

ritual biblical texts that is not ignorant of the "globalization of hermeneutics." In summary, this book will be an essential "rite-of-passage" for seminary students who want to enter into the new world of biblical ritual studies in that it occupies not only the first and unique position as an introductory textbook to biblical ritual studies, but also, to be sure, will be an important catalyst and incentive for the future study of ritual texts, biblical theology, and even the Bible as a whole.

Bong Gyeong Lim

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, PHILIPPINES

Biblia Hebraica Quinta. Fascicle 18: General Introduction and Megilloth, by Adrian Schenker (general editor), J. de Waard (Ruth), P. B. Dirksen (Canticles), Y. A. P. Goldman (Qoheleth), R. Schäfer (Lamentations), and M. Sæbø (Esther). Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004. Pp. c + 96 + 168*. ISBN 3-438-05278-4. Paper. €49.00.

The publication of a new critical edition of ancient texts is generally a very important event in academia. The publication of the first fascicle of a new critical edition of the Hebrew Bible is an even more significant event, since its publication is aimed at providing the most up-to-date critical text of the Hebrew Bible, making available to the biblical scholar not steeped in text-critical research and perhaps also lacking the significant financial resources necessary for maintaining a library that caters to the primary editions of important ancient (biblical) texts, the best possible basis for exegetical and theological work. In this sense, the ambitious project undertaken under the leadership of the German Bible Society in Stuttgart claims its place among some of the other important editions that are currently being developed, including the *Hebrew University Bible* (HUB) and the *Oxford Hebrew Bible* (OHB). Since both the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (BHQ) and the HUB are diplomatic editions, i.e., editions based on a single Masoretic manuscript (such as the Codex Leningradensis in the case of BHQ or Codex Aleppo in the case of HUB) the text-critical notes of the apparatus are highly relevant, since they provide the user with the necessary information to make intelligent choices when faced with a textual variant, even though (as readily agreed by any editor of a critical edition) these variants have already been filtered by the editor (or editorial body) of the respective biblical book (cf. the very helpful comments about the crop of new critical editions of the Hebrew Bible by Richard D. Weis, "Biblia Hebraica Quinta and the Making of Critical Editions of the Hebrew Bible," *TC: A Journal of Textual Criticism* 7 [2002]: n.p. [cited 20 January 2008]. Online: <http://purl.org/TC>).

The first fascicle of the *BHQ* contains the critical text of the five books that Hebrew Bible scholars know as the Megilloth (i.e., the scrolls), including Ruth, Canticles, Qoheleth, Lamentations, and Esther. As with previous editions of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) each biblical book has been assigned a different editor who works under the supervision and guidance of the general editorial board, led by Adrian Schenker of Fribourg University, Switzerland. The ambitious goal of the editorial team is have the complete edition of *BHQ* finished by 2010, by which time most students of Hebrew will (most likely) stop purchasing *BHS* in favor of *BHQ*, and, it should be added, it is hoped that the German Bible Society will consider also the cost factor when offering different editions of this new critical Bible for students and scholars in the Two-Thirds world.

The fascicle contains an extensive general introduction (pp. vii–lxxi) that reviews the history of critical editions of the text of the Hebrew Bible in three languages (English, German, and French) and also explains the layout of the *BHQ*, the textual basis, the reproduction of the Masorah and the important issue of the critical apparatus. This is followed by two helpful figures illustrating (a) the presentation of the text-critical cases in the critical apparatus and (b) a sample page illustrating the features of the layout of *BHQ* (pp. lxxiii–lxxv). This is followed by a long list of sigla, symbols, and abbreviations (pp. lxxvi–lxxxiv) used in the apparatus of the *BHQ*. Since the critical apparatus of the *BHQ* is not just a collection of different readings, but also includes an interpretive characterization of the particular variant done by the editor of the particular book, the introduction also includes a very helpful typology of these criteria.

Seven different characterizations of variants have been established by the editorial board of *BHQ*, including (1) characterizations of a reading as not bearing on the issue of a case; (2) characterizations of a reading as differing from another, identifying only the point of difference (e.g., different grammar, different script, different orthography, different vocalization, etc.); (3) characterizations of a reading as representing a type of change from another reading without any comment concerning the motivation of the change (e.g., conflation, double reading, metathesis, omission, transposition, etc.); (4) characterizations of a reading as representing a change arising through accident (e.g., dittography, haplography, homoioarcton, homoioteleuton); (5) characterizations of a reading as representing a change arising through ignorance or error; (6) characterizations of a reading as representing a change that arises in reaction to some textual/linguistic elements (e.g., some grammatical, lexical, semantic, stylistic or syntactic difficulty or an adjustment based on some aspect of the receptor language); and (7) characterization of a reading as representing a change arising through the intention of a tradent (referring here to scribal or translator decisions in-

volving, for example, abbreviation, amplification, simplification, giving emphasis, interpolation, substitution of terms, etc.). I found this particular aspect of the apparatus very helpful, since it puts at the disposition of the *BHQ* user (to a certain degree) the reasoning and thoughts of the editor of the book in making relevant text-critical decisions. This is definitely a more transparent approach than the one adopted by the *BHS* where one often wondered how and why a certain editor reached a particular textual position. Clearly, some of these criteria are open to subjectivity, especially considering characterizations 5 and 7. After all, who determines with a certain degree of assurance that a variant is based on the ignorance of a scribe or translator? It may actually turn out to be the ignorance of the modern textual critic. Nonetheless, the inclusion of a clear description of these judgment calls should be lauded and should serve as a model for future critical editions in other languages.

Following the list of the seven main characterizations used in the critical apparatus of the *BHQ*, a very helpful list of more detailed definitions of the elements used in the characterizations is included (pp. lxxxviii-xciv) which should become part of the reading list of any course on the text of the Hebrew Bible. The next section includes a glossary of common terms found in the Masora parva that has been prepared by A. Schenker (pp. xcvi-xcvii). It provides helpful translations of these terms for those whose contact with the Masora has been limited (which I dare to say includes most scholars of the Hebrew Bible whose specialization does not involve textual criticism). Before the actual text of the first book of the Megilloth (Ruth) is presented, the editors of *BHQ* included two more useful tables, i.e., the accents for the Hebrew prose books (p. xcix) and the accents of the three poetical books (p. c).

The actual page layout differs from *BHS* inasmuch as between the Hebrew text (with the Masora parva on the side of the text as in *BHS*), the editors chose to include a diplomatic presentation of the Masora magna of Codex Leningradensis, and also a translation in the commentary section of *BHQ*. This commentary section is one of the most significant differences to *BHS* and is included in each fascicle, enhancing significantly the usability of the text, while at the same time (obviously) adding a filter to the text-critical choices. I would imagine that once the complete *BHQ* has appeared, the publisher would consider a two volume edition, with one containing the Hebrew text and another volume containing the total of the textual commentary. The commentary itself has been divided into four sections. In the "Introduction" section the status of the different witnesses for the particular biblical book is discussed, divided into language groups (e.g., "Hebrew witnesses" or "Greek witnesses," etc.). This is followed by notes on the Masora parva and the Masora magna, including a helpful translation of the Masoretic notes. Finally, the editor of the particular biblical book comments

on the text-critical choices he has made in the preparation of this volume. It should be noted that these notes do not cover all the variants noted in the apparatus. Furthermore, one should not forget that this is the conclusion of an individual scholar, while recognizing the fact that s/he has spent considerable time with the text and that some type of peer review of these comments occurs at the editorial level to ensure a uniform presentation and consistency in the use of witnesses.

Since the publication of the first fascicle containing the Megilloth, two more fascicles (Ezra-Nehemiah and Deuteronomy) have been published. Due to my particular current interest in Ezra-Nehemiah (I am busy writing a commentary for the *Apollos Old Testament Commentaries* series), I compared the variants and notes of *BHS* and *BHQ* for the first verses of Ezra 1. Based on these preliminary comparisons it seems to me as if *BHQ* highlights more variants than *BHS*. The explicatory brief characterizations of the variants are helpful and are complemented by extensive text-critical notes in the commentary. An excellent discussion of the differences between these two editions of the text by the editor of that particular fascicle has recently appeared (cf. David Marcus, "How *BHQ* differs from *BHS* in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah," in *Sofer Mahîr: Essays in Honour of Adrian Schenker offered by Editors of Biblia Hebraica Quinta* [ed. Yohanan A. P. Goldman, Arie van der Kooij and Richard D. Weis; VTSup 110; Leiden: Brill, 2006], 169–76).

Congratulations to the editorial team of *BHQ* for a product that builds philosophically on *BHS* (i.e., both are diplomatic editions, recognizing the fact that one needs an existing and [fairly] complete textual basis), is far more user-friendly and transparent than the previous product, and includes helpful critical notes explaining some of the more crucial textual decisions. Obviously, some possible caveats could be pointed out: many students (and perhaps also professors) may take these notes as the final word on the textual issues of a particular verse or section. Furthermore, this tendency to accept the (admittedly excellent) work already done, may create a "textus receptus" mentality in those dealing with this edition. However, in spite of these possible pitfalls (which are not a problem of the conceptual design of the edition itself but rather point to possible "reception" problems), I would recommend that students, professors, and most definitely libraries (considering also the high price of each fascicle) make use of the many improvements of this new critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, while being aware of some of its potential problems.

Gerald A. Klingbeil

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, PHILIPPINES
