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An Introduction to the Arabic Diatessaron[1]

I. From the History of Research.

The history of research into the Arabic Diatessaron (Tᵃ) first started in the year 1719, when the Maronite Joseph Simon Assemani († 1768), under the authority of Clement XI, acquired several manuscripts for the Vatican Library during a trip to the Orient. In his *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* he mentions an Arabic codex, of which he describes the contents as "Tatiani Diatessaron seu quatuor evangelia in unum redacta".[2] In the catalogue of his nephew Stephan Evodius Assemani, who held the post of custodian of the same library from 1768 until 1782, this codex was given the number XIV. It was described: "Codex antiquus in folio bombycinus".[3] The manuscript contains 123 folios and dates back to the 12th century, according to S. E. Assemani. The Swedish scholar Åkerblad († 1819) dated the manuscript much later, that is to the 13th or 14th century. In 1814 Johann Christian Zahn († 1818), clergyman in Delitzsch an der Saale and famous scholar in the field of the Germanic philology,[4] through mediation of Sylvestre de Sacy, acquired further information concerning the manuscript from Åkerblad. The latter sent him, apart from some annotations, also a translation of the beginning of the Arabic Diatessaron up to Luke 1: 9. He had a Latin translation by Rosenmüller (Leipzig) to his disposal as well. This translation had been made on the basis of a transcription of the beginning of Tᵃ up to and including Luke 1: 13, which had been prepared by S. J. Assemani († 1821).[5] J. C. Zahn's acute observations hardly drew the nineteenth-century scholars' attention to the

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1 In this introduction special reference is given to the *Sermon on the Mount* in the Arabic Diatessaron. This article is dedicated in grateful acknowledgment to Prof. dr. Tjitze Baarda (Free University, Amsterdam), to whom I owe a great debt for his guidance and encouragement.
2 J. S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, vol. I, Roma 1719, p. 619.
3 *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio* e Vaticanis codicibus edita ab Angelo Maio bibliothecae vaticanae praefecto IV, Romae 1831, p. 14.
4 Cf. the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, Bd. 44, Leipzig 1898, i. nom., where his year of death should be altered from 1825 into 1818 A.D.
5 J. C. Zahn, *Tatian's Evangelien-Harmonie* (unpublished), Beilage Nro. A (with the first and last folium in the transcription of J. D. Åkerblad and in the translation of E. F. K. Rosenmüller).

Arabic Diatessaron, not even of those who particularly occupied themselves with the Diatessaron problem.[6] In 1881, however, Theodor Zahn (Erlangen), published a study which appeared to be crucially important to the Diatessaron research.[7] In chapter IV of this study Zahn refers to the communications of Assemani, Rosenmüller and Åkerblad and he compares them accurately. On the basis of this he argues that the Arabic Diatessaron was not a translation, but rather an imitation of a Syriac model. The author of T[a] must have used an already existing text of the Gospel in an Arabic translation, and inserted this into the harmonizing framework of the Syriac model.[8]

With this, Zahn consequently put the Arabic harmony on the same level with the Latin harmony (Codex Fuldensis), which was written between 541 and 546 A.D. by order of Victor, the bishop of Capua. Zahn's conclusion, however, had been formed under the influence of the Latin translations of Åkerblad and Rosenmüller. The Arabic text was not accessible to him yet, which led to an incomplete and somewhat erroneous insight into the nature of the work.[9] For an example, Zahn opinioned that the Arabic Diatessaron appeared to commence with Mark 1: 1, whereas from Syriac sources[10], it was known that in Tatian's Diatessaron John 1: 1 was placed first.[11] The resemblance which T[a] bore to the original Syriac Diatessaron was for Zahn "unverkennbar", but he considered closer investigation necessary.[12] He then cherished the hope

6 viz.: K. A. Credner, Tatian's Diatessaron, in: *Beiträge zur Einleitung in die biblischen Schriften*, Bd. I: Die Evangelien der Petriner oder Judenchristen, Halle 1832, Vierter Abschnitt, p. 437-451; cf. his *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (hrsg. G. Volkmar), Berlin 1860, p. 22 ff.; H. A. Daniel, *Tatianus der Apologet*, Halle 1837, Erstes Buch: Tatian's Leben und Schriften, Fünftes Kapitel: Das Diatessaron, p. 87-111; C. A. Semisch, *Tatiani Diatessaron*, antiquissimum N. T. Evangeliorum in unum digestorum specimen, Breslau 1856.

7 Theodor Zahn, *Tatians Diatessaron*, (FGNK I), Erlangen, 1881.

8 *ibid.*, p. 298: "Es scheint demnach der Araber das syrische Diatessaron in der Art nachgebildet zu haben, dass er die Anlage desselben befolgte, hier und da, wie gleich in der Ueberschrift, Zuthaten und Aenderungen sich erlaubte, den Text aber nicht neu übersetzte, sondern eine bereits vorhandene arabische Uebersetzung der Evangelien theilweise oder ausschliesslich dazu benutzte, um auf bequemeren Wege, als es durch selbständige Uebersetzung zu erreichen gewesen wäre, eine inhaltlich dem syrischen Diatessaron entsprechende Evangelienharmonie zu erhalten".

9 Cf. A. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung und Tatians Diatessaron besonders in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnis*, (FGNK VII: 1), Leipzig 1903, p. 69, Anmerkung 1.

10 Cf. among others A. Ciasca, *Tatiani Evangeliorum Harmoniae Arabice*, Roma 1888, p. VII-VIII; cf. also T. Baarda, *The Gospel Quotations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage*, (diss.), Meppel 1975, I, p. 55-57.

11 Cf. Zahn, *Tatians Diatessaron*, p. 296: "Davon würde Ephräm nicht geschwiegen haben, wenn's in seinem T gestanden hätte; auch die spätere syrische Tradition sagt von keinem anderen Anfang als Jo 1, 1". Cf. also J. Hamlyn Hill, *The Earliest Life of Christ ever compiled from the four gospels being the Diatessaron of Tatian*, literally translated from the Arabic version, Edinburgh 1894, p. 4-5.

12 Cf. Zahn, *Tatians Diatessaron*, p. 294: "... noch immer der genaueren Untersuchung harrt".

that someone would soon undertake this arduous task in order to "die vorhan-
dene Kunde durch vollständige Mittheilung der Vergessenheit zu entreissen,
der sie anheimzufallen droht".[13] Zahn's message was taken to heart. Less than
two years later an article of the Augustine scholar A. Ciasca appeared under
the title: *De Tatiani Diatessaron Arabica Versione.*[14] In this article the author
gave a rather exact description of manuscript A, which he dated, in agreement
with Assemani, to the 12th century. Apart from the description of the manu-
script, Ciasca presented an example of the text of the Arabic Diatessaron in a
Latin translation: the Passion up to and including Pilate's question of "what is
truth?" (T^a 48: 1-49: 55 = John 18: 1-18: 38[a]). Moreover, a table was added by
Ciasca, which gave a fine insight into the order of the pericopes in the Arabic
Diatessaron. Ciasca, meanwhile, was to publish the complete manuscript. He
became, however, otherwise engaged and saw no way to start this elaborate
work. For that reason he placed his working copy of the manuscript at the
disposal of professor Paul de Lagarde of Göttingen. It did not take de Lagarde
long to realize that at least 25 months would be needed for preparing the
edition. Another obstacle de Lagarde faced was the lack of Arabic characters
in Göttingen. This delay, however, appeared to be beneficial, for in the course
of the year 1886 Ciasca unexpectedly obtained possession of a second
manuscript of T^a. During his visit to Rome, the apostolic visitator of the
Catholic Copts monsigneur Antonius Marcos' attention was drawn to the
Arabic codex XIV. It reminded him of a similar manuscript he had once seen
in Egypt and which was owned by Ḥalīm Dūs Ġālī, a well-off descendant of
a very prominent Catholic Coptic family. The latter considered it a great
honour to present the valuable book to the Holy Father, and therefore it was
donated to the 'Museum Borgianum de Propaganda Fide' in Rome.[15] An
outstanding feature of this manuscript was that the harmony in the postscript
as well as in the prologue had been defined the Diatessaron of Tatian.[16] Once
having possession of two manuscripts, Ciasca could not resist the notion of
publishing the Arabic Diatessaron. The decision was taken to publish the
work as a gift in honour of the golden anniversary of the ordination of pope
Leo XIII under the title: دياطاسارون الذي جمعه طظيانوس من المبشرين الاربعة *seu Tatiani*
Evangeliorum Harmoniae Arabice ...[17]

13 Cf. Zahn, *o.c.*, p. 294.
14 A. Ciasca, De Tatiani Diatessaron Arabica Versione, in: J. B. Pitra, *Analecta Sacra Spicilegio*
     solesmensi parata IV (= J. P. P. Martin, *Patres Antenicaeni ... ex codicibus orientalibus*), Paris
     1883, p. 465-487.
15 Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. V-VI.
16 *ibid.*, p. VI-IX.
17 Cf. *supra* note 10.

In 1891 Ernst Sellin's extensive review of Ciasca's text saw the light,[18] which compares T[a] with Sy[p] (Peshitta) and discusses the similarities and differences with regard to the Syriac Vulgate. It also presents a registration of agreements with Sy[h] (Harclean Version).[19] Then it makes a comparison between T[a] and the Diatessaron as it was reconstructed by Zahn, where it treats both the agreements and the differences. Sellin also presents us with a typification of the method of translation. As a final judgement Sellin, and later on also Hjelt, expresses the view that the Arabic Diatessaron was a translation of a revision of the Syriac Diatessaron.[20]

In 1894 the first translation of the Arabic Diatessaron in a modern language appeared. The English translation of J. Hamlyn Hill[21], however, depended highly on the translation of Ciasca, which in its turn had been strongly influenced by the Latin Vulgate.[22] The work contains, next to a translation, a very instructive introduction about the Diatessaron and the Arabic text. Moreover, it provides some valuable "Appendices".[23]

The discovery of the Beirut Fragments [24]gave a new stimulus to the study of the Arabic Diatessaron. In a letter, dated August 17th, 1897, and presented to the 'Congress of Orientalists' in Paris, Louis Cheikho brought up these fragments for discussion. He reached the conclusion that the Arabic version of the Diatessaron could not have been made by Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, because the fragments contained a colophon, which turned out to be much larger than the colophons that were already known from the manuscripts A and B. More importantly, however, the specific colophon contained considerable differences in comparison with each of the two other ones. Cheikho added a transcription of the colophon.[25] The manuscript to which these fragments must have per-

18 E. Sellin, *Der Text des von A. Ciasca herausgegebenen arabischen Diatessaron*, (FGNK IV), Erlangen 1891 (= p. 225-246).

19 Sy[h] has unjustly been called Philoxeniana by Sellin, where the Harclean version is meant.

20 Cf. Sellin, *Der Text*, p. 246; also Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 68.

21 J. Hamlyn Hill, *The Earliest Life of Christ ever compiled from the four gospels being the Diatessaron of Tatian*, literally translated from the Arabic version, Edinburgh 1894.

22 *ibid.*, introduction, p. 2-3.

23 Among others a comparative table of contents, an analysis of the Gospels, lists of various readings, principal allusions to the Diatessaron in ancient writings, an analysis of the passages in which Zahn's reconstruction gave a different order from that of the Arabic Diatessaron, and an appendix of the fragments of the Diatessaron cited by Ephraem the Syrian in the course of a commentary which he wrote upon it.

24 Cf. L. Cheikho, Lettre au sujet de l'auteur de la version arabe du Diatessaron, *JA*, série IX: t. X (1897), p. 301-307; and by the same author: نسخ عربية قديمة في المشرق من الانجيل الطاهر in: *al-Mašriq* IV (1901), p. ٩٧- ١٠٩.

25 Photographs can be found in Cheikho's article in: *al-Mašriq* IV (1901), which includes a transcription of the colophon that differs slightly from his earlier one published in: *JA* X (1897).

tained, was dated to 1332 A.D. The colophon referred to a "manuscrit très ancien", which descended from Antioch. On the basis of this information, Cheikho argued that this very old copy must have been written in the 9th or 10th century, hence before the period in which Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib lived.

In 1897 Hope W. Hogg published his English translation of T^a.[26] This version was generally accepted by the scholarly world as the most reliable translation up until then.[27] The translation was based on the Arabic text of Ciasca, without Hogg having consulted the manuscripts himself. The translation was accompanied by an introduction, a table of contents and powerful footnotes.

In 1903, the seventh volume of Zahn's series, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur*, was published. It includes a treatise by Arthur Hjelt.[28] The work contains a detailed study of Sy^{cs}, where the relation of Sy^s with the Diatessaron is the main object of study. In chapter III (p. 59-75) a chronological description of the Diatessaron research from J. S. Assemani up to and including L. Cheikho is being presented. Reference to Hjelt's study has already been made here once or twice.

Now I wish to focus especially on the fact that he particularly attempts to chart the relation to the Peshitta. He concludes that the basis of T^a was a Syriac text, which must have been influenced strongly by Sy^P. He does, however, recognize that the Peshitta often escaped a revision, by means of which a great number of original readings might have been preserved.

In 1912 Sebastian Euringer's specialized study on the Beirut Fragments, discussed previously by Cheikho, was published[29]. In this study Euringer was not concerned so much with the text itself, but rather with the question of authorship on the basis of the colophon. Euringer's study has often been praised as a specimen of methodical investigation.[30] It contains a brief general

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26 Hope W. Hogg, The Diatessaron of Tatian, in: Allan Menzies, *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, Additional Volume, Edinburgh 1897, p. 35-141 (= idem, in: A. Menzies, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. X, Grand Rapids, Michigan [5]1986), p. 35-138.

27 The translation seems for the greater part the work of reverend Hogg's wife. Hogg admits this big-heartedly when he says (*Diatessaron*, p. 40): "… considerably more than half of it is the work of my wife, which I have simply revised with special attention to the many obscurities dealt with in the foot-notes", and a few lines further down (*o.c.*, p. 40): "My wife also verified the Arabic references to the gospels … and prepared the Index to these references – an extremely laborious and perplexing piece of work". The translation may count as reliable, although Hogg's work is certainly not free from errors. Yet, he informs us (*o.c.*, p. 41): "This is not a final translation", which makes the final result more than acceptable.

28 Cf. *supra* note 9.

29 Sebastian Euringer, *Die Überlieferung der arabischen Übersetzung des Diatessarons* (Bst. XVII: 2), Freiburg im Breisgau 1912.

30 Cf. Anton Baumstark, review of Euringer's study in: *OrChr*, new series 2 (1912), p. 350:

introduction and encloses "die Beiruter Fragmente", adapted and translated by Georg Graf.

In his *Untersuchungen*, published in 1918, Erwin Preuschen provides instances of the smooth and easy style by which Tatian managed to compose his harmony.[31] The Arabic Diatessaron is still being mentioned by Preuschen in his list of witnesses, but it merely acts as a useless piece of furniture. Yet, in January 1926 the German translation of T[a] saw the light. Preuschen died before that (1920), but the work was published under the supervision of August Pott, who prefaced the translation with a lengthy introduction.[32]

In 1935 a new edition of the Arabic Diatessaron appeared. The editor's name was A.-S. Marmardji.[33] This edition is particularly interesting because a new manuscript, E, was incorporated. On the other hand it needs to be stipulated that this edition in many respects cannot stand the test of criticism.[34] In the introduction, Marmardji reviews the authorship of the Arabic text in great detail and puts it up for discussion.[35] Manuscript E was another step towards a better appreciation of the Arabic Diatessaron.

In 1939 A. F. L. Beeston reported the discovery of a fifth manuscript, Ms. O.[36] Beeston was inclined to agree with Marmardji's objections to the authorship of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib.[37] In the same year Curt Peters' interesting monograph on the Diatessaron was published.[38]

This book contains an extended discussion of the Eastern, as well as the Western tradition of the harmony. Chapter II deals briefly, but clearly, with the problems connected with the Arabic text. Especially noteworthy is the attention Peters, after Baumstark, pays to the possible influence of other Arabic translations of the Gospels on the Diatessaron and vice versa.[39] Sellin's opinion

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"Seine Arbeit darf als das Muster einer mit besonnener Ruhe und methodischer Sicherheit geführten Untersuchung bezeichnet werden".

31 Erwin Preuschen, *Untersuchungen zum Diatessaron Tatians*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 15. Abhandlung, Heidelberg 1918.

32 E. Preuschen (- A. Pott), *Tatians Diatessaron*, Heidelberg 1926.

33 A.-S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tatien*. Texte arabe établi, traduit en français, collationé avec les anciennes versions syriaques, suivi d'un évangéliaire diatessarique syriaque, Beirut 1935. The Maronite Marmardji was a professor at the 'École Biblique' of the Dominicans of Saint Étienne in Jerusalem.

34 Cf. § III. below.

35 Cf. § VI. below.

36 A. F. L. Beeston, The Arabic Version of Tatian's Diatessaron, in: *JRAS* 1939, p. 608-610. Cf. § II. below.

37 Cf. § VI. below.

38 Curt Peters, *Das Diatessaron Tatians* (OrChrA 123), Roma 1939.

39 Cf. a.o. C. Peters, Grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zur Frage der arabischen Bibeltexte, in: *RSO* 20, Roma, 1942, p. 129-143; id., Proben eines bedeutsamen arabischen Evangelientextes, in:

that the Arabic text in many cases represented the Syriac model, was shared
by Peters. According to the latter this opinion was reinforced by manuscript
B, of which the postscript mentioned a Syriac manuscript, on which Ibn
aṭ-Ṭaiyib, the author of the Arabic harmony, based his translation. The Syriac
copyist was mentioned by name: ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī al-Mutaṭabbib, a pupil of the
famous Nestorian physician and master translator Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq.[40] This
ʿĪsā was also known under the name Īshōʿ Bar ʿAlī, author of the first Syriac-
Arabic lexicon. He was court physician in the service of the ʿAbbāsid caliph
al-Muʿtamid († 892 A.D.). According to Peters, ʿĪsā's Syriac text did not contain
an exact copy of the original Syriac Diatessaron. It rather exhibited, as became
clear from the Arabic translation, a strong revision under the influence of the
Syriac Vulgate (Sy^p). Despite this revision, the original text could still be
traced in various places. This was possible because Peters, like his teacher
Anton Baumstark,[41] created a rule of thumb by which the original text of the
Diatessaron in the Arabic translation could be traced: where the text of T^a dif-
fered from that of Sy^p, the original text of the Diatessaron had been preserved
($T^a = Sy^p \neq$ Diat. / $T^a \neq Sy^p =$ Diat.).[42]

During World War II, in 1944, A. J. B. Higgins wrote a thesis about the
Arabic text of the harmony.[43] In his study, the author used, next to the
manuscripts that were already known to him, also the new manuscript O.
Higgins' study contains a number of interesting conclusions, among others
about the authorship of the Arabic harmony,[44] and about the relation between
T^a and Sy^p.[45]

OrChr, 3rd series 11 (1936) = whole series 33 (1936), p. 188-211; A. Baumstark, Arabische
Übersetzung eines altsyrischen Evangelientextes und die Sure 21$_{105}$ zitierte Psalmen-
übersetzung, in: OrChr, 3rd series 9 (1934) = whole series 31 (1934), p. 165-188; id., Markus
Kap. 2 in der arabischen Übersetzung des Isaak Velasquez, in: OrChr, 3rd series 9 (1934) =
whole series 31 (1934), p. 226-239; for a survey of the translations of the Gospels into the
Arabic and Ethiopic languages see: Ignazio Guidi, Le Traduzioni degli Evangelii in arabo e in
etiopico, in: Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, Memorie della Classe di Scienze Morali,
Storiche e Filologiche 4, Partie iᵃ, Roma, 1888, especially p. 5-37.

40 Cf. Peters, Das Diatessaron, ch. II (19-29), p. 23-24; cf. § V. below.

41 Anton Baumstark, review Knopf-Lietzmann, Dobschütz-Nestle, Vogels etc., in: OrChr, 3rd
    series 1 (1927), p. 191.

42 For the tenability of this procedure see: § VII. below.

43 A. J. B. Higgins, Tatian's Diatessaron, Introductory Studies, with a portion of the Arabic
    Version, (unpublished) Ph. D. thesis, University of Manchester 1945. A Summary of this
    study appeared in JMUEOS 24 (1942-1945, published in 1947), p. 28-32; id., The Arabic
    Version of Tatian's Diatessaron, in: JThS 45 (1944), p. 187-199.

44 Cf. § VI. below.

45 Cf. § VII. below.

In 1947 Paul Kahle's famous book *The Cairo Geniza* was published, which *inter alia* contains an essay concerning the Arabic Diatessaron.[46] Kahle's contribution was especially noteworthy, for its paying attention, with manuscript O as a starting-point, to the Coptic family of scholars, the Aulād al-ʿAssāl and to the adornment of the manuscripts (A)BEO. Like Higgins, Kahle also gives evidence of the fact that he emphatically advocated two separate developments in the textual tradition. He also presents a clear valuation of the Arabic text.[47] After Kahle's publication a certain "calm before the storm" can be observed, although Higgins in particular still published some articles on the subject.[48]

It was not until the seventies that the Arabic text for some extent drew the attention once more because of several publications by T. Baarda.[49] Through some of these contributions it became evident that it might perhaps be fitting to call the attention once more to the text of the Arabic Diatessaron. With my edition and study of the Sermon on the Mount in the Arabic Diatessaron[50] I continued its tradition of research. Also, I express the wish that the method followed in this study will be a model for any future edition of other textual fragments of T\(^a\).

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46 Paul Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), Oxford, p. 297-313.

47 Cf. § VII. below.

48 Other important articles written by Higgins are: The Persian Gospel Harmony as a Witness to Tatian's Diatessaron, *JThS,* New Series 3 (1952), p. 83-87; The Persian and Arabic Gospel Harmonies, *Studia Evangelica,* (TU 73), Berlin 1959, p. 793-810; Tatian's Diatessaron and the Arabic and Persian Harmonies, in: *Studies in New Testament Language and Text,* Essays in Honour of George D. Kilpatrick, Leiden 1976, p. 246-261; Luke 1-2 in Tatian's Diatessaron, *JBL* 103 (1984), p. 193-222.

49 T. Baarda, An Archaic Element in the Arabic Diatessaron? (T\(^a\) 46: 18 = John XV 2), in: *NT* XVII (1975), p. 151-155 (= T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus,* (= *ETWJ*). Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament). A collection of studies selected and edited by J. Helderman and S. J. Noorda, Amsterdam 1983, p. 173-177; id., The Author of the Arabic Diatessaron, in: T. Baarda e.a. (Ed.), *Miscellanea Neotestamentica,* Vol. I, Leiden 1978, p. 61-103 (= *ETWJ*, p. 207-249). Many of Baarda's essays have been collected in two different volumes: *ETWJ* and *EOD* (= Essays on the Diatessaron), Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 11, Kampen 1994.

50 Cf. N. P. G. Joosse, *The Sermon on the Mount in the Arabic Diatessaron,* (Ph.D. thesis VU Amsterdam), Amsterdam 1997 (ISBN 90-9010131-4).

II A. A Survey of the Manuscripts.

> Item illegibilitas. Sunt enim aliqui qui
> faciunt fieri scripta de tali littera quod
> post modicum tempus, visu debilitato,
> vix est eis legibilis vel aliis.
>
> Humbert of Romans

The text of the Arabic Diatessaron is, for all we know now, preserved in seven more or less complete manuscripts and in three stray folios apart from five more manuscripts in private collections.[51]

(1) Ms. A, Vatican Arabo XIV.[52]

This manuscript was brought to Rome from the East, in 1719, by Joseph Simon Assemani. The Ms., from the character of writing and from the presence of certain Coptic letters by the first hand, is supposed to have been written in Egypt.[53] It is usually dated to the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, although Kahle, after Åkerblad's opinion, assigned it to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Originally it consisted of 125 folios. In its present state fols. 17 and 118 are missing, and fols. 1-7 are not well preserved. There are marginal notes: emendations, restorations, explanations, some of them by a later hand. The genealogies of Jesus can be found near the beginning of the harmony: the genealogy of Matthew i is in chapter 2 of the Diatessaron, and that of Luke iii in chapter 4 of the Diatessaron.[54] The Evangelists are described by the first two letters of their names: Matthew مت , Mark مر, , Luke لو , and John يو. The round dots occurring in the text are red-coloured, and thus are the signs for the Evangelists. The text of the Ms. is scarcely vocalised[55], and

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51 Cf. *infra* note 68.

52 Cf. among others Mai, *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio*, IV, p. 14; Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron*, p.465-487; Hamlyn Hill, *Earliest Life of Christ*, p.1; Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p.35-36; Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p.59-60; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p.153; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 298; B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, Oxford 1977, p. 14; W. L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron. Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, & History in Scholarship*, (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, volume XXV), Leiden – New York – Köln 1994, p. 134-135, p. 448.

53 Cf. Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron*, p. 467; Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36.

54 The manuscripts of the Arabic Diatessaron present two forms of the text. One form has the genealogies of Jesus near the beginning of the harmony (Mss. A-C); the other form has them at the end, as a kind of appendix (Mss. B-E-O and perhaps also S-T); cf. also the statement by Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Compendium haereticarum fabularum* , i. 20 (J. P. Migne, *PG*, lxxxiii, p. 371 f.) that the Diatessaron had no genealogies.

55 Hogg's remark (*Diatessaron*, p. 36): "The text of the Ms. is pretty fully vocalised" must be due to a mistake.

has few diacritical points. The Ms. does not mention the name of the translator. The 'Sermon on the Mount' in this manuscript consists of 13 pages. The folios are numbered in the top left-hand corner by a later hand: 17-23. There are liquid stains at the bottom corners of nearly every page, which have affected the ink slightly. The tā' marbūṭa (ة) is seldom written with dots. The tā' and ṭā'; ǧīm, ḥā' and ḫā'; dāl and ḏāl are not always distinguished, whereas coalescence of words frequently occurs.

(2) Ms. B, Vatican Borgianum Arabo 250.[56]

In 1896, this manuscript was given by its owner, Ḥalīm Dūs Ġālī, a prominent Catholic Copt, to the Museum Borgianum de Propaganda Fide in Rome. The manuscript contains the Arabic Diatessaron on fols. 96b, 97a-353a, preceded by a long introduction to the Gospels by an anonymous author (fols. 1-95). It consists of 355 leaves: each page is about 9 inches by 6, 25 (= 22 1/2 x 16 cm.), and has eleven lines of writing, enclosed by gold, blue and red lines connected in the form of rectangles.[57] The big round dots in the text are gold-coloured. The leather binding is claret-coloured and ornamented with golden dots. The Ms. is usually dated to the fourteenth century. Kahle, however, on the basis of the style of decoration thought that it could not be older than the sixteenth century.[58] It is most remarkable that the first two pages are written in exactly the same way as sura 1 and the beginning of sura 2 in Mss. of the Koran.[59] The genealogies of Jesus can be found at the end of the harmony, as a kind of appendix. The Evangelists are not indicated by specific signs or letters as was promised in the prologue of the Ms.[60] The manuscript is complete.[61] The name

56 Cf. a.o. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. vi-vii; Hamlyn Hill, *Earliest Life of Christ*, p. 2; Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36; E. Tisserant, Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits arabes du fonds Borgia à la Bibliothèque Vaticane, in: *Miscellanea Fr. Ehrle V.*, Roma 1924, p. 1-34 (= StT 41), esp. p. 23; Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 60; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 153; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 299-300; Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 14; Petersen, Tatian's *Diatessaron*, p. 135, p. 448.

57 Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. vi; Hamlyn Hill, *Earliest Life of Christ*, p. 2.

58 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 300.

59 Ms. B is written elegantly in black *nasḫī* and resembles the scripture and style of certain 16th century Ottoman Koran codices (cf. *The Holy Quran in manuscript*, catalogue (National Commercial Bank of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), Jeddah 1991 A.D./A.H. 1412, no. 19 - ١٩.

60 This purpose was only carried out in a few instances! The Evangelists are not quoted by single letters throughout the whole Ms. as both Kahle (*Cairo Geniza*, ²1959, p. 297-298) and Metzger (*Early Versions*, p. 15-16) state.

61 Hogg's remark (*Diatessaron*, p. 36), that Ms. B is complete, though worse in its orthography than the Vatican Ms. strikes me as rather peculiar, for Hogg did not consult the manuscripts of Tᵃ, but relied upon the text of Ciasca's edition for his translation. If one already prefers to speak in terms of 'better' or 'worse', then, where the Sermon on the Mount is concerned, the two Mss. are in fact much the same in their orthography.

of the translator Abū'l Farağ ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib has been mentioned in the preamble and colophon of the manuscript. The 'Sermon on the Mount' in this Ms. consists of well over 26 pages. The text is fully vocalised. There are, as compared to Ms. A, many instances of parablepsis. The folios have been numbered by a later hand: 133-146.

(3) Ms. E, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate Cairo no. 202.[62]

The manuscript was completed on 27th Bashnes A. Mart. 1511 (*i.e.* 22nd May, 1795 A.D.), so that it was written much later than A and B. It was not written very carefully: dozens of instances of sub-standard vocalization are on almost every page. The preamble of the Ms. is the same as the one in Ms. B, but it does not exhibit the external form of Koran Mss. The siglum E has been derived from the Dominicans of Saint Étienne, for Marmardji, the discoverer of the manuscript, was a professor at their 'École Biblique'. The genealogies have been placed at the end of the harmony. The Evangelists are being quoted by one characteristic letter: Matthew م , Mark ر , Luke ق , John ح. The manuscript has been described as follows: the dimensions of the book are 25 x 18 cm., each page is 19 x 12 1/2 cm.[63] The manuscript consists of 114 folios. The 'Sermon on the Mount' consists of 13 1/4 pages, fully vocalised. The folios are numbered ٢٠-٢٦ (20-26).

(4) Ms. O, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Arab e 163.[64]

The Ms. has been in the possession of the library since 1937. The manuscript contains three Christian texts: an introduction to the Gospels (fols. 5-31), a compendium on the Christian Truth (fols. 41-139), and finally the Arabic Diatessaron (fols. 140-288). The copyist Antūnī Saʿd finished the text on the 8th Tobah A. Mart. 1522 (= January 1806 A.D.). At the end of the manuscript he declares that, following the orders he has received, he has made an exact copy of a Ms. which was completed on the 13th Rağab A.H. 500 (= 15th March 1107 A.D.). This early manuscript had been written by pious members of the Aulād al-ʿAssāl, a Coptic family, whose prominence flourished in Egypt

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62 Cf. a.o. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xii-xxxvi; Baumstark, review of Marmardji's edition, in: *OrChr*, 3rd series 11 (1936) = whole series 33 (1936), p. 235-244; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 300-301; Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 14; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136, p. 448: (MS 67 1796 is perhaps based on G. Graf, *Catalogue de Manuscrits Arabes Chrétiens Conservés au Caire*, StT 63, Città del Vaticano 1934, pp. 86-87).

63 A kind of title-page which was added to the Ms. contains besides the dimensions of the work the following information: "Gros papier vergé blanc, reliure marocaine rouge".

64 Cf. a.o. Beeston, *The Arabic Version*, p. 608-610; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, vol. viii, no. 93, p. 341 (e 180 should be e 163); Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 187-199; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 301-309; Baarda, *The Author*, p. 72 (= *ETWJ*, p. 218); Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 14; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136, p. 449.

for several centuries. They were anxious to shape it in such a way that it would make an impression on the Muslims and would thus enhance the value of T^a by associating it with the names of outstanding Christian Arabic scholars.[65] The beginning of the text was written in exactly the same manner as the first and the beginning of the second sura in manuscripts of the Koran. The Ms. has the same preamble as the Mss. B-E-S. The Ms. consists of 293 folios, 13 lines on each page, written in a rectangular box of one blue and two red lines. The codex was supplied with a leather-faced contemporary binding and consists of folia of semi-transparent oriental paper of tough texture and good quality. The genealogies are at the end of the harmony. The Evangelists are quoted by single letters. The 'Sermon on the Mount' in this Ms. consists of 15 pages, fully vocalised. The folios are numbered 160-167 by a later hand.

(5) **Ms. S, Library Paul Sbath 1020**.[66]

This manuscript was copied by the deacon Ibrāhīm Abū Ṭibl b. Samʿān al-Ḥawānikī, one of the servants of the martyr Merkurios Abū Saifain in Old Cairo (al-Fusṭāṭ), in A. Mart. 1512 (= A.D. 1797). The siglum S was derived from the first letter of the name Sbath. The Ms. has the same preamble as Mss. B-E-O. So far a postscript is unknown. The Evangelists appear to have been described with one characteristic letter. The Ms. is bound and consists of 277 pages. There are 15 lines on every page. Its dimensions are 17 x 12 cm. According to Sbath, its handwriting is quite beautiful.

(6) **Ms. T, Library Paul Sbath 1280**.[67]

The catalogue of Sbath also mentions another manuscript of the Diatessaron, Ms. 1280. According to Sbath its date is the 18th century. The Ms. consists of 376 pages. The last two pages are missing, breaking off with Mt. 28: 15a (= T^a 53: 30). There are between 12 and 14 lines on each page. The pages are slightly eaten by moths. The Ms. is bound. Its dimensions are 16 x 11 cm. We chose the siglum T for it, the penultimate letter of the name Sbath. The manuscript is most probably a copy of Ms. S. Apart from the Arabic Diatessaron, the Ms. contains a second text: "a collection of prayers", 32 pages.[68]

65 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (^{2}1959), p. 304-313.
66 Cf. Paul Sbath, *Bibliothèque de manuscrits Paul Sbath*, Prêtre Syrien d'Alep, Catalogue t. i- t. iii, Le Caire 1928-1934, t. ii, p. 135-136; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (^{2}1959), p. 301; Baarda, *The Author*, p. 67-70 (= *ETWJ*, p. 213-216); Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 14; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136. The year given here on p. 449: (No. 1020 1791) is due to an error by Graf (cf. also *CGAL*, I, p. 154: 1792).
67 Cf. Paul Sbath, *Bibliothèque de manuscrits*, t. iii, p. 92; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154; Baarda, *The Author*, p. 78 (= *ETWJ*, p. 224); Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136, p. 449.
68 NB. The manuscripts S and T, resp. 1020 and 1280, of the Sbath Catalogue are not in our

(three folios) **Ms. C, Jesuit Library, Beirut 429.**[69]
This manuscript has been preserved in three fragments only, which are commonly called the 'Beirut Fragments'.[70] These fragments have been in the possession of the University St.-Joseph in Beirut since 1897. They consist of three folios from a manuscript that was finished in July A.D. 1332 by Abū'l Barakāt ibn Abī'l-[Kibr?].[71] The folios contain the narrative of the Lord's Supper, and the last sentence of the Diatessaron. They contain also an interesting colophon. The fragments show a form of the text which generally agrees with that of Codex A. The Evangelists are marked with the first two letters of their names, as in Ms. A. The manuscript to which the fragments belonged, was connected through three manuscripts copied from one another in Egypt with a "very old" Ms., written in the city of God (Antioch).[72] The oldest of these three Mss., the one which had been copied directly from the "very old" Ms.,[73]

possession, since several attempts to order photographs have failed. For years they were the private property of the Sbath heirs, but nowadays they are preserved by the "Fondation George & Mathilde Sālim" in Aleppo, Syria. Only part of the Sbath collection is in custody of the Vatican Library (Mss. 1-776). It is a pity that we could not use the Mss. ST for a collation in the Sermon on the Mount. A seventh manuscript of the Arabic Diatessaron was brought to my attention by Prof. dr. W. Baars: Coptic Patriarchate Cairo 198 (without a date), cf. Graf, *CGAL*, I, Edizione Anastatica Anno 1959, p. 668, lines 4-7. The manuscript was given the siglum Q by the present author. Besides 1020 and 1280, Sbath's Catalogue mentions another Ms. which contains also a harmony of the Gospels (Ms. 1029; t. ii, p. 141-143) connected with the name of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib; cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 67-70 (= *ETWJ*, p. 213-216). In his al-Fihris (I, Le Caire 1938, p. 23-24, No. [41]: Aboul Farag Ben at-Tayyeb: (147) الانجيل الدياطاسرون Le Diatessaron), a collection of notes concerning the manuscripts he could not acquire, Sbath mentions seven Mss. of the Diatessaron of which two have already been described in his earlier Catalogue viz. 1020 and 1280 (now two copies). One is in his possession, but not yet recorded in the Catalogue ("... s' ils doivent être enregistrés dans le 4e, je les mentionne sous le nom Sbath") and four Mss. seem to be in the private possession (cf. Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154: "Fihris 147 mit 5 Hss im Privatbesitz"; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136, p. 449: "... locations and ages unknown".) of respectively 1. Chahiāt, Filles d' Élias, notable grec-catholique 2. Chammā(a), Basile, prêtre grec-catholique 3. Qass Nasrallah, Dimitrī, prêtre grec-catholique and 4. Salib, 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Baramoussî al-Massoudî, prêtre copte-orthodoxe, Le Caire. These *Fihris* Mss. may have been sold to individual merchants or, perhaps, assuming a worst case scenario, simply do not exist (anymore).

69 Cf. a.o. Cheikho, *Lettre*, p. 301-307: id., نسخ , ٩٧-١٠٩; Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 23-31; Graf, edition and translation of the fragments, in: Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 61-71; id., *CGAL*, I, p. 153-154; Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 187-199; Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, ([2]1959), p. 298-299; Baarda, *The Author*, p. 65-67 (= *ETWJ*, p. 211-213); Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 15; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 136, p. 449.

70 The three folia are called the 'Beirut Fragments' because they were found, Whit Monday 1890, under a pile of rubbish at the gate of the Maronite monastery of Luaiza, north-east of Beirut.

71 Cf. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 32-36 and p. 59.

72 مدينة الله is a translation of θεόπολις, a name given to Antioch by Justinian.

73 Cf. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 191-192, states that "very ancient" is a very relative term

was written by Anbā Yūsif ibn al-Muḥabrik, Bishop of Fūwah (on the Rosetta Nile) in the first half of the thirteenth century.[74] The manuscript has been described as follows: the three folia are written on tough paper which resembles parchment; the ink is excellent; the title and the names of the Evangelists are in red; the pages measure 20 x 11 cm.[75] We mention this manuscript here, because it stands in evidence of the existence of a separate tradition which is being transmitted in this text and in Ms. A. Naturally, it does not give us any clue about the Sermon on the Mount.

II. B. The Manuscripts, their dating and application.

The dating of the manuscripts presents us with a curious problem. As far as we can gather, we are dealing with two recensions, or families: family A (= Mss. A and C) and family B (= Mss. B-E-O, perhaps also S-T). These manuscripts have been dated as follows:

13th century: Ms. A.
14th century: Ms. C. (1332 A.D.)
16th century: Ms. B. (post ± 1517 A.D.)
Then the dating skips a century to the
18th century: Ms. E. (1795)
: Ms. S. (1797), Ms. T (?)
19th century: Ms. O. (1806)

Ms. O is very probably the most tender shoot of the family tree. But theoretically this should not be a problem. Late manuscripts may, after all, date back to early witnesses. In the case of Ms. O this may indeed not be too far from the truth, if the author's communication on having made an exact copy of a manuscript completed on the 15th of March 1107 A.D. is correct. That is to say that Ms. O, if we suppose that it was a faithful copy, brings us nearer to the textual tradition of circa 1100 A.D., hardly one century after the possible composition of the Arabic Diatessaron. In the case of Ms. O it is true that one reached back to a text that was written seven centuries earlier. In another case, that of Ms. C, the route was different. The manuscript itself is relatively old, 1332 A.D. Yet, this manuscript appears to be the result of a fairly long chain

among Orientals: "The ancestor of the Beirut MS. can then, not very well be later than the time of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib himself, *i.e.* the first half of the eleventh century".

74 The other copyists were the Coptic priest Yūḥannā ibn al-Mu'taman, called Ibn aš-šaiḥ (13th century), who based his transcription of the Codex on that of the Coptic priest Simʿān (13th century); cf. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 59.

75 Cf. Cheikho, *Lettre*, p. 302; Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 23.

of tradition: it is the copy of a text, that goes back to a text, that is itself a copy of a "very ancient" text from the first half of the 13th century. This signifies that there were two links between 1332 and the previous century. This may perhaps indicate that a comparatively large attention for the Arabic Diatessaron existed in the 13th and 14th century. From the thirteenth century we know now Ms. A and the predecessor of Ms. C, which apparently descended both from one textual family (A). Ms. B stems from the sixteenth century or probably later, but because there is a close relation between Mss. B and O, we are now willing to accept that the textual family B has, in a sense, still older credentials: the early twelfth century.

The question is, why was the text of the Arabic Diatessaron copied? Was it, in the early period (12th-14th century), perhaps used in the liturgy? This may be, but the fact that for a long time lectionaries were applied in Syriac liturgy for the scriptural lessons would contradict this assumption. Or was it rather that the Arabic Diatessaron served in the dialogue between Muslims and Christians, as the decorations in certain texts from family B, *e.g.* Mss. B and O, lead one to suspect. The work then may have had a missionary aim. It deserves a thought that in the Christian apologetics there was need for a Gospel which did not exhibit the discrepancies of the separate Gospels, for the latter was a topic in Muslim polemics that played an important part to cast doubt on the dependability of the Gospels. But what brought the people in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to the copying of the Arabic Diatessaron? Was it perhaps the transmission of a 'curiosity', or did they also have a theological interest in it? A much simpler answer can be that the Christian Arabs, as for centuries this was a laudable custom in the Arabic Muslim tradition too, copied the work over and over for the purpose of thus coming into possession of a 'practical' book. Apparently, they still assigned some value to the Diatessaron and wished to avoid the work's passing into oblivion! However, it is clear that a long tradition of copying can be accepted on the basis of the surviving manuscripts. This also raises the question if perhaps many more copies of the Arabic Diatessaron could be discovered in the enormous range of Christian Arabic literature.

III. The Editions.

When editing texts of which more than one manuscript have been preserved, the question of which procedure to follow arises.[76] One might prepare a

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76 For methods and standards of editing Christian Arabic texts (cf. R. Draguet, *Une méthode d'édition*, 1977; K. Samir, *La tradition arabe chrétienne*, 1982; J. Grand 'Henry, *review*, 1983)

'diplomatic' edition, in which one manuscript serves as a model and the variant readings of the others are being registered in an apparatus criticus. One might also try to reconstruct the 'original' text on the basis of a more or less eclectic principle. In that case a text which is either covered by all the manuscripts, or at least by the readings of one of the manuscripts is being created. The result is a text, stipulated by means of a specific critical analysis.

In our edition of the 'Sermon on the Mount', we started out following the first principle. At the beginning of each text, we printed the reading of manuscript A. Towards the end we attempted to reconstruct the 'original' text on the basis of a text critical analysis, with obvious reservations. In this chapter we will establish what procedures the editors of the Arabic text of the Diatessaron have followed. So far, this text has been edited by P. Augustinus Ciasca (1888) and A.-S. Marmardji (1935), as has already been observed.

1. The *editio princeps* was published in 1888 by A. Ciasca, scriptor of the Vatican Library.[77] The title of this edition is: 'Tatiani Evangeliorum Harmoniae'. The edition was founded on two manuscripts: A and B. The Arabic text consisted of 210 pages, whereas the Latin translation ran to 99 pages. Ciasca took the Codex Vaticanus, which, he thought, offered a better orthography,[78] as the basis of his text, but he inserted many variant readings from the Codex Borgianus, if these had his preference to the readings of manuscript A. In these cases he referred to the footnotes for the variant readings of Ms. A. It is obvious that he filled up the *lacunae* in Codex A with the readings of manuscript B and from B he also adopted the prologue and the epilogue. Remarkable is Euringer's observation that Ciasca based his reconstruction on Ms. B. The question with Euringer's argumentation is,[79] whether or not one should consider a printing error here. Pott took Euringer's text seriously and observed the latter's mistake.[80] To end all uncertainty, he referred to Ciasca's judgement: "Hinc, quem dedi textum, ex codice Vaticano, superflua recidens, expressi;

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see the particularly informative and enlightening discussion in Adriana Drint's dissertation: *The Mount Sinai Arabic Version of IV Ezra*, Groningen 1995, Chapter II, section 4, p. 130-134.

77 Ciasca was elevated to the rank of cardinal June 19, 1899.

78 Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. xiv: "Ex duobus manuscriptis, alterum mutilum corruptumque erat, alterum integrum sed orthographice mendosum satis".

79 Cf. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 6-7: "Ciasca glaubte überhaupt beobachten zu können, dass zwar B einen älteren und besseren Typus des Diatessarons als A aufweise, dass sich aber doch beide innigst berühren. Daher legte er seiner Rekonstruktion B zu Grunde".

80 A. Pott in: E. Preuschen (- A. Pott), *Tatians Diatessaron*, p. 51, Anmerkung 1: "Euringer irrt also, wenn er sagt, Ciasca habe seiner Rekonstruktion B zugrunde gelegt".

eius lacunas ex alio (= Ms. B) implevi, erroresque pro opportunitate ex eodem emendavi".[81]

Criticism of the edition was first made by Hogg, who blamed the editor for not having approached the work methodically enough: "Ciasca's text does not profess to be critically determined".[82] Hjelt was of the same opinion. He, moreover, indicated that the editor had better applied a method which would have done more justice to the facts, so that a completely different text could have been created.[83] Euringer expressed the same feelings when writing that Ciasca should have taken the best manuscript as a basis for his text. Then, he should have registered the variant readings of the second manuscript with it. He should have treated the reconstruction of an archetype in a separate section or in a later study.[84] Finally, Kahle's verdict was that "Ciasca's attempt to publish a mixed text", had to be considered a woeful failure.[85]

2. The second edition was edited in 1935 by A.-S. Marmardji. The title read: 'Diatessaron de Tatien'. As has already been noticed, a new manuscript (E) was discovered by Marmardji. He took this manuscript as the basis of his edition, but in addition to this he used the variant readings of the manuscripts A-B. Unfortunately, Marmardji often banished the better readings, as inferior ones, to the footnotes, whereas he included dubious secondary readings into the original text.[86] Moreover, it often has proven impossible "to determine from his apparatus whether the printed text is that of the Ms. or is his idea of what the Ms. ought to read".[87] From the reception of this edition, it became clear that methodically it could not stand the test of criticism. The main objection was that Marmardji set the norm of the text on the basis of Classical Arabic. For that reason Peters called Marmardji's edition: "den Gipfel von Unmethode".[88] Besides this, Baumstark cynically remarked that Marmardji's text was better than that of the Arabic translator, worse still, that the "nouveau texte arabe établi" was better than the "von Tatian geschaffene" text of the Syriac 'Vorlage' of the translator.[89] Kahle strongly disapproved of Marmardji's

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81   Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. xiv.
82   Cf. Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36.
83   Cf. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 61-62: "… denn nicht nur viele LAA des cod. Borg. wären aus den Fussnoten in den Text gerückt, sondern auch da, wo beide Hss. übereinstimmen, würden öftere Korrekturen sich als notwendig erwiesen haben".
84   Cf. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 8.
85   Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 313.
86   Cf. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 239 f.
87   Cf. Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 15; Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 192, note 1.
88   Cf. Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 21.
89   Cf. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 238.

attempt to create a 'new' text on the basis of both textual forms and blamed him for not having had "any real understanding of the actual problems".[90]

Nowhere was Marmardji capable of identifying himself with the train of thought of the Arabic translator. Continually he freely applied the norm of Classical Arabic to a text interspersed with Syriacisms. In the last extremity this led to the assumption of readings which did not occur in T^a at all, and to the actual correction of the Arabic text.[91] In his footnotes, Marmardji frequently made unwarranted proposals for the improvement of the Arabic text.[92] These so-called emendations were, however, largely 'borrowed' from editions of already existing Arabic translations of the Gospels, and not checked by the manuscript tradition of the Arabic Diatessaron. Furthermore, Marmardji's apparatus appeared to be inaccurate, because readings were frequently being ascribed to the wrong manuscripts. Marmardji also frequently, but not always accurately, corrected the sub-standard vocalization of Ms. E. Another objection to Marmardji's edition is that he wholly left out of consideration the Beirut Fragments.[93] A last point of criticism dealt with the annoying corrections in Marmardji's French translation of T^a.[94]

In the early period of research, scholars had at their disposal two manuscripts: A and B which did not always offer the same text. The comparison of these two texts necessarily led scholars to the application of the eclectic method. That was, to a certain extent, apparent from the manner in which Ciasca made use of these manuscripts for his edition.[95] The reason for employing Ms. A as basic text was, at least partly, a practical one. This did not mean that he preferred that manuscript for representing the best text, because he did not hesitate to replace the text of Ms. A by readings of Ms. B, whenever he thought that necessary. For example, in the first two pages of his edition Ciasca not only filled up the gaps of the former manuscript (caused by the bad state of it), but also corrected its errors helped by the latter text. Thus, out of 28 instances where A and B differ in this portion (John 1: 1-5, Luke 1:

90 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (^{2}1959), p. 313: "We cannot derive one of these forms from the other and cannot reconstruct an 'Urtext' of the Arabic Diatessaron from them".

91 Cf. Joosse, *Sermon*, Appendix A3, p. 395.

92 Cf. Joosse, *o.c.*, Appendix A4, p. 396-97.

93 Cf. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 237: "…, das seinen Grund darin hat, dass M. …, die Euringer-Grafsche Publikation überhaupt entgangen ist"; Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 154.

94 Cf. § IV.

95 Cf. Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 40, states that Ciasca's text not professes to be based in its eclecticism on any systematic critical principles.

5-20), he agreed with B eleven times against A.[96] Apparently he was impressed by the fact that Ms. B did not contain the usual stumble-blocks for the identification of the Arabic harmony with the Diatessaron (Mark 1: 1 and 'the genealogies'). But he did not prefer any of both texts on principle. To the contrary, he tried to choose the best readings from each of them.[97] This is the path that later research also took, though the opinion of the superiority of Ms. B gradually gained ground. Ms. B was a later text, but it was neither a copy of Ms. A nor dependent upon it; it was in some respects a better text[98] that – sometimes[99] or even often[100] – offered more original readings. It was already at this stage of study into the Arabic harmony that some scholars realized that A and B were not isolated texts but rather representatives of two families of textual tradition, of two forms,[101] two lines[102] or two types.[103] And this notion has been wholly approved by the chain of discoveries that followed.

   One strong point which is being made by Ciasca's edition is, however, the clear impression we often get of the text and its variant readings in the manuscripts anyway. This is not to say that his edition is immaculate, although the 'Sermon on the Mount', in spite of some details, is free from inaccuracies.[104]

96 Marmardji's choice was here 18 times B against 10 times A; in John 1: 1-5 Ciasca and Marmardji have made the same decisions (4 times A and once B), but here the variations between the manuscripts were purely orthographical, except in one instance where both editors read with Ms. A نور الناس 'light of man' instead of Mss. B-E-O نور البشر 'light of man'. The first form is usual in Arabic versions, so that it may be questioned, whether it was really the reading of Tᵃ. Why did B-E-O use the word بشر ? Was it an analogy of ابن البشر 'Son of man' or ابو البشر 'The father of mankind' meaning 'Adam'?

97 It is another question, whether his choice was always as felicitous as could be. When he – as Marmardji does – prefers to read in Luke 1: 9 with Ms. A فدخل هيكل الرب '(and) he entered the temple of the Lord' (accusative) instead of الي هيكل Mss. B-E, i.e. lit. '(and) he entered into the temple', his choice seems to be wrong: the latter rendering is a good Arabic reproduction of Syriac ܠܗܝܟܠܐ. In Luke 1: 10 I am inclined to believe Ciasca was right in choosing في اوان (A) instead of اوان (B-E) which Marmardji prefers. Ms. A reproduces ܒܚܕܒ 'at the time' (Syˢᶜ); again in Luke 1: 19 Ciasca seems to have the right reading اني انا (A) = ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ (Syᴾ) instead of Marmardji's انا (B).

98 Cf. Hogg, Diatessaron, p. 35.

99 Cf. ibid., p. 36; J. R. Harris, Fragments of the Commentary of Ephrem Syrus upon the Diatessaron, London 1895, p. 7: '… that the Ms. A is, in some of its details, subordinate to, and a later form than that of B'.

100 Cf. A. Pott, in: E. Preuschen (- A. Pott), Tatians Diatessaron, p. 52: '… hat aber oft einen besseren (d. h. originaleren) Text erhalten'.

101 Hamlyn Hill, A Dissertation on the Gospel Commentary of Ephraem the Syrian, Edinburgh 1896, p. 17, speaks of 'two of the forms which it assumed after centuries of use' (cf. Harris in note 99).

102 Hjelt, Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzungen, p. 61 writes about B: '… gehört einer selbständigen Linie an'.

103 Hjelt, o.c., p. 60 speaks of B as 'von einem ursprünglicheren Typus'.

104 e.g. Mt. 5: 14 (الجبل ≠ Ms. A, but Ms. B); Mt. 6: 7 (Ciasca's remark 'scripserat ان يكثر, dein

Marmardji's text has one merit,[105] that now we also get a picture of a third manuscript. Marmardji offered the researcher, by means of his introduction and index, a fine opening to the text of the Diatessaron. Whatever the case may be, a new critical edition would be very important, because now C-O could be incorporated into the existing materials A-B-E.

IV. The Translations.

The Arabic Diatessaron has been translated into Latin, English, German and French. It cannot be said that any of these translations met with unlimited praise. However, Marmardji, in his discussion of the many faults of the Arabic translator, goes too far in saying in a rather off-hand manner: "Les traducteurs modernes du Diatessaron arabe en latin, anglais et allemand, ont commis, à ce point de vue plus d'une erreur, par suite, probablement, de l'idée très haute qu'ils se sont faite du traducteur, et d'un autre part, de leur incapacité et de leur négligence de verifier le texte arabe par le syriaque".[106] This is an undervaluation of his predecessors, especially Hogg. Of course, the instances given by Marmardji to illustrate their incompetence cannot be denied, but it must be stated that the interesting sample given on page xvi under c turns out to be a fine indication of Hogg's capacity![107] Marmardji pointed out that all translators had been misled by the wrong reading of Ciasca's edition which was based on Mss. A and B. The true reading of the Arabic Diatessaron was preserved in the basic text of his own edition, Ms. E, but apparently he did not see that in his apparatus Hogg already noticed the fault without any help of a manuscript, merely by conjecture.[108]

Moreover, it is not difficult to find instances where all translations, including that of Marmardji, are wrong. For instance, in Mk. 8: 32a (= T^a 23: 41) the Arabic text reads ظاهراً قولاً ويقول 'and he shall speak a plain word', or rather '... a word plainly'.

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mutavit in اذ يكثر ', has to be disregarded); Mt. 5: 18 (سينة (Ms. A) may require a textual emendation into سنّة).

105 Moderate praise came from A. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 243-244; D. S. Margoliouth, review of "Diatessaron de Tatien", A. S. Marmardji in: *JThS* xxxviii, 1937, p. 76-79, welcomed Ma's new edition in a grand way (p. 76): 'He has therefore well earned the gratitude of students'.

106 Cf. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xv.

107 *o.c.*, p. xvi: the text of T^a xv: 35 = Lk. x: 19; cf. also Baarda, *The Author*, p. 97-98 (= *ETWJ*, p. 243-244): it concerns a discussion of the Arabic variant readings جنس and جيش.

108 *o.c.*, p. xvi, 'une faute de copiste'; Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 67, note 9: 'This is a clerical error for forces'.

Here Marmardji renders the phrase with 'Et il <u>dit</u> une parole ouverte', and
so the other translators did. Ciasca: 'Et verbum apertum <u>loquebatur</u>', Hogg:
'And he <u>was speaking</u> plainly'. Preuschen: 'Und er <u>sprach</u> das Wort öffentlich'.
All these translations render the imperfect tense of the Arabic as if there stood
a perfect, and this is quite understandable, because the Greek text καὶ παρρησίᾳ
τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει (compare also Sy^P: ܟܐܡ ܠܒܪ ܕܚܒ ܟܐܠܒ ܠܟܚ ܥܒ (a) suggests
that rendering. The imperfect is rather strange. One might be tempted to
connect it with the beginning of the Passion-prediction Mt. 16: 21a where the
word ابتدى, 'he began', was continued with an imperfect tense, namely يظهر,'he
shall show'. But the great distance between the two verbs does not make that
very probable, even less so because this imperfect (يقول) has its place behind
five other imperfect tenses which are being subordinated to 'to show' and not
to 'he began'. It was again Hogg, in spite of his translation, who pointed out
the resemblance between Tᵃ and Syˢ at this point (in his apparatus). In fact, the
Sinaitic Syriac reads ܠܒܪܒ ܟܐܠܒܚ ܟܐܠܒ ܥܒ ܥܒ a 'and he <u>shall speak</u> the word
openly'.[109] The fact that Marmardji was beside the mark here with his translation
(a. he wrongly translated the Arabic; b. he forgot to check the Syriac text)
does not make us speak of incapacity and negligence. It only illustrates how
difficult it is to give an exact rendering. But this difficulty must be taken into
account. It means that students of textual criticism should be very prudent in
making use of these translations. For that purpose also, it is useful to present a
small list with the five existing translations, namely that of Ciasca, Hamlyn
Hill, Hogg, Preuschen and Marmardji. The underlined words denote where
these versions do not agree. After the synopsis each of these versions will be
dealt with separately.

A: (Tᵃ IX: 18 = Lk. 6: 35): 'Jesus teaches the Disciples'
فهو متغاضٍ عن الاشرار والكفار
'for He {is} <u>feigning to disregard</u> the wicked and the infidels'
ὅτι αὐτὸς χρηστός ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηρούς
'for he is <u>kind</u> to the ungrateful and the wicked'

Ciasca (1888):   'ipse enim <u>benignus</u> est super malos et ingratos'
Hamlyn Hill (1894):   'for he is <u>kind</u> toward the evil and the unthankful!'
Hogg (1895):   'for he is <u>lenient</u> towards the wicked and the ungrateful'
Preuschen (1926):   'denn er (ist) <u>nachgiebig</u> gegen Böse und
                        Undankbare'

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109 Cf. S. C. E. Legg, *Nouum Testamentum Graece … Euangelium secundum Marcum*, Oxford
1935, *in loco*: 'haec verba (= vs. 32a) ad fin. vers. 31 iungit Syˢ. (= resurget, et palam verbum
loquetur)'.

Marmardji (1935):　　'car il [fait semblant de ne pas voir] est bon pour les
　　　　　　　　　　méchants et les ingrats'

Marmardji protested against the term متغاض (verb غضو, act. part. VI), because it
would not render the Syriac wording properly. He proposed a rectification
by means of the verb نعم (IV + the preposition على), meaning 'to bestow favors
upon s.o.'. The translations of Ciasca and Hamlyn Hill are adoptions of the
Syriac ܚܣܝܡ, 'kind', 'mild', and certainly not literal translations of the Arabic
text. Hogg and Preuschen missed the point here by rendering the verb too
weak ('lenient', 'nachgiebig'), causing an unsatisfactory translation! Marmardji
was right in his alternative rendering between brackets.

B: (Tᵃ VIII: 51 = Mt. 5: 22): 'About Anger'

فهو مخصوم من الجماعة
'he will be litigated by the community'[110]
ἔνοχος ἔσται τῷ συνεδρίῳ
'shall be liable to the council'

Ciasca　　　　　'reus erit concilio'
Hamlyn Hill　　　'shall be accountable to the council'
Hogg　　　　　　'is condemned by the Synagogue'
Preuschen　　　　'dem wird der Prozess gemacht von der
　　　　　　　　　Gemeindeversammlung'
Marmardji　　　　'sera [vaincu par son adversaire] condamné
　　　　　　　　　par l'assemblée'
Cf. Levin (Mt. 5: 22)　'ist in der Schar des Frevels überführt'

Hamlyn Hill's translation is based on the Latin rendering of Ciasca; Hogg's
translation 'Synagogue' is motivated by one of the meanings of the Syriac
noun: ܟܢܘܫܬܐ. Preuschen's translation is a rendering of خصم (III). Marmardji's
alternative translation between the brackets is a result of the fact that he did
not notice an interchange of the verbal forms in the Arabic, viz. خصم form I for

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110　The translation is based on خصم (i for iii), 'to bring legal action against s.o.', which is a rather
　　free and periphrastic reproduction of the Syriac verb ܚܘܒ (Pa.) + ܠ , 'to find guilty', 'to
　　condemn'. Cf. also Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 59, note 3: 'The word means *to contend successfully*,
　　but it is used throughout by our translator in the sense of *condemn*. It therefore constitutes
　　a Syriacism. Cf. also Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, I, p. 751 where is offered the following,
　　rather rare, rendering of خصم (i) = 'he litigated in a valid, or sound, manner', which merely
　　has been grounded on *Mṣb* (= The "*Miṣbāḥ*" of al-Fayyūmī). In my opinion, this is typically
　　a case where the exception does not confirm the rule (cf. note 112 below). The fact that
　　Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī recorded the forms (3) and (8) of *Mṣb* for his famous *Tāğ al-ʿarūs*, and
　　actually omitted form (1) is in this respect quite significant.

III (I = 'to conquer' or 'to defeat s.o. (in argument)', 'to contend with s.o. in an altercation' or 'to dispute with s.o.' ; III = 'to have a law-suit against s.o.', 'to bring legal action against s.o.'). The translations 'condemned' (Hogg) and 'condamné' (Marmardji) are derived from the Syriac verb ܣܚܒ. It is remarkable that T^a with خصم differed here from its usual rendering of ܣܚܒ (Pa. and Ethpa.), 'to confute', 'to find guilty', 'to condemn'. The fact is, that the Syriac term as well in Mt. 5: 21; 5: 22[111] as in Lk. 6: 37^b has been translated with the verb حق (X), 'to deserve', 'to require',[112] which, as far as its meaning goes, is far more neutral.

C: (T^a VIII: 54 = Mt. 5: 25a): 'About Anger'

Ms. A: كن متلافياً خصمك بسرعة

Mss. BEO: *idem*, but: متلاقاً من

'Be making-up with your adversary quickly' [113]

ἴσθι εὐνοῶν τῷ ἀντιδίκῳ σου ταχύ

'Make friends quickly with your accuser'

Ciasca	'Esto <u>consentiens</u> adversario tuo cito'
Hamlyn Hill	'<u>Agree</u> with thine adversary quickly'
Hogg	'<u>Join</u> thine adversary quickly'
Preuschen	'<u>Ersetze den Schaden</u> deinem Prozess-gegner schnell'
Marmardji	'[<u>sois réparant</u> une chose] <u>sois d'accord</u> avec ton adversaire vite'
Sy^p	ܗܘܝܬ ܡܬܪܥܐ ܥܡ ܒܥܠ ܕܝܢܟ ܥܓܠ
Sy^{sc}	*idem*, but ܒܥܓܠ

Hamlyn Hill's translation is clearly a rendering of Ciasca's Latin, which in its turn is a reflection of the Syriac verb ܐܬܐ (Ethpa.): 'to agree'; Hogg's rendering

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111 Cf. Joosse, *Sermon*, Commentary Mt. 5: 22 (a and c), p. 120-125.

112 Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, Oxford 1879-1901, I, 1214 sub Pa. ܚܘܒ, lines 2. 5. 6. 10, however, records خصم as a synonym, but does not mention the verb حق. Cf. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, I, p. 607: حق (vi) = syn. with خصم (vi) = 'to dispute', 'contend with one another'. In Steingass, *A Learner's Arabic-English Dictionary*, new impression, Beirut 1989, the following has been remarked (p. 327): خصم (i) = 'conquer an adversary', (iii) = 'have a law-suit against (acc.)', (vi) = 'dispute with one another', 'contest in a law-suit' and (p. 288): حق (i; iv) = 'get the better of an adversary in a law-suit', (vi) = 'contend for a right', (viii) = 'have a law-suit against each other'. Cf also L. Costaz, *Dictionnaire Syriaque*, p. 99: ܚܘܒ, 'guilty', 'deserving (of)', مستحق !

113 T^a here follows in the periphrastical structure 'be making-up with' the Syriac, which in its turn follows the Greek text.

'join' is based on the verb لقى (VI) and/or on a different meaning of the verb ܐܚܐ ('to join'), but not of لفو / لفى (VI); Preuschen's option is a translation of a different meaning of the Arabic verb لفى (VI): 'to redress a loss'; Marmardji's alternative translation between the brackets is, essentially, correct; his definite rendering 'sois d'accord' is, however, in agreement with the translation of Ciasca and Hamlyn Hill. Marmardji, however, derived his translation from Arabic موافقا, which is not in the Mss. of the Diatessaron, nor in the testimonies of the other Arabic sources. A correct translation has to be founded on the Arabic verb لفى (VI): 'to make up', 'to make good', and on the Syriac ܐܚܐ (Ethpa.): 'to be reconciled', 'to make alliance', 'to agree', 'to join', 'to consent', or for example on (by introducing a conjectural text) الف (VI): 'to be amicable', 'to be in harmony'. The reading of the Mss. BEO, متلاقا, is most likely a later correction, i.e., a readjustment of the diacritical punctuation under the influence of the various meanings of the Syriac verb ܐܚܐ . In this way, copyists tried to rectify the reading متلاقيا, which in their opinion was inaccurate.

D: (Tᵃ IX: 34 = Mt. 6: 11): 'The Lord's Prayer'

Mss. AEO: اعطنا قوت يومنا

Ms.   B: اعطينا قوة يومنا

AEO: 'Give us the food of today'   = Ar. genitive construction +
                                                Syriacism.
    'Give us food today'   = Syriacism: ܝܘܡܢܐ, 'today'.
    'Give us the food of our day'   = يومنا : نا interpreted as suffix I
                                                pluralis.
    'Give us our food of the day'¹¹⁴

B: 'Give us the strength of today'
     'Give us strength today'
     'Give us the strength of our day'
     'Give us our strength of the day'

Ciasca   'panem quotidianum da nobis'
Hamlyn Hill   'Give us the sustenance (lit. power) of today' ¹¹⁵
Hogg   'Give us the food of today'
Preuschen   'Gib uns das tägliche Brot'
Marmardji   'Donne-nous la nourriture de notre jour'

114 Cf. Joosse, Sermon, § 101 under 3 [4], p. 215-18.
115 The example given is one of the rare instances where Hamlyn Hill differs from his model
     Ciasca.

With 'panem' and 'Brot', Ciasca and Preuschen do not present us literal
renderings of one of the Arabic texts, but rather a translation of the Syriac
term لحما, which means 'bread', and sometimes also 'food'.[116] Possibly, Tᵃ
could not 'transliterate' the Syriac لحما here, because the Arabic expression
لحم means 'meat'. Therefore, the translator had to look for a neutral term. The
Arabic sources Lar, WP, Lev, Ya, however, all read خبزنا 'our bread'. Hamlyn
Hill rendered Ms. B (1st version). The reading of Ms. B seems to be a later
correction. A scribe must have interpreted قوت (AEO) as a misspelled قوة, that
is he read the construct state with -tā' marbūṭa instead of with -tā'. Hogg
based his translation on the Mss. AEO (1st version), an initiative to a genitive
construction, of which the second part read a Syriacism instead of Classical
Arabic اليوم, 'today'; Marmardji also chose AEO (3rd version), but he did not
interpret the word يومنا as a Syriacism! Smith Lewis' remark[117] that the Arabic
Diatessaron lacks a synonym for Greek σήμερον, does not hold water, for
this sense of the word is, of course, implied in the Syriacism يومنا.

"In hac versione, quantum, salva fidelitate, integrum fuit, indolem stylumque
servavi Clementinae Vulgatae, ut quilibet utramque conferens, sibi persuadere
possit de utriusque substantiali conformitate". With these words Ciasca
introduced his translation published on pp. 1-99, which was added to the
Arabic text "in commodum Theologorum arabici cognitione carentium".
According to some scholars his translation was in general a reliable one, although
in some passages one would have wished for a more accurate rendering.[118]
Others, however, more severely criticized Ciasca's attempt to adapt his
rendering to the Clementine Vulgata.[119] This adaptation had led him to a
result contrary to the intention which underlied his attempt to adapt, namely
to give help to students of textual criticism untrained in Arabic: where his text
differed from the Clementine text the peculiar reading of the Arabic Diatessaron
should have been found. But as a matter of fact, his translation has been so
deeply influenced by the Vulgate text that many interesting details of the
Arabic text have been effaced. I think, this criticism is correct. It is clear that
such a text cannot be used as a 'critical' text for textual studies.[120] Nevertheless,
Ciasca's work had the merit that it acquainted many scholars with this important
work so long hidden. And in spite of its inexactness, scholars found quite a

116 Cf. Greek: ἄρτον, 'bread', 'food'.
117 Agnes Smith Lewis (ed.), *The Old Syriac Gospels*, p. 14.
118 For example Sellin, *Der Text*, p. 229-230, Anmerkung 1.
119 Cf. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 62.
120 Cf. Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36; Sellin, *Der Text*, p. 229-230, Anm.1; Hjelt, *Die altsyrische
     Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 62.

few pecularities in it which sufficiently showed the significance of this text for the reconstruction of the original harmony. The first translation of the Arabic Diatessaron in a modern language is Hamlyn Hill's. His English translation, however, is not based on the Arabic text, but on the vulgatized Latin rendering of Ciasca. Hamlyn Hill had compared Ciasca's Latin text with the Arabic text in a number of passages, and approved of his rendering. He decided to make an English version from the Latin. Finally, this English version was compared verbatim with the Arabic text.[121]

A second English translation was published by Hogg, who based his translation on the Arabic text of Ciasca's edition. The manuscripts A and B were not verified themselves and Ciasca's Latin was seldom consulted, except when it was thought the Arabic might be obscured by a misprint. Hamlyn Hill's English was compared by Hogg with his own rendering. This took place mainly to transfer Hamlyn Hill's system of text references to the margin of the new work. In comparison with the earlier translations, Hogg aimed to be 'overliteral'. He even made an effort to preserve the order of words. The Greek and the Revised Version have been used in almost every case to determine how the vague Arabic tenses and conjunctions should be rendered.[122] On the whole, the translation may count as the most reliable rendering of the Arabic text for want of a better one.

Preuschen's German translation on the other hand was prone to criticism and considered to be inaccurate. His translation seemed dependent on Ciasca's edition and it was not founded on the manuscript tradition. The English translations of Hamlyn Hill and Hogg were barely consulted. Moreover, Preuschen seldom registered a translation variant of Hogg. Pott emphasized the literal character of the translation.[123] Peters, however, disagreed with him and sounded a note of warning against the use of Preuschen's translation as he drew attention to the fact that the latter, instead of rendering the Arabic text literally, often "der Text der ihm geläufigen Lutherbibel in die Feder geflossen ist".[124]

Marmardji's French translation could also not pass the test of criticism. Baumstark was the first to utter his irritation about the annoying corrections of the so-called "fautes de traduction de l'original arabe" in the footnotes of the Arabic text and in the French translation, in which they had been carried

121 Cf. Hamlyn Hill, *Earliest Life*, p. 2-3.
122 Cf. Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 41: 'It is therefore only where it differs from these that our translation can be quoted without investigation as giving positive evidence'.
123 Cf. Preuschen (- Pott), *Tatians Diatessaron*, p. 53: 'Sie erweist sich als möglichst wortgetreu'.
124 Cf. Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 20.

out even when they were in contrast with the Old Syriac tradition.[125] Margoliouth was the next scholar to criticize this translation vehemently. He blamed Marmardji for not having taken the Arabic translator seriously, for having made a pun on the latter's words and for having misinterpreted them intentionally.[126] As becomes clear from what has been said above, Marmardji's translation has to be considered an unreliable source in many respects. Prudence is called for if one wishes to use this translation; not only by those who do not master the Arabic language and must appeal to the French translation, but certainly also by the specialists in this specific field of research for whom Marmardji's edition and translation of T[a] might be a 'Fundgrube' and a 'minefield' at the same time.

V. The Language of the Arabic Diatessaron.

All kinds of studies have given attention to the character of the Arabic used in T[a]. This in itself is a complicated matter. If we assume that the Arabic Diatessaron would have been written around the year 1000, we have to address the question of which type of Arabic was current in Christian communities – for example that of Bagdad[127] – about that time. To answer this question we have to turn to Middle Arabic.[128] Middle Arabic (MA) is the connecting link between the Arabic spoken on the eve of the Muslim conquests and its modern spoken dialects. MA is not a development or debasement of Classical Arabic (CA). It is rather a development of North Arabian dialects of the CA type. Its beginnings date back to the earliest days of the Muslim conquests. The first traces of MA

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125 Cf. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 238.

126 Cf. Margoliouth, *review Marmardji*, p. 78: 'This form of humour of which Prof. Marmardji is clearly a master, is in comedy highly effective. But a translation of the Gospels is an unsuitable place for its indulgence'.

127 Cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 90 (= *ETWJ*, p. 236): 'The Christian works of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib … betray the conditions of a Syriac-speaking church, the Christian community of Bagdad, within an Arabic-writing Muslim world'.

128 Cf. a.o. Joshua Blau, *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic. A Study of the Origins of Middle Arabic*, Oxford 1965 (reprint Jerusalem 1981); id., *Studies in Middle Arabic and its Judaeo-Arabic Variety*, Jerusalem 1988; id., *A Grammar of Christian Arabic* I-II-III (CSCO 267, 276, 279), Louvain 1966-1967; Simon Hopkins, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic. Based upon papyri datable to before A.H. 300 / A.D. 912*, LOS, Vol. 37, Oxford 1984; Bengt Knutsson, *Studies in the Text and Language of Three Syriac-Arabic Versions of the Book of Judicum*, with special reference to the Middle Arabic Elements, Leiden 1974; Samir Kussaim, Contribution à l'étude du moyen arabe des coptes, in: *Le Muséon* 80 (1967), p. 153-209 and 81 (1968), p. 5-78; I. Schen, Usama Ibn Munqidh's Memoirs: Some Further Light on Muslim Middle Arabic, in: *JSS* 17 (1972), p. 218-236 and 18 (1973), p. 64-97.

forms in a written text appear in the early eighth century. The origins of MA date back to the period preceding the fixation of the norms of CA by the grammarians and linguists of the eighth-tenth centuries and onwards.[129] MA cannot be found in its pure form, *i.e.* texts which are written entirely in MA. The only way in which to isolate MA features is by showing how they differ from the accepted grammatical norms of CA, which is the nearest approximation to the spoken language Early New Arabic, *i.e.* the dialects.[130] Middle Arabic is divided into three branches: Muslim, Christian and Judaeo-Arabic. This division, however, seems to be based primarily on extra-linguistical, for instance sociological, characteristics.[131] Contrary to Muslim authors, Jewish and Christian writers were not imbued with the ideal of writing *'Arabīya* or pure Arabic.[132] They were less devoted to the standard of the Koran, or just had too little knowledge of CA rules and regulations.[133] Not hindered by these norms or fettered by all the grammatical requirements involved in the perfect usage of CA, Christian and Jewish authors were free to write in a language also containing the vernacular of their time.[134] The influences of living speeches such as Hebrew and Aramaic (Syriac) made themselves felt in the Jewish and Christian communities where Arabic gradually gained ground.[135] Not all deviations from CA can, however, be considered as true MA phenomena. The MA texts also contain an additional result of the diglossy, *i.e.* pseudo-correct linguistic phenomena, which represents neither the true Classical usage nor the vernacular. The alternation of CA, Early New Arabic and pseudo-correct features is characteristic for MA texts.[136] On the other hand, the occurrence of loanforms, due to the Greek and Aramaic 'Vorlage', has to be taken into account. Most of the Christian Arabic (ChA) texts are translations of Greek and Syriac and, especially in the case of translations of the Bible, sometimes

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129 Cf. Schen, 1972, p. 218-219.
130 *ibid.,* p. 219.
131 Cf. Drint, *The Mount Sinai Arabic Version*, Chapter II, section 4, p. 133.
132 Cf. K. Versteegh, *Pidginization and Creolization: The Case of Arabic*, (Amsterdam studies in the theory and history of linguistic science. Series IV, Current issues in linguistic theory, vol. 33, Amsterdam / Philadelphia 1984, p. 42: '... or rather, Jewish and Christian Arabic was much more conservative in the sense that it preserved the original radical innovations of the language that had been introduced after the conquests, instead of giving them up under the influence of the Classical, as the Muslim dialects often did ...'.
133 Cf. Schen, 1972, p. 219; Blau, *Grammar*, I, p. 19; Knutsson, *Studies*, p. XII and p. 42-44.
134 Cf. Knutsson, *Studies*, p. XII and p. 43; cf. Versteegh, *Pidginization and Creolization,* p. 8: 'It has even been asserted that in the case of Judaeo-Arabic – and possibly also in the case of Christian Middle Arabic – we are dealing with a discrete variety, insofar as the 'faulty' use of the written language within a group led to its adoption as a new standard by that group'.
135 Cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 90 (= *ETWJ*, p. 236).
136 Knutsson, *o.c.*, p. XII and p. 43-44; Blau, *Grammar*, I, p. 50-54; id., *On Pseudo-Corrections in Some Semitic Languages*, Jerusalem 1970, esp. p. 56-109.

so awkward and literal that they are hardly worthy of being called Arabic at all.[137] The language used in the Sermon on the Mount of the Arabic Diatessaron[138] exhibits, next to correct CA, MA features indeed,[139] but has undoubtedly been influenced heavily by the Syriac of the 'Vorlage'.[140] These so-called Syriacisms[141] form the basis of the translation of the Arabic Diatessaron. Therefore we simply cannot apply classical standards to the translation of the Arabic Diatessaron. Thus, if we wish to establish criteria by which the language of Bible texts, e.g. Tᵃ, can be distinguished, we should always mind judging each and every text on its own merits.

Hogg was the first scholar to draw the attention of the scholars to "the inferiority of parts of the translation" of the Arabic Diatessaron, but he refused to draw conclusions from that.[142] A.-S. Marmardji especially associated the matter of language and style with authorship.[143] According to Marmardji it was out of the question that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib could have been the writer of the Arabic Diatessaron, for its author continually exhibited poor knowledge of CA.[144] This opinion was supported by Margoliouth[145] as well as Kahle.[146]
    Marmardji gave several examples taken from the text which he had edited, and in these we find violations against the rules of Arabic grammar,[147] in-

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137 Cf. Blau, *Grammar*, I, p. 20 and p. 54; Knutsson, *Studies*, p. 4: 'However, no judgement …
      can be arrived at without a thorough knowledge of the translation of the version concerned'.
138 Cf. also Georg Graf, *Der Sprachgebrauch der ältesten christlich-arabischen Literatur*. Ein
      Beitrag zur Geschichte des Vulgär-Arabisch, Leipzig 1905 and Blau's comment upon the
      book of Graf in: *Arabica*, Revue d'études arabes 28 (1981), p. 187-203, esp. p. 193-194
      (= *Studies in Middle Arabic* …, 1988, p. 118-134, esp. p. 124-125): 'Besides Ancient South
      Palestinian Christian Arabic, it also deals with the Arabic diatessaron and the gospel translation
      made in Spain … pioneerwork, but it is hardly capable of being considered a linguistically
      profound study …' (cf. also Blau, The Importance of Middle Arabic Dialects for the History
      of Arabic, in: *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 9 (1961), p. 206-228, esp. p. 206 = *Studies in Middle
      Arabic* …, 1988, p. 61-84, esp. p. 61, where we can also find A. Fischer's condemnation of
      Graf's work!).
139 Cf. Joosse, *Sermon*, Appendix A1, p. 389-393.
140 Cf. Anis Frayha, Influence of Syriac Grammar on Arabic, in: *al-Abḥāth*, Quarterly Journal
      of the American University of Beirut, xiv (1961), p. 39-60.
141 Cf. Joosse, *Sermon*, Appendix A2, p. 394-95.
142 Cf. Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36.
143 See § VI.
144 Cf. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. lxxxviii; cf. Versteegh, *Pidginization and Creolization*, p. 8:
      '… the Jewish writer Maymonides used Classical Arabic in some of his works, but Judaeo-
      Arabic in his letters to his coreligionists.'
145 Cf. Margoliouth, *review Marmardji*, p. 76: '… the language of this Diatessaron is
      incorrect and unclassical'.
146 See § VI.
147 Cf. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xiii-xv: [: 'Fautes de grammaire dans le texte arabe'; examples
      in the Sermon on the Mount e.g. Mt. 5: 15; 5: 23; 5: 31 etc.

fringements of classical usage[148] and, above all, the unlimited use of Syriac words and expressions.[149] The fact that the text of the Arabic Diatessaron shows a strong Syriac coloration, seems absolutely natural when observing the period and social environment in which Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib lived. The occurrence of Syriacisms in translations of the Holy Scriptures still is less striking, especially in an environment in which the Syriac was the language of the liturgy and the 'scriptural lessons'.[150] When a translation slavishly follows the original text, the 'Vorlage', this is not necessarily due to the author's ignorance, but it may well point to an honourable principle of translation.[151] Baarda commented on this: "To those for whom Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib translated, the general public familiar with the Syriac Bible, the Diatessaron was a venerable document even in its form of language. Therefore he was more or less compelled to keep the Syriac flavour of his exemplar, as far as Arabic grammar and vocabulary permitted him to do so in the view of a man who knew both languages".[152] It seems fair to conclude that the Arabic Diatessaron was a translation from the Syriac language which perhaps sought alliance with the Syriac that was still being read in the churches.

The first to detect the Syriac origin of the Arabic harmony was the Swedish scholar Åkerblad. In his communication to J. C. Zahn he concluded with the words, "Quod ad versionem Arabicam attinet, illam e Syriaco aliquo exemplari factam fuisse nullus dubito, omnia enim in hac versione syriasmum redolent, imo et Tituli capitum, sive sectionum, Syrum hominem arguunt".[153] Because of this observation J. C. Zahn, who was not very optimistic on account of what Rosenmüller had reported,[154] got a new and vivid interest in the Arabic text. But evidently Th. Zahn, in his basic study of 1881, did not share his namesake's optimism, for he took the line of Rosenmüller and suggested that the Arabic harmony was a rather free imitation of the Syriac text, in which the

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148 Marmardji, o.c., p. xv-xviii: †: 'Fautes de contre sens'; examples in the Sermon on the Mount a.o. Mt. 5: 37; Lk. 12: 33a; Lk. 6: 39; Mt. 7: 23.

149 Marmardji o.c., p. xviii- xix: x and *: 'Syriacismes'; (x) contre le génie arabe, Mt. 5: 47; 6: 2; 6: 10; 6: 30; 7: 23 etc. (*) contre le génie et la grammaire arabes, for instance Lk. 6: 40; Mt. 5: 20; 5: 39.

150 Cf. Baarda, The Author, p. 91 (= ETWJ, p. 237).

151 o.c., p. 91 (ETWJ, p. 237).

152 o.c., p. 91-92 (ETWJ, p. 237-238).

153 See J. C. Zahn, Ist Ammon oder Tatian Verfasser?, in: ASEST, Band II, Theil 1, Leipzig 1814, p. 165-210, p. 187 (in the note); cf. the unpublished Tatian's Evangelien-Harmonie, Ms. Theol. 78, p. 3-6 (Beilage Nro. A), p. 6 where it is found in the handwriting of Åkerblad himself.

154 The opinion of E. F. K. Rosenmüller is given in the same Ms. Theol. 78 behind his translation of Åkerblad's samples from the Arabic text.

editor had made good use of existing and current Arabic Gospel texts and had not translated the Syriac exemplar so much.[155] It may be clear that the alternative between these two different points of view is highly important, for it ultimately answers the question whether or not the Arabic harmony may be used as textual witness in the attempt to recover the original text of the Syriac Diatessaron. Subsequent research has shown that the line of Åkerblad should be considered justified in so far that the existence of a Syriac model cannot be doubted, but at the same time it raised another, even more difficult problem, namely that of the textual character of the underlying Syriac harmony. The first time this matter had been dealt with was in the preliminary study of Ciasca in A.D. 1883.[156] This author argued in some conclusive instances that the Arabic harmony emanated from a Syriac source, which in his opinion must have had a type of text that more than once differed from the Peshitta text: its source really seemed to have been descendant from the original Syriac Diatessaron, even though its text showed many deviations from the text as reconstructed by Zahn. The latter scholar was, as early as 1884, inclined to accept some of Ciasca's results.[157] In connection to that he warned students against using his own reconstruction as an absolute standard. The fact that Ciasca had not spoken the last and decisive word becomes clear from a remark by P. de Lagarde made in 1886, stating that the harmony completely depends on a Peshitta form of text.[158] The contrast between Ciasca and de Lagarde presents us with the second and main problem of this chapter.

155 Cf. Th. Zahn, *Tatians Diatessaron*, p. 296 f.
156 Cf. A. Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron*, p. 471.
157 Cf. Th. Zahn, Cardinal Pitra's neueste Beiträge zur vornicänischen Kirchenliteratur, in: *ZKWL*, 5 (1884), p. 617-630; 6 (1885), p. 23-29, under I, on pages 617-626.
158 'Die arabische Uebersetzung des 'εὐαγγέλιον διὰ τεσσάρων', (Kleine Mittheilungen), in: *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und der Georg-August-Universität zu Göttingen*, 17. März 1886, No. 4, p. 150-158. The introduction of his article consists of a bitter complaint about the difficult circumstances under which he had to work. From this publication it appears that de Lagarde had a lively interest in the Arabic Diatessaron since 1864. An attempt to study the manuscript itself in Rome was in vain, 'als ich zu Ostern 1885 in der Vaticana nach dem Codex fragte, war er unzugänglich'. The greatest difficulty for the realization of an edition was the insufficient quantity of Arabic letters. They were enough only for about eight octavo pages (these were the pages that de Lagarde printed in his article from Ciasca's copy and after a revision and collation with the manuscript through I. Guidi). As it would last until 1888 before the edition could be accomplished with the small stock of letters he could dispose of, he gave it up. The text printed did contain the following verses: Mk. 1: 1; Jn. 1: 1-5; (in margine Lk. 1: 1-4); Lk. 1: 5-80; Mt. 1: 1-25; Lk. 2: 1-39; Mt. 2: 1b-23; Lk. 2: 40-3: 3; Mt. 3: 1b-3a; Lk. 3: 4b-6; Jn. 1: 7-17 (*i.e.* Ch. 1-3). Cf. also Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 133-135.

The Manuscript Evidence

The hypothesis of a Syriac exemplar received further attestation through the discovery of the second manuscript: Ms. B, for it testified, in preamble as well as in colophon, that the translator "translated it from Syriac into Arabic", or, as it reads in the original wording: ... ونقله من السرياني الي العربي. But, more important-ly, the colophon of the very manuscript even presumes to tell us whose Syriac copy served as an exemplar for the translator, for it literally (thus <u>with</u> defective spelling) says: نقله ... من نسخة بخط غبسى بن عاي المطيب تلميذ حنين بن اسحق رحمهما الله امين. We read in it that Abū'l Farağ ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib translated it from a copy in the handwriting of ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī al-Mutaṭabbib,[159] who is designated a pupil of Ḥunayn ibn Isḥaq. Who were the persons mentioned by the colophon? We have to deal with that question now in order to get an impression of the importance of what this subscription wants to make us believe.

a. Ḥunayn ibn Isḥaq was immediately identified by Ciasca as a person who was somewhere called "the wise Ḥunayn son of Isḥaq a Nestorian physician", but he could not say more about him.[160] However, in a nota attached to the edition of the Arabic text, he reached the final identification with the famous Abū Zayd Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq al-ʿIbādī (A.D. 809-874).[161] He was, admittedly, the foremost Christian scholar of his time, and his school was an important centre of translating activities.

b. ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī al-Mutaṭabbib was, again in the nota mentioned, identified by Ciasca as the renowned physician of that name, who was one of the most outstanding disciples of Ḥunayn's school.[162] He was the court physician of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Muʿtamid († 892 A.D.). We already came across him under his Syriac name Īshōʿ Bar ʿAlī the author of the first Syriac-Arabic lexicon. It may be clear that the communications given in the colophon are of real importance. After all, we might conclude from them that the Arabic text went back to a Syriac original written in the second half of the <u>ninth century</u>. However, this conclusion depends on the assumption of the reliability of the communication.

The <u>first</u> doubting words were being uttered by Hjelt.[163] Of course, Hjelt

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159 The Ms. has, by misplacing the diacritical signs, Ġubasā instead of ʿĪsā; it also reads al-Muṭṭayyib or al-Muṭīb instead of al-Mutaṭabbib. Baumstark (*Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, Bonn 1922, p. 241) and Petersen (*Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 53-54) have confused the lexicographer and physician ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī with a later ophtalmologist by the name of ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, who was a pupil of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib. (cf. also Graf, *CGAL*, II, p. 176, No. 16 and Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 194, note 1 where the opinion of Kahle is given: "... a later physician and oculist of the same name").

160 Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. xiii.

161 *o.c.*, p. xv: '... qui Hirae natus, fato cessit an. Christi 873'.

162 *o.c.*, p. xv.

163 Cf. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 69.

did not decline the Syriac origin and neither did he wish to detach the name of
ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī from the Diatessaron, but he was not willing to accept that a
savant like ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī, could have had anything to do with such a modest
work as copying a manuscript. He could only have done something more
important than this, that is to say, he must have performed a scholarly and
skilful revision of the liturgical Diatessaron in the Syriac language. This is the
reason why the Arabic version in its colophon has been called the 'exemplar'
of ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī: thus it was only natural that this text had served as the basis
for the Arabic text, for this text was the *textus receptus* of the harmony in the
Nestorian church of the tenth century. If this is correct, it would sufficiently
explain why the translator Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib tried his utmost to render the Syriac
exemplar in such a faithful and literal way. Hjelt then argues that a thorough
revision of the Syriac Diatessaron must have taken place after the time of
Īšōʿdāḏ of Merw, for the latter's text is more archaic than the one found in the
Arabic Diatessaron.[164] Therefore this revision must have taken place ante 1043
A.D. and post ca. 850 A.D. This would fit in very well with his thesis that ʿĪsā
ibn ʿAlī might have been responsible for that revision. I will, however, stress
the fact that the manuscript does not actually say that ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī was a
revisor of the Syriac text. Preamble as well as colophon tell us that he was the
copyist. The translator must have deemed himself happy when he could take a
manuscript performed in the famous scriptorium of Ḥunayn and from the
pen of nobody else than the renowned ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī as the basis for his version.
Such a text, in his view, would necessarily be the most reliable text he could
procure for himself. There is also another objection to be made against the
thesis of Hjelt and that is the fact that his argument starts with a refusal to
accept the possibility that ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī ever copied a text of the Syriac Diatessaron
in the function of a mere copyist. First of all, ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī could have written
the copy during the time in which he worked in a school or scriptorium
under the supervision of Ḥunayn or some other scholar, *i.e.* in his youth.
Then, it cannot even be excluded that a famous scholar such as ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī,
did the work of a copyist, for such works were of no less value than others,
and could, for example, be performed as a deed of penitence or as a present to
somebody.

The <u>second</u> critic was D. S. Margoliouth, who in his review of Marmardji's
edition[165] had accepted the latter's view concerning the authorship of Ibn

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164 *o.c.*, p. 67; This notion starts from the principle that Īšōʿdāḏ still knew the primitive Diatessaron
himself, which is, however, a question that remains to be seen. The observations on the
Diatessaron may be founded on an older tradition of commentary in the Syriac exegetical
literature.

165 Cf. Margoliouth, *review Marmardji*, p. 76-79.

aṭ-Ṭaiyib. In connection to that he wrote: "If this ascription is erroneous, some doubt falls on the statement that the Syriac copy whence it was made was by Bar Ali". He thinks there are more considerations to strenghten this doubt: "The lexicographer asserts[166] ... that the Diatessaron omitted the genealogies and was tabooed (muḥarram) in consequence. The Arabic contains them as an appendix. But if the work was tabooed, would Bar Ali have copied it?" – This criticism seems very impressive, much more impressive at least than the assertions of Kahle, who supposed that the name ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī had merely been added to the ancestor of the Mss. B-E-O in order to give more authority to the apologetical goal which it served.[167] In the opinion of Margoliouth it must be admitted that if anyone rejects the manuscript tradition concerning Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, there will be no reason to maintain the reliability of the tradition concerning ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī. I think, however, that it is not absolutely necessary to take the view of those scholars rejecting the authorship of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib. With regard to the lexicographical notice attributed to ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī we would like to point out that the author does not say that the <u>Diatessaron</u> was tabooed but that, with regard to the omission of the genealogies, he only remarks that "he who composed it has been <u>excommunicated</u> for that reason": (الذي الفه محروم بهذا السبب).[168] With respect to the fact that he mentions the omission of the genealogies, one must take into account that this was a topos in Syriac exegetical tradition based on the observations of Theodoret of Cyrrhus.

The <u>third</u> critic of the statement in Ms. B was Higgins.[169] This scholar was inclined to seek the solutions of some basic problems in the study of the Arabic harmony in the colophon of Ms. O. It appears, however, that his interpretation, in which ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī was the only and true translator of the Arabic Diatessaron from the Syriac instead of a modest copyist, started from a wrong explanation of a difficult passage in the colophon of Ms O.[170]

We have surveyed three lines of criticism with regard to the manuscript tradition about the function of ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī in the history of the Diatessaron. In my opinion the latter two lines have a dead end. As to the first, this could be a line into which one might be inclined to go along with Hjelt in assuming that ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī might have done something more than merely copying a manuscript. Still it should be emphasized that this is not being proven by the

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166 R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus*, I, 869.

167 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (²1959), p. 312; see also § VI.

168 Cf. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 54 (quoting J. R. Harris, *The Diatessaron of Tatian*, Cambridge 1890, p. 13-14): "... is <u>cursed</u> for this reason". Prof. dr. H. Daiber (Frankfurt am Main) has put forward the suggestion to read مخروم, with ḫāʾ: "what he wrote is <u>incomplete</u> for that reason".

169 Cf. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 187-199.

170 Cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 100-102 (= *ETWJ*, p. 246-248).

manuscript, of which the colophon says that the exemplar of the Arabic harmony was a <u>copy</u> (نسخة) in the <u>handwriting</u> (خط) of ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī. Anyhow, there is no decisive instance that can be put forward against the reliability of this simple communication. At this point I fully agree with Baumstark's[171] assessment.

The manuscript evidence as far as the colophon is concerned, implies that the Syriac exemplar has been written ca. 880-900 A.D. As a matter of fact, this is a rather late date: about 700 years after the Syriac Diatessaron was introduced into Syria, and about 500 years after Mar Ephraem's expounding of the very work. We have seen that in the two centuries of Diatessaron tradition, between the beginning of its course through Syria and the date of the Ephraemic commentary, the Diatessaron may have been altered at various points. That suggests that the distance between the Arabic and the original Diatessaron is still much greater, and not only in the temporal sense. Theoretically, however, there is a possibility that a later work is closer to the original text than an older witness.

The text of the Arabic Diatessaron has been interspersed with many, often very literal renderings of the Syriac original. These so-called Syriacisms occur in vocabulary as well as grammar. For the greater part they are accurate imitations of the Syriac with respect to its form, but in some cases certainly with respect to its sound also. When Baarda observed: "Syriacisms concern not merely one peculiarity among others, but the basic trend in form and structure of the language in the harmony,"[172] he did not merely touch at the heart of the matter, but at the same time he gave a managable definition of what is really denoted by the term 'Syriacism'. The text of the Sermon on the Mount in the Arabic Diatessaron reveals to us two types of Syriacisms:

1: very literal renderings of the Syriac, almost transliterations, in which the meaning of the Syriac term is translated rather slavishly into Arabic, and

2: very literal renderings of the Syriac, in which the Arabic receives a different or ambiguous meaning, which often clearly differs from the Syriac in the 'Vorlage'.

Unfortunately, this very literal rendering is not characteristic of the entire Arabic translation, which often exhibits a rather inconsistent style, which moves insecurely between idiomatic and literal translations of the Syriac.[173]

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171 Cf. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 243: 'Gemacht konnte jene Angabe aber von Hause aus nur durch den Übersetzer in seiner Originalunterschrift seiner Arbeit werden, und wenn sie in B tatsächlich in unlösbarer Verbindung mit der Bezeichnung Ibn aṭ-Ṭajjibs als des arabischen Übersetzers auftritt, so ergibt sich, dass als solchen er selbst sich in jener Originalunterschrift eingeführt haben muss'.

172 Cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 92 (= *ETWJ*, p. 238).

173 For example, the Arabic translator has often rendered a Syriac participle with its Arabic

This may denote the fact that the Arabic text at some points already went through correction or revision in the course of the textual tradition. Because we have offered many indications for Syriacisms in our commentary of the text, we will confine ourselves here to a number of remarkable examples.

1: T^a VIII: 59 = Mt. 5: 29

Here Marmardji objected against the translator's usage of forms of the imperative I of the verb فقأ, 'to gouge out', 'to pull out': افقها (Ms. A) and افقيها (Mss. BEO). He, therefore, decided to apply CA standards to the text. After having corrected the anomalous forms of the imperative into افقأها, 'crève le', for which no testi-mony can be found in the Arabic Mss., he wished to implement another change. Subsequently, he proposed an imperative form of a completely different verb: اقلعها, 'arrache-le', for which again no proof is found in the Mss. of the Arabic Diatessaron; it is, however, present in the editions of Lar, WP and in Pe and Ya. Marmardji clearly gave evidence of his misunderstanding of the fact that the Arabic translator might have chosen a very literal rendering, for which he <u>intentionally</u> employed the anomalous form of the imperative; he may have wished to render the Syriac text as accurately as possible in the target language, the Arabic, because thus he would best be able to imitate the parallelism in form and sound in the Arabic translation. Being overzealous in emphasizing the Syriac coloration maximally, the Arabic translator, consciously or not, pushed out the frontiers of CA grammar in a skilful manner. In this particular case he adapted a form of the imperative I of the verb فقأ to that of the impera- tive IV of لقي in order to be able to imitate the Syriac wording ܐܚܣܘܡ ܘܣܕܚ (cf. Sy^h, 'erue eum,[174] et abjice abs te') or ܣܝܢܗ ܘܣܕܚ (cf. Sy^P and Sy^s, but the latter without the copula ܘ) not only in form, but perhaps also in sound, viz. Ms. A: افقها (= ifqahā); Mss. BEO: افقيها (= ifqayhā) and Mss. ABEO: والقها (= wa-alqihā).

T^a X: 8 = Mt. 6: 30

Here we encounter an Arabic vocative construction: يا صغيري الامانة (yā ṣaġīrī l-amānah), 'O you of little faith'. Marmardji considered this an erratic construction due to "l'ignorance ou à l'insouciance du traducteur lui-même", because of the translator's incorrect usage of the non-existing *pluralis sanus* صغيرين/اصغيرون , 'small' (CA would have read يا صغار الإيمان.). Thereupon Marmardji

counterpart in one place, while in other cases he translates the Syriac participle with a perfect or an imperfect form. This phenomenon has also been observed by Sanders in his introduction to Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's commentary on Genesis; cf. J. C. J. Sanders, *Inleiding op het Genesiskommentaar van de Nestoriaan Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib*, (diss. UVA), Leiden 1963, p. 37.

174 ܢܩܐ = Aph. of ܢܩܐ, 'to pluck out', 'to bring out'.

corrected صغير into the synonymous wording قليل , after the example given by
Lar and WP, of which a sound plural قليلين/قليلون indeed exists. In fact, the
Arabic vocative construction reflects the Syriac wording ܡܣܟ̈ܢܐ ܐܚ̈ܝܟ (cf.
Syᵖʰ, Mt.; Syᵖ, Lk. 12: 28).[175] It is a close imitation of the Syriac *status constructus
pluralis masc.*, not only with respect to form, but also to sound. Marmardji,
however, neglected to perceive that the whole construction constitutes a
Syriacism. What we have here is a fine example of a text-oriented mirror
translation, which is quite common in the case of a biblical translation, given
the sacred character of the source text.[176]

2: Tᵃ VIII: 49 = Mt. 5: 20

The Mss. ABEO read here معتزلة (*muʿtazilah*), literally 'withdrawers' for
'Pharisees'. The usual expression for this is supposed to be: فريسين in Arabic.
The Syriac model has ܦܪ̈ܝܫܐ, a derivation of the verb ܦܪܫ, 'to set aside', 'to
separate'. Now the question may be raised why the Arabic translator rendered
the Syriac with معتزلة, and there are three options here:[177]

(1) A wrong interpretation of the Syriac original; the translator could not
find the term in his lexicons and then too hastily derived the translation from
the verb.

(2) A very literal translation, which reflects the accuracy of the Arabic
translator. The author meant to reach those acquainted with the Syriac Bible,
but at the same time he wished to use a form of language not unfamiliar to
Muslims. An example for this might be Mt. 5: 20; here معتزلة and the term عدالة
(*ʿadālah*), meaning 'justice' or 'fairness', occur side by side. Montgomery Watt
made the following observation on *ʿadl -ʿadālah*:[178] "The second of the five
principles defining the Muʿtazilite position was that of justice or righteousness
(*ʿadl*), and they liked to speak of themselves as 'the people of unity and

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175 Syᶜ, Mt.; Syᶜˢ, Lk. 12: 28 read ܡܣܟ̈ܢܐ; cf. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus* , I, 1145 for ܐܚ̈ܝܟ
     = صغير.

176 Cf. Sebastian Brock, The Syriac background to Ḥunayn's translation techniques, in: *Aram* 3:
     1-2 (1991), p. 139-162, esp. p. 142-146 who states in rather Saussurian terms that "by the late
     second century BC, however, a general view was evidently emerging that biblical translation
     should in fact proceed 'verbum e verbo'". The translator is an 'interpres' who focuses his
     attention on the 'signifiant'. In other words the 'interpres' is text-oriented and seeks to bring
     the reader to the original.

177 Interesting in this respect is a remark by I. Goldziher, Materialien zur Kenntniss der
     Almohadenbewegung, in: *ZDMG* 41 (1887), p. 30-141, esp. p. 35, note 4: "Mit der Bezeichnung
     معتزلة nahm man es überhaupt nicht sehr genau". Thereupon Goldziher gives examples of the
     different meanings of *muʿtazilah* in the Arabic literature *e.g.* "politische Dissidenten" and
     "fromme (wohl: zurückgezogene) Leute".

178 Cf. W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*. An Extended Survey, Edinburgh
     1985, p. 46-55.

justice'." The translator tried to create a picture Muslims could identify with, while perhaps simultaneously trying to prevent those same Muslims alienating from their Christian contemporaries. For the average Muslim at that time (8th-10th century) the image of the just Mu'tazilite was possibly clearer than that of the justice of the Pharisees.

(3) It is possible that the expression *mu'tazilah* was already customary in Nestorian circles as a designation of the Pharisees. After all, the term ܡܥܬܙܠܝܐ can be found in a sixteenth century Karšūnī Ms.: Vat. Borg. arab. 231, containing Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew,[179] as well as in a tractate of the Nestorian patriarch Elias III, Abū'l-Ḥalīm ibn al-Ḥiddīṭī († 1190 A.D.):[180] ... من قصة مريم الخاطئة وشمعون المعتزلي , 'From the Story of Mary the Sinner and Simon the Pharisee'.[181] Here the Arabic has an ambiguous meaning, for in the Arabic language and culture *mu'tazilah* is mainly being associated with the renowned Iraqi theological school, which introduced the speculative dogmatism or *kalām* into Islam. It is equally striking that the term mu'tazilah for Pharisees has been used in the Persian Diatessaron,[182] but the fact that, besides a Syriac model, the translator[183] possibly also used an Arabic text of the Gospels[184] might perhaps explain this.

179 This manuscript may have preserved something of the original text of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, because of its specific readings which agree more than once with the Arabic Diatessaron; cf. Graf, *CGAL*, II, p. 168: "... mit vielen sprachlichen Aenderungen (gegenüber der vorigen Hs) ...". Vat. syr. 405 (Karš.) seems to be, on the other hand, a Maronite revision (cf. Graf, *o.c.*, p. 168), whereas Ms. Leiden or. 2375 (new number: 454) is supposed to be a Jacobite revision (cf. Lar = Lagarde, P., de, (ed.), *Die vier Evangelien arabisch, aus der Wiener Handschrift herausgegeben*, Leipzig 1864, (reprint: Osnabrück 1972, p. xvi). The edition of Manquriyūs, Y., *Tafsīr al-mašriqī*, I: Matthew and Mark., al-Qāhira 1908; II: Luke and John, al-Qāhira 1910, is useless from the point of view of textual criticism, for the original Gospel text has been replaced here by a 'modern' Arabic translation (cf. also Graf, *CGAL*, II. p. 167).

180 Cf. L. Cheikho S. J. and PP. A. Durand, *Elementa Grammaticae Arabicae cum Chrestomathia, Lexico Variisque Notis*, pars altera (Auctore L. Cheikho S. J.), Beryti 1897, p. 307-308: 'De Maria Magdelene et Simone Pharisaeo'.

181 Cf. Lei[t] (= Ms. Leiden or. 454: Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's (Arabic) commentary on St. Matthew); the term معتزل for 'Pharisees' occurs likewise in Ms. British Museum add. 14467 (Mt. 9:14); cf. Blau, *Grammar*, I, p. 35; § 1.4.4.6. and II, p. 347; § 230, note 7 (ex.).

182 Cf. Giuseppe Messina, *Diatessaron Persiano*, i. Introduzione; ii. Testo e traduzione (Biblica et orientalia, N. 14, Rome 1951).

183 The Persian Diatessaron appears to have been translated by a Jacobite layman of Tabriz who calls himself Īwānnīs 'Izz al-Dīn, that is, 'John, Glory of the Religion'; cf. Metzger, *Early versions*, p. 17-19.

184 Cf. S. Pines, Gospel Quotations and Cognate Topics in 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Tathbīt* in Relation to Early Christian and Judaeo-Christian Readings and Traditions, in: *JSAI* 9 (1987), p. 195-278, esp. p. 256-257.

VI. The Authorship of the Arabic Diatessaron.

As has already been observed, in the manuscripts B-E-O Abū'l Farağ 'Abdallāh
Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib was mentioned as the translator of the Arabic Diatessaron. In
this chapter the question of authorship is being addressed separately, because
repeatedly, in the history of research, doubt has been cast upon the reliability
of the communication in these manuscripts. This doubt was instigated by the
character of the Arabic in the harmony. To understand the doubts which
arose concerning the authorship it is useful to pay some attention to the
person and the œuvre of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib. He was a Nestorian priest, monk,
patriarchal secretary under Catholicos Yūḥannā ibn Nāzūk (A.D. 1012-1022)
and for considerable time also known as secretary of patriarch Elias I of
Bagdad. On top of that, he was employed there as a physician in the 'Aḍudīya
hospital. His ecclesiastical position did not lower the esteem in which he was
being held among Muslims too. His erudition appeared from the fact that he
was active in a diversity of fields: medicine, philosophy, law, and exegesis. His
command of languages – besides Arabic and Syriac he also knew Greek and
Latin[185] – was very important in this respect. Among other things he did an
Arabic translation of the writings of Galen, he presented an Arabic commentary
on Aristotle, and he was the author of at least two voluminous exegetical
works.[186] Because of this, we can now form a clear picture of his knowledge of
the Arabic language. When he died in A.D. 1043[187] and was buried in the
church of the monastery Dair Durtā in Bagdad, he was valued highly as a
person and for his work. The scholarly opinions have always been greatly
divided on the issue of the authorship of Tᵃ. On the basis of the colophon of
Ms. C Cheikho argued that the translation of the Arabic Diatessaron must
have originated from a date before the tenth century. The fact that the Christian
Arabic literature did not speak at all about such a translation by Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib,
strengthened Cheikho's conviction that the latter could not possibly have

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185 This according to al-Bayhaqī, *Ta'rīḫ ḥukamā' al-islām*, ed. Muḥ. Kurd 'Alī, Damascus 1946,
      p. 43: 12-13: وكان عالماً باللغة الرومية واليونانية (= Meyerhof, 'Ali al-Bayhaqī's Tatimmat Ṣiwān
      al-Ḥikma in: *Osiris* 8, Brügge 1948, p. 122-217, p. 146).

186 Cf. J. C. J. Sanders, *Inleiding*, p. 14-17; G. Graf, *CGAL*, II, p. 162-164 and p. 166-169. By
      the same author: Exegetische Schriften zum Neuen Testament in arabischer Sprache bis zum
      14. Jahrhundert, in: *Biblische Zeitschrift* 21 (1933), p. 25-32. For a general survey of writings
      on Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib see: Joosse, *Sermon*, Appendix A6, p. 401-03.

187 Remarkable are some chronological abstrusities connected with Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib (cf. al-Bayhaqī,
      Ta'rīḫ, p. 45 (= Meyerhof, *Tatimmat*, p. 147): Abu' l-Faraj used to say: "I belong to the
      descendants of Paulus (St. Paul), and Paul was the nephew of Galen (!). When God the Most
      High sent Jesus with the revelation to Mankind, Galen was a very old man and he sent his
      nephew to Jesus ...".

been the translator.[188] Marmardji held the same view. His reasoning was, however, based on the quality of the Arabic. According to him, Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib could not have been the author of Tᵃ, because the Arabic text had been written by a person possessing a poor knowledge of Classical Arabic.[189] Beeston supported Marmardji's opinion, but he added to it that the anonymous author had tried to enhance the value of his work by connecting it with the names of the outstanding Christian scholars Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib and ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī.[190] Kahle agreed with this view. According to him, Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib had nothing to do with the Arabic Diatessaron. In his opinion, the Bodleian manuscript demonstrated this. Kahle stated specifically that Ms. O was an exact copy of a manuscript completed A.D. 1107. The purpose of the twelfth century manuscript, written at the request of the Muslim ruler al-Malik al-Afḍal and containing three texts, was to answer a number of questions posed in a work by the prominent Muslim author al-Ġazālī[191] concerning the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. The famous Coptic family of scholars, the Aulād al-ʿAssāl,[192] to whom this early manuscript must be attributed, added the name of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib and of ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī in order to make a deep impression on Muslim readers and to give their apologetical work more authority.[193] Higgins also stated that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib could not possibly have been the translator. He supposed that ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī had not only prepared the Syriac copy, but that he had also been the translator of the Arabic Diatessaron.[194] This was connected to his interpretation of the term النقل, which can be found in an addition to the colophon of Ms. O.[195] Higgins rendered this expression as "the translation" whereas a translation with "the copy" or "the copying" would have been more appropriate.[196] Euringer, be it with all the proper reservations, defended the thesis that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib was the author of the Arabic translation of the

188 Cf. L. Cheikho, *Lettre*, esp. p. 303.

189 Cf. A.- S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. lxxxvii-xciii.

190 Cf. A. F. L. Beeston, *The Arabic Version*, p. 608-610.

191 Cf. P. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, p. 216-218 (²p.302-304); T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 73 (= *ETWJ*, p. 219). The title of al-Ġazālī's book is: الرد الجميل.

192 See a.o. Georg Graf, Die koptische Gelehrtenfamilie der Aulād al-ʿAssāl und ihr Schrifttum in: *Orientalia Nova Series* 1 (1932): commentarii periodici Pontificii Instituti Biblici, Roma, p. 34-56; 129-148; 193-204; A. J. B. Higgins, Ibn al-ʿAssāl, in: *JThS* 44 (1943), p. 73-75.

193 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, p. 226 (² p. 312); T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 73 and 79 (= *ETWJ*, p. 219 and 225).

194 Cf. A. J. B. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 193.

195 *o.c.*, p. 189.

196 Cf. T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 100-102 (= *ETWJ*, p. 246-248).

harmony,[197] although some doubts still remained.[198] Baumstark,[199] Peters,[200] Graf,[201] and Baarda[202] assumed that the arguments against the authorship of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib were not very decisive.

They thought that the communications in the prologue and the colophon of among others manuscript B, which also mentioned the translator of the Arabic text as the copyist of the Syriac model on which the translation was based, deserved to be trusted. Those opposing the recognition of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's authorship used the following arguments:

1. the colophon of Ms. C (Cheikho). This argument was refuted by Euringer who demonstrated that the oldest copyist named flourished c. A.D. 1235/36, so that two centuries remain for Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, during which, the "very ancient" Antioch Ms. could easily find a place.[203]

2. the unknown author of the Arabic Diatessaron "attempted to give fame to his work by passing it off as the work of the well-known savant" (Beeston).[204] If one takes this point of view, it remains to be explained how this information could be omitted in the A-family.[205]

3. the supposition that the names of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib and ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī were added by the Aulād al-ʿAssāl for impressing Muslim readers (Kahle).[206] One must not rule out the possibility that the Aulād al-ʿAssāl found the names of the outstanding Christian Arabic scholars "already in the copy which they used as their exemplar for their production".[207]

4. the rendering of the additional line "And this man wrote on the basis of what was before him without any modification in the translation, but kept the

197 Cf. S. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 60, based his opinion on the information that is given in the colophon of Ms. C.

198 *o.c.*, p. 60: "Dagegen harrt die positive Seite desselben, ob Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib tatsächlich die, oder genauer gesprochen, eine arabische Übersetzung des Diatessaron angefertigt hat, noch immer der methodischen Untersuchung".

199 Cf. A. Baumstark, *review Marmardji*, p. 243.

200 Cf. C. Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 24.

201 Cf. G. Graf, *CGAL*, I, p. 152: "Die Urheberschaft des Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib indessen ist sichergestellt äusserlich durch die Ueberschrift und den Kolophon zweier Hss und durch das Zeugnis eines anonymen Kopten in der Vorrede seiner eigenen Evv-Harmonie …, innerlich durch die Gemeinsamkeit sprachlicher Eigentümlichkeiten mit dem Evv-text im Kommentar des Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib" (cf. also p. 153: 13-17).

202 Cf. T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 102-103 (= *ETWJ*, p. 248-249).

203 Cf. S. Euringer, *Die Überlieferung*, p. 55f. and also p. 59; A. J. B. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 191-192; T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 77-78 (= *ETWJ*, p. 223-224, esp. note 100).

204 Cf. A. F. L. Beeston, *The Arabic Version*, p. 610; T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 79 (= *ETWJ*, p. 225).

205 Cf. T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 79 (= *ETWJ*, p. 225).

206 Cf. P. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, p. 226 (² p. 311-312).

207 Cf. T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 79 (= *ETWJ*, p. 225).

words" in Ms. O (Higgins).[208] The translation and interpretation of this line received criticism from Kahle, Graf and Baarda.[209] Higgins' rendering of the phrase is clearly deceptive and has merely been applied to maintain his thesis about ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī's authorship.

5. the assumption that the text of the Arabic Diatessaron does not live up to the linguistic and stylistic abilities of the author Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib (Beeston,[210] Kahle, Marmardji). According to Marmardji, Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib had, in fact, earned a reputation for his correct and excellent usage of the Arabic language.[211] Kahle also confirmed this,[212] but retracted it later on.[213] This argument, which seems a convincing reason to doubt the authorship of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, at first has been carefully examined by Baarda, who reached a different conclusion. According to Baarda, the following options need to be regarded: Firstly the possibility must be considered that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib was an absolute beginner when he started his translation of Tᵃ.[214] Secondly, the question could be raised if Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib indeed wrote CA and whether it is at all possible to apply 'classical' standards to the majority of his works, for the language of many of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's writings may, more or less, be characterized as Middle Arabic.[215] From Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's *Fiqh an-Naṣrānīya* it became clear that he did not write correct and excellent Arabic at all, but rather a Christian variant of the Middle Arabic (MA) with a strong Syriac coloration,[216] which also might be gathered from his commentary on Genesis[217] and from other texts ascribed to him.[218] A contemporary of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, the famous Muslim author Ibn Sīnā, wrote in rather jealous tones: "I think that Abū'l-Faraǧ was prominent in medicine except that his style is not eloquent (غير فصيح); sometimes correct (فبعضه مستقيم),

208 Cf. A. J. B. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 189.

209 Cf. P. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, p. 222 (²p. 308); G. Graf, *CGAL*, II, p. 170 (= p. 169, n. 2); T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 100-102 (= *ETWJ*, p. 246-248).

210 A. F. L. Beeston, *The Arabic Version*, p. 609-610.

211 Marmardji tried to support his thesis by adducing specimen from original works of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib and comparing these with examples of the work of renowned Christian Arabic authors like Bar Hebraeus, Elias III, Maymonides and Saʿadya Gaon (Cf. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xciii-cii).

212 Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, (¹1947), London, p. 224.

213 Kahle, *o.c.*, (²1959), p. ix: "When I wrote ... of the 'excellent' Arabic ... this was merely an allusion to what Marmardji had written and did not represent my own opinion".

214 Cf. T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 88 (= *ETWJ*, p. 234).

215 *ibid.*, p. 88-91 (= *ETWJ*, p. 234-237).

216 W. Hoenerbach, O. Spies (ed.), Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, *Fiqh an-Naṣrānīya, Das Recht der Christenheit* (CSCO 161, Arab. 16), Louvain 1956, I, Einleitung, p. vi.

217 J. C. J. Sanders, *Inleiding*, p. 30-31.

218 *e.g.* Mechthild Kellermann-Rost, *Ein pseudoaristotelischer Traktat über die Tugend.* Ed. und Übersetz. der arabischen Fassungen des Abū Qurra und des Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, (Diss.), Erlangen 1965.

sometimes faulty (وبعضه سقيم); he is an amateur and not a professional man".[219]
Apart from this, it needs to be acknowledged once again here, that the frequent
occurrence of Syriacisms is not a sign of the ignorance or the incompetence of
the translator. The Syriacizing tendency of biblical translations is in fact quite
habitual in an environment in which Syriac was the language of liturgy and of
the scriptural lessons.[220]

Because this last argument is most appealing and perhaps the most important
one, I want to comment on the character of the Arabic translation, on the
basis of my research into the Sermon on the Mount. Of course, judging the
entire Diatessaron on the basis of a limited part of the full text being dealt
with here may be quite difficult. Therefore, and in order to approach the
matter tentatively, it needs be observed that such a well-known text as the
Sermon on the Mount might have been all the more subject to correction, so
that the original 'cut and paste work' must have been subject to considerable
wear. Without reaching a decision yet, discussing several excerpts from the
Sermon on the Mount may help the forming of an opinion. For this purpose,
not a single possibility will be ruled out.

(1) Tᵃ VIII: 51 = Mt. 5: 22

The Arabic text reads here مخصوم, passive participle I of the verb خصم: 'to con-
quer s.o.', where in principle form III should be read, meaning 'to have a
law-suit against s.o.'. This unusual interchange of verbal stems likewise occurs
in Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's *Fiqh an-Naṣrānīya*.[221] The examples mentioned there are,
however, perfect and imperfect forms, <u>not</u> participles.

(2) Tᵃ IX: 8 / IX: 10 = Mt. 5: 40 / 5: 42

When Higgins, although his argumentation started from the wrong principle,
surmised that the said 'Īsā ibn 'Alī had been the translator of the Arabic
Diatessaron and not the copyist of the Syriac Diatessaron, this was not very
strange. For 'Īsā could have consulted his own Syriac lexicon, when preparing
the Arabic translation of Tᵃ ; this may perhaps explain why a term like Syriac

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219 Cf. al-Bayhaqī, *Taʾrīḫ*, p. 43-44 (= Meyerhof, *Tatimmat*, p. 146), where one can also read:
     "The Shaikh Abū 'Alī (Ibn Sīnā) blamed him and insulted his writings; he said in his
     "Discussions" (*mabāhith*): 'His work merits to be returned to the vendor, (even) if one has
     to give up its price'." The Christian scholar Bar Hebraeus was likewise not convinced of Ibn
     aṭ-Ṭaiyib's linguistic abilities, cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 89 (= *ETWJ*, p. 235); Euringer, *Die
     Überlieferung*, p. 11 f.
220 Cf. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 91-100 (= *ETWJ*, p. 237-246).
221 Cf. Hoenerbach, Spies, *Fiqh*, II, (CSCO 167; Arab 18; Glossar), Louvain 1957, p. 205, refers
     to the following places in the text: I, 118, *4*, *15*, *18* and I, 126, *11*. Cf. also § IV. *supra*.

ܝܨܒ, 'to wish', 'to prefer', is rendered in the Arabic Diatessaron with اثر (IV), which actually has the meaning of 'to prefer', instead of with the usual اراد (IV), 'to want', 'to wish'.[222] The application of اثر (IV) in the sense of 'to want', 'to wish', can be found in Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's *Fiqh* too, but there merely as an infinitive (IV).[223] But one could also suppose that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib consulted ʿĪsā's lexicon, while translating Tᵃ, so it may be that thus he interpreted the Syriac: ܝܨܒ as اثر instead of اراد.

(3) Tᵃ IX: 43 / X: 1 = Lk. 12: 33a / Mt. 6: 24

In the first case we read ܩܢܝܢܟܘܢ in Syᵖ, but ܟܠܡܕܡ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܟܘܢ in the Old Syriac text, Syˢᶜ, as a rendering of τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ὑμῶν. As for Lk. 12: 33a Tᵃ reads either قنايكم (Mss. AEO), or قناكم (Ms. B). In the second excerpt, where the Greek text has μαμωνᾷ, the Syriac texts offer ܡܡܘܢܐ (Syᶜᵖ). It is striking how the Arabic Diatessaron reads القنايا here. Before entering into details, first of all the fact needs be observed that in other Arabic texts (Lar, WP, Lev) in Mt. 6: 24 / Lk. 16: 13 المال, '(the) properties', '(the) possessions', is read for the 'Mammon'. In Lk. 12: 33a we find (among others in Lar) امتعتكم, 'your possessions', 'your goods'. Besides this we also come across the words فتايا or قنايا.[224]

The question now arises how to read this text from Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's commentary on Genesis? Starting from فتايا, we could interpret this term as a word being derived from فتى, 'youth'. It could then have the meaning of 'young slaves'.[225] When, however, we must read قنايا, the word is being connected with قنى, 'to acquire', 'to gain'. In the latter case we must assume that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's Arabic wording is a rendering of Syriac ܩܢܝܢܐ, 'possessions', which has more or less been adopted into the Arabic language, but untranslated. We

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222   اثر (IV) as a rendering of ܝܨܒ occurs twice with BA (cf. *Thesaurus*, II, 3351-52). Bar ʿAlī's lexicon is, to our best knowledge, the only dictionary that identifies the Syriac term with the Arabic wording اثر. The remaining Arabic sources (Lar, WP, Lev, Ya, and Pe) all read اراد in Mt. 5: 40 (except for Vat. Borg. arab. 231: ܝܨܒ). In Mt. 5: 42 Lar, Pe (2376 + Le D 226), WP read likewise اراد, but Pe (2377): طلب, Ya: قرض (X), and Vat. Borg. arab. 231: ܝܨܒ; cf. T. Baarda, Matthew 18: 14C. An 'Extra-Canonical' Addition in the Arabic Diatessaron? in: *Le Muséon* 107- fasc. 1-2 (1994), p. 135-149, esp. p. 136.

223   Cf. Hoenerbach, Spies, *Fiqh*, II, Glossar, p. 201, refers to the following places in the text: I, 25, *13*; I, 112, *4*; I, 119, *5, 13*. اثر (IV) as imperfect more than once occurs in Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's comment (... قال المفسر) on the Gospel of Matthew (cf. Vat. Borg. 231, Leiᵢ), for example in the comm. on Mt. 6: 24.

224   Cf. Sanders, *Inleiding*, p. 32; here Sanders argues for the reading قنايا as the original Arabic rendering of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib.

225   *o.c.*, p. 32, where Sanders refers to Ἰšōʿdāḏ's wording ܥܒܕܐ, 'slaves' (IM, 67, *23*, J. M. Vosté et C. van den Eynde, Commentaire dʼ Išodad de Merw sur lʼAncien Testament, (CSCO 126; Syr. 67), I: Genèse, 1950, X-239 p. textus).

may suppose then that originally the Arabic contained قنيا or قنيانا.[226] It is quite remarkable that Ms. B, in the translation of Lk. 12: 33a which we mentioned earlier, has maintained a double nūn, which reminds us of the Syriac ܩܢܝܢܐ. Could this mean that Ms. B maintained the original Arabic rendering of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib? The word as such, however, does not occur in the Syriac-Arabic lexicons nor in the other dictionaries. There we merely find قنية, 'acquisition', 'property'.[227] It should, however, be noticed that Ms. Vat. Borg. arab 231 (Karš.), Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's commentary on Matthew (cf. Leiͥ), reads ܐܪܬܟܠܘܬܐ (= المقتنيات), '(the) things acquired', '(the) acquisitions'. A possible textual emendation would be: قنيانا.

The examples given above certainly do not deny Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's authorship of the Arabic Diatessaron. However, neither do they furnish the indelible proof that he was the author of the harmony. Many 'Ṭaiyibisms' doubtlessly will remain hidden in the vaults of Tᵃ. As long as these parts have not been scrutinized in detail, Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib will be given the benefit of the doubt. We have to take into account that the author's works may date back to different periods in his life. Discussing his language and style is impossible, without taking in the criticism some scholars passed on him. This criticism might as well be applied to his translation of the Diatessaron. Moreover, it may concern a very early work here. There is still another possibility. A work may also have been attributed to someone else, supposing the task of writing the intended document was commissioned to a secretary or a clerk. We should consider the Syriac translations of Philoxenus of Mabbūg and Thomas of Harkel here, which were also created under the authority and supervision of these scholars. Likewise, Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib may have commissioned the preparation of the translation to somebody else, keeping the final responsibility himself.[228] The

226 Elsewhere (Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, *Commentaire sur la Genèse*, text, (CSCO 274; Ar. 24), Louvain 1967, vocabulaire d'arabe chrétien, p. 104) Sanders, however, declares that he prefers the reading قنيا as the original rendering of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib. Yet, in the text of his edition he has inserted the form اقنايه!! This remark proves only too well that a first impression is not seldomly a better one, because قنيا might indeed be a close imitation in form of Syriac ܩܢܝܢܐ, but considering the literal manner with which Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib made the larger part of his translation, we would rather have expected the reading قنيانا, which contains on one side the double nūn of Ms. B and the yā' of Mss. AEO, while on the other side it does justice to, at least, one of the long vowels of the Syriac word.

227 Cf. *Thesaurus*, II, 3656; Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. by J. Milton Cowan, third edition, Münster – Ithaca – New York 1976, p. 794.

228 Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib is also known for his activity as compiler of a collection of scientific and philosophical texts of Arabic authors or translators (e.g. Qusṭā ibn Lūqā) under the title of *Kitāb an-Nukat wa-ṯ-ṯimār aṭ-ṭibbīya wa-l-falsafīya*, which has been preserved in two maǧmūʿāt: Escorial (Madrid) 888 and Nuruosmaniye (Istanbul) 3610 (new number 3095).

fact that the translation of the Arabic Diatessaron frequently exhibits ir-
regularities such as an at times inconsistent style, may be due to numerous
factors. Some of these have already been discussed. The negative influence of
clerks and scribes on this is a factor which should not be underestimated. It
should, however, be stressed that the picture we often get of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib is
that of an accurate and cautious man who tried to preserve the contents of the
original text to a large extent when dealing with translations from Syriac into
Arabic.[229] An indication of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's method of working can be found
in Ibn Abī Uṣaibiʿa's († 1270 A.D.) renowned work *Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā'* 'The
Classes of Physicians':[230] وأكثر ما يوجد من تصانيفه كانت تنقل عنه املاء، من لفظه, "And the
majority from his works has been transmitted by him as a dictation in his
own words".

VII. The Contribution of the Arabic Diatessaron
to the Reconstruction of the Syriac Diatessaron.

1. Introduction

As has already been demonstrated in the description of the history of research,
there was a traditional difference of opinion about the significance of the
Arabic text. The first editor of the text pronounced the Arabic text a high
'Diatessaron'- quality. That was not merely related to the fact that he was the
first to examine this text fully and therefore projected it as being important,

These Mss. reveal to us something of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's working-method as a <u>collector</u>. He did
not always seem to have abridged the texts, collected by him, but frequently reproduced
them faithfully (cf. H. Daiber, review Linley, in: *Der Islam* 65 (1988), p. 134-137, esp. p.
135). In the introduction of his monograph on plants in the Escorial Ms. he even informs us
that he has <u>collected</u> (ğamaʿa) material on plants, because Aristotle's book on plants appears
to be lost! (cf. H. P. J. Renaud, *Les manuscrits arabes de l'Escurial*, Bd. II / 3: Sciences
exactes et sciences occultes, Paris 1941, p. 101); cf. also T. Baarda, *The Author*, p. 67-70 (=
ETWJ, p. 213-216) and p. 83-87 (= *ETWJ*, p. 229-233) where the usage of the verb ğamaʿa in
the Arabic harmony of the Coptic author (Ms. Sbath 1029) has been discussed.

229 Cf. Graf, *CGAL*, II, p. 168, note 1, where is given a translation of a passage from a work of
Ibn Ğarīr dealing with Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's method of working in his commentary on the four
Gospels: "... hat dieses (...) Wort für Wort übersetzt, ohne etwas hinzuzufügen oder wegzulas-
sen ..."; cf. also Corrie Molenberg's observation in: *The Interpreter Interpreted. Išoʿ Bar
Nun's Selected Questions on the Old Testament*, diss. RUG, Groningen 1990, p. 14-15:
"Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib probably carefully followed the order of the questions and answers as they
are contained in the Syriac Manuscript" and "Although he freely dealt with the contents of
the Syriac text Išoʿ bar Nun's view was preserved to a large extent".
230 Ibn Abī Uṣaibiʿa, *Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā'*, Ed. A. Müller, Königsberg in Preussen 1884 (reprint:
1972), p. 239 (٢٣٩); cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza* (²1959), p. 310.

but he had good reasons for it. Not only did he discover a high degree of similarity in the arrangement of the harmony with that of Victor of Capua (the Fuldensis),[231] but he especially ascertained the strong 'Syriac' coloration of the Arabic.[232] From this he concluded that in the Arabic text we, in fact, became confronted with a Syriac text from Ephraemic times.[233] Despite the criticism which this evaluation of T^a evoked, the conviction remained with some scholars that the Arabic translation brought us nearer to the original Diatessaron.[234] In a sense, this positive evaluation led to the text critical observations of H. von Soden.[235] In his text critical apparatus Von Soden presented T^a as an important witness for the Diatessaron and its influence on the textual history of the Gospels.

2. Depreciation of the Arabic Diatessaron

Meanwhile, the mood had changed. Many scholars had struck a note of warning concerning the determination of the quality of the Arabic translation, or were more or less inclined to reject this translation. The main reason for this was that they considered the Arabic text as a free revision of a Syriac Diatessaron. But the experts persisted in their negative verdict, even when they – Sellin included –[236] came to the conviction that the Arabic translator had in fact proceeded quite accurately and that he must have already had before him a Syriac model, which was strongly revised. They assumed that the original Syriac Diatessaron had been modified in the course of history, because by

231 Cf. Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron*, a.o. p. 466.
232 '... ipsum derivasse ab originali Syriaco Diatessaron'; cf. Ciasca, *De Tatiani Diatessaron*, p. 472; *ibid., Harmoniae*, p. x: 'Ex his conficitur, versionem arabicam fideliter nobis exhibere syriacum Diatessaron'.
233 Cf. Ciasca, *Harmoniae*, p. xiii: 'Imo nihil prohibet quominus dicamus, ipsam praeferre Diatessaron syriacum quale erat saeculo quarto, seu tempore s. Ephraemi'; cf. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 194 (*thesis*, p. 61): 'This assertion was too confident'.
234 Cf. for instance Michael Maher, *Recent Evidence for the Authenticity of the Gospels: Tatian's Diatessaron*, London 1893, p. 74: 'We have thus proved that the Commentary of St. Ephraem gives us a faithful representation of the primitive Harmony, and that the recent Arabic edition is in perfect conformity both in substance and arrangement with that expounded by the great Syrian Father. The conclusion is clear: Ciasca's volume contains a singularly accurate version of the original *Diatessaron*'.
235 H. von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, II, Göttingen 1913, p. 1-p. 490 *passim*; *o.c.*, I.2, Göttingen 1911, p. 1536-p. 1544, esp. p. 1539: 'In der Hauptsache bieten der armenische Ephräm und das arabische Diatessaron denselben Text'; cf. for criticism of von Soden's thesis: Baumstark, *review Knopf-Lietzmann*, etc., p. 191; J. N. Birdsall, The New Testament Text, in: *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, I, Cambridge 1970, p. 308-376; cf. T. Baarda, To the roots of the Syriac Diatessaron Tradition (T^a 25: 1-3), in: *NT* 26 (1986), p. 1-25, p. 2 (reprinted in: *EOD*, p. 111-132, p. 112).
236 Cf. Sellin, *Der Text*, p. 241 v., p. 246.

means of the Syriac Vulgate it was made to conform to the text known to a great number of people, and that thus it became purified of its most characteristic 'Tatianisms'. An important indication of this was that Tᵃ lacked the readings of the Diatessaron, which were discussed by the Syriac commentators, and more importantly, that it differed in many respects from the readings which could still be found in Ephraem's commentary, at that time known only from the Armenian version. The text critical experts de Lagarde,[237] von Harnack,[238] and Harris[239] set the trend for this, but it was adopted by many others. This depreciation of the text was granted a long life.[240] Consequently, the Arabic Diatessaron hardly if at all drew the attention, when attempting to reconstruct the original Diatessaron. The fact that Zahn[241] did not utilize this translation in 1881 was evident. At the time the Arabic text was not known yet. But also after 1888 Ephraem's commentary was, most preferably, applied as the only real witness to pay attention to, as became clear from the publications of Hamlyn Hill[242] and Leloir.[243] The most recent reconstruction is that of Ortiz de Urbina.[244] Although he brought forward other fourth century witnesses besides Ephraem, once again the Arabic Diatessaron remained out of sight. The same applies to his imitator Molitor.[245] But what else can be expected in a period in which many scholars underestimated the Arabic text?[246]

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237 Cf. de Lagarde, *Die arabische Uebersetzung*, 1886, p. 151: '... eine fast nutzlose Arbeit überlasse ich dem Liebhaber'. – he even says: 'Ich bin dankbar durch Umstände gehindert zu sein, abermals für ein nicht vorhandenes Publikum Zeit und Kraft zu vergeuden'.

238 Cf. Harnack, *Das Neue Testament um das Jahr 200*, Freiburg 1889, p. 103; *idem*, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, 2 Teile, Leipzig 1893-1904, I, 1893, p. 495.

239 Cf. Harris, *Fragments*, p. 5.

240 Cf. Kirsopp Lake, review Sir Frederic Kenyon, "Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts", New York 1940, in: *JBL* lx (1941), p. 329-331, esp. p. 331; cf. also Metzger, *Early Versions*, p. 30-31.

241 Cf. Zahn, *Tatians Diatessaron*, Erlangen 1881, p. 298 a.o., who was at first slightly reserved in his attitude towards the Arabic text, but in further contributions to the subject he gave a far more positive judgement of the value of Tᵃ; cf. Zu Tatians Diatessaron, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 2 Bde, Erlangen und Leipzig 1888-1892, I, i (1888), p. 395: 'selbst für den Text des Diatessaron im Einzelnen dürfte aus der arabischen Bearbeitung Manches zugewinnen sein'; II, p. 530-556 esp. p. 535; see also his: 'Zur Geschichte von Tatians Diatessaron im Abendland' in: *NKZ* 5 (1894), p. 85-120, esp. p. 86: '... und damit sehr wesentliche Hilfsmittel zur Rekonstruktion des Originals ...'.

242 Cf. Hamlyn Hill, *A Dissertation*, Edinburgh 1896; Baarda, *To the roots*, p. 2, note 11 (= *EOD*, p. 112, note 11).

243 Cf. L. Leloir, *Le témoignage d'Éphrem sur le Diatessaron*, (CSCO 227), Louvain 1962; Baarda, *To the roots*, p. 2, note 12 (= *EOD*, p. 112, note 12).

244 Cf. I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia. Series VI: Vetus Evangelium Syrorum et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani*, Madrid 1967.

245 Cf. J. Molitor, Tatians Diatessaron und sein Verhältnis zur altsyrischen und altgeorgischen Überlieferung, in: *OrChr* 53 (1969), p. 1-88; 54 (1970), p. 1-75; 55 (1971), p. 1-66.

246 Hogg, *Diatessaron*, p. 36, pointed to the influence on Tᵃ of the Arabic Gospels on which a

3. Rehabilitation for the Arabic Diatessaron

The notion that the Arabic text had limited value for our knowledge of the Diatessaron materialized in the minds of many scholars. Understandably, because the Arabic text was largely supposed to be a 'revision' of the Syriac harmony. An important factor contributing to this was that, first of all, the Arabic text was being examined in the places, where, on the basis of the text of Ephraem, Aphrahat and the Syriac commentators, typical 'Tatianisms' viz. divergences in the Diatessaron from the usual text had been traced.[247] This point of view was conceivable, but the approach did not do justice to the entire text.

When Resch,[248] in 1893 already, adopted Harnack's opinion in this, after he reached the same conclusion independently in a first collation of the text, he kept the door open to a different approach. In a second, more precise collation, it appeared to him that the Arabic text had preserved many interesting archaic readings after all. This raises the question of whether or not a generalizing notion on the ground of a particular observation does justice to all the phenomena in the Arabic text. We will return to this subject at a later stage.

4. Methodical problems concerning the evaluation

1. When it has been ascertained justly that the text of T^a reflects a Syriac model which has been subjected to a strong assimilation of the Peshitta, the question must be raised in which way archaic Syriac textual elements can still be traced in the Arabic Diatessaron. Marmardji concluded that 80 per cent of

great deal of work was done; F. C. Burkitt, Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, I, Edinburgh and New York 1898, p. 136; idem, *Encycl. Bibl.*, iv. (1902), col. 4999: '... nearly worthless as an authority for the text' ($T^a = \pm Sy^P$); J. F. Stenning, Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Extra Vol., New York 1904, p. 458 a: 'is therefore of no value for restoring the original Syriac version'; Preuschen, *Untersuchungen*, 1918, p. 32, note 65, referring to Mt. 5: 46: 'Mit dem arabischen Diatessaron ist nichts anzufangen' and '... kaum einen anderen Wert als den eines Zeugen für die Überlieferung der Pešitta'; this is also the case on p. 33, note 66, but on p. 42, note 83 he rates the Arabic Diatessaron at its true value: 'Das ist Diatessaronform; vgl. das arab. Diatessaron: ...'; Alberto Vaccari, Propaggini del Diatessaron in Occidente, in: *Biblica* 12 (1931), p. 326-354, esp. p. 330; Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xxxix.

247 Cf. Harnack, *Das Neue Testament*, p. 101: 'Ueberall wo ich die arabische Harmonie aufgeschlagen habe, d.h. an den für den wirklichen Tatian charakteristischen Stellen, war das Charakteristische entfernt und durch das Vulgäre ersetzt'.

248 Cf. A. Resch, *Aussercanonische Paralleltexte zu den Evangelien* I-III (TU X: 1-3), Leipzig 1893/4, 1895, 1896/7, I (1893), p. 44: 'Doch habe ich bei einer zweiten gründlichen Collation auf Grund der von mir bereits angesammelten aussercanonischen Texte noch manche interessante Singularitäten wahrgenommen, welche als unabsichtlich stehen gebliebene Reste vorcanonischen Texte zu recognoscieren sind ...'.

the Arabic text consisted of Peshitta text.[249] It is true that this leaves 20 per cent of Arabic text differing from the Peshitta, but he contributed these variations to carelessness and ignorance of the scribes.

This conclusion deserves a closer examination. Baumstark[250] and his student Peters[251] tried to formulate a rule of thumb, by which the quality of T^a could be assessed:

$T^a = Sy^p, \neq$ Diatessaron

$T^a \neq Sy^p, =$ Diatessaron.

This rule of thumb is an oversimplification. First of all, they did not take into account the possibility that Marmardji theoretically could have been correct in assuming that the differences with regard to Sy^p were due to carelessness of the author or the copyists. But there is, however, another objection which they had recognized themselves, for, together with Sy^{sc}, Sy^p belongs to the oldest tradition of translation in the Syriac region. Sy^p is in a certain sense a revised text of the <u>Vetus Syra</u>, which still preserved many archaic readings. This appears also from the fact that Sy^p quite often agrees with Sy^{sc} and that this might have been the case too where Sy^{sc} are not extant anymore to reconstruct the text of the Vetus Syra. Moreover, Sy^s and Sy^c themselves are independent, partly revised witnesses of the Vetus Syra. So, it is not that surprising that we come across instances where Sy^{scp} offer the same text, or where Sy^{cp} (> Sy^s) and Sy^{sp} (> Sy^c) offer the same text. It cannot be ruled out that where Sy^s or Sy^c are lacking, Sy^p is representing the text of the Vetus Syra. It is even possible that in some cases Sy^p (> Sy^{sc}) has preserved the Old Syriac text and possibly that of the Diatessaron. Peters reached this conclusion[252] in his analysis of Mt. 13: 36. Here the Arabic Diatessaron reads ذلك المثل في الزؤان والقرية with the Peshitta: ܡܬܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܙܝܙܢܐ ܘܕܩܪܝܬܐ 'that parable of the tares and of the field', whereas Sy^{sc} follows the Greek text: ܡܬܠܐ ܗܘ ܕܙܝܙܢܐ ܕܩܪܝܬܐ = τὴν παραβολὴν τῶν ζιζανίων τοῦ ἀγροῦ, 'that parable of the tares of the field'. The rule of thumb needs adjusting here. However much $T^a = Sy^p$ questions the quality of T^a, one has to bear in mind that in cases where the situation $T^a = Sy^p$ > Graeca, is confirmed, the text of T^a offers the original text of the Diatessaron, which was not harmed by the revision, since it occurs the same in Sy^p. One may ask if, even in cases where $T^a = Sy^p$ = Graeca has been found, the possibility must necessarily be denied that here T^a preserved the original Diatessaron too. For if we assume that Tatian read a Greek text in Rome, it is

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249 Cf. Marmardji, *Diatessaron*, p. xxxix.
250 Cf. Baumstark, *review Knopf-Lietzmann*, etc., p. 191.
251 Cf. Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 24: '... wo sie mit der Pešiṭta übereinstimmt, wenigstens grundsätzlich als methodisch entwertet gelten muss'.
252 Cf. Peters, o.c., p. 44-45.

to be reasonably expected that his harmony in many respects agreed with the Greek text that was known in Rome, and that this could also be told from the Syriac harmony. Agreement with the 'Graeca' is in itself no reason to distrust certain readings of T^a, even if T^a corresponds with Sy^P.

2. A second problem with which the student of Tatian's Diatessaron is being confronted is the fact that in several instances the agreement between T^a and Sy^P is found in only one of the two text families. In his scholarly works, Hjelt mentions such a case, and we will discuss it here in order to show how difficult it is to distinguish between authentic readings and possible revisions. The text in question is Mt. 1: 20^b.[253]

In his commentary on the passage, Īšōʿdād of Merw asks[254]: Why does Matthew say, "He that is born in her is from the Holy Spirit" (ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ ܒܗ), when He has not yet been born? Why did he not write "He that is conceived (ܐܬܒܛܢ) in her"? And again "He that is born in her", but not "from her".[255] After a long treatment of the text in which he cites various opinions, he mentions the reading of the Diatessaron:[256] ܕܝܛܠܝܘܢ ܕܝܢ ܐܡܪ / ܕܗܘ ܠܡ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ ܒܗ / ܗܘ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܗܘ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ 'The Diatessaron, however, says: / "He - quoth - who is born in her /, is from the Holy Spirit"'. This is the reading of the Peshitta: ܗܘ ܓܝܪ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ ܒܗ,[257] which is in agreement with the text τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν. Now, this reading is also found in Ms. A of the Arabic Diatessaron: فان المولود فيها "for what is born in her". The conclusion seems obvious: Ms. A has preserved here the original Diatessaron reading which was in agreement with the Peshitta and all Greek texts.[258]

Hjelt paid attention to the agreement of the 'Diatessaron' of Īšōʿdād, the Peshitta and the Arabic Diatessaron, in their following of the Greek. He doubted, however, the strength of this coincidence of witnesses. Did they really preserve the original Diatessaron text? Hjelt observed that Ephraem's Diatessaron text was not known for the pertinent reading in Mt. 1: 20. He

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253 Cf. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 66-68; Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 25-29.

254 Cf. Margaret Dunlop Gibson, *The Commentaries of Ishoʿdad of Merv*, Vol. II: Matthew and Mark in Syriac (= Horae Semiticae No. VI), Cambridge 1911, p. ܟܐ (= p. 21): lines 18-20; cf. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 31 f.; Harris, *Fragments*, p. 16 f.

255 Cf. for a similar problem: T. Baarda, Dionysios Bar Ṣalībī and the Text of Luke I. 35, in: *VigChr* xvii (1963), p. 225-229, esp. p. 226 (= *ETWJ*, p. 79-83, esp. p. 80).

256 Cf. Gibson, *Commentaries*, II, p. ܟܓ (= p. 23): lines 2-3.

257 Cf. for a similar wording in a work attributed to Ephraem (although dubiously), L. Leloir, *L'Évangile d'Éphrem d'après les œuvres éditées, Receuil des Textes*, (CSCO 180), Louvain 1958, p. 1 (= in my opinion Assemani, I, 352 B).

258 Cf. A. Merx, *Das Evangelium Matthaeus (Die vier kanonischen Evangelien nach ihrem ältesten bekannten Texte*, II: i), Berlin 1902, p. 24. Merx mentions the reading 'from her' for Sy^{sc} (ܡܢܗ), b c (ex ea), Cyprian (ex illa).

held the view that the original text was not preserved in T^a – Sy^p – Īšō'dād. This view was based on the fact that the Vetus Syra presented a text which differed from that of T^a – Sy^p – Īšō'dād, namely ... ܡܕܡ ܕܝܬܝܠܕ ܡܢܗ ܗܘ ,[259] "for He that (is/will be) born from her ...". He concludes that the Diatessaron text was preserved in the Vetus Syra, and furthermore that Īšō'dād knew a Syriac text of the Diatessaron which had already been revised in certain parts.[260] Hjelt had been aware of the fact that the Arabic Diatessaron was divided. He followed Ms. A (فيها), but he refers to Ms. B (منها) as well. Now he identifies Ms. A here as the manuscript that preserved Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's text.[261]

Peters dealt also with this verse as an illustration of the historical development of the Diatessaron text. Applying his rule T^a = Sy^p = Graeca $\neq$ Diatessaron, he opts for the reading of $T^{a(BE)}$: منها, and declares that the original Diatessaron read ܡܢܗ (= Sy^{sc}).[262] The textual form of Īšō'dād and of $T^{a(A)}$ should be explained as a reading which came into existence under the influence of Sy^p = Graeca. In spite of their disagreement, both scholars start with the presumption that the original Diatessaron contained the reading ܡܢܗ, and furthermore that the reading with ܒܗ in Īšō'dād and in $T^{a(A)}$ (فيها) was due to a revision according to the Peshitta. They only differed in their opinion whether the text of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib's Arabic version read فيها (= A, so Hjelt), or منها (= BE, so Peters). In their treatment of the text both take the view that ܒܗ (فيها) was the result of a revision of the original Diatessaron text according to Sy^p. Clearly, these scholars used their 'criteria', in which agreement with the Peshitta was seen as an indication of revision. How solid is this argumentation? In the so-called Valdevieso-fragment (P. Palau Rib. 2) we find the following text in Ephraem's commentary:[263] ܠܗ̇. ܡܛܠ ܕܐܝܟܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܗܘ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ, "because what is in her is from the Holy Spirit". This is very surprising, for the Armenian text

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259 Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung*, p. 67, refers to Sy^c only (in 1903!), but the same text was found in Sy^s.

260 This again shows that scholars often took for granted that Īšōdād himself had checked a Diatessaron text. One should, however, reckon with the possibility that Īšōdād had used older commentaries from which he derived his knowledge of the work.

261 His main reason is that Hogg (*Diatessaron*, p. 45, note 6) had observed that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib in his commentary on Mt. 1: 20 had discussed the question why Matthew wrote 'in her' and not 'of her'. This is not a valid conclusion, for the author of the commentary dealt with a specific translation of a Syriac (or a Greek) text and his discussion may have followed the discussion of earlier commentators. One cannot conclude from this anything with respect to his text of the Diatessaron.

262 Cf. Peters, *Das Diatessaron*, p. 26, note (1), where he lists as witnesses to that reading the oriental versions: Georg, Sy^{pal}, Arab (Lev/2377), and the western texts a b c f g^1 gat Ambr.(...): ex ea, de ea (Augustine a.o.), ex illa (Cypr.), ex ipsa (Arnob.).

263 Cf. Leloir, *Saint Éphrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile concordant, Texte syriaque, (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709), Folios Additionels*, CBM no. 8(b), Louvain-Paris 1990, p. 153 (verso, col. 2, lines 14-16).

did not contain this wording. The texts - Armenian[264] and Syriac - read as follows:

Syr.: Therefore, an angel appeared	Arm. (AB): Therefore, an angel appeared
to him and said:	to him, and said:
Joseph, Son of David.	
Rightly then he called him Son of David,	
to remind him of the chief of the Fathers,	
David, he, to whom God had promised	
that from the fruits of his belly in the flesh	
he would raise the Messiah.	
Do not - quoth - fear to take Mary	Do not fear (om. B)
your betrothed (as wife),	
because what is in her is from the	
Holy Spirit.	
And if you doubt	but if you doubt,
about the pregnancy of a virgin,	
that it is without coitus,	
hear Isaiah who says Lo, a virgin	hear thou Isaiah the prophet,
conceives, and to Daniel … (etc.)	for he says: Lo, a virgin will conceive, and Daniel …(etc.)

The Syriac text and the Armenian differ a great deal, but there is no reason to assume that the Syriac text was not the original text of Ephraem's commentary. The Armenian shows itself as a rather condensed abridgement of Ephraem's text. Now if this is the case, it might suggest that Ephraem read a text which contained a reading like ܟܒܗ ܕܐܝܬ ܡܕܡ ܡܛܠ "because what is <u>in her</u>", or at least - if Ephraem paraphrases here - a text with ܟܒܗ "in her".

This new testimony makes it clear that using rules of thumb like Hjelt and Peters did, has its limitations. If we assume that ܟܒܗ was in Ephraem's text, we may wonder whether or not this reading had originally been a part of the Diatessaron text. If Ephraem literally quoted his harmony text, then we have to assume that the texts of Īšōʿdād and Sy[P] provide us with the Diatessaron text in a revised form, but still preserved ܟܒܗ, "in her". If Ephraem more or

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264 Cf. Leloir, Saint Éphrem, *Commentaire de l'Évangile concordant*, Version arménienne, Texte, (CSCO 137), Louvain 1953, p. 25: lines 2-6; idem, *idem*, Traduction, (CSCO 145), Louvain 1954, (Lat tr. p. 18: lines 10-13).

less paraphrased his text,[265] we may even conjecture that Īšō'dād and Syᴾ have preserved the original Diatessaron text here.

We may add a few observations here about the reading of the Vetus Syra represented in Syˢ and Syᶜ. In my opinion, this may have been the result of a 'correction' of the original Vetus Syra text. In Īšō'dād's commentary one is confronted with the problem that the Gospel says "He who was born <u>in</u> her ...", whereas Jesus has not been born yet. One would have expected "He who was conceived" (ܐܬܒܛܢ). Moreover, one would have expected "from her", not "in her". For in Mt. 1: 16 it had already been said: "from whom was born Jesus who is called the Messiah". It is clear that the text of Īšō'dād and Syᴾ was beset with difficulties. The reading of Syˢᶜ has solved them: ܗܘ ܓܝ ܕܡܬܝܠܕ ܡܢܗ "For, He who (is/will be) born from her". Instead of the perfect tense "was born" the ambiguous participle was used. Secondly, this text reads ܡܢܗ "from her". This suggests a correction of a difficult text, which in its turn may suggest that it was a revision of the Vetus Syra text in part of its tradition. Syᴾ preserved the more difficult text of the Vetus Syra which had probably been influenced by the Diatessaron.

The Greek text (γεννηθὲν) and the Syriac (ܐܬܝܠܕ) present an ambiguous wording: the verbs could mean both "has been born" and "has been begotten". The latter interpretation is valid for the text preserved both in Syᴾ and Īšō'dād. The interpretation "has been born", however, is being prompted because of verse 18: ܐܫܬܟܚܬ ܒܛܢܐ "She was found pregnant". Now one would have expected the unambiguous ܐܬܒܛܢ in verse 20. But the text reads ܡܬܝܠܕ, which is ambigu-ous. The revision of Syˢᶜ is meant to prevent any ambiguity: Jesus is to be born from her (ܡܬܝܠܕ ܡܢܗ, ptc.!).

All this would result in a different description of textual tradition in the Diatessaron. It also questions the appropriateness of clear-cut rules of thumb. The student of Diatessaron research should take into account unexpected discoveries and the relativity of premeditated rules for the interpretation of the facts. In this light we must see the possibility that Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib indeed wrote فيها (= Ms. A), and so preserved the reading likewise attested in Syᴾ and Īšō'dād. The reading منها (= Mss. BEO) may have been a correction on the basis of the same considerations which caused the change of the preposition and the participle construction in Syˢᶜ. We may, however, consider the possibility that the Arabic participle construction (المولود) presupposes a 'corrected' text with the participle ܡܬܝܠܕ.[266]

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265 One should observe that the text of Ephraem solves all the problems which we will discuss below.

266 For we have to acknowledge by now that the form of the words, the actual spelling, plays a

3. The question raised above in the example of Mt. 1: 20, whether family A-C, or family B-E-O, is deserving the highest reliance in textual matters, cannot be solved on the basis of one case only. If Ms. A did preserve the original reading here, it may not have done so in other cases.

In his observations, Higgins[267] distinguishes two stages of tradition. Firstly the translation of 'Isā ibn 'Alī (the text more or less preserved in Mss. B-E-O), and secondly the recension or revision of Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib (traceable in Mss. A-C). Generally speaking this distinction implies that the family B-E-O should be preferred in establishing the text of T^a, furthermore he argues that the influence of Sy^p is found mainly in the revised text of Mss. A-C. In Higgins' view the depreciation of the Arabic Diatessaron among scholars can be explained as a result of the wrong decision to take Ciasca's edition of the text as the original text. This edition presents the largest number of readings in agreement with Sy^p. Therefore, the general opinion moved away from T^a as a witness to the Diatessaron. In fact, Ciasca's text agreed with Sy^p in 62% of the readings. In a passage, taken as an example by Higgins, the following result is found:[268]

Ciasca = Ms. A = Sy^p: 32x

Ciasca = Ms. A > Sy^p: 3x

Ciasca = Ms. B > Sy^p: 17x

Ciasca = Ms. B = Sy^p: 2x

Consequently, the outcome of his research is:[269] Mss. B-E-O are superior to Ms. A, and therefore Mss. B-E-O should be the object of further research. The recovery of the 'original' text of T^a would benefit from a future predilection of the witnesses B-E-O. Now, in spite of these reasonings, Higgins is clearly aware that such a general statement cannot be decisive for each instance of the manuscript evidence.[270] Therefore, the question of originality of each reading in Ms. A and Mss. B-E-O has been raised in our treatment of each specific

prominent part in literal translations from Syriac into Arabic e.g. here مولود (pass. part I) - Sy^{sc}: ܡܬܝܠܕ (act. part. Ethpe.) - Sy^p, Īšo'dād: ܐܬܝܠܕ (perf. sg. 3 masc. Ethpe.).

267 Cf. Higgins, *The Arabic Version*, p. 193; see also § VI. above.

268 Cf. Higgins, *o.c.*, p. 195.

269 According to Higgins, *o.c.*, p. 196, B-E-O are superior to A in two respects. Firstly, in A the first words of Mark precede the first words of John. They are a later addition. Secondly, A shows the later stage of accretion of the genealogies to the body of the text; cf. also his article: *The Persian and Arabic Gospel Harmonies*, (1959), p. 804; he speaks there also of 'the general superiority of Ar^{BE}'.

270 Cf. Higgins, *o.c.*, p. 804; it is interesting to hear him say 'just as no Greek manuscript or group of manuscripts can invariably be regarded as presenting the best reading, each case requiring separate consideration in the light of other evidence'. With these words we heartily agree. The recovery of the Arabic Diatessaron in the original form can only be the result of a conscientious and unprejudiced hearing of the witnesses.

text, the more so because of a disinclination to follow Higgins' theory of the translation (B-E-O) and revision (A-C).

4. From the preceding observations it may have become clear that in approaching the Arabic Diatessaron we want to consider the 'rules of thumb' which were developed in the course of earlier research as eye-openers, but not as decisive answers to the problems. We acknowledge the supposition that the original Arabic text is a translation of a Syriac text of the Diatessaron which has often undergone revisions according to the Peshitta. However, we refuse to agree with these scholars declaring T^a worthless when agreeing with Sy^p.[271] The possibility cannot a priori be excluded that Sy^p has preserved several archaic or even authentic Diatessaron readings. In such cases the revisor of the Syriac model of T^a did not revise the text after Sy^p, because there the model contained the same text as Sy^p. In each case, therefore, it should be decided whether T^a = Sy^p is Diatessaron or not. One may, of course, agree with Kahle that "the value of the Arabic Diatessaron consists in the amount of help it gives for finding out readings of the Syriac Diatessaron as Tatian composed it"[272] and add to it, "This is <u>limited</u>".[273] For anyone dealing with the Diatessaron problem knows the <u>limited</u> contribution of all Diatessaronic witnesses. In each case an attempt should be made to assess the real contribution of any of the witnesses, including the Arabic Diatessaron, and this requires sound scholarly methods and intuition. There are many instances in which the Arabic Diatessaron differs from Sy^p. This could indicate that in such cases T^a has preserved original Diatessaron readings.[274] Some of these deviations may indeed help us find the Diatessaron text.[275] One should, however, note that in these cases T^a also deviates from the Old Syriac Gospels, whereas in a few cases there are echoes in Aphrahat or Ephraem. But generally, there are many places in which T^a =

271 Apart from the scholars mentioned before, we may refer here to Paul Kahle's review of Preuschen's translation (*OLZ* 31 (1928), nr. 11, kol. 974), who thought that T^a – if it agrees with Sy^p – is "methodisch entwertet", so that 'it is of little value' (*Cairo Geniza*, [2]p. 313, cf. idem, [1]p. 227: 'of no particular value').

272 But cf. Kahle, *review Preuschen*, kol. 974: 'Es steckt in diesem arabischen Text ganz zweifellos sehr viel echter Tatian'.

273 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, [2]p. 313.

274 Cf. M.-J. Lagrange, L'Ancienne version syriaque des Évangiles I in: *RB*, xxix (1920), p. 321-352, esp. p. 328: 'pour qu'on puisse, <u>du moins</u> dans le cas de désaccord, le traiter comme l'original de Tatien'.

275 Cf. *e.g.* T^a 25: 6 (= Mt. 17: 26), see T. Baarda, Geven als Vreemdeling, in: *NedThT*, 42 (1988), p. 99-113; T^a 26: 7 (= Mt. 18: 14), see Baarda, *Matthew 18: 14C*, p. 135-140; T^a 52: 52 (= Lk. 24: 3), see Baarda, Διαφωνία–Συμφωνία. Factors in the Harmonization of the Gospels, especially in the Diatessaron of Tatian, in: W. L. Petersen (Ed.), *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century*, Notre Dame (Indiana) – London, 1989, p. 133-154, esp. p. 153 (= *EOD*, p. 29-47, esp. p. 45).

$Sy^P = Sy^{sc}$, so that T^a may have preserved an archaic reading there.[276] The task of identifying Tatian's text in the Arabic Diatessaron will remain a complicated one, requiring "sound linguistic equipment and a good grasp of the existing problems".[277]

5. In my study[278] an attempt has been made to reconstruct the original text of the Diatessaron by means of a comparison with the available Syriac texts. We do not agree with Kahle's verdict that we "cannot reconstruct an 'Urtext' of the Arabic Diatessaron".[279] Although we are well aware that, so far, there are two more or less distinct forms of the Arabic text, we cannot accept the assumption that they should be kept and dealt with separately.[280] Kahle's objections with regard to a reconstruction of "Urtexte" may be valid on other pages of his famous *Cairo Geniza*, but we do not think that they are of any relevance in case of the reconstruction of the Arabic Diatessaron. The two families of textual tradition certainly are not two different independent translations of two different Syriac texts, as it has been suggested.[281]

When we speak of the recovery of the original Arabic Diatessaron, this does not mean that we see no difficulties for such a reconstruction. In the course of this introduction we have often indicated how difficult things are in this area of research, and in the establishment of the text such as we have in mind, there will be many instances in which a decision between the two forms or a conjecture of the original form behind the two forms cannot be made. However, we should not yield to pessimism with regard to its reconstruction. On the contrary, both are branches of one tree, and we must find the roots. Our conclusion

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276 See Higgins: *The Persian and Arabic Gospel Harmonies* (1957), p. 804; *Tatian's Diatessaron* (1976), p. 257, p. 259; *Luke 1-2* (1984), a.o. p. 193-194: '... This is established by the fact that, when the Arabic Diatessaron (sometimes along with the Persian Harmony) and the Peshitta agree, they are very often joined by the Old Syriac, so that the reading in question is older than the Peshitta and could be Tatianic. Therefore, where the Old Syriac is missing altogether ... the Peshitta may again retain older, Tatianic readings'; cf. Sellin, *Der Text*, p. 246.

277 Cf. Kahle, *Cairo Geniza*, [2] p. 313.

278 For Joosse, *Sermon*, see: note 50 *supra*.

279 Cf. Kahle, o.c., [2]p. 313.

280 Cf. Kahle, o.c., [1]p. 227; [2]p. 313.

281 Cf. Higgins, *The Persian and Arabic Gospel Harmonies* (1957), p. 810, who draws conclusions from his study of both harmonies and in that connection he writes: 'We know that Tatian's Syriac Diatessaron ... existed in two different textual forms of which the Arabic manuscripts *beo* and *a* are respectively translations'. This cannot be concluded from what Higgins wrote in the preceding pages; this is contrary to his own opinion expressed in his earlier studies that B-E-O and A were different stages of the evolution of the Arabic Diatessaron. Was he influenced here by Kahle who, though he did not say it so explicitly, seems to have cherished the same opinion?

must be that a general decision between the two kinds of text is barely possible. The only way to recover the original Arabic text of the harmony is to apply the eclectic method wherever a difference between the two branches is being found. This method, however, requires a most thorough study of the Arabic text with the best utensils possible, an intensive comparison of each text detail with all other remnants of the Syriac Diatessaron, and with the Syriac and Arabic Gospel translations.[282] But even then, it will not always be possible to remove every single doubt or hesitation concerning the original text of the Diatessaron in the Arabic language.

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282 For we agree with Higgins in this respect: "The variants among the Arabic manuscripts are to be taken seriously. Although many differences are simply the result of scribal errors or are otherwise of no consequence, careful examination and comparison with other witnesses reveal a residuum of genuine and sometimes really significant variants" (cf. *Tatian's Diatessaron* (1976), p. 260).