

Assignment-1-Hannah-Klassek-comments-Mike-Baran

Hi Hannah,

Everyone's approach to answering the assignment questions was different and so each assignment was interesting to read. The questions were not difficult to work through and so no one had any problems with the assignment.

In your case I was interested in your comment: "The most surprising thing about the translations I chose was the use of masculine vs neutral gender language (ie language that can refer to both men and women)."

This is something that you will be able to address more fully when we get to the part in the book where it talks about the "width of the river" that separates the original audience and us in the 21st century. The NRSV uses gender-free language in this case, as you point out, since that was the deliberate intent of the NRSV – to represent our side of the river rather than the original side of the river where society and its culture were structured very differently to ours.

As to why masculine language in the various translations, it's a simple matter that in v.26 the Greek *autou* or even "*heautou*" can be grammatically masculine or neuter gender, that is, "his" or "its." The context does not allow "its" hence "his." Also in v.26 we have "his own life" where "*heautou*" as before, is grammatically masculine rather than neuter gender ("its"). The exact same issue is found in v.27.

However, in v.26 we also have "he can not" where the verb "can" ("*dunatai*") is third person singular and so can be "he, she, or it" depending on the context. The previous statements are all grammatically masculine and so the context demands a masculine "he." Any literal translation will therefore show only a masculine "he."

The NRSV is obviously trying to present itself to an audience on our side of the river who prefer gender-free language and so uses non-gender-specific language.

Hope this helps.

All the very best.

Mike Baran