



**HEBREW AND ARAMAIC ELEMENTS IN THE ISRAELI VERNACULAR
CHRISTIAN-ARABIC AND IN THE WRITTEN CHRISTIAN ARABIC OF Palestine,
SYRIA, AND LEBANON**

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Abstract

This essay examines the Hebrew and Aramaic residues in the Arabic vernacular spoken by Israeli Christians and the written Arabic of Christians in the Holy Land, Syria, and Lebanon. The corpus of the spoken Christian-Arabic under consideration here is based on cassette recordings of elderlies who live in Christian villages in northern Israel—namely in Fassuta, Me'ilya, Tarshiha, Bqe'a, Jiish, Kufir Yasif, Ekreth, Bir'im Ibilleen and Shfa'amir. The corpus of the written Christian-Arabic being reviewed is based mainly on folk tales, poems, proverbs, dictionaries, Bible translations, books of interpretation, and liturgical sources.

It is reasonable to maintain that substrata from languages spoken in the Levant prior to the seventh century Muslim conquest have been preserved in Arabic, given that Arabic itself only gradually replaced those antecedent languages. This is especially the case with Aramaic, the spoken language of the Levant, which was gradually pressed down since the beginning of the Arab conquest in the early seventh century and until the tenth century.¹ Together with that, Aramaic substrata can be witnessed in the diglossia and the linguistic habits of the inhabitants of Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine in the era preceding the modern domination of Arabic. Nevertheless, these Aramaic substrata have remained in today's Levantine Arabic, both in its spoken and written forms—that is to say, in Modern Standard Arabic and the various vernacular languages.

Yihezkiel Kutscher who has written on Aramaic elements in the *Hebrew Encyclopedia* maintained that Aramaic elements have also remained dominant in the Arabic dialects of localities where Aramaic had once been the native tongue.² However, Avishur, in his paper on the *Iraqi Judaeo-Arabic*, hints that the research

¹ Abba Ben-David, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew*, (Dvir, Tel-Aviv 1967), vol. I, 153-65; Joseph Naveh & Jonas C. Greenfield, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the Persian Period" in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, W.D. Davies, L. Finkelstein, (ed.), Cambridge 1999, vol. I, pp. 115-129.

² Kutscher 1971, *Hebrew Encyclopedia*, vol. 5, p.968.



done on this topic remains limited and imperfect, and could benefit from more attention.³ Indeed, the literature that deals with this topic is unanimous with regards to “word-lists” and the like, compiled mostly by priests, and which clearly point to Aramaic and Hebrew substrates. But this work should still be examined through a scientific lens.

Not much has been written on the Hebrew and Aramaic influence on Arabic in terms of pronunciation, form, and syntax, except in the work of Lebanese philologist and clergyman Michel Feghali—namely in his books on the Aramaic remnants in the syntax, pronunciation, morphology, and vocabulary of the Arabic spoken in Lebanon.⁴

In fact, there remains a dearth in terms of systematic comprehensive research dealing with this topic in a methodical, inclusive, and summarizing manner, integrating the Hebrew and Aramaic elements permeating both literary and spoken Levantine Arabic. Therefore, using as a model recent research on the influence of Aramaic on “Judeo-Arabic,” this study⁵ seeks to examine and complement the topic of Aramaic influence on “Christian Arabic” thoroughly and comprehensively, touching upon issues of pronunciation, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary.

For the purpose of this study, I have gathered and condensed the Hebrew and Aramaic elements that have penetrated the spoken and written Arabic used by the Christians of Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine. One cannot overstate the importance of gathering and preserving this kind of material—if only for the purpose of documenting and safeguarding a tradition that may otherwise be on the way to extinction, alongside the atrophied and ever dwindling numbers of Near Eastern Christians. The speedy societal changes in the Levantine region have led to far-reaching transformations in the lifestyle (and especially in language and linguistic habits) that were once a way of life, but that are today slowly disappearing or transforming. The corpus of an Aramaic lexicon, which was once part of daily usage

³ Yitzhak Avishur, "The Ancient Aramaic Elements in the Iraqi Judaeo-Arabic", *Masorot* 9-10-11, (1997 Jerusalem), pp. 277-94.

⁴ Mitchel Feghali, *Étude sur Les Emprunts Syriaques dans Les Parlers Arabes du Liban*, Paris 1918; Mitchel Feghali, *Le Parler de Kfar 'Abida (liban-syrie) -Essai Linguistique sur La Phonétique et La Morphologie d'un Parler Moderne*, Paris(1919); Mitchel Feghali, *Syntaxe des Parllers Arabes Actuels du Liban*, Paris 1928.

⁵ Ibrahim Bassal, *Hebrew and Aramaic elements in the Vernacular Christian Arabic in Israel and in the written Christian Arabic in the Holy Land, Syria and Lebanon*, (Dissertation), Haifa University, 2004. [in Hebrew]



throughout the Levant, is falling out of use today, is being slowly forgotten, and is tending toward fading away, especially among the younger generations. Furthermore, as most informants advance further in age, it is a duty incumbent upon the linguist to preserve and safeguard a vanishing linguistic tradition, before this march toward extinction becomes irreversible.

In this study I also examine the way of the infusion of Hebrew and Aramaic elements into Arabic, and I point to the changes that have occurred within them as a result. To wit, I cross-check the Hebrew and Aramaic elements that exist in the spoken Arabic, and between them and those that exist in the written language. In my opinion, this cross-checking is likely to show the circulation of the Hebrew and Aramaic elements and their fusion within both the spoken and the written Arabic, and even the transmission of those two registers. The cross-checking also points to the exclusiveness and peculiarity of the layers of spoken Arabic in the Holy Land (that is to say the Palestinian varieties of the Christian dialects) in comparison with other Arabic-defined dialects. This also clarifies the linkage between these layers and the languages that were once spoken in Palestine—languages such as Hebrew and Aramaic. Researching these elements linguistically contributes to determining the location of the Arabic-defined vernaculars spoken by Christians within the map of the dialectology of the spoken Arabic in Israel.

Furthermore, researching the Hebrew and the Aramaic components in these layers contributes to the definition of the Arabic linguistic atlas in general, and the unique linguistic atlas of the spoken dialects of Christians. Additionally, this contributes to eventually the completion of a Christian Palestinian Arabic Lexicon. Comparatively, this research is likely to contribute to clarifying some obscurities in the Bible. Blau states that the importance of the spoken Arabic dialect in the Holy Land, which in his view preserves elements and words that might enlighten and contribute to the explanation of difficult words and forms of the Biblical vocabulary, which it seems settled in the mouths of the Arabic-speaking residents in Israel.⁶

The Arab-defined Christians in Israel and the Arabophone Christians are part of Christian communities of the Near East and the Levant. They live in an Islamic environment in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. They are also surrounded by a Jewish population that constitutes the majority of the population in Israel.

However, in spite of their Islamic environment and their use of the Arabic language, they keep their religious identity as Christians, and in parts of the region, in areas such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and even Egypt, they observe their prayers and

⁶ Yehoshua Blau, "Etymologische Untersuchungen auf Grund des palästinischen Arabisch", *Vetus Testamentum* 5 (1955), pp. 337-344.



religious rites and ceremonies in their original languages—that is to say in Aramaic-Syriac in Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria, and in Coptic in Egypt. The Arab-defined and Arabophone Christians who live in Israel today count some 113, 700 people according to the data of the Central Department of Statistics (Annual Statistic of Israel, 2003, No. 54). Those Christians are mainly concentrated in the North of the country. They are united and are different from the rest of the Arab-defined Muslim population in their rites and linguistic habits; their vocabulary is exclusive (reflecting their Church languages,) and their names are exclusive often reflecting Western orientation, and their saints' names as rendered in Western languages.

The spoken Arabic of Israel is varied in its dialects. It could be distinguished according to region, religious affiliation, or urban and rural communities. In the south of the country, the Bedouin dialect is the most widely used speech form.⁷ In the center, and in the triangle region, there exists a distinct exclusive dialect.⁸ And in the north of the country, the Galilean dialects are the most common linguistic cluster. A number of studies have been written about the Arabic dialects in Israel and Palestine.⁹ The common denominator of these studies that they have not

⁷ On the Bedouin Dialect of the Negev see, Haim Blanc, *The Arabic Dialect of the Negev Bedouins*, The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem 1970; Mosa Shawarbah, *On the Bedouin Dialect of the Tiyaha in the Negev: Phonology, Morphology, and Selected Syntactical Issues* (Dissertation) 2007 [Hebrew]; Rony Henkin, *Negev Arabic: Dialectal, Sociolinguistic, and Stylistic Variation*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2010.

⁸ Otto Jastrow, "The Arabic Dialects of the Muthallath (central Israel)" *JSAI* 29 (2004), pp. 166-175.

⁹ There are several works about Palestinian Arabic dialects: Gotthelf Bergstrasser, *Sprachatlas von Syrien und Palastina*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs 1915; Haim Blanc, *Studies in North Palestinian Arabic. Linguistic Inquiries among the Druzes of Western Galilee and Mt. Carmel*, Jerusalem (1953); Moshe Piamenta, *The Use of Tenses, Aspects and Moods in the Arabic Dialect of Jerusalem*. Jerusalem, Bureau of Adviser on Arab Affairs, Prime Minister Office 1964; Heiniki Palva, *Lower Galilean Arabic: An Analysis of its Anaptyctic and Prothetic Vowels with Sample Texts*, Helsinki 1965; Judith Rosenhouse, *The Bedouin Arabic Dialects, General Problems and a Close Analysis of North Israel Bedouin Dialects*, Wiesbaden 1984; Arie Levin, *A Grammar of the Arabic Dialect of Jerusalem*, Magnes Press, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1995; Ahron Geva-Kleinberger, *Die arabischen Stadtdialekte von Haifa in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2004; Ahron Geva-Kleinberger, *Autochthonous texts in the Arabic dialect of the Jews of Tiberias*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2009; Abed Khariush, *Palestinian Dialects- A Phonological Study*, Amman 2004 a book about the phonological description of the Palestinian dialects,



dealt with the Aramaic influence on Arabic. In fact, there is no methodical and comprehensive research on the topic that integrates the post-classical Hebrew and Aramaic elements existing in both literary and spoken languages of the region, especially in Palestine.

As mentioned earlier, this paper is based on researching the Aramaic and Hebrew elements in the spoken Arabic of Israeli Christians, and the written Arabic of the Christian communities in Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. The paper is structured in a way so as to examine two main corpora: the first, the corpus of the Arabic spoken by the Christians of Israel. In order to research the spoken corpus of this community, I carried out interviews and conversations with informants, and I tape-recorded twenty informants among elderly Christians from northern villages in Israel. Those elderly subjects did not know modern Hebrew, and their education, if any, was scant and limited.

The second corpus examined in this paper is that of the written tradition, including the Christian rites, Bible translations, New Testament, Christian liturgical literature, and folk tales in Christian Arabic. In my opinion, examining the two corpora allows for a complete and comprehensive description of the Hebrew and Aramaic linguistic elements. It also enables examining the penetration and infusion of these elements into the Christian Arabic, both in its spoken and written forms. Additionally, examining both written and spoken corpora enables the classification of the elements that penetrated *only* the spoken language, or *only* written texts. Elements that exist in the spoken language indicate that they remain in the spoken form and have not passed into the literary language. Elements in both spoken and written language may show that the borrowing has taken place from the spoken and passed into the written language as well. This points to the depth of the infusion and penetration of these elements in the absorbing language. Words that exist only in the written language indicated that borrowing is only in the written language. I think that putting the two corpora and crossing the linguistic categories together is likely to give a full picture of the range of the Hebrew and Aramaic elements in

through surveying the researches that had dealt with the Palestinian dialect, its distribution and linkage to old Arab dialects [in Arabic].



them, and even point out the domains of their use in both written and spoken Christian Arabic.

The so-called “Christian Arabic” is the spoken and written language of Christians among Christians. This fact is of great importance in the description of the characteristics of this language. The Christian community in the Levant has written an extensive Arabic literature in both the Arabic and Syriac (*Karshuni*) scripts.¹⁰ In the classical (pre-Islamic) era, there were known Christian poets who composed classical Arabic verse where one can find a sizeable number of religious words linked to Christianity and Judaism.¹¹ Moreover, Aramaic and Hebrew words exist in the liturgical religious literature, linked to church matters.

Arab philologists have determined a method to identify the foreign elements in the Arabic language. They identified foreign words by means of phonological, morphological, and semantic criteria. In general, they preceded expressions and combinations before foreign words that indicate their foreignness or suspicion of their being borrowed—for instance “I don’t deem it Arabic” (لا احسبه عربيًا), “Arabized” (مُعَرَّب), “borrowed” (دخيل), or “hybridized” (مُوَلَّد).¹²

In his collection of Arabized words, al- Ġawālīqī¹³ (d.1144) mentioned a number of Hebrew words which were mostly personal names. In the modern era, al-Yasū’y¹⁴ wrote a comprehensive collection of foreign words in Arabic, in which there is a chapter that counts about forty Hebrew words, mostly names, with the remainder being words of religious provenance. More recent works deal with the borrowed

¹⁰ Adam Carter McCollum, "Garshuni as it is: Some Observations from Reading East and West Syriac Manuscripts", *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies*, Vol. 17.2 (2014), 215-235.

¹¹ See: L. Cheikho, *Le Christianisme et La Littérature Chrétienne en Arabie Avant L'Islam*, 2 édition, Dar-El-Machreq, Beyrouth 1989.

¹² For more details, see I. BASSAL, (2013). "Syriac-Aramaic words in an early Christian Arabic copy of the Pentateuch (Ms Sin. Ar. 2), *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* (CCO) 10 (2013), p. 21 note 9.

¹³ al- Ġawālīqī, *al-Muʿarrab min al-Kalām al-ʿaġamī*, ed. F. ʿabd Al-Raḥīm, Damascus, 1990.

¹⁴ Rufaʿel Naxleh al-Yasū’y, *GHarāʿib al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya, al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kāthulikiyya, Beirut 1959.*



Aramaic elements in Arabic—for instance Fraenkel (1886),¹⁵ Hobaika (1902, 1904 and 1939),¹⁶ Feghali (1919),¹⁷ and Agnathius (1969).¹⁸

Judaeo-Arabic has been greatly researched in the context of its Aramaic and Hebrew elements; see for instance Goitein (1931), Leslau (1945), and Bar-Asher (1978 and 1999) who outlined a basis and a method for the research of the Hebrew element in the Judaeo-Arabic. Schwarzwald (1984) related to measures for the infusion of Hebrew and Aramaic words in the Jewish Spanish language. Also Maman (1989) wrote an article about identifying the Hebrew element in Moroccan Jewish Arabic. Bahat (1990 and 2002) related to the Hebrew element in the written Arabic of Jews of Morocco. Henshki (2007) wrote about the Hebrew element in the spoken Arabic of the Jews of Tunisia.¹⁹ Avishur (1997) presented a new method for researching the Jewish-Aramaic element in the Judaeo-Arabic of the Levant by way of examining the Hebrew and Aramaic elements in the written and oral transition of language.²⁰

¹⁵ Sigmund Fraenkel, *Die Aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*, Leiden 1886.

¹⁶ J. Hobeika, *Etymologie arabo-syriaque. Mots et Locutions Syriaques dans l'Idiom Vulgaire du Liban et de la Syrie = al-dawātīr. baḥṭ fī baqāyā al-luġa al-suryāniyya fī al-luġa al-ʿāmmiyya fī Lubnān wa-sūriyya* 2 vols. (Jounieh 1902-3/Byrouth-Basconta (Liban) of which rare work large portions are reprinted in *Al-Machriq* 37 (1939), pp. 289-412.

¹⁷ Mitchel Feghali, *Le Parler de Kfar 'Abida (liban-syrie) -Essai Linguistique sur La Phonétique et La Morphologie d'un Parler Moderne*, Paris 1919.

¹⁸ Aghnathius Yaʿqūb III, *al-Barāhīn al-Ḥissiyya ʿala Taqāruḍ al-suryāniyya wa-ʿarabiyya*, Damascus 1969.

¹⁹ Salomon Dov Goitein, "The Hebrew elements in the vernacular of the Yemenite Jews". *LEŠONENU* 3 (1931), pp. 356-380. (In Hebrew.); W. Leslau, "Hebrew Elements in the Judaeo-Arabic Dialect of Fez" *J.Q.R.* 36 (1945), pp. 61- 78; M. Bar-Asher, "Eléments hébreux dans le Judéo-arabe marocain, *LEŠONENU* 42 (1978) pp. 163-189 [in Hebrew]; Y. Bahat, *La Composante Hébraïque de l'arabe écrit des Juifs du Maroc*, Institut Bialik, Jerusalem 2002; Aharon Maman, "On identifying Hebrew Elements in Judeo-Maghrebian", *Masorot* 3-4 (1989) pp.171-201 [in Hebrew]; O. Schwarzwald, "Determining Criteria for the Fusion of the Hebrew-Aramaic Component in Judeo-Spanish. *Milet* 2: 1984 (Everyman's University Annual), 357-367. [in Hebrew]; Yehudit Henshke, *Hebrew Elements in Daily Speech: A Grammatical Study and. Lexicon of the Hebrew Component of Tunisian Judeo-Arabic*, Jerusalem, 2007. [in Hebrew]

²⁰ Yitzhak Avishur, "The Study of Hebrew Elements from Oral Traditions and Written Sources of Oriental Judaeo-Arabic", *Masorot* 9-10-11, (1997), pp. 277-294.



It is based on the preceding that this paper examines the Hebrew and Aramaic elements (words and forms) using solid linguistic criteria and measures—namely spelling, pronunciation, morphology and syntax.

The borrowed elements that are examined in this paper, in both the spoken and written languages, are mainly from Post-Biblical Hebrew, and from Aramaic, Syriac, and their various dialects. As is well known, Arabic spread (and became widespread) throughout the urban areas of the Levant beginning in the seventh century. It became a dominant—albeit not an exclusive—language beginning in the ninth and tenth centuries.²¹ Within that linguistic space, Aramaic was still a living spoken language, and it was therefore normal for Arabic to have had direct contact with that vibrant linguistic layer, which had left a visible linguistic and cultural mark, to the point of influencing Classical Arabic.²²

In Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon, languages that were supposed to have affected the Arabic dialects were remnants of late Aramaic—including Galilean Aramaic, Syriac, and Palestinian Syriac (or Christian Aramaic) in Palestine, and Samaritan Aramaic and Syriac which was spoken in Syria and Iraq. However, I believe that it would have been difficult to separate the elements and divide them into Aramaic layers and their dialects. Since there is kinship among the Aramaic dialects, and since Aramaic was a dominant language for a very long time in the Syriac-speaking region (Palestine included,) the substrates that were left in the spoken Arabic of the Levant are overwhelming. What is more, the influence from languages other than Aramaic—for instance Hebrew, Akkadian²³, and Greek—which passed to both the written and spoken Arabic *via* Aramaic, remains very strong. See below for instance:

“Arabic”	Transliteration	Syriac	Meaning
صباؤوت	Ṣaba’ūt	ܨܒܐܘܘܬ < צבאות (Heb.)	Armies
هيكل	Haykal	ܗܝܟܠ < ekallu (Akk)	Temple

²¹ Spencer Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times*, London 1979, pp. 2-3; Kees Versteegh, *Pidginization and Creolization: The Case of Arabic*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company 1984, pp. 73-74; Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, Edinburgh University Press 2014, pp. 126-132.

²² See Sigmund Fraenkel, *Die Aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*, Leiden 1886.

²³ Stephen Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic*, Chicago 1974.



زنبيل	Zanbīl	زَنْبِيل < zanbilu (Akk)	Basket
< ايلول	Eylūl	إِيلُول < elūlu (Akk)	September
< آب	Aab	أَب < abu (Akk)	August
< شكارا	Shkārah	إِسْكَارَا < iškāru (Akk)	Acre
اسكولين	Askūlīn	إِسْخُولِيُون < sxolion (Gr.)	Scholars

DIVISION OF THE POST-BIBLICAL HEBREW AND ARAMAIC ELEMENTS

The Hebrew and Aramaic elements that penetrated the spoken and written Arabic were mostly nouns, adjectives and often verbs. These elements are divided into a number of categories:

- 1- There are Aramaic elements that penetrated the literary Arabic and that can be found in parts of the dialects.
- 2- There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements, exclusive to a certain dialect, and which can be found in the various communities that speak that very dialect, such as the Christians in Israel-Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.
- 3- There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements, exclusive to the written and spoken Christian Arabic.
- 4- There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements, exclusive only to the written Christian Arabic.

In the context of the Christian Arabic evaluated in this study, elements may be divided into such divisions as follows:

- 1- There are Aramaic elements that penetrated the literary Arabic and that can be found in parts of the dialects.

Aramaic	Meaning	Aramaic	Meaning
أْتُون < اتون	furnace	مَحْطَا < شَبُوط	Fish covered with scales
صَهْلَا < كانون	brazier	سَفْطَا < سَفْطَا	basket
قَرْمِيد < قَرْمِيد	Brick	سَطْلَا < سَطْلَا	Bucket
سَمَا < نِير	Yoke	حَمَا < دَرِي/بِي دَرِي < بيدر	Threshing



			floor
مصباح < قنديل	lamp	حصار < كوز	Bottle for water

Month Names:²⁴

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
אֶלּוּל < ايلول	September	סֵפֶר < نيسان	April
אֶחָד < تشرين	Oct. and Nov.	אֵיָר < ايار	May
כֶּסֶל < كانون	Dec., and Jan.	סַמֵּן < حزيران	June
שֶׁבַט < شباط	February	אֶחָד < تموز	July
אֶזָר < آذار	March	אָב < آب	August

- 2- There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements, exclusive to a certain dialect, and which can be found in the various communities that speak that very dialect, such as the Christians in Israel-Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.

The span of this elements belongs to various life domains:

A. Nouns Pertaining to Land, Agricultural Seasons, and Types of Sowing:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
מַעֲבָה < معنابة	Furrow	לִגְנָה < لجنة	Row
הַגֹּרֶה < حاكورة	Ground near House	דַלִּיל < دليلا	Thin
בָּלִי < عبي	Thick	שׁוּרָה / מַעֲבָה < شورة	Line
מַעֲבָה < شقيف	Cliff	נִיר < نير	Ploughing over

²⁴ Most of the month names loaned from Akkadian.



צָר < صرار	pebbles	לְקִישׁ < لقشي חֲסֻמָּא	Late Rains
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B. Nouns Pertaining to Weather Conditions:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
מַחַב < شوب	Harsh Heat	חַבּוּרָא < عبورة	Passing Cloud

C. Agricultural and Work Tools:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
מַחְבָּלָא < مغل/نخل	Iron Plow Bar	בִּרְךְ < بُرك	Plough Knee
רַמְסָא < زقوت	Porcupine/Prick	יָצוּל < ياصول	Wagon Shaft
פַּחְזָא < بيور	Ox Goad	מַחְזָא < قطريب	Yoke Cross
חֲסֻמָּא < مساس	Ox Goad	שָׁלַף < شلف	Draw
מַחְבָּלָא < شلفة	Stick	מַחְבָּלָא < شبيط שִׁבְטָא	Stick
מַחְבָּלָא < حالول	Riddle	חַמְסָא < عزقة	Screw/Cog

D. Plants:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
חַמְסָא < برقوق	apricot	חַמְסָא < عافوق	Weed
עַלְתִּינָא < علت	Chicory	חַמְסָא < عكوب	Wild Thorns
מַחְבָּא < قلفاس	Plant	נִטְלָא < نصابة	Planting
רַמְסָא < زوفا	Hyssop	מַחְבָּא < قرمية	Tree Trunk



E. House Tools:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
זלעא / זלעא < זלעא	Bottle	אָזשׂא < אָזשׂא	Jug
לחמא < לחמא	Stool	דבוס < דבוס	Pin
חמא < חמא	Vessel	סרידה / סרידה < סרידה	Straw basket
חמא < חמא	Wooden Box	חמא < חמא	Surface
חמא < חמא	Basket	חמא < חמא	Container
חמא < חמא	Basket, wine jar		

F. Crops and Fruits:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
זגיר < זגיר	Shrivelled Olive	זגיר < זגיר	Olive Waste
דופרה, < דופרה	First Figs	זגיר < זגיר	Thin Chaff flying in the Wind
זגיר < זגיר	Fallen Fig	זגיר / זגיר < זגיר	A Bunch

G. Food and Clothing Items:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
חמא < חמא	Rennet	חמא < חמא	Sacred Bread
חמא < חמא	Crumb	חמא < חמא	Waist Belt
חמא < חמא	Soup	חמא < חמא	Piece of Bread



H. Animals and their Habitat:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
טפזא < טפסון	Rock Rabbit	באעור < באעור	Male goat
חנפסה < קרידיס	Shrimp	חנפסה < שרנקה	Cocoon
שונרא < שנתאר	Partridge	אשגול < זגול	Young Bird
אסטבלא < אסטבל	Stable		

I. Residences and Buildings:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
פחא < ברטאש	Door Threshold	שער < שער	Gate
חשא < חש	Hard Stone	חשא < سفارات	Wood Logs
חמא < ערקה	beam	חמא < جملون	Wooden Frame
חחא < סכרה	Door Lock	חחא < فاكورة	Confined Window

J. Body Parts and Illnesses:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
חא < בז	Breast	חא < طيز	Buttocks
חא < כרעוני	Leg	חחחא < فسفوسة	Body Rash

3. There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements that penetrated both the spoken and the written Christian Arabic. For example:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning



Aramaic		Aramaic	
أَهْمُسا < زِيَّاح	Procession	مَكَلِلا < اِكَلِيل	Wedding, nuptial rite
فَهْمُسا < بَرشَان	Sacred Bread	مَهْمَسِلا < اِشْبِين	Best Man
سُسا < نِيَّاحَة	Eulogy	يَهْمَسِلا < زَكَرَانِيَة	Remembrance
بَعْرَه < عَنصَرَة	Pentecost	قُسُسا < دَنح	Baptism Feast, Epiphany
اِشْبِين < شَعَانِين	Palm Branches	حَمَقُلا < عُمَاد	Baptism
مَهْمُسا < اَقْنُوم	Entity	حَمَسِلا < كِرَازَة	Homily
مَحْمُسا < شَمَّاس	Deacon	كَلَامُه < مَزْمُور مُزْمُور <	Psalm

4. There are Hebrew and Aramaic elements, exclusive only to the written Christian Arabic.²⁵

WORDS AND TERMS LINKED TO THE ARABIC BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

By way of examining the Arabic translations of the Bible, we found an abundance of Hebrew-Aramaic words and terms pertaining to priestly laws, weights, measures, coins, animals, plants, and other related terms used in these translations. It seems that the translators found difficulty finding Arabic equivalents, and therefore resolved to keep the Aramaic and Hebrew originals. Nevertheless, there are Syriac

²⁵ For more discussion see: Ibrahim Bassal, "Hebrew and Aramaic Words in Christian Arabic Bible Translations", pp.137-156, in- *Festschrift Presented to Prof. Yizhak Avishur on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, Ed. Michael Heltzer and Meir Malul, Archaeological Center Publications Tel Aviv 2004. [Hebrew] ; Ibrahim Bassal, "Hebrew and Aramaic Words in Christian Arabic Bible Translations", in *Mituv Yosef – Yosef Tobi Jubilee vol. 1*,(pp. 95-119), ed. Ayelet Oettinger and Danny Bar-Maoz, 3 vol. Bible, Medieval Literature, Modern Literature, The Centre for Study of Jewish Culture in Spain and Islamic Countries, University of Haifa 2011[Hebrew].



words linked to the translation of the Peshitta and the Christian liturgical literature. A sampling below is representative of our findings:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
אָדוֹנָי < אָדוֹנָי	My Lord	צְבָאוֹת < צְבָאוֹת	Armies
אֱלֹהִים < אֱלֹהִים	God	אֲנִי אֲנִי < אֲנִי אֲנִי	I am that I am

Elements of the following words originate in the law of priests, and are characteristic to the Bible:

Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning	Hebrew and Aramaic	Meaning
יְהוָה < יְהוָה	Jubilee	כְּרוּבִים < כְּרוּבִים	Cherubim
שְׂרָפִים < שְׂרָפִים	Seraphim	לְוִיִּים < לְוִיִּים	Levites
עֲצֵרָה < עֲצֵרָה	Pentecost	פּוּרִים < פּוּרִים	Purim
תְּרָפִים < תְּרָפִים	Small gods	אֶלְמָגִים < אֶלְמָגִים	Corals
בָּמוֹת < בָּמוֹת	Altars	חֶסֶר < חֶסֶר	Stage
אֹרָמִים וְתוֹמִים < אֹרָמִים וְתוֹמִים	Oracles	אֶרְיָאֵל < אֶרְיָאֵל	Altar Hearth
אֶפֹּד < אֶפֹּד	Ephod	חַג יְהוָה < חַג יְהוָה	Feast of God
גֵּיהֶנוֹם < גֵּיהֶנוֹם	Hell	גֹּג וּמָגוֹג < גֹּג וּמָגוֹג	Gog & Magog
הוֹשִׁיעֵנו < הוֹשִׁיעֵנו	Save Us	הִחָרִים < הִחָרִים	Destroy
חֶשְׂמֵל < חֶשְׂמֵל	Electricity	חֹמְטָא < חֹמְטָא/חֹמְטָא	Lizzard
לַיְתָן < לַיְתָן	Whale	שְׂכִינָה < שְׂכִינָה	Divine Dwelling
שִׁפּוֹר / שִׁפּוֹר < שִׁפּוֹר / שִׁפּוֹר	Horn, Trumpet	אֵיפָה < אֵיפָה	Ephah



ܡܚܥܘܳܗ			
ܒܳܬ < ܒܳܬ	A Liquid Measure	ܚܳܡܪ < ܚܳܡܪ	A dry measure
ܠܳܬܳܗ < ܠܳܬܳܗ	A Barely-Measure	ܠܳܗ < ܠܳܗ	A Liquid Measure
ܩܳܒ < ܩܳܒ	A Measure of Capacity	ܳܗܳܠܳܘܳܢ < ܳܗܳܠܳܘܳܢ	a coin
ܚܳܘܳܗ/ܠܳܘܳܗ < ܳܘܳܗ	chaff		

Precious stones (breastplate stones) were likewise “Arabized” in relation to the Peshitta:

Aramaic	Meaning	Aramaic	Meaning
ܚܳܡܳܐ < ܚܳܡܳܐ	Topaz	ܚܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗ	Onyx
ܡܳܚܳܘܳܗ < ܡܳܚܳܘܳܗ	Jasper	ܚܳܡܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܡܳܘܳܗ	Jewel
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Ruby	ܚܳܡܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܡܳܘܳܗ	Sapphire
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Garnet	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Opal
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Agate	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Amethyst
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Tarshish	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Mole
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Male Goat	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Fish
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Pigeons	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Kind of Tree
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Cinnamon	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Acacia
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Ravens	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Crocodile
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Mandrakes	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Behemoth
ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Blouse	ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ < ܚܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܗ	Headress



אָפּוּל < اندر	Threshing Floor	< فارش / بارش פּאַרש	Goad
בּרנשאַ < برنشاء	Man	< برشعنا	Son of an hour
גּלויט < جالوت	Diaspora	גּלויט < جريبي	North
טּפּל < سفيل	Desk	טּפּל < سفيل	Cup
פּונדקייטא < فندقانية	Harlot	פּונדקייטא < جاو	A Monastery, a religious community
דּרש < درش	To practice	דּרש < طران	Cliff
פּסח < فصح	Passover	פּסח < كرح	Monk's Niche
כּרז < كرز	Preach	כּרז < كاروزة	Homily
טּפּל < مسطار	Wine	טּפּל < مدراش	School
מּרמא < قسم	Necromancy	מּרמא < قينمون מּרמא	Cinnamon
רַב < راب	Rabbi	רַב < ربيتا	Steward
אָמל < ترمال	Rucksack	אָמל < قلة	Basket
מּפּל < قمين	Furnace	מּפּל < شبقتني	Left Me

Below is a sampling of the Aramaic words mentioned in the Arabic version of the New Testament (Gospels) and in Arabic liturgical Christian literature:

Aramaic	Meaning	Aramaic	Meaning
טּפּל < اقنوم	Entity/Person	טּפּל < سلاق	Feast of Ascension
פּסח < دنح	Feast of Emersion	פּסח < طليثا	Girl
אָמל < طبيثا	Gazelle	אָמל < سليح	Apostle



فاهور < فاهور	Table	مذبحنا < مرعيث	Congregation
مهلا < قوسال	Priest's Habit	وارح < رازين	Last Supper
مصحح < قنوبين	Monastery	انفتح < انفتح	Open
مصحح < بيعة	Church	وكلا < رقا	fool
مترميم < ملاحم	Martha Mary	ملاحم < ملفان	Teacher

REFLECTIONS ON THE HEBREW-ARAMAIC SUBSTRATA IN WRITING, PRONUNCIATION, FORMATION, SYNTAX AND VOCABULARY

Writing Matters

Syriac-Aramaic words that end with a long vowel ta/-a are rendered into Arabic with a “linked T” (*Ta Marbuta*), an “expanded A” (*Aleph Tawīla*) or a “short A” (*Aleph Maqsūra*). For instance, تخلثا، صديدا، صفريّة/صفري، طبيئا/طبيثة،

Furthermore, in handwritten documents in Christian Arabic, as well as other sources, there exists a body of words rendered into Arabic by way of the pattern that ends with “a”. For instance:

Christian Arabic	Meaning	Christian Arabic	Meaning
إشكرعا	Acacia	نقعنا	Diamond
دنحا	Emersion Feast	بيروحا	Mandrakes
سفيلا	Sapphire	صديدا	Turquoise
طلينا	Girl	طبيئا	Gazelle

This pattern is characteristic of Syriac nouns, and it is likely to be a sign contributing to the identification of a Syriac noun-form.

Glottal consonants: ع ه ه ا

The performance of the glottal consonants “ع ه ه ا” in borrowed words is similar to that in Arabic words—that is to say according to the phonemic regional performance in the dialect itself.

Begadkefat: Fricative and plosive
B is performed in two manners: b/f



For example: Avishur أفيشور (Rome 1671 , 1 Chronicles 2: 16,) Avishai أبيشي (Paris 23 , 1 Samuel 21, 6,) Avigail أبيعائل (Rome 1671 ,1 Chronicles 2: 17,) Rahvia رحيبيا (Rome1671, 1 Chronicles 23: 17,) Laban لابان (Rome 1671, Genesis 46: 25.)

The shift of *Fricative* $b > f$

Rifka رفقا Rafshaki the writer (Rome version 1671, 2 Kings 18: 17) أفيشور Avishur (Ms. Paris 23 ,1 Chronicles 28: 29).

The *gimel* is represented by $ج / غ$ / $g / ġ$ plosive and lax performances:

plosive *gimel*: Gedeon جدعون (ms. Paris ,23 Judges 8: 30), Gershon جرشون (Rome ,1 Chronicles 23: 7).

The lax performance: Peleg فالغ (Ms. Sinai 2, Genesis 10:25), Togarnah توغرما (Ms. Sinai 2, Genesis 10:3); Eglon عطلون (Ms. Paris23 , Judges 3: 12), Goliath غولياث (external books, Dunlop 1901 page 45), Avigail أبيعائل (Rome 1671 1 Samuel 25:3).

D is performed in two manners

A fricative performance:

أذري (Ms. Sinai 3 , Genesis 35: 28); يهوذا (Ms. Sinai 2, Genesis 28: 3) ذ: إيلشذي بيركك (Ms. Sinai 3, Deuteronomy 3) "اذوم" (Ms. Sinai 3, Genesis 36:8) and the same in the rest of places.

Plosive performance: أنا يلشذي (Ms. Sinai 2, Genesis 17: 1), Gideon جدعون.

Lax *k* is performed in two manners: $ك / ح$; k / h

Zacharia زكريا (Rome1671) زكريا (Protestant edition), Elimelech إليمك (Ms. Paris 23, Ruth 1: 2), Achich أخيش (Ms. Paris 23) , ملاخي, Malachi (Rome1671) , أحيمك (Rome1671) , Baruch باروخ (Rome 1671).

Shift of $p > f / b$

For example: Orpha عرفا (Rome 1671 , Ruth 1: 4), Peretz فارص (Rome 1671,Genesis 46: 12), "Purim Days" "يومي فوريم" (Rome 1671, Esther 9: 24), "and he made a lot" "أوقع فور", (Esther 9: 26), Potiphar فوطيفر (Rome 1671, Genesis 46: 20), Paghur فاغور (Ms. Sinai 3 ,Deuteronomy 3: 26).

And the second performance $p > b$: $صه; ا < بيور$ (sacred bread), $صه; ا < برشان$ (nail).

Fricative *t* is performed in the written Christian Arabic in t .

hereinafter some examples that reflect the Syriac influence: "ايلت" (Ms. Sinai 3 , Deuteronomy 2: 8), "لتامر كنهه" (Ms. Sinai 3, Deuteronomy 3: 17), "وبسمت بنت اسماعيل" (Genesis 36: 2, Ms. Sinai 3), "عرباث" (Ms. Sinai 3 , Numbers 22: 1 "عربوث" (Ms. Sinai 3 ,Deuteronomy 34:1) "عوج ملك مثنين" (Ms. Sinai 3 , Deuteronomy 3: 1,3), بواعيث (Ben Suleiman 1899, p. 112), يقال لها طيبنا/ طيبنة (Acts 9: 36,



40), طليثا (Mark 5: 41), الصابوٲ (Epistle of James P. 50) دوثن (Ms. Sinai 2 Genesis 33: 17), " افراٲا " (Ms. Sinai 3 , Genesis 35: 19), "وجاٲ" (Ms. Sinai 3 Joshua 11: 23).

Shift of $\acute{c} > \acute{g}$

قصر غادر Fence tower (Ms. Sinai 3, Genesis 35: 21) رغوٲل Reuel (Ms. Sinai 2, Genesis 36: 10), غالي Aali, Yizrael يزراٲل, Ai غاي (Ms. Paris 23, Joshua 8: 1), Gamoura غمورة , فاغور Faghur (Sinai 3 ,Deuteronomy 3: 29), تولاغ بن فواد Tolah Ben Foah (Judges 10: 1.), Gomri غمري (Ms. Paris 23, 1 kings 16: 6).

shift of $h > \underline{h}$

The shift of $h > \underline{h}$ is prominent in nouns, for example: اخيملك Achimeleck (Ms. paris 23, 1 Samuel 21: 2), اخيطوب Achituv (Ms. Sinai 23, 1 Samuel 22: 9), خامطا Lazard (Rome 1671, Leviticus 11: 29-30), ارض خراس pottery mountain (Ms. Paris 23, Judges 1: 35), (Nahash ناخاس Ms. Paris 23, 1 Samuel 11: 1).

The shift of $\acute{s} > s$

For example: سمجر Shamgar (Ms. Paris 23, Judges 3: 31), كوسان Koshan (Ms. Paris 23, Judges 3: 8), كاموس Kamush (Ms. Paris 23, Judges 11: 24), اخيس Achich (Ms. Paris 23, 1 Samuel 21: 11), سمعون Shimon (Ms. Paris 23, Joshua 19: 1), منسا Menasheh (Ms. Paris 23, Joshua 17: 2).

MORPHOLOGY

The verb

Forms in the "pa'al" (3, past, singular) on the Aramaic manner:
فشاع (saw), سماع (heard).

The media *W* verbs conjugate as media *Y* verbs:
'anayyim (make sleep), *'a'ayyim* (awake).

The form (or pattern) **fa'alala > fō'al** monophthongization: (*bōrad*) became cold, (*nōzal*) catch cold, (*fōfaš*) weakened.

Form of **fa'alūn** (third person, plural, Syriac): in normative Arabic, the form is فعلوا, for example: وذلون عليه (prayed for him), وذلون لبلاد كسروان (asked for Kisrawan country), وأعطون (they gave), وملكون (they ruled).

The form **šafala**

Examples from spoken Arabic: شلهب (reddened), شقلب (turned over) ششقل (weighed).



The starting letters of the future tense are expressed in the vowels like Aramaic: [i] *yiktib* (write) *yismaʿ* (hear).

New verb forms, part of them, denominative verb:

تَنِيح (died), زِيح (surrounded), شَسْنِين (served as best man), شَعْن (celebrated the feast of palm branches), شَبَقْتَنِي (forsaken me), شَمَس (serve as a deacon), عَنصر (celebrated Pentecost), تَشْرِن (Autumn arrived), قَصَم (used magic), كَلَل (performed the wedding), حَرَم (destroy).

The Noun

Aramaic name patterns used in Arabic:

faʿalūt pattern

These nouns terminate with suffix-*ūt*, the form indicates abstract nouns: ناسوت (humanness), ملكوت (kingdom), بهموت (animals), كهنوت (priesthood).

fāʿūl pattern

شاعوب (weight tool شاقول), قاصوم (knew), سافور / صافور (horn), قاتول (murderer), جاروشة (grinder), حالول (sieve), (garden fork).

fūʿīl pattern

This pattern is not mentioned among those brought by Sibawaihi: this pattern exists in Aramaic and in Syriac as a form of "*Kūtīnā*", and doesn't exist in Arabic. It exists in the Bible translations in the Christian Arabic, for example: كوتين (blouse).

Supplanting in the patterns ***fīʿīl*** > ***faʿīl***

Examples of nouns: بَطِيخ (watermelon), تَنِين (crocodile)

Adjectives: قَدِيس (saint), صَدِيق (righteous man).

In spoken Arabic, they say *baṭṭīh* (watermelon) ***faʿīl*** This pattern exists in Aramaic and Syriac.

Fayʿūl pattern فيعول exists in Arabic, though rare. The form شيفور (horn) is borrowed from the Syriac, سيعور (scapegoat).

Adaptation according to the Arabic pattern: the word *ephod* is performed in Arabic in form of ***faʿūl/fuʿūl*** أفود / أفود

The Syriac plural form in the emphatic state (-*aiyā*) used in Arabic:

وملكوا كل مارونيا / وكتبوا القرايا (Maronites rules, and wrote to villagers).

The Hebrew plural forms -im:

Hebrew names serve with thus form, for example: بعليم (owners), عوربم (crows), الموجيم (corals).



The shift *kum* > *kon* أخوكن (your brother), أضربهن (I will hit them).

The *nisba* form *āni*, for example: براني (external), جواني (internal), الفوقاني (Ms. Sinai 3, Daniel 9: 2).

The Syriac form of diminution: ***ōn/ūn ūs/ōs*** :

For example: طلموسة (piece of bread), جملون (wooden seat like hump of camel), كرعونة (small leg).

The production of blended or compound forms > **تويدانيات** which is one of the church terms. It returns in anaphoric form in the heads of prayers "tov deen".
ديلاتي > **ديلاتي** (take what belongs to you and give me what belongs to me). The form
برشعنا > **برشعنا** is a Syriac word composed of the words 'bar' and 'shaata'. The word
برنساء > **برنساء** is a Syriac word composed of the words 'bar' and 'nasha'.

Addition *Prosthetic Aleph*

Adding *Prosthetic Aleph* (at start) in order to prevent the beginning of a word with a number of consonants, for example: إشبين (best man), إصحاح (chapter), إكليل (wedding), إزميل (chisel). This phenomenon even exists in Hebrew in words such as **אצטדיום** (stadium).

SYNTAX

"la" as an object marker²⁶

For example:

واخذ ابيمالخ لسارة امراة ابراهيم", "ولما طرد ابراهيم لهاجر ولابنها"
"ملتقا العيس ليعقوب اخوه" (Ms. Sinai 3, p. 8) "ولما استحلف ابراهيم لعيده", (Ms. Sinai 3 p. 7)
"وامر الله" (Ms. Sinai 3, p. 12) "ولما قتل موسى للمصري ودفنه في الرمل" (Ms. Sinai 3, p. 10)
"ومسح الله لهالرون اخيه" (Ms. Sinai 3, p. 14) "لبنى اسرائيل" (Ms. Sinai 3, p. 13)

Concord

Suitability gender and number between subject and verb, for example:

"قالوا الروم للاميراطور/ هذا هو الملك المنصور", "بكوا النصارى على الاخوة / وقالوا يا حيف بلاد له نخوة".
These verbs in normative Arabic are likely to be in singular.

²⁶ For more discussion see: Ariele Levin, "The Particle "LA" as an Object Marker in Some Dialects of the Galilee", *Zeitschrift Für Arabische Linguistik* 16 (1987), pp. 31 – 40; Simon Hopkins, "on the construction šmēh l-ḡabrā 'the name of the man' in Aramaic", *JSS* 42 (1997) pp. 23-32.



The inner object precedes the verb:

اكثرا اكثر I will increase your descendants (**Genesis 16:10**), ملكه تملك do you intend to reign over us? (**Genesis 37: 8**), موتا نموت we are doomed to die (Judges 13:22).

In Arabic the verb precedes the name.

VOCABULARY AND SEMANTICS

A great part of the borrowed elements are nouns. In addition, adjectives and verbs are also borrowed, but in an inflection of Arabic. This grammatical division in percentages shows that the percentage of nouns among those that I discussed is 82,7%, adjectives 2.1%, verbs 14%, adverbs 1.3%.

There are clear guidelines that indicate the absorption of these words in Arabic:

(1) The Arabic definite article mark: in other words, adding 'Al' to borrowed words: for example:

الأراييل (north), الجربي (Jubilee), اليوبيل (Day of Pentecost), العنصرة (Passover), الفصح (alter), الساروفيم (seraphim), الدنح (feast of emersion).

(2) The adaptation of the Arabic plural manner: (The Arabic broken plural)

أجاجين (ground), حواكير (Tishri month), تشارين (schools), مداريش (cycles), محازير (jars), أشعانيين (feast of palm branches), أأجاجير (roofs), سوافير (horns).

(3) Preserving the Hebrew plural form: In the written Christian Arabic, certain nouns continue to perform the Hebrew plural way: ألموجيم (gems), عوريم (ravens), باموت (alters), الأثيقيم (porches), كروبيم (cherubim), اوريم والتوميم (oracle).

(4) Borrowing foreign words, the basic form and the additional suffix, e.g, diminution suffix: $\bar{o}n/\bar{u}n \bar{u}s/\bar{o}s$: ظلموسة (piece of bread), عمروس (young lamb, جملون sloping pattern).

(5) Borrowing Aramaic words in their emphatic or the fossilized state: إشكرعا (acacia), بيروحا (mandrake), سفيل (sapphire), صديدا (garnet), طليئا (girl), طبيئا (gazelle), سومقا (sumac), تخلصا (azure).

(6) Combinations that were produced through blend or compound manner: برنساء (man), برنشاء (again and again), ديلا تي / ديلا تيك (yours), بيدر ((threshing floor)

Adjectives: قرداحي *qerdāhī* (smith), حزيفة *ħazīṭa* (poor woman), زعطوط *za‘atūt* (tiny).



Verbs in Arabic forms: شَمَسَ (served as a deacon), زَيَحَ (went around the church), تشرين (October has begun).

Semantics

In the oral and written Christian Arabic, there are words that are lexically borrowed directly into Arabic, through phonemic and morphemic changes and sometimes the form remains as it occurred in the borrowed language. For example:

إشكرعا (acacia), تخلصنا (azure), يبروحا (mandrakes), حشمل (electricity), طليثا (girl), طبيثا (gazelle), الوهيم (God), اوريم والتوميم (oracle), ترافيم (teraphim), أثيقيم (porches), دنحا (feast of emersion), أفود (vest), شبقنتي (left me), صديدا (garnet), باث (bath, measure), باموت (altars), ككشوثا (mole), كوتين (blouse).

Another technique of semantic copying is a partial or full phonological and morphological adaptation of the borrowed word into the borrowing language, and the use of the definit article and the grammatical inflection of the borrowing language, for example in the written Christian Arabic:

الأندر (threshing floor), أسكوليين (scholars), بيعة (church), جالوت (Diaspora), جربي (North), هوشعنا (palm-branches feast), دنح (baptism feast), الخامطا (lizard), يوبيل (Jubilee), لئك (lethek), لج (measure), أفصح (pass over), صفرية (goat), مدراش (school), قاصوم (future teller), قاصم (divine), قاصم (involved in magic).

A semantic borrowing (loan translation – calque)

In spoken Christian Arabic: *fini* (I can), *lsān 'ittōr* (tongue of ox), *lsān 'il'asfūr* (bird's tongue, plant), *klīl 'ijjabal* (cercis, plant), *'aṣā 'irrā'y* (goose grass, plant).

Examples from the written Christian Arabic:

Burn offering- صعيدة, tabernacle قبة الزمان/ خبا الزمان, evening offering- قربان المساء/ العشي, ark of God تابوت الرب, ark صندوق عهد الله, peace offering سلامة/ كاملة, language شفة, dawn gazelle أيلة الصبح, eye of calf- عين عجل, feast of God حج الله.

Semantic expansion

In a number of words, there is a semantic expansion of meaning in the borrowing language: In the spoken Christian Arabic, we mean by *'ittoray* (Pentateuch), the whole Bible. Here the meaning was expanded by metonymic shift (the part expresses the meaning of the whole).

The main meaning of the word اكليل is crown. In Christian Arabic, there took place a semantic expansion of the word and it is used to connote a wedding ceremony اكليل. Likewise the word "Satan" is used in the spoken Christian Arabic to connote a troublesome kid. It should be noted that in the language of Jewish wisemen, Satan firstborn (Yibamot 3: 1), but other words are derived from this noun, تشيطان "did troubles and deeds of Satan."



An example of a semantic narrowing: the word اصحاح from the Syriac *ܨܡܟܐ* which means a book or a copy or a chapter in a book. In both spoken and written Christian Arabic, it means a chapter in the Bible or the New Testament.

The Arabic vocabulary spoken and written by Christians is exclusive. The exclusiveness stems from the religious and social linkage of Christians to Holy books and to Syriac and Aramaic sources and also to Hebrew and Jewish-Aramaic. Besides, The majority of the Christian residents of the area under investigation spoke Syriac-Aramaic in times past, therefore its normal to have some residues from those languages, thus preserving the linkage to the Aramaic, Syriac and Hebrew sources.

In the course of examining this vocabulary, I discovered its exclusiveness, reflected in terms and combinations, exclusive to Christian communities, in the spoken Arabic in which, the words in many cases are common to other groups. Also in the written Christian Arabic, exclusiveness in words and terms is prominent, and identical terms do not exist in the general Arabic of Moslems.

I have detected tens of Hebrew and Syriac-Aramaic words, used in written Christian Arabic, which are not mentioned in classical Arabic dictionaries, even in late ones. I tried, as possible as I could, to complete that vocabulary and to show its exclusiveness. Below are the Hebrew and Aramaic words that are not included in the classical Arabic dictionaries, and which are found in Christian Arabic writings:

بأث (bath, measure), باموت (altars), حومر (homer), حشمل (electricity), حرّم (destroy), فصّاح (measure), لّج (measure), لثك (lethek), ككشوثا (cliff), ككشوثا (mole), كروبيم (cherubim), مصنفة (God), أدوناي (closet), أرون (vest), أفود (blouse), كوتين (goat), صفرية (pass over), صفرية (goat), فارش/بارش (head cover), فور (fur), قمين (furnace), تخلصا (azure), ترافيم (Teraphim), نفعتا (gem), سفيل (sapphire), صديدا (garnet), يرقا (topaz), سومقا (ruby), قنقنون (opal), قرقدنا (agate), سفسل (desk), أوريم والتوميم (oracle), هين أثيقيم (porches), سذر (future teller), قاصوم (divine), قَصَم (used magic), شيفور (horn), سذرا , درش (Baal), بعليم (north), جربي (whale), لاويتان/لويثان (open), افئا (arrange), سذرا , فندقانية (school), مدراش (measure), لّج (topaz), زرجا (lizard), حامطا/خامطا (study), مرعيث (students), أسكولين (cliff), بطرة (God), ال شداي (sack), ترمال/ترمل (harlot) (congregation), أشكرعا (acacia).

HEBREW AND ARAMAIC WORDS THAT ARE NOT INCLUDED IN AL-BARGHOUTI'S DICTIONARY OF THE PALESTINIAN ARABIC DIALECT

In the spoken Christian Arabic, there are many words that were not included in the Barghouthi dictionary about the Palestinian Arabic dialect. I have pointed at this lacuna in the introduction of my doctoral dissertaion.²⁷ These words exist and are

²⁷ Bassal 2004.



common among the Arab-defined Christians in the North of Israel. Hereinafter, more than fifty such words, omitted in the Barghouthi dictionary, are still in use by Christians in the North. They are as follows:

أقورا (small basket), برشان (sacred bread), بيور (wooden nail), دليل (thin), دفورة (first fig), دعر (push), دقر (touch/come close), هدس (think deeply), زلع (swallowed), زلوعة (bottle), زعطوط (tiny), زوم (soup), حالول (sieve), خلول (holes in ground), طواية (frying-pan), طيبسون (rock hare), طربون (tender part of branch), ياصول (link), ليوت (nail), كلين (hard stone), نبلة (fallen fig), نير (yoke), سفارات (wooden logs), سريدة (basket), سطر (slap), عابورة (passing), عافوق (parasite plant), عيبط (idiot), فاكورة (confined), فاروح (chaff), فجم (damage), قيرداحي (smith), قطيب (cross piece of yoke), صرافة (wooden box), شبرحي (talk freely), شورة (line), شلفون (young-man), شلف (took out), شمط (stole), شعريّة (gate), شرتح (life of poverty), شرنقة (cocoon), شلوط (burn), شيشول (corn hairs).

Words mentioned in the New Testament and in the liturgical Arabic Christian literature, for example: شبقنتي (left me), طليتا (girl), طبيتا (gazelle), أفتا (open), ساروفيم (seraphim), رقا (idiot), أسكوليين (students), مرعيث (congregation), بثل (virgin), سياميذ (putting hands).

As known, the religious-social exclusiveness of the Arab-defined Christians and their linkage mostly to their Aramaic roots, is reflected in the domain of their language, both spoken and written. The vocabulary of the Arab-defined Christian community in Israel as a whole is the same as that of the Arab Moslems. However, the speech of the Arab-defined Christians is exclusive to their religious specificity and their geographical and cultural links to the region of Syria and Lebanon in the near past, in addition to their orientation to the West. This is expressed in the private names, characteristic to Christians: Putros, Hanna, Geries, Michael, Samuel, George, Charles, Anton, Cherbil, Barbara. These names are common among the Christian community and reflect a belonging to that community. Also in the names of educational and cultural institutions, we notice the use of exclusive names to the Christian community: Terra Santa, Mar Yosef, Mar Ilias, Maryam Bawardi, Mar Geries, Cleric School. Moreover, there are words and terms linked to church and the church's surroundings and religious ceremonies. Among them are the following:

مطران (bishop), أسقف (bishop), شماس (deacon), خوري (priest), دير (monastery), هيكل (temple), بطرك (patriarch).

Words linked to feasts and religious life rituals include: إكليل (crown), إشبين (best man), عنصرة (memorial) زكرانيّة, نياحة (funeral), زيار (surrounding/procession), أقنوم (baptism), عُماد (baptism), شعانين (palm-branches feast), دنج (baptism feast), أفتوم (entity), كرازة (preaching), اليم (stage), بيعة (church), هوشعنا (save us), كرز (preach), سلق (ascension feast), سفل (desk), مفلان (guide/teacher), سلق (ascension feast), سلق (ascension feast), سلق (ascension feast), سلق (ascension feast).



رقا (stupid), شبققتني (left me), مشفلة (basket), رازين (last supper), ربييتنا (house-wife), قلاية (monk's house), قنوبين (monastery).

CONCLUSION

In summary, I can say that the spoken and written Christian Arabic is a linguistic register within the Arabic language. One may say that it is Arabic, but an Arabic that has exclusiveness that distinguishes it from the common Arabic language. It is a distinct language form that is bound to ethnic-religious, cultural, social and geographical variables. The affinity that Christians feel to Christian literature, whose origin is in the Syriac and Greek languages, and which abounds in Greek and Syriac influences, cannot be overstated. The geographical closeness of Arabic-speaking Israeli Christians to Syria and Lebanon made the Syriac and Aramaic influence so outstanding in their spoken Arabic, and their historical and cultural linkage to Syrian and Lebanese Christians is prominent in their lifestyles, their customs, and even their spoken and written languages.

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