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# In Search of Tatianic Patchwork in the Text of the Arabic Diatessaron

In my study on the Sermon on the Mount in the Arabic *Diatessaron* ($T^a$) I have discussed the contribution of the Arabic text to the reconstruction of the Syriac *Diatessaron*.[1] I also have questioned the attitude of taking it for granted that the Arabic text is almost worthless.[2] Of course, a well-known text as the Sermon on the Mount might have been subject to correction on the basis of other texts which the translator or copyists had at hand or knew by heart. The 'cut and paste work' of the original text may have been subject to some or even to considerable wear in the course of textual tradition. Therefore, one cannot deny that the Arabic text may have undergone later 'corrections'. The Syriac *Vulgate*, the *Peshitta* ($Sy^p$), may have been of influence in the textual tradition of the Arabic manuscripts. However, it is often very difficult to prove this exactly. It is true that the Arabic text of the harmony goes back to a Syriac *Diatessaron* that admittedly had undergone the influences of he *Peshitta* and therefore differed from the original Syriac *Diatessaron*. However, here again one has to be cautious. The rule of thumb that some scholars applied to the Arabic text ($T^a$ [= $Sy^p$] $\neq$ Diat., $T^a$ [$\neq Sy^p$] = Diat.) is not valid, since the *Peshitta* may have preserved archaic readings. One has to reckon with the possibility that $T^a = Sy^p = $ Diat. [$\neq Sy^{sc}$].[3] In my treatment of the Arabic text I have found several instances in which $T^a$ has preserved the archaic text, even if it agreed with the *Peshitta* text. I may refer here to some examples,[4] where despite the agreement with the *Peshitta*

[1] Cf. N. P. G. J o o s s e, *The Sermon on the Mount in the Arabic Diatessaron*, (Ph.D. thesis VU Amsterdam), Amsterdam 1997, chapter VII, pp. 45–55.

[2] Cf. J o o s s e, op. cit., pp. 45–47.

[3] $Sy^s$: Vetus S y r a: *Sinaitic Palimpsest*; $Sy^c$: Vetus S y r a: *Curetonian manuscript*.

[4] Cf. J o o s s e, *Sermon*, Commentary §1, pp. 57–58, (Mt. 5: $1^a$), §6, pp. 65–67, (Lk. 6: $17^{ab}$) or §96, pp. 209–210, (Mt. 6: $9^a$).

there is no need to assume that T$^a$ was influenced by Sy$^p$. On the contrary, in these cases Sy$^p$ deviates from the ordinary text, and may therefore have preserved an Old Syriac reading that was dependent on the *Diatessaron*. In such cases the Syriac model of T$^a$ was not revised after the *Peshitta*: it only has the same text as Sy$^p$, due to the fact that Sy$^p$ in itself contained a Diatessaronic reading. In other instances it seems to have preserved not only the order, but also the fine embroidery of the harmony. Both these patterns are found in for instance T$^a$ viii: 35 and in T$^a$ viii: 44–45 where the Arabic text introduces Markan elements of the *Parable Discourse* in the Sermon on the Mount. Here it explains the rather mysterious reference to Mk. 4: 22 in E p h r a e m's commentary on Mt. 5: 13–14 (ch. VI: 2).

## T$^a$ viii: 35(Mt. 5: 11; Lk. 6: 22)

### 1. The Text of Ms. A

[1] الطوبى لكم

[2] اذا ما ابغضكم الناس

[3] وفصلوكم عنهم

[4] وطردوكم

[5] وعيروكم

[6] وتكلموا فيكم

[7] بكل كلام سوء

[8] لاجلي

[9] كذبًا

[1]a الطوبى: الطوبا EO

[2]a ما : – BEO

[5]a وعيروكم : – BEO

[1] Blessed are you, [2] whenever men hate you, [3] and separate you from them, [4] and persecute you, [5] and reproach you, [6] and speak about you [7] with every bad word, [8] because of me, [9] falsely.

## 2. The Composition

1. C i a s c a, the first editor of $T^a$,[5] divides the text into two sections: lines 1–5 = Mt. 5: 11, lines 6–8 = Lk. 6: 22, a division which is prompted by the evidence of Ms. A. However, M a r m a r d j i, the second editor of $T^a$,[6] distributes the text as follows: lines 1–3 = Lk. 6: 22$^a$, line 4 = Mt. 5: 11$^b$, line 5 = Lk. 6: 22$^b$, lines 6–9 = Mt. 5: 11$^c$. Mss. EO refer lines 1–4 to Luke, 6–9 to Matthew, omitting line 5. Ms. B has no division.

2. The textual complication is great, if we compare Matthew and Luke:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. μακάριοί ἐστε (= Mt.–Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [1] |
| 2. ὅταν (= Mt.–Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [2] |
| 3. μισήσωσιν ὑμᾶς (= Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [2] |
| 4. οἱ ἄνθρωποι (= Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [2] |
| 5. καὶ ὅταν ἀφορίσωσι ὑμᾶς (= Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [3] om. ὅταν (W) |
| 6. καὶ διώξωσιν (= Mt.) | | = $T^a$ [4] add. ὑμᾶς |
| 7. καὶ ὀνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς (= Mt.–Lk.) | | = $T^a$ [5] |
| 8. καὶ εἴπωσιν...καθ᾽ ὑμῶν (= Mt.) | | = $T^a$ [6] |
| 9. πᾶν πονηρὸν (= Mt.) | | = $T^a$ [7] |
| 10. ψευδόμενοι (= Mt.) | | = $T^a$ [9] |
| 11. ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ (= Mt.) | | = $T^a$ [8] |

The Arabic text has no equivalent for καὶ ἐκβάλωσιν τὸ ὄνομα ὑμῶν ὡς πονηρὸν (Lk.), 'and cast out your name as evil' and the Lukan parallel of 11: ἕνεκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου 'on account of the Son of man'.

3. None of the divisions do full justice to the complexity of the harmonization in $T^a$. The main body of the Arabic text consists of elements of Matthew, but there is, apart from elements that agree in Matthew and Luke, also a strong element of Luke, especially at the beginning. If the text of $T^a$ is a correct rendering of the Syriac model, it may provide us with the text and order of the Syriac harmony. And so it provides us a fine example of T a t i a n's method of harmonizing and offers a good insight into the ingenuity of his operating procedure. Such a complexity in this harmonization must have been created on a premeditated comparison of the texts, which may have been possible through a Synopsis.

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[5] Cf. A. C i a s c a, *Tatiani Evangeliorum Harmoniae Arabice*, Roma 1888.

[6] Cf. A.-S. M a r m a r d j i, *Diatessaron de Tatien*. Texte arabe établi, traduit en français, collationé avec les anciennes versions syriaques, suivi d'un évangéliaire diatessarique syriaque, Beirut 1935.

## 3. Textual Variations

[1]a The manuscripts EO exhibit cases of *alif maqsūra* spelled with *alif*, where in CA this would have been spelled with *yā'*.

[2]a The Mss. BEO omit ما after إذا, which can be found elsewhere in these manuscripts (e.g. in Mt. 6: 5, 17).[7]

[5]a The omission وعيروكم, 'and reproach you' is apparently a copyist's error (*parablepsis* either *homoeoteleuton* or *arcticon*), due to the fact that each element begins with ـو and ends with ـكم.[8]

## 4. Comparison with the Syriac Texts

[1] The blessing is now addressed to the disciples directly — in the preceding beatitudes the sayings were phrased in a more general way — and in this Tª agrees with both Mt. and Lk.: ܛܘܒܝܟܘܢ (μακάριοί ἐστε)

[2α] إذا ما (A) — إذا (BEO) could represent various Syriac particles: ܕ ܡܐ (Syᶜ Mt., Syˢᵖ Lk.), or ܐܡܬܝ, ܕ (Syᵖ Mt.), or even ܟܕ (Syˢ Mt.) — Syᶜ (Lk.) is missing.

[2β]: 'when the people (or: men) hate you', is the first suffering that is expressed in Tª. The verb بغض (IV) has several shades of meaning: 'to have', 'to detest'. It is a standard rendering of ܣܢܐ in Syriac–Arabic lexicons (R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, II, 2668). The phrase agrees with Syriac ܡܐ ܕܣܢܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܒܢܝܢܫܐ [...] in Luke (Syˢᵖ). That this was the first clause in the *Diatessaron* might be deduced from the fact that these very words (preceded by ܟܕ ܢܣܢܘܢ) were also found in Syˢ Mt. (where it is foreign to the Greek text and Syᶜᵖ). It introduces both 'hate' and 'men' into the Matthean text, the latter word being also found in Syᶜ·ᵖᵃˡ, some Latin witnesses (g¹ q aur vulg.), and one Greek Ms. (0133).

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[7] The meaning does not really make a difference, cf. J. Blau, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic, Based Mainly on South-Palestinian Texts from the First Millennium*, I-II-III (CSCO 267, 276, 279; Subsidia 27–29), Louvain 1966–1967., III, pp. 576–580.

[8] Cf. for another error of this kind Lar = P. de Lagarde (ed.), *Die vier Evangelien arabisch, aus der Wiener Handschrift herausgegeben*, Leipzig 1864 (reprint: Osnabrück 1972), *in loco*; WP = B. Walton, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, V, London 1657 (reprint: Graz 1964): om. وفصلوكم, 'and separate you', in Lk. 6: 22, whereas in Lev (B. Levin, *Die griechisch-arabische Evangelienübersetzung Vat. Borg. ar. 95 und Berlin Orient. Oct. 1108*, (diss. Uppsala), Uppsala 1938) in Mt. 5: 11, we find an inversion: وعيروكم, before وطردوكم, which may be the result of the fact that the copyist first skipped the latter word, but inserted it afterwards.

[3]: 'and separate you from them', is also a Lukan element (καὶ ὅταν ἀφορίσωσιν ὑμᾶς, 'and when they exclude you'). The Arabic follows Syriac ܠܟܘܢ ܢܦܪܫܘܢ (Sy$^{s(c)p}$), which also omit ὅταν (cf. Greek W 1195 26 13 and 1 5 24).[9]

The verb فصل is an ordinary rendering of ܦܪܫ (cf. *Thesaurus*, II, 3301, Pe., 3304 Pa.). The Arabic text, however, has a remarkable addition: عنهم 'from them(selves)', perhaps an idiomatic variant, due to the fact that the verb is usually combined with عن, 'from'.

[4]: 'and persecute you' (or: 'drive you away', 'ban you'), is likely the rendering of the Matthean element (διώξωσιν), which in Syriac is rendered with: ܢܪܕܦܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ (Sy$^{sp}$). Sy$^c$ differs slightly, because it is there the first element (ܡܐ ܕܪܕܦܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܐ) of the Matthean verse.[10] Both Sy and T$^a$ add 'you' (cf. Greek D and 33).

[5]: 'and reproach you' — the Arabic verb عاير (II) matches Syriac ܢܚܣܕ (Pa.) according to the Syriac–Arabic lexicons (*Thesaurus*, I, 1328–29). The Syriac verb, in its turn, renders Greek ὀνειδίζω. As a matter of fact, we find in the Syriac versions both in Mt.: ܘܢܚܣܕܘܢܟܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ (Sy$^{cp}$),[11] and in Lk. (idem, Sy$^s$: ... om. ܠܟܘܢ).

[6]: 'and speak about you', literally renders Syriac ܘܢܐܡܪܘܢ ܥܠܝܟܘܢ (for καὶ εἴπωσιν...καθ ὑμῶν) as found in Mt., Sy$^{cp}$, cf. Sy$^s$ (adding ܕ ܡܐ: ὅταν). T$^a$ and Sy$^{scp}$ connect the verb with the preposition as in Greek D, Old Latin d h k m, Georg., and Epiphanius.

[7]: 'with every bad word', is almost similar to Sy$^{ph}$: ܟܠ ܡܠܐ [ܡܠܬܐ] ܒܝܫܐ, 'every bad (or: evil) word', whereas Sy$^s$ (ܕܒܝܫ) and Sy$^c$ (ܘܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܒܝܫ) differ in their wording. The Greek text reads πᾶν πονηρὸν[12] or πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα.[13] The addition of the preposition ب ('with')

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[9] *The New Testament In Greek*, The Gospel According to St. Luke edited by the American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project, part one, chapters 1–12, Oxford 1984, I, Oxford 1984, p. 123 does not register the Syriac texts and T$^a$.

[10] In Sy$^p$ it is preceded by ܐܡܬܝ ܕ ܢܚܣܕܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ, cf. below under [5].

[11] Sy$^c$ has the order: '...when men persecute you, and revile you', Sy$^p$: 'when they revile you and persecute you' (Sy$^c$ agrees with D 33 d h k Boh. Eth.). Sy$^s$ has 'when men hate you and persecute you...' (omits the verb: 'revile you').

[12] So 01 (Greek uncial Ms. *codex Sinaiticus*, usually designated by Hebrew *alef*) B (D) lat Sah. Boh., Tert. (= Sy$^{sc}$).

[13] So for instance C W Θ f$^1$ f$^{13}$ 33 892 1006 q mae. (= Sy$^p$ and Sy$^h$, the latter being the Harclean Version).

is idiomatic: ܐܡܪ (V) with ܒ or accusative in the sense of 'to express', 'to pronounce something'.

[8] لَاجْلِي, 'for the sake of me', or 'on account of me', is a literal rendering of Syriac ܡܛܠܬܝ, Sy$^p$ Mt., which agrees with ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ. This differs from the reading ܡܛܠ ܫܡܝ ܕܝܠܝ, Sy$^s$ or ܡܛܠ ܫܡܝ, Sy$^c$ in Matthew: 'for the sake of my name', which may have been the text of the *Diatessaron* in Syriac. For we find the same reading in Aphrahat ( Dem. II: 19, cf. J. P a r i s o t, *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* (PS I: 1), Paris 1894, (PS I: 2), Paris 1907, I, 89: 17–18).[14] There is, however, a problem here. In the newly found manuscript of Ephraem's commentary we find a passage, which is not in the Armenian version, viz. ch. vi: 1$^b$ which presents us with the following allusion to our verse:[15]

ܛܘܒܝܟܘܢ ܒܪ ܢܗܘܘܢ ܡܚܣܕܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܘܪܕܦܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܡܛܠܬܝ, 'Blessed are you, when they will revile you and persecute you for the sake of me'. It is exactly this term ܡܛܠܬܝ which has become the focus-point of Ephraem's exegesis. Does this mean that E p h r a e m has preserved here the original Syriac *Diatessaron* reading, whereas A p h r a h a t has a text that was influenced by the Vetus Syra? First of all, we should observe that this Syriac text occurs in a passage only preserved in Syriac. Was it E p h r a e m's commentary, and if so, was it the *Diatessaron* text? We cannot discuss this in detail here. There is, however, a possibility that what has been quoted here was an Old Syriac text which was a predecessor of the *Peshitta* text, for it has the order 'revile — persecute' of Sy$^p$ (= Greek text). This seems to suggest that the text might be less important for the reconstruction of the original *Diatessaron* text. The text of T$^a$ may be derived from a *Diatessaron* text that was adapted to the *Peshitta* at this point.[16]

[9] 'falsely', again follows Sy$^p$ both in order (at the end of the verse) and in aspect: ܒܕܓܠܘܬܐ,[17] lit. 'in falsehood' (contra ψευδόμενοι). Sy$^c$ has the same Syriac wording, but inserts it before 'on account of my name', in agreement with

[14] ἕνεκα το ῦ ὀνόματός μου is found in a lectionary *l* 1663 (Lk.).

[15] Cf. L. L e l o i r, *Saint Éphrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile concordant, Texte syriaque, (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709), Folios Additionels*, CBM no. 8(b), Louvain–Paris 1990, p. 58: 12–13.

[16] Sy$^{s[c]}$ (ܡܛܠ and Sy$^p$ (ܚܠܦ) in Lk. follow their Greek texts in reading: 'for the sake / on account of the Son of man'.

[17] For الكذب = ܕܓܠܘܬܐ, cf. BA = R. G o t t h e i l, (ed.), *The Syriac Arabic glosses of Ishōʿ Bar ʿAli*, Memorie della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche (Anno CCCXXII), Serie V, Volume XIII, Roma 1910, Parte II, Roma 1928 and G. H o f f m a n n (ed.), *Ishōʿ Bar ʿAlī, Syrisch-arabische Glossen.* Erster Band (Authographie einer gothaischen Handschrift, enthaltend Bar ʿAlī's Lexicon von Alaf bis Mim), hsg. von G. H o f f m a n n, Kiel 1884; cf. also BB = R. D u v a l, (ed.), *Lexicon Syriacum auctore Hassano*

the Greek text. The word does not occur in Sy[s], the Old Latin b c d h g[1] k m, the Fathers Lucifer, Hilary, Tertullian and Augustine, and in Greek D. One might consider the possibility that it was missing in the so-called 'Western Text'. So it is possible that T a t i a n did not read it in his Roman copy of Matthew, and therefore did not include it in his *Diatessaron*. It may have been added in the Syriac *Diatessaron* in the course of its textual tradition.

## 5. Reconstruction of the Arabic Text and its Syriac Model

[1] الطوبى لكم |||| ܘܛܘܒܝܟܘܢ

[2] اذا ما ابغضكم الناس |||| ܐܡܬܝ ܕܢܣܢܘܢܟܘܢ ܒܢܝܢܫܐ

[3] وفصلوكم عنهم |||| ܘܢܦܪܫܘܢܟܘܢ

[4] وطردوكم |||| ܘܢܪܕܦܘܢܟܘܢ

[5] وعيروكم |||| ܘܢܚܣܕܘܢܟܘܢ

[6] وتكلموا فيكم |||| ܘܢܐܡܪܘܢ ܥܠܝܟܘܢ

[7] بكل كلام سوء |||| ܟܠ ܡܠܐ ܒܝܫܐ

[8] لاجلي |||| ܡܛܠܬܝ

[9] كذبا |||| ܒܕܓܠܘܬܐ

T[a] viii: 44–45: The place of Mark 4: 22–23 par

[1] ليس شيء خفي |||| ܠܝܬ ܡܕܡ ܓܝܪ ܕܟܣܐ

[2] الا ويظهر |||| ܕܠܐ ܢܬܓܠܐ

[3] ومستورٌ |||| ܐܘ [ܕ]ܡܛܫܝ [or: ܛܫܝܐ]

[4] الا ويعرف |||| ܕܠܐ ܢܬܝܕܥ

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*Bar Bahlule...* e pluribus codicibus edidit et notulis instruxit R. Duval, I–III, Parisiis 1888–1901 (reprint: Amsterdam 1970), see for BA and BB: R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, I–II, Oxford 1879–1901 (reprint: Hildesheim–New York 1981), I, col. 822. كذبا expresses the adverbial meaning of Syriac ܒܕܓܠܘܬܐ, 'with falsehood' > 'falsely'. Cf. also Lar, WP (كذبة من اجلى).

[1] There is not anything (= nothing) secret, [2] that will not be revealed,
[3] and {nothing} hidden, [4] that will not be known.

[5] ܡܢ ܟܢ ܠܗ ܐܕܢܢ ܝܣܡܥܢ |||| ܓܝܪ ܕ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܐܕܢܐ ܕܢܫܡܥ

[6] ܦܠܝܣܡܥ |||| ܢܫܡܥ

[5] If anyone has ears that {would} hear,
[6] (so) let him hear.

At first sight it is quite remarkable to find these Markan verses here. They
originally belong to the section of the *Parables* which are found in Mk. 4, Mt. 13
and Lk. 8. This section is found in T^a xvi: 22 — xvii: 37. One would have expected
the sayings of Mk. 4: 22–23 there, at their proper place. Why did the harmonist
omit them there and place them here? In order to find an answer we must look
closely at the passage in which they now occur. It consists of the following textual
elements:

**1. Lk. 6: 27a**, Lukan *Sondergut*,
a transition from the woes to the following part of the speech of Jesus in Luke,
but used here as a transition to Matthean material.

**2. Mt. 5: 13**. The harmonizer used only the Matthean wording of the saying,
but here he neglected the parallels **Mk. 9: 49–50** and **Lk. 14: 34–35**, which he
presented in a harmonized form in T^a xxv: 21–26.

**3. Mt. 5: 14a**, Matthean *Sondergut*.

**4. Mt. 5: 14b**, Matthean *Sondergut*.

**5. Mt. 5: 15**, which has verbal parallels in **Mk. 4: 21, Lk. 8: 16**, and **11: 33**.
At this point the harmonizer made a patchwork from all these texts and created
thus a text that differed from the Matthean wording at great length. None of the
parallel texts is recorded elsewhere in the harmony.

**6. Mt. 5: 16**, Matthean *Sondergut*.

**7. Mk. 4: 22–23 / Lk. 8: 17**. If one looks at the parallel texts mentioned
under 5, one can easily see that the text is a continuation of Mk. 4: 21, Lk. 8:
16 mentioned there as parallels of Mt. 5: 15, which were used to create a word
of Jesus placed in the Sermon on the Mount at its proper place but with a text
that was greatly influenced by the parallel sayings.

This passage shows the procedure which the harmonizer followed. It suggests
that the basic text of the Harmony of T a t i a n was fabricated on a kind of
Synopsis in which the parallels were registered and perhaps even written out.
This explains the fact that we find Mk. 4: 22–23 (Lk. 8: 17) here. It may be added
that the place of this Markan text was most likely found also in the Diatessaron

text of Ephraem. At the closing of ch. VI: 2,[18] E p h r a e m refers to Mt. 5: 14 and to 5: 13 (in this order), but introduces these quotations with a remarkable text: 'Therefore, just like through the communication of the sun with the eye (is) visible all what is visible, which is between heaven and earth, so is also the Life-giver the Light of the living (or: of life). And when He communicates with the mind, he lifts it up to the high, and shows it the h i d d e n things (ܟܣܝܬܐ), and makes it descend to the depth, and r e v e a l s to it the s e c r e t things (ܟܣܝܬܐ). Therefore: 'You are the light of the world' and 'You are the salt of the creation'. The introduction to these texts apparently presents a vague reference to Mk. 4: 22. Now it becomes clear that E p h r a e m, after having referred to the woes (ch. VI: 2 init.) and before entering into an exegesis of Mt. 5: 17–20 (ch. VI: 3), as so often dealt very briefly with the pericope in between, and did so in a reversed order: Mk. 4: 22, Mt. 5: 14, Mt. 5: 13, that is, the items 7, 3 and 2 of the passage indicated above.

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[18] Cf. L e l o i r, *Saint Éphrem, Commentaire*, in loco.