Response to:
T. Muraoka, "Recent Discussions on the Septuagint Lexicography with Special
Reference to the So-called Interlinear Model," in *Die Septuaginta. Texte, Kontexte,
Lebenswelten* (ed. M. Karrer and W. Kraus; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck],
2008) 221-235.

by
Albert Pietersma

If one were to heed Professor Muraoka, NETS would be counted as a bit of a *bête
noire* among the current translation-commentary projects on the Septuagint. The reason
given is that certain members of the NETS household have failed to show due
appreciation and respect for recent LXX lexicography, notably his own lexicon.[1] Hence
NETS is pitted against what "everybody knows" and is thus the odd man out, so to speak.

Muraoka's polemic against NETS and its interlinear paradigm is unfortunate for two
reasons: (1) Nothing could be farther from the truth than that NETS fails to appreciate the
achievement embodied in Muraoka's Lexicon (MSL hereafter),[2] and (2) Muraoka's
critique of the interlinear paradigm is based on a misunderstanding and a misreading of
the published record at several crucial points. To that extent, it unfortunately does not
foster scholarly discussion. Yet discussions about LXX lexicography *should* not and *will*
not cease with the completion of MSL (see the constructively critical review of MSL by
John Lee in *BIOSCS* 37 [2004] 127-139), nor should the completion of NETS and other
translation projects put an end to discussion and debate about translation theory and, by
extension, the hermeneutics of a translated text. Lee's apt observation about the youth of
LXX lexicography ("almost every word is potentially on the brink of further elucidation
by a new study" p. 133) holds, I believe, for translation and hermeneutics as well, *mutatis
mutandis*.

Points of agreement between NETS and MSL/Muraoka can be passed over without
comment. Be it noted, however, that, as Muraoka is aware, NETS is a *translation* project,
not a *lexicography* project, a distinction perhaps more important than he appears to allow
for. As a translation project NETS focuses on the LXX *qua* text, and therefore has no
option but to assess to what extent "text" in the full sense of that term is applicable to
what we have in the translated LXX.[3] It can scarcely be denied, I would submit, that the
question of text-as-discourse has direct relevance not only for translating/exegesis but for
lexicography as well. Paradoxical though it may seem for a field such as LXX studies, I

---

[1] T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Chiefly of the Pentateuch and the Twelve
Prophets*. Leuven, Peeters, 2002.

[2] See e.g. A. Pietersma, "A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions: The Relevance of the
Interlinear Model for the Study of the Septuagint," in *Bible and Computer,* (ed. J. Cook; Leiden, 2002)
337-64, here p. 354 and footnote 34.

[3] See e.g., R. Dirven and M. Verspoor, *Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics*,
Amsterdam/Philadelphia, Benjamins, 1998, chapt. 8 ("Structuring Texts: Text linguistics") pp. 193-216. On
the issue of lexicography versus translation/exegesis see paragraph 3. below.

believe that much more detailed and systematic study of the LXX as discourse is needed to get a better handle on how or to what extent the translation works (or fails to work) at that level. In any case, the central aim of NETS is to promote as inductive and descriptive a line of research as is possible. Placing the LXX as a translation within Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) has increasingly proven productive.

Somewhat surprisingly, Muraoka levels his critique against NETS' interlinear paradigm and its alleged distortion of the translated LXX. I say "surprisingly" because the concept of interlinearity is nothing more (or less) than a shorthand conceptualization of the LXX's textual-linguistic make-up, both as the target text relates to the source text and as the target text manifests itself as a Greek document. It is therefore the textual-linguistic make-up of the LXX, i.e., its constitutive character, which is at issue, not interlinearity as such. Curiously, moreover, on the question of the constitutive character of the LXX there seems to be substantive agreement between MSL and NETS, since both agree that the LXX as a translated text is characterized by linguistic interference from the source language. The real question is the effect of that interference on the various sub-disciplines, including LXX lexicography.

In what follows I perforce paint with a large brush and will, therefore, typically speak of "the translated LXX" without qualification. That should in no way be taken to signal a lack of appreciation for the considerable differences among its books. My chief interest here is, however, in their sameness and translational continuity.

I begin with a primary focus on Muraoka's misreading of the NETS project and its published record.

1. RIGHTING THE RECORD

1.1 Muraoka takes issue with a point of NETS policy, namely, the decision to translate the Septuagint, not in the first instance as its subsequent reading public might have re-articulated or refigured it, but rather as the ancient translators themselves articulated or configured it and presumably intended it to be understood (or not, as the case may be). Muraoka comments:

> His [Pietersma's] awareness that the matter is not as simple as it appears is manifest in his qualifying phrases: "in the first instance ... presumably." Indeed, in the next paragraph he goes on to say, or concedes, one might say: "...the concept of author's/translator's intent must to a large degree be made to *include* [emphasis Pietersma's] that of audience perception. In other words, in reality translator and audience belong to the same language community." I would go a step farther and suggest that the readership of the LXX here might include 21st century bible scholars. (p. 222)

Though my 1995 formulation might easily be improved upon—and in fact has been improved upon—the basic point being made is two-fold: (a) that the concept of "text" includes both "speaker/writer" and "hearer/reader," belonging in the first instance (i.e., at the event of production) to the same language community, and (b) that text production

and text reception are distinct and ought not to be confused or collapsed.[4] In other words, (a) is nothing other that the translation's constitutive character. NETS seeks to translate the text *as produced* (cf. constitutive character) in distinction from the text *as received*. Though Muraoka recognizes (a), he appears to ignore (b) by superimposing text reception on text production, thus making them into a single event. Consequently, Muraoka disregards a distinction, which for NETS (and, I believe, for the discipline as a whole,) is axiomatic. Simply put, NETS makes here the same distinction in text-semantics as Septuagint scholarship routinely makes between "original" text-form and "non-original/secondary" text-forms.[5] Not surprisingly, Muraoka's failure to recognize what for NETS is axiomatic cannot but give rise to a certain level of tension and disagreement between NETS and MSL.

1.2 In the context of describing the LXX's linguistically subservient relationship to its source text, my 1998 formulation of Sebastian Brock's statement about two kinds of translation is said to misrepresent its author. Says Muraoka,

> In Pietersma's paraphrase it [Brock's statement] is supposed to read: the LXX aimed at bringing the reader to the Hebrew original rather than bringing the Hebrew original to the reader. So formulated it misrepresents Brock . . . . (p. 222/223)

What I in fact wrote was:

> Looked at from a different perspective, NETS is presupposing a Greek translation which aimed at bringing the reader to the Hebrew original rather than bringing the Hebrew original to the reader, to paraphrase Sebastian Brock. Consequently, the Greek's subservience to the Hebrew may be seen as reflecting its aim.[6]

My having used the term "paraphrase" renders Muraoka's interpretation perhaps conceivable. But be that as it may, Muraoka might better have read my fuller discussion of Brock in "A New Paradigm"[7] where he would have learned that we quite agree on Brock's statement. Brock is speaking of two kinds of translation, literal versus free, the former described as bringing the reader to the source (the original) and the latter as bringing the source (the original) to the reader. Agreed! Period! NETS, then, proceeds

---

[4] For a definition of "text" see e.g., Dirven and Verspoor, *Cognitive Exploration* p. 194: "Text can . . . be defined as [1] the linguistic expressions used in communication between people and [2] the interpretation the hearer or reader makes of them." Be it noted, however, that [1] provides "interpretation clues" as well as "interpretive constraints" and that [2] in principle allows for an infinite succession of readers/hearers, all with their own "world."

[5] For hermeneutics see Andre LaCocque and Paul Ricoeur, *Thinking Biblically. Exegetical and Hermeneutical Studies* (transl. David Pellauer; Chicago / London: University of Chicago Press, 1998) xi.

[6] Albert Pietersma, "A New English Translation of the Septuagint," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Oslo, 1998* (ed. Bernard A. Taylor, [SCS 51.] Society of Biblical Literature, 2001) 217-28; here: p. 219. See also To the Reader of NETS, p. ix.

[7] Albert Pietersma, "A New Paradigm," p. 345.

from there, applies Brock's formulation to the LXX and suggests that the translated LXX, at its baseline, falls into Brock's second category (i.e., a translation that brings the [Greek] reader to the [Hebrew] source).[8]

1.3 Says Muraoka,

> Hardly any of the ancient LXX translators can be said to be a model precursor of Aquila. Some tend to be literalistic, others tend to be free, but none is absolutely consistent (p. 223).

And later on the same page,

> . . . nowhere in the LXX [is *quantitative equivalence* or *quantitative identity* >interlinearity] consistently and systematically maintained (p. 223).

It may, of course, readily be granted that descriptive analyses of Aquila and of any one of the books of the Greek Pentateuch would not produce identical translation profiles, but by using the term "precursor" Muraoka raises a different question, namely, that of a possible linguistic continuum from Aquila to, say, Job (or vice-versa) with the other translated books, including so-called *kaige* translations, scattered along the baseline. Muraoka evidently precludes such a continuum, but it is not clear whether his preclusion is based on linguistic grounds or on grounds of their respective reception history. The only traits he notes are those of consistency and literalism vis-à-vis the source text, and—granted— Aquila is more consistently literalistic than most if not all of the other books, but surely that is a matter of degree, not of kind.[9] But in that case would it not make eminent sense to push whatever conceptualization works for Aquila as far along the continuum as it remains useful, i.e., as long as it holds its explanatory power? Thus if "interlinearity" might conceivably work for Aquila, as Muraoka seems to imply and as Reider suggests explicitly,[10] why would one reject it out-of-hand for other translated books of the Greek corpus? That some sort of continuum of relatedness to the source text exists is hardly subject to controversy. To what extent translations other than of the *kaige* tradition might be cited as "precursors of Aquila" is certainly worth exploring.[11]

It is lack of consistency and systematicity, however, that renders interlinearity anathema to Muraoka in its application to the translated Septuagint.[12] Understandably so,

---

[8] To the same effect see James Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in ancient biblical translations*. MSU 15, Göttingen, 1979, p. 50.

[9] See Barr, *Typology* (*passim*).

[10] J. Reider, *Prolegomena to a Greek-Hebrew and Hebrew-Greek Index to Aquila*. Philadelphia, 1916, pp. 18-19.

[11] For an exploration of this issue see Cameron Boyd-Taylor, "Reading Between the Lines–Towards an Assessment of the Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies." Thesis (Ph.D.)—University of Toronto, 2005 (to be published by Peeters, Leuven).

[12] For a recent appeal to "interlinearity" (Interlinearübersetzung) see Hermann-Josef Stipp, "Bermerkungen zum Griechischen Michabuch," *JNSL* 29 (2003) 103-132, here: 115. But apparently for Stipp "interlinearity" is a heuristic tool, as it is for NETS.

given Muraoka's misunderstanding of NETS' use of the term. To Muraoka, evidently, NETS in its use of "interlinearity" is proposing a theory of LXX *origins*. That is to say, according to his construal, the LXX was produced in some such format as the Interlinear Greek New Testament, as a diglot possibly with alternating lines of Hebrew and Greek or in parallel columns. In that case, one might indeed reasonably expect a high degree of consistency of treatment, if for no other reason than that the two texts might otherwise cease to be concordant. But as Cameron Boyd-Taylor correctly underscores in a recent paper,[13] such an understanding decidedly does *not* reflect NETS' use of the term. As far back as "To the Reader of NETS" ix [written in 2000] it was stated:

> Be it noted immediately . . . that the terms "interlinear" and "diglot" are intended to be nothing more than visual aids to help reader conceptualize the *linguistic* relationship that is deemed to exist between the Hebrew original and the Greek translation. In other words, "interlinear" is a metaphor and as such it points not to the surface meaning of its own components but to a deeper, less visual, linguistic relationship of dependence and subservience. *Be it noted further, that the deeper linguistic reality, which the metaphor attempts to make more tangible, is in no way contingent on the existence of a physical, interlinear entity at any point during the third to the first centuries BCE* (emphasis added AP). What precise physical format the linguistic relationship took we may never know. A variety of possibilities is not difficult to imagine.[14]

What ought to be clear, therefore, is that "interlinearity" for NETS has nothing to do with Septuagint origins.[15] Instead it is, as Boyd-Taylor notes, a heuristic device, a way of conceptualizing (and thus accounting for) the LXX as a translated document that contains a conspicuous, Hebraistic dimension—admitted to exist across the discipline, including by Muraoka himself—which includes an aspect of intelligibility that goes beyond literalism. NETS labels it the text's "vertical dimension" and Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury) speaks (without specific reference to the LXX) of positive and negative transfer from source text to target text.[16] If such transfer exists to the degree generally

---

[13] Cameron Boyd-Taylor, "Who's Afraid of *Verlegenheitsübersetzungen*?" in *Specialists' Symposium on the Septuagint Translation*, H. Ausloos, B. Lemmelijn (ed.), *Leuven Dec 4-6, 2006*.

[14] *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (ed.). Psalms. Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford, 2000, p. ix. For an earlier (1998) version to the same effect see Albert Pietersma, "A New English Translation of the Septuagint," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies Oslo, 1998*, Bernard A. Taylor (ed.), pp. 215-228, here: p. 219. See now *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (ed.). Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford, 2007, p. xiv, or at http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/

[15] Muraoka in fact goes so far as to suggest that, since I do not preclude the physical existence of an interlinear LXX I must somehow be affirming it (see p. 226 footnote 30). I repeat, interlinearity is not a theory of LXX origins but a metaphor for linguistic relationship between the Greek target text and its Hebrew source. Needless to say, the question of LXX origins is not without interest but is a separate issue from textual-linguistic make-up. Once the character of the translated text has been determined (i.e., its model of translation), it is only logical to ask the socio-linguistic question, namely, where such a text might have originated. But the horse belongs before the cart; not the other way around.

[16] Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and beyond*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1995.

acknowledged by Septuagintalists, its presence needs to be conceptualized, and for NETS "interlinearity" is a productive conceptualization.

Even though the interlinear paradigm was not introduced into Septuagint studies as a theory of origins, its reception history has evidently made it into a theory of origins, and Muraoka is not alone in this. Well and good as long as questions of physical layout at production and issues of linguistic relationship between target text and source text are kept distinct.

Of course, interlinearity as a heuristic device presupposes familiarity with physical interlinearity. But to claim that using interlinearity as a heuristic device for the LXX *ipso facto* makes the LXX into Hebrew-Greek diglot is as vacuous as suggesting that a metaphor is identical to what it stands for.

1.4 In Muraoka's view, resorting to the original text as an "arbiter of meaning" is a peculiar fault of the interlinear model. He writes,

> Admittedly there are cases where an ambiguity in the Greek text can be resolved by taking recourse to the Semitic original. This, however, should not be exaggerated. More importantly, we all know that the Semitic original, even where there is no scribal error or some flaw in the transmission of the text, is not always free of ambiguity. We must also remember here that our ancient translators had to cope with the unpointed text, even when they were aided by the reading tradition. One must further bear in mind the feature of polysemy. Lexemes and forms in the original are often polysemic. (p. 224)

It is, however, difficult to see how NETS' principle of arbitration by the source text can be labeled "exaggerated," since *qua* principle it validates certain conclusions but does not dictate them. Thus unless one holds that recourse to the source text is never warranted (which Muraoka clearly does not), the principle as such can hardly be deemed a stumbling block. The problem here again can be traced to Muraoka's misconstrual of "interlinearity" into a theory of LXX origins. Therefore—so his argument seems to run— since the Hebrew and Greek texts run in tandem, the latter below the former (or some such thing), the Hebrew is too often superimposed on the Greek. The real object of Muraoka's critique is therefore not so much the principle of the source text as arbiter of meaning but "interlinearity." But as has already been pointed out above, Muraoka quite misunderstands NETS' use of the term and further fails to realize that the principle of "the source text as the *arbiter* of meaning" *formalizes* and, in so doing, *regulates* standard practice in the discipline since time immemorial, namely, to have recourse to the source text when the target text, for whatever reason and at whatever point, is problematic. The problem is, of course, that recourse to the source text might then easily give rise to anything from disambiguating the target text by means of the source text to superimposing the source text on the target text, possibly with an appeal to "translator's intent" for the purpose of *bypassing* the Greek text. Such use of the source text might thus have serious repercussions for the integrity of LXX *qua* text (of whatever description) as well as for the Greek language as a system. In lexicography Liddell-Scott-Jones comes readily to mind. Muraoka has of course taken giant strides away from LSJ,

but I am not persuaded that it has become impertinent to ask whether he has distanced himself far enough.[17] Has interference from the source language been given its due in MSL? Though huge strides have been taken in LXX lexicography in recent decades, lexica like critical editions and translations surely remain works in progress. And even if authors and editors be tempted to claim definitiveness, readers owe it to the discipline to resist such a notion. That I take to be the gist of Boyd-Taylor's probing lexicographical questions. Might lexicography of a translated corpus conceivably benefit from the principle of arbitration by the source text, in the same sort of way that translating and exegeting stands to benefit from it? Be that as it may, Muraoka misunderstands the principle of arbitration by the source text in the wake of his misunderstanding of interlinearity.

As the NETS principle clearly states, all that the source text can legitimately be made to do is to *arbitrate* between *established meanings* in the target language. (It is difficult to see how "arbiter" or "arbitration" can be misunderstood!) It can therefore *not* be used to create new senses and, in point of fact, it *precludes* that the source text override the target text. Consequently, it might be more productive to view NETS' use of "interlinearity" in the light of its principle of "the source text as arbiter of meaning," than to skew the latter due to a misunderstanding of the former!

It is moreover not clear to me how Muraoka's apparent *apologia* for the ancient translators addresses the issue at hand, except perhaps to underscore the character of the LXX as a translation. Moreover, generating sympathy for the difficulty of the translators' task misses the basic point that they are scarcely in need of an *apologia*. They might best be assumed to have adopted a translational mode that suited their aim rather than having been forced into one by lack of linguistic competence or textual uncertainty and/or deficiency. Our job it is to describe, rather than to judge. Furthermore, the translator Muraoka seems to have in view is a translator who frequently transmits the problems of the source text to the target text rather than solving them or disambiguating them. He is a translator who at times supplies voweling that makes little if any contextual sense. And if polysemy in the original poses a problem for the translator to such an extent—as Muraoka suggests—that the target text becomes problematic *qua text*, the translator (for whatever reason) is clearly not aiming at making coherent, contextual sense. There is, therefore, good reason for qualifying the notion that a translator must surely always be intent on making sense! Might one perhaps ever so cautiously entertain the possibility that *representation* (in distinction from *translation*) of the source text was sometimes deemed more important than communicating its message or any message?[18] Had the translator always been intent on *communication*, he could surely have construed contextually, whether on the level of the Hebrew or on the level of the Greek (or both at once). That he often does not do so would seem to speak volumes!

---

[17] For an astute critique of LSJ, nearly forty years ago, see J.A.L. Lee "A Note on Septuagint material in the Supplement to Liddell and Scott," *Glotta* 47 (1969), pp. 234-242.

[18] Barr, *Typology*, 18, speaks of an avoidance of interpretation.

It may be à propos in conclusion on arbitration by the source text to recall Martin Flashar's "Exegetische Studien" of 1912.[19] Flashar believed that a translator's semantic intent might often be found where paired Hebrew and Greek lexemes intersect, and the NETS example of δύναμις < צבא or < עז would seem to reflect exactly what Flashar had in mind and the sort of thing NETS has formalized into a principle. A randomly added but apt example is Ps 67:12.[20]

1.5 Muraoka, however, carries his misunderstanding of interlinearity and his resultant misconstrual of the principle of arbitration by the source text one step farther, when he writes:

> Another way in which this principle of invoking the source text as arbiter is by suggesting that, when a given lexeme in the source language is regularly translated with a given lexeme in the target language, there is a total overlap in meaning between the two, and a LXX lexicographer has an enviably easy job of just writing under the headword, e.g. διαθήκη = ברית. (p. 224)

Here then, the principle of arbitration by the source text is portrayed as a wholesale license for superimposing the source text on the target text. The NETS example Muraoka cites is revealing, however, since it has nothing whatsoever to do with either interlinearity or the principle of the source text as arbiter of meaning. Διαθήκη is simply cited (rightly or wrongly) as an example of a "calque," i.e., a *terminus technicus* that predates the LXX. Διαθήκη may not, of course, be a calque, but since it occurs, apparently with the same meaning, in both translated and non-translated books of the LXX, chances are that it is. In that case, prior to the advent of the LXX, it will already have been employed by Alexandrian Jews as a gloss for Hebrew ברית. That calques exist in the LXX is inherently probable (see e.g., Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint,* pp. 107-109), though exactly which words belong to this category of pre-LXX institutionalized lexical stock is more difficult to demonstrate. Interestingly, while NETS renders διαθήκη as "covenant," Septuaginta-Deutsch (I am told) treats it (at least in the Pentateuch) as standard Greek. *La Bible d'Alexandrie*'s "alliance," on the other hand, would seem to side with NETS. One might thus conclude that the jury is still out on διαθήκη. Is or isn't it a calque, i.e., an institutionalized term that pre-dates the LXX?

1.6 In light of what precedes, it may come as no surprise that Muraoka charges NETS with denigrating the LXX and alleges that, for NETS, LXX Greek, since it is translational Greek "must necessarily deviate from the 'normal' contemporary Greek"(p. 229). In fact he goes so far as to write,

> I rather feel sorry for those who have a rather low view of the LXX and nonetheless make it an object of their intellectual endeavour. (p. 231)

---

[19] Martin Flashar, "Exegetische Studien zum Septuagintapsalter," *ZAW* 32 (1912), pp. 81-116, 161-199, 241-268, here e.g., p. 92.

[20] See Flashar, "Exegetische Studien," p. 91.

One might further note such terms as "unfavourable" and "downright derogatory" used by Muraoka on p. 233. If descriptive analysis and conceptualization of the linguistic relation of the LXX as a translation to its source text amounts to denigration, NETS must be counted guilty as charged. What NETS champions, however, is nothing more and nothing less than descriptive and systematic analysis of textual-linguistic make-up, mapping the target text onto the source text (see Toury on "coupled pairs," *Descriptive Translation Studies and beyond,* pp. 87-101) to reach certain conclusions about the character of the target text. Whether or not such an analysis then comes to the same conclusions as MSL does is certainly of interest but scarcely a question of "low view" versus "high view." Surely more relevant than Muraoka's value judgments, attributed to NETS, are Toury's three (descriptive) modes of translating, "linguistic,"[21] "textual"[22] and "literary"[23] (pp. 170-171), since these tell us something about the character of the text and by extension about its prospective role. Similarly, one might refer to Nida's "formal equivalence" often used as a descriptive for the LXX, including by Muraoka himself (cf. p. 228/229,[24]) even though in the case of both Toury and Nida, one might readily point to negative assessments. And even if "formal equivalence," like "interlinearity" or "literality," is not applicable to the translated LXX from A to Z or in every book to the same degree, it nevertheless establishes a baseline for lexicographer and translator/exegete alike.[25] I fail to see how NETS "denigrates" the LXX, whereas Muraoka does not so denigrate it when he writes, for example,

---

[21] "A linguistically-motivated translation is any act of translation yielding a product which is well-formed in terms of the target syntax, grammar and lexicon, even if it does not fully conform to any target model of text formation. (In this case, at least partial interference of the model underlying the source text is to be expected.)" 171.

[22] "A textually-dominated translation . . . yields products which are well-formed in terms of general conventions of text formation pertinent to the target culture, even if they do not conform to any recognized literary model within it. (Interference of the model underlying the source text is still to be expected, namely, in terms of its literary-specific features.)" 171.

[23] " . . . literary translation involves the imposition of 'conformity conditions' beyond the linguistic and/or general-textual ones, namely, to models and norms which are deemed literary at the target end. It thus yields more or less well-formed texts from the point of view of the *literary* requirements of the recipient culture, at various possible costs in terms of the reconstruction of features of the source text." 171.

[24] Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Leiden: 1982, 201: "**formal correspondence**: quality of a translation in which the features of the form of the source text have been mechanically reproduced in the receptor language. Typically, formal correspondence distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the receptor language and hence distorts the message, so as to cause the receptor to misunderstand or to labor unduly hard."

[25] Cf. Barr, *Typology*: "A sophisticated study of the LXX, at least in many books, rather than dealing with the contrast between free and literal, has to concern itself much of the time with variations within a basically literal approach: different kinds of literality, diverse levels of literal connection, and various kinds of departure from the literal. For this reason the idea of literality, rather than the idea of free translation, can properly form our base line of definition." 7.

> Last but not the least, their [the translators'] competence in the source language and/or target language was probably uneven. (p. 226)

As for the charge that, according to NETS, LXX Greek, since it is translational Greek, must necessarily deviate from "normal" contemporary Greek—NETS embraces no such presupposition but, instead, is quite content with the results of a descriptive and systematic analysis of the translated text.

2. THE BASIC ISSUE.
2.1 Says Muraoka,

> One of the fundamental questions pertaining to the LXX lexicography is what view one takes of this Greek document [i.e., the translated LXX]. . . . This is one of the basic issues arising from Pietersma's interlinear model (p. 225).

He then explains how the problem the interlinear model seeks to address was resolved by himself years ago. All one needs to do, according to Muraoka, is to recognize that we are dealing with a "dichotomy or polarity" in the text (p. 225), inconsistent translators who in some instances cater to the demands of the target language and in other instances cater to the demands of the source language. NETS takes no issue with the fact that these contradictions exist in the LXX but would submit that to *note* a linguistic phenomenon is not yet to *take it seriously* and to *account for it*. In other words, to rely on an *ad hoc* approach, rather than a principled one, scarcely recommends itself. I wholeheartedly agree, however, that one's view of the LXX *qua text* is a basic issue, even *the* basic issue for lexicographer and translator alike. But before going on, it may be useful to show what sort of document Muraoka takes the LXX to be—in spite of interference from the source text.

2.1.1 Early on in his paper Muraoka states:

> Existence of a plethora of modern translations of the Bible in a host of languages does not, of course, render Biblical Hebrew or New Testament Greek lexicographers redundant (p. 222).

The above is said in defense of MSL against a phantom critic. It is clear, therefore, that, for Muraoka, the (translated) LXX *qua text* takes its place alongside the Hebrew Bible and the NT (both originals) as a linguistically free standing and self-sufficient entity. In that case, however, one might expect that the LXX is not ever in need of arbitration by its source text. Yet, such arbitration—though he balks at the term—is scarcely denied by Muraoka. But if the reader of the LXX as produced is forced to have recourse to the source text in order to make sense of the target text (or to determine how it is that the text makes *no* sense), might it then not be justifiably asserted that every instance of such forced recourse—whether they run into the teens or hundreds or thousands is immaterial—puts in doubt the LXX as a linguistically free standing and self-sufficient document? To be sure, Aristeas makes the latter claim for the LXX, but his encomium on

and *apologia* for the LXX is surely part of its *reception history*, when the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible had become a *Biblical* translation. Be that as it may, what Muraoka seems to have in mind is what NETS would call the text *as produced*, judging from the un-Aristean admissions he makes along the way about the LXX's linguistic make-up. The key is, however, that Muraoka appears to have in mind the text as produced *as read by a tolerant reader*. It is thus this tolerant reader who may be said to transform the "translationese"[26] items of the text into "normal" Greek, i.e., into the conventional Greek of his speech community, and since this is so, no distinction between "normal" Greek and "translationese" Greek (i.e., "translation equivalents") is apparently called for in the Lexicon (MSL).

2.1.2
Muraoka displays a certain impatience with the text as produced when he writes,

> Whatever the circumstances of the initial production of the LXX as a translation may have been, it is an undeniable fact that it would soon establish itself as an important document of cultural, religious nature, first in the Jewish community, not only in the diaspora, and possibly also among the contemporary gentile community, perhaps on a smaller scale for sure, if we are ready to give some credence to the story told by Aristeas, and eventually in the Christian community (p. 233).

While he is admittedly speaking about the *circumstances* of production more than about *linguistic design* at time of production, and while every Septuagintalist would readily agree with most of what Muraoka writes here, one cannot help but ask how his statement in any way clarifies the (internal) linguistic reality of the translated LXX—unless he is suggesting that we retrovert reception history into production event. (Yet his use of "soon" presupposes a time gap!?) One might then further wonder whether such retroversion would include text-form as well as text-semantics? For instance, should we conclude in that case, that Greek Psalm 8 meant at the production event what Hebrews chapter 2 says it meant at some point in reception history? Or that Psalm 15:8-11 meant at production what it is said to mean in Acts 2:25-28. Is Muraoka suggesting that just as the tolerant reader is capable of "normalizing" the translationese of the text as produced, so the LXX's subsequent history retroactively modifies its initial character and standing? In DTS terms this would amount to claiming that a translation's textual-linguistic make-up, designed at production to serve its prospective function/position, suddenly changed with a change in function/position.[27] In terms of Bible translating, it would mean that translating the Bible *ipso facto* produces a *biblical* translation, an assumption fraught with socio-cultural[28] as well as linguistic difficulty in the case of the LXX.

---

[26] Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Leiden, Brill, 1982, p. 208: "**translationese**: an artificial form of a receptor language, in violation of normal grammatical and semotactic patterns, caused by an excessive effort toward formal correspondence."

[27] See Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies,* pp. 11-14.

[28] *Ibid.* p. 26: "There is no way a translation could share the same systemic space with its original; not even when the two are physically present side by side." See also Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the* Letter of Aristeas. New York, Routledge, 2003, p. 95.

2.1.3 Says Muraoka,

> It is . . . our assumption that the translator intended to have the fruit of his labour read as a Greek text, not as a crib for students. . . . Despite all these considerations and attendant difficulties [e.g. linguistic difficulties and translators' uneven qualifications], I believe, one should read the LXX as a Greek text and it should be possible to do so (p. 226).

Contrary to Muraoka's implicit allegations, there is no disagreement *in principle* between what MSL assumes and what NETS assumes. That is to say, since the LXX is a document written in Greek, it is assumed to be a Greek document—until proven otherwise. That is where NETS begins—which not to say, however, that external information about the text to be read is to be ignored. Presumed literary genre not only arouses the reader's expectation but directs his/her manner of reading as well. Since, according to DTS, "translation" is a genre of sorts and since the LXX (in large part) is universally held to be a translation, one would approach the LXX as the translation it is held to be. Of interest here is Toury's law of interference ("phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text"[29]). Nevertheless, MSL and NETS agree in essence: *the LXX is "normal" Greek until proven otherwise.* At the risk of carrying coal to Newcastle, I will spell out the various NETS stages from point zero: (a) Since the LXX is written in Greek, it is assumed to be a Greek document; (b) since the LXX is universally regarded as a translation, certain expectations are aroused (cf. Toury's law of interference); (c) since descriptive analysis shows the LXX to be a certain *kind* of translation,[30] appropriate principles and procedures are put in place; (d) the five principles delineated in the Prospectus[31] come fully into play at the commentary stage.

 To speak of "normal" Greek is not to claim that we know all the ins and outs of what "normal" Greek is supposed to look like, but it is to claim that we are seldom incapable of judging the difference between "normal" Greek and "translationese" on several levels of constituent structure. NETS is quite aware that translating at the best of times is an act of hubris and doubly so when the documents to be translated are ancient and themselves translations. There is therefore no disagreement between MSL and NETS on the fact that,

> [t]he contemporary, that is Hellenistic and early Roman Greek, literature, as is preserved, does not by any means represent complete attestation of all possible linguistic forms and usages (p. 230).

That is a given if not a truism, but we proceed all the same and do the best we know how, realizing all the while that definitive results are seldom if ever achieved. Our work is a work in progress.

---

[29] *Ibid*. p. 275

[30] See e.g. Toury's three modes, footnotes 21-23 *supra*.

[31] "A Prospectus for a Commentary on the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 31 (1998), pp. 41-48, here p. 44; http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ioscs/commentary/prospectus.html)

It should further be noted that Muraoka's faith in a text that is intended to make lexical sense (and therefore *must* yield sense) sends him on a scramble to make sense of e.g., κενοτάφια[32] in 1 Rgns (Sam) 19:13, 16 (p. 226/227). That at the word level the translator saw some connection between Hebrew תרפים and Greek κενοτάφια may be inferred from the fact that he translates rather than transcribes. One may further reasonably infer that the Greek plural form reflects the Hebrew plural, even though a plural would seem to impede contextual sense even further. But whether the context can be drawn upon to establish what κενοτάφια means is quite another matter. Though Muraoka asserts that κενοτάφια cannot have all three meanings assigned by LEH to the singular ("coffin shaped like a human being, household god, image?"), he suggests no gloss of his own, though speculates on why the translator may have done what he did. Presumably the next edition of MSL will have a definition or perhaps a gloss. One can relate to Muraoka's problem. If one assumes that a given word *must* make contextual sense and if one assumes that the standard lexicographical principle (context realizes meaning) *must* be applied with equal force to *translation* literature, as it is applied to *composition* literature (cf. Muraoka p. 237), one has no option but to come up with a meaning that somehow fits the context.[33] Alternatively, an appeal might be made to Hebrew interference as a constraint on context, but though Muraoka admits to Hebrew interference, it does not seem to have a bearing on LXX lexicography, in his view. In light of the LXX's linguistic character, NETS assigns a restricted role to context, and interlinearity provides both lexicographer and translator with a principled way to resist the "demand" of context.

While in the case of an original composition, standard procedure assigns "errors" in the text to its history of *transmission*, in translations, especially of the formal correspondence variety, they may just as well be due to the text's *production*. Whether these errors are then attributable to a misreading of the source text or to a translator's transmitting them from the source text to the target text is immaterial. They are in the text all the same and thus characterize it. That *reception history* may render intelligible even the unintelligible is, of course, well attested, but a separate issue.

2.1.4

There is, of course, no denying that, as Muraoka notes, translators might at times be creative and innovative, though the particular example he cites fails to convince. In critique of Dirk Büchner he writes,

---

[32] LSJ: κενοτάφιον *empty tomb, cenotaph*

[33] Cf J.A.L. Lee's strict application of this principle in "Note on Septuagint material" p. 234: "It is a basic principle of lexicography that in order to establish the existence of a new sense of a given word incontrovertible examples of that sense must be found. So long as the word can be understood in one of its established senses without undue strain, it ought to be classified under that sense. Only if the new meaning is clearly demanded by context can it be regarded as definitely established." Yet in his application of this principle to *LXX* lexicography, Lee is quite aware that interference from the source text and non-attestation in non-translation literature (or equivalent) must function as lexicographical constraints. As I have suggested in "New Paradigm" §6.1.2 p. 353 the assumption of interlinearity allows one to conceptualize such constraint in a principled manner.

According to Büchner κλητής (*sic*) as a translation of מִקְרָא as in Lev 23,3 τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα ἀνάπαυσις κλητὴ ἁγία is a case of linguistic interference, and means just *called out*. But the adjective here cannot be made to mean *called out*. The choice of the feminine form alone suggests that it is rather a creative, innovative extension of the adjective's basic meaning; its referent is obviously not the immediately preceding ἀνάπαυσις, but ἡμέρα which can easily be supplied from the context. The translator's choice was most likely determined by its Hebrew counterpart, מִקְרָא *act of calling out or summoning*. That is, however, irrelevant to the LXX lexicography. We could list as one of the senses of the adjective: subst.(antivised), f.(eminine), *a day when people are convened*. (p. 231)

MSL offers the following entries: "subst. f., *an occasion when people are convened*, 'convocation, assembly' " for κλητός, ή, ον, and the glosses are repeated for ἐπίκλητος, ον **3**.

Hebrew מִקְרָא thought to mean "convocation" appears 22*x* in MT, almost exclusively in Exodus (2*x*), Leviticus (11*x*) and Numbers (7*x*). The remaining two are in Isaiah (Esaias) (1:13; 4:5). All but Isa (Esa) 4:5 are represented in the LXX, though in five different ways: (a) κλητή Ex 12:16b; Leu 23:2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 21, 24, 27, 35, 36, 37; Num 28:5 = 13; (b) ἐπίκλητος Num 28:18, 26; 29:1, 7, 12 = 5; (c) κληθήσεται Ex 12:16a = 1; (d) ἀνακαλεῖν Num 10:2 = 1; (e) ἡμέρα μεγάλη Esa 1:13 = 1.[34] In eighteen instances reference is being made to a specific day, while three (Leu 23:2, 4, 37) pertain to festivals. Since in Greek (unlike in Hebrew) both nouns that serve as grammatical referents are feminine (ἡμέρα and ἑορτή) ἐπίκλητος and κλητή are feminine and adjectival. A second indication of their adjectival role is that in all eight cases where MT reads וביום "and on the day" (Ex 12:16ab; Leu 23:7, 8, 35, 36; Num 28:18, 25) the LXX reads καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα, the reason being that whereas a מִקְרָא ("convocation") occurs *on* a given day, ἐπίκλητος and κλητή *mark* the day itself. Both the variety in the rendering of מִקְרָא and the representation of a (Hebrew) noun by a (Greek) verbal adjective suggest that LXX translators may not have been familiar with its meaning as "convocation." Most often it was apparently analyzed as a pual participle of קרא, attested only in Isa (Esa) 48:12 where ישראל מקראי "Israel my called one" is translated as καὶ Ισραηλ ὃν ἐγὼ καλῶ.

---

[34] Further items of interest:

ἐπίκλητος; Judg 15:19 עין הקורא אשר בלחי (NRSV: "En-hakkore, which is at Leghi") = Πηγὴ ἐπίκλητος σιαγόνος Judg A (NETS: "Spring-Summoned-by-Jawbone"), = Πηγὴ τοῦ ἐπικαλαλουμένου, ἥ ἐστιν ἐν Σιαγόνι Judg B (NETS: "Caller's Spring, which is in Jawbone"); Am 1:5 ארם קירה עם (NRSV: "the people of Aram [shall go into exile] to Kir") = λαὸς Συρίας ἐπίκλητος (NETS: "the important people of Syria").

κλητός: 2Sam (2Rgns) 15:11 מאתים איש מירושלם קראים (NRSV: "Two hundred men from Jerusalem went. . . ; they were invited guests") = διακόσιοι ἄνδρες ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ κλητοί (NETS: "Two hundred men from Ierousalem went . . . , invited"); 1Kgs (3Rgns) 1:41 כל הקראים (NRSV: "all the guests") = πάντες οἱ κλητοὶ αὐτοῦ; (NETS: "all his guests"); 1Kgs (3Rgns) 1:49 כל הקראים (NRSV: "all the guests") = πάντες οἱ κλητοί (NETS: "all the guests"); Zeph (Soph) 1:7 הקדיש קראיו (NRSV: "he has consecrated his guests") = ἡγίακεν τοὺς κλητοὺς αὐτοῦ (NETS: "he consecrated his called ones").

One might possibly consider (c) and (e) above as "creative" or "innovative," since both make good sense and avoid overloading the text by mechanical transfer. Leu 23:3 and other verses with ἐπίκλητος or κλητή decidedly are not, since feminine inflection and the adjustment of ביום to ἡ ἡμέρα are both obligatory once the translator has read מִקְרָא as an adjectival. Moreover, though neither adjective is needed semantically in the target text, they are supplied nonetheless in order to give an isomorphic representation of the source text—with the lone exception of Leu 23:21 where מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ is suitably divided between two separate clauses (καὶ καλέσετε ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν κλητήν, ἁγία ἔσται ὑμῖν "and you shall call this day marked; it shall be holy to you"). As an aside one might also note pleonastic αὐτάς in Leu 23:2 (though not in v. 37 according to the critical text) as an example of overloading.

It is difficult to see how, in Leu 23:3 (and presumably elsewhere as well), Muraoka can regard the linkage between מִקְרָא and κλητή as being "irrelevant to the LXX lexicography," the more since MSL, like LSJ, glosses the Greek as "convocation/assembly," in direct dependence on the source text but without attestation anywhere else in Greek literature. In fact, I can think of no better example of superimposing the source text on the target text—something precluded by the NETS principle of the source text as arbiter of meaning!—than the item Muraoka cites as an example of creativity and innovation.

Though there is an obvious link between מִקְרָא (√קרא) and κλητή/ἐπίκλητος, it is not one that produces a new sense for either Greek word. Applicable here would seem to be what Lee argued with respect to ψυχή in Gen 12:5 (and similar items in other passages),[35] namely, that to create a new sense on the basis of a literalistic translation and in the face of a total lack of attestation in non-translation literature (or equivalent) is a failure to distinguish between "sense" and "reference" or, to use Lee's wording, "the indicator value of a word" and "a notion expressed by the context." What the translator does manage to do is to overload the target text due to his insistence on an isomorphic representation of his source text.

2.1.5 Says Muraoka,

> Everybody would agree that in the translated part of the LXX, there is hardly any paragraph which would have been included for its literary flavour and elegance of style and locution in a reader of Hellenistic prose and poetry for use at a gymnasium in Ptolemaic Alexandria.[36]

The gist of this statement is well attested in the secondary literature, and NETS wholeheartedly concurs with it. In it Muraoka has moved beyond assumption and presupposition and is giving a descriptive summary of sorts of the text he takes the (translated) LXX to be. NETS would scarcely disagree with Muraoka's assessment. But if the LXX is indeed the kind of text both NETS and MSL seem to agree it is, can its textual-linguistic make-up then be wholly or partially ignored by the modern translator,

---

[35] J.A.L. Lee, "Note," p. 234.

[36] Cited with the author's permission from a longer version of his paper.

the lexicographer, the exegete or the casual reader? To be sure, as Toury notes, a text designed for a given slot in the host culture may be assigned a new cultural slot in reception history, quite at variance with the slot for which it was designed. But that is surely a separate issue and one, which, moreover, does not retroactively change its make-up at production.

While Muraoka is quite correct in noting that formal equivalence *per se* does not pose a problem for the lexicographer (or the translator, for that matter) (see p. 228,[37]) it can scarcely be maintained that a formal equivalence mode that produces pleonastic pronouns and adverbs, verbs with complements that fluctuate in tandem with the source text even against Greek linguistic code, *notae accusativi* (as well as inseparable prepositions) being represented by Greek articles, cognate participles (or datives) standing in for Hebrew infinitives absolute, so-called hymnic participles in Hebrew being glossed by anarthrous Greek participles, Hebrew pronouns glossed according to Hebrew gender rather than referent, lexemes translated on the basis of etymology rather than contextual sense, transcriptions of Hebrew technical terms, etc. etc.—surely it cannot be maintained that these have no effect on the LXX *qua text* at its production? It might possibly be argued that a lexicographer can afford to ignore many of these, but a translator cannot, since they have a direct bearing on textual-linguistic make-up and thus the "text-ness" of the LXX. Not even Muraoka's "tolerant reader" can alter what is.

Summary: It would seem fair to conclude that, for Muraoka, the translated LXX (a) was produced as a free standing, self-sufficient text, intended as a substitute for its original; (b) is a translation that caters at times rather heavily to its source text (cf. Muraoka's statement about dichotomy and polarity); (c) is a text which, in spite of its linguistic make-up, should be treated as a "normal" Greek document seemingly on the basis of (i) assumed translator's intent, (ii) a tolerant reader, and (iii) subsequent status of the document in reception history. But if Muraoka is correct on (b), an *explanation* of the nature of the text is at some point called for, a need of which Muraoka is not unaware.

2.1.6 The assumption of interlinearity is, of course, vehemently rejected by Muraoka as an explanation for linguistic make-up. He does suggest textual difficulty and translators' uneven "competence in the source language and/or target language" (p. 226) as an explanation. This option strikes me as having little explanatory power and at best is partial. Though translators may not have known Greek and Hebrew perfectly, lack of competence would more likely have been in the source language than in the target language and would scarcely have prevented them from making contextual sense. Moreover, that they were deficient in Greek seems to run afoul of what John Lee (and others since) concluded as far back as his *Lexical Study of ... the Pentateuch* (1983). Their use of Greek was apparently not due to incompetence nor does it seem to reflect

---

[37] He writes: "I fail to see why the fact that 'many formal features of the parent-text are consistently present in the translation' [citing Boyd-Taylor] leads to such a negative evaluation of such a translated text and why dealing with such data for a lexicographical analysis of the target language is necessarily problematic."

Alexandrian Jewish Greek *patois*. Rather, their use of language must be assumed to have been deliberate. I have suggested that the kind of language performance we see in the LXX might reflect an educational milieu, but there may be other equally suitable settings, which haven't as yet been proposed. As an aside, it might be of interest to note that both interlinearity[38] and an educational origin[39] have been suggested for targum. Educational milieu or not, one thing would seem to assured: the evidence for or against must come from the textual-linguistic make-up, accumulated systematically and inductively.

2.1.7 As for analysis of textual-linguistic make-up, i.e., constitutive character—I am not suggesting for a moment that Muraoka hasn't done his homework, but I am taking him at his word, namely, that he is a *lexicographer*. As a result, one can assume that his take on the LXX as a document is informed by a *lexicographical* perspective, rather than by the perspective of *translating* (see the citation in 2.1 above). That is not to suggest that the lexicographer limits himself/herself to lexicography or that a translator does nothing but translating, but it is to suggest that the lexicographer and the translator each engages the text from his/her own perspective with a primary focus on different levels of constituent structure. It is furthermore difficult to see how interference from the source text can effectively be ignored by the lexicographer, given the linguistic make-up of most of the LXX. Differently put, the effects of interference are swept under the carpet by Muraoka's tolerant reader who seriously screens the text as produced from view.

Certainly the translator pays primary attention to the level of discourse (no matter what conclusions may be reached about the "text-ness" of the LXX). The translator therefore has to assess not only what kind of text (e.g., a translated text vs. original composition) s/he sets him/herself to translate and how best to translate it, but also to what extent the document at hand is a text in the full sense of the word, i.e., a piece of discourse that has coherence and cohesion and thus constitutes an *act of communication* between addresser and addressee, in the first instance as members of the same language community. If that means anything at all, it means that text-as-discourse comes with interpretive clues and constraints, which no addressee—not even a tolerant one—is free to ignore. That being the case, a decision needs to be made whether to translate the text as produced, i.e., the specific text as fixed to its historical moorings, or the text as received, i.e., the text as detached from its moorings and thus autonomous and (potentially) universal. Since the clues and constraints are not the same in both cases, even if they be construed in terms of each other, one needs to make a decision.

One may well wonder, therefore, what Muraoka has in mind when he says that whereas LEH opted for a "translators' intention" approach, MSL opted for a reader's reception approach ("the interpretation put by the reader") (p. 225). Ostensibly Muraoka has in mind the text as received, since he speaks of the reader of "say between 250 B.C. and 100 A.D" (p. 226). But in that case, why his polemic against NETS when NETS is

---

[38] Steven D. Fraade, "Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum, and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third-Sixth Centuries," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. I. Levine), New York and Jerusalem, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992, pp. 253-286.

[39] W.F. Smelik, *The Targum of Judges*. Leiden, Brill.

explicitly a translation of the text as produced? The answer would seem to be that though MSL ostensibly reflects the text as detached from its historical moorings, it is assumed to be the same as the text fixed to its historical moorings. Hence no distinction is made between the text as produced and the text as received.

3. In conclusion a single lexicographical example, which underscores why NETS has difficulty with MSL and some of its methodology. Muraoka writes:

> One major and well-researched cause for the unfamiliarity, strangeness or even alienness of aspects of the LXX Greek is agreed to be the interference of the source language. This unfamiliarity is of different kinds. Some manifestations of it may have been tolerated. Others occurring in a passage recited in a diaspora synagogue or in a chapel mostly "proselytes" may have put some backs up. One cannot be certain what sort of reaction was awakened when one read about God telling Abraham to survey the land πρὸς βορρᾶν καὶ λίβα . . . καὶ ἀνατολὰς καὶ θάλασσαν (Gen 13,14). It is a reasonable assumption that the average member of the congregation adjusted his bearings a little bit with regard to λίψ and did not wonder why God was being very particular and meticulous only in respect of one of the four quarters. Thus the reader of NETS Genesis, on reading *towards the north and the south-west and the east and the west*, might start wondering aloud whether our modern translator has got his bearing right. (p. 235)

Muraoka will no doubt be even more amazed when he learns that, in Gen 13:14 and similar references, NETS not only speaks of *south-west* but as well of *seaward* (for πρὸς/κατὰ θάλασσαν)! My interest here is not λίψ (see at some length Boyd-Taylor's article referred to by Muraoka[40]) but θάλασσα < ‏ם‎, a standard equivalency in the LXX, irrespective of whether ‏ם‎ refers to a given body of water or to one of the points of the compass, i.e., the Mediterranean and hence the west. NETS' reason is very simple: though in Hebrew ‏ם‎ often refers to the western point of the compass, the same is not true for Greek θάλασσα. The reason for this, though not strictly relevant, is no doubt that θάλασσα meaning "west" would scarcely make sense in the Greek homeland. Nor for that matter would such a designation make sense in Alexandrian Jewish Greek. Though θάλασσα might conceivably have been made to refer to Lake Mareotis, this body of water lay to the southwest of the city and would thus have indicated the same direction as λίψ. Furthermore it would have been eclipsed by Alexandria's "great sea" to the north. It is thus not surprising that neither LSJ nor BAGD venture to gloss θάλασσα as "west."

As far as I am aware (and MSL gives no evidence to the contrary), θάλασσα never meant "west" in the living language of any period. Here then we come face-to-face with Muraoka's "tolerant reader," reference to whom has already been made on a number of occasions. To justify the inclusion of unconventional semantic components (new senses) in his Lexicon, Muraoka apparently relies on readers' tolerance of linguistic interference by the source text. He no doubt correctly assumes that a reader of Gen 13:14 would conclude by a process of elimination that θάλασσα must there stand for a "westward"

---

[40] Cameron Boyd-Taylor, "Lexicography and Interlanguage—Gaining our Bearings," *BIOSCS* 37 (2004) 55-72 and "Reading Between the Lines" 376-84. For θάλασσα see his "Reading Between the Lines" p. 375.

direction. Hence its *reference* might be westward. By the same process of elimination he would rightly conclude that in Ex 27:12 the same word stood for a "northward" direction. But how does such a process of elimination produce anything but a context-specific, unconventional, idiosyncratic, translationese, "exegetical" sense of θάλασσα? Hence in one case its *reference* is westward and in the other case its *reference* is northward. Lexicography, on the other hand—unless I am badly mistaken—records conventional meaning, sanctioned by a speech community. In other words, it distinguishes between "sense" and "reference" and records only the former. Yet, MSL records three semantic components for θάλασσα: 1. *sea*, 2. *west*, 3. *north*, suggesting thereby that the word has three conventional senses. How might this claim be justified? By means of *a tolerant reader* who is apparently deemed capable of transforming translationese Greek into normal Greek, unconventional Greek into conventional Greek and had the wherewithal to declare it sanctioned by his speech community. If one were to add Ps-Clement 62:5 which has "many shall come from east (ἀνατολαί) and west (δυσμαί), north (βορρᾶς) and sea (θάλασσα)" (cf. Lk 13:29) we could make θάλασσα have the sense of southward as well! What Muraoka has done is to confuse, in Lee's terms,[41] "a notion expressed by the context in which it is used" with "the indicator value of a word" or in more common terminology, "reference" and "sense." In other words, just because the *reference* of "sea" in Gen 13:14 is to the western point of the compass scarcely means that "sea" carries a new *sense*, namely, "west."

Muraoka takes exception to Boyd-Taylor's suggestion that he (Muraoka) is confusing lexicography with exegesis, but what he writes in his own defense would seem to prove Boyd-Taylor's point. Says Muraoka:

> I am rather perplexed when Boyd-Taylor says about such an exercise [in determining lexical meaning on the basis of context] that the lexicographer is engaged in exegesis rather than lexicography. I would have thought it axiomatic that a scientific lexicographical analysis must be based on a sound interpretation of the document; it cannot be otherwise when we are dealing with ancient texts of limited extent with no native speakers to fall back on for elucidation. (p. 237)

Lexical meaning, therefore, is ideally vetted by native speakers, according to Muraoka. While it is, of course, patently obvious that no native speakers of ancient Greek can be consulted directly, that scarcely means that we have no access to what native speakers wrote, i.e., original compositions that can be taken to reflect straightforward linguistic performance. Though translations *can* and often *do* reflect such performance, they—especially the formal equivalence variety—cannot be *assumed* to do so. To date we have no evidence that native speakers ever used πρὸς θάλασσαν / κατὰ θάλασσαν with the sense of either "west" or "north" (or "south," for that matter). As a result, we can only call these Greek glosses "translationese." The only alternative conclusion would seem to be that both components be attributed to Alexandrian Jewish Greek dialect. NETS does not believe that the linguistic make-up of the translated LXX warrants that conclusion, without corroborating evidence. MSL apparently does. Consequently, from NETS' perspective, MSL would seem to be either a lexicon of (living) Alexandrian Jewish Greek

---

[41] Lee, "Note," p. 234.

(which I doubt Muraoka intends it to be) or a lexicon of the LXX that includes both "normal" Greek and "translationese" Greek without differentiation. While Muraoka cites Gideon Toury in support of a corpus-based lexicon (p. 234 note 60; see also Lee's review p. 128), it scarcely follows that the two kinds of Greek should in that case be presented *without differentiation*. It is unfortunate, it seems to me, that MSL rarely makes reference to Greek literature outside the (mainly translated) corpus. Given MSL's presuppositions, the user should be given not only a cross section of attestation within the corpus (untranslated, translated, and specific book), but also from literature outside the corpus. As in the case of θάλασσα = "west/north," so in many other cases, more is needed than a reference to other *translated* passages. It is to be hoped that continued lexicographical and translational research will give us greater clarity on what can be counted as "normal" Greek and what cannot. That such work presents a huge challenge and involves many uncertainties is a given. What is needed above all is constructive criticism among the labourers in this field of endeavour. Definitive works are seldom if ever produced.

Additional Bibliography:
Boyd-Taylor, Cameron, "A Place in the Sun," *BIOSCS* 31 (1998) 71-105.
——— "In a Mirror, Dimly—Reading the Septuagint as a Document of Its Times," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures,* Wolfgang Kraus and Glenn Wooden (ed.), (SBLSCS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006).
——— "Lexicography and Interlanguage—Gaining our Bearings," *BIOSCS* 37 (2004) 55-72.
——— "Calque-culations—Loanwords and the Lexicon," *BIOSCS* 38 (2005) 79-99.
——— "Reading Between the Lines – Towards an Assessment of the Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies," Thesis (Ph.D.)--University of Toronto, 2005. Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada = Bibliothèque et Archives Canada, 2006. (In Press Peeters, Leuven.)
——— "Toward the Analysis of Translational Norms: A Sighting Shot," *BIOSCS* 39 (2006) 27-46.
Hiebert, Robert J.V., "Translation Technique in the Septuagint of Genesis and Its Implications for the NETS Version," *BIOSCS* 33 (2000) 76-93.
——— "Translating a Translation: The Septuagint of Genesis and the New English Translation of the Septuagint Project," X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Oslo, 1998 (SBLSCS 51; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), pp. 263-84.
——— "Lexicography and the Translation of a Translation: The NETS Version and the Septuagint of Genesis." *BIOSCS* 37 (2004) 73-86.
——— "The Hermeneutics of Translation in the Septuagint of Genesis," in Wolfgang Kraus and Glenn Wooden (ed.), *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (SBLSCS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), pp. 85-103.
Pietersma, Albert, "Exegesis in the Septuagint: Possibilities and Limits (The Psalter as a Case in Point)," in Kraus and Wooden, *Septuagint Research,* pp. 33-45.

———— "The Seven Voices of the Lord: A Commentary on Septuagint Psalm 28," in *Interpreting Translation, FS J. Lust,* F. Garcia Martinez & M. Vervenne (ed.) (BETL; Leuven: Peeters, 2005), pp. 312-329.

———— "Messianism and the Greek Psalter: In Search of the Messiah," in M. A. Knibb, ed., *The Septuagint and Messianism* (BETL; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), pp. 49-75.

———— "A New English Translation of the Septuagint and a Commentary Series to Follow," *TLZ* 129 (2004) 1008-1015.

———— "LXX and DTS: A New Archimedean Point for Septuagint Studies," *BIOSCS* 39 (2006) 1-11.

———— "Translating a Translation, With Examples from the Greek Psalter," in pp. 169-182.

———— "Text-Production and Text-Reception: Psalm 8 in Greek," in *Die Septuaginta. Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten*, M. Karrer / W. Kraus (ed.), Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 2008, 467-481.

Smith, Jannes, "A Linguistic and Exegetical Commentary on the Hallelouia Psalms of the Septuagint," Thesis (Ph.D.)--University of Toronto, 2005. Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada = Bibliothèque et Archives Canada, 2006.

White, Wade Albert, "A Devil in the Making: Isomorphism and Exegesis in OG Job 1:8b." in Kraus and Wooden, *Septuagint Research,* pp. 145-156.

Wooden, R. Glenn, "Interlinearity in 2 Esdras: A Test Case." in Kraus and Wooden, *Septuagint Research,* pp. 119-144.

Wright, Benjamin, "Translation as Scripture: The Septuagint in Aristeas and Philo," in Kraus and Wooden, *Septuagint Research,* pp. 47-61.