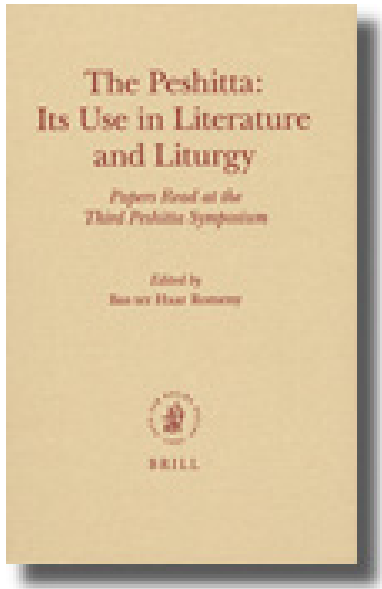


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Haar Romeny, Bas ter, ed.

The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium

Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 15

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The path to the printed page for this congress volume was never straight, filled with a variety of delays and sadness, though in the end the proceedings of the Third Peshitta Symposium in 2001 (first two in 1985 and 1993) present a major contribution to the study of Syriac scriptures. The symposium marked a significant new venture, undertaken with much anticipation and some trepidation, by the scholars associated with the Leiden Peshitta Institute.

The principle project for over forty years has been the development of the critical edition of the Peshitta Old Testament. The directors of the project consistently have not been inclined to consider the introduction of variant readings from patristic and other nonbiblical sources, focusing solely on Peshitta texts. For this third symposium, how the Peshitta has been used in other forms of literature could no longer be ignored. A remarkable harmony for a typically diverse collection of papers ensues, always with an eye toward the recovery of the Peshitta text, now shifting toward how the Peshitta actually was used in the church, liturgy, and theology.

A number of internal factors delayed publication, including the unexpected death of David Lane, and then, as the volume appeared, the death of William Petersen further

saddened the memories of the conference. Konrad Jenner offers high praise to the editor Bas ter Haar Romeny, who persisted in seeing through the volume to completion. Dedicated *in memoriam David Lane*, a poignant passage from Lane's recently published *The Book of Gifts* by Shubh_halmaran is cited on the dedication page.

Underlining the search for how the Bible is utilized in the life of the church, Sebastian P. Brock ("The Use of the Syriac Versions in the Liturgy," 3–25) begins with an overview in the first keynote lecture of the use of scripture in Syriac liturgy, stating at the outset what will be a common refrain throughout the volume, that the scriptures found in these liturgies seldom are direction quotations useful for Peshitta critical editions.

Three verbs are examined, then a fourth added, all used in eucharistic anaphoras as the invocation or *epiclesis* of the Holy Spirit and indirectly reflecting a Peshitta derivation. *Rahēp* or the "hovering" of the Spirit comes from Gen 1:2; *Aggēn* or "tabernacle," the Spirit "falling" or "resting upon" upon someone (Acts 10–11); and *Šrā*, "to reside," while referring to the activity of the Spirit, also describes the incarnation of the divine Word. The action of the incarnation adopts the clothing metaphors of Syriac literature—*lebaš pagrā*, "he put on the body"—a concept transformed in creedal language as the calque, *ethbasar*, "he was enfleshed."

Readings identified from the Diatessaron in later liturgies does not mean, Brock cautions, that compilers still had access to Diatessaron; certain Diatessaron readings will have taken on a separate life of their own, totally divorced from the Diatessaron text itself. Liturgical texts are not only full of allusions to biblical passages but often deliberately alter the wording in order to link them up with other passages.

Aho Shemunkasho, ("New Testament Quotations in the Breviary of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Example: The Annunciation [Luke 1:26–38]," 351–63) and Baby Varghese, "Peshitta New Testament Quotations in the West Syrian Anaphoras: Some General Observations," 379–89) also examine the scriptural use in liturgical venues. Shemunkasho points to the Breviary of the Syrian Orthodox Church, a collection of prayers, hymns, antiphons, and verse homilies reputedly collated by Jacob of Edessa at the end of the seventh century, as a vibrant source of biblical citations and allusions. Focusing on the Annunciation in Luke 1, Shemunkasho proceeds through numerous citations and allusions marking its portrayal to see if the source version is discernable. In the end, without a critical edition of the Breviary available, it is obvious that the Peshitta has had a great impact upon the Breviary, with some Harclean elements definitely present. Conflation of various verses and versions, however, inhibit a clear picture of the biblical text available. Shemunkasho reminds that the Breviary is a prayer book, the purpose of which is to encourage the heart of the reader and not primarily to provide complete and

correct citations of biblical verses and passages. Concentrating on the sixth-century Syriac translation of the Greek Anaphora of St. James (a later revision is attributed to Jacob of Edessa), Varghese points out a number of instances where the biblical quotations have followed closely the Greek text, resisting being modified toward the Peshitta. Other Syriac anaphoras do show evidence of being corrected in light of the Peshitta, while the biblical quotations of still others generally do not correspond to the Peshitta or Harclean. Varghese observes that the Peshitta had a limited influence on the central part of the anaphora, noting that the West Syrians have a preference for paraphrasing the scripture rather than quoting the texts fully.

Lucas Van Rompay's keynote ("Between the School and the Monk's Cell: The Syriac Old Testament Commentary Tradition," 27–51), focusing on Old Testament commentaries, begins with a different refrain of caution toward biblical citations, insisting that first one must figure out "the general profile of the commentary": the style and editorial technique of the author. This is more of a matter of the commentator's approach to the biblical text rather than free citation or citing from memory that produces the illusion of a variant reading.

The two major commentators having a lasting influence were Ephrem in the West and Theodore of Mopsuestia in the East. The latter wrote in Greek, but his works were translated and survive largely in Syriac. Theodore's commentaries involved a great deal of theological interpretation and were also imbued with his perception of biblical history as a manifestation of God's teaching office with humanity. Theodore's successors eschewed his theological bent for more textual and historical explanation, following the general Antiochene tendencies.

Ephrem's commentaries are interesting in that they possess a unity and coherent literary structure, which Van Rompay observes may be read as a narrative in its own right without the biblical text at hand, something not found in Greek commentaries. Perhaps as a literary necessity Ephrem omits large sections of the book under examination.

An unusual characteristic of later Syriac commentaries is the continued citation from Greek and Hebrew sources few ordinary readers would have been capable of recognizing. This phenomenon, Van Rompay observes, is not simply pedantic, but a practice "firmly rooted in the worldview of the Syrian Christians. By all sorts of references, commentators created awareness that the Peshitta had its place in the broader stream of the tradition of the biblical text."

Harry F. van Rooy ("The Peshitta and Biblical Quotations in the Longer Syriac Versions of the Commentary on Athanasius on the Psalms [BL 14568]: With Special Attention to

Psalm 23[24] and 102[103],” 311–25), Stephen D. Ryan, O.P. (“The Reception of the Peshitta Psalter in Bar Salibi’s Commentary on the Psalms,” 327–38), David G. K. Taylor (“The Psalm Headings in the West Syrian Tradition,” 365–78), and Jerome A. Lund (“Isho‘dad’s Knowledge of Hebrew as Evidenced from his Treatment of Peshitta Ezekiel,” 177–86) all treat specific Old Testament commentaries. Van Rooy looks at the long version of Athanasius’s commentary on the Psalms, in particular Pss 23(24) and 102(103), searching for the methodology used by the translator for his Syriac text of the Psalms contained in the translation. Comparing the parallel Syriac texts of the Peshitta, Athanasius’s commentary, and the Syro-Hexapla of the two psalms, van Rooy concludes that the translator of the commentary used a text midway between the Peshitta and the Syro-Hexapla, the base text having close affinities to the Philoxenian translation, which along with Hiebert, Aland, and Brock he understands as a version halfway between the Peshitta and the Harclean, intended as a revision of the Peshitta to bring it more in line with the LXX.

Ryan treats *The Commentary on the Old Testament* by Dionysius Bar Salibi, a unique work in the author’s division between “factual” and “spiritual” commentaries, presented strikingly in parallel columns. Typically, the factual interpretations are based upon the Peshitta and the spiritual upon the LXX, known to Bar Salibi through the Syro-Hexapla, though scholars have not been able to arrive at a satisfactory explanation for these alignments. Ryan concentrates upon the commentary on the Psalms, noting that except for the special section “according to the LXX,” most biblical citations agree with the Peshitta. The source for roughly 50 percent of his factual commentary is Isho‘dad of Merv, and he also inserts the introduction of Moses Bar Kephā’s *Introduction to the Psalms* to function as the introduction to his own work. Ryan frames Bar Salibi’s commentary, noting its purpose is to enable readers to pray the Psalms with understanding.

Lund has a straightforward question: Did Isho‘dad of Merv (fl. 850) know Hebrew, and in what way did he know it? The short answer is, not really. Isho‘dad did know some isolated Hebrew words and readings, but only second-hand through Greek and/or Syriac sources, certainly not in a primary sense. In Isho‘dad’s commentary on Peshitta Ezekiel, Lund lifts out four words referred to as “the Hebrew” (*‘ebrāyā*) and then three variant Hebrew readings. In each instance, Isho‘dad misinterprets or misses an aspect of the text. Several times he does not recognize a simple misspelling of the reputedly Hebrew word, giving evidence that he did not have a real grasp of Hebrew. Lund conjectures that one of Isho‘dad’s sources may well have been a local Hebrew informant who communicated his ideas and interpretations orally. Lund concludes that when Syriac commentators called an item *‘ebrāyā*, this was a generic term for information derived from Jewish tradition, not necessarily from the Hebrew Bible per se.

Taylor cites the recent work of French literary theorist Genette regarding the importance of “paratexts” or the usually ignored marginalia of texts—title pages, prefaces, notes, chapter headings—that work to present and frame the content of the text. This is an obvious lead-in to Taylor’s work on the Syriac psalm headings, particularly in the commentary by Daniel of Salah, writing in 542. The Syriac traditions of psalm headings are much more informative than the prosaic Hebrew and LXX headings, and as a consequence there is much more variance depending upon the methodological principles and theological beliefs of the prior editions that a compiler/commentator inherits. The East Syrian headings ultimately derive from the Psalm commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia, although the diversity of the West Syrian headings traditions has discouraged any serious study.

While Daniel believed that all of the Psalms were written by David, his primary exegetical interest was not historical, for he sees the most important part of David’s prophetic activity to be in relation to the divine economy in Christ, and therefore spiritual and theological issues. Prior to Daniel’s work, Taylor conjectures that the West Syrian tradition utilized Theodore’s headings, for since Theodore insisted upon a literal or historical reading of the Psalms, his headings could not be rejected on the grounds of suspicious Christology. Gregory Barhebraeus (1225–1286) had a lasting impact, as he does on many things. Barhebraeus chose to use the titles of Theodore rather than those of Daniel, perhaps because their authorship had been forgotten and also due to Barhebraeus’s conviction that not all of the Psalms were written by David, a conviction affirmed by Theodore and denied by Daniel.

The third of the keynotes, by William L. Petersen (“Problems in the Syriac New Testament and How Syrian Exegetes Solved Them,” 53–74), is an introduction to Peshitta New Testament history and issues for an audience more familiar with the Old Testament. His cautionary note is that one must include Syriac versions in any study of the early New Testament text or one risks writing nonsense, recalling a recent study he had reviewed that ignored or was unaware of Peshitta readings. Petersen, one of the premier scholars of the Diatessaron, establishes this harmony as the original Syriac New Testament that would influence all later Syriac Gospel texts. There are fundamental differences between the Old Testament and New Testament texts, Petersen points out, the first being that the Old Testament and its textual contours were relatively well known by the time it was translated into Syriac, but not so with the New Testament, as with Diatessaron (ca. 172), where neither a textual form nor a canon had been established. Moreover, the Greek New Testament and its successors never enjoyed the special linguistic position within Christianity as did the Hebrew Bible in Judaism.

The three problems Petersen highlights begin with the dilemma of parallel accounts of Jesus' life to which Syrian exegetes had no trouble allowing different, mutually exclusive interpretations to stand side by side. Then there was the ever-changing nature of the Christian message, cases in which Jesus' unambiguous statement had to be moderated and repositioned depending upon new circumstances—to which Syriac exegetes responded creatively. Third was the primitive Christology that Jesus is simply, explicitly a “man,” one “through whom” God did wonders, witnessed to especially in Aphrahat.

A. Peter Hayman (“The Biblical Text in the Disputation of Sergius the Stylite against a Jew,” 77–86) and Craig E. Morrison, O.Carm. (“The Text of the New Testament in the Acts of Judas Thomas,” 186–205) examine the nature of the biblical texts contained in different genres of Syriac literature. Hayman focuses on an eighth-century dialogue between a Jewish rabbi and a Christian stylite. Containing over 340 biblical quotations, about 300 from the Old Testament, Hayman maintains that the text of Sergius's biblical quotes keep contact with the earliest attested strata of the Peshitta. Several of the Old Testament citations in the Disputation draw upon New Testament readings, such as Deut 6:5 as an amalgam of the Peshitta texts of Deuteronomy and Mark 12:30, and Isa 28:16 largely following the text of Rom 9:33.

Morrison turns to the Syriac *Acts of Judas Thomas* as a source for third-century biblical readings, noting that the author cites directly only New Testament passages, simply referring to Old Testament events and personalities. Morrison examines two New Testament citations that are significantly different from Greek, Latin, and Peshitta readings to see whether they derive from the Diatessaron, usually assumed to be the text behind the *Acts*. Case 1 involves the first explicit citation of the New Testament in the Acts, Jesus' counseling not to be anxious. The phrase “How much [more] will [God] care...” (~ Matt 6:30/Luke 12:24, 28) represents a unique reading that could be from the Diatessaron. Morrison supplies the Syriac text, followed by a number of other Gospel versions, along with Eastern and Western Diatessaronic witnesses, and concludes that the phrase derives from Vetus Syra. Case 2 concerns the addition to the Lord's Prayer of the phrase “and our sins” following “and forgive us our debts.” There are witnesses to the double “debts and sins” in a number of texts, including a homily of Jacob of Serug, but Morrison sees the source most likely in the Vetus Latina tradition. Neither instance is therefore Diatessaronic, though a more complete study of New Testament allusions in the *Acts* is still needed to provide a fuller picture.

Six papers treat the use of the Bible in Syriac patristic writers. Kristian Heal (“Reworking the Biblical Text in the Dramatic Dialogue Poems on the Old Testament Patriarch Joseph,” 87–98) looks at five dramatic dialogue poems on Joseph in which three motifs responding to unresolved issues in the canonical narrative emerge. First is “Joseph the

Righteous,” or why did Jacob treat Joseph better than his other sons? Syriac tradition in general emphasizes the righteousness of Joseph; that is, because of his virtue he deserved his father’s favor. In fact, Narsai recognizes that Jacob knowingly provoked jealousy among the brothers concerning Joseph in order to encourage them to follow in their younger brother’s example. The second is “Examine the Garment,” or why did Potiphar not become suspicious that his wife was left holding Joseph’s coat rather than the other way around? The third motif follows extended accounts of the reaction of Potiphar and his wife to the news of Joseph’s new position. Both Potiphar and his wife are fearful for their lives upon hearing the news, the wife having admitted her guilt, and in several accounts both go separately to Joseph and are forgiven. Heal concludes that the Syriac author of these poems was not simply a compiler of second-hand ideas but an extremely capable, creative, and imaginative interpreter.

Three papers turn to Aphrahat (ca. 345), each for his use of the Old Testament: Marinus D. Koster (“Aphrahat’s Use of his Old Testament,” 131–41), Robert J. Owens (“The Book of Proverbs in Aphrahat’s Demonstrations,” 223–41), and Arie van der Kooij (“The Four Kingdoms in Peshitta Daniel 7 in the Light of the Early History of Interpretation,” 123–29) Aphrahat wrote a long varied work of twenty-three “demonstrations” during a period of Sasanian persecution of Christians in the 330–340s. Koster’s study goes right to the heart of much patristic use of the two Testaments in its use of typology between the events and characters of the Old Testament and that of Jesus in the New. The definition of typology has often been confusing and ambiguous, so Koster helpfully lays out the two main characteristics of typology: it is based on actual persons and things, and it perceives Old Testament personages and happenings as historical, not as allegorical.

Koster enables the reader to revel in a number of examples, including several occurrences of the *Steigerung* motif where Jesus is shown as clearly surpassing or superior to his Old Testament type; for example, Elijah gave the widow a small piece of bread to eat, while Jesus satisfied thousands with a small amount of bread; Joseph was a shepherd with his brothers, while Jesus was the chief-shepherd. The most common and significant typological pair is Moses and Jesus, a good instance being where Moses sweetened the bitter waters of Marah with a piece of wood, while Jesus sweetened our bitterness with the wood of his cross.

Owens, who has previously worked on the Genesis and Exodus citations in Aphrahat, now moves to the same Syriac author’s use of the book of Proverbs. There are authentic early readings attested in Aphrahat’s works, but these can be easily confused with freer citations from memory and allusions, so Owens offers a number of guidelines and cautions in order to increase the probability of identifying an authentic citation. The problem for the text critic, Owens underlines, is that Aphrahat does not explicitly indicate

his intention for a specific citation. Reviewing eleven Proverbs citations, Owens concludes that these citations demonstrate that the Syriac text known to Aphrahat was virtually the same Peshitta text known from later manuscripts, although the small number of citations is not adequate to characterize his text more precisely within Peshitta tradition. Still, the evidence here does seem to confirm that the Peshitta as generally known is not a later development but can be attested in its essence at the beginning of the fourth century.

Van der Kooij addresses an exegetical gloss in Peshitta Dan 7 in order to discover elements of the history of the text. The fourth kingdom in Dan 7 is usually identified as “the Greeks,” but in Josephus, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and Targum Habakkuk it is Rome, along with Hippolytus of Rome and Aphrahat (“the kingdom of the sons of Esau” = Edom/Rome). Aphrahat also identifies the “little horn” of Dan 7:8 as Antiochus Epiphanes. Van der Kooij draws attention to the writings of the neo-Platonic philosopher Porphyry (232–303), who writes that Daniel must have been written after the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus and names the fourth kingdom as “Hellenistic kings who succeeded Alexander.” Since Aphrahat and Porphyry agree in some specific points, he believes that Aphrahat may have been familiar with the other’s work. Aphrahat’s disagreement with the Peshitta text may mean that the glosses are of a later date than the first half of the fourth century.

Christian Lange (“Ephrem, His School, and the Yawnaya: Some Remarks on the Early Syriac Versions of the New Testament,” 159–75) centers on the commentary on the Diatessaron attributed to Ephrem, which he sees to be the work of a later student (ca. 390–400) who probably has incorporated a number of authentic Ephremic statements from lectures and other occasions. Offering an overview of the history of the Syriac New Testament text, Lange is interested in the so-called readings of the Greek Bible introduced into the Diatessaron, a complex problem due among other things to the sole manuscript of the Diatessaron that has significant lacunae that must be filled in by the Armenian translation of the commentary. These layers, however, allow one to peer over the shoulder of Ephrem and his successors to see what kind of a New Testament text he did have available to him. Lange suggests that if there is a Syriac original to the version translated into Armenian, then a student of Ephrem appears to have labeled a Peshitta reading as a quotation from the “Greek Bible.” Therefore, it also appears that Ephrem was well aware of and used versions of the Separated Gospels, in particular *Vetus Syra*.

Wido van Peursen (“Sirach Quotations in the Discourses of Philoxenus of Mabbug: Text and Context,” 243–58) summarizes the history of the Philoxenian version of the New Testament and the Old Testament version possibly developed at the same time, referring to R. G. Jenkins’s work on the Old Testament citations in Philoxenus’s writings. Van

Peursen looks at the four citations of Sirach (5:5; 17:19; 23:18–19; and again 23:19) in the *Discourses* of Philoxenus, a collection of thirteen homilies on the spiritual life directed to monks. Three of the four citations are found in the sixth discourse, “On the Fear of God,” and the fourth in the thirteenth discourse, “On Fornication.” Van Peursen finds that Philoxenus does not quote these verses superficially for their phraseology but locates them in his argument in a way that is faithful to Sirach’s context. A fifth citation (Sir 27:20) is found in Philoxenus’s *Letter to the Monks of Senun*, the only christological writing to include Sirach, but here he simply uses the verse for its biblical phraseology. He observes that there are considerable differences between Philoxenus’s citations and the Peshitta text and occasional agreements between these citations and the Greek text, but a satisfactory explanation is elusive.

The last contribution on patristic interpretation, by Shinichi Muto (“Interpretation in the Greek Antiochenes and the Syriac Fathers,” 207–22), examines what is the actual nature of interpretation according to Antiochene exegetes. Muto works to compare Greek biblical interpretation with Syriac exegesis, primarily the strategies of John Chrysostom and Ephrem. Interpretation, for Chrysostom, is generally not necessary, for the text usually “makes itself plain.” There are, of course, unclear and obscure passages, but these are explained either through context, by the author’s subsequent explanation, or by just following the flow of the interpretation intended by the Bible itself. Indeed, Muto notes that Chrysostom regards using a citation from another part of the Bible to interpret a particular passage as not one’s own interpretation, but the self-interpretation of the Bible. Straightforward as this process may be, Chrysostom recognizes that few are able to understand the truth in the Bible, so their inexperience has made what is not difficult difficult.

For Ephrem, on the other hand, God is not to be interpreted due to the chasm between God “the hidden one” and mere humans. It is only God who can interpret himself, and God does that by creating symbols. Christ has handed the Church three “harps” by which to understand scripture—Old Testament, New Testament, and nature—and Ephrem can never use only one of the three. Muto also alludes to Aphrahat’s similar approach that emphasizes the multiplicity of perspectives on a word in proportion to the multiplicity of the perspectives of interpreters.

Comparing the two traditions, Muto sees that the Greek Antiochenes distinguish interpreters from mere readers of scripture, an author-oriented perspective, for it is the sense intended by the biblical writers that is of key importance. Meanwhile, Syriac writers take almost the opposite strategy, for the important matter is what the text means for the readers, who thereby become “interpreters.”

Jan Joosten (“The Old Testament in the New: The Syriac Versions of the New Testament as a witness to the text of the Old Testament Peshitta,” 99–106) offers a programmatic study regarding the earliest citations of the Old Testament Peshitta: those found in the various Syriac New Testament versions. The use of Old Testament Peshitta by the Diatessaron implies a date before 150 C.E. as the latest for the production of the Old Testament Peshitta. The fact that the Old Testament was translated into Syriac before the Gospels makes it likely that it originated in a Jewish milieu, and the Christians who eventually would be reading such a translation, Joosten believes, were directly descended from Jews or still in close relationship with the local Jewish community. A case study is detailed of the Rom 10:19 citation of Deut 32:21, in which the phrase “with a people who are not a people” appears in syntax untypical of New Testament language, but which does occur in the Palestinian Targum and in Aphrahat. Joosten concludes that in the New Testament’s Old Testament citations, the earliest Syriac translators generally followed the text of the Old Testament Peshitta and so are potential witnesses for the text of the latter.

Andreas Juckel (“The ‘Syriac Masora’ and the New Testament Peshitta,” 107–21) examines a large eighth- or ninth-century compilation of philological and grammatical materials, nicknamed “the Syriac Masora” because of its affinity to the Hebrew Masora. The Syriac name, *Mashlmonutho*, “tradition,” is indicative of the intent of the work. The origin of this compilation comes out of the Qarqaphto Monastery near Rish‘ayno, and the materials reflect and continue the work of Miaphysite theology and philology, especially that of Jacob of Edessa.

The primary issue to which Juckel refers is that of the standardization of vowel indicators in the consonantal Syriac script. In the pre-Masoretic period, the main system was the use of diacritical points that roughly coincides with the Roman/Byzantine period of the Western Syrian church. Following the rise of Islam, Jacob of Edessa initiated a standardized orthography to overcome the decline of the Syriac language. The “masorets” would keep the diacritical points but added the Qushshoyo/Rukkokho points for the *begadkepat* letters, along with stylized Greek vowel signs.

Bas ter Haar Romeny (“The Greek vs. the Peshitta in a West Syrian Exegetical Collection,” 297–310) examines a single manuscript, BL Add. 12168, an eighth- or ninth-century anthology of exegetical excerpts from various authors, which he entitles the *London Collection*. The compiler presents large amounts of the Syro-Hexaplaric text, and Haar Romeny provides a table of four Syriac versions of Gen 49:22–26, plus the LXX and MT. The rest of the collection consists of translations and abridgements of other Greek commentaries: works by Cyril of Alexandria, Severus of Antioch, Ephrem, Gregory of Nazianzus, Epiphanius, Athanasius, and Gregory of Nyssa. The *London Collection*, Haar Romeny observes, is a kind of Greek companion to the Peshitta in an era when the West

Syrian Church was beginning to address seriously the gap between the Peshitta and the Syro-Hexapla and other Greek biblical versions.

The study of the Peshitta Old Testament is still very much alive, as three papers look at various problems in the reception history of particular books. David Phillips (“The Reception of Peshitta Chronicles: Some Elements for Investigation,” 259–95) reviews the difficult history of reception for the Peshitta Chronicles, a book generally believed to have been excluded from various Syriac church biblical canons. A remarkably thorough review and assessment of the status of Chronicles is developed, examining manuscript traditions and lectionaries, the title and division of the book, and citations by Syriac patristic writers Aphrahat and Ephrem. A lengthy treatment of the so-called “theoreticians of canonicity” looks at the authors and source texts that deal with the canonicity of Chronicles. Phillips believes that studies on Syriac Chronicles have been heretofore too deferential to these theoreticians, neglecting to some degree the evidence of patristic and biblical manuscripts. His sure conclusion is that the East Syrian Church did not absolutely reject Chronicles, and at the latest in the time of ‘Abdisho of Nisibis (thirteenth century) it was definitely a part of the canon.

Alison Salvesen’s (“Obscure Words in the Peshitta of Samuel, According to Theodore Bar Koni,” 339–49) attention moves to a relatively little known eighth-century Church of the East theologian Theodore bar Koni. His only work, the *Scholion*, consisting of eleven *mimre* or discourses in question and answer format, includes in the third *mimra* a list of obscure words in the books of Samuel. Many are technical expressions, others archaisms out of memory, but some may be from the fact that the original Syriac translator did not understand the Hebrew expression adequately. Salvesen examines the various types of readings and explanations for what is in fact further obscurity, most of which do derive from an inadequate grasp of Hebrew. What this list and its predecessors indicate is that the early readers of the Peshitta did not always find the text obvious in its meaning. A four-page table of these obscure words with a column giving Jacob of Edessa’s version presents the materials visually.

David J. Lane (“‘There Is No Need of Turtle-Doves or Young Pigeons...’ (Jacob of Sarug): Quotations and Non-quotations of Leviticus in Selected Syriac Writers,” 143–58) ventures to go where few scholars and few Syriac commentators have bothered to go. The editor of the critical edition of Leviticus for the Peshitta Old Testament series, Lane lures one entertainingly into this oft-left-behind book and provides an overview of the biblical text as well. Immediately, he dispels any notion of recovering authentic and precise citations from these varied Syriac sources, focusing upon the aim and strategy of the author and the genre of the specific work to understand the use of the citations, echoing Van Rompay. He presents examples of how Leviticus is occasionally used from West and East

Syriac lectionaries, controversial texts such as *The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite*, already noted by Hayman, along with a homily by Jacob of Sarug against the Jews—the source of the title quotation. Later this Jacob will be plumbed for his use of Leviticus in several of his long expository poems. The *Hexaemeron*s of Jacob of Edessa and *Moshe bar Kepha* are examined, then the only dedicated Syriac commentary on Leviticus by Isho'dad of Merv. Lane's major conclusion, whispered throughout his paper, is that a new edition of the Peshitta including patristic variants is a risky venture, given the free and unpredictable ways authors manipulated the biblical text for their own purposes.

While there was certainly no attempt to be all-inclusive in this volume, the editor and participants come surprisingly close to providing a virtual manual of the reception history of the Peshitta. There are, of course, gaps to be filled, but that is the task for the next symposium.