

REVIEW OF / RESEÑA DE: GARCÍA JUAN, José Francisco. *La traducción latina interlineal de los LXX en la Biblia Políglota Complutense: Libro de los Proverbios*. Estudios Bíblicos, Hebraicos y Sefardíes. Serie: Textos y Estudios Cardenal Cisneros. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2023. – ISBN: 978-84-00-11187-8 – 451 pp. http://libros.csic.es/product_info.php?products_id=1770.

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In 2020 José Francisco García Juan edited, and translated into Spanish, the interlinear Latin translation of the Septuagint version of the Book of Job found in the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. García Juan argued the following: “Este estudio filológico constituye la primera edición contemporánea, traducción y estudio filológico de una de las traducciones interlineales latinas que acompañan al texto griego de los LXX en la Biblia Políglota Complutense, en concreto la del Libro de Job” (pp. 15-16). In the present volume, García Juan endeavours for the second time to edit and translate one of the so-called “interlinear Latin translations” of a Septuagint book – that of Proverbs – from the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. The Complutensian Polyglot Bible was a monumental work, as García Juan writes, one through which Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, set out to publish a fixed version of the biblical texts so as to disseminate Scripture (pp. 17-18) and to ultimately promote the authority of the Vulgate. This edition of the Bible was called “polyglot” because it offered a synoptic approach to Scripture by displaying, on each page of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (the first Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible), an interlinear Latin translation thereof, the Vulgate (Jerome’s Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible), the Hebrew Bible, and in the case of the Pentateuch books Targum Onkelos (an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew), followed by a Latin translation thereof, at the bottom of the page. Juan de Vergara (1492-1557) – Cisneros’ secretary and one of the main editors of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible – was in charge of the interlinear Latin translation of the Septuagint versions of the so-called “Books of Wisdom”, that is, Song of Songs, the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, Psalms (as well as the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach, for which there was no Hebrew). These translations were placed line by line above the Greek text, following it almost word for word, for didactic purposes.

García Juan’s edition of the interlinear Latin translation of Proverbs is composed of two chapters. In the first introductory one, García Juan starts off by giving a very short overview of Cisneros’ Bible project and then briefly introduces his edition (pp. 17-20). He goes on to present the Book of Proverbs: he addresses the genre to which it belongs, that of sapiential literature, its content – wisdom “parables” or “proverbs” – its place in the Hebrew Bible and its significance among Christians, its date of composition, and the goal of the text (pp. 21-26). He endeavours to identify different types of proverbs, teachings and wisdom literary devices found across the book, and to delineate its overall structure (pp. 26-29). He then introduces the Septuagint version of Proverbs and discusses the Complutensian edition, the interlinear Latin translation,

and Juan de Vergara's approach and style (pp. 29-70). García Juan further offers an in-depth, comparative analysis of the *hapax legomena* in the Book of Proverbs and its translations (pp. 70-116), and he investigates the neologisms contained in the interlinear Latin version (pp. 116-119). He finally addresses the historical and philological role of the Complutensian interlinear Latin translations of the Septuagint (pp. 121-135) and he analyses certain aspects of Vergara's version of Proverbs (pp. 135-143). In the second chapter of the book, García Juan proposes his edition of Vergara's text on the left page, and on the right one he places his annotated Spanish translation of the Latin. Very useful are the two indices at the end of the volume: the first one is a Latin index that provides the reader with the Greek word, or words, which the Latin translates in the Septuagint; the second one is a Greek index which gives the Latin word or words which correspond to the Greek.

García Juan's edition of the interlinear Latin version of Job is a useful, if not essential, book to have alongside his edition of Proverbs. Indeed, the former, being the first of his two editions, contains all the necessary introductory material regarding the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, the historical context in which it was produced and the role it played; in the present edition, on the other hand, fundamental points often seem to be disregarded or mentioned in passing, thus only offering a partial overview of the topic. For lack of access to García Juan's Job, this state of affairs may leave the reader with unanswered questions. Certain expressions García Juan employs are potentially misleading: "poesía semita" (p. 25) with regard to the literary genre of Proverbs; "traducción libre" (p. 30) with respect to the Septuagint version of the book, in relation to the Hebrew original; certain notions related to Jerome's translation technique – the *sensus de sensu* and *verbum e verbo* (p. 46) – which, if insufficiently explained, lose their historical and philological weight.

There is no such thing as a perfect translation. Any translation is made of the choices that the translator makes in the context of his agenda, within the confines of his cultural background and the limits of his language and knowledge. Rendering one of Vergara's interlinear Latin translations into Spanish is a complex enterprise in this regard, as it entails paying attention to Vergara's source text, the Septuagint, to the Vulgate, and potentially to the Hebrew text, too. In general, García Juan's translation of Vergara's Proverbs does more than just achieve its goal, as it will be both profitable to Bible scholars and accessible to an uninitiated readership. On a more critical note, when faced with an obscure expression, García Juan can attempt to clarify the text and ends up departing from its meaning. In Proverbs 1:3a, for instance, *ad suscipiendasque involutiones sermonum* is rendered as *y para captar los secretos de los discursos*. Here García Juan assumes that the noun *involutiones*, derived from the verb *involvere* "to roll / to envelop / to cover", refers to "covered things" and, by extension, to "secrets" (*secretos*). However, more likely is that, through *involutiones sermonum*, Vergara simply meant to reflect and match the Septuagint wording, in which the meaning "secrets" is neither expressed nor implied. Indeed, the corresponding Septuagint phrase reads *στροφὰς λόγων* "the turnings of words", and the noun *στροφή* is related to the verb *στρέφω* "to turn", just like *involutio* and *involvere* in Vergara. Furthermore, noteworthy is that the Hebrew phrase *מִסֵּד הַשִּׁבְלִים* "the discipline of understanding", which *στροφὰς λόγων* stands for, does not suggest "secrets" either. The phrase *involutiones sermonum* should therefore not be understood figuratively as "the secrets of speeches", but literally, as "the turnings of words", as in the Greek. Without being at odds with the meaning of the original, García Juan's translation can also depart from the Latin in some minor ways. In Proverbs 1:5a (pp. 150-151), for example, the Latin reads *Hec enim audiens sapiens sapientior erit*, which is rendered into Spanish as follows: *Pues, oyendo esto, el sabio será más sabio*. The plural *hec* – which stands for *haec* – García Juan here translates as a singular (*esto*).

On the whole, García Juan's translation of Vergara's Proverbs ought to be lauded as a valuable contribution to modern scholarship. On a philological level, it is a useful tool in understanding Vergara's work. If one may disagree with some aspects of García Juan's translation system (as presented on pp. 148-149), his overall approach has the merit of paving the way for further investigation of Vergara's translations and of the other interlinear Latin versions of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Ultimately, García Juan's work helps to understand the reception of different Bible versions at the time of the Reformation. Should his editions of Job and Proverbs be followed by more, García Juan will no doubt succeed in shedding light on major aspects of one of the most important editions of the Bible in history.