In spite of these comments I must say that the work by Golomb is a very important one that should be read and consulted by everyone concerned with dialectal Aramaic problems. It is an achievement we all should welcome with gratitude.

Emiliano Martínez Borobio


Though there is no lack of scholarly interest in the Septuagint, it has been examined in the overwhelming majority of cases only as a source of information on the underlying Hebrew text. Yet there is every reason to study it as a literary work in its own right. As such it has been exploited from the very beginning by Hellenistic Judaism and, soon after, Christianity. Philo's Bible is the Septuagint, Josephus and the New Testament authors use it intensely, the Early Church has it as her Old Testament, and even the Latin, Coptic etc. versions of the Old Testament are from the Greek rather than from the Hebrew. Matters are complicated, however, by the fact that we have to do with a translation, and one in which fidelity to the original was the central concern. This circumstance, joined to the fact that it was a pioneer work, has created a number of oddities and obscurities which hamper the understanding by the reader, the ancient as well as the modern. Therefore a translation of this translation is no superfluity. In fact, several translations of the Septuagint have been prepared since the nineteenth century (a listing in S.P. Brock - C.T. Fritsch - S. Jellicoe, *A Classified Bibliography of the Septuagint*, Leiden 1973, pp.7-8; the still useful translation by Sir Launcelot Lee Brenton, which appeared in 1844, has been reprinted more than once in recent times). The project inaugurated by the present volume stands out from them by its copious introduction and annotation.

From the introduction of the volume under review and from a paper by the author entitled 'Traduire la Septante en français: pourquoi et comment?', *Lalies. Actes des sessions de linguistique et de littérature 3* (Aussois, 1-6 Septembre 1981), Paris, Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure 1984, pp. 83-93, we learn that the project is being carried out by a group of Sorbonne Hellenists under the direction of Marguerite Harl, well known for her studies on Philo, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and others. They aim at presenting an annotated translation of the Septuagint in the broad sense (I have not found stated whether also the deuterocanonical books will be included, though it would be logical to do so). The guiding principle is to make clear what the Septuagint meant to its monolingual Greek readers. Thus no use is made of the Hebrew to
elucidate obscurities in the Greek, Semitisms are rendered according to
the sense they make in Greek, literality is striven after in matters of gram-
mar and style, as far as clearness permits. The current text form is fol-
lowed (usually, though not always, RAHLFS, cf. pp.22-23, 109, 165);
isolated or corrected readings, even if preferable from the Hebrew point
of view, are disregarded. Forthcoming volumes are Exodus by A. Le
BOULLUEC, Leviticus by P. HARLÉ and D. PRALON, Numbers by C. DORIVAL,
and Deuteronomy by C. DOGNIEZ and M. HARL.

The present volume opens with an introductory part of some 80 pages,
which has, after a presentation of the project, a bibliography and remarks
on technical matters, three chapters: 'L'unité de la Genèse grecque', 'Le
lexique grec de la Genèse', and 'La langue grecque de la Genèse d'Alex-
andrie'. In the first the central theme of Genesis: the election of a people
sprung from Abraham as heir of God's promises, is studied. Much atten-
tion is paid to the supposed division(s) of the Hebrew text the translators
had before them, considered more congenial to that theme than our actual
division; and comments are offered on the Jewish reception of LXX
Genesis, and on the Christian reinterpretation of the book's central theme.
Chapter II presents a comparison of the word-fields God, the covenant,
man, cult, religious and moral concepts and some realia in the Hebrew and
Greek texts. Chapter III dwells on stylistic aspects ad especially Se-
itisms.

The translation is a sure guide to the meaning of the Greek text, as might
be expected from Professor HARL's expert knowledge, and my random
tests have caused me in no instance to disagree with her interpretation.
In accordance with the principles adopted, the Masoretic text has not
been allowed to influence the interpretation of the Greek. Thus 1,2 has
'or la terre était invisible', where the Hebrew reads, in the rendering of Bi-
ble de Jérusalem, 'or la terre était vide', and 1,5 'un jour' against 'premier
jour' (cf. the annotation for the consequences on the exegesis of these
passages). The translation reads smoothly, as does the Greek. Perhaps,
however, a bit more than the Greek. Thus λέγων after a verb of saying,
rendered off and on by 'en ces termes' (an elegant solution indeed), e.g.
8,15 and 9,8, is elsewhere omitted altogether, e.g. 17,17; 21,22; 23,3.
Unintelligible Semitisms, like υἱὸς ἔκατον ἤτοι (11,10), the so-called ει
degandi (14,23), or ἐπι τέκνους in the sense of 'with her children' (32, 12)
have been smoothed away, and confusing succinctness has been remedied
by inserting auxiliary words, e.g. 14,17 'Abram fut revenu'. Perhaps the
demands of French style had to be respected here (cf. p.133, on the
rendering of κατασκλησμός: 'par fidélité à la tradition française nous gar-
dons le mot déluge, mais il est un peu inexact'). Still, the opportunity has
been missed to cause in French the same astonishment as had been felt
in the Greek by the ancient readers. True, in many instances where the
translation 'normalizes' the notes go into the Greek wording, especially