

Eberhard Bons

## “The Lord is the One Who Crushes Wars”

### A Fresh Look at the Septuagint Translation of Exod 15:3\*

#### Introduction

One of the most uncomfortable statements about God in the Old Testament can be found in Exodus 15:3, where the following words are put in the mouth of Moses: “The Lord is a warrior”, literally “a man of war”, in Masoretic Hebrew *YHWH 'iš milḥāmāh*. This expression appears in the so-called “Song of the Sea” that Moses and the Israelites are said to have sung after walking on dry ground through the sea. To the best of my knowledge, textual variants in the Hebrew biblical text are not attested in either the Qumran scrolls of the book of Exodus or in Masoretic manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> The only exception is the Samaritan Pentateuch. However, it does not diverge particularly from the Masoretic text, the word *'iš* “man” being replaced by *gibbôr* “vigorous, hero”.<sup>2</sup> The Targum Onkelos strengthens even further the martial aspects of Exod 15:3: “The Lord is the master of victory in battles” (*māray niṣḥān q<sup>e</sup>rābayā*). As for the extant ancient non-biblical retellings of the history of Israel, quotations or translations of Exod 15:3 are generally lacking, e.g., Ezekiel the Tragedian does not speak of this song. Philo, on the other hand, reports in detail on the drowning of the Pharaoh’s armies in the Red Sea, and in this context, he also mentions hymns of gratitude sung by the Hebrews, the leaders of the two choruses being Moses and his sister. However, Philo does not quote the wording of such hymns (*Life of Moses*, I, 179–180). Josephus likewise mentions a song composed

---

\* I wish to express my sincere thanks to Katharine Perry, Oxford, who corrected my English, and to my colleagues with whom I was able to discuss several aspects of this essay, especially Anna Passoni Dell’Acqua, Milan.

<sup>1</sup> EUGENE C. ULRICH, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls. Vol. 1: Genesis–Kings*, Leiden 2013, 65.

<sup>2</sup> See LARRY PERKINS, “*The Lord is a Warrior*” – “*The Lord Who Shatters Wars*”: Exod 15:3 and Jdt 9:7; 16:2”, *JSCS* 40, 2007, 121–138, on pages 122–123: “although the Samaritan Pentateuch reads a different text in 15:3a (גבור במלחמה), it has essentially the same meaning as the MT”.

by Moses, and even tells us that this song was written in hexameter verse, but does not report its wording (*Jewish History*, II, 346).

Interestingly, the first attempts made to attenuate the idea of a warrior God in Exod 15:3 do not date back to early Christian texts but to the Septuagint translation. As early as in the 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. B.C.E. the anonymous Alexandrian translators rendered their Hebrew source as follows: κύριος συντριβων πολέμους “the Lord is one who crushes wars”<sup>3</sup>.

It is apparent that this reading is not a literal translation of the Hebrew text; rather, it is probably a correction, and not an insignificant one. In fact, in a later text of the LXX, the Book of Judith, the same expression κύριος συντριβων πολέμους is quoted twice (Jdt 9:7; 16:2). By contrast, Jerome translates Exod 15:3 as follows: *Dominus quasi vir pugnator*. This means, on the one hand, that Jerome adheres to the Hebrew biblical text available to him; on the other, he inserts *quasi* in order to avoid an explicit identification of God with a warrior. Needless to say, each of the quoted translations had an impact on later Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Bible.

In this paper, I will discuss the following issues:

1. The explanation of the LXX translation of Exod 15:3 in former research,
2. Objections raised against the traditional interpretation of the LXX translation of Exod 15:3,
3. A fresh interpretation of κύριος συντριβων πολέμους.

## 1. The explanation of the LXX translation of Exod 15:3 in former research

Generally speaking, a detailed analysis of the LXX text of the book of Exodus leads to a twofold conclusion. It is agreed that, on the one hand, “the Greek text provides a faithful translation of the Hebrew.”<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, there is no doubt that the LXX version of the book of Exodus offers a great variety of free translations.<sup>5</sup> This also holds true for the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–18). In her detailed analysis of this passage, Deborah Lev-  
in Gera has shown that the translator was “no junior Homer” but that “he

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf., for this substantial translation, TAKAMITSU MURAOKA, *A Syntax of Septuagint Greek*, Leuven 2016, 368.

<sup>4</sup> Thus ALISON SALVESEN, “Exodus”, in: J.K. AITKEN (ed.), *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, London, New York 2015, 29–42, on p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> For more details, see ANNELI AEJMELEUS, “What can we know about the Hebrew Vorlage of the Septuagint?”, in: EAD., *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators. Collected Essays*, Kampen 1993, 77–115 (on p. 94–100).

did, it seems, make an effort to convey the poetic flavor of the Hebrew text.”<sup>6</sup> For example, he introduced a “key word,” δόξα, and words of the same stem, in order to highlight the glory of God.<sup>7</sup> Gera explores a number of further cases of free translation, most of which were probably made in deference to theological considerations.<sup>8</sup>

As for Exod 15:3, the Greek phrase κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους is at first sight one of these various free translations. In fact, the Greek wording cannot be explained by a diverging interpretation of the Hebrew letters.<sup>9</sup> In particular, the participle συντρίβων appears to have no Hebrew equivalent, whereas the Hebrew noun ’iš “man” disappears in the Greek translation. Moreover, the word “war” is in the plural in the LXX.

The Hebrew expression ’iš milhāmāh, “man of war”, occurs several times in the Hebrew Bible, normally referring to men experienced in warfare. For the most part it is rendered by ἀνὴρ πολεμιστής (Josh 17:1; 1 Kgdms 16:18; 17:33; 2 Kgdms 17:8; Ezek 39:20) or by ἄνθρωπος πολεμιστής (Isa 3:2), and once by ἄνδρες παρατάξεως (Judg 20:17).

Compared to these occurrences, it is striking that the Greek translation of Exod 15:3 makes two important changes. Firstly, the identification of God as a “man” or “human” is excised by the Septuagint translator. Secondly, by refraining from using words like πολεμιστής, the Septuagint does not suggest that God is directly engaged in combat.

As early as in 19<sup>th</sup> century research, this evidence led to the assumption that the translator was concerned about avoiding a blatant anthropomorphism. To begin with, in his *Novus Thesaurus philologico-criticus sive Lexicon in LXX et reliquos interpretes graecos ac scriptores apocryphos Veteris Testamenti*, vol V,<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Schleusner seeks to explain the difference between the LXX and the Hebrew Bible as follows: *Ita verterunt veriti, ne gentiles, quibus hebraici sermonis proprietates plane erat ignota, eorum versionem legentes putarent, Hebraeorum Deum esse hominem quempiam strenuum, instar Martis*. In other words, the translators did not want to give rise to a misunderstanding of the verse by pagan readers unfamiliar with the biblical language. In particular, the translators aimed to prevent them from associating the God of Israel with a pagan god of war, e.g. Mars. Assuming that this explanation makes sense, one crucial question still remains unanswered: What does κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους exact-

<sup>6</sup> DEBORAH LEVINE GERA, “Translating Hebrew Poetry into Greek Poetry: The Case of Exodus 15”, in *BIOSCS* 40 (2007), 107–120, p. 114.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 118–119.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 114.

<sup>9</sup> The only possible explanation would be to assume the Vorlage *gibbôr* read by the LXX translator as a form of the verb *šābar* “to break” (see Hos 2:20[18]). However, this explanation requires at least two other hypotheses that stand on shaky foundations.

<sup>10</sup> Leipzig 1821, 226.

ly mean? Schleusner gives a clear-cut answer: *finem facio bello seu bellis*. This implies that God intervenes in history with the aim of putting an end to violence and bloodshed, not as someone who is engaged in combat.

While Schleusner did not yet use the category of anthropomorphism when explaining Exod 15:3, some years later, in 1851, the Jewish scholar Zacharias Frankel introduced it in his analysis of LXX renderings. Thus, he argued that various Greek renderings of Exodus quotations, including Exod 15:3, are due to an attempt to avoid anthropomorphisms.<sup>11</sup> In fact, according to Frankel, the translator is concerned about passages where the divine and the human sphere are not sufficiently separated, e.g. when divine qualities and epithets are attributed to humans (e.g. Exod 4:16).<sup>12</sup> Some decades later, Henry Barclay Swete went in the same direction. He quoted the LXX version of Exod 15:3 as an example of the dogmatic interest of the translators who “have endeavoured to avoid the anthropomorphisms of the original.”<sup>13</sup>

With slight modifications, the interpretation of the LXX version of Exod 15:3 developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has found its followers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well. By and large, scholars hold that the LXX translation is due to the avoidance of anthropomorphism, e.g. Deborah Levine Gera<sup>14</sup>, while others underline the positive sense of the Greek text. Roger Le Déaut, for example, claims that a literal translation would have offended the sensibility of Hellenized Jews living in a *milieu* that was familiar with gods of war: “La conception d’un Dieu guerrier, dans un monde qui connaissait trop de guerriers parmi les dieux et les hommes, pouvait blesser la sensibilité religieuse de certains juifs hellénisés.”<sup>15</sup> Le Déaut goes even further by speaking of a “messianic taste” of the Greek translation which opposes the stance of the Hebrew text: “version à saveur messianique qui prend l’exact contre-pied de l’hébreu.”<sup>16</sup> A similar line is taken by the French scholars Alain Le Boulluec and Pierre Sandevour, who have commented upon the book of Exodus in the series “*La Bible d’Alexandrie*”<sup>17</sup>, and furthermore

---

<sup>11</sup> ZACHARIAS FRANKEL, *Ueber den Einfluss der palästinischen Exegese auf die alexandrinische Hermeneutik*, Leipzig 1851, 85.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>13</sup> HENRY BARCLAY SWETE, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900, p. 327.

<sup>14</sup> DEBORAH LEVINE GERA, “Translating Hebrew Poetry into Greek Poetry: The Case of Exodus 15” (see note 6), 114.

<sup>15</sup> ROGER LE DEAUT, “La Septante, un Targum?”, in: *Études sur le judaïsme hellénistique. Congrès de Strasbourg (1983)*, edited by Raymond Kuntzmann, Jacques Schlosser (LeDiv 119), Paris 1984, 147–195, on p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>17</sup> ALAIN LE BOULLUEC, PIERRE SANDEVOIR, *La Bible d’Alexandrie. L’Exode. Traduction du texte grec de la Septante. Introduction et Notes*, Paris 1989, 172

by Daniel M. Gurtner in his recently published commentary of the LXX version of the book of Exodus.<sup>18</sup> One of the most recent commentaries of the Hebrew book of Exodus goes as far as to say that the LXX turns around the meaning of the Hebrew text.<sup>19</sup>

## 2. Objections raised against the traditional interpretation of the LXX translation of Exod 15:3

If in the past there was a consensus in interpreting κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους, it is without any doubt that this consensus can no longer be taken for granted. In an article published in 2007, Larry Perkins made a strong case against a somewhat “pacifist” interpretation of the phrase κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους. The strongest argument in favor of his position is the context of the quotation. Perkins pointed out that “the surrounding narrative, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek translation, portrays God as one who does battle for Israel”. In fact, bearing in mind that the immediate context of Exod 15:3, namely verses 1 and 4, is far from depicting God as a “peacemaker,”<sup>20</sup> we should not overestimate the allegedly peaceful traits of the God of the book of Exodus. Consequently, Larry Perkins warns of a too positive interpretation of the phrase κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους: “It may be that individuals who read the translation of Exod 15:3 subsequently interpreted it in reference to God as peacemaker, but from every indication in the Song itself and in its context and from the translation technique of Exodus, this was not what the original translator intended to communicate.”<sup>21</sup>

In 2010, Johann Maier examined the problem by focusing on the verb employed in the phrase, συντρίβω, which he understood as “to rub together” (i.e. to light a fire), “to shatter”, and, thus, having the figurative meaning of “waging war”. Hence, according to the LXX version of Exod 15:3, God is by no means a pacifist and does not make an end to war.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> DAVID M. GURTNER, *Exodus: A Commentary on the Greek Text of Codex Vaticanus*, Leiden 2013, 341.

<sup>19</sup> See WOLFGANG OSWALD, HELMUT UTZSCHNEIDER, *Exodus 1-15*, Stuttgart 2013, 329. See already JEAN KOENIG, *L'herméneutique analogique du Judaïsme antique d'après les témoins textuels d'Israël* (VTSup 33), Leiden 1982, 59.

<sup>20</sup> So LARRY PERKINS, “The Lord is a Warrior” (see note 2), 121.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>22</sup> JOHANN MAIER, “‘Der Herr ist Kriegsmann’ – ‘Kyrios schägt Schlachten’. Zu Textvorlage und Textverständnis von LXX Ex 15.3 und Jes 42,1 in Juda und Jerusalem in der Seleukidenzeit”, in: *Herrschaft, Widerstand, Identität: Festschrift für Heinz-Josef Fabry*, edited by Ulrich Dahmen, Johannes Schnocks (BBB 159), Göttingen 2010, 281–295, on p. 292. For a similar interpretation, see already J.W. WEVERS, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, Atlanta Ga. 1990, 228: “Exod interprets the predicate as one who

In her 2012 article, Judith Lang raised this issue again, contesting the traditional exegesis of κύριος συντριβῶν πολέμους. Like Larry Perkins, she focusses on the context and concludes: “The Greek text perpetuates the idea of God’s powerful and destructive capability”.<sup>23</sup> Concretely, the LXX does not say that God refrains from fighting but underlines exactly the contrary: Excluding Israel from fighting, God “fights (for the benefit of Israel) in the warfare.”<sup>24</sup>

Two years later, in 2014, Barbara Schmitz also addressed the matter, pointing out that the LXX even strengthens the motif of divine violence. Thus, in verse 4 the LXX does not render the intransitive formulation *tubb<sup>e</sup> ū b<sup>e</sup>yam sūp* “are drowned in the Sea of Reeds”, but portrays God as the one who has brought about the end of the Egyptian army: κατεπόντισεν ἐν ἐρυθρᾷ θαλάσῃ “he drowned [them] in the Red Sea”.<sup>25</sup> However, it is difficult to understand why this reinterpretation of the Hebrew biblical text should be “anti-militaristic”, as Schmitz claims, particularly since she concludes: “the LXX version [i.e. of the book of Exodus] does not picture God as a peacemaker, but as a mighty leader”<sup>26</sup>.

### 3. A fresh interpretation of the phrase κύριος συντριβῶν πολέμους

The crucial question is whether we really know what the translators intended to communicate. Nevertheless, as Perkins has rightly pointed out, the translators did not render *’iš milhāmāh* by ἀνὴρ πολεμιστής or the like.<sup>27</sup> This means that they did not intend to create a new divine title with the aim of comparing the God of Israel to human warriors. The translators of the book of Exodus take a different direction to their colleagues who rendered Ps 24:8, *gibbôr milhāmāh* by δυνατὸς ἐν πολέμῳ. In comparison

---

crashes, and so one who is victorious in warfare.” See also ALISON SALVESEN, “Exodus” (see note 4), 36.

<sup>23</sup> JUDITH LANG, “The Lord Who Crushes Wars. Studies on Judith 9:7, Judith 16:2 and Exod 15:3”, in: *A Pious Seductress: Studies in the Book of Judith*, edited by Géza G. Xeravits (DCLS 14), Berlin, Boston 2012, 179–187, on p. 184.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>25</sup> See BARBARA SCHMITZ, “κύριος συντριβῶν πολέμους ‘The Lord who crushes wars’ (Exod 15:3<sup>LXX</sup>). The formative importance of the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–18<sup>LXX</sup>) for the Book of Judith”, in: *JSCSt* 47, 2014, 5–16, on p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 14. Likewise, BARBARA SCHMITZ, HELMUT ENGEL, *Judit. Übersetzt und ausgelegt* (HThKAT), Freiburg im Breisgau 2014, 284, argues that the phrase κύριος συντριβῶν πολέμους in Exod 15:3<sup>LXX</sup> should be understood as an “antimilitärische(r) Titel”.

<sup>27</sup> See LARRY PERKINS, “The Lord is a Warrior” (see note 2), 134.

with this translation, it does not seem too far-fetched to explain the Greek translation of Exod 15:3 as motivated by the interest of avoiding a flagrant anthropomorphism.

On the other hand, on the assumption that the phrase *κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους* is to be understood based on the background of its specific context, it is questionable if it refers to “God’s consistent victory in all battles”<sup>28</sup> or if it alludes to the “complete destruction and elimination of the Egyptian military force.”<sup>29</sup> Of course, the context depicts the circumstances of the end of the Egyptian army. However, I would argue that the crucial problem in the Greek translation of Exod 15:3 is not whether God is depicted as a warrior or as a peaceful God, or whether Exod 15:3 contrasts the “powerful and incomparable fighting of God and the effectless human warfare”<sup>30</sup>.

Admittedly, the objections raised by Perkins, Lang and Schmitz against the traditional interpretation of the Greek text of Exod 15:3 are too strong to be simply dismissed. Indeed, nobody would dispute that the God of Israel is presented as violent in the Song of the Sea, including its Greek version. As early as in the first verse of the Song, i.e. both in the Hebrew and in the Greek text, God is said to have thrown horse and rider into the sea. In this respect, the Greek text in no way attenuates the message of its Hebrew source. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that the focus of the phrase *κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους* should not be laid on God’s direct or indirect violence against the Egyptian army, but on another aspect neglected so far in the exegetical debate.

Let me begin with an obvious statement: The context of Exodus 15 does not deal with a battle, but with the unexpected drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. In other words, the salvation of Israel is not due to a divine intervention, God acting like a warrior, or having a better strategy or better weapons at his disposal. Israel’s salvation is rather the result of a miraculous event brought about by Israel’s God.<sup>31</sup> Any violent resistance or battle against the Egyptians therefore proved to be unnecessary, even superfluous, because Israel no longer had an enemy against whom to fight against (see Exod 14:28: “not one of them remained”). Although the circumstances previously prompted Israel to fear the worst, namely a terrible

---

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>29</sup> JUDITH LANG, “The Lord Who Crushes Wars” (see note 23), 184.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>31</sup> See also DEBORA TONELLI, *Immagini di violenza divina nell’Antico Testamento*, Bologna 2014, 68: “Israele non scende in campo con un proprio esercito guidato dal Signore ... La battaglia si svolge in modo del tutto particolare: più che un conflitto, assistiamo alla manifestazione della potenza divina e alla fuga di un esercito che dispone di armi potenti. Non c’è un combattimento vero e proprio, ma l’annientamento del nemico per mano di Dio.”

defeat (see Exod 14:10–11), by the time of the Song events have obviously taken a different course. That is why Israel is spared bloodshed and violence. In other words: God is somebody “who crushes wars” *for his people*, because it could not have resisted the powerful Egyptian armies.

As for the noun πόλεμος, it is interesting to note that it is not frequent in the LXX version of the book of Exodus. In the immediate context of the narration of the crossing of the Red Sea, it occurs in Exod 13:17: God does not let Israel take the road to the territory of the Philistines, though it was nearer, because the people might be tempted to return to Egypt “when seeing war” (ἰδόντι πόλεμον). Against the background of this decision, the Greek text of Exod 15:3 becomes even more understandable: God’s aim is that Israel should avoid a war, and it is likely to get involved in military confrontation with the Philistines when crossing their territory. *A fortiori*, God takes all necessary measures to ensure that Israel avoids war and does not have to face a far superior enemy: Egypt. In short, God does not put an end to war,<sup>32</sup> but intervenes in the course of history in such a way that war becomes unnecessary. Such an idea is reflected by Philo, who in his *Life of Moses* (I, 180) notes that the Israelites have gained a victory they had never hoped for without bloodshed (ἀναιμωτὶ νίκην οὐκ ἐλπισθεῖσαν ἤραντο).

In a certain sense, this interpretation of the phrase κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους could be corroborated by the book of Judith, where the phrase in question occurs twice. Firstly, Judith uses the expression in her prayer when speaking of the Assyrians. Trusting on the strength of their army, the Assyrians seem to be unaware of the fact that the God of Israel is a κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους (Jdt 9:7). Once again, Israel has to face a superior enemy without having the arms and the means to confront his extremely powerful army. In this desperate situation, Judith puts her trust in God as somebody whom she holds able “to crush wars”. Her hope is not in vain; returning to the city of Betuliah after having decapitated Holofernes, Judith praises the Lord as a κύριος συντρίβων πολέμους (Jdt 16:2).<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> For this interpretation of the verb συντρίβω, cf. AMADOR ÁNGEL GARCÍA SANTOS, *Diccionario del Griego bíblico. Setenta y Nuevo Testamento*, Estella (Navarra) 2011, 822: “poner fin a las guerras (Ex 15,3)”; see also BARBARA SCHMITZ, HELMUT ENGEL, *Judit* (see note 26), 285: “Durch den Kontext von Ex 15,3<sup>LXX</sup> ergibt sich das Porträt eines kriegsfähigen Gottes, dessen Ziel es jedoch ist, *Kriege zu beenden*” (italics mine). See also BARBARA SCHMITZ, “Gotteshandeln. Die Rettung am Schilfmeer als Paradigma göttlichen Handelns (Ex 13,17–14,31; Ex 15; Jes 43,14–21; Weish 10,15–21; Jdt)”, in: *Exodus. Rezeptionen in deuterokanonischer und frühjüdischer Literatur*, edited by Judith Gärtner, Barbara Schmitz, Berlin/Boston 2016, 33–69, on p. 62. However, the focus of Exod 15:3<sup>LXX</sup> is not on ending wars in general but on averting the impending catastrophe.

<sup>33</sup> For a detailed analysis of the two prayers see BARBARA SCHMITZ, *Gedeutete Geschichte. Die Funktion der Reden und Gebete im Buch Judit* (HBS 40), Freiburg 2004, chapters IV and VI; for the first prayer, see also GÉZA G. XERAVITS, “The Supplication of Judith (Judith 9:2–24)”, in: *A Pious Seductress: Studies in the Book of Judith*, edited



In the past, exegetes have observed many similitudes between the Judith narrative and the Exodus.<sup>34</sup> Be that as it may, both texts have one element in common that is very important for the right understanding of the phrase *κύριος συντρίβων πολέμου*: Just as in the case of Exodus, Israel does not owe its salvation to victory in battle. On the contrary, Israel, whose military power was disproportionately weak in comparison to the enemy force, has been spared war and bloodshed; due to Judith's audacious deed, they are no longer necessary. In other words, by putting into Judith's mouth the expression borrowed from Exod 15:3<sup>LXX</sup>, the author of the narrative appears to insert into Judith's prayers a *theologoumenon* that exactly fits the situation: God makes war superfluous.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, it should be underlined that only in Judith's prayers is God said to intervene in favour of the Israelites. In the narrative parts of the book of Judith, however, Jdt 4:13 is the only quotation where the narrator holds that God heard the prayers of the Israelites.<sup>36</sup>

In any case, both the Exodus narrative and the book of Judith do not speak of acts of war or battles. Perhaps it is this latter element that Exodus and Judith share with Deutero-Isaiah. In Isa 42:13, the MT pictures God as one who "goes forth as a warrior" (*k'ē'īš milhāmōt*, literally "like a man of wars / battles"). Probably influenced by the Greek translation of Exod 15:3,<sup>37</sup> the translator of the book of Isaiah renders the phrase as follows: *καὶ συντρίψει πόλεμον*.

What does this phrase mean in the context of Deutero-Isaiah? In terms of its immediate context, *καὶ συντρίψει πόλεμον* appears at the end of a passage where foreign peoples praise the virtues of the Lord who "will shout mightily against his enemies" (*βοήσεται ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς αὐτοῦ μετὰ ἰσχύος*). However, battles or acts of war are not mentioned at all. God is presented neither as a "peace-maker," nor as a "warrior." Turning to the broader context, but without going into further details, it can be observed that certain passages of Deutero-Isaiah are reminiscent of the Exodus nar-

---

by Géza G. Xeravits (DCLS 14), Berlin, Boston 2012, 161–178, on pp. 171–172.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. BARBARA SCHMITZ, "κύριος συντρίβων πολέμου" (see note 25), *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> It is an anachronism to describe this divine attitude as "friedliebend" or as "Pazifismus"; *pace* BARBARA SCHMITZ, *Gedeutete Geschichte* (see note 33), 286–287.

<sup>36</sup> For this motif, see DEBORAH LEVINE GERA, *Judith* (see note 7), 187.

<sup>37</sup> See already JOSEF ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaia*s, Münster 1934, 125; furthermore MIRIAM VAN DER VORM CROUGHS, *The Old Greek of Isaiah. An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses*, Atlanta Ga. 2014, 385. Under the assumption that the LXX translation of the book of Isaiah is of more recent date than the translation of the Twelve prophets, it cannot be excluded that the translator of the book of Isaiah was familiar with the translation of Hos 2:20[18]. See DAVID A. BAER, *When We All Go Home. Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56-66*, Sheffield 2001 (JSOT.S 318), 87–95.

ratives, e.g. Isa 43:16–23<sup>38</sup>, wherein the anonymous prophet imagines the return from the Babylonian exile by alluding to the Exodus: “Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters” (Isa 43:16 NRSV). It is possible that the translation *καὶ συντρίψει πόλεμον* in Isa 42:13 was meant to introduce another allusion to the Exodus narratives. But that is not all: as is announced in Isa 43:19, God will create something new. Thus, the return from the Babylonian captivity is presented as exceeding the “first Exodus”. However, and this is the essential difference to the “first Exodus”, Israel is no longer faced with a real enemy who would eventually endanger the “second Exodus” by sending troops. Rather, God will intervene once more against potential enemies and nip war in the bud so as to ensure a safe and peaceful return of his people.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> For this problem, see EBERHARD BONS, “Y a-t-il une typologie de l’Exode en Esaïe 43, 16–23?”, in: *Typologie biblique. De quelques figures vives*, edited by Raymond Kuntzmann, Paris 2002, 77–102.

<sup>39</sup> See JEAN KOENIG, *L’herméneutique analogique* (see note 19), 60.