

Obadiah 20: Septuagint and Vulgate

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Obad 20 reads in MT as follows: וְגִלְתָּ הַחֵל-הַזֶּה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-כָּנְעֵנִים עַד-צָרְפַּת: וְגִלְתָּ יְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בְּסִפְרֵי יְרֵשׁוּ אֶת עָרֵי הַנֶּגֶב. A recent commentary on Obadiah asserts that “verse 20 is notoriously difficult,”¹ and a similar view is expressed by the most recent commentary on the LXX of Obadiah: “tout le verset est difficile en hébreu”.² This judgment is valid also for the ancient translations of this verse into Greek and Latin.

1

Let me begin with the words וְגִלְתָּ הַחֵל הַזֶּה. Since Vg, unlike LXX, tries to represent this syntagm (*nomen regens* + *nomen rectum* + attributive demonstrative pronoun) by a parallel Latin sequence (nominative+genitive³+attributive demonstrative pronoun), it is perhaps recommendable to start with the translation of Vg: *et transmigratio exercitus illius* “and the exiles of this army”.

This translation asks for explanation of four aspects: (1) It is obvious that the translator took הַחֵל as הַחֵיל.⁴ (2) The Vg usually uses two substantives in

¹ P. R. Raabe, *Obadiah* (AB 24D; New York, 1996), 261.

² M. Harl et al., *Les douze prophètes: Joël, Abdiou, Jonas, Naoum, Ambakoum, Sophonie* (La Bible d’Alexandrie 23/4-9; Paris: Cerf, 1999), 110 (henceforth BA).

³ According to the Syro-Hexapla, the “Three” (Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion) also used the genitive case for their different translations of חַל, read as חֵיל. For the reliable reconstructions sufficient Greek evidence exists (Aquila: τῆς εὐπορίας, Symmachus and Theodotion: τῆς δυνάμεως). Aquila renders חֵיל by εὐπορία 11 times, and Symmachus and Theodotion translate חֵיל by δύναμις 20 times.

⁴ Cf. Rashi and Qimhi. According to Raabe, 263, the noun חַל is a defective spelling of חֵיל; he translates MT “company” (261), against Barthélemy who translates MT חַל also here by “avant-mur” (“rampart”), like Vg *antemurale* in Isa 26:1; Lam 2:8 (in 2 Sam 20:15 and 1 Kgs 21:23 Vg translates neither חֵיל nor חַל). See

singular number as equivalents for either גולה (42 times in MT) or גלות(א) (19 times in MT): *transmigratio* (41 times),⁵ and *captivitas* (13 times). (3) Four times Vg takes גלות/גולה as a collective singular, and translates accordingly in Latin plural forms such as *migrantes* (Neh 7:6), *qui migrabant* (Jer 40:1), *captivi* (2 Kgs 24:16; Ezek 1:1).⁶ That is a small number of cases compared with the many cases of collective usages of גולה/גולה (= “exiles”) listed in modern dictionaries like BDB (22 cases) and HALOT (24 cases).

(4) How did Jerome interpret “this army”? He begins his comment on v. 20 as follows (372₆₈₈₋₆₉₄):⁷

Those who, according to the book of Ezra and Nehemiah, returned to Judea, are rightly called “the sons of the exiles”.

This shows that Jerome took *transmigratio* as a collective singular. He continues:

This whole army (*totus ille exercitus*) of the sons of Israel will possess [plural in Latin!] – towards south, west and north – Edom, Palestine, the mountains of Ephraim and Samaria. And Benjamin, since he is bordering on the desert, will specifically obtain Gilead.

Till here we read no more but a resumption of his comment on v. 19 (370_{630-371₆₇₆}); only in line 694 begins the comment on v. 20 proper:

But towards east they [the subject is still “this whole army”] will rule over everything which belongs to the land of the Canaanites...⁸

D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l’Ancient Testament, III: Ézéchiel, Daniel et les 12 Prophètes* (OBO 50/3; Fribourg-Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 704.

⁵ The noun *transmigratio* is not attested in non-biblical Latin. The verb *transmigrare* is used only for voluntary changes of abode like moving from one house to another one in the same town (Suetonius, *Tiberius* 15.1), or to another town after the destruction of one’s own town (Livius 5.50.8ff.). Compulsory “transfer” of nations is expressed by *transportare* (Seneca, *De clementia* 1.1.2) or *transicere* (Tacitus, *Annales* 12.39.2).

⁶ In Ezek 12:4 (גולה₁), 7 Vg read גולה (see HUB ad loc.), while in Esth 2:6 Vg omitted the words עַם הַגִּלָּה אֲשֶׁר הִגְלִתָּהּ.

⁷ S. Hieronymi *Presbyteri Opera*, I: *Opera Exegetica*, 6: *Commentarii in Prophetas Minores* (ed. M. Adriaen; CCSL 76; Turnholti: Brepols, 1969), 352-375.

⁸ *Qui de Babylone iuxta volumen Esdrae et Nehemiae reversi fuerant in Iudaeam, et recte filii transmigrationis vocabuntur. Totus ille exercitus filiorum Israel ad meridiem quidem, et ad occidentem, et ad septentrionem, possidebunt Idumaeos, et Palaestinos, et montem*

According to his combination of explanations of vv. 19-20, Jerome apparently thought of three main military columns of “this army” in vv. 19-20: the first and the second are described in v. 19: “Those living towards the south” (*hii qui ad austrum*, translating הַנֶּגֶב) and “those in the plain” (*qui in campestribus*, translating הַשְּׁפֵלָה); the third column consists of “the (returning) exiles” (*transmigratio*, the translation of גְּלוּת). This part of the army is divided into two sub-columns: on the one hand “the exiles of the sons of Israel”, on the other hand “the exiles of Jerusalem”.⁹

This interpretation has a great deal in common with that of Rashi, who explains הַנֶּגֶב as *ארץ ישראל של ארץ ישראל*, and continues: *גלות... גלות אשר הוא מבני ישראל אשר גלו מעשרת גלות ירושלים* and *לבני ישראל גלות אשר הוא מבני יהודה*. Both Jerome and Rashi suppose that v. 19 speaks of the descendants of those mentioned e.g. in Jer 40:7 “men, and women, and children... that were not carried away captive” (KJV), and v. 20 speaks about the returning captives (see Jer 31:23) as a fulfillment of Jer 31:31 “I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (KJV).

2

The translation of LXX seems to be based on a similar idea. In v. 19 הַנֶּגֶב is rendered by “those in the Negeb” (οἱ ἐν Νεγεβ), and הַשְּׁפֵלָה by “those in the Shefela” (οἱ ἐν Σεφέλα). But in the first three words of v. 20 we find a Greek syntagm completely different from that found in Vg. The LXX translate וְגְלוּת

Ephraim, et Samariam. Benjamin quoque, quia confinis est solitudini, specialiter obtinebit Galaad. Contra orientem uero cunctis quae terrae Chananaeorum sunt imperabunt [...]

⁹ The phrasing *transmigratio exercitus illius* “the exiles [or: “the body of exiles”] of this army” agrees with the technical terminology used by classic Roman writers. The names of a special unit, like the plural form *hastati* “the soldiers of the first rank” (Livius 30.18.10), or the collective singular *hastatus* (Caesar, *Civil War* 1.46.4), are followed by the noun *legio* in the genitive case (*legionis* “of the legion”), cf. *beneficarii superiorum exercituum* “the soldiers of the special duty corps of the earlier armies”, as translated by J. F. Mitchell, *Caesar: The Civil War* (Penguin, 1967), 151. Note that in this sentence also the *beneficarii* are a part of *tota (!) acies* “the whole battle-line”!

הַגֵּזֶל הַלְּהָיָה by καὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας¹⁰ ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτή. The equivalent of תִּלְגָּי is in the genitive case, whose semantic function here must be the Genitive of Belonging;¹¹ the equivalent of לְהָיָה is in the nominative case, functioning as a subject of the nominal clause: “Belonging to the exiles¹² (is) this column¹³”. The so called genitival relationship of MT (the construct phrase לְהָיָה תִּלְגָּי),¹⁴ kept by the Vg, is changed in favor of a syntagm like that in the following examples:

Ps 3:9	LXX: τοῦ κυρίου ἡ σωτηρία	MT: הַיְשׁוּעָה הַלְּהָיָה
Ps 22:29	LXX: τοῦ κυρίου ἡ βασιλεία	MT: הַמְּלִיכָה הַלְּהָיָה ¹⁵

A complete parallel of the combination of genitive of belonging (τῆς μετοικεσίας) + nominative of subject (ἡ ἀρχὴ) + attributive demonstrative pronoun (αὐτή) is found in Ruth 2:5 LXX: τίνος νεάνις αὐτή = MT לְמִי הַנְּעֻרָה תִּזְכָּר.

Before we continue to discuss the structure of καὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτή, let us deal with the diverse translations of ἡ ἀρχὴ in the collocation τῆς μετοικεσίας ἡ ἀρχὴ.¹⁶ In terms of word order ἡ ἀρχὴ takes the place of

¹⁰ For this equivalent of גֵּזֶל see Appendix I.

¹¹ H. W. Smyth and G. M. Messing, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), §1297ff.

¹² Raabe, 264, is the only translator of LXX who took μετοικεσία as a collective singular, and translated accordingly “captives”, like in his translation of MT תִּלְגָּי.

¹³ For this rendition of ἀρχὴ see below. This sentence is a pure nominal clause, and has parallels in Classic Greek; cf. e.g. Plato, *Apologia* 18a: δικαστοῦ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴ ἀρετή.

¹⁴ For the term “genitival relationship” see P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Subsidia Biblica 27; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), §129a, n. 2.

¹⁵ In Obad 21 הַמְּלִיכָה הַלְּהָיָה was translated into Greek in the Dative case, functioning as the Dative of Possession (see Smyth, §1476): τῷ κυρίῳ ἡ βασιλεία. It seems that in LXX there is no difference between the Genitive of Belonging and the Dative of Possession, like in Classic Greek (Smyth, §1480). A good example is Prov 23:29, which contains six nominal clauses beginning with לְמִי; the Greek translator used five times the dative τίνι, but in the end he used the genitive τίνος.

¹⁶ L. C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1851; repr. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1982), 1093-1094; C. Thomson and C. A. Muses, *The Septuagint Bible* (Indian Hills, Colorado,

לְהַחֲלִי. It can be supposed that the LXX thought of the *hiph'il* of the root לְחַלֵּי "to begin"¹⁷ and a possible noun לְחִי* analogous to לְחִי, τὸ ἔλεος, derived from the root לְחַי, ἐλεεῖν, ἐλεᾶν, "to show mercy" (this Greek root occurs 58 times in the LXX), or לְחִי, ἡ κουρά, "fleece of sheep" (Deut 18:4), derived from the root לְחַי כְּרִיעַיִם "to shear" (this Greek root occurs 15 times in the LXX)—to give here only examples of nouns vocalized like the supposed לְחִי. But in our context ἀρχή cannot have the sense "beginning", as translated by NETS: "the beginning of the migration".¹⁸ Brenton and Raabe translate: "the domain of the captivity", and similarly Thomson-Muses: "the dominion of the captivity"; BA translate: "l'empire de la transplantation" and explain (our translation):

We are dealing here with a translation depending on the context, with the employment of *arkhē* in a sense attested by Herodot and Thukydidēs...

1954), 1379; BA, 110-111; A. Pietersma and B.G. Wright (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title* (New York : Oxford University, 2007) (henceforth NETS); Raabe, 264

¹⁷ There are 54 occurrences of לְחַלֵּי in *hiph'il/hoph'al*; in 51 cases the word is translated by ἀρχεσθαι/ἐνάρχεσθαι (the other three cases are not helpful: in Num 25:1 the translator derived the verb from לְחַלֵּי "to defile"; in Gen 4:26 it was derived from לְחַי "to hope"; and in Esth 9:23 it is missing altogether in the Greek). J. F. Schleusner, *Novum Thesaurus* (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1820-1821), 1:448 thought of LXX reading infinitive לְחַלֵּי, the translation ἡ ἀρχή being a case of the frequent interchange of a nominal form of a Hebrew verb with a Greek noun. It is noteworthy to mention that with the exception of Obad 20 the LXX translated the noun לְחִי in all four other occurrences by apt technical terms: προτεῖχισμα (2 Sam 20:15; 1 Kgs 21:23 [LXX 3 Kgdms 20:23]; Lam 2:8) and περίτειχος (Isa 26:1).

¹⁸ As if speaking of nomadic people or migratory birds and the beginning of their seasonal change of abode. J. Lust et al., *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003), 85 also give Obad 20 "beginning" as equivalent of ἀρχή. Already Jerome in his commentary translated LXX mechanically (371⁶⁸²: *transmigrationis principium*), without any reference in his commentary. In contrast to him, H.W. Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; trans. M. Kohl; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 61, tried to explain: "Greek ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτῆ, probably read לְחַי לְחַי(ה) or לְחַי לְחַי(ה); a (mutilated) gloss may therefore perhaps have been a reference to a first experience of deportation - the experience of the Northern Kingdom of Israel".

namely “command”, “authority”, “sovereignty”, “empire”, “realm”. We find in LXX other examples of *arkhḗ*, corresponding to different Hebrew words with the sense of “the sphere in which one exerts his authority”:¹⁹ ... *arkhḗ* translates for example Hebrew *mamlākā* “kingdom” (Deut 17:18, 20; Isa 10:10; Ezek 29:14-16;²⁰ and Mic 4:8); it is parallel with “kingdom” (*basileía*).

Learned explanations like *BA*’s are essential in cases in which one tries to determine the meaning of ἀρχή in an apocryphal text like 1 Maccabees, where we have no corresponding Hebrew text. There we find (in Rahlfs’ edition) no more than three instances—each with its own specific meaning—of ἀρχή:

10:52: ἐκράτησα τῆς ἀρχῆς, “I got possession of the realm”.

15:17: ἀνανεούμενοι τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς φιλίαν, “renewing the friendship [that had existed] from the first”.

5:33: ἐξῆλθεν ἐν τρισὶν ἀρχαῖς, “He [=Judas] set off in three columns”.

We shall show that “column” is the most probable meaning of ἀρχή in Obad 20.

Similar considerations of semantics are necessary in cases in which ἀρχή is based on a reading differing from MT, like Jer 49:2 יְרֵשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת יְרֵשׁוֹ, LXX 30:2 καὶ παραλήμψεται Ἰσραὴλ τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτοῦ. *BA* paraphrases “*Israël s’emparera de l’arkhḗ de Rabbath*” (111; see n. 19), and uses this verse as first example for ἀρχή in the sense of “domain”, without indicating that instead of ירשׁו the LXX apparently read a derivative of רשׁא, such as רשׁו(א).²¹

However, in Obad 20 ἡ ἀρχή takes the place of החל, and it can be supposed (as suggested above) that חל was understood as a noun in the *qill* pattern of the root חלל “to begin”. For the proposed new understanding of

¹⁹ The first example, Jer 49:2 (LXX 30:2) does not sustain *BA*’s reasoning; see HUB ad loc. and the discussion below. T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002), 69, translates ἀρχή in Obad 20 similarly: “domain, realm over which one’s sovereignty extends”.

²⁰ One could add ἀρχή translating חֲקֻלָּה (Gen 1:16 [twice]; Jer 34:1 [LXX 41:1]).

²¹ In the very similar clause Obad 17, יְרֵשׁוּ בֵּית יַעֲקֹב אֶת מוֹרְשֵׁיהֶם, there is a (comparatively small) difference between MT and LXX; see our forthcoming edition ad loc.

ἀρχή as a translation of this חל it will be instructive to note that there exists a close affinity between the Greek translation of the Hebrew adverbial expressions found with חלל and with ראש. This affinity is demonstrated by the fact that ἀρχή translates naturally in different combinations of apt Greek prepositions connected with their grammatically corresponding cases of declension מִתְחַלֵּת, בְּתַחֲלֵת, תְּחִלָּתָא (21 times) and מְרֵאשִׁית, בְּרֵאשִׁית, רֵאשִׁית, מְרֵאשִׁית and this in practically all parts of the LXX (including Sirach). It is thus conceivable that the LXX translators presumed in other instances as well that חלל and ראש are synonyms.

In particular, we find ἀρχή translating ראש in cases in which this Hebrew noun is used as a military technical term. In Judg 7:16; 9:43-44; 1 Sam 11:11; 13:17; Job 1:17 military or paramilitary forces are divided into three רֵאשִׁים, that is: *partes, cunei, turmae* (Vg), “companies” (KJV), “divisions” (BDB, Smith),²² “columns” (Driver),²³ “units” (HALOT); Judg 3:34, 37 speak of four such columns. In all these cases LXX has ἀρχαί,²⁴ and in 1 Sam 13:17-18 the singular form ראש/ἀρχή is employed three times in this sense. If ראש is “beginning” and “military unit”, then also חל (derived from חלל “begin”) possibly was understood as “military unit” as well.²⁵ The LXX thus reflects an understanding like that of Jerome (see above): “the column (ἡ ἀρχή) belonging to the exiles (τῆς μετοικεσίας)” is the third group besides the other two spoken of in v. 19: “those of the Negeb” and “those of the Shefela”.

3

All four modern translations of the LXX cited here render καὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτῆ in a way which shows the same structure:

²² H.P. Smith, *The Books of Samuel* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), 100.

²³ S.R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 102.

²⁴ Cf. also 1 Macc 5:33 (cited above).

²⁵ For a similar problem concerning the interpretation of חל in Nah 3:8 see Appendix II.

Brenton:	“and this shall be the domain of the captivity”
Thomson–Muses:	“and this is the dominion of the captivity”
BA:	“et tel est l’ empire de la transplantation”
NETS:	“and this is the beginning of the migration”

However, such a translation suits a different Hebrew structure, **הַגְּלִיתָ וְהָיָה לְךָ**, which would have been translated into Greek as *καὶ αὕτη ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς μετοικεσίας*;²⁶ compare e.g. the first occurrence of this structure in Gen 28:17 **וְהָיָה שְׁעַר הַשָּׁמַיִם**, aptly translated by LXX: *καὶ αὕτη ἡ πύλη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*.

We have in these modern translations of LXX a kind of syntactical reformulation necessitated by the rules of word order in the target languages and by the lack of copulative verbs in a pure nominal clause both in Hebrew and in Greek, in a text written in the style of an inventorial list. In LXX we encounter a different kind of reformulation: the genitive case *τῆς μετοικεσίας* resembles **לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, thus paralleling the following words **לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**; however, the morpho-syntactical difference between them should not be over-stressed: Parallel to the possessive dative **לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, we have the genitive of belonging *τῆς μετοικεσίας*, which, as we have seen, is a legitimate variation.²⁷

4

A new verbless clause, begins in the editions of Swete, Rahlfs and Ziegler, with the Greek translation of **לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, *τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραηλ*²⁸ translated as

²⁶ The transposition *αὕτη ἡ ἀρχὴ* found in many Lucianic manuscripts does not stand for a change in the syntactic function (see Smyth, §1171). For transpositions of words against MT in the Lucianic recension see J. Ziegler, *Isaias* (Göttingen Septuaginta; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), 89: “Diese Umstellungen sind alle aus stilistischen Gründen gemacht”.

²⁷ Cf. above, n. 15. Note that in this verse there occurs another instance of a reformulation by parallelism: Hebrew **עַד צְרַפָּתָה ... אֲשֶׁר בְּסַפְרָה** was rendered by **ἕως Σαρέπιδων... ἕως Σεφραθα/Εφραθα** (see the discussion below).

²⁸ H. B. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*, III (4th ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912); A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta, id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft,

such only by BA: “aux fils d’Israël (la terre de Canaanéens²⁹)”, amplified by Thomson–Muses: “to the Israelites³⁰ shall belong (the land of the Canaanites)”, both expanded and syntactically reformulated by NETS: “The sons of Israel shall have (the land of the Canaanites)”. This division corresponds with the disjunctive accent תלישא גרולה in הַיְהוָה according to MT. Older editions like Tischendorf’s,³¹ combine τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραηλ with the preceding words, and begin the new clause with (ἡ) γῆ “the land”, against the conjunctive accent ישראל in מהפך according to MT; this division was followed by Brenton: “...the captivity of the children of Israel” and Raabe: “...The domain... belonging to the Israelites”.³²

The modern editions of Vg, Weber and Vaticana,³³ use no interpunction, and Vg seems to be inconclusive in this respect. The genitive case *filiorum Israhel* (translating לבני ישראל) may belong as an attribute to the preceding *exercitus illius*: “of this army of the sons of Israel”, or as a predicate to the following *omnia Chananaeorum*: “belonging to the sons of Israel: Everything of the Canaanites”.³⁴ The first possibility recommends itself on the strength of the above cited paraphrase in Jerome’s commentary, *totus ille exercitus filiorum Israhel*, which apparently is the cause of the comma printed after

1935); J. Ziegler, *Duodecim prophetae* (3rd ed.; Göttingen Septuaginta 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984).

²⁹ For the Greek translation of אשר כנענים, (ἡ) γῆ τῶν Χαναανῶν, see the discussion below.

³⁰ This seems a better translation of בני ישראל.

³¹ A.F.C. Tischendorf, *Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1850); 6th edition with *Supplementum* by E. Nestle (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1880).

³² Barthélemy, 704, divides even MT in this way: “Et les exilés de cet avant-mur appartenant aux fils d’Israël ([conqueront] ce qui est aux Cananéens)”, that is, “And the exiles of this rampart belonging to the sons of Israel ([will conquer] that which is to the Canaanites)”.

³³ R. Weber, *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969); *Biblia Sacra: Liber duodecim prophetarum* (Roma: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987).

³⁴ For the Latin translation of אשר כנענים, *omnia Chananaeorum*, see the discussion below.

Israhel in the Clementine edition (1592) and in the edition of Jerome's commentary (371₆₇₈, in the Latin translation of the LXX following the lemma). The second possibility takes *filiorum Israhel* as a Genitive of Belonging which—like in Greek—is syntactically almost equal to the Dative of Possession.³⁵ This can be shown by comparing the translations of Ps 22:29 and Obad 21:

Ps 22:29	MT: כִּי לַה' הַמְּלוּכָה	Vg: <i>quia Domini</i> (genitive) <i>est regnum</i> ³⁶
Obad 21	MT: וְהָיְתָה לַה' הַמְּלוּכָה	Vg: <i>et erit Domino</i> (dative) <i>regnum</i>

5

The LXX translator(s) could not understand the following words **אשר כנענים**, so their place was filled with the well known collocation γῆ εὐρώων Χαναανίων “land of the Canaanites”,³⁷ which translates both **ארץ הכנעני** (Exod 3:17; 13:5, 11; Deut 1:7) and **ארץ כנען** (Exod 6:4; Lev 14:34; Num 13:2; see also LXX^A Ezek 16:29).³⁸ The form **כנענים** appears in MT only here and in Job 40:30 (where it was rendered by Φοινίκια ἔθνη).³⁹ It is improbable that the LXX read **ארץ** instead of **אשר**, as assumed by Wolff.⁴⁰ A glance in the concordance of Hatch and Redpath under the heading γῆ shows that besides Obad 20 there are no less than 37 entries where the *obelus* indicates that there is no

³⁵ Cf. above, n. 15.

³⁶ Cf. Ps 3:9 MT: לַה' הַיְשׁוּעָה, Vg: *Domini est salus* etc.

³⁷ The addition of the article ἡ (γῆ) in Papyrus Washington (LXX^w) and manuscript 763 does not change the syntactic function of the expression; it is a mere inner-Greek improvement and an adaptation to the usual translation of **ארץ הכנעני**. The reading τῆ of manuscripts 239 and 613 reflects no more than a graphic mistake: ΓΗ became ΤΗ.

³⁸ The reverse case of translating **ארץ הכנעני** by γῆ Χανααν occurs in Deut 11:30; Josh 13:4; Ezek 16:3; Neh 9:8.

³⁹ The form **כנענים** occurs only in Neh 9:24, but there it functions as an apposition: **אֶת יְשִׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִים**; LXX translated τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν γῆν τῶν Χαναανίων, as if reading (**אֶת יְשִׁבֵי אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִים**), but this is a sort of reformulation. In Isa 23:8 the words **כְּנַעְנִיָּה** were reformulated by LXX together with the entire clause (see HUB ad loc.).

⁴⁰ So also BA, 112.

apparent Hebrew equivalent.⁴¹ A closer examination of those entries reveals all sorts of Hebrew words, but nowhere a second **אשר**. On the other hand, one finds 66 times the word $\gamma\eta$ preceding names of lands or peoples, where MT has only the name;⁴² this phenomenon is evident in various books rendered into Greek by different translators in different times. Like in Obad 20, $\gamma\eta$ is added in Ezek 11:24; 16:29; 23:16 to the translation of a likewise unusual form of a proper name: **כשדימה** is rendered there by ($\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ or $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$) $\gamma\eta\nu$ $\chi\alpha\lambda\delta\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$, which is the prevalent translation of **ארץ כשדים** (Ezek 1:3; 12:13; Isa 23:13; Jer 24:5; 25:12; 50:1, 8, 25, 45).⁴³

After the predicate $\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$ $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\iota\varsigma$ $\iota\sigma\rho\alpha\eta\lambda$ comes the subject of a pure nominal phrase, which sounds like a military order of the day: "To the Israelites the land of the Canaanites!"⁴⁴ There is no need to insert any verbal forms into the translation as did Thomson–Muses and NETS. With respect to volume (i.e. the formal equivalence in terms of number of words) the LXX and MT are here identical.⁴⁵

Vg *omnia Chananaeorum* also has no more than two words for **אשר כנענים**. This rendition looks like an attempt to translate something understandable by the well known syntagm **כל אשר ל(כנענים)**, using again the Genitive of Belonging (cf. earlier *filiorum Israhel* for **לבני ישראל**). In this syntagm Jerome normally translates **אֲשֶׁר** by a relative pronoun in its apt form with an added copulative verb, for instance:

Gen 31:1 MT: **כָּל אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ** Vg: *omnia quae fuerunt patris nostri*

⁴¹ E. Hatch, H. A. Redpath and T. Muraoka, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998), 240-255.

⁴² Of course we did not include the entries in which the dash means that both $\gamma\eta$ and the proper noun appear in LXX against MT.

⁴³ For the unusual form **כשדימה** see E. Kautzsch (ed.), *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (2nd ed.; trans. A. E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), §90c; Joüon–Muraoka, §93d.

⁴⁴ For the Greek translation of **עד צרפת** and for the second **אשר** see the discussion below.

⁴⁵ K. Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1904), 239 and others like Raabe assumed that in MT the required verb **יִקְשֹׁוּ** (Raabe: "they will depossess") dropped out by haplography in the vicinity of **אשר**.

(cf. KJV: “and all that was our father’s”)

Josh 2:13 MT: **כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם** Vg: *omnia quae eorum sunt*

(cf. KJV: “and all that they have”)

But in 2 Sam 6:12 the same short formulation as in Obad 20 occurs, that is, without both relative pronoun and copula: **כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ** is rendered by *omnia eius* (contrast KJV: “all that pertaineth unto him”).⁴⁶ Like γῆ in Greek, *omnia* (nominative, plural, neuter) is the subject of the nominal clause *filiorum Israhel omnia Chananaeorum* “Unto the Israelites—everything of the Canaanites!”.⁴⁷

6

There is not much to remark on the translations of **עַד צִרְפַּת** (LXX: ἕως Σαρέπτων;⁴⁸ Vg: *usque ad Sareptam*). This town was well known to the translators through the story of Elijah and the widow (1 Kgs 17).⁴⁹ But since the LXX again translates the following **אֲשֶׁר בְּסַפְרָד** by ἕως we must emphasize here a certain semantic distinction in the use of **עַד** and its

⁴⁶ The only instance in which MT omits **כָּל** in this syntagm is Gen 32:23 **וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר לוֹ**. Vg adds the word *omnibus* “everything”: *traductis omnibus quae ad se pertinebant* “everything which pertained to him being led over”; similarly the LXX adds πάντα “all”: καὶ διεβίβασεν πάντα τὰ αὐτοῦ “and he led over all his things”. Their *Vorlage* perhaps had also here **כָּל אֲשֶׁר**.

⁴⁷ We do not understand Wolff, 61: “Vulgate *omnia Chananaeorum* ‘all the things of the Canaanites’ presupposes ‘כָּל הַכֵּי’”. If this abbreviation stands for **כָּל הַכְּנַעֲנִים** (although MT knows only **כָּל הַכְּנַעֲנִי**), Latin would have had *omnes Chanan(a)ei* (nominative) or *omnes Chanan(a)eos* (accusative, cf. Judg 3:3 MT: **וְכָל הַכְּנַעֲנִי**, Vg: *omnemque Chananeum*), hardly *omnes Chanan(a)eorum*. For the improbable partitive genitive after *omnes* see J.B. Hofmann and A. Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik* (München: C.H. Beck, 1965) 56. J.M.P. Smith, *Obadiah* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), 44, gives for Vg an adaptation to correct Classic Latin: *omnia loca Chananaeorum* “all the places of the Canaanites,” found only in the printed Clementine edition (1592).

⁴⁸ For the accent and declension of this designation—taken as the name of a genuine Greek town (like e.g. Μέγαρα)—see H. St. J. Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: University Press, 1909), 167-168, §11,10.

⁴⁹ Note that in 1 Kgs 17:9 **אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן** is translated by Genitive of Belonging in LXX (Σαρέπτα τῆς Σιδωνίας) and Vg (*Sareptha Sidoniorum*).

equivalents ἕως and *usque* (*ad*). When used in geographical contexts this particle can mark the border of the land (see e.g. Deut 34:2 ואת כל ארץ יהודה (עד הים האחרון), but it can also mark a town included in the land (see Deut 3:10 (וכל הבשן עד סלכה ואדרעי ערי ממלכת עוג בבשן)). We shall subsequently show that Greek καὶ (ἡ)⁵⁰ μετοικεσία Ἰερουσαλημ ἕως Ἐφραθα may indeed mean “and the exiles of Jerusalem including Bethlehem”, like before “the land of the Canaanites including⁵¹ Sarepta”.

A second semantic phenomenon found in the Greek translation of ער צרפת will yet be brought under scrutiny. Some manuscripts, among them Papyrus Washington, add καί before ἕως Σαρέπτων, and some manuscripts also before ἕως Ἐφραθα. On the one hand, the word καί is a copulative conjunction (“and”) connecting words, clauses and sentences; on the other hand, it is an adverb meaning “also, even”.⁵² We therefore have to decide in every case which is its correct translation. Already in v. 19 the question arises how to interpret καὶ Βενιαμιν καὶ τὴν Γαλααδίτιν, which means perhaps “and Benjamin [the subject of the preceding predicate “will inherit”] even Gilead [the object of “will inherit”]”. In v. 20 we shall propose to translate καὶ (ἡ) μετοικεσία Ἰερουσαλημ... καὶ⁵³ κληρονομήσουσι... as “and the exiles of Jerusalem... will even inherit...”.

7

The phrase אשר בספרד appears to indicate the place to which the Jerusalemites were exiled (cf. Jer 29:22 אשר בבבל לכול גלות יהודה). However, such an indication is puzzling in a context speaking about the promised geographical destinations of the returning exiles (as in v. 19). Indeed, it seems that the Greek translator had no idea what to do with these words, so he decided to do once more what he did in the beginning of the verse,

⁵⁰ Cf. above, n. 37

⁵¹ The modern translators of the LXX render here “to”, “up to”, “as far as”, “jusqu’ à”; Raabe, 265, avowedly allows only the terminative sense of ער.

⁵² Smyth, §2868ff.

⁵³ For this καί, again attested by Papyrus Washington and important other manuscripts, see the discussion below.

namely, to use a parallel construction. So he wrote ἕως with the place name following.

Ziegler was convinced that the original transcription of ספרד was Σεφραθα,⁵⁴ as given in his edition, but this reading is not attested by any manuscript.⁵⁵ He explained that ΕΝΣΣΕΦΡΑΘΑ developed by haplography of ΣΣ into ἕως Εφραθα which is the reading of almost all manuscripts.⁵⁶ But it is more probable that the opposite happened. In a very early stage of the transmission of the Greek text a critical scribe or corrector did not approve of the reading Σεφραθα, a place name not mentioned anywhere and without any association with Jerusalem; therefore he thought that the double *sigma* is a mistake caused by dittography of ΕΝΣΕΦΡΑΘΑ. Ephratha is indeed identified with Bethlehem not only in Mic 5:1, but also in Josh 15:59 LXX and in Gen 35:19 (the place of Rachel's tomb) and perhaps in Jer 31:15 (the high place where Rachel wept for her children).⁵⁷ The explanatory reading ἕως Βηθλεεμ is indeed attested in Codex Venetus (LXX^v) and the margin of manuscript 86.

Jerome translates the LXX in his commentary by *usque Euphratem*. He apparently found in his *Vorlage* the reading ἕως Εὐφράθου "as far as (the river) Euphrates", a mistake caused when Εφραθα became Εὐφραθα.⁵⁸ There remains a slight possibility that a keen reader tried some exegetical approach inspired by the fact that Deut 1:7 ends with the words עַד הַנָּהָר הַגְּדוֹל נַהַר פְּרָת; this verse has quite a number of geographical terms

⁵⁴ Raabe, 266: "The initial Σ was accidentally omitted by haplography. The substitution of the letter *th* for *d* is strange".

⁵⁵ Ziegler, 55.

⁵⁶ Under the influence of Origen's Hexapla the margin of Codex Marchalianus (LXX^m) has ἕως Σαφραδ; by haplography this became Αφραδ (68) and then Φαραδ (87, 91, 490). Something similar happened also to ἕως Σαρέπτων: ἕως Αρεπτων (46, 86, 147, 538, 711); ἕως Σαρέφθων: ἕως Αρεφθων (87, 91).

⁵⁷ Cf. Mat 2:18. Note that Jer 31 was already referred to above, when discussing the context of the returning exiles.

⁵⁸ In all the following passages the spelling Εὐφραθα occurs in manuscripts: Gen 35:16, 19; 48:7; Judg 6:11, 24; 8:27; Mic 5:1; Ps 132:6; Ruth 4:11 (note Old Latin: *Eufrata*). Old Latin of Obad 20 also reads *Euphratha* (Εφραθα is the transcription of both עִפְרָתָה and עִפְרָה).

corresponding to those of Obad 19-20: הר (twice), ארץ הכנעני, נגב, שפלה, (note also הלכנון, rendered by LXX Ἀντιλίβανον, i.e. the region of צרפת).

The Vg translates אשר בספרד by *quae in Bosforo* (*Bosphoro* in Jerome's commentary). Raabe tried to explain that בספרד was confused with the preposition ב and the letters ספר-⁵⁹. But Jerome himself tells us in his commentary that he had learned from his Jewish teacher that the Bosphorus is called in Hebrew "Sepharad" (372₇₀₉₋₇₁₄). It is not clear at all which of the several straits called Bosphorus is meant here: the Thrakian, the Kimmerian, the Scythian, or the Hellespont; Jerome himself finishes this theme with the wise words: "But we may understand whatever place we like in the kingdom of Babylon".

8

Finally, in order to deal with the overall structure of Obad 20 in the LXX and Vg, we must once more refer to the previous verse. In v. 19 MT as translated by KJV, and LXX as translated by Brenton, are structurally almost identical:

MT (KJV): "And *they of* the South shall possess the mount of Esau; and *they of* the plain - the Philistines; and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria; and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead."

LXX (Brenton): "And they *that dwell* in the south shall inherit the mount of Esau, and they in the plain - the Philistines; and they shall inherit the mount of Ephraim, and the plain of Samaria, and Benjamin, and the land of Galaad."

The difference between KJV and Brenton is that Brenton takes ", and Benjamin," (note the commas!) as a third object of the second "they shall inherit". However, it is preferable to take Benjamin also in Greek as a new subject, like BA: "ainsi que Benjamin du pays de Galaad" (our translation: "in the same way as Benjamin [scil. will inherit] the land of Galaad"). In the combination of καὶ Βενιαμιν καί, the second καί, meaning "also, even" has

⁵⁹ Raabe, 266.

no basis in MT.⁶⁰ However, as mentioned above, some manuscripts prefix twice καί to ἕως “up to, including” in v. 20. So we may translate the LXX: “and Benjamin [will inherit] even Galaad”.

Still closer to MT is Vg (in our translation): “Those who are near the south will inherit the mount of Esau; and those in the plain – the Philistines; and they will possess the region of Ephraim and the region of Samaria; and Benjamin will possess Galaad”. After that follows the translation of v. 20, structurally also identical with MT: “And the exiles of this army: To the Israelites – everything of the Cannanites including Sarepta; and the exiles of Jerusalem, who are in Bosforus, will possess the towns of the south”.

9

In sum, the Greek text of Obad 20 is read by us with the following structure:⁶¹

καὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας ἢ ἀρχὴ αὕτη· τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ γῆ τῶν Χανααναίων ἕως
Σαρέπτων· καὶ μετοικεσία Ἰερουσαλημ ἕως Ἐφραθα καὶ κληρονομήσουσι τὰς
πόλεις τοῦ Ναγεβ

And belonging to the exiles this part (column): to the Israelites – the land of the Canaanites including Sarepta; and the exiles of Jerusalem including Ephraim will even inherit the towns of the Nageb.

The plural form of the verbal predicate κατακληρονομήσουσι “they will inherit” is justified like MT וְיָרְשׁוּ after the collective sense of תַּלְמִיּוֹת meaning “exiles”. The adverb καί, “even, indeed”, before κληρονομήσουσιν is a stylistic (dis)improvement which does not affect the understanding of the textual structure.⁶² This καί is attested by Papyrus Washington, Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Marchalianus, the first corrector of Codex Sinaiticus

⁶⁰ It is therefore not found in some Lucianic manuscripts. But Jerome apparently read it in his Greek *Vorlage*, since he translated it in his commentary: *et Benjamin et* (370⁶³²).

⁶¹ Note the punctuation marks, which differ partly from the traditional ones.

⁶² For adverbial καί before predicative verb see Smyth, §2883. Such a usage is attested in Classic Greek; cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 726: καὶ διδαξόμεσθα, “shall we indeed be taught?”, as translated by R. Jebb and E.S. Shuckburgh, *The Antigone of Sophocles* (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), 158.

and the Lucianic manuscripts; it is missing in the important Codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus (first hand), Venetus and other manuscripts, and also in the *Vorlage* of Jerome's translation of the Greek in his commentary.

The punctuation marks used by Raabe in his translation of the LXX result in an odd statement:

And this is the domain of the captives belonging to the Israelites, the land of the Canaanites up to Zarepath; and the captives of Jerusalem, up to Sephratha; and they will inherit the cities of the Negeb.

One wonders: How can the captives of Jerusalem belong to the domain of the Israelites? Similarly NETS:

And this is the beginning of the migration: The sons of Israel shall have the land of the Canaanites as far as Sarepta; and the migration of Jerusalem as far as Sephratha; they shall also possess the cities of the Negeb.

These translations were doubtlessly influenced by the lack of a punctuation mark after "Sarepta", and by the comma after "Sephratha/Ephrata" found in the traditional editions of LXX. The editor(s) of NETS possibly thought that after "the migration of Jerusalem" one must insert silently an imaginary predicate like the following "(they) shall possess", exactly as Brenton did: "and the captives of Jerusalem *shall inherit* as far as Ephrata". However, in this case we would get a strange parallel: In contrast to the extensive expansion of the domain of the Israelites ("the land of the Canaanites as far as Sarepta") the domain of the Jerusalemites would reach only to a neighboring town.

Thomson-Muses translated the Greek as if it had a dative τῇ μετοικεσίῳ parallel to the dative τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ: "And this shall be the domain of the captivity—to the Israelites shall belong the land of the Canaanites to Sarepta; and to the captives of Jerusalem, to Ephrata: they shall possess the cities of south". This is hardly a translation of the Greek text as it stands, and the English syntax seems awkward: "to the Israelites shall belong the land of the Canaanites...; and to the captives of Jerusalem... shall belong [what exactly?]... they shall possess..."! Whilst three of these translations inserted verbal expressions like "(they) shall inherit" (Brenton), "(they) shall have" (NETS), "(it) shall belong to" (Thomson-Muses, insertions easily explained

by the parallel κατακληρονομεῖν in vv. 19-20), *BA* inserted “ce sera” (that is, “this will be”):

et tel est l’empire de la transplantation: aux fils d’Israel la terre de Chananéens jusqu’ à Sarepta, et ce sera la transplantation de Jérusalem jusqu’ à Sephratha, et ils hériteront des villes du Nageb.

(Our translation: “And that is the domain of the exile: for the Israelites the land of the Canaanites as far as Sarepta, and this will be the exile of Jerusalem as far as Sephratha, and they will inherit the towns of the Nageb”.)

Again we must ask: What will be the exile of Jerusalem? Is it the land of the Canaanites?! The very long note in *BA* 111-112 does not answer these questions.

Appendix I

The Greek equivalents of גולה/גלות

The Hebrew lexeme גולה/גלות is rendered by the following Greek equivalents:

1. αἰχμαλωσία “captivity” (19 times).
2. ἀποικία, ἀποικεσία, ἀποικισμός (25 times): This translation is incompatible with the use of ἀποικία in non-biblical Greek, where ἀποικία means a colony populated by citizens sent by the authorities of the metropolis, cf. Aeschines 2.175: “and in these years we sent out a host of colonies (ἀποικίας... ἀπεστείλαμεν)”;⁶³ Polybios 2.19.12: “This was the first part of Gaul in which they [=the Romans] planted a colony (ἀποικίαν ἔστειλαν)”.⁶⁴ These two examples were chosen because they contain the collocation of ἀποικία “colony” with the verb (ἀπο)στέλλειν “to send, plant” which also occurs—in a completely different sense—in Jer 29:20 (LXX 36:20), in the manuscripts which supply the verses missing in the Old Greek: כל הגולה אשר שלחתי מירושלם בבלה, πᾶσα ἀποικία ἣν ἐξάπέστειλα ἐξ Ἰερουσαλημ εἰς Βαβυλῶνα.
3. μετοικεσία, μετοικία, μετοικισμός (8 times): This translation is better. Although in non-biblical Greek it denotes the status of a denizen, one who lives habitually in a country but is not a native-born citizen (μέτοικος became *métèque* in French!), the verb μετοικίζειν is found in Hellenistic Greek in the required negative sense “to deport people”. Pseudo-Aristoteles, *Oeconomica* 1352a 32f. (written about 250 BCE) tells a story about Cleomenes, whom Alexander the Great appointed administrator of Egypt, and the inhabitants of Canopus (Κάνωβος), an island-town in Lower Egypt, on the western mouth of the Nile:⁶⁵

⁶³ Translation by C.D. Adams, *The Speeches of Aeschines* (LCL; London: Heinemann, 1919), 295.

⁶⁴ Translation by W.R. Paton, *Polybios* (LCL; London: Heinemann, 1922), 1:289.

⁶⁵ Translation by G.C. Armstrong, *Aristotle: Oeconomica* (LCL; London: Heinemann, 1935), 389.

Sailing therefore to Canopus he [=Cleomenes] informed the priests and the men of property there that he had come to remove them (μετοικίσαι αὐτούς)... They, however, declared themselves unable to pay it,⁶⁶ and were accordingly removed (μετώκισεν αὐτούς, lit. "he removed them").

Compare also Plutarch, *Romulus* 17.1: "The people of Fidenae... surrendered... themselves to be transported (μετοικίσαι σφᾶς αὐτούς) to Rome".⁶⁷ In the New Testament the verb μετοικίζειν is used in a positive sense in Acts 7:4: God sends Abram from Haran to Canaan (μετώκισεν αὐτόν); but in v. 13 the verb is used in a negative sense: μετοικιῶ ὑμᾶς ἐπέκεινα Βαβυλῶνος (KJV: "I will carry you away beyond Babylon").⁶⁸

4. No translation (6 times): Isa 20:4; Jer 29:16, 20; Esth 2:6; Dan 5:13; 6:14.

5. Once, in Jer 24:5, גלות is taken as a collective singular: ἀποικισθέντες (as if גוליג).

6. Once, in Jer 52:31, יהויכין גלות is translated in keeping with best Greek syntax by *genitivus absolutus*: ἀποικισθέντος Ιωακίμ "Joakim being exiled".

7. In Ezek 12:4, where MT has גולה, the LXX read גולג (see HUB ad loc.).

Note that in Nah 3:10 גלג the LXX has εἰς μετοικεσίαν, but 8HевXIIgr has εἰς ἀποι[κίαν].⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Cleomenes had asked for a bribe.

⁶⁷ Translation by B. Perrin, *Plutarch's Lives* (LCL; London: Heinemann, 1914), 1:139f.

⁶⁸ This is of course an allusion to Amos 5:27 MT: קַח לְךָ מִהַלְאָה לְדַמְשֶׁק, LXX: καὶ μετοικιῶ ὑμᾶς ἐπέκεινα Δαμασκού.

⁶⁹ E. Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HевXIIgr)* (DJD 8; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 48-49.

Appendix II

The Understanding of לַיָּם in Nah 3:8

A similar problem concerning the understanding of the lexeme לַיָּם is present in Nah 3:8. MT mentions the town קָנַח אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּם,⁷⁰ and qualifies it by the words אֲשֶׁר לַיָּם רָשָׁה. This phrase was translated by LXX ἡς ἡ ἀρχὴ (ἀντιῆς) θάλασσα. Brenton and Muraoka render the word ἀρχὴ here as they did in Obad 20: “whose dominion is the sea”.⁷¹ But it is conceivable that LXX thought also here of לַיָּם like שָׂרָה, this time in the sense of “stock” or “principal” (in contrast to “income” or “interest”), similar to Lev 5:24, where LXX has κεφάλαιον.

In non-biblical Greek we find in the vocabulary of economics κεφάλαιον and ἀρχαῖον in this sense; instead of κεφάλαιον one finds also short κεφαλή “head”, attested in inscriptions of the fourth and third centuries BCE. So ἀρχὴ may be in Hellenistic Greek the same as ἀρχαῖον in Classic Greek.⁷² Hebrew לַיָּם is translated 11 times by πλοῦτος “wealth” (Ps, Job, Prov), and once by τὰ ὑπάρχοντα “means” (Job 15:29). The expression πλοῦτος θαλάσσης occurs in Deut 33:19; Isa 60:5. The sea may be understood as the *principal* of the *original capital* of the seaports wealth (cf. Vg: *cuius divitiae mare* “whose wealth is the sea”).

In the 12 other instances of לַיָּם in the Minor Prophets we find no translation but the most stereotypic ones in the LXX: δύναιμις (8 times),⁷³

⁷⁰ Interestingly LXX has only Αμ(μ)ων, although one could have expected Ναύκρατις (=Town of Krates), the famous old Greek trading post in the delta of the Nile, in whose name the component Ναυ- corresponds to the Hebrew-Egyptian אֲנַח = “town” (BDB, HALOT). Vg and Targ identified קָנַח אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּם with Alexandria.

⁷¹ The similar translations by Raabe (264: “whose domain is sea”) and BA (224: “elle dont l’empire est une mer”) are mistaken, since indefinite θάλασσα means “the sea” (or “la mer”) as opposed to the main land; definite ἡ θάλασσα is used when a particular sea is mentioned (see Smyth, §1140-1141).

⁷² Also the word ἀρχὴ in the sense “column; part of an army” is not attested in non-biblical Greek. The contrary is true for Latin: the various nouns used by Vg (*pars, cuneus, turma*) in the cases where שָׂרָה has that technical military meaning, are well attested in non-biblical Latin.

⁷³ Joel 2:11, 25; Obad 11, 13; Hab 3:19; Zeph 1:13; Zech 4:6; 9:4.

δυνατός (once),⁷⁴ and ἰσχύς (3 times).⁷⁵ In the remaining 242 attestations, לִיָּהּ is translated 178 times by δυνα- and 23 times by ἰσχυ-. Other translations are the already-mentioned πλοῦτος (11 times), ὄχλος (6 times), στρατιά (4 times), ἀνδρείος (twice); and once each πόλεμος, στρατόπεδον, παράταξις, ἔθνος, συναγωγή, σῶμα, συνετός; 9 times there is no Greek equivalent (often whole verses are missing); Jer 46:22 (LXX 26:22) LXX read לִיָּהּ and translated ἄμμος “sand”; Dan 3:20 is completely different.

⁷⁴ Mic 2:4.

⁷⁵ Joel 2:22; Mic 4:13; Zech 14:4.