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# »... *et a plerisque nunc loukianeios dicitur*«: Jerome's Statements on the Greek Biblical Texts and Modern Septuagint Scholarship

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## 1 Introduction

The historian Fernand Braudel introduced the distinction between long-term and middle-term developments, termed *longue durée* and *moyenne durée* on the one hand, and short-term events, called *événements* or *courte durée*, on the other.

This differentiation can, at least to some degree, be applied to the history of research as well. Here also we have assumptions that are long taken for granted. Particular debates or investigations concentrate on specific facts and problems, but at the same time they move within the larger framework that is accepted for a long time. Certainly, the long-term assumptions are built upon the results of research on specific subjects, at least normally; however, if a certain view is established, it also guides – and sometimes even limits – research on specific topics and the perception of the data.

In Septuagint research, one such assumption of *longue durée* is the way in which the statements by Jerome about the text of the Septuagint have been interpreted and how this interpretation has shaped the perception of the Septuagint texts as well as the criteria for text critical decisions and for reconstruction of the oldest text. As a matter of fact, the basic problem is that usually only Jerome's statement in his preface to Chronicles is considered in a kind of a standard interpretation, while his statement in the letter to Sunnia and Fretela is widely unknown or at least not seriously taken into account.

In the preface to Chronicles Jerome speaks about three different text forms used in Syria, in Palestine, and in Egypt, which are related to Lucian, Origen, and Hesychius, while in the letter to Sunnia and Fretela he speaks about two text forms only: The common (κοινήν, *id est communem ... atque vulgatam*) Septua-

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gint, which is now (*nunc*), i. e. only recently, called Lucianic («... *et a plerisque nunc λουκιάνειος dicitur*»), and the text that is found, among other places, also (*et*) in the hexaplaric codices («*quae et in ἑξαπτοῖς codicibus invenitur*«).

In this paper I want to present how the traditional interpretation of Jerome's statements originated and developed, to draw attention to Jerome's other statement, and finally to consider how both may relate to present Septuagint research.

## 2 Jerome's statements on the text of the Septuagint

Basically, there are two statements by Jerome on the text of the Septuagint. One is found in his letter to the Gothic clerics Sunnia and Fretela.<sup>1</sup> The other and more famous one appears in the introduction to his translation of the book of Chronicles in the Vulgate.<sup>2</sup>

There is an even earlier statement in the preface to his revision of the gospels. In spite of its context, this statement is also of some importance for the text of the Septuagint, as there Jerome once more declares his predilection for that Greek text which is closest to the Hebrew.<sup>3</sup>

All three of these statements served to justify Jerome's undertaking and the decisions he has made. This is most clear in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela: Jerome had revised the book of Psalms. His text deviates from the textual tradition known and used thus far. In his letter, Jerome justifies his translation and the Greek text he used for it. Sometimes one wonders whether two Gothic clerics would really write to Jerome and inquire about his Latin text. But even if one assumes that the addressees of the letter are fictitious, Jerome evidently wanted and/or needed to explain and to justify his procedure.

<sup>1</sup> Letter 106, § 2, 2; for more details see below.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, »Preface to Chronicles,« in *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. Robert Weber and Roger Gryson (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007): 546 f.

<sup>3</sup> This third statement is found in the preface to his translation of the Gospels, addressed to pope Damasus (*In euangelistas ad Damasum praefatio*). There he explains that he has preferred Origen's hexaplaric text and that he has passed by the Lucianic or Hesychian texts because they contain errors and additions. »Praetermitto eos codices quos a Luciano et Hesychio nuncupatos, paucorum hominum adserit perversa contentio, quibus utique nec in toto Veteri instrumento emendare quid licuit, nec in Novo profuit emendasse: cum multarum gentium linguis scriptura ante translata, doceat falsa esse quae addita sunt.« (Jerome, »Incipit Praefatio Sancti Hieronymi Presbyteri in Evangelio,« in *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, Weber and Gryson: 1515). Interestingly, even in his introduction to the Gospels Jerome argues about the situation in the Old Testament regarding the closeness of the Greek versions to the Hebrew text.

His statement in the introduction to Chronicles is also a kind of justification, in this case for making a revision at all, namely because of the differences in the Greek texts. In this famous statement Jerome tells his readers that there are three textual forms of the Septuagint:

«*Alexandria et Aegyptus in Septuaginta suis Hesychium laudat auctorem, Constantinopolis usque Antiochiam Luciani martyris exemplaria probat, mediae inter has provinciae palestinos codices legunt, quos ab Origene elaboratos Eusebius et Pamphilius vulgaverunt, – totusque orbis hac inter se trifaria varietate conpugnat.*»<sup>4</sup>

«Alexandria and Egypt praise Hesychius as author of their Septuagint. From Constantino-ple to Antioch they accept the text of Lucian the martyr. And in between these provinces the Palestinians read codices that Origen had worked on and Eusebius and Pamphilius have brought to wide reception – and the whole world competes among itself with this threefold variety.»

From this statement about three textual forms, Paul Anton de Lagarde developed his program for an eclectic edition of the oldest text of the Septuagint. He intended to proceed in two stages: First, he wanted to reconstruct the three recensions, and from there he wanted to go on to reconstruct the Old Greek.<sup>5</sup> However, this is a later statement of intent. Originally, Lagarde had been skeptical about Jerome's *trifaria varietas*; it was under the influence of (the introduction in) Frederick Field's *Hexaplorum Fragmenta*<sup>6</sup> that he developed this new approach.<sup>7</sup>

Before going on, we should say a word about the term *recension*. In recent decades, especially in the English-speaking realm of Septuagint research, there has been some discussion about the terms revision and recension. According to recent opinion, the revision of a text just here and there is not yet a recension; rather, a recension is now defined as a strong and coherent reworking of a text in all its parts. This understanding of recension is different both from the understanding of the term in the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>8</sup> and from its use in Ancient Phi-

<sup>4</sup> Jerome, »Preface to Chronicles«: 546 f.

<sup>5</sup> »Es ist Jahre hindurch meine Absicht gewesen, die drei durch Hieronymus uns bezeugten amtlichen Recensionen der Septuaginta herzustellen, sie in Parallel-Columnen drucken zu heißen, und aus der Vergleichung dieser drei Texte Weiteres zu erschließen«. Paul Anton de Lagarde, *Septuagintastudien I*, AGWG.PH 37.1 (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1891), 3; opening sentence of the *Studien*.

<sup>6</sup> Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum fragmenta quae supersunt* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875).

<sup>7</sup> For this development see: Bernhard Neuschäfer, »Alteri saeculo. Paul Anton de Lagardes ›Lebensarbeit‹«, in *Die Göttinger Septuaginta. Ein editorisches Jahrhundertprojekt*, ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Bernhard Neuschäfer, MSU 30 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013): 235–264, 258 f. n. 91.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the use of »recension« in Baethgen's study on the Psalms (n. 13), where the original text form of the Psalms is also called a recension.

lology up to the present. There, the term recension/Rezenion simply designates a certain text form among other text forms, without defining whether, or how much, a specific text form has been reworked or how it may differ from the original text. In this sense, recension is, so to speak, a neutral term. And Jerome's statement about the *trifaria varietas* could be understood in this more or less neutral sense. That the text was systematically reworked was explicitly known only for the hexaplaric text as revised by Origen.

One should also notice that Lagarde's statement was, so to speak, neutral and different from how it was understood later on: the three text forms should be printed in parallel columns, and from there forward one should proceed by text-critical deliberations. This is different from the basic assumption that the Lucianic text is always the most recent, the result of a late Lucianic redaction. However, this assumption already prevailed in Field's influential study on the Hexaplaric fragments, and it was held by the authors Field referred to.

The influence of Field's *Fragmenta* and the relevant passages warrant a separate investigation. At this point, there is only space for a brief outline. First, it is surprising that in his work on the Hexapla Field devotes so much space to Lucian (whose *floruit* is decades later than Origen's). Field justifies this on the ground that Lucianic readings (may) have been included in the Syrohexapla, which in turn is an important witness to Hexaplaric readings (lxxxiv = 157).<sup>9</sup> But contrary to Joseph White (and others) he also notes the problem of interpreting the Syriac signs *Lam* or *Lomad* and the combination *Lamda/Omikron* (λ) in the manuscripts (it may also indicate ὁ λουτοί). Field himself found it the first time in Codex Parisiensis at 4 Kgdms 9:9,28; 10:24,25; 11:1; 23:33,35 (lxxxv = 157 f.). In his ch. 9, »The edition of Lucian« (lxxxivxciv = 157–173), Field refers to different problems and to several earlier authors who evidently also understood the Lucianic text as a revision, although to a different extent and with different characteristics. Field also takes up Antonio Ceriani's identification of mss. 19, 82, 93, 108 and 245 as Lucianic, not least because their text and also their division of the book »agree with Diodorus and Theodoret, who begin the third book [of kingdoms] from Chapter 2:12« (lxxxviii = 162). Field also already concedes that »for the Octateuch, the question of the recension of Lucian is a little more obscure. This is because the codices which refer to it (which are, it seems, 19, 108, 118) are not distinguished so evidently from the others as in the historical and prophetic texts. Also, the texts from Chrysostom and Theodoret summoned as evidence for it are not enough to decide the matter at issue« (lxxxix = 164). For the historical books Field gives a list of 29 expressions that are different in Lucian (xc = 167; a list that is close to what Barthélemy later presented in his *Devanciers*<sup>10</sup> for the differences between the Lucianic/Antiochen/Old Greek text and the *kaige* recension). Field also makes a synoptic comparison of the Lucianic text and another text, simply named

<sup>9</sup> Roman numerals refer to Field's introduction, Arabic numerals to Gérard J. Norton and Carmen Hardin, *Frederick Field's Prolegomena, translated and annotated*, CRB 41 (Paris: Gabalda, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> Dominique Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers d'Aquila. Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du Dodecapropheton trouvés dans le désert de Juda, précédée d'une étude sur les traductions et recensions grecques de la Bible réalisées au 1 siècle de notre ère sous l'influence du rabbinat Palestinien*, VTS 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

»the Septuagintal text« (evidently HomesParsons, i. e. more or less Codex Vaticanus) of 2 Kgdms 22:212. As Alfred Rahlfs later did in his research on Kings,<sup>11</sup> Field assumes that the Lucianic text is the later one and that the differences demonstrate Lucian's revision of the older text. »But in order that the character of the edition of Lucian might be more evident, we will set out a comparison between it and the Septuagintal text for a fairly long section 2 Kgdms 22:2–12« (xc-xci = 167–169). Field also quotes Jerome's two statements about Lucian, i. e. the letter to Sunnia and Fretela and the preface to Chronicles (the latter erroneously said to come from the *Apology against Rufinus*), side by side without noticing the differences between them and without seeing that in the letter to Sunnia and Fretela Jerome speaks about the common text that is *now* called Lucianic (lxxxvi = 160). Field's view is determined by the statement about the *trifaria varietas*, as was evidently already common in his time, and by the assumption that Codex Vaticanus and its editions represent the oldest text while the Lucianic text is late. This may also explain the fact that in his apparatus he often refers to »Hesych«, i. e. a Hesychian reading, but in his introduction he does not treat the possibility of a Hesychian recension at all, but just casually mentions it (lvi = 107 and xcvi = 177).

The unchallenged assumption that the text of Codex Vaticanus (and its editions) was older and that the Lucianic text was the later revision was taken up and reinforced by Alfred Rahlfs' research on the Psalms from 1905 and on the Lucianic text of Kings, published in 1911.<sup>12</sup> In his study on the Psalms, Rahlfs at first also considered a different model, discussing what he called the bi-polar model of Friedrich Baethgen's study on the psalms. Baethgen had concluded that the widely used text of the psalms is the older one and that the text closer to the Hebrew, i. e. especially the text as found in Codex Vaticanus, is the later, revised text.<sup>13</sup> Rahlfs basically kept the bi-polar model; however, he could not imagine that »such an early revision« (i. e. before Origen) could have taken place. So his solution was that the texts close to the Hebrew, and especially Codex Vaticanus, represented the older text and that the »widely received text« – including the Lucianic text – was a later revision.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Alfred Rahlfs, *Lucians Rezension der Königsbücher. Septuagintastudien III.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911, repr. 1965).

<sup>12</sup> Alfred Rahlfs, *Der Text des Septuaginta-Psalters. Septuaginta-Studien II.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907, repr. 1965); Rahlfs, *Lucians Rezension der Königsbücher.*

<sup>13</sup> Friedrich Baethgen, »Der textkritische Werth der alten Uebersetzungen zu den Psalmen,« *JPTH* 8 (1882): 405–459; 593–667. In his argumentation Baethgen basically came close to Lagarde's so called axioms (Paul Anton de Lagarde, *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien* [Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1863], 3) that the readings that differ from the Masoretic text are the older ones and that the readings closer to MT represent secondary adaptations. Baethgen distinguished two main traditions, the original (and freer) translation (his recension O<sup>1</sup>) and the Hebraized text-form of the group around Codex Vaticanus (his recension O).

<sup>14</sup> Rahlfs, *Der Text des Septuaginta-Psalters*, 231, cf. Alfred Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931), 71f.

Especially in his investigation on Kings Rahlfs wanted to evaluate the Lucianic text. It was taken for granted that the Lucianic text as it is known was the product of Lucian the martyr who had died in 312 CE. Therefore, everything that was different from the other texts, esp. from Codex Vaticanus, was secondary and the result of Lucian's reworking of the text. As is well known, Rahlfs identified certain specifics of this recension, like adding the article and explanatory words, i. e. words identifying the person speaking or acting, or linguistic changes towards Attic Greek. However, many times Lucian also did the opposite, like deleting an article or an explanatory word or even an Atticism. Rahlfs' explanation for this problem was that Lucian worked irregularly and even in contradictory ways. Rahlfs went so far as to declare this irregularity the main trait of Lucian's work.<sup>15</sup>

Rahlfs also tackled the so called *proto-Lucianic problem*, i. e. the observation that many Lucianic readings can already be found in texts dating from long before Lucian, as in the writings of Josephus or in the New Testament quotations or in the Old Latin translation. Rahlfs practically eliminated these disturbing observations by explaining the agreements as result of later cross influences. The Lucianic text would have influenced the later transmission of the text of Josephus and the Old Latin on the one hand, and the New Testament quotations would have influenced the Lucianic manuscripts on the other.

This solution and the basic notion of the Lucianic text lasted for a long time. It was taken up by many authors and heavily influenced text critical decisions. It truly became an assumption and conviction of »*longue durée*«. Even after the discovery of the Qumran texts, the basic ideas have been maintained, although there could not have been a cross influence between the Qumran biblical texts in their caves and the Lucianic manuscripts.

Many scholars identified a large portion of proto-lucianic material. This de facto reduced the extent of the Lucianic redaction formerly assumed. But even if the results of textual analysis greatly reduce what is left of the Lucianic recension, the basic idea is still maintained as an undisputed assumption. To give just one example: in an instruction for making a text critical edition one can read (I translate): At first, one knows little about the manuscripts and their characteristics. »Only the existence of the two great Christian recensions, that of Origen and that of Lucian, may be assumed from the outset – at least for most books. For them, their recensional characteristics are for the most part clear.«<sup>16</sup>

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**15** »Denn der Hauptcharakterzug dieser Rezension ist das Fehlen eines klaren Prinzips.« Rahlfs, *Lucians Rezension der Königsbücher*, 293.

**16** »Lediglich von dem Vorkommen der zwei großen christlichen Rezensionen des Origenes und Lukian kann von vornherein – oder wenigstens in den meisten Büchern – ausgegangen werden.

However, things had changed with Barthélemy's *Les devanciers d'Aquila* from 1963 where he identified the *kaige*-recension and at the same time denied the existence of a Lucianic recension. In his study, Barthélemy not only identified the *kaige*-recension but also inquired about the older base text of the *kaige*-recension and whether this text still can be found. He identified the Lucianic text as the base text of the *kaige*-recension. Because of this relationship, it was clear that the Lucianic or, as Barthélemy called it more neutrally, the Antiochene text was older and close to the Old Greek.<sup>17</sup> In fact, Barthélemy explicitly talked about »the false assumption of a Lucianic redaction«<sup>18</sup> and considered the Lucianic text as more or less the Old Greek although with corruptions (»*la vielle Septante plus ou moins abâtardie et corrompue*«).<sup>19</sup>

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Für sie stehen die Rezensionsmerkmale außerdem weitestgehend fest.« Udo Quast, »Einführung in die Editionsarbeit,« in *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen*, ed. Anneli Aejmelaeus and Udo Quast, MSU 24 = AAWG.PH 3,230 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000): 387–399; 384 f.

17 Barthélemy, *Devanciers*. Barthélemy's reasoning becomes very clear by the headings of the relevant chapters: »Identité de base entre la forme antiochienne et la forme palestinienne du texte grec« (»Basic identity of the Antiochian and the Palestinian forms of the Greek text«) »La forme antiochienne ne peut être issue de la forme palestinienne par abâtardissement« (»The Antiochian form cannot have derived from the Palestinian form by deterioration«) »La prétendue ›recension lucianique‹« (The alleged ›Lucianic recension‹) and finally his conclusion: The Lucianic text, »... c'est la vielle septante, plus ou moins abâtardie et corrompue« (»... it is the old Septuagint more or less deteriorated or corrupted«, 127).

In the light of some criticism, Barthélemy later on conceded that there may have been some recensional activity also in the Lucianic/Antiochene text, and he spoke about »une recension grecisante assez étendue subie par le texte de  $\text{boc}_e$ «; Dominique Barthélemy, »Les problèmes textuels de 2 Sam 11,21 Rois 2,11 reconsidérés à la lumière de certaines critiques des ›Devanciers d'Aquila‹« = »A Reexamination of the Textual Problems in 2 Sam 11:2–1 Kings 2:11 in the Light of Certain Criticisms of *Les Devanciers d'Aquila*«,« in *1972 Proceedings*, ed. Robert A. Kraft, SCS 2 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1972): 16–88 (French) = 17–89 (English), 28; reprinted in: id., *Études d'histoire du text de l'Ancien Testament*, OBO 21 (Fribourg: Éditions universitaires/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978): 218–288. However, Barthélemy did not return to the hypothesis of a Lucianic redaction.

18 »La prétendue ›recension lucianique‹; Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, 126.

19 Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, 127: »Mais ne considérons pas ce ›texte antiochien‹ comme le fruit d'une recension autonome ou, pour employer le langage ancien, comme constituant une ›édition‹ spéciale. C'est essentiellement la Septante ancienne, plus ou moins abâtardie et corrompue.« – »But we should not consider this ›Antiochian text‹ as the fruit of an autonomous recension or, to use the old language, as constituting a special ›edition‹. It is in essence the old Septuagint, more or less debased or corrupted.«

I don't want to pursue this subject further here, as I have written on it several times.<sup>20</sup> For now it is enough to state that the idea of the Lucianic redaction is an assumption of *longue durée* that is maintained and that shapes research in spite of much contradictory evidence. Jerome's statement together with its modern interpretation evidently is still going strong.

Interestingly, another part of Jerome's statement had a quite different fate. This is the part on the Hesychian text. In the footsteps of Lagarde, the attempt was made to identify this recension (in the older sense of the word as a text form). However, the Hesychian text became more and more elusive. The problem begins with the identification of Hesychius. There are several persons known by the name Hesychius, but it is not possible to identify one of them as an authority dealing especially with the Septuagint or responsible for its revision.<sup>21</sup> There is also the problem of identifying manuscripts that might represent the Hesychian text. Interestingly, it was already Rahlfs who gave up the idea of a Hesychian recension. In his 1926 edition of Genesis he reported that no convincing evidence had been found for a Hesychian recension, and that therefore one must abandon

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**20** An important methodological point in research is to analyze coherent texts, because selected single cases can often be interpreted in the one or the other direction. Certainly, each and every case has to be evaluated in its own right. However, many times the »single cases« are argued with general presuppositions, which only tend to confirm them.

For several such analyses of longer units see Siegfried Kreuzer, »Translation and Recensions: Old Greek, Kaige, and Antiochene Text in Samuel and Reigns,« *BIOSCS* 42 (2009): 3451; id., »Lukian redivivus« or Barthélemy and beyond?,« in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010*, ed. Melvin Peters, *SCS* 59 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2013): 243–261; id., »Textformen und Bearbeitungen. Kriterien zur Frage der ältesten Textgestalt, insbesondere des Septuagintatextes, anhand von 2 Samuel 12,« in *Archaeology of the Books of Samuel. The Entangling of the Textual and Literary History*, ed. Philippe Hugo and Adrian Schenker, *VTS* 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 91–115; id., »B or not B? The Place of Codex Vaticanus in textual history and in Septuagint research,« in *Text-critical and Hermeneutical Studies in the Septuagint*, ed. Johann Cook and Hermann-Josef Stipp, *VTS* 154 (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 69–96; id., »Der Antiochenische Text der Septuaginta. Forschungsgeschichte und eine neue Perspektive,« in *Der Antiochenische Text der Septuaginta in seiner Bezeugung und seiner Bedeutung*, ed. id. and Marcus Sigismund, *DSI* 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013): 23–56. See now also: Siegfried Kreuzer, *The Bible in Greek. Translation, Transmission, and Theology of the Septuagint*, *SBL.SCS* 63 (Atlanta GA: SBL-Press, 2015).

See also the investigations in: Jong Hoon Kim, *Die hebräischen und griechischen Textformen der Samuel- und Königebücher. Studien zur Textgeschichte ausgehend von 2Sam 15,119,9*, *BZAW* 394 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009); and: Marcus Sigismund, »Zwischen Kreti und Plethi. Textkritische Erwägungen zu den griechischen Versionen von 2Sam 20,23–26 und Rekonstruktion der ›Old Greek,« in *Von der Septuaginta zum Neuen Testament: Textgeschichtliche Erörterungen*, ed. Martin Karrer, Siegfried Kreuzer and Marcus Sigismund, *ANTF* 43 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010): 51–74.

**21** See the discussion in Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, 240.

the idea of structuring the material according to the three famous recensions.<sup>22</sup> In his edition of Psalms Rahlfs speaks about Egyptian texts and Egyptian text forms only. This has been confirmed by others and is now widely accepted, as one can read, e. g., in the well-known introduction to the Septuagint by Fernández Marcos.<sup>23</sup>

To sum up: Jerome's statement about the *trifaria varietas* – understood according to the modern interpretation that originated with Field and Lagarde and underwent further refinement by Rahlfs and many others – has become a statement with far-reaching influence on Septuagint research. The name »Lucianic« is understood not only to ascribe the text used from Antioch to Constantinople to a famous person, but to credit this Lucian (or some contemporary around 300 CE) with a heavy redaction of the text – although with the somewhat strange assumption that the main trait of this heavy redaction was its irregular character. Interestingly, Jerome's statement had a mixed fate: search for the Hesychian text form was abandoned, while the idea of not only a Lucianic text but of a heavy Lucianic recension of the Septuagint text grew quite strong and was maintained even in spite of evidence to the contrary.

One reason for this difference certainly is the fact that there are a few manuscripts that show a sign (»L« = Lomad), most probably identifying them as the Lucianic text.<sup>24</sup> Today, the main argument for identifying a text as Lucianic or Antiochene is the agreement with Syrian/Antiochian church fathers, especially the writings of Theodoret from Cyrhus.<sup>25</sup> However, this only identifies a text form

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22 »I certainly am not unaware that what I offer here follows even less than in the book of Ruth the ideal of Lagarde to construct an edition according to the famous recensions of Origen, Lucian and Hesychius. But if we wish to advance, we don't have to follow preconceived ideas but the material given to us.« »Daß das, was ich hier biete, noch viel weniger als das im Buch Ruth Gebotene dem Lagardeschen Ideal eines Aufbaues nach den berühmten Rezensionen des Origenes, Lukan und Hesych entspricht, verkenne ich keineswegs. Aber wenn wir vorwärtskommen wollen, müssen wir uns nicht von vorgefaßten Theorien, sondern lediglich von dem gegebenen Material leiten lassen.« Alfred Rahlfs, *Genesis, Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum I* (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1926): Introduction.

23 See the discussion in Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, 239–246; Fernández Marcos himself tries to maintain the term, although for him also it is only the designation of a specific Egyptian text-form. Interestingly, this ascription seems to be experiencing a renaissance.

24 For the difficulty of this question (esp. the differentiation from οἱ λοποῖ) see Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, 225–227, and already Field, *Fragmenta* (cf. above, n. 9).

25 See e. g. the important role of Theodoret's text in the edition of the Antiochene/Lucianic text of Samuel/Kings/Chronicles: Natalio Fernández Marcos and José Ramon Busto Saiz, *El texto antioqueno de la Biblia griega, I, 12 Samuel; II, 12 Reyes; III, 12 Crónicas*, TECC 50, 53, 60 (Madrid: CSIC, 1989, 1992, 1996).

as it was used in a specific region. The geographical identification does not yet say anything about the age, the origin, and the history of the text type.

### 3 Jerome's statement in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela.

In his letter to Sunnia and Fretela, Jerome said something quite different. Its text reads as follows:

«... *illud breviter admoneo, ut sciatis aliam esse editionem, quam Origenes et Caesariensis Eusebius omnesque Graeciae tractatores κοινήν, id est communem, appellant atque vulgatam et a plerisque nunc λουκιάνειος dicitur, aliam LXX interpretum, quae et in ἑξαττολοῖς codicibus invenitur et a nobis in Latinum sermonem fideliter versa est et Hierosolymae atque in orientis ecclesiis decantatur.*» (Letter 106, § 2, 2)<sup>26</sup>

... This I mention so that you will know that there are different editions, the edition which Origen and Eusebius from Caesarea and all the other writers call the *koiné*, that is the common one, and which by most is now called the *Lucianic*; and the Septuagint which is also found in the Hexaplaric codices, and which by us has been faithfully translated into Latin and which is recited (lit.: sung) in Jerusalem and in the churches of the East.

The interesting difference between the two statements is that in this one he equates the Lucianic text with the common Septuagint text and differentiates it from a second text form, also found in the Hexaplaric codices, which he claims to be the true, or at least the best, Greek text. Jerome is not looking for the oldest text, as we are, but for the best text; and the best text for him is the text closest to the Hebrew text, or, as he would say it: closest to the *veritas hebraica*, which in Jerome's time already practically is the *veritas masoretica*.

The important point is that besides his preferred text, Jerome mentions one text form only, one that is widely used and therefore called the *koine* or the common text. The surprising – and, to my knowledge, up to now also neglected – point is

<sup>26</sup> Heinrich Dörrie, »Zur Geschichte der Septuaginta im Jahrhundert Konstantins,« *ZNW* 28 (1939): 57–110: 63 n. 18; see also the quotation in Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, 224 n. 7). The questions refer to the so called Psalterium Gallicanum from ca. 384, but the letter probably was written after 400. See also: Berthold Altaner, »Wann schrieb Hieronymus seine Ep. 106 ad Sunniam et Fretelam de Psalterio?,« *VChr* 4 (1950): 246–248. Eva Schulz-Flügel, Hieronymus – Septuaginta oder Hebraica Veritas,« in *Die Septuaginta – Text, Wirkung, Rezeption*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and Siegfried Kreuzer with Martin Meiser and Marcus Sigismund, WUNT 325 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014): 746–758: 753, dates the letter between 406 and 410.

the remark that he adds to this characteristic: the common Greek text is by most people now (*nunc*) called *loukianeios*.

This means that the Lucianic text is not a special text form but simply the common Septuagint. And, equally important: this text is *now* called Lucianic. Jerome writes around 400 CE. This is almost a century after the assumed floruit of Lucian. The identification of the Lucianic text as the common Greek text to my mind excludes the idea that it is the result of an extensive Lucianic reworking. On the other hand, the expression *nunc dicitur loukianeios* presents this ascription as a rather recent usage.

For understanding and explaining this designation as Lucianic, one has to look at the history of Lucian and especially the history of his veneration as a martyr:<sup>27</sup> In his lifetime, Lucian was famous as a biblical scholar, but he also was at times disputed for dogmatic reasons. In 312 he died in the Diocletianic persecution in Nikomedia, Asia Minor. His corpse was thrown into a nearby lake and a few days later found on the other side of the lake near Drepanon. There a church was built for him. This church became an important destination for pilgrimages. As it happens, Drepanon was also the hometown of the family of Helena, the famous mother of Constantine. Drepanon was renamed Helenopolis. With the martyr Lucian, Helenopolis became an important pilgrimage center, and at the same time it was supported by the family of the now-Christian emperor. In the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Lucian became famous; he was venerated in most of the Eastern Church and associated with the emperor's family. Evidently, in this context, the common text form of the Septuagint became connected with Lucian. As Jerome said: *nunc loukianeios dicitur*.

What may have been the reason for the ascription of the common Septuagint to the now famous martyr? Most probably the discussion about the text forms. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> century onward there had been an awareness of the differences between the Septuagint and the now relevant (proto-masoretic) Hebrew text. Origen had started to accommodate the Septuagint to this Hebrew text, or, as Jerome would call it later on, to the *hebraica veritas*. This tendency was on-going through the following generations. As we can see from his statements in the letters to Sunnia and Fretela and to pope Damasus (see above) about how he did his work of revising the Latin translation, Jerome was an eminent and strong advocate of this tendency, and most probably not the only one.

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Hanns Christof Brennecke, »Lucian von Antiochien (*Martyrium* 71.312),« *TRE* 21 (1991 = 2000): 474–479.

To my mind, the connection of the old Septuagint with the famous martyr and saint Lucian, who was even venerated by the emperor, was an attempt to protect the old Septuagint against criticism and against such Hebraizing claims as are epitomized for us in the work of Origin and Jerome.

In other words, the ascription of the old and common Septuagint text to Lucian had a similar intention of protecting a specific text form as the letter of Aristeas, which connects the translators and the texts with Jerusalem and narrates the acceptance of the translation by the Jewish community and the king. Or, to make a comparison with the Jewish realm of rabbinic times, the ascription to Lucian is similar to the attribution of old traditions to the authority of one or the other famous rabbi.

The situation in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century explains why, according to Jerome, the old and common Septuagint *now*, i. e. in Jerome's time, came to be called Lucianic by most people: *a plerisque nunc loukianeios dicitur*. However, Jerome does not talk about and does not presuppose a Lucianic recension. On the contrary: He only talks about a recent ascription of the old text to a famous authority.

#### 4 The relation of Jerome's statements to Modern Septuagint Research

How does this relate to modern Septuagint research? To give only a short outline, one may say that thanks to the biblical texts from Qumran Septuagint scholarship has moved back from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries CE to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BCE. It has become clear that there was the Old Greek translation, mainly from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BCE, and that there was a Hebraizing revision underway already in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. This has been made most clear by Dominique Barthélemy's *Les devanciers d'Aquila* (1963)<sup>28</sup> and his discovery of the *kaige*-recension. By analyzing the Greek Dodekapropheton scroll from Naḥal Ḥever, Barthélemy identified the so called *kaige*-recension. This was a mainly isomorphic revision of the Old Greek towards the new authoritative (proto-masoretic) Hebrew text. While Barthélemy related some of its phenomena (especially the use of *kaige* that has given its name to the revision) to Jewish exegesis of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE (and especially to Jonathan ben 'Uzziel, thereby placing it in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE), the scroll is now dated on paleographical grounds to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. This means that

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. above, n. 10.

the revision began in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. Barthélemy extended his research to the historical and other books, where he also identified this recensional activity.

As the title of Barthélemy's book indicates, the tendency of the *kaige*-recension was continued and brought to an extreme by the translation of Aquila. But this was not the only line of development. Besides the *kaige*-recension, there were also milder types of Hebraizing reworking. This can be seen in the so called non-*kaige*-sections of the historical books (i. e. the so called  $\alpha$  [= 1Sam];  $\beta\beta$  [= 2Sam 1–10:1];  $\gamma$  [= 1Kgdms 2:12–21:43] sections of 1 and 2 Samuel as identified by Henry St. J. Thackeray).

This can also be seen in other parts of the Old Testament. Eugene Ulrich has surmised that the Greek biblical texts of the Pentateuch from Qumran indicate that what we call the main text has undergone a Hebraizing revision.<sup>29</sup> Recently Innocent Himbaza has demonstrated this for Leviticus.<sup>30</sup> This can also be shown for Psalms. There we also find both freer readings and variants that are adapted to the Masoretic text, especially in word order. Interestingly, the recently published P.Oxy. 5101, which is now the oldest Greek text of Psalms (most probably to be dated around 100 or the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE), also shows such Hebraizing revisions.<sup>31</sup>

In short, there were basically two phases of the Septuagint: the Old Greek translation and the Hebraizing revisions, starting in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE and going on in different ways and with different degrees of intensity up to the time of Aquila, on the one hand, and of Origen, on the other. In spite of many other discussions and not least in spite of the discussion about a Lucianic redaction, these two early stages of the Septuagint are more or less universally accepted in Septuagint research today. This can be seen by the fact that Old Greek and *kaige* (or *kaige*-Theodotion) are accepted in practically all the text books on the Septuagint, e. g. by Natalio Fernández Marcos, by Folker Siegert, and also in the recent textual history of the Bible by Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Eugene Ulrich, »The Greek Manuscripts of the Pentateuch from Qumran, Including Newly-Identified Fragments of Deuteronomy (4QLXXDeut),« in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on his Sixty-Fifth birthday*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Claude E. Cox (Mississauga, Ontario: Benben Publications, 1984): 71–82.

<sup>30</sup> Innocent Himbaza, »What are the consequences if 4QLXXLev<sup>a</sup> contains the earliest formulation of the Septuagint?,« in *Die Septuaginta – Orte und Intentionen*, ed. Siegfried Kreuzer, Martin Meiser and Marcus Sigismund, WUNT 361 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2016): 294–308.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Jannes Smith, »The Text-Critical Significance of Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 5101 (Ra 2227) for the Old Greek Psalter,« *JSCS* 45 (2012): 522.

<sup>32</sup> Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, ch. 5, 6, and 9. Folker Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament. Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta* (Münster: LIT, 2001),

The modern picture of two phases of the Septuagint, the Old Greek on the one hand and the Hebraizing revisions (from *kaige*, semi-*kaige* or whatever one may call it, down to Origen) on the other hand, can easily be related to Jerome's statement in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela. Jerome also speaks about two large strands and forms of Septuagint text: the old, common Septuagint, according to Jerome »now« (i. e. most probably in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century) called Lucianic by many (»κοινήν, *id est communem, appellant atque vulgatam et a plerisque nunc λουκιάνειος dicitur*«), and the revised, Hebraizing text, taken by Jerome together with the hexaplaric codices (»*et in ἑξαπτοῖς codicibus invenitur*«).

The ascription of the old Septuagint to the authority of Lucian, the famous martyr, was made in order to lend Lucian's authority to the Old Septuagint against new Hebraizing editions. This ascription has left its traces in some manuscripts where the famous Lomad (»L«) identifies them as Lucianic. In this sense, there are Lucianic manuscripts and there is a Lucianic text, but there was no Lucianic recension. The idea of a Lucianic recension is a modern idea of *long durée* that in view of the Qumran biblical texts should be abandoned.

But what about the *trifaria varietas* in Jerome's statement in the preface to Chronicles? This statement also can be explained in relation to the two basic stages of the development and the transmission of the Septuagint. The first stage was the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, i. e. the Old Greek translation, starting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and going on through the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE. The second stage was a Hebraizing revision for many of the books of the Septuagint, beginning in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE – not always as strict as the *kaige* recension, but noticeable in many, if not most, books with a Hebrew original.

Putting this in a chronological and a geographical framework, one can say that the Septuagint spread out in two waves. The first wave was the dissemination and reception of the original Septuagint among the Jewish communities in the Eastern Mediterranean realm.

The second phase and the second wave was the circulation of the revised texts, probably this time not (mainly) from Egypt but (mainly) from Palestine. This second wave overlapped the older Septuagint, and the revised text became the dominant tradition. But this happened only gradually. The fringes were reached later on or not at all. Therefore we find the older text in the north, i. e. in

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»2.6: Jüdische Rezensionen; kaige-Theodotion«; Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov, *Textual History of the Bible*, Vol. 1A (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 1.3.1.1; see also Siegfried Kreuzer, »Entstehung und Überlieferung der Septuaginta,« in *Einleitung in die Septuaginta*, ed. Siegfried Kreuzer, LXX.H1 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2016): 29–88.

Antioch, in Syria, and in Asia Minor; we find it in the west, reflected in the Old Latin translation; and we find it in the south, in Upper Egypt, reflected in local Greek manuscripts and in the Sahidic translation.

This situation is what Jerome has before his eyes in his statement in the preface of Chronicles. He knows that there are different textual traditions in the North, i. e. Antioch and northern Syria, in the center, i. e. Palestine, and in the south, i. e. Egypt. Jerome knows about the differences between the textual traditions, but he does not know the historical background for what he considers a threefold variety of the Septuagint.

The other thing he knows, is that the different textual forms have been related to famous men, to Hesychius in Egypt, to Origen in Palestine, and to Lucian in Antioch and Syria. What he really knew – and preferred – was the text closest to the Hebrew as he found it especially in Origen's Hexaplaric text, because it was nearest to what he called the *hebraica veritas*. This text was different from the Syrian/Antiochian text on the one hand and from the Egyptian text on the other hand. How much these texts differed from each other is not known, and it was not relevant to Jerome.

We do not know what and how much Jerome really knew about the situation and about the different texts. On the one hand, Jerome certainly knew more than we know; on the other hand, he certainly knew less than we know through all the manuscripts, the daughter translations and not least because of the texts from the Judaean desert.

We also have to keep in mind that in all his statements on the Greek texts, Jerome primarily wanted to justify his use of the Hebrew and of the Greek texts closest to Hebrew. This is most clear in his (early) letter to pope Damasus and in his (later) letter to Sunnia and Fretela. But also in his preface to Chronicles, Jerome justified his undertaking, i. e. basing his Latin text on the Hebrew, this time by emphasizing the diversity of the Greek tradition.

By describing the situation, Jerome informs us that in his time the different textual forms have been associated with famous men: Hesychius in Egypt, Origen in Palestine, and Lucian in Antioch and Syria. The ascription to Origen is clear, and the ascription to Lucian is understandable from the martyriological situation in the later 4<sup>th</sup> century. But about Hesych we do not really know (maybe it came about as an Egyptian analogy, defending the local text traditions).

## 5 Conclusion

We may follow Jerome's lead and call the Antiochene text Lucianic and the Egyptian text Hesychian, but we should not turn this ascription into a Hesychian or a Lucianic redaction.<sup>33</sup> The true reasons for what Jerome described in the preface of Chronicles as *trifaria varietas* are much older. It was the two phases of Old Greek and the later Hebraizing revisions, and the gradual spreading out of those two text forms that led to different text forms in Syria, Egypt, and Palestine.

And in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela Jerome explained that the common Septuagint – different from the Hebraized texts in the hexaplaric codices – now, i. e. in his time and only recently, was called Lucianic: »... *quam ... κοινήν ... appellant atque vulgatam et a plerisque nunc λουκιάνειος dicitur.*« In other words: »Lucianic« is only a new name for the Old Greek.<sup>34</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper recalls the fact that there is not only Jerome's famous statement about the *trifaria varietas* of the Greek biblical text in the preface to Chronicles, but also a quite different statement in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela, where he talks about only two text forms: the old, widely circulated Septuagint text, now called »Lucianic«, and the Hebraizing text, which is also found in the Hexaplaric codices. The paper analyses the background of Jerome's two different statements and relates them to modern insights of Septuagint research.

**Zusammenfassung:** Der Beitrag erinnert daran, dass es neben der berühmten Bemerkung des Hieronymus über die *trifaria varietas* des griechischen Bibeltextes in seiner Vorrede zur Chronik eine andere Aussage in seinem Brief an Sunnia und Fretela gibt, wo er nur von zwei Textformen spricht, nämlich dem alten, allgemein verbreiteten Septuagintatext, der jetzt von den meisten als lukianisch bezeichnet wird, und dem hebraisierten Text, wie er auch in den hexaplarischen Kodizes zu finden ist. Der Beitrag untersucht den Hintergrund der beiden Statements und setzt sie in Beziehung zu neueren Erkenntnissen der Septuagintaforschung.

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<sup>33</sup> For comparison one may also look at how careful Origen went about his »revision«: He did not delete the assumed plusses, but he put them in »brackets«, and he did not translate himself but quoted from existing translations. Would there really have been the freedom to make such far-reaching changes as are traditionally assumed for the Lucianic recension?

<sup>34</sup> As we have the old text only through later manuscripts, one may add with Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, 127: »although with corruptions«, but this does not alter the basic situation.

**Résumé:** Cet article rappelle le fait que la fameuse affirmation de Jérôme au sujet du *trifaria varietas* du texte grec dans sa préface du livre des Chroniques, est contredite par sa lettre à Sunnia et Fretela dans laquelle il ne retient que deux formes textuelles : l'ancienne, le texte de la Septante, largement répandue et maintenant souvent appelée »lucianien«, et un texte hébraïsant, que l'on trouve également dans les codex hexapliques. Cet article analyse le contexte des deux affirmations divergentes de Jérôme et les relie aux connaissances modernes des études de la Septante.