



**HAL**  
open science

## 11.11 Prayer of Manasseh: Christian Palestinian Aramaic

Laurent Capron

► **To cite this version:**

Laurent Capron. 11.11 Prayer of Manasseh: Christian Palestinian Aramaic. Textual History of the Bible, vol. 2: The Deuterocanonical Scriptures, part 2C, 2019, pp.272-274. 10.1163/2452-4107\_thb\_COM\_0211110000 . hal-03551827

**HAL Id: hal-03551827**

**<https://hal.science/hal-03551827>**

Submitted on 1 Feb 2022

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Version imprimée

Capron, Laurent, “11.11 Prayer of Manasseh : Christian Palestinian Aramaic”, in: *Textual History of the Bible*, vol. 2: *The Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, part 2C, (gen. ed. A. Lange, vol. eds. F. Feder and M. Henze; Leiden: Brill, 2019), 272-274

Version en ligne

Capron, Laurent, “11.11 Prayer of Manasseh : Christian Palestinian Aramaic”, in: *Textual History of the Bible* (gen. ed. A. Lange; vol. eds. F. Feder and M. Henze). [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107\\_thb\\_COM\\_0211110000](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107_thb_COM_0211110000) (accès payant en janvier 2022)

## 11.11. Christian-Palestinian Aramaic Translation

### 11.11.1. The manuscript evidence

The Prayer of Manasseh is known in CPA from a Horologion Book written in Jerusalem on paper in the year 1187-1188, i.e. manuscript Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Or. Oct. 1019. It was acquired in 1906 in Cairo from a Syrian dealer. The manuscript preserves a Malkite Horologion that is a translation of the Horologion of the Greek Orthodox Church.<sup>1</sup> The manuscript is well preserved except that few folios are damaged on the external borders and one folio is missing. The text is clearly written and easily legible.

The Prayer of Manasseh is written on folios 93<sup>v</sup>-96<sup>r</sup> and is preceded by the phrase “Then say the Prayer of King Manasseh” written in Karshuni. Versification is not marked. The Prayer is recited during the service of the Great Compline.

It should be underlined that the Prayer of Manasseh occurs in this manuscript as one of the prayers of the Horologion. There is no evidence that the text was ever copied as a part of the CPA Bible.

### 11.11.2. Modern edition

The manuscript was published by Black in 1954 with a detailed philological commentary and a translation of all the texts not excerpted from the Bible.<sup>2</sup> In his critical notes, Black compares the *lemmata* which diverge from the Greek text of with other known versions. In the case of The Prayer of Manasseh,<sup>3</sup> Black collated the CPA text with the Greek text of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX<sup>A</sup>) and Codex Turicensis (LXX<sup>T</sup>; cf. 11.3), according to the edition of Swete<sup>4</sup> and with the text of the modern Greek Horologion (from the edition of 1930)<sup>5</sup> as well as with the Syriac text of the Prayer of Manasseh published by Wilkins (cf. 11.4).<sup>6</sup>

### 11.11.3. History of research

Black underlined the complexity of the CPA version of the Prayer of Manasseh. The text is closer to the Greek text of the Horologion than to the other Greek versions of the Prayer of Manasseh (cf. 11.3), although some exceptions can be found. He also noticed that, in verses 7, 9 and 10, CPA-Pr Man renders the Syriac text of S<sup>17a6</sup> (cf. 11.4) quite closely and that, in few cases, CPA-Pr Man text would go off on its own.

### 11.11.4. Relevant variants with Greek and Syriac versions

Verses 7, 9, and 10 are of particular importance for the study of the CPA version of the Prayer of Manasseh. Some other variants throughout the text are peculiar to the CPA version and must be analyzed separately.

---

1. A detailed presentation of the manuscript and its content is given in Black, *Horologion*, 3-21.

2. Black, *Horologion*.

3. Black, *Horologion*, 46-48.

4. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek*.

5. *ΤΟ ΜΕΓΑ ΩΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ... σύμφωνον πρὸς τὴν ἔκδοσιν τῶν Πατριαρχείων τοῦ 1900* (Athens: 1930).

6. Wilkins, “The Prayer of Manasseh.” Wilkins edited the text of manuscript Paris, BnF, Syr. 7 (= S<sup>17a6</sup>).

In general, CPA-Pr Man is closer to the Syriac version (cf. 11.4) than to the Greek Horologion. It must be remembered first that we have two main versions of this text in Syriac, represented by manuscripts S<sup>10t1</sup> and S<sup>9a1</sup>,<sup>7</sup> which Gutman and van Peursen compared with each other.<sup>8</sup> CPA-Pr Man is closer to S<sup>9a1</sup>, which in general reflects the same text as that published by Wilkins. This similarity is especially obvious in verses 9 and 10.

In v. 9a, CPA follows the Syriac text very closely, with the only difference that CPA does not have an equivalent of ܦܢܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܝܢ “so that I can lift up my eyes.” No Greek version has an equivalent to this line either. In v. 9b, CPA follows the Syriac, which is not in any Greek version. In v. 10, CPA differs slightly from the Syriac since it omits the phrase ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “and I am bent”. It is possible that CPA originally contained this phrase as a translation of the Syriac ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “and I am bent” and that it was omitted in the sequence ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “and I am bound, and I am bent”, due to *homoeoarchton*.

In the beginning of v. 10, CPA follows the Syriac text as well, particularly with the mention of ܘܠܘܢ ܥܘܢܘܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܥܘܢܘܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “and I do not deserve to lift up my face and look at the height of the heaven, on account of the multitude of my sins.” This is an exact translation of the second part of the Greek v. 9a, και ουκ ειμι αξιος ατενισαι και ιδειν το υψος του ουρανου απο πληθους των αδικιων μου, which is transposed both in CPA and in Syriac. But the end of the sentence corresponds again to the Greek text, where the Syriac has the variant ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “because of the multitude of the iniquity of my wicked deeds.”

In the last part of v. 10, where the Syriac text inverts the two sentences found in Greek (παρώργισα τὸν θυμὸν σου καὶ τὸ πονηρὸν ἐνώπιόν σου ἐποίησα “I provoked your anger and did what was evil before you”) and gives the variant of the Greek text of Odes (cf. 16 ; στήσας βδελύγματα καὶ πληθύνας προσοχθίσματα “having set up abominations and having multiplied objects of wrath”), CPA keeps the Greek order of the text and gives first the equivalent found in the Greek Horologion (μη ποιήσας τὸ θέλημά σου, καὶ μη φυλάξας τὰ προστάγματά σου “do not do your will, and do not keep your ordinances”), followed by the variant of Odes.

In v. 7, CPA seems closer to the Greek Horologion than to the Syriac version, since it gives the same variant (κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῆς χρηστότητός σου “according to the abundance of your compassion”) where the Syriac text agrees with the text of the Greek Didascalia (κατὰ τὴν χρηστότητα τῆς ἀγαθωσύνης σου “according to the compassion of your uprightness”). The Greek text of Odes omits this part of the verse entirely.

### 11.11.5. Differences and relations to others translations

In some cases, CPA has its own variants, some of which are certainly due to scribal error. In vv. 2-3, CPA shows a lack of consistency: first it translates the Greek participles precisely (ὁ ποιήσας “he who makes” translated by ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ), but then it uses second person verbs (ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ, ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ and ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “you have held,” “you have shut up,” and “you have sealed”) to translate ὁ πεδήσας “he who has held,” ὁ κλείσας “he who has closed,” and σφραγισάμενος “he who has sealed.” In v. 13, CPA makes two mistakes: instead of translating ἄνες μοι, Κύριε, ἄνες μοι “relieve me, O Lord, relieve me,” it reads ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “my soul” which has no meaning in this context. Further, it omits the equivalent of Greek μηδὲ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μηνίσας τηρήσῃς τὰ κακά μοι “nor be angry forever and retain evil for me.” This last omission is certainly due to a *homoeoarchton*. In v. 15, CPA presents a variant which is hard to explain: ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕܝܢܝܢ “the beauty and all the birds of heaven” where LXX has πᾶσα ἡ δύναμις τῶν οὐρανῶν “all the force of heaven.”

S-Pr Man (cf. 11.4) seems to have exerted a strong influence on CPA-Pr Man despite some textual peculiarities in the latter. Secondarily, the Greek version (cf. 11.2) as represented by the Greek Horologion influenced CPA-Pr Man as well. It is impossible though to establish a direct lineage among

7. For the sigla of OT Peshitta manuscripts, see *List of the Old Testament Peshitta Manuscripts*.

8. See Gutman and van Peursen, *Two Syriac Versions*.

these three versions. We cannot say for sure that the CPA-Pr Man derives from a Syriac text. The translator could as well have known several versions and tried to merge them into an eclectic rendition as the presence of the two variants in v. 10 suggests.

#### **11.11.6. Bibliography**

Black, M. (ed.), *A Christian Palestinian Syriac Hologion (Berlin MS. Or. Oct. 1019)* (Cambridge: University Press, 1954).

Gutman, A., and van Peursen, W. (ed.), *The Two Syriac versions of the Prayer of Manasseh*, (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2011).

*List of Old Testament Peshitta manuscripts: (preliminary issue)*, ed. by the Peshitta Institute (Leiden University), (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961).

Swete, H.B., *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint. Vol. III, Hosea - 4 Maccabees Psalms of Solomon, Enoch, the Odes*, (2nd. ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899).

Wilkins, G., "The Prayer of Manasseh", *Hermathena* 16 (1911): 167-78.