

# An early anonymous Greek translation of the Qur'ān

## The fragments from Niketas Byzantios' *Refutatio* and the anonymous *Abjuratio*

[Una traducción griega anónima temprana del Corán. Los fragmentos de la *Refutatio* de Nicetas de Bizancio y la *Abjuratio* anónima]

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**Resumen:** Presentamos en este artículo los fragmentos de la primera traducción completa conocida del Corán, acompañados de una introducción y notas. Esta traducción al griego, realizada algún tiempo antes de 780 d.C., no ha sido hasta ahora reconocida en los estudios coránicos ni en los bizantinos, sin que sus principales rasgos hayan sido advertidos. En el artículo argumentamos que la traducción trata de captar el texto coránico de forma precisa y con un espíritu benevolente, además de plantear como posible lugar de origen a la Siria omeya.

**Abstract:** In this article the fragments of the first known complete translation of the Qur'ān are presented with introduction and notes. This translation into Greek, produced sometime before 870 CE, has not previously been recognized in Qur'ānic or Byzantine studies, and its main traits have not been noted. In the article it is argued that the translation attempts to render the Qur'ānic text closely and in a benevolent spirit, and that a possible place of origin would be Umayyad Syria.

**Palabras clave:** Corán. Nicetas de Bizancio. *Abjuratio*. Bizancio.

**Key words:** Qur'ān. Niketas Byzantios. *Abjuratio*. Byzantium.



### Introduction

It has long been known that a few early Byzantine texts contain substantial quotations from the Qur'ān in Greek translation. The first editors of Niketas Byzantios' *Refutatio* and of the anonymous *Abjuratio* (i.e. abjuration formula for

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converts from Islam) marked the passages in these texts that are direct Quranic quotations, and in 1981 Erich Trapp dedicated an article to the question of a Greek Qur'ān (entitled "Gab es eine griechische Koranübersetzung?"), giving a firm positive answer to its existence.<sup>1</sup> In Förstel's recent edition of Niketas' *Refutatio* the Quranic passages are again noted, now also supplied with a German translation.<sup>2</sup>

But, despite this scholarly attention, the existence and character of this very early Greek translation (dating to before 870 CE) has not received the attention it deserves, and there seems to be three reasons for this. First, the fragments are found in texts that have a clear anti-Islamic aim, and in the very influential studies by Khoury the many translation samples found in the *Refutatio* are thought to have been produced by the polemicist Niketas himself.<sup>3</sup> This view, which – as demonstrated by Trapp – is definitely wrong, has probably (yet undeservedly) reduced many readers' interest in the Greek Quranic passages. Secondly, the primary interest in the *Refutatio* and the *Abjuratio* has been directed either primarily towards the Christian-Islamic polemics or, as in the case of Trapp, the specific Greek language used in the translation, mainly its vernacular features.<sup>4</sup> This emphasis on the vernacular traits has possibly also contributed to the failure to recognize the high quality of the Greek translation. Thirdly, the Greek text as such has not been held up against the Arabic original. Trapp only assesses the Greek version by consulting a modern commentary on the Qur'ān.<sup>5</sup> Khoury only

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<sup>1</sup> The *Refutatio*, which is also referred to as the *Confutatio*, has been edited in PG 105.669-805 and in Karl FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz. Schriften zum Islam*, «Corpus Islamo-Christianum. Series graeca» 5.1 (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2000), pp. 1-153. The *Abjuratio*, also referred to as the *Anathemata*, is edited PG 140.124-136. Erich TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 14 has a very brief conclusion to his question.

<sup>2</sup> See K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*.

<sup>3</sup> See Adel-Théodore KHOURY, *Les théologiens byzantins et l'islam. Textes et auteurs (VIIIe - XIIIe s.)* (Louvain-Paris: Éditions Nauwelaerts, 1969), p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> On polemics, see A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, and Dirk KRAUSMÜLLER, "Killing at God's Command: Niketas Byzantios' Polemic against Islam and the Christian Tradition of Divinely Sanctioned Murder", *Al-Masāq* 16 (2004), pp. 163-176; on the vernacular features, see E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 11-14.

<sup>5</sup> See E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 8, referring to that of R. Paret, and in comments pp. 9-10.

discusses the choice of a few central key words.<sup>6</sup> In fact, despite its early date – produced hardly more than two centuries after the redaction of the Qur'ān – the Greek text has received no attention as an early source to the history of the Qur'ān. But, as the present study will try to show, not least though comparison with the Arabic text, the translation is actually of high quality and was made by someone who worked in a positive spirit – maybe a Muslim – insisting on precision and consistency; furthermore, since the translation can with certainty be dated within the two first centuries after the Hidjra, it possibly has an Umayyad origin.

In the pages following on this introduction, appear the 82 fragments of the Greek Qur'ān found in the *Refutatio* and the *Abjuratio*.<sup>7</sup> Of these, all but one are attested in the *Refutatio* of Niketas Byzantios; the remaining fragment (no. LXII) is found in the anonymous *Abjuratio*, where (parts of) two of the fragments (no. III and LXXX) found in Niketas' text are also given. No other Greek text has – so far – been found containing independent attestations of the translation. Since Niketas' text has by its latest editor, Förstel, been dated to 866-870 CE, this date gives an *ante quem* for the translation.<sup>8</sup> The anonymous *Abjuratio* has been variously dated, but never to a date prior to this.<sup>9</sup> To every fragment in the list, the corresponding passage from the Arabic text of the Qur'ān has been added in the left column; below each fragment an English rendering of the Greek text has been attempted, inserted only as a tool for the reader. Such translation of a translation is an intricate matter, and the English version has been produced from the – tentative – aim of reproducing how a general contemporary reader with knowledge of Greek and religious matters would have understood the text. Single words in the Greek text that pertain to Niketas' or the anonymous author's quotation habits (words like λέγων, φησι, γάρ, i.e. 'saying', 'says', 'for' etc.) are given in italics and are not translated into English.<sup>10</sup> The Arabic parallel text is given in full phrases, so as not to disturb the meaning.

<sup>6</sup> See A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, pp. 120, 122, and 142-156.

<sup>7</sup> It is the aim of the present author to present a critical edition of the fragments, but since the major manuscript (Vat.gr. 681) is in the Vatican library, which is temporarily closed, this will have to await the reopening of the library.

<sup>8</sup> See K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, pp. x-xi. A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, p. 118 dates it to 855-856.

<sup>9</sup> A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, p. 187 dates it to end of ninth or beginning of tenth century.

<sup>10</sup> It has been impossible to make a firm assessment on whether the conjunction/particle δέ 'and/but' of the Greek text belongs to the translation or not, since it occasionally seems superfluous (see

### 1. The translation

The translation that we have is not a complete Greek translation of the Qur'ān but the fragments of a complete translation, quoted in the *Refutatio* of Niketas Byzantios and in the anonymous *Abjuratio*.<sup>11</sup> Basic features about the Greek translation have been noted by earlier scholars. It is clear from Niketas' manner of referring to the text that the translator had had before him the Qur'ān as we know it today, i.e. the complete text with the same names for the surahs and given in the same order, and that Niketas now had the Greek version of this. After a general introduction, Niketas goes through his Greek Qur'ān, giving extensive quotations from surahs 2 to 18 and again from surahs 38 to 114, supplied with many paraphrases; in the course of his exposition, he announces that he will pass over surahs 19 to 37,<sup>12</sup> yet he summarizes some of the content of surahs 19, 21, 27, and 31 (or 35), i.e. enough to show that this part of the text was also available to him. One difference, however, is noticeable between Niketas' and the common manner of referring to the Qur'ān. Niketas numbers the surahs differently, stating that the Qur'ān has 113 surahs (as against the common counting reaching the figure of 114).<sup>13</sup> This sum is reached because Niketas takes the first surah (*al-Fātiḥah*) for an introduction, not included in his numbering, consequently labelling the following surahs one digit lower than what is now normal praxis (*sūrat al-Baqarah* is called the first surah etc.). In the anonymous *Abjuratio*, the Qur'ān is referred to by name (τὸν Κοῦρᾶν), but no description is given of it.<sup>14</sup> The author of the *Abjuratio* shares some Quranic quotations with Niketas (notably surah 112, fragment LXXX) and may have taken some of the citations from Niketas, but due to the single quotation not found in Niketas' text (fragment LXII), he must also have had access to other sources than Niketas, possibly the translation itself.<sup>15</sup>

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fragments V, XVII, XXIV, and XXX), but in other cases (see fragments VIII, XI, and LXXXIII) is demanded by the Arabic text (though it may be Niketas' substitution for the frequent καὶ 'and'.

<sup>11</sup> PG 105.669-805 and Karl FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, pp. 1-153. The *Abjuratio* in PG 140.124-136.

<sup>12</sup> See PG 105.768 B13, Förstel, 110. Niketas never actually calls the text by name.

<sup>13</sup> See PG 105.708 C2, K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup> See the *Abjuratio*, PG 140.128b.

<sup>15</sup> See also E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinsche Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 14-17.

Former studies have concentrated on the Greek language of the translation as well as the polemical and theological context that the quotations appear in.<sup>16</sup> But no collation with the Arabic original has ever been made, and therefore important features have gone unnoticed. First of all, we may state that the translation is of the well-known type that goes word by word, and the translator seriously attempted to adhere to this procedure. This is evident in all the fragments (for minor exceptions, see the commentaries to fragments II, IV, and XXXVII), and this strictness facilitates the discernment between actual quotations and the many passages where Niketas (and to some extent the anonymous author of the *Abjuratio*) rephrases or summarizes the content of a Quranic passage. The word-by-word translation results in a specific type of Greek language, comparable to that of many other translations from Semitic languages. One specific trait are the frequent instances of the Greek pronoun αὐτός (in various genders and cases) as well as the personal and possessive pronouns, which serve to render the many Arabic pronominal suffixes; these are found even in a few cases where the pronoun is superfluous or even misleading in the Greek text (e.g. ἐξ αὐτῶν 'from them' in fragment XXX). The word-by-word technique required of the translator that he evinced a correct – or at least reasonable – meaning out of the given word order, and sometimes he would have to apply an enforced use of the Greek cases (e.g. in fragment LIII, where we find ἐγγίζοντα 'lying close' with the genitive). But the strict word-by-word method is no drawback to the translation. It reflected an accepted form of translation, and it made translators – when working properly as in this case – avoid loose paraphrases.

The Greek of the translation, as convincingly demonstrated by Trapp, is not a standard Byzantine Greek (of any stylistic level), but a partly vernacular and certainly un-classical Greek, which sets it apart from the Greek of Niketas (and also from that of the author of the *Abjuratio*). In fact, Niketas will often change these stylistic features into more classicizing expressions when rephrasing passages into his own words.<sup>17</sup> This – together with the errors that can only be explained through Niketas' misreading of a Greek text – is the most important argument in

<sup>16</sup> See especially E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinsche Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 7-17, A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, and D. KRAUSMÜLLER, "Killing at God's Command: Niketas Byzantios' Polemic against Islam and the Christian Tradition of Divinely Sanctioned Murder", *Al-Masāq* 16 (2004), pp. 163-176.

<sup>17</sup> See the examples in E. TRAPP's comments: "Gab es eine byzantinsche Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 11-14.

Trapp's demonstration of why the translator cannot be Niketas but must be someone else.<sup>18</sup> Still, Trapp's clear analysis of the linguistic features of the Greek text – and the lack of direct access to the Arabic text on the part of Niketas – does not lead him to any clear view of the method and origin of the translation. In one passage he speaks of a probable Eastern origin.<sup>19</sup> Trapp is thus thinking of a non-Byzantine origin, but he does not take the point any further.

Whoever produced the translation (and more than one person may well have been involved in the process), it should be stressed that, despite the mentioned linguistic features that may seem to point to a humble origin, it is actually of high quality.<sup>20</sup> The person (or persons) completing the task knew Arabic and Greek well, and a high degree of precision and consistency was aimed at and normally achieved. As to precision, one may point out the very few instances where the meaning of the Greek rendering diverts substantially from that normally taken to be the meaning of the Arabic text (see e.g. the discussion on *ισχύϊ* in fragment LXIX). Another feature that points to the wish for exactitude is the common recourse to etymologizing renderings. This is found both in contexts where the translator would have many choices and in passages where the safest way to proceed was to give a word with the closest possible connotations. An important instance of an etymologizing practice is found in the translation of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* ('allowed' and 'forbidden'), which are translated into forms of *λύω* and *κωλύω*. These Greek words normally mean 'loosen' and 'hinder', which are meanings of the roots in the Arabic words. But since the Greek words are found – though seldom – with the same connotations, the translator found it safe to employ them also in passages where they mean what amounts to 'allow' and 'forbid'.<sup>21</sup> That also consistency was an aim of the translator(s) may be seen e.g. from the way various forms of the root *kfr* 'infidels' is consistently translated into the Greek

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<sup>18</sup> See E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 8-10.

<sup>19</sup> See E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 11: „wenn man annimmt dass die Übersetzung im O (sic!) oder ausserhalb des Reiches entstanden ist“.

<sup>20</sup> By this I only imply that the person producing the translation was a linguistically qualified person, doing his utmost to reproduce the meaning of the Arabic text, not that the translation deserves to be put on a par with accredited translations.

<sup>21</sup> For these meanings of the Greek verbs, see G.W.H. LAMPE (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), under 'λύω'.

ἀρνησάμενοι ('deniers', another etymologizing rendering).<sup>22</sup> The five passages where this word comes up are from four different surahs (3, 5, 9 and 13), and the Arabic root *kfr* is never translated otherwise. Another example are the various Arabic words deriving from the radicals *bjn*. These are consistently translated into Greek words beginning with φανερ- (indicating something 'clear' or 'manifest').<sup>23</sup> The translator has also been blamed for leaving some Arabic words untranslated and instead offering only a transliteration (see fragments LXI, LXVI, LXVII, LXVIII, LXXVII, LXXVIII, LXXIX).<sup>24</sup> But these transliterations are mostly given because the quranic text explicitly presents a question on the meaning of the given word (possible exceptions to this are fragments LXVI, LXVIII, and LXXIX). The translator is therefore reproducing the question concerning the meaning of a word, which he would have felt to have destroyed had he given a Greek transliteration. To sum up, precision and consistency in a translation that in modern terms runs into several hundred pages is not achieved by chance, but must have been a conscious aim on the part of the translator.

Yet another feature of the Greek translation is the possible aim of retaining rhymes. In some surahs, as in surah 114 (fragment LXXXII), rhyme is produced by the fact that each verse ends with the same word in the same form. Such repetition of a word is likely to reappear in a translation, though the rhyme will only be reproduced if the word is again placed at the end and given (in every instance) in the same grammatical form (ἄνθρώπων 'men' in genitive plural, as a rendering of the Arabic *al-nāsi* 'the people' in genitive singular). But in more complex instances, a rhyme structure is further elaborated upon in the Greek version. In surah 91.1-7 (fragment LXX), the rhyme of the Arabic original (seven phrases ending in *-āha*) is repeated in Greek phrases ending in various forms of the pronoun αὐτός (in the gender and case demanded by the context). But in the three last phrases the rhyme is furthermore enhanced by three Greek verbs coming before the pronoun. These three verbs are all of the *-ίζω/-ίζω* type, producing rhymes in *-ισεν/-ασεν αὐτόν/-ήν* (see fragment LXX with commentary). This rhyme pattern is hardly the result of hazard, but seems to point to a translator with

<sup>22</sup> See fragments XIV (3 times), XXVI, XXXIII, XXXIV and XLI.

<sup>23</sup> See fragments II, IV, XI and LIX. In fragment XIX however φανερώς is found as a translation of *jahratin*.

<sup>24</sup> See the critique of GÜTERBOCK, cited by E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 7.

esthetic ambitions. Together with the precision and consistency attested, this excludes any but a benevolent translator.

## 2. Possible origin

As is evident from the information given above, Niketas is not the translator: he had no knowledge of Arabic, and he made mistakes that can only be explained from his misreading of a Greek text. There is no reason to suspect that the author (or redactor) of the *Abjuratio* was behind the translation, since so few passages from it found its way into his text. In fact, due to the vernacular traits in the language of the translation, it is hardly conceivable that it was produced by someone at or affiliated to the central institutions in Constantinople, as was Niketas.<sup>25</sup>

With the observations given above in mind, no definite answer may be given to the question of place and time of origin (except before 870 CE). Trapp argued that the translation could not be from before early ninth century because the copy errors made in Niketas' quotations show that he read the Greek text from a minuscule manuscript.<sup>26</sup> But this only gives a date for the copy that Niketas used, and his copy could have been a copy of an older – and possibly majuscule – manuscript. One may, however, make attempts to envisage what kind of milieu could have fostered and carried out such a vast enterprise. To the present writer, only three possible types of origin can be thought of: 1. within a scholarly circle (with a polemical aim), 2. as product of a religious community whether for liturgy, missionary activities, or as a help for the non-Arab believer, or 3. as an administrative tool in a Muslim, but (at least partly) Greek-speaking state.

As to the first possibility, this is what Khoury envisaged and what the observations made above practically have ruled out. We should, however, bear in mind that the first translation of the Qur'ān made into Latin resulted from exactly such an environment. In 1143 Robert of Ketton produced, at the behest of Peter the Venerable, a Qur'ān translation entitled *Lex Mahomet pseudoprophete*, and Peter's intentions were definitely polemical.

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<sup>25</sup> On the scant knowledge we have regarding his person, see K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, pp. ix-xi.

<sup>26</sup> See E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 10-11.



That the translation should have been produced within a Muslim context for religious purposes – the second possibility – cannot be ruled out, especially since the dominance of Arabic was not as firmly set in the first Muslim century as later. This was the aim of the first complete version of the Qur'ān into Persian.

The third suggestion – that the Greek translation should have been appeared as an administrative tool is based on the fact that Umayyad rule was for more than a century fully or partially carried out in Greek.<sup>27</sup> Inheriting Byzantine lands, the new Umayyad rulers deemed it preferable or even necessary to continue administrative dealings in the way that had for centuries been the customary. In such a milieu where Greek would have to express what was often first conceived in Arabic, a need for a precise way of referring to the holy book also in the administrative language would have become a necessity.

An argument against this is that the writings of John of Damascus (c. 676 - 750) do not seem to reflect any knowledge of the translation, and John had exactly inherited a high administrative position in the Umayyad administration in Damascus.<sup>28</sup> In his writings, which probably all stem from the later period in his life where he lived in retirement at the monastery of Mount Sabba, he makes numerous references to the Qur'ān. Had he had access to the 'official' translation, he would – one could argue – have made use of it. But John was not working in Damascus, and would probably not have access to the translation when in a monastery. In any case, he could read the Arabic text and was clearly not interested in producing or reproducing direct translations. This goes also for some passages in his works that have been deemed close to being translations (see the comments on fragment IX). In the writings of John's pupil Abu Qurra (750 – 820/5), there is one passage that possibly reflects knowledge of the Greek translation under discussion, even if the word Abu Qurra uses diverts somewhat from the word attested here. Referring to surah 112 (see fragment LXXX), Abu Qura translates *ṣamad* with *σφυρόπηκτον* ('solidly compounded'), a word which shares one of its constituent parts with the translator's *ὀλόσφυρος* ('completely solid').<sup>29</sup> Both being very rare words in Greek, a connection is likely, but it may stem from indirect sources; another possibility is that the text is a somewhat later translation of a text that Abu

<sup>27</sup> On this, see G. R. HAWTING, *The First Dynasty of Islam. The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750* (London & New York: Routledge, 1986), pp. 61-64.

<sup>28</sup> See Daniel J. SAHAS, *John of Damascus on Islam. The 'Heresy of the Ishmaelites'* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972), pp. 41-45.

<sup>29</sup> The text of Abu Qurra is found in PG 97.1545C.

Qurra had originally written in Arabic. The translation of *ṣamad* was in any case much discussed by Byzantine authors. In the introductory part of his *Refutatio*, where Niketas does not depend on the translation as source (but probably on some earlier polemicist), the translation of this Arabic word has been corrupted into ὀλόσφαιρος ('completely round'), an absurd meaning which Niketas derides without noticing that he has another, more correct, rendering of the word later in his text. Unfortunately, it was the erroneous rendering of the word that was to survive into some later Byzantine polemics. This again points to the prior existence of a discussion of at least surah 112 based on our translation.

Finally, to support an Umayyad origin, a few words may be adduced from the translation to show that the translator was keen on using distinct words when translating passages that could have a legalistic bearing. In surah 3 (fragment XIV), *nāsir* ('protector') becomes ἔκδικος ('legal representative', 'public advocate'<sup>30</sup>); and in surah 5 (fragment XXV), *lā tatthidhu* ('do not adopt/imitate/assume a position'<sup>31</sup>) is rendered μὴ γίνεσθε ἀντιλήπτορες ('do not become protectors'<sup>32</sup>). Furthermore, if a translation existed in Damascus, one may imagine that a bilingual Qur'ān would have been produced for easy reference. If so, that would explain why the line that fell out in the transmission of the Greek text of fragment XXXV (see the commentary to this) is shorter than what would normally fill a line in a column of a Greek manuscript. Trapp suspected a very small manuscript,<sup>33</sup> but chances are that the column was short because two columns were needed on every page, one for the Arabic text and one for the Greek translation.

### 3. The fragments

The text given below has for the *Refutatio* been taken from the edition of Förstel, unless otherwise indicated in the notes; for the *Abjuratio* it is from the *PG* edition.

<sup>30</sup> See G.W.H. LAMPE (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, under 'ἔκδικος'.

<sup>31</sup> See Hans WEHR, *A dictionary of modern written Arabic* (Ithaca, NY: Spoken Language Services, 1976), p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> See G.W.H. LAMPE (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, under 'ἀντιλήπτορ'.

<sup>33</sup> See E. TRAPP, "Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?", *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), pp. 9 and 12.

## I

## Qur'ān 2:23

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّمَّنْ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ  
صَادِقِينَ

— Förstel 48; PG 105.713a

Ἐάν ἐστε ἐν σκανδάλω περὶ ὧν κατηγορομεν ἐπὶ τὸν δοῦλον ἡμῶν, ἀγάγετε ᾠδὴν ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων αὐτοῦ, ... καὶ ἀγάγετε τοὺς μάρτυρας ὑμῶν, .... εἰ πάρεξ Θεοῦ, φησὶ, ἐστὲ ἀληθεῖς.<sup>34</sup>

“For if you are offended by what was sent down to your servant, then bring a verse of its like, and bring your witnesses, if without God you are true”.

## II

## Qur'ān 2:87

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ ۗ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيْتَ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ  
الْقُدُسِ

— Förstel 50; PG 105.716a

Ἐπηγάγομεν τῷ Μωϋσεῖ γραφὴν, καὶ ἀπεστείλαμεν μετ' αὐτὸν ἀποστόλους· καὶ ἐπηγάγομεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ υἱῷ Μαρίας τὴν φανέρωσιν, καὶ ἐνεδυναμώσαμεν αὐτὸν διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Two short insertions by Niketas are left out in the text given (place in text marked by dots). The text left out is τῶν προφητῶν δηλαδὴ λέγων (‘referring to those of the prophets’) and τοὺς αὐτοὺς λέγων προφήτας, ἢ καὶ τοὺς δυνατοὺς ἐξετάσαι ἀληθὴ ἢ ψευδῆ λόγον (‘referring to the same prophets or to those who are able to discern a true speech from a false’). ἐστὲ ἀληθεῖς is Trapp’s conjecture; the manuscript has ἔσται ἀληθής (‘he(?) will be true’), adopted by Förstel.

<sup>35</sup> In the last two words we see a (small) deviation from the word by word procedure: in the Arabic the word order is *bi-rūh al-qudus* (lit. “by-the spirit-of-the-holy”, which is understood like “by the holy spirit”). This has been changed into the familiar Greek διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος (lit. “through-the-holy-spirit”).

“We sent down the writing to Moses, and we dispatched prophets after him. And we sent down to Jesus, son of Mary, the manifestation, and we strengthened him through the holy spirit”.

## III

Qur’ān 2:150

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ

— Förstel 56; PG 105.720c

Ἐνθα γὰρ ἐστὲ, φησὶ, ὀρθώσατε ὑμῶν τὰ πρόσωπα εἰς τὸ μέρος τοῦ προσκυνητηρίου τοῦ παρατηρήματος.<sup>36</sup>

“Wherever you are, raise your faces in the direction of the prayerhouse of observation”.

## IV

Qur’ān 2:168

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَلًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

— Förstel 56; PG 105.721a1

Φάγετε γὰρ, φησὶν, ἐκ τῶν ὄντων ἐν τῇ γῆ· καθαρὰ γὰρ καὶ καλὰ· καὶ μὴ ἐξακολουθεῖτε ἐν τοῖς ἵχνεσιν τοῦ Σατανᾶ· αὐτὸς ἐχθρὸς ὑμῶν ἐστὶ φανερός.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> The three last words of this fragment are also cited in the *Abjuratio* (PG 153 15ff.); see E. TRAPP, “Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?“, *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> It was observed by E. TRAPP, “Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?“, *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 11 that a rare use of ἐξακολουθεῖω with the preposition ἐν + dative is found here, as against the normal classical ἐξακολουθεῖω + dative. We may note that the presence of the preposition marks a small deviation from the words contained in the Arabic text, for it has no preposition (or anything else) between the word meaning ‘follow’ and ‘footsteps’.



εἰς αὐτάς εἰς παράκλησιν· καὶ φάγετε ἑσπέρας καὶ πῖετε, ἕως ἂν τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ σκοτίου φαινόμενον ῥάμμα μέλαν διὰ τῆς ἡμέρας φανῆ ἄσπρον· καὶ πάλιν πληρώσατε τὴν νηστείαν ἕως τῆς ἑσπέρας· καὶ [μὴ] μίχθητε αὐταῖς ὑμῶν συχναζόντων ἐν τῷ προσκυνητηρίῳ· αὕτη ἐστὶ νομοθεσία Θεοῦ, καὶ μὴ ἐγγίσητε αὐτάς.<sup>39</sup>

“The month of Ramaḍān is the one in which the reading was sent down to us ...”

“Fast in it! ... The night of the fast will be (the time) for you to have intercourse with your wives. For they are a covering for you, and you are a covering for them. For God knows that you risk your souls during the fast, and He becomes gracious towards you. Have intercourse with them according to the command, and eat and drink during the night, till the thread that seems black due to the darkness appears white due to the daylight. And fulfill again the fast until evening. And do not have intercourse with them when you must be gathered in the prayerhouse. This is the command of God, and do not come near them”.

## VII

Qur’ān 2:191

وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقَّفْتُمُوهُمْ

— Förstel 58; PG 721c5

Φονεύσατε, λέγων, αὐτοὺς ὅπου ἂν συναντήσητε αὐτοῖς·

“Kill them wherever you meet them”.

## VIII

Qur’ān 2:194

فَمَنْ أَعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا أَعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ

<sup>39</sup> A large part of verse 185 (and all of 186) have been left out by Niketas. This is marked by dots. The μη of the last sentence was inserted already by the editor of the *PG*.

— Förstel 58; PG 105.721c6

Καὶ ὅστις δὲ μνησικακεῖ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ἐχθράνατε ἐπ' αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐχθρανεν ἐπάνω ὑμῶν.

“And who bears a grudge against you, hate him you as he hated you”.

IX

Qur'ān 2:223

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَاتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ

— Förstel 58; PG 105.721c8

Αἱ γυναῖκες ὑμῶν νεατὸς ὑμῶν· εἰσέλθετε εἰς τοὺς νεατοὺς ὑμῶν ὅθεν βούλεσθε· καὶ συνέλθετε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν.<sup>40</sup>

“Your wives are your fallow land. Go to your fallow land whenever you wish. And come together with your souls”.

X

Qur'ān 2:230

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ طَلَّقَا أَنْ يَفِيءَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ

— Förstel 58; PG 105.721c15

Ἐάν τις ἀπολύσῃ γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, οὐκέτι ἐξέσται αὐτῷ μετὰ τὸ ἀπολυθῆναι αὐτήν, ἕως ἂν ζευχθῇ ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ· καὶ ἐὰν ἀπολύσῃ αὐτήν ὁ δεύτερος, οὐκ ἔστι κατάκριμα ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψωσι πρὸς ἀλλήλους· οὗτοι γὰρ, φησὶν, νόμοι Θεοῦ.

<sup>40</sup> The second line of this fragment is cited again by Niketas in PG 105.708B with slight variation, probably due to manuscript corruption. According to Sahas, 91, John of Damascus also gives a direct quotation of this passage in Greek, saying: Εἴργασαι τὴν γῆν, ἣν ὁ Θεὸς ἔδωκε σοι, καὶ φιλοκάλησον αὐτήν (‘work your land, which God has given you, and bless it’). But this sounds more like a paraphrase.

“If someone divorces his wife, it will no longer be possible for him to divorce her again, before she has been married to another man. And if the second husband divorces her, there is no condemnation on them if they turn to each other again. For these are the laws of God”.

## XI

Qur’ān 2:256

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۗ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

— Förstel 58; PG 105.724a

Οὐκ ἀναγκάσαι δὲ εἰς πίστιν· ἐφανερώθη γὰρ τὸ εὐπρόσδεκτον ἐκ τοῦ σφαλεροῦ.

“There is no enforcement in faith. For the well-received has become manifest through the misguided”.

## XII

Qur’ān 3:42

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ طَهَّرَكَ وَطَهَّرَكَ وَأَصْطَفَىٰكَ عَلَىٰ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ

— Förstel 62; PG 105.725a4

Σὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἐξελέξατο ὑπὲρ τὰς ἀπ’ αἰώνων γυναῖκας:

“God has elected you above the women of the ages”.<sup>41</sup>

## XIII

Qur’ān 3:44-46

نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَفَلَمَنَّمْهُمْ آيَاتُهُمْ يَكْفُلْ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

<sup>41</sup> K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 62 – with no indication in the apparatus criticus – prints ὑπὲρ τὰς ἐξ αἰώνων γυναῖκας (“above the women out of the ages”). This may be the manuscript reading, but this combination of preposition and noun is otherwise unattested.



إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَكَةُ يَمْرُؤُا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَأَلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ  
وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

— Förstel 62; PG 105.725a7

Ὅπερ κατηνέγκαμεν εἰς σέ, σοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἐκεῖσε, ὅταν ἤπλωσαν αὐτῶν τὰς ἀγκάλας ἄγγελοι, ποῖος ἐξ αὐτῶν προσδέζεται τὴν Μαρίαν· καὶ οὐκ ἦς ἐκεῖσε· τοὺς δὲ ἄγγελους πρὸς αὐτὴν φάσαι· Ὁ Θεὸς, φησὶν, εὐαγγελίζεται σε τὸν Λόγον αὐτοῦ· Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Μαρίας ἐπιτυχάνων ἐν τῷ βίῳ τούτῳ, καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι ὑπάρχων,

ὄν ἐκ τῶν ἐγγιζόντων, καὶ λαλῶν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀπὸ σπαργάνων, φησὶν, ὑπάρχων πρεσβύτης καὶ ἐκ τῶν χρησίμων.<sup>42</sup>

“What We have brought down to you, while you were not present, when the angels spread out their arms, who among them should receive Mary. And you were not there”.

“And the angels said to her: “God makes you the good announcement of his word. Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, who succeeds in this life and will live in the coming life, being one of those that come near, speaking to men from the cradle and being also among the respected when old”.

<sup>42</sup> It may be correct as suggested by the editor of the *PG*, that ἀγκάλας (‘arms’) should be changed into ἀστραγάλους (‘dices’) or καλάμους (‘reeds’), but unable to settle the matter I have left it as given by the manuscript. After καὶ οὐκ ἦς ἐκεῖσε (‘and you were not there’), the Greek text has nothing corresponding to the last two words of the Arabic text. The passage τοὺς δὲ ... φάσαι ‘And the angels said to her’ has clearly been changed into an acc. with inf. by Niketas; still, it directly renders the Arabic text.

## XIV

Qur'ān 3:55-56

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعَكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرَكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ  
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذُّهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ

— Förstel 62-64; PG 105.725b

καὶ ὅτι εἶπεν ὁ Θεὸς· Ἐγὼ σε ὑποβάλλω θανάτῳ, καγὼ σε ἀνυψῶ πρὸς με, καὶ  
καθαρίσω σε ἐκ τῶν ἀρνησαμένων καὶ καταστήσω τοὺς ἀκολουθήσαντάς σοι  
ἐπάνω τῶν ἀρνησαμένων ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἀναστάσεως· τοὺς δὲ ἀρνησαμένους  
κολάσω κόλασιν βαρεῖαν ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῖς ἔκδικος·

“And that God said: “I subject you to death and I will exhalt you to me, and I will  
purify you of the deniers and I will raise those who follow you against the deniers  
on the day of the resurrection. I will punish the deniers with a heavy punishment in  
the coming, and they will have no protector.”

## XV

Qur'ān 3:62

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ

— Förstel 64; PG 725c

Αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐξήγησις ἡ ἀληθινή.

“This is the true narrative”.

## XVI

Qur'ān 3:64

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا

— Förstel 64; PG 105.728a

Ἄε οἱ οἰκεῖοι τῆς γραφῆς ... δεῦτε εἰς τὸν λόγον τὸν στοιχοῦντα μέσα ἡμῶν καὶ ὑμῶν, τοῦ μὴ δουλεύειν εἰ μὴ τὸν Θεόν, καὶ τοῦ μὴ θεῖναι αὐτῷ κοινωνὸν τίποτε.<sup>43</sup>

“Oh, the adherents of the writing, join together in the word that is in agreement among us and you, that we shall worship none but God and that we shall not make anything like Him”.

#### XVII

Qur'ān 3:144

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ

— Förstel 66; PG 105.729a

Ὁ δὲ Μωάμετ οὐκ ἔστιν εἰ μὴ ἀπόστολος. παρήλθον δὲ καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ἀπόστολοι. Ἐὰν ἀποθάνῃ ἢ σφαγῇ, ἀποστρέφεσθε εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω.<sup>44</sup>

“And Muḥammad is only a messenger, and before him came other messengers. If he dies or is killed, would you turn back?”

#### XVIII

Qur'ān 4:88

أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْتَدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا

<sup>43</sup> The interjection Ἄε ‘Oh’ (see also fragments XXV, XXVI, and XXVIII) is very rare, and is only given as gloss in the dictionary of Sophocles, with no indication as to its meaning. Here it is clearly meant to represent the Arabic *yā*. It is most probably a derivation from ἄγε (imperative of ἄγω) and represents the intermediate step into the modern Greek αἶ (through the same linguistic development that made classical ἀετός into modern αἰτός. I owe this acute observation to Dr. Giorgos Livadas. Note the consistent translation of the Arabic *ahl* ‘people’ into οἰκεῖοι ‘adherent/members’. A short insertion by Niketas is left out in the text given (place in text marked by dots). The text left out is τοὺς ὑπὸ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τελούοντας ἐνταῦθα καλῶν (‘thereby indicating those enlisted under the Gospel’).

<sup>44</sup> Niketas does not take the last sentence as a question, but there is nothing to exclude that it was so in the original (as in the Arabic text).

— Förstel 68; PG 105.732b

Θέλετε ἄρα ὁδηγήσαι τὸν ἐπλάνησεν ὁ Θεός· καὶ τὸν πλανᾷ ὁ Θεός, οὐ μὴ εὐρεθῆι αὐτῷ ὁδός.

“So do you want to guide someone that God as led astray? And who God leads astray, for him no road was found”.

### XIX

Qur’ān 4:153

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ ۖ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا آلِهَةً جَهَنَّمَ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي سُلُوكِهِمْ

— Förstel 70; PG 105.732d – 733a

Αἰτοῦνταί σε οἱ οἰκεῖοι τῆς γραφῆς, τοῦ κατενέγκαι ἐπάνω αὐτῶν γραφήν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ· καὶ γὰρ ἠτήσαντο τὸν Μωϋσῆν μεγαλότερα τούτων καὶ εἶπον· Δεῖξον ἡμῖν τὸν Θεὸν φανερώς· καὶ ἔλαβεν αὐτοὺς τὸ θεῖον διὰ τὰς ἀδικίας αὐτῶν.<sup>45</sup>

“The adherents of the writing ask of you that you send down to them from heaven a writing. For of Moses they asked for things greater than these and said: “Show us God manifestly.” And the divine took hold of them due to their unrighteousness”.

### XX

Qur’ān 4:160 + 4:151 + 4:155

فَيُظْلَمُ مَنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّت لَّهُمْ  
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا  
فَبِمَا نَفْسِهِمْ مَّيْتَقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بَيَّاتٍ اللَّهُ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغَيْرِ

<sup>45</sup> On οἰκεῖοι ‘adherents’ see fragment XVI.

— Förstel 72; PG 105.733b

Διὰ τὴν ἀδικίαν τῶν Ἰουδαϊσάντων ἐκωλύσαμεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν, ἅπερ ἐξὸν αὐτοῖς ἦσαν, καὶ ἠτοιμάσαμεν ἐξ αὐτῶν κόλασιν σφοδρὰν καὶ διὰ τὸ φονεῦσαι αὐτοῦς τοὺς προφήτας ἄνευ δικαίου.

“Due to the transgression of the Jews, We have made forbidden to them what was formerly possible for them”.

“And We prepared them a heavy punishment”

“because they unrightfully killed the prophets”.

XXI

Qur'ān 4:157-158

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا بَل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ

— Förstel 72; PG 105.733c

Καὶ τοῦ λέγειν Ἰουδαίους, Ἡμεῖς ἐφονεῦσαμεν τὸν Χριστὸν τὸν Ἰησοῦν υἱὸν Μαρίας ἀπόστολον Θεοῦ· οὐκ ἐφόνευσαν αὐτὸν οὐδὲ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτὸν, ἀλλ' ὁμοιώθη αὐτοῖς. οἵτινες δὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι δισταγμῶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ, οὐκ ἔχουσιν εἰς αὐτὸν εἶδησιν, εἰ μὴ ἀκολουθίαν τοῦ νομίζειν· καὶ οὐκ ἐφόνευσαν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, μᾶλλον ὑψωσεν αὐτὸν ὁ Θεὸς πρὸς ἑαυτόν.<sup>46</sup>

“And because the Jews said: “We killed Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Gods messenger.” They did not kill and they did not crucify him, but it seemed to them (as if). Those who are doubtful due to uncertainty concerning him have no knowledge about him, only acceptance of a belief. And in reality they did not kill him, rather God exalted him to Himself”.

<sup>46</sup> In the passage οἵτινες δὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι δισταγμῶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ, Trapp, 9 suspects that some words have fallen, reconstructing the passage in the following way: οἵτινες δὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι <περὶ αὐτοῦ/ εἰσιν ἐν> δισταγμῶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ (‘those who doubt about him are ind uncertainty concerning him’).

## XXII

Qur'ān 4:171

إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ

— Förstel 72; PG 105.736a

Ὁ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Μαρίας ἀπόστολος Θεοῦ ἐστι καὶ λόγος αὐτοῦ, ὃν ἔρριψεν πρὸς τὴν Μαρίαν, καὶ πνεῦμα ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

“Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, is God’s messenger and His word, which he hurled to Mary, and spirit of Him”.

## XXIII

Qur'ān 5:19

أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ

— Förstel 74; PG 105.736d

Τοῦ μὴ λέγειν ὑμᾶς, *ρησιν*, “Οὐκ ἦλθεν ἡμῖν ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος”.

“... so that you will not say: “No bringer of god news came to us”.

## XXIV

Qur'ān 5:46-47

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَعَاتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى  
 وَنُورٌ مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ  
 وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ ۖ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

— Förstel 76; PG 105.737a-b

Ἀποστείλαμεν δὲ ἀκόλουθον τούτων, ... Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τῆς Μαρίας εἰς τὸ ἀληθοποιῆσαι τὰ πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὰ τοῦ νόμου, καταγαγόντες αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ὁδήγησις, φῶς, καὶ δικαιοσύνη, κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ πρὸ αὐτοῦ νόμου,

εἰς ὁδήγησιν καὶ ἐπαγγελίαν τοῖς φοβουμένοις, καὶ εἰς τὸ κρῖναι τοὺς τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ἕνεκεν τῶν κατήγαγεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τούτῳ· καὶ ὅστις ἂν <μη> κρίνη εἰς ἄπερ κατήγαγεν ὁ Θεὸς, οὗτοί εἰσι παράνομοι.<sup>47</sup>

“And We sent Jesus son of Mary to follow after these, to make true the commandments from before him, bringing down to him also the gospel, in which there is guidance, light and justice, in compliance with the law from before him, for guidance and exhortation to the frightened and to judge those belonging to the gospel, because of whom God brought down in this (*or* according to that which God brought down in this). And whoever does not judge in accordance with what God brought down, they are lawless”.

## XXV

Qur'ān 5:51

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصْرَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَاِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ

— Förstel 76; PG 105.737c

Ἄε ὑμεῖς οἱ πιστεύσαντες ..., μὴ γίνεσθε ἀντιλήπτορες Ἰουδαίων ἢ Χριστιανῶν. ὅστις γὰρ ὑπερασπίζεται αὐτῶν ἐξ ὑμῶν, οὗτος ὑπάρχει ἐξ αὐτῶν.<sup>48</sup>

“Oh, you believers, do not become patrons of Jews or Christians. Whoever of you protects them (litt. with a shield), he will become one of them”.

## XXVI

Qur'ān 5:68

<sup>47</sup> A short insertion by Niketas is left out in the text given (place in text marked by dots). The text left out is πάντων δηλαδὴ τῶν προφητῶν ('i.e. all the prophets'). K. FÖRSTEL ([ed.], *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 202) takes the relative pronoun ὅστις to refer to Jesus and puts the rest of the sentence in cruces, since he finds fault with the meaning. There is, however, no need for this, as ὅστις here simply introduces – as it often does – an indefinite relative clause ('whoever ...').

<sup>48</sup> On Ἄε ('Oh'), see notes to fragment XVI. A short insertion by Niketas is left out in the text given (place in text marked by dots). The text left out is πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους φωνῶν ('speaking to the barbarians').

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمُ الْبُحُورُ وَالْأَنْجِيلُ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا  
مِّنْهُمْ مَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا

— Förstel 76; PG 105.737d – 740a

Ἦε οικεῖοι γραφῶν, οὐδέν ἐστε ἕως ἂν ἐξακολουθῆτε τῷ νόμῳ, καὶ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, καὶ τοῖς κατενεχθεῖσι παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ὑμῶν· προστίθεται γὰρ ἐκ τῶν κατενεχθέντων ἡμῖν παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου πλάνη καὶ ἄρνησις.<sup>49</sup>

“Oh, you adherents of the writings, you are nothing before you follow the law and the gospel, and what has been brought down to you by your Lord. For error and denial are increased by what has been brought down to us by the Lord”.

#### XXVII

Qur’ān 6:142

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ

— Förstel 78; PG 105.740c

Καὶ μὴ ἐξακολουθεῖτε, *φησι*, τῇ ὁδῷ τοῦ Σατανᾶ.

“And do not follow the path of Satan”.

#### XXVIII

Qur’ān 7:158

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

— Förstel 80; PG 105.741c

Ἦε ἄνθρωποι· ἐγὼ ἀπόστολός εἰμι Θεοῦ πρὸς ὑμᾶς πάντα.<sup>50</sup>

“Oh, men! I am God’s messenger to you all”.

<sup>49</sup> On Ἦε (‘Oh’) and οικεῖοι (‘adherents’), see notes to fragment XVI.

<sup>50</sup> On Ἦε (‘Oh’), see notes to fragment XVI.



XXIX  
Qur'ān 7:160

فَأَنْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا

— Förstel 82; PG 105.744b5  
Καὶ ἔβρυσαν ἐξ αὐτῆς δώδεκα πηγαί.  
“And twelve sources burst forth”.

XXX  
Qur'ān 7:166

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَنْ مَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ

— Förstel 82; PG 105.744b7  
Ὅταν δὲ ἐπέμειναν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι εἰς ἃ ἐκωλύοντο ἐξ αὐτῶν, εἶπομεν αὐτοῖς· Γένεσθε πίθηκοι.<sup>51</sup>  
And when the Jews persisted in what they had been forbidden from them, We said to them: “Become monkeys.”

XXXI  
Qur'ān 7:178

مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

—Förstel 82; PG 105.744b14  
Τὸν ὀδηγεῖ ὁ Θεός, ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν ὠδηγημένος· καὶ τοὺς πλανᾷ, ἐκεῖνοί εἰσιν ἐλλειμματισμένοι.

<sup>51</sup> The ἐξ αὐτῶν ‘from them’ reflects Arabic idiomatic and is superfluous in the Greek sentence.

“Whoever God guides, he is guided. And those whom he leads astray, these are the deficient”.

## XXXII

Qur’ān 7:188

لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَاسْتَكْتَرْتُ مِنَ  
الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۗ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

— Förstel 82; PG 105.744c

Οὐ κυριεύω τῆς ψυχῆς μου ὠφέλειαν οὔτε βλάβην, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ὁ Θεὸς θέλει. ... Καὶ εἰ ἐγίνωσκον τὰ ἀπόντα, εἶχον πλεονάσαι ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ· καὶ οὐκ εἶχέν μου ἄψασθαι δεινόν. Οὐκ εἰμι ἐγὼ εἰ μὴ ἀναστάλης καὶ εὐαγγελίστης λαοῦ πιστεύοντος.<sup>52</sup>

“I am not master of my own soul, neither for gain or for loss, but only for what God wants. And if I knew of what is absent, I would have an excess of the good, and no evil could have touched me. I am only a sender and bringer of good news to a believing people”.

## XXXIII

Qur’ān 9:30-31

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَزِيزٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ۗ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ ۗ يُضَاهُونَ  
قَوْلَ فَرِيقٍ مِّن قَبْلُ ۗ قَتَلْتَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ ۗ اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهَبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحِ  
ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا

<sup>52</sup> The word ἀναστάλης conjectured by Förstel (here tentatively translated as ‘originator’), as well as the manuscript’s ἀνατάλης, are otherwise unattested in Greek.

— Förstel 86; PG 105.745c

Λέγουσιν Ἰουδαῖοι ὅτι Ἰσραὴλ ἐστὶν υἱὸς Θεοῦ· καὶ λέγουσιν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ· τοῦτό ἐστιν ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν διὰ τῶν στομάτων αὐτῶν· ἰσοφωνοῦσι τοῖς λόγοις τῶν ἀρνησαμένων ἐκ πρίν· φονεύσει αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς, ἕνεκεν τῶν ἀρνοῦνται· ἐπελάβοντο τοὺς ἀποστόλους αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς κυρίου πάρεξ Θεοῦ· καὶ τὸν Χριστὸν υἱὸν τῆς Μαρίας· καὶ οὐκ ἐκελεύσθησαν δουλεῦειν εἰ μὴ Θεοῦ ἐνός.

“The Jews say that Israel is son of God. And the Christians say that Messiah is the son of God. This is their speech through their mouths. They liken their speech to the deniers of old. God will kill them, because of the things they deny. They have taken their messengers and priests to be lords beside God, as well as the Messiah, son of Mary. And they were commanded to serve only one God”.

#### XXXIV

Qur'ān 9:32-33

وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ  
هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

— Förstel 90; PG 105.749c

Κὰν ἀηδῶς ἔχουσιν οἱ ἀρνησάμενοι, Θεὸς ἐστὶν ὁ πέμψας τὸν ἀπόστολον αὐτοῦ εἰς ὁδήγησιν καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἀληθινὴν τοῦ δεσπόζειν αὐτὸν ἐπάνω πάσης πίστεως.<sup>53</sup>

“Even if the deniers dislike it, it is God who sent His messenger, for the guidance and true belief, to make it rule over all faith”.

#### XXV

Qur'ān 9:61

وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤَدُّونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ ۚ قُلْ أُذُنٌ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

<sup>53</sup> K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 90 writes ἔχουσιν without any note, as against the obviously correct ἔχωσιν of the *PG* edition (and probably also the manuscript).

— Förstel 90; PG 105.749d

Τινὲς σιαίνουσι τὸν προφήτην, καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι αὐτὸς [οὗς ἐστι. Ἄε, αὐτὸς ὑμῖν οὗς ἀγαθ]οῦ ἐστί.<sup>54</sup>

“Some cause loathing to the prophet and say that he is ear. Oh, he is the ear of the good for you”.

XXXVI

Qur’ān 10:2

أَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ أَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمَ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

— Förstel 90; PG 105.752b

ἼΑρα ἦν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ξένον ὅτι ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ Θεὸς πρὸς ἄνθρωπον ἐξ αὐτῶν τοῦ διαμαρτύρασθαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ εὐαγγελίσασθαι τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ὅτι ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς προκοπή ἀληθινὴ παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου αὐτῶν.<sup>55</sup>

“So, is it surprising to men that God has made a revelation to a man among them, in order to attest for men, and give the good news to the believers, that there is a true progress (in awaitance) for them by their Lord?”

<sup>54</sup> The text cited by Niketas goes thus: Τινὲς σιαίνουσι τὸν προφήτην, καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι αὐτὸς Υἱὸς Θεοῦ ἐστί (‘Some cause loathing to the prophet and say that he is the son of God’). This misrepresentation of the quranic words is made the object of much derision by Niketas. The text given above reflects the ingenious conjecture given by Trapp, 9: Τινὲς σιαίνουσι τὸν προφήτην, καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι αὐτὸς οὗς [ἐστί. Ἄε, αὐτὸς ὑμῖν οὗς ἀγα-]θοῦ ἐστί. According to Trapp both the οὗς and the θεοῦ before and after the suppressed line would have been read incorrectly by Niketas (or someone before him) as nomina sacra. On the basis of the missing line, he deduces an origin from a small manuscript (with narrow columns of text).

<sup>55</sup> The first person plural (‘we’) of the Arabic text has here been changed into ὁ θεός (‘God’). Part of Niketas’ manner of quotation?

## XXXVII

Qur'ān 11:49

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنْتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا

— Förstel 94; PG 105.756a

Ἐκ τῶν ἐξηγήσεων τῶν ἀπόντων δηλοποιοῦμεν ταῦτα πρὸς σέ· οὐκ ἦς γινώσκων αὐτὰ σὺ οὔτε ὁ λαός σου πρὸ τούτου.<sup>56</sup>

“From the narratives of the absent we disclose these things for you. You were not aware of these things yourself, nor your people before this”.

## XXXVIII

Qur'ān 12:102

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ

— Förstel 96; PG 105.756d

Τοῦτο ἐκ τῶν διηγήσεων τῶν ἀπόντων, ἀποκαλύπτομεν ταῦτα πρὸς σέ.

“This is from the narratives on the absent; we reveal these things to you”.

## XXXIX

Qur'ān 13:30

كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا أُمَمٌ لَتَتْلُوا عَلَيهِمُ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ

— Förstel 98; PG 105.757c

Ἀπεστείλαμέν σε πρὸς ἔθνος οὗ παρήλθον πρὸ αὐτοῦ ἔθνη, τοῦ ἐντυγχάνειν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν τὰ δηλοποιηθέντα πρὸς σέ.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> The fragment contains a very minor deviation in word order: αὐτὰ ‘these things’ is in the Greek sentence placed right after the verb, whereas it in the Arabic text comes at the very end.

“We sent you to a people, before which passed other peoples, in order to read aloud for them what has been disclosed to you”.

## XL

Qur’ān 13:31 + 13:33

لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَهَدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا  
وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ

— Förstel 98; PG 105.757d

Ἐὰν γὰρ ἤθελεν ὁ Θεὸς, ὁδηγήσαι εἶχεν ἅν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πάντας· καὶ ὃν πλανᾷ ὁ Θεὸς, οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ ὁδήγησις.<sup>58</sup>

“For if God wanted, he could have guided all men. And whoever God leads astray, he has no guidance”.

## XLI

Qur’ān 13:43

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْنَا مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

— Förstel 100; PG 105.760a

Λέγουσιν οἱ ἀρνησάμενοι· Οὐκ εἶ ἀπόστολος· εἰπέ· Ἄρκεσθῆ μοι ὁ Θεὸς μάρτυς μεταξύ ἐμοῦ τε καὶ ὑμῶν καὶ ὅστις ἔστιν παρ' αὐτοῦ εἶδησις τῆς γραφῆς.

“The deniers say: “You are no messenger.” Say: “May God suffice for me as witness between me and you, and whoever has knowledge about the writing”.

<sup>57</sup> I have written πρὸ αὐτοῦ instead of Förstel’s (and the manuscript’s) παρ' αὐτοῦ. The passive participle δηλοποιηθέντα (‘what has been disclosed’) may be the result of Niketas’ rephrasing, since it does not represent the first person plural in the Arabic relative clause *alladhī awḥayna*.

<sup>58</sup> Förstel prints no ἅν after εἶχεν, as given in the PG edition. Whatever is found in the manuscript, it is needed in order to produce the correct *irrealis*, cf. fragment XLIII.

## XLII

Qur'ān 14:50

سَرَابِيلُهُمْ مِّن قَطِرَانٍ وَتَغَشَىٰ وُجُوهُهُمُ النَّارُ

— Förstel 100; PG 105.760d

τὰ καμήσια αὐτῶν ἀπὸ κεδρίας, καὶ καλύπτει τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν τὸ πῦρ.

“... their shirts of cedar oil, and the fire covers their faces”.

## XLIII

Qur'ān 15:6-7

وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نَزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ

— Förstel 102; PG 105.761a1

Πάντως ἐροῦσίν σοι ὅτι δαιμονίαρις εἶ λέγων ἐκ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ταῦτα· εἰ γὰρ ἦς ἀληθινός, ἄγγελον ἂν κατήγες.<sup>59</sup>

“In any case they will say to you that you are possessed by a demon, if you say that you have received this from a God. For if you were truthful, you could bring down an angel”.

## XLIV

Qur'ān 16:116

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتَكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلَلٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَقْتُلُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

— Förstel 102; PG 105.761c

Μη εἴπητε ὅτι τοῦτό ἐστι λελυμένον, καὶ τοῦτο κεκωλυμένον τοῦ βλασφημεῖν ἐπάνω τοῦ Θεοῦ ψεῦσμα.

<sup>59</sup> Πάντως ('in any case') has no parallel in the Arabic text of the Qur'an, but can hardly be taken to be an addition by Niketas, coming as it does right after Niketas' φησιν ὅτι (see also above on Niketas' manner of quotation).

“Do not say that “This is allowed and this forbidden,” in order to impart a blasphemous lie on God”.

## XLV

Qur’ān 17:13-14

وَكُلِّإِنْسِنِ الزَّمَنُ طَرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَخُرُجَ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُورًا  
أَقْرَأُ كِتَابِكَ

— Förstel 104; PG 105.764a

Καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐκάστου ἀνθρώπου ἐκολλήσαμεν αὐτῷ τὴν μοῖραν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἐκβαίνει αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἀναστάσεως γραφὴ ὑπαντῶσα αὐτῷ αὕτη· Ἀνάγνωσον τὴν γραφὴν σου.<sup>60</sup>

“And we have fastened to the neck of each person his destiny. And on the day of resurrection a writing meets him, encountering in such words: “Read your writing”.

## XLVI

Qur’ān 17:16-17

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَسُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيَا الْقَوْلُ فَمَدْمَرْنَا تَدْمِيرًا  
وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِنْ بَعْدِ نُوحٍ

— Förstel 104; PG 105.764b

Ὅταν ἠθέλομεν ἀπολέσαι χωρίον, ἐκελεύομεν τοὺς ἐστῶτας ἐν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἠσώτευσαν ἐν αὐτῷ· καὶ ἐδικαιώθη ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ λόγος· καὶ ἐδαμάσαμεν αὐτοὺς δάμασιν· καὶ πολλοὺς ἀπωλέσαμεν ἐκ τῶν γενεῶν μετὰ τὸν Νῶε.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> The initial ἡμεῖς, which is dispensable, seems to be part of Niketas’ quotation manner, since it has no parallel in the Arabic text.

<sup>61</sup> ἐσῶτας, ‘those who lived’, may (as suggested by E. TRAPP, “Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?”, *Diptycha heptaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 [1981], p. 10) be a corruption for ἀσώτους (‘profligate’).



“When We wished to destroy a settlement, we gave a command to those who lived in it and lived in it in a profligate way. And the saying about it is done right. And We tamed them a taming, and We killed many of the generations after Noah”.

## XLVII

Qur'ān 17:40

أَفَأَصْفَنكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنْتًا ۚ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْقُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا

— Förstel 106; PG 105.764d – 765a

Καὶ ἐπελέξατο ὑμῖν ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν τέκνα, καὶ ἐπελάβετο ἐκ τῶν ἀγγέλων θηλείας· ὑμεῖς δὲ λέγετε λόγους μεγάλους.

“And our Lord chose children for us, and took (for himself) female beings among the angels. But you utter frightful speech”.

## XLVIII

Qur'ān 17:111

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا

— Förstel 106; PG 105.765 C

Καὶ εἶπε· Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ τῷ μὴ ἐπιλαβόντι υἱόν.

“And say: “I thank God who did not take take a son”.

## II

Qur'ān 18:18 + 21-22

وَتَحْسَنُهُمْ آيَاتًا وَهُمْ رُفُودٌ ۖ وَقَالَهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ وَكَلَّمَهُمْ بَسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ  
فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْنَا بَنِينَ ۖ رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا  
سَيَتُوبُونَ لَوْلَا نَشَأُ رَبُّهُمْ كَلِمَةً  
رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعَدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ

— Förstel 108; PG 105.765d

Νομίζεις αὐτοὺς ἐγρηγοροτάς, καὶ αὐτοὶ κοιμῶνται· ἀναστρέφεις αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὸ δεξιὸν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀριστερὸν, καὶ τὸ σκυλὶν αὐτῶν ἀπλῶνον τοὺς βραχίονας αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν χοῦν·

ὁ Κύριος οἶδε τὰ περὶ αὐτούς· λέγουσιν οἵτινες ἐνίκησαν ἐπάνω τοῦ πράγματος αὐτῶν· Ἐπελάβομεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν προσκυνητήριον· ἔχουσιν εἰπεῖν τρεῖς· τέταρτος αὐτῶν τὸ σκυλὶν αὐτῶν· ... ὁ Κύριος οἶδε τὸ μέτρον αὐτῶν, καὶ οὐκ οἶδασιν αὐτοὺς εἰ μὴ ὀλίγοι.<sup>62</sup>

“You think that they are awake, and yet they sleep. You turn them right and left, and their dog, folding its legs at the excavated heap”.

“The Lord knows all about them. Those who overcame their cause say: “We got hold for them of a prayerhouse.” They could say: “Three; the fourth among them was their dog”.

“The Lord knows their number, and only few know about them”.

## L

Qur’ān 18:30-31

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا  
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٌ تَجْرَىٰ مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُجَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا  
مِّن سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ ۖ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا

<sup>62</sup> This fragment skips various sentences in the original, but since it is given as a single quotation by Niketas, it has not been subdivided into several fragments. A short insertion by Niketas is left out in the text given (place in text marked by dots). The text left out is δοκοῦντες τὰ ἀπόντα λέγειν· καὶ τοῦτο, φησὶν, ἕως τῶν ἐπτὰ (‘apparently speaking of the absent, and this, he says, until seven’). The second person singular in ἀναστρέφεις (‘you turn’) is hard to explain in view of the first person plural of *nuqallinu-hum*. The phrase οἵτινες ἐνίκησαν ἐπάνω τοῦ πράγματος αὐτῶν (here translated as ‘those who overcame their cause’) is hard to extract any clear sense of. Förstel suggests ἐπεβάλομεν instead of ἐπελάβομεν, but the etymologizing tendency in the translation speaks in favour of the manuscript reading, as the root of λαμβάνω seems closer related to *‘hd* than βάλλω. In any case, the translator apparently failed to recognize the hortative form and the intensive *-anna* ending.

— Förstel 108; PG 105.768a-b

Ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἀπορρίπτομεν τὸν μισθὸν τοῦ καλῶς ἐργασαμένου· ἐκείνοις ἔστι παράδεισος ἐν Ἐδέμ, τρέχονται ὑποκάτω αὐτὸν ποταμοί· ὀρνέονται ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκ βραχιολίων χρυσέων, φοροῦσιν ἱμάτια πράσινα ἀπὸ σινδόνης ἢ σταυράκιν ἀκουμβίζοντες ἐν αὐτῷ ἐπάνω ἀνακλιτορίων· ἀγαθὴ ἀνταπόδοσις καὶ καλὴ ἡ ἀπόλαυσις.

“We do not throw away the pay for well accomplished work. For them there is a garden in Edem (in awaitance); rivers run beneath it. They are adorned in it with golden bracelets; they wear green clothings of silk and brocade, resting on couches. Good is the recompense and glorious the enjoyment”.

LI

Qur'ān 18:86

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ

— Förstel 108; PG 105.768b

Ἀπῆλθεν ἕως δυσμῶν ἡλίου, καὶ εὔρεν τὸν ἥλιον δύναντα εἰς θερμὸν ὕδωρ.

“He went away until the setting of the sun and found the sun sinking into hot water”.

LII

Qur'ān 37:1-5

وَالصَّفِّ صَبًا  
فَالرَّجْرِ زَجْرًا  
فالتَّلِيَّتِ دِكْرًا  
إِنَّ إِلَهُكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ  
رَّبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ

— Förstel 110; PG 105.769a2

Μὰ τὰ φολκῆ τῶν φολκῶν,  
καὶ προκλήματα προκλημάτων,  
καὶ ἐντυγχανόμενα μνήμη·

Θεὸς γὰρ ὑμῶν ἐστὶν εἷς

Κύριος τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ τῆς γῆς, καὶ τῶν μέσα αὐτῶν· καὶ Κύριος τῶν ἀνατολῶν.<sup>63</sup>

“By the rows of rows, and the request of the requests, by what is read aloud in remembrance. For your God is one, Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and Lord of the east”.

### LIII

Qur’ān 37:6-9

إِنَّا زَيْنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِرِيْنَةِ الْكَوَاكِبِ  
وَحَفِظْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ مَّارِدٍ  
لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ الْأَعْلَى وَيُقَذَّفُونَ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ  
دُخُورًا

— Förstel 110; PG 105.769a7

Ἡμεῖς ἐκοσμήσαμεν τὸν οὐρανὸν τὸν ἐγγίζοντα διακοσμήσεως ἀστέρων· καὶ ἐτηρήσαμεν ἐξ ἐκάστου Σατανᾶ ἐκστασίμου· οὐκ ἀκούουσι πρὸς τὰ ὄχλη τὰ ὑψηλά, καὶ ἀκοντίζονται ἐξ ἐκάστου μέρους ὠθούμενοι.

“We adorned the sky, which lies close to the orderly arrangement of the stars, and We protected (it) against any rebellious satan. They do not hear the high assemblies, and they are shot at from all directions, being evicted”.

<sup>63</sup> προκλήματα προκλημάτων is a conjecture of K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 110 (instead of προσθήματα προσθημάτων which the PG edition has). Both are difficult to make sense of. The whole passage from Μὰ until μνήμη is placed in cruces by Förstel, but apart from the word discussed above the text seems to reflect the Arabic text well.

## LIV

Qur'ān 51:1-6

وَالَّذِي تَدْرِي تَدْرِي  
 فَالْحَمَلِ وَقَرَا  
 فَالْحَمَلِ بِسْرَا  
 فَالْمُسْتَمْتِ أَمْرَا  
 إِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٍ  
 وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ لَوُوعٍ

— Förstel 110; PG 105.769b1

Μὰ τὰ λιγμοῦντα λιγμόν, καὶ βασταζούσας γόμους, καὶ τρεχούσας εὐθείας, καὶ τὰ μερίζοντα πράγματα, ὑπισχνέσθε γὰρ τὸ ἀληθές· καὶ ὅτι ἡ κρίσις φθάσαι ἔχει.<sup>64</sup>

“By those that winnow the winnowing-fan, that endure burdens and run straight, and divide the matters. For you promise the truth. And that the judgement will come”.

## LV

Qur'ān 52:1-7

وَالطُّورِ  
 وَكُتُبِ مَسْطُورِ  
 فِي رَقٍّ مَّنشُورِ

<sup>64</sup> The participles of the Greek text waver between feminine plural and neuter plural, and a final settlement of the issue on which to choose does not seem attainable. It is possible that the Greek translator wished ὑπισχνέτε to mean ‘you are being promised’ (which would render the Arabic text better), but the immediate meaning of the phrase would rather be taken to be the one given above (‘you promise’).

وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ  
وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ  
وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ  
إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ

— Förstel 110; PG 105.769b6

Μὰ τὸ ὄρος, καὶ γραφὴν στιχιζομένην ἐν μεμβράνῳ λιτῷ, καὶ τὸ ὀσπίτιν τὸ ὠκονομημένον, καὶ τὸ στέγος τὸ σηκοῦμενον, καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν τὴν δεδομένην, ὅτι ἡ κόλασις τοῦ Κυρίου ἐλεύσεται.<sup>65</sup>

“By the mountain and by the writing that is given in lines on simple parchment, and the house taken care of and the raised roof, and the given sea, because the punishment of the Lord will come”.

## LVI

Qur’ān 53:1-14

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ  
مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ  
وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ  
إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ  
عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ  
ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَىٰ  
وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَىٰ  
ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ

<sup>65</sup> I here accept the conjecture of E. TRAPP, “Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?”, *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 13 (as did Förstel), printing ὠκονομημένον (‘taken care of’) instead of the manuscript reading ὠκοδομημένον (‘built’).

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ  
 فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَىٰ  
 مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ  
 أَفَتُنْمِرُونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ  
 وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ  
 عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ

— Förstel 112; PG 105.769 b-c

Μὰ τὸ ἄστρον τὸ δυόμενον· οὐκ ἐπλανήθη ὁ ἐταῖρος ὑμῶν, οὐδὲ ἠνόμησεν· οὐκ ἐφθέγγετο ἐκ θελήματος· οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ εἰ μὴ ἀποκάλυψις ἀποκαλυφθεῖσα· ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἰσχυρὸς εἰς δύναμιν, ὁ εὐθεώρητος· καὶ ἐκάθισεν· καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἐν τῷ στερεώματι τῷ ἀνωτέρῳ· καὶ ἤγγισε, ἐκρεμάσθη, καὶ ἐγένετο μέτρον δύο τόξων ἢ ἐγγύτερον καὶ ἀπεκάλυψε πρὸς τὸν δούλον αὐτοῦ ὃ ἀπεκάλυπεν· οὐκ ἐψεύσατο τὰ ἐντὸς τὸ εἶδεν· καὶ γὰρ εἶδεν αὐτό· κατὰ βασιν ἄλλην ἐγγὺς τοῦ δένδρου τοῦ ζιζύφου ἐνέδωκε.<sup>66</sup>

“By the sinking star, your fellow was not lead astray, nor was he unlawful. He did not speak on his own accord. To him there is nothing but a revelation that has been revealed. A strong person, and clearly visible, showed him (the way) to power, and he sat down. And He is in the upper firmament. And he approached, and he was hanging, and he was in the distance of two arrow-shots or nearer, and He revealed to His servant what He revealed. The inner parts did not lie about what they saw. For he saw it; He imparted him another epiphany at the jujube tree”.

#### LVII

Qur'ān 53:26

وَكَمْ مِنْ مَلَكٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا

<sup>66</sup> I have printed, as suggested by K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 112, ζιζύφου (or τζιζύφου) 'jujube tree' for the incomprehensible σιδηρίτου found in the manuscript.

— Förstel 112; PG 105.769c7

Και πόσοι οἱ ἄγγελοι εἰσιν εἰς τοὺς οὐρανούς, μὴ ὠφελοῦσα ἡ παράκλησις αὐτῶν τίποτε;

“And how many angels are there in the heavens, and yet their intercession does not avail at all”.

#### LVIII

Qur’ān 54:1-3

أَفْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ  
وَلِن يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرَضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَبِيرٌ  
وَكَذَّبُوا

— Förstel 112; PG 105.769c12

Ἦγγικεν ἡ ὥρα καὶ ἐσχίσθη ἡ σελήνη· καὶ ἐὰν θεωρῶσι σημεῖον, ἀποστρέφονται, καὶ λέγουσι· Φαρμακία ἐστὶ παρεχομένη, καὶ ἐννευδοποίησαν.

“The hour approached and the moon was split. And if they see a sign, they turn away and say: “This is overt magic,” and they call it lies”.

#### LIX

Qur’ān 61:6-7

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ  
وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدٌ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ  
وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

— Förstel 112; PG 105.772a

Καὶ ὅταν εἶπεν Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Μαρίας· Ἄε υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ, ἐγὼ ἀπόστολός εἰμι Θεοῦ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀληθοποιῶν τὰ ἐμπροσθέν μου ἐκ τοῦ νόμου, καὶ εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰς ἀπόστολον ἐρχόμενον μετ’ ἐμέ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Μωάμετ· καὶ ἅμα ἠνεγκεν αὐτοῖς τὴν



φανέρωσιν· εἶπασιν, Αὕτη ἐστὶ φαρμακία, καὶ τίς ἀδικώτερος τοῦ βλασφημοῦντος ἐπάνω τοῦ Θεοῦ ψεῦσμα;

“And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: “Oh, sons of Israel, I am the messenger of God to you, making true what came before me from the law and bringing the good news to the messenger coming after me. His name is Muhammed.” And at the same time He brought them the manifestation. They said: “This is overt magic,” and who is more unrighteous than the person who makes blasphemous lies about God?”

## LX

Qur'ān 68:1-4

نَ وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ  
مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ  
وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ  
وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

— Förstel 112; PG 772b

Μὰ τὸν κάλαμον καὶ τὰ στίχουσιν, οὐκ εἶσε εἰς τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτοῦ δαιμονιάρης· καὶ ἔστι σοι μισθὸς ἄνευ ὀνειδισμοῦ· καὶ εἶσε ἐπάνω πλάσματος μεγάλου.

“By the pen and what they write, you are not by the good of him not a possessed person. And the is a pay for you (in awaitance) without reproach; and you are above (*or of*) a great formation”.

## LXI

Qur'ān 69:1-4

الْحَاقَّةُ  
مَا الْحَاقَّةُ  
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ  
كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادٌ بِالْقَارِعَةِ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.772b-c

Τῷ ἀκκά· τί ἐστι τὸ ἀκκά; καὶ πόθεν οἶδες τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἀκκά; καὶ ἐψευδοποίησεν  
Θαμοῦθ καὶ Ἀὰδ εἰς τὴν ὥραν.<sup>67</sup>

“The *akka*. What is the *akka*? And how do you know what the *akka* is? Thamouth  
and Aad lied in that moment”.

LXII

Qur’ān 70:4

فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ

— PG 140.127b (*Abjuratio*)

κατὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἡμέραν, ἣν περιορίζει εἰς πενήκοντα μυριάδας ἐτῶν.<sup>68</sup>

“... on the future day, which (He?) sets to fifty thousand years”.

LXIII

Qur’ān 75:1-2

لَا أَفْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ  
وَلَا أَفْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.772 C1

Οὐκ, ὀμνύω εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς ἀναστάσεως· καὶ οὐκ ὀμνύω εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν  
μεμφομένην.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> The last words of this fragment seem problematic, as εἰς τὴν ὥραν does not reflect the words of the original. It is possible that ὥραν is a (damaged) representation of *qāri’a*.

<sup>68</sup> This fragment is the single quotation from the Greek translation only found in the *Abjuratio* ((parts of) fragments III and LXXX are found in both). In itself it proves that also the author or redactor of the *Abjuratio* had the translation (or another indirect source) at his disposal and did not depend (solely) on the text of Niketas. Note the Greek μέλλουσαν (‘future’), which is not paralleled in the Arabic.

“I do not swear by the day of the resurrection, and I do not swear by the censuring soul”.

## LXIV

Qur'ān 77:1-7

وَأَلْمَزْتِ عَزْفًا  
فَأَلْعَصْتِ عَصْبًا  
وَأَلشَّيْرْتِ نَشْرًا  
فَأَلْفَرَقْتِ فَرْقًا  
فَأَلْمَلَقَيْتِ ذِكْرًا  
عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا  
إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَفِّعَ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.772c11

Μὰ τὰς ἀπολυομένας ὀρδίνου,  
καὶ καταγίδων καταγίς,  
καὶ τῶν ἀπλωθέντων ἄπλωμα·  
καὶ χωρισάσας χώρημα, καὶ ῥιπτούσας μνήμη  
ἀπολογητικὴν καὶ διαμαρτυρίαν·  
ὑπισχνέσθε γὰρ τὴν ἔλευσιν.<sup>70</sup>

“By those that are released from their rank, and the storm of storms, and the spread of the spread things; that make room for space, that throw a message of excuse and a plea. You are being promised the final end”.

<sup>69</sup> The English translation given of this fragment is what the sentence would mean to an uninitiated reader. Choosing an initial οὐκ (‘not’) for the Arabic *la* (here ‘no’) was a bad choice made by the translator (yet no ordinary word for ‘no’ existed in non-modern Greek). The result was a sentence with the contrary meaning of that in the Arabic text, in which the negation stands alone and does not negate the sentence.

<sup>70</sup> K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 114 has καὶ καταγίδων καταγίς, καὶ τῶν ἀπλωθέντων ἄπλωμα ‘the storm of storms, and the spread of the spread things’ in cruces for no obvious reason. On the nominative of καταγίς, see commentary to fragment LXIX.

## LXV

Qur'ān 79:1-7

وَالزَّرَعِ عَرَفًا  
وَالشَّيْطِ نَشْطًا  
وَالشَّيْخِ سَبْجًا  
فَالشَّيْخِ سَبْبًا  
فَالْمُدْبِرِ أَمْرًا  
يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ  
تَتَّبِعُنَا الرَّادِفَةُ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.772d

Μὰ τὰς ἀνασπωμένας βόλισμα,  
καὶ ἀφελομένας ἀφέλωμα,  
καὶ κολυμβούσας κόλυμβον,  
καὶ προβαλλούσας προβάλωμα,  
καὶ διοικούσας πράγμα  
τῆ ἡμέρα ἐν ἣ σείει ὁ σεισμός.

“By those that send out shots and remove by removal, swim by swimming, that gain advantage and direct a matter on the day in which the tremor trembles”.

## LXVI

Qur'ān 85:1-5

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ  
وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ  
وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ  
قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ  
النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوُقُودِ

— Förstel ; PG 105.772d – 773a

Μὰ τον οὐρανὸν τὸν πεπυργωμένον, καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς συνταγῆς· καὶ μάρτυν καὶ μαρτυρούμενον· ἐσφάγησαν οἱ ἐταῖροι τοῦ ἄλαχουθ, τὸ πῦρ ἔχον τὴν καῦσιν.<sup>71</sup>

“By the heaven with the constellations and the day of covenant, the witness and the witnessed. The fellows of *alachouth* were killed, the fire that had the heat”.

#### LXVII

Qur'ān 86:1-4

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ  
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ  
النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ  
إِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.773a3

Μὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὸν ἀλταρικόν· καὶ τί οἶδες τί τὸ ἀλταρικόν; ὁ ἀστήρ ὁ τρυπητής, ὅτι πάση ψυχῇ τῶν ὄντων ἐπάνω αὐτῆς φύλαξ.<sup>72</sup>

“By the heaven and the *altarikon*. How do you know what the *altarikon* is? It is the piercing star, for to every soul of the living beings there is a guardian over it”.

#### LXVIII

Qur'ān 89:1-5

وَالْفَجْرِ  
وَلَيْالٍ عَشْرِ

<sup>71</sup> Förstel has τὸ πῦρ ἔχον τὴν καῦσιν ‘the fire that had the heat’ in cruces, but the Greek text reflects well the Arabic.

<sup>72</sup> *πάση ψυχῇ* (‘to every soul’) is my conjecture; *πᾶσα ψυχῇ* (‘every soul’) is given by former editors. τῶν ὄντων is not paralleled in the Arabic text, but may be seen as an attempt to qualify ‘soul’ or to insert something instead of the intranslatable Arabic *lammā*.

وَالشَّفَعِ وَالْوَتْرِ  
وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ  
هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّئِي حَجْرٍ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.773a6

Μὰ τὸ αὐγὸς, καὶ αἱ νύκτες δέκα, καὶ ἡ ζυγὴ καὶ ἡ ἀποζυγὴ, καὶ ἡ νύξ ὅταν ἐφαπλοῦται· ἄρα ἔστιν ἐν τούτοις ὄρκος τοῖς ὄγερ;

“By the dawn and the ten nights, and the even and the odd, and the night when its spreads. Is there an oath for the *oger* in these things?”

LXIX

Qur’ān 90:1-4

لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ  
وَأَنْتَ حِلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ  
وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدٍ  
لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

— Förstel 114; PG 105.773a9

Οὐκ, ὁμνύω εἰς ταύτην τὴν χώραν· καὶ σοῦ ὄντος ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χώρᾳ· καὶ γονεὺς καὶ τὰ ἐγέννησε· καὶ γὰρ ἐπλάσαμεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐν ἰσχύϊ.<sup>73</sup>

“I do not swear by this country, and while you are in the country, and the genitor and what he begets. For we have formed man in (*or to*) strength”.

<sup>73</sup> On the confusing use of οὐκ ‘not’, see the commentary to fragment LXIII. Förstel has γονεὺς ‘genitor’ in cruces. The word reflects well the Arabic text, and Förstel’s reason for doubting it may be that the word is in nominative (as opposed to accusative required by the μά ‘oh’). But there is a constant wavering between nominative and accusative in these constructions, see e.g. fragments LXIV, LXX, and LXXVI, and the text therefore seems sound. The last word, ἰσχύϊ (‘strength’), is difficult to explain, since it gives almost the opposite meaning of *kabad* (‘suffering’); this was noted, but not explained, by A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, p. 120.

LXX  
 Qur'ān 91:1-7

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا  
 وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا  
 وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّهَا  
 وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا  
 وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا  
 وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا  
 وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

— Förstel 114; PG 105.773a13-b

Μὰ τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὰς ἀκτῖνας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὴν σελήνην ὅταν ἀκολουθῇ αὐτῷ· καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν ὅταν ἐπιφαίνῃ αὐτῷ· καὶ ἡ νύξ ὅταν ἐπιψαύσῃ αὐτῇ· καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν, καὶ τὸ ἔκτισεν αὐτόν· καὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ τὸ ἥδρασεν αὐτήν· καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ τὸ ἴσασεν.<sup>74</sup>

“By the sun and its rays, and the moon when it follows it; and the day when it shows itself to it; and the night when it touches it; and the heaven and what founded it, and the earth and what established it, and the soul and what put it into balance”.

<sup>74</sup> It is probable that the original had a final αὐτήν (‘it’) at the end of the text (referring to the moon, and reflecting the final *-ha* of the Arabic text). In that case, we see that the rhyme of the Arabic original (seven phrases ending in *-āha*) is repeated in seven instances of the Greek pronoun αὐτός (in the gender and case demanded by the context). In the three last phrases the rhyme is furthermore enhanced by three Greek verbs of the *-ίζω/-ίζω* type, producing rhymes in *-ισεν/-ασεν αὐτόν/-ήν*. Taking into consideration that *ἔδράω* and *ἰσάζω* are rare words, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that the translator did his utmost to convey as much as possible of the rhyme pattern into his Greek version.

## LXXI

Qur'ān 92:1-4

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ  
وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ  
وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ  
إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّىٰ

—Förstel 114; PG 105.773b4

Μὰ τὴν νύκτα ὅταν παρίσταται· καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν ὅτ' ἂν ἐκκαθαίρη· καὶ τὸν ποιήσαντα τὸν ἄρρενα καὶ τὴν θήλειαν, ὅτι ὁ βίος ὑμῶν ἐστὶ πολλαχῶς.

“By the night when it is close, and the day when clears out, and the one who created male and female, for your life is in many ways”.

## LXXII

Qur'ān 93:1-3

وَالصُّحَىٰ  
وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ  
مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ

—Förstel 116; PG 105.773b8

Μὰ τὴν πρωΐαν καὶ τὴν νύκτα ὅταν ἠρεμῇ· οὐκ εἶασέν σε ὁ Κύριός σου οὐδὲ ἐξεκάκησε.<sup>75</sup>

“By the morning and the night when it rests; your Lord did not leave you, nor was he angry with you”.

<sup>75</sup> Κύριός σου is my conjecture, based on the Arabic pronominal suffix *-ka*; former editors give the incomprehensible Κύριος ὦν. A more obvious corruption would however be ἡμῶν ‘our’, but this seems awkward in the proximity of σε ‘you’. On a similar issue, however, see fragment XXVI.



LXXIII  
Qur'ān 94:7-8

فَرَعْتُ فَأَنْصَبُ  
وَالِي رَبِّكَ فَأَرْعَبُ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.773b11

Ὅταν δὲ εὐκαιρήσης, ἀγώνισαι, πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν δεήθητι.

“When you are at leisure, make an endeavour, pray to God”.

LXXIV  
Qur'ān 95:1-5

وَالْتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ  
وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ  
وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ  
لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ  
ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.773b13

Μὰ τὰς συκᾶς καὶ τὰς ἐλαίας· τὸ Σινὰ καὶ τὴν χώραν τὴν ἄφοβον· καὶ γὰρ ἐπλάσαμεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἰς καλὸν ἀνάστημα, καὶ ὑπεστρέψαμεν αὐτὸν κάτω τῶν κατωτάτων.

“By the fig trees and the olive trees, the Sinai and the frightless land. For We formed man into a good uprightness, and We turned him below the lowest things”.

## LXXV

Qur'ān 97:1-5 [the whole sura]

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ  
 وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ  
 لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ  
 تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ  
 سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.773c

Ἡμεῖς καὶ ἠνέγκαμεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν νύκτα τὴν ὠρισμένην· καὶ τί οἶδας τί ἐστὶν ἡ νύξ ἢ ὠρισμένη; καλλίων ἐστὶ χιλίων μηνῶν· καταφέρουσιν οἱ ἄγγελοι, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἐν αὐτῇ ἐπιτροπῇ τοῦ Κυρίου αὐτῶν ἐξ ἐκάστου πράγματος· εἰρήνη ἐστὶν ἐκείνη, ἕως ἂν ἀνατεῖλῃ τὸ αὖγος.

“We also brought him to the designated night. And how do you know what the designated night is? It is better than thousand months. The angels bring down also the spirit on it at the behest of their Lord regarding each case. It is peace, until dawn breaks”.

## LXXVI

Qur'ān 100:1-6

وَالْعَادِيَّتِ صَبِيحًا  
 فَالْمُورِيَّتِ قَدَجًا  
 فَالْمُعِيرَتِ صَبِيحًا  
 فَأَتَرْنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا  
 فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا  
 إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.776a5

Μὰ τὰς δραμούσας ἐν ὑλακισμῶ καὶ τὰς ἐνδεικνουσας πυροβόλια, καὶ περιπιτούσας εἰς ἀγῶς, καὶ ταράζαντες εἰς αὐτὸ ὑδροστάτημα, καὶ μέσα ὄντες εἰς αὐτὸ πάντες· ὁ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Κυρίου ἀχάριστος.<sup>76</sup>

“By those who run in barking, and those that send out fire-darts and attack at morning, and the men whirling up the pool unto it and being all in the midst of it. For man is not grateful to his Lord”.

LXXVII

Qur'ān 101:1-4

الْقَارِعَةُ  
مَا الْقَارِعَةُ  
وَمَا أَذْرٰكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ  
يَوْمَ يَكُوْنُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوْثِ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.776a9

Καρὲ, καὶ τί οἶδες τί ἐστι καρὲ; ἢ ἡ ἡμέρα ἐν ἣ γίνονται οἱ ἄνθρωποι ὡς ψώρα διεσπαρμένη.

“*Kare*, and how do you know what *kare* is? Or the day in which all men become like dispersed itch”.

<sup>76</sup> K. FÖRSTEL (ed.), *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 116 has the passage ταράζαντες εἰς αὐτὸ ὑδροστάτημα, καὶ ἐμέσαντες εἰς αὐτὸ πάντες in cruces. I have adopted the conjecture of E. TRAPP, “Gab es eine byzantinische Koranübersetzung?”, *Diptycha hetaireias byzantinon kai metabyzantinon meleton* 2 (1981), p. 10, printing μέσα ὄντες ‘being in the midst’ for the manuscript’s ἐμέσαντες ‘throwing up’. On the fact that this participle and the preceding is suddenly in nominative, see the commentary to fragment LXIX.

## LXXVIII

Qur'ān 103:1-2

وَالْعَصْرِ  
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.776a13

Μὰ τὸν ἀλέξαρ, ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶν ἐν ἐλλείματι.

“By the *alexar*, for man is in error”.

## LXXIX

Qur'ān 108:1-3 [the whole sura]

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَكَ الْكَوْثَرَ  
فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ  
إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.776b4

Ἡμεῖς ἐδώκαμέν σοι τὸν καθάρων καὶ εὔξαι πρὸς τὸν Κύριόν σου, καὶ σφάζον, ὅτι ὁ μισῶν σε αὐτός ἐστὶν ὁ διχοτομημένος.<sup>77</sup>

“We gave you the *kautharos* and pray to your Lord and make sacrifice, for the one that hates you he is split in two”.

<sup>77</sup> The Greek διχοτομημένος ‘split in two’ reproduces the basic sense of the Arabic *btr* ‘bar from’, but not its more precise meaning here of ‘barred from offspring’.

## LXXX

Qur'ān 112:1-4 [the whole sura]

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ  
 اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ  
 لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ  
 وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

— Förstel 116; PG 105.776b11; PG 140.133a3 (*Abjuratio*)

Εἶπε, αὐτός ἐστι Θεός εἷς, Θεός ὀλόσφυρος· οὐκ ἐγέννησεν, οὐδὲ ἐγεννήθη· οὐδὲ ἐγένετο ὅμοιος αὐτῷ τις.<sup>78</sup>

“Say: “He is God, one, God the solid. He did not procreate or was procreated, nor was there any like Him”.

## LXXXI

Qur'ān 113:1-5 [the whole sura]

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ  
 مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ  
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ  
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ  
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

<sup>78</sup> The word ὀλόσφυρος (litt. ‘solid’, as opposed to hollow e.g. in the case of statues) was to have a vexed history in Byzantine polemics. In an earlier passage in Niketas’ text (K. FÖRSTEL [ed.], *Niketas von Byzanz*, p. 44; PG 708a), a misreading of the word – now taken to be ὀλόσφαιρος (‘completely round’) – leads to absurd conclusions. See the discussion in A.-Th. KHOURY, *Les théologiens*, pp. 122-23. The *finas τις* (‘any’) is only attested in the *Abjuratio*.

— Förstel 118; PG 105.776c2

Εἰπέ, φεύξομαι εἰς τὸν Κύριον τοῦ διαφάσματος, ἐκ κακοῦ τοῦ ἔπλασε, καὶ ἐκ κακοῦ τῆς ἀστροτοξίας ὅταν ἐκτείνηται· καὶ ἐκ κακοῦ ἐμπτυσμάτων εἰς τοὺς κόμβους· καὶ ἐκ κακοῦ φθόνου φθονοῦντος.

“Say: “I seek refuge by the Lord of the morning light, from the evil which He made and from the evil of the stary glow, when it spreads; and from the evil from the spitting on knots, and from the evil of the jealous, when he is jealous”.

#### LXXXII

Qur’ān 114:1-6 [the whole sura]

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ  
 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ  
 إِلَهِ النَّاسِ  
 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ  
 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ  
 مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

— Förstel 118; PG 105.776c9

Εἰπέ, φεύξομαι εἰς τὸν Κύριον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, βασιλέα ἀνθρώπων, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἐκ κακοῦ ψιθυρισμάτων τῶν δαιμόνων εἰς τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἐκ τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ ἀνθρώπων.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> As in other cases (see esp. fragment LXIX), the Greek text slips from the accusative case in βασιλέα ἀνθρώπων (‘King of men’) into the nominative case in ὁ Θεὸς τῶν ἀνθρώπων (‘God of men’).

“Say: “I take refuge by the Lord of men, King of men, God of men, from the evil of the whisperings of the demons into the hearts of men, from the demons and men”.

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