THE ROLE OF AQUILA, SYMMACHUS, AND THEODOTION IN MODERN COMMENTARIES

ON THE HEBREW BIBLE

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In the textual notes of modern philological commentaries on the Hebrew Bible there are sometimes references to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (henceforth Aq., Sym., Theod., or 'the Three'), or to their sigla in Greek, α´, σ´, θ´. Often the introduction to a commentary explains that the major versions of the LXX, Peshitta, Targumim, and Vulgate will be cited, and less frequently the significance of these versions for the textual history of the Hebrew book commented upon. Yet it is rare for any commentary to explain the importance of the later Jewish Greek versions.[1] In this essay it will be argued that for modern study of the biblical text, the 'Three' are valuable witnesses both to the emerging MT between the turn of the Era and 200 C.E., and to the meaning as it was understood at a time much closer to that of the biblical writers than our own.

Almost all that we have of the Jewish Greek versions of Aq., Sym., and Theod. depends ultimately on the work of the early third century scholar Origen. Perturbed by the differences between the Church's LXX and the contemporary Hebrew text used by Jews, Origen had assembled a number of later Greek translations known to him. He set them out synoptically along with the Hebrew text and a transliterated version of the Hebrew, in the multi-columned work known subsequently as the Hexapla.[2]

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[1] The fullest and most accurate account to date remains that of N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 109–61.

[2] As well as the 'Three,' he sometimes included anonymous versions he had found, 'Quinta,' 'Sexta,' and 'Septima,' the 'fifth,' 'sixth,' and 'seventh' versions. The Latin names are derived from Jerome's use of the Hexaplaric versions: naturally, Origen and Eusebius employed the Greek terms. (The 'first' version is the LXX, and the second to fourth the Three.)

Apart from the entire version of the book of Daniel bearing Theod.'s name,[3] almost all of the versions of the Three are preserved only in a fragmentary state. The Hexapla perished, probably sometime after its LXX column was translated into Syriac in 616 to become the Syrohexapla version. Most of the remaining material from the Three has been preserved by Christians, often recorded precisely because it differs from LXX at that point. Preservation has been sporadic: more readings of the Three survive for certain books such as Genesis, Isaiah, and Psalms because Christians were especially interested in those.[4] Some LXX manuscripts even have marginal notes recording readings from the Hexapla. Such notes and citations are not confined to Greek sources, but were translated into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, and Georgian. These can be retroverted back into Greek with care, but obviously there is an element of uncertainty involved.[5]

Collections of Hexaplaric readings were made by scholars from the sixteenth century onwards, up until Frederick Field's *Origenis Hexaplorum quod supersunt*.[6] Field's 1875 edition can still be useful. However, it is no longer an adequate tool for biblical textual criticism without updating and

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[3] Theod.'s version of Daniel survived in its entirety because for unknown reasons it replaced the Church's LXX version of the book.

[4] Eusebius of Caesarea often cites the Three to demonstrate that the renderings of these supposedly anti-Christian Jewish translators could support a Christian interpretation of Isaiah. Later, Jerome's commentaries on the prophetic books had a similar aim, though he also used the Three to show that the Hebrew text was superior to the LXX. Thus a large number of surviving readings are associated with passages presenting theological difficulties in antiquity, rather than with places where modern scholars identify a textual crux.

[5] In Field's edition of Hexaplaric fragments, the retroversions appear in smaller Greek type. However, the Göttingen LXX edition translates Syriac readings into Latin, which can be misleading.

[6] Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive Veterum interpretum Graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta* (2 vols; Oxford: Clarendon, 1875). See T. Michael Law, "A History of Research on Origen's Hexapla," *BIOSCS* 40 (2007): 30–48.

considerable supplementation. Field had drawn on the work of his predecessors and made few fresh

collations of the material, though he did add material from the Syrohexapla.[7] Furthermore, there have

been several important discoveries of new readings since his day, especially from the Cairo Geniza.[8]

There is also the Tur 'Abdin manuscript of the Syrohexapla for the Pentateuch, which covers parts of

the Pentateuch that are not extant in earlier copies of the Syrohexapla.[9] New editions of patristic

commentaries and catenae have been published, such as a new and more reliable edition of Eusebius'

commentary on Isaiah[10] and Françoise Petit's editions of catena material.[11]

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[7] Gerard J. Norton, "Collecting Data for a New Edition of the Fragments of the Hexapla," in *IX Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Cambridge 1995* (ed. Bernard A. Taylor; SCS 45; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 251–62.

[8] Francis Crawford Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings according to the Translation of Aquila* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897) (1 Kgs 20:7–17; 2 Kgs 23:11–27); Charles Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah Palimpsests from the Taylor-Schechter Collection including a fragment of the twenty-second Psalm according to Origen's Hexapla* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900) (Pss 22:15–18 and 90:17–103:17); a Cairo Geniza fragment containing Pss 68.13–14,30–33 and 80:11–14 published by Charles Wessely ("Un nouveau fragment de la version grecque du Vieux Testament par Aquila," in *Mélanges offerts à M. Émile Chatelain* [Paris: A. Champion, 1910], 224–29) was immediately re-identified as Sym. Giovanni Mercati (*Psalterii Hexapli Reliquiae. Pars prima. Codex Rescriptus Bybliothecae Ambrosianae O 39 sup. Phototypice Expressus et Transcriptus* [Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana; Città del Vaticano: In Bybliotheca Vaticana, 1958]) published a ninth century text of Hexaplaric Psalms..

[9] Arthur Vööbus, *The Pentateuch in the Version of the Syro-Hexapla: A Facsimile Edition of a Midyat Manuscript discovered 1964* (CSCO 369; Subsidia 45; Leuven: Peeters, 1976).

[10] Joseph Ziegler, *Eusebius Werke,* Vol. 9. *Der Jesajakommentar* (GCS; Berlin: Akademie, 1975).

[11] A catena is an ancient bible commentary consisting of excerpts culled from noted patristic authorities. The tradition is often very complex. For an example, see Françoise Petit, *La Chaîne sur la Genèse* (TEG 3; Leuven: Peeters, 1995). The Psalter also has a rich catena tradition.

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Since the inception of the Göttingen Septuaginta Unternehmen in 1908, the editions of LXX books have incorporated most of this new material in the second, 'Hexaplaric,' apparatus at the bottom of each page. However, the function of this apparatus is primarily to indicate where the later revisions influenced the mainstream LXX tradition, rather than to provide a guide to the renderings of the Three. Moreover, the second Göttingen edition of Psalms published in 1967 did not include a Hexaplaric apparatus, and the new edition of the Psalter is still a long way off completion, owing to the complexity of the manuscript tradition.

Although patristic tradition suggests that 'Theodotion' was a translator living in the late second or early third century C.E., the evidence of the version points to circles working in the early first century C.E., if not before.[12] It seems very likely that 'Theodotion's' work is associated with a pre-Christian movement of revision that sought to 'improve' the older LXX by conforming it more closely to the Hebrew text of that time. The principles of this movement culminated in Aq.'s revision. Aquila's version has an etymologizing style that is very consistent, and reflects the increasing importance of the details of the Hebrew text for exegesis. Symmachus' translation may have been a reaction in the other direction, because he is interested in fidelity to the Hebrew without the compromises of Greek style

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[12] Frederick Field (*Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive Veterum interpretum Graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta* [2 vols; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875], xxxviii) suggested that Theod. was prior to Sym. , but no earlier than 180–192 C.E. A date in the early first century C.E. was put forward in the revolutionary work of Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaprophéton* (VTSup 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963). See the summary of the current consensus on the 'kaige' Revision and 'Theodotion', in Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 81–87. However, Fernández Marcos (*Septuagint in Context*, 150) wishes to retain the 'historical' figure Theodotion as the last stage of an earlier revisional process.

that Aq.'s approach entailed.[13] An analysis of Sym.'s renderings in the Pentateuch shows clear affinities with Palestinian Judaism of the second to fourth centuries C.E. Sometimes the sigla denoting attribution to a particular reviser has become confused or omitted in the course of transmission. However, someone thoroughly familiar with the style, common equivalences, and translation technique of each of the Three is often able to assign readings to the appropriate reviser.

This overview demonstrates why the versions of the Three are important for the biblical scholar. Theodotion's version may have its roots in the period at the turn of the Era, Aq. dates from 130 C.E, and Sym. from 200 C.E. These two centuries represent a significant period when MT was being consolidated in terms of its text form and reading tradition. So the readings of the Three witness to the development of MT and to possible variants of their period.[14] They also offer a window onto how the Hebrew text was understood both linguistically and theologically by Palestinian Jews during this key period between the formation of the 'Old Greek' LXX translations and Qumran bible texts on the one hand, and of the Peshitta, Old Latin, Vulgate, and Targum versions on the other.

A note of caution should be sounded, however. As James Barr noted, the conjectural element involved in using any biblical text in a language other than Hebrew means that none of the versions can provide direct evidence for Hebrew variants.[15] In addition, the very partial state of preservation of the Three is a further limitation on their usefulness. However, where readings of the Three do survive, they

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[13] It is difficult to determine how far the Three are revisions of the LXX and how far they are new translations. Theodotian is likely to depend on OG, and Aquila on Theod., but whether Sym. knew an unrevised LXX, Theod. and/or Aq., is hard to demonstrate. The situation may vary from book to book.

[14] See especially T. Michael Law, "Do 'the Three' reveal anything about the textual history of the Books of Kings? The Hebrew Text behind the later Greek Jewish versions in 1 Kings," in *After Qumran: Old and New Editions of Biblical Texts. The Historical Books* (ed. H. Ausloos, B. Lemmelijn and J. Trebolle Barrera; BETL; Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming).

[15] James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 239–40.

sometimes attest to possible variants in a pre- or early rabbinic Hebrew text, with regard to the consonantal text or the vocalization. More frequently they indicate how Jewish scholars of the first and second centuries C.E. analysed and understood the Hebrew text before them.

Below there are some examples of recent commentaries and how they use evidence from the Three.

Robert Hanhart has been involved for a long time with the Göttingen LXX Unternehmen, and displays familiarity with the Hexaplaric material in his commentary on Zechariah.[16]

Hanhart renders the phrase at Zech 4:7 תְּשֻׁאוֹת חֵן חֵן לָהּ as "unter dem Jubelruf Gnade, Gnade über ihn."[17] The difficulty is with the word תְּשֻׁאוֹת: Hanhart notes the versions' false etymology of תְּשֻׁאוֹת as from שוה 'to be like, equal.' This sense is reflected in the renderings of LXX, Peshitta, Aquila, and Jerome's Iuxta Hebraeos version (often known as the Vulgate),[18] but is rejected by Hanhart. He also comments that Theod. alone of the versions understands the phrase as a cry of jubilation (κατάπαυσις κατάπαυσις αὐτῇ), though evidently with metathesis of חן to נח: "rest, rest for it!"[19] The textual implications of this reading are not discussed, however.

At Zech 5:1−2 where MT has the 'flying scroll' מְגִלָּה עָפָה, Hanhart notes the sole variant among the versions, the LXX reading, δρέπανον πετόμενον, 'sickle.' He believes this presupposes an ancient

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[16] Robert Hanhart, *Sacharja 1,1–8,23* (BKAT 14/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1998).

[17] Hanhart, *Sacharja*, 249–50.

[18] However, Hanhart (*Sacharja,* ??) s*ays* that the renderings of Aq. and Jerome suggest they took the Hebrew word as a verbal form (ἐξισώσει and *exaequabit*). Jerome seems to have relied on Aq., but as Ziegler's edition of the Minor Prophets suggests, in all probability Aq. originally rendered with the very similar plural noun ἐξισώσεις to reflect the Hebrew plural.

[19] Hanhart, *Sacharja,* 250.

Hebrew variant *מַגָּל, influenced by the text of MT in v.2 and in Joel 4 (*LXX* 3):13 and Jer 50:16 (*LXX*

27:16) where a sickle appears in the context of harvesting. He argues that in Zech 5:1−2 what was

originally a tradition from Palestine was adopted and perpetuated by Hellenistic Judaism in the form of

the LXX reading. This image of the flying sickle increases the eschatological-apocalyptic emphasis of

the vision. However, Hanhart notes that the Three restore MT reading within the Greek tradition since

Aquila and Theod. have διφθέρα 'prepared hide, leather,' and Sym. either κεφαλίς (as reported by

Jerome) or *εἴλημα (suggested by Syh ܚܕܟ) 'volume, roll.'[20] (The likelihood that all three versions

originated in Palestine would also fit this reconstruction). Thus Hanhart uses the Three to plot the

trajectory of the Greek tradition in its relationship to MT.[21]

    In the introduction to his commentary on 2 Samuel, Hans Joachim Stoebe does not mention the

Three explicitly,[22] though he is certainly aware of the issues of 4QSam[a] and 4QSam[b] and of the *kaige*

recension of the Old Greek. The difficulty is that there is as yet no Göttingen edition of the historical

books,[23] so commentators have to depend on Field and the larger Cambridge edition for readings from

the Hexapla. It is possible that more material from the Three has emerged since publication of the latter

in 1927.[24]

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[20] Hanhart, *Sacharja*, 324–25.

[21] See also Hanhart (*Sacharja,* 544–45) on 2 Sam 8:19[a–a] and the pre-hexaplaric Greek witnesses, where he also criticises Ziegler's note in the hexaplaric apparatus as misleading.

[22] Hans Joachim Stoebe, *Das zweite Buch Samuelis* (KAT 8/2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1994), 53.

[23] 2 Samuel for the Göttingen edition was recently assigned to Philippe Hugo and T. Michael Law.

[24] Alan E. Brooke, Norman McLean, and Henry St. J. Thackeray, *The Old Testament in Greek: according to the text of Codex Vaticanus. Vol. 2: The later historical books. Part 1: I and II Samuel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927).

In 2 Sam 6:7 the Lord is described as striking Uzzah עַל־הַשַּׁל. The word שַׁל in MT is otherwise

unknown. Stoebe states that Codex Vaticanus of the LXX omits it.[25] Furthermore, when Stoebe adds

that Codex Alexandrinus has ἐπι τῇ προπετείᾳ 'because of (his) recklessness,' he could have added that

in 2 Samuel and some other books, Alexandrinus frequently represents Origen's revised text, and that

this very reading is under asterisk. Usually such asterised readings have been drawn from one of the

Three, and often from Theodotion.[26] However, Stoebe notes that the versions all interpret the Hebrew

word as indicating ignorance or reckless behaviour, perhaps through a supposed etymology from

Aramaic שלי, 'to be careless' (Aq. ἐκνοίᾳ, Vg *temeritate*).

At 2 Sam 1:21, where MT has נִגְעַל 'defiled' to describe the shield of heroes on Mount Gilboa,

Stoebe sees the renderings of LXX (προσωχθίσθη 'reviled'), the Vulgate (*abjectus)*, and Aq.

(ἀπεβλήθη 'rejected') as referring to the throwing away or rejection of the heroes' shields.[27] Since this

seems an inappropriate idea in a song commemorating heroes, he thinks it preferable to render the word

נִגְעַל as 'defiled,' without emending it to the later form *נִגְאַל. Stoebe could also have included Theod.'s

reading ἐξήρθη, 'lifted up, removed,' as it indicates an association of נִגְעַל with a Niph'al form (perf. or

ptc.) of עלה, i.e. *נעלה, and thus bears witness to MT form with *'ayin* rather than *alef*.

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[25] Stoebe, *Das zweite Buch Samuelis*, 190. Stoebe does not mention here that Vaticanus is regarded as largely representative of the Old Greek translation of Samuel before Origen's revisional activity influenced much of the subsequent LXX tradition.

[26] Jerome, *Ep*. 112 to Augustine §19, cf. also *Comm. Dan. Prol*. However, Jerome may be extrapolating from books such as Job where the many 'minuses' of LXX were indeed all supplied from Theod.

[27] Stoebe, *Das zweite Buch Samuelis*, 91.

The focus of Klaus Baltzer's commentary on Deutero-Isaiah is his thesis that the book

represents 'liturgical drama.' However, he also pays close attention to text-critical matters and makes

intelligent use of the Three for their philological and text-critical value.[28]

On Isa 41:14, where MT reads מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ('men of Israel,' construct of מְתִים, 'men'), he notes

that 1QIsa[a] has מיתי, and that the translations of Aq., Theod., and Vg suggest that they also interpreted

this as 'dead ones of Israel.'[29] Baltzer observes that similar phrases to that of MT here often occur in

contexts suggesting a small number (e.g., Gen 34:30 מִסְפָּר מְתֵי '[small number of] people,' Deut 28:62

בִּמְתֵי מְעָט 'remnant'). However, he could have included in his comments Sym.'s rendering ἀριθμὸς

Ἰσραήλ (or for that matter, LXX ὀλιγοστὸς Ἰσραήλ and Peshitta ܚܣܝܪ ܕܐܝܣܪܠ), which also supports

both MT's vocalization and Baltzer's own preferred meaning for this phrase, 'the few people of Israel.'

In Isa 53:2, there is a long-standing difficulty over whether to understand וַיַּעַל כַּיּוֹנֵק לְפָנָיו as 'he

went up like a *shoot* before him' (which would provide synonymous parallelism with וְכַשֹּׁרֶשׁ מֵאֶרֶץ צִיָּה,

'and like a *root* from thirsty ground'), or 'he went up like an *infant* before him' (cf. LXX

ἀνηγγείλαμεν[30] ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὡς παιδίον)? Though Baltzer notes that the words יונק and שרש

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[28] Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*: *a commentary on Isaiah 40–55* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 2–3 (original German version, idem, *Deutero-Jesaja* [KAT 10/2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1999]).

[29] These are in fact Aq. τεθνεῶτες Ἰσραήλ, Theod. οἱ νεκροὶ Ἰσραήλ, Jerome (no doubt following Aq. and Theod.) 'qui mortui estis in Israel' (Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*, 104).

[30] Sic, with Rahlfs and the entire Greek tradition. Joseph Ziegler (*The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah* [Jerusalem: Magnes, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1995]) assumes a very early corruption and therefore reconstructs *ἀνέτειλε μέν (=וַיַּעַל) in his edition. However, Goshen-Gottstein notes that ἀνατέλλειν is appropriate for plants but less so for child rearing.

associate this passage with the messianic prophecy in Isa 11:1–10 (v. 1 מִשָּׁרָשָׁיו וְנֵצֶר יִשַׁי מִגֶּזַע חֹטֶר וְיָצָא

יִפְרֶה), he opts for the understanding 'infant,' since it fits his interpretation of the Servant as identified

with Moses:[31] יונק is a reference to the infancy stories of Moses.[32] Baltzer does not mention any of the

Three here. Yet Aq. and Theod. favor a similar interpretation to his, though they both take it as a

prophecy rather than a reference to a past event: 'he shall go up like a suckling' (Theod. ἀναβήσεται ὡς

θηλάζον, Aq. ἀναβήσεται ὡς τιθιζόμενον), in contrast to Sym. 'he went up like a branch' (ἀνέβη ὡς

κλάδος). Symmachus clearly reflects the converted imperfect verb and takes it as referring to a past

event.

In Isa 53:5 Baltzer observes that the vocalized form in MT, מְחֹלָל, is a Polal ptc. of חלל II,

indicating the interpretation 'pierced through.' However, he comments that the Puʻal ptc. of חלל I,

מְחֻלָּל 'desecrated,' should be read instead.[33] This alternative is also noted by BHS, though only Baltzer

mentions that Aq.'s rendering βεβηλωμένος, 'profaned' supports this conjectured vocalisation. Yet

neither BHS nor Baltzer mentions that the earlier, LXX, rendering ἐτραυματίσθη 'wounded' supports

MT's vocalisation מְחֹלָל 'pierced.' Aquila's rendering may suggest that in Palestine of the second

century C.E. either there was not yet uniformity of the reading tradition, or Hebrew philology was not

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[31] As did the rabbis in bSota 14a.

[32] Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah,* 392, 405.

[33] Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah,* 392, 410.

sufficiently refined to distinguish between the two very similar forms at an oral level and reflect such differences consistently in translation.[34]

Baltzer renders the rather difficult Hebrew of MT Isa 53:10 וַיהוָה חָפֵץ דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי as 'But it has pleased Yahweh to smite him. He let him become sick.'[35] However, he prefers to see a deliberate textual change having taken place, over the original form which he argues is preserved in 1QIsa[a] as ויחללהו, pointed by C. R. North as וַיְחַלְּלֵהוּ, 'He (God) had profaned him.' Thus his preferred understanding of the whole phrase is 'But it had pleased Yahweh to let him become dust. He had desecrated him.' As for LXX καὶ κύριος βούλεται καθαρίσαι αὐτόν τῆς πληγῆς 'the Lord wished to purify him of the plague,' Baltzer argues that πληγῆς assumes the consonants of MT, החלי read as a noun plus article, 'the sickness.' He does not consider that πληγή could also mean 'wound' and that therefore (regardless of the exact form of the consonants before him) the LXX translator could have made an association with the root חלל. Baltzer does not mention Sym.'s rendering Κύριος ἠθέλησεν ἀλοῆσαι[36] αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ τραυματισμῷ 'the Lord desired to thresh him through wounding,' which implies a similar association. Analysis of Hebrew by interpreters in antiquity often reflects a biconsonantal understanding of the root system, with the association of forms sharing two letters. Thus we cannot be certain from his rendering what Hebrew form Sym. had in front of him in 200 C.E.: either

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[34] See Weissert (*Textus* 8 [1973]: 31–44) "Alexandrian analogical word-analysis and Septuagint translation techniques. A case study of חלל–חיל–חול." Since this approach can also be found in Aq. and Sym., it is clear that the technique continued in second century C.E. Palestine.

[35] Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah,* 393, 419.

[36] MS 86 and Eusebius read ἐλεῆσαι, evidently a corruption of ἀλοῆσαι 'thresh,' which represents דַּכְּאוֹ much more closely. Hence Ziegler's correction.

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MT's החלי (perhaps understood as a noun) or something like 1QIsaᵃ ויחללהו could have been rendered in much the same way on this basis.[37] The interpretative tradition he inherited is more likely to have guided his translation than a scientific analysis of the grammar.

Comment [S3]: Page number?

The Word Biblical Commentary series often includes textual remarks, though these can vary in scope. In his commentary on Gen 1–15, Gordon Wenham uses the versions in cases of textual difficulty. In Gen 4:26 Wenham identifies MT אָז הוּחַל as 3rd masc. sg perf. Hophʻal of חלל, 'begin,' in the impersonal sense 'people began.'[38] Wenham states that LXX (οὗτος) ἤλπισεν 'mistranslates' this as '(he) hoped.' This is a little unfair, since even if the LXX translator had the same consonantal text before him as MT, it would be more obvious to take it as Hiphʻil of הוֹחֵל* ,יחל, rather than the unique Hophʻal of חלל of MT. (However, it is clear that LXX was able to recognise the verb in the active forms, hence Gen 9:20 וַיָּחֶל LXX ἤρξατο, and Gen 10:8 הוּא הֵחֵל LXX οὗτος ἤρξατο).

Wenham could have added the testimony of Aq. and Sym. in support of MT. Aquila renders, 'then it was begun,' τότε ἤρχθη, and Sym. τότε ἀρχη ἐγένετο, 'then there was a beginning.' However, LXX, the Vulgate, and a reading misattributed to Aquila (Theod.'s?), οὗτος,[39] all support what could be a genuine early variant reading זֶה for אָז, if a possible association with Gen 10:8 is ruled out (see above).

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[37] The Hebrew University Bible edition of Isaiah records several medieval variants of this word, including החלו, הֶחֱלִי, and החליא, reflecting long-standing difficulties with this word (Goshen-Gottstein, *Book of Isaiah*, *??*).

[38] Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 96.

[39] Also a Greek reading attributed to 'the Hebrew,' ὁ Ἑβραῖος, which shares affinities with Aq. and Theod. here.

The Old Testament Library series does not emphasise text-criticism and philology, but there are some textual notes in Childs's volume on Exodus.[40] לְעַמֶּךָ וְחָטָאת. Gesenius-Kautzsch §74g suggests reading *וְחָטָאתָ לְעַמֶּךָ on the basis of LXX ἀδικήσεις οὖν τὸν λαόν σου, and Childs takes the same line. He also cites Sym.'s rendering, 'the fault lies with you,' καὶ ἁμαρτίαν ἔχεις, which would suggest *וְחָטָאת עַמְּךָ.[41] Childs could have cited the readings of Aq. and Theod., which reflect a similar text to that represented by LXX, and midway between that of LXX and Sym. (Theod. καὶ η ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν λαόν σου and Aq. καὶ ἁμαρτία λαῷ σου = *וְחַטָּאת לְעַמֶּךָ). Since Aq. is generally very faithful to his Hebrew text, it may be that this was a genuine variant, also reflected in the presumed לְ of LXX. Symmachus' rendering apparently reflects a different reading tradition that makes sense of MT consonants.

Zimmerli's commentary on Ezekiel is also included in the Hermeneia series.[42] He explains the major versions, but though he refers to the Three, he nowhere explains what they are and their significance in the textual picture.[43]

The problem in Ezek 12:18a MT בֶּן־אָדָם לַחְמְךָ בְּרַעַשׁ תֹּאכֵל is that the word רַעַשׁ is used of earthquakes and not of people quaking. Zimmerli cites LXX μετ' ὀδύνης, Aq. ἐν σεισμῷ, Sym. ἐν ακαταστασία, Theod. ἐν σάλῳ.[44] His purpose in so doing is not clear, unless as further evidence against

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[40] Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), ???.

[41] Childs, *Exodus*, 93.

[42] Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* (2 vols.; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress 1979, 1983): original German version *Ezechiel* (BKAT 13; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969).

[43] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1.74–77.

[44] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1.276. LXX translators often use σεισμός for רַעַשׁ, whereas ὀδύνη occurs only in this case.

Koehler-Baumgartner's proposed emendation to כעש, since the renderings of Theod. and Aq. show that at least by the first century C.E. the Hebrew text had רַעַשׁ. In contrast LXX and Sym. reflect difficulty with the word in its context rather than a different Hebrew Vorlage.

On Ezek 19:7 MT has וַיֵּדַע אַלְמְנוֹתָיו וְעָרֵיהֶם הֶחֱרִיב 'and he knew his widows (and destroyed their cities'). Zimmerli regards this as 'unintelligible' and tentatively emends to 'he did evil to their palaces,' since MT form is unattested before the Peshitta and Vulgate. His suggestion makes better sense and gives a better parallel to the following half. He also notes LXX 'he pastured in his boldness' (καὶ ἐνέμετο τῷ θράσει αὐτοῦ), reflecting either a different Vorlage or a misreading of the verbal form with *resh*, *רעה.*[45] Zimmerli cites Aq. καὶ ἐκάκωσε χήρας (αὐτοῦ) 'and he maltreated (his) widows,' to demonstrate that Aq. also must have had a consonantal text with *resh*, not the *dalet* of MT, though interpreted from the root *רעע.*[46]

However, Zimmerli passes over the fact that Aq.'s 'widows' reflects MT, while that of Theod. reflects a verb with *dalet* but does not involve widows: καὶ ἔγνω βάρεις αὐτοῦ 'he knew his palaces,' cf. Targum Jonathan's בירנייתיה. Sym., not cited by Zimmerli, knows a text closer to MT than either the earlier revisers Aq. or Theod. did: 'he knew *how to make* widows' (καὶ ἔγνωσεν χηραποιεῖν), which is presumably an interpretation of the difficult MT.

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[45] Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1.389.

[46] Once again we encounter the phenomenon of ancient biconsonantal understandings of the root system, especially in the case of 'weak' verbs: geminates, hollow verbs and those with a final *hê*.

Andrew Macintosh's commentary on Hosea makes frequent use of all the versions including the Three, and supplies a good introduction to them.[47] Yet having consulted Ziegler's *Beiträge*, Macintosh apparently did not use Ziegler's edition of LXX Hosea and states that he uses Field's edition for the Three.[48] However, in the case of Hosea there is not much in Ziegler's edition beyond what one can find in Field, apart from some new readings preserved in the commentary of Basilius of Neopatrae.[49]

Macintosh notes that the entire phrase וְגָדַרְתִּי אֶת־גְּדֵרָהּ in Hos 2:8b (= LXX 2:6b) 'I will build up her wall' i.e., 'I will block her path with a wall' is absent from 4QpeshHos[a].[50] He speculates that in MT it may therefore reflect an attempt to explain the unusual word שָׂךְ in the previous phrase. He quotes LXX (καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῆς) 'I will wall up [sic] her roads,' and Vulgate (*sepiam eam maceria*), 'I will fence her with a wall.' Macintosh posits three stages of development from the Ur-Text, where וְגָדַרְתִּי was added, and then את דרכה* (as suggested by LXX) and finally את דרכה* was replaced by אֶת־גְּדֵרָהּ. However, this hypothesis has minimal support from the versions (LXX seems to have been guessing or influenced by the following וּנְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ in rendering as τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῆς), and Macintosh fails to cite the Three, all of which support MT even though we are reliant on retroversions

[47] Andrew A. Macintosh, *Hosea* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), and Introduction, lxxix–lxxx. Joseph Ziegler, *Beiträge zum griechischen Dodekapropheton* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943).

[48] Joseph Ziegler, *Duodecim Prophetae* (vol. 13 of *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum;* ed. Auctoritate Societatis Litterarum Gottingensis editum; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943). For readings preserved in Syriac, see Michael P. Weitzman, "The Reliability of Retroversions of the Three from the Syrohexapla: A Pilot Study in Hosea," in *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments: Papers presented at the Rich Seminar on the Hexapla, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 25th July–3rd August 1994* (ed. Alison G. Salvesen; TSAJ 58; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 317–59.

[49] Ziegler, *Duodecim prophetae,* 102.

[50] Macintosh, *Hosea*, 50, 52.

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from the Syrohexapla and Sym. is evidently rendering freely: Theod. *... τὸ τεῖχος αὐτῆς, Aq. *καὶ φράξω τὸν φραγμὸν αὐτῆς, Sym. *καὶ ἐμφραγμὸν κατ᾽αὐτῆς περιοικοδομήσω.

Finally, in this brief survey of modern philological commentaries we may turn to another International Critical Commentary volume, that on Isaiah chs. 1–5, published by the honorand of this volume, Hugh Williamson.[51] Readings from the Three are cited on at least fifteen occasions, and the evidence is carefully employed.

In Isa 1:4 Williamson renders נָזֹרוּ אָחוֹר as 'they have become estranged (and gone) backwards.'[52] He notes that the phrase is a minus in LXX, but possibly present in Qumran manuscripts. It is also rendered by Theod., and 'some later Greek texts' which 'clearly follow MT,' with ἀπηλλοτριώθησαν εἰσ τὸ ὀπίσω. This reading is under asterisk (meaning that in his Hexapla Origen supplied the addition from one of the later Greek versions). Though the attribution differs in each source it is evident that by Origen's time a Greek equivalent for the 'missing' phrase in LXX was known. As Williamson says, this Greek rendering (using a passive form) supports MT vocalization as a Niph'al perf. of זור I.

In this sampling of commentaries, perhaps the best example of a scholar's effective assessment of the Three in terms of their semantic information is Williamson's incisive discussion of the problematic phrase in Isa 2:6, וּבְיַלְדֵי נָכְרִים יַשְׂפִּיקוּ.[53] He notes the loose rendering of LXX, καὶ τέκνα πολλα ἀλλόφυλα ἐγενήθη αὐτοῖς, and takes Barr's treatment of Jerome's comments a stage further by

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[51] H. G. M. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5* (Vol. 1 of *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1–27*; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2006).

[52] Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 36.

[53] Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 193–95.

connecting *adhaeserunt* with שפח/ס and observing that Aq. χορηγήσουσιν and Theod. ἤρκεσαντο evidently derived the verb from שפק II.[54] He also demonstrates that Sym.'s interpretation ἔκροτησαν relates to שפק I, thus correcting Jerome's view that Sym.'s reading implied pederasty. In this way he places the Three in the context of the history of interpretation of this verse along with the Vulgate, Peshitta, and Targum.

The foregoing examples are broadly illustrative of the two main ways in which those modern commentaries that use the Three employ their readings: to demonstrate the possible existence of a non-Masoretic consonantal text or a pre-Masoretic vocalisation; or to provide semantic information in the case of a hapax legomenon or difficult phrase.

Sometimes commentators do not take the implications of the Hexaplaric renderings far enough, or they overlook readings that would prove helpful in reconstructing the history of the text. Few commentaries explain why Aq., Sym., and Theod. are cited, in contrast to other more familiar versions. Thus users may turn to outdated information in encyclopedias and the Web.

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[54] Barr, *Comparative Philology*, 233.

A few philological commentaries appear not to cite the Three at all, or do so very rarely,[55] yet regularly include readings from later versions. Certainly the Targums as we have them are a good deal younger than the Three and frequently reflect MT, while Jerome at the end of the fourth century was reliant on a combination of the Three, the contemporary Hebrew consonantal text, and live Jewish informants.[56] It is particularly odd that the editorial guidelines of the Oxford Hebrew Bible Project appear to ignore the Three totally, given the project's stress on textual criticism for restoring the oldest possible Hebrew text and its professed use of the Gottingen edition where available.[57] However, the editorial policy of Biblia Hebraica Quinta does advocate use of the Three, even if some fascicles are forced to rely on Field in the absence of a recent Gottingen LXX edition of the book in question.[58]

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[55] There is little or no apparent use of the Three in the following philological commentaries: Hans Strauss, *Hiob 19.1–42.17* (BKAT 16/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2000) (contrast Friedrich Horst, *Hiob 1–19*, BKAT 16/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1968); Werner Schmidt, *Exodus 1.1–6.30* (BKAT 2/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1988); William McKane, *Jeremiah* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986); Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 1–19, 20–48* (WBC 28, 29; Waco: Word Books, 1990); Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja 1–12* (BKAT 10/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1972); Hans W. Wolff, *Hosea* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress, 1974). Marvin A. Sweeney (*I & II Kings: A Commentary* [OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007]) frequently refers to the LXX, but the Three do not appear in the commentary, nor is there mention of the Cairo Geniza texts of Aquila for 1Kgs 20:7–17 and 2 Kgs 23:11–27. See now T. Michael Law, "Aquila, *Kaige*, and Jewish Revision," in *The Greek Bible and the Rabbis* (ed. Alison G. Salvesen and T. Michael Law; CBET; Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming).

[56] James Adair ("A Methodology for using the Versions in the Textual Criticism of the Old Testament," *JNSL* 20/2 [1994]: 111–42) overlooks the Three.

[57] See Ronald Hendel, "The Oxford Hebrew Bible: Prologue to a New Critical Edition," *VT* 58 (2008): 324–51 (348).

[58] Carmel McCarthy (*Deuteronomy* [BHQ 5; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007]) used Wevers's edition, de Waard ("Ruth," in Megilloth [BHQ 18; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004], pp. *–*, *–, *–*, *–*, –) consulted Udo Quast, editor of LXX Ruth, before the recent Göttingen edition appeared, and Rolf Schäfer ("Lamentations," in *Megilloth*

What we have left of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion is unfortunately fragmentary. However, for the Hebrew biblical text these versions represent a vital textual link between the Qumran fragments and the Old Greek on the one hand, and the Masoretic tradition, Peshitta,[59] Targum, Samaritan Pentateuch, and Vulgate on the other. This is because:

1) The Three date from the period when the Hebrew consonantal text was becoming standardized. Sometimes their renderings suggest the persistence of small variations in the consonantal form. More often the Three also represent variant vocalization traditions from that recorded in MT.

2) The Three also preserve Jewish traditions about the meaning of obscure words, whether correct or not. Sometimes their interpretations are adopted by Jerome in his Vulgate version or commentaries, and so antedate the Vulgate.

At present there is no up-to-date edition of the surviving readings of the Three and other later versions, since Field now requires much supplementation and the Göttingen edition's second apparatus is more complete but harder to use due to the lack of annotation. The Hexapla Project is working to produce

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[BHQ 18; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004], Pp. 17*–20*, 30*–34, 43*–46*, 113*–136*, 54–72) used Ziegler's 1957 Göttingen edition.

[59] Michael P. Weitzman (*The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* [University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999]) argued for a date in the second half of the second century C.E. for most of the Old Testament Peshitta books. Their northern Mesopotamian and probable non-rabbinic provenance should also be borne in mind when the Peshitta is used as a textual witness.

fascicles of edited and annotated Hexaplaric readings.[60] It is hoped that this work will encourage

commentators to make further use of this valuable material in their text-critical work.[61]

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[60] The first fascicle is likely to be Canticles by Reinhart Ceulemans, based on his PhD dissertation, "A Critical Edition of

the Hexaplaric Fragments of the Book of Canticles, with Emphasis on their Reception in Greek Christian Exegesis" (PhD.

diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2009), to be published by Peeters Press.

[61] See R. Bas ter Haar Romeny and Peter J. Gentry, "Towards a New Collection of Hexaplaric Material for the Book of

Genesis," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Oslo 1998* (ed. Bernard A.

Taylor; SBLSCS 51; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001), 285–99.