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THE LAND IS FULL OF FOREIGN CHILDREN:
LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY IN LXX ISA. 2.6

Rodrigo de Sousa

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that Isa. 2.6 is a challenge for those who try to interpret and translate the book of Isaiah.¹ Over the years, several emendations of the Hebrew text have been proposed and the LXX has often been used as a resource for the clarification of the verse's meaning and textual history.² But in the light of recent developments in research, which have indicated that the form of the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Isaiah was indeed very close to MT, a new set of questions can be asked with regard to the relationship between the MT and LXX of Isa. 2.6. Sweeney (1996: 101) is correct in his assessment that the ancient versions 'represent the translator's or scribe's attempts to make sense out of a confusing text'.³ If the *Vorlage* of the Greek Isaiah is similar to MT, a comparison between the versions opens a window into significant aspects of the LXX translation process.

In the present contribution, I explore the translation technical aspects of LXX Isa. 2.6, focusing on questions of syntax, vocabulary, textual relationship between LXX Isaiah and other LXX texts, and ideological factors behind the rendering.⁴ I expect that this contribution

¹ It is a great honour and privilege to offer this contribution in honour of my *Doktorvater*, Robert P. Gordon. In my years as a doctoral student at Cambridge, I learned from Robert Gordon well beyond academic matters.

² Some of the proposed emendations have found their way into BHS and modern versions. See the surveys in Barthélemy (1986: 13), and De Waard (1997: 12–13). In this connection the work of Gray (1911; 1912) needs to be highlighted for his strong stance on the superiority of the LXX to MT as a witness to the original text of Isaiah.

³ See also Sweeney (1988: 139–41).

⁴ The notion of textual relationship is used here instead of *intertextuality*, as the latter term involves a series of complex principles and methodological presuppositions related to structuralist and post-structuralist literary criticism, represented by the work of authors such as Kristeva (1969; 1974). While the concept of intertextuality is valid for the study of texts (even within the LXX) it does not apply to the kind of simple relationship of direct influence envisaged here between LXX Isaiah and LXX

will advance our knowledge of the principles that oriented the translation of Isaiah in the LXX.

THE LXX TRANSLATION OF ISA. 2.6

First of all, here is a parallel translation of the MT and LXX of Isa. 2.6:

MT	LXX
<p>כִּי נִטְשָׁתָה עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יַעֲקֹב כִּי מְלֹא מְקֹדִים וְעֹנְנִים כְּפִלְשְׁתִּים וּבִלְדֵי נְכָרִים יִשְׁפִּיקוּ:</p>	<p>ἀνήκε γὰρ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ ὅτι ἐνεπλήσθη ὡς τὸ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἡ χώρα αὐτῶν κληδονισμῶν ὡς ἡ τῶν ἄλλοφύλων καὶ τέκνα πολλὰ ἀλλόφυλα ἐγενήθη αὐτοῖς</p>
<p>For you have abandoned your people, the house of Jacob. For they are filled from the east, and sorcerers like the Philistines, and with the children of foreigners they strike.</p>	<p>For he has forsaken his people, the house of Israel. Because <i>their country</i>⁵ has become filled, as at the beginning, with sorceries like <i>that</i> of the foreigners, and many foreign children have been born to them</p>

Modern commentators tend to be bothered by the second person addresses in MT Isa. 2.6 and 9, while third person forms are overall privileged in Isa. 2.6–9. Instead of seeing these two instances as mutually supportive,⁶ scholars have sought to reconstruct alternative Hebrew texts. For instance, Duhm (1902: 39–40) argues that הַתְּשֻׁנָּה⁷ possibly springs from a misreading of נִטְשָׁתָה עַמֶּךָ, occasioned by the joining of the first two words and the confusion of ו and ת resulting in the second person possessive suffix we find in MT's הַתְּשֻׁנָּה. For Duhm, this is probably the reading of the LXX *Vorlage*, and the explanation for the third person rendering ἀνήκε. However, if the translator had a text similar to the one reconstructed by Duhm, one would expect

Deuteronomy and Hosea, as we shall see below. For a succinct account of intertextuality, see Elam (1993) and Thiselton (1992: 38–42).

⁵ The portions in italics represent additions in the LXX.

⁶ As suggested by Williamson (2006: 190).

⁷ The *plene* spelling in MT agrees with 1QIsa^a.

a Greek equivalent for ה' as subject of the verb. Taking this together with the lack of support for the LXX rendering in other ancient versions, we are left with little evidence of a *Vorlage* different from MT (cf. Wildberger 1991: 99; Williamson 2006: 190).

That being the case, the rendering of הַשְׁחִיבֵנוּ by ἀνῆκε in Isa. 2.6 can be seen as the manoeuvre of a translator attempting to produce a meaningful representation of the verse, taking into account the sense of its immediate context. For the Isaiah translator, the use of third person forms in vv. 7 and 8 could have warranted a shift in v. 6. In his discussion of 'personalization' in LXX Isaiah, Baer (2001: 57–58) has demonstrated that in places like Isa. 14.21 and 51.3, the translator was willing to reconfigure his text by maintaining a consistency of pronouns for homiletical and stylistic reasons. Concerns to maintain an intelligible text flow are consistent with the translator's personalizing and homiletical tendencies.

Verse 5 would also have given grounds for the change. While the structure of Isaiah 2 is a matter of intense debate, most commentators agree to delimit vv. 6–22 as a discrete unit.⁸ It is likely, however, that the LXX translator conceived the section as opening in verse 5.⁹ The *petuḥa* at the end of 2.4 in MT suggests a very old tradition of breaking the section between vv. 4 and 5. This tradition is also attested in 1QIsa^a and 4QIsa^b (fragment 2), both of which have line breaks at this point. The LXX addition of καὶ v̄v̄ in v. 5 could also point in this direction (cf. de Sousa 2010: 20–22).

For the translator then, the textual unit begins with the summons for the house of Jacob to walk in the light of the Lord in v. 5,¹⁰ so instead of having the awkward insertion of an address to the Lord in verse 6, with the second person הַשְׁחִיבֵנוּ, it seemed better to proceed directly from the summons to an explanation of why the people are estranged from the Lord and in need of a call to walk in his light. The

⁸ Truly, many consider the present arrangement of these verses to be the result of heavy editing, and some do not think that verse 6 originally belongs where it currently stands—see, for instance, Duhm (1902: 39), and Wildberger (1991: 99–106). This is irrelevant for the present study because the LXX Isaiah translator would have before him a textual form similar to MT.

⁹ This delimitation is also proposed by Sweeney (1996). Watts (1985) is also in favour of this arrangement but with a very particular understanding of the relationship between verses 5 and 6 (See below).

¹⁰ The rendering of בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל by τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ will be discussed later.

use of the third person (ἀνήκε) created a smooth flowing explanation from verses 6 to 8.

Watts (1985: 32) has a quite peculiar understanding of Isa. 2.5–9. He follows the early witnesses in dividing the text at the beginning of verse 5, but sees an incongruity between the invitation to walk in the light of the Lord (v. 5) and the contents of verses 6 onwards. He argues that the MT of v. 6 negates the invitation with a declaration that the people had been abandoned, and that the LXX attempts to solve this difficulty. He proposes that ἀνίημι does not mean ‘to abandon’ but ‘to approach, pertain to’. He thus translates ἀνήκε γὰρ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ as ‘for it applies to his people, the house of Israel’. While open to the possible retroversion בִּי נֹטָה אֵת הָעַמּוֹ בֵּית יַעֲקֹב,¹¹ he is inclined to see here ‘a deliberate change with theological motivations’. For him, the LXX operates in consistency with the promises of future blessing in Isa. 2.2–4 and 5 and validates the invitation that the MT seems to deny. He affirms that this shift ‘could be interpreted as an open door to Samaritans in later times’.

Several factors speak against the proposal of Watts. If the invitation to walk in the light of the Lord is really at the head of the new section, than it is perfectly reasonable to read it as presupposing that the people are currently *not* walking in this light but in the sins described in the following verses. Of course, the second person verb in v. 6 feels somewhat dislocated, yet the slight adjustment offered by the LXX helps to clarify the relationship between v. 5 and vv. 6–8. Besides that, if Watts were correct in his interpretation, solving the problem of the relationship between verses 5 and 6 would still generate an incongruity between verses 6 and 7, which list the sins of the people.

Also, his translation of ἀνήκε is unwarranted. The sense ‘to abandon, to forsake’ for ἀνίημι is quite justified.¹² More significantly, the kind of openness and universalism suggested by Watts could not be in less agreement with the nationalistic tendencies of the Isaiah translator.¹³ In fact, LXX Isaiah 2 has possible indications of an anti-Samaritan polemic.¹⁴

¹¹ He sees the LXX change of ‘Jacob’ to ‘Israel’ as irrelevant.

¹² The meaning ‘abandon’ probably developed from the classical Greek sense of ‘relax, loosen, let loose’. Cf. Euripedes’ *Orestes* 94.1; Thucydides 5.9; Herodotus 4.28.

¹³ Cf. Seeligmann (1948) and Baer (2001), *passim*.

¹⁴ In LXX Isa 2.18, the 3rd person plural of the verb κατακρύπτω deviates from MT (which reads הִלְכִי—3rd person singular), but agrees with 1QIsa^a and all the most

The discussion above serves to indicate that, on the linguistic level, the near context of a verse influences the translator's choices. The contextual considerations of the translator will also come into play as he deals with the difficulties of the second part of Isa. 2.6. The seemingly peculiar uses of the verb מלא and the preposition מן in the construction מלאו מקדש מלאו have proven to be a challenge to commentators at least since Lowth.¹⁵ The LXX rendering indicates that the translator also struggled with the text and produced a version that differs markedly from MT but which makes sense for him within the overall context of the passage. While these differences suggest to some a LXX *Vorlage* very different from MT, it is possible to reconstruct the trajectory from a Hebrew parent text resembling MT to the LXX.

The rendering of מלאו as ἐνεπλήσθη suggests that the translator did not have any difficulties with the meaning of the verb as such, but rather with the identification of its subject and object. By ignoring the ו in ענינים the translator finds his object (what he does with מקדש is discussed below).

The translator also seems to have had difficulty with seeing the 'house of Jacob'—or 'Israel'—as the subject of מלאו. He thus supplies

important ancient versions (Vulgate, Peshitta, Targum). Since haplography could easily explain the reading in MT, it is most likely that LXX reflects a different *Vorlage* at this point. The difference in the meaning of the verbs is also worthy of note. κατακρύπτω carries the ideas *to cover over, hide away, conceal*, and is most frequently associated with the roots טמן (Gen. 35.4; Jer. 13.4,6), סתר (Ps. 30[31].20), and חבא (2 Chron. 18.24; 22.12). הלך means *to pass away, carry, or substitute*, and is mostly connected to ἀλάσσω (Gen. 35.2). This is the only instance in the LXX in which the two terms are connected, and the reason for this could be gleaned from reading verses 18 and 19 together. If we connect the aorist participle form εἰσενέγκαντες (from εἰσφέρω, *to carry into*) with τὰ χειροποίητα as an accusative and not as a nominative, we read that men will carry the idols into the caves—and into the clefts, with the addition of καὶ εἰς τὰς σχισμὰς possibly influenced by v. 21—of the rocks and hide them there. In LXX Gen. 35.4 where we have the narrative of Jacob hiding (κατακρύπτω) the idols and earrings of his servants under the Terebinth at Shechem, the LXX adds 'and he destroyed them until the present day' (καὶ ἀπόλεσεν αὐτὰ ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας). It is possible that the addition in Genesis fits within a later anti-Samaritan polemical tradition, which connects Jacob's hiding of the idols and Mount Gerizim. This tradition is also reflected in texts such as Ant. 18:85–89, Jubilees 31.1, L.A.B. 25.10, and Gen. Rab. 81. See also Harl (1986: 251) and Kippenberg (1971: 250–251). It is conceivable that, under the influence of this tradition, the translator connected Gen. 35.4 and the destruction of the idols in Isa 2.18–19.

¹⁵ Lowth (1868: 149) proposed the reading מקדש מקסם ('with divination from the east') instead of MT's מקדש מלאו as the original one, with the first word being lost through some form of haplography. This view has enjoyed acceptance by several commentators, such as Kaiser (1972: 31).

a different subject for the verb, namely, ἡ χώρα αὐτῶν. Gray (1912:51–53) does not see ἡ χώρα αὐτῶν as an addition but as a translation of אֶרֶץ, present in the *Vorlage* but subsequently lost. He supports this argument by pointing to the distance between the phrase and the verb ἐνεπλήσθη and to the presence of אֶרֶץ in vv. 7 and 8, noting that it is not unusual for LXX Isaiah to render a singular pronoun referring to a collective noun as plural.

Yet, the distance between the phrase and the verb should not be a problem if the translator were trying to represent a *Vorlage* similar to MT. The use of ἡ χώρα αὐτῶν is in fact related to the presence of אֶרֶץ in the immediate context, but does not point to an alternative *Vorlage*, rather to the translator's contextual awareness and reading sensibilities. The presence of אֶרֶץ twice in v. 7 and once in v. 8 suggested to the translator that the passage focused on the *land* and this authorized an addition. This in turn required a change in the verb from plural to singular. Duhm (1902: 39) argues that the singular suffixes of אֶרֶץ in vv. 7 and 8 suggest that the *Vorlage* of LXX Isaiah had a singular form of מֵלֵא. This is an unnecessary assumption. A change in verb number to create coherence is quite within the parameters of the translation techniques of LXX Isaiah (e.g. 6.2; 7.1).

Incidentally, the same choice of subject is found in the Targum, which adds ארעכון at this point. While producing quite different renderings,¹⁶ both LXX and Targum seem to have been influenced by the same kind of contextual considerations. That is, the presence of אֶרֶץ three times in the following verses (twice in verse 7 and once in verse 8) made it possible for the translators to understand the construction in verse 6 as also referring to the land, even if adjustments had to be made.

The perception of the centrality of the land in the passage possibly also lies behind the rendering of מִקְדָּם. The translator understands קָדָם at this point as *beginning, ancient, of old*, and not *East*.¹⁷ He therefore does not see the opposition East-West, represented by פְּלִשְׁתִּים/קָדָם

¹⁶ The Targum reads ארי שבקתון דחלת תקיפא דהוה פקיד לכון דבית יעקב ארי ארעכון ארעכון טעון כיד מלקדמין וענגין כפלשתאי ובמוסי עממא אזלין ('For you have abandoned the fear of the Strong One who has delivered you, you of the house of Jacob, because your land is filled with idols as from the east, and sorcerers like the Philistines, and they go in the customs of the peoples').

¹⁷ Symmachus, on the other hand, has ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνατόλης. The Vulgate's *olim* agrees with LXX, but it could have been influenced by it; see Barthélemy (1986: 13).

in the Hebrew. This is clear from his use of the phrase $\omega\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\prime\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$. The phrase is peculiar to LXX Isaiah, occurring only in 1.26, 2.6, and 63.19. In 1.26 it is a somewhat literal translation of כְּבִרְאֵשׁוֹנָה . The context is the divine promise to restore Zion to its former state of glory and righteousness: ‘I will set up your judges as in the past and your counsellors *as at the beginning*’.

$\omega\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\prime\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$ in Isa. 63.19 is a free translation of מֵעוֹלָם . The MT of 63.19^a reads $\text{הֲיִינוּ מֵעוֹלָם לְאִי־מְשָׁלְתָּ בָּם לְאִי־נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עַל־יְהוּהָ}$ (‘We have become as those whom you never ruled; upon whom your name has not been called’). The LXX is $\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha\ \omega\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\prime\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$, $\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\ \sigma\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\ \eta\grave{\rho}\xi\alpha\varsigma\ \eta\mu\acute{\omega}\nu\ \sigma\acute{\upsilon}\delta\epsilon\ \acute{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\theta\eta\ \tau\acute{o}\ \acute{o}\nu\omicron\mu\acute{\alpha}\ \sigma\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\prime\ \eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ (‘We have become as at the beginning, when you did not rule over us, neither was your name called upon us’).¹⁸ The translator conceives of a distant time in the past, before the Lord exerted his rule upon Israel, and uses the temporal expression $\omega\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\prime\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$ to convey this.

In the light of these examples the use of the phrase in 2.6 is also clearly temporal. In this case, the translator conceives of a time, also distant in the past, when ‘the country of the house of Israel was filled with sorceries like that of the foreigners’. It is interesting to note that when כְּפִלְשֵׁתִים is rendered by $\omega\varsigma\ \eta\ \tau\acute{\omega}\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\phi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omega\nu$, the syntax of the LXX does not draw a comparison directly between the different people groups, as in MT; rather, the *countries*, or *lands*, are compared. This is quite an acceptable shift, since a territory could be conceived as the *locus* of customs or practices, as in 1 Macc. 1.44, which mentions the introduction of ‘customs strange to the land’ ($\nu\omicron\mu\acute{\iota}\mu\omega\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\tau\acute{\rho}\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \gamma\eta\varsigma$). More significantly, the expression $\gamma\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\phi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omega\nu$ appears in 1 Macc. 3.41, 4.22, 5.66, and 68, referring to the land of the Philistines. This suggests that the LXX Isaiah translator could have a specific territory in mind, the coastal area traditionally associated with the Philistines. As argued by Levine (1999: 24), the populations in the coastal areas of Palestine were more susceptible to the process of Hellenization.¹⁹ These thoroughly Hellenized coastal regions were naturally perceived as a threat to the purity of Jewish life, and especially of Jerusalem.

¹⁸ The translation of 63.19^b (64.1) is discussed in detail by Baer (2001: 181–92).

¹⁹ It is noticeable, for instance, that the region of Galilee was not as thoroughly Hellenized as coastal cities such as Caesarea and Decapolis (cf. Chancey 2002; 2006).

The choices of words to represent עֲנָנִים and פְּלִשְׁתִּים also need to be observed. The noun κληδονισμός appears only here and in Deut. 18.14, where it is also connected with עֲנָן. In Deut. 18.10, עֲנָן is rendered by the verb κληδονίζεσθαι. The suggestion of Ziegler (1934: 107) that the translator was influenced by LXX Deut. 18.10 and 14 is taken up by Barthélemy (1986.13) as evidence that this is a peculiar interpretation of MT. The list of pagan magical and religious practices in Deut. 18.10–14 provided the kind of ideological framework that could be used to describe the pagan customs of gentiles, and could be associated with other texts that also deal with similar issues, such as Isa. 2.6.²⁰

It is well known that פְּלִשְׁתִּים is rendered as θυλισταιμ in LXX Pentateuch, Joshua, and in the B text of Judges, and with forms of ἀλλόφυλος in the remainder of the LXX books. Different explanations for the phenomenon have been offered, but only two are highlighted here. Seeligmann (1948: 87) suggests that a ‘definite historical circumstance’ lies behind the rendering. Following Exod. 34.15 as well as 1 and 2 Maccabees, he sees the term as referring to the populations surrounding Palestine who were hostile to Israel during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes but who were forcibly converted to Judaism and incorporated into the Jewish state—without becoming ‘citizens’—after the Maccabean wars. The difficulty with this view is that it does not fit well Seeligmann’s own proposal of dating LXX Isaiah prior to 140 BCE.²¹

A more elaborate and attractive proposal is offered by De Vaux (1972). After tracing some particularities of the historical usage of the term, he points out that it was apparently reserved for the non-Jews living alongside the Jews ‘*dans la terre promise à Abraham*’—as opposed to the Canaanites, who occupied the land *prior* to the Jews but had been absorbed (p. 190). De Vaux’s criticism of Seeligmann’s view is pertinent as it is difficult to view this kind of Septuagint evidence as pinpointing a specific historical situation (such as the Maccabean campaigns) and it is methodologically preferable to look for a more general historical context, such as the geographic and political

²⁰ As we have seen, the non-rendering of the preceding ו alters the syntax of the verse markedly, but was a necessary change to construct a coherent and meaningful Greek verse.

²¹ He is aware of the difficulty and entertains the possibility that earlier strata of LXX Isaiah did contain φυλισταιμ (a view for which there is indeed some slight textual support) and this was subsequently replaced by ἀλλόφυλοι.

configuration of people groups in the areas surrounding Palestine. He proposes that ἀλλόφυλος carries the peculiar nuance of designating those who were the propagating agents of Hellenism. The same kind of ideological drive could lie behind the rendering of פְּלִשְׁתִּים as Ἑλληνας in LXX Isa. 9.11(12).

In this connection, I note that in Legat. 30: 200, Philo describes the ‘multitude’ inhabiting the city of Jamnia as μιγάδες (‘mixed’). They are a mixture, the majority of which is made out of Jews, while others are ἀλλόφυλοι from neighbouring countries (πλησιοχώρων), who are a constant distress to the Jewish people for their continuous violation of Jewish customs.

Thus, the rendering ἀλλόφυλα for נְכָרִים later in Isa. 2.6 is also noteworthy. The root נכר is more frequently translated in the LXX with ἀλλότριος (e.g. Gen. 17.2; 31.15; 35.2, 4; Exod. 2.22; Lev. 16.1; Josh. 24.14; Neh. 9.2; 13.26–27; Isa. 28.21; 62.8; Jer. 2.21; 5.19; Zech. 1.8; Mal. 2.11) or ἀλλογενής (Gen 17.27; Exod. 12.43; Lev. 22.25; Isa. 56.3, 6; 60.10; 61.5; Ezek. 44.7, 9[2x]). The use of ἀλλόφυλα for נכר is exclusive to LXX Isaiah, appearing only here and in 61.5, where the Hebrew reads בְּנֵי נְכָר. The same Hebrew expression is rendered as υἱοὶ ἀλλότριοι in 62.8.²² It seems that ἀλλόφυλος, ἀλλότριος, and ἀλλογενής had enough semantic affinity to be able to be used somewhat loosely to refer to those who represented the dangers and evils of Hellenism. This fluidity in the use of vocabulary explains why the translator could also use Ἑλληνας in LXX Isa. 9.11(12) to translate a Hebrew word normally rendered by one of these Greek terms. The use of ἀλλόφυλα for נְכָרִים in the last part of Isa. 2.6 could indicate an effort to harmonize the Greek text. Attempting to provide an adequate rendering in Greek the translator opted for the word that would create greater coherence in the context.

The adjectival form ἀλλόφυλα occurs within the rendering of the difficult construction וּבְלִדְיֵי נְכָרִים יִשְׁפִּיקוּ. The Greek καὶ τέκνα πολλὰ ἀλλόφυλα ἐγενέθη αὐτοῖς does not seem to correspond either in syntax or in meaning with the Hebrew construction. Yet again we can conceive of the Greek as a free rendering of a *Vorlage* that was similar to MT.

²² In 1.7, a text with an obvious intertextual relationship to 62.8, we have two occurrences of נְכָרִים. These are translated as ἀλλότριοι and λαῶν ἀλλοτρίων.

The discussion about the meaning of the Hebrew construction generally centres on the understanding of *ישפיקו*.²³ Commentators and modern translators are usually divided as to whether *ישפיקו* should be understood as derived from the root *שפק* I or *שפק* II. The first carries the meaning ‘to strike, clap (hands)’. In Isa. 2.6 it would have been used either as a metaphor for striking bargains, or with connotations of some sort of sorcery.²⁴ This proposal often requires the emendation of *בילדי* as *בידי*.²⁵

The root *שפק* II means ‘to be enough, suffice’. Barr (1968: 232–233) points to uses in the Hebrew Bible (the verb in 1 Kgs. 20.10, the noun form *שפקו* in Job 20.22), to the existence of several cases in Sirach (with the spelling *ספק*),²⁶ and to the familiarity of *שפק* II in later Hebrew, to argue that this is the meaning intended in Isa. 2.6. Besides the merits of Barr’s proposal to ascertain the meaning of the verb in its original Isaianic context, it seems to be quite plausible that this understanding does indeed lie behind the LXX rendering (note also the insertion of *πολλά*, prompted by the translator’s attempt to express the sense of the verb clearly).

Several commentators also suggest that the translator has *שפק* II in mind when dealing with *ישפיקו*. Wildberger (1991: 100) argues that the translator deduced from *שפק* II the meaning ‘to have an overflow’ (in the *hif’il*).²⁷ For Williamson (2006: 193), the rendering *καὶ τέκνα πολλά ἀλλόφυλα ἐγενήθη αὐτοῖς* could be based on a ‘loose interpretation’ of *שפק* II (which he translates as ‘to suffice, abound’) and the ignoring of *ב* in *ילדי*.²⁸

Somewhat related to this is the proposal of Lowth (1868: 149). He argues for the corruption of *ישפיקו* in MT and points to Michaelis’ connection of *יספחו* (‘they huddle together’) in Job 30.7 with the noun *ספיח*, noting that it means ‘corns springing up, not from the seed regularly sown on cultivated land, but in the untilled field, from the

²³ Several ancient manuscripts (including 4QIsa^b) read *יספיקו*.

²⁴ This seems to underlie Symmachus’ translation *καὶ μετὰ τεκνῶν ἀλλοτριῶν ἐκποτήσαν*.

²⁵ My own translation of the MT reflects this understanding—without the emendation of *בילד*—but this is secondary to the issue at hand, namely, how the LXX translator understood the term.

²⁶ The manuscript evidence attests both *השפיקו* and *הספיקו* for Sir. 42:17.

²⁷ Wildberger’s own view is that the use in MT reflects *שפק* I.

²⁸ For Williamson’s illuminating discussion of the evidence of later Greek versions and Jerome, see pp. 193–194.

scattered grains of the former harvest'. His contention is that 'the noun, by an easy metaphor, is applied to a spurious brood of children irregularly and casually begotten'. For Lowth this would be the best way of explaining the difficult rendering καὶ τέκνα πολλὰ ἀλλόφυλα ἐγενήθη αὐτοῖς of the LXX, as well as the Vulgate's use of *adhaeserunt*. While this proposal is unique, it is closer to the meaning of שִׁפְכִי II.

The reference to the birth of children in the Greek suggests that either an explanation derived from שִׁפְכִי II or something along the 'metaphorical' lines proposed by Lowth lies behind the LXX rendering. This brings us to another significant issue. A common feature to the studies of Lowth, Wildberger, Williamson, and Seeligmann is the suggestion of a relationship between LXX Isa. 2.6 and LXX Hos. 5.7, which translates יִלְדוּ זָרִים בְּיַד־בָּנִים ('for they have given birth to foreign children') fairly literally as ὅτι τέκνα ἀλλότρια ἐγεννήθησαν αὐτοῖς ('for alien children have been born to them').²⁹ The comparison is suggestive because of the similarity in wording between the two Greek versions. The fact that LXX Hos. 5.7 is a more direct rendering leads Seeligmann—and contemporary commentators—to see it as prior to that of LXX Isa 2.6.³⁰

Though not argued by any of the commentators cited above, the influence of LXX Hos. 5.7 could also lie behind the change of 'Jacob' to 'Israel' in LXX Isa. 2.6. The expression 'The house of Jacob' (בֵּית יַעֲקֹב) appears in MT in both verses 5 and 6. The LXX renders the occurrence in verse 5 by ὁ οἶκος τοῦ Ἰακωβ, but the one in verse 6 by τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ. The lack of textual support in ancient witnesses indicates a *Vorlage* identical to MT. Perhaps the change was effected by literary motivations (to avoid repetition) as something similar happened in the translation of אֲרָצוֹ in the following verses.³¹

In Isa. 8.14 we have the reverse phenomenon. There בְּתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל is translated by ὁ οἶκος τοῦ Ἰακωβ. It is thus likely that the two expressions could simply be used interchangeably without any particular implications. Yet, since the translator could have used either term, something must have steered him in a particular direction. In the light of the

²⁹ Besides the aforementioned commentaries, see Seeligmann (1948: 72).

³⁰ Seeligmann's argument (1948: 70–72) is that whenever a deviating LXX rendering agrees with a literal rendering of another passage, the former is to be seen as dependent on the latter. There is no need to disagree with this assessment at this point.

³¹ אֲרָצוֹ occurs twice in verse 7 and once in verse 8. The first occurrence is rendered by χώρα and the other two by γῆ.

proposed influence of LXX Hos. 5.7, it should be noted that in LXX Hos. 5.1 it is the οἶκος Ἰσραηλ (בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל) that is being addressed. Hos. 5.7 is part of a larger address in which the ‘House of Israel’ is indicted for its sins. If we have a strong case for the influence of the verse in the rendering of Isa. 2.6, it is conceivable that the whole context of the Hosea passage was in the mind of the Isaiah translator, and this could have prompted the translation of בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל by οἶκος Ἰσραηλ.³²

That ancient readers took account of larger textual units is abundantly evidenced by the existence of textual division systems in early manuscripts.³³ Also, several recent studies point to the contextual character of the translational decisions of LXX Isaiah.³⁴ If the ancient competent reader—like *any* competent reader—read and processed texts in larger units and not simply at the individual word and sentence level,³⁵ we can expect that when a different text was evoked, it could also have been evoked as a whole. That is, the translator could have in view larger contextual units than the simple verse.³⁶

IDEOLOGICAL FACTORS IN LXX ISA. 2.6

The strategies used to render Isa. 2.6 and the influence of texts such as LXX Deuteronomy and, especially, LXX Hosea on the translation give us insight on the kind of process operating in the mind of the LXX Isaiah translator. As he attempted to make sense of the difficult

³² It could also be the case that the translator was influenced at this point by the use of בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל in Isa. 63.7. It is conceivable that we have in LXX Isa. 2.6 a glimpse of a tradition which will be developed further in the Targum, where the phrase ‘house of Israel’ was used as a collective designation of God’s chosen, whether in obedience to the Lord or in open transgression of the Law, as in 5.3; 9.1–2; 27.1–4; 28.9, 25; 42.7 (cf. Chilton 1983: 33–37). This tradition could have found its way to the translator’s thinking, who disregarded the precise equivalent in the rendering of Isa. 2.6.

³³ See the articles in Korpel and Oesch (2000; 2002).

³⁴ See especially Van der Kooij (1997; 1998). For a discussion of Van der Kooij’s view, see de Sousa (2010: 13–40).

³⁵ See the distinction made by Barr (1979: 297) between the *input* and *output* sides of the translation process.

³⁶ One is reminded here of Dodd’s well known approach to the issue of the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Dodd (1952: 126) affirms that when a certain text was quoted in *testimonia* collections, the full context of the passage cited was in view. While this position has been largely discredited, it still has commendable elements.

Hebrew verse before him he was guided by clues in the text itself, by his knowledge of previous texts, and by ideological factors.

Thematic and ideological parallels between Isaiah 1–4 and the book of Hosea (especially chapter 5) would have easily been perceived by a translator familiar with both texts. The whole of Isa. 2.5–4.6 is dominated by the theme of the cleansing of Zion (Sweeney 2006: 89), where indictments for the sins of the people are combined with promises of restoration. Hosea presents similar features. Hos. 5.1–7, in particular, continues the association between prostitution and idolatry, which dominated the first four chapters (Mays 1969: 82, 84; Wolff 1974: 101; Macintosh 1997: 189–191). The association between foreign cults and sexual immorality is graphically developed in Hosea. Significant examples are 1.2–9; 2.1–13; 4.11–19; 8.5–11. The themes in Isaiah and Hosea could have been combined and appropriated by post-exilic Jewish groups.

The tensions between the Judaism of the 2nd century BCE and the Hellenizing influences to which it was subject, together with traditions developed around the reading of sacred texts provided the kind of ideological material that steered biblical interpretation and translation in particular directions.³⁷

For instance, the traditions reflected in Ezra-Nehemiah (e.g. Neh. 13.23–31) associate the marriage between Jews and non-Jews with the snare of idolatry and moral defilement. Klawans (1998: 402–405) demonstrates how these traditions subsequently made their way into diverse texts. The two most significant for the present study are: 4Q381, frg. 69, lines 1–2, which states that the practices of the inhabitants of the land are the cause of its moral defilement; Jubilees 20.19–22, and 30.13–15, which contain strong admonitions against intermarriage, also connecting the practices of foreigners with the defilement and pollution of the land.³⁸

Also significant is CD 8.1–13 (cf. 4Q266, frg. 3, col. 4, lines 1–6), which contains an indictment against those who do not adhere to the strict regulations of the group.³⁹ The indictment is crafted in language

³⁷ Neh. 13.23–31 speaks of Nehemiah purging the foreign influences on the Israelites, especially with regard to the marriage to foreign women (נְשִׂיִם נְכַרִּיּוֹת / γυναῖκες ἀλλότριαι [LXX]) and having children with them.

³⁸ It is interesting to note that Jubilees 20.22 describes the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites in language that is akin to Isa. 2.5–22.

³⁹ That is to say the group behind this specific passage. The composite character of the Damascus Document leads many scholars to believe that several different groups

that combines elements from Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Hosea. Besides a direct allusion to Hos. 5.10,⁴⁰ the text combines motifs present in the book of Isaiah, e.g. the untreatable infirmities of Isa. 1.5–6, and Hosea, e.g. references to ‘prostitutions’ (זנות), to craft the accusation against the sinners.⁴¹ The section culminates with a citation of Deut. 32.33, relating the Deuteronomic threats and curses to the Hellenizers who were perceived as a menace the community.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Following the common procedure in early Judaism, the translator of LXX Isaiah read scriptural texts with a keen eye to their common features, and perceived in them severe warnings against the dangers of Hellenization and other alien influences. Being immersed in these traditions and ideological milieu, when trying to make sense of the difficult syntactical constructions in Isa. 2.6, he understood יִשְׁפִּיקוּ as related to שִׁפְק II and perceived in the text references to pagan practices, intermarriage, and the begetting of ‘foreign’ children. Elements which threatened to contaminate the land of Israel from its vicinity.

The translator of LXX Isaiah certainly belonged to the scribal circles entrusted with the preservation and transmission of prophetic literature.⁴² He was most likely endowed with extensive knowledge of scriptural texts, and lived in a context where certain conditions of interpretation were in vogue. These conditions were religious and ideological, stemming from a community which accorded central value to the scriptures, and derived from these texts its values and traditions. In this context, the translation of a particular biblical text was certainly

lie behind the overall composition of the document. See a helpful summary of the discussion in Hempel (2000: 54–56). The difficulty in recovering history from the Damascus texts is highlighted by Grossman (2002), and Metso (2004).

⁴⁰ The condemnation is presented as coming upon the leadership of Judah ביום ביום אשר תשפוך עליהם העברה (‘on the day in which wrath will be poured upon them’). The MT of Hos. 5.10 reads הָיוּ שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה כְּמַסִּיגֵי גְבוּל עֲלֵיהֶם אֲשַׁפֹּךְ כַּמַּיִם עַבְרָתִי (‘The princes of Judah are like those who remove a boundary; upon them I shall pour my wrath like water’).

⁴¹ While focused solely on the Admonition section of the Damascus Document, the study of Campbell (1995), is very helpful in pointing to the pervasive use of scriptural texts, whether as citations or allusions in the composition of the document.

⁴² For a discussion of the possible priestly background if LXX Isaiah and its connection with the Oniad dynasty, see de Sousa (2010: 108–113).

carried out with the avowed intent to be faithful to its message, yet also with particular ideological premises giving shape to its interpretation.

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