

Dr Sandra Toenies Keating, USA: *The Third Risala of Abu Ra'ita al-Takriti: "A Refutation of the Melkites concerning the Union of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ."*

ʿAziz ʿAbd al-Nour, UK: *Images and Inscriptions from Ancient Churches of Iraq.*

Dr Mark Swanson, USA: *The Christian al-Ma'mun Tradition.*

Dr Jamal Attar, Lebanon: *Study of a Medieval Portrait of Arab Christians: Islamic Norm and ʿAbbasid Practices with Reference to the Works of al-Jahiz (776-869 CE).*

Gabriel Said Reynolds, USA: *Christian Sects through Muslim Eyes: ʿAbd al-Jabbar's Tathbit dala'il al-nubuwwa'.*

Dr Martin Accad, Lebanon: *The Interpretation of John 20.17 in Christian-Muslim Dialogue (8th–14th century): the Ultimate Proof-Text.*

Barbara Roggema, The Netherlands: *Primitive Monotheism and Cryptoidolatry, the origin and development of a theme in Christian-Arabic and Syriac writings about Islam.*

Professor Lucy-Anne Hunt, UK: *Aspects of Artistic Production by Christians.*

David Thomas

THIRD PESHITTA SYMPOSIUM, LEIDEN, 12-15 AUGUST 2001

INTRODUCTION

- [1] The third Peshitta Symposium combined all the features that make a conference worthwhile, enjoyable, and memorable, and was a great credit to its conveners, Bas ter Haar Romeny and Konrad Jenner. It was held at the beautifully wooded Oud-Poelgeest Estate with its moated castle and twenty-three aced walks only ten minutes from the centre of Leiden. The conveners seemed to spare no effort to care for the needs of the participants and ensure that the academic focus of the symposium would be of the highest standard. The meeting ended with a superb dinner hosted by E.J. Brill.

- [2] The published theme of the symposium was *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy*. The aim was to gain a more detailed and comprehensive picture of the textual history of the Peshitta of the Old Testament by discussing its preservation in the patristic literature of the Syriac churches. In the words of the conveners, “As much progress has been made on the Syriac Fathers ..., it is time to see where we stand: what has been done so far in this respect, what should be done, and how can we integrate the results of this research into the picture that has been formed on the basis of Bible manuscripts.” This focus intentionally embraced related issues such as the development of the Peshitta text as “an event within the history of the Syrian Churches,” and “the way the Peshitta was received and assessed by its users, whether in exegetical or historical literature or in liturgy.” Attention to the New Testament was also welcomed as an inseparable part of the symposium’s focused exploration.
- [3] Three excellent keynote lectures were presented by Lucas Van Rompay, *Between the School and the Monk’s Cell: The Syriac Commentary Tradition*; Sebastian Brock, *The Use of the Syriac Versions in the Liturgy*; and Bill Petersen, *Problems in the Syriac New Testament and How Syrian Exegetes Solved Them*. The first evening ended with a slide presentation by Mat Immerzeel on *The Cross on the Banner: Christian Wall Paintings in Lebanon and Syria*.
- [4] The abstracts of all thirty papers are presented in full and arranged alphabetically according to author. In this way, the reader will gain the author’s own pre-publication perspective of her or his paper. Authors were invited to submit post-symposium revisions, and in consequence, some abstracts differ from those published in the symposium handbook.
- [5] The symposium also included a Peshitta Institute report on the progress of the Peshitta Programme, and a general discussion of the New Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible (NEATS). The former, prepared by Konrad Jenner, is presented at the very end of this report.

PAPER ABSTRACTS

THE USE OF THE SYRIAC VERSIONS IN THE LITURGY

SEBASTIAN BROCK, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

- [6] The paper was divided into two parts, the first concerning direct use (in biblical readings), and the second on indirect use (technical terms of biblical origin, allusions, etc.).

The first part concentrated on the developments over the centuries in how texts intended for liturgical reading were presented. Five main stages in this development were identified in the manuscript tradition.

The second part looked at three different aspects: (1) some liturgical terms specific to the Syriac tradition which had their origins in the Syriac biblical text. Here the following terms were covered: ܠܡܝܐ (< Ezek 9:4), ܐܢܝ (< Gen 1:2), ܐܪܥܐ (< Luke 1:35, John 1:14), ܕܢܝܚܐ (with possible links with the Palestinian Targum tradition) and the biblical sources for ܠܚܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ and similar phraseology. (2) The textual basis for certain terms and phrases. Here the following were discussed: Christ as the “Ancient of Days”; the title “King Messiah”; various phraseological links with the Palestinian Targum tradition; “the bars of Sheol” (replacing “the gates” in Matt 16:18); and “the bridal chamber” (replacing “the wedding feast” in Matt 25:10). (3) Some exegetical aspects. Here a few examples were given of the deliberate linking of different passages by means of the transfer of distinctive vocabulary—with a warning to the textual critic in search of variants in the biblical texts. Finally, brief attention was drawn to the existence, above all in the East and West Syriac Festal Hymnaries, of some fine poetry (albeit in truncated form, especially in the printed editions): for the full, or fuller forms, reference to the earliest manuscripts available is essential. The paper ended with a quotation from an otherwise unknown poem on Genesis 22, to be found in an East Syriac Burial Service for Children.

ASPECTS OF THE COMMENTARY ON NUMBERS BY IŠO'DAD OF MERV

JOHANN COOK, UNIVERSITEIT STELLENBOSCH

- [7] Most of the biblical commentaries of Išo'dad of Merv have been researched to some extent. The work by C van den Eynde (*le*

commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancient testament) is the most prominent in this regard. He has translated many of this ancient author's commentaries and in the process offered many useful remarks. Clarke, Van Rompay, Molenberg, Ter Haar Romeny and others have also dealt with aspects of this prominent Syriac author. However, these scholars mostly addressed the relationship between different ancient authors. Clarke, for example, compared Išo'bar Nun with Išo'dad of Merv and Theodore bar Koni.

These comparisons were moreover primarily executed in regards to the book of Genesis. As a matter of fact not much has been done in connection with the 4th book of the pentateuch, Numbers, which is the subject of this contribution. This paper, which is limited in intent and extent, will deal with aspects of the exegetical method of the mentioned Syriac commentary. Others have defined the exegetical approach of Išo'dad as belonging to the genre of questiones. This certainly applies to the book of Genesis. However, in Numbers the author applies a seemingly additional exegetical stylistic feature. He quotes words from Scripture like *qtry'* in II,2 and then offers an explanation. Or in III, 26: *glg'* [*plural*]: "According to John they are the branches of the wood ...". This seems to be related to the Peshet exegetical method found at Qumran. Išo'dad also makes frequent references to scripture, interpreting scripture by means of scripture. Cf. for example: I, 50: "Concerning the tent of tabernacle, scripture says: Like one who ...". The particle *lm* is used as well as the verbal form '*mr*. In trying to define its genre Molenberg talks of *scholia* and *aporiai* in this regard.

This paper will at the same time act as a pilot study for a planned monograph on the Peshitta version of Numbers.

THE GREEK VS. THE PESHITTA IN A WEST SYRIAN EXEGETICAL COLLECTION (BL ADD. 12168)

BAS TER HAAR ROMENY, UNIVERSITEIT LEIDEN

- [8] The exegetical collection preserved in the manuscript London BL Add. 12168, from the eighth or ninth century, discusses the greater part of the Old and New Testaments (Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:904-908). The work, which may be called the *London Collection*, consists of extracts from various, mostly Greek authors. The choice of authors quoted gives a good impression of its profile. For the Pentateuch we find the names of Cyril of Alexandria, Severus of Antioch,

Gregory of Nazianzus, and Ephrem; for the Prophets, Athanasius, Cyril, Severus, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, and Ephrem. In other words: some of the more moderate Alexandrians, the moderate Antiochene Chrysostom, the Miaphysite leader Severus, the Cappadocians, and finally Ephrem as the only Syrian authority.

The *London Collection* quotes the biblical text in a number of instances from the Syro-Hexapla; at other places it seems to give a direct translation from the Greek biblical text of the commentaries quoted; and in yet other instances it quotes the Peshitta. The compiler also added an appendix on the various Greek versions, comparable but not identical with Moses bar Kephā's discussion of this subject. This paper will discuss the position of the *London Collection* in the contemporary debate on the right version of the biblical text.

THE BIBLICAL TEXT IN THE DISPUTATION OF SERGIUS THE
STYLITE AGAINST A JEW

PETER HAYMAN, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

- [9] The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite is an eighth century text which purports to record a written-up version of a dialogue between a Jewish rabbi and a Christian stylite. The discussion is located in Gousit, a place about which little is known, but which was somewhere near Homs (Emesa) in southern Syria. The text is preserved in a single manuscript (BM Add.17,199) which William Wright dated to the eighth century on the basis of its "rather inelegant Estrangela". The colophon is damaged and preserves only the name of the scribe (Romanus the abbot) and not the date of his work. The date of the actual Disputation is not in doubt since three times it refers to the seven hundred years which have passed since the Jews lost everything—prophets, priests, temple, etc.

As in most Jewish-Christian dialogues from the ancient period the bulk of the Disputation is taken up with arguments about the relevance of biblical texts to the situations of the Christian Church and the Jewish people. It contains over 340 biblical quotations, the bulk of them (300) from the Old Testament. Some of these are quite extensive in scope. It also contains a number of quotations from an otherwise unattested Syriac version of books 1-5 of

Josephus' *War of the Jews*; book 6 of this version is preserved in 7a1 as the fifth Book of the Maccabees.

The Old Testament biblical quotations in the Disputation fall naturally into four groups:

1. Direct, exact quotations from the Peshitta (c. 130).
2. OT quotations whose text is influenced by the form in which they are cited in the New Testament (14).
3. Quotations (from memory?) in which text and interpretation are intermingled, or contaminated by other biblical texts.
4. A striking series of agrapha based on a now lost book of testimony texts which consisted of a biography of Jesus in Old Testament texts.

This paper deals with the implications for the history of the Peshitta OT of the form of the text cited in the Disputation but also with the way in which the results of the Peshitta Project can, in their turn, be used to help with the dating of patristic texts and manuscripts. It attempts to show that:

- The Disputation contains some valuable readings which are also attested in manuscripts like 5b1, 6b1, and 9a1 which, in turn, probably preserve the original form of the Peshitta version;
- it is unlikely that it preserves original Peshitta readings that have been lost from the biblical manuscripts;
- patristic texts like the Disputation can throw light on the factors generating many variants in the Peshitta version, particularly the need for a Christian understanding of the text versus the Jewish.
- and, finally, that what we now know about the history of the Peshitta version can be used as a valuable tool for confirming or establishing the dates of Syriac patristic texts which contain lots of biblical citations.

REWORKING THE BIBLICAL TEXT IN THE DRAMATIC DIALOGUE
POEMS ON THE OLD TESTAMENT PATRIARCH JOSEPH

KRISTLAN HEAL, *BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, PROVO, UTAH*

- [10] In addition to the materials traditionally employed for the study of Old Testament interpretation in the Syriac tradition, there is another category of texts which deserves more attention than has previously been given, namely the dramatic dialogue poems on biblical themes. This paper focuses on three exegetical motifs that appear in the dramatic dialogue poems on the Old Testament patriarch Joseph. The motifs are studied with respect to the biblical text and Jewish sources in an attempt to answer why and how the retellings of the Joseph narrative were developed in a particular way.

THE SERVICE BOOKS AS A SOURCE FOR TEXT CRITICISM,
TEXTUAL HISTORY AND APPLIED SCIENCE OF RELIGION

KONRAD JENNER, *UNIVERSITEIT LEIDEN*

- [11] Part 2 of Wright's Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in The British Museum contains for the greater part the description of Service Books. The large number and diversity in content gives the impression that ferial, Sunday and high feast services were the foundation of Syriac Christianity and identified Christian community life. It seems that liturgy was the backbone of these services and the heartbeat of Syriac religious life. Thus, at the one hand, liturgy is the reflection of regional and national culture and society, at the other hand an effective instrument to implement and uphold prescriptions as to religious standards and values. Many a service book contains or refers to biblical passages, see e.g., the lectionaries from the ninth century and later that provide us with a substantial amount of variants as may be clear from the critical apparatus in the volumes of *The Old Testament in Syriac*. One may expect that service books present a connection between religious life, Christian perceptions on culture and society, and the reception (i.e. actual use and transmission as well as the interpretation or actualization) of the biblical text. Thus, service books may give an impression of the motives for the selection of texts and an indication for the authority and the degree of fluctuation (i.e. plasticity) of the biblical text.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW: THE SYRIAC VERSIONS OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT AS A WITNESS TO THE TEXT OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT PESHITTA

JAN JOOSTEN, UNIVERSITÉ MARC BLOCH, STRASBOURG

- [12] The earliest attestation of the reading and use of the Old Testament Peshitta is not to be found in the fourth century writings of Aphrahat and Ephrem, nor in the references to *ho Suros* in Eusebius of Emesa, but in the Old Testament quotations contained the early Syriac versions of the New Testament. As has been known for a long time, these quotations often conform to the OT Peshitta, a tendency leading at times to marked divergence from the Greek NT text. Recent research has shown that this phenomenon is due to the habit of the first Syriac translators of the NT-Tatian for the gospels, anonymous translators for the other books—who followed the local OT text in OT quotations.

The use of the Syriac OT in the Syriac NT sheds light on the date and milieu of the OT Peshitta and on the origins of Syriac speaking Christianity. Another implication is that the text of OT quotations in the Syriac NT must be considered an important witness to the text of the OT Peshitta. This last point, which has been almost entirely neglected by textual critics of the OT Peshitta, will be illustrated with a couple of examples showing that the Syriac NT may at times have preserved primitive OT Peshitta readings no longer transmitted by the manuscripts of the OT Peshitta.

THE SYRIAC MASSORA AND THE NEW TESTAMENT PESHITTA

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- [13] The recently (2000) installed NT Peshitta project (St. Paul's Letters) at Münster University is based on ca. 50 manuscripts of the first millennium. The editorial policy of the project is to print the 'majority text' of the 5th/6th century drawn from the ca. 15 earliest manuscripts (5th-7th century). To present the development of the text from its origin (ca. 400/450) to James of Edessa (died 708) and its transmission in the period from the 7th to the 12th century (from James to Dionysius bar Salibi) is the scope of the project. But did the conformity of the NT Peshitta really develop, is there a 'history' of the text which can offer guidelines for an editorial policy? It is the topic of the present paper to argue for two specific

periods within the transmission of the Peshitta text, for a 'pre-' and 'post-Massoretic' period.

The first period of the Peshitta is a period of 'revision', dominated by the development towards the Greek text, culminating in the 'Philoxenian' (507/08) and the 'Harklean' (615/16) versions which both update the Peshitta according to an increasing 'Greek' standard. Variants of the Peshitta might be due either to Greek influence (in the proper sense) or to the influence of the two fellow versions. For editorial policy this background offers the general guideline to follow the non-grecizing reading of the 'majority text' (and to allow for the possibility of non-grecizing variants to be more original than the 'majority text'). The second period of the Peshitta is a 'philological' one and corresponds with the new political and cultural situation under Islamic rule. Now the Peshitta is the 'Syriac' bible (the Harklean the 'Greek') contributing to 'Aramaic' identity. It is subjected to 'scientific' care, the orthographical features are regularized, the pronunciation is fixed by the invention of vowel signs. The 'spiritus rector' of this period is James of Edessa, its philological handbook is the 'Massora' (extant in 15 manuscripts) which relies on principles introduced by James.

By paying attention to 'massoretic' features in Peshitta manuscripts (orthography, variants recorded by the 'Massora', etc.) editorial policy will be able to distinguish 'pre-massoretic' manuscripts from those of obvious 'massoretic' imprint. This does not constitute a 'history' of the Peshitta text but will improve the judgement upon an 'early' and a 'later' stage of the Peshitta (F.J.A. Hort: 'Knowledge of documents should precede final judgement upon readings'). Remarks on the OT quotations in the NT, on the 'Massora' and on James of Edessa quoting the NT will reflect the implications of an editorial policy based on a 'qualified minority of pre-massoretic manuscripts'.

eBETH ARKÉ: THE SYRIAC DIGITAL LIBRARY AND THE
RECEPTION OF THE PESHITTA IN LITERATURE AND LITURGY
GEORGE KIRAZ, BETH MARDUTHO

- [14] *eBeth Arké* is a collection of out-of-copyright publications (books and articles) digitized in eBook form. The collection will be made available on the Internet as an eLibrary. A great deal of the material deals with the Peshitta and its usage in literature and liturgy. This

presentation will give a general description of the project with emphasis on the literary and liturgical material that pertain to the Peshitta. A proposal will be given to add tools that facilitate searching Peshitta quotations in the eLibrary with the use of metadata and markup languages. The speaker will solicit feedback from scholars to make the project useful for the study of Peshitta texts in literature and liturgy.

THE FOUR KINGDOMS IN PESHITTA DANIEL 7 IN THE LIGHT OF
THE EARLY HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

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- [15] The Peshitta text of Daniel 7:1-8, as published in the Leiden edition (vol. III/iv, Leiden 1980), contains inscriptions which represent a specific interpretation of 'the four kingdoms': the k. of the Babylonians, the k. of the Medes, the k. of the Persians, the k. of the Greeks. The question arises whether this interpretation goes back to the original translator of the book, or not. To answer this question, the interpretation as attested in the Pesh Dan. 7 will be discussed in the light of the early history of interpretation regarding the motif of the four kingdoms. Attention will be given to Jewish (Josephus; 4 Ezra; Targum to the Prophets), Christian (Syrian Baruch Apoc., Aphrahat, Chrysostomus, Jerome, Ishodad of Merv) and pagan sources (Porphyry). It is argued that the glosses in Pesh Daniel 7:1-8 are of a later date (5th century) than the time when the Syriac version of Daniel was produced (presumably the second century CE). The identification of the fourth beast in Pesh Daniel 7 as 'the kingdom of the Greeks' (instead of 'the kingdom of the Romans' according to the dominant tradition) seems to go back to Porphyry's Daniel interpretation.

APHRAHAT'S USE OF HIS OLD TESTAMENT

MARINUS KOSTER, BATHMEN, THE NETHERLANDS

- [16] Since their first publication (Wright, 1869), Aphrahat's twenty-three homilies (I-X AD 336/7; XI-XXII AD 343/4; XXIII 345) never ceased to impress their readers by the astonishing scriptural knowledge of their author. Not only did he use his OT according to the traditional pattern of prophecy and fulfilment (e.g. Daniel 8, 4, 2, and 7 in Hom. V, and Dan. 9 in Hom. XIX), but he prefers to give long lists of examples and exemplary persons from the Old

Testament (sometimes continued right into the NT), after the example of Hebrews 11.

In this paper I should like to call attention to Aphrahat's frequent use of *typology* as a method of exegesis. In that case persons and happenings from the Old Testament are conceived as a prototype (*typos*; cf. Rom. 5:14 [Adam], 1 Cor. 10:6 [the following rock; it happened *tepinkw*, v. 11]) of their New Testament counterpart (*antitypos/n*; cf. 1 Peter 3:21 [baptism]). In contrast with the allegorizing method, here the concrete persons, things and happenings are considered as hidden prefigurations of what is revealed in the gospels around the person of Jesus Christ. In the eyes of the author, this is guaranteed by the intrinsic connection which exists between the two covenants, those of Moses and Jesus. E.g. the 'tree' (piece of wood) thrown by Moses into the water of Marah in order to sweeten it (Exod. 15:25) is seen as a prefiguration (Syriac *ṭups'* or *ṛṣ'*) of the cross of Christ.

This exegetical device, employed already by Justin, Irenaeus and others, was made his trade-mark by Aphrahat, who used it in several homilies (IV [Jacob], XII, XXII^f. [Moses], VI [Elijah], XI [Joshua]), but in particular in hom. XXI, which for the greater part consists of a long list of OT exemplary persons (as indicated above), all of them interpreted typologically. I will concentrate on some of these: Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Eliza. Regularly, the characteristic *Steigerung* (Goppelt) between the OT exemplar and its NT counterpart will come to the fore.

'THERE IS NO NEED OF TURTLE DOVES OR YOUNG PIGEONS...',
JACOB OF SAROUG QUOTATIONS AND NON-QUOTATIONS OF
LEVITICUS IN SELECTED SYRIAC WRITERS
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- [17] Quotations in Syriac writers have been considered a fruitful source for detecting Peshitta phrases and passages to shed light on the history of the text's transmission. Words or phrases are seen as evidence of the text familiar to the writer, his circle and his place.

However the evidence does not support this argument. As in the case of Shubhahmaran's general use of Scripture, and Aphrahat's use of Leviticus, quotations are shaped not by their original source but by the author's manipulation of quotations to support his argument. The genre of scripture quoted is an element of the argument which uses it. Some short quotations are careful and

close to the Peshitta, but longer ones are often summaries or selections, with the order changed if felt necessary. The appeal is less to the exact words than to the general sense, or even inferences drawn from them.

Quotations from Leviticus are found in:

1. lectionaries: Eastern ones choosing moralistically, Western ones for analogy;
2. controversies with Jews e.g. Sergius the Stylite: exact phrases are less important than inference;
3. hexaameron e.g. Jacob of Edessa: passages are used for analogy and inference;
4. ascetic e.g. John of Dalyatha: the quotations are allusive and referential.

Hence the literature quoted, and (even more) the argumentative context, are the determining factors in shaping quotation. “Citation très libre” is a consequence of rhetoric rather than failure of memory; exactness is required only when a specific word or short phrase is needed in close exegesis.

EPHRAEM AND THE ‘GREEK BIBLE’

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- [18] On various occasions the author of the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron—which tradition identifies with Ephraem the Syrian—refers to a Biblical text different from that of the Diatessaron. This reference to a Biblical text different from that version upon which the author of the Commentary comments has raised the question whether this text is identical with the *Vetus Syra*—and whether ‘Ephraem’, consequently, is aware of the Syriac version of the separate Gospels. It is the aim of this paper to analyse the quotations in the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron and to attempt an answer to the question of the identity of that Biblical version. Although the chronology of the Syriac versions of the New Testament makes it obvious that the Syriac version of the New Testament referred to in the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron cannot be identified as the Peshitta, the wider theme of the Symposium—the use of the Fathers for the reconstruction

of the text of the Syriac Bible—might justify the main question of this paper.

ISHODAD OF MERV'S EXEGESIS OF THE PSALMS 119 AND 139-147: A STUDY OF HIS INTERPRETATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SYRIAC TRANSLATION OF THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA'S COMMENTARY

CLEMENS LEONHARD, *UNIVERSITÄT WIEN*

- [19] Exegetes of the Apostolic Church of the East sometimes emphasize that their understanding of the biblical text corresponds to this Church's great theological authority, Theodore of Mopsuestia (died 428), who was called 'the interpreter' in exegetical works. Unfortunately, such claims cannot be examined in the sources, as his posthumous anathematization led to the destruction of most of his original texts. However, the Syriac translation of Theodore's commentary to the Psalms 119 and 139-147 is still extant and allows us to compare it with Ishodad of Merv's (mentioned ca. 850) short comments to these Psalms. The first objective of this paper is the evaluation of Ishodad's use of Theodore's commentary and the assessment of his exegetical approach in those cases, where he does not use Theodore's commentary. An additional look into the Ms. Mingana 58 adds to the understanding of Ishodad's way of interpretation.

Timothy I, the great Catholicos of the Church of the East (died 823) tells in one of his letters about his efforts to provide a copy of the Syrohexapla for the school of Bet Lapat. Thus, he introduced an important tool for textual criticism into the academies of the Church of the East. In his commentary, Ishodad sometimes quotes the Syriac translations of other biblical versions ('the Greek', 'the Hebrew') part of which he probably copied from the Syrohexapla. Even the Syriac translation of Theodore's commentary may add 'the Greek' version after the lemma from the Peshitta at the beginning of a paragraph of interpretation. Ishodad also used these attestations of the 'Greek' text. The second objective of this paper is to provide a description of Ishodad's use of such variant readings and suggestions to their provenance.

ISHODAD'S KNOWLEDGE OF HEBREW AS EVIDENCED FROM HIS
TREATMENT OF PESHITTA EZEKIEL

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- [20] Ishodad of Merv's knowledge of Hebrew is evidenced both in his use and his non-use of Hebrew in his commentary on the Peshitta of Ezekiel. In his commentary on Ezekiel, Ishodad refers to 'the Hebrew' (*'ibraya*) 7 times. The 7 cases of 'the Hebrew' can be divided into 3 typological categories: a reference to 'the Hebrew' as the source of the Syriac version which we call the Peshitta (28:10); references to Hebrew words (1:1; 20:29; 43:15); and references to Hebrew versional readings which differ from the Syriac (1:18; 9:2; 25:9). These case will be presented and analyzed with an attempt made to identify the source of Ishodad's Hebrew knowledge. In addition, a key case where Ishodad should have evoked the Hebrew, but did not, will be examined. From this study, an answer to the question about the extent of Ishodad's knowledge of Hebrew-what he knew and what he did not know-will be suggested. Furthermore, implications about the modern critical approach to the Peshitta will be drawn.

THE SYRIAC NEW TESTAMENT IN THE ACTS OF JUDAS THOMAS
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- [21] The Syriac text of *The Acts of Judas Thomas* offers Peshitta scholars a window into the Syriac Bible and its interpretation in the third century. Where this symposium focuses on the text of the Peshitta in what might be called the 'proto-Peshitta' period, the source text for the biblical citations and allusions in this early Syriac narrative becomes of interest. A.F.J. Klijn's assessment of these citations provides a point of departure: 'we may suppose that originally a Diatessaron was used in quoting the New Testament. At a later stage the text was adapted to the separate gospels' (*The Acts of Thomas*, [NT.S 5; Leiden 1962] 17). This conclusion was repeated by W. Petersen who noted: 'to date, no comprehensive study of the gospel citations in the *Acts* has been conducted' (*Tatian's Diatessaron*, [VC.S 25; Leiden 1994] 215). The *Acts* explicitly cites the New Testament seven times in addition to its version of the 'Our Father'. Two citations that depart significantly from the Greek and Latin canonical traditions and from the Peshitta are

examined with a view to establishing whether they derive from the Diatessaron or from the Vetus Syra. The first example is taken from §28: 'Therefore how much will he care for you, you of little faith' (*kma baki 'laykun netbtel leb hsiray baymanuta*) and is a citation of Matt 6,30 and Luke 12,28. The second example is taken from §144 and involves the plus 'and our sins' (*wahṭabayn*) in the *Acts* version of the 'Our Father'.

INTERPRETATION IN THE GREEK ANTIOCHENES AND THE SYRIAC FATHERS

SHINICHI MUTO, SHIGA, JAPAN

- [22] When we attempt to situate Syriac exegeses in the broader history of exegesis in Christianity, one of the most important issues is the relationship between exegeses of the Greek Antiochenes and those of the Syriac Fathers. In order to elucidate their characteristics, it is the best to investigate them in the time before the former started influencing the latter. In this study, the representatives of the Antiochene exegetical school and those of the fairly contemporary Syriac exegesis are elaborated. Before we set out to study their concrete exegeses, it is a prerequisite to have a clear picture of what they think interpretation is, i.e., the central issue of modern hermeneutics. It has been indicated that the Syriac hermeneutics is an Antiochene type, although it has been scarcely compared in detail with the Antiochene.

Among Greek Antiochenes, this study focuses on Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and, above all, John Chrysostom, because his related texts are numerous and extant in original Greek. According to Chrysostom, the Bible is not difficult or ambiguous. In the case of seemingly unclear passages, the author himself explains them on condition that readers attentively follow the intention of the text. Even if a biblical writer does not explain them, other biblical writers instead can do so. So it is not Chrysostom who interprets Scripture, but Scripture which interprets itself. His audience cannot easily oppose such an interpretation.

With regard to Syriac Fathers, this study treats Aphrahat and, especially, Ephrem of Nisibis in whose works many related passages can be found. According to Ephrem, since God bestowed many images of the biblical words in proportion to preferences of interpreters, they understand only a tiny portion of the whole.

Benefits for everyone are hidden for his meditation; he learns step by step. Interpretations are made according to the interpreters' capacity. So there is no particular interpretation valid for anyone at any time.

This study concludes with a comparison between the Greek Antiochenes and the Syriac Fathers. As the former tend to teach their hearers the one true interpretation of a certain passage in the Bible, the latter are more open to learn many other possibilities of interpretations. Between these lie fundamental dissimilarities so that one should not regard the Syriac hermeneutics as an Antiochene type.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS IN APHRAHAT'S DEMONSTRATIONS
AND IN THE LIBER GRADUUM

ROBERT J. OWENS, *THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,*
NEW YORK

- [23] After brief review of current questions in the study of the early history of Peshitta Proverbs, this paper undertakes text-critical analysis of a corpus of citations from two fourth-century Syriac patristic sources. The original Syriac of Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* (337-345 CE) and the *Liber Graduum* (ca. 400) both pre-date the earliest extant Ms of Peshitta Proverbs (6h16). The primary surviving Mss of the *Demonstrations* also pre-date 6h16, although those of the *Liber Graduum* do not.

Within Aphrahat's work, twelve different passages contain quotations of portions of the following Proverbs passages: 9:9; 10:10, 27; 11:5, 31; 16:19, 32; 18:19; 20:6, 9; 25:21; 28:2, 13, 16; 29:23. Within the *Liber Graduum*, six different passages contain portions of Proverbs 10:12; 17:5; 18:10; and 24:17. Though not set apart as distinct lemmata, all of the Aphrahat quotations are formal, being introduced by one of his standard formulas of Scripture citation, such as 'as it says,' 'as it is written,' etc. Three of the *Liber Graduum* quotations are so introduced.

As is typical of the biblical quotations throughout both works, these Proverbs texts are imbedded within the author's own extended prose, calling into question their literalness. None of these citations reproduces an entire verse. In earlier publications, R. Owens has discussed the difficulty that confronts the scholar who seeks text-critical witness in Aphrahat's biblical. On the one hand, Aphrahat obviously quotes casually or from memory much of the

time, calling up only a clause or phrase, sometimes adapting the wording slightly to fit the vocabulary, or conflating similar passages. On the other hand, his quotes are full of apparently exact reproductions of substantial portions of the Peshitta text—so full that one cannot be content simply to ignore this early corpus of biblical quotation. Much of this paper is given over to detailed discussion of the methodological problems involved in trying to use such patristic quotations as textual witnesses.

LEAVEN OF PURITY AND HOLINESS: THE PESHITTA OF
1CORINTHIANS 5:8 AND CHRISTIAN SELF-DEFINITION
EMMANUEL PAPOUTSAKIS, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

- [24] At 1 Corinthians 5:8, the Peshitta differs from the Greek original in that it does not contrast 'leaven (of malice and evil)' with 'unleavened bread (of sincerity and truth)', but rather 'leaven of evil and bitterness' with 'leaven of purity and holiness'. I would like to argue that this rendering of the Greek original reflects an implicit polemic that becomes explicit in the subsequent period. Among the Christian (Syriac, Greek, Armenian) and Jewish (Hebrew, Aramaic) sources that will be discussed are Aphrahat, Ephrem, Cyrillona, Narsai, Jacob of Serugh, Isaac of Antioch; Ignatius of Antioch, Justin, John Chrysostom, Pseudo-Macarius, Gregory of Nyssa; the Targumim and Bereshit Rabbah.

PROBLEMS IN THE SYRIAC NEW TESTAMENT AND HOW SYRIAN
EXEGETES SOLVED THEM
WILLIAM L. PETERSEN, PENNSTATE UNIVERSITY

- [25] The methods and techniques Syrian Christian exegetes brought to bear on the Syriac testaments are exceptionally creative, suggestive, and often unique. However, when compared with the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible), the New Testament confronts an exegete with special challenges. At least three can be readily identified. First, while the Hebrew Bible has some parallel passages and/or multiple accounts, the New Testament has many more such accounts (viz., the gospels), and they concern the very center of the Christian religion (the life, sayings, and acts of Jesus), not peripheral matters. However, as is well known, the gospels are often inconsistent and/or contradictory. Therefore, despite the fact that one is working at the very heart of the Christian belief-system,

an exegete must somehow either choose among the various accounts, or reconcile them by means of some explanation. Second, while the Hebrew Bible was the touchstone for Jewish theology, the New Testament became the touchstone for Christian theology; its writings (e.g., the Pauline epistles) formed the basis for (and became incorporated into) 'normative' Christian theology. But theology is always changing. Therefore, what had been 'normative' in an earlier time might later be deemed unacceptable. In such a case the options are either to change the text itself (by removing or modifying the unacceptable item), or to offer a new interpretation, consonant with the 'new' theology. Third and finally, when compared with the Greek New Testament at a textual level, the Syriac New Testament contains a significant number of important variant readings. How one evaluates them (as relics from a 'primitive' strata of the NT, or as late, singular, 'local' changes, produced in Syria, for the Syrian 'market') is often unclear, and remains the subject of research and debate.

This paper will examine how some of the great Syrian exegetes (Aphrahat, Ephrem, and Isho'dad, for example) perceived these problems, grappled with them, and eventually solved them. As byproducts of this examination, we will gain insight into their attitudes towards the text, their theology, and their exegetical techniques.

SIRACH QUOTATIONS IN THE DISCOURSES OF PHILOXENUS OF MABBUG: TEXT AND CONTEXT

WIDO VAN PEURSEN, UNIVERSITEIT LEIDEN

- [26] The *Discourses on Christian Life and Character* of the West Syrian bishop Philoxenus of Mabbug (450-523 AD) contain four quotations from the book of Sirach. These quotations show some remarkable differences from the text in the extant Peshitta manuscripts and some agreements with the Greek text of Sirach. In this respect the Sirach quotations differ from citations from Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah, and Psalms in the *Discourses*, investigated by R.G. Jenkins in his *The Old Testament Quotations of Philoxenus of Mabbug* (Leuven 1989). Some proposals have been advanced to account for the differences between the text of Philoxenus' quotations and the Peshitta text. W.D. McHardy claimed that Philoxenus used the Peshitta text as it is known to us, but quotes in a loose, free manner, while M.M. Winter argued that Philoxenus

possessed a Philoxenian version of Sirach when he wrote the *Discourses*. These proposals will be evaluated in the light of Jenkins' study. Also other explanations will be reviewed. The present paper will further discuss the context of the quotations and address the question how the Sirach quotations function in the context of Philoxenus' argument and whether the context in which Philoxenus uses his quotations agrees with the context from which they are taken.

Some observations will be made about the quotation of Sir. 27:20 in Philoxenus' *Letter to the Monks of Senoun* and about the absence of Sirach citations in other products of Philoxenus' literary creativity, including his commentaries, his theological and dogmatic treatises, and his numerous letters.

THE RECEPTION OF PESHITTA CHRONICLES: SOME ELEMENTS FOR INVESTIGATION

DAVID PHILLIPS, UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN

- [27] The object of this study is to investigate the substantive elements which can elucidate the way in which the Peshitta to Chronicles was received and used in Syriac tradition. There is evidence to suggest that Chronicle's reception had a chequered history within the totality of the Syriac Churches, but it is necessary to be prudent before drawing hasty conclusions. There are at least three areas of investigation which can shed light on the book's canonicity: a) The Biblical manuscript tradition—that is to say, in which manuscripts and in what order are Chronicles to be found. We will mention complete Bibles, the so-called Massoretic MSS, lectionaries and the group of 'Nestorian Apocryphal Books'. b) Quotations of, or allusions to, Chronicles in Syriac patristic writings in contexts which show or suggest that the Peshitta to Chronicles is being used as Scripture-Aphrahat and Ephrem, among others, provide some interesting examples. c) The 'theoreticians' of canonicity: the presence or absence of Chronicles in the lists of books received as Scripture; seven examples will be mentioned. The intersection between these three areas could also be a fruitful field to be examined.

THE PESHITTA AND BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS IN THE LONGER SYRIAC VERSION OF THE COMMENTARY OF ATHANASIUS ON THE PSALMS (BM ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPT 14568) WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PSALM 23 (24) AND 102 (103)

HERRIE VAN ROOY, *POTCHEFSTROOMSE UNIVERSITEIT*

- [28] Thomson (1977) published two Syriac versions of the commentary of Athanasius on the Psalms, a shorter, abridged version and a longer version. This version is taken from the manuscript BM Additional Manuscript 14568. This manuscript dates from 597 C.E. This text is a translation of a Greek original. It predates the Syro-Hexaplaric translation of the Old Testament. In the Greek original references to the Bible are according to the LXX. The question is what text did the translator use for his Biblical references. Did he translate the references from the Greek manuscript of the commentary, did he use the Peshitta, or can one discern a combination of these two possibilities?

In this study four versions of the references to the Psalms need to be taken into consideration: the quotations in Athanasius, the reading of the Septuagint, the Peshitta and the Syriac version of the commentary. With regard to the references in the Greek version of the commentary, one must keep in mind that the whole Psalm is not quoted in the commentary, only a selection of references necessary for the comments made on the Psalm. It is clear that Athanasius used the LXX, but his text may contain unique variants, such as the plus at the beginning of the heading of Psalm 24(25). In this instance the heading in the Syriac commentary does not contain the plus. The Syriac commentary may add some of the portions omitted in the Greek commentary, such as the last part of Psalm 24(25):1. The Syriac may also agree with the Peshitta in instances where the Peshitta differs from the Greek, such as at the end of the first line of Psalm 24(25):2.

It is clear that the references in the Syriac commentary display a variety of possibilities and each reference must be considered on its own. It is possible that the version of the Psalms reflects the translation of Philoxenus, or at least a related translation by the translator of the commentary.

THE RECEPTION OF THE PESHITTA PSALTER IN BAR SALIBI'S
COMMENTARY ON THE PSALMS

STEPHEN RYAN, *HARVARD UNIVERSITY*

- [29] One of the notable and innovative features of Bar Salibi's Commentary on the Old Testament is its bifurcation: the first column he labels 'factual' and the second either 'factual and spiritual' or 'mixed.' The presentation of these separate commentaries in parallel synoptic columns is without precise precedent in the history of biblical interpretation. In addition to the basic division between factual and spiritual, Bar Salibi appears to have added another division, that between commentaries based on the Peshitta and those based on the Septuagint. Scholars have usually understood these two structuring principles to be related, that is, they have understood the factual commentaries to be based on the Peshitta and several of the spiritual commentaries, as Bar Salibi himself states, to be based on the Septuagint. J.C.J. Sanders argued that Bar Salibi selected the Septuagint as the basis for his spiritual commentaries because he considered the Peshitta to be a Jewish book. Werner Strothmann was more cautious, suggesting that Bar Salibi's choice of biblical versions for his factual and spiritual commentaries is a riddle that we are unable to solve.

This paper studies several related aspects of the reception of the Peshitta Psalter in Bar Salibi's 'Commentary on the Psalms.' I will first review the evidence for the traditional scholarly position that Bar Salibi used the Peshitta for the factual commentary and the Syro-Hexapla for the mixed commentary on the Psalms. I will demonstrate that Bar Salibi made use of the Syro-Hexapla in a limited and partial way and that he did so not because of an ideological conviction but because of the use of this version in one of his sources. Although Bar Salibi did not explain his use of the biblical versions, he did include Moshe bar Kepha's 'Introduction to the Psalms' as a preface to his own commentary. In the final part of the paper I compare the theoretical discussion found in Bar Kepha's preface with the actual practice of Bar Salibi in his commentary.

OBSCURE WORDS IN THE PESHITTA OF SAMUEL, ACCORDING TO
THEODORE BAR KONI

ALISON SALVESEN, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

- [30] One of the problems that translators in the NEATSB project will come across sooner or later are obscure words for which the entries in the standard lexicons seem to be either approximations based on the context, or on the original Hebrew or Greek. It is comforting to realize that even Syriac writers who lived several centuries after the Peshitta was translated found certain words problematic. At the end of each question and answer section of the *Liber Scholiorum* of Theodore bar Koni (end eighth century) is appended a list of the difficult words in that section of the Peshitta, with explanations. This paper seeks to assess their value, and to compare them with the approach of Jacob of Edessa, the earlier West Syriac writer.

GOSPEL QUOTATIONS IN THE BREVIARY (ܬܡܝܪܐ) OF THE
SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

AHO SHEMUNKASHO, MOR JAKOB VON SARUG THEOLOGISCHES
SEMINAR, WARBURG

- [31] The Breviary (ܬܡܝܪܐ) of the Syrian Orthodox Church found its form, as we know it today, certainly after the last Syriac translation of the Bible undertaken by Thomas of Harqel in AD 616. This means that the prayers and songs of the Breviary were finally collected and/or composed at a time when all six versions of the New Testament were in existence; namely the Diatessaron, the Old Syriac Gospels, the Peshitta, the Philoxenian, the Harklean, and the Syro Palestinian. One can see from the text and themes that the Breviary is clearly rooted in the Bible. The themes are related to the classical structure of the Breviary; namely seven prayers a day, dominated by prayers related to Mary, the Apostles and Saints, penitents and to the deceased. Each of these subjects refers to many biblical passages. While most of the biblical references allude to the Bible, only a small number are direct quotations.

The question rises as to which biblical versions have been used in the composition of these prayers and chants, and in particular, how much the Peshitta has influenced the Breviary. This paper will try to throw some light on the question. Furthermore, it will deal with the development of the Peshitta's terminology in the Breviary.

It will, however, only consider Gospel citations and allusions. Biblical references to the Old Testament and the rest of the New Testament are not taken into consideration. Also the work is based on the printed versions of the Breviary and does not consider the various number of manuscripts.

THE PSALM HEADINGS IN THE WEST SYRIAN TRADITION AND
THE PSALM COMMENTARY OF DANIEL OF SALAH
DAVID G.K. TAYLOR, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

- [32] A renewed emphasis on the importance of the contextual study of the Peshitta text has inevitably led to a welcome re-examination of the text traditions preserved in the writings of the Syriac Church Fathers, but the headings prefixed to the Peshitta Psalms provide us with a rare opportunity to examine the influence of the Fathers on the transmission of the biblical manuscripts themselves. The Peshitta Psalm headings are quite independent of the original Hebrew and later Septuagint Greek headings, and characteristically identify the specific circumstances of composition, or link the texts to events in Christ's life. The headings were not included in the Leiden edition of the Peshitta Psalter (1980), and Bloemendaal's important monograph (1960), which built upon the earlier studies of Vosté (1944) and Baethgen (1878), restricted itself to the East Syrian tradition (which proved to be dependent upon the exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia). The independent West Syrian tradition has remained relatively neglected, and it is this which this paper seeks to rectify. On the basis of a collation of the headings in all of the West Syrian Psalm manuscripts utilised in the Leiden edition, plus certain other manuscripts and printed editions, and a survey of the West Syrian exegetical tradition and in particular the exegesis of Daniel of Salah (fl. 541), the author hopes to outline the origins, development, and characteristic features of the West Syrian Psalm headings.

MELCHIZEDEK, WHO CONTAINS THE IMAGE OF CHRIST
JAN VAN REETH, MORTSEL, BELGIUM

- [33] Starting with Psalm 110 and the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. 7), the puzzling figure of Melchizedek has always struck the imagination: from unknown parentage, God-fearing even before Revelation, he seems to have descended from heaven, being a kind of divine

manifestation or hypostasis. In the Syriac tradition and through typological exegesis, he gave rise to the formation of heretic movements. This was especially the case with John of Apamea, who developed a hierarchic cosmology, based on a plurality of consecutive emanations. Our paper is to show that this was based on a specific interpretation of Genesis 14. In the first place, it elucidated the name which Melchizedek attributes to God: *El 'Elyôn*, derived from the epithet of God, *'ĕl*, which was widely spread in the south-western Semitic area (Syriac and Arab desert). This was further combined with the definition of his creative function: He who is 'the possessor of heaven and earth'.

BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE MONK'S CELL: THE SYRIAC COMMENTARY TRADITION

LUCAS VAN ROMPAY, DUKE UNIVERSITY

- [34] Although Syriac literature in its entirety reflects the various ways in which the Syriac Bible was read, understood, and used as a source of inspiration in the Syrian Christian communities, there is reason to single out the specific genre of biblical commentaries.

Biblical commentaries span the whole period of Syriac literature. Unlike most other compositions, they were created and used in close contact with contemporary biblical manuscripts, which both the redactor and reader must have had on their desk. Biblical commentaries, therefore, are the first field to which the student should turn to complement his or her study of biblical manuscripts.

After a brief survey of the existing commentaries, their distinctive features, and the state of the research, we will ask ourselves how the commentary tradition can be integrated into the field of Peshitta studies. Three avenues will be explored.

1. First and foremost, the biblical quotations deserve to be studied. The data culled from the commentaries and critically arranged may in the future develop into a valuable *apparatus* to the existing Peshitta edition.
2. Despite the dominant position of the Peshitta, Syriac commentators throughout the ages were well aware of the existence of biblical versions different from the Peshitta. This awareness of the plurality of the biblical text not only led them to incorporate into their commentaries readings

from versions of Jewish and Greek Christian origin, but also provided them with an intellectual framework for their views on the origin and development of the Bible in various cultural traditions.

3. The commentaries reflect the cultural and ecclesiastical diversity of Syrian Christianity. However, in the course of the centuries, the East and West Syrian traditions gradually came closer to each other and to a certain extent adopted each other's interpretations and approaches.

In addition to these observations, a few more general questions related to the Syriac commentary tradition will be touched upon, e.g. the definition of the genre, the relationship to non-Syriac biblical commentaries, and the *Sitz im Leben* of the commentaries, with special attention to the schools and monasteries.

PESHITTA NEW TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS IN THE WEST SYRIAN ANAPHORAS

BABY VARGHESE, ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
KOTTAYAM, KERALA

- [35] Researches on the Syriac Bible have rarely made use of the liturgical texts, with the exception of the Lectionaries. West Syrian anaphoras (more than 70), baptismal ordo (about a dozen), as well as other liturgical texts contain a large number of quotations from the Bible. Several of these texts or at least part of them belong to the first millennium (c. 350-1000 AD).

The Bible quotations in the West Syrian Anaphoras can be classified into three groups:

1. Quotations translated/adapted from the Anaphoras of Greek origin, especially Anaphora of Saint James.
2. Direct quotations or paraphrases from the Syriac Versions of the Bible.
3. Quotations or paraphrases borrowed from patristic texts, either composed in Syriac or translated into Syriac.

The central part of the anaphora (Sanctus-Institution-Anamnesis-Epiklesis) needs particular attention, as it is the oldest stratum, which remained rather less modified.

Several Bible quotations reached Syriac Anaphoras through the Syriac version of Saint James. Greek Saint James quotes from LXX and the Greek NT, often without much alteration. Some of the quotations of Greek St. James seem to have been borrowed from the so-called 'Clementine Liturgy' of the Apostolic Constitutions.

The West Syrians have made a literal translation of Greek St. James with its Bible quotations. They have rarely made attempts to correct the quotations to make them conform to the Peshitta or the Harklean Versions. Thus in a few pre-tenth century anaphoras, the prayers of Saint James (with the Bible quotations) were often quoted directly or were simply paraphrased.

The anaphoras that were originally composed in Syriac gives more or less accurate quotations from the Peshitta, Harklean, Old Syriac and other unidentified versions. However, Saint James served as the model for quoting the Bible. Thus we can find a tendency to conflate different Bible passages. The Institution narrative is an example of mixing elements from different NT passages.[E.g., 1 Cor.11; Institution Narratives in the Synoptic Gospels, and the accounts of the multiplication of the bread]. Later anaphoras borrowed phrases from anaphoras translated from Greek. This makes the text-critical assessment of the quotations a rather difficult task.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PESHITTA PROGRAMME PRESENTED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE

[36] By: Dr. K.D. JENNER
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13 August 2001

Dear Colleagues,

It is a distinctive honour to the Peshitta Institute to inform you about the progress of the Peshitta Programme.

Looking back at the past three years of the Peshitta programme, the following remarks are to be made about parts III and IV. In 1998 Vol. IV/2, the books of Chronicles, has been published. The publishing of Volume IV/4, containing Ezra

Nehemia and I+II Maccabees, has first priority now. The schedule for this volume is that preparations for printing will be finished in the end of this year, and that it will appear in Spring 2002. A substantial portion of the text of volume III/2 (containing Jeremiah, Lamentations, the epistles of Jeremiah and Baruch, and the book of Baruch) is almost ready for printing. The same holds true for Vol. IV/1, containing Ruth, Susanna, Esther, Judith and Ben Sirah, though we cannot keep secret that portions of the collations still need verification. Moreover, the copy for one of the smaller books of this volume is still wanting. For the moment the publishing of volume IV/5, containing 3+4 Maccabees and the Odes of Solomon, has low priority. Anyway, the editor for this volume has not yet finished his work.

Some years ago, after consultation of Dr. S. Brock, it was decided to add an extra volume to the Editio Major. This volume will contain collations of the MSS from the 13th-15th century (perhaps some 16th century MSS will also be included), addenda and corrigenda. In the near future the Peshitta Institute will invite participants in the project of the Editio Major to deliver their collations for this period, as far as they have not yet done this. If necessary for the preparation of this volume as well as for the revision of the Preliminary List and its subsequent official edition, we will request to return the films that were given in loan.

In the meantime much work has been done for the fifth part of the edition, that is the Concordance. We hope to publish the second volume next year. On their request Dr. W.Th. van Peursen has joined the present General Editors, Professor P.G. Borbone and Dr. K.D. Jenner. Dr. Van Peursen had been recommended for his expertise and qualifications in linguistic and computer assisted studies in the field of Semitic languages.

As preparations for the scholarly Edition of the Peshitta commenced under the aegis of IOSOT, it had already become an accepted presumption that Syriac commentary and liturgical literature might provide additional and text-critically relevant data for the establishment of the text. Time was not yet ripe then, however, to commence a broad, thorough and systematic study of the reception of the Syriac Bible. In the meantime a number of scholars have undeniably proved the importance of this material. The studies in question, however, were still concerned with isolated details and remained restricted to smaller portions of the text.

Recently, Dr. R.B. ter Haar Romeny has made an extensive pilot study of the commentary literature and has irrefutably affirmed the previous presumptions. Thus, on mature deliberation, the Peshitta Institute has come to the conclusion that time is ripe now to make concrete the intention of the late Professor P.A.H. de Boer and Dr. W. Baars. In line with this conclusion the present General Editors, Dr. K.D. Jenner and Professor A. van der Kooij, have planned to add a sixth part to the text edition, containing the data from the sources in question. They have invited Dr. R.B. ter Haar Romeny to share in the responsibility for this part of the text edition, since he is an internationally acknowledged expert in this field, and last but not least knows the ins and outs of the edition and programme in progress.

Text Edition, Concordance, and Concise Survey of the Reception will be of great help for two other projects: the New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible, and the Editio Critica. In line with the acknowledgement of the first project by IOSOT at the Business Meeting in Oslo (1998) the Peshitta Institute started inviting scholars recommended by the General Editors of this project. The invitation is done on the basis of a sample that has been prepared by Dr. A. Salvesen. Inviting participants is still in progress. Meanwhile Dr. ter Haar Romeny has joined the present General Editors, Dr. K.D. Jenner, Professor J. Joosten and Dr. A. Salvesen; he will assist them with regard to the Syriac commentary and related literature. Dr. G. Greenberg has been invited to take care for the uniformity of the English translation and has thus joined the Editorial Board.

After due consideration the Peshitta Institute came to the conclusion that the planned Editio Minor should not present the BTR type of text as in the Editio Major. There are strong arguments now to establish a critical text and to make the Editio Minor an Editio Critica. Consultation of Dr. A. Juckel from Münster made clear that it is to be preferred to combine the critical minor editions of OT and NT. Activities regarding the OT will be co-ordinated by Leiden and those related to the NT by Münster. For the present the doctors Ter Haar Romeny, Jenner, Juckel and Van Peursen are acting as General Editors for the intended edition.

In the meantime the Peshitta Institute made preparations for a project on linguistic and syntactical study of the Peshitta. This project, the *Computer Assisted Linguistic Analysis of the Peshitta*

(CALAP), has started in cooperation with the Free University of Amsterdam. The participants in this project are Drs. J.W. Dyk, P.S.F. van Keulen, and W.Th. van Peursen and Mr. C.J. Sikkel. Dr. K.D. Jenner and Prof. E. Talstra supervise this project which is financially supported by the Netherlands Organization for Research.

As you may have noticed, the past period four volumes of the Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden have appeared. Recently Dr. R.B. ter Haar Romeny has been appointed Executive Editor, and the scope of the series has been broadened as may be clear from the added sub-title: *Studies in the Syriac Versions of the Bible and their Cultural Contexts*. To be clear: the series will thus be open for studies on the Syriac NT as well. Last but not least we may draw your attention to it that this series will also include the edition of the text and annotated translation of Jacob of Edessa's Revised Bible. Anybody who intends to publish a similar work in the Monographs of the Peshitta Institute is invited to consult Dr. Ter Haar Romeny.

Last but not least I may draw your attention to the activities regarding the collection of xeroxes of publications on the Syriac Bible and the large collection of films of Syriac biblical and related manuscripts in the Peshitta Institute. We try to get digitized not only the xeroxed publications but also the films. Together with bibliographical data, surveys of biblical references in studies on the Syriac bible and Syriac liturgy these digitized collections will form the so-called Peshitta Database. Yesterday Mr. Keath Healy and I have discussed the possibilities with regard to digitize the manuscripts and in the near future Dr. Kiraz and I will consult each other as to digitalizing the xeroxed publications. In the meantime you may have noticed that the Peshitta Institute presents the bibliographical references to recent publications on the Syriac bible and its cultural and liturgical context to the Executive Editor of the Journal of the Aramaic Bible.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,

Konrad D. Jenner

Terry C. Falla, Whitley College, University of Melbourne