

**Siegfried Kreuzer, ed., *Introduction to the LXX*, Translated by David A. Brenner and Peter Altmann, Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019. ISBN 9781481311458. Paperback, pp. xxx + 671. \$69.99.**

- [1] Fortunately, today it is no longer necessary to point out the general background and eminent importance of the Septuagint. This Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament that started in the third to the second century BCE has been researched extensively during the last decades. One of the major initiatives is the intense project “Septuaginta Deutsch” (LXX.D) with its elaborate two-volume translation of the Greek text that is accompanied by philological notes in an additional volume. Also worth mentioning is the “Handbuch zur Septuaginta” (LXX.H), whose first volume, *Einleitung in die Septuaginta*, was edited by Siegfried Kreuzer in 2016. This massive book includes two introductory chapters and contributions by forty-five distinguished scholars from twelve different countries. It represents the current state of research for each book of the Septuagint.
- [2] Consequently, the current translation of this richly detailed and high quality anthology into English is most welcome so that students and scholars without profound knowledge of German have easy access to this standard work. Although the English version comes three years after the German edition, the handbook still is a state-of-the-art publication and will certainly remain of crucial importance also in years to come. In addition, the paperback edition by Baylor University Press is definitely a bargain for what readers get.
- [3] The translations by David A. Brenner and Peter Altmann are smooth, fluent, and concise when compared to the German original. Their goal seems to be to preserve the individual style of each of the contributors (above all, in syntax and choice of words).
- [4] Thus, readers get from the English translation the same preciseness and comprehensiveness as the German edition offers. Siegfried Kreuzer’s “The Origins and Transmission of the Septuagint” (3–56) is rewarding, and the English guarantees accessibility of the fundamentally crucial details the author presents there. The bibliography at its end is a who-is-who of Septuagint research (50–56). The following chapter “Overview of Textual Witnesses to the Septuagint” (57–62) by the same author and Marcus Sigismund is an essential reminder of the textual sources and at the same time a systematic timeline of these over the centuries.
- [5] The individual treatments of the Septuagint books are grouped together in several sections (“Pentateuch,” “Historical Books,” “Later Historical Books and Narratives,” “Psalms and Odes,” “Wisdom Books,” and “Prophetic Books”) and each is arranged according to a fixed pattern:
  - First, there is a bibliography divided into texts and editions, Qumran texts, translations and commentaries, and general bibliographical titles.
  - Second, certain textual problems and characteristics of every edition are discussed.
  - Third, the author depicts the translation technique(s) and matters of time and place of the text.
  - Fourth, the linguistic, textual, and theological profile of each text is outlined.
  - Fifth, the history of an individual book is presented or, in other words, aspects of its reception history.
  - Sixth, the final section is about prospects for future research.
- [6] At a first glance the striking difference in length between the individual treatments of the books of the Septuagint might be surprising. However, it does not need to be explained

in detail that the books themselves differ in length *and* the issues to be discussed are very different from each other. For instance, the book of Psalms offers a considerable reception history and was regularly interpreted by early church writers; the bibliography is therefore far longer than that of 1, 2, 3, or 4 Maccabees.

- [7] With the final chapters “The Septuagint and the New Testament” by Martin Karrer (613–26) and “The Significance of Septuagint Quotations in the New Testament against the Background of Old Testament Textual History” by Wolfgang Kraus (627–40), readers are presented with two additional treats. These, together with the two introductory chapters, represent a surplus in comparison with the *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* edited by Jim Atiken and published in 2015. That does not automatically make the latter publication inferior to the book under review. But as both titles offer a book-by-book approach, these chapters may be seen as major differences. In the end, it is of tremendous benefit to scholarly work to have both handbooks on the shelves, because here and there they supplement each other in presenting individual books.
- [8] Navigation within this massive landmark title is facilitated by detailed indexes, a list of abbreviations, and a foundational bibliography at the beginning of the book.
- [9] All in all, Kreuzer’s *Introduction to the LXX* is an inexpensive must-have for everyone seriously interested in the study of the Old Testament in general and the Septuagint in particular. It may serve as both a treasure trove with various details and a starting point from which scholars are prompted to plunge deeper into a text, its transmission, reception, and interpretation. Apart from the main editor Siegfried Kreuzer, the translators and Baylor University Press are to be thanked for making this state-of-the-art handbook available, accessible, and affordable for students and scholars alike.

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