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Historical and Theological Lexicon of the Septuagint

This large-scale collective and interdisciplinary project aims to produce a new research tool: a multi-volume dictionary providing an article of between two and ten pages (around 600 articles in all) for each important word or word group of the Septuagint. Filling an important gap in the fields of ancient philology and religious studies, the dictionary will be based on original research of the highest scientific level.

This project has benefitted from funding from the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (French Research National Agency), the Maison Interuniversitaire des Sciences de l'Homme – Alsace (Strasbourg), the Melanchthon-Stiftung (Tübingen), and the Armin Schmitt Stiftung (Regensburg).

Wider context

The Hebrew Bible has played an important part in the development of Western culture. However, its central ideas – such as monotheism, the demythologization of nature or the linearity of time – had to be taken out of the national and linguistic milieu in which they had developed if they were to become fertile on a

wider scale. They also needed to be rendered palatable to a mind-set that had experienced the scientific, rationalist revolution presented by the Greeks. The Septuagint – the oldest Greek translation of the Jewish Bible, produced over the last three centuries B.C.E. – is the first important step in this process of acculturation.

During the last thirty years, the Septuagint has come out of the shadow of its Hebrew source. Historians of Judaism, linguists, and biblical scholars have come to view the Septuagint as a significant document in its own right. As the discoveries in Qumran have shown, the Hebrew source text of the Septuagint was not identical to the traditional text received by the synagogue (the Masoretic Text). Also, the translators appear to have taken a degree of liberty in interpreting the text. Dominique Barthélemy used the term 'aggiornamento': the Septuagint is a kind of update of the Jewish scriptures.

Several projects are aimed at producing annotated translations of the Septuagint: in France, *La Bible d'Alexandrie*, of which about twenty volumes have appeared since 1986;

