The Peshitta Psalm 19 as a Poetological Example of the Translation Technique

This paper is inspired by the study of poetological features and some translation techniques in the Hebrew Book of Psalms and the Syriac Peshitta. It is worth bearing in mind that the author of the paper addresses not grammar or linguistics, but stylistic features, thus studying mostly poetology and asking how Hebrew poetic features have been "translated" into Syriac. The paper concentrates on Psalm 19 in case of which several poetological dissimilarities between two versions can be observed. The paper argues that a specific translation technique and a certain poetological view of the Syriac translator are reasons for significant differences. Not only is alliteration in the Syriac psalms more prevalent than in its Hebrew counterpart, but also the dominant sound is more tangible than in the Hebrew version. Furthermore, although the standard meter in the Syriac poetry is measured by syllables, the author of the paper uses also the “colometrical tool” to demonstrate differences in the colon length in two versions.

As noticed in previous studies, in some cases, some cola of the Masoretic text are left out in the Peshitta. Some of these exclusions may be imputed to different Hebrew *Vorlagen*, while some others may be attributed to the poetical translation technique of the Syriac translator. Furthermore, the Peshitta does not use common metaphors for God usual in the Hebrew Masoretic text and employs specific and different phrases. This paper, moreover, points up different verbal forms being applied in an *au courant* way in both the Masoretic text and the Peshitta.