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Mikhail G. Seleznev

Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Septuagint: Statistical Testing of a Hypothesis¹

The Hebrew Bible often uses anthropomorphic imagery with regard to God. In some verses of the Septuagint these anthropomorphic images seem to be eliminated or downplayed. Ever since the beginning of the Septuagint studies scholars tended to regard this as a theologically motivated tendency of the Septuagint translators. This thesis was put forward especially by Charles Fritsch in his Princeton dissertation of 1943, devoted to “Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch” (Fritsch 1943). In the following years this thesis was vehemently opposed by Harry Orlinsky and his students (Orlinsky 1944, 1956, 1957–61; Soffer 1957; Zlotowitz 1980; Wittstruck 1976). The critics pointed out that elimination of anthropomorphic imagery may be caused not only by theological considerations, but also by stylistic factors or by some peculiarities of translation technique. Since then the issue has been dealt with in numerous studies, papers and introductions.

We believe that to eliminate the element of subjectivity, the question should be reformulated: is it true that translation of a given expression in a given LXX text correlates in a *statistically significant way* with whether this expression refers to God or to man? The hypothesis of correlation should be tested with standard statistical tools.

In the present paper we shall apply this methodology to one of the “antianthropomorphisms” of the LXX that was often discussed in the scholarly literature, namely to the Hebrew semipreposition בעיני “in the eyes of” (with regard to God) and its rendering in the LXX.

The Hebrew semipreposition בעיני “in the eyes of”² is mostly used in fixed idioms, e.g.:

¹ The paper was written within the framework of the research project “Reinterpretation of religious concepts of the Hebrew Bible in the Greek translation (LXX)” supported by Russian Foundation for Humanities (RGNF), grant N 014-01-00448. The *Deutsche Bischofskonferenz* enabled me to consult in 2015–2016 the modern literature on the topic in the Göttingen libraries, which was crucial for my research.

² On the notion of semipreposition see SOLLAMO, *Renderings*, 1–2.

- לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע (הַיָּשָׁר) בְּעֵינַי “to do evil (or: right) in someone’s eyes”,
- לְהִיּוֹת רָע (יָשָׁר, טוֹב...) בְּעֵינַי “to be bad (or: good, right...) in someone’s eyes”,
- לְמַצָּא הֵן בְּעֵינַי “to find favor in someone’s eyes”.

The semipreposition בעני may be used either in Status Constructus before a noun or with pronominal suffixes attached. From the point of view of the present investigation we do not see any need to distinguish between these two constructions.

Semiprepositions of this type can be regarded as dead metaphors and are clearly distinguishable from constructions where the same nouns are used as ordinary substantives, e.g. הִנֵּה רְאִיהָ בְּעֵינֶיךָ “You will see it with your own eyes” (2 Kgs 7:2, 19).

To render the Hebrew semipreposition into Greek the translators could either produce a literal translation (usually ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς, but also κατ’ ὀφθαλμούς, πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν) or they could replace the Hebrew expression with a Greek preposition (ἐναντίον, ἔναντι, ἐνώπιον, κατενώπιον). Occasionally the translators produced free paraphrases. From the point of view of the present investigation, the difference between free paraphrases and renderings with Greek prepositions is not important; what matters is the difference between literal and non-literal translation.

Can we observe in the LXX a statistically significant correlation between the translator’s strategy (literal vs. non-literal) and the referent of the Hebrew בעני (“God’s eyes” vs. “man’s eyes”)?

Such a tendency can be easily seen in the Targums. For example, in the Targum of Samuel the Hebrew semipreposition בעני with reference to man’s eyes is always rendered with Aramaic בעני “in the eyes of”, but with reference to God’s eyes it is always rendered with Aramaic קדם “before” (≈ Greek ἐναντίον, ἐνώπιον, ἔναντι)³. In the case of the Targums, there is no need to resort to the sophisticated methods of mathematical statistics: we have a one hundred percent correlation. With the Greek texts the situation is much more difficult, since in most cases, when we study theological or exegetical aspects of the Septuagint, we often deal not with strict rules, but with rather vague and probably half-conscious tendencies.

1. History of research

Rendering of בְּעֵינַי in the Septuagint was often dealt with in studies devoted to the problem of (anti)anthropomorphisms in the Greek Bible. Fritsch wrote: “The phrase ” בעני (in the eyes of Jehovah), or בעני (in my eyes), where the pronominal element refers to Jehovah, is consistently translated

³ According to the edition STAALDUINE-SULMAN, Targum of Samuel.

into the Greek by words and phrases which avoid the mention of eyes... We may be quite certain that the Hebrew term had lost its literal significance, yet the original underlying anthropomorphic conception has been permanently eradicated in the LXX".⁴

Subsequent scholarship mostly disagreed with this thesis. Orlinsky, dealing with the rendering of Hebrew עין in Greek Isaiah⁵, first mentions two cases where the word was rendered literally (1.15 and 1.16). Then he lists several instances of rendering בעני with ἐναντίον/ἐνώπιον (43.4, 49.5, 59.15, 65.12, 66.4), with regard to each instance he adduces examples of blatant anthropomorphisms in the nearest context of the Greek Bible, thus showing that this rendering of בעני in Isaiah has nothing to do with attempts to avoid anthropomorphism. Still, as concerns two places (38.3, where בעני was rendered with ἐνώπιον, and a periphrastical rendering in 37.17) Orlinsky admits that "there is a possibility of antianthropomorphism having been at work".

M. Hurwitz argues for a different translational techniques in the Septuagint of Isaiah 36–39⁶, where anthropomorphisms are usually "paraphrased, telescoped or replaced by prepositions". A special Appendix to his study is devoted to the treatment of God's עינים in II Kings, and brings to our attention the fact that in all non-Lucianic manuscripts of 2 Kgs בעני tends to be rendered literally (27 out of 31 instances), while in Lucianic manuscripts the ratio is reversed (5 instances of literal rendering out of 31). The reason for this, Hurwitz claims, is purely stylistic.

Turning to Job⁷, Orlinsky argues that non-literal rendering of God's עינים, characteristic of this book, has nothing to do with "antianthropomorphism", and that literal reproduction of עינים is sacrificed merely "for the sake of elegant composition".

Soffer⁸, dealing with the psalms, notes that in most cases God's עינים are translated literally. Only in two instances (50/51:6 and 115:6/116:15, both of them involve בעני as dead metaphor) the translator chooses non-literal rendering. Soffer adds sarcastically that "in every instance of בעני with reference to *man* the "anthropomorphism" is avoided by the use of ἐνώπιον or ἐναντίον". In fact, this statement is not true, since in Ps 117/118:23 בעינינו is rendered by ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν.

Zlotowitz⁹ observes that there are eleven clear occurrences in the Hebrew Jeremiah of עינים in association with the Lord. Eight are translated

⁴ FRITSCH, *Antianthropomorphisms*, 12–13.

⁵ ORLINSKY, *Treatment*, 197.

⁶ HURWITZ, *Septuagint of Isaiah 36–39*, 75–83.

⁷ ORLINSKY, *Studies* (1959), 164–166.

⁸ SOFFER, *Treatment*, 405.

⁹ ZLOTOWITZ, *Septuagint Translation*, 10–11.

literally (including three instances of בעני), two are translated non-literally (in both cases בעני is translated with ἐναντίον). One occurrence is part of a verse, that is lacking in the LXX. Non-literal rendering is not an attempt to avoid anthropomorphism, but rather a stylistic variation.

The rendering of the Hebrew semipreposition בעני is most complicated and interesting in Samuel-Kings. Therefore the studies of Samuel by Brock¹⁰ and of Kings by Shenkel¹¹ are of special importance for our topic.

Brock¹² notes the striking situation that after 2 Sam 11, outside Lucian's recension, only ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς is found in the books of Samuel and regards this a confirmation of Barthélemy's hypothesis, that in these chapters a "Palestinian recension" (*kaige*) was at work, bringing the Greek translation closer to MT. Brock mentions the tendency of Lucian's recension to have ἐνώπιον where other manuscripts have ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς and concurs with Hurwitz that this development in Lucian's recension should be regarded as purely stilistical.

Shenkel¹³ distinguishes in the text of Reigns between the Old Greek practice and that of the *kaige* recension: "It would seem that the Old Greek practice, then, was to employ ἐνώπιον when בעני referred to Yahweh, and ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς when the Hebrew expression referred to humans. It is most likely not a coincidence either that the expression used in referring to Yahweh was less literal than that used in referring to humans". On the contrary, the *kaige* redactor used ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς in overwhelming majority of instances, both when בעני referred to Yahweh and to humans. The Lucian's recension, Shenkel states, displays the same translation characteristic as the Old Greek.

The most extensive treatment of the topic is Sollamo's monograph on renderings of Hebrew semiprepositions in the Septuagint¹⁴. As concerns the books of Reigns, Sollamo follows in the footsteps of Shenkel, but invites the reader to be more careful than Shenkel as concerns the Old Greek practice. Sollamo deals with the critical text only, leaving the Lucian's recension out of consideration.

The present paper agrees in most cases with the findings of our predecessors, especially Shenkel and Sollamo. What we are going to do is to make our observations and conclusions more objective by introducing the apparatus of mathematical statistics. We think our study of the Greek rendering of the semipreposition בעני might be a test case for application of these methods to the Septuagintal studies.

¹⁰ BROCK, Recensions (1996; originally a doctoral thesis defended in 1966).

¹¹ SHENKEL, Chronology.

¹² BROCK, Recensions, 246–247

¹³ SHENKEL, Chronology, 13–17.

¹⁴ SOLLAMO, Renderings, 123–176.

2. The overall picture of how the semipreposition בְּעֵי is rendered in the Greek Bible

According to the way of how the Hebrew בְּעֵי is treated, the books of the Septuagint can be classified into several groups¹⁵.

(1) In the Pentateuch the translation of the semipreposition בְּעֵי is always (about 80 times) non-literal whether the reference is to God's eyes or man's eyes¹⁶.

(2) The Greek Joshua, as well as Isaiah and the Minor Prophets follow in the same vein: the translation of the semipreposition בְּעֵי is always non-literal.

(3) Esther, Proverbs and Job are translated in a very free manner. Once again, the translation of the semipreposition בְּעֵי is always non-literal.

(4) The Greek translations of Chronicles, Psalter and Jeremiah in most cases render the Hebrew semipreposition בְּעֵי in a non-literal way. However, sometimes the literal rendering (*ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς*) starts to appear. This reflects the beginning of tendency towards more literal translation.

The translator's choice between literal and non-literal rendering does not depend in these books on whether בְּעֵי refers to God's eyes or to man's eyes. Our verdict coincides here with that of previous investigations: both Soffer (analyzing the Psalter) and Zlotowitch (analyzing Jeremiah) regarded the variations in rendering Hebrew עֵינַיִם in these books as purely stylistic device.¹⁷

(5) In the Old Greek parts of the Reigns literal and non-literal renderings of the Hebrew בְּעֵי occur side by side. From the point of view of our present investigation these texts are located in the "point of equilibrium", which makes them especially interesting object of study. Because of the complicated textual history of these books, one must analyse separately: (a) the non-*kaige* sections of B and related manuscripts; (b) the *kaige* sections of B and related manuscripts; (c) the Antiochean text. As concerns the *kaige* sections, the rendering of the Hebrew בְּעֵי is mostly literal (see below). The non-*kaige* parts and the Antiochean text will be in the focus of our paper.

¹⁵ Our classification does not include the books where בְּעֵי never occurs as well as the books where it occurs just once.

¹⁶ The literal rendering of the Hebrew בְּעֵי in the Pentateuch occurs only in the expressions "to lift one's eyes", "to see with one's own eyes" (Deut 3:27, 34:4) or when the reference is to the physical eye (Lev 21:20 – "one who has a defect in his eye"). Note also a vivid metaphor in Num 33:55 (the enemies "will become barbs in your eyes"). In none of these cases the Hebrew בְּעֵי functions as a semipreposition.

¹⁷ See also SOLLAMO, *Renderings*, 145–146.

(6) The book of Judges is also close to the “point of equilibrium”. However, the textual history of the book seems to be even more complicated than that of Reigns, so we decided to leave it outside our investigation, at least until we have a reliable critical text.

(7) In the *kaige* sections of Reigns the Hebrew semipreposition בעני is mostly rendered literally.

(8) As is well known, the highest degree of literalism in the Septuagint is characteristic of the Greek Ruth, Song of Songs, Lamentations and, especially, Ecclesiastes. Within this corpus the Hebrew בעני occurs three times in Ruth (and once in the Song of Songs); the translation is literal: ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς. We can add the book of Ruth to the “literal” end of our table.

3. Rendering of semipreposition בעני in the Greek Bible

Non-literal	Mainly non-literal	“Point of equilibrium”	Mainly literal	Literal
Pentateuch, Joshua, Isaiah, Minor Prophets, Esther, Proverbs, Job	Chronicles, Psalter, Jeremiah	OG Reigns Judges?	<i>Kaige</i> sections of Reigns	Ruth

Seen from the point of view of literal versus non-literal rendering of Hebrew בעני, the books of the Greek Bible represent a continuum. On the one end of this continuum are more idiomatic translations, where the Hebrew semipreposition בעני is always rendered in a non-literal way. On the other end are Hebraizing translations, where the Hebrew בעני is always rendered literally. Roughly speaking, this continuum reflects the tendency towards more literalism, slowly growing in the history of the Greek Bible translations: from the idiomatic Pentateuch to the predecessors of Aquila.

At the non-literal end of the spectrum there is no room for the correlation between the translator’s strategy and the referent of the Hebrew בעני because the semipreposition בעני is always translated in a non-literal way without regard to whether it refers to God’s eyes or man’s eyes. On the opposite end of the spectrum there is no room either for the correlation between the translator’s strategy and the referent of the Hebrew בעני because the Hebrew בעני is translated in a literal way without regard to whether it refers to God’s eyes or man’s eyes.

Is it possible, that in the middle of this continuum, in the “point of equilibrium”, the semantic factor (namely, whether the Hebrew בעני refers to God’s eyes or man’s eyes) can tip the balance between different translation strategies? Shenkel (followed by Sollamo) suggested that the Old Greek translator of the Reigns employed ἐνώπιον when בעני referred to Yahweh,

and ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς when the Hebrew expression referred to humans. This suggestion seems attractive and we shall check it with the methods used in statistics¹⁸.

3.1. The rendering of the Hebrew בעני in the Reigns

Since Thackeray¹⁹ it is customary to divide the four Greek books of Reigns into five sections: α , $\beta\beta$, $\beta\gamma$, $\gamma\gamma$, $\gamma\delta$. The Greek translation of the sections $\beta\gamma$ and $\gamma\delta$ is different from other sections and, in particular, is characterized by significantly more literalistic approach. According to Thackeray only sections α , $\beta\beta$ and $\gamma\gamma$ are part of the original translations, sections $\beta\gamma$ and $\gamma\delta$ were translated later. Barthélemy²⁰ linked the $\beta\gamma$ and $\gamma\delta$ sections with the *kaige* revision, whose authors sought to bring the revised text closer to the MT and to make the translation more literal.

Later Shenkel²¹ suggested to draw the boundary between sections $\beta\beta$ and $\beta\gamma$ not after 2 Reigns 11:1, but before 2 Reigns 10:1.

	Thackeray	Shenkel
α	1 Reigns	1 Reigns
$\beta\beta$	2 Reigns 1:1–11:1	2 Reigns 1:1–9:13
$\beta\gamma$ (<i>kaige</i>)	2 Reigns 11:2 – 3 Reigns 2:11	2 Reigns 10:1 – 3 Reigns 2:11
$\gamma\gamma$	3 Reigns 2:12–21:43	3 Reigns 2:12–21:43
$\gamma\delta$ (<i>kaige</i>)	3 Reigns 22:1 – 4 Reigns 25	3 Reigns 22:1 – 4 Reigns 25

The manuscript tradition of the Greek Reigns is not homogeneous, many manuscripts have been influenced by the Hexapla (only Codex Vaticanus and some affiliated manuscripts remain largely untouched by the Hexapla). It is commonly believed that the Old Greek translation of Reigns is best represented in the sections α , $\beta\beta$ and $\gamma\gamma$ of Codex Vaticanus and affiliated manuscripts.

The only manuscript tradition not affected by the *kaige* revision in the $\beta\gamma$ and $\gamma\delta$ sections is the Antiochene tradition, manuscripts *boc_{2e}*. However, as becomes evident from the comparison of the Antiochene manuscripts with Codex Vaticanus in the sections α , $\beta\beta$, $\gamma\gamma$, the Antiochene text has also been subject to a serious editorial work. The main features of the

¹⁸ Having checked anew all the occurrences of בעני in Samuel-Kings and their rendering in the Greek texts we noted that some data gathered by SHENKEL 1968 (in tables on pages 14–15 and lists on page 128) needs to be corrected (verses concerned are 1 Sam 15:17; 2 Sam 3:19; 2 Sam 19:28; 1 Kgs 9:12; 2 Kgs 7:2, 19). SOLLAMO, *Renderings*, 144 already made some corrections as concerns SHENKEL's treatment of the critical text (but not as concerns the Antiochene text).

¹⁹ THACKERAY, *Greek Translators*, 262–278; Thackeray, *Septuagint*, 16–28.

²⁰ BARTHÉLEMY, *Devanciers*, 89–143.

²¹ SHENKEL, *Chronology*.

Table 1: Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$ in Codex Vaticanus (following Thackeray's division)

	with reference to God	with reference to man
Literal rendering	1	22
Non-literal rendering	21	11

One can easily see that there is a correlation between the referent of בעני and the translator's strategy: speaking about God the translator prefers non-literal rendering, speaking about man he prefers literal rendering. But how significant is this correlation? Is it possible that this distribution is caused by pure chance? A standard tool used in mathematical statistics to answer questions like this is the Fisher exact test²². The test compares our observed data with the values one would expect if the two variables (in our case – the reference of the Hebrew בעני , and the translator's strategy) were independent. To evaluate the difference between the observed and the expected, the test calculates the so-called P-value (the probability of obtaining the same or more extreme deviations from the expected values by pure chance). Let us set the level of significance at 0.01 (=1%); this means that we will consider our observation statistically significant if the probability of obtaining the same (or more extreme) results by pure chance is less than 0.01 (=1%). The P-value for our table, computed by the Fisher exact test is about 0.000003²³, much lower than our threshold of 0.01.

It is important to state that mathematical statistics cannot prove or disprove a hypothesis. Calculations cannot replace human intellect and human research in evaluating a hypothesis. What mathematical statistics can do is to give the researcher some objective point of reference for evaluating a hypothesis. In our case we have formulated the hypothesis that there is a real correlation between the translator's strategy (literal vs. non-literal) and the referent of the Hebrew בעני (God's eyes vs. man's eyes). The test tells us that the probability of obtaining such an *illusion* of correlation without *real* correlation (by pure chance) is less than one thousandth of one percent. Our hypothesis that there is a real correlation between the referent of בעני and the translator's strategy is very plausible.

3.3. Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Codex Vaticanus. Note 1

While doing our calculations we counted all the places, where the Masoretic text has the semipreposition בעני and this semipreposition is somehow

²² The literature on test statistics is enormous; for an introduction to the Fisher exact test see, e.g., GREGORY W. CORDER, Dale I. Foreman, *Nonparametric Statistics: A Step-by-Step Approach*, Hoboken NJ 2014, 196–204.

²³ There are a lot of on-line calculators for the Fisher exact test. The one we used is <http://vassarstats.net/tab2x2.html>.

rendered in the Greek text, either literally or non-literally. The words *ὄτι ἀγαθὸς σὺ ἐνώπιόν μου* (1 Sam 29:10) were excluded from our analysis, because they do not have any counterpart in the MT. But these words quite probably go back to a Vorlage different from the MT, and we may retrovert *ἀγαθὸς σὺ ἐνώπιόν μου* as *בִּי טוֹב אֶתָּה בְּעֵינַי*. This gives us one more instance of non-literal translation of the Hebrew semipreposition *בְּעֵינַי* with reference to man's eyes. How different will be our statistics, if we include *ἐνώπιόν μου* (1 Sam 29:10) in our analysis? Not too different. The P-value computed by the Fisher exact test will be slightly higher (0.000004), but still well below the level of significance that we set at 0.01.

3.4. Rendering of *בְּעֵינַי* in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Codex Vaticanus. Note 2

While doing our calculations we drew the boundary between sections $\beta\beta$ and $\beta\gamma$ according to Thackeray's division. How different will be our statistics, if we do our calculations following Shenkel's boundary between sections $\beta\beta$ and $\beta\gamma$? In this case the P-value computed by the Fisher exact test will be even lower (lower than 0.000001), much below the level of significance.

3.5. Rendering of *בְּעֵינַי* in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Codex Vaticanus. An example²⁴

Before we move any further, let us look at the Greek rendering of 1 Sam 26:24.

וְהָיָה כִּאֲשֶׁר גָּדְלָה נַפְשִׁי הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בְּעֵינַי כֹּן תִּגְדַּל נַפְשִׁי בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה וַיֵּצֵאנִי מִכַּל-צָרָה:

καὶ ἰδοὺ καθὼς ἐμεγαλύνθη ἡ ψυχὴ σου σήμερον ἐν ταύτῃ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς μου οὕτως μεγαλυνθείη ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ σκεπάσαι με καὶ ἐξελείται με ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως

In the Hebrew text David says to Saul: “Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight (*בְּעֵינַי*), so may my life be precious in the sight of the LORD (*בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה*)”. In the Greek translation Hebrew *בְּעֵינַי* is rendered literally (*ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς μου*), but Hebrew *יְהוָה בְּעֵינַי* is rendered periphrastically (*ἐνώπιον κυρίου*). Taken alone, by itself, this change may be subject to different interpretations, for example, one could suggest that the translator wanted to vary the renderings for purely stylistic reasons. However, on the background of our statistical investigation, this example should be regarded as an additional confirmation that for the translator of the Old

²⁴ This verse was already paid attention to in SHENKEL, Chronology, 16.

Greek Reigns the literal translation was felt less acceptable when speaking about God than while speaking about man.

3.6. Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Antiochene text

We follow Brock and other modern scholars in treating sections α , $\beta\beta$ and $\gamma\gamma$ of Codex Vaticanus as best witness to the Old Greek text of Reigns. If we take Codex Vaticanus as our reference point, we see in other manuscripts sporadic changes of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \delta\phi\theta\alpha\lambda\mu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ to $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\pi\iota\omicron\nu$ or vice versa²⁵. The changes of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \delta\phi\theta\alpha\lambda\mu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ to $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\pi\iota\omicron\nu$ are most numerous in Antiochene manuscripts (see 1 Sam 1:23; 8:6; 18:5, 8), where they happen both when speaking about God's eyes and about man's eyes²⁶. Brock²⁷ and Hurwitz²⁸ rightly stress that this tendency of Lucianic manuscripts has nothing to do with avoidance of anthropomorphisms, but are in line with the general tendency of Lucianic recension to eliminate hebraisms. Still, the correlation between the translator's strategy and the referent of the Hebrew בעני is evident in the Antiochene manuscripts as well.

The table below takes account of all the places in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$ where the Masoretic text has the semipreposition בעני and this semipreposition is somehow rendered in the Lucianic tradition (in drawing boundaries between different sections we follow Thackeray's division: $\beta\beta = 2$ Reigns 1:1 – 2 Reigns 11:1). Total number of occurrences is 57, two occurrences more than in the same section of B. This is due to the fact that the verse 1 Sam 18:5 (with two occurrences of בעני in the Hebrew text) is absent from B, but present in Lucianic manuscripts.

Table 2: Rendering of the semipreposition בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$ in the Antiochene text (following Thackeray's division)

	with reference to God	with reference to man
Literal rendering	1	20
Non-literal rendering	20	16

The P-value for table 2, computed by the Fisher exact test is about 0.0001. This means that the probability of obtaining the same or more extreme results by pure chance is just about 0.01%. Our hypothesis that in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$ there is a correlation between the referent of בעני and the transla-

²⁵ See list of these changes in BROCK, Recensions, 246–247.

²⁶ A unique example of the opposite tendency is 1 Sam 29:10, where we have $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\pi\iota\omicron\nu$ in Codex Vaticanus ($\delta\tau\iota \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\delta\varsigma \sigma\upsilon \acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\pi\iota\omicron\nu \mu\omicron\upsilon$) but a literal translation in the Antiochene text. This may be somehow connected with the fact that these words do not have any correspondence in the MT and their textual history might have been more complicated than that of the neighbouring verses (see discussion above).

²⁷ BROCK, Recensions, 246–247.

²⁸ HURWITZ, Septuagint of Isaiah 36–39, 83.

tor's strategy seems to be quite plausible with regard to the Antiochene text as well.

This conclusion is not affected by whether we count 1 Sam 29:10 or not (cf. above "Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Codex Vaticanus. Note 1"). If we count 1 Sam 29:10 the P-value will be slightly higher (0.00014), but still well below the threshold. It is not affected either by whether we draw the boundary between sections $\beta\beta$ and $\beta\gamma$ according to Thackeray or according to Shenkel (cf. above "Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\alpha + \beta\beta + \gamma\gamma$. Codex Vaticanus. Note 2"). If we draw the boundary according to Shenkel, the P-value will be even lower (lower than 0.0001), well below the threshold.

Both in Codex Vaticanus text and in the Antiochene text the probability that the observed correlation may be obtained by pure chance is very low. But in the Antiochene text it is slightly higher. This may indicate that in the Antiochene text the correlation between the translator's strategy and the referent of the Hebrew בעני is not as strong as in the Codex Vaticanus, a bit more blurred. The reason for this "blurring" is that the Antiochene redaction tends to eliminate the hebraism ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς whatever the referent of this expression may be, God or man.

3.6. Rendering of בעני in Reigns $\beta\gamma + \gamma\delta$. Antiochene text

Below is the list of all the places in Reigns $\beta\gamma + \gamma\delta$ where the Masoretic text has the semipreposition בעני and this semipreposition is somehow rendered in the Antiochene text (in drawing boundaries between different sections we follow Thackeray's division: $\beta\beta = 2$ Reigns 1:1 – 2 Reigns 11:1):

2 Sam 11:25; 2 Sam 11:27; 2 Sam 12:9; 2 Sam 13:2; 2 Sam 14:22; 2 Sam 15:25; 2 Sam 15:26; 2 Sam 16:4; 2 Sam 17:4 (bis); 2 Sam 18:4; 2 Sam 19:7; 2 Sam 19:19; 2 Sam 19:28; 2 Sam 19:38; 2 Sam 19:39; 2 Sam 24:22; 1 Kgs 22:53; 2 Kgs 1:13; 2 Kgs 1:14; 2 Kgs 3:2; 2 Kgs 3:18; 2 Kgs 8:18; 2 Kgs 8:27; 2 Kgs 10:5; 2 Kgs 10:30; 2 Kgs 12:3; 2 Kgs 13:2; 2 Kgs 13:11; 2 Kgs 14:3; 2 Kgs 14:24; 2 Kgs 15:3; 2 Kgs 15:9; 2 Kgs 15:18; 2 Kgs 15:24; 2 Kgs 15:28; 2 Kgs 15:34; 2 Kgs 16:2; 2 Kgs 17:2; 2 Kgs 17:17; 2 Kgs 18:3; 2 Kgs 20:3; 2 Kgs 21:2; 2 Kgs 21:6; 2 Kgs 21:15; 2 Kgs 21:16; 2 Kgs 21:20; 2 Kgs 22:2; 2 Kgs 23:32; 2 Kgs 23:37; 2 Kgs 24:9; 2 Kgs 24:19 (52 occurrences in toto).

The MT has one more occurrence of the semipreposition בעני – in 1 Kgs 22:43, but the verses 1 Kgs 22:41–51 are absent from the Greek text of the Antiochene manuscripts. In two cases – 2 Kgs 7:2 and 2 Kgs 7:19 – the Hebrew expression בעני in the phrase הַגִּיד רְאָה בְּעֵינֶיךָ "You will see it with your own eyes" should not be treated as semipreposition.

In 2 Sam 19:28 the MT refers to man's eyes: וְאֵדְנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּמַלְאֵךְ הָאֱלֹהִים וְעָשָׂה הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינַי. Non-Antiochene manuscripts (*kaige* revision) corres-

pond to the MT: *καὶ ὁ κύριός μου ὁ βασιλεὺς ὡς ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ποιήσον τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς σου*. The Antiochene text is radically different, referring to God’s eyes: *ὁ δε κύριός μου ὁ βασιλεὺς ὡς ἄγγελος θεοῦ ἐποίησε τὸ καλὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ*. Since our task now is to analyse the Antiochene text, we list this occurrence as referring to God’s eyes. Probably the Antiochene text reflects here the OG (and its Vorlage?), while the *kaige* revision makes the Greek closer to the MT.

Table 3: Rendering of the semipreposition *בעני* in Reigns *βγ + γδ*
Antiochene text (following Thackeray’s division).

	with reference to God	with reference to man
Literal rendering	6	9
Non-literal rendering	31	6

P-value for table 3, computed by the Fisher exact test is 0.0029, well below the threshold that we set 0.01. Here again our hypothesis that there is a correlation between the referent of *בעני* and the translator’s strategy seems to be quite plausible.

This conclusion is not affected by whether we draw the boundary between sections *ββ* and *βγ* according to Thackeray or according to Shenkel. If we draw the boundary according to Shenkel, the P-value will be slightly higher (0.00905), but still below the threshold.

The Old Greek for sections *βγ* and *γδ* is not preserved, but the principles of the Antiochene redaction should have been the same as in the sections *α*, *ββ* and *γγ*. We have seen in the sections *α*, *ββ* and *γγ* that the Antiochene redaction tends to eliminate the hebraism *ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς*, whatever the referent of this expression may be. This results in “blurring” the picture which was quite net in Codex Vaticanus.

If the same tendency was in effect in sections *βγ* and *γδ*, the correlation between the translator’s strategy and the referent of the Hebrew *בעני* might have been even more clear in the Old Greek than in the Antiochene tradition.

4. Summary

The Greek Reigns drew our attention because we suggested that in these books, located exactly at the “point of equilibrium” between literal and non-literal ways of translating the Hebrew *בעני*, the semantic factor (namely, whether the Hebrew *בעני* refers to God’s eyes or man’s eyes) might have tipped the balance between different translation strategies.

Statistical analysis supports the hypothesis that in the Greek Reigns the Old Greek practice was to employ *ἐνώπιον* when *בעני* referred to Yahweh,

and ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς when בְּעֵינַי referred to humans: the correlation between the translator's strategy and the referent of בְּעֵינַי is statistically significant.

We believe this work may serve as a model of using the apparatus of mathematical statistics in the Septuagint studies.

Sometimes, for example when dealing with Aquila or Targum, we see more or less strict translational and exegetical rules and we may suppose that these rules were quite consciously applied by the translator(s). To describe these ancient rules scholars use the modern scientific language of rules.

As concerns the exegetical and theological features of the Septuagint, in many cases one should speak not about strict and conscious rules, but rather about vague and half-conscious tendencies. The language of black and white rules is not adequate to reflect and describe them. We are in a gray zone.

To evaluate these vague exegetical and theological tendencies – and to evaluate our hypotheses about them – one requires a more sophisticated and flexible scientific apparatus, which at least partly may be provided by statistical analysis.

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