

Antony Perrot

# Reading an Opisthograph at Qumran

The opisthograph manuscripts from Qumran, scrolls written *recto and verso*, have already received some attention in the history of research. Scholars such as Wise,<sup>1</sup> Tov,<sup>2</sup> Brooke,<sup>3</sup> and most recently Falk<sup>4</sup> have proposed lists and in-depth studies of these texts. However, none of them really dwelt on the reading of this corpus in Qumran.<sup>5</sup> Is it possible to know how the reading of these particular manuscripts was “performed” at Qumran? Based on Falk’s article, the most recent to date, we would like to propose a typology of the reading of opisthograph texts based on voluminological aspects.<sup>6</sup>

## 1 Defining an Opisthograph

The term “opisthograph” comes from the Greek word ὀπισθογράφος which means “written on the back”. This term is generally used to refer to a parchment or papyrus written on the *recto* and *verso*.<sup>7</sup> In papyrology, the contours of this phenomenon are defined differently according to the researchers who apprehend it. For Turner, the “true” opisthographs are “simple sheets or rolls of papyrus, the content of which begin on the front, and then continue on the back”.<sup>8</sup> More recently, Tiziano Dorandi has defined the opisthograph in a very different way: “In modern usage [...], the term *opisthographos* is used only when a papyrus scroll or a fragment consisting of only one leaf had new text written on the *verso* shortly after the inscribing of the *recto*,

---

1 Wise 1994.

2 Tov 1999; Tov 2004.

3 Brooke 2011.

4 Falk 2014.

5 See Falk 2014; Brooke 2011.

6 “Codicology” is misleading and anachronistic. We will use the term “voluminology” as Johnson 2004, 3.

7 “In papyri, the inscribed side, on which the fibers run horizontally, is named the *recto*; the *verso*, usually uninscribed, is the side on which the fibers run vertically. [...] In documents written on leather (skin), the term *recto* represents the hairy, usually inscribed, side, while the *verso* indicates the uninscribed flesh side.” Tov 2004, 64.

8 Turner 1978, 60.

---

I would like to thank the organizers and the participants of this conference for the inspiring discussions. For a comprehensive study on the reading of prayers manuscripts at Qumran, see Mika Pajunen’s contribution in this volume. I am indebted to my wife, Nathalie Perrot, and my PhD advisor, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, for their helpful remarks on a previous version of this article. Nicolas Farelly and Michael Johnson considerably improved the English. I am, of course, responsible for any errors.

usually without bearing any relation to the latter.”<sup>9</sup> According to the recent publications and papyrological databases, it seems that Turner’s definition has won the approval of researchers.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, this lack of clarity in trying to define the opisthograph goes back to antiquity. When ancient authors such as Pliny,<sup>11</sup> Lucian<sup>12</sup> or Ulpian<sup>13</sup> refer to this phenomenon, it is very difficult to know what practice they are referring to.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, one can find this scribal practice described without the proper name ὀπισθογράφος being used. For example, in Ezekiel 2:10, the prophet receives a vision where he sees a scroll “written on the recto and verso—כְּתוּבָה פְּנִים וְאָחוֹר”. The book of Revelation borrows this same imagery in 5:1, when the seer sees a scroll “written on the recto and verso (ἔσωθεν καὶ ὀπισθεν)”.

This difficulty in defining the opisthograph is also shared by the Qumranic studies. While all agree that this is an extremely rare phenomenon in Qumran and that this corpus consists of relatively low-grade scribal work, everybody counts a different number of opisthographs.<sup>15</sup> Beyond the fact that it is sometimes difficult to know if certain tiny fragments belong to this or that scroll,<sup>16</sup> it is not clear whether *tefillin* or texts with titles on the verso should be considered opisthographs. Very recently, on the basis of the new images provided by the IAA, Daniel Falk suggested to count 13 to 18 opisthographs. He justifies his selection as follows:

For the purposes of this study, I will not include the following cases of manuscripts inscribed on both sides. First, the writing of signatures or titles on the reverse, whose purpose is to be visible on the outside of the closed scroll, is not relevant to the present study. Second, a number of the *tefillin* found at Qumran are inscribed on both sides, but since these are not intended to be read as texts but are sealed up to be worn as amulets they represent a different phenomenon and will be treated separately as a special case. They will not be included in the statistics on opisthographs.<sup>17</sup>

This distinction seems very meaningful and coincides with the definition of opisthographs made by the ancient sources and the great majority of modern papyrologists. The tables prepared by Falk will therefore be largely used for this study.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Dorandi 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Trismegistos; CEDOPAL.

<sup>11</sup> Plinius Caecilius Secundus 1961, 108.

<sup>12</sup> Lucianus 1992, 20.

<sup>13</sup> Ulpianus 37,11,4.

<sup>14</sup> On the opisthograph phenomenon in the classical period, see Manfredi 1983; Bastianini 1994.

<sup>15</sup> Wise 1994, 133, counts 16 opisthographs; Tov 1999, 12, counts 14 opisthographs; Tov 2004, Appendix 3, 295–297 counts 21 opisthographs.

<sup>16</sup> E. g. 1Q70, 4Q250 c,d; e,f.

<sup>17</sup> Falk 2014, 46.

<sup>18</sup> In these tables “h” signifies a flip to the horizontal, as one can turn a book page; “v” a reversal to the vertical, where the verso is upside-down *vis-à-vis* the recto; “p” a perpendicular flip at 90° degrees. The arrows → and ↓ indicate the orientation of the fibers of the papyrus.

## 2 The “True” Opisthograph: 4Q504 “Words of Luminaries”<sup>a</sup>

Considering Turner’s definition, the only true opisthograph found at Qumran is 4Q504 *Words of the Luminaries*<sup>a</sup> dated to the middle of the 2nd century BCE. Interestingly, Falk has considered this manuscript as an opisthograph only since 2014. It consists of a single work starting at the recto of the parchment and ending on the verso. There is little doubt that this manuscript represents a personal copy. Indeed, it is relatively unkempt on several levels. First, it is obvious that it is the mismanagement of space by the scribe that resulted in this manuscript being an opisthograph. A survey of the size of the inter-columnar margins illustrates that the scribe gradually decreased the width of the margins. In all probability, he realized that he would not be able to write his whole text on this scroll. Thus, for lack of space, he decided to turn the manuscript horizontally to write the end of his text on only 3 cm. An experienced scribe would not have committed this mismanagement of space. The *ductus*, meanwhile, is very irregular. Also, the irregular alignment of the lines between two columns leaves the impression, once again, that the scribe was not experienced. Moreover, this manuscript contained at least six marginal signs. Some of them are corrections of errors<sup>19</sup> and others materialize new sections,<sup>20</sup> in what is certainly a very poor personal copy for liturgical use. On the textual plane, finally, Tov reports no less than 34 interventions from the scribe,<sup>21</sup> which makes this manuscript the fourth most corrected manuscript at Qumran.

I suggest considering 4Q504 as a starting point, the anchor point of our typology, which hopefully will illuminate the formatting of the other opisthographs. Being the only “true opisthograph” according to Turner’s definition, it can serve as a reference scroll for several reasons. First, and in this case only, it is certain that this opisthograph—recto and verso—is the result of the work of only one scribe. The time separating the writing of the recto and verso is insignificant. It, thus, allows us to apprehend the *Sitz im Leben* of this composition. On a voluminological level, the scribe chose to continue his work from the recto to the verso by folding back the left margin of the

**Tab. 1:** The “true” opisthograph.

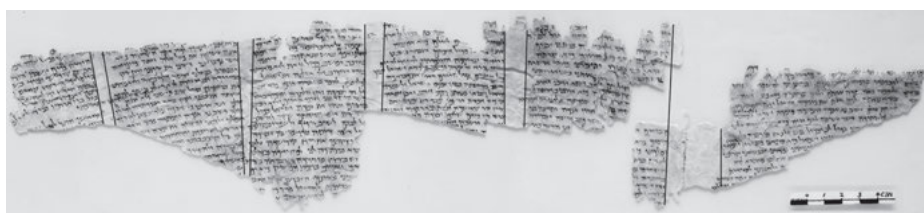
	Scroll	Support	Name of Text	Orient.	Script	Date
Recto	4Q504	Parchment	Words of the Luminaries <sup>a</sup>		Hasm. semi-formal	Mid 2nd c. BCE
Verso	Frag 2		End	h	Same hand	

<sup>19</sup> Col IV, l. 3; Col. V, l. 2; Col. VI, l. 2.

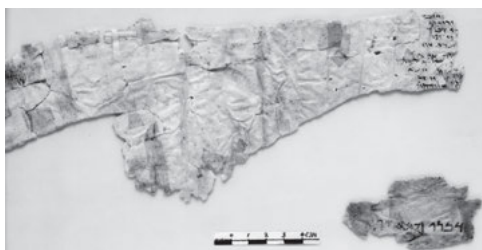
<sup>20</sup> Col. VII, l. 4; Col. VII, l. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Tov 2004, 170.

manuscript, like a book. Moreover, it is clear that this opisthograph scroll was intended to be read on a particular occasion, and that this arrangement was considered the best option for the scribe and the reader, after realizing the obvious lack of space. If the scribe had written the end of his text upside down *vis-à-vis* the recto, he would have been forced to roll up the scroll and return to the beginning of the composition. Moreover, the reader would have had to turn the scroll vertically to continue reading this text, an option that would have required more handling. Starting from the example of 4Q504, where the verso arranged horizontally with respect to the recto reveals the same *Sitz im Leben*, what can be said of the connection between the arrangement and the dating of the other opisthograph scrolls from Qumran?



**Fig. 1:** The end of the recto of 4Q504. The black vertical lines were added to mark the inter-columnar margins. PAM M43.611 and PAM M43.612 merged.



**Fig. 2:** The beginning of the verso of 4Q504. PAM M43.613.

### 3 Documentary Texts on the Verso of Literary Texts

The second category concerns manuscripts where a documentary text is written on the verso of a literary text. The first example of this category contains on the recto the beginning of the first copy of the book of *Enoch* in Aramaic (4Q201) and on the verso what Tov considers as a possible genealogical list (4Q338). The title given by Tov, however, seems somewhat ambitious since one can read nothing more than two mentions of the verb הוֹלִיד and some traces of letters on 4Q338.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, it is certain that the writing on the verso is of a different and later hand, a century later according to Falk.<sup>23</sup>

The next two scrolls are cases of re-use of literary or para-literary texts for the writing of accounts: on the verso of *Mishmarot C* (4Q324), an account in Hebrew or Aramaic (4Q355), and on the verso of fragment 9 of *Narrative Work and Prayer*, an account in Greek. While the Semitic account of the verso of the first parchment is not dated—but certainly later than its recto—the Greek account on the verso of the second parchment was written about two centuries later, probably by the Romans.<sup>24</sup>

One should note that all the documentary texts on the verso of literary texts are arranged upside-down *vis-à-vis* the recto. All are cases of re-use of parchments and the two compositions were certainly not intended to be read together. The text on the verso is always written by a different—and much later—hand than that of the recto.

**Tab. 2:** Documentary Opisthographs on the Verso of Literary Texts.

	Scroll	Support	Name of Text	Orient.	Script	Date
Recto	4Q201	Parchment	Enoch* ar. col. I–III		Hasm. semi-formal	200–150 BCE
Verso	4Q338		Genealogical List	v		ca. 1c. later
Recto	4Q324	Parchment	Mishmarot C		Late Hasm. or early Herod. bookhand	50–25 BCE
Verso	4Q355		Account C ar. or heb.	v	Cursive	Not dated
Recto	4Q460 9	Parchment	Narrative Work and Prayer		Late Hasm. or early Herod. semi-formal	75–1 BCE
Verso	4Q350		Account gr.	v		Late 1st c. CE ?

<sup>22</sup> Tov 2000, 290.

<sup>23</sup> Falk 2014, 49.

<sup>24</sup> Yardeni expressed serious doubts about the origin of the manuscripts from 4Q342 to 4Q360, see Cotton/Yardeni 1997, 283–317.

With the exception of 4Q338,<sup>25</sup> which is too fragmentary to say anything, it is certain that the use of the verso has supplanted that of the recto. Somehow, this arrangement constitutes the extreme opposite of the example of 4Q504, the “true opisthograph”. Having considered these two cases at the opposite extremes, I suggest turning to the other opisthograph rolls, beginning with those with a horizontal reversal.

## 4 Horizontal Orientation in Literary Opisthographs

In addition to 4Q504, there are two papyrus rolls where the verso is arranged horizontally to the recto. The first scroll has on the recto *Daily Prayers* (4Q503) and on the verso *Ritual of Purification B* (4Q512). According to Baillet, the hands of these two compositions are contemporary and date from the first quarter of the first century BCE (100–75 BCE).<sup>26</sup> While Baillet argued that the two compositions were written by different scribes, others defend that this is not necessarily so. Falk highlights the similarities between the two manuscripts: “They also share similar scribal features. Neither is ruled, and they have uneven letter size, line spacing, column width, and left margin. They show a similar full orthography, and both make similar use of the hook-style paragraphos marker.”<sup>27</sup> Although uneven, the ductus of both sides of this manuscript is very similar. The few differences could be explained by the impact of

**Tab. 3:** Horizontal Orientation in Literary Opisthographs.

	Scroll	Support	Name of Text	Orient.	Script	Date
Recto	4Q504	Parchment	Words of the Luminaries <sup>a</sup>		Hasm. semi-formal	Mid-2nd c. BCE
Verso	Frag 2		End	h	Same hand	
	Frag 8		Title	p	Different hand	
Recto →	4Q503	Papyrus	Daily Prayers		Hasm. semi-formal	100–75 BCE
Verso ↓	4Q512		Ritual of Purification B	h	Hasm. semi-formal	100–75 BCE
Recto →	4Q499	Papyrus	Hymns/Prayers		Hasm. semi-formal	ca. 75 BCE
Verso ↓	4Q497		War Scroll-like Text A	h	Hasm. semi-formal (different hand?)	ca. 50 BCE

<sup>25</sup> Tov 2000, 290 suggests that the Genealogical List on the verso is possibly linked to the patriarch Enoch on the recto.

<sup>26</sup> Baillet 1982, 119, 262.

<sup>27</sup> Falk 2014, 52.

fiber orientation, especially in the vertical side, on the ductus of the scribe. Be that as it may, it should be emphasized that the two texts are contemporaneous and arranged horizontally one from the other. Rituals of purification and prayers are often associated in Qumran.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, on the content level, it is very likely that these two compositions, which certainly constitute a personal copy, were read together.<sup>29</sup>

The second scroll with a horizontal arrangement contains on the recto *Hymns/Prayers* (4Q499) and on the verso probably a copy of the *War Scroll* (4Q497). While the first composition is dated around 75 BCE, the second is dated just 25 years later (50 BCE). In fact, in Qumranic paleography, nothing can justify such a precise gap of 25 years. Regarding 4Q497, Falk added the commentary “different hand?” in his table. Despite the fragmentary nature of this scroll, it is possible, once again, to consider that it is the same hand that wrote the texts on the recto and on the verso. On the voluminological level, Brooke notices that “the writing on the back is in the same position as on the front”.<sup>30</sup> While this is true for some fragments, many others seem to contradict this observation. However, this is always true for a scroll that we will consider later (see 4Q415/4Q414, p. 109).

In summary, the opisthographs where the verso is arranged horizontally with respect to the recto are probably the product of the same hand. When there is any doubt about the origin of the hand, less than one generation separates the two sides of the roll. Thus, the two compositions have the same *Sitz im Leben* and the two sides of a scroll were possibly read either directly after the other or with connection to the other, for instance on the same liturgical occasion. In order to verify these hypotheses, it is necessary to study the manuscripts in which recto and verso are arranged vertically.

## 5 Vertical Orientation in Literary Opisthographs

The oldest manuscript arranged vertically is 4Q255 (*Serekh ha-Yahad*<sup>a</sup>), a text inscribed on the verso of a scroll of papyrus, where the fibers are vertical ↓, thus constituting the verso of 4Q433a (*Hodayot-like Text B*). While scholars do not agree on which of these two texts is the “recto”,<sup>31</sup> it is certain that the two texts are paleographically distant of about fifty years and they are not of the same hand. Very different

<sup>28</sup> Falk 2014, 56.

<sup>29</sup> 4Q503 shares common structure and linguistic features with 4Q512, see Falk 1998, 23.

<sup>30</sup> Brooke 2011, 131.

<sup>31</sup> In the very precise case of 4Q255, the editors consider that it forms the verso of 4Q333a, in accordance with the vertical orientation of the fibers of the manuscript (see Alexander/Vermes 1998, 28). On the basis of paleographic considerations, Milik proposed that 4Q255 is the recto (see Milik 1988). As Schuller 1999 more recently underlined, “in accordance with the view of many papyrologists that the vertical or horizontal direction of the fibres has little to do with which side was written first, this terminology has been avoided in our discussion”.

**Tab. 4:** Vertical Orientation in Literary Opisthographs.

	Scroll	Support	Name of Text	Orient.	Script	Date
Verso ↓	4Q255	Papyrus	Serekh ha-Yahad <sup>a</sup>		Early Hasm. Cursive	125–120 BCE
Recto →	4Q433a		Hodayot-like Text B	v	Hasm. semi-formal	ca. 75 BCE
Recto →	4Q509	Papyrus	Festival Prayers		Late Hasm. semi-formal	ca. 70–60 BCE
	(4Q505)	Papyrus	(Words of the Luminaries <sup>b</sup> ?)		Late Hasm. semi-formal	ca. 70–60 BCE
Verso ↓	4Q496		Milhamah <sup>f</sup>	v	Late Hasm. semi-formal	After 50 BCE
	4Q506		Words of the Luminaries <sup>c</sup>		Late Herod. semi-formal	Mid-1st c. CE
Recto	4Q415	Parchment	Instruction <sup>a</sup>		Early Herod. formal	30–1 BCE
Verso	4Q414		Ritual of Purifica- tion A	v	(Late) Herod. and different hand (thick lines)	30 BCE–68 CE

in nature and separated by two generations, “the compositions on both sides are associated with the Maskil, the authoritative instructor and liturgical master of the community”.<sup>32</sup>

The second scroll with a vertical arrangement is what papyrologists consider to be a composite roll. Baillet<sup>33</sup> and more recently Chazon<sup>34</sup> believe that the side with the horizontal fibers contains two separate works written by the same hand: 4Q509 (*Festival Prayers*) and 4Q505 (*Words of Luminaries*<sup>b</sup>). Others, such as García Martínez,<sup>35</sup> Falk<sup>36</sup> and Lange/Tigchelaar<sup>37</sup> believe that this face actually contains only one composition, the *Festival Prayers* of 4Q509. Whether the recto of this papyrus is composite or not, there is no doubt that the verso is. 4Q496 (*Milhamah*<sup>f</sup>) was added shortly after the work(s) of the recto on the verso. On the same face, almost a century later, 4Q506 was written in the middle of the first century CE by a different hand. Although 4Q496

<sup>32</sup> Falk 2014, 55.

<sup>33</sup> Baillet 1982, 184.

<sup>34</sup> Chazon 2012.

<sup>35</sup> García Martínez 1984.

<sup>36</sup> Falk 1998.

<sup>37</sup> Tigchelaar 2002, 315.



was written shortly after 4Q509 (+ 4Q505), the composite nature of this manuscript makes it less likely that it would have been read continuously. Nevertheless, this manuscript was certainly a collection of liturgical texts.

4Q415 (*Instruction*<sup>38</sup>) and 4Q414 (*Ritual of Purification A*) are written on the two sides of an opisthograph parchment scroll. While the dating of the hand of 4Q415 is relatively accurate (30–1 BCE), that of the verso is looser and could extend over almost a century (30 BCE–68 CE). Falk considers the hand of 4Q415 as “early formal Herodian” and, distinguishing possibly later features, the hand of 4Q414 as “(late) Herodian”.<sup>38</sup> Whether the hands of these two compositions are contemporary (around 30 BCE) or not, two manifestly different hands have written this text. The first hand, on the recto, is careful unlike the second one on the verso. Moreover, we notice more than a simple arrangement to the vertical since the scribe of 4Q414 has made all the margins of its composition correspond to that of 4Q415, like a *codex*.<sup>39</sup> This unique scribal feature is peculiar to this scroll and has not been pointed out so far. This careful layout of the verso attempting to match the recto perhaps indicates that the verso scribe was still valuing and therefore read the text of the recto.

Unlike manuscripts with both sides arranged horizontally, the two faces of vertically arranged manuscripts are certainly not of the same hand, and usually, are several decades apart. In the case of 4Q509/4Q505?/4Q509/4Q509 and 4Q496/4Q506, the composite nature of the scroll would explain its vertical arrangement. For all these cases, it is very unlikely that the texts of the two sides were read side by side or continuously in a joint *Sitz im Leben*. However, contrary to the opisthograph documentary texts, these manuscripts are not simple cases of re-use but more likely private collections or ἐκλογή. In all these examples, the reading of the recto was not *de facto* rejected by the adding of the verso. The second scribe had certainly thought it useful to associate his text with that of the recto for liturgical reasons.

In order to test the typology of reading presented so far, we must also examine the unidentified opisthograph papyri.

## 6 Unidentified Opisthograph Papyri

With the exception of a few isolated studies on Qumran papyri or opisthographs, the work on 1Q70/1Q70a has poorly evolved since Milik’s original *editio princeps* in DJD 1.<sup>40</sup> Milik already recognized that the two groups contained on the recto a literary or calligraphic writing, and on the verso a more cursive handwriting.<sup>41</sup> The

<sup>38</sup> Falk 2014, 49.

<sup>39</sup> See fragments 1i + 2ii, 1ii, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10i + ii, 11, 21, 27 and 29.

<sup>40</sup> Barthélemy/Milik 1955, 149.

<sup>41</sup> Barthélemy/Milik 1955, 149.

Tab. 5: Unidentified Opisthograph Papyri.

	Scroll	Name of Text	Orient.	Script	Date
Recto →	1Q70 1-10	Unknown		Calligraphic	Not dated
Verso ↓	1Q70 1-10	Unknown (different hand/work)	v	Cursive	Not dated
Recto →	4Q250 c,d	Cryptic, unidentified text, Text I, K		Cryptic A semi-formal	2nd c. BCE
Verso ↓	4Q250 e,f	Cryptic, unidentified text, Text J, L	h	Same hand?	2nd c. BCE
Recto →	4Q518 1-20	Unclassified		2+ different hands	Not dated
Verso ↓	4Q519	Unclassified	h	Different hand	Not dated
Recto →	4Q518 21-62	Unclassified		3+ different hands	Not dated
Verso ↓	4Q519	Unclassified	v	Different hand	Not dated
Recto →	4Q518 63-68	Unclassified		Indeterminate	Not dated
Verso ↓	4Q519	Unclassified	p	Indeterminate	Not dated

distinction of two very different hands argues in favor of two separate works for the recto and verso of 1Q70. However, one can note that this papyrus is precisely arranged vertically.

With regard to the small cryptic opisthograph fragments of 4Q250 c,d and 4Q250 e,f published by Pfann,<sup>42</sup> it is very likely that these four fragments actually belong to one and the same scroll. Based on a paleographical examination of the ten letters attested, Pfann qualifies the entire writing of 4Q250 as a “semi-formal hand with some semi-cursive traits; second century BCE”.<sup>43</sup> In two other examples, the fragments published by Pfann as belonging to different manuscripts were afterwards considered as one and only. First, Ben-Dov, Stökl Ben Ezra, and Gayer have shown that what Pfann considered to be additional fragments of 4Q249a are actually fragments of the same copy of 4Q249a (*pap cryptA Serekh haEdah*).<sup>44</sup> Second, Ratzon and Ben-Dov<sup>45</sup> demonstrated that the presumed six different copies of a calendrical scroll in cryptic

<sup>42</sup> Pfann 2000a.

<sup>43</sup> Pfann 2000a, 684.

<sup>44</sup> Ben-Dov/Stökl Ben Ezra/Gayer 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Ratzon/Ben Dov 2017.

script (4Q324d-i), according to Pfann's edition in DJD XXVIII,<sup>46</sup> actually belong to the same scroll now called 4Q324d. There is therefore every reason to believe that 4Q250 c,d and 4Q250 e,f is a single scroll in cryptic script. One can note that this manuscript is arranged horizontally, so that it could be the work of the same hand, as other opisthographs arranged in this manner.

4Q518/4Q519 gathers fragments of an unidentified papyrus with writing on both sides and whose verso is arranged either horizontally (frags 1–20), vertically (frags 21–62), or even perpendicularly (frags 63–68). The few dozen small fragments arranged horizontally certainly belong to one or more known rolls with this particular arrangement, and the same is true for the vertical ones. By their arrangement, their grouping under 4Q518/4Q519 is not justified, insofar as they cannot belong all to the same roll. The arrangement between the recto and the verso of each of the 4Q518/4Q519 fragments is a criterion which will have to be considered in the future for their association with a known text. The last group of six fragments contains only a few (traces of) letters. For fragment 66, Baillet noted “large letters, which are supposedly partly destroyed. Fragment of a title?”<sup>47</sup> Baillet's assumption was certainly correct since most of the titles in Qumran are written perpendicularly *vis-à-vis* the recto.

## 7 4Q343/4Q343 and the Perpendicular Orientation of the Verso

Before concluding, a last type of arrangement, consisting in writing the verso perpendicularly in relation to the recto, needs to be considered. By choosing this type of layout, the space available for writing is obviously smaller than when flipping the papyrus horizontally or vertically. This explains why, with the exception of many *tefillin*,<sup>48</sup> this system is used almost only for titles in Qumran. There is no literary text arranged perpendicularly in Qumran, with the exception of 4Q343/4Q343. The *Nabataean Letter* of 4Q343, which continues perpendicularly to the verso, could contradict the typology deployed so far. However, as noted by Eshel, the Qumranian origin of this manuscript is now more than doubtful.<sup>49</sup> By the swing of the pendulum, the typology of opisthograph manuscripts of Qumran supports Eshel's assumption. Thus, there is no opisthograph manuscript that continues on the verso at the perpendicular. The inscriptions at the perpendicular were not intended to be read in connection with the text of the recto but only by the librarian of the manuscript.

<sup>46</sup> Pfann 2000b.

<sup>47</sup> Our english translation of Baillet 1982, 309.

<sup>48</sup> 4QPhyl A, B, G, H, I, J, K, M, O, P, Q, R, U et XQPhyl 4.

<sup>49</sup> Eshel 2001.

## 8 Concluding Remarks

To summarize, I would like to recall the elements of the typology deployed so far. Opisthograph manuscripts arranged horizontally, like a book, have certainly been written by the same hand and/or written in the same period for a liturgical occasion. They therefore most likely have the same *Sitz im Leben*. The vertical manuscripts are divided into two groups: cases of re-use and collation. They have two *Sitze im Leben* or even more. For literary texts, the addition of a text on the back does not necessarily mean that the text on the front was no longer considered “but more likely [that] the owner added another text on the reverse of a scroll he owned and still valued”.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, it is unlikely that these recto and verso texts were read continuously. In short, the more a manuscript must be manipulated to read both sides, the less likely it is that both sides are read continuously. At Qumran already, all continuous reading was done according to what will later become the *codex*.<sup>51</sup>

## Bibliography

- Alexander Philip S./Vermes, Géza (1998), “255. 4QpapSerekh ha-Yahad a.”, in: *Qumran Cave 4.XIX: 4QSerekh Ha-Yahad and Two Related Texts* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 26), Oxford, 27–38.
- Baillet, Maurice (1982), *Qumrân Grotte 4. III (4Q482–4Q520)* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 7), Oxford.
- Barthélemy, Dominique/Milik, Józef T. (1955), *Qumran Cave 1* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 1), Oxford.
- Bastianini, Guido (1994), “Βίβλιον ελίσσόμενον. Sull'avvoglimento dei rotoli opistografi”, in: *Storia, poesia e pensiero nel mondo antico. Studi in onore di Marcello Gigante* (Saggi Bibliopolis 46), Napoli, 45–48.
- Ben-Dov, Jonathan/Stökl Ben Ezra, Daniel/Gayer, Asaf (2017), “Reconstruction of a Single Copy of the Qumran Cave 4 Cryptic-Script Serekh haEdah”, in: *Revue de Qumran* 29 (1), 21–77.
- Brooke, George J. (2011), “Between Scroll and Codex? Reconsidering the Qumran Opisthographs” in: James K. Aitken, Graham I. Davies and George J. Brooke (eds.), *On Stone and Scroll: Essays in Honour of Graham Ivor Davies*, Berlin/Boston, 11–18.
- Chazon, Esther G. (2012), “The Classification of 4Q505”, in: Aren M. Maeir, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Jodi Magness (eds.), “Go out and study the land” (*Judges 18:2*): *Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 148), Leiden, 23–34.
- CEDOPAL, <<http://cip193.philo.ulg.ac.be/Cedopal/MP3/dbsearch.aspx>> (last accessed: 26.11.2017).
- Cotton, Hannah M./Yardeni, Ada (eds.) (1997), *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites. With and Appendix Containing Alleged Qumran Texts (The Seiyâl Collection II)* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 27), Oxford, 283–317.

<sup>50</sup> Falk 2014, 55.

<sup>51</sup> Brooke 2011, 17–18.

- Dorandi, Tiziano (2006), "Opisthographos", in: Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider (eds.), *Brill's New Pauly*, <[http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347\\_bnp\\_e832240](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e832240)> (last accessed: 26.11.2017).
- Eshel, Hanan (2001), "4Q348, 4Q343 and 4Q345: Three Economic Documents from Qumran Cave 4?", in: *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52 (1), 132–135.
- Falk, Daniel K. (1998), *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 27), Leiden.
- Falk, Daniel K. (2014), "Material Aspects of Prayer Manuscripts at Qumran", in: Clemens Leonhard and Hermut Löhr (eds.), *Literature or Liturgy? Early Christians Hymns and Prayers in Their Literary and Liturgical Context in Antiquity* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 363), Tübingen, 33–88.
- García Martínez, Florentino (1984), "Review of Maurice Baillet. *Discoveries in the Judean Desert VII. Qumrân Grotte 4 III (4Q482–4Q520)*", in: *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 15, 157–164.
- Johnson, William A. (2004), *Bookrolls and Scribes in Oxyrhynchus*, Toronto/Buffalo/London.
- Lucianus, Samosatensis (1992), *Philosophes à vendre et autres écrits*, trans. By Eugène Talbot, Paris.
- Manfredi, Manfredo (1983), "Opistografo", in: *Parola del Passato* 38, 44–54.
- Milik, Józef T. (1988), *A Preliminary Concordance to the Hebrew and Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Caves II–X*, printed from a card index and prepared by Raymond Edward Brown et al, 5 vols, Göttingen.
- Pfann, Stephen J. (2000a), "Cryptic Texts: 4Q249 a-z and 4Q250 a-j: Introduction", in: Stephen J. Pfann et al. (eds.), *Qumran Cave 4.XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1*. (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 36), Oxford, 515–701.
- Pfann, Stephen J. (2000b), "Cryptic A Calendrical Documents," in: Douglas M. Gropp et al. (eds.), *Wadi Daliyeh II: The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh and Qumran Cave 4.XXVIII: Miscellanea, Part 2* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 36), Oxford, pls. LII–LXII.
- Plinius Caecilius Secundus, Caius (1961), *Lettres T. 1, Livres I–III*, trans. and ed. By Anne-Marie Guillemin, Paris.
- Ratzon, Eshbal/Ben-Dov, Jonathan (2017), "A Newly Reconstructed Scroll Calendrical Scroll from Qumran in Cryptic Script", in: *Journal of Biblical Literature* 136 (4), 905–936.
- Schuller, Eileen (1999), "433a. 4QpapHodayot-like Text B" in: Esther Chazon et al. (eds.), *Qumran Cave 4.XX: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 29), Oxford, 237–245.
- Tigchelaar, Eibert J. C. (2002), "Annotated Lists of Overlaps and Parallels in the Non-Biblical Texts from Qumran and Masada" in: Emanuel Tov (ed.), *The Texts from the Judean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judean Desert Series* (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 39), Oxford, 285–322.
- Tov, Emanuel (1999), "Opisthographs from the Judean Desert", in: Benjamin G. Wright (ed.), *A Multiform Heritage: Studies on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Robert A. Kraft* (Scholars Press Homage Series 24), Atlanta, 11–18.
- Tov, Emanuel (2000), "338. 4QGenealogical List?" in: Stephen J. Pfann et al. (ed.), *Qumran Cave 4.XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1*. (Discoveries in the Judean Desert 36), Oxford, 290.
- Tov, Emanuel (2004), *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 54), Leiden/Boston.
- Trismegistos, <<https://www.trismegistos.org/tm/search.php>>, (last accessed: 26.11.2017).
- Turner, Eric G. (1978), "The Terms Recto and Verso: The Anatomy of the Papyrus Roll", in: Jean Bingen and Georges Nachtergaele (eds.), *Actes du XVe congrès international de papyrologie*, vol. 1, (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 16), Bruxelles.
- Ulpianus, Domitius, *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti*.

Wise, Michael O. (1994), “The DSS and the Book Culture in Late Second Temple Period”, in: *Thunder in Gemini. And Other Essays on the History, Language and Literature of Second Temple Palestine* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha. Supplement Series 15), Sheffield, 119–146.

## Photo Credits

**Fig. 1, 2:** The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, Israel Antiquities Authority.