

RAIJA SOLLAMO: *Repetition of the Possessive Pronouns in the Septuagint*. Society of Biblical Literature: Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series, Number 40. Scholars Press, Atlanta 1995. ISBN 0-7885-0149-6. 120 p.

In this volume, Sollamo illuminates the translation technique of the Pentateuch by examining the use of the possessive pronouns. This is a linguistic feature which is very revealing in this respect, because the Hebrew and the Greek languages differ sharply from each other: while it is idiomatic in Hebrew to repeat the possessive suffix even in chains of several coordinate nouns, the normal Greek stylistic practice tends to avoid altogether the use of adjectival possessive pronouns or the genitives of the personal pronouns, if the possessive function is obvious in the sentence. In her study, Sollamo first delineates the stylistic practice normal in Hellenistic Greek, using as her material a selection from historiography (Polybius), Ptolemaic papyri (both official documents and private letters), inscriptions and Jewish Greek writers, and considers the frequency of the possessive pronouns and their positions in the clause. She then proceeds with a comparison of the Hebrew original and the Greek translation of the Septuagint, working with a rigorous schema considering the use and position of the possessive pronoun through the five books of the Pentateuch. The disposition may seem repetitive, but it is necessary for the main object of the study, namely to get a picture of the possible divergences in the handling of the possessive pronouns in the different books.

Sollamo starts from the commonly accepted hypothesis that the different books of the Pentateuch have different translators, and the results of this careful study point to the same direction. There are clear differences between the books, Gen and Exod showing markedly less repetition of the possessive pronouns and thus taking the demands of the target language better in account than Lev, Deut and especially Num. Sollamo does not work on the basis of quantitative analysis only, but in the main body of the study she takes into account the stylistic frame of the text (narrative/discourse/legal text etc.) as well as the more immediate context, which often seems to guide the translator in the choice of expression. In many cases Sollamo also discusses the problems of the original Hebrew text and makes suggestions for the wording used by the translator on the basis of his choice of expression in Greek. The quantitative results are collected in the form of three tables in the final chapter *Different translation techniques*, with a critical analysis.

In the light of one such feature as the use of possessive pronouns it would perhaps not be safe to make far-reaching conclusions about the different translators of the Pentateuch, but taken together with the results of other studies made by the Finnish researchers of the Septuagint (mainly by I. Soisalon-Soininen, A. Aejmelaeus and Sollamo herself) a convincingly coherent picture starts to emerge. There are interesting divergencies, too, namely in the intermediary position of Leviticus between a free and literal practice of translation (pp. 83f., 87f.).

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