CHAPTER THREE

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS OF VARIANT QUOTATIONS

Our concern in the present chapter is not with quotations which exhibit only slight variants when compared with our manuscripts of the LXX. These quotations are patently from the LXX, although it is not always clear when a variant reading is to be taken as accurately reflecting Clement's LXX, when Clement deliberately makes minor changes, or when the alteration is an inadvertence in an otherwise exactly memorized quotation. Instead, we are concerned with the quotations which are more markedly variant. How are these quotations and composite quotations to be accounted for? We shall here briefly examine the more likely possibilities which can be suggested in answer to this question. We shall primarily look at possible alternative sources, attempting to assess their suitability in accounting for the variant quotations, but we shall also look at the possible role that memory may play in these quotations. This chapter is thus based upon and presupposes the detailed examination of the quotations in the preceding chapter.

A. DIFFERING GREEK TRANSLATIONS

Since Clement betrays no knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic in his epistle, we need not look to the Massoretic (or other Hebrew) Text or to Aramaic Targums as possible sources of Clement's variant quotations. As we have seen, when the LXX differs from the MT, Clement invariably follows the former against the latter. Consequently it seems safe to say that any Hebrew or Aramaic influences upon the text of Clement's quotations are indirect, perhaps mediated through Greek sources, whether oral or written.1

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1 This we judge to be the case with the καταστρώσω in Clement's citation of Ps. 138.7-10 in 28.3, and φόβος in Fr. 1.29 in 57.5. The same must be said for certain Semitic expressions which are found in the quotations (e.g. γνώσκωσα γνώσκω in Cl. 12.5). Cf. E. Nestle, “War der Verfasser des ersten Clemens-Briefes semitischen Abstam­mung?” pp. 178-180; and E. Werner, “Post-Biblical Hebraisms in the Prima Clementis”, p. 814f.
But once we have established that the source of Clement's quotations was a Greek source, we have not thereby solved the problems which confront us. For in addition to various textual traditions of the LXX, a number of Greek translations or targums independent of the LXX tradition may well have been in circulation in Clement's day.

The availability and importance of a multiplicity of Greek translations of OT writings in the first century has been vigorously argued by P. Kahle. Kahle has attempted to invert the theory of LXX origins held by Lagarde and his successors which traces the various recensions of the LXX back to a single, original Urtext. Finding hints of earlier Greek translations in the Letter of Aristeas (§ 30), Kahle maintains that in reality the letter refers not to the original translation of the Pentateuch into Greek, but is instead an apologetic for the standardization of the text of a number of varying extemore Greek translations.²

In accordance with this theory, Kahle is disposed to interpret the early evidence of Greek texts which differ from the received LXX, not as descendants (whether by corruption or recension) of an original Proto-Septuagint (thus Lagarde, Rahlfs, and successors), but rather as evidence of the survival of non-septuagintal translations. He thus makes much of the apparent presence of Lucianic readings in the earliest extant fragments of the OT in Greek, the John Rylands Papyrus Greek 458 (from Dt. 22-28; second century BC). Similarly, fragments from Greek texts (from Leviticus and Numbers) found in Qumran Cave 4 display a text which contains non-septuagintal readings, as does the leather scroll of the Minor Prophets (the Dodekapropheton Scroll), which again contains Lucianic readings. The text form of quotations in Josephus and Philo are also taken by Kahle to show the influence of a non-septuagintal Greek tradition, as are the quotations in the NT which vary from the LXX.

