

As always, some questions remain. The lack of sophisticated distinctions between "poetry" and "prose" is responsible for some overstatements such as: "some poetry may be rendered into prose reflecting specific reader needs and distinguished by semantic priority and the total ignoring of the aesthetic aspects" (p. 102). In note 7 on p. 126 "French 'on' + plural third person verb" should, of course, read "singular third person verb". There are a number of typographical errors such as "if" (p. 70, line 7) for "is", "itelligibility" (p. 83, line 3), "understaning" (p. 87, line 24), "inot" (p. 88, line 17), "of couuse" (p. 100, line 5), "partcular" (p. 129, line 13). The study by Hammarström quoted p. 38, line 2 with the reference "(1976:2)" does not figure in the bibliography in the back of the book. However, these are all matters of minor detail. The ideas expressed in this book are important for every Bible translator.

JAN DE WAARD

Falk, Marcia, *Love Lyrics From The Bible: A Translation and Literary Study of The Song of Songs*. Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1982. 142 pp. Paper, £5.95; hardcover £9.95.

Marcia Falk has developed a careful analysis of the central issues in the interpretation and translation of the Song of Songs, based on her 1976 dissertation at Stanford University.

A brief preface is followed by Falk's translation of the Song. She divides it into thirty-one poems of varying length and complexity on the basis of the literary structure, types of love lyrics, contents, themes, and motifs. Each of these factors is discussed carefully and clearly in the chapters that follow the translation. Falk is conversant with the work of contemporary biblical scholars and with that of literary critics. By bringing together these two fields and drawing on her sensitivity to the poetic resources of the English language, she has created a work especially valuable to the Bible translator.

Chapter One discusses translation largely in reference to Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig. There is no mention, however, of contemporary linguistics or translation theory, and no notice is given to the theoretical work of the United Bible Societies or to UBS translations.

In chapter Two Falk looks in detail at J. Cheryl Exum's "A Literary and Structural Analysis of the Song of Songs" (ZAW 85, 1973: 47-49) and other studies. Her main debate is with Exum's defense of the structural unity of the text. On balance, she fails to refute Exum's position. All too often Falk's criteria seem inadequate to justify a fragmentation of the book. She separates poem 16 (4:8) from poem 17 (4:9-11), saying that "The mood of 17 is gentler than that of 16, because its context is less threatening." Slim grounds for separating this unit into two poems.

Chapter Three analyses types of love lyrics into monologues and dialogues, further subdivided according to speaker and hearer, for a total of five types. Poem 19 (5:2-6:3) is "composite." It has so clear a unity of content that Falk is restrained from dividing it.

A special chapter is devoted to the poetic descriptions which the lovers give of each other. She uses the Arabic word *wasf* (description), which has been

widely employed for this type of poetry. Here she gives one of the most helpful discussions of the book—the poetic use of metaphor. Scholars, she rightly observes, are often too literal, because they are unable to take the right perspective. Metaphors from another culture strike them as “grotesque,” “peculiar,” or “exotic.” In her translation Falk handles metaphors with particular skill, so that the spirit of the original is preserved and the beauty of the resulting English poetry enhanced. In 7:4 she leaves out the place names (poetic enough in Biblical Hebrew, but stumbling-blocks in English).

Your eyes—two silent pools,

Your face—a tower that overlooks the hills.

Chapter Five discusses specific contexts, themes, and motifs. Especially helpful is her treatment of the botanical terms. Finally, twenty-seven pages of notes given explanations of why she translated each “poem” as she did.

Good translations require scholarly knowledge of the Bible, literary sensitivity, skill in the use of the target language, and a grasp of linguistic principles. Falk has the first three in good measures, and for the fourth her natural skills compensate for her lack of theory.

KEITH CRIM

Hodges, Zane C. and Arthur L. Farstad (eds): **The Greek New Testament according to the Majority Text**. Nashville and Camden, N.Y.: Thomas Nelson 1982. xlv + 810. £8.40.

Even though one may suspect that the motive of the editors of the *Greek New Testament according to the Majority Text* (= GNTMT) is to re-establish the King James Version in the manner of Dean Burgon, it is nevertheless refreshing to read a Greek testament that differs so much from other printed editions of the past one hundred years. This text is not the *Textus Receptus*, as the apparatus to GNTMT makes clear; TR differs from GNTMT about three to four times a page on average for most of the New Testament although more frequent variation is seen in Revelation. GNTMT is a critical edition of the majority text; “majority” in the title means the bulk of Byzantine mss., most of which are cursives written between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries. “Majority” thus approximates to the manuscripts designated \mathfrak{K} in the old Nestle texts or to the category V mss. in K. Aland and B. Aland, *Der Text des Neuen Testaments* pp. 167–170.

Those who are interested in the reasons behind this enterprise may find the book by Hodges’ pupil W. N. Pickering *The Identity of the New Testament Text* instructive; this monograph however *must* be read in conjunction with the critique by G. D. Fee in *The Bible Translator* 31 (1980), 107–118 or with his fuller review in the *Westminster Theological Journal* XLI pp. 397–423.

This text provides a useful antidote for those who have allowed themselves to be persuaded that Nestle-Aland²⁶ (N-A²⁶) = United Bible Societies Greek New Testament³ (UBS³) represents the best text available. Readings in the Byzantine text need to be taken seriously, as G. D. Kilpatrick pointed out in the MacGregor memorial volume in 1965. In many cases the majority text may be original. For instance, an attachment to the majority text by GNTMT results in a good text at Mark 1.16, 27; 6.22; 9.38; 11.24; Luke 24.53; Acts 22.9. The readings printed here may well represent the original text—but they do so