

Van Bruggen is clearly not pleased with certain developments in the United Bible Societies. They have gone too far from being merely "a handmaid of the churches" to being an independent "handmaid in the world". They have gone from publishing *more* than the complete Bible (including the Apocrypha, an inevitable result of cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church) to publishing *less* than the complete Bible (portions and selections are an inevitable result of the dynamic equivalence theory that a translation must be adapted to the anticipated readers). The whole dynamic equivalence approach to translation is in fact rooted in unsound theology (chapter 4) and makes a false pretence of being linguistically based when in fact "it rests on epistemological, anthropological, and theological prejudices" (168).

Van Bruggen obviously takes his subject seriously, but at times one is tempted to think that he is writing tongue in cheek after all: "Many Bible translators work daily with languages into which a translation faithful to form is still very difficult to realize. This is partially due to the structures of the receptor languages . . . and also partly a result of the fact that many of these languages . . . are still incomplete or only partially developed. . . . Biblical Christianity will affect the culture and language of any nation where it is influential and the possibilities of faithfulness to form within that language will increase with cultural development" (104). He objects to Kathleen Callow's statement that a translation will use "those forms which are appropriate to that kind of information in the RL (Receptor-language)", because, he argues, "the Bible is unique and one cannot speak of forms 'appropriate to that kind of information in the RL'. This kind of 'information' did not exist in the receptor language before the Bible arrived" (105).

This book will appeal to the fears and prejudices of many who reject all translations except the KJV. To claim that "some believe that ease of understanding would be gained if only a selection were translated . . . in a less accurate but more easily accessible way" (99) is unfairly moving from a judgment on the accuracy of a translation to a judgment on the motives of the translator. And to claim that the whole Bible will soon be lost in selections of free translations by the Bible societies (150) unless the churches accept their responsibility is nothing less than nonsense.

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**Sjölander, Pearl: Some Aspects of Style in Twentieth-century English Bible Translation. One-man versions of Mark and the Psalms.** Umeå, Sweden 1979. 219 pp.; obtainable from the author, Box 1107, 111 81 Stockholm, Sweden, £2.50 post free.

Within its chosen limits, this book is a remarkable piece of work. It is a contribution, not to biblical studies or linguistics, but to English studies; but it is far from being just another book about the English Bible.

The author has wisely confined herself to translations by individuals, some of them women, despite the subtitle. She pays special attention to 43 versions of Mark 1.1-11, and to 35 verse translations of Psalm 23; these are reproduced at the end of the book. However, the bibliography lists 28 other individual English translations of Mark, and 35 of the Psalms, and even this list is not claimed as exhaustive.

In other respects, too, the book is a model of selection. Related but

peripheral questions such as the language level of the Greek New Testament, and the semantic structure of the Hebrew verb, are concisely stated and then laid aside. Full use is made of UBS publications, including numerous articles in *The Bible Translator*. The translations are allowed to speak for themselves, more often than not to condemn themselves out of their own mouths, by selective though fair quotation, backed up by discreet comment. The result is a work much easier to read than most doctoral theses, but by no means superficial. The occasional rare term is used for special effect, as when J. U. Glanville's "querimoniously" is appropriately condemned as "inhabile" (114).

Translations are not listed in order of publication (an alphabetical index would have been useful), but grouped according to their approximate position on a scale running from formal correspondence (unfortunately called "formal equivalence") to colloquial language. Precise plotting on this scale is impossible, for reasons both theoretical (the scale is multi-dimensional) and practical; what is one to do with a translation intended for children, but whose author's claim to "simple and direct . . . phrasing" is invalidated by such things as:

"My strength is withered, and my tongue  
Fast to my palate cleaves;  
Thou bringest me the graves among,  
Where death its dust receives"? (163)

Among better-known translations, Moffatt and Weymouth are criticized for a mixture of language levels, K. N. Taylor's style is described as "engaging" but sometimes "crude", and Barclay is found inappropriately diffuse in Mark. "Bratcher 1966" (TEV New Testament, 1st edition) is carefully analysed and unreservedly commended. Among translations of the Psalms, special praise is given to those of Alan T. Dale (in *Winding Quest*, London 1972) and Mother Maria (Lydia Gysi): *The Psalms: an Exploratory Translation* (Filgrave, Bucks., U.K. 1973).

The book concludes with a balanced assessment of the pros and cons of "one-man" translations. Negatively, it "is almost too much to expect of one man" that he should be "both a Hebrew or Greek scholar, an accurate transmitter of the original meaning . . ., and a writer of lucid readable English" (179). Yet at their best, such translations have a "spontaneity and freshness of individual insight" which can "mak[e] the Bible come alive for many readers to whom it was a closed book"; in the author's judgement, they have at times "surpassed the committee versions" (180).

Dr. Sjölander's fine study will help all potential translators to be more aware of their limitations, and of the pitfalls in their path. P.E.

Skilton, John (ed.): **The New Testament Student and Bible Translation** (Vol. IV of "The New Testament Student"). Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. 1978, 241 pp., \$5.00.

Part I of this book (1-193) is entitled "Forum on Principles of Bible Translation" and consists of twenty-two short articles by eighteen different writers. Part II consists of five additional essays on New Testament themes not related to translation (195-241). The interest for most readers of TBT will lie in Part I. These essays are uneven in quality and for the most part are by Biblical