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## ***Explanationes in Esaïam* of St. Jerome. The Outline of its Genesis and Method**

### **Hieronimowe *Explanationes in Esaïam*. Geneza i metoda w zarysie**

**Abstract.** The article surveys *Explanationes in Esaïam* of St. Jerome. The circumstances of the genesis of such a work, as well as the analysis carried out on it confirm – as customary to St. Jerome – the great veneration towards the Bible, especially in its original language. His exegetical approach is featured by a detailed and keen linguistic analysis; by a careful interpretation of the text; by a clear and consistent hermeneutics and by a reconstruction of its history. A striking element is represented by a strong resemblance to the exegetical methods carried out nowadays, highlighting the value of the inspired text and maintaining its historical and semantic dimensions. St. Jerome aimed at creating an exegetical as well as theological and cultural patrimony for future Christian exegetes.

**Streszczenie.** Przedmiotem artykułu są *Explanationes in Esaïam* św. Hieronima. Okoliczności powstania tego dzieła oraz analiza potwierdzają tradycyjną wiedzę na temat wielkiego pietyzmu Autora względem natchnionego tekstu biblijnego, zwłaszcza w jego oryginalnym brzemieniu. Egzegeza, z jaką mamy u niego do czynienia, charakteryzuje się wnikliwą analizą lingwistyczną; rygiorem w interpretacji tekstu; wyjaśnianiem historii interpretowanego tekstu; badaniem wewnętrznej spójności stosowanej hermeneutyki. Przede wszystkim jednak widać w tej egzegezie wielkie podobieństwo do stosowanych dzisiaj metod badawczych, zwracających uwagę na wartość samego tekstu i zatroskanych o respektowanie jego wymiaru historyczno-semantycznego. Hieronimowi zależało na tym, by utworzyć *patrimonium* egzegetyczno-teologiczno-kulturalne, które mogłoby być walnie wykorzystane przez przyszłych egzegetów chrześcijańskich.

**Keywords:** Saint Jerome; Book of Prophet Isaiah; Patristic Exegesis.

**Słowa kluczowe:** św. Hieronim; Księga Izajasza; egzegeza patrystyczna.

## 1. The Circumstances of the Creation of *Explanationes in Esaïam*

*Explanationes in Esaïam* are considered to be one of the finest works of St. Jerome – the prince of exegetes among the Church Fathers.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless,

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<sup>1</sup> The main editions of Jerome's *Explanationes in Esaïam* are as follows: *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*. "Introduction par Roger Gryson. Livres I–IV. Texte établi par Roger Gryson et Paul-Augustin Deproost avec la collaboration de J. Coulie et E. Crousse" [= *Vetus Latina*. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel. Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, 23], Verlag Herder, Freiburg 1993; *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*. Introduction par Roger Gryson et Paul-Augustin Deproost. Livres V–VII. Texte établi par Roger Gryson et J. Coulie avec la collaboration de E. Crousse et V. Somers [= *Vetus Latina*. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel. Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, 27], Verlag Herder, Freiburg 1994; *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*. Introduction par Roger Gryson. Livres VIII–XI. Texte établi par Roger Gryson et V. Somers avec la collaboration de H. Bourgois et C. Gabriel, [= *Vetus Latina*. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel. Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, 30], Verlag Herder, Freiburg 1996; *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*. Introduction par Roger Gryson. Livres XII–XVI. Texte établi par Roger Gryson et C. Gabriel avec la collaboration de H. Bourgois et V. Leclercq [= *Vetus Latina*. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel. Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, 35], Verlag Herder, Freiburg 1998; *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*. Introduction par Roger Gryson. Livres XVI–XVIII. Texte établi par Roger Gryson et C. Gabriel avec la collaboration de H. Bourgois et H. Stanjek [= *Vetus Latina*. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel. Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, 36], Verlag Herder, Freiburg 1999. These publications also include the best critical edition of St. Jerome's work which is better than the one published in CCL 73. In this article we use this critical edition of the text (the abbreviation VL will be used [= *Vetus Latina*]). It is important to mention here another valuable edition of Jerome's *Explanationes in Esaïam*, which – although not a critical edition – is a great study of the Dalmatian's work we analyze here: Hieronymi, *Explanationes in Esaïam*. Curavit Robertus Maisano [= *Hieronymi opera*, 4] || Girolamo, *Commento a Isaia*. A cura di Roberto Maisano [= *Opere di Girolamo*, 4], I–IV, Città Nuova Editrice, Roma 2013 (the book offers an extensive bibliography on the subject). Another valuable work on this subject used in this article is S.M. Gozzo, "De S. Hieronymi commentario in Isaiaie librum," *Antonianum* 35 (1960), 49–80 and 169–214. As Seraphinus M. Gozzo states (cf. pp. 49–50), this theme was also examined by the following authors: D. Vallarsi, who published Jerome's work (cf. *Opera omnia Hieronymi Stridonensis. Praefatio*, PL 24, 9–17); F.M. Abel, "Le commentaire de saint Jérôme sur Isaïe," *Revue biblique nouvelle serie* 3 (1916), 200–225; A. Penna, *S. Gerolamo*, Torino 1949, where we can find only some general remarks and information on Jerome's exegesis. There are also other publications which Gozzo does not include, such as G. Bardy, "Saint Jérôme et ses maîtres hébreux," *Revue bénédictine* 45 (1934), 145–164; J. Ziegler, *Textkritische Notizen zu den jüngeren griechischen übersetzungen des Buches Isaias, Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Fachgruppe Religionswissenschaften, N.F.*, 1/4 (1939), 75–102 (imprint: idem. *Sylloge. Gesamelte Aufsätze zur Septuaginta* [= Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unter-

starting with Rufinus of Aquileia, some old Christian authors regarded this work as plagiarism borrowed from Jewish exegetes.<sup>2</sup>

Writing *Explanations in Esaiam*, St. Jerome relied undoubtedly on earlier authors who commented on this inspired book. It is necessary to mention here – in the first place, Origen,<sup>3</sup> whose works the Dalmatian knew thoroughly and sometimes utilized in his studies.<sup>4</sup> Jerome was also familiar with the output of Eusebius of Caesarea,<sup>5</sup> Apollinaris of Laodicea,<sup>6</sup> or Didymus the Blind from Alexandria.<sup>7</sup> The works of Eusebius introduced Jerome to the Hebrew sources

nelimens, 10], Göttingen 1971, 43–70); E. Sutcliffe, „St. Jerome’s Pronunciation of Hebrew,“ *Biblica* 29 (1948), 112–125; J. Barr, „St. Jerome’s Appreciation of Hebrew,“ *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 49 (1966), 281–302; idem. „St. Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew,“ *Journal of Semitic Studies* 12 (1967), 1–36; E. Brønno, *Die Aussprache der hebräischen Laryngale nach Zeugnissen des Hieronymus*, Aarnus 1970; E. Burstein, „La compétence de Jérôme en hébreu,“ *Revue des études augustinienes* 21 (1975), 3–12; A. Penna, *Scrittura e pronuncia dell’ebraico secondo s. Girolamo*,” *Rivista biblica italiana* 26 (1978), 275–299; B. Degórski, „Il metodo esegetico di san Girolamo alla luce del ‘Commento in Isaia,“ in: T. Rossi (ed.), *Liber Viator. Grandi Commentari del pensiero cristiano* [= *Studia Pontificiae Universitatis a S. Thoma Aquinate in Urbe. Studi* 2004. Nuova serie, 8], Roma 2005, 173–195; idem. „L’esegesi geronimiana di Is 1, 1 sulla base del Commento in Isaia,“ *Vox Patrum* 26 (2006), 135–143.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Grützmaker, *Hieronymus. Eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte* [= *Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und der Kirche*, 10], II, Berlin 1906, 114; S.M. Gozzo, 50, footnote 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 51.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 66, 46–50, VL 23, 216 [= 1, 2, 22, CCL 73, 40–41]; *ibid.* 3, 9, 50–55, VL 23, 325 [= 3, 6, 9–10, CCL 73, 92]; *ibid.* 3, 10, 43, VL 23, 331 [= 3, 6, 11–13, CCL 73, 95]; *ibid.* 5, 1, 26–31, VL 27, 546–547 [= 5, *praefatio*, CCL 73, 160]; *ibid.* 11, 1, 1–9, VL 30, 1175 [= 11, *praefatio*, CCL 73, 427–428]. Cf. *ibid.* S.M. Gozzo, 52–53.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 89–90, VL 23, 138 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 3]; *ibid.* 5, 1, 27, VL 27, 546 [= 5, *praefatio*, CCL 73, 160]; *ibid.* 5, 4, 4–6, VL 27, 550 [= 5, 13, 3, CCL 73, 161]; *ibid.* 5, 86, 29–34, VL 27, 611 [= 5, 18, 2, CCL 73, 190]; *ibid.* 5, 91, 14–20, VL 27, 615 [= 5, 18, 7, CCL 73, 192]; *ibid.* 5, 118, 10–11, VL 27, 657 [= 5, 22, 2–3, CCL 73, 211]; *ibid.* 8, 30, 81–83, VL 30, 996 [= 8, 27, 1, CCL 73, 346]; *ibid.* 11, 1, 9, VL 30, 1175 [= 11, *praefatio*, CCL 73, 428]. Cf. also B. de Montfaucon, *Praefatio ad Eusebii Pamphili Commentaria in Hesaiam*, PG 24, 60. 78; S.M. Gozzo, 58.

<sup>6</sup> We do not have this commentary (cf. S.M. Gozzo, 54, footnote 6). On what Jerome borrowed from Apollinaris of Laodicea or to be more precise Jerome’s critique of Apollinaris’ work, cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 94–98, VL 23, 138 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 4]; *ibid.* 11, 1, 10–11, VL 30, 1176–1176 [= 11, *prologus*, CCL 73, 428]; *ibid.* 18, 1, 27–31, VL 36, 1818 [= 18, *praefatio*, CCL 73 A, 741].

<sup>7</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 90–91, VL 23, 138 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 3–4].

from which he drew.<sup>8</sup> As for Latin writers, St. Jerome, undoubtedly, knew the commentary written by Victorinus of Pettau, even if he criticized his style<sup>9</sup> (this work has not survived to our times).<sup>10</sup> It is highly probable that St. Jerome was also not a stranger to the Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah by St. Basil the Great.<sup>11</sup> It should not be concluded, however, that St. Jerome based his commentary on Isaiah strictly on one of these works. *Explanationes in Esaiam* is a much more valuable and better work than all the others, even than the commentary of Eusebius of Caesarea who was indeed an outstanding thinker and theologian.<sup>12</sup>

*Explanationes in Esaiam* of St. Jerome consists of eighteen books.<sup>13</sup> It is not surprising that there are so many of them taking into account the length of the inspired book of the Prophet Isaiah. Each of St. Jerome's books is preceded with

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 61.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *De uiris inlustribus* 74, 1, in: A. Ceresa-Gastaldo (ed.), *Gerolamo. Gli uomini illustri. De uiris illustribus* [= Bibliotheca Patristica, 12], Nardini Editore, Firenze 1988, 180: "Victorinus, Petabionensis episcopus, non aequae Latine et Graecae noverat, unde opera eius grandia sensibus viliora videntur compositione verborum."

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 1, 1, 80–89, 137–138 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 3]; *ibid.* 18, 1, 18, VL 36 [= 18, *praefatio*, CCL 73 A, 741].

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Basilius Caesariensis, *Commentarius in Esaiam prophetam*, PG 30. Cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 57.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 60.

<sup>13</sup> Critical edition in: VL (cf. footnote 1 of this paper). Other critical editions (less valuable): M. Adriaen, CCL 73 and 73 A, Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, Turnholti 1973. On all published editions of Jerome's commentary, cf. R. Gryson, *Introduction*, VL 23, 109–119. On later publications on Jerome's Commentary on Isaiah, cf. B. Löfstedt, "Zu Hieronymus Jesaias-Kommentar," *Orpheus* n.s. 5 (1984), 196–203; C. Siegfried, "Die Aussprache des Hebräischen bei Hieronymus," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 4 (1984), 35–83; M. Simonetti, "Sulle fonti del Commento a Isaia di Girolamo," *Augustinianum* 24 (1984), 451–469; P. Jay, *Lexègèse de saint Jérôme d'après son commentaire sur Isaïe*, Paris 1985; D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament. 2. Isaïe, Jérémie, Lamentations* [= Orbis biblicus et orientalis, 50/2], Fribourg-Göttingen 1986, 26–29; R. Gryson, "La tradition manuscrite du commentaire de Jérôme sur Isaïe. État de la question," in: Y.-M. Duval (ed.), *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient. Actes du Colloque de Chantilly (Septembre 1986)*, Paris 1988, 403–425; J.-C. Haelewyck, "Le lemme Vulgate du commentaire de Jérôme sur Isaïe," in: Y.-M. Duval (ed.), 391–401 (the article analyzes Isa 1–12, text commented in Books I–IV of Jerome's work); I. Opelt, "San Girolamo e i suoi maestri ebrei," *Augustinianum* 28 (1988), 327–338; R. Gryson – P.-A. Deproost, "La tradition manuscrite du commentaire de Jérôme sur Isaïe" (*livres I et II*), *Scriptorium* 43 (1989), 175–222; R. Gryson, "Les six dons du Saint-Esprit. La version héronymienne d'Isaïe 11, 2. 3," *Biblica* 71 (1990), 395–400; R. Gryson – D. Szmatala, "Les commentaires patristiques sur Isaïe d'Origène à Jérôme," *Revue des études augustiniennes* 36 (1990), 3–41; R. Gryson, "Saint Jérôme tra-

a brief introduction.<sup>14</sup> It is highly useful considering the origin of the creation of the commentary, circumstances which accompanied it, sources, the time in which the book was written, the addressees of the work, etc.

*Explanations in Esaiam* was created at the request of the Roman aristocrat and nun who was a favorite student and friend of Jerome – St. Paula, her daughter (also a nun) – St. Eustochium, St. Pammachius – husband of Paulina (another daughter of St. Paula)<sup>15</sup> and Bishop Amabilis. The latter made a request to St. Jerome, first in a letter and then through the deacon Heraclius, to literally lay out “ten visions of Isaiah, which are very unclear”<sup>16</sup> (cf. Is 13–23). The deacon Heraclius asked Jerome to swear that he would satisfy the wish of Bishop Amabilis.<sup>17</sup> It was all the easier because Amabilis – the bishop of the unknown to us diocese of Pannonia<sup>18</sup> – was a friend of the Dalmatian. Jerome then commented literally on Isaiah 13–23 (following the text of *hebraica veritas*, but leaving out comments written by Christian authors). Later, after the death of St. Paula and St. Pammachius, he dedicated the entire *Explanations in Esaiam* to

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ducteur d’Isaïe. Réflexion sur le texte d’Isaïe 14, 18–21 dans la Vulgate et dans l’In Esaiam” *Le Muséon* 104 (1991), 57–72.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 1–107, VL 23, 133–139 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 1–4]; *ibid.* 2, 1, 1–13, VL 23, 217 [= 2, *prologus*, CCL 73, 41]; *ibid.* 3, 1, 1–18, VL 23, 307–308 [= 3, *prologus*, CCL 73, 83]; *ibid.* 4, 1, 1–13, VL 23, 397–398 [= 4, *prologus*, CCL 73, 128]; *ibid.* 5, 1, 1–50, VL 27, 545–548 [= 5, *prologus*, CCL 73, 159–160]; *ibid.* 6, 1, 1–9, VL 27, 687 [= 6, *prologus*, CCL 73, 223]; *ibid.* 7, 1, 1–5, VL 27, 775 [= 7, *prologus*, CCL 73, 266]; *ibid.* 8, 1, 1–16, VL 30, 931–932 [= 8, *prologus*, CCL 73, 315]; *ibid.* 9, 1, 1–16, VL 30, 1015–1016 [= 9, *prologus*, CCL 73, 354]; *ibid.* 10, 1, 1–23, VL 30, 1105–1106 [= 10, *prologus*, CCL 73, 396–397]; *ibid.* 11, 1, 1–36, VL 30, 1175–1177 [= 11, *prologus*, CCL 73, 427–428]; *ibid.* 12, 1, 1–18, VL 35, 1289–1290 [= 12, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 465–466]; *ibid.* 13, 1, 1–24, VL 35, 1367–1368 [= 13, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 506–507]; *ibid.* 14, 1, 1–25, VL 35, 1449–1450 [= 14, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 552]; *ibid.* 15, 1, 1–12, VL 35, 1535 [= 15, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 598–599]; *ibid.* 16, 1, 1–61, VL 36, 1625–1628 [= 16, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 641–643]; *ibid.* 17, 1, 1–50, VL 36, 1717–1719 [= 17, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 691–692]; *ibid.* 18, 1, 1–86, VL 36, 1817–1821 [= 18, *prologus*, CCL 73 A, 740–742].

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 1–7, VL 23, 133 [= 1, *prologus*, CCL 73, 1]; *ibid.* 17, 5, 44–45, VL 36, 1730 [= 17, 60, 6–7, CCL 73 A, 697]; *ibid.* 18, 1, 1–9, VL 36, 1817 [= 18, *praefatio*, CCL 73 A, 740].

<sup>16</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 18, VL 27, 546: “... ut tibi decem uisiones quae in Esaia obscurissimae sunt ...”

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 23–25, VL 27, 546: “Hoc autem anno misisti filium nostrum Heraclium diaconum, qui me manu conserta in ius uocaret et promissum per momenta exigeret.”

<sup>18</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 64, footnote 3.

St. Eustochium.<sup>19</sup> Jerome's commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah was created over a long period of time divided into numerous intervals.

## 2. The Final Structure of *Explanationes in Esaiam*

Before writing *Explanationes in Esaiam*, St. Jerome prepared some parts of the commentary. He wrote the oldest of them when as a young man he stayed in Constantinople in the middle of the year 381. He did it under the supervision of St. Gregory of Nazianzus. This oldest part of the commentary concerns Isa 6:1–8.<sup>20</sup>

Subsequently, at the request of the Bishop Amabilis,<sup>21</sup> Jerome commented in a historical manner on Isa 13–23. This is how he wrote about this event to St. Eustochium, “Plures anni sunt quod a sanctae memoriae uiro Amabili episcopo rogatus ut in decem Esaiæ scriberem uisiones, pro angustia illius temporis quid mihi uideretur in singulis breui sermone perstrinxi, historiam tantum quod petebat, edisserens.”<sup>22</sup> In the introduction to Book V of his commentary written to the Bishop Amabilis, St. Jerome repeats almost the same words, “...ut tibi decem uisiones quae in Esaia obscurissimae sunt, historica exposi-

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 1, 1, 1–4, VL 23, 133: “Expletis longo uix tempore in duodecim prophetas uiginti explanationum libris et in Danihelem commentariis, cogis me, uirgo Christi Eustochium, transire ad Esaiam et quod sanctae matri tuae Paulae, dum uiueret, pollicitus sum, tibi redder.”

<sup>20</sup> It refers to *Epistula* 18 [ad Damasum Papam de Seraphim et calculo]. In *Vaticanus Latinus* 215 we read: “Incipit breuis subitusque tractatus B. Hieronymi de Seraphim; quae in uisione Esaiæ leguntur, quem in Constantinopoli adhuc discipulus eloquentissimus uiri Gregorii Nazianzeni experimento sui sensus, et amicorum rogatu edidit, cui titulum imposuit de Seraphim” (PL 22, 361, footnote b; cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 65, footnote 1). These words are nothing else than a paraphrase (made by other person) of what Jerome writes at the beginning of the commentary on Isa 6:1 (Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 3, 3, 5–10, VL 23, 309): “De hac uisione ante annos circiter triginta, cum essem Constantinopolim et apud uirum eloquentissimum Gregorium Nazanzenum tunc eiusdem urbis episcopum sanctarum scripturarum studiis erudirer, scio me breuem dictasse subitumque tractatum, ut et experimentum caperem ingenioli mei et amicis iubentibus oboedirem.” Jerome sometimes refers the reader to this commentary (cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 3, 3, 10–12, VL 23, 309), writing, “Ad illum itaque libellum mitto lectorem oroque ut breui huius temporis expositione contentus sit.”

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 5–7, VL 27, 545–869.

<sup>22</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 5, 1, 1–4, VL 27, 545.



tione dissererem et omissis nostrorum commentariis, qui uarias opiniones secuti multa uolumina condiderunt, hebraicam panderem ueritatem...<sup>23</sup>

This literal (historical) explication of Isa 13–23 (ten visions) was later included by Jerome in the text of *Explanations in Esaiam* known today as Book V. We know this on the basis of the introductions to Books V<sup>24</sup>, VI<sup>25</sup>, and VII<sup>26</sup>. He did so for the following reason, “Superfluum autem mihi uisum est aut eadem rursus iterare aut in uno opere diuersas sententias promere. Vnde quintus in Esaiam liber hic erit qui quondam solus editus est, quo ad calcem usque perlecto sexti uoluminis iuxta tropologiam arripiemus exordium et eadem te dominum deprecante spiritalis intellegentiae culmina persequemur.”<sup>27</sup>

Book VI<sup>28</sup> and Book VII<sup>29</sup> constitute the exegesis of the same inspired text which is found in Book V. However, in Book V Jerome used the historical method, whereas in the next two books (VI–VII) he applied the allegorical method.<sup>30</sup>

The commentary in Book V is the oldest part of the whole *Explanations in Esaiam*.<sup>31</sup> However, the question arises when Book V was created. Seraphinus M. Gozzo, following the convictions of Vallarsi, Maffei and Cavallery, gives the year 397.<sup>32</sup> This date is based on the hypothesis that the fragment cited above (“Plures anni sunt ...”<sup>33</sup>) was written by Jerome thirteen years after the compilation of the Book V of *Explanations in Esaiam*. As St. Jerome himself stated, about thirty years had passed since 381 from the time when he wrote the commentary to Isa 6:1–8 in Constantinople to the creation of Book III, in which

<sup>23</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 18–21, VL 27, 546.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 14–23, VL 27, 546 [= 5, *prologus*, CCL 73, 159–160].

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 6, 1, 1–9, VL 27, 687 [= 6, *prologus*, CCL 73, 223].

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 7, 1, 1–5, VL 27, 775 [= 7, *prologus*, CCL 73, 266].

<sup>27</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 8–13, VL 27, 545–546.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 6, 1–44, VL 27, 687–773 [= 6, CCL 73, 223–266].

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 7, 1–51, 775–869 [= 7, CCL 73, 266–315].

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1–144, VL 27, 545–685 [= 5, CCL 73, 159–223]. Cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 66.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 66.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 5, 1, 1, VL 27, 545 [= 5, *praefatio*, CCL 73, 159].

Isa 6:1 is explained.<sup>34</sup> Thus, it can be concluded that the whole of *Explanations in Esaiam* was completed by St. Jerome approximately in the year 410. Book V was probably created in the year 397.<sup>35</sup> Such calculations are confirmed by the words of Jerome himself, which demonstrates that the commentary on Book I was started shortly after the author completed his commentary on the Minor Prophets and on the Book of the Prophet Daniel.<sup>36</sup> Having completed *Explanations in Esaiam*, St. Jerome began his Commentary on the Prophet Ezekiel,<sup>37</sup> which was probably created between 410 and 411.<sup>38</sup>

To sum up, we can conclude that Jerome's *Explanations in Esaiam* is not a work written in one specific time period or dominated by the same dogmatic questions. The oldest part of *Explanations in Esaiam* (commentary on Isaiah 6:1–8) originates from the year 381. Book V of the commentary was probably created in the year 397, while the remaining parts, which constitute the main body of the entire commentary, were written in the years 407–410. It should also be noted that (except for Book V) we do not have guidelines to determine the exact dates of creation of individual books.

### 3. The Inspired Text of *Explanations in Esaiam*

In *Explanations in Esaiam* St. Jerome relies mostly on the Latin translation of Scripture. Nevertheless, he frequently uses the Septuagint translation of

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 3, 3, 5–10, VL 23, 309: “De hac uisione ante annos circiter triginta, cum essem Constantinopolim et apud uirum eloquentissimum Gregorium Nazanzenum tunc eiusdem urbis episcopum sanctorum scripturarum studiis erudirer, scio me breuem dictasse subitumque tractatum, ut et experimentum caperem ingenio mei et amicis iubentibus oboedirem.”

<sup>35</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 67.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 1, 1–4, VL 23, 133: “Expletis longo uix tempore in duodecim prophetas uiginti explanationum libris et in Danihelem commentariis, cogis me, uirgo Christi Eustochium, transire ad Esaiam et quod sanctae matri tuae Paulae, dum uiueret, pollicitus sum tibi reddere.”

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Commentarii in Ezechielem, prologus*, CCL 75, 1: “Finitis in Esaiam decem et octo explanationum uoluminibus, ad Hiezechiel, quod tibi et sanctae memoriae matri tuae Paulae, o uirgo Christi Eustochium, saepe pollicitus sum, transire cupiebam ... .”

<sup>38</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 67.



Origen's *Hexapla*.<sup>39</sup> When the philological shades and subtleties require it, the Dalmatian also cites the original Hebrew text.<sup>40</sup>

To interpret individual fragments of Isaiah's inspired text, St. Jerome divides it into shorter or longer parts called *capitula*<sup>41</sup> (it is necessary to remember that

<sup>39</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 66, 2–4, VL 23, 213–214 [= 1, 2, 22, CCL 73, 39]; *ibid.* 2, 23, 1–5, VL 23, 250 [= 2, 3, 23, CCL 73, 57]; *ibid.* 5, 9, 3–4, VL 27, 553 [= 5, 13, 11, CCL 73, 163]; *ibid.* 5, 43, 8–9, VL 27, 579 [= 5, 15, 1, CCL 73, 175]; *ibid.* 6, 21, 11–12, VL 27, 715 [= 6, 14, 2–4, CCL 73, 236]; *ibid.* 6, 31, 34–35, VL 27, 740 [= 6, 14, 24–25, CCL 73, 249]; *ibid.* 8, 10, 8–10, VL 30, 946 [= 8, 24, 21–23, CCL 73, 322]; *ibid.* 8, 16, 45–48, VL 30, 966–967 [= 8, 26, 7–9, CCL 73, 332]; *ibid.* 8, 27, 2–3, VL 30, 984 [= 8, 26, 17–18, CCL 73, 340]; *ibid.* 8, 41, 2–3, VL 30, 1010 [= 8, 27, 12, CCL 73, 352]; *ibid.* 9, 10, 9–10, VL 30, 1054 [= 9, 29, 9–12, CCL 73, 373]; *ibid.* 10, 16, 5–9, VL 30, 1165 [= 10, 35, 1–2, CCL 73, 424]; *ibid.* 14, 19, 5–9, VL 35, 1506 [= 14, 52, 7–8, CCL 73 A, 583]; *ibid.* 16, 22, 48, VL 36, 1686 [= 16, 58, 12, CCL 73 A, 673]; *ibid.* 18, 24, 35, VL 36, 1894 [= 18, 66, 10–11, CCL 73 A, 779]. Cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 68.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 66, 5–6, VL 23, 214 [= 1, 2, 22, CCL 73, 39]; *ibid.* 2, 24, 11, VL 23, 252 [= 2, 3, 23, CCL 73, 57]; *ibid.* 8, 17, 12, VL 30, 967 [= 8, 26, 7–9, CCL 73, 332]; *ibid.* 8, 27, 10, VL 30, 985 [= 8, 26, 17–18, CCL 73, 340]; *ibid.* 9, 3, 91, VL 30, 1025 [= 9, 28, 5–8, CCL 73, 358]; *ibid.* 9, 10, 12, VL 30, 1054 [= 9, 29, 9–12, CCL 73, 373]; *ibid.* 11, 2, 82, VL 30, 1182 [= 11, 36, 1–10, CCL 73, 431]; *ibid.* 16, 20, 10, VL 36, 1677 [= 16, 58, 10, CCL 73 A, 669]; *ibid.* 18, 24, 41, VL 36, 1894 [= 18, 66, 10–11, CCL 73 A, 779]. Cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 68.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 15, 17–18, VL 23, 164 [= 1, 1, 11, CCL 73, 16–17]; *ibid.* 1, 55, 11–12, VL 23, 200 [= 1, 2, 9, CCL 73, 33]; *ibid.* 3, 24, 26, VL 23, 367 [= 3, 8, 5–8, CCL 73, 113]; *ibid.* 4, 9, 53, 23, 425 [= 4, 10, 20–23, CCL 73, 142]; *ibid.* 5, 63, 11–12, VL 27, 593 [= 5, 16, 5, CCL 73, 180]; *ibid.* 5, 84, 15–17, VL 27, 606–607 [= 5, 17, 12–14, CCL 73, 187]; *ibid.* 5, 86, 35–41, VL 27, 611–612 [= 5, 18, 2, CCL 73, 190]; *ibid.* 5, 106, 18–19, VL 27, 635 [= 5, 20, 1–6, CCL 73, 201]; *ibid.* 5, 107, 2, VL 27, 638 [= 5, 21, 1, CCL 73, 202]; *ibid.* 8, 10, 23–26, VL 30, 947 [= 8, 24, 21–23, CCL 73, 323]; *ibid.* 8, 17, 27–28, VL 30, 968 [= 8, 26, 7–9, CCL 73, 333]; *ibid.* 8, 30, 41–45, VL 30, 994 [= 8, 27, 1, CCL 73, 345]; *ibid.* 8, 30, 76–78, VL 30, 995–996 [= 8, 27, 1, CCL 73, 345–346]; *ibid.* 8, 40, 5–8, VL 30, 1009 [= 8, 27, 12, CCL 73, 351]; *ibid.* 9, 2, 76–77, VL 30, 1020 [= 9, 28, 1–4, CCL 73, 356]; *ibid.* 9, 4, 68–69, VL 30, 1029 [= 9, 28, 9–13, CCL 73, 360]; *ibid.* 9, 5, 17, VL 30, 1032 [= 9, 28, 14–15, CCL 73, 362]; *ibid.* 9, 9, 118–120, VL 30, 1052 [= 9, 29, 1–8, CCL 73, 371]; *ibid.* 9, 14, 34–37, VL 30, 1069 [= 9, 29, 22–24, CCL 73, 380–381]; *ibid.* 9, 16, 21–24, VL 30, 1078 [= 9, 30, 6, CCL 73, 385]; *ibid.* 9, 33, 42–45, VL 30, 1102 [= 9, 30, 26, CCL 73, 396]; *ibid.* 10, 2, 85–90, VL 30, 1111 [= 10, 30, 27–29, CCL 73, 399]; *ibid.* 10, 7, 32–36, VL 30, 1125 [= 10, 32, 1–8, CCL 73, 405–406]; *ibid.* 9, 8, 32–34, VL 30, 1132 [= 9, 32, 9–20, CCL 73, 408]; *ibid.* 10, 10, 20, VL 30, 1138 [= 10, 33, 2–6, CCL 73, 412]; *ibid.* 10, 14, 101–102, VL 30, 1158 [= 10, 34, 1–7, CCL 73, 421]; *ibid.* 12, 8, 16, VL 35, 1314 [= 12, 42, 1–4, CCL 73 A, 479]; *ibid.* 12, 18, 49–51, VL 35, 1352 [= 12, 44, 6–20, CCL 73 A, 499]; *ibid.* 12, 21, 17–18, VL 35, 1362 [= 12, 45, 1–7, CCL 73 A, 504]; *ibid.* 13, 2, 10–13, VL 35, 1369 [= 13, 45, 8, CCL 73 A, 507]; *ibid.* 13, 3, 89–90, VL 35, 1374 [= 13, 45, 9–13, CCL 73 A, 510]; *ibid.* 13, 19, 19–20, VL 35, 1317 [= 13, 49, 1–4, CCL 73 A, 534]; *ibid.* 14, 2, 19–20, VL 35, 1451 [= 14, 50, 4–7, CCL

at that time there was no division into chapters and verses as we know it today). Jerome's *capitula* do not, of course, correspond to the current division of Scripture, but break up the inspired text according to a certain thematically related whole. The criterion of division into topics, applied by Jerome, was based on comparing his method with the divisions used by his predecessors whose names he does not explicitly mention.<sup>42</sup> This division was also confronted with the divisions used by Jewish exegetes.<sup>43</sup>

The Latin text of the Prophet Isaiah, which Jerome cites in *Explanaciones in Esaiam*, differs significantly from the text that Jerome himself translated from Hebrew in 392–393. The reason for this is that a given part of *Explanaciones in Esaiam* was created before the Vulgate. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that St. Jerome's translation of Isaiah, which we find in the commentary, is frequently identical with the Vulgate. All this proves that the Vulgate was created over a larger period of time.

As already observed, if some fragments of the inspired text were not difficult to interpret Jerome only indicates their clarity and obviousness.<sup>44</sup> And if

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73 A, 553]; *ibid.* 14, 5, 29–30, VL 35, 1459 [=14, 50, 11, CCL 73 A, 557]; *ibid.* 14, 10, 19–22, VL 36, 1473 [= 14, 51, 9–11, CCL 73 A, 564]; *ibid.* 14, 22, 79, VL 35, 1518 [= 14, 53, 1–4, CCL 73 A, 589]; *ibid.* 15, 1, 10–11, VL 35, 1535 [= 15, *praefatio*, CCL 73 A, 599]; *ibid.* 15, 6, 30–34, VL 35, 1549 [= 15, 54, 9–10, CCL 73 A, 607]; *ibid.* 15, 11, 10–13, VL 35, 1568 [= 15, 55, 1–2, CCL 73 A, 617]; *ibid.* 16, 14, 6, VL 36, 1658 [= 16, 58, 1, CCL 73 A, 659]; *ibid.* 16, 16, 67–70, VL 36, 1664 [= 16, 58, 3–4, CCL 73 A, 662]; *ibid.* 16, 20, 10–11, VL 36, 1677 [= 16, 58, 10, CCL 73 A, 669]; *ibid.* 16 21, 7–8, VL 36, 1681–1682 [= 16, 58, 11, CCL 73 A, 671]; *ibid.* 16, 32, 112–113, VL 36, 1716 [= 16, 59, 19–21, CCL 73 A, 690]; *ibid.* 17, 11, 12, VL 36, 1744 [= 17, 60, 19–20, CCL 73 A, 704]; *ibid.* 17, 17, 14–15, VL 36, 1760 [= 17, 61, 10–11, CCL 73 A, 712]; *ibid.* 17, 21, 9–11, VL 36, 1768 [= 17, 62, 6–7, CCL 73 A, 716]; *ibid.* 17, 24, 6–9, VL 36, 1776 [= 17, 63, 1, CCL 73 A, 720]; *ibid.* 17, 24, 44–45, VL 36, 1777 [= 17, 63, 1, CCL 73 A, 721]; *ibid.* 17, 27, 10–13, VL 36, 1781 [= 17, 63, 3–6, CCL 73 A, 722]; *ibid.* 17, 32, 19–20, VL 36, 1797–1798 [= 17, 63, 17–19, CCL 73 A, 731].

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanaciones in Esaiam* 13, 2, 10–14, VL 35, 1369: “Alii a superioribus separant et proprium capituli huius uolunt esse principium, ac de aduentu domini prophetari quod imperetur nubibus de quibus supra scriptum est: *Mandabo nubibus ne pluant super eam imbrem* [Is 5, 6], id est uineam Israel ...”

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanaciones in Esaiam* 14, 2, 19–20; 14, 2, 34–39, VL 35, 1451–1452: “Iudaei hoc capitulum a superioribus separantes uolunt ad Esaias referre personam ... . Hoc illi dixerint, qui omni ratione conantur de Christo euertere prophetias et ad peruersam intellegentiam praua interpretatione torquere, quasi si et haec de Esaias scripta sint, possint alia super Christo auferre testimonia, quae ita perspicua sunt, ut clarum sui cunctorum oculis lumen infundant.”

<sup>44</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanaciones in Esaiam* 1, 6, 37–38; VL 23, 152: “Manifesta transcurrimus ut in obscurioribus et in his quae explanatione indigent immoremur”; *ibid.* 9, 19, 12, VL 30, 1084: “Manifesta transcurrimus, ut in obscurioribus immoremur”; *ibid.* 11, 2,

the text of Isaiah seems complex or can be interpreted in many different ways, the author refers to the Hebrew original or to the Greek translation of the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus or Theodoton. At the same time, he applies interpretative principles consistent with text criticism and philology.<sup>45</sup> It is worth noting that the Isaiah text in the Septuagint translation differs significantly from the Hebrew original. Nevertheless, given the tremendous respect that the ancients had for the Septuagint, also St. Jerome frequently uses it, although as a rule, he emphasizes and refers to the *hebraica veritas* of the inspired text.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, Jerome sometimes adds to the Latin translation of the Hebrew text the Latin transcription of the Greek translation of the Septuagint instead of the Greek text of the Septuagint. He does so for two reasons: to preserve the *brevitas* of the commentary<sup>47</sup> and to indicate the clear meaning of the text, in particular when it appears to be vague, “ut quantum a ceteris editionibus et ab hebraica ueritate distet uulgata translatio diligens lector agnoscat”.<sup>48</sup> Thus the aim of St. Jerome when he quotes the translation of the Septuagint is to demonstrate to the reader the places where the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew text or from other Greek translations.<sup>49</sup> All this indicates that in his hermeneutics Jerome favors the Hebrew text over the translation of the Septuagint.<sup>50</sup>

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27, VL 30, 1179: “Historia manifesta est et interpretatione non indiget ...”; *ibid.* 11, 4, 23–24, VL 30, 1191: “Perspicua relinquentes ea tantum in quibus latens sensus est disseramus”; *ibid.* 11, 6, 30–31, VL 30, 1197: “Manifesta transcurrimus, ut in dubiis immoremur”; *ibid.* 13, 12, 27, VL 35, 1400: “Quae perspicua sunt cito sermone transcurrimus”; *ibid.* 17, 30, 46, VL 36, 1794: “Manifesta percurrimus, ut in obscurioribus immoremur.”

<sup>45</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 69.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 10, 3, 22–26, VL 30, 1112: “Poteram iuxta hebraicum quid mihi uideretur currens legentibus indicare. Sed quid faciam quorumdam studiis, qui nisi et LXX interpretum editionem disseruero, imperfectum opus me habiturum esse denuntiant? Sequar igitur coeptum ordinem disserendi.”

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 7, 9, 17–18, VL 27, 789: “Vtramque editionem posui in prophetia obscurissima, ne quid uolentibus intellegere quod scriptum est deesse uideatur”; *ibid.* 10, 17, 22–24, VL 30, 1169: “Vtramque editionem miscuimus, ne in proponendis singulis librorum magnitudo tendatur, quae iam modum breuitatis excedit”; *ibid.* 13, 19, 23–25, VL 35, 1417: “Vnde et utramque editionem posui, ut quod in altera uidetur obscurum, alterius lectione reseretur.”

<sup>48</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 3, 31, 15–17, VL 23, 389.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 10, 5, 9–10, VL 30, 1118: “In manifestis unam ponimus editionem, maxime ubi nulla diuersitas sensuum est.”

<sup>50</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 72.

When the discrepancies between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint are significant and important in terms of content, St. Jerome emphasizes them using the phrase “quid sibi LXX uolunt, nescio,”<sup>51</sup> or a similar expression.<sup>52</sup>

Consequently, St. Jerome accepts from the Septuagint only what he believes is right and correct. In truth, however, he much more often rejects the translation of the Septuagint as incorrect or doubtful and uses only the Hebrew original.<sup>53</sup> He marks with an asterisk (\*) what is not present in the translation of the

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 5, 113, 49–52, VL 27, 646: “Quid sibi autem uoluerint in hoc loco LXX interpretes, ut pro leone, qui hebraice dicitur ARIA dicitur, Vriam transtulerint, non satis intellego, praesertim cum supradictus sacerdos Vrias, qui uocatur in testimonium, aliis litteris scriptus sit”; ibid. 10, 6, 53–55, VL 30, 1123: “Quid sibi autem uelit quod in Septuaginta legitur: *PETRA CIRCVM DABVNTVR QVASI VALLO, ET VINCENTVR, QVI AVTEM FVGERIT CAPIETVR*, scire non ualeo ...”; ibid. 13, 3, 89–91, VL 35, 1374: “Quid sibi autem uelint Septuaginta, qui in principio huius capituli transtulerunt: *QVID MELIUS FECI QVAM LVTVM FIGVLI? NVMQVID QVI ARAT ARABIT TERRAM?* scire non ualeo ...”; ibid. 13, 13, 62–64, VL 35, 1404: “Et quid sibi uelit quod infertur iuxta eosdem LXX: *LABORASTI IN COMMVTATIONE AB ADVLESCENTIA?*”

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 4, 5, 15–16, VL 23, 411: “Ponamus in hoc loco translationem LXX, quae ab hebraico discordat in plurimis”; ibid. 4, 11, 16–17, VL 23, 430: “Multum in hoc loco LXX ab hebraico discrepat; quam ob rem utramque editionem posuimus, ut quid nobis uideatur in singulis Christo, si meruerimus, inspirante dicamus”; ibid. 6, 29, 7–8, VL 27, 733: “Quia multum inter se hebraicum distat et LXX editio, separatim de singulis disseramus”; ibid. 7, 23, 27–27, VL 27, 824: “Transeamus ad editionem LXX, quae multum a superioribus discrepat”; ibid. 7, 47, 3–5, VL 27, 861: “Multum a ceteris interpretibus et ab ipso hebraico in hoc loco LXX discordat editio, sed propositum persequamur”; ibid. 8, 6, 6–7, VL 30, 939: “Quantum ab hebraica ueritate in hoc loco LXX distet translatio, sequentia uerba monstrabunt”; ibid. 8, 31, 8–9, VL 30, 996: “Multum hebraicum in hoc loco a LXX editione discordat, idcirco singula ut proposuimus disseramus”; ibid. 9, 28, 10, VL 30, 1093: “Multum in hoc loco LXX editio hebraicumque discordant”; ibid. 10, 7, 92–94, VL 30, 1128: “Haec iuxta hebraicum, a quo LXX non solum uerbis, sed et sensibus in plerisque discordant”; ibid. 16, 6, 11–12, VL 36, 1636: “Primum hebraicum disseramus, quod in hoc loco multum distat a LXX.”

<sup>53</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 73. On what we do not find in the Hebrew original but is present in the Septuagint, cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 3, 8, 3–5, VL 23, 321: “... nobis, quod hebraice dicitur *lanu*, nescio quid uolentes LXX posuerunt *ad populum istum*, quod penitus in hebraico non habetur”; ibid. 3, 17, 2–4, VL 23, 351: “Pro quo LXX transtulerunt *antequam sciat*, quodque sequitur *assumere malum* in hebraico non habetur”; ibid. 3, 24, 63–66, VL 23, 369: “Hoc quod in LXX legitur: *et ambulabit super omnem murum vestrum et auferet de Iudaea hominem qui possit caput levare aut forte quid facere*, in hebraico non habetur et in graecis codicibus ueru iugulante cofossus est.”

On what the Septuagint adds to the Hebrew original, cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 1, 27, 11–13, VL 23, 172: “Et quamquam in hebraico non habeatur Sion, tamen LXX, ut sensum manifestiorem facerent, addiderunt”; ibid. 1, 33, 1–4, VL 23, 178: “*Heu*

Septuagint,<sup>54</sup> and with a closing parenthesis ) what the Septuagint translators (or copyists)<sup>55</sup> added to the Hebrew text.<sup>56</sup>

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*consolabor super hostibus meis et vindicabor de inimicis meis. Rursum et in hoc quod in hebraico non habetur ponunt LXX: non cessabit enim furor meus contra inimicos meos*"; ibid. 2, 12, 6, VL 23, 236: "*Respondebit in hebraeo non habetur, sed de LXX additum est*"; ibid. 6, 41, 61–63, VL 27, 765: "*Quod autem in LXX positum est habitatoribus deseth, in hebraico non habetur, sed pro hoc legitur ares, quod testam siue coctum laterem significat*"; ibid. 7, 13, 18–20, VL 27, 801–802: "*Pro iunco papyrus LXX transtulerunt, de quo charta fit, addentes de suo achi uiride, quod in hebraico non habetur*"; ibid. 13, 6, 19–20, VL 35, 1384: "... siue iuxta LXX *tagon*, qui tamen in hebraico non habetur ..."; ibid. 17, 4, 14–15, VL 36, 1727: "*Quod autem additur in LXX et timebis, in hebraico non habetur ...*"; ibid. 18, 4, 39–40, VL 36, 1828: "*Quod autem in Septuaginta legitur: daemonibus qui non sunt, et in hebraico non habetur ...*"

On what can be found in the Hebrew original but is missing from the Septuagint, cf. e.g.: Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 66, 2–6. 28–30, VL 23, 213–215: "*Hoc praetermiserit LXX et in graecis exemplaribus ab Origene sub asteriscis de editione Aquilae additum est, quod in hebraeo ita legitur: hedalu lachem men aadam eser nesama baaphpho chi bama nesab hu. .... Tacita mecum mente pertractans non possum inuenire rationem quare LXX tam perspicuam de Christo prophetiam in graecum noluerint uertere*"; ibid. 3, 10, 40–46, VL 23, 330–331: "*Quod diximus semen sanctum erit quod steterit in ea uel iuxta Aquilam «semen sanctum erit germen eius», in LXX interpretibus non habetur, sed de hebraico et Theodotionis editione ab Origene additum in ecclesiae fertur exemplaribus, ut postquam intrauerit plenitudo gentium, tunc omnis Israhel saluus fiat et impleatur etiam in hoc sermo domini dicentis: Ego occidam et ego uiuificabo, percutiam et ego sanabo*"; ibid. 12, 4, 79–80, VL 35, 1302: "*Hoc quod posuimus, ego adiuui te, noli timere, vermis Iacob, in LXX non habetur*"; ibid. 15, 24, 65–69, VL 35, 1606–1607: "*Quodque sequitur: unusquisque ad avaritiam suam, a summo usque ad novissimum, venite, sumamus vinum, et impleamur ebrietate, et erit sicut hodie, sic et cras, et multo amplius, in LXX interpretibus non habetur, sed ex hebraico additum stellis illuminantibus praenotatur*"; ibid. 16, 6, 49–50, VL 36, 1638: "*Quodque sequitur: dilatasti cubile tuum et pepigisti cum eis, in LXX non habetur*."

<sup>54</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 66, 2–6, VL 23, 213–214: "*Hoc praetermiserit LXX et in graecis exemplaribus ab Origene sub asteriscis de editione Aquilae additum est, quod in hebraeo ita legitur: hedalu lachem men aadam eser nesama baaphpho chi bama nesab hu*"; ibid. 6, 20, 19–21, VL 27, 710: "*Quod sequitur: et dies eius non protrahentur, asteriscis notandum est, qui de Theodotione additi sunt*"; ibid. 11, 23, 11–14, VL 30, 1240: "*Hoc quod asteriscis notatur: quia spiritus dei flavit in eo, vere faenum est populus, aruit faenum, cecidit flos, ex hebraico et Theodotionis editione additum est*."

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 15, 10, 53–55, VL 35, 1567: "*Quodque sequitur: et obnoxii tui erunt in ea, obelo praenotaui, quod non tam a LXX quam a malis scriptoribus uidetur*."

<sup>56</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 3, 26, 22–23, VL 23, 372: "... quodque sequitur *homines in tuitione obelo praenotandum est*"; ibid. 6, 9, 7, VL 27, 695: "*fundamentum obelo praenotandum est*"; ibid. 6, 13, 6–10, VL 27, 699–700: "*Pro eo quod nos interpretati sumus splendor earum, haud dubium quin stellarum, Aquila et Theodotio ipsum*"

Jerome also informs the reader about the differences between individual Hebrew codes and the Septuagint translation,<sup>57</sup> or about interpretations made *ad sensum*, which, however, are not fully faithful to the original.<sup>58</sup> The Dalmatian also indicates the expressions which have been translated in different ways

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uerbum posuerunt hebraicum xileem; pro quo LXX Orionem transtulerunt, addentes de suo *et omnis ornatus caeli*, quod obelo praenotandum est"; ibid. 8, 26, 14–17, VL 30, 983: "Hoc quod LXX addiderunt: *sic facti sumus dilecto tuo*, pro quo ceteri transtulerunt: *sic facti sumus a facie tua, domine*, obelo praenotandum est"; ibid. 9, 14, 14–15, VL 30, 1068: "Quodque sequitur *et linguae balbutientes discent loqui pacem* obelo praenotandum est"; ibid. 11, 21, 58–59, VL 30, 1236: "Quodque additur in Septuaginta *sacerdotes* obelo praenotandum est"; ibid. 14, 10, 19–22, VL 35, 1473: "Nomen Hierusalem, quod hic a LXX additum est, nec in hebraeo habetur, nec ullus trium interpretum posuit, unde obelo praenotandum est, et sic cum superiori sensu sequens capitulum copulandum"; ibid. 15, 22, 16–17, VL 35, 1599: "Quod autem in LXX additum est *et ancillas* obelo praenotaui"; ibid. 17, 2, 99–101, VL 36, 1724: "Porro nomen Hierusalem et gentium, quod his a LXX ponitur, in hebraico non habetur et obelo praenotandum est, aduersus eos qui asserunt omnia quae dicuntur dici ad Hierusalem"; ibid. 17, 8, 13–14, VL 36, 1738: "Multa desunt in Septuaginta, quae ex hebraeo sub asteriscis posui, et quod addiderunt obelo praenotaui"; ibid. 18, 33, 23–24, VL 36, 1929: "... et iterum sub obelo: *Sicut tinea uestimentum et uermis lignum, sic maeror excruciat cor uiri ...*."

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 16, 21, 7–13, VL 36, 1681–1682: "Quod in alexandrinis exemplaribus in prooemio huius capituli additum est: *et adhuc in te erit laus mea semper*, et in fine: *et ossa tua quasi herba orientur et pinguescent et hereditate possidebunt in generationes et generationes*, in hebraico non habetur, sed ne in Septuaginta quidem emendatis et ueris exemplaribus; unde obelo praenotandum est". On this statement of Jerome cf. S.M. Gozzo, 74, footnote 2.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 1, 34, 3–6, VL 23, 179: "Pro scoria, quod interpretatus est Symmachus, Aquila CTEM Y A, id est uinacea, Theodotio EC, id est acinum uuae interpretatus est, soli LXX incredulos uel inoboedientes, sensum magis quam uerba uertentes"; ibid. 1, 41, 6–12, VL 23, 185: "Et miror cur LXX interpretes in illa dixerint «contra Iudaeam et Hierusalem», et in hac «de Iudaea et de Hierusalem», nisi forte quia ibi appellatur *gens peccatrix, populus plenus peccatis, semen pessimum, filii iniquitatis et principes Sodomorum ac populus Gomorrae et ciuitas meretrix* et cetera istiusmodi, sensum magis quam uerbum interpretati sunt ..."; ibid. 2, 35, 4–7, VL 23, 265: "Porro LXX sensum magis quam uerbum interpretati sunt: *uinea facta est dilecto meo in cornu in loco pingui* siue *uberi*; enim utrumque significat"; ibid. 6, 15, 4–7, VL 27, 702: "Uerbum Hebraicum GAON, quod perspicue arrogantiam et superbiam sonat, Theodotio semper et LXX iniuriam transferunt, sensum magis quam uerbum exprimentes, quia omnis superbus promptus est ad iniuriam."



by the same translator in different places of the text<sup>59</sup> or when they are not supported by the Hebrew original.<sup>60</sup>

Furthermore, Jerome addresses the criteria that the authors of the New Testament follow when citing the Old Testament, analyzing the original Hebrew text or the Septuagint; he also takes into account other translators of the inspired text. By way of illustration, when commenting on Isaiah 6: 9 nn., Jerome first observes that “in the Septuagint it is translated in the same manner as Luke wrote in Acts [cf. Acts 28:28] ...”<sup>61</sup> Subsequently, he explains the reason why St. Luke uses the translation of the Septuagint, although other evangelists cite this passage following the Hebrew text. He states that St. Luke was more familiar with Greek, whereas St. Matthew and St. John knew Hebrew better.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Commenting on Isa 2: 1, St. Jerome observes that the same sentences are translated in two different ways in the Septuagint. In Isa 1:1, it is translated as *contra Iudam et Hierusalem*, whereas in Isa 2:1 as *de Iuda et Hierusalem*. Of course, the Dalmatian believes that it should be translated in the same manner. Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 41, 21–26, VL 23, 186: “Ergo iuxta hebraicum et in illa uisione et in isto sermone quem vidit Esaias filius Amos, «de Iuda et Hierusalem» intellegendum est, non «contra Iudam et Hierusalem» uel «pro Iuda et Hierusalem», ut Symmachus transtulit, sed absolute «de Iuda et Hierusalem», in quo possunt et laeta et tristia contineri.”

<sup>60</sup> Cf. e.g. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 1, 32, 2–3, VL 23, 177: “Pro forti Israhel, quod omnes similiter transtulerunt, soli LXX nescio quid uolentes posuerunt *vae fortes Israhel*”; *ibid.* 2, 50, 2–6, VL 23, 289: “Pro pascentibus agnis iuxta ordinem suum, quod in bonam partem accipitur, nescio quid uolentes LXX transtulerunt: *pascentur direpti quasi tauri*, pro agnis tauros intellegentes et rursus pro aduenis interpretantes agnos”; *ibid.* 3, 8, 2–5, VL 23, 321: “Pro eo quod et nos et omnes alii interpretes transtulerunt *nobis*, quod hebraice dicitur lanu, nescio quid uolentes LXX posuerunt *ad populum istum*, quod penitus in hebraico non habetur”; *ibid.* 5, 101, 4–7, VL 27, 627: “Pro ciuitate solis nescio quid uolentes LXX interpretati sunt *asedec*, quam quidam nostrorum urbem iustitiae interpretatur et, ductus errore quod iuxta hebraicum ares scriptum sit, terram putat, quae aliis litteris scribitur”; *ibid.* 7, 24, 17–22, VL 27, 826: “Illudque quod in hebraico dicitur *aria*, pro quo Aquila et Symmachus leonem et leenam interpretati sunt, nescio quid uolentes LXX *Vriam* posuerunt, quod quidam «lumen domini» interpretari putat, cum aliis litteris lumen domini, quod hic non habetur, et aliis scribatur *leo*, qui hic legitur.”

<sup>61</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 3, 9, 7–8, VL 23, 323: “LXX hunc locum ita interpretati sunt ut euangelista Lucas in apostolorum actibus posuit ...”

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanations in Esaiam* 3, 9, 37–44, VL 23, 324: “Euangelistam Lucam tradunt ueteres ecclesiae tractatores medicinae artis fuisse scientissimum et magis graecas litteras scisse quam hebraeas. Vnde et sermo eius tam in euangelio quam in Actibus apostolorum, id est in utroque uolumine, comptior est et saecularem redolet eloquentiam magisque testimoniis graecis utitur quam hebraeis. Mattheus autem et Iohannes, quorum alter hebraeo alter graeco sermone euangelia texuerunt, testimonia de hebraico proferunt ...”



The second example is the commentary on Isaiah 7:14: “and you will call him Emmanuel”. The Dalmatian states that the Septuagint as well as Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion translated this sentence in the same way as Matthew would later write, “in Matthew it is written ‘they shall call.’”<sup>63</sup> He explains this similarity as follows, “because in many cases evangelists and apostles drew from ancient books, it is surprising to note that they did not follow the order of words but the meaning. Therefore, here too, instead of “will conceive in the womb,” Matthew wrote “will be with child” (Mt 1:23), and instead of “you will call” – “they shall call.”<sup>64</sup>

In addition, Jerome explains to St. Eustochium that when the translation of the Septuagint agrees with the Hebrew original, he himself believes that the inspired authors of the New Testament follow the translation of the Septuagint. However, when the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew text, then they most probably choose the Hebrew text.<sup>65</sup>

In light of all this, it is evident that St. Jerome had a preference for the original Hebrew text. This approach is not only the result of his subjective choice, but also of the desire to be faithful to the *hebraica veritas*, to which the Dalmatian devoted most of his research and because of which he had to endure the attacks of his opponents.<sup>66</sup>

#### 4. Final Conclusions

The analysis of Jerome’s *Explanationes in Esaiam* generally confirms what we know about the great veneration of St. Jerome towards the inspired text of the Bible, including the Old Testament. In his manner of exegesis of biblical texts, we observe what we could describe today as the scientific method of philological study of texts. St. Jerome attempts to meticulously and accurately reconstruct

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<sup>63</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 3, 16, 63–64, VL 23, 349: “... in Mattheo scriptum est «uocabunt» ...”

<sup>64</sup> Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 3, 16, 73–78, VL 23, 349–350: “In multis testimoniis quae euangelistae uel apostoli de libris ueteribus assumpserunt, curiosius attendendum est non eos uerborum ordinem secutos esse, sed sensum. Vnde et in praesenti loco pro «concipiet in utero» Mattheus posuit «in utero habebit», et pro «uocabis» «uocabunt».”

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *Explanationes in Esaiam* 15, 1, 1–6, VL 35, 1535: “Crebro, Eustochium, dixisse me noui apostolos et euangelistas, ubicumque de ueteri instrumento ponunt testimonia, si inter hebraicum et Septuaginta nulla diuersitas sit, uel suis uel Septuaginta interpretum uerbis uti solitos, sin autem aliter in hebraico, aliter in ueteri editione sensus est, hebraicum magis quam Septuaginta interpretes sequi.” Cf. also S.M. Gozzo, 77.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. S.M. Gozzo, 79.

the original inspired text. At the same time, his exegetical approach is featured by a detailed and keen linguistic analysis; by a careful interpretation of the text; by a clear and consistent hermeneutics and by a reconstruction of its history. The result of this kind of laborious and in-depth research is a comprehensive and solid exegesis, faithful to the inspired text under analysis and reflecting the personality of the researcher himself. However, what is visible in this exegesis is a striking similarity to the research methods carried out nowadays, highlighting the value of the inspired text and maintaining respect for its historical and semantic dimension.

The fact that the exegetical method and principles passed on by St. Jerome were not strictly continued, adhered to and applied in the Middle Ages, can be explained at least in two ways. First of all, there were different cultural conditions in which these two theological periods developed. In the Middle Ages the society was fully Christianized, and, as a consequence, aspired to favor purely spiritual and non-scientific exegesis of inspired texts. It was based on a clearly presented patristic tradition and accepted the translation of the Septuagint as inspired text, thus did not seek to refer to the Hebrew text, looking for the meaning of key words of the text at most. This type of exegesis was intended in principle for the clergy, and its purpose was to establish the identity of the group, not to constitute it.

The context in which St. Jerome created his works, although Christian in principle, was also permeated by the presence and mentality of pagans, in particular the aristocracy, the social group he was mostly familiar with. The result was his concern to meet the requirements of the educated and more demanding strata of society, which, in turn, necessitated the application of greater rigor in his research, similar to the discipline we apply in exegesis and theology nowadays.

The other reason should be sought in the very person of St. Jerome, who is an exception when it comes to cultural formation and exegetical fervor. He is most admired due to his research, exegetical observations and conclusions which are so brilliant and apt that it may appear that they originate in modern times, skipping somehow the scholastic period. Undoubtedly, in the Middle Ages there were great thinkers and this period can boast even the whole encyclopedic patrimony, but – it seems – was created to preserve the wealth of the Church Fathers. Etymologies, dictionaries, *glossaria*, which constituted the collection of exegetical tools of the Middle Ages, were in their large part composed of material from the previous patristic period. Thus, two completely different approaches appear: the activities and research of the Middle Ages aimed at preserving the achievements of past centuries. Jerome, on the other hand, sought to create an exegetical as well as theological and cultural patrimony which

could be used extensively by future Christian exegetes, and this is how it looks from our contemporary perspective.

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