

Barbara Aland, Andreas Juckel, eds., *Das Neue Testament in syrischer Überlieferung. II Die paulinischen Briefe, Teil 3: 1./2. Thessalonicherbrief, 1./2. Timotheusbrief, Titusbrief, Philemonbrief und Hebräerbrief.* (Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung 32) Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002. Pp. viii + 551. Cloth, Euro 198. ISBN 3–11-017387-5.

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Following volumes covering the Major Catholic Epistles (1986), Romans and I Corinthians (1991), and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians (1995), the present publication is the fourth tome of Syriac New Testament texts edited by Barbara Aland and Andreas Juckel, both of the Institut für neutestamentlichen Textforschung in Münster. All volumes appeared in the same series, in a format that has remained essentially unchanged. Taken together, they make up an impressive contribution to the study of the Syriac text of the New Testament.

The most substantial part of the book is an edition of the Syriac text of the Corpus Paulinum from I Thessalonians through Hebrews as attested in the Peshitta, in the Harklean, and in quotations in Syriac literature. The different Syriac versions are presented verse by verse in horizontal lines. The Peshitta is given in a diplomatic edition taking British Library Add. 14.470 (5/6th century, referred to as **P4**) as the basic text. The apparatus signals variant readings in eleven other, mostly early, manuscripts. Although this is not a full critical edition of the Peshitta, the editors are certainly right in judging that the variants included are representative for the entire early history of the version. Since no other critical edition was ever made of the Peshitta Epistles (the British and Foreign Bible Society edition of 1920 offered an eclectic text based on early manuscripts, but no apparatus), this segment alone — which forms a small part of the volume as a whole — merits NT scholars' eternal gratitude.

The Harklean is presented in a critical edition based on three manuscripts, the most important of which is Ms 37 of St. Mark's monastery in Jerusalem (8/9th century, referred to as **H4**). Here too, the new edition improves much on the earlier edition of Joseph White (1803), which was based on a single manuscript (break-

ing off at Hebr. 11:27). The translation technique of the Harklean, which aims at formal equivalence with the Vorlage, makes it easy to retrovert into Greek. A retroversion of the Harklean epistles — prepared in comparison with the minuscules of “Family 2138” which are closely allied to the Vorlage of the Harklean — is proposed on 452–494.

The real bonus of the present edition, however, and a breathtaking tour de force, is the collection of quotations in Syriac literature. Thousands of quotations, excerpted from more than 160 writings, dating from the fourth century to Bar Hebraeus, both originally Syriac and translated from Greek, are transcribed in extenso and presented in chronological order alongside the Peshitta and Harklean versions. All the material is there for a historical study of the Syriac text of the Pauline epistles, from the earliest Old Syriac stage, through the Peshitta, the Philoxenian and the Harklean versions, to post-Harklean efforts at taking the imitation of the Greek language to its limit. The editors are justified in expressing the hope that “the wealth of material in our three volumes shall elicit corresponding researches” (p. V).

In comparison with the edition of the Old Testament Peshitta by the Peshitta Institute in Leiden, the present edition clearly expresses different options. The strength of the Peshitta Institute’s approach lies in its focus on the manuscript tradition, treating the manuscripts (or at least the earlier ones) exhaustively. This has made it possible to write a history of the OT Peshitta text — something that is neither attempted nor achieved in the Münster edition for the text of the NT Peshitta. In contrast, Aland and Juckel and their team have selected a more global approach, where the Peshitta text is set in the context of earlier and later Syriac versions of the New Testament. Partly the different policies are dictated by differences in the material: in the Syriac OT there is no analogue to the Old Syriac version, and while the Peshitta is based on the Hebrew OT the later versions are based on the Septuagint. Yet, one might also say that the two projects form a challenge to one another, pointing to possible paths for future research.

Apart from the text edition and its paraphernalia (information on the manuscripts, information on the Syriac writings from which the quotations were excerpted, indexes), the volume contains brief discussions on the textual history of the Peshitta (Ch. III) and the Harklean (Ch. IV). These chapters are highly instructive and reflect the same standards of professionalism as the text edition. They should be required reading for advanced students with an interest in the Syriac Bible. With regard to the Harklean it is shown that

variant readings can generally be classified as errors, assimilations to the Peshitta, or “grecizations” designed to conform the Syriac even more to the Greek text. More important, it is convincingly argued that the Harklean base text was translated from a single Greek manuscript while asterisks and marginal readings were taken from another manuscript (and perhaps from the Philoxenian version as well). The obelos marks elements required by Syriac idiom that have no precise counterpart in the Greek. The Harklean version was not a mere revision of the Philoxenian but an entirely new translation of a Greek manuscript. A confrontation of these views with the famous subscription to the Harklean version leads to a new interpretation of the Syriac text. The key terms are *ʾktb* “to be produced” (said of a biblical manuscript) and *ʾp̄hm* “to be annotated with variant readings”.

With regard to the Peshitta the great homogeneity (Konformität) of the manuscript tradition is correctly observed. The majority of variants are of relatively little consequence. Three classes of variants are identified by Aland and Juckel: a) variants bringing the Peshitta text closer to the Greek or to a specific Greek reading (in many cases variation within the Greek tradition is reflected in Peshitta manuscripts as well); b) idiomatic changes taking their origin in the genius of the Syriac language (some of these may be caused by influence from the elusive “Old Syriac” version of the epistles); c) in Old Testament quotations, readings created by influence of the Old Testament Peshitta. The dynamics of the manuscript tradition are discussed in some detail and illustrated with 59 annotated examples.

It is in the discussion on the Peshitta, where questions of Syriac idiom and translation technique are relatively more important than textual traditions, that one may occasionally disagree with the editors. First a question of detail. In Hebr. 1:7, *dʾbd mlakm̄hy m̄h*, the editors prefer the reading *m̄hy*, with 1cs suffix, offered by three manuscripts over the majority reading *m̄h*, in the status absolutus (19). The original Peshitta rendering, “who makes my spirit into his angels” (Er macht meinem Geist zu seinen Engeln), was later corrected on the basis of the text of the OT Peshitta of Psalm 104:4, so they argue. This evaluation is certainly wrong. The status absolutus is original, and the Syriac clause means “who makes his angels into (or out of) wind”. The addition of the suffix is due to scribes’ unfamiliarity with the status absolutus of nouns functioning as nexus objects: a type of syntax that is common in the OT Peshitta but disappears in later Syriac texts. They “syriacized” the form by adding a silent yudh of the suffix. The phenomenon is often met

with in unusual cases of status absolutus (for examples, see J. Joosten, *The Syriac Language of the Peshitta and Old Syriac Versions of Matthew* [Leiden: Brill, 1996], 73, n. 46).

A more important issue is the question of OT Peshitta influence on the text of OT quotations (notably in Hebrews, where such quotations are numerous). According to Aland and Juckel, this influence is secondary: OT Peshitta readings creep into the manuscript tradition, creating variants (10, 20). This reviewer would argue the opposite: OT Peshitta influence on the quotations occurred in the earliest stage of the textual tradition. The factor creating variant readings is the influence of the Greek NT text with which the OT Peshitta text quoted in the NT Peshitta was often at variance. Later scribes corrected readings conforming with the OT Peshitta in order to bring the text into line with the Greek text of Hebrews. Three arguments favour this alternative view. First, readings influenced by the OT Peshitta occur quite frequently in all manuscripts without variation. Thus in Hebr. 5:6 and 7:21, the words *bdmwtb dmlkṣṣḏq*, “in the likeness of Melchizedek,” attested by all Peshitta manuscripts, do not reflect the Greek text of Hebrews (κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδεκ), “according to the order of M.”) but the text of the OT Peshitta of Psalm 110:4. Similar instances of OT Peshitta influence attested by the entire manuscript tradition, can be found in Hebr. 1:7, 8, 10; 2:7, 12; 3:7, 9, 10; 8:9, 11; 10:5–6; 13:6 (of course, each case merits a discussion, which cannot be given in the present review). Such cases tend to show that OT Peshitta readings belong to the original Peshitta translation of Hebrews. Second, it seems that the Old Syriac text of Hebrews contained even more traces of OT Peshitta influence than does the Peshitta. Thus, Aphrahat’s version of Hebr. 2:13 (Isa. 8:17–18) and 8:8–12 (Jer. 31:31–34) stands closer to the OT Peshitta text than does the Peshitta in several details. The Peshitta version of Hebrews apparently followed an established trend in adopting such readings. Third, the situation in the gospels furnishes a relevant analogy. In the gospels there can be no doubt that the Old Syriac’s OT quotations show more OT Peshitta influence than do the Peshitta gospels (see J. Joosten, *Textus 15* [1990], 55–76). Here the movement is clearly from a text more closely aligned with the OT Peshitta toward greater conformity with the Greek text of the NT. The same general evolution of the text of OT quotations would seem to hold for Hebrews (and for the other Pauline epistles).

As far as the present reviewer has been able to check, the Syriac texts are transcribed with great trustworthiness. The only mistakes I have been able to identify occur in non-German titles in

the bibliography: 543 “AMPHOUX (...) le group” — read “groupe”; 545 “CURETON (...) ancient recension” — read “antient” (sic); “DCB (...) Biography, Literatur” — read “Literature”; 546 “DUVAL (...) jusque’à” — read “jusqu’à”; 548 “PETIT (...) text grec” — read “texte”; 550 “WRIGHT (...) Syriac litterature” — read “literature”. But these are mere trifles.

It is very much to be hoped that the team will go on with this project and publish at least the Book of Acts in the same way. The Minor Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse would also benefit immensely, even although there is no Peshitta translation for these books (nor early quotations). Even for the Gospels the treatment would provide a useful complement to Gwilliam and Pusey’s edition of the Peshitta and G. Kiraz’s comparative edition of the Old Syriac, Peshitta and Harklean versions.