

“Superfluous Lines?” Minuses of OG Job in the Context of Alexandrian Scholarship

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ABSTRACT

The Old Greek of Job contains a large number of minuses compared to the MT consisting of a single line, especially in synonymous parallelisms. The phenomenon is described in two case studies and then discussed in the context of Homeric scholarship in Alexandria, where repetitive lines could be considered spurious. It is argued that the similar textual approach points to interaction between Jewish translators and textual scholars in Ptolemaic Alexandria.

1. THE SHORTENING OF PARALLELISM IN OG JOB: INTRODUCTION

The Old Greek¹ version of Job is quite unusual among the translations of Hebrew scriptures into Greek. Not only does it render the Hebrew in a way that emphasizes rhetorical stylization and a higher register of Greek than most other Hebrew-Greek translations, it is also about one-sixth shorter than the Masoretic Text.² OG Job is also unusual in that there is far-reaching scholarly consensus that the difference in length does not reflect a shorter Hebrew parent text, but is mostly to be attributed to the translator.³ First,

¹ “Old Greek” (OG) refers to the original translation of the Book of Job into Greek. This translation did not contain the asterisked lines which were inserted into the text by Origen using a 1st century CE translation traditionally attributed to Theodotion, thus creating the so-called “Ecclesiastical Text”. All quotes refer to the Göttingen edition: Joseph Ziegler, *Job, Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum* XI,4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982); unfortunately, Ziegler placed the asterisked lines in the lemma text. For a detailed study of the asterisked lines in LXX Job, see Peter J. Gentry, *The Asterisked Materials in the Greek Job*, SCS 38 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 1995).

² See John G. Gammie, “The Septuagint of Job: Its Poetic Style and Relationship to the Septuagint of Proverbs,” *CBQ* 49 (1987), 14–31; and especially Marieke Dhont, *Style and Context of Old Greek Job*, JSJSup 183 (Leiden: Brill, 2018). The oldest Hebrew and Aramaic (11Q10) texts of Job found in Qumran in principle agree with the MT.

³ For a full discussion of the arguments on this topic, see Claude E. Cox, “Does a Shorter Hebrew Parent Text Underlie Old Greek Job?,” in: *In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes: Studies*

this is due to the translation technique, which includes a high degree of lexical variation, anaphoric translations, and generally deviations from an isomorphic translation technique.⁴ Second, the sections only attested in the Hebrew do not differ linguistically from those attested both in the Hebrew and the Greek.⁵ And finally, the poetic structure of the Hebrew text, consisting mostly of parallel lines, is at times interfered with, especially when one colon of a parallelism constitutes a minus. This microstructure is in large parts reproduced in OG Job, but not always: In the Göttingen edition, there are 47 cases⁶ where one colon of a bicolonic verse is placed under an asterisk without being part of a larger minus, thus disrupting the microstructure of the Hebrew text. This phenomenon is particularly characteristic of OG Job and deserves further investigation. In this paper, I want to focus on *one* trend that can be identified among the minuses consisting of a single colon, namely, the shortening of synonymous parallelism. After presenting two examples for this particular approach by the translator, I will suggest that parallels cannot be found in other translations within the LXX corpus, but rather the wider context of Ptolemaic Alexandria, especially Homeric scholarship as practiced at the Library.

2. THE HANDLING OF SYNONYMOUS PARALLELISM IN OG JOB: TWO CASE STUDIES

The first instance of a minus of one colon in a synonymous parallelism occurs in Job 10:4, where Job addresses God:⁷

in the Biblical Text in Honour of Anneli Aejmelaeus, ed. Kristin De Troyer, T. M. Law and Marketta Liljeström, CBET 72 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 451–62; Markus Witte, “The Greek Book of Job,” in *Das Buch Hiob und seine Interpretationen: Beiträge zum Hiob-Symposium auf dem Monte Verità vom 14.-19. August 2005*, ed. Thomas Krüger et al., ATANT 88 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2007), 33–54: 36–8.

⁴ For surveys of OG Job translation technique, see Joseph Ziegler, “Der textkritische Wert der Septuaginta des Buches Job,” in idem, *Sylloge: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Septuaginta*, MSU 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 9–28; Harry M. Orlinsky, “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job II: The Character of the Septuagint Translation of the Book of Job,” *HUCA* 29 (1958): 229–71; and Dhont, *Style and Context*, 7–47.

⁵ This argument was first brought up by Samuel R. Driver and George B. Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job*, ICC 17 (Edinburgh: Clark, 1922 [reprint 1964]), LXXV. A detailed recent study is Juliane M. Eckstein, *Kurz- oder Langvorlage? Anwendung des Idiolekttests auf die in der griechischen Textüberlieferung asterisierten Passagen des Ijobbuches*, ATSAT 98 (St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 2015); see also eadem, “The Idiolect Test and the Vorlage of Old Greek Job: A New Argument for an Old Debate,” *VT* 68 (2018): 197–219.

⁶ Job 9:15b; 10:4b; 11:5b; 12:18b; 13:19b.20b; 16:3b.21b; 17:16b; 18:17b; 19:24a.28b; 20:14b; 21:19b; 22:3b; 24:4b.8a; 24:25b; 25:6b; 27:19b; 29:13a.24b; 30:16a.18b.20b.22b; 31:27a; 33:8a.19b.20b; 34:11b.18b.23a.25b; 35:12a; 37:5a.10a; 39:1a.6a; 39:29b; 40:26a.31b; 41:8a.15b.18b.21a.24b.

⁷ The translations of the Greek follow that of Cox in NETS, that of the Hebrew NRSV.

<p>^{4a} ἢ ὥσπερ βροτὸς ὄρα̃ καθορᾶς ^{4b} *ἢ καθὼς ὄρα̃ ἄνθρωπος βλέψῃ; ∟</p>	<p>העיני בשר לך ^{4a} אם-כראות אנוש תראה ^{4b}</p>
<p>^{4a} Do you see as a mortal sees? ^{4b} *or will you see as a human sees? ∟</p>	<p>^{4a} Do you have eyes of flesh? ^{4b} Do you see as humans see?</p>

The first stich of the Hebrew is not translated, with v.4a in the Greek being a rendering of Hebrew v.4b by the OG. We can see that OG Job translated the second stich faithfully, only changing the word order (כראות אנוש ~ ὥσπερ βροτὸς ὄρα̃). The use of βροτὸς is peculiar to OG Job. The lexeme translates אנוש eight times;⁸ the translators also employ some variation in rendering the verb ראה with the *verbum simplex* ὄραω and with the composite καθοράω. As the asterisked line also corresponds to v.4b, the Ecclesiastical Text contains a double translation.

On the other hand, v.4a is not represented in the Greek at all. Some scholars have suggested theological reasons for this,⁹ but the notion of anti-anthropomorphism cannot explain why only one of the two stichs was omitted. Moreover, the verse is an open question, and thus could also hint at the possibility that God in fact *does not* see like humans.¹⁰ Rather, since the two lines are synonymous, it is plausible that v.4a was omitted by the translator.¹¹

My second example comes from Job 25, the shortest chapter of both Hebrew and Greek Job. The short speech by Baldad in the Hebrew contains five bicola centered around the question of man’s justice before God (v.4) and contrasting God’s highness and man’s lowliness. The elaborate composition of Job 25:2-6 is quantitatively mostly reproduced in the Greek, but in v.6, the second line of a synonymous parallelism belongs to the asterisked materials and was therefore not present in the OG.¹²

⁸ Job 4:17; 9:2; 15:14; 25:4; 28:4.13; 32:8; 33:12. βροτὸς renders אדם in 6 cases, 11:12; 14:1.10; 32:21; 34:15; 36:28 (in 36:25 the OG and MT differ widely, so βροτὸς could be a translation of either word).

⁹ Cf. Georg Beer, *Der Text des Buches Hiob untersucht* (Marburg: N.G. Elwert, 1897), 63; Henry S. Gehman, “The Theological Approach of the Greek Translator of Job 1-15,” *JBL* 68 (1949), 231–40, 237; Maria Gorea, *Job repensé ou trahi? Omissions et raccourcis de la Septante* (Paris: Gabalda, 2007), 23. Why the content of V.4a should have been considered offensive to God, but not the content of V.4b, is not explained by Beer or Gehman. Gorea thinks that העיני בשר “eyes of the flesh” might have been considered an anthropomorphism and thus eliminated, but this is hardly the case: OG reads ὥσπερ βροτὸς “like a mortal”, which is only slightly less anthropomorphic.

¹⁰ For a thorough critique of the notion of theological omissions in OG Job, see Harry M. Orlinsky, “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job III: On the Matter of Anthropomorphisms, Anthropopathisms, and Euphemisms,” *HUCA* 30 (1959), 153–67.

¹¹ Cf. Natalio Fernández Marcos, “The Septuagint Reading of the Book of Job,” in *The Book of Job*, ed. Willem A. M. Beuken, BEThL 114 (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 251–66: 263.

¹² While the diplomatic edition of Rahlfs does not have an asterisk here, Ziegler added it on the basis of manuscripts 255-740 and the Syrohexapla. Cf. Albert Pietersma, “Review

^{6a} ἔα δέ, ἄνθρωπος σαπρία ^{6b} *καὶ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου σκώληξ	^{6a} אף כִּי־אנוש רמה ^{6b} ובן־אדם תולעה
^{6a} But alas, a human being is rot! ^{6b} * and the son of a human a worm	^{6a} How much less a mortal, who is a maggot, ^{6b} And a human being, who is a worm!

The word σαπρία (“rottenness, putridity”) occurs six times in OG Job. Four times, it renders רמה (“maggot, worm”), as is the case here.¹³ As is the case with βροτός, ἄνθρωπος is used to translate אנוש (Job 4:13; 5:17; 7:1, 17; 14:19; 33:15, 16, 26, 27; 37:7, 24) as well as אדם (5:7; 7:20; 20:4, 29; 21:4; 27:13; 28:28; 33:17, 23; 34:11). Since ἔα renders אף in Job 15:16, too, we can safely conclude that 25:6 in the OG is a rendering of 25:6a in the Hebrew. The second colon of the synonymous parallelism is a minus. The literary structure of the Hebrew text of c.25 makes it very unlikely that the verse was later expanded from a mono- to a bicolon. The 2nd-century BCE Aramaic translation of Job found in Qumran can be cited as additional evidence for the MT reading.¹⁴ It is thus very likely that the OG minus in v.6b was created by the translator. Since both cola in the Hebrew share a significantly overlapping semantic range (בן־אדם—אנוש; רמה—תולעה), a more concise diction could well be a motive for this. Based on these examples, to which many more could be added, we can conclude that avoiding the reproduction of synonymous parallelisms was a norm the translators adhered to. While they sometimes opted for different strategies, omitting synonymous lines clearly was a part of their repertoire.

The idea that these omissions are due to the translator of OG Job aiming for a more straight-lined, less repetitive text than his source text is by no means new. It was championed, for instance, by Gillis Gerleman, who claimed the text was shortened for “chiefly stylistic reasons”¹⁵ and “that the translator had been trying to weed out what he considered to be the too abundant

of Joseph Ziegler, *Iob*,” *JBL* 104 (1985): 305–11; 311. Gentry, *Asterisked Materials*, 24–6, has corroborated the argument on the basis of the translation technique of both OG Job and the asterisked materials, citing a) the employment of standard equivalents of the translator of the asterisked materials (e.g., rendering of γ with καί (typical for the asterisked materials, while OG mostly uses δέ); and b) the pattern of OG to either variate (11:12; 14:10; 32:21) or abbreviate (16:21; 34:11; 35:8; 36:25; 37:7) when two Hebrew terms for “man” occur within a parallelism.

¹³ Cf. Job 7:5; 17:14; 21:26. The other cases cannot be related to a direct equivalent in the Hebrew (Job 2:9c; 8:16).

¹⁴ Cf. 11Q10 IX 9, see Florentino García Martínez, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, and Adam S. van der Woude, “11QtargumJob,” in *Qumran Cave 11, II: 11Q2-18, 11Q20-31*, ed. idem, DJD 23 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 79–180: 105.

¹⁵ Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint, I: Book of Job* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1946), 22.

flora of parallel and synonymous sentences.”¹⁶ While this hypothesis is fairly convincing, we yet lack a context in which such an approach was considered acceptable. As Marieke Dhont has shown, OG Job should be understood first and foremost as a part of the Jewish-Greek literary polysystem.¹⁷ Within this polysystem, however, the approach witnessed in OG Job is unusual: Not only does the highly influential translation of Psalms¹⁸ keep synonymous parallelism intact; texts like Wisdom of Solomon were also composed *in Greek* using this literary device.¹⁹ The fact that OG Job keeps some synonymous parallelisms intact suggests that it could have been acceptable to keep them all. Within the context of the Jewish translations from Hebrew into Greek, minuses that consist of entire cola and are not the result of a reading in the source text are extremely rare.²⁰ Dhont suggests that the tendency of the translator of OG Job to shorten his text “might be taken as an indication of the incorporation of literary ideals from the broader Hellenistic system into Jewish literature” and refers to the practice of paraphrasis in Hellenistic education.²¹ While paraphrasis is certainly one element of the translator’s repertoire, the reproduction of most of the source text with occasional omissions of one colon or more in my view has to be explained

¹⁶ Gerleman, *Studies*, 23. Cf. Gorea, *Job repensé ou trahi?*, 226; and Karl V. Kutz, “The Old Greek of Job: A Study in Early Biblical Exegesis,” PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1997, 74–6.

¹⁷ See Dhont, *Style and Context*, 61–93. Polysystem Theory is a theoretical framework developed by Itamar Even-Zohar with which systems of both translated and non-translated literature are conceptualized as dynamic entities subject to diachronic change and synchronic variation. For the theoretical framework, cf. Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Theory,” *Poetics Today* 11 (1990): 9–26; for its application to LXX studies, see also Dries De Crom, “A Polysystemic Perspective on Ancient Hebrew-Greek Translation,” *JAJ* 11 (2020): 163–99.

¹⁸ Homer Heater, *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job*, CBQ.MS 11 (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982), 88–89, demonstrates that the Greek Psalter was known to the translators of OG Job. On the formative importance of the Greek Psalter, see, e.g., Eberhard Bons, “Der Einfluss des Septuaginta-Psalter auf die jüdisch-hellenistische Gebetsprache: Beispiele aus der Septuaginta und der zwischentestamentlichen Literatur,” in *Identität und Sprache: Prozesse jüdischer und christlicher Identitätsbildung im Rahmen der Antike*, ed. Florian Wilk, BThSt 174 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 115–38.

¹⁹ Cf. Dhont, *Style and Context*, 78–79.

²⁰ For instance, the minuses in OG Isaiah discussed by Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses*, SCS 61 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), usually consist of one or two words. However, van der Voorm-Croughs does list some 30 cases of two synonymous clauses in the Hebrew corresponding to only one in the OG (*ibid.*, 191–4), but in most cases proposes text-critical reasons (e.g., homoioteleuton) for these minuses.

²¹ Dhont, *Style and Context*, 331. For a sample of paraphrases of Homer in papyri and other documentary evidence from the 1st to 7th c. CE, see José A. Fernández Delgado, “Paráfrasis Homéricas en papiros, tablillas y óstraka,” *Exemplaria Classica* 15 (2011): 3–45.

otherwise. For an explanation of this remarkable feature of OG Job, I suggest we turn our attention outside of the LXX corpus and look at the wider context of Ptolemaic Alexandria.

3. ALEXANDRIA, HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP, AND THE SEPTUAGINT

The translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek is often located in Ptolemaic Egypt, more specifically, in Alexandria. This is commonly held at least for the translation of the Torah, as well as several other books including Job, which is often dated in the late 2nd or early 1st c. BCE.²² The creation of the Greek Pentateuch is, in fact, connected with the *Mouseion*, the Library, and the Ptolemaic King at Alexandria by the *Letter of Aristeas*. While the historical value of the *Letter's* account of the events surrounding the translation is very much debatable, recent scholarship on the *Letter* has focused on its narrative and what it can tell us about the environment it was produced in.²³ One of the more interesting developments here is the renewed focus on the relationship between Homeric scholarship, centered around the Library, and Jewish exegesis in the city.

Scholars have long noted that the *Letter of Aristeas* uses terms associated with Homeric scholarship to describe the translation of the Torah.²⁴ Maren Niehoff in particular has demonstrated that while the *Letter of Aristeas* is taking a rather sceptic position towards scholarly methods developed for Homeric exegesis at the *Mouseion*, Jewish scholars such as Demetrius the Chronographer or Aristobulos made use of them from the 2nd c. BCE onwards.²⁵ For the LXX translations, most scholars have been reluctant in

²² For the placement of Job in Alexandria, see Claude E. Cox, "The Historical, Social, and Literary Context of Old Greek Job," in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Leiden, 2004*, ed. Melvin K.H. Peters, SCS 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 105–16; Johann Cook, "The Provenance of the Old Greek Job," in *XIV Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Helsinki, 2010*, ed. Melvin K.H. Peters, SCS 59 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2013), 73–92.

²³ Cf. Erich S. Gruen, "The Letter of Aristeas and the Cultural Context of the Septuagint," in *Die Septuaginta—Texte, Kontext, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006*, ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus, WUNT 219 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 134–56: 135–6.

²⁴ Günther Zuntz, "Aristeas Studies II: Aristeas on the Translation of the Torah," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 4 (1959): 109–26; Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (London: Routledge, 2003); Maren Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 19–37. See Ep. Arist. §302, 310–11.

²⁵ Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship*, 123–7, ascribes a more positive view towards Homeric scholarship to the *Letter*.

proposing clear influence of Alexandrian scholarly practices,²⁶ and those who do often hint more generally in that direction.²⁷ While we have to be cautious to extrapolate later exegetical practices onto the earlier translation of the Pentateuch, the study of Niehoff has shown that at least some Jewish authors from the 2nd c. BCE on were acquainted with Homeric scholarship and made use of its methods and literary theories. Given the closeness in time and space, I hold that some of the scholarly methods may have influenced the translators of OG Job. I will aim to demonstrate this by looking at one particular method of Alexandrian scholarship—the identification of ‘spurious’ verses in ancient texts—and then compare it to the abbreviation of synonymous parallelisms.

4. TEXTUAL AND LITERARY CRITICISM IN ALEXANDRIA: THE CASE OF ATHETESIS

A central focus of Alexandrian scholarship was the practice of textual criticism, necessitated by the many variant readings which had developed in more than half a millennium of transmission.²⁸ One product of the search for the correct text was the ἔκδοσις (*ekdosis*), a kind of annotated edition marked with critical signs. The textual problems marked by the signs were then discussed in a commentary, ὑπομνήματα (*hypomnemata*).²⁹ This system

²⁶ Studies that engage with possible scholarly influences on individual translations include Ronald L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, JSJSup 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Martin Meiser, “Theologische Anmerkungen in alexandrinischer Homerphilologie und theologische Korrekturen in der Septuaginta,” in *Worte der Weissagung: Studien zu Septuaginta und Johannesoffenbarung*, ed. Johannes de Vries and Julian Elschenbroich, ABG 47 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2014), 108–36; Natalio Fernández Marcos, “The Greek Pentateuch and the Scholarly Milieu of Alexandria,” *Semitica et Classica* 2 (2009), 81–9.

²⁷ Cf., e.g., Martin Rösel, *Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung: Studien zur Genesis-Septuaginta*, BZAW 223 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994), 257–60, for whom harmonizations and disambiguations of difficult passages point to “ein geistiges Klima...im Umkreis der Einrichtungen des Museion und der Bibliothek” (*ibid.*, 257).

²⁸ On the early transmission of the Homeric text, see Martin L. West, *Studies in the Text and Transmission of the Iliad* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2001), 3–32.

²⁹ While the grammarians, especially Aristarchus, propagated their Homeric text, the commentary was only aimed at readers interested in philological matters. According to Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 218, the signs in the *ekdosis* refer to a lemma in the *hypomnemata* marked in the same manner. Cf. Francesca Schironi, “The Ambiguity of Signs: Critical Σημεῖα from Zenodotus to Origen,” in *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters*, ed. Maren Niehoff (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 87–112, 94, for a reconstruction of this model.

was first used in Alexandria by Zenodotus³⁰, probably the first librarian, who introduced the ὀβελός (*obelus*), a horizontal line, with which lines of questionable authenticity were marked.³¹ This process is called ἀθέτησις (*athetesis*), lit. “setting aside”. However, marking a line as questionable did not mean it was deleted: Athetized passages remained in the text, but the reader was alerted of the possibility of them being interpolations. On the other hand, other lines were in fact deleted from the text altogether: After being marked in another way—crossed out or underlined, in parentheses, or even washed off with a small sponge—they were not copied with the rest of the text.³² This practice was commonplace in ancient book culture, where copying errors were almost unavoidable. Further development, including new signs and refined methods, took place under Zenodotus’ successors, Aristophanes of Byzantium and especially Aristarchus of Samothrace, who headed the Library from around 175–145 BCE and whose scholarship proved particularly influential.³³ Whereas none of the editions of Zenodotus, Aristophanes or Aristarchus is extant, many of their readings survive in the corpus of scholia, mainly the scholia of Codex Venetus A (10th century CE).³⁴ In the following, I will focus on the *atheteses* of Aristarchus in particular.³⁵

As Francesca Schironi writes, for Aristarchus, *atheteses* were never allowed to cause a disturbing of narrative, metric, or syntax.³⁶ This was due to the fact that Aristarchus wanted to purge the text of the Iliad of interpolations he believed had occurred. Furthermore, in the scholia all cases of *athetesis* are argued from a perspective immanent to the text.³⁷ A line could only be

³⁰ Franco Montanari, “*Ekdosis*: A Product of the Ancient Scholarship,” in: *Brill’s Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship: Volume 2: Between Theory and Practice*, ed. Franco Montanari, Stephanos Matthaios and Antonios Rengakos (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 641–72: 655–6.

³¹ Schironi, “The Ambiguity of Signs,” 89.

³² Montanari, “*Ekdosis*,” 651–5.

³³ See Hartmut Erbse, “Über Aristarchs Iliasausgaben,” *Hermes* 87 (1959), 275–303: 302–3. Aristarchus’ working text had a decisive influence on the transmission of the Homeric text, especially the so-called “Vulgate”, from 150 BCE on, see Francesca Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 42–3.

³⁴ See Eleanor Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship: A Guide to Finding, Reading, and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises, from Their Beginnings to the Byzantine Period*, Classical Resources Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 18–23. The most important edition not only of A-scholia, but also of the bT- and D-scholia is Hartmut Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (Scholia Vetera)*, 7 vols. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969–1988).

³⁵ Cf. especially the studies of Dietrich Lührs, *Untersuchungen zu den Athetesen Aristarchs in der Ilias und zu ihrer Behandlung im Corpus der exegetischen Scholien* (Hildesheim: Olms – Weidmann, 1992), and now Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*.

³⁶ Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 447–8.

³⁷ They may have also been motivated by the verses in question missing in some manuscripts, but this is never listed in the scholia as a reason in its own right. On the debate

considered spurious if it did not agree with the character of the Homeric epics, which were meticulously studied. The main presupposition among Homeric scholars was that Homer was the most perfect poet—or ποιητῆς φιλότεχνος³⁸—so his work did not contain inconsistencies, and he only included what was necessary and believable.³⁹ If this was evidently not the case, one had to suspect textual corruption. Athetesis was often applied by Aristarchus in the cases of lines deemed repetitive, but also to inconsistencies within the poems, or passages considered unsuitable or unbelievable.⁴⁰ I will now focus on the στίχοι περισσοί (*stichoi perissoi*), since they in particular may help shed light on the treatment of synonymous parallelism in OG Job. Two examples can help us illuminate the grammarians’ way of thinking.⁴¹

For instance, one case of athetesis concerns Il. 21.470-1, where the narrator refers to Apollon:⁴²

<p>⁴⁷⁰ τὸν δὲ κασιγνήτη μάλα νείκεσκε, πότνια θηρῶν, ⁴⁷¹ Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρη, καὶ ὄνειδειον φάτο μῦθον·</p>	<p>⁴⁷⁰ But his sister rebuked him harshly, the queen of the wild beasts, ⁴⁷¹ Artemis of the fields, and spoke reviling words:⁴³</p>
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V. 471 does not contain additional information past the one already given in the line before. Apollon’s sister, the πότνια θηρῶν “queen of the wild beasts”, is identified in the following line with Artemis, the huntress (ἀγροτέρη). The terms μάλα νείκεσκε and ὄνειδειον φάτο μῦθον also express the same idea, namely, that Artemis chides Apollon. Such repetitions are quite commonplace in an epic poem in the composition of which oral performance

whether or not the grammarians actually collated manuscripts and compared variants, see Franco Montanari, “Aristarchus’ Conjectures (once) again,” in *Lemmata: Beiträge zum Gedenken an Christos Theodoridis*, ed. Maria Tziatzi et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 119–29: 119–20.

³⁸ Cf. Dirk M. Schenkeveld, “Aristarchus and Ὅμηρος Φιλότεχνος: Some Fundamental Ideas of Aristarchus on Homer as a Poet,” *Mnemosyne* 23 (1970), 162–78: 175–7.

³⁹ On the Aristotelian background of this view of literature, see Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 413–43. Special attention to inconsistencies is also reflected by the early Jewish reception of Homeric scholarship in Demetrius, see Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 38–57.

⁴⁰ Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 452–81.

⁴¹ Athetesis due to repetitiveness is also attested for Aristarchus’ predecessors. See Klaus Nickau, *Untersuchungen zur textkritischen Methode des Zenodotos von Ephesos*, Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 16 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1977), 123–32; Martin L. West, “Aristophanes of Byzantium’s Text of Homer,” *Classical Philology* 112 (2017), 20–44: 22.

⁴² Cf. Lührs, *Athetesen Aristarchs*, 68–69; Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 465.

⁴³ The translations of Homer are from Homer, *Iliad*, trans. A. T. Murray and William F. Wyatt, 2 vols., LCL 170-171 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924–1925).

played a large role; this original *Sitz im Leben* however was no longer present in Ptolemaic Alexandria.⁴⁴ Thus, the scholion on this line reads:

<p>Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρη <καὶ ὀνειδίειον φάτο μῦθον>: ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι περισσὸς <μετὰ τὸν> „τὸν δὲ κασιγνήτη μάλα νείκεσε πότνια θηρῶν“ (Φ 470). τίς δὲ κυνηγετικὴ θεὸς εἰ μὴ ἡ Ἄρτεμις;</p>	<p>Artemis of the fields <and spoke reviling words>: (The line) is athetized, because it is superfluous (after): “But his sister rebuked him harshly, the queen of the wild beasts” (21.470), since who is the Goddess leading hunting dogs, if not Artemis? (Schol. II. 21.471a)</p>
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Every reader of Homer knows that the term *πότνια θηρῶν* “queen of wild beasts” refers to Artemis, and that she likes to hunt. In Aristarchus’ view, Homer would not detain his readers with unnecessary clarifications (Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρη) or repetitions (καὶ ὀνειδίειον φάτο μῦθον).

A second example for this is Aristarchus’ treatment of II. 8.527-8, where Hector speaks to the Trojans (cf. 8.496) and tells them that he is praying (εὐχομαι, 8.526) to Zeus that he may:

<p>⁵²⁷ ἐξελάαν ἐνθένδε κύνας κηρεσσιφορήτους, ⁵²⁸ οὓς κῆρες φορέουσι μελαινάων ἐπὶ νηῶν</p>	<p>⁵²⁷ drive out from here these dogs borne by the fates, ⁵²⁸ whom the fates brought on their black ships. (Hom. II. 8.527-8)</p>
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The Achaeans are here insulted as dogs which were brought to Troy by deities of death (κῆρες). The relative clause in v.528 repeats this claim by etymologizing the adjective κηρεσσιφορήτους.⁴⁵ This verse was not only questioned by Aristarchus, but also by his predecessor Zenodotus:

<p>οὓς κῆρες φορέουσι <μελαινάων ἐπὶ νηῶν>: ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι περισσὸς ἐν γὰρ τῷ “κηρεσσιφορήτους” (Θ 527) τὸ αὐτὸ συντόμως εἴρηκεν. ὁ δὲ Ζηνόδοτος οὐδὲ ἔγραψεν αὐτόν.</p>	<p>Whom the fates brought <on their black ships >: (The line) is athetized because it is superfluous: for in the word “borne by the fates” (κηρεσσιφορήτους) (8.527) the same thing has been said in a concise manner. Also, Zenodotus did not write the verse, either. (Schol. II. 8.528)</p>
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The main reasoning for questioning the authenticity of v.528 is not Zenodotus’ authority, but that the verse is considered superfluous: Homer had

⁴⁴ Cf. Schenkeveld, “Aristarchus and Ὀμηρος φιλότεχνος,” 177; Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 230–1.

⁴⁵ Lührs, *Athetesen Aristarchs*, 95.

already concisely (συντόμως) said what he was trying to convey, so there was no need to expound on it in almost the same words. Interestingly, the note that Zenodotus “did not write” (οὐδὲ ἔγραψεν) the verse indicates not athetesis, but outright deletion of the line.⁴⁶ In both examples, the term *περισσός* is used to describe a line giving repetitive information. This was incongruent with the Aristotelian idea held by the Alexandrian scholars that Homer would be concise in his diction.⁴⁷ Where he was not, scholars tended to ascribe the verses in question to later interpolators, and athetized them.

5. CONCLUSION: HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP AND OG JOB

The methods of textual and literary criticism of the Alexandrian grammarians show both an enormous effort at understanding the Homeric poems and an interest in restoring the original text. For this, the grammarians worked with literary theories in their mind which were influenced both by the results of their philological studies and by prior conceptions of what constitutes good literature. Whether the OG translation of Job, on the other hand, can be described as a (partly) text-critical endeavour, is a more difficult issue.⁴⁸ After all, the differences from the Hebrew not only consist of minuses, but also anaphoric translations, double translations, and even two longer pluses to the text (2:9a-e; 42:17a-e). Occasionally, elements of an omitted line have left their traces in the translated text.⁴⁹ However, the translators of OG Job did not have to pay attention to a metrical structure like the epic hexametre; therefore they likely could take more liberties in abbreviating the text.

Recently, scholars have emphasized that OG Job is a translation that attempts to emulate the source text in poetic quality.⁵⁰ But as a translated text, not only the impact of the source text, but also the prospective function

⁴⁶ On Zenodotus' treatment of the verse, see Nickau, *Methode des Zenodotos*, 127–8.

⁴⁷ Francesca Schironi, “Theory into Practice: Aristotelian Principles in Aristarchean Philology,” *Classical Philology* 104 (2009), 279–316. Cf. Schenkeveld, “Aristarchus and Ὁμηρος Φιλότεχνος”.

⁴⁸ Cf. Dhont, *Style and Context*, 330–1. However, Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 112–29, identifies elements of textual criticism in biblical scholars refuted by Philo.

⁴⁹ Cf. Job 17:16b (Gorea, *Job repensé ou trahi?*, 50–51, argues that the word יחד of v.16b influences the OG rendering μετ' ἐμοῦ); 39:27.

⁵⁰ Theo A.W. van der Louw, “Did the Septuagint Translators Really Intend the Greek Text as it is?,” in *Die Septuaginta—Orte und Intentionen: 5. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX. D), Wuppertal 24.-27. Juli 2014*, ed. Siegfried Kreuzer, Martin Meiser and Marcus Sigismund, WUNT 361 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 449–66; 461–2; Jessie Rogers, “Theology and Translation Technique in the Old Greek Version of Job 28,” in *Toward a Theology of the Septuagint*, ed. Johann Cook and Martin Rösel, SCS 74 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2020), 201–24.

within the literary system of Jewish Greek literature would have played a role in this respect. Here, literary theories that were in vogue in contemporary debates could exert a decisive impact. Given that practices of Alexandrian scholarship are applied by Alexandrian Jews like Demetrius and Aristobulos from the late second c. BCE on, it is conceivable that translators working at the same time and place would have come into contact with them. The translator's treatment of Job 10:4; 25:6, as discussed above, shows strong resemblance to some *atheteses* by the Alexandrian grammarians, most likely due to the shared conception that certain texts required a concise diction (*συντομία*). While not changing the core plot and content of the speeches, the minuses introduced by the translator can be viewed as a departure from the Hebrew model of synonymous parallelism and, from a polysystemic perspective on Hebrew-Greek translation, as influence of peripheral elements.⁵¹ This points to the incorporation of Hellenistic Greek literary ideals in the process of translating the book of Job and adapting it to an audience of Greek-speaking Jews—and beyond.⁵² Increased interaction with the methods of the Homeric scholars can explain some features of Old Greek Job. While the former aimed to restore the original text, the work of the translator is directed at an audience sharing a specific literary taste. However, further research on possible parallels between translational practices in Job and Homeric exegesis could help illuminate both the nature of this text and Jewish interaction with contemporary scholarship in Alexandria.

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⁵¹ Cf. De Crom, "A Polysystemic Perspective," 186: "Peripheral phenomena, on the other hand, are considered to be less representative of systemic identity, utilizing procedures that are considered as outdated, *avant-garde*, alien or experimental."

⁵² On OG Job's audience, see Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *Reading Between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies*, BTS 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 424–8. Boyd-Taylor describes the intended readers as "literate and cosmopolitan" Jews as well as possibly "non-Jewish participants with a shared literary interest" (*ibid.*, 426).