



Book Reviews

KULIK, ALEXANDER. *Retroverting Slavonic Pseudepigrapha: Toward the Original of the Apocalypse of Abraham*. Text-Critical Studies 3; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004. Pp. 105. USD 24.95 (paper). ISBN 1599830873.

The author defines the goal of his book as 'a further step in the research on the *Apocalypse of Abraham (ApAb)*' (p. 4), and, indeed, the study can be seen as a significant advancement in the research on this composition. Until recently, the main concern of the scholars of *ApAb* was establishing the Slavonic text, but now, after critical editions prepared by Philonenko-Sayar and Philonenko (1981) and Rubinkiewicz (1987), it is time to look deeper in the textual issues of the text and the possible Semitic original behind the Slavonic text. This task represents one of the main objectives of the book.

The main sections of the book include: an English translation of the whole text of *ApAb* made by the author, who took into account his own syntactical considerations on the text (pp. 10-35); a discussion of the Greek *Vorlage* of the Slavonic version (Chapter 1, pp. 37-60) and of its Semitic original (Chapter 2, pp. 61-76); a short Chapter 3 (pp. 77-79), dealing with retroversion as a means to establish the Slavonic text; an important chapter on 'Intertextual Verification as a Tool of Retroversion' (Chapter 4, pp. 81-90); and the Conclusion (pp. 91-94). It would not have been out of place to supply the Slavonic text with the English translation, but the author decided otherwise and limited himself to a recommendation to his readers to have handy both critical editions during the examination of his work (p. 4).

Kulik's analysis is important not only for the areas of historical linguistics and the history of the transmission of the text in the Jewish and Christian milieus, but also for the history of the theological traditions. It is the latter perspective which interests the present reviewer most.

Naturally, the chapter dedicated to the Greek *Vorlage* (Chapter 1) is the largest one, since the Greek prototype behind the Slavonic text is more accessible to scholars than the Semitic original. The chapter deals with several textual phenomena connected with the Greek proto-text, including 'graphic misinterpretations', 'morphological calques', 'semantic calques', 'syntactic Hellenisms', and 'phraseological Hellenisms'. Some of these textual illustrations provide important insights for theological understanding of the text of *ApAb*. For instance, an explication of the Slavonic term *okrest* (*ApAb* 18.3) is through the Greek uncial prototype ΚΥΚΛΟΙ ('wheels') misread as ΚΥΚΛΩΙ ('round

about') (p. 39). According to the *ApAb*, during his heavenly journey, Abraham sees 'many-eyed round about', but these 'round about' are in fact the 'wheels' (Heb. *ophanim*), the class of the angelic beings known from the theophanies of the book of Ezekiel, where they defined as the wheels 'full of eyes' (Ezek 1.18). A vision of angelic wheels thus is an important feature that demonstrates that *ApAb* is deeply connected with the Second Temple Merkabah traditions, a feature already noticed by some scholars, especially David Halperin in his seminal 1988 volume, *The Faces of the Chariot*.

Another interesting example among the cases of the morphological calques is the terminology pertaining to the Slavonic term *s'xody. *ApAb* 27.3 reads: 'And behold, I saw four s'xody <...>. And they burned the temple with fire, and they carried away the holy things that were in it' (pp. 42-43 and also p. 50). Kulik proposes that the mysterious word s'xody (plural for masculine singular s'xod'' or feminine singular *s'xoda) renders here either ούνοδοι or συναγωγαί, which means four angelic 'camps' or 'rows' attested in the theophanies of the Enochic tradition as well as in some other Jewish texts. Four angelic camps represent both keepers of the holy things of the Temple and their destroyers when the Temple becomes rejected by God. It also constitutes a rather impressive representation of the heavenly pattern of the earthly military camp of Israel in the exodus, which was itself divided into four parts according to Numbers 2 (Kulik refers to the parallels in the later Jewish works).

Let me notice on margin that I see no need to postulate a feminine form *s'xoda (used by Kulik even in the subtitle of the corresponding paragraph) that Kulik himself rightly considers as a *hapax legomenon* (p. 50), if we can accept its existence as proven at all. Indeed, the form of acc. pl. съходы would correspond to both -a and -o declensions, that is, to both the feminine nom. sg. *s'xoda and the masculine s'xod''. If then we must choose between identifying a well-attested lexeme and postulating a *hapax*, it is unclear why one should prefer the latter. The reading s'xody is also an important example demonstrating that retroversion can be a useful tool for establishing the critical text in Slavonic. Some of the manuscripts at this point preserve a reading v'xody, but Kulik rightly opts for a *lectio difficilior*. He deals at length with this use of the retroversion in Chapter 3 (pp. 77-79).

Another important achievement of Kulik's research can be seen in his analysis of a semantic calque from *ApAb* 25.1. In this passage Abraham sees 'the likeness of the idol of jealousy, as a likeness of a carpenter's [work] <...>, and its statue was of shining cooper'. The problem is that an apparently wooden idol ('a carpenter's [drevodēlja] work') is made 'of shining copper'. Here again the traditions found in the book of Ezekiel provide important clarifications. It is possible that the vision of the 'idol of jealousy' found in Ezek. 8.5 combined here with the 'vision of shining copper' from the LXX text of Ezek. 40.3 (MT reads instead 'as a likeness of copper'). Kulik resolves this problem by referring to an alternative meaning of the Greek τέκτων ('carpenter'), which also may be translated as 'craftsman'.

Again on margin, I would like to note that *ApAb* consistently relies on the LXX text of Ezekiel instead of its Masoretic version. I explore this dependence of *ApAb* on the LXX text of Ezekiel in a forthcoming study of the imagery of the propitiatorium in the heavenly sanctuary found in the chs. 21 and 22 of the *ApAb* ('Propitiatorium in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*', in L. DiTommaso and Ch. Böttrich [eds.], *Old Testament Apocrypha in the Slavonic Tradition* [TSAJ; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming]). Such dependence

looks a bit odd only at first glance. It appears that *ApAb* can be seen as an indirect evidence for the Hebrew original of these specific readings of the ancient Greek text of Ezekiel.

Kulik's research also addresses two semantic calques from Greek which were considered in the previous scholarship as 'Christian interpolations'. He demonstrates that both make sense in a purely Jewish context, and so any supposition of an interpolation, Christian or Bogomilian, would be absolutely arbitrary.

The first example includes an allegedly messianic passage from *ApAb* 29.8, where the patriarch receives the following revelation from his *angelus interpres*: 'Hear, Abraham, the man whom you saw shamed and struck and again worshiped is the *oslaba* of the heathen for the people who will come from you in the last days' (pp. 51-52). Previous scholarship often translated the Slavonic *oslaba* as 'relief' and even—in a rather forced manner—'deliverance' and 'liberation', suggesting as the possible background the Greek ἄνεσις or perhaps one of its synonyms. The problem is that since this allegedly messianic figure is 'going out from the left side of the heathen', kissed by Azazel, etc., the imagery suggests the figure of the anti-Messiah (Antichrist) rather than the figure of the Messiah (Christ). Kulik has now proven that this figure is unambiguously that of the Antichrist. He, too, suggests ἄνεσις for *oslaba*, but in another meaning, 'willfulness' (although such a meaning is unrecorded in any of the Greek dictionaries) or, alternatively, ἔκλυσις or παράλυσις, meaning 'weakening' or 'laxity'. The latter options seem to me better choices.

The second example deals with one allegedly Bogomilian statement in *ApAb* 20.7: 'How (*kako*) <...> have you [God] set yourself with him [Azazel]?' (p. 54). According to its literal meaning, the Slavonic text here can be understood as an implicit assertion that there is a kind of collaboration (or, at least, a sort of 'peaceful co-existence') between God and Azazel, so that the question itself concerns only the mechanism of such collaboration. As a result, the phrase might be related to 'Bogomilian' speculations which postulated the co-existence of the two equally powerful principles: God and Satan. The key point for the understanding of the obscure passage and its theology is the Slavonic word *kako*. Kulik resolves the mystery of the passage by interpreting *kako* as an unhelpful translation of the Greek τῶς, which in this context has to be understood as 'why?' Thus the phrase is interrogatory: Abraham inquires about God's seeming collaboration with Azazel, and in subsequent verses receives confirmation that no such collaboration exists.

Only one point in Kulik's list of semantic calques seems problematic, namely his interpretation of Slavonic term *ponovenija* from *ApAb* 9.9 (pp. 46-47), which he traces to the Greek ἐγκαίνια and Hebrew חתונה. If, as Kulik proposes, we define 'semantic calque' as only the 'wrong choice of meaning of a polysemantic word' (p. 44 n. 8, quoting Francis Thomson), then the case of *ponovenija* is not a semantic calque, since it does not constitute a 'wrong choice of meaning'. The words *ponov(l)enija* and *obnovlenija* (these forms are neuter plural, as ἐγκαίνια) became quite common terms in Church Slavonic for the designation of the consecration of church—it was (and still is) the only normative title of the rite—and so, as it is in the case in *ApAb*, applicable also to 'the ages'.

According to Gérard Garitte ('Traduttore traditore di se stesso', *Bulletin de la classe des lettres de l'Académie royale de Belgique* 5^e sér. 57 [1971], pp. 39-80; repr. in *Scripta disiecta, 1941-1977* [PIOL, 22; Louvain, 1980], II, pp. 676-717), such calques as *ponovenija* are 'les interférences implantées' in the language of translation and should be excluded from the list of the evidence that a given text is translated. Such calques are used

equally in the original works, and there are original texts where the usage of such ‘interférences implantées’ is much higher than in the translated texts in the same language. Garitte refers to the original Coptic sermons of Pachomius the Great, where the number of Greek loanwords is greater than in the Sahidic New Testament by about 25%. The only ‘interférences’ that should be taken into account when we are trying to define if a given text is translated or not are ‘les interférences accidentelles’, where a word of the original language was interpreted mistakenly. I quote Garitte because this important theoretical paper on the ways of translation in the Christian Orient retains its value as to the Christian Oriental translations of the pseudepigraphic literature but is not well-known to the specialists in the late Jewish/early Christian literature.

However, though being almost irrelevant to the evaluation of the technique of translation from Hebrew into Greek and then into Slavonic, Kulik’s analysis of *ApAb* 9.9 holds as a demonstration that, due to its ‘templocentric’ attitude, ‘*ApAb* might have been composed, with at least equal probability, in the late Second Temple period’ (p. 47) and not after the destruction of the Second Temple, as it is generally accepted in the contemporary scholarship. I would like to emphasize and re-accentuate this conclusion: I believe that when we are dealing with the Jewish apocalyptic literature, we are always in presence of such ‘templocentrism’, and so the vision of the temple cannot serve as the decisive factor for dating of an apocalyptic work. The imagery of the heavenly temple constitutes an important conceptual center of many apocalyptic texts, and this heavenly sanctuary exists regardless of the existence of its earthly counterpart. In fact, an earthly temple is nothing but an imperfect replica of the heavenly sanctuary.

In the chapter dealing with the Semitic original, Kulik first of all turns himself, naturally, to the problem of its language, Hebrew or Aramaic (pp. 61-64). His conclusion is very balanced. He remarks that ‘as well as the proper names, most Semitic forms in our document may reflect an Aramaic original as well as a Hebrew one. In very rare cases we can indicate Hebrew forms impossible or unattested in Aramaic’ (p. 63). Kulik’s analysis leads him to a hypothesis of Hebrew as the language of original (p. 64). He carefully observes that ‘in the period under discussion elements of these languages [Hebrew and Aramaic] could be mixed in a single text’ (p. 61).

In the section dealing with the retroversion into Hebrew, Kulik outlines two important textual phenomena: retroversion omitting the Greek stage (pp. 64-66) and two-stage retroversion (pp. 66-76). The first type deals with cases when the Slavonic version reproduces Semitisms or misinterpretations of the Semitic original ‘which were not found in any extant Greek texts’, or contains the citations or parallels to the sources preserved only in a Semitic language (p. 64). In this section of his research Kulik offers some examples borrowed from the previous scholarship. I would like to add one more illustration of this type of retroversion, namely the Slavonic word, *obrazovanije / obraz’ / obrazstvo*, found in *ApAb* 21-22. It can be seen as a misinterpretation (on the Greek or maybe even Hebrew grounds) of an ancient Aramaic term for propitiatorium, ܐܘܒܪܐܝܬܐ.

The list of Kulik’s two-stage retroversions is long and fascinating. He considers semantic calques (pp. 66-68), syntactic calques (pp. 69-70), and phraseological biblicisms (pp. 71-76). Some can be traced to the renderings found in the Greek and Slavonic Bibles, and thus not all should be considered as mistakes made by the translators of *ApAb*, since they relied here on the established biblical counterparts. But this does not affect the importance of Kulik’s observations. The data of Raymond Martin (*Syntactical Evidences*

of *Semitic Sources in Greek Documents* [SCS, 3; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1974]) are unfortunately unmentioned by Kulik.

The concluding chapter deals with the issues of clarification and retroversion of the Slavonic text by means of intertextual links. Probably one of the most impressive achievements here is the author's analysis of *ApAb* 11.2-3, an extremely corrupted passage which is situated in the beginning of the depiction of the appearance of Yahoel (the chief angel, which personifies the Divine Name in the text) (p. 83). The description starts with the following passage: 'And the appearance of the body of his feets [*tēla nogu jego* "of the body of his feets (dual)", but some mss have only *tēla jego* "of his body"] was like sapphire [cf. Ezek 1.10]...' Kulik opts for the *lectio difficilior*, proposing a conjecture *nogueva* instead of *nogu jego*, that is, 'the appearance of the griffin's body' (*nogui* 'griffin' = γρούψ LXX in Lev 11.13 and Deut 14.12 = פֶּרֶס MT). This reading might be corrupted because the following part of Yahoel's description deals with his human head that is quite inappropriate to a bird of prey. However, Kulik points to the passage found in 3 *En.* 26.3 where a similar description of a human-eagle figure of the prince of the Seraphim, the angel Serapiel, can be found. We can probably add here a medieval legend of the ascension of Alexander the Great, which goes back to the Hellenistic era. In the legend Alexander reaches the heaven (or even heavenly Jerusalem) transported by four griffins. This motif suggests that the griffins as the *psychopomps* transporting visionaries to heaven were not an invention of the authors of the *hekhhalot* literature but were a part of the early Jewish environment.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Kulik's research manages to present *ApAb* in all its integrity and understands the text as an important witness to Second Temple Judaism. I hope that this book helps to put to oblivion many unsubstantiated claims about so-called 'interpolations' into the text of *ApAb*. The textual focus of Kulik's research encourages all scholars of the Slavonic pseudepigrapha to be dependent more on the textual evidence rather than on ideological considerations. Let us thank the author for this important lesson.

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SCOTT, James M. *On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees*. JSJSup 91. Leiden: Brill, 2005. Pp. xii + 292. Euro 105.00, USD 136.00 (cloth). ISBN 9004137963.

Scott divides the book into an introduction followed by two larger sections dealing with sacred time and sacred space in the book of *Jubilees*. He formulates his general thesis in these words: 'The ultimate goal of history for *Jubilees* is the complete restoration of sacred time and sacred space, so that what is done in the earthly cultus in the Land of Israel exactly corresponds to the way that things are already done in the heavenly cultus, that is, in accordance with the will of God from creation as inscribed on the heavenly tablets' (p. 8). Earth should mirror heaven and the end should replicate the beginning. In the Introduction he presents the explicit instances in *Jubilees* where the theme of a correlation between heavenly and earthly phenomena comes to expression. An example is the festival of weeks which was celebrated by God and the angels in heaven from the