

the Hebrew community of the post-Christian world felt for a Greek translation other than the LXX, it was also, prior to Christian adoption, a vital book in the Jewish community. The LXX included a number of Jewish apocryphal books (by the second century, AD, at least) but how or when these came to be associated with it is not clear...they may have been added by the zealous Christian church...and we are not absolutely sure these works were not thought of as having sacred status by some of the rabbis of the time. But as the LXX gained with the church, it lost its footing with the Jews and was soon displaced in that culture. Emending its text came to be a sort of international pasttime and one of the tasks of Origen (ca 200 AD) was the attempt to recover the full or correct text for the LXX.

In this course we do not consider the concept of a "proto-LXX" that would be the grandfather of all later copies. We merely note that, apart from all suggested correction and addition, the LXX is far and away the most important version of the OT and one most pressing to the scholar.

(2) Manuscripts. Our oldest and most complete copies of the LXX are the Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. You are more familiar with these from New Testament study but they are also the best copies of the LXX. This will help one to understand why the history of the LXX is vague. More than 500 years transpired between its production and the available texts for historical study. Many other of the New Testament codices have OT segments and portions as well as those mentioned and the date given for the NT portion is also that of the Old.

There are some ancient fragments including the Rylands papyri (2nd century BC) with just six fragments in the group. The comparable Minor Prophets scroll found at Qumran in 1952, is not, we are told a Septuagint Mss. And there are a few fragments in the Chester Beatty papyri as well. Full lists of LXX mss may be found in the following sources:

Swete: INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT IN GREEK, Vol. V

Wurthwein: TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, p. 52 ff.