

3rd International Septuaginta Summer School - 2012

The 2012 summer school was organized by the Septuaginta-Unternehmen of the Academy of Sciences and Humanities of Göttingen on 16-20 July, 2012. Cooperation partners were the Faculty of Theology of the Georg August Universität Göttingen and the Centrum Orbis Orientalis et Occidentalis (CORO). This year's lecturer was Prof. Dr. Jan Joosten, professor of Old Testament at the University of Strasbourg (France) and the president of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS). There were 18 participants: from Italy, Germany, USA, Finland, China, Hungary, Holland, and Georgia (Natia Dundua and Natia Mirotadze).

The school was well organized with theoretical lectures followed by practical sessions.

There were seven theoretical lectures on:

- 1) current issues in LXX scholarship;
- 2) Septuagint origins;
- 3) the Septuagint and its Hebrew source;
- 4) the text of the Septuagint: manuscripts, recensions, and editions;
- 5) translation technique;
- 6) the language of the Septuagint;
- 7) the theology of the translators and its influence on the version

(We received the reader in April. The reader included articles and chapters from the books of well-known Bible scholars. Participants were expected to read it before the summer school.).

There were seven practical sessions (A – G) devoted to practical work: to understand and analyze all these theoretical problems in the process of working on the text. *Proverbs* (1_{1.7}; 11, 25) were taken for this purpose. Discussions and exchanges of different opinions took place during all the sessions.

Natia Dundua and Natia Mirotadze also compared Georgian and Armenian translations of these parts of Proverbs with their Greek source.

There are Hexaplaric additions in the Armenian translation, so it is clear that comparatively later, Hexaplaric, version of the Proverbs is kept in the Armenian translation.

The Georgian text of Proverbs is preserved in the following sources: 1) Ath.1 – Oshki Bible (978); 2) A-51 – Saba Bible (XVIII c.); 3) Baqar's Bible (early edition) (1743); and 4) H-999 palimpsest (V – VI) in which so called xanmeti fragment (9-_{1.4}) of Lexionary is presented.

According to these sources the oldest is the palimpsest fragment, but it is very small and it is difficult to define its relation with other Georgian sources. According to the full sources the most important is the Oshki Bible. The text presented in it must be textually very close to the first Georgian translation of the Proverbs. There are no Hexaplaric additions in the Oshki Version of the Proverbs, so it attests earlier stage of the text history of Proverbs than Hexaplaric recension. The Georgian translation is so literal that sometimes it is difficult to understand the meaning of some verses. All these issues show the importance of the old Georgian translation (more precisely, of the Oshki version) of Proverbs for its Greek source not only from the textological but also the exegetical viewpoint.

We are not able to detect the source of the Georgian translation more accurately (Greek manuscript or manuscripts group) because all the Greek sources are not available as all of them are not documented in the critical apparatus of any edition. Some of them are presented in the critical apparatuses of the Rahlfs' and Holmes & Parsons' editions but they are not enough for our purpose.

We described the characteristics of the Georgian versions and on the basis of the Georgian versions we interpreted the Greek one, also according to the Georgian translations we could define how Proverbs was read and understood by the early Christian communities and by the Christian church.

The summer school programme included various cultural activities:

- 1) guided city tour through Göttingen
- 2) dinner at one of the Göttingen's well known restaurants
- 3) visit to the city cemetery where such famous scholars as Paul Anton de Lagarde, Alfred Rahlfs or Udo Quast are buried
- 4) visit to the Göttingen Septuaginta-Unternehmen of the Academy of Sciences and Humanities which is located in the house of Poul Anton de Lagarde. Here are kept photos of Greek Bible Manuscripts, important editions of the Bible and the library of the books connected to the Bible. We were told the history and working principles of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen.

It was very important for me to take part in this summer school for several reasons:

- 1) I met researchers of my generation as well as already famous scholars;
- 2) I tried to popularize the Georgian translation of the Bible and to show its importance not only for detecting the text of the OG, but also for its exegesis.
- 3) I learnt more about modern scientific literature and the current issues connected to the Septuagint.

All these for me, as a young researcher, were a good opportunity for my further professional development.

As I was in one of the oldest and nicest University towns, I did not miss the opportunity to

- go sightseeing
- visit the Göttingen observatory
- use the rich library of the Septuaginta- Unternehmen and copy some books
- meet *Detlef Fraenkel* (his last work is a description of the early manuscripts of the Bible), speak with him about my research and get very important advice from the person who has a long experience of working on the manuscripts and on the text history of the Septuagint
- meet *Alexis Troe*, a German kartvelologist

This was a very interesting academic week, and I want to express my gratitude to FaRiG for paying the participation fee and to the National Centre of Manuscripts for paying for the flight.

Natia Mirotadze