CHAPTER ONE

THE RABBINIC TRADITION CONCERNING THE ‘ALTERATIONS’
INSERTED INTO THE GREEK TRANSLATION OF THE TORAH AND
THEIR RELATION TO THE ORIGINAL TEXT
OF THE SEPTUAGINT

Various passages within rabbinic literature cite a series of alterations which were inserted into the Greek translation of the Torah. In these passages a list of 10 (11), 13, 15, or 18 (16) such alterations appears along with a brief account of the circumstances under which they were inserted in the translation. The background of this rabbinic tradition is examined here, as well as its importance for LXX studies. Special attention is given to the implications of the exact wording of the list for our understanding of the original form of the LXX.

1. The sources

The principal sources for the rabbinic tradition are: b. Meg. 9a; y. Meg. 1, 1, 4., p. 72a; Mek. Exod 12, 40; Midr. Hagadol Exod 4, 20; Abot de-R. Nat. version B, chapter 37; Soph. 1, 7; Yal. Shim. Gen 3; Midr. Tan. Exod para 22. Additional sources are listed in Higger, Soferim, 101.

2. The list

The various sources list a different number of alterations and at times explicitly state the number at the head of the list. Thus Abot de-R. Nat. and Midr. Tan. Exod paragraph 22 mentions 10 alterations (although the lists include 11 or 14 instances) and Midr. Hagadol on Exod 4:20 and Deut 4:19 mentions 18 alterations (the list in Exodus includes only 16 alterations). Other lists do not indicate any number at the head of their lists: b. Meg. 9a; Mek. Exod 12:40; Yal. Shim. Gen, paragraph 3.

It would be natural to assume that the shortest list (10 or 11 alterations) reflects the original formulation of the rabbinic tradition,
expanded by the longer lists; however, the list and the story associated with it developed not only by expansion but also by abridgment.

The sources mentioning 13 or 15 alterations are the most widespread and presumably reflect the central tradition. The difference between these two traditions lies in the inclusion or exclusion of passages 10 and 11. Attention should be drawn to the fact that the list with 16 alterations (Midr. Hagadol Exod 4:20) came about as a result of the addition of biblical passages similar to those originally in the list, and that list is therefore secondary. Among the other traditions, 10 or 18 alterations are mentioned in the headings of the list (though the lists themselves contain some other figure); it would appear that these figures have been influenced by other lists of 10 items in the context (Abot de-R. Nat. ibid.; Abot chapter 5, 1–9) and in the same way by the list of 18 emendations of the scribes in the Hebrew text of the Bible, which, too, is known from rabbinic literature.1 Tendencies toward expansion and abridgment are also noticeable in the items comprising the list themselves, both regarding the biblical citations and their explanations. This problem is particularly acute in light of the fact that certain citations reflect more than one alteration (see notes 28, 29).

In view of these considerations it is impossible to determine with certainty which among the above-mentioned lists is the original or the nearest to it. The lists in b. Meg., y. Meg. and Mek. are the most ancient among the sources, but we lack proven criteria in order to evaluate the differences between these sources themselves. Furthermore, each list itself is transmitted in various forms, both in manuscripts and printed editions, so it is hard to determine their original form, if that existed at all. There were also mutual influences between the various lists, at least at the level of individual manuscripts.

The relationship between the different sources was described in general terms by Frankel, Friedmann, Geiger, Aptowitzer, and Müller.2 Before Aptowitzer it was generally believed that the relatively short baraita (13 passages) in y. Meg. (and similarly the list in Mek.) reflects a more original form than the other sources, but Aptowitzer considered the baraita in b. Meg. earlier. These two opinions are supported by different arguments (see Aptowitzer, “Berichte” 3 [1910] 102 ff.);

2 Frankel, Vorstudien; Friedmann, Onkelos; Geiger, Utext; Aptowitzer, “Berichte”; Müller, “Nachrichten.”
evidently the main problem is the inclusion or exclusion of passages 10 and 11. In b. Meg. these passages are included in the list, while in y. Meg. and in Mek. they are lacking. Judging by their contents, these passages belong in the list, but it is hard to determine if they also appeared at the earliest stage of its development. Even if these passages were added to the list only at a later stage, the discussion will turn out to be profitable if it is based on the longest of the ancient lists. To that end, the 15 passages included in the list of b. Meg. 9a are cited below according to their sequence in the Talmud, quoted from the Vilna edition, and accompanied by variants from MS München (quoted from R. Rabinowitz, עיון בחיבורו, 8 [München 1877]) and other sources.

y. Meg. 1, 1, 4., p. 71b
Mek. Exod 12:40 according to H.S. Horowitz-Rabin (2d ed.; Jerusalem 1960)
Midr. Hagadol Exod 12:40 according to M. Margoliouth (Jerusalem 1967)
Abot de-R. Nat., version B, chapter 37 according to S. Schechter (Vienna 1887)
Soph. 1.7 according to Higger, Soferim; individual manuscripts are here quoted as ‘Soph., mss’
Yal. Shim. Gen, paragraph 3 according to the edition of the Rav Kook Institute (Jerusalem 1973)
Midr. Tan. Exod paragraph 22
1. אלוהים ברמרעשת (Gen 1:1)
2. אנשה אלוהות במלס ו赎回ה (Gen 1:26)
Abot de-R. Nat.: Soph. pr.: Midr. Hagadol Exod adds: יהוה אלוהות את האמה של赎回ה (Gen 1:27).
3. יולוח בורשיט ו奖学ו בורשיט (Gen 2:2)

3 Regarding this detail, is the list of the Yerushalmi earlier since the problematic passages are not found there; or perhaps were they omitted from the list in the Yerushalmi because they were problematic? Similarly, passage 15 appears in its present place in b. Meg. out of the verse order and should thus be considered an addition. On the other hand, it appears in y. Meg. in its proper place according to the order of the passages. It is hard to determine whether it was inserted here later or whether this was its original place.

4 A perusal of the various manuscripts of these sources reveals that the many variant readings listed below as variants between the different lists appear also as variants within the tradition of b. Meg. (and also in other traditions, e.g., Higger, Soferim). The manuscripts of b. Meg. are not listed below. For example, if for passage 4, it is written according to our principles, that the words לוח בורשיט are lacking in manuscript M of b. Meg. it should be pointed out that they are actually lacking in all the major manuscripts.
CHAPTER ONE

Hagadol Exod and Tan., passages 3 and 4 are cited in inverted order. In Abot de-R. Nat. this passage is lacking.

4. והנה עשה צדרא ולע ת切换 ברא (Gen 5:2)

5. והנה ראדה אובלל עשה (Gen 11:7)

6. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Gen 18:12)

7. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Gen 49:6)
   y. Meg. and Yal. Shim.: תַּחַת עַל שָׁאוּם בְּבַרְקָה אֲבָא.

8. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Exod 4:20)

9. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Exod 12:40)
   y. Meg. and Yal. Shim.

10. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Exod 24:5)

11. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Exod 24:11)

12. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Num 16:15)
    y. Meg.: Mek.: Tan. lacks the entire passage.

13. והנה ראדה בברקוה (Deut 17:3)
3. The circumstances under which the alterations were inserted in the LXX

The circumstances under which the alterations were inserted in the LXX are described in the introduction to the list, whether in brief or in detail, and the name King Ptolemy, ‘for’ whom the translators ‘wrote’ their translation, is mentioned in all the descriptions. The short descriptions speak only of ‘writing,’ as in Mek. (‘and this is one of the things they wrote for King Ptolemy. Similarly they wrote him ...’) or of an ‘alteration’ as in y. Meg.: ‘thirteen details were changed by the sages for King Ptolemy; they wrote for him ...’.

The longer descriptions relate the story of the writing of the LXX known also from other sources, both Hebrew and Greek, although the differences in outlook and emphasis between the rabbinic account and the other sources are considerable—see Aptowitzer, “Berichte” 3 (1910) 4 ff. B. Meg. relates the following account: ‘It has been taught, the story goes that King Ptolemy assembled seventy-two elders and lodged them in seventy-two rooms without disclosing to them the reason for assembling them, and he went into each one individually and ordered them “write me the Torah of your Teacher Moses.” The Holy One, blessed be He, put wisdom in the heart of each one so that they agreed with one accord and wrote for him ...’ (at this place follows the list of alterations).

This account describes the circumstances under which the Greek translation of the Torah was prepared, and if not all the details of this story are mentioned in every single source, it is often alluded to in such phrases as ‘they wrote for Ptolemy.’ Furthermore, Midr. Hagadot Exod 4:20 says explicitly: ‘this is one of the eighteen details which our Rabbis changed in the Torah in Greek.’ Significantly, in Soph. 1:7 this story is mentioned together with another one which speaks explicitly about the

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circumstances in which the LXX was produced (‘Thus goes the story about five elders who wrote the Torah for King Ptolemy in Greek etc.; after it comes the story under consideration here beginning with the words ‘Another story about King Ptolemy ...’).

4. Writing or alteration?

A few traditions speak of the ‘writing’ of the above-listed passages, while others speak of the ‘change’ from the Torah (see above). It would seem that even if it is not stated explicitly that the sages/elders/our Rabbis inserted alterations, such a claim is inherent in the very formulation of the list. First, all the passages mentioned in the list differ from MT. Second, for two passages the content of what the translators wrote is explicitly stated instead of other details: 4 ‘male and female he created him’ and they did not write ‘he created them’ (Gen 5:2; the final three words are lacking in many sources); 15 and they wrote for him פִּ֖רְעָ֣ה רַ֣יִן and they did not write נְפֶרֶת יָרִ֖ים (Lev 11:6 [5], Deut 14:7; the various traditions differ, but all of them refer to both expressions in one form or another).

Thus, the story preserved in rabbinic literature records the alterations from the Torah inserted by the translators. It was only natural that people should soon recognize the existence of differences between the Hebrew and Greek Pentateuch. The latter, too, was ‘Jewish’ at its source, even though the Jews distanced themselves from it at a later date. Furthermore, it was also natural that every difference between the Hebrew Torah—being in the language in which the words were originally written—and the Greek Pentateuch should be thought of as an alteration in the Greek. The real background of the aforementioned differences between the Hebrew and the Greek Pentateuch is dealt with below. Apparently, some of these differences do indeed stem from alteration, but others, probably the majority, stem from Hebrew variants, from translation technique and from an incorrect understanding of certain translation equivalents in the LXX. All the same, the differences mentioned in the list as ‘alterations’ are described as such here, because this is how rabbinic tradition understood them. Christian tradition also took similar differences between the ‘Jewish’ and ‘Greek’ (from their viewpoint: Christian) Bible to be alterations, but in the opposite direction: a few Church Fathers claimed the LXX reflects the true form of
God’s words, and that it was the Jews who had falsified them in their Bible.\(^6\)

5. The original language of the passages mentioned in the list

The list contains a number of altered passages, inserted by the translators and differing from the Torah—thus according to rabbinic tradition—and it can indeed be verified that all the passages differ from MT. Therefore the passages listed in Hebrew refer to the Greek translation of the Torah, which is quoted in the list in Hebrew retroversion. Interestingly enough, a few researchers hold to the opinion, for reasons which will be treated later, that these are not citations from a Greek translation at all, but rather alterations on the Hebrew level.\(^7\) This opinion does not appear likely, however, in view of the fact that the introduction to the list explicitly refers to a Greek translation. In addition to this, from some details in the list it also emerges that the citations come from a Greek translation:

1. Five of the passages are identical to passages in the LXX (3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15), with another one (9) being close to it.

2. The supposition that the list goes back to Greek words that were translated here into Hebrew is well substantiated by passage 15. There it is said that the translators wrote צעירה היילה (young-footed) ‘and they did not write ארבה (hare) since Ptolemy’s wife’s name was ‘hare,’ that he might not say ‘the Jews have mocked me by putting my wife’s name in the Torah’ (b. Meg.). In fact, the people did not nickname Ptolemy’s wife (actually his mother) ארבה, but instead used a Greek equivalent (λαγός). Therefore, if ארבה refers to λαγός, the phrase צעירה היילה points to nothing else than a Greek word of equivalent value. Indeed, it is possible to identify the Greek word behind צעירה היילה: the Greek equivalent for צעירה היילה in the LXX of Lev 11:6 (5) and Deut 14:7 is δασίποδα, whose meaning is ‘hairy-footed’ (ניליה ירל). Undeniably this is the phrase צעירה היילה in the words of the sages, presented thus by a phonetic interchange of צ/ם.\(^8\) Furthermore, the equation of ניליה ירל


\(^8\) Cf., e.g. Num 16:30 תִּסְמַח הָעֵדֵב as against the reading of the SP תִּסְמֵח הָעֵדֵב; 2 Sam 8:3 כִּיָּבֵר מֵאַכֵּל as against מֵאַכֵּל in 1 Chr 18:3. See also כְּנֶהוֹד in the *baraita* itself and cf. for this issue A. Bendavid, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew* 2 (Tel-Aviv 1971) 441 (Hebrew). The identification of צעירה היילה with ניליה ירל was first made by G. Tychsen, *Tentamen de variis codicum hebraicorum ... generibus* (Rostock 1772) 52. Tychsen also discusses the rabbinic tradition.
with δασύποδα appears reasonable in light of what is known about the
use of compound words in the LXX and about the translation of these
words in Hebrew and Aramaic: many pairs of two or more Hebrew
words are translated in the LXX by compound words of the type βραδύγλωσσος - βραδύγλωσσος (Exod 4:10)—see Tov, “Compound Words.” Alternati-
vely, compound Greek words were many times translated by a phrase of
two Hebrew or Aramaic words, as can be recognized for instance in the
Syro-Hexapla.\(^9\) Moreover, the translation of δασύποδα in rabbinic
literature needs to be seen in the light of the LXX vocabulary in which
ποις generally reflects מִן and δαסִים reflects מִן in Gen 27:11 (cf.
also Gen 25:25; 2 Kgs 1:8).

3. The assumption that the passages mentioned in the list reflect
Greek and not Hebrew words emerges also from passage 12: מִן מִן
mentioned there reflects ἐπίθυμημα in the LXX (MT: מִן). Within the
LXX the root מִן is generally translated by ἐπίθυμημα, and so מִן is
translated in Isa 32:12 by ἐπίθυμημα. Therefore the reconstructed process
מִן (the conjectural origin of the LXX) = ἐπίθυμημα = מִן (= the rabbinic
list) points to a translation process.

4. Ostensibly, the change of word order in passage 1 (בַּרְבּוּגָלִים
בַּרְבּוּגָלִים) and the expressions 8 אַבֵּה אַבֵּה מַעְטָרָה
אַבֵּה = ὑποζύγια and 7 אַבֵּה = στενοῦσα (see below) can only be understood by the assumption that
these are translations from Greek.

6. The list of alterations and the original text of the LXX

In the past, when scholars observed that the list contains passages which
agree with the LXX, they shirked from applying this description to the
entire list, since the majority of its details go against the transmitted text
of the LXX. A comparison of the passages with the LXX shows that nine
passages in the list differ from the LXX, while five agree with it (3, 8, 10 ,
12, 15), with one passage being close (9).

If the preceding analysis is correct, it is difficult to avoid the unusual
assumption that the nine passages which do not agree with the
transmitted text of the LXX reflect another textual form of that
translation. This other text of the LXX evidently contained the original
text of the translation which differs from the transmitted form in all the
other manuscripts. This assumption is strengthened by what is known
about the textual development of the translation during the first
centuries of its existence. This question is now briefly considered.\(^{10}\)

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\(^9\) E.g. Exod 4:10: מִן מִן - ἐπίθυμημα and מִן מִן - σκληροτραχήλος - σκληροτραχήλος.

\(^{10}\) See further, Tov, TCU, 10–15.
It is reasonable to hypothesize with P.A. de Lagarde, *Proverbiens*, 1–4, that the manuscripts of most, if not all, Septuagintal books, reflect in one form or another the first formulation of the LXX, which we may denote for the purpose of discussion as ‘the original translation.’ This original translation was not preserved in its pure form for an extended period because from the beginning of its dissemination in different scrolls, the textual transmission split off into several secondary traditions. In the pre-Christian period and the first century CE various types of corrections were then entered into individual scrolls of every one of the Septuagintal books. As a result of these corrections, as far as one can tell, there were no two identical or nearly identical scrolls in existence for any book of the LXX.\(^{11}\) In contrast to this situation, by the second and third century CE, a recognizable unity had come about in the textual tradition of the LXX which later disappeared under the influence of the revisions of Origen and Lucian.

For the present discussion it is important to know which types of alterations were inserted in the textual witnesses of the LXX. The evidence shows that many alterations were inserted in early witnesses which brought the LXX into conformity with the Hebrew Bible. Some revisions were inserted in the forerunners of the translation units now found in the canon of the LXX,\(^{12}\) while others are reflected in individual manuscripts, such as manuscripts AFM in Exodus-Deuteronomy.\(^{13}\) Furthermore, even if in a certain detail all manuscripts of the LXX agree with MT, there is no certainty that the original translator indeed produced this rendering, because the original rendering may have been corrected in accordance with MT. This assumption received support from 4QLXXLev\(^{14}\) which sometimes reflects a text which is probably original, while the transmitted text of the LXX was probably corrected toward the standard vocabulary of the LXX and/or MT.\(^{15}\)

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\(^{11}\) This point was emphasized by E.J. Bickerman, “Some Notes on the Transmission of the Septuagint,” *A. Marx Jubilee Volume* (New York 1950) 149–178.

\(^{12}\) This situation is recognizable, for example, in the ‘LXX’ of the following books: parts of Samuel and Kings, Daniel, Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Canticles.


\(^{15}\) The alternative view, according to which the scroll reflects an early revision towards a freer rendering of MT, is not borne out by the evidence.
In view of this situation, it is suggested here that the passages mentioned in the list of alterations reflect the original text of the LXX, while the archetype of all the known manuscripts was corrected.\footnote{Absolute originality cannot be proven. In our view, the passages in the list reflect a text which is more original than the ones in the known manuscripts of the LXX.}

As for the frequency of the presumed corrections of the original text of the LXX, the assumption that two-thirds of the passages in the list were emended in the archetype of Septuagint manuscripts is not illustrative of the frequency of such changes, which must have been less frequent.\footnote{We are faced with a list of differences or changes, which are not characteristic of the general condition of the text.}

We now turn to the ten passages differing from the transmitted text of the LXX; their original form will be reconstructed on the basis of the rabbinic tradition. The discussion includes passage 9, which agrees with the LXX to a limited extent.

The tentative retroversions from the Hebrew of the list to the Greek of the LXX are based primarily on the vocabulary of Hebrew-Greek equivalents which served the translators. These reconstructions encounter the same methodological difficulties as do retroversions in the reverse direction. The degree of reliability of the reconstruction depends on the degree of exactness in the translation. It should therefore be emphasized that the Hebrew translation in the list of Greek passages appears to be exact. This exactitude is recognizable in the literal translation of the two elements of δασυμοεα (15) by נַלְיָה שׁנִיָה (see below) and in the translation from the Greek (possibly: τοῦ λατρεύειν αὐτοῖς) reflected in זַכַּר (14)—such a reading is indeed reflected in a Hebrew source (Siphre Deut 19:19). It seems that only in one biblical passage is a Greek word presented by a free translation: אֵשׁ יְאֵשׁ = ἐποικία (8). If this description proves correct and the Hebrew translation in the list is indeed literal, our reconstruction stands on a firm basis. In fact, the very nature of the list demands that the translation incorporated in it be exact, since the list purports to faithfully represent the differences between the Torah and the LXX.

We now present a tentative reconstruction of the original text of those passages in the list which differ from the transmitted text of the LXX, accompanied by remarks on the retroversions. The transmitted text of the LXX is recorded first, followed by the text of the LXX reconstructed from the rabbinic tradition. These passages have now been analyzed in detail by G. Veltri, Eine Tora für den König Talmai—Untersuchungen zum Übersetzungsverständnis in der jüdisch-hellenistischen und rabbinischen
Literatur (TSAJ 41; Tübingen 1994). The focus of this detailed study differs from our study and in a way the two studies complement one another. See also Tov, “Review of Veltri.”*

1. Gen 1:1 LXX ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς
   = MT בָּרָא בָּרָא אֶלֹהִים
   LXX-reconstr. ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν ἐν ἀρχῇ
   = rabb. list בָּרָא בָּרָא אֶלֹהִים
2. Gen 1:26 LXX ποιήσωμεν ἀνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν
   = MT ἑτεροικίαν καταβάνειν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν
   LXX-reconstr. ποιήσω ἀνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν
   = rabb. list אֱלָהֵם בָּרָא בָּרָא אֶלֹהִים
One of the two differences between the LXX (= MT) and the reconstructed LXX (= rabb. list) concerns the person of the verb (see below). The reconstruction does not relate to prepositions in the list: ב...ב (MT ב...ב; LXX apparently ב...ב), because this type of difference cannot be reconstructed for the LXX. The other difference between MT (= LXX) and the retroverted LXX is based on a reliable tradition.

4. Gen 5:2 LXX ἀρσεν καὶ θηλὶ ἐποίησεν αὐτοὺς
   = MT ἀρσεν καὶ θηλὶ ἐποίησεν αὐτοὺς
   LXX-reconstr. ἀρσεν καὶ θηλὶ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς
   = rabb. list ἀρσεν καὶ θηλὶ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς
The reconstruction is based on the text of b. Meg. See also n. 29.

5. Gen 11:7 LXX δεύτε καὶ καταβάντες συγχέωμεν ἐκεῖ αὐτῶν τὴν γλώσσαν
   = MT δεύτε καὶ καταβάς συγχέω... γλώσσαν
   LXX-reconstr. δεύτε καὶ καταβάς συγχέω...
   = rabb. list δεύτε καὶ καταβάς συγχέω...

6. Gen 18:12 LXX ἐγέλασαν δὲ Σαρρὰ ἐν ἑαυτῇ
   = MT ἐγέλασαν δὲ Σαρρὰ ἐν ἑαυτῇ
   LXX-reconstr. (?ἐγέλασαν δὲ Σαρρὰ ἐν /πρὸς /ἐπὶ τοῖς /τοὺς ἐγγίστα αὐτῆς
   = rabb. list ἐγέλασαν δὲ Σαρρά ἐν /πρὸς /ἐπὶ τοῖς /τοὺς

The difference between the reading of MT (= LXX) and that of the list (πρὸς) may be explained as follows:

1. If πρὸς in the list refers to people standing near Sarah (see the early commentators on the rabbinic list) or to her relatives, the meaning...
of the passage is that Sarah laughs at these people. In this case the original text of the LXX may be reconstructed as above.

2. Most modern interpreters hold that the difference between the passage quoted in the list and MT does not bear on the quoted words, but rather on the continuation of the biblical passage. Indeed, in the continuation of the sentence, the LXX (οὐ πω μὲν μοι γεγόνεν ἐως τοῦ νῦν) differs in three details from MT (אֲכָלָה בַּלַּת וַתֶּחָה לֵךְ וְלֹא): אֲכָלָה בַּלַּת וַתֶּחָה לֵךְ is not represented in the translation. Instead of אֲכָלָה the translator read בַּלַּת, and instead of לֵךְ he read שָׁעַה (= שָׁעַה).

3. Possibly the two words differ solely in their pattern (בֶּכְרָב/בֶּכְרָב), their meanings being identical—cf. the transcription of בֶּכְרָב by βεκορβ in the second column of the Hexapla in Ps 36(35):2 and notice similar phonetic shifts in mishnaic Hebrew.18 Also the MT of Isaiah and 1QIsa9 differ in many instances as to noun patterns19 and such differences are also to be assumed at the base of the relationship between MT and the transcriptions in the second column of the Hexapla.20 But even if בֶּכְרָב reflects a different pattern of the word in MT, the original translation should probably be understood as ‘people standing nearby’ or ‘relatives.’

7. Gen 49:6 LXX ὅπλι ἐν τῷ θυμῷ αὐτῶν ἀπέκτειναν ἀνθρώπους καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ αὐτῶν ἐνευροκόπησαν ταῖρον (ταυροὺς manuscripts 458 340...)

= MT יִבְנָאַה וָאֶשׁ בָּשָׁר עַד וּבָשָׁר שָׁעַר

LXX-reconstr. ...ἐνευροκόπησαν σιτευτόν ...

rabb. list יִבְנָאַה וָאֶשׁ בָּשָׁר עַד וּבָשָׁר שָׁעַר

The point of departure of the reconstruction is מַבְבָשׁ אֶשׁ (Mabbashesh אֶשׁ) which appears in all sources of the list (in most of the lists שָׁעַר comes in the first hemistich, while in some of them שָׁשׁ appears as in MT [see n. 30]). An examination of the translation equivalents of the LXX shows that מַבְבָשׁ אֶשׁ in the list may reflect σιτευτός which in the LXX also translates שָׁשׁ (that is, מַבְבָשׁ in the list = σιτευτός in the recon-structured LXX = שָׁשׁ in the Bible). This assumption is based on the following equivalents: Judg 6:25 יִבְנָאַה שָׁשׁ - τῶν μόσχων τῶν σιτευτῶν according to

18 See G. Mercati, Psalterii Hexapli Reliquiae (Roma 1958).
19 See Kutscher, Language, 396–398.
21 The vocalization of the Adler manuscript (אַבּוֹ), like the orthography of manuscript Columbia X 893 – T 141 (אַבּוֹ), is apparently secondary.
9. Exod 12:40 LXX ἐν δὲ κατοίκησις τῶν οἱ Ἰσραήλ ἐν κατοίκησιν ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν γῇ Χαναάν ἔτη τετρακόσια

MT וַתַּעֲשֵׂה בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ שְׁלָשִׁים שְׁנֵי עַשְׁרוֹן תָּנֵיִים

reconstr. (a) ἐν (γῇ) Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν πᾶσι ταῖς χώραις (τῶν χώρων)
= rabbi. list μπροβάτα καὶ ἐπίκτησιν

reconstr. (b) ἐν (γῇ) Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ταῖς χώραις
= list in y. Meg. μπροβάταμεν εἰς πάσαν τὴν ἰσραήλ

reconstr. (c) ἐν (γῇ) Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν ταῖς χώραις ταῖς ἐτέραις
reconstr. (d) ἐν (γῇ) Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν Χαναάν καὶ ἐν γῇ Γέσσαμ

Reconstructions a–c are founded on the assumption that the translation in the list is exact. Whether the majority reading λεβορα is more original than τοῦ Χαναάν in y. Meg. cannot be determined. Both readings could have stemmed from ἐτέραις in reconstruction c. It should be observed that λεβορα does not occur in the Bible and the absence of the article in τοῦ Χαναάν points to mishnaic Hebrew (against this, manuscript Columbia X 893 – T 141 of b. Meg. reads τοῦ Χαναάν). Reconstruction d is based on the assumption that the Hebrew translation in the list is free. The Greek text may then be reconstructed according to the LXX of the passage, according to the reading in Mek. (אֲרָמִי; μπροβάταμεν μεταφράσεως), and according to the SP ad loc. (אֲרָמִי אֲרוֹמָה מְצִוָיֶה תַּנְיָא)。(אֲרָמִי אֲרוֹמָה מְצִוָיֶה תַּנְיָא)

11. Exod 24:11 LXX καὶ τῶν ἐπιλεκτῶν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ οὐ διεφώνησεν οὐδὲ εἰς...

MT אָלָּא שָׂפֶל לְאָרָמִי אָלָּא שָׂפֶל לְאָרָמִי

LXX-reconstr. ... τῶν νεανίσκων / τῶν ἐλαττομημένων ...
= rabbi. list (אֲרוֹמָה בָּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Passage 10 is treated above together with Exod 24:5 similar to the present passage. Since μικρόν is attested in Hebrew and Aramaic as ‘small,’ it probably goes back to νεανίσκων in the LXX of v. 5. In accordance with passage 11, this word probably appeared in the LXX of our passage, but here the problems are more involved than in v. 5.

22 Attributed to Aquila and Theodotion; a similar translation is handed down as ε'.

THE RABBINIC TRADITION CONCERNING THE ‘ALTERATIONS’
From a linguistic viewpoint it is possible that the Greek translator would translate 

\[ \text{περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ} \]

With a Greek word which would be retroverted in the list as 

\[ \text{περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ} \]

Certainly the root να μας, which is related to the preposition ἀπό, appears both in the sense of ‘to lack’ (Sir 42:21) and in the sense of ‘to set aside’ (Gen 27:36; Num 11:17). From this it can be conjectured that the original equivalent of ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ was ἐλαττομένων, cf. Sir 42:21 ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ - ὡς προσετέθη, ὡς ἐλαττώθη (περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ is retroverted according to the LXX there, and support is now forthcoming for this retroversion from MasSir, which reads ἐλαττομένων). Consequently the following process is reconstructed: ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ in the Bible = ἐλαττομένων in the reconstructed LXX = περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ in the list. But it is also possible that περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ appeared here, as in v. 5, if the translator identified 

\[ \text{περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ} \]

(v. 11) with 

\[ \text{περί του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ} \]

The original equivalent of ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ cannot be reconstructed easily because the construction of the verse differs entirely in its Greek translation. Actually, ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ is represented twice: (1) ἐπιλέκτων (chosen ones) reflecting the accepted interpretation of ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ, and (2) it is also concealed behind διεφώνησεν: the Greek translation of ἀπό του ανελθόντος του ισραήλ should be understood as ‘and from the chosen of Israel not one was lacking.’ Because the root να μας means ‘to lack,’ διεφώνησεν somehow reflects να μας (rather than ἐλαττομένων or a Hebrew variant). Alternatively, the translation may express tendentious exegesis, as elsewhere in the immediate context. To reconstruct an individual detail in the verse is all the more abstruse.

13. Deut 4:19 LXX ἀπενείμενον κύριος ο θεός σου αὐτὰ πᾶσιν ταῖς ἑβδομάδοις ταῖς ὑποκάτω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

MT 

The equivalent ἀρχέοντας ἁλαθημένων also occurs in Num 8:2; Ps 13(12): 3.

14. Deut 17:3 LXX καὶ ἀπελθόντες λατρεύσαν θεοῦς ἐτέροις - καὶ οὐ προσέταξα (-ξευ τινάς) BG... = soi FMV...

MT 

The equivalent ἀρχέοντας ἁλαθημένων also occurs in 1 Sam 30:19; 1 Kgs 8:56.

\[ \text{See the similar use of the verb διεφώνησεν in LXX Num 31:49: καὶ οὐ διεφώνησεν ὡς ἀπελθόντας τὸν θεὸν, for which cf. Ch.T. Fritsch, The Anti-anthropomorphisms of the Greek Pentateuch (Princeton 1943) 45.} \]
The equivalent נצרך - λατρεύειν occurs among other places in Deut 28:14; Judg 2:19.

See also below on the earlier formulation of the LXX to passage 15.

7. The background of the differences between MT and the LXX

The lists in rabbinic literature speak of alterations inserted in the translation, but this notion may now be abandoned.²⁵ The differences between the Torah and the LXX derive from: (a) translations deviating from MT based on Hebrew variants; (b) translations deviating from MT arising either from Hebrew variants or from exegesis; (c) exegetical translations; (d) Greek equivalents which were misinterpreted by the rabbinic tradition as differences between the LXX and the Torah.

The contents of lists of this type are largely a matter of chance, as is also the case with the list of the ‘emendations of the scribes’ (see n. 1). This list does not purport to represent the most conspicuous alterations and indeed anyone will easily find much more far-reaching differences between the LXX and MT, as for instance in the order of chapters and subject matter at the end of Exodus. What the passages in the list have in common is that they pertain to some central issues. These differences could easily be reinterpreted as alterations (like the ‘emendations of the scribes’).

a. Translations deviating from MT based on Hebrew variants

The following passages most likely reflect Hebrew variants:

12. Num 16:15 MT לא תמר את המדים נאשאתי
LXX-reconstr. לא תמר את המדים נאשאתי = list

Possibly the reading תמר was created when a copyist or translator replaced המדים with המדים.²⁶ Cf. Gen 49:14 - τὸ καλὸν ἐπεθύμησεν = νέμει (cf. similar linguistic exegesis in the LXX of Ps 119 (118):20 - ἐπετιθήμησεν)²⁷ and Isa 27:2 - ἀμπελῶν καλὸς ἐπεθύμησα ...
MT apparently reflects the original intention of the text: Moses emphasized that he has not even taken for himself a small thing such as an ass. His words are similar to those of Samuel just before his death: 

13. Deut 4:19 MT אַשָּׁר חֱלָקָהּ אֲלָחוֹן לָפֶל לַעֲמָיו
LXX-reconstr. + לָאָהִיו = rabb. list

The added לָאָהִיו is also reflected in Midr. Hagadol to this verse (see also Rashi). This word evidently testifies to a tendentious early variant: one is not permitted to worship stars: the host of heaven are given only ‘to shine.’

14. Deut 17:3 MT וַיִּשְׂרֵר אָלֹהֵים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ ... אֵין לוֹ רוּחַ
LXX-reconstr. + לָעֲבָדָם = rabb. list

The additional לָעֲבָדָם may reflect an early variant echoed in Siphre 148 on Deut 19:19. Cf. also Deut 28:14 אֲלֹהֵי אָרֶץ אֲלֹהֵים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ לָעֲבָדָם.

The addition is occasioned by linguistic considerations because the word אֵין לוֹ רוּחַ has a certain syntactical oddness about it and begs, as it were, to be completed. The additional word is taken from the context (לָעֲבָדָם וַיֶּהֶב); early commentators added the same word.

b. Translations deviating from MT arising either from Hebrew variants or from exegesis

In certain categories of translation technique it is difficult to determine whether a specific difference between MT and an ancient version attests to a Hebrew variant or reflects the exegesis of the translators (see TCU, 154–162). A few of the passages in the list belong to this group (note that the list did not intend to reconstruct the Hebrew original from which the LXX was made, but rather to communicate a ‘contemporary’ Hebrew translation of some points of interest in the LXX).

2. Gen 1:26 MT נְעָשֶׁה אֲדֹן בּוֹ וּבְאֶלֶמֶן כְּפִרְמָהָיו
LXX-reconstr. ποιήσω ἀνθρώπων κατ’ εἰκόνα καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν (rabb. list)

In these two instances the translation avoids adopting the plural as in MT. The translator either inserted this alteration on his own initiative, or
he found such a Hebrew text in front of him. It is pertinent to remark here that in b. San. 38b, Gen 1:26, 27 and 11:5, 7 are cited together as examples of the use of plural forms in reference to God.

Besides the difference in the person of the verb, an additional difference is noticeable in passage 2: according to the list, the possessive pronouns in MT are not transmitted in the LXX (as against מָצַלָם בְּרֵכָה in MT). This lack is possibly based on an early Hebrew variant, for also in rabbinic literature מָצַלָם and מָצַלָם are sometimes described in an abstract way, without possessive pronouns or article (note, for example, Abot 3:21 אַלְמָא אָלָמָא בְּרֵכָה בַּעֲלָהָה בַּעֲלָהָה אָלָמָא). It is also possible that the translator did not represent the pronouns in order to avoid an anthropomorphic description, as elsewhere in the LXX.28

According to the list in Midr. Hagadol Exod 4:20, the pronouns are lacking in v. 27 of the LXX as well: אֻלְמַא אָלָמָא בְּרֵכָה בַּעֲלָהָה. If the tradition concerning the Greek translations of v. 26 is correct, it stands to reason that v. 27 was formulated in the same way.

3. Gen 2:2 MT

LXX

Ancient as well as modern interpreters were aware of the exegetical difficulty raised by MT, which implies that God worked on the seventh day. This difficulty is eliminated in the LXX. The Greek translation may be based on a Hebrew variant (דָּשֶּׁר) also found in SP, but it is equally feasible that the translator changed the content of the verse.

4. Gen 5:2 MT

LXX-reconstr.

It is hard to know whether the reconstructed translation ἐποίησεν αὐτόν reflects a variant or results from exegesis. Either way, at the base of the translation one should probably posit an understanding which interprets this verse as referring to an androgynous creature as in Gen Rab. 8:10. However, possibly the variant or the tendency lying at the base of the translation did not stem from contextual exegesis, but from syntactical exegesis since the previous verse speaks of the man in the singular, while v. 2 speaks in the plural.

28 See Fritsch, The Anti-anthropomorphisms, 11, n. 6 with reference to omissions of the possessive pronoun in relation to God (LXX Exod 15:7; 23:27; Deut 32:10). In other cases an element is added in the translation between two words in order to tone down an anthropomorphic description.
The passage under consideration comes between these two passages and hence it causes no surprise that in some source a variant or explanation of מִבְּרַח would develop for MT מִבְּרַח. The variant מִבְּרַח/מִבְּרַח included in many sources of the list apparently reflects a secondary stage in the development of that list. 29

9. Exod 12:40 MT שלש הימים (פִּסְחָה) והשֶּׁם והָאָרֶץ מָזוּז (ומָזָא)

LXX-reconstr. see the four possible reconstructions on p. 13.

It is unclear whether the difference between MT and the LXX is to be attributed to an exegetical alteration or to a translation of a Hebrew variant like that appearing in SP (בָּרָא מִן יָדָיו מִן בָּרָא) or in Mek. (פֶּסַח), thus also in Tan. with inverted order).

c. Exegetical translations

1. Gen 1:1 MT בָּרָא אלהי לילה אָלֶלֶת

LXX-reconstr. ὁ θεός ἐποίησεν ἑν ἀρχῇ (list: בָּרָא אלהי לילה אָלֶלֶת)

The LXX translators often inverted the order of elements whether from syntactical or exegetical considerations. In this instance the inversion can be ascribed to the translator’s motivation to begin the translation with ὁ θεός.

d. Greek equivalents which were misinterpreted by rabbinic tradition as differences between the LXX and the Hebrew text

In the following four examples the translators chose regular equivalents which in rabbinic tradition were misinterpreted as reflecting differences between the LXX and the Hebrew text.

7. Gen 49:6 MT בּוֹא בָּאָפָה הָרִיר אֵשׁ וּרְבֵּצָה נַעְרֵי שָׁרָה

LXX-reconstr. ...ἐνευφροκόπησαν στεφότον = list ... נַעְרֵי שָׁרָה

στεφότον (= אָפָה) in the LXX was apparently interpreted as an alteration of the parallel word in the Hebrew (שָׁרָה) since it was generally understood as שָׁרָה = wall (TO, S, Aquila, Symmachus, V; see also Gen Rab. ad loc.). Consequently, according to rabbinic tradition, the LXX

29 A reading מִבְּרַח/מִבְּרַח was probably created during the textual transmission of the list (interchange of ה/ח perhaps when it became unclear what the exact difference between LXX and MT was (a similar confusion is reflected in the addition of מִבְּרַח in the list, a formula recurring only concerning passage 15). It appears that מִבְּרַח/מִבְּרַח refers to the female orifices of the primeval man who was thus androgynous (see Gen. Rabb. 8:10). Worthy of note is the fact that מִבְּרַח does not appear in any similar meaning in the Bible, and in rabbinic literature it is used only in connection with the male sexual organ.
reflects an alteration, but actually the translation is based on a reading tradition which is also reflected in MT (ך).\(^{30}\)

8. Exod 4:20 MT

| נבכי | list (ך) |
| LXX | τά ὑποζύγια |

If מ is a faithful translation of the original Greek translation, it may be reconstructed as *ἀνθρωποφόρος* or *φοράνθρωπος*, though neither of these words is attested in Greek. Apparently in this instance the Hebrew translation in the list is imprecise, meant to emphasize the interpretative dimension of the Greek word. Etymologically the meaning of ὑποζύγιον is a ‘yoke (ζύγον)-bearing animal,’ and as such designates various animals. On the other hand, in Egypt its meaning is restricted to ‘ass,’ or at least this meaning was prevalent there.\(^{31}\) For this reason מ is often translated in the LXX by ὑποζύγιον (the equivalent מ is more frequent in the LXX, with the exception of Exodus in which the passage under consideration appears).\(^{32}\) We may infer that this use of ὑποζύγιον was unknown in Palestine, so that the sages were puzzled about the use of מ (ך) (this is how they understood ὑποζύγιον) and not מ, as usual.

10. Exod 24:5 MT

| נבכי | list (ך) |
| LXX | τοίς νεανίσκοις |

The equivalent מ - νεανίσκος/νεανίας occurs frequently in the LXX (παιδάριον is more frequent). Therefore the use of νεανίσκος need not have raised any difficulty on the linguistic level, but on the exegetical level it was apparently considered unusual, because these מ were usually taken to mean ‘select men’ (see, for example, תו יר and Zeb. 115b) and not ‘little ones.’ Against this background the sages may have

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\(^{30}\) The main differences between LXX and MT pertain to מ and מ. But in the parallel (first) colon מ appears in several lists instead of MT’s מ מ (�� in LXX). Apparently, מ is secondary here and was entered under the influence of מ מ at the end of the verse (where it was replaced by מ). It is unlikely that the original list intended to ascribe this variant to the LXX. See also the preceding note.

\(^{31}\) See the lexicons and particularly MM with examples from papyri of the 3rd century BCE. See especially P. Hib 173-9 where ὑποζύγιον and מ are synonymous. The Egyptian background of this word was also stressed by A. Wasserstein, “On Donkeys, Wine and the Uses of Textual Criticism: Septuagintal Variants in Jewish Palestine,” in: A. Oppenheimer and others (eds.), *The Jews in the Hellenistic-Roman World, Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern* (Jerusalem 1996) 119-142, esp. 122-129. See further D. Wasserstein, “The Ptolemy and the Hare: Dating an Old Story about the Translation of the Septuagint,” *Scripta Classica Israeltica* 17 (1998) 77-86.

\(^{32}\) See also Judg 19:3, 10: מ - manuscript B: מ; manuscript A: ὑποζύγιον.
thought that the translators replaced עם נודע, that is, ‘little ones.’ The same development took place in passage 11.

15. Lev 11:6(5) Deut 14:7 MT

\[\text{дарах ידר} = \text{דרהנה דליש} = \text{דרהנה דליש}\]

LXX \[\deltaασυποδα = \text{list}\]

\[\deltaασυποδα\] appropriately reflects \[\text{דרהנה דליש}\] and therefore may reflect the original Greek translation cited in the list by means of a literal retranslation of its two elements. Rabbinic tradition emphasizes that the translators avoided writing \[\text{דרהנה דליש}\] in this place (that is, \[\lambdaαγων\]); it may be that this claim reflects a post factum explanation; on the other hand, \[\lambdaαγων\] may also represent the original translation of \[\text{דרהנה דליש}\] later supplanted by \[\deltaασυποδα\].

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33 See Aptowitzer, “Berichte” 2 (1909) 104–106; Geiger, Urschrift, 36; Talmon, “Scrolls,” 26; Müller, “Nachrichten,” 81–83. This word is probably not originally Greek (\[\zeta\pi\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] ; see, e.g. the dictionary of Lewy) because it is hard to know what could be common to \[\text{דרהנה דליש}\] and the Greek word (inquirer), and since \[\text{דרהנה דליש}\] is indeed attested in Hebrew (IQM, 11(7):3: \[\zeta\pi\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] and in Aramaic (for the data, see S. Krauss, Griechische und Lateinische Lehrwörter im Talmud, Midrash und Targum (Berlin 1899); see, e.g., T in Cant 6:5 \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\zeta\text{דרהנה דליש}\]). This word is apparently derived from \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] (many manuscripts of b. Meg. indeed read \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] and not \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] as in the printed editions).

Even more has been written concerning \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] זֶפֶר עַבְדַּי, one of the three scrolls found in the temple court according to y. Taanit 4:2, 68a; parallels in Abot de-R. Nathan, version B, chapter 46; Sifre 356 on Deut 33:27; Sop. 6:4. See Talmon, “Scrolls” and the bibliography there. It is unclear what was the character of Sefer Zazat. In any case, the passage in rabbincic literature apparently does not touch on passages 10 and 11 in the list. At most, it may be claimed that these two passages do not belong to the list (note that they are lacking in y. Meg. and in Mek.); however, such a claim is improbable in view of the parallel between \[\zeta\tau\i\tau\i\tau\i\] and \[\chiοραγολλίος\] in Exod 24:5.

34 The LXX to Leviticus changes the order of vv. 5 and 6. For the equivalent \[\zeta\text{דרהנה דליש} - χοραγολλίος\] cf. Prov 30:26 (24:61) and Ps 104(103):18.