Abstrakt. While much has been written about the the nature of the Old Testament Peshitta vis-à-vis its Vorlage, little work has been done regarding the New Testament Peshitta as a translation. This study will examine the Peshitta Epistle of James as a translation. At the outset, renderings that reflect Greek textual variants will be identified since they do not reflect translation technique. Careful examination of the Syriac text in relation to its Vorlage reveals translation features that characterize this book. The evidence assembled here points to a reader oriented translation. The translator, while being faithful to the Greek, transformed the text into idiomatic Syriac.

Keywords: Epistle of James; translation technique; New Testament Peshitta; Syrian language; textual criticism of the New Testament; translation theory.

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**Słowa kluczowe:** List Jakuba; technika translacyjna; Peszitta Nowy Testament; język syryjski; krytycznym tekstualnym Nowego Testamentu; teoria translacji.

While much has been written about the the nature of the Old Testament Peshitta vis-à-vis its Vorlage,1 little work has been done regarding the New Testament Peshitta as a translation.2 This study will examine the Peshitta Epistle of James as a translation. At the outset, one must sort out translation features from Greek textual variants. Only then can one examine the translation features and characterize the translation as a translation. Fortunately, the modern editio maior of the Greek New Testament3 incorporates the critical edition of the Syriac Peshitta of James

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published in 1986. In addition, Bruce M. Metzger has provided a valuable textual commentary to the Greek text. Further, the Accordance electronic modules of the Greek New Testament and Peshitta New Testament, based on the twenty-eighth revised edition of Novum Testamentum Graece and the Peshitta text of the British and Foreign Bible Society respectively, serve as valuable tools for researching this issue.

With regard to Greek Vorlage, it appears that the translator of the Peshitta used a text that was developed, yet not always the same as the so-called textus receptus. In Jas 1:12 ἃν ἐπηγγέλατο ὁ θεός “which God promised” projects Greek ὃν ἐπηγγέλατο ὁ θεός “which God promised,” where the expressed subject ὁ θεός “God” reflects a developed Greek text. Other Greek text witnesses read the expressed subject as ὁ κύριος “Lord.” The primitive Greek text lacks the expressed subject. In Jas 2:20 ἡ πίστις χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων ἀργή ἐστιν “faith without works is dead,” the textus receptus. The primitive Greek text reads ἡ πίστις χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων ἀργή ἐστιν “faith without works is useless.” In Jas 2:25 the primitive Greek text reads Rahab the harlot welcomed the ἄγγελους in the meaning “messengers.” To avoid confusion with the meaning “angels” a substitute entered the Greek textual stream from Heb 11:31, namely κατασκόπους “spies.” It is the developed reading κατασκόπους “spies” that stands back the Peshitta rendering “spies.” In Jas 3:9 the Peshitta reads τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα “the Lord and Father” against the reading

8 So Metzger, 608.
9 The replacement reading “dead” derives from Jas 2:17 or 26.
of the textus receptus, namely, τὸν θεόν καὶ πατέρα “the God and Father.” In Jas 5:7 ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ ἁμαρτανόντων καὶ ὑπέφυσεν “until he receives the early rain and the latter (rain)” goes back to the developed text ἐώς λαβῇ ὑετὸν πρόιμον καὶ ὑψίμον “until he/it receives the early rain and the latter (rain).” The primitive text lacked the word ὑετὸν “rain.”

Some cases are not so straightforward. In Jas 4:4 the Peshitta reads the masculine ὁμιχαλίδες “adulterers” against the feminine μοιχαλίδες “adulteresses.” Whereas no Greek manuscript reads the masculine μοιχοί in place of the feminine μοιχαλίδες – some read μοιχοί καὶ μοιχαλίδες “adulterers and adulteresses” –, the Peshitta’s rendering should be regarded as a reflex of feminine μοιχαλίδες. In context, the term certainly includes men. Such a rendering points to the Peshitta of James being reader oriented rather than source text oriented.

Regarding citations of and allusions to the Old Testament, the translator of the Peshitta of James followed his Greek Vorlage rather than inserting the language of the OT Peshitta. Pesh-Jas 2:8, reading ἀγαπήσεις “you shall love your neighbor as yourself,” follows the NT text ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν, that cites Lev 19:18. By contrast the OT Peshitta reads ἀγαπηθῆσαι “love your neighbor as yourself.” The prefix conjugation form ἀγαπήσεις of Pesh-James reflects the Greek future form ἀγαπήσεις, while the OT Peshitta text has the imperative form. Moreover, the word used for neighbor μαθὴς mirrors the Greek πλησίον and is different from the OT word ἁμαρτή. Jas 5:4 uses phraseology from Isa 5:9, reading εἰς τὰ ὡτα κυρίου σαβαώθ εἰσεληλύθασιν “(and the cries of the reapers) have entered the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.” Pesh-James reads ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ κυρίου σαβαώθ “(and the cry of the reapers) entered into the ears of the Lord Sebaoth,” clearly different from the OT Peshitta's ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ σαβαώθ “it was heard in the ears of the mighty Lord.” In Jas 5:5 the translator rendered the NT text ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς “in a day of slaughter” by ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ κυρίου σαβαώθ “as for a day of slaughter” using a different lexeme than in Jer 12:3 (ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ λαμβάνεται “for the day of killing”). Since the Peshitta of James reflects the practice of translating

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10 NRSV renders “Adulterers!”
the Greek of the New Testament instead of substituting the reading of the Peshitta Old Testament – the strategy found in the Old Syriac Gospel of the distinct evangelists – it seems reasonable to date the translation of James to the fifth century.\(^{11}\)

In this study, we will identify some notable translation features of the Peshitta Epistle of James. These will allow us to characterize the translation. How has the translator encoded the Greek in his translation? Is he guided rigidly by the source language or does he allow room for free expression in the target language? The example from Jas 4:4 indicates a reader oriented translation. Further examples will either confirm or modify this finding.

**LANGUAGE CODING IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE**

**EXPRESSIONS OF THE GENITIVE RELATIONSHIP**

The Peshitta of James renders Greek constructions expressing the genitive relationship between two nouns or a pronoun and a noun into idiomatic Syriac. The simple construct state syntagm is confined to the idioms “court” (Jas 2:6 κριτήριον) and “patience” (Jas 5:10 μακροθυμία), which have become independent lexemes with two constituents in Syriac. Often, the translator used the syntagm noun in the emphatic state + dalath + noun in the emphatic state as in “the Father of lights” (Jas 1:17), “word of truth” (Jas 1:18) – the genitive is attributive, “the true word” –, “expounders\(^{13}\) of evil thoughts” (Jas 2:4 < κριται διαλογισμων πονηρων), and

\(^{11}\) Sebastian Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (Second Revised Edition; Gorgias Handbooks 7; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), 33.

\(^{12}\) Brock dates the Peshitta New Testament, which he views as a revision of the Old Syriac, to about 400. Brock believes that there was an Old Syriac translation of Acts and the epistles, though non extant in the Old Syriac form, in addition to the Old Syriac Gospel (Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, 33).

“the law of freedom” (Jas 2:12). The Greek adjective is expressed via the construct relationship in Jas 2:15, ἀδελφοὶ “daily sustenance” (lit., “sustenance of a day”) representing τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς “daily nourishment,” in Jas 3:7, ἀκροθυ “by the human species” (lit., “by the species of humanity”) rendering τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ “by the human species,” and in Jas 3:8, μῆν “a deadly drug” (lit., “a drug of death”) translating ἰοῦ βανατηφόρου “of deadly poison.” He also used the syntagm with the proleptic pronoun on the first noun as in ἡμᾶς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν “of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jas 2:1), ἡμᾶς “the need of the body” (Jas 2:16), ἡμᾶς ἡγεῖται ἡ λαγνεία “the love of the world” (Jas 4:4), ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία “the doer of the law” (Jas 4:11), ἡμᾶς ἔπειτα ἡ λαγνεία “the ears of the Lord” (Jas 5:4), ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία ἐπὶ ἡμᾶς “the coming of the Lord” (Jas 5:7), ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία ἐπὶ ἡμᾶς “the patience of Job” (Jas 5:11), and ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία ἐπὶ ἡμᾶς “the power of prayer” (Jas 5:16). One should not confuse the anaphoric suffix with the proleptic pronoun in ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία “someone with his rings of gold” (Jas 2:2), where the suffix on ἡμᾶς points back to the word ἡμᾶς in the context.

In characteristic Syriac the construct chain can be interrupted by a preposition as in ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία ἐπὶ ἡμᾶς “transgressors of the law” rendering παραβάται “transgressors” (Jas 2:9). The preposition ἐπὶ intervenes between the nomen regens ἡμᾶς, which is the masculine plural participle in construct state, and the nomen rectum ἡμᾶς.14 The noun ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία “hypocrisy” (προσωπολημψία “partiality”; Jas 2:1) also demonstrates this, where the first constituent ἡμᾶς is in the construct state.15

POSSESSIVE SUFFIXES

Possessive suffixes are attached directly to the noun, not introduced by the genitive particle ἐν, as in ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία “my brethren” representing ἀδελφοὶ

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14 The singular ἡμᾶς ἰδίως ἡ λαγνεία “a transgressor of the law” (παραβάτης νόμου “a transgressor of the law”) appears in Jas 2:11.

μου; ἡ ἐξήρανσις “your faith” translating τὴν πίστιν σου (Jas 2:18); ἡ σώσει “his works” rendering τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ (Jas 2:13); τίς “his son” standing for τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ (Jas 2:21); ἡ ἐξήρανσις “your wealth” reflecting ὁ πλοῦτος ὑμῶν (Jas 5:2); ἡ ἐξήρανσις “of our Lord” τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (Jas 2:1); ἡ ἐξήρανσις “among our members” mirroring ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν (Jas 3:6). Later Syriac translators of Greek literature regularly used ἡ ἐξήρανσις as in ἡ ἐξήρανσις “my brethren” in such cases.

EXPRESSING THE PARTITIVE

The translator expressed the partitive in good Syriac. He rendered both the Greek τις ὑμῶν “any of you” (Jas 1:5) and τις ἐν ὑμῖν “any among you” (Jas 3:13 and 19) as ἐν σοί “any of you,” using the preposition σοί (Jas 1:5). He rendered τις σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν “who is wise and understanding among you” as ἐν σοί ἐστιν σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων “who is it among you that is wise and learned” (Jas 3:13).

WORD ORDER – APPOSITION

The Syriac translator changed the compact structure of the Greek apposition Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος “Jacob, God’s and the Lord Jesus Christ’s servant,” where the appositive comes in final position, into good Syriac structure by rendering Ἰάκωβος ὁ δοῦλος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ “Jacob, the servant of God and of our Lord Jesus the Messiah,” in which the apposition immediately follows the head noun (Jas 1:1). In Syriac the appositive “servant” immediately follows the head noun “Jacob.”

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16 Jas 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19.
17 Nöldeke, Compendious Syriac Grammar, § 249C, notes that the partitive use of is extensive.
USE OF THE PRONOUN IN VERBAL RECTION

Unlike Greek, Syriac frequently uses a redundant pronoun, usually proleptic, as part of the government of the verb. Proleptic pronouns appear in اَنَّ الْحَمْس “and (the sun) dries up the grass” against the source text καὶ ἐξήρανεν τὸν χόρτον “and (the sun) dries up the grass” (Jas 1:11); اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “defiles it our whole body” against the source text ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα “staining the whole body” (Jas 3:6); اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “who are you that you judge him your neighbor” over against τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον “who are you that judges the neighbor” (Jas 4:12); اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “and the prayer of faith will heal him the one that is sick” against καὶ ἡ εὐχή τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμυοντα “and the prayer of faith will save the one that is sick” (Jas 5:15); اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “that it might save them your souls” against σώσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν “to save your souls” (Jas 1:21).

To express the concept of “have” Syriac uses the preposition lamadh as in اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “but let her patience have full effect” as against its source text ἡ δὲ ύπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω (Jas 1:4). The first اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “(let) her have” anticipates اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة “(let) patience have”; the second اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة points back to اسماء للْمَلَائِكَة. This is good Syriac.

RENDERINGS OF THE GREEK FUTURE TENSE

The Syriac translator rendered the Greek future tense (26 cases in 17 verses) with the participle 19 times, with the prefix conjugation 5 times, with the adjective once, and with the construction ὅταν (passive participle) + dalath + prefix conjugation once. This pattern fits the profile of a reader oriented translation.

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18 Jas 1:5, 7, 10, 11, 12; 2:18 (2x); 4:7, 13 (4x), 15 (second case); 5:3 (first case; εἰμί), 15 (3x), 20 (2x).
19 Jas 1:25 (εἰμί); 2:8 (OT citation); 4:8, 10, 15 (first case).
20 Jas 3:1.
21 Jas 5:3 (second case).
Contrast: ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν “and this one will be blessed in his doing” (Jas 1:25 οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται), where the translator used the prefix conjugation, with ἦν γὰρ ἡ πεπεμβασμένη ἀργυρῶν “and their corrosion will be evidence against you” (Jas 5:3 καὶ ὁ ἱὸς αὐτῶν εἰς μαρτύριον ὑμῖν ἔσται), where the translator used the active participle.

**REFLEXES OF THE GREEK IMPERATIVE**

Negated imperatives are rendered into good Syriac as لام + prefix conjugation: لام < μὴ πλανάσθε “do not be deceived” (Jas 1:16); اذ < μὴ κατακαυχάσθε καὶ ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας “do not boast against and be false to the truth” (Jas 3:14); اذ < μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων “do not slander one another” (Jas 4:11); اذ < μὴ στενάζετε ... κατ᾽ ἀλλήλων “do not groan against one another” (Jas 5:9). Once, this Greek syntagm is rendered by لام + the periphrastic construction consisting of لام in the suffix conjugation + participle: اذ لام “do not swear” < μὴ οὐδείς “do not swear” (Jas 5:12). This, too, is idiomatic Syriac.22

Positive imperatives are generally rendered by the Syriac imperative form. In two verses, however, the idiomatic construction consisting of لام in the suffix conjugation + participle appears: لام < οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε “so speak and so do” (Jas 2:12) and اذ < ἦκο τοιούτῳ καὶ ἔσται “and confess your faults one to another and pray one for the other” < ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν23 καὶ εὔχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων “therefore

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23 See also Jas 5:7 where لام renders οὖν.

24 The Syriac read ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν “your transgressions” as over against τὰς ἁμαρτίας “(your) sins.”
confess your transgressions to one another and pray for one another” (Jas 5:16).

The idiomatic construction consisting of ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματά σας τὸν δυνάμενον σώσαι τάς ψυχάς ὑμῶν “you should know that we (teachers) are subject to greater judgment” (Jas 3:1). This, too, is good Syriac, conveying the message of the text clearly to the reader in his own vernacular.

**RENDERINGS OF THE GREEK INFINITIVE**

The Greek infinitive appears 26 times in James in 20 verses. The translator transferred the Greek infinitive into good Syriac using a variety of translation equivalents. He substituted the noun ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματά σας τὸν δυνάμενον σώσαι τάς ψυχάς ὑμῶν “the word implanted in your nature, which is able that it (the word) might save your souls” rendering τὸν ἐμφυτὸν λόγον τὸν δυνάμενον σώσαι τάς ψυχάς ὑμῶν “the implanted word which is able to save your souls” (Jas 1:21) and ὁ δυνάμενος σώσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι “who is able that he might save and he might destroy” from Greek ὁ δυνάμενος σώσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι “who is able that he might save and to destroy” (Jas 4:12) in accordance with Syriac idiom. He used a “that” clause containing the participle to convey the meaning of the infinitive clause in translating Εἴ τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι “if anyone thinks himself to be religious” by ὃν καὶ ἐλευθερίας οὖν διδόειν ἐλευθερίας ἔχει “and if anyone thinks that he serves God” translates (Jas 1:26). Yet, he retains the infinitive when used as a complement of a participle functioning as an adjective – ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματά σας τὸν δυνάμενον σώσαι τάς ψυχάς ὑμῶν.

25 For the Greek infinitive as a greeting in letters, see Acts 15:23 (the letter of the apostles and elders to the Gentile believers) and Acts 23:26 (the letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix). In both places the Syriac translator rendered it by the noun ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα τὸν δυνάμενον σώσαι τάς ψυχάς ὑμῶν “Peace!” as here.
“let every one of you be eager to hear and slow to speak and slow to be angry” renders ἐστω πᾶς ἀνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκούσαι, βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι, βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν “let every one be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (Jas 1:19) –, when the infinitive phrase functions as a substantive –

διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε 1:2-3, “Let all joy be yours –, when the infinitive phrase functions as a substantive –

rendering of the Greek participle expressing attendant circumstances

Often where the Greek participle expresses attendant circumstance, being subordinate to the main verb, the Peshitta renders it via coordination using a coordinating conjunction such as ἀν or ὡς “and,” ἀλλὰ “but,” or ἐν “for,” instead of subordination. In Jas 1:14, the translation coordinates the verbal elements with conjunctive waw: ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου “but each one by his own desire is tempted and lured and enticed” representing ἐκαστὸς δὲ πειράζεται υπὸ τῆς ἰδιᾶς ἐπιθυμίας ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος “but each one is tempted by his own desire, being lured and enticed.” The same happens in Jas 1:22, where the participle becomes an imperative due to coordination: Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταί “Be doers of the word and not hearers only and do not deceive yourselves” renders Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταί
λόγου καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτοὺς “Be doers of the word and not only hearers, deceiving yourselves.” Compare also: “And if you show favoritism you commit sin and you are reproved by the law” for εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε, ἀμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου “And if you show favoritism you commit sin, being exposed by the law” (Jas 2:9); “wail and weep” for λαύσατε ὀλολύζοντες “weep, moaning” (Jas 5:1); “like the farmer who waits for the precious fruits of his land and is patient for it” for ἤδον ὁ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς μακροθυμῶν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ “Behold the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the land, being patient for it” (Jas 5:7); “he willed and begat us” for βουληθείς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς “having willed, he brought us forth” (Jas 1:18); “and they should pray for him and anoint him with oil” for καὶ προσευχόμεθα ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀλείψαντες αὐτὸν ἐλαῖῳ “and they should pray for him, having anointed him with oil” (Jas 5:14).

The translator added as the coordinating conjunction in Jas 1:2-3, “Let all joy be yours ... for you know (ὅτι ... ἐπ’ αὐτῷ) that” representing “Count it all joy ..., knowing (γινόμενοι) that.” Moreover, he added as the coordinating conjunction in Jas 3:1, ἦταν ... διδάσκαλοι “There should not be many teachers among you ..., but you should know that” standing for Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε ..., εἰδότες ὅτι “Not many of you should become teachers ..., knowing that.”

There are places where the translator used a subordinating conjunction instead. In Jas 1:13, for example, the source text μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω “let no one, being tempted, say” is realized as ἦν δὲ ἀμαρτία ἀποτελεσθείσα ἀποκύει θάνατον “and sin, having run its course, brings forth death” is rendered as “and sin, after it has been brought to an end, brings forth death,” with the subordinating conjunction ἐνος “when.” In Jas 1:15 the source text ἦ δὲ ἀμαρτία ἀποτελεσθείσα ἀποκύει θάνατον “and sin, having run its course, brings forth death” is rendered as “and sin, after it has been brought to an end, brings forth death,” with the subordinating conjunction ἐνος “when.” In Jas 2:1 the translator used as a temporal subordinator, rendering Αβραὰμ ... οὐχ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ἄνενέγκας Ἰσαὰκ ... ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστήριου “Wasn't Abraham ... justified by works, having ...
offered Isaac ... upon the altar?” as “Wasn't Abraham ... justified by works, when he offered Isaac ... upon the altar?”

**EXPRESSIONS IN IDIOMATIC SYRIAC**

The translator used idiomatic Syriac expressions in his translation. Lexemes consisting of two words in Syriac are used: “hypocrisy” (προσωποληψία “partiality”; Jas 2:1) and the related “show partiality” (προσωπολημπτεώ “show partiality” Jas 2:9; ἄνυπόκριτος “without pretense” 3:17); “lawgiver” (νομοθέτης “lawgiver”; Jas 4:12 – the Syriac lexeme owes its origin to the Greek language); “be patient” (μακροθυμήσατε “be patient”; Jas 5:7-8); “(the farmer) is patient” (μακροθυμῶν “being patient”; Jas 5:7); “patience” (μακροθυμία “patience”; Jas 5:10). Moreover, the translator rendered “the same” expressed in Greek by the reflexive pronoun αὐτός into idiomatic Syriac, translating ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος “out of the same mouth” as “out of the same mouth” (Jas 3:10; preposition + proleptic pronoun – same preposition – determined noun) and ἡ πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὀπίσθις “a spring from the same opening” as “from the same spring” (Jas 3:11; the numeral ὁς “one” fronted before its nominal head).

With regard to the verb, the translator added the dative of reference: “have you not made distinctions among yourselves” opposed to καὶ οὐ διεξήγητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς “have you not made distinctions among yourselves” (Jas 2:4). He also added the ethical dative, a “faded variety” of the dative of reference,26 in ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ “for the coming of the Lord has drawn near” rendering ὅτι ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἤγγικεν “for the coming of the Lord has drawn near” (Jas 5:8) and in ὅτι ἐστι “sit” translating κάθοι “sit” (Jas 2:3).

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CLEAR INTERPRETIVE EXPRESSION IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE

The translator transferred certain Greek expressions into idiomatic Syriac by exegeting them for the benefit of the reader. In Jas 1:1 the rendering “those scattered among the nations” explains the Greek ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ “those who are in the dispersion.” In Jas 1:21 “the word that is implanted in our nature” interprets the Greek τὸν ἐμφυτοῦ λόγον “the implanted word.” In Jas 1:26 the words κύριου ἤγινεν “and if anyone thinks that he serves God” translate εἰ τίς δοξεῖ θρησκῶς εἶναι “if anyone thinks himself to be religious” (Jas 1:26), the adjective θρησκῶς “religious” being a hapax legomenon in the Greek New Testament. The translator renders the cognate noun θρησκεία “worship” in this context similarly, using ṣḥwawḥ “service” (Jas 1:26-27). The verb θρησκεύω “worship” does not appear in the New Testament, but does in Wis 11:15, where the Syriac renders it with the verb ܐܫܒܒ “worship.”

In Jas 2:8 νόμον ... βασιλείαν “the royal law” becomes ܟܡܪܐܢܐ “the law of God,” making it clear that royal refers to the Deity. In Jas 2:4 the translator renders κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν “judges of [with] evil thoughts” as ṣḥwawḥ ܟܡܪܐܢܐ “expounders” of evil thoughts.” In Jas 2:10 the translator crafts γέγονεν πάντων ἐνοχός “he has become guilty of all” into ṣḥwaw ܟܡܪܐܢܐ “he has become guilty of the whole law” for clarity. The translator changed the second person plural of the verb ὥρατε (“you see” that ...) of Jas 2:24 into the singular (אֶנְהָרֵךְ), bringing the flow of the argument into line with the previous context (Jas 2:18-20). By adding prepositions in his translation of Jas 2:13 the translator brought clarity for his readers, rendering κατακαυχάσθε ἔλεος κρίσεως as ṣḥwawḥ ܢܒܚܐ “you exalt yourselves over judgment through mercies.” Pesh follows the Greek variant κατακαυχάσθε, understanding the form ἔλεος, a neuter noun, to be in the accusative case, with the oblique object κρίσεως in the genitive case. The oblique object in the genitive means “against” as in Rom 11:18 μὴ κατακαυχῶ τῶν χλάδων “do not boast against the branches,” the Syriac translating ṣḥwawḥ ܢܒܚܐ “do not boast

27 Sokoloff, A Syriac Lexicon, 811.
against the branches.” Pesh-Jas 2:5 offers an interesting exegesis of the Greek differing from English translations, at least. The Peshitta reformulates the Greek to make excellent sense by rendering οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τοῦ κόσμου πλουσίους ἐν πίστει καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας ἢς ἑπηγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν; as ὢν ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τοῦ κόσμου πλουσίους ἐν πίστει καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας ἢς ἑπηγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν; “Was it not the poor of the world, but rich in faith, that God chose that they should be heirs in the kingdom which God promised to those who love him?” Contrast NRSV: “Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?”

The translator transformed the conditional clause of the Greek into a clause in extraposition in Jas 3:2, rendering ἐὰν τὶς ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει οὗτος τέλειος ἀνήρ “If anyone does not stumble in spoken word, he is a perfect man” as ἂν εἶ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει οὗτος τέλειος ἀνήρ “Everyone who does not stumble in spoken word, this one is a perfect man.” In the same verse, he expresses δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα “able also to bridle the entire body” in fine Syriac as ὁ κόσμος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται ἐν ἔλεοι καὶ φλογίζο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τοῦ κόσμου “who is able also to subdue his entire body.” The complement of the word “be able” appears as a prefix conjugation – not an infinitive as in the Greek – attached asyndetically and the personal pronoun “his,” implicit in the Greek, enters the translation.

In Jas 3:6 the translator reformulates the Greek and offers an interpretive translation for clarity. In the first part of the verse, the translator links ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἁδικίας “the world of unrighteousness” to what precedes, making it a second predicate linked by “and.” In addition, the translator adds a comparative “like a forest,” possibly from “forests” of the previous verse. The first part then reads as follows: ἦν ἡ γλῶσσα καὶ φλογίζουσα καὶ φλογιζομένη “And the tongue is a fire and a world of sin like a forest.” In the second part of the verse, the Greek structure has the subject, ἡ γλῶσσα “the tongue,” immediately followed by the predicate καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν “makes itself / is made (?) among our members,” then followed by a series of dependent clauses (ἡ σπιλοῦσα ... καὶ φλογιζομένη ... “which stains ... and setting on fire ... and being set on fire ...”). The Peshitta reformulates the Greek syntactically, having the
subject ("the tongue") followed by a temporal clause ("when it is among the members") followed by the predicate (... πᾶσα φύσις ἐρπετῶν καὶ ἐναλίων "defiles ... and sets ablaze ... and burns ... "). In addition, the translator offers the interpretive rendering "the successions of our tribes which (successions) run like wheels" for τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως "the wheel (course) of the family line." Moreover, he renders ὑπὸ τῆς γεέννης "by Gehenna" as "by fire" contextually, the context not having to do with eternal judgment. To sum up, the translator attempted to make sense of the Greek in a clear way for his readers and hence paraphrases the Greek in this verse.

In Jas 3:7 the translator changes the singular subject πᾶσα φύσις "every species" into the plural "all species," explicates the terms ἐρπετῶν καὶ ἐναλίων "of reptiles and of sea creatures" as "and creepers of the sea and of the dry land," and condenses the verbs δαµάζεται καὶ δεδάµασται "can be tamed and has been tamed" into "are subdued." This translation communicates clearly to the readers.

In Jas 4:6 the translator offers a reader friendly translation of ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται "God opposes the proud" by rendering "God humbles the proud."

In Jas 5:13 the translator transforms the Greek into an easily understandable form by adding the conditional "and if" and expressing the jussive by the paraphrasic construction, namely ἐν ὑµῖν "among you" as jussive plus the active participle. The translator reformulated Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑµῖν, προσευχέσθω · εὐθυµεῖ τις, ψαλλέτω "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises." into "And if anyone among you should be in distress, let him pray. And if anyone rejoices, let him sing." Jas 5:14 continues the thought, reading "And if sick, he should summon the elders of the congregation," reflecting ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑµῖν, προσκαλεσάθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας "Is anyone among you sick? Let him summon the elders of the congregation." The translator again inserts "and if," making the first clause conditional, and eliminates ἐν ὑµῖν "among you" as redundant.
In Jas 5:15, the translator rendered “the prayer of faith will save (σώσει) the sick” as “the prayer of faith will make the sick well (σάλληση),” clearly expressing the meaning of the Greek. In keeping with good Syriac style, he used the proleptic pronoun لـ “to him,” pointing forward to لـ “him that is sick.” Furthermore, he transformed the Greek κἂν ἀμαρτίας ἐπεσει, ἀφεθήσονται 28 αὐτῷ “and if he be committing sins, they shall be forgiven him” into clear Syriac by rendering ضنح لـ لـ “and if sins have been committed by him, they shall be forgiven him.”

In Jas 5:16, the translator reformulates πολὺ γὰρ ἑξῆς δίκαιου ἐνεργομένη “effective entreaty of a righteous person is very strong” for the sake of his readers, offering ضنح لـ لـ “for great is the power of the prayer that the righteous prays.”

In Jas 5:19 the translator adds the words “from his error” for perspecuicy. The Peshitta reads ضنح ضنح ضنح ضنح “and someone return him from his error” against the Greek καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ τις αὐτὸν “and someone return him.”

CONCLUSION

The translation features discussed above, found in the Peshitta Epistle of James, point clearly to a reader oriented translation. The translator uses idiomatic Syriac, transforming the Greek of his source text into clear Syriac expression. His was not a source text oriented translation.

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28 The Syriac reflects the plural ἀφεθήσονται against the singular ἀφεθήσεται.


STUDIES


