THE TRANSLATOR'S HAND IN TRANSPOSITIONS?
Notes on the LXX of Genesis 31

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The LXX of Genesis 31 is replete with transpositions. They range from simple inversions, changes of word-order within a single verse, to broader transpositions involving two or more verses. However, whether or not any of these transpositions are of text-critical significance depends on their source. Are the differences in word-order in the LXX based on a variant text, a Vorlage which differed from MT? If so, these transpositions may have text-critical significance. If not, if the differences in word-order rest with the translator, these transpositions can have no text-critical significance. Unfortunately, there are no simple answers to these questions; the text-critical value of most transpositions cannot be evaluated easily.1 Nevertheless, an analysis of the transpositions in the LXX of Gen. 31 may provide some guideline indicating which transpositions must be attributed to the translator's Vorlage and which transpositions may reflect the translator's hand.

I

External evidence can lend support to an assumption that a transposition of the LXX reflects its Vorlage. Certainly, the fact that inversions of adjacent words are found in both the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) and the LXX increases the probability that our translator had a Vorlage that differed from MT.2 Such is the case in Gen. 31:17.3


2See J. Barr, "The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations", Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen 1, Philologisch-historische Klasse, Nr 11 (1979), Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens XV, 284-286; M. Silva, "Internal
It should be noted, however, that the inversion of בִּנְיָן יִשְׂרָאֵל in both the LXX and the SP lends support to the assumption of a textual variant in the Vorlage of the LXX only because 1) there seems to be no good reason for the translator to have inverted the word-order on his own initiative and 2) the probability of both the SP and the LXX translator having inverted the word-order of this particular phrase seems negligible.\(^4\)

However, in many, if not most, cases of identical transposition in an external source, there can be no certainty regarding the source of the inversion in the LXX. Thus, in Gen. 31:16 we find:


\(^3\)The alignments in this article are based on the texts of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Stuttgart 1976-77) (BHS) and Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Genesis (Göttingen, 1974) edited by J.W. Wevers. BH3 refers to the apparatus of Biblica Hebraica, 7th ed. (Stuttgart 1937). SP refers to the Samaritan Pentateuch in Jewish and Samaritan Version of the Pentateuch, edd. Avraham and Ratson Sadaqa (Tel Aviv 1964). The text following the = sign refers to a possible Hebrew text reconstructed on the basis of the Greek. The tilde (~) indicates change of word-order. The numbers in single square brackets ([ ]) refer to the LXX verse numbers; those in double square brackets ([[]]) refer to the verse numbers in MT. Numbers in angular brackets (< >) refer to MT verses used as the basis for reconstruction of Greek additions. Bowed brackets enclose simple stylistic inversions, e.g. (~γάρ). The symbol (...) indicates a distributive rendering, occurring once in the LXX translation but referring to more than one Hebrew word or element. The alignments are based on the Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Study (CATSS) data base.

\(^4\)Interestingly, this order fits neatly into what might be considered a pattern in the Jacob narrative. In Gen. 30:26 רֵאָשׁ אֲנָשָׁאָת אֲנָשָׁאָת הָלָיְלִידְהָו אֲנָשָׁאָת הָלָיְלִידְהָו אֲנָשָׁאָת הָלָיְלִידְיָה and Gen. 33:5 יִשְׂרָאֵל נְתָנֶה אֹת הָלָיְלִידְיָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הָלָיְלִידְיָה אֲנָשָׁאָת הָלָיְלִידְיָה נְתָנֶה אֲנָשָׁאָת הָלָיְלִידְיָה. Contrast the order in the story of Noah (Gen. 7:7, 8:16), of Dinah (Gen. 34:29), and in the Joseph narrative (Gen. 45:19, 46:5).
The Hebrew text could not have read `אָמַרֲךָ מִכֶּל אָשֶׁר לֹּהֵם עֲשָׂה

II

Of course, those transpositions which are purely stylistic in nature do undoubtedly stem from the hand of the translator. Thus, the first verse of the LXX of Gen. 31 begins:

Here, ἡκούσεν δὲ Ἰακώβ obviously reflects יראת עקיב, and Jacob heard. Whether the name עקיב was in the translator's Vorlage or whether the translator added it remain moot questions; however, there can be no doubt that the inversion of the semantic elements in יראת was the translator's choice. He could have chosen to open the chapter with καὶ, keeping a word order paralleling the Hebrew. Similarly, in verse 19 the Greek equivalent of `עִנְבָּה, and Laban went, is ἀλλὰ δὲ ἔχετο. Here, too, there is no reason to suspect a Vorlage different from MT. In fact,
there is virtually no possibility of a transposition of text-critical significance here since transpositions deriving solely from the rules of Greek language or usage, by their very nature, cannot reflect a difference in Vorlage. Nevertheless, the fact that within the 54 verses of Gen. 31 the translator chose to use the post-positive δὲ no less than 34 times is not without significance. Indeed, it is precisely this choice of equivalents and word-order which is most significant in describing the translation technique of our translator, and it is this technique which may well provide a touchstone in evaluating the text-critical significance of the broader transpositions in our chapter.5

III

The first transposition in the LXX of Gen. 31, indeed, in the LXX of the book of Genesis, which involves two verses in MT occurs in Gen. 31:26-27.6

5G. Marquis, "Word Order as a Criterion for the Evaluation of Translation Technique in the LXX and the Evaluation of Word-Order Variants as Exemplified in LXX-Ezekiel," Textus 13 (1986) 59-84, deals with word-order differences within single verses or verses involving a difference in the verse division of LXX and MT. While there is no doubt that differences in word-order may reflect translation technique, the statistical value of a complete listing of word-order variants is questionable. As Marquis himself observed (p.60 n.4) a complete listing of word-order differences includes deviations which may derive from a variant Hebrew text. Therefore, use of such a listing "entails the (incorrect but) necessary assumption that the extent of real variants, that is deviations in the Greek which go back to a variant Hebrew text, is essentially the same for any LXX book and does not significantly throw off our statistics for degree of literalness" (italics NL). Nevertheless, Marquis' categorization of transpositions is useful and his analysis of specific word-order differences should prove helpful in evaluating similar cases.

6In the LXX of Gen. 23:5 and 14 we find differences in division of the verses following differences in vocalization. Interestingly, similar verse division and differences in vocalization are found in SP.

| Gen.23 5 | לא | יSetColor(136,136,136)| ישנאך | λέγοντες |
| Gen.23 6 | רדיא | יSetColor(136,136,136)| שם | קύριε |
| Gen.23 14 | שלם | יSetColor(136,136,136)| לא | αὐσον δὲ ἡμῶν |
| Gen.23 15 | דיה | יIColor(136,136,136)| שמועני | λέγων |
| Gen.23 15 | דיה | יIColor(136,136,136)| שמועני | Οὐχὶ [15] |
| Gen.23 15 | דיה | יIColor(136,136,136)| שמועני | κύριε |
| Gen.23 15 | דיה | יIColor(136,136,136)| שמועני | ἀκήκοα |
v.26

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In the upper apparatus of BH3, the notation regarding תַּנֵנָּאֶלְבֵּנָּא reads, G pro his vb v 27a. Skinner notes that the Greek omits תַּנֵנָּאֶלְבֵּנָּא and transposes 27a and 26b.\(^7\) However, it is highly unlikely that תַּנֵנָּאֶלְבֵּנָּא was missing in the translator’s Vorlage. We agree with BHS which, having no note regarding these

two verses, implies that the difference in the Greek word-order is not text-
critically significant.

There are two basic reasons for our assessment. 1) Though one cannot discount
the possibility that the LXX Vorlage differed from MT, there is no reason to be-
lieve that the translator's Vorlage did indeed differ from that of MT. Certainly,
there is no external evidence to support such as assumption. Furthermore, if MT is
considered original, there is no apparent scribal error and no exegetical or liter-
ary consideration which would account for the deletion of the phrase נַעַי
בְּנֵבַיִם and for the transposition within a variant Hebrew text. On the other hand,
if MT is not considered original, it is equally difficult to account for the addition
of the phrase in MT and the transposition within the MT text. 2) Both the over-
all translation technique of the translator of Genesis and the translation of this
particular chapter point to the translator's hand as the source of the differences
between the LXX and MT in these verses.

There is general agreement regarding the free translation of LXX Genesis as a
whole. 8 Moreover, if one examines what Barr considers to be the six distinguish-
able modes of difference between the more literal and the less literal renderings,
one must rank the LXX of Genesis as decidedly "less literal" in respect to each and
every mode. 9 Accepting Barr's view that "the tendency of many early translators
was not to be consistently literal or consistently free, but to combine the two ap-
proaches in a quite inconsequential way," 10 one must still recognize the fact that
the overall approach of our translator was decidedly free.

The translation of LXX Gen. 31 is similarly free in nature. We have already
noted the frequency of the post-positive δέ in the chapter. The frequent use of δέ
and the introduction of such purely stylistic transpositions as the one found in the
LXX of verse 12 (see p. 107 above) are significant not only because they characte-

8For example, R. Sollamo concludes, "As is commonly noted, Ex and Gen (in this order)
seem to be the freest translations in the Pentateuch". (R. Sollamo, "The LXX Renderings
of the Infinitive Absolute Used with a Paronymous Finite Verb in the Pentateuch," V Congres
IOSCS (1985) 113.) For a detailed study comparing LXX Genesis 3 with the MT of that
chapter and for a number of pertinent albeit tentative statements concerning the work of
the Greek translator see John Wm Wevers, "An Apologia for Septuagint Studies," BIOSCS 18
(1985), particularly 28 - 38.

9Barr, "Typology" 294.

10ibid, 281.
ize our translator's generally free approach to translation, but because they suggest that translation technique may account for other transpositions in the chapter.

An equally significant factor in the translation technique exhibited in this chapter is the translator's choice of equivalents. Our translator does not translate mechanically; his choice of equivalents is based on the meaning of the Hebrew word in its context. For example, the verb יָפָת occurs twice in verse 25. In both cases the translator chose its equivalent on the basis of contextual meaning and what would make good sense in the Greek.

"Jacob pitched his tent" and "Laban stationed his brothers" can be considered literal, though not mechanical translations. More material to evaluating the transposition in verses 26-27 is the fact that our translator understood the meaning of the verb בַּב, to steal, and the meaning of the idiom בַּב אֲנָא, to hide (the matter) from. Moreover, in verses 19 and 20 he distinguished between the two instances of בַּב.

v.19 תַּבּoccanָּא רָכִּי אֲנָא רָכִּיִּים אֲנָא לֶאָבִיתֵהָ

11 Compare the RSV: "And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen encamped in the hill country of Gilead."
Obviously, our translator chose the equivalent ἐκλεψεν to render בְּנֵי in the context of Rachel's stealing Laban's household goods. Equally obvious is the fact that he chose to render the idiom בְּנֵי לֹאְנָב by a single Greek term, by the equivalent ἐκρύψεν. We press the point not only because HR does not consider it obvious, but because our translator's choice of one Greek word to render the two-word Hebrew idiom is yet another indication of his non-mechanical translation technique. He is concerned with content and not overly concerned with one-to-one representation.

Perhaps our translator's lack of concern for the literal rendering of each and every Hebrew element is best illustrated by his rendering of יִנָּה by τὶ ἔστων;

12E. Hatch and H.A. Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the OT (Including the Apocryphal Books), (Oxford 1897, reprinted Grand Rapids 1983), has an “obelus” after the entry for κρύπτειν in Gen. 31:20, implying “that the identification of the Greek and Hebrew is doubtful, or at least that a student should examine the passage for himself” (Preface, vi). Cf. Tov, TCU 86.

13The fact that the rendering is non-mechanical does not indicate that it is not literal. The compound word κακοποιεῖν rendering the two Hebrew words נָשָׂא is quite literal, reflecting, as it does, both Hebrew elements. See E. Tov, “Compound Words in the LXX Representing Two or More Hebrew Words,” Biblica 58 (1977) 189-212. It should also be noted that while our translator chose a literal equivalent, he also chose a stylistic inversion. Though SP reads לֶשֶׁת, its word order does not differ from MT.
("What is it?") in Gen. 31:11. Compare the renderings of the modern RSV ("Here I am") and NJPS ("Here, I answered."). Most important, the LXX "free rendering" highlights the translator's concern with (and for) the flow of the narrative.

Thus, it seems most probable that the translator, not his Vorlage, was the source of the transposition of 27a and 26b. כָּלַב was not missing in his Vorlage. Rather, having "read ahead" and having chosen כָּלַב as the best equivalent for הַנָּבִא in the phrase הַנָּבִא כָּלַב, our translator chose מְקֻלָּם כָּלַב to render הַנָּבִּי and chose to transpose his translation of the beginning of MT 31:27 to "cover" כָּלַב in 31:26. The transposition, then, is an inherent part of the translation technique; we may call it a technical transposition.

15 The translation of כָּלַב throughout Genesis may provide an insight into the translator's attitude to text and narrative. The term occurs eight times in Genesis. It is rendered וַיֹּסֶר כָּלַב five times: in the story of the binding of Isaac, in Gen. 22:1 and 11, when Abraham answers God and his angel; in Gen. 27:1, when Esau answers Isaac, and in 27:18 when Isaac answers Jacob (in a most fitting rendition since, "It is I," is followed by the question, "Who are you, my son?"); and in Gen. 37:13 where it is not a response to a question, but rather Joseph's response to his father's sending him to his brothers in Shechem. כָּלַב is rendered כָּלַב only three times: the first in Gen. 22:7 when, on the way to the binding, Abraham answers Isaac's פָּדֵר, with הבּ יָד, כָּלַב תָּקֵנָא. The two other occasions of the rendering כָּלַב are found in the Jacob stories, in Gen. 31:11 when Jacob reports his answer to the angel of God who appeared to him in a dream, and in Gen. 46:2 when Jacob answers God in a night-vision. It is interesting to note that in Ex 3:4 כָּלַב is also freely rendered by כָּלַב, the implication being that Moses does not at first recognize that it is God speaking from the burning bush.

16 Transposing the beginning of MT 31:27 brings the adverb כָּלַב in proximity to the position that would normally be filled by the equivalent of הַנָּבִי. Recalling that the verb כָּלַב was the equivalent of הַנָּבִי in verse 20, we may consider the adverb as covering the semantic field of הַנָּבִי. It is equally possible, however, to consider מְקֻלָּם כָּלַב as covering הַנָּבִי. Thus, Tov, "Compound Words," 209, equates מְקֻלָּם כָּלַב with הַנָּבִי. Important for our discussion is the fact that it is considered to be an exegetical rendering and כָּלַב is not considered as missing in the Vorlage. Cf. J. Cook, "The Translation of the Greek Genesis," V Congress IOSCS (Madrid 1985) 179, and M. Harl, La Bible d’Alexandrie, La Genèse (Paris 1986) 237.
The technical transposition applied in rendering רוחו / דֵּד in Gen. 31:34-35 is similar to that applied in rendering נַבָּה / דְּד in Gen. 31:26-27.
It is quite possible that our translator did not understand the exact meaning of the verb מָשַׁה in verse 37. However, even if he did understand מָשַׁה, in the context of these two verses, to be equivalent to מָלָא, search. Indeed, he uses the same equivalent for מָשַׁה in verse 37 as he had used for מָלָא in verse 35.

If the differences between the MT and LXX in verses 34 and 35 are not recognized as transpositions related to the translator's technique, the differences would most naturally be treated as a minus in verse 34 followed by a plus in verse 35. In fact, BH3 in its upper apparatus notes the "omission" of המָשַׁה בַּכֵּל הַהַאֲדָל in verse 34. Then, in its lower apparatus it suggests inserting "with the Greek" בַּכֵּל הַהַאֲדָל. BHS, however, does not note the "minus" in verse 34; nevertheless, it notes the Greek "plus" in verse 35, cautiously adding, "perhaps insert בַּכֵּל הַהַאֲדָל." It is difficult to see why the three word "plus" should be more textually significant than the seven word "minus." Moreover, if the "minus" is considered to be textually insignificant, being a matter of translational technique, why should not the "plus" be considered in the same light? The "minus" and "plus" in the LXX of Gen. 31:34-35 would then be recognized as another instance of technical transposition.


IV

The changes of word-order in LXX 31:33 do not involve technical transposition. They are changes of a completely different nature.

The major problem posed by the MT of verse 33 is not the omission of the verb שָׁעָּם (he searched), but the sequence of events describing the search:
The Translator’s Hand in Transpositions?

So Laban went into Jacob’s tent, and into Leah’s tent, and into the tent of the two maidservants, but he did not find [them]. And he went out of Leah’s tent, and entered Rachel’s tent.

Now there is good dramatic reason for having Laban search Rachel’s tent last. We know that it is she who has stolen the household gods, though Jacob and Laban do not. But why does the MT verse state that Laban went out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s tent when it has already mentioned the tent of the maidservants after Leah’s tent?

The LXX solves the problem by changing the order of events, presenting a much more logical sequence. In the course of the change it adds the verb ἰσχύοντας (he searched) and then repeats the addition, and it adds a repetition of καὶ οὖν ἔστη (and he did not find).

If the narrative changes were not introduced by the translator but were already present in his Vorlage, the reconstructed Vorlage would read:

So Laban went and searched in Leah’s tent and did not find [them], and he went out of Leah’s tent and he searched Jacob’s tent and in the tent of the two maidservants, and he did not find [them]; and he entered Rachel’s tent.

The problem before us is to judge whether there was such a Vorlage or whether the translator himself made the narrative changes. We suggest that though the differences in LXX 31:33 may have been based on its Vorlage, such was not necessarily the case. It is for us to consider the probability that the differences reflected the Vorlage and were not the fruits of the translator’s initiative.

Both BH3 and BHS suggest that the first difference between the LXX and MT in verse 33 is textually significant. BH3, noting that the LXX is different, suggests inserting רוחֵם after the basis of the SP and the LXX. BHS does not note that the LXX of the verse as a whole differs from MT. However, it adds a question mark after the suggestion to add רוחם with the SP and LXX.

Undoubtedly the SP can lend support to the assumption of a textual variant. The inversion of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in both the LXX and SP of verse 17 was cited above. Nevertheless, the fact that there is no transposition in the SP of verse 33 would seem to caution against using the SP to support a textual variant in the LXX verse which has such a major transposition.\textsuperscript{20} However, even if one were to view the first addition of ἔρευνσεν (and he searched) as reflecting a textual variant, there is no basis for assuming that the second addition of ἔρευνσεν in the LXX reflects a textual variant. Thus, since it is the second addition that introduces the transposition, we have no basis for judging the transposition to be a textual variant.\textsuperscript{21} Or, to put it bluntly, the only basis for judging the transposition to be based on a textual variant in the Vorlage is the a priori assumption that the transposition could not have been the handiwork of the translator.

The nature of the changes in the verse and the general approach of the LXX translator do not support this assumption. Both the additions and the transposition in the verse are editorial. The transposition presents the narrative in a more logical sequence than MT. The additions, particularly the second addition of ἔρευνσεν (he searched), necessary for the smooth introduction of the transposition, heighten the drama of the narrative. We see Laban searching all the other tents; we hear, "he searched...but he did not find"; and again we hear, "he searched...but he did not find"; only then do we see him enter Rachel's tent.

\textsuperscript{20} Disregarding the orthographic differences between SP and MT which by their very nature cannot be reflected in the LXX, one finds the differences between LXX and MT to be far greater than the differences between SP and MT in our chapter. 1) There are no major transpositions in SP. 2) The major harmonization of SP in regard to our chapter is to be found in the previous chapter. After Gen. 30:36, SP adds an account of the dream for which the reader of MT (and LXX!) is "unprepared" when Jacob relates it to his wives in Gen. 31:11-13.

\textsuperscript{21} Cumulative evidence of pluses and minuses in the Vorlage of LXX Gen.31 could effect our evaluation of the translation as whole. If there were a significant number of pluses and minuses judged to be textual variants, we would tend to consider the transpositions in the chapter to be based on textual variants. However, it is difficult to prove a particular minus in the LXX reflects a minus in the translator's Vorlage, and it is difficult to prove a particular plus was present in the Vorlage and was not added by the translator. Indeed, as Goshen-Gottstein noted, "there is no retroversion without a residue of doubt." ("Theory and Practice of Textual Criticism - The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint" Textus 3 (1963) 132.) Certainly, the LXX of Gen. 31 does not provide convincing evidence of pluses or minuses in the translator's Vorlage.
Surely, these are changes that might have been initiated by a translator who has already demonstrated his artistry in narrative.

V

The additions and transposition in verse 32 illustrate a different type, indeed a different level, of editing. The minus in verse 31 is of the same cut.

v. 31 ἰσορροφεῖς ~ δὲ

v. 32 ἠσθήματα ~ ἀπεριηκράνοντα

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In the preceding verses Laban asked Jacob why he fled secretly and why he stole his, Laban's, gods. In MT verse 31, "Jacob answered Laban, 'Because I was afraid..." (RSV). In the LXX, יְסָרִים יִכְּל ה is not translated. The Vorlage or the LXX translator deleted these words. Of course, the omission may be a case of simple parablepsis. That it may be an addition to MT as suggested by BH3 and BHS seems unlikely. More likely, in view of the LXX of the following verse, we have the case of an editor saving Jacob's honor by deleting the crass admission.²²

²²Cf. the editorial minus in verses 24 and 29.
In verse 32 of MT, Jacob declares, "Any one with whom you find your gods shall not live..." (RSV) The meaning is clear: whoever stole the gods will not "remain alive!" (NJPS) However, this declaration appeared precipitate, if not rash or

Since "the copyists did not confine themselves to the preservation of what was already there, but both corrected and invented" (I.L. Seeligmann, "Indications of Editorial Alteration and Adaptation in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint" VT 11 (1961) 202), it is quite possible that the words יְהִי יְהִי were missing in the Vorlage of both verses 24 and 29. (BH3, in its upper apparatus, indicates that the LXX and the Vulgata omit the two words in both verses.) Nevertheless, it is equally possible that it was the translator who decided that the two words need not/ could not/ should not be translated in both verses. After all, Laban does speak to Jacob.
foolhardy, coming from Jacob. The fact that it came before his saying, "Point out what I have that is yours and take it," only made matters worse. An editorial change in the dialogue was required.

The order in the LXX is, therefore, reversed. First, Jacob asks Laban to find (recognize) whatever of his (of Laban's) is with him (is in Jacob's possession). But this simple change did not seem to suffice. A plus is, therefore, added. Though not stated explicitly, it is clear that Laban looked. What is stated explicitly in the LXX is that he did not find (recognize) anything. Then, and only then, does the LXX have Jacob's transposed declaration, followed by the statement that Jacob did not know that Rachel, his wife, stole (the gods).

Who was responsible for the editing? The scribe who copied, or wrote, the LXX Vorlage or the LXX translator himself?

Undoubtedly, the editorial changes in verse 32 might have been made by a scribe. As Talmon has suggested, the scribe in ancient Israel was seldom if ever a slavish copyist of the text. Rather, he "should be considered a minor partner in the creative literary process" who applied the techniques of the ancient authors and had the right, within limits, to introduce variations into the biblical text. Mechanical faithfulness to the letter of the sanctified literature became the rule only after canonization, not earlier than the first century B.C.E. and not later than the second century C.E. However, if Talmon's view is correct, and we think it is, one must ask why, if mechanical faithfulness was not expected of the scribe before canonization, must we assume that mechanical faithfulness was expected of the early translators?

Admittedly, any judgment regarding the translator's role in this type of editing must necessarily be based on our assessment of how far a translator might go, how much liberty the translator might be expected to take with the text. It is a comparatively short step from recognizing the translator's evident concern for clear narration to assuming he transposed the text in order to achieve his narrative.

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24Talmon does note that "at least some cases of inverted word-order in the Greek translation may reflect the same margin of stylistic license which can be observed in a collation of parallel Hebrew traditions of the Biblical text." (ibid. 373) We suggest that the license taken by the LXX translator went far beyond stylistic license.
goals. However, it is a rather broad jump to the conclusion that the translator would transpose the text to achieve non-narrative goals.

Modern translators may transpose, albeit rarely, for the sake of clarity, but we do not expect them to make editorial changes such as the one under discussion. Indeed, we expect them not to make such changes. The LXX translator, however, was not modern and we have no right to expect him to have followed the standards of today. Indeed, from what we know of other versions of the Pentateuch, the translators of old had their own guidelines, quite different from ours.

A case in point is the Targum, the Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch, attributed to Onkelos (TO). The date of its composition is disputed. However, there is little question about the nature of the translation. It is patently tendentious, its primary purpose being educational. Therefore, though the translator usually conveyed the literal sense of the Hebrew text, he did not feel constrained to do so. He felt free to add halacha and aggada. Moreover, he felt free to make changes that he felt were necessary for the good of his listeners. Luzzatto, in analyzing the translation technique of TO, listed 32 types or modes of change from the literal sense. The fifth mode is "change of the language for the honor of the nation and its forefathers."

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25 NJPS, for example, includes a footnote to its translation of Gen.10:14, "moved up for the sake of clarity" and a footnote to Eccl. 2:12 reads, "The order of the two sentences in this verse is reversed in the translation for clarity." On the other hand, hesitancy to make any editorial change is illustrated by the footnote to Judges 16:24 which states, "This verse would read well after v. 25".

26 Zunz dates it between 20 B.C.E. to 50 C.E., Berliner in the second century C.E. and Eissfeldt as late as the fifth century C.E. Komlosh suggests that the work evolved over a period of centuries. Today it is customary to distinguish between the translation in its present written form and what is termed Proto-Onkelos, the ancient oral tradition which is reflected in the fragments of the Aramaic translations found in Qumran. See Y. Komlosh, "The Aramaic Translations," Encyclopaedia Biblica, vol. 8 (Jerusalem 1982) 742-748 (Hebrew).

27 S.D. Luzzatto, Ohev Ger, Philoxenus, (Hebrew) 2nd ed. (Cracow 1895, reprinted Jerusalem 1969).

28 Ibid., p. 5; in fact the first example cited is מָתַח אֵין הָעֵדֶותָה וְאָבֶן, and Rachel stole the household gods, which TO renders תַבָּעֵה, took. See, too, M. Aberbach and B. Grossfeld, Targum Onkelos to Genesis. A Critical Analysis together with an English translation of the Text, based on A. Sperber's edition (Denver 1982).
Of course, the translation techniques of TO are markedly different from those of the LXX. For example, TO is far more apologetic. Its introduction of halachic and aggadic material is more extensive. And, it does not transpose. However, because of its very nature, one would not expect TO to transpose verses, or even sections within verses. Had the TO not been so tied to word-order, the introduction of such changes as are found in the LXX of Gen. 31:32 would not be unexpected. Thus, ancient translation tradition leads us to suggest that though the editorial changes in this verse may have originated with a scribe, it is at least as likely that they were introduced by the LXX translator.

VI

The most complex, extensive and intriguing differences in sequence between the MT and the LXX of Gen. 31 are found in verses 44 through 51, in the narrative telling of the covenant between Laban and Jacob. When the interwoven transpositions are unraveled, they are found to be of two types. Though both are editorial in nature, it is best to deal with them separately. The simpler type is one we have met with before in this chapter: a transposition made in the interest of narrative clarity or narrative flow.

29 For example, in Gen 31:19 LXX chose to translate literally, ἐκλεψεν δή 'Ραχὴλ, and Rachel stole. As noted, due to respect for the matriarch, TO does not translate literally. By the same token, TO does not picture the patriarch Jacob as fleeing. In Gen. 31:20, 21, 22, 27, as in Gen 27:43, the TO renders רב, לָוָא, went, the same innocuous root used as equivalent for רָע, describing Laban’s having gone to shear his sheep in Gen. 31:19. In other words, TO chose not to render רָע with the usual equivalent רָע, flee. Here, too, the LXX translates literally.

30 Regarding Midrashic halachic and aggadic material in the LXX see L. Prijs, Jüdische Tradition in der Septuaginta (Leiden 1948).

31 The absence of editorial transpositions in TO is to be expected. The custom of reading the Targum in communal prayer may be as ancient as the Targum itself, and apparently from the earliest times the reader of the Torah was to read no more than one verse at a time to the translator. (Mishna Meg. 4; 4; Komlosh, 741). The translator behind TO Gen. 31:32 had the identical problem that faced the LXX translator. His solution was to change יְנַשֵּׁהוּ... anyone with whom you find your gods shall not remain alive!" (NJPS), to לא יְנַשֵּׁהוּ, the place...shall not remain in existence.
In both the MT and the LXX it is Laban who states the terms of the covenant or treaty. Jacob is not to ill-treat Laban's daughters or to take other wives, and neither Laban nor Jacob is to cross the mound to do the other harm. However, in MT, though the first of these terms is mentioned in v. 50a, the second is not mentioned until v. 52b. Between the MT 50a and 52b Laban refers again to the mound that had already been put up as witness. In the LXX there is no such break in the narration of the treaty terms. What is equivalent to MT 51 and 52a has been transposed to a position before MT 48b. The resultant text has two advantages from the point of view of narrative flow: The terms of the treaty are not interrupted, and the text concerning the mound and pillar serving as witness to the covenant is given en bloc.

It is assumed that the smoother narration in the LXX is secondary only because it is smoother. Indeed, it is this very factor that has led to the assumption that we are not dealing with two independent texts. Whether initiated by scribe or translator, editing the smooth narration of the setting up and naming of the mound in the LXX involved two steps. True, their sequence is irrelevant; even describing them as two steps is but a matter of convenience. Yet, we can imagine that 1) MT v. 48a was transposed to precede MT v.47 because the normal sequence of events is רחא ואריך, and he said:... and he named, and 2) MT v. 51 and 52a were then moved up to the slot left by v. 48a, the resultant sequence being MT v. 51 ואריך, and Laban said to Jacob,...MT v. 48b רוח, therefore he called. Thus, the MT was edited in the following manner:

32 Though there are exceptions, this is the prevalent sequence particularly in Gen.1 and Gen.29-30.
33 רוח in 48b is rendered ἐκλήθειν. The translation of the active Hebrew verb by the passive equivalent is found elsewhere in LXX Genesis. In the context of יי רוח, see Gen.11:9 re Babel; 17:15 re Sarai; 25:30 re Edom; and 27:36 re Jacob.
However, the differences between LXX and MT in this pericope are not limited to changes related to narrative flow. We find here another type of editorial change, a nationalistic, theological change.

In the MT of verse 44, Laban is the speaker.34

MT v.44 གཤེུལ་བཞིང་རྒྱུ་བཅོམ་ལྷན་ཡུན་དཔལ་བི་བོད་

RSV Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I; and let it be a witness between you and me.

NJPS Come, then, let us make a pact, you and I, that there may be a witness between you and me.

In the MT of the following verse, Jacob responds:

MT v.45 ཁད་ཟེད་བོད། ཀྲེང་པོའི་མཐུན་

RSV So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.

NJPS Thereupon Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.

In the LXX, an addition is added to MT v.44, an addition in which, though he is not explicitly named,35 Jacob responds verbally before setting up the pillar.

34 See Fr. O. Garcia-Treto, "Genesis 31:44 and ‘Gilead’," ZAW 79 (1967) 13-17, for an analysis of the problems inherent in the MT of verse 44.

35 The name Jacob is added in A and the Old Latin Laa of v.44. The fact that Laa has Laban speaking instead of Jacob in v.46 (Wevers ad loc.) does not effect our analysis.
Thus, in the LXX, Jacob also responds by setting up the pillar as requested. However, his first response to Laban’s request is verbal. LXX 44b reads: “And he (Jacob) said to him, ‘Behold, no one (else) is with us; see God is a witness between me and you.’”

E.A. Speiser has noted the problems posed by the Hebrew text: 1) the Hebrew הָרָע is feminine whereas the verb הָיָה is masculine, 2) it is not the treaty but the deity invoked that is really the witness, as is stated in MT v.50. According to Speiser, “The LXX version probably points to the correct solution. It adds just before the clause in question, ‘though no man be with us, know that God (will be witness between you and me),’ that is, the same clause as 50b.” Moreover, he suggests that two such passages in the original “could readily lead to the loss of one of them....(so-called homoioteleuton).” In other words, Speiser sees a textual problem, a corruption of MT.

We do not see this as a textual problem. Rather, there was a problem of a very different nature and someone, a scribe or the LXX translator, solved it as he saw fit. The fact is that the LXX addition does not come before the problematic Hebrew clause “that there may be a witness,” but after it. More significant, the speaker is not Laban as might be expected if this were a simple case of homoioteleuton; the speaker is Jacob. Most significant, however, is the fact that the words אָלָהֵמִי רָע בְּנִי רְבִּךָ (God is witness between me and between you) spoken by Laban in MT v.50 do not appear in LXX v.50. Furthermore, there is a subtle transposition of הָרָע (ὅποτε, see). The word that introduces אָלָהֵמִי רָע בְּנִי רְבִּךָ in MT is not missing in the Greek; it has been transposed within the verse. These facts can

36E.A. Speiser, Genesis², Anchor Bible (Garden City 1964) ad loc.
hardly be accounted for by homoioteleuton. What we have here is a sophisticated job of editing. The dialogue has been changed. The words of Laban have been handed to Jacob!

Of course, on the formal level one may say that the LXX has a long plus in verse 44 and a minus in verse 50. Thus, in the Göttingen Septuagint, Wevers makes no note that the end of LXX 44 is equivalent to MT 50b, though he does indicate that the end of LXX 46 is equivalent to MT 48a. On the other hand, Rahlfs' apparatus does indicate that LXX 44 is equal to MT 44 and 50b.\textsuperscript{37} Certainly the reconstruction of what might be a Hebrew Vorlage of the plus in LXX 44 must be based on MT 50b. Certainly the ending of LXX 44, words spoken by Laban in MT 50b are now spoken by Jacob and are not spoken by Laban in the LXX at all. What remains uncertain is who made this drastic editorial change.

\textbf{VII}

Of course, external evidence may yet be found which will virtually prove that this editorial transposition was present in the LXX Vorlage, that the LXX translator reflected a variant text. In that case, the variant, because of its editorial nature, must necessarily be considered secondary. Indeed, the very fact that the transposition might have been attributed to the translator highlights its secondary nature.

However, until external evidence is found, we must give due weight to the assumption that the editorial transposition might have been made by the translator. Two factors underly this assumption: 1) the translation technique exhibited in LXX Genesis in general and in LXX Gen. 31 in particular, and 2) our conception of the role of the ancient translator, or, to be more precise, our conception of how the translator of old understood his role.

As has been demonstrated, the translator's freedom in translation is particularly evident in the narration and discourse of LXX Gen. 31.\textsuperscript{38} Furthermore, the

\textsuperscript{37} A. Rahlfs, \textit{Septuaginta} (Stuttgart 1935) ad loc.

\textsuperscript{38} Cf. A. Aejmelaeus, \textit{Parataxis in the Septuagint}, Annales Academiae Scientarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 31, (Helsinki 1982) 183, and her observation that the "gradual increase of free renderings makes itself more clearly felt first in the stories concerned with Jacob and particularly those dealing with Joseph," 166. Interestingly, Aejmelaeus does not include LXX Gen.31 among the chapters listed as having the most free renderings.
translator's transpositions are markedly evident in this chapter. The LXX translator has made stylistic transpositions. The translator has made technical transpositions. It is likely that the translator has made editorial transpositions for the sake of narrative clarity. Ancient translation tradition did not preclude editorial changes to which modern translators would certainly object; the translator of TO may not have used transpositions, but he did make tendentious editorial changes. Cumulative evidence, therefore, suggests that the LXX translator may have made the editorial changes in LXX Gen. 31. The transpositions may reflect the translator's hand.