

## REVIEWS

Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968. Pp. XIX, 424. 65 Sh.

This critical survey of scholarship on the Septuagint follows the model of the handbooks by Swete (2nd edition, 1914) and Ottley (1920) but stresses particularly the contribution of the past half century. After introductory chapters on the history of editions of the Septuagint from Holmes and Parsons through the Cambridge and Göttingen editions, the book is divided into two parts. The first is on the origin and transmission of the Septuagint according to the Letter of Aristeas as well as according to other writings, the revisions of the LXX by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, the work of Origen's *Hexapla*, and the *Trifaria Varietas* according to Jerome. The second part discusses the text and language of the LXX, including a list of all MSS. and versions and a critical review of the state of LXX studies, arranged according to Biblical books, with particular emphasis on the books that have appeared in the large Cambridge and Göttingen editions. Finally Jellicoe, who is the editor of an extremely valuable newsletter of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, presents a survey of current problems and future prospects in the field. Of particular value, among the appendices, is one containing the list of MSS. collated in the Göttingen and large Cambridge editions.

In general Jellicoe prefers to summarize – carefully and fairly – the work of others rather than to express his own views. Among errors of detail one may note that in his summary of the Letter of Aristeas (309), Jellicoe (p. 38) says that after the version had been read the Alexandrian Jewish community asked Demetrius to have the whole Law translated. Inasmuch as Aristeas twice (307, 308) specifically states that the translation had already been completed, the meaning must be that the commu-

nity wished to have a copy made, and such is the meaning of μεταγράψαντα (309). One may also object to the statement (p. 42) that by Justin's time the translation of the seventy elders had been extended to the rest of the Jewish scriptures. Actually, long before Justin's time, the author of the preface to Ecclesiasticus had spoken of the translation into Greek of "the Law, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books".

Again, Jellicoe says (p. 44) that the tradition of the isolation of the translators is first found in Irenaeus; but it is quite clearly implied in Philo, *De Vita Mosis*, 2.37, who notes that under inspiration the scribes came forth with the same version *verbatim*. In any case, Jellicoe should have mentioned Pseudo-Justin, who quite possibly preceded Irenaeus, and who in his *Exhortation to the Greeks* tells of the isolated cells. A similar account, in the Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 9a, represents a Tannaitic tradition undoubtedly preceding Pseudo-Justin.

To argue (p. 49) that if the Letter of Aristeas is addressed to the Jews of Egypt a *terminus ante quem* of 170 B.C.E. best meets the circumstances disregards the fact that the danger of assimilation, as we see two centuries later in the picture painted by Philo, remained long after the Romans had checked Antiochus Epiphanes.

On the famous crux of Aristeas 30, where Demetrius says that the Law of the Jews is written in Hebrew letters but σεσήμανται rather carelessly, Jellicoe (p. 51) leaves the exact translation of the verb open but suggests that it could refer to the fact that either the Hebrew or the Greek had been carelessly written. But, as Jellicoe rightly observes, Demetrius was hardly concerned with the Hebrew MSS., since he nowhere requests them. Yet to say with Jellicoe that Aristeas is more concerned with careless copying of the Greek does violence to the actual context which nowhere mentions Greek. We are forced, I believe, to render σεσήμανται as "interpret" (in the sense, presumably, of a Targum), a meaning found in Herodotus 1.108 of the interpretation of a dream.

As to the number of elders, Jellicoe (p. 56) accepts Zeitlin's suggestion that *He Zekenim* ("five elders") in the Talmudic tractate Soferim (1.7, not 1.8, as cited on p. 56, n. 1) should be read *Ha-zekenim* ("the elders"). But in 1.8 Soferim reads: "Another story connected with King Tolmai is that 72 Elders..." Here the 72 Elders are introduced without a definite article, thus indicating that they had not been mentioned before. Again, Aboth d'R. Nathan, Version B, Chapter 37, has an alternate reading, "ten elders"; this is quite clearly an alternate for five, not 72 elders. It seems most likely that the tradition referred to by Soferim is that there