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**Koch, Klaus and Martin Rösel, eds.**

***Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel***

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The textual history of the Book of Daniel presents the critical reader with a formidable array of problems. The complexity of this history finds expression in the various forms which the literature about Daniel assumed in pre-Christian times: the Old Greek version includes several ‘additions’ to Daniel which are without parallel in the Hebrew/Aramaic version of the book in the MT; likewise, Daniel at Qumran yielded a number of hitherto unknown texts about Daniel, none of which overlap with the Greek additions. Finally, Josephus appears to have known even more stories about Daniel no longer extant. The literature about Daniel thus assumed different forms in different literary contexts in its earliest stages, i.e. immediately after the book reached its final form during the persecutions under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167-164 B.C.E.).

When turning to the Book of Daniel in the MT, the divergences between this and the other versions are no less puzzling. Best known, perhaps, are the variants between the MT and the Old Greek in Dan 3-6. These are, in fact, so dramatic that the Greek may well be based on a Semitic original no longer extant which differed significantly from the MT; strictly speaking, then, we are not dealing with mutually dependent versions in the classical sense, but with duplicate narratives, not unlike those in Dan 6 and in the apocryphal story of “Bel and the Dragon.”

The *Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel* presents for the first time a collation of all major versions of the Book of Daniel in form of a synopsis. The volume opens with a short introduction in which the editors comment briefly on the versions and their major critical editions. The text of Daniel is then printed in five columns in parallel lines: the MT, the Syriac or Peshitta (printed in square “Hebrew” letters and fully vocalized for easier comparison with the MT), Theodotion, the Old Greek, and the Vulgate. The two Greek versions are based on Rahlfs’ edition, since, as the editors explain, Ziegler shows the tendency to “correct” the text in accordance with the MT. A good example is the famous and much disputed passage in Dan 7:13 where the Old Greek’s identification of

the “One Like a Human Being” with the Ancient of Days (cf. Rev 1:13-14) is eliminated by Ziegler who follows the MT. Critical notes at the bottom of each page collate the information found in the apparatus of the text-critical editions. Finally, the editors chose not to include the “additions,” or “deutero-canonical” texts of Daniel because Klaus Koch has already edited these texts elsewhere, also in synoptic form (*Deuterokanonische Zusätze zum Danielbuch*, AOAT 38/1+2, Neukirchener Verlag, 1987). However, in the back of the volume the reader finds the Aramaic text of the additions to Dan 3, the “Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men” (Dan 3:24-90), and the story of “Bel and the Dragon” (Dan 14:23-42), as they are found in the medieval *Chronicle of Jerahmeel*.

The volume, prepared by two of the leading German scholars on Daniel and text-critical studies, will be found most useful on several grounds. Its primary purpose, as stated in the introduction, is to facilitate the comparison of Daniel’s most relevant text witnesses for text-critical and translation purposes. Moreover, the editors explain at the outset that most of the critical editions are dated, with the exception of the Vulgate, and do not reflect the latest manuscript discoveries (a notable example is the Chester-Beatty-Papyrus 967 of which only parts were available to Joseph Ziegler when he prepared his masterful edition of the Göttingen Septuagint in 1954). The *Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel* therefore not only greatly facilitates the comparison of the most important versions by printing them side-by-side; it also offers improved readings for most of the versions (even though these improvements are not identified as such and hence are not readily recognizable to the reader).

Not all versions are of equal text-critical value. The reader is somewhat surprised that the critical notes to the MT reflect a Babylonian-Yemenite version based on a single manuscript from the 14th century, whose text-critical value is relatively small, while other versions which have played a somewhat more eminent role in the text-critical discussion of Daniel, such as the Armenian or Arabic version, are missing. The question of the text-critical value could even be raised with respect to the Vulgate, which largely follows the MT, although Jerome appears to have been aware of earlier translations and shows some influence of Theodotion. The Syriac or Peshitta, like the Vulgate, is based on the MT, with numerous verbatim parallels especially in the Aramaic part of the book, and so its independent value for text-criticism is somewhat limited as well.

None of these observations diminishes the value of the present volume, however. In light of the extraordinarily difficult text-critical problems of the book of Daniel, the *Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel* is a much welcome tool, which will greatly facilitate and, hopefully, stimulate the discussion about the formation history of this intriguing biblical book.