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978-1-108-04351-9 - Catalogue of the Syriac MSS. in the Convent of S. Catharine on Mount Sinai

Agnes Smith Lewis

Frontmatter

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Catalogue of the Syriac MSS. in the Convent of S. Catharine on Mount Sinai

The sisters Agnes Lewis (1843–1926) and Margaret Gibson (1843–1920) were pioneering biblical scholars who became experts in a number of ancient languages. Travelling widely in the Middle East, they made several significant discoveries, including one of the earliest manuscripts of the Four Gospels in Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic, the language probably spoken by Jesus himself. Their chief discoveries were made in the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. This work is a list of the monastery's manuscripts in Syriac, compiled by Agnes Lewis in 1893 and first published in 1894. Written in English and Modern Greek for use as a tool for scholars and for the monks themselves, this fascicule provides a careful document of the monastery's Syriac pages, their physical state and content. This text will be of great interest to Syriac scholars and those interested in Middle Eastern monastic and broader Christian history.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108043519

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2012

This edition first published 1894
This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-04351-9 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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London: C. J. CLAY AND SONS,
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE,
AVE MARIA LANE.
Glasgow: 263, ARGYLE STREET.

Cambridge: DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS.
New York: MACMILLAN AND CO.

Cambridge University Press

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PLATE I.



III MACCABEES I. 8—17
From a Sinaitic MS.

Frontispiece

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STUDIA SINAITICA No. I.

CATALOGUE

OF THE SYRIAC MSS.

IN THE CONVENT OF S. CATHARINE ON
MOUNT SINAI

COMPILED BY

AGNES SMITH LEWIS.

LONDON:

C. J. CLAY AND SONS,

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE

AVE MARIA LANE.

1894

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Cambridge:

PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A., AND SONS,

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

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τῷ μακαριωτάτῳ καὶ φιλομογῶ

ΚΥΡΪΩ ΠΟΡΦΥΡΪΩ

Τῷ τοῦ Ὁροῦς Σινᾶ Ἀρχιερεῖ

ὑπολήψεώς τε καὶ ἐγγνωμοσύνης

ἐλάχιστον δείγμα

προσφέρει

Ἡ ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΗΣ

L. S. M.

b

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following list of the Syriac manuscripts in the Convent of St Catherine on Mount Sinai was made by me in the month of February, 1893. It is not a complete catalogue of their contents, the time at my disposal (forty days) and the necessity of completing other work to which I had set my hands having precluded me from compiling anything that goes much beyond a mere index. I took advantage of an opportunity that has never before been granted to a European visitor, and which sprung directly out of a visit paid by my sister, Mrs Gibson, and myself to the monastery in February, 1892.

I had then the pleasure of discovering and photographing the palimpsest, No. 30, which contains the Four Gospels in Old Syriac, a Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, No. 1, a tenth century Arabic codex of the Gospels, a ninth century Arabic codex of some of St Paul's Epistles, and a Greek Liturgy of St Mark of Alexandria; some of these being hitherto unknown in Europe, and others being known by one, or in the case of the Liturgy, by two copies only.

My sister and I had also gained the goodwill of His Beatitude Porphyrios, Archbishop of Mount Sinai, and of the whole resident community of monks, from whom we received an amount of kindness and assistance which contributed not a little to the success of our efforts. It

was thus only natural that my sister should have taken advantage of this friendship to obtain from the Archbishop the following letter, the promise of which, strangely enough, came to us both as a birthday present.

Ὅσιώτατοι Σκευοφύλαξ Κ. Γαλακτίων καὶ Οἰκονόμο Κ. Νικόδημο. Τὴν Ὑμετέραν Ὅσιότητα πατρικῶς εὐχόμεθα καὶ εὐλογοῦμεν.

Αἱ ἐπιδότιδες τῆς συστατικῆς ἡμῶν ταύτης πατρικο-ευχητικῆς ἐπιστολῆς τυγχάνουσι, αἱ καὶ πέρυσι συναναβάσαι ἐν τῇ Μονῇ γνωσταὶ ὑμῖν Περιηγήτριαὶ Ἀδελφαὶ Ἀγγλίδες Κ. Ἄννα Σμιθ καὶ Μαργαρίτα Γυίβσον, συνοδευόμεναι ὑπὸ τῶν Κ. Κ. Βένσλε μετὰ τῆς συζύγου του, Βάρκερ (sic) μετὰ τῆς συζύγου του, καὶ τοῦ Κυρίου Χάρις, αἵτινες ἔρχονται αὐτόσε πρὸς μελέτην τῆς βιβλιοθήκης τῆς Ἱερᾶς ἡμῶν Μονῆς καὶ πρὸς κατάστρωσιν ἀκριβοῦς καταλόγου ἀπάντων τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ Ἀραβικῶν καὶ Συριακῶν βιβλίων, ὁ ὁποῖος κατάλογος θὰ μένη πάντοτε ἐν τῇ Μονῇ ὡς συνενωθήμεν ἐνταῦθα· καὶ μόνον πιστὸν αὐτοῦ ἀντίγραφον θὰ λάβωσιν αἱ ἐν λόγῳ Κυρίαὶ μεθ' ἑαυτῶν. Ἐπὶ τούτῳ θὰ ἐζήτησαν παρ' ἡμῖν τὴν ἄδειαν τοῦ παραμεῖναι ἕνα περίπου μῆνα αὐτόθι καὶ προτρεπόμεθα ὑμᾶς πατρικῶς ἵνα παράσχητε προθύμως ταῖς ἐριτίμοις καὶ λογίαις ταύταις κυρίαὶς τὴν πρὸς τὸν σκοπὸν αὐτῶν ἀπαιτουμένην συνδρομὴν καὶ περιποίησιν. Ἐφ' οἷς ἐπευλογοῦντες καὶ αἰθῆς ὑμᾶς πατρικῶς διατελοῦμεν.

*τῆς Ὑμετέρας Ὅσιότητος
διάπυρος πρὸς θεὸν εὐχέτης
Ὁ Σιναῖος Πορφύριος.*

*ἐν Καίρῳ τῇ 13 Ἰανουαρίου,
1893.*

Τοῖς Ὅσιωτάτοις Σκευοφύλαξι Κ. Γαλακτίωνι καὶ Οἰκονόμῳ Κ. Νικόδημῳ τοῖς συγκρατοῦσι τὴν Ἱερὰν τῶν Πατέρων Σύναξιν.

INTRODUCTION

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I would draw attention to the conditions under which we obtained permission to examine *all* the Syriac and Arabic books in the Convent. The most important was that a list of these should be made out in the Greek language, and should be left in the Convent, we taking an accurate copy with us on our departure. On the fulfilment of this obligation depended other concessions made to us and to our fellow-travellers, which need not be specified here.

This book is therefore bilingual throughout, the descriptive part being in English and in Modern Greek. In writing the latter I have adopted the ancient forms of the verb *εἶμι*, such as *ἐστί*, *εἶσι*, in preference to *εἶνε*, so as to make it more readily understood by Western scholars. I have however conformed to modern usage by giving to neuter plural substantives a plural verb.

The work of compiling this list during our stay at the Convent was a heavy one, and I could not have accomplished it but for the constant advice and active assistance of my friend Mr J. Rendel Harris. He alone is responsible for the Appendix of Fragments which he catalogued at the request of the late lamented Abbot and Librarian, Father Galaktion. The text of most of them will be found in his *Biblical Fragments from Mount Sinai*, published in 1890. No. 55 is the only one of these which I have copied from photographs.

To Mr Harris also I owe the Syriac extracts from No. 10 and No. 16. These he copied from photographs which he took in 1889 and compared again with the originals in 1893.

The dates which I have ventured to assign to some of the MSS. are only approximate, and I suspect that a few of these will be referred to an earlier period when they come into the hands of more experienced scholars.

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Certain numbers in my list are left blank; the manuscripts to which these belong having apparently been lost or removed. Mr Harris informs me that one of the missing copies is a fine codex of the second and third books of the Maccabees, which he saw and photographed in 1889.*

I have to record my thanks to the holy Fathers who sometimes relieved me of the task of counting pages; to the Rev. R. H. Kennett of Queens' College, Lecturer in Aramaic to the University of Cambridge, who has helped me with various suggestions in regard to the Syriac extracts; and to Mr J. F. Stenning of Oxford, who has brought me from Sinai some words which I had photographed too faintly in No. 10. And I trust that future visitors to the Sinai Library will forgive any sins of omission which they may detect in these pages, for the sake of the time and labour which may be saved to them in their researches.

* See frontispiece.

AGNES SMITH LEWIS.

CASTLE-BRAE, CAMBRIDGE,
1894.

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CORRIGENDA.

Page 17, No. 14 for **ܘܢܘܢܝܘܢ** read **ܘܢܘܢܝܘܢ**

Page 50, No. 48 for *Στιχεράριον* read *Στιχηράριον*

Page 51, No. 50 for „ read „

Page 63, No. 118 for „ read „

Page 66, No. 133 for „ read „

Page 69, No. 148 for „ read „

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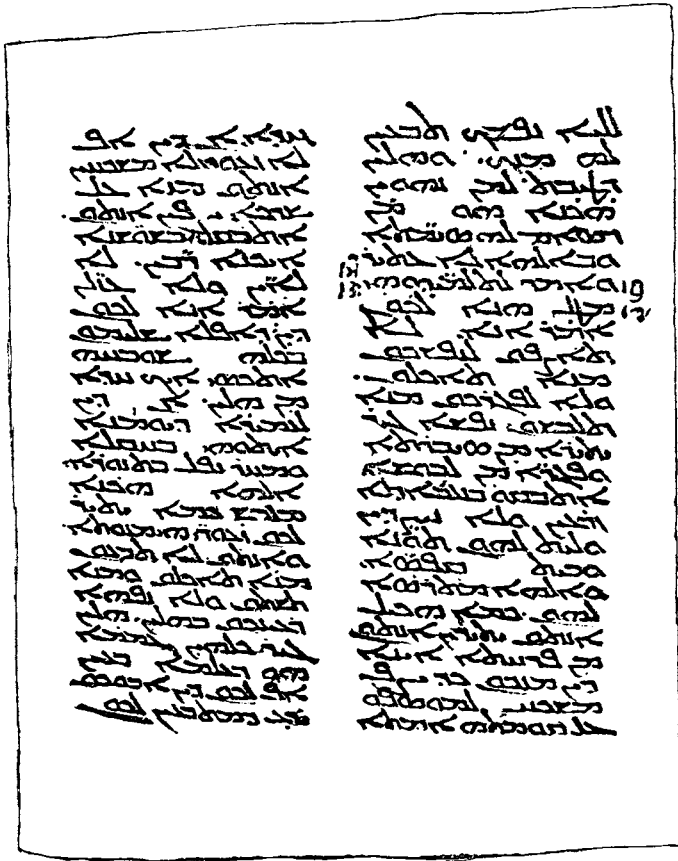
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PLATE II.



Peshito Gospels. No. 2. Sixth century.

LUKE XII. 20—30.

To face page 1.