

He Uncovered the Bottom of the Deep

A Liturgical Translator's Manual

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O Lord, through the prayers of our Holy Fathers Kosmos the
Poet, John of Damascus, and Nikodemos of the Holy
Mountain, give us understanding and grace to create
translations that are pleasing to You!

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Purpose

This handbook is for people who speak English as a foreign language and are translating the liturgical texts into a non-Indoeuropean language. It answers the following questions: What does the Greek text say? What does it mean? What problems might I have translating it and how might I solve those problems? It answers these questions by providing the Greek text, example English translations, notes about each Greek word or phrase, and a detailed grammatical analysis¹.

Types of Translations

The type of translation a person creates depends on what the priority is. If the priority is to preserve the order of the Greek words and phrases and to use words that give the literal meaning of the Greek, I call this a *Structure-Oriented Translation*. I created the GE-SOT as an example. If the priority is to convey the meaning of the Greek text, I call this a *Meaning-Oriented Translation*. I created the GE-MOT as an example. Some translations balance these two priorities, for example, the translation in *The Festal Menaion* by His Eminence Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary (TFM). I created the GEV as another example. Whether or not a translation is structure-oriented, or meaning-oriented, or falls in between, when you translate a hymn, it is important to create a translation that can be sung based on a melody. So, the translation sometimes has to be adjusted by using different words or a different word order. Fr. Seraphim Dedes' translation is an example.

About the Global English Translations

The GEV, GE-SOT and GE-MOT use the Oxford 3000² list of the most important English words. People who speak English as a second language should know these words. By trying to use only these 3000 words, the Global English translations have to adjust the translation in ways similar to what happens when people translate the Greek into non-Indoeuropean languages. These translations demonstrate three types of translation. The GE-SOT is the closest to the Greek word order and the literal meaning. It is used for the word by word discussion of the meaning and for the interlinear grammar and dependency diagram. The GE-MOT will help you understand the meaning. It does this by adding information that is implied by the Greek text. If you must translate from English, ask your Bishop which translation He prefers. If He is not available to ask, then use the GEV.

How to Use this Handbook

If you can, first read the Greek text. Then study the translations. Note what is similar and different. Make a first draft translation from the Greek or the GEV. Write down questions you have. Look for answers in the notes and grammar sections. Make changes to your translation based on what you read. Let other people read your translation. Ask questions to learn how they understand it. Make changes as needed. Adjust the translation to fit the melody it will be sung to.

¹Comments, corrections, and suggestions for improvement should be sent to Michael Colburn at m.colburn@ocmc.org.

²<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/about/oxford3000>.

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The Text and Translations

AGES Topic-Key: he.h.m2-VythouAnekalypse.text

he - Heirmologion (τό Εἰρμολόγιον), h - Heirmoi (Εἰρμοί), m2 - Mode 2 (Ἦχος β')

Source Text

If you know Greek, use this as your source text:

gr_gr_cog	Βυθοῦ ἀνεκάλυψε πυθμένα καὶ διὰ ξηρᾶς οἰκείους ἔλκει, ἐν αὐτῷ κατακαλύψας ἀντιπάλους, ὁ κραταῖός, ἐν πολέμοις Κύριος, ὅτι δεδόξασται.
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Global English Translations

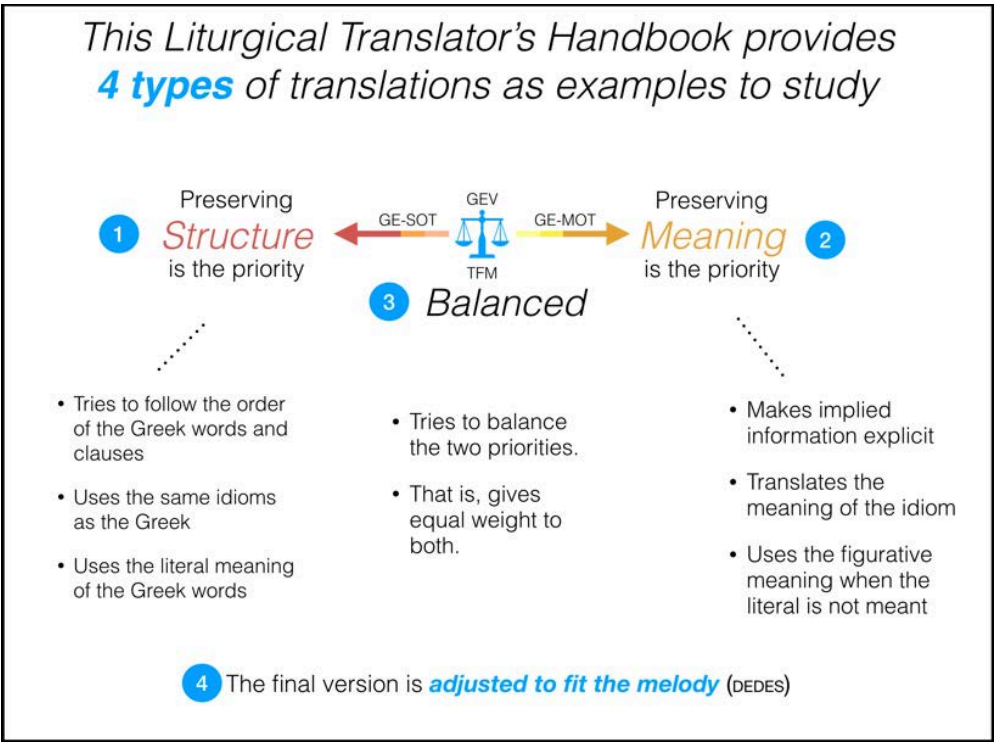
If you do not know Greek, you can use the en_uk_gev as your source text (model):

Structure Oriented (en_uk_gesot)	[He] uncovered [the] bottom of [the] deep, and brings [his] own through dry land, [he who] covered in it [those] opposing, the Lord, powerful in wars: for he has gained honour for himself.
Model (en_uk_gev)	The Lord, who is powerful in wars, uncovered the bottom of the deep sea, and brought His people across its dry land, but there He covered their enemies with its waters. For He has gained honour for Himself!
Meaning Oriented (en_uk_gemot)	The Lord, who is like a great soldier in a battle, exposed the bottom of the deep sea, and he brought his own people across the dry ground at the bottom of the sea; but there He covered their enemies with its water! Sing to the Lord, because He has gained honour for Himself!

Other Translations

en_uk_tfm	The Lord mighty in battle uncovered the foundations of the deep and led His servants on dry ground; but He covered their adversaries with the waters, for He has been glorified.
en_us_dedes	The Lord who is powerful in battle * once exposed the bottom of deep sea * and He drew His people through it as on dry land, * while there again He engulfed the enemies, * for He is glorified.

Note: some liturgical hymns originally used punctuation marks to indicate the boundary of metric feet. They do not have a grammatical role. They are called *scansion* symbols. In the modern version of source text or translations you might see asterisks (*) or forward slashes (/) used as scansion symbols.



Notes About the Text

Summary

This is the heirmos of the first ode of the Canon that St. Kosmos the Melodist wrote for the feast of Theophany. The writer asks us to remember what God did for the people of Israel long ago. And, he asks us to praise the Lord for what He did. The people of Israel were slaves in Egypt. They were forced to work for the people of Egypt. There was a man named Moses, who was one of the people of Israel. God used Moses to lead His people out of Egypt and take them to another land where they could be free. But when they left Egypt, the army of the people of Egypt followed them, to bring them back to Egypt. The people of Israel were trapped between the army and the Red Sea, which is very deep. God told Moses (Exod 14:4) that people would praise God because of the victory He would win over the leader of the people of Egypt (the Pharaoh). This is how He did it. God divided the water of the sea so that it opened up a path for the people to cross to the other side by walking on the ground that had been under the sea. When the army of Egypt tried to follow the people across to the other side, God closed the waters back up again. In that way, God destroyed the army of Egypt. Afterward, Moses told the people to sing a song to God to give Him praise and to thank Him. He said to them, "Sing to the Lord for He has gained great honour for Himself!". You can read this story in the book of Exodus in chapter 14. The Song of Moses is the first Biblical Ode. You can read it in Exodus 15:1-19.

References to the Bible

This liturgical text makes the following references to the Bible:

❖ **for he has gained honour for himself** • ὅτι δεδόξασται ➔ Exod 15:1 for he is very greatly glorified γὰρ δεδόξασται • Extratextual Reference • This is the first verse of the first ode. The first ode always refers to the first Biblical ode, the Song of Moses, found in Exod 15. The Song of Moses starts with the words, *Let us sing to the Lord, for gloriously he has glorified himself; horse and rider he threw into the sea*. NETS. God glorified Himself by rescuing the people of Israel when He drowned the Egyptian army (*horse and rider he threw into the sea*). The response of the people of Israel was to *sing to the Lord*. The writer of the hymn refers to this with the words *for He has gained honour for Himself*. The writer of the hymn is reminding his readers that we are to sing to the Lord because of His glorious works.

Discussion

The notes are sorted based the order of words in the en_uk_gesot version of the text. English quotations from the Bible are from the World English Bible British Edition (WEBBE) unless otherwise stated.

❖ **[He] uncovered** • ἀνεκάλυψε • MEANING: The Greek word ἀνεκάλυψε is from ἀνα- *un-* + καλύπτω *to cover*. It is the opposite of κατακαλύπτω *to cover* used later in the verse. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➔ Isa 26:21 disclose (uncover) • ἀνακαλύψε.

❖ **[the] bottom** • πυθμένα • MEANING: The bottom of the sea is the ground or rock which is beneath the water of the sea.

❖ **of [the] deep** • Βυθοῦ • MEANING: The Greek noun *βυθός* means *the depth* (of something). In this context, it means the *depth of the sea* or the *deep sea*. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: If your language has a word for *depth*, and it can mean the sea, then you should use that word. If your language does not use *depth* or *the deep* to mean the sea, you should translate it using your language's word for sea.

❖ **and** • καὶ • GRAMMAR: This is a coordinating conjunction. It coordinates the verb *uncovered* with the verb *leads*.

❖ **brings** • ἔλκει • MEANING: Lexicons such as *LSJ* translate *ἐλκέω* as *to drag*. But, in the context of what God did as recorded in Exodus, the meaning is that God brings his people across the bottom of the sea, not that God dragged them. Nearly all English translations use the word *leads* or *led* as the translation in this verse. • GRAMMAR: The verb here is in the present tense. It is probably a historical present, about which *Smyth:1883* says, "In lively or dramatic narration the present may be used to represent a past action as going on at the moment of speaking or writing." Fritz 2015 quotes Wackernagel 1920 as saying that in some cases, the historical present makes the event vivid and the listener "becomes a direct witness of what has happened in the past." • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: Regarding the tense of the verb, note that all our English model translations have used the past tense instead of the present. However, you should think about how people tell stories in your language. Do they ever switch the tense from the past to the present or some other form? Why do they do this? What is the effect? If the reason is to make the important part of the story vivid or help the listener feel that he or she is part of the event, then you should consider using this technique in your translation.

❖ **[his] own** • οἰκείους • MEANING: The Greek word means *belonging to the household*. It can refer to the things, servants, or family that live in a household. It can refer to anything that is part of a household: the things in the house, the servants, the family, etc. In this case, it is referring to the people who are members of God's household, that is, the people of Israel. • REFERS TO GROUP ⇒ Jews: The people in this hymn are the people of Israel, the Jews, who were being led by God from their captivity in Egypt to the land God promised to give them. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: The Greek word was translated into English by GEV-SOT as *his own*, by the GEV and HTM as *his people* and by the TFM as *his servants*. If your language has a word that means *that which belongs to a household* and it can refer to the people of the household, you should use that word. Otherwise translate it either as *his people* or *his servants*. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ⇒ Gal 6:10 household • οἰκείους.

❖ **through dry land** • διὰ ξηρᾶς • MEANING: The *dry land* refers to the bottom of the sea, which became dry after the water that had covered it was removed by God. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ⇒ Exod 14:16 the dry land • τὸ ξηρόν.

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❖ **[he who] covered** • κατακαλύψας • MEANING: The Greek word is from κατὰ over- + καλύπτω *to cover* and means *to cover over, to cover up*. It is the opposite of ἀνακαλύπτω *to uncover*, which is used earlier in the verse. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➡ Exod 14:28 covered • ἐκάλυψεν.

❖ **in it** • ἐν αὐτῷ • GRAMMAR: The pronoun αὐτῷ (*it*) refers to the water of the sea. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: When you translate αὐτῷ as a pronoun into your language, do people understand that it means *the sea*? If not, you can replace the pronoun with a noun. Note that this is what some English translations did: *the waters* (TFM), *the deep* (HTM), *its waters* (GEV, GEV-MOT).

❖ **[those] opposing** • ἀντιπάλους • MEANING: The Greek word is an adjective and literally means *a person who wrestles against you*, that is *a person who tries to force you down to the ground*. But, here it means an *opposing person*, a person who opposes you and is fighting against you by any way he can. • REFERS TO GROUP ➡ Egyptians: Those who were opposing the people of Israel were the soldiers of the army of Egypt who were chasing them. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: Based on Osborn and Hatton 1999, three possible translations are *their enemies*, or *those who hated them*, or *those who opposed them*. Although the Greek word is not the same in the Septuagint, see Exod 15:7 in the Bible in your language and look for a word or phrase that means *someone who fights against you*.

❖ **the Lord** • Κύριος • MEANING: When the word κύριος is used as a title of a person, it means that he or she is a person *having power* or *authority over* other people (LSJ) or *one who gives commands* (LN:198912.9). • REFERS TO GOD ➡ God the Son: The Eastern Orthodox liturgical texts identify the *Lord* as the *Son of God*. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: LN:198912.9 suggest using a word that means *chief* or *leader*. If such a word cannot be used in your language as a title for God, they suggest using a phrase, such as *God our chief* or *God the one who commands us*. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➡ Exod 15:19 the Lord • κύριος.

❖ **powerful in wars** • κραταιός ἐν πολέμοις • MEANING: The writer of the hymn is saying that God has power that is like the power of a man who can defeat his enemies when they fight him. • ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: One way to translate this is, *who is like a man powerful in war*.

❖ **for he has gained honour for himself** • ὅτι δεδόξασται • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➡ Exod 14:17 I will get myself honour • ἐνδοξασθήσομαι .



Grammar

Interlinear Text

This section provides information about the grammar of words (that is, the morphology) ³. The Greek words appear in the same order as they do in the source text.

1	Βυθοῦ	2	ἀνεκάλυψε	3	πυθμένα	4	καὶ				
	of.[the].deep		[He].uncovered		[the].bottom		and				
	NOUN.SG.M.GEN		VERB.3.SG.AOR.ACT.IND		NOUN.SG.M.ACC		CONJ				
	βυθός		ἀνακαλύπτω		πυθμήν		καὶ				
5	διὰ	6	ξηρᾶς	7	οἰκείους	8	ἔλκει	9	,		
	through		dry.land		[his].own		leads		,		
	PREP		NOUN.SG.F.GEN		ADJ.PL.M.ACC		VERB.3.SG.PRS.ACT.IND		PM		
	διὰ		ξηρά		οἰκεῖος		ἔλκω		,		
10	ἐν	11	αὐτῷ	12	κατακαλύψας	13	ἀντιπάλους				
	in		it		[he.who].covered		opponents				
	PREP		PRON.SG.M.DAT		PTCP.ACT.AOR.M.SG.NOM		NOUN.PL.M.ACC				
	ἐν		αὐτῷ		κατακαλύπτω		ἀντίπαλος				
14	,	15	ὁ	16	κραταιός	17	,	18	ἐν	19	πολέμοις
	,		the		powerful		,		in		wars
	PM		ART.SG.M.NOM		ADJ.SG.M.NOM		PM		PREP		NOUN.PL.M.DAT
	,		ὁ		κραταιός		,		ἐν		πόλεμος
20	Κύριος	21	,	22	ὅτι	23	δεδόξασται	24	.		
	Lord		,		for		he has gained honour for himself		.		
	NOUN.SG.M.NOM		PM		CONJ		VERB.3.SG.PFV.PASS.IND		PM		
	κύριος		,		ὅτι		δοξάζω		.		



³You can read about Greek grammar at <https://ancientgreek.pressbooks.com>.

Dependency Diagram

A dependency diagram shows the syntax of the text. *Syntax* means *the grammatical relationship between words*. It shows the relationships based on dependency grammar⁴. The order of each Greek word in the diagram is based on the word it depends on⁵. It appears indented and after the word it depends on. The first word in the diagram is the root, that is, the starting point of the dependencies.

- | -2 root **ἀνεκάλυψε** [He].uncovered VERB.3.SG.AOR.ACT.IND **ἀνακαλύπτω**
 - | -3 obj **πυθμένα** [the].bottom NOUN.SG.M.ACC **πυθμὴν**
 - | -1 nmod **Βυθοῦ** of.[the].deep NOUN.SG.M.GEN **βυθός**
 - | -8 conj **ἔλκει** leads VERB.3.SG.PRS.ACT.IND **ἔλκω**
 - | -4 cc **καὶ** and CONJ **καὶ**
 - | -6 obl **ξηρᾶς** dry.land NOUN.SG.F.GEN **ξηρὰ**
 - | -5 case **διὰ** through PREP **διὰ**
 - | -7 obj **οἰκείους** [his].own ADJ.PL.M.ACC **οἰκέϊος**
 - | -20 nsubj **Κύριος** Lord NOUN.SG.M.NOM **κύριος**
 - | -12 acl **κατακαλύψας** [he.who].covered PTCP.ACT.AOR.M.SG.NOM **κατακαλύπτω**
 - | -9 punct , , PM ,
 - | -11 obl **αὐτῷ** it PRON.SG.M.DAT **αὐτῷ**
 - | -10 case **ἐν** in PREP **ἐν**
 - | -13 obj **ἀντιπάλους** opponents NOUN.PL.M.ACC **ἀντίπαλος**
 - | -15 det **ὁ** the ART.SG.M.NOM **ὁ**
 - | -16 amod **κραταιός** powerful ADJ.SG.M.NOM **κραταιός**
 - | -14 punct , , PM ,
 - | -17 AuxX , , PM ,
 - | -19 nmod **πολέμοις** wars NOUN.PL.M.DAT **πόλεμος**
 - | -18 case **ἐν** in PREP **ἐν**
 - | -23 parataxis **δεδόξασται** he has gained honour for himself VERB.3.SG.PFV.PASS.IND **δοξάζω**
 - | -21 punct , , PM ,
 - | -22 mark **ὅτι** for CONJ **ὅτι**
 - | -24 punct . . PM .



⁴See <http://universaldependencies.org>

⁵depends on means is governed by or subordinate to.

Abbreviations

3	third person
ACC	accusative
ACT	active
ADJ	adjective
AOR	aorist
ART	article
AuxX	comma
CONJ	conjunction
DAT	dative
F	feminine
GEN	genitive
IND	indicative
M	masculine
NOM	nominative
NOUN	noun
PASS	passive
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PM	punctuation mark
PREP	preposition
PRON	pronoun
PRS	present
PTCP	participle
SG	singular
VERB	verb

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acl	clausal modifier of noun (adjectival clause)
amod	adjectival modifier
case	case marking
cc	coordinating conjunction
conj	conjunct
det	determiner
en_uk_gemot	GE-MOT Notes and Translations by Dr. Michael Colburn
en_uk_gesot	GE-SOT Notes and Translations by Dr. Michael Colburn
en_uk_gev	GEV Notes and Translations by Dr. Michael Colburn
en_uk_tfm	The Festal Menaion - Mother Mary and Metropolitan Kallistos
en_us_dedes	Translations by Fr. Seraphim Dedes
gr_gr_cog	Commonly used Orthodox Greek text
mark	marker
nmod	nominal modifier
nsubj	nominal subject
obj	object
obl	oblique nominal
parataxis	parataxis
punct	punctuation
root	root



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