1. Introduction

Around 705 CE Jacob, Bishop of Edessa, finished his revision of the Old Testament, a highly conflate work on which he had laboured in retirement for nine years. It has been described by William Wright as ‘a curious eclectic or patchwork text’. Our concern here is with the Samuel manuscript, which contains the text of Samuel according to the Lucianic division, that is, 1 Kgs. 1:1-2:11 forms the conclusion of 2 Samuel.

For this study into its underlying textual Vorlagen, it was decided that soundings from various sections of the manuscript were preferable to an exhaustive analysis of a restricted body of textual data. The texts chosen encompassed 305 verses: 1 Sam. 1:1-5:12; 7:5-12; 16:13; 20:11-21:6; 2 Sam. 6:1-6, 13-14; 7:1-17; 13:1-17, 19-39; 21:1-22; 23:13-17; 1 Kgs. 1:1-49a. All passages where the Syro-Hexapla is known were included, a total of 142 verses. Since we do not have the autograph

* For a more thorough study on this subject, see R.J. Saley, The Samuel Manuscript of Jacob of Edessa: A Study in Its Underlying Textual Traditions (MPIL 9; Leiden 1998), and the companion volume, A. Salvesen, The Books of Samuel in the Syriac Version of Jacob of Edessa (MPIL 10; Leiden 1999).

1 W. Wright, A Short History of Syriac Literature (London 1894), 17.


3 The versification of the Peshitta is employed.

4 21:5 in the Septuagint.

5 2 Sam. 13:18 is missing in the Peshitta.

of the Samuel manuscript of Jacob, but a copy from about fifteen years later, only the main text and not the marginal notations were considered. The other primary texts consulted were the Peshitta and the Septuagint. For the Peshitta the Leiden edition was utilized. The larger Cambridge Septuagint was the source for the major Greek textual families, for which representative manuscripts were chosen: the uncial A and minuscules cx (376, 247) for the Hexaplaric tradition (G\(^H\)); the uncial B with checking against ya\(_2\) (121, 509) for the Egyptian family (G\(^E\)); and the minuscules boc\(_2\)c\(_2\) (19, 108, 82, 127, 93) for the Lucianic tradition (G\(^I\)). The citations for the latter were, in addition, verified by checking the recent edition of the Antiochene text published by Fernández Marcos and Busto Saiz.

In the study of the text, three major issues surfaced: (1) the relationship of the Peshitta, the Syro-Hexapla and the Greek witnesses in the Samuel manuscript of Jacob; (2) the relative presence of the major Greek textual families in the Samuel manuscript; and (3) the extent and nature in the Samuel manuscript of readings outside the major Syriac and Greek traditions.

\textit{Scholia in Libros Samuelis} (Berlin 1897) and in the notes of Masius (cf. Lagarde, \textit{Bibliothecae}, 31–32b) were too fragmentary for the purposes of this study, and hence were not used. The same was true of the Syro-Hexaplaric readings found in the Commentary of Išo’dad of Merv (cf. C. Van den Eynde, \textit{Commentaire d’Išo’dad de Merv sur l’Ancien Testament} 3. \textit{Livres des Sessions} (CSCO 229–230, Syr. 96–97; Leuven 1962–1963)).

This is not to deny the possibility that the majority of the variants in the margins could have come from Jacob himself. Salvesen has studied all of the marginal notes in the manuscript, and though they appear to have been written by a hand different from that of the main text, is inclined to attribute most, if not all, to Jacob’s authorship. See A. Salvesen, \textit{The Books of Samuel}, xiii.

P.B. Dirksen and P.A.H. de Boer, \textit{The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version} 2.2 Judges–Samuel (Leiden 1978), and H. Gottlieb and E. Hammershaimb, \textit{The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version} 2.4 Kings (Leiden 1976). For the purposes of this study in comparing the text of Jacob with the Peshitta, the Syro-Hexapla, and the Septuagint, the assumption was made that Jacob had a text of the Peshitta comparable to the Leiden Peshitta. In fact, as the late Dr Michael Weitzman kindly pointed out (personal communication), there is evidence of corruption within Jacob’s copy of the Peshitta. Given the scope of this work, however, it was decided that such deviations as might occur would almost certainly prove to be inconsequential for the final conclusions drawn. (The same caution, of course, holds true for the texts of the Syro-Hexapla and the Septuagint employed here.)
