

1. Introduction

From the early Hellenistic period onwards, Greek was adopted as the lingua franca in the Middle East. For Jews, this linguistic change brought about the rendering of their scriptures into Greek, many of which were included in the Septuagint. No two translations within this corpus are the same. Some have been considered “literal,” others “free.” Literalism pertains primarily to following the word order of the source text, quantitative representation, and stereotypical word choices.² Freedom tends to be explained as the absence of these features.³ A Septuagint book’s linguistic character is often seen in relation to the translation approach:⁴ a literal translation has been understood to imply frequent interference from the Hebrew source text and has, as such, traditionally been deemed “bad Greek” by modern scholars. This is the case for the Song of Songs, for example, a book which has been described as a slavish representation of its Hebrew source.⁵ Writing “good Greek,” on the contrary, is often associated with “free” translation, such as in the case of the book of Job.⁶

1. This article is a revision of a paper presented during the 2016 Conference of the British Association for Jewish Studies, as part of a panel entitled “The Hellenistic Shaping of Textuality,” organized by James K. Aitken and myself. The research for this paper, as well as participation in the conference, was made possible by funding granted by the F.R.S.-FNRS. The author is currently a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Cambridge.

2. Prominent studies on literalism in Septuagint translations include James Barr, “The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations,” *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse. MSU* 15 (1979) 279–325; Emanuel Tov and Benjamin G. E. Wright, “Computer-Assisted Study of the Criteria for Assessing the Literalness of Translation Units in the Septuagint,” *Textus* 12 (1985): 151–187; Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (3rd ed.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 22–25.

3. An attempt at a systematic typology of free translation in the Septuagint is offered by Theo van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint: Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies* (CBET 47; Leuven: Peeters, 2007).

4. See, for example, the well-known categorization presented by Henry St. J. Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 13.

5. Gillis Gerlemen, *Ruth – Das Hohelied* (Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament 18; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1965), 80; Folker Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischen Bibel und Alten Testament: Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta* (Münsteraner judaistische Studien 9; Münster, 2001), 42.

6. See, for example, Claude E. Cox, *Iob* (SBLCS; forthcoming), passim (references to this commentary are based on a provisional copy of this work generously provided by Claude Cox in advance of its publication); Harry Orlinsky, “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job. Chapter II: The Character of the Septuagint

But what does “good” or “bad” Greek mean? We may question these evaluative labels. For centuries, scholars have observed that the language of the Septuagint is peculiar compared to the language of non-translated Greek writings.⁷ In recent years, this peculiarity has been called into question. It has been demonstrated that the language of the Pentateuch corresponds to the vernacular language of contemporary non-literary papyri.⁸ In that regard, the Greek of the Septuagint is not out of the ordinary and should not be regarded as “bad” Greek. Yet, the Septuagint is characterized by significant degrees of interference from the Semitic source text, the result of which leaves the reader with the impression that the Greek of the Septuagint does have a specific linguistic character.⁹

In this article I want to discuss how we can understand the broad range of translational and linguistic profiles of Septuagint translations. Scholars have been focusing mainly on the study of individual books, or on groups of books that appear to be closely related in terms of translation approach, such as the Pentateuch or the Minor Prophets. The diverse character of the books of the Septuagint has made it difficult to see these translations as a coherent corpus. This does not imply that the Septuagint was already a unity as such in the Hellenistic era, but that these books belong within a similar socio-cultural context, namely that of the Greek-speaking Jews in the Middle East during the Hellenistic era. How can we see such a varied corpus of translated writings as the product of one cultural environment? I will start by assessing various explanations that have been given to account for the existence of different translation approaches. I will then reflect on the supposed link between the translation approach of Septuagint books and their linguistic characters. Lastly, I will explain how the linguistic character of the Septuagint has been shaped within the context of a Jewish-Greek literary tradi-

Translation of the Book of Job,” *HUCA* 29 (1958): 229–71; Idem, “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job. Chapter III: On the Matter of Anthropomorphisms, Anthropopathisms, and Euphemisms,” *HUCA* 30 (1959): 153–67; Idem, “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job. Chapter III (continued),” *HUCA* 32 (1961): 239–68.

7. See the overview of scholarship presented by Jan G. A. Ros, *De studie van het Bijbelgrieksch van Hugo Grotius tot Adolf Deissmann: Openbare les gegeven bij de aanvaarding van zijn werkzaamheid als privaat-docent in de literatuurgeschiedenis van het Griekse proza aan de R.K. Universiteit te Nijmegen op 30 October 1940* (Nijmegen: Dekker & Van de Vegt, 1940).

8. See, for example, James K. Aitken, *No Stone Unturned: Greek Inscriptions and Septuagint Vocabulary* (CSHB 5; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2014); Trevor V. Evans, *Verbal Syntax in the Greek Pentateuch: Natural Greek Usage and Hebrew Interference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); John A. L. Lee, *A Lexical Study of the Septuagint Version of the Pentateuch* (SCS 14; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983);

9. James K. Aitken, “The Language of the Septuagint and Jewish-Greek Identity,” in *The Jewish-Greek Tradition and the Byzantine Empire* (ed. James K. Aitken and James Carleton Paget; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 120–34.

tion. The framework of thought informing my approach in this article is derived from a common framework in contemporary cultural studies, namely Polysystem Theory.¹⁰

2. Explaining Septuagint Translation Techniques

Typically, when scholars attempt to explain “literal” and “free” translation approaches in the Septuagint, they tend to focus on one or two features particular to the corpus, such as chronology or geography. Others have made arguments based on the supposed status of the source text or the translators’ personal approaches. I will unpack some of these proposals and make a case for multicausality in Septuagint studies.¹¹

2.1 Chronology: Linear Development

Some scholars have argued that there is a straightforward development from literal to free translation, or the other way around, assuming that at the time of the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures, people were still learning what translation exactly was or should be.¹² However, given that the social context in which these texts were translated into Greek was thoroughly multilingual and that writings such as administrative documents or private correspondence were already being translated into Greek, this viewpoint does not sufficiently explain the variety of translation approaches that we encounter in the Septuagint corpus. Moreover, the “free” translation of Job was produced later than the Pentateuch, as intertextual links

10. Polysystem Theory is a means to structure one’s argument, rather than a full-blown methodology. I will not go into any theoretical details related to systems theory at this point. For more information on Polysystem Theory and a systemic approach to the Septuagint, see Marieke Dhont, *Style and Context of Old Greek Job* (JSJSupp 183; Leiden: Brill, 2018). The seminal work in systems theory is that of Itamar Even-Zohar; see in particular *Polysystem Studies* (= *Poetics Today* 11/1 [1990]).

11. I do not take into account the dragoman hypothesis and the interlinear paradigm here. Each of these approaches has been criticized amply in previous scholarship, and neither are relevant to explain the translation technique of books such as Job, whereas I am attempting to provide an account for the variety of translation techniques in the Septuagint as a corpus.

12. For the argument that translation would have developed from free to literal, see, for example, Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the ‘Letter of Aristeas’* (London: Routledge, 2003), 97–98 and 123–24. From literal to free, see, for example, James Barr, “Did the Greek Pentateuch really Serve as a Dictionary for the Translation of the Later Books?” in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. Martin F. J. Baasten and Wido T. van Peursen; OLA 118; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 523–44, 539.

to the Greek translation of these books indicate,¹³ but earlier than the “literalistic” scriptural translation of Aquila. This indicates that there was no straightforward, linear development.

2.2 Geography: Palestine versus Egypt

A second possible explanation assumes a relationship between the translation approach and the supposed provenance of the book in question. Greek had become the lingua franca for Jews in the diaspora, but in Palestine Jews are thought to have continued to speak Hebrew and Aramaic for a longer period of time. Scholars suppose that by consequence, the level of Greek spoken in Palestine was lower than that in Egypt. Furthermore, the Naḥal Ḥever-scroll of the Minor Prophets, which dates to the first century BCE and displays an isomorphic translation approach related to the καίτε-tradition,¹⁴ provided a basis for the assumption that when Greek translations appeared in Palestine, they would correspond more closely on a formal level to their Semitic source texts. This argument is based on presuppositions regarding the relation between Greek-language education, the level of Greek spoken in different regions in the Eastern Mediterranean, and translation methods.

The problematic link between translation approaches and educational levels will be discussed further below. At present, it is necessary to point out that we cannot assume that every Greek-speaking Jew in Hellenistic Egypt would have mastered the language to a high level and that all Greek-speaking Jews in Palestine would have hardly been able to write proper Greek¹⁵—particularly since the evidence for the presence of Greek in Palestine has increased in recent decades.¹⁶ Furthermore, determining whether a translation approach is typi-

13. See Homer Heater, *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job* (CBQ MS 11; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982).

14. This argument was made particularly by Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodécaprophète trouvés dans le désert de Juda, précédée d'une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au premier siècle de notre ère sous l'influence du rabbinat palestinien* (SVT 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963). See also Honigman, *Homeric Scholarship*, 123–24.

15. Louis Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 28.

16. See, for example, Victor A. Tcherikover, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957); Pieter W. van der Horst, “Greek in Jewish Palestine in Light of Jewish Epigraphy,” in *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (ed. John J. Collins and Gregory E. Sterling; Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 13; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 174–94, repr. in *Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Studies on Jewish Hellenism in Antiquity* (CBET 32; Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 9–26. On education in Palestine, see Catherine Heszer, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (TSAJ 81; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

cal of a region is hardly possible.¹⁷ The location where a text was found does not warrant any conclusions regarding its provenance.¹⁸

2.3 Cultural Context: Judaism versus Hellenism

Another argument centers around the relationship between Judaism and Hellenism. When Alexander the Great conquered the Middle East, the area underwent a so-called process of Hellenization. This is often conceptualized in terms of a dominant Greek culture and a subservient Jewish culture, with unidirectional influences. The translation of scriptural texts into Greek is seen as a sign of this process, too. The degree to which the translator assimilated to Greek cultural norms is supposed to have determined the extent of a “literal” or “free” translation. This viewpoint equates language and culture: it presupposes that a linguistic transition from Hebrew or Aramaic into Greek implies a cultural transition from Judaism into Hellenism, and the further the translator moves away from the Semitic form, the closer he gets to Greek culture. This line of thought, however, does not reflect the reality of any complex multicultural environment. Jews did not become less Jewish because they had started to speak Greek. Moreover, when a society is characterized by a melting-pot of cultures, the influence between them is not uni-directional. Precisely because different Middle Eastern religions and cultures adopted the Greek language and Greek rule, they became an essential part of Hellenism. In other words, Jewish literature in Greek *is* Hellenistic literature. Different translation approaches in the Septuagint reflect diverging views on what the translation of scriptural texts into Greek could like look to Jews.

2.4 The Personal Approach of the Translator

Other scholars explain the different translation styles in the Septuagint in terms of the proclivities of the individual translators.¹⁹ A literal approach to translation is often seen as the

17. James K. Aitken, “The Social and Historical Setting of the Septuagint: Palestine and the Diaspora,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint* (ed. Timothy M. Law and Alison G. Salvesen; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

18. The Pentateuch, for example, is said to have been translated in Alexandria; yet, fragments have been found at Qumran.

19. See in particular Emanuel Tov, “Approaches towards Scripture Embraced by the Translators of Greek Scripture,” in *Der Mensch vor Gott: Forschungen zum Menschenbild in Bible, antikem Judentum und Koran. Festschrift für H. Lichtenberger zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Ulrike Mittmann-Richert et al.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003), 213–228, reprinted in: Emanuel Tov, *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible and Qumran: Collected Essays* (TSAJ 121; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 325–38, 335–38.

result of a lack of education in Greek.²⁰ As their “literalism” would indicate, the translators of the Pentateuch were uneducated,²¹ whereas the translator of Job, for example, would have been highly literate.²² Proponents of this argument seem to ignore that one’s ability to read and write in Greek in antiquity implied having enjoyed a Greek language education to some degree.²³ Moreover, such a viewpoint proves incapable of explaining the data as a whole. The fact that certain books show similarities and differences in their characters indicate that something more than just “the personal” is at work. For example, we may observe similarities between Job and other books in terms of less interference from the source language and more attention to the stylization of the Greek translation than in the Pentateuch and the Minor Prophets. For example, the approach of the translator of Isaiah already moves in this direction.²⁴ Job and Proverbs display such similarities in translation character, that they have been considered as products of the same hand.²⁵ While this identification has been convincingly re-

20. See, for example, Barr, “Typology of Literalism,” 26; Jan Joosten, “Varieties of Greek in the Septuagint and the New Testament,” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible From the Beginnings to 600* (ed. James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 22–45, 30.

21. See, for example, Jan Joosten, “The Vocabulary of the Septuagint and Its Historical Context,” in *Septuagint Vocabulary: Pre-History, Usage, Reception* (ed. Eberhard Bons and Jan Joosten; SBLSCS 58; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2011), 1–11, 7; Chaim Rabin, “The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint,” *Textus* 6 (1968): 1–26 (in particular on pp. 20–21, the author describes Greek-speaking Jews as “semi-educated”); Michael L. Satlow, *How the Bible Became Holy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 158–59.

22. Claude E. Cox, “Job,” in *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* (ed. James K. Aitken; Bloomsbury Companions; London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 385–400, 390–91; Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint I: Book of Job* (Lunds Universitets årsskrift 43/2; Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1946), *passim*.

23. This point has been made by, among others, James K. Aitken, “The Characterisation of Speech in the Septuagint Pentateuch,” in *The Reception of the Hebrew Bible in the Septuagint and the New Testament: Essays in Memory of Aileen Guilding* (ed. David J. A. Clines and Jo Cheryl Exum; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2013), 9–31; Michel Casevitz, “D’Homère aux historiens romains: Le grec du Pentateuque alexandrin,” in *Le Pentateuque: La Bible d’Alexandrie* (ed. Cécile Dogniez and Marguerite Harl; Paris: Cerf, 2001), 636–49 (see also the discussion by Aitken, “Language of the Septuagint,” 129); Trevor V. Evans, “The Comparative Optative: A Homeric Reminiscence in the Greek Pentateuch?,” *VT* 49 (1999) 487–504. On the nature of Greek-language education in the Hellenistic era, see notably Raffaella Cribbiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001); Theresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge Classical Studies; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Dorothy J. Thompson, “Language and Literacy in Early Hellenistic Egypt,” in *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt* (ed. Per Bilde et al; Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 3; Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), 39–52.

24. See Ross Wagner, *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics* (FAT 88; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

25. The similarity in translation style between Job and Proverbs has been noted by, for example, Brock,

futed,²⁶ it shows that similar working methods, while not necessarily indicating an association with the same person, should be seen in relationship with one another and in comparison with other working methods.²⁷ Moreover, modern translation studies have shown that while an individual's skills and abilities may affect the translation product, of much greater importance and influence is the translator's socialization.²⁸ In other words, a translation is never the product merely of some individual's ingenuity, but is socially managed by varying degrees.

2.5 Authorative Status

A fifth argument to explain the existence of different translation approaches in the Septuagint is to refer to the authoritative status of the books. Job, not a Pentateuchal or prophetic book, was translated "freely" because it is thought to have been less important.²⁹ The more sacred or authoritative books required a literal approach.³⁰ The "literal" translation of other non-Pen-

"Phenomenon of Biblical Translation," 551. For the identification of the translator of Proverbs and Job as one individual, see, for example, Gerleman, *Job*, 14–17; Jean-Daniel Kaestli, "La formation et la structure du canon biblique: que peut apporter l'étude de la Septante," in *The Canon of Scriptures in Jewish and Christian Tradition/Le canon d'Écritures dans les traditions juive et chrétienne* (ed. Philip S. Alexander and Jean-Daniel Kaestli; Publications de l'Institut romand des sciences bibliques 4; Lausanne: Éditions du Zèbre, 2007), 99–113, 106; Julio Treballe Barrera, *The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible: An Introduction to the History of the Bible* (trans. Wilfred Watson; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 319.

26. David-Marc d'Hamonville, *Les Proverbes* (BdA 17; Paris: Cerf, 2000), 139–41; John G. Gammie, "The Septuagint of Job: Its Poetic Style and Relationship to the Septuagint of Proverbs," *CBQ* 49 (1987): 13–31; Jan Joosten, "Elaborate Similes—Hebrew and Greek: A Study in Septuagint Translation Technique," *Bib* 77 (1996): 227–36; Bénédicte Lemmelijn, "The Greek Rendering of Hebrew Hapax Legomena in LXX Proverbs and Job: A Clue to the Question of a Single Translator?" in *In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes: Studies in the Biblical Text in Honour of Anneli Aejmelaeus* (ed. Kristin De Troyer, Timothy M. Law, and Marketta Liljeström; CBET 72; Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 133–50.

27. See Theo Hermans, *Translation in Systems: Descriptive and Systemic Approaches Explained* (Translation Theories Explained 7; Manchester: St. Jerome, 1999), 87–88.

28. Reine Meylaerts, "Conceptualizing the Translator as a Historical Subject in Multilingual Environments: A Challenge for Descriptive Translation Studies?" in *Charting the Future of Translation History* (ed. Georges L. Bastin and Paul F. Bandia; Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2006), 59–75; Daniel Simeoni, "The Pivotal Status of the Translator's Habitus," *Target* 10 (1998): 1–39.

29. Cox, "Job," 389.

30. See, for example, Honigman, *Homeric Scholarship*, 98; Harry Orlinsky, "The Septuagint as Holy Writ," *HUCA* 46 (1975) 89–114, 103; Idem, "The Septuagint and its Hebrew Text," in *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. William D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein; vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of Judaism*; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 534–62, 554; Henry B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902), 318; Henry St. J. Thackeray, *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship: A Study in Origen* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stocks, 1920), 13.

tateuchal and non-prophetic books such as Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs show that this viewpoint cannot be maintained either. Moreover, scholarship currently holds more nuanced views on the authoritative status of Jewish texts and the process of canonization than the opposition between “sacred” and “non-sacred.”³¹ If one would want to maintain that the authoritative status of the book in question played a role in the selection of the translation approach, it could potentially explain why a given book was translated in a specific way, but it does not explain the nature of diverging translation approaches itself. We may hypothesize that the translation approach was linked to the envisioned function of the translation (that is, liturgical, educational, and so on), but then again, we have still to explain how different translation approaches developed and co-existed.

3. Translation Approach and Linguistic Character

The above explanations do not suffice to account for the linguistic, stylistic, and translational diversity in the Septuagint corpus, nor do they do justice to the complexity of the phenomenon of translation. They do show that the activity of translating the Septuagint was deeply imbedded in its environment: it has been related to geography, educational levels, cultural developments, and so on. Indeed, translation does not happen in a vacuum. Contemporary translation studies have shown that translating is a socio-cultural activity. This implies that translators have to deal with culture-bound constraints – that is, notions regarding what a translation should (not) be and/or could (not) be, known as norms.³² By consequence, there seems little point in trying to conceptualize the translation process in terms of a choice along a single axis, from “literal” to “free” or vice versa, since any given rendering is the result of a plethora of factors that influenced the translator’s choices.³³

The choice for a specific translation approach is only part of what constitutes the linguistic character of the translation. A translation may show literalistic features but that evidence should not restrict the conclusion about a book’s linguistic character. The translation approach pertains to the Greek text in relation to a Semitic source. It governs the ways in

31. See, for example, Philip R. Davies, “The Jewish Scriptural Canon in Cultural Perspective” and James A. Sanders, “The Issue of Closure in the Canonical Process,” in *The Canon Debate* (ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), respectively 36–52 and 252–63; Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible* (VTS 169; Leiden: Brill, 2015).

32. The notion of “norms” was developed most notably by Gideon Toury, in his seminal work *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* originally published in 1995 (2nd ed.; Benjamins Translation Library; Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2012).

33. Hermans, *Translation in Systems*, 76.

which the translator will render the source text and will thus guide the choices made. For example, a translator may devote more efforts to preserving the form of the source text or its meaning. A focus on the source text's form may put limitations on the lexical choices a translator has to make. The translation approach is, however, only one element that constitutes the style of a translation. Register, for example, is another. It can be defined as a linguistic variety used for a specific purpose or in a specific social situation.³⁴ Any one speaker has different registers to choose from, depending on contextual factors. One will address a close friend differently than a head of state, for instance. The register a translator chooses depends on factors that might be unrelated to the source text. For example, the Hebrew word אָנוּשׁ “man” occurs mainly in Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Psalter, and Job. Its common equivalent is ἄνθρωπος “man, human” in all books except for Job,³⁵ where another preferred equivalent is βροτός “mortal,” a poetic word that within the LXX corpus is unique to the book of Job.³⁶ While it is an aspect of the translation technique (i.e., a matter of decreased emphasis on lexical consistency) that might allow for this variation, the use of βροτός is motivated by the conventions of the target language and pertains to an element of Greek style. It is thus important to make a distinction between the translation technique and the style of a LXX text and recognize that both could have been at play in the translation process. Scholars of the Septuagint should aim for multi-causal explanations for phenomena in the translation.³⁷ In what follows, I want to reflect on how the Septuagint was shaped in terms of its linguistic and stylistic character. Rather than trying to explain how we should see “freedom” and “literalism,” I want to discuss how we can understand the linguistic and stylistic diversity of the Septuagint corpus, of which a degree of literalism is only an aspect. My point of departure is that Greek-speaking Jews developed and refined their own literary traditions, and that translational activity, evinced in the Septuagint, should be assessed within the context of this development. We can gain insight into this literary development by conceiving of the textual activity of Greek-speaking Jews as

34. Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan, “Introduction: Situating Register in Sociolinguistics,” in *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Register* (ed. Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 3–12, 4; Kirsten Malmkjaer, “Functionalist Linguistics,” in *The Routledge Linguistics Encyclopedia* (ed. Kirsten Malmkjaer; 3rd ed.; London: Routledge, 2010), 177–80, 179–80.

35. See, for example, Isa 8:1; 13:7; Jer 17:9; Ps 8:5; 9:20; Job 5:17; 7:1, 17; 25:6; 33:26.

36. See Job 4:17; 9:2; 10:4; 15:14; 25:4; 28:4, 13; 32:8; 33:12; 36:25.

37. Septuagint scholars stand to gain significantly from modern translation studies in this regard. Scholars who have promoted multiple causation in the study of the Septuagint are James K. Aitken, “The Origins of KAI GE,” in *Biblical Greek in Context* (ed. James K. Aitken and Trevor V. Evans; BTS 22; Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 21–40; Carsten Ziegert, “Das Buch Ruth in der Septuaginta als Modell für eine integrative Übersetzungstechnik,” *Bib* 89 (2008) 221–51.

a system, a multi-layered, heterogeneous, dynamic, open structure of elements which relate to and interact with each other.³⁸ In other words, the corpus of texts produced by Greek-speaking Jews in the Hellenistic era is conceptualized as the Jewish-Greek literary system.³⁹ In order to understand the development and behaviour of this particular system, we have to start by looking at its very beginnings.

4. Explaining the Development from a Literary Point of View

4.1 *The Pentateuch within the Context of Translation into Greek*

The Pentateuchal books are generally regarded to have been translated first.⁴⁰ Their linguistic variant is that of the vernacular Koine. As a translation, the Pentateuch is dependent on a Hebrew source text significantly in terms of word order, quantitative representation, and word choices. James Aitken has shown that not just the language of the Pentateuch reflects the language of contemporary non-literary sources in Greek,⁴¹ but also its translation approach. Aitken has compared the translation approach of the Pentateuch with that of other non-religious, documentary texts from Demotic into Greek. In doing so, he demonstrated that the Pentateuch was translated the way it was, not because it represented the most authoritative text for Jews, but because its translation approach reflects the conventions of the time, in that the norms for translation were focused on isomorphism.⁴²

At the time of the translation of the Pentateuch, Jews did not yet have their own tradition of translating their religious texts into another, non-Semitic language. They did, however,

38. Mark Shuttleworth, "Polysystem Theory," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (ed. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha; 2nd ed.; London: Routledge, 2009), 197–200, 197.

39. The use of "literary" in the term "literary polysystem" is neutral and implies no evaluative connotation regarding the esthetic value of the texts included in the system.

40. For an overview of the order in which Septuagint books were translated, see, for example, Johann Cook and Arie Van der Kooij, *Law, Prophets, and Wisdom: On the Provenance of Translators and their Books in the Septuagint Version* (CBET 68; Leuven: Peeters, 2012); Jennifer Dines, *The Septuagint: Understanding the Bible and its World* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 41–62; Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* (Trans. Wilfred Watson; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 53–66. I take the Pentateuch as having been translated first because the translation approach of all other books can be explained as an evolution from the Pentateuchal translation method; see below.

41. Aitken, *No Stone Unturned*.

42. James K. Aitken, "The Septuagint and Egyptian Translation Methods," in *XV Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Munich 2013* (ed. Martin Meiser and Michaël N. van der Meer; SBLSCS 64; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016), 269–94.

translate the Pentateuch within the framework of an existing practice of rendering other, non-religious texts into Greek. The target audience of these translated texts did not seem to have been concerned by the level of Greek in these translations, which could at times be unidiomatic or “wooden.” Normativity in translation studies implies that the target culture has expectations regarding what a translation could (not) and/or should (not) be.⁴³ The target audience’s expectations regarding a translation may well differ from those regarding non-translated compositions.⁴⁴ Hence, at the time the Pentateuch was translated, the chosen translation approach and the resulting language usage may well have been acceptable, regardless of the nature of the text.

4.2 *The Growth of a Corpus*

The Pentateuch translation marked the beginning of a dynamic literary development. Jews had started to speak Greek. They now had a core group of scriptural texts in Greek which enabled the flourishing of other Jewish writings in Greek. This means that from that moment onwards, Jews developed a literature of their own in Greek with its own conventions. While different Septuagint books were still in the process of being translated, Jews composed texts in Greek as well. We may think of works such as 2 Maccabees, but also include the works of authors such as Demetrius, Eupolemus, and Artapanus, among others, as part of a body of texts constituting the Jewish-Greek literary system.

The Pentateuch played an indispensable role in the production of new texts within this system. Aside from being a source of intertextuality for subsequent translational and compositional activity,⁴⁵ the Septuagint Pentateuch also became a model for the translation of subsequent books in different ways. It set the standard for the acceptability of the use of vernacular Koine to translate the Jewish Scriptures. It provided translators with a lexicon for standard Hebrew-Greek equivalences and for specific expressions.⁴⁶ It also represented a model in

43. Christina Schäffner, “The Concept of Norms in Translation Studies,” in *Translation and Norms* (ed. Christina Schäffner; Current Issues in Language and Society; Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1999), 1–9.

44. Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*, 72–73.

45. Regarding translation, see, for example, Homer Heater, *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job* (CBQ MS 11; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982); Myrto Theocharous, *Lexical Dependence and Intertextual Allusion in the Septuagint of the Twelve Prophets: Studies in Hosea, Amos and Micah* (LHBOTS 570; London: T&T Clark, 2012). Regarding composition, it suffices to point out that Jewish authors intensively engage with Greek biblical texts, as can be inferred from the exegetical concerns of Demetrius the Chronographer or Eupolemus and the tragic cast of the book of Exodus by Ezekiel the Tragedian.

46. See, for example, Johan Lust, “The Vocabulary of Septuagint Ezekiel and its Dependence upon the Pentateuch,” in *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic Literature: Studies in Honour of C. H. W. Brekelmans* (ed.

terms of the translation approach, as the translation approaches of other LXX books are often explained as a development of the Pentateuchal translation approach. We will return to this issue in more detail below. The influence of the Pentateuch on subsequent Septuagint translations indicates that it shaped the production of new texts. In systemic terms, this means that the Septuagint Pentateuch stood at the center of the Jewish-Greek literary system.

Whereas the translators of the Pentateuch had to look towards translation models in the broader Hellenistic macro-system, the translators of later books had a model within their own Jewish-Greek system towards which they would orient themselves. Because Jews developed their own normativity regarding the production of texts, they also developed a referential framework of their own in which works were read, received, and evaluated. Any other Jewish text would position itself in relation to the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch had established the everyday Greek language as an acceptable linguistic variant for literary production. As a result of its translation technique, the Septuagint Pentateuch is characterized by high degrees of interference. Interference in translation is common—it is, in fact, axiomatic in modern translation studies⁴⁷—and it is often deemed acceptable, albeit to varying extents. The Pentateuch provided a model for subsequent translators in terms of translation approach as well as set a standard for the acceptability of interference in scriptural translation.

This was the case, too, for compositions. Early Jewish-Greek authors such as Demetrius and Eupolemus seem to have oriented themselves towards the Pentateuch, in that they wrote in vernacular Koine without incorporating significant literary flourishes.⁴⁸ By the

Johan Lust and Marc Vervenne; BETL 133; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 529–46; Myrto Theocharous, *Lexical Dependence and Intertextual Allusion in the Septuagint of the Twelve Prophets: Studies in Hosea, Amos and Micah* (LHBOTS 570; London: T&T Clark, 2012), 23–66; Emanuel Tov, “The Impact of the Septuagint Translation of the Pentateuch on the Translation of the Other Books,” in *Mélanges D. Barthélemy: Etudes bibliques offertes à l’occasion de son 60e anniversaire* (ed. Pierre Casetti, Othmar Keel, and Adrian Schenker; OBO 38; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 577–92; Emanuel Tov, “The Septuagint Translation of the Torah as a Source and Resource for the Post-Pentateuchal Translators,” in *Die Sprache der Septuaginta* (ed. Eberhard Bons and Jan Joosten; vol. 3 of *Handbuch zur Septuaginta*; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2016), 316–28; Peter Walters, *The Text of the Septuagint: Its Corruptions and their Emendation* (ed. David W. Gooding; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 150–53; Isaac L. Zeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of Its Problems* (Mededelingen en verhandelingen van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap “Ex oriente lux” 9; Leiden: Brill, 1948), 48. This idea has been nuanced, though not entirely denied, by James Barr, “Greek Pentateuch,” 523–44.

47. This is the so-called “law of interference,” see Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*, 310–15.

48. See, for example, the discussion in Ben Zion Wacholder, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 3; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1974).

second century BCE, however, we also find Jewish compositions that attest to the use of a higher register of Greek and more stylized literary forms. We may think of Ezekiel the Tragedian, Philo the Epic Poet, and the author of the *Letter of Aristeas*. The vocabulary becomes more varied and more poetic; syntactic constructions become more complex; meter is used in poetry. In other words, Jews fully adopted the Greek language and started to utilize its possibilities. When Jews had started to write in Greek, there was only a very small repertoire, namely the Pentateuch, written in a vernacular variant. When a literary corpus develops, its repertoire grows. Writers and translators obtain an increasingly broad range of linguistic possibilities and literary forms that were deemed acceptable for the production of texts. This growth of options is necessary for literary production to flourish.⁴⁹ It has been pointed out that these new modes tend to be new more on account of their novel (re)combination of already existing and often competing norms and models, than as the result of genuine “creation.”⁵⁰ This is precisely the case for the development of the Jewish-Greek literary system. No system can remain operational with only a small repertoire; innovation is vital. In order to develop new forms of expression within their own system, centered initially around the Pentateuch, Jews looked at the broader Hellenistic literary world and had to find ways to incorporate elements into their own newly developing tradition to establish a growing repertoire of modes of expression. In doing so, Jews developed ways to express their own culture in Greek regardless of the linguistic variant or literary form they used. Such a process of innovation, however, can often take place more easily in composition than in translation, because translators have an additional constraint that writers do not: a source text.

4.3 *The Development of Translation Practices*

4.3.1 *Towards καίγε*

Some translators followed in the footsteps of the Pentateuch translators. They chose the vernacular Koine and adhered to a translation approach that concentrated on rendering the form of the source text. The rise of the καίγε-movement in the first century BCE, for example, is a development of the earlier Pentateuchal translation method.⁵¹ The approach of the translators

49. Modern translation studies refer to this process by the law of proliferation: “In order to operate and remain vital, a [literary] system has to be always enhanced with a growing inventory of alternative options.” See Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Theory (Revised),” in *Papers in Cultural Research* (Tel Aviv: Unit of Culture Research, Tel Aviv University, 2010), 40–50, 49.

50. Daniel Simeoni, “The Pivotal Status of the Translator’s Habitus,” *Target* 10 (1998) 1–39, 6.

and revisors within this movement was characterized by an increasing degree of quantitative equivalence, reflection of Hebrew word order, and lexical consistency. This method of working is also characteristic of such books as Ruth, Song of Songs, and Lamentations.⁵²

Such an approach to translating might not have allowed certain translators to fully demonstrate their skills as idiomatic Greek writers. This way of working, however, became a topos for Greek-speaking Jews.⁵³ In fact, the *Prologue* to Sirach attests to this:

Παρακέκλησθε οὖν μετ' εὐνοίας καὶ προσοχῆς τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν ποιεῖσθαι καὶ συγγνώμην ἔχειν ἐφ' οἷς ἂν δοκῶμεν τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν πεφιλοπονημένων τισὶν τῶν λέξεων ἀδυναμεῖν· οὐ γὰρ ἰσοδυναμεῖ αὐτὰ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς Εβραϊστὶ λεγόμενα καὶ ὅταν μεταχθῇ εἰς ἑτέραν γλῶσσαν· οὐ μόνον δὲ ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ νόμος καὶ αἱ προφητεῖαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν βιβλίων οὐ μικρὰν ἔχει τὴν διαφορὰν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λεγόμενα.

You are invited, therefore, to a reading with goodwill and attention, and to exercise forbearance in cases where we may be thought to be insipid with regard to some expressions that have been the object of great care in rendering; for what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have the same force when it is in fact rendered in another language. And not only in this case, but also in the case of the Law itself and the Prophets and the rest of the books the difference is not small when these are expressed in their own language.⁵⁴

51. Aitken, "Social and Historical Setting;" See also Siegfried Kreuzer, "Origin and Development of the Septuagint in the Context of Alexandrian and Early Jewish Culture and Learning," in *The Bible in Greek: Translation, Transmission, and Theology of the Septuagint* (SBLSCS 63; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 3–46, 23 (translation of "Entstehung und Entwicklung der Septuaginta im Kontext alexandrinischer und frühjüdischer Kultur und Bildung," in *Septuaginta-Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament*, Band 1 [ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011], 3–39).

52. Jean-Marie Auwers, "Canticles (Song of Songs)," in *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, 370–83, 371; Aitken, "Social and Historical Setting."

53. Aitken, "Language of the Septuagint," 134.

54. Greek text: Joseph Ziegler, *Sapientia Iesu Filli Sirach* (Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Göttingensis editum XII.2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965). English translation: Benjamin G. E. Wright, "Wisdom of Iesous Son of Sirach," in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* (ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. E. Wright; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 715–62.

This statement implies that it became a conscious choice to take this specific translation approach,⁵⁵ which could result in unidiomatic Greek. At this point, interference was not just acceptable, but at times even desirable, as it came to serve a sociolinguistic purpose.

I first want to add a brief excursus regarding the *Prologue*. The fact that the style of the translation is significantly different than that of the prologue, which is characterized by a higher register Greek, demonstrates what I wrote earlier, namely that the expectations a target setting have regarding translation can differ from those regarding composition. It was acceptable for a Jew to compose a prologue in an idiomatic and high register Greek, while the translation is characterized by formal adherence to the Hebrew source and written in a lower register of Koine.⁵⁶

The use of Hebraizing idioms in Greek was not just reserved for translations, as the coincidental result of interference: even in Jewish writings originally composed in Greek, such as *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Judith*,⁵⁷ but also in the works of Eupolemus and Ezekiel the Tragedian,⁵⁸ we find so-called Septuagintisms. A Septuagintism is defined as a particular usage of Greek that find its origins in features of Semitic interference in the Septuagint but that came to be used in Greek texts independently from a Semitic source. These features should not be seen as “bad Greek.” Rather, they are part of a “literary code” that linguistically marked a text as “Jewish” in a context in which peoples from many different backgrounds and (sub)cultures all used Greek to express themselves in written form.⁵⁹ This means that

55. See Benjamin G. E. Wright, “Access to the Source: Cicero, Ben Sira, The Septuagint and Their Audiences,” *JSJ* 34 (2003) 1–27, 19.

56. See Benjamin G. E. Wright, “Sirach (Ecclesiasticus),” in: *T&T Clark Companion*, 410–24, 413: “The Greek of Sirach never rises to the level of decent Koine (definitely not to that of the prologue), let alone literary Greek.”

57. Examples from *Wisdom* are discussed by A. Léonas, “The Poetics of Wisdom: Language and Style in the *Wisdom of Solomon*,” in *Et sapienter et eloquenter: Studies on Rhetorical and Stylistic Features of the Septuagint* (ed. Eberhard Bons and Thomas Kraus; FRLANT 241; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2011), 99–126. Examples from *Judith* can be found in Jan Joosten, “The Original Language and Historical Milieu of the Book of Judith,” in *Meghillot V–VI: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls. A Festschrift for Devorah Dimant* (ed. M Bar-Asher and E. Tov; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2009), 159–76.

58. An example from Ezekiel’s *Exagoge* can be found in Dhont, *Style and Context*, 318–19. An example from Eupolemus’s work can be found in Carl R. Holladay, *Historians* (SBLTT 20, Pseudepigrapha 10; vol. 1 of *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 101.

59. The term “literary code” was coined by Yuri M. Lotman, *The Structure of the Artistic Text* (trans. Ronald Vroon; Michigan Slavic Contributions 7; Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1977). “Literary code” refers to a system of shared conventions necessary to assign meaning to a text of a specific literary tradition, and which can be superimposed on the text’s linguistic code (defined as the language in which a text is written and which allows a reader to recognize the text as having been written in that specific language). See also Douwe W.

Jews did not only adopt, but could also adapt the Greek language, to fit their specific context.⁶⁰

4.3.2 A Stemmatic Evolution

While some translators looked increasingly towards a Pentateuchal translation method with emphasis on interference, other Septuagint books, such as Isaiah, Proverbs, and Job, attest to a markedly different translation approach. These texts show a more idiomatic usage of the Greek language, oftentimes including literary vocabulary and rhetorical features which frequently appear in the Greek without reflecting such feature in the Hebrew. The translators' main concern was oftentimes not rendering the form of the source text, but rather its meaning. How may we explain this development?

Variation is inherent to any system. The question is therefore not why different approaches existed, but how they came to co-exist. Within the dynamic framework of a literary system, composition and translation do not happen in isolation from one another.⁶¹ Owing to the development of Jewish-Greek compositional literature towards the use of a higher register of Greek, it became acceptable for translators to use a more idiomatic and elevated style of language as well. In other words, I think that an increased attention to Greek usage and style within Jewish compositions could have motivated Jewish translators to distance themselves from formal representation of the Semitic source text. The translations of Isaiah, Proverbs, and Job attest to a changing cultural awareness of what a translation of a scriptural text could look like. This does not mean that their translators were therefore more culturally Hellenized than those who took an isomorphically oriented approach to translating. The process I am de-

Fokkema, *Literary History, Modernism, and Postmodernism* (Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature 19; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984). I have adopted the term "literary code" so as to emphasize the written nature of this linguistic variant, as opposed to those scholars who argue that Jews spoke a specific dialect or sociolect. For a recent overview of this discussion, see Stanley E. Porter, "History of Scholarship on the Language of the Septuagint," in *Die Sprache der Septuaginta*, 15–38.

60. For the sake of clarity, I add that this Jewish-Greek literary code should not be seen as indicative of the existence of a specifically Jewish dialect. I side with N. De Lange, "Jewish Greek," in *A History of Ancient Greek: From the Beginnings to Late Antiquity* (ed. Anastassios-Fivos Christidis; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 638–45, 645 who has briefly suggested that the peculiarities of a Jewish-Greek language can be understood as a literary language. It may be interesting to note in this context that departure from "common usage" (in this case, idiomatic Greek) was a rhetorical tactic recognized by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (e.g., *De Demosthene* 10 and 13).

61. See, for example, Itamar Even-Zohar, "The Position of Translated Literature Within the Literary Polysystem," *Poetics Today* 11 (1990): 45–91 and "Factors and Dependencies in Culture" in *Papers in Cultural Research* (Tel Aviv: Unit of Culture Research, Tel Aviv University, 2010), 15–34.

scribing is one that is inherently related to the development of *Jewish* literature in Greek. For these translators, it was deemed acceptable to focus less on Hebrew form and more on the form of the Greek product. After all, the repertoire for the production of texts in terms of linguistic registers, stylistic features, and literary forms within the Jewish-Greek literary system had increased.

4.3.3 Tensions

There was a tension between the diachronic evolution from the vernacular towards high register and even rhetorically stylized Greek on the one hand, and the synchronic state that different translation approaches were acceptable at the same time on the other. For example, the translation of Job is situated in the same period as the emergence of the *καίγε*-movement, namely in the first century BCE.⁶² This evolution in two directions illustrates the heterogeneous character of a growing Jewish-Greek literary polysystem. A comparison of the Greek translations of Job and Ecclesiastes may illustrate the complexity of this heterogeneity. These books display vastly different translation methods. Greek Ecclesiastes is characterized by a high degree of lexical, quantitative, and word order equivalence and shows affinity with the *καίγε*-tradition.⁶³ Its language cannot be described as idiomatic Greek, although it is generally grammatically correct. In Job, we see a departure from formal correspondence between the Hebrew and the Greek texts. Greek Job's language is highly idiomatic.⁶⁴ These differences aside, Job and Ecclesiastes both reflect a similar heightened awareness of literary embellishments.⁶⁵ Symmachus, for example, too, is known for the incorporation of stylistic flourishes in his target text independently from the Hebrew source text, even though his general approach is one based on formal correspondence between the Hebrew and the Greek.⁶⁶ This indicates that attention to Greek style can be observed in different translations, regardless of the

62. It might be possible that the geographical setting of a translation may be one factor among many in the development of different translation approaches. See, for example, Aitken, "Social and Historical Setting;" Tov, "Reflections on the Septuagint," 7–15. A *καίγε*-(related) approach, for example, has been associated primarily with a Palestinian provenance. This issue requires further elaboration from a systemic point of view. I reject a geographical setting as the only explanation for differences in translation approaches, but do not exclude the possibility of its relevance in a multicausal explanation.

63. Aitken, "Rhetoric and Poetry," 55; Aitken, "Ecclesiastes," 356–57. For a literary analysis of Greek Job, see Dhont, *Style and Context*, 142–179 and 219–302.

64. See Dhont, *Style and Context*, 94–179.

65. On the literary embellishments in Ecclesiastes, see Aitken, "Rhetoric and Poetry," 55–78.

66. Alison G. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch* (JSSM 15; Manchester: University of Manchester, 1991).

chosen approach to rendering the source text, and that stylization of the Greek translation need not necessarily be associated with idiomatic Greek language. In the book of Job, because formal representation was not one of the most essential norms, the translator had more opportunity to show his skills as a natural Greek writer. Here, stylization of the Greek text often presupposes Greek usage. In the case of Greek Ecclesiastes and Symmachus, however, the norm of formally adhering to the form of the source text was more important than idiomatic Greek usage. These translators did, however, try to show their literary awareness to the extent they could within the constraints of the chosen translation technique. This demonstrates once more that style has a place within the literary system next to translation technique.

Interestingly, Greek Job shows that the tensions in the system may even be represented within one text. While the book of Job is known for the significant divergences between the Hebrew and the Greek texts, several scholars have pointed out that the Greek translator often opted for an isomorphic, word-by-word translation.⁶⁷ Interestingly, while concentrating on composing a translation in idiomatic, high-register Greek, the translator of Job also still allowed Semitic interference. Most telling in this regard is that one and the same expression in Hebrew was rendered in both idiomatic and non-idiomatic Greek in the course of the text. This indicates that while the translator knew how to render a Hebrew idiom into a Greek idiom, he sometimes chose Hebraizing wording.⁶⁸ Moreover, we encounter the use of Septuagintalisms independently from the Hebrew. Even in renderings that deviate from the Hebrew text of Job, the translator may use a construction or expression that is a known Septuagintalism.⁶⁹ This variation was acceptable: the use of Hebraistic turns of phrase had become desirable in Jewish-Greek compositions and translations as part of the literary code within the system. Yet by the second–first century BCE, a highly Hebraistic style was no longer the only approach to translating the Jews knew. Jewish-Greek literature had developed so that a Jewish writer or translator could use a higher register of Greek and Greek literary forms to express their own culture, but also had a repertoire of possibilities to linguistically mark a text if they wanted to do so.

5. Conclusion

67. Cox, “Job,” 391; Dhont, *Style and Context*, passim; Gerleman, *Job*, 5–6.

68. That Greek Job is not devoid of Hebraisms has been noted by, for example, Claude E. Cox, “Job,” in *T&T Clark Companion*, 385–400, 391 and Gerleman, *Job*, 5–6. The phenomenon has been studied in detail by Dhont, *Style and Context*, 108–122 and 132–140.

69. Dhont, *Style and Context*, 132–40.

The heterogenous character of Septuagint translations and Jewish-Greek compositions demonstrates developments in translation approaches and linguistic styles as the corpus of Jewish literature grew. It also indicates that there was a tension between different attitudes towards writing and translating that co-existed within the literary system. Jewish-Greek writers and Septuagint translators became more conscious of Greek literary models and a higher register Greek, yet at the same time, they became increasingly aware of “translation Greek.” In this article I have tried to show how this evolution took place, but it raises an array of new questions, such as, How does the development of a Jewish-Greek literary corpus and a proper literary code help to establish a Jewish identity in a multicultural environment? The study of translation thus becomes the study of cultural history. Jews shaped their own literary traditions in a new language. This is a complex and nuanced process. It is not one of unidirectional Hellenization. The fact that the Jewish authors wrote in Greek within the Hellenistic world makes their literature part of Hellenistic literature. Yet Jews developed their own literary traditions, adapted the Greek language and its possibilities to make it their own. As such, they represent the cultural diversity which characterizes Hellenism. As much as the shaping of their literature attests to the development of a Jewish tradition in Greek, it also attests to the different ways in which Hellenistic literature could be shaped to fit specific contexts.