Interpreting the Sealed Book

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The following contribution is a documentation of the panel discussion on Ross Wagner's *Reading the Sealed Book. Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics*[1] which took place at the IOSCS meeting during the SBL Annual Meeting 2013 in Baltimore.[2] The statements are given in the order of their presentation. We thank the authors for their willingness to share their papers and to prepare them for publication as a contribution to the ongoing task to analyse and interpret the book of Isaiah in its Septuagint version and to basic hermeneutic questions.

S. Kreuzer

1. Leonard J. Greenspoon, Introduction.

Wagner begins his monograph by observing that there are two sharply divergent approaches or alternatives to "Septuagint hermeneutics": the '"interlinear paradigm" underlying NETS, on the one hand, and the approach behind La Bible d'Alexandrie, on the other.

The first question on which these divergent approaches disagree concerns the degree to which the textual-linguistic character of LXX translations conforms to target-language models. One viewpoint holds that, due to pervasive linguistic interference from the source texts, "unintelligibility of the Greek text qua Greek text is one of [the] inherent characteristics" of the Septuagint.[3] At the other end of the spectrum lies the view that the translators sought to

[1] Forschungen zum Alten Testament 88, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck / Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013, XI, 295 pp.

[2] Nov. 24, 2013, 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

[3] *Reading the Sealed Book,* 3; citing Albert Pietersma, "A New English Translation of the Septuagint," pp. 217–228 in *X Congress of the IOSCS* (SBLSCS 51; ed. Bernard A. Taylor; Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 219.

"produce a text, if not easy to read, in any case almost always of good "greekness," comprehensible and coherent."[4]

A second area of disagreement centers on the nature of the relationship between the Greek translations and their parent texts. One perspective locates the typical translated text in a position of subservience to its source. It attempts to bring its target audience to the source text. In contrast, others regard the typical LXX version as "distinct and independent from its parent text," a translation that aims to bring an interpretation of its source to the target audience.[5]

A third controversy arises over the proper focus of the modern interpreter's attention. Drawing a sharp distinction between "text production" and "text reception," some (e.g., NETS) take the principal object of study to be the Greek text in its relation to its source. Others (so La Bible d'Alexandrie) place the Greek text itself at the center of the investigation

What Septuagint hermeneutics needs—and what Wagner seeks to provide through a close investigation of Isaiah 1—is a theoretical framework and a corresponding methodology. Among the tools Wagner employs is Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), as conceived by Gideon Toury. DTS conceives of translation as an event (rather than a single action) within the literary system of the target culture.

Toury's model recognizes that translation takes place in a social context. Shared cultural expectations regarding aims and methods both guide and constrain translators. Thus, the "paradigm" or "model of translation" from which translators take their bearings can be conceptualized as a set of socially constructed "norms" that are neither static nor absolute; rather they reflect social conventions that are themselves fluid and changeable, and they constitute a spectrum of negotiable behaviors.

This approach starts from the assumption that the translation process involves decision-making on the translator's part. The concept of translational norms allows for the systematic description of the principles guiding translators as they navigate the challenges of re-presenting the source text in a form that will be "acceptable" to the target culture as a translation. Thus understood, target models serve as key points of reference for determining the "fit" of a translated text within the overall literary system of the target culture. In

[4] Ibid., 3; citing Marguerite Harl, "La Bible d'Alexandrie I. The Translation Principles," pp. 181–197 in *X Congress of the IOSCS*, 187.

[5] Ibid., 3; citing Harl, "La Bible d'Alexandrie," 185.

Toury's schema, such an assessment takes place at three distinct levels: the linguistic, the textual, and the literary.

To delineate the interrelatedness of function, process, and product with respect to a particular translation is to specify what Cameron Boyd-Taylor and Albert Pietersma call its "constitutive character." In the case of the Septuagint corpus, it is the textual-linguistic character of the translated text itself that constitutes the primary evidence for these aspects of the translation.

Boyd-Taylor has developed an extended argument for the "interlinear paradigm," theorizing that the "position and function of the typical Septuagintal translation was conceived of as the Greek half of a Greek-Hebrew diglot."[6] The prototypical example of such an "interlinear" translation is Aquila's version. On this hypothesis, the Greek translation seeks to facilitate the reader's engagement with the Hebrew original in some fashion.

Wagner contends and then demonstrates that DTS has the potential to open up fresh perspectives on the Old Greek version of Isaiah, a translation that despite decades of research has resisted easy categorization.

A hotly debated element in this regard is the contention that a constitutive norm of this translation is the permissibility of "actualizing" Isaiah's prophecies for the community's contemporary situation. Passages that are seen as examples of this are judged to be central to the program of interpreting Isaiah as prophecy. For the Greek translator of Isaiah thus understood, the "actualization" of prophecy represented not only permitted, but expected behavior. As is well known, this bold hypothesis has not been without its detractors.

In the substantive middle chapters of his work, Wagner carefully analyzes all aspects of Isaiah 1 in the Greek in order "to (1) offer a theoretically informed 'thick description' of the translation with a view toward delineating its constitutive character more exactly; and (2) model an approach to interpreting OG Isaiah that befits its character as a translated text" (35).

In assessing this text's prospective function, Wagner determines that "as a translation, OG Isaiah remains strongly redolent of its Hebrew forebear in such areas as the rhythm of its syntax, the shape of its rhetoric, and the texture of its figuration" (234). The Old Greek version thus stands firmly in the tradition of translation that took shape around the Septuagint proper, exemplifying as it does the distinctive "interlanguage" authorized by the Pentateuch.

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[6] Ibid., 12; citing Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *Reading between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies* (BiTS 8; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 171–172.

"Where LXX Isaiah most differs from the 'typical' translation within the Septuagint corpus is in the translator's studied attempt to produce a translation with a high degree of textual cohesion, thematic coherence, and rhetorical (or 'literary') power. With his tendency to adhere to the translational norms of quantitative and serial fidelity, [the translator] succeeds in representing many of the textual-linguistic features of the source text in his translation. At the same time, he remains cognizant of the needs of those who will read and hear his text in the target language, offering his audience guidance in understanding the message of the prophet" (234).

The translator's "love for parallelism and his delight in paronomasia and sound-play bespeak an intense interest in the impact of his translation on the ear. This, then, is a text crafted to be heard and experienced on its own. While it may not have been intended to 'replace' its Hebrew parent, neither was it designed simply to assume a subservient position in relation to its source" (234).

In Wagner's view, the most obvious setting for a translation of this character within the Diaspora of the second century BCE would be the Hellenistic synagogue. To imagine that the translator of Isaiah envisioned a "liturgical'" use for his translation does not imply that this version could not also have been intended for study alongside the Hebrew text.

In connection with interpretation in Greek Isaiah 1, Wagner observes: "to the extent that the Greek translator interprets Isaiah for his audience, he does so by elucidating its language, modulating its discourse, and contextualizing its message" (235). In connection with elucidation of language, Wagner points out, the translator normally attempts to resolve ambiguities and aporias in the Hebrew, rather than simply passing them on to his audience. In order to rescue his reader from potential pitfalls, the translator also modulates the tone of the prophet's discourse.

Wagner also contends that "contextualization of Isaiah's message does not, in OG Isaiah 1 at least, take the form of 'actualizing' the ancient prophecies" (236). Rather it is the Greek translator's passion for particular Isaian motifs—especially those that center on sharp economic and moral divisions within Israel—that marks him as a man of his time. In this way, the Greek translator "makes his own distinctive contribution to the formation and preservation of Jewish identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora" (237).

2. H.G.M. Williamson, Review.

As I indicated in my blurb for the publisher, I have enormously appreciated the aim of this monograph, namely its concern to work in detail through an extended passage in Isaiah as a means to address systematically some of the current controversies regarding the method and motivation of the Greek translator of Isaiah. Furthermore, I applaud the care with which this has been done.[7]

I am not a Septuagint specialist, so that I must leave to others an evaluation of the precise approach adopted. The fact remains, however, that there is a great deal that we do not and cannot know about the details of how a rendering of a particular word or phrase in the LXX came about. Some of those who chase after method imply that they know everything; but they do not, and nor do we. The following remarks are therefore offered in a spirit of inquiry with which I know Wagner is happy to engage.

I come unashamedly as a student of the text of the Hebrew Bible, so that my own concern for and interest in the Septuagint text is limited to the extent to which it can serve as a textual witness to the Hebrew. Of course, I am aware that this in itself is not easy, as there is a whole host of considerations that need to be taken into account when trying to determine the wording of the translator's Hebrew *Vorlage*, and Wagner lays these out in short order in part of the second of his introductory chapters. These are familiar to us all when they are listed, because actually they are pretty obvious: things like the need to take account of the translator's practice overall, the uncertainty over whether he had a damaged manuscript, whether consciously or unconsciously he tried to improve upon its intelligibility, and other such matters, including whether or not he was also introducing some form of interpretation or actualization, which is Wagner's main concern behind his book.

But of course that does not mean that they are easy to apply because they require such a sweeping breadth of knowledge which only a few scholars will have. Commentators on the Hebrew text like me generally turn to the Septuagint when there is a problem in the Hebrew to see if the Greek rendering suggests some sort of solution by way of emendation. There is usually little

[7] The following remarks were written for oral presentation, without thought for any subsequent publication. While I have reworded some of the more blatant colloquialisms, I have generally maintained the less formal oral style and furthermore have not added any more than the bare minimum of documentation.

point in looking at it if there is no problem with the Hebrew and equally when we do look it up, how can we possibly know about things like the translator's practice as a whole? After all, even if I knew a bit about it for one book, I could not apply that to another, so that I am completely stymied when I move from one text to another.

Well, now at least there is no danger of getting it wrong for Isaiah chapter 1, so I guess that's a start. The trouble is, I had already written on Isaiah 1 before Wagner had shown me what I was supposed to be doing, so that it all comes too late![8] Still, it is reassuring sometimes to find I was right for unknown reasons. For instance, his detailed study seeks among other things to show how the translator 'takes considerable pains to clarify the structure and cohesion of the discourse in Isaiah 1', and to this he attributes, *inter alia*, the addition of 'Zion' to v. 21 to parallel its appearance in v. 26, where it has been brought in from the start of v. 27 in the Hebrew, so marking out the bounds of this paragraph within the chapter. In my own comments on this I had already associated the occurrence in v. 21 with that in v. 26 (along with some other considerations) so as to conclude that this was an addition by the translator rather than a loss from the Hebrew text (as some commentators had argued), so that it is good now to have this further independent evidence in support.

Moving on from that to passages where one might look to the Septuagint for help with difficulties in the Hebrew text raises other questions, however. The second half of v. 18 sounds in traditional English renderings like an unconditional promise of forgiveness: 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool' (RV). And indeed, in an older style of popular Christian piety that is precisely how they were taken. In view of the urgent commands which precede them and the strongly conditional clauses which follow them, however, it has seemed to many in ancient as well as in more recent times that this is unlikely. The Hebrew imperfect verbs (ילבינו and יהיו) are certainly most usually indicative, but they can also be modal if necessary, and that is now the preferred option of many commentators. My understanding is that, unlike Hebrew, Greek is more easily able to distinguish modal from indicative, so that the commentator naturally looks to see if the translator can offer guidance from the oldest interpretive reader known to us. S/he will be disappoint-

[8] Unless otherwise stated, all references to my own work are to the relevant sections of the first volume of my commentary: *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27,* 1: *Commentary on Isaiah 1-5* (ICC; London: T & T Clark, 2006).

ed, however, as the Greek is as plain as the King James Version! The LXX not only keeps the verbs as simple imperfect indicatives but in addition makes God directly into the first person subject of the verbs: 'I will make them white like snow', etc.

In discussing this, Wagner first shows how the translator has tightened up the interconnected structure of the series of four statements through vv. 18–20, draws attention to the emphasis in the Greek text on the divine initiative, and then concludes that 'the Lord's adamant refusal to forgive his people's sins while they persist in practicing lawlessness (v. 14c) is more than matched by his readiness to cleanse them completely, if only they will turn from oppression and pursue justice'. He then dismisses my reading of LXX as providing an unconditional promise of forgiveness as based on only 'an atomistic reading' that takes no account of the wider context.

Well, of course in one sense that is true. But the fact of the matter is that this verse has been read atomistically by generations of churchmen (though not by many commentators: only Delitzsch and Eichrodt,[9] so far as I know), and the question is whether our translator, who could have made the point clear without difficulty, in fact expected his readers to gloss his rendering with the conditional clauses that Wagner inserts into his exegesis at this point. How can we know?

A similar consideration arises at the end of v. 4. Here, the second half of the verse in the Hebrew comprises three clauses, the last of which has proven quite a challenge to translators throughout the ages: נזרו אחור. So this is an obvious place where one will turn to the versions for some assistance, but when it comes to the Septuagint we may again be disappointed, as it simply omits the clause altogether. Some commentators have suggested that the words did not stand in its Vorlage at all, but I have argued for reasons that need not be rehearsed here that in fact they must have been in the finally redacted text of the chapter, and Wagner appears to agree with me on that. So why were they left untranslated?

Faced with this problem I could only venture to suggest that he did not understand them and so omitted them, aided in this by a quirk of his to which I shall return shortly that he was not always bothered to render lists of things

[9] F. Delitzsch, *Commentar über das Buch Jesaia* (4th edn; Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1889), 61 = ET, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1894), 82–83; W. Eichrodt, *Der Heilige in Israel: Jesaja 1-12* (BAT 17/1; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1960), 33; see too A. B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel*, 4: *Jesaia, Jeremia* (Leipzig: Hinrich, 1912), 7.

in full or with particular accuracy. Wagner goes further with an interesting suggestion. Allowing that there might have been a physical flaw in the translator's *Vorlage* or that we have here a case of haplography (though I am not quite sure how that would work), he in fact favours a solution based again on wider considerations. Noting that the translator links v. 4 more closely with v. 5 than does the Hebrew text by way of a change of person, he suggests that the last clause of v. 4 was deliberately dropped in order to enhance the parallelism of the passage as a whole. But again, how do we know? Enhancing parallelism is a bold claim for a translator in antiquity. This is a second example where Wagner appeals to an observation from a slight change of literary structure in order to explain a feature of the translation. The more examples of the same phenomenon that one can muster, the more probable it all becomes, and the less forceful the evidence appears for any possible reconstruction of an alternative Hebrew *Vorlage*.

Another passage where the translator's concern to add firm structure to his presentation coincides with the failure to translate a phrase occurs at v. 11. In the sentence 'I am fed up with burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed animals; I take no delight in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats', there is no Greek equivalent of Hebrew וכבשם, 'and lambs'. Wagner demonstrates that in this passage the Greek joins this verse with the start of the next as a single sentence as part of 'a series of interrelated macro-level transformations of the source text that bring order to the overall structure of' vv. 11–15.

The lack of an equivalent for וכבשים has been taken by very many commentators as a clue to the possibility that it may not have stood in the translator's *Vorlage* and beyond that to the further possibility that it is a later addition to the Hebrew text. Wagner allows that possibility as well as potential loss by parablepsis, but thinks either of these less probable than the suggestion that he 'simply opted to represent וכבשים ועתדים … by a single equivalent'. Yes, but why? Wagner does not really delay over that as he moves on to the fact that, as others have observed, he had already used ἄρνοι to translate מריאים and that there may also have been influence from Deut. 32:14.

This is all fine, but it takes no account (other than in passing in a footnote) of an argument I have tried to set out in full in an article[10] that looks at a number of passages in Isaiah where we have a list of related nouns only to find

[10] 'Isaiah 1.11 and the Septuagint of Isaiah', in A. G. Auld (ed.), *Understanding Poets and Prophets: Essays in Honour of George Wishart Anderson* (JSOTSup 152; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 401-12.

that the translator regularly treats them in a somewhat cavalier fashion, leaving out or adding items, changing their order, and so on. In particular, the present verse may be profitably compared with 34:6–7, where the similarity in the Hebrew is only partial but where in the Septuagint they coincide completely, as if his list were just what he took to be standard for sacrificial animals.

Now, if that is right (as I still believe), then it is an element in the translator's regular practice that ought surely to have a bearing on our understanding of his procedure here, as well perhaps as elsewhere, such as v. 4 that I discussed earlier. In other words, a response to the question 'how do we know' will need to include an element of 'he could in certain circumstances be somewhat cavalier' in it. And if that is the case, it will have a bearing in turn upon the extent to which we should ascribe every difference to some carefully conceived master plan of literary sophistication, which might be used as a caricature of Wagner's approach.

3. Florian Wilk, Review.

This book – focused on "the problem of how to identify and evaluate 'interpretation' of the source text in the translation" (5) – is a significant contribution to LXX research. W. is right in dividing his study into two main parts – first setting up a theoretical framework in order to define an appropriate methodology, then offering an in-depth analysis of a delimited textual unit in order to delineate the character of the translation. Indeed, only investigations like this one will enable us to make progress towards solving the problem just mentioned.

With regard to LXX Isaiah, W. considers the debate as centered on the question of 'actualization' (32): Is it true that this translation "repeatedly reflects contemporaneous history" (Seeligmann 1948: 4)? I am not quite sure whether ch. 1 is the right text for checking this hypothesis. As far as I know, neither Seeligmann nor van der Kooij, the chief proponents of a fulfillment interpretation, ever referred to it in this regard. On the other hand, it is obvious that the translator presents ch. 1 as a summary of Isaiah's visions of judgment on Judaea and Jerusalem. One should expect, therefore, that a tendency to apply prophecies to his own time – if at all discernible – becomes apparent here, too. In fact, I have tried to show that this is the case (Wilk 2003). Thus, it is up to me to review how W. has tackled the question of 'actualization'. I will do so in accordance with the structure of his book, taking up his reflections on method and discussing his analysis of Isaiah 1.

Although the debate about 'actualization' forms the starting point for his study, W. does not isolate the issue. He models "an approach to interpreting OG Isaiah that befits its character as a translated text" (35). Drawing on insights from Descriptive Translation Studies as developed by G. Toury and refined by C. Boyd-Taylor, W. attempts to describe "the interrelatedness of function, process and product" (11) of the translation. To that end, he analyzes "the textual-linguistic character" (11) of LXX Isaiah "in relation to the cultural framework" (42) in which it was produced and read, i.e., "the reading of scriptural texts in the Jewish diaspora of the second century BCE" (40).

By and large, I can only consent to this approach. The same holds true for the analytical methods W. applies in his investigation. There are, however, two steps in his argument which give rise to questions.

In his description of the cultural encyclopedia W. confines himself to considering "the cultural norms that govern the translation process" (45). This is rather consequential. However, I wonder that he does not refer to the prophetic character of the parent text and its translation at all. Given that the book of Isaiah is "a composition of … oracles", "[t]he crucial question is how these oracles were understood by the translator" (van der Kooij 2009: 150) and by the readers. In fact, there is plenty of evidence that during the second century BCE, it was common among Jews to take scriptural prophecies as referring to the present or the near future of one's own time. From Ben Sira 48:22-25 it can be seen that it was even possible to hold a bifocal view on Isaiah: On the one hand he acted for the good of his contemporaries, on the other hand he showed "to eternity the things that will be." Is it not *a priori* to be expected that such an attitude towards the book of Isaiah informed the composition and the reception of its Greek version, too?

This leads to my second question. At the end of his book, W. characterizes the translator "as a man of his time" (237) who contextualizes "Isaiah's message for the Hellenistic diaspora" (236). This "is most perceptible" in his reference to a "division within Israel between those who rely on wealth, power and *Realpolitik* … and those who trust in the Kyrios." (237) Depicting "adherence to the νόμος as constitutive of Israel's identity as the people of God", the translator points out how Jews are "able to withstand the aggressive … imperialism of the Hellenistic kingdoms" (237). Furthermore, he "alludes to well known facets of life in the Hellenistic diaspora" (233). All that is reminiscent of what Seeligmann once said – that the translator had a "tendency to rediscover, in the text he was translating, the world of his own period" (Seeligmann 1948: 79). But W. makes a definite qualification: He

does not find "compelling evidence to suggest that the Greek translator sought to 'actualize' OG Isaiah 1 for his audience by encoding his translation with specific references to contemporary historical events." (233)

It is not easy to grasp the reason for this qualification. According to W., LXX Isaiah "evokes cultural knowledge" of its time (233) in distinct terms. Isa 1:22, e.g., "recalls the persistent problems the Ptolemies faced with coinage …" (233). Assuming this to be true, is it plausible to state that the Greek text includes no allusions to historical events that affected the translator and the readers?

In fact, what W. objects to is a particular variant of 'actualization': a mode of reading prophecies that van der Kooij has called "*Erfüllungsinterpretation*" (32). W. makes himself clear: "Heard and studied in the synagogues of second-century Egypt, Isaiah's sweeping vision … required no 'actualization' to articulate the … faith and … hope of the translator's community." (237) This statement is apparently based on the conviction that the prophetic text remains "open to continual reinterpretation" (Wagner 2007: 267). If, therefore, the translator had 'actualized' Isaiah's prophecy "by identifying it with a specific contemporary situation" he would have "close[d]" it (Wagner 2007: 268 n.64, quoting R. Troxel).

This reasoning is not conclusive, however. In Jewish literature from the Hellenistic period there are different models of fulfillment-interpretation (cf. van der Kooij 2008: 600). Only the 'pesharim' from Qumran explicitly attest to the view that the prophets wrote down what will happen to God's people at the end of the days, and that it needs divine inspiration to disclose the hidden meaning of their writings. LXX Isaiah lacks any such statement. We cannot tell, therefore, whether the translator aimed at a definite interpretation of Isaiah's prophecy in relation to his own time. He might as well have understood that book "as an inexhaustible source for appropriate historical explanations" (Wilk 2010: 191). In that case, one would expect him to allude to specific events in history without imposing such references on his readers. Thus, I do think it necessary to consider any aspect of the translation that might refer to the time of the translator by keeping one's mind open to different variants of 'actualization'.

In his actual analysis of LXX Isaiah 1, W. succeeds in showing that contextualization is typical of that version. Again and again he points out how a term or phrase refers to a facet of Jewish life in Hellenistic times. With regard to lexical choices and intratextual linkages, W. confirms what others have observed before: "the … translator identifies the central issue in the Lord's

controversy with his people as their … refusal to pattern their lives according to the νόμος" and pinpoints "the leaders of Zion as the primary target of the prophet's polemic" (232). Both phenomena enhance the distinctiveness of his "contribution to the … preservation of Jewish identity in the Hellenistic diaspora" (237).

To my mind, however, we ought to go one step further. LXX Isaiah 1 has two characteristics that should be evaluated more extensively than is done by W.

The first one is the emphasis on the *cultic dimension* of the lawlessness in view. Even the Hebrew parent text speaks of God's disgust at offerings and feasts (v. 11-14), attributes Zion the title 'whore' (v. 21) and refers to the idolatry of Israel's sinners (v. 28-29). LXX Isaiah 1, however, is concerned with Israel's cult throughout: In v. 4-5, the translation adopts scriptural polemic against idolatry; in v. 24, it picks up the notion of purity introduced in v. 16 and applies it to the future removal of all lawless leaders from Zion. In this way, the Greek version suggests that those leaders are responsible for the degeneration of the cult. This, in turn, fits the religious situation at Jerusalem in the second century BCE, marked by a continuous fighting over Hellenistic influences on the temple.

Second, the translation has not only clarified (cf. 230) but significantly modified the *structure* of the text. W. rightly observes that the translator tends to add "particles" as well as "personal pronouns" and to "alter[ ] the grammatical 'person' of verbs" (230). The effect of this is that the smaller units of the parent text link together to form a coherent discourse. Diverging from the outline constructed by W. (cf. 65-67), however, I prefer to divide this discourse into three parts: God's address to the people and its rulers in v. 10-20 constitutes the center; this is preceded by a statement of Israel's unfaithfulness and its consequences in v. 2-9, and it is followed by a critique of Zion's disobedience and a prophecy of God's response to that in v. 21-31. Viewed in this way, it emerges that the sequence of lawlessness and judgment is repeated: Just as Israel once forsook the Lord and provoked him to anger (v. 4), it does so "now" (v. 21, cf. v. 24.28); and just as it was punished in the past (v. 5-7), it will receive punishment in the future (v. 24.28-31). Furthermore, there was and there is an element of hope and salvation: While v. 9 refers to a seed that God left for Israel, V. 26-27 predict that God will restore Zion. That the translator put stress on this analogy can be seen from the structural parallels between the first and the last section of Isaiah 1. In both cases, a bitter complaint (v. 2-3 // v. 21-23) leads to a cry of woe and an exposition of its consequences (v. 4-7 // v. 24-26), followed by a prophecy about Zion's

fortune (v. 8 // v. 27-28) and a concluding explanation (v. 9 // v. 29-31). Apparently, LXX Isaiah 1 establishes a connection between Zion's past, present and future. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the translator applied those passages in the text that concern the present ("now") to his own time.

It is only in this context, I think, that one can make sense of two striking shifts the translator has made in his *usage of verbal tenses*: In v. 7-9 he switches from present to future and then to aorist, in v. 29-30 from future to aorist and back. I have proposed viewing these shifts as signs of an 'actualization' of Isaiah's vision. W. agrees that they can hardly be attributed to "a mechanical *Übersetzungsweise*" (215, *contra* van der Louw 2007: 230) but presents a different explanation. In his view, the tenses in v. 8-9 "suit[ ] the perspective of the speakers" (97 n.120) who express first their fear "that … soon only the mother city will remain unconquered" (94 n.110) and then their "hope in the Lord's fixed purpose to preserve his people" (97 n.120). Again, in v. 29-30 the switch to aorist "recall[s] the past in order to evoke … a deep confidence that the final downfall of the idolators is certain" (217) – without referring to a particular event (cf. 218). To my mind, however, this interpretation does not correspond to the structure of the discourse as a whole. Considering the parallels between v. 2-9 und v. 21-31, it seems natural to connect both changes of verbal tenses: It is the prediction made in v. 8 that is presented as carried out in v. 29b. In making this connection one can also explain the remarkable wording of those verses: The idolators of the past were not brought to an end (v. 28b-29a) but only 'ashamed' (v. 29b); and so they were since Zion was 'abandoned … like a garden-watcher's hut in a cucumber field' (v. 8). In other words: Those who were able to watch over Israel have left Zion. But just in this way, God has preserved a 'seed' which maintains the prospect of Israel's future restoration (v. 9). Accordingly, this restoration will imply the return of leaders who "would once again govern the people according to … the Law" (187, cf. v. 24-26). In view of its cultic dimension the Greek discourse can therefore plausibly be read as referring to the retreat of the Oniads to Egypt and the hope of their reinstatement as high priests in Jerusalem.

The exegesis of Isaiah 1 which is thereby ascribed to the translator can certainly be designated as "fulfillment interpretation". I would deny, however, that it results in a 'closure' of Isaiah's prophecy. Rather, it presents readers of the Greek text in second century Egypt with the opportunity to apply that prophecy to their own situation and to grasp the meaning of their hope of Zion's restoration as it was evoked by Isaiah. Understood in this way, 'actu-

alization' is but an integral aspect of 'contextualization' which W. has shown to be characteristic of the LXX version of Isaiah 1.

Kooij, Arie van der, "The LXX of Isaiah and the Mode of Reading Prophecies in Early Judaism. Some Comments on LXX Isaiah 8-9," in *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten* (WUNT 219. Ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2008), 597-611.

Kooij, Arie van der, "Review of: Troxel, Ron L. *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation: The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah,*" *BIOSCS* 42 (2009), 147-152.

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4. Rodrigo Franklin de Sousa, Review.

J. Ross Wagner's most recent monograph is a stimulating read, and some of the conclusions resonate with proposals I made in my own work. Yet, in this response to the book, I want to offer some reflections and constructive criticism regarding the general method adopted by Wagner, particularly about the adoption of the "interlinear paradigm" and the issue of "actualization of prophecy".

Wagner approaches LXX Isaiah with the dual purpose of characterizing it as a translation and modeling "an approach to its interpretation appropriate to its character as a translated text" (Wagner 2013: 5). To do this, he turns to Descriptive Translation Studies (henceforth DTS), in the form given by Cameron Boyd-Taylor, who in turn recasts Gideon Toury's method. He adds to this two sets of theoretical postulates adopted from Umberto Eco. The first is that of the *cultural encyclopedia*. This is the idea that every linguistic item is

culturally connected with a wide network of concepts, conventions, ideas and representations. The second set of concepts is that which includes the *model author* and *model reader*, which I will not discuss in this review.

With this theoretical model in the background, Wagner exegetes OG Isaiah 1 thoroughly and ends up with the following overall picture: OG Isaiah displays an orientation to the form of the parent text at the linguistic level, and it aims at producing a highly acceptable translation at the textual and literary levels. The version presents a high degree of isomorphism with relation to its source text, and its deviations are very much in line with the development of Isaianic themes and expand these in the intent of bringing to life the meaning of the version for a Jewish Hellenistic readership (227-235). For this reason, Wagner repeats the verdict of Boyd-Taylor upon OG Job, asserting that it is also an apt description of OG Isaiah: "a translation which would be recognized as a literary composition within the target culture but at the same time be readily identified with the culture of the source text". The supposed setting of the version is the Hellenistic synagogue, where the version was performed orally, as well as possibly studied alongside the Hebrew (234).

From this brief overview I proceed to my questions. The first is the connection between DTS and the "interlinear paradigm". Following Boyd-Taylor closely, Wagner weds the adoption of the DTS model with the assumption of the "interlinear paradigm", according to which the "typical" Septuagint translation is to be taken as part of a diglot, in the model of Aquila. For Wagner, the Isaiah translation often deviates from the "typical" LXX text, so that it toggles between the intention of not replacing the Hebrew original and the attempt to produce an acceptable and palatable version to a new readership (234).

In his presentation of the method, Wagner arrives at a translational model for OG Isaiah from a sustained discussion of Boyd-Taylor's treatment of the Aquila and OG versions of 3rd Reigns and the OG version of Job, focusing on the study of the latter. He highlights three features that Boyd-Taylor attributes to OG Job as having relevance to the understanding of the Isaiah translator (25-27). The first is the manipulation of the consonantal text; the second is the technique of "anaphoric translation", that is, drawing on other passages to illuminate the translation of the text at hand; the third, an expansion of the second, is the fact that "the Greek translator occasionally gestures beyond the boundaries of Job toward another text or toward some feature of the wider culture" (27).

Boyd-Taylor describes OG Job as deviating from the interlinear standard of Aquila, but remaining "readily identifiable with the culture of the source text". OG Job is then "an attempt at cross-cultural extrapolation, the refash-

ioning of Hebrew literature for a Hellenistic Jewish readership. (…). The translator evidently understood his task as one of producing a Jewish literary work in Greek".[11] Wagner applies the same conclusions to OG Isaiah.

A primary difficulty I encountered with this approach was the ready adoption of a method developed in work with other versions to Isaiah. Given the plurality in methods and settings of translations of the various LXX books, one ought to view this with caution. We will come back to this point later. But, more significantly, there are shortcomings inherent to Boyd-Taylor's approach. Boyd-Taylor's thorough studies have the goal to establish a benchmark from which to evaluate all Septuagint translations. That is, once we determine the typical text, texts that do not conform to it may be taken as "atypical". The fundamental problem with Boyd-Taylor's method is that his 'typical' text is not a result of his exegetical survey of the versions but comes from an a priori decision that a peculiar model, which is both late (2nd century) and unusual, should serve as a paradigm.

Boyd-Taylor's own exegetical work leads him to admit that the bulk of LXX texts do not necessarily follow the interlinear model, and yet he affirms that this should not affect the paradigm, as interlinearity is a theoretical construct (17; cf. Boyd-Taylor 2011). I find it quite hard to follow the argument that we should stick to labeling a certain approach typical when the vast majority of LXX texts simply take no account of it.

The problems with Boyd-Taylor's method become evident as he deals with the the Old Greek of Reigns and of Job. Aptly noticing that the translational methods of OG Reigns do not conform to the 'typical' pattern set by Aquila, Boyd-Taylor persists in describing the features of this version as deviations from a 'standard' norm or expectation of acceptability. The same happens with OG Job (22).[12] This version is presented as influenced by target-language expectations on the linguistic, textual, and literary levels. But if these expectations are met by the text, why should we persist in calling it a deviation? Worse, a deviation from a model that does not yet exist?

While the effort to produce a typology of Septuagint texts is commendable, the interlinear paradigm is very problematic, since it takes as its starting

[11] Boyd-Taylor 2011: 424-425 *apud* Wagner 2013: 27-28 What Boyd-Taylor actually does, and this is well demonstrated by Wagner, is an in-depth study of passages in 3 Reigns according to Aquila, after which he studies passages in καίγε Reigns, OG Psalter, and LXX Genesis to show that all these versions bear resemblances to Aquila, so that the interlinear paradigm is the "typical" LXX text.

[12] Cf. Boyd-Taylor 2011: 173.

point the assumption that a notably late model represents a typical text, and proceeds to judge all other translations in its light. This is bound to produce a distorted view of the actual process and function of the various LXX books. A useful typology does not start with the assumption of a 'typical' text, but with a cataloguing of the features of each version in its own right, after which a typical model may or may not emerge. A good example of the model I have in mind is that of Barr (1979).

Returning to Wagner, it is not clear how the interlinear model contributed directly to his portrayal of the version. In this regard, one particular feature of his book comes to mind. Wagner accords much significance to the role the Greek Pentateuch occupied in the Alexandrian community and its influence on Greek Isaiah, affirming that this also has to do with power relations and the maintenance of a Jewish cultural identity. Wagner affirms that translations which follow the Pentateuch's model of interference from source language and culture would help foster this identity, so that it was expected from translations, even if they do not follow an interlinear model (56-62).

In this case, a good question to ask is this: If we are to look for a typical version to serve as model and paradigm from which to evaluate OG Isaiah, why not simply to adopt the Pentateuch? What is the real relevance and benefit of resorting to the interlinear paradigm? Don't we run the risk of creating a hybrid and convoluted model?

This leads me to the second point, related to the image we construct of the translator and his social setting, and how this impacts our expectations with regards to what we will find in the translation. Wagner is correct in affirming that the theoretical model of a cultural encyclopedia implies actual social communities, and to understand the work of the Isaiah translator it is fundamental to identify the horizon he shares with the community and the social setting for which the translation is being produced. Naturally, the ultimate clue to this is the version itself, but a measure of consideration of elements drawn from outside the translation is obviously indispensable.

In the case of Isaiah, little is concretely known about this setting, and the standard conjectures are that the translator functioned in the context of a Diaspora community, possibly Alexandria, in the second century BCE, and was likely a scribe. It is within this tradition of Hellenstic Judaism, its practices, representations and literary systems that Wagner seeks to fit the Isaiah translator.

Wagner is highly critical of the view first set forth by I. L. Seeligmann (1948) and later popularized by Arie van der Kooij,[13] that the Isaiah version is marked by "actualizing" interpretation of prophecy. His remarks against van der Kooij's position center around the denial that an actualizing reading of prophecy was an expected behavior of the ancient reader (32), and an exegetical analysis of OG Isa 8:14-16. For Wagner, there is nothing in this particular text that points to a fulfillment interpretation, or to a specific contemporary situation, only to the attempt of offering a coherent interpretation in the light of the broader context of Isaiah (32-33; cf. also Wagner 2007).

He follows closely on Troxel's antagonism to any trace of *Erfüllungsinterpretation* in LXX Isaiah. For Troxel, this is not to be found in LXX Isaiah because the aim of the translator was rather to bring readers to an *understanding* of the text, which implies, in Troxel's words, that the translator did not "liberally injec[t] his own ideas". The divergences between the Hebrew and Greek texts are due to the derivation of sense "from within a larger notion of literary context than is permitted a modern translator". The translation is just making the book intelligible to his readership (Troxel 2008: 291, as cited by Wagner 2013: 34).

Along similar lines, Wagner affirms that the translator's sense of the continued significance of his book to his community does not entail the need or presence of actualization (234-235). For Wagner, the translator seeks to, and indeed succeeds in bringing the text to life before his audience. He does so by expanding themes, particularly the adherence to the Law as distinctive marker of opposition to those who compromise with the cultural, social and political forces of Hellenization. In this way, the translator appears as a man of his time, as these motifs are firmly established in the Jewish literature of the Hellenistic period. So the major transformation is "framing the prophet's call to social justice as a summons to the faithful practice of God's Law", by means of which move the translator fosters the construction of Jewish identity in the Hellenistic world (237).

Like Troxel, Wagner also seems to identify actualization with the injection of "foreign ideas" into the text, as opposed to a reading that highlight themes and brings them to the fore in fresh and creative ways (236).

While I profoundly sympathize with adopting an attitude of caution with regard to the possibility of overly creative assumptions of actualization in the

[13] E.g. van der Kooij 1998.

Greek text, I also have some difficulty with the position of both Troxel and Wagner on this matter.

To me, it seems misguided to identify actualizing interpretation with the injection of foreign ideas, or the translator's own ideas, especially when this is opposed to a translation that seeks to bring an understanding of the text. This sounds like actualization has to do with a transformation of the text and a conscious distortion or obscuring of its meaning. At best, actualization may be unconscious, but it is still 'illegitimate'. I view actualization precisely as an attempt to bring the sense of the text to the reader, but with certain expectations regarding the text which were, given the social setting in which the translation was produced, quite legitimate.

As we think about evidence that lies outside the text, this is important to remark. If the implications of the DTS method with regard to the function of a translation are to be seriously taken into account, it seems that one cannot reject in principle a practice of reading that was widely attested around the time of the translation.

Wagner is rightly open to invoking the help of ancient readers of Isaiah, arguing that since they are closer in time and place to the translator, they can illuminate his approach. He specifically cites Eusebius, Theodoret, Cyril and Jerome (53, cf. fn. 88.). At another point, when building a case for the liturgical use of Greek Isaiah in the Hellenistic synagogue, he draws on the supposed connection between Philo's citations and the later *Haftarot*, according to the model proposed by Naomi Cohen (2007) (234-235).

But if we are to construct a model based on external evidence, would it not be a good procedure to take into account Isaianic interpretation that is even closer and more directly relevant than the examples mentioned above? If we look at sources which are closer in time and place to the supposed Isaiah translator, such as Qumran texts, the New Testament, and many apocalyptic works, will we not be able to find actualizing interpretation as an expected and legitimate behavior of readers? Even Josephus, who was by no means a sectarian apocalyptic freak said with regards to Isaiah and the prophets that "whatever happens to us, whether good or ill, comes about in accordance with their prophecies" (*Ant.*10:35).

Again, I am sympathetic to guarding against excesses in identifying actualizing interpretation, but I fail to see why there needs to be such a sharp resistance in principle to the possibility that this mode of interpretation might have played a role in the translator's reading of his source. Earlier I affirmed that I found Wagner's adoption of Boyd-Taylor's treatment of Job to discuss Isaiah problematic. I return to the same point here. At the end of his thorough

exegetical work on OG Job, Boyd-Taylor concludes that the version was produced to serve as piece of good Jewish literature in Greek. There is no reason to dispute this conclusion concerning Job, given the role this book played or might have played in Hellenistic Judaism. Quite another matter is extrapolating these conclusions and bringing them to bear on LXX Isaiah

If we are to speak in terms of target language models, and the social function and roles a version is expected to occupy, it is quite easy to realize that the book of Isaiah was expected to occupy a slot that was different from that of Job. One can imagine a community of Diaspora *literati* who wanted Jewish literature in Greek and found that in Greek Job, but it is much harder to envision a context in which Isaiah would not be read as a prophecy. And for all we know, the reading of prophecy, particularly of Isaiah, in the broader context in which the translator lived, namely early Judaism, involved actualization. This was a legitimate and expected procedure, which whilst differing from the practices of our distinguished guild, cannot be judged by our standards as the simple insertion of strange fire into an otherwise clear text.

Obviously, the ultimate judge of whether actualizing interpretation is present in OG Isaiah is not external evidence but the text itself. I have argued in previous works that it is very difficult to identify renderings that display actualization. I still think that is the case. But there are at least two examples, which albeit timid and unexciting, are unmistakable. I am thinking of the well-known rendering of *pĕlištîm* by Ἕλληνας in 9:12(11), and the contemporization of the geographical name *taršîš* 'Tarshish' as Καρχηδόνος 'Carthage' in 23:1, 6, 10 and 14.

Examples such as these obviously do not allow us to see actualization as a dominant or persistent thread in LXX Isaiah, but they should serve at least to guarding us from adopting a principle according to which actualization is not to be found. These two examples are not mentioned a single time in Wagner's book. The simplest explanation for that is obviously that they fall out of the limits of his focus, which is chapter 1. With that in mind I think it is worth asking if, with 65 chapters to go, isn't it still early to write actualization off?

These are the chief points of contention I would raise regarding this book, which still represents an interesting contribution to the study of LXX Isaiah. If Wagner's goal was indeed, as he stated, to "encourag[e] others to drink more deeply from Isaiah's abundant waters" (239), he has indeed succeeded.

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Boyd-Taylor, C., *Reading Between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies*, Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

Cohen, N., *Philo's Scriptures: Citations from the Prophets and Writings. Evidence for a Haftarah Cycle in Second Temple Judaism*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

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Troxel, R. L., *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation. The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah*, Leiden: Brill, 2008.

van der Kooij, A., *The Oracle of Tyre: the Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Wagner, J. R. "Identifying 'Updated' Prophecies in Old Greek (OG) Isaiah: Isaiah 8:11–16 as a Test Case", *JBL* 126 (2007), 251-269.

Wagner, J. R., *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics*, Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013.

5. Ronald L. Troxel, Review.

The concluding paragraph of Ross's second chapter elicited one of the heartiest chuckles I have enjoyed while reading scholarly tomes. As a transition to the substance of analysis, he offers an apology for having devoted his first two chapters to method, citing Jeffrey Stout's comparison of conversations about method to clearing one's throat, which "can go on for only so long before you lose your audience" (63). Quite frankly, as much as I like Wagner's whole book, the first two chapters of throat clearing are its real gems. Everything else is commentary, figuratively and literally.

Although W. adroitly applies to OG Isaiah the observations of Descriptive Translation Studies, my admiration for his work has to do more with how he applies DTS in conversation with Umberto Eco's encyclopedia model of language-in-use-in-culture, which holds promise for elucidating the prospective function of OG Isaiah within its socio-cultural milieu. The polyvalent nature of written communication lies in its readers' diverse cultural contexts, each of which has its own encyclopedia that overlaps and differs in varying ways with those of other cultures. The success of the empirical reader – the particular reader of the text – in approximating the model reader anticipated by the text requires engaging the cultural encyclopedia invoked by the model author.

The use of Eco's model in conjunction with DTS raises significant questions. First, and most easily answered is this: if the model author is merely a

metaphor for the strategies of the text, does the category of translation matter? Is it significant for a model that focuses on cooperation between model reader and the textual strategies that evoke her?

The important role of a text as a translation within Eco's model is illustrated by Wagner's discussion of the part played in communication by interference from Hebrew language structures in the OG. Drawing on T. Rajak's framing of the issue, he notes that the "translationese" that characterizes the OG-Torah becomes a register of cultural identity and authenticity (61), so that "translationese" may be less a marker of the *process* of translation than a strategy to authenticate the text as scriptural for the model reader.

Second, if "translationese" serves as a signal of the cultural encyclopedia employed by the model reader, is the fact that a work is a translation significant? Certainly the text linguistic make up of the Septuagint could be imitated, as is illustrated by the diction of the Third Gospel. However, the primary basis for the authority of OG-Isaiah in the eyes of its readers is that it stands in for a book written in Hebrew. The roughly contemporaneous Letter of Aristeas shows that consciousness of the Greek Torah as a translation of Hebrew texts was keen in the Alexandrian Jewish community. Aristeas' notions of the authenticity of the Hebrew text and the fitness of its translators for their task recognizes the importance of its Hebrew pedigree, while the acclaim accorded its reception acknowledges the adequacy of its text linguistic make up as a mark of translation. For the reader/hearer, however, the translation's derivative authority becomes de facto authority, so that what we perceive as translation strategies become simultaneously literary strategies.

This observation invites probing the role translation strategies play in the cooperation between model author and model reader. On the one hand, translation strategies are invisible to the model reader. However, if the model author of a work composed in a single language is constructed from the concrete literary strategies the empirical author chooses, then recognition of translation strategies allows modern scholars to observe what literary structures a translator highlights or innovates. A salient example is Isa 1:28-31, where the OG translates the penultimate clause of v. 31 – ובערו שניהם יחדו ('and both of them will burn together') – with καὶ κατακαυθήσονται οἱ ἄνομοι καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἅμα ('and *the lawless* and *the sinners* shall burn together'). One way of explaining the plus would be to label it as explicitation, with the translator supplying the nouns from v. 28 to clarify the subject of κατακαυθήσονται. That explanation is correct, as far as it goes. However, as Wagner points out, their insertion creates an inclusio with v. 28 (149). This observation of consequent literary effects outmodes the atomistic label of

explicitation by revealing that this translation strategy also constitutes a literary strategy.

Confirmation of this as a strategy to direct the model reader's construal of meaning is not hard to find, since the translator created a similar inclusio between v. 21 and v. 26. Not only did he connect ציון at the head of what we know as v. 27 with the end of v. 26, yielding the title Πόλις δικαιοσύνης μητρόπολις πιστὴ Σιων, but, as Wagner notes, he also supplies Σιων in his translation of v. 21 (188). Positing that the translator supplied Σιων for this purpose seems more plausible than proposing that a corrupt ditography of זונה had occasioned the placement of the proper noun ציון after נאמנה in the translator's *Vorlage*. The translator's identification of the city is comparable to his explicitation of the subject of the verb in v. 31, but equally, it creates an inclusio, making it a literary strategy as well as a translational one.

Wagner also highlights the link between translation strategies and literary strategies in the translator's frequent insertion of conjunctions to create cohesion and structure. As he astutely notes, the insertion of γάρ in 1:27 leads the reader to link that verse with 26 rather than v. 28 (191). All of these maneuvers, taken together, constitute translation strategies that double as literary strategies. Applying Eco's theory of language rescues study of the translation from focusing solely on the relationship between source text and target text. Equally salutary, contemplating translational shifts in light of the consequent literary structure preserves us from speculating about the translator's religious scruples or other unknowable facets of his psychology to explain equivalents visible only to those who can compare the translation with an approximation of its *Vorlage*.

This raises another question: Does recognition of the relationship between translation strategies and literary strategies in OG Isaiah require that we substitute the notion of a "model translator" for Eco's "model author"? Wagner contends that it does, inasmuch as the model translator stands in "[an] intercultural space where two cultural encyclopedias overlap," prompting us to construct the model translator "as we trace the process of translation and analyze the semiotic strategy of its product in relation to the encyclopedia of the translator and his target community" (43-44).

I challenge employing the phrase "model translator" for two reasons. First it conflates two roles I think are better distinguished: that of interpreter of the Hebrew text and that of a Greek author. Wagner rightly and repeatedly highlights the ways the translator buttresses literary structures native to the Hebrew text or creates structures that do not accord with our usual understanding of the Hebrew. That is a dynamic we could not perceive without compar-

ing the OG to a Hebrew text approximate to the source text. However, as Wagner notes, the *Übersetzungsweise* of OG-Isaiah provides no indication that the translation was meant to be read subservient to a Hebrew text of Isaiah (234). Rather, the translator's use of Greek conjunctions and other particles attests a commitment to acceptability, via which the translator *as translator* vanishes from the reader's view.

Second, if we want to appropriate Eco's model to clarify the function of translations, the notion of a model translator who inhabits an "intercultural space" unavailable to the model reader is analogous to divining the psychology of the empirical author, a practice Eco rejects.

This is not to say that the information we gain from studying the process of translation is illicit. Our access to translation strategies stands outside Eco's model but enables us to better describe the literary strategies of the text. And yet, neither the empirical translator nor a model one can replace the 'model author,' the only author known to the reader.

This conclusion raises a fundamental conundrum in applying Eco's theory: how do we reconstruct the cultural encyclopedia that informs the text? That question has often been solved by claiming that exegetical practices evidenced in Palestine are the standard by which to detect the strategies of the translator of Isaiah. However, Eco's model for understanding the cooperation of readers with texts highlights a flaw in that assumption. Wagner notes Eco's observation that cultural encyclopedias are composed of branches that have "'local' and transitory systems of knowledge" (40), thereby creating the possibility of disjunctions in understanding. Readings must be tested against the structures of the text to see if a particular local encyclopedia illuminates it adequately. I agree with Wagner that testing the hypothesis of an actualizing interpretation exampled in Palestinian exegesis fails to confirm that encyclopedia as the one assumed by OG Isaiah.

By focusing on literary structures in OG Isaiah, Wagner confirms the translator's concern to present Isaiah as an acceptable literary product in Greek. The uses of καί, δέ, and οὔτε to translate conjunctive waw evidence skillful manipulation of the target language. Equally, the use of inclusio reveals a feature of the cultural encyclopedia. But by themselves, these do not take us far in delineating the distinctive contours of the putative cultural encyclopedia.

A more promising lead arises from Wagner's observation that the translation of one passage in the light of another is similar not only to Jewish scribal practices but also to "the traditions of scholarship that flourished in [the translator's] Alexandrian milieu" (233). It is this type of comparison that needs further investigation if we want to detect what in the product can be

cited as evidence of the relevant cultural encyclopedia. We certainly cannot expect a complete mapping of literary strategies employed by the *grammatikoi* of the Alexandrian museum on translations of Hebrew books into Greek, for as Wagner observes, "a given instance of discourse (such as a text) activates only a limited number of nodes within a particular cultural encyclopedia" (40). Nevertheless, exploring in greater depth the study of poetry, textual criticism, semantics, and grammar as they were studied in the library might uncover nodes that otherwise escape notice. Pairing DTS with Eco's theory is a fruitful conjunction, but it carries the price tag of sifting more carefully both the internal and external evidence of what might have constructed the cultural encyclopedia that its textual strategies presuppose.

6. J. Ross Wagner, Response.

I am deeply grateful to the panelists: to Leonard for his concise summary of *Reading the Sealed Book*[14] and to Hugh, Rodrigo, Florian and Ron for their responses. Readers of my book will recognize how indebted I am to each of these scholars and appreciate how great a privilege it is to receive their criticism. Limitations of space allow me to address only a few of the important issues they raise for discussion. I will do so under two headings: 'method' and 'results.'

I. Musings on Method

De Sousa states that *RSB* "weds the adoption of DTS with the assumption of the 'interlinear paradigm.'" However, this is simply mistaken. While my analytical approach to OG Isaiah adopts aspects of Descriptive Translation Studies, I argue neither for nor against the interlinear paradigm per se (see 6 n. 24; 12 n. 55). The value of DTS lies for me, as it does for Cameron Boyd-Taylor, in its capacity to characterize multiple models of translation as well as to display the differences among them. As my discussion of his important study indicates, DTS allows Boyd-Taylor to demonstrate that translations like non-καίγε Reigns and OG Job reflect approaches to translation that are "categorically distinct" from the quintessentially 'interlinear' Aquila.[15] For the sake of

[14] Hereafter, *RSB*. Page references in the text are to this volume.

[15] Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *Reading between the Lines* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 149; cited in *RSB,* 21.

argument, I grant Boyd-Taylor's claim that the interlinear model is 'typical' of the Septuagint corpus (234 n. 44). But this is only to insist that the Greek translator of Isaiah (hereafter, G) operates with a fundamentally different paradigm of translation. De Sousa has now persuaded me, however, that it is premature to speak of any model of translation as 'typical' of the Septuagint corpus; such a designation, which is purely descriptive, can appear credible only in the wake of a systematic analysis of each member of the corpus.

In the course of my first chapter, I propose that OG Isaiah may turn out to be analogous to OG Job just to the extent that each "would be recognized as a literary composition within the target culture but at the same time be readily identified with the culture of the source text" (31).[16] But this simply states a *hypothesis* that remains to be tested through close examination of OG Isaiah itself. Thus, I can hardly agree with De Sousa that reference to OG Job skews my conclusions. Not only is my initial hypothesis grounded in over a century of previous research into OG Isaiah (see 29–31), it is only after a painstaking investigation of Isaiah's programmatic opening vision, together with numerous other texts, that I attempt – nearly 200 pages later – to characterize the linguistic, textual and literary character of the translation and speculate about its prospective function (227–237). Furthermore, contra De Sousa, I never suggest that OG Isaiah was translated for "a community of Diaspora *literati*."[17] Rather, I argue that the prospective function of OG Isaiah, within a target literary system centered on the Greek Pentateuch (56–62), was to allow the ancient prophet to speak clearly and persuasively to Greek-speaking audiences in Diaspora synagogues (234–235).

Troxel finds my appropriation of Eco's theory of language and interpretation helpful insofar as it "rescues study of the translation from focusing solely on the relationship between source text and target text" and allows us to "contemplat[e] translational shifts in light of the consequent literary structure" of the translation rather than in terms of "unknowable facets of [the translator's] psychology." I'm puzzled, then, that he deems my construct of the 'model translator,' who stands "at the juncture between the translated text and its source" (43), to be problematic. Troxel worries that the model translator conflates the role of "interpreter of the Hebrew text" with that of "a Greek author." But it is the conjunction of these roles in a single agent that helps to

[16] The quoted words are taken from Boyd-Taylor's characterization of OG Job (*Reading between the Lines*, 424).

[17] As Boyd-Taylor proposes for OG Job (ibid., 426). For my own reservations about viewing OG Job this way, see *RSB,* 28.

distinguish a translator from the author of a non-translated text. Troxel does not, in fact, dispute that by "studying the process of translation" the researcher may gain "access to translation strategies" underlying the translated text. In my adaptation of Eco's schema, the term 'model translator' simply names the aggregate of these translation strategies. Put another way, the model translator is nothing other than the array of explanatory hypotheses the researcher constructs to account for the complex set of relationships she observes between the translated text – in all of its dimensions – and its putative source, considered within the particular cultural and historical context of the translation process. The model translator's 'interculture,' as I have defined it, designates the overlap between two or more cultural encyclopedias.[18] *Pace* Troxel, such intercultural spaces are no less accessible to scholarly analysis than any other region of Eco's "Global Semantic Universe."

The study of OG Isaiah in its character as a *translated* text requires us to adopt a bi-focal perspective that attends to the process of translation, as well as to its product. For this reason, it is not enough merely to appropriate Eco's concept of the 'model author,' who is "nothing else but a textual strategy establishing semantic correlations and activating the Model Reader."[19] So defined, the model author resides entirely within the translated text; thus, to employ this construct rather than the 'model translator' would require us to eschew any reference to the source text in our interpretation (43–44). In contrast, Eco's 'model reader' does occupy an important place in my schema. The model reader, who "possesses the necessary competence to interpret the [translated] text in relation to the larger cultural encyclopedia" of the target system (39), plays a role in analysis complementary to that of the model translator: "the [latter] figures more centrally in our exploration of the target-language text *qua* translation; the [former] assumes a more prominent role as we study the translation *qua* text" (45).[20] Given the source-oriented nature of our investigation, however, we are never confined to the perspective of the

[18] See *RSB* 43–44, with further reference to Anthony Pym, *Method in Translation History* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1998), 177.

[19] Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 11; cited in *RSB*, 43.

[20] For the distinction between "text *qua* translation" and "translation *qua* text," see Albert Pietersma, "Hermeneutics and a Translated Text." Online: http://homes.chass. utoronto.ca/~pietersm/. Accessed 2/25/2014. My apologies to Prof. Pietersma for exactly reversing, in my description of his approach to LXX hermeneutics, the priority he assigns to each (*RSB* 54 n. 90).

model reader, who in many cases cannot be supposed to enjoy the access to the source text that we share with the model translator.[21]

II. Reflections on Results

Spotlighting what I have termed the "residue of uncertainty" that bedevils all attempts to reconstruct the translator's *Vorlage* while simultaneously tracing his *Übersetzungsweise* (*RSB*, 50), Williamson calls attention to criteria and patterns of reasoning that must inform our judgments about such matters. Though he remains unpersuaded by my suggestion that G understood the promise of divine cleansing in 1:18 to be contingent on the people's repentance, he acknowledges the central place my argument gives to structural markers in the translated text. It is by linking v. 18 more tightly to the conditional promise and threat that follow in vv. 19–20, I contend, that G guides the model reader to hear the offer of forgiveness in v. 18 as conditional also.

Williamson further highlights the importance cumulative reasoning plays in my analysis. The suggestion that G dropped the final clause of 1:4 in order to enhance the parallelism of the sentence makes "a bold claim for a translator in antiquity," he observes. Nevertheless, "the more examples of the same phenomenon that one can muster, the more probable it all becomes." Williamson himself seeks to solve the puzzle of the minus in 1:11 in a similar manner, by examining the translator's handling of lists more broadly. I regret that I did not make better use of his earlier study, for I find his explanatory hypothesis quite illuminating. Noting that the exact same animals appear in OG Isa 1:11 and 34:6–7, despite differences in the Hebrew, he conjectures that G chose to employ a stock list of sacrificial animals in both instances rather than attempt to find a distinct equivalent for each item in his source. Williamson's explanation attributes a certain logic to the translator's handling of these lists. Whatever he intends by calling the translator's approach "somewhat cavalier," then, he clearly does not regard it as simply 'arbitrary.' I also proposed that the translator's failure to translate וכבשים reflects a logic of sorts (though nothing so exciting as "a carefully conceived master plan of literary sophistication"), observing that by his omission G produced an alliterative phrase, ταύρων καὶ τράγων, that evokes the diction of the Song of Moses, a passage echoed

[21] Of course, one may choose to study OG Isaiah entirely within the target literary system (e.g., by exploring its *Wirkungsgeschichte* as a Greek text). But this is another sort of investigation altogether, requiring a different methodology (*RSB,* 5 n. 23; cf. Umberto Eco, *Experiences in Translation* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001], 20–22).

elsewhere in OG Isaiah 1 (109). Our explanatory hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, and both – or neither – may be correct. Still, each of us looks for larger patterns in G's *Übersetzungsweise* to guide our guesswork, and this is the essential methodological point to underscore.

Wilk challenges my conclusion (against his earlier study)[22] that the OG version of Isaiah 1 betrays no sign of 'fulfillment interpretation' (*Erfüllungsinterpretation*). He rightly recognizes that the dispute is not over whether OG Isaiah reflects the translator's cultural and historical context in various ways – we both agree that it does – but whether "the Greek translator sought to 'actualize' Isaiah's opening vision for his audience by encoding the translation with specific references to contemporary historical events" (233). I responded to Wilk's reading of Isaiah 1:8 and 29 at some length in *RSB,* offering in each instance an alternative account of both the textual-linguistic character of the translated text and the process of translation that produced it (93–98; 202–219). For example, while Wilk discovers in OG Isa 1:8 an allusion to the Oniads' 'leaving' Jerusalem, I see in the Greek text a skillfully crafted expression of poetic justice: having been 'left' by his rebellious children (1:4), the Kyrios threatens to 'leave' daughter Zion alone as a besieged city in a desolated countryside (1:8); nevertheless, God has mercifully 'left' the people ("us") seed that they might not utterly perish (1:9). It is conceivable that the Greek translator identified this 'seed' with the recently exiled Oniads, but I have found no clear evidence of this in the text of Isaiah he produced.[23] Contra De Sousa, I neither adopt nor advocate a blanket "principle according to which actualization is not to be found" anywhere in OG Isaiah. Rather, I have carefully weighed the arguments Wilk advances for seeing *Erfüllungsinterpretation* in Isaiah 1 and found them wanting.

Both Wilk and De Sousa charge that my rejection of *Erfüllungsinterpretation* in Isaiah 1 represents a failure to take the Greek translator's cultural context fully into account. According to Wilk, one should assume *a priori* not only that G understood Isaiah's oracles to refer to "the present or the near future of [his] own time" but, moreover, that "such an attitude toward the

[22] Florian Wilk, "Vision wider Judäa und wider Jerusalem (Jes 1 LXX)," in *Frühjudentum und Neues Testament im Horizont Biblischer Theologie* (WUNT 162. Ed. Wolfgang Kraus et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 15–35.

[23] Wilk apparently concedes that the alleged reference to the Oniads' retreat from Jerusalem might have been less than obvious to the first readers of the Greek text; in his words, the translator will have "allude[d] to specific events in history *without imposing such references on his readers*" (emphasis mine).

book of Isaiah informed the composition and reception of the Greek version." I fail to see how the latter assumption does not beg the very question at issue, however. I grant that Ben Sira and the Qumran pesharists shared the belief, widely attested among Second-Temple Jews, that Isaiah's oracles spoke about events to come. Yet we find no instance of 'fulfillment interpretation' in the writings of the second-century sage. Apart from positive evidence, then, we cannot simply assume that G understood his brief as translator to include 'actualizing' the source text by means of *Erfüllungsinterpretation.* Such a bold claim requires demonstration. For my part, I have yet to encounter in the literature on OG Isaiah a compelling argument for 'actualization' so defined.

To say this, however, is by no means to suggest that G regarded Isaiah as anything other than a prophetic text. I can find no clearer statement of my position in *RSB* than these concluding sentences (236–237):

> Contextualization of Isaiah's message for the Hellenistic diaspora does not, in OG Isaiah 1 at least, take the form of 'actualizing' the ancient prophecies. This should not be taken to imply that the translator had no interest in the continuing significance of Isaiah's oracles for his contemporaries, however. Only a deep conviction that in this ancient scroll the community might still encounter the word of the Kyrios could inspire such a monumental undertaking as the translation of the scroll of Isaiah into Greek. Heard and studied in the synagogues of second-century Egypt, Isaiah's sweeping vision of the purification of Jerusalem and the restoration of her exiles, of the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion and their diligent obedience to God's law, of the establishment of a new heavens and a new earth in which the Kyrios would reign victorious over death itself, required no 'actualization' to articulate the living faith and enduring hope of the translator's community.

On the specific matter of *Erfüllungsinterpretation*, Wilk and I obviously continue to disagree. But I trust that the present exchange will have clarified just what is at issue in the debate.

I do not presume to have answered all of my colleagues' questions – far less to have spoken the last word on either OG Isaiah or Septuagint hermeneutics. I do hope, however, that *Reading the Sealed Book* will continue to elicit the sort of probing questions and thoughtful challenges offered by my respondents and so serve to advance the conversation about matters so central to Septuagint Studies.

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