Βροτός. A favourite word of Homer in the Septuagint version of Job[*]

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ABSTRACT

Βροτός. A favourite word of Homer in the Septuagint version of Job

Βροτός, a favourite word used by Homer, appears exclusively in the Septuagint version of Job to express the beauty of the whole man, as an excellent creature of God, who is transient but strives to achieve eternity. He is vulnerable but wants to reach perfection, is mortal and longs for immortality. This equivalent enables us to decode translation processes in the LXX-Job and to uncover hermeneutical principles and characteristics of its theological and anthropological language and thought.

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the most admirable ways in which the Septuagint translators rendered the meaning of the original into Greek, is found especially in their efforts to transfer poetry from Hebrew into Greek by using epical-poetical language. From the vocabulary they employed, we can conclude that the translators of the poetical books of the Hebrew Old Testament preferred the way of formal transformation and new

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creation of free poetical styles, rather than the way of a reconstruction or exact imitation of given Hebrew poetical forms and structures. These efforts are reflected especially in the Septuagint of the book of Job. The Septuagint-Job, which is about 1/6th shorter than the Masoretic text, avoids the strict exactness of words in the translation and rather tries to understand the deeper meaning and intention of the Hebrew source text[2] and to reproduce its spirit by applying hermeneutical principles and rules which follow Ancient Greek lines of poetical thought. According to Henry St J Thackeray, the translator of the book of Job "was a student of the Greek poets; his version was probably produced for the general reader, not for the synagogues"[3]. Subsequently, Thackeray ascribes the LXX-Job to a sole translator and gives answer to the key-question of its life-

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2   The conviction, that, *"in order to make a comparison between the Hebrew and the Greek text is* absolutely *necessary to establish the Old Greek version as a base"*, has more than one logical and methodological weakness due to the fact that we today only have eclectic or diplomatic Hebrew and Greek text editions, namely reconstructed texts and texts which are based on the oldest complete preserved codex. Since the discovery of the Qumran texts we know that neither the MT nor the LXX is identical with the so-called Original text. They are only representative text-forms or text-types. Therefore, both of them should first and foremost be seen as texts in their own rights. The LXX represents a complete translation corpus of Hebrew originals from the 3rd to the 1st century BC, which are lost and can only be reconstructed on the basis of comparisons with the MT. The oldest complete manuscript of the LXX, *Codex Vaticanus*, goes back to the 4th century AD. The MT represents the only reliable, complete text of the Hebrew Bible. Its oldest complete manuscript is the Codex Petropolitanus / Leningradensis from the 10th century AD. Critical editions offer eclectic texts and are definitely not identical with the Original text. That means they are rather representative of text- and theologically motivated decisions of modern editors, as opposed to the so-called *Ur-Septuaginta*, the translation done by the original Jewish translators. They are interesting because they offer several other readings so that the reader becomes aware of the fact that not only one single version but more versions were circulating in Antiquity. Eclectic texts have never really existed in this form. The old codices are real texts and therefore we should rather trust what is nearer to the LXX-origins, than the decision of an editor who definitely does not have the natural language feeling of Greek and Hebrew, and is determined to have different ideological and theological presuppositions than the original translators.

3   Thackeray (1915, http://www.bible.researcher.com/isbelxx).

setting. If correct, Thackeray identifies a crucial factor when trying to understand its high-reflected poetical language.

It is noteworthy that Homeric vocabulary was quite often consulted by the LXX-Job[4]. A characteristic example is the word βροτός[5] as an equivalent for אֱנוֹשׁ[6], אָדָם[7] and בָּשָׂר[8]. The word אֱנוֹשׁ is a collective term, widely attested in the Ancient Semitic Languages. It occurs relatively rare within the Hebrew Scriptures, most frequently in the book of Job and its precise meaning is controversial[9]. אָדָם[10] and בָּשָׂר[11], however, are employed by the Hebrew Old Testament authors as collective terms a) to describe mankind as God's creation, and b) to reflect in its historic frailty. In this sense, the equivalent βροτός enables us not only to decode translation processes in the book of Job, but also to uncover hermeneutical principles and characteristics of its theological and anthropological language.

Βροτός, Homer's favourite word, appears as translation equivalent exclusively in the LXX-Job. It recurs more regularly as

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4   See e.g. ἄβυσσος, ἀγαυριάομαι, ἄκων, ἀναβλαστάνω, ἀναπνέω, ἀντακούω, ἀνταπόκρισις, ἀντικρίνομαι, ἀοίκητος, ἀποβαίνω, ἀπολούω, ἀποποιέομαι, ἀρκτοῦρος, ἀτάρ, αὐθημερινός, βούτυμον, βροτός, βῶλαξ, γαυρίαμα, γνοφερός, δείδω, δίαιτα, διανυκτερεύω, διοράω, δυνάστης, εἴθε, ἐκσιφωνίζω, ἐκτίνω, ἔλεγχος, ἐνείρω, ἔξοικος, ἔοικα, ἐπανακαινίζω, ἐρημίτης, ἑωσφόρος, θάρσος, ἰατής, ἰχώρ, καρτερέω, κατατυγχάνω, κεντέω, κολαβρίζομαι, κώλυμα, λάτρις, μεσίτης, μυρμηκολέων, νήχομαι, νουθέτημα, ἀποξύω, ὀλέκω ΄ὄλλυμι, οἱμείρομαι, παμβότανον, παρακαθίζω, πειρατήριον, περιδέω, πνίγμα, πολλάκις, πολυρρήμων, πτύελος, ῥάδαμνος ὀρόδαμνος, σβέννυμι, σητόβρωτος, σθένος, συνεπίσταμαι, συνέχομαι, συνκοιμίζω, συνκύπτω, τακτός, τάρταρος, τιτρώσκω, ὑπερείδω, ὑπομένω, ὑπτιάζω, φθέγμα, χειρόομαί −οῦμαι, χθιζός, χλευάζω, χράομαι, χρώς.

5   Job 4:17; 9:2; 10:4.22; 11:12; 14:1.10; 15:14; 25:4; 28:4.13; 32:8.21; 33:12; 34:15; 36:25.28.

6   Job 4:17; 9:2; 15:14; 25:4; 28,4.13; 32:8; 33:12(?); 36:25(?).

7   Job 11:12(?); 14:1.10; 32:21; 34:15.

8   Only Job 10:4a.

9   See Maass (1973:373-375). Cf. Westermann (1971: 43-44).

10   Westermann (1971: 41-57). Maass (1973:81-94).

11   Bratsiotis (1973:850-867). Cf. Gerleman (1971:376-379).

embossed term in the Intertestamental writings[12]. It is, however, not found in the New Testament, though in the Hymnography of the Ancient Church[13].

An approximate English translation of βροτός is "mortal man" (LSJ 331). A similar semantic equation is also found in German lexica: "sterblich", "der Sterbliche". These semantic choices seem to provide the necessary pragmatic horizon for a certain understanding with regard to the nature and the value of this translation equivalent. The Greek word in question, however, can be understood and explained in more than one way. The decision about its meaning and significance depends on a) the theological and anthropological relevance of the word βροτός up till now, and b) the inner structure of its Greek meanings and intentions in the Septuagint[14].

When analysing the historic-semantic background of βροτός as a translation equivalent, its Homeric heritage should be taken into account as well. Of course, the Homeric language can be described in various ways. But from my perspective it is crucial to analyse the following issues: Did the meaning of βροτός remain static or diverge progressively, and how could the semantic wingspan from Homer to LXX-Job be reconstructed? Did the Job-translator correctly understand his original source text and really made lexical, as well as mental adoptions from the Homeric Epics? Or did he rather slavishly imitate Homeric style and blindly promulgate specific Homeric forms in his own translation in order to reflect the nature of Homeric ways of thinking? How are his translation procedures to be legitimatised?

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12   See e.g. Philo, De aeternitate mundi 121.7.

13   See e.g. Romanus Melodus, Cantica 2.7.6, comment to Gen 6f.: Τὰ κτήνη πτοοῦνται καὶ οἱ βροτοὶ ὡς κτηνώδεις οὐκ ἀπωθοῦντο τὴν πονηρίαν.

14   It must be paid attention to the fact that an approach to the "meanings and intensions" of a translated text can definitely not *only be deducted from the context and the network of relations that words have in the Greek linguistic system*. The LXX-language should be understood as a balance of the translators' Greek education and their Jewish identity based on their belief in Yahweh, the revealed God of Israel.

The present study aims to rediscover the inner unity of the above-mentioned questions especially in view of a reconstruction of the Theology of the language of the Septuagint-Job[15].

> The *Theology of the Septuagint* should be seen as the crown of every philological and theological activity in the field of the LXX-studies, because it deals with central theological issues regarding the Greek Old Testament's belief in one single God (Dafni 2003). Since the Old Testament is not simply a book, but a library which consists of several books, written by different individuals during the course of thousand years, which reflects very old oral traditions differing in form and content, the question of the modifiability of perceptions and depictions of God in Ancient Israel arises. Regarding the LXX, this question must be put on the table as follows: If the LXX has really been translated in the course of two and a half centuries by different individuals, then how did they understand, explain and translate potential changes of perception of God and modifications of expressions referring to God? And how could we today explain the processes described there?

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15   In the last three decades, LXX-scholars raise the following questions: a) How should the LXX be understood? Is it just a translation, or rather a theological document of the early Jewish tradition? Is it a valid part of this tradition, or is it only a reflection of it? Can we assume that *the translators of the Greek Bible are inspired by Ancient Greek authors or did they follow closely the wording of Ancient Greek texts as well*? When scholars raise especially the latter question, then it is obvious that they consciously or unconsciously link and sometimes mix *poetic inspiration*, which refers only to the formal aspect of the scriptural texts, and *divine inspiration* of the Holy Scriptures as the encounter of divine revelation and mental and psychical capacity of the scriptural authors. For other scholars, however, it is clear enough that investigations of biblical vocabulary and the attempt to give an explanation of how the text-semantics and the theology of a text are joined together, refer to theological ideas which we can always reconstruct on the basis of a given text form, but we definitely do not investigate the nature of the divine revelation. This attempt certainly does not deny the divine factor, but acknowledges the limitations of human ratio, as well as the limitations of human language to express "more precisely", "thoroughly" and "accurately" experiences of divine revelation.

The term *Theology of the Septuagint* can mean both a) the theology that is really contained and detected in the Corpus of the Greek Old Testament, as well as b) the theology developed from the LXX by Christian theologians (cf Dafni 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2006a.b). This last attempt presupposes certain value judgments as well as certain attitudes of the LXX-scholar as a theologian with regard to the subject of his research. For this reason, scholars should feel obliged to their readers to clarify how they define the term *Theology of the Septuagint* and with which definition they are dealing.

In my opening lecture at the IOSCS-Congress in Basel in 2001 (Dafni 2002), I introduced the term "*Theology of the Septuagint Language*" in order to contribute to the possibility of writing a Theology of the Septuagint in its own right[16]. Of course, I used the word "theology" as a collective term, which includes "theologies" as sub-areas of the historical-critical analysis. In my view, *Theology of the Septuagint* in its own right can only be the Theology which is based on quantitative or qualitative, intended or unintended differences among Hebrew text forms and the LXX-versions. For what is common between Hebrew and Old Greek versions can only be understood as theological inheritance of the whole Old Testament. The points

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16   Modern LXX-scholars often make the unfounded assertion that *"the translators of the Septuagint were mainly translators and not theologians"*, so that if one asks about the theology on the basis of the language used in the LXX, *"it gives the impression of an eisegesis that supplants exegesis"*. The question we have to ask is, whether it is possible for anybody working with or on the Bible, a theological book *katexochen*, without giving theological thoughts about theological contents at all? And how is one to explain that the *Septuaginta* were only translators and not theologians in spite of fact that the written and the oral Torah as well as the Prophets and the other holy writings had been given as an inheritance to the Jewish people whose task was to understand, explain and transmit it to the present and the future generations? Had the LXX-translators not been working in this sense, then we have to assume that they were no Jewish people, but West European enlightened linguists. These assertions devaluate the translators as teachers of their theological inheritance, and aim at eliminating the LXX as a theological work.

where both the Hebrew and the Greek text versions differ quantitatively or qualitatively, could be characteristic of another or even a new understanding. Theologically speaking, this could be either a hint of developmental phases of the divine revelation or a sign of the degree and extent to which the human capacity can record the divine truth in written texts.

When dealing with such a question, we then have to be conscious of the fact that we are no longer on the area of text-linguistics, but on the area of metaphysics. The arguments do not have the same value anymore. Therefore, we have to be aware of the danger of mixing arguments and results of our investigation. It is not allowed to use linguistic arguments to ground metaphysical judgments or to abuse metaphysical prejudgments in order to criticize pure linguistic analysis. That is why we definitely need methodological criticism. Correctly understood, Theology of the Septuagint Language embraces methodological and philological criticism as well, but methodological or philological criticism without reflection on the Theology of the Language of the Septuagint remains unsubstantial and directionless.

2   SOME LEXICOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

The focus of the following remarks is indeed not on how to justify models of modern theoretical semantics which could only hardly contribute to a deeper understanding of the Greek language and thought[17] in comparison to the Hebrew. My aim is to chose and

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17   Modern LXX-studies are deeply affected by the limited knowledge of Greek language and thought in its development and diachronic unity from the Mycenean era up till to now, as well as the enforcement of humanistic prejudices against the language and its native speakers. Cf. Caragounis (2004). The *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* tried to bridge the gap between Greek meanings and intentions, from Homer to the Apostolic Fathers. James Barr's criticism on the ThWNT refers to the implication of Christian ideas in the contextual meanings of the LXX. Emanuel Tov (1976), on the other hand, gave the key for further constructive investigations. He made the distinction "between three different dimensions of lexicographical description: the meaning of the words in the pre-Septuagintal stage, the meaning in the LXX itself as intended by the translators, and the meaning of the words as

present aspects, which – of course from the perspective of a *native speaker* – are really able to provide exegetical and hermeneutical useful insights into the lexical and metaphorical meanings of the word in question.

2.1 Occurrences of βροτός in the Homeric Epics[18]

As our brief survey with the assistance of *TLG* indicates, βροτός occurs first in the Homeric Epics (8th century BC), which had a permanent influence on the word-usages and meanings[19]. In the Homeric Epics, compound nouns and verbs with βροτός are also found, as for example: ἀβροτάζω[20], ἀβρότη[21], ἄμβροτος, –ον[22], ἀμβροσία[23], ἀμφιβρότης[24], βροτολοιγός[25], τερψίμβροτος[26],

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quoted from the LXX. A theological tension can often be found between meanings of words intended by a Greek translator, and meanings attributed to the same words in the New Testament, the Writings of the Church Fathers and in the translations made of the LXX". This distinction is in accordance to Barr's (1961 [1965]) criticism on the ThWNT and against Georg Bertram's attempt to analyse the Septuagint as "preparatio evangelica" (1957), namely to explain Septuagintal terms anachronistically, by putting Christian meanings in Septuagintal words. In my view, this statement could also be understood as a warning to us about the tendency to understand Septuagintal meanings only on the basis of the Ancient Greek linguistic and mental system, especially Platonism; specifically not the works of Plato himself, but the reception of Plato in the Middle Platonism and beyond.

18   Ilias (Il) 1:272; 2:248.285.821; 3:223; 5:304.361.604; 6:142; 7:446; 8:428; 9:159.545; 10:83.386; 11:2; 12:327.383.449; 13:244.374.569; 14:325; 15:98; 18:85.362.539; 19:2.22; 20:248.287; 21:380.463; 22:31.76; 23:439; 24:43.67.363.464.505.525.533.565. Odyssey (Od) 1:32.66.282.337; 2:216; 3:3; 4:78.190.196.197.397.692; 5:2.101.129.197.218.334; 7:119.149.153.160.201. 205; 8:210; 9:16.222.239.487; 10:405; 11:147.218.287.476; 12:77.125.341. 386; 13:129.180.200.297.312.397; 15:253.255.321.343.408.492; 16:63.148. 212; 17:386. 519; 18:85.116; 19:107.170.286.330.360.365. 567; 21:308; 23: 187.216.267; 24:189.267.

19   Tebben (1994-1998). Snell (1979 & 1991).

20   Il 10:65. Cf. the compound forms ἀπήμβροτε (Il 15:521), ἤμβροτεν (Od 7:292; 21:421), ἤμβροτον (Il 16:336.466.477. Od 21:425; 22:154), βεβροτωμένα (Od 11:41).

21   Il 14:78.

22   Il 5:339.870; 16:867; 17:194.202; 20:358. Od 8:260.265; 11:222; 12:330; 24:59.445.

23   Il 16:670.680. Od 5:93.199; 9:359.

φαεσίμβροτος[27], φθισίμβροτος[28]. These compound words re-appear with the same meanings in later works of Ancient Greek Literature, mainly as citations of Homer. Of special interest is the noun ἀμβροσία which designates the food of the immortal gods of the Ancient Greek Pantheon[29].

Homer makes use of βροτός both as a substantive and as an adjective. Βροτός as adjective occurs in the word-combination βροτὸς ἀνήρ[30] which obviously makes a distinction between ἀνήρ and his quality (to be βροτός). As substantive, it appears in word-combinations such as δειλοὶ βροτοί[31], θνητοὶ βροτοί[32] etc. in contrast to ἀθάνατοι (θεοί)[33], μέρωπες βροτοί[34], (ἐπιχθόνιος) βροτὸς ἄλλος[35], βροτοὶ πάντες[36] / ἄπαντες[37]. It is remarkable that the contrasting word-pairs θνητός–θεός,–ά[38] appear very often in the Homeric Epics[39], while the word-pair βροτός–ἀθάνατος[40] occurs very rarely in connection with human qualities[41] and virtues[42]

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24   Il 2:389; 12:402; 20:281.

25   Il 5:31.455.518.846.909; 8:349; 11:295; 12:130; 13:298.802; 18:421; 19:9; 20:46; 24:464. Od 8:115.

26   Od 12:269.274.

27   Il 24:785. Od 10:138.191.

28   Il 13:339. Od 23:297.

29   According to Homer, Odysseus on the island of the nymph Calypso, who promised him immortality, ate ἀμβροσία (Od 5:93.199; 9:359).

30   Il 5:361.604; 18:85; 19:22; 21:380. Od 4:397; 5:129.197; 12:77.341.

31   Il 22:31.76; 24:525. Od 11:19; 14:408; 15:212.

32   Od 3:3; 8:210; 12:386.

33   Od 3:3(=12:386); 5:2f.

34   Il 2:285.

35   Il 3:223; 20:83.386; 24:505. Od 15:321; 19:286; 23:226.

36   Od 19:330.

37   Il 13:374.

38   Il 2:821; 9:159; 24:363.533. Od 1:32.66; 4:397; 5:101.129; 6:149.

39   See also the contrary word-pairs θνητός–θεός ἄμβροτος (Il 22:9 cf. 24:460. Od 24:445), ἀθάνατος θεός–βροτός (Il 24:464), βροτός–ἀθάνατος καὶ ἄγηρως (Od 5:218).

40   Il 11:2; 19:22; 21:380. Od 5:2.

41   E.g. Od 1:337; 6:119s(=13:200s); 13:312.

already named or described[43] in the given context. These lexicographical aspects must especially be taken into consideration in the case of a translation critical description of the LXX-Job.

2.2 Occurrences of βροτός in the Septuagint-Job

On closer examination, we realize that βροτός appears parallel to σάρξ[44] (=flesh), γεννητὸς γυναικός[45] (=born from a woman), ἄνθρωπος[46] (=man) and ἀνήρ[47] (=man). It should be noted that ἀνήρ in these specific cases does not designate gender, but positive qualities of a man[48] that can also be ascribed to women under certain conditions. Therefore, further examination has to focus on linguistic as well as factual components of the given texts.

2.3 Etymology – Meaning – Translation

1. An important distinction, which should be taken into account when analysing and describing the theological and anthropological sense of βροτός, is between original and secondary meanings. The original meaning could also be derived from the word-etymology, because it may be included in the word itself, if the word has been artificially created by an author to serve certain purposes. In this case, secondary meanings have to be the prevailing themes and ideas of each context where the word is embedded. The word βροτός probably has been formed on the basis of already existing linguistic resources. Therefore, one should constantly pay attention to the linguistic aspects of the lexical equations of the Hebrew and Greek language.

Two kinds of hypotheses with regard to the relationship between the etymology and semantics of βροτός had already been developed in antiquity:

a) Aelius Herodianus (Pseudoherodianus) (2nd century AD) asserts that the word βροτός originated from the verb μαραίνω

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42   E.g. Od 8:239; 13:297.

43   E.g. Od 4:692; 8:487.

44   Job 34:15.

45   Job 11:12; 14:1; 15:14; 25:4.

46   Job 10:4; 11:12; 28:13; 32:21; 36:25.

47   Job 4:17; 14:10.

48   Cf. Matthäa Vock (1928).

(<μροτός<βροτός)[49]. Μαραίνω is used primarily in relation to the plant kingdom in order to designate the withering of flowers and leaves[50]. In this instance, we can state that the word βροτός semantically derives from the plant kingdom and has become a symbol for man as an individual and for mankind in its entirety.

b) Hesychius (5th/6th century AD), who established the Ancient Greek word-meaning in the form of a dictionary, made a distinction between the substantive βρότος and the substantivated adjective βροτός (postponement of the accent)[51]. According to Hesychius, βρότος is a primary name designating both blood as well as an infection through blood. He supports this hypothesis with text evidence from Odyssey and Ilias[52], and equates βροτός with the word meanings of i) φθαρτός (=destructible), ii) γηγενής (=coming from earth) and iii) ἄνθρωπος (=man, mankind). These meanings are not completely congruent but flow into one another.

Furthermore, there are two Greek verbal-adjectives, which can be used instead of φθαρτός[53] (LSJ 1927), namely τρωτός (LSJ 1832) and βρωτός (LSJ 333). Βρωτός seems to be an allomorph of βροτός, and in the text-transmission of the hymns of the Ancient Church both words are virtually interchangeable. i) Βρωτός[54] (vs. ἄβρωτος[55]) derives from the verb βιβρώσκω and designates "something to eat, to distort", and in metaphorical sense "to rot, to decompose", as well as "the decomposed human flesh" (LXX-Job 25:6 and TestJob 20:8 cf. Acts 12:23: σκωληκόβρωτος[56]). ii) Τρωτός[57] (vs. ἄτρωτος[58]) derives from the verb τιτρώσκω and designates the wounded or injured man[59].

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49 De Prosodia Catholica, 3,1.124,14; 3,2.288.25.

50 Sir 14:18 cf. Il 6:146-149.

51 Hesychii Alexandrini (MCMLIII-XVI:349).

52 Il 7:425; 14:7; 18:345; 23:41. Od 24:189.

53 See e.g. φθαρτός and ἄφθαρτος in Aristoteles, Analytica Priora, 47b:25.29; 49a:24; 68a:9.10.16 etc.

54 Euripides, Supplices 1110. Theophrastus, Historia plantarum 1.12.4.10 etc.

55 Aristoteles, Historia animalium 505b:20. Meteorologica 380b:3.

56 Cf. Theophrastus, Historia plantarum 3.12.8.7: δένδρον σκωληκόβρω− τον.

57 Il 21:568. Euripides, Helena 810.

Using a scale of meaning in order to indicate various meanings of the words, we can establish the following scheme:

Βροτός as φθαρτός could under conditions be τρωτός[60]. In this case, the meaning of βροτός is the same as βρωτός, namely "decomposeable". But on the other hand, if the word-meaning handed down through Hesychius is right, then βροτός could be used as a designation of "blood" as the *Sitz im Leben* (setting of life), and thereupon as a characterisation of a living human being. Consequently, the word-spectrum of βροτός could contain both biological as well as ethical-moral meanings. Behind this word-usage may be hidden the ancient idea of a connection between the blood and the moral-ethical disposition of every human being.

In current language usage, blood can designate not only life, but also death, through its infection. This could be the biological explanation of the word βροτός. However, there is not only a biochemical infection, but also a moral infection of blood as setting of life[61] e.g. through lies which cause unjust and unfair deeds. Through lies and unjust deeds one becomes corrupt (βρωτός)[62]. Τρωτός, in this case, is the person who leans over to let himself be guided by lies and governed by injustice and unfairness[63]. Φθαρτός, on the other hand, indicates destructive urge, moral offence or misdemeanour and destructive deeds[64].

2. Through the prefix-negation ἀ– the adjective ἄμβροτος is formed. This word has been used to describe the divine nature in contrast to the human. Greek gods are ἄμβροτοι and eat ἀμβροσία, while man is βροτός, but can also be characterized as πρόβροτος. What exactly is ἄμβροτος and πρόβροτος? They are composites

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58   Pindarus, Isthmia 3/4 18b. Aeschylus, Choephoroe 532. Euripides Phoenissae 594. Sophocles Oedipus Coloneus 906 etc.

59   Il 21:568. Cf. ἄτρωτος in Euripides, Helene 810. Phoenisae 594. Fragmenta Alexandri 43,30, as well as Fragmenta 9d.34.

60   LXX-Job 6:9; 16:(6)7; 20:24; 33:23; 36:14; 36:25; 41:19(20).

61   Cf. Kedar-Kopfstein (1977:248-266). Cf. G Gerleman (1971:448-451).

62   Cf. Stephanus Medicus et Philosophus, Scholia in Hippocratis de Fracuris 79,17s.

63   2 Macc 3:16.

64   Cf. LXX-Isa 54:17. Wis 9:15; 14:8. 2 Macc 7:16. LXX-Gen 6:11. Ex 10:15. Isa 24:3.4.

made by putting together the main word βροτός and the pro-elements ἀ– (in-, un-) and πρό– (pre-). It is noteworthy that both composites indicate human depictions of the divine nature. This means that man, through self-observation, forms his divine pictures and ideas. According to Diogenes Laertius (3rd century AD), a human being can be characterized as πρόβροτος – if it had not existed yet, namely before birth: ὃς δ᾽ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν[65]. According to Hesychius, the adjective ἄμβροτος can only signify divine nature. On the basis of the written evidence, we are not able to establish whether he really identifies ἄμβροτος with ἀγέννητος or not. Of course, theogonies are handed down through the centuries. The question is: Can ἄμβροτος be identified with ἀγέννητος for gods and stand in opposition to βροτός and γεννητός γυναικός, a favourite term of the book of Job? Inasmuch as the gods of the Greek Pantheon are not born from a woman, they can also be characterized as ἀγέννητοι, but not without exceptions. In this sense, ἀγέννητος corresponds semantically to ἄμβροτος.

Hesychius equates ἄμβροτος with ἄφθαρτος (= indestructible, invulnerable), θεῖος (= divine), and ἀθάνατος (= immortal). We here can find the justification of the modern semantic equation of βροτός with mortal (Greek θνητός, θνητὸς ἄνθρωπος in opposition to the divine adjective ἀθάνατος). The equation in question presupposes a translation backwards from ἀθάνατος. If βροτός could be derived from βιβρώσκω, then their word-meanings were the same, as claimed by Hesychius. But if βρότος simply means blood, it indicates the setting of life, while βροτός designates living human beings. Of course, "mortality" belongs to the meaning of the term "man, human being", but "mortality" must not be necessarily seen as the main meaning of βροτός. In this case, we must take the following factors into consideration:

i) Βροτός, αἷμα and βρότος

Homeric word-combinations such as βρότος αἱματόεις[66], ἄμβροτα εἵματα[67], ἄμβροτον αἷμα[68] θεοῖο[69] for ἰχώρ, which

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65   Diogenes Laertius, Vitae Philosophorum, VIII 45.4.

66   Il 3:345; 7:425; 14:7; 17:345; 23:41. Od 24:189.

67   Il 15:670.680. Od 7:265; 24:59.

68   Il 5:870.

69   Il 5:339.870.

establish a connection between βρότος (= blood)[70] and βροτός, lead to the question: are they tautologies? Has βροτός really derived from βρότος, or should we assume another word-origin and, therefore, other word-meanings? Is the derivation from βιβρώσκω conceivable or should we assume Semitic origins? Does the Hebrew בשׂר form the basis of the Greek formation βροτός, or do both words, the Greek βροτος and the Hebrew בשׂר, follow the same Semitic archetype, but with virtual consonantal variations?

It is typical in Homeric texts that βροτός and αἷμα are not semantically connected, but both of them appear in war scenes. Thus I intend to consider βροτός as a derivative of the Greek verb μαραίνω/μαραίνομαι referring to the withering of flowers and leaves. This word-origin has been assumed by ancient grammarians and has pragmatic consequences for the interpretation of the context in which the word is embedded. If blood is really the place of the life of every living being, man or animal, then water can also be seen as the place of the life for plants. Therefore, if the designation βροτός has been used for human beings, the image of man can be metaphorically associated with blossom- and flower-images connected to vital questions regarding the human existence. A flower is not a thorn used as a symbol for suffering. It symbolizes beauty and boldness, but also transience and transitoriness. The withering of a flower is not the end of life, but the beginning of a new life. From a blossom comes seeds, and from seeds new plants, and from plants spring up new flowers.

ii)   Βροτός and ἄνθρωπος

Aristotle (384-322 BC) puts the well-founded question, do βροτός and ἄνθρωπος have exactly the same meaning or not. The response is developed in a philosophical definition of both terms in his Topica 133a:32ss:

> Οἷον ἐπεὶ ἀνθρώπου, ᾗ ἄνθρωπός ἐστι, λέγεται ἴδιον τὸ τριμερῆ ψυχὴν ἔχειν, καὶ βροτοῦ, ᾗ βροτός ἐστιν, εἴη ἂν ἴδιον τὸ τριμερῆ ψυχὴν ἔχειν, χρήσιμος δ᾽ ὁ τόπος οὗτος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ συμβεβηκότος· τοῖς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ᾗ ταὐτά ἐστι, ταὐτὰ δεῖ ὑπάρχειν ἢ μὴ ὑπάρχειν.

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70   LSJ 331: "blood that has run from a wound, gore".

The Aristotelian definition gives the word a new coinage in stricter connection with the triune nature of the human soul, as already discussed by Plato. This coinage goes beyond the lexical meaning and allows for a new interpretation of βροτός – in contrast to the occurrences of θνητός in Biblical writings. Βροτός is definitely not identical with θνητός, but with ἄνθρωπος. If the etymological definition of ἄνθρωπος (ἄνω + θρώσκω = he who is orientated towards the heaven) which is derived from Ancient Greek oral traditions and ascribed to Basilius the Great, a student of Ancient Greek authors in Athens, is correct, then βροτός is man who is not delivered to death, but to eternal life. Thus, we can understand why the Septuagint translators of the Hebrew Scriptures avoided θνητός[71] as an equivalent for the Hebrew אֱנוֹשׁ.

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What is the reason for the English translation of βροτός into *mortal* and the German translation into *sterblich*? Are English translations simply depended on the German? Is there no exact English or German equivalent with identical fields of meaning? Did the English or German translators use a fairly similar equivalent, having missed the real sense of βροτός? Later borrowers of these translations probably have not been aware of this problem. Therefore, we have to leave the issue of finding a better equivalent in the hands of *competent English or German philologists*.

3 HOMER'S ODYSSEY AND THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION OF JOB

3.1 Similarities and dissimilarities: some fundamental considerations

In discussing the contextual meaning and sense of βροτός in Homer's Odyssey and LXX-Job[72] it may be helpful to begin with a few comments about the literary and ideological context in which the word is embedded. It is not my intention to provide a full

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71 מות for θνητός only in Isa 51:12 (ἄνθρωπος θνητός). חי for θ. only in Job 30:23 (οἰκία γὰρ παντὶ θνητῷ γῆ) אדם for θ. in Prov 3:13; 20:24. Further Wis 7:1; 9:14; 15:17. 2 Macc 9:12. 3 Macc 3:29.

72 General features about the relationship between Homer and Old Testament, but without regard to the LXX, see Gordon (1955:43-108). On the Jewish reception of the Homeric epics in the Hellenistic Era see Dafni (2006b:34-54).

explanation of all possible convergences or divergences, but to outline only those points which are significant for the present study.

1) Both works, Homer's Odyssey and the book of Job, are poetical compositions which have undergone long processes of linguistic and mental refinement and canonical standardization. Their complex plots, consisting of heavenly and earthly events from divine and human perspective, revolve around a common ideological centre, namely the issue of theodicy[73] as an attempt to explain, in a reasonable manner, the relationship between human suffering and divine justice.

2) The beginning of each work is about a heavenly assembly and the special qualities attributed to both protagonists, Odysseus and Job.

   a) Within the framework of the Homeric anthropomorphism, attention is paid to Odysseus' similarity to the gods (Od 1:65s: θεῖοιος[74]) with regard to particular sacred actions.

   πῶς ἄν ἔπειτ᾽ Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ λαθοίμην, ὅς περὶ μὲν νόον ἐστὶ βροτῶν,

   περὶ δ᾽ ἱρὰ θεοῖσιν ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε, τοὶ οὐρανόν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν.

   b) In accordance with Old Testament monotheism, the Job-narrator says that God considers Job an incomparable ethical-moral person (Job 1:8 parall. 2:3):

οὐκ ἔστιν κατ᾽ αὐτὸν τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς   אין כמהו בארץ

ἄνθρωπος ἄμεμπτος, ἀληθινός, θεοσεβής,   איש תם וישר ירא אלהים

ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς πονηροῦ πράγματος. : וסר מרע

The MT talks about "*a perfect and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil*"[75], while the LXX-interpretation offers: "*a man blameless, true, godly, abstaining from everything evil*"[76], and despite tests "still clings to his perfection" (2:8).

3) Both Odysseus and Job must suffer. Thus, the question we have to ask is: what causes human suffering; particularly if he who suffers is indeed (or, at least, seemingly) righteous? The question as well as its

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73   See Leibnitz (1744).

74   Od 1:65; 2:233.394; 3:398.417; 4:682.799; 5:11.198; 15:63.313.347.554; 16:53; 17:230.402; 20:248.283.298.325; 21:74.189.432; 24:51.

75   Dhorme (1967:6.15s.).

76   Brenton ([1844] 1976: 665s).

answer, was developed in the prologues of both literary compositions.

a) The prologue of the Odyssey is about the assembly of the Olympian gods. In this assembly the suffering of Odysseus is assessed retrospectively and decided at the time of his homecoming.

b) The prologue of the book of Job, on the other hand, is about the heavenly assembly of God. In this assembly, Satan appears, and, as the result of his intervention, God permits the misfortunes and trials regarding Job's property, family and body.

4) In surveying these prologues, one is struck by two facts: Job is completely innocent; Odysseus, however, must suffer on account of his companions. Human hubris causing death is described in the Odyssey as follows: The companions of Odysseus, despite warnings, sacrificed and ate the cattle of Helios, and thereby committed an outrage. Because of this outrage they had to be destroyed (Od 1:7s.), but Odysseus alone survived. Odysseus dazzled the Cyclops Polyphemos, the son of Poseidon, who had already eaten two of his comrades, and wanted to kill and eat all of them. This is why Poseidon, the father of Polyphemos, prosecuted Odysseus and why Odysseus had to suffer under Poseidon's merciless wrath (Od 1:20s.). But Job suffers while resisting Satan's temptation and withstanding all his misfortunes and trials (Job 1:21; 2:10). Odysseus overcomes Poseidon's terrible blows through the helpful intervention of Athena and his own inventive intelligence. Job fights against the attacks of Satan with patience and unshakable trust in God, although God did not give a sign of His helpful guidance and protection.

5) Essential for a proper understanding of the theodicy in Odyssey and Job is the fact that various approaches converge into contexts using βροτός with regard to the fundamental question about the relationship between human suffering and divine righteousness.

a) In the Odyssey (1:32ss), Zeus himself formulates the problem of theodicy as follows:

Ὦ πόποι, οἷον δή νυ θεοὺς βροτοὶ αἰτιόωνται ἐξ ἡμέων γάρ φασι κάκ᾽ ἔμμεναι· οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε᾽ ἔχουσιν.

b) In the book of Job we can establish two different ways of looking at the theodicy-problem: The divine perspective in the

prologue and the human one in the poetical parts. The word βροτός, as designating human beings, is not used in the prosaic but in the poetical formulations of the theodicy problem in the book of Job.

3.2 The prosaic parts of Job

First, the prosaic parts of the book call attention to the existence of Satan as an external cause of every evil and pain in human life. With God's permission he is allowed to mock Job. The problem is formulated as follows:

Satan says (Job 1:11 parall. 2:5):

οὐ μὴν δὲ	ואולם
ἀλλὰ ἀποστείλας τὴν χεῖρά σου	שלח־נא אדך
ἅψαι...	... וגע
εἰ μὴν εἰς πρόσωπόν σε εὐλογήσει.	אם־לא אל־פניך יברכך:

Neither the MT nor the LXX talks directly about blasphemy of God, and prefers the euphemistic expression *"to bless God's face"*. This euphemism indicates a possible consequence of unrighteous human suffering, given that the trust upon God is not strong enough and lasts only as long as man accepts good things from God. By contrast, man's trustful reaction to evil events is the doxological expression, according to Job 1:21:

εἴη τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου εὐλογημένον	יהי שם יהוה מברך

Accordingly, Job's response to Satan's proof is (Job 1:21):

ὁ Κύριος ἔδωκεν,	יהוה נתן
ὁ Κύριος ἀφείλατο·	ויהוה לקח
ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ ἔδοξεν,	
οὕτως καὶ ἐγένετο·	

The interpretative LXX addition (cf. Vulgate and the Latin Fathers) emphasizes God's free will and righteous judgement, notwithstanding evil against his righteous ones.

Job's wife, without being asked according to the MT and the LXX, seems to act as a mediator between Satan and Job, a role comparable to that of Eve in the temptation between the serpent and Adam. Her words in the MT-Job 2:9 are a resumption of Satan's words to God Job 1:11 parall. 2:5:

εἰπόν τι ῥῆμα εἰς Κύριον	ברך אלהים
καὶ τελεύτα.	ומת

The LXX prefers the indeterminate rendering εἰπόν τι ῥῆμα εἰς Κύριον and dispels the suspicion that the woman once again acts as an *instrumentum diaboli*. This rendering must be understood as the sequel to a large LXX addition concerning the lamentation of Job's wife explaining her own suffering, which will be discussed in more detail in another article.

Job's response in interrogative form (Job 2:10) does not deviate from his initial position (Job 1:21):

εἰ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐδεξάμεθα	גם את־הטוב נקבל
ἐκ χειρὸς Κυρίου,	מאת האלהים
τὰ κακὰ οὐχ ὑποίσομεν;	ואת־הרע לא נקבל

The LXX version seeks to avoid the suspicion that evil as well as good is caused by God and prefers the explanation ἐκ χειρὸς Κυρίου (= from the hand of the Lord) instead of the Hebrew מאת האלהים (= from Elohim). This rendering is used to mark clearly cause and permission of evil with a strong emphasis on an intermediary between God and man, represented by Satan, as an unexpected visitor to God's heavenly assembly.

3.3   The poetical parts of Job

From another viewpoint and on a much narrower textual basis, the later poetical parts come closer to the problem of the theodicy. The poetical parts invoke a repeated expression, in the way of a refrain, spoken by a "night figure", Job and his friends. This expression can be seen as reminiscent of the above-mentioned aphorism of Zeus (Od 1:65s).

1) In Job 4:17 we read in the LXX:

Τί γάρ;	
μὴ καθαρὸς ἔσται βροτὸς ἐναντίον Κυρίου	האנוש מאלוה יצדק
ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ἄμεμπτος ἀνήρ;	אם מעשהו יטהר־גבר ׃

The question of the "night figure" according to the MT places emphasis on the reason that nobody can claim to be righteous and pure before God. The LXX replaces יצדק and יטהר by καθαρὸς and ἄμεμπτος, as well as מאלוה by ἐναντίον Κυρίου. The ambiguous preposition ἐναντίον accentuates not only that every human being stands before God, a declaration of God's omnipresence, but also the fact that under certain conditions human beings can revolt against Him (ἐναντίον Κυρίου). These conditions have already been explained in Job's prologue. The adjective

ἄμεμπτος serves as a cross-reference to the prologue telling the reader to again look at Job's attributes as awarded by God and to remember that Job had never designated himself to be righteous before God. This fact gives the impression that the words of Eliphaz got inspired, not by God, but by Satan. In this way, the translator shows clearly the logical connection between the prosaic and poetic parts of the book.

2) In Job 9:2, we read in Job's monologue:

πῶς γὰρ ἔσται δίκαιος βροτὸς παρὰ Κυρίῳ   : ומה־יצדק אנוש עם־אל

In this more literal translation, special significance is given to the limitations of the human nature in spite of righteousness (πῶς and παρὰ Κυρίῳ "how" and "with/by God"). In Job 4:17, the opposition between God and man is emphasized; Job's words evoke a feeling of human belonging to God, but underline the difference despite closeness between God and man.

3) In Job 15:14 the question is:

τίς γὰρ	מה־
ὢν βροτός,	אנוש
ὅτι ἔσται ἄμεμπτος,	כי־יזכה
ἢ ὡς ἐσόμενος δίκαιος γεννητὸς γυναικός;	: וכי־יצדק ילוד אשה

The Hebrew elliptical interrogative clause מה־אנוש is followed by two subordinated כי־clauses. In the Greek translation we find a mixed style. The second כי־clause has been translated into an ἢ ὡς-clause alluding briefly to the role of Eve in Adam's sin (according to Gen 2-3). LXX-Job 15:14 provides the contrary, referring to human nature (ὢν) and its historical development (ἔσται–ἐσόμενος). Accordingly, human nature is decisive for only limited possibilities of historical development. While ἄμεμπτος for יזכה is reminiscent of LXX-Job 4:17 and the attributes awarded to Job by God in the prologue, the term γεννητὸς γυναικός – ילוד אשה is used parallel to βροτός as a cross-reference to Gen 3:14ss. In connection with δίκαιος – צדיק, the term in question recalls the violation of the divine commandment "not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil". But Adam and Eve refuse to obey God and follow the godless will of the serpent, as well as their own desires.

4) LXX-Job 25:4 says:

πῶς γὰρ ἔσται δίκαιος βροτὸς ἔναντι Κυρίου;   ומה־יצדק אנוש עם־אל

ἢ τίς ἂν ἀποκαθαρίσαι ἑαυτὸν γεννητὸς γυναικός; ומה־יזכה ילוד אשה :

It is not simply a repetition of LXX-Job 15:14 but its completion, because it contemplates reconciliation between God and man through human purification. The question of whether or not human beings can purify themselves implies dependence on God's forgiveness and redemption.

5) Job 10:4a shows that the word choice in the LXX is not arbitrary.

ἢ ὥσπερ βροτὸς ὁρᾷ καθορᾷ   העיני בשר לך

*ἢ καθὼς ὁρᾷ ἄνθρωπος βλέψῃ; אם־כראות אנוש תראה :

The question is about προσωπολημψία, namely to judge people according to their outer image and not according to their heart. This issue has been explained in TestJob 4:8, where a "night figure" tells Job that God judges and repays not according to the "outer image" but according to the total obedience to His law: ἀπροσωπόληπτός ἐστιν ἀποδιδοὺς ἑκάστῳ τῷ ὑπακούοντι ἀγαθά.

It is noteworthy that this is the only case where βροτός replaces בשר. Although in the same context of God's judgement the word אנוש also occurs, translated now into ἄνθρωπος, an equivalent also determined by Aristotle (Topica 133a:32). In this sense, it could be considered as a sign of interchange between βροτός and ἄνθρωπος, and transferability of qualities of the term ἄνθρωπος to βροτός, and vice versa. Therefore, the question to ask is what kind of new coinages does the term βροτός receive in the Job-poetry? Apart from this it is also necessary to prove, on the basis of text examples, if we are able to progress from the word etymology to text ideology and theology. For this purpose, it is useful to look closer at Job 4:17 and its parallels in the book of Job.

4   CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS OF ΒΡΟΤΟΣ IN JOB 4:17 AND PARALLELS

Both the author and the translator of the book of Job were influenced by Greek ways of thinking and were concerned about giving theologically well-founded short descriptive definitions of the attributes of βροτός in the context in which this term is used. These definitions must be first identified and the relationship between their components analysed in order to establish the specific theological meaning of βροτός in the LXX-Job.

1. The first definition is given in the context of Job 4:17. Job 4:6-7 and 4:12-21 play a decisive role in the understanding of this verse. Eliphaz wants Job to accept God's challenge and to examine whether he, in his everyday life, has ever justified God's punishment (Job 4:6-7). He does not even think about an external, personal cause of evil. His main question is: What does God's justice really mean? Eliphaz seems to understand the Ancient Oriental *jus talionis* quite literally and is convinced that injustice is automatically[77] followed by punishment: *"Whatever someone sows, that is what he will reap"* (Gl 6:7). After that he generalizes this opinion and tries to support it with the description of a dream (see above the original texts). The figure in the dream asks (4:17): MT: *"Can a man seem upright to God, would anybody seem pure in the presence of his Maker?"* LXX: *"What, shall a BROTOS (Brenton: a mortal) be pure before the Lord? or a man be blameless in regard to his works?"* The terms אנוש and גבר appear parallel in the MT. The LXX translates them into βροτός and ἀνήρ. In the Hebrew text אנוש is clearly used as a general term, while גבר has a special meaning. As a designation of God the rare poetical term אלוה is used, translated in the LXX into θεός, referring to God as the Creator of all the world. LXX-Job 4:17 entails two main components: a) the relationship of man (βροτός) to the Lord of the whole world (κύριος)[78], characterized by the adjective καθαρός (=pure) and b) the deeds of a man (βροτός) and his relationship to his created environment, characterized by ἄμεμπτος (=blameless). The rendering καθαρός εἰμι for the Hebrew verbal form יצדק is used only once in the LXX. Καθαρός εἰμι usually serves as an equivalent for יטהר (PC, G-stem), which is found in the next sentence translated into ἄμεμπτός εἰμι (= to be blameless). The question is whether the LXX changes the verse ordering because of poetical freedom, or does it translate a source text with another verse ordering. In this instance, both textual intention as well as the contextual term definition of אנוש and גבר against βροτός and ἀνήρ change. The relationship of אנוש to אלוה is determined on the basis of divine justice, while the relationship of גבר as מעשהו to his Creator is characterized in terms of human purity.

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77   Cf. Koch (1972).

78   אלוה for κύριος occurs in Job 3:4; 4:9,17; 5:17; 6:4.8; 10:2; 11:5,6,7; 12:6; 15:8; 16:20,21; 19:6,21,26; 22:26; 27:3,8; 31:6,33.

Eliphaz and the "night figure" share the same opinion, but their statements of justification are different. Eliphaz' is grounded in human deeds and God's reaction. The "night figure", however, presupposes the general characteristics of human nature in comparison to the attributes of God the Creator, and emphasizes that no human being is righteous and pure before God. Complete righteousness and purity can only be considered as divine attributes, while human beings are marked with inherent imperfection in relation to God and are full of flaws dividing one from the other and from God.

2. LXX-Job 4:19ss provides further examples by which we can gain a sense of the Septuagint connotations of βροτός.

19 τοὺς δὲ κατοικοῦντας οἰκίας πηλίνας,	אַף שֹׁכְנֵי בָתֵּי־חֹמֶר
ἐξ ὧν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πηλοῦ ἐσμεν,	אֲשֶׁר־בֶּעָפָר יְסוֹדָם
ἔπαισεν αὐτοὺς σητὸς τρόπον·	יְדַכְּאוּם לִפְנֵי־עָשׁ :
20 καὶ ἀπὸ πρωΐθεν ἕως ἑσπέρας οὐκέτι εἰσίν,	מִבֹּקֶר לָעֶרֶב יֻכַּתּוּ
παρὰ τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς	מִבְּלִי מֵשִׂים
ἑαυτοῖς βοηθῆσαι	
ἀπώλοντο·	לָנֶצַח יֹאבֵדוּ :
21 ἐνεφύσησεν γὰρ αὐτοῖς	הֲלֹא־נִסַּע יִתְרָם בָּם
καὶ ἐξηράνθησαν,	
ἀπώλοντο	יָמוּתוּ
παρὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν αὐτοὺς σοφίαν.	וְלֹא בְחָכְמָה :

Βροτός is not only he who dwells in a clay hut, but he whose body is formed of clay (cf. LXX-Job 10:9). The MT underlines that all his foundation and support is nothing but clay. Likewise, Gen 2:7 says that human beings are formed of dust from the ground (עָפָר מִן־ הָאֲדָמָה) and Gen 3:19 adds that a man is dust and to dust he will return (עָפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל־עָפָר תָּשׁוּב – γῆ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ). In this sense, LXX-Job 10:9 says: Μνήσθητι, ὅτι πηλόν με ἔπλασας, εἰς δὲ γῆν με πάλιν ἀποστρέφεις. LXX-Isa 45:9 asks: Ποῖον βέλτιον κατεσκεύασα ὡς πηλόν κεραμέως; Wis 9:15, however, establishes: Φθαρτὸν γὰρ σῶμα βαρύνει ψυχὴν, καὶ βρίθει τὸ γεῶδες σκῆνος νοῦν πολυφρόντιδα, re-echoing the main theological intention of the just mentioned proto-canonical passages. Obviously, the Job-expression maintains close links to Genesis 2:7; 3:19 and Isaiah 45:9. The translator, when using

πήλινος for חמר, joins terminology and ideology of LXX-Genesis and LXX-Isaiah in one sole expression of LXX-Job 4:19, which ends with the short remark: ἔπαισεν αὐτοὺς σητὸς τρόπον. The MT ידכאום לפני ־עש describes a repeated, recurring phenomenon by means of an imperfect, namely that all human beings will one day be food for the worms, like the flowers will be smitten by a moth. In contrast, the LXX presents a unique event: He smote the βροτοί like a moth. The question is: Who is he? God or Satan? The formulation can be seen as a hint about the role of the serpent in the life of mankind and God's punishment according to Genesis 3. The translator obviously keeps in mind that the life of βροτός in the context of LXX-Job is comparable to plants (see also LXX-Job 4:21) and not to animals, and therefore compares he who has smitten βροτός, not with a serpent, but with a moth. The consequences are described in various ways in Job 4:21-22. MT-Job 4:20 says יכתו מבקר לערב. LXX-Job 4:20 prefers the philosophical expression „οὐκέτι εἰσιν" (= they no longer exist), which also recalls the imagery of flowers in blossom for only one day. The reasoning behind this picture is given as follows: καὶ ἀπὸ πρωίθεν ἕως ἑσπέρας οὐκέτι εἰσίν, παρὰ τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς (LXX-Job 4:20 cf. 25:4). This is explained in the LXX with the imagery from the plant-kingdom: For he blew upon them, and they are withered (ἐνεφύσησεν γὰρ αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐξηράνθησαν), because they do not have any kind of wisdom in themselves (παρὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν αὐτοὺς σοφίαν). In this way, the LXX transforms Genesis 2:9 leaving two kinds of interpretation open: God's breath of life upon man's face also means the gift of wisdom. Human beings prefer, however, knowledge of good and evil more than divine wisdom and, therefore, they die. The MT does not only talk about a lack of wisdom (4:21), but also about the lack of a saviour (4:20). Because of its clearly messianic character, this text has often been omitted in the critical commentaries, which give priority to the LXX-reading παρὰ τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι (hebr. מושיע) instead of משים.

3. The experience of evil in the world and misfortunes in the personal life leads Job to put the question about the lines marking the beginning and the end of βροτός (Job 10:18-22):

18	ἵνα τί οὖν ἐκ κοιλίας με ἐξήγαγες,	הצאתני אגוע ועין
	καὶ οὐκ ἀπέθανον,	
	ὀφθαλμὸς δέ με οὐκ εἶδεν,	ולמה מרחם לא־תראני :

19	καὶ ὥσπερ οὐκ ὢν ἐγενόμην;	כאשר לא־הייתי
	διὰ τί γὰρ	אהיה
	ἐκ γαστρὸς εἰς μνῆμα οὐκ ἀπηλλάγην;	בטן לקבר אובל :
20	ἢ οὐκ ὀλίγος ἐστιν ὁ χρόνος τοῦ βίου μου;	הלא־מעט ימי יחדל
	ἔασόν με	ישית ממני
	ἀναπαύσασθαι μικρὸν	ואבליגה מעט :
21	πρὸ τοῦ με πορευθῆναι	בטרם אלך
	ὅθεν οὐκ ἀναστρέψω,	ולא אשוב
	εἰς γῆν σκοτεινὴν καὶ γνοφεράν,	אל־ארץ חשך וצלמות :
22	εἰς γῆν σκότους αἰωνίου,	ארץ עיפתה
		כמו אפל צלמות
	οὗ οὐκ ἔστιν φέγγος	ולא סדרים
	οὐδὲ ὁρᾶν ζωὴν βροτῶν.	ותפע כמו־אפל :

The opening question ἵνα τί οὖν ἐκ κοιλίας με ἐξήγαγες, καὶ οὐκ ἀπέθανον, ὀφθαλμὸς δέ με οὐκ εἶδεν recalls Job 3:1ss. The whole passage, however, gives an explicit listing of what does not mean βροτός. "Non-exixtence" (οὐκ ὢν) is here defined as one who has never been born from a woman and has come from the maternal womb directly into the grave, the matrix of the earth, the mother of all (10:19 cf. Sir 40:1). This first *explanatio ex negatio* of βροτός as γεννητός γυναικός, reminds one of the philosophical term πρόβροτος by Diogenes Laertius (Vitae VIII 45.4). A witness of human existence is that human beings have been born and are able to perceive and be perceived by other human beings (10:18.22). Βροτός is ephemeral because he is shortlived (10:20). He exists as long as he has not yet gone the way from which there is no return; the way to the land of deep darkness, where there is no light and everything dies (10:22), human or plant.

4. On the basis of LXX-Job 14:1s we can first establish an explicit connection between βροτός and the plant kingdom, respectively the flowers as a symbol for the shortlived man.

1	βροτος γὰρ γεννητὸς γυναικὸς	אדם ילוד אשה
	ὀλιγόβιος καὶ πλήρης ὀργῆς	קצר ימים ושבע־רגז :
(2)	ἢ ὥσπερ ἄνθος ἀνθῆσαν ἐξέπεσεν,	כציץ יצא וימל
	ἀπέδρα δὲ ὥσπερ σκιὰ καὶ οὐ μὴ στῇ.	ויברח כצל ולא יעמוד :

In LXX-Job 14:2, βροτός is compared with a flower, which grows up and will wither away. But withering is not the end of a flower and death is not the end of βροτός. This fact will be elucidated in LXX-Job 14:10ss:

10	ἀνὴρ δὲ τελευτήσας ᾤχετο,	וּגֶבֶר יָמוּת וַיֶּחֱלָשׁ
	πεσὼν δὲ βροτὸς οὐκέτι ἔστιν.	וַיִּגְוַע אָדָם וְאַיּוֹ :
11	ἄνθρωπος δὲ κοιμηθεὶς οὐ μὴ ἀναστῇ,	עַד־בִּלְתִּי שָׁמַיִם לֹא־יָקוּם
	ἕως ἂν ὁ οὐρανὸς οὐ μὴ συρραφῇ·...	עַד־בִּלְתִּי שָׁמַיִם לֹא יָקִיצוּ...
12	ἐὰν γὰρ ἀποθάνῃ ἄνθρωπος,	אִם־יָמוּת גֶּבֶר
	ζήσεται	הֲיִחְיֶה
	συντελέσας ἡμέρας τοῦ βίου αὐτοῦ	כָּל־יְמֵי צְבָאִי אֲיַחֵל

LXX-Job 14:10ss makes a clear difference between the life and earthly existence of βροτός. According to LXX-Job 14:12 the end of the earthly existence is not identical with the end of life. In this way the belief in the resurrection and the eternal life with God, is indirectly expressed. In contrast to other Old Testament passages, which refer to the resurrection of a chosen individual person, here the focus is on a general resurrection that will take place at the end of earthly existence, when the heavens will be joined together (LXX-Job 14:11).

5 OUTLOOKS

The Septuagint term βροτός therefore does not refer to the man who is to die, the mortal one. It expresses and emphasizes the beauty of a complete human being, as an excellent creature of God, who is transient but strives to eternity, who is vulnerable but wants to reach perfection, who is mortal and longs for immortality[79].

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79   Cf. the speech of Eve to Adam according to Romanus Melodus, Cantica 11.3.4-4.6:

„ Τίς ἐν τοῖς ὠσί μου νῦν ἤχησεν ἐκεῖνο ὃ ἤλπιζον;
Παρθένον τὴν τίκτουσαν τῆς κατάρας τὴν λύτρωσιν,
ἧς μόνη φωνὴ ἔλυσέ μου τὰ δυσχερῆ
καὶ ταύτης γονὴ ἔτρωσε τὸν τρώσαντά με.
ταύτην ἣν προέγραψεν υἱὸς Ἀμὼς
ἡ ῥάβδος τοῦ Ἰεσσαὶ ἡ βλαστήσασά μοι κλάδον
οὗ φαγοῦσα ο ὐ θ ν ή ξ ο μ α ι, ἡ κεχαριτωμένη.

The ordering and the logic of the translation of the LXX-Job betrays the usage of extremely obstinate rules which seem mostly independent from the Hebrew source text (*Vorlage*).

The LXX translator offers his translation with a Genesis 2-3 and 6:3 motivation, as well as oriented interpretation of βροτός. Special attention has been paid to Genesis 2:7 and 3:19, where two border situations of human existence are described: the beginning of his life and the end. Reflections have been presented on the cause or the origin of the limitedness of human life. Human beings are limited, because they are creatures and are not the Creator. Human beings are more limited, because they let themselves be tempted by evil and enticed to contravene God's rules.

The textual treatment indicates the abilities of its translator, simultaneously a poet, or at least a student of great Greek poets. The translator attempts to show, by means of exclusive vocabulary, the theological reason that no human being can be absolutely pure and righteous before God. He is not content with the populist view of the theodicy problem, but he tries to provide a theological explanation with the assistance of Homeric vocabulary, in this case βροτός. The parameters of this explanation are depicted in the various βροτός-occurrences of LXX-Job.

If the final form of the Hebrew book of Job must be dated during the Hellenistic period[80], then we can argue that the translator of Job must have had profound knowledge of the Homeric epics. Not only the translator of LXX-Job, but also the author/redactor/editor of the Hebrew text seems to share this knowledge, since the Hebrew text was shaped with in view of the course of events occurring in the Homeric Epics, especially in the Odyssey. The possibility should not be excluded that the Odyssey influenced the *end-redaction* of the

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Τῆς χελιδόνος ἀκούσας κατ᾽ ὄρθρον κελαδούσης μοι,

τὸν ἰσοθανάτιον ὕπνον. Ἀδάμ, ἀφεὶς ἀνάστηθι

ἄκουσόν μου τῆς συζύγου.

ἐγὼ ἡ πάλαι πτῶμα προξενήσασα β ρ ο τ ο ῖ ς νῦν ἀνιστῶ.

Κατανόησον τὰ θαυμάσια, ἰδὲ τὴν ἀπείρανδρον

διὰ τοῦ γεννήματος ἰωμένην τοῦ τραύματος…".

80   Of course with deviations and divergences from other Old Testament texts, which may be depend on the argument about Greek Polytheism and Hebrew Monotheism.

prosaic parts of the Hebrew book of Job,[81] because the time between the *end-form* of the Hebrew *Vorlage* of Job and its Greek translation could not have been so long. We can maintain that both authors/redactors/editors and the translator of the book of Job were hellenized and the book itself was a product of Hebrew religious belief in the soil of the Greek language and thought. Therefore, it is conceivable that the Job-translator consulted Homeric vocabulary to bring the content of the book of Job closer to the Greek reader.

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81   It is remarkable that also the Pseudepigraphon TestJob 28:1, which explains exclusively the prosaic parts of Job (*Rahmenerzählung*) adopts from the Odyssey the scheme of *twenty years wandering* of Odysseus transforming it in *twenty years suffering* of Job.

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