

Thomas C. Schmidt: Hippolytus of Rome's *Commentary on Daniel*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2022 (Gorgias Studies in Early Christianity and Patristics 79). IX, 207 p. \$ 37.00. ISBN: 978-1-4632-4436-1.

This second edition of Thomas C. Schmidt's English translation of Hippolytus' *Commentary on Daniel* (CPG 1873) does not seem to have been revised in comparison with the first (2017),¹ but the *Commentary on Daniel* is here published alone, without the *Chronicon*. The translation (pp. 25–194) is followed by a short bibliography (pp. 195–200) and a biblical index (pp. 201–207). The text translated is that of the critical edition by Marcel Richard (†), published some 25 years after Richard's death.² The short introduction (pp. 1–24) is dealing with the authorship of the Hippolytan Corpus;³ the life of Hippolytus (identified as Hippolytus of Rome); the themes in Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel*: persecution, eschatology, typology, the life of the Church and Logos theology; the reception of the commentary. The introduction does not bring anything new, but is a short summary of extant scholarship.

The translation is, as the author states, “purposefully quite literal” in order “to encourage cross-referencing with the Greek text” (p. 26). The few notes to the translation mostly provide the sources of the quotations present in the Greek text, rarely explanations to the wording, which is, however, not always easy to understand, not the least because the Greek tradition is fragile and often deficient (the Greek text is regularly reconstructed through the Slavonic translation).⁴ The author does not engage with this tradition (with one single exception, see below), and simply follows Richard's text, indicat-

- 1 T. C. Schmidt: Hippolytus of Rome. *Commentary on Daniel and 'Chronicon'*. With Contributions by N. Nicholas. Piscataway, NJ 2017 (Gorgias Studies in Early Christianity and Patristics 67).
- 2 G. N. Bonwetsch (ed.): Hippolyt Werke. Vol. I/1: *Kommentar zu Daniel*. 2nd edition by M. Richard. Berlin 2000 (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, N.F. 7). For a translation in German, see Hippolyt von Rom: *Danielkommentar*. Eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert v. K. Bracht. Stuttgart 2016 (Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 80).
- 3 See E. Norelli: Hippolyte et le Corpus Hippolytéen. In: B. Pouderon (ed.): *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne des origines à 451*. Vol. 3: De Clément d'Alexandrie à Eusèbe de Césarée. Paris 2017, pp. 415–482.
- 4 See M. Richard: Les difficultés d'une édition du commentaire de S. Hippolyte sur Daniel. In: RHT 2, 1972, pp. 1–10.

ing the lacunae, but not the many places where the text constitution is uncertain.

As an example, I will take Book 1, Chapter 15, aligning Richard's edition (as in the *TLG*) with Schmidt's English translation (pp. 42–43). I am also reproducing Schmidt's notes.

Book 1.15

Τούτῳ „ἦν παράδεισος γειτνιῶν τῷ οἴκῳ <αὐτοῦ>“. „καὶ <ἐγένετο> ὥς <ἀπέτρε>χεν <ὁ> λα<ὸς μέσον ἡμέρας> εἰσεπο<ρεύετο Σουσαννά> καὶ <περιεπάτει ἐν τῷ πα>ραδείσῳ <τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς> καὶ ἐθεώρουν αὐτὴν οἱ δύο πρεσβύτεροι καθ' ἡμέραν καὶ ἐγένοντο ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ αὐτῆς“.

(2) ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οἱ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἄρχοντες βούλονται νῦν περικόπτειν τῆς βίβλου, φάσκοντες μὴ γεγενῆσθαι ταῦτα ἐν Βαβυλῶνι, αἰσχυρόμενοι τὸ ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν γεγενημένον, ἀγνοοῦντες τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος οἰκονομίαν.

(3) ὥς ἀπροσωπολήπτως αἱ θεῖαι γραφαὶ <καὶ μετὰ παρρησίας πάντα ἐπιδεικνύουσιν, οὐ μόνον> <τὰ δὲ> <καὶ αἱ> τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔργα, ἀ<ποιοῦντες ἐδικαι>ώ<θησαν, ἀλλὰ> καὶ δεινὰ <τὰ ὑπὸ> τινῶν γ<ε>-γενημέν<α>, ἐφ' <ἃ οὗτοι ... συμφυ>ρέν<τες τελευτῶ>σιν, <ἵνα> οἱ μὲν <τὸν> τοῦ θεοῦ> φ<όβον> ἔχοντες μι<μῶ>νται

1.15.1. In regards to this, Scripture says, ‘*There was a garden adjoining his house and it happened as the people departed in the middle of the day, that Susannah would enter and walk around in the garden of her husband, and the two elders would watch her every day and they became lustful for her.*’⁵

1.15.2. Therefore the chiefs of the Jews now want to mutilate these things from the book, claiming that these things did not happen in Babylon, because they are ashamed at what happened under the elders at that time,⁶ failing to recognize the dispensation of the Spirit.

1.15.3. As the divine writings are not respecters of persons and with openness display all things, not only the righteous works of men, through which after they did them they were justified, but also the terrible things which occurred under them, upon which they ...⁷ were associated, they died, so that those who have the fear

5 Schmidt, n. 66: “Susannah 7–8”.

6 Schmidt, n. 67: “Hippolytus is likely referring to how the canonicity of the book of Susannah was disputed in his day and not admitted in circles of Hebrew speaking Jews, see Origen *Epistle to Africanus* 5”.

7 Schmidt, n. 68: “Richard says that there is a lacuna in the manuscript tradition here”.

τ>οὺς δικαίους, οὕτως καὶ πατοῦντες ἐν δικαιοσύ<νῃ>, οἱ δὲ <τὸ ἐ>ναντίον <ποι>οῦντες πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔχουσιν τὴν μέλλουσαν ἔσεσθαι αὐτοῖς παρὰ <θεῷ> δίκην.

of God may imitate the righteous and in this way walk in righteousness, but those who do the opposite may have before their eyes what is destined for them: vengeance before the presence of God.

(4) ἃ γὰρ ἐκεῖ παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων περὶ τὴν Σουσάνναν γεγένηται, ταῦτα καὶ νῦν ὁμοίως ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων τῶν ἐν τῇ νῦν Βαβυλῶνι ἐπιτελεῖται.

1.15.4. For those things which befell Susannah due to the elders are now likewise accomplished by the chiefs in Babylon.

(5) ἡ γὰρ Σουσάννα προετυποῦτο εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Ἰωακείμ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν. ὁ δὲ παράδεισος ἦν ἡ κλήσις τῶν ἀγίων, ὡς δένδρων καρποφόρων ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ πεφυτευμένων. Βαβυλὼν δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ κόσμος.

1.15.5. For Susannah foreshadows the church, Jehoiaquim her husband foreshadows Christ. The garden is the calling of the saints just as fruit bearing trees are planted in the church. Babylon is the world.

(6) οἱ δὲ δύο πρεσβύτεροι εἰς τύπον δεικνύονται τῶν δύο λαῶν τῶν ἐπιβουλευόντων τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, εἷς μὲν ὁ ἐκ περιτομῆς καὶ εἷς ὁ ἐξ ἐθνῶν. τὸ γὰρ λέγειν „ἀπεδείχθησαν“ ἄρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ „κριταί“ <σημαίνει> ὅτι ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἐξουσιάζουσιν καὶ ἄρχουσι, κρίνοντες ἀδίκως τοὺς δικαίους.

1.15.6. But the two elders represent the example of two peoples who scheme against the church, one who is of the circumcision and one who is of the gentiles. For the statement ‘*They were appointed as chiefs of the people and judges*’,⁸ indicates that in this age they have authority and rule, unrighteously judging the righteous.

As is clear from the use of angle brackets in the Greek text (preserved in the *TLG*), several words or parts of words could not be read by Richard in the Greek manuscript (Athos, Monē Batopediou 290; Diktyon 18434) but were either inferred from the Slavonic translation (German translation by Georg N. Bonwetsch edited synoptically in Richard’s edition) or conjectured by Richard. This uncertainty is not reflected in Schmidt’s translation (except for the lacuna). Schmidt notes that he is using “chevrons ‘< >’” to “indicate Greek text that is in the manuscript tradition but that is suspected of not being original” (p. 26); for this Richard uses square brackets. In Schmidt’s translation, by contrast, square “brackets ‘[]’ indicate text that is implied but

8 Schmidt, n. 69: “Susannah 5”.

not explicit in the Greek text” (p. 26). Angle brackets to indicate an interpolation are rare in Schmidt’s translation,⁹ and once they are used to indicate a restitution of the text (thus contradicting Schmidt’s own ‘key’): “Richard suspects that Greek text has dropped out and conjectures the bracketed phrase”,¹⁰ whereas there are very many such instances in Richard’s edition. At the beginning of 1.15.1, “Scripture says” is not in the Greek text; in other cases Schmidt would have put “Scripture says” between square brackets.¹¹

The translation “as the divine writings are not respecters of persons and with openness display all things” (1.15.3) is not very fortunate. I would rather write: “So the divine Scriptures reveal everything impartially¹² and plainly”. In the same paragraph, for the words *πατοῦντες ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ* (Schmidt: “walk in righteousness”), Richard notes in the apparatus “außer δικαιοσύ zweifelhaft”, and the Slavonic translation has “gerettet werde”. Indeed, the verb *πατέω* is difficult to understand here, as it means, according to Geoffrey W. H. Lampe, “tread”, “treat with contempt”, “confute”, “do away with”; perhaps *περιπατοῦντες* should be conjectured (cf. Prov. 8.20: *ἐν ὁδοῖς δικαιοσύνης περιπατῶ*). The translation “what is destined for them: vengeance before the presence of God” is perhaps not the best way of rendering *τὴν μέλλουσαν ἔσεσθαι αὐτοῖς παρὰ <θεῶ> δίκην* (“the future penalty which they will receive from God”). Translating *τῶν ἀρχόντων τῶν ἐν τῇ νῦν Βαβυλῶνι* by “now [...] the chiefs in Babylon” (1.15.4) is missing the point that what is meant are “the leaders in present Babylon”.

A slightly better translation of 1.15.5 would be, I think, “for Susannah served as a type for the Church, Joakim, her husband, for Christ”. I am not sure how to understand *ὁ δὲ παράδεισος ἦν ἡ κλῆσις τῶν ἁγίων*. The Slavonic translator understood it as “der Garten [...] [war] die Versammlung der Heiligen”. Perhaps *κλῆσις* is indeed to be understood as “enclosure” (from *κλείω*) and not as “calling” (Schmidt: “The garden is the calling of the saints”). So, I would rather translate: “The garden was the enclosure of the saints, who are like fruit-bearing trees planted in a church”.

9 See 3.8.4, 3.8.6–7, and 3.9.2 and Schmidt’s notes 346 and 349.

10 Schmidt’s note 250 at 2.25.1.

11 See e. g. 3.17.6: “And so [Scripture] says” for *λέγει οὖν*, 4.21.5: “For [Scripture] says” for *γάρ*, *φησὶν*.

12 Cf. *Barnabae epistula* 4.12: *Ὁ κύριος ἀπροσωπολήπτως κρινεῖ τὸν κόσμον* (R. A. Kraft/P. Prigent [eds.]: *Épître de Barnabé*. Paris 1971 [Sources chrétiennes 172]).

There is only one place in the whole translation where Schmidt has lengthy notes explaining a passage of the text and engaging with the manuscript tradition (notes 512–519 at 4.23.3), because it is the question of the date of Christmas, dealt with by the author in a former article.¹³ Here again the use of brackets plays a major role.

Book 4.23

(3) ἡ γὰρ πρώτη παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου
ἡμῶν ἡ ἔνσαρκος, ἐν ᾗ γεγέννηται ἐν Βηθ-
λεέμ, πρὸ τεσσάρων <νωνῶν> ἀπριλίων
ἐγένετο [πρὸ ὀκτὼ καλανδῶν ἰανουαρίων,
ἡμέρα τετράδι, βασιλεύοντος Αὐγούστου
τεσσαρακοστὸν καὶ δεύτερον ἔτος, ἀπὸ δὲ
Ἀδὰμ πεντακισχιλιοστῷ καὶ πεντακοσι-
οστῷ ἔτει·

4.23.3. For the first advent of our Lord
in the flesh, when he was born in Beth-
lehem,¹⁴ was [April/March]¹⁵ Decem-
ber 25th,¹⁶ Wednesday,¹⁷ while August-
us was reigning in his forty-second
year, but in the five thousand and five
hundredth year from Adam.

- 13 T. C. Schmidt: Calculating December 25 as the Birth of Jesus in Hippolytus' *Canon* and *Chronicon*. In: VChr 69, 2015, pp. 542–563.
- 14 Schmidt, n. 512: “The manuscripts containing the following passage are quite divergent and the original reading is difficult to ascertain. If the original reading did in fact specify December 25, then it would be the earliest explicit reference to that date as the day of Jesus’s birth. For further evidence that the community of Hippolytus did consider December 25 to be the birthday of Jesus see *Chronicon* §686–688 (and related footnotes); Schmidt, ‘Calculating December 25’; and p. 20–21 of the introduction to this volume”.
- 15 Schmidt, n. 513: “The bracketed fragmentary phrase is taken from the oldest manuscript witness of the passage. This manuscript contains a strange fragmentary double date at this point which references a date sometime before the Kalends, Nones or Ides of April, but does not state exactly when. It reads literally: ‘four days before [the Kalends, Nones or Ides?] of April, eight days before the Kalends of January, while Augustus was ...’ Richard believes that the original reading was ‘Nones’ (April 2) because the *Canon* places the γένεσις of Jesus on this date, yet this conjecture likely confuses γένεσις (conception) with γέννησις (birth) and other related terms. For more information see *Chronicon* §686–688 (and footnotes); Bonwetsch, ‘Die Datierung’; Bonwetsch and Achelis, *Hippolytus Werke: exegetische und homiletische Schriften*, 240–42; Richard, Dihle, and Bonwetsch, *Hippolytus Werke: Kommentar zu Daniel*, 244–46”.
- 16 Schmidt, n. 514: “Lit: eight days before the Kalends of January”.
- 17 Schmidt, n. 515: “Lit: the fourth day”.

ἔπαθεν δὲ τριακοστῷ [τρίτῳ] ἔτει πρὸ
 ὀκτὼ καλανδῶν ἀπριλίῳ, ἡμέρᾳ παρα-
 σκευῇ, <πεντε>καιδεκάτῳ ἔτει Τιβερίου
 Καίσαρος, ὑπατεύοντος Ῥούφου καὶ
 Ῥουβελλίωνος [καὶ Γαίου Καίσαρος τὸ
 τέταρτον <καὶ> Γαίου Κεστίου Σατορ-
 νίνου].

He suffered in the thirty-third year,¹⁸
 March 25th,¹⁹ Friday,²⁰ the eighteenth
 year of Tiberius Caesar, while Rufus
 and Roubellion were Consuls [and
 Gaius Caesar, for the fourth time, and
 Gaius Cestius Saturninus].²¹

For once the translation is not so literal, because it serves Schmidt's purpose to claim that Hippolytus considered the 25th December as the date of Jesus's birth (Schmidt, n. 512: "If the original reading did in fact specify December 25, then it would be the earliest explicit reference to that date as the day of Jesus's birth"). The use of brackets here is at odds with Schmidt's own 'key' (p. 26: "Brackets '[]' indicate text that is implied but not explicit in the Greek text") and with Richard's usage as well, making everything even more confusing (Richard's apparatus is indeed complicated).

Richard edited: πρὸ τεσσάρων <νωνῶν> ἀπριλίῳ ἐγένετο [πρὸ ὀκτὼ καλανδῶν ἰανουαρίῳ], explaining in his apparatus that πρὸ τεσσάρων <νωνῶν> ἀπριλίῳ is found only in A (Batopediou 290), not only the oldest, but also the only complete (albeit damaged and difficult to read) Greek manuscript of Hippolytus, *In Daniele*, and in the Easter *computus*; he had to restore νωνῶν, omitted in A, but necessary to make sense of the date. On the other hand, Richard considered πρὸ ὀκτὼ καλανδῶν ἰανουαρίῳ, which is, according to him, "erased" ("erloschen") in A, to be a later interpolation, already present in the Slavonic translation. So, "[April/March]" in Schmidt's translation is not 'implicit', but Schmidt considers it, against Richard, spurious (as one understands from his notes), whereas "December 25th" is considered an interpolation by Richard, but not by Schmidt. Similarly, "[and Gaius Caesar, for the fourth time, and

18 Schmidt, n. 516. "Richard believes that the original reading was 'in the thirtieth year' because the *Canon* states as much, but all manuscripts of the *Commentary on Daniel* read 'in the thirty-third year,' although, see Jerome *Commentary on Daniel* 689 who seems to indicate that Hippolytus credited 30 years to the life of Christ".

19 Schmidt, n. 517: "Lit: eight days before the Kalends of March".

20 Schmidt, n. 518: "Lit: the day of Preparation".

21 Schmidt, n. 519: "The oldest manuscript and the Slavonic translation contain the names of the two additional consuls, making four names present in these witnesses. See Ogg, George. 'Is A.D. 41 the Date of the Crucifixion?'".

Gaius Cestius Saturninus]” (4.23.3) in the translation should not be between square brackets. It should have been made clearer what in the translation is a deviation from Richard’s text.

In conclusion, the translation is simple and faithful to the text, but not really helpful for scholars looking for a deeper analysis of this work, which is one of the oldest preserved pieces of Christian exegesis, and it can by no means substitute a direct access to the critical edition.

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Empfohlene Zitierweise

Caroline Macé: Rezension zu: Thomas C. Schmidt: Hippolytus of Rome’s *Commentary on Daniel*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2022 (Gorgias Studies in Early Christianity and Patristics 79). In: Plekos 25, 2023, S. 561–567 (URL: <https://www.plekos.uni-muenchen.de/2023/r-schmidt.pdf>).

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