

Synopses and Lists

Textual Practices in the Pre-Modern World

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Cover image: A fragment of a numbered and tabulated list of 22 biblical and rabbinic passages relating to the Sabbath, each referenced by means of a short lemma (T-S D1.76 from the Cambridge Genizah Collection). Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

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A SYRIAC LIST OF THE NAMES OF THE WIVES OF THE PATRIARCHS IN BL ADD 14620

Matthew P. Monger

The final extant folio of London, British Library, Add MS 14620¹ contains a section labelled ܡܬܠܐ ܕܡܬܠܐ ܕܡܬܠܐ ‘The names of the wives of the fathers’. Here, we find a list of the names of many of the pre-Abrahamic wives and mothers who are mentioned but unnamed in the book of Genesis. This text bears a close resemblance to other lists and texts containing the names of the wives of the patriarchs found in several different linguistic and manuscript contexts, most notably the well-known Syriac text found in London, British Library, Add MS 12154, fol. 180.² The names of the

¹ See Wright, *Catalogue*, 800–3. See also Minov, ‘A Syriac tabula gentium’, where this text is discussed. Minov’s article was not available until this present chapter was in the final stages of publication. Accordingly, it was not consulted during the primary research for this contribution.

² This manuscript was first published in Ceriani, *Monumenta Sacra et Profana*, ix–x. The list has subsequently been published in a number of studies on Jubilees; see Charles, *Ethiopic Version*, 183; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 1:8–9. London, British Library, Add MS 12154 is written in the Estrangelo script, while BL Add 14620 is written in the Serto script.

wives of the patriarchs provide a fascinating example of the transmission of lists and extracted material in antiquity and the Middle Ages because of the wide distribution of sources. Lists found in Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Armenian sources share names ultimately derived from Jubilees, a Jewish work from the Second Temple period.

The text of BL Add 14620 is a fascinating case in this connection, as it is not merely a copy of a list of the names of the women as known from Jubilees, but a synthesis of names from Jubilees and at least one other source—a tradition related to the Syriac Cave of Treasures. This conflation of different textual traditions in list form raises several practical and theoretical questions that I would like to investigate in this chapter. Thus, following an edition and translation of the text, I will explore the place of this particular text within the larger tradition and circulation of the names of the wives of the pre-Abrahamic patriarchs. Then, I will move on to a more theoretical discussion of two subjects that arise from this particular list: the transmission of lists as individual units, not only as representations of the works from which they were initially extracted; and the way in which the scribal practice of list-copying may be interrupted by the insertion of new knowledge. In order to situate the text of BL Add 14620 within the larger transmission history of the names of the wives of the patriarchs, I will begin with a brief overview of the

References to Syriac words in BL Add 12154 will be given here in Estrangelo to maintain the visual and material difference between the two manuscripts.

Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures traditions related to the names.

1.0. The Names of the Wives of the Patriarchs

The book of Genesis leaves much to the imagination when it comes to the identities of the wives of the patriarchs. Few women are named in Genesis and the pre-Abrahamic genealogies provide only the patriarchal line, following a standard formula concerning their lives and offspring, which can be exemplified by the information on Seth, the son of Adam and Eve:

When Seth had lived one hundred five years, he became the father of Enosh. Seth lived after the birth of Enosh eight hundred seven years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred twelve years; and he died.³

The lack of names for the wives and mothers is systematic in the generations between Adam and Eve and Abraham and Sarah. However, scattered throughout narrative, exegetical, historiographical, and chronological sources in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, we find different names given to the unnamed women of the biblical stories. In some cases, one or two women are given names, as is the case in sources such as 1 Enoch,⁴ the Genesis Apocryphon,⁵ the Testament of Levi,⁶ and the Babylonian

³ Gen. 5.6–8, translation following the New Revised Standard Version.

⁴ Edna is the name of Enoch's wife in 1 En. 85.3.

⁵ Batenosh is the name given to Lamech's wife in 1QapGen II, 3.

⁶ Melka, the wife of Levi, is mentioned in T. Levi 11.1.

Talmud.⁷ Other, more comprehensive narratives were also composed that filled in more of the gaps found in the text of Genesis. Two works, Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures, contain names for many unnamed women mentioned or alluded to in Genesis. For example, the section of Jubilees corresponding to the verses about Seth from Genesis cited above looks like this: “And in the fifth week of the fifth jubilee, Seth took ’Azura, his sister, as a wife. And in the fourth year of that week, she bore for him Enos.”⁸

The names given to the women are not the same in all these sources, nor do they have a common origin. For example, different names are given to the wife of Noah in a large number of sources, prompting a 1941 article entitled ‘The One Hundred and Three Names of Noah’s Wife’.⁹ The names as found in Jubilees and in part in the Cave of Treasures are the most widely transmitted of the ancient names, being found in various later works, especially of historiographical or exegetical nature, in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim contexts.¹⁰

1.1. Jubilees

The most widespread tradition of the names of the wives of the patriarchs is connected to Jubilees, which was composed during

⁷ b. Bava Batra 91a records the names of the mother of Abraham, Samson’s mother and sister, and the mothers of David and Haman.

⁸ Jub. 4.11; translation from Wintermute, ‘Jubilees’, 35.

⁹ Utey, ‘Noah’s Wife’.

¹⁰ Tal Ilan, ‘Biblical Women’s Names’, has given the most comprehensive analysis and presentation of the sources and traditions. The Jubilees tradition is also analysed in depth in Lipscomb, ‘Tradition’.

the second century BCE. Jubilees is witnessed in Hebrew in several fragmentary manuscripts from Qumran dating to the first centuries BCE and CE, but the text that we today know as Jubilees is based on the Ethiopic text of Jubilees extant in Ge'ez from the fourteenth century CE.¹¹ The work retells the events of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus but differs significantly from the Hebrew Bible and adds a number of details, including the names of many of the women who are unnamed in Genesis. Throughout the sections that correspond to the Genesis genealogies, Jubilees gives names to each of the wives of the pre-Abrahamic patriarchs and the wives of the 12 sons of Jacob and the daughter of Pharaoh.

Jubilees is extant as a complete work only in Ethiopic, but a Greek translation must have existed at one point, and large portions of the book are extant in Latin.¹² Numerous citations and allusions are found in a variety of works written in Greek, as well as in Syriac and Arabic. The nature of the Jubilees material in works of a historiographical nature indicates that material from Jubilees was extracted and circulated much more widely than the

¹¹ As only a small portion of the Hebrew text of Jubilees is preserved, it is impossible to determine the exact shape and extent of the work or its text in Hebrew. As the Ethiopic text is a translation of a translation (Greek), it is prudent to allow for a certain amount of redaction and/or literary growth from the Hebrew version to the Ethiopic; Monger, '4Q216'. A more traditional discussion of the manuscript traditions of Jubilees can be found in VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 1:1–16.

¹² Hanneken, 'Book of Jubilees'.

and world histories may be organised as lists or list-like texts,¹⁹ the purpose of collecting the names in a list outside of any narrative of history or chronology must be to highlight this knowledge, whereas names included in the historiographical texts only supplement the larger goal of describing the lines of history. Thus, of more interest here are the manuscripts that contain lists or list-like texts where the names appear. Among these are two Hebrew manuscripts that contain the names as independent units;²⁰ a Greek catena manuscript from the tenth or eleventh century, containing text and commentary to Genesis and Exodus, that contains the names of the wives of the patriarchs in the margins;²¹ a number of Armenian manuscripts with the names in list form;²² and the two Syriac manuscripts already mentioned.

1.2. Cave of Treasures

In contrast to Jubilees, Cave of Treasures was composed in Syriac and is extant in full in Syriac. Translations and adaptations of Cave of Treasures are also found in Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic, and Georgian.²³ Like Jubilees, Cave of Treasures retells the book of Genesis but then continues up until the time of Jesus and is thus

¹⁹ See the discussion of historiographical texts as lists in Teresa Bernheimer's contribution to this volume.

²⁰ The Fahri Bible, Sassoon collection MS 368; see Harkavy, 'חדשים גם', 58. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 391 (olim 421), fol. 91v; see Perles, *Beiträge*, 90.

²¹ Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, AN III 13.

²² Lipscomb, 'Tradition', 149–63.

²³ See the overview in Toepel, 'Cave of Treasures', 532–34.

clearly a Christian work. Cave of Treasures has two different methods for recording the names of the pre-Abrahamic women. In a few instances, women are given names in the narrative, such as the sisters/wives of Cain, Abel, and Seth and the wives of Noah and Terah,²⁴ whereas all of the others—in addition to the aforementioned—are presented in a list that is included as a single section that serves to clarify the lineage of Mary, mother of Jesus, because “neither the Greek nor the Hebrew or Syriac writers, however, could show from where each one of them took his wife and whose daughter she was.”²⁵ In other words, the genealogy of Christ—from a matrilineal perspective—is the motivation for the complete list in Cave of Treasures.

The list is not witnessed in any other earlier texts, and there are disagreements between the list found in the genealogy of Mary and the names given in the narrative, which may indicate that the list and the narratives were composed separately before their inclusion in Cave of Treasures. For example, the list in Cav. Tr. 44 differs from the narrative when it comes to the names of the wives of Terah.²⁶ There is also wide variation in the manuscripts as to the names of the wives of Terah in Syriac as well as in the ancient versions.²⁷ The text of BL Add 14620 further complicates the picture and will be discussed in detail below.

²⁴ Cav. Tr. 5.21–32; 14.3; 28.16–17.

²⁵ Cav. Tr. 44.

²⁶ The genealogical list is found in chapter 44, with the wives of Terah being mentioned in Cav. Tr. 44.32. In the narrative, the wives of Terah are named in Cav. Tr. 28.17–18.

²⁷ Ri, *La caverne des trésors*, 222–23, 334–61.

It is difficult to determine to what extent some or all of the names are part of older traditions than the works in which they are first witnessed. In some cases, such as those mentioned above found in 1 Enoch, the Testament of Levi, and the Genesis Apocryphon, the names are at least as old as the oldest attestations of Jubilees, which shares the same names for the same matriarchs. Thus, it seems possible—or even likely—that these particular names were known and in circulation prior to the composition of Jubilees. It also seems possible that at least the genealogical list in Cav. Tr. 44 could have been extant prior to its inclusion in Cave of Treasures. Further, the names in the narrative sections of Cave of Treasures could also be part of an older tradition. The fact that there are different traditions of the names of the matriarchs extant seems to suggest that there was no single early tradition that was transmitted. Names of figures from the Hebrew Bible are generally very stable in their transmission into Syriac and Arabic contexts, suggesting that the names of the matriarchs were not in wide circulation in the early centuries of the Common Era. Parts of Jubilees were clearly known in several Syriac contexts,²⁸ but the names of the matriarchs in Syriac texts are more often related to Cave of Treasures than Jubilees. Clearly, some later authors did know of both traditions, as BL Add 14620 suggests, but the earliest circulation of the names of the matriarchs is not reliant on widespread knowledge of the text of Jubilees.

²⁸ Tisserant, 'Fragments syriaques'; Brock, 'Abraham and the Ravens'.

In any case, Jubilees and Cave of Treasures retain different names for the individual matriarchs, and names from both traditions have been transmitted into a variety of literary contexts, such as historiographical works and lists in different types of manuscripts. Given the fact that the names appear in such a variety of textual and manuscript contexts, the question arises as to whether the information was transmitted through the works where the names appear or by other means. In order to further evaluate this question, I will give a more detailed analysis of the manuscript and the manuscript context of the current list before moving on to a presentation of the text itself.

2.0. BL Add 14620: Manuscript and Manuscript Context

BL Add 14620 consists of the remains of a once larger Syriac codex, now reduced to 30 folios representing parts of five quires, though the codex originally seems to have contained at least 14 quires.²⁹ The codex is a regular-sized vellum codex, approximately 25 × 18 cm in dimensions, which William Wright dates paleographically to the ninth century.³⁰ The contents of the codex

²⁹ The manuscript quires are numbered in standard Syriac style, with each quire being marked on the recto of the first folio and the verso of the final folio. The fact that only four quire markers remain in the manuscript—ܠ '11', ܡ '12', ܢ '13', and ܐ '14'—indicates that the original codex had at least 14 quires. See Wright, *Catalogue*, 800.

³⁰ Wright, *Catalogue*, 800.

are miscellaneous in nature, including philosophical texts, extracts from the sixth book of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* and Epiphanius's *On Weights and Measures*, as well as a number of other texts related to theological, philological, and historical topics. This type of anthology is common in the Syriac manuscript tradition, which contains a large number of collections of excerpted material. Many of the excerpts found in these manuscripts are portions of works known from other contexts, such as theological treatises by Greek or Syriac church fathers, historiographical works, and interpretations of biblical passages or topics.

The section containing the list of the names of the wives of the patriarchs is found at the end of the final extant page, fol. 30v. The text immediately follows a treatise on the peoples, languages, and scripts associated with the table of nations found in Gen. 10.³¹ The text, attributed to David of Bet-Rabban, is entitled ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܬܬܐܠܡ: ܩܕܝܫܐ, 'Concerning the generations of the sons of Noah'. It is a re-evaluation of which nations belong to which descendant of Noah. This type of interpretation of the table of nations from Gen. 10 is relatively common, being found in the targumim, Josephus, Eusebius, and many other places.³² In fact, the text of BL Add 14620 claims that "many have attempted to

³¹ The text is fully edited and discussed in Minov, 'A Syriac Tabula Gentium'.

³² The most comprehensive study of the text and its reception can be found in Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel*.

give an interpretation of the generations of the sons of Noah, including Eusebius of Caesarea.”³³

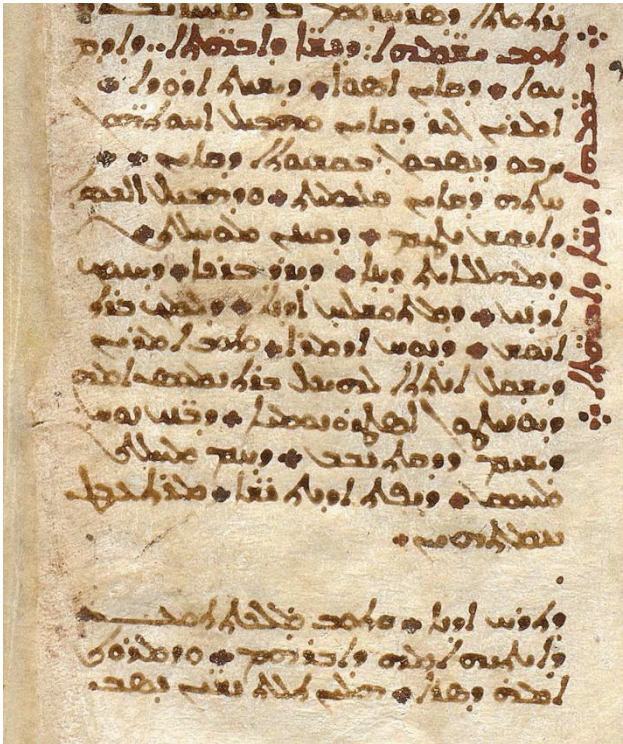
William Wright understands the list of the matriarchs as being part of the text concerning the generations of the sons of Noah, though this is uncertain. Nearly the entire manuscript is written in continuous text, with little space allotted between texts. Each new textual unit is introduced with the word ܐܠ *tob*, a common marker of a new text in Syriac. As it appears in the manuscript now, the title of the final section is rubricated, and the text begins with ܐܠ. Thus, it is graphically and lexically marked as a new section in the same way as the other units of the manuscript. Regardless of how we view the connection of the names of the wives of the patriarchs to the preceding text, the subject of the text fits neatly with the explication of Gen. 10, as the line of Terah is discussed in Gen. 11. Furthermore, the subject as a whole seems to fit within the broader interests of the compiler of the texts in BL Add 14620, which have an exegetical and historiographical tendency.

A final issue that should be dealt with is whether the remaining text is all that was originally copied into this manuscript. The list of the names of the wives of the patriarchs is the final text of the manuscript in its current state, but the quire structure of the original manuscript points towards fol. 30 not being the final folio of the manuscript. It appears that there were at least 14 quires containing 10 leaves each, as quire numbers are found throughout the manuscript, and the quire numbers mark both the

³³ BL Add 14620, fol. 29 I 22–25.

beginning *and* the end of the quires. Thus, it is possible that our text continued onto a now lost folio. In support of the text having once continued is the fact that our current version of the list of the names of matriarchs does not include all of the names known from Jubilees or the other sources to the Jubilees tradition. On the other hand, several sources do not include all of the names of the matriarchs, and it is possible that the current text was intended simply to fill the space available. Further, there is a blank line between the names of the wives of the sons of Noah and the short section on the wives of Terah (see fig. 1). This could be an indication that this text was purposefully placed at the end of this page in order to fill the remaining space. The jump directly from the wives of the sons of Noah to the wives of Terah also points towards this text being purposefully more compact than other sources.

Figure 1: A close-up of the text as found in London, British Library, Add MS 14620, fol. 30v; © The British Library Board



3.0. Text and Translation

London, British Library, Add MS 14620, fol. 30v b

- 26

Again, the names of the wives of the fathers. Of Adam,
- 27

Eve. Of Cain, 'Sw'. Of Seth, 'Rwz'.
- 28

However, they say that Cain and Abel

a similar form: *ʿArzwn* is found in the Arabic script³⁶ and *ܐܪܙܘܢ* *ʿArzwn* in the Garshuni.³⁷ The variance is likely due to a pointing error or misreading of a Syriac text as the letters *zayn* and *rīš* in the Serto script of BL Add 14620 are identical in form except for the dot over the *rīš*.

Lines 28–30: Following the names of the wives of Cain and Seth, the text continues with the phrase *ܐܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܬܝܢ* ‘Indeed they say’, followed by several lines of text that are not part of the Jubilees names tradition, but are related to the sisters and wives of Cain and Abel in the Cave of Treasures tradition. This is the first of several places where BL Add 14620 deviates from the Jubilees list tradition known from BL Add 12154 and the other lists. The phrase ‘Indeed they say’ serves as an introductory formula for information that comes from a different source to the base text, marking a transition from one source to another. The same phrase is used in precisely the same way—also introducing the information related to Cave of Treasures—in lines 34–36. This formulaic introduction may be a simple acknowledgement of the fact that this information supplements or contradicts the information in the text, or it may also indicate that the scribe here is referring to an oral source. A similar situation occurs in BL Add 12154, in the final line of the text where the name of the daughter of Pharaoh who rescued Moses is named. According to Jubilees, Josephus, and a number of ancient sources, her name was

³⁶ See inter alia Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 17, fol. 59v II 13.

³⁷ See inter alia Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. arab. 235–26v 5.

Tharmuth(i), a name which BL Add 12154 records as ܬܪܡܘܬܝܬܐ. Following the name Tharmuthi, BL Add 12154 adds the words: ܬܪܡܘܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܢ ܐܕܡ ܕܥܝܢ ܐܕܡ ‘According to others, R’ws’. The name R’ws’ is known from a number of Syriac sources, such as Ishodad of Merv and Bar Bahlul. While the phrasing is different in the two Syriac manuscripts, the clear demarcation of information as coming from a different source shows the scribal desire to distinguish between sources of information.

The names given to the sister-wives of Cain and Abel in BL Add 14620, ܩܠܡܝܬ ܩܠܡܝܬ *Qlmyt* and ܠܒܘܕܐ ܠܒܘܕܐ *’Lbwd’*, are found in Cave of Treasures, though the form of the name here, *’Lbwd’*, is different to in Cave of Treasures. This form is found in one other text, the tenth-century *Syriac Lexicon* of Bar Bahlul,³⁸ who also gives an alternate form for the wife of Enosh.

The names of the daughters of Eve and Adam from Cave of Treasures are the most widely received of the names of the wives of the patriarchs in the Middle Ages. They appear in the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, which was one of the widest read and copied Syriac texts and was later used as a source for the *Historia Scholastica*, which in turn had great influence on the European vernacular Bibles that developed in the twelfth century. The question of who Cain, Abel, and Seth marry is well known in antiquity and is commented on in the Babylonian Talmud and Midrash Rabbah, as well as Jubilees, Cave of Treasures, and other retellings of Genesis.³⁹ In this current text, we are presented with

³⁸ Duval, *Lexicon syriacum*, 604.

³⁹ *b. Yebam.* 62a; *Midr. Gen. Rab.* 22.7; *Jub.* 4.1–11; *Cav. Tr.* 5.18–32.

the name of Cain's wife in the Jubilees tradition but are also given part of the story about who Cain and Abel were to marry according to Cave of Treasures. In Cave of Treasures, the background for the purported first murder is rooted in a conflict over who gets to marry Cain's twin sister. Cain approaches Adam to ask permission to marry his own twin because he claims she is the more beautiful of the two. Adam rejects this as an abomination and sends Cain and Abel to the cave of treasures to make an offering to atone for their sin. It is assumed that it is this offering that we read about in Gen. 4, where God favours Abel's offering, and Cain subsequently kills Abel.⁴⁰ The text of BL Add 14620 reflects this tradition not only in the names of the twins but also in that it says: "They wanted to marry their sisters—it was the stubbornness of Cain."

The entire section following the words 'Indeed they say' is absent in all the other lists from the Jubilees tradition, but BL Add 14620 is not the only source that records both of these traditions, as we find both sets of names in two Arabic works. Al-Ṭabarī mentions both traditions in his *Tarikh al-rasul wa-l-muluk*, and the names were also known to the tenth-century Christian author Saʿīd ibn Baṭṭīq—also known as Bishop Eutychius of Alexandria—who mentions both in his *Annales*.⁴¹

Line 31: The name of Enosh's wife here is different to in other sources in the Jubilees tradition: ܢܬܝܡ *Nṭym*. In Jubilees and all the other lists, we find the name *No'am*. However, the name

⁴⁰ This episode is found in Cav. Tr. 5.21–24.

⁴¹ Eutychius, *Annales*, 110. Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, 146, 167; translation in Rosenthal, *The History of Ṭabarī*, 316–17, 336–37.

Ntym is found in the tenth-century *Syriac Lexicon* of Bar Bahlul, where she is identified as being the wife of Enosh.⁴² We have already seen that Bar Bahlul records the name of the sister of Abel as *'Lbwd'*, meaning that there are two direct connections between BL Add 14620 and Bar Bahlul. Further, Bar Bahlul also includes the name of the daughter of Pharaoh that is recorded in BL Add 12154, as mentioned above. The presence of the name confirms the spelling here, but as the Jubilees form is not mentioned, and there are no other known sources that record *Ntym*, it is difficult to trace the transmission into BL Add 14620.

Line 32: The manuscript gives the name of this patriarch as ܡܠܠܝܬ *Mhll'yt* where we would expect ܡܠܠܝܬ *Mhll'yl*.

Lines 33–34: The form of the name of the wife of Lamech, ܒܪܬ ܢܘܫ *Brt 'Nwš*, corresponds more closely to the form known from the other sources in the Jubilees tradition than to the Syriac BL Add 12154, which gives her name as *Enoshi*. The form is best understood as a Syriac form of the Hebrew name *Bat Enosh* witnessed in the Genesis Apocryphon. Here, the Hebrew word *bat* 'daughter' is translated to Syriac *bart* 'daughter'.

Line 34: The name of Noah's wife here is ܙܡܪܐ *'Zmr'*. BL Add 12154 has ܡܙܪܐ *'Mzr'*, the common form in the Jubilees tradition. It is likely that the form in BL Add 14620 is the result of a scribal error where the *mīm* and the *zayn* were transposed.

Lines 34–36: After the name ܙܡܪܐ *'Zmr'*, another section of material not related to Jubilees is introduced. Again, we find the

⁴² Duval, *Lexicon syriacum*, 1241.

introductory phrase ܐܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܥܝܢ 'Indeed they say', and the information in the following lines is related to Cave of Treasures, as in line 28 above. The name for Noah's wife given in the section is *Hykl*, daughter of Namos. The name *Hykl* itself suggests a connection to the Cave of Treasures tradition, but more striking in this context is her association with Yonton the Astronomer. Yonton as a figure is first attested in Cave of Treasures, where he is the fourth son of Noah. After the flood, he moves to the east, where he is associated with astronomy and magic. Yonton passes his knowledge down to Nimrod, who is the purported founder of the Persian and Babylonian cultures. Nimrod's connection to Yonton later plays an important role in Cave of Treasures in the story of Jesus's birth. In Matt. 2.1–12, we read about the 'magi from the east' who interpret the rising of a star as a sign of the birth of a king. In Cave of Treasures 45.1–11, the magi are specifically connected to the knowledge of Nimrod and thus to Yonton. Cave of Treasures goes to great lengths to make clear that the astronomy practised by Nimrod and the magi was connected to the divine revelation that had been passed down to Yonton from Noah, his father.⁴³

Line 38–39: The text here is difficult to make sense of. The word ܡܪܬܬܝܢ *mrt'bt* is unclear, but given the focus of the text here on names, I read it as a name. The second word is also ambiguous. It could read 'their mother-in-law' or perhaps 'their heat/

⁴³ For a discussion of the figure of Yonton, see Gero, 'Fourth Son of Noah'; Toepel, 'Yonton Revisited'.

passion/anger'. Again, given the nature of the text I have translated here with a family term, 'their mother-in-law'.⁴⁴

Line 40: After the names of the wives of the sons of Noah, there is a blank line with only a dot at the right edge of the column. This is very uncommon in this manuscript, but there are at least two possible explanations for its function here. It may be that the dot was placed in order to fill the space in the column so that the final lines of the text would fill to the bottom of the page. Another explanation is that the scribe was aware that he was skipping a number of generations between Japhet and Terah and thus marked the large section he skipped with this single dot and a blank line. In either case, the dot appears precisely where the text skips from the sons of Noah to Terah.

Lines 41–43: The final three lines of the text are devoted to Terah and his wives. The first name, *'Dn'*, is the common name for Terah's wife in the Jubilees tradition and matches what is found in BL Add 12154. Following this, two further names are given. Neither name corresponds to any ancient source I am aware of. In Jubilees and the other lists, there are no further names given for the wives of Terah. Cave of Treasures and a number of other ancient sources do speculate that Terah had to have had at least two wives based on a reading of Gen. 20.12, where Abraham explains that Sarah is his sister, the daughter of his father but not his mother. What is noteworthy here is the fact that after giving the names of the three wives of Terah—*'Dn'*, *Mrwt* the mother of Abraham, and *Zmrwt* the mother of Sarah—the text

⁴⁴ Cf. Minov, 'A Syriac Tabula Gentium', 71, who reads the text here as phrase meaning 'Lord, increase their fury'.

makes clear that Terah “took these three women (as wives).” Thus, the text does not envision two wives for Terah but three. While we are not able to identify what the source of the information here is, it is worth noting that the traditions surrounding the names of Terah’s wives are among the most fluid in Cave of Treasures. The names of the two wives of Terah are found twice in Cave of Treasures, both in the narrative about Abraham in Cav. Tr. 29, and in the genealogy of Mary in Cav. Tr. 44. The name of the first wife is fairly consistent in both passages, ܝܘܢܐ *Ywn’* in the East Syriac tradition and ܝܘܢܐ *Yw^o* in the West Syriac tradition. The name of the second wife is more unstable. Her name appears as different variations of ܢܗܪܝܬ *Nhryt* in Cav. Tr. 29, but as ܫܡܡܬ *Smwt* in the East Syriac tradition and ܡܫܡܬ *Msmt* in the West Syriac tradition.⁴⁵

Despite the fact that we cannot identify the source behind the names of the two additional wives of Terah, it is still clear that the text conflates information from at least two sources, the base text of names from Jubilees and the secondary tradition giving different names to the mothers of Abraham and Sarah.

⁴⁵ For the Syriac texts, see Ri, *La caverne des trésors*, 222–23, 334–61.

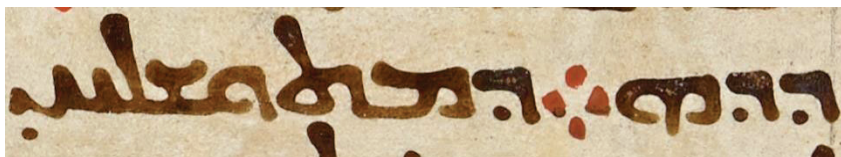
5.0. Format and Style

The format of Syriac lists varies between two common typologies. Some lists are formatted stichographically, each entry appearing on a separate line, but the majority are written in running text without demarcation from the surrounding text. In such cases, entries are generally distinguished by diamond-shaped four-point rosettes (✧), which are often also marked in red ink. The list in BL Add 14620 belongs to the latter group, with running text with rosettes placed between each new item in the list, as can be seen in figure 2. This stylistic feature is also found in BL Add 12154, as seen in figure 3.

Figure 2: Rosettes in London, British Library, Add MS 14620, fol. 30v;
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Figure 3: Rosettes in London, British Library, Add MS 12154, fol. 180r;
© The British Library Board



Syriac traditions. Further, the names in the various translations and adaptations of Cave of Treasures do not always correspond to any Syriac form. The table gives the names from the Western Syriac tradition.

There are, however, a number of features about the format and style of the text in BL Add 14620 that differ from BL Add 12154. In BL Add 14620, each set of names is introduced simply by the prefixed particle , ‘of’, repeating the formula *of X, Y* for each set of names. BL Add 12154 includes the word ܡܠܝܚܐ ‘the wife’, repeating the following formula throughout: *the wife of X, Y*. In this way, BL Add 14620 is closer to the Armenian lists, which also tend to omit the word for ‘wife’ throughout,⁵⁰ while BL Add 12154 is similar to the two Hebrew lists Sassoon collection MS 368 and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 391, which both include the word ‘wife’ (or an abbreviation of it) for each entry, as well as the marginal notes in Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, AN III 13.

Another difference between the two Syriac texts is that BL Add 14620 does not include the relationship between each matriarch and her husband. The text of BL Add 12154 supplies these relationships following each set of names and is clearly based on the same details found in Jubilees. Basel AN III 13 also includes the same genealogical information as BL Add 12154. No other list or list-like source includes all this information from Jubilees.

Further, the scope of BL Add 14620 also differs from that of BL Add 12154. In our current text, the names of the wives of the patriarchs from Arpachshad to Nahor are not mentioned. This is similar to the texts of the Hebrew manuscripts Sassoon 368 and BSB Cod. hebr. 391, which both omit all or the majority of these names. Other traditions, however, such as the BL Add 12154, the

⁵⁰ See Lipscomb, ‘Tradition’, 149–51; Stone, *Adam and Eve*, 165.

Armenian, and the Greek, all include the generations from the flood to Terah.

A final point that is relevant here is the fact that, while the conflation of names from the Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures traditions is only found in list form in BL Add 14620, several Arabic texts that are not lists do also show knowledge of both traditions. In a historiographical text, Saʿīd ibn Baṭṭīq includes the names of the wives of Cain, Seth, Shem, Ham, and Japhet from Jubilees and the names of the wives of Cain and Noah from Cave of Treasures. The widely attested Arabic Genesis catena similarly gives the names of the wives of Cain, Seth, and Noah from Jubilees and the wives of Cain, Noah, and Terah from Cave of Treasures. Common for all of these sources is that, in addition to a few names from Jubilees, the texts give names only to the women who are given names in the narrative portion of Cave of Treasures, not in the genealogy of Cav. Tr. 44. The text that comes closest in scope to BL Add 14620 is the *Tarikh* of al-Ṭabarī, where we find an almost identical situation. Al-Ṭabarī weaves different traditions together throughout his work, including the names of the wives of the patriarchs from Adam to the sons of Noah and the wife of Terah from Jubilees, in addition to the wives of Cain, Seth, and Terah from Cave of Treasures. There is a clear difference in genre between the list in BL Add 14620 and the historiographical and exegetical Arabic texts, but the conflation of material from the Jubilees tradition and the Cave of Treasures tradition is more at home in the Arabic context than in the other lists.

6.0. Discussion

As we have seen in the preceding, BL Add 14620 can be situated textually both within the transmission history of *lists* of the names of the wives of the patriarchs and within the wider transmission of material from Jubilees and Cave of Treasures. The other lists are more or less uniform in their inclusion of names from the Jubilees tradition, while BL Add 14620 conflates Jubilees and Cave of Treasures throughout. Further, the fact that there are a number of differences in layout, syntax, and content makes it difficult to place BL Add 14620 in comparison to the other lists. A question that arises in this connection is how this tradition was transmitted so widely. W. Lowndes Lipscomb, in his article on the Armenian version of the list of the names of the wives of the patriarchs, suggests that the Hebrew manuscripts are all related and that they derive directly from Hebrew Jubilees, whereas all of the other versions are descended from a Greek *Vorlage* that is based on knowledge, not from Jubilees itself, but from one of the Greek chronographers, tentatively identified as the Greek chronicler Annianus.⁵¹ It seems to be the common view that material transmitted from Jubilees to later Greek, Syriac, Armenian, and Arabic contexts passed through the Greek chronographers. The problem with this view as I see it is that the majority of Greek texts prior to the ninth century include only the names of the wives of Cain and Seth. Only a single extant Greek chronicle includes the names of all or nearly all of the wives of the patriarchs,

⁵¹ Lipscomb, 'Tradition', 153–55. Cf. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, 229–34; Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus*.

the *Eklogē historion* found in Paris, Bibliothèque national de France, Grec 854. The names in *Eklogē historion* are very close to what is found in the margins of the Greek catena Basel AN III 13. So close, in fact, that J. T. Milik claims: “Je ne doute guère que le glossateur utilisait un exemplaire de l’*Ἐκλογὴ Ἱστοριῶν*.”⁵² I am not convinced that the glossator actually used a copy of the *Eklogē historion*, but it seems likely that both texts share a common Greek source, quite possibly in list form.

Also relevant to this discussion are the names that are used by al-Ṭabarī. Al-Ṭabarī has much of his Cave of Treasures material from earlier sources and does not seem to use Jubilees traditions except for the names of the wives of the patriarchs. Material from Cave of Treasures is found in many Arabic historiographical and religious texts, so the presence of this material is unsurprising. The inclusion by al-Ṭabarī of names taken from the Jubilees tradition that correspond so closely to the scope of BL Add 14620, and the clear juxtaposition of names from different traditions, put BL Add 14620 closer to al-Ṭabarī than any of the other sources.

All of this suggests that the names may have been transmitted *separately* from the rest of the Jubilees material in the chronicles and universal histories. Based on the available evidence, I believe it is much more likely that the context where we find many or all of the names of the wives of the pre-Abrahamic patriarchs are related to a list tradition that transmitted the names separate from other Jubilees material. It is simply not plausible that all of the lists of the names of the wives of the patriarchs

⁵² Milik, ‘Recherches’.

represent individual instances of extraction. Once a list was developed, the list could itself be transmitted entirely independently of the work from which it was extracted. So, when we deal with lists such as the one in BL Add 14620, we must keep a clear theoretical focus on which situation we are discussing.

If this is the case, then it adds to our understanding of the way in which knowledge was transmitted in list form and also gives us a clearer understanding of the way in which knowledge may be extracted from a given work and circulated independently from the work itself. The latter is an important theoretical point in the study of ancient texts and their reception: the reception of themes, ideas, or even specific texts from a given work does not imply the reception of the work itself. As extraction and list-making were common practices in scribal contexts, the transmission of knowledge in list form into novel contexts is evidence of the transmission of knowledge rather than the transmission of a specific literary work.

In conclusion, I want to dwell for a moment on what this case says about the production and transmission of lists and extracts. My claim here is that BL Add 14620 relies on a base text that is a list of the names of the wives of the patriarchs from the Jubilees tradition, that this list was either very similar to the current text or was more comprehensive but was condensed by the scribe, and that the base text was augmented with information from other sources known to the scribe. By viewing the base text as a work in its own right—free from Jubilees—we can more easily understand the simple scribal interventions made by the scribe of BL Add 14620. The addition of knowledge from Cave of

Treasures shows that the scribe sought to articulate both faithfulness to the received text but also to include important information that supplemented or contradicted the base text. The list form facilitates this addition of information in a way that may not be natural in other formats. Items in a list may easily be moved, reordered, and emended by a scribe in the process of copying, making conflations as seen in this list very simple. This particular expression of the list is thus situated within the Syriac–Arabic context of the ninth century and is evidence of one particular expression of a literary tradition that appears throughout the manuscript cultures of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in late antiquity and the Middle Ages.