The Relationship between Textual Criticism, Literary Criticism and Exegesis – An Interactive One?

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1. Introduction

In a previous generation scholars defined the relationship between textual criticism, literary criticism and exegesis in a dichotomous way. Würthwein holds a representative view in this regard: [1]

> The prehistory of our present Old Testament books lies beyond the province of textual criticism. Reconstructing the *ipsissima verba* of the prophets in their presumably original form, separating the various strands of the Pentateuch, investigating questions of literary integrity, and the like, are among the tasks properly entrusted to higher criticism, literary criticism and exegesis. Although textual criticism, literary criticism, and exegesis come into close contact and occasionally overlap in their practical application, yet in the interest of methodological clarity it is necessary to preserve in principle the distinction between these areas of research.

Emanuel Tov has brought a necessary correction to this rather one-sided perspective: [2]

> In the past the division between these main fields (TC and LC) was probably correct, as long as it was possible to maintain a clear distinction between the two stages. However, this is not always the case. The problem essentially stems from the fact that before the literary compositions were completed, parts of the biblical books or earlier editions of entire books preceded those reflected in ﬡ ﭏ ﭏ ﬠ had already been set down in writing. Since most of the biblical books grew stage by stage throughout a period of several generations, even when a book seemed to have attained a completed state, it was often re-edited in a revised edition.

Whereas the former approach endeavours to separate these two disciplines, Tov distinguishes between them. Herman-Josef Stipp also holds this position.[3]

This article argues that it is not feasible to divide these different scientific disciplines too strictly but that they are indeed three sides of the same coin. It is also not appropriate to distinguish too sharply between these different aspects; since the inception and transmission histories of textual witnesses are so intricate, these different approaches should rather be dealt with in an interactive manner. This is indeed a plea for a holistic approach to the issue of textual criticism and interpretation, what van der Kooij calls "a multi-dimensional approach".[4] In a related context Tov refers to "an open approach"[5] in this regard. In this contribution I will use the Septuagint as comparative material and more specifically the Septuagint of Proverbs, of which I have completed an exegetical commentary for the IOSCS that will be published in the SBL commentary series.[6]

2. *Towards a Holistic Approach*

A definite problem in text-critical as well as exegetical studies in the past has been what one could call *ad hoc* approaches.[7] In the process scholars tended to concentrate on the smaller picture with the inevitable generalisation that follows. For this reason I have decided to approach the

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[3] H.-J. Stipp, "Textkritik – Literarkritik – Textentwicklung. Überlegungen zur exegetischen Aspektsystematik," *ETL* 66 (1990): 143-159.

[4] A. van der Kooij, "Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible: Its Aim and Method," in *EMANUEL – Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (eds. S.M. Paul, R.A. Kraft, L.H. Schiffman and W.W. Fields; Brill: Leiden-Boston, 2003), 733.

[5] E. Tov, "The Nature of the Large-scale Differences between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible. The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (ed. A. Schenker; Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 121.

[6] J. Cook, *Between Text and Interpretation – An Exegetical Commentary of the Septuagint of Proverbs* (forthcoming).

[7] The text-critical notes in BHS are one example.

formulated problem from a more comprehensive perspective, namely of an individual translated unit of the Septuagint. Fortunately LXX Proverbs contains various textual phenomena that can be deemed as representative of the issue at stake. These entail scribal activity, in other words, literary phenomena which according to Tov could define the difference between copyists, scribes and authors.[8] However, firstly, I have to deal with issues pertaining to the Septuagint of Proverbs.

3. The Septuagint of Proverbs

The most pressing issue concerning this unit is the fact that the Old Greek text has not yet been determined systematically. It is one of the books that has not yet been prepared in the Göttingen *Septuaginta Unternehmen*. It has been allocated to Peter Gentry, who anticipates commencing with the work soon. Hence one is confronted with various problems concerning LXX Proverbs, inter alia, textual ones.

3.1 Textual Problems

This unit is subject to various textual problems, of which the most glaring is encountered in Prov 20.[9] The most prominent characteristic of this chapter is its complex transmission history—vv.14–22 are missing in the LXX and 9a–c correspond to vv. 20–22. Tov is of the opinion that these differences in verse sequences are the result of editorial factors.[10] I tend to think that the complicated transmission history and more specifically inner-Greek corruptions provide an appropriate explanation. These phenomena act as a reminder that we need to be circumspect in drawing conclusions concerning this textual witness.

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[8] Tov, *TCHB*, 314.

[9] I dealt with this issue in "Textual Problems in the Septuagint of Proverbs," *JNSL* 26/1 (2000): 163-173.

[10] E. Tov, "Recensional Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls, Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins Presented to John Strugnell* (eds. H. Attridge et al.; Lanham, Md., 1992), 52.

3.2 Translation Technique

Basic to all interpretative endeavours in the ancient versions is the question of the way a specific translator actually approached his parent text.[11] This holds the advantage that the researcher has a more reliable scientific basis on which to determine what the translator has indeed done in individual instances. The translator of Proverbs had an excellent Greek training, which can be observed on various levels, i.e. in his application of *hapax legomena* and neologisms—of the first category I counted 160 and of the latter 74 in total.[12] These phenomena are surely an indication of this translator's proficiency in the Greek language. I deem the differences in the order of chapters between 24 and 31 as another indication of the proficiency of the translator on a literary level. I will return to this issue below.

   I have, moreover, defined the translation technique of this unit as one of *diversity* and *unity*.[13] The translator is a creative renderer who approaches his subject matter interpretatively. This naturally does not mean that all differences between LXX Proverbs and the other textual witnesses, e.g. MT, should automatically be ascribed to the translator,[14] but that this definition should rather act as a general guideline.

3.3 The Text-critical Value of LXX Proverbs

This definition of the translation technique has been instrumental in my viewing the text-critical value of LXX Proverbs as extremely low. This is a rather complex issue and should be approached cautiously. In the *Festschrift*

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[11] E. Tov and B.G. Wright, "Computer-assisted Study of the Criteria for Assessing the Literalness of Translation Units in the LXX," *Textus* 12 (1985): 186.

[12] J. Cook, "The Translator(s) of LXX Proverbs," in *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 7 (2002): 1-30.

[13] J. Cook, "Ideology and Translation Technique – Two Sides of the Same Coin?," in *Helsinki Perspectives on the Translation Technique of the Septuagint* (eds. R. Sollamo & S. Sipilä; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), 199.

[14] M.V. Fox, "LXX-Proverbs as a Text-critical Resource," *Textus* 22 (2005): 95-128.

for Professor Michael Fox I demonstrated why I take this position.[15] Recently (in Washington, November 2006) in a special session of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Fox and I again addressed this issue in arguing for two different approaches to the LXX of Proverbs. My point of departure is that, because of the free nature of the translation, I would *in general* not be confident of any attempt to retrovert the parent text. Fox demonstrated that it is possible and necessary to reconstruct this parent text.

4. Examples of this Interactive Relationship

Against the background of the above theoretical reflection, it is now necessary to discuss some examples of the mentioned relationship. I will concentrate on the difficult one of the difference in the order of chapters in LXX from Prov 24–31, this has a direct bearing upon LC and TC.

4.1 Order Differences in Proverbs 24–31

These order differences are well-known and have been addressed differently by scholars. Tov was the first to deal with them systematically. According to him, this is evidence of two parallel editions of Proverbs.[16] I have expressed my misgivings about this position since there is no primary, Hebrew, evidence of the existence of such deviating editions, excepting of course the LXX. This to my mind seems to be circular argumentation. Hence I have suggested that the translator should be deemed responsible for these drastic differences. I have dealt with this issue in the *Festschrift* for Professor Emanuel Tov.[17] Here I will refer to one example which occurs in ch. 31,

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[15] J. Cook, "The Text-critical Value of the Septuagint of Proverbs," in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients. Essays in Honor of Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday* (eds. R.L. Troxel, K.G. Friebel & D.R. Magary; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 407-419.

[16] Tov, "Recensional Differences," 56.

[17] J. Cook, "The Greek of Proverbs – Evidence of a Recensionally Deviating Hebrew Text?," in *EMANUEL – Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea*

which precedes ch. 25. In my view this difference is the result of deliberate adaptation by the translator on account of literary/thematic considerations. Prov 31 in the Hebrew can be divided into two parts. The first contains the instruction of Lemuel. The second is the acrostic in vv. 10–31. The central theme of the first part is the king. Hence in v. 9 the king is ordered to:

פתח פיך שפט צדק ודין עני ואביון

Open your mouth, judge righteously, maintain the rights of the poor and needy.

ἄνοιγε σὸν στόμα καὶ κρῖνε δικαίως διάκρινε δὲ πένητα καὶ ἀσθενῆ

Open your mouth *and* judge justly and plead the cause of the poor and weak.

The first 8 verses in ch. 25 also refer to the king, as can be seen from the passage concerning the miscellaneous proverbs copied by the friends of the king of Judah.

I am thus of the opinion that the translator deliberately changed the order of these chapters on the basis of literary/thematic considerations. In the *Festschrift* I argued that some of the other major adaptations are the result of what I have called contrastive considerations.[18] The acrostic in Prov 31:10–32 was, in my view, deliberately linked to Prov 29, since there is a contrast between these passages, between ἀνὴρ ἄδικος of 29:27 and γυναῖκα ἀνδρείαν of 31:10. All these adaptations bear witness to the freedom with which the translator approached his parent text.

Michael Fox has expressed criticism of my position by warning that these differences could just as easily have been introduced by a copyist and not by the translator.[19] Fortunately some criteria have been suggested by de Lagarde to distinguish between copying and translational work (see below). Tov seems also not to expect a Greek copyist to actually implement such major differences.[20] Fox is, of course, correct in reminding us that Wisdom literature is indeed of a different order and that sages added and revised

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Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov (eds. S.M. Paul, R.A. Kraft, L.H. Schiffman and W.W. Fields; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003), 610.

  [18] Cook, "The Greek of Proverbs," 605-618.

  [19] Fox, "LXX-Proverbs as a Text-critical Resource," 121.

  [20] Tov, *TCHB*, 314.

creatively more readily than is the case in other genres. This would certainly be one of the reasons why the Greek version of Proverbs contains so many interpretations, additions and minuses compared to the other textual witnesses. This brings us to a crucial issue, the distinction between scribal and translational activity.

4.2 The Difference Between Scribes, Authors and Translators

Tov has pertinent views in this regard and distinguishes between TC and LC.[21] According to him, TC deals with all matters pertaining to the biblical text, the nature, copying and transmission of the biblical text, whereas literary criticism deals with various matters relating to the literary composition as a whole. Tov concedes that it is rather difficult to distinguish between scribes, including copyists, on the one hand, and authors and editors, on the other—I would add translators as well. In this regard Tov believes that:[22]

> It is usually assumed that all differences between various manuscripts and papyri derive from copyists …… It is assumed that large-scale differences displaying a certain coherence were created at the level of the literary growth of the books by persons who considered themselves actively involved in the literary process of composition.

The question thus remains, how do we indeed decide whether any given textual difference was brought about by which of these groups? Tov accepts the fact that it is indeed difficult to distinguish between these groups. He nevertheless argues that in general smaller differences were brought about by scribes and larger ones by authors and editors. He does also not distinguish too explicitly between these groups since: "They were the last of the editors of the biblical books, but at the same time they also formed a transitional group to the next stage, that of the textual transmission, and hence they may also be named *authors-scribes*"(my italics).[23]

[21] Tov, *TCHB,* 315.
[22] Tov, *TCHB,* 314.
[23] Tov, *TCHB,* 314.

Van der Kooij has also dealt with this issue. He argues that persons responsible for translating biblical books belonged to the circle of the learned scribes ("Autoren der schriftlichen Übersetzungen der biblischen Bücher im frühen Judentum waren Leute, die zum Kreis der Schriftgelehrten gehörten").[24] He actually thinks that the persons responsible for, e.g. 4QpaleoExod[m],[25] Sam. Pent., LXX Jos and LXX Job were not only copyists or translators in the sense of interpreters "sondern vielmehr einem schriftgelehrten Autor: er konnte beides machen, übersetzen, bzw. kopieren und edieren".[26] According to him, there is no clear distinction between the different scribal groups in Judaic society of the 2nd century BCE and subsequently, at least not as far as scribal activity is concerned.

Even though it must, theoretically at least, be possible that authors indeed could have and actually did engage in the copying of data, in the study of the Septuagint some criteria have been devised in order to distinguish between translational and scribal activity. It is well-known that the LXX of Proverbs contains double translations[27] and was influenced by hexaplaric activity. Talmon[28] and Talshir[29] have provided us with useful reflection on the first issue, as has Tov. Fritsch distinguishes between various categories, such as "double translations of verses, of a single stich of a verse, of phrases

[24] A. van der Kooij, "Zum Verhältnis von Textkritik und Literarkritik: Über-legungen anhand einiger Beispiele," in *Congress Volume Cambridge 1995* (ed. J.A. Emerton; Leiden-New York-Köln: Brill, 1997), 200.

[25] See also B. Lemmelijn, "The So-called 'Major Expansions' in SamP, 4QpaleoExod[m] and 4QExod[j] of Ex 7:14-11:10: On the Edge between Textual Criticism and Literary Criticism," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Oslo 1988* (SCS 51; ed. B.A. Taylor; Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 429.

[26] A. van der Kooij, "Zum Verhältnis von Textkritik und Literarkritik," 198.

[27] Tov, "Recensional Differences," 44.

[28] S. Talmon, "Double Readings in the Massoretic Text," *Textus* 1 (1960): 144-184.

[29] Z. Talshir, "Double Translations in the Septuagint," in *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Jerusalem, 1986* (SCS 23; ed. C.E. Cox; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 21-63.

and of words".[30] Although in this regard he refers only to double translations, the term doublet[31] also appears in his article. De Lagarde has formulated helpful rules of thumb in order to detect such phenomena.[32] It is clear that these rules cannot be applied dogmatically. Nevertheless they can act as general points of departure.

I am therefore inclined to agree with van der Kooij[33] that one should not try to distinguish between these groupings too sharply, unless, of course applicable criteria have been devised, such as those by de Lagarde, by which it is possible to demarcate fairly clearly the lines between an author, translator and a later copyist. This applies especially to the translators of the Septuagint, who should be deemed as authors in some instances, especially those who can be defined as less faithful renderers of their parent texts, even though there is a fundamental difference between translational and compositional literature.[34] This is at the least true of the translator of Proverbs, who can actually be likened to an independent author.

4.3 The Translator of LXX Proverbs as Author

In line with the translation technique that I defined as one of diversity and unity, I have detected a multitude of examples demonstrating that the person responsible for Proverbs acted as an independent author without consistent recourse to the parent text. In some instances a different story is told and large passages are added and interpretations given. One appropriate example occurs in ch. 1 and entails dramatic changes on a syntactical level.

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[30] C.T. Fritsch, "The Treatment of the Hexaplaric Signs in the Syro-Hexaplar of Proverbs," *JBL* 72 (1953): 170.

[31] Fritsch, "Hexaplaric Signs," 171.

[32] P. de Lagarde, *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien* (Leipzig, 1863), 3.

[33] A. van der Kooij, "Zum Verhältnis von Textkritik und Literarkritik," 198.

[34] C. Boyd-Taylor, *Reading between the Lines—Towards an Assessment of the Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2005), 16.

In 1:32 the translator tells his own story, shaping vv. 28–32 differently from MT:

<div dir="rtl">כי משובת פתים תהרגם ושלות כסילים תאבדם</div>

For waywardness kills the simple, and the complacency of fools destroys them;

ἀνθ᾽ ὧν γὰρ ἠδίκουν νηπίους φονευθήσονται καὶ ἐξετασμὸς ἀσεβεῖς ὀλεῖ

For because they would wrong the simple, they will be murdered, and an inquiry will ruin the impious.

The most conspicuous difference between MT and LXX is found on a syntactic level in the direct connection the translator made between v. 32 and the previous verses. He does this by making the κακοὶ of v. 28 onwards the subjects of those who wronged the innocent; then subsequently they are killed and not the innocent as stated by the MT. He had a different understanding of the passage as a whole! Other examples occur in ch. 2, where the nuanced addition of the exclamation particle ὦ acts as deliberate delimitation of two different realms, vv. 1–12 the good and 17–28 the bad.

A further example is taken from a recent publication by Forti and Talshir on Prov 7.[35] The authors neatly put their methodological cards on the table and I can agree with most of their presuppositions, except the following on p. 130: "Even the few translators that exercise freedom of translation operate within the scope of the text they are translating and do not easily rewrite it through omissions, additions and other substantial changes, or readily introduce ideas from their own milieu. Changes are usually triggered by a difficulty in form, content or concept occasioned by the *Vorlage*".[36] I do agree that this can be formulated as a general rule of thumb, but it can not be forced upon a translated unit such as LXX Prov. My

[35] T. Forti & Z. Talshir, "Proverbs 7 in MT and LXX: Form and Content," *Textus* 22 (2006): 129-167.

[36] I fail to see what the fundamental difference between a free-minded Hebrew reviser (cf. Z. Talshir, "The Contribution of Diverging Traditions Preserved in the Septuagint to Literary Criticism of the Bible," in *VIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Paris, 1992* [SCS 41; eds. L. Greenspoon & O. Munnich; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001], 21) and a translator is.

research has indeed demonstrated that this translator is one of those who actually functioned as an independent author. Although I disagree with many of the views expressed by D'Hamonville[37] on LXX Prov,[38] in this respect I do agree that this translator had an unprecedented free attitude towards his parent text.

Forti and Talshir made an exhaustive study of both MT and LXX; they thus opted not to deal exclusively with the LXX. This is an important methodological point of difference between my research and theirs, and it seems to undermine the positive evaluation of a trend to study the LXX for its own sake mentioned by the authors in their introduction. This also explains why I chose in my analysis of the אשה זרה in Prov 1–9 to spend only one page on this chapter.[39] I focused on this figure in the Septuagint and indeed this passage was not especially significant, at least not as relevant as chs. 2 and 9. The crux of the problem in this chapter is the way the translator deals with the highly significant passage describing the אשה זרה in v. 5. In the Hebrew it is identical to Prov 2:16, except the infinitives לשמרך and להצילך. However, in the LXX these two phrases are rendered dramatically differently. In ch. 2 the Hebrew phrase is translated by means

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[37] D.-M. D'Hamonville, *La Bible D'Alexandrie. Les Proverbes. Traduction du texte grec de la Septante* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2000), 19.

[38] Cf. my contribution to the proceedings of the Septuagint congress that was held in Wuppertal, Germany in August 2006 in which I query his view that this translator actually made lavish use of Platonic and Stoic ideas (Cook, "The Translator of the Septuagint of Proverbs—Is his Style the Result of Platonic and/or Stoic Influence?," in *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten* [eds. M. Karrer & W. Kraus; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2008]). At the recent Specialists' Symposium on the Septuagint Translation held in Leuven (4-6 Dec 2006), I also expressed criticism at his and also that of the project La Bible D'Alexandrie's endeavours to understand the OG from the perspective of its later reception (Cook, "Translating the Septuagint. Some Methodological Considerations," in *Textual Studies in Early Judaism – the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls* [eds. H. Ausloos, J. Cook, F. García Martínez, B. Lemmelijn, M. Vervenne; *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium*, Leuven: Peeters, 2007]).

[39] J. Cook, "אשה זרה (Proverbs 1-9 in the Septuagint): A Metaphor for Foreign Wisdom?," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 458-476.

of *i.a.* υἱέ μή σε καταλάβῃ κακὴ βουλὴ. This phrase has no equivalent in MT and includes an externally motivated translation which refers to the well-known Rabbinic tradition of the good and bad inclinations (κακὴ βουλὴ). I thus analysed this passage from a holistic perspective deliberately opting not to take only the smaller context into account, whereas Forti and Talshir focussed on ch. 7 exclusively. Because of this restricted scope, they actually missed additional significant perspectives. This chapter is one of the key passages, according to D'Hamonville,[40] of evidence that the translator indeed made use of platonic terminology. The main problem I have with D'Hamonville's position is that he bases his arguments upon individual Greek readings. However, the point to make is that Forti and Talshir did not address this issue, since their model seemingly does not allow them to contemplate it.

  In the final analysis I thus agree with Forti and Talshir that "the translator of Proverbs, unlike the majority of LXX translators, is a self-conscious writer. He is aware of the needs and possibilities of the target language, often rewriting his *Vorlage* in order to create an eloquent Greek text. He is also notorious for introducing his own milieu into the text".[41] However, I disagree with their answer to the question: "Does he, nevertheless, remain within the limits set by the strings that bind him to his *Vorlage*?".[42] This translator was certainly in general led by his parent text, but in many instances he had the freedom even to go beyond these limits. In my understanding this is a clear sign of an independent author at work.

5. An Interactive Relationship?

Now that I have established that the translator of LXX Proverbs can be deemed an independent author, who in many instances also brought about major adaptations to his parent text, it is appropriate to return to the question posed at the beginning. Tov's working hypothesis that large-scale

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[40] D'Hamonville, *Les Proverbes,* 106.
[41] Forti & Talshir, "Proverbs 7 in MT and LXX," 131.
[42] Forti & Talshir, "Proverbs 7 in MT and LXX," 131.

differences displaying a certain coherence were created at the level of the literary growth of books can not be deemed more than an hypothesis that has to be tested in each individual case. In fairness it must be said that Tov himself holds a nuanced and cautious view in this regard, since he keeps open the option that a translator could have been responsible for major changes in some instances.[43] In my view it is more appropriate to approach this issue from a holistic perspective, determine first of all what one could in fact expect a translator to do, what his translation technique is, and then argue from the material. Hence, instead of hypothesising about the parent text in the case of Proverbs, where there in any case is no primary Hebrew textual evidence,[44] it seems more sound to approach the deviations interactively by comparing all the data.

6. Conclusion

It seems to me that one way out of the problems concerning the interpretation of textual material is to refrain from trying to apply too strict sets of rules, such as dichotomously dividing TC and LC, as was suggested by Würthwein. This relationship should rather be dealt with in an interactive manner. One should therefore endeavour to approach the available data as objectively as possible. Even the following view by Tov should be treated with caution: "It would seem that the translator did not usually introduce extensive changes such as the ones described below, not even a translator who approached his source freely."[45] If I have argued convincingly, then this does not apply to the translator of LXX Proverbs. Tov also in my view draws too rigid hypothetical lines between TC and LC as can be gleaned from the following quotation:[46]

> …it appears that the data presented in this chapter were created, not in the course of textual transmission but at an earlier stage, namely, that of the literary growth of the biblical books. Therefore, one wonders whether textual

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[43] Tov, "Large-scale Differences," 125.

[44] The Dead Sea Scrolls are unfortunately less helpful in this book.

[45] Tov, *TCHB*, 318.

[46] Tov, *TCHB*, 347.

evaluation has any application to them at all. In our view, textual criteria should not be applied to data that were not created during the textual transmission.

The problem remains how can one be certain when this is indeed the case. Again, if my interpretation of the order differences between LXX Proverbs and the other witnesses is correct, then it is not necessary to retrovert a hypothetical different Hebrew edition. The OG text as it exists should therefore be interpreted interactively and this could indeed present enlightening perspectives as to the exegesis of the text. In the case of LXX Proverbs, the different order of chapters is in line with the translator's general tendency to apply contrasts, a religious category with exegetical implications, more explicitly than is the case in the Hebrew.[47] Compare in this regard, for instance, the deliberate removal of the names Lemuel and Agur by the translator, since these references leave the impression that Solomon was not solely responsible for the collection of Proverbs, as is stated in Prov 1:1.

Finally this contribution should not be seen as a plea for textual interpretation without any rules. But, I am of the opinion that formulated hypotheses applied too strictly can indeed hamper the interpretation of texts.[48] Hence my plea that one should refrain from approaching the textual material prescriptively, with preconceived ideas of what the translator would have been inclined to have done. But it is necessary rather to compare all the material interactively in order to describe what he has actually done. It should also be clear that this suggestion will not be applicable to all cases where the Septuagint differs from the other prominent textual witnesses.

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[47] J. Cook, "Contrasting as a Translation Technique," in *From Tradition to Interpretation: Studies in Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders* (eds. S. Talmon & C.A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 403-414.

[48] See the seminal discussion by N. Fernández Marcos, "The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Judges," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible. The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (ed. A. Schenker; Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 1-16.