Psalm 150 according to the Septuagint: integrating translation and tradition criticism into modern Septuagint exegesis[*]

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ABSTRACT

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The attempt to detect Theology in the linguistic deviations and divergencies of the Septuagint (LXX) with the Massoretic Text (MT), presupposes the use of certain exegetical methods. Of course, this implies methods to be used by the modern Septuagint scholar and not the hypothetical translation technique(s) used by the LXX-translators. Therefore, I suggest the scholar should integrate the historical critical method – in a balanced manner, without the incriminating questioning of long outdated historicism - into the modern LXX-exegesis. In this way, I think, we have the opportunity to verify or falsify hypothetical exegetical practices probably used by the LXX-translators and to discover where we are really able to talk about genuine Theology in the LXX – in contrast to the MT. The LXX-Psalm 150, in comparison to other related Old Testament texts, was chosen to exemplify this suggestion.

A INTRODUCTION

Psalm 150 is well known to us, not only because of its contemporary liturgical use, but also as a result of its reception history in the New Testament, especially through the inclusion of the Septuagint reference ἐν κυμβάλοις ἀλαλαγμοῦ (v. 5b) in the Pauline Hymn of Love in the form of κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον (1 Cor 13:1). The LXX-phrase does not only refer to music instruments, but also to feelings of extreme joy and exaltation experienced during the divine worship, whereas its Pauline adoption, in contrast, describes the wrong attitude of mind.

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Arguing on the basis of the formal structure of the MT-Ps 150, Hermann Gunkel regarded it as "the extended introduction of a hymn" ("die erweiterte Einführung eines Hymns": 1926[4]:622. cf. 1933 §2,8), although it is the closing Psalm of the whole Psalter. Gunkel's opinion is based on the observation that several Psalms, which can be characterized as hymns, are introduced by a call or a series of calls to praise (הללו־יה). However, it cannot explain why this specific Psalm appears independently, and only based on a single verb, namely הלל repeated 12 or rather 13[2] times. Is it pure coincidence or was this the intention of the author or redactor? And if there had been hidden intentions behind this specific text structure, how can we now gain access to them?

It usually has been claimed that Psalm 150 was originally written, not for closing the Psalter as a literary composition, but for liturgical purposes, in order to justify the praise of God by reflecting briefly through key-words on the significance of the divine worship. It furthermore pointed out who and how one must praise Yahweh, without giving a full explanation. According to this opinion, its position at the end of the Psalter could be seen as a redactional choice and decision; thus not in accordance with the real intention of the poet and its original life-setting (*Sitz im Leben*). Brueggemann (1987:298) claims that "it becomes an ideology which asks for assent without giving any reasons related to experience". This opinion betrays the expectation that not only prose, but also poetry should necessarily provide logical argumentative features. But if Psalm 150 is really "a doxological response to earlier theological content", as Allen (2002:405) assumes – apart from the fact that its hypothetically original life-setting could be another one – then the task of the exegete would be to reconstruct the kind of theological questions or explanations this specific Psalm responded to.

The best method to trace the theological traditions presupposed in this Psalm is, in my view, to first analyse its linguistic inventory in considering the direct reference texts, as well as other texts which share similar formal and factual characteristics. This analysis is done in order to understand their horizon and to reconstruct their theological expression and meaning. This kind of tradition critical procedures was also undertaken by the LXX translators before or

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2   See app.crit.

even while translating the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, with the purpose to realize the author's theological conception. It furthermore also took into consideration different ways and means of expressing and responding appropriately to the needs of the Greek translation.

While the Hebrew form of Psalm 150, according to BHS, has been analysed several times, no comprehensive analyses of the LXX version have been done in order to recognize and reconstruct the threads of the LXX translation process. This translation has neither been interpreted by comparing it to its Hebrew source text, nor has it been evaluated independently as an original text *in its own right* (Cox 1987). In this paper I aim to explicate some important aspects with regard to Psalm 150 as the final certificate of the theology of the Psalter, according to the LXX. Of course, it is not my intention to give an elaborate explanation of every possible word used in this Greek Psalm, but I will focus on representative words functioning as examples, which will give us a better understanding of the text's tradition-historical horizon and its theological atmosphere.

However, there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding the appropriate method(s) to analyse and interpret the LXX. According to Cox, Cook and Lust (1987) one should speak about exegesis *of* or rather *in* the books of the LXX based on the ideological background of the translators and their religious trends in relation to the theology of another translated Old Testament text. It has been assumed that this kind of exegesis could probably be proved in a translation-technical manner on the basis of small quantitative and qualitative deviations and divergences found in critical editions of the Greek and Hebrew Bible. Instead, I would advocate the use of historical criticism[3] – in a balanced manner, without the incriminating questioning of a long outdated historicism – when interpreting the LXX as an independent text in its own right, as well as the fact that it is a translation of a lost Hebrew original. Furthermore, one should

3   The historical critical method(s) should not only be seen as a scientific achievement of the German Protestant Theology, but as an achievement of universal Old Testament scholarship. It was perfectionalized in the 20th century, in different grades and ways, by scholars from different churches, confessions and research areas from all over the world. It is the developed version of exegetical criticism also applied to explain biblical texts in the Hellenistic-Roman period by Jewish Biblical scholars, as well as in the Byzantine Era of the Antiochian Church Fathers.

also take into consideration the "potentials and limitations" of modern translation criticism (cf. Reiß 1971; 2000). It is important to take note that translation criticism is not identical with the so-called description of the translation technique, or the manner in which the translation was done (*Übersetzungsweise*), as suggested by Ilmary Soisalon-Soininen (the founder of the Finnish School of Septuagint Studies). It is thus not a descriptive method of the grammatical, syntactical and stylistic, statistically ascertainable equations between the Greek translation and its Hebrew original source. This linguistic method has already proved itself[4] to be insufficient in order to investigate ideological trends; it is thus inadequate in order to write a theology of the language of the LXX[5]. Because it is not enough to only know how a message had been transferred, it is of the greatest value to recognize the purpose of the translation. Translation criticism analyses and interprets the translator's main intension, in comparison to the author's purpose, by also taking into account every possible ideological and theological impulse of a given translation.

B SEPTUAGINT PSALM 150. TRANSLATION CRITICAL REMARKS

1 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LXX AND MT

The critical apparatus of the *Septuaginta Gottingensia* by Alfred Rahlfs[6], the "intellectual father of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen in Göttingen" (Smend 1990:332-344), provides no significant readings or variants which would substantially change the understanding of the text. The readings or variants are simply orthographical errors, and therefore do not need to be taken into consideration. When comparing the translation of the LXX (in my own delimitation) to the MT, I use the Vulgate as a reference text. In this specific instance, the Vulgate reflects an old translation habit on the African soil; Jerome did not always draw up a new translation, but he simply adopted the translation of his Old Latin predecessors. The subsequent division of the LXX, MT and Vulgate text in sentences follows the paradigm of the division done in Wolfgang Richter's

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4   Aejmelaeus (2001).

5   Dafni (2002:315-328).

6   Cf. Rahlfs (1907) and Pietersma (2000:12-32).

Biblia Hebraica transcripta. The proven model of sentence division (*Satzeinteilung*) has already been transferred from the Hebrew Old Testament to the LXX studies, because of its inestimable value for exact comparisons between the MT and the LXX, as well as the description of their quantitative and qualitative deviations and divergences.

	LXX	V		MT
1aJ	Ἀλληλούια!	alleluia	1a	הללו יה
a	Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Θεὸν	laudate Dominum	b	הללו ־אל
	ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ,	in sanctis eius		בקדשו
b	αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	c	הללוהו
	ἐν στερεώματι δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ.	in firmanento virtutis eius.		ברקיע עזו :
2a	Αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	2a	הללוהו
	ἐν ταῖς δυναστείαις αὐτοῦ,	in virtutibus eius		בגבורתיו
b	αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	b	הללוהו
	κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος	secundum multitudinem		כרב
	τῆς μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ.	magnitudines eius.		גדלו :
3a	Αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	3a	הללוהו
	ἐν ἤχῳ σάλπιγγος,	in sono tubae		בתקע שופר
b	αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	b	הללוהו
	ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ καὶ κιθάρᾳ.	in psalterio et cithara		בנבל וכנור :
4a	Αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	4a	הללוהו
	ἐν τυμπάνῳ καὶ χορῷ,	in tympano et choro		בתף ומחול
b	αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	b	הללוהו
	ἐν χορδαῖς καὶ ὀργάνῳ.	in chordis et organo		במנים ועוגב :
5a	Αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	5a	הללוהו
	ἐν κυμβάλοις εὐήχοις,	in cymbalis bene sonantibus		בצלצלי ־שמע
b	αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν	laudate eum	b	הללוהו
	ἐν κυμβάλοις ἀλλαλαγμοῦ.	in cymbalis iubilationis		בצלצלי תרועה :
6a	Πᾶσα πνοὴ.	omnis spiritus	6a	כל הנשמה
	αἰνεσάτω τὸν Κύριον	laudet Dominum		תהלל יה
aJ	Ἀλληλούια!		b	הללו ־יה :

But let me first give you an overview of the possible quantitative and qualitative differences between the MT and the LXX.

There are only two examples in Psalm 150, as given in the textcritical apparatus of BHS, where it seems that the Hebrew source

text (*Vorlage*) of the LXX was quantitatively different from the given consonantal Hebrew Text (MT):1) In 2b the LXX reads ברב (cf. Peshitta) and is translated into κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος. 2) In LXX 6a codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus (4th century CE) occurs – in the form of an interjection – the transcription ἀλληλούια while in codices Alexandrinus (5th century CE) and Veronensis (Latin text-type), in the Lucianic recension, the Coptic translation and Peshitta, as well as in Hieronymus it does not occur.

Apart from this textual conspicuousness, the following qualitative differences are noteworthy:1) The transformation of the status constructus בצלצלי־שמע in an adjective connection ἐν κυμβάλοις εὐήχοις which is not a typical translation of the status constructus, at least in this specific Psalm text. 2) The LXX omission or rather the MT addition of the article ה־ in 6a: LXX πᾶσα πνοὴ instead of MT כל הנשמה (πᾶσα ἡ πνοή). Both of them are undoubtedly useful for explaining the grammatical, syntactical and stylistic equations between the MT and LXX, but in this certain case they do not offer any evidence of what might be characterized as a free translation or deliberate exegesis implying a certain ideological or theological tension of the translator. Even the variable translation of הלל II (Pi.)[7] – at the beginning and the end of the Psalm ἀλληλούια[8], and in the middle of the text αἰνεῖτε[9] – might be helpful for the form-, redaction- and theological-critical setting of the text, but they do not necessarily imply a different Hebrew source text[10].

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7   MT-Pss 10:31; 22:23. 24. 27; 35:18; 44:9; 56:5. 11 (2x); 63:6; 69:31. 35; 74:21; 84:5; 102:19; 104:35; 105:45; 106:1. 48; 107:32; 109:30; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1 (3x). 9; 115:17. 18. 19; 116:19; 117:1. 2; 119:164. 175; 135:1 (3x). 3. 21; 145:2; 146:1 (2x). 2. 10; 147:1. 12. 20; 148:1 (3x). 2 (2x). 3 (2x). 4. 5. 7. 13. 14. 149:1. 3. 9; 150:1 (3x). 2 (2x). 3 (2x). 4 (2x). 5 (2x). 6 (2x).

8   LXX-Pss 104:1; 105:1; 106:1; 110:1; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 114:1; 115:1; 116:1; 117:1; 118:1; 134:1; 135:1; 145:1; 146:1; 147:1; 148:1; 149:1; 150:1.6. It is a characteristic feature only of LXX-Ps 150 to begin and end with ἀλληλούια.

9   LXX-Pss 99:4; 112:1 2x; 112:3; 116:1; 134:1 (2x); 146:1; 148:1 (2x). 2 (2x). 3 (2x). 4. 7; 150:1 (2x). 2 (2x). 3 (2x). 4 (2x). 5 (2x).

10   The Greek equivalents στερέωμα δυνάμεως, δυναστεία and μεγαλωσύνη for the Hebrew divine attributes רקיע עוז, גבורה and גדלה, as well as the renderings of the musical instruments, also seem to provide fertile ground for intertextual relationships to other Old Testamental

On the interpretative level, there is a good reason to assume a theologically motivated exegesis in the rendering ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ (LXX-150:1a) for the Hebrew בקדשו ("in his sanctuary"), where we can hardly see a virtual evidence of a scriptio defectiva. This kind of understanding of MT-Psalm 150:1b is evidently not supported in the LXX, because the LXX formulation in comparison to relevant Psalms phraseology (see under C.1 & 3) allows the hypothesis of a personal interpretation of ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ which bears the impression of a God standing like a king in the middle of / among his saints, or in a metaphorical sense in their hearts, for the human heart could become God's sanctuary. Therefore, the mentioning of musical instruments illustrates the depiction of God as a king in his assembly and justifies the dedication of the whole Psalter from king David to the Lord as a divine king, an idea explicitly formulated in the extra-canonical Psalm 151.

If the above hypothesis is correct, then LXX-Psalm 150 gives a description of the heavenly, divine assembly, which is comparable to the images of LXX-Psalm 88:5, 7 and 149:1. This contrasts to the MT which gives particular importance to the earthly temple of God even if it must be seen as a symbol of his heavenly resting-place. The impact of the impressions left behind by the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (70 CE), as well as the destruction of the temple, should be seen as the background to the interpretation given by the LXX.

2   THE STRUCTURE OF THE LXX-PSALM 150
No internal criteria speak against the essential coherence and balance of the LXX Psalm. This simultaneously is a sign that the LXX translator had also made careful judgements about the literary structure, style and tone of the Hebrew Psalm before or / and while translating it, and had decided to deal with it as an integrated whole. The use of the LXX equivalent αἰνῶ for the Hebrew הלל maybe divides the text into separate thematical units, but, on the other hand, it formally guarantees the unity of the original text.

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texts, but we cannot trace them back to another Hebrew source text. Therefore, it would be meaningful to investigate these aspects in another publication.

The LXX Psalm according to codex Vaticanus, as currently edited in the Septuaginta Gottingensis by A Rahlfs[11], is introduced and closed by the interjection ἀλληλούια, which actually is a transliteration of the Hebrew הללו־יה which links the Psalm together in a formal manner. Ἀλληλούια has no other meaning in Greek as its meaning in this specific biblical context. Before the closing ἀλληλούια we find an insistent call to praise the Lord which is addressed to every human being: πᾶσα πνοή αἰνεσάτω τὸν κύριον. Because of the use of πνοή in Genesis 2:7, it seems to be the formal link in both the LXX and the MT of Psalm 150:6a. This forms an association with the divine creation of mankind: every human being is God's creation and hence the creation is called upon to praise the Creator. The remaining text is formally divided in ten short units introduced by the imperative form αἰνεῖτε.

If one takes the subject matter into consideration, it is possible to divide the Psalm in a different manner into three parts: The first part (1a-2a) is a response to the question *"where?"*, the second (2b-5b) points to *"how?"*, and the third (6a) to *"who must praise God?"*. The second part is constituted by two sub-sections: 2b refers to what is proper (seemingly) to God and 3a-5b refers to musical instruments. The order of the musical instruments is interrupted in 4a by mentioning the word χορός ("dance") and in 4b by mentioning the general terms χορδαί and ὄργανον. The LXX evaluates this stylistically. In comparison to the MT, only the transliteration ἀλληλούια seems to change the Psalm structure.

Replacing the first and the last הללה לה with the word-expression ἀλληλούια, which mentions the Greek interactive pronomen ἄλληλος, −ον, the LXX seems to imply that "all together", people and peoples, know God through his creation and his deeds in the history of the whole world and should praise him. If the intended idiomatic meaning of ἀλληλούια in this context is really "all together", then it can be assumed that the beginning of the Psalm accentuates the variety of the voices, which are all called upon to praise God; and the end emphasizes the unity of all the living beings which carry the divine נשמה – a distinguishing mark of mankind in comparison and contrast to the animals – in the praise of the Lord. This interpretation presupposes the understanding of the

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11   See critical considerations by A Pietersma (2000a:12-32).

revealed God as Creator and Lord of history and the whole world, and indicates the unity of the worship in His name.

But now the question we have to ask is what is actually the central theological idea and main intention of the Psalm according to the LXX? In my view, it depends on the interpretation of ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ in contrast to the Hebrew בקדשו. Changing a key-word or phrase can alter the whole atmosphere of the text in which the key-word or phrase is embedded, as well as the understanding of its tradition-historical horizon and its theological intention.

C   ΑΓΙΟΣ IN SEPTUAGINT PSALM 150. TRADITION-CRITICAL REMARKS

The word ἅγιος serves in the Psalms as a standard equivalent for both קֹדֶשׁ and קָדוֹשׁ. Procksch (1933:89; engl. transl. by Broniley 1964:91) states categorically that "the adjective קדוש is more fluid than the substantive קדש. Whereas קדש is a material concept with no personal element, קדוש can be used outside the place and time of the cultic (Lv. 6:9, 19ff. etc.) of persons". How one thus interprets the Hebrew בקדשו is, therefore, not only a matter of its vocalization. The Hebrew form can be translated into Greek indefinitely (without an article) into ἐν ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ, ἐν ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ or definitely into ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ or ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ respectively. All these different Greek equivalents can formally be understood as having an impersonal reference to God's sanctuary or sanctuaries, as well as referring to God's saint or saints / holy one or holy people. The Aramaic Targum provides the paraphrase מקדשיה בבית which points to the fact that the Hebrew form בקדשו must be understood as a reference to God's sanctuary. Unlike the Aramaic paraphrase, the LXX offers the rendering ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ, which was interpreted as "in sanctis" in the Vulgate, based on the so-called Psalterium Gallicanum, which is a revision of the Old Latin *re*-translation of the LXX. The critical apparatus of BHS contains no reference to another rendering of the LXX, obviously because its editors understood ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ in the sense of "in his sanctuaries" for "in his sanctuary"; they thus did not see any difference between the MT and the LXX. However, Greek native speakers reading or listening to this text do not think of "sanctuaries" but of "saints", in a similar manner as the Vulgate and its ancestor,

the so-called Psalterium Gallicanum[12] did. Greek native speakers, as well as the Vulgate and its Old Latin predecessors can be challenged for interpreting a Christian understanding of God's holiness and human holiness into the Hebrew text. On the other hand, the BHS, the lost Hebrew source text and its Greek translation, which was made by Jews, allegedly presupposed the image of God's presence in his sanctuary together with the idea of the holiness of a place. The question here is whether the idea of God's holiness and human holiness had not already been present in both the Hebrew and the Greek Bible, especially in the book of Exodus, Isaiah, as well as in the Psalms? Does this imply that only the Targum's understanding is representative for the Hebrew theological thinking? Should the LXX and Vulgate therefore be excluded from the theological discussion as inadequate?

1 ″ΑΓΙΟF IN **EXODUS**

1.1   The idea of the holiness of a place, first of all, occurs in Ex 3:5. Here it is expressed with the Hebrew קֹדֶשׁ and translated in the Septuagint with the Greek equivalent ἅγιος.

It is remarkable that the LXX-Exodus 15:11 offers the translation δεδοξασμένος ἐν ἁγίοις for the Hebrew בַּקֹּדֶשׁ נֶאְדָּר which, separated from its context and in view of the exclusivity of the temple in Jerusalem and Zion, can only be understood as "glorified in His saints/holy people". The immediate context reads as follows:

LXX	Brenton[13]	MT
a Τίς ὅμοιός σοι ἐν θεοῖς,	Who is like to thee among the gods,	מי־כמכה באלים
aV Κύριε;	O Lord?	יהוה
b Τίς ὅμοιός σοι;	Who is like to thee?,	מי־כמכה
c δεδοξασμένος ἐν ἁγίοις בקדש,	glorified in holiness,	נֶאְדָּר בָּקֹּדֶשׁ
d θαυμαστὸς ἐν δόξαις,	marvellous in glories	נורא תהלת
e ποιῶν τέρατα.	doing wonders.	עשה פלא :

Brenton follows the Hebrew text and translates into "in holiness" (ἐν ἁγιότητι), which is not at all identical with the equivalent "in saints" (ἐν ἁγίοις). "Holiness" as an abstractum refers to a divine

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12   With regard to the Vulgate, E Zenger (1997) is of the opinion that even the Hebrew text must be understood as a reference to God's holy people.

13   The popular English *re*-translation of the LXX by Brenton is here offered. Cf. also C Thomson (1808) and A Pietersma (2000).

quality, but the adjectival noun "saints" designates concrete human beings. This fact reminds us, furthermore, of other Exodus passages which explain both the meaning and conditions when a person may be characterized as a saint or a holy one. Exodus 15:13 refers to God's resting place. The Septuagint translates this into ἅγιόν σου; it namely uses singular and not plural. It is a conscious choice of a LXX-translator who knows both the theoretical and practical difference between holy people and holy resting-place.

Exodus 15:12-13 explains the meaning of "doing wonders" with two different events: a) the punishment of the sinners (12f-g) and b) the salvation of the believers in Him (13a-c):

12f	Ἐξέτεινας τὴν δεξιάν σου·	Thou strechest forth thy right hand,	נטית ימינך
g	κατέπιεν αὐτοὺς ἡ γῆ.	the earth swallowed them up.	תבלעמו ארץ :
13a	Ὡδήγησας τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου	Thou hast guided in thy righteousness	נחית בחסדך
b	τὸν λαόν σου עמך τοῦτον,	this thy people	עם־זו
bR	ὃν ἐλύτρωσω·	whom thou hast redeemed,	גאלת
c	παρεκάλεσας τῇ ἰσχύι σου	by thy strength thou hast called them	נהלת בעזך
	εἰς κατάλυμα ἅγιόν σου.	into thy holy resting-place.	אל־נוה קדשך :

The Septuagint thus thought the translation τὸν λαόν σου, which presupposes the Hebrew עַמְךָ, points out that the "holy people", the "saints" in this context, must be seen as identical only with one part of the chosen people who obey His word. The "holy resting-place" in the LXX cannot only be identified with the historical "promised land". Within the horizon of the general LXX formulation, this can also mean the future or rather the eschatological place which is provided for God's righteous. This interpretation is in agreement with the idea of God's righteousness, as is expressed in LXX-Ex 15:13a. This is in contrast to God's mercy (חסד), as is unmistakeably expressed in the MT. Thus, in the LXX-Exodus we have a well founded distinction between "holy people", expressed with a plural, and "holy place", which is expressed with a singular in relation to God's righteousness. The MT, on the other hand, presents the idea of God's holiness and mercy finding its expression in his holy resting-place, which first and foremost can be identified with the "promised land". For the reader in the Hellenistic period it, perhaps, is to be identified with the second temple.

1.2. The idea of God's "holy people" is distinctly expressed in LXX-Ex 19:6=23:22 by means of the double designation for Israel, namely βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα and ἔθνος ἅγιον. In LXX-Exodus

19:5-6 the presuppositions for the people's holiness, or rather the precondition of human participation in God's holiness, is expressed:

5aP	Καὶ νῦν	And now	וְעַתָּה
a	ἐὰν ἀκοῇ ἀκούσητε	if ye will indeed hear	אִם־שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ
	τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς[14],	my voice,	בְּקֹלִי
b	καὶ φυλάξητε τὴν διαθήκην μου,	and keep my covenant,	וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
c	ἔσεσθέ μοι	ye shall be to me	וִהְיִיתֶם לִי
	λαὸς περιούσιος	a peculiar people	סְגֻלָּה
	ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν·	above all nations;	מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים
d	ἐμὴ γάρ ἐστι πᾶσα ἡ γῆ.	for the whole earth is mine.	כִּי־לִי כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃
6a	Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἔσεσθαί μοι	And ye shall be to me	וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ־לִי
	βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα	a royal priesthood	מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים
	καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον.	and a holy nation:	וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ

Because of γῆ (v. 5d) and ἔθνος (vv. 5c & 6a) that is used in a general sense, the whole expression in v. 5-6 has a universal character. However, the most important transformation in this context is the replacement of סְגֻלָּה מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים by λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν which seems to gear up for the use of ἔθνος ἅγιον - קָדוֹשׁ גּוֹי. The question now is whether we have a Hebrew source text different from the MT, or a theologically motivated interpretation? It must be taken note of the fact that even here the λαὸς περιούσιος is not simply the chosen people, but the people who indeed obey the voice of God and keep his Covenant. In this specific sense the MT talks about a "special treasure" of God, while the LXX prefers the image of God's "property". The reason could be the fact that the adjective περιούσιος, probably a neologism, derives from περιουσία ("property"). Over and above it, the LXX distinguishes between λαός ("people") and ἔθνη ("nations"), which reminds us of the qualitative Hebrew distinction between עַם and גּוֹי. The text subsequently shows how Israel was regarded during its sojourn in Egypt, namely "a nation among others". It also shows what it can be, namely the people of God, God's property.[15] Brenton's translation "*a peculiar people above all nations*" expresses strangeness and

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14   LXX-Ex 23:22 contains a further explanation: καὶ ποιήσῃς πάντα ὅσα ἂν ἐντείλωμαί σοι (*"and if thou wilt do all the things I shall charge thee with"*).

15   This reminds us also of Hosea's thinking and terminology, as explicitly formulated in Hosea 11:9, 12.

peculiarity; and also the unusual features and habits of the Jewish people in comparison to other nations. This definitely does not correspond to the Greek text and rather implies the specific worldview he, as a modern translator, had.

The occurrences in the book of Exodus give the impression that the translator wanted to explain that God's holiness can make, under certain conditions, people and places holy. This point of view opens the doors to the nations, who can also be God's property, especially because they live on the earth that belongs to Him (Ex 19:5d: ἐμὴ γὰρ ἐστι πᾶσα ἡ γῆ – כִּי־לִי כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃). It was God's free will to choose and call the people of Israel. However, to remain his property and to participate in His holiness would be unthinkable without certain conditions. Consequently, the Greek translation emphasizes the free will of the chosen people and the nations, as well as the possibility to become a people of God. From now on it is entirely their free choice! And the reader has to bear this in mind.

2 Ἅγιος in the Septuagint-Isaiah

We encounter the first קָדוֹשׁ-ἅγιος occurance in the book of Isaiah in chapter 1:4, where it refers to the Holy One of Israel in the following manner: Οὐαὶ ἔθνος ἁμαρτωλὸν, λαὸς πλήρης ἁμαρτιῶν, σπέρμα πονηρὸν, υἱοὶ ἄνομοι· ἐγκατελίπατε τὸν κύριον καὶ παρωργίσατε τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. According to this text, the Holy One of Israel has forsaken and provoked Israel, who is a sinful nation, a people full of sins, an evil seed, and His lawless sons. The reason why Israel was characterized in such a way, had already been given in Isa 1:2-3: Ἄκουε οὐρανὲ, καὶ ἐνωτίζου γῆ, ὅτι Κύριος ἐλάλησεν, υἱοὺς ἐγέννησα καὶ ὕψωσα, αὐτοὶ δέ με ἠθέτησαν. (3) Ἔγνω βοῦς τὸν κτησάμενον, καὶ ὄνος τὴν φάτνην τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ· Ἰσραὴλ δέ με οὐκ ἔγνω, καὶ ὁ λαός με οὐ συνῆκεν (*Hear, O heaven, and hearken, O earth: for the Lord has spoken, saying, I have begotten and reared up children, but they have rebelled against me [or, set me at nought]. (3) The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel does not know me, and the people has not regarded me"*). If we now consider the text of Exodus 19:6ff from this perspective, it is understandable why the LXX translator (with his translational preferences) opens the doors to the nations looking for God. He thus does not limit the divine choice exclusively to the Israelites, or rather to the Jewish people of the Hellenistic period. There obviously was some kind of interaction

between the translator's understanding of the Hebrew text of the book of Isaiah, and his translation of the book of Exodus. The LXX translator of Exodus 19:6ff consulted Isaiah's theological thought processes in order to explain controversial issues; he thus transferred different facets of the Isaian Hebrew into his Greek translation of Exodus.

In Isaiah 4:3, which is a description of the Day of the Lord, we read: Καὶ ἔσται τὸ ὑπολειφθὲν ἐν Σιὼν, καὶ τὸ καταλειφθὲν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ἅγιοι κληθήσονται πάντες οἱ γραφέντες εἰς ζωὴν ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ (*"And it shall be, that the remnant left in Zion, and the remnant left in Jerusalem, even all that are appointed to life [written for life] in Jerusalem, shall be called holy"*). This expression, which describes the last days when the Lord will judge among the nations and will rebuke many people, must be connected to Isaiah 2:2-4 (= Mi 4:1-3) because of its reference to Zion and Jerusalem. The people's holiness indeed presumes the prior dispensation of God's justice. In this sense the remnant left in Zion and Jerusalem are identical with those, who according to Isaiah 10:20 ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τὸν Θεὸν τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (*"they shall trust in the Holy God of Israel, in truth"*). This implies that the divine name "The Holy One of Israel" does not indicate divine nature, but the most sensible and intelligible way of human understanding of God's deeds in the history of His people (*Heilsgeschichte*). Those who believe in Him thus receive sanctification through his Person and through Him. Neither the Torah, nor the revelation of His will to the Israelites through Moses can sanctify them. Sanctification here means life in God's truth. Because He is the Holy One, He is the One who sanctifies them. We encounter the same idea in LXX-Isaiah 54:17 – according to codex Sinaiticus. This idea, however, contrasts to the MT and codices Alexandrinus and Vaticanus: ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μου ἅγιοι ᾿ΑΒ μοι δίκαιοι. MT וצדקתם) (cf. Ex. 19:5f.). We also encounter an eschatological interpretation of the people's sancti-fication in Isa 30:19; again without Hebrew correspondence. In this instance Zion is the eschatological resting-place of the holy people: καὶ πάλιν μενεῖ ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ οἰκτειρῆσαι ὑμᾶς, καὶ διατοῦτο ὑψωθήσεται τοῦ ἐλεῆσαι ὑμᾶς· διότι κριτὴς Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῶν· μακάριοι οἱ ἐμμένοντες ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ. Διότι λαὸς ἅγιος ἐν Σιὼν οἰκήσει· (*"And the Lord will again wait, that he may pity you, and will therefore be exalted that he may have mercy upon you: because the*

Lord your God is a judge: blessed are they that themselves upon him. (19) For the holy people shall dwell in Zion").

The question is now what could be the meaning of the phrase ἡ βουλὴ τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰσραήλ in Isaiah 5:19. Does it refer to God's will or to His council? The LXX's formulation here is quite ambiguous. Brenton prefers to translate it into "*council of the Holy One*". But who are the members of God's council, in the sense of Isa 5:19? If Brenton's translation preference is correct, then the ultimate answer to the provocative expression καὶ ἐλθάτω ἡ βουλὴ τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰσραὴλ, ἵνα γνῶμεν (*"let the council of the Holy One of Israel come, that we may know it"*) should be made known to the reader in the subsequent chapter, namely in Isaiah 6.

On the basis of the Trisagion Hymn in the Isaiah-Vision (Isa 6:3), the Holy One of Israel, who according to Isaiah 5:19 has a council, is identified as the Lord Zebaoth. The LXX-translator did not translate the Hebrew צבאות into παντοκράτωρ, as the translator of Amos, Zechariah and Jeremiah did. Neither was it translated into κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων – as was done by some translators of the Psalms and the books of Kingdoms, who actually preferred the transcription σαβαώθ. In this way the reader is induced to search for the semantic field of the Hebrew צבא and צבאות, which would lead him/her to the books of the Kingdoms. It also raises the issue of polytheism. This attribute does not express a divine quality (e.g. omnipotence), but the image of Yahweh as a warrior in the midst of his war council. In Isaiah 14:27 צבא is translated into ἅγιος. This translation is significant if one keeps in mind that κύριος σαβαώθ and θεὸς ὁ ἅγιος, because of their usage in Isaiah 6:3, seem to be synonymous in the mind of the Isaiah translator. We thus read in Isaiah 14:24: Τάδε λέγει Κύριος Σαβαώθ, ὃν τρόπον εἴρηκα, οὕτως ἔσται, καὶ ὃν τρόπον βεβούλευμαι, οὕτως μενεῖ...(*"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, As I have said, so it shall be: and as I have purposed, so the matter shall remain"*). And in Isaiah 14:27: Ἃ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἅγιος βεβούλευται, τίς διασκεδάσει (*"For what the Holy God has purposed, who shall frustrate?"*). Even more unambiguous is the identification of the Holy One of Israel with the Lord Zebaoth / Pantocrator in Isaiah 47:4. We here find the expression ὄνομα αὐτῷ ἅγιος Ἰσραήλ, which is formulated similarly to LXX-Amos 4:13 ὄνομα αὐτῷ κύριος παντοκράτωρ. The Amos expression is used to characterize the Christos Κυρίου, which in my view is a messianic

allusion (Dafni 2006:443-454). Consequently, both expressions must be redefined und understood within the horizon of the Isaiah-vision and the messianic expectations of the Hellenistic period[16].

While one could see in the Hebrew text of Isaiah 62:11-12 a word about the salvation of Zion, the LXX unmistakeably reads a word about the Saviour who will come in order to call his holy people who had already been redeemed by the Lord: εἴπατε τῇ θυγατρὶ Σιών, ἰδοὺ ὁ σωτήρ σοι παραγέγονεν ἔχων τὸν ἑαυτοῦ μισθόν, καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ. Καὶ καλέσει αὐτὸν Λαὸν ἅγιον, λελυτρωμένον ὑπὸ Κυρίου (*"say ye to the daughter Zion, Behold, thy Saviour has come to thee, having his reward and his work before his face. (12) And he/one shall call them the holy people the redeemed of the Lord"*).

Isaiah 63:10 offers a retrospective critical view of the unfaithfulness of the Israelites in the past: Αὐτοὶ δὲ ἠπείθησαν, καὶ παρώξυναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ (*"But they disobeyed, and provoked his Holy Spirit"*). The question ποῦ ὁ θεὶς ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; (*"Where is he that put his Holy Spirit in them"*) in Isaiah 63:11 exceeds the limits of the subsequent expression we encounter in verse 14 κατέβη πνεῦμα παρὰ Κυρίου, καὶ ὡδήγησεν αὐτούς (*"the Spirit came down from the Lord, and guided them"*), because it does not only refer to an exterior historical guidance, but to an inner effect on the minds and the hearts of the people. The Lord is present within the minds and the hearts of his people through His Holy Spirit.

3   Ἅγιος in the Septuagint-Psalms

We encounter certain word combinations in the LXX-Psalms, such as ὄρος τὸ ἅγιον,[17] ναὸς ὁ ἅγιος,[18] τὸ ἅγιον,[19] οὐρανὸς ἅγιος,[20] αὐλὴ ἁγία,[21] ὄνομα ἅγιον,[22] οἱ ἅγιοι,[23] θρόνος ἅγιος,[24]

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16   Cf. Rev 4:8ff.

17   Pss 2:6; 3:5; 42(43):3; 47(48):2; 86(87):1; 98(99):9.

18   Pss 5:8; 14(15):1; 17(18):7?; 26(27):4; 27(28):2; 64(65):6; 78(79):1; 137(138):2.

19   Pss 19(20):3; 59(60):8; 62(63):3; 67(68):18.25; 73(74):3?; 107(108):8.

20   Ps 19(20):7.

21   Pss 28(29):2; 95(96):9.

22   Pss 32(33):21; 98(99):3; 102(103):1; 104(105):3; 110(111):9; 144(145):21.

πνεῦμα ἅγιον,[25] τόπος ἅγιος,[26] ἔλαιον ἅγιον,[27] βραχίων ἅγιος,[28] ὕψος ἅγιον,[29] λόγος ἅγιος,[30] λαμπρότητες τῶν ἁγίων,[31] τὰ ἅγια,[32] ὁ ἅγιος,[33] ἐκκλησία ἁγίων,[34] βουλὴ ἁγίων,[35] Ἀαρὼν ὁ ἅγιος Κυρίου,[36] Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν...ἅγιος[37]. The word-combination ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραήλ,[38] which is firmly rooted in the prophecy of Isaiah[39], gives us a good idea of the descriptions and the theological focus of both of these books: In Isaiah the holiness of God stands in the centre of attention, whereas the book of Psalms rather prefers to describe the holiness of place and of objects; of course not without exceptions.

It is furthermore remarkable that we do not encounter any dative plural ἐν (τοῖς) ἁγίοις in the LXX-Psalter as a designation for God's sanctuary. For this purpose only the accusative singular and plural neuter were used.

Important for the understanding of ἅγιος in the Psalms are the distributive expressions in Psalm 15(16):3 and Psalm 33(34):9, which unambiguously refer to the saints of God. Psalm 15(16):3 states clearly and firmly: Τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἐν τῇ γῇ αὐτοῦ, ἐθαυμάστωσε πάντα τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτοῖς *("On behalf*

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23   Pss 15(16):3; 33(34):10; 67(68):36; 73(74):3; 82(83):4.

24   Ps 46(47):9.

25   Pss 50(51):13; 137(138):2; 142(143):10.

26   Ps 67(68):6.

27   Ps 88(89):21.

28   Ps 97(98):1.

29   Ps 101(102):20.

30   Ps 104(105):42.

31   Ps 109(110):3.

32   Pss 55(56):1; 133(134):2.

33   Pss 76(77):14; 88(89):36.

34   Ps 88(89):6.

35   Ps 88(89):8.

36   Ps 105(106):16.

37   Ps 98(99):5.9.

38   Pss 70(71):22; 77(78):41; 88(89):19.

39   Isa 1:4; 5:19.24; 10:20; 11:9; 12:6; 17:7.8; 30:12.15; 31:1; 37:23; 41:20; 43:3.14; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 55:5; 60:9.14.

of the saints that are in his land, he has magnified all his pleasure in them"). It is remarkable that the verbal form ἐθαυμάστωσε, in this context, means nothing less than "He reveals Himself through a wonder" and reminds the reader of the Sinai-events. Γῆ in this context is not only the promised land, but the whole world. In Psalm 33(34):9 we read: Φοβήθητε τὸν Κύριον πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι αὐτοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ὑστέρημα τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν *("Fear the Lord, all ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him").* This expression understands the divine choice of Exodus 19:6f as a direct reference to the historic Israel as God's legitimate addressee. Psalm 67(68):36, the closing verse of Psalm 67(68), also talks about Israel in the same sense: Θαυμαστὸς ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις (Β ὁσίοις) αὐτοῦ, ὁ Θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, αὐτὸς δώσει δύναμιν καὶ κραταίωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ. Codex Vaticanus reads ὁσίοις instead of ἁγίοις and with this reading paves the way to ἐκκλησία ὁσίων (LXX-Ps. 149:1). Otherwise, the MT refers to the sanctuary or rather to the temple of God. Brenton translates the LXX-passage according to the MT's understanding: *"God is wonderful in his holy places, the God of Israel: he will give power and strength to his people".*

Furthermore, in Psalm 109(110):3, a text which has had a remarkable influence on Christian Theology and Iconography, we find the expression: Μετὰ σοῦ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τῆς δυνάμεώς σου, ἐν ταῖς λαμπρότησι τῶν ἁγίων σου· *("With thee is dominion in the day of thy power, in the splendours of thy saints (or holiness or holy things").* The phrase ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τῆς δυνάμεώς σου recalls the depictions of the Day of the Lord according to the book Isaiah. If τῶν ἁγίων σου must indeed be translated into "your saints", this reflects an eschatological and clear messianic depiction: The Lord says to the Lord of the Psalmist, or rather to David, at that day he will be seated among his saints in splendour. This eschatological and conspicuous messianic image stands out against the image of "the morning star" (lat. *lucifer*) in verse 4: ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἑωσφόρου ἐγέννησά σε[40]. "The morning star" is here used as a symbol; and namely a symbol which reminds us of Isaiah 14:12, which refers to godless powers or rather to the Ungodly One.

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40   Brenton translates it into *"I have begotten thee from the womb before the morning".* But this translation does not correspond to the intended LXX-meaning.

The most illuminating text with regard to my thesis, is Psalm 88(89):5,7 where the unique word-combinations ἐκκλησία ἁγίων and βουλὴ ἁγίων[41] occur. Both of them seem to reflect the essence of Joel 2:16 (συναγάγεται λαόν, ἁγιάσατε ἐκκλησίαν – קְהַל אַסְפוּ־עָם קׇדְשׁוּ[42]).

	Greek	English	Hebrew
5a	Ἐξομολογήσονται οἱ οὐρανοὶ τὰ θαυμάσιά σου	The heavens shall declare thy wonders,	וְיוֹדוּ[43txt] שׁמים פִּלְאֲךָ[txt]
aV	Κύριε,	Oh Lord;	יהוה
b	καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειάν σου ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἁγίων.	and thy truth in the assembly of the saints.	אַף־אֱמוּנׇתְךָ בִּקְהַל קְדֹשִׁים[txt] :
6a	Ὅτι τίς ἐν νεφέλαις ἰσωθήσεται τῷ Κυρίῳ;	For who in the heavens shall be compared to the Lord?	כִּי מִי בַשַּׁחַק יַעֲרֹךְ לַיהוה
b	καὶ τίς ὁμοιωθήσεται τῷ Κυρίῳ ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ;	And who shall be likened to the Lord among the sons of God?	יִדְמֶה לַיהוה בִּבְנֵי אֵלִים[txt] :
7a	Ὁ Θεὸς ἐνδοξαζόμενος ἐν βουλῇ ἁγίων,	God is glorified in the council of the saints;	אֵל נַעֲרָץ בְּסוֹד־קְדֹשִׁים[txt]
b	μέγας καὶ φοβερὸς ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς περικύκλῳ αὐτοῦ.	great and terrible toward all that are round about him.	רַבָּה[txt] וְנוֹרָא[txt] עַל־כׇּל־ סְבִיבָיו :
8aV	Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων,	O Lord God of hosts,	יהוה אֱלֹהֵי[txt] צְבָאוֹת
a	τίς ὅμοιός σοι;	who is like to thee?	מִי־כׇמוֹךָ[txt]
b	δυνατὸς εἶ	Thou art mighty,	חֲסִין[txt]
bV	Κύριε,	O Lord,	יׇהּ[txt]
c	καὶ ἡ ἀλήθειά σου κύκλῳ σου.	and thy truth is round about thee.	וֶאֱמוּנׇתְךָ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ :

This *ring composition*, according to the LXX, consists of both synonymous and antonymous expressions referring to what God's assembly of saints could be, and what not. Verses 6 and 8 point to

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41   Cf. B-Jud 20:2: ἐκκλησία τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. As a contrary term is used ἐκκλησία πονηρευομένων (Ps 25[26]:5). In this sense Psalm 82(83):3 reads: ἐβουλεύσαντο κατὰ τῶν ἁγίων σου (but MT only צׇפַן).

42   The editor of BHS wonders if the second part of the expression is a *varia lectio*. By contrast, the LXX does not deal with the rhetorical feature *hen dia dyoin*, but with two complementary, interrelated expressions.

43   Text-critical issues (words) of this Psalm-passage cannot be discussed in this article. Thus, they are only marked with (txt).

the fact that the assembly of the saints is defined by the Lord's truth, which is inherent to it and which seems to be the same as the council of the saints (v. 7). However, this is neither identical with the "inhabitants of heavens", who will declare his wonders, nor identical with the "inhabitants of the clouds" or the "sons of God", or the "hosts" who also form a kind of godly council and who are "round about Him". According to verse 8, God's close proximity presupposes in any case the participation in God's truth. And this can be the only condition of being named holy people.

In a similar manner LXX-Psalm 149:1 talks about ἐκκλησία ὁσίων, juxtaposing terminology and theological thoughts of LXX-Psalm 67:36 and LXX-Psalm 88:6-8:

a	Ἄσατε τῷ Κυρίῳ	Sing to the Lord	שירו ליהוה
	ᾆσμα καινόν·	a new song:	שיר חדש
b	ἡ αἴνεσις αὐτοῦ	his praise is	תהלתו
	ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ὁσίων.	**in the assembly of the saints.**	בקהל חסידים:

LXX-Psalm 150:1 again begins with the same theme and continues in a similar way as Psalm 149, which actually is a sign that Psalm 150 has a very artificial structure. It is meant, however, to conclude the Psalter by summarising its message about the quintessence of the people's holiness.

The above-mentioned LXX Psalm-passages give a sober and restrained summary of the monotheistic perception and description of Yahweh in Ancient Israel. It furthermore also summarises the theology with regard to the holiness of God and man, as is expressed in different and in diverse ways in the books of Exodus and Isaiah. Of course, the relationship between the LXX-Psalms and the LXX-Isaiah has given rise to contradictory hypotheses with regard to the direction of dependence between these books. However, it seems to me that the LXX-Psalms, in this matter, presupposes the LXX-Isaiah, and both of them make use of the LXX-Exodus as a reference text, which cannot be completely understood without the theology of Isaiah.

D   SUMMARY

While the Hebrew form of Psalm 150 talks about the historic worship of God in his sanctuary, the LXX version reflects on the eschatological presence of God in the community of his saints, who

are only a possibility on the basis of the divine choice, as well as a real quantity on the basis of the human trust in God's call.

The text corpus which is essentially important for the understanding of the theology of Psalm 150, according to the LXX, is definitely the book of Isaiah, because it deals with the question about the revelation of the holiness of Israel's God and gives a clear and firm response to this question. Psalm 150, according to the LXX, reflects briefly on the process of theological understanding of the book of Isaiah – especially its second part, where the holiness of God is linked to His creation and His rule of the whole world. The holiness of God, according to Isaiah, is the difference between God's images in Israel and its polytheistic environment. Similar views also occur in the so-called Yahweh-King-Psalms. But in the book of Isaiah it is explicitly formulated that the God of Israel sanctifies his people, because He Himself is the Holy One. Only those who are sanctified by Him, can thus praise Him. On the whole, the call to praise Him, according to the LXX-Ps 150, is an invitation to become His holy people, namely to participate in His holiness.

If the LXX-Ps 150 can really be seen as an introduction to a hymn (Gunkel), its setting at the end of the Psalter is a sign that this hymn had never been completed in the Old Testament, but it paved the way to the New Testament, especially to the Pauline Theology of Love (1 Cor 13:1):

Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων

ἀγάπη δὲ μὴ ἔχω, γέγονα χαλκὸς ἠχῶν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

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