CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

THE METHODOLOGY OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM IN JEWISH GREEK SCRIPTURES, WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS IN SAMUEL–KINGS—THE STATE OF THE QUESTION¹

Samuel–Kings have always drawn the special attention of scholars interested in textual problems. In few books does the ‘LXX’ reflect so many interesting Hebrew readings, very often superior to MT, as in 1–2 Samuel, and in addition 1–4 Reigns offer the student of the LXX a wealth of inner-Greek problems.

Interest in 1–4 Reigns increased when the find of 8HevXIIgr drew Barthélemy’s attention to the different hands discovered by Thackeray in 1–4 Reigns, and when Hebrew manuscripts of Samuel from Qumran provided Cross with new insights into textual problems of both the Hebrew and Greek Bible.

The publication of Barthélemy, Dévanciers (1963) and Cross, “Biblical Text” (1964) inaugurated a new period of understanding of the problems of the Greek 1–4 Reigns, and of the whole Greek Bible. Both studies have provided us with a wealth of new data as well as with stimulating new theories.

Beyond the problems discussed with regard to all the books of the LXX, the four books of Reigns have raised several major issues, mainly in the field of recensional activity.

1. The possible distinction of different translation units in 1–4 Reigns and a description of their character.

2. The relationship between the kaige-Th sections in Reigns and other witnesses of the kaige-Th group.

3. The characteristic features of the kaige-Th revision.

4. The relationship between Aquila, Symmachus, and kaige-Th.

5. The problem of bce2, the Old Greek, Lucian, and proto-Lucian.

¹ This paper was presented at a symposium at the SBL congress in Los Angeles in 1971 on “The Methodology of Textual Criticism in Jewish Greek Scriptures, with Special Attention to the Problems in Samuel–Kings.”
6. The relationship between the Greek and Hebrew texts in 1–4 Reigns.
7. The synoptic problem of the Greek texts of 1–4 Reigns and 1–2 Paralipomena.
8. The nature of the sixth column of the Hexapla in 1–4 Reigns.

1. The unity of 1–4 Reigns

After Thackeray had discovered that different translators were involved in the translation of the prophetic books,\(^2\) his attention was drawn to 1–4 Reigns where he uncovered a similar pattern.\(^3\) In both cases Thackeray pointed to manifold Hebrew words, roots and expressions which are represented differently in two or three sections of the same book, indicating, according to Thackeray, that different translators had rendered these sections. In 1–4 Reigns, Thackeray distinguished five such sections, of which the third (\(\beta\gamma\)) and the fifth (\(\gamma\delta\)) were rendered by one translator. Contemporary scholarship is still much indebted to Thackeray’s pioneering studies, at first formulated in the separate articles mentioned in notes 2–3, and later in a monograph.\(^4\)

Thackeray’s examples of differences in translation equivalents between the various sections are, as a rule, correct. His description is also valuable as it contains many insights, such as his conclusion that the translator of \(\beta\gamma\) and \(\gamma\delta\) was a faithful translator, close to Theodotion—Barthélemy went one step further, suggesting that the two are, in fact, identical.

In his study of 1–4 Reigns, Thackeray noticed important differences in translation technique between the individual sections of 1–4 Reigns. He did not pay attention to important agreements between the different sections, i.e. translation options which are characteristic of the four books of Reigns.\(^5\) One should be able to uncover such agreements between the OG sections of Reigns and the OG substratum of the \(kaige\)-Th sections when the text has remained untouched by the \(kaige\)-Th reviser. Since Thackeray did not define any idiosyncratic agreements between the individual sections of 1–4 Reigns, he did not suggest that

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\(^3\) "The Greek Translators of the Four Books of Kings," \(JTS\) 8 (1906–1907) 262–278.

\(^4\) \(The\ Septuagint and Jewish Worship\) (Schweich Lectures 1920; London 1923).

\(^5\) In Jeremiah, on the other hand, Thackeray noticed some agreements between the two sections of that book, cf. \(JTS\) 4 (1902/1903) 253–254.