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## Featured Review

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### Citation

Meer, M. N. van der. (2009). Featured Review. *Bulletin Of The International Organization For Septuagint And Cognate Studies*, 41, 114-121. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/14087>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

## Book Reviews

### Featured Review

Pietersma, Albert, and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. xx + 1027. ISBN: 978-0-19-528975-6.

The New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS) will hardly need any introduction to the readers of this bulletin, nor will it need any advertisement: the NETS is the long expected replacement of the outdated translation of the OG version of the OT made by Sir Lancelot Brenton in 1879. The NETS is based on the best available modern edition of the Septuagint books (that is the Göttingen Septuagint edition where available and Rahlfs's *editio minor* for the other books). The NETS takes into account not only the huge amount of scholarship devoted to the reconstruction of the oldest attainable Greek text since the early nineteenth century, but also the enormous progress made over the last two centuries in determining the character of translation of the individual biblical books. Although the modern scholars involved in the English translation number only half the original team of seventy-two scholars involved in the original project of translating the Pentateuch for Ptolemy Philadelphus, their knowledge and expertise in the individual Greek translation are in no way inferior to the superior wisdom attributed by the author of the Aristeas letter to their colleagues in Antiquity.

Whereas other modern translations of the Septuagint into French or German are still in progress, the NETS has been completed in a comparatively short span of time. It is governed by a fairly uniform approach, which the editors explicate in their introduction, pp. xiii–xx, “To the Reader of NETS.” In short, editors and translators of the NETS approach the Septuagint with the help of the so-called interlinear model. This interlinear model places much emphasis on the meaning of the translation *as produced* in contradistinction to the meaning attached to it by later Christian or Hellenistic-Jewish interpreters (Philo, Josephus). The meaning of the Greek text, according to the editors, is not only determined by normal Greek usage but also to a certain extent by the meaning of the Hebrew text, which the translators very often tried to render as literally as possible. Thus, in cases where the meaning of a Greek word is unclear, the meaning of the source text comes into play “in arbitrating between competing meanings of the Greek” (p. xv). The interlinear model is not to be understood as a theory about Septuagint origins (that is, a physical interlinear text with both source text and Greek translation), but rather as an explanation, metaphor, or heuristic device for the translationese character of Septuagint Greek (p. xiv). It accounts for a Greek translation which, according to the editors (p. xiv) “aimed at bringing the Greek reader to the Hebrew original rather than bringing the Hebrew original to the Greek reader.” According to the editors (pp. xv–xviii), this approach justifies the pragmatic procedure of taking the NRSV as base text for the English translation of the Septuagint and adjusting that base text only where the Greek text differs significantly from the Hebrew.

It is evident that these principles have enhanced the swift production of this translation project, which otherwise could have taken several decades before it would have been completed. It also does justice to the literal character of most of the books

traditionally included under the title of the Septuagint. Furthermore, these principles facilitate the comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts of passages in the HB.

There is also another side of the coin. Whereas the modern translation project is guided by a common set of principles and an editorial board in order to safeguard the homogeneity of the project, there is no indication that the collection of Greek books now bound together in Rahlfs's manual edition entitled *Septuaginta* was guided by a similar set of principles and supervised by a comparable authoritative board. Rather, these books were produced over a large span of time ranging from the early third century B.C.E. (Pentateuch) to the early second century C.E. (Ecclesiastes) and show a considerable variety in translation styles ranging from very free (Job, Proverbs, OG Esther and even more so the Alpha Text of Esther) to very literal (*kaige*-like translations in Judges, Reigns, Canticles, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Jeremiah, Lamentations, and 2 Esdras). It may be true that a certain amount of homogeneity throughout the Greek OT was enhanced by the fact that the Greek Pentateuch came to serve as a model for later translations (for example, Joshua and Isaiah) and by the fact that *kaige*-like translations were inspired by the same Palestinian hermeneutical principles, but there was no such thing as a coordinated project to render the whole of the HB into Greek.

The interlinear paradigm certainly provides a good explanation for what the editors call "translationese" Greek (p. xiv) of many Greek translations, but it also tends to consider the very literal translation style to be the norm and the free interpretative renderings to be atypical. In this sense the interlinear model could be regarded as minimalistic, because it tends to minimize the amount of interpretation ascribed to the stage of the production of the Septuagint translation. Although the majority of Septuagintal books may reflect the aim to bring the Greek reader closer to the Hebrew original, there are also translations that appear to have an agenda of their own. Isaiah is a case in point, as demonstrated by Ziegler, Seeligmann, and van der Kooij.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, though, the NETS takes into full account the individual character of each translation, so that the interlinear model only occasionally seems to function as a straightjacket.

So far for the general principles. It is not the duty of this review to enter into a discussion of the validity and usefulness of the interlinear paradigm. The reader is referred to the various contributions to the debate in the previous issues of *BIOSCS* and most recently the polemic between Muraoka and Pietersma.<sup>2</sup> What counts is the result,

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<sup>1</sup> J. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaia*s (ATA 12.3; Münster: Aschendorffschen, 1934); I. L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of Its Problems* (Mededelingen en verhandelingen van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptische genootschap "Ex Oriente Lux" 9; Leiden: Brill, 1948); A. van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches: Ein Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (OBO 35; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981); idem, *The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah 23 as Version and Vision* (VTSup 71; Leiden: Brill, 1998). See also R. L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation: The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah* (JSJSup 124; Leiden: Brill, 2008), who is skeptical about the notion that Greek Isaiah contemporized, but also holds that the Greek Isaiah contains a considerable amount of interpretation.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the contributions in *BIOSCS* 39 (2006) and in W. Kraus and R. G. Wooden, eds., *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (SBSLSCS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006); T. Muraoka,

not the theoretical framework. In order to see how the NETS works, it is useful to have a closer look at a short passage, Iesous (Joshua) 1:1–3 and to compare the NETS translation with other existing translations of the Septuagint. Since the NETS places emphasis on the Greek translation's subservient relation to the Hebrew text, it is necessary to start the comparison with the MT, the sole complete Hebrew witness to the book,<sup>3</sup> and its English translation in the NRSV:

- MT : ויהי אחרי מות משה עבד יהוה ויאמר יהוה אל־יהושע בן־נון משרת משה לאמר:<sup>1</sup>  
 משה עבדי מת ועתה קום עבר את־הירדן הזה וכל־העם הזה אל־הארץ<sup>2</sup>  
 אשר אנכי נתן להם לבני ישראל:<sup>3</sup> כל־מקום אשר תרדך כפ־רגלכם בו לכם נתתיו  
 כאשר דברתי אל־משה:<sup>4</sup> מהמדבר והלבנון הזה ועד־הנהר הגדול נהר־פרת כל  
 ארץ החתים ועד־הים הגדול מבוא השמש יהיה גבולכם:
- NRSV <sup>1</sup>After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, <sup>2</sup>"My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. <sup>3</sup>Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. <sup>4</sup>From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory.

The Greek text offers a fairly straightforward rendering of the Hebrew text but has a number of variants: it lacks a counterpart for several words and phrases,<sup>4</sup> alters the grammatical construction in v. 3,<sup>5</sup> and modifies the geographical description in v. 4.<sup>6</sup>

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"Recent Discussions on the Septuagint Lexicography with Special Reference to the So-called Interlinear Model" in *Die Septuaginta: Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006* (ed. M. Karrer and W. Kraus, with M. Meiser; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 221–35; A. Pietersma, "Response to T. Muraoka," [cited 22 August 2008]. Online: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/discussion/pietersma-re-muraoka.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of text-critical issues, see the discussion of this chapter in M. N. van der Meer, *Formation and Reformulation: The Redaction of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Oldest Textual Witnesses* (VTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 161–248.

<sup>4</sup> The Greek text has no counterpart for Hebrew עבד יהוה in 1:1; the demonstrative pronoun in 1:2 ואת־הירדן הזה, and in 1:4 והלבנון הזה; the second preposition phrase in 1:2 לבני ישראל, the preposition in מן in v. 4, the conjunctive *waw* in v. 4 as well as the phrase כל ארץ החתים. These minuses in the Greek text have been marked by three hyphens for each lexeme in the Hebrew text.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase "sole of the foot" has been transformed from subject phrase (Hebrew: "on which the sole of your feet treads") to datival phrase in the Greek: "on which *you* tread *with* the sole of your feet." Contrast the Greek rendering of the same Hebrew phrase in Deut 11:24: οὗ ἄν πατήσῃ τὸ ἴχνος τοῦ ποδὸς ὑμῶν.

<sup>6</sup> Whereas the Hebrew text describes the contours of the Promised Land ("from ... until) by drawing a large curve from desert via the Lebanon up to the Euphrates, the Greek text transforms the whole description into an appositional phrase by omitting the first preposition מן and employing the accusative case. Contrast the Greek rendering of the same Hebrew phrase in Deut 11:24: ἀπὸ τῆς ἐρήμου καὶ Ἀντιλίβανου καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου, ποταμοῦ Εὐφράτου .... The Greek text also lacks a counterpart for the phrase כל ארץ החתים

- LXX <sup>1</sup>Καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὴν τελευταίην Μωυσῆ --- εἶπεν κύριος τῷ Ἰησοῖ υἱῷ Ναυη τῷ ὑπουργῷ Μωυσῆ λέγων <sup>2</sup>Μωυσῆς ὁ θεράπων μου τετελεύτηκεν· νῦν οὖν ἀναστὰς διάβηθι τὸν Ἰορδάνην ---, σὺ καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς οὗτος, εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἐγὼ δίδωμι αὐτοῖς --- <sup>3</sup>πᾶς ὁ τόπος, ἐφ' ὃν ἂν ἐπιβῆτε τῷ ἴχνει τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν, ὑμῖν δώσω αὐτόν, ὃν τρόπον εἴρηκα τῷ Μωυσῆ, <sup>4</sup>--- τὴν ἔρημον καὶ τὸν Ἀντιλίβανον --- ἕως τοῦ ποταμοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου, ποταμοῦ Εὐφράτου, --- --- καὶ ἕως τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς ἐσχάτης ἀφ' ἡλίου δυσμῶν ἔσται τὰ ὅρια ὑμῶν.
- NETS <sup>1</sup>And it happened after the death of Moyses that the Lord spoke to Iesous son of Naue, Moyses' assistant, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Moses my attendant is dead. Now then rise up to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them. <sup>3</sup>Every place upon which you tread with the sole of your feet, to you I will give it, as I promised to Moyses, <sup>4</sup>the wilderness and Anti-Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, and as far as the farthest sea; from the setting of the sun shall be your boundaries

A comparison between the NETS and the NRSV makes clear that all the quantitative variants between the MT and the LXX are accounted for in the NETS. The subtle variation in words for servant, מַשְׁרָת-ὑπουργός and עֶבֶד-θεράπων, in the first two verses is also reflected in the NETS: "assistant" – "attendant." The fact that the minus of הַיַּרְדֵּן after הַיַּרְדֵּן does not become apparent in the English comparison is due to the fact that the NRSV does not offer a literal rendering of the Hebrew text here ("this Jordan"). The NETS further accounts for the fact that the opening formula καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ is unidiomatic Greek, hence "And it happened after the death" instead of NRSV's "After the death." One wonders therefore why NRSV's translation of Hebrew דָּבַר "promise" in v. 3 has been maintained, given the fact that Greek λέγω (εἴρηκα) normally means "to speak." Compared to the old translation made by Brenton (below), the NETS is certainly an improvement:

- Br. <sup>1</sup>And it came to pass after the death of Moses, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Naue, the minister of Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>Moses my servant is dead; now then arise, go over Jordan, thou and all this people, into the land, which I give them. <sup>3</sup>Every spot on which ye shall tread I will give it you, as I said to Moses. <sup>4</sup>The wilderness and Antilibanus, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, and as far as the extremity of the sea (or: farthest sea); your coast shall be from the setting of the sun.

Brenton's language is archaic ("thou," "ye"). His translation does not reflect the phrase τῷ ἴχνει τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν, but offers the condensed idiomatic rendering "tread." His rendering of τὰ ὅρια with "coast" is certainly wrong; that notion is expressed in Greek by παραλία (e.g., in LXX-Josh 9:1). Brenton also follows the standard English names for people like Moses instead of the more appropriate transliterations in the NETS, "Moyses," but alters the patronymic "Nun" into "Naue."

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and also presupposes the Hebrew text of Deut 11:24 הַיַּרְדֵּן הַיָּמָיִם in the phrase ἕως τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς ἐσχάτης *vis-à-vis* Josh 1:4 הַיַּרְדֵּן הַיָּמָיִם.

The French translation of the same passage in the French “La Bible d’Alexandrie” series (below) comes much closer to the NETS, but here too a few flaws can be noted.<sup>7</sup>

BA <sup>1</sup>Et il arriva après la mort de Moïse que Seigneur parla à Jésus, fils de Navè, le collaborateur de Moïse, en ce termes: <sup>2</sup>”Moïse, mon servent est mort: maintenant donc, lève-toi et franchis le Jourdain, toi et tout ce peuple, en direction de la terre que moi je leur donne. <sup>3</sup>Tout le lieu sur lequel vous imprimerez la marque de vos pieds, je vous le donnerai comme je l’ai dit à Moïse, <sup>4</sup>le désert et l’Antiliban jusqu’au grand fleuve, le fleuve de l’Euphrate, et jusqu’à la mer la plus éloignée vers le couchant du soleil; ce seront vos frontières.

The choice of “collaborateur” for the rare Greek word ὑπουργός is not a felicitous one, given the negative connotations of collaborating with an occupying force. Furthermore, the rendering “sur lequel vous imprimerez la marque de vos pieds” is a smooth rendering into French, but does not reflect the grammatical shift in the Greek text. Likewise the rendering of ἀφ’ ἡλίου δυσμῶν by “vers le couchant du soleil” smoothens the link between the notion of the farthest sea and the setting of the sun, but disregards the proper meaning of the preposition ἀπό. On the other hand, the translation “comme je l’ai dit à Moïse” stands closer to the Greek text ὃν τρόπον εἶρηκα τῷ Μωϋσῆ than the NETS’s “as I promised.”

The conclusion for this small section must be then, that the NETS offers a careful and literal rendering of the Greek text that reflects all the subtle variants between the Greek and Hebrew and shows hardly any undesirable interference from the NRSV.

It is also worthwhile to have a short look on the English translation of the Septuagint’s sister version, the Peshitta. The translation of the Syriac Bible made by George Lamsa on the basis of “ancient Eastern manuscripts,” according to the title page,<sup>8</sup> in fact shows far greater interference of the KJV than any of the modern translations of the Septuagint.<sup>9</sup>

Syr                    ܠܘ ܐܝܬ ܕܥܠܝܢ ܠܘܬܝ ܝܘܪܝܢ . ܠܝܘܬܝ ܡܘܨܝܝܢ ܠܥܠܝܢ ܕܡܘܨܝܝܢ ܝܘܬܝܢ ܕܥܠܝܢ<sup>1</sup>  
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Lamsa <sup>1</sup>After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, <sup>2</sup>Moses my servant is dead; now therefore

<sup>7</sup> J. Moatti-Fine, *Jésus (Josué): Traduction du texte grec de la Septante: Introduction et notes* (BA 6; Paris: Cerf, 1996), 93–95.

<sup>8</sup> G. M. Lamsa, *The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the East* (Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, 1933) 244.

<sup>9</sup> For a critical evaluation of Lamsa’s translation and the need for a new English annotated translation of the Syriac Bible see K. D. Jenner, A. Salvesen, R. B. ter Haar Romeny, W. T. van Peursen, “The New English Annotated Translation of the Syriac Bible (NEATSB): Retrospect and Prospect,” *Aramaic Studies* 2 (2004) 85–106.

arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, even to the children of Israel. <sup>3</sup>Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, it shall be yours, as I promised Moses. <sup>4</sup>From the wilderness and this Lebanon even to the great river, the river Euphrates, --- all the land of the Hittites, --- as far as the Great sea towards the going down of the sun shall be your boundaries.

Lamsa's translation does not account for the inversion of the phrases "Euphrates, the great river," nor for the conjunctive *waws* in v. 4. Although the variants are rather small, it is nevertheless to be regretted that they are lost in translation. Where he does depart from the Standard version, that is, where he introduced the emphatic word "even," the amplification is unwarranted by Syriac grammar.

The small sample from Josh 1:1–4 clearly demonstrates the value and reliability of the NETS. After examination of dozens of chapters throughout the book, it has become clear to me that the NETS attempts to do full justice to the Greek text as it stands. Only occasionally one finds interference from the Hebrew text and its English translation (NRSV). Thus in Isa 29:10a where the Greek version has πνεύματι κατανύξεως for Hebrew רוח תרדמה, the NETS follows the NRSV "with a spirit of deep sleep." The Greek word κατάνυξις, however, has nothing to do with the Greek word νύξ, "night," but is derived from the verb κατανύσσω, "to affect mentally and profoundly," (*GELS*<sup>2</sup> 302a, *LEH*<sup>2</sup> 321a). In Josh 6:2–20 the Greek translator deliberately introduced variation and dramatic progression in the Jericho narrative by rendering the sevenfold repetition of the Hebrew verb רוע, "to shout," by five different Greek verbs: ἀνακράζω (v. 5) βοάω (v. 10), ἀναβοάω (v. 10), κράζω (v. 16), and finally at the height of the narrative in v. 20, ἀλαλάζω, a word that is commonly used for the cry that heralds the attack. The NETS, however, simply follows the NRSV by employing the English word "to shout," throughout the chapter, with the sole exception of v. 16 ("to cry out" for κράζω). Apparently, this is a case of semantic leveling of the Greek text by the English translator. Here too, the specific diction of the Greek text has been lost in translation.

Occasionally the opposite can be observed, namely that the NETS departs from the NRSV where neither the Hebrew nor the Greek text provides any warrant. This is the case in Ezek 36:33–34:

MT	כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה בַּיּוֹם טְהָרִי אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם וְהוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת־הָעָרִים וּנְבִנו הַחֲרֻבוֹת: <sup>34</sup> וְהָאָרֶץ הַנְּשָׁמָה תֵּעָבֵר תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הִיְתָה שְׂמָמָה לְעֵינַי כִּלְעֹבֹב
NRSV	<sup>33</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the towns to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. <sup>34</sup> The land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by.
LXX	<sup>33</sup> τάδε λέγει κύριος Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, ἣ καθαριῶ ὑμᾶς ἐκ πασῶν τῶν ἀνομιῶν ὑμῶν, καὶ κατοικιῶ τὰς πόλεις, καὶ οἰκοδομηθήσονται αἱ ἔρημοι. <sup>34</sup> καὶ ἡ γῆ ἢ ἡφανισμένη ἐργασθήσεται, ἀνθ' ὧν ὅτι ἡφανισμένη ἐγενήθη κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς παντὸς παροδεύοντος.
Br.	<sup>33</sup> Thus saith the Lord God; In the day wherein I shall cleanse you from all your iniquities I will also cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be built upon; <sup>34</sup> and the desolate land shall be cultivated, whereas it was desolate in the eyes of every one that passed by.
NETS	<sup>33</sup> This is what the Lord says: In the day I will cleanse you from all your lawless acts; I will also settle the cities and the deserts (or: deserted cities)

shall be built,<sup>34</sup> and the annihilated one shall be tilled instead of becoming annihilated before the eyes of every passer-by.

The NETS translator of v. 34 probably overlooked the short Greek phrase ἡ γῆ when he produced the translation “the annihilated one.” One further wonders why the relative pronoun in the phrase Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, ἧ has not been reflected in the NETS. Here the reader gets the impression that the NETS seeks to over-emphasize the differences between the Greek and Hebrew, between the NETS and the NRSV.

When the editors explain how the NETS decides what a Greek word means (p. xvii), they state that they proceed from the normal meaning of the Greek word or phrase of that period. To my mind, this may be more difficult than it seems, given the fact that words can have different meanings not only over time, but also simultaneously, depending on the context. Joseph Ziegler has demonstrated in his *Untersuchungen* that the vocabulary of the Greek Isaiah can be clarified against the background of contemporary Ptolemaic documentary papyri. Thus the word ὑπομηματογράφος, which occurs in Greek Chronicles (1.18:15; 2.34:8) and Greek Isaiah (36:3, 22) is not a neologism invented by the Greek translators, as LEH<sup>2</sup> 636b seem to suggest, but the title of a very high “official in the office of the minister of finance” (LSJ 1889b–90a). The NETS’s rendering “secretary” is certainly too weak and fits the Greek word γραμματεὺς better.

Ziegler also pointed to some specific juridical connotations of common Greek words: ἡττάομαι, “being defeated,” but also, “losing a case in court”; ἀθετέω, “to reject,” but also, “to refuse to recognize the claim of a binding document”; ἀλίσκομαι, “to be captured,” but also, “to be arrested”; and παραδίδωμι, “to hand over,” but also, “to turn somebody in to the police.”<sup>10</sup> The Greek text of Isa 33:1, where the combination of these verbs occurs, could either be regarded as random collection of stop gap renderings of an obscure Hebrew text,<sup>11</sup> or, alternatively, in terms of police and court procedures:

MT	הוֹי שׁוֹדֵד וְאַתָּה לֹא שׁדוּד וּבֹגֵד וְלֹא־בִגְדוּ בּוֹ בְּהִתְמַךְ שׁוֹדֵד תּוֹשֵׁד כְּנִלְתָךְ לְבַגְד יִבְגְּדוּ־בְךָ
NRSV	Ah you destroyer, who yourself have not been destroyed; you treacherous one, with whom no one has dealt treacherously! When you have ceased to destroy, you will be destroyed; and when you have stopped dealing treacherously, you will be dealt with treacherously.
LXX	Οὐαὶ τοῖς ταλαιπωροῦσιν ὑμᾶς, ὑμᾶς δὲ οὐδεὶς ποιεῖ ταλαιπώρους, καὶ ὁ ἀθετῶν ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἀθετεῖ ἀλώσονται οἱ ἀθετοῦντες καὶ παραδοθήσονται καὶ ὡς σῆς ἐπὶ ἱματίου οὕτως ἡττηθήσονται.
NETS	Woe to those who distress you! But no one makes you distressed, and the betrayer does not betray you; the betrayers will be caught and delivered up, and like a moth in a garment, so will they be defeated.

Apparently, the NETS has preferred the first option, but a reader would like to know why Ziegler’s alternative has been rejected. There is therefore every reason to look forward to the NETS Commentary series.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 197–199.

<sup>11</sup> So for example, Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 78–80.

<sup>12</sup> See <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ioscs/commentary/>.

This applies also to another passage in Isa 8:8: καὶ ἀφελεῖ ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας ἄνθρωπον ὃς δυνήσεται κεφαλῆν ἄραι ἢ δυνατὸν συντελέσθαι τι, which Seeligmann and van der Kooij interpret as an allusion to the dispatching of high priest Onias III by Antiochus IV Epiphanes.<sup>13</sup> The NETS offers a different interpretation of the same Greek text: “he [the king of Assyria] will take away from Judea *any* man who can lift up his head or who is capable to accomplish anything,” even though the Greek text has no basis for the word “any” (like πᾶς or τις). Here too, a commentary on the NETS would be helpful to the student of the Greek Isaiah.

All in all, however, the NETS offers a reliable translation of the Greek text and does sufficient justice to the distinctive diction of the Greek text both *in its own right* and in relation to its parent text. Having studied large sections of the NETS ever since it became available on the Internet,<sup>14</sup> I became impressed by its overall accuracy and ingenuity in remaining loyal both to the translational side as well as to the distinctive and creative side of the Greek translations. Only occasionally did I come across a minor error, for example: on p. 44, line 27, “fit” should be “fits”; p. 45, ll. 4 and 5, “מר” should be “אמר”; p. 649, line 17, “בטוב וראה” should be “וראה בטוב”; p. 988, line 8 from below, “הני” should be “הנה.” It also occurred to me that the introductions to the various books differ somewhat: Some offer long bibliographies (for example, Paul D. McLean to the *kaige* text of Reigns), while the introduction to the OG of Reigns mentions nothing of the contemporary literature. Joachim Schaper goes at great lengths to explain a single text-critical detail in 2 Macc 1:9, whereas others go at some length to prove the applicability of the interlinear model (for example, Boyd-Taylor for Ioudith).

The NETS translators like to see their work as a “Göttingen Septuagint in English form” (p. xix). The Septuaginta-Unternehmen in Göttingen has produced two editions of the Septuaginta, an *editio minor* one by Rahlfs, now revised by Hanhart, and an *editio maior* still in progress. It seems to me that the NETS closely aligns with the first of these two editions and will become just as important and indispensable as Rahlfs’s edition has proven to be. It is also to be hoped that the Commentary Series accompanying the NETS will prove to be just as comprehensive and balanced as the Göttingen *editio maior* is.

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<sup>13</sup> Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 84; van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen*, 50–52

<sup>14</sup> See <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/>.