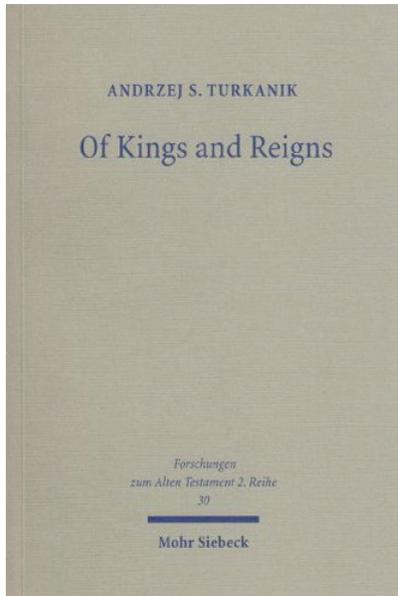


RBL 09/2010



**Turkanik, Andrzej S.**

***Of Kings and Reigns: A Study of Translation  
Technique in the Gamma/Gamma Section of 3 Reigns  
(1 Kings)***

Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2/30

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008. Pp. xiv + 231. Paper.  
€64.00. ISBN 9783161495410.

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This monograph is a reworking of a PhD dissertation submitted at the University of Cambridge in 2002. As indicated in the subtitle, the aim of this research is “to examine the translation techniques used by its translator” (7). This intention has a further key aim: “to discover the translator’s ideological and theological trends by careful analysis of his translation technique.” An indisputable relationship is correctly construed between translation technique and interpretation. Little space is devoted to issues of methodology, including establishing a definition of what is meant by the technical term “translation technique.” The author does refer to the so-called “Scandinavian school,” which, according to him, has a different approach not aimed at determining the exegesis of 3 Reigns (7). He also refers, albeit briefly, to the difficulties of distinguishing between the work of the translator and of later redactional hands. In this regard he uses the symbol “G” for the translator/redactor of the Old Greek (OG) and the text he worked on.

The book is divided into six chapters, counting a short introduction and conclusions. The material is arranged usefully so that the reader can gain easy access to the primary textual material.

## 1. The Translator's Quest for Logical Consistency in Rendering the Hebrew Text

This aspect is addressed under three subheadings: (1) transposition of larger parts of text; (2) transposition of material within verses; and (3) borrowing of material from other verses. It becomes clear that Turkanik tends to favor the free hand of the translator over against possible *Vorlagen* differences. The title “logical consistency” is an indication of this predilection. In the first example, 3 Reigns 4:17, he argues that the different order of verses is the result of the translator giving prominence to the tribe of Benjamin. This inference is possible, but I miss exhaustive discussion of the criteria according to which decisions are made in the final analysis. The same applies to the reorganization of the material in the temple-building narrative in 3 Reigns 5. It would nevertheless seem that logical consistencies played a role in the reorganization of materials in the LXX. This is true for the discussion of 3 Reigns 6:5 (19). Turkanik is at loggerheads with Schenker, who has done exhaustive research on the books of Kings. In general—and this is a generalization—Schenker tends to argue for *Vorlagen* differences over against deliberate exegetical adaptations. However, sometimes Schenker argues that the LXX is more coherent, as is the case in 3 Reigns 10:23a. In this instance, Turkanik disagrees with Schenker. For one thing, he does not agree that non-Israelites were involved in the construction of the temple, nor on the issue of whether “the Israelites were drawn into forced labor or were free from it” (26).

Another significant issue as far as the whole of the OG is concerned is the difference in the ordering of chapters. In connection with LXX Proverbs, I have argued that the different order of chapters 24–31 should be deemed the result of the translator. This argument is based, *inter alia*, on the rather free translation technique followed by this translator. Turkanik also opts for deliberate adaptation by the translator of 3 Reigns 20 and 21, in this case on logical grounds (36).

According to Turkanik, the hand of the translator is also seen in his repeating of material from other verses, such as 3 Reigns 8:1. Such intratextual readings occur widely in the Septuagint. This applies also to the category of smoothing out of difficulties in the Hebrew (41).

## 2. Piety in the $\gamma\gamma$ -Section

This chapter demonstrates that not all differences between LXX and the Hebrew are the result of divergent text traditions (99). These differences “can be attributed to the presence of exegetical elements that can be attributed to ideological and theological convictions on the part of the translator” (99). According to Turkanik, 3 Reigns is concerned to demonstrate that Solomon is a model ruler. One convincing example is

found in 3 Reigns 4:31, where the sequence of building activities in LXX is different from that in MT, which reads “until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD.”

Another important issue concerns the possibility that a typical reading error, haplography, could have been the reason for differences between LXX and the Hebrew. In connection with 3 Reigns 17:22, Turkanik acknowledges the possibility that haplography in fact could have occurred. However, in the final analysis he follows Wevers and thinks that the translator made a conscious adaptation in removing an offensive element, namely, that “God listens and in some ways *obeys* the human call” (110). This statement is contrary to Josh 10:14.

Again one has to concede that many of the examples discussed by Turkanik on piety are likely solutions. This applies to the concern for the cultic purity of Jerusalem’s environs. In 3 Reigns 11:5 the equivalent of the phrase “(on the) mountain that (is) before Jerusalem” is missing in LXX.

Turkanik deals systematically with the difficult issue of anthropomorphisms in the  $\gamma\gamma$ -section. He is rightly critical of Wevers’s point of view that the translator consistently followed an antianthropomorphic tendency. He, on the contrary, suggests that “a better way to describe the translator’s tendency would be to speak of reverential distancing between God and humans in greater measure than is observed in the MT” (122). This at least provides some explanation for the fact that antianthropomorphisms are not consistently applied in the LXX.

### 3. Treatment of the Main Characters in 3 Reigns by the Translator of the $\gamma\gamma$ -Section

This chapter deals with Solomon and other major figures such as David, Hiram, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Abijam, Esa, Nadab, Jehoshaphat, and Ahab. According to Turkanik, King Solomon is whitewashed in many ways, by means of omissions, additions, rearrangement of texts, and grammatical adaptations. Turkanik thinks that the reference to Benaiah son of Jehoiada in 3 Reigns 4:4 was deliberately removed by the Greek translator. As far as 3 Reigns 6:11–13 is concerned, he rejects the interpretation that the additions should be deemed Deuteronomistic in origin. He thinks the omission came about since it interrupted the flow of the narrative (131). An interesting interpretation concerns 3 Reigns 11:6, where the equivalent of the Hebrew phrase “For Solomon followed Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites” was deliberately omitted by the translator.

David is also depicted as a virtuous servant of the Lord in MT of 1 Kings, excepting the incident with Bathsheba mentioned in 1 Kgs 15:5. According to Turkanik, the LXX deliberately ignored the equivalent of the phrase “except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” He concludes that this phrase was offensive, since David was deemed a model king.

#### 4. Issues of Court Etiquette

This chapter has to do with the tendency of the translator “to portray the relationships between a given monarch and his subjects in a ‘proper’ way” (193). According to the author, in 3 Reigns 2:13 the LXX added “and did obeisance to her” out of respect when Adoniah approached Bathsheba for the hand of Abishag. He disagrees with Schenker, who suggests that the literary intention of the whole passage should first be determined. Schenker interprets Solomon’s reaction negatively: he is depicted as a hypocrite, since he accused the innocent Adonijah and his friends of a new conspiracy. Turkanik thinks that Schenker reads too much into the two versions and feels that his view that MT is a redactionally smoothed version is untenable. Turkanik, on the contrary, takes the LXX as an adapted version.

#### 5. Conclusion

Turkanik’s monograph breaks new ground in some respects. The exegetical intent of the translator of the  $\gamma\gamma$ -section of Reigns is clearly demonstrated. A representative number of appropriate examples have been analyzed. Turkanik convincingly demonstrates that the translator of 3 Reigns was an interpreter. However, the criteria according to which these inductively argued inferences were made are not clear-cut. Perhaps more attention could have been given to methodological issues. Hence in some instances one is left with the impression that the author too readily accepted the possibility of exegetical adaptations as the explanation for textual differences. However, it remains true that Turkanik is fair in his discussion of his differences with Schenker, van Keulen, and others.