

## **CODICOLOGY**

A science concerned with the externals of [manuscripts](#) in [codex](#) form, their history, and the [history](#) of manuscript collections, to the exclusion of PALEOGRAPHY.

With the first major classification of the ancient papyrus and parchment codices from Egypt, E. G. Turner reached some noteworthy codicological conclusions. Investigation of the measurements of the [codex](#) leaves and of their arrangement made it possible to recognize for specific periods scribal usages and scribal schools, knowledge of which is important for dating a codex.

The same purpose is served by determining relationships between leaf size and written surface, the number of lines, and the number of columns per page. The proportions for papyrus codices do not find any exact [parallel](#) to those made of parchment because of the differing dimensions of an animal skin as compared with a papyrus roll, which had to be cut up for the production of [codex](#) leaves.

For the manufacture of the codex, four leaves (quaternio) were generally folded vertically to form a quire of sixteen pages, and several quires were united into a book-block. There are, however, also other types of quire (unio, binio, ternio, quinio), and even single-quire codices. It is important to observe, in the production of the quires, the sequence of the pages with horizontal or vertical fibers in papyrus codices, or in parchment codices the sequence of hair and flesh side.

In [Greek](#) manuscripts, the leaves are usually so arranged that in the open [codex](#) two hair sides or two flesh sides always lie beside one another. In the parchment leaves, punctures were frequently made on the upper, outer, and lower margins as an aid to the marking of lines. These lines, usually engraved only on the hair side, appear on the flesh side as ridges.

In addition, other methods are [characteristic](#) of particular scriptoria. Normally the leaves were inscribed before binding, and the stitching of the quires and the manufacture of the book-block were done in conjunction. Numbering of pages or of quires probably came about at the same time as the development of the [codex](#) form. The earliest example of the quire numbering belongs to the years 200 to 250 (Turner, 1977, p. 77).

The illustration of texts, particularly known from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* papyri, was greatly advanced with the dissemination of the codex. The book form offered greater scope for artistic embellishment and for initials, ornamented rules, and flourishes.

The [history](#) of the book cover begins at the same time as the introduction of the codex. The technique for making book covers by hand has not substantially changed from the beginning to today. The Romans had used wooden protective covers for parchment notebooks, and wood was also generally the basic material for the covers of codices, which were overlaid with leather.

In Egypt, instead of the wooden cover, papyrus leaves were glued together into a pasteboard and overlaid with leather (covers of the Nag Hammadi codices). The Copts, who were known for their skill in binding, adorned the leather covers with geometrical figures in low relief. Painted covers are rare. The technique and ornamentation of covers of the [Byzantine period](#) point to Coptic influence (Regemorter, 1954). Medieval bookbinding developed a great sumptuousness with the use of costly metals and precious stones.

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