

Dissertation Summary

SEPTUAGINT LEXICOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE CHANGE IN GREEK JUDGES¹

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The language of the Septuagint has a mixed reputation. Although many explanations could be offered for this state of affairs, at a fundamental level the matter is one of perspective. With such a diverse corpus of texts traditionally falling under the rubric of ‘the Septuagint’, scholars understandably differ over which aspects of the data to emphasise in their analysis as well as the standards with which to carry out that analysis. The prevailing tradition in scholarship typically views the degree of word-for-word correspondence between the Greek and Hebrew texts under analysis as the data fundamental to evaluating the language of the Septuagint. From this perspective, it is the supposed Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* that provides a default standard of analysis. Other scholars frame the discussion in different terms, however, preferring to address the language of the Septuagint first of all in light of contemporary conventions, such that the Greek linguistic milieu provides both the controlling standards and data for analysis. To be sure, these two perspectives are not strictly contradictory, and each has its own purposes and benefits.

This dissertation follows the second path. In doing so, it follows in the footsteps of scholars such as Adolf Deissmann, Henry St. John Thackeray, John A. L. Lee, Trevor V. Evans, and James K. Aitken, all of whom have shown the importance of situating the language of the Septuagint within the broader history of Greek. One area in which the benefits of doing so could not be clearer is that of lexicography. Yet, despite increasing interest and promising developments in this area of the discipline, Septuagint lexicography as a whole remains remarkably

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underdeveloped, unsettled in method, and practically isolated from its linguistic milieu. This dissertation sets out to address these issues by using case studies of language change within the textual history of Greek Judges and by offering several sample lexical entries that demonstrate the results of this approach to Septuagint lexicography.

As explained in the first chapter of the dissertation, Greek Judges has a very complex textual history that provides unique opportunities for lexical analysis. Generally speaking, the Hebrew textual tradition is very well preserved and, with the exception of chapter 5, exhibits little obvious instability. The Greek tradition is significantly more complicated, but possible to analyse in two distinct historical stages: the reconstructed Old Greek (OG or Judg^{OG}) and a revision preserved in the so-called B group of witnesses (Judg^{Rv}). Although Judg^{Rv} did often revise the Greek text towards a proto-MT exemplar in terms of syntax, it also made consistent changes to OG vocabulary that are demonstrably not motivated by the source text. Many of these revised vocabulary choices represent intentional changes that arose from linguistic and stylistic concerns for Judg^{Rv} as a Greek text. These changes are the focus of the lexicographical analysis in this dissertation, as they can only be understood within the history of the Greek language *per se*.

To illustrate the practicalities and payoff of a lexicographical method that situates the language of the Septuagint within its contemporary historical and linguistic context, the second chapter orients the discussion with a historical survey of key developments and debates in Septuagint lexicography. This survey has two parts. The first part focuses on the legacy of serious shortcomings in practical lexicography from the pre-modern era – that is, issues of method and primary evidence – by discussing concordances and lexicons for the Septuagint from their first appearance in the early seventeenth century. The second part focuses more on developments in theoretical lexicography from the beginning of the twentieth century, which were largely driven by the discovery and evaluation of the non-literary evidence for post-classical Greek in papyri and inscriptions. This survey then identifies how these historical developments led to the entrenchment in the late twentieth century of two main views of Septuagint lexicography among specialists and advances key practical measures for the so-called Greek-priority view as the best way forward.

The following three chapters present case studies of language change in Greek Judges based on the Greek-priority view. The vocabulary

discussed was chosen on the basis of its relatively higher frequency of occurrence in the texts under analysis as well as the consistency with which words were at first used in Judg^{OG} and later replaced in Judg^{Rv}. Each chapter first explains the nature of the difference in vocabulary selection between Judg^{OG} and Judg^{Rv} before moving on to lexical analysis of the relevant vocabulary in post-classical Greek sources. The chapters conclude by pointing out implications for Septuagint lexicography, the multifaceted motivations underlying the revision of Judg^{OG}, and the value of Septuagint vocabulary itself as evidence for Greek lexicography in general. In addition to offering general conclusions as discussed below, the final chapter also includes sample lexical entries for several of the words discussed.

Chapter 3 considers vocabulary associated with *battle* concepts. Wherever **םחל** or **מהחלמ** appear in the Hebrew text of Judges, the OG translator preferred to render these words using *πολεμέω* and *πόλεμος* respectively. However, that OG vocabulary choice was later replaced with *παράτασσω* and *παράταξις* in virtually every instance. Major lexicons offer little help as to why the latter two Greek lexemes would be suitable replacements for the former. But detailed diachronic study of *παράτασσω* and *παράταξις* in post-classical literary and non-literary sources shows how these words underwent semantic change in the Hellenistic period such that they acquired new senses that made the words suitable to represent the meaning of **םחל** and **מהחלמ**. The revisional preference, therefore, is not at all semantically odd, as current reference works might lead one to conclude. Indeed, the linguistic register of primary sources in which the newer senses of *παράτασσω* and *παράταξις* appear suggest that their use in Judg^{Rv} arose from a desire for a more educated style in the lexicon of the revised Greek text even while simultaneously adjusting points of its syntax towards the Hebrew.

Chapter 4 moves on to vocabulary associated with concepts for a *young male*. The revisional choices for this Greek vocabulary are not as consistent as seen for the *battle* vocabulary in the previous chapter, but distinct trends do appear that bespeak similar underlying motivation. Where the word **על** appears in Judges, the OG text almost exclusively uses *παιδάριον* as its translation, whereas Judg^{Rv} opts for more variety, using not only *παιδάριον* but also *παιδίον*, *νεανίσκος*, and *νεανίας*. Again, consulting major lexicons provides little help as to why any one of these words might have been chosen over any other in terms of Greek lexical semantics, partly owing to the insufficient approach to

representing meaning typically taken in such reference works. Owing to trends in the frequency with which these words are used in Greek Judges (and/or external sources), the analysis in this chapter focuses mostly upon παιδάριον and νεανίσκος. By examining how these words were used within papyri and inscriptions that represent the linguistic milieu of Judg^{Rv}, it becomes apparent that the *young male* vocabulary was employed in the revised text not only in conformity with contemporary conventions specific to the social context of Ptolemaic Egypt, but also with careful attention to the narrative contexts in which the words were deployed in Judg^{Rv}. Moreover, at points, this lexical replacement in Judg^{Rv} occurs in the same phrase in which Hebraising syntactic revision also occurred, once more illustrating that the desire for the text of Judg^{Rv} to more closely represent a Hebrew exemplar clearly overlapped with a simultaneous concern to improve the translation in terms of its style as a Greek text.

Chapter 5 presents the last case study of language change pertaining to vocabulary for *meeting* concepts. Wherever עָנַף or the construction תִּקְרָא appears in the Hebrew text, the OG text attests ἀπαντάω and ἀπνάντησις respectively, whereas the revised text replaces those choices with συναντάω and συνάντησις respectively. The choice in both texts of a nominal – either ἀπνάντησις or συνάντησις – to render the Hebrew construction תִּקְרָא was suitable owing to the existence, if sparsely attested, of a similar construction in Greek using εἰς, one that was used throughout the Greek Pentateuch for the same Hebrew construction. While most current lexicons sufficiently represent the degree to which ἀπαντάω and ἀπνάντησις overlap semantically with συναντάω and συνάντησις, thereby making the lexical substitution possible, by the same token they do not provide enough information to help understand why one set might be chosen over the other. But examination of non-literary sources, especially inscriptions, demonstrates the developing association of ἀπαντάω and ἀπνάντησις as semi-technical terms related to the Hellenistic ruler cult as of the mid-second century BC. The replacement of ἀπαντάω and ἀπνάντησις in Judg^{Rv} with συναντάω and συνάντησις is therefore best explained as motivated by a desire to avoid using technical terminology inappropriately and instead to use the rarer words συναντάω and συνάντησις, just as in the Greek Pentateuch.

The final chapter presents implications of the dissertation. For the study of Greek Judges, the linguistic evidence analysed provides valuable external evidence from which to postulate a timeframe of

translation in light of the different vocabulary preferences. This evidence suggests that Judg^{OG} was produced in the early second century BC while Judg^{Rv} was completed sometime in the first century BC in Ptolemaic Egypt by one or more individuals acquainted with the details of military and civic life. These timeframes, moreover, agree with what other scholars have postulated for Greek Judges on the basis of different evidence. More broadly, this dissertation also contributes to the discussion of the language of the Septuagint, particularly in pointing out how the motivation underlying revision of Judg^{OG} was multifaceted. The revision of Greek Judges aimed not just at greater conformity with its source text, but also at greater comprehensibility and style in Greek. Balancing the complex factors involved to achieve both of these goals at once attests to the considerable skill required for the revision of Greek Judges and suggests a readership that would have appreciated it. To focus solely on how Judg^{Rv} corresponds syntactically with the Hebrew text, therefore, would be to miss the subtlety and skill of its vocabulary choice. That vocabulary choice, however, could never be fully understood without taking the Greek-priority view, which advocates thorough investigation of contemporary post-classical Greek sources, both literary and non-literary, prior to evaluating the language of the Septuagint. In this connection, Septuagint lexicography must undertake the arduous but critical task of incorporating such evidence into reference works – a task that has not even begun in earnest – in order to support or refine our description of lexical semantics in the corpus and thus equip scholarship for more accurate analysis. Chapter 6 also contains sample entries for the words παρατάσσω, παράταξις, ἀπάντησις, ἀπαντάω, συνάντησις, and συναντάω.