AN OFTEN NEGLECTED WITNESS TO THE TEXTUAL HISTORY OF THE SEPTUAGINT:
THE SYROHEXAPLA OF 3 KINGDOMS

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Long before I met him, Julio Trebolle Barrera had shaped my thinking on the textual history of the Septuagint. When I first became interested in text history, I bought and read Salomón y Jeroboán and Jehú y Joás, and in them I found arguments that were fresh and persuasive. I then ordered from an online bookseller his Centena of 1989, and found inscribed on the inside: 'Al Prof. Frank Moore Cross, con profundo agradecimiento y respeto. -Julio Trebolle.' I suppose if Prof. Cross had already read it and sold it, it is best that it ended up in the hands of a young student who would eventually follow in the author's footsteps. Trebolle's work ushered in a new era in the study of the textual history of the Septuagint, where literary and compositional history would have to be considered when assessing the divergences between the Hebrew and Greek versions, and where one could no longer uncritically assume MT was the Vorlage of 3-4 Kingdoms. Few have had an influence on the study of Septuagint as Prof. Trebolle. In his honor, and with gratitude, I offer this contribution on an often neglected version, the Syrohexapla.

Introduction

This contribution presents some of the findings from a much longer study in which I evaluated the worth of Syh as a witness to the hexaplaric materials in 3 Kingdoms (Kgdms), a project that was preliminary to the preparation of the critical edition of the hexaplaric fragments for the same book.1

* I am grateful to the British Academy for the support to conduct my research as a Postdoctoral Fellow.
I analyzed both the anonymous signed readings and those attributed to revisers, along with the many attributed readings in the margins, all of which may be called hexaplaric materials, with the result that I was able to appraise the reliability of this version for recovering what is preserved of Origen’s Hexapla. The book of 3 Kgdms in Syh comes to us in one single manuscript, but it is, on the whole, in remarkably good condition.

Some details of the Manuscript

The manuscript is Ms. Br. Mus. Add. 14,437 (vellum, 78f., 10 1/8” x 6 1/2”, I col. 21-28l.), dated to the 8th century. The hand is consistent throughout, containing only slight variations in some of the marginal notes that may have been copied by another scribe. There are signs which I referred to as ‘continuation signs’ that were added to indicate that a signed reading (sub + or sub ÷) extends beyond the first line and continues on the line where the continuation sign is placed in the right hand margin. Since these were added inconsistently, the metobelus determines the end of the reading, not the presence or absence of the continuation sign. Recognition of the function of these signs is important since on several occasions Lagarde in his edition (Syh$^\text{ed}$) and also the editors of the Cambridge Septuagint (BMT) have misread the purpose of the sign and have therefore written misleading notes in their apparatuses.

In his attempt to insert the hexaplaric signs in the most precise manner, the scribe sometimes ignores the constraints of Syriac by separating the waw and other particles from the following word: 2:31; 10:7; 15:4 (preposition ∆), 29, 30; 16:13; 17:17; and 21(20 B):19 (preposition 𐤃). In most cases, however, he does not: 2:22; 3:21; 9:3 (preposition ∆), 9 (relative ṣ); 10:29; 13:4; 15:23 (relative ṣ); 16:13 (relative ṣ); 17:6; 20(21 B):1, 7, 11; 22:6 2x (1x: preposition ∆), 38, and 53 (relative ṣ). Syh$^\text{ed}$ is inconsistent in offering correctives to

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1 I am editing the hexaplaric fragments for 3-4 Kgdms for the Hexapla Project, and was honored to have been invited recently to contribute to the Synoptic Polyglot Edition of Kings, edited by Trebolle, P. Torijano Morales, and A. Piquer Otero.


3 E.g., in fols. 113$^1$ and 113$^2$ the he is written in the serta script, even though the rest of the note is in the same estrangela as the main text.

4 All of these cases are noted as they appear in the study.