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# Dominicus Germanus de Silesia's Approach to the Qur'an

*A first assessment (with critical edition)*

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## Abstract

Dominicus Germanus de Silesia's 17th century translation of the Qur'an, *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, offers a new approach to the long history of Latin translations of the Qur'an. In line with the early modern, humanistic, "philological" trend, he aims to explore the original sources of his object of study. However, he takes this concept further by considering as "source" not only the authentic Qur'anic text, but also the most authoritative Qur'anic commentators, whom he also translates into Latin and incorporates into the translation. This paper is a first attempt to analyze in detail Dominicus's *modus operandi*, his sources and how he relates them to the Qur'anic text, as well as the purpose of his work. The study includes the critical edition of sura 9, 28-35 in the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, both in the translation and in the commentary parts of the work.

## Keywords

Qur'an – Translation – Tafsir – Exegesis – Dominicus Germanus de Silesia – *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*

## Résumé

La traduction du Coran par Dominicus Germanus de Silesia au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, offre une nouvelle approche de la longue histoire des traductions latines du Coran. Conformément à la tendance « philologique » humaniste du début des temps modernes, il cherche à explorer les sources originales de son objet d'étude. Cependant, il pousse ce concept plus loin en considérant comme « source » non seulement le texte coranique authentique, mais aussi les commentateurs coraniques les plus autorisés, qu'il traduit également en latin et incorpore à la traduction. Cet article est une première tentative d'analyse détaillée du *modus operandi* de Dominicus, de ses sources et de la manière dont il les relie au texte coranique, ainsi que de l'objectif de son travail. L'étude inclut l'édition critique de la sourate 9, 28-35 dans l'*Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, à la fois dans la partie traduction et dans la partie commentaire de l'ouvrage.

## Mots-clés

Coran – Traduction – Tafsir – Exégèse – Dominicus Germanus de Silesia – *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*

## Introduction

Since at least the 15th century, the rise of humanistic ideas, such as the renewed interest in the study of languages and their deeper structure and meaning, as well as the idea of "returning to the sources" – i.e., the study of texts, their transmission, their cultural background, and their "meaning", which the humanists were able to gain thanks to their enhanced knowledge of languages – also influenced the relations of the Latin Christian world with Islam, as well as the Latin translations of the Qur'an that were produced from then on.<sup>1</sup>

For example, the translation of the Qur'an by Juan Gabriel of Teruel for Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo (1469-1532) around the year 1518 was in four columns.

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent overview of this phenomenon, which also mentions the two examples presented in the following lines of the introduction, see Thomas E. Burman, "European Qur'an Translations, 1500-1700," in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History. Volume 6 Western Europe (1500-1600)*, ed. David Thomas and John A. Chesworth, Leiden, Brill, 2014, p. 25-34, [https://doi.org/10.1163/978900428110\\_004](https://doi.org/10.1163/978900428110_004). (with further bibliography on the matter).

This was done, on the one hand, to allow the reader to compare the Latin translation with the Arabic original (i.e. the “source”) and, on the other hand, to allow a deeper knowledge of the “meaning” of the text. The first three columns contained the Arabic original in Arabic script and in Latin “phonetic” transliteration, placed in columns one and two, respectively, and the Latin translation in column three. In the fourth column, one could read explanatory annotations, mostly illustrating cultural customs of Islamic societies that were not immediately apparent from the Qur’anic text.<sup>2</sup> These were largely inspired by another contemporary work that perfectly embodied the spirit of the time, the book “Confusión o confutación de la secta mahomética” published in 1515 by the convert Juan Andrés. A Muslim himself (as was Juan Gabriel, who, before his conversion was known as Alí Alayzar), Juan Andrés often gives an insider’s view of the rituals and customs within the Muslim community of the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the translation of the Qur’an by Guglielmo Raimondo de Moncada, also known as Flavius Mithridates (*fl.* 1475-1485), for the Duke of Urbino Federico da Montefeltro (1422-1482) around 1480 juxtaposes Latin and Arabic.<sup>4</sup>

2 On this translation, see Katarzyna K. Starczewska, *Latin Translation of the Qur’an (1518/1621) Commissioned by Egidio Da Viterbo: Critical Edition and Case Study* (Diskurse Der Arabistik 24), Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2018); see also Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur’an in Latin Christendom, 140-1560*, Philadelphia PA, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, p. 150-177.

3 On the parallels between Juan Gabriel’s glosses in the translation of the Qur’an and Juan Andrés, as well as their parallels with the two Catholic preachers Martín García (ca. 1441-1521) and Johan Martín de Figuerola (ca. 1457- post 23 July 1532), who were assisted in their preaching by Juan Andrés and Juan Gabriel, see Starczewska, *Latin Translation of the Qur’an*, p. xxxv-lxii, as well as the notes on the edition to the glosses at p. 777-813. About Juan Gabriel’s former name see, *ibidem*, p. xxxi.

4 Mitridate’s translation, however, is not complete, but consists only of the translation of two suras, sura 21 (*al-anbiyā’*, “The Prophets”) and sura 22 (*al-ḥaǧǧ*, “The Pilgrimage”). The prefatory dedication from the “autograph” MS Vat. urb. lat. 1384, fols. 63v-86r of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (here fols. 63v-64v) was published by Hartmut Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation*, Stuttgart, Steiner, 1995, p. 81-82 (*ibidem*, n. 266, also cites later manuscripts in Paris, Venice, Padua, Milan, and Vienna), as well as by Angelo Michele Piemontese, “Il Corano latino di Ficino e i Corani arabi di Pico et Monchates,” *Rinascimento*, 36 (1996), p. 227-273 (here, p. 260). The translation of sura 21 is edited from the same Vatican manuscript (fols. 65r-76v) in: Hartmut Bobzin, “Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada e la sua traduzione della sura 21 (‘dei profeti’),” in *Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada alias Flavio Mitridate. Un ebreo converso siciliano. Atti del convegno internazionale Caltabellotta (Agrigento) 23-24 ottobre 2004*, ed. Mauro Perani, Palermo, Officina di Studi Medievali, 2008, p. 173-183. This translation seems to be far from good: Giorgio Levi della Vida described this translation as “everything but well-made” (Giorgio Levi della Vida, *Ricerche sulla formazione del più antico fondo dei manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana*, [Studi e testi 92], Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1939, p. 94: “tutt’altro che felice”), which was confirmed by

There are more examples of what we may call the humanistic “philological” trend in the field of Latin translations of the Qur’an, but it is not our purpose to list them all here.<sup>5</sup> We simply want to introduce the reader to the existence of such a trend in order to provide a background for the work of the central figure of this article, the 17th-century Franciscan friar Dominicus Germanus de Silesia (1588-1670). This author may be viewed as a recipient of the trend, since he places the emphasis of his translation of the Qur’an on the respect of the original source and provides his translation with exegetical sections based on Islamic sources to present the Muslim perspective. However, he extends and develops this trend in an unprecedented way by explicitly and systematically quoting Islamic commentaries (both in the Arabic and in the Latin translation). Rather than confine them to side notes, he embeds them in extensive sections within the main text, giving them the same importance as the translation of the Qur’anic text, and presenting their interpretation as an essential part of the work.

## 1 Dominicus Germanus de Silesia and the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*

Dominicus Germanus de Silesia,<sup>6</sup> born in 1588 in Schurgast, today Skorogoszcz in Poland, spent the last 18 years of his life, from ca. 1652 until 1670, the year

Bobzin, who stated that the translation was full of errors (Bobzin, “Guglielmo”, p. 174: “pullula di errori”) and listed some (on pages 175-176), and Thomas Burman in *Reading the Qur’an*, p. 137-141 as well as in “Qur’an Translations” p. 26.

5 For an overview of Latin translations of the Qur’an in the Middle Ages and early modern period, in addition to Burman, *Reading the Qur’an in Latin Christendom* and Starczewska, *Latin Translation of the Qur’an*, see Hartmut Bobzin, “Latin Translations of the Koran. A Short Overview” *Der Islam*, 70/2 (1993), p. 193-206, <https://doi.org/10.1515/islam.1993.70.2.193>; Ulisse Cecini, “Latin Christianity Engaging With the Qur’an,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History, Volume 15, Thematic Essays (600-1600)*, ed. Douglas Pratt and Charles L. Tieszen, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2020, p. 227-253, <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004423701>.

6 For the biography of Dominicus Germanus de Silesia, see Bertrand Zimolong, *P. Dominicus Germanus de Silesia O. F. M. Ein Biographischer Versuch*, Breslau, Otto Borgmeyer, 1928; Bertrand Zimolong, “Neues zu dem Leben und zu den Werken des P. Dominicus Germanus de Silesia O. F. M.,” *Franziskanische Studien*, 21 (1934), p. 151-170; Bertrand Zimolong, “Nochmals P. Dominicus Germanus de Silesia O. F. M.,” *Franziskanische Studien*, 23 (1936), p. 426-31; More recent studies are Hartmut Bobzin, “Ein oberschlesischer Koranglehrter: Dominicus Germanus de Silesia, O.F.M. (1588-1670)”, in *Die oberschlesische Literaturlandschaft im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Gerhard Koselleck (Tagungsreihe der Stiftung Haus Oberschlesien 11), Bielefeld, Aisthesis Verlag, 2001, p. 221-231 and the preface of the critical edition of Dominicus’s *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* (only the Qur’anic text, not the *scholia*) by Antonio García

of his death, in the monastery of El Escorial on the Iberian Peninsula, working on what he probably considered to be the greatest achievement of his life: a Latin translation of the Qur'an, accompanied by commentaries based on the reproduction – in Latin translation, but also partly in the original Arabic – of the most authoritative Islamic exegetical literature. On the basis of the explanations he collected from these sources, he structured his refutation, which is also included in the commentary sections, in the form of personal statements related to the quoted Islamic exegetical passages. In this respect, Dominicus considered himself an improvement over the previous Latin translations and refutations of the Qur'an. This is evident from what he writes in the preface to his *Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*:

“... I had hunted down (“*uenatus fuero*”) the interpretation of the meaning of the Qur'an, not from dictionaries and lexica, but from the words and explanations of the disciples of the author himself [i.e. the Prophet Muḥammad, *n. Cecini*], or of other people who lived at same time (or in a time close to theirs), as well as [from explanations] of indigenous commentators of the Qur'an itself.”<sup>7</sup>

In his mind, such a translation and refutation were irrefutable because they were based on a supposedly literal translation and interpretation taken from the meanings explained by the very sources from which each pious Muslim draws his own understanding of the Qur'an.

As we pointed out in the introduction, Dominicus was not the first, even if he would like to present himself as such, to seek a literal translation to implement

Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis* (Nueva Roma 32), Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009, p. 13-22, which mainly draws on Marcel Devic, “Une traduction inédite du Coran”, *Journal Asiatique*, VIII/1 (1883), p. 343-406 and Francis Richard, “Le franciscain Dominicus Germanus de Silésie, grammairien et auteur d'apologie en Persan”, *Islamochristiana*, X (1984), p. 91-107; On Dominicus's translation see also Burman, *Reading the Qur'an*, p. 53-56; Ulisse Cecini, “The Qur'an Translation by Germanus de Silesia OFM (ca. 1650-1670): Observations About Its Inedited Sections”, in *Documenta Coranica Christiana. Christian Translations of the Qur'an. Preliminary Considerations of the State of the Art*, ed. Manolis Ulbricht, Leiden, Brill (forthcoming); Ulisse Cecini, “Germanus de Silesia's Qur'an Translation in the MS K-111-1 of the El Escorial Library: Newly Discovered Revised Versions”, in *The Iberian Qur'an*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2022, p. 133-48, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110778847-006>.

<sup>7</sup> “... *interpretationem Alcorani, non ex dictionarijs lexicisque, sed ex ipsiusmet autoris discipulorum, aliorumue ipsius coaeuorum, uel aeuo proximorum, ac ipsiusmet Alcorani domesticorum expositorum sententia et declaratione, uenatus fuero*”. From the *Praefatio* of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, in Antonio García Masegosa's critical edition, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, p. 35-37 (here, p. 35), with some slight changes in orthography and punctuation (The English translations in this study, unless otherwise stated, are mine).

Muslim commentaries into the translation.<sup>8</sup> It is indeed remarkable, however, how he incorporated the commentaries into the structure and into the concept of the translation, and how he did so in a very analytical and consistent manner. In fact, the quotations from the exegetical sources are not irregularly distributed throughout the translation, but we have a structure that alternates translated sections, which Dominicus refers to as *textus*, and relative commentaries, which he calls *scholia*. The suras, which Dominicus names *textus* as well, are divided into further subsections, also called *textus*, each of which is followed by a *scholium*. The *scholium* contains exegetical material related to the verses translated in the preceding (*sub-*) *textus* to which the *scholium* refers, presented in a Latin translation interspersed with Arabic transcriptions and, now and then, Dominicus's comments on them.<sup>9</sup> For example, the *textus primus*, i.e. the second sura (the first sura, the *fātiḥa*, is called *textus proëmiialis* [=introductory text]), is divided into 25 (*sub-*)*textus*, each of which is followed by a *scholium*, according to the following table:

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*Basmala-v.1*

Introduction on *Basmala* and “Mysterious Letters” of verse 1, leading to the following:

<*textus* 1><sup>a</sup> (v. 2-20)

*scholium* to *textus* 1

*textus* 2 (v. 21-27)

*scholium* to *textus* 2

*textus* 3 (v. 28-39)

*scholium* to *textus* 3

*textus* 4 (v. 40-46)

*scholium* to *textus* 4

*textus* 5 (v. 47-62)

*scholium* to *textus* 5

*textus* 6 (v. 63-66)

*scholium* to *textus* 6

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a The first *textus* of a sura is usually untitled.

<sup>8</sup> On the use of Islamic exegetical sources in the first two medieval Latin translations of the Qur'an, by Robert of Ketton (1143) and Mark of Toledo (1210), see Thomas E. Burman, “Tafsir and Translation: Traditional Arabic Qur'an Exegesis and the Latin Qur'ans of Robert of Ketton and Mark of Toledo” *Speculum* 73/3 (1998), p. 703-32, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2887495> and Burman, *Reading the Qur'an*, p. 36-58.

<sup>9</sup> This is true for relatively long suras. In the case of short suras, we find the translation of the whole sura (*textus*), followed by its *scholium*.

(cont.)

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<i>textus</i> 7 (v. 67-82)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 7
<i>textus</i> 8 (v. 83-86)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 8
<i>textus</i> 9 (v. 87-96)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 9
<i>textus</i> 10 (v. 97-103)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 10
<i>textus</i> 11 (v. 104-110)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 11
<i>textus</i> 12 (v. 111-123)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 12
<i>textus</i> 13 (v. 124-152)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 13
<i>textus</i> 14 (v. 153-167)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 14
<i>textus</i> 15 (v. 168-177)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 15
<i>textus</i> 16 (v. 178-188)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 16
<i>textus</i> 17 (v. 189-207)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 17
<i>textus</i> 18 (v. 208-214)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 18
<i>textus</i> 19 (v. 215-223)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 19
<i>textus</i> 20 (v. 224-232)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 20
<i>textus</i> 21 (v. 233-241)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 21
<i>textus</i> 22 (v. 243-253)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 22
<i>textus</i> 23 (v. 254-260)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 23
<i>textus</i> 24 (v. 261-277)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 24
<i>textus</i> 25 (v. 278-286)
<i>scholium</i> to <i>textus</i> 25

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The *sub-textus* are divided based on their content and not, for example, according to internal Qur'anic divisions such as *hizb* (division of the Qur'an into 60 equal parts) or *ğuz'* (division of the Qur'an into 30 equal parts).<sup>10</sup> This can be seen, for example, by the fact that many *textus* begin with an apostrophe to the intended recipient of the message that follows, thus representing a unit based on content: the beginning of the new apostrophe marks the beginning of the new sura subsection (e.g., *textus* 2 begins with "O uos homines!" ["O ye people!"]; *textus* 4 and 5 with "O filii Israel!" ["O ye Sons of Israel!"]; *textus* 6, 7 and 8 with "Item recordemini" ["You (pl.) should remember further!"]; *textus* 10 with "Dic" ["Say!"]; *textus* 11: "O uos qui uera fidem profitemini!" ["O ye (pl.) who profess the true faith!"]; *textus* 13 with "Recordare" ["Remember (sg.)!"]; *textus* 14 and 18 with "O uos qui uere credidistis!" ["O ye who rightly believed!"]; *textus* 15 with "O homines!" ["People!"]; *textus* 16, 23 and 25 with "O uos qui uere creditis!" ["O ye who rightly believe!"]; *textus* 20 with "Annuntia tu credentibus et dic:" ["Announce to the believers and say:"]).<sup>11</sup> The underlined words in these *textus* allow Dominicus to stress the literality of his translation: In the preface he explains that he has underlined what is to be understood as a commentary within the text, the source of which he indicates in the margin

<sup>10</sup> These divisions were known and used by the Latin translators. Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation*, p. 229, has shown how Robert of Ketton's divisions of longer suras are based on this system. *Hizb*, *ğuz'*, as well as *uŝr* (division marked every ten verses), are signaled in Flavius Mithridates's translation and the *ğuz'*-division is mentioned in its preface, see: Bobzin, "Guglielmo", p. 174 and Burman, *Reading the Qur'an*, p. 137.

<sup>11</sup> See García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, p. 41-64. These translations correspond to the following verses: Q. 2:21 ("yā-ayyuhā al-nās"); Q. 2:40 and Q. 2: 47 ("yā-banī Isrā'īl"); Q. 2:63 ("wa-īd"); Q.2:67 ("wa-īd") and Q. 2:83 ("wa-īd"); Q. 2:97 ("qul"); Q. 2:104 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū"); Q. 2:124 ("wa-īd"); Q. 2: 153 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū") and Q. 2:208 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū"); Q. 2:168 ("yā-ayyuhā al-nās"); Q. 2: 178 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū"), Q. 2:254 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū") and Q. 2:278 ("yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū"); Q. 2:223-224 ("wa-bašširi l-mu'minīna"). In this last example, Dominicus begins the new *textus* at the end of verse 223, which he considers as an introduction to the injunction at the beginning of verse 224 ("wa-bašširi l-mu'minīna / wa-lā tağ'alū ...") [Transl. "and give good tidings to the believers. / 'And do not make ..."]; Dominicus (García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, p. 57.): "Annuntia tu credentibus et dic: 'Cauete ne ponatis ...'" [Transl. "Announce to the believers and say: 'Do not put ...'"]. Dominicus splits the verse where he thinks a new unit of content begins. The content here takes precedence over the verse structure (in fact, Dominicus does not mark the verses in his translation, even though the end of a subsection almost always coincides with the end of a verse). It should also be noted that even though Dominicus stresses the literality of his translation, interpretations or variations sometimes slip into it. Here one should note the three different translations of the exactly identical expression "yā-ayyuhā l-laḏīna āmanū", among which the solution proposed at the beginning of *textus* 11 stands out.

(this is represented by the name, in Arabic script, of the commentator [or commentators] from whom he drew the interpretation, or the abbreviation *ǧm* [also in Arabic script, from the Arabic *ǧamīʿ*, meaning “totality of”], which means that all the commentators present such an interpretation).<sup>12</sup> For example, here is the beginning of *textus* 6, which contains two underlined passages, compared to the Qur’anic source:

Q. 2:63:



*wa-id aḥadnā mītāqa-kum wa-rafa’nā fawqa-kumu l-tūra ḥudū mā ātaynā-kum bi-quwwatin wa-ḍkurū mā fī-hi la’alla-kum tattaqūna.*

“And when We took compact with you, and raised above you the Mount [*i.e.* Mount Sinai, n. Cecini]: “Take forcefully what We have given you, and remember what is in it; haply you shall be godfearing”.<sup>13</sup>

*Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, I, 6:<sup>14</sup>

*Item recordemini quando nos approbauimus pactum uestrum et sublimauimus montem super uos. Tunc, supple, diximus uobis: Recipite id quod tradimus uobis cum efficacia, et fixa mente retinete in eo contenta, ut appareat uos habere timorem Dei.*

“You [*i.e.* the Sons of Israel, n. Cecini] should remember further, when we approved your pact and raised high the mountain above you. Then, you [*i.e.* the reader, n. Cecini] should add, we said to you: Receive what we

12 I reproduce here the text and translation of this passage from the preface of Dominicus (cfr. García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, p. 36-37) from Cecini, “Germanus de Silesia’s Qur’an translation in the MS K-III-1”, p. 141. (*Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis, praefatio*, ms. E, fol. 2r): “In mancis autem dictis et suppositionibus euidentiibus, subintellecta linea subducta notabo, nomen uerò expositoris plurimumue, aut has literas  quae significant omnes in eo convenire, in margine è regione collocabo.” (Transl. “Whenever the [Qur’anic] words are overly synthetic, or there is clearly an implicit reference, I will underline the words of the reference that I have made explicit, and put in the margin the name of the commentator [from whom I obtained the explanation], or more than one name, or these letters “”, which mean that all the commentators agree on such an explanation”).

13 Arthur J. Arberry, trans., *The Koran Interpreted*, New York, Macmillan, 1955, I, p. 36.

14 Cfr. García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, p. 45. For the underlined “*Tunc*”, different from García Masegosa’s edition, see MS Escorial L.I.3 (*siglum: B*), fol. 140v.

transmitted to you with effectiveness, and hold with firm mind what is contained in it, so that it shows that you are afraid of God.”

Here Dominicus wants to connect the new block with the previous one in a logical sequence. The section contained in *textus* 5, beginning with verse 47, opens with a call to the Sons of Israel, telling them explicitly: “Children of Israel, *remember* My blessing etc.”<sup>15</sup> At verse 63, the text continues elliptically, with a simple “and when” (“*wa-id*”), so that Dominicus feels the need to point out to his readers that the text here continues the apostrophe to the Sons of Israel of the previous block: (v.47:) “Sons of Israel, *you should remember* my favour (Lat. “*beneficium*”)” [...] (v.63:) “*Further*, (Lat. “*item*”) *you should remember* (Lat. “*recordemini*”) when we approved your pact etc”. In the next sentence, again, the text does not explicitly say, even if it can be inferred, that a direct speech (“Take forcefully what We have given you etc.”) is beginning, quoting what God said to the Children of Israel at the time of the Covenant, and therefore is not a further commandment, parallel to the “remember”. Dominicus, therefore, points this out in his translation by introducing the direct speech with the underlined words: “Back then (Lat. “*tunc*”), we said to you”. In this case he also marks the addition with the word “*supple*” (“you should add”), which unmistakably marks the addition as a note for the reader. The underlined additions (“*Recordemini*” and “*Tunc etc.*”) fall into the category of an interpretation accepted by all commentators, since in the margin we find the note *ǧm* in Arabic script.<sup>16</sup>

Dominicus is careful to always cite rigorously the original sources of the interpretation presented and he also lists and classifies them all in a separate section between the preface and the translation.<sup>17</sup> In the *scholia*, as we will see in the case study below, he methodically mentions both in the text (usually in Latin transcription) and in the margins (in Arabic script) the source he is quoting. Moreover, Dominicus wishes to accompany his quotations of exegetical sources in Latin translation with the original Arabic, a procedure that increases in subsequent revisions of his work. The *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* project is, in fact, about a continuous reworking, both of the translation and the commentaries, with the objective of obtaining even better translations and more

15 Q. 2: 47 in the translation of Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, I, p. 34. Arabic: “*yā-banī Isrā’īla ḍkurū nī-matiya*”. Dominicus (García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, p. 43.): “*O filii Israel. Recordemini beneficium mei*” (in all versions, the emphasis by the presence or absence of italics is mine).

16 Cfr. Escorial MS K.III.1 (*siglum K*), fol. 64v.

17 I have edited the entire section in Cecini, “The Qur’an Translation.” (forthcoming). See also: Cecini, “Germanus de Silesia’s Qur’an Translation in the MS K-III-1”, p. 136-137.

analytical and in-depth commentary sections. This is clearly visible in some of the extant manuscripts, which show numerous corrections, as we will also see below. Not content with this, after completing a first version of the entire work, Dominicus begins a new translation project in which not only are the commentaries more extensive, but in which each exegetical quotation in Latin is immediately followed by the corresponding original text in Arabic script.<sup>18</sup> This version is quite practical for the analysis of the sources, but unfortunately it covers only a small part of the Qur'an. The first version, the only one that covers the entire Qur'an, is more difficult because the Arabic transcriptions of the original sources translated in the *scholia* are far less frequent and systematic.

## 2 A Case Study: Sura 9, 28-35

In spite of this difficulty, we will offer here a first attempt at analyzing the work of Dominicus both in terms of translation and commentary. This will be done through a case study of (*sub*-)textus 3 of the *Textus Octavus*, i.e. sura 9 "al-tawba". The (*sub*-)textus 3 covers verses 28 to 35 of the sura. We have chosen this passage for the following reasons. First, it is a relevant passage regarding the relations between Islam and other religions or cults: It clearly speaks against the pre-Islamic polytheism, establishes the individual tax for the *dimmīs*, and takes a stand on the affirmation that Christ is the Son of God. Second, one can see in it the effort made by Dominicus to find a text that was acceptable to him, both in the translation and in the *scholium*, given the numerous corrections that can be seen in the manuscripts. Third, we do not have the "new" version of MS K for this part of the Qur'an, so it is a good passage to test Dominicus's first approach to the sources.

### 2.1 The Qur'anic text and the translation of Dominicus Germanus

For the convenience of the reader, I reproduce here the passage both in Arabic and in Arberry's translation:

*yā-ayyuhā l-ladīna āmanū innamā l-mušrikūna nağasun fa-lā yaqrabū  
l-masğida l-ğarāma ba'da āmi-him hādā wa-in ħiftum 'aylatan fa-sawfa  
yuğni-kumul-lāhu min fađli-hi in šā'inna l-lāha 'alīmun ħakīmun (28) qātilū*

<sup>18</sup> This new version, which contains only the translation and commentary of the opening sura and sura 2, v. 1-5, is contained in MS K, fols.15r-38r. About it see Cecini, "Germanus de Silesia's Qur'an Translation in the MS K-111-1 of the El Escorial Library." Its edition is currently under preparation by the author of this paper.

*l-ladīna lā yu'minūna bi-l-lāhi wa-lā bi-l-yawmi l-āħiri wa-lā yuħarrimūna  
mā ħarrama l-lāhu wa-rasūlu-hu wa-lā yadīnūna dīna l-ħaqqi mina  
l-ladīna utū l-kitāba ħattā yu'tū l-ğizyata 'an yadin wa-hum šāğirūna (29)  
wa-qālati l-yahūdu 'uzayrun bnu l-lāhi wa-qālati l-našārā l-masīhu bnu  
l-lāhi dalīka qawlu-hum bi-afwāhi-him yudāhi'ūna qawla l-ladīna kafarū  
min qablu qātala-humu l-lāhu annā yu'fakūna (30) ttaħadū aħbāra-hum  
wa-ruhbāna-hum arbāban min dūni l-lāhi wa-l-masīha bna maryama  
wa-mā umirū illā li-ya'budū ilāhan wāħidan lā ilāha illā ħuwa subħāna-hu  
'ammā yušrikūna (31) yuridūna an yu'fī'ū nūra l-lāhi bi-afwāhi-him  
wa-ya'bā l-lāhu illā an yutimma nūra-hu wa-law kariha l-kāfirūna (32)  
ħuwa l-ladī arsala rasūla-hu bi-l-hudā wa-dīni l-ħaqqi li-yužhira-hu 'alā  
l-dīni kulli-hi wa-law kariha l-mušrikūna (33) yā-ayyuhā l-ladīna āmanū  
inna kaṭīran mina l-aħbāri wa-l-ruhbāni la-ya'kulūna amwāla l-nāsi  
bi-l-bāṭili wa-yašuddūna 'an sabīli l-lāhi wa-l-ladīna yaknizūna l-ğahaba  
wa-l-fiđdata wa-lā yunfiqūna-hā fi sabīli l-lāhi fa-baššir-hum bi-'ađābin  
alīmin (34) yawma yuħmā 'alay-hā fi nāri ġahannama fa-tukwā bi-hā  
ğibāhu-hum wa-ğunūbu-hum wa-žuhūru-hum hādā mā kanaztum  
li-anfusi-kum fa-đūqū mā kuntum taknizūna (35)<sup>19</sup>*

O believers, the idolaters are indeed unclean; so let them not come near the Holy Mosque after this year of theirs. If you fear poverty, God shall surely enrich you of His bounty, if He will; God is All-knowing; All-wise.

Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden – such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book – until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled. 9:30 The Jews say, 'Ezra is the Son of God'; the Christians say, 'The Messiah is the Son of God.' That is the utterance of their mouths, conforming with the unbelievers before them. God assail them! How they are perverted!

They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God, and the Messiah, Mary's son – and they were commanded to serve but One God; there is no god but He; glory be to Him, above that they associate – desiring to extinguish with their mouths God's light; and God refuses but to perfect His light, though the unbelievers be averse. It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse.

<sup>19</sup> The Qur'anic text is that of the 1924 Cairo edition, transliterated according to the rules of this journal. The verse numbers of the Arabic Qur'an are placed, as customary, at the end of each verse.

O believers, many of the rabbis and monks indeed consume the goods of the people in vanity and bar from God's way. Those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not expend them in the way of God -- give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement, 9:35 the day they shall be heated in the fire of Gehenna and therewith their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded: 'This is the thing you have treasured up for yourselves; therefore taste you now what you were treasuring!'<sup>20</sup>

The analysis will be structured as follows: first, we will look at the translation part, paying special attention to the corrections and to the verses commented on in the *scholium*, the analysis of which will constitute the second part of the case study.

The passage exists in three manuscripts:

ms *E* (El Escorial, *Real Biblioteca*, 1624), which is a working manuscript of Dominicus. It shows many corrections, both in the translation and in the *scholium*. Some of the text has been illegibly erased by covering it with ink and replacing it over the line or in the margin.

Fortunately, we have most of the pre-correction version preserved in the copy in ms *M*, Montpellier, *Bibliothèque interuniversitaire*, H 72. *M* is not an autograph copy of Dominicus.

The third manuscript, ms *B*, El Escorial, *Real Biblioteca*, L.I.3, fols. 122r-319v, an autograph of Dominicus like *E*, implements the corrections we find in *E* and adds new ones.

In sum, we have three stages, which we could group into two for better visualization: 1) *E* before the correction and *M*. 2) *E* after the correction and *B*. We will now place the two texts side by side in a verse-by-verse analysis. We will mark the corrected passages in bold. We will mark in italics the modifications that occur only in *B*, i.e., where *E* has no correction and coincides with the text given by *M*. The sections that are underlined were already underlined in the manuscripts. We provide the critical edition of the text in the appendix at the end of this paper.

<sup>20</sup> Arberr, *The Koran Interpreted*, I, p. 210-11.

Q. 9:28

Arabic: *yā-ayyuhā l-ladīna āmanū innamā l-mušrikūna nağasun fa-lā yaqrabū l-masğida l-ħarāma ba'da 'āmi-him ħādā wa-in ħiftum 'aylatan fa-sawfa yuğnī-kumu l-lāhu min fađli-hi in šā' inna l-lāha 'alīmun ħakīmun*

Arberry's transl.: O believers, the idolaters are indeed unclean; so let them not come near the Holy Mosque after this year of theirs. If you fear poverty, God shall surely enrich you of His bounty, if He will; God is All-knowing; All-wise.

*E ante correcturam; M*

*E post correcturam; B*

ج

O uos qui uere creditis!  
**Scitote.** Quoniam illi, qui Deo consortem attribuunt sunt immundi! Quapropter non possunt, nec appropinquare loco orationis sacro **finito hoc lustro** ipsorum. **Si autem uos metuitis inde aliquam inopiam pati posse, Deus sanè ipse sufficientiam uictus tribuet** de sua liberalitate secundum beneplacitum suum, quia Deus omnia sciens sapientissimus est.

O uos qui uere creditis!  
**Scitote.** Quoniam illi, qui Deo consortem attribuunt sunt immundi! Quapropter non possunt, nec appropinquare loco orationis sacro **post peractum lustrum** ipsorum **annale id est magnae festiuitatis.** *Quodsi inde metuitis penuriam uos passuros, Deus uos ditabit* de sua liberalitate, *si ei placuerit, quoniam omnes cognoscens* sapientissimus est.

O ye who believe rightly! You should know that those who give God a companion are unclean! Therefore they cannot even get near to the holy place of prayer after this period of time of theirs has finished. **If indeed you fear you could suffer from this some kind of poverty, God Himself will**

O ye who rightfully believe! You should know that those who give God a companion are unclean! Therefore they cannot even get near to the holy place of prayer **after this period of one year of theirs has been celebrated fully, i.e. [the period] of the great feast.** *If you fear you will suffer scarcity*

certainly give you enough nourishment by His generosity, according to His good will, because God knows everything and is the most wise.

*from this, God will enrich you by His generosity, if it pleases Him, because He knows everyone and is the most wise.*

In this verse, we can see that the corrections involve some changes in the wording, in an effort to be more literal. In the first correction, on MS *E*, Dominicus replaced the *ablativus absolutus* “*finito hoc lustrō*” (“this period having finished”) with a construction that more closely resembles the wording of the Arabic: “*post* (Ar. “*ba’da*”) *peractum lustrum ipsorum annale* (Ar. “*ām*”). He also felt the need to add an in-text gloss (“*id est magnae festiuitatis*” [i.e. [the period] of the great feast]), which he may have found in a subsequent consultation of the commentaries, or simply for further clarification. In the other corrections we found in MS *B*, we see Dominicus striving to be even closer to the Arabic. He prefers “*uos ditabit*” (“he will enrich you”), which is a more literal rendering of the Arabic “*yugannī-kum*” (“he will enrich you”), to “*sufficiētiā uictus tribuet*” (“he will give you enough nourishment”), which is already informed by an interpretation. The same can be said for “*si ei placuerit*” (“if it pleases Him”), which is closer to the Arabic phrase “*in šā*” (“if He will”) than “*secundum beneplacitum suum*” (“according to His good will”). We can also suppose that Dominicus, upon reflection, considers the verb ‘*alama* (from which comes “*alīm*” [the one who is “knowing” *par excellence*]) to be better expressed by the Latin *cognosco* than *scio* – which would perhaps be closer to the Arabic *darā?* –. This might also be the reason for changing “*omnia*” (“everything”) to “*omnes*” (“everyone; every being”), considering *scio* a more abstract and *cognosco* a more concrete type of knowledge. Naturally, this last part is only speculation. On the contrary, in the first version we also find words closer to the Arabic source that have been removed: the “*hoc*” in “*finito hoc lustrō*”, which corresponds to the Arabic *hādā*, and the “*Deus*” in “*quia Deus omnia sciens sapientissimus est*”, which corresponds to the Arabic *Allāh* in the phrase “*inna l-lāha ‘alīmun ḥakīmun*”.

Q. 9:29

Arabic: *qātilū l-ladīna lā yu’minūna bi-l-lāhi wa-lā bi-l-yawmi l-āhiri wa-lā yuḥarrimūna mā ḥarrama l-lāhu wa-rasūlu-hu wa-lā yadīnūna dīna l-ḥaqqi mina l-ladīna utū l-kitāba ḥattā yu’ṭū l-ḡizyata ‘an yadin wa-hum šāḡirūna*

Arberry’s transl.: Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden – such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book – until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled.

*E ante correcturam; M*

Agite bellum contra eos, qui non credunt in Deum, neque in diem nouissimum, nec uetitum sibi habent, quod Deus uetuit apostolusque illius. Neque iudicant iustè quidam ex eis, qui legem acceperunt, id est Judaei et Christiani, quousque dent tributum de manu, id est pro aetate quisque sua etiam si sint paruuli, id est minoris aetatis.

Fight a war against them, who do not believe in God, nor in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden, what God as well as the Apostle of His forbade. Nor some among them who received a Law [i.e. a Scripture, n. Cecini], i.e. the Jews and the Christians, judge justly until they give a tribute from their hand, i.e. each one according to their age, even if they are little, i.e. underaged.

In verse 29, some of the corrections seem to aim at a better style, such as “*et apostolus eius*” instead of “*apostolusque illius*”, or the suppressed repetition of the word “*aetas*” at the end. Others are more like a commentary to achieve greater clarity while at the same time seeking greater literality, such as the further addition, in the last stage, of “*secundum ueritatem*” to express the literal meaning of the Arabic word “*al-ḥaqq*” (“truth”), which had already been translated as “just” (in “*iustum iudicium*”), following the more literal rendering of

*E post correcturam; B*

Agite bellum contra eos, qui non credunt in Deum, neque in diem nouissimum, nec uetitum sibi habent, quod Deus uetuit et apostolus eius. Quia non iudicant iustum iudicium secundum ueritatem, quidam ex eis, qui acceperunt legem scriptam, quousque cogantur dare tributum personale de manu in manum, id est iuxta aetatis augmentum, quisque suae etiam minoris.

Fight a war against them, who do not believe in God, nor in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden, what God and His Apostle forbade. Nor some among them who received a written Law [i.e. a Scripture, n. Cecini] judge with just judgment, according to the truth, until they are forced to give the individual tribute from hand to hand, i.e. each one according to the growing of their age, even if underaged.



“*yadīnūna dīna*” with “*iudicant iudicium*”, which reproduces the typical Arabic construction of the internal object, i.e., the direct object as a noun from the same root as the verb.<sup>21</sup> The word “*personale*” explains the nature of the *ġizya*, the “*tributum*”, as a “head tax”. One explanation is the use of “*cogantur dare*” (“they should be forced to give [the tax]”) instead of “*dent*” (“they should give”), the latter being closer to the wording of the Arabic text, which has only “*yu’tū*” (“[until] they give”), so Dominicus seems to want to underline the coercion here. Nevertheless, he chooses not to translate “*ṣāġirūna*” with “humiliated”, as we find in many translations<sup>22</sup> and also in Arberry, quoted above, and as it is also suggested in the commentaries,<sup>23</sup> but goes with a literal translation of the meaning of the root, i.e. “being small”, interpreting that the tax was also imposed on children. If we look at al-Zamaḥṣārī’s commentary *ad locum*: “*wa-hum ṣāġirūna: ay tu’hidu min-hum ‘alā al-ṣiġāri wa-l-dillī*” (“and they are (or become) little: i.e., it is taken from them to make them contemptible and to cause humiliation”),<sup>24</sup> we may wonder if Dominicus understood “*ṣiġārī*” as the plural of *ṣāġir* (small, little), and thus perhaps interpreted the sentence as “it is collected by them [being imposed] upon the little ones [i.e. the children]”. Once again, this is a tentative way of looking for a solution for which we have no proof. However, it is possible that he found a source to support it, since he also interprets the Arabic “*‘alā yad*” (“out of hand”) to mean that the amount of the tax should be proportional to age, a gloss that he maintained even after the correction, even though he changed the phrasing (before the correction: “*pro aetate quisque sua*” [“each one according to their age”]; after: “*iuxta aetatis*

21 It is also noteworthy that in both versions Dominicus chooses the juridical interpretation of *dīn* (“judgment”), and does not translate it as “religion”, as it is usually interpreted in this passage. He probably thinks that the first interpretation is the more literal one, while the second is a further development. On the two meanings of *dīn*, with an explanation of their possible etymology, see Arne A. Ambros, *A Concise Dictionary of Koranic Arabic*, Wiesbaden; Reichert, 2004, p. 102. and, in more detail, Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur’ān*, Baroda, 1938, p. 131-33.

22 E.g., Bausani, Milan, 2004<sup>15</sup>, p. 135: “umiliati”; Blachère, 1957, p. 216: “humiliés”; Bobzin, Munich, 2010, p. 162: “erniedrigt”; Vernet, Barcelona, 2003, p. 202: “humillados”.

23 E.g. Al-Samarqandī *ad locum*: “*wa-qāla l-Aḥfaṣ: ya’nī: karhan. ‘wa-hum ṣāġirūna’ ya’nī: ḍalīlīna*” (“And Al-Aḥfaṣ said: It means: forcibly, and they are (or become) little, means: they are humiliated.”); Al-Zamaḥṣārī *ad locum*: “*‘wa-hum ṣāġirūna: ay tu’hidu min-hum ‘alā al-ṣiġāri wa-l-dillī*” (“{and they are (or become) little}: i.e. it is taken from them to make them contemptible and to cause humiliation.”); (Source for both commentaries: www.altafsir.com [Last consulted: 27/10/2022]). Al-Samarqandī and al-Zamaḥṣārī are among the most quoted commentators by Dominicus. In al-Samarqandī we can also see the origin of the change “*dare*” > “*cogantur dare*”, which was therefore made by Dominicus according to the evidence of the commentaries.

24 See previous footnote.

*augmentum quisque suae*” [“each one according to the growing of their age”]). Be that as it may, the relevant feature here is that between the two alternatives, “little ones” and “humiliation”, Dominicus seems to have discarded the most polemical one by not speaking of humiliation in his translation. Nevertheless, he adds the detail of the forceful collection of the head tax, which is present in the commentaries.<sup>25</sup> While Dominicus added all the more detailed explanations we have seen so far, he removed the commentary “*Judaei et Christiani*” to explain the “*al-ladīna ūtū l-kitāba*” (“those to whom the book [or rather, the Scripture] was given”). Perhaps by adding “*scriptam*” and changing “those who have received a Law” (“*qui legem acceperunt*”) to “those who have received a written Law” (“*qui acceperunt legem scriptam*”) – thus adhering more closely to the Arabic root *kataba* (to write) of “*kitāb*” – Dominicus considered that it was already implied that one was referring to Jews and Christians as the only custodians, along with Muslims, of written Sacred Scripture.

Q. 9:30

Arabic: *wa-qālali l-yahūdu ‘uzayrun bnu l-lāhi wa-qālali l-naṣārā l-masīhu bnu l-lāhi ḍalīka qawlu-hum bi-afwāhi-him yuḍāhīrūna qawla l-ladīna kafarū min qablu qātala-humu l-lāhu annā yu’fakūna*

Arberry’s transl.: The Jews say, ‘Ezra is the Son of God’; the Christians say, ‘The Messiah is the Son of God.’ That is the utterance of their mouths, conforming with the unbelievers before them. God assail them! How they are perverted!

*E ante correcturam; M*

*E post correcturam; B*

جم  
ابو حيان

Judaei quidem praesentes dicunt, Aōzair, id est Esdras, est filius Dei, idem dicunt Christiani: Christus est filius Dei. Hoc dicto orium [*sic*] suorum, se ipsos conuincunt esse similes

Siquidem Judaei praesentes dicunt, Aōzair, id est Esdras, est filius Dei. Idem dicunt Christiani *nunc existentes*! Christus est filius Dei. Haec sunt uerba oribus ipsorum conficta, imitantes incredulos idolatras,

ابو حيان  
ابن عباس  
الجرجاني  
الرحمشرى

25 E.g. in al-Samarqandī, as shown in two footnotes above this one.

**incredulis quos Deus  
perdidit ante illos, id est,  
idolatrias, ubi eos reperit  
declinasse à ueritate.**

The present Jews say that Aözair, i.e. Ezra, is son of God; the Christian say the same: Christ is son of God. **With this saying of their mouths, they convict themselves to be similar to the Unbelievers that God destroyed before them, i.e. the idolaters, when he found them to have deviated from the truth.**

**suos antecessores, quos  
expugnare praecepit  
Deus, quocumque se  
uerterint.**

1 nunc existentes]  
praesentes *E*

The present Jews say that Aözair, i.e. Ezra, is son of God; the Christian *now existing* say the same: Christ is son of God. **This are words made up in their mouths, imitating their predecessors, the Unbelievers, worshipper of idols, that God ordered to fight, wherever they turn themselves away to.**

In verse 30, we can see that the second part of the verse has been completely rewritten probably once again to be more literal and concise.<sup>26</sup> We can see that the verb *ḏāhaʿa* (to resemble something, to imitate), was later translated with the participle “*imitantes*” (“*imitating*”) instead of the long periphrasis “*se ipsos conuincunt esse similes*” (“they convict themselves to be similar [to the unbelievers which God damned before them]”). In both cases there is an added commentary on the “Unbelievers” (“*increduli*” / “*al-laḏīna kafarū*”) to specify that they are “idol-worshippers” (“*idolatrae*”), in the later version the gloss is incorporated into the translation (“*incredulos idolatras*”), unlike the version before the correction, where it is clearly marked as a gloss (“*id est idolatras*”). In both cases, Dominicus’s translation differs from the modern one. He refers the “*hum*” (“them”) of *qātala-hum* (“may he [*i.e.* God, *n. Cecini*] fight them”) to the unbelievers and not to the Christians and the Jews, and connects it with the following “*annā yuʿfakūna*”, a rethorical exclamation (“how have they been perverted!”) which Dominicus renders in a simpler way: “God ordered to fight them (i.e. the unbelievers) [*quos (i.e. idolatras) expugnare praecepit*”

<sup>26</sup> This may also be the result of consulting more commentaries, as can be seen by comparing the margins of the different versions (the added names are only in *MS B*).

*Deus*”], wherever they turn themselves away to (“*quocumque se uerterint*”). This literally renders the passive *yuʿfaku*, which means “to be turned in a wrong direction”.<sup>27</sup> Once again, between two possible interpretations, Dominicus seems to choose the less polemical one, if it seems to him to be the more literal one, while at the same time making the idolaters, and not Christians and Jews, the target of the exhortation to fight. So if the choice is between polemic and literalism, the polemic loses.

Verses 31-35 will be discussed in less detail, since they are not specifically commented on in the *scholium*.

Q. 9:31

Arabic: *ittahādū aḥbāra-hum wa-ruhbāna-hum arbāban min dūni l-lāhi wa-l-masīḥa bna maryama wa-mā umirū illā li-yaʿbudū ilāhan wāḥidan lā ilāha illā huwa subḥāna-hu ʿammā yuṣṣrikūna*

Arberry’s transl.: They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God, and the Messiah, Mary’s son -- and they were commanded to serve but One God; there is no god but He; glory be to Him, above that they associate.

*E ante correcturam; M*

Tenant sacerdotes **suos Iudaei et Christiani** monachos pro supremis dominis, quod conuenit soli Deo, et pro Deo uenerantur Christiani Christum filium Mariae, cum non sit praeceptum ipsis, nisi ut colant Deum unum, praeter quem nullus est alius Deus, nisi ipse solus supergloriosus, qui longe est ab eo, quod illi ipsi attribuunt.

*E post correcturam; B*

Tenant sacerdotes seu episcopos et monachos pro supremis dominis  *suis, quodque* soli Deo conuenit attribuentes Christo filio Mariae, cum non sit praeceptum ipsis, ut adorent pro Deo ullum, nisi Deum qui solus est uerus Deus gloriosus longe  *existens* ab eo, quod  *ei* ipsi attribuunt.

<sup>27</sup> The first version also translates the verb as “deviate”, but adds an interpretation (“to deviate from the truth”) that is later left out: “[*quos Deus perdidit ante illos*] ubi eos reperit  *declinasse à ueritate*” (“[whom God destroyed before them, when he found them to have deviated from the truth]”).

**The Jews and the Christians** hold their priests <and> monks for supreme lords, which is appropriate only for God, and the Christians worship as a God Christ, son of Mary, when it was not ordered to them, but to worship only one God, beside Whom there is no other God, but Himself only, the immensely glorious, Who is greatly far from what those associate with Him.

They hold their priests, or bishops, and monks for supreme lords of theirs, and gave that, which is appropriate only for God, to Christ, Son of Mary, when it was not ordered to them, to worship as God anyone, but God, Who only is the true God, glorious, Who stays greatly far from what they associate with Him.

Apart from the stylistic corrections, we would like to point out the disappearance of the gloss explaining that the “priests” of the text refer to both Jews and Christians, replaced by the translation of the Arabic *aḥbār* with two words “priests and bishops”. It is important for Dominicus to show how the Arabic word designating a religious scholar, an “expert” in theological matters, often used to designate Jewish rabbis, should also be applied to their Christian counterparts. In fact, by eliminating the direct mention of the Jews, who are also involved in the context of the previous verses, he emphasizes the fact that he considers this verse – even though he is basing his interpretation on Muslim commentaries, as we will see below – to be addressed primarily to Christians, as he will explain in the *scholium*.

Q. 9:32

Arabic: *yuridūna an yutfīrū nūra l-lāhi bi-afwāhi-him wa-ya'bā l-lāhu illā an yutimma nūra-hu wa-law kariha l-kāfirūna*

Arberry's transl.: desiring to extinguish with their mouths God's light; and God refuses but to perfect His light, though the unbelievers be averse.

*E ante correcturam; M*

**Quaerunt** extinguere lucem Dei oribus suis, sed **non permittit** Deus hoc, sed ut perficiat lucem suam, etiam inuitis incredulis.

*E post correcturam; B*

**Volunt** extinguere lucem Dei oribus suis, *id est Alcoranum supprimere*<sup>1</sup>, sed *nequaquam permittet* Deus, nisi ut perficiat lucem suam, etiam inuitis *istis* incredulis *istis*<sup>1</sup>.

1 *supprimere*] *add. s.l. B*

2 *istis*] *add. s.l. B*

**They seek** to put out the light of God with their mouths, but God **does not allow** that, instead [He acts to] perfect His light, even if the Unbelievers are averse.

**They want** to put out the light of God with their mouths, *i.e. to suppress the Qur'an*, but God **will never allow** that, instead [He acts to] perfect His light, even if *these* Unbelievers are averse.

Here we notice a doubt in the rendition of Arabic *yuridūna* (“they want”). “*Quaerunt*” may have been influenced by the Spanish translation of the word (= *quieren*), which in Latin means “they seek”, and is thus an interpretation of the Arabic verb. Dominicus may have later felt that this was not justified and used the more literal “*uolunt*”. We also notice the insertion of a gloss in the later version, a gloss developed in two steps: first only “*Alcoranum*”, to explain the “light of God” as the Qur'an, and then with the addition of “*supprimere*”, which refers the gloss to the whole preceding sentence: “They want to put out God's light”, explained as: “They want to suppress the Qur'an”. It is also noteworthy to what extent Dominicus emphasizes that the Qur'anic text is addressed to a specific group of unbelievers, namely “these”, *i.e.* “these, who are here now” (as the “*praesentes*” and “*nunc existentes*” of verse 30), repeating the addition “*istis*” twice. He seems to want to underline that this revelation, which might be considered somewhat aggressive, is not general, but was made on a specific occasion, as he will explain in the *scholium*. In this way, he may have wanted to reduce controversy by relating this not to all Christians (and Jews), but to a particular group of them at a particular historical time and place.

Q. 9:33

Arabic: *huwa l-laḏī arsala rasūla-hu bi-l-hudā wa-dīni l-ḥaqqi li-yuḏhira-hu 'alā l-dīni kulli-hi wa-law kariha l-mušrikūna*

Arberry's transl.: It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse.

*E; M*

Ipse **propterea** misit apostolum suum cum directione et lege ueritatis, ut ostendat **illam esse superiorem legi uniuersae**, quamuis grauitur id ferant **conso-cificantes Deum**.

*B*

Ipse **est, qui** misit apostolum suum cum directione et lege ueritatis, ut ostendat **eum praepositum super legem uniuersam**, quamuis grauitur **ualde** id ferant **illi, qui Deo socium attribuunt**.

Therefore, He sent his apostle with guidance and the Law of Truth, to show **that it is superior to all Law**, even if **those who** associate [other deities] to God are very upset about this.

He is the one, Who sent his apostle with guidance and the Law of Truth, to show **that he is the head above the entire Law** [*i.e.* Religion, *n. Cecini*], even if **those who give God a companion**, are **really** very upset about this.

We can note how in manuscript *B* Dominicus refers the pronoun “*hu*” of “*li-yuḏhira-hu*” (“to uplift *him*”) to “*rasūl*” (“messenger” / “*apostolus*”) instead of referring it to *dīn* (“religion” / “*lex*”, in Arabic a masculine noun), as he did in the first version (and as Arberry, does).<sup>28</sup> We can speculate whether he has chosen here to avoid a confrontation between religions in favor of a solution that is also grammatically possible and that “only” gives the Prophet a prominent place without explicitly stating the superiority of one religion over others.

Q. 9:34-35

Arabic: *yā-ayyuhā l-ladīna āmanū inna kaṭīran mina l-aḥbāri wa-l-ruhbāni la-ya'kulūna amwāla l-nāsi bi-l-bāṭili wa-yaṣuddūna 'an sabīli l-lāhi wa-l-ladīna yaknizūna l-dahaba wa-l-fiḏḏata wa-lā yunfiqūna-hā fī sabīli l-lāhi fa-baššir-hum bi-'aḏābin alīmin (34) yawma yuḥmā 'alay-hā fī nāri ḡahannama fa-tukwā bi-hā ḡibāhu-hum wa-ḡunūbu-hum wa-zuhūru-hum hādā mā kanaztum li-anfusi-kum fa-dūqū mā kuntum taknizūna*

Arberry's transl.: O believers, many of the rabbis and monks indeed consume the goods of the people in vanity and bar from God's way. Those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not expend them in the way of God – give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement, / the day they shall be heated in the fire of Gehenna and therewith their foreheads

<sup>28</sup> The passage is translated in different ways, which testifies to its ambiguity: Bausani, p. 135, maintains the ambiguity: “Egli è Colui che ha inviato il Suo Messaggero con la retta guida e la Religione della Verità, perché prevalga [who? the Messenger? the Religion of Truth?] sulle religioni tutte”; Blachère chooses a translation similar to the previous reading of Dominicus, p. 217: “C'est Lui qui a envoyé Son Apôtre, avec la Direction et la Religion de Vérité, pour la faire prévaloir sur la Religion en entier”, as do Bobzin, p. 163: “Er ist es, der seinen Gesandten [m.] mit der rechten Leitung sandte / und mit der Religion (f.) der Wahrheit, um ihr (f.) zum Siege zu verhelfen über alle Religion”, and Vernet, p. 203: “Él es Quien ha mandado a su Enviado con la dirección y la religión verdadera, para elevarla sobre todas las religiones”.

and their sides and their backs shall be branded: ‘This is the thing you have treasured up for yourselves; therefore taste you now what you were treasuring!’

*E ante correcturam; M*

*E post correcturam; B*

[34] O uos qui uerè creditis, Scitote! quoniam multi ex sacerdotibus et monachis sunt, qui **edunt** bona hominum gratis, et recedunt a uia **recta** Dei.

Item **alij sunt**, qui thesaurizant aurum et argentum, et non expendunt secundum beneplacitum Dei. Tu ergo annuncia eis tormentum **dirissimum**,

[35] quod apprehendet illos in die **qua** uehementer uret ignis gehennae. **Tunc** cauterizabuntur frontes et latera et terga **ipsorum**, diciturque illis: Hoc est, quod thesaurizastis uobis: **Degustate nunc** id, quod tam auide **congregastis**.

ج

[34] O uos qui uerè creditis, Scitote! quoniam multi ex sacerdotibus **seu episcopis** et monachis sunt, qui **consumunt** bona hominum **inaniter**, et recedunt **recedereque faciunt** a uia Dei.

Item **quidam autem ex illis**, qui thesaurizant aurum et argentum, **quae**<sup>1</sup> non expendunt **ea in uia Dei, id est** secundum beneplacitum **eius**. Tu ergo annuncia eis tormentum rigorosissimum, [35] quod apprehendet illos in die quo uehementer uret ignis gehennae. **Quo etiam** cauterizabuntur frontes **ipsorum** et latera et terga, diciturque illis: Hoc **nunc** est, quod thesaurizastis uobis: **Igitur degustate modo** id, quod tam auide **accumulastis**.

<sup>1</sup> quae] *add. s.l. B*

[34] O ye who believe rightly! You should know that many among the priests and the monks are those, who **eat** the goods of mankind **freely** and turn away from the **right** way of God. Moreover **there are others**, who treasure up gold and silver **and** do not expend them according to **God's** favor.

[34] O ye who believe rightly! You should know that many among the priests, **or the bishops**, and the monks are those, who **consume** the goods of mankind **in vanity** and turn of God. Moreover **there are some of them**, who treasure up gold and silver, **which they** do not expend **on the way of**

Therefore you announce them the most **terrible** torment, [35] which will take hold of them in the day in which the fire of Gehenna will intensely burn. **Then** their foreheads, sides and backs will be scorched and it will be said to them: This is what you treasured up for yourselves! **Taste now** that what you **have collected** so greedily.

themselves away *as well as dissuade others* from the way *God*, i.e. according to *His* favor. Therefore you announce them the most **rigorous** torment, [35] which will take hold of them in the day in which the fire of Gehenna will intensely burn. **On this day**, their foreheads, sides and backs will be scorched and it will be said to them: This is *now*, what you treasured up for yourselves! **Therefore**, taste *in this moment*, that what you have **heaped up** so greedily.

We have connected these two verses because they are logically connected in Dominicus's translation. Here, too, "episcopi" is added as in verse 31.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, we can see an effort to better translate "yaṣuddūna" ("to turn away"), and render its two senses: "to turn away oneself from" or "to turn *others* away, to dissuade from." Along the same lines of a more literal translation is the change from "gratis" to "inaniter" to render "bi-l-bāṭil" (lit. "in what is futile") and the repetition of the expression "on the way of God" present in the Qur'anic text. Dominicus also opts for a more appropriate translation *ad sensum* when he translates "ya'kulūna" (lit. "they eat") with "consumunt" ("they consume") rather than with "edunt" ("they eat"). The other corrections are stylistic choices.<sup>30</sup>

29 Dominicus clearly relates this two verses to the clergymen mentioned earlier. This is also the reason why he does not begin a new *textus* here, despite the apostrophe ("O ye who believe rightly!").

30 For the sake of completeness, we also report here the translation of part of this passage (vv. 30 [part]; 32-33), which Dominicus made in an early work of his, the "Antitheses Fidei" of 1638, p. 13: "Alcor. Textu Paenitentiae, versus medium; dictum eius. *Dixerunt Nazareni: Christus est filius Dei, atque illud est dictum eorum, qui fidem abnegauerunt antea & non multo post: volunt extinguere lucem Dei oribus suis, sed auertat Deus; nisi quod perfiat lumen suum inuitis, etiam infidelibus. Ipse est qui misit apostolum cum directione, seu regula & fide veritatis; vt superiorem illum ostendat super fidem vniuersam, & etiam inuitis participantibus. id est Christianis.*" Note the "volunt" at the beginning of verse 32 and the "illum" of verse 33, referred to the Prophet. We plan to publish more detailed studies on the *Antitheses Fidei*. On this work see: Zacarias Remiro Andollu, "La Sagrada Congregación frente al Islám: Apostolado de la Prensa en lengua árabe", in *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide memoria rerum: 350 anni a servizio delle missioni*, ed. Josef Metzler, Rome, Herder, 1971, vol. I/1, p. 707-731 (esp. 715-716;721); Aurélien Girard, "Teaching and Learning

## 2.2 The scholium

As we mentioned earlier, the *scholia* are the most original and most interesting part of Dominicus's *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*. To date, they have neither been edited nor analyzed in detail.<sup>31</sup> What we present here, together with the critical edition of this *scholium*, which can be found in the appendix section, is therefore a first attempt to see how Dominicus uses the exegetical sources to write his *scholia*, and it should be seen as the first result of a work in progress.

Not only did Dominicus revise the translations, but we also have the three stages we described earlier for the *scholium*. In what follows, we will analyze each paragraph of the *scholium*, according to the two grouped redactions of 1) *E* before the correction and *M*, and 2) *E* after the correction and *B*. We will try to describe Dominicus's use of Muslim exegetical sources by examining the commentaries he mentions and seeing how he deals with them.

The first paragraph reads, as follows:<sup>32</sup>

	<i>E; M</i>	<i>B</i>	
ج	Diuersi diuersas afferunt sententias, de quibus hīc loquatur consocificantibus, seu qui Deo socium faciunt in cultu suo. Siquidem Deus (aiunt <b>ferre omnes expositores</b> ) in antecedentibus legibus, scilicet Turat et Euangelio, mandatum expressum dederit, et in alcorano qui supra omnes	Diuersi diuersas afferunt sententias, de quibus hīc loquatur consocificantibus, qui Deo socium faciunt in cultu suo. Siquidem Deus (aiunt) in antecedentibus legibus, scilicet Turat et Euangelio, mandatum expressum dederit, et in alcorano qui supra omnes leges luce ueritatis	ج

Arabic in Early Modern Rome: Shaping a Missionary Language", in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jan Loop, Alastair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett, Leiden, Brill, 2017, p. 189-212, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctt1w8h2b9.13> (esp. p. 203-204); Ulisse Cecini, "Dominicus Germanus de Silesia in Rome: The Roman Prodromes of a Future Qur'an Translator", in *The Qur'an in Rome. Manuscripts, Translations, and the Study of Islam in Early Modern Catholicism*, ed. Federico Stella and Roberto Tottoli, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2024, p. 263-285, <https://doi.org/10.1515/978311096926-011> (esp. 276-283); Dennis Half, *The Arabic Vulgate in Safavid Persia. Arabic Printing of the Gospels, Catholic Missionaries, and the Rise of Shi'i Anti-Christian Polemics*, Doctoral dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 2016, p. 139-142.

31 We are currently preparing the complete critical edition of the *scholia* of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*.

32 Here MS *E* does not present corrections, so here, as in verse 33, the two stages are *E* and *M* on one side, and only *B*, with its corrections, on the other.

leges luce ueritatis resplendet maiori rigore mandat, ut ipse solus absque consorte, **quia nullus ei par est, adoretur simpliciter et absolutè.**

Different [commentators] bring different opinions [to explain] about which “associators”, – or people who put a companion next to God in their religion – one speaks here. Indeed, God (as **almost all commentators** say) in the preceding Laws [*i.e.* Scriptures, *n. Cecini*], *i.e.* the Torah and the Gospel, has given the explicit order – and He orders with greater rigor in the Qur’an, which shines above all Laws [*i.e.* Scriptures, as above, *n. Cecini*] with the light of truth – that only He Himself, without companion, **should be worshipped, simply and absolutely, because no-one is equal to Him.**

resplendet maiori rigore mandat, ut ipse solus absque consorte, **simpliciter et absolutè adoretur, cum nullus ei sit par aut similis.**

Different [commentators] bring different opinions [to explain] about which “associators”, who put a companion next to God in their religion, one speaks here. Indeed, God (they say) in the preceding Laws [*i.e.* Scriptures, *n. Cecini*], *i.e.* the Torah and the Gospel, has given the explicit order – and He orders with greater rigor in the Qur’an, which shines above all Laws [*i.e.* Scriptures, as above, *n. Cecini*] with the light of truth – that only He Himself, without companion, **should be worshipped, simply and absolutely, because no-one is equal or similar to Him.**

The first paragraph refers to the question of who exactly is referred to by the word “*al-mušrikūna*” (the “associators”<sup>33</sup> of the first verse of the *Textus* III, verse 28: “*innamā l-mušrikūna nağasun*” [Arberry: “The idolaters (lit. “the associators”, *n. Cecini*) are indeed unclean”]). Although he later presents some examples from specific commentators, here Dominicus makes a general statement, saying that there is a multiplicity of opinions among the commentators. He wants to show this because he is convinced that the multiplicity of opinions among the commentators shows the obscurity of the Qur’an and that even the

33 I.e. “Those who associate”. We tried to reproduce in the English translation the Latin “*con-sociificantes*”, used by Dominicus to give a literal rendition of “*al-mušrikūna*”, meaning “those who put an associate or a partner [*socius*] next to God”.

“experts” could not agree on its interpretation.<sup>34</sup> Be that as it may, all the commentators agree (as the notation “*ğm*”, the abbreviation for “*ğami*” [“all” (the commentators)] in the margin confirms) that God did not allow polytheism in any of the revealed scriptures. We have not been able to find the exact wording we read in Dominicus’s *scholium* in any particular commentator. Nevertheless, especially when Dominicus speaks of the Qur’an that “shines above every law with the light of truth”, it is clear that he is translating from, or perhaps summarizing, Muslim sources. Whatever the source,<sup>35</sup> it is important to note that when Dominicus reports a source, he usually translates it “as it is”, including praises of Islam, Muḥammad and the Qur’an, if they are present in the source. The most he does to make it clear that he is reporting a statement is to add an “*aiunt*” (“they say”), but this is not the case with each quotation. In any case, he does not feel the need to adapt the text he is translating, but reproduces it as closely as possible.

After this general statement, Dominicus goes on to illustrate the various solutions to the question: “who are the *mušrikūn*, of whom the text speaks?”

*E ante correcturam; M*

*E post correcturam; B*

الجرجاني  
ابو هريره  
ابن ابى  
نجيح  
مجاهد  
ابن عباس

Elgiorgiani, citans plures  
ex **discipulis**, dicit hoc  
magis propriè intelligi de  
Arabibus idolatris, quibus  
ab antiquis temporibus  
accessus ad phanum et  
ingressus in illud semper  
licitus erat.

Elgiorgiani plures  
**citans discipulos**, dicit:  
Hoc magis propriè  
**intelligi debere** de  
Arabibus idolatris –**qui**  
**Angelorum statuas**  
**adorabant dicentes**  
**eos esse filias Dei, quos**

الجرجاني  
ابو هريره  
ابن ابى  
نجيح  
العادي  
الكلبي

34 Dominicus speaks of this explicitly in the preface to the *Interpretatio* (cfr. García Masegosa, *Germán de Silesia. Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis*, p. 35): “... cum uix in aliquo seruet ordinem narrationis et magnam prae se ferat uerborum ostentationem, incompta nonnumquam connexionem, immo confusione [...]; qua de causa expositores, horum indicationes citantes, cum sint tam diuersae, diuersas quoque eliciunt conclusiones.” (“... since [the Qur’an] almost never keeps the sequence of the narration, while making show of a great verbal ostentation, sometimes with rough connections or, better, confusion [...]; therefore, when the commentators mention the implied meanings of the verses, these meanings are so different that the commentators also draw different conclusions from them.”).

35 Of course, for this and other passages for which we have not found the source, we will be grateful for any hint from the scholarly community.

*asserit textus imitari uidentur Judaei et Christiani asserentes isti Christum, et illi Esdram filium Dei esse*–, quibus ab antiquis temporibus *accessus et ingressus ad phanum* semper licitus erat.

Moghahed apud eundem, asserit id significare **omnes credentes** in Deum extra legem alcoranicam. Probatque hoc auctoritate alcorani, قوله تعالى: "Illi qui credunt, et qui iudaeizant, et Sabei et Christiani et Magi et consocificantes".

Postea adducit declarationem **istius** auctoritatis, factam ab ipso Mohhamaedo:

قوله عليه السلام \*من اسلم من  
اهل الكتاب كان اجره مرتين  
وله ما لنا وعليه ما علينا ومن  
اسلم من المشركين كان له ما لنا  
وعليه ما علينا

Qui fidem moslemani-  
cam suscepit aliquis ex  
domesticis libri –id est  
Judaeis et Christianis–,  
habebit praemium dupli-  
catum: **Idem quod et nos,  
si obserauerit, ad quod  
obligati sumus.** Alterum  
si ante susceptionem  
fidei nostrae id ad quod

ابن عباس  
مجاهد

Moghahed apud eun-  
dem, asserit id significare  
**de omnibus credentibus**  
in Deum extra legem  
alcoranicam. Probatque  
hoc auctoritate alcorani  
قوله تعالى: "Illi qui cre-  
dunt, et qui iudaeizant,  
et Sabei et Christiani  
*Magique cum consocifi-  
cantibus*". Postea adducit  
declarationem *ipsius*  
auctoritatis, factam ab  
ipso Mohhamaedo:

قوله عليه السلام \*من اسلم  
من اهل الكتاب كان اجره  
مرتين وله ما لنا وعليه ما علينا  
ومن اسلم من المشركين كان له  
ما لنا وعليه ما علينا

Qui fidem mosle-  
manicam suscepit  
aliquis ex domesti<ci>s  
libri –id est ex Judaeis  
et Christianis–, habebit  
praemium duplicatum,  
**idem pro ipso, quod pro  
nobis, quia obligatus est,  
ad quod et nos obligati  
sumus, supple dabitur ei.**

**obligatus erat fecit.** Ex  
idolatriis autem conuersus,  
habebit **id quod et nos,  
si fecerit id, quod nos ex  
debito nostro facimus.** Ita  
explicat Eben Aabas **apud  
eundem.**

Alterum (*ait Eben Abbas*)  
si ante susceptionem  
fidei nostrae, fecit id, ad  
quod obligatus erat lege  
sua. Ex idolatriis autem  
conuersus, habebit  
*unum*, id quod et nos,  
si fecerit id, *quod et nos  
facimus*, subintellige<sup>2</sup>  
**secundum legem nos-  
tram. Ita Eben Abbas.**  
1 قوله تعالى 1  
2 subintellige] supple  
p.c. E

Al-Ġurġānī, quoting  
**many among [the  
Prophet's] disciples**  
[i.e. his companions,  
n. *Cecini*], says that this  
[sentence] is understood  
more properly [if referred  
to] the Arab idolaters, to  
whom since the ancient  
times **accessing the  
temple** [i.e. the Ka'ba  
in Mecca] **and entering  
into it** has always been  
allowed.

Al-Ġurġānī, quoting  
*many [of the Prophet's]  
disciples* [i.e. his com-  
panions, n. *Cecini*], says  
that this [sentence]  
*should be* understood  
more properly [as to be  
referred to] the Arab idol-  
aters –*who worshipped  
statues of the angels,  
saying that they* [i.e. the  
angels, n. *Cecini*] *were the  
daughters of God. These  
[idolaters] are the ones  
[whom] the text say that  
Jews and Christian seem  
to imitate, when these  
[i.e. the Christians] say  
that Christ is the Son of  
God and those [i.e. the  
Jews] say that Esdra is.* To  
these [idolaters] since

the ancient times *accessing and entering into the temple* [i.e. the Ka'ba in Mecca] has always been allowed.

Muğāhid, quoted by Al-Ġurğānī, affirms that it indicates **all who believe** in God outside Qur'anic Law. He proves this with a Qur'anic quotation, *qawlu-hu ta'ālā*:<sup>36</sup> "Those who believe and those who practise Judaism, and the Sabians and the Christians **and the Magi and those who associate**".

Then, he presents the explanation of this quotation, made by Muḥammad himself, *qawlu-hu 'alay-hi l-salām*: "man aslama min ahli l-kitāb kāna aḡru-hu marratayni wa-la-hu mā la-nā wa-'alay-hi mā 'alay-nā wa-man aslama min al-mušrikīna kāna la-hu mā la-nā wa-'alay-hi mā 'alay-nā"<sup>37</sup>

Muğāhid, quoted by Al-Ġurğānī, affirms that this is meant *concerning all who believe* in God outside Qur'anic law. He proves this with a Qur'anic quotation: "Those who believe and those who practise Judaism, and the Sabians and the Christians **and the Magi with those who associate**".

Then, he presents the explanation of this quotation, made by Muḥammad himself: *qawlu-hu 'alay-hi l-salām*: "man aslama min ahli l-kitāb kāna aḡru-hu marratayni wa-la-hu mā la-nā wa-'alay-hi mā 'alay-nā wa-man aslama min al-mušrikīna kāna la-hu mā la-nā wa-'alay-hi mā 'alay-nā".

36 This means: "Word of the Almighty."

37 This means: "His word, [i.e. the Prophet], Peace be upon Him: Who converts to Islam from the People of the Book, his reward will be twice as much: to him, the same as to us and upon him the same as upon us. Who converts to Islam from the polytheists, to him, the same as to us and upon him the same as upon us."

Who took the Muslim faith [being] someone from the People of the Book – i.e. the Jews and the Christians – will have a double reward: [The first,] **the same we receive, if he kept the obligations we must keep. The second, if he did what he had to do, before taking our faith. Who converted from the idolaters will receive the same as we do, if he did what we do according to our obligations.** So explains it Ibn 'Abbās, **quoted by him.**

Who took the Muslim faith [being] someone from the People of the Book – i.e. from the Jews and the Christians – will have a double reward: **the same for him as for us, add: will be given to him, since he is bound to the same [rules] we are bound to.** A second [reward will be given to him] – *Ibn 'Abbās says* –, if he did what he had to do according to **his Law**, before taking our faith. Who converted from the idolaters will receive **only one** [reward], the same as we do, if he did what we, too, do, understand in addition: according to our law. So Ibn 'Abbās.

Al-Ġurğānī, explains Dominicus, says that these are to be understood as the idol-worshippers among the Arabs, to whom access to the temple had been granted since ancient times.

This is indeed what we find in al-Ġurğānī's commentary *ad locum*:

{innamā l-mušrikūna naḡasun} al-ḡālu tadillu 'alā anna-hum mušrikū l-'arabi li-anna-hum kānū yaqrubūna l-masḡida l-ḡarāms wa-yaḡtalifūna ilay-hi bi-l-ḡaḡḡi wa-l-'umra dūna sā'iri l-nāsi, wa-inna 'tabarnā bi-l-ḡālībi min iṭlāqi l-kitābi wa-l-sunna dalla dālīka aydan wa-hum 'abadat al-awṭāni dūna sā'iri l-kuffār; li-anna l-lāhu ta'ālā yaqūlu: "inna l-laḡīna āmanū wa-l-laḡīna ḡādū wa-l-ṡābi'īna wa-l-naṡārā wa-l-maḡūs wa-l-laḡīna aṡrakū"<sup>38</sup>

38 Source: shamela.ws (Last consulted: 27/10/2022).



(English translation:) The situation indicates that they are “associators” of the Arabs, because they used to approach the Sacred Mosque and went frequently to it in the Hajj and ‘Umrah rather than the rest of the people, and we learned it mostly by referring to the Qur’an and Sunnah, which also indicate that they are idol-worshippers rather than other unbelievers; Because God Almighty says: {Indeed, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Sabians, and Christians, and the Magi, and those who associate} [Q. 21: 17].

The Qur’anic quotation we find at the end of this passage is also present in the *scholium* of Dominicus, but only in the Latin translation, and it is said to be a quotation of Muğāhid within the commentary of al-Ġurğānī.

Muğāhid does indeed appear in the commentary of al-Ġurğānī that I consulted, but with a different statement, referring to the part of verse 28 that reads “If you fear poverty, God shall surely enrich you of His bounty, if He will”:

*wa-rawīya Ibn abī Nağīḥ ‘an Muğāhid fī hādīhi l-āya: qāla l-mu’minūna: kunnā nusību matāğīra l-mušrikīna fa-wa’ada-humu l-lāhu an yağniya-hum min faḍli-hi ‘awḍan la-hum*<sup>39</sup>

(English translation:) Ibn Abī Nağīḥ transmitted on the authority of Muğāhid: The believers said: We have been obtaining the business of the “associators”. So God promised them that He would enrich them from His favor in compensation for them.

We have the addition in manuscript *B* that the idol-worshippers of the Arabs worshipped the statues of the Angels, considering these as daughters of God, which we find in al-Ġurğānī further below, in the explanation of the word “*yuḍāhi’ūna*”, which was reworked in the translation:

{*yuḍāhi’ūna*} *yuṣābihūna wa-yumāṭilūna l-laḍīna kafarū min qabli, hum al-laḍīna ad’ū ḥalūl al-bārī*<sup>40</sup> *subḥāna-hu fī ağsāmi turābiyya kīn-hum [...]* *banū l-maliḥ al-laḍīna za’amū anna l-malā’ika banāt Allāhi ta’ālā Allāh ‘an ḍālīka*<sup>41</sup>

39 *Ibidem*

40 *sic.* I read *al-bārī*?

41 Source: shamela.ws (Last consulted: 27/10/2022).

(English translation:) They resemble and are similar to those who disbelieved before, they are those who claimed that the Creator dwelled in earthy bodies, glory be to Him! , among them [...] the Banū al-Maliḥ who claimed that the angels are the daughters of God, may God be exalted from that!

Apart from the missing mention of Muğāhid, al-Ġurğānī’s commentary continues exactly as we read in Dominicus’s *scholium*, with a quotation from the Prophet himself, which Dominicus reproduces in Arabic and in Latin translation:

*qawlu-hu ‘alay-hi l-salām: “man aslama min ahli l-kitāb kāna ağru-hu marratayni wa-la-hu mā la-nā wa-‘alay-hi mā ‘alay-nā wa-man aslama min al-mušrikīna kāna la-hu mā la-nā wa-‘alay-hi mā ‘alay-nā”*.<sup>42</sup>

However, I could not find in al-Ġurğānī the following explanatory text that Dominicus attributes to Ibn ‘Abbās: The reward of the people of the book is double, because they receive one reward for obeying the new Islamic Law, and another for obeying the precepts of the Law they followed before conversion, if they did. Once again, the work of tracing Dominicus’s sources is more difficult than it seems at first, and I wonder whether the *tafsīr*-manuscripts of the Escorial library could help in this matter. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee, considering that many manuscripts were destroyed in the fire of 1671.

So far, Dominicus commented on verse 28. The following clearly refers to verse 30 (Here, again, we do not find any intermediate corrections between *E* and the new version of *B*).

<i>E; M</i>	<i>B</i>
<p>ابو حيان الزخشرى العادى الكلبى ابن عباس</p>	<p>Verum alij expositores dicunt. Licet haec collectio, omnes qualitercumque consociantes Deum alijs, praecipue tamen Christianos perstringit. Nam Judaeos leuiter</p>
<p>ابو حيان الزخشرى العادى الكلبى ابن عباس</p>	<p>Verum alij expositores dicunt. Licet haec collectio, <i>omnes illos, qui Deo socium attribuunt quemcumque,</i> praecipue tamen Christianos perstringit. Nam Judaeos leuiter</p>

42 See traslation above.

tangit (inquit Elāamādi citans plures discipulos) quia dicunt Esdram esse filium Dei eo quod ipse **legem Moysis renouavit**, quam antecessores ipsius **Judaei** peruerterant et falsificauerant. Ideò hoc titulo dignum esse iudicauerunt.

However, other commentators say: Even if this passage [is referred to] all [people] **that in some way put other [deities] next to God**, it is referred especially to Christians. In fact, it refers to the Jews only in a mild way (as Al-‘Amādi says, quoting many Companions), since they say that Esdras is the son of God, because he **restored Mose’s Law**, which the Jews before him perverted and falsified. For this reason they [i.e. the Jews] considered him worthy of such title.

tangit (inquit Elāamādi citans plures discipulos) quia dicunt Esdram esse filium Dei eo quod ipse *Moysaicam legem*, quam antecessores ipsius, *in captiuitate Babilonica* peruerterant et falsificauerant, *renouatam integram restituit*: ideò hoc titulo dignum iudicauerunt.

However, other commentators say: Even if this passage [is referred to] *all those, who assign to God some kind of companion*, it is referred especially to Christians. In fact, it refers to the Jews only in a mild way (as Al-‘Amādi says, quoting many Companions), since they say that Esdras is the son of God, because *he restored to its entirety the Mosaic Law*, which the Jews before him perverted and falsified *during the Babylonian captivity*. For this reason they [i.e. the Jews] considered him worthy of such title.

Dominicus moves from al-Ġurġānī to other commentators, whom he lists in the margin as Abu Hayyān, al-Zamaḥṣarī, al-‘Amādi (quoting al-Kalabī and Ibn ‘Abbās). He says that even though these commentators also recognize that this passage refers to anyone who put other deities next to the one God, it is addressed specifically to Christians. Dominicus quotes al-‘Amādi in particular to support the argument that the Qur’anic reprobation concerns the Jews to a lesser extent. They call Esdras the son of God, but this is a kind of honorific title for having restored the true Mosaic Law after it had been perverted during the Babylonian captivity.<sup>43</sup>

We then found a comment of Dominicus which shows how he refuted or diminished the importance of the Islamic sources he so carefully quoted:

*EM*

Quantasque fabulosas narrationes circa hoc **afferant**, longum nimis esse [*sic*] referre.

They **bring** such a great number of fantastic stories concerning this subject that it would be too long to **repeat** them all here.

*B*

Quantas *indignas et* fabulosas de hoc narrationes *astruant, quae reuera indigna sunt auditu*, longum nimis esset *recensere*.

*Et quod magis est, uniuersa, in ipsius impostoris traditione fundant, discipulos ipsius citantes.*

They *construct* such a great number of *unworthy and* fantastic stories about this subject, *which are indeed unworthy to be heard*, that it would be too long to *list* them all here.

*And what is worse, they support them with the tradition of the impostor himself, quoting his Companions.*

The “tradition of the impostor”, as it is called in the later addition of ms. *B*, are probably the hadiths as narrated by the disciples of the Prophet i.e., his companions. Once again, Dominicus seems to discredit the commentators, who

43 Cfr. Tafsiṣ Abū Sa‘ūd al-‘Amādi *ad* Q. 9:30: “*ba‘aṭa l-lāhu ta‘ālā ‘Uzayran li-yuġaddida la-hum al-tawrāta*” (God Almighty sent ‘Uzayr to renew the Torah for them). (Source: shamela.ws [Last consulted: 27/10/2022].)

“fabricate” stories (note the change from “*affero*” (“bring”) to “*astruo*” (“construct”) in the later version) rather than the Qur’anic text itself.

After this parenthesis, Dominicus continues with the quotation from the commentators:

*E ante correcturam; M*

الرمخشرى  
البيضاوى  
البقاعى  
ابن كمال

At uerò Christiani (inquiunt) asserunt Christum esse filium Dei, non tantum nuncupatiuè, sed et substantiuè, ex ipso Deo genitum, ideoque pro Deo ipsum adorant cum suo genitore, cum sit tantum filius Mariae, homo ex homine, licet non per hominem uirum generatus. Et hunc errorem suum minimè agnouerunt, nec Iudaei, nec Christiani, donec uenit Mohhammaed cum alcorano caelitus sibi dato, qui oculos intellectuum ipsorum aperuit ad corrigendum illum, et cognoscendam ueritatem

On the contrary, the Christians (they say) affirm that Christ is the Son of God, not only as a mere title, but according to his substance, [affirming that] he was generated by God Himself, and therefore they worship him as a God together with the one that generated him, when he is [in fact] just the son of Mary, a human being borne of a human being, even if he was not conceived by a human male. They did not recognise

*B*

<*vacat*>

this error of theirs, neither the Jews, nor the Christians, until Muḥammad came with the Qur’an, given to him from above. He opened the eyes of their understanding, so that they may correct their mistake and know the truth.

This second part of the quotation is present only in the earlier versions of *E* and *M*, but is absent from *B*. Did Dominicus perhaps find it too strong for Christian ears? Again, in his earlier translation, he seems to be faithful to his source (which I have not been able to identify), saying that Jesus Christ is “only the son of Mary, a human being borne of a human being, even if he was not conceived by a human male”, and speaks of “the error” of Christians and Jews, of Muhammad “opening their eyes”, and of the Qur’an “containing the truth”.

Then we have a commentary by Dominicus, which we find in the margin of MS *E* and is also incorporated into the text and corrected in *B*, but it is absent in *M*.

*E*

Postea soluit linguam et euomit omne **uenenum** contra Christianos, ac praecipuè **ecclesiasticos**. Quod Elgiorgiani, **apostata et ecclesiastici ordinis altiozem gradum ambiens**, sed ut indignus, exors abiectus (ut in multis alijs deprehenditur) plus **alijs** amplificat.

After these things He [i.e. the Prophet in the Qur’anic passage, vv. 34-35] unleashes his tongue and spits out his entire **venom** against the Christians and especially the **clergy-men**. Al-Ġurġānī, **the apostate, who**

*B*

*Post hoc* soluit linguam et euomit omne **uirus** contra Christianos, ac praecipuè ecclesiasticis ordinis. Quod Elgiorgiani, **apostata eiusdem ordinis, altiozem gradum, ambiens**, sed ut indignus, exors **illius** abiectus (ut in multis alijs **similibus** deprehenditur) plus **omnibus** amplificat et **diffundit**.

After **this** he [i.e. the Prophet in the Qur’anic passage, vv. 34-35] unleashes his tongue and spits out his entire **poison** against the Christians and especially **the members of the clergy**. Al-Ġurġānī, **the apostate from being a clergymen,**

[when he was a Christian] **was aiming at a higher ecclesiastical charge**, but was not elected and was cast aside, as he was unworthy, made [the commentary on] this [part] more extensive than **others** (as it happens in many other [similar cases]).

*who was aiming at a higher charge*, but was not elected and was cast aside from the clergy, as he was unworthy, made [the commentary on] this [part] more extensive and **lengthy** than *anyone* (as it happens in many other *similar* cases).

Again, this is a personal commentary by Dominicus in which he shows his knowledge of the background of the commentators. I could not find the source he used to claim that Al-Ġurġānī was a former Christian.<sup>44</sup> The motive is reminiscent of the legend that Muḥammad was a former Christian cardinal who founded Islam in revenge for not being elected pope.<sup>45</sup> Be that as it may, its purpose is to discredit Al-Ġurġānī's work. Dominicus affirms to have erased the text, probably a commentary on verses 34-35, because it was too critical of the Church and clergy. It seems that he did not want to allow a tone that was too harsh in his argumentation, especially as regards direct attacks on Christians, which would definitely compromise dialogue. This may reflect the post-Tridentine attitude of avoiding theological confrontation and the missionary disposition, promoted by institutions such as the *Propaganda Fide* congregation, to seek "explanation and comparison" in interreligious dialogue. Dominicus, therefore, tends to take advantage of "weak spots" in the doctrine of the opponent, rather than place the argumentation on the territory of mutual attack.<sup>46</sup> He must have thought a lot about this passage because we do

44 A similar case is found in the description of 'Āli ibn Abī Ṭālib (the future fourth Calif) in the introductory section of the "*Interpretatio*" mentioned above. He is said to be a former rabbi, together with his father (MS E, fol. 3r): "Erant [scilicet Aali et Abu Thaleb] enim ambo praecipui Rabbini, suo tempore, inter Iudaeos" (They [i.e. 'Āli and Abū Ṭālib] were both important rabbis of their time among the Jews).

45 On this legend, see: Fernando González Muñoz, "*Liber Nycholay*. La leyenda de Mahoma y el cardenal Nicolás," *Al-Qanṭara* 25/1 (2004), p. 5-43, <https://doi.org/10.3989/alqantara.2004.v25.i1.147>; Fernando González Muñoz, "*Liber Nycholay*, in *Christian-Muslim Relations 600-1500*, ed. David Thomas and Alex Mallet, Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2012, p. 650-653; Alessandro D'Ancona, "La Leggenda Di Maometto in Occidente," in Alessandro D'Ancona, *Studj di Critica e Storia Letteraria*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1912, p. 165-308. (esp. 206-219).

46 On the post-Tridentine missionary attitude and *Propaganda Fide*, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, *Governare le Missioni, Conoscere il Mondo nel XVII Secolo*, Viterbo, Sette Città, 2018, p. 183: "Dopo il Concilio di Trento prevalse l'opinione che era meglio evitare

not find anything about it in manuscript *M*. This means that when this manuscript was copied, Dominicus had erased the passage, probably because he considered it to be too offensive. Later, however, he may have thought that the matter should not be totally ignored and therefore added the marginal note in *E*, which probably refers to the deleted passage, explaining why he chose not to quote it extensively, as he did before when he chose not to list all the "fantastic stories" of the commentators because they were unworthy of being heard. Such a note was then copied into *B*'s text.

*E ante correcturam; M B*

العادي  
السمرقندي  
الرجاني

Haec omnia (aiunt) dicta fuere propter Iudaeos et Christianos, habitantes in Maedina. **Quibus permissum fuit frequentare orationem cum credentibus in phano, eò quod cum illis pactum inierat Mohhamaed, sperans se per hoc illos fidei lucraturum. Quia in Maekka post ultimam occupatioem tam rigorosum mandatum reliquerat de non credentibus in ea, Iudaei et Christiani inibi habitantes parabant omnes discessum inde. Et quia erant mercatores potentes, tractantes negotia**

**Tandem dicunt** haec omnia dicta fuere propter Iudaeos et Christianos, habitantes in Maedina. **Quibus permiserat pacto, frequentare oratorium cum credentibus, sperans se per hoc lucraturum fidei suae. Quoniam auditum fuerat, quod post ultimam occupatioem Maekkae, tam rigorosum mandatum reliquerat credentibus super hoc idem, Iudaei et Christiani inibi habitantes omnes discessum parabant inde. Et quia erant**

العادي  
السمرقندي  
الرجاني

il confronto teologico. [...] Il metodo missionario della predicazione rese necessaria una certa disposizione dei religiosi a favorire la conversione attraverso la spiegazione e la comparazione", and ibidem, p. 187: "Ingoli [i.e. the secretary of *Propaganda Fide*, Francesco Ingoli (1578-1649), n. Cecini] suggeriva di ritorcere contro gli eretici i punti deboli della loro dottrina".

per totam Syriam, Graeciam, **Persiam** et Indiam orientalem, de quibus Maekkenses magnum lucrum reportabant. Qui id aegerrimè ferentes, adierunt Aotsmanum, quem Mohhammaed praesidem reliquerat **phani et totius ciuitatis**, et de eo mandato sunt **conquesti coram ipso**.

De quo mox **certiorem fecit ipsum**, timens ne aliqua seditio oriretur in urbe.

**Ideo (aiunt) propheta statim expediuit Maekkam cum hoc oraculo Aali generum suum qui mox ut peruenit Maekkam praelegit illis oraculum:** "Si uos metuitis penuriam etc." carpens ipsorum modicam fidem in Deum.

Et pro maiori confusione illorum, inquit Elsamarandi, post paucos dies, uenerunt de Jaman, plusquam .500. cameli onusti

mercatores potentes, per totam Syriam, Graeciam et Indiam orientalem **negotia tractantes**, de quibus Maekkenses magnum lucrum reportabant. Qui id aegerrimè ferentes, adierunt Aotsmanum, quem Mohhammaed praesidem **urbis** reliquerat, et de illo mandato **conquesti sunt** coram **isto**.

De quo mox **illum certiorem fecit**, timens ne aliqua seditio oriretur in urbe.

**Ideo misit (aiunt) propheta Aalij generum suum Maekkam cum hoc oraculo:** "Si uos metuitis penuriam etc." carpens ipsorum modicam fidem in Deum.

Et pro maiori confusione illorum, inquit Elsamarandi, post paucos dies, uenerunt de Jaman, plusquam **quingenti** cameli onusti

tritico et alijs necessarijs aduictum. Verumtamen, ut murmurationem plebis communis sedaret, concessit illis incredulis continuare et gaudere **illis immunitatibus quas concessit illis propheta in prima occupatione ciuitatis pacto firmatis currente duntaxat anno**. Quo expleto, limitauit illis talem licentiam **de uisitatione phani**: nempè per quatuor tantum menses interstitii, quibus peregrini solui solent à domibus suis. Reliqua patent in textu.

All this (they say) was said because of the Jews and the Christians living in Medina. **They had been allowed to participate to the prayer with the Believers in the temple, because Muḥammad made a pact with them, hoping to win them to the Faith through this.** Since [however] he had released such a rigorous order concerning the

tritico et alijs necessarijs ad uictum. Verumtamen, ut murmurationem plebis communis sedaret, concessit illis incredulis (**aiunt**) continuare et gaudere **indulto ipsis concesso, in prima occupatione armis facta, de uisitatione phani, currente anno duntaxat**. Quo expleto, limitauit **eis talem licentiam**, nempè; per quatuor menses tantum, **durante interstitio**, quibus peregrini solui solent à domibus suis. Reliqua patent in textu.

Finally they say that all this was said because of the Jews and the Christians living in Medina. He had **allowed them through a pact to go to the praying place with the Believers, hoping to win them to the Faith through this.** Since it had been heard that he had released such a rigorous order to the Believers about the

Unbelievers [i.e. not to be allowed in the temple] after the last occupation in Mecca, the Jews and the Christians living there were all preparing to leave. They [i.e. Jews and Christians] were powerful merchants, making business throughout the entire Syria, Greece, Persia and East-India, from which the Meccans received a great profit.

As they felt very upset about this, they went to Uṭmān, whom Muḥammad had left in charge of the temple and of the whole city, and complained to him about the order.

He [Uṭmān] informed him [Muḥammad] about it immediately, fearing that a rebellion may originate in the city.

Therefore [they say] the Prophet sent out his son-in-law 'Alī to Mecca, who, as soon as he arrived, read out loud the oracle [i.e. the qur'anic revelation] to them: "If you fear scarcity etc.,"

same thing [i.e. that the Unbelievers should not be allowed in the temple] after the last occupation of Mecca, the Jews and the Christians living there were all preparing to leave. They [i.e. Jews and Christians] were powerful merchants, making business throughout the entire Syria, Greece and East-India, from which the Meccans received a great profit.

As they felt very upset about this, they went to Uṭmān, whom Muḥammad had left in charge of the city, and complained to him about that order.

He [Uṭmān] informed him [Muḥammad] about it immediately, fearing that a rebellion may originate in the city.

Therefore [they say] the Prophet sent his son-in-law 'Alī to Mecca, with this oracle [i.e. the qur'anic revelation]: "If you fear scarcity etc.,"

thus pointing out their limited faith in God.

Moreover, for their greater confusion, as al-Samarqandī says, a few days later, 500 camels loaded with wheat and other nourishment goods arrived from Yemen. Nonetheless, in order to appease the murmuring of the common people, he allowed the aforementioned Unbelievers to continue to profit from the permits the Prophet gave them in the first occupation of the city, confirmed in a pact for the current year. At the end of such year, the Prophet limited their permit to visit the temple in the following way: only in the four months of the interstice, in which the pilgrims are released from their houses. The rest of the text is clear.

thus pointing out their limited faith in God.

Moreover, for their greater confusion, as al-Samarqandī says, a few days later, five hundred camels loaded with wheat and other nourishment goods arrived from Yemen. Nonetheless, in order to appease the murmuring of the common people, he allowed (as they say) the aforementioned Unbelievers to continue to profit only for the current year from the concession that had been given to them after the first armed occupation was concluded, about visiting the temple. At the end of such year, the Prophet limited such permit for them in the following way: only for four months, during the interstice, in which the pilgrims are released from their houses. The rest of the text is clear.

The last part of the *scholium* recounts the circumstances of the revelation. This is a frequent occurrence in Dominicus's *scholia* and also reflects the Islamic attention to this topic, which makes the *asbāb al-nuzūl* ("the causes of the revelations (or, literally, of their 'descent'") a part of many *tafāsīr* (Qur'anic commentaries). We will not dwell on the comments of this section, since most of the corrections seem to be mainly stylistic. We will simply draw the attention

of the reader to the last sentence of the *scholium* “*reliqua patent in textu*” (“the rest of the text is clear”), before making the final statements of this study.

### Conclusion: A First Assessment of Dominicus Germanus de Silesia’s Approach to the Qur’an

We will now try to draw some conclusions from our long journey through Dominicus Germanus de Silesia’s translation and commentary of some verses of the ninth sura. The final statement of the *scholium* confirms that the main objective of the translation and its *scholia* is the understanding of the Qur’an. The sources are quoted in order to make explicit what the Qur’an does not say or says in an obscure manner: in short, the *scholia* are real commentaries. I would like to emphasize the fact that in this passage we have verses that speak of fighting and possible humiliation of Christians. Dominicus does not comment on these, because he decides to erase direct attacks on the clergy in the *scholium*. He does not seek this kind of confrontation. This work is not a polemical treatise. From time to time, Dominicus inserts his own thoughts on the futility of some comments that are not worth repeating. He does not argue directly against the content of the Qur’an, but against the validity of the arguments of the commentators or their way of expressing themselves. In this, and by clearly asserting his identity as a Christian, he articulates his refutation. Nevertheless, he qualifies Muhammad as an impostor. However, his translations are as faithful as possible and avoid polemics, rectifications or comments when Islam is praised or Christianity is said to be in error, if this is done in a way that he does not consider disrespectful. He therefore seeks to make the differences explicit, but in a way that promotes dialogue. He constantly seeks the best translation and interpretation, correcting the translations and adding more and more texts in Arabic in order to give his work the greatest possible authority and authenticity, on which the arguments of the missionaries will be based. Sometimes the use of sources is not as rigorous as it is presented. Some passages may be attributed to the wrong source (such as the example of Muğāhid) or Dominicus’s *Vorlage* may have been different from the modern editions. Be that as it may, the quotations, even if wrongly attributed to a particular source, were undoubtedly taken from an Islamic source without falsifying the content. In any case, Dominicus attempts to correct this problem by adding more quotations from the sources in Arabic language that correspond to the translations he gives in later editions of the work. The aim of Dominicus’s activity, not only of his translation of the Qur’an, but also of his linguistic and theological works (to which I will devote further papers), remains the mission.

He seeks to give missionaries the tools to speak the language, both grammatical and theological, of their interlocutors. To this end, he collects an enormous amount of information, which he includes in his *scholia* and in a vast collection of notes that we find in the manuscripts of the Escorial library. Naturally, these are the first conclusions of an ongoing study. We will be able to confirm or correct them only when the complete “*Interpretatio*” has been studied in all its versions and when all the works of Dominicus, including his linguistic and theological works, have been re-evaluated alongside the *Interpretatio* and his biography. Our journey in the production of this man is still at its beginning and we are eager to see how it will continue.

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### Appendix

A critical edition of Dominicus Germanus de Silesia’s *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, VIII, 3 (Q. 9:28-35)

*Sigla Codicum:*

*E*: El Escorial, *Real Biblioteca*, 1624, fols. 168v-170r

*M*: Montpellier, *Bibliothèque interuniversitaire*, H 72, fols. 158v-159v

*B*: El Escorial, *Real Biblioteca*, L.I.3, fols. 289v-291r

*Abbreviationes:*

*add.:* *addidit / addiderunt*

*a.c.:* *ante correcturam*

*del.:* *delevit / deleverunt*

*in marg.: in margine*  
*om.: omisit / omiserunt*  
*praem.: praemisit / praemiserunt*  
*s.l.: supra lineam*

The text in Arabic script is absent from MS *M*. Verse numbers have been added at the beginning of verses.

[E 168v] [B 289v]  
 [...]  
 [M 158v]

Textus .n.<sup>47</sup> III

{28} O uos<sup>48</sup> qui uere creditis! Scitote. Quoniam illi, qui Deo consortem attribuunt sunt immundi! Quapropter non possunt, nec appropinquare loco orationis sacrato post peractum lustrum<sup>49</sup> ipsorum annale, id est magnae festiuitatis.<sup>50</sup> Quodsi inde metuitis penuriam uos<sup>51</sup> passuros, Deus uos ditabit<sup>52</sup> de sua liberalitate, si ei placuerit, quoniam omnes cognoscens<sup>53</sup> sapientissimus est. {29} Agite bellum contra eos, qui non credunt in Deum, neque in diem nouissimum, nec uetitum sibi habent, quod Deus uetuit et apostolus eius.<sup>54</sup> Quia non iudicant iustum iudicium secundum ueritatem,<sup>55</sup> quidam ex eis, qui acceperunt legem scriptam,<sup>56</sup> quousque cogantur dare<sup>57</sup>

47 n] *om. EM.*  
 48 O uos] جم *add. in marg. E.*  
 49 post ... lustrum] finito hoc lustrum *M a.c. E.*  
 50 annale ... festiuitatis] *add. s.l. E om. M.*  
 51 uos] *s.l. B.*  
 52 Quodsi ... ditabit] Si autem uos metuitis inde aliquam inopiam pati posse, Deus sanè ipse sufficientiam uictus tribuet *EM.*  
 53 si ... cognoscens] secundum beneplacitum suum, quia Deus omnia sciens *EM.*  
 54 et ... eius] apostolusque illius *EM.*  
 55 Quia ... ueritatem] quia non iudicant iudicium iustum *E* neque iudicant iustè *M a.c. E.*  
 56 qui ... scriptam] qui legem acceperunt id est Judaei et Christiani *EM.*  
 57 cogantur dare] dent *EM.*

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tributum personale<sup>58</sup> de manu in manum,<sup>59</sup> id est iuxta aetatis augmentum [B 290r] quisque suae,<sup>60</sup> etiam<sup>61</sup> minoris,<sup>62</sup> {30} Siquidem Judaei praesentes<sup>63</sup> dicunt, Aözair, id est Esdras, est filius Dei. Idem dicunt Christiani nunc existentes:<sup>64</sup> Christus<sup>65</sup> est filius Dei. Haec sunt uerba oribus ipsorum conficta, imitantes incredulos idolatras, suos antecessores, quos expugnare praecepit Deus, quocumque se uerterint.<sup>67</sup> {31} Tenent sacerdotes<sup>68</sup> seu episcopos et<sup>69</sup> monachos pro supremis dominis suis,<sup>70</sup> quodque soli Deo conuenit<sup>71</sup> attribuentes Christo filio<sup>72</sup> Mariae, cum non sit praeceptum ipsis,<sup>73</sup> ut adorent pro Deo ullum,<sup>74</sup> nisi Deum qui solus est uerus Deus gloriosus longe existens ab eo, quod ei ipsi attribuunt.<sup>75</sup> {32} Volunt<sup>76</sup> extinguere lucem Dei oribus suis, id est Alcoranum suppressere,<sup>77</sup> sed nequaquam permittet<sup>78</sup> Deus, nisi<sup>79</sup> ut perficiat lucem suam, etiam [E 169r] inuitis istis<sup>80</sup> incredulis.<sup>81</sup> {33} Ipse est,

58 personale] *om. EM.*  
 59 in manum] *s.l. E om. M.*  
 60 iuxta ... suae] pro aetate quisque sua *M a.c. E.*  
 61 etiam] si sint paruuli, id est *add. M add. a.c. E.*  
 62 minoris] *add. aetatis EM.*  
 63 Siquidem ... praesentes] Judaei quidem praesentes *M a.c. E* (praesentes *s.l. E*).  
 64 nunc existentes] praesentes *E lacuna M.*  
 65 Christus] Jesus *praem. sed del. E.*  
 66 جم ابو حيان ابو حيان... الزمخشري *E.*  
 67 Haec ... uerterint] Hoc dicto orium [*sic*] suorum, se ipsos conuincunt esse similes incredulis quos Deus perdidit ante illos, id est, idolatras, ubi eos reperit declinasse à ueritate *M a.c. E.*  
 68 sacerdotes] suos *add. EM.*  
 69 seu episcopos et] *add. s.l. E* Judaei et Christiani *M a.c. E.*  
 70 suis] *om. EM.*  
 71 quoque soli Deo conuenit] quod conuenit soli Deo *EM.*  
 72 attribuentes ... filio] et pro Deo uenerantur Christiani Christum filium *M a.c. E.*  
 73 ipsis] eis *EM.*  
 74 ut adorent..ullum] nisi ut colant Deum unum *ME* nisi ut adorent Deum ullum *p.c. E.*  
 75 nisi..attribuunt] praeter quem nullus est alius Deus, nisi ipse solus supergloriosus, qui longe est ab eo, quod illi ipsi attribuunt *EM.*  
 76 Volunt] quaerunt *EM.*  
 77 id est ... suppressere] *om. EM* suppressere *s.l. B.*  
 78 nequaquam permittet] non permittit *EM.*  
 79 Deus nisi] Deus hoc sed *M a.c. E.*  
 80 istis] *om. EM.*  
 81 istis] *add. s.l. B.*



qui<sup>82</sup> misit apostolum suum cum directione et lege ueritatis, ut ostendat eum praepositum super legem uniuersam,<sup>83</sup> quamuis grauiter ualde<sup>84</sup> id ferant illi, qui Deo socium attribuunt.<sup>85</sup> {34} O uos qui uerè creditis, Scitote! quoniam multi ex sacerdotibus seu episcopis<sup>86</sup> et monachis sunt,<sup>87</sup> qui consummunt<sup>88</sup> bona hominum inaniter,<sup>89</sup> et recedunt recedereque faciunt<sup>90</sup> a uia<sup>91</sup> Dei. Item quidam autem ex illis,<sup>92</sup> qui thesaurizant aurum et argentum, quae<sup>93</sup> non expendunt ea in uia Dei, id est<sup>94</sup> secundum beneplacitum eius.<sup>95</sup> Tu ergo annuncia eis tormentum rigorosissimum,<sup>96</sup> {35} quod apprehendet illos in die quo<sup>97</sup> uehementer uret ignis gehennae. Quo etiam<sup>98</sup> cauterizabuntur frontes ipsorum<sup>99</sup> et latera et terga, diceturque illis: Hoc nunc<sup>100</sup> est, quod thesaurizastis uobis: Igitur degustate modo<sup>101</sup> id, quod tam auide accumulastis.<sup>102</sup>

- 82 est qui] propterea *EM*.  
 83 eum ... uniuersam] illam esse superiorem legi uniuersae *EM*.  
 84 ualde] *om. EM*.  
 85 illi ... attribuunt] consocificantes Deum *EM*.  
 86 seu episcopis] *om. EM*.  
 87 sunt] quidam *add. s.l. sed del. E add. M*.  
 88 consummunt] edunt *EM*.  
 89 inaniter] gratis *M a.c. E*.  
 90 recedereque faciunt] *om. EM*.  
 91 uia] recta *add. EM*.  
 92 quidam ... illis] alij sunt *EM*.  
 93 quae] *s.l. B et EM*.  
 94 ea ... est] *om. EM*.  
 95 eius] Dei *EM*.  
 96 rigorosissimum] dirissimum *EM*.  
 97 quo] qua *EM*.  
 98 quo etiam] Tunc *M a.c. E*, جم *add. in marg. E*.  
 99 ipsorum] *transp. post terga EM*.  
 100 nunc] *om. EM*.  
 101 igitur ... modo] degustate nunc *EM*.  
 102 accumulastis] congregastis *EM*.

[M 159r]

Scholium

جم

Diuersi diuersas afferunt sententias, de quibus hic loquatur consocificantibus, qui<sup>103</sup> Deo socium faciunt in cultu suo. Siquidem Deus (aiunt<sup>104</sup>) in antecedentibus legibus, scilicet Turat et Euangelio, mandatum expressum dederit, et in alcorano qui supra omnes leges luce ueritatis resplendet maiori rigore mandat, ut ipse solus absque consorte, simpliciter et absolutè adoretur, cum nullus ei sit par aut similis.<sup>105</sup>

الجرجاني  
ابو هريره

Elgiorgiani, plures citans discipulos,<sup>106</sup> dicit hoc magis propriè intelligi debere<sup>107</sup> de Arabibus idolatris –qui Angelorum statuas adorabant, dicentes eos esse filias Dei, quos asserit textus imitari uidentur Iudaei et Christiani, asserentes<sup>109</sup> isti Christum, et illi Esdram filium Dei esse<sup>110</sup>–, quibus ab antiquis temporibus accessus et ingressus ad phanum semper<sup>111</sup> licitus erat. Mogiahed apud eundem, asserit id significare de omnibus credentibus<sup>112</sup> in Deum extra legem alcoranicam. [B 291r]<sup>113</sup> Probatque hoc auctoritate alcorani قوله تعالى<sup>114</sup> *Illi qui credunt, et qui iudaeizant, et Sabei et Cristiani Magique cum consocificantibus.*<sup>115,116</sup> Postea adducit declarationem ipsius<sup>117</sup> auctoritatis, factam ab ipso Mohhamaedo: [B 290v]

ابن ابى نجيح  
العمادى  
الكلبى  
ابن عباس  
مجاهد<sup>108</sup>

- 103 qui] seu *praem. EM*.  
 104 aiunt] fere omnes expositores *add. EM*.  
 105 simpliciter ... similis] quia nullus ei par est, adoretur simpliciter et absolutè *EM*.  
 106 plures ... discipulos] citans plures ex discipulis *EM*.  
 107 debere] *om. EM*.  
 108 مجاهد ابن عباس العمادى... مجاهد *EM*.  
 109 asserentes] attribuentes *a.c. B*.  
 110 qui ... esse] *om. EM*.  
 111 accessus ... phanum] accessus ad phanum et ingressus in illud *EM*.  
 112 de ... credentibus] omnes credentes *EM*.  
 113 Here, there was a slight error in the copy of *B*. The next sentence was skipped and copied on the subsequent *folium*.  
 114 قوله تعالى] *om. B*.  
 115 Magique cum consocificantibus] et Magi et consocificantes *EM*.  
 116 Illi ... consocificantibus] *cfr. Q. 21:17*.  
 117 ipsius] istius *EM*.

قوله عليه السلام \* من اسلم من اهل الكتاب كان اجره مرتين وله ما لنا  
وعليه ما علينا ومن اسلم من المشركين كان له ما لنا وعليه ما علينا

Qui fidem moslemanicam suscepit aliquis ex domesticis<sup>118</sup>  
libri – id est ex<sup>119</sup> Judaeis et Christianis–, habebit praemium  
duplicatum, idem pro ipso, quod pro nobis, quia obligatus est,  
ad quod et nos obligati sumus,<sup>120</sup> supple dabitur ei.<sup>121</sup> Alterum  
(ait eben Abbas<sup>122</sup>) si ante susceptionem fidei nostrae, fecit id,  
ad quod obligatus erat lege sua.<sup>123</sup> Ex idolatris autem conuer-  
sus, habebit unum,<sup>124</sup> id quod et nos, si fecerit id, quod et nos  
facimus,<sup>125</sup> subintellige<sup>126</sup> secundum legem nostram. Ita Eben  
Abas.<sup>127</sup>

ابو حيان  
الزمخشري  
العمادي  
الكلبي  
ابن عباس

Verum alij expositores dicunt. Licet haec collectio, omnes  
illos, qui Deo socium attribuunt quemcumque,<sup>128</sup> praecipue  
tamen Christianos perstringit. Nam Judaeos leuiter tangit  
(inquit Eläamâdi citans plures discipulos) quia dicunt Esdram  
esse [E 169v] filium Dei eo quod ipse Moysaicam legem,<sup>129</sup>  
quam antecessores ipsius, in captiuitate Babilonica<sup>130</sup> peruer-  
terant et falsificauerant, renouatam integram restituit.<sup>131</sup>  
ideò hoc titulo dignum<sup>132</sup> iudicauerunt. Quantas<sup>133</sup> indignas

118 domesticis] domestis B.

119 ex] om. EM.

120 idem pro ipso ... sumus] Idem quod et nos, si obseruauerit, ad quod obligati sumus  
M a. c. E.

121 supple ... ei] om. EM.

122 ait ... Abbas] om. EM.

123 fecit ... sua] id ad quod obligatus erat fecit. M a. c. E id ad quod obligatus lege sua fecit  
p. c. E.

124 unum] om. EM.

125 quod ... facimus] quod nos ex debito nostro facimus EM.

126 subintellige ... nostram] supple secundum legem nostram s. l. E om. M.

127 Ita ... Aabas] ita explicat Eben Aabas apud eundem EM.

128 illos ... quemcumque] qualitercumque consociantes Deum alijs EM.

129 Mosaycam legem] legem Moysis renouauit EM.

130 in captiuitate Babilonica] Judaei EM.

131 renouatam ... restituit] om. EM (cfr. supra s. v. Mosaycam legem]).

132 dignum] esse add. EM.

133 Quantas] quantasque EM.

et<sup>135</sup> fabulosas de hoc narrationes<sup>136</sup> astruant,<sup>137</sup> quae reuera  
indigna sunt auditu,<sup>138</sup> longum nimis esset recensere.<sup>139</sup> Et  
quod magis est, universa, in ipsius impostoris traditione fun-  
dant, discipulos ipsius citantes.<sup>140</sup>

الزمخشري  
البيضاوي  
البقاعي  
ابن كمال<sup>134</sup>

[M 159v] At uerò Christiani (inquiunt) asserunt Christum  
esse filium Dei, non tantum nuncupatiuè, sed et substantiuè,  
ex ipso Deo genitum, ideoque pro Deo ipsum adorant cum suo  
genitore, cum sit tantum filius Mariae, homo ex homine, licet  
non per hominem uirum generatus. Et hunc errorem suum  
minimè agnouerunt, nec Judaei, nec Christiani, donec uenit  
Mohhammaed cum alcorano caelitus sibi dato, qui oculos  
intellectuum ipsorum aperuit ad corrigendum illum, et cog-  
noscendam ueritatem.<sup>141</sup>

Post hoc<sup>142</sup> soluit linguam et euomit omne uirus<sup>143</sup> con-  
tra Christianos, ac praecipue ecclesiasticis ordinis.<sup>144</sup> Quod  
Elgiorgiani, apostata eiusdem ordinis, altiore ambiens gra-  
dum,<sup>145</sup> sed ut indignus, exors illius<sup>146</sup> abiectus (ut in multis  
alijs similibus,<sup>147</sup> deprehenditur) plus omnibus<sup>148</sup> amplificat<sup>149</sup>  
et diffundit.<sup>150</sup>

العمادي  
السمرقندي  
الجرجاني

Tandem dicunt<sup>151</sup> haec omnia<sup>152</sup> dicta<sup>153</sup> fuere propter  
Judaeos et Christianos habitantes in Maedina. Quibus permi-  
serat pacto, frequentare oratorium cum credentibus, sperans

134 الزمخشري... ابن كمال] om. B.

135 indignas et] om. EM.

136 de hoc narratione] narrationes circa hoc EM.

137 astruant] afferant EM.

138 quae ... auditu] om. EM.

139 esset recensere] esse [sic] referre EM.

140 Et quod magis ... citantes] om. EM.

141 At ... ueritatem] om. B.

142 Post hoc] postea E.

143 uirus] uenenum E.

144 ecclesiasticis ordinis] ecclesiasticos E.

145 apostata ... gradum] apostata et ecclesiastici ordinis altiore gradum ambiens E.

146 illius] om. E.

147 similibus] om. E.

148 omnibus] alijs E.

149 Post ... amplificat] in marg. E om. M.

150 et diffundit] om. E.

151 Tandem dicunt] om. EM.

152 omnia] aiunt add. EM.

153 dicta] s. l. B.

se per hoc lucraturum fidei suae.<sup>154</sup> Quoniam auditum fuerat, quod post ultimam occupationem Maekkae tam rigorosum mandatum reliquerat credentibus super hoc idem,<sup>155</sup> Judaei et Christiani inibi habitantes<sup>156</sup> omnes discessum parabant inde. Et quia erant mercatores potentes,<sup>157</sup> per totam Syriam, Graeciam<sup>158</sup> et Indiam orientalem negotia tractantes,<sup>159</sup> de quibus Maekkenses magnum lucrum reportabant. Qui id aege-  
rimè ferentes, adierunt Aotsmanum, quem Mohhammaed praesidem urbis<sup>160</sup> reliquerat, et de illo<sup>161</sup> mandato conquesti sunt coram isto.<sup>162</sup> De quo mox illum certio-  
rem fecit,<sup>163</sup> timens ne aliqua seditio oriretur in urbe.

Ideò misit (aiunt) propheta Aalij generum suum Maekkam cum hoc oraculo:<sup>164</sup> {Si uos metuitis penuriam etc.} carpens ipsorum modicam fidem in Deum. Et pro maiori confusione illorum, inquit [B 291r] Elsamarandi, post paucos dies, uenerunt de Jaman, plusquam quingenti<sup>165</sup> cameli onusti tritico et alijs necessarijs ad uictum. Verumtamen, ut murmurationem plebis communis sedaret, concessit illis incredulis (aiunt)<sup>166</sup> continuare et gaudere indulto ipsis concesso, in prima occupatione

- 154 Quibus ... suae] Quibus permissum fuit frequentare orationem cum credentibus in phano, eò quod cum illis pactum inierat Mohhammaed, sperans se per hoc illos fidei lucraturum *EM*.
- 155 Quoniam ... idem] Quia in Maekka post ultimam occupationem tam rigorosum mandatum reliquerat de non credentibus in ea *EM*.
- 156 habitantes] parabant *add. EM, sed del. E*.
- 157 potentes] tractantes negotia *add. EM..*
- 158 Graeciam] Persiam *add. EM*.
- 159 negotia tractantes] *s.l. E, om. M*.
- 160 urbis reliquerat] reliquerat phani et totius ciuitatis *EM*.
- 161 illo] eo *M a.c. E*.
- 162 conquesti ... isto] sunt conquesti coram ipso *EM*.
- 163 illum ... fecit] certio-rem fecit ipsum *EM*.
- 164 Ideò ... oraculo] Ideo (aiunt) propheta statim expediuit Maekkam cum hoc oraculo Aali generum suum [E 170r] qui mox ut peruenerit Maekkam praelegit illis oraculum *EM*
- 165 quingenti] .500. *EM*.
- 166 aiunt] *om. EM*.

armis facta, de uisitatione phani, currente anno duntaxat.<sup>167</sup> Quo expleto, limitauit eis<sup>168</sup> talem licentiam,<sup>169</sup> nempè; per quatuor menses tantum, durante interstitio,<sup>170</sup> quibus peregrini solui solent à domibus suis. Reliqua patent in textu.

- 167 indulto ... duntaxat] illis immunitatibus quas concessit illis propheta in prima occupatione ciuitatis pacto firmatis currente duntaxat anno *EM*.
- 168 eis] illis *EM*.
- 169 licentiam] de uisitatione phani *add. EM*.
- 170 per ... interstitio] per quatuor tantum menses interstitii *EM*.