THE HEBREW TEXT OF JOEL AS REFLECTED IN THE VULGATE

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The arguments in favour of counting Jerome's Vulgate among the witnesses to the text of the Hebrew Bible need not be repeated here.¹ Jerome was acquainted with Hebrew text-forms which to some degree deviated from the one we have before us.² If we can retrieve such variants, they deserve to be recorded even when they seem to be intrinsically inferior or due to scribal error.

In Jerome's Vulgate,³ the distinction between arbitrary renderings of the translator and genuine textual variants can

¹ Cf. the present author's articles in Textus IV (1964), VII (1970), JQR LXXVI (1974) and the bibliography given there.

² C.M. Cooper, JBL 69 (1950), 233 remarks on Jerome's Psalter: "(It) rests on a Hebrew text that is half-way between its early situation as reflected in the LXX and its final fixation in the MT."

³ In the present context, the term 'Vulgate' (V) refers to the books of the OT only. The linguistic character of the translation of the Apocrypha and the New Testament is very different. But also Jerome's translation of the OT is far from uniform: in the Prophets it is rather literal in distinction from the historical books. This makes the translation of the Prophets especially valuable for textual criticism. - V is quoted according to R. Weber, ed. Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem (Stuttgart 1969).
be achieved with relative ease. Being the creation of one man, this version offers many opportunities for the discernment of translational procedures. Moreover, Jerome's writings include numerous remarks on his translation. However, these have to be used *cum grano salis*. Jerome's translation technique was not consistent, and his letters and commentaries were not necessarily produced simultaneously with the translation. His translation of the book of Joel (ca. 392) antedated this commentary (ca. 407) by approximately 15 years. It is not reasonable to assume that Jerome was then able to remember correctly why he had chosen a certain rendition fifteen years earlier. Yet, used with caution, the evidence of the Vulgate and remarks in the commentary, can contribute to the verification of variants.


5 BH (R. Kittel et al., *Biblia Hebraica*, 12th. ed. Stuttgart, 1961) and BHS (K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, Stuttgart 1969), very rarely adduce V as textual witness. In the book of Joel they do so only in two instances where V supports G (1:15; 2:23). - In the following textual analysis, Jerome's commentary is quoted from Vallarsi's first edition (1734-42) of Jerome's complete works. Volume vi contains the commentary on Joel, with a Latin rendition of G. We quote this rendition because it reflects the text-form of G which Jerome had before him, and because it brings into sharp relief agreements and divergences between V and G.
In the first place, such verification disproves any unwarranted assumption of a textual divergence. This should be briefly exemplified.

1:6  
MT: 
V: et molares eius ut catuli leonis
A reading מכולת לו has been suggested. Contrary to appearance, V should not be adduced as corroborative evidence. The addition of the particle ut is not exceptional, and indeed occurs in the preceding clause:

1:15  
MT: 
V: a a a
This is not a triple exclamation as BHS interprets it. The Latin graphemes a a a constitute a usual way of translating the Hebrew interjection (or rather mirroring it, graphically or phonetically); cf. Jer. 1:6, 14:13; Ez. 14:20, 21:5.

6 Cf. K. Marti, Das Dodekapropheton (KHC XIII, Tübingen 1904), 119. Symmachus renders the clause — καὶ αἱ μύλαι ὡς λέοντος, while Aquila adheres to the MT — καὶ μύλαι σκύμνου αὐτῷ.

7 As against G: dentes eius leonis.

8 BHS merely annotates: "G* V ter S bis", whereas BH had preferred the assumed reading: "G V οἶμοι οἶμοι οἶμοι; prb sic l". See also Talmon-Tov, pp. 13-14.
1:18 MT: נָשַׁם
V: disperierunt
There is no need for assuming a reading נָשַׁם. Other occurrences of the same Hebrew root are rendered similarly: interibunt (Hos. 10:2; Ez. 6:6), deficiatis (Hos. 5:15).

1:20 MT: גֶּבֶנֶת הַמֹּת שָׁה הָעֵרָו אָלִילָן
V: sed et bestiae agri quasi area sitiens imbrem suspexerunt ad te
One may be inclined to look for an apparently missing Hebrew equivalent of the clause quasi area sitiens imbrem. However, the meaning which Jerome ascribed to the root militates against any textual emendation. He derived its connotation from the vocable עֵרוֹדָה which he rendered areola (Cant. 5:13; 6:2) or area (Ez. 17:10), and attempted to harmonize it with the context. He translated Ps. 42:2 MT: כָּכָל הַעֵרָו עֵלָּא אֱפֹקָר מִמֹּת Ps. h.: sicut areola praeparata ad irrigiones aurum, whereas the Psalterium gallicanum10 based upon the Septuagint, reads quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aurum. Thus, the

10 Three translations of the Psalter are connected with the name of Jerome: the Psalterium romanum (hardly more than a revision of older Latin versions), the Psalterium gallicanum (based upon Origen's Hexapla) and the Psalterium iuxta hebraeos (= Ps.h., made from the Hebrew text). Since the 9th century, the Ps. gallic. became the 'Vulgate Psalter' in most mss. J.A. Bewer states that V translates Ps. 42:2 desiderat (Obadiah and Joel, ICC 1911, 92). This is misleading since only the translations based upon the Greek text exhibit desiderat. Therefore, nothing can be deduced from it as to Jerome's understanding of the Hebrew word.
clause under review turns out to be a paraphrastic translation of "with", and the concluding words *suspeserunt ad te* are an explanatory gloss on the residuary "in". It is inaccurate to state that Jerome's understanding of the root רָעָה, as if derived from "in accordance with Aquila". It is true, though, that Aquila also had derived the meaning of the verbal form in the verse under review from the noun, as Jerome remarked (vi, 183): "hoc enim uno verbo signicat Aquila dicens ἐπρασῶθην. πρασοῦσθαι (cf. πρασαξεῖσθαι in Ps. 42:2) derives from πρασα = 'a garden-bed' i.e. רָעָה. However, the absurd Greek neologism does not convey the idea expressed in the Latin clause which is an ingenious combination of 'garden-plot' = רָעָה and 'to desire' = רָעָב. Jerome's explanatory clause possibly reflects an interpretation offered by one of his Hebrew teachers.

2:23 MT: מַחְלֹן הַמַּחֲלֹן (בראשית) Only the Clementine edition reads: ...sicut in principio. The reliable mss and the lemma to Jerome's commentary (vi, 197) omit the word sicut. Thus, V confirms the MT, and the instruction in BH "lege cum GS V" is erroneous, in respect to V.

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11 Or else, we might consider the Latin clause to have resulted from a double conflation: רָעָב agri and area, רָעָה sitiens imbrebrem and suspeserunt. Yet in view of Jerome's translation of Ps. 42:2, this assumption is less convincing.

12 Bewer, *op. cit.* In general, it can be said that Jerome consulted his Greek predecessors and learned from them. But ultimately he made his own decision. *E.g.* (vi, 180): "pro coetu in hebraico legitur ASARA, quod Symmachus synodem, Aquila diem collectae interpretatus est". V has coetus for רָעָה, against Aquila, Symmachus and G (curatio).
Some mss and the Clementine edition have *servos meos*. The pronoun seems to be an interpolation, inserted in accordance with Acts 2:17. Codex Amiatinus and other important mss omit it. The Clementine wording does not prove the existence of a variant reading since the Latin pronoun substitutes sometimes for the Hebrew article; *e.g.* Is. 18:5; 19:3; Jer. 21:7; 34:11.

MT: יְהוָה וַתֵּשְׁפַתּוּ V: *servos et ancillas suas*.

II

We can now turn to what may be deemed to be genuine variants.

A. Sense-division

Jerome was much aware of the need to divide the text into smaller sense-units, and of the exegetical implication of this procedure. He maintained that the prophetic books should be written *'per cola et commata'*; although they were not composed in metric (*Prol. in Isaia*). These colons and commas should not be equated with modern punctuation marks, but rather indicate the breaking up of a passage into shorter lines and paragraphs according to sense (*Sinnzeile*). The older mss of V exhibit such a graphic arrangement which was copied into modern critical editions. Though there is no assurance that Jerome's

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13 Against Bewer, op. cit., 126. This is one of the best commentaries in respect to text criticism, but Bewer makes the mistake of quoting Jerome's Latin rendition of G as V. *E.g.*, p. 86: "At the end (of verse 1:14) G adds ἐκτενῶς, V vehementer". Clearly incorrect! Similarly, on p. 106, V is wrongly quoted *illustris and sufficiens* for מִדְּרֶס and מִלְטִים (2:11) respectively. But this is G! V has *terribilis* and *sustinebit eum* respectively.

14 Cf. further *Prol. in Ez.*, *Iob, Chron. Busebii*, ep. 30 and numerous remarks in his commentaries, *e.g.* on Jer. 8:17, 18 et al.
original intention was preserved in every instance, we have a generally reliable guide in the matter. For easier reference, the divergent sense divisions in the MT and in the retroverted V are here given in juxtaposition:

MT

V (Sinnzeile)

1:14, 14

1:5

16

15

The *athnah* is also disregarded in 2:2, 17, 21; 4:8.

The lemmata of Jerome's commentary sometimes show how he divided the text, occasionally differing from the MT: One half

15 In this case, the lemmata of the commentary (vi, 179-180; on this question, see below) exhibit a sense-division which tallies with the MT.

16 This division is confirmed by Jerome's exegetical remark (vi, 173): "et ululate...omnes qui bibitis vinum in dulcedine, sive in ebrietate. dulcia enim sunt vitia etc.". G has a similar sense-division but adds a subject - *εὐφροσύνη ψαλτήριον* (cf. 1:16) to the fragmentary clause ζήσει ζεύγος.
of a verse is attached to the first lemma, the second to the subsequent one, with the two being separated by a lengthy exposition. Thus:

3:5a והיהו כל אשך תושך כשם ה', כמלת...
(Exposition)

3:5b כי הנה אתי ואחרותלים...

4:18a וכול אפריקת חודה כי לזר מית...
(Exposition)

4:18b והמלך יבחה ה', יצא...

B. Vocalization

Jerome worked from an unvocalized Hebrew text.17 Occasionally his comments imply a vocalization which diverges from the MT. E.g. he remarked (vi, 170) on the word בִּרְאוֹי (1:4, 2:25; Am. 4:9) which he consistently rendered eruca ('caterpillar, cankerworm'): "erucam quae hebraice GEZEM, graece dicitur κάψων". Jerome's transliterations are admittedly a very complicated matter.18 We have to take into account the objective difficulty of representing Semitic linguistic items by Latin

17 W. Nowack, Die Bedeutung des Hieronymus für die alttestamentliche Textkritik (Göttingen 1875), 43.
graphic symbols,\(^\text{19}\) the influence of Jerome's predecessors upon him, and his intention in transliterating a Hebrew word. He did not dwell on niceties of the Hebrew vocabulary or grammar, but merely indicated the vocable upon which he wished to comment. Copyists subsequently introduced mistakes. Therefore, inaccuracy and inconsistency are to be expected. We find, e.g. for ישן - IS and HIS, for רבש - BASAR and BOSOR etc. Yet, transliterations may contain reliable evidence. There is no confusion between the noun classes qatal and qatal. Jerome distinguished clearly between the vocalization of מַלְאָכָה and מַלַע (vi, 640): "in hebraeo tres literae positae sunt, DALETH BETH RES absque ulla vocali, quae si legantur DABAR 'verbum' significat; si DEBER, 'pestem'". True, he also stated on מֵדָא (Ez. 1:14): "quod hebraico sermone dicitur BEZEC" (v, 15, comm. ad loc.), but this is not necessarily incorrect. The Massoretic vocalization reflects only one possible phonetic realization of this hapax legomenon, and the place-name is indeed מֵדָא (Jud. 1:4; 1 Sam. 11:8).

Therefore, in the case under review, Jerome may have preserved a divergent vocalization - מֵדָא, instead of MT: מֵדָא.

2:3

MT: לֶפֶן וְאֵלֶּה ָּשׁ V: ante faciem eius ignis vorans
G: ante eum consumens ignis

Since in his translation of the prophets, Jerome quite strictly adhered to the Hebrew syntactical sequence, we assume that the

\(^{19}\) Thus 2:8 MT: יהל becomes SALA (vi, 187). On the strange rendition of this word in V - fenestras, cf. M. Rahmer, Hieronymus' Commentar zu den zwölf kleinen Propheten (Berlin 1902) ad loc.
reversed word order reflects the reading - לַחֲמֶה אֲכָלָה. Also of interest is the substitution of a Latin participle for the Hebrew finite verb. The frequent combination of ושא and אֲכָלָה is translated by ignis and a finite verb-form in Joel 1:19, 20: ignis comedit, cf. Jer. 19:14, 21:14, 50:32; Ez. 19:12; Nah. 3:13; Ps. 78:63 et al. On the other hand, the expression ושא is rendered ignis consumens or devorans in Deut. 4:24, 9:3; Is. 29:6, 30:30 et al. Indeed, in Joel 1:5 we find MT: ושא אֲכָלָה, V: ignis devorantis stipulam. This proves that whether or not an object is mentioned, a Latin participle renders a Hebrew one. Of course, such rules are of a statistical not of an absolute validity. However, the combination of two divergences in V to Joel 2:3 points to an underlying reading: לַחֲמֶה ושא אֲכָלָה.

2:23 MT: לַחֲמֶהּ לַכְלָתָן וּשָּׁא V: et descendere faciet ad vos imbrem G: et pluit vobis imbrem

Most Hebrew verb-forms in this passage (23א: בֵּית, 24: רֶשֶׁם, 25: וּמְלָאת, וּמְלָאות, וּמְלָאָה, וּמְלָאָה) are ambiguous, and can be interpreted as either promising fertility or else describing a situation of fertility and restoration. In v. 26 the reference is to the future. The translator was compelled to make a decision:

20 The preferred translation of a Hebrew participle which qualifies a noun is a Latin participle, e.g.: Gen. 3:5; Ex. 20:5, 6; Is. 16:2, 28:1, 15 et al.

21 Unless, of course, the explanatory accent - וּמְלָאת which fixes the tense unequivocally is taken into account.
G explains v. 23 as referring to the past; from v. 24 on it uses the future tense. One Hebrew form in the above clause - רָוִי - unequivocally points to the past. Jerome, however, postulated the future tense, reading - רוּוִי רָוִי.

4:11 MT: שמחת אל הרבים
V: ibi occumbere faciet dominus robustos tuos
G: illuc mansuetos sit pugnator

Jerome did not distinguish between different classes of weak verbs and was prone to confuse them. Thus, he rendered משחא (from משיח) - percutiet (Jer. 21:13). Therefore, it is inaccurate to say that he derived משיח from משיח. However, he clearly did not take the verb as an imperative; he did not refer 'thy heroes' to the holy host but to Israel's enemies. Cf. his exegetical remark (vi, 212): "ideo enim gentes adversariae israeli parantur ad pugnam...(et) congragantur ut occumbere dominus faciat robustos earum". The underlying reading seems to be - משיח (or משיח).

22 However, the commentary has (vi, 199): "et descendere fecit ad vos pluvias". - On the problem of grammatical tenses in this passage cf. Hans W. Wolff, Dodekapropheton 2 (BK XIV/2 Neukrichen-Vluyn 1969), pp. 67-70.

23 Bewer, op. cit., 139.
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C. Consonants

2:11 MT: כלharma melaghar
כל עזום והשד pubbir

V: quia multa sunt nimis castra eius
quia fortia et facientia verbum eius

G: quoniam multa sunt nimis castra eius
quoniam fortia opera sermonum illius

G's rendition of the second clause is based upon a divergent text, something like כל עזומים ומשלימים דבר(ים). V is closer to the MT but exhibits the noteworthy insertion of the copulative et. 24 Also, in the case under review, the added copula is confirmed by the wording of the commentary (vi, 187): "haec autem multa castra, et innumerabilia fortia sunt nimis et facientia verbum illius". When Jerome added the conjunction it is frequently a question of style and does not result in a substantial change of meaning. 25 But in the present verse the meaning was changed: from - 'powerful is the executor of His word' to - '(His host)...is powerful and executes His word'. 26

24 The copula indeed is frequently added in V, sometimes due to later copyists (the mss differ from one another in this respect). Cf. the critical editions on Is. 9:2, 5; 14:7; Jer. 9:23; 15:7; 31:6; 51:57. In addition to the Biblia Sacra mentioned above, also the new Benedictine Vulgate edited at St. Jerome's monastery in Rome, is at our disposal for these books. The Dodekapropheton has not yet been published, but the Stuttgart Biblia Sacra generally exhibits a reliable text, though with a much less informative apparatus.

25 E.g. 2:8.

26 Symmachus translates: δὴ ὁ ἱερός οὗ πολλαὶ τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ, i.e. כל עזומים ומשלימים דבר.
It is not likely that Jerome introduced such a drastic change without the authority of a Hebrew text. Thus we may assume that he had the following reading in his Vorlage:

1:7  MT: שָׁם גָפִּי לֵשָׁה וְהַאָוֶתִי לָקָּפֵה
V: ponit vineam meam in desertum
et ficum meam decorticavit
G: ponit vineam meam in dissipatioinem
et ficos meas in confractioinem

The rendition of the nominal form - לָקָּפֵה by means of a finite verb - decorticavit, deserves our attention. When such a rare procedure occurs the reasons are easily detectable. E.g. Jer. 30:16 MT: והיה לֵשָׁה, V: vastabuntur. The Latin verbal form reflects גָּפִּי; the other five occurrences of לֵשָׁה in the Bible are rendered by a noun - direptio. Is. 53:11 MT: עָפָר, V: pro eo quod laboravit; the verbal form is meant to reflect the contextual meaning of the prepositional מִ. In Joel 1:7, there is no obvious reason for the change from a nominal into a verbal structure. The Latin wording destroys the parallelism (contrast G) and alters the syntactical construction.²⁷ Jerome hardly would have strayed that far from the Hebrew structure without a textual basis. We may suppose that he had before him

²⁷ Needless to say that V generally preserves the syntactical parallelism, e.g. Micha 6:16, and may even introduce a parallel structure; in 2:3 one participle - vorans - attracted another - exurens.
the reading — שֵׁעַר הָאֵם (cf. שֶׁפֶם in the sequence).²⁶

The following two instances are questionable.

The variant — וַתְּכַבֵּזוּ מַשְׁקַלֵם — recommends itself.²⁹ However, the many
imperatives in the context (vss. 9, 10, 11, 13) may have
influenced V.

4:4  MT: כל הָעֵרְצֵה פָּלְשָׁת  V: et omnis terminus palestinorum.
Generally the Latin pl. termini denotes the territory of a
people (Jer. 31:16; Ez. 29:10; Zeph. 2:8), and would mirror
more faithfully the Hebrew form נַחַלַּת. The commentary indeed
reads (vi, 208): "et palaestinorum terminos" and quotes
(ib. 210): "GALILOTH...Symmachus terminos transtulit". In
Jos. 13:2; 22:10 נַחַלַּת is rendered in the pl. In Joel 4:4,
Jerome perhaps had before him a defective spelling — נַחַלִּים,
and took it as a sing. * נַחַלִּים.³⁰

²⁶ On the meaning of שֵׁעַר — decorticare, cf. M. Jastrow, A
Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud etc. (repr. 1950),
1425s; and Hos. 10:7 MT: סָעַר, G: φρέγανος = 'a dry stick,
firewood'.

43:9, 49:18 MT: וַתְּכַבֵּזוּ, V: congregati sunt. — In view of 4:12
MT: נַחַלַּת, it hardly can be said that the context
necessitated the imperative.

³⁰ The p. form GALILOTH of the commentary does not give
evidence to the Hebrew form which Jerome knew at the earlier
date of his translation. — Aquila also rendered נַחַלִּים by a
pl. (vi, 210): "GALILOTH quod Aquila ἐθνὸς...transstulit. ἐθνὸς
autem, id est tumulos arenarum, referamus ad littora palaestini-
nae etc."
D. Pronominal Suffixes

The mss evidence for additions and omissions of pronouns is complicated and conflicting.\(^{31}\) Only after retrieving in each instance Jerome's original text, one may assume that a variant reading could have resulted from a diverging Vorlage.

1:16 MT: 
ונֶֽאָלָּא ֜נֵגֶֽד ֚עִידְּנָּה
אַכְּלָה ֖נְכִּרָה ֖מָכֵֽי ֗אָלַּחְּנָּה

V: numquid non coram oculis vestris
alimenta perierunt de domo dei nostri.

Some mss and the lemma of Jerome's commentary (vi, 181) exhibit a variant reading: "...oculis nostris..." which resembles the MT. LXX reads: τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ὑψῖν...ἐξοῦ ὑμᾶν, i.e. עִינִיֵיכָם...אֵלַחְצִים (It should be noted that Jerome quotes the Greek version, in Latin translation (vi, 181): "ante oculos vestros...de domo dei nostri"; but this reading does not have the support of the important mss). The Latin reading vestris is to be preferred: it has the support of the most reliable mss and constitutes the lectio difficilior. For these reasons it was rightly adopted in the critical edition. When Jerome wrote his commentary at a much later stage, he clearly was acquainted with a Hebrew text similar to MT: he corrected the lemma and the correction found its way into several mss. We may presume a reading – וַיִּבְדֵּ֣א עִינִיֵיכָ‍ם for the Vorlage of V.

Behind the textual phenomenon stands the question to what extent the prophet identified with his listeners whom he

\(^{31}\) Cf. above 3:2, and the critical editions on 1:8; 2:26.
reproved. We also may ask whether transmitters of the text would take care to preserve indications of such an identification or dissociation. In other words, the prophet may speak to his audience about 'our forefathers' or 'your forefathers'; about 'our God' or 'your God'. The locus classicus is Jeremiah chapter 42, where the viewpoint of the prophet and of the audience are involved, resulting in brusque changes in the use of the pronoun: v. 2 MT: אֲלָהִים, V: deum tuum; MT: אֲלָהִים, V: deus tuus; v. 5 MT: אֲלָהִים, V: deus tuus; v. 6 MT: אֲלָהִים, V: dei nostri; v. 21 MT: אֲלָהִים, V: dei vestri. V reflects faithfully the alternations in the original (on vss. 13 and 20 see below). The adherence of V to alternating pronouns in the Hebrew text can be illustrated from

Joel 1:13 MT: מָשָׂרַתָי אֲלָהִים...מְמוֹנָה אֲלָהִים
V: ministri dei mei...de domo dei vestri
G: ministri dei...de domo dei vestri

Therefore, when V differs from MT in the use of a pronoun, we have reason to assume a divergent reading, as e.g. in Jer. 42:13
MT: אֲלָהִים...אֲלָהִים...אֲלָהִים, V: dei nostri; v. 20 MT: אֲלָהִים...אֲלָהִים...אֲלָהִים, V: deum nostrum...deum nostrum. Consequently, we propose that in Joel 1:16, V mirrors the reading

הָלוֹא נַגֵּד עִיּנוֹכַם אֶלֶל נָכְרָת
מִכְּחַ אֲלָהִים שָׁמָה וּגִדֶל

If this was the original wording, attempts at harmonization by a consistent use of the 1st pers. pl. (MT), or the 2nd pers. pl. (G) could be expected. In his commentary (vi, 181), Jerome avoided the complication by omitting the pronoun altogether: "ante oculos pereunt alimenta peccantium". [16]
One may be tempted to dismiss V as merely following G, but in 2:3 and in the concluding clause of 2:4 there are so many points of divergence that an uncritical acceptance of G by Jerome must be ruled out. Therefore, the Latin pl. pronoun versus the Hebrew sing. deserves our attention. V. 4 constitutes a grammatical juncture: before it the sing. is used — כלבון...אנחרון...לע... in 2:5; ויהז...על...לכלבון. The transition is differently located in different text traditions. MT places it at the caesura of v. 4 (cf. S), while V reflects a text which had it at the beginning of the verse (cf. LXX, T). In his commentary (vi, 189), Jerome seemed to be guided by a text closer to the MT: "nec est qui furorem eius possit evadere cuius crudelis spectus frementium equorum habebit similitudinem".

E. Lexical Variants

2:13 MT: ונהל על דעה
V: et praestabilis super malitia
G: et poenitens super malitia

2:3 V: ante faciem eius ignis vorans et post eum exures flamma quasi hortus voluptatis etc. G: ante eum consumens ignis et post eum flamma succensae sicut paradisus voluptatis etc.

2:4 MT: et quasi equites sic current
V: et sicut equites sic persecutionurs
G: et sicut equites sic persequentur

But v. 6 MT: כלבון, V: a facie eius.
The rendition of ננה by praestabilis is unusual. The standard translations of the frequent idiom (על הגרע) are: ignoscat (v. 14; Jonah 3:9, 4:2), poenitens (Jer. 18:8; 20:16; 26:3, 13, 19), misertus est (Am. 7:3, 6; Zech. 8:14), placatus est (Jer. 42:10). These renderings are semantically very similar, all denoting 'forgiveness'. On the other hand, praestabilis is a hapax legomenon in V, with a very different meaning - 'preeminent, excellent, exalted'. The adjective is derived from praestare which in V stands for רזה (Is. 31:3), ושם (Jud.11:37; 18:4), ובשון (Jos. 24:20). One may be inclined to explain the exceptional rendition in 2:13 by the translator's quest for variation, whereas in v. 14 the same Hebrew idiom recurs. However, a number of reasons militate against this explanation. When Jerome introduced stylistic variation, he generally did so at the second occurrence of the word in question; e.g. Hos. 8:11 MT: ננה, V: ad peccatum...ad delictum; Is. 24:8 MT: ושם...שם, V: gaudio...dulcedo, et al. In the case under review, the deviation from the usual procedure is found at the first occurrence, verse 2:13, while in the second the standard rendition (MT: ננה V: ignoscat) is used. Moreover, these variations differ semantically from the standard translation, and the pertinent idiom is repeated in some other passages mentioned above (Amos, Jonah and Jeremiah), without stylistic variation. Finally, in his commentary, Jerome did not avoid repetition of the word stem poenitere (vi, 191): "longo tempore nostram praestolatur poenitentiam et praestabilis sive poenitens super malitias, ut si nos egerimus super peccatis poenitentiam et ipsum poeniteat comminationis suae, et mala quae comminatus est nobis inferat...". It stands to reason that in
Joel 2:13 Jerome read a different word for MT דָּמָנ, which cannot be anymore retrieved with confidence. The conjecture may be offered that praestabilis reflects וֹדֶא הָיוָה (niph.) which replaced דָּמָנ by way of a lapsus calami.\(^{34}\)

4:4  
MT: וֹדֶא הָיוָה אֲתָם לִי  
V: verum quid vobis et mihi  
G: quid mihi et vobis\(^{35}\)

A short survey of parallels and contrasts is in order. The Hebrew phrase which must be taken to mean 'what is your importance for me, what have you to do with me', has some parallels. In V, a variety of paraphrastic renderings substitute for the Hebrew idiom. 2 Sam. 16:2 MT: מַה אֲלֵה לֵֽךְ, V: quid sibi volunt haec; Ez. 24:19 MT: מַה אֲלֵה לֵֽךְ, V: quid in his tibi velis; Esth. 8:1 MT: מַה אֲלֵה לֵֽךְ, V: quod esset patruus suus; et al.

As against this, the idiomatic expression ...ךָלָּךְ ...ךָלָּךְ is rendered literally: Jos. 22:24 MT: מַה לְכָּלָּךְ אֲלֵה, V: quid vobis et domino; Jud. 11:12 MT: מַה לֵֽךְ לֵֽךְ, V: quid mihi et tibi est; 2 Sam. 16:10 MT: מַה לְכָּלָּךְ לֵֽךְ, V: quid mihi et vobis est, et al.

Thus, it seems likely that Jerome's translation of the clause under review is based on the reading — וֹדֶא הָיוָה אֲתָם לִי.

\(^{34}\) Or else, the underlying faulty reading could be נַשָּׁב, וָשָׁב. As to ...ךָלָּךְ cf. Ps. 113:4.

\(^{35}\) The later Greek translators adhere to the MT: Aquila: καὶ το ὑμεῖς ἐμοὶ, Symmachus: ἀλλὰ καὶ το ὑμεῖς ἐμοὶ; Theodotion: καὶ ἐν ὑμεῖς ἐμοὶ.
Hebrew Text of Joel

4:10  MT:

V: infirmus dicat quia fortis ego sum

G: fortis dicat quia praevaleo ego

The introduction of a reported speech by quia constitutes a problem. In the NT this is indeed a frequent occurrence, reflecting the Greek ἵνα recitativum. Thus, the phenomenon causes no surprise in the Latin rendition of G in Joel 4:10. In V to the OT, we occasionally find the equivalent quoniam as an introduction of direct speech when the MT has כי, e.g. Gen. 4:23; 29:33. Generally, however, V omits the particle: cf. Gen. 21:30; 26:22; 29:32; Jos. 2:24 et al. We may therefore assume that Jerome would not have used this non-Latin construction — quia introducing direct speech — had he not been guided by a Hebrew Vorlage which exhibited the particle כי.