

Tuukka Kauhanen / Hanna Vanonen (eds.)

The Legacy of Soisalon-Soininen

Towards a Syntax of Septuagint Greek



De Septuaginta Investigationes (DSI)

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	7
<i>John A.L. Lee</i>	
Back to the Question of Greek Idiom.....	13
<i>Seppo Sipilä</i>	
Soisalon-Soininen Meets Grice: The Cooperative Principle and the Septuagint Syntax.....	27
<i>Raija Sollamo</i>	
The Usage of the Article with Nouns Defined by a Nominal or Pronominal Genitive in LXX Genesis.....	43
<i>Jan Joosten</i>	
Grammar and Style in the Septuagint: On Some Uses of Preverbs.....	55
<i>Theo A. W. van der Louw</i>	
The Dynamics of Segmentation in the Greek Pentateuch.....	65
<i>Anssi Voitila</i>	
Middle Voice as Depiction of Subject's Dominion in the Greek Pentateuch	81
<i>Patrick Pouchelle</i>	
Did the Translators of the Pentateuch Differentiate the <i>Piel</i> from the <i>Qal</i> ?	97
<i>Philippe Le Moigne</i>	
Une tournure syntaxique fréquente en Ésaïe-LXX: Substantif abstrait + λήμνεται + complément d'objet direct.....	119
<i>Miika Tucker</i>	
The Translations of Infinitives in Septuagint Jeremiah	139
<i>Anneli Aejmelaeus</i>	
Translation Technique and the Recensions: A Late Review of Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen's Doctoral Thesis on the Text-Forms of Judges	159

<i>José Manuel Cañas Reillo</i> Recensions, Textual Groups, and Vocabulary Differentiation in LXX-Judges.....	175
<i>William A. Ross</i> Some Aspects of Παιδάριον and Νεανίσκος in Ptolemaic Egypt	189
<i>Srećko Koralija</i> παράδεισος as/and κῆπος.....	207
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> The Use of the Genitive Absolute in the Septuagint.....	223
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> A Palette of Renderings for the Hebrew Construct State Relation in the Greek Pentateuch	229
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> The Alleged Interchangeability of ἐν and εἰς in the Septuagint.....	241
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> Segmentation in the Greek Pentateuch	251
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> The Rendering of the Hebrew Personal Pronoun as Subject in the Greek Pentateuch	263
<i>Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen</i> Back to the Question of Hebraisms	283
Bibliography	301
Indexes.....	323

Introduction

Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen was born shortly before Finland gained its independence in 1917. Already in school, he demonstrated an exceptional talent for languages in teaching himself Arabic and Hungarian from German textbooks. His competence in Hungarian led him to a student exchange in Hungary that resulted in life-long friendships. As a young student of theology, he served on the front in the Winter War (1939–1940) and later as a military chaplain. After the Second World War, he worked as a hospital chaplain and family counsellor as well as a secondary school teacher, at the same time doing research for his doctoral dissertation on the Septuagint of the Book of Judges. Often, he did his research at night, as the days were devoted to pastoral care and teaching. Soisalon-Soininen received his doctorate in 1951, becoming a Senior Research Fellow in 1962 and an Assistant Professor in 1964. He was appointed to full professorship in Old Testament Exegesis in 1967 and held that position until his retirement in 1984. He was a member of the committee for the most recent Finnish Bible translation (published 1992).

When Soisalon-Soininen began his doctoral research, Septuagint studies were more or less unknown in Finland. His important innovation was to concentrate on the study of translation technique, particularly on the role of syntax in describing the nature of different translations. In his *Die Infinitive in der Septuaginta*, often considered his most influential work, he proceeded from the observation that when it comes to morphology, the translators follow the conventions of the target language; but when it comes to syntax, the translation tends to reflect structures of the source language. From this it follows that it is impossible to describe the syntax of the Septuagint without researching the translation technique employed by different translators, and in this endeavour, the characteristics of both the Hebrew and Greek languages need to be taken into consideration.

These insights led Soisalon-Soininen to launch a long-term research project to describe the syntax and translation technique of the individual translators of the Septuagint. Soisalon-Soininen and his students, **Raija Sollamo** and **Anneli Aejmelaeus**, soon became a familiar sight at international conferences. In addition, Soisalon-Soininen became a prominent figure in the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS). He continued doing research during his retirement until his death in 2002.

To honour the centennial of Soisalon-Soininen's birth, June 2017, a symposium was held at the University of Helsinki. The thirteen articles in the present volume include most of the papers given at that symposium. In addition, the volume contains six previously published articles by Soisalon-Soininen, translated from German into English.

One of the characteristics of the Septuagint as translation is the appearance of Hebraisms. Soisalon-Soininen defined a Hebraism as “an expression calqued from Hebrew that is out of tune with contemporary Greek usage” (“Back to the Question of Hebraisms” in this volume). The counterpart of a Hebraistic rendering is natural or idiomatic Greek. The typology of literal vs. free translations has to take into account what is or is not natural in the target language. **John A. L. Lee’s** “Back to the Question of Greek Idiom” aims to clarify the concepts behind Soisalon-Soininen’s treatment of Hebraisms. He proposes an approach to determine Hebrew interference that has caused non-idiomatic renderings. In the Greek Pentateuch there are clear cases of the translators following the Greek idiom, which demonstrates the translators’ competence. The Greek of the Septuagint Pentateuch can be described as “Greek with Hebrew interference” rather than as “Hebraic Greek”. Some linguistic features, such as the iterative use of *ἄν*, can be considered to reflect contemporary Koine usage even though the earliest evidence can only be found in the Greek Pentateuch itself.

In “Soisalon-Soininen Meets Grice: The Cooperational Principle and the Septuagint Syntax”, **Seppo Sipilä** provides a historical overview of the development of Soisalon-Soininen’s translation-technical method. He then proceeds to adapt Paul Grice’s Cooperative Principle to understand the Septuagint as a translation: “the ancient translators when conducting the translation work made assumptions as to what their audience was expecting when it comes to translating an important text.” The reason for often unidiomatic formal renderings must be looked for in the translators’ aim for an effortless way of translating; not in their putative Hebrew mind-set, as suggested early by Soisalon-Soininen. Conversely, when abandoning a literal alternative for a more idiomatic rendering, the translators did so to facilitate communication in a cooperative fashion.

The Hebrew genitive construction does not use the definite article in connection with the thing owned; nevertheless, the thing owned is considered to be defined. In Greek too, the thing owned is usually considered defined and thus marked with the definite article. When translating from Hebrew into Greek, the translators had to choose whether to mechanistically follow the Hebrew structure and leave out the article, or to use the article in accordance with good Greek practice. **Raija Sollamo** investigates this in “The Usage of the Article with Nouns Defined by a Nominal or Pronominal Genitive in LXX Genesis”. She finds that such nouns have an article in a surprisingly high 78.5% of the cases. In this respect, the Greek Genesis does not display Hebrew interference. Rather, the richness of idiomatic variation in some renderings of the Hebrew genitive structure suggests that the translator must have been a native Greek speaker.

In his translation-technical studies, Soisalon-Soininen often set out from Hebrew features that have no natural counterpart in Greek. The studies described how the Septuagint translators transposed these grammatical structures into Greek. It is also possible to adopt a reverse approach: to investigate the use of

a characteristically Greek feature that has no direct counterpart in Hebrew. **Jan Joosten** (“Grammar and Style in the Septuagint: On Some Uses of Preverbs”) holds that the use of such characteristically Greek features opens up a window onto the style of the Septuagint. His study demonstrates that the translators were not insensitive to requirements of style in their treatment of preverbs. They used preverbs to achieve a rhetorical flourish or a desired nuance, such as gradation. Although not always successful, the translators were capable of making use of the possibilities of the Greek language to create a pleasing effect.

Soisalon-Soininen suggested that the Septuagint translators rendered the Hebrew text segment by segment. Occasionally, this led to losing sight of the context and resulted in awkward renderings. (“Segmentation in the Greek Pentateuch” in this volume.) **Theo van der Louw** revisits “The Dynamics of Segmentation in the Greek Pentateuch”. He reviews three phenomena that can be used as evidence of segmentation: losing touch with the context, translating freely within segment boundaries, and unsuccessfully anticipating the following segments. After having refuted two alternative explanations of these phenomena, van der Louw concludes that the dynamics of segmentation explain those best “through its appeal to the workings of the human brain”. In addition, he provides a typology of “inrasegmental and intersegmental inconsistency”: the former is caused by short-term memory overload, the latter by other factors such as losing touch with the preceding context.

Building upon Ricardo Maldonado’s theory, **Anssi Voitila** investigates the “Middle Voice as Depiction of the Subject’s Dominion in the Greek Pentateuch” with the verb *τιθέναι*. The nine occurrences of the middle aorist of *τιθέναι* indicate relocation, putting someone in prison, giving laws, and making covenants. The use of the middle aorist in these cases does not imply the subject being affected by the action. Rather, it indicates that the subject is highly involved in the action and that the action has a focusing function. While the subject’s affectedness remains a good interpretation of the Greek middle voice in many instances, one must not overlook the possibility of the middle emphasizing the agent’s role as the initiator of the action, superior to the patient or the beneficiary.

Patrick Pouchelle asks “Did the Translators of the Pentateuch Differentiate the *Piel* from the *Qal*?” He provides a survey of current research on the meaning of the *piel* and the *qal* stems, and the Greek translators’ treatment of the Hebrew *bin-yanim* in general. He observes that when the *qal* has a stative and the *piel* a fientive meaning, the translators discerned the difference using the passive for *qal* and the active for *piel*—or two different Greek verbs for the two Hebrew stems. For a fientive *qal*, the difference is less clear; e.g., both stems of שָׁלַח ‘to send’ can be rendered with either ἀποστέλλω or ἐξαποστέλλω, but the latter is used more frequently for the *piel*. However, the use of the *piel* often indicates “dismissal” rather than “sending with a mission” and the distinction used by the translators may be regulated by the context rather than a perception of the underlying Hebrew stem.

Philippe Le Moigne's “Une tournure syntaxique fréquente en Ésaïe-LXX: substantif abstrait + λήμψεται + complément d’objet direct” investigates the usage of λαμβάνω ‘to take, receive’ with an abstract noun subject and a direct object in the Septuagint of Isaiah. The translator consciously favoured the formulation even in some cases where the putative Hebrew *Vorlage* did not readily suggest it. In some of these cases the semantics remain the same even though the Greek syntax clearly differs from the Hebrew (e.g., “they shall obtain joy and gladness” Isa 35:10 MT / “and joy shall take hold of them” LXX). In others, the translation seems to abandon the Hebrew semantics as well (e.g., “the mountains would quake at your presence” Isa 64:1 MT / “trembling from you would seize the mountains” 63:19 LXX). Le Moigne observes that the rendering is used in particular for climatic phenomena and it produces semantic and stylistic unity for such passages. The study contributes to the understanding of the Greek translator of Isaiah as one having a global vision of the work: the translator knows the book of Isaiah in Hebrew perfectly, and does not need to resort to a word-for-word translation style.

The nature of the Septuagint Jeremiah is distinctively different between its earlier (chapters 1–28: Jer a') and later (29–52: Jer b') parts. **Miika Tucker** (“The Infinitive in Septuagint Jeremiah”) investigates how the renderings of the Hebrew infinitive differ between the two parts. A noteworthy feature is the rendering of the Hebrew construction ה+inf. with the Greek infinitive either with or without the definite article. Both renderings appear in both of the two sections, Jer a' and Jer b', but in the former section the articular infinitive is more frequent than in the latter section. The difference is most notable in infinitives expressing purpose: in Jer a', these have an article in 84% of the possible cases while in Jer b' the rate is only 45%. As the renderings of Hebrew infinitives with other prepositions yields similar results, it can be concluded that the renderings of infinitives in the two sections display a marked difference in their character.

Scholars of the syntax of the Septuagint cannot avoid the question of which Greek text form it is they are actually studying. Today, there is a full critical edition for about two-thirds of the text in the series Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum by the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities. The books for which an edition has not yet come out comprise Joshua, Judges, 1–4 Kingdoms (Samuel-Kings), 1 Chronicles, Song of Songs, Proverbs, and 4 Maccabees. In addition, a new edition of the Psalms is in planning. For the aforementioned books, the textual traditions occasionally differ considerably. A major reason for this is recensions that aimed at bringing the text into closer conformity with the Hebrew text or enhancing the literary style of the translation. While the recensions were often unsystematic, they nevertheless brought about noteworthy lexical and syntactic changes.

Such recensions feature in two articles that combine text-historical and linguistic study of the Septuagint version of the Book of Judges. **Anneli Aejmelaeus**

revisits Soisalon-Soininen's dissertation in "Translation Technique and the Recensions: A Late Review of Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen's Doctoral Thesis on the Text-Forms of Judges". When Soisalon-Soininen began his research, it was unclear whether the A and B text forms of Judges represented two different translations, or whether one was dependent on the other. Soisalon-Soininen first looked for translation-technical similarities between the two text forms. This resulted in a characterization of the translation in areas such as word order, conjunctions, prepositions and semi-prepositions, verb construction, pronouns, the Hebrew infinitive, and nominal clauses. Features known from Aquila, אֲנִי rendered with ἐγώ εἰμι when followed by a finite verb and translating the object marker אֶת by σύν + accusative, he considered not to be features of the original translation. When the original translational features are duly characterized, the recensional features must be investigated against those. Soisalon-Soininen's study demonstrated that the B text presents a recension according to the Hebrew text: this explains its greater degree of literalness when compared with the A text.

José Manuel Cañas Reillo, the editor of Judges for the Göttingen Septuagint, provides an overview of "Recensions, Textual Groups, and Vocabulary Differentiation in LXX-Judges". His study builds upon Soisalon-Soininen's dissertation, refining it on various issues. Cañas Reillo defines four main textual groups: *B*, Hexaplaric (*O*), Lucianic (*L*), and mixed (*M*), and analyses how their vocabularies differ. The distinct lexical features of *B* result from a Hebraizing recension that went beyond the *kaige* recension. *O* has some, but not many, distinct Hebraizing lexemes. *L* has the greatest number of lexemes found only in that group. This phenomenon is partly due to its retaining ancient vocabulary via its proto-Lucianic stage; this makes it a particularly important witness for the original translation. *M* oscillates between *B* and AOL when those differ in lexemes; in those cases, AOLM often, but not always, attest to the old reading.

The translators of the Septuagint did not use some syntactic features for the sake of syntax; they used them in order to convey meaning. Meaning is tied to both syntax and the semantics of the lexemes used. Syntax helps to orientate with regard to the semantic field of a lexeme: for instance, λαμβάνω means quite different things when regulated by contextual subjects and objects. Conversely, sometimes it is only the semantics of the lexemes that allow the reader to correctly recognize the constituents of a sentence. The study of the syntax of the Septuagint should not be entirely separated from the study of semantics. In this volume, this fact is acknowledged by including two articles on lexicography: **William A. Ross**, "Some Aspects of Παιδάριον and Νεανίσκος in Ptolemaic Egypt", and **Srecko Koralija**, "Παράδεισος as/and Κήπος".

The use of Greek words for young persons was not so much informed by the actual age of the person, but rather by their perceived age and by sociocultural factors. This makes it difficult to differentiate between terms such as παῖς and

παιδίον or νέος and νεανίας. Ross examines the use of two such words, παιδάριον and νεανίσκος, in Greek literature, documentary papyri, and inscriptions of Ptolemaic Egypt. He concludes that παιδάριον means ‘a semi-skilled labourer’ and νεανίσκος ‘a civic officer’. A similar distinction can be observed in the use of these terms in LXX-Ruth and LXX-Ezekiel. This observation provides further evidence that the translators of those books lived in an Egyptian milieu. The skill of the translators is demonstrated by their ability to use these terms in ways appropriate to their social and linguistic context.

Παράδεισος is an Avestan/Old Persian loan word denoting ‘an orchard’ while the native Greek word κήπος means rather ‘a garden’ with vegetables and plants. Koralija observes that in Classical Greek, παράδεισος seems to imply a degree of grandeur, while in Hellenistic times it can be used to denote various kinds of orchards without an implication of exceptional splendour. The Septuagint reflects the general Hellenistic usage: κήπος mainly designates a place containing vegetables and seeds and is often associated with personal property, while παράδεισος may carry associations of prestige, as can be seen in its being the preferred term for the garden of Eden in the Genesis creation narrative. Subtle differences in meaning between the two words call for special attention on the part of lexicographers.

The volume concludes with six articles by Soisalon-Soininen, originally written in German and translated into English by Theo van der Louw: “The Use of the Genitive Absolute in the Septuagint” (1973), “A Palette of Renderings for the Hebrew Construct State in the Greek Pentateuch” (1977), “The Alleged Interchangeability of ἐν and εἰς in the Septuagint” (1982), “Segmentation in the Greek Pentateuch” (1983), “The Rendering of the Hebrew Personal Pronoun as Subject in the Greek Pentateuch” (1984), and “Back to the Question of Hebraisms” (1990). These studies have lasting value, not only as material for history of research, but as analyses of significant translation-syntactic phenomena. All of them were pioneering studies of their time, and many of them remain the only analysis of the subject. Together with Soisalon-Soininen’s monographs, they crystallize the translation-technical method. Helpfully, every article is preceded by a short abstract. At the end of this volume, before the list of literature cited in the articles, the complete bibliography of Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen is given. Thanks are due to Mr. Aki Ranta for compiling the bibliography and the indexes.

The editors of the present volume hope that this book can serve as inspiration for more research on the syntax of the Septuagint and to uphold the legacy of Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen.

Tuukka Kauhanen

John A.L. Lee

Back to the Question of Greek Idiom

1. Soisalon-Soininen and Greek Idiom

The title of my paper intentionally echoes that of a 1990 paper by Soisalon-Soininen, “Back to the Question of Hebraisms”, providing both a link to his work and a starting-point for the present discussion.¹ That paper was, naturally, about Hebraisms, which he saw as neglected in recent work on literal *versus* free rendering in the LXX. He did not only discuss Hebraisms, however, but made significant mention of idiomatic renderings: “... nearly all the translators occasionally produce very skilful, idiomatic renderings”. He also said that “our work is based on (the question) which renderings are Hebraistic and which are idiomatic”. By idiomatic renderings he evidently meant those that use natural, normal Greek; and the work to which he referred was “to study the differences between individual translators”.²

Soisalon-Soininen thus recognised the presence of idiomatic Greek in the LXX, and his paper gave some illustrations, as well as examples of what he termed Hebraisms. But it seems to me he did not really set out a means of identifying the two, though he did give a definition of a Hebraism.³ As to idiomatic renderings, he only said that they are “renderings which involve, to a greater or lesser degree, a break with the customary word for word approach”⁴—which is rather limited and I think not true: a “word for word” rendering may still be idiomatic Greek. (I admit to some trouble following his thinking here, as at times elsewhere).

1 I. Soisalon-Soininen, “Zurück zur Hebraismenfrage”, in D. Fraenkel/U. Quast/J.W. Wevers (ed.), *Studien zur Septuaginta. Robert Hanhart zu Ehren* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990) 35–51; transl. by Theo van der Louw: “Back to the Question of Hebraisms” in this volume. Page refs. are to the original; translations are van der Louw’s with occasional revisions.

2 “Auf der anderen Seite bringen fast alle Übersetzer gelegentlich sehr geschickte idiomatische Wiedergaben” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Zurück”, 43); “[Ob wir es geradeheraus sagen oder nicht,] so gründet sich unsere Arbeit dann darauf, welche Wiedergaben hebraistisch, welche idiomatisch sind” ... “[Haben wir denn überhaupt die Möglichkeit,] die Unterschiede zwischen den verschiedenen Übersetzern zu untersuchen?” (“Zurück”, 51).

3 “Ein Hebraismus in der Septuaginta ist ein aufgrund des Hebräischen entstandener Ausdruck, der nicht mit dem Sprachgebrauch des gleichzeitigen Griechisch im Einklang steht oder der vom Hebräischen aus erklärliche Gebrauch möglicher Vokabeln oder Ausdrücke im Griechischen in Zusammenhängen, in denen sie nach dem griechischen Sprachgebrauch nicht passend sind” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Zurück”, 39).

4 “...Wiedergaben, die einen größeren oder kleineren Eingriff in die übliche Wiedergabe der einzelnen Teile des Ausdrucks voraussetzen” (“Zurück”, 43).

In other publications also, Soisalon-Soininen made observations on the presence of idiomatic Greek in the LXX. I take two further papers that show this and reveal more about the significance he attached to these features. A 1973 paper dealt with the genitive absolute.⁵ This, as Soisalon-Soininen of course knew well, is a purely Greek construction without any equivalent construction in Hebrew, and therefore a case of idiomatic Greek. It appears only sporadically in the LXX as a whole, though more frequently in books like Job and Proverbs (as one would expect). When it does appear, it gives us (he says) a glimpse of “the true language competence of the translators”.⁶ Though he does not quite spell it out, by “competence” Soisalon-Soininen evidently means competence or skill in *Greek*, not competence in translation. He adds, moreover, in his summing up, that “we should give more weight to these rare cases”,⁷ a sentiment that is in harmony with the aim of this paper—though I would not agree that they are rare.

Clearly, then, Soisalon-Soininen recognised the presence of Greek idiom in the occasional appearances of the genitive absolute. Yet he adds the (to me) curious interpretation that “in those cases, the constraining factors stepped back for some reason”.⁸ What are those “constraining factors”? What does he mean? Evidently they are the constraints imposed by attempting to produce a close rendering of the original Hebrew. This is deducible from Soisalon-Soininen’s preceding discussion, where he speaks of the syntax of the LXX as “translationese” and asserts that “one could say that it is not Greek but rather Hebrew with Greek words”.⁹ Free renderings, then, are not expected, they are not supposed to occur; the translators were supposed to render the Hebrew exactly and not depart from it. And why “for some reason”? Could the answer be in doubt? Soisalon-Soininen does not explain further or seem to want to explore *why* a translator might depart from the strict letter of the original.

5 I. Soisalon-Soininen, “Der Gebrauch des *genetivus absolutus* in der Septuaginta”, in *The Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (vol. 4; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1973), 131–6; repr. in A. Aejmelaeus/R. Sollamo (ed.), *Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen, Studien zur Septuaginta-Syntax. Zu seinem 70. Geburtstag am 4. Juni 1987* (AASF, ser. B, 237; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1987) 175–80; transl. by Theo van der Louw: “The Use of the Genitive Absolute in the Septuagint” in this volume. Page refs. are to *Studien*; translations are van der Louw’s.

6 “[D]ie wirklichen Sprachkenntnisse der Übersetzer” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Gebrauch”, 180). He also speaks of “ihr wirkliches Sprachgefühl und ihr Können” (176) and “die Geschicklichkeit ... der Übersetzer” (180).

7 “[M]üssen wir das Gewicht eben auf diese seltenen Fälle legen” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Gebrauch”, 180).

8 “Es sind aus irgendeinem Grunde die hemmenden Faktoren zurückgetreten” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Gebrauch”, 176).

9 “Übersetzungssprache”; “Man könnte sagen, es ist kein Griechisch, sondern Hebräisch mit griechischen Worten” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Gebrauch”, 175).

My third sample is Soisalon-Soininen's 1977 paper on the relative pronoun.¹⁰ The main interest here is in what Soisalon-Soininen calls "nominal relative clauses", that is, those in which a Hebrew relative clause introduced by **אשר** is translated as a noun phrase with the article, as for example:

Gen 43:16 **וַיֹּאמֶר לְאִשְׁרָאֵל־בִּיתוֹ** = and he said to the (one) who (was) over his house.
καὶ εἶπεν **τῷ** ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ = and he said to the (one) over his house.

Gen 19:11 **אֲשֶׁר־פָּתַח הַבַּיִת** = the men who (were) at the door of the house.

τοὺς ἄνδρας **τοὺς ὄντας** ἐπὶ τῆς θύρας τοῦ οἴκου = the men the (ones) being at the door of the house.

The renderings are natural Greek idiom; the literal equivalent with a relative pronoun would have been possible but less natural. Soisalon-Soininen describes such forms of expression as "idiomatic, one might even say stylish from the viewpoint of the Greek language" and "good Greek style" (57). His appreciation of these as Greek idiom is thus plainly and well stated. But he nevertheless seems to want to push—he does push—the Greek into a closer match to the Hebrew. He does this by an argument that equates the article with the relative pronoun: "the [Greek] relative pronoun is replaced by the almost identical article" (56), and "in some cases the form is actually identical" (57). One may respond that to equate the Greek article and relative pronoun is to ignore their difference of function; and it is not really true that the forms are "almost identical".¹¹ But on this basis Soisalon-Soininen goes on to assert that "this type of translation is not to be taken as a significant indication of the liberties taken by the Septuagint translators" (57). We are thus back to the position that the translator is following his Semitic original exactly and not really departing from it, even when he turns a Hebrew relative clause into a natural Greek equivalent with different syntax—and *does* depart from it.

2. A Different View

This brief exploration of three of Soisalon-Soininen's papers suffices to give an indication of his thinking on the subject of Greek idiom in the LXX. Now my

10 I. Soisalon-Soininen, "The Rendering of the Hebrew Relative Clause in the Greek Pentateuch", in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies Held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 13–19 August, 1973* (vol. 1; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977) 401–6; repr. in *Studien zur Septuaginta-Syntax*, 55–61. Page refs. are to *Studien*. The original is in English.

11 The only forms that are the same are $\acute{o}$, η , $\acute{o}\iota$, $\acute{\alpha}\iota$, and these are distinguished by the accent (rel. pron. $\acute{o}$, η , $\acute{o}\iota$, $\acute{\alpha}\iota$). Further, $\acute{o}$ is *neuter* nom./acc., so cannot function like *masculine* $\acute{o}$.

aim here is not to criticise everything he said, or to diminish the value of all the fine work he did. Rather, I wish to bring the focus on to the element that he himself identified, the idiomatic Greek renderings. He and I agree that they are present; how we ought to view them is where we differ. He evidently sees them as somehow unexpected or anomalous, even difficult to explain, in translations presumed to follow the original as exactly as possible. To me this is to approach the matter around the wrong way. The LXX translators, at least in the Pentateuch, were not tied to producing a close, exact translation, which they departed from only when forced to—for some strange reason. Rather, natural Greek, of which they had an intimate knowledge, was their starting-point, and they deviated from it because of their generally literal method. They follow this method with great inconsistency: they are just as likely to produce natural Greek as to produce Hebraic Greek. That is why natural Greek idiom keeps appearing.

It may be said, of this or that Hebrew feature, that an idiomatic rendering is statistically infrequent compared with a Hebraistic one, and therefore the former is of little or no significance: the translators' aim was still to make the translation as literal as possible, and deviations are in the nature of anomalies. Again I take a contrary view. That a certain feature of Greek idiom appears at all is significant, all the more so if it involves an unrequired or unforced change, as in the case of a shift of word-order. One instance of that kind is just as telling as many.

Whether one agrees with all this or not, the question of the presence of idiomatic Greek in the LXX is a very important one, and I suggest is worth pursuing for its own sake. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the presence of incontestable cases of Greek idiom in the LXX-Pentateuch. The enclitic pronoun/adjective *τις* and the particle *ἄν* will be our examples for this purpose. But we need to begin with sound criteria for identifying Greek idiom.

3. Identifying Greek Idiom

The question of Hebrew interference in the Greek of the LXX has been the subject of enduring discussion, in various guises, since the days of Thackeray. But the sort of methodological framework suited to our purpose has not yet been proposed (as far as I know). I suggest that it is helpful for the present purpose to divide all LXX renderings into three categories, as set out below. This is not, of course, a complete system for analysing all features of a rendering: it is aimed at finding renderings free of interference. I recognise also that the categories are broad and the terminology imprecise. But further refinements can follow, and some will emerge in the discussion below. The illustrations all involve Hebrew *אִישׁ* in some combination, and all have been chosen from the Leviticus translator, deliberately so, to show that he has no less control of Greek idiom than his fellow-translators. These are the three categories of rendering that I propose:

1. The rendering *matches* the Hebrew and is *not* natural Greek: interference is present.

Example:

- (1) Lev 17:3 ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, ὃς ἂν σφάξῃ μόσχον ...
 (4) καὶ λογισθήσεται τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκεῖνῳ αἷμα
 A man a man of the sons of Israel who slaughters a calf ... (4) then bloodshed
 shall be reckoned to that man.
אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁחַט שׁוֹר ... (4) דָּם יִחֲשַׁב לְאִישׁ הַהוּא

2. The rendering *matches* the Hebrew and is *consistent with* natural Greek: interference may or may not be present.

Example:

- (2) Lev 25:17 μὴ θλιβέτω ἄνθρωπος τὸν πλησίον· καὶ φοβηθήσῃ κύριον τὸν θεόν σου.
 Let a man not oppress his neighbour; and you shall fear the Lord your God.
וְלֹא תוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־עֲמִיתוֹ וִירֹאתָ מֵאלֹהֶיךָ

3. The rendering *does not match* the Hebrew and is natural Greek: interference is not present.

Example:

- (3) Lev 6:40(7:10) καὶ πᾶσα θυσία ἀναπεποιημένη ἐν ἐλαίῳ καὶ μὴ ἀναπεποιη-
 μένῃ πᾶσιν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἀαρὼν ἔσται, ἐκάστω τὸ ἴσον.
 And every sacrifice made up with oil or not made up shall be for all the sons
 of Aaron, to each an equal portion.
וְכָל־מִנְחָה בְּלוֹלָה־בְּשֶׁמֶן וְחֹרֶבָה לְכָל־בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן תִּהְיֶה אִישׁ בְּאַחָדוֹ:

Brief explanations will be useful. Example (1) shows a rendering that is not acceptable as natural Greek, even though the meaning would not be totally opaque to a Greek speaker. Comprehension would be aided by “distributive doubling”, a known though rare phenomenon in Greek, as well as by context. But a natural idiomatic Greek equivalent would be different, and one is produced by the Leviticus translator himself in Lev 20:2 ἐάν τις ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ... (אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל). Renderings in this first category can be labelled “Hebraisms”, if one wants to use the term.

In renderings that fall into category 2—and they would probably be the great majority of all renderings—the question of interference remains open. Although they match the Hebrew, they are not inconsistent with natural Greek, that is, they are capable of being read as natural Greek, and are therefore not certainly Hebraisms. Example (2) is in fact not an entirely natural Greek form of expression: we

would be unlikely to find it in a free Greek text. But one cannot say it would be impossible in terms of Greek grammar, syntax, or word-usage.

Renderings of type 3 are by definition one thing and not the other. They are undoubted cases of Greek idiom because they do not match the Hebrew. In example (3) the Hebrew literally means “a man as/like his brother”. The translation departs from a literal rendering and gives an idiomatic Greek equivalent that conveys the sense of the original in different words, literally “to each the equal (portion)”. The insertion of *τό* is Greek idiom (where English uses “an”). No better proof of the Leviticus translator’s grip on Greek could be found than this rendering.

Some further observations arising from the discussion in the Helsinki Symposium and afterwards may be added here.¹² As regards the term “Hebraism”, I would reserve it for individual renderings of type 1 alone, where natural Greek is by definition not present; I would not use it for those of type 2, where there is nothing wrong with the rendering *as Greek*. This means that a great many renderings are left open; but methodologically that is sounder than classing everything that matches the Hebrew as a “Hebraism”. Other considerations may come into play to help decide the question. Many of the renderings of type 2 seem to me to be a matter of *style*. That is, they reflect the style of the original, which like the content is carried over into the translation. It would be surprising if this were not so—unless we think that a Hebrew book can be easily converted into a Greek one. Example (2), as we have noted, may not be the sort of thing a Greek writer would say, but it is acceptable Greek. The reason for the oddity is that the form of expression, like the content, comes from the original.

Style is also the answer, in my opinion, to the perennial issue of frequency. If a Hebrew expression rendered by a natural Greek equivalent appears more frequently than in a normal Greek text, is it a “Hebraism”? My answer is definitely no. Since each individual instance is not a Hebraism, the frequency only reflects that of the original, so it is a feature of style. Soisalon-Soininen expressed it well in his discussion of *ἰδοῦ*: “So, even *ἰδοῦ φωνὴ μεγάλη* is not a Hebraism *per se*. But the frequency of *ἰδοῦ* gives the text a Hebraizing flavour”.¹³ The term “Hebraizing flavour” is of course inexact, but I am not sure of a better alternative. “Stylistic interference” from the Hebrew original might work and is worth a trial.

It is only renderings of type 3 that provide us with undoubted idiomatic Greek. We turn now to examples.

12 Discussion of LXX syntax may advance even in an ice-cream shop or at a tram-stop (thank you Theo van der Louw and Jim Aitken).

13 “So ist sogar *ἰδοῦ φωνὴ μεγάλη* an sich kein Hebraismus. Das sich oft wiederholende *ἰδοῦ* gibt aber dem Text ein hebraisierendes Kolorit” (Soisalon-Soininen, “Zurück”, 41). Similarly: “... eine wiederholte Verwendung ... dem Ganzen ein hebräisches Kolorit geben kann” (39). Cf. R. Sollamo, *Renderings of Hebrew Semiprepositions in the Septuagint* (Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia: Helsinki, 1979), 299: “... exceptionally frequent usage [of the studied expressions] in the LXX is Hebraistic (a *stylistic* Hebraism)”.

4. The Enclitic Pronoun/Adjective τις

The enclitic pronoun/adjective τις is found 79 times in the LXX-Pentateuch.¹⁴ A full analysis appears in my forthcoming book and the data presented here are derived from it.¹⁵ First let us consider the matches between τις and the Hebrew original. Hebrew has no exact equivalent, since it does not employ enclitics like this at all. The Hebrew word for the idea is אִישׁ, which has the primary meaning “man”, with a subsidiary function to mean “someone, a person”. The Pentateuch translators do sometimes use the “literal” equivalent ἀνὴρ or ἄνθρωπος to render אִישׁ meaning “someone, a person”, as in the renderings by ἄνθρωπος in examples (1) and (2) above. Mostly, however, they employ τις or ἕκαστος (“each”), both of which are a move away from a “literal” rendering in favour of more natural Greek.¹⁶

Summary data for τις and the corresponding Hebrew in the Pentateuch are as follows:

Total of τις in the Pentateuch: 79
 In clauses: 54
 In noun phrases: 22
 In μή τι: 3
 With equivalent in Hebrew: 43
 ~ אִישׁ: 40
 ~ מְאוֹמָה, אָחָד: 3
 Without equivalent in Hebrew, i.e., added: 36
 Position of τις:
 In same position as Hebrew equivalent: 19
 Repositioned: 24

The tabulation includes data on the *position* of τις in its clause—and this is where the story becomes really interesting. Like other enclitics, τις conforms to certain position rules. The main one is that it tends to gravitate to the second position in its clause, or the “second slot” (to use a term of my own). Position in the second slot is a manifestation of Wackernagel’s Law, best known for its effects on the

¹⁴ Initial search via Accordance©; readings checked in the Göttingen edition. I do not include Exod 22:9(8) ὃ τι οὖν [sic Göt. edn.], which is an instance of the relative pronoun ὅστις + -οὖν.

¹⁵ J.A.L. Lee, *The Greek of the Pentateuch: Grinfield Lectures on the Septuagint 2011–2012* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁶ ἕκαστος is found 80 times in the LXX-Pent. and corresponds to אִישׁ (אָשׁה) or some combination thereof in 77 of them. This word, too, could be used to demonstrate the presence of idiomatic Greek.

position of the enclitic personal pronoun.¹⁷ For τις I have formulated 11 position rules, based on a close analysis of the 79 occurrences in the Pentateuch, supported by parallels in non-LXX Greek. This list of rules is drawn on here and presented in full in my book.

The question of interest is how much the position of τις matches that of its equivalent וְאֵל. Some might expect it to match consistently, being changed only where וְאֵל is first word and τις has to be moved, or perhaps not even then. In fact, while the position of τις often matches that of וְאֵל, it is more often changed (24 times), the new position being of course in conformity with the Greek position rules. Moreover, in a large proportion of the examples (36 out of 79), τις is *added* without any match to a word in the original. Why would this be? The answer can only be that the addition of τις is natural Greek idiom.

Let us now consider τις in relation to the categories of rendering defined above, with selected examples and parallels. There are no instances of τις in category 1, that is, matches to the Hebrew that are also not natural Greek. In all the cases where τις keeps the same position as וְאֵל, none are unnatural Greek positions. Where keeping the Hebrew order would have led to an unnatural position, as in example (7) below, the translators avoided it by moving τις to a new position.

There are instances of τις in category 2, that is, those in which τις keeps the same position as וְאֵל (or another Hebrew equivalent), and is in a natural Greek position. According to my analysis there are 19 of these. Two examples of τις in category 2:

- (4) Exod 16:20 ἀλλὰ κατέλιπόν **τινες** ἀπ' αὐτοῦ
וְיֹתְרוֹ אֲנָשִׁים מִמֶּנּוּ
BGU 6.1280.17 (210 BC) ἐὰν δὲ μὴ βεβαιῶι ἀλλ' ἐγβάλλῃ τις Διοκλῆν
Pl. *Theaet.* 175c.1 ὅταν δέ γέ τινα αὐτός, ὃ φίλε, ἐλκύσῃ ἄνω, καὶ ἐθελήσῃ τις αὐτῷ ἐκβῆναι
- (5) Exod 22:5(4) ἐὰν δὲ καταβοσκήσῃ **τις** ἀγρόν
כִּי יִבְעֶר-אֵשׁ שָׂדֶה
BGU 14.2367.17 (III BC) ἐὰν δ' ἐπάναγκες δανείζῃ τις μετα[---]
Pl. *Symp.* 221e.1 εἰ γὰρ ἐθέλει τις τῶν Σωκράτους ἀκούειν λόγων

Theoretically these *could* be due to interference, but other considerations apply that make this unlikely to be the main reason for the placing of τις. In example (4), the translator has good reason not to reposition τινες before the verb, though

17 See, e.g., G.C. Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* (2nd ed.; Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 108–9; R. Sollamo, “The Place of the Enclitic Personal Pronouns in the Old Greek Psalter”, in M.K.H. Peters (ed.), *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden 2004* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006) 153–60.

this is a standard position in the case of ἐὰν δέ at the head of the clause, as in examples (6) and (7) below: τις cannot be placed immediately after a co-ordinating conjunction such as ἀλλά. In example (5), in which τις is “postponed” till after the verb when it could have gone before, there are two possible factors to consider. a) Exod 22:5(4) occurs in a rather lengthy string of regulations, many of them expressed in the same form as in example (6) below, that is, ἐὰν δέ τις + verb.¹⁸ It is possible the translator placed τις in a different position simply for variety. b) The second factor is a possible link to historical developments in the placement of enclitics. Over time Greek shows a tendency towards relocation of enclitics to a position *after* the verb.¹⁹ As can be seen in the parallel above, this was already happening in the time of Plato. It is possible the translator was unconsciously influenced by this undercurrent. Of course it could have been a little of both factors. At any rate, both these examples are definitely natural Greek and this explains them better than a resort to interference from the Hebrew. This is true of τις throughout the Pentateuch.

But it is the instances that fall into category 3 that provide incontestable cases of Greek idiom. In these, τις is repositioned or added, *contrary* to the Hebrew, while being at the same time natural Greek. Examples of τις in category 3:

a. τις corresponds to אִישׁ, but is repositioned

- (6) Exod 21:7 ἐὰν δέ τις ἀποδῶται τὴν ἐαυτοῦ θυγατέρα
וְכִי־יִמְכַר אִישׁ אֶת־בִּתּוֹ
(7) Lev 25:29 ἐὰν δέ τις ἀποδῶται οἰκίαν οἰκητήν
וְאִישׁ כִּי־יִמְכַר בֵּית מוֹשָׁב
SB 18.13256.9 (III BC) ἐὰν δέ τις παραθῇται, ἀποτίνειν αὐτόν ...
Pl. *Phaedo* 60b.6 ἐὰν δέ τις διώκη τὸ ἕτερον ...

b. τις is added, without correspondence in the Hebrew

- (8) Gen 6:5 καὶ πᾶς τις (“everyone”) διανοεῖται ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ
וְכָל־יֵצֶר מַחֲשַׁב לָבוֹ
UPZ 1.60.17 (179–168 BC) ἀλλὰ πᾶς τις πειράται
Pl. *Theaet.* 178a.5 ἔτι τοίνυν ἐνθένδε ἂν μᾶλλον πᾶς τις ὁμολογήσειεν

In (6) the translator moves τις to the standard position in the second slot, where the Hebrew equivalent אִישׁ came later, after the verb. There is another word there as well, the particle δέ, and τις is placed after it. This order is not accidental: there

18 Exod 21:7, 14, 20, 26, 33, 22:1(21:37), 22:7(6), 10(9). With the order ἐὰν δέ + verb + τις: Exod 22:5(4), 14(13), 16(15).

19 See Horrocks, *Greek*, 108–9.

are word-order rules within the second slot. (More will be said on these under ἄν.) In example (7) the position of ψῖς could not have been kept without breaking one of the basic rules for τις, that it is not placed first in its clause. Even καί τις (~ψῖς) would not have been idiomatic. In (8) τις is just a natural addition to πᾶς in the manner of idiomatic Greek since Classical times.

So τις is a good example of Greek idiom in the LXX-Pentateuch, indubitably in the cases in category 3 and potentially in all cases in category 2. We may note again the point made earlier that the mere choice of τις as opposed to a “literal” equivalent of ψῖς is a step towards more idiomatic Greek.

5. The Particle ἄν

The particle ἄν occurs just over 400 times in the Greek Pentateuch.²⁰ It is an entirely Greek feature without any counterpart in Hebrew, and therefore an instance of pure Greek idiom. It occurs in the LXX as a component of various clause types, as required by Greek syntax. These are familiar to us, even if we do not always notice ἄν or realise that it is not there by accident. Most of these clause types are illustrated in the examples below; parallels in contemporary (III BC) papyri are added. The “indefinite construction” in temporal and relative clauses is common, as in examples (10), (13), (14), (15), (18). In examples (9) and (17) we have the stylish addition of ἄν to ὅπως, a feature often seen in Ptolemaic officialese. In (11) and (16) there is the highly idiomatic Greek use of ἄν with a verb in the indicative to convey an “unfulfilled” condition (“I would have sent you ...”). In example (12) we see the rare use of ὥς ἄν + optative in a simile.

- (9) Gen 12:13 ὅπως ἄν εὖ μοι γένηται
BGU 8.1738.32 (72 BC) ὀπηνίκ' ἄν εὖ συνθῶμεν.
- (10) Gen 21:6 ὅς γάρ ἄν ἀκούσῃ
PCairZen 1.33.7 ἐπόρισεν γὰρ ἄν αὐτοῖς
- (11) Gen 31:27 ἐξαπέστειλα ἄν σε μετ' εὐφροσύνης
PMich 1.29.3 ἀπέστ[ειλα] | ἄν \σοι/ αὐτήν.
- (12) Gen 33:10 εἶδον τὸ πρόσωπόν σου, ὥς ἄν τις ἴδοι πρόσωπον θεοῦ.
PCairZen 1.93.18 κέχρηται ἡμῖν ὥς ἄν εἴ τις ἐχθρῶι χρήσαιο.
- (13) Exod 32:34 ἢ δ' ἄν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκέπτομαι
PHib 1.29.10 ἢ δ' ἄν ἡμ[έρ]αι
- (14) Lev 13:51 κατὰ πάντα ὅσα ἄν ποιηθῇ
PCairZen 5.815.4 καὶ ὅσα ἄν εὐρεθῇ

²⁰ In the current Göttingen text 394 of ἄν (as counted by Accordance©) + 12 of ἐάν = particle ἄν.

- (15) Lev 16:17 ἕως ἄν ἐξέλθῃ
PPetr 2.3a.1 διὸ ἐπέχω ἕως ἄν ἐξέλθῃ.
- (16) Num 22:29 εἰ εἶχον μάχαιραν ... ἤδη ἄν ἐξεκέντησά σε
PCairZen 4.599.8 καὶ εἰ μὴ ... ἐπεβοήθει ... πάλαι ἄν ἡσχημόνουν.
- (17) Num 16:40(17:5) ὅπως ἄν μὴ προσέλθῃ μηδεὶς
PLond 7.2033.6 ὅπως ἄν μὴ κατέχῃται ὁ Καλλικῶν.
- (18) Deut 12:26 ἂ ἄν σοι γένηται
PCairZen 3.358.3 ὅσα ἄν σοι δόξῃ

These uses of ἄν in the Pentateuch are interesting enough as instances of Greek idiom; but there is more. This particle exhibits word-order behaviour very similar to that of τις, even though it is not an enclitic. Like τις it gravitates to the second slot in its clause, but it has an even stronger tendency to do so than τις; it also precedes some words that τις does not, and τις itself. The rules can be seen played out in our selection: ἄν follows the particles γάρ (10) and δέ (13), but otherwise comes immediately after the headword of its clause, preceding the enclitic pronouns σε (11), σοι (18), the negative μὴ (17), and τις (12). These word-order rules can be traced back as far as Homer.²¹ This of course does not mean that the LXX translators learnt them from Homer; it means that the patterns were established in early Greek and continued to operate all the way to the time of the translators.

6. Conclusions

The aim of identifying Greek idiom in the LXX-Pentateuch can be readily achieved. As we have seen, there are undoubted instances according to the criteria we have established. In the case of ἄν, every use falls into this category. In the case of τις, we have found clear instances in which Hebrew interference cannot be involved (60 in all); in the rest the possibility of interference remains open according to our criteria, but other factors apply that can tip the balance against interference. The approach through three defined categories of rendering (see section 3) provides a method applicable to all cases of potential interference, in effect to all renderings in the LXX.

There are three further conclusions that I think are warranted. First, the evidence of idiomatic Greek woven into the fabric of the Greek Pentateuch demonstrates the translators' complete competence in Greek. If one also takes into account other evidence beyond τις and ἄν—though these are significant enough—it is not too much to assert that the Pentateuch translators had native-speaker

21 See C.J. Ruijgh, "La place des enclitiques dans l'ordre des mots chez Homère d'après la loi de Wackernagel", in H. Eichner/H. Rix (eds.), *Sprachwissenschaft und Philologie. Jacob Wackernagel und die Indogermanistik heute* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1990) 213–33.

competence.²² It is hard to see what other explanation there is for their intimate knowledge of the usage of $\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon$, including the word-order patterns. We can say further that this observation applies to all the translators of the Pentateuch, however many there were. I believe that there were five, but the point is not affected even if this is not true: the spread of $\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon$ shows that they were all equally competent in Greek. This is not the same as competence as *translators*. Nor do these two features enable us to characterise the techniques of individual translators: as far as I can see, they all use them in the same way.

A second conclusion is that the presence of Greek idiom as in $\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon$ supports the contention that the Greek translation of the Pentateuch should be viewed as in essence Greek with Hebrew interference, rather than as Hebraic Greek into which idiomatic Greek occasionally intrudes, for no evident reason. This is to some extent just a matter of viewpoint, but there is a genuine issue underlying it. What we expect to see will have an impact on what we find when we try to analyse the Greek of the Pentateuch and the translators' methods. Soisalon-Soininen's approach to relative clauses might be seen as an illustration (see section 1).

A third conclusion relates to Koine Greek as a whole. Our usual approach to the Greek of the LXX, founded on a long-standing assumption that there is something anomalous about it and every feature needs to be proved to be acceptable Greek, has been to pursue a quest for parallels outside the LXX to provide the proof. What we have found in $\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon$ in the Pentateuch, that is, normal usage of characteristically Greek idiom, suggests that the Pentateuch itself has value as evidence for Koine Greek (with of course the usual cautions and provisos). In regard to the uses of $\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon$ that are already well-attested, as in those presented above, the Pentateuch has little new to offer. But things are different in the case of another use of $\alpha\upsilon$, the "iterative" use with indicative in subordinate clauses, as seen in this example:

- (19) Exod 33:8 ἡνίκα δ' $\alpha\upsilon$ εἰσπορεύετο Μωϋσῆς εἰς τὴν σκηνήν, ...

And whenever Moyses went into the tent ...

... והיה כצאת משה אל-האהל

(Lit.) And it happened at the going out of Moses to the tent ...

Though this new Koine Greek construction is well attested later, there are no examples in III BC documents and there is a general lack of evidence for it in early Koine Greek.²³ The Pentateuch, with some 15 instances, actually provides the (so far) missing proof that it had begun in III BC. As can be seen from the example, it

²² Further evidence supporting this conclusion is offered in Lee, *Greek of the Pentateuch*.

²³ See E. Mayser, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit* (2 vols. in 6 parts; Berlin/Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1906–38), 2,1:295; 2,3:79–80; 94; T. Muraoka, *A Syntax of Septuagint Greek* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 773.

has nothing to do with the Hebrew original, nor can there be any reason to think the translators were using something that was not current Greek.

To conclude. The study of Hebraisms has its place, but rather than go back to the question of Hebraisms I would like to see us go forward to the question of Greek idiom in the LXX. Our evidence has shown that Greek idiom is undoubtedly present in the LXX-Pentateuch, but the pursuit of such evidence has been slow up till now. We could now turn our attention to the many ways in which the translators followed Greek idiom, rather than the ways in which they departed from it.