

## From Greek into Arabic: Some Notes About Translation and Exegesis in a 13<sup>th</sup> cent. Christian Arabic Work

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### 1. Introduction

Much has been debated, among others by Samir Khalil, concerning the need for cataloging and giving an account for the collection of Christian-Arabic manuscripts in the different Libraries<sup>1</sup>, alongside with the urgency in publishing such material.

Added to the scarcity of inventories of this specifically Christian collection (one rare exception, still incomplete, being that of the Monastery of St. Catherine, in Mount Sinai<sup>2</sup>) and the lack of scientific rigor of many of the existing catalogues from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and even the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the scornful treatment of Christian works, remarkable cases excepted, is to be emphasized in the two well-known important repertoires<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A list of existing catalogues can be seen in A.J.W. Huisman, *Les manuscrits arabes dans le monde. Une bibliographie de catalogues*, Leiden, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> The best-updated catalogues in this *laura* are those of Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, Baltimore, 1955 y Kamil Murad, *Catalogue of all Manuscripts in the Monastery of St Catharine on Mount Sinai*, Wiesbaden, 1970. See also the unpublished manuscripts cataloged by I. E. Mēimarēs, *Katalogos tōn neōn arabikōn kheirographōn tēs hieras monēs Hagias Aikaterinēs tou Orous Sina*, Athens, 1985. A concordance of the Sinaitic and Cirenaic manuscript is found in Samir Khalil, *Tables de concordance des manuscrits arabes-chrétiens du Caire et du Sinai*, El Cairo, 1986. For the Syriac collection of this monastery, we can consult the classical *Studia Sinaitica No. I: Catalogue of the Syriac MSS in the Convent of S. Catharine on Mount Sinai*, compiled by Agnes Smith Lewis, Londres, 1894; *Anecdota Oxoniensia: Biblical and Patristic Relics of the Palestinian Literature from MSS in de Bodleian Library and in the Library of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai*, ed. by G. H. Gwilliam, F. Crawford Burkitt, and John F. Stenning, Oxford, 1896. The illuminated manuscripts have been analyzed by K. Weitzmann, *Illustrated manuscripts at St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1973.

<sup>3</sup> C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. 2 vol., Leiden, 1943 and 1949; *GAL. Supplementbände*, 3 vol., Leiden, 1933, 1938 and 1942; F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schifftums*. 10 vol., Leiden, 1967-, in the due course of edition.

The only relevant overall work we can consult is the great work by Graf<sup>4</sup> and still this is being updated under the supervision of Samir Khalil<sup>5</sup>, as there are some lacunae, and lack of information about the manuscripts, the error in the identification, classification and analysis of many samples, this said with no disregard for the great achievements of the work<sup>6</sup>.

It seems obvious that there is still a hard and lengthy work ahead that the materials and places to go into are manifold, and the nature of documents is varied. In addition, the recuperation of the material already edited or presented as the pre-edited state, no matter how valuable it is, must be collected, analyzed, and taken some profit out of it, if the chance is offered.

In this line and according to the above mentioned, we attempt in this paper to announce an important unpublished manuscript: it is the Arabic version of the book of “Book of Psalms” translated from an Antiochean Greek ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl (11<sup>th</sup> cent)<sup>7</sup>. Such manuscript has special relevance because of the important exegetic material it contains and transmits. This MS, still unpublished, proves outstandingly relevant, especially because we do not have a critical edition of the Book of Psalms.

This work is not just the base for a future edition of this manuscript which contains the translation of the Book of Psalms<sup>8</sup>, but

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<sup>4</sup> G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*. 5 vols., Modena, 1996 (=Ciudad del Vaticano, 1944-47).

<sup>5</sup> Vid. S. Khalil, “La tradition arabe chrétienne. État de la question, problèmes et besoins”, in Samir Khalil (ed.), *Actes du Premier Congrès International d’Études Arabes Chrétiennes (Goslar, Septembre 1980)*, Rome, 1982, 19-120.

<sup>6</sup> The internal document we are working with, together with the classification of the material of the first two volumes for the experts has been done by Samir Khalil Samir, “Vers une «Encyclopédie de la littérature arabe des chrétiens»”, Samir Khalil Samir (ed.), *Actes du 5<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d’Études Arabes Chrétiennes (Lund, août 1996)*, in *Parole de l’Orient* 24 (1999), 45-59. Cf. J. P. Monferrer-Sala, “Sobre literatura Árabe cristiana y propuesta de trabajo”, *Ilu* 4 (1999), 136-137.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. J.P. Monferrer-Sala, “En torno a dos manuscritos bíblicos árabes inéditos”, *Philologia Hispalensis* [= C.M<sup>a</sup> Thomas & P. Cano (eds.), *Homenaje a la Profesora Eugenia Gálvez Vázquez*], XIV/2 (2000), 334-338.

<sup>8</sup> Vid. for instance, among the published material: *Liber Psalterium Davidis Regis et prophetarum. Ex arabico idiomate in latinum translatus*, Roma: Typographia Sauariana, 1614 and P. de Lagarde, *Psalterium job Proverbia arabice*, Gottingen,

the need is felt to put forward a series of basic and overall conclusions through a concrete example, the analysis of Psalm 28 (after the order offered by those in LXX). This contribution, besides, attempts to be an integral part of a more ambitious and necessary endeavor to step forward in the biblical texts in Arabic: more specifically, the critical edition of a complete Arabic biblical text, making use of all possible manuscripts available. In this way, we can have at hand a critical text useful for working with greater scientific rigor.

At the same time, we will contribute to the study of the general biblical text, providing variants and textual traditions that are likely to be unknown, if not lost, and casting a new light in the field of the Arabic versions of the Biblical text, still scarce and badly known<sup>9</sup>.

## 2. The translation-commentary of the Psalms into Arabic by ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl

Among the great number of Arab manuscripts that are kept in the Monastery of Mār Kātīrīna, in Mount Sinai, there is an Arabic version of the Book of Psalms that also contains a commentary to the 151 psalms<sup>10</sup> and is the work of the deacon (*shammās*) ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl al-Antākī.

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1876; also *Psalterium, Hebraeum, Graecum, arabicum & Chaldaeum, cum tribus latinis interpretationibus & glosis*, Genua: Petrus Paulus Porrus, in aedibus Nicalai Justiniani, 1516, about the same, vid J. P. Monferrer Sala, “Dos impresos italianos del s. XVI de la BPC. *Una aeditio princeps* bilingue arabe-latina de los Evangelios y un *octapulum* del Salterio”, *Alfinge* 13 (2001), 83-96.

<sup>9</sup> Vid. For instance, M. Schreiner, «Beiträge zur Geschichte der Bibel in der arabischen Literatur», in: G. A. Kohut (ed.), *Semitic Studies in Memory of Rev. Dr. Alexander Kohut*, Berlin, 1897, 495-513; P. Kahle, *Die arabischen Bibelübersetzungen*, Leipzig, 1904; M. L. Margolis, *The Story of Bible Translations*, Jerusalem, 1970 (=Philadelphia, 1917), 48, 53-55, 63; B. J. Roberts, *The Old Testament Text and Versions. The Hebrew Text in Transmission and The History of the Ancient Versions*, Cardiff, 1951, 266-269; P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*, Oxford, 1959<sup>2</sup>, esp. 191-304; S. Khalil, «Old Testament, Arabic versions of», in: A. Suryal Atiya (ed.), *Coptic Encyclopedia*, VI, 1827-1836; B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament. Their Origin, Transmission and Limitations*, Oxford, 1977, 257-268. Vid. also J. Assfalg, «Bibelübersetzungen», en: R. H. Bautier-R. Auty (eds.), *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Munich-Zurich, 1983, II, col. 95.

<sup>10</sup> In fact, the “supplementary” psalm presented by the LXX, but absent from the Hebrw text and the Latin *Vulgata*.

The varied talents of the Melkite Antiochian ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl<sup>11</sup> are well known, a famous translator and encyclopaedist of reputed rigor who was honoured with the name of *shay*<sup>2</sup> and the *laqab* of Abū l-Faḥ. Born in Antiochia<sup>12</sup> into a well-known family at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, he died at the end of that century, having achieved the grade of deacon, as the name *shammās* he bore seems to indicate, as the name of the bishop (*muṭrān*) he was given in some writings seems to be due to an ancestor, most probably his grandfather.

Among Antiochian ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl’s wide work on Scriptures, he allegedly wrote the translation of St. Basilus’s *Hexameron*. He is a central piece to the updating of Antiochian Patriarchate in the context of the cultural upsurge undergone by Christendom with Arabic<sup>13</sup> as the new official language; he also seems to have written a *Bahjat al-mu’min*, a *Sharḥ al-amāna l-mustaqīma*, a *Kitāb al-manfa’a*, and also some hymnographies of liturgical books and a series of 87 homilies taken from the St. John Chrisostoms’s works (*Fam al-Dhahab*), and besides some commentaries to various biblical books: to Genesis (*Tafsīr al-Takwīn / Tafsīr al-sifr al-awwal mina l-Tawrāy al-musammā Sifr al-’alīqa* o *Tafsīr sittat ayyām al-’alīqa*) to St. Matthews’s Gospel (*Tafsīr Bishārat Injīl Mattā l-Rasūl*), to St. John’s Gospel (*Tafsīr Injīl Yuḥannā l-Bashīr*) or the commentary of St. John Chrisostomos on the “Epistle of the Hebrews” (*Sharḥ Risālat al-Qiddīs Bawlus ilā l-’Ibrāniyyīn*) among many other<sup>14</sup>.

In effect, the settlement carried out by the Arabic Islamic troops along the 7<sup>th</sup> century made Arabic a new *lingua franca*<sup>15</sup> that

<sup>11</sup> About this author and his extensive work, vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur II*, 52-54.

<sup>12</sup> About Antiochia, vid. D.S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch: A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East*, Cambridge 1982.

<sup>13</sup> Vid. in this connexion, the work by D. Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture. The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Bagdad and Early ‘Abbasid Society’ (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>- centuries)*, London-New York, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Vid. the work by J. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l’église melchite du V<sup>e</sup> au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Contribution à l’étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne, Louvain-Paris, 1983, III/I, 191-229

<sup>15</sup> Vid. J. Blau’s article for this concept, “A Melkite Arabic *lingua franca* from the

soon became an oral and written means of communication of the human groups that inhabited the occupied territories and in especial, those of the Melkite communities. Among the latter, the Scripture work done was especially fertile in the monasteries, as in the Mār Sābā, Mār Ḥarītōn, and Mār Kātīrīna. This encouraged the Christian writers to gradually substitute the respective languages for Arabic<sup>16</sup>.

In this line and to remedy the faithfuls' lack of knowledge of the Greek language<sup>17</sup>, the intense pastoral work developed by 'Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl with them, in order to provide them with the necessary procedures to take part in the liturgical rites, was helpful to do Arabic versions of those books that were frequent in the liturgy: Gospel books, Epistles and Psalter.

Nonetheless, those versions were not only translations of the original Greek text into Arabic but also added further commentaries as used in the homilies<sup>18</sup>. Among other exegetic purposes, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl had the intention using those commentaries that the faithful got in contact with the Fathers of the Church. He insisted especially on the moral content of St. John Chrisostom through the heritage of Cappadocians.

But of all his prolific work his translation-commentary of the Book of Psalms, done from an original Greek (*al-nuṣḥa l-yūnāniyya allatī staḥrajnā min-hā hadhihi l-tafāsīr*), was one of the works with the most important liturgical purpose done by the author. As it is

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second half of the first Millenium", *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies* LVII (1994), 14-16. For the "Middle Arabic" as used in the works by the Christians, vid. J. Blau, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic. Based mainly on South-Palestinian texts from the first millenium*. 3 vols., Louvain, 1966-67.

<sup>16</sup> Vid. the studies done by S.H. Griffith on the fist samples of "Christian Arabic" in Arabic, like "The Gospel in Arabic: an enquiry into its appearance in the first Abbasid century", *Oriens Christianus* 69 (1985), 131-132 and S.H. Griffith, "The monks of Palestine and the growth of Christian literature in Arabic", *Muslim World*, LXXVIII (1988), 1-28; also J. Nasrallah, "Duex versions melquites partielles de la Bible du IX<sup>e</sup> et du X<sup>e</sup> siècles", *Oriens Christianus* 64 (1980), 203-210

<sup>17</sup> For the various languages used in the different areas of the Christian population, vid. J. Nasrallah, "La liturgie des Patriarcats melquites de 969 a 1300", *Oriens Christianus* 71 (1987), 163-165

<sup>18</sup> Vid. L. Greenspoon, "Theodotion's Version", *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6 (1992), 447-448

explicit in the introduction, the author himself assesses his work as an exegetical work (the copy *Vaticano Arabo 145* and that from Leipzig central Library, *ar. 297*, are annotations to the book of the Psalms<sup>19</sup>) with the plural *tafasīr*, commentaries. With this term he identifies both tasks, that of the translation and that of commentary, done eventually from several Greek texts that ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl identifies in detail with the Greek revisions of the Jews Theodosius, Aquila and Simmacus (the three preserved partially thanks to Origen’s *Hexaplas*)<sup>20</sup>, Theodoretus and other famous Saint Fathers. From them he translates all the glosses, correcting even the text where the Antiochian thinks advisable, as he states: *Thāwudhūrītūs wa-Akīlās wa-Simmāḥus wa-Thawudhūrītus wa-gayri-him min al-Abā’ al-ajillā’l-Qiddīsīn qad tarjmnā min-hā mā htamalāt-hu ḥawāshī hadhihi l-nuṣḥa [...]* (fol. 3r).

‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl did his Arabic version from the text of the LXX that was the only review used in the Melquite church, and was prefaced by an introduction to the Psalms and an interlinear commentary. Such commentary work is inserted, in turn, within a long interpretive tradition of the Book of Psalms in Christian Orient (where, among others, the great Theodorus of Mompuestia<sup>21</sup> was outstanding (died in 428) with an early commentary, the achievement of his early activities<sup>22</sup> that made a great impression in the Syriac

<sup>19</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christliche arabischen Literatur*, I, 59

<sup>20</sup> Cf. D. Barthelemy, *Les Devanciers d’Aquila*, Leiden, 1963 and J.R. Busto Saiz, *La traducción de Simaco en el libro de los Salmos*, Madrid, 1985, 293-310. About the *Hexapla*, vid. for example: H. J. Venetz, *Die Quinta des Psalteriums. Ein Beitrag zur Septuaginta- und Hexaplaforschung*, Hildesheim, 1974; A. Schenker, *Hexaplarische Psalmenbruchstücke. Die hexaplarischen Psalmenfragmente der Handschriften Vaticanus graecus 752 und Canonicianus graecus 62*, Freiburg-Göttingen, 1975, and A. Schenker, *Psalmen in der Hexapla. Erste kritische und vollst...ndige Ausgabe der hexaplarischen Fragmente auf dem Rande der Handschrift Ottobonianus graecus 398 zu den Ps 24-32*, Città del Vaticano, 1982. Cf. also C. E. Cox, “The translations of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion in the margins of Armenian manuscripts”, in C. Burchard (ed.), *Armenia and the Bible*, Atlanta, 1993, 35-45.

<sup>21</sup> Vid. R. Devreese, “Le commentaire de Theodore de Mompueste”, *Revue Biblique* XXXVII (1928), 340-366 and L. Van Rompay, *Théodore de Mopsueste. Fragments syriaques du Commentaire des Psaumes (Psaume 118 et Psaumes 138-148)*. 2 vol., Leuven, 1982.

<sup>22</sup> Vid. R.P. Voste, “La chronologie de l’activité littéraire de Theodore de

literature<sup>23</sup>), and has enormous importance for being widely used in the Melkite Gospel and Epistle Books<sup>24</sup>.

Moreover, it was important for the recurrent revisions that were to be still done among the various Melkite communities spread out through the Middle East up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1735), like that by ‘Abd Allāh Zāahir in Dayr al-Shuwayr<sup>25</sup>, as well as for the great number of manuscripts available of this version<sup>26</sup> and no less for the profit the Orthodox, the Catholics and the Protestants alike have taken out of it<sup>27</sup>.

In the editions referred to by Graf and Nasrallah (none of them done with critical views), the Sinaitic copy was not used, so it would be convenient to offer (in collation with the rest of the copies) an edition of this version<sup>28</sup>, as it is one of the three oldest, just after the British Library copy, dated in 1239<sup>29</sup>. The edition of this Sinaitic manuscript should help also to promote the study of Biblical exegesis generated and developed among the Christian Arabs, a topic not approached yet in the wide panorama of studies in Arabic literature created by the Christians.

At a paleographic level, the copy in question has been done using paper as the material and it belongs to the 13<sup>th</sup> century,

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Mompuste”, *Revue Biblique* XXXIV (1925), 58-60.

<sup>23</sup> Vid. A. Baumstark, *Die christlichen Literaturen des Orients*. 2 vols., Leipzig, 1911, I, 67

<sup>24</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, I, 187-190. A good synthesis of the liturgy as used by the melkite Patriarchat of Jerusalem, both from Antiochia and the Sinai from mid 10<sup>th</sup> cent until 14<sup>th</sup> century, is the one proposed by Msgr. J. Nasrallah, «La liturgie des Patriarchats melchites de 969 à 1300», *Oriens Christianus* 71 (1987), 156-181. For the Byzantine rite in Arab, *vid. Kitāb al-alāt li-sti ‘māl al-mu’minīn zuwī l-ṭaqs al-biḏānī*. Ed. by Msgr. N. Edelbi, al-Dhawq (Lebanon): Dayr al-Malak Mikhaïl, 1962.

<sup>25</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christliche arabischen Literatur*, I, 116 and J. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l’église melquite*, III/I, 217-218

<sup>26</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christliche arabischen Literatur*, I, 118-120

<sup>27</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christliche arabischen Literatur*, I, 117-118 and J. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l’église melquite*, III/I, 217-218.

<sup>28</sup> This is a task we plan to undertake soon.

<sup>29</sup> Vid. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christliche arabischen Literatur*, I, 118. On the manuscripts of the translation of Psalms by ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḏl, *vid. G. Graf, Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, I, 116-119

consisting of 257 sheets of size 168x130 ms<sup>30</sup>. The sheet 1r-v is written in Syriac (scrip sert) and the case fluctuates between 11 and 13 lines. The graph type used is evolved oriental nas<sup>2</sup>ī (with a lowering link slant tendency) that reflects the calligraphic characteristics frequent in Christian Arabic hand writers where the interferences of “Middle Arabic” creep into it in a tendency towards classicism pursued by the translator.

### 3. Some notes on translation and exegesis from Psalm 28

Any approach to the study of old versions of the Bible demands our attention on the fact that we are before materials of translation, which encourages a special view in the study procedures<sup>31</sup>. This is so because when these translations were done no theoretical epistemology would serve as conceptual support of the translational practice. Except for sporadic cases the translators had not lexicons or grammars at their disposal, so they had to lean on their sole linguistic knowledge, which they acquired with their experience in the languages in question.

To this, we may add that the source language represented a state of language and a register that as a rule dated back to several centuries. This entailed, of course, a series of thorny problems that the translator had to sort out, although the end product was not always the best to be expected, and this conditioned it for future generations. To the various dilemmas of philological nature posed for translators, others can be added that stem from the exegesis conducted by some circles of doctrine.

We must bear in mind that the translations were done by bilingual persons, which was a direct influence on the characteristics of the resulting translation, with all the subsequent problems of lexical loans of semantic and syntactic contaminations, and no less importantly, the linguistic transpositions and cultural leaps in the void.

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<sup>30</sup> Vid. A. S. Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, 4 (number 65) and M. Kamil, *Catalogue of all Manuscripts in the Monastery of St Catharine on Mount Sinai*, 12 (number 50).

<sup>31</sup> Relevant considerations on translation in antiquity can be found in S.P. Brock, “Aspects of translation technique in antiquity” in S. P. Brock, *Syriac on late Antiquity*, London, 1984, III, 69-87.



It seems obvious then that the study of certain “techniques” of translation as used in the various texts handed down to us, we can assess -taking into account the concurrent self-imposing limits- the work done by a translator while evaluating the methodology employed in the process. It could also be of use for assessing the translating accuracy or inadequacy achieved by the translator and the state of the language that he makes avail of to translate the source text.

The exegetic task carried out by ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Faḍl, as we can see in the sample we edit below, is of great merit. There the resource to analogy is helpful to present Christological and moralizing dogmas of the Orthodox Church in its Melkite variant, and at the same time, he imitates the analogical tradition of the patristic commentaries which he uses as a sort of *catenae*.

We attempt to give testimony of the value and relevance of this version with the edition of a brief instance, as a kind of sample, of Psalm 28 following the version of the LXX (29 of the Masoretic Hebrew text and of the *Vulgate*) together with its commentary<sup>32</sup>.

The complete heading that introduces the Psalm stands out, where there appears the disposition of the phrases in 24 stichos (*arba‘a wa-‘ishrīn ḥarfan*) and the psalmody of the same in his exact place within the cycle of Jews holy days (*‘alā ḥurūj al-qubba yurīdu bi-hi l-yawm al-thāmin min ‘Īd al-Mazāl*) at the end of the ‘Festivity of Huts’ (ἑξοδίου σκηνης).

#### 4. Appendixes

##### 4.1. Translation

Translation of Psalm 28 of David, in 24 stichos. At the exit of the Temple on the day 8<sup>th</sup> day of the huts, ‘Give to God, oh sons of God! [commentary: ‘the sons of God’ are the Apostles]. Give to God, sons of the Lamb [commentary:

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<sup>32</sup> On this issue M. Harl, “Y-a-t-il une influence du ‘grec biblique’ sur la langue spirituelle des chrétiens? Exemples tirés du Psaume 118 et de ses commentateurs d’Origène à Théodoret”, in *La Bible et les Pères. Colloque de Strasbourg 1969*, Paris, 1971, 243-262. Cf. the sample, which has been studied by J.P. Monferrer-Sala, “Traducción y exégesis de un texto melquita árabe surpalestinense: Jn 6,1-15 en el *Codex Arabicus Sinaiticus* 72 (año 284 H./ 897 JC.)”, in V. López Folgado

‘the sons of the Lamb’ are the lay believers, who are like the beasts]. Give to God the glory and the honour [commentary: who acts in righteousness the dogma of the Holy Trinity he glorifies Holy God, and who honours is he who has pity on the weak and does not suffer from sadness and compassion, but rather he acts as praising God]. <sup>2</sup>Give God the glory of his name, worship God in the dwelling of his holiness! <sup>3</sup>The voice of the Lord over the waters [commentary: it refers to the voice of the Father in the baptism of his eternal Son in river Jordan], the God of the glory thunders [commentary: he said ‘thunders’ because that voice spreads through the whole world with the Gospel. The Lord is over the many waters. The voice of the Lord with strength [commentary: the expression ‘the voice of the Lord with strength’ refers to the grace of the Holy Spirit fills the Apostles with strength], the voice of the Lord in his highest majesty. The voice of the Lord destroys the cedars [commentary: ‘the cedars’ refer to the opposite forces that rise against the knowledge of the Holy God. The Lord breaks Lebanon cedars, making them quake like a Lebanon bullock [commentary: with ‘Lebanon’ he refers to Jerusalem and with ‘bullock’ to a young bull]. To the beloved like the rhinoceros’ cub [commentary: ‘the beloved’ is the believer, since the believer does not yield. The expression ‘like the rhinoceros’ cub’ is referred to he who believes in One God]. The voice of God cuts the fire flame [commentary: the assembly of apostles receives the grace of the Holy Spirit he appearance of fire]. The voice of the Lord in the desert [commentary: ‘In the desert’ refers to the laymen who are full of faith in Holy God]. The Lord shakes the desert of Cadesh [commentary: the sense of ‘shape’ is ‘shows’ and the explanation of Cadesh is ‘his

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(ed.), *Sensus de sensu. Estudio filológicos de traducción*, Córdoba, 2002, 153-173.

holiness’]. The voice of the Lord makes the deer perfect [commentary: ‘the deer’ refers to the Apostles] and fades the forests [commentary: with the ‘forests’, he refers to the temple of the idols that bear no fruits]. In his temple, everybody praises him. The Lord dwells over the waters [commentary: it means that God caused the impious to perish in the Deluge, the Lord sits as a King forever. The Lord will make his people strong, and the Lord will bless his people with peace.

#### 4.2. Edition of Psalm 28 (fol. 41<sup>r</sup>-42<sup>v</sup>)

المزمور الثامن العشرون لداوود وهو أربعة وعشرين حرفا × على خروج القبة يريد به اليوم الثامن من عيد المظال × قربوا للرب يا أبناء الله ×<sup>33</sup> شرح أبناء الرب هم الرسل × فص قتموا للرب أبناء الكباش شرح أبناء الكباش هم المؤمنين من الأمم التي هي كالبهائم فص قربوا للرب المجد والكرامة شرح الفاعل الخير المستقيم الاعتقاد في الثالوث القديس هو الذي يقرب الله تعالى تمجيدا × والذي يقرب كرامة هو الذي يرحم الضعيف ويعطيه بلا حزن ولا مشقة بل كأته يقرض الله سبحانه × فص قربوا للرب تمجيدا لاسمه شرح يشير إلى صوت الأب عند اعتماد الابن الأذلي في الأردن فص إله المجد ارعد شرح إذما قال ارعد لأجل أن هذا الصوت انبت في العالم بتوسط الإنجيل × فص والرب على كثرة المياه × صوت الرب بقوة × شرح يشير بقوله صوت الرب بقوة إلى نعمة الروح المألثة للرسل قوة × فص وصوت الرب يعظمه الرب البهاء × صوت الرب يحطم شجر الأرز × شرح يشير بالأرز إلى قوات المناقضة المتعالية على معرفة الله تعالى × فص ويقصف الرب أرز لبنان × ويدق ذلك كالعجل اللبناني شرح يشير بلبنان إلى

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<sup>33</sup> Margin: أبناء الرب

أورشلام وبالعجل إلى الوحيش<sup>٣٤</sup> فصّ والحبيب كابن ذات القرن × الواحدة شرح  
الحبيب هو المؤمن والمؤمن لا ينقهر × وقوله كابن ذات القرن الواحد أي أنه يؤمن  
بالإله واحد فصّ صوت الربّ يقطع لهيب النار × شرح جماعة الرسل قبلوا نعمة  
الروح القدس في صورته نارية × فصّ صوت الربّ بالقفر شرح يشير بالقفر إلى  
الأُمم الخالية من الإيمان بالله تعالى × شرح ويرجف الربّ بديّة قانس × شرح  
معنى يرجف أي يظهر وتفسير قانس أي قدسه × فصّ صوت الربّ يكمل أيائل  
شرح يشير بالأيائل إلى الرسل × فصّ يكشف الغابات شرح يشير بالغابات إلى  
هياكل الأصنام التي لا ثمر لها البتّة × فصّ وفي هيكله الكلّ يقول تمجيدا والربّ  
في الغمر يسكن شرح أي أنّ الله أزال الكفر بالطوفان فصّ ويجلس الربّ ملكا إلى  
الأبد × والربّ يؤيدّ شعبه بالقوّة والربّ يبارك على شعبه بالسلم .

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<sup>34</sup> MS reads الخزيب, which is a bad reading; I suppose that the good reading is which I am giving in the above edited text; cf. J. P. Monferrer-Sala, “Algunas precisiones en torno a la supuesta ‘primera fuente’ de la acepción *ḥarīš* = rinoceronte (unicornio)”, *Qurtuba* 4 (1999), 208.