

**Translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 and
its value for the text of Ezekiel**

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אֵף חָבַב עַמִּים כָּל־קִדְשֵׁי בְיָדְךָ וְהֵם תָּבוּ לְרַגְלֵךָ יְשׁוּא מִדְּבַר־תֶּךָ

*Surely it is you (LORD) who love the people;
all the holy ones are in your hand.
At your feet they all bow down,
and from you receive instruction (NIV).*

Deuteronomy 33:3

ABSTRACT

The Text of Peshitta Ezekiel has in the past not been appreciated for its usefulness in the textual criticism of the book of Ezekiel. The greatest influence on such a low confidence in the ancient Syriac witness to Ezekiel came from Cornill (1886). Recently however, scholars such as Mulder (1988) have begun to question this early view of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel. Such re-examination of the Peshitta text is still to be completed. The present study contributes to such a re-examination by carrying out a detailed study of the translation technique of a portion of the Ezekiel text, specifically chapters 8-11. This is consequently followed by a detailed analysis and evaluation of Peshitta Ezekiel, especially in light of the resultant translation technique studied. The translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel can be described as containing both literal and free elements so that it cannot easily be painted by one picture or phrase. The text of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 is fairly literal in terms of word-for-word translation (grammatical, lexical and syntactical aspects), but quite literal in terms of conforming to the sense, meaning and general sentence structure of the Hebrew text. These literal aspects of Peshitta Ezekiel in turn mean that the text may be useful for the textual study of Ezekiel. This position is strengthened by the fact that the Peshitta translator did not so much rely on the Septuagint as may have been thought before. From the study of the four chapters of Ezekiel mentioned here, it has emerged that there are in fact, certain variants not attested in any other witness of the Ezekiel text, although these variants may be quite few in number. Furthermore, the Septuagint of Ezekiel itself is not a complete witness of the Masoretic Text so that Peshitta Ezekiel becomes important at those sections which are absent in the Septuagint. It appears that the problematic nature of the Ezekiel text requires the use of more tools for the study of that text, of which the Peshitta should be one. Additionally, considering the tentative nature of the literary history and transmission of the biblical text as a whole, one cannot afford to ignore the Peshitta text of Ezekiel as an important tool in solving the problems by which the Ezekiel text is plagued.

OPSOMMING

Die teks van Esegïel het in die verlede nie hoë aansien geniet as bron vir die tekskritiek van die boek Esegïel nie. Cornill (1886) het op hierdie standpunt die grootste invloed uitgeoefen. In die onlangse verlede het geleerdes soos Mulder (1988) 'n ander standpunt voorgehou. Die herevaluering van die teks van Esegïel in die Peshitta geniet steeds aandag en moet nog voltooi word. Hierdie studie poog om by te dra tot so 'n herevaluering deur 'n studie te maak van die vertalingstegniek van 'n gedeelte van die boek, naamlik hoofstuk 8-11. Dit word gevolg deur 'n detailanalise en evaluering van die teks van Esegïel in die Peshitta, veral in die lig van die vertalingstegniek soos bepaal deur hierdie studie. Die vertalingstegniek van Esegïel in die Peshitta bevat sowel letterlike as vrye elemente, sodat dit nie maklik met slegs een beskrywing omskryf kan word nie. Die teks van Esegïel in die Peshitta is redelik letterlik ten opsigte van 'n woord-vir-woordvertaling (grammatikale, leksikale en sintaktiese elemente), maar taamlik letterlik om die betekenis, bedoeling en sinstruktuur van die Hebreeuse teks weer te gee. Hierdie letterlike sy van die vertaling dui daarop dat die teks wel bruikbaar kan wees vir die tekskritiese bestudering van Esegïel. Hierdie siening word daardeur versterk dat die vertaler nie soveel op die Septuagint gesteun het as wat in die verlede gedink is nie. Daar is selfs variante in hierdie teks wat in geen ander getuie voorkom nie. Dit is nie 'n groot aantal nie, maar tog is dit belangrike variante. Die Septuagint kan nie beskou word as 'n volledige getuie vir die Masoretiese teks nie, met die gevolg dat die Peshitta belangriker word ten opsigte van die gedeeltes wat nie in die Septuagint voorkom nie. Die komplekse aard van die teks van Esegïel vereis die gebruik van 'n verskeidenheid van hulpmiddels, waaronder die Peshitta 'n belangrike plek behoort in te neem. In aansluiting hierby en op grond van die voorlopige bepaling van die literêre geskiedenis en die oorlewering van die Bybelse teks as geheel, kan dit nie bekostig word om die Peshitta van Esegïel as 'n belangrike hulpmiddel te ignoreer in die soeke na oplossings vir probleme in die teks van die boek nie.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

- 1.1 BACKGROUND AND NECESSITY OF THE RESEARCH
- 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT
- 1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT
- 1.4 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH
- 1.5 METHODOLOGY
- 1.6 SPECIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE
- 1.7 PROVISIONAL CHAPTER DIVISIONS

1.1 BACKGROUND AND NECESSITY OF THE RESEARCH

The Peshitta Institute Leiden is in the process of preparing a critical text of the Peshitta Old Testament. With the aim of achieving this goal, the Institute has until now held three symposia aimed at stimulating Peshitta research. The first symposium was held in 1985, and it focused on aspects of the textual history of the Peshitta (cf. Dirksen & Mulder, 1988). In August 1993, the second symposium was held and its emphasis was on aspects of the Peshitta as a translation, namely: the relationship between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text; the Peshitta and Targum; the Syriac idiom of the Peshitta; translation technique of parts of the Peshitta and exegesis in the Peshitta (cf. Dirksen & Van der Kooij, 1995). After the symposium, further studies in these and other areas were expected to continue (Van der Kooij, 1995:220). The

third symposium was held in 2001 and its emphasis was on the use of the Peshitta in literature and liturgy (cf. Ter Haar Romeny, 2006).

In present scholarly studies, a particular problem lies in the use of Peshitta Ezekiel for the text criticism of the book of Ezekiel. In the first symposium mentioned above, M J Mulder (1988) presented a paper in which he showed a high regard for the Peshitta with a view to the textual criticism of Ezekiel. This followed the publication of a critical text of Peshitta Ezekiel in the Leiden Peshitta (Mulder, 1985). Although Mulder was the editor of this critical text of Peshitta Ezekiel in the Leiden Peshitta, he nevertheless later noted that the variants which were recorded in the second apparatus of this edition were of minor importance for the text criticism of the Masoretic Text (Mulder, 1988:171). In a publication, after he had made a random investigation of two chapters, Mulder (1988:180) comes to the conclusion that:

- The Peshitta of Ezekiel was a literal translation of the Hebrew *text* and it used the Hebrew *text* independently;
- The Hebrew *Vortage* is often evident even where the Peshitta did not translate literally or *verbatim*;
- The value of the Peshitta for the text critical and exegetical study of the book of Ezekiel exceeds that of the other ancient translations except for the Septuagint (LXX).

Therefore Mulder (1988:180) implies that there is need to make a detailed investigation into all the differences between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text which he perceived would be useful for the text critical study of Ezekiel. Van Rooy (2007:16-15) also makes similar conclusions, noting that, the Peshitta may contain better readings which come from the same tradition as the reading of the Masoretic Text, that is, at some points where it is found in agreement with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text. Mulder was unable to publish a complete study of his findings before his premature death.

Prior to these views, the views of Cornill (1886) were dominant in this field. Cornill did not have a high regard for the Peshitta regarding the textual criticism of Ezekiel, and he concluded that Peshitta Ezekiel was a free translation of its Hebrew *Vorlage*, not intended to be a literal translation (Cornill, 1886:148). This view directly contradicts that of Mulder stated above. Cornill did not possess a critical text of the Peshitta of Ezekiel, but used the 1823 edition of Lee, a text not meant for scientific purposes but for practical training purposes (Cornill, 1886:139). His study was largely based on the text in the Parish Polyglot by Gabriel Sionita and the London Polyglot, with a focused evaluation on 7a1 (Van Rooy, 2007:4). The text of these two polyglots was not a very good one, since they were based on very late manuscripts (Brock, 2006a:52, 53). Cornill's view was still adopted by Zimmerli who, in his profound commentary on Ezekiel (Zimmerli, 1979:77), also expresses his lack of confidence in the Peshitta's significance in Old Testament text criticism.

With respect to the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta, scholars are generally persuaded to regard the Masoretic Text as a close enough approximation to the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta as to justify its use as a hypothetical *Vorlage* of the Peshitta translation in Peshitta studies (Greenberg, 2002:8). According to Maori (1993:103), several studies in recent years concerning the relation of the Peshitta to the Masoretic Text in different books of the Bible show that the Hebrew text upon which the Peshitta is based generally reflects the state of the Hebrew text in the first century of the Common Era (CE). This text differs from the Masoretic Text only with respect to small details. Tov (2001:123) says that, since these differences are often very significant, the analysis of ancient translations is a necessary part of textual criticism. Therefore the broad aim within Peshitta textual studies is to, through translation technique investigations, separate those differences caused by translation and the transmission process from those differences that exist between the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text. If such differences can be

found in Peshitta Ezekiel, then it is vindicated as of great importance for the text criticism of Ezekiel. Thus Mulder's claims that the Peshitta is a literal translation of its Hebrew *Vorlage* need first to be validated, after which it is possible to analyse all the differences between the Peshitta's *Vorlage* and the Masoretic Text and determine their value for the text of Ezekiel.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the light of the above information, the research question for the present study can now be given as follows: what is the character of translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel and what conclusions can be made concerning the value of this Peshitta text in view of the study of the text of Ezekiel?

Due to the length of the book of Ezekiel and the detail which the present study intends to deal with, a discussion of the entire book of Ezekiel may not be practical. Therefore it is appropriate that focus be made primarily on a section of the book of Ezekiel. Seeing that studies on translation technique on the first chapters of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1-5) have recently been attempted (Van Rooy, 2007), the present study will thus focus on the chapters 8-11 of Ezekiel, a section also selected because it forms a coherent unit detailing the second vision of judgment collections in the first part of Ezekiel (Allen, 1994:xxvi-xxvii). The problem statement can thus be expressed more precisely by the following questions:

- What is the overall translation technique in Ezekiel chapters 8—11?
- Are there any deviations from this technique and if so, what are the reasons for their existence as well as the degree or extent of their occurrence?

- From these findings, what quantitative/qualitative evaluations can be made about the value of Peshitta Ezekiel chapters 8-11 as a tool for textual studies of Ezekiel?

1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The traditional view that Peshitta Ezekiel is a free translation of its Hebrew *Vorlage* needs to be reviewed, and the present study proposes that Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 is a literal translation which may be of greater value in the text criticism of the book of Ezekiel than is currently accepted.

1.4 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

1.4.1 Aim

The aim of this research is to achieve a balanced characterisation of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel chapters 8-11 as relates to its translation technique and thereby make an evaluation of Peshitta Ezekiel for text critical studies of the book of Ezekiel.

1.4.2 Objectives

- To make a complete characterization of the translation technique or techniques used by the translator of the Peshitta in Ezekiel chapters 8 – 11.
- To study all the various deviations from the overall translation technique, their explanations and the degree or extent of these deviations.
- To make a qualitative (and to a lesser extent, quantitative) evaluation of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Translation Technique

While studies on the scope and types of translation techniques have become quite extensive, encompassing terms such as *'paraphrase'*, *'form oriented'* and *'content oriented translation'* (Glassman, 1981:47ff.), studies in the field of ancient translations are generally interested in making a distinction of the techniques of a translation based on two primary aims: fidelity and intelligibility. The balance between these two reached in a given translation will result in that translation being described as either *'literal'* or *'free'* (Weitzman, 1999:22). Furthermore, literalism has different categories of which each needs a separate consideration, with the result that a translation may be *'literal'* in one of those categories and *'free'* in another. Weitzman (1999:22-26) mentions these aspects as: (1) segmentation of the text; (2) quantitative correspondence; (3) imitation of the Hebrew text and (4) consistency of equivalences. In recent studies, Adair (1997:181,187) suggests what he describes as *'a much more nuanced description of the translation technique'* aimed at producing a full quantitative description of the translation technique.

Adair (1997:187) proposes that a quantitative analysis of the four categories referred to by Weitzman above should be made, upon which descriptive evaluation should be based. Adair's statistical approach is instructive. However, he has as yet fully applied it on only one of the four categories (consistency of equivalents). On top of that, this approach is yet to gain wide acceptance in textual studies. Furthermore this approach, with the associated disadvantages of using statistical evaluations, does not mean that qualitative analysis of individual constituents of texts should be abandoned.

The methodology in determining translation technique in this study shall therefore be the comparative text-critical method. This comparison will be

facilitated in most cases by a linear arrangement of the Hebrew and Syriac texts, with one text placed alongside the other (also referred to as the synoptic arrangement of texts for the purpose of comparison) (cf. Greenberg, 2006:263). Within each of the four categories of evaluating translation technique discussed above, interpretive description will be used for the comparison of the Peshitta Ezekiel text against the Masoretic Text. Text-critical analysis and literary analysis will both be used as 'tools'¹ in the process of interpretive description, especially in cases where comparison between the Hebrew text² and the Peshitta shows variance.

The text of Peshitta Ezekiel will be compared against the Hebrew Masoretic Text, since internal evidence has shown that the Peshitta translation was made from a Hebrew text (Weitzman, 1999:1). The Masoretic Text will be taken to be a hypothetical *Vorlage* of the translation of Peshitta Ezekiel. On the other hand, since influence on the Peshitta by the Septuagint has been strongly highlighted, especially in the Book of Ezekiel (Weitzman, 1999:68ff; Van Rooy, 2007:17), comparison of the Peshitta against the Septuagint will also be made in this study. Other versions and witnesses like the Vulgate and the Targums will be used as well, although more as references in the case where the Hebrew and the Syriac fail to give a convincing conclusion or otherwise where the investigation necessitates reference to these witnesses. The Targums in particular have previously been argued to be the source of the Peshitta's translation due to the numerous parallels that exist between the Peshitta and these Targums (Weitzman, 1999:86).

On reconstructing the *Urtext* (the original Peshitta text), comparison between the numerous extant Peshitta manuscripts is necessary. Because of the rigorous nature of this activity (Weitzman, 1999:264), the particular details of

¹ See chapter 2 for a detailed discussion on these 'tools'.

²The phrase 'Hebrew text' will be used here and elsewhere to refer to the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Syriac translation.

such an action will not be performed in the present scope of investigations. Instead, an assumption will be made that manuscript 7a1, as corrected in the Leiden Peshitta critical edition (Mulder, 1985), is near enough to the *Urtext* of the Peshitta as to render it a hypothetical *Urtext* (Greenberg, 2002:20)³. In-depth word studies will be made using concordances, lexicons and word data bases. Relevant references will be made to research works in the field, published in monographs, articles, papers and journals.

1.5.2 Value of Text

Finally, analysis of the results obtained in comparative text critical studies above will be made to arrive at an evaluation of the text. The presence or absence of variations between the Peshitta's *Vorlage* and the Masoretic Text will be a major determining factor as to the value of the text in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11, the presence of differences being positive for its value. It should be clarified here that the differences meant are not those which result from translation, that is, its technique or transmission, but those that may ultimately be attributed to a *Vorlage* with a text different to the Masoretic Text. Greater attention is given to these aspects in the second and fourth chapters of the present study.

Another determining factor in the valuation of the text will be the character of the translation technique itself—the more literal the translation, the more valuable the text would be⁴. Evaluation will also take into account the previously understood functions of the place of the Peshitta in text criticism, that is its place among the textual witnesses of the Bible (Tov, 2001:121-154); its place in the history of the biblical text⁵ (Tov, 2001:187) and the copying and transmission of the biblical text (Tov, 2001:199-201).

³ A detailed discussion on the texts to be used and the associated presuppositions is undertaken in chapter 2

⁴ Cf. conclusions by Mulder (1988:171) in section 1.1 above

⁵ When speaking of the 'biblical text' in this study, it is primarily a reference to the Old Testament text.

1.6 SPECIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

1.6.1 Segmentation of the Text

James Barr (1979) is one of the early scholars to develop a detailed series of criteria for determining the extent to which a translation unit is literal (Adair, 1997:185). Among his six items as cited by Adair (1997:186), Barr mentions the division of the text into elements or segments, as the first aspect of literalism (Cf. Weitzman, 1999:22). This aspect is concerned with how the translator segments the text, which could be 'phrase by phrase' or 'word by word'. According to Weitzman (1999:22) the Peshitta translator needed to examine the whole phrase in order to understand the Hebrew. If Weitzman's observation is accepted, the question of segmentation applies primarily to the way that the translator expressed the sense in Syriac: whether his aim was to represent the sense of each phrase or to provide an equivalent for each Hebrew word. The level at which the translator segments the text has previously been investigated by contrasting the phrase/sentence structure of the source language with that of the target language as in the case of previous studies on the Masoretic Text and the Greek Version (Weitzman, 1999:22).

The same method will be applied in this investigation. An analysis of the rendering of syntactical units of the clause will be made. Examples of such syntactical units are: the verb, noun, adverb, preposition, adjective and the preposition⁶ (cf. Van der Merwe et al., 2000:53). It should be noted, however, that the difference between a word for word and a phrase for phrase translation would be less obvious for a translation from Hebrew to Syriac because of the structural similarity of the two languages (Weitzman, 1999:22).

⁶ Word order is also closely related to the way in which the translator segmented the text. Although it is a factor considered under 'imitation of the Hebrew', it is important to consider it here as well.

A second tool which will be used to determine the level at which the text was segmented is determining the general intelligibility of the translation. A word by word translation would be generally less intelligible than a phrase by phrase translation. Closely linked to the aspect of intelligibility is the question of the degree to which the Syriac of the translation was idiomatic, also incorporating word order. The more idiomatic the translation, the more likely it is to have been a result of phrase by phrase translation. However, since standard idiomatic Syriac of the period of the translation is difficult to establish (cf. Goldenberg, 1995:25), this criterion is less objective than the two previous ones.

1.6.2 Quantitative Correspondence

The ideal of this second type of literalism is that no words are added to or subtracted from the translated text (Weitzman, 1999:23). This aspect shall therefore be investigated in the Syriac translation.

1.6.3 Imitation of the Hebrew Form

This aspect of literalism refers to the extent to which the translator imitates the form of the original text (Weitzman, 1999:25). Since the term 'form' can be quite inclusive, a definition according to the subject at hand is necessary. Weitzman used it to include:

- The form of the Hebrew word (that is, use of Hebrew cognates or calques and Hebraisms)
- Rendering of grammatical categories (conjunctions, particles, verbs and verb inflections, adjectives)
- Syntax and word order (including prepositions, adverbs, interrogative sentences and conjunctions).

1.6.4 Consistency of Equivalences

The aspect of consistency of equivalences is another aspect of literalism where one-to-one correspondence between the vocabulary of the source text and that of the translation is investigated (Weitzman, 1999:27). According to Weitzman (1999:27) there are two guiding principles determining one-to-one correspondence: First, any given Hebrew word should be rendered by the same Syriac word on all occurrences. Secondly, every Syriac word should correspond to one Hebrew word only.

The investigation of the four aspects of literalism mentioned in the foregoing sections is expected to answer the first question (spelled out in section 1.2) and hence the first objective (section 1.4.2) of enquiry concerning the present study.

1.6.5 Analysis of Non-Literal Elements

In one or more of the above four aspects of literalism, it is expected that one or more of the factors given below would be the cause(s) of a non-literal translation. In investigating these factors, the second question (as spelled out in section 1.2) above will be given attention.

- a. Syriac idiom
- b. Influence from other versions
- c. Pursuit for clarity and intelligibility
- d. Difficult Hebrew, guesswork, Hebraisms and abdication of translators' function
- e. *Deliberate changes in the sense of the Hebrew, that is, improvement on the Hebrew text*
- f. Policies in rendering figurative language, anthropomorphisms, proper nouns and names/epithets of God
- g. The work of scribes

- h. Exegetical tendencies
- i. Stylistic changes: making explicit what is implicit in the Hebrew.

1.6.6 Evaluation of the Text of Peshitta Ezekiel Chapter 8-11

To answer the last part of the study in question, the section on the evaluation will seek to determine the value of Peshitta Ezekiel based largely on the outcome of the study of translation technique. Evaluation will also be based on the implication of the results concerning textual studies of Ezekiel as well as the place of Peshitta Ezekiel in the literary history of the Old Testament biblical text.

1.7 PROVISIONAL CHAPTER DIVISIONS

- **Chapter 2.** Theoretical aspects of translation technique and Peshitta Ezekiel

In the second chapter, the aim will be to establish the place of translation technique in textual studies and its relation to other associated processes within this study. Further, the second chapter is also aimed at establishing important theoretical aspects which are necessary when one is involved in the work of translation technique analysis.

- **Chapter 3.** Translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11

This third chapter is focused on a detailed study of the translation technique used by the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

- **Chapter 4.** Translation technique and the value of Peshitta Ezekiel

In this fourth chapter of the study under discussion, it is endeavoured to establish the value of the Peshitta Ezekiel text in view of the translation

technique as would be found in chapter 3. Other factors (besides translation technique) bearing on the value of this text are also to be discussed.

- **Chapter 5. Conclusion**

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND PESHITTA EZEKIEL

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.2 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE IN OLD TESTAMENT TEXTUAL STUDIES

2.3 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE ANALYSIS, TEXT-CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND LITERARY ANALYSIS: BOUNDARIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

2.4 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND THE TEXT OF PESHITTA EZEKIEL 8-11

2.5 CONCLUSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The study of translation technique occurs within the context of Old Testament textual studies. This field is large, which necessitates the proper understanding and function of translation technique and related studies within it. It is therefore necessary to define each process in this study and explain how it is related to the analysis of translation technique. Secondly, translation technique analysis has to do with such aspects as particular manuscript(s), assumptions concerning the *Urtext*, the *Vorlage* and various approaches in the process of translation technique analysis. There is also the need to learn

from previous studies, what is so far known of the text and translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel. These are the matters to be dealt with in the present chapter.

2.2 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE IN OLD TESTAMENT TEXTUAL STUDIES

2.2.1 Introduction

The study of the biblical text involves an investigation of its development, its copying and transmission, and of the processes which created readings and texts over centuries (Tov, 1997:4; cf. Tov, 1992:280). Textual studies concerning the Old Testament encompass text criticism, literary criticism and exegetical studies (Tov, 1997:2, 237). Text criticism is naturally involved with the study of texts and their transmission (Tov, 1992:1, 313). It is within text criticism that the study of translation technique takes place. According to Tov (1992:290), text criticism proper has two stages: the first deals with collecting and reconstructing Hebrew variants, while the second stage is concerned with their evaluation. The analysis of establishing the translation technique is embedded in these stages, but especially in the first stage of collecting Hebrew variants. Within these studies of text criticism, we also find other studies which are related to translation technique analysis. Two of these studies which particularly require attention in this study are text-critical analysis and literary analysis.

2.2.2 Text-Critical Analysis

As noted above, the term text criticism can be used to refer to quite a broad field of textual studies. However, this term could also be applied in fairly narrow contexts. Thus one can speak of text criticism in view of multiple textual witnesses to the Bible (Tov, 1992:1-3), or with respect to only one of those biblical witnesses (Weitzman, 1999:263-265). This wide application of the term and other related ones may cause confusion in trying to identify the

place of translation technique analysis and its relationship to other text-critical sciences. In this study the term 'text(ual) criticism' may be understood according to the broad definition of Tov (1992:1, 313) given above, that is, the study of texts and their transmission. On the other hand, 'text-critical analysis'¹ will be used in accordance with the definition of Tov (1997:17)² where he applies it to the isolation of deviations or variants in a translation which is presumably based on a Hebrew *Vorlage* different from the Masoretic Text. It also includes the reconstruction of elements of that *Vorlage* from the extant manuscripts of a version (Weitzman 1999:263). Text-critical analysis may further be understood in the context of the establishment of the text of a version (*Urtext*) as used by Weitzman (1999:263) (see section 2.2.4 below for the definitions of *Vorlage* and *Urtext*). Thus, the dominant exercise in text-critical analysis is to make evaluations or judgments when faced with variant readings to a specified text (Tov, 1992:290).

2.2.3 Literary Analysis

Another term that merits attention is literary analysis, as opposed to literary criticism. While literary criticism, according to Tov (1992:313-4), may properly be understood as a distinct discipline separated from textual criticism, literary analysis in the context of the present study, is rather a part of or closely related to the process of textual criticism. Lust (1986a:87) lists some aims of literary analysis as: analysis of variants in a translation created by a scribe, an editor, or a translator. Furthermore, we always have such literary aspects necessary to the analysis of translated texts as their origin, date, structure, authorship, authenticity, uniformity and relationship to other versions (Greenberg, 2002:1-25). Literary analysis in this context is unlike literary criticism in the sense that no judgements or criticisms are laid on the text (Tov, 1986b:92-93) and no one witness of the biblical text is preferred to

¹ This is not an attempt at the precise definitions of these terms (an attempt which would require more space than we have devoted in this study), but these definitions are made to facilitate clarity and a better understanding of the present study topic: translation technique analysis.

² Adair (2000:9) seems to use it interchangeably with 'text criticism'.

another. Instead, the literary nature of the text is studied mainly for the sake of understanding the translation in its own right. This need to understand each individual textual witness is also emphasized by Lust (1986b:19) who says that, before the Septuagint is used as a textual witness of the Hebrew text, it should be the subject of a text-critical study of its own .

From the preceding definition of terms, textual criticism in this study may thus be understood as a broader term encompassing within it translation technique analysis, text-critical analysis and literary analysis. Having defined the broader field of our study in this way, we may proceed to discuss what we understand by translation technique analysis within text criticism.

2.2.4 Translation Technique Analysis

According to Tov (1999:240), the term 'translation technique' "has become a *terminus technicus* denoting the special techniques used by translators when transferring the message of the source language into the target language. This includes the choice of equivalents, the amount of adherence to the Hebrew text, the equivalence of Greek³ and Hebrew grammatical categories and etymological exegesis. It also refers to some of the conditions under which the translation was written and about which information is included in the translation itself: cooperation between translators and use of earlier translations." The primary objective of the study of translation technique is a characterization of the translation as either 'free' or 'literal' concerning the various aspects of the language involved (Tov, 1997:19-29; Weitzman, 1999:22). However, the study of translation technique is a field of which the definition and demarcations have received little attention from scholars (Tov, 1999:239). What has been fixed, in a way, is the position of translation technique within text-critical analysis of texts. Translation technique is part of a process in textual studies that should be done and has a direct contribution to text-critical analysis (Adair, 2000:9). According to Tov (1997:17), the study

³ For this study, 'Greek' would be replaced by 'Syriac'.

of translation technique employed by the Greek version translators provides data for a better understanding of the translators' exegesis and for the text critical evaluation of the Septuagint. In text-critical analysis, translation technique is used for the reconstruction of elements in versions towards the hypothetical text of their *Vorlagen*, a process referred to as retroversion (or reconstruction). This *Vorlage* is a reconstructed Hebrew text that must have been the source or base text of the translator (Tov, 2001:122). The text from which this retroversion is made may be termed an '*Urtext*'. Within the context of versions (or translations), the *Urtext* is a putative original form of the text of a version which lay in the translator's finished script and which stood at the beginning of the transmission process of that version (Tov, 2001:17, 177).

Translation technique analysis is also used to reconstruct the *Urtext* of a version. Since this *Urtext* is no longer available, textual critics usually base their studies on manuscripts which come at the end of a long history of transmission, or at least after several stages of transmission, so that what they are studying is not, in some cases, what the translator wrote down. A number of changes might have taken place in the translated text as it was copied from time to time with the result that, the text of any copy of its extant or surviving manuscripts would differ from the *Urtext*. Thus translation technique also facilitates text-critical analysis aimed at the detection of such alterations by scribes (that is, additions, omissions, other errors and possibly corrections) and thus the reconstruction of the text to conform to the *Urtext* (Greenberg 2002:126). In fact, establishing this *Urtext* is the major goal in text criticism in general, whether it is in relation to a version or to the Hebrew Bible (cf. Tov, 2001:177). However, the processes of reconstructing both the *Urtext* and the *Vorlage* can take place only if the analysis of the translation technique of each individual translation unit is taken into account (Tov, 1997:18). Translation technique analysis is therefore a primary step in bringing the witnesses of versions into the whole corpus of the textual studies of the Old Testament (Tov, 1997:19; Adair, 2000:21).

2.3 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE ANALYSIS, TEXT-CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND LITERARY ANALYSIS: BOUNDARIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Translation technique analysis is a process in text criticism which is practised alongside two other processes. These processes have been noted as text-critical analysis and literary analysis. Since all three processes discussed above are concerned with the text, it is important in this study to have an understanding of how translation technique in particular relates to the other two. This is in fact a further step in the definition and boundary-setting of the process of translation technique analysis.

2.3.1 Translation Technique Analysis and Text-Critical Analysis

The line separating the process of translation technique analysis and text-critical analysis is rather tenuous. The reason for this relationship is that the former is a process involving a certain degree of the latter; that is, translation technique analysis involves some evaluations or judgements on the text of the translation and the *Vorlage*. A person investigating an element which seems to be an addition in a translation should decide whether this 'non-literal' element is a conscious addition by the translator, and therefore characterize the translation at that point as 'free'; or that it is actually an element revealing a variant text that lay in the *Vorlage* of the translation and so characterize the translation as 'literal'. In practice, the process is actually more complicated than this (cf. Tov, 1997:39; Lust, 1986b:14-15). Thus commenting on this relationship Weitzman (1999:273) says, "...textual criticism and translation technique are interlocking questions." Translation technique moreover is more than just describing the translation as 'literal' or 'free'. Other techniques such as the use of idioms, possible influence from other versions and style in the target language come into the picture (Greenberg, 2001:10-18).

A slightly different way of viewing the relationship between translation technique analysis and text-critical analysis is to view one as a tool for studying the other. In the present study, text-critical analysis is used as a tool for studying translation technique. A good example in illustrating this relationship can be observed in Joosten (2005:217-223). Here Joosten investigates the characteristic reductions of 'repetitions' present in the Masoretic Text by the Greek Minor Prophets translator. One of his examples was Hosea 5:14 where the Hebrew אָנִי אֶגֶד אֶנְי אֶנְי (I, even I, will rend) is translated into the Greek as καὶ ἐγὼ ἀρπῶμαι (and I will seize) and thus the pronoun "I" is rendered only once in the Greek (Joosten 2005:218). In explaining such reductions, Joosten considers that the reduction may have been in the *Vorlage* of the translator; or that it was due to the translator's conscious change; or that it may have come about during the transmission of the Greek text. He also considers haplography at the level of the *Vorlage* or within the Greek textual tradition. Joosten resolved the problem by referring to the fact that these types of minuses were a characteristic feature of the Greek Minor Prophets, whereby they were the only type of minuses frequently attested in these books. Haplography could not also explain cases where the repeated element was separated by one or more words (in a pattern such as x-y-x). In the end, Joosten reached the conclusion that "...the elimination of verbal repetitions was a conscious technique of the Greek translator of the Minor Prophets" (Joosten, 2005:221-222). It may be concluded that Joosten used text-critical analysis as a tool for the study of translation technique.

The difference between this type of text-critical analysis and textual criticism of the biblical text as a whole, is that in translation technique analysis, the text-critical judgments are aimed at the text of a particular translation (or biblical witness) as against all the witnesses of the biblical text (Tov, 1992:290). Yet certainly, translation technique analysis, though involving textual judgements, is properly concerned with the characterization of the way the text was translated. It clearly contributes to the process of text-critical

analysis and is necessary for it (Tov, 1997:18). On the other hand, text-critical analysis is clearly concerned with evaluations and judgments of readings between texts (cf. Lust, 1986b:16). Both processes are mutually related, yet there is a clearly marked difference in purpose between them.

2.3.2 Translation Technique Analysis and Literary Analysis

Knowledge of the literary characteristics of a witness is essential, even in a study primarily focused on the translation technique analysis of a version (Adair, 2000:9). Thus various scholars, who have in the past attempted purely translation technique studies, have seen the need to make relevant literary analyses in their studies. Greenberg (2002) deems it necessary to discuss the date and place of the Peshitta translation in a work specifically meant for translation technique studies. The literary nature of Jeremiah also contributes significantly to the results of her thesis as revealed by her conclusions (Greenberg, 2002:204). Weitzman's discussion on the number of the Peshitta translators as well as influence from other versions is a study which at least borders on both the studies of translation technique and literary analysis of the Peshitta (Weitzman, 1999). This relationship is apparent even at the broader level of textual studies, as Van Rooy (2007:2) points out. He says that with respect to the history of the transmission of the text of Ezekiel (which includes the Syriac, Hebrew and the Greek texts), the border between literary and textual criticism is vague. We may here argue deductively that, seeing that translation technique often forms the basis for textual criticism, it effectively means that the border between translation technique and literary analysis is also vague. It is therefore apparent that a sound work on translation technique study must also make relevant enquiries regarding the literary nature of the concerned biblical witness. Put in another way, we may say that literary analysis can be taken as a tool for the study of translation technique analysis. On the other hand, translation technique can be used to study the literary nature of a text. There is thus a mutual relationship between these practices although each of them has a distinct purpose in text criticism.

2.3.3 Conclusion

This in turn brings us to the conclusion that in any work of translation technique study, some details of literary analysis and text-critical analysis are essential. These two processes provide translation technique with some essential tools for a more informed characterization of the text. The details of literary and text-critical analysis required probably depend on the type of the witness under investigation and the purposes of that investigation. The mutual relationship between translation technique, literary analysis and text-critical analysis may be illustrated by alluding to the statement by Lust (1986b:87). Lust makes a statement to the effect that once textual criticism⁴ has been done, one can then ask whether the difference between the Greek and the Hebrew texts are intentional or unintentional and whether they are due to a scribe, an editor, or a translator. The translation technique analyst will ask this question, in an attempt to ignore unintentional errors or scribal activity and thus get round to the translator's translation technique. The literary analyst will ask the same question, but in an attempt to establish the number of hands or editors to that text and its development. Lastly, the text-critical analyst will ask the same question, but seeking to establish the authenticity of a possible variant in the *Vorlage* of the translation. Whether the above question is answered from a text-critical context or from a literary context, it can still be useful in defining the translation technique of a specific passage.

The present study shall therefore make use of these 'tools', that is, literary analysis and text-critical analysis whenever they are required in the characterisation of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. Furthermore, these processes will be important in the determination of the value of the text to be undertaken in the fourth chapter of this study.

⁴ 'Text-critical analysis' in the case of the present study.

2.4 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND THE TEXT OF PESHITTA EZEKIEL 8-11

2.4.1 Introduction

In making an analysis of translation technique in the Peshitta, one has to deal with the inescapable problem that there is no direct access either to the starting point of the translation (that is the Hebrew *Vorlage*) or to its end-point (the translator's original work) as Weitzman (1999:17) points out. Thus secondary information in terms of other texts and manuscripts becomes important. Consequently, one should have an understanding of the nature of these texts and the way they are to be used in translation technique analysis. Furthermore, relevant information from current and previous studies in the field will assist in providing the present researcher with information of related precedent studies, thus giving direction to the present study.

2.4.2 Manuscript 7a1 as the *Urtext* of the Translator

As indicated in the first chapter, manuscript 7a1⁵, as corrected in the Leiden *Vorlage* critical edition (Mulder, 1985), shall be considered to be a hypothetical *Urtext*. A single *Urtext* has been hypothesized by scholars, so that all the variants that exist between different Syriac manuscripts developed as the one original text was in transmission (Greenberg, 2002:8). This Peshitta manuscript 7a1 in the Leiden edition was emended wherever it had an obvious mistake, which was not supported by at least two pre-eleventh century manuscripts (Mulder, 1985:VII).

During this correction, orthographical variants were disregarded, for example the different spellings of 'Israel', and cases of *adiunctio-disiunctio* as in the phrases ܩܕܝܫܐ - ܩܕܝܫܐ (Mulder, 1985:IX). Manuscript 7a1 is found in the group of manuscripts called ancient manuscripts, together with 6h15, 7h2,

⁵ It is also referred to as Ms B 21 Inferiore of the Ambrosian Library, Milan, as published in A.M Ceriani's facsimile edition or Codex Ambrosianus (Mulder, 1985:VII).

8a1, and 8h2. Mulder (1985:XII) says that concerning diacritical and other points, the reservation must be made that the presence or absence of *seyame* cannot always be determined with certainty. Therefore, analysis of differences concerning singular/plural forms merit treatment in view of this aspect. This manuscript has not been hailed as the best for reconstructing the Peshitta version, having shortcomings of its own. However, its use in Peshitta textual studies has been commended for its value as a 'median text', that is, one which has elements in common with the manuscripts older and younger than itself. Further, this manuscript, 7a1 has been commended for its resemblance to its near contemporaries (Greenberg, 2002:16). The assumption in the present study to take 7a1 as the *Urtext* shall however not exempt this supposed *Urtext*, where necessary, from critical analysis that might reveal scribal hands or other inner Syriac phenomena within it.

2.4.3 The Masoretic Text as the Hypothetical *Vorlage*

Studies concerning the date and place of the translation, assembled from a number of lines of investigation have shown that the *Vorlage* could well have been close to the Masoretic Text (Greenberg, 2002:4). Scholars generally agree that by the time at which the Peshitta translation is supposed to have been made (about 150 to 200 AD according to Greenberg, (2002:4-5)), a manuscript close to or even identical to the Proto-Masoretic Text would have been in existence to be used for the Peshitta translation (Greenberg, 2002:4; Weitzman, 1999:4-5, 254). Weitzman says the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta shows close but not complete agreement with the Masoretic Text. These differences may be taken to be insignificant and the Masoretic Text considered close enough to the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta to be considered in this study as Peshitta Ezekiel's *Vorlage*. This matter is, however, not treated this plainly in translation technique studies. Thus Weitzman speaks further of the need for a maximalist or a minimalist approach to translation technique analysis (Weitzman, 1999:15). The minimalist approach assumes for every difference encountered between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text as the result of

other factors besides translation technique: that is, as the result of either a different *Vorlage* or of inner Syriac change. The maximalist approach on the other hand would posit any discrepancy between the Peshitta in general and the Masoretic Text as arising from the translator's work (translation technique). While acknowledging that the truth lies somewhere in between, Weitzman (1999:16) opts to lay stronger emphasis on the maximalist approach. In his view, any discrepancy encountered between the Hebrew and the Syriac text is to be attributed to the technique of the translator, unless it does not conform to rationality and coherence (Weitzman, 1999:16).

Weitzman seems to be ignorant of the fact that different books of the Peshitta may have been translated using different techniques. However, his ignorance is justified, since attributing most differences to translation technique is bound to expose those very differences in translation technique of the Peshitta between the different Old Testament books. Weitzman's approach remains justifiable as long as it may be confirmed that *all* the books of the Peshitta were translated from a *Vorlage* close to the Masoretic Text and that, in transmission, the scribes maintained a uniform revisional/editorial policy across all the books. But the fact that Peshitta Chronicles is a freer translation in comparison to most books, raises the possibility of tracing the free translation technique to the *Vorlage* of Peshitta Chronicles (Weitzman, 1999:120). In that case, differences may not justly be attributed to translation technique as such but to the nature of the *Vorlage*, which may be described either as 'different' or 'damaged'. This case may be argued as calling for more of the minimalist approach in studying translation techniques of similar books. Taking note of pitfalls of this nature, the present study will take a maximalist approach and thus attribute differences between the Hebrew and the Syriac to translation technique, unless the differences do not conform to rationality and coherence (this exception is, however, likely to expose accidental errors only). The maximalist approach is ideal for the present study if one should take into account the assumptions that the Peshitta Ezekiel's translator used

a source close the Masoretic Text and that the manuscript available for the present study is fairly old (a seventh century manuscript that has suffered minor textual change). However, care should be taken not to lay too much emphasis on translation technique, totally ignoring effects of inner Syriac change or the differences between the translators' *Vorlage* and the Masoretic Text. This is because previous studies have already shown the presence of a significant number of scribal errors and a possibility of the use of a variant *Vorlage* in the Peshitta of Ezekiel (Van Rooy, 2007:4-17).

2.4.4 Literature Review on the General Character of the Text of Ezekiel

The first intensive study of the text of Ezekiel in the Peshitta and of its relationship to the Masoretic Text was done by Cornill (Van Rooy, 2007:4)⁶. His views were very influential up to the publication of the critical text of Ezekiel by Mulder (1985). His evaluations were not based on translation technique analysis but on a comparison of editions compiled from late manuscripts and on Codex Ambrosianus. Until now, the only source of extensive studies in Ezekiel concerning translation technique has been that made in the Septuagint (Van Rooy, 2007:1). Much therefore of what is known about translation technique, especially in Ezekiel, comes from Septuagint studies. However, in the context of Peshitta studies, there is a limitation to the extent to which one can draw from Septuagint studies, because Greek and Syriac are languages whose morphology, syntax and grammar are different.

Turning to recent studies on the Peshitta of Ezekiel, Van Rooy (2007:8-10) discusses 23 examples from Ezekiel 1-5. Of those examples, the Peshitta was found to be in complete agreement with the Masoretic Text in 17 instances, and in two instances, the differences were a result of small errors. In three instances, the Peshitta gives a condensed version of the Masoretic Text, and in one instance, it offers a condensed version followed by a long unique plus. Only in one instance, apart from the 23 mentioned above, was

⁶ See chapter one.

the Peshitta found to agree with the Septuagint compared to the Masoretic Text. Thus Van Rooy (2007:10) agrees with Mulder's argument that Peshitta Ezekiel is a fairly literal version of the Masoretic Text of Ezekiel (Mulder 1988:180).

Greenberg (2002:18) mentions that studies on the Peshitta to Jeremiah show that the overriding impression on the first reading is the closeness of the Peshitta to the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text, while non-literal elements only become apparent on careful study. This could be due to the fact that the sense of the Hebrew and its structure are almost always preserved by the translator. Greenberg (2002:18) goes on to say that it is, nevertheless, difficult to assess the literary quality of such work as the Syriac translation, since knowledge of written Syriac of the time of the translation is limited. Reflecting on Noldeke's assessments on the quality of the Peshitta literary style, Greenberg (2002:19) points out that the relationship between biblical Hebrew and literary Syriac of the second century CE was so close that it was often natural to preserve the structure and word order of the first when writing in the second. Based on these studies in Jeremiah, it will be expected in the study under discussion that Peshitta to Ezekiel will display similar characteristics, since previous studies have indicated that the translator of Ezekiel followed his *Vorlage* closely (Mulder 1988:180), just as Greenberg (2002:204) concludes regarding Jeremiah.

Notwithstanding the foregoing observations about the literal nature of Peshitta Ezekiel, non-literal elements in the Peshitta have previously been found within texts described as 'literal'. Concerning this observation, Greenberg (2002:13) points to the fact that both elements are found, the 'literal' and 'free', occurring in the *Urtext* of any version depending on the translator's exact aim or style. These aims or styles may be stated as: (1) the 'formal' where extensive use is made of cognate words, transliterations and homophones, with emphasis on external resemblance between the text and the translation; and (2) the

'dynamic', in which aspects of style and sense are more important than one-to-one correspondence. According to Greenberg (2002:13), both these 'literal' and the 'free' aspects occur in Jeremiah. Some aspects such as sense are almost always literally translated⁷, while others, such as word order and consistent one-to-one correspondence are treated with some freedom⁸. Greenberg (2002:19) then goes on to divide the non-literal elements in Jeremiah into two groups. The first group is composed of those elements which enter the text as the result of the translator's conscious efforts (or translators' choice). The second group of non-literal elements is forced on the translators' work by differences in the syntactical structure and idiomatic usages of the Hebrew and Syriac.

Weitzman's general impression of the book differs slightly from that of Mulder (1988:180) and of Van Rooy (2007:10) cited above⁹. He says that the translator strove for an idiomatic rather than a literal translation, often omitting words or phrases that he found redundant or unintelligible (what he calls 'the tendency to abbreviate'). Other difficulties were ingeniously resolved by changes of grammatical elements, and by guesses from the context. Weitzman identifies such conscious changes by the translator in places such as Ezekiel 8:3; 8:12; 9:2; and 9:3 (Weitzman, 1987:465; 1999:164-165). Some of these cases will be studied in detail in Chapter 3 below. In this study, an example of abbreviation is found in Ezekiel 10:9 (see chapter three below) where the Peshitta translator seemingly abbreviated the longer Hebrew text, probably perceived to be unnecessarily repetitive. Although a case of short textual doublets have been identified in Ezekiel (Weitzman, 1999:166), none appear to occur in the text concerned with the present study. In the case of style, Weitzman (1999:179) rates the translator of Ezekiel as a less conservative or modernistic translator, open to new lexical innovations.

⁷ According to Weitzman (1999:23), the tendency to render a sensible translation could lead to non-literal elements in the translation.

⁸ All the categories of translation technique have been described in detail in chapter 1. In chapter 3, these categories will be studied to determine the nature of each in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

⁹ See also his views on influence from versions in the following section (2.4.5).

2.4.5 Influence from the Versions

The book of Ezekiel is one of the Peshitta books in which frequent parallels with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text have been found to occur (Weitzman, 1999:181). Scholars are increasingly becoming convinced of the presence of Septuagint influence on the Peshitta. Van Rooy (2007:17) notes a number of such instances in the first five chapters of the text of Ezekiel. Interpretations of these agreements shall be dealt with in detail in chapters 3 and 4¹⁰. Commenting on the notion that the parallels between the Peshitta and the Septuagint could be attributed to a common *Vorlage* diverging from the Masoretic Text or to coincidence, Weitzman (1987:465) contends that not all of these parallels can be attributed to the said notion. More so especially when it appears that the freedom of translation displayed in the Septuagint is reflected in some Peshitta passages so that these parallels are less likely to be a result of a common *Vorlage* diverging from the Masoretic text or coincidence, but rather of Septuagint influence on the translator.

However, other text critics are quick to point out that a tendency to overestimate Septuagint influence must be avoided (Greenberg, 2002:22). Certainty of Septuagint influence is reduced by the fact that there is often more than one way in which agreement between the two translations could have been reached. Thus such factors as polygenesis and reference to the same exegetical tradition may have contributed to the similarities between the Septuagint and the Peshitta against the Masoretic Text. Later correction by scribes towards the Septuagint is also possible.

In relation to the Targums, the hypothesis suggesting targumic origin of Peshitta Pentateuch and other books has recently been refuted by several scholars (Greenberg, 2002:17). Furthermore, it was shown that although there are many parallels, both in content and wording, between the Targums and the Peshitta against the Masoretic Text, these agreements are mostly

¹⁰ See also section 2.4.6 below.

explained by polygenesis and exegetical tradition (Weitzman, 1999:120-122). The suggestion that the Peshitta is merely a transposition into Syriac of a lost Aramaic version has also been refuted. The first argument against this suggestion is that there are points in the Peshitta which imply direct contact with the Hebrew and yet are so alien to the interpretations found in the extant Targums. Secondly, there is enough evidence that the Peshitta is written in 'pure Syriac' (Greenberg (2002:18). There are readings which may appear targumic, as Ter Haar Romeny (1995:183) notes, but which are in fact independent characteristics of the Syriac text. In these readings, what is implicit in the Hebrew, has been made explicit by way of additions, changes in word order, and harmonization of passages. Such non-literal elements could have entered the Syriac text either at the stage of the translation or at a later transmissional stage (Ter Haar Romeny, 1995:183).

2.4.6 The Effect of Scribal Activity

Cases where the Peshitta departs from the literal rendering of the supposed Hebrew *Vorlage* (the Masoretic Text) have been confirmed by scholars in general. Greenberg (2002:15) notes that there was a significantly high number of differences between the Masoretic Text and the Peshitta to Jeremiah. These numerous differences are, however, insignificant with respect to sense, but concern rather matters of style, being almost always consistent with the presentation style of the translator. On the other hand, there were also a few changes in sense effected by the scribes, mostly motivated by theological perceptions (Greenberg, 2002:15-16). In such cases, there is a good chance of one being able to detect and even explain these scribal activities.

Other kinds of revisional activity by scribes cannot be so easily explained. Cases where the original translation differed from the Masoretic Text but was later revised towards the Hebrew have been hypothesised (Weitzman, 1999:270). These are cases where agreement with the Masoretic Text does

not itself demonstrate authenticity, that is, an original translation by the translator. Such instances are difficult to prove and only become apparent in cases where variant readings among the Peshitta manuscripts may support such phenomena. If the revision towards the Hebrew took place at a very early stage of transmission so that no extant manuscript shows a variant reading of a text, all evidence suggesting revision is lost and the resultant text may be mistakenly taken to represent a faithful translation of the Hebrew source text (the *Vorlage*). The possibility of later revision towards the Hebrew is remote however, given that there is no direct evidence showing that those who copied the Syriac text had any access to the Hebrew text (Weitzman, 1999:270; Greenberg, 2002:12).

Other enquiries have identified scribal activity to have been based rather on Greek forms of the biblical text (Greenberg, 2002:270). In the case where a particular reading reflects agreement with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text, at least two possibilities exist: it could be that the reading was originally made by the translator under the influence of the Septuagint; or the reading was a result of later revisional activity under the influence of a Greek text (Weitzman, 1999:270, 271). Some other reasons like polygenesis and a common exegetical tradition may of course apply. Van Rooy (2007:17) identifies instances where the *Vorlage* used by the Peshitta Ezekiel clearly had readings agreeing with the form of the Masoretic Text, while the younger Syriac manuscripts agreed with the Septuagint. Since this feature of correction towards the Septuagint is especially manifest in younger manuscripts, care should be taken even with the older manuscripts like 7a1, not to too readily explain as original those readings in them which happen to agree with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text.

Apart from the preceding points, most cases where scribal activity brought changes to the text may generally be detected. There are some difficult cases, especially in the older manuscripts like 7a1, in which the texts may

have been corrected towards the Hebrew or towards the Septuagint. Apart from these challenges, it may be stated for the purpose of this study, that the criterion of preferring a reading agreeing with the Masoretic Text as an original reading (that is, a reading that lay in the text of the *Vorlage*) remains preferable (Weitzman, 1999:271). Minimal scribal activity is therefore assumed in manuscript 7a1, as corrected by Mulder (1985). It may be noted further that translation technique will be an important tool in recognising authentic and non-authentic readings within the Peshitta manuscripts (Weitzman, 1999:270-71).

2.4.7 Section Summary

While studies in translation technique analysis may be challenged by the absence of direct evidence in the form of the *Vorlage* and the *Urtext* of the translators, research may still be enabled by appealing to indirect evidence. Hypothetical texts which are close to either the *Vorlage* or to the *Urtext* may be useful, subject of course to certain working conditions and parameters. Concerning the general character of the Peshitta Ezekiel text, the little information available from previous studies shows such aspects as: a fairly literal rendering, a tendency to abbreviate by the Peshitta translator, and some influence from the Septuagint. The minimal of scribal activity is posited in manuscript 7a1, with the result that the text of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 largely represents the work of the translator.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Aspects of translation technique analysis and the general character of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel have provided this study with the necessary tools for the most scientifically acceptable analysis of the translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. On the other hand, the assumptions and hypotheses regarding manuscripts and other texts involved, as well as concerning the methods of

investigation, provide warning for the necessity of caution in every step of this kind of study.

CHAPTER 3

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE IN PESHITTA EZEKIEL CHAPTER 8-11

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.2 SEGMENTATION OF TEXT

3.3 QUANTITATIVE CORRESPONDENCE

3.4 IMITATION OF THE HEBREW FORM

3.5 CONSISTENCY OF EQUIVALENCES

3.6 SECTION SUMMARY

3.7 OTHER CHARACTERISTIC NON-LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

3.8 CASES OF VERY LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

3.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Brock (1979:81), translations can be literal in varying degrees, and a proper characterization lies partly in the successful identification of the translator's particular interests and concerns, and most literalist translators concentrate their attention on certain features only. This means that each aspect or category of translation (detailed below) to be studied in this chapter constitutes the characterisation of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

In aiming to achieve an informed characterisation of the translation of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 in this chapter, the four categories discussed in chapter 1 shall be studied. These categories are: segmentation of text, quantitative correspondence, imitation of the form of the Hebrew text and consistency of equivalences. Other characteristic non-literal elements in the translation will also be scrutinized in order to include those elements which can not be qualified under any of the four categories given in the mentioned list.

3.2 SEGMENTATION OF TEXT

The quest in this section is to establish whether the translator paid attention to individual Hebrew words or whether he sought to represent the meaning of whole clauses (Weitzman, 1999:22). By individual words here is meant the simple classes of words such as verb, noun, adjective, preposition, and pronoun (cf. Van der Merwe et al., 2000:53). If the translator chose to represent the Hebrew by its word classes so that each individual word would be represented by a corresponding equivalent word in Syriac, the result would be a very literal translation in terms of word classes, but probably less literal in terms of sense. On the other hand, should the translator have chosen to render the sense of whole clauses, he would produce a free translation in terms of individual word classes but a literal one in terms of sense. This would

roughly be the case concerning languages that are idiomatically different. Such difference in idiom indeed exists between Hebrew and Syriac as the following study will show. The analysis below demonstrates that the Peshitta translator followed a clause-by-clause approach, where we define a clause as a meaningful series of words that has at least a subject and a predicate, a unit that can be analysed structurally (Van der Merwe et al., 2000:59).

3.2.1 Rendering of word elements in general

The intention in studying the rendering of word elements is to establish whether the translator rendered the Hebrew text word-for-word or whether he rendered it clause by clause, paying attention to the meaning and context of the words in the Hebrew text. The examples below show that the translator followed the latter procedure.

Ezekiel 8:1

7	6	5	4	3	2	1	MT ord ¹
אני	לחדש	בחמשה	בששי	הששית	בשנה	וידוי	MT ²
אנח	שאנח	בנח	בנח	שאנח	בנח	אנח	P
7	4	6	5	3	2	1	P ord

14	13	12	11	10	9	8
ותפל	לפני	ושבים	יהודה	חקני	בביתי	יחשב
אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח
14	13	12	11	10	9	8

19	18	17	16	15
יהודה	אני	י	שם	עלי
אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח	אנח
19	18	17	16	15

¹ 'Ord' stands for order.

² 'MT' here and elsewhere stands for the Masoretic Text and 'P' for the Peshitta

Ezekiel 8:1 may give, at first sight, the impression of a strict attention to the rendering of each word element by the translator. The altered word order from number 4 to number 6 of the Hebrew word order, probably due to a difference in dating systems between the Hebrew and Syriac texts, shows that the translator also paid attention to the meaning of clauses in his translation and the way that he wanted it presented in Syriac. The highly frequent structure (Participle active + the enclitic $\kappa\alpha\mu$) is on most occasions rendered for the participle in Hebrew. According to Muraoka (1997:68), it represents an on-going, repeated, or habitual action in the past. Thus, it may be taken as one unit, an equivalent of the Hebrew participle, waw consecutive plus perfect or any other syntactic feature of Hebrew with similar semantics (cf Van der Merwe et al., 2000:147, 162, 171). At other places in the Peshitta, there is more convincing evidence that the translator paid attention to the meaning of the Hebrew clause before translation of the individual words as in the example below.

Ezekiel 9:3

7	6	5	4	3	2	1	MT ord
אשר	הכרוב	מעל	נעלה	ישראל	אלהי	וכבוד	MT
ג	בוסכא	ע	עלה	גא-שול	גא-למא	סעבונס	P
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	P ord

15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
דאיש	אל	ויקרא	הבית	מפתן	אל	עליו	היה
בוא	ל	סו-א	בבולא	וסולא		ג	סא-סא
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8

21	20	19	18	17	16
במתניו:	הספר	קסת	אשר	הבדים	הלכש
כתב-סו	גספולא	ע-א	סא-סו	ב-א	גלכש
21	20	19	18	17	16

MT

Translation (Tr.): *And the glory of the God of Israel was taken up from the Cherub which was above the threshold of the house. Then he called to the man who was dressed in linen, who had the writing kit of a scribe at his side.*

P

Tr.: *And the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub which was upon the corner of the house. Then he called to the man who was dressed in linen and was girding loins of sapphire.*

The Hebrew combination of the preposition *על + מן* (*from upon*) is rendered with the Syriac *ܥܠܡܢ* only. The verb phrase *היה*, followed by a conglomeration of prepositional phrases, was not literally rendered in the Syriac translation. Instead, the translator came up with the participle of the verb 'to stand, to be stationed,' followed by the enclitic³ while the two Hebrew prepositions were only represented by *ܡܢ*. Therefore this is an attempt to present the clause in a clearer and more idiomatic style true to Syriac. The Syriac rendering of the Hebrew phrase in columns 8-11 is certainly not a word for word literal translation but a translation inclined more to bring out the sense of the phrase in idiomatic Syriac.

The Peshitta Ezekiel's treatment of the Hebrew clause in columns 18-20 above shows that the translator did not understand the Hebrew rendering. There is a possibility that the translator used similarity of sound to solve the difficult Hebrew words.

MT: אשר קסת הספר במתניו:
Tr.: *who had a writing kit*

P: ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܘܢܐ.
Tr.: *and he was girding loins of sapphire.*

³ Here and elsewhere, enclitic = a form of *ܥܡܢ*.

There is a phonetic relationship between the corresponding words: אָשַׁר - יָשַׁר; and סָפַר - שָׁפַל, while the meaning for קָסַת could have been guessed. The problem of this phrase, however, begins at 9:2 to which brief attention needs to be given:

Ezekiel 9:2

MT: ... לבש בדים וקסת הספר במתניו

Tr.: ...*dressed in linen, and a writing kit at his side*

P: ... לבש כסו כסו יָשַׁר וְשָׁפַל כְּסוֹתָיו

Tr.: ...*and was dressed in linen, and was girding loins of sapphire at his waist*

LXX⁴: ἐνδεδυκὼς ποδήρη, καὶ ζώνη σαπφείρου ἐπὶ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ

Tr.: ...*dressed in linen, and a belt of sapphire at his waist*

From this evidence, it is clear that the Peshitta at this point is neither a literal translation of the Hebrew nor of the Greek. Neither can one simply argue that the addition was a result of later scribal correction in favour of the Greek text, given that part of this phrase is totally missing later on at verse 11 which should also have been corrected towards the fuller Greek text. It is most probable that the translator first read the Hebrew phrase and understood it to mean that the man was '*wearing fine linen and was also wearing a belt of sapphire at his loins*'. The problem for the translator was that, while he recognised the two clauses, he could not find the verb for the second clause, which is implied in the Hebrew rendering:

לבש בדים

וקסת הספר במתניו

The translator thus decided to add the participle verb יָשַׁר to the last phrase, in order to make explicit what had been implied in the Hebrew. This proves that the translator first read the whole phrase and got a sense out of it before attempting a translation. Even if it were to be argued that the translator consulted the Greek, it is evident that he did not go for a word-for-word

⁴ LXX, here and elsewhere refers to the Septuagint.

rendering of the Greek but sought to present his translation in a sensible way, since the Septuagint does not have the addition of the participle verb. The relationship between אֲשֶׁר and אֲשֶׁר in verse 3 is probably pure coincidence and should therefore not qualify as *syromanie*, as it may first appear to be. Greenberg, (2002:23) describes *Syromanie* as the resolution by the translator of a difficult Hebrew word by translating it with a word in Syriac which has a similar sound to that in the Hebrew text. It is apparent that the translator misconstrued the lexical identity of סָפַר (HUB 2004, 9:2)⁵, perhaps due to the similarity of sound and morphology, but it is difficult to determine what he did with קָסַת. If polygenesis⁶ is to be argued between the Syriac phrase and the Greek, it may be argued that the same reason how the Greek translator got the translation 'belt' for קָסַת may also be given for the Syriac translator. The Hebrew University Bible (HUB 2004, 9:3) suggests that one or both translators employed contextual exegesis to come up with the meaning 'belt' for the Hebrew קָסַת. From this analysis, we may conclude that the translator first attempted to understand individual phrases before proceeding to translate word for word, making adjustments for the sake of sensibility and clarity, according to his own understanding of the Hebrew phrase. In treating the difficult words, the translator probably used guesswork aided by contextual exegesis.

Another element concerning rendering of verb phrases is apparent in the same verse discussed above. In column 4 of Ezekiel 9:3 given in this example, the Peshitta translator renders the Hebrew passive (or reflexive) verb גַּעְלָהּ with the Syriac active form هَلِم. The Hebrew form here is certainly unnatural, since, in terms of the description of the glory going up from a certain location, such a verb form is not common in Ezekiel. In the BHS, Ezekiel 10:4, 15, 18 and 11:23, all the verbs describing the upward movement

⁵ HUB is used here and elsewhere as an abbreviation for Hebrew University Bible. Unless otherwise stated, Bible chapters and verses immediately following the citation HUB 2004, are used to refer to the exact location of the reference in the edition as in this case.

⁶ See section 3.7.6 for an explanation of the term

of the glory or the cherubim are active in form. The Septuagint verb at 9:3 is also active (ἀνέβη). The Targum employs the same verb root as in the Peshitta, but the verb can be either reflexive (lifted itself) or passive (was taken up). The Vulgate literally reads '*had taken itself up*', implying a reflexive form in the Hebrew text. With this information, conclusions are difficult to make. It may be that the translator's *Vorlage* was different from the Masoretic Text at this point or that he was influenced by the Greek version. But it is more probable to say that the translator rendered this Hebrew verb with the active, having referred to parallel passages where similar phenomena are described. In that case, we may conclude then that the translator first read not only the verb phrase but the whole clause '*the glory lifted itself up...*' The strange meaning of this phrase probably forced the translator to make wider references and thus came up with this rendering in his Syriac text. The rendering process therefore was not limited to a word-for-word translation, or even phrase-for-phrase, but to the understanding of clauses and sentences before the actual translation began.

3.2.2 Intelligibility

The examples discussed above give the impression that the translator sought to render the Syriac in a form that would be intelligible to his readers. These cases are mostly apparent at places where the Hebrew phrases, within the context of their clauses, would seem unnatural or even meaningless if they were represented in the Syriac literally. It is to such renderings that Cornill (1886:148-149) refers when he mentions the tendency of the Peshitta to make abbreviations of the Hebrew. Cornill did not consider that the translator could have been conditioned by a desire to maintain Syriac idiom in his translation. Ezekiel 10:9 offers an example of such abbreviations, made for the sake of giving an intelligible Syriac translation (see section 3.2.4.3).

3.2.2.1 Additions/changes to verbs to clarify or make explicit

(for example, 8:2, 6, 16; 10:2, 11, 12, 19)

Changes were often made to clarify and make the translation intelligible, by additions or changes of certain verbs. At 8:2, the translator decided that the last clause (whose main verb in the Hebrew is positioned at the beginning of the verse) would be unclear without a verb immediately before it. Thus the verb **וַיֵּרָא** was added.

Ezekiel 8:2

MT: **וּמִמְתַּנִּיז וּלְמַעְלָה כַּמְרָאָה**

Tr.: *and from his loins and upwards like the appearance...*

P: **סַבְּךָ תִּפְתָּח, סַלְלָה שְׁמַיָּה אֶרְאֶה שָׁמָּה**

Tr.: *and from his loins and upwards, I saw as the appearance...*

The frequent omission of the Syriac equivalent of the particle **וְהִנֵּה** shows that the translator did not adhere to a strict word-for-word translation, a picture we may falsely have from 8:1 discussed above. The reason for omitting the particle, a common feature in chapters 9 to 11, seems to be that the translator saw it as an unnecessary textual element which would obscure his translated text.

At other times, a different verb from that shown in the Hebrew text would be chosen, with a motive to make intelligible or perhaps enliven the translation. At 10:11, the Hebrew imperfect verb **יִפְנֶה** (to face, turn towards) is rendered by the participle active of **יָצָא** (to go) (see section 3.2.4.5 below).

Again, the Hebrew preposition **אֶצֶל** (beside) is appropriately rendered by the Syriac preposition + noun (**ܥܢܝܢܐ**), thus giving the impression that the translator was not focused on a one-to-one correspondence of words

between the *Vorlage* and the translation. The same disregard for a strict word-for-word correspondence between the Hebrew and Syriac texts is that which is found at 10:9 (see section 3.2.4.3 below). Here the long Hebrew clause, 'one wheel at the side of one cherub and one wheel at the side of one cherub' is paraphrased into 'each wheel at the side of each cherub,' literally 'one-one wheel at the side of each cherub'. Other examples of paraphrases of this nature include: 10:11; 12, 14; and 11:15.

The translator seemed also to have had strict discipline in making sure that every word and every phrase in his source had been accounted for. Thus there would have to be a very good reason for an omission, addition or different treatment of a word, as measured against the normal literal rendering of phrases from his *Vorlage* to the *Urtext*. This means further, that there was limited room for careless omissions or improper treatment of phrases by the translator. All the cases discussed above seem at least to have had a good reason for their unusual treatment by the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel; the basic reasons for this unusual treatment being the drive for intelligibility, clarity, and good literary Syriac. Consequently, wherever the Hebrew text was perceived to be clear enough, and could be transferred to the Syriac without problems of idiom compatibility, it was simply literally translated.

3.2.3 Literary Style

The quest here is to find out whether the translation technique was affected by the translator's need to render his translation in acceptable literary Syriac style, and if so, in what major respects would this drive for good style cause non-literal correspondence between the Syriac and the Hebrew text. As concerns the nature of Syriac literature at the time when the Peshitta was translated, Brock (1977:1) says that the earliest Syriac inscriptions date from the early first century AD, but it is not until the mid-fourth century that we start to have extensive extant Syriac literature. Scanty material is therefore

available against which to measure what was literary Syriac and what was not. The little information that students of Syriac grammar have gathered will be used in finding out how much the translator was ready to depart from the literal form and structure of the Hebrew grammar, syntax, and morphology in his attempt to conform to what may be judged as idiomatic Syriac.

3.2.4.1 The compound tense forms: participle + the enclitic

(for example, 8:11; 9:3, 6; 10:3, 11, 16; 11:21)

As mentioned above, the use of compound tense forms with the participle form of the verb (participle verb form + the enclitic) is frequent in the text. This feature is illustrated in the example below.

Ezekiel 10:3

MT: והכרבים עמדים מימין לבית.

Tr.: *and the cherubim were standing on the right side of the house*

P: ܘܚܝܒܝܢ ܥܡܕܝܢ ܥܠ ܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܒܝܬܐ.

Tr.: *and the cherubim were standing on the right side of the house*

However, numerous other participles occur without the enclitic, denoting other meanings in Syriac (Muraoka, 1997:66). It seems therefore that variations in the use of the enclitic seem ultimately to depend on the nuance perceived in the Hebrew text. Thus the participle used on its own usually indicates what is happening at the moment of speaking as in the clause at Ezekiel 8:6, ܘܚܝܒܝܢ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܕܝܫܪܐܝܝܠ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ (the many abominations which the house of Israel is doing). On the other hand, the participle plus enclitic or compound tense form as in the example given at 10:3 above, represents an on going, repeated action in the past. The enclitic is employed with the participle almost consistently in chapter 10. This shows a significant deviation from the literal Hebrew and is thus an indicator of the drive for literary Syriac by the translator.

Ezekiel 8:8

MT: ואחזק בקיר והנה פתח אחד

Tr.: *then I dug into the wall and behold, a door.*

P: ונפיק באשכולא סאצבנות ודורא ענ.

Tr.: *and I dug into the wall and I found a door.*

Ezekiel 11:1

MT: והנה בפתח השער עשרים וחמשה איש

Tr.: *and behold, at the entrance of the gate; twenty five men.*

P: אנטה כחללא דדורא בשוק סעכרא לבין

Tr.: *and I saw at the entrance of the gate twenty five men.*

Examples of exceptions, where the word was translated as an interjectory particle, occur at 8:2 and 8:4. In cases where both this word and the verb 'to see' occur together in the Hebrew text, the translator simply rendered both words with only the one Syriac verb, 'to see'. He prefers on a number of occasions to ignore the interjectory meaning of the word, probably because its use in Syriac became unnatural, just as using the same word in the English language has become somewhat unnatural today; thus its similar treatment in modern translations like the NIV and CEV. This Hebrew word, rendered as an interjectory, does occur extensively in Peshitta Ezekiel (about 67 times compared to the 95 in the Masoretic Text), both before and after the section of the present study (8-11). There seems to be no hint that scribal revision may have been responsible for emending the text in relation to this word.

The finding discussed above provides a good reason to believe that the translator strove to present his translation in good literary Syriac. Although he omitted or changed redundant words, he made certain that every Hebrew word was accounted for and that the loss of the meaning of Hebrew words was restricted to a minimum. Just how much care was taken to preserve the

meaning (or form) of the original Hebrew in the Syriac translation is not immediately clear. It may be suggested that a compromise, either in favour of the Hebrew meaning/form or the Syriac literary style, was at each time made, as the various problems that surface in this study may show. In light of the inconsistent treatment of the word הנה considered above, it may seem indeed that, at some points, the Hebrew meaning or form was preserved to the detriment of the Syriac style, while at other times, the Hebrew meaning or form was disadvantaged in preference to Syriac literary style.

3.2.4.3 Simplification/shortening of long repetitive phrases

(for example 10:9, 11, 14, 21)

It appears that the translator had a tendency to shorten long repetitive sentences. A close study of several verses in the Peshitta of Ezekiel may lead to this conclusion.

Ezekiel 10:9

MT: ואראת והנה ארבעה אופנים אצל הכרוכים אופן אחד אצל הכרוכ אחד
ואופן אחד אצל הכרוכ אחד ומראה האופנים כעין אבן תרשיש

Tr.: *Then I looked and I saw four wheels at the side of the cherubim: one wheel at the side of one cherub and one wheel at the side of one cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like the appearance of the stone of chrysolite.*

P: ܘܥܘܪܐܬ ܘܗܢܗ ܐܪܒܥܐ ܐܘܦܢܝܢ ܐܥܠ ܗܚܪܘܒܝܡ ܐܘܦܢ ܐܥܠ ܗܚܪܘܒܝܢ ܘܐܘܦܢ ܐܥܠ ܗܚܪܘܒܝܢ ܘܡܪܐܬܗ ܕܐܘܦܢܝܢ ܕܥܝܢ ܐܒܢ ܚܪܫܝܫ.

Tr.: *Then I saw four wheels at the side of the cherubim. Each wheel (one-one wheel) at the side of each cherubim and the appearance of the wheels was like the appearance of Chrysolite.*

- LXX: καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδοὺ τροχοὶ τέσσαρες εἰστήκεισαν ἐχόμενοι τῶν χερουβιν, τροχὸς εἷς ἐχόμενος χερουβ ἐνός, καὶ ἡ ὄψις τῶν τροχῶν ὡς ὄψις λίθου ἄνθρακος.
- Tr.: *And I saw and behold four wheels standing at the side of the cherubim; one wheel at the side of one cherub and the appearance of the wheels was like the appearance of a carbuncle stone.*

In this verse, there is a possibility of *parablepsis (homoioteleuton)* on the part of the translator as suggested in HUB (2004, 10:9). Having translated the repeated phrase once, the eyes of the translator may have jumped to the end of the second part of the repeated phrase ending with *πικ*, and he continued right from there. This explanation may be true for explaining the Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew text but not necessarily the Syriac. In the Septuagint, one of the repeated clauses is literally rendered, while the second one is omitted as shown below.

- LXX: καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδοὺ τροχοὶ τέσσαρες εἰστήκεισαν ἐχόμενοι τῶν χερουβιν, τροχὸς εἷς ἐχόμενος χερουβ ἐνός, καὶ ἡ ὄψις τῶν τροχῶν ὡς ὄψις λίθου ἄνθρακος.
- Tr.: *And I saw and behold four wheels were standing by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub, and the appearance of the wheels (was) as the appearance of the of a carbuncle stone.*

On the other hand, the style used in the Syriac suggests that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator first read the Hebrew clause after which, when he thought he had understood it, he put down into good Syriac what he deemed was the best way to represent the repetitive Hebrew phrase. At 10:14 and 10:21, similar phrasing occurs, where in particular the phrase ‘*each one*’ is represented by two elements (*ܐܘܢ ܐܘܢ*). Due to its consistent occurrence, this translation feature (which appears as if it is a doublet) may be understood as belonging to idiomatic Syriac. At 10:14, there is another example of a significantly shortened text, which nevertheless retains the basic meaning of the Hebrew original as shown below. What is interesting with the following example is that this particular verse is omitted in the Septuagint.

Ezekiel 10:14

MT: וארבעה פנים לאחד פני האחד פני הכרוב ופני השני פני אדם והשלישי פני אריה
והרביעי פני-נשר

Tr.: *And there were four faces for each one; the face of the first was the face of a cherub, the face of the second was the face of a man, the face of the third was the face of a lion and the face of the fourth was the face of an eagle.*

P: מארבע רפא לנג ענ סנסס. ענא רפא כוסכא. סאעולא רפא נבו אעא
סאעולא רפא נאולא סאעולא רפא נעולא.

Tr.: *And there were four faces for each one of them; one (had) the face of a cherub; another, the face of a son of man; another, the face of a lion and another, the face of an eagle.*

Such stylistic shortening by the translators is generally noted to be a common feature of translations with examples cited also from the Septuagint (Tov, 2001:126). It has generally been noted that paraphrasing of repetitive or lengthy and obscure sentences is common in Peshitta Ezekiel (cf. Weitzman, 1987:465). The fact that this verse does not appear in the Greek translation strengthens the argument that the abbreviations were mostly made independently from the Septuagint.

Cornill's comment, that the purpose of the translator in abbreviating the Peshitta text was to shorten the text by simply omitting certain words in his *Vorlage*, may not be acceptable since the translator managed to render successfully the Hebrew meaning in the shortened translation (Cornill 1886:148-149). Cornill did not consider how the Septuagint (which also shortened some of these phrases) resolved the long repetitive Hebrew sentences.

3.2.4.4 The verb לאמר introducing direct speech rendered by a finite or participle verb

(for example 9:1, 11; 10:6)

In most cases, this Hebrew infinitive verb is translated literally with the infinitive in the Peshitta as at 11:14. This verb is rendered literally in the Peshitta of Ezekiel about 49 times out of a total of 59 cases that occur in the book of Ezekiel. Of the remaining cases, it is rendered five times as a finite (perfect) verb and five times as a participle verb. At Ezekiel 9:1 for example, the verb is rendered by a perfect verb in the Syriac. The examples given below illustrate the different ways in which Peshitta Ezekiel rendered this syntactical feature.

Ezekiel 9:1 (rendering by a finite verb)

MT: ויקרא באזני קול גדול לאמר קרו

Tr.: and he called within my hearing with a loud voice saying, "bring here...

P: ܘܩܪܐ ܒܐܙܢܝ ܩܘܠ ܓܕܘܠ ܠܐܡܪ ܩܪܘ

Tr.: And he called within my hearing with a loud voice **and he said**, "bring here..."

Ezekiel 11:14 (rendering by an infinitive)

MT: ויהי דברייהוה אלי לאמר

Tr.: And the word of the Lord came to me saying,

P: ܘܡܡܬܐ ܗܘܐ ܦܘܬ ܕܠܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܠܡܘܨܘܐ.

Tr.: And the word of the Lord came to me **saying**...

Ezekiel 10:6 (rendering by a participle)

MT: וַיְהִי כַּצֹּחַ אֲתֵדָאִישׁ לְבַשׁ דְּבָרִים לְאָמַר קַח אֵשׁ

Tr.: *and it happened when he had commanded the man dressed in linen saying, "take fire..."*

P: ܘܡܢ ܦܫܘܢ ܠܚܒܝܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܚܘܫܐ ܐܡܪ ܠܡܢ ܫܒ ܘܩܝܐ

Tr.: *and when he had commanded the man dressed in linen **saying** to him "take fire..."*

The difference between the Syriac and the Hebrew texts stem from principle: while the Hebrew text may use the infinitive verb in basically all situations introducing direct speech, the Peshitta Ezekiel employs it only in the case of the prophetic formula, 'the word of the Lord came to me saying' as in the case of 11:14. At other places where the Hebrew text employs the infinitive verb, the Syriac translates according to the sense perceived. This can either be by a perfect/imperfect verb as at 9:1 (also 9:11, 13:10, 16:44, 20:5) above or by a participle as at 10:6 (also 12:22, 18:2, 33:30). It appears that the perfect form is naturally used within simple narrative prose as that of 9:1, while the participle is used for relative clauses as at 10:6, and in clauses relating to on-going events. With this evidence of a remarkable policy towards the treatment of the syntactical feature *לֵאמֹר* in the Peshitta of Ezekiel, it may be difficult to decide who instigated it: the translator or the scribes. Studies of the same feature in other books of the Peshitta may help. Since there are more examples of this tendency in having principles of translating certain Hebrew grammatical features in the study in question, the researcher is persuaded to conclude that these principles should have originated with the translator (see also discussions at sections 3.2.4.8; and 3.5.1). Indeed, it appears that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator tried to follow a sophisticated translation policy, which must yet be fully discovered.

3.2.4.5 Differences in use of prepositions and object particles

(for example 8:3, 5, 12, 14, 16; 9:6, 8, 9; 10:11, 16, 17, 19, 20; 11:1, 15, 18.)

This phenomenon of additions of certain prepositions and the use of different prepositions from those found in Hebrew, can be expected to permeate the whole translation. It reveals the significant syntactical differences between the two languages. This in turn argues for the literary nature of the translation in terms of sense and proves its less literal character in terms of translation of these grammatical aspects. What makes this feature more pronounced is that the nature of the Hebrew text itself contains some inconsistencies, especially in the use of prepositions (Lust, 2006:163-164). In the examples given below, the underlined prepositions in the Peshitta are different or absent from the Hebrew text. The preposition Δ , besides showing direction or action towards, also functions as a marker for the object of a clause in the Peshitta Ezekiel text of the study under discussion (Weitzman, 1999:31; Muraoka, 1997:77).

Example 10:16

MT: ובלכת הכרוזים ילכו האופנים אצלם

Tr.: *When the cherubim were going, the wheels went along, beside them.*

P: סגרא גאולא מסא בוסא אולא סא, וצלא בנסא

Tr.: *When the cherubim were going, the wheels went along, **with them**.*

Ezekiel 10:11

MT: כי המקום אשר יפנה הראש אחריו ילכו

Tr.: *but (to) the place which the head would face, they would go after it.*

P: אלא לארואא גאולא מסא וצלא סגרא בוסא אולא סא.

Tr.: *but to the place which their head was going, they would go after it.*

3.2.4.6 Temporal and circumstantial clauses

Clauses for the indication of time are expressed in Syriac differently from the way they are expressed in Hebrew. The Hebrew temporal clause $\text{ב} + \text{infinitive}$ construct for an event that was going on in the past simultaneously with another event, (or an event that happens from time to time) is normally represented in the Syriac text with particle $\text{ܘܢ} + \text{ܐ} + \text{participle}$ (10:5, 16, 17).

Ezekiel 10:5

MT: $\text{בְּקוֹל אֱלֹהֵי בְרִיחַ}$

Tr.: *like (the) voice of El Shaddai when he speaks.*

P: $\text{ܘܢܐܢܐ ܡܠܘܢ ܘܥܠܡܐ ܡܪܐ ܘܡܠܘܢܐ}$

Tr.: *like the voice of God when he speaks.*

For an event that preceded another event in the past, the Hebrew כִּי or $\text{ב} + \text{Infinitive}$ construct is rendered in Syriac with $\text{ܘܢ} + \text{a finite verb}$ (9:8; 10:6, 11:13).

Ezekiel 10:6

MT: $\text{וַיְדַבֵּר בְּצוֹתוֹ אֶת־הָאִישׁ לְבָשׂוּת־בְּדִים לֵאמֹר}$

Tr.: *And when he had commanded the man dressed in linen saying...*

P: $\text{ܘܢܐ ܦܩܘܢ ܘܠܒܘܫܐ ܕܡܠܘܢܐ ܘܥܠܡܐ ܡܪܐ ܘܡܠܘܢܐ}$

Tr.: *And when he had commanded the man who was dressed in linen saying to him...*

These examples should be contrasted with the segmentation of the Hebrew constructions by some Greek translators whose approach was rather very literal: in 2 Samuel 5:24, בְּשִׁמְעוֹךָ is rendered into Greek by ἐν τῷ ἀκουσαί σε , thus representing all the elements of the Hebrew text into Greek (Tov, 1997:23). Considering the similarities of structure and grammar between Hebrew and Syriac, the deviations shown here plainly indicate the Ezekiel

Peshitta's inclination towards a more idiomatic style of rendering than the Greek. There was thus for the Peshitta translator an ever present challenge to read and understand Hebrew clauses and their grammar before converting them into grammatically equivalent Syriac clauses, where the grammatical rules of the target language differed in some respects from those of the source language. The translator managed to do these conversions with a fair degree of success. Thus in terms of temporal and circumstantial clauses, the Peshitta translation conforms to Syriac literary style, and conveys the meaning of the Hebrew well. The translations in most of these constructions are fairly consistent, so that retroversion to the Hebrew *Vorlage* may be possible.

3.2.4.7 Noun and adjectival phrases

According to Muraoka (1987:16, 40), the definiteness of a noun cannot be determined with certainty in the Syriac text, as opposed to the Hebrew text. He says that the emphatic state in Syriac was weakened so that a noun such as ܩܘܡܐܢܐ (Ezekiel 8:2) could mean either 'a form' or 'the form'. This loss of denoting definiteness was subsequently compensated by the use of the demonstrative pronoun (Muraoka, 1997:60), a feature used only occasionally in Ezekiel 8-11 as at 10:3. Because of the lack of consistency in showing such definiteness, the intention of the translator was not always clear whether the demonstrative was to be understood literally or as representing the definiteness of the noun related to it. Thus in the example below, both nouns, 'the man' and 'the cloud' are definite in the Masoretic Text, but only the first one of these is translated with a demonstrative in the Syriac translation. This kind of differentiation may be suggestive of idiomatic differences between Hebrew and Syriac or of the subtle infiltration of the Greek neuter into Syriac.

Ezekiel 10:3

MT: בבוא האיש והענן מלא את החצר

Tr.: ...when the man entered, and the cloud filled the inner court.

P: ܩܪܢ ܕܥܪܢܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ

Tr.: ...When **the** (that) man entered, the inner court was filled with a cloud.

The most frequent way of showing a genitive construction in Peshitta Ezekiel is by prefixing the particle ܐ to the second noun of the genitive construct. In rare cases, the translator declines the first noun of the genitive construct into its construct state and so drops the use of the particle ܐ. For example at 11:5: ܩܪܢܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ (thus have you desired, oh children of Israel). Readings of some manuscripts listed by Mulder (1985:15) may give suggestions that later scribal activity was responsible for the alteration of these genitive constructions, by removing the particle ܐ and declining the first noun of the genitive construction. In manuscript 8a1 for example, the reading at Ezekiel 9:1-2, ܩܪܢܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ (instruments of his vengeance) as reflected in manuscript 7a1, was probably changed to ܩܪܢܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ (Mulder, 1985:15). Occasionally, both forms of the genitive are used in juxtaposed phrases as in the example below.

Ezekiel 10:14

P: ܘܥܢܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܠܐ⁷

Tr.: ... one was the face of a cherub, and another was the face of a man and another the face of a lion...

Prolepsis of noun phrases (or the use of the anticipatory pronoun) occurs widely in the translated text, but still less consistently in comparison to its

⁷ This plural construct form supposes a masculine plural noun, but it actually corresponds to the Hebrew dual noun. According to Muraoka (1987:16), the dual form in Syriac is “virtually extinct,” except as Adair (2000:106) says, for the numbers two and two hundred.

characteristic use in typical Syriac works (Muraoka, 1987:50; Adair, 2000:122). This may probably be due to the fact that the translator followed his Hebrew syntax too closely and thus tended to ignore this rather common Syriac syntactical feature at some places. Prolepsis appears in places such as 9:1 (ܠܘܘܢܐ ܩܠܘܢܐ ܐܘܘܪܐ, literally, *come near, oh avengers of it, the city*) and almost consistently in the phrase '*the glory of God*' as at 9:3 (ܡܘܨܘܪܐ ܠܘܘܢܐ).

Although these idiomatic differences (especially that of definiteness) do have an effect on the ability to reconstruct the Hebrew *Vorlage*, they may not be taken here to have an implication on the character of translation due to the reasons mentioned earlier in this section. They do, however, tell us something about the way the translator translated his text. The use of prolepsis and the treatment of genitive constructions give the indication that the translation was done clause by clause rather than word-for-word.

Divine names were mostly translated, with rare incidences of exegetical renderings. Since the rendering of the divine names has much to do with the exegetical nature of the Peshitta Ezekiel translation, it is a subject treated in greater detail further on in the chapter (see section 3.7.7).

3.2.4.8 Rendering of the interrogative clauses: the yes/no interrogative clause

Focus is here given to those interrogative clauses expecting the answer "yes/no", those expecting "no" and those expecting "yes". A brief survey through the book of Ezekiel reveals that the interrogative clause is expressed in two main forms. The cases briefly studied are at verses 8:6; 8:12; 8:15; 8:17; 12:9a; 15:4; 17:12; 47:6; and 24:19. It was subsequently found that for the yes/no interrogative question, the Hebrew has the following forms:

(i) Interrogative article + participle + pronoun (subject) (as at 8:6)

MT: הֲרֹאיתֶם אֶת־מַעַם עֹשִׂים (*do you see what they are doing?*) and;

(ii) Interrogative particle + a finite verb (as at 8:15).

MT: הֲרֹאיתֶם בְּרֵאשׁוֹם (*do you see son of man?*)

Of the two, the second one was found to be the most common, occurring in eight of the ten cases that were studied. Translations into Syriac of these interrogative phrases were thereafter studied with the following results:

(i) Participle (sometimes preceded by an interrogative particle) + pronoun (as at 8:12),

P: ܘܢܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܨܐܢܐ and;

(ii) Perfect verb form + interrogative pronoun.

P: ܘܢܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܨܐܢܐ ܕܥܘܨܐܢܐ...

Of the two Syriac forms, the first occurs 9 times in the survey, while the second occurs once at 8:6⁸.

From these results it may be concluded that the most common way in which the Hebrew presented an interrogative (mostly a yes/no question) was with a finite verb form, while the Syriac rendered it with a participle verb form. However, the reversal of this general tendency at 8:6 between the Hebrew text and the Syriac text will pose a challenge to this view. It is possible at 8:6 that we have a literal translation of a variant *Vortage* or that scribal alterations took place in the translated text. Besides that variation, the overall picture is that the very change from using a finite to a non-finite verb form in Peshitta Ezekiel reveals the drive by the translators for a literary or idiomatic Syriac translation. Weitzman makes a similar observation when he points out that in the Peshitta in general, interrogative sentences are often recast, while rhetorical questions are replaced by their expected answers (Weitzman 1999:26). The Syriac translator therefore did not follow the Hebrew form

⁸ See, however, the correction made by Mulder (1985:14) at Ezekiel 8:15, which would have made it two cases for this second type and one less for the first.

literally but first tried to understand the phrase before rendering it in Syriac, in a literary and acceptable form.

3.2.5 Conclusion

As stated in the introduction to this section, the Peshitta translator followed a clause-by-clause approach rather than a word-for-word translation. This would mean, according to Tov (2001:126), that the translator was guided more by contextual exegesis than by the linguistic-semantic identification of words alone. Thus the translation tends to be literal in relation to the Hebrew text in terms of sense but less so in terms of lexical and syntactical units. The word-for-word rendering that at times is apparent in the translation is due to the similarities of both languages in structure and grammar as well as to the translator's strict attendance to every linguistic element in his Hebrew text.

3.3 QUANTITATIVE CORRESPONDENCE

The subject of quantitative correspondence has already been touched on in the passing in section 3.2.1 above. Indeed, even throughout the analysis of the segmentation of the text, it was often noted that the translator's drive for a sensible translation in good literary Syriac led to a significant amount of non-literal elements in the Syriac text. These non-literal elements do not only pertain to differences in meaning, structure or form but also to the literal characteristic of one-to-one correspondence between the Hebrew and Syriac elements. A few more examples to illustrate this point are the following:

Ezekiel 10:21

MT: ארבעה ארבעה פנים לאחד וארבע כנפים לאחד ודמות ידי אדם תחת כנפיהם

Tr.: *There were four faces for each one and four wings for each one and the form of a hand of a man was underneath their wings.*

P: ארבע ארבע ארבע פנים לאחד וארבע כנפים לאחד ודמות ידי אדם תחת כנפיהם
 גאמגא נכנפא אלמגא אפמס

Tr.: *There were four faces for **each one of them** and four wings for each one **of them** and the form of a hand of a man was underneath their wings.*

Against the principles of quantitative correspondence, the Peshitta translator represents the Hebrew word element לאחד with two Syriac word elements, and then adds a prepositional phrase thereafter, so that three word elements in Syriac correspond to the one in Hebrew. In the subsequent clause, however, **ו** is not duplicated but the prepositional phrase **אפמס** is still added. There are also cases of duplication at 11:10. The drive for sensibility is certainly evident in these examples, yet there are places where the translator's text very closely approximated one-to-one correspondence with the Hebrew text as in the case of 11:23.

Ezekiel 11:23

MT: ויעל כבוד יחה מעל תוך העיר ויעמד על ידה אשר מקדם לעיר

Tr.: *and the glory of the LORD went up from within the city and stood upon the mountain which was to the east of the city.*

P: ארואוויג זכממס גמגא ספ גל אפמס גכממס גמגממס גמגממס

Tr.: *And the glory of the Lord rose from within the city and stood upon the mountain which was to the east of the city.*

The illustrations given here and elsewhere above, demonstrate that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator did pay attention to every Hebrew word, but unlike the Greek to Syriac translators of the seventh century studied by Brock

(1979:82-83), formal word-for-word quantitative correspondence was not his concern. If one-to-one correspondence does exist in Peshitta Ezekiel, it is probably accidental, due mainly to the fact that Hebrew and Syriac share a similar language structure (Weitzman, 1999:22). We may thus conclude that, in terms of quantitative correspondence, Peshitta Ezekiel was not a literal translation. The Peshitta Ezekiel translator (as it has been found to be the case with other Peshitta Old Testament books) was not too concerned with matching his translation to his Hebrew *Vorlage* word-for-word (cf. Adair, 2000:122).

3.4 IMITATION OF THE HEBREW FORM

The following definition has been adapted from the description of Hebraisms in Greek by Tov: a Hebraism may be defined as a Syriac word, phrase, or *syntagma* which expresses certain characteristic Hebrew elements in Syriac in a non-Syriac fashion (Tov, 1999:87-88). The fact that Syriac is a Semitic language of the Aramaic dialect poses problems in determining Hebraisms which might have found their way into the translation, especially seeing that little knowledge of standard literary Syriac of the period of the Peshitta Ezekiel translation exists (Brock, 1977:1). Indeed, as Semitic languages, both Syriac and Hebrew are expected to share common roots and certain *syntagmas* for a large part of their vocabulary and grammar (Adair, 2000:106). This makes it naturally difficult to identify with certainty cases of Hebraisms in the Peshitta translation. Despite this challenge, it is to be expected, as for any translation, that the Peshitta retains traces of Hebrew idioms, syntax and vocabulary which were not native to Syriac at the time of the translation (Gehman, 1953:141).

3.4.1 Imitation of the Form of the Hebrew Word

A large part of the translator's vocabulary is made up of words cognate with the corresponding Hebrew. In the example below, all phrases except the last prepositional phrase are cognate with the Hebrew. However, it is difficult to be

certain whether this correspondence was a matter of principle of a mere by-product of the similarity between Hebrew and Syriac (Weitzman 1999:25). In the example given below, the way the translator rendered some nouns may suggest that at times, especially with rare Hebrew words, the translator was forced to conform to the form of the Hebrew words.

Ezekiel 10:13

MT: לאופנים להם קורא הגלגל באזני

Tr.: *I heard the wheels being called "the whirling wheels."* (NIV)

P: *אליהם מיה אמר גלגל מנגב.*

Tr.: *The wheels were called, "Oh wheels" in my presence.*

The example given here is a case where the translator had to deal with the representation of the Hebrew synonyms, גלגל and אופנים, both being usually represented in Syriac by the one word *גלגל* (Weitzman, 1999:30). To maintain the differentiation in the Hebrew sentence, the translator simply represented the first Hebrew noun by a Hebraism of that word. However, to diminish the *Hebraistic* nature of his rendering in this sentence, the translator chose to render the last prepositional phrase of the sentence, which is in a figurative form in the Hebrew text, by the prepositional phrase *מנגב*, reflecting the literal sense. The translator could have translated literally by using the preposition *ܐܘܢ* + the normally equivalent noun *ܐܘܢܝܢ* for the Hebrew expression, as at 9:1. From this example one may have the impression that the translator strove to be independent of the Hebrew form although, at times, he could not do so.

3.4.2 Rendering of Grammatical Categories

Speaking of the work of early Bible translators, Brock (1979:81) notes that for the strict adherents of literal translations, it was important to render as far as possible each *vocable* in the source language with one that corresponded with it in grammatical function in the target language. Such methods of literal translations are known in the works of Aquila and his predecessors. They

wished to have Hebrew particles like ו, גם, and וגם represented by corresponding Greek elements in their translations. According to Brock (1979:81), this method of literal translation was also practiced by seventh century Syriac translators. However, Weitzman (1999:25) notes that in the Peshitta, in general, grammatical categories are freely rendered. This general Peshitta characteristic does not appear to be true in findings of the present study. It has been found that most grammatical differences derive from the natural idiomatic differences between Syriac and Hebrew. The following comprises some of these differences.

- Syriac does not have a construction corresponding to the *waw* consecutive before perfect and imperfect verbs. A *waw* consecutive plus imperfect verb in Hebrew is rendered in Syriac with the perfect verb, while a *waw* consecutive plus a perfect verb in Hebrew is rendered by a verb in the imperfect form in Syriac (cf. Adair, 2000:107). In most cases, the *waw* is retained in Syriac only as a conjunction. For example, at 11:9, ועשיתי (and I will do, with the Hebrew perfect) is rendered as ܘܥܫܝܬܝܐ (and I will do, with the Syriac imperfect) in the Peshitta.
- There are slight differences in the meaning of verbal inflections between Syriac and Hebrew. The uses of verbal inflections in Syriac, especially Peshitta Ezekiel, function generally as tenses (perfect for past tense and imperfect for the future tense)⁹ as opposed to the Hebrew which shows a rather interwoven verbal system of aspect and tense (cf. Robinson, 1962:53; Van der Merwe et al., 2000:142-143). Thus the prophetic perfect in Hebrew is simply rendered by an imperfect verb in Syriac. For example, at 9:10, the Hebrew perfect verb נתתי is rendered in the Peshitta as ܘܢܬܝܬܝܐ, the first person imperfect of ܢܬܝܬ.

⁹ Muraoka (1997:65) points out that the Syriac imperfect form is very rarely used in independent clauses to indicate a future action or state, but is highly frequent in dependent clauses. That this should be different in the case of Peshitta Ezekiel may be proved by the examples he gives, drawn almost entirely from the New Testament.

- There are a few cases where a verbal form in the Hebrew text could only be represented in Syriac by a noun or adjective, or vice versa, where a Hebrew noun or adjective can be more sensibly represented by a verbal form in Syriac. Some examples discussed below feature this phenomenon (8:17; 11:6, 7, 8, 21).

In all such cases discussed above, the Peshitta Ezekiel rendered the Hebrew in good idiomatic Syriac. In any case, the free rendering of grammatical categories is very limited, even in those categories that are not affected by the idiomatic differences described above. Such grammatical categories include prepositions, nouns, adjectives, and verbs in general. In most cases, only the constituent word classes in phrases were freely rendered. In the preceding section 3.4.1 above (Ezekiel 10:13), mention was made of the representation of the Hebrew prepositional phrase (preposition + noun) into Syriac by a prepositional phrase without a noun. The result is that the grammatical category remains the same (prepositional phrase), but its composition is slightly altered in the Syriac translation, where it is only composed of prepositions. A similar case occurs at 11:11, where the Hebrew תוך בתוכה (*inside it*), is rendered in the Peshitta by כּ (in it). The Hebrew noun תוך itself was rendered by the Syriac adjective/preposition כּ (instead of the noun ܟܘܢܘܢ) at many places, although the grammatical category remained the same (prepositional phrase) at those places. Similarly, verbal and adverbial phrases mostly retained their grammatical categories in the Peshitta, although their constituent word classes were altered to conform to good Syriac idiom as shown in the example from Ezekiel 10:17 below.

from a prepositional phrase to a verb. The circumstances which led to the grammatical difference between the Syriac and the Hebrew text here might have been due to the error of perception or influence of the Septuagint (see section 3.7.6). It is therefore a difference which is not of interest to text criticism. Again, in the same verse, the Hebrew participle construct form, יֹשְׁבֵי used substantively, is appropriately translated as a noun in the Peshitta (ܡܫܒܝܢ).

At 8:17, the Peshitta Ezekiel translator could not find the equivalent for the Hebrew verb נָקַל (nifal of קָלַל, *to be too light a thing*) in the Hebrew rhetorical question. The translator was thus forced to translate the verb as a noun in Syriac (ܢܩܠܝܢ), as it has also been treated in modern English translations, which translate it by the adjective plus noun.

It is thus evident that most of the differences in grammatical categories between the Peshitta and its Hebrew *Vorlage* came about due to the natural difference between the idioms of the two languages. Apart from such a constraint, the translator rendered grammatical categories quite literally. In the example below all Hebrew grammatical categories of words are identically represented in the Syriac, except for the addition of elements in brackets and the grammatical inconsistency in number with the last noun phrase, 'evil' (see also example at Ezekiel 8:1, section 3.2.1 above).

Ezekiel 11:2

MT: ויאמר אלי בן אדם אלה האנשים החושבים אך והיעצים עצת דע בעיר הזאת

Tr.: *And he said to me, "son of man, these are the men who are planning wickedness and giving evil counsel in this city."*

P: סאמכו לך [מזמא] כזעמא. סלמ [אנש] רבא ונחלעעבך חלא.
סלחמך תלחא כנעא כמזמלא סמא.

Tr.: *and the Lord said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who are plotting deceit and giving evil advice in this city."*

3.4.2.1 Grammatical inconsistency with respect to number, gender and person.

Due to the reservation in this study that the presence or absence of the *seyame* in the manuscripts can not always be determined with certainty (see chapter 2, section 2.4.2), it is difficult to be confident of the grammatical number of nouns in the study section.

Nevertheless, an interesting treatment of the grammatical number of nouns may be detected in Peshitta Ezekiel. When quantifying some nouns by a number more than one, the Hebrew may employ the collective noun (Van der Merwe et al., 2000:268-269). The Peshitta Ezekiel does not use this collective form but the plural form of the noun, especially for those nouns which are non-quantifiable or those which have a collective sense (Muraoka, 1997:59). Examples of this feature can be found at 8:11 and 16.

Ezekiel 8:11

MT: ושבעים איש מזקני בית ישראל

Tr.: *and seventy men from the elders of Israel...*

P: סעבב רבא רב סבא ונחל סמול

Tr.: *and seventy **men** from the elders of Israel...*

Similarly, at 9:6 (see section 3.4.3 below), the Hebrew has the list 'old men, young men, maidens, women and children', listed as collective nouns, while the Syriac idiomatically renders them simply as plural nouns. Again, at 10:17 (above), the Hebrew noun *החיה* is translated as a plural noun in the Syriac, following Syriac idiom. At 8:11, the Hebrew noun in the post construct, *הקטרת* (*smoke, incense*) appears in the Peshitta as a plural noun *ܩܬܪܝܢ*.

In Chapter 10, the differences in the number between Hebrew and Syriac nouns mainly concerns the wheels and the cherubim, indicating the way the translator may have understood the text. The noun *גלגל* appears to be used as a collective noun in Hebrew, and is in all its appearances in Ezekiel translated as a plural in the Peshitta (see Ezekiel 10:13). Often, the alterations could have been in line with presenting a sensible translation as shown below.

Ezekiel 10:2

MT: *בא אלבינות לגלגל אל תחת לכרוב ומלא חפניך גזרי אש מבינות לכרבים*

Tr.: "Go in among the wheels under the **cherub** and fill your hands with coals of fire from within the cherubim..."

P: *בא לבנות גלגל למטה חרוב. סלע עפתיך במלוא ידך מעט חרוב*

Tr.: "Go in between the wheels, under the **cherubim** and fill your hands with coals of fire from within the cherubim..."

In this verse, the Syriac plural rendering of the noun shows good grammatical correlation with the previous verse which reads, "I looked, and I saw the likeness of a throne of sapphire above the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim" (NIV). What probably transpired should more or less be in line with Maori's Characterization of the Translation technique in the Peshitta Pentateuch where he observed that there are places where the Peshitta changes or adds words so that the translation will better fit the contextual meaning, or so that it will appear more logical, or in order to avoid contradictions between verses (Maori, 1995:106). At 10:6, however, the rendering of *האופן* with the plural form may either be due to stereotyping by the translator or scribal changes.

The main reason for differences in grammatical number between the Masoretic Text and the Peshitta may be attributed, as hinted above, to the fact that the Hebrew text used collective forms of nouns, while the Peshitta translator rendered all such nouns with the plural form. There are rare cases where a variation could be due to a different exegetical understanding of the Hebrew text, or due to the influence of the Septuagint. On the whole, the rendering of number was quite literal in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

In verbs, the rendering of number was also fairly literal, with a few exceptions at places such as 9:5, 10; 10:8, 19. In most of these cases, the deviation in number and gender between Syriac and Hebrew verbs is induced by non-literal translations discussed elsewhere in this chapter. To point out how unscrupulous the translator was in correlating the grammatical number of nouns and verbs with the rest of the contextual meaning, we may refer to the example at Ezekiel 10:19.

Ezekiel 10:19

MT: וישאו הכרובים את כנפיהם וירזמו מן הארץ לעיני בצאתם והאופנים לעמתם ויעמד פתח שער
בית יהוה הקדמוני

Tr.: *Then the cherubim lifted their wings and rose from the ground in my presence. As they went out, the wheels were with them. And it stood at the temple, on the entrance of its eastern gate...*

P: ܘܝܫܘܘ ܩܪܘܒܝܢ ܐܬܝܚܘܢ ܘܝܪܙܘܢ ܡܢ ܐܪܥܐ ܠܥܝܢܝ ܒܥܘܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܦܢܝܝܢ ܠܥܡܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܝܥܡܘܢ ܦܬܝܚ ܫܥܪ
ܒܝܬ ܝܗܘܘܗ ܩܕܡܘܢܝ

Tr.: *Then the Cherubim lifted their wings and rose from the ground in my presence. And as they went out, the wheels were with them. And **they** stood at the entrance of the gate, east of the temple ...*

With the support of the Septuagint, which agrees with the Peshitta against the Masoretic Text at the highlighted place, this variant may reflect a *Vorlage* with a text different to the Masoretic Text. Influence from the Septuagint is remotely probable, since such influence seems to have been generally limited to a minimum (see section 3.7.6). Conscious correction by the translator is also quite possible, since his aim was to present a sensible translation. Overall, the grammatical number and gender of verbs were literally rendered, with rare cases at places where the differences were a result of the overall free renderings aimed at presenting a sensible and idiomatic translation.

3.4.3 Syntax and Word Order

According to Brock (1979:81), word order of the Hebrew text was viewed as part of the mystery of the text so that it was essential to reproduce it in the translated text. This preservation of word order in the translations served as the most obvious mark of any literal translation. While Weitzman (1999:26) notes that the Peshitta is less free in word order so that where the Hebrew places the object before the verb, the Peshitta places it after. This characteristic feature is not necessarily true in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. The translator of Peshitta Ezekiel followed the Hebrew word order closely, even in the cases where the object preceded the verb or where the object preceded the subject.

Ezekiel 10:7

MT: וישלח הכרוב את ידו מבין הכרובים

Tr.: *And the cherub stretched out its hand from within the cherubim...*

P: ארזא ארזא ארזא ארזא ארזא ארזא ארזא ארזא

Tr.: *And the cherub stretched out its hand from within the cherubim...*

tripartite nominal clause is also a marked feature in the Syriac text (9:5, 8; 10:20; 11:2, 7) (cf. Muraoka, 1997:83, 86). Following the example below, it may also be noted that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator, following idiomatic Syriac (Muraoka, 1997:68-69), sought to put together in his translation words in the attributive construction which were separated by one word or more in the Masoretic Text.

Ezekiel 10:19

MT: ויעמד פתח שער בית יחזה הקדמוני

Tr.: *and it stood at the temple, at the entrance of its eastern gate.*

P: סמכה כמכלא גולגולא סונטא גולגולא גמולא גמולא

Tr.: *and it stood at the temple, at the temple of its eastern gate.*

3.4.4 Conclusion

It has been established in the preceding section that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator allowed himself to be influenced by the form of Hebrew to a fair degree, especially as concerns vocabulary and word order. Yet this influence was neither systematic nor consistent. At other times, motivated by the need to present a sensible and idiomatic translation, he strove to be independent of the Hebrew wording in such aspects as syntax, word order, word choice and verbal forms. This observation should be contrasted with that of Cornill (1886:148), stating that the Peshitta translator freely changed the word order of the Hebrew text. Rather we should assert that the Peshitta translator closely followed the Hebrew word order, except at such places where he felt that following the Hebrew word order would result in an unclear translation or a translation unnatural to the Syriac language. Only at few places was the alteration of word order made for merely stylistic reasons. Grammatical categories were generally rendered literally, while most of the apparent free renderings were the result of idiomatic differences between Hebrew and Syriac.

3.5 CONSISTENCY OF EQUIVALENCES

3.5.1 Consistency in Individual Word Classes

The literalist translator also desires to achieve one-to-one lexical correspondence, at least for what he considers the more important elements in the vocabulary of his source text (Brock, 1979:85-86). As it was indicated in the first chapter, one-to-one correspondence implies that any given Hebrew word should be rendered by the same Syriac word on all occurrences and thus every Syriac word should correspond to one Hebrew word only (Weitzman, 1999:27). Scholars have affirmed that lexical correspondences between the source and the target language do not have the same semantic range (Brock, 1979:86). The way the Peshitta translator rendered his source into Syriac may reflect the possibility that he was aware of this fact. He did not confine himself to absolute one-to-one correspondence but at times in his text, he through exegesis, tried to give an equivalent in terms of sense, corresponding to the Hebrew word in his *Vorlage*.

The table below is intended to show how consistent the translator was in rendering some Hebrew words. The words in this table are not exhaustive, but act only as an indicator to the nature of consistency of equivalence in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. Therefore, a small sample of words (verbs, nouns, adjectives, and prepositions) was considered from Ezekiel 8-11.

Table 3.1 showing the nature of selected word equivalences between the Hebrew and the Syriac texts (Ezekiel 8-11)

Hebrew Word	Word Category	Preferred Rendering (+ frequency)	Alternative Rendering (+ frequency)	Second Alternative Rendering (+ frequency)
רם/רם	verb	ܘܡܪ (5 times)		
נשא	verb	ܘܥܠܡ (6 times)	ܘܡܪ (3 times)	
עלה	verb	ܘܥܠܡ (twice)	ܘܡܪ (once)	ܘܥܠܡ (once)
קרא	verb	ܘܩܪܐ (4 times)		
אמר	verb	ܘܥܡܘܪ (32 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (once)	
דבר	verb	ܘܥܠܡ (twice) ¹⁰		
כא	verb	ܘܩܪܐ (8 times)	ܘܥܠܡ (8 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (once)
גדל	adjective	ܘܩܪܐ (3 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (3 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (once)
הפנימית	adjective	ܘܩܪܐ (twice)	ܘܩܪܐ (once)	
חצר	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (6 times)		
פתח	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (4 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (3 times)	
שער	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (10 times)		
דמות	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (5 times)		
מראה	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (11 times)		
תבנית	noun	ܘܩܪܐ (3 times)		
אל	preposition/ negative particle	ܘܩܪܐ (13 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (4 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (3 times)
על	preposition	ܘܩܪܐ (18 times)	ܘܩܪܐ (5 times)	participle of ܘܩܪܐ + enclitic (once)

At first sight, one is compelled to conclude that according to the information presented in this table, the Peshitta Ezekiel translator did not follow any policy on consistency of equivalence. However, as it was mentioned above, the apparent inconsistency shown in this table might be due to the fact that the

¹⁰ For the whole book of Ezekiel, however, the Hebrew דבר is rendered about thirty five times by ܘܥܠܡ and thirty times by ܘܥܡܘܪ.

translator was focused on giving a rendering best suited to the sense of the Hebrew for each particular occurrence of a word. This supposition may be verified by carrying out further word studies.

Taking for example the Hebrew root בוא, the translator used three different roots in Syriac for rendering this Hebrew verb. These roots into which the verb בוא is translated in Ezekiel 8-11 are listed below together with their lexical meanings.

ܐܘܪܘܚܐ - to come (Peal); to bring (Afel); to be brought (Ettafal)

ܥܠܐ - to enter a (into) place (Peal); to lead into¹¹ (Afel)

ܐܘܪܘܚܐ - to go (Peal).

Unless otherwise stated, lexical meanings are given according to Muraoka (1987:125-131).

Table 3.2 below records the sense which the Peshitta perceived from the Hebrew verb בוא for each occurrence and whether or not it conforms to the meaning implied in the Hebrew. Against entries for each of the Syriac verbs in the table, (C) represents cases where the particular verb used in Syriac conforms to the Hebrew sense, while the question mark (?) represents the cases where conformity to Hebrew sense is problematic.

¹¹ According to Goshen Gottstein (1970:57), the Afel has the meaning 'to bring in'

Table 3.2 showing the rendering of the verb בָּרָא in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11

Number	location	בָּרָא	בָּ	בָּרָא
1	8:3	brought me to (C)		
2	8:7		brought me in at (?)	
3	8:9		enter (C)	
4	8:10		entered (C)	
5	8:14	brought me to (C)		
6	8:16		bring in to (C)	
7	9:2 a	coming (C)		
8	9:2 b	came (C)		
9	10:2 a		enter/ go in (C)	
10	10:2 b		entered (C)	
11	10:3		entering (C)	
12	10:6	came ¹² (C)		
13	11:1	brought (C)		
14	11:8	bring (C)		
15	11:16			gone (C)
16	11:18		enter (into) it ¹³ (?)	
17	11:24	brought (C)		

The translator evidently managed to distinguish the three different meanings that could be evoked by the Hebrew verb, except for the case of 11:18 and less significantly at 8:7. In Ezekiel 11:18, the translator rendered וּבְאוּ-שָׁמָּה with ܡܠܟܘܢܗܘܢܝܘܢ , where probably the verb form בָּרָא , would have suited the context better given the adverb in the Hebrew.

The translator could have had the root בָּרָא in mind but could have referred, either to the Septuagint or to the Targums which read, $\text{καὶ εἰσελεύσονται ἐκεῖ}$ (*and they will enter in there*) and $\text{וַיֵּעַלְוּן לַחֲמֵן}$ (*and they will enter in there*) respectively. These readings would compel him to use the root בָּ . Again, the

¹² A number of translations including the Septuagint here have “*went in.*” The Peshitta rendering is probably correct since the ‘*man*’ had already ‘*gone in*’ (see 10:2).

¹³ The Septuagint here reads, ‘*and they shall enter in there...*’

translator, failing to perceive the meaning as *'enter in there'*, had to change the adverb to a preposition plus pronoun, according to his understanding of the clause. Thus, his attempt to follow the Greek or the Targum, but failing to understand their meaning, may be taken as proof for influence from either of these witnesses (Weitzman, 1999:70).

This explanation is, however, quite delicate. It is possible that the translator got the sense for the word *'enter'* from his Hebrew source text. Reference could have been made to the parallel passage in Psalm 118:20, where the Hebrew is given as יבאון בו. The same verb phrase also occurs at Ezekiel 7:22 (באון־בה). Furthermore, whenever the Hebrew verb בוא shows motion into an object, say a city or a house, the sense implied there according to the Syriac is that of entering (with the verb ܥܕ, for example 7:22, 9:2, 13:9, 26:10, 37:5, 42:14, 46:9). Thus seeing that the motion implied in the Hebrew verb בוא, in Ezekiel 11:18 was directed inside the city Jerusalem, the translator made the proper choice of the verb. But he did probably have a problem with the adverb (*there*) in the Hebrew which he altered according to his perceived meaning. What is observed here is the fact that the drive by the translator to render an idiomatic and sensible translation meant that he was actively involved in interpretation for each phrase, clause, and sentence that he was translating (see section 3.7.7 below). The level of interpretation in Peshitta Ezekiel is seemingly greater than that which would be expected in the work of translation done strictly as a literal word-for-word translation.

Besides the point indicated above, it may be said that the translator was usually able to identify the intended meaning in the Hebrew text which he represented by appropriate roots in Syriac. If anything, this survey shows that he was scrupulous in retaining the sense of the Hebrew by appropriate words in Syriac, though at the cost of consistency of equivalence in terms of one-to-one lexical correspondence. Such inconsistency of equivalences is unavoidable in the process of translation and should therefore not be taken as

diminishing the literal character of a translation, especially where retroversion is still possible (Tov, 2001:122-123). On a fairly high number of cases, verbs such as ܪܘܐ, ܬܘܐ and ܘܐܘܐ can be retroverted to the Hebrew form without difficulty. Occasionally, though, a case such as at 11:16 given in the table above, where ܘܐܘܐ is given as an equivalent of the root בוא would be problematic. This Syriac verb root (ܘܐܘܐ) is actually the normal root used for rendering the Hebrew הלך. Understanding the meaning *'the places where they have come there'* implied in the Hebrew text probably did not make sense for the translator who chose to give the translation as *'the places where they have gone'* (see translation in KJV vis-à-vis NIV). ܘܐܘܐ itself is used as an equivalent of בוא six times in Peshitta Ezekiel as a whole.

Word choices from Hebrew to Syriac could also have been made difficult by the existence of synonyms in both languages. Such situations, where either a word in the source text may be expressed in the target language by two different words, or where two words in the source language may only be represented by one word in the target language, would disrupt any goal to achieve consistency of equivalence in the translator's text. The existence of synonyms in the target language would also undoubtedly feed the translator's interest to present a stylistic translation (Weitzman, 1999:27). On the other hand, existence of synonyms in Hebrew which were absent in Syriac, like אופנים and גלגל (as in Ezekiel 10:13), presented difficult challenges for the translator (Weitzman, 1999:30). Another example is that of the two Hebrew synonyms דמות and תבנית, which can only be rendered by the one noun ܕܡܘܬܐ in Syriac (see Table 3.1 above).

In the relevant section of the present study, the criteria of choice for a particular synonym seemed not to have been a matter of A-word and B-word as Weitzman (1999:27) suggests for the Peshitta in general. The Peshitta Ezekiel translator was probably guided by perceived nuances in certain words. For example, the Syriac verb root ܦܘܐ was mostly employed with the

in Peshitta Ezekiel by either **ܡܠܟܐ** or **ܡܠܟܐ**, and by the cognate root **ܡܠܟ**. While **ܫܥܪ** was consistently translated by **ܡܠܟܐ**, **ܦܬܚ** alone could be rendered by any of the three words mentioned here. However, where both **ܦܬܚ** and **ܫܥܪ** occurred together in a text, the former would be translated by **ܡܠܟܐ** and the latter by **ܡܠܟܐ**. Thus, the criteria of making a choice between the known equivalents for these two Hebrew synonyms were not simply the consideration of the A-word and B-word, but that the equivalent of one of the synonyms was already fixed. Besides a few such cases, the translator was for the most part consistent in maintaining the equivalencies of nouns as hinted in Table 3.1 above.

In relation to prepositions, what appears at first to be a slack approach is in fact a more nuanced and consistent way of rendering the prepositions in the Hebrew text. We have noted in section 3.2.4.1 above that the Peshitta translator often made use of the participle **ܡܪ** plus the enclitic to show position, where the Hebrew has a non-verbal clause. Where the meaning in the Hebrew is that of position 'above' something, the Peshitta translator renders the Hebrew **על** by the construction **ܡܪ ܠܚܕ** (sometimes with a pronominal suffix after preposition **ܡܪ**). At times, the Hebrew has an additional construction **ܡܠܡܥܠܐ** which the Peshitta translator chooses to ignore (10:1, 4, 19, 11:22). When the meaning is that of 'on/upon', the preposition is simply rendered by the equivalent **ܠܚܕ** (8:1, 10; 9:4, 8; 10:2). Similarly, both prepositional forms **ܐܠ** and **ܠ** were rendered by **ܠ** prefixed to the related indirect object. When, however, these Hebrew prepositions were judged to mean 'on', the translator resorted to the use of **ܠܚܕ** (9:3; 10:11; 11:11, 14), while **ܡܪ** was employed when they were perceived to refer to a situation of speaking 'with' (11:25). Because the translator had to exercise judgment on the nuances of meaning of Hebrew words and phrases in order to determine the appropriate Syriac equivalents and constructions to be used, his work inevitably involved a lot of interpretation of the meaning of the Hebrew

wording. At 10:11 for example given below, the beginning of the verse can be interpreted as:

'When they went, they went upon their four sides...' (KJV) or

'As they moved, they would go in any one of the four directions...' (NIV).

Thus according to the NIV, the preposition *אל* has the literal meaning 'to, towards' (interpreted as 'in a certain direction') and not 'upon' as interpreted by the KJV and the Peshitta translator.

Ezekiel 10:11

MT: כלכתם אל ארבעת רבעיהם

Tr.: *when they went to their four sides...*

P: ܘܡܠܚܘ ܕܥܘܠܘܢ ܥܘܠܘܢ ܥܘܠܘܢ ܥܘܠܘܢ

Tr.: *when they went **on** their four sides...*

We have thus found that the translator followed a strict rendering policy for prepositions as well. He used specific prepositions in Syriac for the meanings, 'to/for', 'with', 'over/above,' and 'on'. There are no grounds then to argue that Hebrew prepositions were inconsistently rendered in the Peshitta Ezekiel as Cornill (1886:148) suggests. Instead, the translator shows a good knowledge of his Hebrew text and a skilled and principled use of his Syriac language. Tov (2001:125) suggests that the more a translation unit uses fixed equivalents, the more it is considered literal, and the less that such fixed equivalents are found in it, the freer it is considered. This guideline needs to be modified in the light of the findings in the Peshitta here. The Peshitta uses fixed equivalents for particular nuances in certain Hebrew words according to their perceived meanings in the context. To a certain extent, this implies that the level of exegesis in the translation is high, so that the translation may be characterised as free. On the other hand, the consistency with which these

perceived nuances were rendered implies a literal translation (Tov, 2001:125). The study of Peshitta Ezekiel therefore requires that its students be well acquainted with the way the translator understood or interpreted his Hebrew text.

3.5.2 Consistency of Equivalence in Syntactical and Grammatical Structures

Consistency of equivalence may not pertain to individual word elements alone, but also to syntactical constructions and grammatical style. For example, the fact that Greek translators were found to consistently render the Hebrew preposition + infinitive construct with ἐν τῷ + infinitive would enable the reconstruction of the Hebrew source to the Greek version (Brock, 1979:82).

In the Peshitta of Ezekiel 8-11, the translator was quite consistent in rendering a number of syntactical structures. The Hebrew כּ + infinitive construct is consistently rendered by the Syriac particle ܐܘܪܝܢܐ + ܐܘܪܝܢܐ + participle (10:5, 16, 17) or by ܐܘܪܝܢܐ + participle, the choice between the two probably depending on differences in nuance as perceived by the Peshitta translator. The Peshitta Ezekiel translator often correctly recognizes the prophetic future in verbs of the Hebrew perfect form (9:10) and translates them simply in their imperfect tense form. Furthermore, since the Syriac does not have the characteristic Hebrew waw consecutive + imperfect verb form, this Hebrew construction is consistently represented in the Syriac rendering by the perfect form (Adair, 2000:107, see section 3.4.2 above). The Peshitta translator also maintained consistency in clauses of direction. The characteristic Hebrew syntax for expressing direction (especially that of the cardinal compass points) in relation to a specific place, is noun of direction + preposition prefixed to noun of place, while in Syriac this would be expressed by preposition prefixed to noun of direction + particle of relation (ܐܘܪܝܢܐ) prefixed to noun (of place). Examples occur at in 8:5, 11:23, and 47:1.

Ezekiel 11:23

MT: ויעמד על ההר אשר מקדם לעיר

Tr.: *and they stood on the mountain which was to the east of the city.*

P: ܘܝܥܡܕ ܥܠ ܗܪܐ ܗܘܝܬܘܬܐ ܡܩܕܡܐ ܠܥܝܪܐ.

Tr.: *and they stood on the mountain which was on the eastern side of the city.*

3.5.3 Conclusion

Overall, the translator was more concerned with being able to represent the meaning of the Hebrew text in the Syriac translation, in an intelligible and clear way. The demands of such a priority naturally meant that one-for-one correspondence of lexemes could not be maintained consistently in his translation. However, respecting the natural difference in idiom between the Syriac and the Hebrew, the translator may be acknowledged to have achieved remarkable consistency, with few exceptions. He indeed shows exceptional ability by capturing in good Syriac idiom with a high degree of consistency, the different nuances of meaning from his Hebrew *Vorlage*. As Maori (1995:105) says, the translator's knowledge of Hebrew is generally very good. His level of consistency in grammatical categories may count to the credit of Peshitta Ezekiel as a literal translation, so that the reconstruction of its Hebrew source may be attempted (cf. Tov, 2001:129).

In other respects, the existence of synonyms in both languages made it difficult for the translator to maintain consistency in rendering his text. Furthermore, the fact that this was probably the first translation of its kind meant that the translator was, in a way, experimenting with his text, having no thorough laid down principles.

3.6 SECTION SUMMARY

From analysing the four categories above, it is evident that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel was generally concerned with translating the sense of the Hebrew into the Syriac in clear and idiomatic Syriac of his time (cf. Dirksen, 1992:390). What is valuable about the translation is that this Peshitta translator does not achieve this goal haphazardly and without principle but instead pays attention to every clause and lexeme, translating them faithfully and concisely. He thus strives to remain faithful to his Hebrew *Vorlage*.

Segmentation of the text in general was at the level of clauses. A few lexical elements of the source text were inevitably lost, and a few new ones found their way into the translation, but the meaning of the Hebrew was generally well retained in the translation. In some cases, the translator was faithful to the Hebrew word order, even where the word order did not conform to natural Syriac, while in a few cases he chose to deviate from the Hebrew word order for the sake of sense, clarity, and style. Word classes were generally consistently rendered, although in a few cases the fine-tuning into the various meanings of the Syriac wording may cause problems for the text critic. While syntactical constructions were mostly different from the Hebrew forms, they were generally consistently rendered. This ability of the translator to maintain a high degree of consistency in his translation is one important aspect of the Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 that may characterise it as a literal translation.

From these observations, we realize that although the general structure of the Hebrew and Syriac languages is the same, Peshitta Ezekiel clearly reveals the subtle differences in syntax, structure, idiom, vocabulary, and style between the two languages that are only evident at closer examination (Greenberg, 2002:18). The readiness with which the Peshitta translator was prepared to alter his text to vary from the form of the Hebrew text, gives us the indication that it was not his aim to produce a literal word-for-word translation of the Hebrew text. Rather, as the examples here have shown, he

intended to faithfully translate the Hebrew original in clear and idiomatic Syriac.

3.7 OTHER CHARACTERISTIC NON-LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

There are other translation techniques which fall outside the categories discussed above, and yet which may not be ignored, since they help us to compose a more informed characterisation of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. These shall now be discussed in this section in detail.

3.7.1 Technical Terms

Within Ezekiel 8-11, these can be identified as objects or phenomena in the Hebrew text that can be expected to have belonged to specialised subjects or fields. Their technical nature may also be observed from the way they were treated by the Peshitta translator who apparently tended to transliterate them. In other cases however, the translator sought to find equivalences in Syriac by which he represented the Hebrew technical words. In 10:1, הרקיע 'expanse' is translated as *ܡܫܬܠܐ* (tent or shelter). In 8:2, the Hebrew כעין החשמלה, 'as it were glowing metal' was translated at this point as *'like the appearance of God'*. That this particular term posed some challenge to the translator is evident from its renderings in Peshitta Ezekiel. The word החשמלה appears three times in the Hebrew Bible, all in Ezekiel (1:4, 1:27, and 8:2). At 1:4, it is not translated into Syriac while the rendering at 8:2 is the same as at 1:27. The rendering at these two later places is a result of exegesis, where the translator simply understood the 'glowing metal' (Greek, ἠλέκτρον), for which he could find no equivalent term in Syriac, as *'the appearance of God'*. This method of rendering is also common with difficult Hebrew names and titles which the Peshitta translators wished to express in understandable Syriac language. The rendering of the divine epithet (El) Shaddai (10:5) for example is one such Hebrew word likely to have been subjected to exegetical rendering by some Peshitta translators (see section 3.7.7.1). The rather

technical Hebrew words אופן and הגלגל may have also posed a problem for the Peshitta Ezekiel translator. These two synonyms were normally both translated into the Syriac by *ܕܒܝܠܐ*, but when they both appeared in the same clause as in 10:13, the translator had to resort to rendering by Hebraisms (see the example in section 3.4.1).

3.7.2 Names of God

In the Peshitta text *Elohim* אלהים is mostly rendered by *ܐܠܘܗܐ*. The *Tetragrammaton* יהוה is substituted by *ܐܘܪܝܘܬܐ* just as it is substituted in the Greek by *κύριος*. The combination אדני יהוה is rendered consistently by *ܐܘܪܝܘܬܐ ܕܐܘܪܝܘܬܐ*. This rendering of the name is said to be employed only in the book of Ezekiel and the Twelve Prophets (Weitzman, 1999:50). As mentioned before, the divine epithet in 10:5, אל-שדי, is rendered by *ܐܠܘܗܐ*. One positive aspect about the rendering of these names is that it was on the whole consistent, with very few exceptions, as at 10:4 where *ܐܠܘܗܐ* is employed for יהוה.

Ezekiel 10:4

MT: וידם נבחר יהוה

Tr.: *and the glory of the LORD rose...*

P: *ܐܘܪܝܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܘܗܐ ܕܐܘܪܝܘܬܐ*

Tr.: *and the glory of **God** rose...*

LXX: καὶ ἀπῆρεν ἡ δόξα κυρίου

Tr.: *and the glory of the Lord departed...*

T¹⁵: ואסחלק יקרא דיין

Tr.: *and the glory of the LORD was taken up...*

It is improbable that the translator found the unique reading in his *Vorlage*.

The difference in the Peshitta may come from stereotyping. The phrase,

¹⁵ T refers to the Targum version of Ezekiel

ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܡܘܨܐ occurs four times in Ezekiel 8-11 (8:4; 9:3; 10:19; 11:22), while the phrase ܠܚܝܐ ܡܡܘܨܐ first occurs at 10:4 and later at 10:18 and 11:23.

3.7.3 Metaphors and Anthropomorphic Language

The translation of figurative and anthropomorphic language in relation to God is fairly literal in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. There is one recurrent anthropomorphic figure in the book of Ezekiel occurring mainly in the first ten chapters of Ezekiel. This figure referring to 'God's eye' occurs at 5:11; 7:4, 9; 8:18; 9:5, 10. Only 9:10 was freely rendered, so that it does not show the anthropomorphic aspects in the Syriac translation. On the other hand, those figurative expressions which are not necessarily related to God are generally rendered freely. These were freely rendered probably for the sake of conformity to style or idiomatic Syriac. The Hebrew figurative expression באזני 'in my hearing' or 'in my presence' occurs three times in the section of the study in question (9:1, 5; 10:13). At 9:5 the Peshitta Ezekiel translated it into another figurative expression 'in my eyes', perhaps expressing the different way of communicating the same idea in Syriac. At 10:13 the translator resorted to the use of the prepositional phrase 'before me'. At 9:1 the Peshitta translator chose to translate it literally 'in my ears'. It is also literally translated at 8:18, where its meaning is clearly determined by the verb phrase 'they shall call' preceding it. Such free renderings that have been referred to, at 9:5 and 10:13 above, were consequently done at the expense of consistency of equivalence and thus ultimately at the expense of a literal translation.

3.7.4 Characteristic Pluses and Minuses

From what has been studied thus far, it is now apparent that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel would have made some additions or minuses in his text, mainly for the reason of achieving an idiomatic text, free of the difficulties and unnaturalness perceived in his *Vorlage*. The translator might be inclined on some occasions to reduce the length of his text significantly where he felt that the Hebrew was unnecessarily long. Such an example of non-literal

translation has already been pointed out in section 3.2.4.3. The reduction at 10:9 was probably a result of the desire to give a clear and idiomatic Syriac translation. The same reason may also be given for the shortening of the text at 10:21, which has a similar text to that of 10:9. The translator of Peshitta Ezekiel often omits the Hebrew particle הנה, especially when it occurs together with the verb ראה. Verse 10:14 has been shortened skilfully where the translator probably judged the Hebrew as being unnecessarily verbose (see section 3.2.4.3). At 10:11, the Syriac text twice omits the verbal phrase in the Hebrew text, underlined in the example below.

Ezekiel 10:11

MT : בלכתם אל ארבעת רבעיהם ילכו לא יסבו בלכתם כי המקום אשר יפנה הראש אחריו
 ילכו לא יסבו בלכתם

Tr.: *When they went to their four sides, they would go and did not tum as they went, but to the place which the head faced, they would follow and did not tum as they went.*

P: סכר ג'אול סם, על ארבעה רבעיהם אול סם, סל
 ספס סם, סל לרוביה ג'אול סם וזעמס. כולס אול סם, סל סכספס סם.

Tr.: *when they went on their four sides, they would go without turning, but to the place which their head was going, they would go after it without turning.*

[The LXX and T are approximately the same as MT.]

From the position of the phrases in the Hebrew text above, it is possible that these phrases, when rendered literally into Syriac, sounded unnatural and repetitive for the translator and so he simply left them out. A similar situation occurs at 1:17 as pointed out in the HUB (2004, 10:11) edition. There, the Peshitta Ezekiel omits the second infinitive construct verb. From this evidence, one is inclined to conclude that it was characteristic of Peshitta Ezekiel to omit verbs in such situations, or at least to alter the position of words and sentence structure, as in the case at 10:1 (see section 3.7.5

below). This is especially credible as the Hebrew sentence at 10:1 is so congested with the same verb that it sounds clumsy and unclear, the very aspects that the Peshitta Ezekiel's translator was trying to avoid. We may also take note of the conjunctions and prepositions added in the same verse by the translator, perhaps for reasons of clarity and naturalness.

On the side of additions, the desire to render a clear, natural, and unbroken text in the translation led the translator to make numerous additions in his translation. In 11:15 for example (shown below), the translator adds the conjunction *ו* where he probably judged that a conjunction was lacking in the Hebrew text for linking the first sentences with the ending subordinate clause. What may have looked to the translator like a subordinate clause introduced by 'for to us ...' was probably an independent sentence in the Hebrew text.

Ezekiel 11:15

MT: אשר אמרו להם יושבי ירושלים חזקו מעל יהודה לנו היא נתנה הארץ למורשה

Tr.: ...to whom the people of Jerusalem have said, depart from the LORD; the land has been given to us as a possession.

P: ויאמרו יושבי ירושלים חזקו מעל יהודה לנו היא נתנה הארץ למורשה

Tr.: ...the inhabitants of Jerusalem are saying to them, 'be far away from the Lord, for the land has been given to us as an inheritance.

This stresses the problems of construal which the translators faced in making out the sense of the Hebrew clauses as a whole, but even more: it shows that the translators were always interpreting the text and giving a meaningful translation rather than mere word-for-word equivalents.

Further, the Hebrew phrase, *כי אני יהרה*, has the pronoun translated twice in the Syriac translation almost consistently in Ezekiel, including at 11:10 and 12. This seems therefore to be a cliché, which the translator preferred to use. He apparently was not bothered by the non-literal form that resulted in his translation. At 9:4 illustrated below, the Peshitta Ezekiel adds the copulative and the adjective 'evils', probably as a result of a stereotyping of the clause from previous occurrences like 6:11 and 8:9.

Ezekiel 9:4

MT: על כל־החטאות הנעשות בתוכה

Tr.: *because of all the abominations which are done within her.*

P: כל חטאין ופחיתא סכנתא נחמדין בנה

Tr.: *because of all those abominations **and evils** which are done within her.*

The phrases at 6:11 and 8:9 referred to above, are themselves amended forms in relation to the corresponding Hebrew forms. In both occurrences the Hebrew literally reads, 'evil abominations', while the Syriac translation of these phrases reads 'abominations and evils'. The translator probably identified the difficulty in the expressions appearing in his Hebrew text where two adjectives of similar meaning are placed together. To bring clarity to his translation, the translator linked the two adjectives by a conjunction. Modern translators of the Hebrew text have had to deal with the same problem (see for example the KJV, ASV and ESV translations, against the CEV and NIV translations). The translator's desire to have a clear and sensible translation is thus clearly brought out here. Another case of a stereotyped addition may have occurred at 8:6, where the relative clause 'which they are doing' appears at the end of the Syriac verse in the Peshitta alone. This clause is probably stereotyped from verses such as 8:9, 13, and 17. This argument meets the difficulty that the sources of the stereotyping in 8:6 are all found after the concerned verse. Another problem is the tendency of the translator

to avoid repetitive clauses as has been noted in the discussion of Ezekiel 10:11 above. In the light of these complications, the additions may be seen as attempts by the translator to clarify his text. Otherwise a scribal hand to the text may also be supposed, where the purpose of the scribe may have been to bring a textual reading in line with other parallel passages. It may also be possible that the Peshitta alone preserves at some of the concerned places, a reading variant from the Masoretic Text, which is unique compared to any other witness.

Additions, where the translator inserts the copulative, are numerous in the translated text. Examples of such additions can be found at 8:18, 11:10, 11, 24, 10:1, 11 and 13. The need to specify the subject or object did not lead to a lot of additions in the text of this study, probably because of the relatively small number of characters involved in the passage. Such additions have been identified as at 11:2, where the subject, 'Lord', which was not in the Hebrew text, may have been added in the Syriac translation. An alternative explanation to the addition in 11:2 may be that the translator was influenced by the Septuagint or more probably, that he found the added text in his *Vorlage*, thus suggesting a variant text in the *Vorlage* of the translator. This problem is discussed in detail in section 3.7.6 below.

Most examples of characteristic minuses and additions given in this section do not seem to have the support of other witnesses, which strengthens the argument that such additions and minuses were characteristic of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 rather than that they were part of the translator's *Vorlage*.

3.7.5 Solutions to Difficult Hebrew

Although text criticism applies to the entire text of the Hebrew Bible, it is also particularly interested in those sections of the Hebrew text which present difficult readings (Tov, 2001, 10). This emphasizes the need to understand

how the translator solved problems at these places—the character of his translation of difficult Hebrew as it might be called.

In Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11, sections where the translator could not figure out the Hebrew clearly were often solved by free translations. The positions of conjunctions and copulatives could be altered, and copulatives could be added or removed (9:6; 10:11; 11:13; 11:15). Sometimes the translator would try to make sense out of figurative phrases, so that he would translate what he had interpreted, as in 11:21, where he replaced the Hebrew *וּאֶל־לֵב* (*but to heart*) with *בְּחַשְׁבֹּתָא* (*for in the thought*). Even though this first part of the translation at 11:21 was freely rendered, the rest of the verse was translated fairly literally. Similarly, at 10:1, the Peshitta Ezekiel altered the text of the Hebrew original due to the difficult form of the Hebrew text.

Ezekiel 10:1

MT: כַּאֲבֵן סַפִּיר כַּמְרֵאָה דְּמִוּת כִּסֵּא נִרְאָה עֲלֵיהֶם

Tr.: *like a stone of sapphire, like the appearance of the form of a throne, it appeared above them.*

P: ... אֲרָא עֲלֵיהֶם כַּאֲבֵן סַפִּיר וְכַאֲבֵן סַפִּיר וְכַאֲבֵן סַפִּיר ...

Tr.: *like the appearance of a stone of sapphire and like the appearance of the form of a throne above them.*

LXX: ὡς λίθος σαπφείρου ὁμοίωμα θρόνου ἐπ' αὐτῶν.

Tr.: *like a stone of sapphire, the form of a throne (was) above them.*

The Peshitta translator failed to determine the subject of the verb *נִרְאָה* at the end of this verse. He probably judged that nouns and verbs related to appearance were clustered in the last clause of this verse and thus decided to switch *נִרְאָה* to the previous clause, inserting it at *כַּאֲבֵן*, with which it would form a genitive construction. The verb was thus changed to the noun *אֲרָא*. On the other hand, the Septuagint simply omits the Hebrew *כַּמְרֵאָה* and the problematic verb *נִרְאָה*. The difficult position of the verb *נִרְאָה* might have led to

meaning, 'so *that not, lest*' (Goshen-Gottstein, 1970:17; Robinson, 1962:151; Muraoka, 1997:66). A problem arises as to why the translator chose to use an interrogative with a negative particle which the Hebrew original does not use. The resolution of rhetoric questions identified by Weitzman (1999:26) in the Peshitta in general does not seem to apply in this scenario. A detailed examination of the use of this particle in Peshitta Ezekiel has revealed that the particle ܕܠܝܢܐ does not have the negative meaning, wherever it is used in Peshitta Ezekiel. The particle appears 5 times in Ezekiel: 15:3, 4; 18:13; 28:3, 9. At all these places, the particle seems to carry only the interrogative meaning corresponding to the Hebrew interrogative particle ܐܢܝ. Thus the Syriac translation above should be read without the negative at the beginning of the verse. Further on in 8:17 above, the presence of the *dalath* with ܕܠܝܢܐ is disturbing. It is difficult to see it as an exegetical addition although this can be the case. Most probably it erroneously entered the text at the stage of translation or very early in the transmission process. The last phrase of 8:17 (*they put the branch to their nose*) was idiomatically translated in the Peshitta. Whether the translator understood the Hebrew or not can not be known with certainty. Most other translations also give an idiomatic rendering for which it is difficult to assess their understanding of the Hebrew text. The Septuagint reads literally, '*they are as those who sneer/snort*'; the Targum of Ezekiel reads, '*they are bringing shame to their face*'; while the Vulgate comes closest to the Masoretic Text with the reading, '*they are folding the branch into their nostrils*'. What may be soundly concluded is that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel translated the difficult Hebrew clause idiomatically and independently from other translations.

At times, multiple cases of obscurities in a single sentence or verse of the Hebrew text would lead the translator to make quite a number of non-literal translations, with the result that the translated text would look more of a paraphrase than a translation. At 10:11, the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel makes additions of copulatives (three times), omits a verb, translates a verb

by a Syriac verb of different meaning, and adds a preposition. Where the translator was not sure of the meaning of the Hebrew words, he would make guesses from the context of the passage as at 9:2 and 9:3, while at other times he would simply omit the whole clause, as at 9:11. Finally, some problems, especially concerning vocabulary which was difficult to reproduce in Syriac, were solved by exegetical rendering. A case in point is the noun *החשמלה* (*glowing metal*) at 8:2 which is rendered as *ܐܘܪܐܘܢ ܐܘܪܐܘܢ* (*the appearance of God*). Alternatively, a suggestion may be made that this was a case of mimicking the sound of the Hebrew word, where the beginning of the Hebrew word has a sound similar to the beginning of the Syriac *ܐܘܪܐܘܢ*. On the other hand, the ending of the Hebrew word sounds like the ending of the noun *ܐܘܪܐܘܢ* (cf. Greenberg, 2007:198-200). It is more probable, however, that the translator had some understanding of the meaning of the Hebrew but did not have an appropriate word in Syriac to represent the meaning and thus he came up with an exegetical term, *'the appearance of God'*.

On the whole, sections at which the translator found the Hebrew difficult or unnatural were freely rendered by means of the various mechanisms described in this section. It is at these sections where Cornill's advice that the Peshitta has to be used with great caution in text criticism most appropriately applies (Cornill, 1886:156).

3.7.6 Influence from the Septuagint or a Greek text

There are a number of points in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 at which the Syriac text has readings agreeing with the Septuagint, while disagreeing with the Masoretic Text. This characteristic feature may give the impression that Peshitta Ezekiel was influenced by the Septuagint at such occurrences. Scholars are generally persuaded of the possibility of influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta translators (cf. Van Rooy, 2007:17; Weitzman 1999:68; Dirksen, 1992:376-390). According to Weitzman (1999:69, 86), not all cases of agreement between the Peshitta and the Septuagint against the

Masoretic Text were a result of influence by the Septuagint on the Peshitta. There are a number of cases, where both Septuagint and Peshitta translators independently came up with similar variants against the reading in the Masoretic Text. Such a situation is referred to as polygenesis. On the other hand, there are some variants that have been found common to these two translations, whose nature are such that they could not have originated with the translators, but came from a Hebrew text variant from the Masoretic Text (Van Rooy, 2007:16). In this section, attention is focussed on finding the extent to which the Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 translator was influenced by the Greek text. This will be achieved through identifying those places where there is agreement between these two witnesses against the Masoretic Text, followed by an analysis of the probable causes which include polygenesis, scribal activity, a variant *Vorlage*, and Septuagint influence.

Some cases in Ezekiel 8-11 where the Peshitta agrees with the Septuagint were found at 8:5; 9:6; 10:8, 9, 19; 11:2, 7; and 21.

Ezekiel 8:5

MT: והנה מצפון לשער המזבח סמל הקנאה הזה בבאה

Tr.: *and look, north of the gate of the altar was this idol of jealousy, at the entrance.*

P: והנה מצפון לשער המזבח סמל הקנאה הזה בבאה

Tr.: *and look, north of the eastern gate stood the image of jealousy at its entrance.*

LXX: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ ἐπὶ τὴν πύλην τὴν πρὸς ἀνατολάς.

Tr.: *and look, north on the gate to the east.*

At Ezekiel 8:5, there is similarity between the Greek version and the Peshitta against the Masoretic Text, where the first two read '*north on/of the gate to the east*', while the Masoretic Text has instead '*north of the gate of the altar*'. The HUB edition (2004, 8:5) identifies this as a case where the translators misconstrued the Hebrew word *המזבח* as the form *המזרה*, mistaking the *bet* for a

resh. The Targum to Ezekiel at this point is identical with the Masoretic Text. The question may further be asked concerning this case, whether Peshitta Ezekiel was influenced by the Septuagint. Such a possibility indeed exists. The Hebrew text at this point, however, is not difficult so that it could have forced the translator to check it up in the Greek translation. Instead, a case of an interchange of similar letters (Tov, 2001:243) due to graphic similarity between the *bef* and the *resh* by both translators independently seems to be a better explanation. It could have happened also that the Hebrew at that point was not clearly written such that it was easy to make this interchange of the letters. Although this does not necessarily mean that the *Vorlage* of the Greek and Peshitta translators were graphically similar at this point, it may explain how both the Peshitta Ezekiel and the Septuagint translators produced identical deviant translations from the Masoretic Text. Therefore the most likely explanation for the similarity between the Peshitta and the Septuagint is polygenesis.

Another case lies at the very end of the same verse (8:5), where the Peshitta agrees with variant versions of the Greek translation (this last part of 8:5 is absent in the Septuagint). The Peshitta and some Greek manuscripts read the last phrase as '*at its entrance*'. The Hebrew preposition phrase בַּבֵּאֵה is a *hapax legomenon* used nowhere else in the Masoretic Text as indicated in the *Masora Parva* of the BHS 1977 edition. The identification of its morphology or syntactical composition might have been difficult for the translator(s). These translators probably took the *hé* at the end as a 3rd person feminine pronominal suffix. Both Greek and Syriac translators could correctly identify the meaning of the strange word, which gives the notion of reliance on a traditional reading or exegetical tradition of the passage. There is a possibility of the use of one of the Greek texts by the Peshitta translator in this verse, although such a tendency has not been found to be common in the Peshitta of Ezekiel. Plausibly, the similar readings at 8:5 between the Peshitta and the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text are a result of polygenesis.

Another case of a variant reading in both Greek and Syriac witnesses due to problems of lexical identification occurs at 11:15. At this place, both the Septuagint and Peshitta translators confused the not so popular Hebrew noun גאלה (*blood relative*) with the noun גולה (*exiles*) (cf. HUB 2004, 11:15). Again, in the same verse, the prepositional phrase כלה (preposition כל + pronominal suffix ה, *the whole of it*) was identified by etymological confusion with the Hebrew verb 'to come to an end'. This later result is quite a possible conclusion in an unvocalized text within the context of Ezekiel, in which God repeatedly promises punishment for Israel's idolatrous actions. Interestingly, both the Greek and the Syriac renderings (συντετέλεσται and ܣܘܢܬܬܐܠܡܐܘܢܐ respectively) suppose that the Hebrew had a 3rd person plural imperfect verb יכלו. While one is inclined to attribute this similarity between the Peshitta and the Septuagint to influence of the later on the Peshitta, one cannot rule out the possibility that the *Vorlagen* of both the Greek and Syriac translations had this variant reading in their respective texts.

At 10:8 the Peshitta and the Septuagint render the Hebrew word וירא (*it appeared*) with the 1st person active verb phrase 'I saw'. The Targum follows the Hebrew text in rendering the verb as a *nifal*, in the passive form. In an unvocalized text, it is possible to misconstrue the Hebrew text as reading 'he saw', which would not make sense to the context. In such a case, a translator might have been inclined to align his perceived sense of the verb in the *Vorlage* with his perceived contextual meaning to achieve a sensible translation. Gelston (2006:53) discusses such problems, pointing out that the problems are a result of differences in the vocalization traditions. The examples discussed by Gelston (2006:53-55) show clearly occasions where the Greek and Syriac translators made the same wrong identification of the vocalization of a Hebrew word, while at other times these versions differed in their identifications of the vocalization in the Hebrew text. Such a pattern leads one to be reluctant to attribute the similarity between the Septuagint

and the Peshitta at 10:8 to the influence of the Greek on the Syriac. One important question here is to ask whether the Peshitta Ezekiel translator found the Hebrew so difficult as to be forced to refer to the Septuagint. While the answer to this question cannot be certain, it is likely that the translator was not challenged to consult the Septuagint, so that *polygenesis* is the most plausible explanation of the similarities between the two witnesses at 10:8.

Ezekiel 10:9 is one of several verses in the study section under discussion where it has been found that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator put down a shorter text than the one in the Hebrew. In the relevant discussion in section 3.2.4.3 above, mention was made that, although it was likely that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator came up with the shortened text, it was still possible that he consulted the Septuagint. At a closer look at the details involved, however, that possibility diminishes. The translator of Peshitta Ezekiel usually represents the phrase 'each one' by the Syriac phrase ܐܘܢ ܐܘܢܐ (1:9; 10:9, 21, 22). This translator is inclined to rephrase difficult readings and present them in a way that is clear and sensible. In 10:21, the Peshitta translator uses the phrase ܐܘܢ ܐܘܢܐ, and adds the prepositional phrase ܕܡܘܢܗܘܢ, which was in neither the Hebrew nor the Greek texts. Furthermore, at 10:21 the Greek text has the reading 'eight wings for each one', while the Hebrew and the Syriac texts both have 'four wings for each one'. It may be concluded that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel read and understood the Hebrew at 10:21 and translated it into Syriac, making additions in order to conform to Syriac idiom and to maintain clarity. Similarly, one may conclude that the same translator could have made the restructured shorter phrase at 10:9 having similar motives as he had at 10:21, and thus without the need of influence from the Septuagint.

Nevertheless, Weitzman (1999:78-79) argues that dependence on the Septuagint by the Peshitta translators could occur even when the translator did not follow the Greek text consistently. It would be clear that such sporadic references to the Septuagint would result in a lot of inconsistencies. But at

10:9, it is found that the Peshitta twice renders the Hebrew with a shortened text and thus shows general consistency throughout, a feature which casts doubt on the translator's dependence on the Septuagint. Furthermore, the shortening of long repetitive clauses seems to have been a particular characteristic of the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel as it has been noted previously (section, 3.2.4.5 above).

Another interesting agreement between the witnesses against the Masoretic Text occurs at Ezekiel 11:2.

Ezekiel 11:2

MT: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּרָאם אֱלֹהִים
Tr.: *And he said to me, 'son of man...'*

P: וַיֹּאמֶר לִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרָיִם
Tr.: *And the Lord said to me, 'son of man...'*

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με Υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου, οὕτοι
Tr.: *And the Lord said to me, 'son of man...'*

The Peshitta Ezekiel and the Septuagint both specify the subject 'Lord', which is lacking in the Hebrew. The Hebrew clause '*and he said to me...*' is quite common at the beginning of each verse in Ezekiel. It is almost always translated literally into Syriac, which is why it is surprising to have the deviation cited at 11:2. The same situation as in the Syriac applies to the Greek translation at this verse. Although it has been pointed out that the Peshitta has the tendency to clarify the text, such clarification did not apply to this clause at other places in the Ezekiel text. Indeed, studies in the Peshitta translation to Jeremiah and the Peshitta in general do identify the translators' inclination to specify the subject occasionally in the text (Greenberg, 2002:37). However, the agreement of this strange variant between the two witnesses is too smart to be attributed to *polygenesis* and one may be compelled to admit that the translator to Peshitta Ezekiel followed the Greek

at this point. It is difficult to determine why the Peshitta translator had to turn to the Septuagint at that particular point, since the Masoretic Text contains no perceptible textual problems. We cannot easily accept the argument that this addition resulted from the desire to clarify the text and coincided at that very point with the same motive by the Septuagint translator. This situation therefore calls for the consideration of a *Vorfage* for both witnesses, which differed at this point from the Masoretic Text. Maori (1995:119) discusses the nature of such cases and suggests likewise that such situations raise the likelihood of a common variant text for the versions.

At Ezekiel 11:7, both witnesses have a text closer to each other than to the Masoretic Text.

Ezekiel 11:7

MT: ואתכם תוציא מתוכה

Tr.: *but he will drive you out from within it*

P: .מאל חן רור חפפ חלח

Tr.: *but I am driving you out from within it.*

LXX καὶ ὑμᾶς ἐξάξω ἐκ μέσου αὐτῆς.

Tr.: *but I will drive you out from within it.*

According to the HUB edition (2004, 11:7), the reading with the first person verb is also supported by readings in the Targum, the Vulgate as well as Genizah fragments and some complete medieval manuscripts. When comparing the Peshitta with the Septuagint, it is evident that the Peshitta employed the participle verb with the first person pronoun, while the Septuagint employed the future first person verb form. Such a difference makes doubtful the probability of influence on the Peshitta by the Septuagint. The support which other witnesses mentioned above provide to the reading in the Peshitta, leads us to attribute the variant reading in Peshitta Ezekiel 11:7 to contamination from other texts or to a variant *Vorfage*, in which case the

variant in the Peshitta would be unique. An identical case appears at 11:19, where the Peshitta, the Septuagint and other witnesses mentioned above share a variant text from the Masoretic Text. The difference concerns a pronoun which in the Masoretic Text is 2nd person plural, while in the witnesses it is third person plural (see Ezekiel 11:19 in section 3.7.7 below). Other cases of a similar nature occur at 10:11, 19; 9:7; and 8:17.

Ezekiel 10:19

MT: כצאתם והאופנים לעמכם ויעמד פתח שער בית יהודה הקדמוני

Tr.: *As they went out, the wheels were with them. And it stood at the temple, on the entrance of its eastern gate...*

P: כצאתם והאופנים לעמכם ויעמד פתח שער בית יהודה הקדמוני

Tr.: *And as they went out, the wheels were with them. And they stood at the temple, on the entrance of its eastern gate...*

LXX: ἐν τῷ ἐξελθεῖν αὐτὰ καὶ οἱ τροχοὶ ἐχόμενοι αὐτῶν καὶ ἔστησαν ἐπὶ τὰ πρόθυρα τῆς πύλης οἴκου κυρίου τῆς ἀπέναντι,

Tr.: *when they went out, the wheels were also beside them and they stood at the entrance of the eastern gate of the house of the Lord...*

At Ezekiel 10:19 illustrated above, the difference in the grammatical number of the pronoun between the Masoretic Text and the versions may have been caused by the translators noting some inconsistency in the grammatical number of the Hebrew verbs. The Peshitta may well have been influenced by the Septuagint, although there is no way of being sure. Alternatively, we may posit a variant reading (against the Masoretic Text) common to the *Vorlagen* of the translations. However, exegetical corrections by the translator are most likely to be the reason for the differences as has been explained elsewhere above (section 3.4.2.1).

At 11:21 (as well as at 9:10) both Peshitta Ezekiel and the Septuagint read the plural noun phrase '*their ways*', while the Masoretic Text has the singular form '*their way*'. While the distinction between plural and single nouns in the Peshitta is subject to the fact raised by Mulder (1985:XII), namely that the presence or absence of the *seyame* in manuscripts may not always be determined with certainty, the agreement between the two witnesses at this point is something to inquire on. No other witnesses are cited in support of these two versions. A number of reasons may be given for the similarity between these witnesses. Suggesting that the Peshitta was influenced by the Greek at this point may not be tenable. The Septuagint also has the noun κεφαλᾶς in the plural, which is singular in the Peshitta. The Septuagint has its main verb for this clause in the perfect form; thus reading '*I have repaid*', while the Peshitta has the same verb in the future tense (the imperfect conjugation). Exactly the same scenario occurs at 9:10. It then becomes difficult to imagine that, at both places, the Peshitta Ezekiel translator chose to follow the Greek text (against the Hebrew) with respect to the plural noun and then switched to the Hebrew text (against the Greek) for the rest of the clause. According to Weitzman's observations, the influence of the Septuagint in the Peshitta was unsystematic (Weitzman, 1999:78-79). Yet in the case under discussion, a systematic pattern exists which makes it difficult to suggest Septuagint influence. For both 11:21 and 9:10, explanations that are more plausible exist to explain similarities between the Septuagint and the Peshitta than merely influence of one upon the other.

Without ruling out the possibility of a variant *Vorlage*, the researcher may be persuaded that both translators could have misconstrued the form of the Hebrew wording, perceiving them to be plural forms rather than singular. Stereotyping from other passages could also have aided the error. Another possibility is that of scribal activity, where the scribes corrected the Peshitta at certain points only. A common exegetical tradition between the Syriac and the Greek, in reading the noun phrase, '*their ways*', may be a possible reason for

the similarity occurring in these two instances of the study section under discussion.

Ezekiel 9:6 concerns the addition of a copulative by the Biblical witnesses which may have been a case of *polygenesis*. This may be the case, since Peshitta Ezekiel's tendency to make such additions have previously been observed to be a common feature of the Peshitta Ezekiel translation.

Ezekiel 9:6

MT: זקן בָּחֹר וּבְתוּלָה וְנָעַם

Tr.: *Old men, young men, and maidens, and children...*

P: ܙܩܢܐ ܒܚܘܪܐ ܘܒܬܘܠܐܐ ܘܢܥܡܐ

Tr.: *and old men, and young men, and maidens, and children...*

LXX: πρεσβύτερον καὶ νεανίσκον καὶ παρθένον καὶ νήπια

Tr.: *and the elders and young men and maidens and children...*

It is difficult at 9:6 illustrated above, to deny or assert influence on the Peshitta by the Septuagint. The probability of a variant reading with the translations may also be suggested.

At 9:2 and 3 (section 3.2.1 above), it was observed that there is a probability that the Peshitta translator consulted the Septuagint for the difficult Hebrew word קָסַת. However, the circumstances (as discussed in section 3.2.1) rather strongly suggest that the Peshitta deduced this meaning from the context, independently of the Septuagint.

In all the discussion in this chapter, not a single case of unquestionable evidence has been found that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel was influenced by the Greek text. Therefore it must be posited that if such influence did exist, it should have been restrained to the minimum. It is rather unexpected that the conclusion here should go against the general observation of previous studies by other scholars, who have observed a high

incidence of the influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta in Ezekiel (Weitzman, 1999:68, 81). This is probably because the section of study scrutinized was rather small in comparison to the whole book of Ezekiel. Secondly, at the first impression, the Peshitta Ezekiel text seems indeed to have been heavily influenced by the Septuagint. Certainly, there are a number of cases that can be described as influences by the Septuagint on the Peshitta, as shown in Weitzman (1999:82). Yet most of the other cases that seem at first to be influences may not, under scrutiny, prove to be such. Rather, some incidences where the Peshitta was found to agree with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text could be explained by polygenesis, common exegetical tradition, scribal revision, and the possibility of an identical Hebrew source text, variant from the Masoretic Text. The reluctance to attribute readings to influence by the Septuagint where the Peshitta agrees with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text is also expressed by Cook (1988:159) with regard to the Pentateuch, and Szpek (1998:265) with regard to Job. Adair (2000:126) makes similar conclusions in his study of the Peshitta to 1 Samuel 3. He notes that the translators of the Peshitta show no tendency to consult other versions in any category other than quantitative representation.

3.7.7 Exegetical Elements

The problem of analyzing this topic is immediately apparent when considering that exegesis or interpretation is an ever present feature in any work of translation. Tov (2001:124-128) identifies four types of exegesis that characterize ancient translations of the Old Testament. The first of these four types is linguistic exegesis which includes the processes of perception, interpretation, and determination of equivalents for the linguistic forms identified. This is the exegesis essential to any translation, and thus Van der Watt (2002:260) notes that, "all translations, even the most literal are the product of interpretation by translators." The second type is contextual exegesis, where the translator sometimes explains a detail according to

another detail in the context and it includes additions and omissions. The third type is the theological exegesis which is mainly focused on the description of God and his acts. Tov (1999:257) especially identifies religious texts as abounding with theologically motivated exegesis. A fourth type is what Tov calls *midrashic tendencies*. These are *midrashic* elements similar to or identical with *midrashic* exegesis known from rabbinic literature, and are particularly frequent in the Targumim. It is with the last two forms of exegesis that this section is concerned. This will also provide an opportunity to assess whether the claim that the Peshitta was originally a Targumic document holds true for Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

From what has been discussed up to this point, it is clear that the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel makes modifications to the Hebrew text which include additions, minuses, verb modifications, word order changes, and syntactical alterations in order to achieve a Syriac rendering that is clear, idiomatic, and sensible. We may not consider such alterations to constitute theological or *midrashic* exegesis, since it may be argued that the intention of the translator was not mainly focused upon swaying the text in a certain theological or exegetical direction, but to give a clear translation. Inevitably, where such intentions are involved, some kind of interpretation may be an unintended result. Yet there exist a few cases in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 which, if it were to be confirmed that their reading did not lie in the source text, would stand out distinctly as exegetical elements (that is, products of theological or midrashic exegesis).

Ezekiel 11:19

MT: ונתתי להם לב אחד ורוח חדשה אתן בקרבכם

Tr.: *and I will give them one heart and a new spirit I will put within you*

P: ארוח למס לב חדש ורוח חדשה אתן במס

Tr.: *and I will give them a new heart and a new spirit I will place in them...*

LXX καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν ἑτέραν καὶ πνεῦμα καινὸν δώσω ἐν αὐτοῖς

Tr.: *and I will give them another heart and a new spirit I will put in them...*

While the variant in the Septuagint may be assessed to be an error of construal of the Hebrew letter *daleth* for the *resh*, the rendering in the Peshitta cannot be attributed to such a cause. The rendering may very well result from stereotyping. When the translator first read the verse, two other verses from parallel passages in Ezekiel could have come to his mind: 18:31 and 36:26. At both these verses, the Hebrew text reads 'a new heart and a new spirit'. By recalling these passages, the translator placed in his script the text from these two passages and thus did not pay close attention to the text of the Hebrew verse he was rendering. Alternatively, he was aware of the Hebrew reading in 11:19, but perceived it as an error and chose to render the information from the two parallel passages. It may be reasoned that if the purpose of the translator in altering the word was to simply 'correct' the Hebrew from available evidence and not to explain it, his translation may not be taken as an element of theological exegesis. The possibility that the Peshitta reading at 11:19 lay in the translator's *Vorlage* should also be considered, since the identical reading 'new heart' at 11:19, has been witnessed in some Genizah Hebrew text manuscripts (HUB 2004, 11:19). Considering all the foregoing alternatives gives us the result that the Peshitta was at this point, far from being intentionally exegetical, although the plain nature of the texts may seem to suggest a case of exegetical rendering. This is where the contrast between the Peshitta and the Targums lies. It may be observed that the Targums display the purposeful act of the translator to explain aspects in the Hebrew text (Adair, 2000:143). The Targum in rendering of the text of Ezekiel 11:19 may provide us with an example.

T: ואתין להון לב דחול ורוח דחלא אתין במעיכון

Tr.: *and I will give them a heart of fear and a spirit of fear I will put in their bellies...*

Peshitta Ezekiel 10:17 chose to give a clearer rendering of the Hebrew phrase after the literal one. One may note that the translator first gave a literal, word-for-word rendering of the Hebrew phrase at the beginning, before giving a clearer and more sensible rendering afterwards. The added part in this doublet (as we may more appropriately refer to it) may in fact be taken to be a kind of parenthesis, explaining the difficult literal translation preceding it. We may note alternatively that the person who inserted the reading could have been a reviser of the Peshitta Ezekiel text, who added the explanation early in its transmission. The reviser, out of a conscious desire to preserve the original literal reading, may have chosen not to delete the literal rendering of the original text but at the same time to provide the clearer and sensible meaning of that text (cf. Tov, 2001:241). The non-exegetical character of the insertion may be confirmed by the fact that it is made in line with the main purpose of the translator of Peshitta Ezekiel. He is focused on producing a faithful rendering of the Hebrew text which at the same time is in clear and sensible idiomatic Syriac. This significantly deviates from the purpose behind the exegetical elements in the Targums such as in 11:19 above. A similar case appears at Ezekiel 1:17 to which it may briefly be referred to, in order to substantiate the point under discussion.

Ezekiel 1:17

- MT: על־אַרְבַּעַת רַבְעִידָן בְּלַכְתֶּם יֵלְכוּ לֹא יִסְבּוּ בְּלַכְתֶּן
 Tr.: *(Lit). On their four sides they would go, they went; they would not turn as they went.*
- P: ܗܠ ܐܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܣܐ ܐܘܠ ܗܘܐ, ܗܠܐ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܗܘܐ, [ܗܠܐ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܗܘܐ
 ܐܝܚܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܣܐ. ܡܘܠܝܢ ܐܘܠ ܗܘܐ, ܗܠܐ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܡܘܠܝܢ ܗܘܐ,
 Tr.: *On their four sides they would go and were not turning, [and to the place which their head was facing to go, they would go after it without turning].*

Based on 10:11, both Cooke (1936:18) and Cornill (1886:147) regard the variant as an interpolation. The addition itself was therefore an attempt to explain the translation that comes before it (the unbracketed clause in the example above). The addition implies some form of exegesis, and the fact that it was based on 10:11 is quite possible. The need for the explanatory addition is, however, motivated by the obscure nature of the literal reading of the Hebrew text. The Hebrew text is quite congested with verbals and in want of conjunctions. One may view it as an exegetically motivated interpolation while perhaps it is more realistic to view it as an attempt to clarify the text, with no exegetical intentions in the mind of the translator. However, the question remains, as Van Rooy (2005:401) notes, as to who inserted the addition: the translator or the subsequent transmitters of the Peshitta manuscripts.

Admittedly, the distinction between an exegetical rendering intentionally made by the translator and one that is not intended to be exegetical is a difficult and subjective exercise. Yet some criterion of distinguishing between the two should be suggested. To this effect, Seeligmann (1948:96-97), referring to exegetical elements in the Septuagint, says that the main issue is to find out, "to what extent the Greek terms employed were, in the translator's mind, charged with a significance which caused the original biblical picture to be shifted to another plane of thought..." In the examples at 10:17 and 1:17 above, it is noted that the purpose of the Peshitta Ezekiel translator was not to shift the mind of the reader to another plane of thought, theological or otherwise, but to a clearer understanding of the Hebrew text. Similarly, no motive to explain theologically the altered terms is discernible in the earlier example of 11:19. According to Tov (1999:261), the presence of theological exegesis in standard renderings (of the Septuagint text) is rare. The majority of translation equivalents derive from linguistic identifications of a given Hebrew root or word with a Greek equivalent; as such, they are of more importance for the understanding of the linguistic knowledge of the translators

than for the understanding of their conceptual (theological) knowledge. The translation of words such as ברית by διαθηκη could have had some theological implications on the readers of the Septuagint but for the translators themselves it involved only semantic exegesis (Tov, 1999:262). Thus, while some scholars have identified theological exegesis in the differences between the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text, Tov however, views most of the differences to be the result of a process of lexical identification coupled with the technique of stereotyped translation (Tov, 1999:262).

Studies on the influence of the Targums on the Peshitta have shown Targumic influence to be present, especially in the Peshitta Pentateuch (Weitzman, 1999:86-129). Cook, (1988:168) attributes the similarities between the Peshitta and the Targums in the Pentateuch to inner Syriac causes. Most books outside the Pentateuch still need to be investigated. From what could be gathered in this study, there seems to be no grounds to suggest a direct influence of the Targums on Peshitta Ezekiel. A study focused on the whole book of Ezekiel is, however, necessary for a more informed characterisation in this regard.

3.7.7.1 The rendering of אל-שדי in Peshitta Ezekiel

There are, nevertheless, elements in Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 which qualify well as theological exegetical renderings, though not necessarily resulting from Targumic influence. The translation of both החשמלה (8:2) and אל-שדי (10:5) by ܐܠܘܗܝܢ as exegetical renderings has already been mentioned. In these cases, it is apparent that the translator intended to guide the reader to a certain theological significance of the words he found in the text according to his understanding of them.

The way the epithet (*EI*) *Shaddai* has been rendered in the Peshitta as a whole, strongly suggests exegetical rendering for this epithet. It has nine

different forms in the Peshitta, compared to the two which appear in the Hebrew text (אל-שדי and שדי). In Genesis and Exodus, where the longer form of the epithet appears more frequently in the Hebrew text, the Peshitta tends to transliterate it. However, in Numbers, Ruth, Job and Ezekiel, exegetical rendering and translation of the epithet are dominant.

Occasionally the epithet is transliterated as in Genesis where in four cases it is rendered as ܫܕܝܐ. Three other cases in Genesis and Exodus are best identified as transliterations mixed with exegetical elements, where the exegetical ܥܡܠܥ is added after the transliteration ܫܕܝܐ to form ܥܡܠܥ ܫܕܝܐ. Strictly speaking therefore, these later extended cases should be referred to as doublets¹⁶. Greenberg (2002:43) treats them as *'additional epithets'*, noting that the expansion of the titles of God in Jeremiah is frequent.

At other times the epithet was translated, as at Ruth 1:21. The translator here chose to render the Hebrew *Shaddai* with the etymologically derived expression, ܫܕܝܐ ܕܥܡܠܥ, *'the one who is sufficient'*, probably understood according to the corresponding Greek rendering ὁ ἰκανός, or *'the sufficient one'*¹⁷. In the previous verse (Ruth 1:20), the epithet had been transliterated. Another case of translation is almost exclusively confined to the book of Job: ܥܡܠܥ, which means *'strong one'*, or *'mighty one'*, is used almost alternately with the other rendering, ܥܡܠܥ.

The third way in which the epithet was treated was by exegetically rendering it. The rendering of the epithet (*EI*) *Shaddai* by ܥܡܠܥ is neither a translation nor a transliteration. Although it may be admissible to refer to the Peshitta rendering such as in Ezekiel 10:5 as a *substitution* or *identification*, it seems more appropriate to refer to it as an exegetical rendering, with a theological motive (Tov, 1999:260-263). This theological exegesis effectively identifies the epithet *EI Shaddai* with *Elohim* (God).

¹⁶ Cf. Weitzman (1999:112f).

¹⁷ Cf. Weitzman (1999:51).

From the different ways in which the translators tried to come up with an acceptable representation of the epithet in Syriac, it is evident that they struggled to do so. As it appears, the translators referred to many different sources which resulted in them coming up with the different renderings of the epithet. The sources for exegetical renderings especially, may be traced to various exegetical writings which may include material in *midrashic* and *talmudic* sources, the *aggadah*, and related practices of Jewish sub-groups in their society¹⁸.

3.7.8 Conclusion

The characteristic non-literal elements discussed in section 3.7 add to the whole picture which one should have of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. Such non-literal elements are bound to form part of any literal translation, since as Martin (1989:9) says: no translation can be absolutely literal. While pluses and minuses permeate the text, technical terms and exegetical elements are few in number and can be determined with more certainty. As concerns influence from the Septuagint, the translator's own individual efforts are more apparent than his tendency to be influenced by the Septuagint.

3.8 CASES OF VERY LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

Most of this study thus far has tended to exploit the non-literal aspects of the Peshitta Ezekiel translation. The huge number of non-literal examples given in this study may lead to the false impression that the translation is totally removed from being a literal translation. On the contrary, a number of cases exist where the translator rendered his *Vorlage* very literally. Ignoring cases of differences in such small aspects as the use of the conjunction 'and', as well as differences in prepositions and pronouns, the following list of verses may

¹⁸ Further research on this topic has been made in a paper read at the SASNES Annual Conference, 20-21 August 2007, titled 'Etymology and the rendering of the divine epithet (*El*) *Shaddai* in the Old Testament Peshitta version'. The paper is expected to be published in the near future.

well be qualified as rendered literally: 8:4, 8:13, 8:15, 8:18, 10:6, 10:15, 10:20, 11:4, 11:8, 11:9, 11:10, 11:11, 11:14, 11:20, 11:22-25. Indeed the studied cases of free renderings in the preceding sections form only part of the study section in question, and are rather scattered throughout the text thereof.

3.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Following the discussion in this chapter, it becomes evident that one cannot easily contain the character of the translation technique used by the Peshitta Ezekiel translator in a single sentence. In terms of the four categories studied in the first part of this chapter, the following points have been noted:

- 3.9.1** In relation to the segmentation of the text, the Peshitta has shown to be a clause-by-clause translation rather than a word-for-word translation. The translation was found to be literal to the Hebrew text in terms of sense but less so in terms of lexical and syntactical units.
- 3.9.2** In terms of quantitative correspondence, Peshitta Ezekiel falls well short of a literal translation. In other words, quantitative correspondence was not a prevailing guiding principle in the translator's work.
- 3.9.3** As concerns imitation of the Hebrew, the translator allowed himself to be influenced by the form of his source to a fair extent, mainly with respect to vocabulary and word order. At a number of places, the translator deviated from the Hebrew form in order to present sensible and idiomatic Syriac in his translation.
- 3.9.4** Further, the translator could not maintain a high level of consistency of equivalencies. This is due to a number of reasons which include the following:
 - The translator was more concerned with being able to represent the meaning of the Hebrew text in Syriac, in an intelligible and clear way.
 - The identification of certain perceived nuances which the translator could represent with different words in Syriac, coupled by the drive to

be stylistic, naturally meant that consistency could not be upheld in his translation.

- The existence of synonyms in both languages also made it difficult for the translator to maintain consistency in rendering his text.
- Furthermore, the fact that this was probably the first translation of its kind meant that the translator was in a way experimenting with his text, having no thorough laid down principles.

Nevertheless, most nouns and syntactical structures were fairly consistently rendered. It has also been observed that some of the elements appearing as inconsistencies do not have a bearing on the character of the translation as such, that is, they do not diminish its literal character.

3.9.5 Other characteristic non-literal translations, that is, technical terms and unfamiliar words which form a large part of the first eleven chapters of Ezekiel, presented problems for the translator, resulting in omissions and free or exegetical translations. The equivalencies for the names of God, on the other hand, were generally consistently employed, so that one may evaluate them as literally translated. A fair number of pluses and minuses permeate the translation, most of whose purpose was to give a clear and sensible translation. Furthermore, the translator did not hesitate to make non-literal renderings at points where the Hebrew text was perceived to be difficult. In relation to influence from the Septuagint, the section under study was found to have suffered minimum influence. Nevertheless, since the cases studied were such that the Peshitta agreed with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text, this adds to the non-literal character of the Peshitta in relation to the Masoretic Text (except in cases where the variant readings can be proved to have originated from the translator's *Vorlage* or from scribal revision). Exegetical elements were kept at a minimum, being confined to technical terms and names, all in a way related to the names and visions of God.

3.9.6 The difficulty in giving a general character to such a translation described here is immediately evident. From previous studies, we find that the Peshitta Ezekiel has been characterised as a free translation (Cornill 1886:148; Zimmerli 1979:77) and as a literal translation (Mulder, 1988:180), while the Peshitta as a whole has been seen as an idiomatic translation (Weitzman, 1999:61). Greenberg (2002:13) suggests that the Peshitta in general and specifically the Peshitta to Jeremiah should be seen as containing both literal and free elements. The observations in this study closely approximate Greenberg's description of the Peshitta to Jeremiah. It has been noted in fact that the literal character of the Peshitta translation is in most instances insufficiently appreciated. What may first seem to be free translations are in fact literal translations that at times follow the more finely defined nuances of Syriac vocabulary and grammar, corresponding to the Hebrew meaning derived from word and context. Therefore, the translation of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 may, in respect to word-for-word translation, be characterised as being fairly literal (keeping in mind that some of the cases found to be free renderings in the relevant examples could have originated from the *Vorlage* of the translator). By evaluating an element (or aspect) of translation as being fairly literal, it is acknowledged that there are also a sizable number of freely translated elements, although the literally translated elements form a majority of the element in question. This assessment alone would not be a true picture of the character of the Peshitta Ezekiel text. Although the translation only manages to conform to the Hebrew original in terms of word-for-word rendering, it does conform well in terms of sense. It has been observed that the purpose of the translator was to give a clear, sensible, and idiomatic translation of the Hebrew text. In relation to this aspect of sense, the translation qualifies well as a highly literal translation of its the Hebrew *Vorlage*.

- 3.9.7** In the opinion of the researcher, describing the whole translation simply as literal or free would not reflect the true picture of the translation. In fact, such a description would be worthless, both to the students of Old Testament text criticism and to the students of Biblical exegesis. At the most, such a translation as the one under study should be characterized in terms of the two aspects of translation that have already been given above. In short therefore, one would say that the Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 translation is fairly literal in terms of word-for-word translation (grammatical, lexical and syntactical aspects), but highly literal in terms of conforming to the sense, meaning and general sentence structure of the Hebrew text.
- 3.9.8** It is important to point out at the same time that, from this study, it has become apparent that the translator could not have had an intention to produce a literal translation in the first place. His attitude towards deviating from the literal nature of his Hebrew source brings out this realization clearly. Rather, the translator was concerned with faithfully representing the meaning of the Hebrew wording in clear, meaningful, and idiomatic Syriac. There are a few factors, however, that may be responsible for the literal character of his translation. In the first place, we should realize that unlike a language such as Greek, Syriac as a Semitic language has many aspects in common with the Hebrew, structure being one of them (Brock, 2006b:19; Adair, 2000:105-106) . Thus, seeing that the translator based his translation on a Hebrew text, his Syriac sentence structure generally tended to follow the Hebrew sentence structure. Secondly, his resolve to remain faithful to the Hebrew source was perhaps another aspect that helped him to follow the Hebrew parent text closely and therefore literally. Since it seems that the translator was not aiming at a literal translation, those characteristics therefore, appearing in the final translated text as literal translations of the Hebrew text were fortunate coincidences of a translation made with different intentions.

CHAPTER 4

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND THE VALUE OF THE TEXT OF PESHITTA EZEKIEL

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

- 4.1 INTRODUCTION
- 4.2 THE NATURE OF THE HEBREW TEXT OF EZEKIEL: ITS WITNESSES AND TEXT CRITICISM
- 4.3 THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEBREW TEXT OF EZEKIEL AND THE PESHITTA TRANSLATION
- 4.4 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND TEXT CRITICISM
- 4.5 PESHITTA EZEKIEL AND THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT
- 4.6 THE VALUE OF THE PESHITTA EZEKIEL TEXT IN EXEGESIS
- 4.7 CONCLUSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the second chapter (section 2.1.1), reference was made to Tov's statement that text criticism proper has two stages: the one dealing with the collection and reconstruction of Hebrew variants, and the second dealing with their evaluation (Tov, 1992:290). The study in chapter three mainly falls within the first stage, since there, the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel was discussed, including text critical analysis, which led to forming an idea of the way the translator translated his Hebrew text.

In this fourth chapter of the study, focus is upon establishing the value of the reconstructed Hebrew text of Peshitta Ezekiel in the study of the text of Ezekiel, especially concerning text criticism. This aspect pertains mainly to the second stage according to Tov's definition of text criticism of the Hebrew

Bible, mentioned above. The term 'text criticism' will be used prominently in the present chapter, seeing that we are looking at the significance of the Peshitta of Ezekiel in the larger field of textual studies (see definitions in chapter two, section 2.1). In this chapter, as in the previous, we will continue to carry out text critical as well as literary analysis, the latter being more pronounced in the present chapter than it was in the previous one.

As the title of this chapter indicates, the scope of the studies here will be focused on the text of Peshitta Ezekiel in general, although the primary stress is on chapters 8-11, from which reference shall also be made concerning practical examples. This position is appropriate, since under present Peshitta scholarship, it is accepted *a priori* that the book of Peshitta Ezekiel, as most other Old Testament Peshitta books, is taken as one unit, a work produced by a single translator (cf. Weitzman, 1999:164-165, 203; Greenberg, 2002:203). There is not, as far as can be established, sufficient information to suggest that more than one section exist in Peshitta Ezekiel with differing literary histories (it may also be supposed that the translator did not change his translation techniques significantly throughout the Book of Ezekiel). Any value therefore, deducible from the translation technique of chapter 8-11, may be concluded to be probably true of the whole book of Peshitta Ezekiel.

While the primary concern in the present chapter is on the contribution of translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel to its value for textual studies, that value is best viewed from within the general framework of all factors affecting Peshitta Ezekiel as a text to be used for the study of the text of Ezekiel. The present chapter shall therefore bring into consideration, other factors affecting the value of the Peshitta text for textual studies, besides translation technique. Indeed, it may be noted, as the discussions below will attempt to show, that translation technique either contributes (directly or indirectly) towards the validity of the mentioned factors or draws strengths from them. With the foregoing point in mind, the following points shall be attended to in

the present chapter: the nature of the extant Hebrew text of Ezekiel, with specific reference to its witnesses and text criticism; the language of the Hebrew text of Ezekiel in relation to the Peshitta translation; translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel in relation to text criticism of the Hebrew Bible; the Peshitta Ezekiel within the history of the biblical text; and the value of the Peshitta Ezekiel text in exegesis.

4.2 THE NATURE OF THE HEBREW TEXT OF EZEKIEL: ITS WITNESSES AND TEXT CRITICISM

4.2.1 Hebrew Witnesses and Ancient Versions

According to Lust (2006:153), the most important Hebrew witnesses for the book of Ezekiel are three medieval Tiberian manuscripts. These are: Codex Leningradensis of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, and the Aleppo and Cairo Codices. A relatively small number of Ezekiel passages are preserved in some six scroll fragments found at Qumran and Masada, all dating to the pre-Christian era (Lust, 2006:153). Besides these Hebrew witnesses, the text of Ezekiel has also been preserved in ancient witnesses which include the Septuagint, the Peshitta, the Targum and the Vulgate. The paucity of the Hebrew witnesses for the Book of Ezekiel and the respectable place which the Peshitta holds among these ancient witnesses, may make the text of Peshitta Ezekiel and thus the results of translation technique study carried out in chapter 3 of the present study, an indispensable tool in text criticism (see Mulder's comments in section 1.1). This is especially the case given that Peshitta Ezekiel has been observed to contain literal elements (besides free elements) which can be useful for the textual studies of the book of Ezekiel.

4.2.2 Commentators' Views on the Text of Ezekiel

Lust (2006:155) observes that earlier important commentators on the Hebrew text of Ezekiel (C.H. Cornill, 1886; G.A. Cooke, 1936; and G. Fohrer, 1952) view the text as being in a rather deplorable state. According to Cooke, (1936:xi) there is perhaps no book in the Hebrew Bible, with the exception of 1 and 2 Samuel, that has suffered as much injury to its text as Ezekiel. This injury, Cooke (1936:xxvii) attributes to the usual accidents of transmission, but even more to the extra-ordinary nature of the events described within it. Furthermore, Cooke notes that "the copyist found himself in difficulties over rare words and obscure architectural terms; well-meant explanations of readers became incorporated from the margin, only to lead to worse confusion" (Cooke, 1936:xxvii).

On the other hand, Lust (2006:155) views modern commentators as advocating for a rather less harsh evaluation of the text of Ezekiel. Allen (1990:xxvii) nevertheless still paints a rather gloomy picture on the nature of the text. He points out that most of the text (chapters 20-48, especially, 32:17-32 and chapters 40-42) is problematic. In any case, Allen seems to draw quite a lot from the works of earlier commentators mentioned by Lust above (Allen, 1994:xxii). This dim picture which the commentators maintain on the Hebrew text of Ezekiel necessitates the use of more tools in the text criticism of the book than the traditional Hebrew and Greek texts. Since it could be realised that Peshitta Ezekiel was rendered fairly literally, the text of Peshitta Ezekiel thus becomes an important text critical tool to consider for some of the problems to be found in the Ezekiel text.

4.2.3 Past Results of the Text Critical Studies in Ezekiel

Textual studies in the book of Ezekiel have come to be mainly partitioned into two related categories: *literary criticism* and *text criticism* (Lust, 1986:17-19). These studies are mainly conditioned by the nature of major textual witnesses available for textual (and exegetical) studies to Ezekiel. These major

witnesses have been identified as the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint (closely associated with the pre-hexaplaric Papyrus 967) (Lust, 2006:154; Allen, 1994:xxiii; Allen, 1990:xxviii). The Greek translation of Ezekiel is notably shorter than the Masoretic Text by about 4-5% (Lust, 2006:160). Lust gives indications that this figure could be greater in Papyrus 967 where longer minuses at Ezekiel 12:26-28; 32:25-26; and 36:23b-38 have been identified. According to Lust (2006:161), these longer minuses are not due to errors of scribes or translators, but they are witnesses to an earlier Hebrew text in which these sections were not yet added.

This apparently substantial difference between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint has led to much debate among scholars as to how to make use of the Greek texts in the study of Ezekiel. Other commentators, especially of the earlier period referred to above, have reportedly ascribed the differences to copyists of the Hebrew text or the Greek translation (cf. Tov, 1986c:89; Cooke, 1936:xl, xxvii), while presently the argument seems to be strongly in support of the fact that many differences between these witnesses were created at the level of the literary growth of the book of Ezekiel. According to a number of scholars, such differences are not at all due to textual factors (Tov, 1986c:89-90,101; Lust, 1986b:18-19; Allen, 1994:xxii). In effect, at the places where such major differences have been identified between the Masoretic Text and the Greek Text, there are different compositions, where the Masoretic Text represents a further stage of development. There is thus no reason to correct the Masoretic Text on the basis of the Septuagint (Lust, 1986b:19; Tov, 1986c:101; Tov 2001:314-316). In other words, it is of no value to count the Greek text as a textual witness for the Masoretic Text, especially for the places in Ezekiel where major omissions in the Septuagint have been identified. As a consequence, the Peshitta becomes an important witness at those sections which are absent in the Septuagint of Ezekiel. An example from the section of study in this dissertation can be drawn from Ezekiel 10:14.

Ezekiel 10:14

MT: וארבעה פנים לאחד פני האחד פני הכרוב ופני השני פני אדם והשלישי פני אריה
והרביעי פני־נשר

Tr.: *And there were four faces for each one; the face of the first was the face of a cherub, the face of the second was the face of a man, the face of the third was the face of a lion and the face of the fourth was the face of an eagle.*

P: מארבעה ארבע לנג ענ כנמס. ענא ארפ כוסכא. מאעולא ארפא נבו אענא
מאעולא ארפא נאזנא מאעולא ארפא נענא.

Tr.: *And there were four faces for each one of them; one (had) the face of a cherub, another the face of a son of man, another the face of a lion and another the face of an eagle.*

Here the additions and modifications in the Peshitta may be understood to be a result of the translator who shortened his text and presented it in a sensible way. According to the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 therefore, there is no need to emend the Hebrew on account of the Peshitta reading. More significant minuses in the Septuagint have been identified elsewhere in Ezekiel, including chapters 7, 12, 13 and 36. The Peshitta becomes important as a witness of the Masoretic Text at these places, although that importance is not likely to result in the discovery of a large number of Hebrew readings that vary from the Masoretic Text (Mulder, 1988:171).

According to Tov (2001:122), the Qumran discoveries seemingly decreased the value of the ancient translations, since reliance on Hebrew texts is preferable to the use of ancient versions of which the Hebrew source is not known. The Qumran texts, in relation to the book of Ezekiel may, however, offer limited help as they are all in the form of fragments, covering only certain passages of Ezekiel. Further, these fragments are themselves plagued with lacunae (Lust, 2006:153-156, 158; Tov 2001:122). This leaves the Peshitta

Text of Ezekiel as being an important witness to the Masoretic Text. The Hebrew source of the Peshitta has generally been viewed as being close to the Masoretic Text, containing fewer variants than the Septuagint, but more than the Targumim and the Vulgate (Tov, 2001:123, 152; Szpeck, 1998:255). The present study has demonstrated (in chapter three) that there are a number of differences between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text which cannot easily be attributed to the translator or other textual causes, but to the *Vorlage* used by the translator. Consequently, the value of the Peshitta Ezekiel for the textual studies of the text of Ezekiel is thereby heightened.

4.3 THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEBREW TEXT OF EZEKIEL AND THE PESHITTA TRANSLATION

4.3.1 General character of the language

The characteristics of the Hebrew language used in Ezekiel may have had an effect on how the translator proceeded in his translation in terms of translation technique. This aspect should be of some importance taking into account the outcomes of studies on books like the Chronicles, where there is a possibility that the translator's *Vorlage* was damaged so that he (the translator) rendered most of the text freely into Syriac, with numerous additions (Weitzman, 1999:120).

Zimmerli (1979:21) acknowledges that the language of the Hebrew text of Ezekiel comes from the sixth century B.C. It has been found that the Hebrew text of Ezekiel displays a considerable number of lexical features typical of Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH). It has been noted particularly that there is a characteristic interchange of על / אל (Lust 2006:162). Rooker (1990:86-99) lists other LBH practices present in Ezekiel such as: the tendency of attaching the third masculine singular suffix directly to the verb; the use of the proleptic pronominal suffix; collective nouns construed as plurals; and the tendency to use ל to introduce the direct object. Thus it may be that the nature of the

Hebrew text itself could have been difficult for the Peshitta translator to understand. Alternatively, the translator may have understood his text, but found it difficult to translate the *Vorlage* into the receptor language, with the result that exegesis became more pronounced in the translation process than the translator intended (cf. Van Rooy, 2005:404). The nature of the source language is particularly important when it comes to the need for reconstruction of the Hebrew text behind the translation. The fact that a semantic element, for example a preposition showing direction (towards), is not represented in a uniform way morphologically in its *Vorlage*, would make it difficult to determine the original form of the *Vorlage* used by the translator with any certainty. But seeing that such inconsistencies pertain mainly to few grammatical elements such as the prepositions על / אל, their impact on reconstruction and on the value of reconstructed variants is in fact insignificant.

4.4 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE AND TEXT CRITICISM

4.4.1 Specifications

The importance of the preliminary studies of translation technique has already been discussed in the second chapter of this study (section 2.1). The main interest here is to evaluate the Peshitta Text of Ezekiel for the study of the Hebrew text of Ezekiel based on the translation technique that has been found to be characteristic of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11.

4.4.2 Possibility to Reconstruct the Hebrew Vorlage

According to Tov's discussion (Tov, 2001:122-124, 129), the particular value of a translation lies in the possibility of finding the Hebrew text behind it, especially where a reading in the translation differs from the one in the Masoretic Text. Rules for the reconstruction of readings were not yet finalised at the time of the publishing of Tov's monograph but had been significantly developed especially in relation to the reconstruction of the Septuagint

Vorlage. Discussions on the rules of reconstruction are also in progress with specific focus on the Peshitta (Maori, 1995; Gordon, 1995). Generally, Tov (2001:129) says that translations can be reconstructed primarily on the basis of intuition in conjunction with the use of various tools such as concordances. Maori (1995:103-128) suggests some guidelines when it comes to deciding whether the reading in the Peshitta version should reflect the translator's exegesis or a variant *Vorlage*. The main guideline he puts forward is that of simplicity: what can be explained in a simple and straightforward way ought not be explained in a complex and indirect way (Maori, 1995:105, 115). Thus if the source Hebrew text is envisaged to have been simple and clear, the Peshitta translator may not be expected to have altered the text so that it would become complex. If the Peshitta translation displays a complex text as opposed to the simple text of the Masoretic Text, a variant reading in the *Vorlage* may be seriously considered. Most differences between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text can otherwise be attributed to Jewish exegesis or the translator's technique (Maori, 1995:101,119).


However, Maori's guidelines are based on a study of the Pentateuch. It has been observed that the issue of Jewish exegesis with which Maori struggles here has a higher incidence in the Pentateuch and in Chronicles than in other books of the Old Testament (Weitzman, 1999:185). Maori's guidelines will therefore not necessarily apply to the Peshitta of Ezekiel although they may be useful. It was previously shown in this study that the Peshitta of Ezekiel (at least in chapters 8-11) is fairly free of sweeping exegetical elements that are typical of the Targums or of the Peshitta Pentateuch (Weitzman 1999:86-87). This does not necessarily result in a greater number of variants attributable to a variant *Vorlage* in Peshitta Ezekiel, but rather that the text critic is to worry less about the possibility of exegesis, among many other explanations that may be given for a deviant text in the Peshitta. In a sense, variant readings that may be attributed to a variant Hebrew text are more easily detectable in the Peshitta to Ezekiel than in the Peshitta Pentateuch.














Furthermore, Tov (2001:129) notes that reconstruction is based on the assumption that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the translation can be determined with greater accuracy, the more consistently the translator used fixed equivalents for individual words and grammatical categories. He says that, if a certain translation unit is freely rendered, it is much more difficult and often impossible to reconstruct its Hebrew source. Similarly, Cook (2004:534) also says that if a translator rendered his parent text freely, it follows logically that deviations, in comparison with the Masoretic Text (as a standard text in the case of this study), should be ascribed to the translator and not to a variant Hebrew *Vorlage*. For the more literal translation, the general guideline would be to consider a deviating *Vorlage* as a possible solution for the origin of variants. In view of these guidelines, the relevant section of study in Peshitta Ezekiel is problematic. According to the description of the translation technique in the previous chapter, the text critic is faced with a text which has both free and literal elements. The amount of interpretation which the translator permitted in his translation, as well as the natural difference in idiom, will make any reconstruction process a very subjective process (Tov, 2001:310). Weitzman (1999:57) also confirms that even when the manuscripts of the Peshitta are unanimous, a discrepancy in sense between the Masoretic Text and the Peshitta need not imply a different *Vorlage*, given the many ways in which the translators were capable of adjusting the text.

A few guidelines may be suggested from the translation technique of the study section under discussion, for the reconstruction of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11. Sections where the Hebrew may be thought to have been difficult for the translator, or where the Hebrew could have been perceptibly unnatural, or contained numerous repetitions, should be treated with less confidence when reconstructing the Hebrew *Vorlage*. At these sections, the translation technique was generally free. On the other hand, differences occurring in simpler Hebrew clauses without repetitions, may be indicative of a variant *Vorlage*. Given the observation made earlier, that the translator strove to give

an idiomatic Syriac translation of the Hebrew text, not all differences between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text may suggest a variant *Vorlage* (Maori, 1995:103); in fact it has been found in this study that a relatively few number of differences may be considered as stemming from a variant *Vorlage* compared to differences attributable to translation technique.


In Ezekiel 10:2, reconstruction may be briefly demonstrated:

P: 

When the Syriac equivalent  is used with the meaning 'to enter in' or 'go in', it is normally derived from the Hebrew  (section 3.5.1, chapter 3). In this case, the Hebrew verb must be a *qal* imperative muscular singular . The adjective  in the section 8:1-11:25 can be translated from either  (within) or from  (between), depending usually on the sense of the context derived by the Peshitta Ezekiel translator. Here it may be assumed that the Peshitta translator rendered his *Vorlage* literally and thus used . The preposition attached to this adjective is equivalent to the Hebrew , either showing direction or indirect object (Muraoka, 1997:39, 77). Deciding between the two Hebrew equivalents may give an uncertain result.  is frequently an equivalent in Syriac of the Hebrew  (thus mostly definite in form). The prepositional phrase  could be represented by  (most likely the latter) plus the preposition . The last noun would be in the plural definite form. The Hebrew can thus be reconstructed as shown below (RH):

MT: 

Tr.: *Go in between the wheels, underneath the cherub*

RH: 

Tr.: *Go in between the wheels, underneath the cherubim*

The difficult nature of such reconstruction is observed when this reconstructed sentence is compared with the Masoretic Text reading of the

last word. In the Masoretic Text, the last word is not a noun phrase but a prepositional phrase. One may not be certain as to whether the Peshitta Ezekiel translator omitted the ל which lay in his *Vorlage*, or that the syntactical feature did not appear in his *Vorlage* at all. This feature is also omitted in the Targum, although the last noun in the Targum is singular, as is the case in the Masoretic Text. The reconstructed Hebrew text is also supported by the Septuagint but not by the Vulgate. To compound on the problem of the differences in these texts, is the difference in number of the noun between the Masoretic Text and the Peshitta reading, which may be a result of inner Syriac activity (see section 2.2.3). At this juncture, it may be concluded that the variant demonstrated here originated with the translator rather than that it sprung from his *Vorlage* (bearing in mind that the maximalist approach is taken here, as described in chapter two, section 2.2.4). As Mulder (1988:171) notes, only few really essential variants are found in Ezekiel, as in all other Old Testament books of the Peshitta. It is most probable that the Peshitta Ezekiel translator was influenced by the Septuagint. But the main aim here is to demonstrate the possibility of reconstructing the *Vorlage* of Peshitta Ezekiel and consequently using such reconstructions in text critical discussions. It appears from this research that Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 may be utilized for such study, provided a good knowledge of the translator's techniques are at hand. Further examples of reconstruction may be given as in the case of Ezekiel 11:2

MT: ויאמר אלי בן־אדם אלה

Tr.: *and he said to me, 'son of man, these ...'*

P: אֲמַרְנִי לֵבְנֵי מַלְאָכָא בְּנֵי מַלְאָכָא

Tr.: *And the Lord said to me, 'son of man, these...'*

RH: ויאמר אלי יהוה בן־אדם האלה

Tr.: *and the Lord said to me, 'son of man, these ...'*

As has been argued under section 3.7.6 in chapter 3, the Peshitta translator, who is understood to refer to the Septuagint sporadically (Weitzman,

1999:78-79), does not have any specific motive to have done so at this point in the text. The Hebrew text is not difficult, neither is it unnatural in sense. The Hebrew construction 'and he said to me...' occurs frequently and is almost always literally translated in Peshitta Ezekiel. Even though the Targum and the Vulgate agree with the Masoretic Text, the case of a variant *Vorlage* should be more seriously considered here.

4.4.3 Possible Cases of Unique Readings

Cases where the Peshitta Text has a unique reading, that is a reading not attested in any other biblical witness, have been found to be quite rare in the Peshitta in general (Weitzman, 1999:59) and also in the section of this study. Weitzman (1999:59) also demonstrates that such unique readings, which are suggestive of a variant *Vorlage*, are difficult to trust in view of the translation technique used in the Peshitta of Ezekiel. In the section of our study reported here, we have an interesting case in point at Ezekiel 9:7.

Ezekiel 9:7

MT: שִׁמְאוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הַחֲצוֹת חַלְלִים צֵאוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ הָיָדוּ בְעִיר (T is similar)

Tr.: *Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city* (KJV).

P: .ܩܘܪܒܘܢ ܐܬܘܪܘܢ ܕܥܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܡܠܘܢ ܐܬܘܪܘܢ ܕܥܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܩܘܪܒܘܢ ܕܥܘܒܘܬܐ ܘܩܘܪܒܘܢ ܕܥܘܒܘܬܐ

Tr.: *Defile the house and fill the courts with the slain. Go! They slew in the city.*

LXX: Μιάνατε τὸν οἶκον καὶ πλήσατε τὰς ὁδοὺς νεκρῶν ἐκπορευόμενοι καὶ κόπτετε.

Tr.: *Defile the temple, and fill the ways with dead bodies, Go out and slay!*

The Peshitta omits the verb phrase 'and they went out' (וַיֵּצְאוּ) which is in the Masoretic Text. The omission could have been an error of *haplography* (Tov, 2001:237). However, the conjunction before the next verb 'they slew' is also missing in the Peshitta, an omission which is difficult to account for. To suggest that the Peshitta omitted the verb and the conjunction because of a difficult or unnatural Hebrew text is not easily perceptible.

On the other hand, the relationship between the Peshitta and the Septuagint is interesting. Both have two verb phrases at the end of the verse rather than the three in the Masoretic Text. They differ, however, with respect to the fact that both verbs are imperative in the Septuagint, while only one of them is imperative in the Peshitta. Furthermore, the Septuagint does not have the last prepositional phrase common between the Syriac and the Hebrew texts, '*in the city*'. Plainly, the Peshitta and the Septuagint do not have the same reading and thus influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta is scarcely possible.

The possibility of a variant *Vorlage* at this place may be quite compelling. The Hebrew text behind the Peshitta, at the end of the verse may be reconstructed as follows:

RH: צאו הכו בעיר

Tr.: *Go! Slay in the city OR Go! They slew in the city*

The reason for the alternative reading is that, in an unvocalised text, the Hebrew verb הכו may be understood either as a perfect plural form of the verb root נכה as read by the Peshitta translator or as an imperative masculine plural as read by the Septuagint translator. Leaving out the prepositional phrase at the end and the added conjunction in the Septuagint, the reconstructed Hebrew text above, seems to be the text which both the Septuagint and Peshitta translators had before them. It may be that the last prepositional phrase in the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta was a later development in the Masoretic Text tradition (Proto-Masoretic texts), or else it came about as a result of later Peshitta editors, trying to conform the Peshitta to the Masoretic Text. One may as well not refrain from suggesting here that the reading in the Masoretic Text may be a later edition, which occurred quite late during the period when it was being fixed as an 'authoritative canonical text' (Tov 2001:190). This thought is only a conjecture and there are other possibilities for the explanation of the reading in the Masoretic Text which will not be dwelt

on in this study. The main aim and purpose of the foregoing study was to show that the Peshitta of Ezekiel may indeed contain some variants with unique readings traceable to a variant *Vorlage* not attested in any other Hebrew textual witness. The possibility to find unique readings in the Peshitta is made practical by a translation technique, which though in other respects free, has just sufficient literal character to enable reconstructions of readings that may have genuinely lain in the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta.

Two other points are worth noting here before proceeding to the next section. Should the suggested reconstruction of the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta be accurate, the faithfulness with which the Peshitta translator rendered it into Syriac would, in this instance, be quite exceptional. Here it seems that, against the normal tendency of his translation technique, the translator refrained from adding the conjunction before the last verb, which seems to be wanting in the reconstructed text. Secondly, seeing here that the Peshitta seemingly did not rely on the Septuagint for its reading, one may be more hesitant to attribute other readings where the Peshitta and the Septuagint agree against the Masoretic Text, to the influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta. All this adds to the credit of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel and hence of the credibility of the version as tool for the study of the Ezekiel text.

4.4.4 The value of Reconstructed Variants

The value of reconstructed variants constitutes one of the most important factors determining the value of the Peshitta Ezekiel for the text criticism of the Hebrew Ezekiel text specifically. Mulder has stated that variants recorded in the second apparatus of the Leiden Peshitta edition of Ezekiel are of minor importance for the text criticism of the Masoretic Text. He says further that in Ezekiel, as in nearly all other books of the Old Testament, only few 'really essential' variants are found (Mulder, 1988:171). It is not clear in his argument here whether he is referring to variants within the manuscripts of

the Peshitta tradition or variants between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text. However, what he tries to prove in the same paper is that the Peshitta is a relatively verbatim translation of its Hebrew source text (Mulder, 1988:174). In his conclusions he highlights, as pointed out in chapter one, that the value of the Peshitta for the text critical and exegetical study of the book of Ezekiel, exceeds that of the other ancient translations except the Septuagint. Going by such a conclusion, one should be able to understand the Peshitta of Ezekiel as having variant readings which are of interest to text criticism. Without such variant readings, the Peshitta may not be valued highly with regard to the text criticism of the Bible (Tov, 2001:123).

It is also important in translation technique evaluation of the present study, to distinguish between the 'number' of important variants in Peshitta Ezekiel and the 'value' of those variants, whatever their number. Peshitta Ezekiel may indeed offer few 'really essential' variants as Mulder (1988:171) may be understood to mean. However, those few variants may be of quite great value to the study of the Hebrew Bible, especially text criticism. The proper evaluation of such variants in turn depends to some extent on factors such as: the history and transmission of the biblical text, and the literary and transmission history of the Peshitta Text. These subjects will now be considered in the following section.

4.5 PESHITTA EZEKIEL AND THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

4.5.1 The Value of the Peshitta According to Age and Relation to Other Witnesses

The discussion concerning the history of the biblical text is aimed specifically at finding the point at which the Peshitta lies along the line of the history of the biblical transmission. This would in part, determine the value that scholars would place upon variants in the Peshitta, in relation to variants from other biblical witnesses variously placed within the history of the biblical text. Naturally, it has been reasoned that the older the witness, the more valuable that witness may be for text criticism (Tov, 2001:301). Tov (2001:301) says further that older textual witnesses are considered generally preferable in text criticism, since an older witness is less likely to have been exposed to textual corruption than a younger one. Although this general argument, where manuscripts are preferred by virtue of their age, has been refuted by some scholars (Tov, 2001:301-302), there is a degree to which it may be helpful, especially in determining the value of variants in ancient translations. However, the argument in our case is not simply that of the age of the translation, but where it is placed in relation to other witnesses within the history of the transmission of the biblical text in general.

Along this line of reasoning, Weitzman (1999:60-61) demonstrates the reason why it is rare for the Peshitta alone to reflect a unique reading. He does this by means of a diagram showing the genealogical relationship between the Masoretic Text, the Peshitta, and the Septuagint. According to Weitzman's diagram, these witnesses may be traced to one parent text which he denotes by ω . Two single lines then separate downwards from this parent text: one toward the Septuagint tradition and the other in the Masoretic Text tradition. The line of the Peshitta translation branches off some way down the line of the Masoretic tradition. According to this presentation, it is indeed difficult for the Peshitta alone to preserve an original text. However, this diagram in

Weitzman implies some assumptions which the author did not spell out immediately.

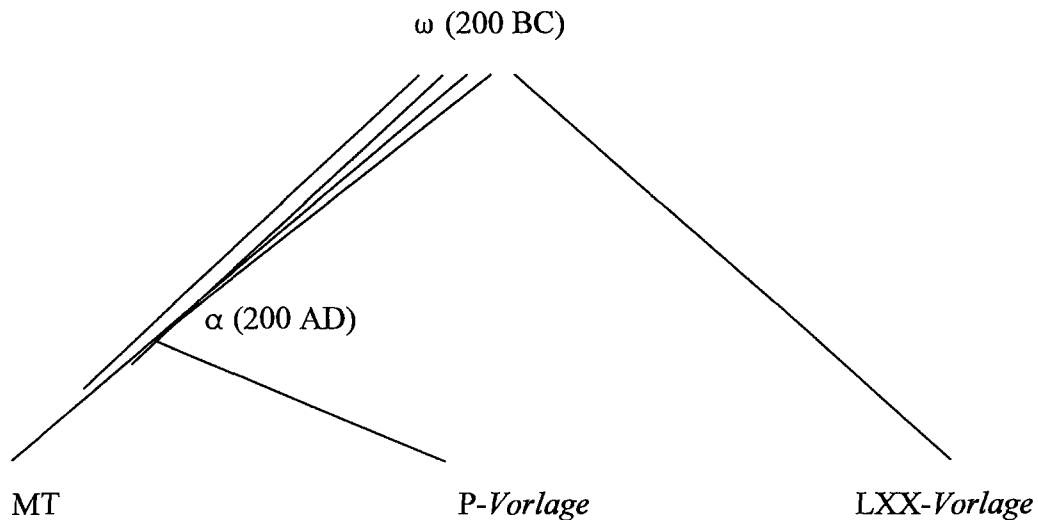
1. At the time of the translation of the Septuagint, there was only one text, or a group of very uniform texts from which the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text traditions descended (cf. Tov, 2001:22-23).
2. The line of transmission of the text from this parent text downwards along these two traditions was single and undivided.

These assumptions may not necessarily be true. Tov (2001:29) postulates that in the early period of the development of the consonantal Masoretic Text, extending up to the destruction of the Second Temple, a relatively large number of small differences existed between the members of the Masoretic Text family. These differences largely concerned matters of content and orthography and with differences in content, limited to single words and phrases. It must also be pointed out that among these texts there were some from certain biblical books which had a text reflecting different stages of literary growth (Tov, 2001:196; 313-317). It is within this period that the Septuagint was first translated. Thus; although the biblical text, and consequently the Masoretic Text family, is hypothetically traced to one original copy (*Urtext*), there may have existed multiple copies already at the time of the translation of the Septuagint, so that the *Vorlage* of the Septuagint may attest readings that were not in the rest of the Proto-Masoretic Texts at the time of its translation.

The period from the Second Temple to the eighth century AD was characterized by a relatively large degree of textual consistency. Thus, the texts of the Masoretic Text family from this second period are characterized by a very small range of differences between them. It is from within this period (circa 200 AD) that the Peshitta was translated. We should not exclude the possibility that some texts survived into this period from the previous period

when significant differences yet existed within the Masoretic Text corpus. We may thus represent this description diagrammatically as follows:

Fig 4.1 Relationship between the Masoretic Texts, the Septuagint and the Peshitta



This picture may prove the possibility that there may be some unique readings which survived in the Peshitta (P), which do not survive elsewhere among the witnesses mentioned in the diagram. While it has been observed that most of the Peshitta books such as Leviticus, Judges, and the Twelve Prophets rarely preserve unique original readings (Weitzman, 1999:59), one might suggest here that the book of Peshitta Ezekiel may have such unique readings, although they should be quite few. The evidence of the variant in 9:7 discussed above informs such a suggestion, as well as a number of other differences observed in Chapter 3, between the Peshitta and the Masoretic Text, which cannot be attributed to translation technique, inner Syriac activity or to the influence of the Septuagint. For this reason, a weightier value for the Text of Peshitta Ezekiel than it has been credited with previously may be suggested here. Apart from unique readings, Peshitta Ezekiel may be a witness to several variant readings which are also evident in the Septuagint.

That support should be deemed valuable, especially seeing that it has been realised that the influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta might not have been as pronounced as scholars initially thought it was.

4.5.2 Literary History of the Peshitta and the Value of its Variants

As far as sources referred to could reveal, knowledge on the translators of individual books of the Peshitta is limited to that which is known about the translators of the Peshitta in general. Specific details about the translators may otherwise be gleaned from the translation technique studies of specific books such as was carried out for Peshitta Ezekiel chapters 8-11. With the date of the translation placed around 200 AD as mentioned above, this translation is thought by Weitzman to have taken place within a Jewish community, who brought with them to the East (possibly Edessa), a version of the Hebrew Bible and who later adopted Christianity (Weitzman, 1999:258-259). This version of the Hebrew Bible has been identified as being very close to the Masoretic Text (Greenberg 2002:4-5). Not much from this historical information can be expected to impact the value of the translation for biblical studies as such. However, it should be pointed out that as observed before (section 3.7.7), the Ezekiel translators refrained from making sweeping contextual and *midrashic* exegesis. This characteristic in turn contributes to a better trust of the variants that Peshitta Ezekiel may display.

4.5.3 Transmission of the Peshitta Text and the Value of its Variants

Confidence in the value of the reconstructed variants is also dependent on the way in which the Peshitta Text was transmitted. Unfortunately, the transmission of the Peshitta manuscripts is riddled by problems (De Boer, 1981:347; Weitzman, 1999:7). The Peshitta Ancient manuscripts are not homogenous among themselves, but differ from each other at many points (Dirksen, 1988:129). Rowlands (1959:170) alludes to the involvement of scribes in the revision and editing of the manuscripts to present a uniform translation. Weitzman (1999:300) postulates that the diverse readings among

the Peshitta manuscripts were a result of the emergence of new readings as the text was being transmitted. These scribes, without access to or understanding of the Hebrew, were willing to fortify the translation, even though they must have realised that in doing so they were likely to diverge from the source text (Greenberg, 2002:129). Weitzman (1999:300-301) and Walter (1995:203) go so far as to suggest the concept of a virtual second edition of the Peshitta. Such revisions of the manuscripts probably continued until the fifth century, the time of the schism that led to the East and West Syrian Churches. There might also be possibilities that the scribes revised manuscripts according to a Hebrew text or texts (Weitzman, 1999:278). Others have suggested the possibility that the revisers of the Peshitta manuscripts were influenced by a Greek text or texts (Greenberg, 2002:129). Thus Bloch (1922:104) says, "While one can safely assume that the Peshitta was executed entirely from the Hebrew, one must not overlook the fact that it underwent later revision which brought it more into conformity with the LXX, this to a greater degree in some books than in others."

This situation in turn demands the practice of text criticism within the Peshitta manuscripts themselves, before one can have an original Peshitta Text (or *Urtext*) with which to engage in the text criticism of the Hebrew Bible proper (Weitzman 1999:263-264; Dirksen, 1988:129). Older Peshitta manuscripts like 5b1 are reported to still preserve the original text, at least for the most part, which may be useful in the text criticism of the Peshitta manuscripts and consequently of the Hebrew Bible. Otherwise, for some errors that have crept into the text, no extant manuscript may witness to the text which the translator wrote; thus the only hope of removing these changes is conjectural emendation (Weitzman, 1999:7). With the use of critical editions such as the Leiden Peshitta critical edition of Mulder (1985), textual criticism within the Peshitta manuscripts can be carried out more confidently. With the issue of Peshitta manuscripts being properly handled, the value of the Peshitta becomes an important tool in the text criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

4.5.4 Value of Variant Readings in Relation to Other Textual Witnesses

The reconstructed readings of Peshitta Ezekiel may be considered inferior or unimportant by virtue of the fact that the Peshitta as a whole is historically not expected to contain unique original readings (Weitzman, 1999:59) and also from the general free renderings (or idiomatic translation technique) attested in the Peshitta in general (cf. Tov, 2001:298). This inferior position of Peshitta readings may be fortified by the high esteem which text critics may have of other witnesses like the Septuagint and Qumran texts (if applicable). Considering the evaluation of readings from external criteria, However, Tov (2001:298) asserts that in principle, all variant readings have an equal status without any relation to the text or specific translation in which they are found. In his own words, Tov (2001:298) says that, "Once retroverted reliably, all variants have an equal claim to originality." Consequently, variants that may be apparent in the Peshitta of Ezekiel, even if they are only a few of them, will provide important information for the study of the biblical text. Such variants are not only useful for informing a decision among a number of readings to the text of Ezekiel, but for the understanding of the development and transmission of the Hebrew text, especially the Masoretic Text.

4.6 THE VALUE OF THE PESHITTA EZEKIEL TEXT IN EXEGESIS

The value of the Peshitta Ezekiel text in exegesis has been underscored by Weitzman (1999:61) who notes that the Peshitta shows in detail how, and to what degree, the Hebrew Bible was understood in a particular community in the earliest centuries of this era. The Peshitta may provide information concerning the beliefs of that community which Weitzman (1999:259) identifies as a Jewish community later converted to Christianity.

It may be expected as well that for the modern biblical exegete, the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel, where he aims for the sense of the Hebrew is quite valuable in understanding how the people of this community

understood the biblical text. The exegesis in Ezekiel could help at especially difficult sections of the Hebrew, which are quite common in the early chapters of Ezekiel. Besides, the way the translator understood such a difficult Hebrew text, where some grammatical elements were inconsistently used in the *Vorlage*, is especially helpful for the exegesis of the book of Ezekiel, as students of the Bible come to learn how the translators of the Peshitta understood their text. Apparently, it was at difficult sections of the Peshitta Ezekiel text that the translator strove most to make his translation sensible.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In seeking to evaluate the Peshitta Text of Ezekiel, especially following the detailed description of its translation technique in chapter three, the following main points may be observed:

- 4.7.1** It was observed in the first place that the role played by the Peshitta of Ezekiel as a biblical witnesses and thus as a tool for textual studies is made especially important due to the relatively few witnesses available for the book of Ezekiel. Specifically, it was noted that the Qumran evidence may not be very helpful, while on the other hand the Septuagint may not be a complete witness for the Masoretic Text on its own. Since the Peshitta to Ezekiel has been noted to contain some literal elements, these should be useful in the textual studies of the book of Ezekiel.
- 4.7.2** It has also been noted that the nature of the language of the Hebrew parent text (*Vorlage*) could contain elements that make it difficult to create reliable reconstructions of that text. These difficulties, however, pertain to a very small proportion of the Hebrew Ezekiel text and, although noteworthy, may be considered insignificant in affecting the reconstruction process and the value of the reconstructed variants.

4.7.3 Translation technique as described in chapter three may facilitate reconstruction of the Hebrew text behind the translation, though with some difficulty at sections where the Hebrew might have been difficult, or had a lot of repetitions. The Bible student should be well acquainted with the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel, and even then, the reconstruction process remains, for the most part of the text, a typical conjectural process.

4.7.4 The literal character of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 is such that it provides for the possibility to discover variant readings in the Peshitta of Ezekiel which do not occur in any other textual witness of the Old Testament. The presence of a number of unique readings, though small, proves the literal nature of the translation technique and hence the value of Peshitta Ezekiel for the study of the text of Ezekiel. Further, a sizable number of variant readings which are in agreement with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text occur in Peshitta Ezekiel. Most of these variant readings are valuable for confirming readings in the Septuagint, since they are not likely to have originated from the influence of the Septuagint itself.

4.7.4 The way the Peshitta Text was transmitted may pose a serious setback to the value which may be placed on the variants of that witness. The Peshitta manuscripts reveal a number of variants amongst themselves, so that text critical analysis is first necessary within the Peshitta manuscripts themselves, before the variants of the Peshitta *Urtext* can be used for the biblical studies of the Old Testament.

4.7.5 Besides its use in text criticism, the Peshitta Text of Ezekiel is an indispensable tool in the study text of Ezekiel, especially in exegesis.

We thus find that the Peshitta Text of Ezekiel occupies a crucial place in the study of the text of the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament. It has potential to contribute to text criticism in Ezekiel and much so to the exegetical studies of that book. The Peshitta Old Testament in general has been acknowledged by scholars of the twentieth century as a valuable instrument in ascertaining the state of the original text of the Old Testament at a very early period (Bloch, 1922:105). This does not go without serious challenges: a lot of labour is required in establishing the authenticity of variants, and great responsibility should be exercised in handling these variants within textual studies of the Ezekiel text.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

- 5.1 THE AIM AND RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH
- 5.2 THE FIRST AND SECOND OBJECTIVES
- 5.3 THE THIRD OBJECTIVE
- 5.4 RETROSPECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY
- 5.5 AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH
- 5.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

5.1 THE AIM AND RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of the present research was to carry out a balanced characterisation of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel chapters 8-11 as relates to its translation technique, and thereby make an evaluation of Peshitta Ezekiel for text critical studies of the book of Ezekiel. This aim was further broken down into the following objectives, against which the results will now be compared as the necessary retrospections are made.

5.2 THE FIRST AND SECOND OBJECTIVES

5.2.1 To Make a Complete Characterization of the Translation Technique(s) Used by the Translator of the Peshitta in Ezekiel Chapters 8 – 11

In connection with this objective, it has been found that the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 contains both free and literal elements (section 3.9.6).

Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 is fairly literal in terms of word-for-word translation (that is grammatical, lexical and syntactical aspects) and highly literal in terms of conforming to the sense, meaning and general structure of the Hebrew text (section 3.9.7). The literal elements are a result of the translator's resolve to be faithful to the Hebrew text (section 3.9.8), preserving as best as he could the word order, sentence structure and sense of the Hebrew original with appropriate equivalencies in Syriac (sections 3.9.3 and 3.9.8). These literal elements are mainly apparent in places where the Hebrew text is not difficult or repetitive (section 3.9.5). The free elements were mainly a result of the need to present the translation in idiomatic Syriac that is clear and sensible. They are mainly apparent at places where the Hebrew original was perceived to be difficult, unnatural, or unnecessarily repetitive (section 3.9.5). There were also a few words, which were interpreted or exegetically rendered, while influence of the Septuagint on the translator appeared to have been minimal (section 3.9.5).

5.2.2 To Study all the Various Deviations from the Overall Translation Technique, their Explanations and the Degree or Extent of these Deviations

The initial intention was to characterise the Peshitta Ezekiel translation as either literal or free (cf. section 1.5.1). However, since it has been observed in chapter 3 (section 3.9.7) that such a description would be an inaccurate representation of the translator's technique, the initial elements seen as deviations from the main translation technique subsequently became part of the translation technique of Peshitta to Ezekiel 8-11. Consequently, the second objective as described in the heading above was not realized. This result should not be viewed as a failure since, through scientific research, the supposition initially held at the beginning of the research has been challenged. This supposition was contained in the second objective (cf. section 1.4.2), mainly implying that the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel could be characterized by a single uniform description. The study

carried out in the third chapter however, does not allow for such a uniform description and thus for the presence of such an aspect as 'deviations from the *overall* translation technique'.

5.2.3 Retrospection on the First and Second Objectives

Studies in line with the above mentioned objectives have led to the realization of valuable results. The characterisation of the Peshitta to Ezekiel 8-11 described in the first objective is, from the point of view of the present researcher, fully representative of the translation technique of the text in question. The second objective has not been achieved as initially intended, but the reason for failure to realize that objective is itself an important result of the present study.

It has become apparent that the translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel cannot simply be described as 'a literal translation', as Mulder (1988:180) puts it (see chapter one). The way the translator resolved the difficult sections, often by free renderings, compels one to question this simplistic characterisation of Peshitta Ezekiel. In this regard, Van Rooy (2005:402) says, "The Peshitta deviates more from the Masoretic Text than one is led to believe from Mulder's statement, at least as far as some of the more difficult sections of Ezekiel 1 is concerned" (cf. Mulder, 1988:174, 180).

The conclusion of the present research also does not correspond to Cornill's characterisation of the Peshitta Ezekiel text. Cornill (1886:148; 151-153) says that the Peshitta is a free translation, giving the basic meaning of its Hebrew parent text. Instead, it has been found in this research that the translator was scrupulous in following the Hebrew text, except at those places where he thought the Hebrew text to be too repetitive or unclear.

What has been the major differentiating factor between the characterisations given by these scholars and the one realised in this study, is the detail with

which the present study attended to the text of Ezekiel. Some of Cornill's conclusions are much further from those obtained in the present study, seeing that Cornill did not have a critical text which could make available older readings of the Peshitta Ezekiel manuscripts at his disposal.

5.3 THE THIRD OBJECTIVE

5.3.1 To Make a Qualitative (and to a Lesser Extent, Quantitative) Evaluation of the Text of Peshitta Ezekiel

The Peshitta text of Ezekiel occupies a crucial place in the study of the text of Ezekiel. A number of scholars have not appreciated this value of Peshitta Ezekiel. This little regard of the Peshitta Ezekiel text may have been a result of the lack of an informed characterisation of the translation technique in Peshitta Ezekiel and it has become apparent that the position which the Peshitta text of Ezekiel occupies among the witnesses of the Ezekiel text needs to be considered carefully. As a result, it has been observed that the Greek text and the Qumran texts (besides the Masoretic Text) cannot, by themselves, sufficiently represent the text of Ezekiel as witnesses (section 4.7.1).

While the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel may be difficult to work with, reconstruction of the Hebrew text is quite possible at many sections of the text, requiring only a student well informed of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel and of the language of the Hebrew text behind the Peshitta translation (sections 4.7.2 and 4.7.3).

Cases where the Peshitta may preserve unique variant readings of a Hebrew parent text do occur in Peshitta Ezekiel, although the number of such cases is very small. However, those few readings would be of great interest to the study of the Ezekiel text. Furthermore, there are variant readings congruent with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text, which would confirm the

existence of actual variant readings both in the Peshitta and the Septuagint's *Vorlage* (section 4.7.4). The value of these variant readings however, may not earn their respect in text criticism unless there is sufficient confidence in their authenticity as having lain in the *Urtext* of the Peshitta translation (section 4.7.4).

The Peshitta text of Ezekiel is also an indispensable tool in the exegesis of the book of Ezekiel (section 4.7.5).

5.3.2 Retrospection on the Third Objective

Firstly, it must be mentioned that, while carrying out an evaluation of the Peshitta text of Ezekiel, this was not done strictly in terms of a quantitative approach, but rather in terms of a qualitative approach. In fact, the given value judgments on the Peshitta text of Ezekiel were based on textual evidence of the witnesses of the book of Ezekiel, on the translation technique as discussed in chapter 3 of the present study, and on literature consultations on the subject. As concerns this methodological approach therefore, it was possible to realise the intended objective (see section 5.4 below about retrospections on methodology as a whole).

Secondly, seeing that a number of factors relevant for the evaluation of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel 8-11 demanded an evaluation of the literary aspects of the book of Peshitta Ezekiel as a whole, it was necessary to make evaluations bearing upon the book as a whole rather than the four chapters mentioned here (section 4.1). This step answers to the third objective (section 1.4.2).

Concerning the content of the findings with respect to the third objective, it became apparent that it may not be sufficient to say, as Mulder (1988:180) does, that the Hebrew *Vorlage* is often evident even where the Peshitta did not translate literally or verbatim. Rather, one must be able to determine

whether reconstruction of the Hebrew text is always possible from such a translation as the Peshitta of Ezekiel. It was evident that not all the cases in the Peshitta text can be reconstructed successfully to their Hebrew Vorlage. This conclusion is necessitated by the nature of the translation technique; some sections were freely rendered, while at other places the translation was fairly free (cf. Tov, 2001:129).

Although Cornill had a rather negative view of Peshitta Ezekiel for the text criticism of Ezekiel, his warning about using the text of Peshitta Ezekiel may not be ignored altogether. Cornill (1886:156) says, "dass S als Zeuge für die alttestamentliche Textkritik nur mit der grössten Vorsicht zu benützen ist."¹ What he refers to as 'great care' is necessitated by the presence of free renderings in the Peshitta of Ezekiel which is otherwise a literal translation. Secondly, one needs to be aware that the text may have been corrupted in its transmission history, so that inauthentic readings may have entered the text.

The objective of making a qualitative evaluation of Peshitta Ezekiel for the study of the Ezekiel text has thus been successfully achieved. This study has afforded the researcher a more realistic and detailed way of understanding the value of Peshitta Ezekiel for the Study of the text of Ezekiel.

The overall aim of the study in question has been achieved as demonstrated in the preceding sections. It was possible to give a balanced characterisation of the text of Peshitta Ezekiel chapters 8-11 as relates to its translation technique, as well as an evaluation of Peshitta Ezekiel for text critical studies of the book of Ezekiel.

¹ S in this quotation stands for the Peshitta of Ezekiel.

5.4 RETROSPECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY

This research has been done using the comparative text critical method, including literature analysis, as described in chapter one (section 1.5). This method allowed the researcher to attend to a detailed study of the similarities and differences between the texts concerned. Using text critical tools such as text critical analysis and literary analysis (chapter two), the nature of the translation could be fully explored in order to discover the way the translator went about his translation. This method also provided an opportunity to explore various explanations for any variations encountered between the texts concerned. Furthermore, it allowed for other perspectives on the translation technique that are only apparent when one considers aspects of context and exegesis. For this reason, it is apparent that this method is well suited for the research carried out in this study. It may be concluded that the objectives set out at the beginning of this study have been successfully realised using the comparative text critical method.

However, there are aspects of the study in question that happened to be difficult to explore fully using this method alone. This pertained to the ability of having the confidence that, every particular feature of translation technique in this study (for example, all differences caused by addition of the conjunction) could be accounted for. It came out that it was quite a laborious activity to search for and take note of each difference between the texts. During the process of this study, it was then discovered that there may be more useful tools which can be incorporated in the methodology used in this research, so that a more effective way of comparing and characterising texts may be achieved.

Concerning such useful tools, reference may be made to J Cook who has been participating in the development of a database for the Peshitta Version of the Old Testament (Cook, 1988:148). He says that this database will

enable scholars to analyse accurately and describe representatively the translation technique of the translator(s) (Cook, 1988:148-149). Cook says in the same place that it has become critically necessary for scholars to base their conclusions on representative data. He later announced and demonstrated the use of such a database, which is a product of the Stellenbosch Peshitta Project (Cook, 1995:205-206). Such a tool could facilitate the study of translation technique using statistical methods, which are needed for a full quantitative description of the translation technique of a given version (Adair, 1997:187). These statistical methods may then be used together with the comparative text critical method employed in this research, so that a more informed translation technique is obtained from a translation such as Peshitta Ezekiel. Greenberg (2002:205) also advocates for a similar approach to further studies on style and translation technique of translators. Greenberg says, in relation to the Peshitta books of Isaiah and Psalms, that a verse by verse analysis of the translation technique in these books supported, if appropriate, by the application of statistical techniques, would go some way towards showing exactly how these books do and do not stand apart from the rest of the Peshitta books as they have been viewed by Weitzman (1999:177).

5.5 AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In section 3.5.1 of this study it was mentioned that the translator was usually able to identify the intended meaning of Hebrew lexical elements which he represented by appropriate roots in Syriac. The translator was in fact scrupulous in retaining the sense of the Hebrew by appropriate words in Syriac, though at the cost of consistency of equivalence in terms of lexicology. It was realised further that such inconsistency of equivalence is unavoidable in the process of translation and should therefore not be taken as diminishing the literal character of a translation, especially where retroversion is still possible (Tov, 2001:122-123).

A suggestion may be made here for more comprehensive research on the way the Peshitta Ezekiel translator managed to represent the different nuances of the Hebrew words into Syriac. It has been observed for an example how the Peshitta translator managed to translate into Syriac the various nuances perceived in the Hebrew verb בּוּא (section 3.5.1). It seems that the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel would be more helpful to the textual study of Ezekiel if it involves the study of all such cases in the Peshitta of Ezekiel. Such a study is expected to provide important clues in cases where one needs to reconstruct the Hebrew text behind the Peshitta Ezekiel text.

The overriding need, however, seems to be that of the complete characterisation of the translation technique of the whole book of Ezekiel. This should be done, preferably with the aid of computer databases and applications as mentioned above. The study of translation technique for the chapters 8 to 11 carried out here may serve as a guide and important reference tool for the complete study of the rest of Peshitta Ezekiel.

5.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

This was a detailed study of the translation technique in Ezekiel 8-11, using older Peshitta manuscripts (as in the critical Leiden Peshitta edition of Mulder, 1985) than those which have been used before in the study of the translation technique of Peshitta Ezekiel. This study will contribute to the larger goal in Peshitta scholarship to produce a characterization of the translation technique of the entire book of Peshitta Ezekiel.

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ABBREVIATIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

KJV	King James Version (1769)
NIV	New International Version (2004)
CEV	Contemporary English Version (1995)
ESV	English Standard Version (2001)
ASV	American Standard Version (1901)

