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The Book of Obadiah in the Septuagint¹

Abstract: The Book of Obadiah, although short (it has only 21 verses; the shortest in the Hebrew Bible), is at the same time very difficult. The difficulties are manifested in its linguistic and textual layers, but above all in what concerns its content, theology and interpretation. The Greek translation of Obad contained in the LXX is particularly important because it represents a way of understanding the Book going back to pre-Christian, Hellenistic times, which strongly emphasised the theme of threats to Israel from other nations. In the Greek translation (LXXObad), the cursing character of the Book is radicalised and the guilt of the enemies (Edomites – Idumeans) is highlighted. The article presents the Book of Obadiah in its historical context (both the Hebrew original and the Greek version), and presents its text, content and character in the Septuagint version. It compares it with LXXJer 29 (LXX numbering) and shows how the challenging theology of the Book was understood among the Jews of Hellenistic Alexandria. The universalisation of the message of the Book by the LXX translation was later continued in its patristic and rabbinic interpretations.

Keywords: LXXObad, the character of translation of the LXX, textual criticism of the LXX, the Book of the Twelve Prophets in the LXX

The Book of Obadiah, although short (it has only 21 verses; the shortest in the Hebrew Bible), is very difficult. The difficulties are manifested in the linguistic and textual layers, but above all in what concerns its content, theology and interpretation. Saint Jerome

¹ This article is a corrected version of the article published in Polish: Barbara Strzałkowska, “Księga Abdiasza w Septuagincie,” *Collectanea Theologica* 90 (2020) no. 1, 19–76. Translated from Polish by Maciej Górnicki.

(and many exegetes after him) wrote: “Quanto brevius est, tanto difficilius” (“As it is short, so it is difficult”).² As a book of curse (some even note in it “boiling anger” and “language marked by exaggeration”³), it is almost entirely (apart from the final verses announcing salvation for Israel) a speech against the Edomites (the closest neighbours of the biblical Israelites, who, according to the Book of Genesis, descended from Esau, Jacob’s twin brother⁴). For this reason, its content and message have always posed a considerable challenge, especially to its Christian interpreters.⁵

The various difficulties arising at the level of the original Hebrew text of the Book acquire new value when referred to its ancient versions. The oldest is contained in the Septuagint (LXXObad). This Greek translation is particularly important because it represents a way of understanding going back to pre-Christian, Hellenistic times, which strongly emphasised the theme of threats to Israel from other nations (cf. the Books of Maccabees or the Greek Book of Judith, which were written at a similar time). This meant that the theme of the Book of Obadiah was important and could become the subject of an update to the situation of the community that was its recipient. Although the LXXObad translation, like the other Books of the Twelve Prophets of which it is a part,⁶ remains “reasonably close to the MT,”⁷ it contains at the same time interesting changes that also allow us to understand the way the LXX translator worked.

Moreover, it is also important in the context of considering LXXObad that – like the original Hebrew – LXXObad can be compared with parallel texts against Edom, especially those

² E. Zenger, “Il libro dei Dodici profeti,” 887. See also: M. Harl, C. Dogniez, L. Brottier et al. (eds.), *La Bible d’Alexandrie. [XXIII], Les Douze Prophètes. 4–9, Joël, Abdiou, Jonas, Naoum, Ambakoum, Sophonie* [further on: B d’A XXIII.4–9], 83.

³ V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1021.

⁴ Cf. Gen 25:19–24 (esp. v. 23).

⁵ Probably also for this reason the Book of Obadiah is not present in the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church; cf. V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1023.

⁶ On the unity of the text of the Twelve Prophets in LXX, see paragraph on the text of LXXObad.

⁷ G.E. Howard, “The Twelve Prophets. To the Reader,” in: A. Pietersma, B.G. Wright (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (further on: NETS), 777.

contained in the book of Jeremiah: Jer 29:8–23⁸ (according to Hebrew numbering 49:7–22), and especially with the opening verses: Jer 29:8–17 (according to Hebrew numbering: 49:7–16). Such a comparison between these texts in the Hebrew version has been made many times (showing the influence of the two texts on each other),⁹ but their comparison in the translations contained in the LXX can add much to the understanding of the direction in which the updates of the message of the two books proceeded, enables a fuller analysis of the work of the LXXObad translator, and can also help date the Greek translation of the Book of Obadiah.

Historical context of the Hebrew and Greek Book of Obadiah

To begin with, it is worth looking at the presumed dating of the Hebrew and Greek Book of Obadiah, especially since its message is strongly linked to a specific historical situation, which certainly influenced the original content and then also the interpretation contained in the translation.

Most scholars agree that the Hebrew Book of Obadiah reflects the situation of the 6th century B.C., i.e., the circumstances of the Babylonian exile.¹⁰ The Book was written either at that time or immediately after it (the most popular theories speak of the 6th

⁸ This numbering follows two LXX editions: J. Ziegler (ed.), *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, vol. XV (further on: ZieglerLXX) and H.B. Swete (ed.), *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. III (further on: Swete); while the following LXX edition: A. Rahlfs, R. Hanhart (eds.), *Septuaginta* (further on: Rahlfs-Hanhart), concerns LXXJer 30:8–23. In the present paper the numbering of the Göttingen edition (ZieglerLXX) is used.

⁹ Discussion of the topic (including literature): see further on.

¹⁰ It was once dated as far back as the 9th century B.C.; cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 84. Discussion of the topic of the dating of the Hebrew Book of Obadiah (with bibliography), see also: R. Mason, *Micah, Nahum, Obadiah*, 85–108; E. Ben Zvi, *A Historical-Critical Study of the Book of Obadiah*. Cf. also: M.A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets. Volume one: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*, 280–281; V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1021–1022; E.D. Mallon, “Księga Abdiasza,” 834–835; J. Renkema, “Data Relevant to the Dating of the Prophecy of Obadiah.”

or 5th century B.C. – a time shortly before the writing of the Book of Joel, which in passage 3:5 seems to quote Obad v. 17).¹¹

The time of the 6th century B.C. was a period of domination by the Babylonian empire, which exerted its influence on the small nations inhabiting Syro-Palestine. The two peoples mentioned in the Book of Obadiah, the Israelites and the Edomites, as well as all the others inhabiting Syro-Palestine, experienced oppression from the Babylonian empire, against which various coalitions were attempted.¹² In the last days of Judah's monarchy, the Edomites, as well as other neighbouring small nations (Moabites, Ammonites, inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon), joined the conspiracy, as mentioned in Jer 27 (especially v. 3).¹³ As a consequence, Babylon sent punitive expeditions, the results of which proved disastrous: the monarchy of Judah was annihilated, its elites deported in three successive stages to Babylonia,¹⁴ and the most symbolic and painful event of that time was the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 586 B.C. A similar fate was shared by all the small neighbouring nations, so one can assume that the Edomites were also among them. The Babylonian invasions of Israel's neighbouring nations are even mentioned by Josephus Flavius in *Ancient History of Israel* (10.9.7, par. 181–182), who lists the Ammonites and Moabites among the nations conquered by Babylon, but – for some reason – is silent about the Edomites. His narrative coincides with that found earlier in various

¹¹ See B d'A XXIII.4–9, 84.

¹² On the subject of Edom and Israel, and the complex historical situation of the 6th century B.C. see: M. Weippert, *Edom. Studien zur Geschichte der Edomiter*; J.M. Myers, "Edom and Judah in the Sixth-Fifth Centuries B.C."; U. Kellermann, *Israel und Edom*; B. Hartberger, "An den Wassern von Babylon..." *Psalm 137 auf dem Hintergrund von Jeremia 51, der biblischen Edom-Traditionen und babylonischer Originalquellen*; B. Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist*; E. Ben Zvi, *A Historical-Critical Study of the Book of Obadiah*; B. Elelwani-Farisani, "The Ethnic Tensions between the Edomites and the Israelites in Obadiah." See also more theological discussion: J.J. Krause, "Tradition, History, and Our Story: Some Observations on Jacob and Esau in the Books of Obadiah and Malachi"; and A.C. Hagedorn, *Die Anderen im Spiegel*.

¹³ E.D. Mallon, "Księga Abdiasza," 834–835. Cf. J.M. Myers, "Edom and Judah in the Sixth-Fifth Centuries B.C."

¹⁴ On this, see a broad discussion with bibliography: W. Chrostowski, "Babilońskie deportacje mieszkańców Jerozolimy i Judy."

places in the Hebrew Bible, including in the pages of the Book of Obadiah.¹⁵ The Edomites are seen as the ones who betrayed the Israelites (perhaps as a consequence of failing to be faithful to the coalition?¹⁶), and the text of the book mentions that Edom ransacked Jerusalem and even murdered surviving fugitives at the crossroads,¹⁷ which is not attested to by any historical sources (ancient documents do not indicate that Edom had any involvement in these battles at all¹⁸).

The Edomites are described in the Book of Obadiah as traitors, close neighbours (closest by legendary descent) who left the brother nation of Israel without help, becoming an ally of the invader, the Babylonian Empire. The prophet Obadiah accuses them of standing by and watching the suffering of a brotherly nation, and even of taking advantage of the weakness they had already experienced after the fall of Jerusalem, when the Edomites were to take advantage of the weakness of the surviving inhabitants of Judah by moving near Hebron – a few dozen kilometers from Jerusalem, after the Babylonians had plundered their own capital, Bosra.¹⁹ The Book of Obadiah is a kind of lament over the fallen city of Jerusalem,²⁰ but above all over the indifference of its neighbours, who through this

¹⁵ And other books; cf. J. Dykehouse, “Biblical evidence from Obadiah and Psalm 137.”

¹⁶ M.A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 281.

¹⁷ V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1021; cf. J. Dykehouse, “Biblical evidence from Obadiah and Psalm 137.”

¹⁸ Arguments for this attitude of the Edomites are found only in the Hebrew Bible and other ancient Jewish sources. According to some scholars, the biblical books mutually reinforce such a picture of the Edomites and, as it were, prove this attitude of theirs (cf. the publication by J. Dykehouse, “Biblical Evidence from Obadiah and Psalm 137”). Less frequently, however, studies confront this one-sided Israelite narrative with historical sources. This is because some find it difficult to accept such a strong ideologisation of biblical books, some commentaries on Obad euphemistically write – not wanting to undermine the message of the Book – that “it is not clear from the documents what role Edom played in these events,” cf. “Księga Abdiasza,” in: J.H. Walton, V.H. Matthews, M.W. Chavalas (eds.), W. Chrostowski (acad. ed. of Polish transl.), *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Biblii Hebrajskiej*, 890. Cf. A.C. Hagedorn, *Die Anderen im Spiegel*.

¹⁹ V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1021.

²⁰ Therefore, there was an idea that the book was read as a lamentation over the fall of the Holy City in the temple liturgy.

indifference become traitors and enemies (on whom a well-deserved punishment will fall), although they themselves fell victim to the Babylonian invasions.

Other biblical traditions (also chronologically older) present the Edomites as being at odds with the Israelites:²¹ already at the time of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt (when Edom refused the chosen people passage through its territory towards the Promised Land; cf. Num 20:14–21); during the monarchy, Judah and Edom were in constant conflict – Edom was sometimes free, sometimes under Judah's rule (Saul, David and Solomon fought against and subjugated the Edomites: 2 Sam 8:13[LXX] and 1 Chr 18:12–13; 1 Kgs 11:15–16 and 11:25b[LXX]; the dispute concerned, among other things, the port of Esayon Geber – today's Eilat. The Edomites are mentioned in the story of Jehoshaphat – 2 Kgs 8:20–22; Joram – 2 Kgs 22:49; Amaziah – 2 Kgs 14:7; and Azariah – 2 Kgs 14:22).²² The Edomites even became a symbol of the enemy in the biblical narratives. Speeches against them appear in Old Testament prophetic traditions, among which the oldest is that contained in the Book of Amos (Amos 1:11–12), but they are also present in other prophetic books (Isa 34:5–17; 63:1–6; Ezek 25:12–14; 35:2–15; Mal 1:2–5; and in connection with Jeremiah Lam 4:21–22).²³ In later biblical traditions as well, even in the Psalms (especially Ps 137:7), where a certain regularity is discernible: the further one moved away from the time of the actual events of the sixth century B.C., the more the image of Edom deteriorated and even allegorized, becoming the paradigm of all the Israelites' enemies.²⁴

Unfortunately, no Edomite writings about Israel analogous to the Bible have been preserved, especially in the context of the events of the sixth century B.C. and relations with the Israelites, and a comparison of the historical narrative of common events presented by the two peoples could be interesting, and in order to make the historical account more objective – even necessary and very fruitful,

²¹ On this see, among others: B. Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist*.

²² Cf. E.D. Mallon, "Księga Abdiasza," 834.

²³ Cf. M.A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 281.

²⁴ Cf. chapter: "Origins of Edom's Role as a Type," in: B. Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist*, 158–204.

just as the confrontation of the biblical text with the text of the stele of Mesha, king of Moab (the only document of this type preserved)²⁵ became valuable for the picture of Israel–Moabite relations. The Israeli interpretation – the only one we know – is therefore dominant, which does not mean that it is not one-sided, subject to ideologization or the creation of history, which was repeated by successive generations, including Josephus Flavius.

This way of thinking about neighbours existed, moreover, in many prophetic books, from the Book of Amos, which began its criticism of the biblical nation of Israel by criticising many of its neighbours (Amos 1–2), to the fully curse-filled Book of Nahum (whose author rejoices at the fall of Nineveh). This Israelite particularism, expressed in a negative attitude towards its neighbours (which is also common in other peoples of the ancient Near East), will in turn be criticised (or even ridiculed), for example, by the Book of Jonah.²⁶ Perhaps for this reason, in the canon (both Hebrew and Greek) the Book of Obadiah is placed just before the Book of Jonah (which is the original voice in the debate concerning Israelite particularism).²⁷

²⁵ On this subject, see the introductory studies: A. Lemaire, “La stèle de Mésha et l’histoire de l’ancien Israël”; A. Lemaire, “The Mesha Stele and the Omri dynasty”; A. Niccacci, “The Stele of Mesha and the Bible.”

²⁶ An analysis of this problem of debate inside the collection of the Twelve Prophets, see B. Strzałkowska, “Księga Nahuma i Księga Jonasza: debata wewnątrz zbioru Dwunastu Proroków?” and its English version: B. Strzałkowska, “The Book of Nahum and the Book of Jonah: Debate Within the Twelve Prophets?”

²⁷ In the BH the Book of Obadiah is the fourth book among the Twelve Prophets, while in the LXX it is the fifth. Cf. also: M.E. Biddle, “Obadiah–Jonah–Micah in Canonical Context”; F. Bargellini, “Il ruolo canonico di Gioele, Abdia e Giona”; A. Sirikivuya Mumbere, “‘Le règne à YHWH’: pour lire Abdias–Jonas et Michée, cas d’une cohérence polyphonique des XII dans le texte massorétique.”

More on the position of Obadiah in the Greek canon see: P.-M. Bogaert, “L’Organisation des grands recueils prophétiques”; B. Jones, *The Formation of the Book of the Twelve: A Study in Text and Canon*; B d’A XXIII.4–9, 86; K. Jeppesen, “The Lord God Has Spoken and Who Will Not Prophecy?” From Osee to Jonas in the Septuagint”; M. Aussedat, “Le regroupement des livres prophétiques dans la Septante d’après le témoignage des chaînes exégétiques”; M. Beck, “Das Dodekapropheton als Anthologie”; J.M. Dines, “Verbal and Thematic Links between the Books of the Twelve in Greek and Their Relevance to the Differing Manuscript Sequences”; J.D. Nogalski, “Not Just Another Nation. Obadiah’s placement in the Book of the Twelve”; J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets.”

This approach to neighbours was also characteristic for the Greek translation of the Book of Obadiah, produced among Alexandrian Jews, most likely in the second century B.C.,²⁸ and in a sense it was even radicalised (see further below). It is understandable that a people living in a foreign land, in the context of the alien culture of Hellenistic Egypt, may have perceived the danger of this coexistence and may have had a need to highlight themes that emphasised the value of their own culture and choice, while – sometimes – belittling others. The emergence of the Greek translation of the Book of Obadiah can also be seen in this context.

This translation originated with the rest of the so-called Minor Prophets, and there is now no doubt that all the books of the collection of the Twelve Prophets, being of a similar nature, should be treated together, especially in their version in the LXX.²⁹ Internal and external arguments support this.

The former show that the translation was most likely done by the same person (group of persons), as indicated by the style and character of the translation – the same in all the books of the

²⁸ On the place and dating of LXXObad see, for example: J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets,” 441; cf. also B. Strzałkowska, “Księga Aggeusza w Septuagincie,” 77–81.

²⁹ On the translation of the Twelve Prophets in the LXX in their unity see: B. Strzałkowska, “Księga Ozeasza w Septuagincie,” 78–86; J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets,” 439–440; A. Scharf, “Dodekapropheten. Das Zwölfprophetenbuch”; G.E. Howard, “The Twelve Prophets. To the Reader,” 777–781 (esp. 780–781). See also older studies: A. Kaminka, *Studien zur Septuaginta an der Hand der zwölf kleinen Prophetenbücher*, 49–60, 242–273; L. Treitel, *Wert und Bedeutung der Septuaginta zu den 12 kleinen Propheten*, 232–234; J. Ziegler, “Die Einheit der Septuaginta zum Zwölfprophetenbuch”; Idem, “Studien zur Verwertung der Septuaginta im Zwölfprophetenbuch”; Kahle, “Die Lederrolle mit dem griechischen Text der Kleinen Propheten und das Problem der LXX”; J. Ziegler, “Zur Dodekapropheten-LXX”; C.R. Harrison, “The Unity of the Minor Prophets in the LXX: A Reexamination of the Question”; T. Mouraoka, “In Defense of the Unity of the Septuagint Minor Prophets”; C. Dogniez, “Le Dieu des armées dans le Dodekapropheton”; C. Dogniez, “Fautes de traduction, ou bonnes traductions?”; J. Joosten, “A Septuagintal Translation Technique in the Minor Prophets. The Elimination of Verbal Repetitions.”

collection.³⁰ This is also indicated by biblical tradition, especially the Book of Sirach, which in v. 49:10 (in the LXX) mentions the Twelve Prophets together (this is the famous text: καὶ τῶν δώδεκα προφητῶν τὰ ὀστᾶ ἀναθάλοι ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτῶν παρεκάλεσαν γὰρ τὸν Ἰακωβ καὶ ἐλυτρώσαντο αὐτοὺς ἐν πίστει ἐλπίδος – “and let the bones of the twelve prophets sprout from their place, for they comforted Jacob and delivered him with unfailing hope”). Some, like G.J. Brook, believe that the Book of the Twelve Prophets has only been treated as a whole since its translation into Greek in Alexandria (and that this perception of them may have been the opinion of the Alexandrian Jewish community, not necessarily shared in Jerusalem),³¹ but there is no doubt that in the Greek version the books of this collection have not only a common origin but also a common character.

External arguments show that in all the manuscripts in our possession the books of the Twelve Prophets are treated together (see further below); already the Codex Vaticanus (the oldest manuscript containing the full text of the Twelve Prophets³²) has the numbering from 1 to 12 at the end of each book of the collection, marking the individual books consecutively, but at the same time suggesting that they are a unity.³³ The other oldest Greek manuscripts (listed meticulously by J. Ziegler in the critical edition³⁴; see also further below) also treat them as a whole.

At the same time, this does not prevent us from showing the characteristic interpretations which took place at the level of

³⁰ E. Tov, “Approaches Towards Scripture Embraced by the Ancient Greek Translators,” 216. On the nature of the translation of the Twelve Prophets see also B d’A XXIII.4–9, 92–93; G.E. Howard, “The Twelve Prophets. To the Reader,” 777–780; J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets,” 440 and 442–444. Cf. also: G. Sgargi, *Gioele – Amos – Abdia*.

³¹ G.J. Brooke, “The Twelve Minor Prophets and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 19–44 (esp. 33); cf. also: M. Beck, “Das Dodekapheton als Anthologie.”

³² Cf. J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets,” 438.

³³ W.E. Glenny, *Hosea*, 1. Codex B can also be consulted on the recently created website with digitized manuscripts from the collections of the Vatican Library (the Twelve Prophets from card number 945; the Book of Obadiah in cards 972–973): http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1209 (accessed: 1 XI 2021).

³⁴ J. Ziegler (ed.), *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, 7–119 (the Book of Obadiah, 239–243).

individual books, especially those dealing with such important themes as the Book of Obadiah. Its translation, made in a foreign country, was meant to express and strengthen the attitude of the Israelites towards their neighbours, at the same time bringing it up to date with the situation of the Hellenistic period: The Edomites would become in the Greek translation of the book not only a symbol of an enemy from the past, but an image of all Israel's current enemies. It is for this reason that LXXObad will rename "Edom" (Hebrew: עֲדוֹמָא) to "Idumea" (Greek: Ἰδομαία), as the land previously held by the Edomites, the protagonists of the Hebrew Book of Obadiah, was then already called.

It is not easy to determine the exact dating of the translation of the collection of the Twelve Prophets in the LXX.³⁵ The latest date is the creation of the Greek Book of Sirach – 2nd century B.C. – mentioning the Twelve Prophets, while the earliest is the translation of the Torah made in the 3rd century B.C. (as the first Greek translation of the Hebrew books). Actually, an analysis of the Book of Obadiah in its Greek version could make it easier to establish the dating of the whole collection: a comparison of LXXObad with the text of the Book of Jeremiah, with which the Hebrew text is compared in the first place, may be helpful.

LXXObad and LXXJer 29:8–16 (and 17–22)

A synoptic comparison of the Hebrew texts of the Books: Obadiah and Jeremiah have been made by many scholars.³⁶ According to them, the Book of Obadiah shows the greatest similarity to

³⁵ See the discussion of this topic: B. Strzałkowska, "Księga Ozeasza w Septuagincie," 100–101.

³⁶ See: P. Weimar, "Obadja. Eine redaktionskritische Analyse"; G.S. Ogden, "Prophetic Oracles Against Foreign Nations and Psalms of Communal Lament: The Relationship of Psalm 137 to Jeremiah 49:7–22 and Obadiah"; B. Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist*, 58–69; see also: W. Rudolph, *Joel – Amos – Obadja – Jona*; A. Deissler, *Zwölf Propheten II: Obadja, Jona, Micha, Nahum, Habakuk*; B. Hartberger, "An den Wassern von Babylon...." *Psalm 137 auf dem Hintergrund von Jeremia 51, der biblischen Edom-Traditionen und babylonischer Originalquellen*; M.A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets. Volume one: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*, 281–285; E. Zenger, "Il libro dei Dodici profeti," 890.

Jer 49:7–16, and also (less) to Jer 49:17–22 (both texts in the LXX according to the Greek numbering given after J. Ziegler³⁷ are LXXJer 29:8–16 and LXXJer 29:17–23). Some have even considered that the prophecy of Obadiah repeats almost entirely a passage from the Book of Jeremiah.³⁸ Jeremiah's text specifically refers to the Edomites as a symbol of hostility towards Israel. In the Book of Obadiah this text is developed and given in a slightly different order of verses,³⁹ and the similarity is clear especially in the first six verses of the Book of Jeremiah. They correspond to the first six verses of the Book of Obadiah, in fact: the first four verses of Obadiah (LXXObad 1–4) correspond to LXXJer 29:15–17 (i.e. Hebrew 49:14–16) and the verses LXXObad 5–6, correspond to LXXJer 29:10–11.⁴⁰ G.S. Ogden, examining the Hebrew text of both books, concluded that in both texts an answer can be found to the question which the psalmist asks God in Ps 136 [137]:7 for Him to remember Edom, but that the answer, different in both books, seems to have arisen in different circumstances.⁴¹

Examining the Greek text of the Book of Obadiah, one may ask: Could the translation in the LXX have been influenced by the Book of Jeremiah, especially in its Greek translation? And can any mutual (or unilateral) influence be discerned in them?

This question is answered by analyses of these 6 verses of LXXObad. In some cases, such as LXXObad 1 and LXXJer 49:14, it seems that the Greek translation of Obadiah could be an adaptation to the – already existing – Greek translation of the Book of Jeremiah.⁴² Unfortunately, these parallels are not found in the remaining verses, and a study in the series *La Bible d'Alexandrie* lists some lexical choices in both Greek translations (LXXObad and

³⁷ Such numbering corresponds also with the one presented by Swete; other is presented by Rahlfs-Hanhart, according to whom the verses spoken about are: LXXJer 30:8–16.17–23.

³⁸ Cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 89 and 90–91.

³⁹ Cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 90–91.

⁴⁰ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 90.

⁴¹ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 90–91; cf. G.S. Ogden, "Prophetic Oracles Against Foreign Nations and Psalms of Communal Lament: The Relationship of Psalm 137 to Jeremiah 49:7–22 and Obadiah."

⁴² A. Gelston (ed.), *The Twelve Minor Prophets* = חרי עשר. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (further on BHQ), 57 and commentary: 89*.

LXXJer) of the verses in question, showing that, in translating their similar Hebrew text, the translators nevertheless used different terminology.⁴³ Through these specific and diverse lexical choices it is very difficult to conclusively prove this possible influence of the Greek books on each other.

The text and translation of LXXObad

The structure of the Hebrew Book of Obadiah, despite the fact that the book is very short, has been the subject of much debate.⁴⁴ Usually scholars divided it into 2 or 3 parts. After the title of the book (v. 1), which announces the content of the message, E. Zenger saw two consecutive parts: vv. 2–15 (announcement of the judgment on Edom) and vv. 16–21 (announcement of salvation in Zion and for all Israel), in which he saw smaller units, with a summary in v. 15 and 21.⁴⁵ M.A. Sweeney divides the book into two parts: vv. 1–7 (call for the punishment of the Edomites) and vv. 8–21 (prophetic announcement of the judgment on Edom).⁴⁶ Others divided the text into three parts: vv. 1–7 (where the pride of Edom is shown); vv. 8–15 (depicting Edom's hostility towards Israel); and vv. 16–21 (showing the destruction of Edom, God's triumph on Zion, and Israel's deliverance).⁴⁷

The text of LXXObad in the available codices and manuscripts is presented as continuous (*scriptio continua*), but with a marked break (so the Vatican Codex does) before v. 11 (marking the return from the past) and v. 17 (introducing the theme of salvation); consequently, the Greek text can be divided into 3 parts.⁴⁸ This is

⁴³ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 91.

⁴⁴ On the structure of the text of Obadiah see: P. Weimar, "Obadja. Eine redaktionskritische Analyse"; Th. Lescow, "Die Komposition des Buches Obadja"; J. Renkema, "The Literary Structure of Obadiah"; E. Assis, "Structure, Redaction and Significance in the Prophecy of Obadiah"; M. Richelle, "La structure littéraire du livre d'Abdias."

⁴⁵ E. Zenger, "Il libro dei Dodici profeti," 887–888.

⁴⁶ M.A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets. Volume one: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*, 288–298.

⁴⁷ After V. Salanga, "Księga Abdiasza," 1021.

⁴⁸ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 87–88.

what all the major critical editions do, based on an analysis of the content of the book: H.B. Swete (reflecting the lessons of the Vatican Codex; such a division – though without the subtitles – is also followed by R. Popowski⁴⁹); while A. Rahlfs and J. Ziegler – distinguish 3 parts in LXXObad, divided as follows:

– vv. 1–10: God’s judgment and destruction of Idumea (in place of Hebrew Edom) for unfaithfulness to Jacob;

– vv. 11–16: God’s judgment that will come upon Idumea and other nations;

– vv. 17–21: salvation on Zion, the new establishment of the Lord’s kingdom and the deliverance of Israel.

A clear message can be seen in this structure: the destruction of Idumea (Edom) for unfaithfulness to the chosen people is the fulfilment of God’s justice over the world, an element of which is also the deliverance of Israel, the renewal of its kingdom, which is identified in LXXObad with the kingdom of God himself. This is the division (along with the subtitles) adopted by the study in the series *La Bible d’Alexandrie*.⁵⁰

Other modern translations of the book from the Greek (though based on the same critical editions) divide the text of LXXObad slightly differently. First of all, they separate two units in v. 1 itself (dividing it into 1a and 1b; *La Bible d’Alexandrie*, NETS, *Septuaginta Deutsch*⁵¹ and *La Biblia Griega*⁵² do so; the first part of the verse reads: ὄρασις Ἀβδίου – “the vision of Obadiah” – is also separated by the Polish translation by R. Popowski⁵³); and then they interpret individual verses separating more parts in the book.

⁴⁹ R. Popowski (transl. and ed.), *Septuaginta, czyli Biblia Starego Testamentu* (further on: Popowski).

⁵⁰ See B d’A XXIII.4–9, 87–88 and 98–113.

⁵¹ W. Kraus, M. Karrer et al. (ed.), *Septuaginta Deutsch* (Introduction to the Twelve Prophets, 1165–1166 and 1195; transl LXXObad, 1195–1196) (further on: *SeptDeutsch*); it is also about the prepared commentary to this German translation: H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja.”

⁵² “Libro de los Doce Profetas,” in: N. Fernández Marcos, M. Victoria Spottorno Díaz-Caro (ed. coord.), *La Biblia Griega. Septuaginta IV. Libros proféticos* (further on: *BibliaGriega*), 15–123 (the Book of Obadiah, 69–72).

⁵³ Cf. Popowski, 1329–1330.

– NETS⁵⁴ (without intertitles): v. 1a; vv. 1b–4; vv. 5–9; vv. 10–14; vv. 15–21.

– SeptDeutsch⁵⁵ (marking the intertitles): v. 1a (contrary to NETS, including the whole phrase: ὄρασις Ἀβδίου τάδε λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῆ Ἰδουμαίᾳ, and not only ὄρασις Ἀβδίου) – *Obadja's Vivion über Idumäa*; v. 1b – *Gott ruft zum Kampf gegen die Völker auf*; vv. 2–11 (in which vv. 2–4, 5–7 and 8–11 are distinguished;) – *Die Schuld und das zukünftige Geschick Idumäas*; vv. 12–16 – *Am Tag des Herrn werden die Völker vernichtet werden und Idumäa Vergeltung erfahren*; vv. 17–21 – *Ganz Israel wird gerettet und erneuert*.

– La Biblia Griega⁵⁶ (without intertitles): v. 1a (only ὄρασις Ἀβδίου); v. 1b; vv. 2–7; vv. 8–11; vv. 12–16; vv. 17–21.

The following table presents a comparison of the Hebrew text (after BHQ⁵⁷) and the Greek text after the Göttingen critical edition.⁵⁸ The translation is as literal as possible to show the characteristics of the two texts, Hebrew and Greek. The structure of the text, based on those discussed earlier, is the result of the LXXObad's own analysis, but most closely resembles that of SeptDeutsch.

⁵⁴ Cf. NETS, 803–804.

⁵⁵ Cf. SeptDeutsch, 1195–1196; see also H. Schmoll, H. Utschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2388.

⁵⁶ BibliaGriega, 69–72.

⁵⁷ BHQ.

⁵⁸ ZieglerLXX, 239–243.

LXX (after Göttingen)	LXX translation	TM translation	TM (after BHS)
<p>¹ ὄρασις Αβδίου</p> <p>τάδε λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῆ Ἰδουμαία</p> <p>ἀκοὴν ἤκουσα παρὰ κυρίου καὶ περιοχὴν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἐξαπέστειλεν ἀνάστητε καὶ ἐξαναστῶμεν ἐπ’ αὐτὴν εἰς πόλεμον</p>	<p>The vision of Obadiah.</p> <p>Thus says the Lord God to Idumea.</p> <p>I <u>heard</u> tidings from the Lord, and a <u>message</u> was <u>sent</u> to the nations: “Arise and let us rise up against <u>her</u> (= <u>Idumea</u>) for war.”</p>	<p>The vision of Obadiah.</p> <p>Thus says <i>my</i> Lord God, to <u>Edom</u>.</p> <p><u>We heard</u> message from the Lord and a <u>messenger</u> <u>among</u> nations was sent: “Arise! Let us arise against <u>it</u> (=Edom). To war!”</p>	<p>¹ חָזוֹן עַבְדֵי יְהוָה</p> <p>כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה לְאֶדוֹם</p> <p>שָׁמַעְתִּי שִׁמְעוּנוּ מֵאֵת יְהוָה וְצִיר בְּגוֹיִם שָׁלַח קוֹמוּ וְקוּמוּ עִלְיָהּ לְמַלְחָמָה:</p>
<p>² ἰδοὺ ὀλιγοστὸν δέδωκά σε ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἠτιμωμένος σὺ εἶ σφόδρα</p>	<p>Behold, <u>very</u> <u>small</u> (<i>masculinum!</i>) have I given thee among the nations; thou art greatly <u>disgraced</u>.</p>	<p>Behold, I have given thee <u>small</u> among the nations; thou art greatly <u>despised</u></p>	<p>² הִנֵּה קָטָן נִתְתִּיךָ בְּגוֹיִם בְּזוּי אַתָּה מְאֹד:</p>
<p>³ ὑπερηφανία τῆς καρδίας σου ἐπῆρῆν σε κατασκηνοῦντα ἐν ταῖς ὀπαῖς τῶν πετρῶν ὑψῶν κατοικίαν αὐτοῦ λέγων ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ τίς με κατάξει ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν</p>	<p>The pride of your heart <u>carried</u> you away, dwelling in the clefts of the rocks, <u>lifting</u> <u>up</u> your dwelling, saying in your heart, “Who shall cast me down to the earth?”</p>	<p>The pride of your heart <u>deceived</u> you, dwelling in the clefts of the rock, your dwelling <u>on high</u>, saying in thine heart, “Who shall cast me down to the earth?”</p>	<p>³ וְזוֹן לִבִּי הַשִּׁיאָךְ שִׁכְנִי בְּחַגְיֵי-סֻלַּע מְרוֹם שְׁבַתִּי אָמַר בְּלִבִּי מִי יִרְדְּנִי אֶרֶץ:</p>

<p>⁴ ἐὰν μετεωρισθῆς ὡς ἀετὸς καὶ ἐὰν ἀνά μέσον τῶν ἄστρων θῆς νοσσίαν σου ἐκεῖθεν κατάξω σε λέγει κύριος</p>	<p>Though you soar like the eagle and though you <u>place</u> your nest among the stars, from there I will cast you down, <u>says</u> the Lord.</p>	<p>Though you soar high like the eagle and though you <u>make</u> your nest among the stars, from there I will cast you down, <u>oracle</u> of the Lord.</p>	<p>אִם־תִּגְבִּיֶה ⁴ כְּצִפּוֹר וְאִם־בְּיַן כּוֹכְבִים שָׁמַיִם תִּבְנֶה מְשֶׁנְּךָ אִזְרִידֶנָּה נְאֻם־יְהוָה:</p>
<p>⁵ εἰ κλέπτει εἰσῆλθον πρὸς σέ ἢ ληστὰι νυκτός ποῦ ἂν ἀπερρίφης οὐκ ἂν ἐκλεψαν τὰ ἱκανὰ ἑαυτοῖς καὶ εἰ τρυγηταὶ εἰσῆλθον πρὸς σέ οὐκ ἂν ὑπελίποντο ἐπιφυλλίδα</p>	<p>If thieves came to you and robbers by night, <u>where would you be thrown?</u> Would they not plunder enough for them? And if grape pickers came to you, would they not leave [only] <u>one grape?</u>⁵⁹</p>	<p>If thieves come to you, if robbers by night, <u>how devastated you will be!</u> Will they not plunder enough? If grape pickers come to you, will they leave <u>anything?</u></p>	<p>אִם־גִּבְּנִים כָּאוּ־לְךָ אִם־שׂוֹדְדֵי לַיְלָה אֵיךְ נִדְמִיתָ הַלּוֹא יִגְנְבוּ דֵימֵי אִם־בְּצִרִים כָּאוּ לְךָ הַלּוֹא יִשְׁאַרוּ עֲלֵלוֹת:</p>
<p>⁶ πῶς ἐξηρευνήθη Ησαυ καὶ κατελήμφθη αὐτοῦ τὰ κεκρυμμένα</p>	<p>How <u>searched</u> was Esau and his <u>hiding places</u> were discovered</p>	<p>How much <u>will they search</u> Esau, they will discover his <u>hidden treasures</u>.</p>	<p>אֵיךְ נִחְפְּשׂוּ עֵשָׂו נִבְעוּ מִצְפּוֹנָיו:</p>

⁵⁹ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 100–102: “Si des voleurs avaient pénétré chez toi, ou des brigands de nuit, où aurais-tu été précipité? N’auraient-ils pas volé leur content? Et si des vendangeurs avaient pénétré chez toi, n’auraient-ils pas laissé juste un grapillon?”; NETS: “If thieves came to you, or robbers by night, where would you be cast aside? Would they not steal what is sufficient for themselves? And if grape gatherers came to you would they not leave gleanings?”; BibliaGriega: “Si unos ladrones hubieran llegado a ti o salteadores de noche, ¿dónde habrías sido arrojado? ¿No habrían robado lo suficiente para sí mismos? Y si unos vendimiadores hubieran llegado a ti, ¿no habrían dejado una rebusca?”; SeptDeutsch: “Wenn Diebe zu dir eingedrungen wären oder Räuber des Nachts, *wohin* wärest du dann *geworfen worden!* Nicht wahr – sie hätten gestohlen was für sie brauchbar war? Und wenn Traubenschnitter zu dir gekommen wären, hätten sie nicht (nur) eine Nachlese übrig gelassen?”; Popowski: “Jeśli wtargną do ciebie złodzieje lub grabieżcy nocą, gdzie z tym się ukryjesz? Czyż nie zagarną sobie, ile zechcą? Lub jeśli szabrownicy winnic wedrą się do ciebie, czy pozostawią ci jakieś resztki?”

<p>⁷ ἔως τῶν ὁρίων σου ἐξαπέστειλάν σε πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες τῆς διαθήκης σου ἀντέστησάν σοι ἠδυνάσθησαν πρὸς σέ ἄνδρες εἰρηνικοὶ σου ἔθικαν ἔνεδρα ὑποκάτω σου οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις ἐν αὐτῷ⁶⁰</p>	<p>They have sent you back to <i>your borders</i>. All your allies <u>have stood against you</u>, your allies <u>have overcome you</u>.⁶¹ They have <u>placed snares</u> under you. <u>There is no understanding [in] them</u>.</p>	<p>They will <u>chase you to the border</u>. All your allies <u>will betray you</u>; your allies <u>will overcome you</u>. <i>Your bread [eaters] will set a snare</i> under you. “<u>There is no understanding in it</u>.”</p>	<p>עַד־הַגְּבוּל⁷ שְׁלַחְוָהּ כָּל אַנְשֵׁי בְרִיתָהּ הַשִּׁיאֻהָ יִכְלוּ לָהּ אַנְשֵׁי שְׁלֵמָהּ לַחֲמָהּ יִשְׁמִימוּ מְזוֹר תַּחְתֶּיהָ אֵין תְּבוּנָהּ בּוֹ:</p>
<p>⁸ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ λέγει κύριος ἀπολῶ σοφοὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἰδουμαίας καὶ σύνεσιν ἐξ ὄρους Ἡσαυ</p>	<p>On that day, <u>says</u> the Lord, I will destroy (<i>futurum!</i>) the wise men of Idumea and the understanding of Esau’s mountain.</p>	<p><i>Will it not [happen]</i> on that day, <u>the oracle of</u> the Lord, that I will destroy the wise men from <u>Edom</u> and the understanding from the mountain of Esau.</p>	<p>הָלוֹא בַיּוֹם⁸ הַהוּא נֵאֵם יְהוָה וְהִאֲבִדְתִּי חֲכָמִים מֵאֲדוֹם וְתְבוּנָהּ מִהַר עֵשָׂו:</p>
<p>⁹ καὶ πτοηθήσονται οἱ μαχηταὶ σου οἱ ἐκ Θαμιαν ὄπως ἐξαρθῆ ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ὄρους Ἡσαυ</p>	<p>And your warriors, those of Teman, shall be <u>terrified</u>, that the man of Esau’s mountain may be <u>removed</u>.</p>	<p>And your warriors shall be <u>struck down</u>, Teman, so that [every] man shall be cut down from the mountain of Esau <i>because of the slaughter</i>.</p>	<p>וְחִתּוּ גְבוּרֵיהָ⁹ תִּימָן לְמַעַן יִכָּרֵת־אִישׁ מִהַר עֵשָׂו מִקְטָל:</p>

⁶⁰ The lesson οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις ἐν αὐτῷ after the edition of ZieglerLXX, while Rahlfs-Hanhart and Swete, after Codex B, S (and other less important witnesses of this text) assume the lesson: οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις αὐτοῖς (see discussion of the elements of textual criticism).

⁶¹ Literally “people of your peace” (literal translation of Hebrew idiom; see discussion of elements of textual criticism).

<p>¹⁰ διὰ τὴν σφαγὴν καὶ τὴν ἀσέβειαν τὴν εἰς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου Ἰακωβ καὶ καλύψει σε αἰσχὺν καὶ ἐξαρθήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα</p>	<p><i>Because of the slaughter and <u>unfaithfulness</u> to your brother Jacob, you shall be covered with shame and <u>removed</u> for ever.</i></p>	<p><u>Because of the violence</u> [against] your brother Jacob, you shall be covered with shame and <u>cut down</u> for ever.</p>	<p>¹⁰ מִמָּוֶם אֶתִּי יַעֲקֹב תִּכְסֶּה בְּוִשָׁה וְנִכְרַתְתָּ לְעוֹלָם:</p>
<p>¹¹ ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἀντέστης ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐν ἡμέρα αἰχμαλωτευόντω ν ἀλλογενῶν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀλλότριοι εἰσηλθόν εἰς πύλας αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ Ἱερουσαλημ ἔβαλον κλήρους καὶ σὺ ἧς ὡς εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν</p>	<p><u>From that day</u> in which you stood <u>in opposition</u>, the day that strangers took captive his forces, and foreigners entered his gates, and cast <u>lots</u> about Jerusalem, you also were like one of them.</p>	<p><u>The day</u> you stood <u>against him</u>, the day the day when strangers took his <u>army</u> into captivity, and foreigners entered his gates, and cast lots (<i>sing.</i>) about Jerusalem, you also [were] like one of them.</p>	<p>¹¹ בְּיוֹם עָמַדְתָּ מִנְּגַד בְּיָוִם שִׁבְוֹת זָרִים חִילְךָ וְנִכְרַתְתָּ בָּאוּ (שָׁעָרוּ) וְעַל- יְרוּשָׁלַם יָדוּ גוֹזְלֵי גַם-אֶתְּהָ כְּאַתָּד מִהֵם:</p>
<p>¹² καὶ μὴ ἐπίδης ἡμέραν ἀδελφοῦ σου ἐν ἡμέρα ἀλλοτρίων καὶ μὴ ἐπιχαρῆς ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰουδα ἐν ἡμέρα ἀπολείας αὐτῶν καὶ μὴ μεγαλορρημονήσῃς ἐν ἡμέρα θλίψεως</p>	<p>And look not on thy brother's day on <u>the day of the foreigners</u>. And laugh not at the children of Judah in the day of their destruction. And speak not insolently on the day of distress!</p>	<p>And look not on your brother's day <u>on the day of his calamity</u>. And laugh not at the children of Judah in the day of their destruction. And speak not insolently on the day of distress!</p>	<p>¹² וְאַל-תִּרְאֵ בְיָוִם-אֶתִּי בְיָוִם נִכְרוֹ וְאַל- תִּשְׂמַח לְבַבְי- יְהוּדָה בְּיָוִם אֲבָדָם וְאַל- תִּגְדַּל פִּיךָ בְּיָוִם צָרָה:</p>

<p>¹³ μηδὲ εἰσέλθῃς εἰς πύλας λαῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πόνων αὐτῶν μηδὲ ἐπίδῃς καὶ σὺ τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀλέθρου αὐτῶν μηδὲ συνεπιθῇ ἐπὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἀπωλείας αὐτῶν</p>	<p>Do not enter into the <u>gates of the peoples</u> on the day of their <u>hardship</u>, nor do you look also <u>at their assembly</u> on the day of their destruction. Nor <u>join in attacking</u> his army on the day of their <u>ruin</u>.</p>	<p>Do not enter into the <u>gate of my people</u> on the day of their <u>calamity</u>, nor do you look <u>upon their poverty</u> on the day of their <u>calamity</u>. And do not <u>stretch out [your hand]</u> for his army on the day of his <u>calamity!</u></p>	<p>¹³ אֶל-תִּבְּוֹא בְּשַׁעַר-עַמִּי בְּיוֹם אֵיָלָם אֶל- תָּרָא גַם-אֲתָה בְּרַעְתּוֹ בְּיוֹם אֵיָדוֹ וְאַל- תִּשְׁלַחְנָה בְּחֵילִי בְּיוֹם אֵיָדוֹ:</p>
<p>¹⁴ μηδὲ ἐπιστῆς ἐπὶ τὰς διεκβολὰς αὐτῶν τοῦ ἐξολεθρεῦσαι τοὺς ἀνασφρομένους αὐτῶν μηδὲ συγκλείσης τοὺς φεύγοντας ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεως</p>	<p>Nor stand at their <u>passages</u> to cut down their <u>survivors</u>, nor surround the <u>refugees from among</u> them on the day of misery!</p>	<p>Nor stand at the <u>passage</u> to cut down their <u>fugitives</u>, nor surround the <u>survivors</u> in their day of misery!</p>	<p>¹⁴ וְאַל-תַּעֲמֹד עַל-הַפְּרָק לְהַכְרִית אֶת- פְּלִיטָיו וְאַל- תִּסְגֵּר שְׂרִידָיו בְּיוֹם צָרָה:</p>
<p>¹⁵ διότι ἐγγὺς ἡμέρα κυρίου ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ὃν τρόπον ἐποίησας οὕτως ἔσται σοὶ τὸ ἀνταπόδομά σου ἀνταποδοθήσεται εἰς κεφαλὴν σου</p>	<p>For the day of the Lord over <i>all</i> the nations is near! As you have done, so shall it be [done] to you. Your retribution <u>will be returned</u> upon your head.</p>	<p>For the day of the Lord over the nations is near! As you have done, so shall it be done to you! Your retribution <u>shall return</u> upon your head.</p>	<p>¹⁵ כִּי-קָרוֹב יוֹם- יְהוָה עַל-כָּל- הַגּוֹיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יַעֲשֶׂה לָּךְ גְּמֹלָתְךָ יָשׁוּב בְּרֹאשְׁךָ:</p>

<p>¹⁶ διότι ὄν τρόπον ἔπιες ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ ἅγιόν μου πίνονται πάντα τὰ ἔθνη οἶνον πίνονται καὶ καταβήσονται καὶ ἔσονται καθῶς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντες</p>	<p>For as you drank on <i>my</i> holy mountain, [so] shall all nations drink the <i>wine</i>. They shall drink and <u>come down</u>, and be as though they <u>did not exist</u>.</p>	<p>For as <u>you</u> [plural] <u>drank</u> on the holy mountain, so shall all nations drink <i>without ceasing</i>. And they shall drink, and <u>swallow</u>, and be as though <u>they were not</u>.</p>	<p>¹⁶ כִּי כִּשְׂתִּי 16 שְׂתִּיתֶם עַל-הַר קָדְשִׁי יִשְׁתּוּ כָל- הַגּוֹיִם תְּמִיד וְיִשְׁתּוּ וְלֹעֲזוּ וְהָיוּ כְּלוֹא הָיוּ:</p>
<p>¹⁷ ἐν δὲ τῷ ὄρει Σιών ἔσται ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἔσται ἅγιον καὶ κατακληρονομήσουσιν ὁ οἶκος Ἰακωβ τοῦς κατακληρονομήσαντας αὐτούς</p>	<p>And there shall be <u>salvation</u> on Mount Zion and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall <u>appropriate</u> those who [formerly] <u>appropriated</u> it.</p>	<p>And there shall be <u>deliverance</u>⁶² on Mount Zion and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall <u>dispossess</u> those who [formerly] <u>dispossessed</u> it.</p>	<p>¹⁷ וּבִקְרַ צִיּוֹן תְּהִיָּה פְּלִיטָה וְתִהְיֶה קְדֹשׁ וְיִרְשׁוּ בְּיַת יַעֲקֹב אֶת מוֹרְשֵׁיהֶם:</p>
<p>¹⁸ καὶ ἔσται ὁ οἶκος Ἰακωβ πῦρ ὁ δὲ οἶκος Ἰωσήφ φλόξ ὁ δὲ οἶκος Ἡσαυ εἰς καλάμην καὶ ἐκκαυθήσονται εἰς αὐτούς καὶ καταφάγονται αὐτούς καὶ οὐκ ἔσται πυροφόρος ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Ἡσαυ διότι κύριος ἐλάλησεν</p>	<p>And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau [shall be] like stubble – and they <u>shall burn against them</u> and consume <i>them</i>. And there shall not be a <u>fire-bearer</u>⁶³ from the house of Esau – for thus said the Lord.</p>	<p>And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau [shall be] like stubble – they shall <u>burn</u> and consume it. And there shall be no <u>survivor</u> of the house of Esau – because the Lord has said so.</p>	<p>¹⁸ וְהָיְתָה בַּיַת- יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ וּבַיַת יוֹסֵף לְהִבָּה וּבַיַת עֵשָׂו לֶקֶשׁ וְדָלְקוּ בָהֶם וְאֶכְלָוּם וְלֹא- יִהְיֶה שְׂרִיד לְבַיַת עֵשָׂו כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר:</p>

⁶² Also: “escape.”

⁶³ SeptDeutsch: “Fackelträger”; NETS, BHQ: “firebearer”; B d’A XXIII.4–9: “porte-feu”; – used here in a figurative sense as “survivor” (see the analysis of this verse below).

<p>¹⁹ και κατακληρονομήσουσιν οἱ ἐν Ναγεβ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Ησαυ και οἱ ἐν τῇ Σεφηλα τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους και κατακληρονομήσουσιν τὸ ὄρος Εφραιμ και τὸ πεδῖον Σαμαρείας και Βενιαμιν και τὴν Γαλααδίτιν</p>	<p>And those from Negev⁶⁴ will <u>take possession of</u> the mountain of Esau and those from Shephelah⁶⁵ – that of the <u>strangers</u>. And they will <u>take possession of</u> the mountain of Ephraim and the <u>plain</u> of Samaria, and Benjamin, and Gilead.</p>	<p>And they shall <u>expropriate</u> the Negev, the mountain of Esau, and Shephelah, [<u>the land of</u>] the <u>Philistines</u>. And they shall <u>expropriate</u> the land of Ephraim, and the <u>land</u> of Samaria, and Benjamin <u>together</u> with Gilead.</p>	<p>¹⁹ וְיָרְשׁוּ הַנֶּגֶב אֶת־הַר עֵשָׂו וְהַשְּׁפֵלָה אֶת־ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְיָרְשׁוּ אֶת־שֵׁדָה אֶפְרַיִם וְאֶת שְׁדָה שִׁמְרֹון וּבְנֵימִן אֶת־הַגְּלָעָד:</p>
<p>²⁰ και τῆς μετοικεσίας ἢ ἀρχῆ αὐτῆ τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραηλ γῆ τῶν Χανααναίων ἕως Σαρεπτων και ἡ μετοικεσία Ἱερουσαλημ ἕως Εφραθα και κληρονομήσουσιν τὰς πόλεις τοῦ Ναγεβ</p>	<p><i>And the beginning of their migration [is this]:</i> the sons of Israel [shall possess] the land of the Canaanites (Phoenicians?) as far as Sarepta, and the <u>exile</u> [in the sense of the Diaspora] from Jerusalem <u>as far as Ephrata</u>, and they shall <u>take possession</u> of the cities of the Negev.⁶⁶</p>	<p>And the exile of this army of the children of Israel [shall possess] the Canaanites (Phoenicians?) as far as Sarepta, and the <u>exile</u> of Jerusalem <u>who [sojourns] in Spharad</u> shall <u>possess</u> the cities of the Negev.</p>	<p>²⁰ וְגֵלַת הַחַל- הָזֶה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־ כְּנַעֲנִים עַד־ צָרְפַת וְגֵלַת יְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בְּסִפְרַד יִרְשׁוּ אֶת עָרֵי הַנֶּגֶב:</p>

⁶⁴ Literary: Nageb.

⁶⁵ Literary: Sefela.

⁶⁶ Literary: of Nageb.

<p>²¹ και ἀναβήσονται ἄνδρες σεσωσμένοι ἐξ ὄρους Σιων τοῦ ἐκδικῆσαι τὸ ὄρος Ησῶν και ἔσται τῷ κυρίῳ ἡ βασιλεία</p>	<p>And the <u>men</u> <u>who were</u> <u>delivered</u> shall ascend Mount Zion to <u>punish</u> Mount Esau, <u>and</u> <u>the kingdom</u> shall [belong to] <u>the Lord!</u></p>	<p>And the <u>deliverers</u> shall ascend Mount Zion to judge Mount Esau. <u>And the reign of</u> <u>the Lord will</u> <u>come!</u></p>	<p>²¹ וְעָלוּ מוֹשְׁעֵימֶ֑ם בְּהַר צִיּוֹן לְשֹׁפֵט אֶת־הַר עֵשָׂו וְהָיְתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה׃</p>
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Elements of textual criticism of LXXObad

The Book of Obadiah (as part of the collection of the Twelve Prophets) has been found in the Greek version in several important ancient witnesses to the text and in many less important ones. These are accurately enumerated in critical editions of the text, especially the volume by J. Ziegler in the Göttingen series (but also other, more handy, critical editions: A. Rahlfs, H.B. Swete). Not all the manuscripts that have been found and the important codices of the so-called Minor Prophets in our possession today contain the Book of Obadiah, others contain its fragments not always in good condition, with various omissions or reworkings. It is therefore worth mentioning the most important witnesses to the text of LXXObad.

The oldest complete text of LXXObad remains the 4th century Codex Vaticanus (B), the 4th century Codex Sinaiticus (S) (the scroll does not contain the books of: Hosea, Amos and Micah, but it does contain the Book of Obadiah – however, because of these major omissions, this Codex is seen as less relevant to the collection of the Twelve Prophets⁶⁷), the Alexandrian Codex (A) of the 5th century (which does contain various explanations and harmonizations, but preserves old lessons of the text⁶⁸), and the Codex Marchalianus (Q) of the 6th/7th century (kept in the Vatican Library as Greek Codex 2125).⁶⁹

⁶⁷ J.M. Dines, “The Minor Prophets,” 438.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Offizielles Verzeichnis der Rahlfs-Sigeln*, 1.

Large fragments of LXXObad are contained in what is believed to be the oldest papyrus containing the Book of the Twelve Prophets until its discovery near the Dead Sea – the Freer Codex, in Washington V (labelled: W), from the 3rd century, held in Washington. It contains the badly damaged Book of Hosea and the beginning of the Book of Amos, and various larger fragments of the other books (including Obadiah).⁷⁰ For the study of LXXObad it remains the oldest, though incomplete, source of the text.

For the Hebrew text, the oldest fragment of the Book of Obadiah (severely incomplete) remains one of the scrolls of the Twelve Prophets found at Qumran⁷¹ and a slightly later one from Wadi Murabba'at.⁷² Unfortunately, the Greek Book of the Twelve Prophets was found neither in Qumran nor in Wadi Murabba'at. However, a Greek scroll of the Minor Prophets was discovered at Nachal Chewer: 8HevXIIgr⁷³ (sometimes designated as 8HevXII^a and 8HevXII^b, and numbered 943 in Rahlfs numbering⁷⁴). This Greek scroll dates from the late Ptolemaic or early Roman period.⁷⁵ According to the editor of this text, E. Tov, the scroll, which contains the Greek collection of the Twelve Prophets, was written by two different persons⁷⁶ (it is not known whether these were two persons

⁷⁰ Ibid. On the topic see also: H.A. Sanders, *The Old Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection*.

⁷¹ And although several of the Qumran scrolls pretend to be “scrolls of the Twelve Prophets” (problems with this classification were discussed by Ph. Guillaume, “A Reconsiderations of Manuscripts Classified As Scrolls of the Twelve Prophets (XII)”; basing the argument, inter alia, on the fact that only two of the Qumran scrolls have more than two books of the minor prophets together: 4QXIIc from circa 75 B.C. and 4QXIIg from circa 25 B.C.; cf. *ibid.*, 3–4), then fragments of the Hebrew Book of Obadiah are found only in the latter: 4QXIIg, which in general is the most complete of the Qumran scrolls of the Twelve Prophets (this scroll contains fragments of 8 of the 12 books comprising the collection; cf. *ibid.*).

⁷² Wadi Murabba'at 88, from around 10 AD.; cf. Ph. Guillaume, “A Reconsiderations of Manuscripts,” 9.

⁷³ On this topic see: E. Tov, R. Kraft, P.J. Parsons (eds.), *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (HevXIIgr)*.

⁷⁴ *Offizielles Verzeichnis der Rahlfs-Sigeln*, 15.

⁷⁵ Cf. E. Tov, R. Kraft, P.J. Parsons (eds.), *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever*, 14.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; see also: D. Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila*, 167.

transcribing one scroll or whether we are dealing with two scrolls,⁷⁷ hence the mentioned difference in nomenclature) and contains fragments of the Books: Zechariah (8HevXII^b) and Micah, Habakkuk and Sophoniah, and possibly of Jonah, Micah and Nahum (8HevXII^a). The Book of Obadiah, unfortunately, has not been preserved in this scroll(s).

For this reason, the most important (and oldest) witnesses to the LXXObad text remain the aforementioned majuscule codices: Vaticanus (B), Sinaitic (S), Alexandrian (A), Freer (W) and Marchalianus (Q).

Among the minuscule (later) codices for the LXXObad text, the most important are the codices⁷⁸: 22 (11th/12th c., London, Lukianic revision); 26 (10th c., Vatican, as Greek codex 556); 36 (11th c., Vatican, as Greek codex 347); 46 (13th/14th c., Paris); 48 (10th/11th c., Vatican, as Greek codex 1794, Lukianic revision); 51 (11th c., Florence, Lukianic revision); 62 (11th c., Oxford, Lukianic revision); 68 (15th c., Venice); 86 (9th/10th c., Vatican City, as Greek codex 549); 96 (11th c., Copenhagen); 106 (14th c., Ferrara); 122 (15th c., Venice); 130 (12th/13th c., Vienna); 147 (12th c., Oxford, in addition to catena for poetic books, also prophetic books); 198 (9th c., Paris); 228 (13th c., Vatican City, as Greek codex 1764, up to 16 prophets, catena?); 231 (10th /11th c., Vatican, as Greek codex 1670); 233 (10th c., Vatican, as Greek codex 2067); 239 (1046, Bologna); 311 (12th c., Moscow); 393 (8th c. and rewritten in 13th c., Grottaferrata and Vatican); 407 (9th c., Jerusalem); 410 (13th c., Jerusalem, St. Petersburg); 420 (1437, London); 432 (10th c., Amorgos); 449 (10th /11 c., Milan); 456 (11th c., Messina, London, Milan, Oxford); 461 (16th c., Meteora); 490 (11th c., Munich); 501 (15th c., Nuremberg); 534 (11th c., Paris); 538 (12th c., Paris); 544 (11th c., Paris); 613 (13th c., Patmos); 631 (14th c., Prague); 667 (10th c. rescr, Vatican City, as Greek Codex 316); 710 (10th c., Sinai); 711 (11th c., Sinai); 719 (9th/10th c., Turin); 763 (11th c., Athos); 764 (13th/14th c., Athos); 770 (12th c., damaged manuscript, Athos).

⁷⁷ Ph. Guillaume, "A Reconsiderations of Manuscripts," 5–8.

⁷⁸ Following the numbering of *Offizielles Verzeichnis der Rahlfs-Sigeln*.

Important for the study of the LXXObad text are the catenae to the Twelve Prophets (including Obadiah):⁷⁹ 49 (11th c., Florence); 87 (10th c., Vatican City); 91 (11th c., Vatican City, as Greek Codex 452); 97 (12th/13th c., Vatican City, as Greek Codices 1153 and 1154); 240 (1285, Florence); 310 (13th century, Moscow); 349 (13th century, Basel); 398 (14th century, Athens); 568 (13th century, Paris); 575 (eclogue?, 13th century, Paris).

In addition, it is worth comparing the Greek text of the Book of Obadiah with the TM, the Hebrew texts found at Qumran, Vul., Peš, Targ. and the Greek revisions, especially Aquila and Symmachus.

The highlights of the textual criticism of LXXObad (excluding changes irrelevant to interpretation) are listed below.

Verse 1

1. The name Obadiah, and consequently also the title of the book, in the Greek version has two principal versions in different manuscripts: ὄρασις Αβδίου or ὄρασις Οβδίου, and (rare ὄρασις Αβδείου.⁸⁰ The “Greek-like” form ὄρασις Αβδίου is to be found in the manuscripts: S, A, 22, 26, 36, 40, 42, 49, 51, 62, 68, 86, 87, 91, 95, 97, 114, 147, 153, 185, 198, 228, 238, 239, 310, 311 and it is present in the writings of Athanasius and Eusebius of Caesarea⁸¹ (and to this form the codices 86, 233, 534 and 764 also add Αβδίου προφητου – “Obadiah the prophet”). The form ὄρασις Οβδίου exists in particular in the important Codex B. And the version ὄρασις Αβδείου is present as a correction in the Codex B, as a form in the Codex 251 and in the writings of the Cyril of Alexandria. Two manuscripts from 10th/11th c. (numbered as 48 and 763) give a simple title Αβδίας (in *nom.*).⁸² None of the ancient versions translate the name according to its Hebrew meaning (“worshipper of Yahweh,” “servant of Yahweh”), but they try to reflect the way it sounds.

⁷⁹ After: *ibid.*

⁸⁰ See discussion: H. Schmoll, H. Utschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2388.

⁸¹ ZieglerLXX, *ad loc.*

⁸² B d’A XXIII.4–9, 85.

2. The LXX is the only one of the ancient versions to replace the form present in TH, Vul, Peš, Targ., and in the text of the Twelve Prophets found in Wadi Murabba'at וְשָׁמְעוּנוּ (“we have heard”) to ἤκουσα (“I have heard”).⁸³ All major Greek manuscripts except two late minuscules (62, 538)⁸⁴ have this wording. In all probability this change is an adaptation of the Greek translation to the text of Jer 49:14⁸⁵ (see discussion of the relationship between the two texts further on). The change is also an attempt to harmonise the text, which has several subjects in the Hebrew text of verse one.⁸⁶

3. The Hebrew expression וְצִיר בְּגוֹיִם שְׁלָךְ (“And a messenger among the nations was sent”), present in such a form also in Targ., was translated in LXX (similarly to Vul.) as: καὶ περιοχὴν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἐξᾶπέστειλεν (“And a message to the nations he sent [‘he’ concerns God]”). This change, present in all the Greek manuscripts of the Book of Obadiah (in manuscripts 233 and 710 it just assumes an analogical form of ἀπέστειλεν, while in manuscripts 130 and 613 the form of ἐξᾶπέστειλα),⁸⁷ is connected to a different reading of the Hebrew text – in particular with its different vocalization:⁸⁸ the term שְׁלָךְ (“was sent”) was read in these versions as שְׁלַךְ (“he sent”), while the term צִיר was read as the object, and not the subject of this sentence.⁸⁹ A similar change exists also in the versions Symm. and Aq., but instead of the term περιοχη, they use the term: ἀγγελία.⁹⁰ And Jer 29:15 (analogical text; according to the Hebrew numbering – 49:14) translates Hebrew צִיר using ἀγγελος. In the Hebrew text of the Twelve Prophets found in Wadi Murabba'at, as well as in the manuscript of the Twelve Prophets found in the 4th cave at Qumran (4QXIIg), this particular lesson, though preserved, is not clear

⁸³ BHQ, 57 and 89*.

⁸⁴ ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

⁸⁵ BHQ, 57 and 89*.

⁸⁶ On this topic see B d'A XXIII.4–9, 98–99; For this reason SeptDeutsch and this study distinguish, as it were, 3 parts of this verse (see the table); SeptDeutsch, 1195.

⁸⁷ See: ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

⁸⁸ BHQ, 57 and 89*.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ BHQ, 57; cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 99.

enough to be read without doubt,⁹¹ and this would be helpful in trying to reconstruct the history of the text.

4. The replacement of the Hebrew name “Edom” (עֲדוֹם) to “Idumea” (Ἰδουμαία) is an element of harmonisation and updating of the LXX text, typical of the Twelve Prophets (see on this further the paragraph on the nature of the LXXObad translation).

5. The change of the pronoun from masculine (הוּ) to feminine (ἐπ’ αὐτήν) present in the LXX is connected with the previous change of the name of the land (Edom to Idumea). It should also be noted that in the later verses of LXXObad the translator is not consistent and returns to the masculine form already in v. 2. Probably for this reason, in three Greek manuscripts (46, 86, 711 and in Theodoret of Cyrrhus)⁹² it was changed to the masculine pronoun (ἐπ’ αὐτον), adjusting not only to the Hebrew text, but also to the subsequent Greek verses.

Verse 2

1. The sentence-opening particle הִנֵּה (“behold”), typically translated in the LXX as ἴδου (“behold”), is omitted in the Greek translation of the parallel LXX text Jer 29:16⁹³ (according to the Hebrew numbering 49:15). However, the particle plays an important stylistic role in the sentence, drawing the recipient’s attention to the Divine judgment that is being announced, as well as explaining the punishment that is to fall on Edom (Idumea).⁹⁴ This participle appears as many as 56 times in the collection of the Twelve Prophets and is an element of typical prophetic language, both TH and TG.

2. The term in the comparative ὀλιγοστός (“very small”) translates in LXXObad the Hebrew term קָטָן (“small”). It is more literally rendered in the corresponding text LXXJer 29:16 (according to Hebrew numbering 49:15) as μικρόν (“small [I have made you]”).⁹⁵

⁹¹ BHQ, 57.

⁹² See: ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

⁹³ Rahlfs has a different numeration: 30:9.

⁹⁴ Cf. B d’A XXIII.4–9, 99.

⁹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 99–100.

Verse 3

1. The expression הַשִּׁיאָה (“she deceived you”), so translated also in Peš and Targ. and also in the Symm., Aq. and Theod., is translated differently in the LXX: as ἐπῆρέυ σε (“she raised you”), which is the result of a different reading of the stem נשא as נשא. The Vul. scroll reads this text in a similar way.⁹⁶ The scroll of Wadi Murabba’at does not help to resolve this issue, while the Greek versions of Symm., Aq. and Theod. which read this stem differently from the LXX, as “to deceive” (like TM), may be an interpretation, an adaptation of the text to, for example, the text of Gen 3:13 known to the authors (where the verb נשא appears in the context of the sin of the first parents).⁹⁷

2. In the LXX, the participle ὑψῶν (“elevating”) translates the Hebrew noun מרום (“high place,” “heights”). No doubt the Hebrew noun in the context of the whole sentence was quite difficult to interpret, although it is also present in this form in the scroll from Wadi Murabba’at. This change present in the LXX probably resulted from the reading of the term מרום as מרים (the participle of the Hiphil form from the stem רים “to raise”)⁹⁸ and is used to facilitate the reading of the whole context of the sentence and is also present in Vul. (*exaltantem*). In contrast, the targumic tradition and Peš. have a syntactic change here – they add the preposition ב, the whole expression: בְּרוּמָא (“in the heights”) becomes more understandable in the context of the whole sentence.⁹⁹ The meaning of this verse has been interpreted in a material sense (as a hard-to-reach country) or allegorically (as pride, haughtiness; cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrillus, Cyril of Alexandria).¹⁰⁰

Verse 4

The verb שים (“was situated”), so present in the scroll of Wadi Murabba’at, is translated in all the important ancient versions: LXX, Vul., Peš., Targ. as if it had the form תשים (“situated”), which is an

⁹⁶ BHQ, 57.

⁹⁷ B d’A XXIII.4–9, 100.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ BHQ, 89*.

¹⁰⁰ B d’A XXIII.4–9, 100.

adaptation of this verb to the context.¹⁰¹ Interestingly, it is also found in this form in the Hebrew fragment of the Book of Obadiah found at Qumran (4QXIIg),¹⁰² older than the TM and the version from Muraba'at. For this reason, it could be considered that there were two forms of the Hebrew text in antiquity – one that formed the basis of the TM and another that served, among others, the Greek translator in his translation. However, research conducted on the Qumran manuscripts in this case points to a possible textual correction. The original lesson of 4QXIIg would have been the form עָשָׂה , while נ was supposed to have been added to this verb later by the proofreader.¹⁰³ The form present in the TM may have been so shaped under the influence of the text of Num 24:21,¹⁰⁴ while the changes in the LXX are of a grammatical harmonizing nature.

Verse 5

The whole sentence in the LXX is rather difficult, consisting of suppositions and questions, presumably rhetorical, showing what would befall the Edomites (Idumeans). However, the differences between the TH and the LXX concern not textual criticism but interpretation. In the TH, all the sentences comprising this verse had the character of foreshadowing; here they have a slightly different shade of meaning, although they are similar in content. Probably because of these difficulties, changes have occurred in the Greek translation with respect to the TH, although the manuscripts rarely differ in the grammatical forms of the verbs.¹⁰⁵

1. In LXX the expression ποῦ ἂν ἀπερρίψης (“where would you be cast out?”) translates the Hebrew expression $\text{הַיְהִימְךָ לְיָצִי}$ (“how will you be destroyed!”). The Greek rhetorical question (which sounds the same in all the manuscripts available to us) replaces the Hebrew emphatic sentence, with a slightly different meaning. Some have speculated that the Greek translator misread the Hebrew ל as ל

¹⁰¹ BHQ, 57; cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 101.

¹⁰² BHQ, 57 and 89*.

¹⁰³ BHQ, 57.

¹⁰⁴ BHQ, 89*; cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 101.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. R. Holmes, J. Parsons (eds.), *Vetus Testamentum Graecum cum Variis Lectionibus*, vol. V (further on: Holmes-Parsons), ad loc.; and: ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

(a frequent mistake), obtaining a new meaning for the whole expression (a similar procedure in Hos 10:7,¹⁰⁶ and also in Hos 11:1 (10,15)).¹⁰⁷ Others have shown that other traditions had trouble with this Hebrew term. For example, Targ. has a lesson here: $\text{ךָּתִּיבְךָ אֲנִי־יִבְךָ}$ (“you will be silenced,” “put to sleep”),¹⁰⁸ being an interpretation of the translator (similarly in the Symm. version), and yet different interpretation exists in Peš. and Vul. (*quomodo conticuisses*). Still others pointed out the ambiguity of the term itself ἀπορρίπτω. In the close context of the analogous text in LXXJer, specifically in the preceding Jer 29:5 (according to Hebrew numbering 40:7), the verb ἀπορρίπτω is used to show the “wiping out” of Ashkelon, its “destruction.” Similarly, the idea of destruction is seen here by Aq. (faithful to TH). Others have seen in LXXObad 1:5 the meaning of “casting away” (which fits the context of the use of the word in the Twelve Prophets, specifically in Jon 2:4).¹⁰⁹ Together with the question of place (Gr. ποῦ) in the text of the Book of Obadiah under discussion, this latter translation seems most appropriate: “where will you be cast out?”

2. Like the original Greek term used at the end, ἐπιφυλλίς (“residue,” “one cluster [of grapes],” “remnants from the vine”) is an interpretation of the Hebrew לְלוֹת (“remnants,” “whatever remains [of something, from something]”). This term is well known in classical Greek (e.g., in Aristophanes¹¹⁰). Interestingly, in the analogous text LXXJer 29:10 (according to the Hebrew numbering 49:9) the same Hebrew term לְלוֹת is translated more literally by Gr. κατάλειμμα (“remnant,” “residue”), according to the text adopted by A. Rahlfs (after manuscripts B, S, among others); or καλαμέματα (“straw,” “stubble”), according to the text adopted by J. Ziegler (after manuscripts: A, Q, V, 46, 86, 110, 130, 233, 538, 544; the

¹⁰⁶ BHQ, 89*.

¹⁰⁷ B d'A XXIII.4–9, 101. On this topic see A. Kaminka, *Studien zur Septuaginta*, 54, 247; cf. also: E. Tov, “On Pseudo-Variants Reflected in the Septuagint,” 172.

¹⁰⁸ BHQ, 57 and B d'A XXIII.4–9, 101.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

Coptic and Armenian versions also have such a lesson; such a lesson is also present in Theodoret of Cyrrhus¹¹¹).

Verse 6

1. An interpretative change is present in both verbs: it is a grammatical change of tense in the LXX – from the future (in TH) to the perfect (similarly the Vul. will have: *scrutati sunt*); Esau will become the subject of the sentence from the object (albeit passive). This happens in all versions (LXX, Vul., Peš., Targ.) except TM, whose lesson in the case of both verbs is also attested by the manuscript from Wadi Muraba’at.¹¹² The change has a harmonizing and updating character.

2. The original term used in LXX αὐτοῦ τὰ κεκρυμμένα (“his hiding places”) translating Hebr. מְצֻפְּתָיו (“his [hidden] treasures”) is most probably a result of the lexical ignorance of the LXXObad translator; similar lesson exists in Vulg (*abscondita eius*).¹¹³

Verse 7

This verse was interpreted in many ways in Hebrew.¹¹⁴ As a result of its ambiguity (some saw in it a *crux interpretum*), the Greek translator also had to make a choice in translating its meaning.

1. The plural in the expression ἕως τῶν ὁρίων (“up to the borders”) is the result of reading the Hebrew expression עַד-הַגְּבֹול (“up to the border”) as the collective singular (with the meaning “up to the borders”).¹¹⁵ This change is of harmonizing nature and is an interpretive change. On top of this, many manuscripts add the pronoun σου (“your”) after the phrase – see W (+ 407, 410), A (+ 106, 26), 49 (+ 764, 613), 198, 233 (+710), 534, 544, as do the Coptic Bohairite, Ethiopian, Arabic versions and the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Cyril of Alexandria.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹¹² BHQ, 57.

¹¹³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Cf. P.K. McCarter, “Obadiah 7 and the Fall of Edom”; G.I. Davies, “A New Solution to a Crux in Obadiah 7”; J.D. Nogalski, “Obadiah 7: Textual Corruption or Politically Charged Metaphor?”

¹¹⁵ B d’A XXIII.4–9, 102.

¹¹⁶ ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

2. In the verbs of this verse (“pursue,” “send,” “betray,” “stand against,” “overcome,” “snare, ambush”) a change of tense is used in the Greek text: from future (present in the TM) to past in the LXX, showing that the action in question has already taken place. This change is present in all the major manuscripts of the LXX,¹¹⁷ so it is, it seems, an intentional, interpretive change by the LXXObad translator. Perhaps the idea was that the punishment on the Edomites (Idumea) had already happened. The change would therefore be harmonizing in nature.

3. The Hebrew expression הָשִׁיאוּךָ (“they will betray you”), translated in this way in Targ. and Peš., sounds different in LXX – ἀντέστησάν σοι (“they have stood against you”) and Vul. – *inluserunt tibi*; these lessons seem to result from a misunderstanding of the Hebrew root (cf. a similar misunderstanding in v. 3).¹¹⁸

4. The translator has translated the Hebrew idiomatic expression אֲנָשֵׁי שְׁלָמְךָ (“allies,” literally “people of your peace”), as ἄνδρες εἰρηνικοί σου (“people of your peace”), which is a very literal translation¹¹⁹ (in Greek even unintelligible, which made some less important minuscule codices add supplementary expressions so that the Greek reader would know that “allies” was meant; cf. manuscripts, with various changes: 22, 23, 36, 51, 62, 86, 87, 95, 97, 114, 130, 147, 185, 238, 240; 310¹²⁰). Interestingly, another idiomatic expression of this verse לֶחֶמְךָ יִשְׂמוּ מִזֶּרַע תַּחְתֶּיךָ (“[eating] your bread set a snare under you”), also meaning “allies” in the LXX has been omitted altogether (as unintelligible) – only Aquila and Theodocion will have it, rendering the Hebrew text even more literally than the LXX (cutting themselves off from the LXX tradition).¹²¹ Some wonder whether this phrase may be a remnant interpretation of the previous two words in light of

¹¹⁷ Minor changes cf. ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹¹⁸ BHQ, 58 and 89*.

¹¹⁹ Cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 102.

¹²⁰ After Holmes-Parsons, ad loc.

¹²¹ Cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 103; BHQ, 58 and 89*.

the idiom לֶחֶם אֹכֵל (“eating bread”) used in Ps 41:10 (Hebrew numbering).¹²²

5. In Codices B and S and some minuscules the Hebrew form of the expression אֵין תְּבוּנָה בּוֹ (“there is no understanding in him”) was changed into the expression: οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις αὐτοῖς (“there is no understanding in them”). It is quoted in this form by some Church Fathers¹²³. Many Greek manuscripts have this expression in a different wording: σύνεσις ἐν αὐτοῖς (manuscripts: 26, 40, 106, 130; also in Jerome: *non est sapientia in eo*);¹²⁴ σύνεσις ἐν αὐτῷ (manuscripts: 22, 23, 36, 42, 49, 51, 62, 68, 87, 91, 95, 97, 147, 153, 185, 198, 228, 233, 238, 310, 311).¹²⁵ The latter as contained in most manuscripts was accepted by J. Ziegler in the critical edition, this version (in the singular) may refer to Esau of v. 6 and seems more intelligible in the whole context. It is very difficult to decide which lesson was the original version of the LXX (was the less understood and more original accepted by A. Rahlfs? Or the more unified and understandable in context – which may be a later proofreading intervention – accepted by J. Ziegler).

Verse 8

The initial particle אֵלֶּיךָ poses some difficulty to the translators (it expresses negation: “is it not,” but also acclamation). The LXX omits it altogether, as does Peš., which, in fact, is a frequent procedure in both versions (Greek and Syriac)¹²⁶; the particle, however, is present in the Targums and Vulg. and in the Hebrew manuscript from Wadi Muraba’at.¹²⁷ In the LXX, the Hebrew rhetorical question is simply changed into an affirmative sentence (and this in the future tense, which changes the past narrative of v. 7 and makes a new unit of speech for the prophet begin here, in v. 8 of the Greek text). This verse in the LXX begins

¹²² Cf. BHQ, 89*. Other suggestions for explaining this difficult-to-understand Hebrew expression see G. I. Davies, “A New Solution to a Crux in Obadiah 7,” 484–486.

¹²³ B d’A XXIII.4–9, 103.

¹²⁴ Holmes-Parsons, ad loc.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Cf. BHQ, 89*; cf. A. Gelston, *The Peshitta of the Twelve Prophets*, 137.

¹²⁷ Cf. BHQ, 58.

immediately with the phrase ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ (“On that day”; so in manuscripts: 22, 23, 26, 36, 51, 62, 86, 85, 106, 130, 147, 185, 198, 233, 238, 311,¹²⁸ for the sake of these manuscripts the editions of Ziegler and Rahlfs take it into the text), which in some important manuscripts has a different order ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ (“On day [that]”).¹²⁹

Verses 9–10

1. The Hebrew expression וַתִּהְיֶינָה (“and they shall be stricken”), present in this version in the Qumran manuscripts (4Q12^g) and found in Wadi Murabba’at, is also present in the Targ., Vul., and Symmach version, but it is altered by Peš.¹³⁰ Its free translation is found in the LXX: καὶ πτοηθήσονται (“and they shall be terrified”). The BHQ Critical Commentary points out that the Hebrew stem תתח can mean both “being paralyzed” [e.g., by information]” and “being terrified,”¹³¹ so the LXX change is a choice made by the translator and present in all major manuscripts of the Greek version of the Book of Obadiah.

2. A situation resembling the previous one occurs with the term דְּבַרְיָנִים (“your warriors”), which is present in all ancient versions (also in w LXX), and is changed only in Peš., which interprets the text, adjusting it to the context.¹³²

3. The Hebrew name תֵּמָן used here in the form of the vocative (“O, Teman”), in the LXX has a slightly altered form οἱ ἐκ Θαυμαῶν (“those of Teman”); the change is of exegetical nature.¹³³ It is interesting that other ancient versions also interpret the name rather than translate it: Targ. refers to “the South” (a similar technique was used elsewhere in the Twelve Prophets: Amos 1:12 and Hab 3:3).¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Holmes-Parsons, ad loc.

¹²⁹ Cf. ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹³⁰ BHQ, 58.

¹³¹ Ibid., 89*.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 58.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 89*–90*.

Some Greek manuscripts (86, 764, 198¹³⁵) adapt the Greek text to the Hebrew, but this change is secondary.¹³⁶

4 In the LXX the last phrase of v. 9 (which in the TH was *ἕνεκα* “because of the slaughter,” “from the slaughter”), is transferred to v. 10, forming with its context a new phrase: *διὰ τὴν σφαγὴν καὶ τὴν ἀσέβειαν τὴν εἰς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου Ἰακωβ* (“because of the slaughter and unfaithfulness [!] to your brother Jacob”). It is interesting to note the addition in v. 10 of the term *ἀσέβεια* (“unfaithfulness”) towards the brother (Jacob), which is absent in the TH. The LXX has harmonised the text, emphasising again that the real reason for the accusation against the Edomites (Idumea) is the lack of faithfulness towards their brother.¹³⁷ In short, the LXX highlights the theology present in the TM by showing the guilt of a neighbour who did not help the Israelites in their time of need.¹³⁸ Later in the book this is made explicit, but the translator has already mad the harmonization here by adding the real reason for the speech against Edom (Idumea). Further verses forming the whole together with v. 10 will complete this information by describing in more detail what this betrayal of Edom (Idumea) consisted of.

Verse 11

The verse contains the first of the most important accusations against Edom (Idumea), the accusation of the brother who stood by, and through passivity became guilty, as did the attacking Babylonians (something the LXX had already begun to explain in v. 10).

1. The first change in this verse in the LXX against the TH occurs already in the initial expression *עַל הַיּוֹם* (“on the day”), which the LXX changes to *ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας* (“from that day”). The accusation does not refer to earlier stories of what happened between Israel and Edom (though these were not exemplary either), but begins “from the day” in which brother stood in opposition to brother. The change is interpretive, clarifying, and may at the same time be a misreading of

¹³⁵ Cf. ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹³⁶ BHQ, 90*.

¹³⁷ Harmonisation was the initiative of the LXX translator; cf. BHQ, 90*; and H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2390.

¹³⁸ Cf. B d’A XXIII.4–9, 104.

the Hebrew text: instead of בְּיוֹם the translator may have read it as מְיוֹם .¹³⁹

2. An important change from textual criticism occurs in stich b: the Ketiv–Qere note at the expression $[\text{שְׁעָרָיו}]$ (שְׁעָרֹו). The TH in its original version speaks of “his gate” (in the singular; so has the version from Wadi Muraba’at, perhaps in as an adaptation to v. 13); the Masoretes note indicates that the plural is meant: “his gates.” The change is explanatory – it is clear that it was not through one gate that people entered the city during the siege, but “his gates.” All ancient versions, including the LXX ($\epsilon\iota\varsigma \pi\acute{o}\lambda\alpha\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\theta\upsilon$), have this expression in the plural.

Verse 12

The verse highlights another aspect of Edomite (Idumean) guilt. LXXObad reveals that the Edomites (Idumeans?) not only remained passive in the face of the violence that befell the Israelites, but laughed at their brother’s misfortune. Edom’s guilt is greater – it is not only indifference, but also satisfaction that bad things are happening to a neighbour. The only change in the LXX (in all the major manuscripts) is that related to the misreading of the נָכַר stem (in the expression בְּיוֹם נָכְרוֹ – “on the day of his misfortune”) as נָכַר meaning “stranger” (especially since this stem occurs more frequently).¹⁴⁰ It was read in the same way by Vul.¹⁴¹ In both cases it refers to the situation in the 6th century B.C. when these “strangers” attacked the Israelites.

Verse 13

One of the more reworked verses in the entire LXXObad.

1. As in v. 11 (see discussion), in the LXX the singular term שְׁעַר (“gate”), is changed to the plural $\pi\acute{o}\lambda\alpha\varsigma$ (“gates”). Such a change relative to TH is also in Targ.¹⁴²

2. The translator also misread the expression עַמִּי (“my people”) as plural (Hebrew: עַמִּים), hence this translation of it: $\lambda\alpha\omicron\nu$. Some

¹³⁹ BHQ, 90*.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 58.

¹⁴² Ibid.

LXX manuscripts (26, 49, 198, 233, 534, 544¹⁴³) correct this text to the singular, bringing it into line with the Hebrew original (but this is a secondary correction).¹⁴⁴

3. The other changes in the LXX relative to the TH are interpretive. The three Hebrew terms used here, אָזָז (“their calamity”), יָזָז (“his calamity”) and יָזָז (“his calamity”), are translated in the LXX in various ways: as πόνος (“toil” – plural), ὄλεθρος (“destruction”) and ἀπόλεια (“ruin,” “destruction,” “annihilation”).¹⁴⁵ This version making difference between the words is the work of the LXX translator (other versions – Targ. and Peš. – render the three Hebrew words with the same term, repeated three times, preserving the character of the Hebrew text).¹⁴⁶ Only Vul. changes the Hebrew term, but just in one case (it successively translates the expressions as: *ruinae eorum, vastitatis illius and vastitatis illius*).¹⁴⁷ This change is intended to adjust the translation so that the whole phrase sounds better in Greek (so as not to repeat the same word three times). The tense in both versions (Hebrew and Greek) is correct, but the whole text is adapted to the language into which it is translated.

4. The last change in this verse is of a similar interpretative character: The LXX in place of Hebrew אַל-תִּשְׂטַח-יָדְךָ (“and do not stretch out your hand”) has μηδὲ συνεπιθῆ (“do not join in the attack”; literally, “do not *co-attack*”).¹⁴⁸ Although this expression has caused quite a lot of problems (it also sounds differently in Targ. and Peš.),¹⁴⁹ it seems that the LXX translation harmonizes the text by showing the guilt of Edom (Idumea) – here specifically in what concerns “co-attacking.” Here the translator did not slavishly translate the Hebrew idiom. The whole verse defines what Edom did, and should not, in difficult times for Israel.

¹⁴³ ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹⁴⁴ H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2390–2391; B d’A XXIII.4–9, 106–107.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. BHQ, 90*.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 58.

¹⁴⁸ On this change see *ibid.*, 91*.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 59.

Verse 14

The verse is a continuation of the themes begun in the preceding verses. It enumerates the successive “sins” of Edom (Idumea) against the Israelites. The only change is the plural, which (absent in the TH) appears in the LXX, in the expression τὰς διεκβολὰς (“in the passages”), with the addition αὐτῶν (“their”). It seems that this rather loose translation¹⁵⁰ may have explicative value: the translator is unambiguous about what the Edomites were doing – they were not standing in some passageway, but in “their (!), that is, the Israelites’, passageways” (Vul. also has the plural here¹⁵¹) – attacking the Israelites who survived the Babylonian attack. The image of the Edomites (Idumei) is even stronger here and leaves no doubt about their guilt.¹⁵² The addition in the second stich, which also contains the phrase ἐξ αὐτῶν (“from among them”), absent from the Hebrew text, serves a similar purpose.

Verses 15–16

The central verses of the entire book. After the guilt has already been established, there is the announcement of punishment – as a consequence of that action (or omission). While v. 15 contains no major changes in the LXX text,¹⁵³ v. 16 has some interesting variants.

1. The singular of the verb ἔπιες (“you drank”) in stich 1 (TH had a plural here), refers grammatically to v. 15 (which also spoke about the 2nd person singular) and is a grammatical harmonization of the text.¹⁵⁴

2. The more precise phrase “my holy mountain” is in turn meant to leave no doubt as to which mountain is meant – Mount Zion, the mountain of God, and not some other holy mountain known in the world of the LXX translator (the change is interpretive and present

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 91*.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 59.

¹⁵² Cf. explanation of this verse in B d’A XXIII.4–9, 107.

¹⁵³ Cf. its discussion in *ibid.*, 107–108.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 107–108; and H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2391.

in all the major witnesses to the Greek text (except manuscript 22¹⁵⁵).

3 The most interesting change concerns the term οἶνος (“wine”),¹⁵⁶ which is absent in the TH but present in all LXX manuscripts. This is the original LXX lesson, in place of the ἄκρη (“without end”) which is present in all ancient versions (Wadi Muraba’at, Vul., Peš., Targ.).¹⁵⁷ Perhaps the translator misread the Hebrew root as: חמר.¹⁵⁸

4. The difficult-to-understand Hebrew hapax legomenon וַעֲלֶיךָ (“and they shall swallow”), rendered thus in Targ. in Vul., also present in the manuscript from Wadi Murabaa’t, has been translated in two ways in the LXX – depending on the manuscripts – either as καταβήσονται (“they shall come down”; manuscripts: W, B, S; adopted in this form by A. Rahlfs¹⁵⁹ and J. Ziegler¹⁶⁰), or as ἀναβήσονται (“they shall enter”; manuscripts: V, 239, 407, in the Church Fathers: among others Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Theodore of Mopsuestia;¹⁶¹ and in manuscripts: 22, 36, 51, 62, 95, 114, 147, 185, 238, 240¹⁶²). Such a reading may have resulted from the difficulty of understanding the Hebrew text, and, for example, associating it with the root הָלַץ.¹⁶³ The Peš. text takes the meaning of this Hebrew term as “slurping” and translates the expression doubly (as slurping and swallowing) – perhaps as an alternative reading of the text.¹⁶⁴

Verses 17–18

They begin a new, the last, part of the prophet’s speech, which speaks of the salvation, the rescue (Hebrew: הִצִּילָה; Greek: σωτηρία)

¹⁵⁵ Holmes-Parsons, ad loc.; ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. B d’A XXIII.4–9, 108; and H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2391.

¹⁵⁷ BHQ, 59.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 91*.

¹⁵⁹ Rahlfs-Hanhart, ad loc.

¹⁶⁰ ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹⁶¹ Cf. ibid., ad loc.

¹⁶² Holmes-Parsons, ad loc.

¹⁶³ Por, BHQ, 91*; and B d’A XXIII.4–9, 108.

¹⁶⁴ BHQ, 91*.

of Israel. Several ancient manuscripts (including A), omit the expression $\psi\kappa\eta\iota\eta\eta$ (“and it shall be holy”) – referred in TH to Mount Zion of v. 17.¹⁶⁵ Perhaps these manuscripts omitted the expression as a result of a *homioarchton* error (or as a result of the same error it appears in TM, although it is present in all versions: Targ. Peš, Vul., and in the manuscript from Wadi Muraba’at).¹⁶⁶ In v. 18 the difficult expression $\tau\gamma\psi$ (“survivor”) is rendered with the rare Greek word $\pi\upsilon\rho\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\omicron\varsigma$ (“fire-bearer”) – in the figurative sense of “survivor,” used in this way in classical literature: in Herodotus, and in Philo.¹⁶⁷

Verses 19–20

Very interesting changes in the LXX occur in vv. 19–20, which give different geographical names (which are often changed in the LXX, including in the collection of the Twelve Prophets).¹⁶⁸ While the geographical names are given in the LXX in transcription (Ναγεβ – “Nageb”; Shephelah, as Σεφηλα “Sephela”), the names of the peoples are changed: Philistines (Hebrew: פְּלִשְׁתִּים) became in the LXX “strangers” (Gr. $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\phi\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$). This particular change may have the purpose of generalising the message – whereas once for the Israelites the enemies were the Philistines, in the time of the author it is all “strangers” who are enemies – and in this way the message of the Greek book has been allegorised and unified: it is to apply to every “foreign” people and nation. The Lord will give to his people all these lands enumerated in vv. 19–20.

Because these verses contained geographical information that was difficult to interpret, they were sometimes – as the Church Fathers, e.g. Hesychius, did – shown as symbols of evil, of sin (i.e. in Christian interpretations an even more far-reaching allegorisation was made of them).¹⁶⁹ V. 20, which is very difficult, has been

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 59; B d’A XXIII.4–9, 109; and H. Schmoll, H. Utschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2391.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. BHQ, 59, 91*.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 91*.

¹⁶⁸ On this topic see B d’A XXIII.4–9, 89, 110–112.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. B d’A XXIII.4–9, 111.

interpreted in many ways not only in the contemporary Hebrew text, but also in its ancient versions: LXX and Vulg.¹⁷⁰

Verse 21

The most important change in the last verse of the book is the one relating to the Hebrew term מוֹשְׁעִים (“liberators”), which in the LXX has been replaced by the expression ἄνδρες σωσμένοι (“men saved”).¹⁷¹ The important LXX manuscripts (A, Q, W),¹⁷² as well as Peš., and the Aquila and Theodosius versions contain such a lesson, while the TM version is also shared by Vul. and Targ.¹⁷³ The change is an adaptation of v. 21 to v. 17, is perhaps the result of a misreading of the Hebrew root.¹⁷⁴ And it seems to be original, although some important LXX manuscripts (B, S, C) have the lesson here: ἀνασωσμένοι (“fugitives,” “runaways”), perhaps referring to the survivors of the previously mentioned verses (those betrayed by the enemy), who on the day of punishment will not only be saved, but they will be the authors of the new kingdom of God that will come. And it is they who will also judge Esau, their traitor.¹⁷⁵

The character of the LXXObad translation

The book of Obadiah in the Hebrew Bible is a poetic work, only the last verses (19–21) are written in prose in BH (this can be seen even in critical editions; cf. BHQ). Since the language and the message of the book were not easy, the ancient translators had to face various difficulties in their translation. The Greek version of the Book of Obadiah, contained in the LXX, has several characteristic features which, on the one hand, are typical of all the books of the collection of the Twelve Prophets (where the nature of the translation can be described as “sometimes distant from the base text and sometimes

¹⁷⁰ Cf. J. Gray, “The Diaspora of Israel in Judah in Obadiah v. 20”; E. Lipiński, “Obadiah 20”; D. Weissert, “Obadiah 20: Septuagint and Vulgate.” Cf. also: B d’A XXIII.4–9, 111–112; H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, “Abdiu. Obadja,” 2392–2393.

¹⁷¹ Cf. BHQ, 60.

¹⁷² Cf. Rahlfs-Hanhart, ad loc.; ZieglerLXX, ad loc.

¹⁷³ Cf. BHQ, 60.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 92*.

¹⁷⁵ On this verse in LXX, see B d’A XXIII.4–9, 112–113.

close to it”¹⁷⁶) and, on the other hand, show the book itself in a somewhat different, more universal light.

The features of this translation are fidelity, richness of vocabulary, updating and harmonisation.

1. Fidelity: sometimes slavish (e.g. v. 4; v. 7, where the translator faithfully translates an idiomatic Hebrew expression that sounds like a caricature in Greek; v. 15, where the translator even preserves the Hebrew syntax, writing in Greek without using the present tense); but not only slavish (other idiomatic expressions in vv. 14 and 15 are translated according to the sense; and others – as in v. 17 – are omitted by the translator). Naturally, sometimes the translators did not avoid misreading the stems, especially where the vocabulary was difficult (twice in v. 16, once when translating the Hebrew term *hapax legomenon*) and other errors (like the possible *homoioarchton* in v. 17).

2. Richness of vocabulary; it is evident that the translator(s) was an educated man; he uses original vocabulary known from classical literature (e.g.: v. 1: περιοχή – “a written message”; v. 4: μετεωρίζομαι – “to glide, like an eagle,” but also “to worry”; v. 5: ἐπιφυλλίς – “a remnant, a small cluster”; v. 6: κερυμμένα – “hiding places”; v. 12: μεγαλορρημονέω – “talkativeness,” but also “megalomania,” “boasting,” “speaking audaciously”; v. 18: πυροφόρος – “fire-bearer,” “survivor,” etc.), his translation was the fruit of Jewish thought, but expressed in Hellenistic terms.

3. Updating and harmonising the text: sometimes only at the grammatical or terminological level (e.g. in 1:1, where he harmonises the subject; or similar grammatical changes in vv. 3.4.6.7.11; or in v. 13, where the translator translates one Hebrew word repeated three times in a sentence with three different words so that it does not repeat itself; or in v. 16, where the singular of the verb in the first stich is grammatically related to v. 15, just as he had previously adapted – by changing the tense – v. 8 with v. 7), and sometimes these harmonisations and updates adapt the text of

¹⁷⁶ Cf. G.E. Howard, “The Twelve Prophets. To the Reader,” 777 (see also a short discussion of all the characteristics of this collection: *ibid.*, 777–780).

the Book to the times and needs of the community for which the translation was made.

These conscious and interpretive changes are most interesting, and in the case of the changes enumerated below there is no doubt that they are the work of the LXX translator.

The first major change is the renaming of the main character of the book from Edom (עֲדוֹמָא) to Idumea (Ἰδοουμαία). This change, which is present in vv.1 and 8, affects the content of the entire book and is part of the harmonisation and updating of the text.¹⁷⁷ It also occurs in the LXX in the other books of the Twelve Prophets (cf. Amos 1:6.9.11; 2:1; Joel 4:19; Mal 1:4) and elsewhere in the LXX.¹⁷⁸ And while it does happen that the term Edom (עֲדוֹמָא) is translated in the LXX as Εδωμ – both a proper name and the name of the land and its inhabitants,¹⁷⁹ this does not happen in the Books of the Twelve Prophets. So this seems to be a translation principle

¹⁷⁷ Cf. B d'A XXIII.4–9, 89; and H. Schmoll, H. Utzschneider, "Abdiu. Obadja," 2389.

¹⁷⁸ For example, Gen 36:16 (other cases in Gen are translated by the term Εδωμ); Josh 15:1; 2 Sam 8:12.13.14 (twice) – speaks of Edom or Edomites; 1 Kgs 11:1 (speaks of Edomite women – Idumeans); 11:14 (speaks of an Edomite – Idumean); 11:15.16 (twice) (Edom – Idumea); 2 Kgs 14:10; 1 Chr 18:11.12; 2 Chr 8:17; 25,14.19; Ps 59:10.11 (in the Hebrew numbering 60:10.11); 82:7 (in the Hebrew numbering 83:7); 107:10.11 (in the Hebrew numbering 109:10.11); Amos 1:6.9.11; 2:1; Joel 4:19; Mal 1:4; Isa 11:14; 21:11; 34:5.6; Jer 30:1.11.14.16 (in the Hebrew numbering 49:7.17.20.22); 32:21 (in the Hebrew numbering 25:21); 34:3 (in the Hebrew numbering 27:3), 47:11 (in the Hebrew numbering 40:11); Lam 4:21; Ezek 25:12.13.14 (twice); Ezek 35:15; 36:5. Additionally, this term occurs also in deuterocanonical books (1 Macc 4:15.29.61; 5:3; 6:31; 2 Macc 12:32; LXX addition to Job: LXXJob 42:17), and once in the NT (Mk 3:8).

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Gen 25:30; 32:4; 36:1.8.9.17.19.21.30.31.32.43; Ex 15:15; Num 20:14.18.20.21.23; 21:4; 24:18; 33:37; 34:3; Josh 15:21.44; Jud 5:4; 11:17.18; 1 Sam 14:47; 1 Kgs 9:26; 11:15.25; 2 Kgs 3:8.9.12.20.26; 8:20.21.22; 14:7; 1 Chron 1:51.54; 2 Chron 21:8.9.10; Ps 136:7; Isa 63:1; Jer 9:25; Lam 4:22; Dan 11:41); The term also occurs in the deuterocanonical books and additions specific only to the LXX: Odes of Salomon 1:15; LXXHi 42:17.

applied by the translator of this entire collection. And it is also an argument for the fact that the translation of all the Twelve Prophets came from one hand. This change was intended to generalize the message of the books, which in the case of LXXObad is of particular importance: The Edomites no longer existed at the time of the translation of the Book of Obadiah, but Idumea and its inhabitants existed, who with the change became the symbol of the enemy at all times.

A change which is very interesting and similar in character in LXXObad occurs in vv. 19–20, which give various geographical names which, in this particular context, again give universal value to the message of the book. This is especially the change of the term Philistines (Hebrew: פְּלִשְׁתִּים) to “strangers” (Gr. ἄλλοφύλους). This particular change may have the purpose of generalizing the message – whereas the Philistines (as well as the Edomites) were once enemies for the Israelites, in the time of the author of the translation all “strangers” are enemies – and so the message of the book is subjected to allegorization and universalization: it can apply to any “foreign” people and nation. The same term, moreover, appears in v. 12, opening up the Greek text (and also the Vul.) to a more general, universal interpretation.

Other lessons of the LXX serve a similar purpose: the change of tenses and modes (from future to perfect, when at the same time Esau becomes the subject from the object; in v. 6; or from future to conditional, in v. 5); plural and singular to the opposite (e.g., v. 14). All these leave no doubt about the guilt of the accused, and the picture of enemies in LXXObad – is consequently even stronger than in TH. Clearly this guilt is defined in vv. 9–10, transferring part of v. 9 to v. 10, showing that punishment will fall on the enemy because of his guilt: “because of the slaughter [carried over from v. 9] and unfaithfulness [!] to your brother Jacob.” The real reason for the accusation against the Edomites (Idumeans?) – is the accusation of a neighbour (brother) who did not help. Later in the book this will be made even clearer: the following verses will show exactly what Edom (Idumea) did (or rather did not do). The LXX emphasizes the theology present in the TM by showing the guilt of a neighbour (brother) who did not help the Israelites in their time of need, and not only remained passive in the face of the violence that

afflicted the Israelites, but mocked it. The guilt of Edom (Idumea) is greater – it is not only indifference, but also satisfaction that bad things are happening to one’s neighbour. This attitude was also repeatedly demonstrated by Israel itself (cf. the Book of Nahum), although here it clearly condemns it in others.¹⁸⁰

Also important in this context is the change contained in v. 21, where the Hebrew term “liberators” is changed to “survivors” or (in some LXX manuscripts), to “fugitives,” “runaways,” alluding to those who, fleeing from the Babylonians, fell into the hands of the enemy. It is they, according to the final emphasis of the book, who will become the authors of the new kingdom of God that will come. And those who will judge their traitor (whoever he may be).

At the same time, the changes in LXXObad emphasize the role of the One God: this is achieved by emphasizing the possessive pronoun “my” in v. 16 (in the phrase “*my* holy mountain” – meaning Zion, of course), and the emphasis on God’s reign in v. 21, which concludes the book (the LXX text makes clear that the kingdom, even restored by the children of Israel, will belong to the Lord).

Christian commentators have had the greatest difficulty in interpreting the Book of Obadiah (regardless of its ancient version). How to reconcile its Israelite particularism (radicalised still in the LXX) with the universalism of Jesus’ teaching? How to interpret the fact that a book cursing its neighbour is part of the inspired word of God? The aforementioned allegorization of the text, already done at the level of LXX translation, came to the rescue. Since already at the stage of the formation of the Old Testament Edom became the paradigm of all hostile neighbours, and the Greek translation contained in the LXX updated this paradigm even more to the times in which the translators of the book and their recipients lived, early Christian theologians went a step further: interpreting the Book of Obadiah and its enemies in the key of the fight against evil in general. This was done, perhaps under the influence of the LXX,

¹⁸⁰ It would be interesting in this context to have writings presenting the situation that inspired Obadiah, in the Edomite optics.

especially by the Greek Fathers¹⁸¹ who devoted considerable commentaries to it: Theodore of Mopsuestia (350?–428), Cyril of Alexandria (350–444) and Theodoret of Cyrrihus (393–466). They developed interpretations of the book: from the enmity of the brothers Esau and Jacob to the enmity of the nations, Israelites and Edomites, and then to the notion of enmity between people and the struggle against evil and sin.¹⁸² “The text of the Book of Obadiah and its patristic interpretations show a very interesting development when it comes to the understanding of Edom. First Edom is a brother/brotherly nation that has become an enemy, then, in the context of worship and literary redaction – a type or symbol of all the hostile nations of Judah, and finally – in the Greek Fathers – a personified evil, the devil.”¹⁸³ Similarly, the Western Fathers – Jerome and Augustine – devoted attention to Edom, relating the concept of enemy to the enemies of the Church and to sin – and showing the struggle against Edom as an image of man’s spiritual struggle.

What is interesting, Christian writers were also followed by rabbis, who also in post-biblical times began to interpret the Book of Obadiah in an allegorical key, seeing in the image of Edom not only any “stranger,” but also very specifically identifying it, for example, with Rome,¹⁸⁴ which undoubtedly also had polemical overtones against Christianity.

Thus the small Book of Obadiah inspired and motivated such an important theology, repeated in various historical circumstances,

¹⁸¹ Cf. V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1022–1023.

¹⁸² Some of Obadiah’s themes can already be found in the pages of the New Testament; see D. Luckensmeyer, “Intertextuality between Obadiah and First Thessalonians,” in: C.A. Evans, H.D. Zacharias (ed.), “*What does the Scripture say?*” *Studies in the Function of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity*, vol. 2, London–New York 2012, 98–120.

¹⁸³ V. Salanga, “Księga Abdiasza,” 1023.

¹⁸⁴ See B d’A XXIII.4–9, 98. On the rabbinic interpretations of the collection of the Twelve Prophets, including Obad, see *The Twelve Prophets* = תרי עשר = *Trei Asar: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic Sources*, vol. 1–2; J. Neusner (ed.), *Habakkuk, Jonah, Nahum and Obadiah in Talmud and Midrash*.

including nowadays, in liberationist, feminist and other contexts, but this would require a separate study.¹⁸⁵

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¹⁸⁵ Cf. B.A. Anderson, “The Reception of Obadiah: Some Historical, Ideological, and Visual Considerations”; S. Almada, “Abdías: la injusticia no quedará impune”; P.J. Botha, “Social Values in the Book of Obadiah”; B. Glazier-McDonald, “Obadiah,” 210–211.

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