

# The headings of the Psalms in Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus

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In Codex Ambrosianus of the Syro-Hexapla, marginal readings related to the headings of some of the Psalms occur. The importance of these variants for the history of the Greek and Syriac Psalm headings warrants further discussion. To this end, this paper undertakes a comparative study of the marginal notes that accompany the headings of the Psalms in the Syro-Hexapla. These notes do not occur for all headings and only rarely do variants from all three occur (as is the case for Ps 7). These variants are compared to the readings of the headings of the Septuagint (LXX) and the Syro-Hexapla. Three matters are investigated in this paper, namely the rendering of the technical term  $\eta\lambda\epsilon\gamma\mu\epsilon\lambda\alpha$  in the Three (Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus), references to the name of David and some instances where the LXX has a substantial plus in comparison to the Masoretic Text (MT), such as in Psalms 98 (97), 104 (103), 43 (42) and 56 (55). Research to date demonstrates that Field did not use these notes in Codex Ambrosianus to their full extent. As far as the three elements under investigation are concerned, this paper demonstrates that the Three frequently differ from the LXX in their rendering of certain aspects of the headings. In some instances, the Three reflect a rendering much closer to the Hebrew. In others, they contain a rendering that is dependent on the Hebrew, but which displays a lack of understanding of especially some of the technical terms in the Hebrew.

**Contribution:** The research shed new light on the variants recorded in the margin of Codex Ambrosianus and their value for the text-critical study of the headings in the Psalms in the MT and the Septuagint. Textual Criticism is one of the core disciplines for the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible and its translation and transmission in different ancient languages.

**Keywords:** Syro-Hexapla; Psalms; headings; marginal notes; Septuagint; Field; Codex Ambrosianus.

## Introduction

In Codex Ambrosianus of the Syro-Hexapla, marginal readings related to the headings of some of the Psalms occur (Ceriani 1874). The importance of these variants for the history of the Greek and Syriac Psalm headings warrants further discussion. In his study of the Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter, Robert Hiebert (1989:260–261) discusses the marginal notes in the different manuscripts he studied for his edition of this psalter. He compares them with the readings noted by Frederick Field (1875) and makes some corrections and additions. Hiebert did not make a comprehensive study of these notes, but his additions and corrections remain very valuable for the study of the Syro-Hexapla. This paper will undertake a comparative study of the headings of these Psalms, with attention to the notes referring to Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus. These notes do not occur for all headings and only rarely do variants from all three the witnesses occur (such as in Ps 7). The following Psalms have variants: 3–15, 17–23, 28, 29, 33, 35, 37–41, 43–58, 60–69, 75–80, 82–84, 86, 87, 91, 97, 99, 101–103, 107, 110, 111, 119–122, 126, 130, 131, 138–141 and 144. These variants will be compared to the readings of the headings of the LXX and the Syro-Hexapla. For the purpose of this paper, only three matters will be considered, namely the rendering of the technical term  $\eta\lambda\epsilon\gamma\mu\epsilon\lambda\alpha$  in the Three, the references to the name of David and some instances where the LXX has a substantial plus in comparison to the Masoretic Text (MT), such as in Psalms 98 (97), 104 (103), 43 (42) and 56 (55).

## Introductory remarks on the Psalter in the Syro-Hexapla

It is impossible to discuss the Syro-Hexapla in detail here. Ignacio Carbajosa Pérez presents a good survey of important issues (2016; see also Hiebert 2001). Hiebert (2005) discusses the

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different Syriac translations of the Psalms in some detail. It is not possible to discuss all of them here, as the focus of this contribution is on the Syro-Hexapla. Hiebert's discussion of the Syro-Hexapla is based on his work discussed below.

In 1989, Hiebert published the revised version of his doctoral thesis on the Psalms in the Syro-Hexapla. This monograph is a diplomatic edition with Codex Ambrosianus as the text published, with variant readings of nine other manuscripts in the apparatus (see also Hiebert 1989:1). Hiebert distinguishes three groups of these manuscripts: SyrPs, SyrPs<sup>a</sup> and SyrPs<sup>b</sup>. He regards the first group as a revision of the Philoxenian Psalter, probably revised by Paul of Tella. SyrPs<sup>a</sup> is a different revision of the Philoxenian Psalter, perhaps by Thomas of Harkel. SyrPs<sup>b</sup> is close to SyrPs but also has some of the features of SyrPs<sup>a</sup> (see also Hiebert 1989:247–260). Of the 10 manuscripts used by Hiebert, seven belong to his SyrPs (manuscripts A, B, C, D, E, F and G [a copy of his F]). The incomplete Manuscript H is predominantly from the 12th century, with Psalm 146:8 onwards dating from the 15th century. Where it is extant, it represents the three groups distinguished by Hiebert: up to Psalm 27:6, it represents SyrPs<sup>a</sup>, from 27:7–146:8, it represents SyrPs<sup>b</sup> and SyrPs from Psalm 146:8 onwards. Manuscript J represents SyrPs<sup>a</sup> up to Psalm 27:6 and SyrPs<sup>b</sup> up to Psalm 151:7. Manuscript K only has parts of Psalm 70–79 and agrees with manuscripts H and J, thus representing SyrPs<sup>b</sup> (Hiebert 1989:5–14). Hiebert discusses whether the Psalms in the Syro-Hexapla can be considered as a witness to the hexaplaric tradition dating back to Origen. Although he finds more hexaplaric influence in the text than Rahlfs (1979), he states that it cannot be regarded as a primary witness to that recension (Hiebert 1989:235, 247). Hiebert (1989) discusses the evidence for this claim in detail in Chapter III. In a later publication, he discusses the Syro-Hexapla and other later Syriac translations of the Psalms (Hiebert 2017). Norton (1995:194; see also Fraenkel 2000:317) states that the Syro-Hexapla is the most complete witness to the Origenic recension and agrees with Rahlfs when he states that it is not faithful to that recension.

Jenkins (1998:86) discusses the marginal notes in the Syro-Hexaplaric Psalms (and Job) with a view to the possibility of a Tetrapla in addition to a Hexapla. His view is that the text of the Syro-Hexapla is based on the Tetrapla and that this is the reason why it differs from the hexaplaric evidence in, for example, the Gallicanum. Fraenkel (2002:309–310) is reluctant to enter the debate about the Hexapla and Tetrapla. As the notes in the margin of the Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter are not in the first instance related to the recension of Origen, the possibility that the Syro-Hexapla represents a different version of the Origenic recension is not that important for the discussion of the notes to the headings. As far as the origin of the marginal notes are concerned, they were probably added by Paul of Tella (Hiebert 1989:261).

With regard to the marginal notes in the Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter, Fraenkel (2000:317) notes that because the text of the

Syro-Hexapla is not Origenic, it raises questions about the hexaplaric fragments in the marginal notes. This is complicated by the lack of Greek notes in some of the hexaplaric manuscripts.

The headings in the Psalms in the different Syriac traditions are varied. As is well known, Theodore of Mopsuestia rejected the headings of the Psalms in the Greek Old Testament. He regarded them as later additions to the Psalms. Peshitta manuscripts of the Psalms did not translate the headings of the Psalms as in the Hebrew Old Testament. In 1960, Bloemendaal (1960:2–3) distinguished four groups of manuscripts and editions as far as the headings are concerned, namely manuscripts of the Eastern Syriac tradition, manuscripts of the West Syriac tradition, the headings in editions such as those of Sionita, Lee and the Polyglots and manuscripts with a mixture of headings. These headings are discussed by Van Rooy (2008), with a critical edition published in 2013 (Van Rooy 2013). David G.K. Taylor (2006) presents a more recent discussion of the West Syriac headings. Two Syriac manuscripts are notable in this regard: manuscript 12t3 and manuscript 12t4. Manuscript 12t3 is a Peshitta manuscript, but with the headings of the Syro-Hexapla (Van Rooy 2005). It is one of the manuscripts used by Hiebert (1989) in his edition of the Syro-Hexapla. The other interesting manuscript, that is 12t4, has up to four headings for each Psalm, including what it calls Hebrew headings (Van Rooy 1999, 2013:57–58).

The headings in the Syro-Hexapla are the subject of a previous study (Van Rooy 2005). All the details cannot be repeated here, but the most important conclusion is that manuscripts A, B and C reflect the same tradition, with very few variants in B and C compared to A, and no common variants between B and C (Van Rooy 2005:125). Manuscripts H and J reflect a different tradition, with a large number of shared variants (Van Rooy 2005:125–126). Manuscript E is closer to the tradition of A, B and C but presents its own unique character in many headings. Manuscript F has quite a number of unique variants (Van Rooy 2005:126). The variants in these manuscripts will be discussed only in instances where the marginal notes agree with any of the variants in the specific heading.

The headings of the Psalms in the LXX are paramount in the study of the headings in the Syro-Hexapla. It is impossible to discuss the headings of the Psalms in detail, but in the examples discussed below, the headings in the LXX must be taken into consideration. In this regard, three publications of Albert Pietersma deserve specific attention. Where necessary, they will be used in the discussion below (Pietersma 1980, 2013a, 2013b).

## The technical term לְמוֹנֵחַ

The Hebrew term לְמוֹנֵחַ is traditionally understood as 'for the director of music' (HALOT:716). This term occurs 55 times in the headings of Psalms in the Masoretic Psalter.<sup>1</sup> The LXX

<sup>1</sup>Psalms 4–6, 8, 9, 11–14, 18–22, 31, 36, 39–42, 44–47, 49, 51–62, 64–70, 75–77, 80, 81, 82; 84, 85, 88, 109, 139 and 140.

usually translates this with εἰς τὸ τέλος (Pietersma 2013a:197). This translation probably connects the Hebrew word to the noun פֶּסַח, a temporal expression well known in the phrase פֶּסַח־ (Pietersma 2013a:197). In 41 of the 55 instances, Rahlfs (1979) presents no variants to this translation. Variants occur in the LXX only in the case of Psalms 31 (30), 41 (40), 42 (41), 44 (43), 45 (44), 46 (45), 47 (46), 49 (48), 50 (49), 51 (50), 83 (82), 88 (87), 139 (138) and 140 (141). In most of these cases, the phrase is omitted by one or just a few manuscripts, usually a few Lucianic and/or Augustinian manuscripts (see also Ps 31 [30], 41 [40], 44 [43], 45 [44], 47 [46], 47 [46], 49 [48], 50 [49], 51 [50], 83 [82], 88 [87], 139 [138] and 140 [141]). The phrase is omitted in a number of manuscripts in the case of Psalms 42 (41) and 46 (45). In these cases, a variant relates to the heading as a whole. In the case of Psalm 42 (41), a number of Lucianic manuscripts only contain κορε ψαλμὸς. In the case of Psalm 46 (45), Manuscript A has τοῦ δαυὶδ ψαλμὸς as heading.

In addition to these examples, in a number of manuscripts the phrase is added to the heading, usually at the beginning of the heading. The phrase is usually inserted on its own at the beginning (see also Ps 15 [14], 17 [16], 25 [24] and some manuscripts of 30 [29]). In some cases, ‘a Psalm’ is added to the insertion (see also Ps 33 [32], 37 [36], 71 [70] and 72 [71]). It is part of a longer insertion in Psalms 43 (42) and 48 (47) in Manuscript A, and of a longer insertion in Psalm 86 (85) in a number of Lucianic manuscripts.

The Syro-Hexapla usually translates the Greek phrase εἰς τὸ τέλος with ܘܠܗܘܠܐ at the end (Payne Smith 1976:565). For this phrase, some variants do occur. In Codex Ambrosianus, ܘܠܗܘܠܐ is the normal rendering. It has ܘܠܗܘܠܐ in only two instances, namely in Psalms 5 and 6. Manuscripts H and J have ܘܠܗܘܠܐ in the following instances: Psalms 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 (10), 12 (11), 13 (12), 14 (13 [only J, as this Psalm is missing from H]), 18 (17), 19 (18), 20 (19), 21 (20) and 22 (21). In the remainder, they agree with Codex Ambrosianus. In the cases where variants do occur in the LXX, the Syro-Hexapla does not follow the variants. This is especially true of those instances where some witnesses to the LXX add εἰς τὸ τέλος. The only exceptions are Psalms 71 (70) and 72 (71). In the case of these Psalms, a number of witnesses insert the phrase at the beginning of the Psalm, as indicated above. In the case of Psalm 71 (70), the insertion is made by Sa, La<sup>C</sup> and L<sup>pauc</sup>, and in the case of Psalm 72 (71), by L<sup>b</sup>. In both these instances, the Syro-Hexapla probably follows its Lucianic *Vorlage*.

Manuscript F of the Syro-Hexapla is intriguing in this regard. Some of the variants are significant, because they demonstrate that Manuscript F is unique in many respects. This manuscript is discussed in more detail by Van Rooy (2005), and the remarks below are summarised from that contribution. With regard to ܘܠܗܘܠܐ in SyrPs, the variant that appears frequently in manuscripts H and J (ܘܠܗܘܠܐ) has already been noted. ܘܠܗܘܠܐ also occurs in Manuscript F in Psalms 9, 11 (10), 19 (18) and 20 (19). In some other instances, Manuscript F has a related but somewhat different variant. It has a unique reading in Psalm 8, namely ܘܠܗܘܠܐ ܕܝܘܠܐܝܡܝܢ. In Psalm 12 (11), it

has ܘܠܗܘܠܐ ܕܝܘܠܐܝܡܝܢ as the rendering of the term εἰς τὸ τέλος. The same rendering occurs very frequently in Manuscript F, in Psalms 13 (12), 14 (13), 21 (20), 22 (21), 31 (30), 36 (35), 39 (38), 40 (39) and 41 (40) in the first book of Psalms. The noun ܘܠܗܘܠܐ is etymologically related to the Hebrew noun פֶּסַח but has the meaning of ‘victory’. This word appears in the East Syriac heading of Psalm 47 (46 of the Syro-Hexapla) and also in the West Syrian headings of Psalms 44 (43) and 54 (53). The Syriac phrase of Manuscript F means ‘till the completion of the victory’ (see Payne Smith 1976:348). This is a notable variant in Manuscript F that can be compared to some of the other Greek renderings of this word. Aquila usually has τῷ νικοποιῷ, Symmachus has ἐπινίκιος and Theodotion has εἰς νίκος or εἰς τὸ νίκος. The Gallicanum follows the LXX (*in finem*) while the Vulgate (*iuxta Hebraicum*) has ‘victori’ (in the same semantic field as the Three; Field 1875:93). One can perhaps say that Manuscript F shows some hexaplaric influence in this instance. In the other books of Psalms, this variant occurs only in the second book in Psalms 42 (41), 44 (43), 46 (45), 47 (46), 51 (50) and 62 (61). Manuscript F does not have this variant in any of the other instances. It is quite clear that the rendering of the phrase in some instances in Manuscript F is related to the renderings in the Three although not in identical words. This is evident from the discussion of the readings of the Three in Codex Ambrosianus below.

The marginal notes to the Three in Codex Ambrosianus have many references to readings of Aquila and Symmachus relating to this expression, but only one from Theodotion. The note to Psalm 4 states that Aquila and Theodotion both read ܘܠܗܘܠܐ. This is a translation of Aquila’s τῷ νικοποιῷ. The reading Field gives for this expression in Theodotion does not appear in Codex Ambrosianus. Notes do not appear for all the instances of Aquila and Symmachus where this expression occurs in the Syro-Hexapla. Where notes do appear, Aquila usually has ܘܠܗܘܠܐ, and Symmachus ܘܠܗܘܠܐ. Notes containing both these readings are appended to Psalms 6, 8, 9, 22 (21), 44 (43), 45 (44), 46 (45), 53 (52), 55 (54) and 56 (55). A note with the rendering of Aquila occurs in Psalms 5, 11 (10), 11 (12), 14 (13), 18 (17), 21 (20), 36 (35), 39 (38), 41 (40), 42 (41), 51 (50), 52 (51), 58 (57), 59 (58), 62 (61), 64 (63), 66 (65), 68 (67), 69 (68), 70 (69), 76 (75), 80 (79), 81 (80), 88 (87) and 140 (139). A note with the rendering of Symmachus occurs in Psalms 13 (12), 20 (19), 40 (39), 54 (53), 57 (56), 61 (60), 67 (66), 75 (74), 77 (76), 85 (84) and 139 (138). In Psalm 19 (18), the note ascribes the usual reading of Aquila to Aquila and Symmachus. In Psalm 65 (64), the note ascribes the normal rendering of Symmachus to Aquila. The usual reading of Aquila is clearly related to the Greek τῷ νικοποιῷ and the reading of Symmachus to ἐπινίκιος. The notes to Codex Ambrosianus have no instances of the usual Greek reading of Theodotion (εἰς νίκος or εἰς τὸ νίκος).

In his edition of the hexaplaric material, Field used the notes from Codex Ambrosianus but not consistently. In his text, he gives the Greek text of the Three, not infrequently retroverted from the Syriac. When he had Greek sources, he would give preference to them. In such instances, he often does not

include a reference to the readings from Codex Ambrosianus. In the case of Psalm 8, he does not have a reference to the Syriac and omits the information that the reading of Symmachus in Codex Ambrosianus has a different word order than the one in his text. Field does not have this note to the margin of Codex Ambrosianus (Hiebert 1989:263). Field omits the reference to Psalm 19 (18) as well, where Codex Ambrosianus has a note with an identical reading for Aquila and Symmachus. For Psalm 36 (35), consider Footnote 27. This may be an error in the notes, but it should still have been included in Field's references. In a future edition or replacement of Field, the information contained in the notes to Codex Ambrosianus should be included in full.

## David in the three

In 1980, Pietersma published a seminal article on David in the LXX. In this article, he draws a number of significant conclusions. He demonstrates that the phrase דָּוִד is consistently rendered as τῷ Δαυὶδ in the Old Greek and that this is frequently changed to τοῦ Δαυὶδ in the course of the transmission of the text. This phrase is also frequently added to psalm titles, with the result that more psalms are ascribed to David. It is interesting to consider this situation in the Syro-Hexapla as well as in the notes to the Three in Codex Ambrosianus.

As far as the Syro-Hexapla is concerned, one might suspect that τῷ Δαυὶδ would have been rendered as דָּוִד, and τοῦ Δαυὶδ as דָּוִדָּא. These two forms are indeed encountered in the Syro-Hexapla: together they appear 80 times. Of these instances, the form דָּוִדָּא appears in only 11 instances (Ps 3, 26 [25], 27 [26], 28 [27], 37 [36], 93 [92], 108 [107], 110 [109], 122 [121], 131 [130] and 138 [137]). In some of these cases, variants with the other form appear in some of the other manuscripts (3, 37 [36] and 110 [109]). According to Pietersma (1980), as far as the readings of Rahlfs are concerned, the form with the dative is uncontested in Psalms 108 (107), 110 (109) and 138 (137) and contested in Psalms 3 (although Rahlfs has no variant here) and 131 (130). In the instances where Rahlfs provides the genitive, the reading is contested in Psalms 26 (25), 27 (26), 28 (27) and 37 (36). Pietersma does not mention Psalm 93 (92) in his list, but it has the dative with no variants. Psalm 122 (122) does not have the name of David in the text of Rahlfs, but the name with the dative is added in a number of witnesses. No fixed pattern can be distinguished in these examples.

As far as the agreement between the LXX and the Syro-Hexapla is concerned, their close relationship is quite clear. Of the 13 instances where the LXX adds the name of David to a heading, the Syro-Hexapla follows the LXX in all the cases (Ps 33 [32], 43 [42], 71 [70], 91 [90], 93 [92], 99 [98], 104 [103] and 137 [136]). In Psalms 33 (32), 43 (42), 71 (70), 91 (90), 94 (93), 95 (94), 96 (95), 97 (96), 98 (97), 99 (98), 104 (103) and 137 (136), the dative appears in the LXX and is uncontested and it is attested in the Syro-Hexapla in the form with the preposition. In Psalm 93 (92), the dative appears in the LXX and is uncontested, while the Syro-Hexapla gives the form

with the relative. The Syro-Hexapla contains a note that the Hebrew does not have a heading for Psalms 33 (32), 93 (92), 94 (93), 94 (93), 95 (94), 99 (98) and 104 (103). No such note appears in Psalms 43 (42), 71 (70), 91 (90), 93 (92), 96 (95), 97 (96) and 137 (136). In Psalm 98 (97), the Hebrew has a heading דָּוִד, while in the LXX and the Syro-Hexapla, 'of David' is added. For the heading of the Syro-Hexaplaric Psalm 98 (97), the marginal note in Codex Ambrosianus states that Symmachus has דָּוִדָּא as heading. For Symmachus, Field gives the Greek ὁ δὲ.

Field neglects to note that the two words of the heading of Psalm 43 (42) are in the same order in the Syro-Hexapla as in Codex Sinaiticus.

As far as the references to the Three in the margin of Codex Ambrosianus are concerned, in many cases, no notes appear and notes to all three appear in only a very few instances. The name David occurs in 39 notes to Aquila, seven with the preposition and 32 with the relative. In Symmachus, the preposition occurs once and the relative 21 times. In Theodotion, two prepositions and one relative occur because of the paucity of notes to Theodotion in the margin. Field does not note that in the margin to the heading of Psalm 19 (18), the reading of Aquila and Symmachus has the name with the relative particle, in contrast with the preposition in the Syro-Hexapla (Hiebert 1989:265–266). The LXX has the dative, with no variant in any of the witnesses (see also Pietersma 1980:215). In this regard, the Syro-Hexapla agrees with the LXX. There is no good reason for Aquila and Symmachus to have the relative particle, which indicates that they were not consistent with the rendering of the Hebrew name of David with the preposition.

The same phenomenon occurs in Psalm 22 (21), with the dative in the LXX and the preposition in the Syro-Hexapla (Hiebert 1989:266), and Symmachus and Aquila having the relative. In Psalm 41 (40), Aquila has the relative particle (Hiebert 1989:266). In Psalm 64 (63), the Syro-Hexapla has the preposition and Aquila the relative (Hiebert 1989:266–267). The Syro-Hexapla agrees with the dative of the LXX (see also Pietersma 1980:215).

Only a few of these notes are truly significant. In Psalm 58 (57), Aquila omits the reference to David in the note, disagreeing with the MT, LXX and Syro-Hexapla. In Psalm 108 (107), the Syro-Hexapla has the relative, and the Three the preposition. In this instance, the Three agrees with the LXX (see also Pietersma 1980:215). In Psalm 132 (131), the Syro-Hexapla follows some LXX witnesses in adding the reference to David. This reference is explicitly omitted in the margin by Aquila and Symmachus. Field does not provide much additional information in this regard. When one considers the Psalms where the LXX adds David to the heading, Field frequently provides a reference to Origen that states the Psalm is without a heading in the Hebrew. In most of these instances, there are no references to the Three at all. In the case of Psalm 33 (32), Field notes that Origen includes





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