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Mašhad, Kitābhāna-i Āsitān-i Quds-i Raḍawī 300, f. 1v
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, *grec* 1853, f. 186v

On a Pair of Greek Quotations in the Arabic Version of Aristotle's Rhetoric

Geoffrey Moseley

Abstract

I closely examine two Greek quotations in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* analyzed in the *GALex* in order to determine the text of the Arabic translator's exemplar and the text of the Arabic translation. This analysis also sheds light on the translator's understanding of linguistically difficult and culturally remote terms and phrases.

For the past several decades, Rüdiger Arnzen has contributed to *A Greek and Arabic Lexicon (GALex): Materials for a Dictionary of the Mediaeval Translations from Greek into Arabic*. Alongside Profs. Gerhard Endreß and Dimitri Gutas, he has shepherded this landmark project in Graeco-Arabic studies through its infancy and childhood (the notecard stage and first fascicles) to the cusp of adolescence (a second, revised edition of the first volume, *alif*, has recently appeared and volume two, *bā*, will appear soon).¹ As a kind of 'Rosetta stone' for Arabic philology, the corpus of Graeco-Arabic translations analyzed in the *GALex* provides scholars with a unique window into the lexicon, syntax, and even stylistics of mediaeval Arabic.² The uses of the *GALex*, however, extend across both sides of the hyphenated adjective 'Graeco-Arabic': on the Greek side, the *GALex* illuminates the transmission of classical and post-classical Greek texts in late antiquity and the translators' understanding of classical and post-classical Greek prose and poetry (the latter usually as quoted by prose writers). Having only recently begun to labor alongside Rüdiger in the vineyard of Graeco-Arabic lexicography, I am grateful to him for his learning, his clear-mindedness, and his candor. As a token of my admiration for his contributions to the *GALex* and to Graeco-Arabic studies generally, I offer below some observations on a pair of quotations of ancient Greek authors found within the *GALex* corpus, both drawn from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. My aim throughout is twofold: (a) to reconstruct the Greek text from which the translator worked,

¹ On the *GALex*, see H.H. Biesterfeldt, "Secular Graeco-Arabica: Fifty years after Franz Rosenthal's *Fortleben der Antike im Islam*", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015), pp. 125-57, at pp. 128-9. Thanks to the Bochum *GALex* team, many of the original notecards are now searchable as part of the *Glossarium Graeco-Arabicum* project at the following address: <http://telota.bbaw.de/glossga/>.

² For the comparison, see M. Ullmann, *WKAS* II, XXII n. 120, citing the following personal communication from Franz Rosenthal: "Mit einiger Übertreibung würde ich sagen, daß die Übersetzungen eine Art Rosettastein der arabischen Lexikographie sind". (I owe the reference to Biesterfeldt, "Secular Graeco-Arabica" [above, n. 1]). In a pair of short pieces on the short words *amr* and *bi-*, Dimitri Gutas has shown us one way in which the data compiled and analyzed in the *GALex* can help in deciphering this 'Rosetta stone': see D. Gutas, "Arabic Particles and Graeco-Arabic Translations: On the Uses of *GALex* I", in A. Akasoy - W. Raven (eds.), *Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages. Studies in Text, Transmission and Translation, in Honour of Hans Daiber*, Brill, Leiden [etc.] 2008 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 75), pp. 557-64 and Id., "Some Morphological Functions of Arabic *bi-*: On the Uses of *GALex* II", in B. Gruendler (ed.) with the assistance of M. Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Humanities In Their Own Terms. Festschrift for Wolfhart Heinrichs on his 65th Birthday Presented by his Students and Colleagues*, Brill, Leiden [etc.] 2008, pp. 62-7.

i.e. the readings of the translator's exemplar, and (b) to determine the translator's understanding of these difficult Greek texts.

I. Theodectes, Alcmaeon apud Arist. Rhet. 1397 b 5-7 (GALex I s.v. anā I.1)

At *Rhet.* 1397 b 5-7,³ in arguing that the question whether the patient of punishment deserved to receive it can be distinguished from the question whether the agent of punishment was entitled to exact it, Aristotle quotes from the lost *Alcmaeon* of Theodectes⁴ as follows (I reproduce Kassel's text and critical apparatus below):

|1397 b 2| ἐνίοτε γὰρ διαφωνεῖ τὸ τοιοῦτον καὶ οὐδὲν κωλύει, |b3| ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ Ἀλκμέωνι τῷ Θεοδέκτου “μητέρα δὲ τὴν |4| σὴν οὐτις ἐστύγει βροτῶν;” φησὶ δ' ἀποκρινόμενος “ἀλλὰ |5| διαλαβόντα χρὴ σκοπεῖν”. ἐρομένης δὲ τῆς Ἀλφειβοίας |6| πῶς, ὑπολαβὼν φησι “τὴν μὲν θανεῖν ἔκριναν, ἐμὲ δὲ μὴ |7| κτανεῖν”.

1397 b 2 ἐνίοτε ω anon : ἐνίοις Dion.Hal., quod ex ἐν ἐνίοις ortum putat Spengel καὶ οὐδὲν κωλύει ω anon : om. Dion.Hal. 3 ὥσπερ ω : vocabulum superscriptum eras. in A ἐν A Dion.Hal. : om. β Ἀλκμέωνι] -έονι A : -αίωσι β Dion.Hal. μητέρα - 7 κτανεῖν ω (anon) : om. Dion.Hal. 4 οὐτις FA^{rec} (Guil Ar) : οὐτος AVet : οὕτως ε δὲ βA^{rec} anon : δεῖ A 5 διαλαβόντα A anon : -ας β χρὴ A anon : om. β 6 πῶς AAVet (anon) : πρὸς οὗς F ὑπολαβὼν φησὶν A (anon) : om. β.

In Lyons's edition, the Arabic version reads:

|1397 b 2| لَأَنَّ هَذَا النِّحْو رَجَا لَمْ يَتَّفَقْ وَلَا شَيْءٌ يَمْنَعُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ |3| كَالَّذِي كَانَ مِنْ قَوْلِ ثُودُوقُطُوسَ * لَلْأَقْمُونِ *
حيث يقول : أَمَّا أَمَّا |4| فَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ * مِنَّا * بِسَبَبِهِ * يَتَنَظَّلُ مِنْهَا فَقَالَ مَجِيئًا |6| أَمَّا * * * * *
وَأَمَّا أَنَا |7| فَلِكَيْلَا أَقْتُلَ غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ |5| يَنْبَغِي لَنَا إِذَا اخَذَ * * * * * نَنْظُرَ مَا الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَنْهُ

³ For the Greek text, I follow the *GALex* in citing the edition of R. Kassel (Berlin – New York 1976). The Arabic text has been twice edited from the unique Paris MS (Bibliothèque Nationale, *arabe* 2346 = *ancien fonds* 882a), first by 'Abdarrahmān Badawī (Cairo 1959) and then by M.C. Lyons (Cambridge 1982); cf. Lyons's list of poetic quotations in Id., “Poetic Quotations in the Arabic Version of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*”, *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 12 (2002), pp. 197-216. Following the *GALex*, I cite the latter, who includes at least some of Badawī's emendations in his critical apparatus. For a study of the translation and its reception in Arabo-Islamic culture, see U. Vagelpohl, *Aristotle's Rhetoric in the East. The Syriac and Arabic Translation and Commentary Tradition*, Leiden – Boston 2008 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 76), with bibliography. For some attempted emendations to the two editions see E. Panoussi, “Some annotations relating to the Arabic Version of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*”, in M. Macúch – C. Müller-Kessler – B.G. Fragner (eds.), *Studia Semitica necnon Iranica Rudolpho Macucho septuagenario ab amicis et discipulis dedicata [Festschrift Rudolph Macuch]*, O. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1989, pp. 195-200 and Id., “The Unique Arabic Manuscript of Aristotle's *Ars Rhetorica* and its Two Editions Published to Date by 'Abdurrahmān Badawī and by M[alcolm] C. Lyons”, in S.J. Ashtiyānī – H. Matsubara – T. Iwami – A. Matsumoto (eds.), *Consciousness and Reality. Studies in Memory of Toshibiko Izutsu*, Leiden – Boston – Cologne 2000, pp. 233-50. On the text of the Arabo-Latin version of Hermannus Alemannus and the textual criticism of the *Rhetoric*, see L. Bottin, “La tradizione araba della *Retorica* di Aristotele e il problema dell'*exemplar decurtatum*”, in *Scritti in onore di Carlo Diano [Festschrift Carlo Diano]*, Pàtron, Bologna 1975, pp. 53-62 and Id., *Contributi della tradizione greco-latina e arabo-latina al testo della Retorica di Aristotele*, Antenore, Padova 1977. I owe the previous references to the rich bibliography of Vagelpohl, *Aristotle's Rhetoric*.

⁴ For a text, Italian translation, and commentary see now V. Pacelli (ed. and tr.), *Teodette di Faselide – Frammenti poetici. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento*, Narr Francke Attempto, Tübingen 2016 (DRAMA - Studien zum antiken Drama und seiner Rezeption, 19), pp. 74-9. The *GALex* refers to Nauck's classic *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*.

|1397 b 2| *li-anna hādā l-naḥwa rubbamā lam yattaḥiq wa-lā šay'a yamnā'u min dālīka* |3| *ka-lladī kāna min qawli T-w-d-w-q-ṭ-w-s *li-L-'q-m-w-n* ḥayṭu yaqūlu: ammā ummuka* |4| *fa-lam yakun aḥadun *minnā bi-sababihī* yataḥallamu minhā fa-qāla muḡīban* |6| *ammā * *alayhā li-l-'ibrati wa-l-tā'limi wa-ammā anā* |7| *fa-li-kay-lā aqtula ḡayra annahū* |5| *yanbaḡī lanā idā aḥada * *nanzur(a) mā lladī yaḡību 'anhu* (p. 148.9-15 Lyons).

As Lyons's edition indicates, the text is corrupt and lacunose in several places. Nonetheless, the underlying Greek of the translator's exemplar can sometimes be discerned. For instance, at 1397 b 2-3, the translator's exemplar clearly read ἐνίοτε (*rubbamā*) and ὥσπερ (*ka-lladī*), but whether the exemplar read or omitted ἐν and the exact spelling of Alcmaeon's name in the translator's exemplar is uncertain, at least at this stage in the study of the Arabic version. Further, as the classicist Kassel knew from the Arabo-Latin version of Hermannus Alemannus, the reading οὗτις (*lam...aḥadun*) is clearly rendered by the Arabic; perhaps the translator wrote something along the following lines: *lam yakun aḥadun mina l-nāsi* (i.e. the partitive genitive βροτῶν) *yataḥallamu minhā*.⁵ Some of Aristotle's contextualization of the exchange, namely the phrase ἐρομένης δὲ τῆς Ἀλφειβοίας πῶς, has fallen out, perhaps as the result of a *saut du même* au même in the transmission of the Arabic (the phrases φησὶ δ' ἀποκρινόμενος and ὑπολαβὼν φησι are both likely to have been translated by (*fa-*) *qāla muḡīban*); more strangely, as Lyons also notes, Alcmaeon's reply, “ἀλλὰ διαλαβόντα(ς) χρὴ σκοπεῖν”, has been transposed to the end of the passage. The first person plural pronouns (*yanbaḡī lanā...nanzur(a)*) suggest that the translator probably read διαλαβόντας in the plural, modifying an implicit ἡμεῖς, with Kassel's β, and the use of *yanbaḡī* suggests that the manuscript preserved the reading χρὴ omitted by Kassel's β.

Finally, I would venture the following tentative reconstruction of Alcmaeon's reply to Alpheisiboea at 1397 b 6-7:

فقال مجيباً أمّا <هي فحكموا> عليها بالعبرة والتعليم وأمّا أنا فلكتيلاً أقتل

fa-qāla muḡīban: ammā <hiya [or tilka, or ummī] fa-ḥakamū> 'alayhā bi-l-'ibrati wa-l-tā'limi wa-ammā anā fa-li-kay-lā [perhaps bi-an lā?] aqtula

The verb *ḥakama*, *yaḥkumu* (verbal noun: *al-ḥukm*) is attested as a translation of κρίνω ‘to judge, to decree’ and its compounds and derivatives and often governs the prepositions ‘*alā* (person) and *bi-* (a penalty), i.e. ‘to sentence s.o. to s.th.’.⁶ As for the μὲν clause, the translator likely used an *ammā...fa-* construction to translate τῇν (μὲν);⁷ perhaps the translator read τῇν μὲν μαθεῖν, as suggested originally by Lyons in a note *ad loc.*, or even τῇν μὲν μανθάνειν.

II. Iphicrates and Callias apud Arist. Rhet. 1405 a 19-22 (GALex I s.v. adībun 3)

At *Rhet.* 1405a19-22, Aristotle quotes a quip of the Athenian general Iphicrates against the aristocrat Callias, a hereditary torch-bearer (δᾶδοῦχος) in the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and Callias' riposte:

⁵ Cf. Lyons *ad loc.*: “the Arabic text is uncertain and may conceal a version of βροτῶν”.

⁶ See, for a very similar example (in the passive) in the Arabic version of *On Theriac to Piso* in which the phrase ἐπὶ τῶν ἡδῆ ... κατὰκριθέντων ἀποθανεῖν is rendered by *ilā qawmin qad ḥukima 'alayhim bi-l-qatli*, *GALex I s.v. ammā* 1.3.

⁷ See *GALex I s.v. ammā* 1.1-1.5 for *ammā* rendering μὲν in various uses. Cf. Vagelpohl, *Aristotle's Rhetoric* (above, n. 3), pp. 129-34.

[1405 a 19] ὥς [20] καὶ Ἰφικράτης Καλλιᾶν μητραγύρτην ἀλλ' οὐ δαδοῦχον. ὁ [21] δὲ ἔφη ἀμύητον αὐτὸν εἶναι· οὐ γὰρ ἄν μητραγύρτην αὐτὸν [22] καλεῖν, ἀλλὰ δαδοῦχον.
20-21 μητρ- A : μιτρ- β anon

The Arabic version renders the passage as follows:

1405 a 19 | كما [20] قال ايفيقراطيس لقلياس : انت ميظراغروطس اي فحل ولسست * * اي صاحب الكلام
[21] فقال له اقلياس : انك غير اديب لانه لم يكن ينبغي لك [22] * * فحلا ولكن صاحب المصباح
[1405 a 19] *kamā* [20] *qāla 'y-f-y-q-r-'-t-y-s li-q-l-y-'-s: anta m-y-t-r-'-ḡ-r-t-w-s ay faḥlun wa-lastā* * *
ay ṣāḥiba l-kalāmi [21] *fa-qāla laḥū 'q-l-y-'-s: innaka ḡayru adībin li-annahū lam yakun yanbaḡi laka*
[22] * * *faḥlan wa-lākin ṣāḥiba l-miṣbāḥi* (p. 178.2-6 Lyons).

In the unique Paris MS, the text is again corrupt and lacunose. As Lyons notes, *كلام* is almost certainly a corruption of *مصباح*, since the term *δαδοῦχος* (*δαῖς/δαξ* + *ἔχω*) is correctly etymologized as *صاحب المصباح* ‘possessor, holder of the lamp’ when the word is repeated in the passage; further, the Arabo-Latin version of Hermannus Alemannus reads ‘candelabrum’, i.e. *مصباح*. The first lacuna should be filled with a transliteration of *δαδοῦχος* and the second with the Arabic equivalent of *αὐτὸν καλεῖν*, i.e. Badawī’s conjecture *an tusammiyanī* (Hermannus: *ut nominares me*) or the like.

What to make of the remaining textual problem, the gloss of *μητραγύρτην* twice as *فحل* ‘stallion’?⁸ The rare and difficult word *μητραγύρτης*, lit. ‘mother-collector’ i.e. ‘mother-beggar,’ denotes (as the *LSJ* puts it) ‘a begging priest of Cybele,’ the *Magna Mater* of the Romans. Clement of Alexandria in his *Protrepticus* states that Antisthenes fittingly dubbed the *μητραγύρται* beggars (*εἰκότως ὁ Ἀντισθένης ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς μεταιτοῦσιν*).⁹ Perhaps, then, the Arabic translator glossed the word twice as *اي شحاذ* ‘i.e., a beggar,’ the final two letters – *اذ* – of which a later copyist misread as a single *ل*, before re-reading the consonantal skeleton *سحل* as the more suitable *فحل*. If ‘beggar’ is in fact the original reading, then the translator had a remarkable grasp of the pejorative meaning of *μητραγύρτης*, thanks either to an accurate analysis of the noun as derived from *ἀγείρω* or to access to an accurate gloss or glossary.

Through the above close look at a few of the Classical Greek quotations included in the *GALex*, I hope to have shown that these quotations bear further analysis for our understanding of (a) the translators’ Greek exemplars (and whatever value the reconstruction of these exemplars may have for Greek textual critics), (b) the language of the translations, which we might call Graeco-Arabic ‘translationese’, and (c) the translators’ (mis)understanding of difficult literary or cultural terms such as *δαδοῦχος* and *μητραγύρτης*. It is a challenge but also a privilege of Graeco-Arabic lexicography to be able to participate, indirectly but not insignificantly, in the study of these texts and the elucidation of their cultural and intellectual contexts. I salute Rüdiger for his years of pathbreaking research and wish him many more years of happiness, health, and hard work. As my teacher once reminded his, “after all, we still have to finish *GALex*!”¹⁰

⁸ Lyons notes *ad loc.*: “The rare term may have been unknown to the translator but there is no clear explanation of the gloss, which itself may be corrupt”.

⁹ See S. Prince (ed. and tr.), *Antisthenes of Athens: Texts, Translations, and Commentary*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 2015, p. 580 [fragment 182] = Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* 7.75.3 Marcovich (cf. Clementis Alexandrini *Protrepticus*, ed. M. Marcovich, Brill, Leiden [etc.] 1995 [Vigiliae Christianae. Supplements, 34]) = 161 DC.

¹⁰ D. Gutas, “Geometry and the Rebirth of Philosophy in Arabic with al-Kindi”, in R. Arnzen - J. Thielmann (eds.), *Words, Texts, and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea. Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilization and Arabic Philosophy and Science Dedicated to Gerhard Endress on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, Peeters, Leuven – Paris – Dudley Mass. 2004 (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 139), pp. 195-210, at 195(*).



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