

Daniel M. O'Hare, "Have You Seen, Son of Man?" *A Study in the Translation and Vorlage of LXX Ezekiel 40-48* (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 57; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010). Pp. xiv + 251. ISBN: 978-1-58983-526-9. Paper, \$32.95.

- [1] This book grew out of graduate work at the University of Notre Dame. It attempts to delineate the translational character of the closing chapters of Ezekiel (the vision of the restored Temple and Land) over against the conjectured Hebrew *Vorlage*. It is a welcome contribution, given that most previous studies have concentrated on chapters 1-39.
- [2] In the first chapter, the author presents his aims and methodology and gives an overview. His overarching thesis is that textual differences between Septuagint (LXX) and Masoretic Text (MT) reflect progressive redactions of Ezekiel. His specific aim is to pinpoint the translator's aims and to identify translational innovations. As methodological grounding he draws on *Skopostheorie*, a functional approach which assumes that all translation is attuned to a particular social milieu. By the end of the book, O'Hare will have argued that the translator of Ezekiel 40-48 aimed to reproduce the authoritative impact of the original Hebrew, strangeness and all, and at the same time to engage the sympathies of his Hellenistic readership by the use of current architectural terminology and a more inclusive view of Jewish/non-Jewish relations.
- [3] Chapter 2 is devoted to the translator's *Übersetzungsweise*, a term which, with good reason, O'Hare prefers to the more common, but potentially misleading, 'translation technique.'. Relying on Tov's general assessment of LXX Ezekiel as 'relatively literal,' he takes it as axiomatic that minuses vis-à-vis MT reflect a shorter Hebrew *Vorlage*. He does not note, however, that there are few, if any, significant minuses in chapters 40-48, but on the contrary a concentration of the book's more significant pluses. It is rather surprising that he quotes with approval Barr's contention that literal translation was initially 'an easy technique' and not a conscious goal (p. 34) since this is not what he comes to think about the translator of Ezekiel 40-48. More helpful is his highlighting of Barr's observation that translations can reflect a mixture of literal and free renderings, which is the case with Ezekiel.
- [4] In trying to distinguish elements of the translator's own activity from divergences already present in the source-text, O'Hare faces the same problem as all modern scholars. If a divergence reflects a different *Vorlage*, it reinforces the translator's concern for literalness; if it comes from the translator, it shows his 'freedom.'. Occasionally a Greek expression cannot be explained by positing an alternative Hebrew one, but more often it is an open question where arguments easily become circular. Often, the differences are so small as to be unimportant: the presence or absence of a connective *waw* to explain a *καί*; changes of person or number in verbs; pluses or minuses involving personal pronouns. O'Hare gives generous examples of all these factors but downplays the extent to which, even if of small moment, the uncertainty actually makes an accurate reconstruction of the supposed *Vorlage* impossible.

- [5] To assess the translational style, O'Hare uses Troxel's four characteristics of literalness: lexical stereotyping; syntactic mirroring; adherence to Hebrew word-order; and quantitative rendering. In all but the first element he finds a high level of congruence, with the translator sticking closely to his source-text, reproducing as far as possible in Greek its grammatical and semantic structures and its word-order (what in *Skopostheorie* constitutes a 'philological' rendering). The translator's aim, O'Hare suggests, is 'to move the readers towards the source-text by reproducing its linguistic structures and so emphasise its divine authority' (p. 41). There are, however, 'counter-examples' which – usually for 'momentary clarity' (p. 71) – show that the 'generally faithful approach' was not the translator's only *modus agendi* and could be overridden to avoid incomprehensibility. The assumption that, for a prophetic book to be 'authoritative,' it must be comprehensible is open to question; Barton, Brock and Leonas, for instance, have all drawn attention to a marked tolerance for obscurity among readers of sacred texts. But with regard to Troxel's first criterion – lexical variation – O'Hare makes a significant contribution to our understanding of this translator's method, for he shows how much more innovative he is in this regard than in the other three areas.
- [6] Chapter 3 tackles the question of the *Vorlage* (LXX^V). O'Hare accepts Aejmelaeus's axiom that where a translation can be seen as predominantly literal, any substantial divergence from MT will normally reflect the *Vorlage* and not the translator's work. He starts from the fact that there are textual differences between MT and LXX Ezekiel as a whole, with LXX often witnessing to a shorter Hebrew text (taken also to be earlier). So the assumption that the *Vorlage* of chapters 40-48 also contained 'earlier' readings is in line with the wider picture. It is somewhat confusing to call these 'secondary' by contrast with MT which is tacitly taken as the default even though LXX^V is characterised as 'earlier.'. This introductory paragraph could have been expanded to make the conjectured textual relationships clearer (pp. 70-71).
- [7] O'Hare then examines in detail some of the pluses in 40-48. Under the heading 'simple transfer of meaning,' he considers pluses which echo other passages in chapters 40-48 (for instance, 40:6 is assimilated to 40:22, 26). These are categorised as 'small pluses,' added to the *Vorlage* to iron out difficulties (p. 80). I am not convinced that they could not have been explanatory touches on the part of the translator (although 1QIsa^a shows that such changes were made in Hebrew). The main problem is the absence of agreed criteria for what constitutes a 'substantial divergence' and so unlikely to have come from the translator. Aejmelaeus's maxim referred to above is offered as a working hypothesis, not as a proven fact. Each case needs to be considered on its own merits. So in LXX Ezek 40:6, I wonder whether specifying that there are 'seven' steps is really 'substantial' and beyond the 'freedom' of a literal-minded translator. Another point which from now on detracts from the argumentation in numerous places is that O'Hare speaks confidently of 'LXX^V' when he really means only LXX; that is, he presents the Greek text and equates it with its presumed Hebrew source (with occasional small essays at retroversion). He refers, for instance, to 'the plus בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in LXX^V' (44:13) as though such a text actually existed. This

seems methodologically imprecise: the Greek text should be examined as such and only then related to a putative *Vorlage*. On the other hand, the various passages are carefully discussed and the arguments are often convincing or at least plausible. O'Hare must be commended too for providing his own translations and not simply falling back on NETS. Further examples link these chapters with other parts of LXX, especially the Pentateuch, for instance 44:13 where passages in Lev 22:15 or Num 5:9 may have suggested themselves to redactors.

- [8] A second type of plus, 'addition of new material,' involves short glosses for clarification. These are interesting for what they suggest about the purity of Temple practices (for instance 40:38-40, concerning the disposal of sacrificial blood). In the case of 42:15-20, where there are a number of divergences from MT, O'Hare for once bases his argument on lexical features, as well as on his *a priori* position. He argues that τοῦ ἐν διατάξει τοῦ οἴκου reflects a Hebrew phrase, added to explain a potentially ambiguous כּוּן. This is deemed preferable to taking the phrase as a Greek gloss on τοῦ προτειχίσματος since this expression 'is perfectly comprehensible as part of the translator's portrait of the temple complex' (pp. 106-107). The force of the argument is, however, lessened when one learns that in fact προτείχισμα 'is not generally associated with sacred architecture in Greek sources' (p. 164). Would not this have lent itself to attracting an explanatory gloss *in Greek*? Despite this weakness in the actual argument, however, the appeal to lexical features and their relative intelligibility is emphatically the way this kind of discussion should be approached (there are further examples on pp. 94, 107). Whatever the nature of the *Vorlage*, an interesting outcome is LXX's emphasis on the increased status of the Zadokite priesthood and the holiness of the Temple (p. 122).
- [9] A final type of plus, designated 'pastiche,' consists of a cluster of pluses, as in 43:2-3. Here there is an echo of Ezek 1:24, and also of Ps 67(68):18, arguably going back to a Hebrew adaptation (p.134). O'Hare suggests that, together with MT Ezek 1:24, LXX^v of Ezek 43:2-3 reflected an early stage in the development of *merkabah* traditions (as found also in, for instance, 4Q405). This is a very interesting discussion.
- [10] In Chapter 4, O'Hare examines the 'near' and 'far' contexts revealed by LXX. By 'near,' he means passages elsewhere in Ezekiel and by 'far,' those occurring in other books, especially the Pentateuch. His aim is to distinguish the 'goals' of the scribes who 'supplemented' LXX^v (probably members of the Zadokite priesthood) from those of the translator; in other words, to identify elements which need not be attributed to textual changes in the *Vorlage*. He identifies two areas: a concern for cultic purity which goes beyond that of MT and which affects the choice of some technical terms; and the adoption and adaptation of some Pentateuchal sacrificial terminology (notably διάστημα, a recurring choice for no less than eight different Hebrew terms and possibly influenced by 1Kgs 6:6). He has a sound critique of S. Daniel in his discussion of θυσία and μαννα as renderings of מַנְּחֵם in 45:24-25 (although μαννα can hardly be a *transliteration* of מַנְּחֵם, which is what O'Hare seems to say). He also demonstrates ways in which the translator uses Pentateuchal terminology

selectively, with some ‘relatively independent’ uses to preserve Ezekiel’s distinctive *halakah* (pp. 155-156).

- [11] Finally, in Chapter 5, O’Hare examines ways in which the translator made concessions to contemporary culture, mainly by adopting Hellenistic architectural terms for the (often obscure) Hebrew ones, and occasionally by small adaptations which modify the somewhat negative attitude of MT Ezek 40-48 to non-Jews. The section on Hellenistic architectural terms is detailed and informative. O’Hare shows the kind of resonances these terms would have had for a contemporary readership and suggests that they would have enhanced the image of the Temple and its cult as the translator sought to ‘re-idealize the symbolic world’ of the Hebrew text (p. 159). There is thus, in this restricted way, a counter-movement to the ‘distancing’ effect created by the translator’s adherence to Hebraic grammar and syntax. Concerning the terms ἐξέδρα and περίπατος, O’Hare interestingly demonstrates the translator’s concern to make connections with the Greek world of learning and philosophy, thus portraying his Zadokite scribes as learned and Jews in general as philosophers (this is further developed in the Conclusion).
- [12] Concerning Gentile participation in the restored cult, O’Hare suggests that a negative attitude is found only with regard to unfitness to be sacred ministers, and not towards Gentiles *per se*. He finds a few hints of a slightly more inclusive stance in LXX Ezek 47:13, 21-23. In 47:13 the plus προσηλύτων seems to create an additional tribe to the standard twelve, though O’Hare does not think this was intended. The plus is assumed to originate in Hebrew but I wonder whether it could not just as well have been a clarifying touch from the translator, given that ἐν τοῖς προσηλύτοις (אֲשֶׁר-גֵּר) follows immediately; the repetition of the noun hardly constitutes a ‘substantial plus.’ Whatever the truth, the fact is that LXX provides an innovation vis-à-vis MT about the reintegration of foreigners (rather quaintly called ‘guests’ as in NETS). If, however, the plus was already in the *Vorlage*, the rendering tells us nothing about the *translator’s* attitude as distinct from that of his *Vorlage*. In 47:13 O’Hare argues that πρόσθεσις is not the result of the translator’s failure to recognise the name of Joseph in יוסף, but a deliberate ploy to include foreigners, in line with his own more open interpretation of Ezekiel’s attitude. This argument is surely circular: the point is to prove that such an attitude exists. The comment that it is significant that the Gentiles are included at all does not really apply only to LXX here, since there is some inclusivity at least in MT. O’Hare’s third argument concerns 47:8 where the renderings הגליל and הערבה by Γαλιλαία and Αραβία are taken to extend the effects of renewed fertility beyond the limits of Palestine proper. There is an interesting comparison with Letter of Aristeas 116-120, another passage which perhaps points to ‘a tradition of Hellenistically-influenced idealized geography’ (pp. 185-187). The argument is persuasive for Αραβία since this is the only occasion when הערבה is equated with a defined geographical area, rather than with words meaning ‘desert’ or ‘wilderness.’
- [13] The main threads are pulled together in the concluding chapter. O’Hare reiterates his conviction that, in general, the consonantal text of MT Ezekiel represents a

later version of the Hebrew which served as base-text for LXX. This conclusion is backed up by a reference to Schwagmeier, though it should be noted that the latter was speaking specifically of Papyrus 967. No conclusions are drawn about the archetype lying behind both MT and LXX^v. O'Hare restates his presumption that the translator did not make substantial changes, referring back to 40:20b where, he claims, the plus is needed to clarify the Hebrew but is unnecessary in Greek (cf. p. 165, with note 24). I have already suggested that this need not be the case. O'Hare brings together the elements both of 'distancing' (i.e. creating a Greek modelled on the grammar and syntax of the venerable, authoritative Hebrew) and of 'bridging' (i.e. making the often remote-sounding text more accessible to his Hellenistic readers) by suggesting that both are aimed at convincing the reader of the holiness of the Temple, and emphasising that the hope of future restoration is still alive. Many of the small re-workings of the *Vorlage*, faithfully reproduced in LXX, are attributed to Zadokite exegetical study. Whether or not O'Hare's detailed arguments find acceptance, he has presented a wealth of material which, as he himself recognises, now needs to be correlated with similar examination of chapters 1-39.

- [14] The book ends with a number of clear, illustrative diagrams of temple structures as envisaged by LXX (Appendix A); a list of divergences from MT's word-order (Appendix B); and a list of technical terms showing the extent of the translator's lexical variation (Appendix C). The book is well-written and well organised, with summaries concluding each major section as well as each chapter. I noticed only a few minor errors of which the most annoying was a persistent spelling of Josephus as 'Josephos.'. In the Bibliography, 'Fuhs' should presumably be 'Fuchs'. The 'List of Abbreviations' at the beginning should also cover 'Sigla.'.
- [15] O'Hare has opened some promising channels in the study of a challenging section of a complex and difficult book. Whatever the nature of the underlying Hebrew, he has identified a number of the ways in which LXX Ezekiel 40-48 stands out as a Greek text over against MT, and he has raised issues with which subsequent scholars of the text of Ezekiel will need to engage.

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