

William Randolph Bynum, *The Fourth Gospel and the Scriptures. Illuminating the Form and Meaning of Scriptural Citation in John 19:37* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 144; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2012). Pp. 213. €116. ISBN 978-90-04-22843-6 (hardback). ISBN 978-90-04-22914 (e-book)

ADAM KUBIŚ

Institute of Biblical Studies, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin
e-mail: adamkubis@kul.pl

The Johannine quote from Zechariah 12:10, from the perspective of textual form, is problematic, since it conforms neither to the Hebrew Masoretic text (MT) nor to the Greek Septuagint (LXX). This fact provided the inspiration for Bynum to conduct his research on the textual form of this Johannine citation. In the introduction to his study, Chapter 1, Bynum provides a general overview of current viewpoints on the issue of the unique textual form of the quote in John 19:37. Its peculiar form has been variously explained as deriving from: (1) an independent non-Septuagintal rendering, (2) a forced accommodation to John's theological agenda, (3) some version of the Greek translation of Zach, like that of Theodoret or Theodotion, which has not survived, (4) an edited, corrected or annotated version of LXX, (5) a *testimonia* source, (6) a standard Christian version (independent Greek translation), (7) a translation of the original Hebrew, or (8) an unknown, unpreserved fragment of Zec 12:10 from the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever (8ḤevXIIgr). Obviously, such an array of divergent opinions calls for some detailed scrutiny as to which might be the more plausible solution. Bynum's central thesis, which follows the above *status quaestionis* and sets the stage for his further study, is stated thus: "The most glaring inadequacy, and the reason why previous answers to the question are simply not satisfactory, is the lack of attention to the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) discoveries in the Twelve and the implications of those discoveries for Johannine citation of the Scriptures. New data from those discoveries, particularly from R, offer significant insights into both the Hebrew and Greek texts of Zech 12:10, as well as John's citation of the verse" (p. 5). Bynum therefore proposed a re-examination of the quote in the light of the DSS, which provide two premises for his thesis. First, they attest to a polyphony of textual forms of the biblical texts. Second, the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever (8ḤevXIIgr, designated "R" for "recension" by Dominique Barthélemy) attests to a text

different from that of the LXX, one which can be understood as a recension or correction of the LXX and much closer to the predominant Hebrew proto-MT of that era.

The core of Bynum's argument can be encapsulated in the statement that "John's citation shares a significant number of characteristics with R, revealing that the best explanation for the form of Zech 12:10 is a citation from R or a similar manuscript" (p. 6). The Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever as a viable explanation for the textual form of the quote in John 19:37 has already been suggested by Robert Hanhart,¹ and Bynum's study offers an in-depth evaluation of this theory along with new corroborating evidence in support of it. It must be noted, however, that Hanhart's hypothesis, as embraced by Bynum, must be deemed only a more or less plausible conjecture, since R does not contain Zec 12:10.

Bynum's book comprises a list of abbreviations (pp. xi-xii); eight chapters (pp. 1-184); a selected bibliography, divided into primary and secondary sources (pp. 185-203); and multiple indices, namely of modern authors (pp. 205-206), names and subjects (pp. 206-209), Greek words and phrases (pp. 209-210), Hebrew words and phrases (p. 210), ancient sources (p. 210), biblical manuscripts (p. 211), and biblical references (pp. 211-213). The first and eighth chapters function as the introduction and the conclusion respectively. The plan of the whole study is well-thought-out and the reader is flawlessly guided from one step of the analysis to the next.

After presenting in Chapter 1 the main objective of the study, *status quaestionis*, and methodology, in Chapter 2 Bynum takes a brief look at the life setting of the Fourth Gospel (FG). Explaining the particular textual form of the Johannine quote of Zec 12:10 in terms of a wider Jewish movement of correcting the LXX, represented by R, Bynum describes the *Sitz im Leben* of the FG within which such textual work could plausibly take place. He points out the controversy between the Christian community and Judaism, the Hellenistic nature of Judaism to which the FG responds, and the diverse audience to which the FG is addressed, including Jews and non-Jews, believers and non-believers.

In the third chapter, Bynum provides an overview of John's use of the Jewish Scriptures. His main conclusions are the following: (1) The Johannine quotes from the Scriptures serve to interpret the Christ-event. (2) The Scriptural quotes illuminate the whole life of Jesus, appearing throughout the entire narrative, but with an interesting shift in the quotation formulae: to wit, from γεγραμμένον ἐστὶν and καθὼς ἐστὶν γεγραμμένον in the Book of Signs to ἵνα γεγραμμένον in the

¹ "Introduction", *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture. Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon* (ed. M. Hengel) (Old Testament Studies; Edinburgh: T&T Clark 2002) 6-7.

Book of Glory. (3) John follows contemporary practice in citing the Scriptures, which not only existed in pluriform textual traditions but also were exposed to intentional interpolations and interpretative renderings. (4) The Scriptures used in the Johannine Passion Narrative come mainly from Isaiah 53, Psalms and Zechariah 9–14. (5) There is a need for an intertextual reading of the FG, since its text cannot properly be read in isolation from the Jewish Scriptures.

As to the content and statements found in this chapter, I have two observations. First, it is impossible to talk about the Johannine use of the Jewish Scriptures without recognizing the true complexity of their use in the FG. Indeed, Hans-Josef Klauck actually identifies nine different ways in which John uses those Scriptures.² Bynum, however, while not stating so directly, appears to have limited himself to explicit quotations only. This leaves the reader reasonably expecting at least some mention of the larger picture of Johannine reliance on the Scriptures, especially since the author frames the purpose of his preliminary chapter in such broad terms: “The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the use of the Jewish Scriptures by John” (p. 17). Secondly, Bynum himself states in this chapter that “it is unlikely that the form of citation itself was ever a primary issue for John’s readers” (p. 21). Yet, at the same time, and seemingly contradicting himself, he elevates the textual form of the quote to an issue of critical importance – and consequently as the subject of his study. Perhaps it is fair to simply say – and Bynum would probably agree – that the textual form of John 19:37 is far more important to present-day scholars than it ever was to the first hearers or readers of the FG. In fact, already in the introduction (pp. 5-6), Bynum lays down a few important observations concerning the significance of the very textual *form* of the quote in question within the FG. In his words, “a careful study of the form of citation in this instance is of critical importance for a number of reasons” (p. 5), summarized as follows: (1) It is the most strategically placed quotation in the FG, not only closing the Passion Narrative but being the last explicit quote from the OT in the entire Gospel. (2) This quote has some importance in understanding John’s viewpoint of the crucifixion. (3) The quote prepares the reader for the resurrection narrative which follows. (4) The

2 H.-J. Klauck, “Geschrieben, erfüllt, vollendet: Die Schriftzitate in der Johannespassion”, *Israel und seine Heilstraditionen im Johannesevangelium. Festgabe für Johannes Beutler SJ zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. M. Labahn – K. Scholtissek – A. Strotmann) (Paderborn: Schöningh 2004) 140-157, esp. 143-144: (1) *markiertes Zitat*, cf. Ps 69:10 in Jn 2:17; (2) *unmarkiertes Zitat*, cf. Ps 118:25-26 in Jn 12:13; (3) *Anspielungen*, cf. Jn 3:14 and Nm 21:4-9; (4) *Echo*, cf. Jn 2:1.11 and Ex 19:16-18; (5) *biblische Sprache*, cf. Jn 1:6 and 1 Sm 1:1; (6) *Erzählfiguren und Erzählmuster* (pattern), cf. Moses in Jn 1:17; 6:32; Abraham in Jn 8:33-40.52-59; (7) *allgemeine Aussagen über die Schrift*, cf. Jn 5:39; (8) *jüdische Auslegungs-traditionen und -techniken*, cf. the Bread of Life discourse (Jn 6) as a midrash on the manna in the desert, (9) *christliche Rezeption*, cf. Is 40:3 in Jn 1:23.

form of the citation, namely the use of the verb ὀράω, carries some significance in relation to other uses of the verb in the FG. (5) A proper understanding of the form of the quote has a bearing on (a) the interpretation of this verse within its immediate literary context, i.e. the crucifixion scene, (b) John's overall use of Scripture, and (c) the important role the quote plays in the theological development of the Johannine narrative. It is Bynum's conviction that grasping the *form* of this quotation gives "a most significant window of perception into the interpretation of the FG" (p. 6). Personally, I have some doubts whether grasping the precise *textual form* of the quote has such great relevance in all the above connections, especially the first three mentioned. More than the precise textual form of the quote, it was its meaning (content) and application which played a crucial role for John's readers. In fact, Bynum states it explicitly: "the issue at stake was the application of those Scriptures to the person of Christ" (p. 21). In the chapter's conclusion (pp. 173-184), besides a discussion of the verb ὄψονται (p. 176-179), Bynum indeed focuses on the content of this quote and not its textual form.

Chapter 4 deals with the textual history of the Book of Zechariah. After broaching a few introductory matters (e.g. authorship, date, literary unity, relationship to the Book of the Twelve), Bynum discusses the issue of an *Urtext* (*Urschrift*) of the MT, the process of standardization of the Hebrew text, extant textual evidence for the Hebrew text of Zechariah among the DSS (4QXIIa, 4QXIIe, 4QXIIg, Mur88), as well as the two ancient Greek texts of Zechariah, namely the LXX and 8HevXIIgr (R). This whole line of scrutiny demonstrates that there was no single "canonical" text of the Twelve Prophets, in either Hebrew or Greek, at the turn of the era and the time the FG was created. Such a pluriformity or polymorphism of the oldest extant Hebrew and Greek texts of the Twelve Prophets hints at the existence of one more *Vorlage*, a work (or works) presently unknown to us which could conceivably stand behind a unique textual form of the quote in John 19:37. Although the text of Zec 12:10 is not preserved by R, Bynum rightly argues that the very existence of R, and its characteristics as a revision of the LXX, are important for the further examination of the textual form of Zec 12:10 and consequently of John 19:37.

Chapter 5 presents a detailed, word-by-word and phrase-by-phrase, analysis of the extant textual versions of Zec 12:10, namely MT and LXX. This text-critical study is enriched by additional insights drawn from ancient versions (e.g., Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, ὁ Ἑβραῖος, Syro-Hexapla, Vulgate) and citations (Barnabas, Justin, Theodoret). The most obvious discrepancy between MT and LXX is the verb καταρχήσαντο (*to dance*) rendering קרקר (*to pierce*). Among three main possible explanations – (1) a figurative translation, (2) ק / ר transposition, and (3) an evasive reading/exegetical substitution – Bynum convincingly argues

for the last one. I remain, however, unconvinced by Bynum's argumentation that the textual testimony of Barnabas, Justin and ὁ Ἑβραῖος prove the existence of the Hebrew textual (and/or vocalization) tradition/recension without the πρὸς με phrase (p. 89-91, 107). Leaving aside the uncertain date and origin of ὁ Ἑβραῖος (it might even be based on Jerome's work), Barnabas and Justin are Christian textual witnesses from the second century AD and, as such, their readings can be influenced by John 19:37. One of the main results of Bynum's analysis is the conclusion that the phrase ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν, which perfectly matches the wording of John 19:37, represents an alternative textual tradition of Zec 12:10, which existed (1) prior to the composition of the NT and (2) alongside, but outside of, the textual tradition attested by LXX (p. 108-109). Having no textual proofs, however – the closest textual variant would be that of Theodotion – such a conclusion must remain in the realm of hypothesis, despite the painstaking and meticulous analysis provided in this chapter.

In Chapter 6, Bynum discusses the form textual relationship of the quote in John 19:37 to the form of John's other scriptural quotes. One of the opening statements – “there are 14 readily identifiable explicit citations in John” (p. 111) – needs some justification or clarification, since other scholars dealing with Johannine explicit scriptural quotations have counted them differently (Braun – 19; Freed – 18; Reim – 20; Schuchard – 13; Menken – 11). The majority of scholars claim that the main and most evident textual source for John's citations is LXX, and any disagreement between John and LXX is usually explained as a result of deviation from Septuagintal textual form. Bynum, however, convincingly distills four distinct types of textual forms for Johannine citations: (1) a precise, to the letter, conformity with the LXX (Jn 10:34; 12:13.38; 19:24), (2) a slight variance from the LXX (Jn 1:23; 2:17; 15:25; 19:36), (3) LXX quotation with multiple word variation (Jn 6:31.45), and (4) possible citation of an alternative text (Jn 12:15.40; 13:18; 19:37). The variances, in types 2 and 3 above, can be explained by: a compressed language from the immediate context, insertion of key-words or phrases, editorial and exegetical activity, or the substitution of a synonymous term. Bynum, keeping with his main premise about the existence of multiple textual traditions / recensions (both Greek and Hebrew), suggests that the textual form of John 19:37, as well as of other quotes from group no. 4 above, come either from a Greek text alternative to the LXX or, by John's own translation, from a Hebrew text equal to or at slight variance with MT.

The core of Bynum's argumentation for the textual tradition behind the text form of John 19:37 is found in Chapter 7. Bynum discusses here in detail his main thesis, that the textual form of John 19:37 derives either from John's own translation of the Hebrew or from his citing a revision of the LXX. In the first case, the text form of the citation “is explainable by a variant vocalization

tradition based upon a proto-MT text” (p. 147). In the second case, John’s quoted text shares many characteristics with the Greek recension R, “indicating the distinct possibility that he quoted R or a Greek text such as R” (p. 156). In the second part of this chapter, Bynum also evaluates other major theories for the textual form of John 19:37, considered in relation to R. He aptly summarizes the results of this part of his study: “Each theory regarding the source of the citation reveals a characteristic or facet that is at the same time a characteristic of R, or a dimension of the citation to which R adequately responds. None of the many scholarly statements cited above is contradictory to the possibility that John quoted from R, and indeed, each of them is entirely compatible with that concept” (p. 169).

The concluding chapter discusses, first, some implications of this study for questions of the authorship, audience and interpretation of the FG, and, second, the meaning of John 19:37 within Johannine theology. As to the author, Bynum argues that, being “an insightful Palestinian Jew”, with “an adept language ability”, “he was sympathetic to the concern of his era for biblical accuracy, for fidelity to the proto-MT, and for the correctness of the LXX” (p. 171). As to the audience, the evangelist’s concern for textual fidelity (he is quoting both a widely-accepted consonantal Hebrew text and a corrected LXX text) “makes his citations acceptable to Judaism, as well as those outside the Jewish community” (p. 172). As to the meaning of John 19:37, Bynum draws attention to the strategic placement of two Zecharian quotations at the beginning and end of John’s Passion Narrative. Using these Zecharian “bookends” brings the whole messianic and eschatological purport of Zec 9–14 into the Johannine narrative. Bynum also aptly describes the relationship of the quote in Jn 19:37 to selected themes of the FG: “seeing”, “believing”, Law, Sabbath, eternal life, judgment, and the Holy Spirit.

Finally, let me make a general observation. The purpose of Bynum’s study was defined as looking for “an adequate explanation for the unusual form of Zechariah 12:10 as cited in John 19:37, and the role it plays in the Johannine narrative” (p. 1). The title of the book also points toward both the form *and* meaning of the quote. In fact, the substantial body of the book deals solely with the issue of the text form, with only the second part of the final chapter – a single paragraph of twelve pages – focusing on the meaning of the quoted text for Johannine theology (p. 173-184). That being so, in order to accurately reflect the content of the study, I would suggest a reworking of the title to focus more exclusively on the text form issue.

Overall, Bynum’s study is well researched and convincingly argued. The discussion of different solutions to the problem of the textual form of both Zec 12:10 and its quote in John 19:37 encompasses a truly impressive plethora of

scholarly opinions. The book is also a good example of a refined exercise in textual criticism and inner-biblical exegesis. Bynum has produced a fine and enriching study that will prove valuable to any scholar or advanced student interested in the current state of studies on the Johannine utilization of the Jewish Scriptures. The volume is recommended for research libraries.