Richard J. Saley, *The Samuel Manuscript of Jacob of Edessa: A Study in Its Underlying Textual Traditions*. Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden, Number 9, ISBN 90-04-11214-6, xii+138 pages. Leiden/Boston/Köln/Brill, 1998.

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[1] The object of this work is to determine whether Jacob of Edessa's Syriac version of the books of Samuel is a combination of Peshitta and Syrohexapla or a revision of Peshitta on the basis of Greek Lucianic text tradition with minimal Syrohexapla influence (p. 9). The method adopted is to take soundings from selected extracts throughout the Samuel manuscript rather than to present a complete analysis of a short section (p. 17). Successive chapters give a comparative discussion of selected phrases to demonstrate the relationship of text traditions to Jacob's work: of Peshitta, Syrohexapla and Greek versions (chapter 2); the major Greek text families (chapter 3); Lucianic additions or substitutions (chapter 4); matter neither hexaplaric nor Greek nor Peshitta (chapter 5). The conclusion (p. 121) is that Jacob varied his methods in different biblical books and even within them, but that the evidence selected shows him to have revised Peshitta more in the light of a Lucianic Greek text than of Syrohexapla. As Saley deals only with extracts, reference needs to be made to Alison Salvesen's forthcoming edition of the text, from British Library Additional Manuscript 14,429, together with translation. This is shortly to appear as a companion volume in the Peshitta Institute Monograph series.

[2] Such a brief summary of this well-planned and executed study does not do justice to the complexity of the subject and the important issues that it raises. The brief comments on Jacob of Edessa which the author gives reveal something of these matters. Jacob flourished in the late seventh and early eighth century, and drew on Syriac and Greek sources and culture at a time when the western part of the Syriac church regarded Greek culture as that most significant for it. This trend is seen in the pattern of a Syriac New Testament which was brought into closer conformity with Greek text tradition, and of the Philoxenian and Harklean revisions of Syriac biblical text. On p. 6, our author quotes from the manuscript's colophon at the end of 1 Sam, to the effect that the book had been laboriously corrected from Syrian and Greek traditions. Hence it reflects a variety of readings and interpretations

suggesting that both the Greek bible and Syriac were normative for elucidation. Jacob's education and his developed skill as a grammarian and translator stood him in good stead for the work he undertook: as well as matters of substance and of style, his own predilections all play a part. This volume plays an important part in testifying to the importance and skill of Jacob: we see laid out both raw materials and the reviser's method. It is a salutary reminder that the work of a translator is an art rather than a science: imagination and flair are as necessary as formal technique. For example, at 1 Sam 1:3, Jacob combines the Syriac formal equivalent of the Hebrew "Lord of Hosts" with the dynamic Greek equivalent "Creator of All," and at 1 Sam 4:6 modifies a Peshitta "What is this sound of jubilation" with elements from three Greek renderings of apparently the same Hebrew *Vorlage* so as to provide between them "almost as many possible ways of saying essentially the same thing as one could imagine," p. 58. A note on this passage does indicate a single word omission in one Syriac manuscript.

[3] A second large contribution of Saley's work is to display the complexity of the world of biblical revision in the Syriac world, although there is one area where the complexity is underestimated. The discussion of Peshitta is less perceptive than that of Greek and Hebrew material. Reference is made to "the Peshitta," and sensibly the text taken is that of the Leiden edition. Footnote 65 on p. 14 acknowledges the assumption that Jacob had a text of Peshitta comparable to the Leiden Peshitta, and a comment by Michael Weitzman that Jacob's text showed some inner-Syriac corruption: but there is more to it than that. The Leiden Peshitta however presents an eclectic text with first and second apparatus. The pieces of text which Saley quotes are short, and represent the Leiden text: there is not a sustained reference to the significance of variants quoted in either apparatus. It needs to be noted that one can no more talk of "the Peshitta" than one can of "the LXX" or "the MT." Peshitta is a term which refers to a textual tradition which is broadly homogeneous; it is a term which is generic rather than specific. The author has taken the point explicitly with reference to the Greek traditions, less so with those of the MT. It will be useful to see Salvesen's full text of the manuscript, and consider whether Jacob's "Peshitta" corresponds with a text types which may be identified from the variants given in the Leiden apparatus: that is, whether Jacob's (presumably the text familiar to his Monastery of

Tell Adda) can be aligned with that of another monastery. This point can be seen, for example, in Appendix A, which lists Jacob's partial departures from Peshitta: each of the categories quoted (e.g., presence or absence of particle, conjunction or preposition, use of synonym, syntax, orthography), is as likely to reflect scribal variants as much as Jacob's preferences.

[4] Saley's discussion of Greek and Hebrew traditions hits the mark well. In the Greek two influences were at work: one is that of local attempts at translation being brought into a later unified pattern either by revisions or by an authoritative declaration, however reluctantly accepted. The second, a revision of text to take into account theories of inspired text: that is, one which by method of translation or cognisance of available Hebrew texts took a Hebrew base as normative. If that were all, the matter would be simple. The seventh and eighth centuries saw a similar process taking place with the Hebrew bible: the MT was still in a state of flux, and Qumran material is useful (and quoted by our author) as evidence of earlier stages in text transmission. The Greek versions of Samuel and Kings are themselves adequate testimony to this state of affairs. It is to be noted that the Leiden Peshitta is evidence for a similar state of affairs in the Syriac church: on the basis of currently surviving manuscripts it seems a normative bible text appears only in the ninth or tenth century. A similar pattern appears in New testament and liturgical material.

[5] This volume is a model of clear thought and presentation: the author, and the Monograph editors are to be congratulated. The means of Jacob's revision are made clear, as is the broad base of its ground. It gives further and valuable impetus to understanding of a Syriac translator's art, and shows the way for further work on the relation between the history of text and that of understanding of text. It shows also the dangers as well as possibilities of using patristic material in the study of the history and transmission of text. It is an important testimony to the workings of a translator's mind in its context. In conclusion, it shows that close and technical argument can be presented clearly and written attractively.