

Ulisse Cecini

# Germanus de Silesia's Qur'an Translation in the MS K-III-1 of the El Escorial Library: Newly Discovered Revised Versions

## 1 Introduction

Dominicus Germanus de Silesia's Qur'an translation is certainly a fascinating chapter in the history of Qur'an translations in the Iberian Peninsula. It was written, in fact, in the Escorial monastery, where its author, the Franciscan friar Dominicus Germanus de Silesia (1588 – 1670), spent the last part of his life working on it.<sup>1</sup> It is in many respects a unique translation and, even if it was basically concluded in 1664,<sup>2</sup> we could say that Dominicus saw it as a lifetime work.

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<sup>1</sup> The most exhaustive contribution to Dominicus's biography remains Bertrand Zimolong, *P. Dominicus Germanus de Silesia O. F. M. Ein biographischer Versuch* (Breslau: Otto Borgmeyer, 1928). A more recent summary of Dominicus's life can be found in Hartmut Bobzin, "Ein ober-schlesischer Koranglehrter: Dominicus Germanus de Silesia, O.F.M. (1588 – 1670)," in *Die ober-schlesische Literaturlandschaft im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Gerhard Koselleck, Tagungsreihe der Stiftung Haus Oberschlesien 11 (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2001). See also the introduction to García Masegosa's edition of Dominicus's Qur'an translation: Antonio García Masegosa, ed., *Germanus de Silesia. Interpretatio alcorani litteralis* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009), 13 – 22. This introduction draws mainly on Marcel Devic, "Une traduction inédite du Coran," *Journal Asiatique* VIII, no. 1 (1883), 343 – 64, and Francis Richard, "Le Franciscain Dominicus Germanus de Silésie, grammairien et auteur d'apologie en persan," *Islamochristiana* 10 (1984).

<sup>2</sup> The *terminus post quem* comes from a donation text to the Propaganda Fide Congregation, dated 30 June 1664, in which Dominicus says that his translation is about to be finished ("foetus

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This fact emerges from the continued work of revision he undertook on it literally — as we will see— until his own demise in the year 1670. We have in fact a number of copies of the translation, almost all in the Escorial Library, in which one can see his continuous interventions, corrections and revisions. Nonetheless, the manuscripts known up to today present one and the same translation, revised as it may be, which we may call “the first final version” of 1664. Now, however, we can add a further link to this chain of copies and manuscripts. In the very same Escorial library, there is a manuscript that was hitherto practically ignored by scholarly research, the manuscript with the signature K-III-1. In it we find textual evidence that points to a new and last effort by Dominicus to undertake a deeper revision of his translation after it was completed. This not only presents the translation in an aesthetically polished edition with neat writing and a pleasant layout, but also revises it in its wording and structure, encompassing both the translation and the commentary parts. We should in fact remember that the main feature of Dominicus’s *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, as the translation is entitled, is that it consists not only of the Latin translation of the qur’anic text but also of the presentation and discussion of Islamic qur’anic exegesis, offered in Latin translation and, at times, also in Arabic transcription.<sup>3</sup> The present chapter will be structured in two parts: First, I will present briefly the general features of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* concerning its manuscript tradition, its structure and its concept as a translation. Even though each of these aspects, because of the work’s complexity, would require a paper or book chapter of its own, it will suffice here to introduce them sufficiently to appreciate the subsequent and main section of the chapter: the description of manuscript K-III-1 and its striking features.

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[...] urget ad partum, nempe Alcorani interpretatio litteralis”) and asks for a scribe to help him revise and copy the text along with other complementary works (the letter is transcribed in Zimolong, *P. Dominicus Germanus*, 12–13). The *praefatio* of the translation mentions at the end King Felipe IV, who died on September, 17<sup>th</sup>, 1665, so it was surely completed before this date, see Devic, “Une traduction inédite du Coran,” 357–58.

3 While the Latin translation has been critically edited by Antonio García Masegosa in 2009 (see above, n. 1) (of course, without considering —or only partly, as we will see— the textual evidence we are presenting in this contribution), the *scholia*, as the exegetical parts are called, have not yet been published. Thus, I am currently preparing the critical edition of the *scholia*, which, as we will see below, should not be considered as an appendix but as the most significant part, if not the core, of Dominicus’s work.

## 2 General Features of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*

### 2.1 Manuscript Transmission

Until now, the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* is known to have been transmitted in the following manuscripts, which are the ones used by García Masegosa for his critical edition:

- MS 1624, Real Biblioteca del Escorial, 528 fols., dated 1669, called by García Masegosa MS *E*. According to him it is Dominicus's working exemplar, with Arabic text, and rich in corrections. It contains the entire work, translations and *scholia*, but lacks the title page.
- MS H 72, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de Montpellier, 488 fols., Masegosa's MS *M*, dated by him 1670. It is a copy of the complete work, title page included; Arabic text and corrections are present only up to fol. 54r, then we find blank spaces where the Arabic text should go.
- MS L-I-3, Real Biblioteca del Escorial, 336 fols., divided by Masegosa into three codicological units and dated by him to the year 1670.
  - A: 1–113r: Title Page (1r-v); “Introductory section” (2r-6r);<sup>4</sup> Text of the *Interpretatio* from sura 1 to sura 5, *textus* I (= vv. 1–5), including the *scholium* related to this last *textus* (14r-113r); blank spaces for text in Arabic not filled.
  - B: 122r-319v: “Introductory section” (122r-125v); Text of the *Interpretatio* from sura 1 to sura 11, *textus* II (=vv. 25–49), with relative *scholium* (126r-319v).
  - P: 154r-155v: Preface of the *Interpretatio*
  - Moreover, in the same manuscript, we find at folios 333r-335v another incomplete copy of the work, consisting only of the Title Page (333r-v); an additional preface *Ad lectorem* (inc: *Semper fuit...*; edited by García Masegosa, p. 33) (334r-v); and an *Admonitio ad eundem* (inc.: *Mirari desine, Oprime Lector...*; still unedited) (335rv).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For the explanation of what the “introductory section” consists of, see further below, in section 2.2.

<sup>5</sup> To these manuscripts, García Masegosa (p.26) adds a fragment from MS &-IV-8 of the Escorial Library, fol. 8r-10v, which he calls *L*. These folios should contain only the *praefatio* of the *Interpretatio*. However, if we look at the manuscript in question (which contains, as García Masegosa

This last manuscript gives us an idea of Dominicus's method of working, reworking and recopying the translation, inserting corrections and amendments. However, in contrast to what we will see in manuscript K-III-1, the modifications are applied to the same base text, the one we have called "the first final version," which is copied and modified but not radically changed, as one can see also from its fixed structure, the next point of our general presentation.

## 2.2 Structure of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*

The general structure of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* is the following:

- Title page
- "Introductory section"
- Main text

We will discuss the title page in more detail below. Now we will illustrate what the so-called "introductory section" consists of:

- The Preface [*Praefatio*]
- The original Arabic text of the sources quoted in the preface in Latin translation, to wit, al-Qarāfi and al-Kāshānī [*Sententiae Alcoranistarum superius allatae contra nos Christianos*]
- The Names of the Prophet's main disciples, who are quoted by the Islamic commentators as the most authoritative sources [*Nomina praecipuorum discipulorum, quos Expositores ceu Archigerontes et majoris autoritatis prae ceteris citant*]. Here a prominent place is given to Ibn 'Abbās, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Abū Bakr and 'Umar, who are listed in this order, with a short description for each of them. These are followed by a list of 55 names both in Arabic writing and in Latin transcription. These are the names of the first commentators and the "*Anṣār Allāh wa-n-nabī*," the "*coadjutores Dei et Prophetarum*" (God's and the Prophet's helpers), as Dominicus calls them, both in transliteration and in Latin translation, adding the explanation that they were "those who followed the Prophet when he fled from Medina to Ethiopia and whose sayings are collected together with the Prophet's sayings and are of great authority."<sup>6</sup>

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rightly observes, Robert of Ketton's Qur'an translation) we do not find the said *praefatio*. We will solve this mystery below in the description of manuscript K-III-1.

<sup>6</sup> MS E, fol. 3v: "Isti vocantur Ansar allah ua ennabi Coadiutores Dei et prophetarum, quia secuti eum quando fugit de Maedina in Aethyopiam, quorum dicta connumerantur inter sententias prophetales, suntque magnae autoritatis."

- The Names of the “most classical” commentators [*Nomina Expositorum Magis Classicorum*]. We have here a list of 11 commentators whom Dominicus considered the most classical, each of whom is provided with a short description and a categorization of his style of commentary. Dominicus writes their full names both in Arabic script and in Latin transliteration. Here, for the sake of clarity and conciseness, we report the names only in short form: they are al-Kāshānī, al-Baqāʿī, al-Zamakhsharī, al-Bayḍāwī, al-ʿAmādī, Abū Ḥayyān, al-Bukhārī, Abū-l-Ḥasan al-Ḥarālī, al-Jurjānī, Burj ad-Dīn ibn ʿAdil al-Ḥanbalī and Ibn Kamāl. The categories by which they are classified are: *mysticus, historicus, tropologicus, moralis, literalis, allegoricus, grammaticus, expositor, imitator, postillator, scholiastes*.<sup>7</sup>

After this “introductory section” we find the main text of the *Interpretatio* itself, whose structure and concept will now be the object of our consideration.

## 2.3 Structure and Concept of the Translation

What is the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*? As we have already seen, in the mind of its author it is a literal rendition of the qur'anic text united with a commented interpretation of its meaning according to the Muslim commentators. The translator himself points this out in the complete title of the *Interpretatio* and in its preface. The former appears as follows (e.g., from MS A, fol. 1): “*INTERPRETATIO ALCORANI LITERALIS. Cum scholiis ad mentem authoris, ex propriis domesticis ipsius expositoribus, germanè collectis per P. Fratrem Dominicum Germanum de Silesia... etc.*,” i.e.: “Literal interpretation of the Qur'an, with *scholia* according to the intention of the author [meaning the Prophet Muḥammad, *n. Cecini*], truthfully collected from its native expounders by Father friar Dominicus Germanus de Silesia...etc.”. The *Praefatio* begins with these words: “I would not think to have spent badly my leisure time and my efforts, once I had hunted down [*venatus fuero*] the interpretation of the Qur'an, not in dictionaries and lexica, but in the thoughts and statements of the disciples of its very author, or other contemporaries of theirs —or people from a time close to theirs— and from the

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<sup>7</sup> Except for the *praefatio*, all the other parts of the “introductory section” are missing from García Masegosa's edition. Their full edition and description has now been submitted for publication and should appear in the following contribution: 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).

native expounders of the Qur'an."<sup>8</sup> The *scholia* are thus an essential complement of the translation, as they are the bearers of the interpretation of the meaning of the text given by the translation. This is made clear also by their place in the work: not in a separate second part after the translation, or in its margins, but inserted inside the main text of the translation. This does not mean that the translation is interspersed with glosses: translated text and commentary are separated and clearly recognizable, however every sura has a translation part and a commentary part. In the case of the shorter suras the whole sura translation is followed by the *scholium*. A good example of this is represented by the Opening Sura (MS E, fols 5r-6r): first comes the translation of the sura, about 5 lines long in the manuscript (which does not start a new line for each verse),<sup>9</sup> then the ca. 2-pages-long *scholium*, at whose end we find a few lines in Arabic. These are a passage from al-Kāshānī's commentary that was quoted in Dominicus's Latin translation inside the *scholium* itself. It concerns the question of why the letter *alif* (in Arabic "ا") is missing in the *basmala* (*bi-smi l-lāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥī-mi*, the first verse of the sura = "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate") in the expression *bi-smi* (= in the name [of], written in qur'anic text بسم, instead of باسم) and *ar-raḥmāni* (= the Merciful, written in the qur'anic text الرحمن, instead of الرحمان). The text appears as follows<sup>10</sup>:

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From the *scholium* to the Opening Sura (MS E, Lines at the end of the *scholium* (MS E, fol. 6r)  
fol. 5r-v)

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<sup>11</sup>Alii autem (refert Kasciani) percunctantes  
causam omissionis literae aleph in hoc no-

حين سنل رسول الله عن الف الرحمن اين ذهب قال سرقها  
الشيطان وامر بتطويل با بسم الله تعويظا عن الفها اشارة احتجاب

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<sup>8</sup> García Masegosa, *Interpretatio*, 35: "Non male me otium ac studium meum impendisse arbitratus sum, si interpretationem *Alcorani*; non ex dictionariis lexicisque, sed ex ipsiusmet autoris discipulorum, aliorumve ipsis coaevorum, vel aevo proximorum, ac ipsiusmet *Alcorani* domesticorum expositorum sententia et declaratione, venatus fuero." (The italics are from the edition, not from the manuscript).

<sup>9</sup> Edited in García Masegosa, *Interpretatio*, 39. See also below, the first table of chapter 3.2.

<sup>10</sup> This example is dealt with more extensively in my aforementioned forthcoming contribution in the volume *Documenta Coranica Christiana*. I repeat here the textual quotation along with the English translation below for the sake of clarity.

<sup>11</sup> At the margin of the manuscript we read the name of the commentator in Arabic script: الكاشاني (*al-Kāshānī*).

<sup>12</sup> Here the *bā* is written with a longer shaft.

<sup>13</sup> Transliteration of the Arabic: *ḥīna su'ila rasūlu l-lāhi 'an alifī r-raḥmān ayna dhahaba qāla saraq-a-hā sh-shaytānu wa-amara bi-taṭwīl bā bi-smi l-lāhi ta'wīḏan* [sic, pro ta'wīḏan] *'an alifī-hā ishārat iḥtijābi l-huwiyyat al-ilāhiyyati fī šūrat al-raḥmāni l-intishāriyyati wa-ḏuhūru-hā fī šūrat al-insāniyyati bi-ḥaytu lā ya'rifu-hu illā ahlu-hu wa-lī-hādḥā unkirat fī-l-waḍ'i wa-qad war-*

*Continued*

**From the *scholium* to the Opening Sura (MS E, fol. 5r-v)**

**Lines at the end of the *scholium* (MS E, fol. 6r)**

mine, dixerunt ad illum, quorsum absit? Quoniam haec litera <sup>1</sup> est de sphaera Divina, hoc est absolute posita in fronte alicuius textus, occulte essentiam Divinam denotat, cum attributis et operationibus. Respondit furatus est illum Diabolus. Statimque praecepit, ut loco illius prolongaretur litera <sup>2</sup> in hac voce <sup>12</sup> *bism* *allā* in nomine Dei. Quo indicatur ipse ita tem Divinam esse occultam in forma diffusiva attributi misericordiae, manifestatam autem in forma humana: in quantum nemo cognoscit illum, nisi qui familiaris eius fuerit. Idcirco amissa fuit, h.e. litera illa <sup>1</sup> in illo maximo attributo Miseratoris. Fertur autem in narratione antiqua: Deum excelsum creasse Adan ad imaginem suam, i.e. tribuit ei attributa sua et operationes suas universas. Sic quoque [f. 5v] concessit illa Mohhammodo. Id est, explicant alii, dedit illi scientiam seu notitiam eorum. Hucusque Al-Kasciani.

الهوية الالهية في صورة الرحمة الانتشارية وظهورها في صورة الانسانية بحيث لا يعرفه الا اهله ولهذا انكرت في الوضع وقد ورد في ان الله تعالى خلق آدم على صورته اى اعطاه صفاته وافعاله وكذا اعطاها محمد: قال الكاشاني<sup>13</sup>

If we look at the English translation of these texts<sup>14</sup> we can see that Latin and Arabic are, respectively, translation and original of the same source, apart from very few differences:

**English translation of the Latin**

Others, however —as al-Kāshānī reports— asking about the cause of the omission of the letter Alif in such word, said to him [scil. Muḥammad]: Why it is absent? As a matter of fact, this letter alif is from the divine sphere, which means that if it is put by herself at the beginning of a text, it implicitly marks the divine essence, with its attributes and acts. He answered: the devil stole it. And he im-

**English translation of the Arabic**

When the Messenger of God was asked about the Alif of Raḥmān, where it went, he said: ‘Satan stole it,’ and he ordered to elongate the letter *bā’* of *bismi l-lāh* to compensate for its Alif, an allusion to the veiling of the divine ipseity (*al-huwiyya al-ilāhiyya*) in the diffusive form of mercy and its manifestation in human form, such that nobody knows him but his people. For this reason it was omitted in the

*ada fī anna Allāh ta‘ālā khalaqa ādaman ‘alā šurati-hi wa-if‘ālī-hi wa-kadhā a‘ṭā-hā Muḥammad: qāla al-Kāshānī.*

<sup>14</sup> All English translations, if not otherwise stated, are mine.

*Continued*

English translation of the Latin	English translation of the Arabic
mediately ordered that in its place the letter <i>bā</i> was to be elongated in that expression <i>bismi l-lāh</i> , in the name of God. Which indicates how the divine ipseity is concealed in the diffusive form of the attribute of mercy, it is however manifested in human form: as nobody knows him, but who was familiar with him. For this reason it was omitted, i. e., that letter <i>Alif</i> , in that supreme attribute of the Compassionate. It was transmitted in an ancient story that the sublime God created Adam in his image, i. e., he gave him his attributes and his all acts. So he conceded them also to Muḥammad. Which means —others explain— he gave him the knowledge or the awareness of them. So <i>al-Kāshānī</i>	writing. Indeed, it was transmitted that the sublime God created Adam in his form, i. e., he gave him his attributes and his all acts. So he conceded them to Muḥammad. So said <i>al-Kāshānī</i>

This was an example of a short *sura*. On the contrary, if the *sura* in question is not overly short it is divided into different sections, called *textus*, and each section is followed by the correspondent *scholium*. For example, the second *sura* is divided thus:

<Textus 1>:	Basmala-v.1 (1 line)
	Scholium (1 page)
	vv. 2–20 (1 page)
	Scholium (3 pages)
Textus 2:	vv. 21–27 (1/2 page)
	Scholium (4.5 pages)
Textus 3	vv. 28–39 (1 page)
	Scholium (6.5 pages)
Textus 4	vv. 40–45 (1/2 page)
	Scholium (2.5 pages)
[...]	
Textus 25	vv. 278–286 (1.5 pages)
	Scholium (1 page)

This does not mean that we do not occasionally find short glosses inside the translation, indeed we do. However, when short glosses are inserted inside the text of the translation they are distinguished clearly by underlining them, or by marginal



notes. The marginal notes point out the name of one or more commentators that may have inspired a particular gloss or translation —as we have seen for al-Kāshānī, or the abbreviation in Arabic script  $\text{jm}$  (i.e., “*jm*” from the Arabic *jamiʿ* = “totality of”), if Dominicus means that a certain interpretation is supported by all commentators. Dominicus himself explains this in the preface:

Whenever the [qur'anic] words are overly synthetic or there is clearly an implicit reference, I will underline the words of the reference I made explicit, and put in the margin the name of the commentator [from whom I had the explanation], or more than one name, or these letters “ $\text{jm}$ ”, which mean that all the commentators agree on such an explanation.<sup>15</sup>

Now that we know the basics about the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis* and we have seen the structure of the Opening Sura as it is in the “first final version,” we can appreciate better the subsequent part of this chapter: the description of the special features of manuscript K-III-1 of the Escorial library.

## 3 Manuscript K-III-1 of the El Escorial Library

### 3.1 General Description

Like the majority of the manuscripts presented here, manuscript K-III-1 of the Escorial library, to which I will give the *siglum* *K*, is also an autograph by Dominicus.

In the online catalogue of the Escorial library it is entitled *Interpretatio Alcorani*, so at first I thought that it was just one more manuscript of Dominicus's *Interpretatio* which had been overlooked during the production of the critical edition, as well as by other scholars who worked on Dominicus Germanus de Silesia.<sup>16</sup> However, once I had the opportunity to consult it, I was confronted with something else.

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<sup>15</sup> *Interpretatio Alcorani Litteralis, praefatio*, MS E, fol. 2r: “In mancīs autem dictis et suppositionibus evidentibus, subintellecta linea subducta notabo, nomen verò expositoris plurimumve, aut has literas  $\text{jm}$  quae significant omnes in eo convenire, in margine è regione collocabo.”

<sup>16</sup> A mention of the manuscript can be found in Bertrand Zimolong, “Neues zu dem Leben und zu den Werken des P. Dominicus Germanus de Silesia O. F. M.,” *Franziskanische Studien* 21 (1934), 168–69, who, however, did not have direct access to manuscript, thus being unable to make the discovery I am presenting here. He drew his information on the manuscript from Arduino Kleinhans, *Historia studii linguae arabicae et Collegii Missionum Ordinis Fratrum Minorum in Conventu ad S. Petrum in Monte Aureo Romae erecti* (Firenze: Collegio di S. Bonaventura, 1930), 84–85, who only partially quotes the titles of the works contained in the manuscript. I thank Jaume Sepulcre of the Escorial Library for mentioning to me Zimolong's article.

The manuscript contains 223 folios and unites different works in their status of work in progress. Apart from the last codicological unit of the manuscript, it is a very clean copy, written in a very tidy manner and in a clear hand. Therefore, I assume that it was supposed to be the “good” final copy of previously worked material.

This is the description of its contents, in which we can recognize six units, each separated from the next by one or more blank folios, to wit:

$K_1$ : fols. 1r-3v **Prognosis interpretationis literalis Alcorani**, in qua traditur synopsis, seu brevis doctrina cognoscendi quavis lethifera venena quae propinat, proponunturque salutifera antidota, nec non et pharmaca curativa.

This work is supposed to be a propedeutical work to the translation, which explains in a simple style the most important qur’anic contents and their relation to Christian contents for the use of missionaries in the Orient. Here we can find no more than the introduction and the beginning of the “Synopsis sacrilegae doctrinae Alcorani,” which, however, already stops before beginning the summary of the second sura.

fols. 4r-6v: blank

$K_2$ - $K_3$ : fols. 7r-38v: **Interpretatio Alcorani literalis** cum scholiis ad mentem authoris, ex propriis domesticis ipsius expositoribus, germanè collectis per P. Fratrem Dominicum Germanum de Silesia.

$K_2$  fols. 7r-13v: Title page (7r-v); Introductory section (8r-13v).<sup>17</sup> This part is basically identical to the one we already know, only in a clean copy

fol. 14rv: blank

$K_3$ : fols. 15r-20r: **Opening Sura (Textus Proëmialis)** with *scholion* [sic]

fols. 20r-38r: **Sura 2 (Collectio Prima. Textus de Vacca)**

fol. 20r: 2, 1 – 5

fols. 20r-38r: *Scholion*

fols. 22r-38r: **Quaestio prima. De literis Mysteriosis.**

This is the surprise finding and the central feature of this chapter. Here we find a new version of both translation and *scholia*, but only for the Opening Sura and

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<sup>17</sup> In this section the *praefatio* is found on folios 8r-10v, so this must be the fragment called *L* by García Masegosa and not the same folios of manuscript &-IV-8. This section is separated from the rest by the blank folio 14. This is probably why García Masegosa missed the translation contained in the unit  $K_3$ , see below in the table (which, however, is different from the first final version he edited, and probably for this reason was not considered), and, more importantly, the version contained in  $K_4$ , which is indeed a further copy of the first final version.

for sura 2, vv. 1 to 5. As we will see in more detail below, the translation is more accurate and the scholia are far longer and better written and structured than in the first version, leading me to think that this is a subsequent work destined to replace the first version if its author could finish it.

fols. 38v-39v: blank

*K<sub>4</sub>*: fols. 40r-191v: [*Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*: first version]

fols. 40r-41v: Opening Sura with *scholium*

fols. 42r-191v: Sura 2 (*Textus Primus. De Vacca*) to sura 4, 104 (*Textus Tertius. De Mulieribus. Textus X*), with *scholium*.

This unit should be collated with the critical edition, as it is a further witness for it.

fol. 192rv: blank

*K<sub>5</sub>*: fol. 193r-194r: *Prodromus interpretationis literalis Alcorani*

fol. 193v-194r: *Prologus interpretis*

Here we find only the prologue of the planned further work, in which once again Dominicus would like to reorganise the qur'anic material in a clearer way for the purpose of its refutation.

fol. 194v-195v: blank

*K<sub>6</sub>*: fol. 196r-223: Working exemplar of yet another version of the *Interpretatio Alcorani Literalis*, somehow between the first final version and *K<sub>3</sub>*,

196r-199r: *Textus Proemialis*, with *scholium*

199r-203r: *Textus Primus* (sura 2, vv. 1–7), with two *scholia*

203r-223r *Textus Primus*, *Textus* nr. 2 to 5 (2, 8–39), with respective *scholia*

fol. 223v: Transcription in Arabic of passages from commentaries on sura 20, 7

Unit *K<sub>6</sub>* is full of marginal annotations made in a completely disorderly fashion. Its textuality, somehow between the first final version and *K<sub>3</sub>*, at least in the translation part, makes me think that these are working papers, maybe in preparation of *K<sub>3</sub>*, thus chronologically earlier, even if they come later in the manuscript. Nonetheless the *scholia* do not coincide 100% with either version, so a more careful study is required to determine more exactly the relation of this unit to the rest.

### 3.2 Textual Evidence

In order to appreciate the peculiarity of the textual evidence of this manuscript, I present in the following table a comparison of the translation of the Opening Sura in the three versions we have spoken of thus far: the “first final version,” contained in manuscripts *E*, *A*, *B*, *M* and *K*<sub>4</sub>; the “new” version of *K*<sub>3</sub> and the “intermediate” version of *K*<sub>6</sub>.

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Bi-smi l-lāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīmi (1) Al-ḥamdu li-l-lāhi rabbi l-‘ālamīna (2) Ar-raḥmāni r-raḥīmi (3) Mālīki yawmi d-dīni (4) Iyyā-ka na‘budu wa-īyyā-ka nasta‘īnu (5) Ihdi-nā ṣ-ṣirāṭa l-mustaqīma (6) Ṣirāṭa l-ladhīna an‘amta ‘alay-him ghayri l-maḡdūbi ‘alay-him wa-lā ḍāllīna

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In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate (1) Praise belongs to God, the Lord of all Being, (2) the All-merciful, the All-compassionate, (3) the Master of the Day of Doom. Thee only we serve; to Thee alone we pray for succour. (5) Guide us in the straight path (6), the path of those whom Thou hast blessed, not of those against whom Thou art wrathful, nor of those who are astray. (7) (A. J. Arberry’s translation)

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<i>IAL</i> , Sura 1, MSS <i>E</i> , <i>A</i> , <i>B</i> , <i>M</i> , <i>K</i> <sub>4</sub>	<i>MS K</i> <sub>3</sub> , fol. 15r	<i>MS K</i> <sub>6</sub> , fol. 196r	<i>K</i> <sub>6</sub> , in marg.
[سورة الفاتحة] <i>M</i> Textus Proëmialis	Textus Proëmialis سورة فاتحة الكتاب	<i>Hic dicitur</i> Textus Proe- mialis	سورة الفاتحة
In nomine Dei miseratoris misericordis	In nomine Dei miseratoris misericordis	In nomine Dei miseratoris misericordis.	
Laus Deo Domino saecu- lorum. Miseratori miseri- cordi, dominatori diei Ju- dicij. Te colimus, et imploramus opem tuam. Dirige nos in viam rectam. Viam illorum quos <i>tua</i> gratia cumulasti. Non eorum super quos ira tua requiescit, neque illorum qui errorem sequuntur.	Laus Deo domino saecu- lorum. Miseratori miseri- cordi, <i>praesidi</i> diei iudicij. Te colimus, <i>te deprecamur</i> . Dirige nos in viam rectam, in viam, <i>inquam</i> , illorum quos gratia cu- mulasti. Non <i>illorum qui- bus iratus es</i> , neque illo- rum qui <i>errantes sunt</i> .	Laus Deo, domino saecu- lorum. Miseratori miseri- cordi, praesidi diei iudicij. Te <i>solum</i> colimus, <i>et tuam opem supplices implora- mus</i> . Dirige nos in viam rectam, in viam, <i>inquam</i> , illorum quos gratia <i>tua</i> cumulasti. Non illorum quibus <i>semper indigna- tus es</i> , neque eorum qui <i>in errore perseverant</i> .	جم  Alcoranistae  Judaei. Christiani.

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In the table we see the Arabic text of the Opening Sura, its English translation proposed by Arberry<sup>18</sup> and the three versions by Dominicus Germanus de Silesia. The differences among the translations are highlighted in italics. The translation of *K*<sub>3</sub> seems to strive for a even more literal translation. If this may be questionable about the *praesidi*, instead of *dominatori*, for the Arabic *Mālik* (= i.e., the one who rules), this is certainly the case for *te deprecamur*, which reflects, if not 100% of the meaning, at least the structure of *īyyā-ka nasta'īnu* (= You [obj.] we ask for help). *Imploramus opem tuam* from the first version perhaps renders more the meaning, but *te deprecamur* does not fail in the meaning (see also Arberry's translation "to Thee we pray [like *te deprecamur*] for succour") and also reflects the structure of the Arabic. The same can be said for verse 7. The *tua* in *tua gratia* is removed because it is absent from the Arabic, and the *super quos ira tua requiescit* is replaced with *iratus es*, a predicative syntagm with a past participle, referring directly to God, closer to the Arabic past participle *al-magḏūbi*; likewise the Arabic present participle *al-ḏāllin* is rendered with a Latin present participle, *errantes*, instead of the periphrasis *qui errorem sequuntur*. The third version should be placed between the first two, in my opinion. It agrees with *K*<sub>3</sub> in the translation *praesidi*, but adds *te solum colimus* (not present in the other two) and is more similar to the first version in the solution *tuam opem supplices imploramus* and in keeping the *tua* in *gratia tua*. In verse 7 we have a mixed solution: on the one hand the past participle *indignatus*, but on the other hand the periphrasis *qui in errore perseverant*.

The fact that *K*<sub>6</sub> is not at all as tidy as *K*<sub>3</sub>, but full of corrections and with textual fragments and notes written in the margins in a chaotic way, following all possible writing directions (one has to rotate the manuscript right-to-left or upside-down to read some of the text in the margins), lets me suppose that it is a working exemplar between the first version and *K*<sub>3</sub>.

To conclude the comparison, we offer now also a little taste of the *scholium* to the sura, the beginning of which we report in the following table according to the three versions:

<i>IAL, Opening Sura, Scholium, MS E, fol. 5r</i>	<i>MS K<sub>3</sub>, fol. 15r</i>	<i>MS K<sub>6</sub>, fol. 196r</i>	<i>Marginalia to the text in MS K<sub>6</sub></i>
Scholium Hunc textum vocant	SCHOLION Hunc textum vocant	Scholium Praefatiuncula: In no-	

<sup>18</sup> Arthur J. Arberry, trans., *The Koran Interpreted* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 29.

<sup>19</sup> English translation: "They call this text 'the mother of the Qur'an' because –they say– it is fruitful with a progeny of many of God's mysteries, precepts and prohibitions, promises and

*Continued*

<i>IAL, Opening Sura, Scholium, MS E, fol. 5r</i>	<i>MS K<sub>3</sub>, fol. 15r</i>	<i>MS K<sub>6</sub>, fol. 196r</i>	<i>Marginalia to the text in MS K<sub>6</sub>.</i>
matrem alcorani, quia est, aiunt, foecunda prole[s] multorum arcanorum Dei, mandatorum et interdictorum, promissionum et comminationum. Ac ut ipse quoque novatoris particularitate insigniretur, in ipsa fronte utitur introitu generali, quo omnia capita incipit, excepto de paenitentia: quae ego potius Textus vocare volui, quia originalia non sunt, sed transcripta e diversis schedu-	matrem alcorani, non quidem, ait البيضاوى <sup>20</sup> : quod tota machina alcorani ex hac praefatione generetur, sed quia est introitus universalis omnium capitum libri caelitus missi cum laudibus divinis. Propter quod incipit. In nomine Dei miseratoris misericordis. Et hoc dicunt maximum nomen ex nominibus Dei. [...] <sup>21</sup> [10 pages long. Each quoted text is present-	mine Dei miseratoris misericordis: quam in fronte omnium textuum totius alcorani praemittit, uno excepto, nempè de Poenitentia, est protestativa fidei alcoranicae, quam sic definiunt. <u>Fides sincerae religionis, et inconcussa integritate prompta mandatorum Dei obedientia, et fuga prohibitorum, nec non et tenax religione adhaesio ijs quae tradunt nuncij id est prophetae</u>	الاسلام الانقياد لامر الله ونهيه واعتقاد ما جاءت به الرسل من صفات الله تعالى والبعث والجزاء أهلها على هدى من ربهم <sup>23</sup>

menaces. In its very beginning it uses the general *incipit*, with which every chapter begins, except the one about repentance [i.e., sura 9, *n. Cecini*], so that it, too, is marked with the peculiarity of the renewer. I wanted to call the chapters ‘texts,’ because they are not originals but have been transcribed from different leaves.”

## 20 *Al-Bayḍāwī*.

21 English translation: “They call this text ‘the mother of the Qur’an,’ but not, as al-Bayḍāwī says, because all the mechanism of the Qur’an is generated by this prefatory text, but because it is the universal beginning of all chapters of the book sent from heaven with the praises of God. Which is why it begins ‘in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.’ They say that this is the greatest among the names of God.”

22 English translation: “Short preface: In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. He puts this at the beginning, before all texts in the entire Qur’an, except one, namely the one about repentance. It is a profession of the qur’anic faith, which they define as follows: ‘Faith of the pure religion, with unshaken integrity, eager obedience to God’s precepts, and avoidance of His prohibitions, as well as tenacious adhesion in worship to all that has been transmitted by the messengers, i.e., the Prophets, about the attributes of God, the Most High. As well as to believe in universal resurrection and retribution, i.e., for the good ones and the wicked ones.’

23 Transliteration: “Al-islām al-inqiyād li-amri l-lāhi wa-naḥi-hi wa-i’tiqād mā jā’at bi-hi r-rusul min šifāt Allāhi ta’ālā wa-l-ba’ṭ wa-l-jazā’ aḥlu-hā ‘alā ḥudan min rabbi-him.” English translation: “Islam is the obedience to God’s precepts and prohibitions, the belief in what has been transmitted by the Messengers about the attributes of God, the Most High, as well as in the resurrection and the reward. Its people are on guidance from their Lord.”

*Continued*

<b>IAL, Opening Sura, Scholium, MS E, fol. 5r</b>	<b>MS K<sub>3</sub>, fol. 15r</b>	<b>MS K<sub>6</sub>, fol. 196r</b>	<b>Marginalia to the text in MS K<sub>6</sub>.</b>
lis.[...] <sup>19</sup> [2 pages long. At the end a short Arabic text which was quoted in the scholium]	<i>ed both in translation and in Arabic.]</i>	<u>de attributis Dei excel-</u> <u>si. Item credere resu-</u> <u>rectionem universa-</u> <u>lem atque</u> <u>retributionem, bono-</u> <u>rum scilicet ac malo-</u> <u>rum. [...]</u> <sup>22</sup> [6 pages long. Unpol- ished version, in the margins Arabic sour- ces of underlined quo- tations in the text]	

From the first version to the other two there is a great enhancement in Dominicus Germanus's exegetical research and in the argumentation. We keep in mind that the *scholium* of the first version was two pages long, with just a short Arabic text quoted and reproduced at the end. The *scholion* of K<sub>3</sub> is 10 pages long with twelve quotations from Muslim commentators, each of which is both translated into Latin and presented in the original Arabic, following an ordered structure that alternates the texts in Latin and their Arabic sources in the original language. The *scholium* from K<sub>6</sub> is six pages long and, as in the sura translation, we find in it contacts and intersections with both the first version and K<sub>3</sub>. My hypothesis, which I still hope to verify more carefully, is that it is a working repository, maybe between the first version and K<sub>3</sub>, though this is not visible here at the beginning. We find in it some argumentation synthetically explained in the first version, but broadened and provided with more quotations, in Latin translation inside the text and in Arabic in the margins. I plan to publish these newly discovered versions and witnesses of work in progress in a commented edition, which would be a remarkable complement to the edition of the *scholia* of the first version and will add a further piece of the puzzle to this exciting chapter of the history of Qur'an in the Iberian Peninsula.

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