Textual Criticism, Translation Studies, and Symmachus’s Version in the Book of Job

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Abstract

The late second century CE translator/reviser Symmachus took a very different approach to the versions of his predecessor Aquila. His renderings do not appear to have survived in Jewish circles but were much admired by early Christian scholars, thanks to their preservation in Origen’s Hexapla. However, for textual critics of the Hebrew Bible Symmachus’ free approach has limited his value since his readings cannot be easily retroverted, unlike those of Aquila or Theodotion. In the case of the book of Job, although Symmachus’ “transformations” (to use a term from Descriptive Translation Studies) differ in nature from the freedoms observed in Og Job, while rejecting the narrow isomorphism of Aquila and Theodotion he nevertheless adheres quite closely to his Hebrew Vorlage. This offers the possibility of identifying elements significant for textual criticism in his rendering, including variant reading traditions or a different consonantal text.

Keywords

Book of Job – Descriptive Translation Studies – Symmachus – Aquila – Theodotion – textual criticism – isomorphism

1 Introduction

Since Textus focuses on textual criticism, it may seem questionable to offer a contribution on the fragmentary renderings of a famously free translator in a notoriously difficult Hebrew book. Can Symmachus (Sym.) offer anything to the text-critical study of Job? In the past I have argued that modern com-
mentators should take the ‘Three’ Jewish Greek revisers more seriously in this respect. However, in contrast to his predecessors Aquila and Theodotion, Sym.’s approach to rendering his Hebrew Vorlage is far less predictable. Such inconsistency produces attractive renderings that were much admired in antiquity, but creates problems for using his version in textual criticism because it is difficult to retrovert his readings.

2 The Use of Ancient Versions in Textual Criticism

Despite the Dead Sea discoveries in the mid-twentieth century, the role of the versions (LXX, Targum, Peshitta, Vulgate) in biblical textual criticism remains a significant one because, in contrast to the manuscripts from the Dead Sea, these ancient versions are complete rather than fragmentary. The LXX version has particular value in that certain books in the corpus were translated before many of the Qumran scrolls were copied; furthermore, they were produced in the Jewish diaspora in Egypt. Thus, they could in theory reflect textual traditions varying from the MT. At the same time, all versions are translations, and therefore at one remove from the Hebrew text. This inevitably limits their usefulness for text-critical purposes.

To use the LXX in textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible entails reconstruction of the underlying Hebrew of the translators, a technique referred to as retroversion. Retroversion has to be based on systematic study of the tendencies of individual translators in rendering Hebrew. Statistical study of renderings in different books of the LXX Pentateuch was developed from the 1950s by the Finnish school, aided by the critical editing of the text by Rahlfs and the Göttingen Unternehmen. This was a significant step in this regard as it avoided...
the more impressionistic or “cherry-picking” approach of older scholarship to the texts. The advent of computers enabled the alignment of the Hebrew and Greek texts for comparison—the catss project. Although the categorisation of individual books as “literal” or “free” is too broad to be very helpful, clearly some books are less amenable to isomorphic alignment or statistical analysis than others. Their unpredictable renderings are often ascribed to lack of competence in Hebrew or to exegetical interference, sometimes both. It is only recently that LXX scholars have looked to the field of modern Translation Studies, especially Gideon Toury’s Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS). Such approaches provide insights into the apparent “deviations” from more obvious renderings of the Hebrew text, to ascertain which may be attributable to variants in the Vorlage and which are due to either exegesis or “transformations” required by the process of translation itself. One of the pioneering studies in this respect is that of Theo A.W. van der Louw’s Transformations in the Septuagint, which takes soundings from chapters from three different LXX books—Gen 2, Isa 1, and Prov 6.

A particular contribution of modern Translation Studies to Septuagint studies is to provide a more sympathetic perspective on the translators’ negotiation of difficult texts by taking seriously the overall effect of the rendering. One of the many contributions the field of Translation Studies offers to biblical scholars is to remind us that the original text is itself polyvalent, especially in the case of poetry. It emphasises both the possibility and legitimacy of different

4 Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint/Scriptural Study.

5 For an early and nuanced discussion of the issues of categorising translations, see James Barr, The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations, msu 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

6 Theo A.W. van der Louw, Transformations in the Septuagint: Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies, cebt 47 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007). Responding to James Barr’s claim that “freedom in translation is not a tangible method, so suitably to be grasped and comprehended” (Barr, Typology of Literalism, 7), Van der Louw counters that one purpose of his own study is “to show that ‘free renderings’ can be grasped and comprehended. Although transformations were not always employed consistently, they often have a logic in their own right”; Transformations, 9. A more recent application of DTS to Septuagint Studies is the monograph by Cameron Boyd-Taylor, Reading between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies, bts 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), and especially his analysis of 06 Job 41:17–26 from the perspective of DTS (393–429) and descriptive profile of the book in terms of its translational norms and acceptability (425).

7 See Matthew Reynolds, The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer and Petrarch to Homer and Logue (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22, who insists on “the finally ungraspable nature of the literary text” because of its own multiple meanings even before any attempt at translation is made, and the danger of “a recurrent line of argument which conjures up a fantasy of perfect translation—of a work that is miraculously the same as its source despite
renderings, shaped by the expectations of the target readership, as well as the personal choices and education of the translator. This leads us to a better appreciation of the translated books of the LXX corpus as multidimensional cultural artefacts, rather than primarily sources for us to plunder for text-critical purposes or to criticise when they do not conform to our own expectations of a competent rendering of the Hebrew.\textsuperscript{8} Too often in biblical scholarship one still encounters the phrase, “the meaning of the Hebrew,” as if this was obvious and unambiguous. Such attitudes also overlook the fact that our own perceptions of the text’s meaning have been shaped by two millennia of scholarship and translations.

The Old Greek (\textit{OG}) translations clearly became self-standing Greek texts very shortly after their creation, even if some could be used as cribs to the Hebrew for a few readers. Even in the case of books we regard as less close to the details and order of the Hebrew wording (such as \textit{LXX Isaiah}, \textit{LXX Proverbs}, and \textit{OG Job}), their readers would have accepted that they were faithful representations of the overall message to the present generation in its own cultural context.\textsuperscript{9}

\begin{itemize}
\item existing in the changed circumstances of a different language and culture.” Lawrence Venuti makes a similar point: “The source text is never accessible in some direct, unmediated manner; it is always already mediated, whether it is read in the source language or translated into the receiving language”; \textit{The Translation Studies Reader}, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012), 497.
\item As an example of a now outdated attitude towards \textit{LXX Isaiah}, see the remarks of R.R. Ottley in a study that is in other respects still valuable: “The translators’ mistakes in reading (however ample their excuse) are so numerous, ranging in their effect from minute points to the wreck of whole sentences, that their view cannot carry weight as to the real Hebrew text of their day”; \textit{The Book of Isaiah according to the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus)} i. \textit{Introduction and Translation with a Parallel Version from the Hebrew} (London: C.J. Clay, 1904), viii.
\item In this regard, see the illuminating discussion by Lawrence Venuti of “instrumental” versus “hermeneutic” models of translation; “Genealogies of Translation Theory: Jerome,” in \textit{Translation Studies Reader}, 483–502. The instrumental model treats translation as “the reproduction or transfer of an invariant which the source’s text contains or causes, typically described as its form, its meaning, or its effect,” while the hermeneutic model “treats translation as an interpretation of the source text whose form, meaning, and effect are seen as variable, subject to inevitable transformation during the translating process”; “Genealogies,” 483. “In the hermeneutic model, any correspondence is partial and contingent: partial because it is incomplete in recreating the source text and slanted towards the receiving language and culture; contingent because it is fixed by one among other possible interpretations, each of which establishes a criterion of accuracy that varies among receiving cultural constituencies, social situations, and historical moments”; “Genealogies,” 484. Venuti advocates the hermeneutic model as “more sophisticated … comprehensive … ethical,” (485).
\end{itemize}
However, even if we can acknowledge the renderings of “freer” LXX translations as both theologically meaningful and possessing literary merit for their early readers, in our role as textual critics we may nevertheless feel frustration at these books’ apparent lack of utility in witnessing to their Hebrew Vorlage. Greek Job is particularly difficult. The lengthy Hebrew text of Job is poetic and contains many hapax legomena. Unvocalised and perhaps lacking an established reading tradition (since it was neither part of the Torah nor the Prophets), it must have presented a considerable challenge to the translator, who condensed, omitted, and embellished the content in order to produce a rendering acceptable within his community—as demonstrated by by Marieke Dhont in her recent monograph.\textsuperscript{10}

The apparently “missing” stanzas\textsuperscript{11} in OG Job vis à vis the Hebrew were later supplied by Origen in his Hexapla from a later and more isomorphic rendering, probably that of Theodotion.\textsuperscript{12} The resulting clash of translational styles in

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\textsuperscript{10} Marieke Dhont, \textit{Style and Context of Old Greek Job}, JSJSup 183 (Leiden: Brill, 2018). She applies the Polysystem Theory developed by Itamar Even-Zohar to OG Job. This theory views a translation as part of the larger cultural context, rather than as a text in isolation from other works and a social setting. On the challenges of cross-cultural translation, see Lawrence Venuti, \textit{The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference} (London: Routledge, 1998), esp. 99–102 concerning the impact of cultural presuppositions on how Homer's English translators have rendered poetic form and dealt with problematic issues such as Achilles' "unmanly" tears.

\textsuperscript{11} Omission and abridgement are not necessarily signs of lack of comprehension. It should not be ruled out that, in the case of “freer” LXX translations, the translator had an eye to what would work in the target language and culture, and was also prepared to leave out what he considered redundant or unnecessary. In modern literary translations it is not uncommon for sentences or sections to be left out of the translation, often for commercial reasons: the translator or publisher fears that the translated book will be too long, or not appreciated in its new context. An example would be Hans Fallada's long novel \textit{Wolf unter Wölfen}, published in 1937, whose original English translator Philip Owens heavily abridged the book; \textit{Wolf Among Wolves} (London: Putnam, 1938). The "missing" material has since been restored by Thorsten Carstensen and Nicholas Jacobs in the 2010 edition published by Melville House. Carstensen explains in an afterword that the motivation behind many of Owens's earlier omissions seems to have been his judgment that the sections in question were too focused on the inner motivations of the characters and did not advance the plot. Ironically, some reviewers have since expressed a preference for the 1938 abridged version of the novel.

\textsuperscript{12} For the source of the asterised lines in Job, see the invaluable study of Peter J. Gentry, \textit{The Asterisked Material in Greek Job}, scs 38 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995). He concludes that this material dates to the early first century CE and is to be identified with the version of Theodotion for Job known to Origen, though Gentry leaves open the question of how it relates to Theodotion Daniel or to Theodotion in other books; \textit{Asterisked Material}, 494–499.

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the ecclesiastical text of Job has been termed “a genetic monstrosity hybridized from apples and oranges” by Peter Gentry.\textsuperscript{13}

As in other books, Aquila and Sym. also produced their own versions of Hebrew Job, which were culled from Origen’s Hexapla and preserved only very fragmentarily in the margins of manuscripts or in patristic commentaries.\textsuperscript{14} The textual critic can easily employ the readings of Theodotion and Aquila in Job, owing to their isomorphic approach and tendency to standardize renderings (or hazard “etymological” ones, in the case of hapaxes), since these features aid retroversion to a presumed Vorlage.

In the case of the readings to Job from Sym., both the brevity of the preserved readings and the unpredictability of his translational choices make the task of retroversion a hard one. Yet his version can still yield interesting results for textual criticism.

3 Examples from Symmachus in the Book of Job\textsuperscript{15}

The following examples from what remains of Sym.’s renderings of Job demonstrate first of all—as in other books—his confident use of educated Greek and his desire to remain closer to the Hebrew text than OG Job without resorting to isomorphism.\textsuperscript{16} In spite of the difficulties Sym.’s style of rendering presents to retroversion and thus to using his version for textual criticism of Hebrew Job, in a few instances it is clear that Sym. knew of a different reading tradition from the MT, and in one or two, he recognised a slightly different consonantal text.

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  \item \textsuperscript{13} Peter J. Gentry, “The Place of Theodotion-Job in the Textual History of the Septuagint,” in \textit{Origen’s Hexapla and Fragments}, ed. Alison Salvesen, TSAJ 58 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 199.
  \item \textsuperscript{14} John Meade’s fresh edition of the Hexaplaric material to Job chs. 22–42 supersedes Frederick Field’s edition of this material in his \textit{Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive Veterum interpretum Graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta}, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875), though it is still worth consulting Field for his retroversions and erudite comments; John D. Meade, \textit{A Critical Edition of the Hexaplaric Fragments of Job 22–42}, Origen’s Hexapla: A Critical Edition of the Extant Fragments (Leuven: Peeters, 2020). My thanks to Prof. Meade for supplying copy of his work in advance of publication.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} The examples are taken from the Göttingen edition of Job—Joseph Ziegler, \textit{Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum x1.4: Iob} (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), and see especially Ziegler’s notes on the sources for the Three in Job (151–161).
  \item \textsuperscript{16} Ideally one should employ a similar analysis to that of Theo van der Louw, but the fragmentary state of Sym.’s readings hinders systematic categorisation of the different types of transformation.
\end{itemize}
The first three examples note some instances where Sym. represents the Hebrew faithfully without resorting to isomorphism or stereotyping, and yet produces a rendering that differs from the OG’s own relatively free handling of its Vorlage.

3.1 Stylistic Improvement of Syntax and Vocabulary

Job 2:11fg

וטִּקְבִּילוּוֹ לִנָּלְדוֹבָלוֹ וֹֽמֲחַנְלֽוּוֹ

“They arranged together to come to commiserate with him and to comfort him.”

ΟΓ καὶ παρεγένοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁμοθυμαδὸν τοῦ παρακαλέσαι καὶ ἐπισκέψασαι αὐτὸν

“And they came to him with one accord to comfort and show concern about him.”

σύνετάξαντο γὰρ ὁμοῦ ἐλθόντες συμπαθῆσαι αὐτῷ καὶ παραμυθήσασθαι αὐτὸν

Sym. “For they arranged, having come together, to sympathise with him and console him.”

Dhont notes that the use of the articular infinitive is a feature of Koine, as is also the meaning of παρακαλέω as “to comfort.” In non-biblical Greek ἐπισκέπτομαι can have the sense of visiting the sick, so is used appropriately in this context. However, in LXX translations the subject of ἐπισκέπτομαι tends to be God rather than humans; he “visits” them with benevolent attention.

In contrast to the OG, Sym. uses γὰρ instead of καὶ, and an aorist participle for the first of three Hebrew infinitive constructs. Sym. also uses ὁμοῖος, which is not used in the translated books of the LXX corpus apart from one place in an asterised addition to Job (34:29), but occurs in the non-translated works (2, 3, 4 Maccabees; Wis 7:11) and in other preserved readings from Sym. He

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17 Dhont, Style and Context, 123, 125, citing Geoffrey Horrocks, Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers, 2nd ed. (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 94, and John A.L. Lee, A Lexical Study of the Septuagint Version of the Pentateuch, scs 14 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1983), 83.

18 See references in BDAG ad loc., § 2.

19 My thanks to Jan Joosten for pointing this out.

20 According to Hatch and Redpath, at Gen 3:22; 2 Kgdms 213, 15; Job 3:18; 24:4; Ps 37:38 (36:38)
avoids the articular infinitive. The verbs he employs here are uncommon in the translated corpus of the Ο.Γ. συντάσσομαι in the Middle voice occurs only in 1 Esd 2:15; Ο.Γ Dan 11:23, and Theodotion Sus 14, the last of which corresponds closely in sense to Sym.’s use here in Job 2:11. συμπαθέω occurs only once, in 4 Macc 5:25. παρακαλέω also occurs only once, in 2 Macc 15:9. Sym. may have avoided παρακαλέω and ἐπισκέπτομαι because the Koine and “biblical” senses they had acquired did not in his view match the context. He preferred more literary-sounding verbs in this instance.

3.2 Sym. Closer to the Hebrew than Ο.Γ but Smoother than Theodotion and Aquila

Job 1:16b

“Fire of God/a mighty fire fell from the sky and burned up the flock.”

Ο.Γ Πῦρ ἔπεσεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ κατέκαυσεν τὰ πρόβατα
“Fire fell from the sky and burned up the sheep.”

<σ’> πῦρ παρά τοῦ θεοῦ κατηνέχθη; σ’ ἀπέκτεινεν
Sym. “Fire from God descended ... it slew ...”

The Ο.Γ.’s “fire from heaven/the sky” is discussed by Dhont, who observes that this is an imprecise rendering influenced by similar phrases in other LXX books. Aquila and Theodotion are recorded as having the predictably literal rendering πῦρ θεοῦ, “fire of God.” Sym. is also closer to the Hebrew in this respect, but provides a smoother and less Hebraic rendering by avoiding a straight genitive by means of παρά. Καταφέρομαι appears a few times in LXX

LXX); 48:5 (47:5 LXX); 49:3, 11 (48:3, 11 LXX); 62:30 (61:30 LXX); 74:6 (73:6 LXX); 122:3 (121:3 LXX); 141:10 (140:10 LXX); Isa 52:9; 60:13; Jer 6:11; 10:8; 46:12 (26:12 LXX).

Other scholars have suggested that the omission of “of God” was theoretically motivated: Gillis Gerleman, Studies in the Septuagint i: Book of Job, Lunds Universitets Arsskrift N.F. Avd. 1, Band 43. No. 2 (Lund: Gleerup, 1946), 58; Donald H. Gard, The Exegetical Method of the Greek Translator of the Book of Job, JBLS 8 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 1952), 61; Martina Kepper and Markus Witte, “Job. Das Buch Ijob, Hiob,” in Septuaginta Deutsch. Erläuterungen und Kommentare, ed. M. Karrer and W. Kraus (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011), 2:2069. Yet Homer Heater notes that the word “God” may not have been in the OG’s Vorlage, and is absent in some Hebrew manuscripts of 2 Kgs 11:2: A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job, CBQMS 11 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 1982), 20–21.
translated books, usually in comparisons of water or hail pouring down (2 Sam 14:14; Isa 17:13; 28:2; Ezek 47:2; Mic 1:4).

3.3 **Higher Register Lexical Choice**

**Job 1:20a**

‘וגל יֹאֵל וּבְרוֹא הַיְּבָאָם
וֹלִﬠְמ

“Thus having stood up, Job tore apart his clothes”

גַּל is not a standard item piece of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. It is associated with the high priest in Exod 38 and 39, and Lev 8. It is worn by Samuel as a child, a prophet, and a ghost; by Saul and Jonathan; by virgin princesses (2 Sam 13:8); by princes (Ezek 26:16); by David bringing up the ark (1 Chron 15:27); by Ezra the priest (Ezra 9:3, 5) and by Job’s high-ranking visitors (Job 2:12) as well as by Job himself here. It is rendered by a variety of Greek words in the LXX corpus, including גַּל as it is here, though this is a term without special connotations. In this verse both Theodotion and Aquila employ their standard equivalents for גַּל: Theodotion uses ἐπενδύτης “robe,” as in 2 Sam 13:8, and Aquila has ἔνδυμα, “garment,” often found in the LXX for גַּל.22

However, here Sym. has ἐφεστρίς, a word that does not appear in the LXX, NT, Josephus, or Philo. According to LSJ, ἐφεστρίς refers in Xenophon to an upper garment, and in Athenaeus to a philosopher’s mantle, though in Plutarch to a soldier’s cloak. Whether Sym. intended to indicate something about Job’s social standing by the use of this term is unclear. The historian Herodian, a contemporary of Sym., uses the term three times, of fine clothes and of praetorians wearing civilian dress (Ab Excessu Divi Marci 4.2.3; 7.11, 2, 3), so it was not confined to elite attire. One of the Suda’s lexical comments suggests the word was sometimes associated with afflictions.23

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22 See Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum fragmenta* ad loc., and Ziegler’s apparatus for the attributions in the witnesses to Aquila and Sym.

23 ἐφεστρίς: ἰμάτιον Ἱωμαῖκον. λέγεται δὲ καὶ μανδύης καὶ βίφρον· δίπον ἐν ὑπερόφ. βλέπομενα ἐλί-ψεις σημαίνουσιν; A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon*, 4 vols., Lexicographi Graeci i [(Leipzig: Teubner, 1928–1935), accessed online at Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.}
3.4  *The Case of הלפת*

Sym.’s treatment of הלפת may be a theological manoeuvre. He also transforms verb + noun to verb only.

**Job 1:22c**

The precise meaning of the word הלפת is hard to determine here, and scholars and translations differ a great deal:24

| Translation | Meaning |
|-------------|---------|
| NRSV | “or charge God with wrong-doing;” |
| NJPS | “or cast reproach upon God” |
| ASV | “nor charged God foolishly;” |
| NEB | “nor charged God with unreason.” |
| OG | καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ θεῷ (NETS: “He did not charge God with folly”) |
| Vulgate | neque stultum quid contra Deum locutus est |
| Peshittta | “nor did he blaspheme [ปราหม] against God.” |

Sym. renders the Hebrew’s verb plus noun with a verb alone, ἀφρονεύσατο. Though this evidently reflects a similar understanding to the OG of הלפת as “foolishness,” the overall sense is “nor did he act foolishly towards God,” which is rather different from the OG. Presumably the foolish action Sym. envisaged would have been for Job to blame God for his troubles: compare the reading of the ‘Hebrew’ (אֶבֶד) version preserved in the catena tradition: οὐκ ἐμέμψατο τῷ θεῷ, “he did not blame God/find fault with God.” However, Sym.’s verb ἀφρονεύσασαι is an unusual one, equivalent to ἀφρονέω, but unattested apart from LXX Jer 10:21 (for niphal of בכר), and Sym. 1Kgdms 13:13, 25 26:21 for niphal בסל.

Compare the renderings of הלפת many chapters later:

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24  See *DCH* 8:665, for possible meanings of הלפת (“1. Tastelessness, unseemliness; 2. perhaps curse, blasphemy”) and suggested emendations; also 4Q230 1, 2 and 4Q525 14 11, 28 for הלפות, “insolence.” The discussion in the philological notes of S.R. Driver and G.B. Gray remains helpful; *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job, together with a New Translation*, 1CC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921) 230–11.

25  One of the two manuscripts with this reading corrects it to ἡφρονησάς derived from the more familiar form ἀφρονέω.
Job 24:12c

“Shall God not attribute unseemliness?”

(Contrast NRSV “Yet God pays no attention to their prayer” (*הָלִּפְתּ))

OG αὐτός δὲ διὰ τί τούτων ἐπισκοπήν οὐ πεποίηται;
“yet for what reason has he not carried out visitation on these people?”

(Contrast NETS “and he, why has he not paid these a visit?”)

θ΄ ... ἀφροσύνην
“... senselessness”

α΄ καὶ θεὸς οὐ δήσει σπουδήν
“and shall God not make haste?”

σ΄ ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμποιεῖ μωρίαν (Ziegler); ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμποιεῖ τιμωρίαν (Meade)
“yet God does not cause folly” OR “yet God does not carry out punishment”

Here the OG’s rendering is quite unexpected. It seems to be a contextual rendering within the broader passage in which Job is complaining that the wicked do terrible things but God does not punish them.

We have only a single word here from Theodotion, but he apparently picks up the rendering of הָלִּפְתּ used by the OG in Job 1:22, ἀφροσύνην, and implicitly corrects the OG in the present verse.

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26 Hans Strauß, Hiob: Kapitel 19,1–42,17, BKAT XVI/2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn; Neukirchener Verlag, 2000), 86, notes that two Hebrew manuscripts as well as the Peshitta have הָלִּפְתּ, which he believes to be the original reading (cf. BHS note on Job 24:12c “frt 1 c 2 Mss S הָלִּפְתּ”).

27 See Claude Cox, “Tying It All Together: The Use of Particles in Old Greek Job,” BIOSCS 38 (2005): 41–54, on the OG translator’s frequent use of δὲ (along with other particles) to clarify what he considered to be the flow of the text.

28 See Dhont, Style and Content, 154: ποιεῖν ἐπισκοπήν appears 6 times in OG Job, twice with no formal correspondence. It is not a construction found in Classical Greek or papyri, though the word ἐπισκοπή on its own is Koine. Cf. also OG Isa 23:17 and Prov 29:13. God is always the subject of this construction.

29 The only witness to Theodotion’s and Aquila’s readings here is the Syrohexapla, but they are easily reconstructed in Greek.
The original form of Sym.’s reading here is debated. For Job 24:12c Field gives Sym. as ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμπνέει (s. ἐμποιεῖ30) μωρίαν. Ziegler’s apparatus at Job 24:12c gives ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμποιεῖ μωρίαν, “yet God does not cause folly”, noting that manuscript 250 places τι before μωρίαν and the Catena group minus 250 have ἐμπνεεί. However, John Meade has checked the Kollationen of hexaplaric fragments made by Ursula and Dieter Hagedorn and notes that manuscripts 250 and 3005 both have τιμωρίαν (creating a rhetorical question, “Yet does God not carry out vengeance?”). Meade cites Jerome’s et Deus inultum abire non patitur in support of this reading, and argues that Sym. understood הָלְפִתּ here as derived from piel הָלְפִתּ, meaning “to pronounce judgment.”31

ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμποιεῖ τιμωρίαν would make good sense in Greek and also fits the context. However, it creates a mismatch between how Sym. understands הָלְפִתּ in Job 1:22 (as “foolishness”) and in 24:12 (as “retribution”). A consistent understanding of הָלְפִתּ in both verses as “folly” would support the originality of the reading ὁ δὲ θεὸς οὐκ ἐμποιεῖ μωρίαν, and the statement “yet God does not cause folly.” In context the rendering would imply that the wicked are responsible for their own actions: God does not force them to act foolishly in this way.32 However, given Sym.’s unpredictability in rendering, the other reading (preferred by Meade) is also possible.

3.5 Treatment of Metaphors
Metaphors in poetry are often a challenge for translators. They may be rendered by using a simile to clarify the sense, as Sym. does here.

Job 24:16

וֹמָ֗ל וּמְתִּחםָ֥מוֹי

NJPS “by day they shut themselves in” (lit. “sealed themselves up”)

※ יַמִּרְעָ֥ס יָסָ֑רֶד יָסָֽרֶד

σ’ ὃς ἐν σφραγίδι κρύψουσιν εαυτοὺς

The OG does not provide a rendering of this verse. The translation supplied by Origen from Theodotion is ※ יַמִּרְעָ֥ס יָסָ֑רֶד יָסָֽרֶד, close to the MT: “by

30 On the basis of Syh כִּי.
31 Meade, Critical Edition, 62–63.
32 According to the Syrohexapla as retroverted by Field (Origenis Hexaplorum fragmenta, 1:245 n. 17), Aquila rendered this phrase as καὶ θεὸς οὐ θήσει σπουδήν [< מָעָלָה דַּלָּה], which Field compared with the Harklean version at Mark 6:25. Field believed this reconstructed reading was probably to be understood in the sense, “and shall God not show diligence?” However, where the LXX and Aquila use σπουδή, it seems always to be in the sense of “haste” rather than “care.”
day they sealed themselves up” (NETS). Sym. prefers to change it into a simile: ὡς ἐν σφραγίδι κρύψουσιν ἑαυτούς, “as with a seal they shall hide themselves.”

3.6 Building on Earlier Renderings

Though Sym. often goes his own way, especially against Aquila’s isomorphism and standardised equivalents, he may also build on the precedent of earlier renderings.

Job 24:17

ירה혀 דע犷 לעלומות כְּרַחַץ בָּלֹבּות עָלָמָה:
※ הָֽיֲהוֹ פָּקַר לְמָוָֽם כְּרַחַץ בָּלֹבּות עָלָמָה:
※ יְהוָֽ הָֽיֲהוֹ פָּקַר לְמָוָֽם כְּרַחַץ בָּלֹבּות עָלָמָה:
σ’ ἐὰν γένηται αὐτοῖς ὁδόρος σκιᾶς θανάτου:
φωραθεὶς γὰρ ἀνύπαρκτος ἐσται σκιασθεὶς: θανάτῳ

In a continuation of the passage describing the attitude of the wicked, this rather opaque Hebrew verse is rendered interpretatively by NRSV as “For deep darkness is morning to all of them; for they are friends with the terrors of deep darkness;” and perhaps more effectively by NJPS as “For all of them morning is darkness; It is then that they discern the terror of darkness.”

There is no OG translation for this verse (or for several around it), since the translator jumped straight to the curse in 24:18c. However, the asterised Theodotion text (cited above) supplies a rendering that NETS understands to mean “because with one accord the morning is death’s shadow to them, because he will recognise the troubles of death’s shadow.”

Sym.’s rendering does not seem very close to the Hebrew; “If dawn comes to them, [it is] death’s shadow: for once discovered, it will be non-existent, overshadowed by death.” His equivalent of תוהלב, ἀνύπαρκτος, is not found in the NT, LXX, or Josephus, but does occur five times in Philo.35 The rendering is not unprecedented: it is evidently influenced by renderings in LXX Ezekiel where תוהלב occurs followed by references to future nonexistence (Ezek 26:21 καὶ οὐχ ὑπάρξεις; Ezek 27:36 καὶ οὐκέτι ἔσῃ; Ezek 28:19 καὶ οὐχ ὑπάρξεις), even though

33 See also Sym. at Ps 18:35 (17:35 LXX), ὡς τόξον χαλκοῦν for γῆς ἀνθρωπου.
34 Field has βιασθείς here, but there is no support in Ziegler’s apparatus for this reading. Meade, Critical Edition, also gives σκιασθείς (67). Field’s note (Origenis Hexalorum fragmenta, vol. ii:46 n. 23) underlines his dependence on earlier scholars rather than familiarity with the manuscript and Catena sources in this case.
35 Mut. 36; Spec. 3:45; Prob. 72; Act. 5:105. The word’s philosophical overtones are clear from its frequency in Sextus Empiricus (2nd–3rd century CE) and by patristic writers, especially on the subject of creation.
Aquila is the likely source for the equivalence, based on construing תוהלב "not-being." Thus while the OG apparently rendered תוהלב as ἀνάγκη, "compulsion," Aquila used the noun ἀνυπαρξία, "non-existence." In a further occurrence of תוהלב, Job 27:20, where the OG has αἱ ὀδύναι, Aquila and Sym. are both recorded as rendering it as ἀνυπαρξίαι.

To summarise, the association of תוהלב with non-being originated with LXX Ezekiel. Using a rather ingenious etymology, Aquila used a contemporary philosophical term to render the word תוהלב itself. Although Sym. does not often accept Aquila's equivalences, in this case he did, employing both the nominal form ἀνυπαρξία and the adjective ἀνύπαρκτος.

3.7 Job 24:25

In the following example consisting of two separate fragments, we see Sym. using particles and a preposition (ἀλλὰ νῦν ... ὑπέρ) in a sensitive manner to convey the apparent sense. However, he also witnesses to a non-MT tradition of vocalisation.

Job 24:25

טַלִּם מֵאֲלֹהִים וַיִּבְיַק מֵאֲלֹהִים נִפְשָׂא.

NRSV “If it is not so, who will prove me a liar, and show that there is nothing in what I say?”

OG εἴ δὲ μὴ, τίς ἐστιν ὁ φάμενος ἐμὲ λέγειν

καὶ γίνεσθαι εἰς οὐδὲν τὰ φήματά μου; ¶

NETS “But if it is not so, who is there to say that I speak what is false

and will he place my words as nothing?” ¶

36 The earliest occurrence of the noun is in the first century BCE philosopher Philodemus, in his work de Morte, col. 8 line 16. Like ἀνύπαρκτος, it appears frequently in the work of Sextus Empiricus and in patristic writers. See also תוהלב in Job 18:11 (OG ὀδύναι, "pains") where Aquila’s rendering has to be reconstructed from the Syrohexapla, but was probably ἀνυπαρξία. Though there is a tentative attribution of ἀνυπαρξία to Theodotion in Field at Job 18:15 for תוהלב, Field has a corrective note (Origenis Hexaplorum fragmenta, 2:34 n. 18), which is apparently accepted and followed by Ziegler in his edition of Job.

Compare also Sym.’s rendering ὡς ὑπάρξαντες in Ps 73:19 (72:19 LXX) for תוהלב. For Ps 96:5 (95:5 LXX) לֶאָלוּ הַלָּא לֶא, Field reconstructs the Syh reading לֶאָלוּ הַלָּא לֶא for Sym. as “ἀνύπαρκτος” (Origenis Hexaplorum fragmenta, 2:253 and n. 4), but this seems unlikely both as an equivalent for the Hebrew and as representing the Syriac.

37 Martina Kepper and Markus Witte, “Hiob,” in Septuaginta Deutsch 2:2101, mention Thackeray’s opinion that the use of this middle participle of φημί demonstrated the OG translator’s familiarity with Homer.
σ´ ἀλλὰ νῦν ... καὶ τάξει τῷ θεῷ λόγον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ

“Rather, now ... and [who] will set [before] God a word on my behalf?”

Sym. must have read the consonants as representing אַלֵא, rather than the MT’s לאל. Jerome’s iuxta Hebraeos rendering “et ponere ante Deum verba mea” may have been influenced or supported by Sym., although he may also have known of the same vocalisation independently. The Peshitta evidently also understood the form as אַלֵא (ܫܬܬܘڕܩܠܡܐ, “and my word would be considered before God”), demonstrating that this particular vocalisation of the Hebrew was more widely established (rather than confined to Sym.’s circle) in the late second century CE.

3.8 Job 25:3–4

In the following passage Sym. follows the Hebrew more closely than the OG, and possibly indulges in some wordplay.

Job 25:3–4

והש מסקר להגדותיו עולייו לא-יךום אוורתה:

חוה נוחק אננוח תוכיח לקו נוח יוהנה:

NRSV “Is there any number to his armies? Upon whom does his light not arise?

How then can a mortal be righteous before God? How can one born of woman be pure?”

In v. 3 the OG unexpectedly interprets the verse as suggesting the certainty of divine punishment for pirates (or highwaymen):

OG μη γαρ τις υπολαβοι οτι έστιν παρέλκυσις πειραταις;

έπι τινας δε σωχ επελευσται ένεδρα παρ’ αυτου;

The reconstruction follows Meade, Critical Edition.

Also noted by Meade, Critical Edition, ad loc. The variant reading also occurs in some Hebrew codices cited by De Rossi; Variae lectiones Veteris Testamenti, volumen iv: Psalmi, Proverbia, Job, Daniel, Ezras, Nehemias, Chronicla, seu Paralipomena (Parma: Regio, 1788), 121. I am grateful to Jan Joosten for this reference.

Harry M. Orlinsky interprets the OG as a statement, “let none think that there is respite for robbers”; “Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job, ii,” Huca 29 (1958): 248. פִּירָאָוִּיס for פְּיָרָאָוִּיס is also used in Hos 6:9, but in OG Job 16:9 the Greek word has no obvious equivalent in the Hebrew (βέλη πειρατῶν αὐτοῦ ἐπ’ ἐμοὶ ἐπέσεν).
πῶς γὰρ ἔσται δίκαιος βροτὸς ἔναντι κυρίου; ἢ τίς ἂν ἀποκαθαρίσαι αὐτὸν γεννητὸς γυναικός;

NETS “For would there be anyone who thinks there is respite for brigands? And upon whom will not come ambushes from him? For how can a mortal be right before the Lord? Or who, born of woman, could purify himself?”

25:3a σ’ μὴ ἔστιν ἀριθμὸς τῶν στρατιῶν αὐτοῦ
25:3b ἐνεδρα] σ’ ἐπιτάγματα (Ziegler); ἐπιτάγμα (Meade)
25:4 σ’ διὰ τίνος δε ἄρρυπος ἔσται τεχθεὶς ὑπὸ γυναικὸς

In contrast, Sym. understands 25:3a as referring to the overwhelming power of the forces at God’s disposal: μὴ ἔστιν ἀριθμὸς τῶν στρατιῶν αὐτοῦ “is there a number to his armies?” His rendering of ἐνεδρα, “his light,” by ἐπιτάγμα is intriguing: the word may denote an understanding as “command” from the supposed etymological connection of ἔνεδρα with ἔνα, “his light,” but taking it as “detachment of troops” would link with the idea of armies in the previous line. Since we do not know how Sym. rendered the rest of the line, it is hard to be sure whether any wordplay was intended.

For v. 4b we do have an entire line of Sym. preserved in the Catena tradition, “by what means shall one given birth by woman be clean?” However, the form ἄρρυπος is attested rather later than Sym.’s time, and one wonders whether this is the original form of the reading.

42 Dhont notes that the rather poetic word βροτὸς is used only in οΓ Job in the LXX corpus; Style and Context, 41.
43 Kepper and Witte note that this is a neologism in the LXX, found also in Tob 12:9; “Hiob,” 2102.
44 See Dhont on the higher register of the οΓ in its use of the optative that was declining in Koine; Style and Context, 150–151.
45 Meade, Critical Edition, 74–75, argues convincingly for the singular form against the majority reading in the plural favoured by Ziegler.
46 Meade’s Critical Edition prefers στρατιῶν over the variant στρατιωτῶν, “soldiers”, found in manuscripts 256–740.
47 See Alison Salvesen, Symmachus in the Pentateuch, JSS Monographs (Manchester: Journal of Semitic Studies, 1991), 70, on Aquila’s rendering φωτίζειν for ὅρος in Exod 4:12, 15; 35:34; and see 173–174 on Sym.’s rendering of ὅρος in Deut 33:8.
48 According to a search on TLG, ἄρρυπος is first attested in the Apostolic Constitutions of the fourth century (ἵνα δυνώμεθα προσεύχεσθαι καθαρὰ τῇ καρδίᾳ καὶ ἄρπυν, 2.53), and in the Acts of Philip in the same century (in the phrase καὶ περιποίησα τε χρυσῷ καὶ ἄρπυν, 119.9–10).
3.9  

*Job 26:5*

This verse in Hebrew has mythological connotations which Sym. may have attempted to match in Greek.

**Job 26:5**

The shades tremble below the waters, and their inhabitants."

> "Will giants be brought forth beneath the water and its neighbors?"

> "Do Raphaim have birth pangs from below waters and the ones encamped in them?"

> "Shall the Godfighters clamour under the waters, and those neighbouring them?"

Evidently Theodotion Job, Aquila, and Sym. all understood the line as a rhetorical question. This suggests that there was a wider tradition that took the *he* of the MT’s definite article as an interrogative (*איה*). Theodotion Job and Aquila both associated the verb with the noun denoting labour pains, ליהה. Sym.’s *θορυβήσουσιν* is more puzzling. The verb is one of his favourites, occurring at least 12 times according to Hatch and Redpath, and for a variety of Hebrew words. But the clue may lie in Eccl 7:7, where Sym. rendered הָלוֹחְי as *θορυβήσει*. This suggests that he read וּלָלוֹחְי of the MT in Job 26:5 as *וּלָלוֹהְי. The strong similarity between *khet* and *he* in square script—observable in Qumran manuscripts—was still an issue in the second century CE, and it would be difficult to say which of the two readings was more original.  

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49 See Meade, *Critical Edition*, 80, for a discussion of the original form of the name.
50 Field has some minor variants in Aquila’s reading compared with Ziegler’s apparatus (both based on Greek manuscript 252 Syh) and the reconstruction of Meade (*Critical Edition*, 80).
51 Cf. also the Peshitta’s *איה, which often represents Hebrew interrogative *he; and Targum to Job’s -דָּל שֶׁפֶן, “it is possible that ...”. Thanks to Jan Joosten for noting these parallels.
52 Jerome's *iuxta Hebraeos* reading *gemunt*, "groan,” could conceivably render either form.
Theodotion Job’s “giants” are influenced by the rendering of Rephaim in Gen 14:5; Josh 12:4, 13:12 and elsewhere (the same Greek occurs for the Nephilim of Genesis too), but Aquila prefers to transliterate what he understands as a proper name. Sym. may be “acculturating” the reference within the target language: Hans-Joachim Schoeps has argued that Sym.’s rendering here is a reference to the Greek myth found in Apollodorus (1st–2nd century CE), of the race of earth-born giants who fought the gods. This is possible, though it should also be noted that the same word also appears in the mouth of Gamaliel in Acts 5:39 in his warning to those opposing the followers of “the Way,” where the allusion cannot be mythological! The related verb θεομαχεῖν occurs in 2 Macc 7:19 and Josephus’s c. Ap. 1:246, 263, where they also concern human challenges to the God of the Jews. These examples evidently have no connection to Greek mythology. However, Schoeps’s case is somewhat strengthened by Sym.’s use of θεομάχοι elsewhere for סְיָאָפְר, in Ps 88:11 (87:11 LXX) and Prov 9:18, where the Hebrew verses speak of the underworld, and so could fit with a mythological presentation.

The other instance of Sym. using θεομάχοι for סְיָאָפְר, in Prov 21:16, is less convincing as a reference to Greek myth. This is because the verse states that a person who strays from the path of understanding will end up “in the assembly of Rephaim/θεομάχων”: in this case, the sense of θεομάχοι as humans who rebel against the Jewish God is more likely.

Certainly in the next example Sym. seems to reject a mythological reading:

Job 26:12–13

עַל הָאֶרֶץ וָאֱלֹהֵי נַחֲשָׁן

NRSV “... he struck down Rahab. By his wind the heavens were made fair; his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.”

OG ἐτρωσεν τὸ κῆτος. (13) Κλείθρα δὲ οὐρανοῦ δεδοίκασιν αὐτόν, προστά-γματι δὲ ἐθανάτωσεν δράκοντα ἀποστάτην.

NETS “He struck down the sea-monster, (13) and heaven’s bars fear him, and by decree he put to death the rebellious dragon.”

v. 12 ἐτρωσεν τὸ κῆτος] σὲ συγκλά άλαζονείαν
v. 13 δράκοντα ἀποστάτην] σὲ τὸν δριν τὸν συγκλείοντα

53 See Hans-Joachim Schoeps, “Mythologisches bei Symmachus,” in his Aus frühchristlicher Zeit: Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1950), 89–92.
54 Εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστιν, οὐ δυνήσεσθε καταλύσαι αὐτούς, μήποτε καὶ θεομάχι εὑρέθητε.
Marieke Dhont argues that OG Job regularly demythologises Leviathan and Rahab by rendering them as κῆτος, the translation used in LXX Gen 1 of the great sea creatures made by God, and in the case of Leviathan, once as δράκων.\footnote{Job 7:18; 31:14; Isa 23:17. Dhont, Style and Context, 129–131, would disagree with Gerleman’s contention that the choice of δράκων in OG Job here is a conscious mythologisation (Gerleman, Studies, 40–42). See also Boyd-Taylor, Reading Between the Lines, 418.} Sym. goes even further in this respect, rendering בַֽהָֽרַץַחָ֣מ in 26:12 as συγκλάτηρ κατὰ ἀλαζονείαν “he crushes arrogance,” no doubt following his usual understanding of the root ἄλαζω as referring to pride rather than the sea serpent of ancient myth.\footnote{Ἀλαζονεία, which occurs in Classical Greek, is surprisingly not found in the translated corpus of the LXX (although the derived verbal form ἀλαζονεύομαι appears in Prov 25:6 for ידוות, and the adjective ἀλαζών in LXX Hab, Theodotion Job, and LXX Prov), but does occur in the Jewish Greek compositions: 2 Macc 9:3; 15:6; 4 Macc 1:26; 215; 8:19; 4:1; 17:7. It is common in Philo, and appears in both Josephus and the NT. Sym. usually understands בַֽהָֽרַץ as “pride, boastfulness,” normally using ἀλαζων: cf. Psa 40:5 (39:5 LXX); Job 9:3. In Psa 87:4 (86:4 LXX) he renders with ὑπερφανεία. Yet at Isa 30:7 Sym. has πάροιχος (OG κατοχή) for בַֽהָֽרַץ.} However, in the next verse he renders חִרְבָּשׁ חַשָּׁנָתָיְוִללַﬠ as τὸν ὄφιν τὸν συγκλείοντα “the serpent that imprisons” (associating חִרְבָּש with the homonymous root meaning “to bar”). Both the Hebrew and Sym. share a close verbal connection to Isa 27:1 prophesying God’s punishment of “Leviathan the fleeing serpent,” which Sym. renders κατὰ Λευιαθαν τοῦ ὀφεως τοῦ συγκλειοντος. Similarly to Job 26:13, in Isa 51:9 (וְלָא חַיִּרְבָּשָׁנָתָיְוִללַﬠ סָיֵּת לַﬠֲבֹדוֹתֶ֥תֶ֥ת מַלְצָ֛ל הָ֑רִים הַﬠֲבֹדוֹתֶ֥ת מַלְצָ֛ל הָֽרַץ) Sym. renders “Rahab” as the abstract “arrogance” again, paired with a reptilian creature (כִּי יְהֵם יָנֵֽנְּתַֽﬠֲבֹדוֹתֶ֥ת מַלְצָ֛ל הָֽרִים "when I was pressing on my ways, when God would pay a visit to my house".

3.10 Job 29:4
Here is another example where Sym.’s rendering reflects a non-MT reading—either owing to a variant in his Vorlage, or to his own misreading of the consonantal text.

Job 29:4

NRSV “when I was in my prime, when the friendship of God was upon my tent”
OG ὅτε ἦμην ἐπιβρίθων ὁδοῖς, ὅτε ὁ θεὸς ἐπισκοπὴν ἐποιεῖτο τοῦ οἴκου μου.
NETS “when I was pressing on my ways, when God would pay a visit to my house”
σε’ ὡσπερ ἦμην ἐν ἡμέραις νεότητός μου ὡπότε περιέφρασσεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν σκηνήν μου

The sense of the first half of the verse in Hebrew is only clear from the context: Job is evidently looking back to a better period of his life, when God was with him. The literal sense of the word ἤμην is debated, since there are two homonymous roots ἤμην. DCH (3:320) lists this verse under the sense “reproach,” implying that Job is reflecting back to the days of his youth, presumably seen as a period of foolish behaviour. Another possibility is “autumn,” i.e. prime, a period of personal fruitfulness, as BDB (358a) has it; c.f. HALOT also associates it with ἤμην “winter” but via the sense of “early time,” hence “youth.” Either way, most translators identify the expression as a metaphor.

The notable lack of formal correspondence between the Hebrew and the OG in this verse is observed by Dhont. The OG misses the metaphor in the first half of the line, and though דוס is common enough in the Hebrew Bible, and usually refers to being in someone’s friendship circle or confidence, many LXX translators struggle to give it a consistent sense or rendering. OG Job is no exception in this respect. Dhont also notes that the expression ποιεῖν/ποιεῖσθαι ἐπισκοπήν used in 29:4 sometimes translates דוס, though obviously not in this case. Sym. clarifies the metaphor in the first half of the line by rendering ὡσπερ ἦμην ἐν ἡμέραις νεότητός μου “just as I was in the days of my youth.” However, in the second part of the line, Sym.’s verb περιέφρασσεν “when God used to fence my tent about,” indicates that he read the form as כוסב, an infinitive construct with bet (דוס is an alternative form of כוס, “to hedge around.”) This reading gives a much better sense, and it is supported not only by the Peshitta here (כוסב) but also by OG Job in a place where כוס does occur in the MT:

Job 1:10

הלא את עצך
בניה מבירה ית

OG  οὔ σὺ περιέφραξας τὰ ἔξω αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ ἔσω τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ

57 Peshitta Job 29:4 does render literally, as כוסב, “in the days of my disgrace” (evidently יִפְרָח), but thereby creates a problem with the overall sense of the passage.
58 Dhont, Style and Context, 154.
59 Despite Gen 49:6 where it is accurately translated as βουλή.
60 Gard, Exegetical Method, 14, remarks on the OG’s use of ἐπισκοπή twice in Job 34:9 to denote God’s “oversight” of a man, for Hebrew that the translator considered problematic theologically. However, the difficulty of the Hebrew here may have caused the translator to see one of his preferred themes in this verse.
Comparable ΩG renderings occur at Job 3:23 συνέκλεισεν for לָכָי (where Sym. has ἀπέφραξεν) and Job 38:8 ἔφραξα for לָכָי. The Peshitta translators demonstrate a comparable approach to these similar roots in their employment of "overshadow," for מִכְנֶשׁ in Job 1:10; לָכָי in Job 3:23; and עִישְׂרִי in Exod 33:22.\footnote{With thanks to Jan Joosten for this point.}

4 Conclusion

Sym. in Job (as elsewhere) provides good examples of van der Louw’s observation, “Behind each transformation stands a literal rendering that has been rejected,”\footnote{Van der Louw, Transformations, 57 (italics original).} a literal rendering that we may sometimes see in a corresponding fragment of Theodotion or Aquila (e.g. Job 1:16b; 24:17). Yet although both ΩG Job and Sym. have a clear eye for high level Greek and syntactic naturalness, Sym.’s own transformations are not the same as those of ΩG Job. This situation does more than exemplify the truism that translational freedom can take many paths: where Sym.’s approach differs from ΩG Job—apart from reflecting the influence of non-Koine Greek (e.g. Job 1:20a; 2:11fg), and a different theological perspective (e.g. Job 1:22c)—is in his desire to ensure that as many of the elements of the source text are represented in his rendering (e.g. Job 25:3–4; 26:13), without sacrificing its appeal to the reader by resorting to isomorphism and stereotyping.

It is this closeness to the Hebrew consonantal text of Sym.’s day that offers us the opportunity to identify elements that may be significant for textual criticism and the history of the textual development of the book concerned. In the case of Job, Sym.’s fragments may exhibit signs of a variant reading tradition (e.g. Job 24:25) and occasionally hint that he had a different consonantal text (e.g. Job 26:5; 29:4).