

CRÍTICA BIBLIOGRÁFICA

Biblia Hebraica Quinta: Judges *

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Judges may not be a very exciting book for text-critical study (see paragraph 6 below), but the present volume is exciting because it is part of a very important editorial enterprise, the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (*BHQ*), and because Fernández Marcos (= FM) produced a fine edition and commentary. In textual criticism, both the trees and the forest are important, and *BHQ* analyzes the trees enabling others to describe the forest, while in this case also the author himself shared some of his important insights with the readers. This volume provides a carefully produced critical text of Judges joined by an apparatus of variants in 63 pages, an introduction to the textual witnesses and to the system of recording in 39* pages, and a commentary of 102 pages on the decisions that FM had to take when constituting the critical apparatus. The textual commentary discusses in detail the difficult readings together with ample bibliographical references.

The Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Aramaic witnesses are briefly introduced on pp. 1*-12*. The author makes the following points, critically evaluated below:

- (1) As in all critical editions in the *Biblia Hebraica* series, codex Leningrad B19^A is the basis for the edition, diplomatically presented, except for its errors, which are corrected in the edition, e.g. 1:9 אָ (with a superfluous *dagesh*) corrected to אַ. As in the other volumes of *BHQ*, the appendix to the introduction lists the open and closed sections of codices L, C and A together with those of 1QJudges, differing among themselves in some 30% of the instances (pp. 13*-15*). These section divisions are indicated in the edition with פ and ד, in conformity with the other editions, although the let-

* *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, vol. 7, שפטים Judges (ed. Natalio FERNÁNDEZ MARCOS; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011). ISBN: 978-3-438-05267-4; XXXII + 63 + 141*.

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ter indications themselves are lacking in L. Understandably the edition follows the traditional section division of MT, also when it is inconsistent, as in 1:29-34. In these verses, the same content divisions are usually indicated with a ם, but after v. 29 with a פ. The stichometric arrangement of the Song of Deborah in *BHQ* follows that of L, close to A and C. In 2:1 and 7:5 all three manuscripts include a *pisqa be-'emsa pasuq*, correctly explained in the commentary as reflecting “an old verse or paragraph division” (p. 46*).

- (2) The Qumran fragments are extensively analyzed on pp. 5*-6* and fully covered by *BHQ* except for matters of orthography (thus בנימין in 4QJudg^b (4Q50) is not indicated in the edition in 21:21). The morphological variant מהמחללות in 21:23 in the same scroll (MT מן המחללות), somewhat imprecisely described as “orthography” on p. 6*, is included in the edition. A reading of 1QJudg in 9:4 is corrected on p. 6* of the introduction, but is strangely not corrected in the apparatus itself which now records a ghost entry. The most extensive deviation from MT in any of the scrolls is the omission of Judg. 6:7-10 in 4QJudg^a. FM wisely decided to give full coverage to this minus in the introduction (p. 6*) and in the commentary (65*-66*). Incidentally, the careful reader will note that there is duplication between the two analyses and that some of the remarks on these verses in the introduction should have been moved to the commentary. The author’s own view of the shorter text is that it “reflects an earlier literary form of the book than the traditional texts” (p. 6*).
- (3) The author notes: “For the Greek book of Judges there still is no critical edition” (p. 6*). This statement should be corrected to read “no critical edition according to the Göttingen system,” for the Rahlfs edition is a full critical edition. In spite of some voices to the contrary I consider the evidence for the existence of two different translations very strong, separated in the Rahlfs edition as the text of codices A and B (with separate critical apparatuses). This analysis is supported by Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, 1963 (not quoted by FM, but he does quote the later work by Bodine, 1980) claiming that the tradition of MS B of the LXX reflects the *kaige* recension. The implication of the research of Barthélemy and Bodine is that the *kaige* recension provides a full-fledged translation.
- (4) Although it is “very difficult to restore the OG <= Old Greek>” (p. 7*, bottom), the author quotes in the first place codex A for the LXX (p.7*, top) or rather, the A-group (p. 8*), although FM does not go as far as naming this

edition the OG. Ms A is sometimes Hexaplaric, says FM (p. 8*), so that it is the group around that manuscript that should be taken as reflecting the Old Greek. This is an important decision improving on *BHS* that has much to be commended. In the absence of a full Göttingen edition of Judges, FM lists his manuscript groups for the LXX on p. 7*. Among other things, he recognizes several OG readings in the Lucianic manuscript tradition (p. 8*). In the introduction FM does not provide examples of such readings, nor in the apparatus itself, since the Lucianic tradition is not specified in the apparatus that limits itself to mentioning mere “Ms(s)” in a generalized way, as elsewhere in *BHQ*. The non-mentioning of Lucian in the case of early readings is problematic, as mentioned in paragraph (5) below. FM also recognizes ancient readings in the Old Latin version of the LXX (p. 8*).

- (5) The author’s insights in understanding the relations between the manuscripts of the LXX as described in the previous remark are not reflected in the apparatus itself, and probably this would not have been possible in the system of *BHQ*. The apparatus thus limits itself to the recording of G and G^{ms(s)} without further details. By the same token, FM does not note in the apparatus what the base is for his understanding of what constitutes the original form of the LXX, indicated in the apparatus as “G*”. Thus in 8:15 for MT ישנא the apparatus records G* as reflecting MT. The reader has no premonition that this G* (Old Greek) is actually a minority reading τοὺς ἀνδρας (not even mentioned in the Rahlfs edition) reflected in a single Greek manuscript and the Old Latin. When reading in *BHQ* τοὺς ἄρχοντας as the reading of “G-Mss” one has again no premonition that this is the reading not of some manuscripts, but of virtually all manuscripts. The data are not hidden, since they are mentioned in the textual commentary, which is absolutely necessary, since only it provides the full evidence. The preference of *BHQ* for this reading, as acceptable as any other choice, is documented in the textual commentary, referred to by a symbol in the apparatus, although the wording of the commentary is not very convincing (“G* may be represented here by the reading of ms. 121...”). It remains unclear why the author preferred this ms. 121 and the Old Latin against all the Greek evidence especially since that reading may reflect a secondary adaptation to MT. The apparatus only notes that τοὺς ἄρχοντας reflects a Hebrew text different from MT. It is unclear from the wording of the apparatus whether FM would call this a variant (“via שרי”), as indicated by the definition of “via” on p. XXVI. See below, paragraph 8.

- (6) FM makes a very important statement when claiming at the beginning of the edition (p. 5*): “The Masoretic text of Judges in its final form is a text relatively well preserved except for chapter 5. Most of M’s readings should be preferred over the variant readings of the versions or a good number of conjectures ... The fragments of *Qumran* are scarce. Most of them prove to be secondary in relation to M.” With regard to the beginning of this statement, I do not think we possess any criteria in order to know whether MT has or has not been preserved well. We also do not know much about the earlier stage of the book preceding that of the textual evidence. It would therefore be more to the point to say: There is not much variation between the textual witnesses of the book of Judges, and usually the MT preserved an acceptable/good/preferable text. The second part of the statement goes as far as saying that in Judges our best text is that of MT, and that the other sources do not offer many details that are to be preferred to MT. Indeed on p. 12*, FM states that the “Peshitta and the Targum are literal translations of M except for chapters 5 and 11:39...” In FM’s view there thus are merely two sources in Judges, MT (+ Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate) and the LXX. I agree, but differ in nuances, as discussed below, paragraph 7. FM could have mentioned here also 4QJudg^a, whose evidence he values highly (see paragraph 2 above).

FM’s statement in the introduction can be tested against the apparatus itself in which only a very small percentage of details is preferred to MT. There are no notes suggesting an “ins(ertion)”, “transp(osition)”, “del(etion)”, “corruptions (crp)”, “hapl(ography)”, “ditto(graphy)” in MT. Such critical evaluations are only used for details in the versions (variants) and not for MT. Thus 6 readings in the versions are described as “hapl”; 8 readings in the LXX and one in V are named “gloss”; 12 readings in the versions are described as “homtel” and “homarc”; 1 case in S is described as metathesis; 22 readings in the versions are described as “harm”; 26 readings in the versions are named doublets (“dbl”); no less than 78 words in the versions, especially in the LXX, are described as “assimilation”; further, a variety of explanatory abbreviations is used to explain details in the translations and scrolls as secondary when compared with MT, such as “theol”. Compared with all these details, only in 77 details in Judges “pref” is used for variants in the versions and scrolls that are preferable to MT. In other words, variants that are preferable to MT are very scarce in Judges according to the *BHQ* edition.

All these evaluations mentioning “pref” refer to a Hebrew reading (variant) differing from the reading of MT mentioned in the lemma. [Incidentally, the notation “pref” is not mentioned in the list of abbreviations and characterizations in the beginning of the book, but is included in the general Introduction to the series, preceding the volume of the Five Megilloth (Stuttgart, 2004).] The variant is always included in a non-Masoretic source, usually reconstructed from an ancient translation. The purpose of the notations is to indicate that the variant reading is pref(erable) to the reading of MT. E.g. Judg 1:4 בידם MT V S T] ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ G θ' || pref בידו see G θ'. In the system of *BHQ* there is an element of imprecise information in notes of this type since the “preferred” reading is compared (“see”) with one or more ancient sources (in this case, G θ'), while in actuality it is *based* on these sources.

- (7) This edition is based on much thorough textual thinking since the author makes the following important statement on p. 8^{*}: “Only in a few cases, as may be seen in the apparatus, can it be argued that the *Vorlage* of G was superior to that of M, except in ...” This is a statement that shows much thinking, and the present reviewer probably concurs. However, without giving examples, it seems to me somewhat exaggerated to claim that the *Vorlage* of the LXX was superior to MT only in “the special case of Judges 5” and the “omissions by homoioteleuton in M of 16:13-14 and 19:30”. These three examples are correctly evaluated, but it is hard to imagine that there are no superior readings elsewhere. For example, the commentary of 9:46 prefers a reading of the LXX to MT. The important plus of the LXX in 2:1 (Beth-El) is brushed aside in *BHQ* as a doublet. In 19:18 most scholars conceive of καὶ εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου instead of MT בית יהוה as the original reading (for a discussion, see my *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*³, p. 238), reflecting ביתי that was understood by way of abbreviation as בית. On the other hand, in *BHQ* the reading of the LXX, discussed at length on p. 108^{*}, is ascribed to “assim-v 29”. In a case like 20:1 בארה וילך בירה – καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἐν ὁδοῦ καὶ ἔφτυεν εἰς Παφα how can we determine at all the original rendering? *BHQ* offers no guidance, but the Greek reading is not considered better than MT. The upshot of this discussion of an important aspect of this edition can only be expressed in the form of a general impression. Evaluation is a subjective process, and therefore this reviewer cannot claim that his view is more

correct than that of FM. While I agree that in Judges, MT is probably our best textual source, I would probably find more readings in the LXX that are preferable to MT than FM has found. I would support this impression by an argument at the level of translation technique. FM admits: “G is a quite literal version of a text very similar, although not identical, to M.” (p. 9^{*}). That being the case, one wonders why FM explained so many deviations from the MT in the LXX as inner-translational features, such as “theol”, “assim”, “harm”, etc. Many of them could reflect Hebrew readings, some preferable to MT.

- (8) In assessing the text-critical value of renderings in the ancient versions, *BHQ* makes a helpful distinction between variants and renderings that are seemingly based on variants, but actually merely reflect the translator’s thinking process. The latter renderings mention the Hebrew words preceded by “via”. Thus in 1:15, גלת is rendered three times with λύτρωσις, which is correctly described in the apparatus as “via גאלת”, involving an imaginary silent *aleph*. This notation implies that the translator did not have this Hebrew reading in front of him, but created the translation by way of etymology. On the other hand, in other instances the use of “via” is unrealistic. Thus, in 1:22 οἱ υἱοὶ for בית ישראל is described as “via בני”. However, at most this rendering can be described as an inner-Greek harmonization, but the present description is misleading, as the otherwise literal translator probably knew a variant בני. By the same token, in 2:20 ἐγκατέλιπεν for עברו actually reflects a form of עוב and should not be described as “via עובו”. The same pertains to some forty additional instances of “via”. In this procedure, FM probably follows the *BHQ* system.
- (9) The exhaustiveness of the edition cannot be examined. Even the most comprehensive edition, that of the Hebrew University Bible Project, is subjective in its selection, and not always exhaustive. The discussion of exhaustiveness is therefore necessarily subjective. Readings of the LXX that are considered secondary by FM, and mentioned on p. 8^{*} of the Introduction, could have been mentioned in the apparatus. This is a rather long list, and I am not certain that all these details should indeed be excluded from the edition. For example, the phenomena described as “doublets” by FM need not be excluded from recording, since they often reflect Hebrew doublets. FM only provides references, and it is not always clear to which details in the text he refers.

- (10) FM wisely quotes the Old Latin only when it disagrees with the LXX (p. 9^{*}).
- (11) The system of *BHQ* has many advantages, as I asserted in my review of this fine edition: “The *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*: An Important Step Forward,” *JNSL* 31 (2005) 1-21. Revised version: *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran: Collected Essays* (TSAJ 121; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 189-198. One of the innovations of *BHQ* is the understanding that certain variants reflect literary rather than textual differences. Such variants are indicated as lit(erary) and are not subjected to textual judgment. That the volume of Judges has no such notations of “lit” should not be held against FM, since possibly there are none. However, in light of FM’s positive view of the lack of Judg 6:7-10 in 4QJudg^b, FM should probably have indicated that instance as “lit”, since he recognized that this minus has literary importance (Introduction, p. 6^{*}).

This is a very fine and mature edition into which Fernández Marcos put much thinking. The data are presented in such a way that the reader can consult the evidence himself / herself, while disagreeing occasionally with judgments expressed in the edition.