THE SCOPE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NATURE OF ITS THEOLOGY.

DETERMINING THE OBJECT AND SUBJECT OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY BY MEANS OF THE SEPTUAGINT

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

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Signature Date

ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the difficulties surrounding the identification of an object and subject for the discipline of Old Testament theology. The goal thereof is to address these difficulties by establishing the legitimacy of an interdisciplinary engagement therewith. In order to achieve this goal the significance of the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures, the Septuagint, for determining the object and subject of Old Testament theology is pursued.

The problems surrounding the object of study in Old Testament theology are identified and discussed in terms of both canon and text. The advent of Canon criticism, with its focus on the nature, function and history of the biblical canon, as well as the study of the recent textual discoveries in the area surrounding the Dead Sea, have rendered previous consensus regarding the formation of the biblical canon(s) and the history of the biblical texts problematic. This necessitates a thorough reconsidering of the scope of the term "Old Testament", and consequently, the basis on which the discipline of Old Testament theology is practiced.

The rise to prominence of a so-called new or postmodern epistemological situation and the resulting influence of developments and shifts in literary studies on Biblical criticism, coupled with new challenges within the historical study of the biblical texts and a rediscovery of the importance of Wisdom literature forces upon the Old Testament theologian the responsibility to indicate and clarify the relationship between the Old Testament and divine revelation. Consequently, the nature of the Old Testament's theology, and therefore, the subject of study in the discipline of Old Testament theology come under scrutiny.

The focus of the study subsequently shifts to topics treated in the study of the Septuagint in order to indicate how these relate to the problems plaguing the discipline of Old Testament theology. Issues relating to the proper use of terminology in Septuagint-studies, theories of the origin of the Septuagint, and the techniques that were employed in

translating the Semitic source texts of the Jewish scriptures into Greek, occupy the student in this regard. As a result, the legitimacy of employing insights from Septuagint-studies in delineating the object and subject of study in Old Testament theology is demonstrated.

The final chapter identifies several overtures for furthering the study of the significance of the Septuagint for Old Testament theology in general. A number of methodological problems in the latter can be subsumed under the twin heading of the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology. Chapter 36 of the Greek translation of the book of Job acts as a brief case study in order to demonstrate the suggestions that are made in this concluding chapter of the study.

OPSOMMING

Die huidige studie fokus op ’n probleem-area in the studieveld van Ou Testament teologie, naamlik, die identifisering van ’n gepaste voorwerp en onderwerp van studie. Die doelstelling is om hierdie probleem aan te spreek deur die legitimiteit van ’n interdissiplinêre aanpak daarvan aan te dui. Ten einde die doelstelling te bereik word die belangrikheid van die Septuaginta (dit is, die Griekse vertalings van die Joodse geskrifte) vir die voorwerp en onderwerp van Ou Testament teologie na-gespeur.

Die probleme in verband met die voorwerp van studie in Ou Testament teologie word geïdentifiseer en bespreek in terme van beide kanon en teks. Die opkoms van Kanon kritiek, met die gepaardgaande fokus op die aard, funksie en geskiedenis van die bybelse kanon, sowel as die studie van die onlangse ontdekkings van tekste in die gebied rondom die Dooie See, het die langstaande konsensus aangaande die ontstaan van die byblese kanon(s) en die geskiedenis van die bybelse tekste in onsekerheid gedompel. Hierdie stand van sake noodsaak ’n grondige heroorweging van die strekking van die term “Ou Testament”, en vervolgens, die basis waarop die dissipline van Ou Testament teologie beoefen word.

Die opkoms van ‘n sogenaamde postmoderne epistemologiese konteks en die gepaardgaande invloed van ontwikkelings binne literêre studies op die Bybelwetenskappe, tesame met nuwe uitdagings in die historiese studie van die bybelse tekste en die herontdekking van die belangrikheid van Wysheidsliteratuur dwing die Ou Testament teoloog om die verhouding tussen die Ou Testament en goddelike openbaring aan te dui en te verhelder. As gevolg hiervan kom die aard van die Ou Testament se teologie, en daarom die onderwerp van studie in die dissipline van Ou Testament teologie, onder die vergrootglas.

Die visier van die studie skuif vervolgens na sake wat in die studie van die Septuaginta aangeroer word met die doel om aan te dui hoe dit betrekking het op die probleme waaraan die dissipline van Ou Testament teologie mank gaan. Die student word, in hierdie verband, gestel voor kwessies rakende ’n paslike gebruik van terminologie in Septuaginta-studies, teorieë rondom die ontstaan van die Septuaginta,

en die tegnieke wat ingespan is om die Semitiese brontekste van die Joodse geskrifte in Grieks te vertaal. Vervolgens word aangetoon dat dit gepas is om gebruik te maak van die insigte vanuit Septuaginta-studies om die voorwerp en onderwerp van studie in Ou Testament teologie te bepaal.

Die slothoofstuk van die studie identifiseer enkele voorstelle vir verdere studie van die belangrikheid van die Septuaginta vir Ou Testament teologie in die algemeen. ‘n Aantal metodologiese probleme in laasgenoemde kan saamgevat word onder die noemers van die strekking van die “Ou Testament” en die aard van die teologie daarvan. Hoofstuk 36 van die Griekse vertaling van die boek Job dien as ’n bondige gevallestudie ten einde the voorstelle wat in hierdie laaste hoofstuk van die studie aangedui word te demonstreer.

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To my parents, Frans and Elette, and also to Manitza: words will simply fail to express my appreciation for all your continuous love and support. Thank you…

Finally, I would like to dedicate this study to both my grandfathers, Bert Robertson and Pen Kotzé. The former inspired me at a young age to pursue theological training and the latter almost single-handedly made it financially possible. May this study, which they helped to materialize, bring honour to their memories.

In loving memory of my grandfathers

Bert Robertson

(1921 – 1994)

and

Pen Kotzé

(1922 –2005)

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
B.Ar.	Book of Aristeas
BA	La Bible d'Alexandrie
BAR	Biblical Archaeology Review
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BTM	Biblical Theology Movement
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
COT	Commentaar op het Oude Testament
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
ESHM	European Seminar in Historical Methodology
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
HIR	History of Israelite Religion
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int.	Interpretation
IOSCS	International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBS	Jerusalem Biblical Studies
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
Jsem	Journal of Semitics
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSupp.	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic text
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint

NIB	New Interpreter's Bible
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OG	Old Greek
OTE	Old Testament Essays
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OTT	Old Testament theology
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate studies
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal for the Old Testament
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
TGW	Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
TS	Theological Studies
TT	Translation Technique
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSupp.	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The definition of an academic discipline could be considered as a cursory or brief description of the most salient features that distinguishes it as a subject of study in its own right. Such a definition should enable the student to make a distinction between this discipline and related or similar disciplines[1]. A proposed definition of a discipline must include, at least, the *subject* treated in the discipline and the *object* that is studied in it. The definition may be elaborated by stating the *task* the discipline seeks to accomplish and by alluding to the proposed method(s) for attaining this goal. However, every discipline is plagued by a number of methodological problems, questions or issues relating to each of these features of its definition. Much scholarly energy is spent in debate and dialogue on these methodological issues, sometimes without reaching any form of consensus. The present study engages in the discipline of Old Testament theology (OTT) and focuses on the difficulties surrounding the identification of an object and subject for the discipline. Ours will be an interdisciplinary engagement as the stated goal of the study is to determine the legitimacy of addressing the problems relating to OTT's object and subject by means of insights drawn from another discipline, namely, Septuagint-studies.

[1] Old Testament theology should, for instance, be distinguished from related disciplines such as the History of Israelite religion (HIR or Israelite *Religionsgeschichte*) and Systematic theology (including Dogmatics or Doctrinal theology). In fact, James Barr goes as far as to see Biblical theology (which includes Old Testament theology) as essentially a *contrastive* notion: "It never derived directly from the Bible, as if, given the Bible, it was obvious that the study of it was biblical theology. Rather, it came to be used in contrast with *various* other modes of studying the Bible that already existed. Thus it does not have clear independent contours of its own: it depends for its existence upon that with which it is contrasted. When contrasted with one operation or mode of argument, biblical theology becomes something other than what it would be when contrasted with another operation or mode of argument" (1999:5 - his italics). Barr mentions five modes of studying the Bible that Biblical theology is contrasted with: (i) Doctrinal theology, (ii) non-theological study of the Bible, (iii) History of religion, (iv) philosophical and natural theology, and (v) the interpretation of parts of the Bible as distinct from the larger complexes taken as wholes (1999:5).

1.1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In the past various attempts have been made to provide the discipline of OTT with an adequate definition. Edmond Jacob describes the discipline as "the systematic account of the specific religious ideas which can be found throughout the Old Testament and which form its profound unity" (1958:11). According to Walther Zimmerli "(a)ny 'Old Testament theology' has the task of presenting what the Old Testament says about God as a coherent whole" (1978:12). Claus Westermann states that "(e)ine Theologie des Alten Testaments hat die Aufgabe, zusammenzufassen und zusammenzusehen, was das Alte Testament als ganzes, in allen seinen Teilen von Gott sagt" (1985:5), whilst Werner Lemke defines OTT as "the exposition of the theological content of the OT writings" (1992:449).

The use of the term "Old Testament" in these definitions, as opposed to "Hebrew Bible", requires some clarification. It is sometimes claimed that OTT is an exclusively Christian endeavour and Brevard Childs, accordingly, states that the use of the designation "Old Testament" is pertinent to this discipline, which has the theological reflection on the Hebrew scriptures as its subject. It is his contention that the term "Old Testament" correctly recognizes that OTT is part of Christian theology and that "the Jewish scriptures as they have been appropriated by the Christian church within its own canon are the object of the discipline" (1985:7). Be that as it may, the referents of the two terms "Hebrew Bible" and "Old Testament" are not quite the same, despite the fact that there is an overlap in content.

The *Hebrew Bible* is a collection of twenty-four books that are arranged in three divisions: the *Torah* (Law), the *Nebi'im* (Prophets), and the *Ketubim* (Writings). The Torah consists of five books traditionally associated with the figure of Moses, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Prophets are divided into two categories, the Former and the Latter Prophets. The Former Prophets include the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings (Samuel and Kings are each counted as one book). The Latter Prophets include the three Major Prophets, Isaiah,

Jeremiah, and Ezekiel and also the Twelve Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi). The Minor Prophets are also counted as only one book. The Writings consist of eleven books: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes), Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (one book), and 1 and 2 Chronicles (Chronicles is also regarded as one book).

Conversely, *Old Testament* is a Christian term, which indicates that this collection is related (in some way) to the *New Testament*. There are differences within Christian churches as to the books that make up the "Old Testament". The *Protestant Old Testament* has the same content as the Hebrew Bible, however, the books are counted individually, yielding a total of thirty-nine books, and arranged in a different order. The Former Prophets are regarded as historical books and grouped with Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. Daniel is seen as a prophetic book, and the Latter Prophets are moved to the end of the collection (so as to point forward to the New Testament). The *Catholic Old Testament* contains several books that are not included in the Protestant Old Testament: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, the Letter of Jeremiah (Baruch chapter 6), and 1 and 2 Maccabees. Furthermore, the Catholic Old Testament includes additions to the books of Daniel and Esther. The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, and the stories of Susanna and Bel and the Dragon are included in the book of Daniel. The *Greek Orthodox Old Testament* contains even more books, including 1 Esdras (which reproduces the content of Ezra and parts of 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah), Psalm 151, the Prayer of Manasseh, 2 Esdras, and 3 and 4 Maccabees (Collins, 2004:2). Protestants refer to these books as "Apocrypha", whilst Catholics call it "deuterocanonical" books, in recognition of the fact that they are not included in the Hebrew Bible (Collins, 2004:3). Moreover, the books of Jubilees and 1 Enoch is considered canonical in the Ethiopian church[2].

[2] For a discussion on these and other introductory issues related to the terms "Hebrew Bible" and "Old Testament" see Collins, 2004:1-22.

Two important questions subsequently present themselves in view of these observations and the definitions of the discipline of OTT quoted above. Firstly, *which* "Old Testament" is to be scrutinized for what it says about God; in other words, should Old Testament theologians seek to give an exposition or systematic account of the specific religious ideas or theological content of the Hebrew Bible, the Protestant "Old Testament", the Catholic "Old Testament", or the Greek Orthodox "Old Testament"? Secondly, *how* does the "Old Testament" speak about God; that is, how do readers have access to those specific religious ideas or theological content that supposedly form the "profound unity" of the "Old Testament" texts?

The first question pertains to the *object* of study in the discipline of OTT and has been intensified in the recent past by the advent of Canon criticism and its focus on the nature, function and history of the biblical canon, as well as the continuing re-evaluation of the canonical process and the aims of textual criticism due to the study and publication of the textual finds in the area surrounding the Dead Sea ever since its discovery in 1947. The absence of a single, completely developed and accepted canon of Scripture as late as the second century C.E., coupled with the presence of a vast textual plurality during the period of the Second Temple, cast a dark shadow over the common practice in the discipline of OTT of restricting the object of its study to a single textual corpus, namely, the Masoretic text (MT). The present study therefore recognizes the fact that the term "Old Testament"[3] is somewhat of a Gordian knot. Apart from the differences between faith communities concerning the extent of the "Old Testament" and how the relationship with the New Testament is to be understood, the texts of the books that are used for translations and exegesis have become problematic in light of the recent textual discoveries. The question regarding the object of study in OTT consequently focuses on the scope of the "Old Testament" in terms of both canon and text.

The second question is relevant to the *subject* with which the discipline of OTT is concerned. The importance of this hermeneutical problem is amplified through the

[3] The term will consequently be placed between inverted commas except when referring to the titles of disciplines (as well as the practitioners of those disciplines), books or articles and in direct quotations.

influence that the developments in literary studies have exerted on Biblical criticism and the consequent reconsidering of the locus of meaning in interpreting written documents such as the "Old Testament" texts. In general, the interests of interpreters of the biblical texts have shifted from the authorial intention and historical production thereof to the literary genre and linguistic features of the different texts and, most recently, to the role of the (modern) reader in procuring meaning from these texts. The significance of these developments for conceiving of the "Old Testament"'s theology lies in the measure of control it exercises over the ability of the reader to grasp the theological thrust of the text and the possible weight that the conceptions of the divine in the "Old Testament" might carry with the reader. If the emphasis in interpretation is placed on the historical context and development of the "Old Testament" texts, then the dynamics of how the divine was perceived at different stages of Israel's religious development would be of consequence to the theology of the "Old Testament". However, if the reciprocity of literary form and theological content is stressed, an appreciation of the function of linguistic features and knowledge of genre is compulsory for an understanding of "Old Testament" texts' theological content. Furthermore, if the role and interests of the reader forms the most important criteria of theological exegesis, then his/her views of the divine might unduly silence or justifiably promote neglected aspects of the "Old Testametnt"'s theology.

Moreover, the problem of the subject treated in OTT also concerns the undeniable religious character of the texts and the status thereof for its readers in this regard. The issues of interpretation take on a new angle when it is viewed against the background of the claims of divine inspiration that are made for these "Old Testament" texts. Questions concerning the interaction between hermeneutics and divine inspiration result from such claims and any attempt to establish the subject for the discipline of OTT must consequently deal with the difficult issue regarding the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation.

It follows that we are able to identify the problem in OTT-research that the present study will seek to address as the discipline's need for an object and subject that take these issues relating to canon, text, and theological content into consideration; in other words,

the need to establish the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology in the discipline of OTT.

The study of the collection of Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures, the Septuagint (LXX), is increasingly being acknowledged as an important part of Old Testament research in matters of textual and theological nature. With regards to textual matters, the Septuagint has long been viewed as an important contributor to our knowledge of the textual history of the "Old Testament" books, as well as the establishment of the proper "Old Testament" text for translation, interpretation, and doing of theology. With regards to theological matters, it is often conceded that the Septuagint is a prime witness to the religious situation during the time spanning the interval between the Old and the New Testament[4]. Regrettably, the value of the Septuagint for the discipline of OTT has not been established at all. Therefore, determining the significance of the LXX for the establishment of the object and subject for OTT is, at the same time, a novel approach to the problem facing OTT and an attempt to address an undeniable desideratum in this discipline.

At first glance, however, the LXX leaves the impression of an inappropriate avenue to search for a suitable solution to this problem plaguing the discipline of OTT. It would rather appear as if the LXX compounds the difficulties surrounding the canon, text, and theological content of the "Old Testament", especially considering the many differences between the Hebrew Bible and the LXX.

On the one hand, the LXX differs in both *external* and *internal* features from the Hebrew Bible. Externally, that is, in terms of canon, the number of books included in the Greek Bible as well as their names and order are different from those in its Hebrew counterpart[5]. Internally, the differences between the Greek and the Hebrew Bibles relate

[4] In this regard, see Jobes and Silva, 2000:288-296.

[5] Books that are included in the Greek, but excluded in the Hebrew Bible are 1 Esdras, Judith, Tobit, the four books of Maccabees, Odes (included with Psalms), the Wisdom of Solomon, the Psalms of Solomon, the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, the Epistle of Jeremiah, Susanna, the Song of the Three Young Men (an appendage to chapter 3 of the book of Daniel) and Bel and the Dragon (Jobes and Silva, 2000:80, Fernández Marcos, 2000:67). This list follows the pocket edition of the LXX, *Septuaginta:*

to the textual traditions underlying the translations and include the sequences of chapters and verses within the books themselves as well as pluses and minuses in relation to the MT[6]. On the other hand, the greater part of the LXX consists of Jewish scriptures that have been translated into Greek. Bearing in mind the fact that all translation implies some measure of interpretation, it is to be expected that the Greek translators would either go to great lengths in order to preserve the original form of the theological content represented by their Semitic source texts, or creatively reproduce it according to their understanding of the traditions. It follows that the LXX version of a particular book may sometimes differ substantially from the MT in theological content. The early Church, however, used the LXX as its "Old Testament"[7]. As such, some of the Church Fathers defended it as a source of divine revelation, its divine inspiration, and, hence, the virtue of its theological content. Their arguments include the fact that the LXX was translated before the birth of Jesus Christ and that it prophesises to him[8], that the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures acted as a bridge to the gentile nations and thus forms part of God's salvation historical plan, and that the New Testament apostles quote from the LXX in their writings (Müller, 1996:68-77).

1.2 THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Contrary to this view that the LXX magnifies rather than diminishes the extent of the problem facing the discipline of OTT concerning the object of its study and the subject

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id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpres, edited by Alfred Rahlfs (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). The books of the Hebrew Bible are arranged according to a tripartite division while the books of the Greek Bible are arranged according to their literary character: Historical books, Poetic books and Prophetic literature (Lust, 2003:39).

[6]"In several instances the text of the books in the Greek Bible differs considerably from that in the Masoretic version of the Bible. Many of these divergences are clearly due to the Hebrew *Vorlage* used by the Greek translators, and not to changes brought in by the translators or later redactors, nor to errors in the course of the transmission of the text" (Lust, 2003:43). Lists of these differences between the Greek and the Hebrew Bible are discussed in Lust (2003:44-45) and more extensively in Swete (1900:231-264).

[7] See Mogens Müller, *The First Bible of the Church. A Plea for the Septuagint* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1996); "The Septuagint as the Bible of the New Testament Church. Some Reflections," *SJOT 7,2* (1993) 194-207; "Hebraica Sive Graeca Veritas. The Jewish Bible at the time of the New Testament and the Christian Bible," *SJOT 2* (1989) 55-71 (Müller, 1989a); and "Graeca Sive Hebraica Veritas? The Defence of the Septuagint in the Early Church," *SJOT 2* (1989) 103-124 (Müller, 1989b).

[8] A good example of such an argument is found in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* where the Christian apologist quotes the Greek translation of Isaiah 7:14 as a prophecy of the immaculate conception of Christ (Müller, 1996:68-70).

treated therein, the hypothesis that the present study will seek to prove, states that the LXX is indeed significant to OTT in terms of both its object and subject and that the LXX should not be disregarded when these methodological issues are decided for the discipline. The purpose of the study is to argue *that* the issues involved in the study of the LXX contribute to the establishment of the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology.

1.3 THE METHOD OF STUDY

The following chapter explores the identified problem in more detail and deals with various issues surrounding the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology. It does not aim to provide the reader with a correct answer or choose one opinion over another; rather it seeks to elaborate on the problem in much of its complexity and to shun any premature solution to it.

The chapter sets out by surveying recent proposals for the object and subject of the discipline of OTT. The dilemma that emanates from these proposals concerning the object of study in OTT manifests itself in the various views on the proper terminology for the collections of scripture that are deemed authoritative for life and faith in Jewish and Christian faith communities, the nature, function and history of the concept of canon, and the correct text of the "Old Testament" that is to be utilized for translation, exegesis and theology. Each of these topics is discussed in turn with the aim of exposing the assumptions and presuppositions that govern the views on them.

With regards to the subject of OTT, a brief overview is provided of the manner in which the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation was understood at various stages of the discipline's development. Furthermore, it is indicated that the emergence of a supposedly new epistemological situation in the closing decades of the twentieth century, as well as recent developments in Biblical studies, including the proliferation of methods in Biblical interpretation, the re-evaluation of the historical study of the "Old Testament", and a renewed emphasis on the value of the Wisdom literature,

raises suspicions over the appropriateness of the concepts of "revelation-through-history" and salvation history (*Heilsgeschichte*) as the dominant focal points of the "Old Testament"'s theological content. These observations obliges the Old Testament theologian to explain the locus of the "Old Testament"'s authority as a source of knowledge about the divine and the significance thereof to faith communities for matters of faith and life.

The next chapter shifts the focus to the nature of the LXX as a collection of books that are translations of Jewish scriptures and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in their own right, with the purpose of demonstrating *that* the study of the LXX can and must contribute to a solution of the problem that was expounded in greater detail in chapter two. This chapter concentrates on issues of terminology, theories concerning the origins of the LXX, and studies of translation technique in order to demonstrate how these issues relate to the topics of canon, text, and theological content.

Due to the confusing manner in which scholars use the term "Septuagint" and its abbreviation LXX, a clarification of these concepts is given at the outset of the chapter. The importance of knowing what the term "Septuagint" refers to in order to establish the significance thereof for the object and subject of OTT is indicated as well[9]. The analysis moves on to two areas of study that have a common concern for the status of Greek translated text in relation to the Semitic source text, as well as the role of the historical context in the need for a translation and the process of translation itself. In an effort to identify the implications of this concern for the theology of the "Old Testament" (and more specifically the object and subject of the discipline of OTT), the exploration of the nature of the LXX subsequently traverses those areas of LXX studies that examine the

[9] Robert Hanhart demonstrates that the study of the nature of the LXX forms part of a more comprehensive problem area in Septuagintal studies, namely, the LXX as a problem of textual history (*Textgeschichte*), research history (*Forschungsgeschichte*), and theology. Textual history refers to the history of the LXX's origin and transmission; research history examines the quality of translations as literature and whether these translations are typified by the mindset of the source text or the way of thinking of the target language; concerning theology the question is posed: "Ist das übertragene Wort des Alten Testaments in seinem Gehalt identisch mit dem ursprünglichen Wort des AT, oder liegt seine Bedeutung als Offenbarungswort christlichen und jüdischen Glaubens in seinem dem Text der Ursprache gegenüber eigenständigen Gehalt?" (Hanhart, 1972:185-186). These three topics surrounding the nature of the LXX are inextricably linked to each other and Hanhart suggests that the one can only be resolved in connection with the others (1972:186).

origins of the LXX and study the translation techniques employed by the original translators in rendering their Semitic source texts into Greek. The outcome of this investigation into the nature of the LXX is to notice the legitimacy of the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures as objects of study in OTT and the important input it may have in determining the subject of that discipline.

The fourth chapter of the present analysis indicates a number of overtures for continuing the study of the significance of the LXX for the entire discipline of OTT. The necessity of a further study is established in light of the unresolved problems and ongoing questions in OTT and identifies the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology as the common ground shared by all these problems. It follows that the results of the present study must be taken further and put into practice by determining *how* the LXX books must be interpreted in order to establish the object and subject for OTT by means of LXX-research. Two methodological guidelines concerning the most efficient manner in which to achieve this task are subsequently indicated. The LXX version of the book of Job is identified as an appropriate case study for testing the proposal that the analysis of the provenance and purpose of individual LXX books provides a suitable point of departure in determining the significance of the LXX for the methodological matters in the discipline of OTT.

The closing chapter provides the reader with an overview of the conclusions that were reached during the preceding analysis of the problem facing OTT concerning its object and subject, the virtue of utilizing the LXX in order to find a solution to this problem, and the overtures for further study that were subsequently identified.

CHAPTER 2

THE OBJECT AND SUBJECT OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

One legitimate, albeit slightly oversimplified, way of conceiving the problems surrounding the object and subject of the discipline of OTT is to attribute it to the influence that external factors exert on viewpoints concerning the canon, text, and theological content of the "Old Testament". While the texts from the so-called biblical era are in themselves ancient written documents of (mostly) religious kind, external authorities make a selection from the available textual witnesses to cherish as the "Old Testament". A claim of divine inspiration and consequent authority for matters of life and faith are often made for these texts. As a result, they are continually used and interpreted by individuals and communities in religious contexts such as worship services for edifying, admonishing, comforting, and meditation purposes from the perspective of the theological traditions, as well as the life and interpretative interests harboured by those who read it in these contexts. In addition, these texts are also being read, interpreted, studied and analyzed in academic contexts. These scholarly contexts have their own goals and canons of method and criteria for arriving at reliable results and assured knowledge. In short, external factors such as theological traditions, interpretative and life interests, ongoing critical research, and epistemology govern the decisions on *which* texts are significant, *how* they are so and, therefore, *why* they merit continual re-reading, interpretation, reflection, scrutiny, and application. These factors are, in turn, informed by presuppositions and assumptions regarding the canon, text, and theological content of the "Old Testament" as well as developments in the study of the Bible.

In order to arrive at a clear understanding of the problems concerning the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology (and therefore, the object and subject of OTT) these general remarks must be systematically explored in more detail. Such a systematic exploration will result in a view of the problem in much of its complexity and will emphasise that scholars should refrain from any attempt to arrive at a premature solution to the problem at hand.

In the following paragraphs some of the recent studies in the field of OTT are briefly surveyed with the aim of examining the current proposals for the object and subject of the discipline. This short review is limited to a number of scholars who have either written extensively on OTT methodology or have recently written (or is in the process of writing) a comprehensive and coherent Theology of the "Old Testament" (roughly spanning the decade between 1995 and 2005)[1], and have thus worked out their proposals in detail. From this survey it will subsequently be shown that both the object and subject of OTT are ambiguous and that the uncertainties concerning them correspond to the questions regarding the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology respectively. As a result, the presuppositions and assumptions that determine the scope of the "Old Testament" will be investigated in terms of the terminology that is used to designate the collections of scriptures adhered to by different faith communities, the parameters, history, and function of these collections, and the texts that are utilized as base for translation, exegesis, and theology. In addition, the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology will be discussed in terms of its relationship with divine revelation. A brief historical overview of the manner in which this relationship was understood from the inception of OTT as an independent discipline in the 18th century up to the mid-twentieth century will be followed by an identification of the influence that recent developments in Biblical studies exercises on current conceptions of this relationship and the challenges that confront Old Testament theologians regarding this issue. The chapter closes with a number of preliminary conclusions and a few remarks concerning the possible value of LXX research in contributing to a solution to the challenges identified in the present chapter.

[1] Unfortunately the following works came to my attention too late to be included in the present survey: The collection of essays by John Collins on the theme of Biblical theology, *Encounters with Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005) and his analysis of recent developments in Old Testament studies, including Biblical theology, *The Bible after Babel: historical criticism in a postmodern age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), as well as the volume edited by Bernd Janowski on themes pertaining to the theology and exegesis of the "Old Testament", *Theologie und Exegese des Alten Testaments / der Hebräischen Bibel: Zwischenbilanz und Zukunftsperspektiven* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2005).

2.1 RECENT PROPOSALS FOR THE OBJECT AND SUBJECT OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

2.1.1 Bernhard Anderson

Bernhard Anderson treats the "Old Testament" (the canonical scripture of the Christian church) as the *object* of study in his *Contours of Old Testament Theology*[2]. He identifies election, promises, covenant, law, and God's holy presence in the midst of the people as some of the *subjects* of the "Old Testament". Instead of discussing these subjects one by one, he proposes an organization of them according to the major covenants in the "Old Testament": the Abrahamic, the Mosaic, and the Davidic. "The term 'covenant' (Hebrew *berith*) points to a fundamental reality in Israel's experience: God's special relationship with the people … Our interest will fasten not on covenant itself but on a *pattern of symbolism* – or perhaps one should say, a theological perspective – that is expressed in each of the covenants. Each covenant, considered in its scriptural context, nuances in symbolic terms what it means to live in the presence of the holy God, who has entered into special relationship with the people Israel" (1999:33 – his italics). Each of these covenants and its concomitant theological perspective is dominant in a major block of "Old Testament" literature and influential in one of the Major Prophets. The Abrahamic covenant and its Priestly theology is represented in the Pentateuch (in its final Priestly redaction) and by the prophet Ezekiel; the Mosaic covenant and its Deuteronomistic theology is represented in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic history, as well as by the prophet Jeremiah; the Davidic covenant is represented in the books of Psalms and Chronicles and by the prophet Isaiah (1999:33-34). However, according to Anderson it is not only the theological perspectives in each of the major covenants that serve as the *subject* of study in the discipline of OTT but also the movement from Torah to Wisdom and from Prophecy to Apocalyptic in the face of the tragedy of exile that called the covenantal relationship between God and Israel into question (1999:34-35).

[2] Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.

2.1.2 James Barr

Although he himself has not written a full-fledged Biblical theology or Old Testament Theology, James Barr has over several decades written extensively on the methodological issues of the discipline[3]. It is important to note that Barr sees Biblical theology as a *contested* discipline within biblical and theological studies and that it has a *contrastive* nature. The character and definition thereof will depend on that with which it is contrasted[4]. First of all, according to Barr Biblical theology consists of both OTT and New Testament theology. It must be distinguished from attempts to treat the theology of the whole of the Christian Bible as a unity. This endeavour he calls "pan-biblical theology". Consequently, when he describes Biblical theology and sets the correct parameters for the discipline, we may infer, *mutatis mutandis*, that the same will be true of OTT. Secondly, he states it clearly that the "Old Testament" has no "theology", that is, when theology is understood as "a reflective activity in which the content of religious expressions is to some extent abstracted, contemplated, subjected to reflection and discussion, and deliberately reformulated" (1999:249). This, however, does not mean that Barr does not consider the biblical text to be theological. It means that the theology of the text is not *explicitly* stated, but only *implicitly* present: "The distinction between implicit and explicit, as made above, seems to me to be important. If we think of a text as *being* theology, we mean that its theology is explicit. When the theology is implicit, it means that the theology is not *stated* by the text. The theology is in someone's mind, but even there is, perhaps, not explicit. The text may, however, be adequate evidence of the implicit theology" (1999:248 – his italics). If the *subject* of Biblical theology is its (implicit) theology, what does this mean? It means that Biblical theology studies theology as it existed or was thought or believed within the time, languages and cultures of the Bible (1999:4): "The biblical theologian seeks to study the intellectual and cultural world-image that lies behind the individual texts and their individual meanings. He or she considers the presuppositions from which the writers (and later readers) may have started, the connections with other concepts which have been used elsewhere, or with concepts

[3] The book under discussion, *The Concept of Biblical Theology*, had its advent in the Cadbury lectures that Barr delivered at the University of Birmingham in 1968.
[4] See note 1 in the previous chapter.

that might have been used or avoided, the general world-picture that may have been assumed, the network of connections and indications that may have been involved" (1999:248). Only thus can it be distinguished from systematic theology or non-theological studies of the Bible. The *object* that is studied in Biblical theology is therefore not limited to individual texts or books of the Bible, but includes parts of texts and the interrelationships between texts.

2.1.3 Walter Brueggemann

Two movements in Biblical criticism significantly influence Walter Brueggemann's approach to OTT[5]. The first is the Rhetorical criticism of his teacher James Muilenburg and Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of language; the second is the Sociological approach to the "Old Testament" of Norman Gottwald. According to Brueggemann some texts in the "Old Testament" serve to "legitimate structure" (the common theology of the Ancient Near East) while others reflect Israel's distinct theological witness by "embracing pain" and challenging the established order (1985:28-46, 395-415). Thus in the "Old Testament" there exists a dynamic tension between those texts that represent "cultural embrace" and "cultural criticism" respectively. The theology of the "Old Testament" will consequently have a bipolar character that reflects the interaction between these two types of texts. This means that the discipline's *object* of study is the "rhetorical enterprise" of the ("Old Testament") texts, how these different texts speak about God (either as legitimating the status quo or subverting it). Brueggemann categorises this rhetorical activity of the "Old Testament" texts under the terms *testimony*, *dispute*, and *advocacy*, which also forms the subtitle to his Theology. These three terms reflect the image of a court of law, the arena where competing versions of the "truth" are testified to, disputed and verified or disproved on the basis of the most effective rhetorical presentation of the available evidence. The "testimony" in the "Old Testament" encompasses those texts where Israel speaks characteristically about the actions and

[5] Bruegemann has written extensively on the discipline of OTT. A volume of collected essays, edited by Patrick Miller has recently appeared under the title *Old Testament Theology: Essays on Structure, Theme, and Text* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); Brueggemann's *magnus opus* is entitled *Theology of the Old Testament; Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997).

attributes of its God, YHWH. In Israel's most habituated speech YHWH is portrayed as the God who creates, makes promises, delivers, commands and leads, but also as the God who exercises his divine sovereignty to govern and sustain life in the world. Israel also testifies to the partnerships in which YHWH stands, that is, his relationship with Israel, individuals, the (other) nations and creation. The "Old Testament", however, also contains some counter-testimonies about YHWH. It tells of the hiddenness of YHWH, the ambiguity in his character, and the problem of theodicy. This comprises the "dispute" in the "Old Testament". In the end, Israel "advocates" the reality of YHWH over against other claims of reality in the Ancient Near East. Consequently, the proper *subject* of OTT according to Brueggemann is the "Old Testament"'s *speech about God*, that is, the plurality of voices, testimonies, counter-testimonies, even competing claims to the God of Israel: "(I)t appears to me that in a practical way, speech leads reality in the "Old Testament". Speech constitutes reality, and who God turns out to be in Israel depends on the utterance of the Israelites or, derivatively, the utterance of the text … *I shall insist, as constantly as I can, that the God of Old Testament theology as such lives in, with, and under the rhetorical enterprise of this text, and nowhere else and in no other way*" (1997:65-66 - his italics).

2.1.4 Erhard Gerstenberger

Erhard Gerstenberger[6] objects to those (canonical) approaches to OTT that seek to construct a coherent, unitary theology from the "Old Testament" that is binding for modern believers thus treating the final form of the "Old Testament" as both the object of interpretations and the authoritative subject from which modern interpreters should receive religious orientation. Gerstenberger objects that there is no one uniform coherent canon and that the preliminary stages of the literature prior to the completion of the individual books may not be discarded or ignored when investigating the theologies in the "Old Testament" (2002:13-14). These objections arise from Gerstenberger's views on the *subject* of OTT, namely, the *theologies* in the "Old Testament". The plural is important and refers to the faith of ancient Israel in its contemporary environment and in

[6] See his *Theologies in the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002).

everyday life, or, in other words, the diversity of time-conditioned experiences of faith, statements and systems (or ideas about God) current in the different *social groups* throughout the history of Israel witnessed to in the "Old Testament" (2002:1-2, 15). Although it underwent a long history of development, we cannot solely rely on the written documents of the "Old Testament" as the *object* of study, but must also make use of archaeological finds and consult the Ancient Near Eastern context and neighbouring cultures and religions into which the faith of Israel was embedded (2002:15-17). The different religious dimensions of our present day social organisation also serve as the object of study in OTT for the ultimate theological task thereof is to bring these theologies, those of ancient Israel in their various social settings, and ours in our social circumstances, into dialogue with each other.

2.1.5 John Goldingay

The first volume of John Goldingay's proposed three-volume Old Testament Theology has recently appeared[7]. Each volume will treat a different aspect of OTT, but all have in common the *object* of study, namely, "the Old Testament in the narrow sense – the books of the Hebrew Bible, or the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings" and the *subject* thereof: "the stance taken by the Old Testament books on the nature of "authentic" Israelite faith" (2005:16). In contrast with Erhard Gerstenberger, Goldingay argues that the "Old Testament"'s theology is something different from what Israelites believed in antiquity. Rather the theology of the "Old Testament" should be understood as the faith or theology that may be gleaned from the "Old Testament" books themselves and in the first volume, subtitled "Israel's Gospel"[8], Goldingay concentrates on the "Old Testament" narratives and employs a narrative theological approach to determine what Israel's story says about "how things were, or what God and Israel have done" (2005:28). The second volume will focus on the "Old Testament"'s faith and hope; "how things are

[7] *Old Testament Theology. Volume One: Israel's Gospel* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005).

[8] Goldingay gives the title "gospel" to the narratives of the "Old Testament" as it refers to the "good news" of how God acted in Israel's life and in events in the world. God began, started over, promised, delivered, sealed, gave, accommodated, wrestled and preserved (2005:32). This "good news" must be seen, according to Goldingay, in light of the possibility that there may not be any (2005:33). For instance, it is "good news" that God continued to act in the life of Israel, despite the many instances of rebellion, failure and unfaithfulness.

and will be, or who God is and who we are" (2005:28). Volume three will have as its focus "the Old Testament's vision of life or its ethos, or how things can be and should be, or what God calls us to" (2005:28).

2.1.6 Rolf Knierim

Like Erhard Gerstenberger, Rolf Knierim[9] also emphasises the plurality of theologies in the "Old Testament". Unlike Gerstenberger however, Knierim does not see this plurality as a virtue, but rather as the fundamental problem confronting the discipline of OTT, especially in light of the fact that the plurality of theologies are juxtaposed in the canon: "The theological problem of the Old Testament's pluralism comes into focus even more when we look at it from the point of theological substance. All theologies in the Old Testament are united in affirming Yahweh as the one and only God. Yet at the same time, their explications of this affirmation vary or differ. These varying or differing explications of the oneness and exclusivity of Yahweh reach to the heart of the theological problem of the Old Testament, especially as they coexist in the canon" (1995:10). He therefore sees the canon of the "Old Testament" as the *object* of study in the discipline and the *extent* and *modes* of YHWH's relationship with reality, that is, the quantitative and qualitative nature of this relationship, as the *subject* thereof. The *quantitative* nature of this relationship refers to *with whom* and *what* YHWH is related (and how these various realms are related to each other), whilst the *qualitative* nature of the relationship refers to *how* YHWH and the various realms of reality are related (and how these various modes of relation are related to each other) (1995:10-11).

2.1.7 Horst Dietrich Preuss

Horst Dietrich Preuss, in his two-volume Old Testament Theology[10], sees the "Old Testament" as witnesses, testimonies and responses to the revelation of God: "We certainly do not have before us in the Old Testament God's revelation as such; rather, we

[9] See his collection of essays, *The Task of Old Testament Theology. Substance, Method, and Cases* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).
[10] *Old Testament Theology*. 2 volumes (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995).

have testimonies to this revelation and the various responses to them. We have 'data' only in the form of a *kerygma* coming to expression within the wonderment of believing witnesses, along with texts that give voice to their testimony, texts that say that here or there YHWH, according to the conviction of the faith of these witnesses, may have acted and may have revealed himself" (1995:23). These witnesses form the *object* of study in OTT. The *subject* of study, according to Preuss, is the divine activity witnessed to by the texts. He summarizes this divine activity as "*'YHWH's historical activity of electing Israel for communion with his world' and the obedient activity required of this people (and the nations)*" (1995:25 - his italics).

From these recent proposals it follows that the "Old Testament" is commonly seen as the *object* of study in OTT and that its "theology / theologies" form(s) the proper *subject* in the discipline. However these proposals differ markedly from one another on how to understand the "Old Testament" and what exactly constitutes the "theology / theologies" thereof. In general one can see that the "Old Testament" is understood in two distinct ways. On the one hand, it is approached in terms of its historical context and make-up and therefore in its different textual strata (Gerstenberger and to some extent Barr). On the other hand it is treated as a unit (Anderson, Goldingay, Knierim) but not necessarily as a homogeneous unit (Brueggemann). Moreover, Bernhard Anderson's remarks on the "Old Testament" as the canon of the Christian church and the restriction of the "Old Testament" to its "narrow sense" (the books adhered to by both Jewish and Protestant Christian communities) by John Goldingay show that religious orientation plays a role in one's outlook on the "Old Testament". The views on the Old Testament's "theology" range from (diverse or authentic) theological speeches (Brueggemann), witnesses to YHWH's election of Israel (Preuss) and perspectives (Anderson) concerning divine activity and the nature of reality gathered from the contents of the "Old Testament" itself to the theological world views current in biblical times (Barr) and then in different social spheres (Gerstenberger).

In order to make an informed decision on the object and subject of OTT and the possible role that the LXX may fulfil in it, one needs to have a clear understanding of both the

"Old Testament" and its "theology". Neither of these topics is unproblematic or self-evident and the difficulties involved with each of them should be identified and scrutinized. The teething troubles involved with the term "Old Testament" will be discussed in terms of its scope, that is, the parameters of this collection of writings, the religious terminology used to name it, and its textual base. It will be shown that certain presuppositions and assumptions regarding terminology, canon, and textual criticism direct the various ways in which the scope of the "Old Testament" is understood. Furthermore, the problems involved with the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology are connected with a proper understanding of the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation. In this regard it will be shown that recent developments in Biblical interpretation and historical studies, as well as the emergence of "postmodern" ways of thinking, currently exert pressure on the discipline of OTT to clarify the locus of this collection's authority as a source of knowledge about the divine and the extent thereof for matters of faith and life. It will be concluded that it is from this methodological starting point in the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology that the significance of the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures for OTT may be established as it is exactly in terms of canon, text and theological content that Septuagintal studies may *inter alia* influence the object and subject of the discipline.

2.2 THE SCOPE OF THE "OLD TESTAMENT" AND THE NATURE OF ITS THEOLOGY

2.2.1 Assumptions and presuppositions underlying the scope of the "Old Testament"

The assumptions and presuppositions underlying the scope of the "Old Testament" pertain to three issues, namely, terminology, canon and text: (i) *Terminology*: "Old Testament" is an epithet used as the title of a *collection* of ancient religious writings. The term itself does not enjoy wholesale support for it carries within itself important religious presuppositions that are not shared by all who read and study it. (ii) *Canon*: "Old Testament" is the term used by the Christian church to refer to those collections of ancient *religious* writings that are held to be divinely inspired and therefore authoritative

for its life and faith. Recent research has however not only reformulated the history of canon formation but also the nature and function of "canon". Religious communities may have to rethink their understanding of their collection of authoritative writings in the light of this research. (iii) *Textual witnesses*: These *ancient* religious *writings* are texts, that is, they are written documents. The plurality of extant textual witnesses necessitates a decision on which of these multiple textual witnesses a religious community will base its translations, exegesis, and theology. An understanding of the history of the composition and transmission of the biblical texts will most assuredly influence such a decision. In the following paragraphs we will, in turn, briefly discuss each of these three issues with an eye on the factors that may determine one's views on the scope of the "Old Testament".

2.2.1.1 Religious orientation and the term "Old Testament"

A consciousness within (Christian) scholarly circles of the perceived negative and even offensive connotations of the term "Old Testament" has developed within Jewish-Christian dialogues. Jewish scholars often highlight the derogatory tone of the adjective "Old", because it creates the impression that the Jewish Torah is considered passé in relation to the "New" Testament. Stefan Reif and Jon Levenson have both demonstrated this by noting Christian interpretation of the "Old Testament"[11]. The "Old Testament" is seen as an inadequate witness to God that must be interpreted in light of the New Testament's witness to Jesus Christ. The former can only be understood as a prediction or foreshadowing of Christ and then either in a typological way or in terms of promise/fulfilment or law/gospel. This is sometimes coupled with notions of *supersessionism*, that is, that the Christian church has replaced the Jewish people as the chosen nation of God because they do not acknowledge the revelation of God in Christ and therefore God's Trinitarian nature. The upshot of this, of course, is that the New has replaced or superseded the "Old Testament" (Novak, 2003:95-113).

[11] See Stefan Reif, "Aspects of the Jewish contribution to biblical interpretation", *The Cambridge Companion to the biblical interpretation* (ed. John Barton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998), 143-159 and Jon Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism; Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).

In academic circles the term “Hebrew Bible” has won the approval of many, especially those scholars that opt for a religiously disinterested approach to Biblical studies. Any terminology that hints at ownership of this collection of scriptures by a religious community is therefore met with disapproval and must be substituted with a more neutral term: “Many who wish to argue for the propriety of the term ‘Hebrew Bible’ either seek to minimize such distinctive identity or its importance, or they regard a term like ‘Hebrew Bible’ most helpful precisely because it sets this consideration fully to the side. Being a term not fully at home in either Jewish or Christian circles is its very appeal” (Seitz, 1998:69). Various suggestions for naming the collection of scriptures deemed canonical by both Jewish and Christian communities have recently been given to replace the term “Old Testament”. These include “Hebrew Bible”, “First Testament”, “Jewish Scriptures” and “Tanak”, an acronym formed from the first consonant of the titles of the tripartite division of the Hebrew Bible, the **T**orah, **N**ebi’im, and **K**etubim.

Christian scholars have rebutted these arguments for a change in terminology either by showing the inadequacy of a term such as “Hebrew Bible” by claiming the importance and indissolubility of the link between the two parts of the Christian canon. Bernhard Anderson (1999:5-7) suggests that “Hebrew Bible” is an incorrect term for this collection of scriptures for the following reasons: First, it refers to the original language in which most of the writings in this collection were composed: Hebrew. Designating the collection by language raises difficulties as it also contains Aramaic texts. Second, the term is unsatisfactory because the early church adopted the Septuagint as its Scripture and it contains books that are not included in the Hebrew Bible. Third, the Christian canon has a different order of books than the Hebrew Bible. Finally, the renaming of the collection may result in too sharp a separation between the Jewish and Christian communities: “Christianity and Judaism belong closely together in the elective purpose of God; therefore, the Old Testament cannot be torn out of the Christian Bible” (1999:7). Moreover, Christopher Seitz has raised the objection that the term “Hebrew Bible” does not evoke any clear link with the New Testament, thereby leaving confusion as to why Christians read the texts. He argues that all titling of this collection of scriptures is an imposition on the material because it aims to understand the collection in its wider

meaning and purpose for a faith community (1998:61-67). He also sees the attachment of these scriptures to faith communities as important and thus the legitimacy of the Jewish practice in calling it "Torah", "Tanak" or "Mikra", whilst the Church names it the "Old Testament" in order to connect it with the New Testament. Anderson arrives at a similar conclusion: "Thus for theological reasons it is best to avoid the term 'Hebrew Bible' and speak of either Jewish Scriptures (Jewish usage) or the Old Testament (Christian usage)" (1999:7).

It follows that the titling of this collection of ancient religious writings is neither neutral nor a matter of mere convention. At the heart of any designation thereof lie important religious presuppositions concerning the nature and scope of the scriptures and consequently how it should be read and interpreted.

2.2.1.2 Canon and community

Some religions of the world are "scriptured", including both Judaism and Christianity. A close relationship of mutual determinacy exists between those faith communities that shaped and preserved the religious traditions that gave them identity (and continue to do so) and the sacred books that contain these traditions. On the one hand, the traditions associated with the sacred books were considered to be of continuing relevance and importance for the ongoing faith and life of the community, while, on the other hand, the prerogative has always been with the community to decide which books were deemed authoritative and binding on it. The term "canon" (from the Greek word `kanwvn` – "measuring stick") came to be used to describe such collections or lists of books that a community deemed authoritative in religious matters. However, "it is an understatement to say that confusion currently surrounds the term and permeates recent discussions of the topic. Some scholars think that canon is a theological *terminus technicus* with a clear meaning, a specific denotation, and a long history of discussion, while others think that the term may be used more broadly to fit any of several aspects related to the collections of authoritative sacred texts of Judaism or Christianity" (Ulrich, 2002:21). Issues of

definition therefore deserve pride of place when recent difficulties surrounding "canon" are discussed[12].

An appropriate definition of the noun "canon" and its adjectival form "canonical" should include references to both its *shape* and its *function*, that is, to the nature of "canon" as both a fixed and authoritative *list* of books (*norma normata*) and a list of *authoritative* books (*norma normans*) (Sanders 1992:839). Eugene Ulrich formulates such a comprehensive and accurate definition. According to him, "canon" refers to "the definitive list of inspired, authoritative books which constitute the recognized and accepted body of sacred Scripture, forming the rule of faith of a major religious group, that definitive list being the result of inclusive and exclusive decisions after serious deliberation and wide endorsement by the community" (2003:58). This definition is by and large the outcome of renewed interest in and study of the notion of "canon" spurred on especially by the advent of Canon criticism in the 1970's[13] and the discovery of a large amount of scrolls and text fragments in eleven caves at Qumran and the surrounding areas of the Judean desert near the Dead Sea in 1947[14]. The studies ensuing from these

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[12] In their introduction to the volume *The Canon Debate*, Lee Martin MacDonald and James Sanders list, besides the problem of a definition, the following issues as contemporary bones of contention within studies concentrating on the biblical canons (2002:3-17): (i) The challenges to the widely held assumptions that the Hebrew Bible achieved canonical acceptance in a three-stage development, that the early church received a closed "Old Testament" from Jesus, that most of the New Testament canon was settled by the second century C.E, and that the so-called Muratorian canon gives evidence of this; (ii) The question whether citations of ancient texts in younger ones necessarily imply the canonical status of the former for the writer of the latter; (iii) The question whether texts earlier than the four canonical gospels as well as the so-called agrapha (sayings of Jesus not found in the canonical gospels) do not paint a more accurate and faithful picture of Jesus than do the New Testament; (iv) The reality of textual plurality. Which text, from the multitude of extant textual witnesses, should be considered as the canonical text for the faith community? And (v) the uncertainty surrounding the criteria that were employed to determine which writings would make up the Christian canon.

[13] The early years of the Seventies marked the publishing date of both *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970) and *Torah and Canon* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), the respective works of Brevard Childs and James Sanders on Canon criticism. Both scholars would go on to write extensively on the various issues pertaining to the biblical canon. See, for instance, Childs's *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1979) as well as his monographs on the Canon critical approach to both OTT (1985) and Biblical theology (1993). Sanders's other works include *Canon and Community* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), where he describes in detail his views on the canonical process and canonical hermeneutics, as well as a collection of essays under the title *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text. Canon as Paradigm* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

[14] Comprehensive studies on the nature of and various aspects related to the Qumran scrolls as well as the influence thereof on Biblical studies may be found in the work of Geza Vermes, *An Introduction to the Complete Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: SCM Press, 1999) and the volume by James VanderKam and Peter Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2002).

developments have thrown new light on the nature, function and history of the "Old Testament" canon, resulting in the critical consensus of the 19th century regarding the three-stage development of the "Old Testament" canon falling into disrepute.

This theory regarding the formation of the "Old Testament" canon that developed in the 19th century and enjoyed almost unanimous consent up until the discovery of the scrolls at Qumran stated that the books of the Hebrew Bible were canonized in three historical stages: the Pentateuch was canonized by 400 B.C.E., the Prophets by 200 B.C.E., and the canonical status of the third and final part of the Hebrew Bible, the Writings, was decided by a council at Jamnia around 90 C.E. (Sanders, 2002:252). Support for this theory of a three-stage development of the canon was found in the late Second Temple period Jewish and Christian texts that supposedly already referred to the tripartite form of the Hebrew Bible in the centuries prior to and following the birth of Christ. Examples of such evidence include the prologue to the Wisdom of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus)[15], passages from the books of First and Second Maccabees[16], Philo's work *On the Contemplative Life*[17], Josephus's writing *Against Apion*, where he supposedly identifies a twenty-two

[15] The Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira dates back to the first two decades of the second century B.C.E., and was translated by his grandson into Greek round about 132 B.C.E. The appropriate passage from the grandson's prologue reads: "Many great teachings have been given to us through *the Law and the Prophets and the others that followed them*, and for these we should praise Israel for instruction and wisdom. Now, those who read *the scriptures* must not only themselves understand them, but must also as lovers of learning be able through the spoken and written word to help the outsiders. So my grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of *the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors*, and had acquired considerable proficiency in them, was himself also led to write something pertaining to instruction and wisdom, so that by becoming familiar also with his book those who love learning might make even greater progress in living according to the law ... For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Not only this book, but even *the Law* itself, *the Prophecies, and the rest of the books* differ not a little when read in the original" (NRSV).

[16] I Maccabees 1:56-57 refers to "the books of the law" whilst 2:50-60 mention, besides "the law", also "the covenant of our ancestors", including Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elijah, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael as well as Daniel. I Maccabees 7:17 quotes Psalm 79:2-3 and introduce it with the words "in accordance with the word that was written". Relevant passages from II Maccabees include 2:2-3, 13-14 and 5:9. 2:13-14 shall suffice: "The same things are reported in the records and in the memoirs of Nehemiah, and also that he founded a library and collected *the books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David*, and letters of kings about votive offerings. In the same way Judas also collected all the books that had been lost on account of the war that had come upon us, and they are in our possession" (NRSV).

[17] In this treatise Philo describes the contemplative life of an ascetic community, the Therapeutae ("healers"), and makes reference to their spiritual activities, prayer, hymns and study of scriptures. With regards to the latter he writes (§ 25): "In each house there is a sacred chamber, which is called a sanctuary or closet, in which in isolation they are initiated into the mysteries of the holy life. They take nothing into it, neither drink, nor food, not anything else necessary for bodily needs, but laws and oracles delivered

book canon[18], and texts from the New Testament, especially Luke 24 which refers to "Moses and all the prophets" (verse 27) and "the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms" (verse 44). Evidence from Qumran such as *Miqsat Ma'aśe Ha-Torah* or *Some of the Works of the Law* (4QMMT)[19] is also mentioned in this regard. It was therefore generally agreed that at least the first two divisions of the Hebrew Bible, the Torah and the Prophets were fixed at the time of the beginning of both Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. The third part, the Writings, remained amorphous until the council of Jamnia decided toward the end of the first century C.E. that these books also "render the hands unclean". In light of the fact that the Christian codices of the Septuagint included more books than did the Hebrew Bible it was supposed that there originally existed parallel canons, the narrower Hebrew Bible in Palestine and a broader Alexandrian canon in Egypt.

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through the prophets, and psalms and the other books through which knowledge and piety are increased and perfected" (Winston, 1982:46). Some scholars note these references to laws, oracles of prophets, and psalms as evidence of the existence of a tripartite Bible in the first century C.E.

[18] The relevant passage is from Book 1 of *Against Apion* §§ 38-42: "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind until his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them". The English translation quoted here is by William Whiston (1987, Hendrickson Publishers). Steven Mason has argued, however, that this passage should be understood within Josephus's overall purpose of demonstrating the antiquity and reliability of the Jewish history as it is recorded in these books, and not to give any demonstrative statement on the openness or closeness of the Jewish canon in the First century C.E. or its arrangement either in a tripartite or bipartite divisions (2002:110-127).

[19] The relevant quotation is taken from fragments 7 and 8 of 4Q397 (4QMMT^{d}): "to you we have wr[itten] that you must understand the book of Moses [and the words of the] prophets and of David [and the annals] [of eac]h generation. And in the book it is written […]… […not to] […]… And further it is written that [you shall stray] from the path and you will undergo [evil. And it is written that] a]ll [these] things [shall happen to you at the e]nd of days, [the blessing] [and the curse…and you shall ass]ent in your heart [and will turn to me with all your […] which came […]" (García Martínez, 1996:84).

Jack Lewis[20] has, however, convincingly rejected the theory of a Jamnian council due to a lack of evidence from the rabbinic sources, whilst the research of Albert Sundberg[21] has refuted the theory of an Alexandrian canon. Moreover, Ulrich describes the Qumran scrolls as "the oldest, the best, and the most authentic evidence we have for the shape of the Scriptures at the time of the beginning of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. Thus, unless one can for a certain aspect explain why it is not the case, the Qumran scriptural evidence is generally applicable for the text and canon of late Second Temple Palestinian Judaism. The Qumran scriptural scrolls should now become the standard criteria for understanding and judging the Jewish Scriptures in late Second Temple Palestinian Judaism. There is strong evidence to demonstrate that the writings in the library at Qumran recognized a number of books as containing the word of God, thus as authoritative Scripture, and they were at times referred to as the Torah and the Prophets. There is no conclusive evidence, however, to determine what the exact contents of the collection were that the community considered the authoritative Scripture. Thus, there were recognized books of authoritative Scripture, but there is no clear evidence for a canon of Scripture. In particular, I think no sound conclusion about a tripartite canon can be based on 4QMMT" (2003:76-77). It follows that studies of the Qumran scrolls show,

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[20] See, for instance, his article "Jamnia Revisited," *The Canon Debate* (ed. L.M. McDonald and J.A. Sanders; Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002) 146-162.

[21] The old consensus is aptly represented by Henry Barclay Swete (1900:26): "Thus while the testimony of the first century A.D. (*sic*) does not absolutely require us to believe that all the books of the Hebrew canon had been translated and were circulated in a Greek version during the Apostolic age, such a view is not improbable; and it is confirmed by the fact that they are all contained in the canon of the Greek Bible which the Christian Church received from its Jewish predecessors. It is another question whether the versions were all of Alexandrian origin, or the only Greek translations which claimed to represent the corresponding Hebrew books ... But as a whole the work of translation was doubtless carried out at Alexandria, where it was begun; and the Greek Bible of the Hellenistic Jews and the Catholic Church may rightly be styled the Alexandrian Greek version of the Old Testament". This consensus has recently come under critical scrutiny, especially by Sundberg who raises four objections to the theory of an Alexandrian canon (quoted in Lust, 2003:41-42): (i) There is a lack of evidence as the primary witnesses to such a supposed canon are Christian codices, the earliest one being *codex Vaticanus* from the fourth century C.E.; (ii) The theory supposes that the city of Alexandria had become a leading centre of Judaism, but the historical sources deny that this is so; (iii) The books quoted in the New Testament, by the Church Fathers and in early "Old Testament" lists do not correspond to the supposed Alexandrian canon; (iv) The theory presumed that the books included in the Greek Bible, but excluded in the Hebrew were all originally written in Greek. The research on the scrolls found at Qumran has shown, however, that many of these books were composed in Hebrew or Aramaic and only later translated into Greek. Lust subsequently concludes: "It should be clear that the precious but scanty remainders of pre-Christian Greek biblical fragments do not give any positive support to an Alexandrian Canon supposedly including more books and following another order than the Hebrew Canon" (2003:43). See also Sundberg's article "The Septuagint: The Bible of Hellenistic Judaism" *The Canon Debate* (eds. L.M. McDonald and J.A. Sanders; Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002) 68-90.

on the one hand, that the term "canon" or "Bible" is an inappropriate one for the "Old Testament" books during the Second Temple period. These books should rather be termed "authoritative scriptures" or "sacred writings", that is, bookscrolls that enjoyed some form of authority within the various Jewish communities of the Second Temple period (VanderKam and Flint, 2002:154-157). Moreover, neither the terms nor the contents of the tripartite division of the Hebrew Bible were fixed at that time[22]. Some of the "apocryphal" and "pseudepigraphical" books[23], as well as literature specific to their own community had the same authority at Qumran as the books we consider to be

[22] This conclusion, however, does not enjoy unanimous approval among scholars. For the view that by the first century C.E. there existed a tripartite canon, while conceding that at least the third part may still have been amorphous, see J.A. Sanders, "The Stabilization of the Tanak", *The history of biblical interpretation* (eds. A.J. Hauser and D.F. Watson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 225-251; and J.C. Trebolle Barrera, "Origins of a Tripartite Old Testament Canon", *The Canon Debate* (eds. L.M. McDonald and J.A. Sanders; Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002) 128-145. However, with reference to the Prologue to the Wisdom of Ben Sira, Arie van der Kooij has shown that the suggestion that the third section in the tripartite division was still open-ended and not yet determined is problematic. The use of the definite article, "*the* other books of our ancestors", seems to presuppose that the third section was indeed a defined section (1998:23). Moreover, after an analysis of *Against Apion* book 1 §§ 38-40, the Prologue to Ben Sira, 2 Maccabees 2:13-14, and 4QMMT, van der Kooij argues that the tripartite structure of the collection of authoritative books and the arrangement thereof as attested by Josephus existed already in the second half of the second century B.C.E. (*ca*. 150 B.C.E.): "The tripartite collection of holy books as described by Josephus can be traced back to the middle of the second century B.C.E. Although one cannot be sure that the books of this collection were always counted in the same manner (22, or 24 [4 Ezra]), it may be surmised that they were practically the same. Also, their arrangement in the three sections as indicated by Josephus seems that have been the same in the Maccabean era: the books of the Law, the books of the Prophets (comprising all non-Pentateuchal books of a historiographical nature), and the remaining books (Psalms and wisdom literature). This collection assumed an official character, due to the fact that the books concerned were kept in the temple. At the same time, however, a canonical status of an ancient book does not yet imply, in the second century B.C.E., a stabilized or standardized text of such a book" (1998:37). In terms of canonization this means that the political situation during the second half of the second century B.C.E. prompted the rise to prominence of this collection of books in its tripartite structure: "Specific historical circumstances triggered a process by which ancient books which had already acquired an official and authoritative significance became in a sense 'canonical' as one of the 'ancestral' elements basic to the Jewish temple state and religion. Thus, their canonization was part of a process of re-establishing Jewish culture and religion after a period of serious threats to their security. At the same time, it is likely to have been part of a particular policy, presumably that of the Maccabean leaders. This would explain why, from about 150 B.C.E. onwards, the ancient books are presented as a defined corpus (though not necessarily a definitive one) with a tripartite structure" (1998:38). See also van der Kooij's article "Canonization of Ancient Hebrew Books and Hasmonaean Politics", *The Biblical Canons* (eds. J-M. Auwers and H.J. De Jonge; Leuven: Leuven University Press, Uitgeverij Peeters, 2003) 27-38.

[23] In accordance with the discussion of VanderKam and Flint concerning the "apocrypha" and "pseudepigrapha" in the Dead Sea Scrolls (2002:182-205) the former may be defined as "Jewish works of the Second Temple period that are excluded from the Hebrew Bible, yet included in the Old Testaments of some but not all churches" (2002:183), whilst the latter is described as "a large group of nonbiblical Jewish works that were previously known (before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls) and as a literary genre, or group, of falsely attributed writings" (2002:188). The Apocrypha include books such as Tobit, The Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira, and the Letter of Jeremiah. The pseudepigrapha include writings such as Psalms 151, 154 and 155, as well as the books of Enoch (1 Enoch) and Jubilees.

canonical. James VanderKam has argued that "Torah" was not restricted at Qumran to the five books of Moses or the Pentateuch, but may have included *Reworked Pentateuch* (4Q158, 4Q364-367), the *Temple Scroll* (4Q524, 11Q19-20) and *Jubilees* (2002:91-109). It also seems likely that the book of *Enoch* or *1 Enoch* was viewed as Scripture at Qumran (VanderKam and Flint, 2002:194-196), whilst both Daniel and the Psalms were considered to be among the Prophetical books (Ulrich, 1999:21-22).

Consequently, the whole history of the formation of the canon is in need of reformulation. With its focus on the canonical process Canon criticism has made a large contribution in this direction. The *canonical process* refers to "the journey of the many disparate works of literature within the ongoing community of Israel (including eventually both rabbinic Judaism and Christianity, each claiming to be the true Israel) from the early stages when they began to be considered as somehow authoritative for the broader community, through the collection and endorsement process, to the final judgment concerning their inspired character as the unified and defined collection of scripture – i.e., until the judgment of recognition that constituted the canon" (Ulrich, 2002:30). The collection and endorsement process referred to here involves the community's retelling or repetition of important traditions in order to foster its identity and to communicate it to succeeding generations. Retelling the stories and traditions that proved significant for the community's identity and by committing them to writing they selected some for repetition and transmission while others were neglected. It is by means of this selection-by-repetition activity of the communities that some of its authoritative scriptures ended up as the table of contents of its canon: "In an extended history of repetition and recitation … some of Israel's traditions landed on a kind of tenure track toward what would eventually be Israel's canon as *norma normata*. There was no council of authoritative persons who made the decisions about what was to be in or not in the canon. Rather, it was the common and frequent repetition of certain traditions in community that determined the content of the eventual canon" (Sanders, 2003:230). This *stability* of a canon, namely that it consists of a *selected* group of traditions that proved definitive for a community's identity throughout changing historical circumstances, is second in importance only to the ability of these traditions to be *adapted* or *resignified* in

order to take on a renewed relevance for the community in ever changing circumstances: "The major characteristic of scripture as canon is its relevance to the ongoing life of the community that passes it on from generation to generation; second to this is the characteristic of stability. In the early history of transmission tradents of the text, both scribes and translators, could focus on the need(s) of the community to understand the messages of the text, even to the extent of modestly altering or clarifying archaic or out-moded expressions so that their community could understand what it might mean to them" (Sanders, 2002:256-257). The canonical process therefore consists of both the *repetition* and *resignification* of the traditions contained in the community's authoritative scriptures.

The *terminus a quo* of this process is difficult to determine as it reaches back to the pre-exilic oral and written stages of the traditions represented by the canonical books while it seems clear from the preceding discussion that the Qumran finds should influence our view of the *terminus ad quem* of the canonical process, pushing it back beyond at least the second century C.E. Ulrich (2002:24-25) has identified five developments along the historical trajectory of the canonical process that have significantly influenced it and are therefore important for our understanding of the history of the formation of the canon. On the one hand, these shifts reflect changing historical circumstances, some, such as the Babylonian exile, the rise of Hellenism, the two revolts against Rome and the influence of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth put a lot of strain on the identity of the communities that fostered the traditions. On the other hand, these developments witness to shifting views on the nature and function of these traditions within the communities.

First, starting with the Babylonian exile there was a shift from the national literature of Israel to the sacred scripture of Judaism. Second, after 70 C.E. there was a shift from a temple-based religion to a text-based religion in Judaism. Third, there was a shift from the fluidity, pluriformity, and creativeness in composition of the text of the books of scripture to a stabilized single textual form for each book. Fourth, there was a gradual shift from viewing revelation as dynamic and ongoing to viewing it as the verbal form of the texts themselves. This development is related to the conviction that prophecy and the

acts of God in history have ceased at the time of Ezra-Nehemiah and should probably be dated after the Bar Kochba revolt in 132-135 C.E. (Sanders, 2002:258). Fifth, "the format of the books of the scriptures shifted from individual scrolls, usually containing one or two books, to the codex, which could contain many books. With scrolls, the table of contents of the scriptures was a *mental notion*, but it became a *physical object* when a codex contained those books included in that table of contents and no others" (Ulrich, 2002:25 – his italics). This characteristic of canon as a fixed and closed list of authoritative books grouped together in one physical, codical volume as "the Bible" dates back to the fourth century within Christian circles. Robert Kraft is of the opinion that "from that period we get references to officially sponsored large-scale codices of 'sacred scriptures' – in essence, *the* Bible as a single book, with roughly the same contents as would be found in classical Greek and Latin Christianity. Although this practice of collecting the entire "Bible" in a single codex did not prevail during the following millennium, I suspect that the new possibility (and concept) affected a major paradigm shift in how Christians henceforth thought about their "Bible" and its canonical cohesiveness. That is, 'biblical canon' took on a very concrete meaning in the shadow of the appearance of the Bible as a single book in codex form" (2002:230 – his italics). If indeed both the function *and* the shape of canon mark its definitive characteristics, the end of the canonical process does not antedate the fourth century C.E.

From Ulrich's comprehensive definition of canon and the research on the history of the canonical process by Canon criticism, coupled with insights from the scrolls found in the Judean desert near the Dead Sea, the following aspects of "canon" should be taken into consideration when one attempts to delineate the scope of the "Old Testament":

(i) From its twin characteristics of stability and adaptability as well as the situation at Qumran it is clear that "canon" refers to books and not to a specific textual form of books: "Qumran demonstrates that the textual form of most books was still in that state of creative development until at least 70 C.E. and possibly as late as 132. Now, when considering the books of scripture in the period of the late Second Temple and the origins of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism, we must distinguish between the book or literary opus and

the particular wording or literary edition of that opus which may still have been in the stage of creative development. It was the book, i.e., the scroll, not its particular wording or literary edition, which made the hands unclean, according to the rabbis" (Ulrich, 2002:32).

(ii) "Canon" denotes a *closed* list of books decided on by the community of faith that adheres to it as its authoritative rule of faith and life. This decision that certain books are henceforth binding for the identity of the faith community is a formal and official one. Therefore, with regard to these first two aspects of "canon", Ulrich argues that "there is no canon as such in Judaism prior to the end of the first century C.E. or in Christianity prior to the fourth century, that it is confusing to speak of an 'open canon', and that 'the canonical' text is an imprecise term, at best an abstraction (not a text one could ever pick up and read)" (1999:56).

(iii) Lastly, it should always be kept in mind that "(w)hen one uses the word 'canon' one must specify to which denomination or community of faith it refers even within Judaism and Christianity: within both there is now and was in antiquity more than one canon in the sense of limited lists of sacred books considered canonical" (Sanders, 1992:838).

2.2.1.3 Plurality of texts and the question concerning the "original" text

The Qumran finds have also radically altered our views concerning the *text* of the "Old Testament". Texts were found there that not only reflect the three major witnesses to the Hebrew texts of the "Old Testament" books, namely, the Masoretic Text (MT), the Septuagint (LXX) and the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP), but also so-called "non-aligned" texts, that is, texts that contain readings that diverge significantly from other texts (Vanderkam and Flint, 2002:144). Emanuel Tov refers to the textual reality at Qumran as one of textual multiplicity "to such an extent that one can almost speak in terms of an unlimited number of texts" (2001:161). Geza Vermes describes the situation thus: "(T)he scriptural scrolls, and especially the fragments, are characterized by extreme fluidity: they often differ not just from the customary wording, but when the same book is attested

by several manuscripts, also among themselves. In fact, some of the fragments echo what later became the Masoretic text; others resemble the Hebrew underlying the Greek Septuagint; yet others recall the Samaritan Torah or Pentateuch, the only part of the Bible which the Jews of Samaria accepted as scripture. Some Qumran fragments represent a mixture of these, or something altogether different … In short, while largely echoing the contents of biblical books, Qumran has opened an entirely new era in the textual history of the Hebrew Scripture" (1999:13-14). This situation of a plurality of extant textual witnesses to the "Old Testament" and the consequent necessity of rethinking the history of the biblical texts cast a shadow on any notion of homogeneity of "the text" of the "Old Testament" as well as ascribing a privileged position to only one of these textual witnesses. Brevard Childs has summarized the issue succinctly with regard to the MT: "Behind the apparently monolithic structure of the MT lay a long history of textual development in which the state of the text was in great fluidity. During several centuries prior to the stabilization of the Hebrew text in the late first century, rival text traditions competed with each other without there emerging any official or authoritative text. The authoritative role of the proto-Masoretic tradition derived from a variety of historical factors many of which remain unknown. However, the authority of the MT did not necessarily entail a textual superiority, in the modern sense, as being the grounds for its selection. Finally, long after the process of stabilization had begun, a considerable amount of textual fluidity continued to be tolerated within Jewish communities" (1979:92). This *plurality of extant textual witnesses* to the Hebrew text of the "Old Testament" available to us therefore begs the question as to *which text* of the books should serve as the basis of our translations, exegesis, and theological study.

The task of establishing a Hebrew text that provides a solid foundation on which exegesis can build is traditionally assigned to the discipline of *textual criticism* (Würthwein, 1995:105). Textual criticism consists of two phases. The first stage deals with the collecting of Hebrew variants or reconstructing them from the ancient translations. The second step involves the comparing of and evaluation of these variants (Tov, 2001:291).

The evaluation of the textual variants aims at establishing the sought after text[24]. The text that textual criticism aims for, usually referred to as the "original" text or *Urtext*, as well as the methods used to arrive at this text will be determined by the textual critic's views on the history of the "Old Testament" texts. Textual theories that seek to explain the history of the "Old Testament" texts try at the same time to account for the plurality of texts, that is, the differences between the extant textual witnesses. The main differences between these various textual witnesses can be categorized in terms of orthography, individual variant readings, and variant literary editions of books (Ulrich, 1999:86-94). Scribes created these differences in the course of the literary growth of the books and their subsequent transmission; in other words, it was the result of both the composition and transmission of the books. Consequently, scholarly opinions regarding the original shape of the texts and the relationship between textual criticism and literary criticism[25] become important. Moreover, it is important to indicate which stage of the history of the "Old Testament" texts the text critic views as the original text. These three issues, the history of the biblical texts, the relationship between textual criticism and literary criticism, and the various views on the "original" text that is in need of reconstruction, go

[24] Ferdinand Deist has shown that scholarly opinions differ as to what exactly this evaluation entails: "Some would say such an evaluation has to judge whether the wording of a text is 'correct' or 'wrong', that is, whether a particular copy of a manuscript contains, in a particular instance, the words written by the author of that text … Textual criticism would in this case only have to do with the establishment of the correct text of the Old Testament, so that the exegetical work done afterwards will foot on an authoritative text … Other scholars would say that the establishment of the 'correct' reading is only one possible task of textual criticism, although perhaps not its major task. Its major contribution, so they would argue, lies within the exegetical process itself … Comparing different manuscripts and translations of a particular Old Testament text is thus primarily aimed not at establishing the one and only correct wording of that text, but at understanding it within a wider textual context" (1988:1). Deist concludes that this difference of opinion rests on different approaches to the Bible and in different philosophical orientations (1988:1).

[25] Literary criticism (*Literarkritik*, Higher criticism or Source criticism) forms part of the larger grouping of Historical-critical methods of studying the Bible, including Form criticism, Tradition criticism, and Redaction criticism (Barton, 1996:20-60; Jonker, 2005:29-45): "Historical critics, it is usually said, are interested in *genetic* questions about the biblical text. They ask when and by whom books were written; what was their intended readership and, in the case of many biblical books, what were the stages by which they came into being – for it is historical criticism to which we owe the suggestion that many books are composite, put together out of a number of originally separate source documents" (Barton, 1998b:9 - his italics). Literary critics study the texts in order to identify and date the smaller units or source documents that underlie the text at hand. Two criteria are important in the identification of sources: (i) disturbing repetitions and (ii) untenable tensions in the text that cannot be explained in any other way (Jonker, 2005:36). "The 'literary' critic … looks for such tell-tale signs of multiple authorship in biblical texts and tries to trace the development of the text through however many stages seem to him to have been involved" (Barton, 1996:21). Literary criticism is therefore a *sine qua non* for a correct understanding of the way in which the text our exegesis, translation, and theology is based on came into being, that is, its composition or textual development.

hand in glove and the presuppositions and opinions that guide them will in turn determine the text that exegesis, translation and theology is based on.

Van der Kooij remarks that when they refer to the "original text" of an "Old Testament" book "most exegetes have in mind the final redaction of a book, or, since this aim is difficult to realize, its earliest attainable form" (2003:730)[26]. *Emanuel Tov* formerly held such a view[27]. According to him the "Old Testament" books passed through two main stages of development: the stage of the books' literary growth up to a form which was final in respect to their content and the stage of the copying and textual transmission of the completed compositions. Literary criticism deals with the first stage, that of the development of the books themselves, whereas textual criticism concerns itself with the second stage, that of the books' copying and transmission (2001:315). The aim of textual criticism is therefore to reconstruct the text that stood at the beginning of this copying and transmission process and for Tov this is the "literary composition which has been accepted as binding (authoritative) by Jewish tradition", that is, the proto-MT (2001:317).

Arie van der Kooij expresses his doubts on whether the proto-MT should serve as the goal of textual criticism for this excludes both the textual traditions which are earlier than the proto-MT as well as texts that contain literary developments subsequent to the proto-MT. In his view all available textual traditions (including texts from Qumran and the ancient versions) form part of the transmission history (2003a:731). Consequently, "(t)he task of textual criticism then is to try to account for all these data in order to establish, as far as possible, the earliest attainable text of a book, be it proto-MT, or earlier (pre-MT),

[26] In contrast to this view, *Ernst Würthwein* has stated that the goal of textual criticism is not to reconstruct the text of a particular time in history, but to *edit* the *traditional text* in order to eliminate the errors that crept in unintentionally through transmission and those that were made deliberately, thus restoring the original reading of that text (1995:106). According to Würthwein the MT preserves the best witness to this text and should therefore be taken as the point of departure in textual criticism (1995:116). Kyle McCarter also adopts a different stance on the issue of the goal of textual criticism. According to him: "(t)extual criticism is an enterprise that has as its objective the enhancement of the integrity of a text. It is based on the study of the extant copies of the text. The critic compares these copies and attempts to draw conclusions about the divergences between them. The goal is the recovery of an earlier, more authentic – and therefore superior – form of the text" (1986:12).

[27] See, for example, "The original shape of the biblical text" *Congress Volume (Leuven 1989)* (ed. J.A Emerton; Leiden: Brill, 1991) 345-359; "Textual Criticism (OT)" *ABD Volume VI* (ed. D.N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 393-412; and *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible. Second Revised Edition* (Minneapolis and Assen: Fortress Press and Van Gorcum, 2001).

that is to say, the wording of a text which lay at the root of attested differences between the witnesses, including different 'editions' of chapters, or the book concerned" (2003a:731).

Brevard Childs has described the history of the biblical texts, and consequently the relationship between its literary development and its transmission, within the broader scope of the canonical process. According to Childs the formation of the canon was both a historical and theological process that shaped the literature in such a way that it would serve as authoritative scripture for future generations (1979:75-79). In the formation of the canon the literary development of the texts and its transmission formed two different, yet overlapping processes. The former "involved major moves affecting the understanding of the literature, such as combining sources, restructuring the material into new patterns, and providing new redactional contexts for interpreting the traditions" (1979:95). By contrast, the transmission process "reflects a far more conservative, passive role with the activity focused on preserving and maintaining traditions rather than creating them" (1979:95). The task of textual criticism is therefore to recover the final form of the texts that resulted from the canonical process, that is, the received or canonical text (1979:96)[28]. The MT should not be equated with the canonical text, but serves as a vehicle for its recovery: "The first task of the Old Testament text critic is to seek to recover the stabilized canonical text through the vehicle of the Masoretic traditions. This process involves critically establishing the best Masoretic text which is closest to the original text of the first century" (1979:101). The location of the canonical text in the first century arises from the fact that the texts of the Hebrew Bible reached a stabilized form at that time and that the Jewish community who preserved these traditions was the only one that survived the disastrous revolts against Rome and therefore could

[28] In contrast to this view that canon should be identified with *a specific form* of a text, Deist argues that "a *text* cannot be a canon (in the sense of a normative prescription): neither in its contents nor in its method of interpretation. What can become canonical is a *tradition* of knowledge, although such a tradition can change and does change as the needs of the community accepting that canon change. Texts and the interpretation of tradition reflected by texts, witness to changes in the paradigm of understanding. And for this reason we have to talk about specific texts produced under specific circumstances, the circumstances being the major generating force in the process of understanding" (1988:201 – his italics). Consequently, he proposes that the task of textual criticism is to reconstruct the different texts that were current in particular communities and to determine the interrelationship of these texts via the respective communities that preserved them (Deist, 1988:201).

have "continued through history as the living vehicle of the whole canon of Hebrew scripture" (1979:97).

Eugene Ulrich, on the other hand, argues that the line that divides the composition and the transmission of the individual texts should not be drawn that sharply; rather he describes the main lines in the picture of the history of the biblical text in terms of multiple literary editions[29]. According to Ulrich the biblical texts, from its beginnings to its final form in the MT tradition, arose and evolved through a process of organic development. This dynamic process whereby the biblical texts were composed in stages included two major thrusts: the faithful repetition or retelling of important traditions, and the creative reshaping of those traditions in new theological directions by editors: "It is well known that many parts of Scripture began as small, oral units and were told and retold, grouped into small collections of related material and gradually written down. The oral and written forms were occasionally reformulated to meet the varied needs of the times and were handed down and repeated faithfully for generations. But every once in a while, an occasion arose that sparked reflection on the traditional literature and readaptation of its traditional thrust in order to illuminate the current situation with its dangers or possibilities, to help the people see the situation more clearly and to motivate them to act in the way the authors or tridents considered necessary or proper" (1999:108). This process, which traces its beginnings back to unknown areas of Israel's past, came to a halt with the Jewish revolts against Roman imperial rule and the growing distinction between Rabbinic and Christian Jews in the first centuries of the Common Era. By that time new anthologies of religious literature had begun to emerge: the New Testament and the Mishnah (1999:108). As a result, Ulrich proposes that the history of the biblical text should be understood along the lines of this progressive trajectory of composition-by-stages and faithful transmission, which was disrupted occasionally by deliberate activity of editors who resignified the traditions for new circumstances. In this way multiple literary editions of the books of the "Old Testament" were produced. With such a view on

[29] Multiple literary editions refers to "a literary unit – a story, pericope, narrative, poem, book, etc. – appearing in two or more parallel forms (whether by chance extant or no longer extant in our textual witnesses), which one author, major redactor, or major editor completed and which a subsequent redactor or editor intentionally changed to a sufficient extent that the resultant form should be called a revised edition of that text" (Ulrich, 1999:107).

the development of the "Old Testament" texts, where the multiple literary editions coexisted alongside each other and enjoyed equal status, determining "the" original text of the books becomes a precarious, even a misleading objective: Consequently, "the target of 'textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible' is not a single text. The purpose and function of textual criticism is to reconstruct the history of the texts that eventually became the biblical collection in both its literary growth and its scribal transmission; it is not just to judge individual variants in order to determine which were 'superior' or 'original'. 'The original text' is a distracting concept for the Hebrew Bible; in a very real sense, there was no 'original text,' at least none accessible, except for those relatively late parts contributed by redactors" (1999:115).

Recently, Tov has changed his opinion and argues that no stage in the literary development of the texts can be singled out as the *Urtext*: "As far as we can ascertain, all these early stages were equally authoritative, probably in different centres and at different times … Upon the completion of each literary stage it was distributed and became authoritative. When the next stage was created and circulated, the previous one could not be eradicated any more, so that even at a late period such as the time of the Septuagint translation or in the Qumran period, both literary forms circulated" (2002:248). The task of the textual critic becomes one of recording the variants between equally authoritative texts without evaluation in parallel columns so as to "facilitate our understanding of these texts and to enable an egalitarian approach to them" (2002:250).

In the same article Tov discusses what he calls the problem that "(m)ainstream Judaism and Christianity adhere to the MT as the sole form of the Hebrew Bible. Surprisingly, even critical scholars use the MT almost exclusively as a base, an issue which has not been tackled in the literature. Even when analyzing the Hebrew Bible critically, scholars tend to consult mainly the printed editions of the MT. These printed editions, however, perpetuate the medieval MT and so continue a *single* textual tradition based on proto-Masoretic or proto-rabbinic texts such as those found at Qumran and Masada (before 68 and 73 C.E., respectively) and in additional sites in the Judean Desert (before 136 C.E.)" (2002:235 – his italics). Furthermore, Tov opposes any equation of the "Old Testament"

or the "original" text with the MT. He raises three objections against this view: (i) the Masoretic vocalization system originates from the tenth century C.E., (ii) the MT is but one textual witness among many, and (iii) the MT is not a uniform text, but rather represents many textual witnesses ranging from the third century B.C.E. to the Middle Ages (2002:242).

The sum total of this discussion on the plurality of texts, the history of the "Old Testament" texts, the aims of textual criticism and the disputed identity of the original shape of the texts is, firstly, that "each and every definition of textual criticism is formulated within an enormous set of theological, literary-theoretical and philosophical principles" (Deist, 1988:200) and, secondly, that the "Old Testament" cannot simply be equated with only one textual witness, especially the MT, but that it should rather be represented by the totality of textual witnesses: "Each Hebrew manuscript and ancient version represents a segment of the abstract entity that we call the 'text of the Bible'" (Tov, 2002:251).

2.2.2 Recent developments in Biblical studies and the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology

The divine is usually considered to be a supernatural being, that is, neither bound to the laws of physics nor perceptible to the human senses in any concrete way. "God" cannot be weighed, measured, counted, or empirically studied; therefore, knowledge of the divine cannot be acquired in an inductive manner. An important question that follows from this is how humans then come to know "God", in other words, how we have access to knowledge of the divine. In this regard some religions make references to the divine making itself known to humanity in historical events, dreams or visions, through the mediation of an intermediary, and religious experiences (ecstatic, meditative et cetera). This self-disclosure of the divine is known as "revelation" (Deist, 1984:219) and finds expression in the religion's main writings, traditions, ideas, concepts, symbols, religious imagination, worship, and ritual practices. The philosophical presuppositions that underlie all notions of the divine, that is, whether it is personal or a process, immanent or

transcendent, involved in human affairs or indifferent towards it, malicious or benevolent, are therefore accessible through a religion's main ideas, texts, and practices that centres around the supposed founding and continuing experiences of the divine.

Consequently, the term "theology" is by and large used in two distinct, yet related ways. The first usage of the term is etymological and grammatical. It refers to a religious community's words *of* God (subjective genitive) and its words *about* God (objective genitive), in other words, its notion(s) of or presuppositions regarding the divine. The second use of the term refers to the (scientific) discipline of theology that systematically studies the different ways in which a religion's notion(s) of or presuppositions regarding the divine find expression in its ideas, texts, and practices. The critical question regarding the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology is how this double usage of the term is brought to bear on the "Old Testament". Is the theological content of the "Old Testament" to be used in both Church and Synagogue for sermons, religious edification, and addressing pressing ethical problems, in other words, as a rule of faith and life? If so, how is it (to be) done? Is the theology (words about God) of the "Old Testament" an important source for Jewish and Christian theology (scientific discipline)? The answer to this question will be determined by the extent to which Jewish and Christian communities continue to view and use the "Old Testament" as a medium of divine revelation (words of God). In OTT this issue surfaces in the form of the debate whether the discipline should be descriptive and merely give an ordered presentation of the "Old Testament" text's theological content, or whether it should construe the theological content in such a manner that it will be prescriptive for those who adhere to the "Old Testament" as Scripture. In essence, the issues concerning the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology centres on the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation, that is, whether the words *about* God in the "Old Testament" (its theological content) are at the same time the words *of* God (revelation).

A brief historical overview of the treatment of this issue on the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation since the inception of Biblical theology, and specifically OTT, as a discipline apart from Systematic theology or Dogmatics until the

decades immediately following the Second World War will provide important background for understanding the present state of affairs regarding this issue[30]. In sum, the overview will show that throughout the first one and a half centuries of independent existence as discipline, Historical-critical methods dominated the form and content of Old Testament Theologies. "History" replaced prepositional concepts or ideas as the guiding category for theological interpretation of the "Old Testament" and found expression especially in the twin-notion of "revelation-through-history" and "salvation history" (*Heilsgeschichte*) in the mid-twentieth century. However, new developments in Biblical studies in the last five decades of the twentieth century have paved the road for the breakdown in consensus regarding "revelation-in-history" and *Heilsgeschichte*, on the one hand, and led to a growing suspicion of a privileged knowledge of the divine associated with the term revelation, on the other hand. This status quo in Biblical studies at the start of the 21st century has left OTT with a crisis regarding the nature of the theology of the "Old Testament" (however it is defined). The crisis concerns the locus of this collection of scriptures' authority as a source of knowledge about the divine and the extent thereof for matters of faith and life.

2.2.2.1 A brief overview of the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation

The 18th century saw the advent of the *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment) throughout Europe. This cultural movement encouraged rational human beings to "think for themselves" (Immanuel Kant) and stood on the twin pedestals of rationalism and individualism. Its adherents emphasized the human reason, that is, the power of human intellect, as the source of true knowledge and the arbiter of truth, which can be reached only by means of observation and inductive reasoning. Unbiased (scientific) study and objectivity was also advocated. For the study of the Bible, including the "Old Testament", this meant that any claim of divine revelation as source of knowledge was shunned and that the Bible was subjected to critical and rational study like any other human document (Lemke,

[30] For a detailed discussion of the complete history and development of the discipline during this time, see J.H. Hayes and F. Prussner, *Old Testament Theology: its history & development* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985).

1992:450). It is against this background that *Johann Philipp Gabler's* inaugural lecture on "the Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Specific Objectives of Each" (1787)[31] must be understood. In this important lecture Gabler sought to establish the necessity of making a distinction between Biblical theology and Dogmatic theology and the method that should be followed in doing so. He felt that "(t)here is truly a biblical theology, of *historical* origin, conveying what the holy writers felt about divine matters; on the other hand there is a Dogmatic theology of *didactic* origin, teaching what each theologian philosophises *rationally* about divine things, according to the measure of his ability or of the times, age, place, sect, school, and other similar factors" (Sandys-Wunsch and Eldridge, 1992:496 - my italics). Accordingly, Biblical theology should be a historical discipline that is descriptive in nature, whilst Dogmatic theology is a didactic discipline that is prescriptive in nature. The consequent task of the theologian is to separate by means of historical and grammatical exegesis the *sacred ideas* within the Scriptures, namely, those *universal* ideas that are *divinely inspired* and have abiding value *for all times*, from those that are merely human, that is, those ideas that pertain only to the historical context of the biblical authors. Everything in the Scriptures that are personal, individual, and time-bound should be discarded in favour of that which is timeless, abstract, and universal. This is to be done in order to provide Dogmatic theology with a firm and certain Scriptural foundation (1992:496-498). It seems clear that Gabler, who is often credited as the "father" of Biblical theology as an independent discipline, intended Biblical theology to service Dogmatic theology with an unchanging foundation by identifying and systematically presenting the Bible's universal, unchanging and "pure notions which divine providence wished to be characteristic of all times and places" (1992:496).

In his overview of methods employed in OTT from its inception until 1930[32], Ben C. Ollenburger notes that by 1836 the discipline had made little progress beyond Gabler (1992:10). During the last quarter of the 19th century a significant shift had taken place in

[31] For a translation of Gabler's 1787 Altdorf lecture, *De justo discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae regundisque recte utriusque finibus*, see Sandys-Wunsch and Eldridge, 1992:489-502. It is important to note that Gabler did not distinguish Old Testament theology from Biblical theology. Gabler's younger contemporary Georg L. Bauer (1797) first made this distinction (Lemke, 1992:451).
[32] See Ollenburger, 1992:3-19.

the presentation of the religious content of the "Old Testament". More and more "Theologies" of the "Old Testament" took the form of a history of Israelite religion. Systematic-conceptual presentations made way for historical and genetic approaches to the religion of Israel. This shift was greatly influenced by a number of factors, including, the rationalism of the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th, a greater historical consciousness during this period brought about by historians like Leopold von Ranke, the influence of G.W.F. Hegel's philosophy of history with its dialectical model of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, and developments in the comparative study of religions of which the *Bibel-Babel* debate may serve as one example (Albertz, 1994:3-12). This development was supported in no small way by a large amount of archaeological discoveries from antiquity (Lemke, 1992:451). Israel's religion was no longer seen as *sui generis*, but as only one example of and influenced by religious ideas from the surrounding Ancient Near Eastern nations.

An exception to this rule was the work of *Johann Christian Hoffmann* who was influenced by the "federal" theology of the Protestant Orthodox theologian, Cocceius (d. 1669), and adopted the view that the Bible tells the story of God's saving acts as it is manifested in historical events. According to this "salvation historical" approach the Bible presents a series of *revelatory* stages extending from creation to consummation wherein God fulfils his *Heilsgeschichte* through his mighty deeds (Anderson, 1999:17). However, the Historical-critical work on the developmental composition of the "Old Testament" texts and the concomitant development of Israelite religion by *Julius Wellhausen* and others tipped the scales decisively in favour of *Religionsgeschichte* for almost four decades (Lemke, 1992:451-452). The upshot of these developments at the turn of the century was that some Christians doubted whether the "Old Testament" contained any revelation at all. It is well known that at the dawn of the twentieth century the historian Adolf von Harnack urged that the "Old Testament" be removed from the Christian canon, whilst theology was almost totally expelled from Biblical studies. In such an environment some scholars began to voice their doubts as to whether a *Religionsgeschichte* can aptly respond to such a crisis in the church (Ollenburger, 1992:15).

Werner Lemke describes the ensuing situation thus: "The dominant hold which the History of religions-approach had exercised over the discipline of OT theology began to wane during the period between the two world wars. Several factors helped bring this change about. Among them was the general change in theological climate following World War I[33], a reaction against the extremes of 19th century historicism and evolutionary developmentalism, and new developments in the field of OT scholarship itself. Already during the twenties, there appeared a series of articles by leading OT scholars, such as R. Kittel, C. Steuernagel, O. Eissfeldt and W. Eichrodt, calling for a revival of the discipline. Without surrendering the legitimate gains of the history-of-religions approach, many increasingly felt and expressed the need to allow the OT to speak theologically in its own right. In so doing, they hoped to defend the OT against its many detractors, as well as to enable it to speak more immediately and in fresh ways to contemporary theological issues and problems" (1992:452). The task of OTT for these scholars was to penetrate into the *essence* of "Old Testament" religion, a task the history-of-Israelite-religion approach failed to accomplish. The two important articles by Eissfeldt[34] and Eichrodt[35], published in 1926 and 1929 respectively, debated whether a *historical study* of the "Old Testament" could indeed reach to the essence of its religion.

Otto Eissfeldt argued in the negative. He voiced the opinion that there are two ways of approaching the religion of the "Old Testament", a historical and theological approach, that is, by HIR and OTT. The two disciplines need to be separated because each approach operates on a different plane of the human psyche: *knowledge* and *faith*: "Die historische Betrachtensweise einerseits und die theologische andererseits gehören zwei verschiedenen Ebenen an. Sie entsprechen zwei verschieden gearteten Funktionen

[33] In this regard the influence of Dialectical theology (or neo-orthodoxy as it is designated by some) should be mentioned. Through its main representatives, such as Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, Dialectical theology engineered a re-emphasis on divine revelation as the norm of our knowledge of God in the study of theology. Concomitantly, the term "theology" was to be preferred above "religion" as the latter designated a purely human endeavour, whilst the former had to do with divine revelation. The Bible was also approached as a whole (Old and New Testament together) with its centre of attention in God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ.

[34] "Israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte und alttestamentliche Theologie," *ZAW* 44 (1926) 1-12.

[35] "Hat die alttestamentliche Theologie noch selbständige Bedeutung innerhalb der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft?," *ZAW* 47 (1929) 83-91.

unseres Geistes, dem Erkennen und dem Glauben … Das Erkennen ist sich dessen bewusst, dass es trotz aller seiner Bemühungen über die raum-zeitlich beschränkte Welt nicht hinausdringt, der Glaube weiss sich von einem Ewigen gepackt. Das Erkennen strebt nach sicheren, klaren, den anderen auch gegen seinen überzeugenden, Beweisen, der Glaube bleibt immer ein ganz persönliches, von jedem neu zu machendes, Wagnis, das da am grössten ist, wo es ein Nicht-Sehen und noch Glauben bedeutet. Mit dieser doppelten geistigen Funktion treten wir an die Religion des AT heran" (1926:6). Knowledge is therefore gained by objective, scientific study freed from claims of "truth". Its field of research is restricted to time and space (1926:10). Accordingly, HIR is a historical discipline that presents "Old Testament" religion as an entity having undergone historical development and that treats it with philological and historical tools (1926:9-10). On the other hand, divine revelation, that which exceeds the time-space barrier and is eternal, can only be grasped by faith. OTT is the discipline where theologians identify those elements in the "Old Testament" that their religious communities regard as eternally valid, that is, as "the truth" or the "true religion" and thus as divine revelation (1926:10). Consequently, it cannot make use of historical methods, but must resort to systematic analyses: "Weil es sich in der alttestamentlichen Theologie um die Beschreibung der dem Glauben am AT gewordenen und immer neu werdenden Offenbarung Gottes handelt, kann sie nicht die Form einer Geschichtsdarstellung haben. Denn der Glaube hat es nicht mit Vergangenem zu tun, sondern mit Gegenwärtig-Zeitlosem; und die Offenbarung ist über die Kategorie der Zeit erhaben. Darum ist hier die systematische Art der Darstellung die gegebene…" (1926:11).

Walther Eichrodt, on the other hand, argued positively that historical methods can indeed penetrate into the essence of the "Old Testament"'s religion. His opinion rests on an understanding of the essence of the "Old Testament" religion and historical research that differs from the understanding of Eissfeldt: "Wenn man also unter dem Verständnis für das Wesen der ATlichen Religion das Urteil über ihren Wahrheits- und Geltungsanspruch versteht, so fällt dies allerdings aus dem Rahmen der ATlichen Wissenschaft als empirisch-historischer Forschung heraus und verlangt eine der Dogmatik verwandte Disziplin. Ganz anders, wenn wir unter dem 'Wesen der ATlichen Religion' ganz einfach

das verstehen, was das AT eigentlich meint, worin das Wesentliche seiner Geschichte eigentlich besteht, was den tiefsten Sinn seiner religiösen Gedankenwelt ausmacht" (1929:85). This understanding of the essence of "Old Testament" religion is coupled with an understanding of historical study whereby it is governed by two concepts. The first, a concept of selection (*Auswahlbegriff*), is the means by which the historian orders and arranges his vast amount of facts according to their broad inner connections. The second concept, that of purpose or aim (*Zielbegriff*), implies that the historical development takes place towards a goal (1929:86-87). Eichrodt's discussion about historical study in general also shows that these concepts stem not from empirical research, but from the historian's "basic value orientation" (*wertenden Grundhaltung*). He goes on to draw the conclusion that the goal towards which the history of the "Old Testament"'s religion develops is the thought world of the New Testament, and that the theologian's concept of selection must serve to clarify how the historical development of the "Old Testament"'s religion is "die Bereitung des geschichtlichen Bodens für die als höchster Wert erkannte Offenbarung in Christus" (1929:88).

In his two-volume *Theology of the Old Testament*[36] Eichrodt would go on to indicate that the *profoundest meaning* of the "Old Testament" belief can only be illuminated by examining its religious environment on the one hand, and its essential coherence with the New Testament, on the other hand (1961:31). To accomplish this task, a *cross-section* must be taken through the historical development of the "Old Testament" religion, or realm of belief, to indicate its *structural unity* (1961:27). For Eichrodt the unifying principle that make up this structural unity of the "Old Testament"'s belief, that distinguishes it from its religious environment, and that links it indissolubly with the New Testament, is the irruption of the Kingship of God into this world and its establishment here (1961:26). Eichrodt chose the biblical concept of *covenant* as an overarching category or unifying centre of the "Old Testament"'s belief. This type of systematic approach to OTT that arranges its contents around a unifying centre, thus presenting a cross-section of its inherent structural unity, dominated the discipline for the next three decades (Lemke, 1992:452).

[36] London: SCM Press, 1961, 1967.

The understanding of the relationship between historical study of the "Old Testament" and the essence of its religion (the divine revelation therein), and with it the discipline of OTT itself, took on a whole new shape with the work of *Gerhard von Rad*. Von Rad's approach to OTT and his concomitant views on divine revelation in the Old Testament, arose from the convergence and mutual intersection between introductory studies of the "Old Testament" and OTT *in vogue* at that time. The Historical-critical study of the development of the "Old Testament" texts into its present form, especially the identification of (written and oral) sources underlying the extant form of the texts, presented the discipline of OTT with important new theological insights to take into account[37]. Underlying the various sources however were multiple units of *tradition* that were joined together: "(E)ach of the individual narrative units which are now joined together in the main sources has a long history behind it, in the course of which it has been subjected to a variety of processes of reminting, and so reinterpreted as to be made relevant in up-to-date preaching. The units were, to begin with, completely independent. Then, as a general rule, they were absorbed into one of the larger blocks of traditions, e.g. those dealing with the patriarchal history, the events at Sinai, the wandering in the wilderness, etc., and were adapted to them. Then these blocks were themselves co-ordinated, although this again was not determined by the actual historical course of events, since that had long passed out of memory; its basis was rather a preconceived theological picture of the saving history already long established in the form of a cultic confession" (1975:4). This cultic confession or *creed*, as Von Rad also referred to it, was a summary of the principle facts of God's redemptive activity in the history of Israel and

[37] Von Rad credits this turn of events especially to the Form-critical work of Herman Gunkel as can be illustrated by a large quotation from the preface to his first volume of Old Testament Theology: "At that time a theology which wanted to be more than an historical picture of the Religion of Israel … could unfold itself along the lines of the scientific concepts of theology, anthropology, and soteriology. But that was changed when, inspired by Gunkel's investigation of literary classics, research met with norms of sacral law, various cultic texts, rituals, liturgies, and, in particular, with very ancient creedal formulae, that is, with insights which were of central importance for the theological understanding of the Old Testament. Has it not almost always been the case that when changes or new things from the point of view of form were met with, they corresponded to changed or completely new theological facts?" (1975: v).

was associated with specific cultic festivals celebrated at the respective cultic centres (1966:2)[38].

Von Rad extended these views to the realm of OTT and concluded that the proper subject matter of the discipline cannot be "the realm of Israel's belief", as Eichrodt maintained, but only Israel's *testimonies* about the *continuing divine redemptive activity* in *history*: "The subject-matter which concerns the theologian is, of course, not the spiritual and religious world of Israel and the conditions of her soul in general, nor is it her world of faith, all of which can only be reconstructed by means of conclusions drawn from the documents: instead it is simply Israel's own explicit assertions about Jahweh … In this respect the theological radius of what Israel said about God is conspicuously restricted compared with the theologies of other nations – instead, the Old Testament writings confine themselves to representing Jahweh's relationship to Israel and the world in one aspect only, namely as a continuing divine activity in history. This implies that in principle Israel's faith is grounded in a theology of history. It regards itself as based upon

[38] Von Rad discussed this issue in his programmatic essay "The Form-Critical Problem of the Hexateuch". He identified Deuteronomy 26:5-9, 6:20-24, and Joshua 24:2b-13 as historical creeds wherein Israel testified to its belief in YHWH's redemptive activity in the exodus from Egypt and the settlement in the Promised Land (1966:2-13). Von Rad associated this creed with the festival of the first fruits (the Feast of Weeks) celebrated at Gilgal to commemorate YHWH as the giver of a cultivable land (1966:43). This creed is however free from any reference to the theophany at Sinai and the consequent giving of the divine law. He saw this Sinai tradition as a totally other tradition, distinct from the Settlement tradition, that was associated with a covenant renewal festival at Shechem (the Feast of Booths) (1966:36). Von Rad argued that a historian, the Yahwist, was responsible for the accumulation and merging of these two traditions. The Settlement tradition remained the foundational tradition as the summary of Israel's testimony to God's redemptive activity in history, the creeds, encompasses exactly this tradition. The Yahwist was also responsible for the expansion of the patriarchal narratives as well as the inclusion of the primeval history into the Hexateuch "Suppose we visualize the matter roughly. On the one hand he had one of those summaries of salvation history (from the patriarchs to the conquest). On the other hand he had a very great number of loose compositions, of which a few perhaps had already coalesced into smaller compositions. Most of them, however, were certainly short and without context. The astonishing creative accomplishment was that by means of the simple plan of that credo of sacred history he was successful in forging the immense mass of narrative detail into a supporting and unifying basic tradition, and indeed in such a way that the simple and manifest thought of that credo remained dominant and almost unchanged in its theological outline" (1961:19-20). Behind this process lay the theological interests of the Yahwist: "For him, God's dealings are not something experienced only intermittently in a holy war through the deeds of a charismatic leader. In a word, the main emphasis in God's dealings with his people is now to be sought outside the sacral institutions. God's activity is now perhaps less perceptible to the outward sight, but it is actually perceived more fully and more constantly because his guidance is seen to extend equally to every historical occurrence, sacred or profane, up to the time of the Settlement. The Yahwist bears witness to the fact that history is directed and ordered by God. The providence of Yahweh is revealed to the eye of faith in every sphere of life, private or public" (1966:71).

historical acts, and as shaped and re-shaped by factors in which it saw the hand of Jahweh at work" (1975:105-106). Consequently, divine revelation is associated with salvation history. According to Von Rad, however, salvation history does not refer to actual historical events in Israel's past as it is reconstructed by critical scholarship, but rather the confessional history of Israel's traditions (1975:108). The task of the "Old Testament" theologian is then not to forge these traditions about YHWH's mighty acts in history (salvation history / divine revelation) into a coherent system, but in fact to *retell* it: "(I)t would be fatal to our understanding of Israel's witness if we were to arrange it from the outset on the basis of theological categories which, though current among ourselves, have absolutely nothing to do with those on whose basis Israel herself allowed her theological thinking to be ordered. Thus, re-telling remains the most legitimate form of theological discourse on the Old Testament" (1975:121).

Von Rad's theology resulted in a lively debate and a cluster of questions concerning the proper understanding of "history": "On the one hand von Rad accepted and affirmed the basic results of biblical criticism in the Old Testament, and especially the form of 'tradition criticism' which had been developed by Alt, Noth, and himself. These remained fundamental to his scholarly vision. But to him, 'history' was more importantly a theological entity: it was the medium in which the God of Israel revealed himself. Thus the structure of his two volumes seemed on the one side to satisfy the historical-critical requirement of a sequential presentation, and on the other hand it seemed to show forth the stages of divine revelation. It was important to him that the Old Testament 'was a history book'. God had acted in history, something that, he implied, placed ancient Hebrew faith in a special revelatory category. But he was a critical scholar and did not suppose that actual history had been exactly the same as the narrations in the Bible suggested. He himself thought, perhaps, that the difference would not matter, but critics pressed the point" (Barr, 2000:93-94). Von Rad's distinction between two versions of Israel's history, the one reconstructed by historical critical scholarship and the other the one built up by Israel's religious traditions gathered in the "Old Testament" was vehemently opposed by *Franz Hesse*. Hesse maintained that our faith rests on what actually happened in "Old Testament" times and not on that which is confessed to have

happened. He put a lot of stock in the ability of historical criticism to give an accurate account of Israel's history. Therefore he contended that we have access to the factual history of salvation by means of the historical critical reconstruction of Israel's history from the "Old Testament" texts (Hasel, 1989:99-101).

Between 1953 and 1962 *Walther Zimmerli* and *Rolf Rendtorff* were engaged in a discussion on history and/or word as the kind of revelation in the "Old Testament". "Zimmerli emphasizes the word of Yahweh which gives rise to and illuminates history (particularly in the self-identification formula I am Yahweh), while for Rendtorff revelation is constituted by history, in which the word is grounded and through which the word is confirmed" (Knierim, 1995:149). In their later works both Zimmerli and Rendtorff indicated, in different ways, that in order for an historical event to be considered revelatory it needed to be *recognized* as such. In their argumentation both scholars quote Hosea 13:4: "Yet I have been the LORD [YHWH – GRK] your God ever since the land of Egypt; you know no God but me, and besides me there is no saviour" (NRSV). Zimmerli argues that history, as a phenomenon in itself, is not the vehicle of divine revelation. He concedes that we can only speak of God in acknowledgement of the way he demonstrates his nature through his *acts* and *commandments*, however this revelation in God's historical acts is always accompanied by his word (1978:25). This means that a messenger from God must first attribute the historical event to a divine act for it to be understood as revelation, in other words, the event must be attributed to YHWH, *the revealed name* of God. With reference to Hosea 13:4 and the First commandment (Exodus 20:2-3) Zimmerli states that the "Old Testament" knows only one God, YHWH, the God that revealed himself in the foundational event of the exodus. The revealed name and the exodus event are inextricably linked, the former recalls the latter: "At the beginning of the great revelation to Israel at Sinai, the mountain of God, stands the proclamation of the Decalogue … The God who here appears in the storm makes himself known through his name, *recalling at the same time* his act of delivering Israel from servitude. On the basis of this act his people may and shall know him" (1978:17 – my italics). In short then, according to Zimmerli revelation and history

overlap only when a divine word from a messenger links the historical event with YHWH, Israel's God since the exodus from Egypt.

Like Zimmerli, Rendtorff also marks the exodus from Egypt as the foundational revelatory act of God in the history of Israel. With reference to Hosea 13:4 he states: "Die Herausführung Israels aus Ägypten ist die grundlegende Heilstat. Die anderen basieren darauf, und sie sind insofern als Selbsterweis des geschichtsmächtigen Gottes erfahrbar, als sie ihn als den Gott bestätigen, der Israel aus Ägypten herausgeführt hat" (1991:120). Rendtorff, however, draws the attention to a different aspect that flows from this than does Zimmerli. Whilst the latter focuses on the link between the revealed name of God, YHWH, and this foundational historical act, the former shows that the "Old Testament" does not only witness to God's self-revelation / self-disclosure in acts such as the exodus, but also human perception of and reflection on this revelation. This means that the people that experience the historical event must first *experience* it as divine revelation for it to be understood as such: "(E)s genügt nicht – theologisch und philosophisch – so von der Offenbarung Gottes in der Geschichte Israels zu sprechen. Denn die geschichtlichen Ereignisse werden ja erst dadurch zur Offenbarung Gottes, dass sie von den betroffenen Menschen als solche *erfahren* werden, dass diese Erfahrung verarbeitet, reflektiert, formuliert und weitergegeben wird. Wir können redlicherweise nicht einfach sagen: Gott hat sich in der Herausführung aus Ägypten offenbart, sondern wir können nur sagen: Israel hat dieses Ereignis als die grundlegende Heilstat erfahren, in der sich Gott offenbart hat als der, der er ist" (1991:121 – his italics). Israel therefore *experiences* this God of the exodus as *their* God. This God is also the God of their patriarchs, the God who gave them the land in which they now live as his people, thinking about, formulating and passing on their experiences of this God to future generations, who in turn will also have to reflect on these experiences and formulate them as their own experience with this God (1991:121). The "Old Testament" witness also to other nations' experiences of Israel's God as the *only* God: "Die Gotteserkenntnis der Völker geschieht also nicht an Israel vorbei oder so, dass sie Israels Gotteserkenntnis dabei hinter sich lassen. Im Gegenteil: indem sie Gott als den Gott Israels erkennen, erkennen sie ihn als den einen und einzigen Gott. Anders ausgedrückt: Gott offenbart sich den Völkern als der *eine*, der

er ist, indem er sich ihnen als der Gott Israels offenbart" (1991:118 – his italics). This double aspect of revelation in the "Old Testament", that Israel knows its God through his self-disclosure in his historical acts (particularity) and that the other nations acknowledges Israel's God as the only God (universality) has two important implications for the way we conceive of the relationship between revelation and the "Old Testament": Firstly, Rendtorff concludes that the theological knowledge of modern faith communities, Jewish, Christian and Muslim, cannot bypass the particularity of Israel's faith. We know no other God than *Israel's* God (1991:120). Secondly, the fact that divine revelation consist not only of the *bruta facta* of God's historical acts, but also of the experience, appropriation, and assimilation thereof in the religious community, means that the "Old Testament" is not only a witness to divine revelation, but in fact shares in the process thereof (1991:121).

A distinct way of understanding theology in its relation to Biblical studies developed in America during the years following the Second World War. This understanding and way of doing theology resembled such distinctive traits that Brevard Childs felt justified in calling it a movement, the *Biblical Theology Movement* (BTM) (1970:13-31). The BTM was driven by a new realization of the relevance of the Bible for the life and service of the Church; a concomitant summons to return to the Bible as central to theology and a resurgence of Biblical theology. The neo-orthodox theology of Karl Barth, and especially Emil Brunner exerted an important influence on the movement. The BTM followed in the wake of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy that raged from 1910 through the late Twenties regarding the validity of Biblical (Historical) criticism for studying the Bible (Childs, 1970:20-21). In its rediscovery of a new message in the Bible that was vital for the Church and its proclamation the BTM was critical of both conservative and liberal misunderstandings thereof. The movement also opened up the possibility of affirming the value of Biblical criticism while at the same time retaining a confessionally oriented theology (Childs, 1970:20-21).

One of the major common themes[39] that was emphasized by representatives of the BTM was the revelation of God in history: "Few tenets lay closer to the heart of the Biblical Theology Movement than the conviction that revelation was mediated through history. It provided the key to unlock the Bible for a modern generation and at the same time to understand it theologically. Invariably one could expect to find among the major expositions of the new theological emphasis at least one chapter on the subject of 'revelation in history'" (Childs, 1970:39). "Revelation-through-history" seemed to provide answers to many of the problems that had plagued American Biblical studies in the preceding era. First, it allowed scholars to relate God's activity with objective events, an emphasis that was lost in seeing the Bible as a process of evolving religious discovery. At the same time, the content of revelation was no longer identified with doctrine and prepositional formulations concerning God, but with God's self-disclosure in historical events. Moreover, by stressing history, the continuing lines that join the Old and the New Testaments was established and the gap between the past and the present was bridged: "Israel's history became the church's history, and subsequently our history. The church's liturgy was a participation in the selfsame redemptive events. Biblical Theology had become recital" (Childs, 1970:41). Finally, Biblical archaeology flourished in America, due in large part to the influence of William Foxwell Albright and his students. By "taking history seriously" the archaeological excavations done by American scholars received a theological justification. George Ernest Wright, who was both a leading archaeologist and a renowned Biblical theologian, propagated the view that Biblical theology and Biblical archaeology belong together since archaeology is the best tool for

[39] Apart from seeing the revelation of God in history, the BTM also stressed the following themes (Childs, 1970:33-50): (i) A recovery of the theological dimension of the Bible, without disregarding Historical criticism. At the centre of this concern for theologically orientated study of the Bible was the conviction that the Bible was relevant for the modern person and his/her needs. (ii) The unity of the whole Bible. (iii) A distinctive Biblical mentality. The BTM discovered a distinctive perspective in the Bible that they identified with "Hebrew mentality" over against Greek or Hellenist ways of thought. The former was personal, verbal, and historical, while the latter was branded as abstract, theoretical, and rationalistic. (iv) The contrast of the Bible to its environment. "The Bible reflects the influence of its environment both in terms of its form and content, and therefore cannot be understood apart from the study of its common Near Eastern background. Yet in spite of its appropriations the Bible has used these common elements in a way that is totally distinct and unique from its environment" (Childs, 1970:48). The distinctions of the Bible that included monotheism, the "aniconic" character of God and the historical activity of God over against the other Ancient Near Eastern gods, who were embodiments of natural phenomena, could be proven by objective, historical research. Influential historians and theologians such as Albrecht Alt, Martin Noth, William F. Albright, George E. Wright, John Bright, and Roland de Vaux were all agreed on this matter (Childs, 1970: 49-50).

the study of ancient history and God revealed himself in his mighty redemptive acts in Israel's history as it is recorded in the "Old Testament". In sum, the BTM opined that the "Old Testament" version of Israel's history was for its most part historically reliable and stressed this history as the vehicle for divine revelation over against seeing the Bible either as a deposit of eternal truths and right doctrine, or as a process of evolving religious development.

By the mid-twentieth century "revelation-through-history" had become the centre of biblical thinking and the interpretation of any biblical passage was to be related to historical revelation. However, dissent was on the horizon and pressures from within and from without Biblical studies eventually led not only to the breakdown of the BTM (Childs, 1970:61-87), but also of the concept of "revelation-through-history". One of the critical voices that were raised against this concept at this time was that of James Barr.

In Barr's inaugural lecture delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1962[40] he posed the question whether the biblical evidence, and the evidence of the "Old Testament" in particular, fits with and supports the assertion that "history" is the absolutely supreme milieu of God's revelation (1963:193). His answer was in the negative. Barr focused his attention on three areas of the "Old Testament" where the idea of the centrality of "revelation-through-history" cannot be applied without doing violence to the texts: "On the one hand, I believe, there are important elements in the texts which cannot reasonably be subsumed under 'revelation through history'. On the other hand, even in the texts which in some degree can be so subsumed, there are important elements which equally call for attention, although they tend to be submerged when the interpretation is guided by the concept of revelation in history" (1963:196). Firstly, there are substantial texts in the "Old Testament", notably the Wisdom literature and the Psalms, which defy any attempt to fit them into a scheme that has "revelation-through-history" as its theological focus or point of departure. Secondly, according to Barr, those texts that have supplied important examples for the idea of "revelation-through-history",

[40] The lecture was published under the title "Revelation Through History in the Old Testament and in Modern Theology", *Int* 17 (1963), 193-205.

such as the Exodus story, have been treated as records of the divine acts in history wherein God revealed himself. However, the details and present form of the texts are seen as merely interpretations of these acts, meditations on them, or theological reflection prompted by them. An example of such a treatment of a text is Exodus 3 where the theophany in the burning bush and the commissioning of Moses were described as "interpretation" of the divine act of salvation in the historical event of Israel's escape from Egypt. Barr objects to such a reading where "revelation-through-history" is emphasized at the cost of the biblical texts' own representation of the events: "We cannot attribute to history a revelatory character, in a sense having substantial priority over the particular divine, spoken communications with particular men, without doing violence to the way in which the biblical traditions in fact speak. The verbal self-declaration of Yahweh in that great passage, Exodus 3, has as much independent standing in the esteem of the traditionists as the crossing of the Red Sea had" (1963:197). Thirdly, Barr insists that the sense in which the word "history" is used when it is applied to biblical stories is a modern one that is also used to characterize more recent events of the past. Consequently, the term "history" as it is commonly used is foreign to the biblical narratives, also because Biblical Hebrew has no lexeme corresponding to this sense of the word "history". One of two possibilities occurs as a result of this: Either the likeness of different biblical narratives, such as the creation, the flood, the Exodus, and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, that share a common character as stories of events in which God acts, is split up when the term "history" is applied to them all in a unitary way, or else in trying to include them all under the same understanding of the term "history" the definition of the term is stretched beyond recognition of its normal usage (1963:198-199).

In another context (1999:345-361), Barr states that the history writing in the "Old Testament" has the character of a cumulative story that develops along a temporal sequence rather than history in the modern sense of the term. This story is indeed "history-like" in that it relates consecutive events from the origins of the world to the building of the Second Temple, but it also includes human and divine acts, speeches, thoughts, conversations, as well as all sorts of varied information. In the process of

unfolding, the story's relatedness to history varies from section to section. What is known of God and what is told about him also varies with the progression of the story: "Theophany, for instance, is particularly characteristic of the earlier story, under the patriarchs; the giving of the law is mainly concentrated into the time of Moses; under David the narration mainly runs on the human level, yet nevertheless works out the mysterious and tragic destiny of a divine intervention, in which, however, much of the action is not directly miraculous in character but proceeds from normal political and military operations" (Barr, 1999:346). As a result, the dogmatic concept of divine revelation as disclosure of hitherto unknown information concerning God is foreign to the biblical narratives and Barr warns that the term "revelation" becomes positively harmful when it is used "to *discriminate* within the complex of acts, events, words, speeches, books, inspirational experiences and so on, and attempts are made to separate out, to define, to deliminate what is revelation as against what is not revelation. When we use the term in this way we soon find ourselves lost, or else forced back on uncritical reiterations of older dogmatic assertions. This happens, for example, when we begin to ask whether the contents of the Bible 'are revelation' or not" (1999:485 – his italics).

The preceding overview of the various ways in which the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation was conceived in different historical contexts, as well as these concluding remarks of Barr on the potentially damaging understandings of revelation serve as the backdrop for the ensuing discussion on the influence that three developments within Biblical studies itself and the emergence of recent "postmodern" ways of thinking exert on the present state of affairs regarding the link between divine revelation and the texts of the "Old Testament". The reference to *texts* of the "Old Testament" is deliberate as it was the rising to prominence of new literary approaches to reading the Bible and the concomitant decline of Historical criticism that has had a marked influence on how the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology is understood and the methods employed in retrieving it. Moreover, the historical study of the Bible have also received a new face with the utilization of Socio-scientific methods in studying

ancient Israel[41], as well as the results of archaeological discoveries[42] and research on the views of ancient Israel and the historical context of its coming into existence. The discipline of OTT has not been exempt from the influence of these developments, as numerous scholarly voices have been raised in objection to an OTT in systematized format as opposed to HIR. The third development within Biblical studies that is important for the present discussion on the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology is the renewed emphasis on the Wisdom literature in recent decades and its incompatibility with a *Heilsgeschichte*-focus on the theological content of the "Old Testament". Furthermore, the quixotic term "postmodernism" is used to denote recent tendencies of thought that emphasizes the plurality of cultures, ways of life, values, and viewpoints, and that shuns all large-scale explanatory frameworks ("metanarratives" or "paradigms"). "Postmodern" thinking eschews any claim for possessing disinterested knowledge, "hard" facts, or objective truth; in fact "there are no facts, only interpretations" (Friedrich Nietzsche). All alleged "privileged" knowledge of the divine (through revelation) is suspect to such thinking.

In the following paragraphs a brief discussion is given of these developments and their respective influences on the contemporary views regarding the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology. It will become clear that the present state of Biblical studies, as well as larger epistemological considerations demand of the discipline of OTT to clarify the manner in which the "Old Testament" speaks "correctly" about God after the repudiation of earlier scholars' focus on "revelation-through-history" and *Heilsgeschichte* as the main characteristics of the "Old Testament"'s theology.

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[41] From the 1970's interest in "the social world of ancient Israel" developed into a full-fledged discipline in its own right. In order to understand the social, political, and historical development of Palestine from the Bronze Age to the Roman period the "Sociological method" made use of social scientific disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. George Mendenhall and Norman Gottwald pioneered this discipline in "Old Testament" studies (Whitelam, 1998: 35-38).

[42] See Dever, 1985:31-74, 1992:354-367 and 2001a:127-147 for a description of the development of Syro-Palestinian Archaeology into a full-fledged, highly specialized discipline independent from Biblical studies ever since the 1970's, a survey of recent studies, and an overview of some of the important challenges facing the discipline.

2.2.2.2 A new epistemological situation

According to some philosophers, theologians and thinkers, the last couple of decades of the twentieth century have experienced the dawn of what Walter Brueggemann has termed a new epistemological situation. This so-called "postmodern" situation[43] has called into question the epistemology of the Enlightenment and its long held views on what we as human beings can know and how we can know it. The new epistemology chides the overarching metanarratives of Modernism that sought to construct a large, uniform (Western / Christian) worldview. Multiculturalism and diversity are celebrated and pluralism is seen as fundamental to the nature of knowledge and the methods of acquiring it. Knowledge, including knowledge of God, is therefore intrinsically local, contextual and pluralistic (Brueggemann, 1993:9).

One example of such views from the ranks of OTT is the work of Erhard Gerstenberger. Gerstenberger draws attention to the fact that all theological knowledge is human-conditioned and therefore time- and context-conditioned. This makes all theology transient and relative and free from all claims to possession of the (one) exclusive and absolute truth: "One of the most serious errors theologians make, at least in the Western hemisphere, is to see themselves as having the absolute truth, so that all other theological positions become error … Circumstances and realities, however, do not support these lofty claims. We live in a transient world … Theology is essentially a thoroughly transient science: God-talk is a precarious affair: The words cannot be fixed but must constantly be renewed … Theology is located within the parameters of transience and relativity. It is, in essence, nothing but a faltering attempt to point towards the depth and immutability, which we surmise, but are unable to grasp. To ears attuned to Western theological attitudes, Biblical witnesses do not point to enduring stability and unchangeable validity: They teach the transience, contextuality, and pluralism of human theological insights" (2005a:64-65). In light of the impermanence of all faiths (to which also the Old Testament bears witness) and in order to discover the "right spiritual answers

[43] For a critique on the manner in which Biblical scholars have employed insights associated with "postmodernism", see Barr, 2000:141-162.

for our own situations in this real world of ours" (2005b:81), and consequently who God is for us today, we need to study the theologies that emerged in the different social spheres of ancient Israel as well as scrutinize our modern forms of social organization (especially under the influence of individualism and globalization) for adequate theological concepts in our own time. The goal of this study is then to discover the affinities between the present day realities and the "Old Testament" witnesses and to "stimulate a dialogue between theologies old and new in their proper social settings" (2005b:78). The end result of this dialogue will not only be the impression of the unfathomable mystery, depth and richness of the divine, but also *a* view of the deity (our dialogue can illuminate only some particular perspective on the divine) that support us in our struggle for human survival on this planet. This particular view will be one of a deity that loves and cares for his / her creation, with everyone and everything in it, and wants it to be wholesome and good (2005b:83).

The example of Gerstenberger shows that Biblical studies in general and OTT in particular have not escaped from the influence of this new epistemology. In fact, Leo Perdue has demonstrated in his review of Old Testament Theologies since the Second World War[44] that the change in epistemology has resulted in the loss of the dominant paradigm for studying the "Old Testament", that of Historical criticism (1994a:4). He attributes this "collapse of history" in part to the following developments: (i) the development of new methods of studying the "Old Testament" that are not concerned with its history or with historical issues. The rise to prominence of literary studies within Biblical studies is of special importance in this regard[45]; (ii) the growing dissatisfaction with the claims of the Enlightenment grounded in objectivity and critical, rational

[44] See his study, *The Collapse of History; Reconstructing Old Testament Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994a).

[45] Literary studies have prompted biblical scholars to read the "Old Testament" texts *as literature*, rather than approaching it as primary sources for the history of ancient Israel. Text-imminent approaches to the reading of the "Old Testament", such as Rhetorical criticism and Structural criticism, focus on the features of the texts themselves in procuring meaning from them (meaning is immanent in texts), while another major development in literary theory has shifted the focus from authorial intention, historical context, and the literary features of the text themselves to the reader(s) as active participants in determining the meaning of the text (Jasper, 1998:27). Reader-Response criticism, Deconstruction criticism, as well as Feminist and Socio-political hermeneutics are prominent examples of this latter, poststructuralist, approaches to Biblical interpretation. See Barton, 1996:104-236; Jonker and Lawrie 2005:67-165; and McKenzie and Haynes 1999:183-306.

inquiry. This included the Enlightenment view of history, namely, that it runs a linear and progressive course and that objective study will reveal "what really happened"; (iii) an increasing number of voices that rejected a purely descriptive approach to OTT which fragmented theology into a variety of disconnected and contradictory ideas; and (iv) the failure of the historical critical method in bridging the historical gap between past and present and establishing the significance of the theological features of the "Old Testament" for contemporary believers and their experiences (1994a:7-10). In conclusion Perdue notes the current state of affairs: "It is the collapse of the historical paradigm as the singular approach for doing Old Testament theology that is the central problem in present theological discussion, but it is also the cause for new and critical reflection about how we approach and carry out the task. With the current, vigorous debate that has emerged, new paradigms of theological discourse have taken shape. If no compelling consensus has yet to appear on the horizon, at least new conversation is under way" (1994a:11).

2.2.2.3 New developments in the historical study of the "Old Testament"

New developments in the historical study of the Bible ever since the 1970's is another important trend in 20th century Biblical studies that have forced "Old Testament" theologians to reconsider "revelation-through-history" as the dominant matrix for understanding the nature of the theology of the "Old Testament"[46]. Two methodological issues confront the historian in his/her study of the historical and social background from which the "Old Testament" emerged. The first of these is the identification of the object

[46] Discussions and suggestions concerning the complexities involved in the writing of a history of Ancient Israel can be found in the publications of the European Seminar in Historical Methodology (ESHM) edited by Lester Grabbe. Four volumes have already been published: *Can a "History of Israel" be Written?* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), *Leading Captivity Captive. "The Exile" as History and Ideology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish historiography and scripture in the Hellenistic period* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), *"Like a bird in a cage": the invasion of Sennacherib in 701BCE* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003). See for instance the article by Niels Peter Lemche in the latter: "On the Problems of Reconstructing Pre-Hellenistic Israelite (Palestinian) History", 150-167, as well as the volume edited by Diana Edelman, *The Fabric of History: text, artifact and Israel's past* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), especially the articles by Gösta Ahlström, "The role of Archaeology and Literary Remains in Reconstructing Israel's History", 116-141, William Dever, "Archaeology and the Early Monarchic Period", 103-115, and Thomas Thompson, "Text, Context and Referent in Israelite Historiography", 65-92.

of the historians' search, in other words, identifying what is meant by "history". Maxwell Miller claims that although "history" is a much-used term, it is not easily defined[47]: "Is history the sum total of past people and events? Or does it include only those people and events whose memory is preserved in written records? The available written evidence from ancient times is uneven in coverage, with some peoples and periods better represented than others … Would it be more accurate, then, to say that history is the past as understood by historians, based on their analysis and interpretation of the available evidence but not necessarily identical with the claims made by ancient documents? What if the historians disagree?[48] And does history belong to the professional historians anyhow? Perhaps history should be equated instead with the common consensus notions about the past held by the general public" (1999:17).

In addition to defining "history", a second issue confronting the historian is the problem of sources for reconstructing history: "It may be said, in any case, that historians seek to understand the human past and that they depend heavily on written sources for their information … This does not mean, of course, that contemporary historians concentrate solely on written evidence or that historical research is conducted independently of other disciplines. Contemporary scholars exploring the history of ancient Israel find themselves necessarily involved, for example, in Palestinian archaeology and sociology" (1999:17). The trustworthiness and accuracy of the "Old Testament" as a written source of historical information concerning ancient Israel is a much-debated topic in recent historical studies of the Bible. In their assessment of the nature of the "Old Testament"'s account of

[47] See also the comments of Hans Barstad "History and the Hebrew Bible" *Can a "History of Israel" be Written?* (ed. L.L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 37-64, and Ernst Axel Knauf, "From History to Interpretation" *The Fabric of History* (ed. D.V. Edelman; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 26-64.

[48] According to Lester Grabbe, most historians "want to gain as detailed a reliable picture of the past as possible" (1997:21). This is a positivistic goal, for historians have generally followed Von Ranke in attempting to establish *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist* ("how it really was"). However, because the sources historians utilize in recovering the past do not speak for itself, all history writing involves historical reconstructions. "It follows that we can never be sure whether we are right, so scholarship has developed the historical method. This is a procedure by which some discipline can be introduced into the guesswork. It is a means of trying to make the choice of possible alternatives more than just a subjective decision by establishing conventions of evidence and argument. It attempts to introduce probability into the debate so that some scenarios can be considered more likely than others, so that some can be ruled out as very improbable but others considered reasonable and even likely" (1997:21). These remarks of Grabbe comes close to Miller's conclusion that "history is a search for 'what really happened", but it is also what the historians can convince us really happened" (1999:20).

Israel's past in relation to the other available sources such as archaeological finds and literature from elsewhere in the Ancient Near East, historians move between two extremes. At one extreme are those scholars who insist that the "Old Testament" is literally accurate in all historical details. At the other extreme are those scholars who either dismiss the historical study of the "Old Testament" texts by approaching it solely as literary documents, or consider the biblical accounts as being so theologically tendentious that any attempt to salvage reliable historical information from it is an exercise in futility. Miller states that most biblical scholars hold a middle ground somewhere between these two extremes: "On the one hand, they proceed with confidence that the Bible preserves authentic historical memory. On the other hand, they recognize that the Bible is not a monolithic document, that its different voices reflect different perceptions of ancient Israel's history that these perceptions usually are heavily influenced by theological and nationalistic interests, and that some of the biblical materials were not intended to be read as literal history in the first place. The historian's task, therefore, is to separate the authentic historical memory from its highly theological and often legendary context" (1999:22). In sum, the key problems facing the historian of ancient Israel are those of history (what really happened) and the nature of the available sources for reconstructing this history.

The changes in the historical study of the Bible with regards to both of these issues are aptly summarized by Robert Carrol: "Since the Second World War there has been a subgenre of Hebrew Bible studies devoted to the production of 'histories of ancient Israel'[49]. This branch of biblical studies has involved paraphrasing the biblical text in

[49] The views of Albrect Alt and Martin Noth (the so-called "Alt-Noth school"), on the one hand, and those of William Foxwell Albright and his students (the so-called "Albright school"), on the other hand, dominated the discussion on the history of ancient Israel during the first two decades after the Second World War. The methodological and theological differences between these schools of historical research resulted in lively debate: "The crucial methodological difference was that the Alt-Noth school insisted on thoroughgoing critical analysis of the biblical texts as the proper starting point for reconstructing Israelite history, while the Albright school was inclined to disregard problems raised by critical analysis of these texts when it appeared that reasonable correlations could be made between the biblical claims and archaeological data … In addition to the methodological differences, there was also a tendency toward theological difference between the two schools. Namely, those who followed the Alt-Noth approach tended to make a sharp distinction between the actual events of ancient Israel's history and Israel's faith response to these events … Albright's followers, on the other hand, tended to be aligned with what has come to be called the 'biblical theology movement'" (Miller, 1985:20).

conjunction with accounts of the latest archaeological discoveries as are deemed relevant to the Bible and the realignment of the biblical narrative with a historiography partly derived from other ancient Near-Eastern documents, artefacts and material remains. Following the dictates of the Enlightenment the historical, in terms of a critical retrieval of the past, was seen as the dominant element to be sought for in the biblical narratives and the historiographies constructed by these 'histories of ancient Israel' reflect a compromise between the textual narratives and modernist theories of history. Such constructions have often stayed too close to the biblical text to be genuinely historiographical studies, so have given the impression of being a modernistic adjustment of the text and a retelling of the narrative in keeping with modern values (e.g., the exclusion of the miraculous, the modification of large numbers etc). As such they began to give way in the seventies to a more radical critique which subjected both biblical text and the archaeological material remains to severe critical analysis. That is, though the writing of such 'histories of ancient Israel' continued without abatement, but with growing sophistication, alternative voices could be heard arguing for very different ways of reading the biblical text and especially in conjunction with different readings of the archaeological remains unearthed in the Near East" (1998:52-53).

In acknowledging the deficiencies of the "Old Testament" texts as sources for the history of ancient Israel and the multifaceted world from which it emerged, the newer reconstructions of the 'history of ancient Israel' have not only continued to employ Historical-critical methods and archaeology, but also made use of the social sciences in order to give a more detailed account of ancient Israel's past. Attempts to reconcile the "Old Testament" accounts of Israel's past with archaeological artefacts and other ancient literary sources have prompted a group of historians to cast serious doubt on the historical reliability of the biblical narratives and consequently to give reconstructions of Israel's past that are divorced in increasing extents from the picture of the biblical texts[50]. These historians, including Niels P. Lemche, Thomas L. Thompson, Philip R. Davies, and Keith

[50] See the important critique of this view by Barstad "The Strange Fear of the Bible: Some Reflections on the 'Bibliophobia' in Recent Ancient Israelite Historiography" *Leading Captivity Captive* (ed. L.L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Sheffield: Academic Press, 1998), 120-127 and Miller "Is it possible to write a History of Israel without relying in the Hebrew Bible?" *The Fabric of History* (ed. D.V. Edelman; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 93-102.

W. Whitelam, are often branded as minimalists or revisionists[51]. The determination of

[51] The critique of the minimalist / revisionist historians' work have, in general, come in two forms and the term "ideology" have figured prominently in both of these types of criticism. Some critics have raised an assault on the integrity of certain of these scholars, accusing them of nihilism, Marxism, leftist politics, anti-Judaism, and even anti-Semitism. Other critics have followed a more sophisticated approach by throwing suspicions about the motives of the scholars in question (Lemche, 2000:166). William G. Dever has been one of the most vehement critics of the minimalist / revisionist viewpoints on the history of ancient Israel. He characterizes the "revisionist agenda" as "absurd", "lacking in any supporting data" and "little more than pseudosophisticated Bible bashing" (2000:29-30): "In my view, most of the revisionists are no longer honest scholars, weighing all the evidence, attempting to be objective and fair-minded historians, seeking the truth. Determined to unmask the ideology of others, they have become ideologues themselves. Their agenda substitutes clever slogans, nonsensical word games, increasingly absurd assertions and escalating polemics for the open, interdisciplinary dialogue that is our only hope for illuminating ancient Israel. The revisionists and postmodernists are dangerous because they have created a kind of relativism – an anything goes attitude – that makes serious, critical inquiry difficult, if not impossible" (2000:68). Dever launches a thoroughgoing critic of the revisionist historians' views in his monograph, *What did the biblical writers know, and when did they know it?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) (Dever 2001b). This kind of criticism is of the first type mentioned by Lemche. The criticisms of James Barr and Iain W. Provan, however, are of the second type.

In his monograph, *History and Ideology in the Old Testament; Biblical Studies at the End of a Millenium*, James Barr clearly states that he finds the revisionist views to be unconvincing. "The main reason for this lies in the excessive weight placed upon the concept of ideology. Not that ideology is absent from the Bible or should be excluded from our thoughts in interpretation, but I think that the whole programme of the revisionists is excessively dependent on ideology, and in more than one way" (2000:82). As Barr sees it, these historians disregard the historical value of the biblical narratives once ideology can be detected in it. The events that these texts describe should then be explained totally and exclusively through the ideology of later historical periods. In fact, Barr claims that many of the readings of texts in revisionist works seem to be biased in order to produce results that point towards ideology (2000:82-83). Moreover, Barr faults the revisionist historians for the hectic, hazardous and heavily theoretical character of some of their arguments (2000:84-89).

Iain Provan's initial criticism was published in *JBL* 114/4 (1995) under the title, "Ideologies, Literary and Critical: Reflections on Recent Writing on the History of Israel" (585-606). The same edition of the journal also published the responses of Thomas Thompson (1995:683-698) and Philip Davies (1995:699-705) to this article of Provan. The principal accusation that Provan directs at this "school" of historians (whom he labels "positivist" and "materialist") is that their complete distrust of the historical reliability of the biblical narratives stands in stark contrast to their blind faith in other texts and archaeological artefacts from the Ancient Near East. They violently sever history and (biblical) story. The ideology of the biblical narratives is played off against historical facts: "(T)he more that scholarship has moved in these directions, the more it has also asked whether our biblical narratives are not better described not as fictionalized history (the older consensus) but as historicised fiction. *Of course* these narratives five the impression of speaking about the past, it is conceded. A history-like element is an obvious and important feature of this kind of text. This is 'realistic narrative': the depiction lifelike, the story lacking in artificiality or heroic elevation. We may grant all that. But why assume that the narrative world thus portrayed has anything to do with the 'real' world of the past? Why not regard it as a 'fictive world,' an ideological construct created by its authors for their own purposes? And why, then, accord these texts a primary place in the reconstruction of the history of Israel? Why not treat them rather as they are, as stories that at most tell us about the Israel within which they came into being, and certainly tell us little or nothing about the Israel of the more distant past? The history of 'ancient Israel,' if that is the correct term, must in this case be sought not in the biblical stories, but in the artefacts, buildings, and inscriptions the people themselves left behind…History and story must be kept quite apart" (1995:586 – his italics). He goes on to explain the reasons why he remains unconvinced by the arguments of these historians by addressing three questions: (i) what is historiography (the task of the historian)? Provan regards historiography as both narratives about the past and as ideological literature, that is, "narrative about the past that involves, amongst other things, the selection of material and its interpretation by authors who are intent on persuading themselves or their readership in

what historians in fact know from what they do not is an essential element to these minimalist or revisionist historians' approach to ancient Israel. Amongst the important results of their various studies is their affirmation that it was not the intent of the authors of the biblical texts to write history in the modern sense of an accurate account of what "really happened". Furthermore, these historians claim that neither the "ancient Israelites" nor the "biblical Canaanites" were historical or ethnic realities, but rather inventions of the authors of the biblical texts. This, however, does not mean that there never was an "Israel" in ancient times but only that the history of this Israel and the historical portrayal of the "Old Testament" do not necessarily coincide. In fact, according to these historians, they rarely do (Lemche, 1994:168-169). Moreover, another important aspect that has come to light as a result of their work is the conviction that the "Old Testament" is a product of the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The implication of such a late dating of the biblical narratives is that they are to be regarded as "interested material" that reflect the values and views (the word "ideology" is often used) of those periods[52]:

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some way" (1995:592). (ii) If all historiography is story, why are the biblical narratives singled out as problematic while other kinds of data, such as archaeological finds, are considered to represent history more objectively than do the biblical texts (1995:593-598). (iii) If all historiography is both story and ideology, why then are biblical historians of the past attacked so fiercely because their approach to the "history of ancient Israel" betrays ideology. And why are these approaches deliberately contrasted with critical (objective) academic scholarship? (1995:598-601). On the one hand, Provan disputes the position that the ideology of the biblical narratives renders them more problematic than other sources for historiography such as archaeological finds. On the other hand, he disputes whether recent attempts at reconstructing "the history of ancient Israel" are plagued less by ideological matters than previous attempts. In the end, Provan prefers the "traditional middle ground", an approach that respects and treats all sources for historiography as equal, not disqualifying certain parts of evidence out of hand, an approach that requires no proof before accepting something as true, however provisional that truth might be considered to be, and an approach that regards history to be an art, and not a science, in the outdated (positivist) sense of the term (1995:603).

[52] In this regard see especially the article by Lemche "The Old Testament – A Hellenistic Book?" *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (ed. L.L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 287-318 and the refutation of his arguments by Rainer Albertz "An End to the Confusion? Why the Old Testament Cannot Be a Hellenistic Book!" *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (ed. L.L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 30-46. The later dating of the biblical narratives is of decisive importance for deciding between primary and secondary sources in reconstructing the history of ancient Israel. The issue revolves around the complex relationship between texts and their socio-historical contexts and how to extract from these sources historically reliable information. "The legacy of literary studies has been to undermine confidence in the assumption that the world of the texts coincided with the views of the past they portrayed. However, dating the final form of these texts to the Persian and Hellenistic periods or first-century Roman Palestine does not solve the problem of their relationship to the socio-historical backgrounds or ideological influences which shaped them. The methodological problems have multiplied and sharpened on how to investigate periods where there is insufficient (literary) evidence, particularly for the Late Bronze and Iron Ages, and how to bridge the gap between text and social reality in the Persian to Roman periods. The biblical traditions can no longer be understood as simple reflections of earlier historical reality. Rather they

"In these newer 'histories of ancient Israel' or 'histories of "ancient Israel"' (following Davies) or even 'histories of Palestine' (following Ahlström and Whitelam) the biblical narratives have been read as textual productions of a period much later than normally claimed for them, even by modernist biblical scholarship. Now the Hebrew Bible begins to look more like a product from the Persian or, more especially, the Greek period than from the earlier Assyrian or Babylonian periods. Written in retrospect it is seen as having become the ideological literature of the post-imperial period and as reflecting a variety of values, including diaspora matters. Whatever status may be granted to some of the historical elements embedded in the biblical narratives themselves (a much disputed point among historians of the Bible), the overall production of the literature is now postdated by perhaps a millennium from what used to be thought to have been the case in biblical studies … No longer inscribed as a value-free work, the Bible is now seen as the construction of a writing elite in the Persian or Greek period who represented themselves as the heirs of ancient traditions of land acquisition and of a temple guild in Jerusalem" (Carrol, 1998:54).

With regard to HIR, Lemche warns that "(w)e should never forget that the uniqueness of the old Israelite religion according to the Old Testament is comparable to the exceptional origin of Israel, as told by the Old Testament. The Old Testament presents the origin of the people and of its religion not as two separate entries; rather, it combines both parts in a magnificent synthesis, in which the religious development goes hand in hand with the socio-political development, and vice versa … We must respect the presence of this synthesis between religion and history in the Old Testament. This, however, is not to say

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offer a valuable insight into perceptions of that reality from particular points of view at the time of the writers. This is not to suggest that such texts may not preserve some authentic memories and information about the past but these are increasingly difficult to assess" (Whitelam, 1998:40). In this regard, Lemche stresses the importance of the kinds of information one can expect to find in ancient and modern texts. He makes reference to the 18th century historian Gustav Droysen's distinction between *Überreste* (residue or remnant) and *Bericht* (narrative). The former denotes original information in a source, disregarding the age of the source (primary source), whilst the latter indicates a literary composition based on historical events, whether these events are alleged or real (secondary source) (Lemche, 2000:175-176). Consequently, if the biblical narratives are "interested literature" that date from the Persian or Hellenistic periods, then the "history" that it relates serves not as a primary source for reconstructing the history of ancient Israel, but rather as a secondary source that is subject to confirmation from extra-biblical material. On the issue of primary and secondary sources for reconstructing history, see also Herbert Niehr "Aspects of Working with the Textual Sources" *Can a "History of Israel" be Written?* (ed. L.L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Shefield Academic Press, 1997), 156-165.

that we should accept the synthesis as historical fact" (1991:103). Is it then still possible to speak of an "Israelite religion" in light of the revisionist histories of ancient Israel? Lemche's answer is "yes and no" at the same time: "Yes, it is still possible to speak of an Israelite religion, although the only place this religion should be sought is in the Old Testament. No, Israelite religion, as it is described by the authors of the Old Testament, should be considered quite different from the types of religion present in Palestine during the so-called Old Testament period. The Old Testament does not describe a religion that could be found in Palestine in ancient times; rather, Israelite religion should be studied in the light of later Jewish religious sentiments" (1994:165).

It is evident that these kinds of views are a total reversal of two prominent themes of the BTM[53], namely, the mutual compliance of Biblical archaeology and Biblical theology and the distinctiveness of Israel's religious ideas from its Ancient Near Eastern environment. It goes without saying that "revelation-through-history" as it was envisioned by a previous generation of "Old Testament" theologians is irreconcilable with these new developments in the historical study of the Bible.

2.2.2.4 A reemphasis on Wisdom literature and creation theology

James Crenshaw has noted that the Wisdom literature has attracted considerable interest among scholars in the last couple of decades of the twentieth century thanks to a combination of events[54]: the publication of Gerhard von Rad's influential book, *Wisdom*

[53] Philip Davies argues that the problem with the BTM's view that Biblical archaeology substantiates Biblical theology, as it is represented by George Ernest Wright, is that "(h)e did not realize that this theology effectively burdened archaeology with responsibility for assuring the religious value of the Bible. By asserting that the Israel of the Bible and that of history were essentially the same, it shackled Biblical Israel to the discipline of archaeology and left the Bible vulnerable to the charge of being worthless if it was not historically reliable. If the archaeological substructure fell, so would the theology. Ironically, by drawing a clear distinction between Biblical Israel, on the one hand, and historical Israel, on the other, the so-called revisionists have created the opportunity to restore the religious value to the Biblical text. These narratives – as had been claimed earlier, before the obstructive interlude of Albrighteanism – were literary constructions, serving the ideological interests of a period centuries later than the time in which they were set. It was therefore in their literary, philosophical, even theological character that their original purpose lay and their contemporary value should be primarily sought" (2000:27).

[54] The books of Proverbs, Job, and Qohelet (Ecclesiastes) make up the corpus of Wisdom literature in the Hebrew Bible, while among the deuterocanonical books the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon are regarded as such. In light of both the fact that the formulation of an accurate and

in Israel[55], the decline of neo-orthodoxy and Biblical theology as the recital of divine acts, the increasing awareness among Biblical scholars of Ancient Near Eastern texts that resembled biblical wisdom, the emerging interest in the study of ethnic proverbs, and the dissatisfaction with any approach emphasizing distinctive ideas in the "Old Testament" (1998:1). The reemphasis of Wisdom literature in Biblical studies has important implications for OTT and the present discussion on the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology. There are two reasons for this: (i) the neglect of Wisdom literature in Old Testament Theologies since the Second World War, and (ii) the theological grounding of "Old Testament" wisdom in creation.

The dominant trend in OTT since the Second World War has been to pay little attention to the Wisdom literature and its theological features. Some scholars even regarded it as an alien corpus in the Bible. This tendency may be attributed to the fact that the main themes in OTT, salvation history (*Heilsgeschichte*), covenant, and law, are absent from

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comprehensive definition of Israelite wisdom remains an elusive quest for scholars as well as the need to distinguish it from both its Ancient Near Eastern parallels and the rest of the "Old Testament" corpus of writings (Crenshaw, 1985:369) it is important to identify what these books have in common in order to justify a distinctive category for them as Wisdom literature. Roland Murphy remarks that the distinguishing feature of Wisdom literature, apart from their didactic nature, is the literary forms that are found in these books and the typical approach to reality advocated therein (2002:1). Gerhard von Rad states the great difficulty in understanding the "Wisdom of Israel" is the fact that these literary forms resist any classification under overlapping headings although they do share a common approach to reality. "(W)hen the reader takes up these texts (and this is the way it must be with this type of literature), he (*sic*) must have enough time to reflect contemplatively both on the unit as a whole and on the details of it; for every sentence and every didactic poem is pregnant with meaning and is unmistakably self-contained, so that, notwithstanding the many features common to them all, they strike us as being peculiarly inflexible. Thus, these didactic poems, from the point of view of their content and the movement of their thought, are difficult to fit into a comprehensive pattern … For all its fluidity and variability, the ideological world to which the teachings belong is nevertheless an indivisible unity" (1972:6). Crenshaw describes this "ideological world" as a particular attitude toward reality, in other words, a worldview: "That way of looking at things begins with humans as the fundamental point of orientation. It asks what is good for men and women, and it believes that all essential answers can be learned in experience, pregnant with signs about reality itself. That worldview assumes a universe in the deepest and richest sense of the word. The one God embedded truth within all of reality. The human responsibility is to search for that insight and thus to learn to live in harmony with the cosmos" (1998:10). In short, (biblical) wisdom, according to Crenshaw, is "the reasoned search for specific ways to assure well-being and the implementation of those discoveries in daily life" (1998:15). He concludes that the nature of Wisdom literature resides in a combination of a diverse number of literary forms and this worldview: "The conclusion reached from this multifaceted approach to defining wisdom is that formally, wisdom consists of proverbial sentence or instruction, debate, intellectual reflection; thematically, wisdom comprises self-evident intuitions about mastering life for human betterment, groping after life's secrets with regard to innocent suffering, grappling with finitude, and quest for truth concealed in the created order and manifested in a feminine persona. When a marriage between form and content exists, there is wisdom literature" (1998:11).

[55] London: SCM Press, 1972.

the theological reflections of the sages (at least until Ben Sira in the second century B.C.E.), as well as the "international" character of Israelite wisdom (that is, its openness to and similarities with other Ancient Near Eastern wisdom texts), the reliance on human powers of perception, reason, and reflection in gaining wisdom, and the Wisdom literature's focus on creation (interpreted by some scholars as the intrusion of Natural theology into the Bible)[56]. However, some scholars have offered valuable insights into both the theology of the Wisdom literature and its relationship to OTT (Perdue, 1994b:19-20).

After reviewing the place accorded to wisdom in leading presentations of OTT since the Second World War[57], Perdue draws the following three conclusions regarding the theology of the Wisdom literature: (i) Wisdom literature is theologically grounded in the creation of the cosmos and of humanity; (ii) Wisdom literature affirms a universal orientation to faith and ethics: "This means, then, that God is a universal deity who speaks to all people through the voice of creation and gives to everyone organs of perception and understanding that make wisdom accessible. Further, the wisdom tradition affirms the importance of the role of reason and human experience in the analysis and critique of faith. The use of reason and empirical analysis moves the objects of faith out of the realm of credulity into tested beliefs that correlate to human understanding and experience" (1994b:34); and (iii) Wisdom literature allows for the exposing of patriarchy's one-sided emphasis on male metaphors for God (1994b:34).

Affirming the theological grounding of Israel's wisdom in creation entails recognition of the theological significance of the sages' cosmology. Scholars often identify "order" as an important element to the sages' view of creation: "It is practically a commonplace in wisdom research to maintain that the sages were bent on discovering order, or orders, in the realm of experience and nature. This means that the sages recognized a certain

[56] The one scholar that has done pioneering work in salvaging the concept of Natural theology for Biblical studies is James Barr. He dedicated his 1991 Gifford lectures to this topic and published it subsequently under the title *Biblical faith and Natural theology* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1993).
[57] Perdue discusses the works of George Ernest Wright, Gerhard von Rad, Claus Westermann, Brevard Childs, and Phyllis Trible (1994b:20-33). See also the article of Murphy, "Wisdom in the OT" *ABD Volume VI* (ed. D.N Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 924-925.

autonomy (granted that nothing could escape the divine sovereignty) in the actions and experiences of the world. Once the order of such events could be discovered, wisdom could be achieved, lessons made apparent, and laws for conduct established. This is not an irreligious view, nor even totally pragmatic or eudaemonistic, as if one should follow rules solely for the success that they bring. Behind the order stands the divinity, the creator, who has set up his world according to certain laws. Creatures are to abide by the divine set of orders" (Murphy, 2002:115). With regards to the order in creation, some scholars draw similarities between Israel's views thereof and the Egyptian concept of *ma'at*[58] while others introduce the notion of *retribution*[59] as an important feature of this created order. Murphy sounds a warning, however, that the sages' sensitivity to certain regularities in the world and customary ways of human and divine conduct should not be mistaken for a rigid and static "order" in creation (2002:115-118). Neither should the attaining of wisdom through analysis of creation and perception of patterns in human experiences be understood as "secular" activities. The sages' contemplation of creation was not done in and for itself, but rather in relation to the creator who was responsible for the reality that confronted the sage. The autonomy of the created world was affirmed for what it can teach humans about themselves, about God's creation, and even about God's own self. The sages, however, were aware of their limitations[60] and realized that the created world is replete with mysteries and ambiguities, none more so than elements of

[58] The Egyptian concept of *ma'at* is difficult to translate; it designates order, truth, and justice: "It is the divine order in the world into which a human being is to be integrated by his conduct. Success in this process of integration means prosperity; failure means chaos. This harmonious integration into *ma'at* underlies the teachings [in Egyptian wisdom]" (Murphy, 1992:928-929). In Egypt, *ma'at* was also deified as a goddess (Murphy, 1992:929).

[59] This doctrine of retribution (*Vergeltungsdogma*) entails the idea that righteousness is rewarded with prosperity and wickedness punished with suffering in a cause-and-effect or deed-consequence (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*) manner. The work of Klaus Koch may be mentioned in this regard: "On the basis of several biblical passages … he reconstructed a specific mentality behind biblical reward/punishment. For him there is no retribution or intervention by God; rather, deed and result are mechanically related. An evil deed produces an evil result; a good deed produces a good result. Hence Koch speaks of a 'destiny-producing' deed; the Lord does not intervene. In Koch's metaphor, God is a kind of 'mid-wife' watching over events and their results, good and bad. This is the nature of the 'retribution' that God has established" (Murphy, 1992:923).

[60] "In view of the imposing array of confident sayings in the collections, from Proverbs down to Sirach, one may ask if the sages were aware of their own limitations. Many sayings reveal such an awareness … Perhaps the most telling is Prov 21:30, 'There is no wisdom, no understanding, no counsel, against the Lord." This radical statement points to the mystery over which the sages had no control: the activity of God. All their careful thoughts about success and the good life deserved to be expressed, but there were certain 'limit situations' which they recognized … The realm of experience to which the sages constantly resorted, also indicated to them that certainty was not always to be had" (Murphy, 1992: 923).

chaos such as folly, evil, suffering, and death that threatened the created order. Moreover, the sages took into account the freedom of God to act in inexplicable ways, as he is the cause of everything, both good and evil. The sages' appreciation for the autonomy of the created world therefore stood "in tension" with their acknowledgement of God's all-pervasive causality (Murphy, 2002:113-115).

The importance of the sages' cosmology for the present discussion on the relationship between divine revelation and the "Old Testament" is that although the experiences of Israel's sages were not unhistorical, "history", in the sense of *Heilsgeschichte*, does not form the major theological category in "Old Testament" wisdom. In the Wisdom literature revelation does not occur through divine redemptive acts in (historical) events; rather, the created world is the showcase for divine activity. The wisdom of Israel's sages reflects an understanding of life and reflections on the creation where experience of the world is at the same time experience of God, its creator (Murphy, 2002:119-120). Consequently, as part of the "Old Testament" canons of Synagogue and Church, the Wisdom literature and its creation theology may no longer be neglected in OTT.

2.2.2.5 Summary

In sum, the influence of "postmodern" tendencies of thought, the new methods for interpreting the "Old Testament", as well as the valuable gains from archaeology and studies on the Wisdom literature forces upon OTT the responsibility to clarify the extent to which it is still viable to speak of revelation in the "Old Testament", especially considering the fact that all claims for privileged knowledge about the divine (that is, revelation) is, at present, either viewed with suspicion or out rightly rejected. The views of Gerstenberger are confirmation of this. Moreover, any confirmation that the "Old Testament" indeed somehow speaks "correctly" about God must explain how it does so in light of the diminishing support in OTT circles for the idea of "revelation-through-

history" and salvation history as the main characteristics of the "Old Testament"'s theology[61].

[61] The many text- and reader-orientated approaches to interpreting the Bible have produced new categories for assessing the truth claims in the Old Testament texts. In this regard, mention should be made of proposals to OTT from the perspectives of literary and rhetorical approaches to the Old Testament, Feminist hermeneutics, Sociological approaches, and Canon criticism.

The literary and rhetorical approaches that focus on the Old Testament texts as literature (narratives and poems) have emphasized the importance of imagination and metaphor for a theological reading of the Old Testament. Imagination is the capacity of the human mind to create images, either immediately or indirectly derived from sense perception, and to furnish these images with meaning. Imagination is important for conceiving the divine for God is not perceptible to the human senses (Perdue, 1994a:263-272). In their theological Introduction to the "Old Testament", Bruce Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, and David Petersen have drawn attention to the capacity of "Old Testament" narratives and poems to create imaginative worlds that produce different metaphors for God and the importance thereof for a continuing experience of the God of Israel, that is, the God communicated through the "Old Testament" texts: "In our view, the God of Israel and the claim that God may make on the communities that continue to regard the Old Testament as scripture can only be known by taking seriously the full reality of the imaginative language through which that God is presented in the biblical text. Thus, interpretation is more a rhetorical than a historical enterprise. The recent explosion of literary approaches in biblical studies has significantly aided such interpretation. To encounter Israel's God requires not the discovery of some hidden history behind the text but serious entry into the world of biblical testimony about this God with its claims and counterclaims. Narrative (i.e., story) and poetry (i.e., song) are the central forms of this testimony about God … We are invited, indeed required, to enter the story and to hear the song and to respond according to the shape of the story and the transactions appropriate to the song. We are to value the imaginative power of the narrative or poem more than its correspondence to some external, empirical reality. We are to discover in the world of Old Testament texts tensions and struggles that challenge settled claims about God and God's community, Israel. It is the power of imaginative language to give rise to metaphor that allows us as modern readers to find our entry into the settled claims and the competing witnesses of the Old Testament. In that encounter with Israel's imaginative language we find perspectives on the claims and witnesses of our own experiences as persons and communities. Such entry into the literary worlds of Israel and its subsequent impact on our own lives has a power that no accumulation of historical data could ever have. The reality of God cannot be disclosed, past or present, apart from the boldness of those who speak that reality into the realm of their own experience" (1999:22-23).

With regard to the influence of Feminist hermeneutics on a theological reading of the "Old Testament", Phyllis Trible has identified some overtures for a Feminist Biblical theology (1989:279-295). Feminism focuses on issues of gender (the culturally perceived roles of men and women in society) and sex (the biological differences between men and women) and opposes domination and subordination in all forms, especially male over female, but also master over slave and humans over the earth (Trible, 1989:280-281). A Feminist Biblical theology would consequently begin with the exegesis of biblical texts, concentrating on neglected texts about female depictions of the deity and woman in the Bible, as well as reinterpreting familiar texts from the perspective of gender. The contours and content of such a Biblical theology (Trible, 1989:292-295) would focus on the phenomenon of gender and sex in the articulation of faith. It would be grounded in creation theology (male and female as the image of God), explore the presence and absence of the female in both the Bible and relevant literature of the Ancient Near East, and theologically reflect on Israelite folk religion (some men and women were denied full participation in official Yahwism). A Feminist Biblical theology would expose androcentric idolatry and demonstrate that the Bible guards against any single definition of God. Similarly, a Feminist Biblical theology would recognize that the biblical texts could mean more and other than tradition has allowed. It would wrestle with the patriarchal language of the text on the one hand, and with models and meanings for authority, on the other hand: "It recognizes that, despite the word, *author*ity centers in readers. They accord the document power even as they promote the intentionality of authors. To explicate the authority of the Bible, a feminist stance might well appropriate a sermon from Deuteronomy (30:15-20). The Bible sets before the reader life and good, death and evil, blessing and curse. Providing a panorama of life, the text holds the power of a mirror to

reflect what is and thereby make choice possible. Like the ancient Israelites, modern believers are commanded to choose life over death. Within this dialectic movement, feminism might claim the entire Bible as authoritative, though not necessarily prescriptive. Such a definition differs from the traditional" (Trible, 1989:294). It is, however, important to note that these are only tentative proposals designed to initiate a discussion that seeks to join Feminist hermeneutics and Biblical theology.

Gunther Wittenberg has drawn attention to the current methodological impasse in the discipline of OTT and the need to develop a new approach belonging to a different epistemology from the one employed by Gabler and the majority of Old Testament Theologies ever since. Wittenberg calls this epistemology *episteme* and characterizes this kind of knowledge as logical, deductive, universal, impersonal, analytical, theoretical, and cerebral. According to Wittenberg, Old Testament Theologies that are based on *episteme* hold little value for black students of the "Old Testament" in South Africa (1996:221-222). What is needed is an approach to OTT in which not religious ideas but context and commitment to the poor and oppressed would be fundamental and in which insights of social scientists such as Clifford Geertz and Max Weber make important contributions. In following such an approach Old Testament Theologies would be based on another kind of epistemology, that of *da'at*. Wittenberg characterizes *da'at* knowledge as local, contextual, practical and emotive, personal and communal (1996:230-233). Consequently, OTT based on *da'at* would acknowledge the embeddedness of theology in the socio-economic and cultural history of the people of Israel and therefore recognize the complex picture in the "Old Testament" of contending theologies. These contending theologies include those that affirm and defend the status quo on the one hand, and those that challenge and resist state power on the other hand (Wittenberg, 1996:234-235). In order to understand the dynamics of the latter in the social conflicts of ancient Israel, OTT would have to pay attention to those social groups which have been the bearers of this kind of resistance theology (Wittenberg, 1996:236). In conclusion, Wittenberg states that the task of OTT would be to tell the story of how Israel's theology was formed in the context of conflict and opposition: "To attempt such a task for the whole of the Old Testament would be a massive undertaking. The objective should therefore be much more modest. We should concentrate on one central issue which proved of decisive significance for the development of Israel's theology, even if we have to recognize that not everything in the Old Testament will be covered. That issue, in my opinion, is the establishment of royal-imperial power and the resistance to that power, the establishment of a hegemonic theology, on the one hand, which is challenged by a new type of theology, on the other" (1996:237).

Full-scale discussions of Brevard Childs's Canon critical approach to OTT can be found in Barr (1999:401-438) and Perdue (1994a:155-168) and need not be rehearsed here. A few remarks on his views concerning the canon as the vehicle of divine revelation will suffice. In his canonical approach to studying both the "Old Testament" and its theology, Brevard Childs demonstrates that the term "canon" has both historical and theological dimensions. Childs sees the final form of the received or canonical text as theologically significant. The reason for this is that the final form of the canonical text represents the end result of the formation of the canon which involved not only the historical composition and transmission of the texts, but also a process of theological reflection whereby the religious traditions were shaped, ordered, and reworked in order to be authoritative scripture for future generations. This theological process encompasses the religious use of these traditions by the community who preserved them and therefore this community's experience of and response to God's revelation. Consequently, history as such is not the vehicle of divine revelation, but rather the final form of the canonical text as it is this text that embodies the history of encounter between God and Israel (1979:75-76). According to Childs, revelation should then be understood as shorthand for Israel's whole enterprise of theological reflection on God. He goes on to add that the "Old Testament" as canon remains authoritative for faith communities today because it is exactly through the ongoing reflection on these writings that God brings these witnesses to divine revelation alive through the work of his Spirit (1985:25-26).

2.3 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

In the foregoing discussion we have sought to show that underlying assumptions and presuppositions and modern developments in Biblical studies respectively influence the various views on the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology. On the one hand, the assumptions and presuppositions that influence views on the scope of the "Old Testament" deal with the parameters and function of the collection of writings one adheres to and regards as authoritative in matters of faith and life, the religious terminology used to name this collection and the texts one uses as base for translation, exegesis, and theology. On the other hand, "postmodern" epistemology, and developments in Biblical interpretation and the historical study of the Bible exert pressure on the discipline of OTT to clarify the locus of this collection's authority as a source of knowledge about the divine and the extent thereof for matters of faith and life (the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology). The magnitude and complexity of the problem should now be sufficiently clear and, therefore, the necessity of chiding all attempts to arrive at a premature solution to the problem that pays little or no attention to the issues of canon, text, or theological content.

The following chapter explores the possibility of utilizing insights from LXX-studies in order to find a solution to the methodological problem plaguing OTT. Indeed, the LXX would be significant for determining the object and subject of OTT if it can be shown that the issues that are treated in LXX-studies, especially concerning the nature of the LXX, are relevant (i) to the presuppositions and assumptions that govern the decisions regarding the scope of the "Old Testament" and (ii) an appreciation of the nature of the Jewish scriptures' theology as it is presented by the texts themselves. In other words, in order to establish whether the hypothesis that the LXX helps rather than hinders the identification of an adequate object and subject for the discipline of OTT is correct or not, it must be determined how LXX studies relates to the issues of canon, text, and theological content.

CHAPTER 3

THE NATURE OF THE GREEK JEWISH SCRIPTURES

The first chapter of the present study dealt with a methodological issue in the discipline of OTT. It was concluded that certain assumptions and presuppositions regarding the term "Old Testament", its constituting canon, and the text thereof determine to a greater or a lesser degree the scope of the "Old Testament", and therefore, the object of study in OTT. Moreover, recent developments in Biblical studies and the emergence of "postmodern" theories of knowledge oblige OTT to indicate the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation. This relationship constitutes the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology and the key to the subject of OTT as a discipline. The present chapter takes as its point of departure the assumption that the LXX has an important contribution to make in efforts to establish the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology that gives appropriate consideration to the issues relating to canon, text, and theological content and consequently aims to validate this assumption from the evidence presented by LXX-studies itself. It deals with the nature of the Greek Jewish scriptures in terms of terminology and origins, as well as in terms of translation technique with the purpose of indicating how these matters relate to the issues of canon, text, and theological content, and therefore, the object and subject of OTT.

A close scrutiny of the evidence from LXX-studies reveals that a multitude of methodological issues lie beneath the discussions on the canon of the Septuagint, the textual base of the translations and original Greek writings, as well as its theological nature. In order to establish the significance of the LXX for the object and subject of OTT all these issues must be adequately addressed and the presuppositions that govern the scholarly opinions on them must be identified and scrutinized. This is by no means an easy task: The term "Septuagint" is often used ambiguously and in a confusing manner; the long and complicated transmission history of the Greek translations of the "Old

Testament" books is difficult to unravel[1]; there are more than one approach to studying the intricacies involved in the translation of books written in Semitic languages (Hebrew and Aramaic) into an Indo-European language (Greek); and describing the nature of the language of these writings as *both* Hellenistic Greek texts in their own right *as well as* translated texts from Jewish religious contexts is a specialized field of study[2].

It would far exceed the limits of the present study to discuss all of these difficult issues in detail. Our focus will accordingly be on three methodological issues in Septuagintal studies that are important for determining the nature of the Greek Jewish scriptures, and,

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[1] Jobes and Silva divide this history into five main stages (2000:56): (i) the original translation of each biblical book from the Hebrew into Greek, the so-called "Old Greek" text (OG). (ii) Early revisions evolving from the OG texts. It was originally assumed that the rejection of the OG and new Jewish translations of the 2nd century C.E. was a reaction against the Christian use of the former, but since the discovery of the Greek scroll of the Twelve Minor Prophets at Nahal Hever in 1953 and the subsequent work on it by Dominique Barthélémy it is clear that there already existed revisions of the OG toward a proto-MT prior to the 2nd century C.E. The stabilization of the Hebrew text during the centuries immediately before and after the birth of Christ seems to have played an important part in this regard. The so-called proto- / kaige-Theodotion and proto-Lucianic texts are examples of such early revisions. (iii) The new Jewish versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion from the second century C.E. Aquila's translation is slavishly literal and represents the culmination of the revisions of the OG towards a proto-MT. Symmachus's version is distinguished for its literal accuracy and use of good Greek idiom, while the historical Theodotion of the 2nd century C.E. seems to have revised an earlier existing recension, the proto- / kaige-Theodotion text (For a more detailed description of the characteristics of these texts, see Fernández Marcos, 2000:109-154, Peters, 1992:1097-1098, and Tov, 1986:229-231). (iv) The recension of the OG by Origen in his Hexapla: "The Hexapla, a massive six-columned work estimated to have been about 6,500 pages long, was completed between 230 and 240 C.E. Origen's chief purpose was to equip Christians for their discussions with Jews, who frequently appealed to the original Hebrew. To this end he arranged in parallel columns the following texts: (1) the Hebrew of his day; (2) the Hebrew text transliterated into Greek; (3) Aquila; (4) Symmachus; (5) LXX, and (6) Theodotion. In some books of the Bible it is reported that Origen added even more columns which he called Quinta, Sexta and Septima; there is also evidence that a version consisting of only the last four columns, the Tetrapla was in use, though some have argued that the Tetrapla was merely another name for the Hexapla" (Peters, 1992:1098). In order to bring the LXX in his fifth column into line with his Hebrew text, Origen made use of Aristarchian symbols to indicate words in his Greek text without Hebrew counterparts (obelus and metobelus) and words in the Hebrew texts without a Greek equivalent (asterisk and metobelus). He adapted his LXX text by inserting the missing words from another Greek version (usually Theodotion). Unfortunately, Origen did not always indicate where he made changes to his Greek text and in the subsequent transmission of the text the signs were confused. The result was a new recension of the OG texts. (v) In his commentary on the books of Chronicles Jerome refers to two more Christian recensions, namely, that of Hesychius, used in Egypt, and that of Lucian, used in Antioch. While little is known of the former, scholars have been able to identify a couple of Lucianic readings, especially in the books of Samuel-Kings (Fernández Marcos, 2000:223-238).

[2] The language of the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures may generally be characterised as *Jewish Hellenistic Greek*. On the one hand it is a form of koine (common) Greek, but on the other, it clearly is translated Greek because it reflects the influence of its Semitic source texts. For an in depth discussion on the issue of Septuagintal language, see Jobes and Silva (2000:105-118), Fernández Marcos (2000:3-17) and Swete (1900:289-314).

consequently, also for our discussion on the object and subject of OTT and the presuppositions that underlie them.

By way of introduction we may sketch the following scenarios in order to facilitate the links between the methodological issues treated in OTT as it was discussed in chapter one, and the three methodological issues of LXX studies that will be addressed in the present chapter:

1. *Terminology*. Scholars are using the term "Septuagint" or its abbreviation "LXX" in a confusing manner. It is commonly used in one of three ways. It is either used carefully in referring to the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch in distinction from the original "Old Greek" translations of the rest of the Hebrew Bible, or it is used carelessly in referring to any printed edition of the Greek Jewish scriptures regardless of the specific textual form presented therein. The most common practice however is the third use of the term, namely, in order to refer to the diverse collection of ancient Greek Jewish scriptures. These scriptures include not only the Greek translations of the Hebrew and Aramaic books associated with the Hebrew Bible, but also various additions to some of these books, as well as books originally written in Greek (Peters, 1992:1093). An important first step in determining the significance of the LXX for the discipline of OTT is therefore to indicate what the term refers to by addressing these three uses thereof and the presuppositions that underlie the decision for the one over against the others. The presuppositions that will determine the decisions on terminology include one's views on the relationship between the three types of texts (translations, additions to translated books, and original Greek compositions), on the scope and homogeneity of the "the Septuagint", as well as the textual history of the books included under the term. With regard to the discipline of OTT the implications of such a decision on terminology is clear: Are we to determine the significance of just the original Greek translation Pentateuch for OTT; if so, why? Are we to determine the significance of the codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus or the critical printed editions of either

Alfred Rahlfs or the Göttingen Septuaginta-Unternehmen for OTT; if so, why? Or are we to determine the significance of a particular collection of Greek Jewish scriptures for the discipline of OTT; if so, why?

2. *The origins of the LXX*. The task of establishing the origins of the Greek Jewish scriptures includes determining both the *provenance* of the individual translations and the *purpose* of this phenomenon. Jennifer Dines notes that LXX scholars are divided about the primary purpose of the original translations: "was it designed to give its first readers access to the Hebrew texts, or was it to replace the Hebrew altogether, that is, how was it meant to be read?" (2004:115). Was the original aim of the translation to bring the reader to the source text via the translation, or was the translation aimed to serve as vehicle to understand the meaning of the source text, that is, to bring the text to the reader? Two important issues with regard to the original translations of the Jewish scriptures are identified by S.P. Brock (1972:20-26). On the one hand, Brock notes that despite the variety of Hebrew texts current at the time of the original Greek translations during the Second Temple period, an increasingly rigid view of the verbal inspiration of some Jewish scriptures (notably the Torah or Pentateuch) was coming into fashion. A logical consequence of such a belief was that the Greek translations were to be very literal (*verbum ad verbum*) in order to preserve as much of the original wording of the source text as possible (1972:20-21). On the other hand, the translators found themselves in a dilemma: because of the differences between the Hebrew and the Greek languages it was difficult to execute such a literal translation without sacrificing the intelligibility of the Greek translated text. This dilemma is already highlighted by the grandson of Jesus ben Sira, the translator of his grandfather's book: "(D)espite our diligent labour in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Not only this book, but even the Law itself, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books differ not a little when read in the original" (NRSV). From the pseudonymous writing of Aristeas, the works of Philo, and the extant Greek

textual witnesses in our possession after the discoveries at Qumran (see below) we may deduce that two different solutions to this dilemma presented themselves. "On the one hand it could be dismissed as irrelevant and a claim made that the translation had the official blessing of the Jerusalem priesthood, or – a rather later development – it could be claimed that the translation itself was divinely inspired. On the other hand the problem could be faced in a realistic way, and the existing translation be made to conform more accurately with the Hebrew original" (Brock, 1972:22-23).

Any modern proposal for the origins of the LXX must consequently fulfil two requirements: (i) The first requirement is that it must serve as a paradigm or explanatory framework for the nature of the books of the LXX as *both* Hellenistic Greek texts *and* translations of Jewish national and religious works, as Albert Pietersma has convincingly shown (2002:337-350); (ii) The second requirement is that this paradigm or framework should enable one to reach a plausible explanation for the different attitudes towards the original Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures as well as the composition of those original Greek works that together make up the LXX. Moreover, it stands to reason that such an explanation of the origins of the LXX, its provenance and purpose, will prove to be of vital importance for, at least, the object of study in the discipline of OTT, for if it can be proven that the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures were seen to be legitimate forms of the traditions represented by their Hebrew (or Aramaic) source texts, then it becomes apparent that the continued use of only a Hebrew text (especially the MT) as the object of study in OTT is not valid and that this practice resides not in the textual superiority of the MT or any other Hebrew text, but in the philosophical or theological presuppositions and assumptions of the scholar.

3. *Translation technique*. "Translation technique" (TT) is the technical term used in LXX scholarship to denote the process whereby translators translated a unit of scripture for a community. Emanuel Tov has identified a number of areas where

the study of TT is especially relevant: In the first place, the analysis of TT is important in its own right as a study of the enormous undertaking of translating a Semitic written document into an Indo-European language such as Greek (1987:349-351). Secondly, the study of the linguistic features of the Greek translations such as grammar and lexicography owes much to the examination of TT (1987:351). Thirdly, any cursory comparison between the MT and the LXX will show multiple differences between the two texts[3]. A study of TT is necessary in order to establish whether these differences are caused by the translator or are due to a variant Hebrew text. TT is therefore also important for the text-critical study of the LXX (1987:352). Johann Cook has also shown that the different TT followed by the various translators determined to what extent exegesis was included in the LXX books (2004:1-19). Two issues pertain to this view, namely, that the LXX should be seen as the first exegetical commentary of the Hebrew Bible and that one needs to make sure that the exegetical interpretations are indeed those of the original translator and not of later revisers or editors (2004:2). A last area of study where TT plays an important role is the investigation of the citations and the use of the Jewish scriptures (Greek and Hebrew) in the New Testament. Timothy McLay[4] has recently made a thorough study of these issues and in the process made a valuable contribution to this vital but often-neglected field of research.

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[3] Jobes and Silva have identified these differences between the Greek and Hebrew versions as the "weightiest problem in LXX scholarship" (2000:90). They identify five possible explanations for these differences: (i) The Hebrew *Vorlage* from which the translation was made differed from the MT; (ii) The translation process was unprecedented and therefore does not reveal a pattern; (iii) The translator made a mistake; (iv) The translator had an interpretative bias; and (v) Some complicated combination of these circumstances (2000:92-93). The reason why it is so difficult to decide between these explanations is the complicated textual history of both the Greek and the Hebrew texts on the one hand, and on the other hand, that there is no uniform method of TT in the LXX. The various books are usually identified either as "free" or as "literal" (2000:91). Tov and Wright have argued that these designations "literal" and "free" are ill defined and that scholars in the past have used them based on their intuitive understanding and impressions of the translations (1985:151-152). Criteria are therefore necessary for a more precise study of the characteristics of the LXX translations. Jennifer Dines has made a helpful suggestion with regards to the characterization of the various LXX books: "Rather than think in terms of either 'literal' or 'free', it is probably better to envisage a continuum running from extremely literal to extremely free renderings, with many intermediate stages and combinations, on which the different translations, or even different parts of the same translation, can be located. On this kind of sliding scale a good number of the books come out somewhere in the middle" (2004:121).

[4] See his monograph, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

The analysis of TT is also important for the discipline of OTT. In order to determine the extent of the influence both the source text and the historical context exerted on the traditions represented in the LXX books it is necessary to come to grips with the manner in which the translators translated their Hebrew / Aramaic *Vorlagen* into Greek. There are two reasons for this: Firstly, it is a commonplace that all translations involve the translators' interpretation of their source texts (Greenspoon, 2003:80). This is even truer of the Greek translation of Hebrew texts as the latter were not yet vocalized at the time of the translations. Secondly, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures did not occur in a historical or religious vacuum. On the contrary, "(b)ecause the biblical texts were both ancient and sacred, the translators were concerned with relating the translation to the religious understanding, traditions, and sensibilities of their contemporary target audience. They worked not only within the linguistic context of Hellenistic Greek, but also within a social, political, and religious context that shaped their translation, probably both deliberately and unconsciously" (Jobes and Silva, 2000:89).

Consequently, the TT of the Greek Jewish scriptures will reflect the degree in which its translators rendered their source texts faithfully or creatively. If the translators translated the source text faithfully, then the LXX text may present a form of the tradition that differs from the MT. This is significant for the object of study in OTT. Conversely, if the translators rendered the *Vorlagen* creatively, the LXX text may reflect additional theological insights into the traditions it preserves. These insights are relevant to the subject of OTT and are to greater or lesser degree influenced by the historical context of the translators.

From the ensuing discussions on the three issues of terminology, the origins of the LXX, and TT, it will become increasingly clear that the conclusions that are drawn from them should markedly influence one's views on the subject and object of OTT and, consequently, the significance of the LXX for that discipline.

3.1 TERMINOLOGY

The traditional use of the term "Septuagint" refers only to the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch, reserving the rubric "Old Greek" for the oldest recoverable version of those books translated from a Semitic source (Peters, 1992:1093; Tov, 1986:230). This practice arose with reference to the tradition related in the *Book of Aristeas* (B.Ar.) that 72 elders translated the Jewish Law in the third century B.C.E. Later embellishments of this tradition reduced the number of translators to seventy[5], hence the abbreviation LXX. Other scholars use the term to indicate the "Old Testament" of the early church in distinction from the later Hexaplaric, Lucianic and Hesychian recensions as well as from other Jewish translations such as those of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion. For many other scholars "Septuagint" simply indicates the entire collection of Greek Jewish scriptures, including the *de novo* Greek writings, either in a particular printed edition of a single manuscript (diplomatic edition), or in a form reconstructed from selected readings taken from extant manuscripts (eclectic text).

Jobes and Silva indicate that these last two uses of the term create the false impression that the "Septuagint" is a homogenous text produced in its entirety at one point in time (2000:30). However, the recent repudiation of the existence of an Alexandrian canon[6], the complex textual history of the Greek Jewish scriptures, as well as the debates within

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[5] The Jewish historian Josephus (37-100 C.E) paraphrases B.Ar. in his *Antiquities of the Jews* book 12 §§11-118 and refers in some paragraphs to 72 and in others to seventy translators. Examples of the latter include the following quotations from the *Antiquities*. 12 §§57 and 86: "This was the reply which the high priest made; but it does not seem to me to be necessary to set down the names of the *seventy elders* who were sent by Eleazar, and carried the law, which yet were subjoined at the end of the epistle" (§57) and "when they were come to Alexandria, and Ptolemy heard that they were come, and that the *seventy elders* were come also, he presently sent for Andreas and Aristeus, his ambassadors..." (§86). The English translation quoted here is by William Whiston (1987, Hendrickson Publishers). The italics are my own. It should be emphasized, however, that neither B.Ar. nor Josephus give any name or title to the Greek translation of the Torah. Both refer to the translators as 72 or seventy, *not* the translation (Sundberg, 2002:70). Another second century Jewish tradition in Rabbinic material also gives the number of translators of the Torah as seventy. This number parallels the seventy elders in Exodus 24:1-2, 9-11 that joined Moses in meeting God on the mountain as well as the seventy elders that received the same spirit that was on Moses (Numbers 11:10-25). The translators are therefore portrayed as assistants to Moses in administering the Law (Jobes and Silva, 2000:36).

[6] See note 21 of the previous chapter.

the early church regarding the scope and authority of the "Septuagint"[7] cast a shadow on such a view. In fact, there is no such thing as *the* Septuagint. Various translators translated the individual books independently at different locations and the whole process spanned a period of three to four centuries. As a result, there never existed a uniform Greek version of the whole of the "Old Testament" and even the Christian codices of the fourth and fifth century such as codex Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus are amalgams of different texts from different times and with different characteristics (Jobes and Silva, 2000:31). This heterogeneous nature of the Greek Jewish scriptures coupled with the fact that the naming of a collection of these texts was a fourth century Christian practice and then not restricted to the Pentateuch, obliges LXX scholarship, on the one hand, to avoid generalizations by investigating the various books / translations

[7] Mogens Müller has shown that neither the precise parameters of the "Septuagint" nor its status was uncontested within the early Church. The Old Latin translation of the "Septuagint" included the apocrypha but theologians such as Athanasius (d. 373), Gregory of Naziananzus (d. *ca*. 380), Amphilochius of Iconia (d. *ca*. 380) and Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) opted for the twenty-two books of the Hebrew Bible. In this regard the number of books was important: "The matter at issue in the beginning was not the canonical Hebrew text or its special wording, but its number of books. Thus there was no objection to the apocryphal additions to the books of Esther and Daniel, any more than there was to the addition of those writings which might be listed under canonical titles (not only Lamentations, but also the book of Baruch and the letter of Jeremiah had been listed, together with the book of Jeremiah), as we see it in the canon of the synod of Laodicea (*c*. 360)" (1996:80). The number of books, twenty-two, in order to be aligned with the number of consonants in the Hebrew alphabet, was however also not unequivocal. There is a tradition that numbers the authoritative books as twenty-four. An example of such a view comes from IV Ezra 14: 37-47. After the return to Jerusalem during the reign of the Persian ruler Artaxerxes, God inspired the priest Ezra to remember all the sacred books that were lost during the exile. The result was ninety-four books in all. However, "the Most High spoke to me, saying, 'Make public the twenty four books that you wrote first, and let the worthy and the unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people" (NRSV). The question regarding the scope and authority of the Church's authoritative books reached a climax in the correspondence between Jerome and Augustine on whether the "Septuagint" (on which the Old Latin was based) was sufficient for the Church or whether a new Latin translation based on the Hebrew text is necessary. Augustine favoured the first option because the "Septuagint" was considered inspired within Christian circles, due, in no small amount, to the embellishments to the tradition associated with B.Ar. Jerome opted for the then stabilized Hebrew text *contra* the Septuagint that underwent various recensions in the Church. Elsewhere he notes that the Church is divided between three recensions of the "Septuagint": the Hexaplaric recension of Origen, the Lucianic recension and the Hesychian recension. Furthermore, because the "Septuagint" differs from the Hebrew text the Church is ignorant of passages exclusive to the latter that are of vital importance to it. Müller succinctly summarizes the outcome of this debate for the Church's concept of Bible: "(B)oth Jerome and Augustine came to appear as simul victores et victi. Jerome's translation was seemingly victorious. But the victory was gained first and foremost because of its linguistic qualities, not because of its faithfulness to the Hebrew text ... As to the extent of the canon, the Septuagint tradition won the toss in the first place. Only with the Reformation did the picture alter decisively when there was a growing appreciation of Jerome's conception of the canon among the translators of the Old Testament into national languages, reinforced by the demands of biblical humanists for translations made directly on the basis of the original languages" (1989b:123).

independently from each other, and, on the other hand, to clarify in each instance how the term "Septuagint" is being used.

Consequently, in the present study on the virtue of the LXX for the object and subject of the discipline of OTT, the term "Septuagint" (LXX) will be used to refer to a *collection of Greek Jewish scriptures* produced by a variety of translators and writers over a long period of time in diverse places. It is this collection of scriptures, including translations and original Greek compositions alike, which functioned as the "Old Testament" for the early church. The term "Old Greek" (OG), in contrast, refers to what specialists regard as *the original Greek translations* that were made from the Semitic *Vorlagen* of the various books included in the Septuagint. These definitions are of special importance for the object of study in the discipline of OTT because the LXX includes books that are excluded from the Hebrew Bible and Protestant "Old Testament", while, in comparison with the MT, the OG texts often reflect clear differences in content.

3.2 THE ORIGINS OF THE GREEK JEWISH SCRIPTURES

3.2.1 The Book of Aristeas

The *Book of Aristeas*[8] is an important witness from antiquity to the origins of the Septuagint (understood here as referring only to the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch). The document consists of 322 chapters or paragraphs and narrates the story of how the Greek translation of the Jewish Law came into being at the behest of the king of Egypt, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.E.)[9]. Aristeas, an official at the court of Ptolemy II, writes a letter to his brother, Philocrates, to inform him of the circumstances surrounding the official translation of the Jewish Law into Greek. Ptolemy II

[8] Scholarly literature usually refers to this document as The *Letter* of Aristeas. However, in a recent study on this document Sylvie Honigman suggests that it should be regarded as a book rather than a letter (2003:1). The present discussion will accordingly make use of her abbreviation, B.Ar.

[9] Although B.Ar. includes details on the release of the Jewish slaves that were brought to Egypt by Ptolemy I Soter at the request of Aristeas (§§12-27), the letter and gifts that Ptolemy II sent to Eleazar (§§28-82), the surroundings of Jerusalem and the temple, the performance of the Jewish cult (§§83-120), and the philosophical questions posed by the king to the 72 translators (§§187-294), we restrict our brief overview of its content to the description of the translation (§§308-317).

commissions the keeper of the king's library in Alexandria, Demetrius of Phalerum, to collect all the books in the world. Demetrius informs the king that it has come to his attention that the books of the Jewish Law are worthy to be included in his library, but it needs to be translated. Demetrius suggests to Ptolemy II that a letter should be written to the high priest in Jerusalem, Eleazar, that requests of him to "dispatch men of the most exemplary lives and mature experience, skilled in matters pertaining to their Law, six in number from each tribe, in order that after the examination of the text agreed by the majority, and the achievement of accuracy in the translation, we may produce an outstanding version in a manner worthy both of the contents and your purposes" (§ 32) [10]. Aristeas is part of the delegation that is sent to Jerusalem to deliver the letter and to return with the 72 translators (six elders from each of the twelve tribes). The king warmly greets the translators and after seven days of festivities they are taken to an island to complete the translation. This is done in 72 days "just as if such a result was achieved by some deliberate design" (§307). Demetrius gathers the whole Jewish community and reads the translation to all in the presence of the translators. The translation is received with great ovation and the leaders decide that since the translation was made rightly, reverently and accurately "in every respect" it should remain so and that there should be no revision (§311). To enforce this decision a curse is pronounced "on anyone who should alter the version by any addition or change to any part of the written text, or any deletion either" (§311). The author of the letter then comments: "This was a good step taken, to ensure that the words were preserved completely and permanently in perpetuity" (§311). The letter ends by relating the assent given by the king to the translation and the return of the translators to Jerusalem.

Some scholars debate the genre of the document[11] and others raise doubts about B.Ar.'s literary unity[12], however, the major disagreements among scholars have been on the

[10] The English translation quoted here is by R.J.H Schutt, "Letter of Aristeas," *The Old Testament Pseudopigrapha Volume 2* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1985) 7-34.

[11] On the one hand, there is a large group of scholars that regard B.Ar. as a fictitious writing that holds no historically reliable information at all. As a result, these scholars describe the genre of B.Ar. as that of *Pseudepigraphon* (Cook, 2005d:443). On the other hand, there are scholars that take the historical context portrayed in B.Ar. seriously. Nina Collins, for example, argues that B.Ar. should be seen as a historical document and consequently assigns the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek to the year 281 B.C.E. (Cook, 2005d:443-444). Furthermore, Sylvie Honigman has argued that the genre and the subject matter of

provenance and, especially, the purpose of the document. The difficulties surrounding the genre, composition, provenance, and purpose of B.Ar. are related though. Therefore, the conclusions that are drawn on one of these topics will inform the views that are held on the others.

The consensus view is that B.Ar. was written in Egypt, probably in Alexandria, however, it is notoriously difficult to date the document. Opinions on its date have ranged from the end of the third century B.C.E. until the second century C.E. (Peters, 1992:1096).

B.Ar. are related. She interprets the document in its Alexandrian background: At the time of B.Ar.'s composition (*ca*. 150 B.C.E.) Hellenistic grammarians, notably Aristarchus, were editing the Homeric epics. Aristarchus produced a new edition of the Homeric epics that achieved a status close to that of an authoritative text (2003:119). Honigman suggests that the fate of the LXX Pentateuch was comparable to that of the Homeric epics and that B.Ar. presents the translation of the LXX Pentateuch in terms of a textual tradition: "(T)his working hypothesis proposes that the early history of the LXX should be read against the background of the history of the editing of the Homeric epics in Alexandria, across a time span ranging from the early third to the middle or later part of the second century B.C.E. Needless to say, the assumption implied by such a working premise is that the LXX was primarily translated not for pragmatic needs, but for the sake of prestige. Seen in these terms, the hypothesis of a Homeric paradigm would restore a close connection between the early history of the LXX and the account of these events in *B.Ar*." (2003:120). Honigman consequently proposes, from the compositional nature of B.Ar., that its genre is that of historical *diegesis* (narrative prose on events that really happened), that is, Hellenistic *historiography* (2003:30). According to Honigman, the narrative of B.Ar. follows an Alexandrian pattern of story-telling in which a diversity of material is presented in a ring composition and a blending of genres in order to embellish the main theme of the writing so as to guard the readers from boredom (2003:42). The author of B.Ar. juxtaposes topics that are conventional in historiography and in religious matters (philosophy) to make up the main themes of the document. The primary topic is the deputation to the High Priest with the purpose of obtaining a copy of the Jewish Law as well as translators. The secondary topic is the liberation of the Jewish slaves that were brought to Egypt by Ptolemy I Soter. Consequently, the main theme of the primary topic concerns the quality of the manuscript on which the translation is based, as well as the fidelity of the translation to the Hebrew original. The theme of the secondary topic is a rewriting of the story of the Exodus. B.Ar. equates the story of the translation of the Jewish Law with the story of the original Hebrew Law. It turns the Greek translation of the Pentateuch into the sacred text of the Alexandrian Jews who, in turn, represents the whole people of Israel (2003:53). As a result, Honigman argues that the author of B.Ar. meant to give his subject matter the status of a *charter myth*, that is, a narrative about past events that is told in order to promote and legitimise some practical purpose. The subject matter of B.Ar. is therefore to be understood as a charter myth for the origins of the LXX Pentateuch. Accordingly, B.Ar. meets the criteria of Hellenistic historiography and its original readers would have understood and accepted the account it gives of the origins of the LXX Pentateuch as reliable and "true" history.
See Cook, 2005c:531-541 and 2005d:441-461 for an evaluation on these views of Honigman.

[12] The bone of contention concerning the homogeneity of the composition is the large numbers of digressions from the supposed main theme of the document, namely, the translation of the Jewish Law into Greek. These digressions make up five-sixths of B.Ar.'s content and include the description of the gifts sent by Ptolemy II to the temple in Jerusalem (§§51-83a), the journey of the delegation to Jerusalem and the description of the temple, the city and the country (§§83b-120), the apology for the Jewish Law by the High Priest, Eleazar (§§128-171), and the feast that lasted seven consecutive nights that includes the questions posed to the 72 translators by the king and the answers given by each (§§187-300). The solution to this problem was to regard these digressions as later interpolations.

Nevertheless, most of the recent attempts to date the document have assigned it to the second century B.C.E. For instance, Jellicoe and Schutt favour a time surrounding 170 B.C.E. for the composition of the book, whilst Bickermann has argued on linguistic evidence that it was written sometime between 145 and 127 B.C.E. (Sollamo, 2001b:334). In her recent monograph on B.Ar., Sylvie Honigman has claimed a date ranging from the middle to the later part of the second century B.C.E. for it (2003:128-129). At the same time, it is important to note that the various attempts at dating B.Ar. have gone hand in hand with a range of proposals for the real purpose of the document.

Ever since Humphrey Hody in the 18th century refuted the authenticity of B.Ar.'s account of Septuagintal origins, scholars have, in general, followed suit in judging B.Ar. to be *fictitious*. Sylvie Honigman has been a notable exception[13]. B.Ar. is accordingly attributed not to an official from Ptolemy II's royal court, but to a Jew from the second century B.C.E. (*ca*. 170-100 B.C.E). Concomitantly, the purpose of its writing has been identified as serving a polemical or apologetical function, rather than being a reliable account of how the Jewish Law was originally translated into Greek. B.Ar. has variously been considered as (i) a writing that ascribes the same sanctity and authority held by the Hebrew Law to the Greek translation thereof (Orlinsky, 1975:89-114); (ii) a polemical document that either demonstrates the superiority of the Jewish religion and Law to Greeks, or, conversely, indicates the close relationship that existed between Jews and non-Jews in Alexandria amidst the upheavals of the Maccabean era, especially the policies of Antiochus Epiphanus (Shutt, 1985:8-9); (iii) an apology for the Alexandrian Greek translation of the Pentateuch directed against a rival Greek version produced by the Jewish community of Leontopolis in Egypt (Jellicoe, 1968:48-50); (iv) an apology for the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch over against revisions toward the

[13] Honigman argues that the main theme of B.Ar, is the quality of the manuscript of the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch. Therefore, the purpose of the writing was not apologetic but rather to promote a textual revision that was made necessary by the fact that the manuscripts of the LXX Pentateuch had deteriorated into a poor state: "With time, the manuscripts circulating among Jewish communities all over Egypt deteriorated. In *B.Ar.*'s time the need was felt for a revised edition. This revised edition of the LXX claimed to be no less than the recovery of the original text established under Ptolemy II. In the same way, it is well known that the Alexandrian grammarians claimed that their edition of Homer was, in fact, the retrieved authentic text of Homer 'composed' *c*. 1050 B.C.E. according to Aristarchus' reckoning" (2003:133-134).

contemporary Hebrew text circulating at the time (Brock, 1974:541-571 and 1992:301-338); and (v) an apology for Diaspora Judaism in relation to a more conservative, Palestinian type of Judaism, which had its supporters in the Alexandrian community itself (Sollamo, 2001b:338-342).

Whether the "real" purpose of B.Ar. is envisioned in terms of an *apologia* for Judaism and its way of life as regulated by Torah, or in terms of the superiority of the original translation versus rival translations and the revisions towards the available Hebrew texts, it should nevertheless be noted that its account of Septuagintal origins, as well as the later embellishments thereof in Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 12 and Philo's *De Vita Mosis* Book 2, are important indicators of the attitudes toward the original Greek translation of the Jewish Law during the Second Temple period and the necessity of revisions towards the Hebrew at that time[14]. These views are essential pieces to the puzzling textual history of the Greek version of the Jewish scriptures, which, in turn, is a major contributor to a correct understanding of the LXX.

In the concluding chapters of B.Ar. (§§ 311-318) it is stated that the translation was made rightly, reverently and accurately, needing no revision and pronouncing a curse on anyone who would change it. In his paraphrase of B.Ar.'s content, Josephus omits this last detail of a curse pronounced on any revisers, and replaces it with the following paragraph: "Moreover they all, both the priests and the ancientest of the elders, and the principal men of their commonwealth, made it their request, that since the interpretation was happily finished, it might not be altered. And when they all commended that determination of theirs, they enjoined, that if anyone observed anything omitted, that he would take a view of it again, and have it laid before them, and corrected; which was a wise action of theirs, that when the thing was judged to have been well done, it might continue forever" (*Antiquities of the Jews* 12 §§108-109). This means that if any

[14] See the views of Harry Orlinsky who suggests that the prohibition against revisions of the original translation of the Jewish Law is actually part of the process of the text's "canonization" which is modelled on the biblical account of the revelation of the Law at Mount Sinai. According to Orlinsky, the Jewish attitudes toward the LXX were determined by the socio-historical context prior to the loss of their sovereignty after the two failed revolts against Rome and the growth of Christianity. The LXX was held in high regard during this time and Orlinsky claims that this is the context in which B.Ar. was written and that gave rise to the views of Philo and Josephus (1975:97-98).

omission was detected that it should be brought to the attention of the priests and elders and subsequently corrected. Furthermore, the Jewish writer Philo (20 B.C.E.-50 C.E.) held the LXX in high regard and elaborates on the content of B.Ar. in his *De vita Mosis* Book 2 §§37-40[15]. Eleazar is both high priest and king of Judea; the request for translation is attributed to divine inspiration; the translators themselves choose the place to make the translation, the island of Pharos; the translators "became as it were possessed and interpreted the divine word without each of them employing different expressions, but all employing precisely the same words and phrases, as though dictated to each by an invisible prompter" (§37). He acknowledges that the same notion can be variously rendered in different languages by means of paraphrasing and rewriting, but that this did not occur in the case of the Greek translation of the Torah. In fact, according to Philo, the translation was accurate as well as inspired because the translators acted as prophets: "(T)he Greek words used corresponded exactly to the Chaldean, perfectly adapted to the things signified. For just as in geometry and dialectic, as I see it, the matters signified do not permit variety of expression, but what was first set down remains unaltered, similarly these writers, as it appears, discovered the expressions that coincide with the matter, and that alone or best of all would render forcefully and distinctly what was meant. The clearest proof of this is that, if the Chaldeans have learned Greek, or Greeks Chaldean, and read both versions, the Chaldean and its translation, they marvel at them and respect them as sisters, or rather one and the same, both in matter and words, and designate the authors not as translators but as prophets and hierophants, to whom it was granted in the purity of their thought to match their steps with the purest of spirits, the spirit of Moses" (§§38-40).

It may subsequently be concluded that the majority of recent scholars have regarded B.Ar.'s account of the origins of the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch, attributing it to the initiative of Ptolemy II's royal court, to be largely fictitious. Its aims have been identified as being polemical and apologetical, rather than giving an accurate account of Septuagintal origins. However, it is often conceded that B.Ar. may preserve

[15] The English translation quoted here is by David Winston, *Philo of Alexandria: The contemplative life, The giants, and selections* (London: SPCK, 1982).

some historical fact in ascribing the translation of the Pentateuch to the third century B.C.E. and locating it in Alexandria. Moreover, if the later embellishments of Josephus and Philo are taken into consideration it becomes apparent that the main bone of contention regarding B.Ar. and the origins of the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures is whether its account of a single original translation is accurate or not in light of the extant Greek textual witnesses in our possession, and whether the supposed "official" nature of this original translation, propagated by B.Ar., guaranteed it equal status with its Semitic source text, thereby rendering the need for revisions obsolete.

As a result, modern proposals for the origin of the LXX have either sustained B.Ar.'s claim for a single original translation (of the Pentateuch), concluding that the later revisions and recensions were based on this original translation, or have postulated on the basis of B.Ar. that there were multiple "unofficial" translations that preceded the "standard" version and circulated alongside it. The former explanation of the origins of the Septuagint is referred to as the "proto- / Ur- Septuagint" theory and was originally championed by Paul de Lagarde, whilst the latter is known as the "Greek Targum" theory advocated by Paul Kahle. Subsequent theories for the origin of the LXX have either made attempts to do justice to the purpose of B.Ar. or to address the complicated textual history of the Greek Jewish scriptures by focusing on the issue of revisions of the Greek texts towards the Hebrew.

3.2.2 Proposals for the origin of the LXX

3.2.2.1 Paul de Lagarde and the proto-Septuagint theory

Paul de Lagarde's views on a proto-Septuagint agreed with his conviction that an *Urtext* underlies all extant Hebrew texts. All translations of the Hebrew Bible with the exception of the LXX were made after the standardization of the Hebrew text. The original form of the LXX (proto-Septuagint) was to his mind a witness to a form of the Hebrew text far more ancient than the consonantal Masoretic text. He therefore assumed that the entire original LXX had been translated from a single (pre-MT) Hebrew *Vorlage*. Lagarde also

thought that all existing Greek manuscripts could be assigned to any one of the three Christian recensions mentioned by Jerome, namely, the Lucianic, the Hesychian and Origen's Hexaplaric recension and that these three recensions were based on the same (proto) Septuagint text. Consequently, he aimed at the reconstruction of a proto-Septuagint from the various existing Greek manuscripts in order to derive from it this ancient Hebrew text (Deist, 1978:174-176).

3.2.2.2 Paul Kahle's Greek Targum theory

Despite the support of the majority of LXX specialists today for Lagarde's proto-Septuagint theory or some revised form of it, it did initially not win universal approval. Paul Kahle proposed a rival theory. It postulated that there were various attempts to translate the Torah and other Jewish scriptures into Greek, probably oral at first and subsequently written down, followed by attempts to improve on these first translations and only later the emergence of an official "standard" translation that was a revision of the already existing translations and meant to replace it. These multiple Greek versions sprang from the need of the Jewish community in Egypt for translations of their scriptures, because they could not understand Hebrew any more. This need was similar to the one of the Jews in Palestine for an Aramaic translation, hence the perceived similarity in origins between the LXX and the Aramaic Targums (1959:213). Kahle found support for his "Greek Targum" theory not only in B.Ar., but also in the biblical quotations of Philo, Josephus and the New Testament (1959: 247-252).

Kahle dated B.Ar. to *ca*. 100 B.C.E. and considered it to be propaganda for a "standardized" Greek version of the Torah, contemporaneous with B.Ar. (1959:211-213). He based his argument, firstly, on the difficult passage in §30 and the verb `seshvmantaiv`. He argues that the phrase `ajmelevsteron de … seshvmantaiv` should be translated with "carelessly interpreted" or "rather carelessly written" and claims that it refers to earlier translations of the Torah into Greek (1959:212-213). Secondly, he notes the references in §§ 314-316 to two Greek authors who lived in the fourth century B.C.E., the historian Theopompos and the Greek tragic poet

Philodectos, who quoted the Jewish Law in their writings with disastrous results. This means, according to Kahle, that the Jewish Law or at least parts of it was already in circulation at that time and therefore much older than the second century "standard" translation propagated by B.Ar.

Kahle was also of the opinion that the biblical quotations of Philo, Josephus and the New Testament (including even some of the early Church Fathers) did not come from a *uniform* translation. He therefore envisioned the origins of the Septuagint as one of a lengthy process of development whereby the first translations, normally not of high standard, were continually improved and revised: "The first attempt at translating a difficult Hebrew text into another language was usually not of a high standard. Revisions were made, some with more, some with less ability by different men on different principles. These Targums had no authoritative text. Every copyist could try to improve the text he copied. Sometimes, texts of a higher standard were produced owing to a better understanding of the Hebrew original; at other times we find an adaptation to another Hebrew text. Sometimes the Greek of the translation was improved" (1959:236).

3.2.2.3 The liturgical theory of Henry St. John Thackeray

Henry St. John Thackeray developed a liturgical theory for the origins of the Septuagint in the 1920 Schweich Lectures. He remarks that the account of B.Ar. has long been discredited as a contemporary and authentic narrative and, subsequently, that it is difficult to disentangle fact from fiction. Following Henry Barclay Swete, Thackeray regards some elements of B.Ar.'s account as credible, namely, that the Pentateuch was a separate corpus in the LXX which was translated first and as a whole in Alexandria during the third century B.C.E. by a small group of translators. However, Thackeray regards the traditional number of seventy or seventy-two translators as legendary; according to him the alternative number of five, which is attested to in a rabbinic version of the story, is probably more likely to be true. Furthermore, the Hebrew manuscript may well have been imported from Palestine at the request of Ptolemy II, a patron of literature and interested in the antiquities of his subjects. It is incredible, though, that the work should entirely be

ascribed to his initiative and to that of his librarian (1921:11-12). As a result, Thackeray proposes alternative circumstances for the origin of the LXX: "There can be little doubt that it was the religious needs of this thriving community which stimulated the ambitious project of translating the Scriptures. Hebrew, even in the homeland, had long since become a learned language; but in Egypt even the Aramaic paraphrase which served the needs of the Palestinian synagogues, had, at least to the second and third generation of immigrants, ceased to be intelligible. Clinging tenaciously to their faith, but driven by circumstances to abandon the use of Aramaic, this enterprising colony determined that their Law should be read in a language 'understanded of the people'. The Greek Bible, it seems, owed its origin to a popular demand for a version in the vulgar tongue" (1921:10-11). The lectionary use of passages from Torah, accompanied by *Haphtaroth* or prophetic lessons and appropriate Psalms, during the main feasts and fasts not only gave rise to the translation of the books but also influenced the form of the texts (1921:40-79). In short, it is with the advent of Diaspora Jewish worship in the synagogue that Thackeray identifies not only the need for a Greek translation of the community's sacred writings, but also the forms that the translation took.

3.2.2.4 The legal theory of Elias Bickermann

Elias Bickermann has objected to the liturgical theory by arguing that the Jewish community in Alexandria would not have required a translation of the whole of the Pentateuch for their liturgy and that it cannot be attested that the Torah was read in the Synagogue in the third century B.C.E. He drew attention to similarities between the literalness of the technique employed by the Greek translators of LXX Pentateuch and the work of dragomen. Dragomen were known professional translators of commercial and legal documents. Bickermann concluded that the translation technique of the original translators of the Pentateuch was modelled upon the dragomen technique and consequently that the LXX Pentateuch was originally intended as a legal document. Chaim Rabin (in the field of translation studies) has also endorsed this legal theory for the origins of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch (Honigman, 2003:105-106; Pietersma, 2002:343-344).

3.2.2.5 Sebastian P. Brock and the educational setting for Septuagint origins

According to Sebastian Brock B.Ar. is correct in depicting the Pentateuch as the earliest part of the Hebrew Bible to have been translated. He also notes the fact that this translation of the Pentateuch was without precedent in the Hellenistic world as an important criterion for a proper assessment of the character of the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures and for the language employed. Moreover, the character of the translation may assist in explaining the later treatment of the original translation and the attitudes towards it (1972:11). Although it is very unlikely that the translators of the Pentateuch had any real tradition of written translation on which to draw, the option of a literal or free style of translation was at least open to them. The solution of the translators was, "not surprisingly, something of a compromise, in that they are neither consistently literal, nor consistently free, although it is interesting to note that specifically legal sections tend to be more literally translated than purely narrative ones" (Brock, 1972:20). Later generations who were familiar with the phenomenon of translation would however take exception to this mode of translation. "Accordingly they became dissatisfied with the compromise adopted by the pioneer translators, and this dissatisfaction very largely determined the whole course of the history of the LXX during the first half millennium of its existence" (1972:20). The problem concerned the increasing view of the verbal inspiration of the Hebrew text of the Jewish scriptures and the concomitant criticisms circulating at that time that the Greek translation of the Pentateuch did not accurately reflect the current Palestinian Hebrew text (Brock 1974:544). As a result of these views and criticisms the OG texts were revised in order to make it conform to the Hebrew text. Brock therefore proposes that the purpose of B.Ar. was to serve as a polemic against those revisers who brought the original translation in line with their Hebrew text and to authenticate the OG version of the Pentateuch in the face of the criticisms levelled against it (Brock 1974:543-544).

Consequently, Brock notes the fictitious nature of Aristeas's account of the origins of the LXX as well as the limitations of a theory that the liturgical needs of the Greek speaking Jewish communities alone resulted in the original translation of the Jewish scriptures. He

subsequently suggests that the inner needs of the Jewish community in Egypt lead to the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek, not only liturgical needs, but also educational needs: "Once it is admitted that the picture given by the author of the Letter of Aristeas (*sic*) – namely that the translation was commissioned by Ptolemy II so that Greeks might have access to Jewish scriptures – is a false one, we are left with the alternative: that the work was done *by* Hellenised Jews, and *for* Hellenised Jews, something that one would have expected all along, and which would never have been questioned, but for the fantasy presented by the Letter of Aristeas (*sic*). On Sabbath there would be regular reading of the Law and the Prophets, and the written Greek translation may well have taken its origin in such a milieu … But liturgical requirements were hardly the only incentive for undertaking the translation of the Pentateuch (and, later, the rest of the Old Testament) into Greek. St. Paul calls the Pentateuch a schoolmaster, and this, for the Jew, was true in a much wider application than Paul makes of it. A schoolmaster who speaks a language which his pupils do not understand is naturally not going to have much success. Hellenistic Jews must have been brought up on the Old Testament (and the Pentateuch in particular) in the same way that Greeks were educated on the classics of Greek literature. It has often been said that Homer was the Bible of the Greeks, but it would be just as accurate, if not more so, to say that the Bible was the Homer of the Jews" (1974:548-550 – his italics). Brock therefore hints at an educational setting for the origins of the LXX, but stops short of arguing that it originated in a school due to the complete lack of evidence about Jewish education in Egypt in the third century B.C.E. He does, however, postulate that the movement of correcting the OG text to the Hebrew was done in an educational setting (1972:29).

3.2.2.6 Albert Pietersma and the interlinear paradigm of Septuagint origins

From the outset of the present discussion on the various views on the origins of the Greek Jewish scriptures it was stated that they should act as paradigms or explanatory frameworks for the nature of the books of the LXX as both Hellenistic Greek texts in their own right, and as translated texts. At the same time the question was posed whether the Greek translated texts was held in the same esteem as its Hebrew (or Aramaic) source

texts. Albert Pietersma (2002:340) has made the observation that B.Ar. propagates the view that the original translation of the Pentateuch was produced to stand in for the Hebrew and to take its place. According to Pietersma, the reigning paradigms for Septuagintal origins have followed B.Ar.'s lead in this view of the LXX as a free-standing, replacement translation, but that this brings their theoretical framework in conflict with their practice of returning to the source text in certain instances for essential linguistic information in order to account for the unintelligible Greek text at hand (2002:355). Furthermore, he notes that there seems to be widespread consensus amongst Septuagintal scholars that the so-called "Hebraic" dimension of the LXX needs to be accounted for (2002:349). This "Hebraic" dimension includes the transliterations of Hebrew (and Aramaic) words featured in the LXX, the "purely mechanical translations of embarrassment", and the unidiomatic uses of grammatical constructions. Instead of treating the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures as self-sufficient and independent texts, Pietersma proposes that it should be engaged with in its constitutive character, or *Sitz im Leben*, as translations from a Semitic source text into Greek[16]. As a translation the

[16] It is important to note that these two distinct approaches to the Greek text of the Jewish scriptures, either as a self-sufficient text independent from its source text, or in its character as a translation of a Semitic source text, indissolubly linked to and dependent on it, forms the distinctive bases for two of the ongoing projects of translating the LXX into modern languages. The English translation project is sponsored by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS) and has its roots in the founding of this organization in the 1960's. The IOSCS is currently engaged not only with this New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS), but also with a planned commentary series based on NETS (Cook, 2005c:535). The interlinear paradigm for the origins of the LXX undergirds both of these projects. Basic to this interlinear paradigm is to seek the meaning of the LXX in the constitutive character of the Greek text as a translation of a Semitic source text and therefore the Greek's dependence on the Hebrew (or Aramaic). As a result, the IOSCS projects are based solely on the OG texts of the LXX books and not on later interpretations thereof, because "what this Septuagint says, and how it says it, can only be understood in its entirety with the help of the Hebrew. This interlinearity with and dependence on the Hebrew may be termed the *Sitz im Leben* of the Septuagint, in contradistinction to its history of interpretation, or better, its reception history. From the NETS perspective these two aspects of the Septuagint are not only distinct but might in fact be termed the apples and oranges of its history" (Pietersma, 2000:x). Arie van der Kooij agrees that the Hebrew source text can be of help in understanding the Greek translation, but warns that it is often our own understanding of the Hebrew text, based on the MT and / or modern philology and exegesis that comes into play when the Greek is tested against the Hebrew (Van der Kooij, 2001:230). Furthermore, he notes that our understanding of the Hebrew text has, historically speaking, to do with the earliest recoverable "original" meaning thereof, whilst the LXX reflects a moment in the reception history of the Hebrew texts (2001:230). He is of the opinion that one should treat the LXX as both a text in its own right and as a translation that is to some extent dependent on its source text for intelligibility. However, he sees the LXX as the only way to know how the translators understood their source texts and that it would be beneficial to start with a thorough analysis of the Greek as it stands, as is done in the French translation project, in order to recover this meaning (Van der Kooij, 2001:230-231).
The French translation project, *La Bible d'Alexandrie* (BA), is executed under the directorship of Marguerite Harl of the Université de Paris-Sorbonne and has as its stated goal to offer as exact a translation

Greek texts exhibit a distinct linguistic relationship with its source texts, that of subservience and dependence: "What is meant by subservience and dependence is *not* that every linguistic item in the Greek can only be understood by reference to the parent text, nor that the translation has an isomorphic relationship to its source, but that the Greek text *qua* text has a dimension of unintelligibility" (2002:350 – his italics).

In order to give an explanation for this linguistic relationship of subservience and dependence, as well as the unintelligibility of the Greek text independent from its *Vorlage* in some instances, Pietersma introduces an interlinear paradigm for the origins of

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of the Greek text of the LXX as possible (Harl, 2001:181). The contributors to BA approach the Greek text of the LXX as important in its own right as a part of the Hellenistic Jewish literature that would later become the biblical text of the Christian Church (Harl, 2001:182). Although BA does not deny the character of the LXX as a translation of a Hebrew (or Aramaic) source text it presupposes that every act of translation "results in a text which receives a new life within the domain of the translation language" (Harl, 2001:184). BA therefore treats the LXX as an independent, self-sufficient text that underwent a history of interpretation itself. In accordance with the view expressed by Arie van der Kooij mentioned above, BA presupposes that the Greek text completely represents the manner in which the translator(s) understood their source texts: "All that he (*sic*) translated as well as all he omitted or changed is a witness to his vision of his Holy Writ. In this respect the LXX is comparable to an instant photograph of the perception of the Hebrew Bible: the Greek text is the meaning of the Hebrew for the translator and his community" (Harl, 2001:184). The method that BA employs to engage with the LXX focuses on four principle points (Harl, 2001:183-197): (i) Translating the LXX "according to the Greek". A literal translation of the Greek is made according to the syntactical and lexical usages of Greek at the time of the translation. In contrast to NETS BA does not determine the meaning of the Greek words in relation to their Hebrew counterparts. Rather, "(i)t is their meaning in the Koinè, or more precisely, the sense they acquire in the context of the LXX sentences, according to the use the translators make of them, following their choices and habits. The meanings of words are specified by the study of their recurrence in the LXX, within similar contexts" (Harl, 2001:186). Another fundamental difference between NETS and BA is the latter's position on intelligibility of the Greek text. According to Harl, the translators had a good knowledge and command of Greek. They consequently produced a text that is easy to read, comprehensible, coherent, and almost always of a good "Greekness" (2001:187). This position is at odds with the interlinear paradigm underlying the NETS project which is designed exactly to explain the strict, often rigid quantitative equivalence of Septuagintal Greek, especially in its syntax, as well as the fact that the Greek text is sometimes unintelligible without reference to its Semitic source text (Pietersma, 2000:ix). (ii) The next principle in the methodology of BA is to establish the divergencies between the LXX and the Hebrew, and subsequently (iii) to understand these divergencies from the LXX context. (iv) The fourth methodological principle is to study the ancient reception and interpretation of the LXX as these may often suggest a possible meaning for a difficult passage. (Harl, 2001:194). Accordingly, the French translation of BA is not only furnished with philological and linguistic notes, but also with exegetical and historical notes. The last phase of the project consists of revising the initial literal translation so as to adapt it to the demands of the French language (Harl, 2001:196).

It is clear from the methodologies of these two translation projects that not only the translation of the LXX but indeed the understanding of what it means will be determined by the theoretical presuppositions and assumptions one adheres to regarding the nature of these books as both Hellenistic Greek texts in own right and/or as translations of a Hebrew (or Aramaic) source text.

the LXX. This interlinear paradigm is not to be conceived as a physical entity or diglot that existed at the time of translation, but rather as a metaphor or visual aid to help conceptualize the reasons for the "Hebraic" character of Septuagintal Greek (Pietersma, 2000:ix). Following the proposal of Brock, Pietersma suggests that the appropriate socio-linguistic context for such an interlinear paradigm is an educational or school setting, based on the examples of school texts and exercises from the Greek educational setup in Hellenistic times where students translated the poetic Homeric texts into colloquial Greek. The social conventions of such an educational context would demand of the translators of the Jewish scriptures to translate the Hebrew (or Aramaic) source texts into colloquial Greek so that it would serve a pedagogical function, namely, to be a study aid to the source text which was in a Semitic language unfamiliar to the students (2002:357-358). Consequently, the Semitic source texts were rendered as literally as possible in order to bring the readers to the text rather than the text to the readers. Moreover, Pietersma observes that as long as the Greek translation served as a crib or tool for the study of the Hebrew (or Aramaic) text of the Jewish scriptures in a school setting, the issue of its relative authority over against the source text would scarcely have arisen. "The problem of authority could only arise when the Greek text became an independent entity. That stage of development had already been reached by the time of Aristeas. Just how long the Greek continued as crib, we do not know, but it would seem certain that the relative authority of mother and daughter, so to speak, did not become an issue in the household of faith until the daughter asserted her independence" (2002:360). Pietersma therefore envisions the development of the LXX in four stages: (i) the Hebrew text as sole authority, (ii) the Greek as crib to study the Hebrew, (iii) the Greek text as independently authoritative, and (iv) the debate over the relative authority of the Hebrew and the Greek (2002:360).

3.2.2.7 The "local text theory" of Frank Moore Cross

The last two proposals, the "local text theory" and the "multiple text theory" were not designed as explanations for the origin of the Greek Jewish scriptures as such. However, each theory provides a framework for understanding the original Greek translations and

its recensions in light of the Qumran discoveries and the concomitant rethinking of the history of the biblical texts.

Frank Moore Cross (1975:306-320) has argued that the discoveries at Qumran are of great importance for the discussion of the Greek recensions. He is of the opinion that the history of the Hebrew text parallels precisely the history of the OG translation and its recensions (1975:306). From the Qumran finds and early versions he has expounded a theory of the history of the biblical texts according to which there existed an original Hebrew text, the Old Palestinian text of the fifth, or at the latest, the fourth century B.C.E. From this original Hebrew text developed three textual traditions, each of them nurtured and preserved by major Jewish communities inside and outside of Palestine over the centuries in isolation from each other. All textual variants are to be assigned to one of the three textual traditions located in Palestine, Egypt, or Babylon. This explanation of the history of the biblical texts and the various different extant texts is known as the "local text theory".

The *Palestinian* text is characterized by "intensive scribal reworking and expansion, especially in the Maccabaean era late in its history" (1975:307) and includes the Samaritan Pentateuch and several biblical texts from Qumran, such as the great Isaiah scroll of Cave 1 (1QIs^{a}) and biblical manuscripts from Cave 4 (fifteen fragmentary manuscripts of Isaiah, two manuscripts of Jeremiah, 4QJer^{a} and 4QJer^{c}, manuscripts of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, as well as 4QSam$^{a, b, c}$) (1975:307-310). The Jewish community in *Egypt* preserved a different textual tradition. This textual tradition was used for the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures made in Alexandria, the proto-Septuagint. An example of such a text type is 4QJer^{b}: "The short text of Jeremiah must have developed in isolation, in a community in which it was not exposed to the intense scribal activity which produced the long Palestinian recension, indeed in a community in which its text was rarely copied and restricted in use and circulation … The evidence drawn from an analysis of these variant textual traditions of Jeremiah appears to be most satisfactorily and parsimoniously comprehended by a theory of local texts, distinguishing the short text of Jeremiah as Egyptian in origin and attributing 4QJer^{b} or its archetype to

the Jewish community in Egypt which persisted through the Persian and Hellenistic ages" (1975:309). The proto-MT, the text that would later become the standardized text of Pharisaic Judaism and eventually vocalized by the Masoretes in the seventh to the eleventh century C.E., "differs radically from both the Egyptian and Palestinian textual tradition … We have been inclined to seek its origin in the third major Jewish community in the Persian and Hellenistic ages, in *Babylon*" (1975:311 – my italics).

In order to demonstrate that the textual history of the Greek text and its recensions exhibit the three textual traditions of the Hebrew text, Cross goes on to discuss the Greek recensions of the books of Reigns (Samuel and Kings) (1975:311-320). He postulates that the OG was made from a Hebrew textual tradition at home in Egypt. A first revision, the so-called proto-Lucianic recension, was then made to bring the Greek text in line with the Hebrew. This Hebrew text was from a Palestinian textual tradition such as reflected in the three Samuel manuscripts from Qumran Cave 4. According to Cross this proto-Lucianic recension is also to be found in the Samuel text in Josephus, in the early stratum of the Lucianic recension in Reigns, and in the sixth column of the Hexapla in Reigns section bg (2 Samuel 10:1-1 Kings 2:11) (1975:312). A second revision was subsequently made towards a Hebrew text. This is the so-called kaige or proto-Theodotionic recension, which was based on the proto-MT, a Babylonian textual tradition. This recension was the first of a continuing series of recensions toward a Babylonian text type, which includes the later revisions of Theodotion, Lucian, and the version of Aquila (1975:313-314). Cross concludes that the "strata of the Lucianic recension are thus symmetrical with the three text types: Old Greek (Egyptian), proto-Lucianic (Palestinian), Lucianic (Babylonian)" (1975:315).

Deist makes the keen observation that "although the theory entails a fairly complicated system of revisions, it holds on to two basic Lagardean ideas, namely that there had been one original Hebrew text and that there had been a Proto-Septuagint which had been a translation of the one Hebrew textual tradition" (1988:156-157).

3.2.2.8 The theory of "multiple textual traditions" of Shemaryahu Talmon and Emanuel Tov

Shemaryahu Talmon has criticized the "local text theory" of Frank Moore Cross for its inability to satisfactorily explain the diversity of textual forms at the end of the pre-Christian era: "It appears that the extant text-types must be viewed as the remains of a yet more variegated transmission of the Bible text in the preceding centuries, rather than as witnesses to solely three archetypes. The more ancient manuscripts are being discovered and published, the more textual divergencies appear" (1975:325). Furthermore, Talmon notes that the variation within all these text-types is relatively restricted. According to him, it would seem that the ancient authors, redactors, editors, tradents, and scribes enjoyed a controlled freedom to introduce variations into the text they transmitted or copied. This means that "in ancient Israel, and probably also in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, especially in Mesopotamia, the professional scribe seldom if ever was merely a slavish copyist of the material which he handled. He rather should be considered a minor partner in the creative literary process" (1975:381). As a result, no hard or fast lines should be drawn between the authors of the biblical text's conventions of style and tradents' and copyists' rules of reproduction and transmission (1975:381).

In view of this Talmon proposes that the major problem to be investigated with regard the history of the biblical texts is not the existence of a limited plurality or diversity of text-types, but rather the loss of other presumably more numerous textual traditions. He suggests that one reason for this relatively limited number of diverse text-types is "the social and societal aspect of the preservation of literature, first and foremost of sacred literature" (1975:325). The MT, SP, and LXX are the three main text-types that have survived from a much larger diversity of textual forms exactly because they became the accepted and standard texts of the Rabbinic, Samaritan, and Christian communities respectively. It may be supposed that other Jewish communities preserved their own textual forms, but that these texts have disappeared together with their adherents. The textual situation at Qumran, where texts resembling MT, SP, LXX, and so-called "non-aligned" texts were preserved and transmitted, is an explicable exception: "The diversity

of textual traditions preserved in the Covenanters' library may in part have resulted from the variegated sources of provenance of at least some of the manuscripts. These probably were brought to Qumran by members of the Community who hailed from diverse localities in Palestine, and from various social strata. From the very outset, one therefore should expect to find in that library, as indeed one does, a conflux of text-traditions which had developed over a considerable span of time in different areas of Palestine, and also outside Palestine, as in Babylonia, and in different social circles. These diverse *Vorlagen* were continuously copied by the Covenanters' scribes at Qumran, even in the restricted compass of their *scriptorium*. The relatively short period of uninterrupted existence of the Covenanters' community possibly was not conducive to the emergence of one stabilized text form, if they were at all concerned about establishing a *textus receptus*" (1975:236). Thus, Talmon suggests that the existence of a notable, yet limited, plurality of extant biblical texts (represented by the MT, SP, and the LXX) is to be attributed to the preservation thereof by its respective adherents (the Rabbis, the Samaritans, and the Christians).

Emanuel Tov agrees to some extent with Talmon but argues that the tripartite division of textual evidence into those that resemble the MT, SP, or LXX respectively should be abandoned. According to him the discoveries in Qumran and other places in the Judean Desert show that there existed at the time of the Second Temple a great variety of texts for each book. Consequently, texts that bear a resemblance to the MT, SP, and / or the LXX must be considered as only three examples out of a larger number of texts that were extant at that time (1982:25). Moreover, Tov suggests that a change in terminology is needed. The multitude of textual witnesses should not be characterized as "recensions" or "text-types", that is, textual traditions that created through some sort of editorial or revisional manipulation (1982:15-16); rather, the textual witnesses should simply referred to as "texts" (1982:25).

With regard to the origins of the LXX, Tov proposes a theory that combines insights from the work of both Lagarde and Kahle. According to this proposal, which he characterizes as a theory of "multiple textual traditions", one original Greek translation underlies the

manuscripts of most, if not all, the books of the LXX. The wording of this translation was not long preserved in its original form though (1981:41). The transmission of the original translation resulted in the coming into being of several secondary textual traditions, which embodied various types of corrections (mainly towards the Hebrew). Tov notes that it should be presumed that these secondary textual traditions continued to develop further (1981:42).

On the basis of this theory, Tov suggests four stages in the development of the text of the LXX (1981:42): (i) The original translation, (ii) A multitude of textual traditions resulting from the corrections towards the Hebrew, (iii) Textual stabilization in the first and second centuries C.E., due to the perpetuation of some textual traditions and the discontinuation of others, and (iv) The creation of new textual groups and the corruption of existing ones through the influence of the revisions of Origen and Lucian in the third and fourth centuries C.E.

3.2.3 Evaluation of proposals

From the preceding discussion it is evident that determining the origin and therefore the purpose of the (original) translation of the Jewish scriptures into Greek is a difficult task when, at the same time, one must account for (i) the nature of the OG texts as both Greek Hellenistic texts and translations of Jewish (national / religious) texts, (ii) the fact that the translation into Greek overlapped with the literary development of the Hebrew texts, still in progress at that time (coupled with diverse approaches to translation ranging from extremely literal to paraphrastic), and lastly (iii) the complex transmission history of these texts that contributed to the textual fluidity in the late Second Temple period.

None of the modern proposals adequately cover all the necessary areas and, at least, the theories of Thackeray and Kahle have received little support from scholars (McLay, 2003:103-104). The proto-Septuagint theory of Lagarde proves popular although Deist has identified an important qualification that deserves to be quoted in full: “That there once was *one* translation of the whole Old Testament which can be called the *Old Greek*

Version is now generally accepted … To say that one Old Greek Version did in fact once exist, does, however, not imply a translation made along the same principles of translation, and perhaps not even translation from one Hebrew text form. The Old Greek version contained a wide variety of translation types, some of which followed fairly conservative procedures and others fairly paraphrastic lines. Sometimes it seems as if more than one translator worked on the same book, while the same translation technique was in other cases used in more than one book. Whether one can then still accept that the whole Old Greek Version had been manufactured in one locality, such as Egypt, is an open question. The possibility must therefore be left open that 'Old Greek Version' could also be understood as a collective name for a variety of 'first translations' made in different places. And if one thinks along these lines the postulated *one* Old Greek Version again becomes problematic, and Kahle then remains knocking on the door" (1988:159-160 - his italics).

Both Dines (2004:58) and McLay (2003:105) have noted that the educational setting for the origins of the LXX proposed by Brock and Pietersma only works for "literal" translations and because not all of the LXX books share the same degree of formal equivalence to the Hebrew it is unlikely that this theory can explain the reasons for translation of all the books collected in the Septuagint.

These theories, however, do address a common dilemma with regards to the textual history of the Greek Jewish scriptures, namely, whether there was an original translation of each book and what its presumed status was in relation to its source text at the time of its translation in the Second Temple period. The importance of these theories of origin for the discipline of OTT may then be reiterated as follows: if it can be indicated that the original Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures were considered at the time of its origin as legitimate forms of the traditions, at least in some Jewish circles, then it may also serve as an object of study in OTT for then it is not an inferior witness to the traditions in comparison with the MT. Furthermore, in light of the fact that the Greek Jewish scriptures come from different times and places the question may be posed how each of the individual books included in the LXX represents the overall Jewish traditions

current in the Second Temple period. This question pertains especially to those books that have a Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage*. Do the (original) Greek translations represent the traditions of their source texts faithfully or creatively? If the translators of a particular book rendered their source text creatively, then the possibility arises that additional insights regarding the theological issues addressed in the book may be procured from the translation. However, if the translators rendered their source texts faithfully, it may witness to a form of the traditions other than that presented in the MT. The first possibility is relevant for the subject of OTT, while the second possibility concerns the object of study in the discipline.

In order to establish whether the translators of the various Jewish scriptures translated their respective source texts faithfully or creatively, it is necessary to analyse their translation techniques, that is, the manner in which they went about their task of rendering the Hebrew or Aramaic source text into Greek. In the following paragraphs we will discuss three approaches to TT and briefly review a recent model for the analysis of TT before drawing some conclusions with regard to the significance of analysing TT for the discipline of OTT.

3.3 APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE

3.3.1 Translation technique and the text-critical use of the Septuagint

The first approach to the study of TT forms part of a larger inquiry into the text-critical value of the LXX in biblical research. Its proponents include Emanuel Tov[17] and others[18] who are interested in the text-critical evaluation of the LXX in order to find out whether deviations of the LXX from the MT reflect Hebrew textual variants (Tov and Wright,

[17] See his monograph, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (Jerusalem: Simor, 1981).

[18] See, for example, B.G. Wright, "The Quantitative Representation of Elements: Evaluating 'Literalism' in the LXX", *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate studies*. (ed. C.E. Cox; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 311-335; and G. Marquis, "Consistency of Lexical Equivalents as a Criterion for the Evaluation of Translation Technique as Exemplified in the LXX of Ezekiel", *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate studies*. (ed. C.E. Cox; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 405-424.

1985:149-150). A variant is any detail in a textual witness that differs from a form of the MT. Such variants include differences in consonants or complete words, omissions, additions and transpositions (Tov, 1981:38). To ascertain the value of the LXX for textual criticism it is necessary to reconstruct the Hebrew text underlying the Septuagint texts by means of *retroversion*, for it is only in this way that scholars may be sure that the *Vorlage* of the Greek translation differs from the MT: "Since the objective of text-critical study of the OT is the recognition and evaluation of different Hebrew textual traditions, there is little use in quoting details which differ from MT in the language of a translation. The textual scholar must first determine whether a given deviation from MT in a translation reflects a Hebrew variant, for only if it does will he (*sic*) be interested in its contents. Accordingly, the first step in the use of the ancient translations for text-critical purposes is their *retroversion* (*retranslation, reverse translation*) into the supposed Hebrew/Aramaic ground-form, when possible, so that the retroverted elements, together with the evidence transmitted in Hebrew, can be compared with MT" (Tov, 1981:37 – his italics). For an accurate retroversion, however, the scholar must of necessity first establish how consistent the translator was in rendering the individual lexemes and sentences of his source text in the same way throughout the translation unit. It is therefore of prime importance to have knowledge of the translation as a whole and thus of the translator's TT so as to be able to judge whether a deviation of the LXX from the MT reflects a true variant or the work of the translator: "It is necessary to know whether the translation is considered literal or its opposite (paraphrastic, free) or somewhere between the two. If one has a preconceived view that the translation is literal upon encountering a substantial deviation, one's first thought is that the deviation resulted from a different Hebrew *Vorlage*. Likewise, if the translation is considered paraphrastic or free, one's first thought would be that the deviation resulted from the translator's free approach to his[19] source text" (Tov and Wright, 1985:150).

The consistency with which the translator rendered the individual lexemes and syntactical elements of his source text with the same Greek equivalents is one of the main exemplars

[19] Although it is theoretically possible that there may have been women who acted as translators of the Greek Jewish scriptures, Tov and Wright are probably correct in suggesting that the translators were all male.

of “literalness” in a translation unit. In order to establish a more precise method of measuring the character of a translation unit, Tov developed five criteria for the analysis of “literalness” in a translation, all of which, save the last one, can be expressed statistically:

(i) *Consistency / Stereotyping*: “Stereotyping” is the consistent rendering of a Hebrew word, root, construction or syntactical element (a preposition, for instance) with the same Greek equivalent (Tov, 1981:54-56).

(ii) *The representation of the constituents of Hebrew words by individual Greek equivalents*: This criterion is also termed “segmentation” and determines whether the translator “segmented” a Hebrew word into its constituent elements (definite article – noun – pronominal suffix, for instance) and represented it with a corresponding Greek equivalent. (Tov, 1981:57; Wright, 1987:316-317).

(iii) *Word-order*: The degree in which the translator adhered to the word-order of his source text is an important criterion for establishing the “literalness” of a given translation unit considering the substantial differences in linguistic structures between the Hebrew and Greek languages.

(iv) *Quantitative representation*: Literal translators tried to represent each individual element in his source text by one equivalent element in the translation. Other translators felt free to add clarifying elements in his translation to adequately express the elements in the source text (Tov, 1981: 58-59).

(v) *Linguistic adequacy of lexical choices*: Given the fact that literal translators focused on the precise form and meaning of words in order to reproduce the meaning of the Hebrew/Aramaic source text in Greek, exegetical elements lying beyond the understanding of the words were excluded from the translation. Their choice of Greek equivalent thus reflects the translators’ understanding of the word in the source text. This criterion cannot be expressed statistically (Tov, 1981:59-60).

On the basis of the statistical information gathered with the use of these criteria and with the assistance of available computer programs[20] the books of the LXX can be categorized as "literal", "relatively literal", "free", "relatively free", "inconsistent" or "indecisive" (Tov and Wright, 1985:33). One major criticism of this approach, however, is that statistical information gathered in this way takes too little account of the linguistic phenomena in the grammatical systems of the respective languages of the source text and the translation as well as the demands of these phenomena on the act of translation (Lemmelijn, 2001:58).

Moreover, Tov cautions that despite these valuable criteria for measuring the "literalness" of translations and the methods he expounds in the rest of his monograph on retranslating the Greek text into its supposed *Vorlage*, scholarship should attempt to delay the assumption of underlying variants as long as possible. Retroversion remains a precarious affair that depends a lot on the scholar's intuition and knowledge of the text. Therefore, he concludes that "(w)hen analyzing the LXX translation for text-critical purposes, one should first attempt to view deviations as the result of inner-translational factors. Only after all possible translational explanations have been dismissed should one turn to the assumption that the translation represents a different reading from MT" (Tov, 1981:74).

3.3.2 Translation technique as part of studying the language of the Greek translations

A second approach to the study of TT differs markedly from the first approach not only in its intended goal of study, but also in its presuppositions regarding the intentions of the translators and the consequent process of translation. This approach is associated with the so-called "Finnish-school"[21] and focuses on the manner in which Hebrew syntactical and

[20] See E. Tov and B.G Wright, "Computer-Assisted Study of the Criteria for Assessing the Literalness of Translation Units in the LXX," *Textus* XII (1985) 149-183.

[21] Representatives of this "school" include I. Soisalon-Soininen, R. Sollamo, and A. Aejmelaeus. See, for example, Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen "Methodologische Fragen der Erforschung der Septuaginta-Syntax" *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate studies. Jerusalem 1986*. (ed. Claude Cox; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 425-444; Sollamo, R "The Significance of Septuagint Studies" *Emanuel. Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (ed. S.M. Paul, R.A. Kraft, L.H. Schiffman, W.W. Fields; Leiden:Brill, 2003) 497-512; Raija Sollamo "Prolegomena

grammatical features are translated into Greek, to which Greek syntactical features these features are made to correspond, and whether there are differences in this regard between the various books of the LXX (Muraoka, 2001:13-14). Taking the Hebrew source text as their point of departure the aim of this method, according to Anneli Aejmelaeus, is "to follow the trail of the Septuagint translators, to understand their way of working, the problems they met and how they solved them, and to describe and explain the result of their work on the basis of these premises" (1993:3). A number of presuppositions underlie this approach that guide it in its execution and the results that it attains. This approach presupposes firstly that the translators of the LXX intended to give a faithful rendering of the meaning of their source text and, secondly, that the differences between the MT and the LXX is not to be attributed to deliberate efforts on their part, but to a variant Hebrew *Vorlage*: "All in all, the scholar who wishes to attribute deliberate changes, harmonizations, completion of details and new accents to the translator is under the obligation to prove his thesis with weighty arguments and also to show why the divergences cannot have originated with the *Vorlage* … It is no longer possible for a scholar to assume off-hand that a divergence between the MT and the Septuagint was caused by the translator – either his carelessness or free rewriting – without serious consideration of the possibility of a different Hebrew *Vorlage* … This basic confidence in the Septuagint translators also has another root. It is supported by the study of translation techniques. The more one learns about the work of the Septuagint translators, the clearer it becomes that they ought to be looked upon, not as editors or revisers, but primarily as translators who – each of them in their own way – aimed at a faithful rendering of their Holy Scripture" (Aejmelaeus, 1993:92-93, 116). A third presupposition of this approach is that the Septuagint translators did not follow any preconceived method or philosophy of translation but proceeded in their task in an *ad hoc* manner, relying on their intuition and in some instances following an "easy technique", that is, making use of consistent lexical choices and retaining the original word-order of the source text (Aejmelaeus, 1993:68-69).

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to the Syntax of the Septuagint" *Helsinki Perspectives on the Translation Technique of the Septuagint* (ed. R. Sollamo and S. Sipilä; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001) 23-42 (Sollamo, 2001a); Anneli Aejmelaeus *On the Trial of the Septuagint Translators. Collected Essays*. (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993).

These three presuppositions, namely, that the translators intended to render the meaning of their Hebrew source text faithfully, that they made no use of any conscious method of translation, and that the divergences between the MT and the LXX are probably due to the translator's different *Vorlage*, lead the adherents of this method to consider translation technique as a methodological step in the study of the language of the Greek translation and therefore to trace the manner in which the linguistic phenomena in the Hebrew source text is reproduced in the target language. A more precise delineation of what is meant by "free" translations is now possible. The "freeness" of a translation can be measured in terms of the extent to which the translator rendered the source text in good, genuine, natural and idiomatic Greek. By studying the various translations' degree of "freeness" the stated goal of this approach to TT may be attained: "Free renderings are like fingerprints that the translators have left behind them. By these fingerprints it is possible to get to know them and to describe their working habits, their actual relationship with the original, and their talent as translators" (Aejmelaeus, 1993:50).

3.3.3 Translation technique and exegesis in the Septuagint

The third approach to TT presupposes that all translation involves some form of interpretation and sees the LXX as the first exegetical commentary on the Hebrew scriptures. It therefore concentrates on the interpretative elements resulting from the process of translation: "Not surprisingly, the Septuagint is regarded as one of the earliest witnesses to the history of biblical interpretation. It has the potential of enlightening our understanding of how the Hebrew Bible was used at the time it was translated into Greek. The Septuagint can provide access to the theological trends and hermeneutical principles of Judaism in the Hellenistic period" (Jobes and Silva, 2000:89). It stands to reason that scholars who are interested in this aspect of TT would focus their efforts on those instances where the Greek translation adds or omits details in relation to the MT, but Leonard Greenspoon has correctly argued that if "we seek to understand fully the conceptual world of these translators, these divergences are only part, albeit an important part, of the study. Where translators were content to render their Hebrew in a straightforward manner, such passages were presumably consistent with their beliefs or

presuppositions or thought patterns … These instances also need to be taken into account by anyone endeavouring to provide a complete picture of Hellenistic Judaism" (2003:85). Furthermore, with regards to the relationship between TT and exegesis it is also important to show that these interpretative elements, whether they are in complete agreement with the Hebrew source text or differ substantially from it, do indeed come from the original translator and not from later revisers of the text toward the Hebrew or other editors. Scholars that focus on the exegetical elements resulting from the translators' TT therefore necessarily work with the OG text of the book under study and are dependant on critical editions of the OG texts such as those published by the Göttingen Septuaginta-Unternehmen. Although the conclusions concerning the exegetical labour of the translators of those books where such critical editions of the OG texts are still wanting should probably then be seen as provisional, it does not exclude the fact that reliable results may still be reached despite this obstruction. The work of Johann Cook on LXX Proverbs may be mentioned as an example of this.

Scholars are unanimous in characterizing LXX Proverbs as a "free" translation of its Hebrew source text. Cook has demonstrated that the "freedom" of the translation is exhibited on both the *micro* and *macro* levels of this translation unit. With regards to the micro level he has shown that the translators have not only made ample use of *hapax legomena* and neologisms[22] but that they also had a unique approach to individual lexemes whereby they render individual words freely, even paraphrastically, in some instances, while in other instances they would render their source texts conservatively, even stereotypically. In such cases where the translators follow a consistent manner of translating this does not prevent them from interpreting in individual instances. Cook defines this approach of the translators as one of *diversity* and *unity* (2001:197). On the macro level the order of chapters at the end of the book have been rearranged[23] and the

[22] Cook gives an in depth discussion and lists of both *hapax legomena* and neologisms in his article "Translator(s) of LXX Proverbs" in *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism 7* (2002) 1-50. He defines *hapax legomena* as "a Greek word that is used only once in the LXX" (2002:1) and neologisms as "newly formed Greek words that appear for the first time in the Septuagint and often appear as well in the literature based upon it" (2002:10).

[23] Chapters 24-31 in LXX Proverbs have a different sequence or order from that found in the MT. The sequence of these chapters looks as follows in the Greek text: 1:1–24:1-22; 30:1:1-14; 24:23-34; 30:15-33; 31:1-9; 25-29; 31:10-31 (Cook, 2003:608).

names of Agur and Lemuel, who are mentioned as authors of some proverbs in the Hebrew text, have been removed from chapters 30 and 31. Cook attributes these changes to the translators of LXX Proverbs on account of exegetical reasons (2004:6-7), in fact, according to him the "free" TT, on both micro and macro levels, serves the theology / ideology of the translators (2001:195-210). With regard to the above mentioned changes on the macro level, Cook argues that the names of Agur and Lemuel have been removed in order to confirm the opening verses of Proverbs 1 that attribute all these proverbs to Solomon. Furthermore, the transposition of the acrostic in Proverbs 31:10-32 in order to link it with Proverbs 29 was deliberately done so as to create a contrast between "an unjust man" and "a courageous wife"[24]. This creation of deliberate contrasts is also one of the salient features of the translators' "religionizing" / exegesis on a micro level. Cook has discovered three such religionizing trends in LXX Proverbs, namely, a stressing of the positive aspect of religion, that is, underscoring the righteous and righteousness, the underlining of the negative aspect of religion with an emphasis on the evil and wicked, and the deliberate creation of contrasts as a religious category (2004:7-16).

These observations on the exegesis in LXX Proverbs have lead Cook to make judgments on the other two approaches to TT in relation to this specific translation unit. On the one hand he characterizes the last religionizing trend of contrasting as a TT and consequently demonstrates that the issue of TT should not be restricted exclusively to the area of linguistics as is done by the "Finnish-school": "Of crucial importance for our endeavours to understand this specific translation unit is the overriding role specific ideological / religious perspectives play in the translator's free and creative rendering of his *Vorlage*. He consequently does not 'adapt' his parent text solely on the basis of stylistic semantic, or syntactic considerations. In many instances he has some 'ideological' perspective in mind when adapting his *Vorlage*. One such decisive 'theological' concept is to this translator contrasts or dualisms. In practically each chapter he concentrates on such contrasts which he finds in his parent text. And … he then emphasizes these dualisms even more explicitly than the parent text. This is not a totally novel perspective. That the translator of Proverbs had a predilection for antithesis has already been observed by

[24] For an in depth discussion of this issue see Cook, 1997b:310-315.

Gerleman. However, the extent to which this translator actually applies 'religiously' orientated contrasts is so conspicuous that it can be seen as a translation technique followed by him" (1997a:404-405). On account of the "free" TT on both micro and macro levels, together with the translators' religionizing activity, the use of *hapax legomena* and neologisms, as well as the fact that the OG text of LXX Proverbs have, as of yet, not been established, Cook regards the text-critical value of LXX Proverbs as extremely low, in contrast to the views of Emanuel Tov and Michael Fox (2003:605-618; 2005b: 407-419).

In his monograph, *The Septuagint of Proverbs. Jewish and / or Hellenistic Proverbs? Concerning the Hellenistic Colouring of LXX Proverbs*[25], Cook has attempted to measure the influence of Hellenistic culture on the process of translating LXX Proverbs and consequently on its exegesis. He reaches the conclusion that although the translator was a *stylist*, steeped in both Jewish and Greek culture as is evident from his extensive vocabulary and the images he borrows from the Greek world[26], in the final analysis he is to be identified as a *conservative Jewish scribe* who endeavoured to explicate and transmit the *intention* of his Hebrew source text to their target readers. LXX Proverbs is a *Jewish-Hellenistic* writing according to Cook (1997b:316-320)[27]. The fundamental

[25] Leiden: Brill, 1997.

[26] For example, in addition to the example of the ant in the Hebrew source text the translators of Proverbs 6:6-8 give the example of the bee as another industrious animal. There are significant parallels between this occurrence in the LXX Proverbs and Aristotle's *Historia Animalium*. Cook consequently expresses little doubt that the translators had access to Aristotle (1997b:166). Cook, however, disagrees with P.W. van der Horst who suggests that the inclusion of the bee with the ant in Proverbs 6:6-8 was done under the influence of "a Hellenistic combination of ant and bee" (Cook, 1997b:167), in other words, that Hellenistic thought informed the form and content of the proverb in the LXX version. Cook argues that the translator was well versed in Greek language and made use of Greek thought in order to expound his interpretation of the meaning of the Hebrew *Vorlage*. Therefore, according to Cook, the translator utilizes this Greek motif in the work of Aristotle without carrying over the Greek philosophical content thereof, but rather explicates, with the help of this motif, a (Jewish) religious element that is already present in the source text (1997b: 167-168).

[27] Robert Hanhart (1992:340-370) has endeavoured to show that the same principle dictated the translation of all of the Jewish scriptures into Greek. He indicates that none of the Greek philosophical, written, or religious traditions found their way into the LXX and regards, as a matter of principle, the various translations to be faithful renderings of the respective *Vorlagen* as far as content and form is concerned: "The LXX – and this is true for all the books translated – is *interpretation* only insofar as a decision is made between various possibilities of understanding which are already inherent in the formulation of the Hebrew Vorlage and thus given to the translator. Furthermore, the LXX is the *actualisation* of the contemporary history of the translator only when the choice of the Greek equivalent is capable of doing

Jewish character of this translation unit is further demonstrated by the anti-Hellenistic sentiments evident in it. One such example is the fact that all the "strange women" that the wisdom teacher warns his "son" against in Proverbs 1-9 are to be understood as metaphors for "foreign wisdom" in LXX Proverbs (1994:458-476). The content of this "foreign wisdom" is none other than the Greek philosophy of the kind encountered in the Hellenistic period (1994:474). Another example is the more prominent role that the Torah of Moses plays in the LXX of Proverbs in comparison with its Hebrew source text. Whereas the Hebrew text refers to the teachings of the fathers, the Greek text emphasizes the Torah (1999:448-460). This situation should be attributed to the Hellenistic context at the time of the translation when concerted efforts were made to devalue the Law of Moses. In this regard, and with reference to the Greek translation of Proverbs 2, Cook writes: "The 'youth' is warned against 'bad counsel' that comes from other teachings than those he has learned, which are based upon the law of Moses. This bad counsel leads to his forgetting the covenant. This 'bad counsel' in the final analysis comes from those 'who forsake upright paths to walk in ways of darkness (v. 13); who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perverseness of evil (v. 14); whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways (v. 15); whose paths are crooked and whose ways are bent (v. 15); *in order to remove the inexperienced youth far from the straight way and to estrange him form a righteous opinion* (v. 16)'. These are lawless people who simply disregard the law of Moses" (1999:454 – his italics). The Greek text of Proverbs 28:4 also represents a significant interpretation of a central Jewish religious concept, namely, that of the Torah of Moses as a surrounding wall around the righteous (1999:457-459).

In conclusion, Cook is of the opinion that the unique TT followed by the translator of LXX Proverbs had its roots in his ideology / theology and that his religionizing exegesis was in turn generated by the historical context in which he worked (2005a:65-81). Exegesis and TT are indeed two sides of the same process in this specific translation unit (2001:195-210). Cook consequently locates the translation of LXX Proverbs in Jerusalem and dates it to the second century B.C.E at a time that Hellenism did not yet have "the

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justice both to the factuality and history of the original Hebrew witness and also to the contemporary history of the translator. The LXX is essentially *conservation*" (1992:342 – his italics).

kind of impact on Judaism that it would have a century later. This represents a period of time before the Hellenization of Jewish writings (Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon), when the readers had to be made attend of the dangers of this 'foreign wisdom'" (1994:474-475).

3.3.4 A recent model for the analysis of translation technique

In his monograph, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research*[28], Timothy McLay seeks to provide a framework for determining the importance of the Greek Jewish scriptures for the understanding and interpretation of the New Testament. He focuses on the manner in which the writers of the New Testament cited the Jewish scriptures in their writings, that is, whether they cited the scriptures from a Hebrew or Greek written source, or from memory (2003:15). According to McLay, the study of TT enables the researcher to determine whether a quotation in the New Testament is Septuagintal as opposed to a translation from the Hebrew into Greek of the writer's own making (2003:39). Moreover, an appreciation for the ways in which the translators of the Jewish scriptures rendered their source texts into Greek is important for interpreting the writings of the New Testament because of the New Testament writers' use of the scriptures in expounding their views (2003:44).

McLay launches his discussion of TT with a definition of its purpose: "The purpose of the study of TT is to describe the way in which individual translators engaged in the process of translating a unit of Scripture for a community" (2003:45). He comments on five aspects of this definition: "First of all, the definition is stated in terms of the translator's approach to his source text as a whole, but it is not meant to exclude employing TT as a description of the way in which the translator treated individual elements in a translation" (2003:45). Secondly, "analysis of TT has to concern itself primarily with individual *units of Scripture* rather than with the entire corpus of the LXX" (2003:45 – his italics). A unit of Scripture may refer to more than one book or to parts of a book in those cases where more than one translator worked on the same book.

[28] Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Thirdly, "the reference to the *community* of the translator recognizes that these translations were not carried out in a sociological and historical vacuum" (2003:45 – his italics). Scholars use the term *Tendenz* to refer to those instances where the historical context of the translator influenced the translation to such an extent that the meaning of the text is altered. Fourthly, the analysis of TT attempts to describe the manner in which the translator understood the source text. And finally, "we refer to *individual translators* out of the belief that individuals worked alone on the task of translation" (2003:46 – his italics).

In addition to this description of the purpose of analysing TT, McLay identifies five interdependent presuppositions that guide the analysis and are each grounded in modern linguistics: In the first instance, the analysis of TT is *descriptive*: "By descriptive we mean that the analysis of TT is concerned with *describing* the way in which a translator rendered the source text into the receptor language as opposed to *evaluating* the grammatical correctness of the translation" (2003:61-62 – his italics). Furthermore, the analysis of TT is primarily *synchronic*, that is, TT studies the manner in which the Greek language was employed to render a source text at a given point in time (the time of translation) rather than studying the way in which the Greek language changed through time (a diachronic approach): "The orthography, morphology, lexical choices, and the syntax of the translation will reflect the conventions of the language in the time and place in which it was produced. At the semantic level, the meaning of the translation for its intended audience is determined by the context, both the linguistic context and the socio-historical context, as far as it can reasonably be reconstructed" (2003:63). Moreover, the analysis of TT accounts for *langue* and *parole*: "*Langue* refers to language as an abstract system, which is common to all speakers of a language community, while *parole* refers to the actual discourse of individuals within the community. Both of these aspects of language play an important role in the study of TT. In the act of translation the original translator has to read the source text (which as a written document is an example of *parole*) and attempt to decode the meaning of that text on the basis of his/her knowledge of the grammar of the source language (*langue*). The translator then has to encode the message of the source text in the receptor language (*parole*) on the basis of his/her

knowledge of the grammar of that language (*langue*). These are minimum requirements for what the translator does, though we cannot be absolutely sure how the neurological process takes place" (2003:68). TT is therefore a description of the *parole* of a particular unit of translation. In addition, the analysis of TT is a study of the *structure* of the translation unit. This presupposition has its origins in *structuralism*, which holds the thesis that every language has a unique relational structure and that all the syntactical elements derive their existence and meaning from their relationships with other units in the same language system (2003:69-70). "The connection between the structure of the language system and semantic information conveyed is critical for the analysis of TT because the structure of two different languages will inevitably reveal differences. In the process of translating the translator is immediately confronted with the clash between structure and meaning. That is, if the translator attempts to render the source text using the same surface structures in the target language (*formal equivalence*), then there is liable to be some loss of meaning. Loss of meaning occurs because the surface structures of the target language do not convey meaning in the same way as do the surface structures of the source language. Conversely, the decision to render the meaning of the *Vorlage* will often require the choice of different surface structures in the target language (*dynamic equivalence*)" (2003:70-71). The fifth and final presupposition states that the analysis of TT takes the *source language* as its point of departure.

Having established some presuppositions that guide the analysis of TT, McLay goes on to provide a model for analysing TT. There are four basic elements to this model: the element of translation, adjustment, motivation, and the effect on meaning (2003:77-99):

(i) *Element of translation*. The analysis of TT begins with a comparison of the structural elements in the source and target texts. "Comparing the similarities and differences among the structural elements in the source and target texts focuses the analysis on the distinctions in the formal surface structures of the two texts" (2003:98). This comparison takes into account factors such as word order, the rendering of grammatical features and the translation of individual lexemes.

(ii) *Adjustments*. The following step in the analysis is to note the types of changes that are exhibited by the translation in comparison with the source text. These adjustments in the translation consist of additions, omissions, and substitutions at the syntactical and lexical level (2003:88). These first two stages in the analysis of TT provide the scholar with a general indication of the "literal" or "free" character of the translation unit under study.

(iii) *Motivation*. The third stage of the analysis tries to account for the changes in the translation. These changes may be inevitable due to the differing linguistic structures of the Hebrew and Greek languages or due to the translators' intentional or unintentional alteration of the formal structure of the source text in the process of rendering it into the target text.

(iv) *Effect on the Meaning*. The final stage of analysing TT is concerned with the effect that the translation process had on the tradition represented by the source text. How faithfully did the translators communicate the meaning of the source text and to what extent did they creatively alter that tradition?

3.3.5 Summary of approaches to translation technique

From the preceding discussion on the three approaches to TT and the review of McLay's model for analysing TT it should be sufficiently clear that diverse presuppositions and objectives govern the various approaches to TT. These approaches are not mutually exclusive though; rather they represent complimentary insights into the manner in which the individual translators achieved their task of rendering their Semitic source texts into Greek. In view of the differences between the MT and the OG texts, the significance of the analysis of TT for the discipline of OTT lies in the fact that the Greek translation may either faithfully reflect a Hebrew / Aramaic *Vorlage* that differs from the MT, or it may represent the theological insights of the translators who creatively rendered the source texts (*Tendenz*). It was already stated in the foregoing paragraphs that the former possibility pertains to the object of study in OTT, while the latter possibility is relevant for the subject of the discipline.

3.4 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this chapter it was stated that the issues of canon, text, and theological content that were discussed in the first chapter were to be considered as ideal avenues along which to determine the significance of the LXX for the object and subject of the discipline of OTT. The necessity of studying the Greek Jewish scriptures in its nature as both Hellenistic Greek writings in its own right (including the *de novo* Greek compositions) and translations of Semitic source texts was subsequently indicated. Three issues in Septuagintal studies that may influence the object and subject of OTT pertaining to canon, text, and theological content were identified, namely the terminology used to designate the collection of Greek Jewish scriptures, the origins of these writings, and the techniques that were employed to render the source texts underlying most of these scriptures. The following preliminary conclusions may consequently be drawn from the discussions on each of these issues:

Regarding terminology it was concluded that the term "Septuagint" (and hence its abbreviation LXX) refers to the collection of Greek Jewish scriptures that were produced by a variety of translators and writers over a long period of time in diverse places. It is this collection of scriptures that the early Church held as their "Old Testament". The term "Old Greek" refers to the original Greek text of each of the various books included in the Septuagint. The definition of these terms are important for the object of study in the discipline of OTT because the LXX includes books that are excluded from the Hebrew Bible and Protestant "Old Testament", while, in comparison with the MT, the OG texts often reflect marked differences in content.

Concerning the various proposals for the origin of the LXX it may be concluded that they all share the common goal of explaining the Greek translations' reason for being as well as their relationship with their Semitic source texts. Any proposal for the origins of the LXX must therefore account for the nature of the Greek translations as *both* Hellenistic Greek *and* translated Jewish texts. As a result, the study of the origins of the LXX should

take as point of departure the historical circumstances that may have given rise to the need for a Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures. This historical context includes the presence and influence of Hellenism on the Near East as well as the nature of early Judaism in the Second Temple period. According to Martin Hengel "Hellenism" "must be treated as a complex phenomenon which cannot be limited to purely political, socio-economic, cultural or religious aspects, but embraces them all. The starting-point and point of reference is the expansion of Greece which was in the making in the fourth century B.C. (*sic*), reached its political and military climax with the expedition of Alexander, and was followed by economic and cultural penetration; the East answered this in the religious sphere by accepting it, rejecting it and developing counter-movements" (1974:3). Judaism during this period "was dynamic rather than static, pluralistic rather than homogeneous. It was transitional between what went before in the Persian period and what would follow with the rabbis, and was itself in transition, often in different ways at different times and places" (Nickelsburg and Kraft, 1986:20). The variety and diversity within Judaism in the Second Temple period is evident not only from the different parties and groups such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, and Samaritans, or from the different reactions toward Hellenism, but also in the textual plurality witnessed to by the Qumran discoveries. Among these Qumran texts were copies of the Greek translation of certain books. These finds have called into question the assumption that Judaism was divided among linguistic and geographical lines into so-called "Palestinian" Judaism and "Diaspora" / "Hellenistic" Judaism. The former was seen as the supposed norm for "faithful" Judaism, while the latter was seen as largely "corrupted" by Grecian influences. However, since the finds at Qumran it has become clear that "even as an independent Maccabean / Hasmonean kingdom, Jewish Palestine is best viewed as part of the larger 'hellenized' world, whether its representatives were speaking and writing in Greek or in a Semitic dialect (Aramaic or Hebrew). That there were different responses to that world is also clear, but they are not defined primarily along linguistic or geographical lines. To state the issue more generally, the relation of Jews and Judaism to the Hellenistic environment was similar to that of other identifiable 'subcultures' (e.g., in Egypt or Syria) and is treated most satisfactorily by accepting Hellenism as the norm against which to judge similarities and differences, rather than by

positing some ‘pure’ form of (Palestinian) Judaism as the norm” (Nickelsburg and Kraft, 1986:12). This pervading presence of Hellenism with its political supremacy and the concomitant cultural influence resulted, amongst other things, in the need of Jewish communities for the translation of their national and religious scriptures into Greek. The necessity of translation due to historical and socio-religious circumstances, coupled with the fact that the Hebrew texts of many of the scriptures were still in the process of development at the time of translation, leads to the conclusion that the OG texts represent *legitimate* forms of the traditions that the scriptures communicate.

As a result of this conclusion that the OG texts of the LXX represent a legitimate form of the “Old Testament” traditions, we may furthermore conclude with Mogens Müller that the LXX may no longer be seen as a secondary witness to the “Old Testament”: It is no longer “a question of whether this Septuagint was considered more or less accurate as a translation, or a more reliable text witness, but whether it was now predominantly to be treated as witness to the *tradition*. This holds true no matter whether one believes that the Septuagint legend originated in a number of Greek translations of the Hebrew text, or that there was but one basic ‘authoritative’ translation … The *inherent character* of the Septuagint makes it reasonable to understand it predominantly as a *tradition* that has been amplified by Hellenistic Jewry. In other words, the Septuagint is a special version of the Jews’ sacred books, and Aristeas may be taken as evidence that there were certain groups who preferred this version of the Mosaic Law as normative” (Müller, 1989a: 65-66 - my italics). The important implication for OTT is that not only the MT, or any Hebrew text for that matter, should be scrutinized for its theological traditions, but equal attention should be given to the OG texts of the LXX, for they may also rightfully serve as the object of study in the discipline.

The following preliminary conclusions may be drawn with regard to TT: First, for a correct understanding of the nature of the OG texts it is necessary to measure the influence that *both* the historical context *and* the way in which the translators engaged their source texts had on it. Second, the study of TT makes a thorough comparison of the OG and the MT in an attempt to account for the differences between the two texts. The

guiding question is how *faithful* the translators rendered the source texts and to what extent they *creatively interpreted* it. An extremely literal translation may be unfaithful to the meaning of its source text, while a free translation may give an accurate account of it. As a result, the approaches to the study of TT should not be seen as mutually exclusive, but rather as complementary and therefore somehow combined in a single comprehensive approach. Third, it is the consistency of rendering certain lexemes and grammatical features, as well as the extent to which the translators employed a good, natural, and idiomatic Greek style that mark the TT of a translation unit. Fourth, any translation involves interpretation and TT provides a window into the exegetical biases of the translators. This is true of both paraphrastic and slavish translations. However, the logical assumption that the differences between the Greek and Hebrew texts in a "free" translation may be attributed to the translators, while in "literal" translations it is due to a variant *Vorlage*, remains a useful rule of thumb. Finally, because the OG texts witness to legitimate forms of the *traditum*, the translation process may be seen as a form of *traditio* (the continuation of the tradition). In those cases where the *traditio* reproduces a faithful representation of the *Vorlage*'s version of the *traditum*, the significance for OTT lies in the fact that it may differ from the version of the MT. These different versions of the tradition associated with a given biblical book pertain to the object of study in the discipline. Conversely, in those cases where the *traditio* represents a creative rendering of the tradition, the hermeneutical activity according to which it proceeded and the resulting exegetical and theological insights are just as valid as the corresponding forms of the tradition in the Hebrew texts. Consequently, the exegetical and theological results of translating the "Old Testament" books into Greek must, in turn, influence the view on the nature of the "Old Testament"'s theology, and therefore, the subject of study in the discipline of OTT.

In conclusion, it may be inferred that the issues of terminology, theories of origin, and translation technique do indeed relate to the matters of canon, text, and theological content. It does so in terms of the external and internal differences between the OG texts and the MT of individual books, as well as the legitimacy of the forms of the theological traditions represented by the former in relation to the latter. Therefore, the

abovementioned conclusions demonstrate that the issues of terminology, theories of origin, and translation technique pertain in different ways to both the object and subject of OTT and, consequently, that any effort to establish these two elements, which gives due consideration to the difficulties surrounding canon, text, and theological content, will benefit from a study of the LXX.

CHAPTER 4

OVERTURES FOR FURTHER STUDY

The aim of the present study was to argue for the relevance of the LXX in establishing the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology. From the preceding investigation into the nature of the LXX it is evident that the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures and the original Hellenistic Jewish writings that form part of this collection may not go unnoticed or be ignored when this methodological issue in the discipline of OTT is decided. It may therefore be concluded that the hypothesis of the present study was proved to be correct. At the same time, however, the limited scope of the study should also be emphasized. It was proven *that* both the LXX and the issues related to the study thereof are important in determining the subject and object of the discipline of OTT. This is only the first step in establishing the significance of the LXX for the entire discipline of OTT. The outcome of such a study would be the establishment of a proper methodology for OTT that is based, *inter alia*, on the LXX and which addresses the ongoing problems and unresolved questions in the discipline with the help of insights from LXX-studies. Apart from the ambiguities that accompany the object and subject of OTT the ongoing problems and questions that hamper the discipline include the following four issues[1]:

(i) The desirability or possibility of OTT in comparison with a History of Israelite religion (HIR)[2].

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[1] For further suggestions see Anderson, 1999: 3-39; Barr, 1999:52-311, 330-361; Brueggemann, 1992, and 1997:721-742; Childs, 1985:4-6; Coats, 1985:239-262; Hasel, 1989:35-96; Hayes and Prussner, 1985:254-279; Lemke, 1992:448-473; Preuss, 1995:14-15; Reventlow, 1985, and 2001:221-240.

[2] Rainer Albertz notes that HIR is nowadays re-establishing itself as a meaningful and theologically necessary discipline in light of the waning of the influence of Bultmann and Barth in the present situation in theology and the desire that the discipline of HIR should again form part of "Old Testament" scholarship in general (1994:2-3). As a result OTT and HIR are two competing disciplines in "Old Testament" scholarship that both claim to be more appropriate to the subject of the "Old Testament" than the other and "better able to assist the transfer of Old Testament research to theology and church" (1994:16). Albertz regards HIR as the more meaningful discipline for the following reasons: (i) It corresponds better to the historical structure of large parts of the "Old Testament"; (ii) It takes seriously the insight that religious statements cannot be separated from the historical background from which they derive or against which they are reinterpreted; (iii) It is not compelled to bring down its varying and sometimes contradictory

(ii) The supposedly Christian character of the discipline. If, on the one hand, OTT is only a Christian endeavour, as some scholars maintain[3], the questions concerning the nature of the "Old Testament" as Christian scripture arise, that is, the problematic relationship between the Old and the New Testament. Finding an adequate solution to this challenging question is a methodological task confronting the discipline of Biblical theology. On the other hand, some scholars have maintained that OTT is also a Jewish concern. If such is the case, closer co-operation between Christian and Jewish scholars is needed and mutual exploration of the methodological issues in OTT may prove to be fruitful[4].

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religious statements to the level of intellectual abstraction; (iv) It describes a dialogical process of struggle for theological clarification, demarcation and consensus-forming which clearly corresponds to the present-day synodical or conciliar ecumenical learning process of the churches and Christian-Jewish dialogue; (v) It sees its continuity not in any religious ideas which have to be appropriated by Christians but in the people of Israel itself, to which the Christian churches stand in a brotherly and sisterly relationship through Jesus Christ; (vi) It dispenses with any claim to absoluteness and does theology under an eschatological proviso, which befits a minority church in a multi-religious and partially secularised world community; (vii) Its approach from a comparison of religions facilitates dialogue with the other religions (1994:16-17).

[3] Among these scholars are Bernhard Anderson and Brevard Childs. These scholars are in agreement that although the "Old Testament" has an independent voice from the New Testament it nevertheless forms an inextricable part of the Christian Bible. As such, the independence of the "Old Testament" in relationship with the New Testament is only relative and the discipline of OTT is therefore better understood as the Biblical theology of the "Old Testament", which is a Christian endeavour (Anderson, 1999:10-11).

[4] Rolf Rendtorff is one (Christian) scholar that promotes the joint enterprise by Jews and Christians of studying the "Old Testament" together. He considers such a common reading as a necessity for two reasons: "Die einfache Tatsache ist, dass für Juden und Christen die Hebräische Bibel oder das Alte Testament Heilige Schrift ist. Wenn jede Gruppe getrennt von der anderen lebte, in einer Welt ohne irgendwelche Beziehungen zu der Welt der anderen, dann gäbe es keine Notwendigkeit, von einer unterschiedlichen Lektüre und Auslegung der jeweiligen Heiligen Schrift Kenntnis zu nehmen. Aber das ist nicht der Fall. Im Gegenteil, seit dem frühesten Beginn einer getrennten Geschichte von Christen und Juden, d.h. seit der Entstehung des Christentums aus dem Judentum, sind beide Gemeinschaften eng und, wie es scheint, unlösbar miteinander verbunden, im Guten und im Bösen. Dies macht es faktisch unmöglich, den Gebrauch der Bibel durch die andere religiöse Gemeinschaft einfach zu ignorieren" (1991:42-43). He further indicates that because the "Old Testament" is a theological book in its own right, it can profitably be studied and interpreted theologically by both Jews and Christians: "Einer der zentralen Punkte ist die Auffassung, dass die Bibel nicht erst theologisch wird durch die Interpretation von einer später entwickelten Theologie aus, sei sie rabbinisch oder christlich; vielmehr ist es möglich und notwendig, die theologischen Gedanken und Botschaften der biblischen Texte selbst herauszuarbeiten. Dies impliziert zugleich die Auffassung, dass die Autoren der biblischen Texte in einem bestimmten Sinne als Theologen zu bezeichnen sind, die theologische Gedanken und Absichten hatten, wenn sie sprachen oder ihre Texte schrieben, und auch wenn sie Texte zu grösseren Einheiten oder Büchern zusammenfügten. Dies scheint eine Binsenwahrheit zu sein. Aber wenn es wahr ist, dann gibt es keinen Grund, warum jüdische und christliche Exegeten nicht zusammenarbeiten könnten, um die theologischen Inhalte der biblischen Texte zu erheben" (1991:49). However, Jon Levenson has attempted to show "Why Jews Are Not Interested in Biblical Theology" (1993:33-60). James Barr gives an extensive overview of the various important Jewish scholars' views on the matter, including that of Levenson (1999:286-311).

(iii) Another problematic issue is whether there is any kind of unity within the diversity of the "Old Testament" and its religious content. Does the "Old Testament" form a coherent whole or is it simply a collection of diverse authoritative scriptures? Is there a theology of the "Old Testament", one that is intrinsic to the "Old Testament" itself, or is it only possible to create from an *a priori* ideological standpoint a theology based on, or in accordance with the "Old Testament" due to its diverse theological character? This issue revolves around the nature and scope of "canon" and the virtues thereof for the questions confronting OTT. At the same time it encompasses the question of a proper organising principle for OTT. Proposals for such a principle are generally twofold: either one chooses for a principle external from the "Old Testament" to organise its theology[5], or one opts for an inner-"Old Testament" principle. The second option begs another question, one continually debated within OTT circles, namely, whether there is one idea, concept or principle that pervades the whole of the "Old Testament" and thus forms its most important idea or "centre".

(iv) Whether OTT should be a descriptive or a constructive / prescriptive discipline is yet another difficult issue and the last to be mentioned here. In short, the issue revolves around the goal of OTT and the method(s) of attaining this goal; is the goal of OTT to establish what the texts "means" or what it "meant" (theologically speaking). This issue touches, firstly, on the relationship between OTT and Systematic theology and, secondly, on the role "history" has to play as a hermeneutical principle in OTT. In this regard, "history" is understood either in a religiously positivistic sense as the verifiable mode of divine revelation, or in terms of the history of interpretation, implementation and influence of the "Old Testament" on successive generations and traditions (*Wirkungsgeschichte*), or as a mode of studying the "Old Testament" texts. The first understanding of the term

[5] The preferred principle among such proposals was the threefold dogmatic scheme of Theology, Anthropology and Soteriology. The Theology of the Swiss scholar Ludwig Köhler is a prominent example of this approach (Barr, 1999:28-29).

implies that the large historical gap between the present and the biblical times are inconsequential for the meaning of the text and concentrates on what the text "means". The second understanding traces the influence on its contemporary meaning of what the texts meant throughout its continued usage in various circumstances and by different interpreters. The third usage, on the other hand, investigates what the text "meant" in its supposedly original ancient contexts and includes the so-called Historical-critical methods and Sociological approaches to the "Old Testament". All three of these understandings of "history" have implications for the proposed goals of the discipline of OTT and how it will be approached.

The present chapter has the double aim of (i) exploring the possible avenues along which to address these questions by means of LXX-studies and (ii) of proposing and demonstrating a method of putting the insights gathered from the preceding discussion into practice in doing so. The following paragraphs investigate the issues relating to the interpretation of LXX in general with the purpose of identifying the preconditions for utilizing LXX-studies in solving the methodological dilemmas troubling OTT. A hypothesis that focuses on the manner in which LXX books should be engaged in order to fulfil these preconditions will subsequently be proposed, as well as a method of study that will yield a successful demonstration of this hypothesis. The Greek translation of the book of Job is afterwards identified as a potential case study for the application of this method. The chapter closes with a short excursus in which the proposed method is applied to a selected number of verses from chapter 36 of the Greek translation of Job before a final list of preliminary conclusions is drawn.

4.1 ISSUES RELATING TO THE INTERPRETATION OF LXX BOOKS

A close scrutiny of the methodological difficulties in the discipline of OTT mentioned above reveals that all of them have some relation to the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology. It is therefore to be expected that the determination of an object and subject that resolves the difficulties surrounding canon, text and theological content

will go a long way in providing adequate solutions to these pervasive problems that plague the discipline of OTT. As a result, the identification of an appropriate object and subject for OTT, which pertain to the issues of canon, text, and theological content, remains an important desideratum for the discipline. This realization, coupled with the conclusion that was drawn from the present study that the study of the LXX is indeed significant to finding a solution to this problem, lead to a recognition of the next step on the way to determining the significance of the LXX for the entire discipline of OTT, namely, to pose the question *how* the LXX books must be engaged as objects of study in OTT and in connection with the subject treated therein; in other words, how can LXX-studies, and the interpretation of LXX books in particular, assist in identifying an appropriate object and subject for OTT. In order to give a plausible answer to this important question a few preliminary remarks on the interpretation of LXX books in general are warranted.

In view of the nature of the LXX as a collection of books that are Greek translations of Semitic source texts and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in their own right, as well as the fact that the different books originated from different times and at different places, each one of the books included in the LXX must be considered individually in order to understand its own peculiar characteristics with regard to its relationship to its Hebrew / Aramaic source text and its historical context. When the researcher sets out to interpret the individual LXX books, however, he/she must be attentive to the following important methodological matters[6]: (i) to begin with, it must be ascertained which Greek text is to be used for interpretative purposes. With regards to the Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures the researcher must differentiate between those interpretations that were made by the original translators, those that were inserted or produced by later revisers of the OG texts, those that resulted from textual transmission or corruption, and those that faithfully reflect the Semitic source text from which the original translation was made. Because the significance of the LXX books for the object and subject of OTT is located

[6] Cook discusses these methodological issues and demonstrates them with references to the LXX versions of the Pentateuch, Proverbs, and the book of Daniel in his article, "Die Septuaginta, *aliquid novi ex Africa*" in *TGW* 45/4 (2005), 457-465 (Cook, 2005e). See also the article by Albert Pietersma, "Septuagint Research: A plea for a return to Basic Issues," *VT 35/3* (1985) 296-311 (Pietersma, 1985a).

in either *Vorlagen* that differ from the MT or in the interpretations that the original translators made of the theological traditions represented by their source texts, it is to be expected that the study of the LXX books from an OTT-perspective would focus on the OG texts. The work of textual criticism therefore logically precedes the (theological) interpretation of the individual LXX books. This is equally true of the original Hellenistic Greek writings in the LXX. (ii) After the Greek text that is appropriate to the interpretative purposes of the researcher is established an analysis of TT is to follow. Such an analysis is comparative in nature and aims to discern whether the differences between the Greek text and the Semitic text it is compared with resulted from the translation process or from a variant source text. The Hebrew text that is usually utilized for comparative purposes is the MT. Cook notes that there lie no ideological intentions behind this general practice; rather the MT embodies the only complete Hebrew text that is available to the researcher (2005e:460)[7]. Furthermore, the focus on the TT of a particular passage proceeds deductively from an analysis of larger translation units or the translation of a book as a whole, although each variant must be considered and explained individually in its literary and historical context. (iii) Similar to the procedure pertinent to the original Greek compositions in the LXX collection, the translated LXX books are also to be studied independently from their source texts so as to do justice to their nature as Hellenistic Greek writings in their own right.

As a result, an important precondition for any attempt to determine the procedure to be followed in establishing the object and subject for the discipline of OTT by means of LXX-studies is that the individual LXX books must be respected and interpreted in its nature as translations of Semitic source texts and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in own right. This observation is reinforced by the conclusion from the previous chapter that the circumstances surrounding the origins of the LXX books cause them to be legitimate

[7] Nonetheless, it should be noted in light of the discussion in the second chapter of the present study on the issue of textual plurality and the aims of textual criticism, that it would be unwarranted to make use of only the MT for comparison with the LXX text in those instances where alternative textual fragments are in existence. The recent publication of the Qumran-scrolls in the series *Discoveries in the Judean Desert* (DJD) has greatly increased the accessibility of textual witnesses other than the MT that may fruitfully be used in comparison with LXX texts.

forms of the theological traditions, or *traditum*, represented by the Hebrew/Aramaic scriptures with which they are either directly related by being translations of these scriptures, or indirectly related through their Jewish character. In addition, it was concluded that the TT of those books that are based on Semitic source texts determines the influence of the *Vorlagen* and the historical context on the process of translation. It was consequently demonstrated that these two conclusions are pertinent to the object and subject of the discipline of OTT. A hypothesis subsequently takes shape with regards to the manner in which it does so. It stands to reason that this hypothesis will pertain to the question *how* LXX books must be interpreted in order to establish a suitable object and subject for OTT.

4.2 A PROPOSED HYPOTHESIS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Bearing in mind the fact that the problem of OTT's object and subject remains as yet unresolved, together with the potential of LXX-studies to contribute to an adequate solution to this problem, it is proposed that *LXX books must be interpreted in both its literary/translated and historical nature as documents that hail from different milieus and embody particular purposes in order to establish an appropriate object and subject for the discipline of OTT utilizing LXX-studies*. The milieu of an individual LXX book refers to its provenance or the religio-historical circumstances that gave rise to it; the purposes thereof incorporates the reason for its being, in the case of original Greek Jewish writings, and the manner in which it reproduced the theological traditions (*traditum*) represented by its source text (*traditio*), in the case of Greek translations of Jewish scriptures. Concerning the latter, an analysis of translated LXX books from an OTT perspective gauges the manner in which the original translators understood and rendered the *traditum* represented by their various Semitic source texts, and consequently, the influence of both the Semitic source text and the historical context on the shape of the *traditum* in its Greek translated form. The study of TT, and therefore a comparison between the OG and the MT texts, is an important prerequisite in determining the *faithfulness* or *creativity* with which the translators preserved the theological traditions of their source texts (*traditio*). Likewise, an OTT sponsored analysis of those LXX books

that are original Greek Jewish writings also attempts to establish the *traditio*, but now in terms of the *similarities* and *differences* between its theological outlook and those of contemporary literature, Jewish and otherwise. In sum, the nature of LXX books as translations of Semitic source texts and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in own right compels the researcher who is interested in establishing the object and subject of OTT by employing insights from LXX-studies to determine the *traditum* of individual LXX books (purpose) and placing it within the history of Israel's religious traditions at the time of translation in the Second Temple period (provenance).

4.3 THE METHOD OF STUDY

In order to accomplish this double task assigned to the Old Testament theologian, two methodological guidelines may be suggested with the aim of determining the provenance and purpose of LXX books. The first guideline states that, to begin with, the arguments or *traditio* of the passage under analysis must be reconstructed. The insight of literary studies that the content or meaning of a text is conveyed through its literary form (linguistic features and genre) is important in this regard. Applying this insight to LXX books means that the examination of style, syntax and vocabulary as well as a detailed comparison with the Semitic source text, where applicable (that is, the analysis of TT), are prerequisites in reconstructing its argument.

The second guideline states that the development of the theological traditions that are presented in the book under analysis must be reconstructed against the background of the larger history of Israelite religion. The theological content of a particular passage must consequently be situated within the development of the arguments within the book as a whole, as well as located within the broader tradition history of Israel's religion with the intention of establishing the influence that the historical context exercised on the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures or the composition of new scriptures in Greek.

These two guidelines do not seek to circumvent the methodological issues in interpreting LXX books in general; rather it aims to be commensurate to them. The necessity of

establishing the Greek text appropriate to the interpretative intentions of the researcher prior to interpretation still remains the first step in this proposed method for determining the provenance and purpose of LXX books. The same applies to the requirement that the LXX books must be interpreted individually. This would be expected of course, in light of the fact that the different books included in the collection of the LXX originated at different times and in diverse circumstances during the Second Temple period, and, probably, not all with the same purposes in mind. It follows, therefore, that this proposed method for determining the provenance and purpose of LXX books must be applied to each one of these documents individually and that generalization should be avoided. As a result, the establishment of its object and subject by making use of this method in LXX-studies will be an arduous and piecemeal process in the study of OTT; and yet it is clear from the conclusions of the present study that its completion forms part of the obligations consigned to Old Testament theologians.

4.4 LXX JOB AS A CASE STUDY

The foregoing arguments have lead to the necessity of identifying an appropriate case study to test the proposed method and the LXX version of the book of Job presents itself as a good candidate in this regard. It does so in terms of textual, translational, and theological matters. Concerning the text of LXX Job the most important element to notice is that the original Greek translation is much shorter than the MT and that Origen has filled the gaps with passages taken mainly from Theodotion's version. Scholarly opinions diverge on the reasons for the abbreviated nature of the OG text, that is, whether to attribute the missing poetic lines to a variant Hebrew *Vorlage* or to the theological bias of the translators. Furthermore, the OG text of LXX Job is categorized among the most "free" or paraphrastic translations in the whole of the LXX collection of books. Once again interpreters differ amongst themselves whether the freedom of the translation is due to stylistic and linguistic reasons or the theological exegesis of the translators. Moreover, with regards to theological matters, the influence of the Hellenistic context on the translation of the book of Job has been rated quite highly by Gerleman, whilst Cox maintains that that the book remains fundamentally Jewish in its outlook. Accordingly,

each of these issues relating to the LXX version of the book of Job will be discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs with the aim of formulating a proposal for further reflection on the significance of the LXX (Job) for the discipline of OTT.

4.5 ISSUES RELATING TO THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

4.5.1 The text of LXX Job

The most salient feature of the original Greek translation of the book of Job, in comparison with the MT, is that it is much shorter than the Hebrew text. The OG text of Job is 1/6 shorter than the Masoretic *textus receptus*, yielding a deficit of up to 390 lines of poetry or cola[8] (Fernández Marcos, 1994:252, Wevers, 1996:86). Driver-Gray (1921:lxxv) and Dhorme (1967:ccii-cciii) have independently calculated the approximate percentages of missing cola in the OG text of Job in relation to the MT. The result is a rising proportion of omissions throughout the book: 4% until chapter 15, 16% of chapters 15-21, 25% of chapters 22-31, 35% of chapters 32-37, and 16% of chapters 38-42.

However, all the extant Greek manuscripts and almost all of the existing textual witnesses to the Greek text of Job preserve the insertions from Theodotion's version that Origen made in order to account for the missing cola. These Hexaplaric additions are much closer to the MT than the original translation and are indicated in the textual witnesses with an asterisk (at the start of the addition) and a metobelus (to indicate the end of the quotation). It is only the Sahidic version and a few Old Latin quotations that present a form of the original translation without the asterisked fragments from Theodotion (Wevers, 1996:86). Moreover, both of the modern critical editions prepared by Rahlfs

[8] In his Guide to its techniques, Watson provides definitions for the constituent parts of Hebrew poetry (1984:11-15). A colon refers to a single line of poetry, "either as a semi-independent unit (= monocolon), or as a part of a larger strophe (bicolon, tricolon, quatrain, etc.)" (1984:12). A hemistich is a subdivision of the colon and equal to half a length of it. A bicolon, or couplet, is made up of two cola (generally, but not always in parallel). A tricolon is a set of three cola forming a single whole. A strophe is a "verse-unit of one or more cola, considered as part of the higher unit termed the stanza. The monocolon, bicolon, tricolon and so on are all strophes" (1984:13). Stanzas consist of a number of strophes and together form the sub-sections that make up a poem.

(1935) and Ziegler (1982)[9] print composite texts, that is, a conflated text consisting of the original translation and the additions from Theodotion. Although the additions are clearly indicated with the Hexaplaric signs in these modern critical editions, the editors made the mistake of punctuating their composite texts as if they were a single translation.

Two important questions present themselves concerning these observations on the text of LXX Job (Cook, 1992:27): Firstly, how did the differences between the OG and the MT arise? Are these differences to be attributed to an originally short Hebrew *Vorlage* or are they the result of the translators' deliberate tampering with the text? Secondly, can the modern critical editions' practice of printing a composite text be justified; in other words, should the later Hexaplaric additions be treated as part of the LXX text of Job?

With regard to the first question, there are two schools of thought. The majority of scholars who have made a study of the Greek translation of the book of Job attribute the differences in form and content between the OG and the MT to the translators. In the respective views of these scholars the translators deliberately abridged the Hebrew source text for theological or stylistic reasons[10]. They consequently maintain that the Hebrew

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[9] *Iob. Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum volume XI/4* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).

[10] According to Gerleman the shortness of the Greek text in comparison with the Hebrew is chiefly due to *stylistic* reasons and not a variant Hebrew *Vorlage*. In those cases where the Hebrew text did not present any difficulties to the translators, they spare no effort to polish the language and style of the translation. However, in those cases where they did not understand the source text, the translators still attempted to give a real translation of the Hebrew by creative use of their imagination (1946:17-18). Furthermore, Gerleman objects to the opinion that the omissions in the Greek text represent texts that the translators either did not understand, or viewed as ethically or theologically objectionable; rather, he is of the opinion that the translators made summaries or résumés of the source texts' content by means of their truncated Greek versions (1946:22-23). The many differences between the Greek and the Hebrew texts of the book of Job therefore occurred during the process of translation. Dhorme argued that the translators omitted those passages they felt were unnecessary and shortened those which were too long (1967,cciii), whilst Cox is of the opinion that the translators abbreviated the Greek text in order to curtail the large amount of repetition in the Hebrew text or due to textual difficulties (1987:80). D.H. Gard (1952:6-90), conversely, sees the reason for the differences between the Greek and the Hebrew texts of Job in the *theological* exegesis of the translators rather than in a variant Hebrew *Vorlage*. According to him, the translators' theological interpretation included the following elements: (i) Theological "toning down". The LXX departs from the Hebrew in order to avoid ideas concerning God which were offensive to the translators; (ii) Anti-anthropomorphisms. The translators eliminated portrayals of the deity as having human faculties and emotions; (iii) The avoidance of any detraction from the perfect character of God. The translators supposedly subordinated references to God's destructive behaviour to his constructive work; (iv) Omissions due to theological reasons. The translators left certain verses untranslated and the verses preceding and following these omissions create a logical sequence of thought in the Greek text. Although

Vorlage of the OG was essentially the same as the *textus receptus*. Conversely, H.M. Orlinsky has refuted the notion that the differences between the OG and the MT are due to the theological bias of the translator. In a series of studies on the LXX book of Job[11] he has argued that the translators faithfully rendered their Hebrew *Vorlage* and that the omissions are either the result of such a shorter source text, or due to stylistic and linguistic factors.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the researcher who is interested in determining the significance of LXX Job for the discipline of OTT must, in each case, discern the reason(s) for the differences between the Greek translation of Job he/she is studying, and the Hebrew text with which this Greek text is brought in comparison, namely, the MT. It may suffice to briefly repeat what has been concluded in preceding paragraphs of the present study, namely, that if the differences were due to a shorter Hebrew *Vorlage*, the significance thereof for OTT would be in connection with the object of study in the discipline. If, however, it were concluded that the Greek text owes its abbreviated form to the theological or exegetical bias of the translators, this conclusion would hold significance for the subject of the discipline.

The second question that presented itself concerning the text of LXX Job is whether the later Hexaplaric additions should form part of the Greek text that the researcher sets over in comparison with the MT. In light of the arguments for and against an original shorter Hebrew source text mentioned above, the close adherence of the Theodotionic additions to the MT, and the criticisms levelled at the Göttingen edition of LXX Job prepared by Joseph Ziegler[12], it is evident that the Hexaplaric additions in the critical editions may be

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Gard concedes that departures from the source text may indeed be from the translators' style in some instances, however, he is adamant that the rest of the differences are due to their theological exegesis.

[11] "Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job I. An analytic survey of previous studies", *HUCA* 28 (1957), 53-74; "Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job II. The Character of the Septuagint Translation of the Book of Job", *HUCA* 29 (1958), 229-271; "Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job III. On the Matter of Anthropomorphisms, Anthropopathisms, Alleged Concept of Afterlife, and Charges Against or Involving God", *HUCA* 32 (1961), 239-268; and "Studies in the Septuagint of the Book of Job V. The Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Septuagint of Job: The Text and the Script", *HUCA* 35 (1964), 57-78.

[12] Pietersma criticizes Ziegler for creating from the available textual evidence an ecclesiastical version of the Greek text of Job that is neither the OG text nor that of Theodotion, nor even the Hexaplaric recension of the LXX: "It is a text such as never left the hands of any Greek translator or recensionist! In essence it is

ignored and only the short OG text be taken into account in a theological study of LXX Job.

4.5.2 A translation profile of OG Job

The original Greek translation of the book of Job is of a good literary quality. The translators avoided "Hebraisms" and followed the standard Greek style in rendering Hebrew syntactical constructions and conjunctions, as well as in their use of participles and particles (Gerleman, 1946:5-31). Moreover, John Gammie has drawn the attention to poetic and stylistic tendencies in OG Job that illustrate the translators' aim of creating a work of poetic appeal and effect. These tendencies include the repetition of words and sounds, especially assonance and alliteration, in order to bring two or more hemistichs into relation with each other (1987:15-19).

As a result of its good literary quality and abbreviated character, OG Job is often described as a "free" or paraphrastic translation, but Cox notes that these usual categories of characterizing a translation fail when OG Job is assessed: "It is not just free or paraphrastic, it is also something of an epitomy of the longer and often difficult original. Old Greek Iob is one of a kind in the Septuagint corpus. We can typify it as amongst the least literal, both in its attitude toward abbreviating the parent text and in the way the translator worked with that portion of the text for which we have a translation" (2005:2). According to Fernández Marcos the translators rendered the *Vorlage* accurately enough in those cases where it was intelligible to them. They did so in a literary manner and not word-for-word. However, in those cases where the *Vorlage* was uncertain the translators employed a diverse range of solutions with the purpose of creating a meaningful text in the Greek language (1994:263).

Homer Heater has convincingly demonstrated that yet another characteristic of OG Job is the practice of the translators of interpolating material from other parts of the LXX into

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an ecclesiastical text such as evolved at a fairly early stage in the history of the Christian Church" (1985:307) (Pietersma, 1985b).

the passage that they are translating. The texts that are inserted into the translation usually come from within the book of Job itself, but also from elsewhere in the LXX such as the books of the Pentateuch and Isaiah. Heater considers this practice to be a translation technique of the person(s) responsible for the Greek translation of the book of Job (1982:136-140) and refers to it as "anaphoric translation".

Apart from the fact that the translation as a whole seems to reveal a conscious shortening of the Hebrew source text, there are also various additions that have no correspondence to the MT. These additions include the diatribe of Job's wife (2:9a-d)[13], wherein she bemoans her fate and laments that her suffering is equal to that of Job, Job 19:4b-c which attributes Job's mistake to unbefitting and inappropriate words, Job 36:28c-f, Job 40:4a-c, and the small embellishments to the concluding verse of the book (42:17a-e) (Cox, 2005:2; Fernández Marcos, 1994:261).

4.5.3 The supposed historical context of OG Job

In his study of the Greek translation of the book of Job *Gillis Gerleman* suggested that LXX Job was not intended for use in the synagogue; rather, according to him, the translator was an Alexandrian Hellenist who addressed his translation to a Hellenistic-Alexandrian circle of readers (1946:32). Following the argument of *Henry Barclay Swete* (1900:256) *Edouard Dhorme* exhibited a similar view in his commentary on the book of Job (1967:cxcvi). Furthermore, basing his arguments on style, diction, vocabulary, and a supposed openness to Greek culture, Gerleman put forward the hypothesis that this translator was the same person who was responsible for the Greek translation of Proverbs (1946:14-17)[14].

Natalio Fernández Marcos (1994:251-266) has demonstrated the effect that the translators' literary approach to translating the difficult and often obscure Hebrew

[13] Fernández Marcos (1994:261) follows a suggestion by Heater (1982:31-36) that this addition is probably midrashic in nature and consequently may have been introduced by a later hand.
[14] These arguments have been refuted convincingly by John Gammie in his article "The Septuagint of Job: Its Poetic Style and Relationship to the Septuagint of Proverbs", *CBQ* 49 (1987), 15-31.

Vorlage of Job has had on the worldview presented by the book: "As a device of the author's translation technique he updated and hellenized the religious universe of the book, the names of God, the divine court (transformed into a contest between the angels and Satan), the mythological constellations, the symbols and metaphors. But, I insist, even this hellenization is rather formal and superficial because the Greek Job is rooted in the wisdom tradition of Israel. The Greek translator of Job did not introduce the belief in the immortality or resurrection of the dead as some authors have thought" (1994:264). Nevertheless, Fernández Marcos does echo earlier studies in claiming that the Greek translator aimed this translation at "a circle of readers wider than attenders of the synagogue" (1994:264); in fact, he claims that the book was not read in the synagogue at all[15].

Claude Cox, however, holds a diametrically opposed view and argues that the communities which first read the Greek translation of Job were Jewish and that their reading was located in the synagogue. Although he explicitly states that the OG translation of Job is a document of the Hellenistic period and efforts to understand it should do so against the Hellenistic environment thereof, Cox maintains that the book is "not literature of the Hellenistic world generally, as much at home in Athens or Antioch as in the synagogues of Jerusalem or Alexandria. The underlying moral outlook of the book is Mosaic" (1992:325). Moreover, Cox notes that a comparison of the OG text of Job with other Jewish scriptures such as the Pentateuch, the books of the Prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs, and Tobit yields numerous comparisons in the issues that are treated, as well as forms and language that are utilized (1992:326).

As a result of these different views concerning the historical context of OG Job, the researcher who is interested in the significance of the OG Job for the object and subject of the discipline of OTT is obliged to discern the extent in which the Greek rendering of

[15] Fernández Marcos notes the possibility that this probability may account for the early appearance of the Aramaic Targum of Job (*ca*. 100 B.C.E.). Moreover, he observes that the (larger) Targum of Job that was found at Qumran (11QtgJob) follows a text very close to the MT (1994:264). For a discussion on the two Targums of Job from Qumran (11QtgJob and 4QtgJob) and their value for the study of the book of Job, see the article of Bruce Zuckerman, "Job, Targums of", *ABD Volume III* (ed. D.N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 868-869.

the theological content or traditions in the book of Job was influenced by either the translators' Hellenistic context and/or their Jewish heritage.

4.6 APPLYING THE PROPOSED METHOD TO THE BOOK OF JOB

4.6.1 Reconstructing arguments (*traditio*) in the book of Job

In order to determine whether the translators of the book of Job rendered the theological *traditum* of the source text faithfully or creatively, it must be established how "closely" the form of the tradition in the Greek text of LXX Job resembles the corresponding form in the Hebrew text of the book that is used for the purpose of comparison. From the preceding discussions on the methodological issues concerning the exegesis of LXX books and the review of research on LXX Job it follows that, in the case of LXX Job, the texts that are to be used for comparison are the OG and the MT respectively. However, the Hebrew text of the book of Job is notorious for its difficulty and corrupted nature in some passages. The nature of the Hebrew text of the book, with its large amount of *hapax legomena*, is difficult to classify or pinpoint. The attempts of scholars to explain the precarious nature of the book of Job's Hebrew range from characterizing it as a mixture of Hebrew and some other Semitic language to describing it as a (half) translation of an Arabic (Ibn Ezra; A. Guillaume) or Aramaic (H.S. Tur-Sinai) original (Andersen, 1976:60; Pope, 1965:xliii-xliv). The cognate languages of Biblical Hebrew, such as Aramaic, Arabic, and Ugaritic[16] have been employed by scholars to assist in understanding the difficulties in the Hebrew text of the Masoretic *textus receptus*. Robert Gordis refers to this as the "horizontal" aspect of elucidating the language of the book. He also mentions the importance of a "vertical" aspect, namely, the development of the Hebrew language through time, and consequently, the virtue of employing insights gathered from the post-biblical Rabbinic Hebrew of the Mishna, Talmud, and midrashim in attempting to understand the Hebrew text of Job (1965:161).

[16] Pope's commentary in the *AB* series makes abundant use of his expertise in the field of Ugaritic studies to elucidate difficulties in the book of Job.

The difficulties regarding the MT of Job is augmented, on the one hand, by the fact that a large part thereof is poetic, and on the other hand, that the book is considered to be *sui generis* when it is viewed as a unit; that is, the book as a whole does not fall into any single genre or *Formgeschichtliche* category (Fohrer, 1963:50-53; Pope, 1965:xxx)[17].

Moreover, modern discussions on the book of Job make reference to the fact that the literary unity and integrity of the MT is frequently called into question[18]. Accordingly, commentators mention the incongruities and inconsistencies between the narrative framework of the book (1:1-2:13; 42:7-17) and the poetic dialogues (3:1-42:6), which form the body thereof[19]. Chapters 24-27 of the book are almost certainly corrupt. The dialogue between Job and his friends fall into three cycles of speeches with each of the friends taking a turn in addressing Job. In each case Job responds to the speech of Eliphaz, Bildad, or Zophar before the next friend voices his opinion regarding Job's predicament. However, in the third of these dialogue-cycles (chapters 21-27) Bildad's

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[17] Murphy identifies the main genres in the book of Job as that of story, complaint, avowal of innocence, appeal to ancestral tradition, oath, and disputation speech (sometimes interjected with legal, hymnic and wisdom motifs) (1981:16-45). Westermann (1981:1-15) claims that suffering in the Bible has a language of its own and in order to understand the book of Job, one must first understand this language. Lament encompasses three dimensions of human existence: being an individual, being together with other people, and being in relation to God. The book of Job mirrors this threefold dimension of lament by presenting the suffering of Job through three representations: Job himself, his friends, and God. Westermann consequently depicts the speeches between Job and his friends as a disputation that contains the arguments of the latter concerning the fate of a transgressor and the laments of the former addressed to God. The individual laments of Job in chapters 3 and 29-31, respectively, frame these speeches. This final lament summons God to speak who, in turn, obliges and puts the controversy to an end. This whole event, or drama, is then placed within a narrated story. The structure of the book of Job should therefore be explained as a dramatization of lament, according to Westermann.

[18] Childs, 1979:526-544; Collins, 2004:505-517; Crenshaw, 1992:858-868; Fohrer, 1963:29-43; Hartley, 1988:20-33; Kroeze, 1961:17-23; Newsom, 1996:319-339; Pope, 1965:xxi-xxx; Rendtorff, 1985: 250-255. These views are largely concerned with the manner in which the book of Job came to be in its present form. See also the article by David Clines "Why is there a Book of Job, and What does it do to you if you read it?" *The Book of Job* (ed. W.A.M. Beuken; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), 1-20 and the views of Douglas Lawrie on both the problems connected with though necessity of such historically oriented approaches to the book in his article "How Critical is it to be Historically Critical? The Case of the Composition of the Book of Job" *JNSL* 27/1 (2001), 121-146.

[19] Apart from the difference in diction (prose and poetry), the framework differs from the dialogues in the names that are used for God (YHWH in the narrative framework and either El, Eloah, Elohim, or Shaddai in the dialogues); the manner in which the characters, especially Job, are portrayed (the Job of the narrative prologue is a pious and patient saint but the Job of the dialogues complains bitterly and charges God with injustice); and a supposedly contradicting view of the validity of the doctrine of retribution (it is vehemently challenged by Job in the dialogues, whilst the epilogue to the book seems to sustain it). This incoherence in both form and content renders the book of Job ideal for all kinds of deconstructionist readings. An example of such a reading is presented by David Clines in his article "Deconstructing the Book of Job" *What does Eve Do to Help?* (D.J.A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 106-123.

speech is unusually brief (25:1-6), Zophar does not speak at all, and the contents of Job's speech contradicts his earlier views; in fact, they resemble some of the arguments used previously by his friends. In addition, many scholars regard the poem on the inaccessibility of wisdom to human beings (chapter 28) to be extraneous to the original composition and argument of the book. Furthermore, the four speeches of Elihu (chapters 32-37) is often rejected as an unwarranted and later interpolation[20] into its present location between the concluding soliloquy of Job wherein he takes an oath of innocence (chapters 29-31), and the appearance of YHWH in the storm (38:1-42:6). The two speeches of YHWH in which Job is asked a series of rhetorical questions regarding the creation and preservation of the natural world and the two great beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, as well as Job's respective replies to these sets of questions, present yet another literary problem to the interpreter. Many commentators therefore voice the opinion that these literary inconsistencies are evidence of a gradual composition and development of the book into its present Masoretic textual form.

These observations regarding the textual difficulties of the book of Job, its uniqueness in terms of genre, and its supposedly gradual composition over time, contributes to the intricacies involved in attempts at understanding the arguments of the book. Apart from taking notice of scholarly attempts to read the book of Job as a whole[21], the importance

[20] Doubts among scholars concerning the authenticity of the Elihu-speeches arise from the following observations: this bombastic young upstart is not mentioned in the epilogue of the book; the poetry of these chapters are supposedly of an inferior quality in comparison with the rest of the book; there are allegedly more Aramaisms in this part of the book than elsewhere; apart from the introduction of the idea that suffering may be a form of divine communication and therefore medicinal, scholars are unanimous in claiming that Elihu's arguments are not very different from those of the three friends and they add little in terms of finding a solution to the problems discussed in the book; Elihu seems to quote *verbatim* from the earlier parts of the dialogue between Job and his three friends.

[21] In his commentary *Francis Andersen* assumes the unity of the book of Job and the consistency of its theology. He concedes that there are arguments and disagreements concerning theological content, but that this is the way that the book was written. Different theologies, therefore, do not necessarily imply different authors (1976:46). According to Andersen, the "meaning" of the book can only be found in the total structure of the book and the function of the individual parts thereof in that structure (1976:46-47). *Brevard Childs* argues that the present canonical shape of the book of Job performs a variety of functions for the community to whom this text is authoritative in religious matters. The tension and interaction between the various parts of the canonical form of the book address a wide-range of questions regarding wisdom and a canonical reading of the book in this regard will always appreciate its individual parts for their place within the book as a whole (1979:533-544). *Gerald Janzen* stresses the importance of the interrelationship between form and content in reading the text of Job and consequently proposes a reading of the book as a whole in which the tensions between the various parts of its form contributes to the meaning thereof

of dealing with these textual and literary puzzles exist in the fact that it is exactly the MT (in all its obscurity) that is primarily used for comparison with the OG text in the analysis of TT[22]. Moreover, if it is conceded that the analysis of the TT in a particular passage works deductively from an analysis of a larger translation unit, or even the book as a whole, then it is imperative for an understanding of the arguments in the Greek text to establish to what extent the truncated OG text resemble the (supposed) composite nature of the MT or a unified reading of the book as a whole.

For this reason, scholars on occasion propose large-scale emendations, omissions, or transpositions of words or passages in order to make some sense of the Hebrew text. Gordis, conversely, suggests that what is needed is a patient study of every facet of the book, utilizing insights from all relevant disciplines that are basic to biblical scholarship (1965:18). As a result, the researcher is obliged to make ample use of the available tools for linguistic study such as grammars, lexica, manuals for the study of Biblical Hebrew poetry, and concordances in reconstructing the arguments in both the MT and the OG with the aim of analyzing its TT. However, when these reconstructed arguments are subsequently compared with each other in order to gauge the probable influence of the *Vorlage* on the form of the theological traditions in the Greek text, it must be kept in mind that these are *our* understandings of the arguments, based on our *modern*

(1985:15-17, 22-24). *Norman Habel* employs the literary techniques of plot analysis to expose what he deems to be the continuous narrative plot, which undergirds the book of Job and gives coherence to the text as a whole. He is of the opinion that the prose materials of the book reveal passages that function as markers for three movements in the plot of the narrative: Movement I: God afflicts the hero – the hidden conflict (1:1-2:10), Movement II: The hero challenges God - the conflict explored (2:11-31:40), and Movement III: God challenges the hero – the conflict resolved (32:1-42:17). As a result Habel sees the book of Job as a (biblical) narrative whose plot includes lengthy speeches/dialogues, which advances and develops the plot, albeit through retarding and complicating it (1985:26-35).

[22] Remnants of only four manuscripts of the book of Job were discovered at Qumran. Interestingly, one of these manuscripts (4QpaleoJob^{c}) was written in the archaic paleo-Hebrew script that, according to Abegg, Flint and Ulrich, was common before the Babylonian exile (1999:590). However, these fragmentary remains of the book of Job unfortunately do not help much with illuminating the difficult nature of the MT: "Occasionally when the Qumran manuscripts differ from the traditional version, there is not enough text preserved to establish a context firmly. This is problematic, since even the Masoretic Text itself is sometimes obscure, and translators must make educated guesses. Most of the variants are quite minor: singular for plural, transposition of word order, presence or lack of a small word that adds no meaning or is implicit. Once 4QJob^{a} uses a more familiar form of the word 'God' (Job 33:26). In another instance 4QJob^{a} has a *negative* that is not in the traditional text (Job 37:1), but the full context cannot be confidently established" (Abegg, Flint, Ulrich, 1999:590 – their italics). It follows that, in the case of Job, the MT remains the primary Hebrew textual witness to the book, and therefore, the appropriate text to use in comparison with the OG text.

knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and koine Greek, and not necessarily the understanding of the Hebrew text and its traditions that the original translators held. This acknowledgment leads to the second guideline in applying the proposed method *en route* to establishing the significance of the LXX (Job) for the object and subject of the discipline of OTT, namely, reconstructing the history of the theological traditions in the book of Job.

4.6.2 Reconstructing the history of theological traditions in the book of Job

By acknowledging the fact that a synchronic and comparative study between the arguments in the MT and the OG texts of the book of Job is insufficient for a complete understanding of the transformations that its theological traditions underwent in the process of translation, it is conceded that its translation did not take place in a historical vacuum. This is even more evident when the translation of religious texts is understood as a form of transmitting theological traditions (*traditio*). It stands to reason, therefore, that in order to establish whether the Greek translators of the book of Job rendered the theological traditions thereof faithfully or creatively, the researcher must not only reconstruct the arguments of the book as a whole, but also locate these arguments in the history of Israel's religious traditions at the time of translation. This is a difficult task for two reasons: On the one hand, the literary complexity of the book of Job defies any effort in assigning it to a particular time and context. On the other hand, the book of Job deals with some of the most painful, difficult and unavoidable questions which can arise in human experience and theology (Janzen, 1985:1) and commentators hold differing views as to what constitutes the precise nature, nuance, and function of the theological traditions addressed by the book[23].

In general scholars consign the book of Job to the post-exilic period, somewhere between the sixth and the second century B.C.E., with the exception of Andersen who proscribes an early, eight century, dating for the book (*ca.* 750 B.C.E.) (1976:63). The criteria for dating the book include linguistic evidence, allusions to the historical and prophetic

[23] See Andersen, 1976:64-73, Birch, Brueggemann, Fretheim, Petersen, 1999:392-406; Clines, 1989:xxxviii-xlvii; Fohrer, 1963:48-50; Gordis, 1965:135-156; Hartley, 1988:43-50; Janzen, 1985:1-14; Kroeze, 1961:23-31; Newsom, 1996:319, 334-339; Perdue, 1994b:123-192; Pope, 1965:lxviii-lxxvi.

traditions of Israel, and the possibility that the issues of the innocent suffering of an individual and the querying whether the doctrine of retribution is applicable to all situations in a mechanical way, were pertinent at a particular time of Israel's history. Nevertheless, Norman Habel has convincingly argued that although the cumulative evidence may tend to suggest a post-exilic period for the composition of the book, the literary integrity, paradoxical themes, deliberate setting in an ancient heroic era, and the uncomfortable theological challenges turn the dating of the book of Job into a precarious affair (1985:42). With regard to the time of the book's original translation into Greek, Dhorme has noted that external evidence points to a first century date at the latest: "The date of the Greek version of the Book of Job can be roughly determined, at least as regard the *terminus ad quem*, owing to the use of this translation by the historian Aristeas … Now, this author is already cited by Alexander Polyhistor (80-40 B.C.) (*sic*), whose work is the source of Eusebius. Hence we know quite certainly that the text of the Septuagint was in circulation about the year 100 B.C. (*sic*)" (1967:cxcvi). The theological traditions of the book of Job and its rendering into Greek may consequently be studied against the religious background of the Second Temple period.

Concerning the theological traditions in the book of Job, the following may provisionally be identified as the main issues that are treated therein: the possibility of disinterested piety (can human beings worship God simply for the sake of his divinity, or do they worship God out of fear of punishment or hope of reward); the question whether there is such a thing as innocent suffering; the applicability of the doctrine of retribution to all cases of human predicament or prosperity; in other words, the relationship between traditional theological conceptions and personal human experiences; the problem of theodicy; that is, "the attempt to defend divine justice in the face of aberrant phenomena that appear to indicate the deity's indifference or hostility toward virtuous people" (Crenshaw, 1992b:444). To be sure, these problematic issues of faith are neither unique to Israel, nor to Job in the "Old Testament", and yet, in this book, they are treated in a manner that is characteristically Israelite, on the one hand, and transformative of the Israelite traditions concerning creation, redemption, and the covenant relationship, on the other hand (Janzen, 1985:2).

Numerous parallels exist between the form and content of the book of Job and other literature from the ancient world. Scholars often discuss the similarities between Job and literature from Egypt, including, *The Dispute Between a Man and His Soul*, and *The Eloquent Peasant*, as well as literature from Mesopotamia, including, *Man and his God*, *I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom*, *The Babylonian Theodicy*, and *A Dialogue Between a Master and his Slave*. The Canaanite epic of Keret bears some resemblance to the book of Job, whilst more remote parallels include the Greek story of the Titan Prometheus and the Indian tale of Hariscandra, who demonstrates his incredible virtue in the face of the trials that resulted from a wager between the gods Vasishta and Shiva concerning the existence of pure goodness among earthly creatures (Clines, 1989:lix-lx; Crenshaw, 1992a:864-865; Fohrer, 1963:43-47; Hartley, 1988:6-11). Commentators, however, exclude the possibility that any of these non-biblical works directly influenced the book of Job or served as a source of ideas or themes to its author(s). They rather attribute the similarities between the non-biblical literature and the book of Job to the latter's (international) wisdom character and context[24]. Andersen succinctly summarizes the common view shared by Joban exegetes on this matter: "The literature of the ancient Near East has not yielded another 'Job'. There is a considerable list of writings from this region, and a few from further afield, which remind one of Job in this way or that. But none comes close to Job when each work is examined as a whole. Each shows more differences than similarities, and not one can be considered seriously as a possible source or model for Job. The doleful Israelite in the grip of calamity did not have to read a Mesopotamian or an Egyptian work to raise the question of why God sends such experiences to men. The closest parallels are sufficiently explained by the common background of Wisdom tradition, without implying direct borrowing. The parallels can, however, be used piecemeal with real advantage to throw light on the individual verses in Job which they

[24] Job and his friends are pictured as non-Israelites (possibly Edomites, who were famous for their wisdom) and the setting of the events bear resemblance to the (pre-) patriarchal age of Genesis: the hero's wealth is measured in terms of livestock and slaves, he is the head of a large family and brings sacrifices without the mediation of a priest, the monetary unit hfycq (Job 42:11), belongs to that era, the hero's lifespan exceeds those of the patriarchs (140 years), and the characters do not know the deity by the Israelite name, YHWH, but refer to him with epithets that are characteristic of the patriarchal age (El, Eloah, Elohim, Shaddai) (Clines, 1989:lvii; Crenshaw, 1992a:858).

resemble" (1976:31-32). Therefore, notwithstanding its relatedness to non-biblical material in both theme and content, the book of Job should be interpreted as distinctively Israelite literature.

Moreover, due to its Israelite character, the book of Job exhibits a range of similarities with other biblical material. It is usually discussed in connection with Wisdom literature such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira, and the Wisdom of Solomon. Nevertheless, there are also striking correspondences between the book of Job and the laments in the Psalms (37, 49, 73 for example), Jeremiah (chapters 3, 12 and 20) and Lamentations (chapter 3), passages from Amos (4:13, 5:8-9, 9:5-6) and Habakkuk (1:4,13), the book of Ruth, and, especially, the suffering servant of Deutero-Isaiah (chapters 52-53) (Crenshaw, 1992a:865; Hartley, 1988:11-15; Murphy, 2002:34). Furthermore, Gerald Janzen notes that although it is often merely contrasted with the book of Deuteronomy and the latter's theology of consistent reward and punishment, the book of Job actually constitutes "a critique and an implicit deepening and transformation of Israel's understanding of creation, covenant, and history" (1985:13). This makes the comparison of the book of Job with other biblical literature ideal for a reconstruction of the history of Israel's religious traditions.

It follows, therefore, that the researcher who is interested in the analysis of TT in order to trace the influence of the historical context on the Greek rendering of the theological traditions represented by the book of Job, is obliged to study the Greek shape of these traditions in relation to other LXX books and Second Temple period literature. A comparison of OG Job with these works, in which the similarities and differences are accounted for, may subsequently contribute to an understanding of the history of Israel's religious traditions during this period, as well as the influence of the religio-historical context on the process of translation and, therefore, the shape that the theological traditions of the book of Job embodied in its Greek translated form.

4.7 EXCURSUS: LXX JOB 36:5-23

In order to illustrate the suitability of the OG version of the book of Job for an appropriation of the proposed method of determining the provenance and purpose of LXX books *en route* to establishing the object and subject for OTT, the following short excursus will explore the textual, translational, and theological matters of one passage from the book, namely, Job 36:5-23. With regard to the first two topics a brief comparison will be made between the OG and the MT versions of these verses with the aim of accounting for the differences between the Greek and the Hebrew texts, followed by a profile of the manner in which the translators of these verses went about their task of rendering the difficult Hebrew into Greek. Finally, a synopsis of these versions' respective portrayals of the divine will be provided in order to determine the changes in theological outlook that resulted from the translation process.

A number of criteria governed the choice of these verses to serve as the object of the present analysis: (i) It forms part of the Elihu-speeches, which not only count among the most debated issues concerning the literary integrity of the book of Job, but also contain the most truncated passages in the OG text of the book (it is almost half the length of the Hebrew in volume)[25]; (ii) This large amount of omissions from the Hebrew text beg the question whether the OG text faithfully or creatively preserves the theological tradition or argument of its source text and scholarly opinions diverge at this point[26]; (iii) One of the textual fragments of the book of Job that was found at Qumran, 4QJob^{a}, preserves fairly substantial parts of chapter 36 that may also be used for comparative purposes.

[25] In addition, it is interesting to note that, according to Kutz, the translators of the book of Job presents a negative portrayal of the character of Elihu in the OG text (2005: 350-355).

[26] Gerleman, on the one hand, argues that the shorter OG text presents a résumé or simplified summary, which merely reproduces the content of the longer Hebrew text (1946:24). On the other hand, Gard is of the opinion that the translators' theological approach to their source text compelled them to remove certain offensive passages concerning the portrayal of the divine in these verses (1952:37-38). Moreover, Heater (1982:116-119) treats Job 36:5-17 as a unit because, according to him, the OG version of these verses represent a collocation of selected phrases in the Hebrew text. For instance, OG 36:10a corresponds to MT 36:5b; OG 12a is a compendium of MT 36:6a and 12b, whilst OG 36:12b conflates MT 36:10a and 12a; OG 36:15b matches MT 36:6b and OG 36:17 is a translation of MT 36:7a (1982:116). It follows that the argument is different in the Greek translation compared to the Hebrew text.

In view of the preceding discussion on the interpretation of LXX books, a few preliminary remarks concerning the textual editions that are used for the analysis are in order. Ziegler's edition of the Greek text will be used, however, the Hexaplaric additions will be ignored. The BHS will serve as the version of the MT to be compared with the OG text. The numbers between brackets in the OG text refer to the corresponding verses in the BHS. In comparison with these versions the Qumran text of 4QJob^{a}, which preserves, amongst other texts from Job, fragments from chapter 36 verses 7-11, 13-24, and 25-27[27], exhibit the following features: Of the verses represented in the OG text, a word or two of verses 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, and 22-23 have survived. These verses do not differ much from their counterparts in the MT. Fragments from those verses that were omitted by the OG translators do appear in 4QJob^{a}. As a result, the latter does not support the shortened character of the former. The differences between the MT and the Qumran fragments are largely orthographical. In verses 11 and 23 the longer forms of the pronominal suffixes `hk-` and `ht-` are used respectively. Therefore, so far as it is possible to discern 4QJob^{a} presents the same compositional structure as the MT. The Hebrew textual evidence of Job 36:5-23 at our disposal consequently discourages large scale transpositions or reshuffling of verses, words or phrases in order to elucidate this difficult text.

The English versions of the texts that are utilized in the present analysis are taken from the NRSV and Claude Cox's provisional NETS translation[28]. For the purposes of the present excursus these English translations may substitute for an individual detailed linguistic discussion of both the Hebrew and Greek texts. Some of these issues will, however, come to the fore in the comparison between the OG and the MT.

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[27] Eugene Ulrich and Sarianna Metso were responsible for the reconstruction and presentation of these verses in *Qumran Cave 4 XI Psalms to Chronicles (DJD XVI)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000) 171-175.

[28] Quotations are taken from *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, © 2005 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This provisional version of the NETS translation of Job is available on the NETS website: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/

4.7.1 The OG and MT versions of Job 36:5-23

MT (BHS)	OG (Ziegler)
5 הֶן־אֵל כַּבִּיר וְלֹא יִמְאָס כַּבִּיר כֹּחַ לֵב׃ 6 לֹא־יְחַיֶּה רָשָׁע וּמִשְׁפַּט עֲנִיִּים יִתֵּן׃ 7 לֹא־יִגְרַע מִצַּדִּיק עֵינָיו וְאֶת־מְלָכִים לַכִּסֵּא וַיֹּשִׁיבֵם לָנֶצַח וַיִּגְבָּהוּ׃ 8 וְאִם־אֲסוּרִים בַּזִּקִּים יִלָּכְדוּן בְּחַבְלֵי־עֹנִי׃ 9 וַיַּגֵּד לָהֶם פָּעָלָם וּפִשְׁעֵיהֶם כִּי יִתְגַּבָּרוּ׃ 10 וַיְגַל אָזְנָם לַמּוּסָר וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־יְשֻׁבוּן מֵאָוֶן 11 אִם־יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיַעֲבֹדוּ יְכַלּוּ יְמֵיהֶם בַּטּוֹב וּשְׁנֵיהֶם בַּנְּעִימִים׃ 12 וְאִם־לֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ בְּשֶׁלַח יַעֲבֹרוּ וְיִגְוְעוּ כִּבְלִי־דָעַת׃ 13 וְחַנְפֵי־לֵב יָשִׂימוּ אָף לֹא יְשַׁוְּעוּ כִּי אָסָרָם 14 תָּמֹת בַּנֹּעַר נַפְשָׁם וְחַיָּתָם בַּקְּדֵשִׁים׃ 15 יְחַלֵּץ עָנִי בְעָנְיוֹ וְיִגֶל בַּלַּחַץ אָזְנָם׃ 16 וְאַף הֲסִיתְךָ מִפִּי־צָר רַחַב לֹא־מוּצָק תַּחְתֶּיהָ וְנַחַת שֻׁלְחָנְךָ מָלֵא דָשֶׁן׃ 17 וְדִין־רָשָׁע מָלֵאתָ דִּין וּמִשְׁפָּט יִתְמֹכוּ׃ 18 כִּי־חֵמָה פֶּן־יְסִיתְךָ בְסָפֵק וְרָב־כֹּפֶר אַל־יַטֶּךָ׃ 19 הַיַּעֲרֹךְ שׁוּעֲךָ לֹא בְצָר וְכֹל מַאֲמַצֵּי־כֹחַ׃ 20 אַל־תִּשְׁאַף הַלַּיְלָה לַעֲלוֹת עַמִּים תַּחְתָּם ׃ 21 הִשָּׁמֶר אַל־תֵּפֶן אֶל־אָוֶן כִּי־עַל־זֶה בָּחַרְתָּ מֵעֹנִי׃ 22 הֶן־אֵל יַשְׂגִּיב בְּכֹחוֹ מִי כָמֹהוּ מוֹרֶה׃	(5) γίγνωσκε δὲ ὅτι ὁ κύριος οὐ μὴ ἀποποιήσηται τὸν ἄκακον. (10) ἀλλὰ τοῦ δικαίου εἰσακούσεται, (12) ἀσεβεῖς δὲ οὐ διασῴζει παρὰ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι εἰδέναι αὐτοὺς τὸν κύριον καὶ διότι νουθετούμενοι ἀνήκοοι ἦσαν. (14) ἀποθάνοι τοίνυν ἐν νεότητι ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτῶν, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ αὐτῶν τιτρωσκομένη ὑπὸ ἀγγέλων, (15) ἀνθ᾽ ὧν ἔθλιψαν ἀσθενῆ καὶ ἀδύνατον, κρίμα δὲ πραέων ἐκθήσει. (17) οὐχ ὑστερήσει δὲ ἀπὸ δικαίων κρίμα, (18) θυμὸς δὲ ἐπ᾽ ἀσεβεῖς ἔσται δὶ ἀσέβειαν δώρων, ὧν ἐδέχοντο ἐπ᾽ ἀδικίαις. (19) μή σε ἐκκλινάτω ἑκὼν ὁ νοῦς δεήσεως ἐν ἀνάγκῃ ὄντων ἀδυνάτων, (21) ἀλλὰ φύλαξαι μὴ πράξῃς ἄτοπα, (22) τίς γάρ ἐστιν κατ᾽ αὐτὸν δυνάστης; (23) τίς δέ ἐστιν ὁ ἐτάζων αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα; ἢ τίς ὁ εἴπας Ἔπραξεν ἄδικα;

23 מִי־פָקַד עָלָיו דַּרְכּוֹ וּמִי־אָמַר פָּעַלְתָּ עַוְלָה׃	

NRSV	NETS (Cox)
5 "Surely God is mighty and does not despise any; he is mighty in strength of understanding. 6 He does not keep the wicked alive, but gives the afflicted their right. 7 He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous, but with kings on the throne he sets them forever, and they are exalted. 8 And if they are bound in fetters and caught in the cords of affliction, 9 then he declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly. 10 He opens their ears to instruction, and commands that they return from iniquity. 11 If they listen, and serve him, they complete their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasantness. 12 But if they do not listen, they shall perish by the sword, and die without knowledge. 13 "The godless in heart cherish anger; they do not cry for help when he binds them. 14 They die in their youth, and their life ends in shame. 15 He delivers the afflicted by their affliction, and opens their ear by adversity. 16 He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there was no constraint, and what was set on your table was full of fatness. 17 "But you are obsessed with the case of the wicked; judgment and justice seize you. 18 Beware that wrath does not entice you into scoffing, and do not let the greatness of the ransom turn you aside. 19 Will your cry avail to keep you from	(5) But know that the Lord will not reject the innocent; (10) rather, he will listen to the righteous. (12) But the impious he does not deliver because they do not wish to know the Lord, and because, when they were being admonished, they were unreceptive. (14) “Well then, may their soul die in youth, and their life, being wounded by messengers, (15) because they afflicted the weak and powerless; but he will expose judgment against the meek. (17) “Yes, justice will not be wanting for those in the right, (18) but wrath will fall on the impious on account of the impiety of gifts they would receive for injustices. (19) Let not your mind purposely turn you aside from the petition of the powerless when they are in distress. (21) Rather, be careful that you do no wrongs, (22) for who is a mighty one like him? (23) And who is it that examines his works, or who is it that states, “He has done injustice”?

distress, or will all the force of your strength? 20 Do not long for the night, when peoples are cut off in their place. 21 Beware! Do not turn to iniquity; because of that you have been tried by affliction. 22 See, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him? 23 Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, 'You have done wrong'?	

The most salient feature emerging from the juxtaposition of the OG and the MT texts is the shortness of the former in comparison with the latter. The minuses in the Greek version of Job 36:5-23 amount to 24 cola. The Hebrew lines that are omitted in the Greek translation include verse 5b, 6a-b, 7a-c, 8a-b, 9a-b, 10b, 11a-c, 13a-b, 16a-c, 19c, 20a-b, 21b, and 22a. In order to establish whether these lacunae represent a shorter Hebrew *Vorlage* or are the result of the translation process, the TT of these verses must be determined through a detailed comparison of the MT and the OG.

4.7.2 A comparison between OG and MT Job 36:5-23 (textual matters)

<u>VERSE 5</u>

The Greek words γίγνωσκε and τὸν ἄκακον have no parallels in the MT. Heater (1982:117) alludes to the possibility that the former may be a second rendering of the word tw[d in verse 4b of chapter 36. However, it can also be understood as the translation of the discourse marker ÷h. Gard suggests that τὸν ἄκακον is the result of the translators' attempt to provide samy with an object. According to him the translators toyed with rybk and consequently read it as rbb. The first b supposedly acts as a sign of the object of the verb and rb ("blameless") is subsequently translated with τὸν ἄκακον. Gard concludes that the OG eliminates the anthropomorphic use of bl (verse 5b) and wyny[(verse 7) as it is applied to God (1952:37-38). Heater, conversely, gives a more plausible explanation for the presence of τὸν ἄκακον (1982:117).

Following an observation made by Dhorme (1967:539) he recognizes the similarities in language between OG 36:5 and OG 8:20a. As a result Heater identifies the phrase ὁ κύριος οὐ μὴ ἀποποιήσηται τὸν ἄκακον as an anaphoric translation that is taken from this passage in chapter 8 (□ γ□ρ κύριος ο□ μ□ □ποποιήσηται τ□ν □κακον). The translation of al + imperfect with the Aorist subjunctive οὐ μὴ ἀποποιήσηται in order to indicate a most definite form of negation regarding the future[29] ("will not reject") exhibits the good Greek style with which the translators rendered their source text.

Furthermore, the translators of the Hebrew text rendered the divine name la with κύριος. Fernández Marcos observes that the translators reduced the diverse names of God used by Job's friends, namely, El, Eloah, and Elohim (and more rarely Shaddai and YHWH), to either κύριος or θεονς and that this practice represents part of the translators' effort to Hellenize the religious universe of the source text (1994:257).

VERSE 10

Both Gard and Heater see the omission of verses 5b-9b as the translators' deliberate effort to create a logical sequence of thought by means of a bicolon (5a and 10a). The former, however, regards the result as a magnification of the grace of God (1952:38), whilst the latter argues that the translators put in Elihu's mouth a statement that refutes Job's negative comments that God will not listen to just people (1982:118). Moreover, Gard is of the opinion that the translators objected to the idea that God physically opens a human being's ears, even for instruction. They consequently rendered •nza lgyw with εἰσακούσεται. Likewise, according to him, the translators read rvy ("to be upright") instead of rsy in translating rswm with τοῦ δικαίου, but it seems more likely that the translators inserted τοῦ δικαίου in the process of creating a bicolon between verse 5a and verse 10a. The conjunction ἀλλαν therefore acts as the hinge that joins these two verses.

[29] Blass and Debrunner, 1961:184.

VERSE 12

ἀνήκοοι ἦσαν and παρὰ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι εἰδέναι might be the respective translations of w[mvy and t[d ylbk. This is far from certain though. Heater is of the opinion that the addition of the latter is indebted to a passage from OG 21:14b (□δούς σου ε□δέναι ο□ βούλομαι), but this is equally uncertain. The text-critical remark at verse 12 in the BHS notes that multiple manuscripts read ylbb instead of ylbk as it does in Codex Leningradensis B19^{A}. Dhorme (1967:542), Driver-Gray (1921:276), and Hartley (1988:469) prefer this reading to the one witnessed to by the MT. Hartley goes further by drawing the attention to the fact that the preposition b is used here to express cause: "from/because of a lack of knowledge" (1988:469). Such a reading may have prompted the Greek translators to render this phrase with παρὰ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι εἰδέναι. This articular infinitive[30], as well as the particle διότι indicates a purpose clause. This is a sign of the translators' intention of translating their source text using a standard Greek style. Moreover, the conjunction δεν continues the sequence of thought created by the bicolon of the previous two verses. Consequently, the subject of the verb διασῴζει is ὁ κύριος of verse 5 and the object ἀσεβεῖς should therefore be regarded as an insertion made by the translators in order to contrast the attitude of God towards the righteous and the impious.

VERSE 14

The OG text presents a relatively accurate translation of a Hebrew text that is similar to the MT. However, there are two pluses, the inferential conjunction τοίνυν and the participle τιτρωσκομένη. The former acts as causal connection[31] in the continuation of the sequence of thought ("Well then"), while the latter forms an adverbial clause, which, in effect, ignores the poetic device of ellipsis in the Hebrew text (Kroeze, 1961:397). The Aorist optative ἀποθάνοι is a proper Greek translation of the Qal jussive form of the verb twm (tmt). Its function is to denote an attainable wish (Blass and Debrunner,

[30] Blass and Debrunner, 1961:205.
[31] Blass and Debrunner, 1961:234-235.

1961:194) and Cox translates it accordingly as "*may* their soul *die*". Heater is probably correct in inferring that the translators read •yvideQ] as •yvidoQ] and translated it as ἀγγέλων in accordance with the way they have translated •yvidoQ] in Job 5:1 (1982:118).

VERSE 15

The ability of the translators to render their source text into an appealing Greek style is exhibited in verse 15. The occurrence of alliteration in the Hebrew words Åljy and Åjlb is matched in the Greek by ἔθλιψαν, ἀσθενῇ, and ἐκθήσει. Likewise, the use of the prepositional clause ἀνθ᾽ ὧν brings the number of different ways the translators employ to indicate a purpose clause to three: (i) through the articular infinitive clause παρὰ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι in verse 12, (ii) through the particle διότι, also in verse 12, and (iii) through the use of this prepositional clause in verse 15. The respective explanations that Gard and Heater offer in order to account for the differences between the Greek and the Hebrew versions of verse 15 are at odds with each other. The former ascribes it to the effort of the translators to remove the idea that God would wrong anyone even for disciplinary reasons. They therefore rewrite the verse to portray the judgment of God as in favour of the meek (1952:66). Heater, conversely, attributes the differences to a reshuffling of the Hebrew verses so that OG 36:15b is the translation of MT 36:6b. He bolsters this argument with the observation that OG 36:17 (the next colon) corresponds quite well to MT 36:7a (1982:118-119). On the contrary, the reference to the meek (πραέων) and their judgment (κρίμα) should rather be seen as an addition by the translators in order to expand on the line of thought concerning the behaviour of the impious toward the powerless and to contrast it with the attitude of God towards them.

VERSE 17

MT Job 36:17b has no equivalent in the OG text and the Greek of verse 17 shows very little correspondence to the Hebrew of 17a. However, κρίμα may be the translation of ÷yd and οὐχ ὑστερήσει that of talm. Orlinsky notes that one of the characteristics of

the OG translators was to render, in a number of cases, a Hebrew word by a Greek word with the opposite meaning and then adding a negative particle to neutralize the Greek word (1958:231). The recognition of this characteristic in this verse rules out the suggestion made by Heater (1982:119) that OG 36:17 corresponds to MT 36:7a. Furthermore, the conjunction δev links verse 17 directly to verse 15. The translators have been consistent in rendering the conjunction w in the Hebrew with δev instead of καiv. The fact that this conjunction never appears at the beginning of the sentence, contrary to the Hebrew syntactical convention, may be an indication of the translators' intention of avoiding "Hebraisms".

VERSE 18

OG Job 36:18 contains two additions that have no parallel in the Hebrew, ἀσεβεῖς and ἐπ᾽ ἀδικίαις. θυμονς corresponds to hmj and δώρων to rpk respectively. The use of the prepositional clause δία + Genitive in order to indicate cause ("on account of…") demonstrates once again the translators' proficiency in the Greek language.

VERSE 19

The translation of the interrogative in 36:19a with an assertive sentence in the negative is yet another characteristic trait of the OG translators, according to Orlinsky (1958:246-248). Moreover, ἐν ἀνάγκῃ is probably the equivalent for rxb. ἀδυνάτων seems to be another object without a parallel in the Hebrew text that the translators inserted into their translation.

VERSE 21

MT 36:21b is not translated in the OG text and there is no matching conjunction for ἀλλav in the Hebrew version of this verse. The translators employed this conjunction to join verse 21 with verse 19. The use of the Aorist subjunctive μὴ πράξῃς to express a negative command is an example of the good Greek style utilized by the translators.

VERSE 22

The OG of verse 22 leaves the first part of the bicolon in the MT untranslated. The conjunction γάρ is consequently used to provide the motivation for the imperative in verse 21. It is probable that the translators read hr</m (“teacher”) as hrem; (“lord” in Aramaic) and translated it with δυνάστης (“ruler”, “sovereign”, “mighty one”). Therefore, κατ᾽αὐτον is the equivalent for whmk.

VERSE 23

There is an alliteration of τ and sibilant sounds in the OG version of this verse, as well as a repetition of α-sounds (assonance). The use of τίς δέ and ἢ τίς continues the motivation of the imperative in verse 21 that was begun in the previous verse. The participle ἐτάζων is used substantively as the equivalent for dqp and wkrd (“his way”) is understood to refer to deeds (αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα). Finally, the subject of the verb in the direct speech in 36:23b is second person singular in Hebrew (“You have done wrong”) and third person singular in Greek (“He has done injustice”).

4.7.3 A translation profile of OG Job 36:5-23 (matters of translation)

The OG version of Job 36:5-23 represents a literary translation in a good Greek style, rather than a literal or slavish rendering of the Hebrew source text. Evidence of this style that the translators employed include the use of a wide range of conjunctions as clause connectors (δεν, ἀλλαν, γάρ, and τοίνυν) instead of restricting themselves to καιν; drawing on typical Greek syntactical constructions such as the optative, participles, and infinitives in order to render the source text; and the different ways in which the translators express a purpose clause in verse 12 and 15.

Another feature of the manner in which the translators went about their task is the insertion of the wording in Job 8:20a in order to translate 36:5. This is an example of what Heater calls anaphoric translation. Two of the nineteen characteristics that Orlinsky identified for the OG translation as a whole appear in these verses, namely, the rendering

of a Hebrew word by a Greek word with the opposite meaning and then adding a negative particle to neutralize the Greek word (verse 17), and the translation of an interrogative with an assertive sentence in the negative (verse 19).

It seems as though the translators had difficulty in understanding their Hebrew source text. Nevertheless, the OG translation does make sense, but contrary to what Gerleman suggests, verses 5-23 of chapter 36 are not merely a résumé or summary of the Hebrew text; rather it would appear as if the translators identified individual words or phrases in each verse and built up an intelligible translation around it by inserting certain words or phrases, omitting surrounding verses or cola, and joining those cola that are translated with various conjunctions. The result is that the meaning of the OG is not quite the same as that of the MT[32].

In sum, the translators creatively rendered their source text, which in all probability was not very different from the MT. The truncated nature of the OG text should consequently be attributed to the translators and the good Greek style[33] they employed and not to a variant *Vorlage*.

4.7.4 Synopses of the theological outlook in the MT and OG versions of Job 36:5-23 (theological matters)

4.7.4.1 The portrayal of the divine in the MT

The gist of Elihu's argument in the MT version of this part of his fourth speech revolves around God's dealings with the righteous. To be sure, God condemns the wicked without further ado, but he is ever aware of the acts of the righteous whom he exalts with

[32] In all honesty it should also be conceded that the MT version of these verses is very difficult and even incomprehensible at times. Commentators have suggested numerous transpositions of words and phrases in an effort to make sense of the MT and Heater follow them in this. The problem with these suggestions is that the evidence they are based on is usually circumstantial. Accordingly these transpositions do not enjoy wholesale support among scholars.

[33] The suggestions of Gard concerning the presence of the translators' supposed theological exegesis in these verses should not be rejected out of hand; however, in our opinion the stylistic features that have been identified presents a more consistent explanation for the differences between the OG and the MT texts.

enthroned kings forever (this may be a metaphor for God's blessing the righteous with prosperity). However, if they act arrogantly, he afflicts them and instructs them through this affliction that they should return from their iniquity. The righteous may either give heed to this instruction from God through their suffering, or they may ignore it. If they listen, they will end their days in prosperity; if they do not, they are the godless in heart that will die without knowledge in youth and in shame. Although the text is very problematic in verses 17-20, Elihu seems to say that God treated Job thus, and warns him not to turn to iniquity because of the extent of his affliction. Furthermore, this argument is framed by two declarations wherein Elihu draws the attention to God's mightiness, his incommensurability as a teacher, and the implication that it is futile to question (this mighty) God's ways with human beings.

4.7.4.2 The portrayal of the divine in the OG

The Greek version of these verses presents the Lord's different attitudes toward the innocent / righteous and the impious respectively. The Lord attends to the former and assures them of justice, but he does not save the latter because they do not want to know him or listen to his admonitions. The Lord will expose their judgement against the meek and (his) wrath will befall them on account of the gifts they receive in order to do injustice. Elihu expresses the wish that these impious people will die while they are young and that angels will mortally wound them because they afflict weak and powerless people. In addition, Elihu warns Job to follow the Lord's example in heeding the plight of the powerless and not to act wrongly as the impious do in deliberately ignoring these people in their distress. He motivates this warning with reference to the mightiness of the Lord and the fact that no one can attribute injustice to him in his dealings with human beings (as Elihu describes them).

These synopses clearly illustrate the differences in theological outlook presented by the same verses in their Hebrew and Greek forms. Through the process of translating these verses of chapter 36, the topic changed from God's treatment of the righteous when they act arrogantly and its application to the situation of Job in the MT, to Elihu's warning to

Job in the OG not to follow in the footsteps of the impious – those people who do not know God or heed his admonitions and oppress the weak and powerless. The Elihu of the MT pictures God as a mighty and just teacher who admonishes the righteous with affliction. The Elihu of the OG portrays God (the Lord) as the mighty and just guardian of justice for the righteous and innocent.

4.8 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

The present chapter had the double aim of (i) exploring the limitations of the present study by investigating possible avenues for putting the insights gathered from the preceding discussions into practice, and (ii) proposing a method for doing so. Respecting and interpreting the individual LXX books in their nature as translations of Hebrew / Aramaic Jewish scriptures and/or Hellenistic writings in own right was marked as the main precondition for determining the object and subject of OTT by means of LXX-studies. As a result, a hypothesis was identified for taking the next step in accomplishing this task, namely, that the provenance and purpose of LXX books must be determined in interpreting them from an OTT-perspective. The method that was proposed for testing this hypothesis consists of two methodological guidelines: firstly, the reconstruction of the argument in the text under study in relation to the argument of the book as a whole, and secondly, the location of this argument within the history of Israel's religious traditions during the Second Temple period. The book of Job in its original Greek translation was subsequently identified as a suitable case study to put this method into practice. The excursus on Job 36:5-23 resulted in the recognition that the suitability of the book for this purpose exists in its textual, translation, and theological characteristics.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

In this closing chapter of the present study a brief outline of the preliminary conclusions from the foregoing chapters is presented in order to provide the reader with an overview of the most important results that was procured from the analysis. To begin with, however, the problem that was addressed by the abovementioned analysis will presently be restated for the sake of clarity.

The introduction to the study identified the ambiguities surrounding the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology as a major methodological problem in the discipline of OTT. For this discipline the problem translates into the necessity of establishing an object and subject of study that addresses the topics of canon, text, and theological content in light of recent developments in the field of Biblical studies.

With regard to the object of study in OTT, the problematic issues revolved around the various canons of the "Old Testament" which different faith communities within both Judaism and Christianity adhere to, as well as the plurality of textual witnesses to books included in the "Old Testament", especially since the textual discoveries in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea. Which "Old Testament" does the title of the discipline, Old Testament theology, refer to; and why is this so? Which texts are used as the basis for establishing its theology? Do only texts from the MT qualify for this honour? If this is the case, why is it so?

With regard to the subject treated in OTT, the problem, on the one hand, is hermeneutical and pertains to the manner in which the theology of the "Old Testament" is to be obtained. On the other hand, the problem also concerns the undeniable religious character of the texts and the status thereof for its readers in this regard. The different approaches to the interpretation of the "Old Testament" texts embody divergent views on the locus of the texts' meaning, and consequently, the manner in which an understanding of the

theological content is to be secured. Nevertheless, behind these questions of hermeneutics lie notions of the nature of the "Old Testament" texts and therefore its theological content. As a result, the claim of divine inspiration that is often made for these texts or the denial thereof are of great importance for an understanding of the "Old Testament" texts and its theology; at the same time it gives rise to the actual problem relevant to the subject of OTT, namely, how the relationship between "Old Testament" texts and divine revelation is to be conceived.

These problematic issues were explored in more detail in the second chapter of the present study. The aim of the chapter was to arrive at a clear view of the complexity of the problems surrounding the scope of the "Old Testament" and the nature of its theology, and therefore, the object and subject of OTT. It was concluded, firstly, that certain presuppositions and assumptions regarding the terminology, canon, and text of the "Old Testament" govern the views on the scope thereof, and consequently, the object of study in OTT. These presuppositions and assumptions include the conceptions of the place or location of the "Old Testament" within the larger theological tradition of both Judaism and Christianity, the definitions of canon that are adhered to, and how the goals of textual criticism are interpreted. Secondly, it was deduced that recent shifts in epistemology, as well as developments in the field of Biblical studies, including the proliferation of approaches in interpreting the "Old Testament" texts, the re-evaluation of the historical study thereof, and a renewed emphasis on the Wisdom literature, significantly influence the manner in which the relationship between the "Old Testament" and divine revelation is understood at present. As a result, the chapter demonstrated that (academic) conceptions of the "Old Testament"'s theology, and therefore, the subject treated in the discipline of OTT, are bound to the precariousness and vicissitudes of ongoing critical research.

The third chapter of the analysis ventured to demonstrate the necessity of utilizing insights from LXX-studies in order to address this methodological problem in the discipline of OTT and concentrated on the nature of the LXX in terms of terminology, theories of origin, and the study of translation technique. It was concluded that a decision

between the various referents of the term “Septuagint” was a compulsory first step in establishing the significance thereof for the problem at hand. It was surmised that the Septuagint is a collection of books that are Greek translations of Jewish scriptures and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in own right. This decision is relevant to the object of study in OTT because the Septuagint includes books that are excluded from the Hebrew Bible and Protestant “Old Testament”. Moreover, the texts of these books reflect many differences in comparison to the Masoretic *textus receptus*.

Nevertheless, an acknowledgement of the importance of the Septuagint for OTT is subject to a demonstration of the legitimacy of the traditions thereof in comparison to the Semitic versions of the same or similar traditions. This issue was addressed with reference to the various theories of origin developed in LXX-studies. The conclusion was reached that the necessity of translation owing to historical circumstances during the Second Temple period, coupled with the fact that the Hebrew texts of many of the scriptures were still in the process of development at the time of translation, validates the theological content of the Greek Jewish scriptures in relation to its Semitic counterparts and, therefore, requires that the LXX books also be treated as an object of study in OTT and be consulted when the subject of the discipline is determined.

An overview of studies concerned with translation technique was appended to the foregoing discussions on the proper parameters of the term Septuagint and the various theories concerning its origin with the aim of establishing whether the translators of the Jewish scriptures reproduced the theological traditions faithfully or interpreted it creatively. Thus, the analysis of translation technique involves a detailed and comparative study of the differences between the original Greek translations and the MT in order to determine the influence of the source text, the historical context, and the translation process on the eventual shape of the Jewish theological traditions in its faithful or creative Greek form. It was inferred that either possibility holds some significance for the discipline of OTT and the problems relating to its object and subject. In those cases where the *traditum* is reproduced faithfully, the Greek text may bear witness to a Semitic *Vorlage* that differs from the MT. Conversely, in those cases where the *traditum* is

interpreted creatively, the result may be a version of the tradition that diverges from the one presented by the source text. The former possibility pertains to the issue of text, and therefore to the object of study in OTT, whilst the latter possibility is relevant to the issue of theological content, and for that reason to the subject of the discipline.

It was subsequently indicated that these three topics, which are peculiar to the study of the LXX, are relevant to those issues relating to canon, text, and theological content that comprise the problems concerning the object and subject of OTT. They are relevant to these issues in terms of the external and internal differences between the OG texts and the MT of individual books, and the legitimacy of the forms of the theological traditions represented by the former in relation to the latter. It follows from the preceding arguments that any effort to establish the object and subject for the discipline of OTT, with due consideration given to the difficulties surrounding canon, text, and theological content, is compelled to make use of insights from LXX-studies.

The driving question behind chapter 4 focused on the manner in which this task may successfully be achieved and therefore explored the limitations of the present study by investigating the possibilities of putting the insights gathered from it into practice and proposing a method for doing so. It was indicated that in order to establish the object and subject of OTT by means of LXX-studies, the LXX books must be interpreted in their nature as translations of Jewish scriptures and/or Hellenistic Greek writings in own right. Consequently, a hypothesis was formulated with the aim of appropriating the conclusions of the present study for the task at hand in the discipline of OTT. This hypothesis stated that the provenance and purpose of LXX books must be established when they are interpreted from an OTT-perspective. The former refers to the probable religio-historical context that influenced the shape of the theological traditions represented by the individual LXX books, while the latter refers to the shape of the traditions in relation to either its Semitic source text or (similar) traditions in other Jewish scriptures. Two methodological guidelines were consequently proposed for testing this hypothesis, namely, a reconstruction of the arguments of a particular LXX book and the location of these arguments in a reconstructed history of Israel's religious traditions during the

Second Temple period. By taking into consideration textual, translation, and theological matters, the OG version of the book of Job was subsequently identified as a suitable candidate for putting these guidelines into practice.

In sum, it may be concluded then that LXX-studies hold intriguing and important possibilities for the discipline of OTT. Yet these possibilities would have remained shrouded in obscurity without the necessary preliminary work presented by the present study. Several questions remain unanswered concerning the significance of the LXX for the object and subject of OTT and the fourth chapter of the present study indicated that a lot of work must still be done before an adequate solution to this problem can be reached in this regard. However, the conclusions that were drawn throughout the analysis provide the researcher with the necessary background information on the problem facing OTT, on the one hand, and the LXX, on the other hand, in order for him/her to proceed with the important task of establishing an object and subject for the discipline of OTT with the help of LXX-studies.

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