

## 2 The Scripts of the Bodmer Papyri<sup>89</sup>

Since the first published editions of the Bodmer papyri in 1956 interest in the different (Greek and Coptic) scripts found in them has always been subordinated to the philological and chronological aspects of each individual papyrus. Such an approach is not exclusively the responsibility of the editors, who often provided general palaeographical descriptions while neglecting an overall view of the scripts. Part of the responsibility must be attributed to palaeographers themselves; if one looks at the reproductions of papyri in the anthologies of facsimiles of Greek manuscripts published since the 1950s (Table 4),<sup>90</sup> it is clear that only some of the Bodmer papyri (and always the same ones) have been reproduced. For all those working on the history of Greek scripts, the Bodmer papyri have not been of particular interest. Yet, on the contrary, the sheer range of scripts found in these nineteen codices is of great interest both for the variety of their graphic typologies as well as the differing qualities of their execution. As laid out in Table 5,<sup>91</sup> the script most often found in this group of papyri is Biblical majuscule, both in its ‘normalised’ form (six examples) and the various derivatives modelled on it (4 examples). Moreover, it should be noted that it is above all the manuscripts in Coptic which use the Biblical majuscule. The Alexandrian majuscule on the other hand is less frequent: there is a single example of its ‘normalised’ form and another four for scripts which belong in this stylistic category. In addition we

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**89** The expression ‘Bodmer papyri’ used in the chapter refers to a group of 19 codices listed in Kasser 1991c: P. Bodmer III (LDAB 107758), VI (LDAB 107761), XVI (LDAB 108535), XVIII (LDAB 108536), XIX (107759), XXIII (LDAB 108542), XL (LDAB 108548), XLI (LDAB 108121), XXIV (LDAB 3098), XIV–XV (LDAB 2895), II + P. Köln V 214 + P. Chester Beatty Ac. 2555 (LDAB 2777), P. Bodmer XXI + P. Chester Beatty Ac. 1389 (LDAB 108537), P. Bodmer XXII + Mississippi Coptic Codex II (LDAB 108176), P. Bodmer XXV+IV+XXVI + P. Köln VIII 331 + P. Duke inv. 775 (LDAB 2743), P. Bodmer XXIX + XXX–XXXVIII (LDAB 1106), P. Bodmer XLV + XLVI + XLVII + XXVII (LDAB 4120), P. Bodmer V + X + XI + VII + XIII + XII + XX + IX + VIII (LDAB 2565), P. Monts. Roca. inv. 128–178, 292, 338 (LDAB 552), Schøyen Collection MS. 193 + P. Chester Beatty 2026 (LDAB 107771). I am aware that different and larger reconstructions of this corpus have been proposed (see in particular Robinson 2013), but my preference for the list provided by Kasser primarily depends on the need to limit my study to a group of core manuscripts which are numerically manageable within the present publication; nevertheless, I do not rule out the possibility of widening my investigation further in the near future to include all the other manuscripts normally related—with more or less convincing arguments—to the group of the ‘Bodmer papyri’. See most recently Fournet 2015.

**90** The publication of facsimile collections of Coptic manuscripts, leaving aside those published before 1950 (i.e. Hyvernat 1888, Stegemann 1936), is limited to Cramer 1964, which does not reproduce any manuscript from the Bodmer Collection.

**91** The table excludes P. Bodmer XLI, as yet unpublished.

should note the presence of three important examples of the mixed style of Biblical majuscule and unimodular Alexandrian majuscule, found in both Greek and Coptic manuscripts but most prevalent after the fifth century in Coptic production.<sup>92</sup>

There are only a few examples of severe style, including the forms which belong to the phase of transition towards pointed majuscule (upright and sloping), found in three examples, and a handful of examples of documentary, cursive and informal scripts (four examples).

In terms of their chronology, these manuscripts can be attributed, on the basis of palaeographical evidence, to a broad period (Table 5), stretching from the third to the sixth century, with a peak of production in the fourth.<sup>93</sup>

On the basis of these general observations it is possible to state that:

1. the different styles of script found in the Bodmer papyri—from the more formal and set styles to those that use a more cursive *ductus*—show a highly variegated production;
2. the differing qualities of execution show that, in most cases, the producers of these manuscripts were not professional scribes but individuals whose writing abilities varied and who were producing books intended for practical use, by other individuals or groups, in daily life.

It should be added that—as far as present studies have established—there are no definite cases where the same scribe has been involved in the production of more than one manuscript.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Orsini 2008a, 143 n. 76; Orsini 2008b, 107–109, 112–115.

<sup>93</sup> I propose the dating of manuscripts illustrated in Table 5 on the basis of my analysis of their scripts. One should keep in mind, though, that manuscript P. Bodmer XX is the only one which has a firm reference for its dating: it includes the *Apologia* of Phileas, who was martyred in 305 CE, thus establishing a *terminus post quem* for the manuscript. On the manuscript see *infra*. In a recent work Nongbri 2014 suggests a dating to the fourth century for P. Bodmer II, on the basis of a palaeographical comparison between P. Bodmer XX and two other papyri (P. Cairo Isid. 2 [a letter from the archive of Aurelius Isidorus, dated 298 CE; TM 10352] and P. Lond. VI 1920 [a letter belonging to the Greek-Coptic dossier from the monastery of Phathor, datable c.330–340 CE; TM 44659]). The two Bodmer papyri (II and XX) show two different graphic typologies, and therefore are not comparable, even if they were contemporary; more convincing is the comparison with the scripts of the two letters. Moreover, the dating to late fourth – early fifth century for P. Bodmer XXIII, which I already proposed in the past (see Orsini 2008a, 131–132), is seemingly confirmed by archival documents found in its binding (published as P. Bodmer LIV–LVI), probably datable to the first half of the fourth century (see Fournet 2015, 25–40).

<sup>94</sup> See *infra* for the hypothesis presented here in relation to the comparison between one scribe of P. Bodmer XXV + IV + XXVI + P. Köln VIII 331 + P. Duke inv. 775 and the copyist of P. Monts. Roca inv. 128–178, 292, 338 (LDAB 552).

From the palaeographical perspective, it must be admitted that the Bodmer papyri form a *post hoc* assemblage of pieces from different periods, whose common element is the fact that they were found together and had possibly been put together by someone at some point in the past for a purpose the details of which remain unknown to us. In terms of their original production these manuscripts (either separately or as small groups defined on the basis of their textual, codicological or palaeographical homogeneity) were produced on their own; they are not elements which form part of a wider publishing project.

From the codicological point of view, three factors can be taken into consideration: the types of fascicules, the size and the proportion (Table 5).<sup>95</sup> For the fascicules, five of the codices consist of a single quire, while the others show a very wide range of types, using single bifolia, two bifolia, ternions and quaternions to quinions, eight and nine bifolia, often combining different sized quires within the same codex.<sup>96</sup> The size (W+H) varies between 237 and 460 mm, mostly falling within the range 300–400 mm. The proportion (W/H) ranges between 0.5 to 1 and over, with a high degree of variation.

It is helpful, by way of contrast, to recall the collection of the Nag Hammadi codices discovered in 1945 in southern Egypt in the same geographical area where the Bodmer papyri are said to have been found<sup>97</sup> and which, all datable to the fourth century, are close in the period of their production to many of the Bodmer papyri. The fourteen hands found in the thirteen Nag Hammadi codices belong prevalently to the Alexandrian stylistic class, apart from those which use Biblical majuscule and its related styles; only in a few isolated examples can we find a mixed style of Biblical majuscule and unimodular Alexandrian majuscule, as well as a type of script which belongs to the transitional phase between sloping severe style and sloping pointed majuscule.<sup>98</sup> From a codicological point of view, the Nag Hammadi manuscripts are much more uniform than the Bodmer group.

<sup>95</sup> For the meaning of ‘size’ and ‘proportion’, see Bozzolo / Ornato 1980, 217–219; Maniaci 1996, 144. In relation to the Bodmer Papyri, see also the bibliographical observations in Fournet 2015, 14.

<sup>96</sup> Turner 1977, 58–64. For the terminology used in the description of different types of quires, see Maniaci 1996, 132–134.

<sup>97</sup> For the history of the Nag Hammadi codices, see Robinson 2014, 1–119. On the different locations where the Bodmer Papyri were found, see Kasser 1988, 191–194; Robinson 2013, 15–35, 108–129.

<sup>98</sup> See *The Scripts of the Nag Hammadi Codices* chapter, Tab. 2.

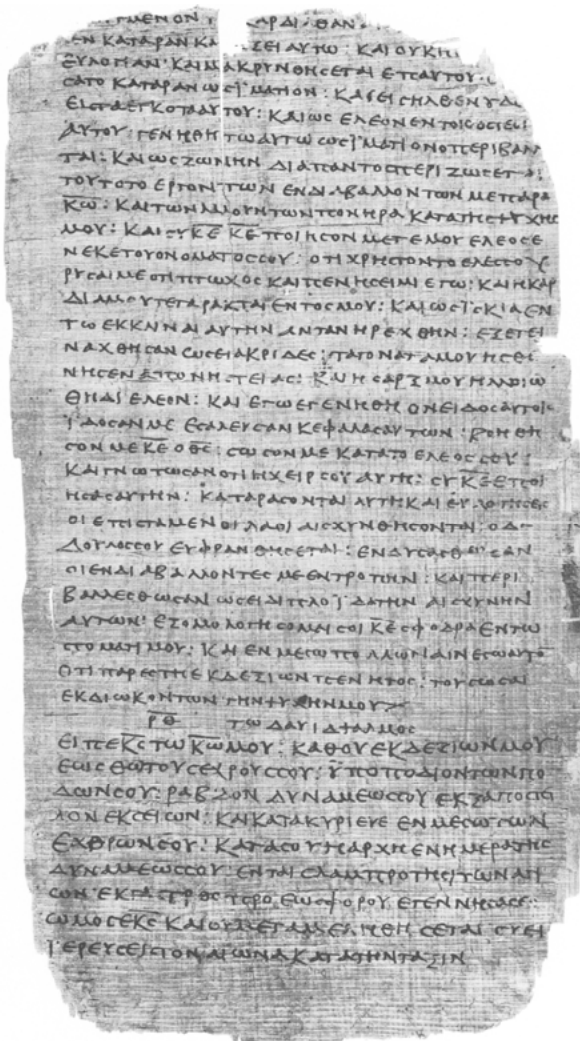


Fig. 16: P. Bodmer XXIV, f. 55r.

In short, the features we can identify in the Nag Hammadi codices—a more uniform selection of scripts, the presence of two scribal hands in several codices, a greater uniformity of codicological characteristics—are absent in the Bodmer manuscripts.

The comparison between the two groups makes it clear that no unified and coherently planned scribal project lay behind the production of the Bodmer

papyri and reinforces the hypothesis that they form a provisional and temporary assemblage of documents, unrelated as a whole.

In order to understand better some of the ways in which these manuscripts were produced it will be helpful to look at the codices which contain several hands. Specific indications can emerge from the observation of the forms of collaboration between scribes, the different styles of writing employed, and the strategies used to manage and coordinate the visual appearance of the texts and blank spaces.

Eight of the nineteen Bodmer papyri were written by more than one hand: in three of these ((P. Bodmer III; P. Bodmer XXI + P. Chester Beatty Ac. 1389; P. Bodmer XLV + XLVI + XLVII + XXVII) there is a sequence of successive hands, whereas in the remaining five (P. Bodmer V + X + XI + VII + XIII + XII + XX + IX + VIII; P. Bodmer XIX; P. Bodmer XXIV; P. Bodmer XXV + IV + XXVI; P. Bodmer XXIX + XXX–XXXVIII) the different hands seem to have been working at the same time. We will concentrate our analysis on these five codices.

We start with the most straightforward manuscripts, P. Bodmer XXIV and P. Bodmer XIX.

P. Bodmer XXIV is a papyrus codex in a single quire, of which 49 leaves have survived (some in a highly fragmentary state) and [41] bifolia have been reconstructed. It contains in Greek translation the text of *Psalms* 17–118. Two hands can be found: hand A copied ff. 1r–55r l. 30 (as far as the title of *Psalms* 109); hand B copied ff. 55r l. 31–59v (from the beginning of *Psalms* 109 to the end of *Psalms* 118). The exchange of hands takes place in the middle of f. 55r (Fig. 16). Both hands use a majuscule which belongs to the style of rounded and cursive scripts, with roots in documentary production and which forms the basis for the Alexandrian stylistic class. Possible comparisons are P. Oxy. X 1231 (Sappho; second century; Turner 1987, Pl. 17; LDAB 3893), P. Oxy. XVIII 2161 + PSI XI 1209 (Aeschylus, second century; Turner 1987, Pl. 24; LDAB 103), and above all P. Oxy. III 412 (Julius Africanus; *post* 227—*ante* 276 CE; Roberts 1956, Pl. 23a; LDAB 2550).<sup>99</sup> On the basis of these comparisons a cautious dating to the first half of the third century can be proposed instead of between the end of the third century and beginning of the fourth century, as the editor of the published volume has suggested.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Hammerstaedt 2009, with Pl. 1; Wallraff / Scardino / Macella / Guignard (eds) 2012, xxxiii–xxxviii, figs 1–4. On the verso of the papyrus there is the copy of the will of an unidentified Hermogenes (P. Oxy. VI 907; TM 20370), dated 276 CE.

<sup>100</sup> P. Bodmer XXIV, 22.



Fig. 17: P. Bodmer XIX, pp. PЄC'-A'.

P. Bodmer XIX is a parchment codex which in its present state consists of seven quires (a two-bifolia quire followed by six quaternions). It contains a section of *St Matthew's Gospel* in Coptic (13, 28–28, 20) and the initial section of the *Letter to the Romans* (1, 1–11, 3). Four hands can be identified: hand A has written the entire text from Matthew; hand B has written the last three leaves of the codex, containing the *Letter to the Romans* text; hand C has restored passages of text in the part written by A (on ff. 18r = p. 111, 23v = p. 122, 27r = p. 129); hand D has overwritten letters at several points in A's section.<sup>101</sup> If we exclude hands C and D therefore, which intervened subsequently to restore parts of the text which had been damaged, the change from hand A to B occurred at the point when one text concludes and another begins, in the final quire. Hand A finished Matthew's Gospel on the first column of the page numbered PЄC' (166, the verso of the fifty leaf of the quire); in the second column there is only the final title in the middle of the page); hand B begins to write on the following page (numbered A'; the recto of the sixth leaf in the quire) the text of the *Letter to the Romans* (Fig. 17). That the two scribes collaborated on the production of the codex is also shown by the fact that both use similar decently formed Biblical majuscules, with some typical characteristics of Coptic Biblical majuscule such as the extension under the base line of the left to right descending stroke in *alpha*, *kappa* and *lambda*.<sup>102</sup> These forms of

<sup>101</sup> P. Bodmer XIX, 19–22.

<sup>102</sup> Orsini 2008a, 131–132, and in the present volume p. 121.

Biblical majuscule can be compared—as the editor has suggested<sup>103</sup>—with the writing found both in P. Berol. inv. 3259 (*Psalms*; end of fourth—beginning of fifth century; LDAB 107864)<sup>104</sup> or with P. Bodmer XXII + Mississippi Coptic Codex II (end of fourth—beginning of fifth century). A dating to between the fourth and fifth centuries can therefore be proposed for P. Bodmer XIX.

The other three codices written by several hands are more complex than the two manuscripts just examined.

P. Bodmer V + X + XI + VII + XIII + XII + XX + IX + VIII have all been traced to the same codex consisting of approximately 15 quires<sup>105</sup> and containing nine texts in Greek.<sup>106</sup> In codicological terms, how these pieces were put together is unclear. However, at least two main *nuclei* can be identified:<sup>107</sup> the first is formed of P. Bodmer V X, XI, VII, XIII, XII and the second of P. Bodmer XX and IX.

**103** P. Bodmer XIX, 19 n. 4.

**104** Stegemann 1936, pl. 2.

**105** According to published editions, the collation of the original codex is as follows: 1<sup>6</sup> (ff. 1–6 = pp. 1–12), 2<sup>8</sup> (ff. 7–14 = pp. 13–28), 3<sup>8</sup> (ff. 15–22 = pp. 29–44), 4<sup>7</sup> (ff. 23–29 = pp. 45–58), 5<sup>6</sup> (ff. 30–35 = pp. 59–[69–70]; p. 68 is followed by an unnumbered blank leaf [pp. 69–70]), 6<sup>8</sup> (ff. 36–43 = pp. 3–18), 7<sup>8</sup> (ff. 44–51 = pp. 19–34), 8<sup>8</sup> (ff. 52–59 = pp. 35–50), 9<sup>7</sup> (ff. 60–66 = pp. 51–64; wanting the last blank leaf of the original quaternion, without loss of text), 10<sup>10</sup> (ff. [67]–76 = pp. [127–146]; ff. [67], [69], [74] have been reconstructed), 11<sup>2</sup> (ff. 77–78), 12<sup>2</sup> (ff. 79–85 = pp. 1–13; wanting the first leaf of the original quaternion), 13<sup>8</sup> (ff. 86–93 = pp. 15–30), 14<sup>2</sup> (ff. 94–95 = pp. 31–34), 15<sup>2</sup> (ff. 96–97 = pp. 35–36 + two blanks). For a different reconstruction of the quire structure, see Nongbri 2015: highlighting the different direction of the papyrus fibres in pages ΛA→/ΛB↓ – ΛΓ→/ΛΔ↓ (a bifolium artificially reconstructed, with a papyrus strip glued to its lower edge) of P. Bodmer VIII, Nongri 2015, 172, formulates the hypothesis that: ‘originally the last four leaves of P. Bodm. VIII formed the beginning of a quire (probably a ternion). At a subsequent stage, the bifolia of this quire were cut in half and the resulting loose leaves were joined serially, so that leaves ΛA/ΛB and ΛΓ/ΛΔ came to form a bifolium despite the different orientation of their fibres’. A different direction of the fibres is also found, however, in the following two leaves ΛE→/ΛC↓ – blank→/blank↓ (also linked by a papyrus strip at the lower edge), whereas, if the original quire had been a ternion, we should now find the direction of the fibres in the correct sequence ΛE→/ΛC↓ – blank↓/blank→, as the two leaves would have been the central bifolium in the quire. The present sequence of the fibres in the four surviving leaves suggests that the quire originally was a quaternion (formed of four bifolia), from which the last four leaves were excised and the remaining ones artificially linked together to form two separate bifolia.

**106** *Nativity of Mary* (P. Bodmer V: pp. 1–49); *Apocryphal Epistles between St Paul and the Corinthians* (P. Bodmer X: pp. 50–57); *XI Odes of Solomon* (P. Bodmer XI: pp. 57–61 l. 2); *Letter of Judas* (P. Bodmer VII: pp. 61 l. 3–68); *Melito of Sardis, Passover Homily* (P. Bodmer XIII: pp. 1–63); liturgical hymn, fragment (P. Bodmer XII: p. 64); *Apologia of Phileas* (P. Bodmer XX: pp. [129–145] l. 5); *Psalms* 33,2–34,16 (P. Bodmer IX: pp. [146] + 2 loose leaves); *Letters* by St Peter (P. Bodmer VIII: pp. 1–30); see Wasserman 2005; Camplani 2015, 113–122.

**107** Crisci 2004, 122–126.



Fig. 18: P. Bodmer V, p. A'.

The codices which form the first group were certainly part of the same codicological unit for the reason that the texts contained in them are continuous: the ends and beginnings of individual texts are found either on the same page (P. Bodmer X and XI, XI and VII) or on the recto and verso of the same leaf (P. Bodmer V and X, VII and XIII, XIII and XII). In this group three hands can be found: hand A wrote the entire text of the *Nativity*, consisting of the first three quires, up to the recto of the third leaf of the fourth quire (Fig. 18); on the verso of the same leaf hand B began the text of the *Apocryphal Epistles between St Paul and the Corinthians* and continuing up to the recto of the last leaf in quire 5 copied the texts of XI *Odes of Solomon* and the *Letter of Judas* (Fig. 19); on the verso of this leaf hand C wrote the title of the *Passover Homily* by Melito of Sardis and continued to copy as far as the verso of the last leaf of quire 9, with the fragment of a hymn (Fig. 20).

Hand A uses a formal round majuscule with a fluent *ductus*; hand B is an informal rounded majuscule, with many cursive and documentary features; hand C uses a style which belongs to the general category of Biblical majuscule and its



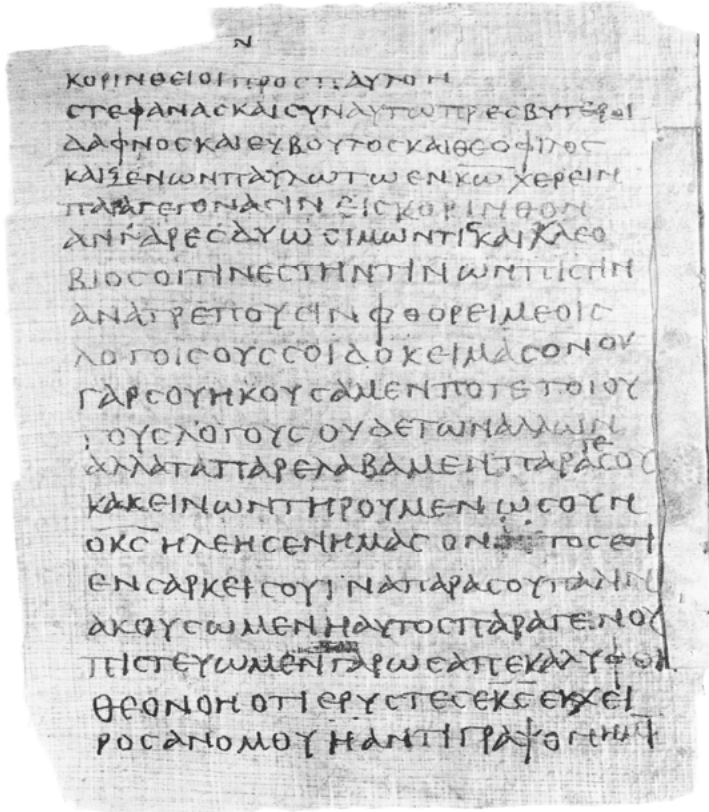


Fig. 19: P. Bodmer X, p. N'.

related styles. Hand A can be compared with P. Oxy. X 1250 + P. Oxy. LVI 3837 (Achilles Tatius; Seider 1970, Pl. XX, fig. 41; LDAB 10)<sup>108</sup>, attributable to between the end of the third century and beginning of the fourth; hand B with P. Oxy. II 209 (*St Paul*; beginning of fourth century; Cavallo / Maehler 1987, Pl. 1a; LDAB 3025), P. Köln I 52 (offer of employment; 263 CE; TM 15463);<sup>109</sup> and hand C with P. Oxy. I 22 (Sophocles; fourth century; Turner 1987, Pl. 29; LDAB 3947).

<sup>108</sup> Johnson 2004, 65 (Scribe B9).

<sup>109</sup> Harrauer 2010, Pl. 175.

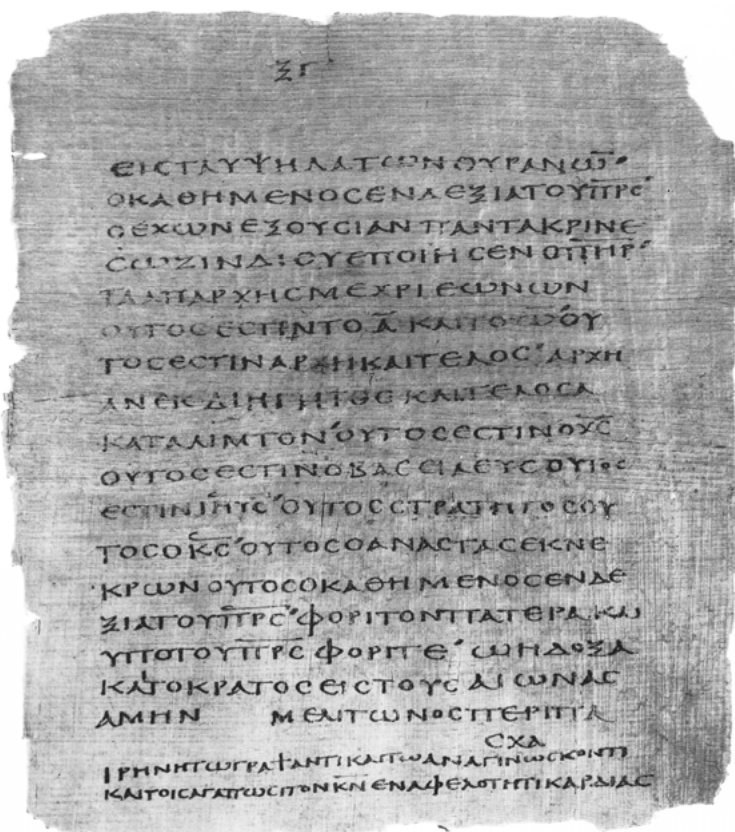


Fig. 20: P. Bodmer XIII, p. 37.

The second group is formed of P. Bodmer XX (*Apologia* of Phileas) and P. Bodmer IX (*Psalms* 33 and 34); these texts follow one another on the recto and verso of the last leaf of a quire in two different hands: hand D began to write the *Apologia* of Phileas on the recto on the first leaf up to the recto of the last leaf of a new quire (Fig. 21); another hand, E, starting from the verso of this same leaf began to write the *Psalms*, using two successive loose leaves (Fig. 22). It should be noted that P. Bodmer XX represents a *terminus post quem*, insofar as it contains the *Apologia* of Phileas, whose martyrdom can be dated to 305 CE:<sup>110</sup> this is important for the dating of hand D (a mixture of characteristics of Biblical and

<sup>110</sup> See n. 93; Bausi 2015, 161–162.

Alexandrian majuscules) and hand E (close to the Alexandrian stylistic class) which can as a result be assigned to the middle or, at the latest, end of the fourth century. An extremely interesting comparison for hand D is found in the first hand in the codex P. Chester Beatty IX–X (*Ezechiel, Daniel, Esther*: only the text of *Ezechiel* has been written by the first hand; LDAB 3090), which—thanks to this comparison—could be dated to the middle or the second half of the fourth century. Hand E can be compared with the writing in P. Reinach II 69 (Homer; end of fourth century; Cavallo / Maehler 1987, Pl. 6a; LDAB 2156).

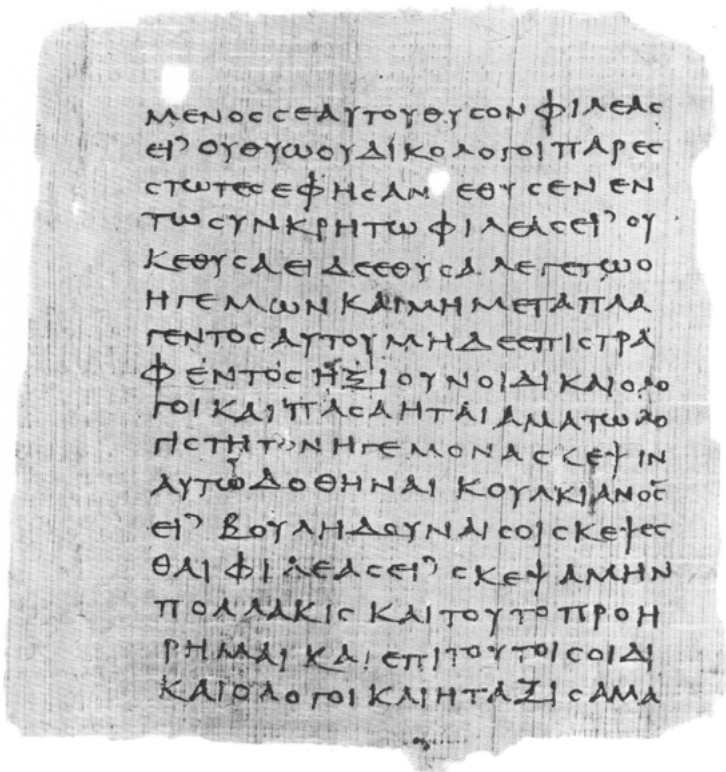


Fig. 21: P. Bodmer XX, p. [PMΔ].



Fig. 22: P. Bodmer IX, first leaf, detached, verso.

Outside these two groups of codices there is P. Bodmer VIII (*Epistles* of Peter) in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.<sup>111</sup> It is made up of a quire of seven sheets, of four sheets and two bifolia. It should be remembered that this small codex has been regarded as the final piece in the reconstruction of a single codex including all nine Bodmer papyri on the sole and rather weak grounds that there are two blank pages at the end.<sup>112</sup> Yet, as the editor of the papyrus has acknowledged, the single pieces were originally independent of each other and were only put together subsequently. There is material evidence for this both in the two sets of holes for two different bindings (the original binding and the later one when the codi-

<sup>111</sup> Reproduced in facsimile in Martini 1968a, Martini 2003.

<sup>112</sup> P. Bodmer VII–IX, 9: ‘at the end, there is a blank leaf, probably for protection: it therefore seems clear that Peter’s *Epistles* were the last work to be copied in the compilation’.

ces were put together) and some page numbers (ΞΔ' in P. Bodmer XII and ΠΑΕ'–ΠΑΣ' in P. Bodmer XX) which are not in the hands of the scribes who wrote the texts but belong to a single later hand (possibly the man who organised the codices into one compilation?).<sup>113</sup> Thus the blank pages at the end of P. Bodmer VIII can be seen as the termination of this small codex when it was still separate.



Fig. 23: P. Bodmer VIII, p. A'.

Nevertheless, on closer examination it can be seen that the copy of the *Epistles* of Peter in P. Bodmer VIII (Fig. 23) was done by the same hand B which wrote P. Bodmer X, XI and VII, and the possibility therefore cannot be excluded—even in the absence of certain codicological evidence—that this codex is in some way connected with the first group of codices.<sup>114</sup>

P. Bodmer XXV + IV + XXVI + P. Köln VIII 331 + P. Duke inv. 775 is a papyrus codex composed of a single quire of [16] bifolia. It contains three comedies by Menander, *Samia*, *Dyskolos* and *Aspis*.<sup>115</sup> According to Carroll A. Nelson and Joanne L. Raymond four hands succeed each other in P. Bodmer IV:<sup>116</sup>

<sup>113</sup> P. Bodmer VII–IX, 9.

<sup>114</sup> Nongbri 2015, 172.

<sup>115</sup> Martin 1960; Martin 1966; Kasser 1971.

<sup>116</sup> Nelson / Raymond 1967.

- hand A, ff. 10r–17v l. 40 (= pp. 19–34 = pls 1–16 l. 40 in P. Bodmer IV);
- hand B, ff. 17v l. 41–18v end (= pp. 34–36 = pls 16 l. 41–18 in P. Bodmer IV);
- hand C, f. 19r complete (= p. 37 = pl. 19 in P. Bodmer IV);
- hand D, ff. 19v–20r (= pp. 38–39 = pls 20–21 in P. Bodmer IV).



Fig. 24: P. Bodmer IV, f. 17v.

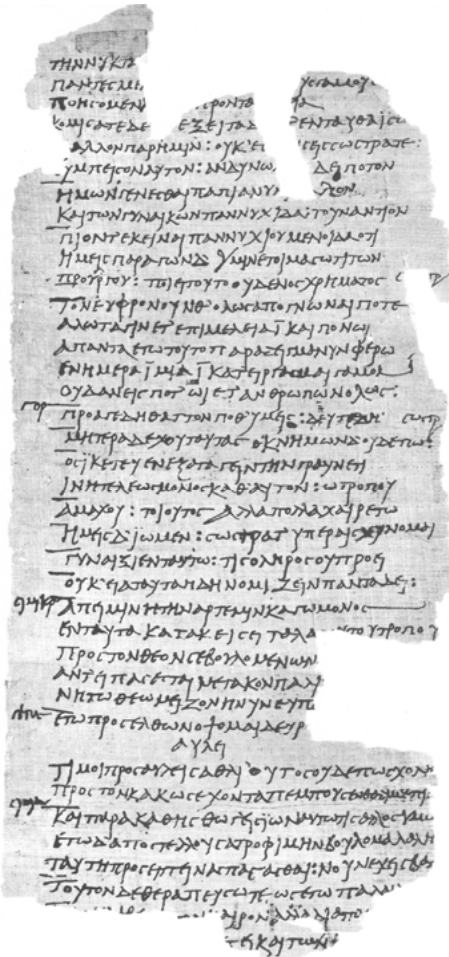


Fig. 25: P. Bodmer IV, f. 19r.

However, the hand found in the last two pages is none other than hand B, with all its distinctive characteristics. It can be seen that hand A has copied the entire text of the *Samia* (P. Bodmer XXV, ff. 1r–9v = pp. 1–18) and a large part of the *Dyskolos* (P. Bodmer IV, ff. 10r–17v l. 40) (Fig. 24); in the same text we find hand C which wrote a single page (P. Bodmer IV, f. 19r) (Fig. 25); finally, hand B returns for the last two pages of the *Dyskolos* (P. Bodmer IV, ff. 19v–20r) (Fig. 26) and begins a new text, *Aspis* (P. Bodmer XXVI, ff. 20v–31v = pp. 40–62).

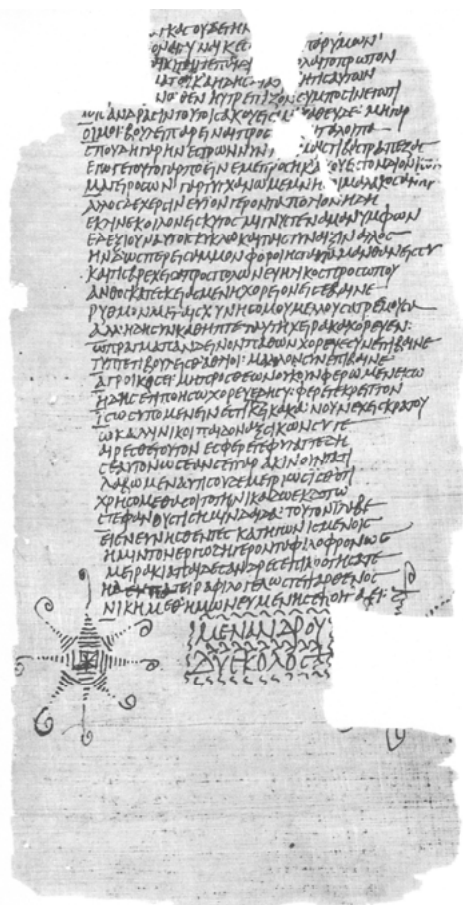


Fig. 26: P. Bodmer IV, f. 20r.

Judging from the alternation of the hands, it would appear the scribes were working in close collaboration in writing the Menander texts. Moreover, they all show the same graphic characteristics belonging to the practices of documentary and bureaucratic writing: a majuscule sloping to the right, a small module, a rapid *ductus* and a noticeable use of cursive features; ligatures between letters are frequent and at the end of lines the final strokes of letters are extended into the margin. All these hands can be compared to the writing found in P. Oxy. VI 856 (Aristophanes; fourth century; Turner 1987, Pl. 73; LDAB 354), P. Oxy. XXXIII 2656 (Menander; fourth century; Turner 1987, Pl. 43; LDAB 2711), P. Berol. inv. 5003 + P. Cairo 140 + P. Gen. 4 158 (Olympiodorus; fourth–fifth centuries; Seider 1970,



Pl. XXXIII, Fig. 62; LDAB 5938). However, hand B in this codex can also be convincingly compared with another Greek text found in one of the manuscripts which, it has been suggested, has close links with the Bodmer papyri, the codex P. Monts. Roca inv. 126–178, 292, 338 (LDAB 552) in Barcelona. In this miscellany a single hand has been identified as being responsible for the texts in Greek (a euchologion and a list of words to be used in tachygraphy) (Fig. 27) and in Latin (Cicero, *In Catilinam* 6–8, 13–30; an acrostic hymn to the Virgin Mary; *Alcesti* in Latin hexameters; a story about the Emperor Hadrian).<sup>117</sup> The hand is the same graphic type as hand B in the Menander codex; furthermore, the two hands share some detailed features: for example, the strokes and the shapes of the letters *epsilon*, *zeta*, *kappa*, *sigma*, *upsilon* as well as a whole series of ligatures and linking strokes between letters.

Elias Lowe dated the Latin script found in the Barcelona codex—called ‘antique half-uncial’—initially<sup>118</sup> to between the fourth and fifth centuries and later<sup>119</sup> to the second half of the fourth century.<sup>120</sup> Thus, if the perception that these two codices are related is a plausible hypothesis (could they have been produced in the same

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**117** Torallas Tovar / Worp (eds) 2006; Gil / Torallas Tovar 2010; Nocchi Macedo (ed.) 2014. Torallas Tovar / Worp (eds) 2006, 23, draw attention to a change in writing instrument in P. Monts Roca inv. 175v (Pl. XX), while excluding the possibility that this coincides with a change of hand; moreover, Nocchi Macedo (ed.) 2014, calls its Latin script a ‘minuscola libraria primitiva’, i.e. primitive minuscule bookhand, (51) and proposes a dating to the second half of the fourth century (57); it is worth pointing out that, in the description of the writing of the Greek portion of the codex, Nocchi Macedo interestingly proposes a comparison with P. Bodmer IV as well, although without a precise indication of which hand he is referring to (39). See also Crisci 2004, 129–132. In the two *tabulae ansatae* at the end of the Latin texts (*Catilinariae* and the story about the Emperor Hadrian) the character *Dorotheus* is mentioned: De Paolis 2000, 46 n. 25, suggests the identification of this name with the author of the two visions in P. Bodmer XXIX (Dorotheus could be identified with the presbyter Dorotheus, born in Antioch in 255 CE and martyred at Edessa in 362 CE); on this name and De Paolis’s hypothesis, see Torallas Tovar / Worp (eds) 2006, 22–23 and nn. 12–13; Gil / Torallas Tovar 2010, 30–31; Nocchi Macedo (ed.) 2014, 136.

**118** CLA XI (1966), no. 1650.

**119** CLA Suppl. (1971), no. 1782.

**120** Lowe (CLA XI [1966], no. 1683) proposed an interesting comparison between the Latin script of the Barcelona codex and the Latin portion in the bilingual codex P. Chester Beatty Ac. 1499 (CLA Suppl. [1971], no. 1683: second half of the fifth century, ‘antique half-uncial’; LDAB 3030; digital facsimile: [http://csntm.org/Manuscript/View/GA\\_P99](http://csntm.org/Manuscript/View/GA_P99)): it is worth pointing out that the codex in the Chester Beatty Library has been associated (Robinson 2013, 68–71) with the group of the *Dishnā papers* (see also Nocchi Macedo [ed.] 2014, 55–57). In my opinion, the Greek script in the Barcelona codex also shows a number of features similar to the Greek hand in P. Chester Beatty Ac. 1499, although single strokes (see *beta*, *zeta*, *eta*, *xi*) and ligatures (for example *epsilon* + *iota*) also suggest that we should exclude the possibility it was the same hand.

place or possibly even written by the same scribe?) then the Greek hand in the Menander codex—with the further support of the Latin script found in the Barcelona codex—could also be attributed to the second half or the end of the fourth century. Such a dating would move forward by approximately a century the traditional attribution of the Menander codex to the second half of the third century or beginning of the fourth century generally found in the related studies.<sup>121</sup>

The forms of collaboration between the scribes, the writing styles employed and the type of texts which have been copied indicate that the Menander codex was intended as an informal book, destined for a limited circle of readers, for whom secular culture must have played an important role.



Fig. 27: P. Barc. inv. 157b, f. 32v.

<sup>121</sup> It is worth mentioning Frank Gilliam's statement (Gilliam 1978, 129–130) that 'the ornamentation at the end of the *Samia* [in P. Bodmer XXV] resembles that at the end of the First Catilanian [in the Barcelona codex]', followed by the comment (n. 73) 'this should be taken into account in dating the Menander codex'. See also Cavañale 1987, 103.



Fig. 28: P. Bodmer XXXVIII, f. 5v.

P. Bodmer XXIX + XXX–XXXVIII—the well-known *codex VISIONUM*—is a papyrus codex made up of a single quire of twelve bifolia, containing ten texts.<sup>122</sup> Hand A has written up to f. 5v (the first two visions of Hermas and the start of the third) (Fig. 28);

<sup>122</sup> *Visions I–III* from the *Shepherd of Hermas* (P. Bodmer XXXVIII: ff. 1r–11v; lacking two leaves, [12] and [13], including the end of the III Vision and the IV Vision); *Vision of Dorotheus* (P. Bodmer XXIX: ff. 14r–185 l. 21); *Poem on Abraham* (P. Bodmer XXX: ff. 18r l. 22–18v l. 17); *Poem ad Justos* (P. Bodmer XXXI: ff. 18v l. 18–20v l. 11); *Hymn to the Lord Jesus* (P. Bodmer XXXII: ff. 20v l. 12–21r l. 16); *The Murder of Abel 1* (P. Bodmer XXXIII: f. 21r ll. 17–39); *The Lord Jesus to those who suffer* (P. Bodmer XXXIV: ff. 21r l. 40–21v l. 31); *The Murder of Abel 2* (P. Bodmer XXXV: ff. 21v l. 32–23r l. 2); *Poem* (P. Bodmer XXXVI: ff. 23r l. 3–23v); *Hymn* (P. Bodmer XXXVII: f. 24rv). On this manuscript, see the articles in Hurst / Rudhardt 2002; see also Agosti 2015; Camplani 2015, 101–113.

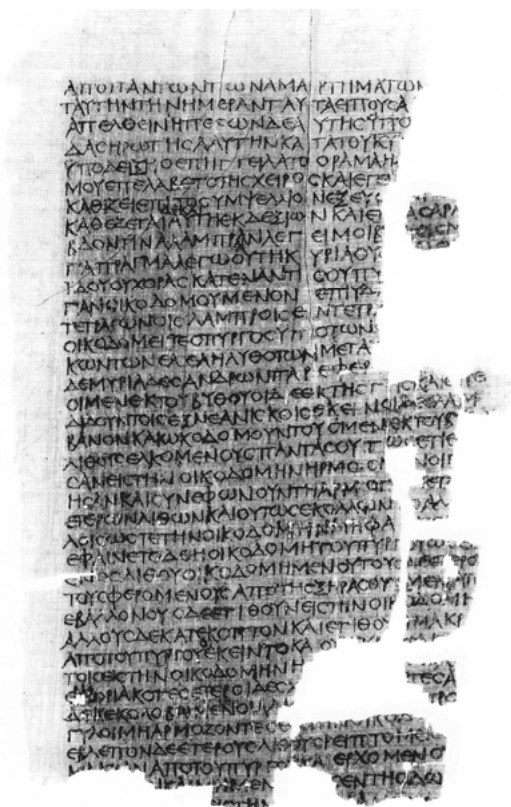


Fig. 29: P. Bodmer XXXVIII, f. 6r.

hand B has followed on from f. 6r (Fig. 29), continuing the text of the third vision of Hermas, until f. 11v (where the text ends abruptly); perhaps a middle bifolium which contained the final part of the third vision and the entire fourth vision is missing. From f. 14r hand C takes over in copying the text of the *Vision of Dorotheus*, up to the end (f. 18v l. 21) (Fig. 30); from f. 18v l. 23 hand D intervenes in the transcription of the *Poem on Abraham* and *Poem ad Justos* (the title of the latter work has been written by hand E), up to f. 20v l. 11; from l. 12 on the same page (Fig. 31) hand E begins to copy the *Hymn to the Lord Jesus* and the *Murder of Abel* 1, until f. 21r l. 39; from l. 40 on the same page hand D has written only the initial part (the title and the first two lines) of *The Lord to those who suffer* (Fig. 32); on the verso of f. 21 hand F continues the same text until the end, the *Murder of Abel* 2, together with a Poem and a Hymn (Fig. 33).



Fig. 30: P. Bodmer XXIX, f. 18v.

The cross-overs between hands D, E and F suggest that these scribes were working in close collaboration, just as the alternation of hands A and B in their copy of the third vision of Hermas does: the change of hand coincides with a change of page. Hand C leaves off and D continues in the middle of a page.



Fig. 31 and 32: P. Bodmer XXXI-XXXII, f. 20v and P. Bodmer XXXII-XXXIV, f. 21r.

A detailed description of all these hands can be found in Guglielmo Cavallo's analysis; Cavallo suggests a dating to the beginning of the fifth century.<sup>123</sup> The present discussion merely draws attention to the fact that all four hands, A, B, C, and D, write in the general stylistic context of Biblical majuscule, though it should also be pointed out that hands A and D show a good level of skill while B and C are much less precise and more careless. Hands E and F, on the contrary, combine features from both Biblical majuscule and unimodular Alexandrian majuscule: in E *alpha* and *mu* are 'Alexandrian' while in F only *mu* is 'Alexandrian'.

<sup>123</sup> P. Bodmer XXXVIII, 118–124.



Fig. 33: P. Bodmer XXXIV-XXXV, f. 21v.

The *codex Visionum*, therefore, was probably written at the beginning of the fifth century by six scribes working in close collaboration; the scribes' abilities differed but they share the same type of writing. They do not appear to be professional scribes and perhaps not even apprentices learning to copy, but a group of individuals—perhaps members of some community—for whom, in the words of Edoardo Crisci, 'the act of writing must have been a form of edification, almost of moral obligation, of spiritual elevation, of a more intimate dwelling on texts which were

thought to possess particular ethical and doctrinal value.<sup>124</sup> In short, the collaboration between the scribes and the thematic homogeneity of the texts transcribed in the codex suggest a religious community producing books for their own internal use.

The various situations we have described lead to two main types of collaboration:

1. several scribes alternating between themselves copied different texts: a. on the same page; b. on the recto and verso of the same leaf; c. on the verso of one leaf and the recto of the following leaf;
2. several scribes alternating between themselves copied the same text: a. on the same page; b. on the recto and verso of the same leaf.

In two cases the same scribes have changed round twice: these are hands B and C in P. Bodmer XXV + IV + XXVI, and hands D and F in P. Bodmer XXIX + XXX + XXXVIII, with brief passages. These consecutive alternations would suggest that the scribes were working in close collaboration.

These methods of working gave rise to different results:

- codices written in formal scripts by well-trained scribes, probably working on commission;
- codices written in informal scripts, intended for a limited circulation and for practical, daily use;
- codices which display a mixture of formal and informal scripts—at times more clearly belonging to a documentary environment—which would seem to reflect the activity of a group of individuals, perhaps members of a particular community, who practise writing as a form of moral education;
- codices written in documentary scripts properly so-called for what might be called educational purposes, perhaps in a school (either lay or religious);
- finally, codices which are the result of other codices, originally conceived as separate items, being bound together in one volume.

Once again we are faced with disparate materials. Each of these codices, written by more than one hand, can be seen as the result of processes of book production springing from different cultural motivations, carried out with differing levels of graphical and codicological expertise and intended for different recipients. It is evident that such a multiplicity of material does not reflect a coherent and harmonious unity of conception.

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124 Crisci 2004, 121.



2.1 Tables

	Seider 1970	Metzger 1981	Cavallo / Maehler 1987	Turner 1987
P. Bodmer II	no. 44 (II, mid)	no. 7 (c.200)		no. 63 (III, early)
P. Bodmer IV	no. 51 (III–IV)		no. 5b (IV, first half)	
P. Bodmer XIV	no. 49 (II–III)	no. 9 (III, early)		

**Tab. 4:** Bodmer Papyri reproduced in facsimile collections of Greek manuscripts.

P. Bodmer	Century	Typology	Quires	Script (Hands)	Dimen- sions (W×H)	Size (mm)	Propor- tion
XXIV	III, first half	PapCod	1	[AM1] (A, B)	130×240	370	0,541
XLV + XLVI + XLVII + XXVII	III–IV	PapCod	+	Severe style (A); [BM] (B); Alex- andrian Chan- cery Hand of Subazianus Aquila (C)	155×180	335	0,861
II + P. Köln V 214 + P. Ches- ter Beatty ac. 2555	III, mid– IV, mid	PapCod	+	[AM1]	[200×210]	410	0,952
XIV–XV	III, late– IV, early	PapCod	1	Severe style	[130×260]	390	0,5
Schøyen Col- lection MS 193 + P. Chester Beatty 2026	IV	PapCod	+	[AM1]	155×147	302	1,054
III	IV	PapCod	+	BM (A, B)	165×232	397	0,711
V + X + XI + VII + XIII + XII + XX + IX + VIII	IV	PapCod	+	[BM] (A; C); [AM1] (E); [BM+AM] (D); Round semi- formal majus- cule (B)	142×155	297	0,916

P. Bodmer	Century	Typology	Quires	Script (Hands)	Dimensions (W×H)	Size (mm)	Proportion
XXV + IV + XXVI + P. Köln VIII 331 + P. Duke inv. 775	IV, 2nd half	PapCod	1	Informal cursive majuscules (A, B, C)	130×280	410	0,464
XVIII	IV, 2nd half	PapCod	+	BM	140×145	285	0,965
P. Monts. Roca. inv. 128–178, 292, 338	IV, 2nd half	PapCod	1	Informal cursive majuscule (Greek); primi- tive minuscule bookhand (Latin)	114×123	237	0,926
VI	IV–V	ParchCod	+	BM+AM	120×145	265	0,827
XIX	IV–V	ParchCod	+	BM (A, B, C, D)	125×155	280	0,806
XXIII	IV–V	PapCod	+	BM	[135×210]	345	0,642
XXII + Mis- sissippi Coptic Codex II	IV–V	ParchCod	+	BM	[120×140]	260	0,857
XXIX + XXX– XXXVIII	V, early	PapCod	1	[BM] (A, B, C, D); BM+AM (E, F)	[175×285]	460	0,614
XVI	V	ParchCod	+	AM1	135×160	295	0,843
XXI + P. Chester Beatty Ac. 1389	V	PapCod	+	Severe style > UPM / SPM (A); [BM] (B)	125×185	310	0,675
XL	VI	ParchCod	+	BM	150×190	340	0,789

**Tab. 5:** Bodmer papyri

PapCod = papyrus codex; ParchCod = parchment codex; C = Coptic; G = Greek; L = Latin; BM = Biblical majuscule; AM1 = unimodular Alexandrian majuscule; BM+AM = script mixing elements from Biblical and Alexandrian majuscules; UPM = upright pointed majuscule; SPM = sloping pointed majuscule; the script acronym within square brackets, e.g. [BM], is used when a hand belongs to the general graphical style of the script, but not to the so-called 'canon'; the symbol '+' is used in the 'Quires' column when a codex is formed of more than one quire.