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MICAH 6  
A PARALLEL PERSPECTIVE OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

VASILE ANDREI CONDREA

MA *by research* Dissertation Thesis  
Durham University  
Department of Theology and Religion

*This dissertation is the product of my own work, and the work of others has been properly acknowledged throughout.*

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## Abbreviations

→	related to textual linguistics: refers to changes from FLC to SLC
↔	related to textual linguistics: refers to continuation forms
A	Codex Alexandrinus
B	Codex Vaticanus
BA	Biblical Aramaic
BDB	Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, <i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).
Basil	Basil the Great
BH	Biblical Hebrew
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
Catena	Catena group
Cyril	Cyril of Alexandria
FLC	first level of communication
IMP	Imperative
L	Lucianic recension
Chrysostom	John Chrysostom
La <sup>s</sup>	Fragmenta Sangallensia
L-S	H. George Liddell, R. Scott, P. G. W. Glare, and A. A. Thompson, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
LXX	Septuagint
M	Codex Marchalianus
MT	Massoretic Text
PL	Plural
SG	Singular
SLC	second level of communication

SNC	simple nominal sentence
Theodore	Theodore of Mopsuestia
Theodoret	Theodoret of Cyr
Theophylact	Theophylact of Acrida
TL	textual linguistic
V	Codex Venetus
W	Codex Washington
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

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## Introduction

Micah's name means 'Who is like YHWH'<sup>1</sup> and refers to the author of the fourth book in the scroll of the Twelve Minor Prophets<sup>2</sup>. This name appears several times in the Bible but only two of them (Jer. 26:18 and Mic. 1:1) contain the localisation 'of Moresheth', which is a village in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The superscription of his book tells us that he acted 'in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah' and his preaching concerned Samaria and Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> In the final form the Book of Micah presents an alternation between prophecies of judgement (1:2-2:11; 3:1-12; 5:14-7:7) and salvation (2:12-13; 4:1-5:13; 7:8-20).<sup>4</sup>

The aim of this dissertation thesis is to offer a parallel presentation of the sixteen verses of the sixth chapter from the Book of Micah. The main focus will be on analysing these particular verses as they were handed to us in the Masoretic Text (MT), the Septuagint (LXX) and in the Targum.

Two main tools are selectively used in this analysis. Both in the MT and LXX, Micah 6 raises many questions regarding the interpretation of particular forms because of their ambiguity or their obscure meaning. Consequently, a main focus of this research dissertation will be on searching for the original text of the MT and LXX. This particular analysis will offer the critical text which I believe is the closest copy of their *Vorlage*. Both these textual traditions will be separately analysed as they have been proven to be representative and self-standing in the history of the transmission of the biblical text. Given the fact that the textual criticism for the Aramaic Targums of the

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<sup>1</sup> James Luther Mays, *Micah: A Commentary* (London: SCM, 1976), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> I. Francis Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York, London: Doubleday, 2000), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> A pertinent evaluation of superscriptions in the Book of the Twelve is available in G. M. Tucker, 'Prophetic Superscriptions and the Growth of a Canon', in *Canon and Authority: Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology*, ed. George W. Coats and Burke O. Long (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 56-70; J. D. W. Watts, 'Superscriptions and Incipits in the Book of the Twelve', in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, ed. James Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), p. 110-124.

<sup>4</sup> Marc Leroy, *La formation du livre des quatre: Création théologico-littéraire en Juda durant l'époque néo-babylonienne* (Jerusalem: École Biblique, [course support] 2011), p. 97.

Bible is a rather young discipline, this study will not venture into such uncharted territory.<sup>5</sup>

The second research tool is represented by the employment of the textual-linguistic syntactical analysis, a method which stems from Harald Weinrich's research on modern languages. The principles of his syntactical theory were applied to Biblical Hebrew by Alviero Niccacci<sup>6</sup> and later on by Paolo Messina for Biblical Aramaic.<sup>7</sup> The present research will perform this type of analysis on Micah 6 MT and Targum but not on the Septuagint source, as this task would exceed the objectives of this dissertation.

The outline of this research comprises five chapters focused on the three main sources. The first chapter offers a detailed account of the history of research on the Book of Micah. The presentation covers all the modern history of research starting with Ewald, Stade and Wellhausen, the main promoters of the historical-critical method in the nineteenth century, and continuing with E. Ben-Zvi and Bruce Waltke in modern times. The account highlights problems connected with the person of the prophet Micah, the dating of his book, division, solutions to textual problems and influential commentaries.

The MT will be the subject discussed in chapter two, which will be divided in five parts. Prior to the actual textual analysis, (1) the history of the textual-linguistic method will be described starting with H. Weinrich's basic assumptions followed by A. Niccacci's presentation of this method. The thesis will continue with the exposition of (2) the textual critical analysis. Once the main textual and morphological difficulties are dealt with, the (3) the syntactical commentary (using the textual-linguistic method) and a brief review of the translation proposed by major scholars of Micah will follow. The last two parts will engage in (4) an analysis of the poetic devices and a (5) commentary of the MT text as a whole.

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<sup>5</sup> One of the recent contributions on textual criticism for the Targum is constituted by the latest book of Ahuva Ho, *The Targum of Zephaniah: Manuscripts and Commentary* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Alviero Niccacci, *Sintassi del verbo ebraico nella prosa biblica classica* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum–Analecta 23, 1986). (English translation: Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, JSOTSS 86, 1990)). Biblical Hebrew Poetry received special attention over the years in his research which was condensed in Alviero Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*, ed. S. E. Fassberg and A. Hurvitz (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Press, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Paolo Messina, 'Il sistema verbale dell'Aramaico Biblico: Un approccio linguistico–testuale', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*, ed. Gregor Geiger and Massimo Pazzini (Milano/Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa, Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum–Analecta 78, 2011), pp. 221-256.



The third chapter will be dedicated to the *Septuagint* as an equally important witness for the transmission of the Bible. The short excursus on the research history of the Septuagint will be followed by a detailed textual analysis of the major Greek manuscripts, as they are recorded in the critical edition of J. Ziegler with reference to the Rahlfs and Swete editions of the Septuagint when needed.<sup>8</sup> The rest of the chapter will concentrate on presenting differences between the MT and LXX and determining what the text is saying in the Greek form.

The Aramaic Targum witness of Micah 6 is the concern of the next chapter which starts with an exposition of the Biblical Aramaic verbal system according to the textual-linguistic method. The presentation proceeds with its application to the proposed text. The last part of this chapter concerns the main differences between the MT and Targum in Micah 6 introduced by a general account of the Targum as translation.

The last chapter offers an outline of the most interesting findings of this research along with general conclusion about the textual-linguistic method.

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<sup>8</sup> Joseph Ziegler, *Duodecim prophetae* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967); Alfred Rahlfs and Robert Hanhart, *Septuaginta: id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006); Henry Barclay Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge: University Press, 1905).

## 1. Literature review on Micah 6

History of research and interpretation is the first step in understanding the implications and the meaning of the ancient texts. This presentation will evaluate the scholarly research looking into the exegetical methods and their results. It will focus on problems related to the dating of the book of Micah, division and coherence of the book. Historical realities in which this book was written are important to the interpretation of the linguistic setting and its theological themes.

The Book of Micah has received a great deal of attention in the scholarly research starting with Heinrich Ewald, Julius Wellhausen and Bernhard Stade in the nineteenth century. Their exegetical commentaries influence most of the later research.<sup>9</sup>

Ewald (1867) is the first one to propose a division and a dating of the Book of Micah. He supposes that the book is divided in two parts. The first five chapters are the work of Micah himself, while chapters 6 and 7 are a later addition during the reign of Manasseh. He observes that Micah is similar in theological themes and language with Jeremiah, Habakkuk and Psalms. He points out that Micah 6-7 is 'a prophetic piece, structured and executed in a purely dramatic manner'.<sup>10</sup> His opinion on the dating and division of the last Micah 6 are shared by Wellhausen<sup>11</sup> and Stade.<sup>12</sup> They also propose that the last two chapters are to be divided in two parts. Micah 6:1-7:6 is dated in the time of Manasseh, while Micah 7:6-20 is either an exilic composition (Wellhausen) or a post-exilic addition (Stade). Drawing on the idea that during the reign of Manasseh child

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<sup>9</sup> My presentation of the work of Ewald, Wellhausen, Stade, Marti and von Hoonaker is based on Kenneth H. Cuffey, *The Coherence of Micah: A Review of the Proposals and a New Interpretation* (Doctoral Thesis: Drew University, 1987), pp. 6-26.

<sup>10</sup> Heinrich A. von Ewald, *Die Dichter des Alten Bundes*, Vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1866), p. 527.

<sup>11</sup> Julius Wellhausen, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1878), pp. 425-426.

<sup>12</sup> Bernhard Stade has presented his view on the Book of Micah in two articles that appeared in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*: Bernhard Stade, 'Bemerkungen über das Buch Micha', *ZAW* 1 (1881) and Bernhard Stade, 'Streiflichter auf die Entstehung der jetzigen Gestalt der alttestamentlichen Prophetenschriften', *ZAW* 23 (1903), as a part of a debate with W. Novack regarding the origin of Micah 1-3 and 4-5. Later, Stade has completed his description of the Book of Micah in Bernhard Stade, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Berlin: Grote, 1888).

sacrifice was a regular custom, Stade argues for the dating of Micah 6 in this historical period.<sup>13</sup>

In the following years, the opinions are much divided. While Karl Marti (1904) argues that Micah 6 was not composed until exilic times<sup>14</sup>, Albin van Hoonaker (1908) believes that Micah 6-7 was written after 722 and relates to the fall of Samaria.<sup>15</sup>

The research on Micah becomes more specialized as the authors tend to dedicate entire articles and monographs to its interpretation. Nevertheless, the proposals are very different and often contradictory.

For example, Paul Haupt divides the Book of Micah into ten poems. He asserts that the last four chapters of Micah have southern origins and are composed of five poems called 'a Maccabean appendix'. Micah 6 is divided between poems V (A: 6:2-4a, 6, 16 and B: 6:9, 12, 10-11, 13-14b, dated 170-100 BC) and X (6, 6-8, dated 100 BC). The verses 6, 1, 4b-5, 15 are 'secondary glosses' of the text. He thinks that verse 5 was originally 'Remember how your fathers were marvellously helped from Shittim to Gilgal', but it was omitted because of the repetition of the word 'remember'.<sup>16</sup> Regarding verse 9 he translates the literary *הַטָּאת נִפְשִׁי* with 'as a guilt offering of my soul', relating to a capital crime and *פְּרִי בִטְנִי* is translated 'the fruit of my belly/womb' (cf. Deut 7:13, 28:4,11; 30:9; Ps. 132: 11). The literal translation of the word *לְשִׁירָקָה* (v. 16) is hissing but it refers to the action of whistling (p. 36). The omission of the act of anointing was a sign of mourning, cf. Dan 10, 3 (p. 36). He also presents an historical context for Omri and Ahab (pp. 33-34).

On the other hand, Burkitt considers Micah 6-7 a Northern prophecy. He supports his theory with several arguments. While there is no mention of Zion or Jerusalem, all other names are references to the geography and names of the North (Carmel, Bashan, Gilead, Gilgal, Omri, and Ahab). Moreover, Micah 6:6-8 fits with the atmosphere of the tribes settled in on the land of Israel after the deportation of Israel (2 Kings 17:23-41). He

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<sup>13</sup> Stade, 'Streiflichter auf die Entstehung der jetzigen Gestalt der alttestamentlichen Prophetenschriften', 1903, pp. 164-171 and Stade, 1888, p. 632.

<sup>14</sup> Karl Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1904), pp. 258-259.

<sup>15</sup> Albin van Hoonaker, *Les douze petits prophètes* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1908), pp. 351-353.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Haupt, 'The Book of Micah', *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 27 (1910), p. 35.

considers that these settlers were willing to fulfil all kinds of worship, including the sacrifice of the first-born child.<sup>17</sup>

John Merlin Powis Smith (1911, reprinted in 1974) starts his commentary on 6:1-8 with a short introduction which divides the poem in two parts. The first part (6:1-5) is composed of four strophes (vv. 1, 2, 3, and 4-5), while the second (6:6-8) has three (6, 7, 8). He offers a textual analysis and literary analysis commenting also on the recent research history. The first part contains the case of Yahweh against Israel his people continued in the second part which outlines the 'nature of Yahweh's requirements'.<sup>18</sup> The whole poem reaches a climactic point in verse 8 with the proclamation of the core requirements of the Law. Verses 6:9-16 is divided between denouncing the sins (strophe 1 (verses 9 and 12) and 2 (verses 10-11)) and the doom oracles (strophes 3 (verse 13 and 14b) and 4 (verses 14a and 15)), while verse 16 represents a summary.

G. W. Anderson comments only on Micah 6:9. His article states that the faith of the prophets was the proper answer to the righteous deeds of God towards his people (Micah 6:4). He considers the succession  $\text{אֵלֹהֵינוּ/אֵלֵינוּ}$  in vv. 3-4 a play on words used to avoid the arguments that the people might present in their defence. He asserts that sin is not merely a transgression of the Law, but a 'rebellion' against God. Calling to the debate the ends of the earth, the prophet reminds his adversaries that God is also the Creator. In the last part, he comments on the three commandments of v. 8.<sup>19</sup>

In the next two decades the research on the Book of Micah advances with the commentaries of Renaud, Anderson, Mays, Clark, Hillers, Alfaro and Wolff. The full development of the historical-critical method, the discoveries of the Dead Sea scrolls, and linguistic advancements give a broader image of Micah's historical setting, language and theological themes.

In the introduction of '*La formation du Livre de Michée*', Renaud states two main questions of the book of Micah: the structure and the elements that are of non-authentic origin. Chapter 6 is divided into two sections: 1-8 and 9-16. In the first section there are

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<sup>17</sup> F. C. Burkitt, 'Micah 6 and 7 a Northern Prophecy', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 45, No. 1-2 (1926), pp. 159-161.

<sup>18</sup> John Merlin Powis Smith, William Hayes Ward, and Julius A. Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1928), p. 123.

<sup>19</sup> W. Anderson, 'A Study of Micah 6:1-8', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 4 (1951), pp. 191-197.

some remarks on the translation of the text, the unity of the section, literary form, the unity of the theological development and the origin of the section (deuteronomistic similarities, its *Sitz im Leben*, date and authenticity). The second section starts with remarks on the translation, the structure of Micah 6:9-16 with a certain regard to redactional interventions, date and authenticity, and a conclusion for the section and for the whole chapter.<sup>20</sup>

J. L. Mays wrote a commentary on Micah in *The Old Testament Library* series. In the introduction, he presents the form of the book, explains who is Micah the Moreshite and the formation of the book. After a brief list of the books written about Micah (pp. 34-39), he proceeds with a commentary by sections of the entire book. Chapter 6 is divided into 3 sections: (a) God's Salvation and its justification (1-5); (b) It is you, not something, God wants (6-8); (c) Guilt and punishment under the covenant (9-16).<sup>21</sup> Each chapter follows a fixed pattern: first he gives his own translation of the MT text with LXX differences, followed by a general presentation of the language, style, formal structure and literary types. The commentary ends with a verse-by-verse analysis (grammar, syntax, explanation of translation problems, commentary of the characters and theological themes).

Delbert R. Hillers writes a commentary on Micah in the *Hermeneia* series. He discusses the general form of the Book of Micah with a special section on its poetic form, comments on the parallel with Jeremiah 26 and then proceeds with the commentary by sections. Chapter 6 has two sections: (a) Covenant Lawsuit: The Whole Duty of Mankind (1-8); and (b) A Curse on the Cheating City (9-16). His presentation starts with his translation of the MT text and grammatical notes on the parallels found in the LXX and Murabba'at texts and proceeds with a commentary on the ideas of every section.<sup>22</sup>

Dawes's article is focused on Micah 6:8. He draws the attention to the fact that since Anderson's article, there have been authors (Hillers, Allen, Renaud) who argue that the translation of the Hebrew expression *וְהִצַּנְעַ לְכַת עִם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ* is not 'walk humbly with your God', but 'walk wisely/circumspectly', as it appears in NEB. He extends Anderson's

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<sup>20</sup> Bernard Renaud, *La formation du Livre de Michée: tradition et actualisation* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977).

<sup>21</sup> Mays, 1976, p. 127-142.

<sup>22</sup> Delbert Hillers, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Micah* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

research and concludes that ‘walk *humbly*’ is the appropriate rendering of the MT expression.<sup>23</sup>

The *International Theological Commentary* series aims to pass from the critical-historical approach of the Old Testament to a theological interpretation for ministers and Christian education. With this aim in mind, Juan I. Alfaro offers a presentation of the Jewish context because its traditions are important for the understanding of the texts. The second objective is to present the message of Micah ‘with sound theological ideas’. In the introduction, he speaks about the author and about the message, unity and structure of the book. He rejects the division of Micah’s prophecies in alternating oracles of doom and hope, following the divisions of the Book as proposed by Allen and Alonso Schökel in their commentary on the Prophets.<sup>24</sup>

Alfaro’s commentary of Micah 6 commences with a presentation of the theories of O. Eissfeldt,<sup>25</sup> A. S. van der Woude,<sup>26</sup> Bruce Vawter,<sup>27</sup> and then offers a theological commentary, focusing on the following terms: *rib*; sacrifice versus personal conversion; synthesis of the doctrine of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah; and sin of the people.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> S. B. Dawes, ‘Walking Humbly: Micah 6:8 Revisited’, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41 (1988), pp. 331-39.

<sup>24</sup> Juan I. Alfaro, *Justice and Loyalty: A Commentary on the Book of Micah* (Grand Rapids & Edinburgh: Eerdmans & Handsel Press, 1989), pp. 11-12; cf. Luis Alonso Schökel and J. L. Sicre Diaz, *Profetas* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1980): Alonso Schökel proposes a structure from the point of view of the main theological themes. This theological view divides the Book of Micah into two sections: (a) The Theophany of God and Its Consequences (c. 1-5); and (b) The Judgment of God (6-7). Chapters 6 and 7 in this setting are closely connected: (a) Summons and accusation of ingratitude (6, 1-5); (b) Rejection of empty ritual and demand of justice and loyalty (6, 6-8); (c) There is no justice (6, 9-16); (d) There is no loyalty (7, 1-6); (e) Acceptance of divine retribution, acknowledgment of sin, and certainty of pardon (7, 7-20) (see Alfaro, 1989, pp. 11-12).

<sup>25</sup> Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966). Eissfeldt shares the opinion of Stade and Welhausen about the division of the last chapters of Micah into two (6:1-7:6 and 7:7-20). He thinks that Micah 6:1-8 is ‘an impressive judgement speech’ divided into four parts: introduction (vv.1-2); Yahweh speech (3-5); Israel speech (6-7); and prophetic exhortation (8) (p. 409). Micah 6:9-16 is a diatribe against Samaria, not Jerusalem which leads him to the conclusion that the passage dates from the period before 721 (p. 411).

<sup>26</sup> In his article, A. S. van der Woude, ‘Micah in Dispute with the Pseudo-Prophets’, *Vetus Testamentum* 19, No. 2 (1969), pp. 244-260, claims that the last chapters are written by another prophet than Micah from the Northern Kingdom based on several reasons: the influence of Isaiah; geographical and historical reference to the north; reflection on Exodus and Conquest; and addressing the society as a whole.

<sup>27</sup> Bruce Vawter, *Amos, Hosea, Micah* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1981), p. 159: Vawter asserts that Micah 6:1-8 comes from the prophet himself because he is using formulas and traditional liturgical language specific to his time. Also, he considers this passage as ‘the best and the most complete exemplification in the prophetic literature of the *rib*’.

<sup>28</sup> Alfaro, 1989, pp. 62-73.

Wolff's commentary on Micah<sup>29</sup> was published for the first time in 1982<sup>30</sup> and translated by G. Stansell in 1990.<sup>31</sup> The introduction speaks about the period, about the 'Man Micah', the language of the book, its message, the book itself (the general division) and the literature that comments on it.

Referring to the message of Micah, Wolff divides it into four parts: (a) 1-3: the 'original message' - guilt and judgment of Samaria, Judah and Jerusalem (which contains six interpolations);<sup>32</sup> (b) 4-5: future salvation for Jerusalem and Israel; (c) 6:1-7:7: later prophetic voices which supplement the Book of Micah with admonitions, judgement speeches, and laments; (d) 7:8-20: the liturgical community speaks. Historically, Wolff considers that Micah has a long redaction history which starts in pre-exilic times when the first three chapters were written (Deuteronomistic commentaries, interpolations and 'liturgical introit'). Chapters 4-5 accumulate sayings from prophets of salvation after the exile. The first five chapters of Micah underwent a general redaction in connection with the lamentation over the fall of Jerusalem which, at a later time, receives the final redaction from a social-critical point of view (6:2-7:7).

Chapter 6 is divided into 2 parts (1-8: 'Walk attentively with your God' and 9-16: 'The Deceiver'). His commentary opens with a translation, comparison with the LXX and grammatical notes, form criticism, the setting of the verses (redaction history) and commentary verse by verse. Every part closes with a 'Purpose and Thrust' section which concerns the theological implications.

In the introduction of his commentary on Micah, McKane presents an outline of the Book of Micah, its redaction history and *Sitz im Leben*. His work contains also a discussion of the textual variants of MT, LXX, Targum, Peshitta and the Vulgate. Chapter 6 of Micah is divided into three parts: (a) Yahweh takes Israel to court (1-5); (b) Yahweh's requirements are justice, mercy and humility (6-8); (c) Yahweh threatens the city (9-16).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Hans W. Wolff, *Micah: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990).

<sup>30</sup> Hans W. Wolff, *Micha* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982).

<sup>31</sup> He also wrote a monograph on Micah: Gary Stansell, *Micah and Isaiah: A Form and Tradition Historical Comparison* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

<sup>32</sup> Wolff, 1990, pp. 18-19.

<sup>33</sup> William McKane, *The Book of Micah: Introduction and Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), pp. 177-206.

In 2000, F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman published a commentary on Micah in the Anchor Bible series. Their commentary starts with a presentation of the texts and translations of Micah, its place in the Book of the Twelve and presentation of the literary units.<sup>34</sup>

Chapter 6 of Micah is divided into two parts: (a) Yahweh's covenant dispute 6:1-8 (Yahweh's indictment 1-5; Israel's response 6-7; Yahweh's remedy 8); (b) More accusations and Covenant curses 6:9-16 (More accusations 9-12; Covenant curses 13-16).<sup>35</sup>

On the first section, their commentary begins with a translation of the MT and LXX with grammatical notes. It talks about the 'constituents of Micah 6', the drama of Micah 6:1-8, the literary genre, its poetry, notes (verse by verse) and then a general comment on the passage 6:1-8. Also, it contains an Excursus on the human sacrifice (religious background, biblical evidence, relationship with Gen 22, Judges 11 and the modern critical interpretation).

Ben Zvi's research on Micah aims to provide a form-critical commentary.<sup>36</sup> In the short introduction, the author presents the general structure of Micah. Pointing out its sophistication, he believes it has textual coherence. His commentary is focused on the social setting in the ancient Near East as reflected in the relationship between the patron and client.<sup>37</sup> The commentary on Micah 6<sup>38</sup> follows a strict plan for each of the sections (a) Structure and its explanation; (b) Genre of each section (6, 1-8 *rib*; announcement of judgment 6:9-16); (c) Settings (6:1-8: to whom it is addressed, localization, liturgical or not for; 6:9-16: not necessarily a northern view, it may well be the explanation of the fall of the monarchic Jerusalem); (d) Intention (general purpose of 6:8: to 'inculcate the

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<sup>34</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, pp. 33-99: Andersen divides the Book of Micah into three literary units: Book of doom 1: 2-3:12; Book of Visions 4:1-5:14; Book of Contention and Conciliation 6-7. The introduction is followed by an exhaustive bibliographical list on Micah.

<sup>35</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, pp. 502-560.

<sup>36</sup> Ehud Ben Zvi, *Micah* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>37</sup> This relationship has been portrayed in two articles by Ray T. Hobbs, 'Reflections on Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116 (1997) and Pete N. Lemche, 'Kings and Clients: On Loyalty Between the Ruler and the Ruled in Ancient Israel', *Semeia* 66 (1994).

<sup>38</sup> Chapter 6 begins a section of the book called '*A final set of prophetic readings*' (6:1-7:17) divided into four parts: (a) Prophetic-didactic reading about divinely ordained behaviour (6:1-8); (b) Prophetic reading explaining the reasons for divine judgment against the monarchic 'city' (6:9-16); (c) Reading expressing trust in Yahweh despite and in response to social disintegration 7:1-7; (d) Reading conveying a confirmation of Yahweh's relationship to Judah/Zion in spite of its low worldly status 7:7-17.



teaching expressed in 6:8' (p.152), while 6:9-16 tries to explain the fall of Jerusalem (p. 164)<sup>39</sup>); (e) Bibliography.

'The conceptual coherence of the Book of Micah' is a monograph written by Mignon R. Jacobs in the *JSOT Supplement Series*. The main focus of research is to question the book's unity/coherence.<sup>40</sup> After a methodological part (pp. 46-57), chapter 3 offers a presentation of the macro-structure of the Book of Micah. She presents the other researcher's proposal on the macro-structure of the book and then outlines hers. The two-fold macro-structure<sup>41</sup> follows that of Ewald (accepted also by Mays,<sup>42</sup> and Hagstrom<sup>43</sup>). Micah 6:1-8 contains the second dispute against Israel (Introduction – summons to hear 6:1-2; Argumentation 6:3-7; Resolution – 6:8). The last part (6:9-7:20) concerns Israel's fate, focusing on his present judgement (6:9-7:6) and on his future prospects of hope (7:7 – 20).

In 'A commentary on Micah', Waltke aims to determine the book's historical context (syntax, meaning, figures of speech, rhetorical techniques and literary form) and to propose an interpretation for the contemporary church. There are two main parts: introduction and commentary. In the introduction, the author includes a presentation of the prophet, historical background, date and authorship, form and structure, text and a selected bibliography. The discussion of the text observes a predefined pattern: translation (based on his 'Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax'),<sup>44</sup> exegesis and

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<sup>39</sup> He agrees with Renaud, 1977, p. 342.

<sup>40</sup> Mignon R. Jacobs, *The Conceptual Coherence of the Book of Micah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001). The author offers in her introduction a view of the history of research: Ewald (1876); Stade (1881 and 1883); Smith (1911); Lindblom (1929); Weiser (1961); Renaud (1964); Willis (1966); Lescow (1972); Allen (1976); Mays (1976); Wolff (1982, 1990); Hagstrom (1982, 1988); Hillers (1984); Luker (1985); Cuffey (1987); Stansell (1988); Shaw (1993). She provides a table with the authors, sources of coherence and criteria for discerning coherence. In a later article she updates the history of research on Micah: Mignon R. Jacobs, 'Bridging the Times: Trends in Micah Studies since 1985', *Currents in Biblical Research* 4, No. 3 (2006), pp 293-329.

<sup>41</sup> Following Mignon, Micah is shaped in two disputes: First Dispute (1:2-5:14) and Second Dispute 6:1-7:20, introduced by the superscription (1:1).

<sup>42</sup> Mays, 1976, p. 4-12.

<sup>43</sup> David G. Hagstrom, *The Coherence of the Book of Micah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), p. 23.

<sup>44</sup> Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990).

exposition.<sup>45</sup> Chapter 6 is divided into two parts: Israel is accused of breaking the Covenant (6:1-8) and The Covenant curses fulfilled on Jerusalem (6:9-16).

Another important contribution to the research of Micah is that proposed by Alviero Niccacci.<sup>46</sup> His proposal stems from his theory regarding the Hebrew verbal system presented in '*The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew prose*'. After a brief introduction, he offers an Italian translation and then proceeds with a philological commentary with a special interest in the dynamic and sense of the phrase.

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<sup>45</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah* (Grand Rapids, London: Eerdmans, 2007). His commentary is divided into a three-fold structure or 'cycles': I '*God gathers the elect remnant into Jerusalem*' (1:2-2:13); '*God restores Jerusalem's Former Dominion to the Purified Remnant*' (3:1-5:14); '*God forgives the remnant of his sinful people*' (6:1-7:2).

<sup>46</sup> Alviero Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', *Liber Annuus* 57 (2007).

## 2.1. Hebrew Syntax and Alviero Niccacci's Proposal

Textual-linguistics represents a method of syntax championed by Harald Weinrich who considers that a syntactical evaluation should come from the analysis of the verbal forms 'integrated into a temporal paradigm'.<sup>47</sup> This process involves a study of the phoneme, morpheme and lexeme of the text. This does not involve the classic division of time past-present-future, but it has to derive from the communication process (speaker-listener). A key word here is 'textual tense' which means that any text has a before and an after which encloses the message.<sup>48</sup>

One of the first attempts to employ this textual linguistic model on the Biblical Hebrew was W. Schneider in his *Grammatik des biblischen Hebraisch*, Claudius, Munchen, 1974. Schneider's book was discussed by E. Talstra in two articles,<sup>49</sup> where he stressed the importance of semantics in any syntactical analysis.

Alviero Niccacci proves the feasibility of this method<sup>50</sup> by putting together the emphasis on the morphological and linguistic principles (W. Schneider's main concern) and semantic principles (Talstra). His proposal studies the prose and the poetic passages separately, as the poetic passages follow their own syntactical rules. His approach is synchronic and looks at the use of the verb as found in the present state of the text regardless of its diachronic status.

Niccacci is fully aware that a syntactical analysis of any kind of text requires a precise definition of what 'text' means. He adapts Weinrich's definition of a text in his syntactical commentary of Malachi<sup>51</sup> (the square brackets represent his additions): 'A text is a logical (i. e intelligible and consistent) sequence of linguistic signs [particularly the wayyiqtol in BH], placed between two significant breaks in communication [i. e.

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<sup>47</sup> Harald Weinrich, *Tempus. Le funzioni dei tempi nel testo* (Bologna: Societa Editrice il Mulino, 1978), p. 14; [German title: Harald Weinrich, *Tempus: Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (2nd edition; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971)].

<sup>48</sup> Weinrich, 1978, p. 77.

<sup>49</sup> E. Talstra, 'Text Grammar and Hebrew Bible. I: Elements of a Theory', *BiOr* 35 (1978), pp. 169-74; and 'Text Grammar and Hebrew Bible. II: Syntax and Semantics', *BiOr* 39 (1982), pp. 26-38.

<sup>50</sup> For a full list of his research publications see G. Claudio Bottini, 'Scheda bio-bibliografica di Alviero Niccacci', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*, ed. Gregor Geiger and Massimo Pazzini (Milano/Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa, Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum–Analecta 78, 2011), pp. 16-29.

<sup>51</sup> Alviero Niccacci, 'Poetic Syntax and Interpretation of Malachi', *Liber Annuus* 51 (2001), p. 57; cf. Weinrich, 1978, p. 14.

waw-x-qatal, or other non-verbal construction in BH]’. A correct delimitation of the text is the first step of syntactical analysis.

In Weinrich’s view the verbal forms and temporal indicators (like adverbs) have the most prominent place.<sup>52</sup> A careful scrutiny of any text shows that ‘in almost all texts [...] either one or other tense clearly dominates, either one or other group of tenses, forming a strong majority of the temporal forms there present.’ Tenses can be divided into (1) discourse or comment tenses (present-present perfect-future, most often with the first and second person), and (2) narrative tenses (imperfect-simple past/past perfect-conditional, usually in third person).<sup>53</sup> In reading them, the translator should be aware in the former case that ‘this is a text that comments’, while in the latter that ‘this is a text that narrates’.<sup>54</sup> This difference has the specific purpose of shedding light on the tension that the message is carrying: if it uses discourse tenses than the text has a ‘perspective of tension’, while if it uses narrative tenses its perspective is of distension. These two positions are together called ‘linguistic attitude’.<sup>55</sup> In practical terms for Aramaic and Hebrew, this linguistic attitude has resulted in discrimination between narrative texts and direct speech passages.<sup>56</sup> The chart presents the verbal forms for the two groups and their correspondence in the basic axes of time.<sup>57</sup>

TEMPORAL AXIS	GROUP I ‘DISCOURSE’	GROUP II ‘NARRATIVE’
PRESENT	PRESENT	IMPERFECT PAST CONTINUOUS
PAST	PRESENT PERFECT	SIMPLE PAST PAST PERFECT
FUTURE	FUTURE	CONDITIONAL

The syntactical evaluation of any poetic material has its basis in the use of the tenses in the direct speech passages. Niccacci’s presentation of syntax covers three perspectives: temporal axis, type of functions (groups I and II) and syntactical relation (first level of

<sup>52</sup> Weinrich, 1978, p. 19.

<sup>53</sup> Weinrich, 1978, p. 23.

<sup>54</sup> Weinrich, 1978, p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> Weinrich, 1978, p. 44. The key words here *perspective* and *linguistic attitude* refer to what Niccacci explains in Ch. 7 ‘Tense Shift’; cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 112.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 19.

<sup>57</sup> The diagram is present in Niccacci, 1990, p. 19. The addition of PAST CONTINUOUS is mine.

communication or coordination versus second level of communication/background or subordination).

The Hebrew verbal system works with five verbal forms: qatal, weqatal, yiqtol, weyiqtol and wayyiqtol. These are translated, as Niccacci points out, ‘by all the tenses in the modern languages, by every mood (except IMP and wayyiqtol) and by both aspects and ‘modes of actions’ (complete or incomplete)’.<sup>58</sup> This syntactical approach has as a basic rule: these five verbal forms each have their own value. For example, weqatal is not the coordinate or inverted form for qatal; rather, the weqatal is the continuation of the x-yiqtol for the future indicative.

Due to the fact that poetic passages are closer in organisation to items in Group I, this outline will present a syntactical relation in direct speech, the narrative part being left aside. The syntax of narrative passages is less complex and its configuration is more predictable. This syntactical outline can be seen in Annex 1.

**On the temporal axis of the past**, any given narration starts with an x-qatal or a simple qatal (with no effect on the syntax) followed by wayyiqtol so as to present the coordinative relation (successive information). The wayyiqtol may well be followed by another sequential wayyiqtol↔wayyiqtol, which bears the name of ‘narrative sequence’, presenting pieces of information chronologically, on the main line of communication.<sup>59</sup> When the author presents background information or a second level of communication, the tense adopts one of the following four verbal forms: x-qatal (non-successive information, specific information), Simple Nominal Clause (SNC – with no verb, concomitant information), x-yiqtol and weqatal.

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<sup>58</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 17. A small glossary of the technical terms employed is offered by W. G. E. Watson in the translation [p. 14]. Most of them are taken from Weinrich: ‘comment in the guise of narrative: *narrazione commentativa*; degree zero: *grado zero (Nullstufe)*; narrative comment/discourse: *commento/discorso narrativo*; past perfect: *trapassato*; present perfect: *passato prossimo*; prominence: *messa in rilievo (Reliefgebung)*; another possible equivalent is ‘salience’; simple past: *passato prossimo*; tense shift: *transizione temporale (Tempus-Übergang)*; two-member syntactic construction: *schema sintattico a due membri*; volitive: *volitivo*, also possible would be ‘volitional’.

<sup>59</sup> Niccacci, ‘Poetic Syntax and Interpretation of Malachi’, 2001, p. 56.

As a general rule for all temporal axes, the time shift from the main level of communication to the background does not imply a syntactical division, but rather a *'pause'* either in the narrative (if we are talking about the axis of the past) or in the discourse. The regent and its subordinate clauses are an 'indivisible syntactical unit'.<sup>60</sup> Also, there are special cases when wayyiqtol<sup>61</sup> can be a form of continuation on the SLC only after x-qatal on the SLC.

**On the temporal axis of the present,** the direct speech starts with a SNC (simple nominal cause) which follows the predicate – subject sequence. At this point the syntax of the phrase influences the syntactical relations in the clause: so as to preserve the predicate-subject sequence, the syntactical analysis of the SNC would identify as predicate any given morphological form that occupies the first position in the phrase (substantive, pronoun, question, etc.) The subordination of the present tense is made possible through a SNC, but this time through a subject-predicate sequence.

**On the temporal axis of the future,** there is a clear distinction between future indicative (referring to the actual future) and future volitive (which denotes an order or some other form of will implication).

The future indicative has two types of initiation and a single type of continuation (or coordination). A future indicative sentence may be initiated either with SNC (usually with participle), either with x-yiqtol; and the coordination form is weqatal for both initial forms. The subordination in the future tense is introduced through x-yiqtol.

Future volitive can be introduced either by an (1) IMP or by (2) an x-yiqtol cohortative/jussive or yiqtol cohortative or jussive, while the coordination form is weyiqtol. The subordination is introduced through x-IMP in the first case or x-yiqtol in the second case. In addition, there are two frequent constructions in the future volitive:

- a. IMP with weqatal – (syntactically the future volitive [regent] passes to the future indicative [subordinate clause]) which must be translated as an order followed by a consequence (introduced by: thus, that is why, therefore, whereupon). The

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<sup>60</sup> Niccacci, 'Poetic Syntax and Interpretation of Malachi', 2001, p. 57.

<sup>61</sup> This feature of wayyiqtol is discussed in Niccacci, 1990, pp. 48 and 176. Cf. 2 Sam. 28:3; 2 Kgs. 12:10b-12; Job 1:2-3.

weqatal is not on the main level of communication, because the normal continuation for IMP is weyiqtol.

- b. IMP with weyiqtol – (two coordinated constructions in the future volitive) which should be translated as an order followed by a final clause (so that, in order to).

Consequently, the volitive future has three constructs which can initiate the discourse: IMP, x-yiqtol or jussive/cohortative<sup>62</sup> yiqtol. While for the IMP there is no room for confusion regarding to which temporal axis it belongs, this is not the case with yiqtol and x-yiqtol.

Sometimes jussive yiqtol is distinct from indicative yiqtol, as the first one may have an abbreviated form (cf. יִקְוֹ or יִהְיֶה (indicative)/יִקְוֹ or יִהְיֶה (jussive)). Nevertheless, this distinction is not always apparent, so the weyiqtol is important when one has to decide to which temporal axis an initial yiqtol form belongs: (1) If it is followed by an weqatal, the discourse refers to the future indicative. (2) If the yiqtol has weyiqtol as an continuation form, it conveys information about the future volitive. The other way of differentiating them is revealed by the negations in the continuation form: אֵלֹּ yiqtol for the future indicative forms, אֵל yiqtol for jussive/cohortative for future volitive forms.<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, it is clear that the initial yiqtol (FLC) cannot refer to a future indicative temporal axis (as the normal initiation is x-yiqtol). But this is not the case with SLC x-yiqtol. The most difficult is to determine whether an waw-x-yiqtol is a volitive or an indicative future form. The examples provided by Niccacci (Gen. 43:11-14; Ex. 10:24; Ex. 19:21-22) lead to the conclusion that only when x-yiqtol is ‘preceded by one of the direct volitive forms’ it refers to a future volitive function (in foreground or background).<sup>64</sup>

### 2.1.1 Negations

Another important aspect of Niccacci’s syntactical approach is his treatment of negative forms. There are corresponding negations for each of the five verbal forms (qatal, weqatal, yiqtol, weyiqtol and wayyiqtol). They have the same value for the syntax as their positive correspondents. Negative forms are not necessarily the negation of the

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<sup>62</sup> Both terms refer to terms conveying an order or an exhortation: jussive refers to 2nd and 3rd person singular/plural and cohortative denotes 1st person singular/plural.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 76.

<sup>64</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 78-81. He differentiates between direct volitive forms (jussive, cohortative and imperative) and indirect ones (weyiqtol). The weyiqtol forms are presented in § 61-64, pp. 88-94.

positive form. For example the negation for weqatal is אֵלַי yiqtol, not אֵלַי qatal. In the next few lines I will give the corresponding negative forms proposed by Niccacci:

(1) The negation of wayyiqtol is אֵלַי qatal. Wayyiqtol appears in narrative passages or in direct speech (past) on the main level of communication, and may be followed by a אֵלַי+qatal on the same level of communication.

(2) The x-qatal (either in narrative passages (background), or in direct speech (background)) has (waw-) x-אֵלַי-qatal as negation. In direct speech the negation of the initial<sup>65</sup> (x)-qatal is אֵלַי-qatal.

(3A) The x-yiqtol has as negation (waw-) x-אֵלַי-yiqtol when it refers to forms in the narrative passages or in the future indicative (direct speech), on SLC.

(3B) The initial x-yiqtol (future indicative, direct speech) has as negation אֵלַי-yiqtol

(3C) The initial (x-) yiqtol (future volitive) has as a special negation: אֵלַי-yiqtol

(3D) The x-yiqtol (future volitive) on the SLC has as negation (waw)-x-אֵלַי-yiqtol.

(4) The weqatal both in narrative passages (SLC), and in direct speech, and future indicative (FLC continuative form after initial x-yiqtol) has as negation אֵלַי+yiqtol.

(5) The weyiqtol (direct speech) continuative in future volitive after initial yiqtol has as negation אֵלַי-yiqtol.

### **2.1.2. Main features of poetry**

Niccacci confesses that he did not give any precise function to the verbal forms in poetry in the early years of conceiving his Biblical Hebrew syntax. Drawing on Watson's *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (1984), Niccacci in his 'Analysing Biblical Hebrew Poetry'<sup>66</sup> (1997) presents two main characteristics of poetry in contrast with prose: 'segmented versus linear communication' and 'parallelism of similar bits of information

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<sup>65</sup> The initial forms are those which start the direct speech, immediately after a narrative form of introducing the direct speech, for example wayyomer. The sequence between a narrative passage which introduces a direct speech (past) may be wayyomer (he said): (x) qatal ↔ wayyiqtol (both last forms on the main level of communication).

<sup>66</sup> Alviero Niccacci, 'Analysing Biblical Hebrew Poetry', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 22, No. 74 (1997), pp. 77-94.



versus sequence of different bits of information'. Nevertheless, he does not comment further on the verbal system.<sup>67</sup>

In the following years, he focused on different poetic passages, writing articles for *Liber Annuus*: 'Syntactic Analysis of Jonah' (1996), pp. 9-32; 'Proverbi 23, 12-25' (1997), 33-35; 'Proverbi 23, 26-24, 22' (1998), pp. 49-104; 'Poetic Syntax and Interpretation of Malachi' (2001), pp. 55-107.

Only in 'The Biblical Hebrew System in Poetry' does he come to the conclusion that: (1) 'verbal forms play different functions in BH poetry' and (2) 'verbal forms in poetry are basically the same as in prose, more precisely in direct speech'.<sup>68</sup> Before embarking on the presentation of the poetry, Niccacci stresses two points:

- a. (Referring to the 'Alternating qatal/yiqtol), the diachronic approach to Hebrew – like parallel comparison with Ugaritic<sup>69</sup> – must be verified 'within the framework of the verbal system'. He refuses at this point the idea of *coordinated waw*.<sup>70</sup>
- b. (Referring to initial yiqtol on the future volitive tense), 'sentence initial yiqtol is volitive, or jussive, even though its vocalization is not distinctively jussive or is not jussive at all'. The main reason for this is the fact that morphology (or vocalisation) is not sufficient to qualify yiqtol as jussive. Moreover, a first position in the sentence is enough to attest a yiqtol jussive.

Regarding poetic texts, Niccacci presents five rules for syntax:

1. qatal (past) and (future) yiqtol are each connected to their own temporal axis.

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<sup>67</sup> Niccacci, 'Analysing Biblical Hebrew Poetry', 1997, pp. 77-78.

<sup>68</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*, pp. 247-268.

<sup>69</sup> Niccacci explains that the analysis should be mostly a synchronic undertaking because applying a phenomenon present in Ugaritic to BH (cf. Umberto Cassuto, *The Goddess Anath: Canaanite Epics of the Patriarchal Age* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1971), pp. 46-48) 'without appropriate control within the framework of the verbal system of that language' cannot be an automatic process. Contrarily, the analysis should be primarily based on the synchronic approach and secondarily rely on diachronic arguments, cf. Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting* pp. 250-251.

<sup>70</sup> Due to the fact that weqatal is not the coordinated form for qatal, yiqtol for weyiqtol or wayyiqtol, but each of them has a specific role on a temporal axis which usually differs from one another (qatal-past/ weqatal-future; yiqtol-future/ wayyiqtol-past), the coordinated *waw* is not a feasible rule in BH, cf. Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*, p. 251.

2. If these two forms are relating an event in the past, they indicate a shift from the main level of communication and the punctual aspect of the qatal to the SLC and the 'repeated/habitual/explicatory/descriptive' value of yiqtol.
3. The function of the 'double-duty modifier' can transform an apparent initial yiqtol (future volitive) to a non-initial yiqtol, which in turn becomes an x-yiqtol, future indicative. A double-duty modifier refers to 'a grammatical element that serves two or more lines although it does not appear in every case but only in the first line or, more difficult to recognize, only in the subsequent parallel lines of a poetic unit'.<sup>71</sup>
4. Initial yiqtol has volitive functions.
5. Volitive yiqtol can fulfill the function of a protasis.

### **2.1.3. Conclusion**

The principal advantage of Niccacci's theory for Hebrew syntax (especially for the poetic passages) is that the exegete is provided with a good theoretical base for translating and interpreting poetic verbal forms, rather than having to rely on his or her own opinion. It also provides him the possibility of clearly following the changes in tense (past, present, future) and in verbal aspect (durative action, repetitive or punctual). In the case of Hebrew poetry, his syntax method integrates the findings of poetic analysis, which can provide a viable explanation for particular cases.

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<sup>71</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*, pp. 258-259. Niccacci's presentation relates with Watson's presentation of ellipsis and double duty modifiers as poetic devices (Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), pp. 303-306).

## 2.2. Text-critical Analysis of MT Micah 6

Textual criticism is the first task of any research on the text of the Old Testament. It seeks to answer the question: ‘which text is the best witness to the primitive text?’<sup>72</sup> Scholars of the critical textual method recognize nowadays that the Masoretic text and the Septuagint are two distinct recensions. They must be studied by themselves, and that one is not to be favoured to the detriment of the other. This is the approach adopted by D. Barthélemy and E. Tov.<sup>73</sup> Consequently, my presentation will discern separately the changes occurring in the transmission of the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, using textual informations from the Targum, LXX, Qumran (Mur 88), and Vulgate. My textual observations will discuss verse by verse first the BHS critical apparatus, and the recent edition of A. Gelston.<sup>74</sup> Commentators’ proposals will also be engaged in order to assess the impact of different textual readings.

### Verse 1

The Septuagint translates אָמַר יְהוָה אִמְרָתְךָ with λόγον κυρίου· κύριος εἶπεν or ἀκούσατε δὴ λόγον κυρίου· ὁ κύριος εἶπεν (some LXX manuscripts). These translations are an expansion of the MT, which provides the unusual construction of the preposition אֶת with a relative sentence: אִמְרָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אִמְרָתְךָ,<sup>75</sup> which is supported by Mur 88, Vulgate, and Targum.

Regarding the vocalization of אָמַר, Taylor observes that the Jerome, the Targum, the Vulgate and the MT (אָמַר participle masculine singular) follow the vocalisation with אָמַר, while the Septuagint (εἶπεν), and Peshitta prefer the perfect tense (אָמַר). Also the Vulgate does not translate אֶת, an obvious omission, as the LXX and Targum variants

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<sup>72</sup> P. Guillemette and M. Brisebois, *Introduzione ai metodi storico-critici* (Roma: Borla, 1990), p. 134.

<sup>73</sup> Marguerite Harl, 'Les divergences entre la Septante et le texte massorétique', in *La Bible grecque des Septante*, ed. G. Dorival, Marguerite Harl, and Olivier Munnich, *Initiation au christianisme ancien* (Paris: Cerf, 1988), p. 203. Harl asserts that the main reason for the divergence of the Masoretic text and the Septuagint is that fact that the latter translates a text older than the text vocalized by the Masoretes. Consequently, there are no ‘faults’ in the Septuagint, but ‘divergences’, since the Hebrew text itself was fluid at the time the LXX was made (cf. pp. 201-202).

<sup>74</sup> A. Gelston, *Introduction and Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010).

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Leslie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978), p. 362, n.1; Gelston, 2010, p. 77.

contain this particle.<sup>76</sup> The word אַתָּ is supported by the Mur 88 and the LXX, while the Vulgate, Peshitta and Targum translate it with ‘against’.<sup>77</sup>

### Verse 2

The term הָאֲתָנִים comes from אֲתָן, employed both in relation with water courses and with the idea of being wise.<sup>78</sup> The sense of the word relates to something that is low or deep. LXX translates φάραγγες (ravine, valley, and chasm). Barthélemy shows that the LXX interprets נַחַל אֲתָן with χεῦμαρρους ἄβατος (Am. 5:24: *never-failing stream* [NIB]) or prefers to transliterate it rather than to translate it (Jer. 30:13; 50:44; Ps. 73:15 and I Kings 8:2).<sup>79</sup> הָאֲתָנִים is corrected by many of the commentators to hifil perfect third masculine plural הַאֲתָנִים (אָזַן hifil imperative plural *to give ear*).<sup>80</sup> This reading modifies the Masoretic text so הַאֲתָנִים is not to be taken into account.<sup>81</sup> The Targum interprets the text translating עֲקָרִיא יסודי ארעא ‘*roots of the foundation of the earth*’.<sup>82</sup>

### Verse 3

Verse three has no notable textual critical problems. The Targum expands the text, interpreting מָה־עָשִׂיתִי with מא טבא אמרית למעבד לך ולא עבדית (‘*what good have I said to do to you and I have not done?*’).

Regarding the second verb הִלְאֵתִיךָ from לאה, a hifil perfect 1 person singular, the LXX renders it with two terms (ἢ τί ἐλύπησά σε ἢ τί παρηνώχλησά σοι) instead of one, connected with ἢ, a coordinative conjunction. The verb לאה in nifal means *to tire oneself*, while in hifil it signifies *to make weary*. Taylor suggests that at first the authors of the LXX translated first τί ἐλύπησά σε and then corrected by a more exact rendering

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<sup>76</sup> John Taylor, *The Massoretic Text and the Ancient Versions of the Book of Micah* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1891), p. 131. Sperber also vocalises אמר as perfect 3 masculine cf. Alexander Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic. The Latter Prophets according to Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), p. 447.

<sup>77</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 105\*: ‘The interpretation of V S T. although natural is less suitable to the context than that of G, which is more consistent with the role of mountains as witnesses in v. 2.’

<sup>78</sup> BDB, p. 450.

<sup>79</sup> Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament* (OBO 50/3; Fribourg, Göttingen: Editions Universitaires, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), p. 756.

<sup>80</sup> These commentators follow the reading proposed by Wellhausen, all listed by Barthélemy, 1992, p. 755: Oort, Smith, Nowack, Marti, Halevy, Sievres, von Orelli, Powis Smith, Haupt, Duhm, Riessler, Sellin, Weiser, Robinson, Cent, Deissler, Vuilleumier, and Wolff; cf. אָזַן in BDB, p. 24.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Allen, 1978, p. 365.

<sup>82</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 77; cf. Sperber, 1962, p. 448.

of παρενοχλέω since the sense of the לאה (in nifal and in hifil) is not very clear.<sup>83</sup> The Targum version also expands the text with מא מרועא קשיא אסגיתי עלך ('what hard visitation have I increased against you?'), confirming the LXX's difficulties.

These two additions are to be discarded because the Masoretic text is a *lectio brevior* and is confirmed by the Vulgate, Ethiopic and Mur 88 recensions.

Gelston spots a difference between the *daghes lene* present in MT Leningrad Codex (עֲנֶה בִּי), on one side, and its omission in MT Aleppo and Cairo Codices (עֲנֶה בִּי), on the other. The presence of *daghes lene* in this case is an error because 'the word-final ה is generally quiescent'<sup>84</sup> and thus there is no need for the spirantisation of the consonant ב. Despite the fact that he signals the error, he also includes it in his critical text because this particular variant is *lectio difficilior*.<sup>85</sup>

#### Verse 4

In text-critical terms, there is no difference between the Masoretic text and its translations in verse four. Vulgate translates with an ironical question hinted in the Masoretic text *quia eduxi te de terra Aegypti*, close to the interpretation offered by Niccacci.<sup>86</sup> The Mur 88 text contains הֶעֱלֵתִיךָ with the first *yod* in *plene scriptum* form, a minor textual difference already signalled by Collin.<sup>87</sup>

#### Verse 5

This verse has several textual problems. The following textual critical questions are present in the BHS critical apparatus:

1. עֲמֹ (עם with suffix 1 masculine singular - *my people*) probably is to be read עֲמֹ (עם with suffix 3 masculine singular - *his people*) in connection with verse 4b. The reading is an emendation as none of the variants support it.

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<sup>83</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 133.

<sup>84</sup> Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006), pp. 83-84.

<sup>85</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 77.

<sup>86</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 134; Taylor, 1891, pp. 133-134.

<sup>87</sup> Matthieu Collin, 'Recherche sur l'histoire textuelle du prophète Michée', *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971), p. 284.

2. The apparatus proposes that מִלְּךָ מוֹצֵב is an addition, but none of the versions considers this option.

3. The apparatus signals that כָּן-בְּעוֹר might be a result of a scribal corruption of the text. Based on the evident verb ellipsis in 5c (*‘from Shittim to Gikal’*), it proposes as viable variants either (כָּן)עָבַרְךָ *in your passage* [from Shittim to Gikal] (preposition כָּן, infinitive construct עָבַר and pronominal suffix 2 person singular), or וַתַּעֲבֹר *you passed* (עָבַר imperfect, 2 masculine singular+waw). These readings assume a mistaken reading of עָבַר with בְּעוֹר. The Masoretic reading is *lectio difficilior* and has the support of the other variants, including the Mur 88 reading.

4. The last reading noted by the BHS Masoretic apparatus is צְדָקוֹתַי (צְדָקָה noun feminine plural, *my righteous deeds, God*) instead of צְדָקוֹת (צְדָקָה noun feminine plural construct dependent on יְהוָה, *righteous deeds of God*). Apart from the fact that צְדָקוֹתַי is never found in the Hebrew Bible, neither variant supports this proposal. The Septuagint translates צְדָקוֹת with ἡ δικαιοσύνη (nominative, singular), a rendering explained by Taylor: ‘they choose to mention the quality instead of naming the actions in which that quality is manifested’.<sup>88</sup> The reading depends on the construction with the conjunction לְמַעַן. Taking into consideration only its occurrences with יָדַע, one can see that the Septuagint uses two conjunctions to translate it: either ἵνα, with subjunctive aorist active (Ex. 8:16; 18; 9:29; Ez. 38:16; Is. 43:10; 45:3, 6), or ὅπως, with subjunctive aorist active (Ex. 11:7; Lv. 23:43; 1 Kings 8:43, 60; 2 Chr. 6:33; Ps. 78:6), Micah 6:5 being the only occurrence with the passive voice. Consequently, in this last case, the Septuagint authors have interpreted the text, rather than translated it. Symmachus also interprets צְדָקוֹת with ἐλεημοσύνας (accusative plural from ἐλεημοσύνη) which supposes a verbal form in the active voice, a reading also not authentic.

Moreover, most of the commentators suppose that there is an ellipsis before מִן-הַשְּׁטִיִּים עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל. I found two coherent reconstructions:

a. Taylor: וּמִהַעֲשִׂיתִי מִן הַשְּׁטִיִּים עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל (*‘what I have done from Shittim to Gilgal’*). This reconstruction uses the first verb עָשָׂה in 3a which starts the series of

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<sup>88</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 136.

interrogatives.<sup>89</sup> The expression מְהַעֲשִׂיתִי can be found in Num. 22:28; Judg. 8:2; 1Sam. 17:29; 20:1; 26:18; 29:8; 1 Kgs. 19:20; 2Chr. 32:13; and Jer. 8:6.

b. Barthélemy: וּמִהֲהִיָּה מִן הַשְּׁטִים עַד־הַגְּלִגָּל. This setting is similar with Ex. 32:1, 23, 1Sam. 4:6; 2Sam. 1:4; Ecc. 7:10, but there is no similar occurrence in the prophetic books.<sup>90</sup>

The only version that agrees literally with MT is Mur 88, followed closely by Vulgate. Taylor shows that the Vulgate has one misreading of the לְמַעַן דַּעַת (subordinate conjunction with יָדַע verb infinitive construct). Verse 5 supposes a second person singular to whom the exhortation is addressed, so the correct rendering would be *ut cognosceres* (subjunctive, imperfect, 2 singular - *so that you may know the righteous deeds of God*), not *ut cognosceret* (subjunctive, imperfect, 3 singular – *so that he may know*).<sup>91</sup>

#### Verse 6

There are no significant textual problems in verse six, apart from the fact that in the Mur 88 text בְּעוֹלוֹת is read with בעלות. Though the last two letters of the word are reconstructed in Mur 88, the text preserves the first 3 letters (בעל) where *waw* (*mater lectionis*) is not present in the manuscript. The Septuagint proposes an expansion of the MT vocalizing with אֱלֹהֵי (θεοῦ μου ὑψίστου, *my highest God*), instead of לְאֱלֹהֵי (masculine singular construct, *God*).<sup>92</sup>

#### Verse 7

In verse seven the BHS critical apparatus suggests the deletion of the noun יְהוָה on account of the metre (4+3+3+3).<sup>93</sup> The omission would make a fine *lectio brevior*. Looking at the poem in 6, 1-8, one can see that its main focus is not the people, but God. While the people are mentioned three times (v. 2c, 3a, and 5a) and Israel once, יְהוָה is mentioned seven times in eight verses (1a, 2ac, 5d, 6a, 7a, 8b). His name is missing only in verses 3-4 where God himself addresses rhetorical questions to his people;

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<sup>89</sup> Taylor, 1891, pp. 134-135.

<sup>90</sup> Barthélemy, 1992, p. 757.

<sup>91</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 135.

<sup>92</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 78.

<sup>93</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 362.

therefore he is present directly through his words. Consequently, the repetition of the name is part of the author's intention to show that the message is from God himself, and cannot be deleted on metrical grounds.

#### Verse 8

In verse eight the Masoretic critical apparatus signals the fact that LXX translates  $\text{גָּבַר}$  ( $\text{גבג}$ , hifil, perfect 3 masculine singular) with  $\text{\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta}$  (indicative aorist passive 3 singular of  $\text{\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega}$  to announce, to report), Theodotion with  $\text{\acute{\epsilon}\rho\rho\acute{\epsilon}\theta\eta}$  (indicative aorist passive 3 singular from  $\text{\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega}$  to say): both imply a Masoretic *Vorlage* with  $\text{גָּבַר}$  (hofal, perfect, 3 masculine singular, be reported). Also the Targum interprets this Hebrew form as a passive voice ( $\text{אָנֹכְךָ לְךָ אָנֹכְךָ}$ ). These variants are an interpretation which modifies the text. Sadly, Mur 88 manuscript is lacking this verse entirely.

#### Verse 9

Regarding verses 9-16, the BHS critical apparatus supposes that the verses should be regrouped. Those which address the prophecy to the 'city' (3 fem.) should be read together (meaning verses 6:9, 12, 14aβb, 16). Verses 6:10, 11, 13, 14aα, 15 which present the prophecy against an addressee in 2 masculine are to be referred to a 2 masculine person and also to be studied together.<sup>94</sup> This textual reconstruction has no support in the manuscripts. Moreover, verses 10 and 11 display no visible connection with verse 13, besides the logical one supposed by Smith (1912) and Vuilleumier. It is closer to the 3 feminine in v.9, and there is no need to modify the text connecting verses 10-11 with 13.<sup>95</sup>

Each of the three sentences in verse 9 presents one or more textual problems:

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<sup>94</sup> This variant is preferred by Smith in J. M. Powis Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912), p. 129, who translates vs. 12 immediately after v. 9, clearly showing the syntactical connection between the two verses. René Vuilleumier adopts a similar position: René Vuilleumier, *Michée* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1990), p. 75, who accepts Smith's proposed critical text almost without emendation.

<sup>95</sup> The verbal form  $\text{קָרָא}$  ( $\text{yiqtol}$ , 3 masculine singular active) is attested in the Greek versions of Aquila and Symmachus, in the Vulgate. The Septuagint uses  $\text{\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\kappa\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota}$  (indicative present passive, 3 singular, will be called) which supposes a nifal vocalization of the text with  $\text{קָרָא}$ . The passive voice of the LXX interprets the passage or is a more ancient reading.



1. The phrase קול יהנה לעיר יקרא is interpreted differently by the translations (passive in the LXX; the Targum uses the plural to agree with the syntactical subject).<sup>96</sup>
  2. The expression ותושֶׁה יראָה שָׁמָּה is considered by the BHS critical apparatus an addition. The problem stems from the fact that the sense of תושֶׁה is not very clear and the verbal form יראָה may be derived from two different roots (ראה *to see* and ירא *to fear*). The meaning of the sentence is dependent on תושֶׁה.
- a. The Septuagint's rendering of תושֶׁה with (1) hifil imperfect יוֹשִׁיעַ (in LXX σώσαι) and (2) the hifil perfect הוֹשִׁיעַ proposed by the BHS critical apparatus are both interpretations of the text. They require a change not only in pointing, but also in the consonantal text. Analyzing the occurrences of this form in MT, Grim assigns it several meanings: *success* in Job 5:12; *prop, support* in Job 30:21; *reliability* in Job 11:6; *help* in Prov. 2:7 and Is. 28:23; *strength* (due to parallelism with גְּבוּרָה) in Prov. 8:14 and 18:1. He argues that תושֶׁה 'seems to be connected etymologically with the Assyrian stem *asû* (a synonym of *takâlu*), in the Ninevite pronunciation, *ašû* 'to support, to help', and its derivatives *issu* and *usâtu*, 'help', *asû*, 'helper, physician', *asîtu*, 'pillar, support', which, in the Ninevite pronunciation *ašîtu*, has passed into Hebrew'.<sup>97</sup> Consequently, he considers Mic. 6:9ab 'void of proper sense'.<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, Gertz concludes that the occurrences in the MT of תושֶׁה are related to Wisdom literature.<sup>99</sup> Even though the term is difficult to interpret in its present form and position, תושֶׁה here preserves its sense as '*wisdom*' as proposed by BDB.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 106\*.

<sup>97</sup> Karl J. Grimm, 'The Meaning and Etymology of the Word תושֶׁה in the Old Testament', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 22 (1901), p. 43.

<sup>98</sup> Grimm, 'The Meaning and Etymology of the Word תושֶׁה in the Old Testament', 1901, p. 42.

<sup>99</sup> G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Grande lessico dell'Antico Testamento*, vol. IX (Brescia: Paideia, 2009), p. 1079.

<sup>100</sup> Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown–Driver–Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 444/1064. Cf. Carl F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Twelve Minor Prophets* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark/Hendrickson, 1871/2006), p. 336; Allen, 1978, p. 375 'good sense'; Ben Zvi, 2000, , p. 155; Jacobs, 2001, p. 245; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 87; Stuart Weeks, *Instruction and Imagery in Proverbs 1-9* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 197.

- b. The variant *to fear* is embraced by those who interpret it using the recensions (LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, etc).<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, the variant *to see* recognizes the wisdom background of תוֹשֵׁבָה and it is supported by those who are more conservative regarding the Massoretic text in respecting its integrity.<sup>102</sup>
- c. The LXX reads שָׁמוֹ (LXX) instead of שָׁמָּה (MT, Vulgate, Targum). The latter is *lectio difficilior*, so the variant reading is not acceptable.

3. The MT in וְיָמִי יַעֲדָהּ שָׁמָּה presents ambiguous readings stemming from the fact that the masculine noun מִטָּה does not agree in gender with the feminine suffix in יַעֲדָהּ. The interpretation of וְיָמִי יַעֲדָהּ influences greatly the textual options of most of the commentators regarding not only this phrase itself, but also the sense of מִטָּה. There are here two currents of interpretation:

- a. The most ancient starts with the LXX which translates וְיָמִי יַעֲדָהּ with ‘and who will adorn the city?’, putting together the last two words of verse 9 and the first word of verse 10 (which is changed from עוֹד to עִיר). This recension supposes major changes not only in the vocalization but also in the Masoretic text itself. A second proposal (which builds on the previous one) also changes the vocalization and the text supposing מוֹעֵד הָעִיר ‘assembly of the city’, thus transforming the whole sense of the phrase into ‘Listen tribe and assembly of the city’.<sup>103</sup> Both interpretations translate מִטָּה with ‘tribe’.
- b. The second current preserves the MT and makes no change. Though it is supported by a small number of scholars,<sup>104</sup> this is the right textual choice as it represents a *lectio difficilior*. Taylor has rightly observed that the ancient versions have erroneously considered מִטָּה as vocative, while מִטָּה is in fact the object. The suffix feminine יַעֲדָהּ poses no problem as the masculine מִטָּה ‘is used

<sup>101</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 375; Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 155; Jacobs, 2001, p. 245.

<sup>102</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 226; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 87; Waltke, 2007, p. 737.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Smith, 1912, p. 129; Mays, 1976, p. 143; Wolff, 1990, p. 185; Vuilleumier, 1990, p. 75; Jacobs, 2001, p. 245; Waltke, 2007, pp. 394-396.

<sup>104</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 336; Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 155; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 87; Gelston, 2010, p. 106\*: ‘All the versions interpret the noun (i.e. מִטָּה) as vocative referring to the subject of שָׁמָּה, rather than as its object, and G V S interpret it in the sense ‘tribe’ rather than ‘rod’. [...] the most probable interpretation of the clause: ‘Listen to the rod (which strikes) and (learn) who is the one who has appointed it’.’

in the figurative sense of punishment or calamity', which are generic/indefinite qualifications; hence, the feminine reference is 'common'.<sup>105</sup>

#### Verse 10

This verse has several textual problems. The term  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  is translated by the LXX and by the Vulgate with  $\pi\tilde{\nu}\rho$  'fire' which supposes (1)  $\text{שָׂהָה}$ . The changes proposed by the critical apparatus posit a different vocalization with (2)  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  or (3)  $\text{שָׂהָה}$ , both presuming different roots. The first term  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  is derived from  $\text{נָשָׁה}$  'to forget',<sup>106</sup> while the second term  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  comes from  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  'to lift, carry, take' or forgive. Despite the fact that  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  could be a *lectio difficilior*, none of the three is a credible variant as they involve changing either the vocalization (1), or the MT (2) and (3).  $\text{שָׂהָה}$  occurs twice in the BHS: once *plene scriptum* (Neh. 6:11) and once written defectively (Mic. 6:10).

The critical apparatus proposes the deletion of  $\text{בֵּית רָשָׁע}$  as it may be a *lectio varia* or a gloss for  $\text{אֲצֵרוֹת רָשָׁע}$ . Though this variant would be a *lectio brevior*, its removal has no support in the other recensions. While the LXX expands the text (with  $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega\nu$  (אֲצֵרָה), omitted as dittography<sup>107</sup>), the Targum and the Vulgate follow closely the MT.

#### Verse 11

In this verse the critical apparatus signals only the different interpretation of  $\text{הִצְדָּקָה}$  (זכה) verb qal imperfect 1 singular *be pure*) with 'iustificabo' (Vulgate) from  $\text{זָכַר}$  *be pure, clean*. 'The root is  $\text{זָכַר}$  is a bi-form of  $\text{זָכַר}$  'to be clean/pure'.<sup>108</sup> The confusion in Vulgate is to be understood given the fact that these two terms (MT:  $\text{זָכַר}$ ; Vulgate  $\text{זָכַה}$ ) are so closely related in meaning and inflexion.

#### Verse 12

The ambiguity of the text leaves room for debate regarding the position that this verse should occupy in the chapter. The prophet is directing his speech to the 'wealthy people' and the 'inhabitants' with no specific delimitation as to which place they belong. Syntactically speaking there are two difficulties:  $\text{אֲשֶׁר}$  and the feminine singular

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<sup>105</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 143.

<sup>106</sup> Smith, 1912, pp. 129-130.

<sup>107</sup> Smith, 1912, p. 130.

<sup>108</sup> Waltke, 2007, p. 399.

suffixes in v. 12 have no viable antecedent in v. 11. Most of the commentators believe they are connected with the ‘city’ to which the voice of the prophet is calling in verse 9<sup>109</sup> and some actually relocate the entire v. 12 after v. 9.<sup>110</sup>

Nevertheless, the relocation of v. 12 is not attested in any of the manuscripts, nor in the other ancient recensions. Also the text as it is represents a *lectio difficilior*. The present text may be explained in two ways. The first is Wolff’s position, who considers אֲשֶׁר as a causal and not a relative conjunction, deriving his supposition from the Syriac translation. He also points out the logical connection (guilt and punishment) between verses 12 and 13 which is disrupted by the relocation.<sup>111</sup> The second belongs to Keil and seems more elegant. He respects the normal regime of אֲשֶׁר as a relative pronoun and the presence of the two feminine singular suffixes ‘*She, whose rich men are full of ...*’.<sup>112</sup> Continuing on this line of thought, verses 11-12 should be understood in a closer connection: ‘*Will I be pure in the scale of wickedness and ... [Will I be pure] in her whose rich men are full of violence and [whose] inhabitants ...*’. The text has an ellipsis of הָאֲזִכָּה and the אֲשֶׁר is to be interpreted as equivalent to a genitive singular. The determination in gender of אֲשֶׁר is specified by the subsequent feminine suffixes, which connect it with עִיר, the only logical antecedent for all. Given the limited syntactical means of Biblical Hebrew to convey the required genitive, this construction is the only way to express it.

### Verse 13

The Targum recension follows the MT.<sup>113</sup> The only visible problem is that regarding the MT form הִקְלִיתִי (הלה) hiphil perfect 1 singular *to make sick, ill*). The critical apparatus signals the different variant הִקְלִיתִי (הלל) hiphil perfect 1 singular *to begin*) presented by

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<sup>109</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 375, n. 56; Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 156; Waltke, 2007, p. 400.

<sup>110</sup> Smith, 1912, p. 132: ‘The transfer of v. 12 to this position furnishes the feminine suffixes of v. 12 the required antecedent, which is lacking when it follows verse 11; and also yields the two lines necessary to complete Str. I, leaving v. 10 to go with v. 11 into Str. II where they belong together.’ Cf. Vuilleumier, 1990, p. 76, n. 1: ‘Nous avons déplacé ce verset ici parce qu’il n’est certainement pas au bon endroit dans TM. Par conjonction אֲשֶׁר, il fait suite au verset 9.’; Mays, 1976, p. 144.

<sup>111</sup> Wolff, 1990, pp. 186-187. His position is confirmed by Niccacci, ‘Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso’, 2007, p. 138. He concedes that ‘the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר can have the function of a conjunction’. He also gives acceptable equivalents in Italian ‘quanto al fatto che, dato che, poiché’.

<sup>112</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 338.

<sup>113</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 79.

LXX, Vulgate, Aquila, Theodotion and the Syriac recensions. This variant is a consequence of confusion of verbal root which resulted in different vocalizations of the text.

The majority of recensions accept אָתָּה תֹּאכַל (MT, LXX, Symmachus, Vulgate and Peshitta), while Aquila and Theodotion expand the text with πάσαις ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις σου. Obviously the first variant is the closest because it represents a *lectio brevior* and has wider support.

#### Verse 14

There are four textual puzzles. (1) One regards the transposition of אָתָּה תֹּאכַל לֹא תִשָּׁבַע before verse 15. This has little support in the textual witnesses.<sup>114</sup> (2) The second regards the sense of the *hapax* אָרְשָׁן. The BDB supposes that it means ‘emptiness (of hunger)’, a sense derived from the context.<sup>115</sup> The versions translate it differently: LXX (and Theodotion) propose καὶ σκοτάσει (אָרְשָׁן, אָרְשָׁן vb. *be, grow dark*), Syriac – dysentery, Targum – sickness, Vulgate – humiliation (from אָרְשָׁן imperfect 3 masculine singular from *bow, be bowed down*, cf. Psalm 10:10).<sup>116</sup> Modern interpreters<sup>117</sup> also support different opinions such as hunger,<sup>118</sup> semen,<sup>119</sup> child,<sup>120</sup> bowel blockage,<sup>121</sup> physical pain,<sup>122</sup> and some consider it a gloss (deleting it altogether).<sup>123</sup> Given the variety of the solutions proposed, I side with Keil, BDB and Niccacci,<sup>124</sup> interpreting the text as a *lectio difficilior* and determining its meaning from the context.

(3) There are also three different proposals for אָרְשָׁן בְּקִרְבֵּי וְתִסַּג, all with no support from the recensions:

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<sup>114</sup> Smith supports this theory on the grounds of the ‘connection [...] established between v. 14a and v. 15’ and that of strophic structure, cf. Smith, 1912, p. 134.

<sup>115</sup> Brown, Driver, and Briggs, 1962, p. 445.

<sup>116</sup> Taylor, 1891, pp. 148-149.

<sup>117</sup> A detailed discussion is given in Renaud, 1977, p. 331-334 and McKane, 1998, pp. 196-198.

<sup>118</sup> Vuilleumier, 1990, p. 77; Jacobs, 2001, p. 245;

<sup>119</sup> Mays, 1976, p. 143.

<sup>120</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 376.

<sup>121</sup> McKane, 1998, p. 201; Ben Zvi, 2000, pp. 155-156; Waltke, 2007, p. 402: *dysentery*.

<sup>122</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 185.

<sup>123</sup> Smith, 1912, pp. 133-134: ‘The meaning of the main word [אָרְשָׁן] in this phrase is wholly unknown; no help is to be derived from the Vrss. [...] The cognate languages know no such word. Hence no assurance is possible as to its meaning’; Renaud, 1977, p. 333.

<sup>124</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 338; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 88: ‘il tuo vuoto’.

- a. וַאֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּךְ תִּפְסַג - 'and what in your inside/midst you will conceive ...' (בישג/נסג, hifil, imperfect 2 masculine singular, *to reach, overtake*, here *to conceive*)
- b. וְיִשְׂכַח בְּקִרְבָּךְ תִּסְגֶּר 'and has power in your midst to close [the womb]' (סגר, niph'al imperfect 3 feminine singular *to shut up, close*) with reference to Gen. 20:18 where the root עצר is employed to relate God action of closing someone's womb, to render infertile.
- c. וְיִשְׂכַח בְּקִרְבָּהּ תִּסְגֶּר 'and there is power in her to close' (referring to the *city* from 9a)

The following comment concerns points b) and c). Both עצר and סגר share the sense of *closing, shutting up* but with different nuances. On the one hand, the root עצר suggests 'stopping from, refraining from and restraining from, appease' (cf. Gen. 16:2 (Sara from being pregnant); Num. 17:13; 25:8; 2 Sam. 24:25 (the plague); Dt. 11:17 (the rain); I Sam. 21:6 (sexual intercourse)). The sense 'to render infertile/close the womb' is used only with regard to the life of Sara, and in Isaiah 66:9.

On the other hand, the verb סגר is more descriptive than עצר as most of its occurrences in MT refer to a specific instrument of closing (with flesh or fat (Gen. 2:21; Jg.3:22), by a door (Gen. 19:6; Jdg. 3:23; 2 Kgs. 4:4; 2 Chr. 28:24; Neh. 6:10; *to isolate* in Lv. 13:4) or a gate (Jos. 2:5), by the desert (Ex. 14:3)). The use of סגר with the same sense of to 'close the womb' is to be found only Sam. 1:5-6 (referring to Hanna) and Job 3:10. Strikingly enough the passage of Job 3:10 contains also the expression דַלְתֵי בִטְנִי *the doors of my womb [where I was]*. Consequently, if the term וַתִּסְגֶּר was derived from סגר (*to close [the womb]*), the author would have been more descriptive at Micah 6:14, by including physical elements to specify the meaning intended. Moreover, the arguments taken from the context are themselves emendations and/or suppositions with little support.

(4) The last difficulty consists of a textual change from תַּפְּלִיט (hifil [causal] imperfect 2 masculine singular *to bring to safety*) to תַּפְּלִיט (piel [intensive] imperfect 2 masculine singular *bring forth* cf. Job 21:10).<sup>125</sup> This variant changes MT and tries to make more plausible the interpretations discussed earlier.

<sup>125</sup> Variation supported by H. Torczyner, 'Bibliographische Anzeigen: Wilhelm Gesenius' Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch', *Zeitschriften der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 70 (1916), p. 558; Allen, 1978, p. 376; Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 155.

In modern times, this text has been analysed and translated differently. The proposals can be narrowed down to two main lines:

1. The first starts with the Septuagint and Targum which translate literally and supposes that there will be emptiness/sickness inside and one will save, but will not be able to keep it [the crop] and what it will keep will be delivered to the sword.<sup>126</sup>

2. The second derives from Jewish medieval authors (Ibn Janah, Ibn Ezra, and Qimhi) who translate 14c with: ‘And thou shalt conceive, but shalt not bring forth’.<sup>127</sup> Probably having this birth image in mind, H. Torczyner derives תַּשְׁקֵה from יֶשֶׁה *embryo*.<sup>128</sup> Jewish medieval explanation finds linguistic support with Driver who suggests that תַּשְׁקֵה is interpreted by Targum as תַּשְׁקֵה from תַּשְׁקֵה *to reach*. The result of this change is ‘*thou mayst make (the embryo) to reach (the mouth of the womb)*’.<sup>129</sup> The most soundly based text is the one presented in the BHS Masoretic text. While the medieval Jewish commentators and the modern linguists make a very good case to support these emendations of the text, still they offer an exegesis.

#### Verse 15

This verse has no textual problems. Regarding the interpretation of תִּירוּשׁ, Gelston shows that all the versions translate the consonantal Hebrew text. The Septuagint and the Vulgate translate it as a noun (*wine*), while the Targum and Peshitta prefer the verbal form (*to tread, to press grapes*).<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> This position is supported by Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 338; Smith, 1912, p. 129; Wolff, 1990, p. 185; McKane, 1998, p. 205; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 140.

<sup>127</sup> See discussion in Marvin H. Pope, 'The Word תַּשְׁקֵה in Job 9:31', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83, No. 3 (1964), p. 271 n. 4 and Waltke, 2007, pp. 402-403.

<sup>128</sup> Torczyner, 'Bibliographische Anzeigen: Wilhelm Gesenius' Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch', 1916, p. 558.

<sup>129</sup> G. R. Driver, 'Linguistic and Textual Problems: Minor Prophets II', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 39, No. 155 (1938), pp. 267-268: 'The meaning then is: whatever thou doest shall have no result; thou shalt eat and remain empty, thou shalt be like a woman who brings to the birth but cannot deliver her child and, if thou art successful, I will destroy the fruit of thy labour.'

<sup>130</sup> Gelston, 2010, p. 107\*.

## Verse 16

Verse 16 is corrected in the critical apparatus of BHS as it has been connected with v. 9, referring to the fact that all the accusations should be made to a 3 feminine person (city), not a 2 masculine person as we see in the text. These corrections are:

- a. LXX in some manuscripts and Theodotion propose  $\kappa\alpha\iota \ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\alpha\xi\alpha\varsigma$  or  $\text{וְיִשְׁפְּטֶנָּה}$  a 3 feminine form in order to agree with  $\text{יְיִשְׁפְּטֶנָּה}$  (your [feminine] inhabitants);
- b. Some add to  $\text{וְיִתְּנוּ לָהּ בְּמַעֲצוֹתֶיהָ}$  either a 2 plural form or suppose a 2 feminine singular  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$ , and cf. 9a;
- c. The form 2 masculine singular  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  with  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  2 feminine singular;
- d. The sentence  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ עִמִּי תִּשְׁאוּ$  probably is an addition, but it is necessary if the change of  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  with the 2 feminine singular form  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  (in agreement with 9a) is accepted;
- e. The form  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  (2 masculine plural) is replaced by  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  2 feminine singular.

All these corrections are trying to harmonize the text of v. 16 either with itself (point a), or with v. 9 (points b, c, and d). The reasons behind the changes are attempts to obtain a more plausible and easily readable text. The text as it is represents a *lectio difficilior*.

Other changes found in the versions:

- a. Septuagint:
  - $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ}$  LXX translates with  $\lambda\alpha\tilde{\omega}\nu$
  - LXX for  $\text{וְיִתְּנֶהָ הַקְּוִיִּם עִמִּי}$  has  $\kappa\alpha\iota \ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\alpha\xi\alpha\varsigma \ \tau\acute{\alpha} \ \delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha \ \text{Ζαμβρι}$ .  $\acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\alpha\xi\alpha\varsigma$  is a 2 singular active form, while the MT has the 3 singular hitpael form. Taylor supposes that the MT ‘reading must have been well supported by tradition’ if the Massoret still preserves it, despite the difficulty of the reading.<sup>131</sup>
- b. Targum:
  - Tg has 2 plural active (דנטרתון) instead of 3 singular in order to agree with the next  $\text{וְעַבְדְּתוֹן}$
  - Tg uses (בֵּית) before (עמרי) to parallel the  $\text{בֵּית־אֶהָאֵב}$
  - Tg uses (עובדי ועבדתון) ‘you have done the works’ instead of  $\text{וְכָל מַעֲשֵׂהָ}$  ‘all the works’

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<sup>131</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 152.



- Tg לאשתממו (שמם) verb hithpeel – to be confounded) for לְשִׁרְקָה *whistling* – inaccurate

The word הַרְפַּת (feminine singular construct *disgrace*) has a variant in LXX and in Targum where the term is translated with a plural, (ὄνειδη plural accusative neuter ὄνειδος, ους, τό disgrace; חסודי plural from חסוד *shame*). While the reading in LXX tries to make it agree with its determinant λαῶν, there is no visible reason for the change in case of the Targum.

### 2.3.1. Syntactical Commentary on MT Micah 6

My syntactical analysis and translation draw on Niccacci's *'The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew prose'* 1990, his three articles regarding Hebrew syntax and poetry (1987, 1997, and 2006) and the one regarding the Book of Micah (2007).<sup>132</sup> The translation and analysis will try to determine where possible where each character intervenes and to what purpose.

שְׁמַעוּ-נָא אֶת-<sup>133</sup>אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אָמַר קוֹם רִיב אֶת-הַהָרִים וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבָעוֹת קוֹלִי:

*Listen to what the Lord says: Arise, contend together with the mountains; let the hills hear your voice!*

The first verse starts with an imperative (future volitive) followed by a non-verbal sentence,<sup>134</sup> also called a Simple Nominal Clause (SNC, אֲשֶׁר nominalizes any subsequent verbal form), which introduces the direct speech. The direct speech begins with two imperatives and a weyiqtol (the normal continuative form of the future volitive) which preserves the volitive force of the first two verbs.

שְׁמַעוּ הָרִים אֶת-רִיב<sup>135</sup> יְהוָה וְהָאֲתָנִים מִסְדֵי אָרֶץ כִּי רִיב<sup>136</sup> לִיהוָה עַם-עַמּוֹ וְעַם-יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְנַכַּח:<sup>138</sup>

*Listen, O mountains, to the case of the Lord and you perennial foundations of the earth: because there is a case before the Lord against his people, and he will argue against Israel.*

The second verse starts with an imperative and proceeds with a subordinate SNC and an x-yiqtol. The imperative is the mode of the future volitive in Hebrew so the final x-yiqtol will conserve the future tense in translation. The identity of the characters

<sup>132</sup> Alviero Niccacci, 'A Neglected Point of Hebrew Syntax: Yiqtol and Position in the Sentence', *Liber Annuus* 37 (1987), pp. 7-19; Niccacci, 'Analysing Biblical Hebrew Poetry', 1997, ; Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*; Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, pp. 83-161.

<sup>133</sup> BDB, p. 85

<sup>134</sup> There is no finite verbal form in this particular clause as the infinitive and participle do not count as verbal forms.

<sup>135</sup> BDB, p. 937: רִיב vb. *strive, contend*; noun/masculine *strife, dispute, controversy, case law*.

<sup>136</sup> BDB, p. 513 ל prep. 'denoting possession, belonging to', predicative.

<sup>137</sup> BDB, p. 767, עַם 'if the common action be of the nature of a contest or combat (עַם) is with the sense of against.'

<sup>138</sup> BDB, p. 406, יכה verb hithpael imperfect 3rd masculine singular: *with Israel he will argue*.

becomes clear. The prophet is calling the mountains and hills as witnesses. The Lord's case is against 'his people' and 'Israel'.

<sup>3</sup> עָמִי מִה־עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ וּמִה הִלְאֲתִיךָ עֲנֵה בִי:

<sup>4</sup> כִּי הִעֲלֵתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמִבְּיַת עַבְדִּים פְּדִיתִיךָ וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וּיְמָרְיָם:

The temporal sequence of verses 3-4 starts with two x-qatals, the past tense. This verse marks a change from the past tense to the future volitive *עֲנֵה בִי*. The past tense returns with two x-qatal forms in v. 4 followed by one wayyiqtol, the normal form of narration in the past tense. The normal continuation of the first x-qatal (*כִּי הִעֲלֵתִיךָ*) would have been with wayyiqtol in order to preserve the second clause (*וּמִבְּיַת עַבְדִּים פְּדִיתִיךָ*) coordinated with it. Instead the poet changes the normal sequence by using the x-qatal to obtain a chiasmic verse pattern.<sup>139</sup> The form of the chiasm in 4ab is  $\alpha\beta//\beta'\alpha'$ . This second x-qatal is connected with the last wayyiqtol (*וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ*).

The great majority of commentators do not present a coherent explanation of the connection between verses 3 and 4. There are two options in translating this verse: as an affirmative or as an interrogative sentence. The first is supported by most of the commentators,<sup>140</sup> while the second one is supported by Barthélemy<sup>141</sup> and Niccacci.<sup>142</sup> Obviously verses 3-4 share a logical connection, as v. 3 contains two questions and v. 4 is the only answer present. Moreover, *כִּי* clearly implies a subordinate relation between the two, so the affirmative dominant quality of verse 4 is not probable.

The setting of verses 3-4 fits a protasis-apodosis pattern, as proposed by Van Selms. He argues for the existence in biblical Hebrew of the 'motivated interrogative sentence'. These are 'sentences commencing with the interrogative particle *כִּי*, sometimes followed by a second question introduced by *וְ*, the apodosis being introduced by the

<sup>139</sup> Watson, 1984, pp. 201-202.

<sup>140</sup> Mays, 1976, p. 128; Allen, 1978, 362; Wolff, 1990, p. 164; Vuilleumier, 1990, p. 70; McKane, 1998, p. 185; Waltke, 2007, p. 343.

<sup>141</sup> Barthélemy, 1992, p. 757.

<sup>142</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 134.

conjunction וְ.<sup>143</sup> According to van Selms, a similar construction contains (1) the aforementioned particles (וְ or interrogative pronoun הַאֲ, the conjunction וְ, and sometimes אֲ), (2) a message that conveys irony, indignation or anger, (3) *reductio ad absurdum*, and (4) an apodosis with the imperfect. His conclusions are limited of course to the passages examined.

Verses 3b-4 are a 'motivated interrogative sentence' because they share the first three characteristics described by van Selms. Niccacci already pointed out the ironical characteristic of the passage stating: *'I translated verse 4 with an ironical question [...] analyzing וְ from verse 4 in connection with the interrogative pronoun הַאֲ'*.<sup>144</sup> The only difference is that the apodosis in this passage does not show a verbal form in the imperfect tense but in the perfect tense (הִעֲלֵתִיָּהּ).

In stating God's case, the prophet employs *reductio ad absurdum*. Van Selms maintains that in this type of construction the question suggests that 'both the speaker and the person listening know that what has been asked is not a reality'.<sup>145</sup> The Exodus from Egypt is a reality proven by the very existence of Israel. The general sense of the question is *'Should I not have brought you from the land of Egypt and from the house of slavery; should I not have ransomed you [...] in order not to make you weary?'* It is absurd to think that God should have left them in the land of Egypt because the Exodus would 'weary' the people. The use of this 'motivated rhetorical question' is a more suitable technique of persuasion than a simple statement of the fact that God had saved them from annihilation when he brought them from Egypt.

The difficulty of the passage stems both from the insertion of the clause וְ עֲנֶהָ and from the Masoretic accentuation, which sever the connection between verses 3b and 4. Rendering an oral message in writing is difficult in any epoch due to the limitation of expressing the non-verbal message (tone of voice, mimicry, particular stresses on words

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<sup>143</sup> A. van Selms, 'Motivated Interrogative Sentences in Biblical Hebrew', *Semitics* 2 (1971-1972), p. 143. He revisited this argument in a later article: A. van Selms, 'Motivated Interrogative Sentences in the Book of Job', *Semitics* 6 (1978), pp. 28-35. In conclusion of this paper, van Selms argues that these questions have too much passion, irony and sarcasm that their origins could not be assumed in an ordinary 'situation of life'. Their language, the usual presentation of characters and of the case makes it very similar to a *rib*. In time, the repetition of these texts induced the appearance of rhetorical motivated questions (cf. p. 33).

<sup>144</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 134 n.100.

<sup>145</sup> Selms, 'Motivated Interrogative Sentences in Biblical Hebrew', 1971-1972, p. 143.

and body language). The clause *וְעָנָה בִּי* is an incidental sentence typical of oral discourse, which in our times would have been inserted between commas. Therefore, the MT verse division should be overlooked, and verses 3-4 translated continuously: *'My people, what have I done to you? Have I made you weary, answer me, because I brought you up from the land of Egypt and from the house of slavery I ransomed you and I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam?'*

All in all, verse 4 is a rhetorical interrogative question that rejects any other counter-argument the people might have against God, as their very existence is an act of God.

עָמִי זָכֵר-נָא מֶה-יַעַזְבֵךְ בְּלֶקֶךָ מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וּמֶה-עָנָה אֹתוֹ בְּלַעַם בֶּן-בְּעֹוֹר מִן-הַשְּׁטִיִּם עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל לְמַעַן יֵדַעַת  
צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה:

*My people remember now what Balak, king of Moab, planned and what Balaam son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal in order to know the righteous deeds of God.*

This verse contains two x-qatal interrogatives, referring to the past. Moreover, the episode of Balaam and Balak occurs before Gilgal (so the preposition *מִן* is not connecting the two places with this episode) and the three biblical names are not related to any of the facts that occurred at Shittim or Gilgal. Those involved all died before ever reaching Shittim: Moses on Mt. Nebo, Aaron on Mt. Hor (Num. 20:20), Miriam in the wilderness of Zin (Num. 20:1-2). Consequently, *עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל מִן-הַשְּׁטִיִּם* might have been an independent sentence as presented in the textual criticism part. The best solution seems to be the one proposed by Taylor<sup>146</sup>: *וּמֶה-עָשִׂיתִי מִן הַשְּׁטִיִּם עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל* (*'what I have done from Shittim to Gilgal'*). God's call to remembrance has three objects: the plan of Balak, Beor's answer and the facts which took place between Shittim and Gilgal. The verse closes with an infinitival construction with no syntactical value, as a conclusion of all the acts of salvation performed by God.

בְּמַה<sup>147</sup> אֶקְדַּם יְהוָה<sup>148</sup> אֶפְרָף לְאֱלֹהֵי מְרוֹם הַשָּׁמַיִם מִנּוּ בְעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּגִי שְׁנָה:

*With what shall I come before God and bow myself before the Most High God? Shall I go before him with burnt offerings, with calves of one year old?*

<sup>146</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 134.

<sup>147</sup> BDB, p. 869: קדם piel imperfect 1 singular *to go before, to precede*.

<sup>148</sup> BDB, p. 496: כפף niph'al imperfect 1 singular *to bend, to bow, to submit oneself to anyone*.

The verse is formed by the succession x-yiqtol, yiqtol, x-yiqtol, all future indicative. The rule as explained by Niccacci points out that yiqtol cannot stand in the first position in the clause in the future indicative.<sup>149</sup>

This particular problem was discussed in a recent article by J. Joosten who concludes that the non-first position of yiqtol in the phrase can be either the result of an ellipsis or certain exceptional conditions.<sup>150</sup> He only presents two examples of the latter (I Kgs. 22:22 and Gen. 41:15), which lead him to the conclusion that *'the handful of cases of clause-initial yiqtol occurring at the beginning of discourse are real exceptions.'*<sup>151</sup> Mic. 6:6b does not fit the first case as the context shows that the ellipsis is unlikely. Consequently, this is one of the cases that defy the rule but, as Joosten notes, this does not cast any doubt on Niccacci's observation.<sup>152</sup>

הִירָצָה יְהוָה בְּאַלְפֵי אֵילִים בְּרִבְבוֹת נְחֹלֵי־שָׁמֶן הָאֵתָן בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פָרִי בִטְנֵי חַטָּאת נִפְשֵׁי׃<sup>7</sup>

*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my womb for the sin of my soul?*

The MT proceeds with two x-yiqtol on the future temporal axis, FLC. The questions follow the same pattern: interrogative pronoun, verb, complement and a hyperbolic sequence (פָּרִי בִטְנֵי חַטָּאת נִפְשֵׁי/בְּרִבְבוֹת נְחֹלֵי־שָׁמֶן).

הֵגִיד לְךָ אָדָם מֵה־טוֹב וּמֵה־יְהוָה דְּנִרְשָׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֵסֶד וְהִצַּנַּע לְכַת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃ פ׃<sup>8</sup>

*He has told you, O man, what is good and what the Lord seeks from you, only to do justice, to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God.*

The author shifts to the past tense using a qatal form on the FLC followed by two indirect questions on the SLC. The initial form in direct speech may be an x-qatal or a

<sup>149</sup> Niccacci, 'A Neglected Point of Hebrew Syntax: Yiqtol and Position in the Sentence', 1987, pp. 7-19. Nevertheless, yiqtol initial is normal in future *volitive*.

<sup>150</sup> Jan Joosten, 'A Neglected Rule and Its Exceptions: On Non-Volitive yiqtol in Clause-Initial Position', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*, ed. Gregor Geiger and Massimo Pazzini (Milano/Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa, Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum-Analecta 78, 2011), p. 215. The rule has been previously observed by several scholars (Otto Rössler, Haim Rosén, E. J. Revell) and fully presented by Niccacci (cf. p. 213).

<sup>151</sup> Joosten, 'A Neglected Rule and Its Exceptions: On Non-Volitive yiqtol in Clause-Initial Position', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*, p. 215.

<sup>152</sup> Joosten, 'A Neglected Rule and Its Exceptions: On Non-Volitive yiqtol in Clause-Initial Position', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*, p. 219.

<sup>153</sup> BDB, p. 857: נַעַנַּע verb hiphil infinitive absolute *be modest, humble* 'a making humble to walk' with *God*.

qatal with no implication for the syntax of the phrase. This particular qatal is a personal one, referring to the prophet. The passive voice would imply a hofal instead of hifil (see discussion in Waltke<sup>154</sup>). These two indirect questions are simple nominal clauses (SNC). The first SNC has no verb, while the second has a verb in the participle form with no influence on the syntactical analysis. These two are introducing three infinitive constructs. The preferred construction in this case would be ל with an infinitive construct. Nevertheless, the author uses a special construction with כִּי אֵם. Niccacci<sup>155</sup> observes that the two words are usually found after negative statements which they contradict (Gen. 15:4; 32:29; 35:10). In our case there is no negation in the previous statement; however, the construction suggests an ellipsis: *'nothing else he seeks from you, but'*. This poetic device is meant to enhance the reader's attention to God's requirements. For that reason, the translation of the passage is: *'He has told you, O man, what is good and what the Lord seeks from you, only to do justice, to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God'*.

קֹוֹל יְהוָה לְעִיר יִקְרָא<sup>156</sup> וְתוֹשָׁבֶיהָ יִרְאֶה שְׂמֵךְ שְׂמָעוֹ מִטֶּהָ וּמִי יַעֲדֶהּ:<sup>157</sup>

*The voice of the Lord to the city will call and wisdom will see your name: Listen to the rod and who had appointed it.*

Syntactically, there are two x-yiqtol future indicatives on FLC. Normal continuation for the first x-yiqtol is a weyiqtol. The second x-yiqtol is a sign of emphasis on the element x<sup>158</sup> and of subordination to the initial x-yiqtol.

These two are followed by an imperative, a normal future volitive in direct speech, FLC. The x-qatal is dependent on the previous imperative and represents a SLC.

The morphological problem of the verse resides in the non-concordance of the m. sg מִטֶּהָ and the following fem sg suffix, which can only be referring to תוֹשָׁבֶיהָ.

עוֹד הָאֵשׁ בֵּית רִשָׁע אֶצְרוֹת רָשָׁע וְאִיֶּכֶת רִזּוֹן וְעוֹמֶה:<sup>159</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Waltke, 2007, pp. 360-361.

<sup>155</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 134.

<sup>156</sup> BDB, pp. 1064 and 444: תוֹשָׁבֶיהָ noun feminine singular absolute, *aid, prudence, wisdom*: *'he that sees thy name is well advised'*. LXX: σὺ σέει φοβουμένους τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ - שְׂמוֹ יִרְאֵי הוֹשִׁיעַ - שְׂמוֹ יִרְאֵי הוֹשִׁיעַ.

<sup>157</sup> BDB, p. 416: יַעֲדֶהּ qal perfect 3 masculine singular with suffix 3 feminine singular *to point out, to define*, here: *to appoint a rod*.

<sup>158</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 137.

*Are there yet [in] the house of the wicked man treasures of wickedness and the accursed<sup>160</sup> scant ephah?*

This verse is made up of one independent SNC, present tense.

הָאֵזֶפֶה<sup>161</sup> בְּמֵאזְנֵי<sup>162</sup> גֵּשֶׁעַ וּבְכֵיסִים אֶבְגִּי מִרְמָה:

*Shall I be pure in the scale of wickedness and in the bag of deceitful stones?*

The present tense changes to the future through a x-yiqtol future indicative, FLC. Such changes from present-future are not unusual in Hebrew.

אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂירֶיהָ מְלֵאוּ חֲמָס וַיִּשְׁבְּרוּ דְבָרוֹ-שֶׁקֶר וּלְשׁוֹנָם רַמְיָה בְּפִיהֶם:

*[Shall I be pure] in her whose rich are full of violence and her inhabitants speak lie and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*

The level of communication descends from the main level to a secondary level, as this verse is introduced with an אֲשֶׁר. Verse 12 is dependent syntactically on verse 11 as a result of the ellipsis of הָאֵזֶפֶה, as indicated in the textual criticism analysis. The verse is composed of two x-qatals and one SNC. All of them are on the SLC. The feminine singular suffix of עֲשִׂירֶיהָ and וַיִּשְׁבְּרוּ relate to עִיר, the only feminine substantive present.

וְגַם-אֲנִי<sup>163</sup> הִחֲלִיתִי הַכּוֹתֶךָ הַשֹּׁמֵם עַל-חַטָּאתֶךָ:

*Therefore, I have made you sick smiting you, desolating (you) for your sins.*

The x-qatal signals for another shift from the future to the past tense. This x-qatal of the past tense FLC is followed by other verbs in infinitive constructs, both of them part of the same sentence with the x-qatal. The translation will reflect this complete dependence of the last two verbs on the x-qatal. Usually the particle גַּם means ‘also, too’, and refers to an inclusion of the subject in something. Here instead, it introduces the punishment that the Lord will inflict on the above-mentioned sinners, so it is

<sup>159</sup> BDB, p. 276: זעם verb qal participle passive feminine singular absolute, *be indignant, have indignation*.

<sup>160</sup> The translation is influenced by the extant hendiadys resultated from the juxtaposition of רֵזוֹן and יְעוּמָה; cf. discussion in the chapter ‘Poetic devices’.

<sup>161</sup> BDB, p.268: זכה qal imperfect 1 singular *be clear, clean, pure; be justified, be regarded as just*.

<sup>162</sup> BDB, p. 24: מאזנים noun masculine dual construct – *balances*, from אָזַן (only piel): *weight, test, prove*; BDB, p. 88: פֿ ‘introduces the predicate, denoting it as that in which the subject consists, or in which it shows itself – the Bet essentiae – common in Arabic’.

<sup>163</sup> BDB, p. 318: הלה hiphil perfect 1 singular *make sick, ‘make sore thy smiting’*.



sensible to translate it with ‘therefore, so, for this reason’.<sup>164</sup> This construction is frequent when the authors desire to transmit an opposition between the second or third person (you/him) and first person (*I*, ‘on my part’) (cf. Am. 4:67; Ez. 21:16; Job 40:14; I Sam 1:28).

אתה תאכל ולא תשבע וישמח בקרבך ותסג ולא תפליט ואשר תפלט לתרב אתו:<sup>164</sup>  
אתה תנרע ולא תקצור אתה<sup>165</sup> תדרוך-זית ולא-תסוד שמן ותירוש ולא תשתה-יין:<sup>166</sup>

*You will eat, but you will not be satisfied, your emptiness [will be] in your midst, you shall put away, but not save, so that what you will bring into security to the sword I will give. You will sow but you will not harvest, you will tread olives but you will not anoint with oil, and must, but you will not drink wine.*

Verses 14-16 are a classical example of the futile curses genre. Syntactically they may be presented in two ways. The first is the classic x-yiqtol/we-lo-yiqtol sequence (the affirmation and negation of an action). The second is proposed by Niccacci<sup>168</sup> who considers it as a protasis-apodosis sequence: ‘even if you will eat, you will not be satisfied’. Nevertheless, the translation that he is offering does not differ from the one provided by the first analysis.<sup>169</sup>

Therefore, verse 14 starts with an x-yiqtol future indicative followed by a we-lo-yiqtol, both on the FLC, and a SNC (also future indicative) on the SLC. The same pattern is followed in the second part of verse 14 (x-yiqtol future indicative followed by a we-lo-yiqtol) which suffers a small change with the adding of an SNC with אשר connected with the x-yiqtol, both on the SLC. These last two forms seem to repeat the protasis-apodosis pattern ‘and what you will save, I will give to the sword.’

Verse 15 maintains the same structure, except that there is no SNC. Consequently, the pattern this time is x-yiqtol future indicative followed by a we-lo-yiqtol which repeats

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Wolff, 1990, p. 185; Waltke, 2007, p. 395.

<sup>165</sup> BDB, p. 691: טג hiphil imperfect 2 masculine singular jussive in form, apocopated: *to carry away valuables, to rescue them*.

<sup>166</sup> BDB, p. 812: פלט hifil/piel imperfect 2 masculine singular (1) as Piel תפלט causative: *to cause to escape, bring into security, save or* (2) as Hifil תפליט *bring into security*.

<sup>167</sup> There are two options: (1) noun masculine singular absolute – *must, fresh or new wine; yielding wine* (BDB, p.440); and (2) imperf. from root ירש *to tread*, cf. William Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids/Leiden: Eerdmans/Brill, 1988), p. 145.

<sup>168</sup> Niccacci, ‘Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso’, 2007, pp. 138-139.

<sup>169</sup> Niccacci, ‘Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso’, 2007, p. 87.

three times. The third time, the ellipsis of the *אתה תִּדְרֹךְ* occurs, disrupting the balance of the verse. This poetic device of an ellipsis<sup>170</sup> becomes in the syntax a ‘double duty-modifier’ as explained by Niccacci: ‘a grammatical element that serves two or more lines although it does not appear in every case but only in the first line or, more difficult to recognize, only in the subsequent parallel lines of a poetic unit’.<sup>171</sup>

וַיִּשְׁתַּמְּרֵךְ חֻקֹּת עֹמְרִי וְכָל מַעֲשֵׂה בֵּית־אֲחָאָב וַתִּלְכּוּ בְּמַעֲצוֹתֵיכֶם לְמַעַן תִּתְּנִי אֶתְךָ לְשַׁמָּה וַיִּשְׁבְּיֶיךָ לְשַׁרְקָה וְחִרְפַּת עַמִּי תִשָּׂאוּ: פ

*Anyone [the people] may observe the statutes of Omri and all the deeds of the House of Ahab as you did walk in their counsels, consequently I will give you to destruction and her inhabitants to hissing and the reproach of my people you shall bear.*

In the last verse of Micah 6, there is one weyiqtol followed by a wayyiqtol on the FLC followed by one infinitive and one x-yiqtol on the SLC. The first two forms of the verse may be more difficult to understand and a more extensive explanation is in order.

There are two types of future tense in the direct discourse: future indicative (x-yiqtol or SNC followed by a weqatal, both on the FLC) and future volitive (x-)yiqtol or imperative followed by weyiqtol). In the latter case, the weyiqtol form in direct speech is a continuation form of the future volitive (cf. diagram Annex 1).<sup>172</sup>

In the poetic passages the volitive property of weyiqtol is also present in the future tense, while in the past time frame it refers to purpose-volitive consequences.<sup>173</sup>

In our case though, due to the fact that the previous axis is one of the future and a weyiqtol is present, the translation must render the future volitive of the verb *שמר* in the hitpael form.<sup>174</sup> The translation offered by Niccacci uses the Italian subjunctive present ‘*Si osservino pure le regole di Omri...*’ that in English may be rendered as ‘*Anyone [the people] may observe the statutes of Omri ...*’

<sup>170</sup> Watson, 1984, pp. 303-306.

<sup>171</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting* p. 258.

<sup>172</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting* p. 248.

<sup>173</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting* p. 266.

<sup>174</sup> Cf discussion on the v. 16 in Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, pp. 140-142.

The wayyiqtol is also problematic. In the prose passage wayyiqtol is the normal tense of narration, usually translated into English with the simple past tense. Likewise, in this poetic passage, the wayyiqtol refers to the past: ‘you walked...’ Niccacci considers this succession a protasis-apodosis period where the weyiqtol is the protasis and the wayyiqtol represents a ‘parenthetic sentence’, which specifies that everything suggested within the weyiqtol really happened.<sup>175</sup>

The author’s intention is to play with the temporal axis. Firstly, he is talking about the future volitive *literally*: ‘*anyone may well observe the statutes of Omri ...*’ Secondly, he reminds them about the past: ‘*and you walked in their counsels...*’ and then the consequences follow. The general idea of this translation is that ‘*Anyone might observe the statutes of Omri and the deeds of the House of Ahab, as in fact you have walked, consequently I will give you to destruction and her inhabitants to hissing and the reproach of my people you shall bear*’. The only way one can explain the shift from the impersonal weyiqtol to the 2 masculine singular is to suppose here a sort of anacoluthon. The whole verse is trying to convey the idea that those who followed and continue to follow the statutes and deeds of Omri and Ahab are exposed to the same fate as them.

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<sup>175</sup> Niccacci, ‘Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso’, 2007, p. 141.

### 2.3.2. Translations of Micah 6

My thesis has presented the syntactical method of Prof. A. Niccacci and the differences that the analysis of a Hebrew poetic passage imposes in distinction from prose. This type of syntactical analysis has three key advantages. Firstly, it individuates the characters and the relationships between them. Secondly, it sets forth the core information (FLC) and differentiates it from the secondary one (SLC). Thirdly, the flexibility of the method regarding poetic passages allows the exegete to discern temporal values for the verbs, where previously one had to rely on his or her own interpretation.

Also, the engagement with textual variants of the MT and its agreement with the parts that survived from Mur 88 disclose its integrity in the form that we have it today.

Micah 6 has had its share of commentators and the next step in my presentation concerns a critique of certain translations and commentaries. I choose for my presentation some of the most cited interpreters of the text such as H. W. Wolff,<sup>176</sup> D. Hillers,<sup>177</sup> F. I. Andersen,<sup>178</sup> E. Ben-Zvi<sup>179</sup> and B. Waltke,<sup>180</sup> and confront them with A. Niccacci's proposal. As syntactical analysis is the first step in the exegetical process, flawed and incoherent analysis renders the results of the exegesis itself questionable and prone to mistakes.

Verse 1

MT: קוֹם רִיב אֶת־הַהָרִים וְתִשְׁמְעֵנָה הַגְּבֻעוֹת קוֹלְךָ:

Wolff: 'Stand, accuse the mountains, so that the hills hear your voice.'

Niccacci: 'Sorgi, fa' causa insieme ai monti e le colline ascoltino la tua voce.'

Wolff considers 'the mountains' as the object of God's accusation. His theological interpretation refers to the idea that the mountains represent Israel,<sup>181</sup> thus becoming the object of God's *rîb*. Nevertheless, here, the meaning of  $\text{תָּשׁ}$  is 'with' and 'together with',

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<sup>176</sup> Wolff, 1990, pp. 163-199.

<sup>177</sup> Hillers, 1984, pp.75-82.

<sup>178</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, pp. 501-506.

<sup>179</sup> Ben Zvi, 2000, pp. 87-172.

<sup>180</sup> Waltke, 2007, pp. 342-414.

<sup>181</sup> This proposal stems from A. S. van der Woude, 'Deutero-Micha, ein Prophet aus Nord-Israel?', *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 25 (1971), pp. 365-78; cf. Ez. 6:3; 36:4.

having an associative sense. BDB gives it a spatial value, translating as *'before'*. The common expression would be with אֶת־פָּנָי *'in the presence of'* which refers mostly to instances where there is an event taking place in the *presence* of someone of high importance for the development of the biblical story (I Kgs. 12:6; Esther 1:10; Prov. 17:24; 1Sam. 22:4; Gen. 19:13).<sup>182</sup>

Continuing his translation with *'so that the hills hear your voice'*, Wolff suggests that this is the aim or purpose of the preceding imperatives. Though weyiqtol is used to hint at purpose/intention,<sup>183</sup> the volitive force of the imperatives should be taken more into account and translated *'let the hills listen to your voice'*, according to Niccacci's interpretation.

#### Verse 2

MT: כִּי רִיב לַיהוָה עַם־עַמּוֹ וְעַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְוַכַּח

Wolff: *'For Yahweh holds a lawsuit with his people,/he contends with Israel.'*

Hillers: *'For Yahweh has a suit against his people,/With Israel he wishes to contend.'*

Andersen: *'For Yahweh has a dispute with his people,/and with Israel he will argue.'*

Waltke: *'For I AM has an accusation against his people;/ even against Israel he will establish what is right.'*

The literal translation of the passage is *'because there is a case for the Lord against his people, and he will argue against Israel'*. No commentator preserves the heightened position of the noun *'dispute'*, changing the syntactic relation between the words *'dispute'* and *'Lord'*. *'Lord'*, the logical subject in MT, becomes the syntactical subject in translation and *'dispute'* is the object of his message, as we can see in all four versions present above. Even though this rendering is smoother, the elevated position of כִּי רִיב in MT stresses the idea of the dispute, not who is the one arguing it. It is obvious that this is a message that comes from God.

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<sup>182</sup> Brown, Driver, and Briggs, 1962, pp. 86 and 815; Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, p. 195.

<sup>183</sup> Niccacci, 1990, pp. 90-1 and 187; Robert F. Horton, *The Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah* (Edinburgh: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1906), p. 257; Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 333; Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 502.

The succession of the words in the SNC  $\text{פִּי רִיב לִיהָיָה עִם־עַמּוֹ}$  puts  $\text{פִּי רִיב}$  in a special position, because it becomes the syntactical predicate of the clause.<sup>184</sup> A correct rendering would be ‘*because there is a dispute before the Lord*’. Also, this translation pays attention to the value of the preposition  $\text{ל}$ . Joüon and Muraoka concede that ‘*because of the extreme variety of its meanings, ל often has a rather vague value*’.<sup>185</sup> Consequently, returning to its basic spatial sense argued by Waltke,<sup>186</sup> the translation of  $\text{ל}$  as ‘before’ is more probable. This in fact is a common use when the preposition  $\text{ל}$  is associated with Yahweh, as it is the case here, and with  $\text{פָּנָה}$  (Lev. 6:7; 1Sam. 1:19; 2Sam. 7:18; I Kgs. 8:62; Ez. 43:24; 44:3).

While Waltke renders the future indicative of the Masoretic verbal form ( $\text{יִתְנַכַּח}$ ) with his translation ‘even against Israel he will establish what is right’, it is clear that the sense of the verb  $\text{יָכַח}$  and the additional indirect interrogative clause ‘what is right’ does not have a Hebrew equivalent.

Hillers’s translation of  $\text{וְעַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְנַכַּח}$  as ‘With Israel he wishes to contend’ supposes a volitive future clause. Nevertheless, the presence of the conjunction  $\text{וְ}$  changes the following SNC and the x-yiqtol from future volitive, FLC to *future indicative*, SLC. Thus, the future indicative translation would be ‘and he will argue against Israel’.

Verse 3

MT:  $\text{עֲנֵה בִי}$

LXX: ἀποκρίθητί μοι

Targum: אסהיד קדמי

Wolff, Hillers, and Waltke: ‘Testify against me!’

Andersen: ‘Answer me!’

The sense of the word  $\text{עָנָה}$  is ‘to answer, respond’ (BDB, p. 772). The stronger sense adopted by most of the commentators ‘to testify’ is either an influence of the Targum version, or an attempt to suggest once more a lawsuit context.

Verse 4

<sup>184</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 167.

<sup>185</sup> Joüon and Muraoka, 2006, p. 458.

<sup>186</sup> Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, p. 205.

Wolff: I surely brought you from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery ...'

Waltke: Surely, I brought you up from the land of Egypt, even from the house of ...'

Anderson/Hillers: 'For I brought you/thee up/out from the land of Egypt, and from the house of slaves I redeemed thee/you; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron and Miriam.'

Most of the commentators (besides Anderson and Hillers) ignore the subordinate state and interrogative value of verse 4. As Niccacci points out, there is a connection between the initial וַי and the interrogative pronoun מַה in verse 3, leading to an 'ironical question' in verse 4.<sup>187</sup>

#### Verse 5

Wolff: 'My people remember now, what Balak plotted, the king of Moab, and what Balaam answered him, the son of Beor! Recall the passage from Shittim to Gilgal that [you] may know Yahweh's saving acts'

Hillers: 'Remember the scheme of Balak, king of Moab,/ And the answer he got from Bilaam, son of Beor/ ... from Shittim to Gial.

Andersen: 'My people! Do remember!// What did Balaq king of Moab scheme?'/ And how did Balaam son of Beor answer him,/ from Shittim to Gilgal?/ ... as to know the righteous acts of Yahweh.

Waltke: 'My people, remember what plotted,/ that is, Balak king of Moab, and how he responded to him, that is, Balaam son of Beor./ '[Remember the crossing] from Shittim to Gilgal, in order to know the saving acts of I AM'

The commentators agree that there is an ellipsis here. Hillers observes that the phrase 'from Shittim to Gilgal' 'does not fit with the context'.<sup>188</sup> He suggests that there is a corruption of the text, a missing part, and rejects the reconstructions based on variants of the root עבר 'to pass' (Sellin, Robinson, Weiser) or the deletion proposed by Wellhausen and Marti, because the phrase has meaning in this setting and it is not a gloss.

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<sup>187</sup> Niccacci, *Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso*, 2007, p. 134, n. 100.

<sup>188</sup> Hillers, 1984, p. 76.

On this matter, Wolff translates ‘recall the passage from...’ (cf. Vuilleumier ‘*Lors de ton passage*’).<sup>189</sup> The prepositions involved (מן and עַד) assume a crossing, but the author of the text is more interested in showing *what* God has done for them than the *passage* through the Jordan itself. Thus, I side with Taylor who supposes ‘what *I have done* from Shittim to Gilgal’ (וּמַה־עָשִׂיתִי מִן הַשְּׁטִים עַד־הַגִּלְגָל).<sup>190</sup>

In his translation, Andersen translates both interrogative indirect clauses with direct ones. Though this proposal is possible, it does not take into account the syntactical construction of the verse. The expression מִן־הַשְּׁטִים עַד־הַגִּלְגָל לְמַעַן דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה is clearly subordinated. The verse starts with a call to remembrance whose syntactical objects are these two indirect questions, which in turn lead to the whole purpose of the remembrance (to know the righteous acts of Yahweh). His translation leaves no regent for the last part of the verse (לְמַעַן דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה).<sup>191</sup>

Regarding the same verse, Hillers does not translate עַמִּי ‘my people’ and ignores completely the indirect questions מַה־יַּעַזְרֶנּוּ and וּמַה־עֲנֶנּוּ, translating ‘Remember the scheme [...] and the answer he got from Balaam, son of Beor’. There are two syntactical misreadings: (1) these two indirect questions are two x-qatals, not two genitival constructions (noun status construct with noun status absolute); (2) Balak and Balaam are syntactical subjects, not nominal attributes.<sup>192</sup>

#### Verse 6

MT: בַּמָּה אֶקְדָּם יְהוָה אֲפָרָה לְאֵלֵהֶי מְרוֹם

Hillers: ‘With what shall I come before Yahweh, bow to the God who is on high?’

Andersen: ‘With what shall I enter Yahweh’s presence?’ [With what] shall I bow down to the God of the height?’

Hillers and Andersen perceive the fact that the second question in verse 6 does not have any connector, there is only juxtaposition. The construction is a good example of a

<sup>189</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 164; Vuilleumier, 1990, p. 71.

<sup>190</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 134-135.

<sup>191</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 502; Hillers, 1984, p. 75.

<sup>192</sup> Hillers, 1984, p. 75.



‘double-duty modifier’. In poetic terms this is equivalent to asyndeton with ellipsis of the interrogative **הֲאֵיךְ**.

#### Verse 8

Wolff: ‘It has been told to you, O man, what is good,/ and what Yahweh requires from you:/ Simply practice justice, love kindness, and walk attentively with your God’

Hillers: ‘He told you, O man, what is good/Yahweh wants nothing from you, except that you/ Do justice/ Love kindness/ And walk wisely with your God.’

Andersen: ‘He told thee, O man,/ What is good? And what is Yahweh seeking from thee? / Only to do justice ... ’

Waltke: ‘It has been told to you, Human Being, what is good./ And what does I AM require from you? [Not sacrifices] Rather, [he requires you] to practice justice ...’

Niccacci: ‘Ti hanno detto, o uomo, cosa è bene e cosa il Signore richiede da te: niente altro che fare il diritto, amare la misericordia e umilmente camminare con il tuo Dio.’

My translation: He has told you, O man, what is good and what the Lord seeks from you, only to do justice, to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God.

The syntactical analysis shows that this verse starts with an initial qatal FLC followed by two infinitives (indirect questions, SLC) which introduce like a quotation three SNCs. All commentators agree that the construction **אֵיךְ לֹא** supposes a negation and translate with: ‘Yahweh wants nothing from you, simply/except/only...’ (Wolff, Hillers, and Andersen) or with periphrasis ‘[Not sacrifices] Rather, [he requires you] to practice justice ...’ (Waltke).

The difficulty of the passage resides in the fact that, while the whole message of the verse is positive (he told you the good, the Lord seeks, do justice, love goodness, walk humbly), the actual syntactical layout contains an inversion after the negation with **אֵיךְ לֹא**. Keeping the positive message and preserving the negation is the main problem for the exegete and translator. The prophet is not concerned with limiting God’s requirements to three only, because these three contain the whole Law. Rather, using this negation **אֵיךְ לֹא** he is instructing that nothing else is of importance but the Law.

The classical solution is provided by Hillers who interprets the second interrogative clause *וּמָה-יִהְיֶה דֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם-עֲשׂוֹת מְשָׁפֵט* with ‘Yahweh wants nothing from you, except that you...’ using the normal negative construction ‘nothing ... except’. An elegant answer is proposed by Wolff/Stansell (‘what Yahweh requires from you:/Simply practice’) and by Andersen (‘And what is Yahweh seeking from thee?/Only to do justice’); proposals that follow the MT text by not supplying the negation in the last interrogative clause.

Andersen and Waltke in part interpret the interrogative questions as direct ones.<sup>193</sup> I think that these questions are indirect ones, because the initial qatal (to say) requires a syntactical object. Only these two indirect interrogative clauses are provided here. In conclusion the closest translations are those offered by Wolff, Hillers and Niccacci.

Verse 9ab

Andersen: The voice of Yahweh! He is calling to the city. /And it is wisdom to fear thy name.

Waltke: The voice of I AM! He cries out to the city. -and whoever fears your name is wholly sound in judgment-

Ben-Zvi: The voice of YHWH calls to the city: / -Wisdom is to fear your name-

Hillers: The voice of Yahweh calls out to the city /... and wisdom, to fear thy name

Wolff: Yahweh’s voice calls to the city: /[It is prudent to fear your name]

All commenters assume the two x-yiqtol are on the present axis. Nevertheless the initial x-yiqtol shows that they belong to the future indicative. This interpretation is also shared by Sharpe and partly by Horton.<sup>194</sup> The problems related to the sense of *וְתוֹשָׁבֵהָ וְרָאָה שְׁמִי* were previously discussed in the critical textual analysis part.

Verse 9c

Andersen: Hear [2nd masculine plural], O tribe!/And who appointed her still?

<sup>193</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 503.

<sup>194</sup> John Sharpe, *Micah: A New Translation* (Cambridge, London & Oxford: J. Hall & Son, 1876), p. 40. Sharpe’s translation coincides with Niccacci in terms of which temporal axis each sentence belongs to: ‘A voice of Jehovah to the city will cry, and wisdom will perceive Thy name, ‘hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it’’. He seems to draw his interpretation from Jewish exegesis as he is supporting the translation with Ibn Ezra and Qimhi who translate 9b: ‘the man of wisdom will perceive in his heart that this is the Name’ (cf. Sharpe, p. 84). Horton only disagrees in the translation of the first x-yiqtol: ‘The voice of the Lord crieth unto the city’, p. 261.

Waltke: Listen, Tribe, and the assembly of the city.

Hillers: Hear, O tribe, and assembly of the city.

Ben-Zvi: Hear the staff and the one who appoints it.

Apart from Andersen, none of the other commentators acknowledges the final x-qatal and its past value. The previous imperative shifts the direct speech to the future indicative. The present in the second sentence would have required a SNC construction, not an x-qatal, which is always a past construction.<sup>195</sup>

Moreover, most of the commentaries consulted interpret הַטֹּמֵן as being in the vocative case. Ben-Zvi rejects this reading on the basis of Is 10:5; 14:5; 18:27 and Mic. 4:13. Taylor explains that the ancient versions (LXX, Vulgate) erroneously interpreted הַטֹּמֵן as vocative, while it is in fact the object.<sup>196</sup>

#### Verse 10

All commentators agree that this verse belongs to the present axis. There is a difference in translating עוֹד הֲאֵשׁ בֵּית רְשָׁע: (1) ‘Should I forgive in the house of the wicked [...]?’ (Waltke), ‘Can I forget [...]?’ (Wolff) and (2) ‘Are there in the house of [the] wicked [...]?’ (Hillers, Andersen, Ben-Zvi). This divergence derives from Wellhausen’s interpretation, who reads שֶׁאֵשׁ (אֵשׁ *to forget*).<sup>197</sup>

#### Verse 11

Regarding the syntax, Andersen is aware of the future tense of verse 13 (‘Shall I regard as pure [...]?’), interpreting the initial form הֲאֶזְזָה in a personal way. Hillers, Wolff, and Waltke offer a free translation on the present axis (‘Can I tolerate?’/‘Can I pronounce justice [...]?’/‘would I be acquitted [...]?’). Ben-Zvi’s translation (‘May I be just [...]?’) preserves the same sense of הֲאֶזְזָה as Andersen, but with the syntax of the Hillers, Wolff, and Waltke texts.

#### Verse 12

Wolff: Because her wealthy are full of violence/ and her inhabitants speak lies.

Waltke: The city’s rich people are full of violence/ and her inhabitants speak lies.

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<sup>195</sup> For the interpretation of הַטֹּמֵן see the chapter Textual criticism, v. 9.3a.

<sup>196</sup> Taylor, 1891, pp. 142-143.

<sup>197</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 186.

The critical-textual part (cf. ‘Textual Criticism Analysis of MT Micah 6’) showed that this verse is syntactically connected to verse 11, as the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר refers to the *city*. This connection is established through the two feminine plural suffixes (in עֲשִׂירֶיהָ and וַיִּשְׁכְּבֶיהָ) in v. 11, which do not have any other antecedent than the feminine noun *city* (v. 9). Hillers, Andersen, and Ben-Zvi follow the same reading. Waltke also shares this opinion although he prefers to translate verse 12 more freely.

In turn, Wolff suggests another interpretation. Drawing on Syriac, he assumes a syntactical connection between verses 12-13 with a causal אֲשֶׁר in the first sentence of the causal period. Introducing a causal clause is a legitimate function for אֲשֶׁר<sup>198</sup> but it would be a very rare case in the MT as the causal אֲשֶׁר is found after the regent sentence (cf. similar causal clause with אֲשֶׁר at the beginning of the verse: Ecclesiastes 8:12; Jer. 20:17; Joel 4:5) – not before. Moreover, verse 13 starts with וַיִּגְמַלְאֲנִי which severs the syntactical connection between verses 12 and 13, changing the temporal axis to the past. Also, verse 13 marks the initiation of the punishment, which is motivated by the wrongdoings described in verses 10-12, not only 12.

### Verse 13

Waltke: And so in recompense I am going to strike you [...]

Hillers: I for my part am striking you [...]

Waltke chooses to translate this phrase with the present tense. Although he acknowledges the past tense in the commentary (p. 81), Hillers also has this verse in the present tense. The other commentators (Andersen, Wolff and Ben-Zvi) agree that this initial x-qatal indicates past events.

### Verses 14-15

All commentators translate these verses with the future tense. Regarding the obscure word יִשָּׁה, Andersen prefers not to translate it (‘and thy *ysh* in thy midst’). The others accept either the variant proposed by the Syriac (dysentery: Waltke) or Targum (sickness: Wolff ‘physical pain’; Hillers ‘cramp’; Ben-Zvi ‘excrement’).

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<sup>198</sup> Joüon and Muraoka, 2006, p. 599: ‘The relative conjunction אֲשֶׁר can have a weak causal sense: Gen. 30:18; 31:49; 34:13, 27; 1Sam. 15:15; 26:23; 1Kgs. 3:19.’

## Verse 16

Hillers: But she observes the precepts of Omri [...] / she walks in their counsels. / So I must make her a desolation [...] / She shall bear the scorn of my people.

Ben-Zvi: The statutes of Omri were kept [...] / and so you walked in their counsels / therefore I must make you a desolation [...] / and you shall bear the scorn of my people.

Wolff: You have kept the precepts of Omri / [...] / you live according to their counsels / so that I will give you up to destruction / [...] / the scorn of the peoples you shall bear.

Waltke: And the city observed the precepts of Omri, / [...] / and you all went in their counsels. / So I am going to give you over to horror, [...] for you [all] will bear the reproach against my people.

Anderson: And he observed the statues of Omri, / [...] / And you walked in their policies. / So that I might give thee to devastation / and her residents to hissing; / and you will bear the reproach of my people.

Following Niccacci's model of textual-linguistic criticism, one interprets the succession of the verbal forms in v. 16 as being weyiqtol/wayyiqtol/x-yiqtol. Niccacci also points out that *'in BH the different verbal forms play basically the same functions in poetry as in prose, specifically in direct speech'*.<sup>199</sup> In the same article, he states that the yiqtol future volitive can play the role of a protasis. Keeping in mind that weyiqtol is the only normal continuative form for the imperative/(x-)yiqtol initial forms (FLC, future volitive), one can infer that in the case of Mic. 6:16 the weyiqtol retains its volitive propriety, as specified by Niccacci,<sup>200</sup> and is not a simple future. The commentators translate this particular weyiqtol (וַיִּשְׁתַּמְר) either with the past (Ben-Zvi, Waltke, Wolff, Andersen) or present tense (Hillers); also there is a difference in the analysis of the diathesis, as Ben-Zvi interprets it with the passive voice, while the others simplify the translation by using the active voice. The impersonal value of Niccacci's translation ('Si osservino pure le regole di Omri') finds a middle ground between the passive voice of the hitpael form and the volitive function required by the weyiqtol form.

Regarding the wayyiqtol form, Wolff and Hillers employ the present tense, overlooking the hint to the past embedded in this form. The subsequent infinitive form וַיִּתְּנֵם remains a

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<sup>199</sup> Niccacci, 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting*, p. 265.

<sup>200</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 187.

past form, as it depends on the wayyiqtol. Its function is to express the result<sup>201</sup> and not necessarily a specific time, so regardless of the time used in translation, the focus should be on the result. Finally, all commentators agree that the last x-yiqtol relates information on the temporal axis of the future.

### 2.3.3. Conclusions

The analysis of translations reveals that the MT has received different readings according to one's textual-critical options, exegetical point of view, or through the interpretation of ambiguous terms. Ultimately, there are still important disagreements in interpreting the same syntactical construct. Here are some examples:

- a. Differing interpretations of a preposition (Wolff v. 1) or a conjunction (Hillers v.3; Wolff v. 12);
- b. Distinctive renderings of a temporal verbal form (Wolff v. 1; All commentators 9ab; Waltke, Hillers, and Ben-Zvi 9c; Hillers v. 13; All commentators v. 16a; Wolff and Hillers v. 16c);
- c. Not everyone seems to apply the rules of word order in Hebrew (All commentators v.2);
- d. Subordinate state (All commentators vv. 3-4, cf. above, pp. 42-44);
- e. Interpreting indirect with direct interrogative clauses (Andersen v.5, Andersen and Waltke v. 8).

It is obvious that an inconsistent syntactical analysis creates problems, such as incoherent translations of the message, differences in interpreting the relationship between parts of the text, and confusion between types of questions. As syntactical analysis is the first step in the exegetical process, the results of such exegeses are questionable.

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<sup>201</sup> Holladay, 1988, p. 207.

## 2.4. Poetic devices in MT Micah 6

The reason for this poetic analysis of Micah 6 is that it is particularly helpful. This idea comes from Petersen and Richards who make an interesting analogy between listening to a sonata and reading Hebrew poetry. When listening to a sonata one can tell if he or she likes it or not; but only a trained ear can ascertain the quality of composition or the virtuosity of the interpretation. The same thing happens with Hebrew poetry.<sup>202</sup> Up to now, this thesis has been concerned with what is necessary (establishing a critical text, and performing a syntactical analysis in order to obtain a pertinent translation); in this chapter it refers to what is helpful. This kind of analysis goes deeper into the substance of the poetic message by looking for patterns, repetitions, and other lyrical affirmations of the writer.

### 2.4.1. Poetic devices

Micah 6 is divided into two sections: 1-8 and 9-16. Most scholars agree with this division of the passage.<sup>203</sup> An overview of the poetic settings in Micah 6:1-16 reveals several poetic devices. Watson finds in Micah 6 one chiasmic pattern, one assonantal paronomasia (vv. 3-4), one delayed identification (v. 6:5), one hyperbolic expression using exaggeration (v. 6-7), two series of rhetorical questions (vv. 6-7 and 10-11) and two word pairs (v. 7 and 15).<sup>204</sup> Apart from these, a closer look at the passage reveals several other poetic devices.

#### Verse 1

Verse 1 contains two parallel exhortations and a synonymous word pair. The parallel exhortations are: *וְתִשְׁמְעֵנָה הַגְּבוּעוֹת קוֹלְךָ* and *קוֹם רֵיב אֶת-הַהָרִים*. The purpose of this verse is to describe the parties involved in the coming *רֵיב*. The initial imperative *שְׁמַעוּ* has as a correspondence the last word of the verse 1 *קוֹלְךָ* ('your voice'), which is the one to whom they should listen. There are three parties involved. (1) Using a delayed identification of God, as he is named only in verse two, the author presents Yahweh as the one who gives a double command, thus indicating complete obedience. (2) The prophetic voice refers to one man, a fact proven by the imperative singular *masculine* of

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<sup>202</sup> David L. Petersen and Kent Harold Richards, *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 1-2.

<sup>203</sup> Renaud, 1977, pp. 301-344; Hillers, 1984, pp. 75-82; Wolff, 1990, pp. 163-199; Ben Zvi, 2000, pp. 141-165; Andersen and Freedman, 2000, pp. 502-560; Waltke, 2007, pp. 342-414.

<sup>204</sup> Watson, 1984, cf. *Index of Biblical References*.

two verbs (קום, ריב) and the noun קול with its *masculine* singular suffix. (3) The witnesses are represented by ‘the mountains’ and ‘the hills’ which are ordered to listen (שמע).

Alonso Schökel identifies הרים and גבעות as a synonymous word pair. In his view, ‘synonymy is a semantic repetition, repetition of the sense, not of the precise word’. He argues that synonymy for a poet has a wider definition than for a linguist. While the latter thinks that synonyms are words ‘perfectly interchangeable on all occasions’, the former uses them as ‘word pairs with significant common features’.<sup>205</sup> This word pair meets all three criteria outlined by Watson: they are both nouns (sharing the same grammatical class), they belong to two parallel exhortations, and they are widespread throughout biblical Hebrew (Gen. 7:19; Dt. 12:2; Ps. 114:4, 6; 148:9; Is. 2:2, 14; 54:10; 55:12; 65:7; Ez. 34:6; Hos. 4:13; Jl. 4:19; Am. 9:13; Mic. 4:1).<sup>206</sup>

## Verse 2

This contains one poetic merismus and one chiasmus. The presentation of the characters involved in the ריב is continued with the naming of the witnesses. The call to listen is addressed by the prophet to the mountains. The reason for this lawsuit is stated through a chiasmus which has the pattern a-b// b'-a' (case-people/against Israel-argue).

Because (there is) a case of the Lord against his people	ריב ליהוה עם-עמו
and he will argue against Israel	ועם-ישראל יתנבא

This chiasmus is reinforcing the existence of the ריב and presents the fourth party of the lawsuit – the accused. These two introductory verses have presented all the individuals involved and prepared the announcement of the actual cause.

Merismus is ‘a special case of synonymy’ which ‘*reduces a complete series to two of its constituent elements, or it divides a whole into two halves*’.<sup>207</sup> The merismus in the verse is discernible in the word pair הרים and מַסְדֵי אָרֶץ (*mountains and foundations of the earth*) which together refer to the whole world.<sup>208</sup> They represent physical extremities of

<sup>205</sup> Luis Alonso Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* (Rome: PIB, 1988), pp. 64-65.

<sup>206</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 128: ‘1. each [parallel word-pair] must belong to the same grammatical class (verb, noun, etc.); 2. the components must occur in parallel lines; 3. such word-pairs must be relatively frequent.’

<sup>207</sup> Alonso Schökel, 1988, p. 83.

<sup>208</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 321: ‘The significant point is that in merismus, of whatever form, it is not the individual elements themselves that matter but what they amount to *together*, as a unit’ [author’s italics].



the world and everything that can one can find between them. The author is not calling only these two separate entities, but is trying to convey the idea that as witnesses the entire world is called.

Verses 3 and 4

One would expect a presentation of Yahweh's case against Israel, his people. Instead the prophet proceeds with two grammatically parallel questions introduced by a noun in the vocative עַמִּי.

PRON. INTEROG. –VERB – PREP.+2 M.SG. SUFFIX      מַה-עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ

PRON. INTEROG. –VERB – PREP.+2 M. SG. SUFFIX      וּמָה הִלְאַתִּיךָ

Verses 3b-4 are closely connected by an assonantal paronomasia *כי הִעֲלֵתִיךָ // וּמָה הִלְאַתִּיךָ*. Paronomasia is 'the deliberate choice of two (or more) different words which sound nearly alike'. In the absence of homonymic variants (words with different sense, but with similar sound) or polysemy (one word, several senses), the poet may use this poetic device which is basically a word play.<sup>209</sup>

Verse four is another example of a chiasmus pattern. Its purpose is to emphasize the grave situation the people of Israel were in when they were residing in Egypt. The chiastic pattern is visible both in the morphology (verb-noun//noun-verb) and in the semantics of the verse. The sense of the verbs *עלה* (bring up) and *פדה* (ransom) supposes a changing in state or place for the object they refer to. Moreover, this chiastic pattern indicates that the land of Egypt is in fact 'a house of slaves'.

CONJ-VERB- NOUN      כִּי הִעֲלֵתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

CONJ-NOUN -VERB      וּמִבַּיִת עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתִיךָ

Verse 5

Verse five contains one delayed identification and one ellipsis. The imperative *זְכֹר-נָא* is a call to remembrance which requires a specific fact or idea. Regarding the delayed identification (or delayed explication), Watson describes it as 'leaving the name of a subject to some time after his or her actions are described'.<sup>210</sup> The delayed identification suggests suspense, as the reader has to wait for the subject to be pinpointed. Watson remarks that 'when the subject is eventually named identity is often made doubly clear

<sup>209</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 242. Schökel concurs with Watson: 'Play on words exploits the polyvalence of meaning of one word, or the similarity of sound of various words', see Alonso Schökel, 1988, p. 29.

<sup>210</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 336.

by a parallel couplet<sup>211</sup>. The author uses two indirect questions which delay the acknowledgment of the object of this call until the end of the second question where the name of Balaam appears. Only with him we can relate this calling with the episode presented in Num. 22-24.

The ellipsis has been signalled as early as 1840 (Maurer) (v. 5c), who proposed the indirect question *מִן־הַשְּׁטִים עַד־הַגִּלְגָל* as the solution for the obscure expression *וַמָּה־עָשִׂיתִי*

Interrog. Pron.	Verb	Name/verbal form	Name	Mic.6:3-5
מָה	עָשִׂיתִי	לָךְ		3a
וַמָּה	הִלְאֵיתִיךָ	עָנָה בִּי		3b
מָה	יַעַן	בָּלַק	מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב	5a
וַמָּה	עָנָה	בְּלָעַם בְּן־בְּעוֹר	בְּן־בְּעוֹר	5b
[וַמָּה]	[עָשִׂיתִי]	מִן־הַשְּׁטִים	עַד־הַגִּלְגָל	5c

The insertion of a third indirect question relates to the fulfilment of the divine promise of the Land. Shittim is the last place in the sojourn because once they had crossed the Jordan, the people of Israel set camp at Gilgal, marking the end of the Exodus. The ellipsis of *וַמָּה־עָשִׂיתִי* encloses the series of questions in the section 6:3-5, as it is parallel with the direct question *מָה־עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ* (6:3). The lawsuit evolves from the direct rhetorical questions (v. 3) to words presenting the history of the relationship between God and his people (v. 4), and it finishes with three indirect questions about the completion of his promise (4abc). Yahweh's actions converge to one purpose: to know his righteous deeds (4d).

<sup>211</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 337.

## Verses 6-7

These verses are a separate section attached to the *rîb* which is organised around eight rhetorical questions, despite the fact that only five verbal forms are present. These questions are a positive reaction to the lawsuit in the verse 6:1-5.

Verse 7 is a double distich formed by 7ab and 7cd, both containing a ‘double-duty modifier’. The first distich has as double duty modifier הַיְרָצָה, while for the second distich הָאֵתָן fills that position. The first distich (7ab) exhibits a hyperbolic word pair אֵילִים//בְּרִבּוֹת<sup>212</sup> aimed at expressing the affluence of the supposed holocaust. Based on Ugaritic recurrences, Avishur counts four instances where this word pair has a regular order (אֵילִים//בְּרִבּוֹת: Micah 6:7; Dt. 32:30; 1Sam. 18:7 (1Sam. 21:12; 29:5); Ps. 91:7) and only one with inverse order (Dt. 33:17).<sup>213</sup>

Interrog.	Verb	Name	Adverb	Noun	Specificity	6:6-7
בְּמָה	אֶקְדֵּם	יְהוָה				6a
	אֶכְפֹּר	לְאֱלֹהֵי	מְרוֹם			6b
ה	אֶקְדָּמֶנּוּ			בְּעוֹלוֹת		6c
				בְּעִגְלִים	בְּנֵי שָׁנָה	6d
הָ	יִרְצָה	יְהוָה		בְּאֵלֶיךָ	אֵילִים	7a
				בְּרִבּוֹת	נְחֹלֵי־שָׁמֶן	7b
	הָאֵתָן			בְּכוֹרֵי	פְּשָׁעֵי	7c
				פְּרֵי בְטָנֵי	חֲטָאת נִפְשֵׁי	7d

Watson counts seven rhetorical questions in v. 7,<sup>214</sup> probably seeing 7d (פְּרֵי בְטָנֵי חֲטָאת) as in apposition to בְּכוֹרֵי. Poetic technic analysis shows that the members of distich 7cd are carefully connected through a hendiadys<sup>215</sup>: פְּשָׁעֵי פְּרֵי בְטָנֵי חֲטָאת נִפְשֵׁי. Besides the fact that both refer to a child, there are two reasons for considering this a hendiadys.

<sup>212</sup> Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Traditional Techniques in Classical Hebrew Verse* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), pp. 144-146.

<sup>213</sup> Yitzhak Avishur, 'Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew', *Semitics* 1-2 (1971-72), p. 42, n. 121. Avishur states that word pairs were for the first time presented by the editors of the English edition of Gesenius dictionary and received a great boost once the Ugaritic texts were discovered. It was immediately evident that (1) Hebrew is very much influenced in terms of word pairs by the Ugaritic literature and that (2) the first word in the word pairs is usually the most common, while the second is rare (pp. 17-18).

<sup>214</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 339.

<sup>215</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 324: Hendiadys 'is the expression of a single but complex concept by using to separate words, usually nouns.'

Firstly, the distich contains a parallelism between 7c and 7d, type ab//a'+c b'+d (חטאת נִפְשִׁי//פָּשְׁעִי; פָּרִי בְּטֹנִי//בְּכוֹרִי), where the second member (7d) is extended. Secondly, there is no copula between the 7c and 7d.

These eight rhetorical questions are paired two by two, confirming Watson's observations that they 'tend to come in pairs'.<sup>216</sup> In this case only questions 6cd, 7ab, and 7cd are paired, while the introductory questions 6a and 6b are separate. Consequently, verses 6-7 display a careful poetic construction which prepares the ground for the climactic finish of the poem with verse 8.

### Verse 8

Parallelism is the main characteristic of verse eight. After the introductory statement ׀אָדָם הֵגִיד לָךְ אָדָם, the poem proceeds with two indirect questions and three parallel SNC:

Conj.+Prep.	+Infinitive+Noun	כִּי אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט
Conj.	+Infinitive+Noun	וְאִתְּבַת הַסֹּד
Conj.+Infinitive+Infinitive+Noun		וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ

In my opinion, there is also a balance between the questions and the answers in verse eight. On the one hand, the first indirect question מִה־טֹב and the first two infinitives אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאִתְּבַת הַסֹּד suggest general rules that could apply to anyone. On the other hand, the last indirect question וּמִה־יִהְיֶה דֹרֶשׁ מִמֶּךָ and the last infinitive לְכַת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ are addressed to a second person plural. The suffixes in the second person masculine singular create a parallelism between the two sentences.

### Verses 9-12

Verse 9 displays no visible poetic devices. Its construction with the noun קוֹל in the first position of the verse is rather unusual because it appears only in the Psalms (29:2-5, 7-9; 77:19), Songs of Solomon (2:8), Job (15:21; 29:10), and in the prophetic literature (Is. 40:3, 6; 52:8, 66:6; Jer.10:22; 26:36; 48:3; 50:22, 28; 51:54; Mic. 6:9; Nah. 3:2). All of these texts are written in poetry therefore, this itself could be a poetic feature.

Verses 10-12 are a series of extended rhetorical questions meant to expose the sins of the city. While the interrogative sense of verse 10 is deduced more from the context,

<sup>216</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 341.

rather than from its construction, the questions in verses 11 and 12 begin with the regular interrogative pronoun  $\text{הַ}$  followed by the predicate. As shown in the textual criticism chapter,  $\text{הַאֲזִכָּה}$  was elided in v. 12. The ellipsis is explainable if the metre is taken into account. In its present form the metre in verses 11 and 13 is 3+3, while in v. 12 is 3+3+3.<sup>217</sup>

Verse 10 presents the repetition of the root  $\text{רשע}$  and one hendiadys ( $\text{רְזוּן זְעוּמָה}$ ). The repetition is employed in order to transmit the idea of guilt by association. The house becomes wicked because its wealth is acquired by wickedness. The hendiadys is formed by the juxtaposition of the adjective  $\text{רְזוּן}$  and the qal passive feminine singular  $\text{זְעוּמָה}$ . The two terms share the same antecedent  $\text{אֵיפֶת}$  and lack the copula, two major features pointed out by Watson as defining hendiadys.<sup>218</sup> The reason for using this poetic device here is to obtain rhyme (cf.  $\text{בֵּית רָשָׁע}$ ,  $\text{אֲצֵרוֹת רָשָׁע}$ ) and to complete the negative sense of the verse. The result is that these two words should be translated as referring to a single idea (*the accursed scant ephah*),<sup>219</sup> not as a two separate determinants (*the scant ephah that is cursed*).<sup>220</sup>

#### Verses 12-13

While v.12 presents two grammatical parallel sentences, v.13 contains only one hendiadys  $\text{הַהֲלִיתִי הַכּוֹתֶה}$ . This poetic device explains the unusual combination of a finite verb followed by an infinitive. The most sensible translation of this hendiadys is offered by Ben Zvi ‘I have made [or make] painful [or grievous, sore] your smiting.’<sup>221</sup>

NOUN-SUFFIX [2.FEM.]-VERB-NOUN	$\text{עֲשִׂי־יָיָהּ מְלֹאוֹ תָמִס}$
NOUN-SUFFIX [2.FEM.]-VERB-NOUN	$\text{וַיִּשְׁבֵּיָהּ דְּבָרוֹ-שָׁקָר}$

#### Verses 14-15

These verses present five parallel so-called futility curses (*Nichtigkeitsflüche* or *malédiction d’annulation*) formed by the affirmation of a specific human action or type

<sup>217</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 376.

<sup>218</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 326.

<sup>219</sup> Cf. Allen, 1978, p. 376; Hillers, 1984, p. 80; Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 157.

<sup>220</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 325: ‘The important aspect of hendiadys is that its components are no longer considered separately but as a single unit in combination’.

<sup>221</sup> Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 155.

of work followed by the denial of the result or products of the work.<sup>222</sup> In the case of Micah 6, these constructions are formed by אָתָּה+yiqtol+אֵלַי+yiqtol. Verses 14 and 15 share two and respectively three parallel constructions. Despite the fact that they are parallel they do not always share the same pattern.

The table below shows that the main pattern is followed in three occurrences of the pattern (14a, 15a and 15b). The deviations from the main pattern include the omission of the pronoun (14c and 15c), the substitution of the verb with a noun (15c), and the inclusion of the complement (15b and 15c). These minor modifications do not affect the inner structure of the construction. The two additions (14b and 14d) are nuances that the author introduces in the text. While the first one does not present any special interest, the second addition is in fact a parallel protasis-apodosis formation (*what you will save/to the sword I will give*).<sup>223</sup> The pattern is ab//a'b'. The presence of this addition is of a special interest because it introduces the agent who enacts the prophecy. The shift in the verb from 2 singular (in the curse) to 1 singular (the addition) stresses that 'it is I [Yahweh] who is the cause of the destructions, not a random natural phenomenon or other human intervention'.

The basic poetic device underlying this construction is the word pair<sup>224</sup> as there are seven word pairs in verses 14-15. The logical connection between the two members of the pairs is semantic and is related to the completion of an action and its lack of result. The pairs are the verbs זרע-קצר, סוג-פלט, אכל-שבע, דרך-קצר, the supposed דרך with שתה and the nouns גֵּי-תִירוּשׁ and יַיִת-שָׁמֶן.

Pronoun	Verb	Negation	Verb	Addition	6:14-15
אָתָּה	תֹּאכַל	וְלֹא	תִשְׂבַּע	וְיִשְׁמַח בְּקִרְבְּךָ	14ab
	וְתִסַּג	וְלֹא	תִפְלִיט	וְאַשֶׁר תִּפְלִיט לְתִרְבַּב אֲתָן	14cd
אָתָּה	תִּזְרַע	וְלֹא	תִקְצֹר		15a
אָתָּה	תִּדְרֹךְ-יַיִת	וְלֹא-	תִסּוּד שָׁמֶן		15b
	וְתִירוּשׁ	וְלֹא	תִשְׁתַּה-יַיִן		15c

<sup>222</sup> Leroy, [course support] 2011, pp. 135-136. He lists among the commentators who analyse this literary genre H. W. Wolff, T. Podella, and A. Shart.

<sup>223</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, pp. 139-141.

<sup>224</sup> Watson, 1984, p. 128.

Hunger is the professed curse which is introduced by the programmatic pair *שבֵּע-אכל*. There are five occurrences of this word pair in the same verse in the prophetic literature (positive: *eat and be satiated*: Is. 44:16; Jer. 46:10; Joel 2:26; negative: Hos. 4:10; Mic. 6:14). Micah 6:14 has its positive correspondent in Joel 2:26. While in Micah God predicts hunger, in Joel God promises satiety after eating. The next one *סוג-פלט* does not occur elsewhere. A more recurrent pair is *זרע-קצר* found six times in the prophetic literature (Is. 37:30; Jer. 12:13; Hos. 8:7; 10:12, 13; Am. 9:13 and Mic. 6:15).

#### Verse 16

This verse displays one incomplete chiasmic structure and one grammatical parallelism. The former structure can be observed in 16ab and has the pattern *ab//b'*-, in this case the fourth member is missing (*Anyone (the people) may observe the statutes of Omri and all the deeds of the House of Ahab [may observe]*). The parallelism is present in 16de and is depicted in the table below.

PLACE	PREPOSITION: TO	OBJECT	PREP.	VERB
שָׁמָּה	לְ	אֲתֶּךָ	תִּתִּי	אֶתְ
שָׁרָקָה	לְ	וַיִּשְׁרָקֶיָּהּ		ELLIPSIS

#### 2.4.2. Conclusion

The tricolon is the most important division of the strophes and it is used for introducing the argument (v. 1), to mark a subordination inside the text (v. 4) and to close the poem (v. 8cde). Each poem uses a special vocabulary to transmit its message. The first poem is a dispute between God and his people Israel. The vocabulary repeats the parts in conflict (*עָמִי, יְהוָה, אֱלֹהִים*), the witnesses (*הַרְיִים*), the calling to dispute (*שָׁמְעוּ*) and to answer (*עֲנֵה*), the questions (*הֲ* and *מָה*) and usual prepositions (*עִם, בְּ, אֶת, מִן, לְ*). The use of these words organise the poem around the *rib*.

The second poem presents the sins and the punishment that the people should suffer for their sins. Besides the prepositions (*לְ, אֶת, בְּ*) and the questions (*הֲ* and *מִי*), the second poem repeats terms related to their deeds (*רָשָׁע*), negations (*וְלֹא*), the source of the bad influence is a *בַּיִת* (house), a physical presence in the midst of the people. There is also a strong connection between the two poems through key words: *קוֹל, טֹאט, הֵלֶךְ, שָׁמַע*, and *נָתַן*. These repeated words in themselves contain the main idea of the two poems. The

people must listen to the voice of God, repent of their sins and walk in the ways of God  
(cf. also the annexes for the strophic division).



### 2.5.1. Commentary on Micah MT 6

This commentary will integrate the results of the textual criticism with the textual-linguistic method, seeking the main points and how the author presents them. The majority of the key terms are evaluated within the wider context of the Hebrew Bible, looking at their use in different passages so as to determine parallel passages and hidden allusions.

The two poems (1-8 and 9-16) of this chapter present God's *rîb* against his people, which in form has two distinct layers. The first one is represented by the use of poetic devices, which have already been analysed in the previous chapter. The second layer is the logical construction of the passage, which contains a call to attention (vv. 1-2), history of the relations between God and his people (3-5), short statement of the Law (v. 8), second call to attention (v. 9), sins of the people (10-13), expected punishment (vv. 14-15) and motivation and verdict (v. 16).

### 2.5.2. Division of Micah 6

The division of this chapter has received several interpretations. One of the most popular among the modern commenters is that of Wolff (also embraced by Hillers and Waltke).<sup>225</sup> His analysis, which starts with form criticism and redaction criticism, argues that Micah 6:1-8 is a 'Deuteronomistic paraenesis'. He divides it into three parts: (1) a general summons, verses 1-2a, (2) 'inauguration of the judicial procedure', or Yahweh's speech in self-defence (verses 3-5), and (3) a presentation of God's expectations regarding human conduct, which resembles a priestly formula (verses 6-8). The last two parts are in fact a didactic sermon.<sup>226</sup>

Regarding the second part, Hillers describes it as taking place in a millennial social setting but without giving a clear division.<sup>227</sup> In turn, Wolff and Waltke are sharing the same division where verses 9a-10 contain summons to hear, followed by accusations (10-12). The announcement of the punishment or the sentence (13-15) represents the

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<sup>225</sup> Hillers, 1984, p. 77; Waltke, 2007, p. 367.

<sup>226</sup> Wolff, 1990, pp. 166-169.

<sup>227</sup> Hillers, 1984, p. 82.

most important part of God's message in this section, which closes with an appendix or recapitulation (16).<sup>228</sup>

The first poem resembles the *rîb* genre, but 'not in a mimetic form' according to Ben Zvi. He also argues that this is not a legal lawsuit. He depicts the passage as being similar to a confrontation where both parties defend their own views: verses 1-2 are introducing the first divine speech (3-5), verses 6-7 contain Israel's response and verse 8 has the second divine speech.<sup>229</sup> The second poem is located in Jerusalem, in post—exilic times. Here Ben-Zvi envisions a community of literati who attempt to explain the fall of Jerusalem. In 9-16, they are trying to convey God's message through a speech (9b-16) introduced by a parenetical remark (9a).<sup>230</sup> A similar position is adopted by Andersen, who argues that this is not a lawsuit, but a *rîb*,<sup>231</sup> which contains a summons (v. 1), an accusation (v. 2-3), a recital of Yahweh's deed (v. 6-7), a rejection of sacrifice as means of reconciliation and the verdict or exhortation (v. 8).<sup>232</sup> The second part includes a bill of crimes (9-12) and threats of punishment (13-16).

All the aforementioned authors use one or more diachronic approaches to the Hebrew text. Their effort is based mainly on historical critical methods and on a classical view of the syntactic relations within the poetic text in Biblical Hebrew, as outlined by Joüon-Muraoka or Waltke.

By contrast with these, the textual-linguistic method interacts with the Hebrew text in a synchronic manner. While the previous methods focus their attention mainly on textual problems, textual-linguistics derives the logic of the text from the way the message is transmitted during communication. Consequently, the text is no longer regarded as comprising mixed parts of tradition, belonging to different times and places and joined together in a later period. Each chapter is analysed as it stands before us today, receiving a certain coherence inside the chapter itself and within the entire book as a whole. As a result of this analysis, Niccacci discerns a parallelism inside the book of Micah and presents a holistic view of chapter 6. He detects that Micah 1 is parallel

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<sup>228</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 189; Waltke, 2007, p. 406.

<sup>229</sup> Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 141-142.

<sup>230</sup> Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 156.

<sup>231</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 509: '*rîb* does not mean 'lawsuit', but describes the ordinary experience of confronting someone with a complaint'.

<sup>232</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, pp. 502-504.

with 6 due to the presence of three pairs of parallels: 1:2-4//6:1-2, 1:5//6:3-12 and 1:6-7//6:13-16.<sup>233</sup> At a chapter level, Micah 6 is a prophetic lawsuit, which sets off with a calling in 6:1-2, followed by God's accusations in 6:3-12 and by the coming punishment in 6:13-16.<sup>234</sup>

### 2.5.3. Verse 1-8

Micah 6 reports a dispute between two parties in conflict. The first poem is concentrated on stating God's case against his people. He is the main focus of this part (7 occurrences and allusions of God in 1-8), everything revolving around His crucial influence in the history of Israel. The initiation of this *rib* is made through verse 1 as a 'redactional transition' (Wolff) with the purpose of linking chapter 6 with the entire book. Wolff asserts that the redactor preserves the same terminology, but the general meaning of the words is changed,<sup>235</sup> referring to the fact that שמע in Mic. 5:14 means *obeying*, while in 6:1 it denotes a call to attention/ hear. The verbal form שמע appears 49 times in the Minor Prophets and it has four different meanings which pertain to:

1. *obeying* (Hos. 9:17; Mic. 5:15; 6:9; Zech. 1:4; 3:2; 7:12; Hag. 1:2, Mal. 2:2);
2. *listen* (2 Kgs. 21:9);
3. *make something public or declare* (at hifil Am. 3:9; Am. 4:5);
4. *hearing*, the normal use of the verb involves the meaning of *hearing* (Hos. 7:12, Ob.1:1; Jonah 2:2; Mic. 6:1; Nah. 7:7; Hab. 1:2; 3:2 Zech. 2:8; Mal. 3:16; sometimes with הִדְבָּר Am. 3:1; Am. 4:1; Am. 5:1; 7:16). The general use of hearing is specified when is associated with two key-words, as מִשְׁפָּט (Hos. 5:1; Am. 5:23-24; Mic. 3:1, 10) and רִיב (Hos. 4:1 and Mic. 6:2), where the sense of the word is adapted to a court-house hearing. This court-house hearing influences the sense of the verb which passes from a simple passive hearing to an active *hearing to judge* action.

<sup>233</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, . Richelle asserts that this parallelism is verified also in chapters 2 and 7, cf. Matthieu Richelle, 'Un triptyque au cœur du livre de Michee (Mi 4-5)', *Vetus Testamentum* 62, No. 2 (2012), pp. 233-234.

<sup>234</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, .

<sup>235</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 167.

The subject of this call to attention is the רִיב, which is used in Micah both as a verb (v. 1) and as a noun (v. 2). In the prophetic literature, this term signals an entire literary genre. H. Gressmann<sup>236</sup> and H. Gunkel were the first to ascertain the existence of the *Gerichtsrede* or lawsuit speech in the prophetic writings. In the prophetic literature, Claus Westermann considers as *Gerichtsrede* Is. 1:2-3; 18-20; 3:13-15; 5:1-7; Mic. 6:1-5; Hos. 2:4-17; 4:1-3; 4-6; 12:3-15; Jer. 2:5; 25:31 and Mal. 3:5.<sup>237</sup> The debate about the sources of the *Gerichtsrede* proposed three different views: origins in legal practice (H. Gunkel), cultic origin (E. Würthwein),<sup>238</sup> or international treaty forms (H. B. Huffmon<sup>239</sup> and J. Harvey).<sup>240</sup> After an evaluation of the three uses of the word רִיב, Limburg concludes that this *rîb* is ‘very much at home in the sphere of international relationships, particularly in connection with international treaties’.<sup>241</sup> There is little agreement among scholars about which texts belong to the *Gerichtsrede*, but the passages in Is. 1:2-3; 18-20; Jer. 2:4-13 and Mic. 6:1-8 are recognized as being part of this genre by most of them.<sup>242</sup>

The *rîb* has a complicated story in the research history but two elements seem to be particular to Micah 6. First, the most plausible alternative is that of a cultic setting because of the strong reference to acts of worship in verses 6-7 and the allusion in v. 16

<sup>236</sup> Gressmann individuated 49 oracles of *Gerichtsworte* type in Deutero-Isaiah.

<sup>237</sup> Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 199.

<sup>238</sup> Würthwein thinks that *Gerichtsrede* is literary genre appeared in connection with the Covenantal law citing in support research on Ps. 96, 11-13; 98:7-9; 76:8-10; 50:1-7. He also agrees that Mic. 6:1-3 is a *Gerichtsrede* composition cf. E. Würthwein, 'Der Ursprung der prophetischen Gerichtsrede', *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 49 (1952), pp. 1-16. Julien Harvey's critique is that he should have had expanded his research texts to others, less closely related with the theme of the Covenant, cf. Julien Harvey, *Le plaidoyer prophétique contre Israël après la rupture de l'alliance* (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1967), p. 13.

<sup>239</sup> H. B. Huffmon proposes two settings for the prophetic lawsuit genre. In type 1, Yahweh is the accuser, Israel the accused and the earth and the sky are the judges (Ps. 50; Is. 1:2-3; and maybe Mic. 6:1-8). In type 2, Yahweh takes the role of a judge, while the accused are the foreign gods (Deut. 32; Is. 1), in H. B. Huffmon, 'The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959), pp. 285-295.

<sup>240</sup> Daniels R. Dwight, 'Is There a 'Prophetic Lawsuit' Genre?', *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 99 (1987), pp. 339-340

<sup>241</sup> James Limburg, 'The Root רִיב and the Prophetic Lawsuit Speeches', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88, No. 3 (1969), p. 304.

<sup>242</sup> Dwight, 'Is There a 'Prophetic Lawsuit' Genre?', 1987, p. 343; cf. p. 351: Mic. 6:1-8 has a redactional introduction (v. 1), followed by a call to attention (v. 2); vv. 3-5 contain Yahweh's speech while vv. 6-7 presents the audience's question about 'what types of sacrifice is required' answered by a prophet response in v. 8. This setting is strikingly similar in pattern with Is. 1:10-20. Nevertheless, Dwight denies the existence of a רִיב genre, due to the fact that common structural features are missing in Is. 1:2-3; 18-20; Jer. 2:4-13 and Mic. 6:1-8 (p. 360).

(‘*statutes of Omri*’), and, second, this corresponds, in Huffmon’s classification (cf. n.238), to type 1 *rîb*, as Yahwe is the accuser and Israel the accused, with the sole amendment that Yahwe is also the judge (not the earth and sky) and the one who enacts the punishment.

There is a certain delay in identifying who is the guilty party, as the natural elements in v. 1 act as witnesses (הַהָרִים and הַגְּבָעוֹת). The chiasmus in 1bc connects poetically the mountains and hills. The meaning of their juxtaposition here could infer a syntagmatic relation (colon 1b and 1c continue each other) or a paradigmatic one (they substitute each other).<sup>243</sup> The latter model is more appropriate as all the parts from 1b can be replaced with its 1c synonyms with no impact on the meaning. 1c shows that the hills and the mountains do not refer to two different entities, but are regarded as perfect synonyms. The resulted repetition aims to emphasise that the object of God’s message is a *rîb*.

Besides Niccacci,<sup>244</sup> Waltke also supports the idea that the weyiqtol form וְהִשְׁמַעְנָה has a jussive connotation, observing the preceding imperative.<sup>245</sup> Again, this delay is present in 2a, which repeats the call to hearing and giving a broader description of the witnesses (הָאֲרָץ וְהָאֲתָנָיִם and הָרִים). Andersen points out that there is a gradual development of the presentation as the second verse repeats the first one adding more details.<sup>246</sup>

These two verses contain two interesting features. (1) The witnesses called represent in fact the whole cosmos or the whole world, given the hendiadys in verse 2 (הָאֲרָץ וְהָאֲתָנָיִם מְסֻדֵי and הָרִים). (2) There are three calls for the witness to hear the *rîb* in the first two verses, but none of them is addressed directly to Israel or ‘my people’ who is mentioned in third person (2b). The chiastic structure in v. 2b indicates that Israel and ‘my people’ refer to the same character.

Regarding the sense of יְתוֹכַח, Anderson asserts that it has a ‘reciprocal meaning’, namely that the lawsuit is meant to be both a protest against the Israel and a dispute.<sup>247</sup>

Though he does not directly cite Anderson, Waltke argues, on the contrary, that this

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<sup>243</sup> Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 18.

<sup>244</sup> Cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 187.

<sup>245</sup> K. Bruce Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah* (Grand Rapids, London: Eerdmans, 2007), p. 345.

<sup>246</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 515.

<sup>247</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 517. This idea stems from the interpretation given to יְתוֹכַח in BDB, p. 407.

form 'is not reciprocal [i.e. it does not mean both 'to quarrel' and to 'argue'], for the form in that case would be plural, a sense that detracts from the force of the root and from *rîb*'.<sup>248</sup> The occurrence of the two terms is to be interpreted within the setting of the chiasmus in verse 2b, which in this case suggests rather a synonymy between יְתוֹכַח and רִיב than a competition, as happens with the other doublet: Israel and 'my people'.

Verses 3 and 4 are syntactically connected by the presence of a motivated interrogative question. At the verse level, a parallelism (v. 3) and a chiasmus (v. 4) can also be identified, which embellish the poetic message. Instead of simply listing the great deeds that He has accomplished for the benefit of his people, God addresses the two direct questions to his people, to which the answer is obviously 'No': '*No, you have not done anything wrong to us / No, you haven't wearied us with bringing us up from the land of Egypt...*'. Also, the implied *reductio ad absurdum* argument strengthens God's argumentation that He did marvellous acts to protect His people.

The act of 'bringing from the land of Egypt' is a common theme for the pre-exilic prophets (Amos 2:9-10; 3:1; 9:7; Hos. 2:17; 11:1; 12:14). The LXX uses two verbs in this translation instead of one: τί ἐποίησά σοι ἢ τί ἐλύπησά σε Mic. 6:3<sup>249</sup>, probably seeking to define the sense of the 'עֲשִׂיתִי'.

Referring to הֶעֱלֵתִיךָ, Anderson also observes that the Deuteronomistic corpus would have used the root יִצָּא,<sup>250</sup> instead of עלה. His observation proves to be valid in Dt. 6:12, where הוֹצִיאָךְ is present in the expression: 'הוֹצִיאָךְ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים', almost identical with our setting. Micah seems to textually quote the Deuteronomy and completes the chiasmus in verse 4ab with another rare word root פדה. There is of course the question of why did he changed the verb יִצָּא to עלה. The answer may lie in the poetic construction of the verse. The author prefers עלה to the original יִצָּא (Deut 6:12) to give a special musicality to the first part of the tricolon.<sup>251</sup>

Due to the *waw*, the expression 'וּמִבֵּית עַבְדִּים' is unique in the MT. Wolff considers it as a 'typical Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic apposition'<sup>252</sup> (Deut. 5:6; 6:12; 7:8; 8:14; 13:6, 11; Exod. 13:3; 20:2; Judg. 6:8).

The term פְּדִיתִיךָ (פדה *to ransom*) occurs twice in the MT (Micah 6:4 and Jer. 15:21). Ex. 15:13 uses גאל (*to redeem, deliver*), which is more common when referring to the God's

<sup>248</sup> Waltke, 2007, p. 348.

<sup>249</sup> Hillers, 1984, p. 76.

<sup>250</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 518.

<sup>251</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 366.

<sup>252</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 170.

salvation from Egypt. The normal use of פדה is related to ritual or juridical ransoms (a donkey: Ex. 13:13; a woman Ex. 21:8; unclean animals: Lv. 27:27). There are also occurrences where פדה is related to ransoming of the first-born, as a cultic act performed in the temple on the eighth day after birth. Ex. 13:15 explains this ritual by the fact that the first-born of the Israelites were spared by the angel who took the lives of all first-born, during the last plague of Egypt. The use of פדה in Micah 6 reinforces the idea that the *rib* takes place in a cultic setting, as hinted in the subsequent verses 6-7. The phrase אֶת־מִשְׁפַּחַת אֶהְרֹן occurs only once in the MT. The presence of the preposition אֶת marks their leadership position during the exile.<sup>253</sup> Usually their mention is related to a message from God that they have to deliver to the Pharaoh or to their own people. This is the only time when Aaron is mentioned in the prophets.<sup>254</sup> The name of Miriam מִרְיָם appears three times in this form with *waw*: Num. 12:5, I Chr. 5:29 and Mic. 6:4. The other occurrences of מִרְיָם are: Ex. 15:20-21, Num. 12:1, 4, 10, 15; 20:1; 26:59. The Targum gives an explanation for the occurrence of these three names: Moses - to teach the tradition of judgments, Aaron - to appease for the people and Miriam - to teach the women.

Verse 5 continues the list of God's deeds with the call to remembrance of the story of king Balak and the prophet Balaam and the crossing of the Jordan River. Balaam's presentation is neutral and it is not related in any way to the negative reviews that he receives in other textual traditions.<sup>255</sup> Instead, Balaam and his king are used as examples of characters in the history of Exodus.

The allusion to the crossing of the Jordan is almost hidden in the MT, which mentions only two geographical locations on either of the banks of this river. Shittim is the base of operation for the people of Israel before they crossed to the Promised Land, from where Joshua sent the two spies to survey the city of Jericho (Jos. 2:1). Gilgal is the place of the first camp in Israel, 'on the east border of Jericho' (Jos.4:19), which is a quite precise localisation, given the small distance between Jordan and Jericho. From there, Joshua directs his campaigns against Jericho (Jos. 6), Ai (Jos. 8), and the five kings (Jerusalem, Hebron, Eglon, Jarmuth, Lachish cf. Jos. 10).

<sup>253</sup> Waltke, 2007, p. 352.

<sup>254</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 521.

<sup>255</sup> Cf discussion in G. Vermes, *Scripture and tradition in Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), p. 175.

There are at least three events for which Gilgal is important in the history of Israel. (1) This is the place where God's promise to bring the people of Israel to 'a land flowing with milk and honey' (Ex. 3:8) is fulfilled and, as a sign, the manna ceased to be provided immediately after they ate some of the products of the land. (2) Moreover, it has a cultic value, as the first altar made out of the stones collected during the crossing of Jordan was dedicated here (Jos 4:20). Also, the circumcision of the generation born in the desert (Jos. 5:4) and the first Passover (5:10) were both celebrated here. For these reasons, it becomes one of the sacred places along with Bethel and Mizpah (1Sam. 7:16). (3). Finally, Saul received his anointment as the first king of Israel in Gilgal (1 Sam. 11:14-15) and he performs here the unlawful sacrifice that causes Samuel to prophesy his later demise (1 Sam 13:8-14), which makes way for the subsequent Davidic dynasty.

All of these are summarised in the last words of this verse, as צדקוֹתַי הֵן. Wolff<sup>256</sup> asserts that this is a 'fixed expression' (cf. Judg. 5:11; 1 Sam. 12:7; Ps. 103:6). צדקוֹתַי is found four times in the MT (Jud. 5:11 (2 times); 1 Sa 12:7 and Mic. 6:15). BHS, J. Lindblom<sup>257</sup> and T. Robinson<sup>258</sup> propose צדקוֹתַי (my righteous deeds), a form rejected by Renaud because changing places between God and his prophet is a common technique in the prophetic literature;<sup>259</sup> Anderson also rejects this proposal because God is speaking here and this is an equivalent way of saying 'I'.<sup>260</sup>

The Exodus was a pretext for both God and Israel to know each other. Mic. 6:5 and Dt. 8:2 are two verses that mirror each other in this respect. The first passage shows that the sojourn in the desert was a pretext for the people to know 'God's justices'. The second reflects God's point of view: 'God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments, or not.' (RSV)

Verses 6-7 not only convey an increased tension,<sup>261</sup> but also enquire about how far a human being should go about expressing reverence to God. The general tone of the first

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<sup>256</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 165.

<sup>257</sup> Johannes C. Lindblom, *Micha: literarisch untersucht* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1929), p. 99.

<sup>258</sup> Theodore H. Robinson, *Die zwölf kleinen Propheten: Hosea bis Micha* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1954), p. 144.

<sup>259</sup> Renaud, 1977, p. 296.

<sup>260</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 523.

<sup>261</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 178.



and the second questions, which refer to devotional acts (approach God, bow down), is replaced with a list of self-giving acts, which start with offering burnt-offerings, continue with sacrificing thousands of rams and rivers of oil and finish with giving up the first-born son, like any other pagan worshipper of those times. Being dedicated to the God מְרוֹם, as Wolff explains, these would be a sign of ‘humility before the majesty of God’<sup>262</sup>.

Nevertheless, the context of Mic. 6 is not interested in his majesty but in preparing the right mind-set for the listener to welcome the message in verse 8. Verses 6-8 are constructed as a hidden negative protasis-apodosis period. The first hint about this is given in v. 8 where the conjunction וְיִאָּזַם requires a negative statement in precedence which is to be refuted. One sees that the real question of the passage is not whether the worshipper is to present himself before God with calves, rivers of oil or his first-born son, but: ‘*With what shall I come before God and bow myself before Most High God*’ (6ab). The negative indication in v. 8 regards the subsequent examples of worshipping. God requires from man ‘*to do justice, to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God*’ not burnt-offerings, thousands of rams, rivers of oil or the first-born son.

#### 2.5.4. Verses 9-16

The second poem of this chapter continues the lawsuit with the presentation of the sins and punishments.<sup>263</sup> Introducing this part with קוֹל יְהוָה, the author stresses that this message has its origins in God himself and it is not to be overlooked. Although the city to which the message is being addressed is not mentioned, three solutions have been proposed: (1) Jerusalem is the first choice of the majority of the commentators (Renaud,<sup>264</sup> Mays,<sup>265</sup> Wolff,<sup>266</sup> Ben-Zvi, Allen,<sup>267</sup> Niccacci,<sup>268</sup> R. Smith<sup>269</sup>). (2) The first to interpret the city as being Samaria was Jerome, followed by Lindblom in modern

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<sup>262</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 179.

<sup>263</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 377.

<sup>264</sup> Renaud, 1977, p. 342.

<sup>265</sup> Mays, 1976, p. 145.

<sup>266</sup> Wolff, 1990, p. 190.

<sup>267</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 377.

<sup>268</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 137

<sup>269</sup> Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 53.

times.<sup>270</sup> (3) Hillers<sup>271</sup> thinks that it is ‘unadvisable’ to identify the city if the name is not stated.

Regarding the use of קול in the first position, the prophetic literature reports similar cases in doom prophecies related to Moab (Jer. 48:3), Babylon (Jer. 50:22, 28; 51:54) and hope prophecies about Jerusalem (Is. 40:2-8; 52:8). None of the prophecies found in the Minor Prophets (Micah 6:9 and Nahum 3:2) have a precise target.

The form ותושיה is found four times in this particular form: Mic. 6:9; Job 12:16, 26:3 and Prov. 8:14 and also without waw Is. 28:29 Job 5:12, 11:6, Prov. 2:7, 18:1, 30:22. It is associated with the terms ‘wisdom’ and counsel in the wisdom literature. Andersen explains it as ‘successful application of sound wisdom.’<sup>272</sup>

The form יעצה occurs three times in this form (Mic. 6:9, Jer. 47:7, Ex. 21:8). The proposed interpretation (‘Listen the rod and who had appointed it’) supposes God as a logical subject of the verse. The only instance where the verb יעצה is associated with God is in Jer. 47:7, where the object that is appointed is ‘the sword of the Lord’ (Jer. 47:6), a very similar setting to Micah 6. מטה which is more likely to refer here to a punishment, as suggested by its translation with ‘rod/staff’, rather than to the ‘tribe’ or governors of the city, as the Targum interprets it. All in all, verse 9 makes a fine introduction: it asserts the source of the message (God), to whom it is addressed (city) and summarizes its content (punishment).

The prophet proceeds in verses 10-11 with the presentation of their sins. The term רשע is the key to the interpretation due to its consistent repetition in these verses. It brings together three coordinates (house, treasures and balances), all of them qualified by ‘wicked’. The text alludes to guilt by association, meaning that the use of wicked balances renders the treasures and the house that owns them wicked. The other terms וזון ונעמה and ונאפת רזון confirm the extent to which the wickedness is a part of their way of gaining the wealth. The ephah, the bags of weight (measures used for hard materials; 1 ephah= 36.4 litres) and the play on words בית (house)/בת (bath, measure for liquids)<sup>273</sup> implies that all kind of commercial trade is affected by deceit.

The root זכה (v. 10) refers to a generic purity, which according to the wisdom literature can hardly be a human quality (cf. Job 15:14; 25:4; Prov. 20:9). This pessimistic

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<sup>270</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 250.

<sup>271</sup> Hillers, 1984, p 81.

<sup>272</sup> Andersen and Freedman, 2000, p. 546.

<sup>273</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 378.

perspective is overturned in the Psalms and Isaiah, which assert that a man can keep his heart pure (Ps. 73:13) but only ‘by guarding it according to thy word’ (Ps. 119:9, RSV) and by ‘removing the evil of your doings’ (Is. 1:16). Both these essential elements in a man’s transformation are found in Micah 6 (the word cf. v. 8: הִגִּיד לְךָ; condemnation of sins cf. verses 10-12).

These sins are associated with the wealthy people who use violence (חָמָס) and repeated lies to deceive their inferiors (דְּבַר-וִישָׁקָר וְלִשְׁוֹנָם רַמְיָה בְּפִיָּהֶם). Violence is presented as the main reason for the deluge (Gen. 6:13), while lying is forbidden by one of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:16). רַמְיָה is another technical term for deceit, mostly found in Psalms (32:3; 52:4; 78:57; 101:7; 120:2-3). Each of these three terms (חָמָס, רַמְיָה and וִישָׁקָר) alone can bring destruction to mankind. Micah is using all of them at once, showing the eminence of the destruction.

וַיִּגְמַל אֱלֹהֵינוּ presents the opposition between the sinners and God. Both the verb נָכָה and the verb שָׂמַם are related to a destruction performed by God. The verb נָכָה refers to physically delivering a blow to someone and it is a part of the Exodus vocabulary regarding the plagues that fall upon Egypt by the hand of God (Ex. 3:20; 7:17; 8:12; 9:15; 12:12, 29). Most of נָכָה occurrences are exclusively related with an action performed by God. Being able to decree the devastation and to enact it is a sign of his divine power (cf. Hos. 6:1; 14:5; Am. 3:15; 4:9; 6:11; 9:1; Jon. 4:7, 11; Hag. 2:17; Zech. 9:4; 10:11; 12:4; 13:7; Mal. 3:24). The use of the perfect tense in (הִתְקַלְתִּי) is a sign for ‘certainty in the future’.<sup>274</sup> The verse closes with the affirmation that the only reason for this destruction is sin (‘for your sins’).

The futility curses in Lv. 26: 26; Dt. 28:30-31, 39-40; Hos. 4:10 and Am. 5:11<sup>275</sup> are reshaped and presented in verses 14-15 as punishments. According to Ben Zvi, these futility curses display ‘a strong contrast between אֱלֹהֵינוּ (God) and אֶרֶץ (the city/the sinner)’.<sup>276</sup> They refer to an ordinary human action (eating, saving grain, planting, treading olives or grapes), which is then denied or its results rendered useless (hunger, sword, not having the chance to anoint with the oil or drink the wine). It is Allen’s

<sup>274</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 1871/2006, p. 338.

<sup>275</sup> Leroy, [course support] 2011, pp. 111-112; Wolff, 1990, p. 197; Cf. full discussion in Allen, 1978, pp. 378-381.

<sup>276</sup> Ben Zvi, 2000, p. 161

opinion that all these mean a disruption in the agricultural cycle, which in turn endanger the existence and well-being of the whole community.<sup>277</sup>

Verse 16 represents a summary of the elements present in the second poem. Omri and Ahab are two kings of the Northern Kingdom, father and son (1 Kgs. 16:29), who distinguished themselves as following the steps of their ancestor Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 16:19 (Omri), 31 (Ahab)). While Omri has an episodic appearance in the history of Israel, as the founder of the city of Samaria (1 Kgs. 16:24), Ahab is best known for his disputes with the prophet Elijah. Their worst sin is that of being worshippers of idols, but the context of Micah 6 does not seem to allude to that sin.

The main concern in Micah 6 is the deceit and wealth acquired through violence. Even if Omri is considered to have been a sinner ‘more evil than all who were before him’ (1 Kgs. 16:25, RSV), there is no attestation of this fact in the MT. On the contrary, Ahab is well known for this because of the story of Nabot’s vineyard, when he unjustly expropriated his neighbour’s propriety by the hand of his wife Jezebel (1 Kgs. 21).

The author uses three different nouns to suggest their sins: *הַקִּוִּיֹּת*, *מַעֲשֵׂה*, and *בְּמַעֲצוֹתָם*. The first one is employed throughout the Pentateuch in reference to God’s statutes or ordinances referring to rules fulfilled by Abraham (cf. Gen. 26:5), keeping the Passover (Ex. 12:14; Num. 9:3) or other cultic laws (Lv. 7:36). When this term is associated with Omri’s name in Micah 6, its meaning is changed and may well refer to practices of idolatry. Instead, *מַעֲשֵׂה* has a very general significance and can indicate any kind of work or deed. Using it along with the name of Ahab, Micah 6 is trying to refer in a general manner to the wickedness described in verses 10-12. The last one, *בְּמַעֲצוֹתָם*, appears only 6 times in MT (Prov. 1:31; 22:20; Ps. 5:11; Jer. 7:24; Hos. 11:6; Mic 6:16) as a generic term for sin. The term *מוֹעֵצָה* is a participle form of *יעצ*, which strangely enough also occurs in Micah 6:5, referring to the plan devised by Balaam against Israel. These three words insinuate that this verse represents a summary of the sins condemned in chapter 6.

The past tense indicated by the wayyiqtol (וַתִּלְכֹּד) signals that these sins are already accomplished, agreeing with v. 10, where they are recorded using the present tense. The sense of *הִרְפָּתָה* has been overlooked in the commentaries, being simply translated with

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<sup>277</sup> Allen, 1978, p. 380.

‘reproach’. Nevertheless, in the MT it is employed in all kind of contexts, starting with the shame of not having a child (Agar, Gen. 30:23); for marrying a non-Israelite husband (Gen. 34:14); of the nations who had overpowered them (Philistines I Sam. 17:26); of being violated (Amnon and Tamar I Sam. 13:12); for their religion (Neh. 5:9; Jer. 6:10); for being naked (Is. 47:2-3). In the Minor Prophets, this term is found 6 times, including Micah 6:16. While the passages Joel 2:17, 19 are not very clear about what kind of **קִרְפָּה** this prophet conveys, it signifies shame before Moab for the exile in Zephaniah 2:8 and 3:18, and shame for idolatry in Hosea 12:15. In Micah 6, **קִרְפָּת** relates to all the sins of the house of Omri and Ahab.

In conclusion, Micah 6 displays a coherent presentation of the arguments, which present an introduction verse and a summary verse in both poems. While the first poem is concentrated on God’s deed and favours towards his people and what it means to render him worship, the second one is focused on the people presenting their sins and their lawful punishment. In line with the usual prophetic opinion, Micah implies that God shows kindness and goodwill towards his people but (cf. 6:4-5), when provoked by sin, he is also the one who proceeds to administering punishment (cf. 6:13).

### 3. Text-critical Analysis of LXX Micah 6

The *Letter of Aristeas* is the only ancient testimony which gives an account of the appearance of the Septuagint. There have been roughly five theories regarding the origin of Septuagint. Three of them readily dismissed suppose a (1) Palestinian provenance (Moshe Gaster), (2) a liturgical provenance (H. St. John Thackeray), or (3) a translation done on the Hebrew text transliterated in Greek characters (Tychsen-Wutz). Paul Kahle issued in 1915 the (4) Targum theory contradicting the existence of a *Vorlage* or *Ur-Septuagint text* proposed by the (5) *Lagardian theory*.<sup>278</sup> The Targum theory was contradicted by most scholars, such as Barthélemy, H. M. Orlinsky, Peter Walters, Frank M. Cross, and H. H. Rowley.<sup>279</sup> Barthelemy was the main advocate for considering the Septuagint version of the Bible in its own right and not only as a translation of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>280</sup>

This chapter will engage in a textual critical analysis of Micah 6 LXX, trying to explain as many textual witnesses as possible. The analysis discusses most of the textual variants present in the critical apparatus of the LXX in Ziegler's edition verse by verse and gives the critical textual version resulting from the analysis. The analysis often refers to *assimilation* and to *conflate readings* (or *conflation*). While the former designates a reading which is corrected by a certain witness in order to be similar to MT (for example ἀκούετε [in 130-311] (MT: אָשָׁר) instead of ἀκούσατε (LXX)), the process of conflation represents the additions to the original text which explain it fully or even comment on it (cf. v. 6: insertion of conjunction καί before ἀντιλήμψομαι; v. 7 ὑπέρ before ἀσεβείας).

Ziegler counts one neutral recension and four other main recensons in the Book of the Twelve Prophets. The neutral position, and, consequently, the most important, is held by four manuscripts. These are the ancient Codices Vaticanus (B) and Sinaiticus<sup>281</sup> of

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<sup>278</sup> The Lagardian theory was produced in 1863 by Paul Anton de Lagarde. He asserted that that in order to reach the eclectic *Urtext* of the LXX one must follow an eclectic procedure. The critical text must be presented after an analysis of each translator's style and the discernment either of a Hebrew original influencing the translator, or of a Greek distortion. Should one have to choose between two readings, priority must be given to the free translation, not to the literal one. Cf. Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 6.

<sup>279</sup> Cf. the discussion of these theories in Jellicoe, 1968, pp. 59-73.

<sup>280</sup> Harl, 'Les divergences entre la Septante et le texte massorétique', in *La Bible grecque des Septante*, p. 202.

<sup>281</sup> The Book of Micah is missing entirely from this manuscript.

the fourth century, the later Codex Venetus ((V) eighth century) and the oldest extant codex of the Septuagint Codex Washington ((W) third century, fragmentary). The other four are the Hexaplaric, Alexandrian, and the Lucianic recensions, and the Catena group.

The Hexaplaric recension is the result of Origen's strenuous work on the Hebrew Bible dated between 235 and 245 B.C. It contained six columns which offered a synoptic display of the Hebrew text, its transliteration into Greek, and the translations of Aquila, Symmachus, the Septuagint and Theodotion.<sup>282</sup> He was adept to a literal translation of the Hebrew Bible. He marked the pluses and the minuses in the Septuagint in comparison with the MT, changed the word order and provided the transcription of the names in order to resemble the Hebrew original. His work has been very influential for the subsequent translations, some scribes correcting their own manuscripts after his. This in turn had a detrimental influence on LXX<sup>283</sup> as it was no longer considered an independent text until recent times.

The Alexandrian recension, which sometimes is related to the Hesychian recension<sup>284</sup> (despite the opposition of Ziegler's school), contains a text influenced by the Hexaplaric tradition but free from its additions; it preserves the word order of the old LXX and offers a free translation of the original Hebrew text.<sup>285</sup>

The Lucianic texts belong to the Antiochian tradition, and in the Minor Prophets is very similar to the text commented by Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyr.<sup>286</sup> They show a '*post-Hexaplaric reworking of the text*', which was performed in Antioch.<sup>287</sup>

The Catena group is a specific cluster of manuscripts which is similar to the Syro-Palestinian and Armenian translations, Theophylact of Acrida and Jerome.<sup>288</sup> It was identified by M. Faulhaber who singled out the first catena in the minuscule 87-91-490,

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<sup>282</sup> Natalio Fernández Marcos and Wilfred G. E. Watson, *The Septuagint in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 210.

<sup>283</sup> Olivier Munnich, 'Le texte de la Septante', in *La Bible grecque des Septante*, ed. G. Dorival, Marguerite Harl, and Olivier Munnich (Paris: Cerf, 1988), pp. 165-166.

<sup>284</sup> Cf. discussion in Fernández Marcos and Watson, 2000, pp. 242-243.

<sup>285</sup> Fernández Marcos and Watson, 2000, p. 246.

<sup>286</sup> Ziegler, 1967, pp. 70-71.

<sup>287</sup> Fernández Marcos and Watson, 2000, p. 236.

<sup>288</sup> Ziegler, 1967, pp. 90-96.

dated 450-550. The basis of this identification was three common errors found in Hos. 4:13, Nahum 1:3 and the misspelling of the prophet Haggai's name.<sup>289</sup> The second important catena is the 130-311-538 which sometimes oscillates between manuscripts 87-91-490 and the Alexandrian recension. Nevertheless, both the first and the second catena are closely related to the Hexaplaric recension.<sup>290</sup>

#### Verse 1

The Greek variant, ἀκούσατε δὴ λόγον κυρίου ἃ ὁ κύριος εἶπεν, supported by the majority of the Alexandrian witnesses (A, 106, 26, M, 544, 710), combines the MT (אָז־יַעֲזֹבֵי- aorist IMP: ἀκούσατε δὴ) and B (κύριος εἶπεν), which is an harmonization of the MT. LXX A puts καί before κρίθητι, a variant not supported by the majority of the texts (MT, Targum or LXX B).

In the Septuagint, there are some textual problems regarding the introductory words: ἀκούσατε δὴ λόγον κυρίου κύριος εἶπεν (version proposed by Rahlfs & Ziegler):

- a. Manuscript 130-311 (C) proposes ἀκούετε (present indicative or present IMP of ἀκούω) instead of ἀκούσατε (aorist IMP). This variant lacks witnesses in the tradition and is probably assimilating the MT יַעֲזֹבֵי.
- b. The most important variant present in the Ziegler critical apparatus is: ἀκούσατε δὴ ἃ ὁ κύριος εἶπεν. This variant has wide support (MT, V; Origen's recension; group 233, group 407 from the Alexandrian recension, Basil, Complutensian Bible) and is *lectio brevior*. Nevertheless this textual version is not preferable to the one proposed by Rahlfs and Ziegler whose reading is supported by the Vatican and Washington Codices which are far more ancient witnesses (5<sup>th</sup> century).

The article οἱ is placed in front of βουνοί (in W and in Hexapla critical apparatus) to be closer to the original MT. Though accepted by Rahlfs in his *Septuaginta*, this rendering is discarded by Ziegler.<sup>291</sup> His option in this case for the Greek variant is *lectio difficilior* and *brevior*.

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<sup>289</sup> Ziegler, 1967, p. 90.

<sup>290</sup> Ziegler, 1967, p. 96.

<sup>291</sup> Ziegler, 1967, p. 220.



Text v. 1: ἀκούσατε δὴ λόγον κυρίου κύριος εἶπεν ἀνάστηθι κρίθητι πρὸς τὰ ὄρη καὶ ἀκουσάτωσαν βουνοὶ φωνὴν σου

## Verse 2

This verse begins with a unique expression in the MT  $\text{עֲמָשׁוּ \text{רִי} \text{רִי}}$ . Its subject in the LXX is translated either with βουνοί (A accepted by Rahlfs) or λαοί (B and W, Ziegler, Swete<sup>292</sup>). The MT reading (βουνοί/ $\text{רִי} \text{רִי}$ ) is more probable as it is *lectio difficilior*.

There are also omissions or additions in Ziegler's critical apparatus, all to be discarded, as they have little textual support:

1. From the expression τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ κυρίου is omitted the genitive article singular τοῦ in the V.
2. The article αἱ from αἱ φάραγγες is lacking in minuscule 534 from C.
3. The article τὰ before θεμέλια is supported by L (62, 147 and 613).

Other variations involve the verbal form διελεγχθήσεται (from διελέγω – *to refute utterly, to prove false* - indicative, future passive, 3 person, singular), all with little textual support:

1. διαλεχθήσεται (from δια-λέγω, *to pick out one from another, to pick out* – indicative future middle, 3 person singular) with support in L (62, 147), a part of C (130-131, 534), the Alexandrian text (26, 106), Basil, Theophylact and Chrysostom.
2. ελεγχθήσεται (ελέγω, *to disgrace, put to shame* – indicative, future middle, 3 person, singular) supported by 538, minuscule from group C, from the same family as 130, 534.
3. διαλεγχθήσεται (δια-ελέγω indicative, future middle, 3 person, singular) supported by 68 (C)

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<sup>292</sup> Swete, 1905, p. 35.

Text v. 2: ἀκούσατε βουνοί τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ αἱ φάραγγες θεμέλια τῆς γῆς ὅτι κρίσις τῷ κυρίῳ πρὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ διελεγχθήσεται

### Verse 3

The Septuagint text adds a whole clause: ἢ τί ἐλύπησά σε (conjunction coordinative ἢ, pronoun interrogative, verb – λυπέω *to grieve, pain*; and a personal pronoun accusative, singular 2 person). The addition is supported by all the major textual witness and it was signalled as an addition as early as Origen. It is missing from the Ethiopic<sup>P</sup> version and in Theodore. Even if their version is *lectio brevior* and agrees with the MT, the addition is an integral part of the Septuagint.

L in 62, 147 and Theophylact report σέ (accusative pronoun 2 singular), instead of σοί (dative) after the verb παρενοχλέω. The verb παρενοχλέω usually requires a complement in the dative case, with few occurrences with the accusative.<sup>293</sup> For that reason and because the change is poorly attested, it should not be taken into consideration.

Text v. 3: λαός μου τί ἐποίησά σοι ἢ τί ἐλύπησά σε ἢ τί παρηνώχλησά σοι ἀποκρίθητί μοι

### Verse 4

For the Septuagint text, L (62, 147) reads ἀνῆγον (ἀνάγω, *to bring up*, imperfect, active 1 singular), instead of the aorist (ἀνήγαγον). This version emphasizes the length of the action<sup>294</sup> and it is more suitable after the rhetorical question in verse 3 τί παρηνώχλησά σοι (*‘how have I wearied you?’*). The lack of textual witnesses and the fact that the reading improves the text disqualifies this variant.

The use of the enclitic particle τε, supported by W, 734 (Alexandrian recension) and 239 (C group), is used to indicate a closer connection<sup>295</sup> between Moses and Aaron than the one with Miriam. Being an interpretation of the text and with few textual witnesses, this variant is not acceptable.

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<sup>293</sup> Henry George Liddell et al., *Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 1336.

<sup>294</sup> Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1956), § 1908a, p. 427.

<sup>295</sup> Smyth, 1956, pp. 666-667.

Text v. 4: διότι ἀνήγαγόν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας ἐλυτρώσάμην σε καὶ ἐξαπέστειλα πρὸ προσώπου σου τὸν Μωυσῆν καὶ Ααρων καὶ Μαριαμ

Verse 5

In verse 5, Ziegler presents several omissions:

1. Particle δὴ in L (majority of the witnesses), Codex Constantiensis (Latin, V century), translations: Ethiopic, Arabic, Armenian. The Hebrew particle  $\text{כִּי}$  is translated by the emphatic particle δὴ supported by B and Origen. The omission is not acceptable due to poor attestation, though it is *lectio brevior*.

2. Article τοῦ (genitive, masculine, singular) from τοῦ Βεωρ supported by the Alexandrian recension (764), C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 68-96-239), Cyril, Theophylact and the Complutensian Bible. This version has various recensions to support it and it is *lectio brevior*, but all the witnesses are later than X century.

3. Article τοῦ (genitive, masculine, singular) from τοῦ κυρίου supported by V, L (46, 86, 711), C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 68-96-239, 534) and Theophylact. The Complutensian Bible does not support this omission.

Other textual changes are presented, but with little textual support:

1. ἐβουλεύσατο (indicative aorist middle 3 singular) to ἐβουλεύσαντο (indicative aorist middle 3 plural) supported by the Alexandrian recension (26, 106).

2. Instead of σχοίνων (noun genitive masculine plural common from ὁ σχοῖνος – *rush, a place where rushes grow*) the critical apparatus proposes variants to be discarded because of scant textual support:

a. σχοινίων genitive plural from τό σχοινίον (*little rush*), diminutive of σχοῖνος (W, V, Alexandrian recension (711), C (139, 311, 538) and Alexandrian recension (233));

b. Jerome supposes σχίνων (genitive plural from σχῖνος, ἦ, the mastic-tree).

3. *καί* is added in the Syro-Hexapla recension. In this it loses its normal coordinative copulative function and becomes an adverbial *καί* (*also, even, too* Lat.: *etiam*). This use is attested in balanced disjunctive phrases or expressions in order to ‘mark the connection between antecedent and consequent’.<sup>296</sup>

4. Particle *ἄν* is added by one witness of the C (87\*) and Theophylact. The construction *ὅπως* with subjunctive can receive *ἄν* in purpose clauses.<sup>297</sup> Being a correction this addition cannot be considered.

Text v. 5: λαός μου μνήσθητι δὴ τί ἐβουλεύσατο κατὰ σοῦ Βαλακ βασιλεὺς Μωαβ καὶ τί ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Βαλααμ υἱὸς τοῦ Βεωρ ἀπὸ τῶν σχοίνων ἕως τοῦ Γαλγαλ ὅπως γνωσθῆ ἡ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ κυρίου

Verse 6

In verse six, the Greek manuscripts contain additions as well as one homoioteleuton and one word with a different spelling:

1. The addition of *ἐν τίνι* before *ἀντιλήμψομαι* is to be discarded as it conflates the text repeating the interrogative pronoun *τίς, τί* with the preposition *ἐν* from the beginning of verse 6, correcting the ellipsis of *πᾶς*. Moreover it has weak textual support (W\* and the Ethiopic recension).

2. The Ethiopic and the Arabic recensions, along with Cyprian, insert the copulative conjunction *καί* before *ἀντιλήμψομαι*, a version to be discarded because it represents a conflation of readings.

3. There is an *homoioteleuton* of *θεοῦ μου ὑψίστου εἰ καταλήμψομαι* (in M and 91\*). The elision is triggered by the identity of case, number, and genre between *τὸν κύριον* (accusative singular masculine) and pronoun *αὐτόν* (*αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτό* accusative singular masculine). Consequently, this reading is erroneous. Uncial 534 (C) deletes *αὐτόν* after *καταλήμψομαι*.

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<sup>296</sup> Smyth, 1956, § 2885 and 2888a, p. 653.

<sup>297</sup> Smyth, 1956, § 2201, p. 495.

4. Between the clauses εἰ καταλήμφομαι αὐτὸν and ἐν ὀλοκαυτώμασιν ἐν μόσχοις ἐνιαυσίοις, in the uncials 49, 764 and 613 (Alexandrian tradition), and La<sup>s</sup> (IX century), there is the disjunctive conjunction ἢ.

5. L in 763, Cyril and Theophylact support ἐνιαυσιᾶσις (ἐνιαυσιᾶος, α, ον, adjective dative masculine plural) instead of B ἐνιαυσίοις (ἐνιαύσιος, α, ον, adjective dative masculine plural).

Text v. 6: ἐν τίνι καταλάβω τὸν κύριον ἀντιλήμφομαι θεοῦ μου ὑψίστου εἰ καταλήμφομαι αὐτὸν ἐν ὀλοκαυτώμασιν ἐν μόσχοις ἐνιαυσίοις

Verse 7

The Septuagint in manuscript 538 ([C] XII, Paris), and part of C (87-91-490, 130-311-538), reads εἰ προσδέχεται (indicative *present* middle 3 singular) instead of εἰ προσδέξεται (indicative future middle 3 singular) as a translation of הַפְּרִיזָה. The manuscript is not uniform in this verse because the following clause, introduced with the same conjunction εἰ, does not preserve the present tense, but uses the future δοσῶ.

Ziegler proposes the omission of the euphonic *nun* in χιλιάσιν and μυριάσιν, an option supported by papyrus Washington (W\*), one of the oldest papyri, III CE. The main purpose of the *nun* was to avoid hiatus. In the papyri the euphonic *nun* was frequently missing<sup>298</sup>, as there was no specific rule for its use prior to the Byzantine period. Its use becomes uniform in Greek with the influence of the Koine dialect in III BCE.<sup>299</sup> In time euphonic *nun* becomes one of the features of Hellenistic Greek in contrast with the Attic dialect. While its use is ‘universal before both consonants and vowels’ with verbal forms (see ἐστίν), with other morphological forms the omission is possible.<sup>300</sup> Besides this ancient attestation, his textual choice is morphologically correct, as the addition of the *nun* is necessary when the next word normally starts with a vowel in order to avoid hiatus, which is not the case here. Also, the omission of the article ὁ before κύριος is *lectio brevior*.

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<sup>298</sup> Edwin Mayser and Hans Schmoll, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit*, Vol. 1, I Teil (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1970), pp. 169-170.

<sup>299</sup> Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert Walter Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 12.

<sup>300</sup> H. St John Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), pp. 134-135.

The Septuagint version expands and connects the two clauses in this verse with the coordinative conjunction ἥ. The Masoretic and Mur 88 texts followed by the Syro-Hexapla translation are *lectio brevior*, thus probably more authentic.

The Septuagint translates גִּבְרֵי־יִלְדָּיִם either with χίμαρων (*young goat*) in codices B and V, or with its variation χειμάρων (Washington papyrus and Origen's recension), or even ἄρνων (in A). All are ancient and trustworthy witnesses, but all three variants are in fact scribal misspellings of χειμάρρων (noun genitive plural *brook*). The Targum preserves the correct text חַלְיֵן דְּמִשָּׁה.

The Septuagint witnesses also contain several changes:

1. There is no pronoun 1 person genitive, singular (μου) after ἀσεβείας in the majority of the manuscripts where the MT contains יַעֲרַבִּי (*my transgression*). Being so well supported its authenticity cannot be denied, and also it is a *lectio brevior* and *difficilior*. Taylor asserts that it does not mean that the suffix has not been read, but it is 'left to be supplied' because μου is used three times in this verse.<sup>301</sup> L cannot be considered because it corrects the error.
2. It conflates the translation with: the preposition ὑπέρ before ἀσεβείας (W, V, Origen's recension and L); the preposition περί before ἁμαρτίας (V); and *pro misericordia* before ψυχῆς μου (Bohairic version). Although they have textual support, the changes are not acceptable as they conflate the text.

Text v. 7: εἰ προσδέξεται κύριος ἐν χιλιάσι κριῶν ἢ ἐν μυριάσι χειμάρρων πiónων εἰ δὲ πρῶτότοκά μου ἀσεβείας καρπὸν κοιλίας μου ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτίας ψυχῆς μου

Verse 8

Rahlfs, Ziegler, and Swete accepted in their critical text the subordinate conjunction εἰ at the beginning of the verse 8. This addition met wide acceptance in the patristic period (Origen, Theodore, Theodoret, and Cyprian), which can be explained with Niccacci's assertion that in the Hebrew text the expression כִּי־יָבִי comes usually after a negative statement.<sup>302</sup> Consequently, it can be argued that these authors were aware of this

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<sup>301</sup> Taylor, 1891, p. 137.

<sup>302</sup> Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 136.

ellipsis in the Hebrew text and tried to render it as closely as possible in Greek through εἰ from the expression εἰ δὲ μή (*if not*). Thus, their translation faithfully reflects the MT.

Its attestation in the oldest manuscripts is difficult to retrieve because Micah is lacking entirely from Codex Sinaiticus. It is also absent from Codex Venetus (7<sup>th</sup> century CE), L, Ziegler's C (87-91-490 and 130-311-538, 68-96-239, 534) and the Complutensian Bible.

Other variations:

1. The variants of ἀνηγγέλη are multiple:
  - a. With strong tradition: ἀπηγγέλη (Origen and Syro-Hexapla text, C, Theodore and Complutensian Bible (ἀπαγγέλω *report, bring tidings, relate*)<sup>303</sup>);
  - b. With little textual support: ἀπηγγέλει (62, 147; little textual support); ἀνηγγέλλει (86 (L) and 106 Alexandrian text); ἀναγγέλει (26, Alexandrian recension, 239 from C) ἀναγγέλη (534, C) ἀπηγγείλα (48 719 (L), Peshitta); ἀνηγγείλα (763(L)) ἀπαγγέλω (Chrysostom and Vulgate).
2. The addition of καὶ δικαιοσύνη after ποιεῖν κρίμα is present in the L recension (36-49, La<sup>s</sup>) and in one manuscript from C (239). Having little support and being a conflate variant, the addition is not acceptable.
3. Two critical editions have two variants in this verse. Rahlfs chooses ἀγαπᾶν ἔλεον with support in B, manuscript 86, L recension (22, 36, 48, 51, 231 and 719), and some patristic authors (Basil, Chrysostom and Theodore, Theodoret). He assumes that ἔλεον is the accusative case of τό ἔλεος, ους, which in fact is a misspelling. Ziegler chooses ἀγαπᾶν ἔλεος (accusative, singular, third declension of τό ἔλεος, ους,) with support in W, Eusebius. His variant seems more appropriate as the noun is neutral and the nominative, accusative and vocative cases are identical. It is true that there is a noun ὁ ἔλεος (masculine, II declension), which would have supported the accusative form proposed by Rahlfs, but its use was already discontinued by the time of the Septuagint.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 173.

<sup>304</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 532.

4. The variants ὀπίσω (majority of texts in L, Chrysostom, Cyr<sup>p</sup>, Theodere and Theodoret) and με κατά πρόσωπον (49, Alexandrian recension). Apart from the lack of textual support, the former is interpreting, rather than translating the Hebrew preposition  $\text{אַחֲרַי}$ , and the latter is an expansion of the text.

5. The omission of κυρίου from the Greek expression κυρίου θεοῦ has little support (only 711, (L) and 87-91-490 (C)). The reason for this omission lies in the fact that it is missing in the MT.

Text v. 8: εἰ ἀνηγγέλη σοι ἄνθρωπε τί καλόν ἢ τί κύριος ἐκζητεῖ παρὰ σοῦ ἀλλ' ἢ τοῦ ποιεῖν κρίμα καὶ ἀγαπᾶν ἔλεος καὶ ἔτοιμον εἶναι τοῦ πορεύεσθαι μετὰ κυρίου θεοῦ σου

Verse 9

There are several minor changes proposed in the critical apparatus.

1. A, 106, 26, Cyril and Theophylact register the use of the accusative plural masculine article τοὺς before φοβουμένους. This minor change is unacceptable due to the fact that it is attested in only one recension.

2. Venetus Codex, 711 (L recension), and most of the manuscripts of C (87-91-490, 130-131-538, 68-96) omit the prefix ἐπί in ἐπικληθήσεται. L-S definition of καλέω is *to call, summon, invite, bring before the court* (judicial sense), while ἐπικαλέω signifies *to summon god to a sacrifice/ as witness to an oath; challenge, bring accusation against*.<sup>305</sup> The first variant seeks to correct the text in line with MT, thus this variant is not acceptable.

3. W proposes the imperative plural ἀκούετε, but this variant is a correction of the Septuagint to agree with the MT.

4. A in several witnesses (A, 106, 26, 49, 764, 613, and 764 (the last witness in the first hand manuscript is not certain)), and Cyril support the replacement of nominative masculine singular τίς with τί, the neuter singular.

5. 407, an Alexandrian manuscript supports the accusative singular φυλήν instead of the vocative φυλή – little support.

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<sup>305</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, pp. 866 and 635.



6. The omission of the second *καί* is supported by V, the majority of the L witnesses (22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763, 62, 147, 46, 86, 711), 49 (Alexandrian manuscript), one Latin witness (La<sup>s</sup>), and the following recensions: Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Armenian. There are also some patristic references in Theodore, Theodoret from Cyr, and Theophylact. The reason for the adoption of this variant resides in the attempt to follow more closely the MT. Even though this variant has very strong support in the witnesses, this version is not acceptable because of its attempt to correct it in line with MT.

Text v. 9: φωνὴ κυρίου τῆ πόλει ἐπικληθήσεται καὶ σώσει φοβουμένους τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἄκουε φυλὴ καὶ τίς κοσμήσει πόλιν

#### Verse 10

Due to its obscurity in the Hebrew text, this verse has often been amended starting from ancient times with the first witnesses (Septuagint, Targum, Vulgate, Syriac, etc). (1) The discussion will first evaluate the corrections made to the Septuagint in order to bring it in line with the MT recorded by Ziegler's critical apparatus. (2) Secondly, it will engage with the differences between the critical texts presented by Ziegler and Rahlfs. The folios containing the Book of Micah are missing in Sinaiticus making the evaluation even more difficult. Most important in this case remain Codices Vaticanus and Washington.

1. Some witnesses omit words from, or further modify LXX, to make its text more in accord with MT. All of them are unacceptable readings of the Septuagint as they change the text in the direction of the MT.

- a. Omission of the first *καί* in 239, a manuscript from C.
- b. Omission of *θησαυρίζων* in 106 (Alexandrian tradition). Even if the text is *lectio brevior* in this case, the omission is not acceptable, because it lacks textual support and it represents the only verbal form in the whole verse. Its omission renders even more unintelligible the Greek translation (cf. below Rahlfs-Ziegler discussion).
- c. Regarding this point one must pay close attention to the distinction between three similar morphological forms, part of the same family (*ὁ νομος*, *ου* with *alpha*

*privativus*): (1) the adjective ἄνομος, ον (*without law*), (2) the noun ὁ/ἡ ἄνομος, ον (*transgressor*), and (3) the noun ἡ ανομία, ας (*iniquity, sin, lawlessness*). Ziegler signals the replacement of (i) ἀνόμου with ἀνόμων and of (ii) ἀνόμους with ανομίας.

- i. W supports ἀνόμου (from (1) ἄνομος, ον adjective genitive singular masculine) against ἀνόμων (from (2) ὁ/ἡ ἄνομος, ον, noun genitive plural) which has support in the Alexandrian (codices A and M along with 106, 26, 49, 198, 233, 710) and L traditions (36), in two translations (Ethiopic, Arabic), and in patristic testimonies such as Cyril and Basil.
- ii. Ziegler shows that ἀνόμους (from (1) ἄνομος, ον – adjective accusative masculine plural, [*treasures*] *without law*) is replaced with ανομίας ((3) ανομία, ας – noun genitive singular feminine, [*treasures*] *of iniquity*) in the Alexandrian (codices A and M along with 106, 26, 544, 49, 764, 613, 198, 233, 710) and L traditions (36, 711), in translations (Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic), and in patristic testimonies like Cyril, Basil and Theophylact. Despite the wide support, the replacement is illegitimate because ἀνόμους is the version maintained by the oldest manuscript extant (W) and because the θησαυροὺς ανομίας conveys as closely as possible עֲשֶׂה רָחֵק מִן מֵת from MT.

d. The preposition μετά supported by all the codices (and Rahlfs) is replaced by Ziegler and Swete with μέτρον from the noun τό μέτρον, ον, *measure* (Ziegler: *scripsi=I wrote*). This is the exact reading present in Micah 6 Targum מְכִילֵן (*measures*).

Regarding ἀδικία there are three proposals deriving from the noun ἡ ἀδικία, ας. (i) The nominative singular ἀδικία. This proposal is supported by Rahlfs but Ziegler supposes three subjects (fire, house and wickedness) connected through καί. The translation in this case would be: ‘are there yet fire and the house [...] and wickedness?’ (ii) The genitive singular ἀδικίας supported by codices Washington and Venetus, majority of the L witnesses, one Alexandrian manuscript (49), C (87-91-490), three translations (Ethiopic, Syriac and Arabic), and by Cyril (in part), Theodore, and Theophylact. This proposal would be the most probable choice because of its strong support in the textual witnesses. (iii) The accusative singular ἀδικίαν is present in L recension (62, 147), and Cyril (in part). This version lacks

validation from other witnesses. The analysis of the witnesses cannot provide a reasonable argument in favour of either variant.

2. The solution may come from analysis of the differences between Ziegler and Rahlfs. While the former chooses as his criterion the conformity with MT (*μέτρον ὕβρεως ἀδικία*), Rahlfs prefers the reading which is better attested (*μετὰ ὕβρεως ἀδικία*). Going backwards, Ziegler hesitates to consider *θησαυρίζων* part of the text, putting it into square brackets, which might not be a bad idea as it would be *lectio brevior*. Both *θησαυρίζων* and *μετὰ ὕβρεως* have a common purpose in relation to their syntactical subjects: to give more details about them. Consequently, the value of the preposition *μετά* is not to be discarded, as it has very strong support. Its purpose is to introduce a genitive of accompanying circumstance<sup>306</sup> meant to give a precise idea about the *ἀδικία* (injustice) through *ὕβρεως* (insulting). The preposition does not affect in any way the nominative case of *ἀδικία* which thus cannot be interpreted as a genitive, as suggested by the majority of witnesses.

Text v. 10: μὴ πῦρ καὶ οἶκος ἀνόμου θησαυρίζων θησαυροῦς ἀνόμους καὶ μετὰ ὕβρεως ἀδικία

Verse 11

(1) One Alexandrian witness (764) proposes the disjunctive conjunction ἢ instead of the interrogative pronoun εἰ. (2) The addition of the copulative conjunction καὶ has solid support starting with W, followed by the Alexandrian recensions (A and M codices, 106, 26, 198, 233, 710, 764), by the C (534) and Lucianic recension (46, 86). Both variants are trying to connect syntactically the two rhetorical questions in verses 10 and 11. The first attempt seems an elegant solution to the problem but it has little support in the witnesses. The second one has plenty of witnesses in the tradition but has no equivalent in MT.

(3) The term ἄνομος is replaced with ἄδικος in most of the L manuscripts and some of Alexandrian testimonies (407, 613) and Theodoret, which do not amount to a critical mass of manuscripts to require its acceptance.

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<sup>306</sup> Smyth, 1956, §1691, 1, p. 381.

(4) The form μαρσίππῳ (μάρσιππος, ου noun dative masculine singular *bag, sack*) is replaced.<sup>307</sup>

- in C (130-311-538, 68-96-239) and one Alexandria witness (198) with μαρισπίῳ (μαρσίπιος, ου noun dative neutral singular), attested in Hippocrates, Cairo Papyri, and the *Flinders Petrie Papyri 3*;
- in some works of Cyril and Basil with the variation μαρισπίῳ (μαρσίπιος, ου noun dative singular) – *varia lectio* in later manuscripts.

Text v. 11: εἰ δικαιωθήσεται ἐν ζυγῷ ἄνομος καὶ ἐν μαρσίππῳ στάθμια δόλου

Verse 12

Ziegler's critical apparatus includes several textual problems. For the sake of clarity, the discussion will focus on verbal forms, on omissions/additions and then on other morphological forms (ἄσεβείας, αὐτήν, and ψευδῆ).

**a. The disputed verbal forms amount to five:**

i. There are two different textual options supported by Rahlfs and Swete, and one by Ziegler. Rahlfs and Swete consider ἔπλησαν (πίμπλημι, indicative aorist active 3 plural *to fill*)<sup>308</sup> as the most suitable, while the latter supports ἐνέπλησαν (ἐμπίμπλημι indicative aorist active 3 plural *to fill up*).<sup>309</sup> ἔπλησαν has wide support in the recensions starting with the Washington, Vatican, and Venetus codices, the Hexaplaric recension in the corrected form, L (22, 62, 711), C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 68, 239), and Cyril along with one Alexandrian testimony (198). ἐνέπλησαν is supported by the Alexandrian and M Codices, and the Complutensis Bible.

ii. ἔπλησε (πίμπλημι, aorist 3 singular) is supported only by 613 (Alexandrian witness)

iii. Instead of κατοικοῦντες (κατοικέω participle present active nominative masculine plural *live, reside*), V, the great majority of both L (22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719,

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<sup>307</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 1124.

<sup>308</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 1405.

<sup>309</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 545. As Smyth explains it, in the verbal form ἐνέπλησαν the preposition ἐν reappears in its proper form, which in the present tense is modified to ἐμ (cf. Smyth, 1956, p. 545).

763, 62, 147, 46, the original reading of 86, 711) and C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 68, 96, 534) have ἐνοικοῦντες (ἐν-οικέω participle present active nominative masculine plural *to dwell in a place, inhabit*). All critical editions consulted (Swete, Rahlfs, Ziegler) endorse κατοικοῦντες.

iv. V, the Hexaplaric recension in the corrected form, and some manuscripts from C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 96, 534), the Complutensian Bible, and Theophylact support ἐλάλησαν (λαλέω indicative aorist active 3 plural).

v. B is the only manuscript supporting ὑψώθητι (ὑψόω imperative aorist passive 2 singular) against ὑψώθη (indicative aorist passive 3 singular).

**b. Additions and omissions:**

- several unacceptable additions:
  1. the insertion of καί cannot be accepted as it is supported only by three witnesses in C (87-91-490) and it is a conflated reading.
  2. τὸν πλοῦτον is replaced with domus in texts of Latin provenance (Jerome and La<sup>s</sup>, IX century) and in Theophylact<sup>lem</sup>.
- Omissions:
  1. First αὐτῶν in one L manuscript (711), one C manuscript (538), and in Jerome.

**c. The other disputed morphological forms (regarding number ἄσεβείας, αὐτήν and ψευδή):**

- ἄσεβείας (ἡ ἀσέβεια, ας noun genitive feminine singular *impiety, godlessness*), Smyth is very helpful in explaining the rapport between the commanding verb πίμπλημι and the genitive ἄσεβείας: ‘the genitive is used with verbs signifying *to fill, to be full of*. The thing filled is put in the accusative’.<sup>310</sup> Consequently, ἐξ ὧν τὸν πλοῦτον αὐτῶν ἄσεβείας ἔπλησαν is to be translated ‘from which they filled their richness with

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<sup>310</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 324.

impiety'. ἐξ ὧν renders ἡψῆς, and refers not to the *city* (as was established in the MT earlier) but to ἐν ζυγῶ and ἐν μαρσίπῳ.

There are two proposed modifications:

1. Manuscript 26 (Alexandrian recension) supports ἀσεβεῖς. This form comes from the adjective ἀσεβής, ἐς (*ungodly, impious*)<sup>311</sup> but is used as a noun (ὁ ἀσεβής, εὐς<sup>312</sup>) because as an adjective it would have no other noun to qualify. ἀσεβεῖς can be either nominative plural or accusative plural. The former is the form employed here. The reason for the change is to provide a smoother translation by offering a syntactical subject for ἐπλησαν (the translation in this case would be: '[...] *in which impieties fill their richness*'). The reading lacks support in the manuscript, but improves the translation.
  2. Manuscripts 46-86<sup>xt</sup> (L) present ἀδικίας (noun genitive feminine singular/ accusative feminine plural *injustice*). This proposal appears in only one recension. Also the change would impact on the sense of the phrase, as L-S asserts that ἀδικία is the opposite of ἡ ἀσέβεια, ας referring probably to a semantic opposition between *injustice*, which implies a broken law, and *impiety* implying the disregard for a god.<sup>313</sup>
- **αὐτήν** (αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτό pronoun accusative feminine singular), there are five variations involving some modifications in case, number, gender, and an omission. The verb κατοικέω (*settle in, colonize*) has a transitive value which seems to be its classical use as shown by L-S 'κατοικέω πόλιν' (Herodotus) *to dwell in, inhabit*.<sup>314</sup> κατοικέω has also an intransitive value (*to dwell, to settle*)<sup>315</sup> which will be exemplified below. Given the participial use which refers to the inhabitants or the residents of the city, its value tends to switch from the action of settling the city (an internal accusative<sup>316</sup> as it stands in the present form in the critical text (αὐτήν)) as a locative value. Being a lost syntactical case in Greek, the functions of the locative were redistributed to the dative

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<sup>311</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 255.

<sup>312</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 243.

<sup>313</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 255.

<sup>314</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 928.

<sup>315</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1889/1974), p. 341.

<sup>316</sup> Cf. Smyth, 1956, p. 354.

case.<sup>317</sup> Consequently, one can see the logical modification operated by (1) some of L manuscripts (αὐτῇ dative feminine singular in 62 and 147) and (2) by Theodoret (ἐν αὐτῷ preposition ἐν<sup>318</sup> with dative masculine singular). (3) C (490) overrides any syntactical discussion by omitting αὐτήν but this is not a viable solution as this αὐτήν has a specific purpose: to make clear whose inhabitants are referred to (ἡ πόλις, εως *city* in v. 9). (4) Basil connects it through the change αὐτήν→αὐτόν (accusative masculine singular) with τὸν πλοῦτον ('those who are settled in it [in richness]'). (5) The L (36) and A recensions (49) suppose αὐτῶν (genitive plural), which plays on the intransitive quality of κατοικέω. αὐτῶν is a partitive genitive<sup>319</sup> to be translated as '*those who settled among them*'. All of the five proposals are discarded because they lack support in the manuscripts, and interpret the text.

- **ψευδῆ** (ψευδής, ἐς adjective accusative neuter plural) there are three variants. (1) V, Hexapla recensions (Origen and Syro-hexapla), 711 (Alexandrian recension), the majority of the C, La<sup>s</sup>, Theophylact and Jerome support ἄδικα (ἄδικος, ον adjective accusative neuter plural). (2) A variation from the same semantic family is ἀδικίαν (ἡ ἀδικία noun accusative feminine singular) supported by two late manuscripts from C (68 and 239) and the Armenian recension. (3) The last variant *in mendacio verba* (*they were speaking words in falsehood*) (Akhmimic translation) has no other textual support. Only the first variant has strong textual support in the witnesses, but it is rejected because it tries to make the text more readable and has no support whatsoever in the MT.

The only version which remains faithful to the MT text is the Akhmimic translation (*divites eius impleverunt iniquitatem*), but there is no other validation for this in the LXX manuscripts.

Text v. 12: ἐξ ὧν τὸν πλοῦτον αὐτῶν ἀσεβείας ἔπλησαν καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες αὐτήν ἐλάλουν ψευδῆ καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα αὐτῶν ὑψώθη ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῶν

<sup>317</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 47. The locative is discussed thoroughly in §215, §229, §280, §341-342, §1279, §1450, §1530-1543.

<sup>318</sup> Smyth, 1956, pp. 352-353: 'With names of countries and places, ἐν is more common than the locative dative, and, with the above exceptions, the place where is expressed in Attic prose with ἐν'.

<sup>319</sup> Smyth, 1956, pp. 316-317 [§1306-7], 320 [§1339].

Verse 13

Hexapla καίγε ἐγὼ ἐβασάνισα ἐπὶ σε ἀφανισμῷ διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου

LXX καὶ ἐγὼ ἄρχομαι τοῦ πατάξαι σε ἀφανιῶ σε ἐπὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις σου

This verse is very different in the Hexapla recension (Origen and Syro-hexapla), in 711 (L), some manuscripts in C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, 96, 534) and in Jerome<sup>lem</sup>. This variant manages to transmit the same message as MT, but it deviates from the LXX in trying to picture a clearer idea about the action (βασανίζω *to torture*, cf. 2Mac. 8:27) which is rendered with two verbs (ἄρχομαι *to begin* and πατάσσω *to strike*) in the LXX. These two verbs in turn are converted into one (βασανίζω), while the last verb (ἀφανιῶ) suffers a change from verb into a noun (ἀφανιῶ dative masculine singular ἀφανισμός, οὔ *destruction*). The result for the Hexapla recension is a single statement instead of the asyndeton in LXX.

The personal pronoun σέ (accusative 2 singular) remains the external object<sup>320</sup> for the verb (Hexapla βασανίζω/LXX πατάσσω), but the Hexapla recension enhances the hostile position with the use of the preposition ἐπί with accusative ('I have tortured [against] you').<sup>321</sup> One can say that ἐπί is even pleonastic. The cause of the punishment is presented with a normal διὰ with accusative ('because/owing to your sins').<sup>322</sup> Nevertheless, the critical text is more appropriate as it preserves the rhetorical quality of the asyndeton<sup>323</sup> and the Hebraic construction (אֶתְּיָדַי לְיָדְךָ) which underlines it. ἐπί with the dative ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις relates the motive<sup>324</sup> of the punishment, while the variant found in the Hexapla (διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας) has no influence on the general sense of the phrase.

V, La<sup>s</sup>, the Armenian translation and Jerome support ἀφανισμῷ (dative masculine singular ἀφανισμός, οὔ *destruction*) instead of the ἀφανιῶ (ἀφανίζω indicative future active 1 singular). All of these witnesses are later manuscripts.

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<sup>320</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 354, §1554.

<sup>321</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 379; cf. Liddell et al., 1996, p. 623.

<sup>322</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 375.

<sup>323</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 484, §2165a.

<sup>324</sup> Smyth, 1956, pp. 348 and 379.



The asyndeton has been cancelled with the addition of καί in most of the Alexandrian manuscripts (Alexandrian and M codices, 106, 26, 544, 49, 764, 613, 198, 233, 710, 407), in some manuscripts from C (534) and L (36, 46, 86), in the Ethiopic and Arabic translations, in Cyril, Basil, and Theophylact. This modification seems to have only really significant support in the Alexandrian recension, so it is discarded.

Because verses 12-13 are referring to the same object, L (22, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763 and Theodore) tries to make the plural forms in v. 12 (αὐτῶν [three times], ἐπλησαν, κατοικοῦντες, ἐλάλουν) agree with the personal pronouns in v. 13 (1) σέ (accusative 2 singular) and (2) σοῦ (genitive 2 singular) by replacing them either with (1) ὑμᾶς (accusative 2 plural) or eos (is, ea, id demonstrative pronoun accusative masculine plural only in Akhmimic translation) and, respectively, (2) ὑμῶν (genitive 2 plural) or αὐτῶν (only in Akhmimic translation). Being an attempt to correct the LXX, these variants are discarded. Verse 14 preserves the 2 singular forms.

Text v. 13: καὶ ἐγὼ ἄρξομαι τοῦ πατάξαι σε ἀφανιῶ σε ἐπὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις σου

Verse 14

Only three witnesses propose a modification of the first σύ: its replacement with καί (46 – L) and its deletion (first hand in minuscule 86 – L and the Ethiopic translation). Though very old, the attestation of the form ἐπλησθῆς (πίπλημι subjunctive aorist passive 2 singular) for ἐμπλησθῆς (ἐμπίπλημι subjunctive aorist passive 2 singular) in W is too weak to be considered. Based on Thayer's observations,<sup>325</sup> one can argue that πίπλημι refers to the idea of being full, to be completed, while ἐμπίπλημι relates to being satiated, satisfied. In the end their sense overlaps because they both share the same root.

The Hexapla recension, L (V, marginal notes in 36, 86, minuscule 711), C (87-91-490, 130-311-538, Armenian translation, Jerome), and Alexandrian recension (233, 710, Bohairic translation, Cyril, 748) support instead of (1) σκοτάσει ἐν σοὶ καὶ ἐκνεύσει (LXX) the variant (2) ἐξώσω<sup>326</sup> σε ἐν σοὶ καὶ καταλήψῃ<sup>327</sup> (I will displace you because

<sup>325</sup> Thayer, 1889/1974, pp. 208 and 509.

<sup>326</sup> ἐξ-ωθέω future indicative 1 singular *to expel, drive out, displace*, cf. Samuel Bagster, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited, 1852), p. 226; Liddell et al., 1996, p. 500.

<sup>327</sup> καταλαμβάνω, indicative future middle 2 singular, cf. Liddell et al., 1996, p. 897.

of you<sup>328</sup> and you will lay hold). The variations of this translation reported in Ziegler's critical apparatus have little support in the manuscripts, so they will not be discussed.

Both variants depart from the same difficult Masoretic expression  $\text{וַיִּשְׁתְּקוּ בְּקִרְבָּהּ וַתִּסַּג}$ . As we have seen in the textual criticism analysis performed on the Hebrew version, (1) the *Septuagint* believes that the form  $\text{וַיִּשְׁתְּקוּ}$  comes from the root  $\text{שָׁקַף}$  (*be, grow dark*), while  $\text{וַתִּסַּג}$  is interpreted with  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$  as equivalent of the Hebrew root<sup>329</sup>  $\text{סָר}$  (Hifil: 'to cause [turn aside] depart, common word for *remove, take away* [...] rare uses are: *put aside*.<sup>330</sup>). The most frequent Hebrew equivalent in the variant (2) for  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\text{-}\omega\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$  is  $\text{נָדָה}$  (18 times out of 30 occurrences of  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\text{-}\omega\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$  in LXX: Dt. 13:6; 2Sam. 14:13-14; 15:14; 23:6; 2Kgs. 17:21; Joel 2:20; Jer. 8:3; 16:15; 23:2-3, 8; 24:9; 25:16; 26:28; Ps. 5:11). The other verb  $\text{καταλήψη}$  understands the *Vorlage* as having a form of  $\text{נָשָׂה}$  (*to reach, overtake* cf. Hos. 2:9; 10:9; Zech. 1:6; Is. 35:10; 51:11; 59:9). Whatever the causes of the variation in the (1) *Septuagint* translation from  $\text{ג}$  to  $\text{ר}$  (different *Vorlage*, or a copyist's mistake), this variant is better attested.

This verse also has another 6 minor variations with little support in the witnesses:

1. Instead of  $\text{σκοτάσει}$  ( $\text{σκοτάζω}$  indicative future active 2 singular *to become dark, to remain in darkness*), the L (22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763, 62, 147, Theodore) and Alexandrian (49, 764, 613) recensions, and La<sup>s</sup> support  $\text{συσκοτάσει}$  ( $\text{συσκοτάζω}$  same morphological value *to grow quite dark*).

2. The form  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$  ( $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\omega$  indicative future active 3 singular *to turn aside, withdraw*) it has very good support: B, majority Alexandrian recensions (W and 407, Akhmimic translation, Basil)) is replaced with  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota\varsigma$  ( $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\omega$  indicative future active 2 singular) in L (together with the great majority of the Patristic tradition). Evidently, L tries to have this verb agree in person with the following  $\text{διασωθῆς}$  (2 singular), as they are antonyms. Regarding the comma between  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$  and  $\text{καί}$  in Ziegler's critical text, there is no reason for its use here because the conjunction  $\text{καί}$  is used to connect two sentences. The comma is not present in other similar cases (v. 14:  $\text{σὺ φάγεσαι καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐμπλησθῆς}$ ; v. 15:  $\text{σὺ σπερεῖς καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀμήσης σὺ πιέσεις ἐλαίαν καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀλείψῃ}$ ).

<sup>328</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 377, §1687c.

<sup>329</sup> Thayer, 1889/1974, p. 416.

<sup>330</sup> BDB, p. 694.

3. οὐ precedes the second οὐ μὴ in Codices Vaticanus and Venetus, in one Alexandrian (764) and one L minuscule (711). Despite the antiquity of B, this addition is justifiable neither on the basis of parallelism (in that case, it should have been placed before ἐκνεύσει), nor to provide precision in regard to the person involved, since the verb already signals the second person singular (διασωθῆς).

4. ἐάν supported by W is replaced with ἄν in the majority of the Alexandrian witnesses (Codices A and M, 106, 26, 544, 49, 764, 613, 198, 233, 534, Cyril), L (87-91-490, Theodore, Theophylact, Basil). Both variants can be qualified as a type of conditional clause called by Smyth ‘*more vivid future conditions*’. While in other types of conditional clauses the presence of one particle or another can influence its sense, for this specific case (protasis: subjunctive/apodosis future indicative) the particle can be ἐάν, ἄν or ἤν.<sup>331</sup> Given the antiquity of W, the first variant is more plausible.

5. Minuscule 48 and 86 (L), and Cyril support σωθῶσιν (σώζω subjunctive aorist passive 3 plural) against διασωθῶσιν (διασώζω). The only instances where the root σώζω translates the Hebrew טָלַף (*escape, bring to safety*) are Ps. 55(56):8, Mic. 6:14 and Job 21:10.

6. The same minuscule and Theodoret use the preposition ἐν with dative ῥομφαία instead of the preposition εἰς with the accusative ῥομφαίαν. Both prepositions suppose a locative value. The substitutions may be explained by the fact that the dative case usually fulfils this duty.<sup>332</sup>

Text v. 14: σὺ φάγεσαι καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐμπλησθῆς καὶ σκοτάσει ἐν σοὶ καὶ ἐκνεύσει καὶ οὐ μὴ διασωθῆς καὶ ὅσοι ἐὰν διασωθῶσιν εἰς ῥομφαίαν παραδοθήσονται

Verse 15

This verse counts several minor variations, most of them with little material support in the recensions. The same phenomenon of deletion of asyndeton (cf. verses 13 and 14) by inserting a copulative καί is verified in one L minuscule (51).

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<sup>331</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 523.

<sup>332</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 351.

Verb tenses vary substantially which is in fact a reflection of the difficulty the Greek reader experiences when attempting to translate faithfully the verbal forms from Hebrew. Ziegler counts several variations:

1. Origen and Basil report σπείρεις (σπείρω indicative present active 2 singular) instead of σπερεῖς (future).

2. ἀμήσης (ἀμάω subjunctive aorist active 2 singular) is replaced with ἀμήσεις (indicative future active 2 singular) in the Alexandrian recension (W), Origen, L recension (22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763, 62, 147), in the Catena recension (87-91-490), and others.

3. σὺ πῆσεις (*you will press*) has several variations:

a. Origen renders more precise the verb employing ἐκπιέζω (*to squeeze*);

b. C in minuscule 130 and 764 supports πῆσης (subjunctive present active 2 singular);

c. Another Catena minuscule (239) replaces it with another verb: σὺ ἐργάσει (ἐργάζομαι indicative future active 2 singular).

4. ἀλείψη (subjunctive aorist middle 2 singular) is discarded in one C minuscule (130) in favour of λήψη (λαμβάνω indicative future middle 2 singular). The sense of λαμβάνω employed here is *to receive as produce, profit*.<sup>333</sup>

5. Minuscule 86 (marginalia, Catena recension) replaces πῆτε (subjunctive aorist active 2 plural) with πῆεις (future indicative active 2 singular). πῆτε has a plethora of witnesses starting with B, followed by the Alexandrian recension (Codices A and M, 106, 26, 544, 198, 233, 764, Bohairic and Arabic, Cyril and Basil), and the Catena recension (534).

6. Before οἶνον two recensions (L [22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763] and C [87-91-490]) present ποιήσεις (ποιέω future indicative active 2 singular *to do, make*), while Bohairic translation (Alexandrian recension) has *conculcabit* (conculcare future indicative active 2 plural *to crush* cf. Is. 16:10).

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<sup>333</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 1027 cf. *ad locum*.

Each of the three pairs of sentences in v. 15 contains an affirmation (A) and a negation (B). In the Greek version the critical text contains three verbs (two expressed and one omitted) in the future indicative connected with another three verbs in subjunctive mode negated with οὐ μή. The negation ‘οὐ μή, and the compounds of each, are used in emphatic negative predictions and prohibitions.’<sup>334</sup> Because the force of the negation comes from the way the negation οὐ μή is constructed and not from the verbal forms themselves, Smyth’s definition applies to all versions regardless of the verbal form they employ (aorist subjunctive or future indicative). Two minuscules (62, 147) from L do not recognize this value of οὐ μή (the first in v. 15) and change it to οὐκ, simple negation.

Some correction is apparent for (1) ἐλαίαν (ἡ ἐλαία accusative singular feminine *olive tree*) with ἐλαίον (ἐλαίον accusative singular neuter *olive* (Origen)) and (2) οἶνον (ὁ οἶνος accusative masculine singular *wine*) with σταφυλήν (ἡ σταφυλή accusative *bunch of grapes* (Alexandrian recension: 49, La<sup>s</sup>, Jerome)) and ἄμπελον (ἡ ἄμπελος accusative *vine* (C: 239)).

The last part of verse 15 καὶ ἀφανισθήσεται νόμιμα λαοῦ μου has no equivalent in MT. This modification is supported by all recensions (Alexandrian: V, La<sup>s</sup>; L: 22, 48, 231, 719, 763, the Armenian translation, Theodore, Theodoret; C: 87-91-490, 130, 311, 68-96-239, Jerome; and Origen: Syrohexapla translation).

Text v. 15: σὺ σπερεῖς καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀμήσης σὺ πιέσεις ἐλαίαν καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀλείψῃς ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον καὶ οὐ μὴ πίητε καὶ ἀφανισθήσεται νόμιμα λαοῦ μου

#### Verse 16

The critical text proposed by Ziegler does not include the translation of the first clause of verse 16 מְרַיָּקָה תִּקְרָה מִשְׁפָּחָה due to its weak support with the recensions (Alexandrian: W, 786 and Ethiopic translation; few minuscules in L (51<sup>c</sup>, 46, 86, 711)). Besides the actual MT text, there is no real consensus among recensions to support it. Consequently,

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<sup>334</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 629 [§2754-2758]; for subjunctive: pp. 404-405; also with future tense: p. 429 [§1919].

Ziegler (as Complutensis Bible) treats this sentence as an addition to the critical text and not as a part of it, as do Rahlfs and Swete.<sup>335</sup>

This verse has its share of textual problems, but none of them is worth taking into consideration, as all have little support in the witnesses. Their list follows below with some commentary where necessary.

1. The omission of the article *τά* is supported only in some L witnesses (22, 36, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763 and Theodore).

2. One L witness (86\*) supports *ὄρια* (*τό ὄριον* nominative/accusative neuter *boundary limit*) instead of *ἔργα* (*τό ἔργον* accusative neuter plural *deed, action*).

3. Two witnesses (62 and Bohairic translation) spell *αχαβ* in place of *Αχααβ*. La<sup>s</sup> (Alexandrian recension) supposes *huius achab*, reading the proper noun with article *τοῦ* (genitive singular).

4. The variant *ἐπορεύθης* (indicative aorist passive 2 singular) instead of the *ἐπορεύθητε* (2 plural) is supported by one L minuscule (51<sup>c</sup>) and three minor Alexandrian witnesses (Akhmimic and Ethiopic translations, and Jerome). This is a correction that seeks to make the verb agree with pronouns (*σύ*) and verbal forms (*σπερεῖς, ἀμήσης, πίεςεις, ἀλείψη, πῆτε*) in 2 singular from verse 15. Due to the lack of witnesses, and because it is a correction of the text, the variant is discarded.

5. There are three modifications that are connected with *Αχααβ*:

a. *βουλαῖς* (*ἡ βουλή, ἥς* dative feminine plural *plan, decision*) is replaced in B, La<sup>s</sup> and the Akhmimic translation (both Alexandrian recension) with *ὁδοῖς* (*ὁ ὁδός* dative masculine plural);

b. The possessive pronoun *αὐτῶν* (*αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτό* genitive plural) is replaced with *αὐτοῦ* (genitive singular). This *αὐτοῦ* refers to *Αχααβ*. The modification reflects an agreement in number that the Armenian translation and two corrected L minuscules (22, 51) also observe. These witnesses are among those which do not include the sentence *καὶ ἐφύλαξας τὰ δικαιώματα Ζαμβρι*. The Armenian translation is constant regarding these two elements (possessive pronoun and

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<sup>335</sup> Ziegler, 1967, p. 223; Swete, 1905, p. 36; Rahlfs and Hanhart, 2006, p. 517.

Αχασβ), while 22, 51 corrected it later. The plural form αὐτῶν implies a reference to Ζαμβρι and Αχασβ.

- c. Two witnesses (Cyril<sup>P</sup> of Alexandria and Basil) prefer παραδώσει (παραδίδωμι indicative future active 4 singular) to παραδῶ (subjunctive aorist active 1 singular). Their translation would be ‘*so he will give you to destruction*’.

6. The same form παραδῶ is translated by the majority of the Alexandrian witnesses with παραδώσω (future indicative 1 singular ‘I will give you’). To render the MT (יְהִי עִירָהּ), the Greek translation should have employed the subordinate conjunction ὥστε with future (for something that ‘occurred *as a fact*’) or infinitive (for intention, etc.) in order to reproduce its consecutive sense.<sup>336</sup> Instead the *Septuagint* uses the causal subordinate conjunction ὅπως with the subjunctive, while the Alexandrian recension employs the future tense. According to Smyth, there is no difference in sense between the subjunctive and future tense in this case.<sup>337</sup>

7. There are also six other minor variations.

- a. Personal pronoun σέ (accusative 2 singular Lat. *te*) replaced with the plural (*vos*) in La<sup>s</sup>, and Armenian translation.
- b. Some witnesses have a different variant for κατοικοῦντας (κατοικέω *reside, settle*): ἐνοικοῦντας from ἐνοικέω *to dwell in a place* (Origen (Hexapla) and C (87-91-490, 68, 239, 613)), and συνοικοῦντας from συνοικέω *to dwell together* (130).
- c. Regarding the possessive pronoun αὐτήν (accusative feminine), minuscule 68 has dative αὐτῇ (locative sense, influenced by ἐνοικέω *to dwell in a place*); minuscule 46 changes it to masculine αὐτόν, a form also present in the Ethiopic and Armenian translations (*te*).
- d. C (46, 86, 711) uses preposition ἐν+dative instead of εἰς+accusative triggering a change in case from συρισμόν (ὁ συρισμός accusative) to συριγμῶ (ὁ συριγμός dative *a whistling, hissing*). There is no difference between ὁ συρισμός and ὁ

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<sup>336</sup> Cf. Smyth, 1956, p. 507 [§2257-2258].

<sup>337</sup> Smyth, 1956, p. 496 [§2203].

συριγμός in terms of sense (<συρίζω *to make a hissing sound* <ή σῦριγξ, ἰγγοσ, *pipe*).<sup>338</sup>

- e. L (all its witnesses, Theodore, exception 36) inserts λαοῦ μου (λαός genitive singular with personal pronoun 1 singular genitive) instead of λαῶν (genitive plural no personal pronoun) in order to make the Greek variant agree with MT (לְאֹמֵי).
- f. λήμψεσθε (λαμβάνω indicative future middle 2 plural) is replaced with λήμψονται (λαμβάνω indicative future middle 3 plural) in L recension (22, 48, 51, 231, 719, 763, 62, 147, Theodore) and in the Ethiopic and Arab translations.

Text v. 16: καὶ ἐφύλαξας τὰ δικαιώματα Ζαμβρι καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα οἴκου Αχασαβ καὶ ἐπορεύθητε ἐν ταῖς βουλαῖς αὐτῶν ὅπως παραδῶ σε εἰς ἀφανισμόν καὶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας αὐτήν εἰς συρισμόν καὶ ὄνειδη λαῶν λήμψεσθε

### 3.1. Conclusion

The analysis discerned divergences between MT and LXX in terms of textual differences and confirmed the general tendencies of the non-neutral recensions. The main differences regarded not only the obscure texts which needed clarification but also the insertion of little corrections so that the syntactical or morphological problems receive an appropriate reading in Greek.

The main differences between the two texts convey:

- 1. Reinforcement. (1) LXX repeats in v. 1 in direct speech the person who represents the source of the prophetic message: ἀκούσατε δὴ λόγον κυρίου κύριος εἶπεν. (2) In verse 15, LXX expands the curses with καὶ ἀφανισθήσεται νόμιμα λαοῦ μου ‘*and the lawful things of my people will be destroyed*’. The addition concludes the curses in verses 14-15.
- 2. Clarification of general/obscure words or phrases:
  - a. In v. 3 the addition of ἢ τί ἐλύπησά σε limits the general sense of the initial question הֲלֹא יִתְשַׁעַח הַמֶּלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם.
  - b. The Septuagint translates מִצְרָיִם with ὁ σχοῖνος, *rush, rush bed or reed* or ‘*land measure used especially in Egypt*’, which would fit with where the LXX was

<sup>338</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, pp. 1731-1732.



produced. This term comes from σχοινίς, ἴδος which means *rope* and is related to the noun σχοινᾶς *rope-maker* and the adjective σχοινινός *made of rushes*.<sup>339</sup> These elements suggest that σχοῖνος could be used in the making of ropes.

Regarding the sense of סִיטָוּ, the Septuagint does not seem to recognize it as the name of the biblical place סִיטָוּ if it is not acknowledged as such by MT. The term occurs five times in the Hebrew version but only in three passages (camp location: Num. 33:49; Jos. 2:1; 3:1), does it present as a name of a specific place because this can be determined from the context. In the other two instances (Joel 3:18 and Micah 6:5), the context is not explicit enough and LXX returns to ὁ σχοῖνος.

In Micah 6:5 MT, the sense of the phrase was easy to suppose because it talks about two places near the river of Jordan and it is fair to assume that implied a crossing from one place to another. The sense proposed by J. Aitken, who translates ὁ σχοῖνος in Jer. 18:15 with the word *way*,<sup>340</sup> does not fit the context of Mic. 6:5. Nevertheless, in his quest for the sense of ὁ σχοῖνος, he mentions T. Muraoka's statement that one should read the Septuagint looking for 'what sense a reader [...] ignorant of Hebrew or Aramaic might have made of the translation'<sup>341</sup> (p. 438).

Muraoka himself reads ὁ σχοῖνος as *rush*<sup>342</sup> but, if his previous suggestion is to be accepted, it should be read in the generic sense of *bush*. In this case, the message of the LXX is 'My people [...] [remember what have I done]<sup>343</sup> from the rush/bush to Gilgal' which could refer to Exodus 3:4 where God communicates his first commands to Moses from a *bush*, ἐκ τοῦ βάλτου (3:2-4). The sense of ὁ βάλτος, ου is *bramble-bush* (OED: A rough prickly shrub<sup>344</sup>), and it also refers to the Jewish measure of liquids.<sup>345</sup> Both βάλτος and σχοῖνος refer to a type of bush and measure.

Returning to the sense of סִיטָוּ, the Vulgate shows that its translation was not limited to *rush* or *measure*, because in Joel 4:18 it is translated with *spinarum*. This demonstrates that the difference in meaning between ὁ σχοῖνος and ὁ βάλτος is not that clear, as the first can have the same property of having thorns. Consequently, the translation of ὁ σχοῖνος can be flexible and should not be confined to *rush* or

<sup>339</sup> Liddell et al., 1996, p. 1746-1747.

<sup>340</sup> James K. Aitken, 'Σχοῖνος in the Septuagint', *Vetus Testamentum* 50, No. 4 (2000), pp. 433-444.

<sup>341</sup> Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Twelve Prophets* (Louvain: Peeters, 1993), p. VIII.

<sup>342</sup> Muraoka, 1993, p. 667.

<sup>343</sup> Cf. discussion of this ellipsis, pp. 20-21.

<sup>344</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, <http://www.oed.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/22583>, consulted on 30.09.2012.

<sup>345</sup> Thayer, 1889/1974, p. 99.

*measure*, but it can refer also to a generic *bush*. The reading with ὁ σχοῖνος has the advantages of both preserving the literalness of the passage and offering a coherent rendering.

- c. LXX explains עִם־לְהִיָּךְ לָכֵן וְהִצַּנְנֵנִי with καὶ ἔτοιμον εἶναι τοῦ πορεύεσθαι μετὰ κυρίου θεοῦ σου. A very common theme in the MT, walking humbly with God, is translated in LXX as a ‘being ready/prepared to walk with your God’.
- d. (v. 9-14) LXX interprets obscure expressions or words. The grammatical changes have been explained already.
  - i. הַיִּירָאֵה יְהוָה יִרְאַה שְׂמָךְ becomes καὶ σώσει φοβουμένους τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ‘save those who fear his name’.
  - ii. וְיָמִי יְעָדָה is translated with καὶ τίς κοσμήσει πόλιν ‘who adorns the city’. (v. 9).
  - iii. עוֹד הָאֵשׁ בֵּית רְשָׁע אֶצְרוֹת רְשָׁע is interpreted as μὴ πῦρ καὶ οἶκος ἀνόμου θησαυρίζων θησαυροὺς ἀνόμους ‘are there not fire and a house of wickedness in which they treasure wicked treasures?’ (v. 10) (cf. p.34).
  - iv. The relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר (v. 12), which has no visible antecedent, is translated with ἐξ ὧν referring it to ἐν ζυγῷ ἄνομος καὶ ἐν μαρσίππῳ. While MT supposed an uncertain ellipsis as v. 11, LXX connects verses 11-12: ‘will I be justified in a wicked balance and a heavy bag of treachery with which they fill their unjust wealth [...]?’
  - v. The ambiguous phrase וְיִשְׁתָּחֶה בְּקִרְבֶּךָ is read by LXX as καὶ σκοτάσει ἐν σοὶ καὶ ἐκνεύσει. The changes have already been presented (cf. p.103). The translation of the LXX is ‘and you will remain in darkness inside you and you will turn aside.’
  - vi. LXX observes that the punishments are directed to ‘my people’ (cf. Mic. 6:2, 3, 5) and consequently changes עַמִּי ‘my people’ in v. 16 (‘and the reproach of my people you will bear’) to λαῶν (‘and the reproach of peoples you will bear’).
3. Easier reading: because μου is already present three times, LXX avoids repetition of μου in v. 7 after ἀσεβείας where the context is clearly referring to the first person.

This presentation of the differences between LXX and MT has revealed the interpretation that the former is giving to Mic. 6. The overall message of chapter 6 does not change in the Greek recension.

Besides offering an interpretation of the difficult passages and corrections of a small element of incoherence (cf. v. 16), the Septuagint uses the ambiguous term  $\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$  (v. 5) as an excuse to be more inclusive in the description of the Exodus. The allusion to the burning bush produces a far more powerful image in the mind of the readers than the crossing of the Jordan. Its purpose is that of summarizing all of God's actions for the benefit of his people as it can be determined from its final position at the end of the list. This list is initiated in v. 4 where God states that he brought them up from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery, sent them the three prophets to guide them, and preserved them from the curses of the other people (the story of Balak and Balaam). All this can be resumed in one phrase *'My people [...] [remember what have I done]<sup>346</sup> from the [burning-]bush to Gilgal so that you may know the justice of the Lord.'* The questions in v. 6-7 do not present any variation from the MT.

The conclusion of the first part (interpreted as in v. 8) has a slight change in God's message by introducing the idea of 'being prepared'  $\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\nu$ . The word  $\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\omicron\varsigma$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\omicron\nu$  often occurs in the LXX but in this particular form  $\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\nu$  (accusative neuter singular or nominative neuter singular) there are only five occurrences in the LXX text which have a parallel to MT. All of them are connected to the temple or the presence of God (cf. Ex. 15:17: 'mountain of your inheritance'; 2 Chr. 6:2 'I have built you an exalted house'; Hos. 6:3 'His going forth is established as the morning'; Mic. 4:1 'the mountain of the Lord shall be prepared on top of the mountains'; and Mic. 6:8).

The interpretative technique of the translator is present more in the second part because of the larger number of difficult and ambiguous passages. The voice of God is calling to the city, but the only ones to be saved are 'those who fear his name'. The call is addressed to the tribe and to the ones who adorn the city. The rhetorical questions in verses 9-12 show more cohesiveness. LXX prefers the most literal and easiest reading when translating with *fire* the difficult form at the beginning of verse 10 even though it does not make sense in the context. Verses 11-12 indicate, in the LXX version, that the accumulation of wealth through deceit (wicked balance, *a heavy bag of treachery* and lying tongues) cannot be justified. Their sins constitute the reason for being stricken and

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<sup>346</sup> Cf. discussion on this ellipsis, p. 46.

destroyed (v. 13). The punishments coincide with those present in the MT. The interpretation of *וַיִּשְׁתָּהוּ בְּקִרְבָּהּ* in v. 14 with ‘*and you will remain in darkness inside you and you will turn aside*’ represents the interior drama that takes place at the same time as the external punishment for sin. The final v. 16 in LXX depicts an identical conclusion in which both the sins (keeping the states of Omri and all the works of Ahab) and the punishments (destruction, hissing and reproach of the peoples) are summarized.

The Septuagint proves to be a reliable translation which reproduces the sense of the phrase and clarifies the ambiguous passages. The internal coherence of the elements seems to be more important than the literalness of the translation (cf. *אֲשֶׁר*, v. 12). When the original MT is too broken to be repaired as in the case of *אֲשֶׁר*, *ὁ σχοῖνος*, the rendering of the passage interprets the general context but it does not go so far as to correct or to supply the missing words respecting the literalness of the passage when in doubt. This fine balance between literalness and free translation makes the Septuagint the most important witness in the history of the transmission of the Hebrew Bible.

## 4. Textual-linguistic Analysis: Targum Micah 6

Targum Micah 6 is a part of the Book of the Twelve in the Targum Jonathan (TJ). The language and the history of TJ are said to be similar to that of Targum Onkelos (TO) which was written in the Standard Literary Aramaic (SLA), used by the Jews towards the end of the Second Temple Period. This dialect is common to the Genesis Apocryphon (Qumran)<sup>347</sup> and, prior to its four-fifth century CE ‘official redaction’ in Babylon, was used in Palestine.<sup>348</sup> In recent times, the opinion that TO and TJ were written in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (JPA), which infers that Targum Proto-Onkelos is dated before 135 CE, seems largely accepted.<sup>349</sup>

The first attempt to apply the textual-linguistic method to Aramaic texts is that of Paolo Messina in his thesis submitted for an MA at Studium Biblicum in Jerusalem.<sup>350</sup> His work is limited to the Aramaic texts found in the Hebrew Bible and applies Niccacci’s synchronic approach. Often comparative, his research describes the syntactical constructs specific to Biblical Aramaic and their use in relation to temporal axes (past-present-future), syntactical value (foreground/background), and aspectual values (punctual or durative). This chapter will present Messina’s conclusions on the textual-linguistic method in Biblical Aramaic and proceed with an attempt to apply it to the Micah 6 Targum.

Regarding the rapport between JPA and Biblical Aramaic, Flesher-Chilton’s presentation of the Aramaic language is truly enlightening. Within J. A. Fitzmyer’s

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<sup>347</sup> Edward Yechezkel Kutscher, 'The Language of the Genesis Apocryphon', in *Aspects of the Dead Sea scrolls; Scripta Hierosolymitana, Vol.4*, ed. Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin (Jerusalem: Magnes-Press, 1965), pp. 9-11.

<sup>348</sup> Cf. Philip S. Alexander, ed. *Targum, Targumim*, The Anchor Bible Dictionary (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 321-325.

<sup>349</sup> Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 200. The Palestinian origin of TO and TJ has been advocated by Abraham Tal, *The Language of the Former Prophets and Its Position within the Aramaic Dialects* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1975 (in Hebrew)); Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, 'The Language of Targum Onkelos and the Model of Literary Diglossia in Aramaic', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 37, No. 2 (1978), p. 178.

<sup>350</sup> Paolo Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* (Disertatio ad Licentiam, Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 2011). A summary of his thesis was published in Messina, 'Il sistema verbale dell'Aramaico Biblico: Un approccio linguistico-testuale', in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ*. As to avoid confusion, all the subsequent footnotes mentioning Messina’s work will refer to his MA thesis. The ‘Scheme of Syntactical Construct in Biblical Aramaic’ (cf. below) is present in Niccacci’s *Festschrift* (Gregor Geiger and Massimo Pazzini, eds., *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ* (Milano/Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa, Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum–Analecta 78, 2011), p. 252).

framework of the five stages of the Aramaic language,<sup>351</sup> the Aramaic texts found in Ezra (4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26) belong to Imperial or Official Aramaic (700-200 BCE). After the decline of Official Aramaic, two dialects of Middle Aramaic were developed in Palestine, namely Judean Aramaic (cf. Sokoloff's Dictionary) and Jewish Literary Aramaic (JLA). The latter has as its earliest witness the Aramaic text of Daniel (beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE), which is chronologically followed by Targum of Job (mid second century BCE), Genesis Apocryphon (late first century BCE). TO and TJ reveal a standardisation and a development from the JLA towards to the JPA (in the second century CE). Nevertheless, according to Flesher and Chilton, the standardisation must have been completed by a scribal elite, associated with the temple in Jerusalem. Their work is reflected in Targum Proto-Onkelos and Jonathan and must have been finished at the beginning of the first century CE, before the wars with the Romans.<sup>352</sup>

Both Niccacci and Messina leave aside this diachronic dimension of the text when engaging into a textual-linguistic analysis. For the MT this approach has been fruitful despite the fact that it considered texts from a variety of historical periods. Messina's presentation shows that, regardless which dialect Ezra (Official Aramaic) and Daniel (JLA) belong to, this method can yield a coherent picture of the Aramaic verbal system. This chapter will present Messina's conclusions on the textual-linguistic method in Biblical Aramaic and proceed with an attempt to apply it to Targum Micah 6.

There are two more considerations to be added. First, it seems that the diachronic method is more concerned with the evolution in time of phonetics, phonology and vocabulary, than with the changes in verbal constructs. These constructs are fixed forms and their usage can be traced not only within a certain cluster of Aramaic dialects, but across several cognate languages (i.e. the attestation of imperative, *yiqtol* and *qatal* in Hebrew, Akkadian and Ugaritic). Thus, the theoretical suspicion that the textual-linguistic categories present in BH cannot be applied to Aramaic equivalents is unfounded.

Second, the parallelism between the MT and Targum is paramount for discovering the roles of a verbal construct in Aramaic. In contrast with the Aramaic of Ezra and Daniel,

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<sup>351</sup> Joseph A. Fitzmyer, 'Phases of the Aramaic Language', in *A Wandering Aramean: collected Aramaic essays* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), pp. 57-84.

<sup>352</sup> Flesher and Chilton, 2011, pp. 270-274.

the Targum Micah 6 has a parallel Hebrew text, which is followed almost to the letter. These types of texts may be used as guidelines to ascertain the value that verbal forms assume in Aramaic in general, and then safely deduce their value in other texts.

#### **4.1. Verbal system in Biblical Aramaic**

Messina identifies 12 syntactical constructs which are separately examined and then systematically presented in terms of their linguistic attitude (narrative or direct speech text). The present outline will firstly describe the narrative syntactical constructs and the direct speech constructs and secondly their use on temporal axes (past-present-future), in a similar way to Niccacci's description of Biblical Hebrew syntax.

Textual linguistics encompasses three elements: (1) linguistic attitude (narrative, direct discourse); (2) prominence (foreground-background or FLC-SLC); (3) linguistic perspective (retrieved information, the level of the story itself, anticipated information).<sup>353</sup> These main textual linguistic features are the same when applied to the Aramaic texts. A distinctive characteristic of Aramaic is the importance of the initial syntactical constructs. Both when introducing a new temporal axis and when the linguistic attitude is changed (narrative-direct speech, direct speech-narrative), the specific initial construct is used.

##### **4.1.2. Narrative texts**

a. Narrative texts are all connected to the past tense. Every narrative passage sets out with a flashback (prelude) part introduced by an x-qetal. If the author wants to add more information, the prelude will proceed with syntactical constructs like qetal, x-yiqtul, waw-yiqtul, x-participle and SNC. All syntactical constructs in the prelude are on the secondary level of communication.

b. The initial forms for the FLC (regent) are qetal, x-qetal, participle, x-participle and macro-syntactic markers [MSM] (אָלִי/אָרִי, כְּעֵן, אָדִינִי). These macro-syntactic markers

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<sup>353</sup> Cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 20.

render as regent any kind of SLC syntactical forms.<sup>354</sup> The continuative forms are qetal and participle.

c. Background information (SLC) is provided by using x-qetal, x-yiqtul, x-participle and SNC.

#### 4.1.3. Direct speech

These passages have all three temporal axes. In addition, the future tense records a second value with the future volitive.

a. Past tense has one initial form (foreground) x-qetal and two continuative forms - qetal and participle (also on FLC). Subordination is rendered with x-qetal (continuative form: qetal), x-yiqtul, x-participle (continuative form: participle), and SNC.

b. Present tense is initiated either with x-participle, or with SNC. The continuative syntactical constructs are the participle and SNC. All forms belong to FLC. On SLC direct speech proceeds with x-participle (continuative form: participle) and SNC (continuative form: participle).<sup>355</sup>

c. Future indicative has only x-yiqtul as initial form which can be continued with waw-yiqtul or simple yiqtul. This is not the case for future volitive where yiqtul continuative is always employed without waw.<sup>356</sup> Background information is provided through x-yiqtul (continuative form: yiqtul), x-qetal, x-participle and SNC.

d. Future volitive has two sets of initial forms in Biblical Aramaic: imperative and x-imperative, yiqtul (short form) and x-yiqtul. The continuative forms are yiqtul (also short form) and imperative. Subordination is expressed through x-imperative and x-yiqtul (short form).<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Cf. Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 68: 'La presenza di un SgM [segno macrosintattico cf. MSM] lungo il racconto indica che la proposizione seguente si trova sul PP [primo piano] della comunicazione quanto alla MR [messa in rilievo], anche quando questa è costituita da un costrutto che normalmente si trova sullo Sf [sfondo]'.

<sup>355</sup> This particular form is referred to in the table below as 'qetal<sup>\*c</sup>' (qetal background continuative form). Similarly there is a 'participle<sup>\*c</sup>' (participle background continuative form). Both sigles intend to discriminate background SLC forms from FLC qatal and participle forms.

<sup>356</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 31.

<sup>357</sup> My presentation is based on Chapters 3 and 4 of Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* pp. 85-109.



Biblical Aramaic is more flexible in using these syntactical constructs. (1) The participle may occupy a foreground position (both in narrative passages and direct speech) in concurrence with qetal. (2) There is no syntactical difference between waw-qetal and qetal as continuation forms in narrative passages and in direct speech (both on FLC). The same rule applies to the yiqtul and weyiqtul forms. (3) There are no different types of negation for the indicative tenses, as happens in Biblical Hebrew (for example the negation for wayyiqtol is not אֵל-yiqtol but אֵלַי-qatal while for weqatal it is not אֵלַי-qatal but אֵלַי-yiqtol). Nevertheless, the rule of different negations for indicative (אֵל) and future volitive forms (אֵלַי) is still applied in Biblical Aramaic which has אֵל for indicative and אֵלַי for future volitive forms.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p 28n.106 and p. 107.

## 4.2. Micah 6 Targum

This chapter in the Targum is divided into two parts (1-8 and 9-16).<sup>359</sup> The first part starts with an imperative, offering a clear indication that the text is a direct speech passage. Consequently, all syntactical forms in this chapter will be analysed as parts of direct speech. The second part sets off with an x-participle (v. 9: נבייא דיוי על קרתא מכלן: קל) which is the normal initiation for the present tense in direct speech. Its continuation is an x-participle which represents background information on SLC. This verse has the sole purpose of introducing another direct speech in v. 10-16.

v. 1: שמעו כען ית דיוי אמר קום דין עם טוריא וישמען רמתא<sup>360</sup> קלך

*Hear to what the Lord says: Rise up, contend before the mountains and the heights hear your voice!*

This first verse commences with an IMP plural followed by an x-participle (די+participle) which in turn introduces another direct speech with another two IMP plural. די shares the same purpose as the Hebrew אָשַׁר to transform the clause into a SNC type.<sup>361</sup> Consequently, the participle loses its verbal value as attested in other cases<sup>362</sup> and all the attention shifts towards God (דיוי) who is found here in a prominent position.

כַּעַן does not have the macro-syntactic function defended by Messina<sup>363</sup> but it acts as the equivalent of the particle interjection נָא (cf. Gen. 13:9; 14:52; 27:20; Mic. 3:1, 9; 6:5) after an IMP form. Messina does not mention this use of כַּעַן because כַּעַן is only used with a macro-syntactic function in Biblical Aramaic.

The actual words of God start with two IMPs followed by one waw-yiqtul (וישמען). The obvious temporal axis is that of the future volitive. When speaking about the future volitive in Hebrew, it is possible to differentiate between (1) weyiqtol (normal form of continuation for future volitive after an IMP; final inference) and (2) weqatal (normal

<sup>359</sup> For the Aramaic critical text Sperber's edition was used (Sperber, 1962, pp. 447-449).

<sup>360</sup> Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim* (London: Luzac&Co., 1903), p. 1481: masculine רָם, רָמָא, feminine plural רָמָא: high, exalted.

<sup>361</sup> Niccacci, 1990, pp. 23-24.

<sup>362</sup> Cf. Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* pp. 41-48.

<sup>363</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 72: 'Il suo uso [כַּעַן] può essere paragonato a quello di עָתָה in ebraico. Il suo valore è temporale-argomentativo' cf. Niccacci, 1990, p. 101. This particular function is present in Hos. 5:3; Mic. 4:9, 14.

form of continuation for future indicative after an x-yiqtol; conclusive inference).<sup>364</sup> In BH, *waw* becomes an integral part of syntactical constructs assigning them a new meaning (cf. wayyiqtol, weyiqtol, weqatal forms). This is not the case in BA where the *waw* simply preserves its copulative sense. The *waw*-yiqtol should be interpreted according to the first option, as the influence of future volitive is very strong. This verse is exact translation of the Hebrew text.

v. 2:

שמעו טוריא ית דינא דיוי ועקריא יסודי ארעא ארי דינא קדם יוי עם עמיה ועם בית ישראל עביד תוכיחא  
*Hear, mountains, the judgment of the Lord, and roots of the foundation of the earth, because [there is] judgment before the Lord against his people and against the house of Israel he is doing the admonishment.*

This verse repeats the IMP form שמעו which has two subjects (טוריא ארעא, ועקריא יסודי). The reasons for this call presented through two sentences (SNC and x-participle) are on the SLC introduced by the subordinate conjunction אַרְי. The first sentence is a SNC with no verbal form and has a descriptive purpose, preserving the Hebrew syntax [כִּי רִיב לִיהוָה],<sup>365</sup> while the second is an x-participle, which translates the Hebrew x-yiqtol. The use of x-yiqtol and its parallel Aramaic x-participle aim to illustrate that by ‘my people’ the author refers to ‘Israel’.<sup>366</sup>

v. 3-4: עמי מא טבא אמרית למעבד לך ולא עבדית או מא מרועא<sup>367</sup> קשיא אסגית<sup>368</sup> עלך אסהיד קדמי  
 ארי אסיקתך<sup>369</sup> מארעא דמצרים ומבית עבדותא פרקתך ושלחית קדמך תלתה נביי משה  
 לאלפא מסרת ודינין אהרן לכפרא על עמא ומרים לאוראה לנשיא

<sup>364</sup> Cf discussion Niccacci, 1990, p. 91.

<sup>365</sup> Cf. Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 49.

<sup>366</sup> A similar temporal shift from weqatal → x-yiqtol in Ex. 18:26bc is observed in Niccacci, 1990, p. 67.

<sup>367</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 839: (*evil*) occurrence, visitation.

<sup>368</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 954: סגי in afel to enlarge, increase, make great.

<sup>369</sup> Dalman and Stevenson record of the Afel perfect form אַסִּיק, *aufsteigen lassen/to release*. Cf. Gustaf Hermann Dalman, *Aramäisch–neuhebräisches Handwörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch* (Frankfurt: J. Kauffmann Verlag, 1922), p. 292 and William Barron Stevenson, *Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 61. This particular form is an Afel perfect 1 singular with a pronominal suffix 2 masculine singular. Jastrow mentions that the root קָקַל or קָקַל are equivalent of the Hebrew עלה, but has no records of any קָקַל in Afel (p. 997). As it stands the afel form אַסִּיק can be either a perfect 3 singular or an imperfect 1 singular. The form אַסִּיקְתְּ indicates that it is about a perfect tense as the suffix is attached to a קְתַבְתָּ form, cf. Stevenson, 1962, p. 83, §36.5.

*My people, what good have I promised<sup>370</sup> to do for you and I did not do [it] or have I increased an [evil] visitation against you, testify before me, because I brought you from the land of Egypt and from the house of slavery I ransomed you and I sent before you my three prophets: Moses to teach the tradition of judgments, Aaron to atone for the people and Miriam to teach the women?*

The syntactical analysis of MT<sup>371</sup> established that these two verses share a very strong syntactical and logical connection. The last question of verse 3 in MT is a ‘rhetorical interrogative question’ which presents the reason or the motivation for the question in verse 4. The Aramaic translator reproduces this strong connection and adds a few comments to the list of names in verse 4 (using the infinitive). While these comments in verse 4 do not change in any way the syntactical situation in verses 3c-4, the first simple rhetorical question is developed into a full apodosis-protasis period (מא טבא אמרית למעבד (לך ולא עבדיית).

Syntactically, the level of communication shifts back from the second (v. 2bc) to the first one with the first rhetorical question. After the vocative עמי (‘my people’), the discourse proceeds with an x-qetal (מא טבא אמרית) followed by waw-לא-qetal (ולא עבדיית). The first construction is the usual initial form for the past in direct speech FLC.<sup>372</sup> Its aspect is punctual and refers to a specific time in the past. The normal continuation on the same level is the waw-qetal or qetal. According to Messina, there is no difference between them at the syntactical level,<sup>373</sup> whereas in Hebrew the value of qatal is different from weqatal. Also the negation for qetal is simply לא-qetal.<sup>374</sup> Consequently, the first two syntactical constructions in verse 4 remain on FLC.

At the syntactical level, the x-qetal and waw-לא-qetal are equal as a result of the copulative coordination. Nevertheless, the logic of the message reveals them to be closer to a protasis-apodosis period. In this case, the protasis is לך אמרית למעבד ‘I have promised’ and the apodosis is ולא עבדיית ‘I did not do [it]’. The translation should be ‘What good despite promising to do it for you did I not do?’ One mark of this particular

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<sup>370</sup> The context here clearly shows that it is not merely about saying but it is about promising, vowing.

<sup>371</sup> Cf. pp. 41-42.

<sup>372</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 25: In direct speech, ‘questo costrutto [x-qetal] si riscontra sempre e solo al principio della catena temporale del passato e indica l’inizio di un racconto orale’.

<sup>373</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 21.

<sup>374</sup> Cf. Dan 2:10; 3:12, 27; 5:22-23; 6:5,14,18,22,24; Jer. 10:11; Ez. 5:6-7.

connection is the existence of a common object טבא, which is not repeated in the second sentence.

The second construction (או מא מרועא קשיא אסגיתי עלך), formed by an x-qetal FLC, is a parallel rhetorical question with מא טבא אמרית למעבד לך. The coordinate conjunction או connects these two rhetorical questions.

The fluidity of the direct discourse enables the author to shift from past tense to future volitive tense with the imperative (אסהיד קדמי). Messina accepts Niccacci's classification of the imperative as a volitive tense.<sup>375</sup>

Verse 4 resumes the past tense on the SLC with two x-qetals (ומבית ארי אסיקתך and ומבית ארי אסיקתך) followed by the normal continuation form in past tense, waw-qetal. These three constructions represent a heterogeneous shift both in tense and syntax (from the imperative in v. 3d), offering the reasons for the motivated question.<sup>376</sup>

v. 5 עמי אידכר כען מא מלך בלק מלכא דמואב ומא אתיב יתיה בלעם בר בעור הלא גבורן  
אתעבידא<sup>377</sup> לכון ממישר שטין עד בית גלגלא בדיל למדע זכותא דיוי

*My people, remember what Balak king of Moab advised and what Balaam son of Beor answered him. Were mighty deeds not done for you from the valley of Shittim to the house of Gilgal in order that you know the meritorious deeds of the Lord?*

Verse 5 begins with the same vocative עמי and an imperative construct, returning the direct speech on FLC, future volitive. Two x-qetal forms on SLC enclose information in the past tense and represent two indirect questions. Moreover, these constructs retain a descriptive punctual aspect and translate accurately the Hebrew x-qatal forms.

The Aramaic version explains the obscure elliptic construction מן־השטים עד־הגלגל with a negative rhetorical question, which is an x-qetal. Besides revealing that the events took place in the past, this construction highlights the importance of the גבורן, which in fact is

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<sup>375</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 53. Mentioning Weinrich's research, he asserts: 'Questa forma [imperative] si trova sollo al interno del discorso diretto e appartiene all'asse del futuro, in quanto l'azione che essa esprime non è ancora avvenuta nel momento della comunicazione'.

<sup>376</sup> Cf. Messina, p. 88.

<sup>377</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1035. This is an ithpeel perfect 3 feminine plural from עבד *to be done to be made, become*.

the subject of the passive עבד.<sup>378</sup> The Aramaic version proceeds then with the infinitival construction introduced by the subordinate conjunction בדיל.

v. 6:

במא אפלה קדם יוי אשתעבד לאלהא דשכינתיה<sup>379</sup> בשמי מרומא האפלה קדמוהי בעלוון בעגלין בני שנא  
*With what shall I worship before the Lord or shall I bow to God whose Shekinah [is] in the high heavens? Shall I worship before him with burnt offerings, with one-year-old calves?*

This verse marks a complete shift in tense, person and level of communication from the previous ones. The author follows the original Hebrew text, expanding only when referring to the divine name of God, as a sign of deep reverence.

Similarly, the syntactical situation entirely reproduces the Hebrew setting. The succession of constructions is x-yiqtul–yiqtul–x-yiqtul, all rhetorical questions being posed in the first person. The general temporal axis is future indicative. The first two constructions fit into the pattern discerned by Messina: it starts with an x-yiqtul, followed by a yiqtul on the same level of communication.<sup>380</sup> As an observation, the rule on non-initial yiqtul as pointed out by Niccacci<sup>381</sup> does not apply in Aramaic (cf. discussion, p. 45).

X-yiqtul/yiqtul forms are rarely associated with narrative passages and only for conveying background information.<sup>382</sup> The main purpose of yiqtul is to ‘announce an action which still has to happen’<sup>383</sup> and it is the usual form of continuation in the future indicative. In direct speech x-yiqtul functions are more diverse, as it can be found either in the foreground (as initial form) or in the background.<sup>384</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Stressing the importance of the element x is one of the purposes of the x-qetal/x-qatal constructions cf. Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico–testuale* p. 23; Niccacci, 1990, p. 69.

<sup>379</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1573: שְׁכִינָה – royal residence, Shekinah, Divine Presence, holy inspiration.

<sup>380</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico–testuale* p. 28.

<sup>381</sup> Niccacci, 'A Neglected Point of Hebrew Syntax: Yiqtol and Position in the Sentence', 1987, pp. 7-19.

<sup>382</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico–testuale* pp. 26 and 31.

<sup>383</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico–testuale* p. 27.

<sup>384</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico–testuale* p. 32.

In normal circumstances, the third construct (x-yiqtol) would have marked the shift from the foreground to background information.<sup>385</sup> Instead, due to the atypical succession of rhetorical questions, the last x-yiqtol in the verse should be interpreted as an initial form in the future tense FLC.

v. 7 היתרעי יוי באלפי דכרין ברבות נחלין דמשה האתין ברי חלף חובי חיבוב<sup>386</sup> מעי חלף הטאי נפשי  
*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
 Shall I give my son<sup>387</sup> in place of my transgressions, the love of my womb in place of the  
 sins of my soul?*

The rhetorical questions continue in verse 7 with two consecutive x-yiqtul in the future indicative tense. The first one repositions the discourse on to the foreground. The continuation form in the future tense is (waw)-yiqtul<sup>388</sup> both in the foreground and background. Nevertheless, I presume this second x-yiqtul is on FLC future tense, because it comes after a long line of parallel rhetorical questions initiated by במא אפלה in v. 6. This x-yiqtul closes the series of rhetorical questions initiated by הלא גבורן in v. 5.

v. 8:

אתחזה לך אנשא מא טב ומא יוי תבע<sup>391</sup> מינך אלהין למעבד דין דקשוט ומרחם גמילות חסדא והוי<sup>390</sup> צניע<sup>389</sup>  
 להלכא בדחלתא דאלהך

*It has been told to you, O man, what is good and what the Lord demands from you: only  
 to do the justice of righteousness, and to love deeds of kindness. And be decorous to  
 walk in the fear of your God!*

<sup>385</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 34: 'La presenza di un successivo x-yiqtul [after an x-yiqtol-yiqtol sequence] o di un altro costruito interrompe questa catena e determina, rispettivamente, il passaggio dalla comunicazione dal primo piano allo Sf[ondo] oppure la transizione verso un altro asse temporale'.

<sup>386</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 450: חיבובקא, *love, loved object*.

<sup>387</sup> Some manuscripts add בכורי, cf. Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon, *The Targums of the Minor Prophets* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), p. 124. This is considered an addition which translates the Hebrew בכורי, but not necessarily a part of the Targum critical text, cf. Sperber, 1962, p. 448.

<sup>388</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* pp. 28-29.

<sup>389</sup> Jastrow derives this word (after Rashi) from צנוע *retired, discrete chaste, decorous* cf. Jastrow, 1903, pp. 1291-1292.

<sup>390</sup> Imperative masculine singular from הוי cf. Gustaf Hermann Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1905), p. 354; Jastrow, 1903, p. 338.

<sup>391</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1645: תבע *to ask, to demand; to enquire, to search* (equivalent of דרש and בקש).

In this verse direct speech returns to the past tense through one qetal (foreground) followed by two indirect questions. While the first indirect question is a SNC, the second is an x-participle construction, both on the background.

The Aramaic version reproduces faithfully the Hebrew subordinate conjunction  $\text{כִּי אִם}$  with  $\text{אֱלֹהִין}$ .  $\text{אֱלֹהִין}$  is an equivalent of  $\text{אֵל}$  used as an adversative conjunction after a negative sentence.<sup>392</sup> This use corresponds to the one determined by Niccacci for  $\text{כִּי אִם}$ .<sup>393</sup>  $\text{אֱלֹהִין}$  introduces two infinitival constructions. Despite the fact that the whole verse is syntactically subordinated to a qetal in the past tense (אתחזה), these particular constructions are translated with the present tense, as they refer to God's commandments. These commandments cannot be limited to the moment of their appearance in time, as they are universal and equally refer to the past, present and the future. When translating  $\text{וְהִצַּנַּע לְכַת עִם-אֱלֹהֵיךָ}$ , the Aramaic translator uses a future volitive tense with the periphrastic construction of  $\text{הוּי}$  with the imperative and participle (צניע ויהוּי).

v. 9 קל נבייא דיוי על קרתא מכלן ומלפין דחלין לשמך שמע מלכא ושלטונא ושאר עמא דארעא

*The voice of the prophets of the Lord to the city shouts because teachers fear your name. Listen, O king and governor, and the rest of the people of the land.*

Verses 9-16 represent the second part of the prophecy in Micah 6 and are addressed to the 'king and governor, and the rest of the people of the land'. After naming the addressees, the 'voice of the prophets' lists the sins of the people (6:10-12) and the punishments (6:13-16).

Verse 9 proceeds with a succession of two x-participles in the present tense. While the first construction signals the shift to the present tense, the second one presents background information.

In order to determine the value of the second x-participle, three elements should be taken into account. (1) This second x-participle belongs to the SLC (so it is subordinated to the first x-participle) and refers to a 'unique action concomitant or successive to the one presented on the main level of communication'<sup>394</sup>. (2) Due to the

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<sup>392</sup> Dalman, 1905, p. 241.

<sup>393</sup> Cf. Niccacci, 'Il libro del profeta Michea. Testo traduzione composizione senso', 2007, p. 134.

<sup>394</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 40.



obscurity of the Hebrew original, the Aramaic translator is forced to interpret ותושיה יראה with שמך with ומלפין דהלין לשמך ('and teachers fear your name'). MT remains enigmatic and neutral by recording only facts ('the voice of God calls to the city and it is wisdom to fear his name'), with no further comments on the historical setting. The Aramaic version expands on the suggestion of a specific political power induced by מטה into 'kings and governors' who are called to listen. (3) The 2 masculine suffix of לשמך may be referred to God ('teachers fear your name, [God]') or to the king and governor ('teachers fear your name, [O king]').

In this context, it is reasonable to assume that the teachers fear the king, not God, and to interpret the suffix as referring to the king. Fear of the king makes more sense. People do not dare to speak against the king who is responsible for or even a partaker of their sins and, consequently, the 'voice of the prophets' reacts. This verse ascertains the divine source of the prophetic voice, presents its historical status, and calls for everybody's attention (king, governor and people alike).

v. 10-12 עווד דאית בית רשיעא אוצרין דרשע ומכילין דשקר מיתין<sup>395</sup> לוט  
 היזכון במוזנוון דרשע ובכיס דביה מתקלין רברבין ודעדקין  
 דעתירהא מלן אוצריהון חטוף ויתבהא ממללין שקר ולישנהון נכלין בפומהון

(10) *Are there still the house of the wicked treasures of evil and measures of lie which bring curse?* (11) *Will they be justified with scales of wickedness and with the bags in which there are weights big and small, (12) whose rich one fill their treasury with violence and whose inhabitants [repeatedly] speak lie and their tongues [are] deceit in their mouths?*

Verses 10-12 contain two rhetorical questions. Syntactically, the entire verse 10 is a SNC which begins with the adverb עווד (still)<sup>396</sup> and changes its discourse to the present tense on the FLC.

This regent state is preserved with the x-yiqtul (היזכון) in verse 11, which is the initial form for the future indicative. The element x is the interrogative prefix ה. It should be noted that v. 10 is in the present tense, while verse 11 is in the future.

<sup>395</sup> Participle afel masculine plural from אתא/אתי to bring, carry, cause to come cf. Jastrow, 1903, p. 132; Dalman, 1905, p. 359.

<sup>396</sup> Dalman, 1905, p. 213.

Verse 12 is introduced with the subordinate conjunction ךֿ. Messina makes a distinction between its function at clause level to express the Genitive case (similar to the construct state) and its function in a phrase, where it can introduce either verbal clauses (that actually have a verbal form), or a SNC (with no verb). Messina concludes that it is employed in four types of constructions: ךֿ-(x-)qetal; ךֿ-(x-)yiqtul; ךֿ-(x-)participle; and ךֿ-SNC. Most frequently used as a conjunction, it has the same function as אָשָׁר: ‘to nominalize the subsequent construct’.<sup>397</sup>

Verse 12 comprises three sentences, all on SLC. It starts with a ךֿ-x-qetal, proceeding with one x-participle and one SNC. The Aramaic version preserves the ambiguity of the MT, which leads to the conclusion that ךֿ is referring to קרתא (v. 9 *the city*).

In narrative text and in direct speech, x-qetal (background) either comments or adds specific details related to the story presented in the foreground.<sup>398</sup> The x-participle construct is polyvalent because it can fill both the functions belonging to x-qetal (commentary and adding details) and to x-yiqtol (repetitive actions or describing an action in progress).<sup>399</sup> The SNC on SLC communicates contemporary information or has a descriptive function.<sup>400</sup> Considering the value of each construction, it is reasonable to assume that the translation of verse 12 is: ‘*whose rich fill their granary with violence* (adds a specific detail) *and whose inhabitants lie [repeatedly] and their tongues [are] deceit in their mouths*’ (reinforces the idea of speaking lies).

v. 13                                      ואף אנא איתיתי<sup>401</sup> עלך מרע ומחא אצדינך על דחבתא

*Also I brought upon you sickness and plague I made you desolate because you have sinned.*

Verse 13 begins with an x-qetal followed by qetal continuative, both on the foreground. The background information is introduced with an x-qetal, where the x element is the

<sup>397</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 56. He dedicates an entire section to developing the uses of ךֿ in pp. 56-68. There is no difference in syntax between constructions with x and those without.

<sup>398</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 25.

<sup>399</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 40.

<sup>400</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 49. The SNC is defined as a syntactical construct which contains either a ‘participle with nominal function (attributive or as substantive) or the particle אִתְּי with or without participle’ (pp. 48-49).

<sup>401</sup> Dalman, 1905, p. 358: אַתְּי/אַתְּא afel 1 singular; cf. Jastrow, 1903, p. 132: אַתְּי/אַתְּא afel *to bring, carry, cause to come*.

subordinate conjunction על ד.<sup>402</sup> The Aramaic is more explicit in this verse, as it mentions more specific punishments for sin (sickness and plague) than its Hebrew counterpart (smiting and desolation).

v. 14-15      את תיכול ולא תסבע ויהי לך למרע במעך ותדביק ולא תשיזיב ודשתיזיב להרבא אמסר  
 את תזרע ולא תחצוד את תבדיר זיתין ולא תשוף משה ותעצר ענבין ולא תשתי חמר  
*You shall eat, but not be satisfied and there shall be sickness in your belly; you shall obtain but not save, and what you save to the sword I shall hand over. You shall sow, but not harvest. You shall tread olives, but not anoint yourself with oil, and [you] will tread grapes, but not drink wine.*

These two verses list all the curses that will fall on people and belong to the future tense. The projection of these curses in the future tense is signalled by the fact that all verbal constructions represent a variation of *yiqtul*.

Another common aspect is the parallelism that influences the succession of the syntactical constructs. Rather than presenting the curses with coordinate *yiqtul*, the initial *x-yiqtul* is employed (14a, 15ac) in order to introduce a human action (eat, sow, tread olives) which is continued with *waw-אָל-yiqtul* (14b, 15bd). The latter forms predict their failure (you shall not be satisfied, you shall not reap, you shall not anoint yourself) which can be further developed with a chain of *waw-yiqtul/ waw-אָל-yiqtul* (cf. v. 14 and 15c-f) in the foreground.

The use of the initial *x-yiqtul* has the purpose of organising the human actions into three categories:

- i. Work of the land which is expanded in verse 14. All constructs remain on FLC while the last *x-yiqtul* (14g) relates additional information on SLC.

g	f	e	d	c	b	a
את תיכול	ולא תסבע	ויהי לך למרע במעך	ותדביק	ולא תשיזיב	ודשתיזיב	להרבא אמסר
<i>x-yiqtul</i>	<i>waw-אָל-yiqtul</i>	<i>waw-yiqtul</i>	<i>waw-yiqtul</i>	<i>waw-yiqtul</i>	<i>waw-אָל-yiqtul</i>	<i>x-yiqtul</i>

- ii. Sowing.

b	a
ולא תחצוד	את תזרע
<i>waw-אָל-yiqtul</i>	<i>x-yiqtul</i>

<sup>402</sup> Dalman, 1905, p. 233: *wegen* [because of/on account of].

iii. Treading olives and grapes.

f	e	d	c
ולא תשתי חמר	ותעצר ענבין	ולא תשוף משח	את תבדיר זיתין
waw-אל-yiqtul	waw-yiqtul	waw-אל-yiqtul	x-yiqtul

v. 16:

על<sup>403</sup> דנטרתון גזירת בית עמרי ועבדתון עובדי בית אחאב והליכתון בנמוסיהון בדיל לממסר יתך לצדו  
ויתבהא לאשתממו וחסודי עמי תקבלון

*Because you observed the decrees<sup>404</sup> of the house of Omri and you have done the works of the of the house of Ahab and you have walked in their laws, so as to deliver you to desolation and her inhabitants to become desolate; and the shame of my people you shall receive.*

This verse illustrates the underlying cause for the curses that will strike people in the future. Consequently, the discourse shifts to the past tense on SLC through an x-qetal followed by two continuative waw-qetals.

What follows is divergent from what MT transmits. This divergence includes two infinitival constructions introduced by בדיל<sup>405</sup>, which obviously renders them subordinated to the previous chain of x-qetal→waw-qetals.

The last waw-x-yiqtul can be interpreted either as belonging to the future tense FLC, with the sole purpose of introducing a consequence (*‘Consequently, the shame of my people you shall receive’*), or to the past tense SLC, by assuming one of the functions listed by Messina (emphasis on the element x, repetitive action, or it presents important information).<sup>406</sup>

<sup>403</sup> Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University-Press, 1990), p. 406: על, conjunction *because, since*. He inserts here an observation which is useful in determining up to which point this Aramaic translation is a literal one: *‘This word is never employed in the Targumic text in literal translations which use either [see entry] ארום or בגין’*.

<sup>404</sup> Some manuscripts support the MT plural form, cf. Cathcart and Gordon, 1989, p. 125.

<sup>405</sup> Regarding the significances of בדיל cf. Dalman, 1905, p. 233: *wegen (on account of)*; Jastrow, 1903, pp. 140: *on account of, for the sake of, in order that*; Sokoloff, 1990, p. 85: (conjunction) *on account of, since, in order that*.

<sup>406</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell’aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* pp. 31-33.

### 4.3. What type of translation is the Targumic version of Micah 6?

The definition of the word *translation* is different in antiquity from what it is believed to be today. Oxford English Dictionary defines *translation* as ‘*the action or process of turning from one language into another; also, the product of this; a version in a different language*’.<sup>407</sup> When applied to the translation of the Hebrew Bible, for the ancients, this idea was more specific and oriented towards obtaining a ‘*sacred text as intelligible as possible to people with social status, cultural and linguistic context different from that in which the Bible was written*’.<sup>408</sup> Ribera’s definition does not limit the Targum translation to a mere word-by-word or thought-for-thought reproduction of the text into Aramaic, but also implies that the translator has to incorporate into his work elements that would render it understandable to its readers. He also concludes that the Targum was destined for the people in Palestine who did not understand Hebrew any longer. The authors followed specific hermeneutical rules, *derash*, which resulted in texts ‘*literally translated*’ or even in a ‘*developed commentary*’ of a specific passage.<sup>409</sup>

Still as a preliminary remark, Alexander classifies the Targum translations into two main types. While type A Targum contains passages that can be ‘bracketed out, leaving behind a viable one-to-one rendering of the original’, type B Targum excludes this possibility because ‘the translation is dissolved in the paraphrase’.<sup>410</sup> If the main concern of the Targum translator is not literalness, but the facilitation of understanding, then he is able to move freely from literal translation to commentary, as dictated by necessity.

Moreover, commenting on ‘*converse translation*’, Gordon observed that other factors might influence the translation process: (1) a certain ‘interpretative impulse’ of the translators who were aware of the ‘modifications introduced by the later biblical writers’ (referring to the tradition of the transmission of the text); (2) translators were also sensitive to the fact ‘that biblical manuscripts sometimes fail’; (3) they are unable

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<sup>407</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, *translation* (Oxford University Press), accessed on 20 September 2012 <<http://www.oed.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/Entry/204844?redirectedFrom=translation>>.

<sup>408</sup> Joseph Ribera, ‘The Targum: From Translation to Interpretation’ in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, ed. Derek Robert George Beattie and Martin McNamara (Sheffield: JSOT Press [JSOTSS 166], 1994), p. 218.

<sup>409</sup> Ribera, ‘The Targum: From Translation to Interpretation’ in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, , pp. 218 and 225.

<sup>410</sup> Philip S. Alexander, ‘Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures’, in *Mikra*, ed. M. J. Mulder and Harry Sysling (Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress Press, 1988), pp. 229-237.

to transmit their motivation for offering a different reading (as a modern translator would do through footnotes).<sup>411</sup>

There has been a delimitation of at least two types of approaches to evaluating the Targums as a translation. One is connected to the methods employed,<sup>412</sup> while the other is concerned with its interpretative character.<sup>413</sup>

After this brief account of the research pertaining to Targum translation, the remaining part includes comments on (a) the changes in syntax of the Aramaic version, (b) on omissions and substitutions, and finally (c) on pluses.

(a) On the syntactical level, the Aramaic version is very close to MT. It replicates not only the succession of the verbal forms but also their aspects. The aspect of the verb is not an exact science but, in my opinion, the durative aspect is visible in case 1 (x-participle), in case 3 (waw-participle), and case 4 (x-qetal), while the punctual state is discernible in case 2 (waw-qetal). The change from infinitive to IMP (v. 8) gives a more engaging effect to the exposition, but it does not alter the sense of the phrase. Where necessary, the Aramaic version promotes clarity by the logical presentation of the facts (v.16).

1. The first two verses of Micah 6 are translated in a regular fashion by both the Hebrew and Aramaic versions. In verse 1, both versions show a convergence in the sequence of time (3 IMPs↔weyiqtul). Verse two displays one variation in terms of syntax from the sequence IMP→SNC↔x-yiqtol (MT) to IMP→SNC↔x-participle (BA). The use of x-yiqtol forms in the background MT suggests the emphasis on the element x<sup>414</sup> and a repeated action.<sup>415</sup> x-participle is attested in BA as conveying

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<sup>411</sup> R.P. Gordon, 'Converse Translation' in the Targums and Beyond', *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 10, No. 19 (1999), p. 18-21. When speaking about *converse translation*, Gordon refers (p. 4) to Klein's categories (M. L. Klein, 'Converse Translation: A Targumic Technique', *Biblica* 57 (1976), pp. 515-537) 'addition and deletion of the negative particle; replacement of the verb, resolution of the rhetorical question, and addition of the negative particle d'la ('lest')'.

<sup>412</sup> Cf. Alexander Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic. The Targum and the Hebrew Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1973); Ho, 2009, pp. 33-184.

<sup>413</sup> Cf. Arie Van der Kooij, 'Some Remarks on the Analysis of the Interpretative Character of Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, with particular attention to Targum Isaiah XXIII', in *Dutch Studies in the Targum*, ed. I. E. Zwiep and A. Kuyt (Amsterdam: Juda Palache Institute, 1993), pp. 78-88.

<sup>414</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p.67.

<sup>415</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 68.

contemporary action when used in the future tense SLC.<sup>416</sup> Here, the translator is probably trying to refer to that sense of equivalence that x-yiqtol (וְאָנִי אֶבְרַכֶּם) has in Num. 6:27, as pointed out by Niccacci.<sup>417</sup> In regard to that passage, he thinks that Aaron's putting the name of God on the sons of Israel is equivalent to God's blessing. Similarly, both the MT and the Aramaic versions of Micah 6 consider 'my people' as equivalent to Israel (MT) or 'house of Israel' (Aramaic version). On a lexical level, the shift from the yiqtol תִּנְכַּח (יָכַח *to argue*) to the participle construction עֲבִיד תּוֹכִיחָא (verb עֲבַד and noun תּוֹכִיחָא derived from יָכַח<sup>418</sup>) does not change the sense of the sentence.

2. In both versions, verses 3-4 are connected through the causative conjunction 'because' (כִּי and the Aramaic equivalent אַרִי). The general syntactical sequence is the same in both languages apart from the replacement of the last wayyiqtol (MT v. 4c) with the Aramaic correspondence waw-qetal. Qetal and waw-qetal occur both in narrative passages and in direct discourse. Essentially similar to the Hebrew wayyiqtol, (waw-)qetal is used in the narration to present the story in the FLC,<sup>419</sup> so there is no change in this respect.

3. In verse 8, the Aramaic version does change MT as the last two infinitives are turned into (a) a waw-participle (contemporaneity as a continuative form<sup>420</sup> of the infinitive) and into (b) an IMP form (וְהוּי צְנִיעֵ). While the former modification does not visibly change the syntactical relationships, the latter converts the temporal axis to the future indicative FLC, becoming a calling to practise the good deeds preached.

4. The Aramaic version reproduces the syntactical situation in MT Mic. 6:9-12. The only difference is the variation from the Aramaic x-qetal<sup>421</sup> (which translates the Hebrew x-qatal)<sup>422</sup> to x-participle (v. 12c), all being able to refer an action that is simultaneous to the regent clause in SLC.

<sup>416</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 112.

<sup>417</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 92.

<sup>418</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1652.

<sup>419</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 22.

<sup>420</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 112: 'In direct speech, on the contrary, it [the participle] may in the first level of communication in the temporal axis of past and present tense, and it can be found as continuative form of second level of communication in the same temporal axes, denoting basically the contemporaneity'.

<sup>421</sup> Messina, *Il sistema verbale dell'aramaico biblico. Un approccio linguistico-testuale* p. 40.

<sup>422</sup> Niccacci, 1990, p. 165.

5. Verse 16 presents a more complex setting. MT uses a weyyiqtol (continuation form in future indicative) in the *passive* diathesis followed by a wayyiqtol (continuation form in the past tense), and a secondary construction infinitive with x-yiqtol. None of these constructions fit well together (2 forms of continuation from 2 different temporal axes; infinitive followed by x-yiqtol). Consequently, the Aramaic version (instead of the confusing future weyyiqtol) begins the translation with an *active*<sup>423</sup> x-qetal, the normal form in direct speech, with a past tense form on SLC, transforming the whole verse into a causal clause. The following waw-qetals add reasons for the preceding curses.

(b) The Aramaic version counts only two omissions, neither of them impacting on the message of the chapter: suffix 1sg. in תתי and of כל.<sup>424</sup> Similarly, there are also only two substitutions:

1. (v. 2) The preposition ל is replaced with the preposition קדם. M. L. Klein thinks that קדם ‘as a substitute for the nota accusative את, or for other more direct prepositions, is common in both the divine and the human contexts’ and ‘a natural result of the idiomatic variance between biblical Hebrew and Targumic Aramaic’.<sup>425</sup> The preposition is also replacing כ (v. 3), ל (v. 4), or introducing the name of God (v. 6a) and referring to him more explicitly (קדמוהי, v. 6c) where MT uses just a verbal suffix (האֲקַדְמֵנִי). The use of קדם in relation to God is interpreted by Ho as a sign of anti-anthropomorphism, a ‘buffer term to maintain the dignity of God and to tone down strong feelings like anger’.<sup>426</sup>

2. The rhetorical questions are connected with ו instead of the waw (v.3). The modification had already been signalled by Sperber.<sup>427</sup> Similar substitutions occur in Mal. 1:8 and 2:17.

3. When translating words that are not familiar to the community, the Aramaic version attempts to find the closest synonym (אִי־פִת is translated with the pael participle

<sup>423</sup> The inverse phenomenon of changing from active to passive diathesis is also present in v. 6b: אֲקַדְמֵנִי; v. 8a: אֲתַחֲוֶה—הִגִּיד. Probably, this could be interpreted as a sign of reverence to God, as these two verses refer to actions connected to his true worship or his commandments.

<sup>424</sup> Sperber, 1973, pp. 72 and 80.

<sup>425</sup> M. L. Klein, 'The Preposition קדם: a Pseudo-anti-anthropomorphism in the Targums', *The Journal of Theological Studies* XXX, No. 2 (1979), p. 507.

<sup>426</sup> Ho, 2009, p. 411.

<sup>427</sup> Sperber, 1973, p. 92.



masculine plural מכילן<sup>428</sup> from כול *to measure*) or the Aramaic equivalent (זְעוּמָה) ‘which is cursed’ (זעם) means ‘which is excited’<sup>429</sup> in Aramaic, instead the construction לוט<sup>430</sup> ‘brings a curse’ is employed) (v.10).

4. The noun קְרַפַּת<sup>431</sup> is substituted with חסודי<sup>432</sup> (v.16).

(c) Addition is the favourite tool used by the translator. The multiple uses of the addition range from giving explanations (case 2.i), to inserting a clarification (case 2.iii) or to transmitting a specific feeling (case 1), and ending with disambiguation (case 5.i).

1. The extension of יִשְׂרָאֵל with בית ישראל (v. 2). The second change is an addition with the intent to give a sense of the community to the reader.

2. מָה־עָשִׂיתִי לְךָ for מא טבא אמרית למעבד לך ולא עבדית או מא מרועא קשיא אסגיתי עלך. As shown in the analysis, the translator explains this enigmatic question by adding a protasis: ‘what good have I promised’ which makes more sense to the listener. The Aramaic translator is looking for ‘clarity of expression’<sup>433</sup> and to gain readers’ attention. The Aramaic version does not simply ask ‘*what have I done to you*’ but also offers a specific background ‘*what good have I promised to do for you and I did not do [it?]*’ This intricate passage needs a logical analysis in order to be correctly read. While in v. 3a God questions the existence of broken promises on his part, in verses 3b-4 he explains that he has never provoked any harm to his people but, on the contrary, he is the one who brought them up from Egypt. The Targum aims to trigger a sense of thankfulness in their hearts by indirectly validating the common assumption that God keeps his promises. Verse 4 contains another explicative note introduced by the added phrase תְּלַתָּהּ נְבִיִּי. The explicative note follows a specific pattern: naming of the prophet (Moses, Aaron, Miriam), preposition לְ, infinitive (presenting his or her action: teach, appease, teach), and subject of their mission (tradition/people/women). This comment refers to all aspects of human life by including interpersonal relations governed by judgment, religious life and family life.

<sup>428</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 782, cf. כול p. 619.

<sup>429</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 408.

<sup>430</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 696.

<sup>431</sup> Sokoloff, 1990, p. 215 and Jastrow, 1903, p. 505: חרף: to blaspheme, sharpen/scrape.

<sup>432</sup> Jastrow, 1903, pp. 458 and 486: חסוד: shame, rebuke, revilement.

<sup>433</sup> Sperber, 1973, p. 21.

3. Other notable changes are: (i) the introduction of a full sentence (הלא גבורן) to explain the enigmatic construction מן־השטים עד־ (אתעבידא לכון ממישר שטין עד בית גלגלא הגלגל (v. 5d); (ii) the replacement of the ambiguous verbal root קדם (*to present, to walk before*; 6ac) with a more explicit equivalent פלה<sup>434</sup> (*to worship*); (iii) the use of the stereotyped construction ('x for y') to clarify the 'meaningful expression' that the listener might fail to notice<sup>435</sup> (v. 7c בְּכֹרֵי פְּשָׁעֵי חוּבֵי - בְּרֵי חֲלָף חוּבֵי; נִפְשֵׁי - פְּרֵי בְּטָנֵי חֲטָאת נִפְשֵׁי; חֲלָף חֲטָאֵי חֲטָאֵי (חיבוב מעי חלף חטאי); (iv) inserting words to specify the positive side envisioned (8b: not any משפט but דין דקשוט [judgement of *righteousness*]).

4. With קול יְהוָה (v. 9) MT does not imply that God himself communicates his message. Nevertheless, the Targum points out this fact more clearly with the addition of נביא. This tendency to interpose a mediator between God and man is traced by Ahuva Ho in Targum Zachariah.<sup>436</sup>

5. (i) A generous expansion is present in v. 9 where מְטָה is expanded in עמא דארעא ושאר מלכא ושלטונא ושאר in order to illustrate the suggestion of power. (ii) In v. 10 the translator uses a disambiguation of the construction הָאֵשׁ with דאית, interpreting it as referring to אֵשׁ (there is/are). (iii) The word מְרָמָה is replaced through an entire relative clause מתקלין (v.11). (iv) The Aramaic version expands the text by explaining that the rich men are full of violence because they fill their granary with violence עתירהא מלן (v. 12) אוצריהון חטוף

6. Verse 13 outlined in MT condensed very briefly the punishments. Consequently, the translator focuses the attention on the three words that codify them: עֲלֵי־הַשָּׁמַם, הַכּוֹתֶה, הַטְּאֲתֶה. The expansion is operated only on הַכּוֹתֶה [developed in מרע ומחא], while the others go through a change in syntactical status (הַשָּׁמַם<sup>437</sup> [infinitive] becomes an x-qetal from צדי<sup>438</sup>; עֲלֵי־הַטְּאֲתֶה [preposition and noun] to x-qetal (דחבתא).

7. Verses 14-15 closely follow MT. The Aramaic version expands only the sensitive points: (1) the obscure SNC וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה בְּקִרְבָּה is expanded in a waw-yiqtul למרע (it follows more closely ותעצר ענבין ולא תשתי חמר ולא תשתי־יין; ויהי לך במערך

<sup>434</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1178

<sup>435</sup> Sperber, 1973, p. 20.

<sup>436</sup> Ho, 2009, p. 412.

<sup>437</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1597: the sense of the word evolves to [*stand still,*] *to be astonished, to be waste.*

<sup>438</sup> Jastrow, 1903, p. 1262: *to be desolate.* It translates the Hebr. שָׁמֵם.

the process of winemaking from treading the grapes to obtaining the fresh wine חמר [instead of חַיִּי].

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

Targum Micah 6 belongs to Alexander's Targum type A, as the operated changes are mostly expansions which explain punctual facts perceived as obscure (cf. (c)). Substitutions correspond to secondary and insignificant clarification required by vocabulary changes in the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic (cf. (b) 3, 4).

The syntactical setting of the entire chapter closely follows the MT, diverging only when the latter proves unclear (v. 16). Moreover, the Aramaic version replicates verbal aspects and even closer relations, as shown in the case of the comparison (v. 2: x-participle). All in all, in this particular case, the Targumic Aramaic version is both a reliable translation of MT and an open window into the early Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew Bible.

## 5. Final Discussion and Conclusions

This thesis was dedicated to performing a comparative analysis of the three main traditions of the Biblical text: Hebrew, Greek, and Targumic. While the composition of the Hebrew Bible is spread over several hundred years, the other two represent the renderings of the original Hebrew in its final stage, when its tradition of interpretation is less fluid.

All these three testimonies of the Bible are addressed to the chosen people of Israel. When the Septuagint and the Targum first appeared (IV-II century BCE), they were both directed to the Israel of diaspora. Before becoming the book of Christianity, the Septuagint was primarily meant for Jews in Egypt, but also received elsewhere in Greek-speaking Judaism. In turn, the Targum is supposed to translate the Bible for those living in the land of Israel or in Babylon but not skilled in Biblical Hebrew. All these elements (space, time, and readership) constitute the reasons for the differences that occurred between the Hebrew original and these later translations of the text.

Given the wide diversity of origin, scope and purpose, a comparative study needs to employ a similar methodology for all three witnesses so that the results obtained could be assessed with reasonable objectivity. The common methods of choice in this thesis are textual linguistics and textual criticism. The subsequent presentation will follow the chapter order in the thesis.

Chapter 2 was concentrated entirely on MT. The textual criticism analysis was performed on the Masoretic and Septuagint texts considering each of them as distinct witnesses of the same text. Regarding the MT, the analysis offered an identical critical text with the one present in the BHS and in A. Gelston. Also, it had allowed a clear delimitation of the textual choices which were important to the syntax and exegesis of the MT. For example, the analysis revealed that: (1) v. 5 contains the ellipsis of וְמָה עָשִׂיתִי before the enigmatic עַד־הַגְּלִיגָל מִן־הַשָּׁטִיִּם; (2) the significance of the phrase שָׁמְעוּ מִטָּה (v. 9) is ‘listen the staff/rod and the one who appointed it’ (Ben-Zvi) not ‘listen, tribe, and who appointed her still’ (cf. Andersen, Waltke, Hillers); (3) אָשָׁר (v. 12) is not to be moved after v. 9 (against Smith (1912), Vuilleumier, and Mays); (4) the obscure *hapax* יְשָׁקָה means ‘your emptiness’ (against Vuilleumier (hunger), Mays (semen),

McKane (bowel blockage), Wolff (physical pain)); (5) the form תפליט is to be interpreted as hifil not as piel (v. 14).

After a brief presentation of the textual-linguistic method, the thesis continued with a syntactical analysis which had closely followed Niccacci's outline (2007). Building on Van Selm's research, the analysis revealed the existence of a motivated interrogative question in verses 3c-4 to account for the suspended causal phrase in the v. 4. In the subsequent section, the main concern was to identify how the most prominent commentaries explained differently passages in Micah 6. The comparison of their work with the results of the textual-linguistic method prompted the certitude that the latter has a coherent approach in poetic passages to (1) future indicative verbal constructs (x-yiqtol refers to future axis in v. 9ab), (2) to future volitive forms (cf. weyyiqtol form, v.1 and v. 16a) and (3) to past forms (cf. x-qatal in v. 9c and wayyiqtol in 16c). Also, (4) it keeps track of the word order and translates accordingly (cf. the heightened position of ריב v.2b).

The last two sections in the second chapter presented the poetic devices in Micah 6 and a commentary. Besides employing classic poetic devices such as parallelism and the word-pair, Micah also makes good use of chiasmus (2cd, v. 4ab, 16ab), ellipsis (5c, 12), delayed identification (1a, 2c), hendiadys (7cd, 10, 13) and hyperbole (7ab).

The commentary brought together these different analyses of the text. It determined that the two poems are integral parts of a lawsuit genre in the larger sense of the term as they are simultaneously a protest and a dispute between God and Israel. Each of them is focused on one single person (poem I – God, poem II – people). All parts of a regular lawsuit are present (calling, witnesses, statement of the case, statement of the Law, sins, punishment and conclusion). God's argumentation proves to be very elaborate and compelling as it describes the history of the relationship between him and his people; he employs one mode of argumentation (cf. *reductio ad absurdum* v. 3-4) and resorts to rhetorical questions (4-7). The vocabulary is charged with direct or alluded references to Exodus, the covenant between God and his people, and to common sins as idolatry, deceit, and lie.

The Septuagint version was the main focus of the third chapter. The textual critical analysis of Micah 6 evaluated the majority of the manuscripts present in Ziegler's

critical apparatus and aimed to present an improved critical text. The Greek translator of Micah 6 offers both a literal translation and clarifications for the ambiguous passages. When the text is too corrupt, he does not hesitate to interpret by adding new elements, paraphrasing the MT or even by introducing his own interpretation.

The most striking interpretation of the text is that of שְׁטִים as ὁ σχοῖνος. The Septuagint realises that the text is talking about a crossing and could have assumed that it is about the crossing of the Jordan. Also, the translator must have known about the existence of Shittim as a location. Nevertheless, in my opinion, he refuses the easy reading and chooses the one that is more inclusive and refers to the whole Exodus history.

The last chapter focused on the analysis of the Targum Micah 6. It has established that this is a type A translation which contains only a few minor textual differences. This, in turn, has allowed us to ascertain that (1) the Aramaic version replicates both the verbal forms and aspects of its Hebrew counterpart (cf. point [a]). Nevertheless, the Aramaic reveals more flexibility and thus an evolution in the usage of the verbal constructs where the Hebrew is bound by its main syntactical categories (qatal, weqatal, yiqtol, wayyiqtol, weyiqtol). (2) Moreover, the Targum makes a point of being as clear as possible in passages where the Hebrew version is ambiguous. It looks for the closest synonym possible to explain a dead-word (cf. v.10: מכילן/איפת); the obscure or even unknown terms are given a straightforward interpretation (v. 9: מלפין/תושיה) or even a list of interpretations (מלכא ושלטונא ושאר עמא דארעא for MT מִטָּה); suggestions in MT become fully expressed clauses, with subject and predicate (מְנִי־הַשְּׁטִים עַד־הַגְּלָגֶל [MT] - הלא גבורן אתעבידא לכון ממישר שטין עד בית גלגלא [Tg]). (3) Last but not the least, the Targum aims to edify and strengthen both people's knowledge and religious feelings towards God. A good example is offered by verses 6:3-4, where the translation instructs the reader about the mission of the three prophets, everything being connected with thankfulness for what God has already done for them.

This parallel reading of Micah 6 has shown that, despite its inconsistencies, the Hebrew is coherent in the presentation of the Law. The LXX and the Targum read and even interpret this text according to their social and cultural setting. Moreover, it has confirmed that textual-linguistics is a valid method of interpretation and that future research on how the verbal constructs are employed in Aramaic is needed. All in all, the core message of these three versions of the Biblical is briefly summarized in Mic. 6:9:

*'He has told you, O man, what is good and what the Lord seeks from you, only to do justice, to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God'*

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## ANNEX 1: Scheme of Syntactical Construct in Biblical Hebrew

### Narrative passages

Prelude	Main level of communication or Foreground	Secondary Level of communication or Background
(waw) x-QATAL (+ WAYYIQTOL) (waw) x-YIQTOL weQATAL (continues with waw x-YIQTOL) SNC	WAYYIQTOL or negation שָׁלוּ + QATAL	→ (waw) x-QATAL (for anteriority, simultaneity, contrast, emphasis or circumstance) → (waw) x-YIQTOL (repetitive or habitual action; future prevision – future in the past) → weQATAL (repetitive action/description) → SNC (simultaneity)

### Direct speech

Temporal Axis	Main level of communication or Foreground	Secondary Level of communication or Background
Past	x-QATAL → WAYYIQTOL <i>continuative</i> coordination, both foreground: oral narration	→ x-QATAL (anteriority: retrieved info) → x-YIQTOL (future prevision) → weQATAL (future prevision) → SNC (simultaneity)
Present	SNC (with/without participle) word order: PREDICATE – SUBJECT	SNC word order: SUBJECT – PREDICATE
Future Indicative	SNC → weQATAL <i>continuative</i> or → שָׁלוּ + YIQTOL x-YIQTOL (initial) → weQATAL <i>continuative</i> or → שָׁלוּ + YIQTOL	x-YIQTOL
Future Volitive	IMPERATIVE → weYIQTOL (both foreground) (x-) YIQTOL → weYIQTOL (both foreground) (jussive/cohortative)	x-IMPERATIVE or x-YIQTOL
	Note: IMPERATIVE → weYIQTOL = purpose ('in order to') (both forms on FOREGROUND) IMPERATIVE → weQATAL = consequence ('thus, therefore') (FOREGROUND) (BACKGROUND)	

Note: this is a reproduction of a tables from Niccacci, 1990, p. 20 and 'The Biblical Verbal System in Poetry', p. 248.



## Negations

TEMPORAL AXIS		Positive form	Negative Form
LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
NARRATIVE AND DIRECT SPEECH		WAYYIQTOL	אֵלַי QATAL
MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
NARRATIVE AND DIRECT SPEECH		x-QATAL	(waw) x אֵלַי QATAL
BACKGROUND			
PAST (DIRECT SPEECH)		(x)-QATAL	אֵלַי QATAL
MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
NARRATIVE OR FUTURE INDICATIVE		x-YIQTOL	(waw-) x אֵלַי YIQTOL
SECOND LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
FUTURE INDICATIVE		initial x-YIQTOL	אֵלַי YIQTOL
MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
FUTURE VOLITIVE (DIRECT SPEECH)		initial YIQTOL	אֵלַי YIQTOL
MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
FUTURE VOLITIVE (DIRECT SPEECH)		x-YIQTOL	(waw) x אֵלַי YIQTOL
SECOND LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
FUTURE VOLITIVE (DIRECT SPEECH)		weYIQTOL	אֵלַי YIQTOL
SECOND LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION			
NARRATIVE SECOND LEVEL	FUTURE INDICATIVE MAIN LEVEL	weQATAL	אֵלַי YIQTOL

**ANNEX 2: Micah 6 Syntactical Scheme**

SECONDARY LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION (SUBORDINATION)	MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION (REGENT)	TEMPORAL AXIS
<p align="center">כי ריב ליהוה עם-עמו ועם-ישראל יתנפח:</p>	<p align="center">1 שְׁמַעוּנָא אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אָמַר קוֹם רִיב אֶת-הַהָרִים וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבֻעוֹת קוֹלָךְ:  2 שְׁמַעוּ הָרִים אֶת-רִיב יְהוָה וְהֵאֲתַנּוּ מִסְדֵי אָרֶץ</p>	<p>IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE weYIQTOL CONTINUATIVE IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE SNC FUTURE INDICATIVE X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE</p>
<p align="center">4 כי העלתיך מארץ מצרים ומבית עבדים פְּדִיתִיךָ וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת-מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וּמֹרְיָם:  מה-יָעִז בְּלֶק מְלֶךְ מוֹאָב וּמֵה-עֲנָה אֹתוֹ בְּלַעַם בֶּן-בְּעֹר מִן-הַשִּׁטִּים עַד-הַגְּלָגָל לְמַעַן דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה:  מה-טוֹב וּמֵה-יְהוָה דוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם-עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצַּנַּע לְכַת עִם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ: פ  וְתוֹשִׁיָה יִרְאֶה שְׁמֶךָ  וּמִי יַעֲדָה:  12 אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂירֶיהָ מְלֵאוֹ חֶמֶס וְיִשְׁבִּיָהּ דָּבָרוֹ-שֶׁקֶר וּלְשׁוֹנָם רִמְיָה בְּפִיהֶם:</p>	<p align="center">3 עֲמִי מֵה-עֲשִׂיתִי לָךְ וּמָה הִלְאַתִּיךָ עֲנֵה בִי:  5 עֲמִי וְכִרְנָא  6 בְּמָה אֶקְדָּם יְהוָה אֶכְרֶה לְאֱלֹהֵי מְרוֹם הַאֶקְדָּמְנוּ בְּעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּגִי שָׁנָה:  7 הִירְצָה יְהוָה בְּאֵלֶיךָ אֵילִים בְּרִבְבוֹת נְחֹלֵי-שֶׁמֶן הֵאֲתַן בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פְרִי בְטָנֵי חֲטָאת נִפְשֵׁי:  8 הִגִּיד לָךְ אָדָם  9 קוֹל יְהוָה לְעִיר יִקְרָא שְׁמַעוּ מִטָּה  10 עוֹד הָאֵשׁ בֵּית רְשָׁע אֶצְרוֹת רְשָׁע וְאִיפֹת רְזוֹן זְעוּמָה: 11 הֵאֲזַנָּה בְּמֵאוֹזֵי רְשָׁע וּבְכִיס אֲבָנֵי מֶרְמָה:  12 אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂירֶיהָ מְלֵאוֹ חֶמֶס וְיִשְׁבִּיָהּ דָּבָרוֹ-שֶׁקֶר וּלְשׁוֹנָם רִמְיָה בְּפִיהֶם:</p>	<p>X-QATAL PAST X-QATAL PAST IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE X-QATAL PAST X-QATAL PAST WAYYIQTOL CONTINUATIVE X-IMPERATIVE X-QATAL PAST X-QATAL PAST  X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE QATAL PAST SNC SNC  X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE IMP FUTURE VOLITIVE X-QATAL SNC PRESENT X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE X-QATAL PAST X-QATAL PAST SNC</p>

### MICAH 6 SYNTACTICAL SCHEME

SECONDARY LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION (SUBORDINATION)	MAIN LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION (REGENT)	TEMPORAL AXIS
<p style="text-align: center;">וְיִשְׁחַד בְּקִרְבָּהּ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְאֲשֶׁר תִּפְלֹט לְקִרְבֵי אֶתְנִן:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְהִרְפַּת עַמִּי תִשְׂאוּ: פ</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><sup>13</sup> וְגַם־אֲנִי הִתְלִיתִי הַכּוֹתֵף הַשִּׁמֶם עַל־חַטָּאתָהּ:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><sup>14</sup> אֶתְּהָ תֹאכַל וְלֹא תִשְׁבַּע</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְתִסַּג וְלֹא תִפְלִיט</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><sup>15</sup> אֶתְּהָ תִזְרַע וְלֹא תִקְצוֹר</p> <p style="text-align: center;">אֶתְּהָ תִדְרֹךְ־וַיִּזֵּן וְלֹא־תִסּוֹף שְׁמֹן וְתִירוֹשׁ וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּהֲרִיזוּ:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><sup>16</sup> וְיִשְׁתַּמְּרֵךְ קִקְוֹת עַמִּי וְכָל מַעֲשֵׂה בֵּית־אֱהֻיָּב וְתִלְכוּ בְּמַעֲצוֹתֵם לְמַעַן תִּתִּי אֶתְּהָ לְשִׁמָּה וְיִשְׁבִּיחַ לְשִׁרְקָהּ</p>	<p>X-QATAL PAST</p> <p>X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE</p> <p>וְלֹא + YIQTOL</p> <p>SNC</p> <p>weYIQTOL</p> <p>וְלֹא + YIQTOL</p> <p>X-YIQTOL</p> <p>X-YIQTOL</p> <p>X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE</p> <p>וְלֹא + YIQTOL FUTURE</p> <p>X-YIQTOL FUTURE INDICATIVE</p> <p>וְלֹא + YIQTOL FUTURE</p> <p>וְלֹא + YIQTOL</p> <p>WEYIQTOL FUTURE</p> <p>WAYYIQTOL</p> <p>X-YIQTOL</p>

**ANNEX 3: Poetic devices Micah 6:1-8**

<b>Strophe</b>	<b>Poetic devices</b>		
1abc	Parallel exhortation 1bc Delayed identification 1a -2c		1 שְׁמַעוּ־נָא אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אָמַר קוֹם רִיב אֶת־הַהָרִים וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבָעוֹת קוֹלִי:
2abcd	Chiasmus 2cd Paradigmatic parallelism		2 שְׁמַעוּ הָרִים אֶת־רִיב יְהוָה וְהָאֲתָנִים מִסְדֵי אֶרֶץ כִּי רִיב לִיהוָה עִם־עַמּוֹ וְעַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְוַכַּח:
3ab	Parallel questions 3ab	One motivated interrogative question 3b-4abc	Parallel questions
4abc	Chiasmus 4ab		
5abcd	Delayed identification 5a-5b Ellipsis in 5c		3ab // 5abc
6abcd			Eight Rhetorical questions
7abcd	Double duty modifier in 7ab and 7cd Hyperbolic word pair 7ab Hendiadys 7cd Parallelism 7c//7d		Paradigmatic parallelism
8ab			Paradigmatic parallelism
8cde	Incomplete Parallelism 8a//8b//8c		

**ANNEX 4: Poem division Micah 6**

No strophe		Strophe	Strophe	
1	Poem I 6:1-8	1abc	9abc	Poem II 6:9-16
2		2abcd	10 ab	
3		3ab	11ab	
4		4abc	12 abc	
5		5 abcd	13 ab	
6		6 abcd	14 abcd	
7		7 abcd	15 abc	
8		8ab	16 abc	
9		8cde	16def	

## ANNEX 5: Scheme of Syntactical Construct in Biblical Aramaic

<b>Narrative passages</b>		
<b>Background/SLC</b> (before initiation of the FLC)	<b>Foreground / FLC</b>	<b>Background/SLC</b>
Initial form x-qetal	<b>Initial form</b> MSM (x-)qetal (x-)participle	x-qetal →qetal <sup>*c</sup> x-yiqtul x-participle SNC
<b>Continuative forms</b> x-qetal →qetal <sup>*c</sup> x-yiqtul waw-yiqtul x-participle SNC	<b>Continuative forms</b> qetal participle	

<b>Direct Speech</b>		
<b>Temporal Axis</b>	<b>Foreground/FLC</b>	<b>Background SLC</b>
<b>Past</b>	<b>Initial form</b> x-qetal	x-qetal →qetal <sup>*c</sup> x-yiqtul x-participle → participle <sup>*c</sup> SNC → participle <sup>*c</sup>
	<b>Continuative forms</b> qetal participle	
<b>Present</b>	<b>Initial form</b> x-participle SNC	x-participle → participle <sup>*c</sup> SNC → participle <sup>*c</sup>
	<b>Continuative forms</b> participle SNC	
<b>Future Indicative</b>	<b>Initial form</b> x-yiqtul	x-yiqtul → yiqtul <sup>*c</sup> x-qetal x-participle SNC
	<b>Continuative forms</b> yiqtul	
<b>Future Volitive</b>	<b>Initial form</b> (x-)IMP (x-)yiqtul (short form)	x-IMP x-yiqtul (short form)
	<b>Continuative forms</b> yiqtul (short form) IMP	

## ANNEX 6: Synoptic View of MT and BA Syntactical Forms

TARUGM MICAH 6	FORMS		BHS MICAH 6
1שמעו כען ית דיוי אמר	IMP	IMP	1שמעו־נָא אַתְּ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אָמַר
קום	IMP	IMP	קום
דין עם טוריא	IMP	IMP	רִיב אֶת־הַקְּרִים
וישמעו רמתא קלך	WWA-YIQTUL	WEYIQTOL	וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבֻעוֹת קוֹלְךָ:
2שמעו טוריא ית דינא דיוי ועקריא	IMP	IMP	2שמעו־הַרִים אֶת־רִיב יְהוָה וְהֶאֱתַנְגִּים מִסְדֵי אֶרֶץ יִסּוּדֵי אֲרֻעָא
יסודי ארעא			
ארי דינא קדם יוי עם עמיה	SNC	SNC	כִּי רִיב לִיהוָה עִם־עַמּוֹ
ועם בית ישראל עביד תוכיחא	X-PARTICIPLE	X-YIQTOL	וְעִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתּוֹכַח:
3עמי מא טבא אמרית למעבד לך	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	3עַמִּי מִה־עֲשִׂיתִי לְךָ
ולא עבדית	WAW-QETAL		
או מא מרועא קשיא אסגיתי עלך	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	וְמִה־הִלַּאתִידָהּ
אסהיד קדמי	IMP	IMP	עֲנֵה בִּי:
4ארי אסיקתך מארעא דמצרים	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	4כִּי הִעֲלִיתִיד מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
ומבית עבדותא פרקתך	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	וּמִבַּיִת עֲבָדִים פָּדִיתִיד
ושלחית קדמך תלתה נביי	WAW-QETAL	WAYYIQTOL	וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־מִשְׁחֵה אֶהְרֹן וּמְרָיִם:
משה לאלפא מסרת ודינין			
אהרן לכפרא על עמא			
ומרים לאוראה לנשיא			
5עמי אידכר כען	X-IMP	X-IMP	5עַמִּי זְכַר־נָא
מא מלך בלק מלכא דמואב	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	מִה־יָעִץ בְּלַק מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב
ומא אתיב יתיה בלעם בר בעור	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	וּמִה־עָנָה אֹתוֹ בְּלַעַם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר
הלא גבורן אתעבידא לכון ממישר	X-QETAL		מִן־הַשִּׁטִּים עַד־הַגִּלְגָּל לְמַעַן דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה:
שטין עד בית גלגלא בדיל למדע זכותא דיוי			
6במא אפלח קדם יוי	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	6בְּמִה אֶקְדָּם יְהוָה
אשתעבד לאלאהא דשכינתיה בשמי מרומא	YIQTUL	YIQTOL	אֶפְרָא לֵאלֹהֵי מְרוֹם
האפלח קדמוהי בעלוון בעגלין בני שנא	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	הֶאֱקַדְמֵנּוּ בְּעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה:
7היתרעי יוי באלפי דכרין ברבות	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	7הִתְרַעֵה יְהוָה בְּאַלְפֵי אֵילִים בְּרַבּוֹת נְחֹלֵי־שָׁמֶן
נחלין דמשה			
האתין ברי חלף חובי חיבוב	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	הֵאֱתַן בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פְרִי בִטְנֵי חֲטָאת נִפְשֵׁי
מעז חלף חטאי נפשי			
8אתחזה לך אנשא	QETAL	QATAL	8הִגִּיד לְךָ אָדָם
מא טב	SNC	SNC	מִה־טוֹב
ומא יוי תבע מינך	X-PARTICIPLE	SNC	וּמִה־יְהוָה דוֹרַשׁ מִמֶּךָ
אלהין למעבד דין דקשוט	INFINITIVE	(3 INFINITIVES)	כִּי אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט
ומרחם גמילות חסדא	WAW-PARTICIPLE		וְאֶהְבֵת חֶסֶד
והוי צניע להלכא בדחלתא דאלהך	IMP		וְהִצְנַע לְכַת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ: פ
9קל נבייא דיוי על קרתא מכלן	X-PARTICIPLE	X-YIQTOL	9קוֹל יְהוָה לְעִיר יִקְרָא

ומלפין דחלין לשמך	X-PARTICIPLE	X-YIQTOL	ותושיה יראה שמך
שמע מלכא ושלטונא ושאר עמא דארעא	IMP	IMP FV	שמעו מטא
		X-QATAL	ומי יעדה:
<sup>10</sup> עוד דאית בית רשיעא אוצרין	SNC	SNC	<sup>10</sup> עוד האש בית רשע אצרות רשע ואיפת רזון
דרשע ומכילן דשקר מיתין לוט			זעומה:
<sup>11</sup> היזכון במוזנוון דרשע ובכיס	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	<sup>11</sup> האזקה במאזני רשע ובכיס אבני מרמה:
דביה מתקלין רברבין ודעדקין	X-QETAL		
<sup>12</sup> דעתירהא מלן אוצריהון חטוף	X-PARTICIPLE	X-QATAL	<sup>12</sup> אשר עשיריה מלאו חמס
ויתבהא ממללין שקר	SNC	X-QATAL	ולשביה דברוש שקר
ולישנהון נכלין בפומהון	X-QETAL	SNC	ולשונם רמזה בפיהם:
<sup>13</sup> ואף אנא איתיתי עלך מרע ומחא	X-QETAL	X-QATAL	<sup>13</sup> וגם אני החליתי הפותה השמם על-חטאתך:
אצדינג	QETAL		
על דחבתא	X-QETAL		
<sup>14</sup> את תיכול	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	<sup>14</sup> אתה תאכל
ולא תסבע	WAW-לא-YIQTUL	לא+YIQTOL	ולא תשבע
ויהי לך למרע במעך	WAW-YIQTUL	SNC	ולשחך בקרך
ותדביק	WAW-YIQTUL	WEYIQTOL	ותסג
ולא תשיזיב	WAW-לא-YIQTUL	לא+YIQTOL	ולא תפליט
ודשתיזיב	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	ואשר תפליט
לתרבא אמסר	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	לתרב אתו:
<sup>15</sup> את תזרע	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	<sup>15</sup> אתה תזרע
ולא תחצוד	WAW-לא-YIQTUL	לא+YIQTOL	ולא תקצור
את תבדיר זיתין	X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	אתה תדרד-זית
ולא תשוף משה	WAW-לא-YIQTUL	לא+YIQTOL	ולא תסוד שמן
ותעצר ענבין	WAW-YIQTUL		ותירוש
ולא תשתי חמר	WAW-לא-YIQTUL	לא+YIQTOL	ולא תשתה-יין:
<sup>16</sup> על דנטרתון גזירת בית עמרי	X-QETAL	WEYIQTOL	<sup>16</sup> וישתמר חקות עמרי
ועבדתון עובדי בית אהאב	WAW-QETAL		וכל מעשה בית-אחאב
והליכותון בנמוסיהון	WAW-QETAL	WAYIQTOL	ותלכו במעצותם
בדיל לממסר יתך לצדו	INFINITIVE	INFINITIVE	למען תתי אתה לשמה
ויתבהא לאשתממו	INFINITIVE		ולשביה לשרקה
וחסודי עמי תקבלון	WAW-X-YIQTUL	X-YIQTOL	וקרפת עמי תשא: פ



### ANNEX 7: Micah 6 - Tabulation

verse word	Common words within the poem I																	Common words with 9-16						
	שמעו	נא	את	יהוה	אלה	ריב	הרים	קולך	כי	ל	עמ	עם	מה	ענה	ב	מן	כן	interog	שמעו	יעצ	קול	נתן	טאת	הלך
1a	שמעו	נא	את	יהוה														שמעו						
1b						ריב	הרים											שמעו						
1c								קולך										שמעו		קול				
2a	שמעו		את	יהוה		ריב	הרים																	
2b																								
2c				יהוה		ריב			כי	ל	עמ	עם												
2d												עם												
3a										ל	עמ		מה											
3b													מה	ענה	ב									
4a									כי							מן								
4b																מן								
4c										ל														
5a		נא									עמ		מה							יעץ				
5b													מה	ענה			כן							
5c																מן								
5d				יהוה						ל														
6a				יהוה									מה		ב									
6b					אלה					ל														
6c															ב			interog						
6d															ב		כן							
7a				יהוה											ב			interog						
7b															ב									
7c																		interog				אמו		
7d																							חטאת	
8a										ל			מה											
8b				יהוה									מה			מן								
8c									כי															
8d																								
8e					אלה							עם												לקח

verse words	Common words within the poem II									Common words with 1-8						
	יְהוָה	לְ	מִי	בֵּית	רָשָׁע	בְּ	interog הַ	וְלֹא	אֲתָהּ	תִּפְלֹט	נָתַן	קוֹל	שָׁמְעוּ	טָאָה	הַלֵּךְ	יַעֲצֵב
9a	יְהוָה	לְ										קוֹל				
9b																
9c			מִי									שָׁמְעוּ				
10a				בֵּית	רָשָׁע											
10b																
11a					רָשָׁע	בְּ	interog הַ									
11b																
12a																
12b																
12c						בְּ										
13a																
13b													חֲטָאָהּ			
14a								וְלֹא	אֲתָהּ							
14b																
14c								וְלֹא		תִּפְלֹט						
14d										תִּפְלֹט	אֲתָן					
15a								וְלֹא	אֲתָהּ							
15b								וְלֹא	אֲתָהּ							
15c								וְלֹא								
16a																
16b				בֵּית												
16c						בְּ									בְּמַעֲצוֹתָם	וַתֵּלְכוּ
16d		לְ									תִּתֵּן					
16e		לְ														
16f																