

Article

Compline in Melkite Alexandria, Contained in MS Sinai Arabic 232 (13th c.)

Andrew Wade

Independent Researcher, 51100 Pistoia, Italy; sitkwa@gmail.com

Abstract: This article is the latest in a series examining the offices in the Horologion of Sinai Arabic 232 (13th century). This Book of Hours has its origin in Melkite Alexandria and has never been studied before, nor indeed have the Arabic Books of Hours, in general. The article presents an English translation of the Office of Compline from this manuscript (apart from the psalms, which are simply indicated), with comments and identification of the individual texts. Features of particular interest are the extra saints in the intercessions, different psalms and prayers from the modern rite, and the series of common troparia at the end. The additional saints in the intercessions pose a conundrum: whereas the analysis of Matins, the Hours, and Vespers has suggested that this is an Arabic Melkite Horologion from Alexandria that must have been received from Jerusalem c. the 7th century and then underwent both Alexandrian (Coptic) influences and later Byzantinisation which did not entirely eliminate more archaic elements from Jerusalem such as the tri-ode system at Matins, the choice of additional saints suggests a double provenance from both Alexandria and Sinai. We therefore suggest that the Horologion was brought from Alexandria and underwent some degree of adaptation on Sinai without eliminating all the specifically Alexandrian features.

Keywords: Christian Arabic; Horologion; Book of Hours; Alexandria; Sinai; Jerusalem; compline; Melkite



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1. Introduction

This article is the latest in a series in which I have translated, analysed, and commented on the Book of Hours contained in Sinai Arabic 232. (Wade 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022). In a recent article (Frøyshov 2023, pp. 223–69, at p. 256), Stig Frøyshov classifies this source among the sources of the “Central Late Hagiopolite Horologion”. I would agree with this, but with some reservations since Sinai Arabic 232 also contains elements deriving from Alexandria, including prayers found today only in the Coptic *Agpeya* (see Wade 2020, 2022; Agpeya 1982). The photographs of the Sinai collection made in 1950, which were put online for certain manuscripts by the University of Louvain, are now all available for consultation online at the Library of Congress. The photographs of Sin. Ar. 232, made on 25 May 1950, can be consulted at <https://www.loc.gov/item/0027938457A-ms/> accessed on 20 November 2024.

Of course, despite their relatively good quality, these photographs were made 74 years ago in black-and-white, and it would be very desirable to have new colour photographs made with modern technology. In particular, this might render visible many of the rubrics, which seem to be in faded red and are often difficult or impossible to read.

1.1. The Contents of Sinai Arabic 232¹

The manuscript contains 397 paper folia measuring 13.5 × 9 cm. The cover bears the mention “c. 13th c. A.D.”, which seems likely in view of the handwriting and linguistic peculiarities of the manuscript. It is generally difficult to date Arabic Christian manuscripts very precisely, and this manuscript, unfortunately, has no colophon. The manuscript is very composite, with frequent changes in handwriting, which, however, is very similar,

with the exception of certain marginal notes made in gross calligraphy. Even in the Horologion, there is an abrupt interruption after the beginning of the ninth hour on fol. 260r. At this point, there was an accident in the manuscript. F. 260v was blank (there are traces of repair with the recuperation of a Greek manuscript; one reads five letters in cursive Greek on a slip of paper stuck on the bottom left-hand corner of f. 260v). The empty page was filled with a prayer in a different hand, untrained in calligraphy and grammar. The Horologion continues after the interruption with the very end of the *mesorion* of Sext (again) on f. 261r.

The first 123 folia contain a psalter, followed by a series of liturgical and lectionary elements. We find various prayers, Gospel and Apostle readings, comments in other hands, and some illegible rubrics. After f. 129, there is a series of readings that appear to follow the order of the feasts from Christmas to the Epiphany and Hypapante, then Easter, Transfiguration, and Easter again. All readings are followed by “and praise to God always”. Clearly, this section requires further study but is outside the scope of this article.

After a pious prayer in a gross hand on f. 148, we find part of a Menologion, beginning with 29 August, the Beheading of John the Baptist. This is preceded by the clearly Egyptian title of “Month of Tūt” (شهر توت). This adds weight to the argument that the horologion that follows is of Egyptian (Melkite, Alexandrian, or maybe partly Coptic) origin; however, the very composite nature of the manuscript in its present state means that arguments derived from one part of it cannot automatically be applied to other parts. This calendar section, which also appears to contain other elements, requires more detailed study, particularly since the Byzantine calendar appears to coexist with the Egyptian months.

F. 206r is blank and is followed by the Book of Hours, ff. 206v-333v. Ff. 334r-397v requires closer study and seems to be a collection of stichera and prayers.

1.2. Method Adopted for This Presentation

I shall first present an annotated English translation of the office of Compline in this manuscript and afterwards make some remarks and draw some conclusions. I have decided not to edit the Arabic text of the manuscript for the following reasons:

- (a) While it is true that “... without an Arabic text, the reader is left to wonder about the original text behind the author’s translation choices, which would leave much to be desired in the study of this interesting manuscript”², the manuscript can be freely consulted online at the URL given above in the first paragraph, so the reader is not deprived of the original text.
- (b) As Sauget remarked in 1964, when texts were not yet available online, to explain why he did not present the text given in Migne, “Il est inutile de reproduire ici le texte de HM, facilement accessible.” (Sauget 1964, here p. 302).
- (c) Most liturgiologists, unfortunately, do not read Arabic.
- (d) Wherever there were difficulties in deciphering the Arabic or other anomalies, I have mentioned these in my notes.
- (e) This is the method I have followed in my previous articles on Matins, the Hours, and Vespers in Sin. Ar. 232.

1.3. The Office of Compline

As is well known, the Western term “compline” refers to an office intended to be recited after vespers and dinner and before sleep. In Greek, the office with this same function is called “Apodeipnon”, i.e., “After supper (office)”. In Arabic, it is known as “*ṣalāt al-naʿwm*” (صلاة النوم), i.e., “the prayer of the sleep”. In present usage, compline is similar to the Hours in its structure, with three psalms and an appendix with extra prayers and the asking of forgiveness. There is also an office of Great Compline, used on weekdays in Lent and on the vigils of Christmas and Epiphany, which has six psalms at the beginning and three units of three psalms or canticles each and various special prayers, ending with the asking of forgiveness. The Russian Old Believers also have a Middle Compline, as was current in pre-Nikonian Russia. Sinai Ar. 232 has only one compline service, unlike the

modern rite.³ The office in Sin. Ar. 232 corresponds most closely to Great Compline in the modern rite.

2. English Translation

The office of compline begins on f. 288v:

>X< φ The prayer of the sleep [compline]⁴ φ φ φ φ φ >X<

Aghios and those that follow it⁵ φ φ φ φ and he says

Come let us prostrate to Christ our king and to our God *three times*

And he says psalm four⁶

[psalm 4]

f. 289r

[psalm 4, concl.]

Psalm six⁷

f. 289v

[psalm 6, concl.]

Psalm twelve

f. 290r

[psalm 12, concl.]

Psalm twenty-four

f. 290v

[psalm 24, contd.]

f. 291r

[psalm 24, concl.]⁸

Psalm thirty

f. 291v

[psalm 30, contd.]

f. 292r

[psalm 30, contd.]

f. 292v

[psalm 30, concl.]

Psalm ninety

f. 293r

[psalm 90, concl.]

f. 293v

duksā kā nīn⁹ and he says

God is with us¹⁰

Know, O multitude of the peoples and submit yourselves. God is with us.

[the canticle, contd.]

f. 294r

[the canticle, contd.:]

Here am I and the sons that the Lord gave me.¹¹ God is with us.

The people travelling¹² in the darkness and in the shadow of death beheld a great light. God is with us.

Those sitting in the darkness [*correction in margin: the villages*¹³] and in the shadow of death: A light has risen to them. God is with us.

For a child has been born to us, and a son has been given us. God is with us.

Whose headship is upon his shoulders. God is with us.¹⁴

And his name shall be called Angel of the great council. God is with us.

Wonderful counsellor. God is with us.¹⁵

God powerful ruler. God is with us.

The head of peace. The father of the coming age. *Dukṣā*. God is with us.

Kā nīn. God is with us.

God is with us.

f. 294v

Know, O multitude of the peoples and submit yourselves. God is with us.

*And he says*¹⁶: Now that I have passed the day, I thank you, O Lord, and I ask you that you may grant to me the evening with the night without sin, O Saviour, and save me. *Dukṣā*.

Now that I have passed the day, I thank you, O Master, and I beseech you, O Saviour, that you may bestow upon me the evening with the night free from guile, O Saviour, and save me. *Kā nīn*.

Now that I have passed the day, I thank you, O Holy one, and I ask you that you may give me the evening with the night not inactive, O Saviour and save me. *And he says*¹⁷:

The incorporeal nature of the cherubim,

f. 295r

with never silent praises, and the seraphim, the living being [*sic*] with six wings, proclaim your memory with uninterrupted voices, and all the hosts of the angels laud you in thrice-holy praises. For you did not cease to be before all things, O Father, and you have your Son, equal to you in principle, and the Spirit of life, equal to you in honour, showing forth the Trinity without division; O all-holy Virgin, mother of Christ¹⁸, and eye-witness of the Word and his handmaiden,¹⁹ O assembly of the prophets and the apostles and the martyrs: inasmuch as you have immortal life, intercede for us sinners for we are in difficulties so that we may all be delivered from the evil one and may cry out with the praises of the angels: O Holy one, O Holy one, O Holy one,

f. 295v

O Thrice Holy one, have mercy on us.²⁰

And he says the Creed²¹. And he says²²:

O all-holy Lady, Mother of God, intercede for us sinners. O all the powers of the heavenly angels, intercede for us sinners. O saint John the prophet, the precursor and baptiser of Christ, intercede for us sinners. O holy apostles, intercede for us sinners. O you, our pure fathers, Saint²³ Moses and sSaint Aaron, and Elijah and Elisha, the miracle-workers and all the prophets, intercede for us sinners.

f. 296r

O all the martyrs Saint²⁴ George and Saint Tādrus²⁵ and Mercurios and Buqṭur²⁶ and Mīnās and Sergius and Pachomios and Demetrius and Abrākūtiyūs²⁷ and all the martyrs, intercede for us sinners. O our holy fathers Athanasius²⁸ and Cyril and Basil and Gregory and John Chrysostom and Nicholas and all the saints, intercede for us sinners. O our fathers Saint Anthony²⁹ and Pachomios and Tādrus and Makarios and Makarios³⁰ and Paul and Saint Symeon and Symeon and Saint Arsenios

f. 296v

and Sābā (سبأ)³¹ and all the saints, intercede for us sinners. O power of the noble, life-giving, ineffable Cross,³² do not remove your mercy from us, O Lord, forgive us sinners and have mercy on us, for you are blessed to the ages, amen.³³ *And he says*: Holy God and what follows them. *And he says*³⁴: O Lord, you know the sleeplessness of my invisible

enemies, and you know the weakness of my flesh, of me the miserable one, O my creator. So, before you, I consign my spirit in your hands; protect me with your wholesome wings lest I sleep unto death, and illumine my intellectual eyes with delight in your divine words, and make me rise from oppressive sleep to glorify you at all appropriate times,

f. 297r

for you are good and compassionate to mankind. *Dukṣā*.³⁵

O Lord, your judgements are fearful when the angels are standing and, the people are herded and, the books are opened and, the deeds are uncovered, and thoughts are betrayed. What judgement shall be my judgement, I who am dominated by sins? Who will extinguish the blaze of fire from me? Who will illumine my darkness if you will not have mercy on me, O Lord, for you are compassionate to mankind. *Kā nīn*.

O Mother of God, since I possess trust in you that does not shame, I shall be saved, and since I have acquired your intercession and mediation, O perfectly pure one, I shall not fear to chase away my enemies and put them to flight, taking on

f. 297v

your protection like the protection of armour and your omnipotent intercession, and I supplicate, crying out to you: O Lady, save me by your intercessions and raise me up from oppressive sleep to glorify you by the power of God who was incarnate of you. *And he says Kiriāylyayson* (کریالیسن), forty, and he says:

O Lord, all that we have sinned in this our day or in this night, whether it were in word or in thought or in deed or by all the senses, leave, efface and have mercy and forgive for the sake of your holy name, and give us, O God, peaceful sleep, free of all anxiety, and send us an angel of peace to protect us from all evil and from all strikes of the evil one, by the grace

f. 298r

and mercy of your only Son and by the gift of the Spirit of holiness and by the prayers of our Lady Martmaryam³⁶ the Mother of God the lover of mankind and of all the saints and the just, and straighten out, O God, our paths and have mercy on us, amen.

May the name of the Lord be blessed from now and to the ages, amen.³⁷ *Another prayer*.³⁸ O my Lord Jesus Christ, you are my succour, and I am in your hands, and you know my good deeds, so succour me and do not abandon me, lest I sin, for I am erring and cannot but follow my passions and I cannot but perish in my sins. Be gracious towards me, your creature, and do not reject me, for I am weak, and do not forsake me, for I have fled to you; save my soul, for I have declared to you all those that oppress me: they are in your hands

f. 298v

and there is no refuge for my weakness, O my Lord Jesus Christ, other than to you, so save me by your compassion, and may all those who rise against me and seek my soul to destroy it be confounded, for you are capable of everything and to your countenance behooves veneration and adoration, also to your good Father with you and your Holy, life-giving Spirit who is equal to you in essence, now and at all times and to the age of the ages, amen. *Dukṣā Kā nīn*.

And he says: In the name of the Lord, bless, O saints.

Bless, O Lord. *And he says:* May the Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us, amen.

ϕ Then we begin to complete it, and he says Aghios and what follows them.

And he says: Come let us prostrate and bow down to Christ our king and our God. ϕ *three times* ϕ

f. 299r

and he says psalm fifty³⁹ ϕ after it; he also says psalm one hundred and one.

[Psalm 101, beginning]

f. 299v

[Psalm 101, contd.]

f. 300r

[Psalm 101, concl.]

Dukṣā⁴⁰ and he says >X<
>X< The prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah
O Lord almighty...⁴¹

[Prayer of Manasseh, contd.]

f. 300v

[Prayer of Manasseh, contd.]

f. 301r

[Prayer of Manasseh, contd.]

f. 301v

[Prayer of Manasseh, concl.]

ϕ ϕ ϕ ϕ and he says:

Holy God and what follows them *and he says*:

O God of our fathers,⁴² who always acts with kindness towards us;

f. 302r

do not take your mercy away from us, but by their intercessions, direct our life in peace. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, since we are bereft of any answer; we sinners present this supplication to you, O Master, have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us. *Dukṣā*. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for we have placed our trust in you, so do not be very angry against us and do not recall our transgressions, but look as the compassionate one and save us from our enemies, for you are our God and we are all the work of your hands and we are your people and the sheep of your flock and we are called in your name.⁴³ *And he says*:⁴⁴ Open to us the door of compassion, O blessed Mother of God, since we hope in you let us not be abandoned by you, but be saved by you from all adversity, for you are the salvation of the human race⁴⁵ ϕ

And he says Kiriālayṣ (كرياليس)⁴⁶ forty times, and he says *Dukṣā kā nīn*.

f. 302v

and he says: In the name of the Lord, bless, O saints.

Bless, O Master. And he says the verse:

May the Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us.

∴ and he begins to say the completion of the prayer >X< He says:

O Master God, the almighty Father,

and the Lord, the only Son Jesus Christ and the Spirit of holiness,

one divinity and one power, have mercy on me, the sinner

and by the judgements that you know, save me, your unworthy servant,

for you are blessed to eternity. Amen⁴⁷.

And he says

[*in the margin*:] Come let us prostrate to Christ our King and our God three times.

And he says Psalm one hundred and twenty.⁴⁸ I have raised my eyes to the mountains...

[Ps. 120 contd.]

f. 303r

[Ps. 120 concl.]

... may the Lord keep your entering and your going out. *He says psalm sixty-nine*

O God, look to my assistance...

[Ps. 69 concl.]

f. 303v

Psalm one hundred and forty-two. O Lord, hear my prayer...

[Ps. 142 contd.]

f. 304r

[Ps. 142 concl.]

...for I am your servant. *Dukṣā kā nīn*⁴⁹. And he says

>X< The praise of the angels.

Glory to God in the highest...

[The lesser (ferial) doxology, contd.]

f. 304v

[The lesser (ferial) doxology, contd.]

f. 305r

[The lesser (ferial) doxology, concl.]⁵⁰

And he says Aghios⁵¹ and what follows it. *And he says on the verse* Psalm one hundred and fifty⁵² *then he says*

O Lord of the powers, be with us because we do not have help in tribulations except for you⁵³ *he says from the psalm*

Praise God in his saints; praise him in the firmament of his power.

f. 305v

they repeat, O Lord of the powers Verse:

Praise him for his powerful acts; praise him according to the multitude of his greatness

φ φ

They repeat, O Lord of the powers Verse:

Praise him in the voice of the trumpet; praise him with the lute and the harp.

They repeat, O Lord of the powers Verse:

Praise him in the cymbals and dances; praise him with the strings and the pipe.

They repeat, O Lord of the powers Verse:

Praise him in the well-tuned cymbals; praise him in the cymbals that acclaim.⁵⁴

They repeat, O Lord of the powers Verse:

Let every breath praise the Lord *They repeat O Lord of the powers*

And he says, O lord of the powers *They repeat O Lord of the powers*

Dukṣā O Lord of the powers *kā nīn* O Lord of the powers

And he says⁵⁵

f. 306r

O Christ God, illumine my eyes lest I sleep unto death

And lest my enemy say, "I have overpowered him." *Dukṣā*

O God, be a help to my soul in the midst of many snares

So, deliver me from them, O God, and save me, O Good one,

Lover of mankind. *Kā nīn*. O all-holy one,

O pure Virgin Mother of God, mother of Christ

God, present our prayer to your Son and our God so that our souls may be saved on your account. And he says *Kiriyālayṣun* (كيرياليسن) forty.

Dukṣā kā nīn, and he says: In the name of the Lord, bless O Saints bless, O Master

>X< A prayer and it is dismissal >X<

O Lord⁵⁶, O Lord, deliver⁵⁷ us from every arrow

f. 306v

in the day and save us from everything that moves in the darkness, and receive the lifting of our hands⁵⁸ as an evening sacrifice and make us worthy in the course of the night without shame and that we may pass without ruinous temptations and deliver us from all opposition and anxiety that may befall us from the devil, and give to our souls humility and to our thought carefulness and discernment in your just and fearful judgements, nail your fear into our bodies and mortify our earthly members so that in tranquil light we may travel in the contemplation of your rulings. Remove from us every ruinous imagination and harmful lust. Raise us up in the times of prayers, firm in faith, successful in your commandments by the grace and goodness of your only Son

f. 307r

with you, the Blessed one, and with all holiness and the goodness of your life-giving Spirit, equal to you in essence, now and all times and to the age of the ages, amen.

>X< Another prayer >X<

I magnify you⁵⁹ with magnification, O Lord because you have looked upon my lowliness and have saved my soul from tribulations and have not imprisoned me in the hands of my enemy, so protect me, because your grace shall come upon your mercy because my

soul has been anxious and it is sad at my leaving this body, lest the wish of ruinous resistance should encounter it and thwart it in the air and befriend it in the darkness on account of the sins that it has committed in this

f. 307v

present age through its ignorance, O Master, be forgiving to us, do not cause my soul to see the sight of the evil, repugnant demon,⁶⁰ but consign it to the beatific, luminous angels so that it may glorify your holy name, and raise me up with your power to your divine throne and in my debts may the hand of those powerful in the world not reach me, but assist me and be for me, our Saviour, a victorious helper, for these bodily punishments are only passing for servants, O Lord, have mercy on my soul that has become filthy with the passions of this world and receive it bright and pure, for you are blessed to the age, amen.

*Another prayer:*⁶¹ O our Master Jesus Christ my Lord and the Lord of my fathers, show my tomb in my sleep to keep my body,

f. 308r

God of my salvation, keep me from the transgression of the night, from evil habit, my God, calm my offence, and the movement of my eyes and the outrage of my hands, and the offence of my feet, and save me from the path of the devil, O Lord, calm my diabolical thoughts and give us a bright, pure mind and a present memory; teach us what are good and perfect and upright dispositions; set me upright, O God of the powers of the night and the day and make me an altar for the multitude of your glory and your thanks in all of my nights and my days, both of them, that I may give thanks to your holy name and praise the Father and the Son and the Spirit of holiness, now and to the eternity of the eternities, amen. *Verse and Aghios.*

And he says: O Lord, save your people, bless your inheritance,

f. 308v

give the kings victory over the barbarians and keep by your Cross all those that are yours.⁶² *And he says* O foremost ones among the Apostles, and teachers of the universe, intercede to the Master of all that he may give peace to the universe and the greatest mercy to our souls.⁶³ *For Saint Nicholas and all the Fathers.* If you want: The truth of your deeds revealed you to your flock as a rule of the unity of faith and a teacher of abstinence; for this cause, you achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty. O Father clothed in divinity, Nicholas,

intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved.⁶⁴ *And he says:* O holy moneyless ones⁶⁵ and wonderworkers Cosmas and Damian, watch over our illnesses:

f. 309r

freely you have taken, give freely. *And he says*

*for whomsoever you wish of the Fathers:*⁶⁶ By the unceasing flood of your tears, you cultivated the desert to a hundredfold, and from the depths of your groaning and your labour, and you became a beacon for the universe with your miracles. O our father Palirdasios [?]⁶⁷, pray to Christ our God to save our souls! *And he says,* O Lord, by the intercession of all the saints and the intercession of the Mother of God, give us peace and have mercy on us, for you are gracious. *And he says*

O Apostles and martyrs and prophets and bishops and ascetics and the just who, with excellent perseverance, completed the labour and kept the faith, with the daring that you have with the Saviour, plead with him to save our souls.⁶⁸

f. 309v *And he says:* Kiriālayṣun (كرياليسن) twelve times >X<

>X< *End of the prayer of sleep [صلاة النوم] compline* >X< >X<

===== >X<

>X< *The prayer of midnight (صلاة نصف الليل)* >X<

* * *

3. Discussion

The structure of this Compline is similar but not identical to the modern office of Great Compline. There is some ambiguity about whether it is intended for individual recitation (there is no initial blessing; each new section is introduced by the rubric “and he says”) or for communal celebration (rubrics such as “they repeat” and the set formulas for dismissal at the end of the nocturns, “bless, O Saints, bless, o Master”). The prayers oscillate between the first person singular and the first person plural.

The structure of Compline in this manuscript is the following:

1. No initial blessing; initial prayers,
2. Six psalms (4, 6, 12, 24, 30, 90).
3. Canticle with refrain: God is with us.⁶⁹
4. Evening kata stichon hymn, as in the modern rite.
5. The Creed.
6. The intercessions, with the addition of many Egyptian monastic saints and martyrs and also prophets typical of Sinai.
7. Troparia, a prayer for absolution reminiscent of the Coptic recension, and another prayer.
8. Dismissal for the first part.
9. Unit: psalms 50, 101 and the Prayer of Manasseh.
10. Troparia of the Fathers and of Penitence
11. Dismissal for the second part and concluding prayer
12. Second unit: psalms 120 (!), 69, 142, ferial doxology,
13. Canticle of psalm 150 with the refrain “O Lord of the powers, be with us...” to be sung together (“they repeat”)
14. No final troparia as in the modern rite; brief final troparia and dismissal of the second unit.
15. Prayers: 1. Attributed to Saint Basil, as in the modern rite;
2. Attributed to Saint Eustratios in the modern rite, but more succinct in the Arabic here and called *ṣalāt* (from Syriac *ṣlōtā*);
3. unidentified, and called *ifšīn* (from Greek εὐχί)⁷⁰.
16. Troparia of the Cross, Saint Nicholas, Anargyroi Cosmas and Damian, Holy Fathers, Mother of God, and finally, the troparion of all the saints.
17. Kyrie, eleison, 12 times.

The features of particular interest are the extra saints in the intercessions and the two prayers concluding the first section; Psalm 120 at the beginning of the second unit, making three psalms plus the doxology; three prayers, two of which are in the modern rite, although the second is now to be found in Saturday Midnight Office, and the series of common troparia at the end.

Instead of the final prayers and the troparia found in Sinai Ar. 232, the modern rite has the “prayer of the hours” (“O you who in every time and hour...”), the initial prayers, two long prayers to the Mother of God and to the Trinity, the dismissal and the monastic rite of forgiveness with a final litany of general intercessions.

The additional saints in the intercessions pose a conundrum: whereas analysis of Matins, the Hours, and Vespers has suggested that this is an Arabic Melkite Horologion from Alexandria that must have been received from Jerusalem c. the 7th century and then underwent both Alexandrian (Coptic) influences and later Byzantinisation which did not entirely eliminate more archaic elements from Jerusalem such as the tri-ode system at Matins, the choice of additional saints suggest a double provenance from both Alexandria and Sinai. Moses, Aaron, Elijah, and Elisha are typical of Sinai but not at all of Alexandria⁷¹. We could, therefore, suggest that the Horologion brought from Alexandria underwent some degree of adaptation on Sinai and that Sinai Arabic 232 may have been copied on Sinai from this new redaction of the Alexandrian Horologion with certain modifications. These modifications must have included the mentions of saints that are specific to Sinai. They certainly did not eliminate all the specifically Alexandrian features, but it is

difficult to assess whether other adaptations were made to the usage of Sinai or whether the only changes were these mentions of local saints.

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Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

¹ This description repeats the information given in (Wade 2020, pp. 285–86).

² Thus observed an anonymous colleague, whom I thank for his careful examination and useful comments, almost all of which I have implemented.

³ Here and *passim*, I mean by the ambiguous term “the modern rite,” the liturgical office or offices of the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches of the modern period. I have used (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993) as my text of reference for “the modern rite” unless otherwise indicated. For “Middle Compline” in pre-Nikonian Russia (14th to 17th centuries), see (Andreev 2022, abstract *et passim*). I thank one of the reviewers for this reference.

⁴ صلاة النوم. In this article, I have used italics to indicate what is probably red ink in the manuscript, which often indicates rubrics. The signs φ , $> X <$, etc. appear to have no meaning other than decoration, filling lines occupied by titles, etc. They are very similar to those found in the manuscript, which can be examined online.

⁵ I.e., the standard initial prayers but no initial blessing.

⁶ A Middle Arabic form, *mazmūr arbaʿah* (مزمور اربعه). There follow the initial six psalms of compline, cf. the modern rite of Great Compline as in (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993, p. 158ff). Unlike Sinai Ar. 232, the modern rite also places Ps. 69 before the six psalms of Great Compline if it is the first week of Lent.

⁷ *Mazmūr sittah* (مزمور ستة).

⁸ There are no verses repeated at the end of Ps. 12, as in the modern rite, which also has “Glory... Both now... [Alleluia x3, glory to you, O God] x3 with three bows, Kyrie eleison x3. Glory... Both now...,” before proceeding with Ps. 24, see (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993, p. 160). None of this is present in Sinai Ar. 232.

⁹ Δόξα, καὶ νῦν. As in the modern rite of Great Compline, but Sinai Ar. 232 does not add “[Alleluia x3, glory to you, O God] x3, Kyrie eleison x3. Glory... Both now...”

¹⁰ This canticle with the refrain “For God is with us” also follows in the modern rite of Great Compline, cf. (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993, pp. 164–65). Here, the refrain is given in the affirmative form: “God is with us,” with nothing corresponding to the Greek “for” (ὅτι).

¹¹ The Arabic presents forms of Middle Arabic (hereinafter MA): *huwa dā anā wa-l-banīn* [sic] *al-ladī* [sic] *aʿtānī-r-rabb* (هو دا انا والبنين الذي اعطاني الرب).

¹² Sic, *al-sālik* (السالك).

¹³ Ar. *al-kuwar* (الكور) for Gk. χώρα. The scribe (or translator?) has confused these two verses.

¹⁴ After this verse, the scribe has omitted, “And of his peace there shall be no end”.

¹⁵ The verses are divided differently from the modern rite.

¹⁶ cf. (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993, p. 165).

¹⁷ For the following text, a *kata stichon* hymn, cf. (Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα 1993, pp. 165–66). For an edition of a mediaeval text of this hymn, see (Maas 1909, pp. 309–56).

¹⁸ The Greek has “Mother of God.” Is this “Nestorianising” a change to avoid Islamic accusations?

¹⁹ The Greek does not apply “eye-witness and handmaiden” to the Virgin but has these terms in the vocative masculine plural as a separate category being invoked, maybe referring to the apostles, although the latter are mentioned in the following invocation.

²⁰ For the last petition, today’s Greek has: “O Holy one, O Holy one, O Holy one, thrice-holy Lord, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.”

²¹ Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα (1993, p. 166).

²² cf. Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα (1993, p. 167).

²³ *Mārī Mūsā wa-Mārī Harūn* (مارى موسى ومارى هرون): Notice the Syriac title *Mār* (Lord, saint) with the –y (silent in Syriac but written to be pronounced in Arabic), also the form with –y (no diacritic points) in the first case but –ī (with diacritic points in the second case). The omission of diacritic points under –y is not necessarily a sign of Egyptian provenance, whereas their inclusion is not necessarily a sign of Syrian or Palestinian provenance, as it would be in modern usage. Here we have both! The use of diacritic points is far from systematic in mediaeval manuscripts, so no hasty conclusions should be drawn. Furthermore, these special commemorations of Moses and Aaron, inserted into the “common” list of saints, are usually seen as a feature of Sinai; see note

71 below. It would, therefore, appear that the Alexandrian Horologion underwent some influence from Sinai before reaching the text found in Sinai Ar. 232. The modern Greek rite does not mention these additional saints, whose names often indicate the provenance of the manuscript.

24 *Mārī* (ماري). Thus, throughout this list of saints.

25 *Mārī Tādrus* (ماري تادرس): Saint Theodore. Here is a list of manifestly Egyptian and, indeed, Coptic monastic saints and martyrs, confirming the Egyptian provenance of this text.

26 *بِقَطْر* Victor.

27 Procopius? *Abrākūtiyūs* (ابراكوتيوس) is written clearly, but the diacritics may be a little free, and maybe it should be *Abrākūtiyūs*, *Prokotius > * Prokopius (?).

28 Athanasius and Cyril were great patriarchs of Alexandria.

29 We are back in Egypt with Anthony and Pachomios, who appears for the second time, as does Theodore.

30 Possibly dittography, but Symeon is also repeated; are these two cases of two saints with the same name? They could certainly be the two stylites, Symeon the Elder and Symeon the Younger.

31 No doubt Saint Sabbas of the Lavra in the Judaeian desert, but it should be remembered that there was a monastery of Saint Sabbas at Alexandria, which is a possible provenance for this manuscript tradition.

32 Here we have returned to the “common” order of these intercessions, cf. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 167).

33 This ending differs from the text found in (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 167).

34 In the modern rite, this hymn is appointed only for Tuesday and Thursday evenings. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 168).

35 In the modern rite, there is a psalm verse here (Ps 118:32), and “Glory...” precedes the third troparion, while “both now...” precedes the final theotokion. However, here “Glory” separates the first two troparia, and “both now...” precedes the theotokion.

36 *مترميم*. This title (literally, “Lady Mary”) is of Syriac origin. However, it is regularly used in the Coptic Church and in Palestine as a title for Mary the Mother of God.

37 This verse (Ps 112:2) figures in the modern rites of Typika and Vespers as well as in the eucharistic Liturgies. It is an indication of thanksgiving after communion, leading us to think that there used to be a communion rite at this point, particularly following the “self-absolution” prayer “leave, efface and have mercy and forgive” (Ἄνεξ, ἄφεξ, συγχώρησον), see (*Wade* 2005). We should note that in the Coptic book of hours, the *Agpeya*, there is a similar prayer for absolution at the offices: “Loose, remit, and pardon, O God, our transgressions that we have committed voluntarily and involuntarily, consciously and unconsciously, hidden and manifest. O Lord, remit for the sake of your holy name, by which we are called, according to your mercy, O Lord, and not according to our sins.” Cf. (*Agpeya* 1982, p. 17; *الأجبية* n.d., pp. 55–56). Nevertheless, as one of the reviewers has pointed out, in my view correctly: “I know of no daily office with a communion rite at Compline. Moreover, in a medieval context, this would require fasting until the beginning of the night and a meal after Compline, that is, after the “after supper service” (“apodeipnon”) (!!). This makes no liturgical sense.” This may, therefore, not be a communion rite but a mimetic conclusion of the unit, copying Typika and Vespers.

38 I thank one of the reviewers for indicating that this prayer is perhaps Prayer (40) listed by Georgi Parpulov, *Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters ca. 850–1350 AD*. Plovdiv, 2014, at 185 (*Parpulov* 2014).

39 Unlike the other psalms, psalm 50 is not written out in full, presumably because everyone knew it by heart, but maybe because it is already found in the Third Hour. It is also not written out in full in the Mesoria when it figures as a fourth psalm. Here begins the next unit of compline, cf. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, pp. 169–72), which also has Pss. 50, 101, and the Prayer of Manasseh.

40 There is no “Glory...” at this point in the modern rite, cf. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 172), nor does “both now...” appear subsequently in the manuscript after the Prayer of Manasseh.

41 *Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* (1993, p. 172).

42 This is the common troparion of the venerable fathers, cf. for example (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 294), whereas the modern rite has the troparia of repentance at this point (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 173), which follow in the manuscript.

43 This troparion has an unusual ending in this manuscript; at this point, the Greek says: “... for you are our God, and we are your people, all works of your hands, and we are called by your name.”

44 The scribe forgot to add *Kā nīn*.

45 The Greek ends: “of the race of the Christians”.

46 I thank the aforementioned colleague for pointing out that this is not a misspelling but a common variant of Arabic transliteration employing the emphatic *s* (ص *ṣād*) instead of *s* (س *sīn*) and terminating before the final syllable.

47 cf. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 173).

48 Here begins the third unit. In the manuscript, psalm 120 precedes the psalms of the modern rite, cf. (*Ωρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, pp. 173–75), which has Psalms 69 and 142 before the lesser (ferial) doxology. Although not necessarily in the same order, a number of early Horologia contain Ps 120, e.g., Erlangen University Library A2 (olim 96), dated 1025, the oldest dated Greek Horologion, of Palestinian type; Sinai Georgian O.34 (copied mid-tenth century, content before ca. 700 according to Frøyshov);

Sinai Georgian N.23 (A.D. 985, Constantinople); Sinai Greek 863 (ninth c.); Schøyen MS 575 (Syriac, tenth c.). For a full discussion of Compline in the earliest surviving Horologia, see (Frøysshov 2014, especially pp. 223–29).

49 There is no “Glory, and now” and no title (“The praise of the angels”) in the modern rite preceding the doxology, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, pp. 174–75).

50 At this point, the modern rite inserts the canon, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, pp. 175–76).

51 cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 176).

52 Although the following canticle has interspersed verses from Psalm 150, in the modern rite, Psalm 150 is not announced or recited, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, p. 176).

53 The refrain in the manuscript is shorter than that found in the modern rite, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 176).

54 From this point, the divisions of the verses and the repetitions differ from the modern rite, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 177).

55 The troparia that follow in the manuscript are not found in the modern rite, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 177).

56 This is the prayer attributed to Saint Basil the Great in the modern office of Great Compline before the second unit, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 169).

57 Imperative in Arabic, indicative in Greek.

58 The reference is, of course, to the vespertal Psalm 140, in which the supplicant is in the singular. Here, it is adapted to “us”, i.e., the plural number rather than “my hands”, and consequently, the “hands” are in the plural rather than the original dual in the Arabic psalter.

59 This is quite a free version of the final prayer of Saturday Midnight Office in today’s rite, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα*, pp. 35–36), where it is attributed to “Saint Eustratios”. The Arabic is more concise than the more prolix received Greek text, maybe reflecting an earlier recension.

60 *Al-jinn*, translating the Greek “demons” (plural).

61 This time, *ifšīn* (from Greek εὐχή) rather than *ṣalāt* (from Syriac *šlōṭā*).

62 The troparion of the Cross gives a very “Melkite” flavour with the prayer for the kings (the Byzantine emperors), but praying for “those that are yours” rather than for the imperial city (Πολίτευμα). This text is not found in the modern rite at this point, but, apart from the feasts of the Cross, it is found in the “royal beginning” of Matins, e.g., (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 49), which is not found in this manuscript.

63 The troparion of the Apostles Peter and Paul. It is not found here in the modern rite, but the text is found in the Menaion at 29 June, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 388).

64 The troparion of Saint Nicholas is also absent from the modern rite at this point but is found in the Menaion for 6 December, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 264). The note in the rubric “and for all the fathers” indicates that this is the common troparion for holy hierarchs. In the manuscript, the phrase “an image of meekness” is missing.

65 This is the troparion for the “Anargyroi”, who were physicians who treated the sick “without silver”, that is, free of charge. Cf. Menaion 1 July, in (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 391), although here their names have been added to the common text.

66 This is the common troparion for holy monks, cf. (*Ὁρολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* 1993, p. 201).

67 I have not been able to find this saint nor his troparion in any texts. As far as I am aware, this is his only occurrence in this manuscript.

68 In the Russian Church, this troparion is sung on Saturdays at the Matins for the dead. It also figures on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings at vespers, matins, and the Liturgy with commemoration of the dead. Cf., for example, (*Издательство Белорусского Экзархата—Белорусской Православной Церкви* 2004, p. 562).

69 See note 10 above.

70 My reason for highlighting the two terms for “prayer”, with two different etymological origins, is that this difference suggests that these prayers have been derived from two different sources.

71 When discussing the manuscript Sinai Greek 1097, Dmitrievskij (*Дмитрієвскій* 1917, vol. 3, p. 401) compares the litē at vespers during the vigil with the text found in the manuscript Jerusalem Patriarchal Library 311 (16th c.). At the litany Σῶσον, ὁ Θεός, τὸν λαόν σου... (“Save, o God, your people...”), he observes: “(упоминаются пророки Моисей, Ааронъ и Елисей)” (“the prophets Moses, Aaron and Elisha are commemorated”), and that the prayer that follows the litany, Δέσποτα πολυέλεε... (“Most merciful Master...”), also adds saints: (упоминаются пророки Моисей, Ааронъ, Илія и Елисей и великомученица Екатерина) (“the prophets Moses, Aaron, Elijah and Elisha and the great martyr Catherine are commemorated”, my translations). Referring to (*Дмитрієвскій* 1917, p. 401), Uspenskij, in his article on the All-Night Vigil (*Успенский* 1978), describes both these manuscripts on page 70: Такой же характер носила лития в Синайском монастыре великомученицы Екатерины. Ркп. Синайск. библ. № 1097 по этому поводу говорит: «и начинаем стихиру пророка по гласу дня и совершаем литию с кадиллом и лампадой, предносимой пред иереем. По окончании же стихиры возглашает иерей во услышание всех: Спаси, Боже, люди Твоя (упоминаются пророки Моисей, Аарон и Елисей), Господи, помилуй,— 50 раз. После сего возглашает иерей: Еще молимся об оставлении согрешений раба Божия и архиепископа нашего Симеона и т. д. до конца прошения, Господи, помилуй, — 50 раз. После сего возглашает: И услыши ны, Боже, Спасителю наш... И

нам преклоншим колена молится иерей велегласно: Владыко многомилостиве (упоминаются пророки Моисей, Илия, Аарон и Елисей и великомученица Екатерина). (“In the Sinai monastery of the great martyr Catherine, the litē had the same character. MS Sinai 1097 says about this: “and we begin the stichera of the prophet on the tone of the day and perform the litē with the censer and the lamp, borne in front of the priest. At the end of the stichira, the priest exclaims in the hearing of all: Save, o God, your people (the prophets Moses, Aaron, and Elisha are commemorated), Kyrie, eleison, 50 times. After this, the priest exclaims: Again, let us pray for the remission of the sins of the servant of God and our archbishop Symeon, etc. until the end of the petition, Kyrie, eleison, 50 times. After this, he exclaims: And hear us, o God, our Saviour... and as we kneel, the priest prays aloud: O most merciful Master (the prophets Moses, Elijah, Aaron and Elisha and the great martyr Catherine are commemorated”) [my translation]. Here, Uspensky’s note 59 refers to (Дмитрієвскій 1917, p. 401). On the same page (70), Uspensky describes the prayer for blessing the bread at the litē: Обряд хлебоблагословения совершается по всем памятникам чтением молитвы «Господи, Иисусе Христе, Боже наш, благословивый пять хлебов...», причем по ркп. № 1096 Синайск. библ., отражающей практику лавры преп. Саввы, в этой молитве упоминается его имя, а по ркп. № 1097 той же библ., отражающей практику Синайского монастыря, здесь упоминаются пророки Моисей, Аарон, Илия и Елисей и великомученица Екатерина. (“The rite of the blessing of the bread is performed in all the monuments by the reading of the prayer ‘O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, who blessed five loaves...’, and here, according to MS Sinai 1096, expressing the practice of the Laura of the ven. Saba, his name is commemorated in this prayer, but according to MS Sinai 1097, expressing the practice of the monastery of Sinai, the prophets Moses, Aaron, Elijah, and Elisha and the great martyr Catherine are commemorated.”) Once again, the note here (89) refers to (Дмитрієвскій 1917, p. 401).

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