

INTRODUCTION

In method and general set-up this book is in line with *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Mark*, Vol. 2 of the series "Helps for Translators" (Leiden, 1961), by Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida. It is tacitly assumed that this companion volume is in the hands of the readers of the present handbook. The same applies to the eighth volume in the same series, Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden, 1969); to *A New Testament Wordbook for Translators*, in two fascicles, (1) *Some Exegetical Articles in Preliminary Form* (ABS, New York, 1964), by Robert G. Bratcher, and (2) *Some Translational Articles in Preliminary Form* (ABS, New York, 1966), by Eugene A. Nida; and to William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (and Other Early Christian Literature)* (5th impression, Chicago, 1960).

This book is different from its predecessor on Mark in that it does not deal with problems of text and punctuation. The edition of *The Greek New Testament* (GNT) with its extensive critical apparatus and its punctuation apparatus makes this superfluous. Furthermore the forthcoming companion volume to GNT is intended to give the translators all the help and information they need with regard to textual problems. Only where the RSV follows a text different from that of GNT is the difference made clear in order to avoid confusion. In a few cases differences between GNT and Nestle are referred to.

The exegetical notes aim at making clear the meaning of the Greek text in terms of translational problems. Theological and historical questions are touched upon only when they have a direct bearing on the translation. It is assumed that one or more commentaries are always at hand, and sometimes commentaries are referred to, either in a general way or directly by the name of the author. For practical purposes references to lexicons, grammars and other scholarly literature have been restricted to those mentioned in the List of Books (see below, p. 775ff).

Ample attention has been given to an analysis of the syntactic structure of the Greek clauses. When different possible renderings or interpretations are presented, the exegete's preference is, as a rule, indicated but seldom explicitly argued. Lack of space made this imperative. To present and discuss the evidence and the main scholarly opinion would have required

another volume. The absence of argument may make the preferences indicated seem arbitrary and unwarranted but they are only for the benefit of those translators who find it impossible to choose between the alternatives.

As in the *Translator's Handbook on Mark* the Greek text is cited in terms of primary and secondary levels of comment, with two steps of indentation. But instead of all occurrences being listed in the lexical notes, an Index of Greek words is given at the end of the volume. In the introduction to that Index the reader will learn what to look for in the Index and what not. Words occurring only once are indicated as such at their place of occurrence, and, if necessary, discussed. Words occurring twice are usually discussed at their first occurrence and the other occurrence is added. If useful, a back reference is given at the second place. Occurrences in two subsequent verses are considered as one, both in the exegetical notes and in the Index.

The discussion of the translational problems of each verse, or sequence of verses, keeps closely to the interpretation given in the preceding exegetical section; the one should not be used without the other. A secondary alternative, mentioned as possible but not preferable in *Exegesis*, has not been discussed in *Translation*, unless it appears to have been widely adopted in the versions investigated.

The translational notes aim basically at two things, (1) to help the translator not to feel himself bound to the formal linguistic features of the source language, and (2) to make him aware of the problems he may meet in his search for the closest natural equivalent in matters of lexical items, syntactic construction, clause and sentence structure, stylistic features, etc. A considerable part of the notes is taken up by examples and/or quotations, the former attempting to indicate how certain problems may be solved, the latter showing how the same or comparable problems have actually been solved by other translators. The quotations usually give a rather literal English back-translation, sometimes in a kind of "translationese". In reading and evaluating such back-translations one should be conscious that they are only approximations (as Nida rightly points out in his *Bible Translating*, p. 196).

When using the handbook the translator should not simply imitate in the receptor language the solutions suggested. He must always exercise his own judgment, taking into account the specific linguistic features and translational possibilities of the receptor language, and its typical differences from Greek and/or English. In particular he should remember that the receptor language will often require less extreme transformations,

transpositions and adjustments than those reflected in the given examples and quotations, for the simple reason that the handbook tends to call attention to rather extreme solutions, in which the points to be made can be most clearly demonstrated. Many translators will have to break up, for instance, the long and involved Greek sentence found in Luke 1 : 1-4, but such break-ups will seldom be as extreme as those reflected in the quotations given in the note on that passage (below pp. 6f).

Translation may be characterized as an art made possible by a technique. This handbook aims at providing the technique, but it cannot teach the art. The latter must spring from the translator's intimate knowledge of the source in combination with his "feel" for the genius of the receptor language, his experience in using it in a creative way, and his familiarity with the life, ideals, thoughts, and culture of its speakers.

The author of the translational notes apologizes for the rather extensive use he has made of references to books on Bible translation. To repeat or summarize the relevant data found in them would probably have made for easier reading; it would, however, have added so much to the bulk of the handbook (which even now is considerable) as to defeat its own end. For the same reason back references to the discussion of a certain lexical item are not repeated if the distance from the preceding identical reference would have been less than twenty to thirty verses, and items occurring more than about twelve times are not followed by a back reference, but their occurrences can be found with the help of the English Word List (see below pp. 791f).

The English running text quoted in this book is that of the Revised Standard Version, 1946, ed. 1964; it is used by permission of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

The authors of a handbook like this are indebted to many people: New Testament scholars, linguists, missionaries, translators. For the exegetical part this indebtedness is brought out only to a limited extent by the List of Books Quoted. Much more literature has been consulted which has not been mentioned in the notes. Valuable suggestions have been offered by Dr. M. de Jonge, professor of New Testament at the University of Leiden, and by the Rev. F. Visser, of the Netherlands Bible Society. Mr. G. W. Marchal, assistant in the New Testament Department at the University of Utrecht, has placed the writer, and the readers, in his debt by checking all references in the text of the exegetical part and by

assisting the writer in the tedious work on the Index of Greek Words.

For the translational part the situation is somewhat different. Its author passes on the results of the insight, the experience, and the toil of many Bible translators of yesterday and today. Relatively few of them, however, have cared to publish books or articles about their work. The problems they met, the solutions they found, the hesitations they felt, occasionally also the false steps they made (which in several cases were found to provide rewarding material for the handbook!), had to be extracted from their translations, either by the author himself, or by others on his behalf.

Thus the material used in the translational part of this book is drawn from a number of sources, including principally:

- (1) *The Bible Translator*, and books about Bible translating;
- (2) field notes of Eugene A. Nida, which he kindly made available to be used by others;
- (3) versions in languages the author could read and understand fairly well himself, viz. in some European and Indonesian languages;
- (4) material provided by consultants on the basis of versions in languages known to them.

The consultants mentioned under (4) have been so kind as to read through continuous stretches of the first draft of the notes, and/or to answer one or more extensive questionnaires circulated amongst them. The author owes much to their comments and replies, and he wishes to thank them for their valuable help. Their names, together with the names of the language(s) they dealt with are as follows.

Ralph Covell (Sediq), Wesley J. Culshaw (some languages of India), Donald S. Deer (Kituba), Marion L. Doble (Kapauku), Faye Edgerton (Navajo, Apache), Richard Elkins (Manobo), W. H. Ford (Lokele), Vivian Forsberg (Tagabili), Fidel P. Galang (Pampango), Herbert G. Grether (Thai), C. D. Grijns (Bahasa Indonesia), Harold F. Hanlin (Ponape, Trukese), Michail Hannan (Shona), R. P. Kramers (Chinese), Houndja Lazare (Bamiléké), Paul Lewis (Lahu), James Lorient (Shipibo), P. Middelkoop (Timorese), J. Noorduynd (Sundanese), H. Perdok (East Toradja), W. Perston (Kanarese, Tamil, Telugu), T. Price (East Nyanja, Lomwe, Yao), W. Murray Rule (Foe, Huli), Fred. W. Schelander (Marathi), Lynn A. de Silva (Sinhalese), Marianna C. Slocum (Tzeltal), E. Smits (Sundanese), Arlene Spurlock (Zarma), Leslie H. Stennes (Fulani), H. van der Veen (South Toradja), J. B. Veitch (West Nyanja), J. Voorhoeve (Sranan, Bamiléké, Kilega, Nyakyusa), G. Henry Waterman (Tagalog, Cuyono), K. A. Zeefuik (Sranan).

It is to be hoped that the use made of all this material will not fall too far short of the painstaking care most consultants have given to it. At the same time it should be pointed out that only the author is responsible for the presentation of that material, for the conclusions drawn, and the (necessarily subjective) selection made from it. And he apologizes in advance for any misuse, mistake, or misjudgment that may have crept in.

The final draft of the translational notes was read through by Dr. J. Voorhoeve, professor of West African languages at the University of Leiden. Their author wishes to express his gratitude for this help and for the readiness with which it was given. All drafts and other material have been typed and retyped by Mr. E. Smits, who also handled the manuscript before it went to the printers, and read the proofs. The authors owe much to the great care and scrupulous attention he gave to the job.

A few words should be said about the language in which this book is written. The authors are not native speakers of English. Their English (or what they supposed to be so!) had to undergo careful correction, of course. The Reverend J. Williamson (chaplain of Christ Church, Amsterdam) and Miss Edyth A. Banks (UBS, London) have been so kind as to perform this task, the former for chapters 1-18, the latter for chapters 17-24. The authors have greatly benefited by their corrections and critical remarks on wording and style. Their advice has gladly and gratefully been followed except in a very few matters, especially the use of one or two technical grammatical terms, and some minor changes in wording made when the book was already going to the press, which could not be discussed because of the pressure of time.

Whoever uses this handbook should be aware of the following items.

(1) Quotations from existing translations are followed by a reference to the version from which they are taken. For versions in English and other western languages a conventional abbreviation is used (e.g. NEB), or a short indication (e.g. Zürich), or the name of the translator (e.g. Rieu); for versions in non-western languages the name of the language is given, where necessary followed by an indication of the specific version, revision or edition used. Further particulars can be found in the List of Books and the List of Languages (see below pp. 775-777 and 793-798). If the reference to the source is preceded by "cp.", this is to show that the quotation does not render or reproduce the original in all details but is more freely worded, concentrating on what is especially relevant to the

point under discussion. In some cases a quotation reflects not a final but an evolving stage of the work, and hence the translators working in the language concerned may have in the meantime modified their renderings or adopted quite different forms of expression. It has not been possible, of course, to revalidate all of these details, but the authors will certainly welcome correspondence from translators whose data is cited here and who may have now found still more satisfactory solutions.

(2) References to editions of the text and to books are given in such a form that further particulars can easily be found in the List of Books (see below, pp. 775ff).

(3) Section headings are not discussed in the body of the commentary, but a list of proposed section headings is added on pp. 769-774.

(4) Italics mark,

- (a) words quoted in Greek, or in another foreign language;
- (b) English words quoted from the *Revised Standard Version* and functioning as the beginning of an entry in the translational notes;
- (c) titles of books.

(5) Some special abbreviations and symbols are employed.

The phrase “in Luke” means, “in the Gospel of Luke” (*not* including Acts).

The abbreviation *l.c.* stands for *loco citato* (in the place already quoted).

The abbreviation *scil.* stands for *scilicet* (you may understand; supply).

“...” indicates direct quotation from an English source.

‘...’ reflects the (approximate) English rendering of a foreign language expression.

[...] in the running text marks English words or passages which the RSV does not have in the text but in a footnote; in *Exegesis* it encloses parts of the text which the *GNT* regards as having dubious textual validity.

(...) in the examples or quotations encloses words or phrases the addition of which is optional.

(or, ...) in the examples or quotations indicates an alternative phrase.

(†) after a Greek word marks it as occurring only once in the Gospel of Luke.

- (††) after a Greek word marks it as occurring only once in the New Testament.
- .../... indicates alternative renderings of a foreign language word or phrase.
- ...-... joins together renderings that consist of more than one word but correspond to a single word in the source language.
- :: stands between two words which are opposite in meaning.

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