

**STUDIA SINAITICA NO. IV. A
TRACT OF PLUTARCH, ON THE
ADVANTAGE TO BE DERIVED
FROM ONE'S ENEMIES (DE
CAPIENDA EX INIMICIS UTILITATE)**

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STUDIA SINAITICA No. IV.

A TRACT

OF

PLUTARCH

ON THE ADVANTAGE TO BE DERIVED
FROM ONE'S ENEMIES
(DE CAPIENDA EX INIMICIS UTILITATE)

THE SYRIAC VERSION

EDITED FROM A MS. ON MOUNT SINAI
WITH A TRANSLATION AND CRITICAL NOTES

BY

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PREFACE.

THE same Syriac manuscript of the Sinaitic Convent (No. 16), which has preserved for us the version of the *Apology of Aristides*, contains also the Syriac translation of *three moral tracts of Plutarch*. Two of them have already been printed in Syriac by *de Lagarde* in his *Analecta Syriaca*; the lost one *de exercitatione*, which has been translated by *Gildemeister* and *Bücheler* (*Rheinisches Museum*, 1872, vol. 27), and *περὶ ἀσχηροῦς*, on which *V. Ryssel* may be compared (*über den textkritischen Werth der syrischen Uebersetzungen griechischer Klassiker*, II. Theil, Leipzig, 1881, p. 55, 56). The present one does not seem to be found in any of the Syriac MSS. of our European libraries. It stands in the Sinaitic MS. immediately after the *Apology of Aristides*, before the tract *περὶ ἀσχηροῦς*; it occupies there the fol. 105a to 112a. For the description of the MS., which is believed to be of the seventh or according to Prof. Sachau of the second part of the sixth century, see the edition of *Aristides* by J. Rendel Harris and J. Armitage Robinson (*Texts and Studies*, Cambridge, Vol. 1. No. 1 (1891), p. 3—6 of the first edition and the facsimile facing the title page). "The book is made up of a number of separate treatises, all of which are ethical in character." As the discoverer of the Syriac *Aristides* justly remarked "it was apparently the ethical character of the *Apology of Aristides*, that secured its

incorporation with the volume," so we may say the same of the translation and preservation of these moral tracts of Plutarch.

Surprising as it seems at the first, that Syriac monks or clerics should have thought of translating into their mother tongue the writings of a Greek heathen author, the fact is easily explained if we consider the character of the writings, which they chose for translation, and the way in which they made them familiar to their countrymen. For they are all moral tracts warning against anger and hatred and recommending love and moderation and self-restraint. And it is not a literal translation which we have here, but *rather an adaptation of the heathen tracts* for the benefit of the Christian community; all that for the Christian reader was void of interest or which he could not approve of, for instance the particulars of Greek mythology, is left out or changed. If, in consequence of this character, these Syriac texts are less instructive for the philological student whose delight is in a most literal translation of an ancient text, they are all the more interesting for the theological and Christian reader, who finds here one more link between Grecian philosophy and Christian piety. It was the same sound of a truly human religion which those Syrian scholars heard in the Proverbs of the Old Testament, in the Sermon on the Mount with its golden rule or in the Epistle of St James in the New Testament, and which they also seemed to hear from these writings of the Greek philosopher, and therefore they made them accessible to their co-religionists.

But there is a third point which makes the publication of the following text desirable. The state of Syriac philology and lexicography is still such, that every addition to our stock of printed Syriac texts is highly welcome. I therefore gladly undertook the task of preparing the

following pages for the press, when Prof. J. Rendel Harris had the great kindness of offering me, for this purpose, the copy which he had made from the MS. on Mount Sinai. A few remarks, I hope, will be sufficient.

The Syriac text is printed from the very copy made by Prof. Harris; but where an alteration seemed to be necessary, the emendation was received into the text and the reading of Prof. Harris always given in the margin. Prof. Harris has also corrected my printed text by the aid of photographs. As a rule the text is well preserved and the translation very fluent and easy. There are passages which read more smoothly in Syriac than in the original Greek, just as it is for instance with the book of Titus of Bostra against the Manicheans and its Syriac version. There are, however, some points in the text, on which a remark seems desirable.

p. 1, l. 5. The interpunction is to be changed; **ܕܡܪ** **ܘܡܪܝܢܐ** begins the apodosis.

p. 1, l. 7. As the text stands, the translation must be: there is not to be found *in the land of Creta what is called a wild beast*; but should we not expect: in the land that is called Creta?

p. 1, l. 21. **ܪܥܘܢ ܡܘܠ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܕܡܘܠ ܪܥܘܢ ܪܥܘܢܐܕ ܡܠܝܢ ܥܘܠܝܢ**. Here the construction of the feminine subject **ܕܡܘܠ ܪܥܘܢ** with the masculine predicate **ܪܥܘܢ ܡܘܠ** is irregular,—we expect **ܕܡܘܠ ܪܥܘܢܐ** or **ܕܡܘܠ ܪܥܘܢܐ**; and if we consider the first **ܕܡܘܠ** as the enclitic **ܪܥܘܢ**, spoken of by Nöldeke (§ 328), it should be **ܪܥܘܢ** instead of the fem. **ܕܡܘܠ**. But I don't think it advisable to change the text, because to the Greek neuter correspond in Syriac both genders, masc. as well as fem.

Later on, p. 11, l. 22, we have again a fem. subject connected with a masc. verb $\text{ܩܕܫܘܢܐ} [\text{ܩܕܫܘܢܐ}] = \text{ܩܕܫܘܢܐ}$ ܩܕܫܘܢܐ (Nöldeke, § 321; Duval, § 378 a).

On the stat. emph. p. 6, l. 21, $\text{ܩܕܫܘܢܐ} \text{ܩܕܫܘܢܐ}$ ܩܕܫܘܢܐ = *καλὸς κάγαθὸς γενόμενος*, comp. Nöldeke, 204 B, C.

p. 10, l. 3. ܩܕܫܘܢܐ . I have not changed the text, but it seems to stand for ܩܕܫܘܢܐ "from hatred."

As to the Lexicon, no wholly unknown word is contained in our text, except the proper names; but there are several, examples for which are highly welcome. For instance

ܩܕܫܘܢܐ = *σπαράττειν* [p. 5, l. 4]; Payne Smith 546; to the examples given there add Julian, ed. Hoffm. 57, 3¹.

ܩܕܫܘܢܐ [p. 11, l. 18] with the sense of *investigate*.

ܩܕܫܘܢܐ = *ζωγράφειν* [p. 8, l. 19].

ܩܕܫܘܢܐ with the special sense *παντοία* [p. 4, l. 11], for which compare Novaria 177 as quoted by Castle-Michaelis 895 = Lagarde Praetermissa 32, 31.

At the end I have put a list of some of the rarer words. Here I may yet mention ܩܕܫܘܢܐ [p. 12, l. 12] "as for

¹ I may be pardoned for seizing the opportunity of correcting an old mistake connected with this word. Beside ܩܕܫܘܢܐ and its infinitive-noun ܩܕܫܘܢܐ Bar Ali has (ed. Hoffmann 4647) ܩܕܫܘܢܐ (sic), Bar Bahlol (ed. Duval 3, 880) ܩܕܫܘܢܐ , the same Payne Smith 1786, Cardahi (al-Lohab 589). The two latter give as its meaning, on the authority of Kamosodinozo, *cartilago*, it. *parti astium medulla quae mandis postit*; BA and BB acknowledge it as infinitive-noun with the meaning *abstrere ossa, exedere medullam*: it is clear that the whole paragraph is due to the misspelling ܩܕܫܘܢܐ instead of ܩܕܫܘܢܐ .

me" as a very good rendering of the Greek *φιμν* (347 B). Quite in the same way it stands Lag. An. 191, 21 for *καὶ μὴν ἔδοκον* (*περὶ ἀοργ.* 872 F). This leads to the question as to the rendering of the Greek text.

Whether our tract has been rendered into Syriac by the same hand, to which we owe the Syriac version of *περὶ ἀοργήσας* (and *περὶ ἀρετῆς*) I dare not answer in a definite way; yet it seems to me very likely. The general treatment of the two texts is quite the same. Particulars, for instance, of Greek Mythology, unknown to the Syriac and Christian reader, are left out in both texts; so are uncommon proper names; instead of them we read "a king," "a wise man"; the vocabulary is very similar. It is a pity that in the beginning of *περὶ ἀοργήσας* the beautiful saying of Musonius is left untranslated: *δεῖν δὲ θεραπευόμενους βιοῦν τοὺς σὺζεσθαι μέλλοντας*. For this latter expression occurs again in our tract in the saying of Antisthenes [p. 9, l. 11], *ὅτι τοῖς μέλλουσι σὺζεσθαι ἢ φίλων δεῖ ἡρησίων ἢ διαπίρων ἐχθρῶν*, and our translator has given it here in a very singular way, quite destroying the almost Christian tinge which the word has in these and similar passages: he gives it *ܩܘܘܢܝܢ ܘܠ ܩܘܘܢܝܢ ܘܘܘܘܘܢܝܢ ܩܘܘܢܝܢ* *he who wishes to get famous by (in) his behaviour*¹.

But there is another passage, which is almost identical in both texts, the saying of Plato, that men must give a severe reckoning even of the lightest thing in the world, the uttered word. In *περὶ ἀοργ.* 456 D it runs thus: *κουφοτάτου πράγματος, ὡς φησὶν ὁ Πλάτων, λόγου βαρυτάτην ζημίαν τίσουσιν ἐχθροὶ καὶ κακολόγοι καὶ κακοίθεις δοκοῦντες εἶναι*. This is rendered in the Syriac (Lagarde, 189, 23): *ܩܘܘܢܝܢ ܩܘܢܝܢ ܘܠܗܐ ܩܘܘܢܝܢ ܩܘܢܝܢ*

¹ On this use of *σὺζεσθαι*, the theological reader may compare Wyttenbach's Annotations to Plut., de discern. adul. ab amico, 74 c, p. 548.