

Material context of text-bearing objects

...

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May 13, 2024

What do we mean by “material context”?

- context of **production** of the artifact
 - material and materiality
 - dimensions
 - technique of execution
 - origin etc.
- context of **discovery**
 - provenance
 - archaeological context
 - acquisition
- context of **publication**
 - licenses
 - agreements
 - permissions
 - funding
 - competing interests

Where (and how) do we expect to find this information?

- context of **production** of the artifact

- material and materiality
- dimensions
- technique of execution
- origin etc.



in each entry, in structured metadata rather than in a commentary

- context of **discovery**

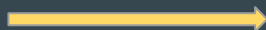
- provenance
 - archaeological context
- acquisition



in each entry, in structured metadata rather than in a commentary; if the data is homogeneous (e. g. consistent acquisition for a whole collection), perhaps in the *prolegomena*

- context of **publication**

- licenses
- agreements
- permissions
- funding
- competing interests



ideally, in each entry in structured metadata; realistically, on the “about” page, on the homepage, or in the *prolegomena*, or not displayed but tagged in the raw data

An example from IRCyr

A.48. Imperial building? inscription of Domitian

«Previous: A.47 Next: A.49»

Description: Series of sandstone blocks or parts of blocks, moulded above. Similarities in the letter-forms and cutting between the two groups suggests, but does not prove, that both may be from a single text presented in two registers. a: fragments of 8 blocks; b: fragments of two inscribed blocks, and three uninscribed fragments.

Text: Inscribed on one face, a. on an upper register, originally disposed in 7 bays (each 2.40) interrupted by pilasters. Within each bay stood two blocks of unequal size, of which the larger carried 8-9 letters and the smaller 4-6, (depending on whether these were narrow or broad); b. probably on a lower register.

Letters: First century CE; series a. 0.22; bars above the figures; series b. 0.15; a stiff, down-pointing ivy-leaf after the text on block i.

Date: CE 92

Findspot: Apollonia: Theatre, in the area of the stage; found in 1961.

Original location: a: On the façade of the scaenae frons; b: uncertain.

Last recorded location: Findspot, 2008.

An example from IRCyr



LEVERHULME
TRUST _____



This work is licensed under a [CC-BY-NC-SA License](#).

License and **funding** information provided on the IRCyr homepage and in each XML file (albeit inconsistently)

Examples from printed editions of Byzantine seals

118. ΡΩΜΑΝΟΣ ὑπατος καὶ ἄρχων (1. Hälfte 9. Jh.)

MK 612

Ed Unediert

Il Kein Parallelstück bekannt

D Das Stück ist oben und unten durchlöchert. Av. leicht nach oben dezentriert, Rv. gut zentriert, Randverluste. Der Kanal verläuft leicht schräg. Allgemein gut bis sehr gut erhalten.

Ø 30 (tot.), 25 (F.)

1.57 Jean, *hypatos* et archonte du *blattion*

Ist. 34 (ex 77).

Dia. : 27. Des. : Grandes échancrures aux orifices du canal ; flan trop petit et fortement rogné au sommet du champ ; gros points d'oxydation au droit.

// : Deux exemplaires dans l'ancienne collection Zacos ; Ermitage.

Éd. des // : ZACOS – VEGLERY, n° 228 ; I. V. SOKOLOVA, *Ob epigrafike vizantijskich pecatej VIII-IX vv.*, IV 42, 1981, pl. VIIb

Éd. : ÉBERSOLT, *Seeaux*, n° 400 ; BULGURLU, *Bizans Mühürleri*, n° 93.

Information on **material** and **technique of execution** is not given. Understandable because the TBOs are all made out of lead and struck.

ORIGINE DE LA COLLECTION

Monsieur Turan Gökyıldırım, après des recherches dans les archives du musée et consultation du livre d'inventaire, a pu reconstituer l'historique de la collection depuis 1936.

Code d'inventaire	Provenance	Mode d'acquisition
11	Yalova- Çiftlikköy 1936	Achat
38	Gaziantep	Confiscation
40	Istanbul 1936	Achat
98a	Collection Tevhid Bey Istanbul 1938	Achat
125	Lofçalı Mahmut Istanbul 1938	Achat
142a	Région, fouilles de 1938	Fouilles
168a	Şatıf Istanbul 1939	Achat
222	Istanbul 1940	Achat

KOLEKSİYONUN KÖKENİ

Turan Gökyıldırım, Müze arşivlerinde yaptığı araştırmalardan ve envanter incelemelerinden sonra, 1936 yılından başlayarak koleksiyonun tarihçesini oluşturabilmiştir:

Envanter Kodu	Geldiği Yer	Edinme Şekli
11	Yalova- Çiftlikköy 1936	Satın alma
38	Gaziantep	El koyma
40	Istanbul 1936	Satın alma
98a	A. Tevhid Bey Koleksiyonu Istanbul 1938	Satın alma
125	Lofçalı Mahmut Istanbul 1938	Satın alma
142a	Region Kazısı	Kazı Malzemesi
168a	Şatıf Istanbul 1939	Satın alma
222	Istanbul 1940	Satın alma

Acquisition history and **provenance** of the collection had to be reconstructed through archival work, as it hadn't been documented in the previous decades.
Bonus point: **bilingual** (French/Turkish)

**How would we deliver
information on the
production context in
EpiDoc?**


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    <objectDesc>
      <supportDesc>
        <support>
          <material> </material>
          <objectType> </objectType>
          <dimensions> </dimensions>
        </support>
      </supportDesc>
      <layoutDesc> <layout> </layout> </layoutDesc>
    </objectDesc>
    <handDesc> <handNote> </handNote> </handDesc>
  </physDesc>
  <history>
    <origin>
      <origPlace> </origPlace>
      <origDate> </origDate>
    </origin>
    <provenance type="found"> </provenance>
    <provenance type="observed"> </provenance>
  </history>
</msDesc>
```

C.271. Honours for Gn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus

«Previous: C.270 Next: C.272»

Description: Rectangular marble base, with a socket on top for a statue (w: 0.75 x h: 0.265 x d: 0.675); the upper left corner has been broken away.

Text: Inscribed on one face from which a previous inscription has probably been erased.

Letters: First century BCE 0.025.

Date: First century BCE

Findspot: [Cyrene](#): Found in 1861 in the [Temple of Apollo](#).

Original location: Unknown.

Last recorded location: London: [British Museum](#), registration number 1861,1127.43.

<https://ircyr2020.inslib.kcl.ac.uk/en/inscriptions/C.271.html>

Elements of support description

Support

- Type
- Condition
- Material
- Dimensions
- Decoration

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a marble stele, cut down for reuse as a column capital: w. 0.365, h. 0.365, d. 0.30. Roughly incised palm branches at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material> stele, cut down for reuse as a column capital: w. 0.365, h. 0.365, d. 0.30. Roughly incised palm branches at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material>

<objectType>stele</objectType>, cut down for reuse as a column capital: w. 0.365, h. 0.365, d. 0.30. Roughly incised palm branches at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material>

<objectType>stele</objectType>, cut down for reuse as a column capital: <dimensions unit="metre">w. 0.365, h. 0.365, d. 0.30</dimensions>. Roughly incised palm branches at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material>

<objectType>stele</objectType>, cut down for reuse as a column capital: <dimensions unit="metre">

<width>0.365</width> <height>0.365</height>

<depth>0.30</depth></dimensions>. Roughly incised palm branches at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material>

<objectType>stele</objectType>, cut down for reuse as a column capital: <dimensions unit="metre">

<width>0.365</width> <height>0.365</height>

<depth>0.30</depth></dimensions>. Roughly incised
<rs type="decoration">palm branches</rs> at the ends
of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

Descriptive prose approach

<supportDesc>

<support>

<p>Part of a <material>marble</material>

<objectType>stele</objectType>, cut down for reuse as a column capital:

<dimensions unit="metre">

<width>0.365</width> <height>0.365</height>

<depth>0.30</depth></dimensions>. Roughly incised <rs

type="decoration">palm branches</rs> at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>

</support>

</supportDesc>

Schematic approach

```
<supportDesc>
  <support>
    <objectType>stele</objectType>
    <material>marble</material>
    <p>Cut down for reuse as a column capital. Roughly incised <rs
type="decoration">palm branches</rs> at the ends of lines 2 and 4.</p>
    <dimensions unit="metre">
      <width>0.365</width>
      <height>0.365</height>
      <depth>0.30</depth>
    </dimensions>
  </support>
</supportDesc>
```

Elements of support description

Support: <supportDesc>, <support>

- Type: <objectType>
- Condition: <p>
- Material: <material>
- Dimensions: <dimensions>, <width>, <height>, <depth>, <dim>
- Decoration: <rs type="decoration"> or <decoDesc> in <physDesc>

**How would we deliver
information on the
discovery context in
EpiDoc?**

```
<msDesc>
  <msIdentifier> <repository> </repository> <idno> </idno> </msIdentifier>
  <physDesc>
    <objectDesc>
      <supportDesc>
        <support>
          <material> </material>
          <objectType> </objectType>
          <dimensions> </dimensions>
        </support>
      </supportDesc>
      <layoutDesc> <layout> </layout> </layoutDesc>
    </objectDesc>
    <handDesc> <handNote> </handNote> </handDesc>
  </physDesc>
  <history>
    <origin>
      <origPlace> </origPlace>
      <origDate> </origDate>
    </origin>
    <provenance type="found"> </provenance>
    <provenance type="observed"> </provenance>
  </history>
</msDesc>
```

C.271. Honours for Gn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus

«Previous: C.270 Next: C.272»

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Letters: First century BCE 0.025.

Date: First century BCE

Findspot: [Cyrene](#): Found in 1861 in the [Temple of Apollo](#).

Original location: Unknown.

Last recorded location: London: [British Museum](#), registration number 1861,1127.43.

<https://ircyr2020.inslib.kcl.ac.uk/en/inscriptions/C.271.html>

Types of locations

- original location
- findspot
- last recorded location / modern location

Original location

<history>

 <origin>

 <origPlace>Baths of Trajan.</origPlace>

 <origDate>CE 119</origDate>

 </origin>

 <provenance>...</provenance>

</history>

Original location

<history>

<origin>

<origPlace ref="https://www.slsgazetteer.org/1041">Baths of
Trajan.</origPlace>

<origDate>CE 119</origDate>

</origin>

<provenance>...</provenance>

</history>

Findspot

<history>

<origin>...</origin>

<provenance type="found">

<p>Cyrene: Roman House, west of the Temple of Apollo, in the
pavement; found in 1926.</p>

</provenance>

</history>

Findspot

<history>

<origin>...</origin>

<provenance type="found">

<p><placeName ref="https://www.slsgazetteer.org/1362">Cyrene:
Roman House</placeName>, west of the Temple of Apollo, in the
pavement; found in 1926.</p>

</provenance>

</history>

Findspot

<history>

<origin>...</origin>

<provenance type="found" when="1926">

<p><placeName ref="https://www.slsgazetteer.org/1362">Cyrene:
Roman House</placeName>, west of the Temple of Apollo, in the
pavement; found in 1926.</p>

</provenance>

</history>

Last recorded location

<history>

<origin>...</origin>

<provenance type="found">...</provenance>

<provenance type="observed"><p>Now in the Baths of Trajan, fixed to the wall of the frigidarium (2008).</p>

</provenance>

</history>

Last recorded location

```
<history>
```

```
  <origin>...</origin>
```

```
  <provenance type="found">...</provenance>
```

```
  <provenance type="observed" when="2008">
```

```
    <p>Now in the <placeName ref="https://www.slsgazetteer.org/1041">Baths  
    of Trajan</placeName>, fixed to the wall of the frigidarium (2008).</p>
```

```
  </provenance>
```

```
</history>
```

Provenance: @type

- found (@subtype: discovered, rediscovered, first-recorded...)
- observed (@subtype: seen, autopsied, photographed...)
- not-observed (@subtype: lost, stolen, destroyed...)
- transferred (@subtype: moved, sold, given, loaned...)

**How would we deliver
information on the
publication context in
EpiDoc?**

Licenses

<availability>

<licence target="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/">

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0

International - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0</licence>

</availability>

- **availability** supplies information about the availability of a text, for example any restrictions on its use or distribution, its copyright status, any licence applying to it, etc.
- **licence** contains information about a licence or other legal agreement applicable to the text.

Funding

`<sponsor>`University of Cologne, Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
and Cologne Center for eHumanities (CCeH)`</sponsor>`

`<funder>`Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) `<idno corresp="https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/projekt/469385434">`
Grant n° 469385434`</idno>` and Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR)
`<idno corresp="https://anr.fr/Projet-ANR-21-FRAL-0008"></idno></funder>`

- **sponsor** (sponsor) specifies the name of a sponsoring organization or institution.
- **funder** (funding body) specifies the name of an individual, institution, or organization responsible for the funding of a project or text.

Less objective – but
equally important –
features are left out
from the encoding



Recap

- providing information regarding the **material context of our text-bearing objects** (production, discovery, and publication) is of crucial importance, as it makes our **edition more transparent**
- when talking about digital editions, it is very important that this information is delivered in a **machine-actionable form** and in a widely accepted standard, thus **minimizing the risk of obsolescence**
- even if a piece of information is valid throughout the corpus (e.g. lead seals produced by striking), tag it in each XML file, as each edition might (and should!) be reused outside of its context or simply because “I just want to check an edition real quick, I won’t read the *prolegomena*”: the **data is more structured**, can be **easily repurposed** by you or others **without loss of context or information**
- let’s be driven by the principles of **transparency** and **explicitness**: redundant information is always better than unclear or missing information!

SunoikisisDC Digital Classics and Byzantine Studies: Material Context of Text-Bearing objects (Session 6)

Daria Elagina, Universität Hamburg

Rubrication and Punctuation in Ethiopic Manuscripts

Outline

1. Rubrication in Ethiopic manuscripts
2. Rubrication and Workflow
3. Rubrication in Manuscript Tradition: Case Study
 1. Introduction to the Text and its Manuscript Tradition
 2. Rubrication in MSS BnF Éthiopien 146 and d'Abbadie 31
 3. Punctuation

Rubrication

Rubrication = addition of text in red ink.

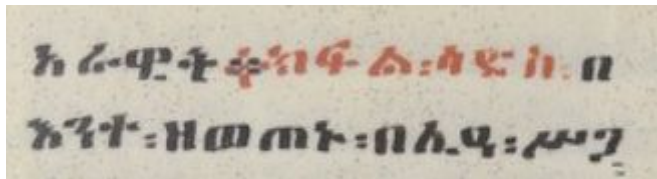
Rubrication in Ethiopic manuscripts attests various patterns:

- incipits;
- saintly names;
- titles and subtitles;
- digits (and their elements);
- punctuation signs and their elements
- etc.

Incipit: MS BnF, Éthiopien 146, fol. 62ra



Punctuation, Subchapters: MS BnF, Éthiopien 146, fol. 62v



Rubrication and Workflow

Addition of rubricated elements was (in most cases) a separate step in manuscript production:

1. text in black ink (copying from a Vorlage);
2. text in red ink (copying?).

This workflow sometimes had a **considerable** influence on the final representation of a copied text.

Rubrication in Manuscript Tradition: Case Study

The Chronicle of John of Nikiu:

- was composed in the seventh century in Egypt;
- has survived only in the Ethiopic version;
- is attested in five Ethiopic manuscripts;
- is divided into 122 chapters.

Manuscripts

A = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Éthiopien 146, 17th century, fols 62r–138v;

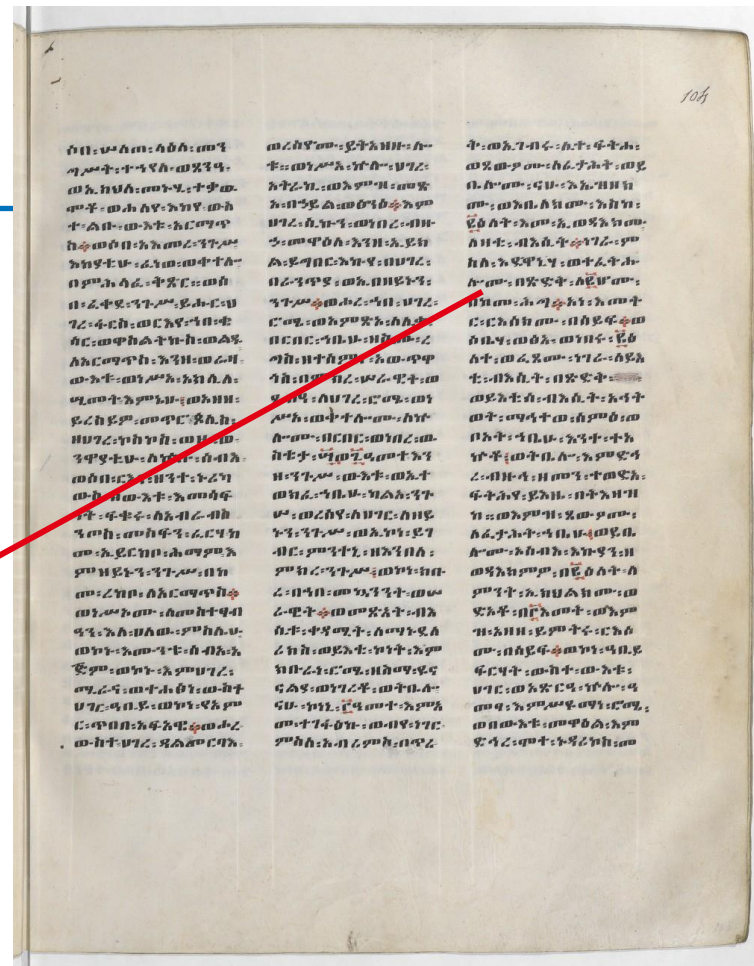
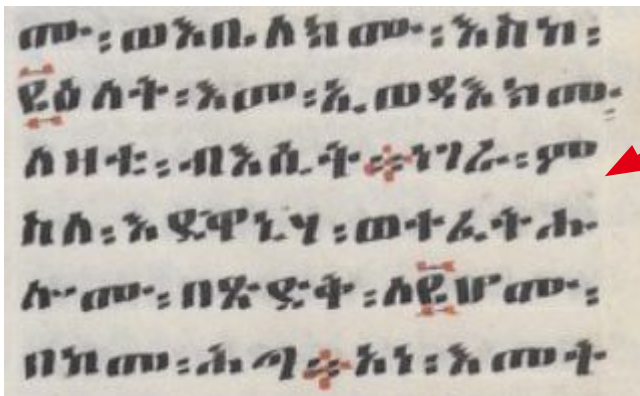
B = London, British Library, Oriental 818, 17th century, fols 48r–103r;

C = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, d'Abbadie 31, 1766 (fol. 103v), fols 104r–164r;

D = Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, fondo Conti Rossini 27, 20° century, pp 1–120;

G = Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopic Manuscript Microfilm Library 7919, 18th century, fols 49r–98v.

Rubrication in MS BnF, 146 fol. 104r

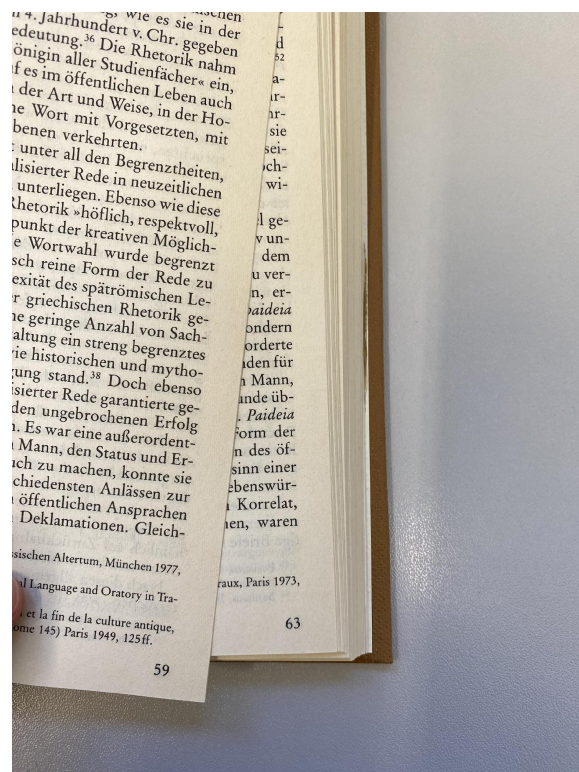


Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Éthiopien 146

Rubrication in MS BnF, 146

Rubrication resumes on fol. 105v.

Missing rubrication of fols. 104v-105r:
flipping two leaves, instead of one.

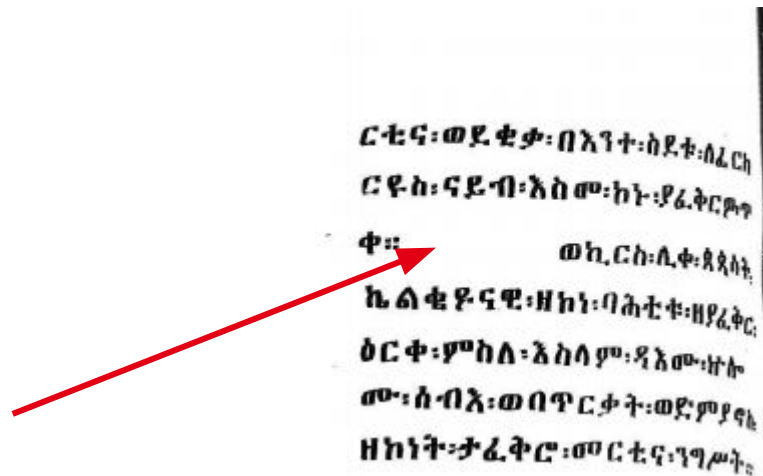


Rubrication in MS BnF, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 31

108r – 124r: rubrication

124v – 164r: no rubrication

The following text is rubricated
(another production unit).



MS BnF, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 31, fol.

160vc.

Punctuation in Ethiopic Manuscripts

Classification according to Denis Nosnitsin:

I. Word dividers

- Example: ፡

II./III. Sentence and Section / Text dividers

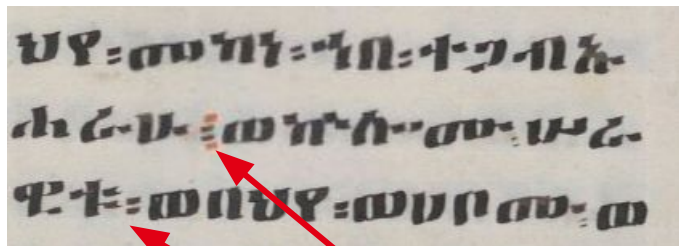
- Example: ::

IV. Others: lines, chains, etc.

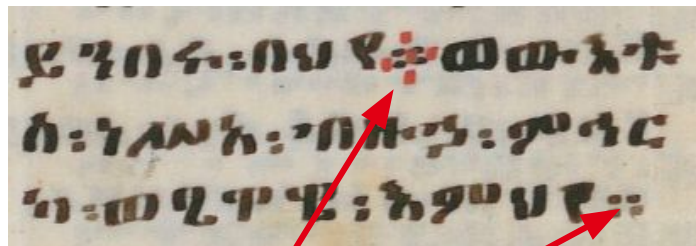
Punctuation Signs and Rubrication: MS BnF

Éthiopien 146

Fol. 77va



Fol. 135vc



Rubrication and Workflow

1. Rubrication was, in most cases, a separate step in manuscript production.
2. Rubrication took place after the text in black ink was copied.
3. The role of a *Vorlage* in rubrication process is unclear (skipping?).
4. Missing rubrication might result in missing information on some punctuation signs.

Rubrication and Logical Patterns

Logical pattern (numbers): consultation of a *Vorlage* is not necessary.

The *Chronicle of John of Nikiu* is divided into 122 chapters.

Chapter Numbering in Manuscripts: Chapter 60

A = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Éthiopien 146, 17th century: fol. 89rb, ፳: (60), rubricated

B = London, British Library, Oriental 818, 17th century: fol. 67vc, ፳: (60), rubricated

C = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, d'Abbadie 31, 1766 (fol. 103v), fol. 126ra, ፳: (60), rubricated

D = Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, fondo Conti Rossini 27, 20th century, pp 1–120: p. 47, ፳: (60), not rubricated

G = Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopic Manuscript Microfilm Library 7919, 18th century, fols 49r–98v: fol. 62va, ፳ (28), not rubricated

MSS D and G build a group. MS D shares errors with G; has no rubrication.

Rubrication and Stemmatology

Rubrication, if it follows a logical pattern and represents a separate step in manuscript production, has a special place in establishing relations between manuscripts: copying (no rubrication) vs. following a pattern (rubrication).

Error (r) → Correct reading (r) – not a disjunctive error?

Error (r/nr) → Correct reading 2 (nr) – disjunctive error?

Rubrication in Ethiopic Manuscripts: Encoding

The project **Beta maṣāḥəft: Manuscripts of Ethiopia and Eritrea** (Schriftkultur des christlichen Äthopiens: eine multimediale Forschungsumgebung) is a long-term project funded within the framework of the [Academies' Programme](#) (coordinated by the [Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities](#)) under survey of the [Akademie der Wissenschaften in Hamburg](#).

<https://betamasaheft.eu/Guidelines/>

Rubrication in Ethiopic Manuscripts: Encoding

<https://betamasaheft.eu/Guidelines/?id=text-encoding>

Example:

```
<hi rend="rubric">
```

<https://betamasaheft.eu/Guidelines/?id=handDescription>

Example:

```
<handNote script="Ethiopic" xml:id="h1" >
```

```
<seg type="ink">Black, red.</seg>
```

```
<seg type="rubrication">Nomina sacra; a few lines in the incipit.</seg>
```

```
</handNote>
```

Lacking rubrication can also be specified in manuscript description.

Further Ideas: Focus on Workflow

Explicit statement on the absence of rubrication? (no intention to rubricate)

Identification of punctuation signs distinguished only by rubricated elements? (potential loss of information)

Standardisation of encoding for lacking rubrication? (for example, lack of rubrication in general or of some elements only)

Encoding strategy for the presence of logical patterns in rubrication?