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The Septuagint as Canon

Simon Crisp
United Bible Societies and Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship

Abstract
The term "Septuagint" refers to a lengthy process by which individual books of the Hebrew Bible were translated into Greek, together with the inclusion of a few books originally composed in Greek. It only took on the form of a more or less fixed corpus much later. In the same way, this collection of books in Greek acquired authoritative status for its users over a period of time; notions of formal or institutional canonicity came only at a considerably later date, and in a Christian rather than a Jewish context. This article summarizes the processes by which the Greek translation was made and traces the way in which this corpus gradually acquired authoritative and then canonical status. Some practical implications for Bible Societies' translation policies are also presented.

Keywords
biblical canon, Septuagint, base text, Letter of Aristeas

When we pick up the Rahlfs–Hanhart edition of the *Septuaginta* (more than two thousand pages in its elegant blue binding), it has a reassuring feel of solidity and permanence.[1] The text, the order of books, and their number all appear to be fixed and definitive. And when we read about the Septuagint (LXX) as the "Scriptures of Hellenistic Judaism," the "Bible of the (Early) Church," or the "Old Testament of the Orthodox Churches," the picture is one of a stable and authoritative collection with a unified character and a long tradition. As soon as we look into the matter more deeply, however, we

[1] The same goes for the standard edition of the Church of Greece (Bratsiotis 1928).

Corresponding author:
Simon Crisp, United Bible Societies, 4 Elora Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7LL, United Kingdom.
Email: scrisp@biblesocieties.org

discover that all these assumptions need to be questioned. The process of making a Greek translation of the Old Testament in reality stretched over several centuries; the text went through many stages and revisions and only gradually acquired its authoritative—let alone canonical—form and status. The whole subject of "Septuagint as canon" is therefore fraught with difficulties and complexities.[2]

Introduction and definitions

The understanding of canon itself is not so straightforward either. As the previous paragraph shows, issues of stability on the one hand and authoritativeness on the other affect our understanding of this term. In order to be canonical in an institutional religious sense, a collection of writings must have a fixed and stable make-up (in terms of which texts it includes, although not necessarily a fixed form of those texts) and a strong measure of authority for its community of users. Although in the sources we shall be considering, the word "canon" is used in a number of different and looser meanings,[3] the aim of this article is to explore the extent to which the Septuagint (in so far as this can be defined as a discrete entity) can be considered canonical in this formal and institutional sense. As Seppo Sipilä indicates elsewhere in this issue of *TBT* (following Eugene Ulrich), the term "canon" when applied to the Bible should include at least the following elements: a formal list of writings believed to have religious authority because of their divine inspiration. To what extent does the Septuagint measure up to this definition?

Historically, we should really apply the term "Septuagint" only to the Greek translation of the five books of the Torah made in Alexandria in the third century B.C.E. As Martin Hengel observes, "The translation into Greek of those documents later assembled in the Hebrew canon may have continued for about three centuries into the middle of the first century, indeed even to the beginning of the second century CE" (2002, 83). Further, the incorporation into the corpus of the LXX of those writings not found in the Hebrew Bible was at least an equally long and complex process. As well as all this, "unfortunately, we have only a very few chronological reference points for the historical details of this translation process. It is fundamental

[2] As Aejmelaeus (2012, 315) justly observes at the very beginning of her study of this subject, "Der Weg der Septuaginta zur Kanonisierung ist lang und verschlungen" (the Septuagint's path towards canonization is long and convoluted).

[3] For discussion about the concept of canon in Classical and Hellenistic Greek, respectively, see Hägg 2009; McDonald 2013. For the Homeric parallels in particular, see n. 12 below.

that these documents in their Greek form comprise no unity whatsoever; rather, each must be investigated individually" (84).[4]

The Letter of Aristeas

The complexities of our subject begin to unfold as we look at the origins of the Septuagint. Our most important source,[5] the so-called Letter of Aristeas, bristles with problems: To what extent can any historical realities be discerned behind the legendary presentation? Was the motivation for the Greek translation of the Torah a request from the librarian of Alexandria resulting in a royal decree (as "Aristeas" claims),[6] or was it rather an internal Jewish requirement for a translation of the Torah in an understandable language for use in the Greek-speaking synagogues of the Hellenistic Diaspora? To what extent did the resulting Greek translation have religious authority and status for the Jews of the Diaspora (and indeed for the Greek-speaking Jews of Palestine)?[7]

The Letter of Aristeas is not a real letter, but something more like a Hellenistic novel,[8] and the person of Aristeas (ostensibly a pagan Greek at the court of Philadelphus) is a fictional construct since the author is clearly a Jew and the work itself Jewish in nature. It is generally dated to the late first century B.C.E., and recounts how the royal librarian Demetrius suggests to the king that the Jewish books of the Law are worthy of being translated; how a letter is sent to the High Priest in Jerusalem who dispatches a set of scrolls and a group of seventy-two translators; how the translation process itself is completed through discussion and consensus in a period of seventy-two days; how the translation is positively received by the local Jewish community and by the king; and (perhaps most relevant for our topic) how future revision of the text is expressly forbidden: "Since this

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[4] For a convenient summary of the current status of research into each individual book of the Septuagint, see now Aitken 2015. The history of the term "Septuagint," and especially its late application to a text (as opposed to a group of translators) is conveniently discussed by Williams 2012, 173–78.

[5] Not, however, the earliest source; this distinction belongs to the fragments preserved by later writers from the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus (probably mid-second century B.C.E.), which include some references to the Greek translation (see Müller 1996, 58–61, and especially Dines 2004, 33–38).

[6] For a robust defence of the role of the Library of Alexandria in the Greek translation of the Torah (and therefore a much more positive view of the reliability of Aristeas) see Collins 2000.

[7] A key source for study of the Letter of Aristeas is Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, which deals in detail with the whole history of the text itself and its subsequent reception history. A useful recent summary may be found in Rajak 2009, chapter 1.

[8] Or in Sundberg's words (2003, 69), a "fable" (2003, 74), a "fiction."

version has been made rightly and reverently, and in every respect accurately, it is good that it should remain exactly so, and that there should be no revision" (*Let. Aristeas* 311).[9]

In addition to this rather brief treatment of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch,[10] the Letter of Aristeas includes a request to the emperor to release thousands of Jewish slaves who had been taken captive as prisoners of war, a creative use of the Exodus motif as a means of bolstering the authority of the Septuagint (Law 2013, 36). The Letter also contains extensive material of an apologetic nature stressing the virtues of the Jewish Law, which may be understood as an attempt to enhance the authority of the translation and indeed the place of the Jewish community in the Greco-Roman culture of Alexandria. This is the central argument of Satlow's recent discussion of the way in which the biblical Scriptures acquired their unique authority.[11] With regard to the LXX in particular he writes,

> Beginning with the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek around 250 BCE, the Jewish intelligentsia in Egypt and other Greek-speaking areas increasingly began to turn to it as a foundational literary or cultural text. They engaged with it much as their non-Jewish neighbours did with Homer,[12] and toward very much the same goal: the attainment of social and cultural prestige. (Satlow 2014, 5; see also chapter 6 of his monograph)[13]

Many scholars are skeptical about the historical value of the Letter of Aristeas, and feel that the only secure information about what later became

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[9] On the basis of some OT examples Aejmelaeus (2012, 318) interprets this statement as a "canon formula." From this she draws the conclusion (319) that "ohne Zweifel wird in Aristeasbrief der Septuaginta kanonisches Ansehen zugesprochen" (without any doubt, the Septuagint is accorded canonical status in the Letter of Aristeas). However, the reference in Aristeas could be simply to some kind of authoritativeness, rather than to canonicity in the strict sense.

[10] Satlow 2014, 164, calls it the "'charter myth' for one particular Greek translation of these books." As Rajak indicates (2009, 222 n. 44) this designation is widely used, and goes back to the work of Sylvie Honigman (see n. 12 below).

[11] Satlow prefers the term "authority" to "canonicity"; see Satlow 2014, 4, for a useful three-way distinction (normative, literary, oracular) in the definition of textual authority.

[12] The parallels between LXX and Homer in terms of "canonical status" for a collection of writings have been observed by many authors. The most systematic statement of the case is Honigman 2003; good summaries may be found in Rajak 2009, 239–43 and McDonald 2013, 27–34. The broader background may be seen in the collection of essays edited by Finkelberg and Stroumsa (2003).

[13] Satlow's account is actually not so novel: according to Aejmelaeus (2012, 317) the view that "die Septuaginta durch die jüdische Gemeinschaft in Alexandria für ihre Bedürfnisse abgefasst wurde" is "die traditionelle Auffassung der Septuaginta-Forscher" (the view that "the Septuagint was composed by the Jewish community in Alexandria for its own needs" is "the traditional view of Septuagint scholars").

known as the Septuagint translation is the fact that the Pentateuch was translated probably in Alexandria, possibly during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (282–246 B.C.E.). Why this translation was made (and indeed whether this was the first Greek translation of the Pentateuch, or whether its purpose was to produce a standard "official" version to replace previous efforts)[14] remains unclear. Even the claimed number of the translators varies in later sources between the seventy-two (six from each tribe of Israel) referred to by Aristeas and the seventy (by analogy with the seventy elders of Israel in Exod 24 and Num 11) found in later sources. The idea of a miraculous translation process whereby each individual translated the entire text in isolation from the other translators while subsequent comparison showed their texts to be identical, comes later and appears to be built on Philo's account of the translators working in seclusion on the island of Pharos (Müller 1996, 62),[15] but subsequently it caught the imagination of Christian writers in particular, who added various kinds of legendary accretions (see Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, chapter 4 in particular).

Early Christian responses to the Septuagint

The earliest Christian testimony to the special character and significance of the LXX appears to be that of Justin Martyr. In his *Apology* and *Dialogue with Trypho* Justin presents his own version of the legend of the origin of the translation, and emphasizes the christological significance of the Old Testament as a whole. He cites as holy Scripture almost all the books in the Hebrew Bible "canon," he strongly defends LXX readings, most notably παρθενος in Isa 7.14 (contrasted with νεανις in the version preferred by Tryphon and his friends) as proof-texts for prophecy about the Messiah, and accuses his opponents of falsifying these texts in order to avoid their messianic interpretation.[16]

The legend of the isolation of the translators appears again in Irenaeus, who regards it as proof of the divine inspiration of the translation. For Irenaeus, the Greek translation could even in some senses be regarded as superior to the Hebrew text, since any variations from the source text could be considered divinely legitimized. As Bokedal summarizes the matter, "Similar to Justin, Irenaeus does not prioritize the Hebrew text. For him,

[14] See Müller 1996, 51ff., for a detailed discussion of this (he reaches a negative conclusion).

[15] See Satlow 2014, 168–69, for a convenient summary of the overwhelming importance of the Greek Bible to Philo, who essentially devoted the whole of his life to the study of this text. For Philo's view of the Greek Torah translation process, see Law 2013, 129–30.

[16] For details about Justin's defence of the Septuagint, see Bokedal 2014, 256–57.

Greek is the language of the one Bible" (2014, 297). Following a wide-ranging review of patristic claims about the Greek OT translation, Müller reaches a similar conclusion: "As the perception of the unique character of the Septuagint became more outlined in Christian theology and apologetics, it was not only acknowledged as an inspired translation—a kind of variant of the Hebrew Bible—but it came to be regarded more as a revelation" (1996, 78).

Augustine was equally aware of this tradition, and was strongly committed to the use of the Greek Old Testament in the churches (see Müller 1996, 89–94; Law 2013, 161–66). At the same time he tried tactfully to mediate between the claims made for the Seventy on the one hand and the loyalty of Jerome to the Hebrew text on the other. In essence, Augustine believed both texts to be divinely inspired; both the Hebrew original and the Greek translation of the Seventy were to be considered as inspired and therefore to be taken seriously in the church.[17]

What has been called the "Christian appropriation of the LXX" is also reflected in the physical form in which the text is preserved. Many scholars have drawn attention to two features, the preference for codex over scroll on the one hand and the use of abbreviated forms of *nomina sacra* on the other, both of which are characteristic of Christian manuscripts as opposed to Jewish ones.[18]

The Septuagint in Hellenistic Judaism

As the LXX grew in significance for the Christian church, so Judaism increasingly turned elsewhere for its own authorized Greek text of the Bible (most notably to the highly literal rendering of Aquila). Traditionally this move has been understood as a deliberate rejection of the LXX precisely because it was increasingly used by Christians, but as Seppo Sipilä has argued elsewhere in this issue of *TBT*, there are other possible ways of understanding the matter (see also Rajak 2009, chapter 9).[19] In any case, the preference of the fathers for the Greek over the Hebrew Old Testament is not unequivocal: witness Origen's careful and monumental work of comparing

[17] For a detailed account of the sometimes rather heated discussion between Augustine and Jerome, see Hennings 1994.

[18] The implications of these two features especially for (NT) canon are explored in detail in Bokedal 2014, chapters 3 and 4. Aejmelaeus (2012, 323) also links the rise of the "great Christian codices" with the collection of a "Greek canon."

[19] For Aejmelaus (2012, 325–26) one explanation does not exclude the other: the process of Jewish rejection of the LXX began in pre-Christian times, but continued in the dispute between rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity.

the Greek text with the Hebrew, and Jerome's famous preference for *veritas hebraica* (see Müller 1996, 78ff.).[20]

The question of the existence of a Jewish canon of Greek-language Scripture in the Diaspora (the so-called "Alexandrian canon") has been extensively debated.[21] According to Hengel, "we cannot prove the existence of a genuine Jewish, pre-Christian collection of canonical value, unambiguously and clearly delimited, distinguishable through its greater scope from the canon of the Hebrew Bible in the realm of the historical books and wisdom writings and written in Greek" (see Hengel 2002, 19–20).

At the same time, though, there can be little doubt about the authoritative status of the LXX for Greek-speaking Jews. This rehabilitation of the Jewish nature of the LXX is the central premise of Tessa Rajak's 2009 monograph. Chapter 6 of her work includes a thirteen-point "dossier" of Hellenistic Jewish commitment to the Greek Scriptures, taking in such matters as the role of Moses as an ideal figure (for example in Philo), the use of expressions from the Greek Bible in public inscriptions, and the Greek Torah as the "chief determinant" for Jewish practice, observance, and ethics in the Diaspora (Rajak 2009, 228–37). Rajak explicitly declines, however, to use the term "canonicity," first, because the word is anachronistic when applied to Jewish Scriptures in the Hellenistic period (and indeed to Jewish Scriptures at all, since it is essentially a fourth-century Christian term), but second, because several of the key elements of canonicity (especially imputing exclusive holiness to the canonized texts) are lacking in the case of the LXX; she prefers instead to use the term "centrality" (2009, 212–16).

The Septuagint in Christian Bible manuscripts

Whatever the authority of the LXX in Jewish communities in both Alexandria and Jerusalem, it is clear that the Greek Old Testament did acquire authoritative status in the Christian community. It is equally the case, however, that it took some time for this corpus to attain a fixed shape. If we consider the three great fourth-/fifth-century biblical codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and Alexandrinus, we must agree with Kaestli (2007, 111) that "the order and classification of the books of the Christian Old Testament remained rather fluid during the first centuries." All three of these codices include Judith, Tobit, Sirach, Wisdom, the expanded books of Daniel and Esther, and Psalm 151, in addition to the books of the Hebrew Bible. There the similarity

[20] On the wider role of Hebrew language and text for the church fathers, see Streett 1999; Gallagher 2012.

[21] A good summary of the debate may be found in Harl, Dorival, and Munnich 1994, 112–18.

ends, and there are significant differences among the three manuscripts in both the number and order of books. Vaticanus lacks all four books of Maccabees; Sinaiticus lacks 2 and 3 Maccabees, 1 Ezra, Baruch, and the Letter of Jeremiah; Alexandrinus contains all the LXX books familiar from Rahlfs's edition, including all four books of Maccabees and the fourteen Odes of Solomon appended to the Psalter.[22]

The ordering of the books is also interesting. None of the three codices follows the order of Rahlfs's edition (which must therefore either be an abstraction or else reflect later tradition).[23] Perhaps more significant than these variations within the Greek tradition, however, is the fundamental difference in structure from that of the Hebrew Bible: instead of the threefold division into Torah, Prophets, and Writings, we find a four-way split into Law, Historical Books, Prophetic Writings, and Wisdom literature.[24] This division has persisted until our own times in Christian Bible publishing, where it is almost universally observed, thus representing perhaps one of the most lasting consequences of the "LXX canon." The significance of this difference in structure is evidently theological. As Johan Lust points out (2003, 40), "The order of the books in the Greek canon implies a different theological bias." While the Hebrew canon "is construed around the notion of revelation and the Word of the Lord," the Greek collection has more of a historical orientation based on the past (historical books), present (Psalms and wisdom books), and future (prophetic books).

The Septuagint as a Christian collection of books

The LXX canon, then, as a Christian collection of books, includes all the books of the Hebrew Bible together with a number of books which do not form a part of that corpus. These books appear with varying degrees of consistency in the early Christian canon lists, which are themselves in the main based more or less firmly on the books of the Hebrew Bible.[25] The process by which they became a part of the Christian scriptural canon is a complex

[22] A detailed discussion of this may be found in Fabry 2012, 588–93.

[23] Detailed lists can be found in Swete 1914, 201–2; McDonald and Sanders 2003, 588. On the relationship between the order of books in Greek manuscripts and printed editions, see Brandt 2001, 216–17.

[24] The development of the different subdivisions of the OT books is examined in great detail in Brandt 2001; see especially chapter 6 on the LXX tradition. Kaestli 2007, 107–13, presents a nuanced picture of the relationship among different book orders in both Jewish and Christian traditions.

[25] Swete 1914, 203–14, offers a rather comprehensive listing of the books in the "patristic and synodical lists" of the Eastern and Western churches. See also Rüger 1991, 153–54; McDonald in McDonald and Sanders 2003, 585–87.

and circuitous one. It is not surprising, for example, that Wisdom and Sirach should have been included with Proverbs, Qoheleth, and Canticles in a kind of mini-Solomonic corpus; it is perhaps less clear why books like Judith, Tobit, Greek Esther, Baruch, and Maccabees should have been included while the book of Enoch, which is cited with greater frequency by early Christian authors (including the quotation in the NT Letter of Jude 14-15), should have been excluded from all but the Ethiopic canon.

In any event, it is clear that books from outside the Hebrew Bible canon were included among the wide range of sources quoted or alluded to by NT authors and early Christian apologists;[26] the question of delimiting a fixed or closed canon had not yet arisen in this early period. Given the historical circumstances of the early church one might even have expected a smaller rather than a larger number of books to be in use.[27]

It is perhaps harder to explain the role of the books not included in the Hebrew Bible for Judaism (although Rajak 2009 is a recent attempt to show in detail just how important this role was). Most of them may have had Hebrew or Aramaic originals and were translated into Greek, not as "holy Scripture," but in order to edify, educate, or entertain. Although their later date (and in some cases their language of composition or preservation) prevented them from being included in the authoritative Scriptures,[28] they clearly performed a valued didactic and instructional function. This moreover was the case not just in the Diaspora; there is clear evidence that the LXX was read also in the synagogues of the Hellenists in Jerusalem. Indeed, when they quoted the Old Testament, even those NT authors who presumably understood Hebrew or Aramaic generally cited the text familiar to Greek-speaking readers.[29]

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[26] NT citations of and allusions to non-canonical and extra-canonical books are summarized by Hengel 2002, 107–8; see also deSilva 2002, 34; Sundberg 2003, 82. A detailed account of the reception by the early church fathers of the books outside the Hebrew Bible canon is given by Hengel 2002, 116–22.

[27] Hengel proposes a rather ingenious explanation for this: "The question of the origin of the *larger* canon of the early church, which so occupies us today, was apparently not yet in view. On the basis of the New Testament's use of Scripture, one would actually expect a *smaller* canon. Apparently the contents of the bookcases of the Christian community in the first and at the beginning of the second century were, to a degree, quite divergent and, in poorer communities, also still relatively modest" (2002, 111).

[28] There are several different views concerning the closure of the Hebrew canon, and indeed whether it is appropriate to speak of such closure at all in the early/ancient period. The traditional explanation of a chronological cut-off linked to "cessation of prophecy" is no longer widely accepted.

[29] There is of course a voluminous literature on quotations from the LXX and Hebrew Bible in the New Testament. See, for example, Swete 1914, 381–404, for extensive tables and some discussion, and Harl, Dorival, and Munnich 1994, 274–82, for a more nuanced and up-to-date treatment.

Do we need an Old Testament canon?

Hengel concludes his discussion of "The Septuagint as Christian Scripture" with an interesting personal statement "as a New Testament scholar and Christian theologian":

> Does the church still need a clearly demarcated, strictly closed Old Testament canon, since the New Testament is, after all, the "conclusion," the goal and the fulfilment of the Old? Indeed, does one not face an essential contradiction if one, in an unhistorical biblicism, clings to a limited "Hebrew," or better pharisaical, "canon" from Jabneh? (Hengel 2002, 125–26)

And in his very last footnote Hengel quotes some "fundamental reflections" from Harmut Gese, including the irony of traditional Bible Society hostility to the non-canonical books: "Since the historical discoveries of the nineteenth century and especially after those at Qumran, we no longer have scientific grounds for separating the apocrypha. But precisely since this time, the Bible societies seem to have sworn to protect us from the apocrypha."[30] This seems to bring us right back to the concerns expressed by Loba Mkole elsewhere in this issue of *TBT* about the regrettable tendency of some Bible Societies to disparage the significance of the non-canonical books.

Conclusions

It is time to draw some conclusions from this brief survey of issues relating to the canonical status of the LXX. First, to return to our starting point, we must emphasize once again that the "Septuagint" is something of a construct; although it did gradually acquire a more or less fixed form (in the books which comprise it, if not in their text), it only achieved this through a complex process lasting several centuries. In reality it is a collection (overwhelmingly) of translations from Hebrew biblical books made at different times and in different places, and to a much more limited extent of original works written in Greek. In view of this it might seem inappropriate to speak of "canon" at all with regard to the LXX: certainly, in the context of Hellenistic Judaism we can say that the books comprising the Greek Old Testament possessed varying degrees of religious or spiritual authority (from very high in the case of the Pentateuch to much lower in the case of those books without Hebrew originals), but that they did not constitute a formal or institutional canon—not least because the concept itself belongs

[30] On the changing attitudes of the Bible Societies towards the DC books see the essay by Gundert 1991.

to a later period. What we can affirm with certainty is that specific forms of the LXX tradition subsequently became canonical for individual Christian churches—but that is the subject of another discussion.

Practical implications

Second, in the context of the symposium that produced the articles in this issue of *TBT*, what are the implications of all this for UBS policy? Clearly, the main practical point at issue concerns the use of the Septuagint as the base text for modern Bible translations (in view of its importance as the authoritative text of the Old Testament, for example, in the Orthodox tradition).[31] In this perspective there are two formal policy statements that we should consider. At the meeting in September 1993 of the UBS Executive Committee, there was a discussion of "UBS Relations with the Orthodox Churches and Translation Projects," and a resolution (UBSEC.93.27) on base texts for translation was passed. This included a statement of the "default position" that the Masoretic Text (MT) should normally be the base text for OT translations, and then the following statement about the use of the Septuagint as base text:

> If the MT cannot be accepted by the church(es) involved as the base text, the Septuagint (LXX) can be accepted as a base text, with the proviso that significant differences between the MT and LXX must be identified in footnote references, and introductory or postscriptum notes. (In no case should a "hybrid" text—for example, part MT, part LXX—be used as a base text.)

It is doubtful whether this resolution has ever been fully observed in actual translation projects, in part because its central requirement (to identify the "significant differences" between the textual traditions) is virtually impossible to achieve in practice, but probably more importantly because of the immediately following statement on the canon of the Old Testament, which commits the UBS to "accept the canon as defined by the church(es) involved." This put the usage and tradition of individual churches above any historical claims about the basis of their canons, and opened the way for Bible Society-sponsored translations of LXX-based texts according to the full canon of the churches involved (and without extensive footnotes on differences in the base text).

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[31] A good general survey is to be found in Scanlin 1996. For a detailed and nuanced discussion from a Greek Church perspective, see Konstantinou 2004; for the Russian Church view, see Lénart de Regt's article in this issue of *TBT*.

Ten years after the resolution of UBSEC, questions of OT text and canon were raised once again in the UBS Guidelines for Scripture Translation issued in April 2004. This document introduced a new category of "Confessional Scripture Translation," a tacit recognition that the mandate to serve all the churches also meant taking into account the needs of churches that were less enthusiastic about using interconfessional translations. The section on OT base text reads as follows:

> The UBS recommends that the Masoretic text or the Septuagint should be used as base text. In particular circumstances where churches have their own long-standing tradition of using a daughter translation this may be followed. In these cases however the UBS recommends that significant differences from the parent text should be indicated in the edition according to principles established for the project. (UBS 2004, 8)

The statement on "Canon and Order of Books" reads in this way:

> The scope of the canon of the Church for whom the translation is intended should be respected as well as its canonical order of books. In cases where a confessional translation is published in an interconfessional edition, it is recommended that the deuterocanonical texts be grouped together in a separate section preceding the New Testament. (UBS 2004, 8)

The key points here are the acceptance of a "long-standing tradition of use of a daughter translation" in certain cases, and limitation of the requirement (now downgraded to a "recommendation") to include the non-canonical books in a separate section to interconfessional editions only. These guidelines seem to provide a good starting point for and an attempt to safeguard the place of the books not included in the Hebrew Bible but nevertheless an integral part of the LXX tradition and its successors.

Finally, a point which goes beyond the specific issue of LXX canon but which offers a reflection on the matters raised in this article from the perspective of contemporary Bible translation practice. Mogens Müller has argued eloquently that the complex history of both the LXX and the MT means that we cannot claim that the former is no more than a translation of the latter (and not least because the MT is historically a later phenomenon). The LXX must not be considered as derivative, but rather its own status and authority must be recognized. Historically, as we have seen, the collection of books which eventually formed the LXX had clear authority for both Judaism and Christianity, even if more formal notions of canon came only later. The books in this collection are almost entirely translations, and yet were clearly perceived by their audiences as vehicles for the inspired message of God. In this respect, I would close by suggesting that there is an

analogy with the work of Bible translators today, whose translations, for all their complex relationships with their base texts, also have the capacity to become inspired, "canonical" holy Scripture for their readers and hearers.

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