

**Josef Schmid, *Studies in the History of the Greek Text of the Apocalypse: The Ancient Stems*, translated and edited by Juan Hernández Jr., Garrick V. Allen, and Darius Müller, Text-Critical Studies 11, Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018. Pp. xxxviii + 298. Paperback ISBN 9781628372045, \$42.00; hardcover ISBN 9780884142829, \$57.00.**

- [1] It is great news that volume 2 of Josef Schmid’s landmark studies on the text of the New Testament Apocalypse is now easily available in English. Thanks to three translators, the book is not just a plain translation of Schmid’s *Die Alten Stämme* from 1955, but it represents a fine piece of reflective translation practice that includes necessary corrections of and helpful updates and supplements to Schmid’s own results and conclusions. It is certainly of great benefit for the quality of the title under review that all of the translators (Juan Hernández Jr., Garrick V. Allen, and Darius Müller) have researched into the text of the Apocalypse themselves.
- [2] Schmid’s studies, published in two volumes and in three parts, have become a standard reference book for everyone interested in and working on the Greek text of Apocalypse and its history. Although somewhat outdated today, the volumes still mark the starting point for anyone who intends to investigate seriously and in-depth into Apocalypse, especially into the so-called Andreas-Text (A<sub>v</sub>), a commentary on the Apocalypse by Andrew of Caesarea that can be found in roughly one-third of all the manuscripts with text from the Apocalypse.
- [3] Among Schmid’s many merits are his systematic attempt to catalog the Andreas manuscripts, his examination in detail of the Andreas text, and his being a pioneer of comprehensibly studying the text of the Apocalypse. These aspects should not be forgotten, because in his days it was not commonly accepted to take patristic sources seriously for text-critical studies. Herman Charles Hoskier, for instance, ignored the textual attestation by Andrew of Caesarea; to be more precise, he tried to separate canonical (i.e., manuscripts with biblical texts alone) from noncanonical textual transmission (i.e., manuscripts that preserve a commentary or others with biblical texts) (see “Translators’ Introduction,” 8, and Schmid’s own notes in preliminary manuscripts of his articles, preserved in Munich; see below). Herman von Soden believed in three different and independent recensions of the Apocalypse (6). R. H. Charles did not examine the Andreas text at all but, like Wilhelm Bousset, considered “the linguistic style ... decisive for reconstructing the text” (7).
- [4] My own two research trips to the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, Germany, to investigate Schmid’s handwritten and printed manuscripts, lectures, letters, lexicon entries, and notes confirm what the editors of the translation under review, Hernández, Allen, and Müller, point out and what Schmid himself emphasizes as a salient aspect of his work: for the study of the Apocalypse, Schmid undertook almost every effort possible and reasonable to scrutinize all available manuscripts. He wrote to libraries, requested prints and copies of relevant manuscript folios, asked specialists to assist him with their expertise, and carefully drew his own conclusions from a critical inspection of how the actual text is set and shown in a concrete witness. Moreover, he reworked his notes over and over again, added handwritten corrections and additions, and modified his work with the help of the photographs he received from libraries and others in diverse countries.
- [5] In their insightful and concise “Translators’ Introduction” (xvii–xxxvi), the editors prove that they are certainly more than translators, because they provide a brief but profound

- history of research up to Schmid and beyond him. They also justify why an English translation is needed, problematize Schmid's textual groupings, describe his terms for textual reconstruction (i.e., text, *Urtext*, neutral text, *Vorlage*, and archetype), discuss the major text forms in Schmid's days, and evaluate Schmid's work. In addition, they offer a view of future work on the Apocalypse and act as critics, commentators, evaluators, and keepers of Schmid's groundbreaking studies. Here and there, but always at the right spot, the editors update Schmid's research, because there are many more manuscripts of the Apocalypse known and available today, and shifts of method in textual criticism definitely change our attitude toward how we deal with manuscript attestation (see, above all, the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method [CBGM]).
- [6] The need of a translation of Schmid's studies into English might not appear a pressing task at first glance. *Die Alten Stämme* (*The Ancient Stems*) could be regarded as outdated and obsolete (see [5]). Why, then, was producing an English translation considered beneficial for interested nonspecialists *and* experts? Apart from his unique approach (see above), Schmid provides an important model in the way in which he always critically assesses the manuscripts and actually reviews the history of research. Furthermore, his work and that by others he refers to is mostly written in German and hardly available in English, something that is true for his *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes* and was fact for his *Die Alten Stämme* prior to the publication of this translation. Consequently, an English translation of Schmid's studies grew out of the editors' affection for Schmid and their own need to have a personal translation (see the statement by Hernández in the acknowledgments, ix–x).
- [7] Of course, the major part of the book comprises the translation of Schmid's *Studien* or, to be more precise, of his *Alte Stämme*. Consequently, the starting point is Schmid's foreword composed in Munich in June 1955 (xxxvii–xxxviii), in which Schmid refers to the classic studies he relies on (e.g., von Soden, Hoskier, Maldfeld, and Nestle). He points out that he started his studies in November 1930 and finished them in 1942, repeatedly adding to and correcting his manuscript. Surprisingly, he could not find a publisher for a considerable time.
- [8] In his introduction Schmid provides an unbiased and comprehensive history of research, before he formulates his “goals of the following investigation” (12). It is natural that the relationship between the two major recensions Av and K (Koine), the importance of AC (Codices Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus), and the nature of S (Sinaiticus) should be defined more closely and accurately by the discovery of P<sup>47</sup>. The ultimate aim of his studies is to say more about “the Apocalypse's major ancient stems and linguistic style” (14). In addition, Schmid intends to offer an overview of the manuscript tradition and determine the place the Apocalypse has among the other texts of the New Testament. Then he presents the manuscript attestation for the Apocalypse according to the standard categories “papyri,” “majuscules,” and “minuscules” (14–31), groups of manuscripts (28–31), and the “Citations of the Apocalypse in Early Christian Writers” (31–32), and “The Place of the Apocalypse within the Tradition of the New Testament” (32–44).
- [9] What follows is separated in two sections and makes up the bulk and the core part of the book: the first section “The Major Stems of the Greek Text of the Apocalypse and Their Interrelationships” (45–181) is about the four text-types identified by Schmid: Av, K, and the older text forms A C Oek (Oecumenius) and P<sup>47</sup> S (Sinaiticus) Origen. The problem with the last text form is that “C is missing about a third of its text. And Oecumenius's text cannot be established with absolute certainty everywhere” (89). Consequently, A becomes the more important and decisive source. Schmid calls the text of AC a “neutral”

one, while he regards the other old text form as differing (117) “from AC (Oec) with a considerable number of corrections.” For each of the text forms Schmid provides extensive lists of readings and corrections and their attestations.

- [10] The second section deals with “The Linguistic Style of the Apocalypse” (183–263) and follows the simple and clear principle formulated by Wilhelm Bousset in his 1896 *Die Offenbarung Johannis*: “Textual criticism can only be pursued in close connection with research into grammar and linguistic style” (cited by Schmid on 183). Consequently, Schmid traces and collects observations of various relevant phenomena (e.g., morphology; contracted and uncontracted forms; the assimilation of consonants; declension; verbal conjugation; the use of the article; the use of cases, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and particles; singular and plural *constructio ad sensum*; and hebraism). It is noteworthy that Schmid solely concentrates on observations that are of text-critical significance and relevant for certain words and/or phrases in Apocalypse.
- [11] A real treat to the reader is the following, rather short appendix (“Errata,” 265–68), in which typos, false sigla, and obvious mistakes are corrected by the editors of the book. The section also contains Schmid’s own notes that can be found in “Schmid’s personally annotated copy of the *Studien*” (266), which is kept in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich.
- [12] There is no doubt that Schmid’s *Studien* were landmark works in their days that were not initially acclaimed as such. Although some of the observations made by Schmid, his results, and his theory might be outdated, the *Studien* themselves are pioneering works performed by a very talented scholar. This English translation serves a twofold purpose in an excellent way: it makes Schmid’s *Studies* available to a worldwide readership, and it brings the result of academic and scientific groundwork, carried out long before the convenience of digital search and analysis tools, back into consciousness.

*Thomas J. Kraus*  
*University of Zürich*