



BRILL

Aramaic Studies 5.2 (2007) 239–253

Aramaic
Studies
www.brill.nl/arst

The Book of Daniel in the Bible of Edessa¹

Richard A. Taylor

Abstract

The translation and accompanying notes for the forthcoming annotated English translation of the book of Daniel in the Bible of Edessa will be consistent with the following features of the Syriac Peshitta of Daniel. First, Peshitta-Daniel is a primary version of the Hebrew-Aramaic text and not a daughter version made from a Greek text. Second, some Peshitta-Daniel readings are superior from a text-critical perspective to readings of the MT. Third, Peshitta-Daniel is not significantly influenced by the Septuagint, although it does frequently align with the Greek text of Theodotion. Fourth, Peshitta-Daniel is essentially a literal translation of its Hebrew-Aramaic source text, while at the same time maintaining a high level of stylistic elegance in Syriac. Fifth, Peshitta-Daniel frequently reverses the order of matched pairs of words due to translation technique. Sixth, Peshitta manuscripts of the book of Daniel have interpretive glosses that guide the reader as to the exegesis of chapters 7, 8, and 11, adopting an approach to the interpretation of Daniel that suggests at least indirect influence from the pagan philosopher Porphyry.

Keywords

Book of Daniel, Bible of Edessa, Syriac, Peshitta, Old Testament

Introduction

In their enthusiasm for studying the westward expansion of early Christianity scholars have sometimes neglected significant exegetical and theological developments to the east of the geographical cradle of Christianity, where early missionary efforts produced a thriving Christian community within a distinctively Semitic cultural context. From the second century onward there emerged, especially in Edessa but throughout much of the Fertile Crescent as well, a Syriac-speaking community of Christian believers whose literature and activities are relatively unknown to many modern students of church history.

¹) An earlier form of this paper was presented at the Syriac Studies Symposium V, which met at the University of Toronto on June 25–27, 2007.

By the second century A.D. these Christians had in their own language the Old Testament Scriptures, which had been translated into Syriac directly from a Hebrew-Aramaic *Vorlage*. They also had a harmony of the Gospels known in Syriac as the *Evangelion da-Mehallete*, or ‘Gospel of the Mixed,’ and a collection of the four separate gospels known as the *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, or ‘Gospel of the Separated.’ Over a period of time those portions of the New Testament that were accepted as canonical also appeared in Syriac in various other versional forms, such as the Peshitta, the Philoxenian, and the Harklean versions. From the fourth to the seventh centuries this Syriac-speaking community produced an impressive number of biblical commentaries, theological treatises, devotional writings, historical works, and hagiographical literature. But in terms of enduring influence, nothing was of more permanent and abiding significance than their Syriac translation of the Scriptures known as the Peshitta. Pride of place goes above all to what some scholars refer to as the Bible of Edessa.

Although the text-critical value of the Peshitta for both Old and New Testament studies has long been recognized, it has only been in recent years that we finally have a truly critical edition of this important text. Earlier editions of the Peshitta include the Paris Polyglot of 1629–1645 (the Syriac text of which was prepared by the Maronite scholar Gabriel Sionita), the London Polyglot of 1657 prepared by Brian Walton, the edition of 1823 prepared by Samuel Lee, the Urmia edition of 1852 prepared by Protestant missionaries, and the Mosul edition of 1887–1891 prepared by Dominican scholars. But all of these editions were of limited value for text-critical use. Old Testament scholars finally addressed the need for a critical edition of the Syriac Old Testament in 1953, when the newly-formed Peshitta Institute at the University of Leiden, operating under the aegis of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, determined to produce a critical edition of the Old Testament Peshitta. Over the past five decades progress on the preparation of this edition has been steady, and the work is now nearing completion. Once this project is complete, which we hope will be within the next few years, text-critical use of the Syriac Old Testament will rest on a more secure foundation than has ever been possible in the past.

The Leiden edition of the Peshitta Old Testament is for the most part a diplomatic edition that presents in the text the readings of the sixth- or seventh-century Ambrosian codex 7a1 whenever that manuscript has the support of at least two other early manuscripts.² Variant readings found in the

² The Leiden edition of the Peshitta is not a diplomatic edition in the strict sense, since the printed text departs on occasion from the text of Ms 7a1.

Syriac manuscript tradition are collected in the critical apparatus, providing scholars with the necessary data for reaching a text-critical evaluation of the printed Syriac Old Testament text. As this project nears completion, attention has increasingly focused on several related projects. First, work is underway in Leiden for producing a tagged electronic database which will facilitate both morphological and syntactical searching of the Syriac text of the Old Testament. This project is known by the acronym CALAP, or Computer-Assisted Linguistic Analysis of the Peshitta.³ Second, a concordance with keyword-in-context is being prepared for the Syriac Old Testament, one volume of which (covering the Pentateuch) appeared in 1997.⁴ Additional volumes covering other portions of the Syriac Old Testament will follow this majestic concordance for the Syriac Pentateuch. Third, a one-volume *editio minor* based on the multi-volume Leiden Peshitta is in process. Since the cost of purchasing the fourteen volumes of the large Leiden edition is almost prohibitive for individuals, this one-volume edition will indeed be welcomed by students of the Syriac Old Testament. Fourth, since 1998 an annotated English translation of the Peshitta Old Testament has been underway. This latter project will be known as *NEATSB*, or *The New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible*. It will make available in English the so-called Bible of Edessa. In this

³ On the CALAP project see the following: Konrad D. Jenner, Wido van Peursen, and Eep Talstra, 'CALAP: An Interdisciplinary Debate between Textual Criticism, Textual History and Computer-Assisted Linguistic Analysis', in P.S.F. van Keulen and W.Th. van Peursen (eds.), *Corpus Linguistics and Textual History: A Computer-Assisted Interdisciplinary Approach to the Peshitta* (SSN, 48; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), pp. 13–44; Konrad D. Jenner and Eep Talstra, 'CALAP and Its Relevance for the Translation and Interpretation of the Syriac Bible: The Presentation of a Research Programme on the Computer Assisted Linguistic Analysis of the Peshitta', in Johann Cook (ed.), *Bible and Computer: The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference: Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique 'From Alpha to Byte,' University of Stellenbosch 17–21 July, 2000* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 681–699. For illustrations of the CALAP project applied to the books of Kings see the following: Wido van Peursen, 'Morphosyntactic and Syntactic Issues in the Syriac Text of 1 Kings 1', in Cook (ed.), *Bible and Computer*, pp. 99–111; Janet Dyk, 'Linguistic Aspects of the Peshitta Version of 2 Kings 18 and 19', in Cook (ed.), *Bible and Computer*, pp. 519–543; P.S.F. van Keulen, 'A Case of Ancient Exegesis: The Story of Solomon's Adversaries (1 Kgs. 11:14–25) in Septuaginta, Peshitta, and Josephus', in Cook (ed.), *Bible and Computer*, pp. 555–571.

⁴ P.G. Borbone and K.D. Jenner (eds.), *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version, V. Concordance to the Old Testament in Syriac, I. The Pentateuch* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

paper I will describe some of the issues and points of interest that I have encountered in preparation of the translation and notes for the book of Daniel in this project.

An international team of mainly European scholars is involved in the preparation of *NEATSB*.⁵ The work is being done under the auspices of the Peshitta Institute at the University of Leiden under the aegis of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament. It will be published in the Netherlands by Brill, at first in individual fascicles and then in a single volume. After initial debates about whether translators should follow the Leiden edition without exception, a consensus was reached to emend as necessary the Leiden text as the basis for the English translation.⁶ Since users of this translation may not have sufficient experience in text-criticism of the Syriac Bible for resolving such problems for themselves, the decision to present in the English translation the readings of the preferred Syriac text seems to be justified. The user will thus have a translation based on the closest possible approximation of the original Syriac text, at least in the opinion of the translators. Footnotes attached to the translation will alert the reader to those places where the Syriac text has been emended, as well as other matters of text-critical interest. Footnotes will also provide brief philological helps for the reader who wishes to understand the basis of significant translational decisions; footnotes will also call attention to developments in the reception history of the Peshitta. Once this project is complete, a reliable English translation of the Syriac Old Testament will finally be available to non-specialists.

Observations on the Peshitta of Daniel

My work on the Peshitta version of the book of Daniel and its translation into English has led me to a number of conclusions and observations, six of which I will now summarize.

⁵ For information concerning this project see the following descriptions: K.D. Jenner, A. Salvesen, R.B. ter Haar Romeny, W.T. van Peursen, 'The New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible (NEATSB): Retrospect and Prospect', *ArSt* 2 (2004), pp. 85–106; Moshe A. Zipor, 'Towards an Annotated English Translation of the *Peshitta*', *JNSL* 28 (2002), pp. 63–82; Konrad D. Jenner, 'The New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 2, no. 2 (July 1999); J. Joosten, 'Materials for a Linguistic Approach to the Old Testament Peshitta', *JAB* 1 (1999), pp. 203–218.

⁶ See Bas ter Haar Romeny, 'Choosing a Textual Basis for the New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible', *ArSt* 3 (2005), pp. 167–186.

The Peshitta as a Primary Version

The Peshitta Old Testament is a primary version of the Hebrew Bible and not a daughter version based on the Septuagint, in spite of certain assertions to the contrary in the secondary literature.⁷ The Syriac translators of the book of Daniel based their work on a Hebrew-Aramaic source text. In this regard the Peshitta differs for example from the Coptic version, which is a daughter version based on the Septuagint. It is important to grasp this point, since it implies considerable text-critical significance for this version. In general terms the Peshitta is quite close to the MT. The translation was probably undertaken shortly after the stabilization of the Hebrew text that occurred toward the end of the first century A.D. For that reason the Peshitta lags well behind the Septuagint as a source of possibly original textual variants for the Hebrew Bible. Nonetheless, the text-critical value of the Peshitta should not be minimized or overlooked. In the critical apparatus of both *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* there are frequent references to Syriac readings that differ from the MT, a procedure so obviously useful that it requires no defense. Old Testament text critics who seek to evaluate the condition of the Hebrew Masoretic text are obliged to take into account the witness of the Syriac Peshitta in their quest for the most authentic form of the Old Testament text. The Peshitta is an important witness to the condition of the Hebrew text in the early Christian period.

Peshitta-Daniel Readings Superior to MT

In a limited number of places the Peshitta of Daniel points to an underlying Hebrew-Aramaic *Vorlage* that may actually be superior to the Hebrew Masoretic text, either with regard to the consonantal text or with regard to its proper vocalization. Since the Syriac Old Testament was produced probably in the second century A.D., the translators no doubt had access to Hebrew

⁷ Anderson, for example, refers to the Peshitta as 'a daughter version of the Septuagint.' See G.W. Anderson, 'Canonical and Non-canonical', in P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, I. *From the Beginnings to Jerome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 158–159. Likewise, Sanders says, 'the Syriac often seems a faithful daughter of LXX or Old Greek.' See James A. Sanders, 'Text and Canon: Old Testament and New', in Pierre Cassetti, Othmar Keel, and Adrian Schenker (eds.), *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy: Études bibliques offertes à l'occasion de son 60e anniversaire* (OBO, 38; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), p. 376.

manuscripts that dated to the first century or earlier. The Peshitta therefore witnesses to a Hebrew text that is much earlier than most of our extant Hebrew manuscripts. In some instances it provides readings that are preferable to those of the MT.

Readings in the Syriac text of Daniel that witness to a consonantal text that may be superior to the MT include the following four examples. (1) In the MT of Daniel 3 the musical instruments that were played at the dedication of Nebuchadnezzar's image are listed four times (vv. 5, 7, 10, 15). With the exception of v. 7, six different instruments are always mentioned. However, in Dan. 3.7 MT lacks **וּסוּמְפוּנְיָא** ('and bagpipe?'). P has here **סַי פְּנִינָא** ('and bagpipe'), in agreement with the other three lists in Daniel 3. This reading is also supported by many medieval Hebrew manuscripts, some manuscripts of Theodotion (*καὶ συμφωνίας*), and the Latin Vulgate (*et symphoniae*). The Peshitta, in conjunction with this other early textual evidence, points to a reading for Dan. 3.7 that is probably to be preferred over the MT.

(2) In Dan. 5.11 MT has as a plus the awkward reading **אבוך מלכא** ('your father the king'). These words seem redundant in light of the similar phrase **ךְ וּמְלִיכָא נְבֻכַדְנֶצְרִי אֲבוּךְ** ('and king Nebuchadnezzar your father') found earlier in this verse. Most exegetical attempts to account for the phrase are not convincing.⁸ It probably originated as a secondary scribal gloss. The absence of this phrase in the Peshitta probably points to the correct reading.

(3) In Dan. 10.9 MT has **וְאִשְׁמַע אֶת קוֹל דְּבַרְיִי** ('and I heard the sound of his words'), which is immediately followed by **וְכִשְׁמַעִי אֶת קוֹל דְּבַרְיִי** ('and when I heard the sound of his words'). The repetition is probably due to dittography. P lacks the first clause and reads only the second, in agreement with the Septuagint. This reading of the Peshitta is to be preferred over the MT.

(4) In Dan. 11.10 MT lacks a prepositional phrase **בּוּ** ('against it'), the presence of which is attested by P (**בְּחַלְמֵי**), the Septuagint (*κατ' αὐτῆς*), and some medieval Hebrew manuscripts. The prepositional phrase may have been lost in the MT due to haplography caused by similarity to the immediately preceding words **וּבֵּא בּוּא**.

Finally, an example of a reading in the Peshitta that implies a vocalization that may be preferable to that of the MT is found in Dan. 9.26, where in place of MT **עַם** ('people') the Syriac reads **בְּ** ('with'), in agreement with

⁸ F. Zimmerman, for example, maintained that these words were an embedded textual variant placed there by a school of proto-Masoretes. Zimmerman took the alleged variant to be the original reading. See F. Zimmerman, 'The Perpetuation of Variants in the Masoretic Text', *JQR* 34 (1944), pp. 460, 465.

Theodotion (σύν). The reading of the Latin Vulgate (*populus cum*) is apparently due to dittography. Although the actual number of readings that are superior to the MT is not great, the Peshitta of Daniel nonetheless makes a significant contribution to the text-critical study of this portion of the Old Testament.

Relationship of Peshitta-Daniel to Greek Texts

There is no reason to think that the Syriac translator of Daniel emended his Hebrew-Aramaic *Vorlage* by comparison with the Septuagint. It is true that there are minor places where the text of the Peshitta and the Septuagint for the book of Daniel agree. But that agreement is not necessarily due to the Syriac translator emending his source text on the basis of the Greek text. In fact, the Septuagint for Daniel is vastly different from the MT, especially in chapters 4–6. In none of the major pluses or minuses that characterize these chapters in the Greek text does the Syriac translation align itself with the Septuagint against the MT. Therefore, when we encounter the combination ⒺⒸ in the critical apparatus of our Hebrew Bible, it is a mistake automatically to collapse that agreement to a single witness, as though the Syriac text is simply following the Greek in those places.⁹ Such a conclusion must be demonstrated rather than assumed. The agreement of the two witnesses may instead be due to congruence of the *Vorlagen* rather than to direct use of the Septuagint on the part of the Syriac translator. The Syriac version should remain an independent witness unless there is clear textual evidence to the contrary.

The relationship of the Peshitta to the Theodotion-Daniel text is more complex. Although the historical figure of Theodotion dates to the second half of the second century A.D., there seems to have been a proto-Theodotion Greek text of the Old Testament as early as the first century B.C. Distinctive Theodotion readings appear in certain citations of the book of Daniel found in the New Testament and in the Apostolic Fathers. The Theodotion text therefore did not originate with the historical Theodotion. There is reason to think that the Peshitta translators were both aware of and made use of

⁹ *Pace* Würthwein, who says, 'Agreements with the Septuagint can be explained by the later intrusion of the Septuagint readings. In such instances the two witnesses are reduced in effect to one.' See Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 81. It is interesting to note that Würthwein does not repeat this assertion in the second edition (1994) of this book.

this Greek text, especially in the book of Daniel but elsewhere as well.¹⁰ It is possible that some of these alignments may be due to polygenesis, in which case the agreements came about independently as a result of common scribal tendencies. But polygenesis cannot account for all such agreements in the book of Daniel. The number of such agreements is large enough to warrant the conclusion that on occasion the Peshitta translator was aware of and was influenced by the so-called Theodotion Greek text.¹¹

Peshitta-Daniel Translation Philosophy

In terms of translation theory the Peshitta of Daniel falls more into the category of what today is known as formal correspondence, as opposed to functional or dynamic equivalence. The Syriac translator rendered the text in a fairly literal fashion, departing from that approach only as he deemed it to be in the best interests of his readership. In places where Syriac idiom would suffer no ill result, the translator closely followed the Hebrew-Aramaic text in terms of lexical choices, word order, and syntax. He often preferred cognate vocabulary, a further indication of a preference to follow closely his source text whenever possible. This is especially obvious in chapters 2–7, where the Syriac translation often reproduces the Aramaic text of Daniel quite closely. This of course is not surprising, since Syriac is a dialect of Aramaic. The Syriac translator of Daniel would probably have felt quite at home with the translation approach of the RSV and NRSV: ‘As literal as possible, as free as necessary.’

On the other hand, the Syriac rendering of the book of Daniel is for the most part smooth and idiomatic, showing sensitivity to the requirements of Syriac idiom. Although this version is relatively literal, it is not slavishly wooden to the point of becoming awkward in terms of Syriac style. For the most part, the Peshitta of Daniel in fact reads more like a native composition than a translation document. To the degree that it was practical, the translator stuck closely to his source text, using lexical choices, syntactical structures, and word order that were similar to those found in his source text. But he does so in a way that keeps the target audience very much in mind. As a result, the Peshitta of

¹⁰ The examples are too numerous to discuss here. For a collection of relevant evidence see my *The Peshitta of Daniel* (MPIL, 7; Leiden: Brill, 1994).

¹¹ For a similar conclusion with regard to the relationship of P and LXX elsewhere in the Old Testament see the following discussion: M.P. Weitzman, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 56; Cambridge: University Press, 1999), pp. 69–70.

Daniel is a readable version with a minimum of stilted or wooden expressions that would be unfamiliar to a Syriac readership.¹² For good reason later Syriac writers often regarded the literary quality of the Syriac Old Testament as a standard to emulate in their own writings.

Matched Pairs in Peshitta-Daniel

At times the Syriac translator adapted his Hebrew-Aramaic source text to more familiar cadences of Syriac idiom, taking a certain amount of unexpected freedom in accommodating his rendering to the idioms of his target audience. In some instances this meant departing from a formal equivalence to a more functional-equivalent rendering. Perhaps the most interesting example of this tendency concerns the rendering of matched pairs of words in the Peshitta of Daniel. There is a clear tendency for the order of matched pairs to be reversed in the Peshitta, not just in the book of Daniel but in certain other biblical books as well.¹³ In these cases the Syriac translator reverses the word order of the Hebrew-Aramaic text, rendering 'A and B' as 'B and A.' This is not due to textual variation in the translator's source text, and it should not be treated as variation in the text-critical sense. It is instead a translation technique adopted by the original Syriac translator and consistently reflected in the manuscript tradition.

But why did the translator adopt this technique? The answer is not clear. It may have been due to a perception that certain phrasal collocations sounded better in Syriac in a word order reversed from that found in the MT. A

¹² This is not to ignore the fact that the Peshitta Old Testament sometimes retains too much of the syntactical structure and literary style of its Hebrew parent text, resulting in interference in the Syriac style of this version. Nöldeke aptly registers the following complaint: 'The Syriac Old Testament frequently approximates the original Hebrew text too closely; and, precisely because of the intimate relationship of the languages, we sometimes find ourselves at a loss as to whether the verbal reproduction is still in conformity with the true Syriac idiom, or is really a Hebraism.' See Theodor Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar* (trans. James A. Crichton; London: Williams & Norgate, 1904; reprinted with an appendix edited by Anton Schall and translated by Peter T. Daniels; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), pp. xiii–xiv.

¹³ Gelston, for example, has documented a number of instances of this pattern in the Dodekapropheton of the Peshitta. See A. Gelston, *The Peshitta of the Twelve Prophets* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 71, 135, 149. See also P.J. Williams, *Early Syriac Translation Technique and the Textual Criticism of the Greek Gospels* (Texts and Studies, 3d series, 2; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004), pp. 204–235; M.D. Koster, *The Peshitta of Exodus* (SSN, 19; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1977), pp. 55–56, 583, n. 374; G. Greenberg,

phenomenon perhaps similar to this can be observed even in English, where certain pairs of words sound better in one word order than they do in the opposite word order. For example, the expression ‘an arm and a leg’ seems more preferable in English than ‘a leg and an arm,’ although the reasons are not so obvious. Likewise, ‘hand over fist’ sounds better than ‘fist over hand.’ In these cases subtle cultural forces have influenced the way we state things, and in such cases the opposite word order strikes one as a bit odd.¹⁴

I have noticed thirteen instances where this sort of pair reversal occurs in the Peshiṭta of Daniel. If variant readings from the Syriac manuscript tradition are included, another two instances surface. In what follows I will briefly describe these cases.

(1) In Dan. 2.21 for MT עֲדֻנְיָא וְזִמְנִיָּא (‘times and seasons’) P has ܘܩܬܘܪܐ ܘܫܘܒܘܪܐ (‘seasons and times’), reversing the order of these two nouns. The correspondences between the lexical items makes it clear that a switch has occurred here. The first term in the Aramaic phrase is matched by the second term in the Syriac phrase, which is cognate to it, and the second term in the Aramaic phrase is matched by the first term in the Syriac phrase. For some reason the translator has preferred in this verse a word order that is the opposite of that found in the Aramaic text. (2) In Dan. 2.35 for MT חֲסֵפָא נְחֹשֶׁת ܘܟֶסֶף (‘the clay, the bronze, the silver’) P has ܘܟֶסֶף ܘܢܚܘܫܐ ܘܚܫܐ (‘and the bronze and the clay and the silver’), reversing the order found in the Aramaic text for the first two items. (3) In Dan. 2.38 for MT חַיֵּי בְּרֵא וְעוֹף שָׁמַיָּא (‘the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky’) P has ܘܥוֹף שָׁמַיָּא ܘܚַיֵּי ܒְּרֵא (‘and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field’), again reversing

Translation Technique in the Peshitta to Jeremiah (MPIL, 13; Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 53; P.J. Williams, *Studies in the Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings* (MPIL, 12; Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 155; David J. Shepherd, ‘Rendering ‘Flesh and Bones’: Pair Reversal and the Peshitta of Job 2.5,’ *ArSt* 3 (2005), pp. 205–213.

¹⁴ An interesting parallel is found in Eph. 6.12 and Heb. 2.14, where the Greek text has the phrase ‘blood and flesh’ (αἷμα καὶ σάρκα or αἵματος καὶ σαρκός, respectively). In these verses the English versions almost always render this phrase as ‘flesh and blood’ rather than ‘blood and flesh’, based on English preferences with regard to word order. Modern translators do not feel obliged to replicate the Greek word order in such cases. On the other hand, English versions are sometimes inconsistent in their translations of these verses. For example, NRSV renders the phrase in Eph. 6.12 as ‘blood and flesh,’ but the same version has ‘flesh and blood’ in Heb. 2.14. NAB has ‘flesh and blood’ in Eph. 6.12, but it has ‘blood and flesh’ in Heb. 2.14. There seems to be no good reason for this variation in translation technique in these English versions. I wish to thank my friend Buist M. Fanning III for bringing to my attention the word order found in the Greek text of Heb. 2.14 in this regard.

the order of the two items. (4) In Dan. 2.40 for MT **מהדק וחשל** ('breaking and shattering') P has **אֲחַד וְאַחַד** ('shattering and breaking'). Here the first term in the Aramaic phrase is matched by the second term in the Syriac phrase, which is cognate to it, and the second term in the Aramaic phrase is matched by the first term in the Syriac phrase. The word order is reversed. (5) In Dan. 3.27 for MT **סגניא ופחותא** ('prefects and governors') P has **סגלילא וסגלילא** ('and governors and prefects'). The translation equivalents for these words are established elsewhere in chapter 3 (cf. vv. 2, 3), where MT **סגניא** is rendered by **סגלילא** and MT **פחותא** is rendered by **סגלילא**. The Peshitta reverses the order of these officials. (6) In Dan. 4.19 for MT **רבית ותקפת** ('great and strong') P has **עצול סובל** ('strong and great'), again with a reversed word order. (7) In Dan. 4.33 for MT **הדברי ורברבני** ('counselors and nobles') P has **סגלילא וסגלילא** ('and nobles and counselors'), reversing the order of the officials. (8) In Dan. 5.23 for MT **כספא ודהבא** ('silver and gold') P has **גדסא ודסא** ('gold and silver'). Here in similar fashion Theodotion has **χρυσός και ἄργυρος** ('gold and silver'), in agreement with the Peshitta. (9) In Dan. 6.5 for MT **עלה ושחיתה** ('occasion and negligence') P has **סחלה סחלה** ('negligence and occasion'). The word order is reversed. (10) In Dan. 6.8 for MT **סגניא ואחשדרפניא הדבריא** ('prefects and satraps, counselors') P has **סגלילא וסגלילא** ('and nobles and satraps and prefects'). The order of the first two officials is reversed. (11) In Dan. 6.25 for MT **בניהון ונשיהון** ('their children and their wives') P has **סלבתתא סלבתתא** ('and their wives and their children'), placing the items in a reversed order. (12) In Dan. 7.14 for MT **ויקר ומלכו** ('and honor and kingdom') P has **סלבתתא סלבתתא** ('and kingdom and honor'). Again, the order is reversed. (13) Finally, in Dan. 8.26 for MT **הערב והבקר** ('the evening and the morning') P has **גַּי פּוּא סגלילא** ('the morning and the evening'), adopting a reversed word order. In most of these examples the Peshitta stands alone in reading a reversed order for the word pairs in question. Internal evidence presents no compelling reason for thinking that the Peshitta's reading is to be preferred as the original reading in any of these cases. Rather, it seems that the Syriac translator himself had a proclivity for this sort of change, perhaps due to cultural expectations on the part of his readership.

The preceding thirteen examples of reversed word order appear in the Syriac text of Daniel as presented in the Leiden edition. Two additional examples appear as variant readings cited in the critical apparatus of the Leiden edition. First, in Dan. 9.7 for MT **הקרבים והרחקים** ('those near and those far away') the Leiden text has the expected order **גזסמא גזסמא** ('those near and those far away'). However, several Syriac manuscripts have the reverse order, **גזסמא גזסמא**

ܐܦܝܚܝܢܝܢ (‘those far away and those near’).¹⁵ Second, in Dan. 9.16 for MT אַפַּךְ וְחַמְתְּךָ (‘your anger and your wrath’) the Leiden text has, as we would expect, ܐܘܪܝܘܬܝܢ ܘܥܘܪܝܘܬܝܢ (‘your anger and your wrath’). Several Syriac manuscripts, however, have instead ܐܘܪܝܘܬܝܢ ܘܥܘܪܝܘܬܝܢ (‘your wrath and your anger’).¹⁶ Although these two Syriac variants may be due to later scribal corruptions, their reversal of word order is consistent with the pattern described above. In general we may say that the Syriac biblical manuscripts vary somewhat in the degree to which they exhibit pair reversal.¹⁷

Awareness of this tendency to reverse the word order of pairs is of value to the text-critic who makes use of the Peshitta of Daniel. Given this fairly common pattern, it would not seem prudent to emend the Hebrew text on the basis of the Syriac reading in such cases, since the Syriac variant appears to be due to a translation technique on the part of the translator.

Glosses in Peshitta-Daniel Manuscripts

In a number of places the Syriac translation of Daniel has interpretive glosses which guide the reader concerning the preferred exegesis of the biblical text. These paragraph headings instruct the reader concerning the identification of certain unnamed individuals or kingdoms described in chapters seven, eight, and eleven of the book of Daniel. As such, these glosses provide an interesting window into the exegesis of these chapters in early Syriac-speaking Christianity. The interpretive headings are as follows.

First, in Daniel 7 we find the following glosses. Before verse 4, which describes the first of four animals coming up from the sea, a gloss appears which says ‘the kingdom of the Babylonians’ (ܩܘܠܘܬܝܢ ܕܒܒܝܠܝܢ). Before verse 5, which describes a second animal coming up from the sea, a gloss appears which says ‘the kingdom of the Medes’ (ܩܘܠܘܬܝܢ ܕܡܕܝܐ). Before verse 6, which describes the appearance of a third animal coming up from the sea, a gloss appears which says ‘the kingdom of the Persians’ (ܩܘܠܘܬܝܢ ܕܦܪܫܝܢ).

¹⁵ Mss 6h21, 8ar^c, 10d1 12d1.2.

¹⁶ Mss 9l6, 11l4.5 12d1.

¹⁷ Koster finds that in half of eighteen instances of altered word order in the Peshitta of Exodus, Ms 5b1 has the word order found in MT as against that of other Syriac manuscripts which adopt a different word order in these cases. This sort of variation in the Syriac manuscript tradition indicates that the tendencies of copyists varied with regard to reversal of word order as found in their Hebrew *Vorlage*. See further, Koster, *The Peshitta of Exodus*, pp. 55–56.

ܠܫܘܢܐ). Before verse 7, which describes a fourth animal so awesome that it is non-descript, a gloss appears which says ‘the kingdom of the Greeks’ (ܠܫܘܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ). Finally, in verse 8, which describes a small horn coming up between other horns, and again before verse 21, which describes this horn as waging war with the holy ones, a gloss appears which says ‘Antiochus’ (ܐܢܬܝܘܚܘܫ). Daniel’s four empires are thus identified in these glosses as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. The prominent horn that makes war against the holy ones is Antiochus Epiphanes. This understanding corresponds to commonly accepted views in modern criticism of the book of Daniel, but such a view is markedly different from traditional exegesis of this chapter, which identified the four empires as Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Second, in Daniel 8 we find the following glosses. In verse 5 a gloss appears which says ‘the kid of the goats is Alexander son of Philip’ (ܠܫܘܢܐ ܕܩܝܕܐ ܕܗܘܢܐ ܐܠܟܣܢܕܪ ܒܢ ܦܝܠܝܦ ܕܩܝܦܐ). In verse 7 a gloss appears which says ‘the ram is Darius the Mede’ (ܠܫܘܢܐ ܕܪܡܝܢ ܕܕܪܝܘܫ ܕܡܕܝܐ). In verse 8, which describes the breaking of the big horn, a gloss appears which says ‘the death of Alexander son of Philip’ (ܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܟܣܢܕܪ ܒܢ ܦܝܠܝܦ). Before verse 9 a gloss appears which says ‘Antiochus Epiphanes; the four servants of Alexander son of Philip who ruled after his death’ (ܐܢܬܝܘܚܘܫ ܐܝܦܝܦܐܢܝܘܫ ܕܐܠܟܣܢܕܪ ܒܢ ܦܝܠܝܦ ܕܩܝܦܐ ܕܪܘܠܘܢ ܕܒܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܠܟܣܢܕܪ ܒܢ ܦܝܠܝܦ ܕܩܝܦܐ). Before verse 20, which interprets the ram in general terms as the kings of Media and Persia, a gloss appears which specifically says ‘Darius the Mede’ (ܠܫܘܢܐ ܕܪܡܝܢ ܕܡܕܝܐ). Before verse 21, which identifies the hairy goat in general terms as the king of Greece, a gloss appears which specifically says ‘Alexander’ (ܐܠܟܣܢܕܪ). An additional gloss, found only in Ms 7a1, occurs before verse 3, which describes a ram standing before the Ulai canal. It says ‘Darius the Mede’ (ܠܫܘܢܐ ܕܪܡܝܢ ܕܡܕܝܐ). These notes found in Daniel 8 in early Syriac manuscripts correctly describe the meaning of Daniel’s apocalyptic symbolism in this chapter.

Third, in Daniel 11 we find numerous glosses scattered throughout the chapter. Since these are not found in the early Syriac manuscripts, I will not discuss them here. They seem to be an attempt on the part of later scribes to expand the earlier practice attested for Daniel 7 and 8.¹⁸

¹⁸⁾ The glosses found in Syriac manuscripts for Daniel 11 are listed in the introduction to Daniel in the Leiden edition. See *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version*, III.4 *Dodekapropheton-Daniel-Bel-Draco* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), pp. xviii–xx. For a brief discussion see A.G. Kallarakal, *The Peshitto Version of Daniel: A Comparison with the Massoretic Text, the Septuagint and Theodotion* (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 1973), pp. 130–131.

The interpretive notes found in chapters seven and eight of the Peshitta text of Daniel occur in our earliest Syriac manuscripts. The similar glosses found in chapter eleven of the book of Daniel are found only in manuscripts dating to the tenth century or later. Consequently, they are not as significant as those found in chapters seven and eight. The early exegetical glosses suggest that influence from the pagan protagonist Porphyry regarding the identity of the four empires of Daniel was strongly felt in early Syriac-speaking Christianity.¹⁹ This identification of Daniel's four empires as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece differs markedly from the interpretation set forth in the West by Christian commentators such as Jerome.²⁰ In Jerome's understanding the first three kingdoms were Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece, with the fourth empire being Rome.²¹ Jerome documents the polemical tensions that accompanied discussion of the identity of Daniel's four empires, faulting Porphyry for taking an approach to these chapters that nullified the possibility of predictive prophecy on Daniel's part. It appears that Syriac-speaking Christians from an early time were accustomed to reading the book of Daniel through an interpretive lens influenced by the views of Porphyry.²²

¹⁹ Van der Kooij concludes that the Peshitta glosses in Daniel 7 were incorporated into the Syriac biblical text probably sometime in the fifth century A.D. See Arie van der Kooij, 'The Four Kingdoms in Peshitta Daniel 7 in the Light of the Early History of Interpretation', in Bas ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (MPIL, 15; Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 128–129.

²⁰ Jerome's identification of the fourth empire as Rome has antecedents in both Jewish and Christian exegesis of the book of Daniel, although none of those sources discuss this interpretation in as detailed a manner as does Jerome. Van der Kooij discusses the following sources that identify Rome as Daniel's fourth empire: Josephus, 4 Ezra 12.10–12; 2 Baruch 39.3–5; Targum Habakkuk 3.17 [cf. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to the Pentateuch, Lev. 26.42–44, Deut. 32.24]; Hippolytus of Rome, *Daniel*, 4.5 [cf. Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 5, §§10, 15–19]. See van der Kooij, 'The Four Kingdoms in Peshitta Daniel 7', pp. 124–127.

²¹ See Jerome's commentary on the book of Daniel: Fr. Glorie (ed.), *Jerôme, Commentariorum in Daniele* (CCSL, 75A; Turnhout: Brepols, 1964). See also the following: Gleason L. Archer Jr. (trans.), *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958); Jay Braverman, *Jerome's 'Commentary on Daniel': A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible* (CBQMS, 7; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1978); Mary Reaburn, 'St Jerome and Porphyry Interpret the Book of Daniel', *AusBR* 52 (2004), pp. 1–18; Pier Franco Beatrice, 'Pagans and Christians on the Book of Daniel', in Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia patristica*, XXV.4 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), pp. 27–45.

²² On this point see further P.M. Casey, 'Porphyry and the Origin of the Book of Daniel', *JTS* 27 (1976), pp. 15–33; A.J. Ferch, 'Porphyry: An Heir to Christian Exegesis?' *ZNW* 73 (1982), pp. 141–147. Collins takes exception to Casey's view in light of certain inconsistencies

Conclusion

In this paper I have described briefly the following key features of the Peshitta translation of the book of Daniel. First, Peshitta-Daniel is a primary version of the Hebrew-Aramaic text and not a daughter version made from the Greek. Second, some Peshitta-Daniel readings are superior from a text-critical perspective to readings of the MT. Third, Peshitta-Daniel is not significantly influenced by the Septuagint, although it does frequently align with the Greek text of Theodotion. Fourth, Peshitta-Daniel is essentially a literal translation of its Hebrew-Aramaic source text, while maintaining a high level of stylistic elegance in Syriac. Fifth, Peshitta-Daniel frequently reverses the order of matched pairs of words due to translation technique. Sixth, Peshitta manuscripts of the book of Daniel have interpretive glosses that guide the reader as to the exegesis of chapters 7, 8, and 11. These glosses adopt an approach to the interpretation of Daniel that suggests at least indirect influence from the pagan philosopher Porphyry.

The forthcoming English translation of the Bible of Edessa will hopefully make the Peshitta translation of the Hebrew Bible better known to students of the Old Testament. This version is important as a text-critical tool for resolving problems in the Masoretic Hebrew text. But it is also a work to be studied in its own right. As such, it provides a helpful window into the practice of biblical translation in the early Christian period. It also enables us to see how certain exegetical forces influenced the way in which Syriac-speaking Christians understood some of the more obscure portions of their Old Testament. Such factors find ample illustration in the Syriac translation of the book of Daniel, underscoring the importance of the Bible of Edessa to biblical scholarship.

found in the Syriac tradition. See Adela Yarbro Collins, 'The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament', in John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 114–116.

Copyright of Aramaic Studies is the property of Brill Academic Publishers and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.