continued effort. The 'Larsen' version uses the word *mēnmai,* and in Thessalonians puts *menmaiyaka āsikka* "to desire, as a dignity or excellence, to be quiet". The 1941 Revision uses the word *pērāval* in all three places, with the sense of strong desire.

I am discouraged from essaying the path in unknown tongues, by the fact that the word used in Hindi seems to convey no impression whatever to my Hindi-speaking servants on whom I tried it; but it may be noted that in Urdu the word used in Romans and Corinthians is the word for ambition, while the word for desire is used in Thessalonians.

I have refrained from the temptation to try to assess the relative merits of the courageous efforts that have been made, whether in English or in other languages, to bring out the full force of the word that St. Paul chose to use. But I hope that I have shown that such study, even if it has no other value, may be of fascinating interest to the student himself, and that not seldom it brings new meaning out of familiar words.

The Old Testament in Greek

F. F. Bruce

(This is the first of a series descriptive of the great versions of the Early Church designed to illustrate their importance in establishing the text of the originals and, by implication, their bearing on the work of translators today. It is reproduced by permission of the author and his publishers, Pickering & Inglis, from The Books and the Parchments *(1952).)*

Part I.

The writer remembers being present once at a conference of theologians, where one of the subjects debated was the nature of true theology. One eminent speaker declared on the first day of the conference: 'A man can be a good theologian even if he knows nothing but the Authorized Version of the Bible'. Another speaker, who arrived later and so did not hear this dictum, read a paper on the second day in the course of which he said: 'I would not call a man a theologian unless he could translate from the Septuagint back into Hebrew'. As someone else would have said had he been present: 'It all depends on what you mean by a theologian'. This is not what we are going to consider now, but perhaps this article will suggest to the reader some of the reasons which led the second speaker to attach such high value to the Septuagint.

What, then, is the Septuagint? The term itself comes from the Latin word for 'seventy', *septuaginta,* and it is frequently indicated by the Roman numeral sign LXX. The origin of the name is to be found in an ancient document known as the Letter of Aristeas. This document belongs to the years around 100 B.C., but it purports to have been written over a century and a half earlier by Aristeas, an official at the court of King Ptolemy Philadelphus, of Egypt (285-246 B.C.), to his brother, Philocrates. Ptolemy was renowned as a patron of literature and it was under him that the great library at Alexandria, one

of the world's cultural wonders for 900 years, was inaugurated. The letter describes how Demetrius of Phalerum, said to have been Ptolemy's librarian, aroused the king's interest in the Jewish Law and advised him to send a delegation to the high priest, Eleazar, at Jerusalem. The high priest chose as translators six elders from each of the twelve tribes of Israel and sent them to Alexandria, along with a specially accurate and beautiful parchment of the Torah. The elders were royally dined and wined, and proved their wisdom in debate; then they took up their residence in a house on the island of Pharos (the island otherwise famed for its lighthouse), where in seventy-two days they completed their task of translating the Pentateuch into Greek, presenting an agreed version as the result of conference and comparison. [1]

This story explains the name 'Septuagint' applied to this version, [2] but it was not written to explain a name but to place the stamp of authority upon a translation. To understand why this was necessary we must look farther back in history.

We read in the book of Jeremiah (chapters 41 to 44) of a large number of the inhabitants of Judah who went down to Egypt to settle there three or four months after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar (587 B.C.). From that time to the present day Egypt has never been without a Jewish colony. About the same time as the migration in which Jeremiah was forced to take part, a king of Egypt settled a garrison of Jews on the southern frontier of his kingdom, at Elephantine, at the first cataract of the Nile. If they were not members of the group that went down with Jeremiah, they were their fellow-countrymen. This military colony flourished at Elephantine, and built a temple there some time before 525 B.C.

But the heyday of Jewish colonization in Egypt dawned when Alexander the Great founded Alexandria in 332 B.C. Practically from the first, Jews formed a very important element in the population of this great commercial and cultural capital. Most of the members of the Ptolemy dynasty, which fell heir to Alexander's Empire in Egypt and the neighbouring territories and had its seat of government at Alexandria, favoured the Jews and assigned them a special quarter of Alexandria. By the early years of the Christian era we are told that there were almost a million Jews in Egypt, that two out of the five wards of Alexandria were known as Jewish districts, and that others were scattered throughout the remaining three wards.

Alexandria was from the start a Greek-speaking city, and its Jewish population soon forgot their Palestinian vernacular and came to speak exclusively in Greek. If these people were to make any use of the Hebrew Bible, it must be in a translation. A Greek Targum was as necessary in Alexandria as an Aramaic Targum was in Palestine and Babylonia. And the internal evidence of the Septuagint suggests that this Greek

[1] Later writers improved on this account by telling how the 72 translators did their work in separate cells, and how after 72 days all their versions were found to coincide exactly—sufficient proof of the divine inspiration of the work!

[2] Note that primarily the term 'Septuagint' applies to the Pentateuch only; it was at the time of Origen (early 3rd cent. A.D.) that it came to denote, as it does now, the whole Old Testament in Greek.

version of the Old Testament was made in the first instance to meet the requirements of the Jewish population of Alexandria, and not to grace the royal library. That a copy ultimately found its way into the royal library is quite likely, but that is another matter.

The exact circumstances under which the Septuagint translation began to be made are unknown. The various ancient reports agree in saying that it was made in Alexandria, and that it was begun in the third century B.C., and this is borne out by the character of the work. The language suggests that the translators were Egyptian Jews, and quotations from the Septuagint text of Genesis and Exodus appear in Greek literature before 200 B.C.

When we are dealing with an ancient work in the language in which it was written, we endeavour by the methods of textual criticism to arrive as nearly as possible at the text of the original document. But in dealing with translations we may have to adopt a quite different procedure. If the translation was an official one from the start, then we can make it our business to determine the original text of the official translation. But the fact is that the official translation very often lies at the end and not at the beginning of the history of the translation of a document from another language. For instance, Jerome's Latin version of the Bible, which became the 'Authorized Version' of Western Christendom, was preceded by a large number of individual and unofficial attempts at translation. The evidence suggests that this was so with the Greek translation of the Old Testament. Some of the extant manuscripts of the Septuagint exhibit texts of certain portions of the Old Testament varying from one another to such an extent that they cannot have been derived from a single archetype by the ordinary chances of scribal corruption and so forth. They represent varying translations from Hebrew into Greek. In the first century A.D. the evidence of quotations from the Greek Bible in authors like Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and some New Testament writers, points to the existence at that time of variant Greek translations.

Such a state of affairs is unsatisfactory, and we can trace a number of attempts to give official status to one particular form of the Greek text of the Old Testament. The earliest of these attempts was closely connected with the Letter of Aristeas. Of all the Old Testament, the most important section in the eyes of Jews after the return from the Babylonian exile was the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch, as distinct from the rest of the Old Testament, was read straight through in the synagogue sabbath by sabbath, according to a triennial lectionary cycle, whereas only selections from other parts of the Old Testament were read in public. It must have seemed highly desirable to the leaders of Alexandrian Jewry that there should be one standard Greek version of the Pentateuch, instead of a number of unofficial versions differing from each other.

Dr. Kahle has argued convincingly [3] that it was to invest a new standard version with the necessary authority in the eyes of the people that the Letter of Aristeas was written. For it is plain from the wording of that Letter that the Greek version of the Pentateuch which it celebrates was intended to supersede previously existing versions which were

[3] *The Cairo Geniza*, pp. 132 ff.

regarded as inadequate. It represents Demetrius of Phalerum as writing to King Ptolemy:

> 'Since Your Majesty has given orders for the collection of those books which are lacking to complete the library... I report to you as follows: The books of the law of the Jews are lacking, together with a few others. For they are composed in Hebrew letters and language, *and have been interpreted rather carelessly and not in accordance with the actual sense,* as is reported by those who know; for they have not received royal attention'.

And later in the letter we read that some earlier Greek writers had quoted from the Jewish law, but had come to grief because they used 'the earlier translations which were rather precarious'.

Dr. Kahle's conclusion is that the standard version of the Greek Pentateuch, intended to supersede these earlier translations which were deficient in accuracy, was made about 100 B.C.,[4] that the Letter of Aristeas was written to give it the requisite prestige and that the enterprise proved successful in the long run, although some variant translations continued to be used for a considerable time afterwards. Like our English Authorized Version, it was a revision of earlier translations, incorporating their good features, correcting their defects, and ultimately superseding them because of its inherent worth.

The Pentateuch seems to have been the only part of the Greek Old Testament of which a standard text was established by Jewish authorities. The Jews might have gone on at a later time to produce a standard text of the rest of the Septuagint, but for reasons which will be mentioned below, they lost interest in the Septuagint altogether. With the most fragmentary exceptions, every manuscript of the Septuagint which has come down to our day was copied and preserved in Christian, not Jewish circles.[5]

There were two main reasons why the Jews lost interest in the Septuagint. One was that from the first century A.D. onwards the Christians adopted it as their version of the Old Testament, and used it freely in their propagation and defence of the Christian faith. It is little wonder that Christians came to attach some degree of divine inspiration to the Septuagint, for some of its translations might almost appear to have been providentially intended to support Christian arguments. The use which Christians made of it can be traced in several New Testament passages. One example is the quotation from Amos 9 : 11, 12 in James's speech in Acts 15 : 16-18, where the Septuagint version differs considerably from the Massoretic Hebrew text of Amos (represented in our English Old Testament), and where the Septuagint gives more explicit support to James's argument than the Massoretic text

[4] If this dating is right, then the fragmentary papyrus of Deut. 25-28 in Greek in the Rylands Library, Manchester, dated about the middle of the second century B.C., exhibits a text older than this standard version of the Pentateuch. See C. H. Roberts, *Two Biblical Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (1936).

[5] This is not the only Jewish work which has been preserved by Christians. The same applies to the writings of Philo and Josephus.

does. [6] But it is when we go on to the second century that we realize what an armoury of textual ammunition for disputes against the Jews Christian apologists found in the Septuagint. If we read Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* (the setting of which is at Ephesus shortly after A.D. 135), we find there a good example of this. Trypho on occasion demurs to Justin's quotations from the Septuagint, on the ground that it does not properly represent the Hebrew text; Justin replies that the Rabbis have obviously altered the Hebrew in order to obscure the correspondence between the prophecy and its fulfilment. For example, Justin quotes Psalm 96 : 10 in the form, 'Say among the nations that the Lord reigned from the tree', and charges the Jews with having cut out the words 'from the tree' so as to remove a reference to the crucifixion. Trypho answers: 'Whether the rulers of the people have erased any portion of the Scriptures, as you affirm, God knows; but it seems incredible'. [7] Trypho was right, in fact; the phrase, 'from the tree', was not omitted by Jews, but added by Christians.

Another reason for the Jews' loss of interest in the Septuagint lies in the fact that about A.D. 100 a revised standard text was established for the Hebrew Bible by Jewish scholars, in the first instance for the Pentateuch and later for the other Old Testament books. This was the beginning of the process of revision and editing which lasted for several centuries and resulted in the production of the Massoretic text. The standard text fixed about A.D. 100 was the consonantal text which formed the basis of the Massoretes' labours. Variant forms of the Hebrew text which had existed before A.D. 100 were allowed to disappear, with the exception of the Samaritan Pentateuch which was preserved outside Jewish circles. But when this authorized text was fixed, any version in another language which was to be fit for Jewish use must conform to it, and this the existing forms of the Greek version plainly did not. So here was a further reason for repudiating the Septuagint, and the version which had once been officially authorized by Alexandrian Jewry and protected from alteration by the most solemn sanctions, the version which Philo regarded as written by inspiration, was now represented as the work of Satan; 'the accursed day on which the seventy elders wrote the Law in Greek for the king' was compared to the day on which Israel had made the golden calf.

A new translation of the Bible into Greek was required for Greek-speaking Jews, and this translation was provided by a man named Aquila. We are told by the fourth-century writer, Epiphanius, that Aquila was

[6] The LXX version, quoted by James, presupposes Heb. *yidrĕshu* ('will seek') for Massoretic *yirĕshu* ('will possess'), and *'ādām* ('man') for *'Ĕdōm;* and it neglects the particle *'eth*, the mark of the accusative case, which precedes *shĕ'ĕrîth* ('remnant'). But the LXX version must represent a variant Hebrew text which has disappeared: and, as C.C. Torrey points out, even the Massoretic text would have served James' purpose (if not with the same explicitness), since it predicts that the Messianic community will gain possession of all the nations which are called by the name of the God of Israel' (*Composition and Date of Acts* (1916), pp. 38 f.).

[7] *Dialogue*, chap. 73; cf. Justin's *First Apology*, chap. 41 The phrase is not present in any copy of the LXX which has come down to us. It may have found its way into the Septuagint texts on which Justin relied from the 'Epistle of Barnabas', viii. 5: 'The kingdom of Christ (or the reign of Christ) is on the tree'.

a relative of the Emperor Hadrian, a native of Sinope, on the Black Sea, who came to Jerusalem as a civil servant. There he became a Christian, but his inadequate emancipation from some of his pre-Christian ideas and ways brought upon him a public rebuke from the elders of the Church. Aquila thereupon took offence, left the Church, and became a Jewish proselyte. Most of this story is probably fictitious, but that he was a Jewish proselyte from the Black Sea coast is confirmed by earlier and more trustworthy writers, and the evidence suggests that he flourished in the first half of the second century A.D. His translation not only followed the newly established Hebrew text but did so with such slavish literalness that it could hardly be called Greek: the individual words were Greek, but they were put together according to the rules of Hebrew composition. One interesting feature of his translation is that in Isaiah 7 : 14 he translated Heb. *'almāh* [8] by Gk. *neanis*, 'young woman', and not by *parthenos*, 'maiden', 'virgin'. The Septuagint translation was *parthenos*, which suited the Christian interpretation of this passage as a prophecy of the virginal conception of Christ (as in Matt. 1 : 23). The replacement of *parthenos* by *neanis* in the later Greek versions blunted the point of this application.

Towards the end of the second century A.D. another Jewish proselyte, Theodotion, a native of Ephesus, produced another Greek version of the Old Testament. This was not an original work; what Theodotion seems to have done is to have taken an older Greek translation belonging to the pre-Christian era—one, indeed, which appears to lie behind some of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, particularly in Revelation—and revised it in accordance with the standard Hebrew text. It is interesting to note that it was Theodotion's version of Daniel that the Church adopted for purposes of its standard version of the Greek Bible, and not the older version commonly called the Septuagint version of that book. The reason for this was probably the simple fact that in the book of Daniel Theodotion's translation is much more satisfactory of the two. The 'Septuagint' translation of Daniel is extant only in two manuscripts—the cursive 87, in the Chigi library in Rome (9th or 11th cent. A.D.) and one of the papyrus codices in the Chester Beatty Collection (3rd cent. A.D.). It is also possible that the relation between I Esdras in the Septuagint (= I Esdras in the English Apocrypha) and 2 Esdras in the Septuagint (= Ezra-Nehemiah of the Massoretic text and the English Bible) is that the former is an older Septuagint version and the latter is Theodotion's version.

Some time after Theodotion another Greek version of the Old Testament was made by Symmachus, who belonged to the Jewish-Christian sect of the Ebionites. His aim seems to have been an idiomatic Greek version, and his method of operation was thus as far removed as possible from Aquila's.

The grandson and translator of Jesus ben Sira, in his prologue to his grandfather's book (Ecclesiasticus), implies that about 132 B.C. a

[8] While *'almāh* is strictly 'young woman', and *bĕthūlāh* is strictly 'virgin', in Hebrew, yet in the Old Testament *'almāh*, which occurs seven times, does not seem to be used in a markedly different way from *bĕthūlāh*, which occurs fifty times.

great part of the Old Testament (possibly all of it) was available in Greek. 'Things originally spoken in Hebrew', he says, 'have not the same force in them, when they are translated into another tongue: and not only these, but the law itself, and the prophecies, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their original language'. *(To be continued).*

The Revision of the Chokwe New Testament

D. B. Long

Chokwe is one of the most virile of the Bantu languages in this belt of Africa, the people having been great warriors and traders with no fear whatever of travelling long distances. The home of the tribe is in the Cassai valley, but the Swedish Mission down on the borders of the Kalahari desert in South West Africa sells almost as much Chokwe literature as some of our purely Chokwe missions up here. The mines through Southern Congo, N. Rhodesia and S. Rhodesia as well as South Africa have large numbers of A-Chokwe. North into the Congo in the area of the Unevangelized Tribes Mission there are thousands of Chokwe people, as down in Bie in the Umbundu tribe and over among the Songo tribe as well. I mention this because they manifest the greatest freedom in adopting and adapting words from everywhere, moulding them to fit the genius of their own tongue and in a year or two will argue that such words are pure Chokwe from the times of their grandfathers. The fact that the Portuguese authorities do not recognize native languages and demand that all teaching and school work be done in Portuguese has also tended in this direction and they have blithely taken on hundreds of Portuguese words, developed nouns from verbs and vice-versa, made adjectives, adverbs on their own pattern from Portuguese roots and continue to do so, even in the most backward pagan villages. Where certain words have been lacking they have of their own will formed abstracts from concretes and such like, once they get the idea involved and this has been a tremendous help to us in theological terms. In general they formed abstracts by prefixing 'u' to the concrete or the verb form and putting it into the noun class of their own abstracts, e.g. *kuhuka:* to be bad or naughty, *chihuki:* a bad person, *uhuka:* badness or naughtiness. Thus, though they did not have such a word when they themselves needed 'deity', they took *Zambi,* put the abstract prefix 'u' on it and now *Uzambi* is part of the language. In the same way was made *Ukristu* for 'messiahship'. For 'the place of the unrepentant dead' they used the word *mbwemena* ('the burning') from *kuwema,* 'to burn' and it now has almost completely lost any other meaning.

Lord

With 'Lord' we have had no trouble at all since *Mwene* has almost the same area of meaning as our word. *Mwene wa zuwo* is 'the head of the house', its owner, its boss, he who commands. *Mwene wa ndungo* (shortened to *mwenya ndungo*) means 'the slave's master or owner'