

H. Ausloos
Maître de recherches
of the F.R.S.-FNRS,
professor of Old
Testament Exegesis
at the Université
catholique de Louvain
(Belgium), as well as
Research Associate
at the University
of the Free State,
South Africa.

E-mail:
hans.ausloos@
uclouvain.be

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup26.3>

ISSN 1015-8758 (Print)
ISSN 2309-9089 (Online)

Acta Theologica 2018
Suppl 26:57-70

© Creative Commons
With Attribution (CC-BY)



TRANSMISSION HISTORY AND BIBLICAL TRANSLATION: THE CASE OF DEUTERONOMY 9:24

ABSTRACT

Transmitting a source text into a target language always implies, to some extent, that the translator must interpret the text that is being translated. However, contemporary Bible translations regularly significantly deviate from the Hebrew text they pretend to render, even if the source text is not at all problematic. In this article, I will analyse Deuteronomy 9:24 from this perspective. I will argue that the rendering by several actual Bible translations seems to be influenced by the transmission history of the text, as it can be found in some of the ancient *versiones*.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Italian adage “*Traduttore, traditore*” – a translator is a traitor – is undoubtedly a correct characterisation of the process of translating a text from its source language into a target language. By definition, a translation can never be a perfect rendering of the original. Each language has its peculiarities. In the case of the translation of the Bible – in particular, the Old Testament –, translators are all the more confronted with this issue, not at least because the Hebrew language strongly differs from the majority of target languages, not only on the graphemic (with regard to the letters of the alphabet), but also on the morphological, verbal and lexical levels (Ausloos 2017a:7-8). Therefore, a translator is always compelled to make choices when rendering a

source text. Choosing one possible rendering always implies excluding others that are often equally legitimate.

During his academic career as Old Testament scholar, Prof. Fanie Snyman undoubtedly also often experienced how difficult it can be to achieve the right balance between remaining “faithful” to the “original” biblical text, and delivering a “good” translation thereof.¹ Indeed, he will have faced numerous issues and been compelled to make decisions in translating the book of Malachi in English, as part of his prominent commentary on this book within the series *Historical commentary on the Old Testament* (Snyman 2015), or in translating the books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Zechariah into Afrikaans for the *Nuwe lewende vertaling* (Snyman 2006:95-125, 166-203, 970-979).

Prof. Snyman surely often had great sympathy for the first translators of the Old Testament. In translating the Hebrew books into Greek, the translators of the Septuagint (LXX), from the 3rd century BCE onwards, also had to seek solutions to numerous problems. How, for example, should one render a typically Israelite vocabulary – words such as *shèqèl* (שקל) or *shabbât* (שבת) – into the Greek language? How can a Greek translator reflect Hebrew wordplay into Greek? How should the Hebrew *hapax legomena* be rendered adequately if one does not even know the precise meaning of the word in Hebrew? (Ausloos & Lemmelijn 2010:368-373). In general, Bible translators endeavour to remain as close as possible to their source text, and to seek appropriate renderings. Nevertheless, the LXX translators sometimes made intentional changes to the text, not at least in instances in which the text could have given rise to theological discussions (Ausloos 2017b:235-247). Although it is not easy to find out whether these changes were made by the translator or whether they originated from the Hebrew *Vorlage* they were using (Tov 2012:240-262), it is one of those elements that clearly illustrates that, until the beginning of the current era, the text of the biblical books was not yet completely established. It was only later, when decisions had to be made for different reasons (*inter alia*, the formation of the canon), that a single consolidated text was established and viewed as authoritative within a specific religious community. The oldest extant complete manuscript reflecting this *Textus Receptus* of the Old Testament in mainstream Judaism can be found in the so-called Leningrad Codex (B19^a) from 1008 CE.

The vast majority of modern translations of the Old Testament are attempts to render this manuscript – often considered to be the “original

1 On the distinction between “literal”, “free”, and “faithful” with regard to bible translations, see, *inter alia*, Ausloos & Lemmelijn (2010:358-363).

text” – in an acceptable form. Most of the translations succeeded in presenting a “faithful” rendering thereof. Nevertheless, it appears that translators often took the liberty to adjust the text.

In this present modest contribution, which I warmly dedicate to Prof. Fanie Snyman,² I will address Deuteronomy 9:24, several translations of which diverge from the Hebrew text.

2. WHO KNOWS WHO IN DEUTERONOMY 9:24?

Deuteronomy 9:24 is part of Deuteronomy 6:1-11:31, a literary complex of chapters about Moses’ admonition to obey YHWH’s commandments. After enumerating Israel’s various acts of rebellion against God during its journey through the desert – in particular, the worshipping of the calf at Mount Horeb (Deut. 9:15-21), and Israel’s sin at Taberah, Masah, Kibroth-hattaavah and Kadesh-barnea (Deut. 9:22) –, Moses summarizes Israel’s insurgencies in Deuteronomy 9:24 in one single sentence: *mamrîm hêyîtêm ‘im yhw h miyyôm da’tî ‘ètkèm* (ממרים הייתם עם יהוה מיום דעתי אתכם).³

From a morphological and syntactical perspective, this verse is not problematic. A plural *hifil* participle masculine (*mamrîm* – ממרים) precedes a finite form (2nd person plural) of the verb *hâyâh* (היה). Although a participle as such can be used in the sphere of the past (Joüon & Muraoka 1993:409), by adding a form of the verb *hâyâh* (היה) with past meaning, the author clearly wanted to express explicitly the past dimension of Israel’s rebellion (Joüon & Muraoka 1993:411). According to Waltke and O’Connor (1990:628), and specifically when the finite verb is preceded by the participle, this participle can have the function of a substantive. However, Joüon and Muraoka (1993) argue that, in Deuteronomy 9:24, the participle has “a quasi-adjectival meaning”. Followed by the preposition *‘im* (אם) – in this instance, undoubtedly with an adversative connotation (Waltke & O’Connor 1990:219) – and the tetragram YHWH (יהוה), this sentence can be translated as follows: “You have been rebel(liou)s against YHWH”. An identical expression is used in Deuteronomy 9:7 and 31:27.

In addition, the remainder of the verse does not pose any problems from a linguistic perspective. The final consonant of the preposition *min* (מן) has been assimilated to the first consonant of the following noun

2 To date, we have known each other for twenty-five years. During this time, we have shared many unforgettable moments in either Belgium or South Africa.

3 Several scholars view Deuteronomy 9:22-24 as a later addition to the text (see, for example, Von Rad 1964:56). This discussion, however, does not have any influence on its actual function within the context.

yôm (יום). Because of the noun *yôm* (יום), there can be no doubt regarding the temporal sense of the preposition (Joüon & Muraoka 1993:489). This temporal indication is followed by the *Qal* infinitive construct with a first person singular suffix *da'tî* (דעתִי), followed by the object *'ètkèm* (אתכם), a second person plural form. The second part of the verse could, therefore, be translated as “from the day I am knowing you”.

In sum, it appears that the text – as transmitted in the MT – is not difficult to translate and interpret: Moses refers to Israel’s numerous sins. He addresses the people in the first person, completely in line with both the preceding and the ensuing verses. God is the speaking subject in Deuteronomy 9:13-14, threatening Moses that He will exterminate the Israelites. This direct speech of God is clearly marked as such in Deuteronomy 9:13-14:

And YHWH said to me:

I have seen that this people is indeed a stubborn people. Let me alone that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and more numerous than they.

In Deuteronomy 9:15, the author is giving the floor to Moses. This is clearly indicated by the use of the first person singular:

So I turned and went down from the mountain, while the mountain was ablaze; the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands.

Moses continues in the first person singular in verses 16-21. In Deuteronomy 9:23, Moses explicitly continues in the first person: “Throughout the forty days and forty nights that I lay prostrate before YHWH ...”.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that Moses speaks the words in Deuteronomy 9:23-24 – with the exception of the clearly marked divine direct speech in verse 23 (“And when YHWH sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, “Go up and occupy the land that I have given you”). Moses is disillusioned because of Israel’s disobedience, from the day he came into contact with the Israelites.⁴ Moses’ desperate exclamation in Deuteronomy 9:24, as transmitted in the MT, is not at all problematic: “You have been rebel(liou)s against YHWH from the day I knew you”.

4 One could argue, in this instance, that the Israelites were not rebellious against Moses from the moment they came into contact with each other, but only from the journey in the wilderness onwards. Tigay (1996:102) suggests, however, that the expression seems to have a hyperbolic meaning.

Even if Deuteronomy 9:24 in the MT may be clear and evident, a comparison of some arbitrarily selected modern translations reveals how this verse has been rendered in divergent ways. In general, the first part of the verse (*mamrîm hêyîtêm 'im yhw̄h* – ממררים הייתם עם יהוה) is rendered fairly faithfully. With regard to the second part of the verse (*miyyôm da'tî 'ètkêm* – מיום דעתי אתכם), however, the translations differ significantly. A brief survey of some major Bible translations in English, French, German, Afrikaans, and Dutch leads to a remarkable assessment. Although many translations follow the Hebrew of the MT, considering the suffix -y (י-) within the verbal form *da'tî* (דעתי) to Moses as speaking subject,⁵ several translations render this form as a third person singular.⁶ In doing so, Moses is not viewed as having known the people to be rebellious. In these cases, it is rather God who becomes the subject of knowing, and Israel has been rebellious as long as God has been familiar with the people.

One can only guess the reason why Bible translators were not faithful to the Hebrew text they were translating – the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*

-
- 5 New English Translation (NET): “You have been rebelling against him from the very first day I knew you!”; King James Version (KJV): “Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you”; Traduction œcuménique de la Bible (TOB): “Vous avez été en révolte contre le seigneur depuis le jour où je vous ai connus”; Bible de Maredsous (BM): “Depuis je vous connais, vous êtes rebelles au Seigneur”; Bibel in gerechter Sprache (BGS): “Seit ich euch kenne, widersetzt ihr euch Adonaj”; Staten-vertaling (SV): “Wederspanning zijt gij geweest tegen den heere, van de dag af, dat ik u gekend heb”; Nieuwe Bijbel-vertaling (NBV): “Vanaf het moment dat ik met u te maken kreeg, hebt u zich tegen jhw̄h verzet”; Petrus Canisius-vertaling (PC): “Gij zijt tegen Jahweh weerspanning geweest van de dag af, dat ik u ken”; Afrikaanse vertaling (AV 1953): “Wederstrewig was julle teen die here van die dag af dat ek julle ken”; Afrikaanse vertaling (AV 1983): “Vandat ek julle leer ken het, was julle in opstand teen die Here”; Die Bybel. Nuwe vertaling (NV): “Vandat ek julle leer ken het, was julle in opstand teen die Here.
- 6 Revised English Bible (REB): “You were defiant from the day that the Lord first knew you”; New Revised Standard Version (NRSV): “You have been rebellious against the Lord as long as he has known you”; Bible de Jérusalem (BJ): “Vous avez été rebelles à Yahvé depuis le jour où il vous a connus”; Einheitsübersetzung (EÜ): “Ihr habt euch dem Herrn widersetzt, seit er euch kennt”; Willibrord-vertaling 1995 (WV 1995): “U bent opstandig geweest tegen de Heer vanaf de dag dat Hij u heeft uitverkoren”. As far as I am aware, no single Bible translation in Afrikaans renders Deuteronomy 9:24 in this way. Nevertheless, in using a capital (“Ek”), the *Nuwe Lewende Vertaling* (NLV) at least suggests that God is the subject of knowing: “Ja, julle het teen die Here in opstand gekom so lank as wat Ek julle ken”. Some translations such as, for example, NRSV and BJ mention the other possibility of translating the verse in footnote.

is generally used as source text for modern translations.⁷ The fact that the verb *yād'a* (יָדַע) is used with Moses as subject can hardly have been the reason. The verb is very commonly used in Hebrew literature, and it occurs with both a divine and a human subject.⁸ Moreover, all Hebrew manuscripts of Deuteronomy 9:24 are identical, and stand for a text as represented in manuscript B19^a. The only exception can be found in the Samaritan Pentateuch (SamP). Being identical with the first part of Deuteronomy 9:24, SamP, which only contains the text of the Torah and was preserved for centuries by the Samaritans, contrary to the MT , reads a third instead of a first person form for *yād'a* (יָדַע) in the second half of the verse: *mmrym hyytm 'm yhw h myw m d'tw 'tkm* (ממרים הייתם עם יהוה מיום דעתו אתכם).⁹ The version of this verse in SamP can be rendered as follows: “You have been rebel(liou)s against γHWH , from the day *he* knew you”. The third person suffix in the verbal form *da'tô* (דָּעָתוֹ), therefore, does not refer to Moses as the speaking subject. Because of the explicit mention of γHWH as the object in the first part of the verse, it seems logical that, in SamP, γHWH is viewed as the subject of knowing.¹⁰ This variant hardly fits in the series of typical features of SamP, which, in addition to some orthographic variants, mainly has to be distinguished from the MT because of ideological elements and harmonizing alterations (Tov 2012:74-93).

Although the reading of SamP is unique among all Hebrew textual witnesses, it also seems to be reflected in some revisions of the LXX , in particular those by Symmachus (Sym.) and Theodotion (Theod.). Sym. should probably be dated at approximately 200 CE (Jobes & Silva 2015:29-30). According to Salvesen (1991:262), Sym. “aimed to produce a translation in clear Greek which accurately reflected the sense of the Hebrew original”. Moreover, Salvesen (1991:262) argues that

his respect for the LXX is evident: he revised it in the spirit of the original translators of the Pentateuch, ironing out their lexical

7 The more recent edition of the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (McCarthy 2007:32) also represents the Hebrew text of the B19^a manuscript.

8 In Deuteronomy 2:7; 8,2; 31:21, 27, 29; 34:10, the verb *yād'a* (יָדַע) is used with God as subject. In Deuteronomy 4:9, 35, 39; 7:9, 15; 8,2, 5, 16; 9:2, 6; 11:2, 26; 13,2, 6, 13; 18:21; 20:20; 21:1; 22:2; 28:33, 36, 64; 29:4, 6, 16, 26; 31:13; 32:17; 33:9, it is used with Israel (or Israel's ancestors) as subject. Moses seems to be its subject in Deuteronomy 3:19.

9 For the text of SamP, see Tal & Florentin (2010:551). Unfortunately, the SamP is the only extant Hebrew version of the verse outside the MT . In the Dead Sea scrolls literature, there is no fragment left of Deuteronomy 9:24. See Ulrich (2010:202).

10 This is in line with Hosea 13:4: “I did know you in the wilderness”.

inconsistency and inaccuracies, yet preserving smooth diction where he found it and extending it where it was absent.

In Deuteronomy 9:24, Sym. reads $\xi\gamma\nu\omega\ \acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\varsigma$ (Field 1875:287). Instead of the first person as in the MT , Sym. reads $\xi\gamma\nu\omega$, a third person singular second aorist active of $\gamma\iota\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\sigma\kappa\omega$.¹¹ This is thus in line with SamP that considers $\gamma\eta\eta\eta$ as subject instead of Moses. The accusative plural pronoun $\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\varsigma$ is an adequate equivalent of the Hebrew $\text{'\acute{e}tk\acute{e}m}$ (אתכם).

Similar to Sym., Theod., a revision dating from the 2nd century CE, also reads this form. Because of the findings of much older Greek texts – in particular, the Greek Minor Prophets scroll found at Qumran –, scholars now presuppose that,

for at least parts of the Hebrew Bible, a translation containing elements once attributed to Theodotion was already in use prior to NT times (Jobes & Silva 2015:28).

Whether or not this is the case for Theod.'s rendering of Deuteronomy 9:24 cannot be determined beyond any doubt. The variant reading – a third person suffix instead of a first person –, as reflected in SamP in Hebrew and in Sym. and Theod. in Greek, can be considered to be very ancient. This, however, does not necessarily imply that this variant reflects a more original reading than the one reflected in MT , and that it would justify the option of various modern translations to reformulate the MT 's rendering. Indeed, besides the reading of MT , on the one hand, and SamP, Sym. and Theod., on the other, a third variant reading should be mentioned.

Being, to a certain extent, in line with SamP and the revisions of Sym. and Theod., the LXX of Deuteronomy 9:24 also reads a third person singular instead of a first person in MT (Wevers & Quast 2006:153). However, where SamP, Sym. and Theod. have an active form – thus considering $\gamma\eta\eta\eta$ as subject of the verb –, the LXX reads a passive form ($\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\sigma\theta\eta$). Due to this third person singular aorist, God becomes the subject of the verbal form (“he became known”). Due to this verbal form, the accusative – in Hebrew expressed by the *nota accusativi* $\text{'\acute{e}t-}$ (-את) followed by a suffix second masculine plural $\text{-k\acute{e}m}$ (כם) – has become a dative ($\acute{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$). Therefore, in translation, Deuteronomy 9:24 LXX reads: “You [Israel] were disobedient in

11 Contrary to Wevers (1995:171), who, arguing that Theod. and Sym. reflect the reading of the MT , erroneously seems to characterise $\xi\gamma\nu\omega$ as a first person singular.

regard to things concerning the Lord from the day in which he was known (ἧς ἐγνώσθη) to you (ὑμῖν).¹²

In sum, three readings of the verse can be distinguished in the ancient textual witnesses. With a direct speech, starting in Deuteronomy 9:15, Moses reproaches the Israelites in Deuteronomy 9:24 with the following words: “You too have been disobedient against YHWH ...”. According to the MT, this has been the case “from the day I [Moses] know (יָדַעְתָּ) you”. For SamP, Sym. and Theod., Israel has been disobedient “from the day He [YHWH] knew (יָדַעְתָּ) you”. For the LXX, it was “from the day He [YHWH] was known (ἐγνώσθη) to you”.

3. DEUTERONOMY 9:24 AND TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Being confronted with textual variants, the discipline of textual criticism aims to find out which of the variants in Deuteronomy 9:24 can be considered to be the more original one (Lemmelijn 2018). In this respect, McCarthy (2007:78*; 32) argues that “the variations between M, G, and Smr suggest three possible stages in the evolution of this verse”. In McCarthy’s view, the reading of SamP – as reflected in the Greek revisions of Sym. and Theod. – is the most original one. As such, McCarthy is in line with Geiger (1928:336), who seems to suggest that SamP renders the more original text.¹³ In Geiger’s and McCarthy’s view, a reader of the “original”

12 Compare my literal translation with the translation of this LXX verse by Peters (2007:154): “You were disobedient in regard to things concerning the Lord from the day he knew you”. See also Dogniez & Harl (2007:179) who render the passive aorist ἐγνώσθη as an active form: “Vous avez désobéi au Seigneur depuis le jour où il s’est fait connaître à vous”. The German translation of the LXX gives a correct rendering of the verse: “Ihr wart ungehorsam gegen die Anliegen des Herrn seit dem Tag, an dem er euch bekannt wurde” (Den Hertog *et al.* 2009:188 – italics by the translators). Brenton (1851:244): “Ye were disobedient in the things relating to the Lord from the day in which he became known to you”. The Spanish translation of the LXX reads: “Habéis estado desobedeciendo las cosas del Señor desde el día en que se os dio a conocer” (Fernández Marcos *et al.* 2008:404). According to Huffman (1966:35), the verb *yād’a* (יָדַעַ), as rendered in the LXX, is in line with the technical use of the verb in ancient Near Eastern international treaties, thus letting Moses accentuate that Israel has been rebellious since its covenant with YHWH. However, as Lundbom (2013:374) rightly remarks, this would not be in line with Deuteronomy 9:7, where it is stated that Israel has been rebellious against YHWH from the day they left Egypt.

13 “Wiederum hat unser T. eine kleine Correctur erfahren 5 Mos. 9, 24. Dort sagt Moses: Widerspenstig wart ihr gegen Gott von dem Tage an, da Er euch gekannt, d.h. sich euer angenommen. So, יָדַעַ, liest der Sam.; die 70, daran

text could get the impression that there was a day when God did not yet know his people Israel. From a theological perspective, this could have been perceived as problematic.¹⁴ According to both Geiger and McCarthy, this was the perception of the LXX's translator of Deuteronomy 9:24, who rendered the active *infinitivus constructus* as a passive form, even if it is not impossible that the LXX presupposes the same consonantal text as SamP.¹⁵ For the LXX translator, it was not God who – albeit being omniscient – did not know Israel from the beginning: in making use of a passive form, the translator was referring to a period in which God was not yet known to Israel. When revising the LXX, Sym. and Theod. corrected the LXX version according to the “original” Hebrew, as handed over in the SamP, according to McCarthy. In the latter's (McCarthy 2007:78*) view, the version of the MT “removes the problem entirely by having Moses as subject”. By its *plus* of the verbal form “*coepi*” (“sed semper fuistis rebelles a die qua nosse vos coepi”), the Latin version of the Vulgate also seems to be willing to focus on Moses, who has not always known the Israelites.¹⁶

Even if McCarthy's rather complicated reconstruction of the transmission history of Deuteronomy 9:24 makes sense – it seems to be based on the hypothesis that the *lectio difficilior* should be considered as the

Anstoss nehmend, dass ein Tag bezeichnet werde, von dem an erst Gott Israel kennen gelernt, verwandeln es in das Pass.: ἤς ἐγνωσθη ὑμῖν, unser T. jedoch mit den andern Uebers. liest דעתו, als bezüge es sich auf Moses. Vg.; noch die Uebers. zu 5 Mos. 2,7. Hos. 13,5 und sonst.” (Geiger 1928:336). See also Barthélemy, Hulst & Lohfink (1976:279).

- 14 In this instance, reference could also be made to Exodus 2:25. Whereas MT reads: “God looked upon the Israelites, and God knew (*wayyida' 'èlohîm* – וידע אלהים)”, thus lacking an object, the LXX reads: *καὶ ἐγνωσθη αὐτοῖς*. Thereby, the verbal form has been interpreted as a passive aorist, which is not an impossible rendering of the non-vocalised text (Le Boulluec & Sandevour 2004:87; Schaper 2011:280). According to Schaper (2011:280), “das Obj. ... (*αὐτοῖς*) wird sinngemäß hinzugefügt”. However, it is also possible that *αὐτοῖς* is not a real *plus*, if one accepts that the translator or the LXX *Vorlage* read *'aléyhèm* (אלהים), which, due to a simple metathesis of two consonants, is not implausible. SamP follows the version of the MT; in the Dead Sea Scrolls; Exodus 2:25 unfortunately is lacking (Ulrich 2010:31). Compare, however, with Tigay (1996:102), who seems to minimize the theological problem: “‘Knew’ can mean either ‘chose’, ‘looked after’, or ‘met’. In any case, that reading means that Israel has been rebellious since the beginning of its relationship with God”.
- 15 See Den Hertog *et al.* (2011:558): “Gegenüber der 3. Pers. Sg. in Smr und der 1. Pers. Sg. (Inf. mit Suffix der 1. Pers. Sg.) nimmt die LXX eine Mittelposition ein, da der Übersetzungstext eine pass Verbform der 3. Pers. bietet. Smr und die LXX könnten allerdings den gleichen hebr. Ausgangstext voraussetzen.”
- 16 See, moreover, the *minus* for *'m yhwh* (עם יהוה) (Weber 1994:248).

preferable one¹⁷ – a much easier hypothesis is also plausible, and seems to be more probable. In fact, there are good reasons to accept that the variant is simply due to an accidental mistake by a copyist. An erroneous interchange between the consonants *y-* (י-) and *w-* (ו-) occurs frequently in the process of the transmission of the text, due to the graphic similarity in the square script (Tov 2012:229-230). Due to this simple graphic reason, the “original” reading of the MT, which completely fits in the surrounding verses, could have been corrupted by a Hebrew copyist. This erroneous reading can still be found in SamP. The LXX, as well as the revisions of Sym. and Theod., reading a third instead of a first person, are hence to be considered dependent on this Hebrew form. A supplementary argument in favour of the originality of MT’s reading can be found in Deuteronomy 31:27 (Weinfeld 1991:414). In this instance, and within the context of reproaching the Israelites their rebelliousness, it is Moses – not יַהֲוִה – who addresses them, making use of a similar vocabulary:

For I know (*yâda’fi* - ידעתי) your rebellion and your stubbornness. Behold, when I am still alive amidst you this day (*hayyôm* – היום), you have been rebellious against יַהֲוִה. How much more you will be it after my death?¹⁸

4. CONCLUSION

Translating a (Biblical) text is always intrinsically related to the need to interpret it. In the case of Deuteronomy 9:24, however, a brief survey of some recent translations revealed that many translators often seem to deviate from the MT – as transmitted in manuscript B19^a –, they pretend to translate. However, there are no sound reasons to change the MT by conjecturally emending it on the basis of the *versiones*, and to consider them as witnesses of a more original form of the text.¹⁹ Therefore, Snyman’s Afrikaans rendering of Deuteronomy 9:24 in *Nuwe lewende vertaling* can

17 Joosten (2008:33) correctly warned against a too rash application of the often used rule *lectio difficilior, potior*: “L’idée de la règle de *lectio difficilior* est qu’un copiste est susceptible de simplifier un texte jugé difficile, plutôt qu’il ne rendra incompréhensible un texte lisse et sans aspérité. En règle générale, ceci est exact. ... Mais un texte difficile peut tout aussi bien être le résultat d’une corruption textuelle: la confusion des consonnes, l’omission accidentelle d’un mot, l’harmonisation mécanique avec un passage parallèle, peuvent créer un texte difficile et néanmoins secondaire”.

18 On the use of the *qatal* in this instance, see Seeligmann (2004:238).

19 See also Labuschagne (1987:209) and Christensen (2001:187) contrary to, for example, Braulik (1986:80) and Otto (2012:933, 937).

only be applauded, even if his rendering of the personal pronoun with a capital (“Ek”) suggests that ΥHWH should be considered the subject of the verb *da'ti* (דע'ת).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AUSLOOS, H.

2017a. “Garden in Eden” or “Paradise of Delight”? The Septuagint’s Rendering of דע in the Book of Genesis. *Acta Theologica* 37(1):6-17.

2017b. Sept défis posés à une théologie de la Septante. In: L.C. Jonker, G.R. Kotzé & C.M. Maier (eds), *Congress Volume Stellenbosch 2016* (Leiden: Brill, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 177), pp. 228-250.

AUSLOOS, H. & LEMMELIJN, B.

2010. Content-related criteria in characterizing the LXX translation technique. In: W. Kraus, M. Karrer & M. Meiser, *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 252), pp. 357-376.

BARTHÉLEMY, D. HULST, A.R. & LOHFINK, N.

1976. *Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Project – Compte rendu préliminaire et provisoire sur le travail d’analyse textuelle de l’Ancien Testament hébreu. I. Pentateuch*. Stuttgart: United Bible Societies.

BRAULIK, G.

1986. *Deuteronomium 1-16,17*. Würzburg: Echter. Die Neue Echter Bibel. Altes Testament.

BRENTON, L.C.L.

1851. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons.

CHRISTENSEN, D.L.

2001. *Deuteronomy 1:1-21:9, revised*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Word Biblical Commentary 6a.

DEN HERTOOG, C., LABAHN, M. & POLA, T.

2009. Deuteronomion – Das fünfte Buch Mose. In: W. Kraus & M. Karrer (eds), *Septuaginta Deutsch. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft), pp. 175-215.

2011. Deuteronomion – Das fünfte Buch Mose. In: M. Karrer & W. Kraus (eds), *Septuaginta Deutsch. Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament. Band I: Genesis bis Makkabäer* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft), pp. 523-601.

DOGNIEZ, C. & HARL, M.

2007. *Le Deutéronome. Traduction du texte grec de la Septante, introduction et notes*. Paris: Cerf. La Bible d’Alexandrie 5.

- FERNÁNDEZ MARCOS, N., SPOTTORNO DIAZ-CARO, V. & CAÑAS REÍLLO, J.M.
2008. *La Biblia griega Septuaginta. I. El Pentateuco*. Salamanca: Sígueme. Biblioteca de Estudios Bíblicos 125.
- FIELD, F.
1875. *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totus Vetus Testamentum fragmenta. Tomus 1: Prolegomena; Genesis – Esther*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- GEIGER, A.
1928. *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judentums. Zweite Auflage*. Frankfurt-am-Main: Madaa.
- HUFFMON, H.B.
1966. The treaty background of Hebrew Ya'da. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 181:31-37.
- JOBES, K. & SILVA, M.
2015. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Second edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- JOOSTEN, J.
2008. La critique textuelle. In: M. Bauks & C. Nihan (eds), *Manuel d'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament* (Genève: Labor et Fides. Le monde de la Bible 61), pp. 13-45.
- JOÜON, P. & MURAOKA, T.
1993. *A grammar of biblical Hebrew. Part Three: Syntax. Paradigms and indices*. Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico. Subsidia biblica 14/2.
- LABUSCHAGNE, C.J.
1987. *Deuteronomium. Deel 1B*. Nijkerk: G.F. Callenbach. Prediking van het Oude Testament.
- LE BOULLUEC, A. & SANDEVOIR, P.
2004. *L'Exode. Traduction du texte grec de la Septante. Introduction et notes*. Paris: Cerf. La Bible d'Alexandrie 2.
- LEMMELIJN, B.
2018 (forthcoming). Textual criticism. In: A. Salvesen & T.M. Law (eds), *Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- LUNDBOM, J.R.
2013. *Deuteronomy. A commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
- MCCARTHY, C.
2007. *Deuteronomy*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. Biblia Hebraica Quinta 5.
- OTTO, E.
2012. *Deuteronomium 1-11. Zweiter Teilband: 4,44-11,32*. Freiburg: Herder. Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament.

PETERS, M.K.H.

2007. Deuteronomion. In: A. Pietersma & 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 Press), pp. 141-173.

SALVESEN, A.

1991. *Symmachus in the Pentateuch*. Manchester: University of Manchester. *Journal of Semitic Studies Monographs* 15).

SCHAPER, J.

2011. Exodos – Das zweite Buch Mose. In: M. Karrer & W. Kraus (eds), *Septuaginta Deutsch. Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament. Band I: Genesis bis Makkabäer* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft), pp. 259-324.

SEELIGMANN, I.L.

2004. Erkenntnis Gottes und historisches Bewußtsein im alten Israel. In: I.L. Seeligmann, *Gesammelte Studien zur Hebräischen Bibel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck. *Forschungen zum Alten Testament* 41), pp. 232-263.

SNYMAN, S.D.

2006. Levitikus – Deuteronomium – Sagaria. In: W. Vosloo & A. du Toit (reds), *Die Bybel. Nuwe lewende vertaling* (Vereeniging: CUM), pp. 95-125, 166-203, 970-979.

2015. *Malachi*. Leuven: Peeters. *Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*.

TAL, A. & FLORENTIN, M.

2010. *The Pentateuch. The Samaritan version and the Masoretic version*. Tel Aviv: The Haim Rubin Tel Aviv University Press.

TIGAY, J.H.

1996. *Deuteronomy*. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society. *The JPS Torah Commentary*.

TOV, E.

2012. *Textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. Third edition, revised and expanded. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

ULRICH, E.

2010. *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls. Transcriptions and textual variants*. Leiden: Brill. *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 134.

VON RAD, G.

1964. *Das fünfte Buch Mose. Deuteronomium übersetzt und erklärt*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. *Das Alte Testament Deutsch* 8.

WALTKE, B.K & O'CONNOR, M.

1990. *An introduction to Biblical Hebrew syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.

WEBER, R.

1994. *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

WEINFELD, M.

1991. *Deuteronomy 1-11. A new translation with introduction and commentary*. New York: Doubleday. The Anchor Bible 5.

WEVERS, J.W.

1995. *Notes on the Greek text of Deuteronomy*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press. Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies 39.

WEVERS, J.W. & QUAST, U.

2006. *Deuteronomium*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum 3/2.

Keywords

Trefwoorde

Bible translation

Bybelvertaling

Deuteronomy 9:24

Deuteronomium 9:24

Textual criticism

Tekskritiek