

THE LITURGY OF THE NILE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649306299

The Liturgy of the Nile by G. Margoliouth

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G. MARGOLIOUTH

**THE LITURGY
OF THE NILE**

THE
LITURGY OF THE NILE.

186055

THE PALESTINIAN SYRIAC TEXT, EDITED FROM A
UNIQUE MS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM,
WITH A
TRANSLATION, INTRODUCTION, VOCABULARY, AND
TWO PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES.

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Reprinted from the "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY."

LONDON:
DAVID NUTT, 270 AND 271, STRAND.

1896.

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1896

NOTICE.

IN presenting to the public a reprint of "The Liturgy of the Nile," the author desires to express the hope that the other Services contained in the British Museum MS. Or. 4951 may soon find an editor and translator.

The Service contained in the present little work constitutes (apart from the well-known Gospel Lectionary, edited by Count Miniscalchi Erizzo and also by Lagarde) the only complete Palestinian Syriac text that has as yet been published; and the addition of nine other complete, though very small, texts in the same dialect, is sure to be welcomed with eagerness by Aramaic students, both in England and on the Continent.

From a liturgical point of view the gain is likely to be at least as great, for the Malkite, or Græco-Syrian, Services contained in the MS. reach back to a considerable antiquity, and will be found to offer several interesting points for study and comparison. An editor of these texts will, therefore, be able to appeal to two different classes of students, and the risk of finding no readers will thus be reduced to very small proportions indeed.

G. M.

October, 1896.

THE LITURGY OF THE NILE.

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Description of the MS.
2. Analysis of the Service, followed by Remarks on (a) the Dates of its Celebration, (b) its Malkite Origin, (c) the Biblical portions contained in it.
3. Analogies from (a) the Ritual of the Ancient Egyptians, (b) the Graeco-Roman Period, (c) the Religious Observances of the Coptic Church, (d) Muhammedan times.

II. THE PALESTINIAN SYRIAC TEXT.

III. AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

IV. A VOCABULARY OF UNUSUAL WORDS AND FORMS.

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. *Description of the MS.*

THE MS. from which the text of the Nile Service is taken is numbered Or. 4951, and is a recent acquisition of the British Museum. It consists of 69 paper leaves, measuring about $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by 5 ins., with mostly 15 lines to a page. The quires, 7 in number, are of 10 leaves each (the last leaf being blank). The Syriac letters by which the quires are numbered are written in the middle of the lower margin, both on the last and the first page of each quire. Thus, on fol. 10^b, the letter } denotes the end of the first quire, and the same letter also stands on fol. 11^a; the letters D , V , etc., are similarly written on foll. 20^b and 21^a,

fol. 30b and 31a, etc. The only exception is the absence of the letter \circ on fol. 61a. The style of writing,¹ though smaller, approaches very nearly to that of pl. xx (representing fol. 34r of Add. 14,664) in vol. iii of Wright's "Catalogue of the Syriac MSS. in the British Museum," which has been assigned to the twelfth or thirteenth century. The letter "rish" is, with very few exceptions, written ܪ ² (with two dots instead of one), and the "daleth" is, as a rule, not distinguished by a dot below. There are no diacritic points below the letters, and points over the text (see the first facsimile, representing fol. 38b of the MS. chosen to exemplify some of the characteristics mentioned here) are mainly employed in the following cases: (1) one dot over the letter ܠ to mark the aspirate;³ (2) a dot often placed over the ܐ of both the 3rd person suffix masc. and fem. sing.; (3) the occasional distinction of the plural form by the two dots known as "s'yāmē" (e.g. ܐܢܗܘܢ in the fourth line of the first facsimile); (4) two dots over the inverted pē (ܥܦ), and sometimes also over the letter ܥ .

¹ The earlier stages of Palestinian Syriac writing are exemplified in plates xviii and xix published in Wright's Catalogue; see also the facsimiles given in Land's "Anecdota Syriaca," vol. iv, and in "Anecdota Oxoniensis," Semitic series, vol. i, parts v and ix.

² It is well known that there was a double pronunciation of the "rish" in Palestine (see J. Derenbourg, "Manual du Lecteur," Journal Asiatique, 1870, p. 446), but one can hardly refer the occasional use of ܪ in this MS. to a difference of pronunciation.

³ Differences from the Edessene Syriac are shown in such words as ܥܦܢܐ (Jew. Aram. ܥܦܢܐ), ܥܦܢܐ , etc. The dot is, however, not used with perfect regularity.

There are no vowel-signs¹ for the Syriac in the MS., and the system of interpunction consists mainly of two, three, or four dots, differently grouped.

It contains the following Services of the Malkite Church, in the Palestinian Syriac dialect, the rubrical directions and several of the headings being in Karshuni, and also embodying prayers and liturgical "formulae" in Greek transcribed into the Syriac character:—

I. Two services for the Consecration of a Church.

(a) The consecration to include the Holy Table.
Fol. 2a.

Heading: ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ
ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ
ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ

(b) The consecration to apply to the Chancel only.
Fol. 12b.

Heading: ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢ

¹ On the vowel-signs which are used in connection with the Syriac transcription of Greek words, see further on.

² For ܩܘܠܘܢ in the sense of "consecration" see Dozy, *Supplement aux Dict. Arab.*, vol. ii, p. 455.

³ *وَأَلْفَاةٌ*.

i.e. "Finished by the help of the Lord; the prayer of the laying on of hands is finished. I, Antony, the sinful Metropolitan. Pray for me, my masters, and everyone shall be rewarded according to his prayer. Amen."

If the Metropolitan Antony, who appears to have written the MS., could be identified, the period to which the copy belongs would cease to be uncertain; but, unfortunately, he does not appear to be mentioned in Le Quien's "Oriens Christianus," nor can I find a trace of him in Neale's work on the "Holy Eastern Church." Some scholar who has made a special study of the Malkite ecclesiastical history of that time might be able to throw light on the subject.

III. The Liturgy of the Nile. Fol. 27a.

Heading: $\text{ܘܨܘܠܬܐ ܕܥܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$
 $\text{ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$
 $\text{ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$

For the full heading and translation, see pp. 21, 37; an analysis of the Service, together with an account of the lessons from the Holy Scriptures, will be given in the second part of the Introduction.

IV. A series of Ordination Services for Non-celibate Clergy.

(a) The Ordination of Readers. Fol. 43a.

Heading: $\text{ܘܨܘܠܬܐ ܕܥܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$
 $\text{ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$
 $\text{ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$

(b) The Ordination of Subdeacons. Fol. 48a.

Heading: $\text{ܘܨܘܠܬܐ ܕܥܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ ܕܡܩܝܡܐ}$