THE "LUCIANIC" TEXT OF THE CANONICAL AND THE APOCRYPHAL
SECTIONS OF ESTHER: A REWRITTEN BIBLICAL BOOK

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The so-called Lucianic text of Esther (L) is contained in
mss 19 (Brooke-McLean: b'), 93 (e₂), 108 (b), 319 (y), and
partly 392. In other books the Lucianic text is joined by
mss 82, 127, 129. This group is in Esther traditionally called
"Lucianic" because in most other books it represents a text of
the "Lucianic" type, even though the "Lucianic" text of Esther

1 The following bibliographical abbreviations are used:
Cook
H.J. Cook, "The A Text of the Greek Versions of
the Book of Esther", ZAW 81 (1969),
pp. 369-376.

Hanhart
R. Hanhart, Septuaginta, VT graecum in
auctoritate academae litterarum gottingensis
editum, VIII, 3 (Göttingen 1966).

Langen
J. Langen, "Die beiden griechischen Texte des
Buches Esther", TQ 42 (1860), pp. 244-272.

Moore
C.A. Moore, "A Greek Witness to a Different
Hebrew Text of Esther", ZAW 79 (1967),
pp. 351-358.

Moore, Additions
C.A. Moore, Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah, The
Additions, Anchor Bible (Garden City, New

Moore, Esther
C.A. Moore, Esther, Anchor Bible (Garden
City, New York 1971).

2 For a description of these mss see Hanhart, pp. 15-16.
and that of the other books have little in common in either vocabulary or translation technique. Accordingly, this study too speaks of the L text. Some scholars call this text A, as distinct from B which designates the LXX.\

The editions of Cambridge and Göttingen (Hanhart) print the LXX and L separately, just as the earlier Handausgabe of Rahlfs (1935) had provided separate texts of A and B in the book of Jud. Indeed, it would not be appropriate to record readings of L in the apparatus of the LXX.

3 Scholars have attempted in vain to detect the known characteristics of the Lucianic text elsewhere in the LXX also in the L text in Esth. For example, the Lucianic text is known for substituting words of the LXX with synonymous words, and a similar technique has been detected by Cook, pp. 369-370 in Esth. However, this criterion does not provide sufficient proof for labeling the L text of Esth. "Lucianic", since the use of synonymous Greek words can be expected to occur in any two Greek translations of the same Hebrew text. Furthermore, the tendency of Atticism, which is characteristic of the Lucianic recension, has been recognized by Hanhart, p. 89, also in the L text, but the evidence is not very strong. For a description of other characteristics of the L text, see Hanhart, pp. 87-95.

4 Thus Moore and Cook on the basis of earlier editions. In the commentaries on Esther and the "Additions", Moore employs the abbreviation AT (A Text).

5 A.E. Brooke, N. McLean and H.St.J. Thackeray, The OT in Greek, III, 1 (Cambridge 1940). In distinction from the principles used elsewhere in the Cambridge Septuagint, the edition of the L text of Esth. is eclectic; in fact, it merely reproduces the text which was composed earlier by P.A. de Lagarde, Librorum VT canoniconorum pars prior graece (Göttingen 1883). It should be noted that the L text of Esth. was printed as a separate text ever since the edition of Esth. by Usserius (London 1655).
Despite the separation between L and LXX in these editions, the unique character of L in Esther was not sufficiently noted by scholars, possibly because Rahlfs' Handausgabe does not include any of its readings. As is well-known, also the concordance of Hatch-Redpath does not quote the readings of L in Esth., since it refers only to the text of the majuscules ABS of the LXX and the Sixtine edition.\footnote{Hanhart, p. 90, n. 1, mentions a hand-written concordance of L (without Hebrew equivalents) by P.H. Daking Gooderham (1957).}

The L text differs greatly from MT in omissions, additions and content. An analysis of its nature is of importance for understanding the Greek translation(s) of Esth. It may also be significant for the textual and recensional history of the Hebrew text. These aspects of L are discussed here. Three explanations suggest themselves: (1) L reflects a recensionally different text of the book of which the Greek translation is a reliable, though not a literal, translation;\footnote{This possibility was mentioned by Moore and Cook (n. 1), C.B. Paton, Esther, ICC (Edinburgh 1908), p. 38 and C.C. Torrey, "The Older Books of Esther", HTR 37 (1944), pp. 1-40. Torrey described in detail the importance of the two Greek versions of Esther which, in his view, reflect Greek translations of the original Aramaic text of Esther, from which the Hebrew versions of MT was translated and adapted.} (2) L is an inner-
Greek rewriting of the biblical story. (3) L is a Greek translation of a Hebrew (or Aramaic) rewriting of the story. By implication, the assumption of a recensionally different book (1) bears on our understanding of the literary history of the biblical book of Esth., while (2) and (3) bear only on the history of its interpretation. Although no certainty can be achieved since the original language of L remains doubtful, possibilities (2) and/or (3) are to be preferred.

I

We first turn to the investigation of the relationship between L and the LXX. There is little doubt that L is closely connected with the LXX of Esth. and depends upon it. This dependence shows in important common renderings which could not have developed independently. Furthermore, errors in L display its dependence on the LXX. Hanhart, p. 88, illustrated the close relationship between the two texts by examples from Additions C and E. Examples drawn from the canonical sections of Esth. are given here.

Examples of renderings common to L and LXX:

1:20

לאגאדהית

LXX ἀπὸ πτωχοῦ ἔως πλουσίου
L ἀπὸ πτωχῶν ἔως πλουσίων

9:3

מOfFile איה והיהודים

LXX ἐτύμων τοὺς Ἰουδαίους
L ,, ,, ,, }

[4]
9:3

USHISH HMLKH VSHR LMLKH

LXX 'OL BASLHKLK' GRAMMATETZ

L '' '', '', '' '' , 'Ασσυηρων

(for a similar rendering, see 2 Chr. 31:12).

Corruptions in L show its dependence on the LXX text:

9:7-10

ΧΩΝ ΦΡΟΝΗΓΗΣΑΝ ΛΕΠΟΛΗ...UXURHA BCN TXH

LXX TOV TEE FARSAVNESTALV KAI ΔΕΛΦΩΝ...TOUS DEKAV YWOUS AMAN

L KAI TOV FARSAV KAI TOV ΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ...KAIV TOUS DEKAV YWOUS AMAN

The name of Haman's son: ΔΕΛΦΩΝ, was corrupted in L to τὸν ΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ (i.e., Farsan's brother). This reading makes little sense because all the men listed were brothers. The corruption must have occurred at an early stage because the Greek context subsequently has been changed: since the list starts by mentioning "Farsan and his brother", it could not anymore have the summary line, "the ten sons of Haman". Therefore, by the addition of καί which is necessarily secondary since it depends on the corruption of ΔΕΛΦΩΝ to ΔΕΛΦΩΝ, the six names were separated from the next phrase - "and the ten sons of Haman".

Note that L mentions only five sons of Haman as well as "Farsan's brother".
8:10 רֵבִים מֵעִמָּי הַאֲרֵי מַתְחָלְתֵינוּ
LXX καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν περιετέμοντο
L καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων περιετέμοντο

מַתְחָלְתֵינוּ has caused many exegetical problems. Its most simple explanation would be that the Gentiles "became Jews" out of fear of Mordechai. It was thus understood by the Greek translators (LXX and L) who rendered it: "they were circumcised". According to the LXX, this refers to the Gentiles (ἕθνα); according to L, to the Jews. This makes no sense. L's dependence on the LXX shows in the verb περιετέμοντο which derives from the LXX; τῶν Ἰουδαίων probably reflects a second rendering of מַתְחָלְתֵינוּ (טֵן of MT is not represented in L).

4:8 LXX + ...διότι ἄμαν ὁ δευτερεύων τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐλάλησεν...
L + ...διότι ἄμαν ὁ δευτερεύων λελάληκε τῷ βασιλεῖ...

The separation between the translation of the two elements of the phrase מַתְחָלְתֵינוּ (cf. MT 10:3 [not in LXX or L]) in L is clearly secondary. In 4:8, the Greek phrase which has no counterpart in MT refers to Haman, while in the MT of 10:3 it refers to Mordechai.

The few instances adduced here and the data apud Hanhart, p. 88 and B. Jacob, ZAW 10 (1890), p. 261, demonstrate L's dependence upon the LXX text. Their number can be amplified by further significant renderings common to the LXX and L. Accordingly, L should be considered dependent upon the LXX. The exact relationship between L and the LXX (and MT) is discussed in the next section.

[6]
II

Taking into consideration the existence of both significant agreements and disagreements, we cannot avoid the conclusion that L reflects some type of revision of the LXX, as was suggested by most scholars. At this stage, the nature of this revision cannot be determined, since we do not know whether the reviser had access to a Hebrew text. However, it appears that this was indeed the case.

The present article does not concentrate on the relationship between LXX and L. Rather, it centers on the relationship between L and MT. There are many differences between them, and their text-critical value is analyzed next.

As it has been established that L is based on the LXX, the many deviations of L from MT must have resulted from the translator's free attitude to his Hebrew and/or Greek Vorlage or from a Vorlage which differed from MT. However, prior to this decision one should decide whether L had independent access to a Hebrew text different from MT. In our view, there is little doubt that L reflects Hebrew readings which differ from MT. This becomes particularly evident from the many (syntactic) Hebraisms in the short additions to MT. Here are some examples, 

9 The relationship between L and the LXX is more complex than is implied here, but our remarks are limited to the canonical sections in the Greek versions. It has been recognized by some scholars (e.g., Cook, p. 371) that in the sections which have been translated from a Semitic Vorlage (that is, in the canonical sections as well as some of the Additions), the LXX and L texts reflect two different translations (see below), whereas the sections which have been composed in Greek (at least Additions B and E) relate to each other as two textual recensions of one Greek text.
tentatively retroverted into Hebrew:

3:5 + καὶ ὀργὴ ἔξεκαθή ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐξῆτε φιλελεύν τὸν
Μαρδοχαίον καὶ πάντα τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ =
(cf. 2:21 LXX καὶ ἐξῆτουν ἀποκτείναν = ῥεῖκοσια λήσθα (κβλρ) and
further 1:12 (see p. 9)).

6:4(2) + εἰς παραφυλακὴν τῆς ψυχῆς μου =
המשמר תחנה המש

6:4(2) + δυστυ αὐτός ἐποδησε με ζην ἀχρι τοῦ νῦν =
(κε διὰ αὐτοῦ τὴν ἡμέραν)

(note the representation of the hiph'il by πολεύω + inf.,
frequently found elsewhere in the LXX)

6:5(3) + ἐνέχειτο γὰρ φοβὸς Ἀμαν ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις αὐτῶν =
καὶ πτόλεμος ἡμῖν ἐκεῖνον
(cf. 9:3
cαὶ πτόλεμος μᾶκα ἐκεῖνο)

(note the different rendering in L and LXX)

6:13(10) + (ὡς δὲ ἔγνω Ἀμαν δότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτὸς ὁ δοξαζόμενος ἀλλὰ
δότι Μαρδοχαῖος) συνετρίβη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ σφόδρα (καὶ
μετέβαλε τὸ πνεύμα αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐκλύσει) =

6:17(11) + ... καὶ ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν κόρον = ' ὅ λα

10 This phrase is known only from biblical contexts. See
Liddell-Scott-Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon9 (Oxford 1940),
s.v.
The assumption that L is based on a Hebrew text may be supported by another criterion. At times, L exhibits more literal renderings of MT than the LXX:

1:3

Lambda 1:3...κατ’ τοὺς ἄρξοντας τῶν σατραπῶν

L...καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες τῶν χωρῶν κατὰ πρὸς τοὺς αὐτούς

1:12

Δανάη 1:12...καὶ ἐλυθήθη οἱ βασιλεὺς καὶ ἡρίος

L...ἐλυθήθη Σφόδρα καὶ ὁργή ἐξεικασθῇ ἐν αὐτῶ

1:14

Δανάη 1:14...οἱ ἐγγὺς τοῦ βασιλέως

L...καὶ οἱ ὁρῶντες τὸ πρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως

2:7

Δανάη 2:7...καὶ τῇ ἐβδομῇ

L...καὶ τῇ ἐβδομῇ Σφόδρα καὶ ὁρατὰ τῇ ἀπε

3:1

Δανάη 3:1...οἱ ἅρων πρὸς ἡλίῳ γεῦλα

L...μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐδοξαζεν...καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τῶν λόγων τούτων ἐμεγάλυνεν...

For further examples, see Moore, pp. 355-358.
Let us recapitulate. L is based on the LXX; since it also differs from the LXX, it must reflect a revision of the LXX.

L had independent access to a Hebrew (or Aramaic) text which differed from MT. It may be described as a revision of the LXX towards that text. The nature of this underlying text is investigated here.

In an attempt to unravel the riddle of L, the solution comes from an unexpected corner, viz. the so-called apocryphal additions to Esth. As is well-known, the two Greek versions of Esth. contain six major additions, traditionally named A–F, besides many minor additions. Jerome placed A–F at the end of the canonical book in order to distinguish between them and the canonical sections. This separation led to misleading conclusions because scholars usually did not ascribe these additions to the translator himself. Furthermore, in the history of research, the "canonical" and "non-canonical" components were mostly studied separately by different scholars. We suggest that they should be investigated in conjunction, which will improve the understanding of both the LXX and L.

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12 For further examples, see C.A. Moore, *The Greek Text of Esther*, unpubl. diss, Johns Hopkins University 1965, pp. 51; Cook, p. 375.
We note that L differs from MT not only with regard to the large (as well as to some minor) additions, but also with regard to large omissions, inversions and changes in content. The question of the original language of the Additions bears on the issues under investigation. If they were translated from Hebrew or Aramaic, their fate is closely connected with that of the canonical sections; however, if some were originally in Greek, they could have been written by the translator himself. In this case, the fate of these additions is closely connected with the Greek version. It should therefore be stressed that modern research\(^{13}\) has left few doubts that the original language of Add. A, C, D, F, was Hebrew or Aramaic, and that of Add. B and E was Greek.

We submit the translation of the canonical sections in L and the so-called Additions should be regarded as one organic unit (thus also Langen, p. 255). This can be shown at different levels:

1) The text of the canonical sections in L contains several references to the Add. For example, in 1:1, καὶ ἔγλευεν μετὰ τῶν λόγων τούτων (= ἔγλευεν μετὰ ἑαυτοῦ τούτων; note the Hebraic diction) was added after Add. A had been prefixed before ch. 1. καὶ δεὶγήθη τοῦ θεοῦ (4:11[15]) and ὁ θεὸς ἐπαύσατο Ἑσθήρ προσευχομένη (5:1) refer both to Add. C (similar connections with the Add. are found in the LXX to these verses, and in 2:20; 4:8).

2) When the additions were attached to the canonical sections, there resulted a certain redundancy in content which still shows in the text of the LXX. However, in L this redundancy was avoided by omitting some components of the canonical text. Presumably, the author of the Hebrew (or Aramaic) Vorlage of L was responsible for these omissions, just as he was responsible for other omissions and additions. Since both the minor additions (for examples, see p.17f) and the large Additions A, C, D, F were originally composed in Hebrew (or Aramaic), also the omissions vis-à-vis MT derived from that Hebrew (or Aramaic) text, rather than from the Greek translator. Three examples follow:

2:6 om. The content of this verse (genealogy and background of Mordechai) is given in Add. A 2(3).

2:21-23 om. This section tells of Mordechai's discovery of a plot against the king which he subsequently foiled. In the canonical book this section is of major importance; in L it was omitted, probably because the matter had already been mentioned in Add. A 9(11)-17.

5:1-2 om (also in the LXX). Add. D elaborates on 5:1-2 of the canonical text; hence, the parallel verses in MT were omitted.

Two other omissions concern Additions originally written in Greek:

[12]
3:12 om. The content of this verse is covered by Add. B.

8:7-13 om. The greater part of these verses were omitted because they are covered by Add. E which contains the decree which allowed the Jews to take revenge on their enemies.

3) In a few cases, the Add. share vocabulary with the canonical sections, e.g.:

A 18 -- καὶ ἐξῆθεν ὁ Ἀμαν κακοπολήσας τὸν Μαρδοκαίου (similar to the LXX); cf. 3:5 L καὶ ἐξῆθεν ἄνελευ τοῦ Μαρδοκαίου (different from MT); cf. also 2:21 LXX and E 3, L and LXX.

A 14 -- καὶ ὁμολογήσαντες οἱ εὐνοῦχοι ἀπαχθήσων (similar to the LXX); cf. the use of this verb in 7:11 ἀπαχθήσω Ἀμαν καὶ μὴ ἔκαστω (different from MT).

The "canonical" and "apocryphal" sections of L should be considered as one unit, although the translation of the latter does not depend on the former. An illustration is 2:6 which is quoted in A 3 in a wording which is closer to MT than to LXX and L of 2:6. A 3 mentions "Jechoniah king of Juda", as does MT of 2:6, whereas the Greek versions (or their Vorlage) omitted the words between הָלָה הָעַי and הָלָה הָשָׁא, possibly due to homoiooteleuton (resulting in the strange construction of the LXX).
If the canonical and non-canonical sections of L (with the possible exclusion of Add. B and E)\textsuperscript{14} indeed formed one unit, we can now attempt to characterize their content because the Additions are not as problematic as the other sections of L. In the following section, an attempt is made to describe the character of the L text as a whole.

1. The Additions in toto and in many details are secondary when compared with MT. The contradictions in content between the Add. and the canonical text of Esth. have been amply illustrated by C.B. Paton, op. cit. (n. 7), p. 43; Moore, Additions, p. 179.

2. In his revision of the LXX, L often follows the Vorlage closely, and at times represents it more faithfully than the LXX (see p. 9f). At the same time, the revision often deviated from its Hebrew and Greek Vorlagen as will be shown by a comparison of the three texts in the following instances:

1:4

\textit{כָּלָה הַפָּרָה וַרֹדֵלוֹת}

\textit{לָכָּה מְדַּעְתָּן תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ}

\textit{לָכָּה מְדַּעְתָּן תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ}

\textit{לָכָּה מְדַּעְתָּן תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ תִּכְּבֹרָסָהָּ}

\textsuperscript{14} At least Add. E. was probably added secondarily. A short version of the original text of the letter is found after 8:35 in L (before 8:15 of MT), while an expanded version of that letter (Add. E) is found after 8:12.
It seems impossible to conciliate the literal and the free elements in L. Moreover, the LXX reflects renderings of both types throughout the canon. Accordingly, their juxtaposition in the L text of Esth. is not surprising. Furthermore, one should pay attention to the proportions. The non-literal elements in L seem to be dominant. Finally, the literal elements are found more frequently in the former than in the latter part of the book (see below).

3. The author of the text which underlies L (or simply L, as he will be called in the following discussion) felt free to rewrite the biblical story. He added, omitted and re-wrote many details. Approximately half of the biblical
book was omitted in L. While in ch. 1-7 L followed at least the framework of the biblical text, little was left of chs. 8-10. The editor appears to have been more interested in the first two thirds than in the last third of the biblical story. It is of interest to note here that in Midrash Abba Gurion\textsuperscript{15}, ch. 8-10 are not represented, and in B.T. Megillah 10b-17a (a running commentary on Esth.), they are commented upon very briefly. It is possible that the account of the Jews' revengeful killing of their enemies was not to the liking of the authors of L and of these midrashic collections.\textsuperscript{16}

4. The introduction (Add. A) and subscription (Add. F) provide the framework into which the author integrated the rewritten story. One of the main features is the emphasis on the role of God behind the events.\textsuperscript{17} God informs Mordechai in a dream (A 4-10) what he plans to do. The meaning of the cryptic dream is clarified in the postscript (Add. F).\textsuperscript{18} In the biblical story, Esther is not concerned

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item S. Buber, Sammlung Agadischer Commentare zum Buche Esther (Wilna 1886), pp. 1-42.
\item As is well-known, in Qumran no fragment of the Book of Esth. has been identified among the hundreds of biblical scrolls which have been found. Various interpretations of this situation have been suggested. However, within this context little attention has been paid to the aforementioned dislike of at least part of the Book of Esth.
\item See E. Erlich, "Der Traum des Mardochai", ZRGG 7 (1955), pp. 69-74.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
about dietary laws when she dines with the king, but in
Add. C 27-28, she is extremely concerned about this issue.
D 8 mentions God's intervention and C 20 the Temple. A
conspicuous feature of the biblical story is the absence
of the name of God.\(^{19}\) However, in the Greek translation
God is mentioned often, both in the Add. and in the canoni-
cal sections (4:9[14], 11[16]; 7:2 in L and 2:20, 4:8 and
6:1 in the LXX). Of great interest is the rendition of
רָם בַּשָּׁם in 4:14 as ὁ ἡσύχας and the mention of God in
connection with the reference to fasting in 4:16. For the
text of 7:2, see p. 9.

5. The author *embellished* the story as he saw fit. The sub-
jective nature of these embellishments precludes any con-
sistency. Such expansions are found in Add. D - the ap-
pearance of Esther before the king (parallel to 5:1-2 of
MT), Add. B - the first letter of the king (after 3:13 of
MT) and Add. E - the second letter of the king (after
8:12).

The canonical sections contain many additions which
are not found in MT, e.g.:

1:12 + δὲν ἡκύρωσεν Οὐασσεν τὴν βουλὴν αὐτοῦ =
כִּי הָפָרָה וְשָׁתָה אָתָא אָצַהוֹר

cf. 1:16 + δὲν ἡκύρωσε τὸ πρόσταγμα τοῦ βασιλέως =
כִּי הָפָרָה אָתָא אָצַהוֹר הָמֵלך

\(^{19}\) For the background of this and related issues, see S. Tal-
mon, "'Wisdom' in the Book of Esther", VT 13 (1963),
pp. 419-455.
The Greek verb ἀκυροῦω does not occur in the canonical books of the LXX. It is known from Aquila's revision where it frequently equals ידוע. Hence, it is plausible to retrovert here the phrase ידוע ידוע which occurs often in the OT.

4:8 Contains a long addition which is partly based on the LXX. The mention of יבכע יבכע in MT probably prompted L to dwell on its assumed contents.

5:14 + ἔπεις συγκεκριμένη σε ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀφανίσας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ ἔδωκάν σοι οἱ θεοὶ εἰς ἐκδοξησίν αὐτῶν ἡμέραν ὀλέθρου

6:2-3 long add. The king stresses that nothing was done for Mordechai. His servants hesitate to answer him because they envy Mordechai. L draws a parallel between Mordechai's and Haman's fear (for the text, see p. 8).

6:10 short add., see p. 8.

6:11 long add., see p. 8.

7:2 long add., see p. 9.

7:5 long add. Esther pities the king, soothes him and asks him not to be angry. The king makes Esther swear to tell him who is the evil-doer. The addition adds much dramatic effect to the story.
6. In the rewriting of the biblical story, the author was
guided by his understanding of its major points, so that
details were often omitted. Again, no consistency should be
expected. It could be argued, e.g., that the genealogy of
Mordechai and the historical background as depicted in MT
(2:6, not in L) fit the religious tendencies of L, and
therefore should have been retained. However, L may have
omitted it because he considered this verse of little
importance for the main thread of the story,\(^{20}\) like many
other seemingly less relevant or unnecessary details.
Further examples follow:

1:3 נָשַת שָלוֹשׁ om
In L the symposium is not dated.

1:10 The names of the seven eunuchs are not mentioned
(the sections in parentheses are missing in L):
אמר לו (מעומק כותא רביםה בכותא ואבותה זכר זכרה
שבעתה) המר״ים (המושרים את פנים الملك אחשורוש)

\(^{20}\) The verse presents an exegetical problem, especially when
it is compared with 1:1 ff. If Mordechai was deported with the
exile of Jehoniah in 597 (2:6), and if אחשורוש is identified
as Xerxes who reigned from 486 until 465 B.C.E., Mordechai
must have been over 100 years old when the events described
took place, and his adopted daughter must have been too old
for acting like the biblical Esther. Moreover, 2:6 contains
the only allusion to the history of the Jewish people. As is
well-known, the Book of Esth. lacks a religious background, and
has no references to either Palestine, the Temple or Jewish
history, except for 2:6 (cf. n. 19). This underlines the diffi-
culties which inhere in 2:6. Therefore L may have omitted this
verse on purpose.
1:14 The names of the seven princes are not mentioned:
והקרוב אליהם (כannessא שחר אדומיםה חסין ונ/yyyyי ממסנאמ
ממוכן שבתח) שרי פרש וררי.

1:17-8 om. These verses interrupt the sequence of
vv. 16-19. The suggestion that the rebellion of
Vashti could cause other women, especially princesses,
to rebel, is a mere afterthought.

1:22 om. V. 22 contains two elements: (1) the king sends
a letter to all provinces; (2) the gist of the letter
is that every man should rule in his own house and be
permitted to talk in his own language. This verse
somehow continues vv. 17-18 which are also lacking
in L. V. 22a is not needed in the context since v. 21
already mentioned that the king accepted the advice
of Memuchan.

2:7 והקרוב אליהם (حسبה ההא) אסתר בת דבר (כא או לחה ואדום)
ותChunks חפ תאר וגדות מרה (רמוזה אבייה ואמה לחה מדרך
וללמח)
The sections in parentheses are missing in L.

2:8-18 L condensed the long and detailed description. A
large part of the section is lacking in L: 8a, 9b,
10-13, 14b, 15-16, and small segments of vv. 17-18.
As a result, the ceremony of assembling the maidens
is missing, as well as details of grooming the maidens
for their meeting with the king. L knows, that Esther
was chosen from among many maidens (v. 17 ὃς δὲ κατεμφάνθη ὁ Βασιλεὺς πάσας τὰς παράθεντος). In the rewritten text (in which vv. 10-13 are lacking), v. 14a - מִלֶּהֶן בְּנִבְנֵךְהָנִיהַו - refers to Esther (cf. the added phrase - ὃς δὲ εὐσήχθη ἦν Ἑσθήρ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα), rather than to the maidens in general.

2:19-20 om. All exegetes consider these verses as contextually very difficult, especially v. 19a (which is also lacking in the LXX). After Esther has been chosen as queen and the symposium was held (v. 18), there was no need for a second assembling of the virgins (v. 19). For this reason, this section may have been omitted.

4:3 om. This verse describes the situation in the Persian empire. It disturbs the connection between v. 2 and v. 4, which concern the personal fate of Mordechai.

4:4-11 The section is much shorter in L. Inter alia, vv. 4, 5-7 are lacking. There also is a difference in subject matter; according to MT, Esther sends Hatakh to Mordechai, but in L Hatakh is not mentioned. The section which reports the sending of messengers is condensed in such a way that the initiative seems to come from Mordechai.

For further omissions see 4:13b, 5:11, and ch. 8-10, where little of the biblical story was left.
7. The author felt free to make changes and revise whole sections. Some examples follow:

1:13-15 In L, v. 15 follows upon v. 13 and in its turn is followed by v. 14. The syntax of MT in vv. 13-15 is difficult. L gives the only correct interpretation of this text by connecting the verb of v. 13a with v. 15 (v. 13b as well as v. 14 contain subordinate clauses). The order vv. 15, 14 probably resulted from the syntactical rewriting of the passage.

3:1-5 Much of vv. 1-5 differs in L from MT, but the message of both texts is basically the same. There are several omissions and additions. Note especially the addition in v. 5 (mentioned above, p. 8) which reflects Hebraic diction.

3:6-13 Vv. 6-13 occur in L in the sequence: 6 8 9 11 10 7 13. The most important result of this change vis-à-vis MT is that the choice of the 13th of Adar succeeds Haman's coming to the king. In a way, L's sequence is more logical. Haman would not have chosen the day for the attack on the Jews before permission was granted by the king. (The sequence in MT has caused some exegetes to explain the throwing of lots as referring originally to the choice of the day on which it was most suitable for Haman to come to the king.)
These words occur in L after "and Mordechai knew all that had happened" (4:1).

7:10 om. The idea of MT was expressed differently elsewhere in L: καὶ ἐσφαγώζῃ ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ βασιλεύς ταύτῃ (7:13).

8:1 om. L does not explicate that Ahashverosh gave Haman's house to Esther. Instead, he has the king complain to Esther that Haman wanted to kill Mordechai, and adds that the king did not know that Mordechai was Esther's relative (7:14).

8:2 According to MT, Esther gave Haman's house to Mordechai; according to L, the king himself gave him the house (7:15).

8:3-6 om. Instead, L has Mordechai, not Esther, asking the king to annul Haman's edict (7:16).

8. L reflects midrash-type exegesis of the biblical story, adding and stressing elements in a way which resembles techniques of the Targumim, the Genesis Apocryphon and several apocryphal and pseudopigraphal works. Moreover, L not only reflects this type of exegesis, but occasionally also agrees with actual midrashim on Esth. in the Targumim and in the collections of midrashim (see n. 17). The clearest example is the above-mentioned feature of placing the story in a religious setting. For agreements in details,
see 4:15 in L and Targum sheni, 1:5 שָׁמַֽרְתָּא and Yalqut Shim'on ad loc.: Esther's concern for dietary laws in Add. C 27-28 is also attested in B.T. Megillah 13a, Midrash P anim Aherim II, 63, 64, and Targum sheni 2:7. In all these sources God is the main agent behind the scene and his existence is felt in all sections of the book.

In 1:16 L equates מָמוֹךְ with Βούγατος (LXX: Μουχατος), the equivalent of "the Agagite" - Haman (thus 3:1; 9:10; E 10). The equation of מָמוֹךְ and Βούγατος is found also in B.T. Megillah 12b and Midrash Abba Gurion 1.

The second royal letter, Add. E (after 8:12), has a parallel in a similar addition in Targum sheni. The words מָמוֹךְ are taken to refer to God in L, Targum rishon and Targum sheni.

9. Like L, the LXX is in the nature of a rewritten story, with large-scale deviations from MT. Like L, LXX contains large Additions, and also minor additions and omissions. However, on the whole, the LXX does not deviate from MT as much as L (the greater part of ch. 8-10 which is lacking in L, is found in the LXX). The precise nature of the midrash-type translation of the LXX must be studied separately.

21 I owe these references to Dr. M. Zipor.

22 For the frequent agreement of (presumably original elements in) the Old Latin version of the LXX with Midrashim and the Targumim, see G.A. Moore, op. cit. (n. 12), pp. 96-127.
To summarize, L is a translation which is based on the LXX but corrects it towards a Hebrew (or Aramaic) text which differed from MT. This text was a midrash-type rewriting of the biblical story.

23 The issue of the language underlying L must be studied in greater detail. Torrey's arguments (see n. 7) in favor of an Aramaic Vorlage are not convincing, but this possibility cannot be discarded. One is struck, e.g., by the sequence of the words in 1:16 καὶ ἐνετειλατο ὁ βασιλέας περὶ τοῦ Μαρδοχαῖον θεραπεύειν αὐτῶν...καὶ πᾶσαν θύραν ἑπιφανῆς τηρεῖν; 6:17 καὶ ἐδόθη Μαρδοχαῖος πέρας θεωρεῖν, which is neither Hebrew nor Greek, but rather Aramaic.