

The Hebrew Bible

Volume 1C
Writings

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Contents of THB Volume 1

VOLUME 1A

Preface

Introduction to the Textual History of the Bible

Introduction to Textual History of the Bible, Vol. 1: The Hebrew Bible

1 Overview Articles

VOLUME 1B

2 Pentateuch

3–5 Former Prophets

3 Joshua

4 Judges

5 Samuel–Kings

6–9 Latter Prophets

6 Isaiah

7 Jeremiah

8 Ezekiel

9 Minor Prophets

VOLUME 1C

10–20 Ketuvim (Writings)

10 Psalms

11 Job

12 Proverbs

13–17 Five Scrolls

13 Ruth

14 Canticles

15 Qohelet

16 Lamentations

17 Esther

18 Daniel

19 Ezra–Nehemiah

20 1–2 Chronicles

21 The Biblical Text as Attested in Ancient Literature

Addenda et corrigenda to volumes 1A and 1B

Contents of THB Volume 1A

Preface (Armin Lange)	IX
Introduction to the Textual History of the Bible (Armin Lange)	XI
Introduction to Textual History of the Bible, Vol. 1: The Hebrew Bible (Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov)	XV
Area Editors	XXI
Authors	XXII
Notes to the Reader / Abbreviations	XXIII
Collective Bibliography	XXIX
 1 Overview Articles	
1.1 Introduction	3
1.1.1 Textual History of the Hebrew Bible (Emanuel Tov and Eugene Ulrich)	3
1.1.2 Canonical History of the Hebrew Bible	35
1.1.2.1 The History of the Jewish Canon (Armin Lange)	36
1.1.2.2 The History of the Christian Old Testament Canon (Armin Lange)	48
1.2 Ancient Hebrew-Aramaic Texts	82
1.2.1 History of Research (Armin Lange)	82
1.2.2 Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic Jewish Texts (Armin Lange)	112
1.2.3 Samaritan Pentateuch (Sidnie White Crawford)	166
1.3 Primary Translations (Emanuel Tov)	176
1.3.0 Introduction	177
1.3.1 Greek Translations	191
1.3.1.1 Septuagint (Emanuel Tov)	191
1.3.1.2 Pre-Hexaplaric Translations, Hexapla, post-Hexaplaric translations (Peter J. Gentry)	211
1.3.2 Samareitikon (Jan Joosten)	235
1.3.3 Targumim (Beate Ego)	239
1.3.4 Peshitta (Ignacio Carbajosa)	262
1.3.5 Vulgate (Michael Graves)	278
1.3.6 Arabic Translations (Jewish [Rabbanite and Karaite], Samaritan)	289
1.3.6.1 Jewish Arabic Translations (Meira Polliack)	289
1.3.6.2 Samaritan Arabic Translations (Tamar Zewi)	309
1.4 Secondary Translations	316
1.4.0 Introduction (Emanuel Tov)	316
1.4.1 Vetus Latina (Julio Treballe Barrera)	319
1.4.2 Coptic Translations (Frank Feder)	331
1.4.3 Ethiopic Translation(s) (Steve Delamarter, Ralph Lee, and Curt Niccum)	345
1.4.4 Syro-Lucianic Translation (Ignacio Carbajosa)	360
1.4.5 Syro-Hexapla (Ignacio Carbajosa)	362

1.4.6	Jacob of Edessa's Syriac Translation (Ignacio Carbajosa)	368
1.4.7	Armenian Translations (Claude Cox)	370
1.4.8	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	375
1.4.9	Christian Palestinian Aramaic Translation (Christa Müller-Kessler)	385
1.4.10	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	393
1.4.11	Arabic (Christian) Translations (Ronny Vollandt)	408
1.4.12	Gothic Translations (Marcus Sigismund)	416
1.5	Medieval Masoretic Text (Elvira Martín-Contreras)	420
1.6	The Biblical Text as Attested in Ancient Literature (Michael Segal)	430
1.7	The Biblical Text in Light of Its Quotations and Allusions	440
1.7.1	Jewish Quotations and Allusions (Armin Lange)	440
1.7.2	Christian Quotations and Allusions (Martin Meiser)	445

Contents of THB Volume 1B

Area Editors	XII
Authors	XIII
Notes to the Reader / Abbreviations	XIV
Collective Bibliography	XIX
2 Pentateuch	
2.1 Textual History of the Pentateuch (Emanuel Tov)	3
2.2 Ancient Hebrew Texts	22
2.2.1 Ancient, Late Ancient, and Early Medieval Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	22
2.2.2 Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Ronald Hendel)	59
2.2.3 Other Texts (Ronald Hendel)	72
2.2.4 SP and Ancient Texts Close to SP	84
2.2.4.1 Genesis (Ronald Hendel)	84
2.2.4.2 Exodus (Magnar Kartveit)	86
2.2.4.3 Leviticus (Sarianna Metso)	93
2.2.4.4 Numbers (Nathan Jastram)	98
2.2.4.5 Deuteronomy (Sidnie White Crawford)	101
2.2.5 Other Sources (Nathan Jastram)	105
2.2.5.1 Tefillin and Mezuzot	105
2.2.5.2 Nash Papyrus	111
2.2.5.3 Silver Scrolls from Ketef Hinnom	115
2.2.5.4 Severus Scroll	119
2.3 Medieval Text of MT (Elvira Martín Contreras)	126
2.4 Primary Translations	131
2.4.1 Septuagint	131
2.4.1.1 Genesis (Martin Rösel)	131
2.4.1.2 Exodus (Larry Perkins)	135
2.4.1.3 Leviticus (Moshe A. Zipor)	142
2.4.1.4 Numbers (Martin Rösel)	145
2.4.1.5 Deuteronomy (Sidnie White Crawford)	148
2.4.2 Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Andrew McClurg)	152
2.4.3 Targumim (Avigdor Shinan)	152
2.4.3.1 4Q ^{tg} Lev	152
2.4.3.2 Targumim – General	153
2.4.3.3 Targum Onqelos	158
2.4.3.4 Palestinian Targumim	161
2.4.4 Samaritan Targum (Abraham Tal)	167
2.4.5 Peshitta (Jerome Lund)	173
2.4.6 Hexaplaric Greek Translations and Hexapla of the Octateuch (Andrew McClurg) ...	180

2.4.7	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	188
2.4.8	Vulgate (Matthew Kraus)	189
2.4.9	Arabic Translations (Ronny Vollandt)	195
2.5	Secondary Translations	207
2.5.1	Vetus Latina (Julio Treballe Barrera)	207
2.5.2	Coptic Translations (P. Nagel)	211
2.5.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) of Octateuch (Steve Delamarter and Curt Niccum)	215
2.5.4	Late Syriac Translations (Alison Salvesen)	219
2.5.5	Armenian Translations (Claude Cox)	225
2.5.6	Georgian Translations (Bernard Outtier)	227
2.5.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	230
2.5.8	Arabic Translations (Ronny Vollandt)	239
3–5	Former Prophets	
3	Joshua	
3.1	Textual History of Joshua (Michaël van der Meer)	251
3.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	257
3.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	257
3.2.2	Masoretic Text and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Karin Finsterbusch)	259
3.2.3	Other Texts (Karin Finsterbusch)	265
3.3	Septuagint (Michaël van der Meer)	269
4	Judges	
4.1	Textual History of Judges (H. Ausloos)	277
4.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	281
4.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	281
4.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Julio Treballe Barrera)	284
4.2.3	Other Texts (Julio Treballe Barrera)	289
4.3	Septuagint (Cécile Dogniez)	294
5	Samuel–Kings	
5.1	Textual History of Samuel (Eugene Ulrich)	301
5.2	Textual History of Kings (Philippe Hugo and Adrian Schenker)	310

5.3 Ancient Hebrew Texts	319
5.3.1 Ancient and Late Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	319
5.3.2 Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Philippe Hugo & Adrian Schenker) .	332
5.3.3 Other Texts (Philippe Hugo & Adrian Schenker)	339
5.4 Septuagint (Samuel) (Siegfried Kreuzer)	349
5.5 Septuagint (Kings) (Siegfried Kreuzer)	362
3-5.1 Primary Translations	367
3-5.1.1 Septuagint (Emanuel Tov)	367
3-5.1.2 Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Andrew McClurg)	367
3-5.1.2.1 Joshua-Judges	367
3-5.1.2.2 Samuel-Kings	367
3-5.1.3 Targum (Willem Smelik)	367
3-5.1.4 Peshitta (Craig E. Morrison)	375
3-5.1.5 Hexapla (Andrew McClurg)	383
3-5.1.5.1 Joshua-Judges	383
3-5.1.5.2 Hexaplaric Greek Translations and the Hexapla: Samuel-Kings	383
3-5.1.6 Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	387
3-5.1.6.1 Joshua-Judges	387
3-5.1.6.2 Samuel-Kings	389
3-5.1.7 Vulgate (David Everson)	391
3-5.1.8 Arabic Translations (Meira Polliack & Meirav Nadler-Akirav)	396
3-5.2 Secondary Translations	397
3-5.2.1 Vetus Latina	397
3-5.2.1.1 Joshua-Judges (Andrés Piquer Otero)	397
3-5.2.1.2 Samuel-Kings (Pablo Torijano Morales)	400
3-5.2.2 Coptic Translations (Alin Suciu)	403
3-5.2.3 Ethiopic Translations	409
3-5.2.3.1 Joshua (Steve Delamarter)	409
3-5.2.3.2 Judges (Michael G. Wechsler)	410
3-5.2.3.3 1-4 Kingdoms (Curt Niccum & James Prather)	412
3-5.2.3.4 1-2 Kings (Curt Niccum)	415
3-5.2.4 Late Syriac Translations (Ignacio Carbajosa)	415
3-5.2.5 Armenian Translations	420
3-5.2.5.1 Joshua (Peter Cowe)	420
3-5.2.5.2 Judges (Peter Cowe)	422
3-5.2.5.3 1-2 Samuel (1-2 Reigns) (Peter Cowe)	424
3-5.2.5.4 1-2 Kings (3-4 Kgdms) (Peter Cowe)	427
3-5.2.6 Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	429
3-5.2.7 Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	436
3-5.2.8 Arabic Translations (Ronny Vollandt)	445
3-5.3 Medieval text of MT (Elvira Martín Contreras)	447

6–9 *Latter Prophets***6 *Isaiah***

6.1	Textual History of Isaiah (Arie van der Kooij)	459
6.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	470
6.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Russell Fuller)	470
6.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Russell Fuller & Peter Flint)	476
6.2.3	Other Texts (Russell Fuller & Peter Flint)	482
6.3	Septuagint (Arie van der Kooij)	489

7 *Jeremiah*

7.1	Textual History of Jeremiah (Richard D. Weis)	495
7.2	Ancient Hebrew-Aramaic Texts	514
7.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	514
7.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Armin Lange)	518
7.2.3	Other Texts (Armin Lange)	536
7.3	Septuagint (Georg Fischer)	543

8 *Ezekiel*

8.1	Textual History of Ezekiel (William A. Tooman)	559
8.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	570
8.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	570
8.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (William A. Tooman)	572
8.2.3	Other Texts (Armin Lange)	579
8.3	Septuagint (Johan Lust)	581

9 *Minor Prophets*

9.1	Textual History of the Minor Prophets (Christopher J. Fresch)	589
9.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	601
9.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Russell Fuller)	601
9.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Russell Fuller)	606
9.2.3	Other Texts (Russell Fuller)	611
9.3	Septuagint (W. Edward Glenny)	614

6–9.1	Primary Translations	623
6–9.1.1	Septuagint (Emanuel Tov)	623
6–9.1.2	Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	623
6–9.1.3	Targum (Gudrun Elisabeth Lier)	623
6–9.1.4	Peshitta (Arie van der Kooij)	630
6–9.1.5	Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	637
6–9.1.6	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	643
6–9.1.7	Vulgate (Michael Graves)	645
6–9.1.8	Arabic Translations (Meira Polliack and Meirav Nadler-Akirav)	652
6–9.2	Secondary Translations	660
6–9.2.1	Vetus Latina (Julio Treballe Barrera)	660
6–9.2.2	Coptic Translations	665
6–9.2.2.1	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel (Frank Feder)	665
6–9.2.2.2	Minor Prophets (Nathalie Bosson)	671
6–9.2.3	Ethiopic Translation(s)	677
6–9.2.3.1	Isaiah (Curt Niccum)	677
6–9.2.3.2	Jeremiah (Martin Heide)	679
6–9.2.3.3	Ezekiel (Michael Knibb)	681
6–9.2.3.4	Minor Prophets (Jeremy Brown, Steve Delamarter, Anke Dorman, Curt Niccum, and Kipp Swinney)	684
6–9.2.4	Late Syriac Translations (Stephen Ryan)	689
6–9.2.5	Armenian Translations	695
6–9.2.5.1	Isaiah (Peter Cowe)	695
6–9.2.5.2	Jeremiah (Peter Cowe)	699
6–9.2.5.3	Ezekiel (Peter Cowe)	702
6–9.2.5.4	Minor Prophets (Peter Cowe)	703
6–9.2.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	707
6–9.2.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	714
6–9.2.8	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	723
6–9.3	Medieval text of MT (Elvira Martín Contreras)	731

Contents of THB Volume 1C

Area Editors.....	XIV
Authors.....	XV
Notes to the Reader / Abbreviations.....	XVI
Collective Bibliography.....	XXI
10–20 Ketuvim (Writings)	
10 Psalms	
10.1 Textual History of Psalms (Brent A. Strawn)	5
10.2 Ancient Hebrew Texts	24
10.2.1 Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	24
10.2.2 (Proto-)Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Brent A. Strawn)	42
10.2.3 Other Texts (Brent A. Strawn)	61
10.3 Primary Translations	82
10.3.1 Septuagint (Jannes Smith)	82
10.3.2 Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	88
10.3.3 Targum (David Stec).....	88
10.3.4 Peshitta (Ignacio Carbajosa)	93
10.3.5 Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	98
10.3.6 Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	103
10.3.7 Vulgate (Justin Rogers)	104
10.3.8 Arabic Translations (Ilana Sasson).....	110
10.4 Secondary Translations	115
10.4.1 Vetus Latina (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	115
10.4.2 Coptic Translations (P. Nagel)	119
10.4.3 Ethiopic Translation(s) (Steve Delamarter)	122
10.4.4 Late Syriac Translations (Robert Hiebert)	125
10.4.5 Armenian Translations (Claude Cox)	130
10.4.6 Georgian Translations (Bernard Outtier)	132
10.4.7 Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	135
10.4.8 Arabic Translations (Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala)	143
11 Job	
11.1 Textual History of Job (R. Althann).....	151
11.2 Ancient and Late Ancient Hebrew Texts.....	156
11.2.1 Ancient and Late Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	156
11.2.2 Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Brent A. Strawn)	158

11.2.3	Other Texts (Brent A. Strawn)	169
11.3	Primary Translations	175
11.3.1	Septuagint (Claude Cox)	175
11.3.2	Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	181
11.3.3	Targum and Qumran Aramaic Versions (David Shepherd)	181
11.3.4	Peshitta (Ignacio Carbajosa)	187
11.3.5	Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	190
11.3.6	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	196
11.3.7	Vulgate (Soenksen, Jason)	198
11.3.8	Arabic Translations (Ilana Sasson)	202
11.4	Secondary Translations	207
11.4.1	Vetus Latina (Jean-Claude Haelewyck)	207
11.4.2	Coptic Translations (Frank Feder)	209
11.4.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) (Curt Niccum)	211
11.4.4	Job, Proverbs, Canticles, and Qohelet in Late Syriac Translations (Peter J. Gentry) ..	213
11.4.5	Armenian Translations (Claude Cox)	224
11.4.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	227
11.4.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	228
11.4.8	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	236
12	<i>Proverbs</i>	
12.1	Textual History of Proverbs (Johann Cook)	243
12.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	248
12.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	248
12.2.2	Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Johann Cook)	250
12.3	Primary Translations	253
12.3.1	Septuagint (Forti, Tova)	253
12.3.2	Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	259
12.3.3	Targum (Díez Merino, Luis)	259
12.3.4	Peshitta (Ignacio Carbajosa)	263
12.3.5	Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	267
12.3.6	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	270
12.3.7	Vulgate (Justin Rogers)	271
12.3.8	Arabic Translations (Ilana Sasson)	275
12.4	Secondary Translations	280
12.4.1	Vetus Latina (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	280
12.4.2	Coptic Translations (Frank Feder)	283
12.4.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) (Curt Niccum)	285
12.4.4	Late Syriac Translations (Peter J. Gentry)	287
12.4.5	Armenian Translations (Claude Cox)	287

12.4.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	289
12.4.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	291
12.4.8	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	295
 13–17 Five Scrolls		
 13 Ruth		
13.1	Textual History of Ruth (Melanie Köhlmoos)	303
13.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	306
13.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	306
13.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Veronika Bachmann)	307
13.2.3	Other Texts (Armin Lange)	315
 14 Canticles		
14.1	Textual History of Canticles (Bénédicte Lemmelijn)	321
14.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	327
14.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	327
14.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Armin Lange)	329
14.2.3	Other Texts (Armin Lange)	332
 15 Qohelet		
15.1	Textual History of Qohelet (Michael V. Fox)	339
15.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts (Armin Lange)	345
15.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	345
15.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Armin Lange)	346
15.2.3	Other Texts (Armin Lange)	350
 16 Lamentations		
16.1	Textual History of Lamentations (Gideon Kotzé)	357
16.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	361
16.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	361
16.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Rolf Schäfer)	362
16.2.3	Other Texts (Rolf Schäfer)	367
 17 Esther		
17.1	Textual History of Esther (Kristin De Troyer)	377

17.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	385
17.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	385
17.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Veronika Bachmann)	385
13–17.1	Primary Translations	389
13–17.1.1	Septuagint	389
13–17.1.1.1	Ruth (Cécile Dogniez)	389
13–17.1.1.2	Canticles (Cécile Dogniez)	391
13–17.1.1.3	Qohelet (Cécile Dogniez)	392
13–17.1.1.4	Lamentations (Cécile Dogniez)	394
13–17.1.1.5	Esther (Kristin De Troyer)	396
13–17.1.2	Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations	402
13–17.1.2.1	Lamentations (John D. Meade)	402
13–17.1.2.2	Ruth (John D. Meade)	402
13–17.1.2.3	Qoheleth (Peter J. Gentry)	402
13–17.1.2.4	Canticles (John D. Meade)	402
13–17.1.2.5	Esther (Peter J. Gentry)	402
13–17.1.3	Targumim (Christian Brady)	402
13–17.1.4	Peshitta	409
13–17.1.4.1	Ruth (Michael G. Wechsler)	409
13–17.1.4.2	Canticles (Ignacio Carbajosa)	413
13–17.1.4.3	Qoheleth (Maya Goldberg)	415
13–17.1.4.4	Lamentations (Claudio Balzaretto)	418
13–17.1.4.5	Esther (Michael G. Wechsler)	419
13–17.1.5	Hexapla	424
13–17.1.5.1	Lamentations (John D. Meade)	424
13–17.1.5.2	Ruth (McClurg, Andrew)	425
13–17.1.5.3	Qoheleth (Peter J. Gentry)	425
13–17.1.5.4	Canticles (John D. Meade)	433
13–17.1.5.5	Esther (McClurg, Andrew)	437
13–17.1.6	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	439
13–17.1.7	Vulgate (Vincent Skemp)	441
13–17.1.8	Arabic Translations (Ilana Sasson)	446
13–17.2	Secondary Translations	452
13–17.2.1	Vetus Latina	452
13–17.2.1.1	Ruth (Bonifatia Gesche)	452
13–17.2.1.2	Canticles (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	454
13–17.2.1.3	Ecclesiastes (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	456
13–17.2.1.4	Lamentations (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	457
13–17.2.1.5	Esther (Jean-Claude Haelewyck)	459
13–17.2.2	Coptic Translations (Alin Suci)	461
13–17.2.3	Ethiopic Translation(s)	466
13–17.2.3.1	Ruth (Meley Mulugetta)	466
13–17.2.3.2	Canticles (Steve Delamarter, Ralph Lee, Curt Niccum & Melaku Terefe)	467

13-17.2.3.3	Qoheleth (Curt Niccum)	470
13-17.2.3.4	Lamentations (Curt Niccum)	472
13-17.2.3.5	Esther (Veronika Bachmann)	474
13-17.2.4	Late Syriac Translations	475
13-17.2.4.1	Ruth (Michael G. Wechsler)	475
13-17.2.4.2	Canticles (Peter J. Gentry)	477
13-17.2.4.3	Qoheleth (Peter J. Gentry)	477
13-17.2.4.4	Lamentations (Claudio Balzaretto)	477
13-17.2.4.5	Esther (Michael G. Wechsler)	478
13-17.2.5	Armenian Translations	478
13-17.2.5.1	Ruth (Peter Cowe)	478
13-17.2.5.2	Canticles (Peter Cowe)	480
13-17.2.5.3	Qoheleth (Peter Cowe)	484
13-17.2.5.4	Lamentations (Peter Cowe)	486
13-17.2.5.5	Esther (Peter Cowe)	489
13-17.2.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	490
13-17.2.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	497
13-17.2.8	Arabic Translations (Ronny Vollandt & Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	506
13-17.3	Medieval Text of MT (Elvira Martín-Contreras)	512
18	<i>Daniel</i>	
18.1	Textual History of Daniel (Daniel Olariu)	517
18.2	Ancient Hebrew-Aramaic Texts	528
18.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	528
18.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Michael Segal)	532
18.2.3	Other Texts (Michael Segal)	537
18.3	Primary Translations	542
18.3.1	Septuagint (D. Amara)	542
18.3.2	Other Greek Versions Prior to the Hexapla (Jason T. Parry)	554
18.3.3	Peshitta (Richard A. Taylor)	558
18.3.4	Hexapla (Jason T. Parry)	561
18.3.5	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Jason T. Parry)	565
18.3.6	Vulgate (Michael Graves)	568
18.3.7	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	571
18.4	Secondary Translations	575
18.4.1	Vetus Latina (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	575
18.4.2	Coptic Translations (Sofia Torallas Tovar)	579
18.4.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) (Curt Niccum)	582
18.4.4	Late Syriac Translations (Richard A. Taylor)	584
18.4.5	Armenian Translations (Peter Cowe)	586
18.4.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	589

18.4.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	591
18.4.8	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	595
19	<i>Ezra–Nehemiah</i>	
19.1	Textual History of Ezra–Nehemiah (Lisbeth Fried)	603
19.2	Ancient Hebrew-Aramaic Texts	610
19.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	610
19.2.2	Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (David Marcus)	611
19.3	Primary Translations	615
19.3.1	Septuagint (Zipora Talshir)	615
19.3.2	Other Greek Versions Prior to the Hexapla (Jason T. Parry)	620
19.3.3	Peshitta (Claudio Balzaretto)	623
19.3.4	Hexapla (Jason T. Parry)	626
19.3.5	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	629
19.3.6	Vulgate (Edmon L. Gallagher)	630
19.3.7	Arabic Translations (Meira Polliack, Meirav Nadler-Akirav & Yair Zoran)	634
19.4	Secondary Translations	638
19.4.1	Vetus Latina (Bonifatia Gesche)	638
19.4.2	Coptic Translations (Frank Feder)	639
19.4.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) (Curt Niccum)	640
19.4.4	Late Syriac Translations (Claudio Balzaretto)	643
19.4.5	Armenian Translations (Peter Cowe)	645
19.4.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	648
19.4.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	651
19.4.8	Arabic Translations (Ronny Vollandt)	653
20	<i>1–2 Chronicles</i>	
20.1	Textual History of Chronicles (Andrés Piquer Otero)	659
20.2	Ancient Hebrew Texts	665
20.2.1	Ancient Manuscript Evidence (Armin Lange)	665
20.2.2	(Proto-)Masoretic Texts and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Mika Pajunen)	665
20.3	Primary Translations	670
20.3.1	Septuagint (Gary N. Knoppers)	670
20.3.2	Pre-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	676
20.3.3	Targum (Leeor Gottlieb)	676
20.3.4	Peshitta (David Phillips)	681
20.3.5	Hexaplaric Greek Translations (John D. Meade)	684
20.3.6	Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations (Matthew M. Dickie)	687
20.3.7	Vulgate (Edmon L. Gallagher)	688
20.3.8	Arabic Translations (Polliack, Meira)	692

20.4	Secondary Translations	693
20.4.1	Vetus Latina (José Manuel Cañas Reillo)	693
20.4.2	Coptic Translations (Frank Feder)	695
20.4.3	Ethiopic Translation(s) (Steve Delamarter)	696
20.4.4	Late Syriac Translations (David Phillips)	699
20.4.5	Armenian Translations (Peter Cowe)	701
20.4.6	Georgian Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	704
20.4.7	Old Church Slavonic Translations (Alessandro Maria Bruni)	708
20.4.8	Arabic Translations (Miriam Lindgren Hjälms)	710
10–20.1	Ketuvim: The Medieval text of MT (Elvira Martín-Contreras)	714
21	<i>The Biblical Text as Attested in Ancient Literature</i>	
21.1	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (Michael Segal)	721
21.1.1	Jubilees (Michael Segal)	721
21.1.2	Pseudo-Philo (Howard Jacobson)	724
21.2	Qumran Literature	726
21.2.1	Exegetical Compositions (Alex P. Jassen)	726
21.2.2	Rewritten Bible/Parabiblical texts (Molly Zahn)	731
21.3	Josephus (Paul Spilsbury)	737
21.4	Philo (James R. Royse)	741
21.5	New Testament (Peter Rodgers)	747
21.6	Rabbinic Literature (Assaf Rosen-Zvi)	751
21.7	Greek Church Fathers (Reinhart Ceulemans)	755
21.8	Latin Church Fathers (Michael Graves)	759
21.9	Syriac Church Fathers (Yifat Monnickendam)	764
21.10	Coptic Church Fathers (Anne Boud'hors)	768
	Addenda & Corrigenda to Volumes 1A and 1B	771

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10.3.5 Hexaplaric Greek Translations

10.3.5.1 Background

LXX-Pss (→ 10.3.1) exhibits a literal translation technique applied to a text similar to proto-MT (→ 10.2.2).¹ The revisions of Theodotion and Aquila developed the literalness of this version, while Symmachus revised the version according to proto-MT in readable Greek.²

¹ For an excellent discussion of the original form of LXX-Pss, cf. → 10.3.1.2.

² → 1.3.1.2.

10.3.5.2 Sources, Editions, and Auxiliary Tools

Since the publication of Field's edition, new evidence has expanded the collection of Hexaplaric fragments.³ In addition to the sources cited in Fernandez Marcos, there has been significant work done on the Palestinian Catena of Psalms.⁴ This catena is most relevant for a collection of Hexaplaric fragments, since it contains the relevant Greek church fathers: Origen, Eusebius, Theodoret, Didymus, Apollinaris, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Hesychius. Of the six manuscripts identified as containing the Palestinian Catena of Psalms, Field incorporated only two (LXX¹¹³³ and LXX¹¹⁷⁵). Subsequent research has shown that these manuscripts are not only low on the manuscript stemma but they also descend from the same putative *Vorlage*. Harl and Dorival identified two manuscripts as the principal witnesses to the catena (LXX¹⁶⁷⁵ [Pss 83:4–150] and LXX¹⁷⁵⁶ [Psalms 78–150]).⁵ These two scholars prepared the materials of Psalm 118 and Curti edited the materials for the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 119–33) and has also provided long sections of these manuscripts in his work on Eusebius' commentary of the Psalms, which contained Hexaplaric fragments. These manuscripts need to be collated completely both for patristic exegetical fragments and Hexaplaric fragments.

There is no critical edition of the Hexaplaric fragments of the Psalter, and Rahlfs' critical edition of LXX-Pss⁶ does not contain a second apparatus, which in subsequent editions is a repository for the Hexaplaric fragments. The most recent collection of the Hexaplaric fragments of the Psalter is Field's work published in 1875.⁷ Therefore, as of 2015, a new edition of the Hexaplaric fragments of the

Psalter in conjunction with the ongoing work of establishing the critical edition of the Greek Psalter is a clear *desideratum*. For auxiliary tools related to the Hexapla, see the bibliography.

10.3.5.3 Translation Character and Technique

10.3.5.3.1 Theodotion

Theodotion employs a formal translation technique where he seeks to render each word of his Hebrew source in the same word order of the source. Ps 87(86 LXX):5–6a provides a good example:

MT-Pss יהוה יִצְיֹן אָמַר אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יִלְד־בָּהּ וְהוּא יְכַנְנֶהָ עַל־יוֹן: יִסְפֹּר בְּכֶתוּב עַמִּים

And of Zion it shall be said, "This one and that one were born in it"; for the Most High himself will establish it. The Lord records, as he registers the peoples (**NRSV*)

LXX-Pss Μητηρ Σιών, ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτήν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος διηγῆσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν

With regard to Sion [note Rahlfs has "Mother Sion"], surely no person will say, "And a person was born in it?" And himself founded it – the Most High! The Lord will recount, in a list of peoples (**NETS*)

Th-Pss καὶ τῇ Ζιὼν ῥηθήσεται, ἀνὴρ καὶ ἀνὴρ ἐγεννήθη ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἡτοίμασεν αὐτήν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος διηγῆσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν.

And to Zion it will be said, "Each one will be born in it"; and the Most High himself founded it. The Lord will recount in a list of peoples.

This fragment illustrates that Theodotion revised LXX according to the Hebrew. For יִצְיֹן "and of Zion," LXX-Pss has μητηρ Σιών "Mother Sion," which Theodotion revised to καὶ τῇ Ζιὼν "and to Zion," which is in closer alignment with the Hebrew. For the אָמַר *Niphal* "it shall be said," LXX-Pss has an active verb, ἐρεῖ "will say," while Theodotion has the passive ῥηθήσεται "it will be said," agreeing with the vocalization of MT. For וְאִישׁ וְאִישׁ "this one and that one," LXX-Pss has ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἄνθρωπος "person, and person," reading ἄνθρωπος¹ "person" with the active verb in the first line and ἄνθρωπος² "person" with ἐγενήθη "was born" in the second line. LXX-Pss uses ἄνθρώπος for וְאִישׁ (both meaning

³ Field, **Hexapla*. For the evidence relevant to the Hexapla of Psalms that has appeared since Field, **Hexapla*, see Fernandez Marcos, **Introduction*, 113–15. Cf. also Schenker, *Psalmen in den Hexapla*, which appeared after the work by Fernandez Marcos and analyzed the Hexaplaric notes in *Ott. Gr.* 398 (= LXX²⁶⁴).

⁴ Curti, *La catena palestinese*; Curti, *Eusebiana 1*; Dorival, "L'apport des chaînes exégétiques grecques"; Harl and Dorival, *La chaîne palestinienne*.

⁵ Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis*, 129, 218.

⁶ Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis*.

⁷ Field, **Hexapla*.

“person”) in many places (e.g., Pss 4:2; 21:6; 30:20; 33:12; 36:7). By contrast, Theodotion understood the construction as a distributive and rendered it with ἀνὴρ καὶ ἀνὴρ “each one.” The rendering of שׂוֹנִי with ἀνὴρ (both meaning “person”), even when used for the distributive, is a trait of the καίγε group, which Theodotion used elsewhere (cf. Th-Job 41:9a).⁸ Aquila also has ἀνὴρ καὶ ἀνὴρ “each one.” Symmachus has καθ’ ἑκάστων “each one,” ἄνθρωπος “person” indicating that he read the Hebrew as a distributive and also revised the Greek since he includes ἄνθρωπος² “person” as the subject of the following verb. In this instance, Theodotion contrasts with LXX-Pss. Theodotion is closer to the καίγε group and Aquila than to LXX-Pss.

10.3.5.3.2 Aquila

The Aquila materials indicate that he employed a formal equivalence translation technique, which attempted to render each Hebrew element with a Greek equivalent isomorphically. On the word level, Aquila’s version is very literal and demonstrates the concordance principle of translation, even employing equivalents to maintain etymological connections between Hebrew and Greek. However, when Aquila’s syntax and Greek vocabulary are considered, his version furnishes more appropriate and even ingenious renderings of the Hebrew source.⁹

Pss 89(88 LXX):8 provides a good example:

MT-Pss אֱלֹהִים נֶעְרָץ בְּסִדְד־קְדֹשִׁים רַבָּה וְנִרְאָה עַל־כָּל־סִבְיָו
a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and awesome above all that are around him? (*NRSV)

LXX-Pss ὁ θεὸς ἐνδοξαζόμενος ἐν βουλῇ ἁγίων, μέγας καὶ φοβερός ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς περικύκλω αὐτοῦ
God is glorified in a council of holy ones, great and awesome to all that are around him. (*NETS)

Aq-Pss ἰσχυρὸς κατισχυρευόμενος ἐν ἀπορρήτῳ ἁγίων, πλήθος καὶ ἐπιφοβὸς ἐπὶ πάντας κύκλω αὐτοῦ.
a Powerful One is strengthening himself in a secret of holy ones, great and terrible to all that are around him.

Aquila provides a quantitative rendering of the Hebrew. The equivalent ἰσχυρὸς “Powerful One” for לֵא “God” is a characteristic of Aquila’s version (cf. Pss 21:2; 35:7; 80:10; 81:1; 84:9) and is one of the precursor equivalences present in the καίγε tradition and perfected by Aquila.¹⁰ Theodotion and the καίγε group used this same equivalent usually with the article (e.g., ὁ ἰσχυρὸς “the Powerful One”; cf. Th-Job 22:13a, 33:29a), but Aquila employed it as a proper noun usually without the definite article.¹¹ LXX-Pss in this verse uses ὁ θεός “the God” and Symmachus used the vocative θεέ “O God.”

10.3.5.3.3 Symmachus

Symmachus produced a revision of LXX (→ 10.3.1) that was faithful to the sense of the Hebrew (→ 10.2.2) in readable Greek.¹²

Pss 87(86 LXX):5–6a provides a good example of Symmachus:

MT-Pss וְלֵצִיִן יֹאמַר אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יִלְדָּבָהּ וְהוּא יְכוֹנְנָהּ עַל־יוֹן וְהוּא יִסְפֹּר בְּכִתּוּב עַמִּים יְהוָה יִלְדָּבָהּ
And of Zion it shall be said, “This one and that one were born in it”; for the Most High himself will establish it. The Lord records, as he registers the peoples, “This one was born there.” (*NRSV)

LXX-Pss Μήτηρ Σιών, ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτὴν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος διηγήσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων τούτων τῶν γεγεννημένων ἐν αὐτῇ
With regard to Sion [note Rahlfs has “Mother Sion”], surely no person will say, “And a person was born in it?” And himself founded it – the Most High! The Lord will recount, in a list of peoples and rulers, those that were born in it. (*NETS)

LXX-Pss Μήτηρ Σιών, ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτὴν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος διηγήσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων τούτων τῶν γεγεννημένων ἐν αὐτῇ
With regard to Sion [note Rahlfs has “Mother Sion”], surely no person will say, “And a person was born in it?” And himself founded it – the Most High! The Lord will recount, in a list of peoples and rulers, those that were born in it. (*NETS)

Sym-Pss περί τε Σιών λεχθήσεται καθ’ ἑκάστων, ἄνθρωπος οὗτος ἐτέχθη ἐκεῖ, αὐτὸς δὲ ἥδρασεν αὐτὴν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος ἀριθμήσει γράφων λαοὺς, οὗτος ἐτέχθη ἐκεῖ
And concerning Sion it will be said singly, ‘this man was born there.’ And he established it, the Most High. The Lord will count, writing the peoples, ‘this one was born there.’

Sym-Pss περί τε Σιών λεχθήσεται καθ’ ἑκάστων, ἄνθρωπος οὗτος ἐτέχθη ἐκεῖ, αὐτὸς δὲ ἥδρασεν αὐτὴν ὁ ὕψιστος. κύριος ἀριθμήσει γράφων λαοὺς, οὗτος ἐτέχθη ἐκεῖ
And concerning Sion it will be said singly, ‘this man was born there.’ And he established it, the Most High. The Lord will count, writing the peoples, ‘this one was born there.’

⁸ → 1.3.1.2.2.2.

⁹ Hyvärinen, *Die Übersetzung von Aquila*, 111–12.

¹⁰ → 1.3.1.2.2.3.2.1.

¹¹ → 1.3.1.2.2.3.2.1.

¹² → 1.3.1.2.5; cf. Salvesen, *Symmachus*, 198.

Symmachus provides a functional equivalence translation of this verse, which follows the Hebrew word order. Symmachus rendered נִפְחַל *Niphal* “it will be said” with a middle-passive verb λεχθήσεται “it will be said,” while LXX-Pss has the active ἐρεῖ “he will say.” As noted above, Symmachus renders the Hebrew distributive שִׁנְיָ שִׁנְיָ “each one” with an idiomatic Greek expression (καθ’ ἑκάστον “singly”) in contrast to Theodotion and Aquila. Symmachus adds the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος “this,” which is not represented in the Hebrew. Perhaps Symmachus made recourse to the last part of the verse in Hebrew, which has הִנֵּה “this,” for his rendering here. LXX-Pss does not have the demonstrative pronoun. Another difference between Symmachus and LXX-Pss is the rendering of הִנֵּה “in it.” Symmachus uses ἐκεῖ “there,” while LXX-Pss has ἐν αὐτῇ “in it.” Symmachus renders וְעַתָּה “and” with δὲ “now” where both Theodotion and LXX-Pss have καὶ “and.” This example illustrates Symmachus’ reaction to the καίγε tradition and its ultra-literal principles and his desire for a more readable Greek translation.

10.3.5.4 Inner-Translational Features

The provisional nature of Field and the work done on the Palestinian Catena by Curti, Harl, and Dorival provide warrant for a few comments regarding Hexapla criticism of the Psalms.

First, some of the fragments from the Palestinian Catena are new or provide significant variants to already known fragments. In Ps 93:15, LXX¹⁶⁷⁵ contains the following note and attribution in a comment attributed to Theodoret: Σαφέστερον δὲ Σύμμαχος· καὶ ἀκολουθήσουσιν [= רַחֵם “after”; also in Sym-Ps 77:71] αὐτῇ πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ· ὁ δὲ Ἀκύλας καὶ Θεοδοτίων· καὶ ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ [= יַרְחֵם “after it/him”] πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ “But more clearly Symmachus: And all the straight in heart will follow it; but Aquila and Theodotion: and after it / him are all the straight in heart.”¹³ The Symmachus fragment is new to the corpus of Hexaplaric fragments, since Field did not use or have access to LXX¹⁶⁷⁵. Concerning the fragment

of Aquila and Theodotion, Field had αὐτῆς “it” instead of αὐτοῦ “it.” He listed this variant in a footnote, but it is probably the original text since: 1) it agrees with the Hebrew pronoun in gender; 2) αὐτῆς “it” probably arose due to secondary influence from the Bible text; and 3) αὐτοῦ “him/it” now appears in the best textual witness to the Palestinian Catena.

Second, the Palestinian Catena also confirms retroversions of fragments known only from the Syro-Hexapla. In Ps 121:4, Field lists his retroversion of the Syro-Hexapla for Symmachus: ἐκκλησία τῶ Ἰσραήλ “assembly in Israel.” The catena preserves the same reading in Greek in a comment attributed to Eusebius.¹⁴ The reading is now based on a surer foundation from the Greek catena.

Third, Ps 131:8b provides a final example of the significance of this catena for a critical edition of the Hexaplaric fragments. Field listed Aq ἀφόρισμα αὐτοῦ “his distinction” Syh and Sym ὁ ἁγίασμός αὐτοῦ “his holiness” Syh Nobil. The catena provides the following: Aq καὶ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀνθήσει ἀφόρισμα αὐτοῦ “and upon him his distinction will shine” and Sym αὐτῷ δ’ ἐπανθήσει ὁ ἁγιασμός αὐτοῦ “but for him his holiness will be bright.” Field had two words retroverted from the Syro-Hexapla for both Aquila and Symmachus. The Palestinian Catena confirmed the retroversions of Field and preserved the entire line for both revisers in an exegetical fragment attributed to Eusebius.¹⁵

These fragments and more like them will need to be included in the Hexapla Institute’s future critical edition of the Hexaplaric fragments of Psalms.

10.3.5.5 Text-Critical Value for the Hebrew Text

Sometimes the versions of the Three reflect variant Hebrew readings. An example of this phenomenon comes at Ps 9:21. Here are the relevant texts of the Three from Field:

¹³ Curti, *Eusebiana I*, 45.

¹⁴ Curti, *La catena palestinese*, 55.

¹⁵ Curti, *La catena palestinese*, 195.

MT	שִׁיתָהּ יְהוָה מוֹרָה לָהֶם Put them in fear, O Lord (*NRSV)	
LXX	ατατάσθησον, κύριε, νομοθέτην ἐπ’ αὐτούς Set a lawgiver over them, O Lord	= lawgiver
Th	ατατάσθησον, κύριε, φόβον αὐτοῖς Set fear for them, O Lord	= fear
Aq	θού, κύριε, φόβημα, αὐτοῖς Place fear for them, O Lord	= fear
Sym	τάξον, κύριε, νόμον αὐτοῖς Assign a law/instruction for them, O Lord	= law/ instruction

The word in Codex Leningradensis and the Aleppo Codex is מוֹרָה, which is otherwise unattested in the Hebrew Bible. It is sometimes suggested that this word ought to be read as מוֹרָא “fear,” which is actually attested in Kennicott manuscripts 239, 266 and de Rossi manuscripts 31, 39, 196, 231, 277, and 828.¹⁶ The cause of the variant could be attributed to ה/א confusion.¹⁷ The מ- prefix combined with the ה- suffix could mark a noun from ירה “to teach, instruct,” which could then indicate a form parallel with תוֹרָה “instruction, teaching.” Therefore, the noun probably means “instruction” and this appears to be how Symmachus (σύμωκ) understood it, since he renders words of the ירה group most often with words of the φοβ group in Greek.¹⁸ LXX-Pss read the consonants of MT but probably understood the form as מוֹרָה, the *Hiphil* participle from ירה, meaning “teacher, lawgiver.” Theodotion and Aquila read מוֹרָא “fear.” The versions of Aquila and Theodotion are significant because they attest to the early reading “fear,” which appeared later in some of the Hebrew manuscript tradition. Symmachus, however, confirms that the consonantal text of Leningrad and Aleppo should be read “instruction.”

¹⁶ For example, see HALOT, II מוֹרָה.

¹⁷ An alternative view is that the Greek versions could be employing a biliteral exegesis of the יר type (yr’ / yrh). For biliteral exegesis in the Septuagint, cf. Tov, *HB, GB, and Qumran, 378–97.

¹⁸ Busto Saiz, *La traducción de Símaco*, 661, 674.

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10.3.6 Post-Hexaplaric Greek Translations

10.3.6.1 Background

The only post-Hexaplaric recension known to us is that of Lucian. In Jerome's letter to Sunnias and Fretela, he attributes the "common" (κοινή) version of the Psalter to Lucian.¹ Jerome corrects the notion that Lucian's revision was the most reliable text (i.e., LXX). Lucian's text is distinct from Origen's text (→ 10.3.5), which was the source text for Jerome's Latin translation of the Psalter (→ 10.3.7; → 10.4.1). The widespread use of Lucian's recension of the Psalter is noted by Fernández Marcos, who suggests that the text was standardized through liturgy alongside Lucian's revision of the New Testament. The resultant text became the official version of the Psalter in Byzantium.² The extent of Lucianic improvements in LXX-Pss has been questioned by Perkins, whose study of LXX-Pss 72–82 demonstrates "little affinity between the 'Lucianic' characteristics or tendencies which appeared in Reigns and the characteristics and tendencies of the L group in the Psalter."³

10.3.6.2 Original Form, Editions, Auxiliary Tools

Although a critical edition of the Psalter exists,⁴ it does not incorporate relatively new witnesses such as Bodmer papyrus 2110 and other significant witnesses. Nonetheless, it is the best reference for Lucianic readings. Rahlfs notes that there are more than one hundred manuscripts in the edition of Holmes and Parsons of the Septuagint⁵ that preserve the text of L.⁶ Hence, their edition of LXX-Pss (→ 10.3.1) is indispensable. The ubiquity of the witnesses lends credibility to Jerome's comment about how widely the text had circulated. In addition to the many Greek manuscripts that preserve the recension, Theodoret, Chrysostom, the correctors of Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, and the Syro-Hexapla (→ 10.4.4) preserve Lucianic variants. Papyri LXX¹⁰⁴⁶ and LXX²⁰⁴⁰ also evince the LXX^L text. Ancillary studies, such as Pietersma's analysis of the textual affiliations of Chester Beatty Papyrus XIII (LXX²¹⁴⁹), improves the textual picture of all Greek witnesses of the Psalter, including the LXX^L group, which preserves thirty-four singular agreements with papyrus LXX²¹⁴⁹.⁷

10.3.6.3 Translation Character and Technique

The characteristics of the Lucianic Psalter follow patterns found elsewhere in the recension.⁸ The LXX^L text of the Psalter regularly employs εἶπον for εἶπαν "they said". The preference for second aorist forms and other Atticisms in Lucianic witnesses has been questioned by Perkins. He suggests that medieval copyists may have introduced variants from Classical Greek grammar or that Hellenistic forms were not always employed during the late Hellenistic period so that Attic forms may be

¹ B. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 274.

² N. Fernández Marcos, "Some Reflections on the Text of the Antiochian Septuagint," in *Studien zur Septuaginta – Robert Hanhart zu Ehren* (eds. D. Fraenkel, U. Quast, and J.W. Wevers; MSU 20; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1990), 219–30 (221).

³ Perkins, "The So-called 'L' Text of Psalms 72–82," 60.

⁴ A. Rahlfs (ed.), *Psalmi cum Odis* (3rd ed.; Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

⁵ A.R. Holmes and J. Parsons, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum cum Variis Lectionibus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1732).

⁶ Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis*, 61.

⁷ This unpublished data was given to me by Peter Gentry.

⁸ The characteristics of the Lucianic recension are fairly uniform, though they vary in degree of distribution. For a list of characteristics, see Ziegler, "Hat Lukian den griechischen Sirach rezensiert?"