In every field of scholarship there are a handful of books that permanently alter the way in which we define and view basic research issues. In the field of Septuagintal studies one such volume is Dominique Barthélemy’s *Les devanciers d’Aquila.*¹ To Barthélemy goes the credit for having isolated an early Jewish recension of the Old Greek translation (commonly called the Septuagint or LXX) of the Bible. Known as καἰγε or καῖγε-Theodotion, this revision stands between the Old Greek and the later versions of Aquila and Symmachus and generally reflects a Hebrew text quite close to our MT.

Barthélemy’s contributions in this regard have stimulated a number of review essays and other studies, including the present one.² It is the goal of this paper to isolate and evaluate Barthélemy’s contributions in one particular area; namely,

¹ *Les devanciers d’Aquila: Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodéca prophéton; trouvés dans le Désert de Juda, précédée d’une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au premier siècle de notre ère sous l’influence du rabbinate palestinien* (VTSup 10; Leiden 1963).


A plenary session in Barthélemy’s honor was held in conjunction with the 1988 AAR/SBL meetings. We presented an earlier version of the present paper there. The other presentations at this session (“The Septuagint and the DJD Scrolls”) were John Wm. Wevers, “Barthélemy and Proto-Septuagint Studies” (published, with the same title, in *BIOSCS* 21 [1988] 23-34), and Robert A Kraft, “The Edition of *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll* (DJD VIII) and the Contribution of Barthélemy to the History of the Biblical Text.”
his attempt to link recensional developments in the Greek to exegetical developments among the rabbis. It turns out that this is the weakest part of Barthélemy's reconstruction of early Greek textual traditions.

Nonetheless, we remain in agreement with the assessment graciously offered by Sidney Jellicoe a decade and a half ago: "In common with clothing, household furnishings and many other accompaniments of daily life, scholarship has its fashions, which reflect, in their ever-varying forms and patterns, the changing interests of the times." This is so even "in the specialized field of LXX studies....The latest of these additions to the Septuagintal bazaar of fashions is the so-called 'Kaige recension' which, as such, began its reign with the publication of Père Dominique Barthélemy's Les devanciers d'Aquila in 1963. It cannot be denied that this is an important, even an epoch-making, work which has had a highly stimulating impact upon the current climate of LXX studies."³

It is possible to divide Barthélemy's reconstruction or hypothesis into two sections. The first of these rests on three interrelated claims: 1) that kaîγe-Theodotion is a revision of an older Greek text, 2) that this revision is chronologically prior to the version of Aquila, and 3) that Aquila made extensive (we would say, exclusive) use of this earlier revision in fashioning his own text.⁴ The second consists of Barthélemy's attempt to link kaîγe-Theodotion with Hillel and Aquila with Rabbi Akiba, and to identify the earlier reviser with Jonathan ben Uzziel and the later with Onkelos.

For Barthélemy, however, the kaîγe recension cannot be properly understood apart from its close connections with rabbinic figures. This is evident in the last phrase of the full title of Les devanciers d'Aquila (hereafter, D.A.): "sous l'influence du rabbinit palestinien."⁵ The importance Barthélemy attached to these connections is also evident in statements he made in the 1953 article in which he first published readings from the Minor Prophets scroll, an article that

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⁴ In the book of Joshua, Aquila used καίγε-Theodotion as the basis for his further revision; no independent knowledge of the Old Greek can be detected in his text. See Leonard J. Greenspoon, Textual Studies in the Book of Joshua (HSM 28; Chico 1983) 235-253.
⁵ See also his concluding remarks on p. 267 of that work.
was to form the basis for his later, full-length study in *DA*. Early in the article he writes: "Il est en effet assez aisé de prouver...premièrement que notre texte n’est qu’une *recension de la Septante*, et deuxièmement que cette recension est *l’oeuvre de lettrés juifs*...une recension rabinique de la Septante." In this preliminary study Barthélemy was content to describe the "recenseur" as simply doing his best to be faithful to his Hebrew *Vorlage*. Barthélemy felt that he was able to detect a Jewish hand without relying on any particular "indices doctrinaux." On this point, it would seem, Barthélemy changed his view over the intervening decade (*DA* was published ten years after this article), inasmuch as "doctrinal" or halakhic, and certainly exegetical concerns came to play a major role in Barthélemy’s understanding of how this recension was shaped. On a related point, however, he remained consistent: Aquila, the great champion of "l’orthodoxie rabinique," used this recension as his base.

The early reviews of *DA* were quite enthusiastic. Nonetheless, an occasional cautionary flag was raised even in the midst of favorable reviews such as that by Geza Vermes. Among the questions raised by Vermes was the validity of Barthélemy’s assertion "that the revision is...an anti-Christian phenomenon." This must surely be ruled out by its date, Vermes remarks. On the question of original intent, Vermes offers the intriguing suggestion that Aquila’s version may have been designed "to help Greek-speaking Jews with a rudimentary knowledge

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6 Dominique Barthélemy, "Redécouverte d’un chaînon manquant de l’histoire de la Septante," *RB* 60 (1953) 18-29.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 21. See also the testimony of Justin (cited frequently by Barthélemy in this article).

8 *Ibid.*, p. 23: "Le recenseur...a seulement fait de son mieux pour rendre la LXX fidèle à l’hébreu qu’il avait sous les yeux. Ce n’est donc pas à des indices doctrinaux que nous reconnaîtrons une main juive."

9 *Ibid.*: "Mais le fait décisif est que Aquila, le grand champion de l’orthodoxie rabinique, a pris pour base notre recension."

of Hebrew to understand the sacred text of the Old Testament."¹¹ Moreover, Vermes continues, "I am not yet convinced either that the aim of Aquila's systematic literalism was the application of Akiba's halakhic exegesis to the Greek Bible."¹²

In hindsight, it is rather remarkable that Vermes' brief statement on this last point, which appeared three years after the 1963 publication of DA, was the first critical attention given to this specific question, and that the issue was not raised again until 1982 in an article by Lester Grabbe.¹³ In the interim, as Grabbe noted, "Aquila's relationship to Aqiva...has been mentioned...as if it were axiomatic." ¹⁴Among scholars who may be placed is this category are I. Soisalon-Soininen, H. J. Venetz, and K. Hyvärinen.¹⁵

Axiomatic acceptance is also an apt characterization of the stance implicitly taken in a series of dissertations done at Harvard University under Frank M. Cross by James Shenkel (on Kings), Kevin O'Connell (on Exodus), Walter Bodine (on the book of Judges), and Leonard Greenspoon (on Joshua).¹⁶ Even though this

¹¹Vermes, "Review" (above, n. 10) 263-264. In a recent article ("Biblical Translators in Antiquity and in the Modern World: A Comparative Study," HUCA 60 (1989) 91-113), we suggest that the version attributed to καίγε-Theodotion may have been designed to help Hebrew-speaking Jews with a rudimentary knowledge of Greek.

¹²Vermes (above, n. 10) 263. See also Kraft, "Review" (above, n. 10) 479-480.


¹⁴Ibid., p. 527.


younger group of scholars did not make mention of rabbinic connections in adding to the number of xenye characteristics "perfected" by Aquila, it is also the case that they did not move to reject or even modify Barthélemy's by then classic formulations in this regard. Perhaps, none of these scholars felt obliged or sufficiently prepared to subject the rabbinic material to an independent analysis.

The first individual to initiate such an analysis was Lester Grabbe. Grabbe divides his relatively brief article (10 pages) into six sections. In the first, "Biographical Traditions concerning Aquila," Grabbe notes the lack of unanimity among ancient sources with respect to Aquila's association with any particular rabbi, including Akiba. Grabbe quotes approvingly Louis Ginzberg's judgment (from the mid-1930s) that he doubted "the correctness of the position that Akiba was the teacher of Aquila."17 In the second section, "Aquila's Translation Technique," Grabbe shows himself in agreement with James Barr, who wrote: "It seems uncertain whether Aquila was so extreme a literalist as has commonly been believed....Unless our evidence is massively erroneous, it must be clear that with many words Aquila did not follow a very extreme stereotyping policy."18 Because of this, Grabbe reasons, "the 'atomistic exegesis' exemplified in many rabbinic writings could not have been done on the basis of his [Aquila's] text."19

Grabbe begins his third section, "Rabbinic Traditions of Aqiva's Exegesis," with two typical Talmudic statements about Akiba's exegetical stance. Although these and similar passages were generally taken at face value in the past, Grabbe asserts that it is no longer possible to do so: "In light of what might well be termed the 'Neusnerian revolution' in rabbinic studies, it is clear that the Aqivan tradition needs detailed analysis." Even a preliminary analysis uncovers "reason to doubt the reliability of some of the attributions to Aqiva."20 Barthélemy made much of the marked differences in exegesis between Akiba and his more literal-minded contemporary Ishmael. In a study by a student of Neusner's, Gary Porton,


17"Aquila's Translation" (above, n. 13) 528.


19Ibid., p. 529.
the point is forcefully made that neither of the rabbis was so consistent, even on potentially significant practices like the handling of the particle נח. Porton concludes:

The evidence suggests that it is difficult to draw any clear distinctions between the exegetical techniques of the two masters as they are preserved in the material transmitted to us. I believe that in fact the actual situation was not much different. It seems likely to me that the exegetical 'schools' were created by later generations and read back into history.21

Grabbe agrees that "alleged differences between Ishmael and Aqiva are to some extent artificial."22

Grabbe's fourth part focuses on Aquila's translation of נח. Here he concludes that Aquila's use of σῶς to represent נח in some constructions involved "translation mechanics and had nothing to do with any particular exegetical function that Aquila reputedly gave to the particle."23 In any case, such usage would not link Aquila to Akiba in particular.

Was the literalness of Aquila's translation meant to provide a basis for Akiba's exegesis? No, according to Grabbe. In fact, he continues, "a literal translation does not necessarily presuppose a particular mode of interpretation. Rather, it generally seems to arise from the more undefined and perhaps almost mystical notion of being 'faithful to the original.'" In this regard, the common assumption (still prevalent today) is that "the most literal rendering is the most faithful."24 Finally, Grabbe discusses four passages (the only ones he uncovered) where Aquila's treatment and that of a particular rabbi have both been preserved. In only one case is there even "the possibility that Aquila's translation reflects an interpretation of Aqiva." Echoing remarks made earlier, Grabbe finds in Aquila "little to suggest that he tried to exemplify any of the exegeses current in his own day."25

20Ibid., p. 530.
22Ibid. p. 532.
23Ibid. p. 533.
24Ibid., pp. 533-534.
Grabbe's exposition is clear, and there is no doubt that he has effectively made his major points. Nonetheless, we feel uneasy with his accusation that Barthélemy quoted "only examples which support his" view and overlooked "the many instances which contradict it." Did Barthélemy willfully skew the data? A similar criticism against Barthélemy, in a different context (i.e., protoc-Lucian), was offered by George Howard. In our opinion, Barthélemy's response to Howard serves equally well as a self-defense against these criticisms by Grabbe.

On the basis of Grabbe's characterization of Aquila, it is fair to conclude that this translator was motivated more by considerations of style than by what we might term exegetical concerns. In accordance with this analysis, it is difficult to sustain Barthélemy's thesis of an identifiable and unique link between Aquila and Akiba. Five years after the publication of Grabbe's article, the French scholar Olivier Munnich published a study in which he reached similar conclusions about Theodotion and Hillel: the Greek text of κατά-Theodotion does not exemplify or incorporate the exegetical principles traditionally associated with Hillel or any other rabbinitic figure.

Munnich noted, as did Grabbe, that the question of rabbinitic influence in the κατά recension had not received much critical discussion prior to the publication of his study. He was able to cite two scholars, Emanuel Tov and Sidney Jellicoe, who seemed to share his skepticism over Barthélemy's attempts to connect κατά-Theodotion with a particular exegetical tradition, in this case the school

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29 Munnich, "Premier révision" (above, n. 26) 190-220. Of course, the lack of a "rabbinitic connection" for κατά Theodotion does not preclude the possibility of there having been just such a relationship for Aquila and a later rabbi. (The reverse would also be true.) But it does seem tidier for both precursor and successor, revised and reviser, to be similarly situated with respect to one of the leading rabbis of their day (as Barthélemy envisions) or for neither to be so situated (as these critics argue).
of Hillel. For Tov, "an attempt to explain all the characteristic renditions of καίγε-Θ' in accordance with Rabbinical sayings seems far fetched." In Jellicoe's judgment, "there is no certain evidence – apart from the Dead Sea location of the discovery of the Greek Scroll of the Minor Prophets, and this is not evidence of origin – that the καίγε group represents a Palestinian recension, and that the work of the rabbinate." We should also take note (although Munnich did not) of the opinion expressed in the revised edition of Emil Schürer's History of the Jewish People: "Barthélémy's claim that this was a Palestinian recension under the influence of the rabbis is however hypothetical...." Munnich divides his article into three sections. In the first he writes: "Un livre de la LXX embarrasse, semble-t-il, l'auteur des 'devanciers d'Aquila': la traduction du Psautier, entreprise incontestablement bien avant cette révision, manifeste déjà certains de ses caractères." He then poses the question: "Les devanciers d'Aquila posséderaient-ils eux-mêmes des devanciers?" The direction of his affirmative response to this query, hinted at already in the earlier reference to Psalms, becomes clearer in the title Munnich gives to his second section: "La LXX de Psaumes: un chaînon manquant de l'histoire du GK [i.e., the καίγε revision]." (In devising this title, Munnich consciously paraphrased the title of Barthélémy's 1953 RB article.) For Munnich, a key element in the establishment of this missing link is the pattern of usage for the words βάρις and πυργόβαρις in LXX and in GK. Munnich establishes πύραξ = βάρις as a characteristic representation in a number of καίγε texts; this equivalence in turn suggests a dependence on the earlier Greek rendering of the book of Psalms: "La mention de βάρις et de πυργόβαρις est, selon toute vraisemblance, originale dans le

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31 Septuagint and Modern Study (above, n. 2) 93.

32 The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, Vol. III (rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Martin Goodman; Edinburgh 1986) 503. Elsewhere (p. 499), the revisers/editors judge that the identification of Theodotion with Jonathan ben Uzziel "has little to recommend it." Less fair and judicious is their contention (p. 503, n. 39) that "Barthélémy's sole grounds for asserting the involvement of Palestinian rabbis in the translation seems to be the fact that the Minor Prophets scroll was found at Qumran."

33 Munnich, "Première révision" (above, n. 26) 194.
Psautier....La récurrence d'une option aussi originale que θαυμάζει est très instructive: elle marque l'obéissance des recenseurs envers le Psautier grec.34

It is Munnich's third and longest section, "Le GK et l'exégèse rabbinique de l'école hillelîte," that is most relevant to the present discussion. Munnich begins this section: "Outre une description de la recension κατεχεται, D. Barthélemy en a fourni une explication....Les initiatives du GK s'expliqueraient par les principes exégétiques que, pour résumer, on peut attribuer à Hillel."35 This view is not easy to reconcile with the proposal Munnich develops: "Les 'devanciers d'Aquila' possèdent eux-mêmes dans le Psautier grec un devancier dont ils se révèlent les successeurs et même les héritiers."36

Munnich believes that he can successfully prove his point through a systematic comparison of selected κατεχεται characteristics and OG texts. Is this not, he asks, a sounder methodology than Barthélemy's emphasis on rabbinic material: "Il convenait-il pas plutôt de mettre ce groupe, il est vrai homogène, en relation avec les textes de la LXX ancienne, et de se demander si l'on ne trouvait pas dans ceux-ci, au moins à l'état de germes, les principes de traduction qui aboutissent aux caractéristiques du GK?"37

To accomplish this goal, Munnich discusses several of the characteristics proposed by Barthélemy. In each case he uncovers a relationship, some closer and more convincing than others, between GK and "la LXX ancienne." He also investigates the rabbinic material. Here he differs from Barthélemy's interpretations, but he does not break new ground nor does he make use of the insights bequeathed us by the "Neusnerian revolution" (to use Grabbe's term). The results of his comparison are suggestive, if not conclusive. In any event, he is surely correct in his judgment that "D. Barthélemy a sans doute sous-estimé l'influence de la LXX anci-

34Ibid., p. 204.
36In his final series of conclusions (p. 217). Earlier (p. 205), Munnich writes along the same lines: "Le GK s'est montré, non pas 'étranger', mais nettement dépendant du Psautier grec. De ce fait, les recenseurs κατεχεται...semblent moins des 'devanciers d'Aquila' que des 'successeurs' du traducteur grec des Psautres."
37Ibid., p. 206.
en est surestimé celle de l'exégèse hillélite sur l'adoption de traductions caractéristiques du GK.\textsuperscript{38}

In his concluding statements Munnich reiterates a number of points he already made, but he also develops more fully an idea that lay just below the surface earlier in his article. First the reiteration: "La recension καιγε apparaît comme une entreprise inspirée – en partie au moins – par la volonté de généraliser à divers livres de la LXX les options retenues par certains traducteurs." He continues: "On insiste sur la révision accomplie par le GK dans le but d'harmoniser la LXX ancienne en fonction d'équivalents jugés pertinents." In determining the degree of "pertinence" of any given translation option, Munnich argues, precedence was given to stylistic over theological concerns: "La recension...procède d'une influence littéraire s'exerçant à des degrés divers et non de principes doctrinaux."\textsuperscript{39}

In sum, Grabbe and Munnich are in agreement that the καιγε recension, in its (proto-)Theodotionic as well as in its Aquilian stages of development, was largely shaped by concerns for style rather than by specific theological considerations. While contacts with rabbinic traditions cannot be ruled out (it would be remarkable indeed if there were none at all), no specific links join this recension to any identifiable school or strand of rabbinic thought. In our judgment, these conclusions on the part of Grabbe and Munnich are correct, and they need to be taken into account in all future discussions of the καιγε recension.

A third article, by André Paul, builds upon Grabbe's earlier study of Aquila.\textsuperscript{40} In addition to his positive evaluation of Grabbe's work, Paul also cites Barr and Ginzberg approvingly. At the same time, he recognizes that their shared skepticism over the reputed close connection between Aquila and Akiba is a minority po-

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., p. 211. Elsewhere (p. 208) he writes: "D. Barthélemy minimise les liens entre le GK et la LXX ancienne." As we have seen, in Munnich's reconstruction the Psalter is the most influential book of "la LXX ancienne." Nonetheless, he allows for substantial influence from other sections of the OG translation, in particular the OG of the Pentateuch. So Munnich (p. 218, n. 112): "Les caractéristiques du GK mises en évidence par J. D. Shenkel, K. G. O'Connell et W. R. Bodine [see above, n. 16] correspondent souvent à des traductions déjà présentes dans la LXX du Pentateuque." From a broader perspective, see Emanuel Tov, "The Impact of the LXX Translation of the Pentateuch on the Translation of the Other Books," Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy (Fribourg 1981) 577-592.

\textsuperscript{39}Munnich (above, n. 26) 218.

\textsuperscript{40}Paul, "Bible grecque" (above, n. 15) 221-245.
sition: "Par la suite, plusieurs chercheurs ont marché sur ses [i.e., Barthélemy's] traces, considérant son opinion comme définitivement acquise et même indiscutable... On enseigne en effet couramment que la version grecque d'Aquila est toute proche de la doctrine d'Aquila..."41 Earlier we listed some of the scholars Paul had in mind.42 He also makes reference to views expressed by the editors of the revised edition of Schürer. There we read, in connection with Aquila's style: "This attention to the smallest detail may perhaps be traced to the influence of Akiba, whose pupil Aquila is said to have been."43 This is hardly a ringing endorsement of Barthélemy's position; in its careful choice of words ("may perhaps," "is said"), it probably reflects the same caution that Geza Vermes had already expressed 20 years earlier in his review of DA.44

And what has Barthélemy to say about all of this? For the purposes of analysis, it is convenient to divide his comments into two categories: explicit and implicit.

In the category of explicit we place Barthélemy's response to other participants at the colloquium held in conjunction with the 1972 AAR/SBL meetings in Los Angeles.45 At one point in this essay he refers to views expressed by Emanuel Tov: "Il manifeste [writes Barthélemy of Tov] des doutes sur la pertinence de certains des rapprochements que j'ai proposés entre certaines caractéristiques du

41Ibid., pp. 226-227.
42See above, n. 15.
43History (above, n. 32) 495. See also Ernst Würthwein (The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica [Grand Rapids 1979] 53) on "Aquila...disciple of Rabbi Akiba, according to Jewish tradition, in whose spirit he produced his slavishly literal translation."
44At the same time, we note the editors' apparent acceptance of the identification of Aquila with Onkelos (p. 496). Cf. Barr, Typology of Literalism (above, n. 18) 31, n. 1: "It is sometimes thought that, because Aquila is known to be a very literal translation, and Targum Onkelos has the reputation of being literal in comparison with other Targums, this forms an argument in favour of the identity of Aquila and Onkelos as persons. But the literalism of Aquila is, it would seem, a quite different sort of literalism from that which can justly be predicated of Targum Onkelos."
groupe et certaines exégèses rabbiniques."\(^{46}\) In this regard, Barthélemy states that he agrees with Tov's assessment (quoted above) to the effect that "an attempt to explain all the characteristic renditions of καίγε-θ' in accordance with Rabbinical sayings seems far-fetched." Indeed, Barthélemy never sought to explain every characteristic in that way, any more than Munnich sought to make dependence on the OG of Psalms the sole explanation for the shape and scope of his GK. Barthélemy did, however, insist on a few arguments, among which are:

1) "que la traduction de δια par καίγε jointe à la traduction de ἦν par σῶν caractériser Aquila comme un disciple d'Aqiba." Vermes' early doubts that Aquila could be identified as a disciple of Akiba's were proven correct by Grabbe. Grabbe's position has now gained the support of André Paul. (See above.)

2) "que la traduction de δια par καίγε alors que ἦν n'est pas traduit s'associe chez les membres du groupe καίγε à de nombreux indices montrant qu'ils appartiennent à l'effort rescensionnel qui a abouti à l'œuvre d'Aquila."\(^{47}\) There is a very broad scholarly consensus in favor of this placement of καίγε-Theodotion chronologically and developmentally prior to Aquila's work. We do not foresee any major modification of Barthélemy's position in this regard.

Writing in the early 1970s, Barthélemy felt that the lack of any sustained criticism of these and other points allowed him to present "le groupe καίγε comme un produit de l'école Hillel au cours du 1er siècle de notre ère."\(^{48}\) This, of course, is just what Munnich wishes to deny. From another direction, some paleographical analyses of Barthélemy's Minor Prophets Scroll have now pushed its composition back to a date anterior to the appearance of any Hillelite "school" (sometime between 30 and 10 B.C.E.).\(^{49}\)

As he continued his remarks, Barthélemy characterized one of his goals in a manner that seems considerably more limited or restricted than is commonly portrayed: "Si j'ai essayé de trouver dans l'exégèse rabbinique ancienne des parallèles à telle ou telle autre options caractéristiques du groupe καίγε...je

\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 267.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.

\(^{48}\) Ibid., p. 268.

\(^{49}\) In the recently published Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (eds. Emanuel Tov and R. A. Kraft; DJD 8; Oxford 1990), P. J. Parsons offers an updated discussion of the Scroll's date.
voulais seulement évoquer une ambiance culturelle analogue." Moreover, Barthélemy appeared to acknowledge certain limitations in his mastery of rabbinic material, when he issued this invitation: "Je souhaite que des spécialistes de l'exégèse rabbinique poussent plus loin la détermination de cette ambiance culturelle." 50

Barthélemy's implicit affirmation of his position can be found in certain of his later writings, in which he adopts a similar stance toward rabbinic material and uncovers similar links between Greek traditions and specific rabbis. In particular, we think of two articles: "Est-ce Hoshaya Rabba qui censura le 'Commentaire Allégorique?'" and "Qui est Symmaque?" 51

In his article on Symmachus, Barthélemy immediately takes issue with the view that this translator is primarily to be understood in an Ebionite context. It is Joachim Schoeps, among twentieth century researchers, who is most closely identified with this view. 52 In Schoeps' opinion, Symmachus' generally free rendering exhibits numerous contacts with characteristic elements of Ebionite exegesis and belief. For his part, Barthélemy does not deny that Symmachus may have been an Ebionite. But he emphasizes another strand in traditions about this ancient translator; namely, that he was a Samaritan who converted to Judaism. In Barthélemy's reconstruction, the Symmachus who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek and who was a converted Samaritan (with possible Ebionite leanings) can be identified with "Sumkos" or "Symmachus," a disciple of Rabbi Meir mentioned in the Talmud. 53

50 Prise du position" (above, n. 45) 268.


52 See, for example, his "Symmachusstudien," Aus frühchristlicher Zeit: Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen (Tübingen 1950) 82-119.

53 See especially "Symmaque" (above, n. 51) 319-321. There is an appealing symmetry to Barthélemy's structure: Theodotion-Hillel, Aquila-Akiba, Symmachus-Meir. All that is needed is to link Symmachus to a Targum! See the statement by Fernández Marcos (Introducción (above, n. 2) 207): "A diferencia de Aquila y Teodocion ningun especialista lo ha identificado con el autor de un Targum arameo."
In the last footnote of his article, Grabbe terms Barthélemy’s suggested identification of Symmachus “an interesting and ingenious proposal but one as equally in need of a comprehensive study as his theory on Aquila.”\(^{54}\) An investigation of all of the traditions associated with Rabbi Meir would be as valuable as the quest for the historical Akiba (the lack of which is mentioned by Grabbe). We also note that some scholars place the appearance of Symmachus’ work in the second quarter of the third century, a date hard to reconcile with Barthélemy’s identification, according to which the Greek translator was active in the third quarter of the second century.\(^{55}\)

In his article on Hoshaya Rabba, Barthélemy starts with an observation made by Peter Katz in his 1950 study, *Philos Bible.*\(^{56}\) Katz demonstrated, to the satisfaction of most of his readers, including Barthélemy, that the Aquila-like biblical text found in certain manuscripts of some of Philo’s treatises reflected a later revision. Thus, this text does not represent a tradition actually used by (and, therefore, earlier than) Philo. The first objective Barthélemy had in his work on this subject was to establish "Aquila seul" as "source des hébraïsations." Having done this, he sought to prove that this "retoucheur" (the individual in question is far too unsystematic to acquire a loftier title like "recenseur") was a Jew. This contention flies in the face of the common assumption that, almost from the beginning, Philo’s works passed into Christian hands and that they were transmitted from that time until the modern era exclusively among Christians.

In order to make his case, Barthélemy takes his readers to Origen’s scriptorium at Caesarea and recreates something of the atmosphere and working habits in that establishment. Origen had a need for Jewish assistance; Hoshaya Rabba was a celebrated rabbi, resident of Caesarea, and Origen’s contemporary. From there Barthélemy mines the rabbinic material and uncovers parallels:

Elles ne nous permettent pas de donner au retoucheur le nom de R. Hoshaya Rabba, mais du moins elles nous confirment que le milieu juif de Césarée offrait à l’époque

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\(^{54}\) Aquila’s Translation” (above, n. 13) 536, n. 34.

d’Origène un ‘Sitz im Leben’ idéal pour le travau de ce retoucheur de l’édition du Commentaire Allégorique.  

Here again Barthélemy has applied his methodology to link developments in the textual history of the Greek Bible with particular rabbinic figures. It is also worth noting that in this case, as in the earlier ones, Barthélemy is more modest in his proposals than he is often made out to be.

At the end of his aforementioned article Grabbe calls for "a comprehensive study of all the Minor Versions in the light of all the various types of ancient Jewish biblical interpretation." Such a study or series of studies will, no doubt, lead to further modifications in Barthélemy’s hypothetical reconstructions.

In the interim, we recognize that Barthélemy has permanently and positively changed the way in which we look at a significant body of textual material. The advancement of knowledge in a humanistic discipline like textual criticism necessarily proceeds at a rather slow pace. With the publication of DA, Barthélemy took a giant step forward and brought the rest of us along with him. As his critics rightly point out, he stepped out a bit too quickly and too boldly. With them, we must now take a small step or two backward. But we have moved forward from our starting point. And for this we appropriately offer thanks to Dominique Barthélemy.

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57 "Hoshaya Rabba" (above, n. 51) 171.

58 "Aquila’s Translation" (above, n. 13) 536.