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Article

The Ṇǝk Version of Philo of Carpasia’s Commentary on Canticle of Canticles 1:2–14a: Introductory Notes

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The Gǝez Version of Philo of Carpasia’s Commentary on Canticle of Canticles 1:2–14a: Introductory Notes

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Premise

The fragment with Philo of Carpasia’s explanation of Canticle of Canticles 1:2–14a bears the title ፁፋፎፋፊፋፕ: ከ፪ፋፎፋ ጭግ።ፋፕे ሞልመ የሰሉመ መልጆ ከሚጆ “Interpretation of Solomon”. In his shelf list of the Ethiopian manuscripts kept at the Ethiopian archbishopric in Jerusalem, Ephraim Isaac makes the following remarks in relation to the manuscript JE300E (MS 119 at the Ethiopian archbishopric in Jerusalem):

This is the title given to the work which contains, beside other composite monastic works, a commentary to Song of Songs 1:2–14a (fols. 3a–20a). This commentary is the work of Philo of Carpasia (Philon Philgos) (c. 400). I thank Prof. Sebastian Brock who helped to identify this work with the help of Rev. Roger Cowley. The commentary incorporated into the catena of Procopius is published in PG KL. (In Latin, see Epiphanius of Salamis). As far as I know this is the only known Ms of this work in Ge’ez.

Ephraim assigns the manuscript to the 14th/15th century and it is the only manuscript in the shelf list that has been commented. While this clearly

1 It would be logical to seek an explanation of how those manuscripts in Ge’ez and Amharic got to Jerusalem, especially in the case of the particularly rare specimen dealt with in this paper. A likely setting of our manuscript’s location is described in the following historical overview: “From the 14th cent. on, a variety of sources report of the Ethiopian community: dedication in books sent as gifts to the community from Ethiopian rulers; letters from Ethiopian kings and nobles; marginal notes in manuscripts; descriptions by foreign historiographers and in numerous itineraria of foreign pilgrims; documents from legal processes; letters from foreign missionaries in Jerusalem; two historiographic manuscripts in Amharic written by members of the community in the late 19th cent.; books published by members in the late 20th cent. From these writings it becomes clear that the community flourished in the 14th–15th cent.,” STOFFREGEN PEDERSEN 2007: 274; cf. also, VAN DONZEL 1983: 93–101.

2 The manuscript appears in Cowley’s shelf list, cf. COWLEY 1988: 437.

3 The above observation appears in a footnote in ISAAC 1987: 67–68. For more information, cf. MACOMBER 1995, on Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem, Roll 3, Item 14,
helps to attract the attention of researchers, Ephraim’s description which
has been fully reproduced here, does contain a few minor lapses.\(^4\)

In \(PG\) 40, the title of the commentary to the Canticle reads: \(\Phi I L O N O S \ E I P I \Sigma \Xi K O I P O I O Y T O U \ K A R P \Iota \Pi A S I O Y \ \Sigma \Upsilon N \ \Theta \Epsilon \ \E R M H N E I A \ E I S \ \TA \ \AZ \Sigma M A T A \ T \O \N \ \AZ \Sigma M A T \O \N\) \(\Pi \rho \dot{\varepsilon} \ \E U S T A T \dot{\iota} \theta \iota \theta \iota\) \(\omicron \epsilon \iota \varepsilon \theta \dot{\iota} \iota \omicron \omicron \epsilon \sigma \iota \) \(\kappa \alpha \iota \omicron \varepsilon \theta \dot{\iota} \iota \omicron \omicron \delta \iota \alpha \omicron \omicron \nu \omicron \), followed by the Latin translation: \(\text{Philonis episcopi Carpasiae, Deo} \ \jmath u\nu a n t e, \Enarratio in Canticum Canticorum, Ad Eustathium presbyterum et\) \(\Eusebiun \ \d\iota \alpha \nu \iota \omicron \nu \iota \nu\). Thus, the commentary in \(PG\) 40, coll. 27–154, is not a \textit{catena}\(^5\) but rather the production of a single hand: Philo of Carpasia.\(^6\) It is true that there is a \textit{catena} of Procopius of Gaza (5th/6th century) in \(PG\) 87/2, coll. 1545–1753. In the collection of Procopius there are 48 passages of the commentary to the Canticle by Philo of Carpasia. Moreover, in the \textit{catena} of Pseudo-Eusebius (end of the 5th century/beginning of the 6th century), Philo’s commentary is quoted thirty seven times, and there are three references in the \textit{Topographia Christiana} of Cosmas Indicopleustes (mid-6th century).\(^7\) Ephraim identifies Philo of Carpasia with “Philon Philgos” without any explanation. Perhaps he has taken for granted that the author of the Commentary of the Canticle is the same as the interpreter of the Pauline Corpus known as \textit{Torg\^ame Felon Felgos}.

The manuscript

\(JE300E\) is a small size parchment: 15 x 11 x 5 cm with 120 leaves, of which fol. 120v is blank. It is written on a single column with an average of 16/17 lines. In fols. 117–120 there are rudimentary drawings of horses, in fol. 117rv two horses, the one in the \textit{verso} with a rider. Apart from a rough geometrical drawing in the upper margin of fol. 3v, the manuscript does not have any ornamental motif, nor a particularly elaborate sign system in the punctuation. In fol. 1v there is a seal that is green in colour, unfortunately so fuzzy that it is impossible to decipher the \textit{legenda}. The only recognizable

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4 The shelfmark is \(PG\) XL (i.e. 40) rather than \(PG\) KL. The statement that the “commentary incorporated into the catena of Procopius is published in \(PG\) KL” does not seem accurate.


7 Cf. \textit{Wolska-Conus} (éd.) 1973. Philo’s passages are the comment to Canticle 1:2.4, on pp. 295–297; Canticle 7: 6–7, on p. 297.
The manuscript is in good condition. The binding consists of two wooden plates, without any additional cover. The upper plate was torn but it has been repaired again. The upper borders have been partially damaged, presumably by rats; the written parts though have survived.

Some of the leaves are thick and hard, others are thinner. The script, except for the first leaf, is homogeneous throughout the manuscript. It is archaic but clear and easily readable. The letters are bulky and often angular. The codex displays the orthographic exchange between \( \text{ח/ח; } \text{ל/ל; } \text{נ/נ; } \text{מ/מ; } \text{נ/נ} \), common to all \( \text{גמ} \) manuscripts. The interchange between the first and fifth order (for example, fol. 2r \( \text{יב} \text{א} \text{ל} \text{א} \text{ה} \), fol. 2v \( \text{לה} \)) is so frequent that it allows us to believe that this is a scribal habit. There are exchanges between the first and fourth (fol. 9r \( \text{ב} \text{ג} \text{א} \text{ד} \text{ן} \) for \( \text{ב} \text{ג} \text{א} \text{ד} \text{ן} \)), as well as between the first and seventh order (fol. 9r \( \text{פ} \text{נ} \) for \( \text{פ} \text{נ} \)). Hybrid letters are also featured, for instance in fol. 3v, where the letter \( \text{ג} \) has a double hook; it looks like an overlap of the second and third order. It is difficult to distinguish the \( \text{נ} \) from \( \text{ן} \). There are instances in which a fusion of two voices occurs, such as \( \text{יב} \text{א} \text{ל} \text{א} \text{ה} \) for \( \text{יב} \text{א} \text{ל} \text{א} \text{ה} \) in fol. 12v.

Philo’s commentary begins abruptly and is preceded by an alien text (from fol. 2r to two words in fol. 4r).

Philo of Carpasia

Philo, the abridged form of Philemon, bishop of Carpasia in the island of Cyprus, was a contemporary of Epiphanius of Salamis († 403?). In fact it was the latter who ordained him bishop (\( \text{Vita S. Epiph.} \) II, 49). There has been skepticism on the reliability of the information about Philo, similar to that on the more famous Epiphanius. Philo died in Carpasia at the beginning of the 5th century and was buried in his church in the town of Rizocarpaso.9 The \( \text{Commentary to the Canticle of Canticles} \) is the only work of Philo Carpasiianus registered in \( \text{CPG} \) (no. 3810).

Philo’s commentary on the Canticle

The aim of the present paper is not to reopen a discussion on the authorship of the commentary. I will rather summarize the data of researches conducted so far. Philo composed a \( \text{Commentary to the Canticle of Canticles} \) in Greek (\( \text{PG} \) 40, 28–153, from now on = G) which has survived in an epitome published by Michelangelo Giacomelli in 1772, and in a Latin version edited by Epiphani-

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The Ga’az Version of Philo of Carpasia’s *Commentary on Canticle of Canticles* 1:2–14a

us Scholasticus (6th century), who was an expert in translations from Greek to Latin and worked as a secretary (scholasticus) of Cassiodorus at Vivarium (Calabria). It was on the orders of the latter that Epiphanius has carried out the translation of Philo’s commentary. In 1750, Pietro Francesco Foggini published the editio princeps of the Latin version in Rome: *S. Epiphanii Salaminis in Cypro epicopi commentarium in Canticum Canticorum prodit nunc primum ex antiqua versione latina opera et studio P.F.F.* (from now on = L.). The edition was performed on the Latin manuscript Vaticanus lat. 5704 (probably belonging to the second half of the 6th century), the only witness of the Latin version. Scholars maintain that L is closer to the original. The Commentary has been edited again more recently.10 In antiquity Philo’s authorship of the Commentary to the Canticle was questioned. Cassiodorus, in a plausible attempt to enhance the prestige of the work, ascribed it to Epiphanius of Salamis (*Institutiones* I, 5,4). Pietro Foggini shared the same view. The issue of authorship was laid to rest after Giacomelli, unanimously followed by subsequent researchers, denied that Epiphanius of Salamis had written the *Commentary to the Canticle*. Since then, it has been firmly established that albeit there are some discrepancies, L is simply a translation from Greek.11

Concerning the language of the commentary Ceresa Gastaldo says: “Il testo greco filoniano, quale si legge nell’edizione del Giacomelli, non presenta molte difficoltà, dato lo stile estremamente semplice richiesto dalla spiegazione letterale di ogni singolo versetto al Cantico. Solo saltuariamente compaiono vocaboli di uso postclassico”.12 Scholars have expressed various and not always flattering views on the quality of Philo’s Commentary on the Canticle. Indeed, it has often been dismissed as mediocre and a compilation in character. Siegmund’s verdict on the work is sharp: “… ziemlich wertlos”.13 One of the most important features of Philo’s exegesis is the traditional identification of the bridegroom with Christ and of the bride with the Church.

**Philo in Ga’az literature**

There are at least three works in the Ga’az language that are associated with the name of Philo,14 a Paschal homily, a fragment of the *Commentary to the Canticle of Canticles*, and a vast commentary on the Pauline Corpus. Even

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10 Ceresa Gastaldo 1979; Sagot 1981.
13 Siegmund 1949: 128.
14 Neither Philo nor Carpasia are registered in the section of Dillmann’s Lexicon reserved for nomina propria, cols. 1408–1423. There is no mention of them in Kidana Wäld Kéfle 1948 ‘A.M.
though it can be safely excluded that the trilogy belongs to Philo of Carpa-
sia, nonetheless, there is a multifaceted common thread shared by the
tree works that carry the name of Philo. The similarities range from an
apparently peculiar translation strategy to linguistic characteristics as well as
a common Weltanschauung which seems to privilege an ascetic/monastic
life style. The three works contain passages with anti-Judaic polemics and
seem to be fond of the so-called “Theology of Substitution”.15

Paschal homily

In one of the three ancient manuscripts, the same text of a Paschal homily is
ascribed to Philo (or Theophilus) bishop of Carpasia. The title in
EMML 1763, no. 64, fols. 201v–204v, reads: “Homily of Felon, bishop of the
town of Qerpesyas for Easter Wednesday”.16 The text is part of a large “col-
lection of homilies for the year” and has been dated at around 1336/37 or
1339/40. Bausi maintains that EMML 1763 “contains traces” of what he calls
“The Aksumite collection”.17 The Paschal homily has elements that confirm
the antiquity of the homiliary’s language.

The second witness is Or. 8192 of the British Library,18 and presumably
belongs to the 14th century. The title is: 589:] ֩ךֱנָנֶנָרֶנֶנֶנָרֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶנֶn
In his catalogue, Strelcyn translates:
“Homily by Theophilus, Patriarch of Qärnelos,19 at Easter, for Wednesday
in Easter-Week.”20

15 One example of the “Theology of Substitution” which advocated the idea that the Old
Testament and Israel have been replaced by the New Testament and by the Church is
the Epistle of Barnabas (2nd cent.).
17 BAUSI 2006a: 54, n. 21. With regard to the place and time of the “Aksumite collec-
tion”, Bausi states: “La Collezione aksumita, almeno il suo nucleo principale fu vero-
similmente redatta in Egitto, come provano i documenti di origine alessandrina in essa
incorporati, e in lingua greca. La data probabile della sua costituzione non è anteriore
alla seconda metà del V sec.: il termine post quem è il 477 d.C., data della morte di Ti-
moteo Eluro, il più tardo degli autori identificati i cui scritti vi siano compresi; come
temine assoluto ante quem vale probabilmente il 686/87, come si evince da probanti
elementi filologici”, ibid.: 45.
18 Catalogued in STRELCYN 1978: 92, ms. 56, no. 19 (fols. 72va–77ra).
19 The toponym is written in five different Gǝǝz syllabic signs, of which the third is
partially stained (-ne-?; -me-?). Perhaps Qärnelos could have been a more obvious
choice of the copyist.
20 This is a free translation. “Wednesday in Easter-Week” is not part of the title. 589:] ֩ךֱנָנֶn
“Wednesday in Easter-Week” is a liturgical indication placed in the upper margin.
Among the texts of EMML 8509, no. 40 (fols. 99r–102r) is a “homily for the 4th Sunday of Easter”, ascribed to “Theophilos Bishop of Carpathia”. Sergew dates it “not before the 10th and not after the 13th century”.

The variant “Theophilos”, a name more familiar than Philo to Ethiopian ears, can be explained as an adjustment of “Philo”, which perhaps looked awkward to the copyists. The difference in the spelling of names in the above Go’az manuscripts, and especially the identification of the text behind the Go’az version have been a great challenge to the editors and translators into Italian of the homily. The daunting task of searching for the Vorlage and retrieving it, an enterprise that at that time appeared beyond reach, did not discourage me from dealing with the Go’az text which I found extremely puzzling and irresistible at the same time. The publication of the homily with its translation into Italian was rightly criticized for its failure to hunt out the Vorlage, but it is also true that the Italian translation has been decisive in tracing the presumed Greek text behind the Go’az version of the homily. The “provisional conclusions” of Professor Voicu, formulated in

21 Cf. SERGEW HABLE-SELASSIE 1987: 17. Sergew has republished this article verbatim in Ostkirchliche Studien 42, 1991, pp. 64–82. Our homily is listed on p. 73 as “Fourth Sunday of Eastern” (sic). It is said to belong to Tana Qirqos and its contents are almost the same as EMML 1763, ibid.: 9. Referring to the language from which the Collection of the homilies has been translated, Sergew states: “It is out of the question to expect translation from Greek in this time because, as we find in this text, some of the Greek words which became technical terms in the Christian world, such as Pentecost, are written in a distorted way. Coptic words such as Tut and Hetur are indicated as Greek words. So most probably the bulk of the homilies, if not all, must have been translated from Syriac and Coptic”, ibid.: 20–21. At present, most scholars are skeptical of translations from Syriac or Coptic into Go’az.

22 Ibid.: 23.

23 In the Go’az Synaxarium there is no mention of anyone by the name Philo.


25 Cf. BAUSI 2006b: 45, n. 14; 2007a: 36. Voicu’s praise too, at the beginning of his paper sounds like an implicit criticism: “Ai due curatori [Raineri – Tedros Abraha] va riconosciuto subito un coraggio eccezionale”, VOICU 2004: 5. There have been complaints about the omission of EMML 8509 in the collation. I tried hard to gain access to this codex. I applied for a microfilm of the manuscript at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Ababa and at HMML (Minnesota). Both institutions told me that they do not have it. I found the manuscript somewhere else only very recently. Seeing the script (finedly described by Sergew and with the reproduction of the most striking letters) is a satisfaction in its own right. Nothing new though has emerged that can change the textual data presented in the 2003 publication. Sometimes it is much easier to point out an omission than to pursue and to consult the document itself.

26 In the entry “Filone di Carpasia”, E. Prinzivalli writes: “In etiopico sussiste una ome- lia pasquale che in larga misura si ispira all’In sanctum pascha dello Ps. Ippolito”, cf.
eight concise points raise some of the core issues and yet it seems that they are far from sorting out the question of the Vorlage of the Gǝǝz version.

Commentary on the Pauline Corpus

The Tǝrgǝǝme Felon Felgos is a bulky commentary of the Corpus Paulinum in which each Pauline pericope is followed by explanations ascribed alternately to Felon and to Felgos. The manuscripts inspected so far do not provide any additional information about the plain names of the two presumed commentators. The commentary is preserved in at least four manuscripts:

1) Vatican Library, Raineri 127, a parchment of 81 large folios, belonging approximately to the late 14th century;
2) British Library, Or. 13,964, a copy on paper by a very recent hand;
3) British Library, Cowley 35, a replica of Or. 13,964;
4) Giustino de Jacobis (1800–1860) in his letter, dated 11 September 1846 gives an account of his visit to Däbrä Bizän (Eritrea) where he was allowed to see the manuscripts of the monastery. Among the texts he saw, he mentions: “Un’esposizione rimarcabile di S. Paolo; opera, come dice l’autore della prefazione premessa al libro, di Filone e di Fileguos.”

In the first three manuscripts parts of the commentary are missing. Raineri 127, which is much older than Or. 13,964, has many gaps on several accounts and the manuscript is in a poor state. The present order of the leaves is generally messy. The original binding has fallen apart for reasons difficult to under-

Di Bernardino (a.c.) 2007: 1961. In the bibliography at the end of the entry, there is no mention of the Gǝǝz text of the homily either in the manuscripts or in the publication by Raineri – Tedros Abraha 2003.


28 An edition of this commentary with an annotated translation by the undersigned is well underway.

29 Tǝrgǝǝme Felon Felgos is registered in the list of: A, 4: אֲנַיָּתוֹ הַלַּאֹם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם תַּעַלְּנֶת הַגָּזָּלֵם. p. 81. Among the list of 652 books in EMML 1601, no. 206 is: Tǝrgǝǝme Pǝwłos za-Fǝlǝn Fǝlǝgos. In the introductory note to this microfilm the cataloguers say that “the original composer of this list is most probably Liqa Ҭabbabt Akilila Berhăn Walda Qirqos”, cf. Getatchew Haile – Macomber 1981: 81. In the same manuscript, the reference in f. 201b apparently points to a further witness of “Tǝrgǝǝme Pǝwłos za-Felon Fǝlǝgos is ambiguous”. Fol. 201v is the first leaf of the Paschal homily ascribed to Philo of Carpasia.

30 Registered in Raineri 2004: 641.

31 Cf. Cowley 1988: 445. Cowley acknowledges that the commentary’s lemmas “represent an old Geez text-type” but he dismisses the commentary as “somehow flat and pedestrian” (ibid.: 282). I doubt that Cowley has read the whole commentary, otherwise his judgement would have perhaps been different.


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stand. The fatal result is the irretrievable loss of several parts of the original manuscript.

The text is clearly a servile translation from author(s) and text(s?) that so far remain unknown. Nonetheless, the commentary is of huge interest, among several other aspects, due to the amount of Ga'az hapax legomena and to entries attested only once or twice elsewhere. I am skeptical though that the Tərgʷame Felon Felgos has been translated directly from Greek. The comment on Heb 7:1-3 clears ground. Philo of Carpasia at any rate cannot be the author. It says:

\[ \text{33 The first explicit quotation in the Tərgʷame Felon Felgos.} \]
Felgos interpreted and said: And Mälkà Şedeq [Melchizedek] is the King of Peace, priest of the high God. When he says, ‘King of Salem’, it is because he (God) appointed only him to the grave of our father Adam and its name is Salem, no one else before him resided in that town. Because of this he was named king, for he alone did priestly ministry within her. That is Jerusalem, a prophecy of the one who was to come, Jesus, Saviour of the world. And Abraham held a meeting with him as he returned from the battle against the kings, when he killed the kings of Amalek, since he is a prophet, he knew that God would have sent his Word on earth and he said: ‘Will you send your Word on earth during my days?’ And he manifested himself to Abraham to whom the word of prophecy was given, and told him: ‘It is not now, but cross the Jordan and I will manifest to you’. And he told him that he encountered Melkisedek and he blessed him. And Mälkà Şedeq blessed our father Abraham and gave him the typoi of the flesh and blood of Christ. Thus Abraham saw in prophecy through the hands of Mälkà Şedeq, and Abraham rejoiced and gave the tenth from all he received, and gave a tithe to Mälkà Şedeq, his first interpretation means ‘king of Peace’, who did not have a father and who did not have a mother and whose birth is unknown, and whose life has no end and has no beginning. When he says this, ‘he has no father and he has no mother’ do not mislead your heart as Severus of Antioch, and he said: ‘He is from the essence of the divinity and Mälkà Şedeq is the Holy Spirit’. And for this reason he committed a great mistake. If he says: ‘He has no father and he has no mother’ it is because his father and his mother were idol worshippers who did not fear the Lord. And for this reason Sem too, after stealing from his father and mother, as his father had ordered, because Noah knew from the Holy Spirit, that he would have become priest of the high God inside Salem. With this knowledge he was crucified there in Kranio, where our father Adam was buried, and there appointed Mälkà Şedeq that he may praise, sing, incense and do priestly ministry. When he said ‘king of righteousness’, it was because only he lived and there was nobody with whom he quarrelled, and no end to the

35 Anacoluthon.
37 For sources on Golgotha as the place of Adam’s burial, cf. SU-MIN RI 2000; ANDERSON – STONE – TROMP (eds.) 2000.
length of his days. Until the coming of Christ again, he will live as God has
hidden and concealed him, until he dies, according to his (God’s) will.

This is a literal translation which is meant to be faithful to the Go\^z and
also to allow the reader to have an insight into the nature of the text. The
background of this comment will be discussed in due course in the edition
of the commentary. For our purpose now, it is sufficient to observe that
Severus of Antioch died one century after Philo, in 540 ca.

The Commentary to the Canticle of Canticles

Premise

In the introduction to his seminal work on the Targ\^ame and And\^omta
of St. John’s Apocalypse, Roger Cowley divides Go\^z commentaries into
tree categories:

1) translations representative of an earlier period of Greek sources;
2) translations representative of a later period of Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic
sources, principally of Ibn at-Tayyib and various Syriac writers, or of
substantial reworking of earlier sources, as in the “Coptic-Arabic gospel
catena”;
3) original Go\^z compositions.

Cowley places our fragment of Philo’s commentary on the Canticle
among the translations of the earlier period.\(^{38}\)

As mentioned earlier, the commentary is introduced as an “Interpretation of
Solomon”. The Go\^z version is anonymous. There are several elements shared
by the aforementioned texts associated with Philo that I could not observe in
other Go\^z texts translated from Greek. As a general term of comparison be-
tween “Philo’s” Go\^z versions and literature rendered from Greek, I have
taken into consideration three homilies in EMML 1763 published by
Getatchew Haile,\(^{39}\) the Qerlos,\(^{40}\) the F\^salgos,\(^{41}\) the Anti-Christ of Pseudo

\(^{38}\) Cowley 1983: 35–36.

\(^{39}\) They are: (1) Getatchew Haile 1979: 309–318; Getatchew Haile in his remark that
introduces the text of the homily states that “the story of Frumentius was composed
by Rufinus in Latin, retold by Socrates in Greek, translated anonymously as a homily
into Go\^z, perhaps during the Axumitic period, and finally re-edited for the Synaxary
by someone (sic) with good command of Go\^z, but who misunderstood and ‘recti-
fied’ the homily in several places”. The connection with Latin and Greek texts is not
demonstrated. (2) Id. 1981: 117–134. (3) The other homily is contained in fols. 110r–
113v, cf. Id. 1990: 29–47. The vocabulary and especially the grammar of the Paschal
homily is considerably different from the language of these homilies.

\(^{40}\) The Qerlos, a compendium of patristic and theological works, gathers together writ-
ings which were not all written by Cyril of Alexandria. It includes: a) Astagbo\’s
Hyppolytus\textsuperscript{42} to mention a few. In the search for models that can help to figure out translation patterns that could eventually shed light on Philo’s version, it is essential to keep a close eye on the Bible, especially on the critical editions of the Gospels. There is an important difference though between the “Philonian” writings and the texts of Sacred Scripture. The aim of the biblical translators was to allow readers and listeners to grasp the message while in “Philo’s” versions the purpose seems to be to reproduce a spitting image of the original. It is the classical case in which “… ancient translators were satisfied with their work at a point where a modern translator would begin to manipulate his, not to change the meaning but to create the proper aesthetic effect”.\textsuperscript{43}

“Philo’s” Ge\textsuperscript{3} versions have a syntax which differs from the early Ge\textsuperscript{3} texts and reflects a translation technique of their own. The linguistic harshness and the hermeneutic system are basically the same in the three “Philonian” texts. There is a consistent number of terms not found elsewhere, or rarely attested outside these scarcely copied and virtually unknown works. Even though, at least for the time being, it is difficult to reconstruct the identity of the translator and of his milieu, there is no doubt that the trilogy contributes to the knowledge of archaic Ge\textsuperscript{3} as well as to a particular brand of translation technique.

The translator and the translation

The present paper does not pretend to engage in a full-fledged speculation about the translation strategy at the heart of the Ge\textsuperscript{3} version, whose texture is elusive in its kind. Instead of providing an essay on translation techniques that elaborate on theories about a hypothetical school training translators, the scope is limited to highlighting the more evident elements of renderings that do not have (known) equals in Ge\textsuperscript{3} literature. The linguistic hurdles, the paleness of the comments that do not match exactly with the

(Compilation) in which we find the De Recta Fide and the Prosphoneticus ad Reginas; b) P\textsuperscript{3}lladyos or g\textsuperscript{3}ss\textsuperscript{3}aw\textsuperscript{3} d\textsuperscript{3}rs\textsuperscript{3}an, that is, Quod Christus sit unus; c) T\textsuperscript{3}r\textsuperscript{3}f\textsuperscript{3} Qer\textsuperscript{3}los ‘The Rest of Cyril’ is a collection of homilies and extracts, eight by Cyril himself, fourteen by other writers, one epistle of the Council of Ephesus and one passage of the Council of Nicaea. Most of this material has been critically edited and translated by Manuel Bernd Weischer; cf. BAUSI 2010: 287a–290a.

\textsuperscript{41} Cf. Hommel 1877.
\textsuperscript{43} Miles 1985: 2. For a more recent and useful work, see, Van der Louw 2007, especially chapters 2 and 3 which deal with “Translating and translations in Antiquity”, “Inventory of Transformation”, pp. 25–92.

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hermeneutic taste of the Ethiopic tradition\textsuperscript{44} engender a couple of obvious questions: why Philo, a commentator who did not enjoy fame even in his own milieu was translated into G\textsuperscript{advisor}? The morphology, syntax and vocabulary of this commentary are similar to those of the Paschal homily attributed to the same author about which I made the following assessment: "... as it stands, the language of this homily is linguistically untenable. In fact, rather than a sequence of orderly thoughts, the text presents a pile of words, put side by side without any care to provide a logical connection among them. The morphology and syntax do not correspond to the most elementary rules of G\textsuperscript{advisor} grammar which in this text appears to be visibly disfigured. This text is a test bed, a unique challenge even to people who are familiar with G\textsuperscript{advisor}.”\textsuperscript{45} This evaluation suits perfectly the Commentary on the Canticle and the Targum Felon Felgos.

Having the original in front of you though, makes a difference. This is the case with the Commentary on the Canticle. Nonetheless, unanswered queries remain: who took upon himself the herculean task of producing such a translation that demanded, not only relentless discipline in strictly adhering to the Greek copy but also a great deal of creativity? Why did the translator deliver such a thorny text? Who was the target reader, if there was one at all? It is the virtually inaccessible character of the G\textsuperscript{advisor} version in its totality, that elicits these questions and more, like for instance through the vocabulary, that is often apparently created \textit{ad hoc} to reproduce the original faithfully.\textsuperscript{46} The phrasing as well is extremely difficult to understand and to handle. Some token examples will help us see these difficulties for ourselves.

Fol. 6v: \textit{Ӧ��ŦԂŎڧш˒}, renders the Greek: \textit{Ӧ��ŦԂŎڧш˒}. Such a slavish translation is doomed because it fails to make sense. The phrase would have been easier to understand if it were formulated differently: \textit{Ӧ��ŦԂŎڧш˒}. Of course, the issue at stake here is only the sequence of the words. The sentence suggests that the translator must have had a good grasp of both languages, because for instance, the verb \textit{ŀԓҝӫ}; \textit{ԓҝӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӫ}; \textit{ӊԓӦ}, has

\textsuperscript{44} Usually Ethiopic hermeneutics is generous in offering lengthy explanations, in resorting to symbolism, analogy and multiple interpretations of the same item, whenever it is possible to do so.

\textsuperscript{45} Cf. RAINERI – TEDROS ABRAHA 2003: 386.

\textsuperscript{46} Perhaps this is one of the reasons that can explain the “death” of the text that did not have either circulation or resonance.
been rendered with θανατήσῃ from τοιχώμενος “mente percipere, sentire, sibi consciunm esse” (Dillmann 1865, col. 997.3).

A comparison between the Greek and the Goʿaz leads to conclude that the technique followed by the translator seems to be the “mirror type” translation: a paratactic rendering, totally subservient to the language the translator had before his eyes and at the expense of the reader. It seems that the latter is excluded from the translator’s horizon.47 A few illustrative cases allow us to see the pattern: fol. 4v ἀλήθειας ἐξ ἀλήθειας, which reads insincerely for falsehood; fol. 4r, ἀρχή : ἀρχή “marriage of theft” for κληρονομία.48 Even for a pedantic translation, ἀρχή : ἀρχή would have been more tolerable than ἀρχή : ἀρχή, an opposition behind which we can see the verbs κλέπτω and γαμέω.49 Instead of the artificial ἀρχή : ἀρχή, attested nowhere else except in this text, θανατήσῃ “adultery, fornication” could have easily cut the Gordian knot.

There is a passage in the Goʿaz version which in my opinion, can be perceived as a glimpse of the translator’s identity. Fol. 13r reads: Λήττερ θανατήσῃ: λήττερ Ύστερη: λήττερ βίοι: λήττερ κόσμοι: λήττερ παραγγελία: λήττερ ἐνεκριμένο: λήττερ ἐνεκριμένον: λήττερ ἐνεκριμένοι: λήττερ ἐνεκριμένον προφανώς βίοι: λήττερ ἐνεκριμένον προφανώς ἐνεκριμένον = “... which comes from the black preacher of glory, who receiving the Only-Begotten through Philip the Apostle saying: ‘Ethiopia stretches her hands towards God’” (Psalm 67:32).50 For: ἐναραιμένην ἀπὸ τοῦ Αἰθιοποῦ τοῦ εὐνοῦχου τὸ μάρτυς δέχεσθαι τὸ σημείον τοῦ Μονογενοῦς διὰ Φίλιππου τοῦ ἀποστόλου. While it cannot be excluded categorically, the question is whether an Ethiopian would have translated Αἰθιοπός with θανατήσῃ “black” because the predicate “black” is usually derogatory.51 On the other hand, if the proper noun Ethiopia is of Greek origin,52 as many scholars support, the term αἴθιος from αἴθω “burn”,...
The Ga’az Version of Philo of Carpasia’s Commentary on Canticle of Canticles 1:2–14a

and ὀψις “face”, would mean “scorched face, black”, thus conceding a scope of possibility that Αἰθιόπος is, if not a translation, perhaps an interpretation of Αἰθιόπος. In the New Testament Αἰθιόπος occurs twice in Acts 8: 27 and there is no evidence so far that it has ever been rendered with Αἰθιόπος. The LXX uses Αἰθιόπος 28 times where the Hebrew reads בְּנֵי.

**Relationship between the Greek text and the Ga’az version**

It is a well established fact that there has been an interaction between the two languages. Numismatics, inscriptions, the first translations of the Bible and of other Christian writings into Ga’az express Greek as an undisputed witness that has been a source language. There are a good number of Greek terms that have made their way into Ga’az, directly or through other languages. Some of them are still used in the liturgy. The divide between the two languages can hardly be exaggerated. Translating from Greek, a language with an incomparably wider vocabulary, and a more complex syntax, must have been a unique challenge. The intricate web of the Greek verbal system, with its subtleties and nuances is impossible to transfer effectively not only into Ga’az but also into other Semitic languages. The Ga’az version of Philo’s commentary is a meaningful example that confirms the distance separating the two languages and how troublesome their encounter can be.

was less a geographical location than a state of mind. For Greeks and Romans generally, Ethiopian meant dark-skinned peoples who lived south of Egypt” (Levine 2000: 1). According to Ethiopian tradition, Ethiopia is the name of Aethiopis, who reigned from 1856 to 1800 B.C., cf. VOIGT 2003: 162b. 53 It is wise to leave this question open, taking into account the fact that until the Middle Ages the country identified itself as βασιλεία Αἰθίοπες, cf. DILLMANN 1878: 179. 54 It is worth mentioning the passage in the (pseudo-)Clementine literature which says: ὅποιος ἦν ἂν ἂν ἄνθρωπος: ἢ ἄνθρωπος ἂν ἀνθρώπος: “all Ethiopians whose body is black”, cf. DILLMANN 1865, col. 1259. Hagiography knows the 4th century monk ὁ Ἰσραήλ: ἄνθρωπος: “Moses “The Black””, cf. ZANETTI 2007: 1025.

55 There is no point in giving a bibliographical list on this subject which has been extensively studied. In the entry “Ga’az Literature”, Getatchew Haile begins the periodization of Ga’az literature with the “Greek Period”, cf. GETATCHEW HAILE 2005: 736b–737a; cf. also LUSINI 1988: 469–493.

56 Indirectly, especially via Arabic.

It has already been mentioned that so far, there is no critical edition of Philo’s Greek commentary to the Canticle of Canticles based on the whole of the manuscript tradition\textsuperscript{58}. While waiting for the production of such a work, a comparison of the Go\'az version with the available printed material can be a starter to put forward a preliminary evaluation. The Go\'az translation is closer to the Greek and in several places distant from the Latin.\textsuperscript{59} This will be highlighted in the footnotes of the translation.

The quality of the Go\'az version of Philo’s commentary is not completely homogeneous. Sometimes it seems to stick meticulously to its Vorlage, while elsewhere the impression is that it is a loose translation. In the comparison between the Go\'az text with the Greek the following aspects deserve particular attention:

**Punctuation of the Go\'az version in JE300E**

Generally the four dots appear fairly often after short units which in many cases do not represent a full concept, and rather than helping to understand the text they often throw it into darkness. As we do not know which Greek text was used to translate the Commentary into Go\'az it is difficult to get to the origin of the messy punctuation. It is also impossible to establish whether the punctuation belongs to the first draft or more likely to a subsequent copyist. We have an example of absolute anarchy in the punctuation of Targ\'ame Felon Felgos in the copy of Or. 13,964, which is very different from that of Raineri 127. The passages below have been selected to show the phenomenon:

fol. 4v:}$\text{ EIFR} : \text{ΛΠΩ} : \text{ΜΩЮ} : \text{ΛΨΡ} : \text{ΤΥΡΩ} : \text{ΙΨΨΨΨ} : \text{ΗΡΞ} : \text{ΚΨΡ} : \text{ΛΨΡ} : \text{ΜΩΨΨΨ} : \text{ΑΡΨΨΨ} : \text{ΛΨΡ} : \text{ΜΩΨΨΨ} : \text{ΑΡΨΨΨ} : \ldots \text{ “which perfumes a perfume without limits, which has a glory that is not amazing, of the angels. Which leads to honour}$. The punctuation does not correspond to the Greek:

fol. 5r:}$\text{еЛЯ} : \text{ЛΨΡ} : \text{ЧΨΨΨ} : \text{ΛΨΡ} : \text{МΩΨΨΨ} : \text{ΑΡΨΨΨ} : \text{ΛΨΡ} : \text{МΩΨΨΨ} : \text{ΑΡΨΨΨ} : \ldots \text{“which inspires fragrances without limits, which has ineffable glories, which carries honours equal to those of the angels”};$


59 The translator has often faithfully rendered the passive forms of the Greek verbs, which is not a frequent habit in Go\'az literature.
“For it will not make me totter like a drunk. This drink says the Church”. The Greek says: οὖ γὰρ λέει με ὁσπερ ἡ μέθη τοῦ ἀρτέμια, φησιν ἡ Ἑσχηρᾶ ὃ συναντᾷ για to πόμα, θαυμάζων ἡ Ἑσχηρᾶ “for it does not loosen me like drunkenness this drink, says the Church ...”. The Ga‘az punctuation has to be slightly modified: λογος ὁ εἰς ἀρτέμιαν; λογος ὁ ἐν ἀρτέμιαν. The four dots should have been placed three steps before, namely: σωφρόνισται ὁ ἄγιος ὁ πάρθενος ὁ πνεύματος ὁ παρθένος. Where this Gospel is going to be preached, everywhere perfume and the perfume of the world. Like one of them, the Apostle Paul said: ...

This passage is marred by a misplaced punctuation, and once the four dots are removed the sentence becomes clearer: λογος ὁ εἰς ἀρτέμιαν; λογος ὁ ἐν ἀρτέμιαν; σωφρόνισται ὁ ἄγιος ὁ πάρθενος ὁ πνεύματος ὁ παρθένος. It is a single phrase to be rendered in the following terms: “For one is the legislator, in the two of them he ordered rules and from a source that does not die [laws] which have life and milk of the spirit”. The Greek says: εἰς γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς νομοθέτης ἐκατέρτες διείστηκε Διαθήκης. Δύο τούτων μαστοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ δύο κέλευθαι Διαθήκαι; καὶ ἐν μιᾷ τῆς...
The examples above are only a few of the many twists, difficult, if not impossible to sort out without the help of the Greek original.

The difference between G and the Go‘az: omissions

The textual vacua in the Go‘az version can be interpreted in various ways, starting perhaps with the textual type the translator used namely, a translation carried out on an inadequate specimen. Parts could have been left out, due to the translator’s insurmountable linguistic difficulties. As a matter of fact, some of the Greek terms are impossible to render literally into Go‘az. Either the translator needed to be gifted with extraordinary creativity and resilience, otherwise, and this is the more common situation, it was necessary to resort to paraphrasing. There are instances in which gaps seem to have occurred involving terms and grammatical constructions within the range of the translator’s capacity, due to distraction or perhaps sheer negligence. A few token examples of one or more terms that disappeared in the translation will be listed here-after:

fol. 4v: ἐσπαρξακα from ἐσπαρξω “to show as in a mirror, reflect”;
fol. 4v: καὶ ἔτι γῆς “and on earth”;
fol. 5r: ποτὲ “sometimes”;
fol. 5r: ὑπερβολή [τῆς λαμπρότητος] “excess of [brightness]”;
fol. 6v and 7r: φην “says”;
fol. 8r: the translator gets rid of: ἐν ταυτῷ δὲ προφητικῶν σημαίνει τρόπον “for in that he indicates a prophetic figure”, with two words only: ὥσπερ ἐστὶν “and in this makes known”;
fols. 8v–9r: Βλέπε νεανία ἔξειν τὴν τῷ σώματι ἀσθενεστέραν, ὡς ηῆς δὲ πίστει ἰσχυρότεραν “Watch that girl very weak in the body, but stronger in the soul for the faith”. The Go‘az version reads: ΄υψηλότατος ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, ὑπερβολή: ἦν ἀλήθειας: ἦν ἁπάντως: ὧν ἡ ἑλπίδα: υἱοθετήσας: ἔτι ἐστὶν “the virgins in the faith, but not a virgin which is weak in the flesh but the spirit is firm in the faith”. The omission of the initial verb βλέπε, has a fatal consequence for the whole period: it strips off its meaning;
fol. 10v: καὶ περὶ τὸν ἐκατόμην νυμφίων “and rejoicing in her groom”.

Tedros Abraha
Peculiarities of some of the translations

Fol. 4v: παρηγορίαν προάγνον “providing firmness”. Προάγνον is a present participle, feminine, singular of the verb προάγνον “to procure, secure for”.61 In theory there is no identical verbal form in Gә’az. άΣі·ν ή·ν ή·ν “faith which gives”, is the way our translator renders the Greek expression. The translation does not represent the Greek perfectly but it is an acceptable adaptation. Παρηγορία can mean “confidence, trust, frankness in speech”.62 The choice of the verbal noun άΣі·ν (from άΣі) meaning “fides a) quae creditur, religio; b) confessio”,63 cannot pass unnoticed. The entry άΣі·ν does not occur in the Bible.64 In the New Testament there is no uniformity in the rendering of παρηγορία.65 In Mk 8: 32; Acts 4: 31 it is translated with Мл; in Jn 7: 13; Acts 2: 29 with Ηνό-ό. Both entries correspond to the meaning of the Greek. However there is no notable occurrence of ΗɛЯипіп/Ηɛіп translating παρηγορία.

In the Gә’az version of Philo’s commentary there is a twofold rendering of διαθήκη: in fol. 5v δύο Διαθήκες is read as: Φε Διάνο “two laws”. In fol. 11r: Ԭіііі η Φіііііііііі “two statutes” for δύο Διαθήκες.

The term τρόπος which means: a) direction; b) mode, manner; c) character, nature; d) style, in Gә’az (fol. 7v) is rendered with σιμον. discrimen, differentia,66 a rare word indeed, attested in Wis 7: 20.

In fol. 6r Βωμάλυ μ Χβ “drink of the spirit” is an example of a common pattern which instead of an adjective makes use of the apposition of proper nouns. None of the Gә’az witnesses of 1 Cor 10: 4 reads Βωμάλυ μ Χβ for πνευματικήν ἑτερ. The more obvious rendering is: Χβ: εσαλβασθ. Likewise the translator renders θεόν γοαρή with εσαλβασθ. έ ή Αλαμάλα Β (fol. 7v) instead of the more common expressions like εσαλβασθ. έ ή Αλαμάλα Β or εσαλβασθ. ε ή Αλαμάλα Β.68

Fol. 8r reads: ΣХβούμε: έ ΆΜΑΛΑ Β “fear of God”, but also Φ Κ’ (f. 17r) for ἔνδειξις.

61 LAMPE 1961: 1159.
62 Ibid. 1045, III.
63 DILLMANN 1865, col. 738.
64 As a matter of fact, traditional Gә’az language teachers describe the word with the derogatory amharic epithet, ወኝ “incorrect, useless”.
65 Ibid., col. 14. There has been a long-standing discussion on the origin of ΗɛЯипіп which is close to the Syriac ܐܚܝܡ. Re-opening the debate on this issue is not relevant to our purpose here.
66 Heb 10: 19.35 has Φιλν for παρηγορία even though the former means “grace, gentleness ...”, cf. Ibid., col. 937.
67 Ibid., col. 1346.
68 Ibid. col. 153.
Contemplation is adequately translated with ‘חָפַך’ ‘mind, thought’.

It is likely that the expression was too difficult to translate, therefore it is reduced to: ‘חָפַךְ’ ‘like many’.

There is a needless stop after ‘אַשְׂפָה’ as well as a confusion between ‘אִיר’ to begin, ‘אְרַס’ to come, go.

As already said, the translation of ‘אִיר’; ‘אִיר’ with ‘אַשְׂפָה’ is curious. The Gøsz omits ‘אַשְׂפָה’ as well as a confusion between ‘אִיר’ to begin, ‘אְרַס’ to come, go.”

Free translations (?)


Compound terms translated literally

This is a frequently used translation technique in Philo’s commentary. There is an impressive strict adherence to the original, quite bold indeed, but the result seems to be a parody of the Gøsz language. A few illustrative examples will follow:

69 Also Ex 2:8 renders ‘אִיר’ with ‘אֲדָהֵךְ’, cf. BOYD 1911: 3.
70 DILLMANN 1865, col. 664.
The Gəsz Version of Philo of Carpayia’s Commentary on Canticle of Canticles 1:2–14a

fol. 4r: ἀείμῷοι τελειμάθεις;
fol. 6r: ἁδρόμως παυσάλτους;
fol. 12r: ἐν γὰρ ἔθιμαι σπηλαίων παύσιν;
fol. 12r: ἀνάμεσαι ἦσαν ἔθιμαι σπηλαίων;
fol. 12r: ἐν γὰρ ἔθιμαι σπηλαίων παύσιν;
fol. 13r: τοιούτοις εἴσεξεν Οὐσπαράνην.

The translator renders the Greek word for word, but some of these versions remain dead because the Gəsz fails to make sense. On the other hand, there are “mirror type” translations the grammar of which is acceptable and the meaning perfectly understandable. Here is a short list of examples:

fol. 9r: κύνες: κάλλινης τὴν αμμοθούσαν;

The Latin version and the Gəsz text

The Gəsz version has been performed on a Greek text. There are occasional connections though with the L. Obviously this does not suggest that there has been an interaction between L. and the Gəsz version. The traces of L. in Gəsz indicated in the footnotes of the translation, derive from the relationship between the Greek Vorlage and L.

The Gəsz text of the Commentary to the Canticle

In the edition of 2008 the choice was to publish the text as it appears in the Jerusalem manuscript with a literal Italian translation. As already stated, the vocabulary, grammar, and the type of translation of the Gəsz version do not suit Gəsz linguistic schemes. They will be discussed briefly hereafter.

Vocabulary

Verbal forms apparently created by the translator

There are several instances with the uncommon fourth (reciprocal) form of the Gəsz verbal root. In fol. 4r we find ὑποθέτων, employed to render

72 ὑποθέτων: ἀμίγγα has to be emended with ὑποθέτων: ἀμίγγα.
73 A defective form for ὑποτάσσω.
75 I tried to read some parts of this manuscript to two native scholars of Gəsz language. One of them listened for a few minutes and rejected the text, complaining that the idiom cannot qualify as Gəsz. The reaction of the second scholar was not much different.
76 Traditionally known as ἥπερ-“pillars” or basic verbal forms. For a detailed description on the meaning of ἄσμαδ, cf. KIDAN WÄLDE FLE 1948 ‘A.M.: 59; cf. also GUIDI 1906: 915.
To drag, draw. It would be the reciprocative form of *traxit*. In the same fol. 4r the text reads *libidine corrumpere*. Once again, *libidine corrumpere* is not attested elsewhere. In fol. 19r the translator presents *ad se recipere* from *locus quo quis se convertit*, an otherwise unattested reciprocal form of *locus quo aquae confluunt*.

**Verbal nouns apparently coined by the translator**

In fol. 17r we read *velocem esse* or rather from *alium alium praevenire studere*, corresponds to *locus quo aquae confluunt* of the verb *lcludere*.

Thus the form *velocem esse* or rather from *alium alium praevenire studere*, corresponds to *locus quo aquae confluunt* of the verb *lcludere*.

**Voices impossible to decipher**

In fol. 4v there is a non-existent term which does not express anything. If the translator’s intention was to render γάλακτος, he should have used *locus quo aquae confluunt*. In fol. 5r we have *ad se recipere* instead of *ad se recipere*, which can be taken as an orthographic error. There are more of such cases and they will be indicated in the footnotes of the upcoming edition and translation of the text.

77 LIDDELL – SCOTT 1968: 534.
78 DILLMANN 1865, col. 179.
79 Ibid., col. 168.
80 From οἰσοφὴλατέω = ‘to be maddened, to be driven mad’, LAMPE 1981: 946.
81 DILLMANN 1865, col. 764.
82 Ibid., col. 541.
83 Ibid., col. 540.
84 Ibid., col. 207.
Morphology and syntax

From what has been said so far, it has become clear that the Gǝz version of the commentary offers a number of new and sometimes awkward entries. There are also forms that occur rarely in Gǝz, such as Ӻҕчңэ in fol. 5r: rarissime is Dillmann’s (col. 141) comment on the enclitic particle э, the regular form is ъ. The manuscript always has Ӻҕчңэ instead of the more common Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 6r Ӻҕчңэ in fol. 5r: rarissime is Dillmann’s (col. 141) comment on the enclitic particle э, the regular form is ъ. The manuscript always has Ӻҕчңэ instead of the more common Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 6r Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 7v reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 8v reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 9r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 10r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 11r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 12r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ. From at least the 17th century onwards the use of the accusative with Ӻҕчңэ, will be abandoned. Disagreement in number and gender, an aspect that does not only belong to this text, is very widespread here.

Impossible cases

These are passages that resemble inaccessible fortresses. An example of such desperate cases is the passage in f. 10r: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 11r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 12r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 13r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 14r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ. The first casualty of this version, impossible to translate into English, is Gǝz syntax. The only aim of the translator seems to be to render the Greek (harsh in the original too) faithfully. The positive score of the Gǝz version is that it manages to preserve the substance of the Greek.

Biblical quotations

Almost all of the biblical quotations in this manuscript differ considerably from the known Gǝz textual tradition. The biblical references look like translations carried out together with the rest of the commentary without reference to existing biblical texts:

fol. 9r Mt 9:23 reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 10r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 11r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 12r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 13r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 14r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ. But the disciples said: “Send away the one that is crying behind us!”. The earliest available witnesses read: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 10r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 11r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 12r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 13r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ; fol. 14r reads: Ӻҕчңэ instead of Ӻҕчңэ.
Send her away for she is crying behind us!"

And his disciples came and told him: "I have finished the running. And I have kept the faith, and now for me is ready the crown of justice that God will give me on that day. The judge of righteousness, and not only to me, but also to all of those who love his teaching". This quotation displays several peculiarities. The voice ἔλογον a gerund which here, together with ὑπόθεσιν seems to have the function of an infinitive is not attested elsewhere. The form for ῥάζη is ῥάζης. The oldest available witnesses of these verses read: "And I have indeed finished my race and I have kept my faith, and now for me is ready the crown of justice that God will give me on that day, the judge of righteousness. And not to me alone, but to all of those who love his coming"

fol. 11v: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: "those who suffer and walk the cramped gate and the narrow way" is an allusion to Mt 7:14. In the earliest manuscripts Mt 7:14 reads: ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν ἐὰν "Very narrow and crammed is the way that leads to life and few are those who enter it". There are old witnesses that read (and add) ἀγαπάω "hard" instead of ἀγαπάω "crammed";

fol. 12r quotes Mt 5:44: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: ἀγαπάω: "Love your enemies and again do well to those who hate you and pray for those who do violence to you".

The references "A-Text", "B-Text" are Zuurmond’s classifications of the textual types according to their antiquity.

85 The proper form of the infinitive though is ἐλογίζω.
86 Ibid., col. 308.
87 E.g., Pentaglotto Ambrosiano B. 20 inf. (14th/15th century); Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Eth. 29 (compiled in 1419).
88 The references "A-Text", "B-Text" are Zuurmond’s classifications of the textual types according to their antiquity.
and persecute you”. B-Text: "Love your enemy and pray for those who do violence to you and persecute you”;

fol. 12r quotes Ex 23:5: "If you find your enemy’s donkey that fell down while loaded do not pass by, raise it". The oldest available text reads: "if you saw the donkey of your enemy and has strengthened his adversary do not oppress it but help it". In most of the other texts collated by Boyd there is "its load” instead of "its adversary”.

The LXX reads: "if in the islands of Kittim and look you! In Kedar too send, understand well whether anything like this was done, whether the nations change their gods”. This differs from the text edited by Schäfers: "I moved in the islands of Kittim and look! You in Kedar too send, understand well whether anything like this was done, whether the nations change their gods”.

Fol. 13v quotes Jer 2:10: "Cross to the islands of Kittim and look and dispatch and send to the children of Kedar and examine thoroughly and look if [something] like this has happened. Whether the nations change their gods”.

90 SCHÆFERS 1912: 3.

91 SCHÆFERS 1912: 3.

There are very minor differences among the Paris Codex and the other manuscripts collated by Boyd. "and do not pass over” is the one of the variants which is shared by our commentary, cf. BOYD 1911: 68.
yourself being a Jew and you are like a pagan and your life is not like the Jews. How do you compel the nations to become Jews?”. The difficulties loom right at the beginning of the quotation which should have started off with αὐτοῖς ἡμῶν: ἡμῖν· or υἱοῖς ἡμῶν: ἡμῖν·. The oldest available witnesses of this verse read: λαόν/λαός: λαός; ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖн· ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖν· ἡμῖν: ἡμῖ

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They worked for one hour and you equated them with us who have borne the weight and the flame of the day. The Greek reads: μίαν ώραν ἐποίησαν, καὶ ζούσεν ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ἐποίησας τοὺς βασάνους τὸ βάρος τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ τὸν καυσῶνα “They worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat”.

Proper nouns

In fol. 8r there is 92 for 93. Schäfers reads: 94. 95

Philo’s commentary and the other Ethiopian commentaries on the Canticle of Canticles

There is no trace at all of this Commentary either in the 96 or in the 97.

Abbreviations:

A.D. = Anno Domini
‘A.M. = ‘Amātā Mšbrāt (year in Ethiopian calendar)

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92 ἡδΑ : ἡμ “name split” is the formula traditional morphology employed to indicate partial or defective forms of proper nouns, as in the present case. ἡμ for ἡμ is a further example of this scribal habit. The cut of the last letter, which is often intentional, is aimed at obtaining the rhyme, cf. “Netflix: Hindi” in TASSAMA ḤABTĀ MIKA’EL 1951 ‘A.M.: 890. ἡμ is a Greek calque, like ἡμ or ἡμ and more than anything else is a form close to the Syriac ḥṃ, Hebrew יָנ, and Arabic ḥₚ. 93 The context is Jer 2: 10.11a.
94 There is no similarity with the edition of EURINGER 1937: 257–276, 369–382.
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Summary

The aim of the paper is to provide an overview of little known Ga‘az texts ascribed to Philo, namely: fragments of a Paschal Homily, a bulky but incomplete commentary on the Pauline Corpus and a fragment of Philo of Carpathia’s commentary on the Canticle of Canticles. While concentrating mainly on the latter, the present article wants to draw attention to linguistic characteristics common to the trilogy which is associated with the name Philo. The Ga‘az version of Philo of Carpathia’s Commentary is a rare example of a strictly paratactic translation which is keen to reproduce literally the Greek text from which it depended. The outcome is a hardly understandable Ga‘az text which is however interesting as a unique witness of an ancient translation technique. The Philonian trilogy is among other aspects, a mine of unknown or little attested Ga‘az terms.

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