *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script*, ed. Muhammad Isa Waley, trans. Deke Dusinberre and David Radzinowicz, 2nd edition (London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2015), p. 51.

among Arabic monastic scribes from parchment to paper after about 920 CE.³⁰ We therefore estimate that the Genizah psalter was produced between 867 and 920 CE.

Linguistic Evidence of Source Text

As we will see, the translation of Exodus 15 that appears in this psalter is most likely based on a Syriac source mediated by the Septuagint. Ronny Vollandt has identified four of the most attested Syriac-based Arabic Pentateuch text types from roughly the period of the Genizah psalter. He designates them Arab^{Syr}1, Arab^{Syr}2, Arab^{Syr}3, and Arab^{Syr_Hex}1a.³¹ The first three – Arab^{Syr}1, Arab^{Syr}2, and Arab^{Syr}3 – are all based on the Syriac of the Old Testament Peshitta, itself originally translated from a Hebrew vorlage in the second century CE. None of them match the translation that appears in the Genizah psalter.³² In contrast to these Peshitta types, Arab^{Syr_Hex}1a is an Arabic translation based on the Syriac of the “Syro-Hexapla.” Paul of Tella, a Syriac Orthodox bishop, produced the Syro-Hexapla in the early seventh century by translating the Greek Septuagint version from Origen’s Hexapla into Syriac. Then, sometime before 956 CE, the Melkite al-Ḥārith ibn Sinān ibn Sunbaṭ al-Ḥarrānī translated the Syro-Hexapla into Arabic, producing Arab^{Syr_Hex}1a.³³ His version of Exodus 15 also does not match the Genizah psalter.³⁴ The present author has also compared the Genizah translation to five additional Arabic Psalter manuscripts containing the nine canticles which date between the tenth and twelfth centuries. While all five have considerable lexical and syntactic similarities to the Genizah psalter fragments in their versions of the Song of the Sea, they are nevertheless separate translations. The *rubricated heading* of the Genizah psalter, with its reference to “Miriam, the sister of Aaron,” is most similar to that of Bryn Mawr College Library BV 47 (f.72r), a Melkite psalter dated 916-17 CE.³⁵ Further research is needed to understand the relationships between these related canticle translation traditions and the Genizah psalter.

Even though the Genizah psalter does not correspond to any of these text types, two circumstantial details support the hypothesis that it is based on a Syriac source. First, the earliest dated example of the “plain” script style (see “Palaeography” above), Sinai Arabic 151, is itself a biblical translation for several books from the New Testament. Its colophon specifies

³⁰ Hjälms, ‘A Paleographical Study’, pp. 76-77.

³¹ Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 244-263.

³² Based on comparison with manuscripts containing Exodus 15 from Arab^{Syr}1 (Sinai Arabic 2, f.105v) and Arab^{Syr}2 (Sinai Arabic 4, f.85v). See Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 244-245.

³³ Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 60-61.

³⁴ Based on comparison with Sinai Arabic 10, f.74r. See Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, 253.

³⁵ The five other psalters compared here are Bryn Mawr College Library BV 47, ff. 71v-72r (916-17 CE); Sinai Arabic 21, ff. 143r-144v (ca. eleventh century); Sinai Arabic 32, ff. 117r-118r (ca. eleventh century); Sinai Arabic 52, ff. 222r-223v (ca. twelfth century); and Sinai Arabic 53, ff. 141v-142r (ca. twelfth century). On the earliest extant Arabic psalters, see Treiger, ‘From Theodore Abū Qurra’, pp. 20-21.

that it was copied from a Syriac vorlage.³⁶ Second, Sinai Arabic 2, the example of the “plain” script type dated to 939/40 CE, is one of the oldest witnesses to the Arab^{Syr}1 translation type.³⁷

Textual correspondences between various versions of Exodus 15:1-16 and the Genizah psalter further suggest that its translator had access to both the Peshitta and the Septuagint. Due to the damage in the manuscript, it is often difficult to reconstruct the syntax of entire sentences, so this analysis relies on the comparison of individual words in the Peshitta, Syro-Hexapla, Septuagint, and Masoretic Hebrew Bible. This discussion abbreviates these sources with the sigla P (Peshitta), S-H (Syro-Hexapla), LXX (Septuagint), MT (Masoretic text), and GP (Genizah psalter). An edition of Exodus 15:1-16 from the psalter fragments and parallel translations from these potential source versions appear in Table 9. Linguistic observations follow below.

³⁶ Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, 59, n. 52; Joseph Nasrallah, ‘Deux Versions Melchites Partielles de La Bible Du IXe et Du Xe Siècles’, *Oriens Christianus* 64 (1980), pp. 202-215.

³⁷ Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, p. 245.

Table 9³⁸. Edition of Exodus 15:1-16 in the Genizah Psalter Translation and Four Potential Source Versions.

The links between the Genizah psalter and the Peshitta begin already in Exodus 15:1a, “Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord” (MT: אָז יָשִׁיר-מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה הַשִּׁירָה). The Hebrew designates the “song” of the sea with the word הַשִּׁירָה, literally ‘song’. The translators of the Peshitta and Syro-Hexapla both render this noun with the Syriac ܐܘܒܫܒܫܘܬܐ, meaning ‘hymn’ or ‘praise’, which is also the typical designation for the nine canticles. The Genizah psalter applies the cognate Arabic root *sbh* for the Syriac ܐܘܒܫܒܫܘܬܐ, glossing ܐܘܒܫܒܫܘܬܐ as [التسبيحة] (1v.8). However, while the P and GP also use this ‘praise’ root to translate the Hebrew verb יָשִׁיר (P: ܘܒܫܘܬܘܗܘܢ ‘they praised’; GP: [سبح] ‘he/they praised’, 1v.7), the S-H and LXX do not (S-H: ܘܫܘܪܘܗܘܢ ‘they sang’, esp. of Psalms; LXX: ᾄσεν). The same glosses appear again in verse 15:1b, “I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously” (MT: ܐֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי-גָאַה גְּאָה). The S-H translates אֲשִׁירָה as ܘܫܘܪܘܗܘܢ ‘we will sing’ (LXX: ασωμεν) while the P and GP have ‘we will praise’ (P: ܘܢܫܘܚܘܢ; GP: ܢܫܚܘܢ, 1v.9).

This correlation between the Syriac *sbh* and Arabic *sbh* roots is already strong evidence that the GP translation was based primarily on the P, but there are other orthographic, syntactic, and lexical indicators. In Exodus 15:8a, the MT reads “At the blast of your nostrils the waters gathered together” (וּבְרוּחַ אֶפְיֹד גִּעְרָמוּ מַיִם). Instead of ‘your nostrils’ here, the S-H follows the LXX’s οὐστὸς σου ‘your wrath’, giving ܘܫܒܘܬܐ ܘܗܘܝܬ. By contrast, the P mimics the orthography and plurality of the MT with ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ ‘your faces’, and the GP simply gives the Arabic cognate of the Hebrew, انف ‘nose’ (2r.9). Then the MT of Exodus 15:8b has “the depths congealed in the heart of the sea” (קָפְאוּ תְהֹמֹת בְּלִבַּיִם), and the P again mimics the Hebrew with ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ ‘they congealed, coagulated’. The GP translates this verb as ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ ‘they froze, coagulated’ (2r.10), matching the P in both sense and plurality. Meanwhile, the S-H has the singular ܘܗܘܝܬ ‘it condensed’ (LXX: ἐπάγη), with a sense more typically applied to fog or vapour. In verse 15:15a, the MT reads, “Then the chiefs of Edom will be terrified, trembling will seize the leaders of Moab (אֲזַ נִבְהָלוּ אֱלֹפֵי אֲדוֹם אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֶאֱחָזְמוּ רַעַד). The MT, P, and GP all refer to ‘the leaders of Moab’ here, (MT: אֵילֵי מוֹאָב; P: ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ; GP: ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ, 2v.12), but the S-H has ‘the leaders of the Moabites’ (S-H: ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ; LXX: ἄρχοντες Μωαβιτῶν). Additionally, both the P and GP give cognates of the MT’s verb יֶאֱחָזְמוּ ‘it will seize them’ (P: ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ; GP: ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ, 2v.12), while the S-H does not (ܘܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܝܬ; LXX: ἔλαβεν).

While it is likely that the Genizah psalter’s translator based their work on the Peshitta, several lexical details suggest that they also had access to the Septuagint. In Exodus 15:4a, the

³⁸ For table 9, please see appendix at the end of this article.

MT states that Pharaoh’s army drowned “in the sea of reed” (בַּיַם־סוּף). The P adapts this phrase directly into Syriac, giving ܫܘܦ ܫܘܦܐ ‘in the sea of reed’. The S-H, however, follows the LXX *ἐν ἐρυθρᾷ θαλάσῃ* ‘in the red sea’, glossing it as ܫܘܦ ܫܘܦܐ ‘in the red sea’. The GP matches the S-H and LXX here: البحر الاحمر [في] ‘[in] the red sea’ (2r.1-2). Then, while the GP does match the syntax of the MT and P regarding ‘the leaders of Moab’ (see above), it calls those leaders اراكنه (2v.12), using an Arabicised broken plural form of the LXX’s ἀρχοντες ‘archons’. This loan is unrelated to the equivalent Syriac glosses (P: ܕܥܘܠܝܢܐ; S-H: ܕܥܘܠܝܢܐ) and can only have come from the translator knowing a Greek version of this verse. The combination of Greek and Syriac sources is a hallmark of Melkite Bible translation,³⁹ and these lexical connections support the conclusion that the translator of the Genizah psalter was a multilingual Melkite Christian.

Conclusion: Melkite Provenance and the Cairo Genizah

The combination of paleographic, codicological, and linguistic evidence indicates that the manuscript made up of T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210 is a Melkite psalter produced in the late ninth or early tenth century. The translator’s primary source text was the Syriac Peshitta, but, like the Genizah Gospel fragment published by Monferrer-Sala,⁴⁰ their translation was mediated by Greek sources, specifically the Septuagint. At the very least, the translator was aware of alternate glosses from the Septuagint and incorporated them into their Arabic translation of the Peshitta. The psalter’s script style is most similar to Sinai Arabic 151 (dated 867 CE), another Arabic Bible manuscript that belongs to a Melkite liturgical tradition and contains a translation based on a Syriac source.⁴¹ It is thus most likely that the Genizah psalter comes from from a multilingual Melkite monastery in Palestine that was active during the ninth century.⁴² This origin would be consistent with other Christian material in the Genizah, particularly the Greek and Christian Palestinian Aramaic palimpsests, that are

³⁹ Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ Monferrer-Sala, ‘A Fragment of the Gospel’, p. 211.

⁴¹ Zaki, ‘A Dynamic History’, p. 221 and p. 246. Previous scholars have argued that the translator of Sinai Arabic 151, Bishr ibn al-Sirrī, was also a Melkite, but recent research indicates he was an East Syriac Christian. Compare Nasrallah, ‘Deux Versions Melchites Partielles de La Bible Du IXe et Du Xe Siècles’, pp. 203-206; Samir Khalil Samir, ‘Michel Évêque Melkite de Damas Au 9e Siècle. A Propos de Bišr Ibn al-Sirrī’, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 53 (1987), pp. 439-441; and Sidney Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic: The Scriptures of the ‘People of the Book’ in the Language of Islam* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 134; with Zaki, ‘A Dynamic History’; Habib Ibrahim, ‘Revisiting the Works of Ibn Al-Sirrī (9th Century)’, *Scrinium* 19, no. 1 (2023), pp. 28-48; and Alexander Treiger, ‘An East-Syriac Scholar in Ninth-Century Damascus’, *Scrinium* 19, no. 1 (2023), pp. 388-413, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18177565-bja10082>.

⁴² See Kate Leeming, ‘The Adoption of Arabic as a Liturgical Language by the Palestinian Melkites’, *ARAM Periodical* 15 (2003), pp. 239-246; Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 54-55; Monferrer-Sala, ‘A Fragment of the Gospel’, p. 209.

suspected to come from Palestinian Christian communities between the seventh and ninth centuries CE.⁴³ However, since the psalter does not show any signs of erasure or reuse, it is also plausible that it came from a Melkite community in the immediate area of Fustat before ending up in the hands of Cairo's Jews.⁴⁴

The question of why Egyptian Jews would have obtained Christian material and deposited it into a Cairene genizah is one that remains unresolved. While the surviving psalter fragments show no signs of recycling, it is possible that Jewish bookmakers repurposed the rest of the quire as a palimpsest or to reinforce other bindings. It is also possible that an Arabic-speaking Jew simply wanted a professional copy of the Song of the Sea in Arabic and was not picky about who produced it. The same can be said for many Arabic scientific and medical works produced by Christians and Muslims that now reside in Cairo Genizah collections.⁴⁵ On the other hand, one of the numerous collectors who acquired manuscripts for the Cambridge Genizah Collections could have purchased the psalter fragments from dealers in Egypt or Palestine, with only tenuous connections to the Jews of Fustat.⁴⁶ Regardless of their exact provenance though, these fragments represent new data for the study of Christian Arabic paleography, material history, and Bible translation in the ninth and tenth centuries.

⁴³ See Lewis and Gibson, *Palestinian Syriac Texts*; Sokoloff and Yahalom, 'Christian Palimpsests', pp. 110-111; Müller-Kessler, 'Recent Identifications'.

⁴⁴ On Melkites in and around Fustat, see Dridi, 'Christians of Fustat in the First Three Centuries of Islam: The Making of a New Society', p. 38 and p. 40.

⁴⁵ Szilágyi, 'Christian Books in Jewish Libraries'; Mark R Cohen, 'Geniza for Islamicists, Islamic Geniza, and the "New Cairo Geniza"', *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, no. 7 (2006), pp. 129-245; Nick Posegay, 'The Long Road to Samarqand: Reverse-Engineering the Travels of a 12th-Century Andalusí Muslim (T-S Ar.53.39)', *Fragment of the Month (October)*, Cambridge University Library: Genizah Research Unit, 2023, <https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fofm-2023/fragment-8>. See also, Magdalen M. Connolly and Nick Posegay, 'A Survey of Personal-Use Qur'an Manuscripts Based on Fragments from the Cairo Genizah', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 23, no. 2 (2021), pp. 2-4, <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2021.0465>.

⁴⁶ Rebecca J.W. Jefferson, 'The Trade in Cairo Genizah Fragments in and out of Palestine in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries', *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 14, no. 2 (2023), pp. 169-171, <https://doi.org/10.30965/21967954-bja10046>.

Edition of Exodus 15:1-16 in the Genizah Psalter Translation and Four Potential Source Versions¹

Septuagint	Syro-Hexapla	Masoretic Text	Peshitta	Psalter fl verso	Verse	Line
			ܫܒܚܘܢ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	التسبحة الاولى لمريم اخت هرون		6
Τότε ἤσεν Μωϋσῆς καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ τὴν ὥδην ταύτην τῷ θεῷ καὶ εἶπαν λέγοντες ἀσωμεν τῷ κυρίῳ, ἐνδόξως γὰρ δεδόξασται· ἵππον καὶ ἀναβάτην ἔρριψεν εἰς θάλασσαν.	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	אֲזַיִשִׁיר־מִשֶׁה וּבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְאַמְרָאֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאָה גָאָה קוֹס וּרְכַבּוֹ רָמַה־בַּיִם	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	وموسى : [حينئذ سبّح موسى وبني	1a	7
				[سرايل ... هذه الت]سبحة للرب وقال		8
				نسبح للرب بي[..]جد وعلى الخيل و		9
				و[رسانهم] طرح في البحر.	end 1	10
βοηθός καὶ σκεπαστής ἐγένετό μοι εἰς σωτηρίαν· οὗτός μου, θεός, καὶ δοξάσω αὐτόν, θεός τοῦ πατρὸς μου καὶ ὑψώσω αὐτόν.	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	עֲזֵי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה וַיְהִי־לִי לְיִשׁוּעָה זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאַנְוָהוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאַרְמְמָנָהוּ:	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	[.....]اد لي مخلص		11
				[.....] الاله ابي ارفعه	end 2	12
κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους, κύριος ὄνομα αὐτῷ. ἄρματα Φαραῶ καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ ἔρριψεν εἰς θάλασσαν,	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ: מִרְכַּבַּת פְּרָעָה וְחִילּוֹ יְרָה בָיִם	ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ ܫܒܚܘܢ ܘܨܬܐ ܕܘܨܬܐ	[.....]فرعون وج[نو]ده	3-4a	13
				[.....] غرقو[..]	4a	14

¹ The text of the Genizah psalter is my edition of T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210. The Peshitta text comes from Samuel Lee's *Vetus Testamentum Syriace* (London, 1823), the Masoretic Text is from the Westminster edition of the Leningrad Codex (<http://www.tanach.us/Tanach.xml>, accessed 1 March 2024), the Syro-Hexapla text is from Paul de Lagarde's *Bibliothecae Syriacae* (Göttingen, 1892; p. 67), and the Septuagint text is from Alfred Rahlfs' *Septuaginta: id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX Interpretes* (Stuttgart, 1935).

Septuagint	Syro-Hexapla	Masoretic Text	Peshitta	Psalter f2 recto	Verse	Line
ἐπιλέκτους ἀναβάτας τριστάτας κατεπόντισεν ἐν ἐρυθρᾷ θαλάσῃ.	ܬܠܝܬܝܬܐ ܕܬܪܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	וּמִבְחָר שְׁלֹשִׁיו טְבָעוּ בַיַּם־סוּף:	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	وخيل [.....] البحر	4b	1
πόντος ἐκάλυψεν αὐτούς, κατέδυσαν εἰς βυθὸν ὡσεὶ λίθος.	ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	תְּהַמֵּת יַבְסִימוּ יַרְדּוּ בְּמִצּוֹלֹת כְּמוֹ־אֲבֹן:	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	الاحمر ه [.... غ] طاهم ه هبط<وا>	end 4- 5a	2
				[.....] سخوا كالمحجارة ه	end 5	3
ἡ δεξιὰ σου, κύριε, δεδόξασται ἐν ἰσχύϊ· ἡ δεξιὰ σου χεῖρ, κύριε, ἔθραυσεν ἐχθρούς.	ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	יְמִינֶךָ יְהוָה נִאֲדָרִי בַפֶּחַ יְמִינֶךָ יְהוָה תִּרְעַץ אוֹיֵב:	ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	[.....] مجددة بالقوة ه	6a	4
				[.....] لث لاعدانا ه ²	end 6	5
καὶ τῷ πλήθει τῆς δόξης σου, συνέτριψας τούς ὑπεναντίους· ἀπέστειλας τὴν ὀργὴν σου καὶ κατέφαγεν αὐτούς ὡς καλάμην.	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	וּבְרַב גְּאוּנֶךָ תִּהְיֶה קַמִּיךָ תִּשְׁלַח חַרְבְּךָ יֵאבְדְּלוּ כְּקֶשֶׁ:	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	بك[.....] رضضت ال[..] اربن	7a	6
				او [.. غضية] ك فاكلته[م ..]	7b	7
				كال[مقشوش] ش ه [.....] ك	end 7b	8
καὶ διὰ πνεύματος τοῦ θυμοῦ σου διέστη τὸ ὕδωρ· ἐπάγη ὡσεὶ τεῖχος τὰ ὕδατα, ἐπάγη τὰ κύματα ἐν μέσῳ τῆς θαλάσσης.	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	וּבְרוּחַ אַפִּיךָ נִעְרַמוּ מַיִם נִצְבּוּ כְּמוֹ־גֵד נְזִלִים קָפְאוּ תְּהַמֵּת בְּלִבַּיִם:	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	انف صلا[ى] الما[.....]	8a	9
				[و] ج[م] دوا [..... في وس] ط البحر ه	8b	10
εἶπεν ὁ ἐχθρὸς Διώξας καταλήμψομαι, μεριῶ σκῦλα, ἐμπλήσω ψυχὴν μου, ἀνελῶ τῇ μαχαίρῃ μου, κυριεύσει ἡ χεῖρ μου.	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	אָמַר אוֹיֵב אֶרְדֶּה אֲשִׁיג אֶחְלַק שְׁלַל תִּמְלֹאמוּ נַפְשִׁי אֶרְיֵק חַרְבִּי תּוֹרִישֵׁמוּ יָדַי:	ܘܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ ܕܬܠܝܬܐ	قال ال[ع] دوا[] ... وادرك	9a	11
				واق[س] م السبي ه و[ش] بع نفسى	9a-9b	12
				و[... هر سيفي وتا[ته] لك [.] هم	9b	13

² The final ث in [لث] here is likely a scribal error for ت, and should be read لثت ‘you have blunted, sullied’. This verb corresponds with the Peshitta ܕܘܬܝܬܐ ‘you have broken’ (Exodus 15:6).

ἀπέστειλας τὸ πνεῦμά σου, ἐκάλυψεν αὐτοὺς θάλασσα.	אֶפְסַדְתָּ לְהַלְוֵהוּ דְּלִיבָא אֶפְסַדְתָּ לְהַלְוֵהוּ	נְשַׁפְתָּ בְּרוּחְךָ כְּסִמּוֹ יָם	אֶפְסַדְתָּ לְהַלְוֵהוּ דְּלִיבָא אֶפְסַדְתָּ לְהַלְוֵהוּ	[يدي ه] لت ربحك فغطاهم ه	end 9b- 10a	14
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Septuagint	Syro-Hexapla	Masoretic Text	Peshitta	Psalter f2 verso	Verse	Line
ἔδυσαν ὡσεὶ μόλιβος ἐν ὕδατι σφοδρῶ.	ܠܒܚܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	צָלְלוּ בְּעוֹפְרַת בְּמִים אֲדִירִים:	ܠܒܚܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	البحر [.....] رصه] اص	end 10a- 10b	1
				في الما الضه] خم ه م] ن مثلك	end 10b- 11a	2
τίσθμοίός σοι, ἐν θεοῖς, κύριε; τίσθμοίός σοι δεδοξασμένος ἐν ἁγίοις, θαυμαστός ἐν δόξαις, ποιῶν τέρατα;	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	מִי־כַמְכָּה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה מִי כַמְכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ נִזְרָא תְּהִלַּת עֲשֵׂה פְּלֵא:	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	يارب الاهنا من] مثلك [....]	11a	3
				في القدس ه معجب [....]		4
				في السبح عامل الاع] مال ه	end 11b	5
ἐξέτεινας τὴν δεξιάν σου, κατέπιεν αὐτοὺς γῆ.	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	נְטִיַת יְמִינְךָ תְּבַלְעֵמוּ אָרְצִי:	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	م] دد] ت يمينك ف] ...ت] هم	12a	6
				[ال] ارض ه وهد] يت [ب] ...ح] يك	12b- 13a	7
ὠδήγησας τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου. τὸν λαόν σου τοῦτον, ὃν ἐλυτρώσω, παρεκάλεσας τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου εἰς κατάλυμα ἁγίον σου	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	נְחִיַת בְּחֶסֶדְךָ עִם־וְי נְאֻלַּת נְהִלַּת בְּעוֹד אֶל־נְוָה קֹדֶשְׁךָ:	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	[..ال] ...ك ه [هد] يت	13a- 13b	8
				[.....] قدسك ه سمعت	13b- 14a	9
ἤκουσαν ἔθνη καιῶργίσθησαν. ὠδῖνες ἔλαβον κατοικοῦντας Φυλιστιμ.	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	שְׁמַעוּ עַמִּים יִרְגְּזוּן חִיל אֲחִיז יִשְׁבִי פְּלִשְׁתִּי:	ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ ܟܘܢܗ	[ال] ا] مم [.....] اخذ القلق	14a- 14b	10
				سك] ان فلسطين] ن ه ح] ند [..سرعوا	14b- 15a	11

<p>τότε ἔσπευσαν ἡγεμόνες Εδωμ, καὶ ἄρχοντες Μωαβιτῶν, ἔλαβεν αὐτοὺς τρόμος, ἐτάκησαν πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες Χανααν. ἐπιπέσοιέπ' αὐτοὺς φόβος καὶ τρόμος, μεγέθει βραχίονός σου,</p>	<p>ⲁⲩⲟⲩⲓⲃⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲃ ⲉⲛⲁⲩⲁⲣⲟⲩⲧⲉⲥ ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲃⲓⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲟⲩⲓⲃⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ</p>	<p>אָז נִבְהַלּוּ אֱלֹהֵי אֲדוֹם אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֶאֱחָזְמוּ רַעַד נִמְגּוּ כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן: תִּפְּלֹ עֲלֵיהֶם אֵימָתָהּ וּפְחַד בְּגִדְלָהּ יִרְעֶה יִדְמוּ כְּאַבְן</p>	<p>ⲁⲩⲟⲩⲓⲃⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲃ ⲉⲛⲁⲩⲁⲣⲟⲩⲧⲉⲥ ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲃⲓⲧⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲟⲩⲓⲃⲉⲛ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ ⲁⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩ</p>	<p>روسا ادوم واراكنه ماب اخذتهم الدع[..] ه وذا بوا جميع [سكان] كنعان ه يقع عليهم [...]</p>	<p>15a 15a- 15b 15b- 16a</p>	<p>12 13 14</p>
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Abstract: This article presents an Arabic translation of Exodus 15 from the Cairo Genizah, preserved in two fragments of a Christian Psalter (MSS CUL T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210). The style of the Psalter's Arabic script suggests that it was copied by a well-trained scribe in the late 9th or early 10th century. Such a date makes it the oldest Christian Arabic Bible translation yet found in the Genizah. Linguistic analysis further indicates that its translator had access to both the Peshitta and the Septuagint of Exodus 15 during their work. Most likely, this translator was a ninth-century Palestinian Melkite who spoke Syriac and Arabic.

Keywords: Exodus 15; Genizah; Christian Arabic Bible translation; Melkites; MSS CUL T-S NS 305.198; T-S NS 305.210.

Resumen: En este artículo se presenta una traducción árabe de Éxodo 15 de la Genizah de El Cairo, conservada en dos fragmentos de un salterio cristiano (MSS CUL T-S NS 305.198 and T-S NS 305.210). El estilo de la escritura del salterio árabe sugiere que fue copiado por un escriba bien entrenado en el siglo IX o principios del X. Esta fecha se convierte en la traducción árabe cristiana de la Biblia más antigua que se ha encontrado hasta ahora en la Genizah. El análisis lingüístico indica que el traductor tuvo acceso a Éxodo 15 tanto de la Peshitta como de la Septuaginta durante su trabajo. Lo más probable es que este traductor fuera un melquita palestino del siglo IX que hablaba siríaco y árabe.

Palabras clave: Éxodo 15; Genizah; Traducción árabe cristiana de la Biblia; Melquitas; MSS CUL T-S NS 305.198; T-S NS 305.210.