The *Vorlage* of Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) in Hebrews 1:8-9[1]

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Abstract

The origin and text form of Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) in Hebrews 1:8-9 are investigated. On a tradition-historical level it is established that Psalm 45:1-2b was quoted in 4Q171 in early Judaism, but in early Christianity, prior to Hebrews, no evidence of quoting Psalm 45 has been found. Messianic connections might have prompted the author to use it. On a text-critical level, new manuscript evidence is assessed and variant readings are discussed. It is concluded that the author himself made minor changes to his text without following another Vorlage. Insofar as Jesus is being called "God" by God himself, Psalm 45 confirmed to the author of Hebrews the divinity of Jesus. The royal imagery, righteous rule and eternal throne are christologically applied.

1.   INTRODUCTION

The issue of the *Vorlage* of the explicit quotations in Hebrews is still an unresolved one. It relates particularly to questions about the origin (the tradition-historical level) and text form (the text-critical) of these quotations. In the quest for the *Vorlage,* evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the latest available information on New Testament textual witnesses and developments in the research of the Psalms all need to be taken into account. The question about the *Vorlage* of the quotations is an important step in identifying the alterations made to those quotations by the author of Hebrews. Only after the text form and its possible origin have been established, can the hermeneutical reinterpretation of these quotations be studied, which, in turn, will assist in providing insight into the theological perspectives of the author. Furthermore, once the *Vorlage* of these quotations has been established, it might provide some clues about the author's hermeneutics and the text type employed as part of his process of Scriptural activity. Most studies though,

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start on the hermeneutical level almost from the outset. This contribution is an attempt to go one step back in this process.

It is clear that the author of Hebrews derived his quotations from three groups of sources. A first group of quotations was obtained via the early Jewish and early Christian (pre-Hebrews) traditions (cf Ps 2:7; Ps 8:[5-]7; Ps 22[21]:23; Ps 104[103]:4; Ps 110[109]:1). A second group of quotations was taken from passages previously quoted by early Jewish and early Christian authors (prior to Hebrews), although quoted from a different section of the passage (cf Ps 45:6-7 [44:7-8]; Ps 110[109]:4 and Ps 118[117]:6. The quotations in the third group are only to be found in Hebrews and chances are that the author identified these himself and applied them to his new context (cf Ps 40[39]:7-8; Ps 95[94]:7-11; Ps 102[101]:26-28. He not only quoted from these (e g Ps 40 and Ps 95), but also provided his own commentary on them – he also did so with the quotation from Psalm 8 (from the first group) having expanded and commented upon it.

The quotation from Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8 LXX) in Hebrews 1:8-9 is the fifth explicit quotation in the catena of Hebrews 1:5-14 and in all likelihood belongs to the second group of quotations mentioned above, that is those quotations from previously quoted passages by authors who wrote prior to Hebrews, although from a different section in that passage. It is closely connected with the next quotation from Psalm 102 (101):26-28, which is the only quotation from the seven cited in this catena not to have been quoted prior to Hebrews. These two quotations form the third pair of quotations in the catena. Both deal with the theme of the eternal reign of the Son who is addressed as "*God*" (if θεοῆ is taken as a vocative in this instance), thereby contributing to the author's argument that the Son is superior to the angels. The two quotations seem to be linked by "conceptual parallelism (the enduring nature of the Son)" as well as by "the common use of the personal pronoun σου, 'your'" (Lane 1998), probably according to the hermeneutical rule of *Gĕzērâ šāwâ* (Bateman 1995:17). The "royal psalm, Psalm 45:6-7 with its eloquent praise for a Davidic king at his wedding", in this instance probably unites two first-century Jewish concepts behind Hebrews 1, namely that of Davidic sonship (Ps 2:7; Ps 110:1 and 2 Sm 7:14) and that of Divine Wisdom (Dt 32:43/Ode 2:43; Ps 104:4 and Ps 102:25–26) (Bateman 1995:26).

As is the case with Psalms 40, 95 and 102, none of the verses of Psalm 45 is explicitly quoted anywhere else by any of the New Testament writers. It seems unlikely that the author of Hebrews would have known Psalm 45 from the early Christian tradition. However, Psalm 45:1-2 has been quoted and commented upon in 4Q171 (4QpPs[a]), providing evidence amongst early Jewish literature that the Psalm was known and used in the

Jewish tradition. In fact, should the author of Hebrews have known such a quotation from Psalm 45 via the Jewish tradition, he quoted from an unknown source. This points to his own theological creativity. Karrer (2002:141) puts it as follows: "Wahrscheinlich liegt also eine Schriftentdeckung des Hebr vor."

2. TRADITION-HISTORICAL LEVEL

2.1 Background regarding Psalm 45

The possible Egyptian, West-Semitic and Accadian parallels of Psalm 45 have already been pointed out and discussed by Mulder (1972:83-143). Attention was drawn to Psalm 45:7a for which a good Egyptian parallel is to be found in the word *ntr*, occurring in a set phrase as "the perfect (or beautiful) god" (Mulder 1972:87). This can be compared with the messianic interpretation (Strack-Billerbeck 1961:679; Smits 1963:557; Kistemaker 1961:24; Reim 2000:92) of the rabbinics in Targum Jonathan: "Thy beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than that of the sons of men." An interesting parallel with West-Semitic inscriptions also relates to Psalm 45:7 where a judicial sceptre and a throne are present as royal *insignia* in parallelism. Except for Psalm 45, the combination of the sceptre with justice (let alone being in parallelism with a throne) does not occur in the Old Testament (Mulder 1972:92-93, 119). This combination might actually be something worth noting with respect to both Psalm 110:4 and Genesis 14. The Melchizedek motif combines the "priest" and "king" elements as qualities or functions of the Son. Reim (2000:92) puts it as follows:

> Es könnte allerdings sein, daß das Verständnis Jesu als „König der Gerechtigkeit" in Hebr 7, 7 auf Psalm 45, 5 ('für die Sache der Wahrheit und für das Recht') zurückgeht und so parallel steht zur Übersetzung von Melchisedek als 'König der Gerechtigkeit', also eine Brücke bildet für den Schreiber des Hebr.

In Mesopotamia, however, this combination is found "over a wide range of centuries and at different courts" (Mulder 1972:119). Several Accadian parallels are even closer, such as the "everlastingness of a royal throne given by the gods" (Mulder 1972:116) and the "qualification of the royal sceptre as 'right, just'." These references are quite common in Accadian literature.

Already in the Old Testament the element of the "sceptre" on its own, was a symbol for the king. The motif for the messiah-king is also to be found in CD 7:20, as well as in PsSal 17:24 (Braun 1966:243).

In rabbinical literature Psalm 45 has been ascribed to a host of possible authors: the sons of Korach, Moses, Aaron and Solomon. It has

been described as an *epithalamion*, or wedding song for an Israelite king (Reim 2000:92; Rösel 1999:128; Strobel 1991:23; Attridge 1989:58; Kistemaker 1961:24, 144). This, however, is only applicable to the second part, the "Brautspruch", verses 11-17 (Whitley 1986:277; Schedl 1964:314-315). Zenger is of the opinion that the Psalm, in its present form, is allegorically directed and that the wedding motif in verses 11-16 is secondary (Zenger, NEB I:278 – as quoted in Rösel 1999:128). With Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, it has also been ascribed to the group of messianic royal Psalms (Zenger, NEB I:279; Schröger 1968:60), which would particularly apply to the first part, the "Königspruch", verses 3-10 (Whitley 1986:277; Schedl 1964:314). Barth (1962:72) suspected, for instance, that Psalm 45 (with Pss 2, 97, 102, 110 and 2 Sm 7) "were composed and used for a day of specific celebration of the kingship of God and of his Anointed One" and that even Psalms 8 and 22 "may deal with a festive royal ceremonial act."

Structurally, verses 4-8a – from which the quotation in Hebrews was taken – belong to the first section of the Psalm dealing with the king's justice. Within this section, verses 7-8a (MT) focus specifically on the king's justice and its God-given foundation (Mulder 1972:28). The address of μyhl a in verse 7, with its translation of oJ qeoŁ in the LXX, is an epithet for the king in the context of Psalm 45 (Motyer 1999:17; Schaper 1995:80; Müller 1986:235). The implication of this, according to Psalm 45:7, then is that a king of Israel was addressed as "God" (cf Schröger 1968:60) – even though it might only have been a *topos* of the messiah. The debate on this issue started over a thousand years ago amongst some Jewish scholars with a variant reading of the Peshitta – and is still continuing (Mulder 1972:33). According to Schaper "the history of the Jewish community in Alexandria and its struggles with the Ptolemaic authorities" inspired the application of the epithet qeoŁ for the ruler which has "since the dynastic cult nowhere found fuller and more complex expression than in Ptolemaic Egypt" (1995:82). The Psalm uses hyperbolic language to praise the monarch's majesty (Attridge 1989:58). It is an expression of the king's royal might and beauty – expressed in verses 7-9 through the use of the verb j vm which belongs to the pre-exilic base of the Psalm (verses 2-10,17-18) (Rösel 1999:129, 131).

2.2   Psalm 45 in the early Jewish and early Christian tradition

Initially, Psalm 45 was probably not interpreted as messianic in Judaism (Motyer 1999:17). So, similarly, Hühn (1899:79) regarded it as one of the "mit Unrecht messianisch gedeuteten Stellen des AT." Also Kistemaker (1961:78) refers to it as "only indirectly considered messianic" and according to Weiss (1991:165, n.34) "… eine Einflußnahme der messianischen Deutung von

Psalm 45 im Targum Psalm 45 auf den Hebr (ist) nicht wahrscheinlich." But it is a classical case of how, by means of its translation, the LXX built a hermeneutical bridge for the early Christian writers to interpret texts in a christological manner. The heading of Psalm 44 LXX might have pointed in a messianic direction, which is εἰϲ τον τελοϲ. Riggenbach (1922:22) pointed to this connection in the LXX: "Auf messianisches Verständnis scheint die Aufschrift der LXX (V.1) zu weisen." One could probably also add the connection made between the ἠγάπησα~ in Psalm 44:8 and its application in the context of Hebrews 1:9. The LXX thus opened up the possibility for a messianic interpretation, so that this "Greek version is one of the very first witnesses to this tradition" (Schaper 1995:79; Strobel 1991:23; Schröger 1968:66).

Regarding the occurrence of a quotation from Psalm 45 in the Jewish literature prior to Hebrews, it should be mentioned that amongst the *pesharim* found at the Dead Sea, a combination of Psalm 37:2-39 + Psalm 45:1-2b + Psalm 60:8-9, with commentaries, occurs in 4Q171 (4QpPs[a]). Steudel (1994:189, n.1) states in this regard: "Zwar entstand die Handschrift um die Zeitenwende, doch ist das Werk nicht zuletzt wegen Kol. II,6-8 in seiner Entstehung vor 70 v. Chr. anzusiedeln. Es handelt sich also um einen frühen Pescher." It is the only instance of a quotation from Psalm 45 occurring in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Maier 1996). It relates only to Psalm 45:1 whilst the section under discussion here is Psalm 45:6-7.

Although no explicit quotations of Psalm 45 are to be found amongst any of the New Testament authors (with Heb 1:8-9 being the exception), possible traces of its (Psalm 45:8) messianic use have been suggested (Reim 2000:92). One such possibility is to be found in Romans 9:5 – relating μγηλα to Christ as God (Reim 2000:92). Motyer (1999:17), however, is of the opinion that the Psalm was not interpreted in a messianic manner elsewhere in the New Testament. Another instance is to be found in the Gospel of John, although it probably occurred at a later stage than Hebrews, with possible traces of the use of Psalm 45 appearing in John 1:1.18 and 20:28 (Ps 45:7); John 18:33-37 (Ps 45:5). Reim (2000:92, 98) holds it for possible "… daß sowohl Joh als auch Hebr etwa gleichzeitig von aus der Tradition vorgegebenen Psalmen ausgehen und sie verschieden anwenden." John is however not citing the text. One can possibly only go so far as to state that the use of Psalm 45:7 is not far removed from these passages in John (Meier 1985:514). These cases are however questionable. It would be difficult to prove beyond doubt that the same element(s) occurring here, did not actually form part of those authors' pool of theological knowledge – without there being any particular connection with Psalm 45.

The relatively lengthy quotation from Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) that appears in Hebrews 1:8-9 is cited "with a totally new content and thrust which differs greatly from what one usually finds in Jewish reflections on these texts." According to Thompson (1976:359) the author used this text "with his own set of assumptions." These assumptions are Christ logically directed.

In the post-Hebrews early Christian literature, however, the same quotation from Psalm 45:6-7 that appeared in Hebrews, also played a prominent role amongst some of the Church Fathers (cf Glasson 1965/6:270-272). For instance, Justin (*Dial* 38.4; 56.14; 63.4; cf McLean 1992:71). Origen, Athanasius and Eusebius quote and refer to it.

3.   TEXT-CRITICAL LEVEL

The fifth explicit quotation in the catena of Hebrews 1:5-14 is introduced with the words προ;~ de; ton uiΒn, which means that again it is God himself who, in the words of this Psalm, speaks about the Son (Schröger 1968:60; Müller 1986:235). The document starts with God who spoke long ago (palai oJ qeo;~ lalhsa~, v 1), but who also spoke during these last days through the Son (ejlalhsen, v 2). This element is again taken up again in verse 5 at the opening of the catena of quotations with the quotation from Psalm 2:7 (Tini gar eipen) and referred to in the introductory formulae of the quotations that follow: kai; palin (v 5), legei (v 6), legei (v 7), kaiv (v 10), and eirhken (v 13). The contrast between the angels and the Son is then highlighted in the construction of the introductory formulas of the preceding Psalm 104 (103) (pro;~ men) and here with Psalm 45(44) (pro;~ dev) (Kistemaker 1961:78).

3.1   Comparison of the readings of Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) with Hebrews 1:8-9

Before the reading of the quotation in Hebrews 1:8-9 can be compared with that of Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8), the reconstruction of both texts ought to take place. Some differences do occur amongst the available textual witnesses, some of which seemed to have been made in order to bring the New Testament reading in closer conformity with the LXX (Attridge 1989:49).

Depending on their reconstruction of the texts, some scholars regard the text of the quotation in Hebrews to be identical (Archer and Chirichigno 1983:71; Weiss 1991:165), "except for a few details" (Kistemaker 1961:24; Schröger 1968:60; Müller 1986:235) or very close to that of the LXX (Strack-Billerbeck 1961:679; Karrer 2002:141). Attention should be paid to the formulation. In this regard, compare Müller who stated that Hebrews 1:9 is "wörtlich nach der Septuaginta zitiert" (1986:236). In light of available text

witnesses and in light of the changes made by the author himself, this statement is too strong. Others again, find the reading in Hebrews to be further removed from the LXX. According to Howard, the text of the quotation from Psalm 45 as it appears in Hebrews 1:8-10 is unlike that of the MT and the LXX (Howard 1968:211).

The textual tradition and reconstruction of the Hebrews Psalm 45 are complex and have been discussed elsewhere (Rösel 1999:128-131; Whitley 1986:277-282; Mulder 1972:9ff; Schedl 1964:310-318; Schildenberger 1959:31-43). It is not the aim of this study to pursue this avenue. Therefore, where necessary, attention will only be paid to verses 6-7 and their variants which might have served as possible *Vorlage* for the author of Hebrews. The reconstructed MT could be used as a working edition, as one possible textual tradition that might have been available as *Vorlage* to the author of Hebrews.

A second group of possibilities is to be found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some similarities between the Dead Sea Scrolls and Hebrews also occur at other places and have been identified by scholars. Explaining such possible connections is almost impossible, given the limited availability of evidence. The similarities therefore remain a mystery. However, it is important to compare the text readings of the quotations in Hebrews with available variants amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls. A fragment was found in 11Q8 (11QPs^d) (cf Martinez & Tigchelaar 1998:1182-1183; Martinez, Tigchelaar & Van der Woude 1998:70) containing the section of Psalm 45:6-7/8, used by the author of Hebrews for his quotation. Although this passage was not previously included in editions and listings (Flint 1997:42, n.101), it brings no new information as far as the text form of the quotation is concerned and its reading agrees with that of the MT.

Ps 45:7-8 11Q8 (11QPs^d)	Ps 45:6-7 MT
r"vym fb[v d[ʍ μΙʍ[μyhΙ a hkask **7** [vr anctʍ qdx tbha **8** .hktʍkΙ m fbv] μyh]Ι [a hkj vm ׃k Ι [	rvʮmi fbˌved[ʍ μΙ⁄[μyhiΙ aֿòaˌʃKi **6** [vˌr, anc]Ti"qdX, Tbֿh'a; **7** .òtʍkΙ]m' fbˌve ׃m,v, òyh,Ι aֿ0μyhiΙ aֿ0òj]vm] ׃KΑΙ ['ֿ .òyr b̪j]me ׃/cc;

The third group of possibilities belongs to the LXX witnesses. The reconstructed LXX text of Psalm 44:6-7 only presents a few possible alternatives. There is not sufficient text critical evidence to choose in favour of the omission of the articles, ton before αἰῶνα, and τοῦ before αἰῶνο~ (omitted by B L^R Aug Cyp). The variant, however, brings the reading closer to

the text of the MT, but according to Ahlborn (1966:113) "... könnte man immerhin fragen, warum dann trotzdem die Kopula vor dὲ unübersetzt geblieben sei." Furthermore, there is not enough evidence for the omission of ὁ θεός (only omitted by La^G) either. The situation is slightly different, though, with regard to the alternative of ἀδικίαν for ἀνομίαν (attested by 2013' A).

Turning to the New Testament text, the oldest fragment that contains this particular section, is probably the 3rd century AD Papyrus 114, alternatively known as Papyrus Oxyrhynchus LXVI (4498) (cf www.ntgateway.com/resource/image.htm; Gonis, Chapa & Cockle 1999: No.4498). The fragment has not yet been incorporated into the critical text of NA^27 and the piece is identified as being that of Hebrews 1:7-12. It might have formed part of a papyrus codex. The fragment is in poor state and not much remains of the text. One advantage is that the piece of text belongs to a left margin, which assists in the possible reconstruction of the lines. In counting the characters per line, the text seems to be close to the reading represented in Codex B.

Ps 44:7-8 LXX	Heb 1:8-9 NA^27
7 ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τον αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, ῥάβδος εὐθύτητος ἡ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου. 8 ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν· διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ᵃὁ θεός ὁ θεός σου ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου.	8 πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν· ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τον αἰῶνα £ ᵃτοῦ αἰῶνος᾽ Ἄκαι· °ἡ ῥάβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος᾽ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας ᶜσου. 9 ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ᶜἀνομίαν· διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεός ὁ θεός σου ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου.
7 εἰς τον / τοῦ = B, *saecula saeculorum* L^R Aug et Cyp. 8 ᶜ ἀδικίαν = 2013' A: eadem lectionis varietas in Hebr. 1,9| 8,2+3 unus stichus ɑ 2013' 1219 ᵃὁ θεός = La^G	8 £ καὶ εἰς τον αἰῶνα = 876 ᵃ τοῦ αἰῶνος = B 33 t vg^ms Ἄ καιν = (C) D^2 Ψ E K L P 056. 0142. 0151. 6. 81. 104. 326. 1175. 1834. 0278. 1881. 𝔐 f t vg^cl sy Ju Or Eus Ath GrNy Chr Thret °ῥάβδος εὐθύτητος᾽ = D Ψ K L P 056. 075. 0142. 0151. 0278. 1881. 𝔐 Ju Or Eus Ath GrNy [ἡ] = ɑ* ᶜ αὐτοῦ = † 𝔓^46 ɑ B 9 ᶜ ἀνομία~ = D* || ἀδικίαν = ɑ A 33^vid *pc*; Or Eus (*DemEv*) Ath

3.2 oJ qeo^ as vocative?

Whether μγh¦ a should be read as nominative or as vocative remains a question. See Mulder (1972:35-36) for a list of ancient and modern translations and scholars *pro* and *contra.* The same question applies to the reading of oJ qeo^ in the Greek (LXX and NT), as it is also not clear whether it should be taken as a nominative (Westcott 1974:25-26; Thomas 1964/5:305; Kistemaker 1961:25-26; Moule 1959:32) or as a vocative (Blass-Debrunner 1961:§147(3); Büchsel 1922:22; Michel 1966:47; Montefiore 1964:47; Teodorico 1952:51; Bruce 1985:64; Müller 1986:236; Attridge 1989:49; Weiss 1991:165; Schaper 1995:80; Karrer 2002:127). Eusebius († 339/49) already dealt with this issue (*Demonst Evang* IV.15.49). He referred to the recension of Aquila (an extremely literal translation of the Hebrews) that translated the Hebrews more clearly and treated this as a vocative in translating oJ qrono~ sou, qee;, eij- aijẁna ktl. His argument runs as follows:

> For in the place of the first name, where Aquila has "Thy throne, O God," clearly replacing oJ Qeo^ by Qeeʋ the Hebrews has Elohim. And also for "Therefore, O God, he has anointed thou" the Hebrews has Elohim, which Aquila shewed by the vocative w\Qeéʋ Instead of the nominative case of the noun, which would be "Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee –" the Hebrews with extreme accuracy has Eloach, which is the vocative case of Elohim, meaning "O God," whereas the nominative Elohim means "God." So that the interpretation that says "Therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed," is accurate.

(Eusebius, *DemEv* IV.5.49 tr by Ferrar 1920)

On the surface, it seems as though the LXX and the New Testament use the nominative case. There is enough evidence, from classical Greek however, that the nominative case could also be used as a vocative (Blass-Debrunner 1961:§147, 3; Schröger 1968:61; Attridge 1989:58). The same applies to the LXX (Ps 2:8; 5:11; 7:2, 4, 7; 9:33; 12:4; 16:16; 17:29; 21:2, 3; 40:9) and the New Testament (cf Mk 15:34; Lk 18:11; Jn 20:28; Rv 4:11; 11:17; 16:7). The author of Hebrews again uses the nominative as vocative in 10:7 (Karrer 2002:127). Attridge is of the opinion that the author of Hebrews exploited the ambiguity of the Psalm in this regard (Attridge 1989:49).

Most scholars argue in favour of the vocative use by the author of Hebrews (Meier 1985:514). This allows for the interpretation (Harder 1939:39; Thompson 1976:358; Strobel 1991:23) that Christ is addressed as God so that God's Messiah-Son. Sitting at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, he is on a level with God (Clements 1985:39; Noth

1966:39; Thomas 1964/5:305). Meier has formulated the implication of this as follows: "Once we understand *ho theos* as an address to the Son, the reference to the eternal throne must be taken in its widest sense: it symbolizes not just the exaltation after Christ's death, but rather the eternal rule which the pre-existent divine Son has exercised from all eternity" (1985:514-515).

There might be a further argument in favour of the vocative which needs to be considered. If the broader context is taken into account in terms of the next quotation from Psalm 102(101), then the first line of both quotations show striking similarities:

> Psalm 45(44) = oJ qrono~ sou oJ qeo;~ eij~ ton aijwna tou aijwno~
> Psalm 102(101) = su; kat j ajrca;~, kurie, thn ghn ejqemeliwsa~

On this basis it might then be argued that the Son is addressed in the vocative, not only as "Lord" (kurie), but also as "God" (oJ qeo~).

Returning to the Hebrews there is a totally different angle to the issue as well. Rather than asking whether μyhla should be read as vocative or as nominative, one should enquire about the various meanings of the term *Elohim* – which in this case might be understood to mean "the Anointed One" (Whitley 1986:281-282), or "o Godlike." See the discussion on the historical debate in Wallis (1992:100-103). The fact of the matter is, the LXX translator used the term qeo~, even if it was not intended to be the case in the Hebrews (Motyer 1999:17), and the author of Hebrews followed the LXX translation.

3.3   tou aijwno"

None of the LXX witnesses omits the phrase. It is also clear that the omission of this phrase by some witnesses of the NT (B 33 t vg[ms]), does not carry sufficient weight (Weiss 1991:165,n.35). A counting of the characters in Papyrus 114 opens up the possibility for the phrase to have been omitted there too. Should that be the case, then the combined support for its omission in $\mathfrak{P}^{114}$ and B would have to be weighed against that of $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ a A and the rest, which sways the scale in favour of the inclusion of the phrase. Other possibilities in counting the characters in $\mathfrak{P}^{114}$ are the omission of ton, tou, or, most likely, the omission of eij~, ton, tou – the latter bringing it in close conformity with the Hebrews text.

3.4   rabdo" eujquthto" hJ versus *kai; hJ* rabdo" *th"* eujquthto"

It is clear that in this case the NT witnesses are divided into two groups. One group prefers the same reading as that which is to be found in the LXX

(r`abdo" eujquthto" hJktl). They omit kaiÛ (omitted by C D² K L etc) and the articles hJ and th`~. At least the omission of και should be seen as a secondary adaptation towards the LXX text (Weiss 1991:165, n.35). The textual history of the LXX shows no uncertainty with regard to the reading and the three words are consistently absent in all the LXX textual witnesses. Interesting, though, is that the omission of the article before r`abdo" eujquthto" actually makes this part of the verse the predicate, instead of the subject. This, in turn, has implications for the interpretation of the whole verse.

The other group prefers the reading: kai; hJ r`abdo" th" eujquthto" – with the inclusion of kaiv and the articles hJ and th`~. The textual evidence in favour of the latter carries more weight: inclusion of kai ($\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ a A B D* 0243, 33, 1739 *pc* it vg$^{st.ww}$) inclusion of articles ($\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ a¹ A B 0243, 33, 1739 *pc*). A character count in the lines of P^{114} also suggests that this papyrus too included the three words. It is also clear that the inclusion of kaiv and the two articles create a balanced structure between two independent clauses (Rüsen-Weinhold 2002:187; Bateman 1995:13; Ahlborn 1966:113; Kistemaker 1961:25):

> oJ qrono" sou oJ qeo," eij" ton aijwna tou` aijwno",
> *kai; hJ* r`abdo" *th"* eujquthto" hJ r`abdo" th" basileia" sou

According to Smits (1963:557) and Kistemaker the conjunction kaiv might have been the cause of some of the differences in this instance. The latter argues as follows:

> It is the additional connective that separates the clauses, with the result that in the first one the vocative oJ qeo" strengthens the 2nd pers. sing. … In other words, two particular thoughts are mentioned: one addressing the Son directly as God, and the other in the form of an afterthought referring to the kingdom of the Son. While the conjunction "and" balances the two clauses, it also places them over against each other in order to call attention to the content of the individual statements.
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> (Kistemaker 1961:25)

Ahlborn is probably correct when pointing out that the changes in this instance should not simply be explained stylistically, but rather theologically.

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2. Codex C is also listed with the other witnesses in Braun (1984:39) and Weiss (1991:165, n 35). *NA*^{27}, (p 690), though, notes that C is missing in 1:1-2:4. So also observed with regard to *NA*^{26} by Cadwallader (1992:262, n 30).

It is not just any sceptre, but God's sceptre, which is different than that of Aaron in Hebrews 9:4 or Jacob's from Genesis 47:31 in Hebrews 11:21, and which is here transferred to the Son (1966:114). Büchel (1906:520) suspected that different ruling sceptres might have been available for the Messiah according to Zechariah 11:7b. The argument that a change in accent took place with the position of the article – a change of subject and antecedent – which gives the sceptre of righteousness[3] the deciding emphasis (Schröger 1968:62; Weiss 1991:165, note 35), follows along the same lines. The author of Hebrews understands this sceptre of righteousness messianically (Schröger 1968:63).

3.5 Possible substitution: αὐτοῦ for σου?

There is a dispute about whether the possible substitution of αὐτοῦ for σου should be accepted in this instance. The latter reading is supported by A D K L P Y 0121b latt sy[p.h] co arm 0243 0278 1739 1881 33 81 104 326 Chr *M*. A character count in the lines of 𝔓[114] is of no use here as the lines are between 38 and 42 characters long. It would be 40 characters with σου and 42 characters with αὐτοῦ. This particular case is problematic and doubts remain about the text (Cadwallader 1992:260, note 21). Both options are equally well attested.

(i)   Arguments in favour of σου are based on the following: Internal considerations would have the decision largely depend on whether ὁ θεός is taken as nominative or as vocative. Should the latter be preferred (Weiss 1991:165), then the decision is towards σου. Supporters of σου regard the reading with αὐτοῦ as an error of an early copyist (Zuntz 1953:64; Ahlborn 1966:114; Metzger 1975:662-663; Attridge 1989:59; Grässer 1990:84; Rüsen-Weinhold 2002:188) – a viewpoint rejected by Büchel (1906:520) a century ago, but it still appears to be the best explanation. It has also been pointed out that αὐτοῦ is missing from in the LXX and that in terms of content and style, it does not fit the context in Hebrews (Ahlborn 1966:114).

(ii)   Arguments in favour of αὐτοῦ run along the following lines: Supporters of the nominative-option for ὁ θεός usually prefer αὐτοῦ (Thomas 1964/5:305; Kistemaker 1961:25; Cadwallader 1992:283-284) – where the nominative also solves the problem of the antecedent of αὐτοῦ (Thomas 1959:22). In the words of Bateman (1995:17): "'you' is

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[3] εὐθύτητος is a *hapax legomenon* in the NT. Also, it is only found twice in the LXX, here in Ps 44:7 as well as in Qoh 12:10.

changed to 'his' (*autou*, genitive of possession) to emphasize that the Son presently possesses the kingdom: It is 'his' kingdom". Text-critically, the external evidence cannot be discarded either, as it is supported by $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ a and Cadwallader (1992:284) points out that "(t)he manuscript support for αὐτοῦ comes from those witnesses which are more frequently found to be resistant to the tendency to conform Hbs to the LXX". Thomas, for instance, argues in favour of αὐτοῦ because of the strong witnesses $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ and a – "(which in eleven other instances of minority readings in Hebrews, where they are together, and considered to have the original reading), the scribal tendency to use σου to avoid difficulties of interpretation, and the tendency to retain σου as found in the LXX" (Thomas 1964/5:305, note 3). Because αὐτου leads to a syntactically difficult reading, thus the *lectio difficilior*, it is easier to explain a later correction towards the σου of the LXX (Karrer 2002:127; Benoit 1937:75; Schröger 1968:62-63; Westcott 1974:26; Bruce 1985:10; Buchanan 1977:20). An interesting suggestion is mentioned by Kistemaker who points to the similarity between "*his* kingdom" in 2 Samuel 7:13 and αὐτοῦ here in Hebrews 1:8 (Kistemaker 1961:78).

The Greek New Testament editions, which reconstructed the text with σου (UBS^3, NA$^{26/27}$) give it a "C" rating (i e those with a considerable degree of doubt).

Thomas is of the opinion that the text in Hebrews should be reconstructed to read ὁ θεος as a nominative, to include καὶ ἡ and τῆς, and to change σου to αὐτοῦ – which, according to him, enhances the meaning of the sceptre which is now also the Son's. For him, the text would then read as follows: "Thy (the Son's) throne *is God* (the Father) for ever and ever *and the* sceptre of uprightness (the Son's) is the sceptre of *his* (the Father's) kingdom" (Thomas 1964/5:305). Should the text be reconstructed in this manner, then these changes could be ascribed to the hand of the author of Hebrews. That being the case, the author adapted the quotation in order to bring the Son and the Father in the closest possible association, in order to underline the exalted status of the Son and his position as being superior to that of the angels.

3.6   ἀνομίαν or ἀδικίαν?

The Egyptian textual tradition runs along two lines: the lower Egyptian tradition followed the LXX with ἀνομίαν, while the upper Egyptian tradition

chose the synonym, ἀδικίαν (Ahlborn 1966:114). Rüsen-Weinhold (2002:188, note 68) adds that it is striking that Codex ἀ did not bring the readings of the LXX (ἀνομίαν) and the New Testament (ἀδικίαν) in agreement with each other in this instance. The reconstructed text of NA[27] prefers ἀνομίαν (based on P[46] B D[2] Ψ 0243, 0278, 1739, 1881, 𝔐 latt sy[h]), with a few other witnesses choosing the alternative (ἀδικίαν = ἀ A 33[vid] *pc*; Or Eus (*DemEv*) Ath). The ἀνομίαν-reading of NA[27] should indeed be preferred, based on the textual witnesses ("δικαιοσύνη (ist) eindeutig sekundär gegenüber der meistbezeugten Lesart ἀνομίαν, (Weiss [1991:165, note 35]) as well as the attestation of the Church Fathers (see below). It is clear that the plural, ἀνομίας (D*), "is an error influenced either by the ending of the verb (ἐμίσησας) or by the genitive βασιλείας in the preceeding verse" (Attridge 1989:49).

3.7   σε ὁ θεός· σου ὁ θεός?

The small fragment of Papyrus 114 presents a difficulty in line 5. The reading is not very clear, but chances are that it actually reads SOUOΘΣ. This would mean that it contains a reading which is attested absolutely nowhere else: σε ὁ θεός] σου ὁ θεός.

- Was this a possible paralepsis with line 2?
- Did he transpose the σου by bringing it forward and placing it between the two occurrences of ὁ θεός – so that it would not be misunderstood as an unconscious duplication?

Here the LXX and the MT have the same reading, followed by all the witnesses of the New Testament. The text that survived in 11Q8 unfortunately ends bluntly after the first occurrence of μηλα. How the reading continues, is not known. Fact is, all the other textual witnesses clearly do not follow this alternative.

3.8   Evidence from the Church Fathers

The trend amongst Church Fathers such as Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 38, 4; 56,14; 63,4), Origen (*Cont.Cels.* 1,56), Athanasius (*Orat.Arian* 26; *Ep.Serap* 26; *Ep.Mar*; *Exp.Pss; Hom.sem.*), Eusebius (*Hist.Eccl.* I 3, 14; *Dem.Ev.* IV15, 15.49.57.58; IV16, 47; V 1, 28; *Eccl.Theol.* I20, 84; *Generalis elementaria*; *Comm.Pss* 23) and Gregory of Nyssa (*Ant.Apoll.* 3,1; *Contr.Eun.* 3,2; *Test.Jud.* 46) to quote Psalm 45:6-7 and to interpret it christologically, is rather interesting. They all prefer the reading with the *inclusion* of τοῦ

aijwno", the *omission* of kaiv and the *omission* of the definite articles hJ before the first rJabdo~ and th~ before eujquthto~, the *inclusion* of the definite article hJ before the second rJabdo~, and the *preference* for sou after th~ basileia~. The only exception is the alternative reading, ajdikivan, mainly by Eusebius (*Dem.Ev.* IV15,15.49.57.58; IV16,47; V1,28) and Athanasius (*Orat.Arian.* 26; *Ep.Serap.* 26; *Ep.Mar.; Exp.Pss*). Referring to Psalm 45:6-7(44:7-8), the Church Fathers followed the reading of the LXX, despite their christological application and possible knowledge of the quotation in Hebrews. It should probably be understood against the background of polemical writings against the Jews in which the Jewish text itself carries more weight, hence the original wording of the Psalm in its Greek version.

4.   CONCLUSION

On the *tradition-historical level*, it was established that the author of Hebrews might have known Psalm 45 via the early Jewish tradition. It probably already had messianic connotations. The author's LXX translation supported the messianic line of interpretation. He must have quoted from the text itself (not from a quotation) and chose a section never quoted previously. Some possible factors might have led to the author of Hebrews using this particular section, either independently or in some combinations. The first clue is the occurrence of Psalm 45:1-2 quoted in 4Q171 amongst the *pesharim* of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He might have shared an exegetical tradition that included Psalm 45 as part of the texts studied and commented upon. The second clue may be provided by the heading of Psalm 45 in the LXX (Riggenbach 1922:22) and the fact that the Psalm contained messianic elements for the author of Hebrews (Schröger 1968:64). A third clue is to be found a few lines earlier in the context of Hebrews 1 where the author quotes 2 Samuel 7 – which we know was well known in the tradition. Several elements (throne, his kingdom, forever) from the kingdom motif might have provided the *Stichwörter* by means of which the author found his passage (Kistemaker 1961:78; Schröger 1968:64-65). A conceptual connection with 2 Samuel (2 Kgs LXX) 7:12 can be seen here, a connection that is made in 4QFlor 1:10-11 (Bateman 1995:17). The royal image elements (judicial sceptre, throne) and the ruler's eternal reign[4] are now christologically interpreted.

On the *text-critical level*, oJ qeo~ should be taken as a vocative. The Son is addressed as "God" by God himself. It becomes one of the titles for

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[4] Cf also eij~ toŋ aijwŋa in the quotations from Ps 110 (109):4 , as well as tou;~ aijwŋa~ in Hebrew 1:2, eij~ toŋ aijwŋa tou aijwŋo~ in Hebrew 1:8, tou;~ aijwŋa~ in Hebrew 11:3 and eij~ tou;~ aijwŋa~ in Hebrew 13:8.

the Son in the catena of Hebrews 1. Having established the hermeneutical bridge that the king of Psalm 45 is the messiah (Rendall 1955:214-220; Müller 1986:235), the link that his status is equal to that of God, has thereby been made. For the author of Hebrews it serves as an explicit reference of the divinity of "the Son" (Ahlborn 1966:114; Müller 1986:235; Motyer 1999:15; Rüsen-Weinhold 2002:189). The inclusion of καὶ ἡ and τῆς were deliberate changes by the author of Hebrews. These changes were not only made on stylistic grounds in order to create a balanced structure, but also with a theological emphasis: God's sceptre, the sceptre of righteousness, is transferred to the Son. The choice in favour of σου should probably be preferred as it goes with the vocative. It would be difficult to assume that the linguistically refined author, who wrote the best Greek in the NT, would use αὐτοῦ after interpreting ὁ θεός as a vocative. The αὐτοῦ-alternative goes with a nominative interpretation of ὁ θεός. It would be equally difficult to prove that the author of Hebrews followed another *Vorlage* (Rüsen-Weinhold 2002:188) of Psalm 45(44), based on two grounds. Firstly, none of the LXX textual witnesses supports the changes which include καὶ ἡ and τῆς, neither are there any witnesses which replaced σου with αὐτοῦ. The only evidence of a possible alternative is to be found in the ἀνομία / ἀδικία lower and upper Egyptian groupings of textual witnesses, where the LXX followed the lower Egyptian route. However, in this case the New Testament most probably also followed this option. Secondly, the occurrence of the quotation from Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) by the Church Fathers testifies to the same reading as that found in the LXX. There seems to be little doubt that the *Vorlage* used by the author of Hebrews for his quotation from Psalm 45 (44), was similar to that of the LXX, and that the author himself made minute changes to this text by adding καὶ ἡ and τῆς.

Some concluding thoughts on the *hermeneutical and methodological* application of the quotation would suffice. The quotation is closely connected with the next quotation from Psalm 102 (101) on the theme of the nature of the Son, as well as with the 2nd person singular pronoun. Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) is interpreted in Hebrews 1:8-9 in terms of Christ (Rösel 1999:128; Müller 1986:236; Harder 1939:47), and is therefore christologically (Weiss 1991:165) applied. The danger of looking for a christological reference, particularly in the anointing terminology, in every part of the quotation is real. Hebrews does not use it elsewhere. Attempts to over-emphasise its occurrence here, would probably be taking the comparisons too far. See the notes of caution in Meier (1985:515-516). Interpretations moving in this direction can be found in Easton (1996). Rather, it should be seen as a sign

of equipping with power and reward (Müller 1986:235). The fact of the matter is, the author of Hebrews applies this Psalm to Christ and he does so mainly by the application of the name qeo$ to the Son. In the quotation taken from Psalm 2:7 he was addressed as "Son" and in the quotation from Psalm 102(101):26 as "Lord." The quotation from Psalm 45 (44) bestows the title "God" on him. The introductory formula taken into account, it is God himself who calls the Son "God" too (Attridge 1989:58; Müller 1986:235; Karrer 2002:141, 142) – that is if the vocative is preferred. This issue of the Son as God should be seen within the context of his time. On the one hand, the Roman rulers were partly worshipped as gods (Karrer 2002:141). On the other hand, Philo referred to the Logos, one of the divine powers, as God. It might then be that the "author's understanding of the Psalm may have been influenced by his high christology with its sapiential roots" (Attridge 1989:58-59). The author of Hebrews uses Psalm 45:6-7 as confirmation of the divinity of Jesus as God's Son. It means that the Son is God, that the throne of the Son is eternal ("unlike the transitory angels" – Attridge 1989:59) and that his rule is righteous (Meier 1985:516; Müller 1986:235). His sceptre, according to Scriptural language, is a symbol of legitimate rulership (Weiss 1991:166).

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