

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

The present volume continues a well-established tradition of presenting the proceedings of the triennial Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS) in published form. The IOSCS, now the premier learned society for the study of the Septuagint and Old Greek translations, had a quiet beginning on December 19, 1968, in Berkeley, California, at a session in conjunction with the annual meeting of the SBL, when, with Harry M. Orlinsky presiding, John W. Wevers moved that the meeting “constitute itself as an organizing meeting of the IOSCS.” On the passage of that motion, the IOSCS was born, with Orlinsky as its first President, C. Fritsch as Secretary, and S. Jellicoe as Editor.

In an October 1969 presidential message in *Bulletin* no. 2 of the IOSCS—technically, the first published *BIOSCS*; no.1 had been circulated in mimeograph form in June 1968 by S. Jellicoe (and later published) under the rubric *Coordination Project for Septuagintal and Cognate Studies*—Orlinsky articulated his vision for the organization with these words:

The purpose of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS) is to constitute a center of Septuagint and related research, and to help relate this to the textual criticism of the Bible as a whole. That is why we are happy and grateful to have been able to begin our activity as an independent group within the larger framework of the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Berkeley, December 19, 1968). It is our hope to function thus in relation to similar learned meetings outside the American continent.

In keeping with this hope of the founding president, two years later in 1971 the first international IOSCS meeting was held in Uppsala in conjunction with the Seventh Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT) and has continued triennially since then in the following venues: Edinburgh 1974, Göttingen 1977, Vienna 1980, Salamanca 1983, Jerusalem 1986, Leuven 1989, Paris 1992, Cambridge 1995, Oslo 1998, Basel 2001, and Leiden 2004.

From the beginning, there was a felt need among participants to publish the proceedings of the congress. Detailed abstracts of the Uppsala papers appeared in the *BIOSCS* no. 5 (1972) and of the Edinburgh papers in no. 8 (1975). As early as the 1980 Vienna Congress, a portion of the proceedings was edited and pub-

lished as *The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel: 1980 Proceedings IOSCS—Vienna* (ed. Emanuel Tov; Jerusalem: Academion, 1980); abstracts of the remaining papers were published in *BIOSCS* no. 14 (1981). It was not until the following Salamanca Congress (1983) that the first complete proceedings were edited by Natalio Fernández Marcos and published beautifully as a volume, *La Septuaginta en la investigación contemporánea (V Congreso de la IOSCS)* in the series *Textos y estudios “Cardinal Cisneros” de la Biblia Políglota Matritense Instituto “Arias Montano” C.S.I.C.* (Madrid: 1985).

The tradition of publishing the proceedings in the SBLSCS series (initiated in the early 1970s) began with the 1986 Jerusalem Congress. Participation in the international congresses increased steadily over the years so that by 1998—the last congress for which a complete set of proceedings is available in one volume—a program was presented in Oslo that was, in the words of the European Vice President in his introduction to that volume, “rich and almost overloaded. Sixteen papers were presented in plenary sessions, and another eighteen were delivered in parallel sessions. In addition to these, a panel discussed the aims and methods of modern annotated translations of the Septuagint.”

All these papers were published together as SBLSCS 51. Given the sheer size of that congress volume (almost 600 pages), it did not appear in print until 2001, and it exposed the increasing challenge faced by the Editor of the congress volume, who until that time was usually also Editor of the SBLSCS monograph series. Thus, at the 2001 meetings in Basel, when, in addition to plenary and parallel sessions, there was again a dedicated panel discussion on the relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew base of the Septuagint, the IOSCS executive decided that the panel papers for that Congress would be published separately and also that someone other than the SBLSCS Series Editor would prepare that congress volume. The panel volume appeared as *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible* (SBLSCS 52) in 2003, but the main volume of the proceedings of the XIth Congress was not published. Thus it is my pleasure to restore the tradition and present herein papers from the XIIth Congress of the IOSCS.

The meetings in Leiden were rich and diverse and took place in conjunction not only with those of the customary IOSOT but also with those of the International Organization for Targum Study and the International Organization for Masoretic Study. A week earlier, the International Meeting of the SBL had been held in Groningen, The Netherlands, in conjunction with other biblical studies associations. The XIIth IOSCS Congress consisted of some thirty-six papers presented over two days in plenary and parallel sessions, including two panel discussions: one on Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and the LXX; and another on the Hexapla. All ten of the panel papers—six from the DTS panel and four from the Hexapla panel—are appearing separately. Two or three of the remaining twenty-six were not submitted for inclusion. Other colleagues had made prior commitments to publish their papers in other places and duly informed me, and a few felt unable to make the submission deadlines.

The seventeen papers published here are highly representative of the congress and of the flourishing field of Septuagint studies. They include those of long-standing distinguished scholars and, as is always a sign of a healthy organization, those of promising younger scholars in whose hands rests the future of the field. The order of presentation of the papers follows what I hope is a logical pattern. Those dealing with general conceptual matters are presented first, followed by those concerned with specific textual issues in the Septuagint corpus arranged in “canonical” order.

I wish to thank the various contributors for their cooperation and patience during the process of the preparation of this work. Most returned proofs promptly and supported the production in every way. I wish to thank also and especially SBL publications for their assistance in getting this volume together. Until now, all of my dealings there had been in my role as SBLSCS Editor—evaluating, approving, refining, and editing the work of other authors/editors. This time, functioning both as Series and Volume Editor, I was privileged to enjoy an even clearer vision of the skill, talent, and dedication of Leigh Andersen, Managing Editor, and Bob Buller, Editorial Director. I am (and the contributors are) in their debt.

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