

A Kohlhammer translation of Tosefta tractates in MOED

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This translation and commentary are meant to serve primarily an audience that does not read Hebrew, but which has an interest in rabbinic literature. The translation is based on the Zuckerman transcription of the Erfurt manuscript. The commentary gives special attention to the realia of the period and highlights the relevance of the Tosefta to New Testament scholars. The review deals with several issues in the critical study of the Tosefta and considers the relationship of the Kohlhammer edition to S. Lieberman's commentary to the Tosefta.

This translation of, and accompanying commentary on, three consecutive medium-sized tractates of the Second Order of the Tosefta-Moed ("Festivals") is a welcome attempt to offer an interested audience a prime text of Tannaitic literature. The Tosefta ranks second in importance to the Mishna in the wide range of Talmudic literature. Yet, while translations and commentary to the Mishna abound, the Tosefta has had relatively few (not even in Hebrew), even though the Tosefta parallels and extends the Mishna and is a work at least twice as large as the Mishna. Commentaries on the Mishna were written in almost every age and period over the greatest part of the past millennium. In contrast, those on the Tosefta can be counted on one hand. It is only in our time that the Tosefta has come into its own with the truly monumental edition of text (five volumes) and commentary (ten volumes) on more than half of the Tosefta by the late Saul Lieberman. Yet when one considers that in Lieberman's more youthful work *Tosefet Rishonim* (4 vols., Jerusalem: Bamberger and Vahrman, 1937-39) there is a two-volume commentary to the Sixth Order Toharoth, one may safely maintain that he has left us with full commentary to more than two-thirds of the Tosefta. It is still tragic, however, that this unrivaled critical scholar did not live to complete the task that would have been the crowning achievement of a lifetime of intense literary activity.

The present Kohlhammer volume is the most recent in a project begun more than sixty years ago but, due to the condition of the times, continued only haphazardly. Begun in 1933, it was perforce discontinued in 1937 and resumed only in 1945. The driving and guiding force for most of this period has been Karl Heinrich Rengstorf. It was originally intended to be a simultaneous project in which teams of scholars would work on diverse tractates of separate Orders. As of now, however, only relatively few tractates have been published for most of the Orders. They are: *Yevamot* (with Hebrew text and variants appended), 1953; *Berakhot-Pea* (with Hebrew text), 1957; *Demai-Shevi'it*, 1971; *Sanhedrin-Makkot*, 1976. The one exception to this seemingly haphazard arrangement is the Sixth Order, *Toharot*. From the very beginning of the project, concentration was on this Order. It is the largest of the Orders and certainly the most difficult. Three volumes of text and translation and a fourth of the Hebrew text appeared in the 1960s: *Kelim Baba Kamma-Negaim* (1960); *Para-Mikvaot* (1965); *Toharot-Uksin* (1967); *Hebrew text with variants* (1967).

The present volume, like the two previous ones, does not have an appended Hebrew text. Indeed, this is hardly necessary, for the translation by Bornhauser and Mayer depends upon the readily available M. S. Zuckerman edition of the Erfurt manuscript (but not upon the manuscript itself, as we shall explain below). Moreover, there is the Tosefta text edition of Lieberman based upon the superior Vienna manuscript, with full variants and complete parallel indications. As far as the earlier volumes of the project are concerned, however, there was reason for appending the Hebrew text, especially with regard to the complete Sixth Order Toharot. For Lieberman's Tosefta (both text and commentary) does not reach past the "Three Gates" of the Fourth Order, nor does the Erfurt manuscript go past the beginning of the Fifth Order. Necessarily, and even luckily, the Hebrew text appended to Toharot is that of the Vienna manuscript. It may be worth noting that to this day we still do not have a printed text of the Vienna manuscript to Toharot other than that of the Rengstorff project. (For fuller information on these matters, see my chapter on the Tosefta in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. S. Safrai [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1987], especially pp. 298-301).

Nor should the isolated tractates which have so far appeared in the project be considered a "haphazard" selection. The aim of the project from the very beginning was to concentrate on preparing representative tractates from all the Orders. And it has indeed come close to achievement, for there are tractates to all the Orders except to the Fifth - Kodashim. The present volume under review, containing three middle volumes of the Second Order, is a fair representation of the Order. Together, these isolated tractates give us a wide panorama of the Tosefta. Future volumes will help round out the picture.

The three tractates treated in the present volume are not only representative, but are also closely related. The middle tractate, "Yom Toy," deals with generalities which govern all the different Festival Days. The first, "Sukkah," deals with the particulars of the Festival of Tabernacles, while the last, "Rosh Hashanah," particularizes the various aspects of the New Year celebration.

It is relevant to ask if this translation and commentary to the Tosefta text serves any wider purpose. Are there any underlying considerations that give impetus to what is taken up in the commentary? The volume has no introduction to explain the goal and application of the translation and commentary. Nor is there any definition of the reading audience this edition aims to reach. Yet a close reading of the present volume nevertheless tells us much about the purpose of this work.

I have little doubt that this volume, although generally of good critical quality, is meant to be a popular work, aiming primarily at a non-Hebrew-reading audience, one that has either a prime or even tangential interest in rabbinic literature. This essentially popular commentary, therefore, does not match the manifold contributions of the Lieberman commentary which, because it encompasses the entire range of Tannaitic and Amoraic interpretation, as well as Hellenistic background, is obviously on a different level. For the most part, in this work discussion or even acknowledgment of different interpretations to a particular Tosefta pericope is lacking. All this could detract from the very purpose of the undertaking. In fact, however, the commentary makes mention of Lieberman, often giving his assessment of a given text. Moreover, use is made of Lieberman's critical apparatus of variants and parallels.

Yet, since the Kohlhammer commentary is aimed at a specific audience, there are features that cannot be found in Lieberman's commentary. Coming a generation after Lieberman's effort, the Kohlhammer commentary can avail itself of critical writing since the early 1960s, especially in matters dealing with historic, economic, religious, and social realia of the time. Realia, no matter how seemingly trivial and unimportant to the understanding of the text, are given prime place in these pages. Furthermore, parallels to the New Testament are often made in the commentary, part of a conscious effort to make the Tosefta relevant to NT scholars. Lieberman's commentary, of course, does this as well, but it aims for immediate relevance mostly to the Tosefta. Lieberman will quote the NT only when it provides new insight into the Tosefta, whereas the Kohlhammer edition has close to four hundred references to the NT in its one-hundred-fifty half-pages of commentary, most of them marginal and some even trivial.

In its preoccupation with realia, the commentary depends upon a broad range of secondary sources. Little is overlooked, regardless of whether or not it illumines the Tosefta. I present here a few examples culled at random. The mention of a "large bowl" in "Yom Tob" [YT] I 20 attracts a comment that, according to the secondary sources, it can be either of wood, glass or clay (p. 84, n. 188). The mere mention of "wheat" in YT 1 23 summons its Latin nomenclature and reference to its secondary sources (p. 86, n. 210). The same for the following notes on "bean" (p. 212) and "barley" (p. 213). Fig-cakes, dried figs, and carobs that appear in YT I 19 launch a comment on how fig-cakes are prepared (p. 84, n. 180), how figs are dried (n. 181) and that carobs were a staple diet of the poor. This last point is confirmed by references to the rabbinic Midrash Lev. R. 13.4 and to the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:16 (n. 182). The word "lamp" in YT II 3 calls for a lengthy excursus to describe it and to explain its significance in Sabbath lighting, and to detail the recognition of such among the gentiles (p. 89, n. 25). Preparation of food and drink in the ancient world, as well as their use, fascinates the commentary. Thus we find that the mere mention of the plucking of a citron in Rosh Hashanah I 9 moves the commentary to explain how it was processed for eating (p. 132, n. 153).

The economy of the period is often a subject. Mention of the sela coin in YT III 5 brings comment on its relationship to the Tyrian tetradrachme (shekel) as well as a reference to a recent study of fluctuation and stability (p. 103, n. 38). Apropos the taking of food on credit on the Festival Day in YT III 4, there is room for a discussion on credit development at the time (p. 104, n. 57). Mention of domestic birds in YT III 6 is reason enough to comment broadly on the raising of poultry in the ancient world (p. 103, n. 46). So, too, the citing of non-domestic birds in YT I 10 brings lengthy comment on animal parks and vivaria (p. 76, n. 102).

References to the NT are often similarly random and not immediately relevant. Thus, mention of a blind man and his cane in YT III 17 is reason enough to recall the frequent reference to blindness in the NT as well as to the secondary literature dealing with this topic as encountered in the ancient world (p. 109, n. 153). Similarly, mention of "mustard" in YT III 15 will refer readers to both the NT and I. Low's Flora (p. 108, n. 132). The a fortiori exegetical rule brought up in YT I 6 calls for a long excursus in which are collected three specific references to such a usage in the NT as well as the relevant literature (p. 71, n. 47).

In addition to the very full scriptural references, especially to the NT, that more or less parallel the Tosefta period, the commentary finds reason to allude to (or quote from) Jubilees, the Damascus Covenant, and Philo. Much attention is also given to the question of whether what we learn about Jewish practice in Josephus harmonizes with that of the Tosefta. Josephus as well as Philo are said to reflect the rabbinic concern about cruelty to animals (p. 101, n. 18). In connection with YT II 1, where Sabbath walking-limits are mentioned, Josephus is cited together with Jubilees, the Damascus Covenant and the NT (p. 88, n. 3). Josephus is again in full agreement with the tradition that the autumn Tishri is the beginning of the year when counting the Sabbatical and Jubilee years (p. 130, n. 42). So, too, does Josephus agree with the majority view that Tishri and not Nisan is the beginning of the year for house-renting. The commentary, however, does not make this distinctly clear. Pericope RH I 5 discusses the minority view ("some say" in RH I 1) making the spring Nisan the beginning of the year for it. The commentary to I 5 stresses that Josephus explicitly states that Tishri is the first month of the year for all money transactions, and thus he seemingly differs from the Tosefta. It would have been helpful to the casual reader to make specific mention here (despite the cross reference in RH I 1) that the entire pericope is not the majority view of the Tosefta itself. But Josephus does indeed prove helpful in determining the correct reading in YT 1 10 in choosing between Herodian pigeons and Rhodesian pigeons.

Undoubtedly, such excesses in annotation may prove worthwhile; yet, if any topic concerns readers enough, would they not do better to search fuller and more systematic treatments on these topics? Why should the Tosefta become a peg for such curiosity? Is this profusion not likely to distract from what surely must be the prime purpose of a translation and commentary to the Tosefta: to make understandable the Tosefta itself and its relationship to Tannaitic literature in general? The purpose of the volume might be better served if all these topics were systematized in an expanded glossary with short notations and full secondary references. Obviously, however, where a correct interpretation of the Tosefta depends upon scientific exposition of the realia or upon a valid conjunction with other texts from antiquity, there should be relevant annotations in the commentary. Nor would one want to omit from the commentary the Greek and Latin forms of the many borrowings found in the Tosefta, especially connected with the realia, even though there is a full index of such forms on page 186.

After this long exposition on what characterizes the commentary, we turn to an assessment of the quality of the translation and commentary with reference to the Tosefta itself. The translation is indeed of high quality, handling the exigencies of translation satisfactorily. The compactness of the Hebrew itself and the technical terminology of the Tosefta (as of Tannaitic literature in general) makes translation practically impossible without bracketing explanatory words or phrases. Thus the elliptic phrase "ashes which he burnt" in YT 15 (p. 70) is expositively rendered: "[combustionable material] reduced to ashes."

A severe limitation of the translation, however, is its dependence on the Erfurt text of the Tosefta. I believe that reliance on even an eclectic text (if for some reason the excellent Vienna manuscript text would not do) would undoubtedly have been an improvement, for Erfurt is the least reliable of our available texts. It contains numerous erroneous readings which can give sense only by convoluted

reasoning. Moreover, even where the text of Erfurt seems to translate easily, as we shall see below it can occasionally remain misleading.

It is a commonplace that in any translation of an unfamiliar text, no matter how excellent it is - especially one from an entirely different literary and cultural milieu - explanation will nonetheless be necessary, most often when the text is full of technical terms. Here is where a commentary could be most helpful. In this respect the Kohlhammer commentary rates highly. It takes pains to give as a lemma the Hebrew of the word that is being explained. Thus in untangling the difference between "proof" and "happening" in Suk I 7, the Hebrew terms are given in the commentary. Occasionally, however, there may be a misprint, as for *kivnumeron* in RH I 11, where the Hebrew transcription lacks the *mem* (p. 133, n. 70). The commentary here gives the Greek (*noumeros*) and Latin (*numeros*) origins of this word (translated: "like in numeros"). This is an easily recognized foreign word. Rabbinic Hebrew, however, has so assimilated words borrowed from Greek that most readers are hardly aware of their foreign origin. Their number is surprisingly high and, to the credit of the commentary, none of them is overlooked. Moreover, historical characters from the Greek and Roman periods, as well as place names, such as Queen Helena of Adiabene in Suk I 1 (p. 4, n. 6) and Lod in Suk II 1 (p. 14, n. 6) are clarified, their background and geographical significance explained. Mention of Roman soldiers entering a town on a Festival Day in YT II 6 brings comment on the situation background (p. 92, n. 53).

An important contribution are the cross-references to other tractates, broadening knowledge of the religious and political background of the period. A very interesting example concerns the Boethusians, where note 118 on RH I 15 (p. 136) refers back to the fuller exposition in note 5 on Suk III 1 (p. 28). Of the very few references in Tannaitic literature, two of the most important are in these two tractates of the Tosefta. Who are the Boethusians? This question has troubled modern critical scholars for well over a century. Although generally identified with the Sadducees, the commentary here points out that at the most they were a special group within the Sadducees, consisting primarily of high priestly families with close ties to Herod and his dynasty. (Appointment to the high priesthood was the prerogative of the king.) References to the Boethusians are almost all perjorative. They are said to be unscrupulous, not hesitating to hire false witnesses to testify on the sighting of the new moon on a day of the week, thus forcing the Pharisees to celebrate the Pentecost on a Sunday, in accordance with anti-Pharisaic tradition (RH). Nor do the Boethusians hesitate to interfere with the Sukkoth holiday willow-thrashing ceremony on a Sabbath, observed by the Pharisees but opposed by them (Sukka). The term Sadducee, on the other hand, is hardly perjorative. The rather extensive debate on the question of purity between Sadducees and Pharisees in the last three pericopes in Mishna "Yadayim" is but a touch more acrimonious than what we encounter in internal Pharisee controversies between the schools of Shammai and Hillel. The recent publication of Qumran Cave 4-V *Miqsat Ma'ase Ha-Torah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) has renewed interest in the Sadducee-Boethusian identification. Its appendix I (pp. 179-206) contains a penetrating and illuminating discussion on "The History of the Halakha and the Dead Sea Scrolls," by Y. Sussman (translated from the Hebrew in *Tarbiz* 59 [1989-90]: 11-76 with selected footnotes). Sussman accepts Liberman's revival of the thesis (pp. 191-96) identifying the Boethusians with the Essenes - a thesis which might be difficult to uphold in light of the positive attitude toward the Essenes that is

portrayed in the contemporaneous outside literature of the time and the most unflattering portrayal of the Boethusians in Tannaitic literature.

The Kohlhammer commentary, as noted, does not generally deal with the Mishnaic background of the various Tosefta pericopes, other than noting the parallels. There is one area of Mishna-Tosefta relationships, however, which is ardently pursued. It is alleged that the Tosefta is a kind of repository for traditions which the Mishna wants ignored or even suppressed. A view presented in the Tosefta not in accord with the Mishna is considered an "antagonistic tradition" that the Tosefta is preserving. This is a kind of inquiry which, I believe, can only be termed simplistic, for differing views in the Tosefta ought not to imply a conflict between the Tosefta and the Mishna. Rather, it should indicate that the Tosefta is only an extension and completion of the Mishna, and that the two works are but different portions of a single major work, with the same teachers, the same idiom and manner of presentation, and the same reflection of Pharisaic teaching. A contrary opinion expressed in the Tosefta should never be taken as reflecting friction between the Tosefta itself and the Mishna; it is nothing more than a fuller realization of the Mishna. Differences of opinion abound in the Mishna; yet the Mishna hardly feels it necessary to give them full range. The compiler of the Mishna was certainly aware of these opinions, but the principles of its editing - which I have discussed elsewhere (Safrai, *Literature of the Sages*, 222-27, 285-91) - precluded a full inclusion of all the differing views on a particular topic. There are many anonymous pericopes of one opinion in the Mishna; but most pericopes present two opinions, sometimes three, and on rare occasion even four. Generally, the four main pupils of Rabbi Akiva, whose names dominate in the Mishna, are usually divided among themselves on most topics. Where the Mishna presents only one or two of their conflicting views, the Tosefta will usually complete the accounting. The editor of the Mishna, moreover, limited himself to editing the teachings of previous generations of scholars, generally. His own teachings as well as of those of his contemporaries perforce could find room only in the Tosefta. It would be foolhardy to regard the supplementary strata of teaching in the Tosefta - topical or generational - as evidence of conflict. I find most misleading, therefore, the extensive note to YT II 4 (p. 90, n. 36) on two "antagonistic" traditions, each preserved, separately and purposefully, in the Mishna and the Tosefta.

Another aspect of the Kohlhammer edition worthy of comment is the manner of notations to Tosefta parallels in the two Talmuds. The parallels found in the Palestinian Talmud are indicated simply by page notation; those in the Babylonian Talmud, however, are cited by page, usually followed by the abbreviation "Bar" (= Baraita). This is taking a stand on a very controversial question: are Tosefta quotations in the BT really "Tosefta," such as those in the Palestinian Talmud? Or are they independent baraitot of Babylonian tradition that in their own way only parallel the Tosefta? The position of the Kohlhammer editors is clear: the Tosefta parallels in the BT are for the most part really baraitot.

This view indeed is very close to that of the foremost Talmudic scholar of the past generation. The late J. N. Epstein posited an early Tosefta text that more or less continued unchanged in the Palestinian tradition but that underwent mutations in the Babylonian tradition to the extent that it became an independent version. This view, however, is gradually changing, if for no better reason than that it ends critical exploration on the evolution of the changes. The newer approach works on the assumption that the Babylonian baraita basically reflects the same text as the "Palestinian" Tosefta. It should be pointed

out that many so-called independent baraitot in the BT are exactly like the Tosefta text of the PT. At least half are very close to the readings of the Tosefta as we have it. More substantial changes can be explained by the general characteristics of literary transmission. There are many changes of the Tosefta wording in the PT as well; but they may seem minor because the PT was edited a century before the BT. Had the PT been left to develop and grow for another hundred years, it too would most likely have shown the same range of change as in the BT. Interpolations, explanations, substitutions of simpler for more complex phrasing are all normal phenomena in literary transmission.

We can see this change even in the Tosefta itself, when it quotes from the Mishna. Explanatory elaborations are often interwoven with the Mishna text; yet it would be far-fetched to claim that the Tosefta had a Mishna that differs from the received text. Similarly, and perhaps on a wider scale, are the interpolations of the BT in the basic text of the Tosefta known to us. We need only add that sometimes the exigencies of the Talmudic sugya may seem to do violence to the Tosefta text. But it certainly does not reflect an independent Babylonian tradition, for such changes clearly represent late manipulations. Finally, we must emphasize that our concern is with Tosefta parallels in the BT and not with those baraitot that have no parallel in the Tosefta.

Our last topic of investigation, and perhaps the most crucial for a critical appraisal of the Kohlhammer edition, deals with the choice of the Erfurt manuscript, as transcribed in the Zuckerman edition, as a basis for translation. The Erfurt text, although on rare occasions admittedly providing the only good reading of a difficult text, is generally recognized today as the least reliable of the versions. One of the prime reasons for downgrading its value is the clear influence the BT had on the scribe who often substituted BT parallel readings - with which he was most familiar - for what he found in the Tosefta. Erfurt is definitely inferior to both the excellent Vienna manuscript, as well as that of the first printing. Zuckerman certainly made a contribution in giving us the Erfurt manuscript in print, but it was a mistake for Rengstorff to have made it his base text when better versions were available.

The irony was that the first goal of Rengstorff's project - eventually accomplished - was the translation of the complete Order of Toharot, together with the Hebrew text. However, for this last Order of the Tosefta we lack the Erfurt text, since that manuscript stops at the beginning of the Fifth Order. The Vienna text therefore was chosen as the basis for translation. Yet in the introduction to the first of the three volumes of Toharot, Rengstorff bewailed the unavailability of the "very good" Erfurt manuscript. Again, in the introduction to the Hebrew text of Toharot several years later, Erfurt is described as "the best of the Tosefta mss." and regret was expressed on its unavailability.

The drawbacks of Erfurt are compounded when a translation depends on the printed transcription of Zuckerman, a transcription not entirely free from error, as Lieberman, who gives variants from the manuscript itself, points out. Thus, in RH I 9 (end) the translation based on Zuckerman tells us that tithes of the third year in the Sabbatical cycle are labeled "second," while those of the fourth year are called "poor man's" tithes. Yet it is elementary knowledge that second tithes are given on the first, second, fourth and fifth years of the Sabbatical year cycle, whereas poor man's tithes are given on the third and sixth years. The translation reverses the order here of the third and fourth years. All the variants, however, preserve the proper order. (Strangely enough, the commentary here, departing from

its usual pattern, fails to indicate these variant readings.) How did this incorrect reading get into Zuckerman? As Lieberman points out in his own commentary (p. 1021, n. 6), the scribe of Erfurt by mistake wrote "second tithes" for both the third and fourth years (that of the fourth year being correct). Zuckerman, realizing that the third and fourth years do not have the same tithes, "corrected" one of these to "poor man's" tithes, except that his "correction" was the opposite of what was needed. A glance at the manuscript here (or even to Lieberman's commentary) would have persuaded the Kohlhammer translator not to follow Zuckerman.

Yet even where Zuckerman follows Erfurt correctly, as he mostly does, the many homoioteleutons of Erfurt remain. Often the translator will fill in a most obvious homoioteleuton on the basis of the variants, putting these in pointed brackets, as in RH I 12 (p. 133) "Die Tora sagte." Yet, at the same time, the translator will not fill in another obvious homoioteleuton in the very same pericope from "kingship" to "kingship," not recognizing that the first "kingship" phrase is part of a beading which is later elaborated. Here, again, the Kohlhammer commentary fails to note that this phrase, missing in Erfurt, is in all the variants. In YT I 8 the vital phrase "from dove cote to dove cote" is missing in Erfurt, but it is not supplied, even in brackets, in the translation when the commentary says that it is found in all the variants (p. 73, n. 64). In the same pericope, Erfurt reads "Rabbi says" instead of "Rabbi Judah says" albeit this is in the commentary (p. 73, n. 69). In YT I 16 the dissenting view of the School of Hillel is entirely missing. Both translator and commentator are unaware of the omission.

Here are a few more examples, mostly culled from consecutive pages. YT III 14 teaches that a wooden stump may be broken on a Festival Day and used as firewood, provided this is done in an irregular way, such as breaking it in an "opening" (of a wall). Lieberman here recognizes this as the correct reading, being as well the majority reading. Nevertheless, he struggles with the Erfurt reading "sand" and tries to give it meaning by explaining it as "coarse sand" (p. 984). One wonders why he undertook such a strained explanation. The commentary here does not mention the variants (p. 107, n. 128).

In the very next pericope (15) the issue is about sweetening mustard grains on a Festival Day by placing them in contact with a glowing coal. Whether this was permitted or prohibited depends on how to treat the connecting phrase of the pericope. The majority reading is "but," implying permission, in contrast to a prohibition mentioned at the end of the previous pericope. Yet Erfurt reads "one may not." Reading carefully between the lines of Lieberman's attempt here (p. 985) to reconcile the two antagonistic readings by positing different situations, one gathers that the majority reading is that of the PT, while that of Erfurt is of the BT. This agrees well with the tendency of the Erfurt scribe to substitute BT readings for those of the Tosefta still preserved in the PT. Yet the Kohlhammer commentary mentions no variants, nor does it recognize that the Erfurt reading follows that of the BT (p. 108, n. 133).

I offer two more instances, taken at random, where BT influences Erfurt. In YT II 5 (p. 91) the majority reading is: "One may not bake on the Festival Day for the outgoing of the Festival Day." Erfurt alone reads "for the outgoing of the Sabbath," again a reading of the BT. Lieberman (p. 947) explains at length why both readings are possible, giving equal value to the Erfurt reading. There is nothing on this discrepancy in the Kohlhammer commentary.

In YT I 10 the necessary word "prohibited" is missing in Erfurt. Lieberman (p. 926), after stating that Erfurt was erroneous here, tried nonetheless to justify it as an incomplete quote from the Mishna. Lieberman's efforts here were intended to find a way to give Erfurt a meaning that was consonant with the majority readings; they were not intended to sanction an "undoubtedly corrupt reading." If the translation here nevertheless remains that of the corrupt reading, one wonders whether this is still not part of the general tendency in Kohlhammer to view the Tosefta as a preserver of "varying traditions" - in this case to that of Mishna I 4.

I have sometimes wondered at Lieberman's fairly frequent attempts to give explanation to isolated Erfurt readings, even when he knows them to be strained, and especially, so when they clash with the variant readings. This has bothered me for a long time, and only now I feel I may have some understanding. In a number of places Lieberman has conjectured that the Tosefta contains some "Babylonian baraitot" and is therefore not an exclusive Palestinian source. He can point to only a very few of them, and even these are posited on purely external grounds. These "baraitot" are never recognizable in the Tosefta as such, since their language and syntax are identical with the Palestinian tradition. Now if there is indeed a "Babylonian tradition" in the Tosefta, might it not be possible that Erfurt preserves it more than the other readings? This kind of hypothesis seems so farfetched that a scholar of Lieberman's caliber would never openly have proposed it. However, perhaps, could there have been in the back of his mind the thought that if someone might find confirmation for such a wild hypothesis, then his own efforts to explain Erfurt might yet find new meaning?

A main purpose of this extensive review is to help guide future translations and commentaries intended for a general audience. The Kohlhammer edition is fulfilling a very important purpose and will undoubtedly further the appreciation of the Tosefta and of its potential to illumine the religious, social, and economic contexts of the period.

Future volumes in this series will only add to this appreciation.