

# MELITA THEOLOGICA

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## A FRAGMENT OF A LECTIONARY IN THE ROYAL MALTA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

THIS is a parchment leaf 11 x 8½ ins slightly damaged in the lateral margins and with a few holes which, however, do not greatly efface the writing. It is written on both sides in two columns with 24 lines to the column and contains John 7, 19b-30; 8, 12-16. The leaf formed the binding of the Greek Grammar by Const. Lascaris, and the frequent handling of the book made the writing on the outer page sometimes illegible. The latter section has the superscription ΕΚ Τ ΚΑ ΙΩ with the Τ superscribed over the Κ and the Α. It is obviously a fragment of a lectionary. The two sections are parts of the lessons 7, 14-30 and 8, 12-20 that were read on the 4th and 5th day respectively following the 3rd Sunday after Easter (F.H.A. Scrivener, *A plain introduction to the criticism of the New Testament*, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 80). There is nothing to indicate the date of the MS except palaeography, but palaeography is not always a sure indication of date, as a later scribe may imitate, especially in biblical MSS, the handwriting of an earlier age. The writing is round and upright, and though of the minuscule character, it exhibits a certain mixture with uncial forms. Thus the *beta* and *kappa* have mostly a u-shaped form but the uncial forms are always used. The *lambda* is very much like modern *psi*. Final *sigma* has the uncial form. The *mu* and *nu* have the same form with the left leg stretched downwards. Accents and breathings are used. Direct speech is marked by a small cross corresponding to inverted commas. An undulatory line is used sometimes to denote the omission of a letter, thus in 7, 20 instead of τικς σε there is τικςε with an undulatory line over the syllable τικς; Sometimes however the meaning of this mark is not apparent as in the case of κατ in 7, 22. A mark resembling in form a large comma is frequently superimposed over a word without any apparent reason. On the whole the writing is very much like the specimens of the 9th-11th century A.D. given by E.M. Thompson in his *Intro-*

*duction to Greek and Latin Palaeography.*

## Variant readings:

7, 20 ὁ ὄχλος] + και εἶπεν

7, 22 ὁ Μωϋσεῆς] πρὶ διὰ τοῦτο

7, 26 ἄληθως] trans in fine ante Χριστὸς

7, 29 ἀπέσταλκεν] ἀπέστειλεν

8, 13 Φαρισαῖοι] Ἰουδαῖοι

8, 14 ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι καὶ ποῦ ὑπάλω] om per homoiol.

8, 16 ἀληθινῆ] ἀληθῆς. με] πατῆρ.

The following abbreviations are used: ιο = ἰησοῦς; πρων = πατέρων; ανος = ἀνθρωπος; χς = Χριστὸς; κς = κύριος; πηρ = πατῆρ.

P.P. SAYDON

P.S. After having written this short note, I happened to come across Harry Merwyn Buck Jr, *The Johannine Lessons in the Greek Gospel Lectionary*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago – Illinois, 1958. In spite of the apparent relation of this work with our fragment, the book was hardly of any use to me. Although the author explicitly declares that his study 'is concerned with the textual character of the Johannine lessons in the Greek Gospel Lectionary between Easter and Pentecost' (p. 5), he examines only the second lesson 8, 12-20 contained in our fragment, but omits altogether the lesson 7, 14-30 although it was read on the fourth day after the third Sunday after Easter and therefore belongs to the period, Easter-Pentecost, under examination. None of the variants of our fragment is listed by Buck, not even the peculiar introduction of the lesson 8, 12-20: 'And the Lord said to the Jews who had come to him'.



