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[Accueil](#) > Where are the academic reviews of bible translations?

WHERE ARE THE ACADEMIC REVIEWS OF BIBLE TRANSLATIONS?

This evening something drew my attention to the *New World Bible Translation*, the English translation of the bible made by and for the Jehovah's Witnesses. I knew nothing much about it, except that it is generally derided as biased and edited to reflect the theological ideas of that group.

But I prefer not to rely on hearsay for such things, and I began to search for information. I came across a great many webpages, all of them amateur. I came across the Wikipedia page, full of supposed quotes by scholars. But it was clear that the JW's themselves have also edited it to include material advantageous to themselves. None of the material, for or against, seemed particularly reliable to me.

At this point, I wanted to know more. I'm not a Hebrew scholar of any description. The Greek text is something I could read, but not as a specialist. So what I want is the professional, unbiased opinion of someone specialising in the relevant language skills. I want someone with no axe to grind. In other words, I want a solid academic review.

Naturally I skipped off to JSTOR, which my university makes available to alumni, and typed in "New World Translation". And I came up with ... nearly nothing. One review, in fact, just over a page long, which did not seem to me to be of a high standard.

On a hunch, I repeated the search but for the "New International Version". Again I got nothing worth having. I did the same for a couple of other versions, with the same result - nothing worth having.

Google searches revealed a single study, by a certain Robert H. Countess. I have not seen this, but the information available to me did not suggest that Dr. Countess was the kind of language scholar that I was looking for.

I have begun to wonder if I am looking in the wrong place! Some of those who read this must know. Am I doing this wrong? Are all the reviews of bible translations hidden away somewhere?

The taxpayer funds universities to make it possible for us to find studies of knowledge. To make available objective information as to whether a translation of an ancient text is accurate or not - whatever the ancient text - is one of the fundamental duties of a scholar in the relevant discipline. This is particularly true for a text like the Bible, or indeed the Koran, where an error may produce heavy social consequences.

The world is heavy with biblical scholars. You can't throw a brick without one popping up, it sometimes feels. So where are the reviews?

In my ignorance, it is hard to believe that these things don't exist. Could that possibly be the case?

Answers in the comments, or using the [Contact Me form](#) please!
