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Front cover:

“Laylā visiting Majnūn in the desert”, watercolour, gouache and gold on paper. Central Deccan, 1780—1800.
Miniature in Album (*Muraqqaʿ*) X 3 in the Fabergé collection at the St. Petersburg Branch
of the Institute of Oriental Studies, fol. 8b, 13.6×17.1 cm.

Back cover:

- Plate 1.** ‘*Unwān* from *Khamṣa* (“Pentateuch”) by Abū Muḥammad Ilyās b. Yūsuf b. Muʿayyad Nizāmī Ganjawī. Manuscript C 1674 in the Fabergé collection at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Heart, ca. 1480—1490, fol. 1b, 13.0×21.4 cm.
- Plate 2.** “The night journey of Muḥammad and his ascent to heaven”, miniature in the same manuscript (later work modelled after Herat samples), fol. 3b, 13.0×21.4 cm.
- Plate 3.** “Nūshāba, Queen of Amazons, showing Iskandar his portrait”, miniature in the same manuscript (later work modelled after Herat samples), fol. 41a, 13.0×21.4 cm.
- Plate 4.** “Iskandar supporting the head of the dying Dārā (Darius)”, miniature in the same manuscript (later work modelled after Herat samples), fol. 258b, 13.0×21.4 cm.

THESA PUBLISHERS
IN CO-OPERATION WITH
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH
OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



Manuscripta Orientalia

International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research

Vol. 8 No. 3 September 2002



75ESA
St. Petersburg

BOOK REVIEWS

Lucy-Anne Hunt. *The Mingana and Related Collections. A Survey of Illustrated Arabic, Greek, Eastern Christian, Persian and Turkish Manuscripts in the Selly Oak Colleges*, Birmingham: s. a. [1997?], 93 pp.

The short book under review here (henceforth, the Survey) was conceived by its author to complement already published catalogues of Eastern manuscripts held at the Library of the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. A bibliography of those catalogues is given in the first chapter of the Survey (pp. 2–4) entitled “Introduction”. It is accompanied by a description of the library collection by language. The following collections are thus described: Arabic manuscripts (Muslim and Christian), Persian, Turkish, Syriac, Greek, Armenian, and Ethiopian manuscripts and scrolls; papyrus; fragments of Jewish manuscripts (mainly from the Cairo Genizah), fragments from Georgian manuscripts from Sinai, etc. The author of the Survey explains (p. 3) that an addition to existing descriptions was necessary because at the time of the initial cataloguing of the Birmingham manuscript collections, questions of manuscripts artistic virtues were given short shrift. Moreover, a portion of the manuscripts remained uncatalogued up through the present (their total number is not given). Some of them (Turkish, Persian and Arabic) are described for the first time in the Survey (in the tenth, concluding chapter). The author says the following about the principles of describing manuscripts in the Survey: “The basic description follows a format frequently used in manuscript cataloguing: the measurements, binding, state, date, content of the text, palaeography, codicology and a list of the illustrations, and summary bibliography” (p. 3).

The second chapter — “Background to the Mingana and related collections” (pp. 4–9) — describes how the manuscript collection took shape. The key role in the collection's creation was played by the chocolate magnate and philanthropist Dr. Edward Cadbury, as well as Alphonse Mingana, for whom the industrialist funded several trips to the East to collect manuscripts. In Lucy-Anne Hunt's own words, “... the collection of manuscripts was as diverse in its coming together as it is in its content. The driving spirit behind it was the philanthropic support

of missionary activity in the Middle East by Dr. Edward Cadbury, motivated by the desire to stimulate at Woodbrooke research of the highest order into Theological and Mission Studies. Alphonse Mingana was the instrument in the attempt to realise that dream, through his travels to collect manuscripts and his work in cataloguing them” (p. 9).

The third chapter — “Islamic Arabic manuscripts” (pp. 10–35) — contains descriptions of 80 manuscripts (Qur'āns, commentaries on the Qur'ān, works on the Qur'ān and the Islamic tradition, legal texts, works on dogmatics, mysticism, philosophical, historical and devotional texts, texts on grammar, works of literature, biographies of Muḥammad, geographical text, texts on astronomy and astrology, magical text, and some other miscellaneous manuscripts). All of these manuscripts have already been described in the printed catalogue, and the Survey always provides references to their call numbers. The present edition repeats (following the earlier, already published catalogue), for the most part, only the author's name, the title of the work, and the date of copying (if available). The additional material consists of a scrupulous enumeration of various types of illuminations (such information was absent in the earlier catalogue). Unfortunately, the technical language employed for description gives only a general sense. In 1993, I noted the imprecision of the terminology and its lack of universal applicability¹.

On the other hand, some of the 80 descriptions in this section are accompanied by illustrations (12 black-and-white and 2 colour). A juxtaposition of the illustrations with the descriptions of the corresponding manuscripts helps one to gain a better sense of things, aiding the development and emergence of a national terminology (in this case, English-language) with an eye to its future internationalisation, so to speak. The inclusion of illuminated manuscripts in a separate catalogue provides specialists in the field with a convenient guide where they can find a list of illuminations of all kinds in each manuscript. At the same time, the technical language employed to describe the artistic elements in conjunction with the selected illuminations serves up yet another portion of food for thought on the unsatisfactory state of national and international terminology.

¹ Val. V. Polosin, “K opisaniiu arabskikh illiuminovannykh rukopisei”, in *Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie*, issue 3 (St. Petersburg, 1993), p. 154. The English version of this work was published, see *idem*, “To the method of describing illuminated Arabic manuscripts”, *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 1/2 (1995), p. 16.

The most noteworthy, in this author's opinion, examples of Arabic manuscripts are listed in the "Introduction" (pp. 3—4), which also gives the best copies from other language groups. The Arabic manuscripts are dated to the twelfth — nineteenth centuries.

The majority of Islamic Arabic manuscripts described in chapter 3 were copied before the eighteenth century, but there is, for example, one Qur'ān from the Mamlūk period (15th century) and several Qur'ānic fragments from the second and third centuries A. H. (8th — 9th century A. D.).

In the fourth chapter — "Christian Arabic manuscripts" (pp. 35—42) — the author notes that the Armenien, Ethiopian and Coptic manuscripts of the Mingana collection were not catalogued yet. Further, in contrast with A. Mingana's view who estimated the artistic virtues of Christian Arabic manuscripts as rather mediocre, the author of the Survey observes that among the manuscripts of the collection there are "several which are of interest for the art and culture of the Christian East, especially when the illustrations are examined in relation to the texts, and the purpose they served is elicited" (p. 36). We find descriptions of six manuscripts in this chapter (six black-and-white photograph reproductions are present).

The fifth chapter — "Greek manuscripts" (pp. 42—58) — contains descriptions of five manuscripts. The descriptions are accompanied by 10 photographs, nine black-and-white and one colour. Manuscript No. 84 in this section is of special interest. The copy contains the Gospels and is dated to the first half of the twelfth century. Fols. 1—3 and 352—365 are a majescale palimpsest of the ninth century. It comprises a lectionary with lessons from the Epistles and Acts. The manuscript was executed in Constantinople and has the Evangelist portraits (12th century). The portrait of St. John at the beginning of the manuscript is of a later origin (presumably, late 13th — 14th century). The manuscript acquired by Quaritch, a well-known book dealer, has changed several owners and found its way to the Selly Oak Colleges' Library.

The sixth chapter — "Syriac manuscripts" (pp. 59—67) — describes six manuscripts, for four of which we have black-and-white and one colour reproductions. This part of the collection contains a copy of Syrian Orthodox Lectionary executed at the monastery of Mar Mattai (near Mosul); the manuscript is dated 1216—1220 A. D. It has the depiction of Christ healing the Leper (13.2×12.0 cm). The illustration, preceding the beginning of the lesson for the second Sunday in Lent, is remarkable for the richness of its colour palette (the pigments are unfortunately oxidised). Gold and silver are also used in the miniature: one can see gold nimbi, Christ's sleeve is also gold, while his hand is silver.

The seventh chapter, which occupies a single (!) page — "Ethiopic scroll" (p. 68) — describes a magical nine-

teenth-century scroll. The chapter is supplied with one black-and-white photograph.

The eighth chapter — "Armenian manuscripts" (pp. 69—71) — also describes only one manuscript (the Four Gospels, 17th century), augmenting the description with black-and-white photographs of three double pages from the manuscript. The fourth photograph is in colour and also shows a double page.

The author tells us (p. 72) that when she began working on her Survey, the Mingana Persian manuscripts "were virtually unknown". She treats them in the ninth chapter — "Mingana Persian and Indian manuscripts" (pp. 72—89) — where she describes 15 manuscripts from this collection and publishes 14 black-and-white and 3 colour reproductions. Several of these manuscripts were acquired in Iran and India directly. Three of the manuscripts date to the fifteenth century: (i) *Dīwān-i Amīr Khusraw*, (ii) the collection of poetical works which includes *Dīwān-i 'Aṭṭar* (both manuscripts were executed in Shiraz), and (iii) *Kalīla wa Dimna*, a copy dated 1412. It contains 62 miniatures displaying Turkman or more likely Indian style. The other manuscripts are of a later origin (16th — 19th centuries).

The tenth and final chapter — "Uncatalogued Turkish, Persian and Arabic manuscripts" (pp. 90—3) — contains descriptions of four Arabic, seven Persian (one with an unidentified text) and two Turkish manuscripts. This chapter lacks illustrations.

The chief virtue of the book under review is, of course, the idea behind it — to complement existing archaeological information about one of the most valuable collections of Eastern manuscripts in Great Britain with a specialized guide to 127 illustrated copies contained therein. Moreover, codicologists and art historians will take some interest in the technical language employed for descriptions, as such terminology leaves much room for further development and internationalisation. Yet another virtue is that a large number of the illustrations published in the Survey reproduce manuscript pages and double pages in full, without imperious and arbitrary reformatting that crops the margins and distorts the proportions found in the original.

Among the insignificant shortcomings is the book's division into numbered chapters. This adds nothing useful to the headings of the thematic divisions that make up the Survey. There are no clear or convincing reasons given for spreading Arabic-Muslim and Persian manuscript descriptions over two separate chapters (the former in the third and tenth chapters, and the latter in the ninth and tenth chapters), which is inconvenient for the reader. Some indices, or at least one general index, with the names of authors, titles of works, terms, etc. would have been welcome. But even in its present form, the Survey is undoubtedly a useful guide for specialists whose work focuses on illustrated Eastern manuscripts.

Val. Polosin