THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM

The Text-critical Use of the Septuagint

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The aim of the present paper is to analyse a central problem confronting an editor who intends to make use of the ancient versions of the Bible for text-critical purposes. Although some suggestions which may account for differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts are offered in the following pages, our case as a whole does not rest on the acceptability of this or that suggestion. What is discussed is rather the general problem of constructing a critical apparatus based on retroversion from different languages. Whether any particular interpretation advanced here will meet with approval or not, matters little.

The matter can be illustrated, of course, from each of the ancient versions. For two reasons have I chosen to base my argument on the Septuagint: because of its exegetical texture, which may be described as midways between the Peshat character of the Peshitta and the Derash features of the Targum; and because of the special position traditionally accorded to the Septuagint as the main "antagonist" of MT. Apart from a few comparative remarks I have based myself, therefore, on the Septuagint only.

The ideas outlined here are, perhaps, the logical continuation of my studies published in Text and Language. In attempting to translate my earlier results and ideas into editorial practice, I tried at the time to put forward a number of "theses". Amongst other points, I was concerned with the lack of objective criteria to help us in dealing with the many "mechanical" changes in the versions. On the one hand, the analysis of the material can justify the extreme position that the great majority of differences between our sources — those connected with the "linguistic dynamics" of the verse, such as the influence of parallelism, syntactical or grammatical normalization, harmonization, etc. — might be the spontaneous creation of each source, so that the occurrence of

1 These generalizing and certainly relative terms are not necessarily true for all the books of the Bible. The examples for the present inquiry deal exclusively with the book of Isaiah, which I propose to edit.

2 M.H. Goshen-Gottstein, Text and Language in Bible and Qumran, Jerusalem-Tel Aviv 1960 (henceforth TL). For the problems discussed here cf. especially the introduction, p. ix f.
what seems to be a common deviation of two sources from MT is in itself no necessary proof of textual connection (op. cit. pp. 45 f., 55 f.). Generally speaking, this would seem to indicate that, for instance, the faithful recording of the innumerable changes of number and person would drown the apparatus with a mass of alleged evidence, which by its very nature would always be inconclusive. In other words, most of these “grammatical” changes will almost never aid us should we attempt to draw conclusions from the apparatus towards a constitutio textus.

On the other hand, however, it stands to reason that a certain number of such differences may point to “real variants” which were, indeed, part of a Hebrew prototype. We possess no criterion for differentiating between these two types of outwardly identical grammatical changes. But we should be at least aware that we are in constant danger of “explaining away” variants which did exist in a Hebrew text.

In TL this kind of dilemma was mentioned mainly as regards slight linguistic changes, harmonizations etc. Problems of differences between the sources which seem to bear on the subject matter proper were left aside on purpose. To be sure, philological ἄριστα demands the same degree of exactitude, regardless of the inherent “importance” of the textual differences. But since the study of the ancient Bible versions is not only a text-critical exercise in its own right, we can hardly be satisfied with clarifying our attitude towards “grammatical variants” without asking ourselves whether the same kind of dilemma exists with regard to more “material” differences. Indeed, it can be said without exaggeration that most scholars are more interested in the evaluation of what appear to be differences of “content” between our ancient sources. Given the fact that the versions bear distinct exegetical character, the main problem is not to find a satisfactory notation for differences between singular and plural, or harmonized personal suffixes, however important these may be from the point of view of text-critical method or linguistic exactitude, but rather how to devise a procedure for disentangling and reconstructing “subject variants” from the exegetical texture of the version.

Furthermore, we must keep in mind that for practical reasons no project of a critical edition of the Bible which attempts to put before the reader all the evidence available, can possibly aspire to offer in addition a full-size commentary on each verse analysing each of the sources (cf. below, note 15).

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3 The textual differences as found in the biblical Qumran Scrolls have changed certain aspects of the problem and have taught us to exercise more caution. But criteria are still lacking, and no means of devising them are in sight. Cf. also TL pp. 55 f., 156 f. See now also the outspoken statement of Albright, CBQ 25 (1963), p. 1.
In other words, it is not enough for the editor to attempt an evaluation of the text-critical value of a version in any given instance. A system of notation must be devised to compress the necessary information into minimum space and the more or less fixed framework of a critical apparatus.  

To start with, it will be granted that there is a basic difference between an apparatus of the textual tradition in one language and one which attempts to retrovert readings from exegetical versions. Whereas the former type was developed with much methodological rigour within the realm of classical philology, the latter has practically remained the perpetual much-abused stepchild of biblical philology. It stands to reason, however, that in a *retrovertive* apparatus we can hardly ever exclude the possibility of our reconstruction of the *Vorlage* being erroneous. If the *Vorlage* itself could bear more than one meaning, the translator had to come to a decision as to the “true” sense. To be sure, from the point of view of the author he could be mistaken, but as a rule his translation is based on *one* particular interpretation, which usually reflects his main exegetical tradition.

The task of the textual critic is, in this case, to retrace the steps of the translator. But one major difference remains: attempting to rediscover the one-way path of the translator may cause us to stray in a labyrinth to which we possess no thread of Ariadne. To put it plainly: there is no retroversion without a residue of doubt, and what seems self-evident to one scholar may look like a house of cards to his fellow.

When discussing a similar dilemma with regard to the much easier question of linguistic changes, grammatical harmonizations, etc., I suggested using some system of *dual notation*: “We have to aim at a reasonably complete *objective* notation which enables the reader to come to a decision by himself. To this, however, the editor should add his *subjective* judgment as to which reading should be regarded as a “real variant”.  

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4 I need not stress that these considerations follow up a trend of thought about the duties of an editor which I started to express in *TL* xiii f., 199 f. However, the problem under consideration at present is different.

5 This is one of the reasons why I maintain that the different types of witnesses used for the planned edition must not be mixed up in *one* large apparatus and that the diplomatic edition of the text itself should be provided with critical apparatuses (in the plural). Cf. the statement *Textus* 1 (1960), p. 211.

6 There are, to be sure, a considerable number of “double translations” in our versions as well as other ingenious ways of hinting at a double meaning. Modern translators can solve the dilemma by adding footnotes.

7 *TL* p. xiii, and see especially note 19 there as to the technical possibilities. Cf. also below, note 19.
Reviewing the problem as a whole now, it would seem to me that the very terms *objective* and *subjective*, which then so readily suggested themselves, can be not only misleading but may, indeed, prejudice our whole discussion. For it may be assumed that any philologist who has witnessed with horror to what results the introduction of "subjective" judgment has often led — especially in the publication of *eclectic* texts (cf. *op. cit.* p. 199 f.) — will perforce use the terms *objective* and *subjective* with a strong emotive connotation.

In our special case the term *objective notation* could easily come to mean the notation of all the "readings" as retranslated from the versions. Those differences between MT and the version are, so to speak, "objectively" there if we retranslate from the Greek, etc., into the Hebrew. On the other hand, to say that these retroverted "readings" represent in reality no variants at all, would be only the "subjective" opinion of the editor. To put it more bluntly: the very terms may suggest to someone that, strictly speaking, only the "objective" retroversion deserves space in the apparatus, whereas the opposite suggestion, that such a retroverted variant is spurious, will be taken to represent only the editor's "subjective" prejudice, which might as well be left out of the apparatus completely.

I submit that such a position would be unjustified, and that it would play havoc with all textual criticism, if only for the reason that there can be no such thing as "objective retroversion". The large majority of retroversions — and practically all those of any exegetical interest — are by necessity "subjective", as witness literally every page of a standard handbook such as Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*. The true difference in this case is not between objective facts and subjective attempts to get rid of those alleged facts, but between what I shall call for lack of better terms *mechanical* and *interpretative* retroversion, both of which are in general equally "subjective".

The *mechanical* retroversion is a retranslation from Greek, etc., into Hebrew. If such a retranslation, with the help of the concordance, etc., happens to look somewhat like a certain Hebrew word in a given verse — which in that case may or may not happen to create some textual difficulty — some scholar is sure to suggest that we have detected a "variant" or even a "superior reading". The *interpretation*, on the other hand, might enter a counter-claim that appearances deceive, and that what looks at first blush like a variant is due to some exegetical, theological, linguistic, etc. tradition which the version followed. The fact that the defenders of the two opposing positions will call each other's procedure "subjective" does not render either of them "objective".

If this theoretical insight is correct, we must not shrink from drawing the consequences for the practice of textual criticism. An editor of a so-called "critical edition" who is content to restrict his apparatus to *mechanical* retro-
versions, not only neglects his duties, but by restricting himself to what he mistakenly holds to be the objective facts, he is bound to mislead his readers. It may so happen that some mechanical retroversion also turns out to be the "correct" interpretation. But any resulting reconstruction, as far as the user of the edition is concerned, has not been achieved thanks to any method, but by pure coincidence.

Paradoxical as our claim may sound, the only way for the editor to remain truly "objective" is to put before his readers both sides of the picture. The basic demand, that an editor should concentrate on presenting "objective" evidence, means in our case that it is his duty to note in the apparatus, as far as possible and to the best of his ability, both the mechanical and the interpretative side.

The editor who, on the other hand, mistakes mechanical for objective method and simply enters into his apparatus any number of retroversions as variant readings, without inquiring into the interpretation of these alleged variants, misleads his readers as to the true state of affairs and, to be quite candid, offers them a hodgepodge of perhaps interesting but certainly utterly subjective suggestions. Under the pretext of an "objective" exactness which takes cognizance of the "facts" as they meet the naked eye, he will perpetrate a travesty of textual criticism and finally be responsible for the introduction or perpetuation of countless pseudo-readings to be taken over on his authority into exegetical handbooks.

The editor, then, who seriously draws the necessary conclusions from the above insights and tries to avoid those pitfalls, is the one whom we may call "objective". By introducing his readers to both sides of the picture he leaves

8 I should like to stress that this discussion does not concern the unilingual apparatuses of the edition. Cf. TL pp. xiv, 199.

9 Quite often the editor will have no interpretation to offer. He should indicate this clearly (cf. also next note). On the other hand, the system is not meant to include all those exegetical additions or changes of the version which nobody would suspect of representing a variant. It is applicable in those cases in which there exists a prima facie possibility that a variant reading underlies the version, of which the editor would have to take cognizance.

10 It is clearly understood that the interpretative part of the apparatus will not always contain the "true" solution, nor need it suggest all the possible explanations in each and every case. Even a fuller commentary (cf. note 19) would fail to accomplish this. Once the two sides as regards a certain instance have been shown, and the point as such been made, the reader may hit upon a different and possibly more convincing interpretation than the editor. Methodologically it is the differentiation as such, within the apparatus, that counts, whereas scholars remain at liberty to differ "subjectively" as to what understanding of the text seems to them more plausible.
the choice to them. It is that choice which remains "subjective". At the same time the interpreters of the apparatus will spell caution to everyone and will warn the reader not hastily to mistake the mechanical retroversion for a true reconstruction of the Vorlage.

I therefore now suggest differentiating between two pairs of terms as regards the possible types of apparatus: mechanical versus interpretative, and full versus eclectic. What we, then, should try to aim at, as far as humanly possible, is a full apparatus, not one eclectically chosen for solving exegetical problems, that provides for the notation of both mechanical and interpretative retroversions.

At this point it may be permissible to point out that, for the present writer at least, this proposed method of notation is a further implication of a more general theory whose various aspects I have tried to explore in earlier studies. That theory maintains that, in view of the type of material we have at our disposal for the desired reconstruction of a biblical Urtext by strict philological procedures, we cannot always hope to reach back to our "final" goal, and that we should not force our way by pretending that we possess enough evidence

11 The editor, like others, may indicate, preferably outside that apparatus, whether he thinks that the explanation really overrides the alleged reading or whether a variant should be assumed in spite of a possible interpretative solution. That would be his own subjective judgment. Since the editor would presumably have acquired a more intimate knowledge of the problems concerned than many of his readers, an indication as to his personal preferences might be very useful, provided it is clearly marked as such and not mixed with the apparatus. This would be something parallel to the apparatus of preferred readings (perhaps some other term like index should be employed) which I suggested in connection with an unilingual edition (TL, p. 199).

12 The degree of "fullness" of the apparatus is a matter of editorial decision. As regards certain grammatical phenomena it was already suggested in TL that such a decision would be influenced by the picture shown by the index of phenomena which is being compiled concurrently with the notation by chapter and verse. The editor is at liberty to announce that his apparatus does not cater for certain phenomena and does not include changes of a given description. Alternatively, he may announce that for that particular change he has noted cases eclectically because of some stated reason.

Thus, e.g., after a decade has passed, I not only hold fast to what I claimed with regard to the additions and omissions of ו vowel and its equivalents (cf. Biblica 35, p. 437 = TL, p. 59). But I feel strongly inclined to exclude from full notation a certain number of phenomena such as pronominal suffixes, addition and omission of יָם and its equivalents and, of course, ו vowel itself. Personally I would not mind sacrificing in such instances the theoretical scholarly virtue of completeness to the practical expediency of cutting the size of the apparatus by half, if not more, and ridding it from a mass of information which will be practically useless and mostly inconclusive. But in this as in other details my personal views are not necessarily the final decisions of the Editorial Board of the HUBP as a whole.

12a Perhaps selective apparatus would be a better term, thus avoiding the connotation of eclectic versus diplomatic text.
when in reality there is none. Perhaps more often than not our material only leads us back to the last stage but one, and we have to remain content to note two alternative possibilities and to leave the final step to the “subjective” choice of each scholar.\textsuperscript{13}

On the other hand, if we duly stress our inability to reach back to the primary source in many cases, we enhance the weight of our results in those instances where the material at our disposal makes a reconstruction of an \textit{Utext} possible and plausible. Similarly, if we adopt the method of introducing the user of our apparatus to both sides of the picture, he will feel more confident when the editor expressly notes that in a particular case the difference between MT and the version does, indeed, signify a variant and — as far as the editor can see\textsuperscript{14}—there really exists no alternative explanation.

Over and beyond its place within the practice of textual criticism the method suggested here touches upon another, perhaps even more fundamental issue. It should enable us to build a formal bridge between two attitudes in the evaluation of the ancient versions in general and the Septuagint in particular, which originally were diametrically opposed. For we cannot get rid of the perturbing fact that such opposite positions, even though usually not in their extremes, can often be defended with equally good reasons; nor will mutual accusations of partisan prejudice decide the issue.\textsuperscript{15} No useful purpose would be served, in my submission, if our critical apparatus would simply ignore the existence of those opposed attitudes and thus become a partisan undertaking itself, the very opposite of that much-hailed “objectivity”.

I am referring, of course, to the detection of “original” readings in most deviations of the Septuagint at almost any price, on the one hand,\textsuperscript{16} and to the counter-claim, on the other hand, that practically any such deviation is an exegetical, theological, \textit{etc.}, change or else simply betrays the ineptitude of the translator or the “faultiness” of his \textit{Vorlage}. To be sure, the discussion in recent decades has lost much of its theological background and implications

\textsuperscript{13} The theoretical side of this “theory of alternative hyparchetypes” has been developed mainly in VT 7 (1957), p. 195 f. = \textit{TL}, p. 156 f. and p. xii. Since my wording (\textit{TL}, p. 160) may give rise to some misunderstanding (cf. the ending of John Strugnell’s kind review of my book in JBL 80 (1961), p. 200), I use this opportunity to stress that I am concerned with our ability or otherwise to reconstruct the archetype with the help of the tools we possess, not with the existence of \textit{Utexte} as such. Cf. also above, note 3 and \textit{The Rise of the Tiberian Bible Text}, note 43.

\textsuperscript{14} This is a “subjective” element we can never get rid of. Cf. above, note 10.

\textsuperscript{15} Cf. also \textit{TL} p. xii, note 15.

\textsuperscript{16} The most outspoken proponent of this position in the modern study of the Septuagint of Isaiah was Anton Scholz in his \textit{Die alexandrinische Übersetzung des Buches Jesaias} (Würzburg 1880).
and has at least partly undergone a philological metamorphosis. Therefore we find scholars in the twentieth century tending to favour various in-between shades rather than those extreme and outspoken positions. But we should remember that these in-between shades are not the outcome of any clear results achieved by strict method and built on definable criteria. Rather they are personal compromises according to temperament, belief, or traditional background only thinly disguised by rationalization.  

Precisely because no student of the Bible text can free himself from the bonds of his "personal equation", and because at our present stage of knowledge we can entertain no hope of gaining "objective" criteria which would enable scholars to judge between the two ways of evaluating the ancient versions and using them for text-critical purposes, I would claim that the suggested method of double notation is once more the only solution that enables the editor to remain as "objective" as possible, leaving the final choice to the interpreters of each school. 

17 I do not propose to exclude my own efforts from this judgment, at least as far as they belong to the realm of subjective choice (cf. note 11). Such vacillation is, for instance, very much in evidence in Ziegler's Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias (Münster 1934), otherwise the soundest and most important discussion of the text of the Greek Isaiah published in this century. It is evident on almost every page that the author was torn between the two ways of interpreting the Septuagint without ever becoming fully cognizant of this inner conflict, so that his system of dealing with the facts before him changes from verse to verse without apparent reason.  

18 Although the lines of denominational demarcation are less pronounced in this century (witness again Ziegler's notable contribution), it should be spelled out, once and for all, that the history of our subject is part of our present dilemma. Since the days of Frankel and Geiger (in spite of all the disagreements between them) there has been, generally speaking, a difference between the Jewish and the non-Jewish attitudes to the relative values of our sources, usually well-hidden from open discussion and often intuitive and half-conscious only. This was due not only to the religious backgrounds and beliefs of scholars, but even more to their degree of acquaintance and empathy with rabbinic exegesis. Because of constant interaction of opinions and common striving for the scholarly truth, the differences of attitudes in the past two generations must not be defined any more by means of religious affiliations. But I stress again my strong personal belief that in order to evaluate any given question in the text of the Septuagint a scholar is in duty bound to examine all the ancient versions as well as the rabbinic traditions before judgment can be passed. Furthermore I would suggest — and here we enter the realm of subjective conviction — that such comparative study will make us prefer, more often than not, the interpretative solution to the mechanical retroversion. But although the present study, by its very nature, will illustrate cases where mechanical retroversion leads, in my personal and subjective opinion, to wrong results, this should in no way be taken to mean that I deny the existence of "real variants" and even "superior readings" (in the sense explained in TL, p. xiii) that have survived in the Septuagint. Far from it!  

19 The technical side of differentiating between the two types of notation within the apparatus
The following examples are meant to illustrate our thesis and to throw into relief the differences between mechanical retroversion and interpretation. As mentioned in the beginning, my aim at this stage is not to propose the "correct" interpretation of Septuagint verses\(^{20}\), but to illustrate the necessity of applying the suggested method in our critical apparatus. I may not have chosen the clearest examples, and the proposed explanations may not always sound convincing; as long as they help to clarify the basic issue under discussion they will have served my purpose.\(^{21}\)

\(\text{(through typography etc.) does not concern us at the moment (cf. also TL, p. 200). It might, however, be added that in many instances the apparatus could only sum up the main facts, so that a fuller commentary remains desirable. The somewhat lengthy discussion of some of the examples to follow here should suffice to convince everyone of this. For reasons of human frailty, this may remain a desideratum.}\)

\(^{20}\) To the best of my knowledge none of the interpretations advanced here has been suggested in that way before, but for my purpose it is unnecessary to trace the history of the interpretation of each verse. Earlier suggestions have been quoted from the standard studies on the Septuagint of Isaiah. For fuller bibliographical details see Ziegler, Untersuchungen (above, note 17), and the most recent authoritative discussion of the Septuagint of Isaiah in general: Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* (Leiden 1948), p. 5 f. Apart from these studies and that of Scholz (above, note 16) I have checked the suggestions in Schleusner’s *Novus Thesaurus... in LXX* (London 1829), the notes in Ottley’s *The Book of Isaiah according to the Septuagint* I (Cambridge 1906) and some notes in Wutz, *Die Transkriptionen von der Septuaginta bis zu Hieronymus* (Stuttgart 1925–1933) as well as Fischer’s remarks on Wutz in *Beih. ZAW* 56 (1930). In general cf. also Gray’s commentary on Isaiah in the *ICC series ad loc.* (Edinburgh 1912). The text of the Septuagint is quoted according to Ziegler’s edition (Goettingen 1939). Most recently cf. the dissertation of L. Delekat, *Septuaginta und Peshitta — Eine Untersuchung zu den alten Uebersetzungen des Buches Jesaja* (Heidelberg 1956), almost fully published in *Biblica* 38 (1957), p. 185 f.; 321 f.; *ZAW* 69 (1957), p. 21 f.; 71 (1959), p. 165 f.; *VT* 8 (1958), p. 225 f. See also E.R. Rowlands, *The Targum and the Peshitta Version of the Book of Isaiah*, VT 9 (1959), p. 178 f. For some more general issues cf. recently also Seeligmann, *VT Suppl.* i (1953), p. 150 f. and Schildenberger, *Biblica* 40 (1959), p. 188 f.

Examples have been chosen on purpose both from the beginning of Isaiah and from chapter forty onward. Apart from the general problem to be illustrated in this study, I have made a point of giving examples for changes which can be explained by different interpretative assumptions: pure linguistic reasons, influence from parallel verses, complication by inner-Greek variants, implicit exegesis, and midrashic interpretation. The examples will follow this order. As for the possibility that sometimes, after more diligent search, a better source might have been found for explaining the “reading” of the Septuagint, cf. above, note 10.

\(^{21}\) While the suggestions for interpretation are mine and I bear sole responsibility, the details of checking, correcting, looking up parallels etc. have been carried out by my assistants in the Septuagint section of the HUBP, Dr. D. Weissert and Mrs. S. Ori. If I have been saved from committing howlers in my Greek it is thanks to their learning. In certain cases I hit upon the interpretation while approaching the text via the Peshitta. In those
The problem of אַשְׁרִי as against μακρός is usually solved by the assumption of a different reading. Mechanical retroversion will either suggest a change in the Hebrew or in the Greek. On the one hand the time-honoured שַׁרְדָּר (sic) of Houbigant and Lowth still makes its occasional appearance. But on the other hand, scholars seem nowadays to prefer retroversion in the opposite direction, and substitute the apparently neatly fitting μάταιος (ὁς σχοινίῳ μακρῷ)⁴¹.

Such a mechanical retroversion is suspect not only on formal grounds, as it encounters considerable palaeographical or phonetic difficulties. It also tacitly prejudices one of the most basic issues in the text-critical use of the versions, for by taking μακρῷ as an inner-Greek corruption of ματαιος, we practically claim that the Peshitta ad loc. is dependent on the LXX because of its habdha 'arrithā. Such a claim, although possible on principle, should never be put forward lightheartedly and certainly not by implication.

The problem we touch upon here is of such basic importance that a more general remark may not be out of order before we continue to discuss our particular verse.

In about ninety-five percent of the content variants in Isaiah common to Septuagint and Peshitta, the reason is their common exegetical background, and nothing can be inferred as regards the dependence of one version on the

cases the material was checked for me again by my assistant in the Peshitta and Targum section, Mr. H. Shirun, B.A. If my ideas will one day bear some fruit it is thanks to their persistent and conscientious work.

22 The possible interchange of ב and ב, i.e. בַּשְׁרַדִּיר as against φί, can be disregarded for the purpose of our present discussion.

23 I fail to understand why the Greek is supposed to bear witness to a Hebrew בַּשְׁרַדִּיר (sic), as suggested by Wutz, Transkriptionen, p. 179.

24 The idea for this conjecture obviously comes from συ. ὡς σχοινίῳ ματαιοτητος. Generally speaking, the very fact that Sym. has this reading would suggest that LXX read nothing similar; but it does not exclude such a possibility altogether. Also Th. may have had the word; cf. the discussion of Lütkenmann-Rahlfis, NGGW 1915, p. 52. I cannot make out why Ziegler ad loc. quotes the conjecture in the name of Fischer only.

25 Note that the Syrohexapla felt the Greek expression to be equivalent to that of the Peshitta and did not change the word "arrithā. Also the Vetus Latina uses "sicut funiculo longo".
other. Against earlier statements (on other books of the Bible) which have
influenced our handbooks, it should be stressed that this vast majority must
not be seen in the light of the very few instances of the following type. On
no account can we allow the claim of any large-scale dependence of the
Peshitta on the Septuagint (cf. also TL, p. XII).

In a few cases the deviation has obviously arisen within the Greek text,
but these are so few that each case must be investigated separately. I myself
am still in doubt as to whether there are even five to ten such possible instances
in the whole book of Isaiah, and most of these occur in connection with a
specific problem the translator had to face. The resulting picture is that of the
secondary influence of the Septuagint in a few specific cases; and even as
regards these, one may press the evidence so as to deny direct dependence alto-
gether. In any case, we must have very good reasons to claim that in a given
case there occurred a mistake possible only within a Greek version.

In another few cases, slightly more than the preceding group, the deviation
seems to have arisen within an Aramaic version or under Aramaic influence.
Such instances in the LXX have often been correctly interpreted as Aramaic
pre-Septuagint influences on the Greek, and have no direct bearing on the
relation between LXX and Peshitta. But, again, such an assumption needs
specific proof and should be put forward with caution. Thus, to give an
example of a suggestion I would not agree with, our present problem has
been solved by Delekat, VT 8 (1958), 236, as follows: The misunderstanding
has arisen because of the Aramaic 'arrīkhā, which was understood to mean
"würdig" (the Biblical-Aramaic word, Ezra iv, 14 does not really mean that
and is, of course, spelled differently). This "würdig", in turn, translates the
Hebrew הָעַטִּשׁ, which is supposed to have this meaning. The Vorlage was there-
fore בהָל לֶעַטִּשׁ and meant "des Stricks würdig" (sic).

Coming thus back to the verse we started with, we may now turn away
from the attempts at mechanical retroversion. As against these, our interpreta-
tion would suggest that the apparent difference between the Greek and the
Hebrew does not betray any textual variant. In this case the suggested solution
is a linguistic interpretation that can be substantiated from the Midrash.

While we may assume that the presence of the root משך in our context
contributed to the picture of a "long" rope, it was the word שְׁעֵטֶשׁ that was
not understood in the sense most familiar to us, viz. vanity (μακρυγμόν). This

26 Cf. especially Hänel, Die aussermasoretischen Übereinstimmungen zwischen der Septua-
ginta und der Peshitta in der Genesis (Giessen 1911).
27 In connection with מַעַטִּשּׁ in our verse, cf. e.g. the text Ps. cxv, 5: מַעַטִּשׁ, where מַעַטִּשׁ is paralleled by the root מַעַטִּשָּׁה.
should become clear from the midrash *ad loc.* (cf., *e.g.*, B.T. Sanh. 99b)²⁸: יֶהָרָה בָּהּ בַּבָּרָה שְׁלֹשֶׁת בִּכְלָלָה שְׁלֹשֶׁת שְׁלֹשֶׁת בִּכְלָלָה.

The meaning of around the spool or the staff. This thread can, indeed, be properly described as *habblā ‘arrikhā*. The word which appears in MT as *טַשָּׁה* was not interpreted as “vanity” but, standing next to *בָּרָה*, it was quite naturally connected with the word appearing in Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, and Syriac²⁹ as *אָבַּשָא,* *שֶָׁיְָוָיתָ* ³⁰, all meaning a distaff or reel around which the thread is spooled, or something similar. In the whole context, *טַשָּׁה* came to be understood as “long” or “large” thread (or rope). Therefore our interpretation would not allow the assumption that the (alleged) difference between the Greek and Syriac versions on the one hand and MT on the other hand was caused by a variant reading³² or by textual development.

2. Is. iv, 5

וקא ו, על כְּלָלָה יָרָדָה זַעְָיָה פַּרְעָה, אתָּ כְּלָלָה יָרָדָה זַעְָיָה פַּרְעָה

καὶ ἤδει καὶ ἔτρωσεν πάντοτε τοῦ ὄρους Σίων καὶ πάντα τοῦ περικύκλῳ αὐτῆς

Most scholars seem to practice mechanical retroversion from the Greek on the basis of τοῦ περικύκλῳ for פַּרְעָה. The difference lies in their procedure. Some simply retranslate the Greek into a Hebrew word containing the root הבכ, which patently has nothing in common with the word written in MT,

²⁸ For midrashic quotations compare in general most conveniently *Yalqut Shim‘on ad loc.*

²⁹ It seems unnecessary to point out the difference between looking for an explanation on the basis of Rabbinic Hebrew or Aramaic and the somewhat discredited procedure of squeezing the Arabic dictionary to yield its treasures in order to explain the exegesis of the Septuagint. In this particular instance the suggestion handed down is אֶל which, to my mind, cannot be stretched to mean “long”.

³⁰ See especially *Tosefoth ha-‘Arukh ha-Shalem* (1937), p. 69 b.

³¹ Apart from the cognate *שֶָׁיְָוָית* cf. especially *שֶָׁיְָוָית* which, *e.g.*, Am. vii, 17 translates the Hebrew יָרָדָה!

³² This, however, does not mean necessarily that the spelling was originally אֶל. Even though the spelling בכ (?) in Q15a is perfectly explicable within the orthographic system of the Qumran Scrolls (cf. *my Text and Language*, etc., p. 108 and especially *The Qumran Scrolls and their Linguistic Status* (1959), § 13 f.), it may, perhaps, allow of a different interpretation in the light of what has just been said. To go one step further, the interpretation of Midrash, Peshitta and LXX even slightly favours the assumption that their Vorlage spelled בכ without an aleph.
either in script or in sound. Others assume a word which has at least one root-consonant in common. Thus הֶבֶרֶךְ (supplied in Biblia Hebraica with a question mark) is at least as old as the Notes of Cappellus. Ottley, on the other hand, found the root בֹּקֶן in Hatch-Redpath mentioned under פְּרִיקוֹן, and therefore suggested that the Vorlage here had “some form from the root בֹּקֶן”.

Although the trend in mechanical retroversion is in general to look for the fault on the Hebrew side, we must also investigate the possibility of a corruption within the Greek. The nearest I can think of would be παρακαλεῖτε, which, however, is unattested. Even going as far as παρακαλεῖτε will not do — in spite of Is. xi, 2 — because it is not the verbal translation of בֹּקֶן. Furthermore, such a doubly improbable suggestion would again make the Peshitta dependent upon an inner-Greek corruption.

On the other hand, it is even less probable that the corruption has arisen on Aramaic soil, as Delekat (VT 8 (1958), 235) wishes us to believe. According to him, the Hebrew Vorlage had, indeed, בֹּקֶן. This was rendered quryā, which at one stage of the transmission was misunderstood as quryā (“ihre Ortschaften”), for which at a later stage ḫēdhrēḥ was substituted (“so ist ḫēdhrēḥ offenbar Ersatz für die Lesung quryā”). Hence the Greek rendering.

I am not so much concerned at the moment with the fact that none of these mechanical retroversions seems convincing and that none happens to fulfil the elementary demands of a felicitous conjecture. It is much more important to stress that also in the field of retroversion we may encounter many opinions, so that, in the last resort, these are all nothing but “subjective interpretations”.

33 It makes little difference whether the Hebrew Vorlage is assumed to be הָבֶרֶךְ (cf., e.g., the commentaries of Dillmann and Marti ad loc.) or whether a case is made out that the word was וַיִּבְרֹךְ (see Kutsch, ZAW 1953, p. 248 ff.). The lack of philological method is the same.
34 The idea seems to come from Jos. xxi, 11 where the two Hebrew words occur side by side. The ḫēdhrēḥi in the Vorlage cannot be ungrammatical, such a connection exists elsewhere, e.g. Num. xxxv, 2; Ez. xlv, 2, but none of it justifies the conjecture וַיִּבְרֹךְ in our verse.
35 To be sure, there is one such reference to the High’l בֹּקֶן (2 K. vi, 14).
37 As, e.g., in the Peshitta of Lev. xxiii, 21; 35 in translating קְרַיָא.
38 It need not be stressed that the analysis of the various tacit assumptions of critics, on which their methods are based, is hardly a less fascinating subject of study than the analysis of the text itself.
39 I readily admit that because of the flights of fancy in which many critics indulge, I may be too cautious. But, generally speaking, I am suspicious of any conjecture which does not “click” after the assumption of one intermediate step and which assumes the improbable in the way of script or sound.
Turning away, then, from the attempts at retroversion, I would suggest a different procedure of interpretation. In my submission, the key words of our verse connect it to the picture in Ps. xcvii, 2:

νεφέλη καί γνόφος κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ 40
In that instance stands in parallelism to מַמָּךְ in connection with וַנַּעַנְו, and that picture, so closely similar, seems to have influenced the exegesis of our verse. 41

We may perhaps go one step further: We have assumed above (note 10) that we may have to allow for different attempts at interpretation. Thus, although the verse mentioned seems to me the main exegetical influence, the appearance of an equivalent of מַמָּךְ may have been influenced also by some additional verses. Cf. Ps. 1, 3: אשִׁיְפָהּ תַּהֲנֶל מְכִירֵי נַפְשֶׁךָ שָׁמָּךְ מַדְּמָךְ, and perhaps Lam. ii, 3: יָרֵכָה יָרֵכָה תַּהֲנוֹת לָךְ תוכֶלֶת מְכִירֵי. 42

In our submission, therefore, any mechanical retroversion based on an attempt to find a suitable Hebrew word for “around” is unwarranted, and the lack of an interpretative note which offsets the suggested retroversion(s) would be misleading. 43

40 It so happens, that also here Pesh. renders ḫēḏhārawn. But this would not be necessary for our assumption, nor would any disagreement prejudice the relationship of the versions. In assuming “targumic” exegesis on the basis of contents-interpretation of related verses, we need not necessarily encounter the same words, although the use of such words may help to strengthen our proof, cf. below, note 47.

41 To put it clearly, in order to claim exegetical influence we have to be able to point to some specific picture and key words. It is not good enough to maintain, very generally, as Ziegler does (Untersuchungen, p. 108), that an expression like “the surroundings of Jerusalem” is well known to the Bible.

42 This last verse seems to have influenced Is. ix, 17, and again the notion of מַמָּךְ comes in through the influence of another key word (תֵּאָב): כיִּם הַתוֹאָבָה תַּהֲנוֹת מַמָּךְ פֶּרְצָה אֶלְּבָשׁ (where תַּהֲנוֹת is not a reflection of הבושׁ הַתוֹאָבָה, as one might conjecture at first blush). On the other hand, although Is. v. 2 is only two verses apart from our verse, the notion “round it” expressed by περιεύθυνσις and ἀποδέχθηναι has nothing to do with our verse and simply depends on the interpretation of ἀποδέχθηναι, ἀποδέχθηναι.

43 Incidentally, it would be just as wrong to look for a Hebrew word of that meaning in Is. vi, 2 on the strength of קָנָם פַּרְצָה פֶּרְצָה אֶלְּבָשׁ for מַמָּךְ. The solution lies, of course, in recognizing certain theological difficulties which caused the translator to change a number of expressions in Is. vi. Of course, Ps. lxxix, 8: אל נָאַרְבּ תַּהֲנוֹת פָּדִידלִי may also have had its share.
There are two obvious problems in the Greek of this verse\textsuperscript{44}: συνετρίβη as against κρυπτός and καταδεδεμένα for καταδείξα. The former appears to us as a problem mainly because of our own exegetical tradition, which interprets κρυπτός as parallel to γραφή. Furthermore, one ought always to exercise utmost caution in suggesting variant readings when the Hebrew is practically a \textit{hapax legomenon}. Even so, the common κρυπτός suggests itself as a reading. What makes this retroversion even more plausible\textsuperscript{45} is the fact that both the Greek and the Syriac use roots which render Hebrew וְרָאשׁ.

As against such a mechanical retroversion, our interpretation might try to understand the translation\textsuperscript{46} on the basis of a similar verse. I should like to point to xxii, 9, where we encounter a very similar picture:


dεισάλλεν όλοι επί μεσσηλίν Αλωδίας ιερά.

Here the two verbs δεισάλλεν/ειδερίζον were rendered suitably by πέπτωκε...συνετριβησαν.\textsuperscript{47}

The more difficult problem in this verse is, obviously, the apparent use of καταδείξα to render δεισάλλεν. Again, in the light of what has been said above \textit{(ad}, 18) we should note that LXX and Peshitta interpret alike, and \textit{τα'να ἑδίδθη} poses exactly the same problem as καταδεδεμένα of the Greek.

I know of no justification for the mechanical retroversion ρα' ρά of ρα' ρά.\textsuperscript{48} However, if we try to trace the basis for the translation, we are led to a similar picture in Hos. x, 5 f. Fortunately, the connection between the two contexts

\textsuperscript{44} The renderings of רָא and מָשַׂא do not really constitute a problem and have just to be noted in their proper places.

\textsuperscript{45} I am not aware that this reading has been actually suggested. Ziegler, \textit{Untersuchungen}, explains the Greek in this case as a “farbloses griechisches Äquivalent” of קֹרֶשׁ.

\textsuperscript{46} As a matter of fact, a perusal of all the ancient versions suggests that in spite of the \textit{hapax} character there was a clear exegetical tradition as to the meaning of קֹרֶשׁ:

\textsuperscript{47} To be sure, what counts is to find what we think is the basis for the exegetical tradition (cf. note 40). It is not at all necessary that the versions use actually the same word. In this case the Septuagint did; the others did not, but this does not confer any special status upon the LXX.

\textsuperscript{48} Cf. Ottley \textit{ad loc.} In this case no Hebrew word from the list in Hatch-Redpath looks even faintly like דֶּכֶת, and for ρα' ρά Ottley had to look for the list s.v. δείν.
in ancient exegesis can be shown. The Midrash\textsuperscript{49} connects our verse with the one in Hosea. Hosea has the idols carried away (יָרָבָל), whereas the Septuagint is even more explicit:

καὶ αὐτῶν εἰς Ἀσσυρίαν δῆσαντες ἀπῆγαγαν.\textsuperscript{50}

In other words, the “binding” of the idols onto the animals\textsuperscript{51} is part of the whole picture and does not reflect a variant reading.\textsuperscript{52}

4. Is. v, 29

For our purpose we may leave aside the problem of the syntax of the verse, arising from the existence or omission of the \textit{waw}s and the different readings \textit{אֶלְּחֵי לֵבָנָה} which has recently been illustrated also by the Qumran Isaiah scroll. Also the difference between singular and plural in rendering the pair \textit{לֵבָנָה} can be ignored here. Our problem is rather the curious translation of the pair \textit{אֶלְּחֵי לֵבָנָה}. In this case most scholars agree that we should note a variant reading, although it seems debatable which word should appear

\textsuperscript{49} cf. B.T. Sanh. 63b; Meg. 25b and \textit{Yalqut ad loc.}:

\textit{מלכתייה בַּשִּׁי לֵבָנָה וְהָעָדֶה הֵמָה} - מֶלֶכֶת מִרְתֵּי אָדָם בַּשִּׁי בְּלִקְרָמָם... וְהָעָדֶה - הָעָדֶה בַּשִּׁי אֵין בַּלְבִּין שְׁאָרָם...\textsuperscript{50}

It is especially interesting to learn from Ziegler’s apparatus that Justin omits δῆσαντες but features δεῦδωνον in the context. The general picture of “carrying the gods” has, of course, influenced later writers, cf. e.g., Epist, Jerem. 3; 25.

\textsuperscript{51} Recently I have had occasion to deal with the expression \textit{נַעֲלֵי מְלֶכֶדָּה} further on in that chapter (Hos. x, 11). Connecting with Ugaritic \textit{mll} (cf. \textit{Biblica} 41 (1960), p. 64 f.), I suggested that the heifer is described as having something bound on its back (a saddle, etc.). I may therefore be excused if I do not suppress a wild association of ideas, namely that according to that interpretation \textit{מְלֶכֶדָּה} means pretty well the same as \textit{κοραίδεῖδωνον}.

\textsuperscript{52} In passing we should note that in the following verse, Is. xlvii, 3, the verb \textit{αἴσχρω} translates the root \textit{אָשָׁם}, so that \textit{OnError} seems to be rendered by \textit{παντελούμενοι}. This does not influence our above findings, unless we take this to strengthen our view that the Septuagint did not translate that word literally. It is conceivable that the Greek \textit{παντελούμενος} \textit{ἐκ παντοῦ} is just a very free rendering of the sense “from a child”. But, again, it might allude to another picture: The idols have to be carried; but the true God carries His people. Deut. xxxii, 10-12 with its καὶ έμαθέντες ἄνθρωπον comes to the mind, the more so since the context of Is. xlvii, 3-9 shows other traces of influence of Deut. xxxii. But all this cannot be proved, nor is it relevant to our problem.
in the retroversion. I have found as suggestions not less than רָשָׁעָה, בְּשֵׁים-ִינֵו, 53 בְּשֵׁם for the verb, and in addition בְּשֵׁם הַיָּדָה for the noun. I doubt whether this exhausts the suggestions based on the Septuagint.

In this case it seems necessary to start by making sure which reading should be assumed as representing the Septuagint text.54 The readings ὀργησάτων and ὀργήσατων have been rightly rejected by earlier scholars (Ottley, Wutz, Fischer). For not only are they suspect of Lucianic origin55, but none of the verbs which might possibly be at the root of these readings (ὁργάω, ὀργύζω, ὀργύσατω) is used by the LXX56, nor do they yield any satisfactory sense in our context. We should not be misled by an alleged Greek verb ὀργάω, which supposedly renders רָשָׁע, since it is merely inferred from our verse.

There remains a last device: to conjecture into the Septuagint a form based on the rendering of one of the three later Greek versions.57 In our case the reading ὀργημα of Sym. and Th. would therefore suggest the conjecture ὀργοσσοῦν. It is somewhat remote from the attested readings, but that alone would not be an insurmountable obstacle. However, in spite of its venerable age58 the conjecture is unacceptable because the Greek verb is ὀργόματι (always in the LXX and almost always outside it59).

We must therefore conclude that ὀργήσατω is, indeed, the correct reading60, and in consequence one of the above mentioned Hebrew retroversions would be noted in the apparatus.61

Against any of these mechanical retroversions, our interpretation would try to follow a different path. In our submission the translator ingeniously evaded the tautological הָנַטָּה הָנַטָּה by simply substituting a different picture. His

53 Since this form seems so far away from MT, I might add that this is the alleged basis of IECAF (< הָנַטָּה) according to Wutz, (Transkriptionen, p. 76). For the problem of the plurality of retroversions, cf. above ad iv, 5.
54 As everywhere else, I rely exclusively on Ziegler’s apparatus.
55 Also MS 93, which reads ὀργήσατω, is Lucianic.
56 ὀργύζω exists in the passive, but is certainly not a suitable rendering of הָנַטָּה.
57 Cf. the problem discussed above, note 24. As indicated there, readings suggested by this method are always to be considered with utmost caution.
58 Cf. Schleusner II, 584.
59 A possible derivation from ἐκσύγμαι need hardly be taken as a serious conjecture.
60 The case for this reading has been convincingly put by Ottley.
61 The reason for suggesting readings such as נַטָּה or נַטָּה is, if we care to check the Hebrew list appended in Hatch-Redpath s.v. ὀργή. Incidentally, those scholars who are ready to accept the claim of Wutz that our נַטָּה is connected to ὀργή (= פְּתַחְיו, by way of Σαατά/Σααγα, as in Jer. xlvi, 3 [LXX: xxix, 3]), will notice with interest that the הָנַטָּה and the הָנַטָּה of that verse reappear in Is. v, 28.
lion does not “roar” but is stirred up, rushes on, etc. It is not the picture of MT in Isaiah, but that of the pericope of Balaam, Num. xxiii, 24:

Although we may sometimes be forced to suggest the influence of similar verses without being able to show the specific reason or relationship which may have caused the exegetical association, in our assumption, we should never be satisfied without having tried to adduce such a specific reason. For only if we can show such a connection may we hope to convince ourselves that the interpretational solution nullifies the mechanical retroversion.

In this case we cannot adduce any explicit midrash, but we can offer strong circumstantial evidence. First of all, the passage which we hold responsible for the change in LXX comes from one of the best-known pericopes of the Pentateuch, which exercised much influence on the ancient translators and exegetes. More specifically, both our verse and the verse from Numbers go on to mention לֶאָר. Lastly, and perhaps most convincingly, comes the opposition to קִנְיָם in the verse from Numbers: לֶא שַבֵּכ. This was rendered correctly oד Κοινὴθησαναι. However, this root reappears rather strangely in the context of our picture in Is. (verse 27), where וְיַעֲשָׂ את has been rendered oδδε κοινηθησονται. As against some 150 instances where this Greek root renders Hebrew בָּשָׂ, it stands only here for שַי. To my mind, this is further proof that our translator accepted a tradition associating our picture with Num. xxiii, 24.

It may be instructive to follow up this interpretation as an example how our suggested attempt differs from the method used by an outstanding scholar like Ziegler (Untersuchungen, p. 16). He, too, assumes that the Greek bears

62 These are the simple meanings of ὀρῶμαι as given in any dictionary. It is of some interest to note that the Syrohexapla has rendered in this verse the Greek ὀρῶμαι by the Syriac שָׂבַכ, which in Is. xxxv, 6 renders the Hebrew לֶא, cf. Field ad loc. On the other hand, Schleusner’s attempt (II, 590) to get out of the dilemma is rather touching by its naiveté: “Leones rugientes impetum facere solent.” But at least we should appreciate his frankness in discussing the parallel παρέστησαν: “Liberti transstulerunt, nonnullis legisse videntur שָׂבַכ vel בָּשָׂ”.

63 I prefer to think of this verse as having influenced our translator because of the parallism in the two hemistichs (לֶא שַבֵּכ / שָׂבַכ) mirrored, so to speak, in ὀρῶμαι // παρέστησαν. Otherwise an equally good verse would be, e.g., Deut. xxxiii, 22, where the root שָׂבַכ occurs in connection with the lion. Incidentally, the reading of the LXX in Is. may thus, indeed, reflect the Hebrew root שָׂבַכ, but in quite a different way than assumed by other scholars.

63a The Qumran Scrolls should have taught us that our ways of thought cannot always comprehend the paths of “free association of ideas” frequented by ancient exeggetes.

64 So did all the “poetic” chapters of the Pentateuch. The translator of Isaiah, however, was especially influenced by Deut. xxxii and by the Balaam pericope.
witness to a Hebrew reading different from MT אֲשֵׁר. From the list of Hebrew equivalents for παριστάναι, he chooses the one which on the face of it is among the least likely: שְׁחַךְ. The original text could not have been שִׁירָיָה, but by assuming a further step we get לַעַר שִׁירָי, which was, according to Ziegler, what the lion was doing before the Vorlage of LXX got corrupted.

Our attempt of interpretation on the basis of associative exegesis seems to me preferable to Ziegler’s ingenious suggestion, not because of the different type of procedure and not because it does not involve an additional hypothetical step. On that account his suggestion is not impossible, and I am far from suggesting that retroversion should never be attempted. But I feel that retroversion must do no violence to linguistic usage.

Thus, on the one hand, לַעַר שִׁירָי is inconceivable to me as signifying the terrifying sound of a lion’s roar. The expression could be used, at most, in a medieval translation of a fable, e.g. to signify that the king of the beasts commences his speech, but could not be the correct expression in our biblical context.

On the other hand, the Hebrew equivalents suggested on the basis of Hatch-Redpath should always be checked. It is true that παριστάναι renders שְׁחַךְ, but in one sense only: the payment of money. Even if we assume that an original לַעַר שִׁירָי had been corrupted or misread into לַעַר שִׁירָי, the evidence before us would not justify in such a case the equation שְׁחַךְ = παριστάναι.

To sum up: In our submission it would be wrong to note in the apparatus any or all of the suggested readings without adding the interpretation that in all probability the “reading” of the LXX goes back to an exegetical tradition based on Num. xxiii, 24.

5. Is. xlii, 12

תַּנְשָׁמֵית הַנָּרָה הָעַלְקָמַט הַחַלָּב בַּכֶּס רָ

אֲנָהַרְגֵּיָא לִי יְסַפְּרוּ אֱנֶידִיָּא קַי אֵי יֶּנֶּנ יֵן יֵמִי יִלְלְיָדָרְיָו

The difference between נְשָׁמָית and the Greek word taking its place has been solved by two opposite attempts at retroversion. Since no known Hebrew

65 As mentioned before, other scholars had already suggested other equivalents from that list.
66 I am afraid that in my treatment of the Septuagint of Isaiah, from which these examples are taken, there are, if anything, still too many instances of unjustified retroversion.
67 Hebrew לַעַר שִׁירָי = Ugaritic ולשִׁירָי, does not yield לַעַר שִׁירָי.
68 The use is not restricted to the book of Esther, as one might infer from Hatch-Redpath. It also occurs in 2 Sam. xviii, 12, where other manuscripts use לַעַר שִׁירָי.
equivalent of δνοίζειιν seems to fit, scholars have been satisfied to suggest Hebrew verbs which have little connection with the Greek. The best suggestion in this vein I know of is Duhm’s שמשת. with Ottley’s ומשת rather than an improbable second. Neither seems acceptable as a retroversion, nor do they make much sense.69

The other attempt at retroversion takes the Greek as its target. Unbelievable as it may sound, although the above Greek text is unanimously attested by all the witnesses, it does not appear in Ziegler’s text.70 This reads ἐνῶτις, which upon scrutiny of the apparatus turns out to be based on a scripsi.71 The basis for the conjecture is clearly Is. xlv, 8:

In our submission the conjecture is rather doubtful and certainly should never have been incorporated in the text. Firstly, δνοίζειιν and ἐνῶτις are rather far from each other, both in script and sound. Furthermore, the verb ἐνῶτις should have been sufficient to prevent the unanimous “corruption” of the “original” ἐνῶτις. Lastly, the necessity for the “Three” to substitute ἡκούσις ill agrees with the assumption that LXX read ἐνῶτις.72

As against these retroversions, our interpretation would again look for the exegetical association. Our verse reads: ומשת ויא בֶּן רֶם. This is obviously a play on the Sinai motif, which stresses the action of God as the absolute One and the “hearing” of the people.73 But this was more than a simple hearing: God forced the people to listen to the Divine manifestation of his justice. Thus the Pesiqta comments on our verse (cf. Yalqūf ad loc.):

69 To be sure, Ottley’s δνοίζειιν assumes a corruption both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, together with an equation of roots unattested for the Septuagint. The claim of Wutz, Transkriptionen p. 516, that δνοίζειιν represents ומשת “zum Reden bringen”, is without any basis.

70 This is as good an example as any against the concoction of eclectic texts.

71 Actually this is a time-honoured conjecture, according to Schleusner II, 563 as old as Semler and Doederlein, and accepted by many critics. Cf., e.g., Torrey, The Second Isaiah (1928), p. 338. Seeligmann, p. 11, quotes this as one of the telling examples of a justified conjecture in the LXX on the basis of MT, and returns to it again on p. 55.

72 Cf. above, note 24. Note that in xlv, 8 we do not find such a reading transmitted in their name. But this last argument could be pushed aside by maintaining that the corruption is very old, and that we possess only part of the readings of the “Three”. Even so, the combined arguments carry considerable weight.

73 Perhaps an even stronger development of this motif is Ps. lxxxi, 9 f: יאשע בֶּן אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַع לָא רָא אֵת אָתְרֵדַע L. It is beyond doubt that our verse was connected with the revelation on Sinai, not only because of various midrashic interpretations of the context but also because of the specific mention in the Targum: נא אֶמֶס יְהוָה אֲלֹהָם אֲרוֹיִיתָם מֵאָשׁ.
and thus connects our verse to the expressions of Divine judgment and chastisement as developed in Ps. lxxvi, 9 f. This, in my submission, is the solution of ὄνειδος, viz. ἡσσαμεται δι᾽ ἑαυτοῦ.  

6. Is. ix, 2


The present problem has been chosen to demonstrate the difficulties which may arise over a word in one verse when compared to a different context elsewhere.

On the side of retroversion, תהלים seems the favourite candidate for the apparatus, and the claim (cf. Schleusner II, p. 167) that κατάγαγες represents תהלים is still being repeated, although such an equation is attested nowhere else in the Septuagint. With the same amount of justification we might accept the reading הערת (cf. Sellin ad loc.), or even Wutz’s הערת (Transkriptionen, p. 237). The alternative suggestion of Wutz, תהלים (p. 485) would be an obvious choice, but I cannot see what it has got to do with κατάγαγες. In any case, there is no lack of attempts at retroversion.

Our interpretation, on the other hand, would suggest again exegetical association. κατάγαγες ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ is a perfect expression for leading back the people from exile; cf. lv, 12:

which was rendered, according to Ziegler’s text: καὶ ἐν χαρᾷ διακατήσαοθε (cf. Targ. הערתא צמחי בר). While the exegetical connection stands in its own right, one could claim, so

74 It would seem that our attempts to understand ancient versions still underrate the well-known principle according to which a left-out detail in the text invites midrashic amplification. Thus, in the verse immediately following (xiii, 13), the expression מַעֲשֵׂהוּ מַעֲשֵׂהֽוּ demands some clarification, and it seems completely senseless to retrovert מַעֲשֵׂהוּ (cf. Biblia Hebraica ad loc.). Of course, מַעֲשֵׂהוּ of Targ.; men yavmā qaḏmāyā of Pesh. and at πραγμάτεια of LXX all betray a common exegesis. Similarly, when we move from Orzeit to Endzeit, it makes little sense to retrovert the Greek in lvii, 2 for ἡττήσατε ἐν πτωχείᾳ which reads ἔτην εἰς τὸν μόνον. We just have to realize (cf. Yalqut ad lvii, 7) that the Midrash uses in this context the expression לְעָכְרֵי אֶזְרֵי מִשְׁכָּבִים, etc.

it seems at first, that there is also a clear verbal connection between the two verses, both of which use similar compounds of δεῖν. But at this point, there arises a new problem. Ziegler has chosen διαχθήσεσθε for his text in lv, 12, probably because it fitted the Hebrew. Just now it seemed that this preference could be strengthened by appealing to the exegetical connection between the verses.

However, if we evaluate the reading strictly according to the Greek textual witnesses, his choice seems almost indefensible. On that basis we would practically be forced to adopt the reading διαχθήσεσθε, which is almost unanimously attested. Although in the light of the Hebrew it looks like a corruption, one has to admit on second thoughts, judging purely by the evidence of Greek manuscripts, that the reading διαχθήσεσθε is suspicious and looks like a rather well-taken correction.

But in that case what about the curious διαχθήσεσθε? Again we may try our hand at searching for its exegetical basis. I would suggest that the solution is quite simple: According to lv, 12, it is obviously God who shows the way to those redeemed from the exile. This theme is elaborated in xlvi, 17–20 in some detail. But in that instance the showing of the way is expressed differently: נִלְמַדְתָּ הָעֵינָי מַדְּרֵיכוֹ וּרְאֵה-תָּל. Could this be the solution for the apparently impossible διαχθήσεσθε?

I maintain that this example should teach us strictly to keep apart the exegetical basis and its linguistic expression, and that it should warn us not to accept hastily what seems a perfect solution on the basis of a related passage, without inquiring carefully into the problems of that passage in its own right.

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76 Although none of the other few instances of בְּרִיָּה in Isaiah was actually translated by κατάγην, the use of the verb is varied and a case could be made out for connecting the two Greek verbs.
77 It is worthwhile to point out that the apparatuses of Swete and Rahlfis would not even suggest to the reader that there is such a reading as διαχθήσεσθε.
78 Already Schleusner I, p. 599 emphatically rejected this reading.
79 Cf. Ziegler, p. 165. The Greek in xlvi, 17 poses its own problems. I do not suggest that there exists a verbal connection between our διαχθήσεσθε and the δεῖ αὐτῷ of xlvi, 17.
80 Since I myself fell victim for some minutes to that “perfect solution”, I may be excused for moralizing on an altogether very common pitfall. It is quite a different problem whether there may have been some secondary mutual influence between the two verses mentioned. In any case I think that it would be almost impossible to describe these reflections within the framework of an apparatus. Cf. above, note 19.
7. Is. xli, 25

There is little exegetical interest in this case, but it may serve as an illustration of a further point of method. Mechanically, we ought to note the omission of ἐν ἀλλήλῳ in the Greek and the addition of ἀπὸ καρδίας.81

Starting with the plus of the Greek, the interpretation would point out that the common Hebrew expression to indicate the lack of any real basis of a claim is לַעֲבֹר מַלְכָּה (cf. Neh. vi, 8; 1 Kings xii, 33). Hence the added ἀπὸ καρδίας as a complement to the idiom.82 “Out of the heart” means more or less “cooked up”, and is a motif expression in connection with false divinations, cf. Is. lix, 13; Ez. xiii, 2.

The interpretation would thus deny that there is a plus in the Vorlage of the Greek. Is there a minus? I think a case can be made for the claim that our translator worked according to what I suggest calling the “slot” system83: if within the framework of a clause (or a syntactic or prosodic unit) there occurs a plus for some exegetical or linguistic reason, the “slot” is often regarded as “filled out”, so that a word or unit of the original Hebrew unnecessary to the understanding of the contents may be left out. This is just a trend, but it is definitely noticeable.84 In our case the predicate of the first clause also does service for the second.

In order to illustrate the “slot” system, a few examples must suffice for the present:

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81 No retroversion has been seriously suggested. Ottley II, p. 317, did not believe himself in his half-hearted suggestion ἀποσκεδάζει for ἀπὸ καρδίας, and Ziegler’s proposal (p. 126) to connect with this an assumed ἀποκαρδίας has little to commend it.

82 It is none of our task to indicate whenever the LXX agrees with MT. In my opinion this very addition is an indirect corroboration that the Greek read יִבְרָא, like MT.

83 Apart from the examples mentioned here, the problem will be discussed at greater length shortly. Cf. for the moment also the “stop-gaps” of Ottley I, p. 50; Ziegler, p. 13 f.

84 This statement does not hold true if reversed, for a unit may be missing in the translation for many other reasons or for no apparent reason at all. Thus, e.g., in a similar instance the predicate is missing in the translation of the second co-ordinate clause and nothing else takes its place (xlv, 12): דֶּשֶׁת אַבְרָאִם שָׂלָל גְּרוּיָה חָגְרֵי נָאָר הַר עַרְבָּא. One must, of course, always inquire whether the translator knew the word in question. But although לָעֲבֹר does not occur elsewhere in Isaiah, the evidence of other books makes it seem reasonable that the word was known.
The interpretation therefore maintains that both the plus and the minus to be noted in the mechanical notation disappear upon further investigation.

8. Is. xlv, 8-9

Among all the cases discussed here, the present example is the most complex one. It is meant to raise the problem, to what lengths we are allowed to go in confronting mechanical retroversion and interpretation, and to what extent we may use indirect evidence. In spite of the fact that our suggestion in this case may be even less convincing than elsewhere, its inclusion in our discussion seems thus likely to be illuminating.

85 In this case the Leitmotif of "erring" and "being led astray", which is introduced by the Septuagint in almost every case where the prophet ridicules idol worship, has taken over the second half of the verse and ousted the "redundant" parallelism.

86 Here the use of γῆ for θέα aided the substitution of a different picture (according to v. 5) for the parallelism. Of course, once the picture had been changed, there was no point in translating θεός.
If we compare the state of the two verses, it seems that the first does not offer serious textual problems, whereas the second, especially in its beginning, apparently defies retroversion. Given such deep-going differences between the Hebrew and the Greek, are we permitted to single out any particular item for retroversion or interpretation, apart from the general texture of the verse?

Since the attempts at retroversion of the beginning of v. 9 can hardly be taken seriously, we may start our interpretation by looking for an exegetical connection. This perforce leads us to Is. xxix, 16, as has long been noticed.

If the connection is correct, our first though minor point would be the relationship between יִבְרִי in ch. xxix and γαρ κατεξειλασθε. Already here we encounter the question whether the tradition in one place may bear evidence to a reading in another verse, although in that other verse such a tradition is not recorded in the version (cf. below). Could it be, then, that κατεξειλασθε in xlv, 9 echoes a reading יִבְרִי in xxix, 16?

But it is the continuation our verse which is of interest. Leaving aside the question which is the “correct” understanding, we may state that MT tries to connect the letters רהש to the subject of potter and clay, whereas the Septuagint takes up a different motif. We are immediately led to xxviii, 24 90:

טֵא הָיוָה חַתָּם הַרְסָן יַחַתְתָהוֹ Water eraser

But it is not sufficient to find the clue. After all, the translation should make some sense. Our lead is only useful if we can make it plausible that the exegetical tradition made sense within the context of xlv, 9.

At that point we must return to v. 8 with its theme המנה אנשי. In other words, the tradition of the LXX in rendering אִשׁ, did not take up the theme of the potter of v. 9, but the theme of v. 8. Going back, then, to xxviii, 24, we see

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87 To be sure, attempts have been made, such as Scholz’s 아 out of יִבְרִי — hence ראתו — or Fischer’s בֶּן יִבְרִי (!), or on the other hand, Duhm’s אֵין (a word from Ecclesiastes!) because of בְּלֵא ראתו. It sounds somewhat ironical that of all scholars it should be Heller (Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta (1932), p. 22) who maintains that “der Anfang des G. Verses beruht offenbar auf anderer Textvorlage”.

88 The Septuagint in xxix, 16 reads: о εὐσεβὴς μὲ ἐνοικίσας.

89 The variants יִבְרִי/yבּרִי appear quite often, and are also attested in our verse by Hebrew manuscripts. I need not repeat that to my mind such an agreement per se between Hebrew manuscripts and the LXX is of no significance. Cf. TL I f.; 51 f. Because of the break before xlv, 8 I doubt whether the rendering κατεξειλασθε in v. 7 exercised any influence. But this is at least a possible alternative.

90 This connection is beyond doubt, as will be seen from the telling additions of Lucianic, etc., manuscripts in xlv, 9; cf. Ziegler’s apparatus.
that that passage contains not only the ploughman but also the theme of דבש חכם, parallel to דבש חכם of xliv, 8.

Having got that far, a new problem arises. If we examine more closely the Greek of v. 8, we find a rather amazing rendering of the sequence דבש חכם יושב ים. Both verbs are rendered by the recurring ἀνατελάτω. On the level of mechanical retroversion, this would suggest that the translator was forced to use ἀνατελάτω because a suitable word occurred in his Vorlage91, so that דבש חכם becomes a plausible suggestion.92

Here again we face the problem of interpretation on the basis of a different verse. If the exegetical tradition connected xliv, 8–9 with xxviii, 24, is this not an indication that it knew of the reading דבש חכם in our verse (and not דבש חכם)? On the other hand, xxviii, 24 shows that the translator shied away from translating the picture of “opening the earth” literally, so that a mechanical retroversion in xliv, 8 has to be approached even more cautiously. I would suggest that he had an excellent reason for doing so: All the other passages of “opening the earth” are pictures of disasters (Korah!) and not of salvation and healthy growth.93

To sum up our case: It may happen that we do not hit upon our source of interpretation directly, but must use roundabout evidence. To what degree such procedure is permissible has still to be investigated. But one point must be made: it may well be that in loco the Greek may mirror the Hebrew in one way and extra locum in another. There is not one monolithic exegetical tradition at the basis of the version for a whole book — let alone the whole Bible — and divergent interpretations can co-exist, especially if not brought into close contact in loco. It would hardly be surprising if a special investigation of exegetical traditions outside their specific verse would make us aware of such a co-existence of multiple traditions, which would allow us to gain further understanding of the problem of retroversion versus interpretation.

91 The problem of repetition in parallelism in MT as against “stylistic” change in the version and vice versa deserves a full-scale study.

92 Ehrlich, Randglossen, ad loc., suggested this reading without adducing the LXX. Cf. also LXX on Ps. lxxii (lxii), 7. If we start out from рем או, we could end up with suggesting (ה)יש, which would fit the Greek. Of course, one could maintain that the first ἀνατελάτω is the result of an attempt to combine two Hebrew verbs. But even then one wonders whether the translator really could do no better than repeat himself. (The reading ἀνατελάτω is, of course, a corruption after lxxii, 9, as has long been seen). Cf. also Ottley, ad loc.

93 I would not suspect that the translator refrained from rendering the expression literally because of some possible sexual connotation attached, as exemplified by the Midrash (e.g. Gen. Rabba, section XIII): דבש חכם יושב ים — נקטתת וּשְׂדֵה מּוֹתְתָה לַבּוּר; יִמור יֵשֶׁב — שֹׂנֵא מְרִים וּרְבִית.
9. Is. xlv, 23

κατ' ἐμαυτοῦ ὅμως... ὅτι ἦμείς κάμψει πάν γόνυ καὶ ἐξομολογήσεται πάσα γλώσσα τῷ θεῷ

This final example is meant to illustrate yet a further aspect of our problem: The exegetical basis of a suggested interpretation — as always, in contradistinction to retroversion — in connection with traditions which cannot be traced in the extant collections of the Midrash. In a way, the type of interpretation to be suggested is perhaps not less interesting for the study of Jewish literature in the Rabbinic period than it may be for our understanding of the Septuagint.

First of all, the reading itself has to be verified. Ziegler’s apparatus lists two distinct renderings: ἐξομολογήσεται and ὅμεσται. Although the latter rendering is necessarily the one which appears in the Hexaplaric, Lucianic (and the Catena) manuscripts, the evidence does not completely exclude its Septuagintal origin. To be sure, the evidence becomes complicated through the quotation of our verse in Rom. xiv, 11 as shown by the addition of τῷ θεῷ. But in any case we are confronted — in one way or another, and most probably by the Septuagint itself — with the rendering ἐξομολογήσεται for ἄνασται.

This is hardly a literal translation of ἄνασται, but it would be a very good rendering of the form ἄνασται, which could thus be suggested as the result of our retroversion.

Our interpretation, on the other hand, would start with the observation

94 According to the present fashion, one would probably end up by ascribing it to a “proto”-tradition (“Proto-Lucianic”, etc.). For that issue, cf. also my Rise of the Tiberian Bible Text, n. 65.
95 The Vetus Latina conflates the two renderings: iurabit et confitetur.
96 For the different readings τὸ θεό / τὸν θεόν cf. Ziegler, Untersuchungen, p. 74. The quotation in Phil. ii, 11 is, of course, a further development of the idea.
97 I do not wish to get involved at this stage in a discussion about multiple translations and recensions. It is even enough for our purpose to state that this rendering was not introduced by one of the “Latter Greek Versions.”
98 The interesting marginal note in the Vaticanus on Ezek. xvi, 8, reading ἐμολογηθα for ἐμοσία (γενναος) is no evidence to the contrary. For the simplex (ὁμολογεῖ) also once translates ἐπ᾽; cf. also the variant ὁμολογηθαν for ἐμοσίαν in 1 Macc. vi, 61.
99 This retroversion is especially noteworthy in the light of the reading adduced below, n. 104. To be sure, it cannot claim any support from the list in Hatch-Redpath, and the Greek verb does not happen to translate this Hebrew root in the Septuagint.
that our verse is of a pronouncedly doxological character. This is inherent in its original setting, but even more strongly developed in its exegetical use. In parallelism to the "bending of the knee", "swearing" did not make perfect sense, especially after the "swearing" in the beginning of the verse.\(^{100}\) Therefore שלוש was interpreted in the slightly cognate sense of avowal or confession — in short within the semantic field of Hebrew והזה.\(^{101}\) For the interpretation of שלוש in the sense of והזה, we can, I submit, adduce proof from a midrash which to my knowledge has not been recognized as such. I refer to the well-known doxological passage in the second section of the 'Alelu prayer\(^{102}\), which on various grounds has been declared to be one of the most ancient prayers. It runs in its usual form:

יإبرיר ירשה כל ישבך תכל כי זה הברך כל ברך השמש כל השם.апрקיי 할וחנים ייחר.

In my submission this passage contains a typical derash on the verse quoted, that is to say: כי לי מרום כל ברך and שלוש שמעי קך ייחר means now:อง להברך שמעי קך ייחר. I need hardly add that this fits our דומולוגות perfectly.

If we accept the proposition that the Septuagint and ancient Jewish prayer had the same tradition with regard to the sense of this passage, we may look for further evidence in that direction. I suggest that such evidence is forthcoming from another ancient prayer which is of the most pronouncedly doxological character. I refer to the use of our verse in the Nishmuth benediction\(^{103}\) which runs:

כן יזון יברך יشبهו רסהור (חרשורי) והרודומית והרימויות ריקנישו וקנילבו את שמך

말צוה. כי לא אכלה ילב$v_1$צוה כל השמש וכל הברך וכל המברך לפי חומש לפניך השוהות.

Whereas the interpretation of כל בברך כל השמש is literal, as we understand it, the phrase כל השמש is again interpreted as we have seen before:

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\(^{100}\) The repetitious use of שלוש in MT is by itself not without difficulties, and could be interpreted as favouring an emendation. The translator of Isaiah had, of course, no difficulty in expressing the concept of "swearing by the name of the Lord", cf. xix. 19.

\(^{101}\) Because of the semantic development of Hebrew והזה and of Greek (ἐξομολογέω) in the LXX and NT, possibly to some extent under Hebrew influence, it cannot be said with certainty what exact shade of meaning was intended. I doubt, however, whether the meaning of praise (칭וג) was the one originally intended here, and possibly much of the sense of declare, confess, avow, etc. was still felt. However, for the later Jewish interpretation (see below) we are allowed to assume already the sense praise, cf. also Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum N.T., s.v. On the intended sense in Phil. ii. 11, cf. especially E. Lohmeyer, Kyrios Jesus (Sitzb. d. Heidelberger Ak. d. Wiss., Phil.–Hist. Kl. 1927–28), p. 60.


\(^{103}\) Ibid. p. 126 (1962 ed. p. 173).
and in this instance it is the verb ורדות itself which is being used.104

Our assumption, that ורדות was interpreted in this case in the sense of היה can be finally proved from the following “identification”105 of the verbs in Midrash Tehillim on Ps. c, 1:106

ומושר לתרודה: אמר הכהנים ירדו נָא כָל הַאָמוּרָהָו אָנוּמקלְקְלָו. שאמור: “כי נשמתך...

יְהוָה מַהְיָא כָּל וַעֲשָׂרְךָ כָּל לְשׁוֹן.

To sum up: This last example is meant to illustrate that in our search for traditions underlying the exegesis of the Septuagint, we may have to venture outside the boundaries of linguistic identification of parallel verses and of explicit midrashic interpretations. The large field of scriptural quotations, as used by the community in its devotion, may yield further fruit.

Again and again we have been confronted by cases where we were disposed to assume at first sight that retroversion would lead us back to a variant reading. On second thoughts, we were convinced that the difference between the versions is founded upon an exegetic tradition, regardless as to whether our solution was based on linguistic evidence, parallel passages, or midrashic statements. Finally, however, we sometimes wonder which is the true and which the apparent solution or whether, perhaps, the resultant text is the outcome of two processes combined. It is at this point that subjective choice and intuition come in. Whether our suggestions in any particular example will be judged by fellow-scholars to be acceptable or not, I trust that the foregoing will justify the proposed system of double notation. It is hoped that this system will become more and more refined as we proceed with our edition of the Bible.

104 I am inclined to assume that the various words used for interpreting נשמת is pure coincidence. But I should like to point out that for the Nishmath prayer we possess the variant reading של לנים נשמת! This reading has been noted, of course without any connection with our problem, in the edition of the Passover Haggada by E.D. Goldschmidt, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 107. It may well have arisen within the doxological context of the prayer, and is no proof of a variant reading in the Bible text. But a case could be made for maintaining that the exegetical tradition rests, in the last instance, on a variant reading. While I do not ignore this possible solution, it tastes too much of a compromise for my liking. See below. On the other hand, ורדות and נשיטת appear very often as parts of the same idiom in doxological contexts both in Hebrew and Aramaic. Cf., out of many cases, the tradition common to all the Targums on Ex. xv, 1, where נשיטת ומיעד is rendered לשון ורדות.

105 To be sure, outside the doxological context נשיטת could be interpreted literally. Cf. the midrash on our verse (B.T. Nidda 30 b): "ишננת נפשך...ויהיו ו aplicación...שפימה...תקבך".

106 I am using Buber's edition (1890). All the spacings are mine.