

# What Old Greek Translators Did When They Did Not Know a Hebrew Form

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## 1. Introduction

Many scholars have demonstrated that Old Greek (©)<sup>1)</sup> translators did not always understand their Hebrew text.<sup>2)</sup> In translating, however, translators cannot leave a difficult or unknown form undealt with. The © translators had to represent a difficult or unknown form in some way in order to come up with a rendering that is linguistically and semantically tolerable in the textual segment in which it occurs. This article discusses the common translation practices that © translators employed when dealing with difficult or unknown Hebrew forms.

## 2. Translation Evidence that a Translator Does Not Know a Hebrew Form

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- 1) For a treatment of the different ways the term “Septuagint” is used, see Leonard Greenspoon, “The Use and Abuse of the Term ‘LXX’ and Related Terminology in Recent Scholarship”, *BIOCS* 20 (1987), 21-29. I use the term “Old Greek” (©) to refer to the original Greek translation or, more accurately, translations of the books comprising the Jewish scriptures that were included in the canonical “Old Testament” of the early church and I understand the term Septuagint (LXX) to refer more generally to include other non-canonical books as well.
- 2) Emanuel Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox, eds., *De Septuaginta: Studies in honour of John William Wevers on his sixty-fifth birthday* (Mississauga: Benden Publications, 1984 ), 53-70; Richard Ottley, *A Handbook to the Septuagint* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1919), 114-116; Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (New York: KTAV, 1902 [reprint 1968]), 329-330.

Two translation evidences often indicate that a Hebrew form is more likely a difficult or unknown form to a © translator. First, a Hebrew form is more likely a difficult or unknown form if the Hebrew form is a rare one and its © renderings are incorrect.<sup>3)</sup> For instance, the place name קִיר “Kir” in Amo 1:5 is incorrectly rendered ἐπίκλητος “the called” by the © translator. The Hebrew קִיר “Kir” is more likely a difficult or unknown form to the © translator as further evidenced by the fact that when it occurs again in Amo 9:7, the same translator incorrectly renders it as βόθρος “pit.” The fact that a Hebrew form is a difficult one is often reflected by an incorrect rendering in one or more ancient versions, namely, the Latin Vulgate, Syriac Peshitta, and Aramaic Targumim. In the case of קִיר “Kir,” it is correctly represented by the Peshitta *qjr* in Amo 1:5, but it is incorrectly represented by Targum Jonathan קִירִיני and by Vulgate *Cyrene*. The incorrect renderings of קִיר “Kir” in other places confirm that the Hebrew form is a difficult one to many ancient translators.<sup>4)</sup>

Second, a Hebrew form is more likely a difficult form to the © translator if all occurrences of the same Hebrew form are incorrectly rendered in the same translation unit. A translation unit is a book or group of books translated by the same translator. For instance, taking the Minor Prophets as a translation unit,<sup>5)</sup> the fact that all occurrences of the Hebrew סֹפָה “whirlwind” in the Minor Prophets are incorrectly rendered as καταστροφή “overthrow, destruction” (Hos 8:7) and συντέλεια “end, completion” (Amo 1:14; Nah 1:3) in the © Minor

3) It is neither claimed here (1) that every rare Hebrew form is unknown to a © translator, nor is it claimed (2) that every rendering of every rare Hebrew form is incorrect. Rather, the claim is that if a Hebrew form is a rare one and its rendering/s is/are incorrect, then the Hebrew form is more likely a difficult or unknown form to the translator.

4) Outside Amos, the proper name קִיר “Kir” occurs only two other times in the Hebrew Bible (2Ki 16:9; Isa 22:6). In 2Ki 16:9, the Peshitta correctly represents it with *qjr*, while Vulgate and Targum incorrectly represent it with *Cyrene* and קִירִיני respectively (cf. ἡ κυρηνηνιδε for קִירִי). In Isa 22:6, Peshitta, Vulgate and Targum Jonathan all associate it with its other homonym קִיר “wall,” hence, the Peshitta has שֹׁר “the wall,” the Vulgate *parietem* “the wall” and Targum Jonathan שֹׁר “wall.” The © translators eliminate it from the translation in 2Ki (4 Kgdms) 16:9, and possibly replaces it with συναγωγή “assembly” in Isa 22:6.

5) H. St. John Thackeray, “The Greek Translators of the Prophetic Books”, *JTS* 4 (1903), 578-585; see also, Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint*. Vol. 1: *An Introduction, Orthography and Accidence* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1909), 11-12.

Prophets is translation evidence that the Hebrew is a difficult form to the © Minor Prophets translator. That סִוּפָה “whirlwind” is a difficult form to the © Minor Prophets translator but not to © translators of a different translation unit is obvious from the fact that all its occurrences in the Minor Prophets are rendered incorrectly and all its occurrences outside of the Minor Prophets are rendered correctly.<sup>6)</sup>

It needs to be stated that not all incorrect renderings of a Hebrew form indicate the translator’s ignorance. An incorrect rendering of a known Hebrew form may result from a translator’s secondary attempt to make overall sense of a textual segment that contains a difficult form. In such a case, there is often translation evidence in the same translation unit that the © translator knows the Hebrew form that has been rendered incorrectly.<sup>7)</sup> For instance, in Amo 3:12, one sees the incorrect renderings of מִטָּה “bed, couch” as φυλῆς “tribe” and עֲרֹשׁ “couch, divan” as ἱερεῖς “priests.” These incorrect renderings, however, do not indicate that the translator is mistaken or ignorant of the two Hebrew forms. Translation evidences in © Amos indicate that the translator knows both Hebrew forms as evidenced by the correct renderings of עֲרֹשׁ “couch, divan” as στρωμνή “bed, couch” (Amo 6:4), and of מִטָּה “bed, couch” as κλίνη “bed” (Amo 6:4). Rather, the difficult form in Amo 3:12 is קִמְשָׁךְ “silk?” which the translator attempts to make sense of by transliterating it as the place name Δαμασκῶ “Damascus.” The incorrect renderings of מִטָּה “bed, couch” as φυλῆς “tribe” and עֲרֹשׁ “couch, divan” as ἱερεῖς “priests” are secondary adjustments

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6) Outside of the Minor Prophets, the word is properly represented by words in a similar semantic range: λαίλαψ “whirlwind, hurricane” (Job 21:18), γνόφος “darkness” (Job 27:20), δίνη “whirlwind” (Job 37:9), ὀργή “wrath” (Psa 83[82]:16) and καταιγίς “hurricane, storm” (Pro 1:27; 10:25; Isa 5:28; 17:13; 21:1; 29:6; 66:15; Jer 4:13).

7) For a theoretical discussion on such secondary adjustments that, on the surface, suggest that a © translator may be ignorant of a Hebrew form that has been rendered incorrectly, see Alpheus Graham Zobule, “A Critical Analysis of the Old Greek (©) Translation of Amos 1-5: Testing the ‘Semantic Situations and Paths’ (SSP) Model”, Ph.D. dissertation (Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 2008)”, 83-85.

made to accommodate the incorrect representation of the difficult form **דַּמְשֵׁק** “silk?” as **Δαμασκῶ** “Damascus.”<sup>8)</sup>

### 3. How A © Translator Deals With A Difficult or Unknown Hebrew Form

A © translator resorts to the following translation practices when he deals with a difficult or unknown Hebrew form: conjecture and conjectural variation, transliteration, replacement, etymological rendering, form-association rendering, segmentation, and elimination.<sup>9)</sup>

#### 3.1. Conjecture and Conjectural Variation

Conjecture and conjectural variation are the translation practices of guessing the meaning of an unknown form based on grammar, syntax, and context. These two translation practices are commonly employed and are not unexpected. For instance, in Amo 1:4, the translator is ignorant of **אַרְמְנוֹת** “citadels.”<sup>10)</sup> The translator conjectures its rendering as **θεμέλια** “foundations,” a conjecture that fits well in the syntax, and it makes good sense in the context. The various © representations of the 32 occurrences of the Hebrew form **אַרְמוֹן** are a good example of conjectural variation.<sup>11)</sup> Outside of the Minor Prophets, © translators

8) Alpheus G. Zobule, “A Critical Analysis of the Old Greek (©) of Amos 3:12 in Light of Ancient Translation Practices”, Kenneth A. McElhanon and Ger Reesink, eds., *A Mosaic of languages and cultures: studies celebrating the career of Karl J. Franklin* (Dallas: SIL International, 2010), 447-454. SIL e-Books, 19. [Dallas]: SIL International. <http://www.sil.org/silepubs/abstract.asp?id=52554>.

9) To avoid the impression that I am manufacturing my evidences, I will cite, as much as possible, examples that come from studies done by other scholars. As will become clear, however, in many cases I have re-interpreted their data.

10) William Rainey Harper, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905), 22; Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 57; Robert P. Blake, “Khanmeti Palimpsest Fragments of the Old Georgian Version of Jeremiah”, *HTR* 25 (1932), 254-256; Percy J. Heawood, “**אַרְמוֹן** and **אַרְם**”, *JTS* 13 (1911-12), 66-73; G. B. Caird, “Towards a Lexicon of the Septuagint”, *JTS* 19 (1968), 460-61.

11) Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 56-58.

vary their conjectures as follows: βασιλειον “palace” (Pro 18:19), ἀμφοδα “block of houses surrounded by streets; streets” (Jer 17:27; 30:33[49:27]), ναός “temple” (Jer 30[37]:18), οἶκος “house” (Isa 32:14), ἐναντίον “opposite, facing” (2Ki [4 Kgdm] 15:25), πόλις “city” (Isa 34:13), ἄντρον “cave” (1Ki [3 Kgdm] 16:18), βάρις “large, house” (2Ch 36:19; Psa 48[47]:4, 14; Lam 2:5, 7), πυργόβαρις “citadel, fortress” (Psa 122[121]:7), θεμέλιον “foundation” (Isa 25:2; Jer 6:5), τοίχος “wall” (Isa 23:13), and γῆ “land” (Jer 9:20). The © Minor Prophets translator varies his conjecture of the Hebrew form אַרְמֹנִים between the nouns θεμέλιον “foundation” (Hos 8:14; Amo 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 5) and χώρα “land, country” (Amo 3:9[2x], 10, 11; Mic 5:4).

### 3.2 Transliteration

Transliteration is the practice of transcribing a source language form in the receptor language. Transliterating a difficult or unknown Hebrew form by © translators is a phenomenon that has been long recognized by scholars.<sup>12)</sup> In Jdg 8:7 the © translator is ignorant of the rare form הַבְּרִקְנִים “thorny growth,” and so transliterates it as βαρκοννιμ.<sup>13)</sup> When the rare form occurs again in Jdg 8:16, the translator also transliterates it but as βαρακηνιμ. In Gen 15:2, the translator is ignorant of מַשְׂקָה “acquisition, possession,” a hapax legomenon, which occurs in the phrase בְּרִית־מַשְׂקָה, and so transliterates it, hence, the rendering υἱὸς Μαασεκ.<sup>14)</sup> In Amo 3:12, the translator is ignorant of רְמֹשֶׁק “silk?,” a hapax legomenon, and so he transliterates it as the proper name Δαμμασκιῶ “Damascus.”<sup>15)</sup> A transliteration in and of itself does not indicate the © translator’s ignorance of the underlying Hebrew form. A translator may transliterate other forms such as

12) Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, 32; Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 324-325; Michael Paul Vernon Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques of the Septuagint”, Ph.D. dissertation (Bob Jones University, 1977), 107, 144-147; Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 55-56; Tov, “Loan-words, Homophony and Transliterations in the Septuagint”, *Biblica* 60 (1979), 233-235; Tov, “Transliterations of Hebrew Words in the Greek Versions of the Old Testament”, *Textus* 8 (1973), 86-92.

13) Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 55.

14) Harry M. Orlinsky, “The Septuagint as Holy Writ and the Philosophy of the Translators”, *HUCA* 46 (1975), 104-105.

15) Zobule, “A Critical Analysis of the Old Greek (©) of Amos 3:12 in Light of Ancient Translation Practices”, 477-545.

proper nouns and technical terms (religious terms, measures, weights, etc.) for which the receptor language has no equivalent, and loan-words also appear as transliterations.<sup>16)</sup> Transliteration, as a way of dealing with unknown forms, applies only to content words or words that are expected to be translated but are instead transliterated.

### 3.3. Replacement

Replacement is the practice of replacing a source language form with a receptor language form that is semantically unrelated to it.<sup>17)</sup> The translator may replace a source language form that is unknown to him with a known but semantically unrelated receptor language form. For instance, since the obscure and rare form  $\text{הַרְשָׁא}$  “mountain slopes?” (NIV) or “flaming fire?” (RSV) in Deu 33:2 is an unknown form to the © translator, he replaces it with a semantically unrelated form  $\text{ἄγγελοι}$  “angels.”<sup>18)</sup> In Isa 28:19, the translator is ignorant of  $\text{הַצִּיָּד}$  “trembling,” and so replaces the phrase  $\text{וְהָרַקְוּ$  “only trembling” with  $\text{ἐλπὶς ποιηρά}$  “bad expectation.”<sup>19)</sup> In Jer 18:20, the translator replaces the

16) Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, 32-36; Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques”, 107; Tov, “Loan-words, Homophony and Transliterations in the Septuagint”, 217-218, 227-233.

17) Szpek calls this a “contextual translation, substitution that most often has no semantic connection with the original source language” (Heidi M. Szpek, *Translation Technique in the Peshitta to Job: A Model for Evaluating a Text with Documentation from the Peshitta to Job*, SBL Dissertation Series 137 [Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1992], 171). I reserve the term “substitution” for a translation practice that involves substituting a known form, not an unknown form, with another known form. See Zobule, “A Critical Analysis of the Old Greek (©) Translation of Amos 1-5”, 76-77.

18) James Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations*, *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens* 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 302-303. The noun  $\text{הַרְשָׁא}$  is also a difficult form to Aquila, Symmachus, Vulgate, Targum Onkelos, and Peshitta. In order to make sense of the textual segment, Peshitta eliminates it from the translation, while other ancient translators segment it as  $\text{הַרְשָׁא}$ , hence, Aquila  $\text{πῦρ δόγμα}$ , Symmachus  $\text{πυρρινός νόμος}$ , Vulgate *igne lex* and Targum Onkelos  $\text{אִישָׁהּ אֲרִיָּהּ}$ . In Deu, a similar form  $\text{הַרְשָׁא}$  “foundation” occurs in the phrase  $\text{הַפְּסָגָה הַרְשָׁא}$  (Deu 3:17; 4:49). Ignorant of this Hebrew form, the © Deu translator transliterates it as  $\text{Ασηδωθ}$ . In Jos 10:40; 12:3, 8; 13:20, the same Hebrew form is also transliterated as  $\text{Ασηδωθ}$ .

19) Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 59.

unknown form שוּחָה “pit” in כָּרוּ שוּחָה לְנַפְשִׁי “they dug a pit for my soul” with ῥήματα “words.”<sup>20)</sup> In Amo 2:8, יְעוֹרְשִׁים “fined” is replaced by συκοφαντιῶν “false accusation.” Since the translation practice of replacement involves a Greek form that is semantically unrelated to the Hebrew form it replaces, the resultant Greek translation is incorrect.

### 3.4 Etymological Rendering

Etymological rendering is the practice of deriving the meaning of a form from its original root/s or from its cognate in a cognate language. In an etymological rendering, the meaning that the translator uses is traceable to a root or cognate of a cognate language, and the form that the translator seeks to represent and the meaning of the root that the translator uses must be shown to be semantically related. For instance, granted that the noun צְלִמּוֹת is related to an original expression צֶל מְוֵה “shadow of death,” then the © translators employ true etymological rendering when they segment and render צְלִמּוֹת as σκιά θανάτου.<sup>21)</sup> The two cognate languages, namely, the languages of the Peshitta and Targum, also represent separately the two components of צְלִמּוֹת.<sup>22)</sup> One may admit as another example of etymological rendering תְּהַבְּלוֹת which is rendered κυβέρνησις “generalship?” (Pro 1:5; 11:14; 12:5; 24:6; Job 37:12), if תְּהַבְּלוֹת is indeed etymologically related to הַבֵּל “steersman, captain” (Eze 27:8, 27, 28) which is rendered κυβερνήτης. The representation of the noun in the

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20) Ibid., 59. The fact that שוּחָה “pit” is a difficult form to the © Jer translator is again evident from its incorrect renderings in Jer 2:6 as ἀβάτω “untrodden, impassable” and in Jer 18:22 as λόγον “word.” Note that the Hebrew form is correctly rendered by the © Pro translator in Pro 22:14 as βόθρος “pit” and in Pro 23:27 as τετρημένος “bored.”

21) Barr, *The Typology of Literalism*, 302.

22) The noun צְלִמּוֹת occurs 18 times and it is represented as follows in ©: σκιά θανάτου (Job 3:5; 12:22; 24:17, 17; 28:3; Psa 23[22]:4; 44[43]:20; 107[106]:10, 14; Isa 9:1; Jer 13:16; Amo 5:8), γνοφεράν (Job 10:21), σκιά (Job 16:16), ζῆδου (Job 38:17), ἀκάρπω (Jer 2:6), οὐκ ἔστιν φέγγος (Job 10:22), and left unrendered (Job 34:22). The Peshitta segments every occurrence of צְלִמּוֹת as *ʕllj mwt* “shadows of death.” The Targum Jonathan represents צְלִמּוֹת with מוּהָא “shades of death” in all but its occurrences in Jer 13:16 and Amo 5:8 where it represents it with הַשׁוּךְ and קַבֵּל respectively. The Vulgate represents it with *umbra mortis* “shades of death” in all but in a few places (Job 10:21; 16:16; 24:17b; 38:17; Jer 2:6; Amo 5:8) where it uses a word that means “dark” or “death.”

difficult expression רַחֲמָיו “his allies” (Amo 1:11) with the noun μήτρα “womb,” which is the usual representation of רֶחֶם “womb,” is another example of etymological rendering.

### 3.5 Form-association Rendering

Form-association rendering is the practice of representing the meaning of a form with the meaning of another similar but semantically unrelated form.<sup>23)</sup> The translator may employ a form-association rendering when he does not know the meaning of a difficult or unknown Hebrew form. This translation phenomenon is a very common one, but it has been incorrectly labeled as “etymological” rendering or exegesis by Tov, Barr, and others.<sup>24)</sup> The words “etymology” or “etymological” are inadequate descriptive terms for such a phenomenon because the two forms that the translator associates are similar only in form but are not etymologically related in any way. The term “form-association” is the best descriptive term for such translation phenomenon. For instance, the © translator is ignorant of the meaning of the rare form הַמִּשְׁפָּתִים “campfires?” or “sheepfolds?” of Jdg 5:16, and so he associates מִשְׁפָּתִים with the similar but semantically unrelated form שְׁפָתוֹת “lips” and renders מִשְׁפָּתִים as χεῖλέων “lips” (Jdg 5:15 [MS A]).<sup>25)</sup> In Isa 28:17, the © translator is ignorant

23) I borrow David Weissert’s term *form-association* to refer to the translation phenomenon of associating one form with a similar but semantically unrelated form. David Weissert, “Alexandrian Analogical Word-Analysis and Septuagint Translation Techniques-A Case Study of חלל-חיל-חול”, *Textus* 8 (1974), 31-44. Weissert says, “In problematic cases the derivation or reduction of certain verb-forms was accomplished by the method of *analogy* or *form-association*” (Ibid., 36). Weissert applies the terms *analogy* or *form-association* only to certain verb forms. My use of the term *form-association* is not restricted to verbs.

24) Emanuel Tov, “Excursus: Etymological Exegesis”, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged (Jerusalem: Simor Ltd, 1997), 172-180; Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 67-69; Barr, “*The Typology of Literalism*”, 318-322; Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques”, 184.

25) Tov, “Did The Septuagint Translators Always Understand their Hebrew Text?”, 69; Tov, “Excursus: Etymological Exegesis”, 173. The unknown form מִשְׁפָּתִים occurs in the phrase בֵּין הַמִּשְׁפָּתִים here and in Gen 49:14, where the © Genesis translator also finds מִשְׁפָּתִים an unknown form and so replaces it with a semantically unrelated form κλήρος (“portion, lot”), hence, the rendering ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν κλήρων.



of the form מִשְׁקֶלֶת “leveling instrument, level” and so associates it with a similar but semantically unrelated form מִשְׁקָל “weight” and renders it σταθμούς “weight.”<sup>26)</sup> In Isa 1:25, the © translator is ignorant of בַּר “lye, potash” and so associates it with a similar but semantically unrelated form בָּרַר “to purify” or בַּר “pure” and renders it as καθαρόν “clean, pure.”<sup>27)</sup> In Amo 7:1, the translator associates לְקֵשׁ “after-growth, after-math” with the similar but semantically unrelated form לְקָ “locust,” hence the rendering βροῦχος “locust.”<sup>28)</sup>

Two general observations may be noted regarding the application of a form-association rendering. First, the number or order of the consonants in the difficult or unknown form does not have to match those of the consonants of the similar but semantically unrelated form with which the translator associates. All the translator looks for is for at least two consonants to be similar or the same. In

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26) Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques”, 184. Barrett associates מִשְׁקֶלֶת “leveling instrument, level” with שָׁקָל “measures” but it is more likely that the translator associates מִשְׁקֶלֶת with מִשְׁקָל “weight.” Of the 88 times that the noun שָׁקָל occurs, it is primarily rendered by δίδραχμον (e.g., Gen 23:15, 16; Exo 21:32) or σίκλος (e.g., Exo 30:24; 39:1,1); it is rendered by σταθμός only once (Lev 27:3) and by στάθμιον only 2 times (Eze 45:12; Amo 8:5). The form מִשְׁקָל “weight,” however, is primarily rendered by σταθμός (e.g., Gen 43:21; Lev 26:26; Jdg 8:26; 1Sa [1 Kgdm] 17:5; 2Sa [2 Kgdm] 12:30; 21:16; 1Ki 7:47 [3 Kgdm 7:32]; 10:14; 25:16; 1Ch 20:2; 22:3, 14; 28:14, 16, 17, 18; 2Ch 9:13; Eze [2 Es] 8:30, 34; Job 28:25; Jer 52:20; Eze 4:16) and twice by στάθμιον “weight, small stone” (Lev. 19:35; Eze 5:1). The form מִשְׁקֶלֶת occurs in another place only in 2Ki (4 Kgdm) 21:13 and there the translator also takes a similar form-association rendering by rendering it as τὸ στάθμιον “weight, small stone.”

27) Barr, *The Typology of Literalism*, 321. An observation of how the other versions deal with this difficult form indicates the following. The Vulgate and Peshitta also follow a similar form-association rendering and render the form בָּרַר in Isa 1:25 as *ad purum* and *dkjw* respectively. Aquila also does a form-association rendering but uses a Greek form that is slightly different semantically, namely, ἐκλεκτός “select, choice.” For the occurrence of the form בַּר “lye, potash” in Job 9:30, © does another form-association rendering but turns it into an adjective representing the phrase בָּרַר כְּפֵי with χερσὶν καθααίς “pure hands,” the Vulgate as well as the Peshitta make form-association renderings and represent בָּרַר with *mundissimae* “shining clean” and *bdkjw*’ “with purity” respectively while the Targum Job replaces it with באהלא “with aloe.”

28) Note that the © Minor Prophets translator has rendered לְקָ “locust” as βροῦχος “locust” elsewhere (Joe 1:4; 2:25; Nah 3:15, 16).

Isa 1:25, the translator associates a two-consonant form בר “lye, potash” with a three-consonant form ברר “pure,” hence, the rendering καθαρόν “clean.” In Isa 14:12, the © translator associates the unknown form חוּלֵשׁ “the one who crushes, defeat” with its transposed form שׁוּלְחַ “the one who sends,” hence, the rendering ὁ ἀποστέλλων “the one who sends.”<sup>29)</sup> In Mic 6:14, the © translator associates the unknown form רְחִיטָה “emptiness?,” a hapax legomenon, with the verb חָשַׁךְ “it will darken” and renders it as σκοτάσει “you shall darken.”<sup>30)</sup> In 2Ch 3:10, the © translator associates the unknown five-consonant form צַעֲצָעִים “things formed, images” with the two-consonant form עֵץ “tree” and represents it with ξύλων “trees.”<sup>31)</sup> Second, the translator may look for a similar but semantically unrelated form in a cognate language. For the © translator this language is usually Aramaic.<sup>32)</sup> In Hab 3:16, the © translator associates the rare

29) Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques”, 184.

30) Takamitsu Muraoka, “Hebrew Hapax Legomena and Septuagint Lexicography”, Claude E. Cox, ed., *VII Congress of the IOSCS, Leuven 1989*, SCS 31 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1991), 210.

31) Tov, “Excursus: Etymological Exegesis”, 174.

32) Theoretically the © translator could also associate an unknown form with a similar but semantically unrelated form in the receptor language, namely, Greek. Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, 36-38, has pointed to possible examples. However, one must be careful not to accept uncritically all the examples that Thackeray gives. Many of the examples that Thackeray gives do not involve difficult forms and would properly classify as homophonic associations, but they are “forced” homophonic associations that have no phonetic resemblance to their Hebrew equivalents. Other scholars have also suggested that homophony is a translation technique employed by Septuagint translators (Charles T. Fritsch, “Homophony in the Septuagint”, *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies* [1973], I [Jerusalem 1977], 115-120; G. B. Caird, “Homoeophony in the Septuagint”, Robert Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs, eds., *Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976], 74-88; Tov, “Loan-words, Homophony and Transliterations in the Septuagint”, 223-227), but Barr has appropriately cast doubts on such a suggestion (James Barr, “Doubts about Homoeophony in the Septuagint”, *Textus* 12 [1985], 1-77). Barr has observed that “translation on the basis of phonetic resemblance is to be found in a small handful of cases and with rare or specialized words. On common and key vocabulary items it probably had no effect” (77). However, such a phenomenon is theoretically possible and may also involve known words when an unknown word occurs in the same textual segment. In the phrase וּבְדִמְשֶׁק עֵרֶשׁ (Amo 3:12), the translator transliterates the unknown form דְּמִשְׁק as Δαμασκῶ. Having done that, he now cannot render the known form עֵרֶשׁ “bed”

form צָלַל, from צָלַל “to tingle, quiver,” with the similar but semantically unrelated Aramaic form צַלִי “to pray,” hence, the rendering προσευχῆς “prayer.”<sup>33)</sup> In Psa 60 (59): 10; 108(107):10, the © translator associates the rare noun רְחִצִי “my washbasin” with the similar but semantically unrelated Aramaic form רְחִצִי “to trust” and renders רְחִצִי as τῆς ἐλπίδος μου “my hope.”<sup>34)</sup>

### 3.6. Segmentation

Segmentation is the practice of segmenting a source language form below the word level and then representing the different constituents of the form as meaningful forms in a receptor language. The translator may segment and represent constituents of difficult or unknown forms. One or all of the segments may turn out to be meaningful forms but otherwise the translator may also apply form-association rendering on the other segments. In Amo 4:10, the © translator segments the rare form בְּאֵשׁ “stench” as בְּ אֵשׁ “in fire” and represents it by ἐν πυρὶ “in fire.” In Amo 1:14, the translator segments סוּפָה “whirlwind” as ה 3fs suffix and סוּף “end, completion”, hence the rendering συντελείας αὐτῆς “her end.” In Nah 1:12, in the expression אִם־שְׁלָמִים וְכֵן רַבִּים “though they are safe and are many” the © translator is ignorant of שְׁלָמִים and so segments אִם־שְׁלָמִים as אַמְשַׁל מִים, and leaving aside the initial א on אַמְשַׁל and וְכֵן in the phrase, he comes up with a meaningful phrase מִשַׁל מִים רַבִּים, which he then renders as κατάρχων ὑδάτων πολλῶν “rules over many waters.”

The translation practice of segmenting a Hebrew form was practiced not just by © translators but by other ancient translators as well. In Isa 18:1, Aquila

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correctly without having a linguistically intolerable phrasal segment and so he associates עֲרֹשׁ with ἱερεῖς “priests” and represents it by ἱερεῖς. This could be called a homophonic association but it is better called just a similar form-association rendering resulting in a transliteration.

33) Tov, “Excursus: Etymological Exegesis”, 179.

34) Ibid.; Staffan Olofsson, *The LXX Version: A Guide to the Translation Technique of the Septuagint*, Coniectanea Biblica, Old Testament Series 30 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 7. Other examples of form-association rendering may be gleaned from Tov, “Excursus: Etymological Exegesis”, 179-180; Staffan Olofsson, *The LXX Version*, 28-30; Ottley, *A Handbook to the Septuagint*, 114-115; Muraoka, “Hebrew Hapax Legomena and Septuagint Lexicography”, 205-222. For a discussion on the possible influence of late Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic on the © translators, see also J. Joosten, “On the LXX Translators’ Knowledge of Hebrew”, Bernard Taylor, ed., *X Congress of the IOSCS, Oslo, 1998*, SCS 45 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001), 165-179.

segments צלצל “whirring” as צל צל and represents it by σκιά σκιά’ “dark, dark.”<sup>35)</sup> In Exo 32:25, Aquila segments the hapax legomenon שִׁמְצָה as שִׁם צה “name of ?” Note that the segment שִׁם “name” is a meaningful form, but the segment צה is not, so Aquila further associates צה with a similar but semantically unrelated form צִאָה “filth,” and represents שִׁמְצָה by εἰς ὄνομα ῥύπου.<sup>36)</sup> In Deu 33:2, Aquila segments the rare noun אֲשֵׁרֶת “mountain slopes?” or “flaming fire?” as אֵשׁ תֵּר “fire of the law” and represents it by πῦρ δόγμα; and the same form is also segmented by Symmachus and represented by πυρινὸς νόμος.<sup>37)</sup> (As has been discussed under the translation practice of replacement, the © translator replaces the difficult אֲשֵׁרֶת with ἄγγελοι “angels.”)

### 3.7. Elimination

Elimination is the practice of removing the receptor language equivalent of a source language unknown form from the translation. In this translation practice the translator eliminates any representation of the unknown form from the translation if, by doing so, it does not create an unresolvable semantic situation in his translation. The translator may make other adjustments that prevent the rendering of the textual segment from becoming linguistically and semantically intolerable. In 2Ki (4 Kgdms) 4:35 in וַיִּגְהַר עָלָיו וַיִּזְוֹרֶר הַנֶּעַר עַד־שִׁבְעַ פְּעָמִים “and he stretched upon him, and the child sneezed seven times,” the translator is ignorant of זרר “to sneeze,” a hapax legomenon,<sup>38)</sup> so he eliminates וַיִּזְוֹרֶר from the translation and then slightly reorganizes the syntax to arrive at καὶ συνέκαμψεν ἐπὶ τὸ παιδάριον ἕως ἑπτάκις “and he bowed himself upon the child seven times.” In the segment וְהָיוּ לְאֵלֶּה לְשִׁמָּה וְלִקְלָלָה וְלַחֲרָפָה (Jer 44 [51]:12) “and they shall become a cursing, horror, a curse, and a disgrace,” the

35) Barr, *The Typology of Literalism*, 300. The Targum Jonathan ספינן “ships” and the © πλοίων “ships” probably render the Hebrew form correctly. The Peshitta translator associates it with the similar but semantically unrelated Syriac form *ʾll'* “shade, shadow,” while the Vulgate *cymbalum* “cymbal; sound” associates צלצל with a similar but semantically unrelated form צלצלים “cymbal.”

36) *Ibid.*, 300.

37) *Ibid.*, 302.

38) Barrett, “A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques”, 147. Another example that Barrett gives is the verb צנך in Isa 22:18, a verb which occurs another time only in Lev 16:4 (*Ibid.*, 184-185).

Jer β translator is ignorant of אָלָה “curse” and so he eliminates it from the translation, hence, the resultant rendering of the expression is καὶ ἔσονται εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν καὶ εἰς ἀπώλειαν καὶ εἰς κατάραν “and they shall be for a reproach, destruction, and a curse.”<sup>39)</sup> For the other occurrence of אָלָה in Jer 42(49):18, the translator replaces it with another semantically unrelated form, namely, ἄβρατον “untrodden, impassable.” The noun לְקַשׁ “after-growth, after-math” occurs only twice and both of them are in Amo 7:1.<sup>40)</sup> Ignorant of the noun, the translator eliminates its first occurrence from the translation, and associates the second occurrence with the similar but semantically unrelated form לְקַשׁ “locust,” hence, the rendering βροῦχος “locust.” To accommodate this incorrect rendering, he associates אַחַר “after” with אֶחָד “one” and גִּוִּי “mowing” with גֹּג “Gog” so that וְהָיָה לְקַשׁ אַחַר גִּוִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ “and behold it was the latter growth after the king’s mowings” is now represented by καὶ ἰδοὺ βροῦχος εἰς Γωγ ὁ βασιλεύς “and behold, one caterpillar, king Gog.”<sup>41)</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

Scholars have long recognized that © translators did not always know their Hebrew text. Modern day translators often betray their ignorance of a Hebrew with a footnote like “*Hebrew is uncertain*,” but © translators are not known to have employed footnotes in their translation. As translators, however, ©

39) Takamitsu Muraoka, “Literary Device in the Septuagint”, *Textus* 8 (1973), 26. Muraoka assumes Thackeray’s two-translator theory for Jer. However, even if one does not assume Thackeray’s theory, the translator also seems to have eliminated it from the translation in Jer 23:10, which would be in Jer α according to Thackeray’s theory. The form also occurs in Jer 29:18, but the entire verse has no corresponding Greek text.

40) The verb לְקַשׁ “to take the aftermath” (Job 24:6) which is a hapax legomenon is also an unknown form to the © Job translator. The translator replaces it with ἠργάσαντο “they worked,” a verb which, though semantically unrelated to the unknown form, still makes sense in the textual segment. See Homer Heater, Jr., *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job*, Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 11 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982), 78-79, 138.

41) The Hebrew אַחַר (rendered μετὰ ταῦτα in Hos 3:5) is not a difficult form to the © Minor Prophets translator. The noun גִּוִּי occurs only in Amo 7:1 in the Minor Prophets, and quite possibly another difficult form to the © Minor Prophets translator.

translators had to deal with difficult or unknown forms, for leaving a difficult or unknown Hebrew form undealt with would create more difficulties in the translation. The basic question faced by the © translators in such a situation is how to represent meaningfully the difficult or unknown Hebrew form. This gave rise to the translation practices discussed above. In employing these translation practices, the primary aim of the © translators is to come up with a rendering that is semantically and linguistically tolerable, not necessarily correct, in the textual segment in which the difficult or unknown Hebrew form occurs. For each of the examples of the difficult or unknown Hebrew forms discussed above, a comparison of the meaning of the Hebrew form and its © representation reveals that both mean different things, and if accuracy in translation is measured by how closely a © translation renders the meaning of the Hebrew form, then the © rendering may be said to be incorrect or wrong. However, since the Hebrew form is difficult or unknown to the © translators, translation accuracy is out of the question and instead the foremost aim in the mind of the © translators is to give a © representation that is meaningful in and of itself and also meaningful in the textual segment in which the difficult or unknown Hebrew form occurs.

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Old Greek, translation practice, unknown Hebrew forms, conjecture, conjectural variation, transliteration, replacement, etymological rendering, form-association rendering, segmentation, and elimination.

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<Abstract>

## 히브리어 어형을 몰랐을 때 고대 그리스어 번역자들은 어떻게 했는가

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설교자들은 잘 모르는 히브리어 어형(form)에 대해 얼버무리고 지나가거나 단순하게 무시할 수 있는 반면 성경 번역자들은 그러한 자유를 누릴 수 없다. 번역자들은 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 히브리어 어형을 다루어야만 한다. 현대 성경 번역에서 번역자들은 “히브리어 원문 불분명”이라는 각주를 달고, 그들의 히브리어 어형에 대한 무지를 종종 드러내곤 한다. 옛 성경 번역자들은 히브리어 어형을 모를 때 각주를 활용한 것으로 알려지지 않았다. 그러나 이들은 여전히 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 히브리어 어형을 다루어야만 했다. 이와 관련하여 고대 그리스어 번역자들이 어떻게 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 히브리어 어형을 다루었는가에 대해 질문을 제기할 수 있다. 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 어형의 의미를 추측하는 번역 방법은 고대 그리스어 번역자들이 흔하게 취했던 방법이었으나 이 외에도 이러한 어형들을 다룰 때 이들이 취했던 다른 방법들이 있다. 이 논문은 고대 그리스어 번역자들이 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 어형을 다룰 때 채택했던 일곱 가지 번역 방법을 확인하고 그에 대한 사례들을 제시하고 있다. 고대 그리스어 번역자들이 채택한 번역 방법은 결과적으로 틀리거나 올바르지 않은 번역을 낳았다. 그러나 이러한 번역은 비록 틀리거나 올바르지 않더라도 고대 그리스어 번역자들이 어렵거나 알려지지 않은 히브리어 어형에 대해 의미 있는 뜻풀이를 제공하기 위한 시도들을 나타낸다.