

ELIA OF NOLA'S HANDWRITING AND OTHER PECULIARITIES  
OF THE HEBREW PIECES IN MS SBB, *OR. FOL. 13*:  
PALEOGRAPHICAL, CODICOLOGICAL AND TEXTUAL REMARKS\*

*Introduction*

The 27-folios Syriac manuscript *Or. fol. 13* (*Sachau 342*) preserved at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (*M* henceforward)<sup>1</sup> is a precious collection of eight letters in Syriac, most of which sent by the Syrian scribe and priest Moses of Mardin to Andreas Masius<sup>2</sup> between 1553 and 1556.

A brilliant diplomat, the Flemish humanist and biblical exegete Andreas Maes (1514-1573) was among the first scholars in Europe to take a serious interest in Syriac: he particularly devoted himself to translating from this language and took part in the edition of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible, authoring a grammar and a glossary that together came to be the first systematic introduction to the Syriac language in Europe. He had a strong working partnership with Moses, a representative of the Syriac Orthodox Church at the Holy See searching for opportunities to both purchase and release Syriac manuscripts and books who eventually participated in the publication of the first edition of the New Testament in Syriac (Vienna, 1555).<sup>3</sup> Providing noteworthy testimony to their relationship, Moses' letters to Masius (*M*, ff. 11-27) mainly illustrate the many hardships he faced in Rome and Venice as well as his role as editorial advisor in Vienna.<sup>4</sup>

\* Deep gratitude is owed to Pier Giorgio Borbone (University of Pisa), Saverio Campanini (University of Bologna), Giacomo Corazzol (IRHT - CNRS), Fabrizio Lelli (University of Salento) and Giulia Spoltore (Università della Svizzera Italiana) for their insights and advice.

<sup>1</sup> See E. SACHAU, *Verzeichniss der Syrischen Handschriften*, II (Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin 23), Berlin 1899, p. 910, n° 342. The manuscript is fully digitized: <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN739951084> (acc. 2022.05.05).

<sup>2</sup> Essential information on his life, activity and crucial role can be found in: S.G. BURNETT, *Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1500-1660). Authors, Books, and the Transmission of Jewish Learning*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2012; R. CONTINI, *Gli inizi della linguistica siriana nell'Europa rinascimentale*, in M. TAVONI (ed.), *Italia ed Europa nella linguistica del Rinascimento. Italy and Europe in Renaissance Linguistics*, 2, Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, Modena 1996, pp. 483-502; H. DE VOCHT, *Andreas Masius (1514-1573)*, in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati. IV. Letteratura classica e umanistica*, Città del Vaticano 1946, pp. 425-441; W. FRANÇOIS, *Andreas Masius (1514-1573): Humanist, Exegete and Syriac Scholar*, «Journal of Eastern Christian Studies» 61: 3-4 (2009), pp. 199-244; A. VAN ROEY, *Les débuts des études syriaques et André Masius. Conférence inaugurale (texte abrégé)*, in R. LAVENANT (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum 1988*, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Roma 1990, pp. 11-19; R.J. WILKINSON, *The Kabbalistic Scholars of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2007, pp. 39-48; Id., *Orientalism, Aramaic, and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation: The First Printing of the Syriac New Testament*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2007, pp. 63-94. Further reference can be found in the 2020 study by Maxime Maleux (pp. 70-73: see below).

<sup>3</sup> Moses' actual position and role in Rome are as complex and controversial as those of Masius and Elia of Nola/Giovanni Paolo Eustachio: see G. CARDINALI, *Ritratto di Marcello Cervini en orientaliste (con precisazioni alle vicende di Petrus Damascenus, Mosè di Mārdīn ed Heliodorus Niger)*, «Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance» 80: 1-2 (2018), pp. 77-98/325-343. New insights and major details into Moses' life have been shared and discussed by András Mércz: see A. MÉRCZ, *The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin*, «Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies» 22: 2 (2019), pp. 345-393.

<sup>4</sup> András Mércz has very recently defended a seminal doctoral thesis on their correspondence (Budapest, 08 September 2022: see below).

Masius stayed in Rome as a delegate on three occasions (1549-1550, 1551-1553 and 1556) when he could meet Elia ben Menachem of Nola (1540-1602), *scrittore* at the Vatican Library. As a copyist of Hebrew manuscripts and middle-man book trader, especially of rabbinical and kabbalistic works, Elia closely bonded with Masius—whose deep interest in Talmudic literature and Jewish mysticism he knew well and nurtured further—and corresponded with him in 1555.<sup>5</sup>

The popularity of *M* has therefore mainly rested upon the Syriac letters, but these precious testimonies to the epistolary relations entertained by the illustrious Flemish humanist are just one of the promising issues it raises.

In fact, the ten folios preceding the correspondence (ff. 2-9) feature eight unique Hebrew texts, namely a poem on Christ and a list of kabbalistic works penned by Elia and three versions of a metrical poem on a fount, two rhymed quatrains and another ode on the same fount written and copied by Masius. In particular, the poems on the fountain all most likely sprang from the digging of an artificial fount and the installation of the monumental fountain of Julius III in the gardens of Villa Giulia, whereas the two pieces by Elia strikingly match what he himself reported in his letters to Masius about the worsening living conditions of the Jews in the Papal States.

In the light of a few prominent studies showing the importance of this manuscript and its peculiar Hebrew pieces as examples of Christian poetry in Hebrew and of Masius' mastery of this language,<sup>6</sup> the present article aims at providing fresh evidence from a new material and textual examination. On the one hand, some codicological details and paleographical considerations will be offered—these last also for the purpose of a more accurate attribution of the texts—, while on the other hand the Hebrew poems and notes will be reviewed with special focus on those that still deserve closer attention,<sup>7</sup> thus furthering their study as sources on the circulation and trade of Kabbalistic texts in Renaissance Italy as well as on Masius' intellectual life and close cooperation with Elia in Rome in the early Fifties of the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Three letters in Italian have been published (15 June, 29 June and 16 August 1555): see J. PERLES, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Hebräischen und Aramäischen Studien*, München 1884, V: 10-12, pp. 216-231. Elia converted to Catholicism around 1566, changing his name to Giovanni Paolo Eustachio and working as censor and polemist in Rome: in-depth study on his life and activity is offered in B. LEBER, *A Jewish Convert in Counter-Reformation Rome. Giovanni Paolo Eustachio*, PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> By date of publication: A. SPANIER, *Ein hebräisches Humanistengedicht aus dem 16. Jahrhundert*, «Soncino-Blätter: Beiträge zur Kunde des jüdischen Buches» 3: 2-4 (1930), pp. 148-150 (= I. ELBOGEN - A. FREIMANN - H. PICK - D. SIMONSEN [edd.], *Festschrift für Heinrich Brody*, pp. 72-74); H. STRIEDL, *Hebräische Lobgedichte des Andreas Masius auf die Aqua Virgo im Nymphaeum der Villa Giulia in Rom*, in H. FRANKE - W. HEISSIG - W. TREUE (edd.), *Folia rara. Wolfgang Voigt lxxv. diem natalem celebranti ab amicis et catalogorum codicum orientalium conscribendorum collegis dedicata* (Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Supplementband 19), Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden 1976, pp. 126-133; M. MALEUX, *On Hebrew Nymphs and Aqueducts. Two Hebrew Poems by Andreas Masius*, «Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources» 47: 1 (2020), pp. 67-87; A. MÉRCZ, *The Syriac correspondence of Andreas Masius and Moses of Mardin*, PhD diss., Pázmány Péter Catholic University 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Some being still rather neglected or unpublished (see *a.*, *d.*, *e.* and *f.* below).

<sup>8</sup> Spanier, Striedl and Maleux particularly addressed Masius' two poems on the 'fountain of the virgin' (see *b.*, *c.*, *g.* and *h.* below), not only presenting editions and commented translations, but also framing these texts within the tradition of Christian Hebrew poetry. As regards Mércz's dissertation, chapter 2.2.1 focuses on the content, history and materiality of *M* (see MÉRCZ, *Correspondence*, cit., pp. 46-59). The writer wishes to inform that only after completion of this article and at an advanced stage of revision (i.e. summer 2022) was the existence of these publications made known to him. Therefore, the codicological comments and the presentation of some already discussed pieces and issues in the following pages have the sole purpose of complementing those fundamental studies—to which due reference will be made—, integrating further bibliography and fitting into their wake in the scholarly debate.

# 1. Manuscript M: two undetected watermarks

Consisting of 27 paper folios,<sup>9</sup> this manuscript is a collection of eight anonymous and undated texts in Hebrew and as many letters in Syriac.<sup>10</sup> It is dated to the sixteenth century according to the dates of the Syriac letters and the chronological record of the watermarks, whereas the pasteboard binding covered in marbled *coulé* paper presumably dates to the nineteenth century. Overall condition is good, although the written text in the first folios is partially incomplete due to the loss of the writing surface<sup>11</sup> and water stains efface the middle lines of the letter at f. 13.<sup>12</sup>

As far as codicological features are concerned, watermarks deserve special consideration as individual handicraft creations and further elements towards a reconstruction of the material history of the manuscript—albeit of little use in dating the texts. In fact, not only is their variety truly remarkable,<sup>13</sup> but two patterns also raise questions about both their dating and shape.

Firstly, all the watermarks date to around the mid-sixteenth century in accordance with the dating of the Syriac letters, but one of them apparently matches a pattern not occurring before 1587, that is, a column topped with a lily (Fig. 1):<sup>14</sup>

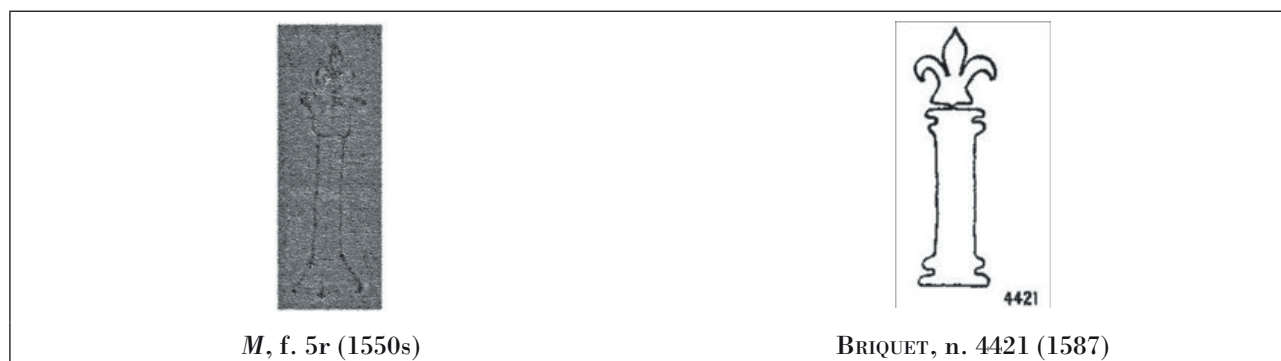


Fig. 1. *M*: 'column watermark' vs. Briquet pattern.

<sup>9</sup> The arrangement of folios, many of which bound upside down, testifies to the archival nature of *M*, more properly an aggregation of notes and letters (*filza*) later bound as a 'manuscript'. As Mércz carefully points out, there are eight distinct foliations: for the sake of convenience, the latest one (pencil, Arabic figures, eastern, recto) will be referred to (see the detailed discussion in Mércz, *Correspondence*, cit., pp. 51-53).

<sup>10</sup> Seven by Moses of Mardin to Masius (1553-1556) and one undated by Masius to Moses in Hebrew script. For an overview of the content of *M* see also SPANIER, *Humanistengedicht*, cit., pp. 148-149; STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., pp. 126-128; MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 69; Mércz, *Correspondence*, cit., pp. 46-48.

<sup>11</sup> Later mending is visible.

<sup>12</sup> Drawing on the available images, the dimensions can be roughly indicated as follows: ca. 335×225×180 mm (binding), whereas folio size as well as text justification vary for each piece. The writer could regrettably not carry out a physical examination, but a thorough and in-depth codicological description can now be found in Mércz, *Correspondence*, cit., p. 51.

<sup>13</sup> The watermarks have been investigated in Mércz, *Correspondence*, cit., pp. 56-59: see the respective patterns in C.M. BRIQUET, *Les filigranes. Dictionnaire historique des marques du papier dès leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu'en 1600*, Paris 1907. Among them are: single column topped with a lily (see below); lily inscribed in a circle (n. 7104: 1560); gothic letter P topped with an escutcheon (n. 8796: 1557-1569); small escutcheon charged with a bend and a six-pointed star in the sinister chief and dexter base (n. 1008: 1531-1589). For anchor with star see G. PICCARD, *Die Wasserzeichenkartei im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart*, W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1961-1997, n. 118992: 1529. Far later watermark (a scroll-eared top, lobed base escutcheon charged with maybe three flowers on the same stem and topped with a conifer: see e.g. *Wasserzeichen Informationssystem* [WZIS], DE0945-Kaufmann4392\_I: 1790 ca.) and countermark (*I W EBART*, i.e. Johann Wilhelm Ebart [1781-1822]: WZIS, cit., DE0960-BachP375\_V) are visible on f. 27 and on the rear pastedown respectively.

<sup>14</sup> See BRIQUET, *Filigranes*, cit., n. 4421. This watermark does not seem to be that showing «the column with crown» pointed out in MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 70 n. 12.

The date of Briquet pattern n. 4421 (1587) surely rules out any direct connection to the Syriac letters received in the 1550s by Masius. Nevertheless, despite the watermark in *M* being markedly different as for the shape of both column base and capital, the overall design seems quite the same: *M* might therefore present, as early as the 1550s, a possible antecedent of the pattern marking paper later used in Rome.

In addition, a second pattern even seems to be missing in catalogues. In fact, f. 7 shows an apparent quadrupedal animal with elongated neck inscribed in a horsehead (or bucranium) shaped escutcheon topped with a bird-like silhouette (Fig. 2):

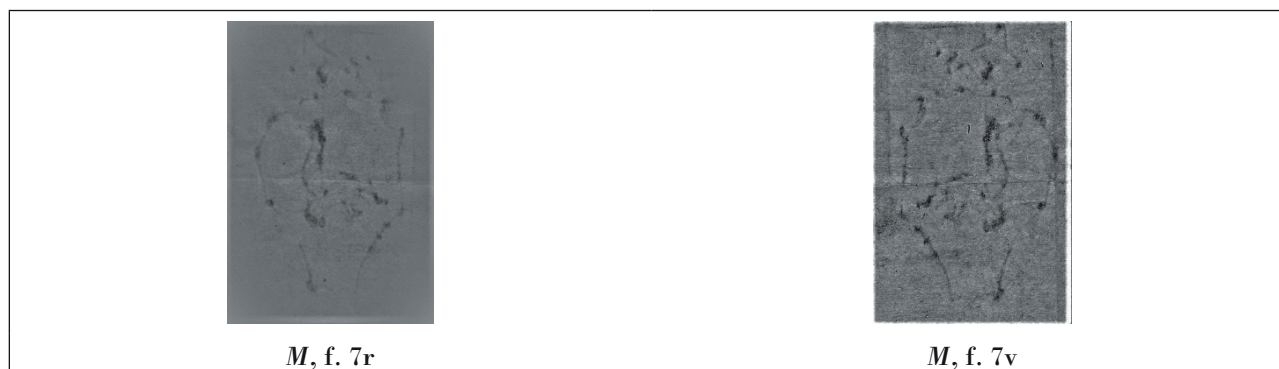


Fig. 2. *M*: unmatched watermark.

Both figures of the animal in the shield and of the surmounting element are blurry, and the identification of the watermark is therefore doubtful. The animal might be a horse (maybe Pegasus or a unicorn), a dragon (albeit with lowered wings) or a swan (with open wings), but in none of this case does the shape properly match the respective specimens in the main inventories.<sup>15</sup>

## 2. The Hebrew texts<sup>16</sup>

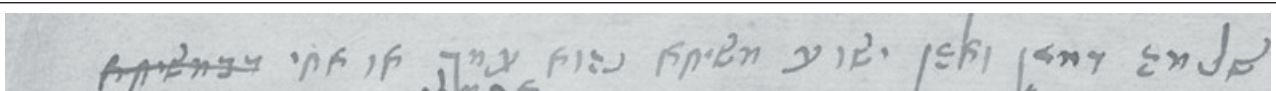
The eight anonymous and untitled Hebrew texts of *M* are arranged in the following order:

- a. f. 2v, a poem on Christ
- b. f. 3v, a poem on a speaking fount (draft A)
- c. f. 4r, a poem on a speaking fount (draft B)
- d. f. 5v, a quatrain
- e. f. 6r, *Kabbalah* booklist
- f. f. 8r, a quatrain
- g. f. 8v, a poem on a speaking fount (draft C)
- h. f. 9r/v, ode on a fount and on a monument

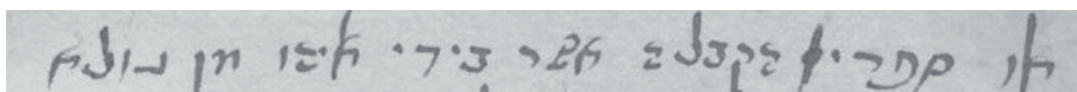
<sup>15</sup> The shape also resembles a giraffe, which cannot be found: see THE BERNSTEIN CONSORTIUM (ed.), *Bernstein. The Memory of Paper* ([https://www.memoryofpaper.eu/BernsteinPortal/appl\\_start\\_disp#](https://www.memoryofpaper.eu/BernsteinPortal/appl_start_disp#)); BRIQUET, *Filigranes*, cit. (<https://briquet-online.at/BR.php?IDtypes=4&lang=fr>); FONDAZIONE FEDRIGONI FABRIANO (ed.), *Corpus Chartarum Fabriano* (<https://ccf.fondazionefedrigoni.it>); G. PICCARD, *Wasserzeichenkartei*, cit. (<https://www.piccard-online.de/start.php>); WZIS, cit. (<https://www.wasserzeichen-online.de/wzis/index.php>); D.W. MOSSER - E.W. SULLIVAN, II (eds.), *The Thomas L. Gravell Watermark Archive* (<https://www.gravell.org/index.php>). All websites were last accessed 2022.01.14.

<sup>16</sup> The Syriac letters will not be discussed, for Masius massive correspondence with several personalities and scholars (including Elia/Eustachio) is very well known: see P.G. BORBONE, “*Monsignore Vescovo di Soria*”, also known as *Moses of Mardin, scribe and book collector*, «Hristianskij Vostok. Serija, posvjashchennaja izucheni-ju hristianskoj kul'tury narodov Azii i Afriki» 8: 14 (2017), pp. 79-114; M. LOSSEN, *Briefe von Andreas Masius*

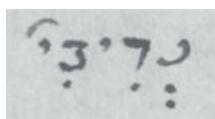
The whole content of *M*, these texts included, has always been tacitly attributed to Masius,<sup>17</sup> and paleographic comparison with the Syro-Hebrew letter provides definitive evidence thereupon (Fig. 3):



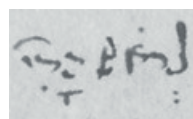
*M*, f. 26v, l. 1: Masius' hand, Syro-Hebrew letter.



*M*, f. 6r, l. 1: Masius' hand, heading to Elia's *Kabbalah* booklist.

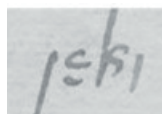


a

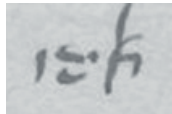


b

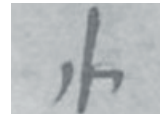
*M*, f. 5v, ll. 2 (left) and 4 (right): Masius' suspension of pl. m. ending (a: נְדִיבִים; b: הָרִים)



a



b



c

*M*, ff. 26v, l. 1 (a) and 6r, l. 1 (b, c): Masius' *alef-lamed* nexus (a: וְאֵלֶּהוּ; b: אֵלֶּהוּ; c: אֵלֶּוּ).

Fig. 3. *M*, Masius' hand: key-letters and further details.

Distinctive letters sharing identical *ductus* are א, ב, ה, ל, מ and ש. Moreover, Fig. 3 shows a few idiosyncratic elements such as the *alef-lamed* nexus (אֵ) and the suspension of plural masculine ending ים by means of a curved stroke above the line.

Masius' hand,<sup>18</sup> a personal cursive in the type of the Sephardic semi-cursive,<sup>19</sup> is elegant, regular and rather calligraphic and shows a proportionate, balanced and rather clean *ductus*; the letters tend

*und seinen Freunden 1538 bis 1573*, Leipzig 1886; A. MÉRCZ, *Correspondence*, cit.; J.W. WESSELIUS, *The Syriac Correspondence of Andreas Masius: A Preliminary Report*, in R. LAVENANT (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum 1988*, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Roma 1990, pp. 21-29.

<sup>17</sup> Masius' notes to e. and f. are nonetheless worth mentioning (see below).

<sup>18</sup> To avoid ambiguities in the use and meaning of English and Italian paleographical terms, the following correspondences are resorted to: 'script' = "modello, tipologia scrittoria, scrittura"; 'hand-/writing' = "mano/ scrittura personale"; '(cursive vs. non-cursive) mode' = "*ductus* (corsivo vs. posato)"; '*ductus*' = "tratteggio".

<sup>19</sup> Both Masius' and Elia's hands (see below) resemble the so-called *rašī* typeface: see A. YARDENI, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script styles, Calligraphy & Design*, The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, London – New Castle 2002, pp. 97, 102-103, 246 and M.J. HELLER, Review to A. YARDENI, *Hebrew Script*, cit., «The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America» 98:2 (2004), pp. 246-248, in particular p. 247.



to have the same proportions.<sup>20</sup> Abbreviations, ligatures and nexuses are rare, and the text is fully vocalized and pointed.<sup>21</sup>

However, two texts by a different hand in similar script stand out from these considerations, namely the poem on Christ and the title list of Kabbalistic works, whose author can be identified only by way of paleographical examination.<sup>22</sup> The handwriting is Elia's one: the line is neat and the *ductus* fluent, and there are no vowel points. The term of comparison is MS *Vat. ebr. 70* (V), copied by Elia in the same years (1556 ca).<sup>23</sup> Some distinctive elements and key letters (א, ה, ל, מ and ר) are showed here down (Fig. 4):

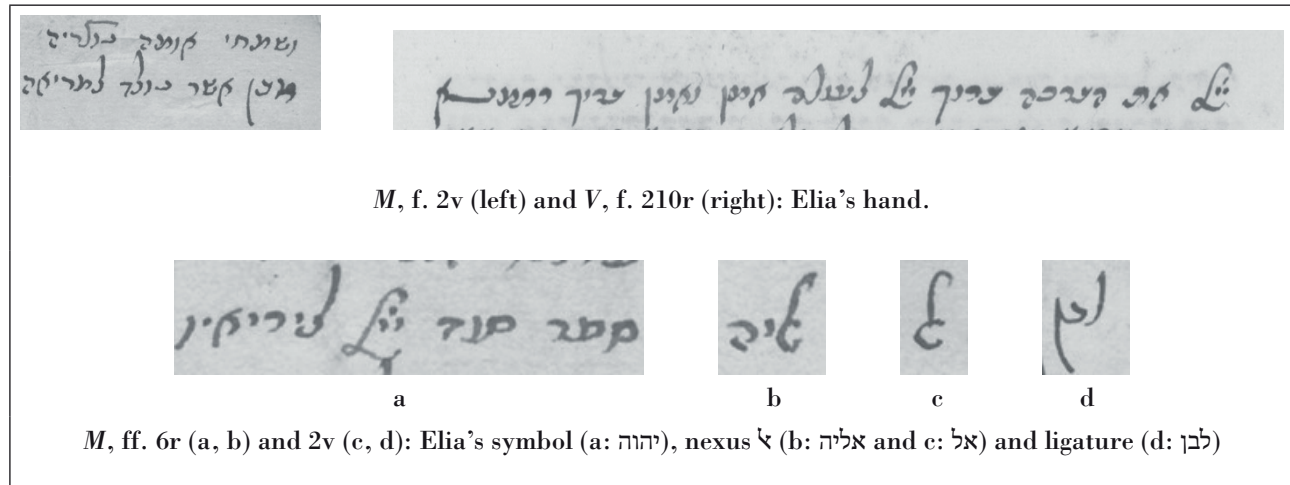


Fig. 4. Elia's hand: comparison of *M* and *V* with peculiarities.

Eventually, paleographical matching with Masius' Syriac letter in Hebrew script at f. 26v substantiates the authorship of five finely structured poetical texts (*b.-d.* and *g.-h.*), whose stylistic, metrical, rhetorical and linguistic quality also testifies to Masius' literary skills. As for the two remaining texts (*a.* and *f.*), both paleographical assessment (*ductus*, mode, abbreviations, symbols, ligatures and nexuses) and comparison with a Vatican Hebrew manuscript copied by Elia of Nola in the same time span allow to identify him as the author.

The Hebrew texts on *M* can therefore be attributed as follows:<sup>24</sup>

|    |                |  |       |
|----|----------------|--|-------|
| a. | Elia of Nola   | Poem on Christ                           | f. 2v |
| b. | Andreas Masius | Poem on a speaking fount A               | f. 3v |
| c. | Andreas Masius | Poem on a speaking fount B <sup>25</sup> | f. 4r |

<sup>20</sup> A few letters such as the final *he* of עֲלֹמָה in *g.*, l. 3 are difficult to read due to the swiftness of the stroke.

<sup>21</sup> Although Maleux draws the attention to Masius' often aberrant usage (see MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 7).

<sup>22</sup> Concerning the list, this is true with respect to the content, for the heading is by Masius. This suggests that the Flemish humanist also collected and copied texts and notes penned by others, as the presence of the poem on Christ by Elia and the quatrain by Crispino (should Masius' Latin annotation actually mention the author, see *f.*) further indicates.

<sup>23</sup> Elia was an esteemed copyist at the Vatican Library: MSS *Vat. ebr. 69, 70, 81, 85, 93, 272* and *340* stemmed from his work. See s.vv. B. RICHLER (ed.), *Hebrew manuscripts in the Vatican library. Catalogue*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2008. *V* is fully digitized and freely accessible online: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.ebr.70](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.ebr.70) (acc. 2022.14.01).

<sup>24</sup> A full edition and translation of *a.*, *d.*, *e.* and *f.* is provided here for the first time.

<sup>25</sup> These three drafts are listed alphabetically and here presented in order of appearance, although B does show a more definite shape and is also accompanied by Masius' Latin translation. Thus, it can be considered the

|    |                |                             |         |
|----|----------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| d. | Andreas Masius | Quatrain 1                  | f. 5v   |
| e. | Elia of Nola   | <i>Kabbalah</i> booklist    | f. 6r   |
| f. | Andreas Masius | Quatrain 2                  | f. 8r   |
| g. | Andreas Masius | Poem on a speaking fount C  | f. 8v   |
| h. | Andreas Masius | Ode on a fount and monument | f. 9r/v |

a. *Elia of Nola, Poem on Christ*

A poem on Christ quoting verses from the gospel of Matthew. The text is unfortunately lacking the first words of all first and some second hemistichs due to loss of the writing surface and subsequent restoration, as the integration at the folio fold and centre clearly shows.

*Language and style.* The language is relatively fluent, though sometimes convoluted; the vocabulary is clear and the style elevated but not obscure.

*Metre.* Twenty-six bicolons cadenced in the same single and internal perfect rhyme (הָ, -).

|                           |                        |    |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----|
| כי בא לך עת הלידה         | ושמחי אומה נוצריה      | 1  |
| אשר לא מאיש היתה הרה      | מבן אשר נולד למריאה    | 2  |
| שאמר הנה עלמה הרה         | ם נבואת ישעיה          | 3  |
| ובעת לידתה היתה בתולה     | רוח הקדש נכנסה בה      | 4  |
| ושלשה מלכים באו שמה       | תמה ומום אין בה        | 5  |
| להשתחות לו כהוגן וכשורה   | לבקש אשר נולד לגאולה   | 6  |
| צר לו מאוד על השמועה      | ארודס שר המלוכה        | 7  |
| והמלאך בא עם הבשורה       | וגזר כל הילודים למיתה  | 8  |
| אתה והאשה ואת בנה         | רד מצרימה              | 9  |
| עד יום בא לארודס המיתה    | כוליכם שמה             | 10 |
| עד שוב מלאך הבשורה        |                        | 11 |
| ...יביך נמסרו למיתה       |                        | 12 |
| [...] הבין לדרוש תורה     |                        | 13 |
| ...[ש]ר על זה כגזר למיתה  | עידה                   | 14 |
| לאמר גידף ושנה התורה      | עליו ריבה              | 15 |
| והמיתוהו בבושה וכלימה     | רוצו בעבדה             | 16 |
| ביום אשר נתן לו המיתה     | ירח כהרה               | 17 |
| ובשלישי חי יצא מן הקבורה  | יד האומה העבריה        | 18 |
| נפלאות עשה בחיים ובמיתה   | אות כי לו העוז והממשלה | 19 |
| ובחיים נצחיים הוא לשמימה  | וכאיש בא אל המיתה      | 20 |
| לחולים בחיים נתן רפואה    | ולמתים היתה אורה       | 21 |
| לבן שמחי כי לך היה לגאולה | המתים הציל משוחה       | 22 |
| נשלם בו חזון ונבואה       | שמו כי בו ישועה        | 23 |
| כי הוא יצילכם מכל צרה     | שמו בשמחה              | 24 |

author's last and 'final' one, as also Spanier and Maleux concluded. Still, differently from what they opted for, all the three drafts are presented here to provide more direct evidence of their peculiarities as Masius reworked them (see b. below).

|                   |             |    |
|-------------------|-------------|----|
| כי בו עוז האמונה  | באימה.....  | 25 |
| לתת לעובדיו מנוחה | השלימה..... | 26 |

*Translation.* 1 [...] and rejoice, Christian people, for the time of giving birth has come for you / 2 [...] from the son born to Mary, who was impregnated by no man / 3 [...] the prophecy of Isaiah, who said: «Behold, a pregnant maiden...»<sup>26</sup> / 4 [...] the Holy Spirit seeped into her, and at the time of child-birth she was a maid / 5 [...] intact, and no blame was in her. Three kings came there / 6 [...] searching for him who was born for redemption, to bow down to him as the Righteous and the Redeemer. / 7 [...] Herod, lord of the kingdom, got bitterly jealous of him due to the announcement / 8 [...] and sentenced all the new-borns to death. And the angel came up with the announcement / 9 [...] «... go down to Egypt, you and the woman together with her son / 10 [...] your belongings there»,<sup>27</sup> until the day came for Herod to die / 11 [...] until the angel repeated the announcement / 12 [...] were put to death<sup>28</sup> / 13 [...] learned to investigate the *Torah* / 14 [...] community [...] the lord] about this, sentencing to death / 15 [...] on him a damsel, saying: «he swore and overturned the *Torah*»<sup>29</sup> / 16 [...] were appeased by the fact, and they put him to death with ignominy and contempt / 17 [...] month of conception, the day that he gave him death / 18 [...] the hand of the Jewish people, and on the third he came out alive from the tomb / 19 [...] sign that to him are strength and dominion, he worked wonders in life and death / 20 [...] and like a man God came to death, and in eternal life to heaven. / 21 [...] and to the dead light came, and to the living sick he gifted healing, / 22 [...] he redeemed the dead from the grave. Do rejoice for the son, for he was your deliverance, / 23 [...] his name, for through him there was salvation, through him vision and prophecy were accomplished, / 24 [...] his name with gladness, for he will deliver you from every evil / 25 [...] with fear, for in him is the power of faith, / 26 [...] complete to give his servants rest.

Unfortunately, the lack of a large part of the text hampers a complete reading of the poem, whose specific occasion is not clear.

Striedl's claim that this is a Hebrew translation by Masius of an original Syriac poem procured by Moses of Mardin is unfortunately not supported by further evidence,<sup>30</sup> and the identification of Elia's hand also calls for some clarifications as to why he would have copied it. Although Striedl effectively rejects Spanier's suggestion that it may have been addressed to the Jews for proselytising purposes,<sup>31</sup> this very hypothesis might instead explain Elia's involvement.

This devotional composition might attest Elia's approach to (or at least interest in) the Christian faith as early as the 1550s, that is, long before the formal conversion in 1566: not surprisingly, in his letter to Masius of 16 August 1555 he alludes to the issue of a papal bull threatening banishment from the Papal State for all Jews who would not baptize and make profession of faith in Christ's birth from the Virgin Mary and in his divinity. Therefore, the poem might be occasioned by this event.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See Isa 7:14 and c., l. 3 below.

<sup>27</sup> See Matt 2:13.

<sup>28</sup> The preceding and maybe incomplete word יבין... («your...») is unclear.

<sup>29</sup> Probably echoing Matt 26:65.

<sup>30</sup> See STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., p. 127.

<sup>31</sup> For the addressees in the first line are the Christians, not the Jews: see STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., p. 127 n. 8 and SPANIER, *Humanistengedicht*, cit., p. 72.

<sup>32</sup> See PERLES, *Beiträge*, cit., pp. 219-220: «[...] qui li hebrej stanno molto travagliatj per una altra bolla nuovamente uscita de sua Santita, per laqual pare che sua Santita vogli che cebatizamo per forza, dicendo che qual sivoglia persona che non creda che X i-o non sia nato di maria virgine et che sia figliolo di dio che tutti habiano di partirsi del tutto tenimento de la eclesia fra termino tre mesj». Elia is maybe referring to the aftermath of Paulus IV's bull *Cum nimis absurdum* (14 July 1555) and apostolic constitution *Cum quorundam* (07 August 1555).



b. Andreas Masius, Poem on a speaking fount (draft A)<sup>33</sup>Language, style and metre. Same as draft B (see c. below).<sup>34</sup>

|    |                  |                             |                                 |                             |
|----|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1  | בוא נא ידיד נפשי | ולמה תעמוד <sup>35</sup>    | ה[נ]ה מחכים לך <sup>36</sup>    | אני מי השלוח                |
| 2  | באר מים חיים     | וגם מעין גנים               | איש השותה מהם                   | ימצא לו מנוח                |
| 3  | אני היא העלמה    | מיתרפקת על דוד              | מה רבו שנותי                    | על זה הקילוח                |
| 4  | כל מעיני קדם     | עמק השידים הם               | נשארתי לבדי                     | לשם ולניחוח                 |
| 5  | בנקרות הצורים    | אגריפס <sup>37</sup> הינחני | מהררי קדם                       | הלוח ונסוע                  |
| 6  | ולוא טיבריס      | וניקולאו קדוש               | המשעינים ידי                    | הלכתי שחוח                  |
| 7  | כל תגמולם עלי    | ואודה את שמם                | חסדם ואמיתם                     | לא אשכח שכוח                |
| 8  | אולם גבר עלי     | ויהי לי לישועה              | גוליו אב הקדוש                  | שלישי משוח                  |
| 9  | יושבת בגנים      | בין עצי ארזים               | שם את תמונתי                    | מגדל הריקוח                 |
| 10 | בשלוש לשונות     | הנם מכתב חרות               | האי[ר]... <sup>38</sup> [נ]ארתי | ויזרח זרוח                  |
| 11 | על כן אני עתה    | לגור ולקבוד                 | ה... <sup>39</sup> מו           | ובו אבטח בטוח <sup>40</sup> |

<sup>33</sup> The many textual divergences of A from the 'final' draft (B) are highlighted both in the text (bold) and in the translation (italics). Spanier just edited the texts of A and B disregarding C (see SPANIER, *Humanistengedicht*, cit., pp. 149-150), while Maleux opted for an edition and translation of B with critical apparatus for the different readings of A and C. Yet, some unmentioned adjustments have been made in Maleux's edition (e.g. plain rendering of words and lines, divided in syllables and split into four *kola* in the original respectively), while the apparatus does not clearly convey how the text actually looks in A and C (see MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., pp. 78-80). A transcription and translation—or just specific notes, as in the case of C—is here given for all drafts.

<sup>34</sup> A Latin note by Masius under the text reads: *Ita sunt ascript[... ] auctorem, sed male in plerisque locis*.

<sup>35</sup> Possibly a literal (למה תעמוד) and literary (a crucial meeting by a fount) echo of Gen 24:31 apparently missing in Spanier's and Maleux's in-depth surveys of the many biblical quotations and allusions in this poem: see SPANIER, *Humanistengedicht*, cit., p. 150 and MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., pp. 85. Moreover, the almost literal echoes in draft A occur also in B and C, albeit slightly adapted or radically changed. By way of example, see: l. 3 מיתרפקת (Cant 8:5) A → מבקשת BC (= synonymic substitution); l. 5 הלוח ונסוע (Gen 12:9) and l. 6 הלכתי שחוח (Isa 60:14) A → l. 5 הליכות השחוח BC (= merging and adaptation).

<sup>36</sup> Perhaps the unclear feminine לך mistakenly stands for לך.

<sup>37</sup> Common orthographical variant of drafts A and C versus אגריפא in B.

<sup>38</sup> The following word reads נארתתי «I was cursed» making no sense, and the colon also lacks one syllable.

<sup>39</sup> Text missing at ll. 10-11 due to loss of the writing surface.

<sup>40</sup> Translation. 1 So come, beloved of my soul, why are you standing? [Behold], they are waiting for you! I am the water of Siloam, / 2 Well of living water and fount of gardens: everyone drinking it will get rest! / 3 I am the maiden seeking the beloved. How my years have multiplied on this stream: / 4 All the ancient founts are the valley of Siddim: alone I remain as to name and fame. / 5 Through holes in the stones Agrippa drew me, from ancient mountains the way and the path do come. / 6 Were it not for Tiberius and the holy Nicholas upholding my hand, I would have ended in darkness. / 7 All the gratitude they deserve is my duty: I shall always celebrate their names, their grace and virtue: I shall not forget in oblivion! / 8 And yet Julius III, the holy anointed father, endured for me and was my salvation: / 9 I sit in the gardens, among the trees of the stables he placed my image, the tower of perfumes, / 10 An engraved script in those three languages, he lit up [...] and splendour will glow. / 11 Therefore, now for praise and glory I [...] and I shall be safely secure in it.

c. *Andreas Masius, Poem on a speaking fount (draft B)*<sup>41</sup>

A poem on the story and recovery of a fount celebrated and reported by herself. *Language and style*. Eloquent language: the difficult rhyme 𐌲𐌹- deserves special mention.<sup>42</sup> *Metre*. Eleven ‘tetrameters’ showing double perfect rhymes, each articulated in three disyllabic feet with an alternating prosodic structure of long and short syllables, according to a scheme noted by Masius himself on top of the text:<sup>43</sup>

|    |                                     |                                     |                                     |                                       |
|----|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1  | בֹּא נָא יְדִיד נִפְשִׁי            | וְלִמָּה תַעֲמֹד לָךְ <sup>44</sup> | כִּי הוֹלְכִים <sup>45</sup> מִנִּי | לֵאסֵּמִי שִׁלּוֹחַ                   |
| 2  | מִיָּם בְּאֵר חַיִּים               | וְגַם מַעַיִן גְּנוּיִם             | שׁוֹתָה הָלֵא יִמְצָא               | לְנִפְשׁוֹ מְנוּחַ                    |
| 3  | עֲלֻמָּה אֲנִי וְכָה                | מִבְקֶשֶׁת דּוֹדִי                  | רְבוּ שָׁנוֹת חַיִּי                | עָלֵי הַקִּילוֹחַ                     |
| 4  | כָּל מַעֲיֵינִי <sup>46</sup> קָדֵם | כַּעֲמֻק שְׁדִים הֵם                | נִשְׁאַרְתִּי אֲנִי                 | לְשֵׁם וּלְנִיחוּחַ                   |
| 5  | בְּנִדְרוֹת צוּרִים                 | אֲגָרִיפָא הִנָּחֲנִי               | מִהֲרָרִי קָדֵם                     | הַלִּיכּוֹת הַשְּׁחוֹחַ <sup>47</sup> |
| 6  | לֹוּלָא טְבִירִיאֻס                 | וְנִיקוּלָא קְדוּשׁ                 | הַסּוֹמְכִים יָדִי                  | וְאִדְכָּה אֲשׁוּחַ                   |
| 7  | אוֹדָה שְׁמֵם תָּמִיד               | וְתִגְמוּלֶם עָלֵי                  | חֲסִדָּם בְּפִי יוֹם יוֹם           | לְבַלְתִּי שְׂכוּחַ                   |
| 8  | אוּלָם גְּאֻלָּנִי                  | יִשׁוּעַת עוֹלָמִים                 | יּוֹלוּס לְאָב קְדוּשׁ              | וּפֶאפֶּא <sup>48</sup> מְשׁוּחַ      |
| 9  | יִשְׁבְּתִי בְטִיט                  | בִּיּוֹן טְבַעְתִּי                 | אֵךְ הוּא הַקִּימֵנִי               | לְמַגְדֵּל מְרָקוּחַ                  |
| 10 | הַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתִי                 | בְּשִׁלוּשׁ הַלְשׁוֹנוֹת            | אוֹרִי כְּאוֹר שְׁמֶשׁ              | עָדִי עַד יִזְרוּחַ                   |
| 11 | עֲלֵכֶן לְעוֹלָמִים                 | לְנֹזֵר וּכְבוֹדוֹ                  | יִהְיֶה שְׁמִי כְשֵׁמוֹ             | בְּחִסְדּוֹ אֲבִטּוּחַ <sup>49</sup>  |

<sup>41</sup> The punctual notes and remarks by Spanier and Maleux clearly illustrate the linguistic, metrical, orthographic and rhetorical features of this poem while also aiding its literary interpretation and historical contextualization: see SPANIER, *Humanistengedicht*, cit., pp. 149-150 and MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., pp. 73-75 and 84-86.

<sup>42</sup> See MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 84.

<sup>43</sup> See *g.* below. For an overview of prosody and metrics in Hebrew poetry see S. BURNISHAW - T. CARMİ - S. GLASSMAN - A. HIRSCHFELD - E. SPICEHANDLER (eds.), *The Modern Hebrew Poem Itself. A New and Updated Edition*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit 2003, pp. 323-359; B. HRUSHOVSKI, *Note on the Systems of Hebrew Versification*, in T. CARMİ (ed.), *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1981, pp. 57-72; ID., *Prosody, Hebrew*, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Thomson Gale, Detroit 2007, vol. XVI, pp. 595-623 (in particular, *Hebrew poetry in Italy*, pp. 611-613); W.G.E. WATSON, *Classical Hebrew Poetry. A Guide to its Techniques*, JSOT Press, Sheffield 1984.

<sup>44</sup> This *colon* is hypermetric in the long syllable לָ. See also *b. ad loc.*

<sup>45</sup> Words are oftentimes graphically broken to count the syllables.

<sup>46</sup> The word is broken probably to count syllables: see נְשֹׂא־רִתִּי (same line), בְּנִי־קֹרֹת (l. 5) and וְנִי־קֹרֹלָא (l. 6) and יִשְׁבְּתִי (l. 9).

<sup>47</sup> השחוח : שחוח corrected.

<sup>48</sup> «(Julius) III Pope» above the line. אפיפיור שלישי : לאב קדוש ופאפא

<sup>49</sup> The form אֶבְטֹחַ is unclear. Since the Latin translation *acquiescam* (see below, Maleux mistakenly reading *acquiescans*) points to an impf. 1. per. sg. from אֶבְטֹחַ, it might then stand for אֶבְטֹחַ «I shall trust»—i.e. and odd spelling by Masius to fit both metre and rhyme—, which is exactly the reading of A ad loc. It may also recall אֶבְטֹחַ “protection”—though again vocalized improperly—, the translation being then: «in his grace is (my) protection».

*Translation.*<sup>50</sup> 1 So come, beloved of my soul,<sup>51</sup> why are you standing? Behold, from me the water of Siloam is gently flowing, / 2 Water of enlivening well and fount of gardens. Anyone coming to drink will surely find rest for his soul! / 3 I am a pure maiden seeking my beloved.<sup>52</sup> The years of my existence have multiplied on the stream, / 4 All the ancient founts are like the valley of Siddim: alone I remain as to name and fame!<sup>53</sup> / 5 Through holes in the stone Agrippa drew me, from ancient mountains and twisted ways; / 6 Were it not for Tiberius and the holy Nicholas holding up my hand, I would be bowed down in humiliation. / 7 I shall always celebrate their names, and the gratitude they deserve is due on my part, their benefit on my lips day by day, with no oblivion. / 8 And yet Julius, holy father and anointed Pope, recovered me to eternal salvation: / 9 I sat in mourning, I was submerged in mud. He indeed raised me up by the tower of blended perfumes,<sup>54</sup> / 10 He sang my praises in three languages.<sup>55</sup> My light will always gleam like sunshine! / 11 Therefore, my name will eternally be like his own in praise and glory: in his grace I shall be secure.

d. Andreas Masius, Quatrain 1

*Language and style.* Also in this case language and style are solemn, with paronomasias and inversions. *Metre.* Four bicolons closed by the same *rime riche* (רִיכָה).

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | אֲנִי עֵין לְכָל עֵין וְאֵין            | כְּמוֹ יַפְיֵי תַעֲלַת הַבְּרָכָה :            |
| 2 | חֲפְרוֹנִי וְכְרוֹנִי נְדִיבִי          | נִתְנוּנִי לְכָל בָּא פֹה כְּרָכָה :           |
| 3 | שָׁתוּ מִימֵי גְבִירִים הַנְּעִימִים    | וְאִזְ תְּהִיָּה בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתְכֶם בְּרָכָה : |
| 4 | וְתִנּוּ שְׂבַח לְרֹאשׁ הָרִי מְשׁוּבָח | וְתִנּוּחַ עָלֵי רֹאשׁוֹ בְּרָכָה :            |

<sup>50</sup> Masius also wrote a Latin translation below the Hebrew text: 1 *Veni dilecte animae meae, quid stas? Nam a me leniter exeunt aquae Siloe, / 2 aquae putei vitalis, et fons hortorum, bibens nonne inveniet animo suo requiem! / 3 Puella ego pura quaerens amasium meum. Multiplicati sunt anni mei ad aquarum praeceptum, / 4 Omnes fontes veteres sunt tranquillae vallis Siddim. Ego superstis sum non sine bona fama et nomine / 5 Per foramina petrarum Agrippa deduxit me, ex montibus priscis per vias incurvas, / 6 Nisi (exstitissent) Tiberius, et Nicolaus sanctus, qui sustentaverunt manus meas, eodem attrita humilisque essem / 7 Celebrabo nomen isporum perpetuo, habenturque ipsis a me gratiae. Eorum beneficium in ore meo assiduo absque oblivione, / 8 Sed vindicavit me salute perpetua, Iulius pontifex tertius Unctus, / 9 Sedebam in luto, in limo eram demersa. Ille vero erexit me in turriculam aromatis / 10 Protulit laudem meam tribus linguis. Lumen meum ut lumen solis perpetuo exorietur / 11 Ideo in aeternum ad laudem et decus illius durabit nomen meum sicut nomen ipsius in eius munificentia acquiescam.*

<sup>51</sup> The first words echo back to the opening of the *Yedid nefeš*, traditionally attributed to the Sephardic kabbalist Rabbi El'azar Ben Moše Azkiri (1533-1600) and first published posthumously in 1601. This renowned *piyyuṭ* and *zemer* was already transcribed in a fifteenth-century commentary to *Numbers* preserved at the Cambridge University Library (MS Ff. 2.17.1-2; see S.C. REIF, *Hebrew Manuscripts at Cambridge University Library. A Description and Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997, pp. 92-93), and Masius' allusion might further imply an earlier dating.

<sup>52</sup> Maybe echoing Cant 5:6. עֵלְמָה might be a pun on both (*Aqua*) *Virgo*—the Roman aqueduct connected to the fount whose name and origin recall a legendary female protagonist—and its own later Christian meaning «virgin» (see a., l. 3). Masius is well aware thereof, for his Latin version reads *puella* (not *virgo*).

<sup>53</sup> The term נִחוּחַ literally means “scent”, but here it seems to figuratively stand for “fame” as Maleux reasonably reads on the basis of the Latin translation. However, the word is evidently reminiscent of biblical echoes (e.g. Exod 2:2), and Masius might use the term as also an allusion to the ‘tower of the winds’ (see d. below).

<sup>54</sup> Lit. «blending scents», most likely hinting at the ‘tower of the winds’ on the hill of the *vigna del Monte*: see D. RIBOUILLAULT, *Julius III's Tower of the Winds: A Forgotten Aspect of Villa Giulia*, in M. ISRAËLS - L.A. WALDMAN, (eds.), *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Joseph Connors*, I, Villa I Tatti, Firenze 2013, pp. 474-484/909-914.

<sup>55</sup> There is no record of a trilingual celebratory inscription connected with Villa Giulia, the nymphaeum or any of its monuments. This is the first and only mention at present. See MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 83 n. 44.

*Translation.* 1 I am the fount of all founts, and nothing equals my beauty, the channel of the cistern! / 2 Noble men dug and installed me, offering me as a delight to everyone coming here. / 3 Do drink my water, you mighty among the honourable ones: then there will be blessing in your houses! / 4 And do raise a praise resounding unto the top of the mountains, so that blessing will rest upon its head.

e. *Elia of Nola, "Kabbalah book list"*

A numbered list of thirty-three titles including several renowned kabbalistic texts (e.g. *Ra'aya mehemna*, *Sefer yeširah*, *Sefer ha-šorašim*, *Sefer ha-temunah*, *Tiqqunim gedolim*) and commentaries (e.g. to *Leviticus* and the *Song of Songs*) apparently possessed by Elia. No vocalization or pointing.<sup>56</sup>

אלו<sup>57</sup> ספרי הקבלה אשר בידי אליהו<sup>58</sup> מן נולא  
בכמ"ר מנחם מן נולא  
ברומא

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| [1] | ...המצוות מקבלה <sup>59</sup>                         |
| [2] | ...ת הגדול מקבלה                                      |
| [3] | ... הקצר מקבלה  |
| [4] | [...]   |
| [5] | ... [א] להות עם פירוש ארוך                            |
| [6] | ...נפש מקבלה  |
| 7   | פירוש התפילות מקבלה                                   |
| 8   | ספר סוד י"י ליריאו                                    |
| 9   | גמטריות על קצת התורה והמצוות                          |
| 10  | סוד היחוד   |
| 11  | ספר יצירה עם הרבה פירושים                             |
| 12  | פירוש הספירות מר אליהו <sup>60</sup> בכמ"ר בנימין נע" |
| 13  | ספר שערי אורה שהוא פירוש על הספירות ושמותן            |
| 14  | מפתח הספירות  |
| 15  | זוהר שיר השירים                                       |
| 16  | זוהר ויקרא  |
| 17  | התיקונים הגדולים מהזוהר                               |
| 18  | פירוש השמים מספרים מקבלה                              |
| 19  | סוד ידיעת המציאות                                     |
| 20  | סוד רמז השם הגדול                                     |
| 21  | כתר שם טוב  |
| 22  | סוד השרשים  |

<sup>56</sup> Original handwritten numbering in italics.

<sup>57</sup> In nexus: אלו.

<sup>58</sup> In nexus: אליהו.

<sup>59</sup> The first and end lines are either missing or incomplete due to loss of the writing surface.

<sup>60</sup> In nexus: אליה.

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| ספר השרשים מקבלה                   | 23 |
| שאלות תשובות מקבלה                 | 24 |
| סודות מהרבה מצוות                  | 25 |
| ספר התמונה עם פירוש                | 26 |
| ספר השכל                           | 27 |
| רעיא מהמנא                         | 28 |
| רבינו האי גאון                     | 29 |
| סודות ר' אברהם ב"ע על התורה מקבלה  | 30 |
| [ספר] מים חיים מקבלה <sup>61</sup> | 31 |
| יבות [...]                         | 32 |
| ות [...]                           | 33 |

*Translation.* These are the books of the *Kabbalah* possessed by me, Eliahu of Nola, | son of the glorious and great Rabbi Menachem of Nola | in Rome.

[1...] of the *mišvot* of the *Kabbalah* | [2...] major of the *Kabbalah* | [3...] short of the *Kabbalah* | [4...] | [5...] divinity with extended *peruṣ* | [6...] soul of the *Kabbalah* | 7. *Peruṣ ha-tefillot* of the *Kabbalah* | 8. *Sefer sod ha-šem li-yreyaw*<sup>62</sup> | 9. *Gemaṭriot* on a section of the *Torah* and *mišvot* | 10. *Sod ha-yiḥud* | 11. *Sefer yeširah* with many *peruṣim* | 12. *Peruṣ ha-sefirot* by Rabbi Eliah, the son of the glorious guide Rabbi Binyamin, may he rest in Heaven | 13. *Sefer ša'arey orah*, that is, *peruṣ* to the *sefirot* and their names | 14. *Maṭteah ha-sefirot* | 15. *Zohar Šir ha-širim* | 16. *Zohar Wayyiqra* | 17. The *Tiqqunim gedolim* of the *Zohar* | 18. *Peruṣ ha-šamayyim* of the books in the *Kabbalah* | 19. *Sod yedi'at ha-meši'ot* | 20. *Sod remez ha-šem ha-gadol* | 21. *Keter šem tov* | 22. *Sod ha-šorašim* | 23. *Sefer ha-šorašim* of the *Kabbalah* | 24. Questions and answers of the *Kabbalah* | 25. *Sodot* of many *mišvot* | 26. *Sefer ha-temunah* with *peruṣ* | 27. *Sefer ha-šekel* | 28. *Ra'aya mehemna*<sup>63</sup> | 29. Rabbenu Hai Gaon<sup>64</sup> | 30. *Sodot* of the late Rav Avraham Ben Ezra on the *Torah* of the *Kabbalah* | 31. [*Sefer*] *mayim Ḥayyim* of the *Kabbalah* | 32. [...] | 33. [...]

As the title expressly states, this list is first and foremost a wide inventory of the Kabbalistic books owned in Rome by Elia including some very well-known titles.

Two preliminary considerations arise: on the one hand, this is a testimony to the dense circulation of such works in mid-sixteenth century Rome; on the other hand, it shows how intense Elia's commitment to collecting, transmitting and trading Kabbalistic literature was, and the very fact that it now lies amongst Masius' papers eventually ratifies their close partnership.<sup>65</sup>

Furthermore, it might be the same list of Kabbalistic books Elia claims to have enclosed to the letter to Masius of 29 June 1555.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Doubtful conjecture, maybe also [באר].

<sup>62</sup> Lit. "the counsel of the Lord is with those who fear him", see Ps 25:14.

<sup>63</sup> In Aramaic.

<sup>64</sup> Maybe a biography of the renown gaon and rabbi.

<sup>65</sup> See PERLES, *Beiträge*, cit., pp. 216-217 and LEBER, *Giovanni Paolo Eustachio*, cit., pp. 47-67.

<sup>66</sup> See PERLES, *Beiträge*, cit., p. 218: «[...] vi mando lo Indice che me dimandatj adimandare Insieme Con uno Indice delli libri che tengo Io». Discussing the importance of this list and its many implications—including Elia of Nola's actual access to manuscript copies and editions of the indicated Kabbalistic works and their circulation, dissemination and fortune in Rome and beyond in the mid-sixteenth century—is not possible here. Furthermore, each title would merit in-depth investigation. All these aspects offer fresh research avenues for a separate study.



f. *Andreas Masius, Quatrain*

*Language and style.* Style and language are elevated, with a flair for paronomasia (l. 1) and periphrases (קולך בת גלים, l. 4). The enjambement at ll. 3 and 4 should be noted. These last also differ from ll. 1-2 for the absence of spaced caesura and the lack of clear syntactic pauses that hinder an immediate understanding. For this very reason and the absence of both vocalization and punctuation, the text seems to be a draft. *Metre.* Four double-rhyming verses (תַּ. [v]-).<sup>67</sup>

- |   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | עורי עלמה ועל מה ועלמה                | ישנה את ועד מה את מתנכרת                      |
| 2 | נדיבי עם כרוך שרים חפרוך              | מלכים אומניך <sup>68</sup> ועל שמך העין נקראת |
| 3 | ניקולאו חמישי קדושך ובדברו הושב שביתך | אבן מקיר מימין מי עלמה זועקת <sup>69</sup>    |
| 4 | צהלי קולך בת גלים קדש עזרך בבית הרים  | יוליו שלישי המשים תבניתך על העין שומרת        |

*Translation.* 1 Rise, maiden,<sup>70</sup> for you are hidden and dormant until you come up! / 2 Noble ones among the people have dug you out, leaders have delved you, sovereigns are your builders, and from your name the spring takes its own. / 3 Nicholas V is your hallower, and by his will your site was settled, having the stone excavated. Your water is that of a maiden<sup>71</sup> exalting / 4 The festive cries of your wave-begotten voice. Julius III consecrated your site in the seat of the hills,<sup>72</sup> he who placed your image to guard the fount.<sup>73</sup>

g. *Andreas Masius, Poem on a speaking fount (draft C)*<sup>74</sup>

*Language, style and metre.* See c. above.

- |   |                 |                             |                              |                            |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | בא נא ידיד נפשי | ולמה תעמוד לך <sup>75</sup> | כי הולכים קרים <sup>76</sup> | לאט מי שילוח <sup>77</sup> |
| 2 | מים באר חים     | וגם מעין גנים               | שוטה הלא ימצא                | לנפשו מנוח <sup>78</sup>   |
| 3 | עלמה אני זכה    | מבקשת דודי                  | רבו שנות חיי                 | עלי הקילוח                 |
| 4 | כל מעיני קדם    | כעמק שדים הם                | נשאירתי אני                  | לשם ולניחוח <sup>79</sup>  |

<sup>67</sup> Rhyme תַּ. at l. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Underlined, maybe envisaging inversion (עזקת) «hoing out»?) or word change.

<sup>69</sup> See c., l. 3.

<sup>70</sup> See c., l. 3.

<sup>71</sup> See c., l. 3.

<sup>72</sup> This phrase (lit. «the seat of the hills») is probably a pun on both the Pontiff's given name (Giovanni Maria Ciocchi del Monte) and family arms (*trimontium*): see RIBOUILLAULT, *Tower of the Winds*, cit., pp. 475-480.

<sup>73</sup> A line under the text reads *Pier (?) Felice Crispino da Ravenna*, maybe the unknown author of these lines or more likely a reader, as suggested in MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 70.

<sup>74</sup> The text being almost identical to B, draft C is not translated, and the really few and minor divergences are highlighted in bold only in the text. The examination of the variants in the three drafts—from Masius' corrections in order to maintain the four-part verse structure to the progressive reworking of the biblical quotations—seems to confirm the sequence A→C→B.

<sup>75</sup> «why are you hesitating» changed to ולמה תעמוד לך in the upper margin.

<sup>76</sup> «fresh» קרים above the line; מיני «from me» above the line; לאט קרים in the upper margin.

<sup>77</sup> Same text above the line, partially vocalized.

<sup>78</sup> «Water of a well of life, and a fount of gardens for you who are drawing (from me) / you will drink <and> surely find rest for your soul!» above the line.

<sup>79</sup> Sic, with *gameş*.

|    |                                   |                                    |   |                                     |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 5  | בְּנִיקוֹת צוּרִים                | אֶגְרִיפֶס <sup>80</sup> הִנְחֵנִי | מִה רָרִי <sup>81</sup> קָדָם           | הִלִּיכוֹת הַשְּׁחוֹחַ              |
| 6  | לֹא טְבִירִיאֹס                   | וְנִיקָאֵלָא קְדוֹשׁ               | הַשׁוֹמְכִים יָדִי                      | וְאִדְכָּה אָשׁוּחַ                 |
| 7  | אוֹדָה שְׁמָם תְּמִיד             | וְתַגְמוּלֶם עָלַי <sup>82</sup>   | חֻקָּדָם בְּפִי יוֹם יוֹם <sup>83</sup> | לְבִלְתִּי שְׁכוּחַ                 |
| 8  | אוֹלָם גָּאֲלָנִי                 | יְשׁוּעַת עוֹלָמִים                | יּוֹלֹס לְאֵב קְדוֹשׁ                   | וּפֶאֶפֶא מְשׁוּחַ                  |
| 9  | יִשְׁבְּתִי בְּטִיט <sup>84</sup> | בִּינּוֹ טְבַעְתִּי                | אֵף הוּא הִקִּימָנִי                    | לְמַגְדֵּל מְרָקוּחַ                |
| 10 | הִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתִי               | בְּשְׁלוֹשׁ הַלְשׁוֹנוֹת           | אוֹרֵי כְּאוֹר שְׁמִשׁ                  | וְאִזְרַח זְרוּחַ <sup>85</sup>     |
| 11 | עַלְכֵּן לְעוֹלָמִים              | לְנוֹרוֹ וּכְבוֹדוֹ                | יְהִיָּה שְׁמִי <sup>86</sup> כְּשִׁמוֹ | בְּחֻסְדּוֹ אֶבְטוּחַ <sup>87</sup> |

*h. Andreas Masius, Ode on a fount and on a monument*<sup>88</sup>

**Language and style.** This celebrative poem shows a rather loose and complex syntax, elevated style and learned vocabulary. The parts of the sentence are freely arranged according to metrical needs,<sup>89</sup> and the simple conjunction ׀ is often merely syllabic. Rhyme accounts for the connective *nun* in pf. verbal forms before 3<sup>rd</sup> sg. fem. suffix pronoun.<sup>90</sup> *Metre.* Fifteen distichs made up of one decasyllable and a dodecasyllable each. A perfect double rhyme (נה[v]-) closes all the dodecasyllables, while the decasyllables rhyme in couplets (aA aA a'A a'A bA bA cA cA).<sup>91</sup>

(F. 9r)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | שִׁיר לְשִׁבַּח מִעֵין וּמִצִּבְּבָה אֲשֶׁר |
| 2 | בִּגְן יוֹלִיאֹס הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כוּהֵן       |
| 3 | גְּדוֹל יִרְיָה                             |
| 4 | אִישׁ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּרְדַּד לְתוֹךְ הַגֵּן |
| 5 | וְשִׁירָיִךְ בְּרוֹב יָפִי תִשְׁכַּרְנָה    |
| 6 | גֵּשׁ נָא רְאֵה הַנּוֹטְרָה מַעֲנֵן         |
| 7 | בְּלִי הַמּוֹן וְקוֹל גְּרוֹן תִּשְׁוֹרְנָה |

<sup>80</sup> See *b.* above.

<sup>81</sup> Broken word with no upper stroke.

<sup>82</sup> כָּל־תַּגְמוּלֶם עָלַי וְאוֹדָה אֶת־חֻסְדָּם : אוֹדָה שְׁמָם תְּמִיד וְתַגְמוּלֶם עָלַי «all the thanks are due on my part, and I shall celebrate their glory» above the line.

<sup>83</sup> וְאִמְיָתָם : בְּפִי יוֹם יוֹם «and their rectitude» corrected under the line.

<sup>84</sup> כִּי־שָׁם תִּמּוֹנָתִי : יִשְׁבְּתִי בְּטִיט «for there lies my image» above the line.

<sup>85</sup> וְהִזְרַח זְרוּחַ : וְאִזְרַח זְרוּחַ «and splendour has shone through» in the left margin; נָתַנּוּ לְזְרוּחַ «he donated to shine» in the lower margin; עַד־יִזְרַח «as long as it shines through» further below.

<sup>86</sup> שְׁמִי יְהִיָּה : corrected above יְהִיָּה שְׁמִי.

<sup>87</sup> וְאִבְטַח בְּטוּחַ : בְּחֻסְדּוֹ אֶבְטוּחַ «and I shall quietly rest» above the line.

<sup>88</sup> The commentaries by Striedl and Maleux are essential for both reconstructing the specific occasion from which this poem originated and understanding its deep formal, stylistic and thematic connections to the Andalusian Hebrew poetic tradition: see STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., pp. 128-133 and MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., pp. 75-78, 80-83 and 86-87.

<sup>89</sup> E.g. noun and apposition or attribute are often far apart or reversed.

<sup>90</sup> See f. 9r, ll. 13, 21, 23 and f. 9v, ll. 4, 6, 8, 10.

<sup>91</sup> The poem is introduced by an autograph heading in Latin: *Versus hebraici in laudem statu(ae) ad fontem in horto Iulij Tertii* (actually *Iulij Tertij*) *quos Andreas Masius faciebat Romae*.

- 8 כי נלִכְדָּה נַפְשָׁה בְּתִרְדָּמָה
- 9 וְהִיא נִלְאָה מְאֹד לָמָּה תַעֲרִינָהּ
- 10 יָפָה בְּכִלְגוּפָהּ וְנִשְׁלָמָה
- 11 וּמוֹם אֵין בָּהּ כְּבִתְשָׁבַע תְּדִינָנָה
- 12 אֲמָנָם כְּחִרְשׁ כּוֹחֵךְ יָבֵשׁ
- 13 בְּאֵר הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר אֵין אִישׁ דִּלְחָנָהּ
- 14 זָכָה כְּסִפִּיר אוֹ כְּאֶלֶיגְבִישׁ
- 15 וְלֹה זָהָב וְזָכוּרִית לֹא תַעֲוִרְכָּנָהּ
- 16 צִיָּה וְחוּם לֹא יִגְזָלוּ קֶרֶנָּהּ
- 17 בְּחוּרָב גַּם בְּקוֹר קָרָה וְנֶאֱמָנָהּ
- 18 מִהֵר קָרַב הִנֵּה שְׁתָּה מִנָּה
- 19 לְמַעַן עֲצָמוּרִיתִיךָ תִּשְׁקִינָהּ
- 20 כִּי מִי מְנֻרְחוֹת מִי בְּאֵר זֹאת הֵם
- 21 דְּבַר מְנוֹת וּמַחֲלָה לֹא נִגְעָנָהּ
- 22 לֹא תִשְׁוֶה בָּהּ בּוֹר בְּבִית־לֶחֶם
- 23 אֲשֶׁר דָּוִד בָּעֵת קִצִּיר חִפְצָנָהּ<sup>92</sup>
- 24 אֶךְ כָּל טָמֵא הַגּוֹף וְלֹא כִפּוֹ
- 25 וְשִׁפְתוֹתָיו בְּנִקְיוֹן תְּרוּחַצָּנָהּ
- 26 אִישׁ עוֹרִגְבוֹת עֵינָיו לְדַבְרֵי שְׁוֹא
- 27 יָפִי נָשִׁים תַּצְרִיפִינָהּ וְתִזְנִינָהּ
- 28 יַעֲצוֹר תִּשְׁוִקְתּוֹ וְלֹא יִקְרַב
- 29 וְעֵינָיו הִזְנוֹת לֹא יַעֲבִר<sup>93</sup> הִנֵּה

(F. 9v)

- 1 יִסוֹר וְלֹא יָבֵא לְהַתְעַרֵּב
- 2 בְּעִדָּנָהּ זֹו אֲשֶׁר אֵין לוֹ מְזֻמָּנָה<sup>94</sup>
- 3 כִּי הַבָּאָר הַזֹּאת<sup>95</sup> טְהוּרָה הִיא<sup>96</sup>
- 4 וְלֹא אָדָם טָמֵא שִׁפְתוֹת טַעֲמָנָהּ
- 5 גַּם הַבְּתוּלָה זֹאת וְצִנּוּעָהּ הִיא
- 6 וְאִדִּיר אוֹיְמִי הַדּוֹר יַצְרָנָהּ
- 7 כּוֹהֵן בְּכָל הַכּוֹהֲנִים גָּדוֹל
- 8 תַּעֲלֶה זֹו לְמִיבּוֹעַ פְּלָגָנָהּ
- 9 שִׁקְתּוֹ יְהִי תָמִיד וְלֹא יִחַדֵּל

<sup>92</sup> «craved» above the line. חִפְצָנָהּ : חִשְׁקָנָהּ

<sup>93</sup> *Hif'il* apocopated impf.

<sup>94</sup> identical unvocalized text above the line. בְּעִדָּנָהּ...מְזֻמָּנָה

<sup>95</sup> «pure maid» above the line. No article before the demonstrative. הַבְּתוּלָה זֹאת

<sup>96</sup> «or that pure and humble maid» in the right margin. גַּם...הִיא

|   |    |
|---|----|
| וְהֵעֲלָמָה לְנוֹטְרָה הַבִּיאָנָה            | 10 |
| לְהִיּוֹת שְׁתִּיָּהוֹן פֶּה לְשֶׁשְׁשׁוּעִים | 11 |
| וְלֵב אָדָם בְּתוֹךְ הַגֶּן תִּשְׁמַחָנָה     | 12 |
| עַל כֵּן יִהְיֶה נְגִיד וְשָׂר רֹעִים         | 13 |
| יִקָּר הוֹדוֹ לְשׁוֹנֹת כָּל תִּשְׁבַּחָנָה   | 14 |
| סְלִיקָא זְמִירָא <sup>97</sup>               | 15 |
| תּוֹשַׁבְחָתָא לְאַלְהָא                      | 16 |

*Translation.* (f. 9r.) **1** Poem in praise of a fount and a monument<sup>98</sup> | **2** Placed in the garden of Julius III Pontifex | **3** Maximus, may his glory be raised.

**4** Whoever you are, descending in the garden / **5** Your eyes will get inebriated because of its great beauty! / **6** So come and look at the guardian fount; / **7** With neither noise nor cry they will see / **8** That her soul is imprisoned in sleep! / **9** She is very tired, and they will notice why. / **10** Beautiful in all her body and complete, / **11** There is no flaw in her like Bathsheba, they will confirm! / **12** Truly your strength, man, is completely drained: / **13** Do look at the well that no one has muddied! / **14** Pure as sapphire or as crystal, / **15** Gold and glass cannot compare to her, / **16** Dryness and heat will not deplete her power, / **17** In heat and cold she will be chill and firm! / **18** Now come here, and drink from her, / **19** So that your bones may be watered, / **20** For the water of this well is restoring water: / **21** Nothing dead or sick touched it. / **22** The well of Bethlehem does not equate to her, / **23** That which David in the harvest desired.<sup>99</sup> / **24** Indeed the hands of any carnal sinner / **25** And the impure lips will be cleaned, / **26** Whosoever whose eyes love falsehood / **27** looking and admiring the beauty of women, / **28** Will retain his desire and will not approach, / **29** And immorality will not prosper in his eyes. / (f. 9v.) **1** He will depart and will not come to mingle / **2** In this pleasure that has no limit, / **3** Since this well is pure / **4** And no man with his impure lips has tasted it, / **5** or this maid or that humble girl! / **6** And a powerful man among the educators of the generation raised it, / **7** The greatest priest among of all priests / **8** Split this ditch at the source. / **9** Her trough<sup>100</sup> will be eternal and will not fail, / **10** The maiden<sup>101</sup> has brought it to the keeper, / **11** Both staying here as cherished ones.<sup>102</sup> / **12** The heart of man in the garden will rejoice, / **13** thence he will be head and prince of shepherds: / **14** His shining splendour the tongues will praise. / **15** The song is finished. | **16** Praise be to God.

<sup>97</sup> סְלִיקָא שִׁירָה : סְלִיקָא זְמִירָא «the poem is finished» above the line. The *explicit* is in Aramaic.

<sup>98</sup> In the light of the previous texts (except for *a* and *e*.) and of the joined mention here of a «fount» (מַעְיָן) and a «monument» (מַצְבָּה), also «[inscribed] stele»), Masius might be referring to both the artificial spring and the «monumental fountain» (*fontana di mostra*) of Julius III at Villa Giulia, supplied by a dedicated secondary branch of the *Aqua Virgo* aqueduct. The fountain is today embedded into a rounded corner in the walls of Palazzo Borromeo (seat of the Italian State Embassy to the Holy See), at the intersection of Via Flaminia and Via di Villa Giulia, but modifications in the eighteenth century have completely changed the original. Essential information on 'Julius III's fountain' can be found in: D. BORGHESI - P. SEBASTIANI (eds.), *Palazzo Borromeo. L'ambasciata d'Italia presso la Santa Sede*, Umberto Allemandi, Torino 2019, pp. 36-41; C. DAVIS, *Villa Giulia e la «Fontana della Vergine»*, «Psicon. Rivista internazionale di architettura» 8-9 (1976), pp. 132-141; S. DELLI, *Le fontane di Roma (le fontane esterne)*, Schwarz & Meyer Editori, Roma 1972, pp. 33-35; R. LANCIANI, *Storia degli scavi di Roma e notizie intorno le collezioni romane di antichità. III. Dalla elezione di Giulio III alla morte di Pio IV*, Roma 1907, p. 17; W. POCINO, *Le fontane di Roma*, Newton & Compton, Roma 1996, pp. 135-136.

<sup>99</sup> See 2 Sam 23:15.

<sup>100</sup> The fountain still has a trough.

<sup>101</sup> See c., l. 3.

<sup>102</sup> Maybe alluding to two of the female statues decorating the fountain, e.g. *Minerva* and *Roma*.

Masius' poems invite some overall remarks. Among the numerous artistic and historical research hints, a few elements disclose both the author's intentions and the meaning of the poems and point to the identification of the speaking fount and fountain featured in the texts as those commissioned by Pope Julius III at Villa Giulia, which was built between 1551 and 1553:<sup>103</sup>

- The fount(ain) (properly «fount»: מעין or עין) is apparently meant to adorn Julius III's «gardens» (גנים) and is guarded by a female effigy called «maiden/virgin» (עלמה): this term may allude, as a *senhal*, both to one of the statues once adorning the fountain and to the *Aqua Virgo* aqueduct supplying the fount and the nymphaeum of Villa Giulia. The direct references to Agrippa and Nicholas V—builder and restorer of the aqueduct respectively—and to Julius III (the commissioner of the «channel», תעלה, תעלת) support this interpretation.<sup>104</sup>
- The fount(ain) speaks in the first person,<sup>105</sup> which fact may recall—yet reversed in a celebratory rather than satirical key—other renowned fountains hosting speaking statues in Rome.<sup>106</sup>
- Finally, reference to a trilingual inscription could imply a celebratory use thereof, and Masius may have been appointed to compose the text.<sup>107</sup>

## Conclusions

The purpose of this paper is to draw further attention to the eight Hebrew texts preserved in MS SBB, *Or. fol. 13* drawing on some crucial publications released so far. Preceding a renowned collection of letters in Syriac mostly sent by the Eastern prelate Moses of Mardin to the Flemish diplomat and scholar Andreas Masius in the mid-sixteenth century, these texts were all loosely ascribed to Masius himself. Although important studies have already been carried out on some pieces—in particular the two poems by Masius on the 'fountain of the virgin'—, the others still call for in-depth study and further investigation, starting from extensive edition and translation—here released for the first time—and a reassessment of their attribution.

<sup>103</sup> They might therefore be drafts for a celebratory ode underpinning the 'poetic fortune' of Villa Giulia: see D. RIBOUILLAULT, *La fortune poétique du nymphée de la Villa Giulia*, in J. BERCHTOLD - M. JAKOB (eds.), *Jardins en images : stratégies de représentation au fil des siècles*, Métis Presses, Genève 2021, pp. 98-155. Masius' reference to Julius III's fountain rather than to any other—e.g. a lost one, maybe placed by the 'tower of the winds' of Villa Giulia in the same period, as some lines apparently suggest—is open to question, but see STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., pp. 128-130 and 132-133. An international workshop on Villa Giulia has recently taken place in Rome: «Vigna Iulia, che egli fece fare con spese incredibili». *Nuove ricerche sul cantiere architettonico e decorativo di Villa Giulia e le sue trasformazioni nei secoli* (21-22 December 2021, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia).

<sup>104</sup> See also MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., p. 85.

<sup>105</sup> But not in *h*.

<sup>106</sup> I.e. *Abate Luigi, Babuino, Facchino, Pasquino, Madama Lucrezia* and *Marforio*.

<sup>107</sup> It might have been in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, for multilingual celebratory epigraphs were widespread and in vogue at the time. Achille Bocchi (1488-1562, whose palace in Bologna bears two inscriptions in Hebrew and Latin) created an emblem for Julius III on the same trend (n. CXLVIII in A. BOCCHI, *Achillis Bocchii Bonon. Symbolicarum quaestionum de universo genere quas serio ludebat libri quinque*, Bononiae 1574, V, pp. cccxvi-cccli). See G. BUSI, *Achille Bocchi, ebraista figurativo*, in Id. *L'enigma dell'ebraico nel Rinascimento*, Nino Aragno Editore, Torino 2007, pp. 187-195; M. PERANI, *Federico Fregoso e la più antica iscrizione ebraica di un umanista cristiano a Gubbio (ca. 1533). Esame paleografico e comparativo*, «Materia giudaica» 20-21 (2015-2016), pp. 45-75; N. ZORZI, *L'iscrizione trilingue di Tommaso Rangoni sulla facciata della chiesa di San Zulian a Venezia (1554)*, «Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova» 45 (2012), pp. 107-137. Regrettably, the two coeval frescoes at the Vatican Palace and Villa Giulia portraying the whole estate with the fountain and the gardens only show a Latin epigraph: *IVLIVS III | PONT. MAX. | PVBLICAE COMMODITATI | ANNO III*. This aspect has been keenly discussed in STRIEDL, *Lobgedichte*, cit., pp. 129-130 and MALEUX, *Nymphs*, cit., pp. 82-83.



Paleographic comparison with a letter in Masius' own hand in the same manuscript actually allows for only some texts to be ascribed to him. These are six poems celebrating the artificial spring connected to the *Aqua Virgo* aqueduct and the now lost monumental fountain commissioned by Pope Julius III at Villa Giulia. Beyond several lexical hints and overt allusions, only a thorough survey of archival records and iconographic sources can further frame such a hypothesis.

The other two pieces, namely a poem on Christ and a title list of Kabbalistic works, were penned by Elia of Nola, as proven by paleographic examination with the Vatican Hebrew manuscripts he copied in the same years. In particular, the poem seems to stem from Elia's urge to convert to Christianity as a consequence of the radical reversal in Pope Paulus IV's policy towards the Jews and the dramatic worsening of their conditions in the Papal States, whereas the list testifies to Elia's role as trader of Kabbalistic books on behalf of Masius. Elia's letters to Masius dating to the summer of 1555 also confirm this.

It is therefore no coincidence that texts by both personalities appear together in this manuscript. Masius may have composed his drafts and met Elia during his second stay in Rome (1551-1553), and the two texts by Elia might not have been written before summer 1555.

Finally, this small manuscript also presents prominent material specificities. Two watermarks deserve special attention: on the one hand, the pattern of the single column topped with a lily at f. 5 might reasonably be an earlier and apparently unrecorded model of the one used in Rome in 1587 according to Briquet's catalogue; on the other hand, the shape of a long-necked animal at f. 7 seems to be either an unprecedented pattern or perhaps a variant of some known yet unidentifiable one.

Simone Isacco Maria Pratelli  
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
e-mail: simone.isacco.maria.pratelli@gmail.com

## SUMMARY

This study presents the well-known eight Hebrew texts in MS Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, *Or. fol. 13*, offering a first edition and translation of four of them as well as new paleographical and material remarks. The analysis of hands indicates two different authors, that is, the prominent humanist Andreas Masius and the famous copyist, convert and polemist Elia of Nola/Giovanni Paolo Eustachio, while the examination of watermarks invites to backdate the rise of a pattern and to further investigate a second, apparently unmatched one. As for the texts, celebration poetry combines with the genre of the 'speaking fountain', and the well-knit intellectual collaboration between Masius and Elia clearly shows up.

**KEYWORDS:** Andreas Masius; Elia of Nola/Giovanni Paolo Eustachio; Kabbalah literature; Paleography; Villa Giulia; Watermarks.

