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Ph. Guillaume, “New Light on the Nebiim from Alexandria: A Chronography to Replace the Deuteronomistic History.”

New Light on the Nebiim from Alexandria:

A Chronography to Replace the Deuteronomistic History

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1. Introduction

The gradual demise of the traditional date for the formation of the Deuteronomistic History (ca. 562 BCE) leads to ask afresh the question of the origin of the chronological arrangement of the Biblical books from Joshua to Kings¹. The Copenhagen school is pressing the case for a Hellenistic origin of most of the Bible² and for the recognition of the influence of Greek historiography on the Biblical presentation of Israel's past³. Niels Peter Lemche considers that 'From a chronological point of view, it is likely that the Septuagintal order of books should be considered older than the one found in the Hebrew Bible'. He adds that the 'original order in both Greek and Hebrew traditions was the Law followed by the Prophets, while they differed when it came to the incorporation of other writings'⁴. In fact, the two traditions already differ widely on the Prophets, since the Greek Law is followed by Historical books whose content does not quite match that of the Former Prophets. These differences go beyond a simple matter of title; they reflect different canonization procedures and circumstances.

The books of Joshua to Kings will be designated here as the Biblical Chronography⁵. Their canonization as part of the Prophets is generally dated ca. 200 BCE on the basis of the prologue of Ben Sira⁶, although recent studies consider 150 BCE as the decisive moment in the history of the canonization of the *Nebiim*, thus insisting on the importance of the Hasmonaean factor⁷. These 50 years would be of little account if they did not straddle the upheavals of the Maccabaeen revolt, and thus turn the canonization of the *Nebiim* into either a pre-Maccabaeen process or a Hasmonaean endeavour. Deciding between 200 or 150 BCE has immediate bearings on the understanding of the function and

purpose of the *Nebiim*.

After considering afresh the date of the Wisdom of Ben Sira and its bearing on the formation of the *Nebiim*, the discussion will focus on the precursor of the *Nebiim*, namely the Alexandrian canon. The case for a revised Alexandrian canon hypothesis is put forward to deal with the chicken-and-egg debate over the primacy of Biblical “history” or “prophecy”.

2. Earliest Evidence of the Prophetic Collection

The evidence for the existence of the prophetic collection is too well known to require a detailed account⁸. From the first century CE, the following texts mention the Prophets as a collection of books:

Fourth Ezra 14:44-46 (ca. 90 CE)⁹: 94 books = 24 published + 70 reserved for the wise among the people.

Josephus, *Contra Apionem* I.38-40 (ca. 94 CE): Jews do not possess myriads of contradictory books but only 22 = 5 books of Moses + 13 Prophets + 4 remaining books (hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life).

Philo of Alexandria, *De vita contemplativa* §25: ‘Laws and Oracles given by inspiration through Prophets, and Psalms, and the other books whereby knowledge and piety are increased and completed’.

The Law and the Prophets in the New Testament: Matt 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:16.29; 24:44; John 13:15; 14:14; Acts 13:15; Rom 3:21. Matthew 23:35 // Luke 11:51 are discussed below.

In the second and first centuries BCE four witnesses already concur to establish the presence of a prophetic collection or canon:

In 2 Maccabees 15:9, Judas encourages his men before the battle against Nicanor by reading ‘from the Law and the Prophets’.

The Law and the Prophets are mentioned in several Dead Sea scrolls (1QS 1.3; 1QS8.15-16). The ‘books of the Prophets’ occur in CD 7.17-18.

2 Maccabees 2:13-14 belongs to the second of two letters (2 Macc. 1:1-9 and 1:10—2:18) appended as cover letters to the Epitome of Jason of Cyrene’s lost history. It mentions

books collected by Judas after a recent war and cannot therefore have been written before 164 but was most likely written in 103-102 BCE in connection with a conflict between Cleopatra III and Ptolemy IX¹⁰. These books correspond to the collection established by Nehemiah comprising ‘books about the kings, those about the prophets and the books of David and the letters of the Persian kings on dedicatory gifts to the temple’.

4QMMT, the so-called Halakhic letter is addressed to a national leader in Jerusalem, possibly a Maccabean or Hasmonaean ruler¹¹, which in any case places 4QMMT after 164 BCE. It states: ‘We have written to you so that you may study the book of Moses and the books of the Prophets and David...’¹².

Ben Sira’s grandson translated into Greek his grandfather’s *Wisdom* after 135 BCE. In the prologue, he explains: ‘My grandfather Jesus, who had devoted himself for a long time to the study of the Law, the Prophets, and the other books of our ancestors...’

Some time earlier, Ben Sira himself describes the subjects to be studied by scribes and he seems to refer to a specific prophetic collection: ‘How different it is with the person who devotes himself to reflecting on the Law of the most High: he studies the wisdom of all ancients and he occupies himself with the prophecies; the stories of the famous men he preserves and he penetrates the intricacies of proverbs; he studies the hidden meanings of sayings and he knows his way among riddles of proverbs’ (Ben Sira 39:1-3)¹³. Admittedly, the reference to a separate prophetic collection is far from clear here, as various types of writings are mentioned. However, the so-called Praise of the fathers (Ben Sira 44—49) names in the correct order the title of each book of the *Nebiim*.

Before considering these chapters, it is crucial to check its date since Ben Sira is widely considered as the earliest witness of the prophetic canon.

3. The Date of Ben Sira

The sole chronological anchor to date Ben Sira’s *Wisdom* is provided by the foreword to the Greek translation where Ben Sira’s grandson states that he arrived in Egypt in the 38th year of the reign of King Euergetes. This corresponds to Ptolemy VII Physkon Euergetes II (170–164 and 146–117 BCE) because the other Euergetes (Ptolemy III Euergetes I 246–221 BCE) only reigned 25 years. Euergetes II began his rule in 170 conjointly with his

brother Ptolemy VI (181–146 BCE). Calculating from 170, Ptolemy VII's official accession year, Ben Sira's grandson arrived in Egypt in 132 BCE¹⁴.

Since the grandson made the translation after his arrival in Egypt, Ben Sira wrote the last parts of his *Wisdom*¹⁵ between 322¹⁶ and 130 BCE¹⁷. These extreme points embrace both high priests named Simon, Simon I who officiated during the reign of Ptolemy I in the earliest years of the third century BCE (*Antiquities* 11.8.7 §347; 12.2.5 §43-44) and Simon II a century later (219–196 BCE)¹⁸. This wide bracket is slightly narrowed down to 300–130 BCE to allow time for Simon I to die during the reign of the first Ptolemy because the panegyric for the high priest seems to presuppose the death of Simon: 'Simon the High Priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the House...' (50:1)¹⁹. Ben Sira offers no firm indication for the identification of Simon, although his building activities (Sira 50:1-4) fit the transitional period between Ptolemaic and Seleucid rule (Simon II) better than the little we know about the military activities of Ptolemy I against Jerusalem (Simon I)²⁰. David Williams claims that 175 BCE is more likely than the commonly accepted date of 195 BCE, although the 60 years intergenerational gap he is working with is a very rough estimate²¹ and could be considerably reduced. Differences between the Hebrew and the Greek texts of the prayer at the end of Simon's encomium²² provide additional weight in favour of Williams' proposal. The benediction (50:22-24) may have formed the original end of the whole work²³. In the last verse, the Greek version's rather general blessing 'May he entrust to us his mercy, and may he deliver us in our day' stands for the more specific Hebrew 'May he entrust to Simon his mercy and may he maintain for him Phinehas' covenant which will neither be broken for him or for his offspring as long as will the heavens last'. This verse makes more sense if it has been written while Onias, Simon's son and immediate successor, was facing difficulties but before his situation became hopeless²⁴. Collins cautiously warns that 'we cannot know whether Ben Sira had an inkling of impending problems when he prayed for the preservation of the line'²⁵, but the Hebrew text can hardly refer to a period other than the sojourn of Onias in Antioch (175—172 BCE) or to the ten years leading up to it.

However, such a late date for the Praise at the time of Onias has been rejected because Ben Sira ends his description with Simon and fails to mention Onias. David deSilva claims that 'the lack of any comment on the subversion of the high priesthood by Jason,

the younger son of Simon II... indicates that Ben Sira's work, and probably his life, were finished before those dark times²⁶. I insist that Ben Sira's anxious prayer in the Hebrew text reflects Onias or his brother Jason's perilous position, but certainly one of them was still holding on to Simon's office. Therefore, Ben Sira should have penned the original conclusion of his Wisdom between Jason's deposition of his brother Onias (175 BCE) and Menelaus' deposition of Jason (ca. 172 BCE)²⁷. By mentioning the father only, Ben Sira carefully avoided taking sides in the sons' bitter rivalry.

By the time the grandson arrived in Egypt (132 BCE), Jerusalem had been torn by worse fights, and with hindsight the end of Simon's line only appeared as the first episode of a long and bloody conflict over the control of Jerusalem. The high priesthood was now firmly in the hands of the Hasmonaean rulers. Ben Sira's grandson thus altered the prayer and broadened its application in order to avoid having a 50 chapter-long work centred around God's covenant faithfulness close on a prayer that was not answered. Like unfulfilled prophecies, unanswered prayers are an excellent token of authenticity. Ben Sira supported the Oniad side, the sons of his previous patron, and he had good reasons to fear for Simon's line and for his own future and career.

So, although the last part of Ben Sira is closer to 175 than to 190 BCE, Ben Sira remains the earliest witness of a prophetic collection, at least one decade before the Maccabean insurrection. Now, the location of the author is another important factor to clarify.

4. Ben Sira in Egypt

Are there any clues to locate Ben Sira? Until recently, the following elements were considered as ample proof for the Palestinian origin of both Ben Sira and of his grandson:

- The Wisdom of Ben Sira was known in Palestine: Hebrew manuscripts were found at Qumran, Massada and in the Cairo Geniza (B)²⁸. This does not imply that Ben Sira wrote in Palestine.
- The elaborate description of a liturgy performed at Jerusalem by Simon (Sira 50:5-21) is taken as indicating that Ben Sira personally witnessed Simon's performance. At most, this only implies that Ben Sira happened to be in Jerusalem once.

- In the last chapter, Ben Sira provides an autobiographic note suggesting that he spent at least his youth in Jerusalem: ‘When I was still young, before I went on my travels, I sought wisdom openly in my prayer. Before the temple I asked for her, and I will search for her to the last’ (Sira 51:13-14). However, there were Jewish temples elsewhere, and although the temple of Leontopolis is widely believed to have been founded by Onias IV after 175 BCE in reaction to Jason or Menelaus’ usurpations of the high priesthood, the existence of such a temple could be set back a century earlier²⁹.
- The prayer ‘Have pity on the city of thy sanctuary, Jerusalem, the place of thy rest. Fill Zion with the celebration of thy wondrous deeds, and thy Temple with thy glory,’ (36:13-14) reveals Ben Sira’s particular attachment to Jerusalem. Emotional attachment does not prove continuous residence.
- Finally, Ben Sira’s signature ‘I have written this book, Jesus son of Eleazar son of Sirach of Jerusalem’ (50:27) would establish beyond doubt Ben Sira’s Palestinian origin; but since the words ‘of Jerusalem’ are absent in the Hebrew text doubts remain over both his birthplace and his location when he wrote his *Wisdom*.

Paul McKechnie has therefore put forward a convincing case for a Ben Sira born in Jerusalem but who then travelled widely (Sira 34:9-12; 39:1-11; 51:13) and wrote his treatise in Hebrew, not in Jerusalem but at Alexandria³⁰. This explains why the grandson, who does not indicate where he came from, tells his readers that it is upon arrival in Egypt that he found his grandfather’s book³¹.

Against Elias Bickerman’s view that ‘there are no self-revelations in Ben Sira’³², McKechnie considers the passages where Ben Sira speaks in *propria persona* and the final prayer to insist that the repeated mention of accusations (Sira 12:10-12; 25:7; 27:21-24; 51:6-7) does not merely reflect literary conventions but reveal a real trauma and that Ben Sira actually faced trial following accusations made before the king. The question then is before which king was Ben Sira accused and tried? In the absence of evidence favouring a Seleucid³³ or a Ptolemaic ruler, McKechnie claims that, as a member of the elite at the time of Simon, Ben Sira is likely to have been evacuated from Jerusalem in 200 BCE. In the aftermath of the decisive Seleucid victory at Panion, the Ptolemaic general Scopas returned to Egypt ‘bringing away the upper-class supporters of Ptolemy

with him'³⁴. Ben Sira then served as courtier at Alexandria until allegations were brought against him before Ptolemy IV (Philopator), V (Epiphanes) or VI (Philometor). After having been cleared of the charges yielded against him (Sira 25:7), Ben Sira wrote his *Wisdom* at Alexandria, a location that accounts better than Jerusalem for the advanced level of Hellenization reflected throughout the work³⁵: 'It is really not plausible to suggest that Ben Sira calmly instructed upper-class Jews in the social graces of the symposium in a city [Jerusalem] where a generation later a gymnasium was a major scandal'³⁶. The fact that Pharaoh is never mentioned in the entire work, except for a cryptic allusion in Sira 3:26, is another argument in favour of McKechnie's claim that Ben Sira wrote his *Wisdom* in Egypt.

Some time after his acquittal, after an honourable retirement from royal service, Ben Sira set up a wisdom school and was rich enough to offer courses for free (Sira 51:25). The structure of his *Wisdom* probably presents the substance of his teaching, since the book is organized into eight sections³⁷. The Praise of the fathers comes last, probably at the end of the original second volume³⁸, allowing the dating of its writing to some time between 198 at the very earliest and 150 BCE at the latest³⁹. This fits Williams' date accepted in the previous section (175 BCE).

How does the location of Ben Sira in Alexandria bear on the formation of the prophetic collection? If it has no bearing on the date, it certainly brings Alexandria to the fore as a much more likely locale than Jerusalem for book collection and canon making. The Zion-centeredness that dominates scholarship is blind to the relative insignificance of Jerusalem throughout the Hellenistic period, although its absence is notable from the list of military encounters throughout the wars between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids. Jerusalem never appears as a strategic location, its only importance derives from the deposits held in the temple treasury. And nothing indicates that these deposits were extraordinarily abundant. This is also in line with the overall picture that one can recover from the Ptolemaic rule in Palestine⁴⁰. On the other hand, the importance of Alexandria cannot be overstated, especially when it comes to intellectual endeavours. Alexandria is the world centre for the canonization of ancient literature, for historiography and for philosophy, three domains directly pertaining to Ben Sira and to the formation of the *Nebiim*⁴¹.

5. Ben Sira's Prophets

The first question to be answered is whether or not Ben Sira 44—49 prove the existence of the prophetic collection as claimed among others by Odil Hannes Steck⁴². Although it seems to be the case, Philip Davies claims that Ben Sira does not even 'know the five books that now constitute the Pentateuch in their canonical form'. This radical claim is taken over by John Collins⁴³. David Carr also rejects Steck's conclusion that Ben Sira demonstrates the existence of a literary unit Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve⁴⁴.

On the other hand, Jean-Louis Ska reached the conclusion that although Ben Sira is not interested in books as such, he nevertheless introduces the principle of periodization found in the *Nebiim*⁴⁵. Alon Goshen-Gottstein and Joseph Blenkinsopp agree that Ben Sira undoubtedly reflects a two-part canon⁴⁶ and Lester Grabbe concludes that 'Ben Sira had essentially the present Biblical text of the Pentateuch, Joshua to 2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles and the Prophets in front of him'⁴⁷.

Indeed, the praise does not mention every book of the Torah. Materials in Leviticus and Deuteronomy are not alluded to, and Moses' meekness (Num. 12:3.7) comes in Sira 45:4, before verses 8-12 that describe priestly garments (Exod. 39:1-31). However, on reaching the Prophets, Ben Sira's is much more precise, as if he is carefully making a point: each book is alluded to in almost perfect order⁴⁸ and the transition between Torah and *Nebiim* is well marked by an exhortatory blessing (45:26). The verses dedicated to Joshua (46:1-8, twice as many as for Moses) refer more to the book than to the figure Joshua. Since no text can sustain the presentation of Joshua as Moses' helper (in the Hebrew) or successor (in the Greek) in the prophetic office, this only makes sense if the book of Joshua is meant as the first one of the prophetic collection, following the Mosaic collection.

Then the transition between what we know as the Former and the Latter Prophets is also carefully effected by Sira 48:10: 'At the appointed time, it is written, you are destined to calm the wrath of god before it breaks out in fury...'. This verse has been suspected of being secondary since its apocalyptic connotations seem out of place in the context of the passage⁴⁹. However, this sudden apocalyptic outbreak has a canonical explanation: it combines oracles from Isa. 49:10 and Mal. 3:23-24 and applies them to Elijah in order to

tie up the last book of the Former Prophets (Kings) with the first and the last of the Latter Prophets (Isaiah and Malachi). This *inclusio* suggests that the juxtaposition of the prophetic books and the “historical” ones into one collection is recent and thus it requires comment.

In the Praise, the words ‘prophet’, ‘prophecy’ and ‘to prophesy’ only appear in the section that corresponds to the *Nebiim* (Sira 46:1—49:10)⁵⁰. At this point, I can do no better than quote Goshen-Gottstein:

While the earlier part of the Praise, devoted to the Torah, makes no mention of the individual books of the Torah, the later part of the Praise, that addresses the Prophets, seems to make it a point to relate to all books in the prophetic corpus. This is particularly sticking in view of the fact that concerning some of these books Ben Sira really has nothing to say. Thus, 46:11-12 relates to the Judges, without really saying anything relevant concerning them, except to the fact that they are mentioned and blessed... if the point is to redescribe the prophetic canon, as part of a wider project in which Ben Sira is engaged, then all parts of the canon must be addressed, even where there is little to say concerning the individual works or the figures related to those works.

The cases of the Judges and the twelve Minor Prophets are telling in another way as well. If Ben Sira wanted to make honourable mention of individual heroes in Israel’s history, he should have referred to individual figures by name. What is the point of referring to works by their title? Why not list the prophets and the judges individually? It seems to me the answer lies in the fact that Ben Sira is more interested in describing the canon than he is in describing individual lives⁵¹.

Although the importance of Ben Sira for the formation of the canon has long been recognized⁵², Goshen-Gottstein follows Gerald Sheppard in insisting that Ben Sira is not merely providing information on the canon *en passant*, but he is ‘actively and consciously describing the canon’⁵³. It is therefore all the more important to check the content of Ben Sira’s prophetic list.

Besides minute irregularities concerning his presentation of Torah material⁵⁴, the only deviations within the Prophets are David placing singers before the altar (47:9), an isolated quotation of Mal. 3:23-24 in the Elijah section (Sira 48:10b), the mention of Job in 49:9 between Ezekiel and the Twelve, and the out-of-place mention of Genesis at the very end of the Prophets (49:14-16). These deviations should be examined to determine the content of Ben Sira’s Prophets.

5.1 The case of Chronicles (Sira 47:9)

Burton Mack found four common elements in Chronicles and Ben Sira: (1) the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable kings; (2) David’s links with the cult; (3) both tell a story that runs up into their own time; (4) both tell a story legitimizing second

temple cult⁵⁵. Ska evaluates these elements and concludes that since elements (1) and (3) are also characteristic of the books of Kings only (2) and (4) may be of interest⁵⁶.

However, David's placement of singers before the altar (Sira 47:9) is beyond doubt a reference to 1 Chronicles 6:32 (Heb. 6:17) because the books of Kings do not attribute such a move to David. The reference to Chronicles is confirmed by the use of the word ψαλτωδὸς often found in Paralipomenon⁵⁷. If this reference to Chronicles is clear in the Greek, it is the work of the translator, but it may not correspond to Ben Sira's intent. Unfortunately, the very passage that would settle the question of Ben Sira's relation to Chronicles is damaged in the only extant Hebrew text (MS B). The gaps within the brackets can be filled approximately on the basis of the Greek of Ben Sira 47:8-10:

8a	ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν ἔξομολόγησιν ἀγίῳ ὑψίστῳ ῥήματι δόξης•	בכל מעשהו נתן תודות לאל עליון [דבר כ] כבוד
8b	ἐν πάσῃ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ὑμνησεν καὶ ἠγάπησεν τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτόν.	בכל לבו אוהב עושהו ובכל [לבו זמר].....:
9	καὶ ἔστησεν ψαλτωδοὺς κατέναντι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου καὶ ἐξ ἠχοῦς αὐτῶν γλυκαίνειν μέλη•	נגינות שיר ל[פני מזבח וק[ו]ל]הם מתק נוג[נים תיקן]:
10a	ἔδωκεν ἐν ἑορταῖς εὐπρέπειαν καὶ ἐκόσμησεν καιροὺς μέχρι συντελείας	[נתן ל]מועדים נאות[יעד מספרם ב]שנה:
10b	ἐν τῷ αἰνεῖν αὐτοὺς τὸ ἅγιον ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ πρωΐας ἠχεῖν τὸ ἅγιασμα.	בהלן ולי[ם שם קדשו לפני בק[ר] ירין משפט {מקדש}:

The Greek is sufficiently close to the Hebrew text to get an idea of the Hebrew text of verse 9⁵⁸. The word נגנה is never found in Chronicles but in Isa. 38:20; Hab. 3:19 and in the Psalms. In the second colon, the word μέλος corresponds to root הגה⁵⁹ providing various technical terms in the Psalms, among them נגנה at the beginning of the verse. One thing is clear, apart from the word ψαλτωδὸς, the Greek and Hebrew vocabulary of verse 9 is never used in Kings or Chronicles, while several connections with David are

found in the Psalms, in particular Psalm 61 that uses the word נִנְנָה in the Davidic title and the link of Ps. 51:1 with David's sin, the only text, besides 2 Sam. 12:13, to sustain David's forgiveness in Sir 47:11a⁶⁰.

The reference to Chronicles is thus elusive, and the common claim that Ben Sira uses the books of Chronicles must be seriously curtailed: it is limited to one word in the Greek version and cannot be used to prove that Ben Sira himself explicitly refers to Chronicles and even less that he considers Chronicles as part of the Prophets⁶¹. Once this point is made, the possible references to Chronicles in the Gospels can be examined.

Beckwith suggests that the canon listed in Baba Bathra 14b starts with Genesis and ends with Chronicles and may have existed in Pharisaic oral tradition of the 1st century CE⁶². The argument rests on Matthew 23:35 // Luke 11:51 that mention the blood of the martyrs Abel and Zechariah. Abel obviously marks the first book of the Torah but Zechariah does not provide such a clear canon boundary: Luke 11:51 supplies no patronym for Zechariah so it has been understood as referring to Zechariah ben Jehoiada mentioned in 2 Chron. 24:20-21⁶³. The suggestion is reinforced by the fact that the parallel in 2 Kings 12 does not mention Jehoiada's son or his murder, while the name Zechariah is a favourite of the Chronicler. However, if Luke's Zechariah indicates that Luke considered that the canon ended with 2 Chronicles, this is not the case with Matthew. The parallel in Matt. 23:35 indicates that Zechariah is ben Barachiah which can only refer to Zechariah of the book of the same name (Zech. 1:1). Since there are no indications that this Zechariah ended as a martyr, Matthew's canon-consciousness is clear⁶⁴. Moreover, LXX 2 Chronicles 24:20 mentions Ἀζαρία for MT's זְכַרְיָה, thus reducing the possibilities that Luke refers to Chronicles, unless Luke did not use the LXX. So Eissfeldt reckoned that the Gospels refer to a murder during the Jewish revolt in 66—70 CE⁶⁵. The least we can say is that Matthew and Luke did not refer to the same unfortunate Zechariah. If they did mean to indicate the span of the canon through martyrs (this is more likely in Matthew's case), they did not share the same canon: Matthew's ended with the Twelve like Ben Sira's, while Luke's included Chronicles as claimed by Beckwith. But there are still two different ways to interpret Luke's canon including Chronicles. Beckwith understands it as reflecting the traditional Jewish arrangement of the books (recorded in the Talmud) whereby Chronicles are placed at the end of the third

group⁶⁶. However, Luke the self-proclaimed historian could also reflect the sequence of the *Historica* as we know them from the Christian LXX whereby Chronicles follow Kings. The fact that Matthew the Jew disagrees is precious because it indicates the presence of two competing canons. For Matthew, Scriptures are the Torah and *Nebiim*, but for Luke it is the Alexandrian Torah and Chronography, which means that the two were in competition with each other.

5.2 The case of Job (Sira 49:9)

Since Ben Sira is quoting Job in the first part of his work⁶⁷, his mention by name as a kind of fourth prophet between the references to Ezekiel and of the Twelve (49:8-10) could indicate that his list differs from the *Nebiim*. However, no Hebrew manuscript is extant as far as the word ‘Job’; and if the Hebrew original did mention Job, the grandson read אֵיבֹב ‘enemy’ instead of Job (אִיּוֹב), referring to the Gog and Magog prophecy in Ezek. 38:9.22⁶⁸. The Greek text thus refers to the book of Ezekiel and not to Job as a book. In fact, in Sira 49:9 it is Ezekiel rather than God who remembers. Moreover, the figure of Job is mentioned with Noah and Danel in Ezek. 14:14.20⁶⁹.

Therefore, Ben Sira does not include Job in his list of books, although he does quote the book of Job several times. The conclusion is that Ben Sira is bound by the pre-existing list of the *Nebiim*, which prevents him from including the book of Job, in spite of clear theological affinities.

5.3 The case of the temple builders (Sira 49:11-13)

The perfect agreement of the order and content of the Prophets in the Praise of the fathers with the *Nebiim* seems to be ruined by the mention of Zerubbabel, Jeshua ben Jozadak and Nehemiah (49:11-13). These three figures are all credited with building activities, and thus introduce Simon, whose building endeavours are mentioned in the first four verses of the Praise of Simon (50:1-4).

Although the mention of Nehemiah is problematic for a canon-conscious reading of the Praise, he need not be understood as belonging to Ben Sira’s prophetic list, any more than Simon need be understood as the title of a prophetic book. Although the division between chapters 49 and 50 gives the impression that Nehemiah belongs to the Prophets,

Zerubbabel, Jeshua and Nehemiah mark the end of the Prophets section and the beginning of Simon's encomium. The subject matter indicates the change, the last mention of prophets and prophecy-related activities occurs in 49:10 for the Twelve, the next figures are builders of walls and of walls only, thus suggesting that the mention of Zerubbabel, Jeshua and Nehemiah does not stem from canonical concerns, but introduces the Praise of Simon⁷⁰. The transition is very elaborate. Zerubbabel, who canonically still belongs to the Prophets, is mentioned first with a quote from Haggai 2:23 that compares Zerubbabel to a signet ring on God's right hand. Then the building motif is introduced with Jeshua, who also belongs to the book of the Twelve (Haggai). Finally, the memory of Nehemiah is mentioned, only on account of the rebuilding of walls, city-gates and houses. Since the next verses present textual problems (see below), the Nehemiah verse can be considered secondary as the rest of the chapter. If so, Ben Sira closes the Prophets section of the Praise with Jeshua ben Jozadak (Sira 49:12). This creates a neat inclusion with Joshua ben Nun at the beginning of the Prophets (Sira 46:1), while Jeshua's building activities provide an apt transition to Simon. Ben Sira would thus follow the order and the content of the *Nebiim*.

But this solution seems too good to be accepted so quickly, it smacks of circular reasoning, since it removes the parts of the text that do not fit the theory that it is supposed to prove. So another possibility is to claim that from Nehemiah onwards, the description engages a reverse movement back to Adam (Sira 49:16) in order to signify clearly the end of the canon⁷¹. The result is almost the same; both Jeshua and Adam provide a clear mark of the end of the canon, except that in the second case doubts remain over the status of the book of Nehemiah. Carr uses this to claim that Ben Sira did not have a prophetic collection in front of him⁷². Before examining the last verses of chapter 49, one can at least conclude at this point that if Ben Sira's purpose had been to delimit the new prophetic canon, he considered Nehemiah as the last book of this canon.

Now, there is another way to explain the mention of Nehemiah. The fact that he is never paired with Ezra reveals a different authorship for Sira 49:13-16. According to Joseph Blenkinsopp, Ben Sira's silence about Ezra is polemical: Ben Sira objected to Ezra intransigent opposition to the Tobiads⁷³. But this does not fit with Ben Sira's clear pro-Oniad stance (Simon), which should have made Ezra sympathetic to Ben Sira. However,

Blenkinsopp holds the key to the silence over Ezra if this silence is not attributed to Ben Sira but to a secondary addition. Blenkinsopp shows that these verses share the same high consideration for Nehemiah as the letter that was appended to 2 Maccabees (2 Macc. 1:10b—2:18) where Nehemiah alone, without Ezra, is considered as the founding father of the second temple. These interpolators are Hasmonaean apologists, a fact that dates both the addition in Sira 49:13-16 and Epistle 2 in 2 Maccabees at the end of the second century BCE⁷⁴. The secondary nature of Sira 49:13-16 thus becomes more likely.

5.4 The case of the concluding Patriarchs (Sira 49:14-16)

After Nehemiah, the Praise of the fathers closes with Genesis figures. The common explanation for the belated mention of Enoch, Joseph, Shem, Seth, Enosh and Adam (49:14-16) is that it constitutes an echoing technique that rounds off the Praise of the fathers by returning to the starting point of the Biblical story with Adam, and that these Genesis figures are placed at the end because they are not associated to any covenant⁷⁵. One may wonder why they are mentioned here since they do not fit any pattern of characterization in the book⁷⁶. The only answer, if they do not belong to a secondary addition, is that they delimitate the end of the canon. So Mack's claim that 49:14-16 are secondary textual additions should be considered⁷⁷.

The figures of Joseph and Enoch⁷⁸ have certainly caused problems to translators and copyists. Joseph may be alluded to in 44:23: 'From his [Jacob's] descendants, he brought forth a godly man who found favour in the sight of all and was beloved by God and people', but the allusion is more likely to apply to Moses who is mentioned immediately after this phrase.

Joseph is named at 49:15 'Nor was anyone ever born like Joseph' (Mss H and S). The Greek adds 'the leader of his brothers, the support of the people'; while in H and S these words are found at the beginning of 50:1 qualifying Simon. This reveals the existence of a previous form of the Hebrew with no verse 16, a notion strengthened by the wide range of differences between H and S at verse 16.

Recently, Kister has offered a new proposal for the end of chapter 49:

49:14 מַעַט נּוֹצֵר עַל הָאָרֶץ כַּחֲנוּךְ וְגַם הוּא נִלְקַח פְּנִים

Few like Enoch have been created on earth; [but] he also was taken⁷⁹.

15 כִּי־וְסָף אִם נּוֹלַד גִּבֹּר וְגַם גּוֹיָנוּ נִפְקַד

Like Joseph was ever a man born? Even his body was visited (by death).

16 וְשֵׁם וְשֵׁת וְאֵנוֹשׁ נִפְקְדוּ וְעַל כָּל חַי תְּפֹאֶרֶת אָדָם

Shem, Seth and Enosh were visited (by death), and above every creature possessing human form⁸⁰.

The passage is picking the root פִּקַּד in 50:1c where it means ‘to be renovated’ and uses it with the meaning ‘visited by death’ as in Num. 16:29⁸¹. Probably for dogmatic reasons, the Greek and Syriac obscure the focus of this passage dealing with the inevitability of human death, in particular concerning Enoch, and the five figures are reinterpreted as members of the great men celebrated in the Praise. The theme of the inevitability of death belongs to Aramaic eulogies which catalogue ‘Jewish patriarchs in order to show that the Angel of Death could not be stayed... if so great a man as Adam or Noah had died, who then could escape death?’⁸². If this interpretation is correct, the strangeness of this theme compared to the rest of the *Wisdom* of Ben Sira is obvious, thus reinforcing suspicions about the secondary nature of these verses⁸³, or at least that they are not dealing with the canon of the Prophet any more. They belong to the anti-Enoch polemic found also in Targum Onqelos⁸⁴ and in Bereshit Rabbah 25:1⁸⁵. Since Enochite circles developed their own canon⁸⁶, it is thus not surprising that the end of Ben Sira’s prophetic collection attracted such a polemical passage.

Kister’s proposal for the final verses of Sira 49 is therefore dealing with a secondary stage of the development of the text, attested by the Greek. But Hebrew MS B definitely ascertains the secondary nature of 49:15-16 and the later introduction of Enoch in v. 14 since it reads כַּהֲנִיךְ “your priests”⁸⁷ or “your priestly service”⁸⁸, and there is no text-critical evidence to emend into כַּחֲנוּךְ⁸⁹. Stone noted the strangeness of v. 16 since there

is no other reference to the image and likeness of God reflected in human persons in Sira⁹⁰.

The conclusion is that even if in the final form of the text these Genesis figures function as transition markers, their presence here breaks the return movement effected by the Praise of Simon that links Simon with the first part of the Praise of the fathers, in particular Aaron and Phinehas⁹¹. They blur a previous transition that worked perfectly with Zerubbabel and Jeshua⁹². The conclusion is inescapable; the references to Nehemiah, Enoch, Joseph, Shem, Seth, Enosh and Adam belong to secondary additions that were effected in at least two stages. First, Nehemiah, Joseph, Shem, Seth⁹³ and Adam (Sira 49:13.16) are added by the Greek translator himself or by Hasmonaean apologists before the translation while they were canonizing the *Nebiim*. Then, the Greek received an anti-Enochite gloss (49:14-15); a gloss that was only partially harmonized in the Hebrew. The original Hebrew text linked Zerubbabel and Jeshua, both marking the end of the *Nebiim* and both temple builders, with Simon by moving directly from 49:12 to 50:1.

It is now necessary to delve into the aim of Ben Sira's Praise.

6. Ben Sira's Purpose: Prophetic Chronography

Ben Sira is not merely describing the *Nebiim*, he is reflecting upon their meaning⁹⁴. The list of figures in the second part of the Praise of the fathers is so similar to the *Nebiim* that it is beyond doubt that the Torah and the Prophets had 'not only come together but had become authoritative by 200 BCE'⁹⁵. Ben Sira was working with a pre-existing list whose content was known to the audience although its authority was not yet fully recognized. By linking the Prophets to the Torah, Ben Sira demonstrates that this secondary collection deserves the same status than the Torah, but if nine chapters are required to demonstrate the theological value of the collection, it is obvious that in Ben Sira's time, the *Nebiim* are a recent collection that has not yet gained wide acceptance.

How does Ben Sira proceed to shore up the authority of the *Nebiim*? Rather than fusing the Prophets into the Torah, Ben Sira upholds the Torah as the sum of Wisdom (Sira 24:23) while affirming that the Torah is not self-sufficient but should be studied in light of wisdom and prophets (Sira 39:1-3)⁹⁶.

Research displays a considerable vagueness over the characterization of the Praise of the fathers. Several answers have been suggested: the Praise is a pedagogical list of heroes to be emulated in the manner of 1 Macc. 2:49-61⁹⁷, or it strengthens a particular religious ideology⁹⁸. The sheer length of Ben Sira's Praise of the fathers (six chapters against 15 verses) and the absence of clear injunctions as in Mattathias' testament⁹⁹ show the inadequacy of these suggestions¹⁰⁰. Mack favours a historiographic motive¹⁰¹, which is rejected by Goshen-Gottstein in favour of a canon-conscious reading: in spite of the fact that Ben Sira framed his Praise of the fathers with a Praise of God's work in creation (Sira 42:15—43:33) and a Praise of Simon (Sira 50), Simon is not the fulfilment of the history of Israel, but the fulfilment of ideal religious types representative of Scripture in its entirety. As will later be the case with Jesus, Simon does not belong to the canon but fulfils its meaning, precisely because the canon is closed¹⁰².

My feeling is that the difficulty in classifying the Praise within known categories¹⁰³ is inherent to Ben Sira's position. Ben Sira and the *Nebiim* are reacting against a 'profane' Alexandrian Chronography, introducing within the Chronography the concept of prophecy to endow it with theological value, thus producing a *Mischwesen*, a prophetic Chronography. One thing is clear: for Ben Sira this prophetic Chronography is no Deuteronomistic History. Although covenantal succession is fundamental, the lack of repentance (except for Sira 48:15) as found in Nehemiah 9 is not an argument against history¹⁰⁴ but against Deuteronomism. Ben Sira is describing God's unconditional actions through an understanding of the *berit* strikingly similar to that found in the Priestly document¹⁰⁵; while in the second part, the heroes are mainly heroic because they are men of prayer¹⁰⁶ rather than simply part of God's creation¹⁰⁷. He is not creating a periodization of Israel's past¹⁰⁸, because this periodization already exists and he is reacting against it. His canonical concern turns heroes and events into books and collections of books. Ben Sira is not interested in events; he mentions the Israelite Exile in 47:24, but not the Judaeon Exile and Return. Although he mainly selects righteous people¹⁰⁹, he also mentions Solomon, because his name is attached to a collection. Rehoboam, whose policy drove the people to revolt, and Jeroboam, who led Israel into sin (Sira 47:23-24), both get an entry because they illustrate the consequences of

Solomon's sins; but they do not belong to the sequence as such because the next figure is Elijah (48:1), who lived before the Israelite exile.

If Ben Sira is modifying the Alexandrian Chronography by introducing prophecy into it, why does he devote so little space to the "classical" prophets (Sira 48:20-23; 49:6-10) and so much to the Former Prophets (Sira 46:1—49:7)? Goshen suggests that it is because he is struggling with the religious meaning of the Prophetic corpus, and that, since this meaning is more obvious for the great Prophets, he needs to concentrate on the other books¹¹⁰. Joshua is thus cast as prophet, David is presented in the wake of Nathan's prophetic activities, and Hezekiah is led by Isaiah (Sira 48:22-23); thus the books of Kings actually tell the story of prophets¹¹¹. Ben Sira introduces prayer in the second part of the Praise because it helps to uncover the prophetic significance of the second part of the canon. So Ben Sira is certainly struggling, not with the religious meaning of the prophetic corpus as a whole, but more precisely with the part of the Chronography that has recently been coupled to the Prophets to turn Chronography into literary prophecy, the *Nebiim*.

The *Wisdom* of Ben Sira thus appears as the first commentary of the *Nebiim*. The new collection was soon officially canonized by the Hasmonaean dynasty, and by then Ben Sira's *Wisdom* became the first deuterocanonical book of the *Nebiim* in the same way that Joshua and Job were the first deuterocanonical books of the Torah¹¹². Ben Sira's *Wisdom* was rejected from the *Ketubim* because the work is signed (Sira 50:27) and there was thus no possibility to put him under Solomonic authorship. Nevertheless, Alexandria recognized its value, and it became the only non-Solomonic book of the wisdom books.

7. Rival Collections

Are there any clues of "canonical rivalry"¹¹³ that would explain the formation of the *Nebiim* in reaction to an Alexandrian Chronography? The answer is positive; it is found in the *Letter of Aristeas*, whose historical value is increasingly recognized after two centuries of downgrading, thanks to Humphrey Hody¹¹⁴. Nina Collins claims that in spite of the fantastic and inaccurate elements it contains, the main story of the *Letter of Aristeas* is correct, and confirms that the Torah was translated in 280 BCE at the initiative

of Ptolemy II, despite Jewish opposition¹¹⁵. Contrary to common opinion, the translation was not commissioned for synagogue use by Jews who needed a translation because they no longer understood Hebrew, but by Demetrius of Phalerum, who kept the original translation and supplied a copy to Jews who asked for it. The Library was part of the Temple of the Muses, a religious institution¹¹⁶ which the Jewish leaders opposed. They considered the translation unnatural, although they reluctantly conceded to the royal desire (LetAris. 44-45), but not before having secured the emancipation of a huge number of Jewish slaves who had been carried away by Ptolemy I from Judah (LetAris. 12). The number of slaves, or even whether the deal was ever struck, is irrelevant. After presenting a number of convincing arguments, Collins concludes that the translation was not a Jewish initiative¹¹⁷. It is important for the discussion below to note that Albert Sundberg flatly rejects this idea¹¹⁸.

In spite of initial Jewish resistance, the LXX gradually gained acceptance and was used in the liturgy, which caused the addition of several interpolations into the text of the *Letter of Aristeas* in order to assert the divine inspiration of the translation¹¹⁹. However, the acceptance of the LXX was not universal; Collins compares how Philo of Alexandria and Josephus used the *Letter of Aristeas*, and reveals that while Philo defended the divine inspiration of the LXX, Josephus removed from his account of the translation any hint that would sustain its inspired status¹²⁰. Josephus' refusal to grant authority to the LXX reflected the sentiments of some of his Jewish contemporaries and thus provides the motive for the formation of a larger Torah-*Nebiim* collection in reaction to the Alexandrian Torah, its Chronography and the other two collections preserved in the Christian LXX, the *Prophetica* and the *Poetica*.

Within the 80 years following the translation of the LXX, most Jewish books were translated and classified along the lines established for Greek and Egyptian literature. Bernhard Lang and Albert de Pury have recognized the influence of Greek literary canons on the formation of the Ketubim¹²¹; I suggest that this influence should be extended to the Torah, the Chronography and the *Nebiim*. The aim of the translation of the Torah was legal, to provide the administration with an official version of Jewish laws, in much the same way the Persian administration recorded the Egyptian customs as they stood upon their arrival in Egypt¹²². Concerning the Chronography, it must be noted that

Alexandria established a literary canon of eight Greek historians¹²³; while the surviving fragments of Hecateus' *Aegyptiaca* indicate that Alexandrian historians had a keen interest in Jewish past, even if it was only in relation to Egyptian history. This provides enough evidence to counter any claim that the canonization of Biblical literature can only be done at Jerusalem by Jews. As for the *Nebiim*, although I claim that they reacted against the Greek Chronography of Israelite past, the model for their canonization is not particularly Jewish either. The evidence comes not from the canons of Greek literature that contained no prophetic class, but from the ten prophetic books that constituted one of the five categories of Egyptian literature established at Alexandria¹²⁴.

8. Ben Sira and His Alexandrian Colleagues

Ben Sira's Praise of the fathers and the whole of the book probably reflect the curriculum of a scribal school (51:23) and it can hardly be a coincidence that a contemporary of Ben Sira, the Peripatetic philosopher Sotion of Alexandria (ca. 200-170 BCE), wrote a *Succession of the Philosophers* in 13 books¹²⁵, which may have inspired Josephus's idiosyncratic listing of the Prophets (see below). At about the same time, the Jewish historian Eupolemus wrote a succession of kings and prophets¹²⁶. For now it is enough to note that although the *Nebiim* seem to react against a pre-existing Chronography by imposing a prophetic category upon it, the canonizing paradigm of the *Nebiim* comes nevertheless from Alexandria¹²⁷.

9. Ben Sira's Grandson: First Witness of the *Nebiim* as Canon

In 132 BCE, Ben Sira's grandson arrived in Egypt, found his grandfather's *Wisdom* and decided to translate it. Was he sent to Egypt precisely for this purpose, or did he perchance find the book in the possession of family members¹²⁸? Was the translator's initiative entirely private or was he selected to accomplish a translation commissioned by Jewish authorities precisely because he belonged to the author's family? The prologue supplies no answer; but the differences between the extant parts of the Hebrew text and the Greek version offer some clues.

Ben Sira regarded most Hebrew books as the Torah of the Most High (Sira 38:34—39:3)¹²⁹, while his grandson thrice mentions the Law, the Prophets and the other books, thus insisting on the presence of a third group of books. This does not indicate that a third collection has been canonized. On the contrary, it is the *Nebiim* that have recently received official approval and their canonization distinguishes them from all the “other books”.

The aim of the translator may also be deduced from the particularities of the Greek translation. The translator copied the prayer ‘May their (the judges’) bones send forth new life from where they lie’ (Sira 49:10) found in the notice about the Minor Prophets, and added it into the verses dedicated to the judges (Sira 46:12a)¹³⁰. This corresponds to official Hasmonaean propaganda that consciously linked the Maccabees with the Biblical judges: ‘Jonathan took up residence in Michmash and began to judge the people, rooting the godless out of Israel’ (1 Macc. 9:73).

The next verse (Sira 46:13) diplomatically avoids the mention of Judaeen kings.

In 46:20, the Greek drops the end of the verse that mentions Samuel’s prophesying to blot out the wickedness of the people.

The Greek makes another diplomatic alteration by not cursing the Samaritans (47:23).

As noted above, the translator appears to avoid the possible reference to Job in the Hebrew, transforming him into a storm (Sira 49:9). The translator avoids any mention of non-official Prophets because the *Nebiim* have been canonized¹³¹.

As seen above, the end of chapter 49 was tampered with in all texts, but since the Greek alone attributes to Joseph the words that originally described Simon as ‘Leader of his brothers and pride of his people’ (Sira 49:15), this is probably the doing of Ben Sira’s grandson.

These differences provide a clear picture of the aim of the translator. They elevate Joseph to the rank of the pre-Flood ancestors. To the elevation of the “Egyptian patriarch” corresponds a less obvious but no less effective homage to the Hasmonaean dynasty presented as the resurrected line of the judges of the book of the same name. If one considers that the translator, a direct descendant of a supporter of Simon the Just, arrived in Egypt a year or two after John Hyrkanus (134-104 BCE) became prince and high priest in Jerusalem (1 Macc. 16:23-24; *AJ* 20.10.3.240), the chances are that Ben Sira’s

grandson was encouraged or commissioned to translate the Wisdom into Greek because the *Nebiim* played an important role in Hasmonaean propaganda. By then, the *Nebiim* were officially canonized, and the excellent diplomatic relations between the Ptolemies and the Maccabees¹³² naturally led to the recognition of the importance of the *Nebiim*. All the individual books of the collection were already translated into Greek. The translation of the *Wisdom* of Ben Sira put an official stamp on the collection that had reached canonical status¹³³. John Hyrkanus soon demonstrated the frightening power of the new canon at the Gerizim, the destruction of its temple led to the rejection of the *Nebiim* by the Samaritans in 128 or 107 BCE¹³⁴. The fact that the Greek translation omits to curse the Samaritans may indicate that the translation was produced before these dramatic events, or that it reflects the local situation, where Jews did not wish to aggravate the Samaritan communities living with them in Egypt¹³⁵. The pro-Hasmonaean apologist who added Nehemiah, Joseph and the other Genesis figures in Sira 49:13-16 may have been Ben Sira's grandson himself.

10. The Chronographers of Alexandria

An Alexandrian Chronography has been mentioned several times in the above discussion, and what is meant by it must now be clarified.

The first step is to ask why the Former Prophets follow the same order as the first Historical books of the Septuagint, except for the book of Ruth that the Hebrew canon places within the Writings. This question is brushed aside by rejecting the Alexandrian canon (see Sundberg below), but this does not explain why the four books that have been painstakingly arranged chronologically although they obviously were not meant to be read in sequence (consider the Joshua/Judges transition¹³⁶), are finally called Prophets rather than History, while the supposedly later arrangement of the LXX retains the obvious historical title. When the formation of a Deuteronomistic history in the 6th century BCE was accepted truth, the chronological arrangement by periods was attributed to DtrH in the wake of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, but the gradual rejection of the Deuteronomistic History now requires a new answer.

The incorporation of Judah into the Ptolemaic kingdom and the presence of a large

Jewish community at Alexandria make it ‘unlikely that the famous Alexandria Museum and library had no influence upon the course of Jewish canonizing’¹³⁷. The role of Alexandria has been recognized for the last part of the Hebrew canon. Pury and Lang argue convincingly that the governing principles structuring the *Writings* are found in the canon of Greek literature developed at the library of Alexandria¹³⁸. Equally, the gradual demise of the Deuteronomistic History leads to Alexandria as the most likely place for the formation of the first part of the Former Prophets. Once the straightjacket of the exilic period is abandoned, Alexandria imposes itself as the most obvious place not only for the translation of the Torah into Greek, but also for the translation and the canonization of other Jewish books. It is there that the books of Joshua to Kings, written for some parts since the seventh century BCE, were finally put together to form the so-called Deuteronomistic History, consciously following the model of Berossus’s *Babyloniaka* (c. 290 BCE) and Manetho’s *Aigyptiaka* (c. 280 BCE). As Eratosthenes’ *Olumpionikai* created a chronological frame-work for Greek history¹³⁹, chronological matters were introduced or expanded in the Chronography of the Jews. This was an essential step. Mythic and epic literature (Greek, Hebrew and all the others) had no concern for sequencing the past which was lumped together into one single period, or past events were only vaguely lumped together around major figures, with little attempt at coordinating them to each other. Chronology was the element that transformed Greek and Hebrew myths and epics into measured and sequenced periods, even if today we realize that some of these had little historical reality. Under the scrutiny of archaeology and history, the neat eras that used to organize every history of Israel are now relegated to the category of literature. Historically, the Hebrews did not wander for forty years in the desert, there was no such thing as a period of the Conquest not even pre-monarchic Judges. Mythical as they are, these eras and their carefully established durations successfully founded the historicism that modern Bible readers have great pains to give up.

So, who produced the historical collection of the LXX? Certainly not Christians since, as Swete noticed long ago, Christians had vested interests in prophecy, and they are the ones who placed the Prophets at the end of our LXX (*Historica –Poetica – Prophetica*) in order to present the New Testament as fulfilment of prophecy¹⁴⁰. In so doing, they broke the *inclusio* Joshua 1—Malachi 3, which forms the backbone of the *Nebiiim*¹⁴¹.

Neither was the Joshua—Kings sequence created by the people who organised the *Nebiim* since the Joshua—Kings succession is congruent with the Hellenistic concept of historiographic periodization while the *Nebiim*, as collection of prophetic books, reject history. It took Ben Sira six long chapters to prove that the Former Prophets have something in common with the Torah and with the Latter Prophets, while the Joshua—Kings sequence is at home in the LXX's *Historika*¹⁴². A cursory look at Christian canonical lists¹⁴³ reveals that in spite of the prophetic title of the second section of the Hebrew canon, the order and content of the Joshua—Kings succession, both in the Former Prophets and the *Historika*, is almost as stable as the Torah's¹⁴⁴, while the order of the Latter Prophets presents every possible combination. This stability of the Former Prophets points to a date of formation between the Torah and the *Nebiim*. In the framework of the Deuteronomistic History, the History is deemed older than the Torah, which goes against all canonical logic. This problem is recognized by Norman Gottwald, who explains that the Deuteronomistic History gained recognition during the Ptolemaic period, following a change in political climate after the collapse of the Persian Empire¹⁴⁵. Gottwald identified the Ptolemaic period as the moment when the historical books came to the fore, but the pervasive Deuteronomistic History supposedly composed shortly after 586 BCE forced him to postulate a three-century gap between the formation of the history and its recognition. Is it not more convincing to consider that its formation is roughly contemporaneous its first mention, during the Ptolemaic period between Hecateus (ca. 300 BCE) and Ben Sira (ca. 200 BCE)?

If the scholar responsible for the organization of the Biblical Chronography had to be named, the most likely candidate would be the Jewish chronographer Demetrius (c. 250 BCE at the earliest and before Ben Sira), the first witness to the use of the Greek Torah¹⁴⁶. His treatise, *On the Kings of Judaea*, reveals a particular historical interest; and Frag. 6 of his work shows that he followed the chronology of the LXX¹⁴⁷. If Demetrius was not one of the 70(2) to whom is attributed the translation of the LXX (torah only), his consistent use of the Greek text, his sober chronological precision and his readiness to disagree with the Hebrew text (see Frag. 3 and 5) indicates that he was very close to the school that organized Joshua—Esther into a Chronography and at the same time designed a chronology that differs from the Hebrew and Samaritan one¹⁴⁸. The remarkably

unprejudiced appraisal of non-Greek cultures by some of Demetrius' contemporaries in Alexandria certainly fostered their emulation by Jewish scholars¹⁴⁹.

The *Nebim* were then formed in reaction to the Alexandrian Chronography. This new collection upgraded the religious significance of the chosen books. The others which were not included into the *Nebim* were not lost. Some found their way into the third Hebrew canon¹⁵⁰, while retaining their position within the Alexandrian canon because canons are unable to destroy other canons¹⁵¹.

Claiming that the paradigms for the *Nebim* as well as for the *Ketubim* come from Alexandria comes close to the so-called 'Alexandrian canon' hypothesis rejected 40 years ago by Albert Sundberg which now needs to be discussed.

11. Sundberg and the Alexandrian Canon of the Bible

All studies dealing with the canon of the Old Testament quote Albert Sundberg who is credited with the final refutation of the Alexandrian canon hypothesis¹⁵². Sundberg's thesis is that the LXX does not reflect an ancient Alexandrian canon, there was only one canon in Judaism before 70 CE, the Torah and the *Nebim*, and a wide literature circulated both in Palestine and in the Diaspora besides it. This canon was later enlarged at Jamnia in 90 CE to define the content of the Writings and to exclude all other works from the Hebrew Scriptures. According to Sundberg, Christians separated themselves from the Jews before the formation of the Writings (around 70 CE), so Christians were not affected by the Jewish Writings and thus the church carried on using a wide Jewish literature for several centuries after Jamnia until the differences became so wide that the church was led to organise the Bible along its own lines. According to Sundberg, the LXX is therefore a purely Christian arrangement, clearly secondary to the Jewish order. The theory of a specific Alexandrian canon is thus redundant.

Sundberg traces the genesis of the Alexandrian Canon hypothesis back to the dogmatic debates at the time of the Protestant reformation and the Council of Trent. This section demonstrates the overwhelming importance of political and dogmatic factors in canonization processes, an important reminder for theologians who tend to give too much weight to purely theological motives¹⁵³. Canons are first and foremost political

statements.

In 1504, Elias Levita published a revised version of Moses Kimchi's twelfth century Hebrew grammar, introducing Christian scholars to the Talmudic theory of the 24 books of the Law, *Nebiim* and Hagiographa collected and arranged in a three-fold canon by the men of the Great synagogue under the supervision of Ezra¹⁵⁴. This venerable tradition would not have spurred much debate over the Old Testament canon had Levita not claimed that the vowels of the Hebrew text were not fixed by Ezra and his colleagues but by the Masoretes around 500 CE. The Catholics got hold of this claim to argue against the Protestants that the Bible cannot be understood apart from the traditional interpretation of the Roman Church. Dogmatics took over until Protestants settled in favour of Jerome's theory of the Hebrew canon while the Catholics stuck to the Vulgate at Trent (1546), although very few theological factors prepared such decisions, and Protestants found plenty of pre-Trent Catholic authorities to quote in favour of the Hebrew canon¹⁵⁵. However, the denial of the antiquity of the Hebrew vowels introduced critical studies into dogmatics, and a second onslaught was soon launched against the Talmudic dogma by Gilbert Genebrard, who postulated a canonization process in three stages: in Ezra's time, in the time of Eleazar the high priest who convened a council in Jerusalem to authorize the 72 translators of the Septuagint to be sent to Egypt and to canonize Tobit, Sira and other books, and a last council under Shammai and Hillel that canonized the books of the Maccabees¹⁵⁶. The main issue at the time was the Apocrypha and how they found their way into the canon in spite of Jerome's esteem for the Hebrew canon. John Cosin answered that Diaspora Jews introduced them; they were first included in Theodotion's Greek version and then passed into the Latin version¹⁵⁷. The Greek factor was pushed further by John Grabe who replaced Genebrard's council of Jerusalem authorizing the translators with an Alexandrian Sanhedrin, based on the evidence that a large part of the Apocrypha originated in Alexandria. Grabe's Greek edition of the Letter of Aristeas was translated into English by Thomas Lewis who asserted that a larger Old Testament collection was used at the Jewish temple of Leontopolis and then found its way into Palestine, and this is the version quoted by Jesus and the Church¹⁵⁸. Sundberg considers that 'Lewis' theory is too fantastic to merit serious consideration'¹⁵⁹. Johann Semler went further than Lewis and extended the scope of the *Letter of Aristeas* to the translation of

the *Nebiim*, the Writings and the Apocrypha. The geographic and linguistic division between Palestinian and Alexandrian canons was thus firmly established¹⁶⁰.

Both Catholic and Protestant dogmatics resisted the idea of an Alexandrian canon larger than its Palestinian counterpart; until critical exegesis revealed that some of the books of the Old Testament were composed after Ezra. The traditional concept of the closing of the entire canon by Ezra was undermined. Abraham Kuenen dealt the last blow to Ezra's great synagogue¹⁶¹, and it became generally accepted that the Pentateuch was canonized about 400 BCE, the *Nebiim* around 200 BCE and the Writings about 90 CE.

W.R. Smith felt that the Alexandrian canon hypothesis implied a schism between Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism that, according to him, did not exist¹⁶². This is an important point because the Alexandrian canon reduces the primacy of Jerusalem. This is also the first objection raised by Sundberg against an Alexandrian canon in general use throughout Diaspora Judaism and later taken over by the church: 'does this not presuppose that Alexandria had become a kind of "Mecca" for non-Palestinian Jews?'¹⁶³. This passage is quoted approvingly by J. Schaper who claims that the Alexandrian canon hypothesis 'assumes that Diaspora Judaism had become sufficiently independent from the motherland to create and use a canon of its own. The theory is built on the assumption that the importance of Jerusalem and its temple had diminished significantly'¹⁶⁴.

This objection to the Alexandrian canon is based on the false assumption that the first Jewish canons were the work of Diaspora Jews, while we now know that the Torah, its first Greek translation and the Chronography were more or less imposed on the Jews by Persian and Ptolemaic rulers. For canonization issues, the traditional Diaspora/Palestine opposition should be replaced by a Ptolemies/Jews divergence, later replaced for the *Ketubim* by a Christian/Rabbinic Judaism opposition. The evidence now available sets Alexandria not only as a Mecca but also as *the* Medina, the mother of all canons. The indisputable position of the Ptolemaic capital does not imply hostility towards Jerusalem as the traditional centre of Judaism; it only reflects Jerusalem's position in the outer periphery of the Ptolemaic realm. But before entering the debate, let us follow Sundberg's presentation to reveal once for all how dated it has become and how weak is any argument relying on it.

The case of the Alexandrian canon was further bolstered by the work of Gustav

Hoelscher, who believed that the Alexandrian canon represents the more primitive form of the Jewish Scriptures, since the early church fathers witness a similar form of the Old Testament, and that it was Palestinian Judaism that reduced it to 22 books by closing the inspiration period with Ezra¹⁶⁵. Sundberg claims that Hoelscher's priority of the Alexandrian canon was conclusively countered by Eduard Koenig, who pointed out that the Palestinian canon must be older than its Alexandrian counterpart because Palestinian Jews do not count Daniel among the *Nebiim*¹⁶⁶. However, this in no way prevents the Alexandrian canon from being even older than the *Nebiim*, providing that one accepts Charles Torrey's claim that the Alexandrian collection was a list that had no religious significance¹⁶⁷. In the same direction, Otto Eissfeldt felt that at Alexandria only the Torah was canonical, that the *Nebiim* and the *Ketubim* were loose collections of edifying books including books that were never canonized in Palestine¹⁶⁸. However, in Egypt Ben Sira's grandson recognized the existence of the *Nebiim*, and Henry Cadbury found that he used a standard Septuagint text that renders antiquity to the Greek translations and collections¹⁶⁹.

After this detailed presentation of the origins of the theory, Sundberg presents his own critique. The "Mecca" objection mentioned above is first in the list and continues thus:

- Church usage: if the church adopted a more-or-less fixed canon from Diaspora Judaism, we should expect to find a rather exact correlation between the supposed contents of that canon and Christian usage. The evidence points out to the opposite. The New Testament, Church fathers and even Rabbis quote a large array of Jewish books extending even beyond the LXX's Hagiographa. I reply that this argument certainly proves that the Writings and the Hagiographa were not canonized before the second century CE, and that the supposed Alexandrian canon did not contain the LXX's Hagiographa, but it has no bearing on the canonization of the *Nebiim*.
- Linguistic division and apocalypticism: Sundberg easily disproves earlier theories claiming that most of the Apocrypha were composed in Greek at Alexandria¹⁷⁰ and that apocalyptic writings were more popular in the Diaspora than in Palestine¹⁷¹, thus rejecting the relevance of too sharp a distinction between Palestine and Diaspora. Again, this point has no relevance for the *Nebiim*.

- Recognition of the Prophets in Egypt: Sundberg takes issue against Pfeiffer and Eissfeldt who claimed that the special status granted to the Torah led Egyptian Jews and Josephus to disregard the clear-cut separation between the Prophets and the Writings¹⁷². The evidence clearly points to the contrary, and thus seems to allow Sundberg to affirm that the total abandonment of the Prophets / Writings distinction is a Christian innovation that had no root in an Alexandrian canon¹⁷³. However, I will show in the next section that Josephus can actually be used to prove the antiquity of the LXX historical order and thus provides new evidence in favour of a reduced Alexandrian collection.
- The Jewish temple of Leontopolis: Sundberg dismisses rather quickly the importance of the religious centre of the Egyptian Jews, claiming that Josephus does not indicate that the Egyptian Jews had forsaken their devotion to the Jerusalem temple¹⁷⁴. However, the existence of such a temple adds up to the primary importance of the cultural centre of Alexandria and provides a most convincing context for Jewish canonical activities outside Jerusalem.
- The use of Baruch by Diaspora Jews: Sundberg rejects Thackeray's far-fetched hypothesis that Jews used Baruch in the 9th of *Ab* liturgy, based on a Syriac Sermon against the Jews¹⁷⁵. Again, this argument reveals the late exclusion of the Apocrypha, but has no bearing on the *Nebiim*.
- Sadducee/Pharisee canon differences: Sundberg claims that where Josephus mentions that the Sadducees observed prescriptions from the Torah only (*War* II.8.14; *Antiquities* XIII.10.6; XVIII.1.2; XX.9.1) he is not referring to a different canon but to the Sadducees' rejection of the Pharisaic oral tradition.

Sundberg concludes that the Alexandrian canon hypothesis lacks primary evidence and cannot be proved¹⁷⁶. His analysis definitely proves that a pre-Ben Sira Alexandrian canon could not be identical to the LXX because the distinction Hagiographa / Apocrypha belongs to the 2nd century CE at the earliest, but Sundberg was not able to draw this conclusion because he held to the canonization of the writings at Jamnia in 90 CE. He was then forced to postulate a very early and radical separation of Christians from Jews in order to explain why the Church used the Apocrypha after the canonization of the Writings. Ironically, the very year Sundberg published his thesis, Jack Lewis released an

article that laid the basis for the rejection of the canonizing role of the Jamnia assembly (90 CE)¹⁷⁷. This new understanding of the canonization of the Writings renders the rest of Sundberg's thesis obsolete¹⁷⁸. This is not to say that the old Alexandrian canon hypothesis should be revived wholesale, it is enough to note that Sundberg's rejection of the Alexandrian canon has no bearings on the canonization of the *Nebiim*. Davies thus considers that 'Sundberg's rejection of an "Alexandrian canon" is correct only in terms of a narrow definition of canon. That Jews in Alexandria recognized a canon or canons of Jewish scriptures seems clear enough'¹⁷⁹. It is time to render to Alexandria what belongs to Alexandria and to accept that Alexandria is the cradle of Jewish historiography. It is also time to turn to Josephus who provides important data for the situation of the Old Testament canon at the end of the 1st century CE.

12. Josephus and the Thirteen Prophets

Josephus stands on the other side of the canonization process of the *Nebiim*. Whereas Ben Sira is its first witness, Josephus offers *a posteriori* reflection that has the advantage of hindsight.

Josephus claims that, contrary to the pagans, Jews do not possess myriads of contradictory books. Their books amount to 22: five books of Moses (from the birth of man to the death of the law-giver = 3000 years), thirteen Prophets (from the death of Moses until Artaxerxes) + four remaining books (hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life). He does not hesitate to contradict his previous affirmation by admitting that there are actually other books besides those 22: 'From Artaxerxes to our own time the complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets'¹⁸⁰.

The trouble with Josephus is that he presents too many prophetic books to match with the *Nebiim*. To make things worse, Josephus does not name the individual books, so various suggestions have been made (see table below).

Josephus is consciously mixing two collections for his own purpose. He has no qualms doing this since he does not consider the LXX as inspired (see above) and since his aim is to defend the authenticity of Jewish records rather than to give an account of Jewish

canons but ¹⁸¹. His concern being historiographic, Josephus follows the LXX's historical books until Artaxerxes, insisting that these books were written by prophets, which is a token of accuracy because they were inspired by God. Applying the canonical razor on the LXX's *Historica* severs the period after Artaxerxes from Josephus' Prophets. Since Artaxerxes is mentioned 14 times in the Old Testament, always in Ezra and Nehemiah (= 2 Esdras in the Christian LXX), all the historical books of our LXX are included except the Maccabees: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kingdoms, Paralipomenon, Esdras, Esther, Judith and Tobit¹⁸². These amount to nine books; to them the four prophetic books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Twelve) should be added since Josephus calls this collection 'Prophets', and according to the information they provide, the Prophets were written before Artaxerxes. Josephus' thirteen Prophets are thus recovered simply on the basis of Josephus' explanations and by following the order of the LXX. This, I suggest, is a more objective method than Thackeray and Beckwith's who both include Job and Daniel instead of Judith and Tobit¹⁸³ (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Josephus' thirteen prophetic books

Thackeray ¹⁸⁴	Beckwith ¹⁸⁵	Zevit ¹⁸⁶	LXX + Prophets
Joshua	Job	Joshua	Joshua
Judges + Ruth	Joshua	Judges	Judges
Samuel	Judges + Ruth?	Ruth	Ruth
Kings	Samuel	1 Samuel	Kingdoms
Chronicles	Kings	2 Samuel	Paralipomenon
Ezra + Nehemiah	Isaiah	1 Kings	Esdras
Esther	Jeremiah + Lam?	2 Kings	Esther
Job	Ezekiel	1 Chronicles	Judith
Isaiah	Twelve	2 Chronicles	Tobit
Jeremiah + Lam.	Daniel	Daniel	Isaiah
Ezekiel	Chronicles	Ezra	Jeremiah
Twelve	Ezra-Nehemiah	Nehemiah	Ezekiel
Daniel	Esther	Esther	Twelve

Josephus was not keen to inform his readers that the Jews, like everyone else, had all sorts of contradictory books, and that they even had at least two rival canons. Some Jews considered the Alexandrian canon as authoritative as the *Nebiim*. Although he rejected the divine inspiration of the LXX, Josephus did not hesitate to draw on it to find thirteen Prophets in order to present them in Alexandrian style as perfect matches to Sotion's succession of the schools of Philosophy in thirteen books¹⁸⁷.

This does not prove that the *Historica* of our LXX correspond exactly to the Alexandrian Chronography¹⁸⁸, but it reveals that the order and contents transmitted by the Christian Septuagint should not be dismissed before counter-evidence sustains such a move. New Testament and early Christian evidence indicates that Christians did not hesitate to draw on an even wider array of Jewish books than those of the Christian Septuagint¹⁸⁹, until it began to be felt as a problem. A common ground was necessary to debate with Jews. The Alexandrian canon was finally preferred because it provided more anti-Jewish ammunition, while possessing an antiquity that the Jews could not deny; otherwise the church would have had no choice but to accept the Hebrew canon. This is what Melito was thinking, what Jerome was pushing for; but it was the Jewish canon of Alexandria that prevailed because of its antiquity. The point is that even though the earliest Christian lists are very close to the *TaNaK* (Melito ca. 170 CE has just Esther missing; Origen ca. 200 CE includes 1 Esdras and the Epistle of Jeremiah), they do not follow the *Nebiim* and include Ruth and Chronicles within the second part like the LXX's *Historika*. During the 3rd and 4th centuries CE, the difference with the Hebrew canon increased, always due to the inclusion of Greek books. Even Jerome, a staunch partisan of the Hebrew canon (although he counts Ruth in his Prophets)¹⁹⁰, included all the books of the LXX into the *Vulgata*. The conclusion is inescapable; the list that is transmitted by the LXX was always in a position to compete with the Hebrew canon because it could claim as great an antiquity as the *Nebiim*, and probably greater.

However, the fact that the Maccabees are now part of both the Christian LXX and the Vulgate shows that the Alexandrian collections were literary canons that could be updated. But they nevertheless enjoyed great authority, even in the eyes of Josephus. Although he did not believe that the LXX was divinely inspired, his *Antiquities* follow

the Alexandrian collection (Genesis to Esther) and then jumps to Maccabees¹⁹¹. Moreover, in the prologue to his *War*, Josephus explains that he is starting with Antiochus because it is where the Prophets leave off. Once again, Josephus happily amalgamates the Chronography and the *Nebiim*¹⁹².

13. Conclusion

Alexandria is the most likely place of origin of the Biblical Chronography. Soon after the translation of the Torah (280 BCE), other Biblical books were translated and organized onto a chronological pattern. The book of Joshua was long considered as a commentary and the natural sequel to the Torah. The books of Samuel and Kings formed a literary unit well before their translation into Greek¹⁹³, while the book of Judges was a self-standing literary unit; and it is only at this point (between 280 and 180 BCE) that Judges and Ruth were inserted between Joshua and Samuel to create a new period in Jewish past¹⁹⁴. The transitional passages, those connecting *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, and *Samuel* are therefore much later that is postulated within the framework of a sixth century BCE Deuteronomistic History, and this may also apply to other transitions in the Historical books and the Prophets. Being crafted with books that were never meant to play this role, the period of the Judges thus remains artificial and the transition with the other periods is laborious. This was not in itself a problem since the aim of the Chronography was to organize ancient books chronologically rather than to provide a continuous narrative *per se*. The fact that *Paralipomenon* duplicates or contradicts the data contained in Kingdoms was not a problem, on the contrary. It was up to the historians who would use the Chronography as their main source to write the continuous narrative that we call histories. Consequently, there is no reason to doubt that Chronicles, Esdras and Esther (and possibly Tobit and Judith¹⁹⁵), were also part of the Chronography, representing the Persian period. Since he is the first Jewish scholar to use both the Septuagint and the Chronography for his own work¹⁹⁶, Demetrius the Chronographer (c. 250 BCE) was at least acquainted with the group of scholars who organized and translated the Chronography, unless he was one of them (Fig. 2).

Later, other Biblical books were translated and included in the two other lists preserved in the Christian Septuagint: the *Poetica* and the *Prophetica*. These lists constituted the Alexandrian collections of Jewish literature rather than a fixed religious canon, because, apart from the Torah, the lists were updated. Maccabees were added to the *Historica*, thus providing a clue to the religious canonization and closure of the *Historica*¹⁹⁷.

The formation of the Chronography spurred the formation of the *Nebiim*, a collection composed of the first part of the Chronography and the *Prophetica*, whose theological value Ben Sira's Praise of the fathers sought to demonstrate (ca. 170 BCE). Thanks to Ben Sira, the *Nebiim* were gradually accepted, in particular because they offered a welcome counterpart to the Alexandrian collections. Finally, the Hasmonaeans canonized the *Nebiim*, but they did not create the collection¹⁹⁸. The Samaritans and the Sadducees refused to accept it; and even the Pharisees were reluctant to ascribe much authority to the *Nebiim*. The Mishnah quotes overwhelmingly from the Torah and to a certain amount from the Psalms and Proverbs, but very little from the *Nebiim*¹⁹⁹. For the same reason, the Tosephta and the Minor Tractates mark a clear difference between rolls of the Torah and those of the *Nebiim* in terms of covers and line spacing²⁰⁰. The full and closed Hebrew canon as we know it did not emerge before the second century BCE at the earliest²⁰¹. Claims that it was already closed in 150 BCE rest on faulty interpretations of Ben Sira.

Christians at the intellectual centre of Alexandria logically kept in step with Philo who, contrary to Josephus, considered the LXX as divinely inspired an attitude that probably spilled over to the other collections of Jewish books established in Alexandria. Christians thus accepted the Alexandrian collections and simply placed the *Prophetica* before the New Testament, because they had never been linked to the *Historica* as was the case within the *Nebiim*.

Whether the Biblical Chronography is chicken or egg, it came at the end and not at the beginning of the redactional process of the books that were included in it. The Chronography was not created during the 6th century BCE but three centuries later in the Alexandrian chicken-coop of the Muses, where it fed on bookworms²⁰².

Fig. 2: Time line (dates approximate):

280 BCE: Translation of the Torah

250 BCE: Formation of the Chronography and its translation (by Demetrius?)

180 BCE: Formation of the *Nebiim*

200 BCE: Ben Sira settles in Alexandria

170 BCE: Ben Sira finishes his *Wisdom*

150 BCE: Jonathan (?) canonizes the *Nebiim*

130 BCE: Ben Sira's grandson translates Sira

Notes

¹ The place of Deuteronomy within the Historiography and the Tetra-/Hexateuch debate are beyond the scope of this study since I take the demise of the Deuteronomistic History for granted: E.A. Knauf, 'Does 'Deuteronomistic historiography' (DtrH) exist?' in A. de Pury & Th. Römer (eds), *Israel Constructs its History. Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research* (JSOTSup, 306; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 388-398; H.N. Rösel, 'Does a Comprehensive Leitmotiv Exist in the Deuteronomistic History?', in Th. Römer (ed.), *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History* (BETL, 147; Leuven: University Press, 2000), pp. 195-212. P.R. Davies, 'Post-exilic Collections and the Formation of the Canon', in J.W. Rogerson & P.R. Davies (eds), *The Old Testament World* (Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 360-375. Th. Roemer, 'Réponse à l'étude critique de Philippe Guillaume' *RThPh* 135 (2003), pp. 39-62, calls upon new evidence in favour of DH, partly founded on H.M. Barstad, 'Deuteronomists, Persians, Greeks and the Dating of the Israelite Tradition', in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup, 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 47-77 who concludes that 'Any claim that the Deuteronomistic History (or the Chronicler for that matter) is influenced by Greek historiography must be regarded as highly problematic'. I agree because I do not consider the DH as historiography. Barstad shows that the books contained in the DH belong to the common theology of the Ancient Near East; which embraces Hammurabi, Mesha and Ashurbanipal. So much for the date of DH! But Roemer has another joker in his sleeve: 3 tablets stolen from Babylonia which (perhaps) reveal the existence, somewhere, sometimes, of a town called Al-Yâhûdû which according to Roemer proves the existence of a Jewish centre that could have composed the DH in the Neo-babylonian period: F. Joannès & A. Lemaire, 'Trois tablettes cunéiformes à onomastique ouest-sémitique', *Transeuphratène* 17 (1999), pp. 17-34. In fact, the only tablet mentioning the city (village?) in question records the sale of a two-years old ox by a woman; a bit short to suggest the establishment of an intellectual centre capable of a vast enterprise such as DH. And this is to say nothing about the ethics of publishing and quoting looted Iraqi tablets.

² Th.L. Thompson, 'The Bible and Hellenism: A Response', in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup, 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 274-286; N.P. Lemche, 'On the Problems of Reconstructing pre-Hellenistic Israelite (Palestinian) History', in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Like a Bird in a Cage. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE* (JSOTSup, 363; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), pp. 150-167.

³ J.-W. Wesseliuss, *The Origin of the History of Israel: Herodotus' Histories as Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible* (JSOTSup, 345; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

⁴ N.P. Lemche, 'The Old Testament—A Hellenistic Book?' in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup, 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 287-318 (288).

⁵ The term 'Chronography' is used instead of 'Deuteronomistic History' because the *Joshua—Kings* succession is not the product of an historian but the result of scribal joining books that had not been meant

to be read in succession when they were first written. It is therefore similar to the work of the Alexandrian Chronographers of the third century BCE (see below).

⁶ S.Z. Leiman, *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: the Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence* (Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Science, 47; Hamden: Archon, 1976); R. Beckwith, *The Old Testament of the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985); O.-H. Steck, *Der Abschluß der Prophetie im Alten Testament: Ein Versuch zur Frage der Vorgeschichte des Kanons* (BThS, 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991).

⁷ A. van der Kooij, 'The Canonization of Ancient Books Kept in the Temple of Jerusalem' in A. van der Kooij & K. van der Toorn (eds), *Canonization & Decanonization* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), pp. 17-40 (19); Ph.R. Davies, *Scribes and Schools* (London: SPCK, 1998), pp. 174-182.

⁸ Full discussion in Beckwith, *Old Testament*; van der Kooij, 'Ancient Books'.

⁹ M.E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1990), p. 10.

¹⁰ J.A. Goldstein, *2 Maccabees* (AB, 41A; New York: Doubleday, 1983), pp. 162-164.

¹¹ D.R. Schwartz, 'MMT, Josephus and the Pharisees', in J. Kampen & M.J. Bernstein (eds), *Reading 4QMMT. New Perspectives on Qumran Law and History* (SBLSS, 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), p. 79 quoted by van der Kooij, 'Ancient Books', 26.

¹² DJD X:59.

¹³ Van der Kooij, 'Ancient Books', 34.

¹⁴ A.A. di Lella, 'Wisdom of Ben Sira' in *ABD* 6.932.

¹⁵ Some scholars consider that a first volume ended at 24:29 and that verses 30-34 introduce a second volume spurred by the success of the first one: R.H. Pfeiffer, *History of New Testament Times with an Introduction to the Apocrypha* (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 353. Only the latest part is relevant here.

¹⁶ Assuming that he wrote his *Wisdom* at 20 and fathered a son at 70, that this son fathered the translator also at 70 and that the translator himself arrived in Egypt aged 70.

¹⁷ Assuming that Ben Sira wrote around the time of his grandson's arrival in Egypt. In 130, Ben Sira could have been 70, his grandson 20 if both his father and grandfather became father at age 20.

¹⁸ J.C. VanderKam, 'Simon the Just: Simon I or Simon II?', in *Idem* (ed.), *From Revelation to Canon* (SJSJ, 62; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 224-240.

¹⁹ J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), p. 106. J.C. VanderKam, 'Simon the Just: Simon I or Simon II?' in *Idem*, *From Revelation to Canon. Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (SJSJ, 62; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 224-240. But O. Mulder, *Simon the High Priest in Sira 50* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003), p. 103, claims that Simon was probably still alive when Ben Sira wrote his *Wisdom*.

²⁰ Pace VanderKam, 'Simon the Just', 237-238; but see *Antiquities* 12.1.1 §3-7.

²¹ D.S. Williams, 'The Date of Ecclesiasticus', *VT* 44 (1994), pp. 563-566; D.A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 158 n. 7.

- ²² See Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 98-100.
- ²³ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 107.
- ²⁴ So G. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach* (JSHRZ, III; Gütersloh: Gütersloher / Gerd Mohn, 1981), p. 490.
- ²⁵ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 107.
- ²⁶ DeSilva, *Apocrypha*, 158.
- ²⁷ So Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 61. For the dates, see E.S. Gruen, 'The Origins and Objectives of Onias' Temple', *Scripta Classica Israelitica* 16 (1997), pp. 47-70; for slightly different dates: J.G. Bunge, *JSJ* 6 (1975), pp. 4-5.
- ²⁸ The Cairo MSS may have been one of the documents found by Karaites in a cave near Jericho about 800 CE: P.W. Skehan & A.A. DiLella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, (AB, 49; New York: Doubleday, 1987), p. 569.
- ²⁹ There are no binding reasons to affirm that the Egyptian temple was founded by Onias III or IV, if there ever was a fourth Onias (on this see V. Keil, 'Onias III, Märtyrer oder Tempelgründer?', *ZAW* 97 (1985), pp. 221-231; Gruen, 'Origins'. Since Manetho already mentions strong links between Jews and Heliopolis, the Leontopolis temple could have been established then to serve the large Jewish garrison around 300 BCE (see *Against Apion* 1.26, 237-239.250), it would be consistent with the ideology of both 1 Maccabees and Josephus to minimize as much as possible the antiquity of this competing sanctuary.
- ³⁰ P. McKechnie, 'The Career of Joshua Ben Sira', *JThS* 51,1 (2000), pp. 1-26.
- ³¹ McKechnie, 'Career', 8.
- ³² E.J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard Univ. Press, 1988), p. 204.
- ³³ Sira 10:8.10 have been taken as pro-Seleucid clues: R. Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach* (Berlin: Reimer, 1906), p. 93, and M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (London: SCM, 1974), vol. II p. 96 n. 280.
- ³⁴ Jerome, *In Danielelem* 11.14, PL 25 cols. 562-3, FGrHist 260 (Porphyrius of Tyre) F45.
- ³⁵ Entertainment industry (9:9), banquets (32:1-13), and royal physicians (38:1-15). On this last point, see the way LXX translates Exod. 21:19.
- ³⁶ McKechnie, 'Career', 26.
- ³⁷ J.D. Harvey, 'Toward a Degree of Order in Ben Sira's Book', *ZAW* 105 (1993), pp. 52-62.
- ³⁸ Sira 24:30-34 introduce the sequel of the first volume composed after the success of an earlier work ('lo, my canal became a river ...'): Pfeiffer: *History*, 353; W. Roth, 'On the Gnostic-Discursive Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach', *Semeia* 17 (1980), pp. 59-79.
- ³⁹ If Ben Sira was 20 when he was evacuated in 200, he might still be writing in 150 at age 70. If he was 60 in 200, he could be completing his Wisdom only a few years later, providing that the trial took place shortly after his arrival in Egypt in 200.
- ⁴⁰ The Zenon archives (PCZ 59093; 59804;) attest intense slave trade towards Egypt through the coastal harbour cities, and the importance of the Ammonite city (rather than Jerusalem) for the control of Coele-Syria: Polybius, *Histories*, book V; F. Zayadine, 'La campagne d'Antiochos III le Grand en 219 - 217 et le siege de Rabbatamana', *RB* 97 (1990), pp. 68-84. *C. Ord. Ptol.* 21-22; R.S. Bagnall & P. Derow (eds),

Greek Historical Documents: the Hellenistic Period (SBL SBS, 16; Chico: Ca: Scholars Press, 1981), p. 53, pp. 95-96; *CPJ* I.2; *Letter of Aristeas* 4,22; B.G. Wright, ‘Ebed/Doulos: ‘Terms and Social Status in the Meeting of Hebrew Biblical and Hellenistic Roman Culture’, *Semeia* 83/84 (1998), pp. 83-111. Jerusalem’s relative insignificance results from its isolated position, away from commercial routes: V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publ. Society of America, 1959), pp. 108-109; hence the Ptolemies did not attempt to found a polis at Jerusalem as they did at Ailas, Amman, Akko and possibly Beth-Shean.

⁴¹ B. Lang, *Ein Buch wie kein Anderes* (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1980), pp. 16-17; A. de Pury, ‘Le canon de l’Ancien Testament’ in *Protestantisme et construction européenne: actes du colloque des Facultés de théologie protestante des pays latins d’Europe* (Bruxelles: Ad Veritam, 1991), pp. 25-45; A. de Pury, ‘Qohéleth et le canon des Ketubim’, *RThPh* 131 (1999), pp. 163-198. B. Lang, ‘The "Writings": A Hellenistic Literary Canon in the Hebrew Bible’, in A. van der Kooij & K. van der Toorn (eds), *Canonization and Decanonization* (SHR, 82; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), pp. 41-65 (45-50).

⁴² Steck, *Abschluß*, 136-144.

⁴³ Ph.R. Davies, ‘Scenes from the Early History of Judaism’, in D.V. Edelman (ed.), *The Triumph of Elohim* (Kampen: Kok, 1995), p. 170; Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 19-20. His recent book on canonization, Davies, *Scribes*, does not mention Ben Sira 44—49 at all.

⁴⁴ D.M. Carr, ‘Canonization in the Context of Community: An Outline of the Formation of the Tanakh and the Christian Bible’, in R.D. Weis & D.M. Carr (eds), *A Gift of God in Due Season. Essays on Scripture and Community in Honor of James A. Sanders* (JSOTSup, 225; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

⁴⁵ J.-L. Ska, ‘L’éloge des pères dans le Siracide (Si 44-50) et le canon de l’Ancien Testament’ in N. Caldach-Benages & J. Vermeylen (eds), *Treasures of Wisdom. Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom. FS Gilbert, Maurice* (BETL, 143; Leuven: Peeters, 1999), pp. 181-193 (192);

⁴⁶ A. Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Ben Sira’s Praise of the Fathers: A Canon-conscious Reading’, in R. Egger-Wenzel (ed.), *Ben Sira’s God. Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference. Durham - Ushaw College 2001* (BZAW, 321; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), pp. 235-267 (241 n. 18); J. Blenkinsopp, ‘The Formation of the Hebrew Bible Canon: Isaiah as a Test Case’, in L.M. McDonald & J.A. Sanders (eds), *The Canon Debate* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 53-67 (61).

⁴⁷ L.L. Grabbe, ‘Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period’, in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup, 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 129-155 (147).

⁴⁸ O. Mulder, ‘Two Approaches: Simon the High Priest and YHWH God of Israel / God of All in Sirach 50’, in R. Egger-Wenzel (ed.), *Ben Sira’s God. Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference. Durham – Ushaw College 2001* (BZAW, 321; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), pp. 221-234 (223); Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Praise’, 241.

⁴⁹ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 104.

⁵⁰ Ska, 'L'éloge', 182: the first prophet is Joshua, in spite of the fact that neither the Pentateuch nor the book of Joshua present Joshua as a prophet, the other prophets are Samuel (46:13.15.20), Nathan (47:1), Elijah (48:1) and Elisha (48:8 H; 48:13 G).

⁵¹ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 241-242.

⁵² I.L. Seeligmann, 'Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese', in *Congress Volume, Copenhagen 1953* (VTSup, 1; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1953), p. 152; Leiman, *Canonization*; G.T. Sheppard, *Wisdom as Hermeneutical Construct: a Study in the Sapientializing of the Old Testament* (BZAW, 151; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980); Beckwith, *Old Testament*; 110-111.

⁵³ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 242 n. 21.

⁵⁴ A fourth allusion to Numbers (14:6-38 at 46:7-8) after the two allusions to Joshua (but this mentions Caleb and Joshua).

⁵⁵ B.L. Mack, *The Wisdom and Hebrew Epic. Ben Sira's Hymn in Praise of the Fathers* (Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 117-118.

⁵⁶ Ska, 'L'éloge', n. 28.

⁵⁷ 1 Par. 6:33 (18); 9:33; 13:8; 15:16.19.27; 2 Par. 5:12; 20:21; 29:28; 35:15. Although one must notice that Sinaiticus (against Alexandrinus and Vaticanus) uses ψαλμωδὸς instead of ψαλτωδὸς, a word with no parallels in Paralipomenon.

⁵⁸ I have just altered two letter marked as uncertain by the editor P.C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A text edition of all extant Hebrew manuscripts and a synopsis of all parallel Hebrew Ben Sira texts* (VTSup, 68; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), p. 84: in v. 9b the unclear letter after the second break read by Beentjes, as ל into נ to fit attested plural masculine forms derived from הננה or ננן (Isa. 8:19; Ps 68:26); in v. 10ba I replace the suggested ה by a ם to avoid the plural feminine הויללור found exclusively in Qohelet with the meaning 'folly'.

⁵⁹ E. Hatch & H.A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (Graz: Akad. Druck, 1975), p. 909.

⁶⁰ Ms B: פשעו יי העביר פשעו compare Ps 51: 5 and 2 Sam. 12:13. David's sin is not mentioned in Chronicles.

⁶¹ Pace J.L. Koole, 'Die Bibel des Ben Sira', *OTS* 23 (1965), pp. 374-396 (385). The Chronicler's reference text is not the Deuteronomistic History as claimed by R. Albertz, 'An End to the Confusion? Why the Old Testament Cannot Be a Hellenistic Book!', in L.L. Grabbe (ed.) *Did Moses speak Attic?* (JSOTSup., 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 30-46 (39); and Z. Talshir, 'Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles', *ZAW* 113 (2001), pp. 386-403 (397); but only the books of Samuel and Kings or Kingdoms. Chronicles may indicate that the books of Samuel and Kings were authoritative, or as their first commentary they revealed their canonicity: K. Peltonen, 'A Jigsaw without a Model?', in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup., 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 225-273 (256-257.269). The same can be said about Ben Sira's Praise of the fathers, it comments a new collection to attribute it a new status. But the Chronicler had never heard of a Deuteronomistic History.

- ⁶² R.T. Beckwith, 'A Modern Theory of the Old Testament Canon', *VT* 41 (1991), pp. 385-395 (396).
- ⁶³ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 123.
- ⁶⁴ But H.G.L. Peels, 'The Blood 'from Abel to Zechariah' (Matthew 23,35; Luke 11,50f.) and the Canon of the Old Testament', *ZAW* 113,4 (2001), pp. 583-601 considers that both Matthew 23 and Luke 11 cannot figure as crown witnesses for the view that the OT canon in Jesus' days was fixed and closed.
- ⁶⁵ O. Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Tuebingen: Mohr, 1956), pp. 702-703; P. Katz, 'The Old Testament in Palestine and in Alexandria', *ZNW* 47 (1956), pp. 191-217 (194 n. 6). Josephus, *War* 4.334-44 relates the murder of Zecharias ben Baruch (335) by Zealots in the middle of the temple (343). According to W.D. Davies & D.C. Allison, *Matthew 19-28* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1997), p. 318, this recent event explains better the "you" of the gospel.
- ⁶⁶ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 115; Beckwith, 'Modern Theory', 387-388.
- ⁶⁷ J.G. Snaith, 'Quotations in Ecclesiasticus', *JBL* 18 (1967), pp. 1-12: Job 9:12 in 33:10; Job 38:25 in 40:13; Job 39:28 in 40:15; Job 15:17 in 42:15. J.L. Koole, 'Die Bibel des Ben-Sira', *OTS* 14 (1965), pp. 374-396. About Job 29:21 in Sira 13:23 see Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 57.
- ⁶⁸ See Beckwith, *Old Testament*, p. 73 and p. 97 n. 49.
- ⁶⁹ According to Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 242 n. 22 who rejects this possibility (n. 24) and prefers to understand the reference to Job as growing out of its canonical context rather than out of his mention in Ezekiel 14.
- ⁷⁰ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 256.
- ⁷¹ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 251 n. 39.
- ⁷² Carr, 'Canonization', 39.
- ⁷³ J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), pp. 55-57.
- ⁷⁴ See discussion in Goldstein, *2 Maccabees*, 157-167.540-545.
- ⁷⁵ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 251 n. 39, 260; Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 378.
- ⁷⁶ Mack, *Wisdom*, 201.
- ⁷⁷ Mack, *Wisdom*, 201-203.
- ⁷⁸ Another dubious mention in 44:16, but strophically isolated and missing from the Massada Hebrew MS.
- ⁷⁹ S drops 14b, considered too polemical.
- ⁸⁰ M. Kister, 'Some Notes on Biblical Expressions and Allusions and the Lexicography of Ben Sira', in R. Egger-Wenzel (ed.), *Ben Sira's God. Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference. Durham - Ushaw College 2001* (BZAW, 321; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), pp. 160-187 (179-180).
- ⁸¹ See Y. Yahalom, 'Angels Do not Understand Aramaic', *JJS* 47 (1996), pp. 38-39.
- ⁸² Yahalom, 'Angels', 38-39 quoted by Kister, 'Lexicography', 181 n. 89.
- ⁸³ The glossator also copied the word **הַפְּאֵרֶת** in 49:16b to smoothen the transition with 50:1a where this word forms an inclusion with 44:7: Mulder, *Simon*, 317. He did the same with **אֲדָם** that creates an

inclusion between 49:16 and 50:22 and כהניך that links 49:14 to 44:16: Mulder, *Simon*, 358. This wealth of inclusions with material before and after Sira 49 is another mark of the work of skillful glossators.

⁸⁴ Targum Onqelos adds at Gen. 5:24 ‘And he was not because the Lord caused him to die’. But some manuscripts (Sperber U, y^b, d¹) add a negation: ‘he did not cause him to die’. J. Bowden, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1969), p. 147. See also P.C. Beentjes, ‘The "Praise of the Famous" and its Prologue. Some Observations on Ben Sira 44:1-15 and the Question on Enoch in 44:16’, *Bijdragen* 51 (1984), pp. 374-383; C. Begg, ‘Josephus's Portrayal of the Disappearances of Enoch, Elijah, and Moses: Some Observations’, *JBL* 109 (1990), pp. 691-693.

⁸⁵ Some Epicurians said to R. Abbahu: ‘We do not find that Enoch died’. R. Abbahu asked: ‘Why not?’ They said: ‘The word take is used here and it is also used of Elijah’. He replied: ‘If you rely on the word take, then in Ezekiel it is written, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes’. R. Tanhuma said, ‘He answered them well’.

⁸⁶ Some parts date back to the 3rd century BCE: D. Dimant, ‘The Biography of Enoch and the Books of Enoch’, *VT* 33 (1983), pp. 14-29 (23). See also R. Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach* (SBLEJL, 8; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), p. 12.

⁸⁷ Cf. 2 Chron. 6:41; Ps. 132:9; Neh. 13:29 and S. Schechter & C. Taylor, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (Amsterdam: 1979).

⁸⁸ Mulder, *Simon*, 93.

⁸⁹ Mulder, *Simon*, 21, 63. 91.

⁹⁰ M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta: SBL, 1992), p. 56; quoted by Mulder, *Simon*, 102.

⁹¹ Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Praise’, 263.240 n. 14.

⁹² Codicology sustains the fact that Jeshua serves as a point of delimitation in 49:12: Mulder, *Simon*, 28. Hebrew MS B seems to end page XVIII with Jeshua: Mulder, *Simon*, 28-29 and consistently starts a new passage on line 1 of a new page. The Nehemiah-Adam passage (49:13-16) is thus clearly transitional.

⁹³ Enosh may be understood as “humanity”: Mulder, *Simon*, 98-99.

⁹⁴ Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Praise’, 243-244.

⁹⁵ Grabbe ‘Historiography’, 147.153.

⁹⁶ Ben Sira considers his own writings also as prophecy (Sira 24:33), and he also seems to refer to the Solomonic collection (Sira 47:17). Although this falls beyond the scope of this study, Ben Sira provides precious information on the Hagiographa: Proverbs are mentioned in 1:25; 3:29; 6:35; 13:26; 20:20; 38:33; 39:3; 47:17, but do they correspond to the canonical ones? For Song of Songs see J.G. Snaith, ‘Quotations in Ecclesiasticus’, *JBL* 18 (1967), pp. 1-12, and Goshen-Gottstein, ‘Praise’, 250 n. 36. Ben Sira never mentions Daniel (too recent?): K. Koch, ‘Is Daniel Also Among the Prophets?’, *Interpretation* 39 (1985), pp. 117-130.

⁹⁷ R.T. Siebeneck, 'May their Bones Return to Life. Sirach's Praise of the Fathers', *CBQ* 21 (1959), pp. 411-428; R.A.F. MacKenzie, 'Ben Sira as Historian', in T.A. Dunne & J.M. Laporte (eds), *Trinification of the World* (Toronto: Regis College Press, 1978), pp. 312-327.

⁹⁸ Th.R. Lee, *Studies in the Form of Sirach 44-50* (SBLDS, 75; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), p. 48.

⁹⁹ 1 Macc. 2:51: 'Remember the deeds of the ancestors'; vs. 61-64: 'And so observe... Do not fear... be courageous'. Mattathias's testament looks like a Dtr remake of Ben Sira's, listing Abraham, Joseph (disputed in Ben Sira), Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elijah, Hannaniah, Azariah, Mishael, Daniel. The Maccabean heroes and the patriarch of their Egyptian allies are added to Ben Sira's list!

¹⁰⁰ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 236-237.

¹⁰¹ Mack, *Wisdom*.

¹⁰² Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 261.

¹⁰³ Mack, *Wisdom*; Lee, *Studies*; R. Petraglio, *Il libro che contamina le mani. Ben Sira rilegge il libro e la storia d'Israele* (Teologia, 4; Palermo: Augustinus, 1993).

¹⁰⁴ Pace Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 238.

¹⁰⁵ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 248; Ska, 'L'éloge', n. 17; Collins mentions the absence of references to dietary laws (31:16 is probably not referring to what is permissible to eat at the symposium, but about table manners) and the non-application of the death penalty for adulterous women, contrarily to Levitical prescriptions. Circumcision is only alluded to in 44:20 concerning Abraham. Ben Sira is thus no partisan of the enforcement of the Torah. His theology subsumes Torah into Wisdom at creation, Wisdom is accomplished by the transfer of the holy tent at Zion (24:10), not by the Sinai encounter: Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 47.57-58.69.

¹⁰⁶ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 253.

¹⁰⁷ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 239.

¹⁰⁸ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 241 n. 19 rejects Ska's claim that Ben Sira is the author of the periodization: Ska, 'L'éloge', 185-191.

¹⁰⁹ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 238.

¹¹⁰ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 253-254.

¹¹¹ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Praise', 250.

¹¹² E.A. Knauf, 'Der Kanon und die Bibeln. Die Geschichte vom Sammeln heiliger Schriften', *BiKi* 57 (2002), pp. 193-198: Job was the non-deuteronomistic "sixth book of the Torah" while Joshua was its deuteronomistic counterpart, both used to provide a particular commentary of the Torah.

¹¹³ Katz, 'Old Testament', 195; Carr, 'Canonization', 22-64.

¹¹⁴ H. Hody, *Contra Historiam LXX Interpretum Aristae nomine inscriptuam dissertatio* (1684).

¹¹⁵ N.L. Collins, *The Library in Alexandria and the Bible in Greek* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 115-130. A. van der Kooij, 'The City of Alexandria and the Ancient Versions of the Hebrew Bible', *JNSL* 25 (1999), pp. 137-149, shows that the LXX never mentions Alexandria, while the Vulgate and the Targumin translate

MT's 'No Amon' by 'Alexandria' in Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:14-16; Nahum 3:8, three passages announcing impending judgment: this reveals at least a conscious desire not to attack the Ptolemaic capital city.

¹¹⁶ Collins, *Library*, 122.

¹¹⁷ Collins, *Library*, 115-126.

¹¹⁸ A.C. Sundberg Jr., 'The Septuagint: the Bible of Hellenistic Judaism', in L.M. McDonald & J.A. Sanders (eds), *The Canon Debate* (Peabody, MA : Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 68-90 (76).

¹¹⁹ Collins, *Library*, 127-140.

¹²⁰ Collins, *Library*, 147-164; Philo, *De vita Mosis* II.25-42; Josephus, *Antiquities* XII.2 (11-118). Josephus' neutral position towards the LXX developed into bitter resentment: Collins, *Library*, 172: *Megillat Taanit* 9a., *Masseket Sopherim* 1.7.

¹²¹ De Pury, 'Le canon', *idem*, 'Qohéleth'; Lang, 'Writings'.

¹²² G. Posemer, *La première domination perse en Egypte* (le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1936); J. Blenkinsopp, 'The Mission of Udjahorresnet and those of Ezra and Nehemiah', *JBL* 106 (1987), pp. 409-421. J. Méléze-Modrzejewski, 'How to be a Jew in Hellenistic Egypt?' in S.J.D. Cohen & S. Freirichs (eds), *Diasporas In Antiquity* (Brown Judaic Studies, 288; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1993), pp. 65-92; *Idem* 'Law and Justice in Ptolemaic Egypt' in M.J. Geller & H. Maehler (eds), *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World. Papers from a Seminar Arranged by the Institute of Classical Studies, the Institute of Jewish Studies and the Warburg Institute, University of London, February to May 1986* (London: Warburg Inst., 1995).

¹²³ Lang, 'Writings', 48.

¹²⁴ Lang, 'Writings', 45-46 and Clement of Alexandria, *Stomateis* VI, 35-37: 2 books of hymns, 4 on astrology, 10 on geography and temple building, 10 on priestly education and the art of sacrifice, and 10 prophetic books dealing with priestly training and state administration.

¹²⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (transl. R.D. Hicks, LCL; London: Heinemann, 1966), xxiv. I.2.

¹²⁶ See Eusebius, *Prep. Evang.* 9.30.447a; E.J. Bickerman, 'La chaîne de la tradition pharisienne' in *idem* (ed.) *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), vol. II, 256-269 (263 n. 38).

¹²⁷ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 100. Van der Kooij, 'Ancient Books', 38 n. 35; S. Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), pp. 235-240.

¹²⁸ McKechnie, 'Career', 8.

¹²⁹ Ben Sira tends to merge Torah and Wisdom, mentioning wisdom immediately after Torah, prophecies only coming in third rank, followed by discourses of notable men, parables and proverbs: Davies, *Scribes*, 109. See also John 10:34; Rom. 3:19 and 1 Cor. 14:21 where books that do not belong to the Torah are called *nomos*.

¹³⁰ Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 103.

¹³¹ This could reflect the translator's careful avoidance of elements that may remind the reader of books of the Humanistic canon (see Pury, 'Qohéleth', 163-198) which I suggest was formed or used during Menelaus' reform (see J. Scurlock, '167 BCE: Hellenism or Reform?', *JHJ* 31 (2000), pp. 125-161) in replacement of the Torah, which the Hellenizers rightly considered as the main source of Jewish particularism and a powerful hindrance to integration.

¹³² B. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus* (Cambridge: University Press, 1989), pp. 47-89, suggests that the blazing successes of the Maccabees, who found themselves at the head of a powerful army overnight, must be partly due to the active support of the well-trained Jewish troop that controlled the Delta for the Ptolemies. The Ptolemies would have been glad to lend a helping hand against the Seleucids.

¹³³ Although this is not directly relevant to the *Nebiim*, one can postulate that the Hasmonaeans' canonizing activities were not limited to the Prophets. A. van der Kooij, 'Canonization of Ancient Hebrew Books and Hasmonaeon Politics', in J.-M. Auwers & H.J. De Jonge (eds), *The Biblical Canons* (BETL, 163; Leuven: University Press, 2003), pp. 27-38 (36), has revealed the differences of opinion over the non-Torah and non-Prophets books before and after the Maccabean coup. Ben Sira considers wisdom literature as vitally important (Sira 39:1-3) and J.C.H. Lebram, 'Aspekte der Alttestamentlichen Kanonbildung', *VT* 18 (1968), pp. 173-189 even claims that Ben Sira knew a three-fold canon: Law, Wisdom and Prophets. However, all post Maccabean witnesses steer clear of Wisdom literature, the grandson's prologue mentions "other books of our ancestors", Philo "Psalms and other books", 2QMMT "David", 2 Maccabees 2 "David and letters of the Persian kings" and Josephus "the remaining four books". Solomon is conspicuously absent, and this absence can only be explained if one accepts de Pury's hypothesis of a Humanistic canon enforced before 168 BCE (I suggest by Menelaus as a counter-Torah), a canon suppressed by the Maccabees and the Hasmonaeans. The Hasmonaeans canonized Ben Sira's *Nebiim* in order to decanonize Solomon's wisdom books (Song, Job, Qohelet, Proverbs 10—29). These books were recanonized in the 2nd-3rd centuries CE by the rabbis who shared their Pharisaic ancestors' dislike for the Hasmonaeans and their *Nebiim*.

¹³⁴ J. Zsengellér, *Gerizim as Israel. Northern Tradition of the Old Testament and the Early History of the Samaritans* (Utrechtse Theologische Reeks, 38; Utrecht: Univ. Verlag, 1998), pp. 164-169. The script of the Samaritan Pentateuch branched off in the late Hasmonaeon period and the terminus a quo for the formation of an independent Samaritan canon is 128 or 107 BCE: J. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (HSM, 2; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 18-52.86-87.

¹³⁵ But in the list of detestable nations (50:26) G replaces Seir with the mountain of Samaria: Mulder, *Simon*, 221.304.328.

¹³⁶ K. Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus* (WMANT, 81; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), pp. 218-220.374. Davies, *Scribes*, 112-113. Eupolemus Frag. 2:1-2 (157 BCE) does not mention the period of the Judges: 'Then Joshua the son of Nun prophesied for thirty years; he lived one hundred and ten years and pitched the sacred tabernacle in Shiloh. After this Samuel was prophet' (Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha*,

2.866 and note e.). The Chronography which created the Period of the Judges is less than a century old when Eupolemus is writing. Therefore, as a historian, he is aware that it is only a literary period! (on the following see Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha*, 2.843) And he was not alone: according to Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha*, 2.292, Demetrius the Chronographer probably wrote a book titled *On the Kings in Judaea* that started with the Patriarchs, Justus of Tiberias wrote a history of Judaeian kings which covered the period from Moses to Agrippa II. Philo calls Moses a ‘king’ (*Vit. Mos* 2.292).

¹³⁷ Davies, *Scribes*, 30.

¹³⁸ De Pury, ‘Le canon’; *Idem*, ‘Qohéleth’; *Idem*, ‘Zwischen Sophokles und Ijob. Die Schriften (Ketubim): ein jüdischer Literatur-Kanon’, *Welt und Umwelt der Bibel* 28 (2003), pp. 25-27. Lang, ‘Writings’.

¹³⁹ Eratosthenes (c. 275-194 BCE), the father of Chronology (he also wrote a *Chronographiai*): J. Blomqvist, ‘Alexandrian Science: The Case of Eratosthenes’, in P. Bilde (ed.), *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt* (Studies in Hellenistic Civilization, 3; Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), pp. 53-73 (61).

¹⁴⁰ H.B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge, 1900), p. 219.

¹⁴¹ Steck, *Abschluß*, 156.170.

¹⁴² N.P. Lemche, ‘The Old Testament—A Hellenistic Book?’, in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic?* (JSOTSup., 317; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 287-318 (288).

¹⁴³ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 450-451.

¹⁴⁴ Exceptions are the place of Ruth, the insertion of Job or Psalms after Deuteronomy. The Joshua—2 Kings succession is only broken once by the insertion of Jeremiah between Samuel and Kings (MSS Add. 21161).

¹⁴⁵ This problem is recognized by N.K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible. A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), p. 107. S.B. Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) dismisses the problem by being more Nothian than Noth: he rejects the notion of a Torah-only canon in the post-exilic period and tries to show that the Law and the Prophets were already canonized by the time of the redaction of the books of Ezra—Nehemiah.

¹⁴⁶ Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha*, 2.844.

¹⁴⁷ J. Hanson, ‘Demetrius the Chronographer’, in Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha* 2.846.

¹⁴⁸ On the problem of chronologies: G. Larsson, *The Secret System* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), p. 87 who draws attention on the intimate link between canon, chronology and alphabet.

¹⁴⁹ On Hecateus, see D. Mendels, ‘Hecataeus of Abdera and a Jewish “patrios politeia” of the Persian Period’ (Diodorus Siculus XL,3), *ZAW* 95 (1983), pp. 96-110. Towards the end of the introductory book of his *Geography*, Eratosthenes ‘criticized Aristotle’s advice to Alexander to treat Greeks as friends and barbarians as enemies and praised Alexander for ignoring it and bestowing his favours on men according to their talents but irrespective of their ethnic origin’: Blomqvist, ‘Alexandrian Science’, 64.

¹⁵⁰ Davies, *Scribes*, 174-182.

¹⁵¹ Beckwith, 'Modern Theory', 389 n. 7 suggests that in the Prologue of Ben Sira there is no settled title for the *Hagiographa*, unlike the Law and the Prophets, because the books of the *Hagiographa* had only recently been divided off from a larger collection of non-Pentateuchal Scriptures. Here Beckwith thinks of a larger prophetic collection because he includes Daniel and Esther in Josephus' list of the Prophets and Psalms, Proverbs, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles in Ben Sira's Prophets (Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 73)¹⁵¹. However, if Ben Sira (see above) and Josephus (see below) are both mentioning a prophetic canon that strictly corresponds to the *Nebiim*, the larger collection of non-Pentateuchal text from which the Writings were drawn has to correspond to a list of miscellaneous books similar to the LXX's *Poetica*. The coexistence of Greek collections next to the Hebrew Torah-*Nebiim* canon explains the on-going debate over the two- or threefold nature of the Old Testament canon around the turn of the era. Beckwith is in favour of a threefold canon, while Barton supports the idea of a purely twofold canon with its second section indefinite in content: Beckwith, 'Modern Theory', 389; J. Barton, *Oracles of God* (London: Barton, Longman & Todd, 1986). E. Ulrich, 'The Non-Attestation of a Tripartite Canon in 4QMMT', *CBQ* 65 (2003), pp. 204-214. J. Barr, *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), p. 55 and Carr, 'Canonization', 40f. There were more than one canon at any time, and the Beckwith versus Barton debate reflects debates already going on two centuries before Christ.

¹⁵² A.C. Sundberg Jr., *The Old Testament of the Early Church* (HTS, 20; Cambridge, Mass / London: Harvard University Press, 1964); Barr, *Scripture*, 56.

¹⁵³ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 7-24.

¹⁵⁴ E. Levita, *Journey on the Paths of Knowledge* (1504).

¹⁵⁵ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 15.17.

¹⁵⁶ G. Genebrard, *Chronographia* II (Lugduni, 1599), pp. 190ff.

¹⁵⁷ J. Cosin, *A Scholastical History of the Canon of the Holy Scripture* (Oxford, 1849), p. 124.

¹⁵⁸ J.E. Grabe, *The History of the Seventy-two Interpreters* (trans. T. Lewis; London, 1715).

¹⁵⁹ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 19.

¹⁶⁰ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 21.

¹⁶¹ A. Kuenen, 'Over de mannen des Groote Synagogue', *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* (Amsterdam: 1876), pp. 207-248.

¹⁶² W.R. Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* (New York: 1890), pp. 138-194; See G. Bohak, 'Hieropolis: a Single-Temple Policy and its Singular Ramifications', *JJS* 50 (1999), pp. 3-16.

¹⁶³ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 51-52.

¹⁶⁴ J. Schaper, 'The Rabbinic Canon and the Old Testament of the Early Church: a Social-Historical View', in A. van der Kooij & K. van der Toorn (eds), *Canonization & Decanonization* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), pp. 93-106 (94).

¹⁶⁵ G. Hoelscher, *Kanonisch und Apokryph* (Leipzig: 1905), pp. 22-25.

¹⁶⁶ E. Koenig, *Kanon und Apokryphen* (Guetersloh: 1917), pp. 45-46; Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 42.

- ¹⁶⁷ C.C. Torrey, *The Apocryphal Literature* (New Haven: 1945), pp. 3-29.
- ¹⁶⁸ O. Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Tuebingen: 1931), pp. 226-228.
- ¹⁶⁹ H.J. Cadbury, 'The Grandson of Ben Sira', *HTR* 47 (1955), pp. 219-225.
- ¹⁷⁰ J.S. Semler, *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canons I.* (Halle: 1771), pp. 121-122.
- ¹⁷¹ S. Zeitlin, *The Second Book of Maccabees* (New York: 1954), pp. 91-94; Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 60-66.
- ¹⁷² R.H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), pp. 67-68; Eissfeldt, *Einleitung*, 626-627; Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 67-74.
- ¹⁷³ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 71.
- ¹⁷⁴ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 74.
- ¹⁷⁵ H.St.J. Thackeray, *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship*, (London: 1921), pp. 107-111.
- ¹⁷⁶ Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 79. In a recent article, Sundberg confidently claims that the Alexandrian canon is now defunct: Sundberg, 'Septuagint', 79.
- ¹⁷⁷ J.P. Lewis, 'What Do We Mean by Jabneh?', *JBR* 32 (1964), pp. 125-132 = S.Z. Leiman (ed.), *The Canon and Massorah of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Ktav, 1974), pp. 254-261. P. Schaefer, 'Die sogenannte Synod von Jabne, II. Der Abschluss des Kanons' *Judaica* 31 (1975), 116-124 = *idem*, *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des Rabbinischen Judentums* (SGJU, 15; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978), pp. 56-74.
- ¹⁷⁸ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 385. But J. Lust, 'Septuagint and Canon' in J.-M. Auwers & H.J. De Jonge (eds), *The Biblical Canons* (BETL, 163; Leuven: University Press, 2003), pp. 39-55 (43) claims that Sundberg's critiques of the Alexandrian canon are sound. He presents a very useful list of the 11 pre-Christian witnesses to the Greek translation (p. 42) to kill the Alexandrian canon hypothesis. However, out of these 11 fragments, 9 belong to the Pentateuch, the remaining ones are the Minor Prophets (p943 or 8HevXIIgr) and Epistle of Jeremiah 43-44 (p804 or p7QLXXEpJer), which means that 50% of the non Torah witnesses of a possible Alexandrian canon belong to a text (Ep.Jer.) that is transmitted only by the LXX! Of course, statistics are meaningless on such a small sample, but this data does not invalidate the hypothesis of an Alexandrian canon that predates the TNK and contained a much wider array of books, on the contrary, it tends to strengthen it.
- ¹⁷⁹ Davies, *Scribes*, 188 n. 6. Koch, 'Daniel', 121, also opposes Sundberg by claiming that 'the firm order which already appears in the earliest papyri of the Septuagint presupposes an old Jewish diaspora canon'.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Contra Apionem* I.38-40. This does not mean that Prophecy had ended: J.R. Levison, 'Did the Spirit Withdraw from Israel? An Evaluation of the Earliest Jewish Data', *NTS* 43 (1997), pp. 35-57. See also W.J. Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism* (JSOTSup, 286; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999). E.M. Meyers, 'The Crisis of the Mid-Fifth Century B.C.E. Second Zechariah and the "End" of Prophecy' in: D.P. Wright, D.N. Freedman & A. Hurvitz (eds), *Pomegranates and Golden Bells. Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995), pp. 713-723.

¹⁸¹ P. Höffken, 'Zum Kanonbewusstsein des Josephus Flavius in *Contra Apionem* und in den *Antiquitates*', *JSJ* 32 (2001) pp. 159-177. J.C. Trebelle Barrera, 'Origins of a Tripartite Old Testament Canon', in L.M. McDonald & J.A. Sanders (eds), *The Canon Debate* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 128-145 (132), notes that in *Ant.* 10.35 Josephus mentions Isaiah and "also others, twelve in numbers", thirteen in all, which do not seem to correspond to those alluded to in *Ap.*

¹⁸² Esther is set at the court of a Xerxes whose reign could therefore be set before that of an Artaxerxes. Judith: In spite of the most flagrant "errors" of the opening verse: "It was in the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians from his capital Nineveh . . ." the book is set before the Persian period. The only limitation is the possible writing of Judith in the Hasmonaean period, although this is still early enough for Josephus to know it. Tobit is also situated during the Assyrian period.

¹⁸³ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 79-80 fills the list by drawing information from Josephus' *Antiquities* and *War* to include Daniel and Lamentations. He also includes Judges and Samuel although they are not mentioned in Josephus' works, and Esther because she was married to Artaxerxes and also Ezra and Nehemiah (*Ant.* 11.5.1-2,6-8) who ministered during the reign of this same king.

¹⁸⁴ Josephus, *Contra Apionem* (transl. H.St.J. Thackeray, LCL; London: Heinemann, 1966), p. 179.

¹⁸⁵ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 119.

¹⁸⁶ Z. Zevit, 'Canonization', 140 n. 20: the prophetic books are excluded because they would have contributed nothing to the argument since most of the argument of *Contra Apionem* is to establish that the Jews possess authentic, accurate historical records.

¹⁸⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Eminent Philosophers*, xxiv. I.2.

¹⁸⁸ Admittedly, the status of Judith and Tobit remains problematic: Josephus does not mention them, although he refers to Ruth.

¹⁸⁹ Including Enoch, Ascension of Isaiah: see table in Sundberg, *Old Testament*, 54-55.

¹⁹⁰ Jerome, *Prologus Galeatus*, Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 120.

¹⁹¹ Because Judith and Tobit are not mentioned by Josephus, these books were probably not part of the Chronography in Josephus' days, contrarily to Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel, mentioned in *Antiquities* and recovered by the *Ketubim*.

¹⁹² Josephus, *War*, Preface 6 (18). G.A. Williamson, *The World of Josephus* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), p. 288.

¹⁹³ And thus constituted what could be saved of the original Deuteronomistic History.

¹⁹⁴ Ph. Guillaume, 'From a Post-monarchical to the Pro-monarchical Period of the Judges', *BN* 113 (2002), pp. 12-17.

¹⁹⁵ Judith and Tobit seem to be a late Christian addition, although they do fit into Josephus' prophets while the main Eastern supporters of their canonicity come from Alexandria: Origen (*Epistle to Africanus*) for Tobit, Clement for Judith (see C.A. Moore in *ABD*).

¹⁹⁶ Charlesworth, *Pseudoepigrapha*, 2.844 n.6.

¹⁹⁷ The onset of the Roman period marks the end of the growth of the *Historica*: according to Goldstein, 2 *Maccabees*, 83, 1 Maccabees was written by 90 BCE, Jason of Cyrene wrote his work by 86 BCE and the abridger produced his between 78 and 63 BCE. 3 and 4 Maccabees could have been produced in the 1st century 50 CE (H. Anderson, *ABD* 4.439-454), but the fact that they had to receive a ‘Maccabaeian’ title which does not correspond to their content indicates that the Maccabaeian period was considered as the natural end of Jewish past. The canonization of the *Nebiim* by the Hasmonaeans thus led to close the *Historica*.

¹⁹⁸ Contrary to my previous claims: Guillaume, ‘Period of the Judges’; idem, *Waiting for Joshua* (JSOTSup., 385; London: Continuum, 2004).

¹⁹⁹ Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 60.

²⁰⁰ See Beckwith, *Old Testament*, 113-115.

²⁰¹ J.A. Sanders, ‘The Issue of Closure in the Canonical Process’, in L.M. McDonald & J.A. Sanders (eds), *The Canon Debate* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002), forthcoming.

²⁰² Timon of Phlius, Frag. 12 Diels, quoted by R. Barnes, ‘Cloistered Bookworms in the Chicken-Coop of the Muses: the Ancient Library of Alexandria’, in R. MacLeod (ed.), *The Library of Alexandria* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), pp. 61-78 (62).