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ARABIC RENDERINGS OF ΝΌΜΟΣ AND ΝΟΜΙΚΌΣ IN AN ELEVENTH CENTURY GREEK-ARABIC LECTIONARY

Introduction

The Ms. Suppl. grec 911 contains a bilingual Greek-Arabic fragmentary version of the Gospel of Luke which was copied during the first half of the 11th century (year 1043 CE). Although this *codex* came from the 'Library of the Holy Sepulchre' in Jerusalem (Monferrer-Sala 2005: 93-139, Urbán & Monferrer-Sala 2005: pp. 79-102), and the copy of the MS, according to the information given in the colophon by the copyist (κλερικόν 'clerk' / *shammās* 'deacon') was finished in June 1043 CE. (Urbán & Monferrer-Sala 2005: 102). Although Géhin thinks that this text was brought to the Middle East after having been copied probably in Southern Byzantine Italy or in Islamic Sicily (Géhin 1997: 172), we do not know for sure the exact origin of the Ms, but is not haphazard to suppose that it was made in Jerusalem or in one of the nearby monasteries for the use of a Melkite community like Mār Sābā, since in the Library of the Holy Sepulcher survive MSS from that Monastery (Vailhé 1898-9: 45, Vailhé 1898-9: 332-341, Vailhé 1899-1900: 18-128, 168-77. Cf. Meinardus 1968-9: 392-401). All in all, the Ms exhibits that it was used in Palestine three centuries after having been copied. The handwriting of the subscription in the margin of the folio 68[v] and on the restored pages as well proves it. Moreover, we know that this lectionary was kept in the 'Library of the Holy Sepulchre' until the late 19th century, exactly up to 1880 when it was transferred to the 'Bibliothèque nationale de France', where it currently survives (Ehrhard 1892b: 447, Ehrhard 1892c: 348-349, Ehrhard 1892a: 168-169).

From the contents viewpoint, an important feature of this MS should be highlighted. This feature is no other than the good condition in which the text has survived with regard to other biblical MSS. However, the MS exhibits a

lack of about 22 pages from a total of 328, with the following *lacunae*: 1:22b–25 (1 leave), 5:10b–34a (7 leaves), 8:8b–14 (2 leaves), 10:13b–17a (1 folio), 18:28–19:15a (7 leaves), 24:8-38 (4 leaves). One of these lacunae – a portion of the "parable of the sower" (Lk 8:8b-14) – has been recently rescued and edited (Monferrer-Sala & Urbán 2011: 115-134).

The linguistic register used by the Arabic translator is Middle Arabic, i.e. that register which Blau has called "the missing link" between Classical Arabic and modern dialects or Neo-Arabic (Blau 1966-7: I, 19-58). In the case of the Christian Arab authors and translators that lived under the Muslim rule, Arabic language did replace their mother-tongues (Griffith 1997: 11-31), mainly Greek, Aramaic and Coptic, and it was employed for creating an important and rich *corpus* of texts written by Christians for Christians in "Middle Arabic" since it was born (Corriente 2007: 303-320). As the translation language it was, this literary *koiné* used by Christian Arab translators and authors – but also among Jewish and Muslim authors as well –shows diverse Middle Arabic phenomena through the different levels of the Arabic language caused by pseudo-corrections, but also as interferences from the Neo-Arabic dialects (Blau 1963: 363-7, Versteegh 2005: 3-18). Although not only these, the 9th-11th centuries Arabic texts of the New Testament (Atiya 1955: 4-7) were copies of earlier translations which were done from different *Vorlagen* (Metzger 1977: 257-68) with interferences of a third language, as it occurs with Aramaic in texts from the Palestinian area. These interferences were possible in form of Arabic loans or calques from Aramaic, since we do not forget that Aramaic was a living tongue in Palestine at the eve of the Muslim conquest and during some centuries after that and some translators where connoisseurs if not speakers of the Christian Palestinian Aramaic dialect (Monferrer-Sala & Urbán 2011: 139-155).

1. νόμος against תּוֹרה

The term νόμος is used on nine occasions in the Gospel of Luke, and appears 19 times in the Acts (Moulton & Geden 1897: 667-668) with the sense of 'law', 'usage', 'custom' (Liddell & Scott 1882: 1009, Moulton & Milligan 1914-29: 429, Lampe 1961: 920-2, Abbott-Smith 1936: 304). The specific passages addressed here are: 2:22,23,24,27,39; 10:26; 16:16,17; and 24:44.

Verse	Greek	Complement	Translation	Peshīṭṭā
2:22	κατὰ τὸν νόμον	+ Μωυσέως	'according to the law' of Moses	ܒܢܡܘܣܐ ܕܡܘܫܐ
2:23	ἐν νόμῳ	+ κυρίου	'in the law of the Lord '	ܒܢܡܘܣܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ

2:24	ἐν τῷ νόμῳ	+ κυρίου	'in the law of the Lord '	ܒܢܡܘܣܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ
2:27	τοῦ νόμου	+ κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον	'according to the custom of the law'	ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܥܝܕ ܒܢܡܘܣܐ
2:39	τὸν νόμον	+ κυρίου	'to the law of the Lord '	ܕܒܢܡܘܣܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ
10:26	ἐν τῷ νόμῳ	—	'in the law'	ܒܢܡܘܣܐ
16:16	ὁ νόμος	—	'the law'	ܢܡܘܣܐ
16:17	τοῦ νόμου	—	'of the law'	ܡܢ ܢܡܘܣܐ
24:44	ἐν τῷ νόμῳ	Μωϋσέως	'in the law of Moses '	ܒܢܡܘܣܐ ܕܡܘܫܐ

The translator of the Arabic column has opted for the following strategies:

Verse	Arabic	Translation
2:22	على ما في توراة |موسى|	'according to the law' of Moses
2:23	في ناموس |الربّ|	'in the law of the Lord '
2:24	في ناموس |الربّ|	'in the law of the Lord '
2:27	|سُنَّة| الناموس	' the custom of the law'
2:39	في ناموس |الربّ|	'to the law of the Lord '
10:26	في التوراة	'in the law'
16:16	الناموس	'the law'
16:17	من التوراة	'of the law'
24:44	في ناموس |مُوسى|	'in the law of Moses '

In terms of lexis, the translator has evidently chosen to use two different Arabic terms to translate the Greek νόμος: whilst the Peshīṭtā uses the single word *namūsō*, a loanword from Greek νόμος, this translator makes use of both *tawrāʾ* and *nāmūs*. It should be noted here that in LXX (Schleusner 1821-22, 1829: II, 508-9), apart from דָּבָר 'word', the term νόμος chiefly renders Hebrew תּוֹרה 'law', 'usage', 'custom, but also חֻקָּה 'statute' of special ritual laws or of established custom (Brown, Driver & Briggs 1906: 435-6, 349-50). The only apparent regularity in cases where the term takes a postponed nominal object is to be found in the formula *nāmūs al-Rabb* 'the law of the Lord' (2:23,24,39). In the two phrases in which Moses is the nominal object (2:22; 24:44), the translator

uses both *tawrāt Mūsā* (2:22) and *nāmūs Mūsā* (24:44). In the single case of a preceding nominal object, *sunnat al-nāmūs* (2:27), he opts to eschew *tawrāᵗ*. In the three remaining cases (10:26; 16:16,17) in which the term occurs with no nominal object, he uses either *tawrāᵗ* (10:26, 16:17) or *nāmūs* (16:16).

Clearly, the strategies adopted by the translator of Ms. BnF Suppl. grec 911 cannot be ascribed to linguistic considerations. Comparison of the corresponding texts in Ms. Sin. Ar. 72, a manuscript copied from a Greek original in Damascus and completed in 897, shows that the translator – the Melkite Christian Isṭāfanā al-Ramlī – has opted to use the term *nāmūs* throughout (Arbache 1994: I, 106, 107, 130, 167). The same is true of the Viennese Ms. (17th c.) translated from the Peshīṭṭā (de Lagarde 1864: 69, 70, 85, 95, 108. Cf. Graf 1947: I, 151). Similarly, the only available relevant text (24:44) of the Gospels by the well-known Copto-Arabic author al-Asʿad ibn al-ʿAssāl (13th c. CE) (Samir Khalil Samir 1994: 517), and the Copto-Arabic version edited by Watts, both choose to use only the term *nāmūs* (Watts 1820: 73, 74, 90, 100, 115. Cf. Graf 1947: I, p. 141).

A particularly interesting feature is the translation of the reference in 2:27 to Ex 13:1-16, through the phrase κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον τοῦ νόμου 'according to the custom of the law' (cf. *ʾaykanō fĕqīd b-namūsō* 'as is commanded in the law'): while Sin. Ar. 72 and Watts' edition both give *ka-ʿādat al-nāmūs* 'according to the law' (Arbache 1994: I, 106; Watts 1820: 73), this translator has opted for the verb-phrase *mā jarat bihi sunnat al-nāmūs* 'what was common to the custom of the law'. A similar strategy is used by the translator of the Viennese Ms.: *kamā yajib fī l-nāmūs* 'as it must be according to the law' (de Lagarde 1864: 69), although this wording is closer to that of Sin. Ar. 72 and the Roman Ms. than to that of Ms. BnF Suppl. grec 911.

In the light of the foregoing, it would seem reasonable to assume that the translator of the Arabic text in Ms. Suppl. grec 911 must have had some solid reason for using a different translation of the Greek term νόμος depending on whether it was linked to Moses or to God. The evidence suggests that he sought to distinguish, in exegetical terms, between the post-Exilic *Tôrat Mōshē* (תורת משׁה; LXX νόμος Μωϋσέως) and the Tôrat Yahweh/ʾAdônay (תורת יהוה; LXX νόμος κυρίου 'the law of the Lord'). In drawing this distinction the Arab translator, rather than simply translating them, has opted to convey in Arabic the meaning of the two expressions, separating what he sees as divine revelation – but transmitted by Moses (*tawrāt*) and probably understood in its ritual sense – from divine revelation in the fullest sense of the term, but seen as man's indispensable moral guide to living, as it appears in Ps 119/118 (Robert 1937: 182-206) Although the term νόμος κυρίου is found in LXX, the formula appearing in Luke, καθὼς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ i.e. 'as is written in the law of the Lord', reflects not the LXX wording, but rather an idiom found in 2 Chr 31:3; 35:26 כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה 'as is written in the Law of the Lord', cf. Arabic *kamā kutiba* (< κατὰ γέγραπται) *fī nāmūs al-Rabb* 'as it was written in the law of the Lord' (2:23), and *kamā qīla*

(< κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον) *fī nāmūs al-Rabb* 'as it was said in the law of the Lord' (2:24).

2. *Nāmūsī* (< νομικός) and *kātib* (< γραμματεύς): two words for the same concept

The term νομικός, not found in the Acts, is used on six occasions in the Gospel of Luke (Moulton & Geden 1897: 667) with the meaning of 'lawyer' (Liddell & Scott 1882: 1008, Moulton & Milligan 1914-29: 428-9, Lampe 1961: 918, Abbott-Smith 1936: 304). The following passages are examined below: 7:30; 10:25; 11:45,46,52; 14:3.

Verse	Greek	Translation	Peshīṭtā
7:30	οἱ νομικοὶ	'the lawyers'	ܣܦܪܐ
10:25	νομικός	'a lawyer'	ܣܦܪܐ
11:45	τις τῶν νομικῶν	'one of the lawyers'	ܚܕ ܡܢ ܣܦܪܐ
11:46	τοῖς νομικοῖς	'the lawyers'	ܣܦܪܐ
11:52	τοῖς νομικοῖς	'the lawyers'	ܣܦܪܐ
14:3	τοὺς νομικοὺς	'the lawyers'	ܣܦܪܐ

The translator of the Arabic column has opted here for the following strategies:

Verse	Arabic	Translation
7:30	كتاب الناموس	'the scribes of the law'
10:25	ناموسي	'a lawyer'
11:45	أحد كتبة الناموس	'one of the scribes of the lawyers'
11:46	الناموسيون	'the lawyers'
11:52	الناموسيين	'the lawyers'
14:3	كتاب الناموس	'the scribes of the law'

As in the case of νόμος above, the Arab translator has handled the nominalised Greek adjective νομικός (pl. νομικοὶ) in different ways: on three occasions (10:25; 11:46,52) he opts for the nominalised adjective *nāmūsī* (once in the singular and twice in the plural), while in two cases (7:30; 14:3) he chooses *kuttāb al-nāmūs* and in the remaining case (11:45) he uses the construction

aḥad katabat al-nāmūs to translate the Greek τις τῶν νομικῶν. In 7:30, the Arab translator has clearly sought to draw a precise distinction between three different groups: *al-aḥbār*, *kuttāb al-nāmūs* and *al-ʿashshārūn*, the third of which appears in the preceding verse (7:29). *Al-aḥbār* ('the wise men/rabbis') is an interpretation of οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ('the Pharisees'), while *al-ʿashshārūn* translates οἱ τελῶναι, both signifying 'the tax collectors'. In translating οἱ νομικοὶ by *kuttāb al-nāmūs* ('the scribes of the law'), he has evidently attempted to render the concept more specifically in Arabic, with a view to distinguishing it clearly from the Greek Φαρισαῖοι. Since he has opted to interpret this social group as 'the wise men' (*al-aḥbār*), who were jealous adherents to the law and well-versed in it, he now needs to find a precise term to cover νομικοὶ. To this end, he rules out *al-nāmūsiyyūn*, which is too close semantically to *al-aḥbār*, since both allude to experts in interpreting the law (Louw & Nida 1999: 11.49, 33.337-8).

This differentiation of the term γραμματεῖς is by no means unique; in the OT, for example, a distinction is drawn between γραμματεῖς and λευῖται (cf. LXX 2 Chr 19:11 οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ λευῖται 'and the scribes and levites'), thus conveying the sense of וְשֹׁטְרִים הַלְוִיִּם 'the levites shall be officers'; and also between γραμματεῖς and κριτάς (LXX γραμματεῖς καὶ κριτάς 'scribes and judges'), thus interpreting the pl. שֹׁפְטִין (HT שֹׁפְטִין וְדַיָּנִין 'magistrates and judges'). Elsewhere (e.g. 1 Kings 4:3), LXX γραμματεῖς translates סֹפְרִים; 'scribes'. However, the decision to use the phrase *kuttāb al-nāmūs* is not a reflection of these distinctions; rather, it is intended to reflect Mt 23:23, which distinguishes clearly between γραμματεῖς and Φαρισαῖοι (cf. Peshīṭtā ܣܦܖ̈ܐ ܘܦܖ̈ܝܫܐ), since in Greek οἱ γραμματεῖς are professional Torah scholars (cf. Mt 5:20).

But one thing is to choose a given phrase for the sake of harmonization, in this case Mt 23:23; the translator had a quite different reason for distinguishing between two lexical and translation strategies: a) *kuttāb al-nāmūs* / *aḥad katabat al-nāmūs*, and b) *nāmūsī* and *al-nāmūsiyyūn/īn*. His final choice, as in the case of νόμος above, was dictated by purely exegetical considerations. Analysis of the passages shows that on every appearance of the couplet τοὺς νομικοὺς καὶ Φαρισαίους (in 7:30 in reverse order), which is typical of the language of the Gospel of Luke, the translator opts for 'scribe' (*kuttāb* / *aḥad katabat*); yet whenever the concept νομικός / νομικοὶ appears alone, he prefers *nāmūsī* or its plural form.

The translator clearly has in mind the phrase from Mt 23:23, and seeks to distinguish between γραμματεῖς and Φαρισαῖοι. Whilst the term νομικός (pl. νομικοὶ) is not strongly differentiated from Φαρισαῖος (pl. Φαρισαῖοι), the word γραμματεύς (pl. γραμματεῖς) conveys a clear distinction between the two social groups, Pharisees and professional Torah scholars, i.e. the γραμματεῖς or *sōphĕrîm*, rightly interpreted by the Arab translator of BnF Suppl. grec 911 as *kuttāb*.

Conclusions

From the two examples explored here, it is evident that the Arab translator of BnF Suppl. Grec 911 has displayed a praiseworthy attention to detail. Not only has he taken the trouble to provide a translation of the Greek base text, but he has also adopted a subtly exegetical approach, with a view to conveying in each case the precise concept intended in the text.

As we saw earlier, when translating νόμος he has distinguished between two possible senses in Arabic (*tawrāʿ* and *nāmūs*), drawing a qualitative – and obviously ideological – distinction between the 'law of God' and the 'law of Moses', and thus implicitly between the divine *lex universalis*, which governs Christianity, and the Jewish *lex consuetudinaria*.

In dealing with νομικός, pl. νομικοὶ, the translator has also sought to distinguish usages as a function of context. Where the term forms part of a couplet together with Φαρισαῖοι, he opts for *kuttāb/katabah*, as a translation of the Greek γραμματεῖς (sg. γραμματεύς), which as we noted earlier is used in LXX to render the Hebrew *sōphĕrîm*. By contrast, where the term appears alone, the translator uses the nominalised adjective *nāmūsī/nāmūsiyyūn*. In doing so, he establishes a clear denotative difference between two social classes linked to the practice of the Mosaic law, the scribes and the Pharisees. But where he perceives no need for a precise definition of one group as opposed to the other, he opts for a literal translation of the Greek νομικός (pl. νομικοὶ). By this means, he distinguishes between a generalised use of the term (*nāmūsī/nāmūsiyyūn*), shorn of any contextual denotation, and the use of the same term as denoting a given social identity (*kuttāb/katabah*) in opposition to the other element in the couplet (*aḥbār*). He thus seeks not only to differentiate mere lexical usages, but also – as in the earlier case – to provide an exegesis of the contextual framework within which the concepts are used.

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